

MANTHAN

Current Affairs Supplement

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Preface

Dear Readers,

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the month for the upcoming exams like Banking, Insurance, CLAT, MBA etc. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfil aspirations.

Happy Reading!

Best Wishes

Team CL

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

National



PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates International Rice Research Centre in Varanasi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Rice Research Institute's South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) campus in Varanasi. The centre will serve as a hub for rice research and training in South Asia.
- The 50-year partnership between the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Republic of India reached another significant milestone with the opening of the IRRI South Asia Regional Centre (IRRI SARC) in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. The Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, officially inaugurated the state-of-the-art rice research facility on 29 December 2018, dedicating it to the people of India as part of his ambitious goal of doubling farmers' incomes.
- India's association with the IRRI dates back to the 1960s. PM Modi was the first Indian prime minister to visit IRRI headquarters in Manila, Philippines in November 2017.

The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is the world's premier research organization dedicated to reducing poverty and hunger through rice science; improving the health and welfare of rice farmers and consumers; and protecting the rice-growing environment for future generations. IRRI is an independent, nonprofit, research and educational institute, founded in 1960 by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations with support from the Philippine government. The institute, headquartered in Los Baños, Philippines, has offices in 17 rice-growing countries in Asia and Africa.

Madhya Pradesh government to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department)

- The Congress-led Madhya Pradesh Government said that it is going to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department) by merging several existing departments.
- The Congress had promised to form such a department before the last month's Assembly elections. The 'Anand Vibhag' (Department of Happiness) set up by the previous BJP government, a first in the country, would be incorporated into the new department.
- Anandiben Patel is the current Governor of Madhya Pradesh and Governor of Chhattisgarh and former Chief Minister of Gujarat. She was the first woman chief minister of the Gujarat state.
- Kamal Nath is the 18th Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. He was appointed the Pro Tem Speaker of the 16th Lok Sabha.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the "Heart of India" due to its geographical location in India. Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India.

Dharmendra Pradhan launches 100 Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin units in Odisha

- Union Petroleum Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** launched the **Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin** initiative in **Bhubaneswar**, which will expand **women's access to hygiene products** and provide them with **employment opportunities** in every district of the state.
- The Central scheme will be a counter to the Odisha government's **Khushi** scheme, in which **sanitary napkins** are provided **free of cost to female students of government and government-aided schools** in the state.
- In the **first phase of the Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin initiative**, around **100 local manufacturing units** will be set up by **oil marketing companies at Common Service Centres (CSCs)** across 93 blocks in all 30 districts of Odisha. CSCs are facilities set up to deliver the Central government's e-services in rural and remote locations.

Dharmendra Debendra Pradhan is currently the **Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship** in the NDA Government. He was elected to the **Rajya Sabha** in **March 2018** from **Madhya Pradesh**. Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is a Ministry of Government of India set up on **9 November 2014** to coordinate all skill development efforts across the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 106th Indian Science Congress (ISC)-2019

- **World's largest science meets 'Indian Science Congress (ISC)-2019'** is being held from **3rd to 7th January 2019**, in **Jalandhar, Punjab**.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has inaugurated the **106th edition of ISC-2019**, based on the theme '**Future India: Science and Technology**' on 3rd January.
- The **Nobel Laureates** who will be participating include **German-American biochemist Prof. Thomas Sudoph**, who has been awarded the **2013 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine** for work on vesicle trafficking; a **Hungarian-born Israeli biochemist and Nobel laureate in Chemistry Prof. Avram Hershko**; and, a **British born physicist Frederick Duncan Michael Haldane** who has been awarded **2016 Nobel Prize in Physics**.

The **105th Indian Science Congress** was held at **Manipur University**. The theme chosen for the **Indian Science Congress** last year is quite appropriate: "**Reaching the Unreached through Science and Technology**". The **Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA)** owes its origin to the foresight and initiative of two **British Chemists**, namely, **Professor J. L. Simonsen** and **Professor P.S. MacMahon**. The first meeting of the Congress was held from **January 15-17, 1914** at the premises of the **Asiatic Society, Calcutta**, with the **Honourable Justice Sir Asutosh Mukherjee**, the then **Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University**, as **President**.

Sudhir Bhargava sworn in as Chief Information Commissioner

- **Sudhir Bhargava** was sworn in as **Chief Information Commissioner** in the **Central Information Commission**.
- **President Ram Nath Kovind** administered the oath of office to **Mr Bhargava** at a function in **Rashtrapati Bhavan**.
- **Four Information Commissioners** namely **Shri Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha**, **Smt. Vanaja N Sarna**, **Shri Neeraj Kumar Gupta** and **Shri Suresh Chandra** were administered the oath of office of the **Information Commissioner, Central Information Commission (CIC)** by the **Chief Information Commissioner, Shri Sudhir Bhargava**.

The **Central Information Commission** has been constituted with effect from **12-10-2005** under the **Right to Information Act, 2005**. The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all **Central Public Authorities**. The Commission includes **1 Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)** and not more than **10 Information Commissioners (IC)** who are appointed by the **President of India**. The first **Chief Information Commissioner of India** was **Wajahat Habibullah**. The present **Chief Information Commissioner of India** is **Radha Krishna Mathur**.

Train 18 to be launched between New Delhi-Varanasi

- **India's fastest Train 18** will soon start its services between Delhi and Varanasi. The train which will run at a speed of 160 kilometers per hour will reduce the journey time between the two cities from the present 11 hours and 30 minutes to 8 hours.
- **India's first locomotive-less train**, known as Train 18, has breached the 180 kilometres per hour speed limit during a test run at Kota-Sawai Madhopur section in Rajasthan.

Train 18 is an Indian semi-high speed train, an intercity electric multiple unit, a type of self-propelled train without a separate dedicated locomotive. It was designed and built by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) Chennai under the Indian government's Make in India Initiative over a span of 18 months.

Cabinet clears setting up of committee to implement Clause 6 of Assam Accord

- The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of a high-level committee for implementation of clause 6 of the Assam Accord and measures envisaged in the Memorandum of Settlement, 2003 and other issues related to Bodo community.
- It also announced the establishment of a Bodo museum and modernization of All India Radio Station and Doordarshan Kendra in Kokrajhar.
- Clause 6 of the Assam Accord says, “Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people”.
- The committee will also look into issues of the Bodo people, especially the measures mentioned in the Memorandum of Settlement signed between the Government of India, Assam government and the Bodo Liberation Tigers Force in 2003.

Assam Accord — signed between the Government of India, Assam government and All Assam Students Union (AASU) on August 15, 1985. As per the Assam Accord, any person who came to the state after the midnight of March 24, 1971, will be identified as a foreigner.

Bhoomi Rashi Portal

- The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has recently launched the Bhoomi Rashi portal. In the past years, acquisition of land for the purpose of National Highway projects, payment of compensation to the land owners etc were done manually by physical movement of documents in the form of files.
- The Competent Authority for Land Acquisition (CALA), Ministry has developed a web based Utility – Bhoomi Rashi to fully digitize and automate the entire process of land acquisition.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation in the Government of India. He was served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party from 2010-2013. Gadkari contested 2014 Loksabha election successfully from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra and won it.

The 6th ‘Women of India Organic Festival’ to begin in Chandigarh

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development will be hosting the 6th ‘Women of India Organic Festival’ from 12th to 14th January, 2019, at Leisure Valley in Chandigarh, to celebrate and promote women farmers and entrepreneurs in the organic sector from the remotest parts of India.
- “The festival aims to encourage Indian women entrepreneurs and farmers to connect with more buyers and thus, empower them through financial inclusion, while promoting organic culture in India.

The 5th Women of India National Organic Festival 2018 was inaugurated on 26th October 2018, at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Janpath Road, New Delhi by the Union Minister of Women and Child Development, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, who has been instrumental in creating the only festival of its kind in India. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi has been representing the Lok Sabha from Pilibhit constituency in Uttar Pradesh.

All the 640 districts (as per census 2011) of the country covered under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme

- BBBP aims to address the issues of declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and enabling Girl Child education. Towards this purpose, multi-sectoral interventions are carried out in selected BBBP districts.
- Apart from this, an awareness campaign is carried out for creating awareness and visibility about the criticality of the issue of declining CSR in the country. To improve declining Child Sex Ratio in the country and to change the mindset is a long-term challenge. CSR is calculated on decadal basis by Registrar General of India through census.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, on 22nd January, 2015 in Panipat, Haryana as one of the flagship programmes of the Government, to address the declining Child Sex Ratio and related issues of empowerment of women on a life-cycle continuum. It is a tri-ministerial, convergent effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.

Maharashtra farmers to get sops for using solar pumps

- To encourage farmers to use solar agriculture pumps, the Maharashtra government has decided to give two LED bulbs, a DC fan and a mobile charging socket as freebies.
- The State has launched the Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana (ASKP) for farmers with a subsidy of up to 95 per cent on solar pumpsets. The State plans to install one lakh solar pumps.

PM Modi renames Ross, Neil & Havelock Islands in Andaman and Nicobar

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the renaming of three islands of Andaman and Nicobar on the occasion of 75th anniversary of Tricolour hoisting by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Port Blair.
- The Prime Minister said, the Ross Island has been renamed as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep, the Neil Island would now be known as Shaheed Dweep and the Havelock Island as Swaraj Dweep.
- Mr Modi also released a commemorative stamp, its first-day cover and a 75 rupees coin on this special day. He also announced setting up of a deemed university after Netaji Bose.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands, one of the seven union territories of India, are a group of islands at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. It comprises two island groups, the Andaman Islands (partly) and the Nicobar Islands, separated by the 150 km wide Ten Degree Channel (on the 10°N parallel). The Andaman Islands are home to the Sentinelese people, an uncontacted people. The union territories of Andaman and Nicobar, Delhi and Puducherry are headed by lieutenant-governors.

Centre notifies High-Level Committee for implementation of Clause VI of Assam Accord

- Union Government has notified a High-Level Committee for implementation of Clause six of the Assam Accord.
- The clause envisaged that appropriate constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, should be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the people of Assam.

- **The nine-member committee**, comprising of eminent Assamese persons from different fields, is **headed by former bureaucrat MP Bezbaruah**. The committee will examine the effectiveness of actions since 1985 to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord.

Assam Accord — signed between the **Government of India, Assam government and All Assam Students Union (AASU)** on **August 15, 1985**. As per the Assam Accord, **any person who came to the state after the midnight of March 24, 1971**, will be **identified as a foreigner**.

Rajyavardhan Rathore launches National Youth Parliament Festival 2019

- Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, **Col Rajyavardhan Rathore** launched the **National Youth Parliament Festival 2019** at a function in **New Delhi**. The festival will continue till 24th of next month.
- The theme of the festival is- **Be the Voice of New India and Find solutions and contributes to policy**.

Colonel **Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore AVSM** is a **former professional shooter**. Rathore was **appointed as a Cabinet minister with independent charge for Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** in 2017. Rathore, who replaced **Vijay Goel**, became the **first sportsman to take charge of the sports ministry**.

Fourth Edition of Raisina Dialogue held in New Delhi

- **Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Observer Research Foundation** is **organized the 4th edition of the Raisina Dialogue** in **New Delhi** from 08-10 January 2019. **Norway Prime Minister Ms Erna Solberg** has **delivered inaugural address** in presence of Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and **Sushma Swaraj**.
- The theme of the Dialogue this year is **"A World Reorder: New Geometries; Fluid Partnerships; Uncertain Outcomes"**.

Raisina Dialogue is a **multilateral conference** held **annually in New Delhi**. Since its **inception in 2016**, the conference has **emerged as India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics**. It is **designed on the lines of Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue**. The name **"Raisina Dialogue"** comes from **Raisina Hill**, an elevation in **New Delhi**, seat of the **Government of India**, as well as the **Presidential Palace of India, Rashtrapati Bhavan**.

Centre plans 10% quota for the poor

- The Union Cabinet approved a **Constitution Amendment Bill** to provide **10% reservation to the economically backward sections in the general category**.
- The **Bill** will also **cover** those from the **Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist and other minority communities**.
- The **quota** will be **over and above the existing 50% reservation to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes (OBC)**.
- **Who have an annual salary of less than Rs. 8 lakh per year and possess less than 5 acres of land** will be able to avail themselves of reservation in educational institutions and jobs.

The **constitutional** amendment bill would be **required as the constitution does not provide for reservation on the ground of economic conditions**. It envisages amendment to **Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution**. The **constitutional amendment bill** seeks to insert a clause in **Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution**, introducing reservation for **economically weaker sections in educational institutions and government jobs**. So far, the **Constitution envisages quota for socially and educationally backward classes besides Scheduled Castes and Tribes**, and has **no mention of economically weaker people**. In its famous **Indra Sawhney judgement**, the **Supreme Court** had set a **50 per cent cap on quotas**.

Lok Sabha passes Constitution 124th Amendment Bill, 2019 to provide 10% quota in jobs, education for economically weaker sections in General category

- The Lok Sabha has passed the Constitution 124th (Amendment) Bill, 2019 to provide ten per cent reservation to economically backward sections (EWS) in the General category.
- The bill facilitates reservation for EWS in direct recruitments and admission in higher educational institutions. 323 members voted in favour of the bill, while three voted against it.

Two new Skill Development Scheme approved

- Two new Skill Development Schemes have been approved namely (i) Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood (SANKALP); and (ii) Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE).
- The Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood (SANKALP) is a centrally sponsored scheme with a project of total size US Dollar 675 million.
- Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) project is a World Bank assisted-Government of India project with the objective of improving the relevance and efficiency of skills training provided through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and apprenticeships.

Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is a Ministry of Government of India set up on 9 November 2014 to coordinate all skill development efforts across the country. Dharmendra Debendra Pradhan is currently the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in the NDA Government. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in March 2018 from Madhya Pradesh.

Women and Child Development Ministry launches “Web- Wonder Women” Campaign

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, has launched an online campaign, ‘#www: Web- Wonder Women’. The Campaign aims to discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been driving positive agenda of social change via social media.
- Through the campaign, the Ministry and the Campaign’s Partners aim to recognize the fortitude of Indian women stalwarts from across the globe who have used the power of social media to run positive & niche campaigns to steer a change in society.

Maneka Sanjay Gandhi has been representing the Lok Sabha from Pilibhit constituency in Uttar Pradesh.

First Swadesh Darshan project in Meghalaya inaugurated

- The Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Shri. Conrad K Sangma, inaugurated the project “Development of North East Circuit: Umiam (Lake View) - U Lum Sohpetbneng- Mawdiangdiang - Orchid Lake Resort” implemented under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in presence of the Minister of Tourism, Government of Meghalaya.
- This is the first Swadesh Darshan project of Union Tourism Ministry in the state of Meghalaya.

Meghalaya is a state in Northeast India. The name means "the abode of clouds" in Sanskrit. Shillong is a hill station in the northeastern part of India and the capital of Meghalaya. Tathagata Roy is currently serving as Governor of Meghalaya since August 2018.

Andaman to be First Island to operate seaplanes under UDAN-3

- India could soon see seaplanes being used to fly passengers with the government giving approval to 13 water aerodromes under UDAN-3. The very first seaplane could run within Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

- **Four different islands from Andaman and one island from Nicobar** have been selected to fly seaplanes. These are Havelock, Long Island, Neil Island and Hutbay Island in Andaman and Car Nicobar in Nicobar.

Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) was launched in October 2016 to make air travel accessible to citizens in regionally important cities. This is a first-of-its-kind scheme globally to stimulate regional connectivity through a market-based mechanism. **Prime Minister flags off the first UDAN Flight under Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) on Shimla - Delhi sector.** Till 2018, 122 air-routes have been made operational under the RCS, serving 21 underserved and 14 newly operated airports.

Sikkim will become the first Indian state to introduce Universal Basic Income

- **Sikkim's ruling party, the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), declared to include the Universal Basic Income scheme** in its manifesto ahead of the Assembly election in 2019 and aims to implement it by 2022. If everything goes according to the plan, it will be the **first state to implement UBI in India.**
- **Universal Basic Income (UBI)** is a programme for providing all citizens of a country or other geographic area/state with a given sum of money, regardless of their income, resources or employment status. The main idea behind UBI is to **prevent or reduce poverty and increase equality among citizens.**

Sikkim is the best state for women in the workplace, there's less crime against women. **Sikkim's literacy rate increased to 82.2% from 68.8% in 2001, among the country's highest.** **Sikkim is the least populated state in India, has its per capita GDP growing in double digits since 2004-05.** **Sikkim became the first fully organic state,** since embracing the mission in 2003 received a fillip from PM Narendra Modi earlier this year.

PM-led panel moves Alok Verma out of CBI, Rao back in charge

- The **high-power committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi removed Alok Verma as CBI Director**, a day after he resumed office following the Supreme Court verdict restoring his position.
- The panel, **including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Justice A.K. Sikri — the Chief Justice of India's nominee on the panel —** was of the opinion that Mr. Verma had been given an **opportunity to present his case before the CVC**, in the presence of Justice A.K. Patnaik (retired).

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the **premier investigating agency of India.** Operating under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the **CBI is headed by the Director.** The agency has been **known to investigate several economic crimes, special crimes, and cases of corruption** and other high-profile cases. The **CBI headquarters are located at Lodhi Road in New Delhi.** The founding director of the CBI was **D. P. Kohli**, who held the office from 1 April 1963 to 31 May 1968.

India's longest single lane steel cable bridge opened in Arunachal

- **India's longest 300-metre single lane steel cable suspension bridge** was **inaugurated by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu.**
- The bridge across the Siang river at Yingkiong in Upper Siang district has been named Byorung Bridge.

Arunachal Pradesh is the northeastern-most state of the country. **Itanagar is the capital of the state.** **Brigadier (Dr.) B. D. Mishra is the present Governor of Arunachal Pradesh.**

India Ranks 79th, Japan tops list of Most Powerful Passports

- **According to the Henley Passport Index**, which periodically measures the access each country's travel document affords, **India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th this year.**
- **Japan retained its top spot as the world's most travel-friendly passport** due to the document's access to 190 countries. **Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nepal ranked further low at 104, 102 and 94 respectively.**

The Henley Passport Index is based on data provided by the International Air Transport Authority (IATA) and covers 199 passports and 227 travel destinations. Henley & Partner's list is one of several indexes created by financial firms to rank global passports according to the access they provide to their citizens.

Jaitley inaugurates Hunar Haat organised by Minority Affairs Ministry

- Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley and Union Minority Affairs Minister Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi inaugurated 'Hunar Haat' organised by Minority Affairs Ministry at State Emporium Complex in New Delhi.
- The Minister hailed the efforts of Minority Affairs Ministry saying Hunar Haat is providing a platform to artisans.

The Minister Shri Mukhtar Abbas informed that this Hunar Haat exhibition is unique from earlier exhibitions as for the first time products made by inmates of Delhi's Tihar Jail are also being showcased and sold which gives them a sense of self-dependency and appreciation. These products include furniture, handlooms, handicrafts, bakery items, organic spices and grain.

President Kovind gives nod to 10% quota for EWS in upper castes

- President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to a bill providing 10 per cent reservation to economically backward section in the general category. After the approval of Parliament during the Winter Session this week, the Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill, 2019 was sent to the President for his assent.

Odisha launches free LED bulb distribution scheme

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 'Ama Ghare LED' scheme, under which about 95 lakh families in the State will each get four LED bulbs free of cost.
- The 9-watt LED bulbs will be distributed to the beneficiaries registered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and the State Food Security Scheme (SFSC).

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Dr. Senayangba Chubatoshi Jamir is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

Gujarat becomes first state to implement 10% quota to economically weaker sections

- Gujarat has become the first state to implement newly-introduced 10 per cent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category.
- Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced that his government has decided to implement the reservation from January 14, 2019.

The Union Cabinet approved a Constitution Amendment Bill to provide 10% reservation to the economically backward sections in the general category. The Bill will also cover those from the Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist and other minority communities. The quota will be over and above the existing 50% reservation to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes (OBC). Who have an annual salary of less than Rs. 8 lakh per year and possess less than 5 acres of land will be able to avail themselves of reservation in educational institutions and jobs.

President Kovind approves re-promulgation of Triple Talaq ordinance

- President Ram Nath Kovind has approved re-promulgation of the Triple Talaq ordinance. In a Ministry of Law and Justice notification, the government said, President Ram Nath Kovind has promulgated The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Ordinance, 2019.

- The ordinance seeks to protect the rights of married Muslim women and criminalise the practice of instant triple talaq.

Cabinet approved re-promulgation of the ordinance after the bill to criminalise triple talaq was stalled in the Rajya Sabha. An ordinance to make triple talaq a crime was first promulgated in 2018.

One Family One Job scheme launched in Sikkim

- Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme which entitles one government job for every family in the state.
- "Sikkim has become the first state in the country to carry out such an exclusive programme for the people who would now be entitled to state government employee benefits".

Sikkim is the least populous and second smallest among the Indian states. In 2003, Sikkim decided to convert fully to organic farming statewide, and achieved this goal in 2015, becoming India's first "organic state". A referendum in 1975 led to Sikkim joining India as its 22nd state. Sikkim's capital and largest city is Gangtok. The 36th Amendment repealed the 35th Amendment, and made Sikkim a full state, adding its name to the First Schedule of the Constitution.

Union Government drafts five-year action plan to address drug abuse in the country

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has drafted a five-year action plan for addressing the problem of drug and substance abuse in the country, dumping a long-pending draft policy on the matter.
- The National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2023) aims to employ a multi-pronged strategy — involving education, de-addiction and rehabilitation of affected individuals and their families — to address the issue, a government official said.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is responsible for welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society, including scheduled castes (SC), Other Backward Classes (OBC), the disabled, the elderly, and the victims of drug abuse. Dr. Thawar Chand Gehlot currently serves as the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment. He is the Rajya Sabha MP from Madhya Pradesh

World's largest religious and cultural human congregation - Kumbh Mela begins in UP

- The world's largest religious and cultural human congregation -Kumbh 2019 has begun with the holy dip at Sangam, the confluence of rivers Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati at Prayagraj.
- The first bathing was taken by saints and seers of different Akharas.

The Kumbh Mela (the festival of the sacred pitcher) is the largest public gathering and collective act of faith, anywhere in the world. Primarily, this congregation includes Ascetics, Saints, Sadhus, Sadhvis, Kalpvasis, and Pilgrims from all walks of life. Kumbh Mela, in Hinduism, is a religious pilgrimage that is celebrated four times over a course of 12 years. The geographical location of Kumbh Mela spans over four locations in India, they are 1. Haridwar on the Ganges in Uttarakhand 2. Ujjain on the Shipra in Madhya Pradesh 3. Nashik on the Godavari in Maharashtra 4. Prayagraj at the confluence of the Ganges, the Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati in Uttar Pradesh

Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice Dinesh Maheshwari elevated to Supreme Court

- President Ram Nath Kovind approved the elevation of Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Dinesh Maheshwari to the Supreme Court.
- Justice Khanna is presently a judge of the Delhi High Court. Justice Maheshwari is the Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court. The Supreme Court collegium headed by Chief Justice of India Justice Ranjan Gogoi had recommended their elevation to the apex court.

The Collegium system is one where the Chief Justice of India and a forum of four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court recommend appointments and transfers of judges. However, it has no place in the Indian Constitution. The system was evolved through Supreme Court judgments in the Three Judges Cases.

Election Commission of India launches Voter Awareness Forums (VAFs) in New Delhi

- **Voter Awareness Forum (VAF)** was launched by Election Commission of India in New Delhi. Similar VAFs were also launched by the Chief Electoral Officers in the State capitals and by District Election Officers in the Districts simultaneously.
- **Voter Awareness Forums** are informal Forums for generating awareness around electoral process through activities like discussions, quizzes, competitions and other engaging activities.

Election Commission of India operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. Chief Election Commissioner of India is usually a member of the Indian Civil Service and mostly from the Indian Administrative Service. It is very difficult to remove the authority of the Chief Election Commissioner once appointed by the president, as two-thirds of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha need to vote against him for disorderly conduct or improper actions. Sukumar Sen was the first Chief Election Commissioner of India, serving from 21 March 1950 to 19 December 1958.

Nirmala Sitharaman launches TN Defence Industrial Corridor

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched a series of projects as a part of the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor in Tiruchirappalli. The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor will include Chennai, Hosur, Salem and Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli as the nodes.
- Dr. Ajay Kumar, Defence Production secretary said that the corridor is expected to be a specialised facility of aero component manufacturing. Ordnance Factory Board has announced 2305 crore rupees investment in the corridor. This will be the country's second defence industrial corridor after the first one was launched in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh August last year.
- The Ministry also said that Tamil Nadu ranks 4th in the country with 9.8% of India's total exports and the corridor will expand the exporting opportunities from the region.

Nirmala Sitharaman is currently a member of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka. Nirmala Sitharaman became the first full-time Defence Minister to fly in a Sukhoi 30 MKI of the Indian Air Force. She is the first full-fledged woman defence minister of India. The first defence minister of independent India was Baldev Singh. She is the second woman since Indira Gandhi to hold this major post.

India's second defence innovation hub to come up in Maharashtra's Nashik

- Nashik in Maharashtra will be the site of the country's second defence innovation hub after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, Union Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre said. He said the defence innovation hub at Nashik will help local industries and entrepreneurs and further the Centre's Make in India push in the country's defence sector.
- He informed the gathering the Ministry of Defence had set a target of making the country among the top five arms exporters by 2025. By then, he added, the plan was to achieve annual arms exports of Rs 35,000 crore.

National Museum of Indian Cinema inaugurated by PM

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in Mumbai.

- The **state-of-the-art Museum, built at a cost of Rs. 140.61 crore**, aims to **take its visitors through an absorbing journey of over a century of Indian cinema** in a story telling mode with the help of visuals, graphics, artifacts, interactive exhibits and multimedia expositions.
- The **creation of the Museum has been guided by the Museum Advisory Committee headed by Shri Shyam Benegal**. An innovation Committee headed by Shri Prasoon Joshi was also constituted to provide an upgrade to NMIC.

PM inaugurates Ninth Edition of Vibrant Gujarat Summit in Gandhinagar

- Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 9th edition of Vibrant Gujarat Summit** at Mahatma Mandir Exhibition cum Convention Centre in Gandhinagar. **5 Heads of States from Uzbekistan, Rwanda, Denmark, Czech Republic and Malta along with the captains of industry** from various sectors & over 30,000 delegates from India and abroad are **taking part in the event**.
- Prime Minister said, **“At 7.3 per cent, the average GDP growth has been the highest of any Indian government since 1991. At the same time, the average rate of inflation at 4.6 per cent is the lowest for any Indian government since 1991 when India began its process for liberalization.”**

Vibrant Gujarat is a biennial investors' summit held by the Government of Gujarat. The event is aimed at bringing together business leaders, investors, corporations, thought leaders, policy and opinion makers. The **first Vibrant Gujarat: Global Investors' Summit 2003** was organized during the Navratri festival. Then **Deputy Prime Minister of India, Lal Krishna Advani inaugurated Vibrant Gujarat: Global Investors' Summit 2003** on 28 September 2003. Then **Chief Minister Narendra Modi**, Arun Shourie, Ram Naik, Mukesh Ambani, and A C Muthaih **were the other dignitaries present on the dais**.

PM inaugurates the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019

- The Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019** at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad.
- From the street vendors to shopping malls and from Craftsmen to hotels-restaurant-linked businesses, across the Gujarat, have come to showcase and promote their products. The **festival is unique since it is organized simultaneously with the Vibrant Gujarat Summit**.

The **606-year-old walled city of Ahmedabad**, which was founded by emperor Ahmed Shah, has become **India's first World Heritage City**. The World Heritage Committee (WHC) of UNESCO announced it in 2017. Spread over 5.43 sq km, the walled city of Ahmedabad was preferred over Mumbai and Delhi during the nominations. With a population of 3.75 to 4 lakh, the city's living heritage being the 600 odd 'pols' or neighbourhoods with clusters of centuries-old residences.

New Delhi appoints new envoys for Israel, South Africa, Bhutan, and Maldives

- In a major reshuffle of ambassadorial appointments, the **Ministry of External Affairs** has decided on **sending new Ambassadors to Israel, Mexico, South Africa, Argentina, New Zealand and Vietnam**. India's **High Commissioner to South Africa Ruchira Khamboj** is expected to be **posted to Thimphu after completing the visit of South African President Cyril Ramaphosa** who will be the Chief Guest for the Republic Day parade this year. **Ms. Khamboj would exchange places with Jaideep Sarkar**, who is **presently in Thimphu** and will move to Pretoria in her place. **Sunjay Sudhir, presently with the Petroleum Ministry** has been chosen to **move to the Maldives**, an important posting given the reset in ties between the two countries since the election of President Ibu Solih.
- **Sanjeev Singla**, a key official in the **Prime Minister's Office**, is being **sent to Israel in place of Ambassador Pavan Kapoor**. Former ambassador to **Afghanistan Manpreet Vohra** is being **sent to Mexico**, and will replace **Ambassador Muktesh Pardeshi**, who, according to reports will **move to New Zealand**. **Pranay Verma**, who has been a diplomat handling **South East Asia at the MEA headquarters at present** will **move to Vietnam** and the

Joint Secretary (North) who handled Nepal and Bhutan, Sudhakar Dalela, will head to Chicago as Consul-General, according to sources.

Uttar Pradesh third state to approve quota for poor among upper castes

- The Uttar Pradesh government approved 10 per cent reservation for economically backward among upper castes in jobs and educational institutions.
- The nod was given at a meeting here of the state cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, senior cabinet minister and UP government spokesperson Shrikant Sharma told mediapersons.
- Uttar Pradesh became the third state after Gujarat and Jharkhand to approve the legislation which has to be ratified by at least half the state Assemblies in the country.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in the Republic of India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh. Ram Naik is currently the 24th Governor of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath is the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

India among the most trusted nations globally

- India is among the most trusted nations globally when it comes to government, business, NGOs and media.
- The 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer report, which was released ahead of the World Economic Forum meet in Davos, noted that the Global Trust Index witnessed a marginal increase of 3 points to 52.
- China topped the Trust Index among both the informed public and the general population segments.
- India was at the second place in the informed public category and third place in the general population category.

The Index is the average per cent of trust in NGOs, business, government and media. In terms of trust in companies headquartered in each market, the most trusted are those from Switzerland, Germany and Canada.

15th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas concluded at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh

- The 15th edition of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas concluded at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. It is organised in Varanasi for the first time.
- The theme this year is, 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India'.
- Several world leaders of Indian origin, including Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, took part in the event and share their insights on the theme.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the event, with Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth being the Chief Guest.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a celebratory day observed on 9 January by the Republic of India to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India. The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915.

Nitin Gadkari inaugurated first inter-state bridge in Jammu and Kashmir

- Union minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the 1.2 km-long Keediyani-Gandiwal Bridge on the Ravi River in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir. It is the first inter-state Bridge connecting Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir.
- The inter-state bridge was built at a cost of nearly Rs 150 crore in a span of three and a half years linking secluded areas of Kathua district with Punjab.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party from 2010-2013. Gadkari contested 2014 Loksabha election successfully from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra and won it.

Indians over 65 and under 15 can now visit Nepal and Bhutan with Aadhaar

- Aadhaar cards are now valid travel documents for Indians under 15 and over 65 years travelling to Nepal and Bhutan.
- Indians other than those in the two age brackets will not be able to use Aadhaar to travel to the two neighbouring countries, for which no visas are needed.
- Indian citizens going to Nepal and Bhutan don't need a visa if they have a valid passport, a photo identity card issued by the government of India or an election ID card issued by the Election Commission.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 ("Aadhaar Act 2016") on 12 July 2016 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). Aadhaar is the world's largest biometric ID system, with over 1.19 billion enrolled members as of 30 November 2017. J. Satyanarayana is the current chairman of UIDAI.

Odisha CM Patnaik increases social security pension by Rs 200 per month

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced a hike of Rs 200 per month in the social security pension under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY).
- Mr Patnaik said, 48 lakh elderly, disabled, widows and destitute women will be benefited from the scheme. Stating that the enhanced pension will come into effect from February 15, 2019.
- As per the enhanced pension, the elderly persons aged over 60 years will get a revised old age pension of Rs 500 per month as against Rs 300 and those who are more than 80 years old; the pension will be Rs 700 per month instead of Rs 500 per month.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Dr. Senayangba Chubatoshi Jamir is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

First & largest Coastal Defence Exercise "Sea Vigil" Concluded in Kochi

- The first coastal defence Exercise Sea Vigil, conducted by the Navy and Coast Guard, in close coordination with State Governments and Union Territories concluded in Kochi.
- It was the largest such exercise the country had ever witnessed in recent times and saw participation by more than 100 ships, aircraft and patrol boats manned and operated by various security agencies. Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla, AVSM, NM, VSM, Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Defence periodically reviewed the progress of Ex Sea Vigil

Arunachal government declares Pakke Hornbill Fest as 'state festival'

- The government of Arunachal Pradesh declared the Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF)—the state's only conservation festival, as a "state festival". The first-ever PPHF was held on January 16–18, 2015.
- The organizers had a number of objectives in mind—to recognise the role played by the resident Nyishi tribe in conserving hornbills in the Pakke Tiger Reserve (PTR), to devise alternative sources of income for a region that relies on hunting and logging.

Arunachal Pradesh is the **northeastern-most** state of the country. **Itanagar** is the capital of the state. **Brigadier (Dr.) B. D. Mishra** is the present Governor of Arunachal Pradesh. **Pema Khandu** is the current Chief Minister.

India ranks at 54th position among most innovative countries

- **India figures at 54th position among the world's most innovative countries**, according to Bloomberg 2019 Innovative Index. It is for the **first time that India has made it to the rankings**.
- **South Korea has retained the top spot with a score of 87.38**, while **Germany scored 87.30 for improvements in research and education**. **Finland with a score of 85.70 came third on the list**, followed by **Switzerland with a score of 85.49**. **Israel came in at the 5th spot with a score of 84.78**. The **United Kingdom fell one spot to 18th and lost out to China for the first time ever** in Bloomberg rankings.
- **Among the new entrants** annual Bloomberg Innovation Index are some of the **world's largest emerging economies: India, Mexico, Vietnam and Saudi Arabia**.

Bloomberg L.P. is **privately held financial, software, data, and media company headquartered in Midtown Manhattan, New York City**. The **annual Bloomberg Innovation Index analyses dozens of criteria using seven metrics**, including research and development spending, manufacturing capability and concentration of high-tech public companies. **Each country was scored on a 0-100 scale based on seven equally weighted categories**.

Prime Minister launches Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana in New Delhi** under which a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a **government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year**.
- All people of **Indian-origin aged 45 to 65 can apply** and a group will be selected out of them **with first preference given to people from 'Girmitiya countries'** such as **Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica**.
- They will be taken to **religious places of all major religions in India** and the government will bear all the expenses including the airfare from their country of residence.

South African President Ramaphosa, chief guest at Republic Day parade, lands in Delhi

- **President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa arrived in New Delhi on a two-day State Visit to India**. **He was the State Guest of Honour for the Republic Day parade**.
- **South African President Cyril Ramaphosa joined a select group of world leaders, including Nelson Mandela, to have graced India's Republic Day celebrations**. **Mr Ramaphosa is the second President of South Africa after President Nelson Mandela to be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day**.
- His presence at the celebrations was seen as significant as India is **celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of the father of the nation**. **Mahatma Gandhi had stayed 21 years in South Africa** which played a pivotal role in moulding him as an apostle of peace.

The **seeds of a republican nation were sowed at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress** at the midnight of **31st December 1929**. The session was held under the presidency of **Pt. Jawarhar Lal Nehru**. Those present in the meeting **took a pledge to mark January 26 as "Independence Day"** in order to march towards **realizing the dream of complete independence from the British**. The Lahore Session paved way to the Civil Disobedience movement. It was **decided that January 26, 1930 would be observed as the Purna Swaraj (complete Independence) Day**. Ever since the historic day, **January 26 is celebrated with festivities and patriotic fervor all around the country**.

Last year, leaders of all 10 ASEAN countries attended the Republic Day celebrations. In 2017, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was the chief guest at the celebrations, while then French president Francois Hollande graced the occasion in 2016. In 2015, then US president Barack Obama watched the parade.

Cabinet decides to strengthen northeast autonomous councils

- The Union Cabinet approved a Constitutional amendment to increase the financial and executive powers of the 10 autonomous councils in the Sixth Schedule areas of the northeast.
- The amendment would impact a population of about 1 crore tribals living in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, according to the Centre. Till now, the autonomous councils have depended on grants from Central Ministries and the State governments for specific projects.
- As per the proposed amendment, at least one third of the seats would be reserved for women in the village and municipal councils in the Sixth Schedule areas of Assam, Mizoram and Tripura.

Northeast India (officially **North Eastern Region**) is the easternmost region of India representing both a geographic and political administrative division of the country. It comprises eight states – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Siliguri Corridor or Chicken's Neck is a narrow stretch of land of about 22 kilometres, located in the Indian state of West Bengal, which connects India's northeastern states to the rest of India.

Millennials will be eligible to vote for first time in 2019 general elections

- President Ram Nath Kovind said millennials will be eligible to vote for the first time in the general elections this year.
- Addressing the gathering on the National Voters' Day celebrations in Delhi, the President said these first-time voters will determine the fate and future of 21st Century India. He said it is a matter of pride to be a voter in world's largest democracy.

Ram Nath Kovind is the 14th and current President of India. He had served previously as the Governor of Bihar from 2015 to 2017. He became only the second Dalit representative to become President after K. R. Narayanan, and also is the first BJP candidate to be elected to the post.

Jharkhand is the first state in the country where an MOU was signed to develop one such abandoned air strip at Dhalbhumgarh

- Union Civil Aviation department Secretary said that Jharkhand is the first state in the country where an MOU was signed to develop one such abandoned air strip at Dhalbhumgarh.
- Centre has decided to renovate and develop around 400 abandoned airstrips across the country to strengthen air-connectivity. Secretary of Union Civil Aviation department R N Choubey said a drive has been launched to renovate and develop abandoned airstrips to improve air connectivity on the directive of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu is the current Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation of India, under the Narendra Modi government. He currently represents Andhra Pradesh in the Upper House of Indian Parliament. He was the Union Railway Minister of India from November 2014 to September 2017.

Indian Railways' fastest Train 18 named Vande Bharat Express

- India's first indigenously built engineless semi-high speed train, Train 18, has been named Vande Bharat Express, Union Minister Piyush Goyal announced. The train is set to run between Delhi and Varanasi at a maximum speed of 160 kmph and will soon be flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- The 16-coach train, built in 18 months at a cost of Rs 97 crore by the Modern Coach Factory, Rae Bareilly, is regarded as a successor to the 30-year-old Shatabdi Express. “It is completely made in India under Make in India Initiative. It’s also the first locomotive-less train in the country.

Train 18 is an Indian semi-high speed train, an intercity electric multiple unit, a type of self-propelled train without a separate dedicated locomotive. It was designed and built by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) Chennai. When this indigenously designed train is made operational, it will become the country's fastest train. Train 18 is capable of touching 200 kilometres per hour provided the rest of Indian Railways' system, permit

Bharat Parv showcasing spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat begins at Red Fort

- Fourth edition of Bharat Parv, showcasing the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat concluded at Red Fort in Delhi.
- The five-day event is a part of Republic Day Celebrations and the objective of this festival is to generate a patriotic fervour and promote the rich cultural diversity of the country.

Bharat Parv is a five-day festival organised by Ministry of Tourism (India) to showcase the cuisine and culture of different states of India. The festival is held annually at the end of January.

Expert Panel Recommends Increasing Number of Institutions of Eminence To 30

- The Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) set by the HRD Ministry for selecting Institutions of Eminence (IOEs) has recommended to increase the number of such institutes to 30 from the current 20, according to senior officials.
- The IoE project for internationalization of Indian campuses and creating world class universities was rolled out by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) in September 2017.

Accordingly, the Government / UGC approved the scheme of providing Regulatory Architecture for setting up / upgrading of 20 Institutions (10 from public sector & 10 from private sector) as world class teaching and research institutions called as ‘Institutions of Eminence’. Each public Institution selected as ‘Institution of Eminence’ will get financial assistance up to Rs. 1000 Crore over the period of five years under this scheme. It is expected that the selected Institutions will come up in top 500 of the world ranking in 10 years and in top 100 of the world ranking eventually overtime.

Union Minister Gadkari inaugurates Atal Setu in Goa

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated four-lane, 5.1-kilometer long “Atal Setu”, the third Cable Bridge across river Mandovi in Panaji, Goa.
- Mahadayi, also known as the Mandovi River, is known as a lifeline in the northern parts of Karnataka. The river originates and flows for 28 kilometer in Karnataka and goes through Maharashtra and Goa before meeting the Arabian Sea.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party from 2010-2013. Gadkari contested 2014 Lok Sabha election successfully from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra and won it. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation in the Government of India.

Governor grants quota for J&K’s Pahari community

- Governor Satya Pal Malik approved the Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2014, providing reservation to the persons belonging to Pahari community of the State, evoking adulation from all political parties.

- “Because of the remoteness and inaccessibility of the areas of their residence, the **Pahari community** has **historically faced considerable economic distress** leading to overall socio-economic backwardness. The welfare legislation is **aimed at providing job opportunities to the Pahari people** residing in backward areas of the State,” said the Governor’s statement.

Pahari is a linguistic group, comprising both Muslims and Hindus, and is mainly located in Poonch, Rajouri, Kupwara and Baramulla districts.

World’s biggest cyclothon Swasth ‘Bharat Yatra’ culminates in Delhi

- The **Swasth Bharat Yatra**, the world’s biggest cyclothon to push people to eat right, **culminated in New Delhi**. The campaign was **flagged-off on 16th October** last year on the occasion of **World Food Day**.
- The yatra began from six different locations - **Leh, Panaji, Thiruvananthapuram, Puducherry, Kolkata and Agartala** on six different tracks in which more than ten thousand volunteer cyclists covered over twenty thousand kilometres **spreading the message of ‘Eat Safe, Eat Healthy and Eat Fortified**.

This yatra is a part of the **Eat Right India** movement, a **pan India public health revolution to create a sustainable culture and habit of safe and healthy diets** by promoting individual awareness, collective action, strengthening institutional system and fostering partnerships. **Food Safety Standards Authority of India, FSSAI**, led the movement.

Civil aviation ministry launches first GI store

- Civil Aviation ministry launched the country’s first **Geographical Indication (GI) store** at **Dabolim International Airport** in Goa.
- **Union Minister for Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu**, who was in the state for the launch, said, “We want to make sure that **all 201 airports—101 airports and in the next few years another 100 airports—have a GI stall**.” The minister explained that these GI stalls will promote products made by local artisans and talents.

A **geographical indication (GI)** is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a **specific geographical location or origin** (e.g. a town, region, or country). **India**, as a member of the **World Trade Organization (WTO)**, enacted the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** has come into force with effect from **15 September 2003**. **Darjeeling tea** became the first GI tagged product in **India**, in 2004-05, since then by oct 2018, 321 had been added to the list. **Madhya Pradesh** was recently granted GI tag for the **Kadakhnath chicken breed** on **30th July 2018**.

International



PM Sheikh Hasina wins landslide in disputed vote

- **Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina** has secured a **fourth term** with a **landslide victory** in polls the opposition slammed as "farical" over claims of vote-rigging, and clashes between rival supporters that killed at least 17 people.
- **Hasina's ruling Awami League party and its allies won 288 seats in the 300-seat parliament**, with the main opposition securing only six seats, Election Commission secretary Helal Uddin Ahmed said. Sheikh Hasina's Awami League has run Bangladesh since 2009. **Bangladesh's parliament has 350 seats in total, 50 of which are reserved for women** and allotted proportional to the overall vote.
- The ruling Awami League leaders said, a **new government could be formed on 10th of this month**. The day is celebrated as **Bangladesh founder Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's homecoming day**.

Bangladesh is a country in **South Asia**. It shares land borders with **India and Myanmar (Burma)**. **Nepal, Bhutan and China** are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. **Dhaka** is its capital and largest city, followed by **Chittagong**, which has the country's largest port. **Bangladeshi taka** is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. **Mohammad Abdul Hamid** is the **16th and current President of Bangladesh**, in office since April 2013. **Sheikh Hasina** is the **current Prime Minister** of the Bangladesh.

Justice Asif Khosa to replace Justice Saqib Nisar as CJP

- The **federal government announced the appointment of Supreme Court Justice Asif Saeed Khosa** as the **Chief Justice of Pakistan**, replacing incumbent Justice Mian Saqib Nisar, from January 18.

Qatar will cease to be a member of OPEC

- **Qatar will cease to be a member of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries**. The decision came amid the ongoing diplomatic and economic blockade imposed on the country by its Persian Gulf neighbours and several Arab states.
- **Qatar is the first Gulf country to leave the bloc of oil-producing countries**. The withdrawal decision reflects Qatar's desire to focus its efforts on plans to develop and increase its natural gas production from **77 million tonnes per year to 110 million tonnes** in the coming years. **Qatar is the world's largest exporter of LPG**.

Qatar is a country located in **Western Asia**, occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. **Doha** is the capital and most populous city of the State of Qatar. **Qatari riyal** is the currency of the State of Qatar. **Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani** is the **current Emir of Qatar**. **Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani** has been **Prime Minister of Qatar** since 26 June 2013.

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is an intergovernmental organization of 14 nations as of February 2018, founded in 1960 in Baghdad by the first five members (Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela), and headquartered since 1965 in Vienna, Austria.

US, Israel quit UNESCO citing bias

- The **United States and Israel** officially quit the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** with the close of 2018.
- The countries had announced their decisions in 2017 of withdrawing from the agency, accusing it of bias against Israel.
- America has demanded fundamental reform in UNESCO, which was co-founded by it after World War II to foster peace.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris. **Audrey Azoulay** appointed as the **Director-general** of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), becoming the **second female leader of the organization**. **India** is **sixth on the list of countries with the most number of sites in the list**. **Italy** leads with **53 sites** followed by **China** with **52 sites**.

Bolsonaro declares Brazil's 'liberation from socialism' as he is sworn in

- **Jair Bolsonaro** has announced **Brazil's "liberation from socialism, inverted values, the bloated state and political correctness"** after being sworn in as the country's 42nd president.
- The former army captain and his wife Michelle waved to crowds from an open-topped Rolls-Royce before he and his vice-president, retired army general **Hamilton Mourão**, were sworn in at congress.

Brazil is the **largest country in both South America and Latin America**. **Brazil** is the **world's fifth-largest country by area and the sixth most populous**. **Brasília** is the **federal capital of Brazil** and seat of government of the Federal District. **Brazilian real** is the **official currency of Brazil**. **Brazil** is the undisputed **largest coffee-producing nation in the world**. **India** is the **seventh largest coffee-producing nation in the world**. **Karnataka** is the **largest coffee-producing state in the India**.

China develops its own 'Mother of All Bombs'

- **China** has developed a massive bomb, said to be the country's answer to the **US-built 'Mother of All Bombs'**, the most powerful non-nuclear weapon.
- It is **dubbed as the Chinese version of the "Mother of All Bombs"** due to its huge destruction potential that is claimed to be only second to nuclear weapons.

Pakistan Declares Panj Tirath- an ancestral Hindu site as a National Heritage

- The **provincial Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in northwest Pakistan** has declared the **ancient Hindu religious site of Panj Tirath in Peshawar** as national heritage.
- **Panj Tirath**, which got its name from the **five pools of water present there**, also contains a **temple and a lawn with date palm trees**. The five pools of the heritage site now come under the ambit of **Chacha Yunus Park** and **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chamber of Commerce and Industry**.

Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is the **13th and current President of Pakistan**. **Pakistan** is a country in **South Asia**. It is the **fifth-most populous country**. **Islamabad** is the **capital city of Pakistan**. **Pakistani rupee** is the **currency of Pakistan**. **Imran Khan** is the **current Prime Minister of Pakistan**.

Bangladesh: Sheikh Hasina took oath as PM

- Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has taken oath as Prime Minister of Bangladesh for the third consecutive term.
- A 47-member Council of Ministers including 31 new faces were sworn in. President Mohammad Abdul Hamid administered the oath of office to the Ministers at Bangabhaban.
- Hasina's ruling Awami League party and its allies won 288 seats in the 300-seat parliament, with the main opposition securing only six seats. Sheikh Hasina's Awami League has run Bangladesh since 2009. Bangladesh's parliament has 350 seats in total, 50 of which are reserved for women.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh.

Malaysia's new head of state to be appointed by January

- In Malaysia, members of the royal families met to set dates to choose a new king after the resignation of Sultan Muhammad -5 as the country's head of state.
- Sultans of Malaysia's states decided to set January 24 as the date on which they would convene to discuss the appointment of a new king, while January 31 as the date on which the new king will be sworn in.
- Muhammad - 5 became the first head of state to resign after just over two years of his mandated five-year term.

Malaysia is a federal constitutional monarchy in Southeast Asia. Mahathir bin Mohamad is a Malaysian politician currently serving as the seventh Prime Minister of Malaysia. The Malaysian ringgit is the currency of Malaysia.

India's assistance for construction of Sittwe Port

- The Sittwe Port in Myanmar is constructed with India's assistance and is ready for operation. Sittwe Port is part of the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project.
- Its objective is to create a multi-modal sea, river and road transport corridor for shipment of cargo from the eastern ports of India to Myanmar through Sittwe port as well as to North-Eastern part of India via Myanmar.

Sittwe Port is a deepwater port constructed by India in 2016 at Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State in Myanmar, on the Bay of Bengal. The proposal for the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project was conceived by India, primarily to provide an alternative route to India's landlocked northeastern states. The only access to these seven states is through the Siliguri Corridor, a narrow strip of Indian territory wedged between Bhutan and Bangladesh.

India takes over operations of part of Chabahar Port in Iran

- The Government of India took over the operations of a part of Shahid Beheshti Port, Chabahar in Iran during the Chabahar Trilateral Agreement meeting.
- This is the first time India will be operating a port outside its territories.

Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran's only oceanic port. India-Iran-Afghanistan MoU and plans have committed at least \$21bn to Chabahar-Hajigak corridor, including \$85m for Chabahar port development by India.

Guatemala to withdraw from UN-backed anti-corruption commission

- **Guatemala** has said it is **withdrawing from an UN-backed anti-corruption commission**. It has given the UN body's staff 24 hours to leave the country.
- **President Jimmy Morales accused the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala**, commonly known as CICIG, of polarising the country and putting its security at risk.

Guatemala is a country in Central America. Its capital and largest city is Nueva Guatemala de la Asunción, also known as Guatemala City. Jimmy Morales is currently serving as the President of Guatemala since January 2016. The quetzal is the currency of Guatemala, named after the national bird of Guatemala, the resplendent quetzal.

Tehran proposes a new regional forum for West Asia

- In a diplomatic initiative to address the lingering conflicts and mistrust in the Gulf region, **Iran proposed a new platform for regional peace building**.
- **Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif** said such a forum should offer membership to countries based on a set of general principles to address real issues that affect people of the region and the world.

Iran also called Persia is a country in Western Asia. Tehran is the country's capital and largest city, as well as its leading economic and cultural center. Hassan Rouhani is serving as the current and seventh President of Iran since 3 August 2013. Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei is the second and current Supreme Leader of Iran, in office since 1989. The Iranian rial is the currency of Iran.

Opposition leader 'wins' DR Congo election

- **Opposition leader Felix Tshisekedi** was **declared winner of DR Congo's presidential election**, but his victory was dismissed by the runner-up and questioned by the Catholic Church.
- **If Tshisekedi's victory is confirmed by the constitutional court, Democratic Republic of Congo will see its first peaceful democratic transfer of power** since it gained independence from Belgium in 1960.

Democratic Republic of the Congo was known as Zaire between 1971 and 1997. Kinshasa is the capital and the largest city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Joseph Kabila Kabange is the current President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As of 10 January 2019, Felix Tshisekedi is the President-elect of the DRC. The franc is the currency of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Su Tseng-chang appointed as Taiwan PM

- **Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen** has **appointed Su Tseng-chang as Prime Minister** during a Cabinet reshuffle following the ruling **Democratic Progressive Party's heavy losses in local elections**. Su is a former premier appointed in 2006 by then-President Chen Shui-bian.

Taiwan officially the Republic of China is country in East Asia. Taiwan formerly was known as Formosa. Taipei City is the capital and a special municipality of Taiwan. New Taiwan dollar is the official currency.

British Parliament rejects Brexit deal

- **British Prime Minister Theresa May** suffered a **crushing defeat in Parliament over Brexit deal**.
- **May's bid to get the Withdrawal Agreement, struck between Britain and European Union, passed by House of Commons was defeated by a margin of 202 to 432 - a majority of 230 votes**. This is the **biggest defeat ever suffered by a British premier** in modern history.
- According to the Britain's parliamentary procedure, **when a bill is rejected by the MPs, the prime minister has three sitting days to return to Parliament with a Plan B**.

In July 2016, following a Brexit referendum in which a majority of those voting supported leaving the European Union, Davis was appointed by new Prime Minister Theresa May as Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, with responsibility for negotiating the UK's prospective exit from the EU. Brexit is the impending withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU). In a referendum on 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the participating UK electorate voted to leave the EU. The last date for the UK to withdraw from the EU is march 29, 2019.

First human rights TV channel to 'lend voice to the voiceless'

- The world's first television channel dedicated to human rights was launched in London with a promise to deliver hidden stories ignored by mainstream media into people's living rooms.
- The International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR) said its web-based channel would bring human rights issues to audiences in over 20 countries across Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.

India-Myanmar begin Army exercise for UN peacekeeping

- The second India-Myanmar bilateral Army exercise 'IMBEX 2018-19' commenced at Chandi mandir military station in Chandigarh.
- "The aim of this joint training event is to train the Myanmar delegation for participation in UN peacekeeping operations. The exercise includes participation of 15 officers from Myanmar Army and 15 officers from Indian Army who shall jointly train for over a period of six days".

India, 5 Central Asian nations back inclusive peace process in Afghanistan

- India and the five Central Asia nations have backed an inclusive peace process in Afghanistan that is Afghan-owned and Afghan-led.
- The understanding was reached at the first ever India-Central Asia Dialogue in Uzbekistan capital Samarkand.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located within south-central Asia. Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan and its largest city. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is the current President of Afghanistan, elected on 21 September 2014. Abdullah Abdullah is serving as Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan since September 2014. The afghani is the currency of Afghanistan, issued by the central bank Da Afghanistan Bank.

US Prez Trump nominates 3 Indian Americans to key administration post

- US President Donald Trump has nominated three Indian Americans to key administration positions as per the latest list of senior nominations sent by the White House to the Senate.
- Rita Baranwal has been nominated for the post of Assistant Secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy), Aditya Bamzai for Member of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board and Bimal Patel as the Assistant Secretary of Treasury.

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of 50 states and capital is Washington, D.C.,. Donald John Trump is the 45th and current President of the United States. He became the oldest and wealthiest person ever to assume the presidency, the first without prior military or government service, and the fifth to have won the election while losing the popular vote.

India to host UN conference on land degradation, desertification this year

- India will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) this year to address the issue of land degradation and desertification and has participation from over 100 countries, is likely to be held in October, 2019.

- The UNCCD, established in 1994, has 197 parties working towards maintaining and restoring land and soil productivity and mitigating the effects of drought.

Stefan Lofven elected for a second term as Prime Minister of Sweden

- In Sweden, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven has been elected for a second term, ending a four-month political vacuum. Lofven's minority centre-left government, comprising his Social Democrats and the Greens, won the backing of the Centre and Liberal parties.
- It will be one of the weakest administrations in Sweden in 70 years, with just 32.7 per cent of voters having cast ballots for the two parties.

Sweden is a Scandinavian country in Northern Europe. Stockholm is the capital of Sweden and the most populous city in the Nordic countries. The Riksdag is the national legislature and the supreme decision-making body of Sweden. The krona has been the currency of Sweden since 1873. Carl XVI Gustaf is the King of Sweden.

Palestine takes over chairmanship of Group of 77 and China from Egypt

- Palestine took over the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China from Egypt at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Palestine is slated to lead the bloc for 2019.
- Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas accepted the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China, a coalition of 134 mainly developing nations, on behalf of Palestine, a non-member observer state of the United Nations.

The G77, which got its name from 77 founding members, is a group of 133 developing countries at the United Nations. The group was founded on 15 June 1964, by the "Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Countries".

Justice Asif Khosa takes oath as new Chief Justice of Pakistan

- Justice Asif Saeed Khosa took oath as the 26th Chief Justice of Pakistan in a simple ceremony held here at the President's House which was also attended by foreign dignitaries, including from India.
- President Arif Alvi administered oath to the new Chief Justice who took office after the retirement of Chief Justice Saqib Nisar.

Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is the 13th and current President of Pakistan. Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the fifth-most populous country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Pakistani rupee is the currency of Pakistan. Imran Khan is the current Prime Minister.

Andry Rajoelina sworn in as President of Madagascar

- Andry Rajoelina was sworn in as President of Madagascar at capital city of Antananarivo. The oath-taking ceremony was attended by delegation from 35 countries and international organizations.
- Declared on Jan 8 by the High Constitutional Court (HCC) as winner of the presidential election with 55.66 percents of the votes, Rajoelina said in the presence of the three past elected presidents, Didier Ratsiraka, Marc Ravalomanana and Hery Rajaonarimampianina, that Madagascar became a model in democracy currently.
- It is the first time in the history of Madagascar since its independence that a democratic power transfer and a peaceful power transition took place between two elected presidents.

Madagascar is an island country in the Indian Ocean, off the coast of East Africa. Antananarivo also known by its colonial shorthand form Tana, is the capital and largest city of Madagascar. Christian Louis Ntsay is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Madagascar. The ariary is the currency of Madagascar.

Congo Court declares Felix Tshisekedi is elected President

- Congo's Constitutional Court has declared the election of Felix Tshisekedi as the President and has rejected the challenges to the vote by runner-up Martin Fayulu.

- **Tshisekedi**, son of the late, charismatic opposition leader Etienne, is now set to be inaugurated. The court said Tshisekedi won with more than 7 million votes, or 38 percent and Fayulu received 34 percent. However, leaked data published by some media outlets, attributed to the electoral commission and representing 86 percent of the votes, show that Fayulu won 59 percent while Tshisekedi received 19 percent.
- Congo, rich in the minerals key to smartphones around the world, is moving close to achieving its first peaceful, democratic transfer of power since independence in 1960.

Democratic Republic of the Congo was known as Zaire between 1971 and 1997. Kinshasa is the capital and the largest city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Felix Tshisekedi has been the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 24 January 2019. The franc is the currency of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Rio de Janeiro will be World Capital of Architecture for 2020: UNESCO

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has announced that the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro will be the World Capital of Architecture for 2020.
- Having defeated Paris and Melbourne, Rio will be the first city to receive the title under a program launched together by UNESCO and the International Union of Architects (UIA). The city will host the World Congress of UIA, in July 2020, an event that occurs every three years.

Brazil is the largest country in both South America and Latin America. Brazil is the world's fifth-largest country by area and the sixth most populous. Brasília is the federal capital of Brazil. Brazilian real is the official currency of Brazil. Jair Bolsonaro is serving as the 38th and current President of Brazil since January 2019.

Shanghai opens world's longest 3D-printed concrete bridge

- Shanghai is now home to the world's longest 3D-printed concrete bridge, produced by a team from the Tsinghua University School of Architecture in Beijing. It's 86 feet long and was created entirely with a 3D printer.
- The pedestrian crossing was modeled on the famed Zhaozhou Bridge, which was built between 589 and 618 in Hebei province, northern China, and is the country's oldest standing bridge. That crossing was made from limestone slabs, while the new structure, found in Shanghai's Baoshan district, and was created using far more modern construction techniques.
- Designed by professor Xu Weiguo, the bridge's body consists of 44 3D-printed concrete units, each measuring about 3x3x5 feet, while the flowing sides are made from 68 separate concrete slabs.

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China, the world's third most populous city proper, and most populous capital city. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies.

President Chooses New Prime Minister of Burkina Faso

- President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré has appointed Christophe Joseph Marie Dabiré as Prime Minister of Burkina Faso.
- Dabiré is a seasoned economist and a politician who takes the reins of government at a time when there are economic and security challenges facing Burkina Faso.

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa. Ouagadougou also Wagadugu, is the capital of Burkina Faso. West African CFA franc is the currency of eight independent states in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Sultan of Pahang named Malaysia's new king

- Sultan Abdullah from the central Malaysian state of Pahang has been named the country's new king, replacing Sultan Muhammad V from Kelantan state who stunned the nation earlier this month by abdicating after only two years on the throne.
- Malaysia has a unique system of constitutional monarchy giving each of the nine hereditary rulers a chance to be king for five years in rotation. The system was created just before Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957.
- Under the rotating system of monarchy, the new king is voted on by the Council of Rulers, made up of the nine state rulers, in a secret ballot. The rulers also elected Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, 62, from Perak state as the deputy king.
- The elevation of Sultan Abdullah as the new king was widely expected after he was proclaimed the head of the Pahang royal house on Jan 12, succeeding his ailing 88-year-old father Sultan Ahmad Shah.

Malaysia is a federal constitutional monarchy in Southeast Asia. Mahathir bin Mohamad is a Malaysian politician currently serving as the seventh Prime Minister of Malaysia. The Malaysian ringgit is the currency of Malaysia.

Sugarcane juice as 'national drink' of Pakistan

- The government of Pakistan has declared sugarcane juice as the 'national drink' of the country. The announcement came after the government conducted a Twitter poll where people were asked to decide on the country's national drink with two other options -- orange and carrot -- besides sugarcane.
- According to the poll, 7,616 people or 81 per cent cast their votes favouring sugarcane juice, 15 per cent voted for orange juice while 4 per cent chose carrot.

Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is the 13th and current President of Pakistan. Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the fifth-most populous country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Pakistani rupee is the currency of Pakistan. Imran Khan is the current Prime Minister of Pakistan.

World Economic Forum Annual Meeting held in Davos

- The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting-2019 was held in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland. The theme of the event was "Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution". The event concluded on 25th January 2019.
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) released its World Economic Outlook Update in Davos, Switzerland. The report stated that India's gross domestic product (GDP) is poised to grow by 7.5% in the 2019-20 fiscal and 7.7% in 2020-2021.

World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland, was founded in 1971 as a not-for-profit organization. It gained formal status in January 2015 under the Swiss Host-State Act, confirming the role of the Forum as an International Institution for Public-Private Cooperation. The WEF hosts an annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in Graubunden, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.

Dubai airport retains top position as world's busiest

- The UAE's aviation sector continues to scale new heights, with **Dubai International maintaining its position as the world's busiest airport** for international passengers for the **fifth consecutive year** while the sector's contribution to the country's economy also grows steadily.
- **Dubai International (DXB) saw its 2018 passenger traffic increase 1 per cent to reach 89.1 million** compared to **88.2 million** in the previous year, **missing its target of 90.3 million** due to a slowdown in Gulf economies amid lower oil prices. It is the slowest growth for Dubai airport in the past decade.
- **Dubai became the world's busiest airport for international passenger traffic in 2014** when it overtook London's Heathrow Airport.

India remained the top destination last year with 12.28 million passengers, with most visitors coming from Mumbai, Delhi and Cochin. **Saudi Arabia came at number two with 6.47 million passengers, followed by the UK at 6.28 million.** Other key markets were the US (3.2 million), China (3.5 million) and Russia (1.53 million). **London was the top city with 3.81 million visitors, followed by Mumbai at 2.54 million and Kuwait at 2.19 million.**

Germany, France and UK set up transactions channel with Iran

- **Germany, France and the UK have set up a payment channel with Iran called INSTEX**, to help continue trade and circumvent US sanctions.
- While, the new institution, called **INSTEX is a project of the three governments**, it will receive the formal endorsement of all 28 EU members. Deputy foreign minister Abbas Araghchi also welcomed the step as a **first step by the EU in fulfilling its commitments toward Iran.**

In May 2018, US President Donald Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal, and re-impose sanctions against Iran that had been lifted under the agreement. The first round of restrictions came into force in August and the second on 5 November 2018.

Ami Bera to head key Congressional panel

- **Indian-American Congressman Ami Bera has been named the head of a key congressional subcommittee** that will have broad jurisdiction to conduct oversight into America's foreign policy.
- He would **chair the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.**

Ami Bera is an American physician and politician who has been the U.S. Representative for California's 7th congressional district since 2013. He is a member of the Democratic Party.

US suspends nuclear arms control treaty with Russia

- The **Trump administration said that it was suspending one of the last major nuclear arms control treaties Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, widely known as the INF with Russia**, following five years of heated conversations over accusations by the United States that **Moscow is violating the Reagan-era agreement.**
- The decision has the potential to incite a new arms race — **not only with Russia but also with China, which was never a signatory to the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.**
- It also comes as the United States has begun **building its first long-range nuclear weapons since 1991. U.S. will formally give Russia and the other treaty parties a formal notice that it is withdrawing under Article XV of the Treaty.**

The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) was a 1987 arms control agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union (and its successor state the Russian Federation) signed by President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on 8 December 1987. President Donald Trump announced on 20 October 2018 that he was withdrawing the U.S. from the treaty, citing Russian non-compliance. The U.S. formally suspended the treaty on 1 February 2019.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Settled GST, credit flows among 7 reforms to aid India grow 7.5% in 2019: CII

- A settled goods and services tax (GST), improving credit availability and capacity expansion from increasing investment in infrastructure are among seven key drivers that will help Indian economy grow 7.5% next year, said the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- In its 'Growth Outlook for 2019', CII said that amid growing global vulnerabilities of trade wars and US monetary tightening, India shines as the fastest growing major economy with robust gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018 that is expected to continue to expand in 2019.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is a business association in India. CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization. It was founded in 1895. It is headquartered in New Delhi. The CII Theme for 2018-19 is 'India RISE: Responsible. Inclusive. Sustainable. Entrepreneurial'.

NHAI to raise Rs 10,000 crore through Bharatmala bonds

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) plans to raise Rs. 10,000 crore through Bharatmala Taxable Bonds in the current fiscal.
- Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said as per the internal and extra budgetary resources approved for 2018-19 by the government, Rs. 62,000 crore is to be raised by NHAI through various sources including Bharatmala bonds.
- Under the phase 1 of Bharatmala Pariyojana, the government has approved implementation of 24,800 km highways and 10,000 km balance NHDP projects over a period of five years from 2017-18 to 2021-22.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,15,000 km in India. The NHAI was created through the promulgation of the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988. NHAI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation for satellite mapping of highways.

Andhra tops ACI's Ease of Doing Business index

- Andhra Pradesh emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI), Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business (EDB) Index ABC rankings for economies of 21 states of India, while Maharashtra and Delhi came in second and third place, respectively.

- **EDB index** is based upon **three parameters** called **ABC** - **Attractiveness to Investors, Business Friendliness and Competitiveness Policies**.

Andhra Pradesh jumped from the 7th rank in 2016 to the 3rd rank in 2018 in Attractiveness to Investors. The state rose from the 6th to the 1st position in Business Friendliness. However, the state dipped from the 2nd to the 4th rank in Competitiveness Policies. In total, Andhra Pradesh rose from the 5th rank in 2016 to the top spot in 2018.

Integration of Mandis with e-NAM

- **585 wholesale regulated markets/ Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) Markets** have been so far **integrated with e-market (e-NAM)** platform in 16 States and 2 Union Territories (UTs), who have carried out requisite reforms in their State Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee Act (APMC Act).
- States desirous of linking their mandis with e-NAM are required to carry out **3 marketing reforms in their APMC Act i.e. Single point levy of mandi fee, Unified trade license** valid across all mandis of State and Provision of e-auction.

National Agriculture Market or eNAM is an **online trading platform for agricultural commodities** in India. The market facilitates farmers, traders and buyers with online trading in commodities. The eNAM markets are proving popular as the **crops are weighed immediately and the stock is listed on the same day and the payments are cleared online.**

NHAI to collaborate with oil marketing companies for issuance of FASTags through petroleum retail outlets

- To ensure easier availability of FASTags, **Indian Highways Management Company Ltd. (IHMCL)**, a company promoted by NHAI, is signing MoUs with state-run Oil Marketing Companies (IOCL, BPC, and HPC).
- It will ensure availability of FASTags at petroleum outlets across India. In the first phase, the tags will be available across **50 Fuel Station in Delhi NCR**, which will subsequently be expanded to outlets across India.

Indus Food Meet 2019

- **Odisha** will be participating as a partner state in the upcoming mega international food and beverage show 'Indus Food 2019' to be held at **India Exposition Mart, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh** on January 14 and 15.
- **Jointly organized by Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) and Department of Commerce**, Indus Food meet 2019 is an initiative to promote India as a strong exporter of food and beverage products to the world.

Indus Food Meet is organized annually; Indusfood is **India's official, export-focussed F&B Trade fair** showcasing the **country's best line-up of food & agri products** to global buyers.

Vijay Mallya becomes first person to be declared a 'fugitive economic offender' under new law

- A special court in Mumbai declared absconding liquor baron **Vijay Mallya** a **fugitive economic offender (FEO)** on a plea of the Enforcement Directorate.
- **Mallya has become the first businessman to be declared EFO** under the provisions of the new Fugitive Economic Offenders Act which came into existence in August last year.

Vijay Vittal Mallya is an Indian businessman and a former member of the Upper House of the Parliament of India. The son of businessman Vittal Mallya, he is the ex-chairman of United Spirits, the largest spirits company in India and continues to serve as chairman of United Breweries Group, an Indian conglomerate with interests including beverage alcohol, aviation infrastructure, real estate and fertilizer.

The provisions of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill will apply to economic offenders who have left the country to avoid facing prosecution, or refuse to return to face prosecution, persons against whom an arrest warrant has been issued for a scheduled offence, as well as wilful bank loan defaulters with outstanding of over Rs 100 crore. It provides for confiscating assets even without conviction and paying off lenders by selling the fugitive's properties. Such economic offenders will be tried under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

AAI signs MoU with SAMEER for boosting communication

- **Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed MoU with Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER) for joint research programs in the field of Communication Navigation and Surveillance (CNS).**
- **AAI and SAMEER, an autonomous research and development (R and D) institute under MeitY have entered into an overarching MOU that will provide a platform for Collaborative Research for both the Organizations to work together.**
- **Both the organisations will strive to arrive at a beneficial solution for CNS Systems related R and D activities in the country.**

Total value of BHIM UPI transactions crosses Rs 1 Lakh crore mark in December 2018

- **The total value of BHIM-UPI transactions crossed 1 Lakh Crore Rupees mark in December 2018.**
- **Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad informed via tweet that the app-based payments touched 1 lakh, two thousand five hundred and ninety-four crore rupees mark in December last year.**
- **BHIM is a secure, fast and a reliable cashless payment system that is currently offered by 109 banks.**

Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) is a mobile app developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), based on the Unified Payment Interface (UPI). It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at Digi Dhan mela at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi on 30 December 2016. It was named after B. R. Ambedkar and is intended to facilitate e-payments directly through banks as part of the 2016 Indian banknote demonetisation and drive towards cashless transactions.

India born Gita Gopinath joins IMF as Chief Economist

- **India born Gita Gopinath has joined International Monetary Fund as its chief economist. She has first woman to occupy the top IMF post.**
- **Gopinath succeeds Maurice (Maury) Obstfeld as Economic Counsellor and Director of the IMF's Research Department. Obstfeld retired on December the 31st.**

The IMF, also known as the Fund, was conceived at a UN conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States, in July 1944. The IMF's primary purpose is to ensure the stability of the international monetary system—the system of exchange rates and international payments that enables countries (and their citizens) to transact with each other. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., of ". At present, 189 countries are the member countries in IMF. The current Managing Director (MD) and Chairman of the International Monetary Fund is noted French lawyer and former politician, Christine Lagarde, who has held the post since 5 July 2011.

Sushil Modi to head GoM on GST revenue shortfall faced by states

- Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi will head the seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to look into the revenue shortfall being faced by states following the roll out of Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- As per a GST Council notification, the committee will suggest steps for augmenting collections. It will undertake data analysis and suggest measures for course correction.
- Several states, including Bihar, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha and Gujarat are facing revenue shortfall.

India to become world's third largest consumer market by 2030: WEF

- A report by World Economic Forum said that India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030.
- The report said consumer spending in India is expected to grow from 1.5 trillion US dollar at present to six trillion US dollar by 2030.
- The report said that with the annual GDP growth rate of 7.5 percent, India is currently the world's sixth largest economy.
- The report titled 'Future of Consumption in Fast-Growth Consumer Market - India' also noted that growth of the middle class will lift nearly 25 million households out of poverty.

The World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland, was founded in 1971 as a not-for-profit organization. It gained formal status in January 2015 under the Swiss Host-State Act, confirming the role of the Forum as an International Institution for Public-Private Cooperation.

Launch of NCDC model for cooperatives as Modern banking unit will bring about financial inclusion of farmers in remote villages

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Radha Mohan Singh has said that National Council for Cooperative Training (NCCT) besides being responsible for training, awareness and evaluation programmes of employees working in the cooperative sector also facilitates the same for other stakeholders in the cooperative sector in the country.
- The main objective of the NCCT is to facilitate the human resource development in the cooperatives in the country.
- The Minister was addressing second Governing Council meeting of National Council for Cooperative Training (NCCT) and launch of National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC's) model for cooperatives as Modern banking Unit.

India's GDP may grow at 7.3% in 2018-19, says World Bank

- India's GDP is expected to grow at 7.3% in the fiscal year 2018-19, and 7.5% in the following two years, the World Bank has forecast, attributing it to an upswing in consumption and investment. In comparison, China is expected to register a much lower growth rate of 6.3 per cent in 2018-19.
- The bank informed India will continue to be the fastest growing major economy in the world. These predictions have been made in a report prepared by the World Bank titled: 'Global Economic Prospects: Darkening Skies'. The report says that most world economies stare at dark times in this financial year. However, it has projected a brighter picture for India and the South Asian region as a whole.

Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2018-19 (Series-V) opens

- The Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2018-19 (Series-V) opened for subion. The issue price of the Bond during this subion period will be three thousand two hundred and fourteen rupees per gram with the settlement date of January 22nd 2019.

- The Centre in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India has **decided to allow discount of 50 rupees per gram from the issue price** to those investors who apply on-line and make the payment through digital mode.

Union Government had launched the **Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme on 5th November, 2015**. The main objective of the scheme is to **reduce the demand for physical gold** and shift a part of the gold imported every year for investment purposes, into financial savings through Gold Bonds. **Sovereign Gold Bonds are issued by RBI on behalf of the Government of India on payment of the required amount in rupees and are denominated in grams of gold**. The Bonds are restricted for sale to resident Indian entities including individuals, HUFs, trusts, Universities, charitable institutions. **Minimum permissible investment is 2 grams of gold** to be paid in rupees. The **maximum amount subscribed by an entity will not be more than 500 grams per person per fiscal year** (April-March).

Womaniya on Government e Marketplace

- **Government e Marketplace [GeM] has launched “Womaniya on GeM”, an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups [WSHG] to sell handicrafts and handloom, accessories, jute and coir products, home décor and office furnishings, directly to various Government ministries, departments and institutions.**
- The initiative seeks to **develop women entrepreneurship on the margins of society to achieve gender-inclusive economic growth.**

Government e Marketplace is a 100 percent government owned company setup under the aegis of Ministry of Commerce and Industry for procurement of common use goods and services by Government ministries, departments and CPSEs. **GeM was setup in 2016.**

India has approximately 500 million Internet users and nearly 54 percent of them are more than 25 years of age with higher discretionary income and likely to transact more online, half of internet users reside in small towns and present new opportunities for e-commerce and most importantly **women constitute 33 percent or 143 million Internet users and control 44 percent of household spending in India**. **Womaniya on GeM will spur hyper-local economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs and address goals and objectives under United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**

UAE, Saudi Arabia to invest in Indian agriculture sector

- **Union Minister for Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu** said, the government is coming up with an **Agriculture Export Policy** in which the districts possessing potential for particular industries and items will be identified and developed as clusters for the development of the sector.
- The Government has come out with a policy to **double farmers’ income by 2022**. Exports of agricultural products would play a pivotal role in achieving this goal. **“Agriculture Export Policy” aimed at doubling the agricultural exports and integrating Indian farmers and agricultural products with the global value chains.**

Government forms GoM on GST issues in lottery trade

- **The government set up an eight-member ministerial panel headed by Maharashtra Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar** to look into GST-related issues of lottery business.
- The **Group of Ministers (GoM)** would submit its **report to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council**. The terms of reference of the ministerial panel would include examination of issues related to enforcement including the legal framework, so as **to prevent evasion of tax on lottery and suggest appropriate tax rate to address the problem.**

The GST tax came into effect from July 1, 2017 through the implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government. The **tax replaced existing multiple cascading taxes levied by the central and state governments**. The **GST has a four-tier structure for taxation of services, 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent**, in line with what has been done for goods. **GST Council is headed by Union Finance Minister.**

WEF, annual meet begin in Davos

- The **World Economic Forum, WEF, annual meet begins in Davos, Switzerland.** The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting is the only yearly gathering that brings together leaders of global society.
- The theme of the event was “**Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution**”.

The heads and members of more than 100 governments, top executives of the 1,000 foremost global companies, leaders of international organizations and relevant non-governmental organizations, the most prominent cultural, societal and thought leaders, and the disruptive voices of the Forum’s Young Global Leaders, Global Shapers and Technology Pioneers come together at the beginning of each year to define priorities and shape global, industry and regional agendas.

India to surpass UK in world's largest economy rankings in 2019: PwC

- **India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, to become world's fifth largest economy,** according to a report by global consultancy firm PwC.
- As per the report, while the **UK and France have regularly switched places** owing to similar levels of development and roughly equal populations, India's climb up the rankings is likely to be permanent.
- As per the World Bank data, in 2017, **India became the sixth largest economy with a GDP of USD 2.59 trillion, relegating France to the seventh position. The GDP of France stood at USD 2.58 trillion.**
- The **US was the world's largest economy with a size of USD 19.39 trillion, followed by China (USD 12.23 trillion)** at the second place in 2017. **Japan (USD 4.87 trillion) and Germany (USD 3.67 trillion)** were at the third and fourth places, respectively.

PwC's Global Economy Watch is a short publication that looks at the trends and issues affecting the global economy and details its latest projections for the world's leading economies. PwC's Global Economy Watch report projects real GDP growth of 1.6 per cent for the UK, 1.7 per cent for France and 7.6 per cent for India in 2019.

Arab Economic and Social Development meeting: A summit mired in controversy

- **Lebanon’s efforts to boost its international prestige by organised the fourth Arab Economic and Social Development Summit** over the weekend were severely hindered by the absence of many Arab heads of State.
- **Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani and Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz** were the only two Arab leaders to attend the summit, which was the first to be held since 2013.

Indians biggest supporters of international aid: WEF global survey

- **Indians have emerged as the biggest supporters of international aid,** with a global public opinion survey putting India on the top when it comes to people expecting their nation to help other countries.
- The survey released by the World Economic Forum ahead of its high profile annual meeting in this ski resort town on the Swiss Alps showed that South Asian countries, including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, as also Nigeria and Saudi Arabia exhibit widespread support for international aid.
- **On migration, 63 per cent of US respondents** believed new immigrants are mostly good for their country compared to a global average of 56 per cent, 48 per cent in Germany and 30 per cent in Italy.

The respondents in the survey of over 10,000 people were asked, do they think their country has a responsibility to help other countries in the world. As many as 95 per cent Indians replied in affirmative, which was the highest for any country, followed by 94 per cent in Indonesia and Pakistan each. Bangladesh followed with 87 per cent, while Nigeria scored 84 per cent, Saudi Arabia 83 per cent and China at 80 per cent. The global average was 72 per cent, with countries like Argentina, France, Germany, the UK and the US scoring 60 per cent or below.

India ranks 80th on Global Talent Competitive Index 2019

- **At 80th rank, India moves up one position on the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) 2019**, according to a report released by INSEAD business school in partnership with Tata Communications and Adecco Group.
- **Switzerland followed by Singapore, the US, Norway and Denmark were the top five on the list.** With an overall position of 45th and despite a fall of two places, China is the best performer among BRICS countries, while India remains the laggard of this grouping

The survey measures how countries and cities grow, attract and retain talent, ranking 125 countries and 114 cities across all groups of income and levels of development. The report also said cities rather than countries are developing stronger roles as talent hubs and will be crucial in reshaping the global talent scene. **The top-ranked city this year is Washington, DC, followed by Copenhagen, Oslo, Vienna and Zurich.**

Centre's debt-to-GDP falls, States' rises

- While the Centre is moving in the right direction in terms of meeting the **N.K. Singh Committee recommendations on public debt**, the **States are moving in the opposite direction**, data released by the government show.
- According to the **Status Paper on Government Debt for 2017-18**, the **Centre's total debt as a percentage of GDP reduced to 46.5% in 2017-18 from 47.5% as of March 31, 2014.** The total debt of the States, however, has been rising over this period, to **24% in 2017-18**, and is estimated to be **24.3% in 2018-19.**
- In absolute terms, the **Centre's total debt increased from Rs.56, 69,429 crore at the end of March 2014 to Rs.82, 35,178 crore in 2017-18**, representing a **45% increase.** The **total debt of the States increased from Rs.24, 71,270 crore to Rs.40, 22,090 crore** over the same period, an **increase of almost 63%.**

JNPT becomes India's only port to be ranked among world's top 30

- The government said the **Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT)** has **become India's only port to get listed among the top 30 global container ports.**
- **"The JNPT, India's premiere container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report. JNPT notched up five spots, to be 28th on the list, compared to its previous ranking,"** the shipping ministry said in a statement.

Jawaharlal Nehru Port also known as **Nhava Sheva**, is the largest container port in India. Located east of **Mumbai (previously known as 'Bombay')** in **Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra**, this port on the Arabian Sea is accessed via **Thane Creek**. **Jawaharlal Nehru Port** is also commonly referred as **JNPT (short for Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust)**. The port was established on **26 May 1989**. This port is also the terminal of **Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (in construction)**. **JNP** accounts for more than half of total container volumes handled at **India's 12 public ports**. The port handles cargo traffic mostly **originating from or destined for Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, as well as most of North India.**

Cabinet approves creation of the National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi**, has **approved the creation of National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT).**
- The **National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal shall be situated at New Delhi.** **GSTAT shall be presided over by its President** and shall consist of one Technical Member (Centre) and one Technical Member (State).
- The **creation of the National Bench of the GSTAT would amount to one time expenditure of Rs.92.50 lakh** while the recurring expenditure would be **Rs.6.86 crore per annum.**

The GST tax came into effect from July 1, 2017 through the implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government. The tax replaced existing multiple cascading taxes levied by the central and state governments. The GST has a four-tier structure for taxation of services, 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent, in line with what has been done for goods. As per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council has to be constituted by the President within 60 days of the commencement of Article 279A. GST Council is headed by Union Finance Minister.

Indian economy may grow 7.6% in FY20: UN report

- The **Indian economy** is expected to accelerate in 2019-20 to expand by 7.6% from 7.4% in the year ending 31 March on the back of robust growth in private consumption, while private investment may continue to remain sluggish, according to the World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) report released by the UN.
- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** projected India's growth at 7.5% in 2019-20 amid slower global expansion. Rating agency Crisil Ltd in its India outlook said growth will be marginally better in 2019-20 at 7.3% from 7.2% in 2018-19 as estimated by the Central Statistics Office.

Cabinet approves Amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries'

- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given ex-post facto approval for amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries' to incorporate a 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD 400 million operated within the overall size of the Facility of USD 2 billion and build in flexibility with respect to modalities of its operation, such as period of swap, roll over, etc. after due consideration of conditions of requesting SAARC member countries and domestic requirements of India.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of nations in South Asia. Its member states include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SAARC was founded in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

China to surpass US as world's largest retail market this year

- A newly published report by research firm eMarketer said that **China is expected to surpass the United States to become the world's largest retail market in 2019.**
- The report predicted that **China's total retail sales will grow 7.5 percent to reach US\$5.636 trillion in 2019, while that of the United States will grow 3.3 percent to US\$5.529 trillion.** According to the National Bureau of Statistics, e-commerce is a major driver of China's retail economy, accounting for almost one fifth of the country's total retail sales in 2018.

In a first, India enters \$100 billion M&A club in 2018: Report

- **India has entered the \$ 100 billion club in the merger and acquisition space.** In a first, 1,200 deals worth around \$ 110 billion or Rs 71,000 crore were concluded in India in a year as per Grant Thornton's (GT) annual Dealtracker.
- **M&A transactions were the growth front runners with deals aggregating to \$90 billion** and PE reporting deals aggregating to \$20 billion, the GT report stated. This was an 80% jump in deal value over 2017. **As per the GT report deals worth \$ 60 billion were concluded in 2017, and \$ 57 billion in 2016.** The spurt could also be the result of the change in several regulations, the report stated.

Nepal, India to set up energy banking system to utilise surplus electricity

- **Nepal and India** have agreed to set up an 'Energy Banking' mechanism that would help the Himalayan country export its surplus electricity to neighbour India during the monsoon season and import power during its lean season in winter.
- The agreement on the 'Energy Banking' mechanism was arrived at during a meeting between the Nepali and Indian Energy Secretaries in Pokhara, following recommendations by the electricity authorities of both the neighbours.

India replaces Japan to become the second top steel producer in the world

- **India** has replaced Japan as world's second largest steel producing country. According to World Steel Association's report, India's steel production was at 106.5 MT in 2018. It went up by 4.9 % from 101.5 MT in 2017.
- **Japan** produced 104.3 MT in 2018, down 0.3 % compared to 2017. **China** is the largest producer of crude steel accounting for more than 51 % of production.

India improves its global corruption ranking in 2018

- **India** has improved its ranking on a global corruption index in 2018 by three points and moved to 78th position with a score of 41.
- In the list of 180 countries, **China** and **Pakistan** lagged far behind at 87th and 117th position, respectively.

According to the rankings released by an anti-corruption watchdog, **Denmark** is the least corrupt country followed by **New Zealand** while **Somalia**, **Syria** and **South Sudan** are the most corrupt countries in the world.

Banks in News

Union Cabinet approves first-ever amalgamation of Vijaya, Dena and Bank of Baroda

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the scheme of amalgamation for amalgamating Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank, with Bank of Baroda as the transferee bank and Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank as transferor banks.
- The amalgamation will be the first-ever three-way consolidation of banks in India, with the amalgamated bank being India's second largest Public Sector Bank.

The amalgamation of the three banks would be through share swap which will be the part of scheme of merger. In April 2017, State Bank had merged with itself five of its subsidiary banks and taking over Bharatiya Mahila Bank, catapulting it to be among top 50 global lenders with over USD 550 billion in combined assets. Post-merger of BoB, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank, the number of PSU banks will come down to 19.

Allahabad Bank, SBI Life join hand for bancassurance partnership

- State-owned Allahabad Bank has tied up with SBI Life Insurance to sell the policies of the insurer from over 3,200 branches.
- Allahabad Bank and SBI Life Insurance came together and signed a bancassurance pact, to offer a holistic financial planning solution to consumers, SBI Life said in a release. The agreement was signed in the presence of Allahabad Bank Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mallikarjuna Rao and SBI Life MD & CEO Sanjeev Nautiyal.

Allahabad Bank is a nationalised bank with its headquarters in Kolkata, India. It is the oldest joint stock bank in India. On 24 April 2014, the bank entered into its 150th year of establishment. It was founded in Allahabad in 1865.

UAE, Saudi central banks launch common digital currency called 'Aber'

- The central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia have launched a common digital currency called "Aber", which will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.
- Through this digital currency, both the United Arab Emirates Central Bank (UAECB) and the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA) are studying the impact on the improvement and reduction of remittance costs and the assessments of risks.

U.K. Sinha to head RBI panel on MSME revival

- The RBI has appointed an eight-member expert committee headed by former SEBI chairman U.K. Sinha to comprehensively review and propose long-term solutions for revival of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector.
- Among the terms of references, the RBI said the panel would review the current institutional framework in place to support the MSME sector, and examine the factors affecting the timely and adequate availability of finance to the sector.

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved change in the basis of classifying Micro, Small and Medium enterprises from 'investment in plant & machinery/equipment' to 'annual turnover'. A micro enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover does not exceed five crore rupees; A small enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover is more than five crore rupees but does not exceed Rs 75 crore; A medium enterprise will be defined as a unit where the annual turnover is more than seventy five crore rupees but does not exceed Rs 250 crore.

RBI offers relief to MSMEs; allows restructuring of debt up to Rs 25 crore

- Reserve Bank has allowed a one-time restructuring of existing debt of up to 25 crore rupees for the companies which have defaulted on payment but the loans given to them have continued to be classified as standard assets.
- The decision will help the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) which are facing cash crunch in the wake of demonetisation and GST implementation.
- RBI has decided to permit a one-time restructuring of existing loans to MSMEs that are in default but 'standard' as on 1st of January, 2019, without an asset classification downgrade.
- To be eligible for the scheme, the aggregate exposure, including non-fund based facilities of banks and NBFCs, to a borrower should not exceed 25 crore rupees as on January 1, 2019, and the restructuring has to be implemented by 31st of March 2020.

Government infuses nearly Rs 11,000 crore capital in public sector banks

- Union government has infused 10,882 crore rupees in four public sector banks, including UCO Bank and Syndicate Bank.
- It is part of 28,615 crore rupees capital infusion to be done in seven public sector lenders. UCO Bank has received 3,074 crore rupees in the equity by way of preferential allotment. Besides, Bank of Maharashtra got 4,498 crore rupees, Syndicate Bank 1,632 crore and the Central Bank of India 1,678 crore.

Public Sector Banks (PSBs) or Nationalised Banks in India are banks where a majority stake i.e. more than 51% is held by a government. In 1969 the Indian government nationalised 14 major private banks, one of the big bank was Bank of India. In 1980, 6 more private banks were nationalised. They dominate the banking sector because of their large size and widespread networks.

RBI limits customer liability in fraudulent PPI transactions

- The **Reserve Bank of India** has **decided to limit the liability of customers in case of unauthorised electronic payment transactions in Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) issued by non-banks.**
- Under new norms on customer liability, the regulator said frauds due to third-party breach where neither the customer nor the PPI issuer is at fault, **there cannot be any liability for the customer, in case the incident in reported within three days.**
- If the fraud is reported between three and seven days, **customer liability will amount to the transaction value or Rs. 10,000, whichever is lower.**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is India's central banking institution, which controls the monetary policy of the Indian rupee. It commenced its operations on 1 April 1935 in accordance with the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. RBI was nationalised on 1 January 1949. The **inaugural officeholder** was the **British banker Osborne Smith**, while **C. D. Deshmukh** was the **first Indian governor**. The bank's 15th governor, **Manmohan Singh**, later became India's 13th prime minister. The position is currently held by **Shaktikanta Das**.

Cabinet approves recapitalisation of Exim Bank to tune of Rs. 6,000 cr

- Union Cabinet **approved recapitalisation of Export-Import Bank of India to the tune of 6,000 crore rupees** and increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from 10,000 crore to 20,000 crore rupees.
- EXIM Bank is the **principal export credit agency for India** and infusion of capital into it will enable it to augment capital adequacy and support Indian exports with enhanced ability.

Export-Import Bank of India is a **finance institution in India, established in 1982** under Export-Import Bank of India Act 1981. Since its inception, Exim Bank of India has been both a catalyst and a key player in the promotion of cross border trade and investment. Commencing operations as a purveyor of export credit, like other export credit agencies in the world. It is **headquartered in Mumbai**. **Shri. R.C. Shah** was the **first Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) from 1982 - 1985**. **Shri David Rasquinha** was **appointed the Managing Director of Exim Bank from August 2017**.

RBI eases norms for external commercial borrowing

- In a bid to improve ease of doing business, the **Reserve Bank of India has decided to liberalise external commercial borrowing (ECB) norms**, allowing **all companies that are eligible for receiving foreign direct investment**, to raise funds through the ECB route.
- The RBI has decided to keep the **minimum average maturity period at 3 years for all ECBs**, irrespective of the amount of borrowing, except for borrowers specifically permitted to borrow for a shorter period. **Earlier, the minimum average maturity period was five years. The ceiling for borrowing remains at \$750 million.**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is India's central banking institution, which controls the **monetary policy of the Indian rupee**. It commenced its operations on **1 April 1935** in accordance with the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**. RBI was nationalised on **1 January 1949**. **Foreign exchange reserves of India** are India's holdings of cash, bank deposits, bonds, and other financial assets denominated in currencies other than India's national currency, the Indian rupee. The reserves are managed by the Reserve Bank of India for the Indian government. **Shaktikanta Das** is the **current Governor of RBI**.

SBI, other banks agree to finance Nagpur-Mumbai Samruddhi Corridor

- A consortium of banks led by **State Bank of India** has agreed to provide finance for Nagpur-Mumbai 'Samruddhi Corridor' expressway project.
- **SBI has agreed to lend the highest amount, 8,500 crore rupees.** Other lenders include Punjab National Bank, Bank of Baroda, Bank of Maharashtra as well as the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India.

RBI approves appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD, CEO of IDFC First Bank

- Reserve Bank has approved the **appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of First Bank for a period of three years**, according to a regulatory filing. His tenure is effective from December 19, 2018.
- Last month, **IDFC Bank and non-banking financial company Capital First completed their merger**, creating a combined loan asset book of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for the merged entity IDFC First Bank. Following the merger, the board of IDFC First Bank approved the appointment of Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of the new entity. Prior to this, Vaidyanathan was the founder and chairman of Capital First.

IDFC First Bank is an Indian banking company with headquarters in Mumbai that forms part of IDFC, an integrated infrastructure finance company. The bank started operations on 1 October 2015. In December 2018, IDFC merged with Capital First Ltd., an NBFC, and renamed itself as IDFC First Bank. Capital First shareholders to get 139 IDFC Bank shares for every 10 shares held.

Nepal bank announces ban of Indian notes above Rs 100

- Nepal's central bank has announced the **ban of Indian currency notes with denominations above Rs 100.** Currently, only the notes with a denomination of Rs 100 and below are freely exchangeable in Nepal.
- The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) issued a circular for the institutions licensed by it notifying them about the ban.

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) is the central bank of Nepal and was established on 26 April 1956. It supervises the banks and financial institutions (licensed by the Bank) in Nepal and guides monetary policy. Chiranjivi Nepal is the current Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank.

Ravneet Gill to replace Rana Kapoor as YES Bank MD & CEO

- **YES Bank has appointed Deutsche Bank's Ravneet Singh Gill as its MD and CEO, who will succeed Rana Kapoor.**
- In a statement to the exchanges, the private lender said it has received RBI approval for the same. **Gill, who is the CEO of Deutsche Bank's India operations, will join the private lender on or before March 1, 2019.** As the news became public, the stock shot up by over 14 per cent. **YES Bank had time till February 1 to announce a successor to Kapoor, whose term ends on January 31.**

Yes Bank is India's fourth largest private sector bank, founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. **Yes Bank is the only Greenfield Bank licence awarded by the RBI in the last one decade**

SBI Card and Etihad Guest tie-up to launch premium card for international travel

- **SBI Card and Etihad Guest, the loyalty programme of Etihad Airways, have joined hands to launch a travel specific Visa credit card for members and Indian travellers.**
- This is the **first international co-brand partnership of SBI Card, the country's second largest credit card issuer.**

On April 1, 2017, the State Bank of India, which was **India's largest bank,** merged with five of its associate banks (State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore), and with the **Bharatiya Mahila Bank.** **Rajnish Kumar is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI).**

UBI, Srei Equipment Finance enter pact for MSME sector finance

- **United Bank of India** and **Srei Equipment Finance** have entered into an agreement for financing the **MSME** and **agriculture** sectors.
- Under the pact, UBI would leverage its **low-cost loans** with **Srei** to enable purchase of equipment and vehicles in a seamless manner.

United Bank of India (UBI) is an **Indian government-owned bank** headquartered in **Kolkata, India**. UBI was the result of the merger in **1950** of four **Bengali banks**: **Comilla Banking Corporation**, **Bengal Central Bank**, **Comilla Union Bank** and **Hooghly Bank**. All four had suffered runs in **December 1950** after the failure of the **Nath Bank**. On **19 July 1969**, the **Government of India** nationalised UBI, along with **13 other major Indian commercial banks**.

Centre amalgamates three regional rural banks

- The Centre has **amalgamated three Regional Rural Banks (RRB)**, **Punjab Gramin Bank**, **Malwa Gramin Bank** and **Sutlej Gramin Bank** -- into a **single Regional Rural Bank** with effect on and from **January 1, 2019**.
- In a filing to the **Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)**, **Punjab and Sind Bank** said the central government, after consulting the sponsor banks of the three RRBs, felt that, they should be amalgamated into a single RRB.

Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) also known as **Gramin banks**, are **Indian scheduled banks (Government banks)** operating at **regional level** in different States of India. They have been created with a view of serving primarily the **rural areas of India** with basic banking and financial services. The sponsor banks of the RRBs are **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**, the **Government of Punjab** and **Punjab National Bank**, **State Bank of India** and **Punjab and Sind Bank**.

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim to step down on Feb 1, 2019

- **World Bank President Jim Yong Kim** announced that he will step down from his position on **February 1, 2019** - much before the end of his term in **2022**. Kim has been in this position for over **six years** now.
- Under **Kim's leadership**, and with the **backing of the Bank Group's 189 member countries**, the institution in **2012** established two goals: to **end extreme poverty by 2030**; and to **boost shared prosperity**, focusing on the bottom 40 percent of the population in developing countries.

The **World Bank** is a **vital source of financial and technical assistance** to **developing countries** around the world. The **World Bank Group** comprises **five institutions** managed by their member countries. It was established in **1944**, the **World Bank Group** is headquartered in **Washington, D.C.** **Jim Yong Kim** has been serving as the **12th President of the World Bank** since **July 1, 2012**. Together, **IBRD** and **IDA** form the **World Bank**, which provides financing, policy advice, and **technical assistance** to **governments of developing countries**. **IDA** focuses on the **world's poorest countries**, while **IBRD** assists **middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries**.

RBI forms committee to boost digital payments

- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has constituted a **High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments** to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion.
- The **five-member committee** headed by **UIDAI's former Chairman Nandan Nilekani** will include **RBI's former Deputy Governor Mr. H.R. Khan** and **Former Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology, Mrs. Aruna Sharma** among others.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is India's central banking institution, which controls the **monetary policy of the Indian rupee**. It commenced its operations on **1 April 1935** in accordance with the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**. **RBI was nationalised on 1 January 1949**. Foreign exchange reserves of India are India's holdings of cash, bank deposits, bonds, and other financial assets denominated in currencies other than India's national currency, the Indian rupee. The reserves are managed by the Reserve Bank of India for the Indian government. **Shaktikanta Das** is the current Governor of RBI.

Union Government allows Iranian bank to open Mumbai branch

- **India has allowed an Iranian bank to open a branch in Mumbai**, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said, announcing a move seen aimed at circumventing US trade and investment sanctions as India builds a strategic port in the West Asian country.
- The bank will open its branch in the next three months, shipping, roads and highways minister Gadkari said after a meeting with Iran's foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif. Iran's Pasargad Bank has received the necessary clearances to open its branch in Mumbai

India's UCO Bank will open a branch in Iran; the two banks will facilitate transactions relating to operation of berths at Iran's Chabahar Port that India is developing. Iran is one of India's top sources of oil and though New Delhi has reduced its imports under US pressure. India has started its commercial activities in Chabahar within the framework of a **2016 trilateral deal** that also includes Afghanistan and is aimed at developing the southern Iran port into a regional trade hub.

Yes Bank appoints Brahm Dutt as non-executive part-time chairman

- **Yes Bank appoints Brahm Dutt as non-executive part-time chairman**. Yes Bank's board also includes Mukesh Sabharwal, Subhash Kalia, Ajai Kumar, Pratima Sheorey, Uttam Prakash Agarwal, TS Vijayan, and Rana Kapoor (Managing Director and CEO).
- **Yes Bank executive Rajat Monga and a CEO of a foreign bank have been shortlisted to succeed long-serving Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Rana Kapoor** at the bank

Yes Bank is India's fourth largest private sector bank, founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. Yes Bank is the only Greenfield Bank licence awarded by the RBI in the last one decade.

RBI announces OMO purchase of government securities on Jan 17

- **Reserve Bank will inject 10,000 crore rupees into the system through the purchase of government securities to increase liquidity**. The central bank said in a statement that the purchase will be made through open market operations (OMOs).
- The eligible participants should submit their offers in electronic format on the **RBI Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber)** system.

ICICI Bank sacks Chanda Kochhar

- The **ICICI Bank has decided to terminate the contract of former managing director and CEO, Chanda Kochhar** after the **B.N. Srikrishna panel** found that she violated the bank's code of conduct. The bank also said there would be a clawback of bonuses paid between 2009 and 2019.
- In June last year, the bank formed the one-member panel, assisted by a law firm, to look into the allegations of conflict of interest against Ms. Kochhar in relation to a loan given to Videocon Industries.

ICICI Bank, stands for Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India, it is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai. As of 2018, **ICICI Bank is the second largest bank in India in terms of assets and market capitalisation**. **Sandeep Bakhshi** is the current MD & CEO of Bank.

Firms in News

Assam-based Numaligarh Refineries receives 'Best Miniratna PSU' award

- **Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL)** has been awarded the best miniratna PSU in strategic performance (financial category) at the Governance Now Sixth PSU awards.
- The award, comprising of a trophy, was presented to NRL MD S K Barua by Member of Parliament **Manoj Tiwari** and veteran actress and social activist **Poonam Dhillon** at an award function held in New Delhi recently, a NRL release said
- The awards are given out in recognition of the efforts of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) who have played a key role in the country's growth. They are evaluated by a two-phase rigorous process by data science agency **M76 Analytics (IIT Bombay incubated)** while the performances are measured using the Moody's methodology, the release added.

The **Numaligarh Refinery** is located at **Morangi, Golaghat district, Assam** in India is a refinery owned by **Numaligarh Refinery Limited**, a joint venture between **Bharat Petroleum (61.65%)**, **Oil India (26%)** and **Govt of Assam (12.35%)**. It has a capacity of 3 million metric tonnes per year.

Tata enters list of top 100 valuable brands

- The 'Tata' brand has entered the list of **Top 100 most valuable global brands**, according to the **Brand Finance Global 500, 2019 report** released at the World Economic Forum in Davos. **Climbing from the 104th to the 86th position this year, Tata is the lone Indian brand in the Top 100.**
- The total value of **Brand Tata** increased **37 per cent to \$19.5 billion in 2019 from \$14.2 billion a year ago.** According to Brand Finance, the increase in the valuation of the brand is thanks to the improved performance of key Tata companies such as **Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Motors and Tata Steel.**

Tata Group is an **Indian multinational conglomerate holding company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra.** It was founded in 1868 by **Jamshedji Tata.** **Tata Group** is owned by **Tata Sons**, a registered charity. **Natarajan Chandrasekaran** is the chairman of **Tata Sons.**

IOC to commission Ennore LNG terminal this month

- **Indian Oil Corp (IOC)**, the nation's biggest oil firm will commission its first liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal at **Ennore in Tamil Nadu** this month.
- **IOC Chairman Sanjiv Singh** said the **Rs 5,151-crore terminal is completed** and would be commissioned after completion of dredging of the channel that will bring cryogenic ships carrying natural gas in its liquid form to the port.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) is an **Indian state owned oil and Gas Company** with registered office at **Mumbai** and primarily headquartered in **New Delhi.** It is the **largest commercial enterprise in the country.**

HDFC MF surpasses ICICI Prudential MF to become largest AMC in India

- **HDFC Mutual Fund** has pipped **ICICI Prudential MF** to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years.
- As of December-end, **HDFC MF** manages assets to the tune of **Rs 3.35 lakh crore**, while those of **ICICI Prudential MF** stood at **Rs 3.08 lakh crore**, as per the latest data available with Association of Mutual funds in India (Amfi).

HDFC MF was the largest asset manager since October 2011 and it held the numero uno position till March 2016, when ICICI prudential MF had overtaken the top spot. SBI MF is at the third slot with AUM of Rs 2.64 lakh crore, followed by Aditya Birla Sun Life MF (Rs 2.42 lakh crore) and Reliance MF (Rs 2.36 lakh crore). Overall, asset base of the country's mutual fund industry was at Rs 23.61 lakh crore at the end of December quarter.

Oil PSUs sign pact with IIT-Bombay to set up centre of excellence

- **India's seven bluechip oil firms including IOC and ONGC signed an agreement with IIT-Bombay to set up a Centre of Excellence in Oil, Gas and Energy.**
- The MoU was signed by heads of Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), GAIL India Ltd, Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL), Oil India Ltd and Engineers India Ltd.

The centre of excellence is aimed at collaborative research and capability building in the areas of oil, gas, and energy. It will work towards developing sustainable solutions and explore new frontiers in technology for future energy needs. The centre of excellence will leverage the expertise available with IIT-Bombay and the oil and gas industry. It will also provide an institutionalized platform for industry-academia interactions.

Ashok Chawla resigns as NSE chairman

- **Ashok Chawla resigned as the chairman and public interest director of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) informed a Delhi court that the Centre had given the go-ahead to prosecute five people, including Mr. Chawla, in the Aircel-Maxis matter.**

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) is the leading stock exchange in India located in Mumbai and the fourth largest in the world by equity trading volume in 2015, according to World Federation of Exchanges (WFE). It began operations in 1994 and is ranked as the largest stock exchange in India in terms of total and average daily turnover for equity shares every year since 1995, based on annual reports of SEBI. NSE launched electronic screen-based trading in 1994, derivatives trading (in the form of index futures) and internet trading in 2000, which were each the first of its kind in India. Mr. Vikram Limaye is the Managing Director and CEO of NSE.

BHEL and LIBCOIN to Build India's First Lithium Ion Giga Factory

- **Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and Libcoin are in dialogue to form a world class consortium to initially build 1GWh lithium ion battery plant in India. Its capacity will be scaled up to 30GWh in due course. With this, India has finally taken steps into its energy security and clean energy commitment to the world.**
- **BHEL will be sending a team of senior officers for study of the facilities, R&D infrastructure and other techno-commercial issues soon. Based upon the evaluation and recommendations of the team, further process towards formation of Joint Venture will be carried forward.**

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) owned and founded by the Government of India, is an engineering and manufacturing Maharatna status company based in New Delhi, India. It was established in 1964, BHEL is India's largest power generation equipment manufacturer.

Microsoft launches e-commerce platform for handloom weavers

- **Microsoft India has launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave, part of its philanthropic initiatives.**
- **This e-commerce platform will help connect artisans to buyers directly, enabling them to expand to newer customers and markets.**
- **The new e-commerce website hosts signature collections created by weaver communities and showcases traditional designs and products created from natural dyes.**

Microsoft Corporation is an American multinational technology company with headquarters in Redmond, Washington. Microsoft was founded by Paul Allen and Bill Gates on April 4, 1975, to develop and sell BASIC interpreters for the Altair 8800. The first versions of two classic Microsoft products, Microsoft Word and the Windows operating system, were released in 1983. By 1991, Microsoft's operating systems were used by 93 percent of the world's personal computers.

Dell India launches PolicyHack for teachers in India

- Dell India has partnered with the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) as well as Ignus to launch PolicyHack for teachers and school representatives.
- The initiative allows the teaching fraternity to come up with solutions for problems faced by teachers inside and outside the classroom.
- It will also help create a platform for teachers and school representatives to interact with each other, according to a press statement.

Dell is an American multinational computer technology company based in Round Rock, Texas, and United States that develops, sells, repairs, and supports computers and related products and services. Named after its founder, Michael Dell, the company is one of the largest technological corporations in the world.

Anushree Jindal unveils micro finance venture

- Anushree Jindal has launched a micro finance venture, initially in two States, Karnataka and Maharashtra, with the aim of expanding into banking services in future.
- Svamaan Financial Services, a micro lender, which recently received Reserve Bank of India's approval for starting operations, will offer financial products to unbanked and under-banked sections of population.
- Initially, the MFI will focus on Karnataka and Maharashtra with plans to enter the eastern markets of Odisha and Chhattisgarh by 2020. Svamaan aims to reach 100,000 customers by 2021.

Reliance Industries gets CCI nod to acquire Hathway, DEN

- Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Industries has received a go ahead from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to acquire majority stakes in two of India's largest cable operators – DEN Networks and Hathway Cable & Datacom.
- RIL said it will acquire 66% in DEN and 51.3% in Hathway for a total consideration of Rs 5,230 crore.

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) is an Indian conglomerate holding company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. On 18 October 2007, Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to breach \$100 billion market capitalization. It is also the highest income tax payer in the private sector in India. The company is ranked 203th on the Fortune Global 500 list of the world's biggest corporations as of 2017. Dhirubhai Ambani founded Reliance Industries in Bombay with his cousin.

GSKCH India gets CCI approval for merger deal with HUL

- GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare (GSKCH India) said its merger deal with Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) has been approved by the fair trade regulator CCI.
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the scheme of amalgamation between the two companies, through an-all equity deal, valuing the total business of the latter at Rs 31,700 crore. GSK CH India is the market leader in the health food drinks (HFD) category, with popular brands such as Horlicks and Boost.

Tetra Pak wins ICC 'Social Impact Award' for Environment Sustainability

- Tetra Pak India, the world's leading packaging and processing solutions provider was felicitated with the 'Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Social Impact' award in the 'Sustainable Environment category'.
- The award recognizes Tetra Pak's leading efforts in setting up a sustainable ecosystem for recycling of used Tetra Pak cartons, using a multistakeholder approach and delivering measurable impact.

Tetra Pak is a multinational food packaging and processing sub-company of Tetra Laval, with head offices in Lund, Sweden, and Lausanne, Switzerland. Tetra Pak was founded by Ruben Rausing and built on Erik Wallenberg's innovation, a tetrahedron-shaped plastic-coated paper carton.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Three Indian-origin women scientists awarded by Australian government

- **Three Indian-origin women scientists made it in the list of 60 Superstars of STEM list** announced recently by the Australian government. These bright minds — **Onisha Patel, Devika Kamath and Asha Rao** — are born and brought up in India and have done pathbreaking work in the field of science. All three moved to Australia to pursue higher studies and wish to change the situation for younger girls back home.
- The women scientists work is not reported much by the media as well. The **Department of Science and Technology, Australia aims to change this scenario by making deserving female scientists get proper visibility** so that they can be a role model for girls who wish to take up STEM.”

Devika Kamath is researching where stars get the cosmos matter they are made of. “Our universe is mysterious. **Onisha Patel** loved science and arts but did not know what structural biology was until she took admission in **RMIT University, Australia**. **Asha Rao** is a cyber-mathematics expert and specialises in detection of money laundry. She teaches mathematical science at the RMIT University. She has participated in the fourth United Nations Intergovernmental meeting on cybercrime held recently.

ISRO launches Samwad with Students on New Year Day

- As part of the enhanced outreach programme of **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, a new platform named “**Samwad with Students**” (SwS) was launched in Bengaluru.
- Through the SwS initiative, **ISRO aims to constantly engage youngsters across India to capture their scientific temperament**. The first SwS event saw 40 wards and 10 teachers from select schools interact with ISRO Chairman **Dr K Sivan** at the Anthariksh Bhavan.

Indian Space Research Organisation is the space agency of the Government of India headquartered in the city of **Bangalore**. **ISRO** was formed in 1969. **ISRO** built India's first satellite, **Aryabhata**, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. **Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan Nadar** is current the chairperson of the **ISRO**.

NASA’s Juno probe captures volcanic plumes on Jupiter’s moon Io

- **NASA’s solar-powered Juno spacecraft** has beamed back new images of volcanic plumes on **Jupiter’s moon Io**, captured during the mission’s 17th flyby of the gas giant. Four of Juno’s cameras captured images of the Jovian moon **Io**, the most volcanic body in the solar system.
- **Juno** is a NASA space probe orbiting the planet **Jupiter**. It was built by **Lockheed Martin** and is operated by **NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory**.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the **United States** federal government responsible for the **civilian space program**, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** established NASA in 1958. **James Frederick Bridenstine** is an **American politician** and the **current administrator** of the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration**. He became the **first member of Congress** to lead NASA.

IIT Professor Awarded For Contribution towards Development of Geo-Spatial Science

- The **Indian Society for Remote Sensing** conferred the **National Geospatial Award for Excellence** to IIT professor **Jayanta Kumar Ghosh** for his contribution towards the development of geospatial science and applications.
- Mr Ghosh, a professor at the civil engineering department of the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)** in **Roorkee**, was felicitated on December 5. He was conferred the **National Geospatial Award for Excellence-2017 (Life Time Achievement Award)** at the Space Application Centre in Ahmedabad.

Chinese lunar rover named as ‘Yutu 2’

- **China** has named the lunar rover, successfully deployed to carry out a string of experiments on the unexplored far side of the moon, as ‘**Yutu 2**’.
- It follows the **BeiDou Navigation Satellite System** — **China’s** homegrown **Global Positioning System** that started worldwide service.

China National Space Administration (CNSA) is the **national space agency of China**. It is responsible for the national space program and for planning and development of space activities. The **headquarters are in Haidian District, Beijing**. **Zhang Kejian** is the **Director** of the **China National Space Administration**.

ISRO has plans to set up Space Galleries

- The **ISRO** has plans to set up **Space Galleries** in various locations in the country. The **Space Galleries** are expected to disseminate the knowledge about space science and technology amongst the citizens of our country.
- The Gallery will consist of interactive methods/ models describing the principles of Space science and technology.
- Initially, **Space Galleries** are planned to be established at **Birla Science Centre at Hyderabad**, **Nehru Science Centre at Mumbai** and **National Science Centre at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi**.

Union Government allocates Rs 10,900 cr for development of 40 satellite launch vehicles

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** Chairman **Dr K Sivan** has said that the **Union Government** has allocated **10,900 crore rupees** for the development of **40 satellite launch vehicles** in the next four years.
- The **human space flight Gaganyaan** is planned to be launched by **2022**, the 75th anniversary of Independence.

Indian Human Spaceflight Programme (HSP) was created by the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** to develop the technology needed to launch **crewed orbital spacecraft** into **low Earth orbit**. **India’s first manned space flight ‘Gaganyaan’** will send **three humans** into space for **five to seven days** and the spacecraft will be placed in a **low earth orbit of 300-400 k m** from the earth’s surface.

China announces Chang'e-4 mission complete success

- **China** announced that the **Chang'e-4 mission**, the first-ever probe to land on the moon's dark side, was a complete success.
- With the assistance of the relay satellite **Queqiao (Magpie Bridge)**, the rover **Yutu-2 (Jade Rabbit-2)** and the lander of the **Chang'e-4** probe took photos of each other.

China National Space Administration (CNSA) is the **national space agency of China**. It is responsible for the national space program and for planning and development of space activities. The **headquarters are in Haidian District, Beijing**. **Zhang Kejian** is the **Director** of the China National Space Administration.

First manned mission to space by December 2021: ISRO

- **ISRO** is well prepared to meet the targets of launching **Gaganyaan** manned mission to outer space by **December 2021**. Under **Gaganyaan** project, India is planning to send **three astronauts** to outer space for **seven days** and bring them back.
- **332 launches** are planned this year. Important among them are **Chandrayaan -2** mission to the moon in mid-April.
- **GSAT-20 Satellite** for **high bandwidth connectivity** to be launched in September-October. **ISRO** is conceiving a mission to **Venus** by **2023**.

Indian Space Research Organisation is the space agency of the Government of India **headquartered in the city of Bangalore**. **ISRO** was formed in **1969**. **ISRO** built **India's first satellite, Aryabhata**, which was **launched by the Soviet Union** on **19 April 1975**. **Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan Nadar** is current the **chairperson of the ISRO**.

India's largest startup ecosystem inaugurated in Kerala

- **India** got its largest startup ecosystem when **Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated in **Kochi** a **1.8-lakh-square-foot facility** housing incubation set-ups across a string of segments in modern technology.
- The **Integrated Startup Complex** under the **Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM)** includes the **ultra-modern facilities of Maker Village** that promotes hardware startups, the **Bio Nest** that promotes medical technologies, **BRINC** which is the country's first international accelerator for hardware startups; **BRIC** which aids developing solutions for cancer diagnosis and care, and a **Centre of Excellence** set up by industry majors such as **UNITY**.

Technology Innovation Zone (TIZ) was set to become the country's largest **Work-Live-Play** space exclusively dedicated to startups. The **Maker Village**, set up by the **IITM-K** in association with **KSUM** and supported by **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**, houses **65 startups** working in electronics hardware technologies.

Odisha takes its first step towards promoting turtle tourism

- The state held its first **Olive Ridley turtle festival** to give way to **eco-tourism** and in turn conserve turtles.
- **Odisha's Puri beach** witnessed its first turtle festival on **January 13, 2019**, where tourists, researchers and environmentalists gathered to promote eco-tourism, which in turn could help conserve **Olive Ridley turtles**.
- While **Odisha** has half of the world's **Olive Ridley turtle** population, **90 per cent** of **India's turtle** population lives in the state.

The **Olive ridley turtles** are the **smallest and most abundant** of all sea turtles found in the world, inhabiting warm waters of the **Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans**. Though found in abundance, their numbers have been declining over the past few years, and the species is recognized as **Vulnerable** by the **IUCN Red list**.

Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurates UNNATI programme of ISRO in Bengaluru

- **UNNATI**, a capacity building programme on **Nanosatellite development**, is an initiative by **ISRO** to commemorate the **50th anniversary** of the first **United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE-50)** launched in **Bengaluru**.

- The programme provides opportunities to the participating developing countries **to strengthen in assembling, integrating and testing of Nanosatellite.**
- **UNNATI programme is planned to be conducted for 3 years by U.R. Rao Satellite Centre of ISRO in 3 batches** and will target to benefit officials of 45 countries. The first batch started in which 30 delegates from 17 countries are participating.

The launch window for Chandravan-2 is March 25 - April 30 this year

- The **launch window for Chandravan-2 is March 25 - April 30 this year**, said Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Dr K Sivan. He said that **ISRO has planned 32 missions this year.** Elaborating on the priority areas of ISRO, the Chairman said that these include **Gaganyaan project**, reaching out to students, outreach programmes, planned missions of this year and Vikram Sarabhai Centenary celebrations.
- **For the first time, ISRO has announced the ‘Young Scientists Programme’** to encourage the scientific talent and increase scientific pool in the country.
- **Under this programme**, Dr Sivan said, **3 students from each state and UT will be selected for ISRO programme for one month** during which they will visit ISRO centres, interact with senior scientists and will have access to Research and Development facilities.

Indian Space Research Organisation is the space agency of the Government of India **headquartered in the city of Bangalore.** **ISRO was formed in 1969.** **ISRO built India's first satellite, Aryabhata,** which was **launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975.** **Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan Nadar** is current the **chairperson of the ISRO.**

Super Blood Wolf Moon, Lunar Eclipse on January 20-21, 2019

- The **only total lunar eclipse for 2019 took place on the night January 20 to January 21.** The eclipse is also **being called as a ‘Super Blood Wolf Moon’**, and started at 7.34 pm Pacific Standard Time on January 20, which converts to 9:00 am IST (January 21). However, **India was not able to witness this lunar eclipse.**
- According to NASA, eclipse was visible across North America, South America, Greenland, Iceland, Ireland, Britain, Norway, Sweden, Portugal, France and Spain. The rest of Europe and Africa will also get a glimpse of the Super Blood Wolf Moon. The eclipse was visible to people in India and other Asian countries.

HAL-built light combat helicopter completes air-to-air weapon trials

- The public sector entity **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** designed and developed light combat helicopter (LCH) has successfully carried out air-to-air missile firing on a moving aerial target.
- "This is the first time in the country that a helicopter has carried out air-to-air missile engagement. None of the helicopters with the military services in the country has demonstrated such a capability. With this, LCH has successfully completed all weapon integration tests and is ready for operational induction," **HAL chief R Madhavan** said.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is an **Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company headquartered in Bangalore, India.** It is **governed under the management of the Indian Ministry of Defence.**

Japan launches Epsilon-4 rocket with 7 satellites

- **Japan successfully launched the Epsilon-4 rocket** carrying seven satellites from the Uchinoura Space Center in Kagoshima.
- The satellites have been **developed by private sector companies and universities.** The **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency or JAXA** shouldered the cost of the launch, which adds up to roughly USD 50 million, to encourage space exploration by the private sector, reports NHK World.

- **In a first for the Epsilon series**, which was developed in a bid to put small satellites into orbit at a low cost, multiple satellites were transported. In fact, the **largest satellite has been successfully placed in orbit shortly after take-off at an altitude of 514 kilometres.**

ISRO successfully launches PSLV-C44 with Microsat-R, Kalamsat onboard

- **India successfully launched the 46th mission of its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) from the Sriharikota spaceport, near Chennai**, carrying Microsat-R and Kalamsat to Sun Synchronous Polar Orbit.
- **PSLV-C44 is the first mission of PSLV-DL and is a new variant of the PSLV.** The rocket took off from the first launch pad (FLP) of Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota. The PSLV is a four-stage launch vehicle with alternating solid and liquid stages.
- **PSLV-C44's fourth stage (PS4)**, which is an **experimental orbital platform for carrying out technology demonstration**, was moved to a higher circular orbit so as to establish an orbital platform for carrying out experiments.
- **Kalamsat, a student payload**, will be the **first to use PS4** as an orbital platform. The **payload was developed by students and SpaceKidz India.**

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Israel Successfully Tests Arrow 3 Anti-ballistic Missile System

- **Israel said that it has successfully tested the country's advanced missile defense system capable of defending against long-range ballistic missile threats.**
- The Defense Ministry said the **successful test of the Arrow-3 interceptor is "a major milestone" in Israel's ability to defend itself "against current and future threats in the region."** It comes a couple days after Israel thwarted an Iranian missile attack.

Navy Chief commissions Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa' at Diglipur

- **Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned the Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa' at Diglipur in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.**
- This will be the countries' **third Naval air facility after INS Utkarsh at Port Blair and INS Baaz at Campbell Bay** in the Andaman that overlooks key sea lanes of communication and strategic points. Speaking on the occasion, Admiral Lanba emphasized that INS Kohassa will enhance Indian Navy's operational capabilities in the region. He said the Naval Air Station has been **developed to meet both military and civil needs as it will also provide impetus to the UDAN scheme.**

INS Kohassa is an Indian naval air station under the joint-services Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) of the Indian Armed Forces. **INS Kohassa was established as Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur in 2001** as a Forward Operating Air Base (FOAB) for enhanced surveillance in North Andaman. **The station, earlier known as NAS Shibpur, was renamed as INS Kohassa** after the extension of facilities in January 2019.

Russian military has released the specifications of SSC-8 ground-fired cruise missile (also known as the Novator 9M729)

- **The Russian military has released the specifications of its new missile, seeking to dispel the U.S. claim that the weapons violates a key nuclear arms pact.** The military insisted that its **new SSC-8 ground-fired cruise missile (also known as the Novator 9M729) conforms to the limits of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.**

- The U.S. government says the new Russian missile violates provisions of the pact that ban production, testing and deployment of land-based cruise and ballistic missiles with a range of 310 to 3,400 miles.

India successfully test fires long range surface-to-air missile

- In a bid to galvanise its air defence capabilities, **India successfully test fired a new, long range surface-to-air missile jointly developed with Israel from a defence base off the Odisha coast.**
- The long range missile, a product of a joint venture between India and Israel, was test launched from a mobile launcher at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur. Indian Navy had also successfully test launched the long range surface to air missile (LR-SAM). The test was undertaken on the Western Seaboard by INS Kolkata on December 30, 2015.

"In 2017, India was the fourth-largest funder by absolute funding and proportion of GDP and accounted for almost three-quarters (Rs 492 crore) of the public funding from low income and middle income countries," the report stated. The largest funder, as per the report is the US government, which through its National Institutes of Health provided 39 per cent of the total.

UK to support nitrogen research in India

- Nitrogen pollution is an emerging environmental problem linked with air pollution, biodiversity loss, pollution of rivers and seas and ozone depletion. The British government has announced a research project to study nitrogen pollution in India and South Asia.
- Nitrogen pollution is caused, among other things, by emissions from chemical fertilisers, livestock manure, and burning of fossil fuels.
- The new partnership programme, South Asian Nitrogen Hub, will be led by the UK's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and will include 50 organisations from UK and South Asia.

India is the only country in South Asia that has completed its nitrogen assessment over a year ago and is already co-leading the South Asian nitrogen assessment for the UN Environment," N Raghuram, who chairs the International Nitrogen Initiative, said.

India Successfully Tests DRDO's Anti-Radiation Missile NGARM Capable of Destroying Enemy Radar Surveillance

- India successfully tested an indigenous new-generation anti-radiation missile (NGARM). The missile boasts of a capability to destroy radar and surveillance targets and was tested successfully test fired from a Sukhoi-30MKI fighter.
- The strike range of the missile is about 100 km and is one of the first air-to-ground missiles to be developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The missile was tested from a Sukhoi-30MKI on 18 January at the integrated test range in Balasore. The missile, with all systems functioning properly, hit the designated target with a high degree of accuracy in the Bay of Bengal. The NGARM can be launched from Sukhoi from different altitudes and velocities."
- Besides this, India successfully tested, the Barak 8 or long range surface-to-air missile (LR-SAM) from Indian Navy's destroyer INS Chennai. The missile has been jointly developed by DRDO, Israeli Aerospace Industries and Rafael.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation.

Inventions/Discoveries

NASA's probe discovers a new planet

- NASA's latest planet-hunting probe has discovered a new world outside our solar system, orbiting a dwarf star 53 light years away.
- This is the third new planet confirmed by the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) since its launch in April last year.
- The planet, named HD 21749b, orbits a bright, nearby dwarf star about 53 light years away, in the constellation Reticulum, and appears to have the longest orbital period of the three planets so far identified by TESS.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. James Frederick Bridenstine is an American politician and the current administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He became the first member of Congress to lead NASA.

A paper sensor that can detect freshness of milk

- Scientists at Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, have developed a simple paper kit that can test freshness of milk and tell how well it has been pasteurized. Aided with a smart phone app, the kit can help ensure that milk is consumed before it turns too sour.
- A milk enzyme, Alkaline Phosphatase or ALP, is considered an indicator of milk quality because its presence even after pasteurization indicates presence of microbes that may not have been rendered inactive with pasteurization.

Scientists design tiny 'magic carpet'

- Inspired by the magic carpet featured in the folk tale of 'Aladdin', researchers from the University of Pittsburgh in the U.S have designed a two-dimensional, shape-changing sheet that moves autonomously in a reactant-filled fluid.
- The 'magic carpet' in tales from One Thousand and One Nights captures the imagination not only because it can fly, but because it can also wave, flap and alter its shape to serve its riders.
- The group accomplished this feat of self-propulsion and reconfiguration by introducing a coating of catalysts on the flexible sheet, which is roughly the width of a human hair.

To best of scientist's knowledge, this is the first time these catalytic chemical reactions have been applied to 2D sheets to generate flows that transform these sheets into mobile, 3D objects.

Telescope to detect cosmic X-rays launched from Antarctica

- US scientists say that they have successfully launched a telescope from Antarctica that analyses X-rays arriving from distant neutron stars, black holes and other exotic celestial bodies.
- The X-Calibur instrument, launched by Washington University in the US from the McMurdo Station in Antarctica, is carried aloft on a helium balloon intended to reach an altitude of 130,000 feet.
- X-Calibur will travel at nearly four times the cruising altitude of commercial airliners, and above 99 per cent of the Earth's atmosphere.

IIT-Madras scientists create 'space fuel' in lab

- **IIT Madras scientists** have created what they call 'space fuel' by **simulating interstellar conditions in the lab**, a method that may be **used to convert atmospheric CO₂ into a next generation energy source on Earth**.
- **Clathrate hydrates** are molecules like methane, carbon dioxide, etc, trapped in well-defined cages of water molecules forming crystalline solids.
- **They are formed at high pressures and low temperatures** at places such as the ocean floor, hundreds of metres below the sea level. **They are also found in glaciers such as in Siberia**.

Oceans are heating up at a quickening pace, say scientists

- The **world's oceans are heating up at an accelerating pace** as **global warming** threatens a diverse range of marine life and a major food supply for the planet.
- The findings in the U.S. journal Science, **led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences**, debunk previous reports that suggested a so-called pause in **global warming in recent years**. **"Ocean heating is a very important indicator of climate change**.

'Roshni' to help visually impaired identify notes

- The **Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar**, has come to the **aid of visually impaired, who have been facing difficulty in identifying the new currency notes** introduced by the Reserve Bank of India, post demonetisation.
- The application **"Roshni"** is free of cost. A team comprising **Dr Puneet Goyal, PhD scholars Mandhatya Singh and Joohi Chauhan, and student R Ram** from the institute demonstrated the app in the presence of students from Institute for Visually Impaired, Chandigarh.
- **The claimed that "Roshni" was the first Android app launched in Chandigarh that worked successfully with new INR currency notes**. The user after downloading "Roshni" from the Play Store has to bring the currency note in front of the phone camera and the app will provide audio notification intimating the currency note's denomination.

Novel soft robot can curl and climb like plant tendrils

- **Researchers at IIT-Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia in Italy created the first soft robot which is able to curl and climb like plant tendrils** using the same physical principles determining water transport in plants.
- **Researchers at Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) in Italy** took inspiration from plants and their movement.

Rainfall detected on Saturn's moon Titan

- **Scientists from USA, using data from the Cassini spacecraft, have found evidence of methane rainfall on the north pole of Titan, the largest moon of Saturn**. The rainfall would be the first indication of the start of a summer season in Titan's northern hemisphere.
- **Dhingra and her colleagues identified a reflective feature near Titan's North Pole** on an image taken June 7, 2016, by Cassini's near-infrared instrument, the Visual and Infrared Mapping Spectrometer.

Titan is the largest moon of Saturn. It is the only moon known to have a dense atmosphere, and the only object in space, other than Earth, where clear evidence of stable bodies of surface liquid have been found. Titan is the sixth gravitationally rounded moon from Saturn.

Health/ Disease

FSSAI asks food businesses to comply with new packaging norms by July 1

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has said food businesses need to comply with new packaging regulations that bar use of recycled plastics and newspapers to wrap food articles by July 1.
- **FSSAI CEO Pawan Agarwal** said the new packaging regulations would raise the bar of food safety in India to the next level. The new regulations prohibit packaging material made of recycled plastics including carry bags for packaging, storing, carrying or dispensing articles of food.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India. The FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India.

Albumin better indicator of diabetes

- Based on findings of their new research, **scientists at the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune** have suggested that **measuring levels of free albumin and albumin attached to glucose molecules in the blood** can be a better diagnosis test for diabetes and help in its management.
- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** recommends using levels of **glycated (or glucose-bound) hemoglobin** in blood for diagnosis of diabetes.

World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is concerned with international public health. It was established on 7 April 1948, and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The current Director-General of WHO is **Tedros Adhanom**, who started his five-year term on 1 July 2017.

Health research money increased by Rs 135 crore in India

- **Public funding in India** in the field of research and development for neglected diseases has increased significantly by Rs 135 crore since 2009, says a new report.
- The report conducted by **G-Finder** a project that tracks and reports on global investments into research and development (R&D) for neglected diseases which was released suggested that funding from **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** increased by Rs 147 crore.
- The report also suggested that **ICMR** is one of the four largest global TB R&D funders for the first time ever, with an increase of Rs 39 crore in investment.

WHO lists 10 threats to global health in 2019

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has listed out 10 global health threats for 2019, adding that millions of lives will be at risk if these threats are not addressed.
- The United Nation's public health agency, thus, is starting a **new five year strategic plan- the 13th General Programme of Work**. According to the WHO, the plan focuses on a triple billion target that includes ensuring 1 billion more people benefiting from access to universal health coverage, 1 billion more people being protected from health emergencies and 1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being.
- This year, **air pollution** is considered as the greatest environmental risk to health. Microscopic pollutants in the air can damage the lungs, heart and brain, killing 7 million people prematurely every year from diseases such as cancer, stroke, heart and lung ailments.

World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is concerned with international public health. It was established on 7 April 1948, and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The WHO is a member of the United Nations Development Group. **Tedros Adhanom** has been Director-General of the World Health Organization.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



Morocco ranks high in climate action

- Morocco has been named the second best performing country after Sweden in the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI). The North African country significantly increased the share of renewables over the past five years and increased new renewable energy capacity.
- Sweden is in top position, followed by Morocco and Lithuania in the CCPI 2019.

The bottom five in the list is Saudi Arabia, U.S., Iran, South Korea and Taiwan. With the connection of the world's largest solar plant to the grid, Morocco is on track for achieving its target of 42% installed renewable energy capacities by 2020.

Parliamentary panel flags neglect of Western Ghats

- Over 56,000 km of ecologically sensitive areas in the Western Ghats could not be earmarked as 'no-go' zones due to State governments'. It urged the Union Environment and Forests Ministry to constitute a committee to address the issues and grievances of the local people.
- The panel had examined issues regarding the categorisation of Western Ghats parts as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs) as per the recommendations of two different committees led by Madhav Gadgil and K. Kasturirangan.

Centre aims for 20% cut in air pollution by 2024

- The Centre has launched a programme to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024.
- The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) is envisaged as a scheme to provide the States and the Centre with a framework to combat air pollution.
- "The NCAP will be a mid-term, five-year action plan with 2019 as the first year. This is not a pan-India, but a city-specific programme".

Air pollution is one of the biggest global environmental challenges of today. A time bound national level strategy for pan India implementation to tackle the increasing air pollution problem across the country in a comprehensive manner in the form of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan in New Delhi.

Antarctic ice melting 6 times faster than it did in '80s

- The ice in Antarctica is melting six times faster than it did 40 years ago, according to a new study.

- This acceleration of the ice loss is a clear indication of human-caused climate change. Lead author Eric Rignot, an ice scientist at the University of California–Irvine, said the melting ice has caused global sea levels to rise more than half an inch since 1979.
- Since 2009, almost 278 billion tons of ice has melted away from Antarctica per year, the study found. In the 1980s, it was losing 44 billion tons a year.
- Scientists combined satellite data records with computer model outputs to estimate the Antarctic ice loss since 1979.

2018 sixth-warmest year in India, says IMD

- Year 2018 was the sixth warmest year on record in India since it commenced keeping nation-wide records of weather events in 1901, said India Meteorological Department (IMD) while noting that the country had lost over 1,400 lives in extreme weather events last year.
- In its latest report, on 'climate of India', the government's weather department, India Meteorological Department (IMD), stated that the annual mean land-surface air temperature for the country was $+0.41^{\circ}\text{C}$ above the 1981-2010 average, showing an increasing warming trend.
- The year 2016 has so far been the warmest year for the country, when the mean annual surface temperature was $+0.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ above the 1981-2010 average. The five warmest years on record in order are 2016 ($+0.7^{\circ}\text{C}$), 2009 ($+0.56^{\circ}\text{C}$), 2017 ($+0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$), 2010 ($+0.54^{\circ}\text{C}$) and 2015 ($+0.42^{\circ}\text{C}$) ever since the nation-wide records commenced in 1901.

India Meteorological Department (IMD), also referred to as the Met Department, is an agency of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India. It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology. IMD is headquartered in Delhi and operates hundreds of observation stations across India. India Meteorology Department was established in 1875. IMD became a member of the World Meteorological Organization after independence on 27 April 1949.

Earth's oldest known rock was found on the Moon

- A lot of the rocks we have on Earth are pretty old, but none of them were around when our planet was first formed. The Earth itself is around 4.5 billion years old, and the oldest rocks we've ever found are a little over half that age. The twist is that this particular rock wasn't discovered on Earth at all. It was found on the moon.
- The rock itself was discovered decades ago by the Apollo 14 crew. The Apollo missions brought back a whole lot of rock samples, and scientists have been methodically analyzing them ever since.

Apollo 14 was the eighth manned mission in the United States Apollo program, and the third to land on the Moon. It was the last of the "H missions," targeted landings with two-day stays on the Moon with two lunar EVAs, or moonwalks.

19 amphibian species are critically endangered: ZSI list

- An updated list of Indian amphibians was released on the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) website last week, with 19 species being treated as critically endangered and 33 species as endangered.
- The current list bears the names of 432 amphibian species from India, the year of discovery and their IUCN 'red list' conservation status.

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), founded on 1 July 1916 by Government of India Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, as premier Indian organisation in zoological research and studies to promote the survey, exploration and research of the fauna in the country. It is headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal. The history of ZSI begins from the days of the Asiatic Society of Bengal founded by Sir William Jones in 1784.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Bangladesh ODI captain Mortaza becomes first active cricketer to become an MP

- In India, many ex-cricketers have fought elections but in Bangladesh, the current ODI cricket team captain too has participated in the ongoing elections. **Bangladesh ODI Captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has contested from Narail 2 constituency on an Awami League ticket.**
- As per the latest information, **Mashrafe has in fact won the seat and that too by a huge margin. He got 274,418 votes** as against his nearest opponent who received just 8,006 votes.
- With this, **he became the first active cricketer to become a Member of Parliament** and the **second national cricket team captain, after Naimur Rahman Durjoy,** to enter the Parliament.

Rishabh Pant first Indian wicket-keeper to claim 20 catches in Test series

- **Indian wicket-keeper batsman Rishabh Pant became the country's first keeper to complete twenty catches in a Test series,** during the final day of the 'Boxing Day Test'.
- **Pant surpassed former cricketers Naren Tamhane and Syed Kirmani** who had **recorded nineteen dismissals in 1954-55 and 1979-80** respectively. Both the players had recorded the tally during cricketing series conducted against arch-rivals Pakistan.

Ishant Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami break 34-year-old record

- It has been a good year for the Indian fast bowlers and **the trio of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Ishant Sharma etched their name in the history books** when they broke a 34-year-old record during Day 4 of the third Test match between India and Australia in Melbourne.
- The **trio of Bumrah, Shami and Ishant has picked up 131 wickets between themselves in 2018** and as a result, they **broke the 34-year-old record** which was previously held by the legendary West Indies trio of Joel Garner, Michael Holding and Malcolm Marshall.
- The Windies greats had taken 130 wickets in 1984. They are followed by the South African pace trio of Morne Morkel, Makhaya Ntini and Dale Steyn who managed to take 123 wickets in 2008.

ICC announces women's ODI and T20I teams of the year

- International Cricket Council, ICC, announced **women's ODI and T20I teams of the year 2018.**
- New Zealand's **Suzie Bates** was named as captain of the 50-over side and **Harmanpreet Kaur** of India appointed captain of the T20 team.

- Smriti Mandhana and Poonam Yadav are the two Indians who feature in both the ODI and T20I squads.
- Harmanpreet Kaur has been rewarded for spearheading Indian team to the semi-final of the ICC Women's World T20 in the Caribbean.

Pankaj breaches the 400-mark

- Pankaj Singh became the first fast-bowler and 10th overall to pick 400 wickets in the Ranji Trophy.
- Ahead of the 2018–19 Ranji Trophy, he transferred from Rajasthan to Puducherry. In November 2018, during the Ranji Trophy match against Mizoram, he set a new record for the most five-wicket hauls against different teams in the Ranji Trophy with 17

Virat Kohli breaks yet another Sachin Tendulkar record in Sydney

- Indian captain Virat Kohli broke yet another Sachin Tendulkar record as he became the fastest batsman to reach 19,000 international runs.
- He got to this feat in the in his 399th innings during the fourth and final Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Rishabh Pant becomes first Indian Wicket-Keeper to score a Test Century in Australia

- Rishabh Pant also became the only second visiting wicket-keeper to register Test centuries both in England and Australia. Jeffery Dujon, with hundreds in Manchester and Perth in 1984, was the first. Pant is now the only Indian wicketkeeper to have scored a century in Australia. Before Pant's century, Farokh Engineer had the highest scorer of 89 for an Indian wicketkeeper in Australia, which he scored in Adelaide in 1967.
- Pant became the first wicket-keeper from the subcontinent to score over 200 runs and take 20 catches in a Test series.

IWF president named as Chef de Mission for Tokyo Olympics

- President of the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Birendra Prasad Baishya, has been named Chef de Mission for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- It is for the first time that the Weightlifting has been accorded with the honour of Chef de Mission for the Olympics.

Mary Kom is World No. 1

- M.C. Mary Kom's unprecedented sixth World title last November has propelled her to the top position in the AIBA latest World rankings.
- In the latest rankings put out by AIBA, Mary Kom is placed top of the chart in the 48kg weight division with 1700 points.

Kevin Anderson beats Ivo Karlovic to win Maharashtra Open title

- Top-seeded Kevin Anderson won his sixth ATP title when he recovered from 5-2 down in the decisive tiebreaker to beat Ivo Karlovic 7-6 (4), 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5) in the Maharashtra Open final.

Hopman Cup: Roger Federer & Belinda Bencic retain title for Switzerland

- Switzerland's Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic secured a 2-1 victory over Germany's Angelique Kerber and Alexander Zverev to win the Hopman Cup for the second year in a row.

Egypt and Liverpool's Mohamed Salah retains African Footballer of the Year award

- Egypt striker Mohamed Salah has been named African Footballer of the Year for the second successive year at the Confederation of African Football's 2018 awards ceremony in Dakar.

Players selected from Khelo India to be given Rs 5 Lakh scholarship

- The Khelo India Youth Games 2019 kicked off in Pune.
- 1,000 players will be selected out of competitions in the current edition of Khelo India and they will be given Rs 5 lakh each per annum for the next 8 years for development of their sporting talent.

Virat Kohli, Ravi Shastri receive honorary membership of Sydney Cricket Ground

- India skipper Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri received the honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket.
- The only other international cricketers to be granted the honorary membership of the SCG are Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara of the West Indies.

Dhoni joins elite list of Indian cricketers to score ten thousand runs

- The seasoned Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the fifth player to score ten thousand runs for India in One-day International Cricket, adding another feather to his illustrious cap.
- Dhoni thus joined an elite list of Indian cricketers who had previously achieved the feat, which include Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid and Virat Kohli.

Abhinav Shaw becomes youngest gold medallist in shooting

- At the Khelo India Youth Games in Pune, ten year old Abhinav Shaw became the youngest gold medallist in shooting.
- He teamed up with Mehuli Ghosh to help West Bengal win the 10m air rifle mixed team event. Delhi's Devanshi Rana bagged gold in Under-21 girls 25m pistol event.

8-year-old Kartik Singh becomes youngest to win Junior World title in golf

- Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship organised by US kids Golf in Malaysia, which makes him the youngest Indian to win the title.
- Kartik is well known all across DLF Golf and country club for his dedication and hard work. The DLF Golf Academy, opened in 1999, is the first professional golf school in the country.

Shakil Ahmed sets world record in indoor rowing

- Asian Cup gold medallist Shakil Ahmed has added one more feather to his cap when he set up a world record in indoor rowing by completing one lakh metres in above-40 year's category in Kolkata.
- Shakil began his record-setting indoor rowing feat in Salt Lake stadium complex and achieved the milestone of covering one lakh metres of simulated distance in 10 hours.

Srihari Nataraj bags 7 Gold medals

- Karnataka swimmer Srihari Nataraj has emerged as the most prolific gold medal winner at the Khelo India Youth Games.
- He has won 7 Gold medals. With SP Likith, picking five, the Karnataka duo were the most decorated gold medalists of the Games.

Vinesh Phogat becomes first Indian athlete to be nominated in Laureus World Comeback of Year Award

- Ace Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat has become the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award.

- She has been nominated alongside **US Tour Championship winner Tiger Woods**, who won his **first tournament in five years**. The Awards will be **presented in Monaco** on the 18th of next month.
- She became the **first Indian woman wrestler to win Gold in both Commonwealth and Asian games**.
- **Vinesh Phogat won the gold medal in women's 50kg freestyle wrestling** at 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.

Virat Kohli's men became the first country to return from Australia without losing a single series

- **Mahendra Singh Dhoni** rekindled his love affair with final flourishes, anchoring **India to their maiden bilateral ODI series triumph in Australia** for a perfect finish to a historic trip Down Under in Melbourne.
- **Virat Kohli's men became the first country to return from Australia without losing a single series** having won the **Test series 2-1** and **drawn the T20 Internationals 1-1**.
- **MS Dhoni scored his 70th half-century** as India chased down 231 against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground **to win their first ever bilateral ODI series in the country**. After losing the first ODI in Sydney, India bounced back to win the second match in Adelaide by 6 wickets and the series decider in Melbourne by 7 wickets.

Virat Kohli creates history, becomes first player ever to win all ICC Awards

- **Indian captain Virat Kohli** became the **first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year** awards following an extraordinary 2018.
- **Kohli was also named captain of ICC's Test and ODI teams of 2018** for a fabulous run in international cricket. **Kohli scored 1,322 runs at an average of 55.08 in 13 Tests** with five hundreds during the calendar year while in **14 ODIs he amassed 1202 runs at an astonishing average of 133.55 with six centuries**. He also scored 211 runs in 10 T20Is.

Ankita Raina wins ITF's tournament in Singapore

- **India's Ankita Raina** has won the **International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore**.
- **In the Final Ankita defeated top seed and world number 122 Arantxa Rus** of the Netherlands, 6-3, 6-2.

Mumbai Marathon: Cosmas Lagat, Worknesh Alemu clinch men's, women's titles

- **Cosmas Lagat of Kenya and Worknesh Alemu of Ethiopia** won the men's and women's crowns in the **Tata Mumbai Marathon in Mumbai**.
- **India's Sudha Singh** finished on **top among the Indian runners** while setting at a personal best of **2 hours: 34 minutes and: 56 seconds**.

Virat Kohli breaks the Brian Lara's record of 10405 runs

- **Virat Kohli went past West Indies legend Brian Lara's record of 10405 runs** during the first ODI vs New Zealand in Napier. Now the **Indian captain has broken into the top 10 of One-day International run-scorers** and with that, he has gone past West Indian batting legend Brian Lara.
- **Virat Kohli has now crossed Brian Lara's 10405 runs to reach 10430 ODI runs**. Kohli is currently **No.10 on the list**.

Mohammed Shami is the fastest Indian bowler to reach 100 ODI wickets

- **Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets**, during the first one-dayer against New Zealand at Napier. **Shami reached the milestone in his 56th match**, with the wicket of opener Martin Gupthill.

- The **Indian record** was previously held by **Irfan Pathan**, who got there in his **59th match**, against **Pakistan in Abu Dhabi in 2006**. The world record is currently held by **Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan**, who needed **only 44 games to reach the mark**. **Shami** is the joint-sixth with **New Zealand fast bowler Trent Boult**, who is also playing this match.

Australian Open 2019: Rafa Nadal dismantles Stefanos Tsitsipas to reach final

- **Rafa Nadal ended Stefanos Tsitsipas's trailblazing run at the Australian Open**, serving up a semi-final masterclass to blitz the 20-year-old Greek 6-2 6-4 6-0 and **reach his fifth final at Melbourne Park**. Staging a clinic under the lights at Rod Laver Arena, the Spanish second seed tamed the **Tsitsipas** serve and racked up 28 sparkling winners against the man who **knocked out double defending champion Roger Federer in the fourth round**.
- **Nadal, the 2009 champion**, will face either top seed **Novak Djokovic** or 28th-seeded Frenchman **Lucas Pouille** in the final as he bids for a **second Melbourne title and an 18th Grand Slam crown**.

Saina Nehwal claims Indonesia Masters title after Carolina Marin retires

- **Indian badminton star Saina Nehwal added another feat to her long list of achievements after Carolina Marin retired** due to a leg injury **at the Indonesia Masters in Jakarta**. She secured her first world tour title **after more than 2 years**.
- Eventually, Saina bagged the title at the Daihatsu Indonesia Masters 2019 Super 500 world tour event. It was her first title after a new world tour format was introduced on the BWF circuit. She was runner-up last year after losing to Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei.

Australian Open 2019: Novak Djokovic beats Rafael Nadal to win record seventh title

- **Novak Djokovic won a record seventh Australian Open title and a third successive Grand Slam** as he swept aside **Rafael Nadal in Melbourne**.
- The Serb, rarely troubled on his serve, **won 6-3 6-2 6-3 for his biggest victory** in a major final over his great rival. **Djokovic won** in two hours and four minutes to move clear of **six-time men's winners Roy Emerson and Roger Federer**.

The **Australian Open** is a **tennis tournament held annually over the last fortnight of January in Melbourne, Australia**. The **tournament is the first of the four Grand Slam tennis events held each year**, preceding the French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open. **First held in 1905 as the Australasian championships**, the Australian Open has grown to **become the largest annual sporting event in the Southern Hemisphere**. It is **nicknamed as "the happy slam"**.

Rohit Paudel of Nepal youngest batsman to hit international half-century

- **Nepal's Rohit Paudel broke Shahid Afridi's record to become the youngest half-centurion in one-day internationals**. Paudel, aged 16 years and 146 days, scored 55 in the second ODI of Nepal's tour of the United Arab Emirates.
- **Paudel, scored 55 off 58 balls and his innings was studded with 7 boundaries**. Overall in international cricket, the record was held by **Sachin Tendulkar**, who scored 59 in a Test against Pakistan at 16 years and 213 days.
- **Paudel had come close to setting a world record when he made his ODI debut aged 15 years and 335 days back in August 2018**. He became the **fourth-youngest male cricketer to make his ODI debut**. Pakistan legend **Shahid Afridi** was 16 years and 217 days when he scored 102 against Sri Lanka in Nairobi back in 1996.

Naomi Osaka wins Australian Open as she overcomes mid-match wobble to beat Petra Kvitova in thrilling final

- Japan's Naomi Osaka defeated Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova 7-6 (2), 5-7, 6-4 in the women's final to clinch her maiden Australian Open title.
- Despite Kvitova's efforts in the final set, Osaka had the last laugh as she won the set 6-4 and win her second Grand Slam title. She also won the 2018 US Open title where she defeated Serena Williams.

Sport Events

Third edition of women's national boxing championships begins

- Country's top boxers will be vying for top honours when the third edition of women's national boxing championships begins at the JSW Sports-owned Inspire Institute of Sport, in Vijayanagara, Karnataka.
- The Inspire Institute of Sport, which will be hosting the women's national championship is heralded for its multispecialty facilities and is India's first privately-funded High-Performance Olympic Training Centre. The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) had hosted a pre-Asian Games conditioning camp for its elite men and women's teams before the Asian Games and this will be the first time a national event of this magnitude will be held at this facility.

80th National Table Tennis Championship begins in Cuttack

- The 80th National Table Tennis Championship began at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack.
- Odisha State Table Tennis Association (OSTTA) is hosting the championships after a gap of 18 years. The event will conclude on January 9.

India create history, win first ever Test series in Australia

- India created history by winning their first ever Cricket Test series on Australian soil after beating the home team 2-1.
- It is the first time India managed the feat since they began touring Australia in 1947-48. Consequently, Virat Kohli became the first Indian as well as the first Asian captain to win a Test series in Australia.
- India reinforced their status as the world's number one test team and retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with the series win. Cheteshwar Pujara was declared man of the match as well as man-of-the-series.

The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games begins in Pune

- The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games officially begins in Pune, Maharashtra.
- More than 9000 players from different states will participate in 18 different games at Khelo India Youth Games. It has already been announced that Youth Olympic Gold Medallist in shooting Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhari as well as weight lifter Jeremy Lalrinnunga will be among the cream of India's youth sporting talent competing at these games.

Egypt to host 2019 Africa Cup of Nations

- Egypt will host the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations between 15th June and 13th July. Confederation of African Football (CAF) President Ahmad Ahmad made the announcement.
- The CAF executive committee preferred Egypt to South Africa as replacement for original hosts Cameroon, who were dropped due to delays in preparations and concerns over security.

ICC Announces USA Cricket as 105th Member

- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** announced **USA Cricket** as its **105th member**.
- As a Member of the ICC, **USA Cricket** is now eligible to receive funding in accordance with the **ICC Development Funding Policy** and can sanction domestic and international cricket in the United States.

Bengaluru Raptors win Premier Badminton League title

- **Bengaluru Raptors** have won their first ever **Premier Badminton League** title. In the title clash played at Bengaluru, Bengaluru edged out Mumbai Rockets, with a 4-3 win.
- Star player **Kidambi Srikanth**, **Vu Ji Trang** and the Men's Doubles pair of **Mohammad Ahsan** and **Hendra Satiawan** won their matches for Bengaluru guiding them to victory.

First National EMRS National Sports Meet, 2019 Began at Hyderabad

- The first National Level Sports Meet for the students of **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** was inaugurated by **Shri Jaswantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor**, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs at **G.M.C Balayogi Stadium, Gachibowli**, and Hyderabad.

Mumbai Marathon: Cosmas Lagat, Worknesh Alemu clinch men's, women's titles

- **Cosmas Lagat** of Kenya and **Worknesh Alemu** of Ethiopia surprised pre-race favourites to win the men's and women's crowns respectively in the **USD 405,000 Tata Mumbai Marathon** in Mumbai.
- **Lagat**, winner of the **Sevilla** in 2016, made the **42.195-km** race in this coastal city his own over the last 10 km to storm his way home in 2 hours, 9 minutes and 15 seconds, the second-best in the 16-year history of the race.
- In second place was **Aychew Bantie** of Ethiopia who clocked **2 hours: 10 minutes and: 05 seconds**. The women's race Ethiopian Alemu in 2 hours: 25 minutes and: 45 seconds. **Gobena** came in second.
- Significantly, **India's Sudha Singh** finished on top among the Indian runners while setting at a personal best of **2 hours:34 minutes and: 56 seconds**, but also dipped well under the qualifying mark set by IAAF for the September-October Doha World Championships.

Malaysia stripped of world para swim event over Israel stance

- **Malaysia** has been stripped of the right to host the **2019 World Para Swimming Championships** for threatening to refuse to allow Israeli athletes to take part.
- The **International Paralympic Committee** said the decision was taken after the Malaysian authorities failed to provide the necessary guarantees that Israeli Para swimmers could participate, free from discrimination, and safely in the Championships. The championships, a qualifying event for the **2020 Tokyo Paralympics**, were due to take place in **Kuching** on **July 29-August 4**.

ICC ropes in Coca-Cola as official sponsor

- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** announced a five-year global partnership deal with beverage manufacturer **Coca-Cola Company**.
- The partnership will see **Coca-Cola's** brands becoming exclusive **non-alcoholic beverage partners** of the ICC until 2023.
- The five-year agreement includes all ICC events around the world including the **ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2019** in England and Wales, the **ICC men's and women's T20 World Cups** in Australia in 2020, the **ICC Women's World Cup 2021** in New Zealand and the **ICC Men's Cricket World Cup** in India in 2023 amongst other global tournaments.
- ICC has signed similar partnerships with alcobev brands, **Royal Stag** and **Bira 91**.

AWARDS



French World Cup champions awarded Legion d'Honneur

- The players in France's football team which last year won the World Cup have been awarded the Legion of Honour in the New Year's honours list.
- The 23 players, including star strikers Kylian Mbappe and Antoine Griezmann, each received France's top medal for their part in beating Croatia in the World Cup final in Moscow.
- The French team that won the 1998 World Cup also received the Legion of Honour.

Legion of Honour (National Order of the Legion of Honour) is the highest French order of merit for military and civil merits, established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte and retained by all the divergent governments and regimes later holding power in France, up to the present.

Smriti Mandhana wins ICC 'Women's Cricketer' and 'ODI Player of the year' awards

- India's stylish left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana has won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year and also been named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year, the International Cricket Council announced.
- The 22-year-old, who has also been named in the ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year and the ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year, scored 669 runs at an average of 66.90 in 12 ODIs and 622 runs at a strike-rate of 130.67 in 25 T20Is during the voting period, which ran from 1 January to 31 December 2018.

Govt to honour outstanding young entrepreneurs with National Entrepreneurship Awards

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship hosted third edition of the National Entrepreneurship Awards in New Delhi.
- The awards aim to recognize and honor outstanding young first-generation entrepreneurs and those who have contributed immensely in building the entrepreneurship ecosystem.
- A total of 43 awards were given this year. Speaking on the occasion, Mr Prabhu said, the government will provide full support to the young entrepreneurs to enhance their business.

Six professors awarded Infosys Prize 2018 for science and research

- The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) honoured six eminent professors for winning the Infosys Prize 2018 across different categories of science and research.

- The annual award includes a pure gold medal, a citation and a prize purse worth USD 100,000 (or its equivalent in the Indian rupees).
- The ISF honoured the winners of the Infosys Prize 2018 at an awards ceremony while also celebrating its 10th year milestone.

The Infosys Prize is an annual award given to scientists, researchers, engineers and social scientists of Indian Origin (not necessarily born in India) by the Infosys Science Foundation and ranks among the **highest monetary awards in India to recognize research**. The prize for each category includes a gold medallion, a citation certificate, and prize money of Rs. 65 Lakh (about US\$100,000). In 2008, the prize was jointly awarded by the Infosys Science Foundation and National Institute of Advanced Studies for mathematics.

Namita Gokhale wins Sushila Devi Literature Award

- Writer Namita Gokhale has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel "Things to Leave Behind".
- She was awarded in the 'Best Book of Fiction Written by a Woman Author' category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF).

Exhibitor of the Year Award for DRDO at 106th Indian Science Congress

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) pavilion received 'Exhibitor of the Year Award' at 106th Indian Science Congress held at Lovely Professional University (LPU), Phagwara, and Punjab.
- The pavilion narrated the saga of self-reliance & national pride with the 'Make in India' spirit was a big attraction among people, especially students visiting the pavilion and getting opportunity to interact with DRDO scientists.

WHO Goodwill ambassador Yohei Sasakawa to get Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018

- Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018 will be conferred on Yohei Sasakawa who is Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organization for Leprosy Elimination.
- The award will be given to Mr Sasakawa in recognition of his work towards the eradication of the disease in India and across the world.
- Ekal Abhiyan Trust has been chosen for the award for the year 2017 while Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sulabh International will share the award for 2016. Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari bagged the award for 2015.

The International Gandhi Peace Prize, named after Mahatma Gandhi, is awarded annually by the Government of India. As a tribute to the ideals espoused by Gandhi, the Government of India launched the International Gandhi Peace Prize in 1995 on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Mohandas Gandhi. This is an annual award given to individuals and institutions for their contributions towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violence and other Gandhian methods. Julius Kambarage Nyerere was the first person to win this award.

Detained Chinese lawyer Yu Wensheng wins Franco-German human rights award

- A detained Chinese rights lawyer has won a European human rights award for his "exceptional contribution" to the protection and promotion of human rights.
- Yu Wensheng, who is in pretrial detention on subversion charges, has been held **incommunicado** by authorities in Jiangsu's Xuzhou city for more than a year.
- The French and German ambassadors to Beijing have granted a human rights award to a detained Chinese lawyer, with his wife picking up the prize on his behalf.

First-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award presented to PM

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the “first ever” Philip Kotler Presidential Award by the World Marketing Summit India, whose event in New Delhi in December was co-sponsored by a public sector company, GAIL India, and partnered by Baba Ramdev’s Patanjali group, Republic TV (co-owned by BJP MP Rajeev Chandrashekar), and a number of other companies.
- The Award focuses on the triple-bottom-line of People, Profit and Planet.
- Prof. Philip Kotler is a world-renowned Professor of Marketing at Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management. Owing to his ill-health, he deputed Dr. Jagdish Sheth of EMORY University, Georgia, USA, to confer the award.
- While the other five honours were bestowed by individual countries (Saudi Arabia, Palestine, South Korea and Afghanistan) and the UN, little information has been shared about the provenance of the latest award, or the organisation presenting it.
- The awards are named after a celebrated marketing and management guru, who is also the founder of the World Marketing Summit (WMS) Group.

World Marketing Summit Group was founded by Philip Kotler in 2011. The WMS Group signed an agreement with Kotler Impact (its own marketing and sales partner) and Suslence Research International Institute Pvt Ltd, an Aligarh-based company established in 2017, to hold WMS in India for three years. In 2018, the website adds, Kotler also gave permission to use his name for awards to an organising committee, comprising Kotler Impact and the Department of Management Studies at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad.

Noted writer Neelum Saran Gour bags The Hindu Prize for fiction

- Noted English writer Neelum Saran Gour, author of Requiem in Raga Janki and Bengali writer and socio-political activist Manoranjan Byapari, author of interrogating my Chandal Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit, bagged The Hindu Prize 2018 for fiction and non-fiction respectively at The Hindu Lit for Life 2019.

The Hindu Literary Prize or The Hindu Best Fiction Award, established in 2010, is an Indian literary award sponsored by The Hindu Literary Review which is part of the newspaper The Hindu. It recognizes Indian works in English and English translation. The first year, 2010, the award was called The Hindu Best Fiction Award.

Indian-American Sikh Gurinder Singh Khalsa presented with Rosa Parks Trailblazer award

- An Indian-American philanthropist and entrepreneur, Gurinder Singh Khalsa, has been presented with the prestigious Rosa Park Trailblazer award for his campaign that forced US authorities change their policy towards headgear of the Sikh community. Indianapolis-based Khalsa was presented the award for his continued demonstration of courage and compassion.
- In 2007, Khalsa was refused access to board an airplane because of his turban, organisers of the event said. Thereafter Khalsa mobilised more than 67,000 people nationwide for petitions and took the issue to all the way to the US Congress, which forced Transportation and Security Administration (TSA) to change its headgear policy towards the Sikh community.

India born, Dr. Rattan Lal honoured with 2019 Japan Prize

- The Japan Prize Foundation announced the laureates of the 2019 Japan Prize, who have pushed the envelope in their respective fields of "Materials and Production" and "Biological Production, Ecology".
- India born, Dr. Rattan Lal, Distinguished University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A. is being honored for his work in identifying technological options adapted to various

ecosystems through his intensive basic and applied research on processes and factors of soil degradation caused by inappropriate biological production.

The **Japan Prize** is awarded to people from all parts of the world whose "original and outstanding achievements in science and technology are recognized as having advanced the frontiers of knowledge and served the cause of peace and prosperity for mankind." The **Prize** is presented by the **Japan Prize Foundation** since its inception in 1985.

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Rao chosen for Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials

- Eminent scientist and recipient of Bharat Ratna C N R Rao has been chosen for the first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research, given by the Centre for Advanced Materials of the UAE.
- The prize committee unanimously decided to award this to Professor Rao of the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research.

The James C. McGroddy Prize for New Materials is a prize that has been awarded annually by the American Physical Society since 1975, but was only given that name following its endowment by IBM in 1999. Prior to that it was known as the International Prize for New Materials. The recipients are chosen for "Outstanding achievement in the science and application of new materials". The prize is named after James C. McGroddy, himself a winner of APS's George E. Pake Prize in 1995, and comes with a cash award of \$10,000.

Green Book wins best film at PGA

- **Green Book** took home best film at the Producers Guild Awards boosting its chances at next month's **Oscars** after it picked up three wins at the Golden Globes.
- The **civil rights drama-comedy** starring **Mahershala Ali** and **Viggo Mortensen** beat **Roma**, **A Star Is Born**, and **Bohemian Rhapsody**, which **won the top award at the Globes**.
- **Green Book** recounts the unlikely friendship between **Don Shirley**, a black piano virtuoso, and his driver, **Tony Lip**, during a concert tour in 1962.

BJP MP Anurag Thakur honoured with Sansad Ratna Award

- **Anurag Thakur**, **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)** leader and party's **chief whip in the Lok Sabha**, was **bestowed with Sansad Ratna Award** for distinguished performance as a parliamentarian.
- He is the first MP from the **BJP**, besides being the only Member of Parliament from north India, to have been awarded the Jury Committee Special Award.

Rashtriya Bal Puraskar: President Kovind awards 26 children for their bravery and innovation

- This year, the **National Bravery Award** was merged with the **Bal Shakti Puraskar** and **Bal Kalyan Puraskar**. More than 783 applications were received and **only 26 bright minds were shortlisted for the esteemed award which was given by President Ramnath Kovind** on January 22, 2019.
- **Bal Shakti Puraskar** shall be given in the following fields: **Innovation, Social Service, Scholastic, Sports, Art & Culture and Bravery**. The award carries a medal, a cash prize of **Rs. 1,00,000/-**, book vouchers worth **Rs. 10,000/-**, a certificate and a citation.

President Kovind confers Pravasi Bharatiya awards

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** conferred the **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman** awards on **28 eminent personalities and two organisations of the Indian diaspora** for their contributions and achievements in various fields.
- According to a list provided by the External Affairs Ministry, the awards were conferred in the fields of **social, community and public service, business, business management, entrepreneurship, chartered accountancy, training and simulation, science, medical science, engineering, technology, architecture, academics, arts and diplomacy**.
- **Nihal Singh Agar**, known for his services to the **Hindu community in Australia**, was conferred the award under the category of **social service**.
- **Two organisations -- Indian Community Association of Egypt and Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha -- and Swami Saradaprabhananda of the Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa**, got the award for **community service**.
- **Himanshu Gulati**, a Member of Parliament in **Norway**, and **Shamim Parkar Khan of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** were honoured for **public service**.

Government institutes Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar

- **Government** has instituted an annual award titled **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar**. The award is to be announced every year on **23rd January** on the birth anniversary of **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose**.
- **All Indian Citizens and organizations**, who have excelled in areas of **Disaster Management**; like **Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Rescue, Response, Relief, Rehabilitation, Research/ Innovations or Early Warning** are **eligible for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar**. The award scheme for the year 2019 was given wide publicity and nominations of the award were solicited from **19th Dec 2018 onwards**. Last date for

receipt of Nominations was 07th Jan 2019. The response to the award scheme was overwhelming with over 300 nominations from Institutions and Individuals.

- For the year 2019, 8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) located at Ghaziabad has been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for its commendable work in Disaster Management. The Award recipient will receive a certificate and a cash prize of Rs. 51 lakh:

Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra awarded Saraswati Samman 2017

- Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra has been awarded Saraswati Samman, 2017, for his poetry collection in Gujarati named “Vakhar”.
- This is the 27th edition of the prestigious award instituted by K.K.Birla foundation given every year to an outstanding work of an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years in any of the languages mentioned in Schedule 8 of the constitution.

Saraswati Samman is an annual award for outstanding prose or poetry literary works in any 22 Indian language listed in Schedule VIII of the Constitution of India. It is named after an Indian goddess of learning and is considered to be among the highest literary awards in India. The inaugural award was given to Harivanshrai 'Bachchan' for his four volume autobiography, Kya Bhooloon Kya Yaad Karoon, Needa Ka Nirman Phir, Basere Se Door and Dashdwar se Sopan Tak.

Pranab Mukherjee gets Bharat Ratna along with Nanaji Deshmukh, Bhupen Hazarika

- Former president Pranab Mukherjee was conferred with the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award in India. The award was also conferred on Bharatiya Jana Sangh leader Nanaji Deshmukh and legendary singer-composer Bhupen Hazarika posthumously.
- Mukherjee served as president between 2012 and 2017. Fondly known as ‘Pranab Da’, he has been a senior leader in the Congress and had held several ministerial portfolios. He was also the finance minister from 2009-2012 under the prime ministership of Manmohan Singh.
- Nanaji Deshmukh was a Sangh Parivar veteran, founder member of the Janata Party and one of the seniormost members of the Bharatiya Janata Party. A social activist, Nanaji played an important role in carrying out social restructuring programme in over 500 villages of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. He passed away on February 27, 2010 in Chitrakoot.
- Bhupen Hazarika was a singer and filmmaker, popularly known as Sudhakantha. He was born in Sadiya, Assam. Known for his flawless baritone and his trademark Nepali cap, he was respected nationwide, as a great balladeer and also came to be known as the ‘Bard of the Brahmaputra’.
- Hazarika lent his voice to the film “Gandhi To Hitler”, where he sang Mahatma Gandhi’s favourite bhajan ‘Vaishnav jan’. For his mammoth body of work and contribution to Indian cinema, he received the National Film Award for Best Music Direction (1975), Padmashri (1997), Padmabhushan (2001), and posthumously, the Padma Vibhushan (2012), among other awards.
- Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and founder of Banaras Hindu University Madan Mohan Malviya were given the award by the Narendra Modi government in 2015.

Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of the Republic of India. Instituted in 1954, the award is conferred "in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order", without distinction of race, occupation, position, or sex. The award was originally limited to achievements in the arts, literature, science, and public services, but the government expanded the criteria to include "any field of human endeavour" in December 2011. The first recipients of the Bharat Ratna were politician C. Rajagopalachari, philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, and scientist C. V. Raman, who were honoured in 1954. In 2014, cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, then aged 40, became the youngest recipient. Though usually conferred on India-born citizens, the Bharat Ratna has been awarded to one naturalised citizen, Mother Teresa, and to two non-Indians, Pakistan national Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and former South African President Nelson Mandela.

Union Government announces Padma Awards 2019

- President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian awards of the category, to 112 people from various disciplines. The awards were conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.
- The list, which was approved by the President, comprises of four Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri awardees. Twenty-one of the awardees are women, 11 persons are from the category of foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI; there are three posthumous awardees and one transgender person.

Jayant Kaikini's 'No Presents Please' wins prestigious DSC Prize

- Kannada poet and short story writer Jayant Kaikini was named the winner of the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for his translated work "No Presents Please."
- Jayant beat internationally-acclaimed writers including Kamila Shamsie and Mohsin Hamid to win the prize and the generous purse of \$25,000.
- The announcement was made at the Tata Steel Kolkata Literary Meet at the iconic Victoria Memorial Hall in Kolkata. This marks the first time a translated work has won the prestigious prize.

DSC Prize for South Asian Literature is an international literary prize awarded annually to writers of any ethnicity or nationality writing about South Asia themes such as culture, politics, history, or people. It is for an original full-length novel written in English, or translated into English. The DSC Prize was instituted by Surina Narula and Manhad Narula in 2010 and its vision is to showcase and reward the best writing about the South Asian region and bring it to a global audience. H.M. Naqvi is the author of Home Boy, winner of the inaugural DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Arunima Sinha scales new heights, becomes first woman amputee to climb Mt Vinson in Antarctica

- Indian mountaineer Arunima Sinha has once again done her country proud by becoming the first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
- In 2013, Sinha had broken the world record by becoming the first woman amputee to climb Mount Everest.

Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi elected speaker as democrats take control of House of Representatives

- In US, Veteran Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, considered an ardent supporter of India-US ties, has been elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives for the second time, thus becoming the most powerful elected woman in America.

Justice T B N Radhakrishnan sworn in as Chief Justice of Telangana HC

- The Telangana High Court has come into being with justices taking oath. Justice T B N Radhakrishnan was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court.
- Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan administered oath of office to him. Later, Justice Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office to 12 justices of Telangana High Court on the premises of the High Court.

Justice AK Sikri nominated as Executive Chairman of NALSA

- Justice AK Sikri was nominated as the Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- President Ram Nath Kovind nominated Justice Sikri as Executive Chairman of NALSA with effect from December 31, 2018. The post got vacant after the retirement of Justice Madan B Lokur.

J-K sets up law commission, Justice Hanjura appointed its founding chairperson

- The Jammu and Kashmir administration set up a law commission with Justice (Retd) M K Hanjura as its founding chairperson, to identify redundant and obsolete laws that can be repealed and suggest measures for quick redress of public grievances.
- According to an order issued by the Law Department, the term of the Jammu and Kashmir State Law Commission will be for three years. It will have a chairperson, two full-time members and two part-time members.

Pranav R Mehta Becomes the First Indian to Head Global Solar Council, Headquartered in Washington DC

- A visionary in the field of Solar Energy and the chairman of National Solar Energy Federation, Shri Pranav R Mehta, has taken over as the president of Global Solar Council (GSC) from January 1, 2019. The GSC has its headquarters in Washington D.C., USA.
- The Global Solar Council (GSC) was launched on December 6, 2015, following the historic United Nations Climate Change Conference (UN COP 21). The GSC came into being as International Coalition of more than 30 nations, utilising maximum solar energy, decided to harness the renewable energy for the greater good.

Malala pens new book

- Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai has written a new book, charting her experiences travelling the world and visiting refugee camps. Titled “We are Displaced”.

Trump appoints Charles Kupperman as his deputy national security advisor

- US President Donald Trump has appointed former defence executive Charles Kupperman as his deputy national security advisor.
- National Security Advisor John Bolton said, Kupperman has been an advisor to him for more than 30 years, including during my tenure as National Security Advisor to President Trump.

Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu elected to US Congress to run for President in 2020

- Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu elected to US Congress and a four-time Democratic lawmaker, has said she will run for President in 2020, becoming the latest member of her party to challenge Republican President Donald Trump.
- Tulsi Gabbard is an American politician serving as the U.S. Representative for Hawaii's 2nd congressional district since 2013. She is the first Samoan-American member and the first Hindu member of the United States Congress.

India's Satyarup becomes world's youngest mountaineer to climb 7 peaks, 7 volcano summits

- Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley. With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man to climb the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.

Jaideep Govind appointed Secretary General, NHRC

- Senior bureaucrat Jaideep Govind was appointed Secretary General, National Human Rights Commission.
- Govind, a 1984 batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, is at present Special Secretary and Financial Adviser in Ministry of Rural Development.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved his appointment as the Secretary General, NHRC.

C.P. Joshi new Rajasthan Speaker

- Veteran Congress leader C.P. Joshi was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly.
- The House passed the motion for Mr. Joshi's election to the post by a voice vote.

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- **Veteran Congress leader C.P. Joshi** was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly.
- The **House** passed the motion for Mr. Joshi's election to the post by a voice vote.

Kerala student made Commonwealth Learning's Goodwill Ambassador

- **Karthyayani Amma**, 97, who had bagged the first rank in the 'Aksharalaksham' literacy exam conducted by the Kerala government in November 2018, has been honoured by the Commonwealth of Learning. The Canada-based organisation which works for the promotion of education in Commonwealth countries declared the Alappuzha native as their goodwill ambassador.
- Commonwealth of Learning's goodwill Vice-President **Balasubramaniam** visited **Karthyayani Amma**, who is busy preparing for her Class 4 equivalent exam, to hand over the award in person. And now, the grandmother from Neyyattinkara in Alappuzha district has been chosen to be the Commonwealth of Learning Goodwill Ambassador.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank reappoints Parthasarathi Mukherjee as its MD for two more years

- Private sector lender **Lakshmi Vilas Bank** has reappointed **Parthasarathi Mukherjee** as its managing director for two more years.
- **Mukherjee's** extended term begins on **January 25**. The reappointed has received the final approval from RBI.

Piyush Goyal named interim Finance & Corporate Affairs minister

- **Piyush Goyal** was appointed interim finance minister a week ahead of the **February 1** interim budget presentation, with **Arun Jaitley** undergoing surgery in the US. **Goyal** will therefore likely present the budget, traditionally a vote on account in an election year.
- Currently the minister for railways and coal, **Goyal** will also be interim minister for corporate affairs, the government said. **Jaitley** will remain a minister without portfolio. The President of India, as advised by the prime minister, hereby directed that during the period of indisposition of **Arun Jaitley**, minister; the portfolios of minister of finance and minister of corporate affairs held by him, be temporarily assigned to **Shri Piyush Goyal**, in addition to his existing portfolios.

Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh appointed as Regional Director WHO SE Asia

- **Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh** has been appointed Regional Director for World Health Organization South-East Asia, for a second five-year term. The WHO Executive Board unanimously endorsed **Dr Khetrpal Singh**, who was earlier also unanimously nominated by 11 Member countries of the Region for another five years.
- Congratulating her, **WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, said, "the first woman to become Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia Region, you have provided dynamic leadership in a Region that accounts for a quarter of the world's population but a disproportionate burden of diseases. Under your leadership, the Region has made remarkable progress."
- Outlining her vision for the second term that begins on **1 February 2019**, **Dr Khetrpal Singh** said sustaining the gains, accelerating progress to finish the unfinished agenda and innovating, would be the approach to ensure health and wellbeing of the 1.8 billion people across the Region.

Sindhu is PNB MetLife brand ambassador

- **PNB MetLife**, a life insurance company, signed **P.V. Sindhu** as its brand ambassador. She is respected by contemporaries, created a fan following across generations with athleticism and aggression on court.
- The shuttler conquered some of the biggest names in women's badminton.

Pakistan appoints first ever female Hindu civil judge

- Pakistan has appointed the country's first ever Hindu female civil judge after she passed an examination for induction of judicial officers.
- Suman Kumari, who hails from Qambar-Shahdadkot in Sindh province, will serve in her native district.

Obituary

Mary Oliver, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet who found solace in nature, dies

- Mary Oliver, a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet whose lyrical descriptions of the lamp-eyed owl, the white-toothed bear and the lilies by the pond evoked natural wonders with a startling clarity of vision, while suggesting that life was a matter of learning to love the world even in the face of ugliness and pain, died Jan. 17 at her home in Hobe Sound, Fla.
- Mary Jane Oliver as an American poet who won the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. In 2007 The New York Times described her as "far and away, this country's best-selling poet."

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1956 Olympics gold medallist Raghbir Bhola passes away

- Former India hockey player Raghbir Singh Bhola, a two-time Olympic medallist, has passed away. Bhola, who represented India in the 1956 Melbourne and 1960 Rome Olympics, winning a gold and silver medals respectively for the country.
- He successfully captained the Indian Air Force hockey and Services team from 1954-60. In 2000, he was honoured with the Arjuna Award for his achievements in hockey.

Siddaganga Mutt seer passes away

- Dr. Shivakumara Swami, the 111-year-old head of the Siddaganga Mutt, the most revered Lingayat seer, the head pontiff of five-centuries-old Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru passed away.
- Popularly known as 'Nadedaaduva Devaru' (Walking God), Shivakumara Swami was initiated into Viraktha Ashrama in 1930. Karnataka government has declared State-wide public holiday.

Jnanpith awardee, acclaimed author Krishna Sobti passes away

- Acclaimed Hindi fiction writer and essayist Krishna Sobti died in New Delhi due to prolonged illness. Sobti had won the Sahitya Akademi award in 1980 for her novel 'Zindaginama'. She was also conferred with the Jnanpith in 2017 for her contribution to Indian literature.
- Sobti was best known for her 1966 novel 'Mitro Marajani', which talked about a married woman's sexuality.

George Fernandes, Former Defence Minister passed away

- George Fernandes, a former Defence Minister of India, has passed away. He had been unwell and bedridden over the past few years. George Fernandes served as Defence Minister between 1998 and 2004.
- One of the most prominent leaders of the socialist movement in the 1970s, George Fernandes was a senior Janata Dal leader before he founded the Samata Party. During the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led government, Mr Fernandes held several ministerial portfolios including communications, industry and railways.

MISCELLANEOUS

West Bengal government announces two initiatives for farmers

- The West Bengal government announced two welfare initiatives for farmers. Both initiatives, which are part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme, will come into effect from New Year's Day.
- The first of the two initiatives will provide Rs 2 lakh to the family of a deceased farmer. Under the second initiative, farmers would get Rs 2,500 twice a year for growing a single crop on one acre of land.

Credit flow to agriculture increased by 57 per cent

- Agricultural credit flow has increased by 57 per cent to Rs 11 lakh crore in the last 4 years. Interest subsidy has also been increased by one and half times to 15 thousand crore rupees. The Ministry said, to increase the income of farmers, 546 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO) has been constituted.
- For landless farmers, the Joint Liability Group has been increased from around six lakh to over 27 lakh. The Ministry said, in its efforts to double the income of the farmers by 2022, Minimum Support Prices of 24 crops have been raised by 1.5 times of the production cost.

Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair declared as an authorized Immigration Check post

- Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair has been declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/exit from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers.
- This decision of the Union Government will open up the Port Blair Airport for direct international flight and immigration facilities.
- For this purpose, the Superintendent of Police (CID), Andaman and Nicobar Police has been appointed as the 'Civil Authority' for the purpose of the immigration check post.

Govt Releases 6 Crore LPG Connections under PMUY

- Under the PMUY scheme, the government provides a subsidy of Rs 1,600 to state-owned fuel retailers for every free LPG gas connection that they give to poor households. This subsidy is intended to cover the security fee for the cylinder and the fitting charges.

Hundred percent household electrification achieved in 25 states

- The Nation has achieved yet another milestone in the power sector with completion of electrification in hundred percent household in 25 states at the year end.
- Now, only about 10.48 Lakh households are left to be electrified in 4 States viz., Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Chhattisgarh. These States are also taking all concerted efforts to achieve, at the earliest, saturation of household electrification in their respective States.

Ten-day Indian Panorama Film Festival to open on 4th January, 2019

- The Indian Panorama Film Festival is being organized from 4th to 13th January, 2019.
- The ten-day Festival is being organized by the Directorate of Film Festivals, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting at Siri Fort Auditorium II, New Delhi.
- The directors of the opening feature film 'Olu' and of the opening non-feature film 'Kharvas' viz. Shri Shaji N Karun and Shri Aditya Suhas Jambhale will be present on the occasion.

Nobel Laureates inaugurate Children Science Congress at Indian Science Congress, 2019

- As a part of the on-going five-day Indian Science Congress, Rashtriya Kishore Vaigyanik Sammelan (Children Science Congress) was inaugurated in Jalandhar by Nobel Laureates Avram Hershko from Israel and F.Duncan M.Haldane from USA.

“Jai jawan, jai kisan, jai vigyan, jai anusandhan”- slogan of new India

- Indian Science Congress (ISC) 2019 was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi while delivering the inaugural address, recalled the great Indian scientists of the past, including Acharya J.C. Bose, C.V. Raman, Meghnad Saha, and S.N. Bose.
- Narendra Modi also recalled Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri ji and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji and said that Shastri Ji gave us the slogan: "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan," while Atal ji added "Jai Vigyan" to it. He said that now the time has come to take a step further, by adding "Jai Anusandhan."
- " A four-day 106th Session of Indian Science Congress, 2019 is being held from 3rd to 7th January, 2019 at Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, and Punjab.

CM Ashok Gehlot approves amendments in Rajasthan Judicial Service Rules, 2010

- Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has approved the proposal for amendments made in Rules-12 and Rule-17 of the Rajasthan Judicial Service Rules, 2010. The decision was taken in the State Cabinet's meeting held under the chairmanship of Gehlot. According to the existing provisions for state services, one can now have access to the benefit of age exemption in the Rajasthan judicial services with amendments made in the existing rules,
- As per the Rajasthan Judicial Service (Amendment) Rule 2018, the minimum age limit for general category in Rajasthan judicial service has been reduced from 23 to 21 years and maximum age limit is increased from 35 to 40 years.

UP university to set up first goat fertility lab in the state

- Aiming to supplement farmer's income in Uttar Pradesh, the Deen Dayal Veterinary University proposes to set up the first goat fertility lab in the state under a novel project funded by the central government, its vice chancellor K M L Pathak said.
- The Union government, under Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojna, has transferred Rs 22 crore to the university through the state Government for establishing UP's first goat fertility lab and allied system.

Veteran actor-writer Kader Khan passes away in Canada

- Veteran actor-writer Kader Khan passed away in Canada.
- Kader Khan was an Afghan-born Indian-Canadian film actor, screenwriter, comedian, and director. Sahitya Akademi Award for his work and contributions to Hindi Film industry and Cinema.

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad Inaugurates Science Communicators' Meet at the Indian Science Congress, 2019

- As a part of the on-going Indian Science Congress, 2019, Science Communicators' Meet was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Law & Justice and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad at Lovely Professional University in Jalandhar.
- India is now at the 6th position in scientific publications and 10th in patent filing. "India is now 3rd most attractive investment destination for technology transactions.

Andhra Pradesh Minister receives award for Polavaram Project

- Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Devineni Umamaheswar Rao has received the 'Central Board of Irrigation and Power Award' for better planning and construction of Polavaram Irrigation Project in the state at Lodhi Road, New Delhi.
- Rao was honoured by the Minister of State (IC) Power and New and Renewable Energy Raj Kumar Singh.

Union Minister for HRD Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurates 27th edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair

- Union Minister for Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the 27th edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair 2019 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- Sharjah is the Guest of Honour this year at the Book Fair.

Union Ministry launches Swachh Survekshan 2019, Survey Toolkit, ODF+ And ODF++ Protocol, Swachh Manch

- While the **Swachh Survekshan 2019 survey toolkit** contains the detailed survey methodology and component indicators with scores to help cities prepare themselves for taking the survey, **ODF plus and ODF plus plus protocol focusses on sustaining ODF tag by ensuring toilet functionality, cleanliness and maintenance and fecal sludge management.**
- A web portal 'Swachh Manch' was **launched** with a motive to bring together different stakeholders under one roof. It is for the citizens to connect and contribute to the overall cleanliness of their respective areas.
- **This year, cities will be ranked out of the total of 5,000 marks and data will be equally collected from four different sources** – citizen feedback, direct observation, service level progress and certification for garbage and open defecation free cities.
- **Under service level progress, all the cities will be evaluated on seven different parameters:** Collection and transportation of municipal solid waste (27 per cent), Processing and disposal of municipal solid waste (30 per cent), Sustainable sanitation (25 per cent), IEC (Information, Education and Communication) (5 per cent), Capacity building (3 per cent), Innovation and best practices (5 per cent) and Bye-laws (5 per cent).

Secunderabad Railway Station Hoists Tricolour, South Central Zone's First

- Secunderabad Railway Station became the **first railway station of South Central Railway (SCR) zone to hoist a huge tricolour on a 100-foot tall pole** at its main entrance in Hyderabad.
- This is in keeping with the **Railway Board's order to hoist the national flag at A1 category railway stations.**

President of India Confers the Honorary Rank of General of the Indian Army on General Purna Chandra Thapa

- The **President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, conferred the Honorary Rank of General of the Indian Army on Sukirtimaya Rashtradeep General Purna Chandra Thapa, Chief of the Army Staff, Nepalese Army,** for his commendable military prowess and immeasurable contribution to fostering Nepal's long and friendly association with India, at a special Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Bimal Roy Memorial and Film Society to honour Farooq Sheikh, Asha Parekh

- **Veterans Farooq Sheikh and Asha Parekh are set to be honoured by the Bimal Roy Memorial and Film Society to commemorate the 52nd death anniversary of the renowned filmmaker.**

- The organisation was instituted 22 years ago in memory of the late filmmaker. Its **aim is to reward unsung heroes of the film industry.**

9-day long International Kite Festival kicks off in Ahmedabad

- **In Gujarat**, the nine-day long international kite festival kicked off at Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad.
- **About 500 kite fliers** 13 different states of the country and 19 cities of Gujarat are also taking part.
- The festival is also planned at Vadodara, Kevadiya, Dwaraka, Surat, Rajkot, Jetpur, Songadh, Saputara and Dhordo.

NCR launches mobile app to help people navigate through Prayagraj city during Kumbh Mela

- The North Central Railway, NCR has **launched a mobile application** to help people navigate through Prayagraj city during Kumbh Mela starting from January 15.
- The 'Rail Kumbh Seva Mobile App' will also provide information regarding all the 'Mela special' trains that will be run during the period.

HRD introduces 70-point grading index to assess quality of school education in states

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development has **introduced a 70-point grading index** to assess the quality of school education offered by states.
- The ministry has also decided to **print more books** of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

Five-judge SC Bench to hear Ayodhya pleas

- The Supreme Court notified that a **five-judge Bench**, consisting of the incumbent Chief Justice of India **Ranjan Gogoi** and the next four future Chief Justices of India in line of seniority to **hear the Ayodhya title dispute appeals** on January 10.
- The Bench, besides Chief Justice Gogoi, will have **Justices S.A. Bobde, N.V. Ramana, U.U. Lalit and D.Y. Chandrachud.**

PM launches Gangajal Project to Provide Better and More Assured Water Supply in Agra

- The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched a series of development projects worth **Rs. 2900 Crores** for the Agra city and the adjoining areas.
- The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, **Gangajal project**, which will **provide Agra with better and more assured water supply, at an estimated cost of Rs.2880 crores.** Gangajal project aims to bring 140 cusecs of Ganga water to Agra. This will help meet the drinking water demands in the city.

Government plans to rename Indian Forest Service ahead of 2019 election

- Ahead of parliamentary elections, the Centre has **proposed another pro-tribal measure – renaming of the Indian Forest Service** as Indian Forest and Tribal Service.
- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has initiated an inter-ministerial consultation note to rename the service and also train its cadre to be more receptive towards tribals and forest dwellers.

EC panel submits report on digital media and campaigning during last 48 hours before polls

- The Election Commission appointed Committee has submitted its report **on digital media and campaigning during last 48 hours before polls** to the Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora.

- The Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Sr. Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha.
- The panel was mandated to review and suggest modifications in the provisions of Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act dealing with campaigning in the last 48 hours and related provisions of the Model Code of Conduct.

Two new AIIMS for Jammu and Kashmir, One for Gujarat

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for a proposal for establishing three new AIIMS at Vijaynagar, Samba, Jammu at a cost of Rs 1661 Crore; Awantipura, Pulwama, Kashmir at a cost of Rs 1828 Crore and Rajkot, Gujarat at a cost of Rs 1195 Crore.

29th Indian Paint Conference - 2019; The Largest Trade Show of Paint Industry to Be Held in Agra, UP From 11th to 13th January 2019

- The Indian Paint Association (IPA), the apex body of the country's paint industry announced that the 29th biennial Indian Paint Conference to be held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh from 11th to 13th January 2019. This would be the largest trade show of the estimated INR 500 billion (50,000 Crore) Indian Paints & Coatings industry.

Polavaram enters Guinness Book of Records

- Polavaram project-the life line of Andhra Pradesh, the concrete works of spill channel successfully entered Guinness Book of World Records by completing 32,315.5 Cubic meter of concrete works in a span of 24 hours.
- The Polavaram project also broke the earlier records for largest and continuous concrete pouring.

Six States sign agreement for Renukaji Multipurpose Dam Project

- An agreement for Renukaji Dam Multipurpose Project will be signed among the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. The project is aimed at meeting the drinking water needs of these states.
- Three storage projects are proposed to be constructed on the river Yamuna and two of its tributaries - Tons and Giri in the hilly regions of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

Shri Manoj Sinha inaugurates the conference on “M2M/ IoT Enabling Smart Infrastructure”

- Shri Manoj Sinha, Minister of State for Communications (Independent Charge and Minister of State for Railways inaugurated a one-day conference hosted by the Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC), New Delhi on “M2M/ IoT Enabling Smart Infrastructure”.

Over 1 lakh youths offered job during skill summit in Ranchi

- Over 1 lakh youths have been given jobs in the private sector during Global Skill Summit 2019 in Jharkhand's capital Ranchi.
- Jharkhand became the first state to achieve the feat of giving jobs to over one lakh youths in the private sector.

Three-day 6th ‘Women of India Organic Festival’ organized by WCD Ministry to begin at Leisure Valley, Chandigarh

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development is organised the three-day 6th ‘Women of India Organic Festival’ at Leisure Valley, Sector-10, Chandigarh, to celebrate and promote women farmers and entrepreneurs in the organic sector from the remotest parts of India.
- The Women of India Organic Festival has been held annually in New Delhi since 2015, and makes its debut in Chandigarh this year.

Odisha: Patnaik announces 0 % interest loan for SHGs

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced zero percent interest loan for Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Mission Shakti scheme of state government introduced for women's financial inclusion and development.
- Mission Shakti was launched in 2001 as a project aiming economic empowerment of women through self help groups and providing them bank loans at low interest for livelihood opportunities. At present, around 70 lakh women are working with over 6 lakh SHGs with 5,000 crore savings and 2,000 crores annual bank exposure.

Prakash Utsav of Guru Gobind Singh being celebrated

- The 352nd birth anniversary of Guru Govind Singh is being celebrated as Prakash Utsav in various parts of the country.
- Born at Patna Sahib in 1666, Guru Govind Singh was the 10th Sikh guru. He succeeded his father Guru Tegh Bahadur Singh as leader of Sikhs at the age of just nine.

2-day Global Aviation Summit 2019 to take off in Mumbai

- A two-day Global Aviation Summit 2019 takes place in Mumbai.
- Union Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu said this was the first-of-its-kind event in the world with participation from more than 86 countries.
- The Global Aviation Summit with a theme “Flying for all - especially the next 6 Billion”, organised by Ministry of Civil Aviation in association with FICCI.

Government to launch an end-to-end prediction system for predicting thunderstorms/lightning by April 2019

- India Meteorological Department will be implementing an end-to-end prediction system for predicting thunderstorms/lightning by April 2019.
- Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) and IMD are developing prediction tools for thunderstorm/lightning.
- IITM Pune has already installed 48 lightning sensors around the country which can locate the thunderstorm/lightning activities on real time.
- IITM Pune also developed a Mobile App called “DAMINI” to give alerts on impending lightning activity over the area.

President of India inaugurates Gandhian Resurgence Summit in Prayagraj

- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind visited Uttar Pradesh (Prayagraj) to inaugurate the Gandhian Resurgence Summit.
- This Summit is organised by the Parmarth Niketan, the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance.

Government to set up over 460 more Eklavya Model Residential Schools across the country

- The government will soon set up over 460 more Eklavya Model Residential Schools across the country.
- Eklavya Model Residential Schools have expanded into a major education system in the country after Vidyalaya and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas.

Second World Orange Festival begins in Nagpur

- The second World Orange Festival was organised in Nagpur to 21 of this month.
- The festival, while offering its famed oranges to the world, will also showcase and brand the exquisite fruit in order to boost its export.

PM dedicates Kollam bypass, Kerala to the Nation; also launches development projects worth over Rs 1,500 cr in Odisha

- The Kollam Bypass on the National Highway-66 considerably reduces travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram, besides avoiding traffic congestion in Kollam town.
- Notably, this is the first National Highway project in the country taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership.
- The 13-kilometre-long two-lane bypass is constructed at a cost of 352 crore rupees. It has three major bridges over the Ashtamudi lake, having a total length of 1540 metres and an underpass.

Government forms GoM for GST issues in real estate

- Government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel will be the convener of the GoM.
- Finance Ministers of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the Panchayat Minister of Goa will be the members.

Chennai Traffic Police introduces robots for traffic management

- The Chennai Traffic Police inducted a road safety robot into its fold.
- Named ROADEO, the robot will make the pedestrians, especially children; feel safe while crossing the roads.
- It will also ease the work of traffic police, as these robots can be integrated with the traffic signals, as well as can be operated manually, through a Bluetooth app.

National Wildlife Board clears ONGC Trishna gas project

- The state-owned ONGC Tripura Asset would soon start extracting natural gas from Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary in Belonia subdivision of Gomati district following National Wildlife Board's clearance of its proposal.
- We have discovered 10-12 gas bearing wells long back in Trishna Wildlife sanctuary. As the gas bearing zones are in the wildlife sanctuary, we needed permission from the National Wildlife Board.

Prabhu inaugurates 10th edition of India Rubber Expo 2019

- Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 in Mumbai.
- The three-day event held at the Bombay Exhibition Centre is one of the most anticipated events in the rubber industry's calendar.

PMRPY crossed milestone of one crore beneficiaries as on Jan 14

- The Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana, PMRPY has crossed the milestone of one crore beneficiaries as on the 14th of this month.
- The Centre's flagship scheme launched on 7th August, 2016 incentivises employers to promote employment generation.
- Under the scheme, government pays full employers' contribution of 12 per cent towards Employees' Provident Fund and Employees' Pension Scheme for a period of 3 years to new employees registered with EPFO, with salary up to 15,000 rupees per month.

Green nod for Telangana's Rs 13,384 cr Sita Ram Irrigation project

- **Telangana government** has been given the green nod for its Rs 13,384.80 crore Sita Rama Lift Irrigation Project that aims to divert Godavari river water to irrigate 2.72 lakh hectares in three districts.
- As per the proposal, the lift irrigation project will divert Godavari river water from upstream of existing Dummugudem Anicut to irrigate 2, 72,921 hectare of Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam and Mahabubabad districts of Telangana.

Nirmala Sitharaman inspects amphibious military drill by armed forces in Andaman and Nicobar

- **Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman** watched a joint amphibious exercise off the Campbell Bay coast, the southern-most island of the nation, which saw participation of the three armed forces.
- **Andaman and Nicobar is an Integrated Services Command.** Andaman and Nicobar archipelago is straddled strategically near the mouth of the Malacca Straits.

Armed Forces Veterans' Day

- **Armed Forces Day** is commemorated as a mark of respect to the services rendered by Field Marshal K M Kariappa, who retired on January 14, 1953.

Doordarshan's channel 'DD Science' along with internet-based channel 'India Science' launched

- Science and Technology Minister Dr. Harshvardhan launched **DD Science and India Science channels in New Delhi.** DD Science is Doordarshan's first ever daily slot on Science and Technology, while India Science is an internet-based channel.

9th International Conference on Micro Irrigation to be held at Aurangabad

- **Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation,** Government of India is organizing the **9th International Micro Irrigation Conference on Modern Agriculture at Aurangabad in Maharashtra** from January 16–18, 2019, in association with International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), Indian National Committee on Surface Water (INCSW) and WAPCOS Limited, a CPSE under the Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation.

10 % reservation in education to economically weaker sections of general category to be implemented from 2019-20 session

- The 10 per cent reservation in education to Economically Weaker Sections of general category will be implemented in 40,000 colleges and 900 universities from academic year 2019-20.

BES EXPO 2019 begins, 25 countries displaying their products at Expo

- The **25th International conference and exhibition on terrestrial and satellite broadcasting BES EXPO 2019** began in **New Delhi.** Nearly 300 companies from 25 countries are displaying their products at the Expo.

First Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme inaugurated in Delhi

- **First Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme** was inaugurated by the United Nations Under Secretary General Izumi Nakamitsu, and Indian Foreign Secretary, Vijay Keshav Gokhale.
- Young diplomats from as many as 27 countries are participating in the Fellowship Programme, which is being held at the Foreign Services Institute from January 14 to February 1.

- The **programme, which is organised by Ministry of External Affairs**, covers a range of issues relevant to disarmament and international security such as global security environment, weapons of mass destruction, certain conventional weapons, space security, maritime cooperation, security of cyberspace, export controls, emerging technologies, etc.

Union Home Minister approves Task Force report on Space Technology in Border Management

- The **Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh** has **approved report of Task Force** created by MHA to **identify areas for use of Space Technology** in improving Border Management.
- The **Task Force** headed by **Joint Secretary (Border Management)** and having members from BSF, have been identified for use of space technology: **1. Island development, 2. Border Security, 3. Communication and Navigation, 4. GIS and Operations Planning System and 5. Border Infrastructure Development.**

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Government to set up over 460 more Eklavya Model Residential Schools across the country

- The government will soon **set up over 460 more Eklavya Model Residential Schools across the country.**
- **Eklavya Model Residential Schools** have expanded into a major education system in the country **after Vidyalaya and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas.**

Second World Orange Festival begins in Nagpur

- The **second World Orange Festival** was organised in **Nagpur** to 21 of this month.

- The **festival, while offering its famed oranges to the world**, will also showcase and brand the exquisite fruit in order to boost its export.

PM dedicates Kollam bypass, Kerala to the Nation; also launches development projects worth over Rs 1,500 cr in Odisha

- The **Kollam Bypass on the National Highway-66 considerably reduces travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram**, besides avoiding traffic congestion in Kollam town.
- Notably, this is the **first National Highway project in the country taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership**.
- The **13-kilometre-long two-lane bypass is constructed at a cost of 352 crore rupees**. It has three major bridges over the Ashtamudi lake, having a total length of 1540 metres and an underpass.

Government forms GoM for GST issues in real estate

- **Government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel will be the convener of the GoM.**
- **Finance Ministers of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the Panchayat Minister of Goa will be the members.**

Chennai Traffic Police introduces robots for traffic management

- The **Chennai Traffic Police inducted a road safety robot into its fold**.
- **Named ROADEO, the robot will make the pedestrians, especially children; feel safe while crossing the roads.**
- It will also ease the work of traffic police, as these **robots can be integrated with the traffic signals**, as well as can be **operated manually, through a Bluetooth app**.

National Wildlife Board clears ONGC Trishna gas project

- The **state-owned ONGC Tripura Asset** would soon start extracting natural gas **from Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary in Belonia** subdivision of Gomati district following National Wildlife Board's clearance of its proposal.
- We have **discovered 10-12 gas bearing wells long back in Trishna Wildlife sanctuary**. As the gas bearing zones are in the wildlife sanctuary, we needed permission from the National Wildlife Board.

Prabhu inaugurates 10th edition of India Rubber Expo 2019

- Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, **Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 in Mumbai**.
- The three-day **event held at the Bombay Exhibition Centre** is one of the most anticipated events in the rubber industry's calendar.

PMRPY crossed milestone of one crore beneficiaries as on Jan 14

- The **Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana, PMRPY has crossed the milestone of one crore beneficiaries as on the 14th of this month**.
- The **Centre's flagship scheme launched on 7th August, 2016 incentivises employers to promote employment generation**.
- Under the scheme, **government pays full employers' contribution of 12 per cent towards Employees' Provident Fund and Employees' Pension Scheme for a period of 3 years to new employees registered with EPFO, with salary up to 15,000 rupees per month**.

Green nod for Telangana's Rs 13,384 cr Sita Ram Irrigation project

- **Telangana government** has been given the green nod for its Rs 13,384.80 crore Sita Rama Lift Irrigation Project that aims to divert Godavari river water to irrigate 2.72 lakh hectares in three districts.
- As per the proposal, the lift irrigation project will divert Godavari river water from upstream of existing Dummugudem Anicut to irrigate 2, 72,921 hectare of Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam and Mahabubabad districts of Telangana.

Nirmala Sitharaman inspects amphibious military drill by armed forces in Andaman and Nicobar

- **Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman** watched a joint amphibious exercise off the Campbell Bay coast, the southern-most island of the nation, which saw participation of the three armed forces.
- **Andaman and Nicobar is an Integrated Services Command.** Andaman and Nicobar archipelago is straddled strategically near the mouth of the Malacca Straits.

Armed Forces Veterans' Day

- **Armed Forces Day** is commemorated as a mark of respect to the services rendered by Field Marshal K M Kariappa, who retired on January 14, 1953.

Doordarshan's channel 'DD Science' along with internet-based channel 'India Science' launched

- Science and Technology Minister Dr. Harshvardhan launched **DD Science and India Science channels in New Delhi.** DD Science is Doordarshan's first ever daily slot on Science and Technology, while India Science is an internet-based channel.

9th International Conference on Micro Irrigation to be held at Aurangabad

- **Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation,** Government of India is organizing the **9th International Micro Irrigation Conference on Modern Agriculture at Aurangabad in Maharashtra** from January 16–18, 2019, in association with International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), Indian National Committee on Surface Water (INCSW) and WAPCOS Limited, a CPSE under the Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation.

10 % reservation in education to economically weaker sections of general category to be implemented from 2019-20 session

- The 10 per cent reservation in education to Economically Weaker Sections of general category will be implemented in 40,000 colleges and 900 universities from academic year 2019-20.

BES EXPO 2019 begins, 25 countries displaying their products at Expo

- The **25th International conference and exhibition on terrestrial and satellite broadcasting BES EXPO 2019** began in **New Delhi.** Nearly 300 companies from 25 countries are displaying their products at the Expo.

First Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme inaugurated in Delhi

- **First Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme** was inaugurated by the United Nations Under Secretary General Izumi Nakamitsu, and Indian Foreign Secretary, Vijay Keshav Gokhale.
- Young diplomats from as many as 27 countries are participating in the Fellowship Programme, which is being held at the Foreign Services Institute from January 14 to February 1.

- The **programme, which is organised by Ministry of External Affairs**, covers a range of issues relevant to disarmament and international security such as global security environment, weapons of mass destruction, certain conventional weapons, space security, maritime cooperation, security of cyberspace, export controls, emerging technologies, etc.

Union Home Minister approves Task Force report on Space Technology in Border Management

- The **Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh** has approved report of Task Force created by MHA to identify areas for use of Space Technology in improving Border Management.
- The Task Force headed by Joint Secretary (Border Management) and having members from BSF, have been identified for use of space technology: 1. Island development, 2. Border Security, 3. Communication and Navigation, 4. GIS and Operations Planning System and 5. Border Infrastructure Development.

By 2020, capitals of all NE states to have rail connectivity

- **All capital cities of the North East** will be connected through rail network by 2022. The survey work to connect the religious town Barpeta through rail line will be completed in the next 3 months.
- The **first electric train in Guwahati** is likely to be run in 2020 as the steps are being taken for railway electrification.

India Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)- 2019

- The final planning conference to work out the modalities for **Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019** is conducted at Pune on 23-24 January 2019. Delegates from Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, Namibia, Mozambique, Uganda, Niger & Zambia attended the conference.
- **Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019** is scheduled to be conducted at **Aundh Military Station and College of Military Engineering, Pune** from 18 March to 27 March 2019. The joint training exercise is being conducted with more than a dozen African countries & India. It aims at synergising humanitarian mine action and joint peace operations. The initial planning conference for the exercise was held in December 2018.

Conference of sustainable agriculture concludes in Hyderabad

- **Agrivision 2019**, a conference on envisioning agro solutions for Smart and Sustainable Agriculture has concluded in Hyderabad.
- The two-day conference was jointly organised by Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Cornell University, USA.

Shri Shripad Naik inaugurates international forum for advancing global collaboration in Homoeopathy

- The **World Integrated Medicine Forum on the regulation of Homoeopathic Medicinal Products with the theme 'Advancing Global Collaboration'** was inaugurated by Shri Sripad Naik, Union Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of AYUSH in New Delhi.
- The **three-day forum** is organised by **Central Council for Research in Homeopathy (CCRH)**, with the support of Ministry of AYUSH, Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Convention of the United States (HPCUS) and European Coalition on Homeopathic & Anthroposophic Medicinal Products (ECHAMP), Pharmacopoeia Commission of Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy and Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).

Telangana to set up 'Save Tiger Protection Force'

- The **Telangana government** has decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State.

- The 112-member-armed STPF will be headed by an Assistant Conservator of Forests to protect tiger population in Amarabad and Kawal Tiger Reserves. The State and Central government will share the cost of the force on 40:60 basis, it said.

India-set short film ‘Period. End of Sentence’ on menstruation gets Oscars nomination

- A film on menstruation, set in rural India, titled **Period. End of Sentence** has earned a nomination in the Documentary Short Subject category for the 91st Academy Awards.
- Award-winning filmmaker Rayka Zehtabchi has directed the short film, which has been produced by Guneet Monga’s Sikhya Entertainment.
- The film came to being as a part of The Pad Project, started by students at the Oakwood School in Los Angeles and their teacher, Melissa Berton.

AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik inaugurates World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019

- AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik inaugurated the 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 organized from 23rd to 25th of this month in Goa.
- The organizers of the forum are the Central Council for Research in Homeopathy, under the Ministry of AYUSH.

Gadkari lays foundation stones of Namami Gange projects in Agra, Mathura

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari lays the foundation stones of six Namami Gange projects in Agra and Mathura.
- The four projects in Mathura have a sanctioned cost of 511.74 crore rupees. These include two sewerage projects.
- The first is an integrated sewerage infrastructure for the city on Hybrid Annuity Mode with ‘One-City-One-Operator’ approach and reuse of treated sewage water in Mathura refinery at a sanctioned cost of 460.45 crore rupees.

PM Modi inaugurates Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose museum

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose museum at Red Fort in New Delhi.
- He unveiled the plaque to inaugurate the Museum. The museum showcases various artefacts related to Subhash Chandra Bose and Indian National Army. The artefacts include wooden chair and sword used by the leader, medals, badges, uniforms and other artefacts related to the INA. PM Modi had laid the Foundation stone of the museum during the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of Azad Hind Government in October last year.
- The Prime Minister also visited the Yaad-e-Jallian Museum, which provides an authentic account of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre that happened on April 13, 1919. The museum also showcases the heroism, valour and sacrifices made by Indian soldiers during the World War-I. PM Modi also visited the Museum on 1857-India's first war of Independence.

RPF Women Squad ‘JOYMATI BAHINI’ launched in Guwahati

- In Assam, Railway Protection Force of Lumding Division has taken a significant step towards enhancing the security of women in the North East region.
- A dedicated RPF Women Squad named as ‘JOYMATI BAHINI’, comprising women sub-inspector and constables of the Railway Protection Force was formally launched at Kamkhaya Railway Station in Guwahati.

India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference begins in Mumbai

- **India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference begins in Mumbai.** The three-day event organised by Ministry of Steel will help chart out the future growth path of the steel industry.
- **Over 250 exhibiting companies from 15 countries, over 200 International buyers** and large number of delegates are participated business meetings during this event.

Cabinet approves MoC between India and Japan in the field of Food Processing Industry

- The **Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** has given its approval to the **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between India and Japan** in the field of food processing sector.
- The **MoC will lead to betterment of the food processing sector in the country** by introducing innovative techniques and processes. It will help in increasing food processing in the country by getting access to best practices and better markets

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launches new reforms, guidelines to strengthen Jan Shikshan Santhans (JSS)

- In a bid to boost skill training and entrepreneurship in the remotest corners of the country, **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Petroleum and Natural Gas (MSDE)** announced **comprehensive reforms for Jan ShikshanSansthan (JSS), to further strengthen the skills ecosystem** benefiting those in the underprivileged sections of society. The announcements were made during the **National Conference for Jan ShikshanSansthan (JSSs) which was held in New Delhi.**
- **Jan ShikshanSansthan (JSS)** has been instrumental in skill training and introducing avenues of entrepreneurship among the socio-economically backward and educationally disadvantaged groups such as neo-literates, semi-literates, SCs, STs, women and girls, slum dwellers, migrant workers. By bringing them under the aegis of the national skill framework, the agenda of event was to align all skilling activities to a common cause of skill development at the district and gram level.

Bureau of Indian Standards in Collaboration with Indian Air Force Releases New Standard for Bio-Jet Fuel

- **To use bio-jet fuel on all military and civilian aircraft, BIS has in collaboration with IAF,** research organisations and the industry brought out a new standard for **Aviation Turbine Fuels.** These specifications will align Indian standards with current international standards.
- After a series of deliberations over the past nine months, an Indian Standard **IS 17081:2019 Aviation Turbine Fuel (Kerosene Type, Jet A-1) containing Synthesised Hydrocarbons,** has been formulated. This standard would enable the oil companies to manufacture bio-jet fuel for the Indian aviation industry.

Coast guards of India, Japan undertake disaster control exercise in Yokohama

- **Coast Guards of India and Japan kicked off their disaster control, search and rescue exercises off the coast of Yokohama in Japan.** Senior leadership of both the forces including Indian Coast Guard Chief Rajendra Singh and his Japanese counterpart Shuichi Iwanami reviewed the drills.
- **Indian Coast Guard Ship ICGS Shaunak is the main Indian ship taking part in the drills.** Japanese ships came to India last year to carry out the exercise with the Coast Guard in India.

Odisha's launched "Jiban Sampark" to reach vulnerable tribes

- **Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik** announced **"Jiban Sampark" project in partnership with UNICEF India** to generate awareness about the development and welfare initiatives of state government among the **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups** of the state.

- The announcement was made after Patnaik inaugurated **the annual tribal fair popularly known as "Adivasi Mela" on Republic Day**. The annual event which has 180 stalls to showcases tribal market, food, agriculture produces and forest products will continue till 9 February.

Indian Diplomat launches bilingual anthology in Brazil

- A new anthology of poems titled 'New Brazilian Poems', translated and edited by **Indian poet-diplomat Abhay Kumar** was launched at the **National Association of Writers of Brazil**. Over three years I translated works of **over 120 Brazilian poets** however have only included works of the **60 poets active in post-1972 period** to expand on the great work done by poet Elizabeth Bishop to take Brazilian poetry to the world."

Two trained elephants deployed at Satkosia Tiger Reserve

- **Odisha Forest department** has mobilized two elephants from **Similipal Tiger Reserve** which will be deployed at **Satkosia Tiger Reserve**. It is suspected that the **two trained elephants- Mahendra and Rajkumar** has been **roped in to track movement of tigress Sundari** after its release from a special enclosure in **Satkosia Tiger Reserve**.
- However, **PCCF (Wildlife) Sandeep Tripathy** clarified that the two elephants have been **roped in for general security and no decision to release tigress Sundari** from its enclosure has been taken so far.

Southern Railway adjudged number one for cleanliness

- The **Southern Railway** has bagged the **number one position for cleanliness** in the country. The **Divisional Railway Manager Shirish Kumar Sinha** said, this achievement was **under the category of other than Premium Category trains** in the recent **Trains Cleanliness Survey** conducted by **IRCTC** on all India level.
- During the year 2018, **Southern Railway's gross earnings also stood at more than six thousand crores rupees** which is almost **10 per cent higher than the last year earnings**. To cater to the growing demands of passengers, **Southern Railway** has also introduced 54 trains over past four years.

Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania awards 4th annual Carnot Prize to Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal

- The **Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Design** formally **presented the fourth annual Carnot Prize to Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal**, Minister of Railways & Coal and former Minister of Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines, Government of India, at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**.

Doordarshan to broadcast a travelogue series Rag Rag Mein Ganga

- **Doordarshan** started to **broadcast a travelogue series Rag Rag Mein Ganga from February 2, every Saturday and Sunday at 9.00 PM** on **DD National**. The program will **highlight Ganga's journey from Gomukh to Gangasagar**.
- The travelogue series is an account of the **spiritual, religious, cultural and socio-economic heritage of the river Ganga** and its present ecological condition.

2,680 indigenous languages in danger: UN

- **There's Ojibwe in Canada, Ami in Australia and Ayapanec in Mexico**: these are among the **world's nearly 2,700 indigenous languages** at risk of disappearing unless new initiatives are taken, **UN officials** say.
- The **UN** is hoping to raise awareness of the cultural loss with the **launch the International Year of Indigenous Languages**, a year-long project to help protect these ancient mother tongues. Out of the **roughly 7,600 languages spoken worldwide**, **2,680 indigenous languages** are in danger and many are disappearing at an alarming rate.

Nari Shakti is Oxford Dictionary's Hindi Word of the Year 2018

- The **Oxford Dictionaries** announced '**Nari Shakti**' as the **Hindi Word of the Year**. The Hindi Word of the Year chosen every year, in many ways, reflects the conversations, ethos of a particular year. The word this year, **Nari Shakti**, has been derived from Sanskrit and when broken down, the word '**nari**' means women and '**shakti**' means power.

Election Commission of India hosts International Conference on Making our Elections Inclusive and Accessible'

- The **Chief Election Commissioner of India**, **Shri Sunil Arora** and **Election Commissioner Shri Ashok Lavasa** inaugurated an **International Conference on 'Making our Elections Inclusive and Accessible'** in New Delhi.
- ECI is hosted the **International Conference** on the occasion of **9th National Voters Day** which is observed on **25th January** every year.



IMPORTANT DAYS

DRDO day

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) day is celebrated every year on 1st January.
- The DRDO was established in 1958 with just 10 laboratories to enhance the research work in defence sector.
- DRDO Chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy said that the country is self-reliant in areas of missiles, radars, sonars and torpedoes and many other systems. Mr Reddy said, the Organisation has been working over the years to develop state of the art weapon system for the country's armed forces.

World Braille Day is celebrated every year on 4 January

- World Braille Day is celebrated every year on January 4th because it's Louis Braille's birthday. He's the inventor of braille! Louis was born in 1809 in France and became blind after a childhood accident.
- When Louise was only 15 years old, he created a reading and writing system based on Charles Barbier's night writing system. We know Louise's system today as braille. Adjusted over time, braille is now easier to read and used all over the world.

National Youth Day

- National Youth Day is celebrated in all over the world on 12 January on the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. In 1984 the Government of India declared the day as the National Youth Day and since 1985 the event is celebrated in India every year.

Prime Minister to inaugurate 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on 21st of this month

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on 21st of this month at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.
- The three days long event will attract many eminent persons of Indian origin from the world over.
- The first day of the Divas will be dedicated to the youth.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a celebratory day observed on 9 January by the Republic of India to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India. The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915.

Ministry of Women & Child Development celebrates National Girl Child Day

- The Women & Child Development Ministry celebrates National Girl Child Day (NGCD) on 24th January, 2019 at Pravasi Bharti Kendra, Chankyapuri, New Delhi. The programme also observed anniversary of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme.
- The theme of this NGCD is "Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow" and celebrating with objectives of generating awareness on the issue of declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and create a positive environment around valuing the girl child. Union Minister, MWCD, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi graced the occasion as Chief Guest and Minister of State, Dr. Virendra Kumar was the Guest of Honour of the event.

UN's first International Day of Education

- To celebrate the role of education for peace and development, the United Nations General Assembly on December 3 adopted a resolution declaring January 24 as 'International Day of Education.' In India, National Education Day is observed on November 11 to commemorate the birth anniversary of the first education minister of independent India — Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

- The **proclamation of January 24 as the International Day of Education is an important step to promote education as a critical aspect of sustainable development.** The UN resolution also mentioned every member states, organisations of the UN system, and civil society, non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, the private sector, individuals and other relevant stakeholders to observe the International Day of Education.
- The event's theme **“Education: A Key Driver for Inclusion and Empowerment”** echoes the focus of the UN High Level Political Forum that **takes place in New York**, which will review SDG4, among other goals. Bringing together the voices of governments, the UN system, the private sector and youth organizations, the event will be a platform to **highlight education's vital contribution to the entire 2030 Agenda and to strengthen collective action to achieve SDG4.**

National Voters' Day celebrated on 25th January

- The **9th National Voters' Day (NVD) is celebrated across the country on 25th January 2019.**
- The **theme for NVD this year was ‘No Voter to be Left Behind’** reiterating the commitment of Election Commission of India (ECI) in view of the Lok Sabha elections due this year.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day

- **International Holocaust Remembrance Day is an international memorial day on 27 January 2019 commemorating the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War.**
- It commemorates the **genocide that resulted in the death of an estimated 6 million Jews, 8.7 million Slavs, 1.8 million ethnic Poles, 220,000 Romani people, 250,000 mentally and physically disabled people, 312,000 Serb civilians, 1,900 Jehovah's Witnesses, and 9,000 homosexual men by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.**



QUESTIONS

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Rice Research Institute's South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) campus in:
(a) Varanasi (b) Hyderabad (c) New Delhi (d) Mumbai
2. Which of the following Indian State is going to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department)?
(a) Haryana (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Karnataka
3. In December 2018, Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched the Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin initiative in:
(a) Odisha (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Karnataka
4. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has secured a _____ term with a landslide victory in the recent polls.
(a) Second (b) Fourth (c) Fifth (d) Sixth
5. According to the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Indian economy grow _____% in 2019.
(a) 7.0 (b) 7.2 (c) 7.5 (d) 7.7
6. How many Indian-origin women scientists made it in the list of 60 Superstars of STEM list announced recently by the Australian government?
(a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 7 (d) 9
7. Who is the first active cricketer to become a Member of Parliament?
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Mohammad Azharuddin
(c) Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (d) Naimur Rahman Durjoy
8. Who has won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year and also been named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year 2018?
(a) Mithali Dorai Raj (b) Smriti Mandhana (c) Harmanpreet Kaur (d) Cathryn Fitzpatrick
9. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the renaming of three islands of Andaman and Nicobar on the occasion of 75th anniversary of Tricolour hoisting by _____ in Port Blair.
(a) Mahatma Gandhi (b) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(c) Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru (d) Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose
10. Deen Dayal Veterinary University proposes to set up the first goat fertility lab in:
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Karnataka
11. World's largest science meets 'Indian Science Congress (ISC)-2019' is be held in:
(a) Amritsar (b) Jalandhar (c) Ludhiana (d) Chandigarh
12. In the last 4 years, Agricultural credit flow has increased by:
(a) 23% (b) 34% (c) 47% (d) 57%
13. Who is the newly sworn in Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission?
(a) Ajay Ratra (b) Deepanker Bhattacharya
(c) Sudhir Bhargava (d) Arun Prabhakar

14. Name the political party of Bangladesh, which won the general elections of Bangladesh recently.
(a) Bangladesh Awami League (b) Bangladesh Nationalist Party
(c) Jatiya Party (Ershad) (d) Islami Oikya Jote
15. Which of the following countries ceased to be a member of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries from 1st January 2019?
(a) Qatar (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Venezuela (d) Russia
16. Recently, which of the following two countries officially quitted the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the close of 2018?
(a) South Sudan and Eritrea (b) North Korea and Russia
(c) United States of America and Israel (d) North Korea and Vietnam
17. Recently, Reserve Bank has allowed a one-time restructuring of existing debt of up to _____crore rupees for the companies which have defaulted on payment but the loans given to them have continued to be classified as standard assets.
(a) 5 Crores (b) 10 Crores (c) 15 Crores (d) 25 Crores
18. The government has infused 10,882 crore rupees in _____public sector banks.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Five
19. Recently, As part of the enhanced outreach programme of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), a new platform named "Samwad with Students" (SwS) was launched in:
(a) Chennai (b) Bengaluru (c) Chennai (d) Mumbai
20. DRDO day is celebrated every year in India, on:
(a) 30th December (b) 31st December
(c) 1st January (d) 2nd January
21. Who has been nominated as the Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) recently?
(a) Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde (b) Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri
(c) Justice N.V. Ramana (d) Justice Arun Mishra
22. Which of the following Indian states is related with "Krishi Krishak Bondhu"scheme?
(a) Sikkim (b) West Bengal (c) Assam (d) Tripura
23. India's fastest Train 18 will soon start its services between:
(a) Mumbai and Pune (b) Delhi and Varanasi (c) Kolkata and Varanasi (d) Chandigarh and Amritsar
24. Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of a high-level committee for implementation of clause 6 of the Assam Accord and measures envisaged in the Memorandum of Settlement, 2003 and other issues related to:
(a) Thengal community (b) Bodo community (c) Khamti community (d) Karbi community
25. Under the PMUY scheme, the government provides a subsidy of _____to state-owned fuel retailers for every free LPG gas connection that they give to poor households.
(a) Rs 1,000 (b) Rs 1,200 (c) Rs 1,500 (d) Rs 1,600

26. Jair Bolsonaro is the newly elected president of:
(a) Argentina (b) Brazil (c) Mexico (d) Canada
27. Who has been appointed by RBI as the head of the eight-member expert committee to comprehensively review and provide long-term solutions for revival of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector?
(a) HR Khan (b) NS Vishwanathan (c) TS Vijayan (d) U.K. Sinha
28. Which among the following is the best performing country in the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2019?
(a) Sweden (b) Finland (c) Brazil (d) Iceland
29. Name the person, who has been conferred with the National Geospatial Award for Excellence-2017 (Life Time Achievement Award) at the Space Application Centre in Ahmedabad.
(a) Duleep Kumar Mohanthy (b) Sandeep Narain Markandey
(c) Jayanta Kumar Ghosh (d) Samar Singh Rana
30. Who is the first Indian fast-bowler and 10th overall to pick 400 wickets in the Ranji Trophy?
(a) Stuart Binny (b) Pankaj Singh (c) Nitish Rana (d) Manpreet Gony
31. Recently, India has achieved completion of electrification in hundred percent household in 25 states at the year end. Which of the following is not among the 25 states?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Bihar (d) Rajasthan
32. Which of the following ministries has recently launched the "Bhoomi Rashi" portal?
(a) Ministry of Road Transport & Highways
(b) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
(c) Ministry of Rural Development
(d) Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation
33. Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the nation's biggest oil firm will commission its first liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal in:
(a) Kerala (b) Goa (c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu
34. Which of the following has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap two years?
(a) Axis Mutual Fund (b) HDFC Mutual Fund (c) SBI Mutual Fund (d) PNB Mutual Fund
35. Recently, Scientists at which of the following leading Indian institutes has developed a simple paper kit that can test freshness of milk and tell how well it has been pasteurized?
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Guwahati (d) IIT Madras
36. The ISRO has plans to set up Space Galleries in various locations in the country. At the initial stage the space gallery is not to be established in:
(a) Hyderabad (b) Mumbai (c) Bengaluru (d) New Delhi
37. The Indian Panorama Film Festival is organized in:
(a) Mumbai (b) Panaji (c) New Delhi (d) Bhopal
38. Recently, who among the following gave away the slogan of "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan Jai Anusandhan of New India"?
(a) Shri Rajnath Singh (b) Shri Narendra Modi (c) Shri Rahul Gandhi (d) Baba Ramdev

39. Recently Indian captain Virat Kohli broke record of the fastest batsman to reach 19,000 international runs. He broke the record of:
(a) Rahul Dravid (b) Sunil Gavaskar (c) Sachin Tendulkar (d) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
40. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship hosted third edition of the National Entrepreneurship Awards in:
(a) Kolkata (b) New Delhi (c) Patna (d) Lucknow
41. Name the Indian woman mountaineer, who became the first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
(a) Shailaja Mishra (b) Nishi Bharadwaj (c) Aditi Rana (d) Arunima Sinha
42. Recently, Rashtriya Kishore Vaigyanik Sammelan (Children Science Congress) was inaugurated in:
(a) Jalandhar (b) Chandigarh (c) Nagpur (d) Surat
43. As per census 2011, how many districts of the country are covered under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme?
(a) 455 (b) 498 (c) 570 (d) 640
44. Who has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Pakistan in January 2019?
(a) Justice Mian Saqib Nisar (b) Justice Shareef Ahmad Moosa
(c) Justice Asif Saeed Khosa (d) Justice Usman Ahmad Afridi
45. Who has been elected as the Speaker of the House of Representatives of USA for the second time?
(a) Sara Palin (b) Tulsi Gabbard (c) Nancy Pelosi (d) Kamla Harris
46. Which of the following Indian states emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI), Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business (EDB) Index ABC rankings for economies of 21 states of India?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Assam
47. Who among the following has decided to limit the liability of customers in case of unauthorised electronic payment transactions in Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) issued by non-banks.?
(a) RBI (b) Union Corporate Ministry
(c) Finance Ministry (d) SIDBI
48. Which of the following countries has named it's the lunar rover, successfully deployed to carry out a string of experiments on the unexplored far side of the moon, as 'Yutu 2'?
(a) Japan (b) India (c) China (d) Australia
49. Recently, the 80th National Table Tennis Championship began in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Pune (c) Cuttack (d) Nagpur
50. Recently, Rishabh Pant becomes _____ Indian Wicket-Keeper to score a Test Century in Australia.
(a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Seventh
51. To encourage farmers to use solar agriculture pumps, _____ government has decided to give two LED bulbs, a DC fan and a mobile charging socket as freebies in January 2019.
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Gujarat (c) Maharashtra (d) Bihar

52. Which of the following state will be participating as a partner state in the upcoming mega international food and beverage show 'Indus Food 2019' to be held at India Exposition Mart, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh in January 2019?
(a) Odisha (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Sikkim
53. Science Communicators' Meet was inaugurated by:
(a) Shri Ramnath Kovind (b) Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
(c) Shri Narendra Modi (d) Dr. Harsha Vardhan
54. The provincial Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in northwest _____ has declared the ancient Hindu religious site of Panj Tirath as national heritage.
(a) Pakistan (b) Bangladesh (c) Afghanistan (d) Iraq
55. To ensure easier availability of FASTags, Indian Highways Management Company Ltd. (IHMCL), a company promoted by NHAI, is signing MoUs with which of the following companies?
(a) IOCL (b) BPC (c) HPC (d) All of the above
56. Who has become the first businessman to be declared fugitive economic offender (FEO) under the provisions of the new Fugitive Economic Offenders Act?
(a) Nirav Modi (b) Vijay Mallya (c) Sujana Choudhary (d) Lalit Modi
57. _____ and Srei Equipment Finance have entered into an agreement for financing the MSME and agriculture sectors in January 2019.
(a) United Bank of India (b) State Bank of India (c) Andhra Bank (d) Corporate Bank
58. How many banks are amalgamated into a single Regional Rural Bank (RRB) with effect from January 1, 2019?
(a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) 5
59. Which of the following countries scientists have successfully launched a telescope from Antarctica that analyses X-rays arriving from distant neutron stars, black holes and other exotic celestial bodies in January 2019?
(a) India (b) China (c) Israel (d) USA
60. Which of the following state government water resources minister has received the 'Central Board of Irrigation and Power Award' for better planning and construction of Polavaram Irrigation Project?
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Telangana (d) Andhra Pradesh
61. Which of the following Indian state governments has announced zero percent interest loan for Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Mission Shakti scheme of state government introduced for women's financial inclusion and development?
(a) Assam (b) West Bengal (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Odisha
62. Recently, the nine-day long international kite festival started in:
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Bihar (d) Meghalaya
63. Recently, the government has notified a High-Level Committee for implementation of Clause six of the Assam Accord. Who will be the head of this committee?
(a) MP Bezbaruah (b) Shikander Hayat
(c) Duleep Singh Duaba (d) Harvinder Singh Maan

64. Recently, which of the following railway zones launched a mobile application to help people navigate through Prayagraj city during Kumbh Mela?
(a) East Central Railway (b) Central Railway
(c) North Central Railway (d) Northern Railway Railway
65. Who among the following has taken oath as Prime Minister of Bangladesh for the third consecutive term?
(a) Sheikh Haseena (b) Begum Khalida Zia (c) Moudud Ahmed (d) Anwarul Hasan
66. Who among the following signed MoU with Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER) for joint research programs in the field of Communication Navigation and Surveillance (CNS)?
(a) SEBI (b) AAI (c) Indian Railway (d) SEBI
67. The human space flight Gaganyaan is planned to be launched by year:
(a) 2020 (b) 2022 (c) 2023 (d) 2024
68. Who won the Maharashtra Open title recently?
(a) Ivo Karlovic (b) Kevin Anderson (c) Andy Murray (d) Roger Federer
69. Which of the following countries won the Hopman Cup 2019?
(a) France (b) UK (c) Germany (d) Switzerland
70. Which of the following became the first railway station of South Central Railway (SCR) zone to hoist a huge tricolour on a 100-foot tall pole at its main entrance recently?
(a) Secunderabad (b) Guntakal (c) Guntur (d) Nanded
71. Recently, The Ministry of Human Resource Development has introduced a _____grading index to assess the quality of school education offered by states.
(a) 40-point (b) 50-point (c) 60-point (d) 70-point
72. The Union Cabinet approved a Constitution Amendment Bill to provide _____reservation to the economically backward sections in the general category.
(a) 2.5% (b) 5% (c) 10% (d) 20%
73. The fourth edition of the Raisina Dialogue is being started in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Kolkata (c) Chennai (d) Ahmedabad
74. Who became the first head of state of Malaysia to resign after just over two years of his mandated five-year term?
(a) Sultan Mahmud 3 (b) Akram Ismail 2 (c) Abu Bin Pasha 1 (d) Sultan Muhammad 5
75. Which of the following two new Skill Development Schemes have been approved recently?
(a) SEEKHO and HUNAR (b) STRIVE and HONOUR
(c) SANKALP and STRIVE (d) SIDDHI and RIDDHI
76. India provided the assistance for constructions of Sittwe Port. This Port is located in which of the following countries?
(a) Thailand (b) Malaysia (c) Cambodia (d) Myanmar
77. Recently, Jim Yong Kim announced that he will step down from his position on February 1, 2019. At present Jim Yong Kim is:
(a) Chairman of ADB (b) World Bank President
(c) CEO and MD of IMF (d) Chairman of NDB

78. The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games officially begins in:
(a) Goa (b) Maharashtra (c) Gujarat (d) Odisha
79. Who has been declared Man of the Series at recently held Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia?
(a) Cheteshwar Pujara (b) Virat Kohli (c) Jasprit Bumrah (d) Travis Head
80. Who among the following are set to be honored by the Bimal Roy Memorial and Film Society to commemorate the 52nd death anniversary of the renowned filmmaker?
(a) Farooq Sheikh and Asha Parekh (b) Naseeruddin Shah and Sharmila Tagore
(c) Amrish Puri and Rekha (d) Anupam Kher and Hema Malini
81. Which of the following countries will host the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations?
(a) Guinea (b) Angola (c) Burkina Faso (d) Egypt
82. Who is the first woman to join IMF as its chief economist recently?
(a) Valenala Eriviea (b) Sushma Bharadwaj (c) Rehana Khan (d) Gita Gopinath
83. Recently, Shri Manoj Sinha inaugurated the conference on "M2M/ IoT Enabling Smart Infrastructure" in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Lucknow (c) Bhopal (d) Nagpur
84. Who will be the head of the High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion?
(a) Aruna Sharma (b) Narayan Murthy (c) Nandan Nilekani (d) . H.R. Khan
85. Name the Indian, who has taken over as the president of Global Solar Council (GSC) from January 1, 2019.
(a) Deepak Raheja (b) Amar Wasvani (c) Pranav R Mehta (d) Chandrasekhar Verma
86. Who received 'Exhibitor of the Year Award' at 106th Indian Science Congress held at Lovely Professional University (LPU), Phagwara and Punjab?
(a) DRDO (b) ISRO (c) CSIR (d) IOCL
87. Which of the following countries is withdrawing from UN-backed anti-corruption commission?
(a) Liberia (b) Nigeria (c) Senegal (d) Guatemala
88. Recently, The Supreme Court notified that _____ consisting of the incumbent Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi to hear the Ayodhya title dispute appeals on January 10.
(a) three-judge Bench (b) five-judge Bench (c) nine-judge Bench (d) seven-judge Bench
89. Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai has written a new book, charting her experiences travelling the world and visiting refugee camps. The title of this book is:
(a) Mercy (b) We Can Do
(c) We are Displaced (d) Something left behind
90. Which of the following projects recently successfully entered Guinness Book of World Records by completing 32,315.5 Cubic meters of concrete works in a span of 24 hours?
(a) Polavaram Project (b) Baspa Project (c) Chukha Project (d) Dul Hasti Project
91. Recently, The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, Gangajal project, which will provide _____ with better and more assured water supply.
(a) Lucknow (b) Moradabad (c) Ghaziabad (d) Agra

92. Recently, The Jammu and Kashmir administration set up a law commission. Who has been appointed as its founding chairperson?
(a) Justice (Retd) H.N.Kunzroo (b) Justice (Retd) Nagendra Sharma
(c) Justice (Retd) M K Hanjura (d) Justice (Retd) Mohan Lal Sukhadia
93. Recently, the Centre has proposed another pro-tribal measure - renaming of the Indian Forest Service as:
(a) Indian Tribal Services (b) Indian Forest Goods Services
(c) Indian Forest and Tribal Service (d) Indian First Tribal and Assessment Service
94. Which of the following ministries has launched an online campaign, '#www: Web- Wonder Women'?
(a) Ministry of Women and Child Development (b) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
(c) Ministry of Labour and Employment (d) Ministry of Law and Justice
95. Which of the following Indian states inaugurated the project "Development of North East Circuit: Umiam (Lake View) - U Lum Sohpetbneng- Mawdiangdiang - Orchid Lake Resort" implemented under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism?
(a) Tripura (b) Nagaland (c) Manipur (d) Meghalaya
96. Which of the following Indian islands is to be the first Island to operate seaplanes under UDAN-3?
(a) Andaman (b) Minicoy (c) North Bay Island (d) Majuli
97. According to a report by World Economic Forum, India is set to become the world's _____ largest consumer market.
(a) Second (b) Fourth (c) Third (d) Fifth
98. According to the World Bank forecast, India's GDP is expected to grow at _____ in the fiscal year 2018-19.
(a) 5.7% (b) 6.1% (c) 6.7% (d) 7.3%
99. Recently, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced _____ as its 105th member.
(a) Canada Cricket (b) USA Cricket (c) Mexico Cricket (d) Nepal Cricket
100. Who has been named African Footballer of the Year for the second successive year at the Confederation of African Football's 2018 awards?
(a) Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (b) Mohamed Salah
(c) Sadio Mane (d) Riyad Mahrez
101. Which will be the first Indian state to introduce Universal Basic Income (UBI) in India?
(a) Nagaland (b) Sikkim (c) Goa (d) Mizoram
102. Recently, Renukaji Dam Multipurpose Project agreement was signed between how many Indian states?
(a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 6 (d) 8
103. Recently, the Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for a proposal for establishing three new AIIMS in:
(a) Two in Uttar Pradesh and one in Odisha (b) Two in Jammu & Kashmir and one in Gujarat
(c) Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Rajasthan (d) Sikkim, West Bengal and Nagaland
104. Recently, National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan in:
(a) Bengaluru (b) Kolkata (c) New Delhi (d) Chennai

105. The high-power committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi removed _____ as CBI Director, a day after he resumed office following the Supreme Court verdict restoring his position.
(a) Alok Verma (b) Rakesh Asthana (c) G Nageshwara Rao (d) Vivek Sharma
106. Recently, India's longest 300-metre single lane steel cable suspension bridge was inaugurated in:
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Assam
(c) Meghalaya (d) Jammu & Kashmir
107. Recently, Felix Tshisekedi was declared winner of presidential election in:
(a) DR Congo (b) Mali (c) Senegal (d) Eritrea
108. The Government of India has given permission to bank Pasargad to open a bank branch in Mumbai. Bank Pasargad is major private bank of:
(a) Turkey (b) Iran (c) Iraq (d) Saudi Arabia
109. Recently Scientists of which of the following institutes have created 'space fuel' by simulating interstellar conditions in the lab, a method that may be used to convert atmospheric CO₂ into a next generation energy source on Earth?
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Madras (d) IIT Kanpur
110. Who has been named recently as Chef de Mission for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics?
(a) Brijbhushan Sharan Singh (b) Suresh Kalmadi
(c) Birendra Prasad Baishya (d) Dheeraj Lalwani
111. Which Indian state recently became the first state to achieve the feat of giving jobs to over one lakh youths in the private sector?
(a) Odisha (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Jharkhand (d) Chhattisgarh
112. The Ministry of Women and Child Development is organised the three-day 6th 'Women of India Organic Festival' in:
(a) Jaipur (b) Bhopal (c) Pune (d) Chandigarh
113. The Election Commission appointed Committee has submitted its report on digital media and campaigning during last 48 hours before polls to the Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora. The Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of:
(a) Sunil Lavasha (b) Arun Narayan (c) Umesh Sinha (d) Shitanshu Yagnik
114. Recently, Su Tseng-chang has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of:
(a) Thailand (b) Vietnam (c) Laos (d) Cambodia
115. Recently, Ashok Chawla resigned as the chairman and public interest director of:
(a) National Stock Exchange (NSE) (b) Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)
(c) India International Exchange (d) OTC Exchange of India
116. According to the Henley Passport Index, which periodically measures the access each country's travel document affords, India ranks _____ in 2019.
(a) 43rd (b) 52nd (c) 64th (d) 79th

117. According to findings in the U.S. journal Science led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the world's oceans are heating up at an accelerating pace due to:
(a) Global Warming (b) Oil Spilling (c) Coral Reef (d) Lumbering
118. ISRO is well prepared to meet the targets of launching Gaganyaan manned mission to outer space by year:
(a) 2020 (b) 2021 (c) 2022 (d) 2024
119. Who among the following Indian cricketers received the honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket?
(a) Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli (b) Cheteshwar Pujara and Harbhajan Singh
(c) Virendra Sehwa and Zaheer Khan (d) Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri
120. National Youth Day is celebrated every year in India on:
(a) 12th January (b) 13th January (c) 15th January (d) 18th January
121. Which of the following Indian state government launched the 'Ama Ghare LED' scheme, under which about 95 lakh families in the State will each get four LED bulbs free of cost?
(a) West Bengal (b) Assam (c) Odisha (d) Andhra Pradesh
122. Recently, the Indian Paint Association (IPA), the apex body of the country's paint industry organized the 29th biennial Indian Paint Conference in:
(a) Agra (b) Nagpur (c) Surat (d) Srinagar
123. Recently, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Col Rajyavardhan Rathore launched the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 in:
(a) Pune (b) Mumbai (c) New Delhi (d) Lucknow
124. Recently, President Kovind gives nod to 10% quota for EWS in upper castes. This bill was the _____ amendment bill, 2019.
(a) 122nd (b) 123rd (c) 124th (d) 125th
125. Recently, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley inaugurated Hunar Haat in New Delhi. Hunar Haat is organized by which of the following Indian ministries?
(a) Ministry of Minority Affairs (b) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
(c) Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
126. Recently, Chief of the Army Staff of which of the following countries was conferred the Honorary Rank of General of the Indian Army?
(a) Myanmar (b) Bangladesh (c) Nepal (d) Bhutan
127. Who will head the seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to look into the revenue shortfall being faced by states following the roll out of Goods and Services Tax (GST)?
(a) Rajesh Agarwal (b) Tamradhwaj Shahu (c) Sachin Pilot (d) Sushil Kumar Modi
128. Who became the fifth player to score ten thousand runs for India in One-day International Cricket recently?
(a) Virat Kohli (b) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
(c) Rohit Sharma (d) Shikhar Dhawan
129. Recently, the 352nd birth anniversary of Shri Guru Govind Singh is being celebrated as Prakash Utsav in various parts of the country. Shri Guru Govind Singh was born in:
(a) Ludhiana (b) Jalandhar (c) Patna (d) Lucknow

130. Name the writer, who has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel "Things to Leave Behind".
(a) Sharmila Thane (b) Anandi Bajaj (c) Deepika Vaishali (d) Namita Gokhale
131. The first India-Central Asia Dialogue which is expected to focus on a plethora of regional issues was held in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Tashkent (c) Samarkand (d) Dushanbe
132. The government has drafted a five-year action plan "National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction" Between years:
(a) 2017-2022 (b) 2018-2023 (c) 2019-2024 (d) 2020-2025
133. Which Indian state becomes first state to implement 10% quota to EWS?
(a) Gujarat (b) Rajasthan (c) Assam (d) Haryana
134. Which state has launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme which entitles one government job for every family in the state?
(a) Goa (b) Sikkim (c) Nagaland (d) Mizoram
135. According to Union Minister for Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu, which of the following two countries are interested to invest in Indian agriculture sector?
(a) Bhutan and Nepal (b) Myanmar and Thailand
(c) UAE and Saudi Arabia (d) Afghanistan and Sri Lanka
136. Who has been appointed as the Secretary General of National Human Rights Commission recently?
(a) Subhash Kashyap (b) Deepak Vishwas (c) Govind Mathur (d) Jaideep Govind
137. Name the Indian, who became the youngest gold medallist in shooting at the Khelo India Youth Games in Pune.
(a) Deepak Raheja (b) Shivam Bajaj (c) Abhinav Shaw (d) Rajdeep Ganguly
138. Name the team, which won their first ever Premier Badminton League title.
(a) Bengaluru Raptors (b) Mumbai Rockets (c) Hyderabad Hunters (d) Chennai Smashers
139. Name the Indian, who has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship organised by US kids Golf in Malaysia, which makes him the youngest Indian to win the title.
(a) Shubhanshu Rana (b) Animesh Karthik (c) Kartik Singh (d) Alankrit Shukla
140. Name the writer, who won the Hindu Prize 2018 for fiction.
(a) Deepika Raghuvanshi (b) Anamika Bajaj (c) Neelum Saran Gour (d) Alka Dutta
141. Who had received the first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award recently?
(a) Shri Ramnath Kovind (b) Shri Narendra Modi
(c) Shri Rahul Gandhi (d) Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
142. Recently, world's largest religious and cultural human congregation -Kumbh 2019 has begun in:
(a) Prayagraj (b) Hardwar (c) Ujjain (d) Nashik
143. The two-day Global Aviation Summit 2019 is organized in:
(a) Hyderabad (b) Mumbai (c) Bengaluru (d) Pune

144. IITM Pune and ESSO have developed a Mobile App called _____ to give alerts on impending lightning activity over the area.
(a) BIJLI (b) DAMINI (c) CHAPLA (d) TADIT
145. Recently, a joint amphibious exercise which saw participation of the three armed forces was organized in:
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Andaman & Nicobar (d) Lakshadweep
146. Recently, Government e Marketplace [GeM] has launched _____ an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups [WSHG] to sell handicrafts and handloom directly to various Government ministries, departments and institutions.
(a) Stri Sahyog on GeM (b) Womaniya on GeM (c) Parakramon GeM (d) Sahayata on GeM
147. Recently, India got its largest startup ecosystem in:
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
148. The 9th International Micro Irrigation Conference on Modern Agriculture is organized in:
(a) Aurangabad (b) Amravati (c) Dehradun (d) Kolkata
149. Recently, third Armed Forces Veterans' Day was celebrated on:
(a) 9th January (b) 11th January (c) 13th January (d) 14th January
150. Name the robot inducted by Chennai Traffic Police, which will make the pedestrians, especially children; feel safe while crossing the roads.
(a) ROADEO (b) SHAKTIMAN (c) ROBOFRIEND (d) BILLU
151. Name the first National Highway on which project in the country has been taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership?
(a) National Highway-66 (b) National Highway-72
(c) National Highway-81 (d) National Highway-86
152. The 10 per cent reservation in education to Economically Weaker Sections of general category will be implemented in 40,000 colleges and 900 universities from academic year:
(a) 2019-20 (b) 2020-21 (c) 2021-22 (d) 2022-23
153. Who among the following launched DD Science and India Science channels in New Delhi recently?
(a) Dr. Harshvardhan (b) Narendra Modi (c) Ramnath Kovind (d) Venkai Naidu
154. Recently, Government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Who will be the convener of the GoM?
(a) Rajesh Agarwal (b) Nitin Patel (c) Tamradhwaj Shahu (d) D Sivakumar
155. In India, First Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme was inaugurated in:
(a) Kolkata (b) Chennai (c) Bengaluru (d) New Delhi
156. The Reserve Bank will inject _____ rupees into the system through the purchase of government securities to increase liquidity.
(a) 5,000 crore (b) 8,000 crore (c) 10,000 crore (d) 15,000 crore
157. Recently, scientists at the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune have suggested that measuring levels of free albumin and albumin attached to glucose molecules in the blood can be a better diagnosis test for:
(a) Jaundice (b) Typhoid (c) Diabetes (d) Cancer

158. Recently, the first National Level Sports Meet for the students of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) was inaugurated in:
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Ranchi (d) Cuttack
159. Recently, Sita Rama Lift Irrigation Project got the green nod. It is situated on river:
(a) Cauveri (b) Bhadravati (c) Godavari (d) Mahanadi
160. Who among the following is awarded with Franco-German human rights award recently?
(a) Deepak Parashar (b) Yu Wensheng (c) Lathal Mosaar (d) Mohammad Naseer
161. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show in:
(a) Gandhinagar (b) Ahmedabad (c) Surat (d) Bharuch
162. The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the Gandhian Resurgence Summit in:
(a) Prayagraj (b) Cuttack (c) Gandhinagar (d) Pune
163. Recently, Voter Awareness Forum (VAF) was launched by Election Commission of India in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Kanpur (c) Bhopal (d) Guwahati
164. Who has been elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly?
(a) Ghanshyam Tiwadi (b) Kuldeep Bainsla (c) C.P. Joshi (d) Mamta Sharma
165. Recently, the second India-Myanmar bilateral Army exercise 'IMBEX 2018-19' commenced in:
(a) Champawat (b) Chandigarh (c) Pune (d) Bikaner
166. Recently, The RBI has decided to keep the minimum average maturity period at _____ for all ECBs, irrespective of the amount of borrowing, except for borrowers specifically permitted to borrow for a shorter period.
(a) 1 year (b) 2 years (c) 3 years (d) 5 years
167. Recently, Union Cabinet approved the increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from 10,000 crore to _____ crore rupees.
(a) 15,000 (b) 20,000 (c) 23,000 (d) 25,000
168. Which of the following Indian state held its first Olive Ridley turtle festival to give way to eco-tourism and in turn conserve turtles recently?
(a) West Bengal (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Tamil Nadu
169. Who among the following will be conferred with Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2018?
(a) Yohei Sasakawa (b) Ekal Abhiyan Trust (c) Sulabh International (d) Akshaya Patra Foundation
170. Who is the first Indian and youngest man to climb the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents?
(a) Amitabh Bhattacharya (b) Deepak Raheja
(c) Satyarup Siddhanta (d) Lakshman Diwakar
171. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in:
(a) Noida (b) Mumbai (c) Pune (d) Jaipur

172. The government set up an eight-member ministerial panel headed by _____ to look into GST-related issues of lottery business.
(a) Sushil Kumar Modi (b) Sachin Pilot (c) Sudhir Mungantiwar (d) Thomas Isaac
173. Who inaugurated the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019 at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad recently?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Ramnath Kovind (c) Shri Arun Jaitley (d) Shri Suresh Prabhu
174. Who among the following Indian born has been honoured with 2019 Japan Prize?
(a) Dr. Rattan Lal (b) Shri L.N.Mittal (c) Shri Naresh Goyal (d) Shri Gopichand Hinduja
175. Recently, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 in:
(a) Pune (b) Vizag (c) Mumbai (d) Kochi
176. Who has become the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award recently?
(a) Geeta Phogat (b) Babita Phogat (c) Vinesh Phogat (d) Sushil Kumar
177. Recently, the world's first television channel dedicated to human rights was launched in:
(a) Dubai (b) New York (c) Paris (d) London
178. Who inaugurated UNNATI-- Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training programme of ISRO in Bengaluru recently?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri C.K.Sivan (c) Smt. Tessy Thomas (d) Dr. Jitendra Singh
179. Recently, Scientists, using data from the Cassini spacecraft, have found evidence of methane rainfall on the north pole of Titan, the largest moon of:
(a) Jupiter (b) Mars (c) Saturn (d) Uranus
180. Recently, the 25th International conference and exhibition on terrestrial and satellite broadcasting BES EXPO 2019 began in:
(a) Noida (b) Gurugram (c) New Delhi (d) Kochi
181. Which among the following will be the site of the country's second defence innovation hub after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu?
(a) Nagpur in Maharashtra (b) Nashik in Maharashtra
(c) Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh (d) Surat in Gujarat
182. Justice Asif Saeed Khosa took oath as the 26th Chief Justice of:
(a) Iran (b) Iraq (c) Pakistan (d) Afghanistan
183. Which among the following countries will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)?
(a) USA (b) France (c) China (d) India
184. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and Libcoin are in dialogue to form a world class consortium to initially build _____ lithium ion battery plant in India.
(a) 1GWh (b) 2GWh (c) 3GWh (d) 4GWh

185. For the first time, ISRO has announced the 'Young Scientists Programme' to encourage the scientific talent and increase scientific pool in the country. Under this programme _____ students from each state and UT will be selected for ISRO programme for one month.
(a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 10 (d) 15
186. The only total lunar eclipse called as a 'Super Blood Wolf Moon' for 2019 will take place on the night January 20 to January 21. The eclipse will not be visible to people in:
(a) North America (b) South America (c) Greenland (d) India
187. Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur will be commissioned as INS Kohassa on 24 Jan 19 by Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chief of Naval Staff. NAS Shibpur was established in:
(a) 1990 (b) 2001 (c) 2006 (d) 2010
188. Which is the first cricket team in the world to return from Australia without losing a single series having won the Test series 2-1 and drawn the T20 Internationals 1-1?
(a) India (b) South Africa (c) England (d) Pakistan
189. Raksha Mantri Smt Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 426.60 metre long Pre Stressed Concrete Box Girder type bridge over Dikko River on Roing-Koron-Paya road in:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Assam (d) Sikkim
190. The Union Minister for Tourism Shri K. J. Alphons attended the Seventh Meeting of Tourism Ministers of ASEAN and India held in:
(a) Vietnam (b) Myanmar (c) Singapore (d) Indonesia
191. India's first defence industrial corridor was launched in:
(a) Aligarh (b) Chennai (c) Kolkata (d) Ahmedabad
192. Who has been appointed as the India's Ambassador to Israel in January 2019?
(a) Ruchira Khamboj (b) Jaideep Sarkar (c) Sanjeev Singla (d) Pavan Kapoor
193. Which among the following states of India became the third state to provide 10 per cent reservation for economically backward among upper castes in jobs and educational institutions?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Sikkim
194. Stefan Lofven has been elected for a second term as the Prime Minister of:
(a) Sweden (b) Norway (c) Netherland (d) Denmark
195. Which among the following countries took over the chairmanship of the Group of 77 in January 2019?
(a) India (b) Israel (c) USA (d) Palestine
196. Who has been appointed as the MD and CEO of First Bank for a period of three years?
(a) V Vaidyanathan (b) Sushil Arora (c) Anand Malhotra (d) Muktesh Pardeshi
197. Which among the following countries has successfully launched the Epsilon-4 rocket carrying seven satellites?
(a) China (b) North Korea (c) Japan (d) South Korea
198. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the year 2018 was the _____ warmest year on record in India since it commenced keeping nation-wide records of weather events in 1901.
(a) Fourth (b) Fifth (c) Sixth (d) Seventh

199. Which among the following has designed and developed light combat helicopter (LCH) has successfully carried out air-to-air missile firing on a moving aerial target?
(a) Goa Shipyard Ltd (b) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
(c) Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) (d) Mazagon Dock Ltd
200. Cosmas Lagat has won the men's USD 405,000 Tata Mumbai Marathon 2019 in Mumbai. He hails from which among the following countries?
(a) Spain (b) Kenya (c) Uganda (d) Mexico
201. Which of the following cities has been declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the World Capital of Architecture for 2020?
(a) Paris (b) Ankara (c) Rio de Janeiro (d) Buenos Aires
202. The World Economic Forum, WEF, annual meet begins in:
(a) The Hague (b) Davos (c) New York (d) Berlin
203. Recently, Felix Tshisekedi is declared as the elected President of:
(a) Eritrea (b) South Sudan (c) Congo (d) Zimbabwe
204. AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik inaugurated the 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 organized in:
(a) Goa (b) Sikkim (c) Nagaland (d) Haryana
205. Recently, Andry Rajoelina was sworn in as President of:
(a) Suriname (b) Mali (c) Indonesia (d) Madagascar
206. The theme of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas 2019 is:
(a) Apna Bharat Apna Gaurav (b) Redefining Engagement with the Indian Diaspora
(c) Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India (d) Leveraging Social Media for Diaspora Connect
207. According to a report by global consultancy firm PwC, India is likely to surpass the _____ in the world's largest economy rankings in year 2019.
(a) United Kingdom (b) France (c) Germany (d) Japan
208. Recently, Agrivision 2019 a conference on envisioning agro solutions for Smart and Sustainable Agriculture has been concluded recently in:
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Lucknow (d) Nagpur
209. Who has won the International Tennis Federation's Women's tournament in Singapore recently?
(a) Sania Mirza (b) Ankita Raina (c) Karman Kaur Thandi (d) Nirupama Sanjeev
210. Which of the following film has been awarded as the best film at the Producers Guild Awards?
(a) Roma (b) Bohemian Rhapsody (c) A Star Is Born (d) Green Book
211. Which of the following companies has launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave, part of its philanthropic initiatives?
(a) Amazon India (b) Microsoft India (c) Facebook India (d) Walmart Inc
212. Which of the following country has announced the ban of Indian currency notes with denominations above Rs 100?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Bangladesh (c) Nepal (d) Mauritius

213. Which of the following Indian states announced a hike of Rs 200 per month in the social security pension under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY)?
(a) West Bengal (b) Odisha (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Telangana
214. According to the 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer report, which country is among the most trusted nations globally when it comes to government, business, NGOs and media?
(a) Japan (b) India (c) Russia (d) USA
215. Recently, Aadhaar cards are made valid travel documents for Indians under 15 and over 65 years travelling to:
(a) Bhutan and Myanmar (b) Bangladesh and Myanmar
(c) Nepal and Bhutan (d) Sri Lanka and Mauritius
216. Recently, Arab Economic and Social Development meeting was started in:
(a) Beirut (b) Abu Dhabi (c) Dubai (d) Tehran
217. Which of the following companies has partnered with the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) as well as Ignus to launch PolicyHack for teachers and school representatives?
(a) Amazon India (b) Microsoft India (c) Facebook India (d) Dell India
218. India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference begins in:
(a) Hyderabad (b) Cuttack (c) Mumbai (d) New Delhi
219. Name the first Member of Parliament from the BJP, besides being the only Member of Parliament from north India, to have been awarded with Sansad Ratna Award.
(a) Lal Krishna Advani (b) Anurag Thakur (c) Manoj Sinha (d) Rajnath Singh
220. Name the Indian, who was chosen for the first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research, given by the Centre for Advanced Materials of the UAE.
(a) Kailasavadivoo Sivan (b) Tessy Thomas (c) C N R Rao (d) Sulabha Kashinath Kulkarni
221. Recently, A dedicated RPF women squad named as 'JOYMATI BAHINI', comprising women sub-inspector and constables of the Railway Protection Force was formally launched in:
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Tripura (d) Meghalaya
222. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose museum in:
(a) Cuttack (b) New Delhi (c) Kolkata (d) Kohima
223. Recently, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the first interstate, 1.2 km-long Keediyar-Gandiwal Bridge on the _____ river in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir.
(a) Ravi (b) Sutlej (c) Chenab (d) Beas
224. Recently, which Indian state declared the Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF)-the state's only conservation festival, as a "state festival"?
(a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Nagaland
225. What is the present rank of India on the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) 2019?
(a) 52nd (b) 61st (c) 80th (d) 84th

226. Recently, Svamaan Financial Services, a micro lender, which recently received Reserve Bank of India's approval for starting operations, started its operation in two states namely:
(a) Gujarat and Rajasthan (b) Karnataka and Maharashtra
(c) Kerala and Tamil Nadu (d) Uttar Pradesh and Haryana
227. According to the Status Paper on Government Debt for 2017-18, the Centre's total debt as a percentage of GDP reduced to _____ in 2017-18 from 47.5% as of March 31, 2014.
(a) 46.5% (b) 45.0% (c) 44.5% (d) 42.5%
228. The smallest ever satellite made by students is:
(a) Kalamsat (b) Littlesat (c) Tinysat (d) Indiasat
229. Who has been awarded Saraswati Samman, 2017, for his poetry collection in Gujarati recently?
(a) Sitanshu Yashashchandra (b) Atul Modi
(c) Anand Maheshwari (d) Deepak Mehta
230. Who is the first player in history to win three prestigious ICC awards - the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards?
(a) Hashim Amla (b) Kane Williamson (c) Virat Kohli (d) Babar Azam
231. India figures at _____ position among the world's most innovative countries, according to Bloomberg 2019 Innovative Index.
(a) 34th (b) 54th (c) 64th (d) 74th
232. Coast Guards of _____ and Japan kicked off their disaster control, search and rescue exercises off the coast of Yokohama in Japan.
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) South Korea
233. Which among the following ports has become India's only port to get listed among the top 30 global container ports?
(a) Kolkata Port (b) Chennai Port
(c) Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (d) Vishakhapatnam Port
234. The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval for amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries' to incorporate a 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD _____ operated within the overall size of the Facility of USD 2 billion.
(a) 400 million (b) 500 million (c) 600 million (d) 700 million
235. The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the creation of National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT). The National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal shall be situated at:
(a) Mumbai (b) Hyderabad (c) New Delhi (d) Kolkata
236. Which among the following countries has successfully tested the advanced missile defense system 'Arrow-3' in January 2019?
(a) India (b) Israel (c) USA (d) Palestine
237. Virat Kohli went past _____ record of 10405 runs during the first ODI vs New Zealand in Napier.
(a) Brian Lara (b) Ricky Pointing (c) Rahul Dravid (d) Sourav Chandidas Ganguly

238. Who among the following has become the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets in January 2019?
(a) Umesh Yadav (b) Mohammed Shami
(c) Jasprit Jasbirsingh Bumrah (d) Bhuvneshwar Kumar
239. The first coastal defence Exercise Sea Vigil, conducted by the Navy and Coast Guard, in close coordination with State Governments and Union Territories concluded on 23 Jan 2019 in:
(a) Chennai (b) Kolkata (c) Vishakhapatnam (d) Kochi
240. Government has instituted an annual award titled Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar. The award is to be announced every year on:
(a) 21 January (b) 22 January (c) 23 January (d) 24 January
241. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana in:
(a) Mumbai (b) Hyderabad (c) New Delhi (d) Kolkata
242. Karthyayani Amma has been chosen to be the Commonwealth of Learning Goodwill Ambassador. She hails from:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Kerala (c) Gujarat (d) Sikkim
243. Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019 is scheduled to be conducted at Aundh Military Station and College of Military Engineering, which is located in:
(a) Chennai (b) Kolkata (c) Vishakhapatnam (d) Pune
244. The world's longest 3D-printed concrete bridge was opened in:
(a) India (b) China (c) USA (d) Palestine
245. President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré has appointed Christophe Joseph Marie Dabiré as Prime Minister of:
(a) Burkina Faso (b) Jamaica (c) Mexico (d) Ghana
246. According to the World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) report released by the UN Indian economy is expected to accelerate in 2019-20 to expand by _____% from 7.4% in the year ending 31 March on the back of robust growth in private consumption, while private investment may continue to remain sluggish.
(a) 7.6 (b) 7.8 (c) 8.0 (d) 8.2
247. Who has been appointed as the interim finance minister of India?
(a) Rajnath Singh (b) Subramanyam Swami (c) Piyush Goyal (d) Suresh Prabu
248. Ravneet Singh Gill has been appointed as the MD and CEO of:
(a) YES Bank (b) Andhra Bank (c) Canara Bank (d) Bank of Baroda
249. Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned the Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa' at Diglipur in:
(a) Chennai (b) Kolkata (c) Vishakhapatnam (d) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
250. The Women & Child Development Ministry celebrates National Girl Child Day (NGCD) on:
(a) 21 January (b) 22 January (c) 23 January (d) 24 January
251. President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa arrived in New Delhi on a two-day State Visit to India. Mr Ramaphosa is the _____President of South Africa to be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day.
(a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fourth

252. The Union Cabinet approved a Constitutional amendment to increase the financial and executive powers of the 10 autonomous councils in the _____ Schedule areas of the northeast.
(a) Third (b) Fourth (c) Fifth (d) Sixth
253. Which among the following companies has received a go ahead from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to acquire majority stakes in two of India's largest cable operators - DEN Networks and Hathway Cable & Datacom?
(a) Airtel (b) Reliance Industries (c) TATA (d) Idea
254. Which is the first mission of PSLV-DL and is a new variant of the PSLV?
(a) PSLV-C41 (b) PSLV-C42 (c) PSLV-C43 (d) PSLV-C44
255. The World Health Organization (WHO) has listed out _____ global health threats for 2019, adding that millions of lives will be at risk if these threats are not addressed.
(a) 5 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 15
256. The new SSC-8 ground-fired cruise missile (also known as the Novator 9M729) launched by:
(a) India (b) Russia (c) USA (d) Palestine
257. Former India hockey player Raghbir Singh Bhola has passed away. Bhola represented India in the:
(a) 1956 Melbourne Olympics (b) 1960 Rome Olympics
(c) 1964 London Olympics (d) Both A and B
258. To celebrate the role of education for peace and development, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring _____ as 'International Day of Education.'
(a) 21 January (b) 22 January (c) 23 January (d) 24 January
259. This year, the National Bravery Award was merged with the Bal Shakti Puraskar and Bal Kalyan Puraskar. How many children's were shortlisted for the esteemed award this year?
(a) 10 (b) 15 (c) 26 (d) 30
260. A film on menstruation, set in rural India, titled Period. End of Sentence, has earned a nomination in the Documentary Short Subject category for the 91st Academy Awards. This short film was directed by:
(a) Rayka Zehtabchi (b) Pushpdeep Bhardwa (c) Bala Senthil Kumar (d) Bala Latha
261. Which is the first state in the country where a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed to develop one such abandoned air strip at Dhalbhumgarh?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Jharkhand (c) Gujarat (d) Sikkim
262. Sultan Abdullah has been named the new king of:
(a) Indonesia (b) Malaysia (c) Singapore (d) Vietnam
263. A newly published report by research firm eMarketer said that _____ is expected to surpass the United States to become the world's largest retail market in 2019.
(a) India (b) Germany (c) China (d) Russia
264. Parthasarathi Mukherjee has been reappointed as the managing director of:
(a) Lakshmi Vilas Bank (b) Airtel Bank (c) Paytm Bank (d) Maharashtra Bank

265. Which among the following countries has entered the \$ 100 billion club in the merger and acquisition space in January 2019?
(a) India (b) Germany (c) Japan (d) Russia
266. Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) has been awarded the best miniratna PSU in strategic performance (financial category) at the Governance Now Sixth PSU awards. This company is based in:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Assam
267. Which among the following countries has announced a research project to study nitrogen pollution in India and South Asia in January 2019?
(a) UK (b) France (c) Japan (d) USA
268. Who among the following Indian badminton players has won the Indonesia Masters title in January 2019?
(a) Ashwini Ponnappa (b) P.V.Sindh (c) Saina Nehwal (d) Jwala Gutta
269. The 9th National Voters' Day (NVD) is celebrated across the country on:
(a) 22 January (b) 23 January (c) 24 January (d) 25 January
270. Acclaimed Hindi fiction writer and essayist Krishna Sobti passed away in New Delhi. Sobti had won the Sahitya Akademi award in:
(a) 1970 (b) 1980 (c) 1990 (d) 1999
271. Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award in India was/were conferred to whom among the following in January 2019?
(a) Pranab Mukherjee (b) Nanaji Deshmukh (c) Bhupen Hazarika (d) All of the above
272. The Oxford Dictionaries announced '_____ ' as the Hindi Word of the Year 2018.
(a) Nari Shakti (b) Sahayak (c) Aadhar (d) Bhayya
273. Which among the following countries has declared sugarcane juice as the 'national drink' of the country?
(a) Pakistan (b) India (c) Germany (d) Japan
274. Which among the following was felicitated with the 'Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Social Impact' award in the 'Sustainable Environment category'?
(a) Tetra Pak India (b) Green India (c) IRDI (d) All of the above
275. "Roshni" was the first Android app to the aid of visually impaired in identifying the new currency notes introduced by the Reserve Bank of India, post demonetisation. Roshni was developed by:
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai (b) Indian Institute of Technology, Kolkata
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai (d) Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar
276. Bharat Fritz Werner Ltd (BFW) machining solution provider, has partnered with Universal Robots, a Danish robot maker and a leader in collaborative robots, to co-create robots for MSME sector. BFW is based in:
(a) Mumbai (b) Pune (c) Bengaluru (d) Hyderabad
277. The Earth's oldest known rock was found on the:
(a) Moon (b) Asian Continent (c) Europe Continent (d) North America Continent
278. Who among the following has won a record seventh Australian Open title and a third successive Grand Slam in January 2019?
(a) Roger Federer (b) Novak Djokovic (c) Rafael Nadal (d) Andrew Murray

279. President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian awards of the category, to _____ people from various disciplines.
(a) 85 (b) 95 (c) 100 (d) 112
280. International Holocaust Remembrance Day is an international memorial day on:
(a) 24 January (b) 25 January (c) 26 January (d) 27 January
281. India's first indigenously built engineless semi-high speed train, Train 18, has been named as:
(a) Mahatma Express (b) Vande Bharat Express
(c) Atal Express (d) Deen Dayal Express
282. The Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) set by the HRD Ministry for selecting Institutions of Eminence (IOEs) has recommended to increase the number of such institutes to _____ from the current 20.
(a) 25 (b) 30 (c) 35 (d) 40
283. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated four-lane, 5.1-kilometer long "Atal Setu", the third Cable Bridge across river Mandovi in:
(a) Sikkim (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Goa
284. Governor Satya Pal Malik approved Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2014 providing reservation to the persons belonging to Pahari community of the State. Pahari community belongs to which of the following states of India?
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Rajasthan
285. Who has been appointed Regional Director for World Health Organization South-East Asia, for a second five-year term?
(a) Dr.Lathakumari Mangalam (b) Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh
(c) Ava Marie DuVernay (d) Patricia Lea Jenkins
286. According to the Brand Finance Global 500, 2019 report, which has entered the list of Top 100 most valuable global brands?
(a) Tata (b) Jio (c) TCS (d) Patanjali
287. Researchers at IIT-Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia in _____ created the first soft robot which is able to curl and climb like planet tendrills using the same physical principles determining water transport in plants.
(a) Italy (b) Israel (c) Mexico (d) USA
288. Rohit Paudel broke Shahid Afridi's record to become the youngest half-centurion in one-day internationals. He hails from:
(a) UAE (b) Hong Kong (c) Bhutan (d) Nepal
289. Who won the women's single Australian Open title 2019?
(a) Petra Kvitova (b) Serena Williams (c) Naomi Osaka (d) Venus Williams
290. India's second Tulip garden is to be set up in:
(a) Shimla (b) Dharamshala (c) Amaravati (d) Bhopal
291. Civil Aviation ministry launched the country's first Geographical Indication (GI) store at Dabolim International Airport in:
(a) Sikkim (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Goa

292. The Swasth Bharat Yatra, the world's biggest cyclothon to push people to eat right, culminated in:
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Bengaluru (d) Hyderabad
293. The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting-2019 was held in :
(a) Sweden (b) Norway (c) Finland (d) Switzerland
294. Which of the following airports is the world's busiest airport for international passengers for the fifth consecutive year?
(a) Dubai International Airport (b) Indira Gandhi International Airport
(c) New York International Airport (d) Beijing International Airport
295. India has replaced _____ as world's second largest steel producing country.
(a) USA (b) China (c) Germany (d) Japan
296. Which of the following countries has been stripped of the right to host the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships in January 2019?
(a) Indonesia (b) Malaysia (c) Singapore (d) Japan
297. Who has been posthumously awarded India's highest peace time gallantry award, the Ashok Chakra in January 2019?
(a) Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Wani (b) Shah Nawaz Khan
(c) Havildar Hangpan Dada (d) Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon
298. Which of the following railways has bagged the number one position for cleanliness in the country in January 2019?
(a) Southern Railway (b) Northern Railway (c) Central Railway (d) Eastern Railway
299. Jayant Kaikini was named the winner of the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for his translated work "No Presents Please". He hails from:
(a) Kerala (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Karnataka
300. George Fernandes has passed away recently, he served as:
(a) Defence Minister of India (b) Home Minister of India
(c) Finance Minister of India (d) Governor of Assam
301. Which of the following states has been chosen as the best tableau among states in this year's Republic Day Parade?
(a) Assam (b) Tripura (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Sikkim
302. Who among the following launched the report "The Future of Rail" of International Energy Agency (IEA) recently?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Piyush Goyal (c) Shri Suresh Prabhu (d) Shri Ramnath Kovind
303. Recently, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial at:
(a) Dandi (b) Ahmedabad (c) New Delhi (d) Surat
304. Who is the Pakistan's first ever appointed Hindu female civil judge?
(a) Roop Kumari (b) Shailja Batra (c) Deepika Bharadwaj (d) Suman Kumari
305. What is the name of the common digital currency launched by the central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia recently?
(a) Amber (b) Aber (c) Antul (d) Mutel

306. According to the rankings released by an anti-corruption watchdog, the rank of India on a global corruption index in year 2018 is:
(a) 32nd (b) 37th (c) 54th (d) 78th
307. Recently, Researchers have identified _____ genes that can predict an individual's likelihood of developing a severe form of dengue fever with about 80% accuracy.
(a) 10 (b) 15 (c) 20 (d) 25
308. Name the Indian, who won the New South Wales men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia recently.
(a) Sushant Negi (b) Kartik Sharma (c) Ayushman Sharma (d) Deepak Rawat
309. Name the Hindi writer, who has been awarded with Sahitya Akademy Awards for her book 'post box no 203 Nalla Sopara', which was based on the life of a transgender.
(a) Asha Negi (b) Urmila Deshpande (c) Chitra Mudgal (d) Anita Raj
310. Recently, the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Design formally presented the fourth annual Carnot Prize to:
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Sarbananda Sonowal
(c) Shri Piyush Goyal (d) Shri R.K.Singh



ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Rice Research Institute's South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) campus in Varanasi. The centre will serve as a hub for rice research and training in South Asia.
2. b The Congress-led Madhya Pradesh Government said that it is going to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department) by merging several existing departments.
3. a Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched the Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin initiative in Bhubaneswar, which will expand women's access to hygiene products and provide them with employment opportunities in every district of the state.
4. b Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has secured a fourth term with a landslide victory in polls the opposition slammed as "farical" over claims of vote-rigging, and clashes between rival supporters that killed at least 17 people.
5. c A settled goods and services tax (GST), improving credit availability and capacity expansion from increasing investment in infrastructure are among seven key drivers that will help Indian economy grow 7.5% in 2019, said the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
6. a Three Indian-origin women scientists made it in the list of 60 Superstars of STEM list announced recently by the Australian government. These bright minds - Onisha Patel, Devika Kamath and Asha Rao - are born and brought up in India and have done pathbreaking work in the field of science. All three moved to Australia to pursue higher studies and wish to change the situation for younger girls back home.
7. c Bangladesh ODI Captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has contested from Narail 2 constituency on an Awami League ticket. With this, he became the first active cricketer to become a Member of Parliament and the second national cricket team captain, after Naimur Rahman Durjoy, to enter the Parliament.
8. b India's stylish left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana has won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year and also been named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year.
9. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the renaming of three islands of Andaman and Nicobar on the occasion of 75th anniversary of Tricolour hoisting by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Port Blair.
10. a Aiming to supplement farmers income in Uttar Pradesh, the Deen Dayal Veterinary University proposes to set up the first goat fertility lab in the state under a novel project funded by the central government, its vice chancellor K M L Pathak said.
11. b World's largest science meets 'Indian Science Congress (ISC)-2019' is going to be held from 3rd to 7th January 2019, in Jalandhar, Punjab.
12. d Agricultural credit flow has increased by 57 per cent to Rs 11 lakh crore in the last 4 years.
13. c Sudhir Bhargava was sworn in as Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission.
14. a Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League and its allies won the general elections, bagging 288 of the total 299 seats which went to the polls.

15. a Qatar will cease to be a member of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.
16. c The United States and Israel officially quit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the close of 2018.
17. d Reserve Bank has allowed a one-time restructuring of existing debt of up to 25 crore rupees for the companies which have defaulted on payment but the loans given to them have continued to be classified as standard assets.
18. c The government has infused 10,882 crore rupees in four public sector banks, including UCO Bank and Syndicate Bank.
19. b As part of the enhanced outreach programme of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), a new platform named “Samwad with Students” (SwS) was launched in Bengaluru.
20. c On 1st January the DRDO was established in 1958 with just 10 laboratories to enhance the research work in defence sector.
21. b Justice AK Sikri was nominated as the Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
22. b The West Bengal government announced two welfare initiatives for farmers. Both initiatives, which are part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme, will come into effect from New Year's Day.
23. b India's fastest Train 18 will soon start its services between Delhi and Varanasi.
24. b The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of a high-level committee for implementation of clause 6 of the Assam Accord and measures envisaged in the Memorandum of Settlement, 2003 and other issues related to Bodo community.
25. d Under the PMUY scheme, the government provides a subsidy of Rs 1,600 to state-owned fuel retailers for every free LPG gas connection that they give to poor households. This subsidy is intended to cover the security fee for the cylinder and the fitting charges.
26. b Jair Bolsonaro has announced Brazil's "liberation from socialism, inverted values, the bloated state and political correctness" after being sworn in as the country's 42nd president.
27. d The RBI has appointed an eight-member expert committee headed by former SEBI chairman U.K. Sinha to comprehensively review and propose long-term solutions for revival of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector.
28. a Morocco has been named the second best performing country after Sweden in the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI).
29. c The Indian Society for Remote Sensing conferred the National Geospatial Award for Excellence to IIT professor Jayanta Kumar Ghosh for his contribution towards the development of geospatial science and applications.
30. b Pankaj Singh became the first fast-bowler and 10th overall to pick 400 wickets in the Ranji Trophy.
31. d Now, only about 10.48 Lakh households are left to be electrified in 4 States viz., Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Chhattisgarh. These States are also taking all concerted efforts to achieve, at the earliest, saturation of household electrification in their respective States.

32. a The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has recently launched the Bhoomi Rashi portal. In the past years, acquisition of land for the purpose of National Highway projects, payment of compensation to the land owners etc were done manually by physical movement of documents in the form of files.
33. d Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the nation's biggest oil firm will commission its first liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal at Ennore in Tamil Nadu this month.
34. b HDFC Mutual Fund has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years.
35. c Scientists at Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, have developed a simple paper kit that can test freshness of milk and tell how well it has been pasteurized. Aided with a smart phone app, the kit can help ensure that milk is consumed before it turns too sour.
36. c Initially, Space Galleries are planned to be established at Birla Science Centre at Hyderabad, Nehru Science Centre at Mumbai and National Science Centre at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.
37. c The ten-day Festival is organized by the Directorate of Film Festivals, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting at Siri Fort Auditorium II, New Delhi.
38. b "JAI JAWAN, JAI KISAN, JAI VIGYAN, JAI ANUSANDHAN"- SLOGAN OF NEW INDIA was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
39. c Indian captain Virat Kohli broke yet another Sachin Tendulkar record as he became the fastest batsman to reach 19,000 international runs.
40. b The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship hosted third edition of the National Entrepreneurship Awards in New Delhi.
41. d Indian mountaineer Arunima Sinha has once again done her country proud by becoming the first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
42. a As a part of the on-going five-day Indian Science Congress, Rashtriya Kishore Vaigyanik Sammelan(Children Science Congress) was inaugurated in Jalandhar by Nobel Laureates Avram Hershko from Israel and F.Duncan M.Haldane from USA..
43. d All the 640 districts (as per census 2011) of the country covered under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme.
44. c The federal government announced the appointment of Supreme Court Justice Asif Saeed Khosa as the Chief Justice of Pakistan, replacing incumbent Justice Mian Saqib Nisar, from January 18.
45. c In US, Veteran Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, considered an ardent supporter of India-US ties, has been elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives for the second time, thus becoming the most powerful elected woman in America.
46. a Andhra Pradesh emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI), Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business (EDB) Index ABC rankings for economies of 21 states of India, while Maharashtra and Delhi came in second and third place, respectively.
47. a The Reserve Bank of India has decided to limit the liability of customers in case of unauthorised electronic payment transactions in Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) issued by non-banks.

48. c China has named the lunar rover, successfully deployed to carry out a string of experiments on the unexplored far side of the moon, as 'Yutu 2'.
49. c The 80th National Table Tennis Championship began at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack.
50. a Rishabh Pant Becomes First Indian Wicket-Keeper to Score a Test Century in Australia
51. c To encourage farmers to use solar agriculture pumps, the Maharashtra government has decided to give two LED bulbs, a DC fan and a mobile charging socket as freebies.
52. a Odisha will be participating as a partner state in the upcoming mega international food and beverage show 'Indus Food 2019' to be held at India Exposition Mart, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh on January 14 and 15.
53. b As a part of the on-going Indian Science Congress, 2019, Science Communicators' Meet was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Law & Justice and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad at Lovely Professional University in Jalandhar.
54. a The provincial Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in northwest Pakistan has declared the ancient Hindu religious site of Panj Tirath in Peshawar as national heritage.
55. d To ensure easier availability of FASTags, Indian Highways Management Company Ltd. (IHMCL), a company promoted by NHAI, is signing MoUs with state-run Oil Marketing Companies (IOCL, BPC, and HPC).
56. b A special court in Mumbai declared absconding liquor baron Vijay Mallya a fugitive economic offender (FEO) on a plea of the Enforcement Directorate. Mallya has become the first businessman to be declared EFO under the provisions of the new Fugitive Economic Offenders Act which came into existence in August last year.
57. a United Bank of India and Srei Equipment Finance have entered into an agreement for financing the MSME and agriculture sectors.
58. b The Centre has amalgamated three Regional Rural Banks (RRB), Punjab Gramin Bank, Malwa Gramin Bank and Sutlej Gramin Bank into a single RRB with effect from January 1.
59. d US scientists say that they have successfully launched a telescope from Antarctica that analyses X-rays arriving from distant neutron stars, black holes and other exotic celestial bodies.
60. d Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Devineni Umamaheswar Rao has received the 'Central Board of Irrigation and Power Award' for better planning and construction of Polavaram Irrigation Project in the state at Lodhi Road, New Delhi.
61. d Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced zero percent interest loan for Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Mission Shakti scheme of state government introduced for women's financial inclusion and development.
62. a In Gujarat, the nine-day long international kite festival kicked off at Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad.
63. a The nine-member committee, comprising of eminent Assamese persons from different fields, is headed by former bureaucrat MP Bezbaruah. The committee will examine the effectiveness of actions since 1985 to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord.

64. c The North Central Railway, NCR has launched a mobile application to help people navigate through Prayagraj city during Kumbh Mela starting from January 15.
65. a Awami League President Sheikh Hasina has taken oath as Prime Minister of Bangladesh for the third consecutive term.
66. b Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed MoU with Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER) for joint research programs in the field of Communication Navigation and Surveillance (CNS).
67. b The human space flight Gaganyaan is planned to be launched by 2022, the 75th anniversary of Independence.
68. b Top-seeded Kevin Anderson won his sixth ATP title when he recovered from 5-2 down in the decisive tiebreaker to beat Ivo Karlovic 7-6 (4), 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5) in the Maharashtra Open final.
69. d Switzerland's Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic secured a 2-1 victory over Germany's Angelique Kerber and Alexander Zverev to win the Hopman Cup for the second year in a row.
70. a Secunderabad Railway Station became the first railway station of South Central Railway (SCR) zone to hoist a huge tricolour on a 100-foot tall pole at its main entrance in Hyderabad.
71. d The Ministry of Human Resource Development has introduced a 70-point grading index to assess the quality of school education offered by states.
72. c The Union Cabinet approved a Constitution Amendment Bill to provide 10% reservation to the economically backward sections in the general category.
73. a The fourth edition of the Raisina Dialogue is being started in New Delhi.
74. d In Malaysia, members of the royal families met to set dates to choose a new king after the resignation of Sultan Muhammad -5 as the country's head of state.
75. c Two new Skill Development Schemes have been approved namely (i) Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood (SANKALP); and (ii) Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE).
76. d The Sittwe Port in Myanmar is constructed with India's assistance and is ready for operation.
77. b World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announced that he will step down from his position on February 1 - much before the end of his term in 2022.
78. b Maharashtra is all set to host the second edition of Khelo India Youth Games which will officially begin in Pune.
79. a India reinforced their status as the world's number one test team and retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with the series win. Cheteshwar Pujara was declared man of the match as well as man-of-the-series.
80. Veterans Farooq Sheikh and Asha Parekh are set to be honoured by the Bimal Roy Memorial and Film Society to commemorate the 52nd death anniversary of the renowned filmmaker.
81. d Egypt will host the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations between 15th June and 13th July. Confederation of African Football (CAF) President Ahmad Ahmad made the announcement.

82. d India born Gita Gopinath has joined International Monetary Fund as its chief economist. She has first woman to occupy the top IMF post.
83. a Shri Manoj Sinha, Minister of State for Communications (Independent Charge and Minister of State for Railways inaugurated a one-day conference hosted by the Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC), New Delhi on "M2M/ IoT Enabling Smart Infrastructure".
84. c The five-member committee headed by UIDAI's former Chairman Nandan Nilekani will include RBI's former Deputy Governor Mr. H.R. Khan and Former Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology, Mrs. Aruna Sharma among others.
85. c A visionary in the field of Solar Energy and the chairman of National Solar Energy Federation, Shri Pranav R Mehta, has taken over as the president of Global Solar Council (GSC) from January 1, 2019. The GSC has its headquarters in Washington D.C., USA.
86. a The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) pavilion received 'Exhibitor of the Year Award' at 106th Indian Science Congress held at Lovely Professional University (LPU), Phagwara, Punjab.
87. d Guatemala has said it is withdrawing from a UN-backed anti-corruption commission.
88. b The Supreme Court notified that a five-judge Bench, consisting of the incumbent Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and the next four future Chief Justices of India in line of seniority to hear the Ayodhya title dispute appeals on January 10.
89. c Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai has written a new book, charting her experiences travelling the world and visiting refugee camps. The title of this book is "We are Displaced".
90. a Polavaram project-the life line of Andhra Pradesh, the concrete works of spill channel successfully entered Guinness Book of World Records by completing 32,315.5 Cubic meters of concrete works in a span of 24 hours.
91. d The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, Gangajal project, which will provide Agra with better and more assured water supply, at an estimated cost of Rs.2880 crores. Gangajal project aims to bring 140 cusecs of Ganga water to Agra. This will help meet the drinking water demands in the city.
92. c The Jammu and Kashmir administration set up a law commission with Justice (Retd) M K Hanjura as its founding chairperson, to identify redundant and obsolete laws that can be repealed and suggest measures for quick redress of public grievances.
93. c Ahead of parliamentary elections, the Centre has proposed another pro-tribal measure - renaming of the Indian Forest Service as Indian Forest and Tribal Service.
94. a The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, has launched an online campaign, '#www: Web- Wonder Women'.
95. d The Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Shri. Conrad K Sangma, inaugurated the project "Development of North East Circuit: Umiam (Lake View) - U Lum Sohpetbneng- Mawdiangdiang - Orchid Lake Resort" implemented under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in presence of the Minister of Tourism, Government of Meghalaya.
96. a Andaman to be First Island to operate seaplanes under UDAN-3

97. c A report by World Economic Forum said that India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030.
98. d India's GDP is expected to grow at 7.3% in the fiscal year 2018-19, and 7.5% in the following two years, the World Bank has forecast, attributing it to an upswing in consumption and investment.
99. b The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced USA Cricket as its 105th member.
100. b Egypt striker Mohamed Salah has been named African Footballer of the Year for the second successive year at the Confederation of African Football's 2018 awards ceremony in Dakar.
101. b Sikkim's ruling party, the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), declared to include the Universal Basic Income scheme in its manifesto ahead of the Assembly election in 2019 and aims to implement it by 2022. If everything goes according to the plan, it will be the first state to implement UBI in India.
102. c An agreement for Renukaji Dam Multipurpose Project will be signed among the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. The project is aimed at meeting the drinking water needs of these states.
103. b The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for a proposal for establishing three new AIIMS at Vijaynagar, Samba, Jammu at a cost of Rs 1661 Crore; Awantipura, Pulwama, Kashmir at a cost of Rs 1828 Crore and Rajkot, Gujarat at a cost of Rs 1195 Crore.
104. c National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan in New Delhi.
105. a The high-power committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi removed Alok Verma as CBI Director, a day after he resumed office following the Supreme Court verdict restoring his position
106. a India's longest 300-metre single lane steel cable suspension bridge was inaugurated by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu.
107. a Opposition leader Felix Tshisekedi was declared winner of DR Congo's presidential election.
108. b Iran's Bank Pasargad will open its branch within the next three months in Mumbai.
109. c IIT Madras scientists have created what they call 'space fuel' by simulating interstellar conditions in the lab, a method that may be used to convert atmospheric CO₂ into a next generation energy source on Earth.
110. c President of the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Birendra Prasad Baishya, has been named Chef de Mission for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
111. c Jharkhand became the first state to achieve the feat of giving jobs to over one lakh youths in the private sector.
112. d The Ministry of Women and Child Development is organised the three-day 6th 'Women of India Organic Festival' at Leisure Valley, Sector-10, Chandigarh, to celebrate and promote women farmers and entrepreneurs in the organic sector from the remotest parts of India.
113. c The Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Sr. Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha.

114. b Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen has appointed Su Tseng-chang as Prime Minister during a Cabinet reshuffle following the ruling Democratic Progressive Party's heavy losses in local elections.
115. a Ashok Chawla resigned as the chairman and public interest director of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) informed a Delhi court that the Centre had given the go-ahead to prosecute five people, including Mr. Chawla, in the Aircel-Maxis matter.
116. d According to the Henley Passport Index, which periodically measures the access each country's travel document affords, India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th this year.
117. a The world's oceans are heating up at an accelerating pace as global warming threatens a diverse range of marine life and a major food supply for the planet.
118. b ISRO is well prepared to meet the targets of launching Gaganyaan manned mission to outer space by December 2021.
119. d India skipper Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri received the honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket.
120. a National Youth Day is celebrated in all over the world on 12 January on the birthday of Swami Vivekananda.
121. c Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 'Ama Ghare LED' scheme, under which about 95 lakh families in the State will each get four LED bulbs free of cost.
122. a The Indian Paint Association (IPA), the apex body of the country's paint industry announced that the 29th biennial Indian Paint Conference to be held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh from 11th to 13th January 2019.
123. c Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Col Rajyavardhan Rathore launched the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 at a function in New Delhi.
124. c President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to a bill providing 10 per cent reservation to economically backward section in the general category. After the approval of Parliament during the Winter Session this week, the Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill, 2019 was sent to the President for his assent.
125. a Finance Minister Arun Jaitley inaugurated Hunar Haat organised by Minority Affairs Ministry at State Emporium Complex in New Delhi.
126. c The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, conferred the Honorary Rank of General of the Indian Army on Sukirtimaya Rashtadeep General Purna Chandra Thapa, Chief of the Army Staff, Nepalese Army, for his commendable military prowess and immeasurable contribution to fostering Nepal's long and friendly association with India, at a special Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
127. d Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi will head the seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to look into the revenue shortfall being faced by states following the roll out of Goods and Services Tax (GST).
128. b The seasoned Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the fifth player to score ten thousand runs for India in One-day International Cricket, adding another feather to his illustrious cap.
129. c Born at Patna Sahib in 1666, Guru Govind Singh was the 10th Sikh guru. He succeeded his father Guru Tegh Bahadur Singh as leader of Sikhs at the age of just nine.

130. d Writer Namita Gokhale has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel "Things to Leave Behind".
131. c The understanding was reached at the first ever India-Central Asia Dialogue in Uzbekistan capital Samarkand.
132. b National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction, 2018 to 2023, aims to employ a multi-pronged strategy to address the issue. It involves education, de-addiction and rehabilitation of affected individuals and their families.
133. a Gujarat Government has announced the benefits of 10 per cent quota for Economically Weaker sections of general category in educational institutions and government jobs.
134. b Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme which entitles one government job for every family in the state.
135. c UAE, Saudi Arabia to invest in Indian agriculture sector.
136. d Senior bureaucrat Jaideep Govind was appointed Secretary General, National Human Rights Commission.
137. c At the Khelo India Youth Games in Pune, ten year old Abhinav Shaw became the youngest gold medallist in shooting.
138. a Bengaluru Raptors have won their first ever Premier Badminton League title.
139. c Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship organised by US kids Golf in Malaysia, which makes him the youngest Indian to win the title.
140. c Noted English writer Neelum Saran Gour, author of Requiem in Raga Janki and Bengali writer and socio-political activist Manoranjan Byapari, author of Interrogating my Chandal Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit , bagged The Hindu Prize 2018 for fiction and non-fiction respectively at The Hindu Lit for Life 2019.
141. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi, received the first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award at his residence in New Delhi.
142. a The world's largest religious and cultural human congregation -Kumbh 2019 has begun with the holy dip at Sangam, the confluence of rivers Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati at Prayagraj.
143. b A two-day Global Aviation Summit 2019 took off in Mumbai.
144. b IITM Pune has developed a Mobile App called "DAMINI" to give alerts on impending lightning activity over the area.
145. c Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman watched a joint amphibious exercise off the Campbell Bay coast, the southern-most island of the nation, which saw participation of the three armed forces.
146. b Government e Marketplace [GeM] has launched "Womaniya on GeM", an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups [WSHGs] to sell handicrafts and handloom, accessories, jute and coir products, home décor and office furnishings, directly to various Government ministries, departments and institutions.
147. b India got its largest startup ecosystem when Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated in Kochi a 1.8-lakh-square-foot facility housing incubation set-ups across a string of segments in modern technology.

148. a Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India is organizing the 9th International Micro Irrigation Conference on Modern Agriculture at Aurangabad in Maharashtra from January 16-18, 2019.
149. d Armed Forces Day is commemorated as a mark of respect to the services rendered by Field Marshal K M Kariappa, who retired on January 14, 1953.
150. a The Chennai Traffic Police inducted a road safety robot into its fold. Named ROADEO, the robot will make the pedestrians, especially children; feel safe while crossing the roads.
151. a The Kollam Bypass on the National Highway-66 considerably reduces travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram, besides avoiding traffic congestion in Kollam town. Notably, this is the first National Highway project in the country taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership.
152. a The 10 per cent reservation in education to Economically Weaker Sections of general category will be implemented in 40,000 colleges and 900 universities from academic year 2019-20.
153. a Science and Technology Minister Dr. Harshvardhan launched DD Science and India Science channels in New Delhi. DD Science is Doordarshan's first ever daily slot on Science and Technology, while India Science is an internet-based channel.
154. b Government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel will be the convener of the GoM.
155. d First Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme was inaugurated in New Delhi.
156. c Reserve Bank will inject 10,000 crore rupees into the system through the purchase of government securities to increase liquidity.
157. c Based on findings of their new research, scientists at the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune have suggested that measuring levels of free albumin and albumin attached to glucose molecules in the blood can be a better diagnosis test for diabetes and help in its management.
158. b The first National Level Sports Meet for the students of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) was inaugurated by Shri Jaswantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs at G.M.C Balayogi Stadium, Gachibowli Hyderabad.
159. c Telangana government has been given the green nod for its Rs 13,384.80 crore Sita Rama Lift Irrigation Project that aims to divert Godavari river water to irrigate 2.72 lakh hectare in three districts.
160. b Detained Chinese lawyer Yu Wensheng wins Franco-German human rights award.
161. a Mr Modi inaugurated the 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show' in Gandhinagar.
162. a The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, visited Uttar Pradesh (Prayagraj) to inaugurate the Gandhian Resurgence Summit.
163. a Voter Awareness Forum (VAF) was launched by Election Commission of India in New Delhi.
164. c Veteran Congress leader C.P. Joshi was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly.

165. b The second India-Myanmar bilateral Army exercise 'IMBEX 2018-19' commenced at Chandi mandir military station in Chandigarh.
166. c The RBI has decided to keep the minimum average maturity period at 3 years for all ECBs, irrespective of the amount of borrowing, except for borrowers specifically permitted to borrow for a shorter period.
167. b Union Cabinet approved recapitalisation of Export-Import Bank of India to the tune of 6,000 crore rupees and increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from 10,000 crore to 20,000 crore rupees.
168. c Odisha's Puri beach witnessed its first turtle festival on January 13, 2019, where tourists, researchers and environmentalists gathered to promote eco-tourism, which in turn could help conserve Olive Ridley turtles.
169. a Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018 will be conferred on Yohei Sasakawa who is Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organization for Leprosy Elimination.
170. c Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley. With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man to climb the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.
171. b Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in Mumbai.
172. c The government set up an eight-member ministerial panel headed by Maharashtra Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar to look into GST-related issues of lottery business.
173. a The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019 at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad.
174. a India born, Dr. Rattan Lal, Distinguished University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A. is being honored for his work in identifying technological options adapted to various ecosystems through his intensive basic and applied research on processes and factors of soil degradation caused by inappropriate biological production.
175. c Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 in Mumbai.
176. c Ace Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat has become the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award.
177. d The world's first television channel dedicated to human rights was launched in London with a promise to deliver hidden stories ignored by mainstream media into people's living rooms.
178. d Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurates UNNATI-- Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training programme of ISRO in Bengaluru.
179. c Scientists, using data from the Cassini spacecraft, have found evidence of methane rainfall on the north pole of Titan, the largest moon of Saturn.
180. c The 25th International conference and exhibition on terrestrial and satellite broadcasting BES EXPO 2019 began in New Delhi.

181. b Nashik in Maharashtra will be the site of the country's second defence innovation hub after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, Union Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre said.
182. c Justice Asif Saeed Khosa took oath as the 26th Chief Justice of Pakistan in a simple ceremony held here at the President's House which was also attended by foreign dignitaries, including from India.
183. d India will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) this year to address the issue of land degradation and desertification.
184. a Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and Libcoin are in dialogue to form a world class consortium to initially build 1GWh lithium ion battery plant in India. Its capacity will be scaled up to 30GWh in due course. With this, India has finally taken steps into its energy security and clean energy commitment to the world.
185. a The launch window for Chandrayaan-2 is March 25 - April 30 this year, said Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Dr K Sivan. For the first time, ISRO has announced the 'Young Scientists Programme' to encourage the scientific talent and increase scientific pool in the country. Under this programme, Dr Sivan said, 3 students from each state and UT will be selected for ISRO programme for one month during which they will visit ISRO centres, interact with senior scientists and will have access to Research and Development facilities.
186. d The only total lunar eclipse for 2019 will take place on the night January 20 to January 21. The eclipse is also being called as a 'Super Blood Wolf Moon', and will start at 7.34 pm Pacific Standard Time on January 20, which converts to 9:00 am IST (January 21). However, India will not be able to witness this lunar eclipse.
187. b Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur will be commissioned as INS Kohassa on 24 Jan 19 by Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, Chief of Naval Staff. INS Kohassa has been named after a White- Bellied Sea Eagle, which is a large bird of prey endemic to Andaman and Nicobar Islands (ANI). NAS Shibpur was established in 2001 as a Forward Operating Air Base (FOAB) for surveillance in North Andaman.
188. a Virat Kohli's men became the first country to return from Australia without losing a single series having won the Test series 2-1 and drawn the T20 Internationals 1-1.
189. b Raksha Mantri Smt Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 426.60 metre long Pre Stressed Concrete Box Girder type bridge over Diffo River on Roing-Koron-Paya road in Arunachal Pradesh.
190. a The Union Minister for Tourism Shri K. J. Alphons attended the Seventh Meeting of Tourism Ministers of ASEAN and India held in Ha Long City, Vietnam. The Ministers' meeting noted the strengthened tourism performance of ASEAN and India in 2018 with preliminary numbers of 139.5 million tourist arrivals to ASEAN and India in the year with an increase of 7.4 per cent as compared to the previous year.
191. a Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched a series of projects as a part of the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor in Tiruchirppalli. The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor will include Chennai, Hosur, Salem and Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli as the nodes. This will be the country's second defence industrial corridor after the first one was launched in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh August last year.
192. c In a major reshuffle of ambassadorial appointments, the Ministry of External Affairs has decided on sending new Ambassadors to Israel, Mexico, South Africa, Argentina, New Zealand and Vietnam. Sanjeev Singla, a key official in the Prime Minister's Office, is being sent to Israel in place of Ambassador Pavan Kapoor.
194. b The Uttar Pradesh government approved 10 per cent reservation for economically backward among upper castes in jobs and educational institutions. Uttar Pradesh became the third state after Gujarat and Jharkhand to approve the legislation which has to be ratified by at least half the state Assemblies in the country.

194. a In Sweden, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven has been elected for a second term, ending a four-month political vacuum. Lofven's minority centre-left government, comprising his Social Democrats and the Greens, won the backing of the Centre and Liberal parties.
195. d Palestine took over the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China from Egypt at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Palestine is slated to lead the bloc for 2019.
196. a Reserve Bank has approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of First Bank for a period of three years, according to a regulatory filing. His tenure is effective from December 19, 2018.
197. c Japan successfully launched the Epsilon-4 rocket carrying seven satellites from the Uchinoura Space Center in Kagoshima.
198. c Year 2018 was the sixth warmest year on record in India since it commenced keeping nation-wide records of weather events in 1901, said India Meteorological Department (IMD) while noting that the country had lost over 1,400 lives in extreme weather events last year.
199. b The public sector entity Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) designed and developed light combat helicopter (LCH) has successfully carried out air-to-air missile firing on a moving aerial target.
200. b Cosmas Lagat of Kenya and Worknesh Alemu of Ethiopia surprised pre-race favourites to win the men's and women's crowns respectively in the USD 405,000 Tata Mumbai Marathon in Mumbai.
201. c The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has announced that the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro will be the World Capital of Architecture for 2020
202. b The World Economic Forum, WEF, annual meet begins in Davos.
203. c Congo's Constitutional Court has declared the election of Felix Tshisekedi as the President and has rejected the challenges to the vote by runner-up Martin Fayulu.
204. a AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik inaugurated the 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 being organized from 23rd to 25th of this month in Goa.
205. d Andry Rajoelina was sworn in as President of Madagascar at capital city of Antananarivo.
206. c The theme this year is, 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India'.
207. a India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, to become world's fifth largest economy, according to a report by global consultancy firm PwC.
208. b Agrivision 2019, a conference on envisioning agro solutions for Smart and Sustainable Agriculture has concluded in Hyderabad.
209. b India's Ankita Raina has won the International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore.
210. d Green Book took home best film at the Producers Guild Awards boosting its chances at next month's Oscars after it picked up three wins at the Golden Globes.

211. b Microsoft India has launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave, part of its philanthropic initiatives.
212. c Nepal's central bank has announced the ban of Indian currency notes with denominations above Rs 100.
213. b Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced a hike of Rs 200 per month in the social security pension under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY).
214. b India is the most trusted nations globally when it comes to government, business, NGOs and media.
215. c Aadhaar cards are now valid travel documents for Indians under 15 and over 65 years travelling to Nepal and Bhutan.
216. a Arab Economic and Social Development meeting was started in Beirut.
217. d Dell India has partnered with the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) as well as Ignus to launch PolicyHack for teachers and school representatives.
218. c India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference begins in Mumbai.
219. b Anurag Thakur, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and party's chief whip in the Lok Sabha, was bestowed with Sansad Ratna Award for distinguished performance as a parliamentarian.
220. c Eminent scientist and recipient of Bharat Ratna C N R Rao has been chosen for the first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research, given by the Centre for Advanced Materials of the UAE.
221. b A dedicated RPF Women Squad named as 'JOYMATI BAHINI', comprising women sub-inspector and constables of the Railway Protection Force was formally launched at Kamkhaya Railway Station in Guwahati, Assam.
222. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose museum at Red Fort in New Delhi.
223. a Union minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the 1.2 km-long Keediyani-Gandiyal Bridge on the Ravi River in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir.
224. c The government of Arunachal Pradesh declared the Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF)-the state's only conservation festival, as a "state festival".
225. c At 80th rank, India moves up one position on the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) 2019, according to a report released by INSEAD business school in partnership with Tata Communications and Adecco Group.
226. b Anushree Jindal - daughter-in-law of industrialist Sajjan Jindal - has launched a micro finance venture, initially in two States, Karnataka and Maharashtra, with the aim of expanding into banking services in future.
227. a According to the Status Paper on Government Debt for 2017-18, the Centre's total debt as a percentage of GDP reduced to 46.5% in 2017-18 from 47.5% as of March 31, 2014. The total debt of the States, however, has been rising over this period, to 24% in 2017-18, and is estimated to be 24.3% in 2018-19.
228. a Kalamsat is the ISRO's first launch this year. It would put in orbit the smallest ever satellite Kalamsat, made by students and the imaging satellite Microsat-R.

229. a Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra has been awarded Saraswati Samman, 2017, for his poetry collection in Gujarati named "Vakhar".
230. c Team India skipper Virat Kohli led history by becoming the first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year.
231. b India figures at 54th position among the world's most innovative countries, according to Bloomberg 2019 Innovative Index.
232. a Coast Guards of India and Japan kicked off their disaster control, search and rescue exercises off the coast of Yokohama in Japan.
233. c The government said the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) has become India's only port to get listed among the top 30 global container ports. "The JNPT, India's premiere container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report.
234. a The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given ex-post facto approval for amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries' to incorporate a 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD 400 million operated within the overall size of the Facility of USD 2 billion and build in flexibility with respect to modalities of its operation, such as period of swap, roll over, etc.
235. c The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the creation of National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT). The National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal shall be situated at New Delhi.
236. b Israel said that it has successfully tested the country's advanced missile defense system capable of defending against long-range ballistic missile threats. The Defense Ministry said the successful test of the Arrow-3 interceptor is "a major milestone" in Israel's ability to defend itself "against current and future threats in the region." It comes a couple days after Israel thwarted an Iranian missile attack.
237. a Virat Kohli went past West Indies legend Brian Lara's record of 10405 runs during the first ODI vs New Zealand in Napier.
238. b Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets, during the first one-dayer against New Zealand at Napier. Shami reached the milestone in his 56th match, with the wicket of opener Martin Guptill.
239. d The first coastal defence Exercise Sea Vigil, conducted by the Navy and Coast Guard, in close coordination with State Governments and Union Territories concluded on 23 Jan 2019 in Kochi.
240. c Government has instituted an annual award titled Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar. The award is to be announced every year on 23rd January on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
241. c Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana in New Delhi under which a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
242. b Karthyayani Amma has been chosen to be the Commonwealth of Learning Goodwill Ambassador. Karthyayani Amma, 97, who had bagged the first rank in the 'Aksharalaksham' literacy exam conducted by the Kerala government in November, last year, has been honoured by the Commonwealth of Learning.
243. d Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019 is scheduled to be conducted at Aundh Military Station and College of Military Engineering, Pune from 18 March to 27 March 2019.

244. b Shanghai is now home to the world's longest 3D-printed concrete bridge, produced by a team from the Tsinghua University School of Architecture in Beijing.
245. a President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré has appointed Christophe Joseph Marie Dabiré as Prime Minister of Burkina Faso.
246. a The Indian economy is expected to accelerate in 2019-20 to expand by 7.6% from 7.4% in the year ending 31 March on the back of robust growth in private consumption, while private investment may continue to remain sluggish, according to the World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) report released by the UN.
247. c Piyush Goyal was appointed interim finance minister a week ahead of the February 1 interim budget presentation, with Arun Jaitley undergoing surgery in the US.
248. a YES Bank has appointed Deutsche Bank's Ravneet Singh Gill as its MD and CEO, who will succeed Rana Kapoor.
249. d Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned the Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa' at Diglipur in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
250. d The Women & Child Development Ministry celebrates National Girl Child Day (NGCD) on 24th January, 2019 at Pravasi Bharti Kendra, Chankyapuri, New Delhi.
251. b President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa arrived in New Delhi on a two-day State Visit to India. He was the State Guest of Honour for the Republic Day parade. Mr Ramaphosa is the second President of South Africa after President Nelson Mandela to be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day.
252. d The Union Cabinet approved a Constitutional amendment to increase the financial and executive powers of the 10 autonomous councils in the Sixth Schedule areas of the northeast.
253. b Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Industries has received a go ahead from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to acquire majority stakes in two of India's largest cable operators - DEN Networks and Hathway Cable & Datacom.
254. d India successfully launched the 46th mission of its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) from the Sriharikota spaceport, near Chennai, carrying Microsat-R and Kalamsat to Sun Synchronous Polar Orbit. PSLV-C44 is the first mission of PSLV-DL and is a new variant of the PSLV.
255. b The World Health Organization (WHO) has listed out 10 global health threats for 2019, adding that millions of lives will be at risk if these threats are not addressed.
256. b The Russian military has released the specifications of its new missile, seeking to dispel the U.S. claim that the weapons violate a key nuclear arms pact. The military insisted that its new SSC-8 ground-fired cruise missile (also known as the Novator 9M729) conforms to the limits of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.
257. d Former India hockey player Raghbir Singh Bhola, a two-time Olympic medallist, has passed away. Bhola represented India in the 1956 Melbourne and 1960 Rome Olympics, winning a gold and silver medals respectively for the country.

258. d To celebrate the role of education for peace and development, the United Nations General Assembly on December 3 adopted a resolution declaring January 24 as 'International Day of Education.'
259. c This year, the National Bravery Award was merged with the Bal Shakti Puraskar and Bal Kalyan Puraskar. More than 783 applications were received and only 26 bright minds were shortlisted for the esteemed award which was given by President Ramnath Kovind on January 22, 2019.
260. a A film on menstruation, set in rural India, titled Period. End of Sentence, has earned a nomination in the Documentary Short Subject category for the 91st Academy Awards. Award-winning filmmaker Rayka Zehtabchi has directed the short film, which has been produced by Guneet Monga's Sikhya Entertainment.
261. b Centre has decided to renovate and develop around 400 abandoned airstrips across the country to strengthen air-connectivity. Jharkhand is the first state in the country where an MOU was signed to develop one such abandoned air strip at Dhalbhumgarh.
262. b Sultan Abdullah from the central Malaysian state of Pahang has been named the country's new king, replacing Sultan Muhammad V from Kelantan state who stunned the nation earlier this month by abdicating after only two years on the throne.
263. c A newly published report by research firm eMarketer said that China is expected to surpass the United States to become the world's largest retail market in 2019.
264. a Private sector lender Lakshmi Vilas Bank has reappointed Parthasarathi Mukherjee as its managing director for two more years.
265. a India has entered the \$ 100 billion club in the merger and acquisition space. In a first, 1,200 deals worth around \$ 110 billion or Rs 71,000 crore were concluded in India in a year as per Grant Thornton's (GT) annual Dealtracker.
266. d Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) based in Assam has been awarded the best miniratna PSU in strategic performance (financial category) at the Governance Now Sixth PSU awards.
267. a Nitrogen pollution is an emerging environmental problem linked with air pollution, biodiversity loss, pollution of rivers and seas and ozone depletion. The British government has announced a research project to study nitrogen pollution in India and South Asia.
268. c Indian badminton star Saina Nehwal added another feat to her long list of achievements after Carolina Marin retired due to a leg injury at the Indonesia Masters in Jakarta. She secured her first world tour title after more than 2 years.
269. d The 9th National Voters' Day (NVD) is celebrated across the country on 25th January 2019. The theme for NVD this year was 'No Voter to be Left Behind' reiterating the commitment of Election Commission of India (ECI) in view of the Lok Sabha elections due this year.
270. b Acclaimed Hindi fiction writer and essayist Krishna Sobti died in New Delhi at the age of 93 due to prolonged illness, her family said. Sobti had won the Sahitya Akademi award in 1980 for her novel 'Zindaginama'. She was also conferred with the Jnanpith in 2017 for her contribution to Indian literature.
271. d Former president Pranab Mukherjee was conferred with the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award in India. The award was also conferred on Bharatiya Jana Sangh leader Nanaji Deshmukh and legendary singer-composer Bhupen Hazarika posthumously.

272. a The Oxford Dictionaries announced 'Nari Shakti' as the Hindi Word of the Year. The Hindi Word of the Year chosen every year, in many ways, reflects the conversations, ethos of a particular year.
273. a The government of Pakistan has declared sugarcane juice as the 'national drink' of the country.
274. a Tetra Pak India, the world's leading packaging and processing solutions provider was felicitated with the 'Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Social Impact' award in the 'Sustainable Environment category'.
275. d The Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar, has come to the aid of visually impaired, who have been facing difficulty in identifying the new currency notes introduced by the Reserve Bank of India, post demonetisation. The claimed that "Roshni" was the first Android app that worked successfully with new INR currency notes.
276. c Bharat Fritz Werner Ltd (BFW), a Bengaluru-based machining solution provider, has partnered with Universal Robots, a Danish robot maker and a leader in collaborative robots, to co-create robots for MSME sector.
277. a Earth's oldest known rock was found on the Moon
278. b Novak Djokovic won a record seventh Australian Open title and a third successive Grand Slam as he swept aside Rafael Nadal in Melbourne.
279. d President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian awards of the category, to 112 people from various disciplines. The awards were conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.
280. d International Holocaust Remembrance Day is an international memorial day on 27 January commemorating the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War.
281. b India's first indigenously built engineless semi-high speed train, Train 18, has been named Vande Bharat Express, Union Minister Piyush Goyal announced. The train is set to run between Delhi and Varanasi at a maximum speed of 160 kmph and will soon be flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
282. b The Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) set by the HRD Ministry for selecting Institutions of Eminence (IOEs) has recommended to increase the number of such institutes to 30 from the current 20, according to senior officials.
283. d Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated four-lane, 5.1-kilometer long "Atal Setu", the third Cable Bridge across river Mandovi in Panaji, Goa.
284. a Governor Satya Pal Malik approved the Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2014, providing reservation to the persons belonging to Pahari community of the State, evoking adulation from all political parties.
285. b Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh has been appointed Regional Director for World Health Organization South-East Asia, for a second five-year term. The WHO Executive Board unanimously endorsed Dr Khetrpal Singh, who was earlier also unanimously nominated by 11 Member countries of the Region for another five years.
286. a The 'Tata' brand has entered the list of Top 100 most valuable global brands, according to the Brand Finance Global 500, 2019 report released at the World Economic Forum in Davos.
287. a Researchers at IIT-Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia in Italy created the first soft robot which is able to curl and climb like planet tendrills using the same physical principles determining water transport in plants.

288. d Nepal's Rohit Paudel broke Shahid Afridi's record to become the youngest half-century in one-day internationals. Paudel, aged 16 years and 146 days, scored 55 in the second ODI of Nepal's tour of the United Arab Emirates.
289. c Japan's Naomi Osaka defeated Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova 7-6 (2), 5-7, 6-4 in the women's final to clinch her maiden Australian Open title.
290. b India has always been known globally for its natural and cultural heritage. With the rising steps, the country is about to have its second Tulip garden after Kashmir in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh.
291. d Civil Aviation ministry launched the country's first Geographical Indication (GI) store at Dabolim International Airport in Goa.
292. b The Swasth Bharat Yatra, the world's biggest cyclothon to push people to eat right, culminated in New Delhi. The campaign was flagged-off on 16th October last year on the occasion of World Food Day.
293. d The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting-2019 was held in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland. The theme of the event was "Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution". The event concluded on 25th January 2019.
294. a The UAE's aviation sector continues to scale new heights, with Dubai International maintaining its position as the world's busiest airport for international passengers for the fifth consecutive year while the sector's contribution to the country's economy also grows steadily.
295. d India has replaced Japan as world's second largest steel producing country. According to World Steel Association's report, India's steel production was at 106.5 MT in 2018.
296. b Malaysia has been stripped of the right to host the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships for threatening to refuse to allow Israeli athletes to take part.
297. a Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Wani has been posthumously awarded India's highest peace time gallantry award, the Ashok Chakra.
298. a The Southern Railway has bagged the number one position for cleanliness in the country. The Divisional Railway Manager Shirish Kumar Sinha said, this achievement was under the category of other than Premium Category trains in the recent Trains Cleanliness Survey conducted by IRCTC on all India level.
299. d Kannada poet and short story writer Jayant Kaikini was named the winner of the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for his translated work "No Presents Please".
300. a George Fernandes, a former Defence Minister of India, has died at 88. He had been unwell and bedridden over the past few years. George Fernandes served as Defence Minister between 1998 and 2004.
301. b Tripura has been chosen as the best tableau among states, followed by Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.
302. b Minister of Railways & Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the report "The Future of Rail" of International Energy Agency (IEA).
303. a Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial at Dandi in Navsari district, Gujarat to the nation on Mahatma Gandhi's death anniversary.

304. d Suman Kumari, who hails from Qambar-Shahdadkot in Sindh province, will serve in her native district.
305. b The central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia have launched a common digital currency called "Aber", which will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.
306. d India has improved its ranking on a global corruption index in 2018 by three points and moved to 78th position with a score of 41.
307. c Researchers have identified 20 genes that can predict an individual's likelihood of developing a severe form of dengue fever with about 80% accuracy.
308. b India's Kartik Sharma won the New South Wales men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia.
309. c The award was given to Chitra Mudgal for her book 'post box no 203 Nalla Sopara', which was based on the life of a transgender.
310. c The Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Design formally presented the fourth annual Carnot Prize to Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways & Coal and former Minister of Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines, Government of India, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

