

December Month Current Affairs PDF for **SSC & Railways Exam**

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Monthly Digest December -2018

Dear readers,

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a complete docket of **important news** and events that occurred in a month of **December 2018**. This file is important for, **SSC & Railways** exams.

Important News – India

1. The President **Shri Ram Nath Kovind** has inaugurated the 13th edition of CII Agro Tech India-2018 in **Chandigarh**.
Note: A total of **195 exhibitors** (including 37 foreign exhibitors from 8 countries) will participate in the expo. The expo is one of the biggest confluences of stakeholders from agriculture and allied sectors. The UK is a partner country at the CII Agrotech this year.
2. **Cyril Ramaphosa (South African President)** will be the Chief Guest at the **2019 Republic Day celebrations** in New Delhi.
Note: Mr. Ramaphosa's visit will further cement business and people to people ties between India and South Africa. Since 1950, India has been hosting head of state or government of another country as the state guest of honour for Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi.
3. **Air forces of the US** and India to hold joint exercise at Kalaikunda and Panagarh Air Force Base in West Bengal (India)-- **Ex-Cope India 2019**.
Note: The **objective of the exercise** is to provide operational exposure and undertake mutual exchange of best practices towards enhancing operational capability. It is the **fourth edition** (last one taken place in 2010) in the series of bilateral joint exercise held by the Air Forces of the two nations which is conducted in India. The exercise will host more than 40 aircraft including F-15 & C-130H aircraft of USAF.
4. The **Civil Aviation Ministry** have started the registration process through a **portal** for drone operators in the country -- **Digital Sky platform**.
Note: Earlier, The Union Government has announced the release of its Civil Aviation Regulations to enable safe flying of Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) popularly referred to as drones. For drones of micro size and above categories, operators are required to register on the Digital Sky portal.
5. The **80th Session of the Policy Commission** of the World Customs Organization (WCO) held in **Mumbai**.
Note: The Session is being organized by the WCO and hosted by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), India. More than 30 countries along with their delegations will be participating in the three-day long discussion on various matters related to customs. The Indian delegation will be headed by S Ramesh (Chairman CBIC) along with Member PK Das and their team of senior officers.
6. The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has launched media campaign for elimination of industrially produced trans-fat in the food supply -- **Heart Attack Rewind**.
Note: It is in line with FSSAI's objective to get Freedom from 'Trans Fat: India@75'. Globally, trans-fat intake leads to more than 500,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease every year. Trans-fat is made by adding hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils to make them more solid and to increase shelf life of foods.
7. India's first locomotive-less train has breached the 180 kilometres per hour speed limit during a test run at Kota-Sawai Madhopur section in Rajasthan -- **Train 18**.
Note: Train 18 is capable of touching 200 kilometres per hour provided the rest of Indian Railways' system, such as tracks and signals, permit. With 16 coaches, the train will have the same passenger carrying capacity as that of the Shatabdi Express. The fully air-conditioned train offers better passenger comfort and safety, as all equipment are fixed under the carriage so that more space is available on board.
8. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched India's heaviest satellite GSAT-11 (weighing 5,854 kg) by Ariane-5 VA246 rocket from **French Guiana (South America)**.
Note: The GSAT-11 (also called -Big Bird) will deliver multi-spot beam coverage over the Indian mainland and nearby islands bringing significant advantages to the user community. The GSAT-11 is the next generation high throughput communication satellite that will play a vital role in providing broadband services across the country. The satellite is expected to have a life span of 15 years.



9. The Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated the three days 'India Water Impact Summit 2018' in **New Delhi**.
Note: The IWIS-2018 being jointly organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga). The India Water Impact Summit is an annual event where stakeholders get together to discuss, debate and develop model solutions for some of the biggest water related problems in the country.
10. International conference on bears held in **Agra**.
Note: First time, more than 80 delegates from 11 countries are participating in a four-day International conference on bears being organized in Agra (Uttar Pradesh). The objective of the conference to share knowledge on principles of welfare of bears and other wild animals in zoos, sanctuaries and rescue centers.
11. The five days bilateral air exercise between Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) & Indian Air Force at A F Station Agra -- **SHINYUU Maitri-18**.
Note: The theme of the exercise is joint Mobility/Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) on Transport aircraft. The focus of the exercise is set for the IAF and JASDF crews to undertake Joint Mobility/ HADR operations.
12. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba has released a book -- **Blue Waters Ahoy**.
Note: The unveiling was part of Navy Day reception at the Navy House in presence of President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan, Delhi. The book has been authored by Vice Admiral Anup Singh.
13. India signed an agreement with **Peru** for co-operation and mutual assistance in Customs Matters.
Note: It provides a legal framework for the sharing of information and intelligence between the Customs authorities of the two countries. The agreement will also help in the proper application of Customs laws, prevention and investigation of Customs offences.
14. **Ravi Shankar Prasad** has launched National Challenge 'Ideate for India - creative solutions using technology' for school students in New Delhi.
Note: It is collaboration between National e-governance Division & Intel India, supported by the Department of School Education and Literacy of Ministry of Human Resources Development. The challenge will help empower the youth to become the next generation of innovators and technology creators. Over 10 lakh students will participate in the challenge.
15. The Indian Coast Guard has conducted the Regional Level Marine Oil Pollution Response Exercise at sea off Port Blair -- **Clean Sea - 2018**.
Note: Coast Guard ships Viswasth, Vijith, Rajveer, Rajshri, 4 interceptor boats and its air assets Dornier and Chetak helicopters participated in the exercise.
16. Ministry of Shipping has approved development of a freight village in Varanasi adjoining the Inland Waterways Terminal on **River Ganga**.
Note: It will be developed at a cost 156 crore rupees, serve as a cargo hub and a centre for aggregation. It will also provide support to stimulate development of a professional logistics industry in Varanasi. A freight village is a designated area where facilities for various modes of transportation, distribution of goods and other logistics are available in a synchronized manner on a large scale.
17. President Ram Nath Kovind has inaugurated the 13th edition of **CII Agro Tech India-2018** in **Chandigarh**.
Note: A total of 195 exhibitors (including 37 foreign exhibitors from 8 countries) will participate in the expo. The expo is one of the biggest confluences of stakeholders from agriculture and allied sectors. The UK is a partner country at the CII Agrotech this year.
18. India's 2nd container cargo sector on Inland waterways -- **Kolkata-Patna**.
Note: India's new Inland Water Transport (IWT) Kolkata-Patna, origin-destination pair for containerized cargo movement on the National Waterway-1. Patna will be witness to a new landmark in India's IWT sector. The Ministry of Shipping is developing NW-1 (River Ganga) under Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) from Haldia to Varanasi (1390 Km) with the technical and financial assistance of the World Bank at an estimated cost of Rs 5369 crore.
19. 18th All India Annual Conference of Heads of Science Centre's & Museums begins at **Itanagar**.
Note: Arunachal Pradesh State Council Science and Technology is playing an important role to tie up and collaborate with other scientific institutions across the country to promote science and technology in the state. The conference will be able to chalk out strategies to promote scientific temper and to play a catalyst role for students.
20. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has released a compilation of selected speeches of President Ram Nath Kovind titled, in English -- **The Republican Ethic**.
Note: The books are collection of 95 of his selected speeches out of a total of 243 speeches made by the President in the first year of his office.
21. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has released a compilation of selected speeches of President Ram Nath Kovind titled in Hindi -- **Loktantra ke Swar**.
Note: The books are collection of 95 of his selected speeches out of a total of 243 speeches made by the President in the first year of his office.



22. The first International Conference on 'Sustainable Water Management' was held in **Mohali, Punjab**.
Note: The conference was organized by Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) under the aegis of the National Hydrology Project of the Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
23. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates fourth partner's forum in **New Delhi**.
Note: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the two-day fourth Partners' Forum in New Delhi. The objective of the conference is to improve knowledge and accountability to accelerate action on women's, children's and adolescent health. Around 1500 participants from 85 countries is participating in the conference to improve the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents.
24. The Union Government has notified commonly used medical devices nebulizers, blood pressure monitors, digital thermometers and glucometers as **drugs**.
Note: The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) will regulate the import, manufacture and sale of these devices from January 2020. DCGI is the Country's highest drug advisory body. Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) is responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines and sera in India.
25. **Delhi High Court** has ordered ban on the sale of medicines online by e-pharmacists across the country.
Note: The court directed both Central and state government to ensure immediate implementation of the order. The order was passed by the Delhi High Court Chief Justice Rajendra Menon and Justice VK Rao, acting on a PIL filed by Zaheer Ahmed (dermatologist).
26. Indian Railways has commissioned 41 projects at a cost of 700 crore rupees for the Kumbh Mela in **Allahabad**.
Note: 'Kumbh Mela' will begin in Allahabad from January 2019. About 800 special trains are proposed to be run during the Kumbh Mela from various stations of Allahabad district for the pilgrims coming to the Kumbh Mela. Four big enclosures to house about ten thousand pilgrims have been constructed at the Allahabad Junction Railway Station.
27. The Indian Navy inducted the 'Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle' into service at the Western Naval Command in **Mumbai**.
Note: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba inducted the vehicle into the Navy. The DSRV has the capability to rescue personnel from a distressed submarine up to a depth of 650 metre and it is the latest in terms of technology and capabilities.
28. **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** has approved registration of record 15 new breeds of livestock and poultry this year alone taking the total to 40 during 2014-18.
Note: India have about 15% of total cattle, 57% of total buffalo, 17% of goat, 7% of sheep and 4.5% of chicken of the world.
29. President Ramnath Kovind laid the foundation stone of new ultra- modern Railway Station at **Kevadia, Gujarat**.
Note: The station will connect the Statue of Unity project to the rest of India through broad gauge railway line. 32 kilometers long new broad-gauge railway line between Chandod and Kevadia will be completed in one year and connect the Kevadia with the rest of country.
30. **Niti Aayog** organized the 3rd edition of Women Transforming India awards 2018.
Note: Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu has given the 3rd edition of Women Transforming India Awards 2018, organized by NITI Aayog. This year's theme is "Women and Entrepreneurship", and fifteen winners have been chosen. The Women Transforming India Awards recognize and celebrate stories of exemplary women from across the country.
31. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal dedicated India's first Railway University to the nation in **Vadodara, Gujarat**.
Note: The Railway University will be first of its kind institution in the nation and the third in the world after Russia and China. The first batch of the university has already been shortlisted and consists of 103 students (62 for BSc in Transportation Technology and 41 in BBA in Transportation Management). The chairman of Railways Board Sh. Ashok Lohani has been named the Vice Chancellor of the University.
32. A deep depression in the Bay of Bengal has intensified into a cyclonic storm named -- **Phethai**.
Note: The cyclonic storm is very likely to hit Andhra Pradesh's coast and cross evening between East Godavari and North coastal districts. The cyclone located about 775 km from Chennai and 870 km from Machilipatnam of Krishna district, moving with a speed of 11 km per hour towards Andhra Pradesh.
33. The union Cabinet has approved establishment of two new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at **Madurai (Tamil Nadu) and Bibinagar (Telangana)**.
34. India decides to extend 1.4 billion dollars aid to **Maldives**.
Note: India and Maldives need to increase bilateral cooperation to maintain peace and stability in the Indian ocean. India and Maldives inked four pacts, including one on visa facilitation. The two Countries also agreed to strengthen maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean region through coordinated patrol and aerial surveillance.



35. The Human Resource Development Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurates Sangeet Kala Sangam in **New Delhi**.

Note: It has been organized under the aegis of Human Resource Ministry, to provide a National Platform to the Art and Music Teachers of KVS. Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and Navoday Vidyalaya Samiti are two sister organizations of HRD Ministry. The objective of KVS is to provide uninterrupted quality education to the wards of transferable employees of central government, while NVS provides quality education to talented students specially from rural background.

36. The first AC local train in north India will hit the tracks in **February 2019**.

Note: The MEMU (mainline electric multiple unit) train will cater to the Uttar Pradesh cities within 200-300 km from Delhi. The upgraded MEMU air-conditioned trains can run at a speed of 130 kmph (earlier-100 kmph). It has been manufactured at a cost of Rs 26 crore and has a capacity to carry 2,618 passengers. All the eight coaches will have two toilets each, GPS-enabled information system, automated doors, CCTV surveillance systems and cushioned seats.

37. The union Communications Minister Manoj Sinha has released a commemorative postage stamp (worth Rs 5) on freedom fighter -- **Raj Kumar Shukla**.

Note: Rajkumar Shukla made a seminal contribution culminating in the launch of the 'Champaran Satyagraha' (in 1917) by Mahatma Gandhi ji. With this stamp, the Communication Department has released 43 issues in the current calendar year.

38. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has launched GSLV F 11 carrying GSAT-7A from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota.

Note: GSAT 7A is a **geostationary communication satellite** weighing 2250 kilogram. It will provide communication services in Ku Band over the Indian region. GSLV F 11 with indigenous cryogenic upper stage has a total of three stages before reaching the destined orbit using the onboard propulsion system.

39. The Ministry of **Commerce** is examining the proposal to set up a trade promotion bodies in 15 countries to promote exports of SMEs from India.

Note: Global Value Chains (GVCs) are specifically significant for SMEs as they provide them the opportunity to contribute to exports without bearing the setup costs. New Intellectual Property regime is being launched to strengthen the IPRs of Indian MSMEs as well as protecting IPRs of the other countries.

40. Every block with more than 50% Schedule Tribe (ST) population and at least 20 thousand tribal persons, will have an Eklavya Model Residential School by the year -- **2022**.

Note: Eklavya schools will have special facilities for preserving local art and culture besides providing training in sports and skill development. As per census 2011, there are 564 sub-districts having more than 50% ST population and at least 20 thousand tribal persons.

41. India's largest cancer institute 'National Cancer Institute' (NCI) has been launched at -- **Jhajjar, Haryana**.

Note: The institute was finalized at a cost of Rs 2,035 crore and the project was approved by the cabinet committee in 2013. The aim is to strengthen research and also bring down the patient load at All India Institute of Medical Sciences' (AIIMS) cancer centre. The hospital will be fully functional by December 2020.

42. The **Environment, Forest and Climate Change ministry** Ministry has launched the "Asiatic Lion Conservation Project" to protect and conserve the population of Asiatic Lion and its associated ecosystem.

Note: The Asiatic Lion Conservation Project is aimed at the conservation and recovery of Asiatic Lion with the help of up to date techniques, instruments, regular scientific research studies, disease management, modern surveillance and patrolling techniques. The total budget of the project is around Rs 9784 lakhs for 3 years.

43. Gujarat has emerged as the best performing state in the Startup Ranking 2018.

Note: The National Report on States' Startup Ranking was unveiled by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi. Gujarat (100%) has performed better than all other states in all the seven areas including start up policy, incubation support, seeding innovation and scaling innovation. 27 states and 3 union territories participated in the ranking process.

44. The Union government will set up a council under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to promote the medical devices sector -- **National Medical Devices Promotion Council (NMDPC)**.

45. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the annual conference of Directors General and Inspectors General of Police at -- **Narmada district, Gujarat**.

Note: The venue for the conference is a Tent city set up nearer to the Statue of Unity. This police conference is an annual event in which top police officers from all over the country share and discuss security related issues. Union.

46. The former prime minister Manmohan Singh has released five-volume book on his public life -- **Changing India**.

Note: The book has been Published by Oxford University Press. The book is being described as a definitive expression of the former prime minister's perspectives on a wide range of economic, social and political issues as they evolved under his long and eventful career.

47. The **civil aviation ministry** along with the **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** jointly launched an official



- mobile app '**GAS 2019**' for the global aviation summit in Mumbai.
- Note:** The summit is being hosted by the civil aviation ministry along with the AAI and industry lobby Ficci.
48. India successfully test-fired **Agni-IV** its nuclear-capable long-range **Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile**.
- Note:** The test was part of a user trial by the Army. Agni-IV missile is equipped with advanced Avionics, 5th generation On Board Computer and distributed architecture. Ballistic missiles like Agni-I, II and III and Prithvi have already been inducted in the arsenal of the armed forces.
49. The Union Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has launched the **Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** at the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in **Gurugram**.
- Note:** The objective of having an IFC-IOR is more for partners equals to work towards keeping the global commons safe and democratically available for all. The IFC-IOR will help interface and integrate, wherein, the country will benefit from each other's best practices and expertise. IFC - IOR shall be a collaborative construct that will work with partners, countries as well as international agencies to enhance maritime security and safety.
50. **India-China Film Festival** has begun at the Siri Fort auditorium in **New Delhi**.
- Note:** Three-day long Film Festival is being organized during the 1st India-China High-Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges. Seven films including four Chinese and three Indian Films will be screened during the Festival.
51. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated rail-road bridge in Assam -- **Bogibeel Bridge (4.94 km long)**.
- Note:** It is India's longest rail-cum-road road bridge, on the river Brahmaputra. The bridge is constructed at an estimated cost of 5,800 crore rupees. It is situated 17 km downstream of Dibrugarh city in Assam. The bridge reduces travel time from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh to four hours and will cut out the detour of over 170 km via Tinsukia. It will also reduce Delhi to Dibrugarh train-travel time by about three hours to 34 hours as against 37 hours presently.
52. The union Government has approved laying a new **broad-gauge railway line** connecting **Rameshwaram with Dhanushkodi**.
- Note:** The 17-km line will cost around Rs 208 crore and it has been included in the umbrella work for new lines in the current financial year. Dhanushkodi railway station was destroyed and abandoned after the 1964 Rameshwaram cyclone and it remains unattended. The new railway line will be a boon to pilgrims visiting the place. Hindu pilgrimage at Rameshwaram gets completed only after taking a dip in Dhanushkodi.
53. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has released a commemorative stamp and coin on the Paika Rebellion at **IIT Bhubaneswar campus**.
- Note:** The Paika Rebellion, also called the Paika Bidroha, was an armed rebellion against British East India Company's rule in Odisha in 1817. The Paikas were the traditional militia of Odisha who served as warriors.
54. The Unique Identification Authority of India has asserted that schools cannot make the 12-digit biometric identifier a pre-condition for **student admission**.
- Note:** UIDAI's clarification comes at a time when admissions to nursery and entry-level classes have begun in over 1,500 private schools in Delhi. UIDAI has asked schools to ensure that no child is denied admission for lack of Aadhaar. It had ruled that Aadhaar was not mandatory for bank accounts, mobile connections or school admissions.
55. The Indian Navy has commissioned its tenth Naval hospital, at the Naval station Karanja in Uran near Mumbai -- **INHS Sandhani**.
- Note:** Preeti Luthra, President of NWWA (Navy Wives Welfare Association), Western Region, unveiled the commissioning plaque of the hospital. Indian Naval Hospital Ship (INHS) Sandhani is the tenth naval hospital of the Indian Navy.
56. NITI Aayog CEO released the Second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme -- **Amitabh Kant**.
- Note:** The ranking details the incremental progress achieved by the districts during June to October this year across six key development sectors.
57. **Airports in India** will be able to use body scanners from next year and spare "clean" passengers physical frisking.
- Note:** The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) is soon going to come out with technical specifications of these scanners and then airports can install and machines meeting those norms. The scanners to be used in India will need to be customized for Indian 'conditions' so that it can penetrate the layers of clothes unique to the country — like chunnat (front fold) of a sari, lungi and pallu.
58. India's fastest train '**Train 18**' will begin operations in January 2019 at a curtailed speed of 130 kmph.
- Note:** Train 18, which is set to replace the Shatabdi series, has the potential to run between 160 kmph to 200 kmph. At trials, it breached the 180-kmph mark. The report has suggested several conditions which need to be met before we can run the train at 130 kmph," the source said, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will flag off the train.
59. President Ramnath Kovind launched 'Sadbhaav Utsav' in **Mumbai**.
- Note:** He participated in the Wellness festival organized on 100-years anniversary of the Yoga Institute. The



programme is organized at Bandra Kurla Complex's MMRDA ground.

60. The **Indian Railways** has decided to grant 40% concession in passenger fares to **transgender senior citizens**.
Note: It will be available from 1st January 2019. Though a column for transgender (T) was introduced in the reservation form, the concession was not admissible to them.

61. The book titled "**Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From**" written by -- **Tony Joseph**.

Note: The book talks about the migration of the First Indians also known as 'Aryans' who arrived here 65,000 years ago. This book relies heavily on path-breaking DNA research of recent years.

States News

- Nagaland state celebrated its 55th formation day on -- **1st Dec**.
Note: On 1st December 1963, Nagaland became the 16th state of India. The union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has also inaugurated 19th Hornbill Festival in Nagaland.
- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated the second edition of Khasdar Mahotsav at the Ishwar Deshmukh College of Physical Education in **Nagpur**.
Note: It is an attempt to provide our next generation with better infrastructure like roads, homes, education, skill development and make them aware about our rich cultural heritage.
- The Tamil Nadu state Govt. has announced the hike of health insurance coverage from two lakh rupees a year to **5 lakh rupees**.
Note: The decision will benefit 1.58 crore families in the state. So far, 26.96 lakh people have been benefitted by the chief minister's comprehensive health insurance scheme, availed medical treatments worth 5,133 crore rupees.
- Bhopal** city has observed the 34th anniversary of gas leak tragedy as on the intervening night of **2nd & 3rd December in 1984**.
Note: Several hundred people were killed, and scores of people were maimed for life when the Methyl Isocyanate gas was leaked from the pesticide plant of Union Carbide.
- The Union Govt. and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed an USD 85 million loan to improve skill development eco-system in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**.
Note: The project will help over 1.5 lakh people learn skills in priority sectors, including manufacturing, construction and services for formal employment. The Skill Centre will deliver eight training courses for 13 thousand students and provide training to five thousand teachers.
- Nagaland becomes first north-eastern state to launch single emergency number **112**.
Note: The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has launched the single emergency number '112' under the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for the state of Nagaland. It will have a special women safety feature 'SHOUT' to get immediate assistance from police and volunteers.
- Bihar govt has fixed Rs. 100 as the charge for people to get their property registered after division of **family's immovable assets**.
Note: Earlier, the charges for registration of property was 5% of the value of property registration fee (3% stamp duty & 2% registration fee), as per the prevailing minimum value register (MVR) of the area. This is a decision related to public welfare and will reduce tension, disputes, violence and cases in society.
- The **Gujarat** Govt. has approved 50-crore rupees to Science & Technology Innovation (STI) Fund to provide assistance up to Rs. 50-lakh to UGC and AICTE recognized central and state universities and colleges.
Note: The assistance will be for a maximum period of three years to develop latent talents, encourage creativity research and development in strategic fields in the knowledge-based ecosystem. Earlier, Gujarat Government has announced similar assistance under the Biotechnology Policy and IT Policy.
- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has launched a unique initiative called to transform rural Maharashtra -- **SMART**.
Note: The objective of the World Bank assisted to revamp agricultural value chains, with special focus on marginal farmers across 1,000 villages. The project will entail an investment of 300 million US dollars of which World Bank would contribute 210 million US dollars.
- Chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan has inaugurated the 23rd International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) 2018 at -- **Thiruvananthapuram**.
Note: The objectives of the Academy include being a link between the Government and the film industry. The International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) festival started in 1996 and is hosted by the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy on behalf of Department of Cultural Affairs, Government of Kerala.
- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has launched the 'Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana' for **senior citizens**.
Note: The pilgrimage for three days and two nights can be undertaken on the following circuits. 1,100 senior



- citizens from every constituency of Delhi (70- Constituency) will be able to avail free travel package. Under this free pilgrimage scheme, Delhi resident above 60 years will be eligible to take free pilgrimage. The applicant can also take along an attendant above the age of 20 years, if the applicant or his spouse is above 70 years.
12. Nagaland state is celebrating its 55th formation day on **1st Dec 2018**.
Note: On 1st December 1963, Nagaland became the 16th state of India. The union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has also inaugurated 19th Hornbill Festival in Nagaland. The state shares its borders with the state of Assam to the west, Arunachal Pradesh to the North, Manipur to the South and Burma to the east.
 13. The Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated the 2nd edition of Khasdar Mahotsav in **Nagpur**.
Note: It is an attempt to provide our next generation with better infrastructure like roads, homes, education, skill development and make them aware about our rich cultural heritage.
 14. Tamil Nadu Govt. has announced the hike of health insurance coverage (under Ayushman Bharat scheme) from two lakh rupees to **5 lakh rupees**.
Note: The decision will benefit 1.58 crore families in the state. So far, around 26.96 lakh people have been benefitted by the chief minister's comprehensive health insurance scheme, availed medical treatments worth 5,133 crore rupees.
 15. Pinarayi Vijayan (Chief Minister of Kerala) and Suresh Prabhu (Minister of Civil Aviation) jointly inaugurated an international Airport **Kannur international Airport (KIAL)** in Kerala.
Note: The Kannur airport will give major boost to trade, commerce, tourism, employment and export prospects in Kerala. The Integrated Passenger Terminal and Air Traffic Control building was designed by premier public sector consultancy agency KITCO India.
 16. **Ministry of Home Affairs** has launched a Twitter account named '@CyberDost' to spread awareness about cybercrimes and normal precautions to be taken.
Note: It is aimed at enhancing people's basic knowledge about cybercrimes and precautions to be taken for prevention. This twitter handle will educate people about various channels through which complaints about cybercrimes can be filed and makes people aware of their duties.
 17. The **union Government** and the **Asian Development Bank** has signed a loan agreement of **31 million dollars** to develop Tourism in **Tamil Nadu**.
Note: The Project will help the State in preserving the natural and cultural heritage. The activities under the project will also boost economic opportunities for the local people. The Project will support the conservation and restoration of eight heritage monuments, one museum and three temples.
 18. **Uttar Pradesh** Govt. will establish an umbrella university to control all the medical & dental colleges and nursing institutions in the state.
Note: The university will be named after former Prime minister 'Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee'. It will be quite helpful in controlling the quality of medical education by one syllabus and one education session. It will also help in transparency in entrance and examination system.
 19. The union government and the Asian Development Bank have signed a loan agreement of 31 million to develop Tourism and boost Jobs in **Tamil Nadu**.
Note: The project is expected to improve the tourism infrastructure in Tamil Nadu and also help the State in preserving its natural and cultural heritage. The activities under the project will also boost economic opportunities for the local people.
 20. Shi Yomi has become the 23rd district of **Arunachal Pradesh**.
Note: It was inaugurated by Pema Khandu (Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister) in presence of Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju. Two more districts Pakke-Kesang and Lepa Rada) will be formally inaugurated in the state within taking the total to 25.
 21. The Union Government and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed USD 60 Million Dollar Loan Agreement for **Assam**.
Note: The objective of the program is to increase the reliability and effectiveness of flood and riverbank erosion risk management systems in flood-prone areas of Assam. The Project will continue to support the institutional capacity development of the autonomous body anchored to the Assam Water Resources Department.
 22. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has inaugurated the 'Hyderabad book fair' at NTR stadium in **Hyderabad**.
 23. The Chhattisgarh Government has announced to waive off farm loans to the tune of 6,100 crore rupees of more than 16 lakh farmers.
Note: It has been decided to waive off all short-term loans availed by farmers from cooperative and Rural development banks. Chhattisgarh cabinet also decided to provide 2,500 rupees per quintal to farmers for their paddy being sold under Minimum support price (MSP) scheme.
 24. The Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved a new bridge across the Ganga river at **Patna (Bihar)**.
Note: The project for construction of 5.634 km long new 4 lane bridge parallel to the existing Mahatma Gandhi Setu on NH-19. The project is likely to be completed by January 2023. The bridge is proposed to be built by the



- Union ministry of road, transport and highways utilizing an estimated outlay of Rs 2,961 crore.
- 25. This year Goa** state is celebrating its 57th Liberation Day.
Note: The state was liberated on this day (19th December) in 1961 from Portuguese control after almost 450 years of colonial rule. Goa is a state in India within the coastal region known as the Konkan in Western India, bounded by Maharashtra to the north and Karnataka to the east and south, with the Arabian Sea forming its Western coast.
- 26. Govt. orders panel to identify new tourism projects in J&K.**
Note: The Jammu & Kashmir government has ordered to constitute an official panel under the Chairmanship of Governor Satya Pal Malik to screen and identify new tourism projects in the state. The committee will complete the screening and identification of projects by the end of this month.
- 27. The first Indian state to enact a law banning sexual exploitation of women "by those in positions of authority, having a fiduciary relationship or a public servant" -- Jammu & Kashmir.**
Note: The State Administrative Council (SAC) under the chairmanship of Governor Satya Pal Malik approved the 'Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2018' and the 'Jammu and Kashmir Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018'. Any person committing the offence of sextortion shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term not be less than three years, may extend to five years and with fine.
- 28. India's first music museum to be set up in Thiruvaiyaru.**
Note: Country's first music museum will be set up with assistance from the Central government in Thiruvaiyaru, Tamilnadu. Thiruvaiyaru is the birthplace of Saint Tyagaraja (one of the Trinities of Carnatic music).
- 29. The state Govt. has approved the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme, worth over Rs 10,000 crore, for the development of farmers in Odisha Govt.**
Note: An amount of Rs 10,000 per family at the rate of Rs 5,000 each for Kharif and Rabi seasons shall be provided as financial assistance for taking up cultivation. The KALIA will further accelerate agricultural prosperity in the state and reduce poverty. All the small and marginal farmers of the state (over 30 lakh) will be covered under the scheme.
- 30. Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana' has been launched in Uttarakhand.**
Note: Under the scheme, each household in the state will be able to avail medical treatment of up to 5 lakh rupees annually. The scheme will benefit 23 lakh households and cover 1,350 critical diseases. Launching the Yojna in Dehradun yesterday, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh
- Rawat distributed scheme-related golden cards to beneficiaries. All the households have been included under the scheme.
- 31. A 25-foot high statue of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be installed in Lok Bhawan, Uttar Pradesh**
Note: Adityanath made the announcement at a ceremony held to celebrate Vajpayee's 94th birth anniversary. "Atalji had strong ties with Uttar Pradesh. He started his public life from Balrampur in the state and represented Lucknow as an MP for five terms," the chief minister said.
- 32. International Gita Mahotsav 2018 concluded in Kurukshetra, Haryana.**
Note: In this year's edition, Mauritius was the partner country and Gujarat was the partner state. Mauritius to organize Gita festival in February 2019. The Bhagavad Gita presents a synthesis of Hindu ideas about dharma, theistic bhakti, and the yogic paths to moksha.
- 33. President Ram Nath Kovind issued orders for the creation of a separate high court for Andhra Pradesh.**
Note: Andhra Pradesh gets its own High Court in Capital Amaravati. With the creation of the new high court, the country will have 25 high courts. It will have 15 other judges besides the chief justice.
- 34. Largest cancer hospital in India, the National Cancer Institute in Haryana's Jhajjar district.**
Note: The institute, being considered as a landmark in the field of cancer research in the country, shall lessen the deficit of tertiary cancer care in the northern region. The institute will have 710 beds, out of which 200 beds will be dedicated for translational research on India-specific cancers.
- 35. The tribal Baduga community in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu celebrated their annual Heddaiyamman festival on -- 26th Dec 2018.**
Note: People observe 48 days fast and walk in religious processions, holding up a holy shaft which symbolizes the miracle of the traditional Badaga goddess. The Badagas are an indigenous tribal group in the Nilgiris and occupy more than 400 remote hill villages in the district.
- 36. The 26th National Childres's Science Congress held in -- Bhubaneswar.**
Note: The progress of science is essential for the National growth and healthy Nation. Odisha government is organizing various programmes for the development of scientific temper among students.
- 37. The Arunachal Pradesh government has created a record of a total revenue generation of Rs 1,598.49 crore in 2017-18, reaching a new high in the last 30 years.**
Note: The revenue generation had crossed the Rs 1,000 cr mark for two consecutive years since Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood in 1987. The source of



- revenue generation by the state government includes share of central taxes, state taxes among others.
38. The third Dwijing Festival has begun on the bank of Aye river at **Chirang district**.
Note: Around 15 lakh tourists are expected to participate in the festival. Assam PHE minister Rihon Daimary inaugurated the festival in presence of several dignitaries.

39. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced the renaming of three islands of **Andaman and Nicobar**.
Note: The Ross Island has been renamed as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep. Now, The Neil Island would be known as Shaheed Dweep and Havelock Island as Swaraj Dweep. The Prime Minister also visited the Cellular Jail and laid a wreath at the Martyrs' Column.

Important News – World

- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) Plenary 2018 was held in **Brussels, Belgium**.
Note: EU handed over the Chairmanship of KPCS to India from 1st January 2019. The 4-day Plenary also witnessed discussion on environmental challenges in diamond mining and industry responsibility. India is the founding member of KPCS and is actively involved in KP activities to ensure that almost 99% of the diamond trade in the world is conflict free.
- Nepal's Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli has inaugurated the two-day Asia Pacific Summit-2018 in **Kathmandu**.
Note: The theme of Summit is "Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, and Universal Values". Around 1500 participants from 45 countries, including India, attending the summit.
- The 24th meeting of Conference of Parties (COP-24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has begun at **Katowice, Poland**.
Note: The Conference 'COP-24' is very significant as it is expected to finalize guidelines for implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted in 2016. The Agreement also focuses on developing countries need to adapt to adverse impacts of climate change, in a manner that it does not put an additional burden on them. The union Environment Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan is leading a delegation from India.
- OPEC Country has decided to leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) from January 2019 (after nearly six decades) and focus more on the production of natural gas -- **Qatar**.
Note: Qatar has plans to increase its annual exports of liquified natural gas (LPG) from 77 million tons of gas per year to 110 million tons. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is an intergovernmental organization of 15 nations, founded in 1960 in Baghdad by the first five members (Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela), and headquartered since 1965 in Vienna, Austria.
- Members of Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other oil-producing countries are scheduled to meet in -- **Vienna**.
- OPEC's third-biggest producer Iran has called to be excluded from any decision to cut production. Over the past two months oil prices have plunged and a barrel of Brent crude, the European benchmark.
- Luxembourg** will be the first country in the world to make all public transportation free (by summer 2019) as part of a new environmental initiative.
Note: All fares for trains, trams and buses will be scrapped as part of a new environmental initiative. The move is aimed at addressing environmental issues and the problem of traffic congestion.
- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) Plenary 2018 was held in **Brussels (Belgium)**.
Note: EU handed over the Chairmanship of KPCS to India from 1st January 2019. India is the founding member of KPCS and is actively involved in KP activities to ensure that almost 99% of the diamond trade in the world is conflict free.
- NASA's InSight lander has provided the first-ever 'sounds' of Martian wind on the **Mars**.
Note: According to NASA, InSight sensors captured a haunting low rumble caused by vibrations from the wind, estimated to be blowing between 10 to 15 miles per hour on 1st December. The seismometer recorded lander vibrations caused by the wind moving over the spacecraft's solar panels. The air pressure sensor, which will collect meteorological data, recorded these air vibrations directly.
- FAO Council** has approved India's proposal to observe an International Year of Millets in 2023.
Note: The **160th session of the FAO Council** in Rome approved the proposal. Millets consists of Jowar, Bajra, Ragi and minor millets together termed as nutri-cereals. FAO Council has also approved India's membership to the Executive Board of the United Nations World Food Program for 2020 and 2021.
- Japanese government** has passed a new law to bring more blue-collar foreign workers into the country to address chronic labour shortages.
Note: The government plans to start the new scheme from April 2019. Under the law, Japan plans to bring in **3 lakh 45 thousand foreign workers** in construction, food services, nursing and other sectors for five years.



11. The Celebrations of week-long celebrations 'Vivah Panchami' begins in the historic **Janakpur city, Nepal**.
Note: Vivah Panchami also highlights age old social and cultural bonding between India and Nepal that has been cherished for centuries. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Rama married Goddess Sita (the daughter of King Janak of Janakpur) on Vivah Panchami.
12. **Israel** became full member of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) __
Note: FATF is an international body (established in 1989) to set up to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other threats to the international financial system. Now, Israel has taken its place alongside 37 other members including most of the G20.
13. The 40th session of the GCC summit will be held in **UAE**.
Note: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a political and economic alliance of six countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) in the Arabian Peninsula. The GCC promotes economic, security, cultural and social cooperation between the six states and holds a summit every year to discuss cooperation and regional affairs.
14. President Ram Nath Kovind has inaugurated the 5th Enterprise India show in **Yangon, Myanmar**.
Note: The focus of the conference was Small and Medium Enterprises. President Ram Nath Kovind has dedicated India assisted project 'Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research & Education' (ACARE) to the people of Myanmar. The President also dedicated the Rice Bio-Park to the people of Myanmar.
15. India's first Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence at the Department of European Studies (DES) at Manipal Academy of Higher Education in **New Delhi**.
Note: This is the fifth time that MAHE has been awarded grants under the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet initiative. The award comes with a grant of €1,00,000 to pursue India-EU interdisciplinary studies in culture, literature, education and society.
16. European Union (EU) has established India's first Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (CoE) at Department of European Studies (DES) at MAHE in **New Delhi**.
Note: Jean Monnet Center of Excellence in India-EU Interdisciplinary Studies aims to strengthen and enhance the educational connect between India and EU. Jean Monnet was French political economist and diplomat.
17. The world's first floating nuclear power plant has been started at the Baltiysky Zavod shipyard in **Saint Petersburg, Russia**.
Note: A floating nuclear power plant is a site with one or more nuclear reactors, located on a platform at sea. It is an autonomous site that can provide electricity and heat to areas with difficult access, such as the cold Northern territories. It can also provide drinking water to dry areas, via desalination techniques.
18. The Swedish Parliament extended the smoking ban as of **1st July 2019**.
Note: Sweden is banning outdoor smoking in certain public places including playgrounds and train station platforms. Currently, Smoking is allowed only in designated smoking areas in most workplaces and public places.
19. **Nigerian military** has lifted a ban on UNICEF operations in the ravaged northeast.
Note: Earlier it had suspended the aid agency and accusing it of training spies supporting Boko Haram jihadists. The ban was revoked following an intervention by well-meaning and concerned Nigerians. Boko Haram's insurgency has killed more than 27,000 people since in 2009 in the country.
20. In New Zealand, regulations for mandatory phase-out of single-use plastic shopping bags will take effect from **1st July 2019**.
Note: Retailers will no longer be able to sell or give away single-use plastic shopping bags from July next year. Plastic shopping bags are a hazard for nature, particularly marine wildlife. They can also introduce harmful microplastics into the food chain.
21. UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan has declared 2019 as the **Year of Tolerance**.
Note: Year 2019 would highlight the UAE as a global capital for tolerance, instilling the values of co-existence and peace in local, regional and international communities. Earlier, (In 2016) the UAE Cabinet introduced the first post of the Minister of State for Tolerance and launched the National Tolerance Programme.
22. The first-ever meeting of India-China High-Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges in **New Delhi**.
Note: Earlier, India and China had decided to set up people to people mechanism during the meeting between P M Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping.
23. **Three** Astronauts have returned to Earth after more than six months (197 days) aboard the International Space Station.
Note: A Russian Soyuz capsule carrying Serena Aunon-Chancellor of NASA, Sergey Prokopyev from Russia and German astronaut Alexander Gerst of the European Space Agency landed on the snow-covered steppes in Kazakhstan. It was the first mission for Aunon-Chancellor and Prokopyev, while Gerst flew his second to a total of 362 days in orbit, setting the ESA's flight duration record.
24. **China** has launched its first communication satellite to offer broadband internet services to users worldwide.
Note: It is CASIC's (China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation) first satellite launch under China's Hongyun project. Under this project, China plans to give broadband internet connectivity to users all over the



- world by building a space-based communications network. The satellite aims to rival Google and other companies which have similar plans for providing Internet services worldwide.
- 25. Burundi government has declared the country's new political capital -- Gitega.**
Note: Previous capital Bujumbura will serve as the economic capital of the country. Gitega's population is around 30 000 as compared to Bujumbura's 1.2 million. Burundi is a landlocked country in the African Great Lakes region of East Africa, bordered by Rwanda to the north, Tanzania to the east and south, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west.
- 26. Japan.** has decided to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and will resume commercial whaling July 2019.
Note: Japan will not be able to continue the so-called scientific research hunts in the Antarctic that it has been exceptionally allowed as an IWC member under the Antarctic Treaty. The withdrawal also means Japan joins Iceland and Norway in openly defying the IWC's ban on commercial whale hunting. The IWC, established in 1946 to conserve and manage the world's whale and cetacean population, introduced a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986.
- 27. Russia** has become the first country to complete the development of hypersonic weapons.
Note: The Intercontinental, nuclear-capable hypersonic missile system will enter service in Russia's military next year, President Vladimir Putin added. The weapon, dubbed "Avangard," successfully hit a target 6,000 kilometers from launch, according to a separate statement from the Kremlin. The Avangard is invulnerable to intercept by any existing and prospective missile-defense means of the potential adversary.
- 28. The United Arab Emirates** has resumed its diplomatic service at Damascus in Syria after six years of suspension.
Note: The move underscores the UAE government's keenness to restore relations between the two brotherly countries to their normal course. UAE had closed its Embassy in the early years of the Syrian conflict.
- 29. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina** registered a landslide victory in Parliamentary elections.
Note: The ruling Awami League-led grand alliance bagged 266 seats and its ally Jatiya Party secured 21 in the 300-member House. The opposition National Unity Front (UNF) with BNP being its key partner got only seven seats and Independent candidates won in two seats. The election was postponed in one seat due to the death of a candidate.

Banking & Financial Awareness

- 1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has announced its fifth bi-monthly monetary policy review of the current financial year 2018-19
Note:
- Keep the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 6.5 per cent.
 - Consequently, the reverse repo rate under the LAF remains at 6.25 per cent, and
 - The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 6.75 per cent
 - The decision of the MPC is consistent with the stance of calibrated tightening of monetary policy in consonance.
 - Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) remains unchanged at 4%.
 - RBI to cut SLR by 25 bps to align it to LCR requirement.
- 2. According to data released by Central Statistics Office,** India's economy grew by **7.1%** for the second quarter of 2018-19.
Note: The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at constant prices had grown at 6.35 in July-September quarter of the last fiscal. The CSO estimates state that GDP at constant prices was 33.98 lakh crore rupees for second quarter this fiscal, which is a marked increase from 31.72 lakh crore rupees for the same period in 2017-18.
- 3. According to an official release,** The GST collection in the month of November 2018 stood at **97 thousand and 637 crore rupees.**
Note: Out of the total GST collection, the CGST collection is 16 thousand and 812 crore rupees. SGST is over 23 thousand crore rupees while IGST collection stood at 49 thousand and 726 crore rupees. 11 thousand and 922 crore rupees have been released to the states as GST compensation for the months of August and September this year.
- 4. World Bank** has unveiled 200 billion US Dollars in climate action investment for 2021 to 2025.



- Note:** The move represents a significantly ramped up ambition to tackle climate change and sends an important signal to the wider global community to do the same. The breakdown of 200 billion dollars would comprise approximately 100 billion in direct finance from the World Bank.
5. The second meeting of the newly constituted NITI Forum for North East held in **Guwahati, Assam**.
Note: It mainly focusses on issues pertaining to five critical sectors, namely tourism, bamboo, dairy, fisheries and tea. The NITI Forum for North East was constituted in February 2018 to periodically review the development status in North Eastern Region.
 6. How many Crores would be spent on MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) this year to improve the infrastructure and the quality of life of people **60 thousand crore rupees**.
Note: MGNREGA is the largest social security scheme in the world, guaranteeing 100 days of unskilled manual work to all rural households in India. Last year, about 235 crore person-days of work were generated under the scheme.
 7. **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** will implement an Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions covering services provided by entities falling under Reserve Banks regulatory jurisdiction.
Note: The scheme will be notified by the end of January 2019. For customer protection initiative, RBI has issued instructions on limiting customer liability in respect of unauthorized electronic transactions involving banks and credit card issuing non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).
 8. According to Credit rating agency 'Fitch', India's GDP growth forecast for current fiscal -- **7.2%**
Note: In its Global Economic Outlook, Fitch projected that for 2019-20 and 2020-21 financial years, India's GDP growth will be 7% and 7.1% respectively. Fitch Ratings Inc. is one of the big three credit rating agencies (other two -Moody's and Standard & Poor's). It is one of the three nationally recognized statistical rating organizations (NRSRO) designated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in 1975.
 9. **Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank)** has extended a credit facility of USD 500 million to Tanzania for water supply projects in the country.
Note: Under this agreement, of the total credit by Exim Bank, goods and services of value of at least 75% of the contract price shall be supplied by the seller from India. The remaining 25% of goods and services may be procured by the seller for the purpose of the eligible contract from outside India.
 10. As per data released by Central Statistics Office, India's economy grows for 2nd part of 2018-19 -- **7.1%**.
Note: The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at constant prices had grown at 6.35 in July-September quarter of the last fiscal. The CSO estimates state that GDP at constant prices was 33.98 lakh crore rupees for second quarter this fiscal, which is a marked increase from 31.72 lakh crore rupees for the same period in 2017-18.
 11. The provisional figures of **Direct Tax collections** for 2018-19 up to November 2018 show that Gross Collections are at **6.75 lakh crore rupees**.
Note: This is **15.7% higher** than the Gross Collections for the corresponding period of last year. The refunds amounting to 1.23 lakh crore rupees have been issued during April to November this year which is 20.8% higher than refunds issued during the same period in the preceding year. Net Direct Tax collections represent 48% of the total Budget Estimates of Direct Taxes for 2018-19.
 12. The Central Government contribution will be raised to **14% (existing 10%) in NPS**.
Note: The tax exemption limit for lump sum withdrawal on exit has been enhanced to 60%. Government employee contribution under Tier-II of NPS will be covered under Section 80 C for deduction up to 1.50 lakh rupees for the purpose of income tax. National Pension System (NPS) is a voluntary defined contribution pension system in India.
 13. Retail inflation eased to a 17-month low in November this year at -- **2.33%**.
Note: Retail inflation based on **consumer price index (CPI)**, for October 2018 has been revised to **3.38%** (earlier 3.31%). For November, the retail inflation was at the lowest level recorded since June last year, when it stood at 1.46%. Industrial output (IIP) of the country grew at an 11-month high of 8.1% in October 2018 on the back of mining, power, manufacturing sectors and higher offtake of capital and consumer durable goods.
 14. **SEBI** relax listing norms for start-ups, rename it Innovators Growth Platform.
Note: The proposed changes include renaming the Institutional Trading Platform that the regulator had created for such listings as Innovators Growth Platform.



- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had set up an expert group in June this year to review the start-up platform.
- 15.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a fine of Rs 1 crore on **Indian Bank** for violating cybersecurity norms.
Note: This action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered by the bank with its customers. This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- 16. IndusInd Bank.** has launched first interactive Credit Card in India with buttons called IndusInd Bank Nexxt Credit Card.
Note: It will give customer multiple options on how to make a payment using his or her Credit Card. This Card has been created in partnership with Pittsburgh USA headquartered Dynamics Inc., which designs and manufactures intelligent, battery powered payment cards
- 17.** As per research firm Canalys, **India** has overtaken US to become **second largest smartphone market** in the July-September 2018 quarter.
Note: India saw shipment of 40.4 million units during third quarter and was second to China where 100.6 million smartphones were shipped. Smartphone shipment in US was at 40 million units.
- 18.** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has liberalized norms governing external commercial borrowings (ECBs) for infrastructure creation.
Note: The provisions have been reviewed and decision has been taken in consultation with Central Government.
- 19.** As per the WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2018, India has been ranked in World Economic Forum (WEF) gender gap index 2018 -- **108th**.
Note: Iceland topped in the list having closed more than 85.8% of its overall gender gap. Nordic countries Norway (2nd), Sweden (3rd), and Finland (4th) dominated the top slots.
- 20.** IDFC Bank and Capital First (non-banking financial company) has announced the completion of their merger -- **IDFC First Bank**.
Note: They created a combined loan asset book of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for the merged entity IDFC First Bank. Capital First and IDFC Bank shares had also gained 5% each in previous session.
- 21.** As per the World Bank released a report, Efficiency gap in India's power sector costs the Indian economy every year -- **4%**.
Note: Recently, The World Bank released a report titled 'In the Dark: How Much Do Power Sector Distortions Cost South Asia'.
- 22.** The Union Government has notified phone calls and internet on flights and ship voyage within India's territory -- **Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018**
Note: The Indian and foreign airlines and shipping companies that are operating in India can provide in-flight and maritime voice and data services by partnering with an Indian telecom company having a valid licence. The rules regarding this will be called as the Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018.
- 23. Karnataka Bank** has announced a strategic partnership to offer the bank's home loan product to customers on the Paisabazaar platform.
Note: Through this partnership, consumers will now be able to choose and apply for a home loan from Karnataka Bank, directly through the Paisabazaar platform.
- 24.** The Nepal government has decided to ban Indian currency above -- **Rs 100**.
Note: The government has asked Nepal citizens to refrain from keeping new Indian note of Rs 2,000, Rs 500 and Rs 200 denominations.
- 25. India Post** has started internet facility of the customers of Post office savings bank account.
Note: The facility was launched by Union Minister Manoj Sinha at National Media Centre, New Delhi. Revamped version of Indian Post website and e-commerce portal for rural artisans were also launched at event.
- 26.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to have a rule-based dynamic limit for outstanding stock of External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) at **6.5% of GDP**.
Note: The soft limit works out to USD 160 billion for the current financial year. As on 30th September 2018, Outstanding stock of ECBs stands at USD 126.29 billion.
- 27.** The Union government will infuse how many Crores in Public Sector Banks in next few months -- **83000 crores**.
Note: The recapitalization will enhance the lending capacity of state-owned banks and help them come out of the RBI's Prompt Corrective Action, PCA framework. Recognition of non-performing assets in the public sector banks is complete, and the downslide in bad loans has begun. The union Govt. has moved proposal in



- Parliament for enhanced bank recapitalization outlay from Rs 65 thousand crore rupees to one lakh six thousand crore rupees in the current financial year to propel economic growth.
- 28. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has released commemorative coin in honor of former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee -- Rs. 100.**
Note: The 100Rs coin is made up of silver (50%), copper (40%), zinc (5%) and nickel (5%), weight is 35 grams. The coin will bear the Ashoka Pillar Lion Capital in the centre with 'Satyameva Jayate' inscribed below in Devanagari script on the other side. The left periphery of the coin will have 'Bharat' inscribed in Devanagari while the right side will have 'India' inscribed in the English language.
- 29. Reserve Bank of India will introduce Rs 20 notes with additional features.**
Note: The reserve bank has already issued new-look currency notes in the denominations of Rs 10, Rs 50, Rs 100, and Rs 500, besides introducing Rs 200 and Rs 2000 notes after demonetization. The new notes are being introduced under the Mahatma Gandhi series. The new currency notes are different in size and design compared to issued previously
- 30. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will capture payment habits of individuals in six cities.**
Note: The survey will cover a sample of 6,000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds across six cities -- Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati. Sigma Research & Consulting Pvt Ltd has been engaged to conduct the fieldwork of the survey on behalf of the RBI.
- 31. Reserve Bank of India has formed an expert committee under former governor Bimal Jalan to decide the**
- appropriate level of reserves that the regulator should hold.
Note: The six-member panel has former deputy RBI governor Rakesh Mohan as its vice chairman and comprises economic affairs secretary Subhash Chandra Garg, RBI central board members Bharat Doshi and Sudhir Mankad and deputy governor NS Vishwanathan.
- 32. India pips China in FDI inflows for the first time in 20 years.**
Note: India has been getting more foreign investment than its neighbor China. In 2018, India saw more than \$38 billion of inbound deals compared with China's \$32 billion. China's trade standoff with the US is seen as a major reason for the slowdown.
- 33. Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has set up an oversight committee with a former deputy governor from Reserve Bank of India to kick-start bank-led resolution of stressed assets under the inter-creditor agreement.**
Note: The association has asked the 34 lenders to initiate and send the resolution proposals under the scheme.
- 34. Birupaksha Mishra has been appointed as an Executive Director of Corporation Bank.**
Note: Mishra is a Post Graduate and a Certified Associate of Indian Institute of Bankers (CAIIB). Prior to this appointment, he was General Manager in Central Bank of India.
- 35. The Union government has decided to infuse Rs 2,159 crore in the United Bank of India.**
Note: The government has decided to pump Rs 28,615 crore into seven public sector banks (PSBs) through recapitalization bonds soon. Bank of India is likely to get the highest amount of Rs 10,086 crore.

Important Dates

- The World Aids Day is being celebrated every year on -- **1st December.**
Note: The WAD raises the public awareness about Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The theme of 2018 Aids Day is 'Know your status'. It is a pandemic disease caused due to the infection of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
- The **Border Security Force (BSF)** has celebrated its 54th formation day on -- **1st December 2018.**
Note: India's Border Security Force (first Line of Defence of Indian Territories) was formed on 1st December 1965, after the Indo-Pak and India-China wars. With 186 battalions and over 2.57 lakhs military personnel, the BSF is the largest border security unit in the world. BSF Jawans have lived up to their motto of 'Duty Unto Death' (जीवन पर्यंत कर्तव्य).
- The **International Day for the Abolition of Slavery** organized every year on **2nd December.**
Note: The Day was first celebrated in 1986. The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of



Others was approved by the United Nations General Assembly on December 2, 1949.

4. **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** being observed every year on **3rd December**.

Note: International Day of Persons with Disabilities is an international observance promoted by the United Nations (UN) since 1992. The theme for this year is "Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".

5. The **Indian Navy day** is being observed every year on - **4th December**.

Note: The Navy day is celebrated to honour the courageous attack on the Karachi harbour during the Indo-Pakistan war (on 4th December 1971) by the Indian Naval Missile boats as well as to reverence all the martyrs of that war. The navy day observed every year to celebrate achievements and role of the naval force in the country. Sunil Lamba is the current Chief of the Naval Staff.

6. The **World Soil Day** is observed annually on -- **5th December**.

Note: The day focus attention on the importance of healthy soil and advocating for the sustainable management of soil resources. The theme for 2018 World Soil Day is - 'Be the Solution to Soil Pollution'.

7. The **International Volunteer Day (IVD)** observed every year on **5th December**.

Note: The theme of IVD 2018 is: 'Volunteers build Resilient Communities'.

8. The **Armed Forces Flag Day** (Flag Day of India) is being observed annually in India on **7th December**.

Note: The objective of the day honours the martyrs as well as men and women in uniform, who valiantly fight on our borders to safeguard the country's honour.

9. Defence Ministry Nirmala Sitharaman has launched the **Armed Forces Week** from -- **1st to 7th December 2018**.

Note: The objective is to encourage citizens to make financial contributions to the families of war heroes and to pay respects to the brave sons and daughters of our nation. The Armed Forces Flag Day is observed annually in India on 7th December since 1949.

10. **International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD)** is being observed annually on -- **9th December**.

Note: The day raises public awareness of corruption and what people can do to fight it. Every year USD 1 trillion is paid in bribes while an estimated USD 2.6

trillion are stolen annually through corruption. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) had designated 9th December as International Anti-Corruption Day by passing resolution 58/4 of October 31, 2003.

11. The **World Human Rights Day** is being observed every year on -- **10th December**.

Note: The theme this year is, 'stand up for the human rights'. This year, Human Rights Day marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a milestone document that proclaimed the inalienable rights which everyone is inherently entitled to as a human being.

12. The **International Mountain Day** is being observed every year on -- **11th December**.

Note: The theme for 2018 IMD is 'Mountains Matter'. International Mountain Day was established by the UN General Assembly in 2003 to encourage sustainable development in mountains.

13. The **International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day)** is celebrated globally on -- **12th December**.

Note: The theme for the 2018 UHC Day is: "Unite for Universal Health Coverage: Now is the Time for Collective Action. The objective of the day to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage with multi-stakeholder partners.

14. The **nation pays homage to the martyrs** who sacrificed their lives while defending Parliament House from the dastardly terror attack on this day in 2001 -- **13th December**.

Note: Leaders of different political parties and MPs payed floral tributes to the martyrs at the plaque in Parliament House. On this day, two persons from the Parliament Security Service of the Rajya Sabha, five Delhi Police Personnel and a woman constable of the Central Reserve Police Force, laid down their lives while preventing entry of terrorists inside the Parliament House Building.

15. The **National energy conservation day** is celebrated every year by the people all over the India on -- **14th December**.

Note: The objective of the day to aware people about the importance of energy as well as saving or conserving the more energy by using less energy. The Energy Conservation Act in India was executed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in the year 2001.



- 16. Vijay Diwas** is commemorated every **16th December** in India, as it marks its military **victory over Pakistan** during the --**Indo-Pakistani War of 1971**.
Note: On 16th December, 1971, Lieutenant General AAK Niazi (chief of Pakistani forces), along with 93 thousand troops, surrendered to the allied forces, comprising the Indian Army and the Mukti Bahini. Bangladesh is also celebrating its Victory Day.
- 17. The UN's (United Nation) International Migration Day (IMD)** is being observed every year on -- **18th December**.
Note: The theme of this year is 'Migration with Dignity'. In Dec 2000, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 18 Dec as International Migrants Day after considering the large and increasing number of migrants in the world.
- 18. The United Nation (UN) International Human Solidarity Day** is annually held on -- **20th December**.
Note: The Day aims to raise public awareness of the importance of solidarity and encourages debate on the ways to promote solidarity for the achievement of the

Sustainable Development Goals including poverty eradication. The United Nations General Assembly established the World Solidarity Fund on 20th December 2002 as a trust fund of the United Nations Development Programme.

- 19. The National Mathematics Day** is being observed every year on -- **22nd December**.
Note: The day celebrate the birth anniversary of great Indian Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan. Ramanujan Prime and Ramanujan theta discoveries have inspired further research on this mathematical subject. In 2011, the National Mathematics Day was instituted by the Union Government to celebrate Ramanujan's 125th birth anniversary.
- 20. Atal Bihari Vajpayee's anniversary** celebrated as Good Governance Day on -- **25th December**.
Note: Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away on 16th of August this year at the age of 93 at the All India Institute of Medical Science, AIIMS in New Delhi.

Obituaries

- Former US President (41st) **George HW Bush** passed away in Houston, USA.
Note: Bush, the last veteran of World War II to serve as President, was officially the longest living President in US history. He had also served as the US Vice President for eight years.
- Noted agriculturalist **Jayaraman** passed away in **Chennai**.
Note: Mr. Jayaraman was the pioneer of the protection and propagation of indigenous paddy varieties in Tamil Nadu. Jayaraman has been credited with documenting and protecting more than **170 paddy varieties**.
- Congress Lok Sabha MP (Bihar's Kishanganj constituency) passed away due to heart attack -- **Maulana Asrar-ul-Haque Qasmi**.
Note: Qasmi won the Kishanganj seat in 2009 general elections by contesting on an Indian National Congress ticket after five consecutive failures. He was a member of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board and founder member of the All India Milli Council.
- Senior journalist **Jagdish Thakkar** passed away at the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) in New Delhi.
Note: Mr. Thakkar worked with Prime Minister Narendra Modi since his days as the chief minister of Gujarat and later joined him in the PMO. He also served nearly a dozen other chief ministers in Gujarat for over three decades.
- Noted historian **Prof. Mushirul Hasan** passed away recently.
Note: Mr. Hasan was the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Jamia Millia Islamia University. He has also served as the Director-General of the National Archives of India, and the President of the Indian History Congress.
- Senior Congress leader and Former Kerala minister **CN Balakrishnan** passed away at Amritha hospital in Kochi.
Note: CN Balakrishnan was also the front ranking volunteer and leader of the library movement in the state. In 2011, he became the Minister of Co-operation, Khadi and village industries in the Oommen Chandy cabinet.
- Former Prime Minister of Nepal **Tulsi Giri** passed away in Kathmandu.
Note: Dr. Giri was suffering from liver cancer for a long time. Dr. Giri had served twice as the prime minister of Nepal first (1962 to 1964) and from (1975 to 1977).
- Veteran CPI(M) leader **Nirupam Sen** passed away at a city hospital after a prolonged illness.
Note: He was the former **West Bengal** commerce and industry minister.



9. The Samadhi of Atal Bihari Vajpayee was dedicated to the Nation on the birth Anniversary of the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee -- **Sadaiv Atal**.
Note: On 25th December 2018 the President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated late PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's memorial Sadaiv Atal at Rashtriya Smriti Sthal to the nation. Sadaiv (always) Atal memorial will be managed by a trust headed by Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan.
10. Renowned social worker & Padma Shri awardee Sulagitti Narasamma passed away in Bengaluru.
Note: She had helped deliver more than 15,000 babies in Krishnapura, a remote village in Pavagada taluk in Karnataka. Sulagitti Narasamma, born in 1920, hailed from a community that was at the time referred to as 'untouchable'. She is best known for extending free of cost midwife services to women. It is believed that she learned the art from her grandmother.
11. The tallest literary figure in the world of Urdu language, literature, and literary criticism passed away -- **Hamidi Kashmiri**.
Note: He was a prolific creative writer, an acclaimed critic and propounder of "Iktishaafi Tanqueed" (इक्तिशाफी तनकीद). His demise has created a void difficult to fill, especially in the subcontinent. He has also been the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir for years during the most difficult times of militant unrest.
12. Legendary filmmaker **Mrinal Sen** passed away due to **age-related ailments** in Kolkata.
Note: He was the recipient of 12 international film awards including Cannes Film Festival. Mrinal Sen was also a member of the Indian People's Theatre Association. He was born on 14th May 1923, in the town of Faridpur (now in Bangladesh).

New Appointments

1. **Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador** has been sworn in as the new **Mexican President**.
Note: Lopez Obrador also reaffirmed his intentions to sell Mexico's official presidential plane, to not live in the presidential palace.
2. **Ajay Narayan Jha** has been appointed as the new **Finance Secretary of India**.
Note: The Finance Secretary plays a leadership role in the bureaucracy of the Finance Ministry, Government of India. Jha is a recipient of World Bank scholarship to pursue Masters in Economic Policy Management from McGill University in Canada.
3. The **International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF)** **Jon Ridgeon** has appointed its new CEO.
Note: Ridgeon (51-years) will take up the new role in March 2019. Jon Ridgeon winning silver in the shorter event at the 1987 World Championships. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) is the international governing body (founded on 17th July 1912) for the sport of athletics.
4. Former Indian diplomat **Preeti Saran** elected to UN's Socio-Economic Cultural panel.
Note: Saran was elected to the CESCR for a four-year term beginning from 1st of January 2019. All States are obliged to submit regular reports to the committee on how the rights are being implemented.
5. **Dr. Krishnamurthy Subramanian** has been appointed as the Chief Economic Adviser for three years.
Note: Currently, He is working as an Associate Professor in Indian School of Business, Hyderabad. In June 2018, Arvind Subramanian (Chief Economic Advisor of India) had resigned from the post. The Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) is the economic advisor to the Government of India and ex-officio cadre controlling authority of the Indian Economic Service.
6. **Atul Sahai** has been appointed as the **Chairman and Managing Director (CMD)** of the **New India Assurance** for a period of five years.
Note: Currently, Mr. Sahai is the General Manager at Oriental Insurance. The New India Assurance Co. Ltd is a public sector general insurance company of India.
7. **Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (RLSP)** chief **Upendra Kushwaha** has resigned from the Union council of ministers.
Note: He has sent his resignation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he is quitting the BJP-led NDA alliance. He is a Member of Parliament from Karakat loksabha in rohtas district, Bihar.
8. Myntra's **chief executive officer (CEO)** has resigned from his role with his position set to be abolished -- **Ananth Narayanan**.
Note: Myntra is the unit of Walmart Inc-owned Flipkart. Flipkart's executive Amar Nagaram has been



- given the responsibility to head Myntra. Myntra is an Indian fashion e-commerce company headquartered in Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.
9. Former economic affairs secretary has been appointed as the 25th governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for period of three years -- **Shaktikanta Das**.
Note: Mr. Das replaces Urjit Patel, who resigned from the central bank. Mr. Das retired as the **Economic Affairs Secretary** in May 2017. RBI was established during the British rule under the RBI Act, 1934 and commenced its operations on 1st April 1935.
10. **Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) Chief K Chandrasekhar Rao** took oath as the Chief Minister of the youngest state in the country, Telangana.
Note: Governor ESL Narasimhan administered the oath ceremony at the Raj Bhavan, in Hyderabad. TRS won 88 seats of the 119 seats state Assembly. Telangana Rashtra Samithi (88 Seats), Congress (19 Seats), TDP (2 Seats) All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (7 Seats), BJP (1 Seat) and All India Forward Bloc (1 Seats).
11. **Brijendra Pal Singh** has been nominated as the new president of Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Society and Chairman of Governing Council.
Note: Currently, Mr Singh is the Vice Chairman of the FTII Governing Council. The position was vacant after actor Anupam Kher stepped down in October this year. The Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) is an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Government of India.
12. **Rajiv Mehrishi** has become the Vice-Chair of the UN Panel of Auditors.
Note: The United Nations Panel of Auditors consists of External Auditors of the United Nations and its agencies. Currently, the panel is chaired by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the UK, Sir Amyas Morse. United Nations Panel of Auditors It was established by UN General Assembly Resolution 1438 (XIV) in 1959.
13. Mizo National Front (MNF) head **Mr Zoramthanga** took oath as the Chief Minister of Mizoram.
Note: Governor Rajasekharan administered the oath ceremony at the Raj Bhavan, in Aizawl. In the 40-seated Assembly, MNF has secured a landslide victory bagging 26 seats. Mizo National Front: 26, Indian National Congress: 5, Independent: 8, Bharatiya Janata Party-1
14. Yes Bank Ltd has named one of its independent directors as the bank's part-time non-executive independent chairman -- **Brahm Dutt**.
Note: Earlier, former Finance Secretary Ashok Chawla resigned from the position. Yes Bank Limited is India's fourth largest private sector bank, founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. It primarily operates as a corporate bank, with retail banking and asset management as subsidiary functions.
15. **Mahinda Rajapaksa** resigned as Sri Lanka's Prime Minister.
Note: On the 3rd December 2018, a court issued an interim order preventing Mahinda Rajapaksha from functioning in the position. The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka is the most senior member of parliament in the cabinet of ministers in Sri Lanka.
16. US President Donald Trump has named budget director as the acting chief of staff -- **Mick Mulvaney**.
Note: He replaces General John Kelly, who is leaving by the end of the year. The White House Chief of Staff has traditionally been the highest-ranking non-elected employee of the White House. The Chief of Staff is a political appointee of the President who does not require Senate confirmation.
17. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the extension of Intelligence Bureau Director for six-month extensions -- **Rajiv Jain**.
Note: The Director of Intelligence Bureau (DIB) is the chief executive of 'Intelligence Bureau'.
18. The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has approved the extension of Research & Analysis Wing Secretary for six-month extensions -- **Anil K Dhasmana**.
Note: The Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW or RAW) is the foreign intelligence agency of India, established in 1968.
19. Senior Congress leader **Ashok Gehlot** sworn-in as the new **chief minister of Rajasthan**.
Note: Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh administered the oath of office to Gehlot at the Albert Hall, Jaipur. Rajasthan state Congress president Sachin Pilot was sworn in as deputy chief minister. Indian National Congress (INC): 99, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP): 73, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP): 6 and Other parties :21.
20. Veteran Congress leader sworn in as the **18th Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh** in Bhopal -- **Kamal Nath**.



- Note:** Governor of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Anandiben Patel administered the oath ceremony at the Raj Bhavan, in the state capital Bhopal. Indian National Congress (INC): 114, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)- 109, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), 2, Samajwadi Party-1 and Independents (IND)-4.
- 21. Chhattisgarh Congress** president **Bhupesh Baghel** sworn-in as the new **chief minister of Chhattisgarh**.
Note: Governor of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Anandiben Patel administered the oath ceremony at the Raj Bhavan, in the state capital Raipur. The Indian National Congress won 68 seats against the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's 15, JCC(J)- 5 and BSP-2.
- 22. Ramphal Pawar** has been appointed as the new Director of **National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB)**.
Note: Mr Pawar was Joint Secretary in NATGRID. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is an Indian government agency responsible for collecting and analysing crime data as defined by the Indian Penal Code (IPC).
- 23. Madhavi Divan** has been appointed as the **Additional Solicitor General (ASG)** to represent it in the Supreme Court.
Note: She is the third woman to be appointed as Additional Solicitor General in the court. The Solicitor General and the Additional Solicitors General advise the Government and appear on behalf of the Union of India in terms of the Law Officers (Terms and Conditions) Rules, 1972. Additional Solicitor General of India is a law officer of India and is the third ranking lawyer of the Government of India.
- 24. Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel** resigned due to ongoing upheaval within his **minority Government** over the signing of **UN's migration** treaty.
Note: Michel lost the backing of the party over his support for the UN migration pact, a cause celebre for European anti-immigration parties. The Prime Minister of Belgium is the head of the federal government in the Kingdom of Belgium.
- 25. The interim chief of Central Bureau Investigation (CBI) M Nageswara Rao** has been promoted to the rank of an Additional Director.
Note: Rao was appointed as interim chief of the CBI (No. 3) after the government stepped in between the fight of CBI Director Alok Verma and Special Director Rakesh Asthana. After his appointment, the Centre had sent both Verma and Asthana on a leave with immediate effect.
- 26. Arti Chhabra Srivastava** has been appointed as the SEBI's first full-time Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO).
Note: CVOs are considered an extended hand of the CVC, which is tasked with detecting graft by officials holding public office. The SEBI CVO will mainly keep tabs on its officials and detect and punish corruption and other malpractices.
- 27. Harsh Vardhan Shringla** has been appointed as the **Ambassador of India** to the United States of America (USA).
Note: The Indian Ambassador to the United States (US) is the chief diplomatic representative of India to the United States, housed in Embassy of India, Washington, D.C. Riva Ganguly Das' (IFS official-1986 batch) has been appointed as the next Indian Ambassador to Bangladesh.
- 28. US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis** has resigned from his post due to policy differences with President Donald Trump.
Note: General Mattis' departure comes a day after, President Trump has announced that all US troops would be withdrawn from Syria. The Secretary of Defense is appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate and is by custom a member of the Cabinet and by law a member of the National Security Council.
- 29. Pranab Kumar Das** has been appointed as chairman of the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**.
Note: He will take over from current Chairman S Ramesh (retires on 31st December). The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is the apex indirect tax policy-making body under the Finance Ministry. The CBIC is headed by the Chairman and consists of six members.
- 30. P V Bharathi** has been appointed as managing director and chief executive officer of the Corporation Bank.
Note: At present, she is the Executive Director of the Canara Bank. She will take over the charge on or after 1st February, 2019 and remain in the post till 31st March, 2020.
- 31. Sudhir Bhargava** has been appointed as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), along with four information commissioners in the Central Information Commission.



Note: Four new information commissioners are Yashwardhan Kumar Sinha (IFS officer), ex-IRS officer Vanaja N. Sarna (the only woman), Neeraj Kumar Gupta

(1982-batch IAS officer) and Mr Suresh Chandra (former law secretary). Mr. Bhargava was Information Commissioner in the CIC.

Honor & Awards

- The 'Sahitya Akademi' has announced its annual Sahitya Akademi Awards-2018 in **24 languages**.
Note: Anees Salim has been awarded the 'Sahitya Akademi Award 2018 for English literature category for his novel 'The Blind Lady's Descendants'. Ramesan Nair won the award for his work 'Gurupournami', a poem on the life of social reformer Sree Narayana Guru. An eminent short-story writer, Mushtaq Ahmad Mushtaq, bagged the Award for his collection of short stories "AAKH".
- Vanessa Poncede Leon** has won the coveted Miss World 2018 (68th edition) crown at a grand event in China.
Note: She is the first Mexican woman to win Miss World. Nicolene Limsnukan of Thailand was named first runner-up. Almost 118 contestants from countries across the world participated in the beauty pageant.
- Prathamesh Maulingkar** has become the first Asian/Indian to win Mister Supranational title at Krynica-Zdroj, Poland.
Note: He defeated 37 contestants from all over the world in the final round to win the coveted title. Mister Supranational (Poland) was adjudged first runner-up, Mister Supranational (Brazil) was adjudged second runner-up.
- Manipur Government honoured AIBA World Women Boxing Gold medalist with the title "Meethoileima" title -- **MC Mary Kom**.
Note: Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh handed over a cheque of ten lakh rupees to her. Mr. Singh also declared that the Imphal West DC Road towards Game Village will be named as MC Mary Kom Road.
- Saudi journalist has been named the Time magazine's 'Person of the Year' alongside several other journalists - **Jamal Khashoggi**.
Note: Journalist Khashoggi was murdered in October 2018 at his country's Istanbul consulate. Times Person of the Year is an annual issue of the United States news magazine Time. It features and profiles a person, a group, an idea, or an object that 'for better or for worse' has done the most to influence the events of the year".
- Delhi Police** has entered the Limca Book of Records by training over two lakh women and girls under their self-defence programme in 2017.
Note: The Delhi Police will receive the award in February 2019. Delhi Police has set a target to train around 3.5 lakh women in 2019 and make them strong to deal with any kind of situation. Special Police Unit for Women and Children (SPUWAC), is a special body of Delhi Police, which aims to safeguard the rights of women and children in the Capital.
- Amitav Ghosh** will receive the country's highest literary honour Jnanpith Award 2018.
Note: The Jnanpith Award is an Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their 'outstanding contribution towards literature'. The award was given to the authors for their most outstanding work and consisted of a citation plaque, a cash prize of Rs 1.5 lakh and a bronze replica of 'Saraswati'.
- Catriona Gray** has been crowned Miss Universe 2018 (67th) at IMPACT Arena, Muang Thong Thani in Thailand.
Note: Tamaryn Green from South Africa was named the first runner-up while Miss Venezuela Sthefany Gutiérrez stood third at the pageant. Miss India 2018 Nehal Chudasama (22-years) represented India.
- International filmmaker was honored with the French Knight of the National Order of Merit -- **Ashok Amritraj**.
Note: Mr. Amritraj has been the producer of Hollywood films such as Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance with Nicholas Cage and 99 Homes starring Andrew Garfield. He has produced over 100 movies in the span of his 30 years career. The Order of Merit is awarded to recognize eminent artists as well as people who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world.
- Bollywood actress **Sonam Kapoor** has been named People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's Person of the Year for 2018.
Note: Sonam Kapoor has been feted as she sings in praise of vegan eating and because she keeps animal skins out of her handbag line for her fashion brand Rheson, apart from taking other action for the welfare of animals. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an American animal rights organization based in Norfolk, Virginia.
- Pakistan activist posthumously honoured with the 2018 United Nations Human Rights Prize 2018 -- **Asma Jahangir**.
Note: Ms. Jahangir was an outspoken critic of Pakistan's powerful military establishment and fought against religious extremism and for the rights of oppressed



minorities in Pakistan. The United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights is an honorary award given to individuals and organizations in recognition of outstanding achievement in human rights.

12. **Mamata Banerjee** has been awarded the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award 2017 for her contribution in the overall development of the state and emerging as the best chief minister in the country.

Note: The Skoch Group is a think tank dealing with socio-economic issues with a focus on inclusive growth since 1997.

13. Noted sitar player has been conferred with the 'Tansen Samman' for 2018-- **Manju Mehta**.

Note: The 'Raja Mansingh Tomar Honour' was given to the Sankat Mochan Pratishtan in Varanasi for 2017 and the Natrang Pratishtan of New Delhi for 2018. The award is given to institutions for nurturing good music.

14. The Mohammed Rafi has been bestowed upon late music composer -- **Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar and playback singer Usha Timothy**.

Note: The award was instituted by an NGO headed by Mumbai BJP Chief Ashish Shelar. Kudalkar, of the Laxmikant-Pyarelal duo, was given the Mohammed Rafi Lifetime Achievement Award consisting of 1 lakh rupees and a trophy. The award was received by his daughter. Timothy was honoured with the award and 51,000 rupees at a programme held in suburban Bandra.

15. Divya Patidar Joshi of Madhya Pradesh was crowned with the prestigious -- **India 2018 Title**.

Note: The Mrs. India **My Identity Beauty Pageant 2018** finale was held in Delhi. Divya won the crown of

Mrs. India this year from among 24 promising contestants. She won all the rounds of Beauty with Brain contest along with Best Cat Walk title. Now, in the year 2019, she would be representing for **Mrs.**

Universe title.

16. The Union government has banned Liberation Force (LF) for its involvement in several killings, bombings, and other terror activities during its violent campaign for secession of Punjab" -- **Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF)**.

Note: The government has banned Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) for its involvement in several killings, bombings, and other terror activities during its violent campaign for "secession of Punjab". The decision to ban the outfit under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) comes in the backdrop of agencies unearthing several KLF modules in recent months which has led to apprehensions that it is attempting to revive militancy in the state.

17. **Monika Bhutunguru (Chamba SP)** conferred the 'Champion of Change' award by Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu for her exemplary administrative work.

Note: She was conferred one of the most prestigious awards by the vice president at Vigyan Bhawan for her immense contribution, exemplary work and bringing a significant change in the district. The award selection jury was led by former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishna and former Supreme Court judge Sudha Mishra.

Sports News

1. Indian shooter **Abhinav Bindra** has been conferred the **sport's highest honour** for his outstanding services as the chairman of the International Shooting Sport Federation's Athletes Committee.
Note: He was a member of the **ISSF Athletes Committee** (from 2010 to 2014) and chairman (2014 to 2018). He has been bestowed with the Blue Cross (the ISSF's highest award). Bindra created history by winning the 10m air rifle gold at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.
2. **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** will launch a school-level project by March-April 2019 in association with the game's world governing body FIFA.
Note: Under this programme, the AIFF touched about 15 thousand schools across the country. The project, schools league', will be launched on a pilot basis. The Star Sports India Football Forum 2018 organised by SportzPower in Mumbai.

3. **Atlawim Debebe** has won the Pune International Marathon (33rd year) with the timing of 2 hours 17 minutes 17 seconds.
Note: Teshome Getachew (Ethiopia) claimed second and Bekele Asefa ((Ethiopia) third position. In women's Full Marathon Pascalia Chepkogei (Kenya) stood first with the timing of 2 hour 50 minutes 27 seconds. Dekebe Tafa and Degefa Gezmu both from Ethiopia are winners of the men's and women's half marathon. In women's Full marathon Urvi Tambe stood first amongst Indian participants.
4. **Maheshwari Chauhan** has retained women's skeet title at the 62nd National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC).
Note: Rajasthan's Maheshwari Chauhan retained her women's skeet title at the 62nd National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC) for shotgun events in Jaipur. Maheshwari overcame Ganemat 52-51 in the



- final to clinch the gold. The bronze medal was won by Punjab's Simran Preet Kaur Johal.
5. Former coach of the Indian shooting team **Pawan Singh** has become the first Indian to be elected one of seven members of the Judges Committee of the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF).
Note: Judges Committee is responsible for the uniform application of the shooting rules, provides guidelines for international judges, prepares and conducts courses for judges and jury members.
 6. Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijju has inaugurated the 19th All India Police (AIPDM) Shooting Competition-2018 at **Manesar (Haryana)**.
Note: The competition will continue till 11th of this month. More than 750 participants of 31 teams of State Police Forces and Central Armed Police Forces are participating in the event. There will be total 13 matches and 41 medals & 13 Trophies will be awarded to the winners.
 7. Former India opening batsman **Gautam Gambhir** has announced his retirement from all forms of Cricket.
Note: Gambhir played in 58 Tests (from 2004 to 2016), scoring 4,154 runs at an average of 41.95, with the help of 9 hundred and 22 fifties. He also played in 147 ODIs between 2003 and 2013, besides featuring in 37 T20 Internationals.
 8. Delhi Daredevils was renamed as -- **Delhi Capitals**.
Note: Co-owners Parth Jindal (representing JSW Sport) and Kiran Kumar Grandhi(GMR) unveiled the new name of the team. Shreyas Iyer will continue to lead the team despite the presence of Shikhar Dhawan. Australian great Ricky Ponting will continue to coach the team.
 9. Croatia's midfielder has won prestigious honour of football, Ballon d'Or award 2018 -- **Luca Modrich**.
Note: His club Real Madrid's third straight Champions League trophy. Cristiano Ronaldo remained second in run of ballon d'or race this year. FIFA Ballon d'Or Award is annual football association award given by FIFA to the male player who has performed the best in previous calendar year.
 10. **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** will launch a school-level project by March-April 2019 in association with the game's world governing body FIFA.
Note: Under this programme, the AIFF touched about 15 thousand schools across the country. The project, schools league', will be launched on a pilot basis. The Star Sports India Football Forum 2018 organized by SportzPower in Mumbai.
 11. **Italy** has won the Admiral's Cup Sailing Regatta 2018 (ninth edition) at Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala.
Note: Team Singapore was the Runners-Up and Team USA came third. The Admiral's Cup witnessed competitive sailing races in Laser Radials boats during race days scheduled from 3 -6 December 2018.
 12. Khelo India Youth Games-2019 will be held from 9th to 20th of January 2019 in **Pune (Maharashtra)**.
Note: Khelo India School Games (KISG) is a national level multidisciplinary grassroot games in India for the under-17 years school kids. Every year best 1000 kids will be given an annual scholarship of Rs. 500,000 for 8 years to prepare them for the international sporting events.
 13. Madhya Pradesh opener etched his name in the record books by slamming the highest first-class score on **debut -- Ajay Rohera**.
Note: He remained unbeaten on 267 against Hyderabad in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group-B Cricket in Indore. Earlier, the record was held by former Mumbai stalwart Amol Mazumdar, who had hit 260 versus Haryana at Faridabad in 1994.
 14. Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over the tri colour flag to **Arunima Sinha**.
Note: Arunima Sinha is the first female Divyang to climb Mount Everest. Mr Modi lauded her impressive achievements and extended his best wishes for her latest venture.
 15. Who has rolled out its revolutionary contracts system for the grapplers -- **Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)**.
Note: The wrestlers have been placed in four Grades. WFI is the only Indian Olympic Association-affiliated National Sports Federation to offer contracts to its athletes and only the second after the BCCI.
 16. **Belgium** has won the FIH Hockey World Cup 2018 for the first time after defeating the Netherlands 3-2 in the final on a penalty shoot-out.
Note: Defending champions Australia won the third-place match by defeating England 8-1. The 2018 Men's Hockey World Cup was the 14th edition of the Hockey World Cup for men's national field hockey teams organized by the FIH. It was held at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, India. (from 28 November to 16 December 2018).
 17. Ace Indian Shuttler **P V Sindhu** lifted the prestigious season-ending World Tour Finals trophy at Guangzhou, China.
Note: She defeated Japan's Nozomi Okuhara 21-19, 21-17 in the summit clash. The Badminton Association of India (BAI) has also announced a cash reward of 10 lakh rupees for P V Sindhu for winning the women's singles championship. BAI has also announced a cash reward of 3 lakh rupees for Sameer Verma who reached the semi-final in his maiden appearance at the World Tour Finals.
 18. **SAIL Hockey Academy** has won the 115th All India Aga Khan Gold Cup hockey tournament.
Note: All India Aga Khan Gold Cup Hockey Tournament-2018 (115th) held at Major Dhyan Chand Hockey Stadium, Pune. This year, SHA (SAIL's Rourkela Steel Plant) also won the Shri Nawagarh Trophy All India



- invitation Hockey Tournament and 8th Vinod Khandekar Under 21 All India Gold Cup Hockey Tournament.
19. Sports Minister Col Rajyavardhan Rathore flagged off a special marathon 'Soldierathon' in **New Delhi**.
Note: The marathon was organized in the honour of Martyrs and wounded Soldiers. The proceeds from the event will be donated to Indian Army's Artificial Limb Centre for wounded soldiers to help them acquire state-of-the-art prosthesis at the Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre.
20. The 37th Senior National Rowing Championship has started in the Army Rowing Node in **Pune**.
Note: Around 500 rowers and coaches from various rowing associations across the country will take part in the Championship. The Rowers for the World Championships-2019 will be selected from this event.
21. Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu flagged-off a car rally for Parliamentarians in **New Delhi**.
Note: The objective of the rally is to promote awareness among the people on road safety and responsible driving.
22. Renowned Kabaddi Player **Anup Kumar** announced his retirement from Kabaddi.
Note: He had led India to a memorable Kabaddi World Cup title triumph in 2016. Anup began his international career in 2006 at the South Asian Games in Sri Lanka. He led India to gold medal at the Asian Games and was also part of the team which repeated the feat in the 2014 edition.
23. Former Indian Cricketer **W V Raman** has been appointed as the new coach of the Indian women's cricket team.
Note: He will take over the role from Ramesh Powar. India women's national cricket team represents the country of India in international women's cricket, governed by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
24. **International Cricket Council** has ordered Pakistan Cricket Board PCB's to pay 60% of the cost demanded by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
Note: Earlier, the ICC rejected Pakistan Cricket Board PCB's compensation claim which blamed India for lack of bilateral series between the two nations. The Panel orders the PCB to pay the BCCI 60% of the claimed Costs, administrative costs and expenses of the Panel. The BCCI has been asked to pay 40% of the administrative costs and expenses of the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC).
25. **Mithali Raj** will be the captains for the Indian Women's ODI team.
Note: India will play three ODIs in New Zealand beginning on 24th of next month as part of the ICC Women's Championship before playing three T20 Internationals.
26. **Harmanpreet Kaur** will be the captains for the Indian Women's T20 team.
27. The Premier Badminton League (PBL) started in **Mumbai**.
Note: Total nine franchises will take part in the tournament, with the final to be played on 13th January 2019. The teams will battle it out for the prize money of Rs 6 crore. Premier Badminton League is a franchise league has the rights to operate and execute the Premier Badminton League. The nine teams are Delhi Dashers, Ahmedabad Smash Masters, Awadhe Warriors, Bengaluru Raptors, Mumbai Rockets, Hyderabad Hunters, Chennai Smashes, North Eastern Warriors and Pune 7 Aces.
28. Indian woman became the fastest Asian to cycle the globe--**Vedangi Kulkarni**.
Note: Vedangi cycled into Kolkata in the wee hours, completing the 29,000 kilo metres distance required to qualify as bicycling across the globe. She spent 159 days peddling up to 300 kilo metres a day in 14 countries. She will be flying back to the Australian city to complete the record by cycling a 15-kilometre distance to reach the same place from where she started. Vedangi is a student of the University of Bournemouth in the United Kingdom pursuing a degree in sports management.
29. International golfer has been arrested by the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department for poaching -- **Jyoti Randhawa**.
Note: As per preliminary information received, Jyoti Singh Randhawa and Mahesh Virajdar have been arrested in a poaching case in Motipur Range of Katarniaghat. A vehicle, weapon and other equipment, along with wildlife articles, have been seized. A skin of wild boar, Range Finders, binoculars and a gun registered in Randhawa's name have also been recovered from his vehicle.
30. Former Australia captain **Ricky Ponting** formally inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame.
Note: Ponting is a three-time ICC Cricket World Cup winner including two times as captain. He is the 25th Australia cricketer to be formally inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. Ponting scored 41 centuries, 13,704 runs in 375 ODIs with 30 centuries and 401 runs in 17 T20s with two half-centuries.
31. The Dronacharya awardee boxers has taken over as India's chief boxing coach **C A Kuttappa**.
Note: The Kuttappa (39-year) is credited with shaping some of the country's most successful boxers such as Vijender Singh, M Suranjoy Singh and Shiva Thapa, among others. He replaced veteran coach SR Singh.
32. Croatia soccer star **Luka Modric** has been chosen Balkan athlete of the year 2018.
Note: Now, He became only the second soccer player to scoop the prize after Bulgaria's former European Footballer of the Year Hristo Stoichkov in 1994. Tennis great Novak Djokovic of Serbia was second in the Balkan



poll, and Romania's Simona Halep third. Modric also won the prestigious Ballon d'Or for the first time earlier in December.

- 33.** The sports ministry has earmarked Rs. 100 crores for funding the athletes under the (TOPS) Target Olympic Podium Scheme ahead of 2020 Olympics in **Tokyo**.
Note: Under the scheme, the athletes were also given financial assistance to prepare for Commonwealth Games and Asian Games. The scheme was launched in September 2014 to provide financial assistance to potential Olympic medal winners. The flagship scheme of the government will also nurture future sporting talent by supporting a group of athletes who are a potential medal winner in 2024 and 2028 Olympic Games.

- 34.** Indian Shooter **Saurabh Chaudhary** has won the 10m air pistol trials at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range.
Note: Asian Games and Youth Olympic Games champion. Earlier, Saurabh had won the first trial in both events as well and in one final shooting event way above the existing world record score. He won the men's final with a relatively modest 243.3 score, leaving behind Punjab's Arjun Singh Cheema, who shot 239.8 to emerge second.
- 35.** The third edition of women's national boxing championships begins in **Vijayanagara, Karnataka**.
Note: Country's top boxers will be vying for top honours as the tournament will be held at the JSW Sports-owned Inspire Institute of Sport till 6th of the next month.

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