

GK Capsule

LIC AAO & SBI PO
Main Exam 2019



GK Capsule for LIC AAO & SBI PO Main Exam 2019

Dear Aspirants,

This GK Capsule is a complete docket of important Banking Awareness & Current Affairs news and events that occurred in last 5.5 months (1 January 2019 – 22nd June 2019). This file is important and relevant for all competitive exams like Banking, Insurance, SSC and UPSC Exams.

News related to RBI

June 2019

1. **RBI reduced repo rate by 25 bps** - For the third time in a row, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on 6th June 2019, reduced interest rates by 25 basis points.

Current Policy & Reserve Rates

1.Repo Rate	5.75%
2. Reverse Repo	5.50%
3. CRR (Cash Reserve ratio)	4.00%
4.SLR (Statutory Liquidity Ratio)	19.00%
5.MSF (Marginal Standing Facility)	6.00%
6.Bank Rate	6.00%

2. RBI has promoted **Rabi N. Mishra as executive director (ED)**.
- He was earlier holding the position of the Principal Chief General Manager at the central bank's Risk Management Department.
3. **RBI conducted Financial Literacy Week**
- Financial Literacy Week 2019 observed from June 3-7, 2019.
 - The theme of "**Farmers**" and how they benefit by being a part of the formal banking system.
 - Financial Literacy Week is an initiative of RBI to promote awareness of key topics every year through a focused campaign.
4. **RBI releases report on 'Benchmarking India's Payment Systems'** – The report on 'Benchmarking India's Payment Systems' which was released mentions that the country is "strong" in areas like having necessary laws and cash in circulation per capita.
5. **RBI to infuse Rs 12,500 crore into the financial system through bond purchase** – The Reserve Bank of India will infuse **Rs 12,500 crore** into the financial system through bond purchases under the Open Market Operation (OMO).
- The RBI uses open market operations (OMO) for injecting liquidity into the system through the purchase of government bonds (G-Sec).
6. **RBI sets up panel under UK Sinha to study MSMEs**
- On 18th June, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an eight-member expert committee to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
 - The committee will be headed by former chairman of Sebi UK Sinha.

May 2019

1. **RBI extends timings for RTGS from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm** – RBI has extended timings for customer transactions in the Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system to **6:00 pm from 4:30 pm**.

Note:

- The customer is charged a 'time-varying charge' on each outward transaction in addition to the flat processing charge.
- The fee for transfers between 8 am to 11 am is nil, from 11 am to 1 pm is Rs 2, and from 1 pm to 6 pm is Rs 5.
- The fee for transfers made after the initial cut off of 6 pm will be Rs 10.
- The initial cut off for customer transactions will be 6 pm and the final cut off for inter-bank transactions will be 7:45 pm.
- The IDL reversal will take place between 7:45 pm and 8 pm.

Note:

- RTGS is an online fund transfer system, supported by the RBI. RTGS enables transmission on a real-time basis.
- The minimum amount for the transaction to be eligible as an RTGS transfer is Rs. 2 lakh.

2. **Harsh Vardhan Committee:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) constituted a committee under **Harsh Vardhan**, to review existing state of mortgage securitisation in India and suggest measures to develop market further.

3. **Debit Card Swipes on PoS terminals rise 27% in March 2019: RBI data**

- According to the RBI data, in Mar 2019, the total number of financial transactions done by people using their debit cards increased by 15%.
- Also, the financial transactions done by the debit cards at POS terminals increased by 27% compared to March 2018.
- In actual terms, the total number of financial transactions done by people using their debit cards at ATMs stood at 891 million for the month of March, increased by 15%, against 775 million in March 2018.

4. **RBI sets up committee on corporate loans** – RBI has constituted a six-member committee on the

Development of Secondary Market for Corporate Loans to come up with recommendations to increase the efficiencies of the debt market and aid in the resolution of stressed assets.

- The committee, headed by **TN Manoharan, Chairman**, Canara Bank

5. **RBI releases draft norms on liquidity risk management for NBFCs** – RBI stated that all non-deposit-taking non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) with an asset size of **Rs 5,000 crore** and above, and all deposit-taking NBFCs irrespective of their asset size, have to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of a Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR).

Note:

- In a draft on liquidity risk management framework for NBFCs and core investment companies, these measures will promote resilience of NBFCs to potential liquidity disruptions by ensuring they have sufficient **High-Quality Liquid Asset (HQLA)** to survive an acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days.
- The banking regulator proposed that it will implement LCR through a glide path from 01st April 2020 to 01st April 2024.

6. **RBI allows modern Currency Chests to hike Service Charges** – The Reserve Bank of India has announced that it will allow large modern currency chests to increase the service charges on cash deposited by non-chest bank branches from the existing rate of **Rs 5 per packet of 100 pieces** to a higher rate subject to a maximum of **Rs 8 per packet**.

7. **RBI releases 'Vision 2021' For Payment Systems For 'Cash-Lite' Society** – Reserve Bank of India has released a vision document 'Payment and Settlement Systems in India: Vision 2019 – 2021', with its core theme of **'Empowering Exceptional E-payment Experience'** for ensuring a safe, secure, convenient, quick and affordable e-payment system.

- The number of digital transactions is expected to increase more than four times from 2,069 crore in December 2018 to 8,707 crore in December 2021.

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8. Bank credit grows 13.2% in FY19: RBI

- Bank credit grew by 13.2% in the financial year 2018-19 as compared to 10.3% in the previous financial year, mainly aided by loans to services and retail sector. Deposit growth also gained momentum, growing by 10% as compared to 6.7% a year ago.

9. RBI enhances Housing-Loan limits Under Priority Sector Lending for RRBs, SFBs – The Reserve Bank of India has decided to enhance the housing loan limits for Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and Small Finance Banks (SFBs) for eligibility under priority sector lending.

- Housing loans given by RRBs and SFBs to individuals up to INR 35 lakh in metropolitan centers (with population of 10 lakh and above).
- INR 25 lakh in other centers, provided the overall cost of the dwelling unit in the metropolitan centers and at other centres does not exceed **INR 45 lakh and INR 30 lakh**, respectively, will be eligible for classification under priority sector lending.

April 2019

1. RBI sells entire stake in NHB, Nabard to govt for Rs 1,470 cr

- The Reserve Bank has sold its entire stakes in the National Housing Bank (NHB) and the National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (Nabard) to government for Rs 1,450 crore and Rs 20 crore, respectively.
- With this divestment, the government now holds 100 percent stake in both these financial institutions.
- The central bank has sold its stake in NHB on March 19, while it sold the stake in Nabard on February 26.

Note:

- RBI had 100% shareholding in NHB, which was divested for ₹1,450 crore.
- Up till now, the authorised capital of NHB stands at ₹2,000 crore of which ₹1,450 crore has been subscribed by RBI.
- The Nabard stake was divested in two phases — RBI had 72.5% stake in Nabard amounting to ₹1,450 crore, out of which 71.5%, worth ₹1,430 crore was divested in October 2010 and the residual shareholding was divested on February 26 this year for ₹20 crore.
- In 2007, the government acquired 59.73 per cent stake held by RBI in the country's largest bank SBI for Rs 35,531.33 crore.

- It was the Narasimhan Committee that recommended the transfer of RBI's stake in State Bank of India, Nabard and NHB to the government to differentiate the central bank's role as the owner of banks and the sector regulator.

Note:

- The Narasimham panel had stated that RBI could not own those entities which are regulated by it.
- The move is part of ending the cross-holding in regulatory institutions and follows the recommendation of second Narasimham committee report of October 2001.
- The current change in the capital structure of both these financial institutions was brought in by the government through amendments to the Nabard Act of 1981 and the NHB Act of 1987 which were notified on January 19, 2018 and March 29, 2018, respectively.

About NABARD

- NABARD is responsible for regulating and supervising the functions of Co-operative banks and RRBs.
- Harsh Kumar Bhanwala is the current Chairman of NABARD.

About NHB

- Now NHB is not a wholly owned subsidiary of RBI as the government holds the 100% stake in it.

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- NHB was set up on July 9, 1988 under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.
- NHB is the regulator for housing finance companies.

It aims at-

- Promoting housing finance institutions both at local and regional levels.
- Providing financial and other support to such institutions.
- Promoting the market potentials to cater the housing needs of all segments of the population.
- Dakshita Das is the current MD & CEO of NHB.
- Its head office is in New Delhi.

2. RBI will release a new note of Rs 20

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will soon issue a new note of Rs 20, which will include additional features.

New 20 Rupee note

- Series - Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series
- Dimensions - 63 mm x 129 mm
- Base colour – greenish -yellow
- Motif (image on the note) - Ellora Caves (Ellora is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra)
- Note: Old Rs 20 note size is 143 X 63 mm and has a motif of Mount Harriet.

3. RBI issues ₹50 notes signed by Governor Shaktikanta Das

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 16 April 2019, issued ₹50 denomination banknotes bearing the signature of Governor Shaktikanta Das.
- The design of these notes is similar in all respects to ₹50 banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi (new) series.

About Rs. 50 banknotes

- The base colour of the new note is fluorescent blue.
- It has a motif of Hampi with Chariot on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage.
- The dimension of the banknote is 66 mm x 135 mm.
- On the reverse side, the note has a 'Swachh Bharat' logo printed on it with its slogan.

4. RBI proposes to allow fintech start-ups to test regulatory sandbox

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a 14 page draft document named "Enabling Framework for Regulatory Sandbox."
- The Reserve Bank of India proposed that fintech start-ups could set up regulatory sandbox or live-testing of innovative products and services in segments such as retail payments, money transfer, artificial intelligence and data analytics in the financial sector.
- The concept of a RS was mooted by a committee headed by RBI Executive Director Sudarshan Sen.

5. Reserve Bank of India issues norms for banks to set up currency chests

- The Reserve Bank of India issued a guideline for banks to set up new currency chests.
- RBI specify minimum standards for setting up new currency chests - the minimum area of the strong room/ vault should be at least 1,500 sq ft.
- For those banks situated in hilly/ inaccessible places, the minimum area of the strong room/ vault should be at least 600 sq ft.
- Besides, the new chests should have a processing capacity of 6.6 lakh pieces of banknotes per day.
- For those situated in the hilly/ inaccessible places, capacity of 2.1 lakh pieces of banknotes per day.
- RBI further stated that – under the subject to ground realities and reasonable restrictions the currency chests should have **Chest Balance Limit (CBL)** of Rs **1,000 crore**.

About Currency Chest

- Currency chests are branches of selected banks authorised by the RBI to stock rupee notes and coins.
- The responsibility for managing the currency in circulation is vested in the RBI.

6. RBI injected Rs 2.98 lakh crore liquidity in 2018-19

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- According to the RBI reports, the Reserve Bank of India injected a total liquidity of Rs 2.98 lakh crore in the market in 2018-19.
- 7. Banks close FY19 with 13.24% credit growth, deposits up 10.03%**
- According to the Reserve Bank data, bank credit rose 13.24 percent to Rs 97.67 lakh crore for the fortnight to March 29.
 - Deposits have grown by 10.03 percent to Rs 125.72 lakh crore during the same period.
 - This is the second consecutive double-digits credit growth after the same had declined to 4.54 percent in FY17 at Rs 78.41 lakh crore, which was the lowest since 1963.
- 8. Complaints with bank ombudsman surge 25% in FY18 - RBI Report**
- According to the RBI Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India - the number of complaints registered at banking ombudsman offices have seen a **25% increase** in the fiscal year 2018.
 - "The banking ombudsman offices in tier-1 cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Hyderabad accounted for more than 57% of the total complaints received by all BO offices.
 - Currently, there are 21 functional banking ombudsman offices in the country.
 - These offices were established under Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006
- 9. Reinsurance brokers permitted to open foreign currency accounts: RBI**
- The Reserve Bank of India said reinsurance brokers have been permitted to open non-interest bearing foreign currency accounts with banks for undertaking transactions.

- Earlier, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) had issued notification in this regard.
- Foreign currency account refers to a bank account held or maintained in currency other than the currency of India or Nepal or Bhutan.

10. RBI tweaks LCR norms to boost liquidity

- In a bid to further improve the cash position of banks, the RBI on April 04, provided additional 2 per cent liquidity window to the lenders by tweaking liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) norms.
- LCR indicates the proportion of highly liquid assets held by banks to ensure their ability to meet short-term obligations.

11. RBI sets the limits for Ways and Means Advances (WMA)

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in consultation with the government of India has set the limits for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) for the first half of the financial year 2019-20 (April 2019 to September 2019) at Rs 75000 crore.

Ways and Means Advances (WMA)

- Ways and Means Advances is the temporary loan facility provided by the RBI to the centre and state governments.
- The WMA scheme was introduced in 1997 to meet any temporary mismatches in the receipts and payments of the government.
- The WMA needs to be vacated after 90 days. The interest rate for WMA is currently charged at the repo rate.
- The limits for WMA are decided by the RBI and in consultation with the Government of India.

March 2019

1. RBI sets NBFC-MFIs' average base rate at 9.21% for April-June

- According to the RBI notification, the applicable average base rate to be charged by Non-Banking Financial Company – Micro Finance Institutions (NBFC-MFIs) to their

borrowers for the quarter beginning April 01, 2019 will be 9.21 per cent

2. RBI relaxes forex norms for FPIs and FVCIs

- The Reserve Bank of India eased foreign exchange management (deposit) regulations pertaining to opening of accounts by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) and foreign venture

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capital investors (FVCIs), and opening of non-resident ordinary (NRO) account by long-term visa (LTV) holders.

- The central bank said that banks, which are authorised to deal in foreign exchange, can allow SEBI-registered FPI and FVCI to open and maintain a non-interest-bearing foreign currency account for the purpose of making investments.
- Further, such banks can open only one non-resident ordinary (NRO) account for a citizen of Bangladesh or Pakistan, belonging to minority communities in those countries, namely Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians, residing in India and who has been granted a long-term visa (LTV) by the Central government.

3. RBI raises FPI investment limit in G-Secs

- The Reserve Bank of India upped the investment limit for FY2019-20 for foreign portfolio investors (FPI) in Central government securities (G-Secs) to **6 per cent** of outstanding stock of securities from **5.5 per cent in FY2018-19**.
- The limit for FPI investment in State development loans (SDLs) and corporate bonds has been left unchanged at 2 per cent and 9 per cent of outstanding stocks.

4. Indian banks' deposits rose 9.8 per cent y/y in a fortnight to March 1: RBI

- According to the Reserve Bank of India's weekly statistical supplement data, Indian banks' loans rose 14.6 percent in the two weeks to March 1 from a year earlier, while deposits rose 9.8 percent.
- Outstanding loans rose by 891.1 billion rupees (\$12.90 billion) to 95.29 trillion rupees in the two weeks to March 1.
- Bank deposits rose by 1.11 trillion rupees to 122.30 trillion rupees in the two weeks to March 1.

5. SBI, ICICI & HDFC Bank to comply with additional capital norms by Apr 1: RBI

- The Reserve Bank said that; SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank will have to comply with additional capital requirement norms by April

1 as the banks continue to remain 'too big to fail' lenders, referred to as **D-SIB or domestic systemically important bank**.

Note:

- The Reserve Bank had issued the Framework for dealing with D-SIBs in July 22, 2014.

About SIB: Systematically Important Bank

- RBI evaluates some banks on the basis of Size, Interconnectedness, Lack of readily available substitutes or financial institution infrastructure and Complexity.
- RBI has given different weightage for different parameters and there is a bucket for each indicator. Hence, if a bank achieves all these parameters is known as Systematically Important Bank.

6. RBI to inject liquidity via forex swaps

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to inject rupee liquidity into the system through long-term foreign exchange buy/sell swap — a first-of-its-kind instrument used for liquidity management.
- The RBI would conduct dollar-rupee buy/sell swap auction of **\$5 billion** for a three-year tenor on March 26.
- RBI has infused more than Rs 2.36 lakh crore through such purchases so far this fiscal.
- Minimum bid size for the auction is set at \$25 million and banks will be allowed to submit multiple bids.

7. RBI Notifies Norms for 2% Interest Subsidy Scheme for Short-term Crop Loans -

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has notified the norms for banks with regards to **two per cent** interest subvention or subsidy for short-term crop loans during 2018-19 and 2019-20 under the interest subvention scheme approved by the central government.
- Under the interest subvention scheme, the central government provides short term crop loan up to one year for a loan up to Rs. 3 lakhs. The Central government provides an interest subvention of 2 per cent for these short term crop loans.

8. RBI relaxes norms for trade credit

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- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) relaxed norms for imports of capital and non-capital goods by raising the trade credit limit to \$150 million under the automatic route.
- For others, the limit is up to \$50 million or equivalent per import transaction.
- Trade credits (TCs) refer to the credits extended by the overseas supplier, bank,

financial institution and other permitted recognised lenders for maturity for imports of capital and non-capital goods permissible.

- Earlier, under the automatic route, banks were permitted to approve trade credit up to \$20 million. TCs beyond \$20 million were required approval from the RBI.

February 2019

1. RBI Lifts Cap on FPI Investments in Corporate Bonds –

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) withdrew the 20% limit on investments by FPIs in corporate bonds of an entity with a view to encourage more foreign investments.
- As part of the review of the FPI investment in corporate debt undertaken in April 2018, it was stipulated that no FPI should have an exposure of more than 20% of its corporate bond portfolio to a single corporate (including exposure to entities related to the corporate).

2. RBI, Bank of Japan Sign Bilateral Swap

Arrangement – Reserve Bank of India and Bank of Japan have signed a Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA).

- The BSA provides for India to access 75 billion US dollars whereas the earlier BSA had provided for 50 billion dollars. The BSA was approved by the Union Cabinet in January this year.

3. RBI doubles the limit of bulk deposits from Rs. 1

Crore to Rs 2 Crore - Reserve Bank of India decided to

treat deposits to over Rs.2 crore as ‘bulk’ as they doubled the limit for the same from the earlier Rs.1crore.

4. New Policy for Overseas Borrowings - The Reserve Bank has come out with a new policy for overseas borrowings. The RBI has rationalized the earlier policy in consultation with the Government of India.

Key points

- The new policy allows all eligible borrowers to raise External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) up to **\$750 million** or equivalent per financial year under the automatic route replacing the existing sector wise limits.
- The minimum average maturity period (MAMP) has been kept at three years for all ECBs.

5. RBI raised collateral-free farm loan limit from Rs. 1

Lakh to Rs. 1.6 Lakh - The Reserve Bank of India raised the limit of collateral-free agricultural loans to Rs. 1.6 lakh from the current Rs. 1 lakh with a view to help small and marginal farmers.

GDP growth rate projection by various Org.

Org.	GDP growth rate projection
RBI	RBI lowered its growth forecast for the economy to 7 per cent from the earlier projection of 7.2 per cent for the 2019-20
World Bank (Global Economic Prospects report)	7.5 percent in fiscal year 2019-20 real GDP growth is estimated at 7.2 per cent in 2018-19
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	7.3% in 2019 (2019-20) and 7.5% in 2020
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	India’s growth forecast was lowered for 2019-20 to 7.2% from 7.6% estimated earlier.

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FICCI survey	India's GDP is forecast at 7.10 percent for Financial Year 2020 and 7.20 percent for Financial Year 2021.
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) - Economic Outlook report	India's economic growth will regain strength and approach 7.5% by 2020 and projected to strengthen to close to 7.25% in FY19.
Fitch rating	India's growth forecast was lowered to 6.6 per cent for the current fiscal from 6.8 per cent projected earlier. Fitch retained its GDP growth forecast for the next fiscal (2020-21) at 7.1% and 7.0% for 2021-22.
Moody's	Indian economy is expected to grow at 7.3% in 2019-20.
UN's World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP)	7.0 % in 2019-20 India's economy is projected to grow at 7.1 per cent in fiscal year 2020
DBS Bank	DBS Bank has revised India's GDP growth for fiscal year 2020 downwards to 6.8 per cent year-on-year (YoY) from 7 per cent projected earlier
Crisil Ratings	7.3 % in 2019-20
Central Statistics Office (CSO)	7.2% in 2018-19
India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)	lowered India's growth forecast for the current fiscal (2019-20) to 7.3%, from the earlier projection of 7.5 %.

Rank of India in different Indexes

1. Global Peace Index 2019: India Ranks 141

- India's ranked 141 among 163 countries on the Global Peace Index 2019.
- Iceland remains the most peaceful country and Afghanistan the least peaceful nation.
- New Zealand has been ranked the second most peaceful country.
- Portugal was ranked third, and Austria fourth and Denmark was fifth most peaceful country in the world.
- The report is prepared by Australian think tank Institute for Economics & Peace.

2. Traffic Index-2018:

- Mumbai 'most congested' among 403 global cities, Delhi ranks 4th.
- Mumbaiers spend 65% extra time caught in traffic.
- New Delhi ranked fourth with a congestion rank of 58%.
- Bogota (63%) in Colombia and Lima in Peru (58%) were ranked second and third on the list respectively, while the Russian capital Moscow (56%) ranked fifth.
- Traffic Index-2018', compiled by location technology specialist TomTom.

3. Global Gender Equality Index Released: India Ranks 95

- India ranked 95th out of 129 countries in a new index that measures global gender equality looking at aspects such as poverty, health, education, literacy, political representation and equality at the workplace.
- The list was topped by **Denmark** followed by Finland and Sweden.
- Chad was placed at bottom most position (129th).
- The Index is developed by Equal Measures 2030, a partnership effort of regional and global organisations.
- Indicators: It includes 51 indicators across 14 of 17 official Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

4. End of Childhood Index 2019 -

- India was ranked 113 in 176 countries on the wellbeing of children.
- The Index was released by 'Save the Children', a United Kingdom (UK) based non-

profit organisation which works for child rights.

- The Index was topped by Singapore.

5. IIT Bombay has emerged the country's best university: QS Rankings

- IIT Bombay has emerged the country's best university for the second consecutive year in the 2019 QS World University Ranking.
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was named the world's best for a record eighth consecutive year.
- Twenty-three Indian institutes feature in the sixteenth edition of the QS World University Ranking in which IIT Bombay (152), IIT Delhi (182) and Indian Institute of Science Bangalore (184) are ranked in the global top 200.
- The ranking is produced by global higher education consultancy Quacquarelli Symonds, QS ranks the world's top 1,000 universities.

6. IMD World Competitiveness Rankings 2019

- India ranked at 43rd position in the most competitive economy in the world.
- In 2018 India was ranked at 44th place.
- Singapore has grabbed the top position.
- Hong Kong SAR is in second position and US has slipped to the third place in 2019.
- The ranking is compiled by International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

7. Kids Right Index 2019: India Ranks 117

- India stands in a lowly 117th position out of 181 countries in the KidsRight Index.
- The index ranks how countries adhere to and are equipped to improve child rights.
- Iceland secured the top position in the index followed by Portugal.
- KidsRights Index is an initiative of Kids Right Foundation in cooperation with Erasmus University, Rotterdam.

8. India ranked 20th among the top capital importing countries: Knight Frank

- With investment of \$2.6 billion, India was ranked 20th among the top capital importing countries globally, while China was at the 6th position with an investment of \$14.30 billion.

- The US was the top capital importing country globally with an investment of \$80.89 billion.
- The report noted that the US also topped the list of capital exporting countries globally, with an investment of \$59.62 billion, followed by Canada (\$50.41 billion) and Germany (\$24.50 billion).

9. Cancer Preparedness Index 2019 - India Ranks 19th

- India was ranked 19th out of 28 countries in the Index.
- Index is released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- Top 3 countries are Australia (1st), Netherlands (2nd) and Germany (3rd).
- Bottom three are Saudi Arabia (28th), Romania (27th) and Egypt (26th).

10. Global Startup Ecosystem – India was ranked 17th position among 100 countries.

- It was released by StartupBlink.
- The report ranks countries based on the strength of its startup ecosystem.
- China was ranked 27th.
- Bangalore, New Delhi, and Mumbai were the top cities in the Indian startup ecosystem.
- Top three countries are: United States, United Kingdom and Canada.

11. India Ranks 140th In World Press Freedom Index –

- India ranked 140th out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index 2019.
- Index is released by Reporters Without Borders.
- The index is topped by Norway followed by Finland and Sweden.

12. WEF Global Energy Transition Index – India rank 76th on a global energy transition index.

- The report stated that India is amongst the countries with high pollution levels and has a relatively high CO₂ intensity in its energy system.
- Sweden remains on the top and is followed by Switzerland and Norway in the top three.
- The index is compiled by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF).

13. World Happiness Report 2019 – India is ranked 140th out of 156 nations.

- The World Happiness Report was released by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations.

- For the second consecutive year, Finland topped the list.
- Denmark ranked second followed by Norway.
- Pakistan ranked 67th, Bhutan 95th, China 93rd, Bangladesh 125th, and Sri Lanka 130th while South Sudan ranked last in the World Happiness Report.

14. India Ranks 11th in Gold Holding: WGC Report –

The World Gold Council its latest report highlights the quantum of gold holding by the different countries.

- India has the 11th largest gold reserve and the current holding pegged at 607 tonnes.
- The top spot is occupied by US gold reserves of 8,133.5 tonnes, followed by Germany with 3,369.7 tonnes.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) ranks third on the list with total gold reserves of 2,814 tonnes.
- The World Gold Council is the market development organisation for the gold industry and it aims to stimulate and sustain demand for gold, provide industry leadership, and be the global authority on the gold market.
- The members of the World Gold Council include gold mining companies.

15. India ranks 16th in terms of Highest Number of impacted Species in Hotspots –

A recent study published in PLOS Biology found that human impacts on species occur across 84% of the earth's surface and India ranks 16th in such impacts, with 35 species impacted on an average.

- Malaysia ranks 1st among the countries with the highest number of impacted species (125).
- Southeast Asian tropical forests, including those in India's Western Ghats, Himalaya, and north-east, are among the 'hotspots' of threatened species.
- However, these very areas are also 'cool-spots' (the world's last refuges where high numbers of threatened species still persist).

16. Inclusive Internet Index 2019 – India has been ranked 47th.

- **Sweden** has topped the rankings followed by **Singapore and the US**.
- The Inclusive Internet Index 2019 was prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) for Facebook.

- The 'Inclusive Internet' score was based on the scores of availability, affordability, relevance and readiness categories.

17. International IP index 2019

- India has jumped eight places to **36th position** on the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index.
- The US, the UK, Sweden, France and Germany remained the top five economies on the intellectual property index in 2019
- In 2018, India was ranked at 44th position.

18. Corruption Perception Index 2018

- India has improved its ranking by 3 points by moving onto **78th position** in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2018 published by Transparency International.
- China and Pakistan, in a list of 180 countries, lagged far behind than India at 87th and 117th position respectively.
- Somalia has been ranked last with a score of 10 behind South Sudan and Syria.

19. India ranks 54th in 'Bloomberg Innovation Index' of 60 economies

- For the first time ever, India has been ranked in Bloomberg's 2019 list of most innovative countries in the world.
- India has grabbed the 54th spot among 60 countries in the Bloomberg Innovation Index with a score of 47.93 out of 100.
- South Korea has topped the Bloomberg Innovation Index for the sixth time in a row with a total score of 87.38.
- Germany ranked second, Finland stood on the third spot.

20. Global Talent Competitive Index 2019:

- India ranked at **80th positions** on the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) 2019.
- The index is released by INSEAD business school in partnership with Tata Communications and Adecco Group.
- Switzerland topped the index which is followed by Singapore and the US.
- Last year in 2018, India was ranked at 81st position.

21. Democracy Index 2019: The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released the Democracy Index which ranks 167 countries by 60 indicators across five broad categories.

- Top 3 countries in the list are – **Norway, Iceland and Sweden**.

- Australia and New Zealand are the only “full democracies” in the entire Asia-Pacific region
 - India was at the **41st place** with a score of 7.23/10 and was placed in the flawed democracies category.
- 22. India Ranks 79th, Japan Tops List of Most Powerful Passports** - According to the Henley Passport Index, India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th in 2019. Japan retained its top spot as the world’s most travel-friendly passport.
- 23. India 6th in GDPR Readiness Index: CISCO** - Nearly 65% of Indian organizations are better prepared for the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), making the country the sixth leading nation globally in the GDPR readiness index, global networking leader, according to CISCO.
- 24. World Bank's ease-of-doing-business 2019: India ranked at 77**
- India’s jumped 23 places to 77 among 190 countries in the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business 2019 index.
 - The World Bank on October 31, 2018 released the Doing Business Report 2019 titled as ‘Doing Business 2019: Training for Reform’, assessing and ranking countries on the basis of ease of doing business in the year 2018.
 - In its annual 'Doing Business' 2019 report, the World Bank said India has improved on six of the 10 parameters on starting and doing business in a country.

- The biggest improvements have been in the indicators related "construction permits" and "trading across borders."
- Last year, India ranked at 100th position.
- The top 3 economies in the ease of doing business rankings are **New Zealand, Singapore, and Denmark.**

25. IMD World Talent Ranking: India Ranks 53rd

- Switzerland has topped the list of the IMD World Talent Ranking 2018 for the fifth year in a row.
- The Top 3 countries in the list are:
 - Switzerland, Denmark, Norway

26. Climate Change Performance Index 2019:

- India ranked at 11th position.
- As per the Index, Sweden has topped the list while India was on 11th position.
- Saudi Arabia came last, in 60th place, partly due to its obstructive role during international climate negotiations.

27. WEF Gender Gap Index 2018:

- India has been ranked **108th** in World Economic Forum (WEF) gender gap index 2018.
- As per the WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report 2018, Iceland topped the list having closed more than 85.8% of its overall gender gap.
- The Report was published for total 149 countries.
- Norway and Sweden were on 2nd and 3rd position, respectively.

Economy News

June 2019

1. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chairs 35th GST council meeting in Delhi

- The 35th Goods and Service Tax (GST) council meeting was held in New Delhi.
- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chaired the meeting for the first time after assuming the office.

Key points

- The Council extended the tenure of the anti-profiteering authority by two years till **November 2021.**

- The Council has decided to use **Aadhaar as the identity and address proof** required for registration for GST. No other documents will be required, and authentication can be done using a one-time password.
- The Council decided to extend the deadline for the filing of the annual return forms GSTR 9, 9A and 9C to August 30, 2019. The earlier deadline was June 30, 2019.
- The council also approved the rollout of the **single-return filing system for all by January 1, 2020.**
- The council also approved imposing a penalty of up to **10 per cent of the profiteered amount on**

- **entities for not passing on benefits of GST rate cuts** to consumers, as against the current norm of levying a maximum fine of Rs 25,000.
 - The Council also approved the rollout of an **electronic invoicing system** on a pilot basis from January 1, 2020, made it mandatory for GST-registered multiplexes to issue e-tickets.
 - According to the proposal, entities with a turnover of more than Rs 50 crore will be required to generate **electronic invoices** on a government portal for B2B sales.
2. **SEBI sets up panel for reviewing Margins on Derivatives** – The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the capital markets regulator has set up a panel, to review current framework of margins in the futures and options (F&O) derivative segment.
- The working group set up by SEBI is headed by the **National Stock Exchange (NSE) Clearing Ltd.**
3. **Fitch lowered India's growth forecast to 6.6 per cent** for the current fiscal from 6.8 per cent projected earlier.
- Fitch also retained its GDP growth forecast for the next fiscal (2020-21) at 7.1% and 7.0% for 2021-22.
4. **EAC-PM releases a detailed analysis on robustness of India's GDP estimation methodology** – The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister released a detailed note titled '**GDP estimation in India- Perspectives and Facts**'.
- The new methodology that uses 2011-12 as the base year includes two major improvements,
 - a) Incorporation of MCA21 database, and
 - b) Incorporation of the Recommendations of System of National Accounts (SNA), 2008.
5. **World Investment Report 2019: UNCTAD**
- According to the World Investment Report 2019, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows to India grew by 6% to USD 42 billion in 2018. India was ranked among the top 20 host economies for FDI inflows in 2017-18.
 - The report is published by United Nation Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
6. **FDI in services sector up 37 per cent in 2018-19**
- Foreign direct investment (FDI) in services sector grew 36.5 per cent to \$9.15 billion in 2018-19, according to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
 - The sector attracted FDI worth \$6.7 billion in 2017-18.
- Services sector includes finance, banking, insurance, outsourcing, R&D, courier, technology testing and analysis.
 - Services sector contributes over 60 per cent to the gross domestic product (GDP).
7. **India accounts for 6.3% of global fish production: Fisheries department**
- According to the Fisheries Department, India is the second largest fish producing country in the world as it accounts for 6.3 per cent of the global fish production.
 - China is the largest producer of fish in the world.
8. **DBS revises India GDP forecast for FY20 down to 6.8 per cent**
- DBS Bank has revised India's GDP growth for fiscal year 2020 downwards to 6.8 per cent year-on-year (YoY) from 7 per cent projected earlier, citing headwinds for exports amidst challenging trade outlook.
9. **FM chairs the 20th meeting on FSDC**
- The 20th meeting on Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was held under the chairmanship of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi.
- About FSDC**
- The FSDC was constituted in December 2010. It is apex body of sectoral regulators and not a statutory body.
 - It was set up by on the recommendation given by Raghuram Rajan Committee.
 - The council is headed by the finance minister.
 - Members – RBI Governor and SEBI Chairman, IRDAI Chairman, PFRDA Chairman as other members along with finance ministry officials.
10. **Bangladesh's first iron ore mine discovered**
- For the first time in Bangladesh, iron ore mine has been discovered at **Isabpur village in Dinajpur**.
 - The announcement was made by the Geological Survey of Bangladesh following extensive drilling over two months in the area.
11. **ICMR calls for ban on Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems** - The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommended 'complete' ban on Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), including e-cigarettes. The recommendation is based on currently available scientific evidence.
- Electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes are devices that do not burn or use tobacco leaves but instead vaporise a solution, which a user then inhales.

- The main constituents of the solution, in addition to nicotine, are propylene glycol (with or without glycerol and flavouring agents).
- 12. DCC approves levy of penalty on Airtel, Vodafone Idea** - The Digital Communications Commission (DCC), the highest decision-making body of Department of Telecom (DoT), has approved levying of penalty on Bharti Airtel Ltd. and Vodafone Idea Ltd. for denial of interconnection to Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. when the latter had entered market in 2016.
- The telecom regulator while recommended a fine for Airtel and Vodafone amounting to ₹1,050 crore each.

Digital Communications Commission

- DCC was formerly called 'Telecom Commission'. It is the top decision-making body in Department of Telecommunications (DoT), under Union Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.
- 13. Forex reserves swell by \$1.8 bn to \$421.8 bn** - The country's foreign exchange reserves increased by USD 1.875 billion to USD 421.867 billion in the week ending 31st May 2019.
- Reserve Bank weekly data released showed that foreign currency assets, which is a major component of the overall reserves, rose by USD 1.946 billion to USD 394.134 billion.
- 14. World Bank retains Growth Forecast for Indian Economy at 7.5%** - The World Bank in its Global Economic Prospects report, retained its forecast of India's growth rate at 7.5% for the current financial Year 2019/20.
- 15. Overseas investors pump over Rs 9,000 crore into Indian capital markets in May** - Overseas investors

pumped more than 9,000 crore rupees into the Indian capital markets in last month on expectations of more business-friendly measures.

- 16. CEA Krishnamurthy Subramanian appointed part-time member in IBBI** - Krishnamurthy Subramanian, Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) and B. Sriram, former managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI Bank) were appointed part-time members of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI).

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India

- IBBI, an insolvency regulatory agency was established on 1 October 2016.
 - The IBC 2016 established Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI), to oversee insolvency proceedings in India and to regulate entities registered under it.
- 17. ONGC overtakes India Oil Corp as Most Profitable PSU** - The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) overtook India Oil Corporation (IOC) by regaining crown of being India's most profitable Public Sector Undertakings (PSU).
- It is a state owned multinational oil and gas company now headquartered in Vasant Kunj, Delhi.
- 18. GST collections cross Rs 1 lakh crore mark for third straight month** - India's goods and services tax (GST) revenue collections crossed Rs 1 lakh crore for the third straight month in May to Rs 1,00,289 crore, despite the slowdown in the industrial activities.
- GST collections rose by **6.67 percent** over the revenue of Rs 94,016 crore reported in May 2018.

May 2019

1. India's Economy to grow 7.5% by 2020: OECD report

- As per the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Economic Outlook, India's economic growth will regain strength and approach 7.5% by 2020.
- As per the report, Gross domestic product (GDP) growth in India is projected to strengthen to close to 7.25% in FY19.
- Global growth is now projected to settle to 2.7 % in 2019 and 2.9 % in 2020.

2. India to Grow at 7.1% in FY'20: UN Report

- As per the report by the United Nations, India's economy is projected to grow at 7.1% in the fiscal year 2020 and projected at 7.0 per cent in 2019.
- The World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) report is published by UN.

3. FICCI survey forecasts India's GDP growth at 7.1% for FY20 - The country's median GDP is forecast at 7.10 percent for Financial Year 2020 and 7.20 percent for Financial Year 2021.

- The industry body FICCI's economic outlook survey stated that the minimum and maximum growth estimate stood at 6.80 per cent and 7.3 percent for 2019-20.

- Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation rate is projected at 3.1 percent in 2019-20, While, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation has a median forecast of 4 percent for 2019-20.
- 4. US removes India, Switzerland from its currency monitoring list** – The Trump administration removed India from its currency monitoring list of major trading partners.
 - Switzerland is the other nation that has been removed from the list. However, the list includes China, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam among others.
 - 5. India's overall exports registered positive Growth of 1.34% in April 2019** – According to the Ministry of Commerce & Industry data, India's overall exports, in April 2019 is estimated to be around 44 billion US dollars with a positive growth of 1.34% over April 2018.
 - Overall imports in April 2019 is estimated to be around 53 billion dollars with a positive growth of 4.5% over the corresponding period of 2018.
 - 6. Unemployment rate, highest in 45 years, touches 6.1%**
 - India's unemployment rate has touched a 45-year-high of 6.1 per cent.
 - The report is released by the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO's) periodic labour force survey (PLFS) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
 - The last time India saw such high unemployment rate was in 1972-73.
 - The assessment period for the data was between July 2017 and June 2018.
 - The report showed that 7.8% of all employable youth in urban areas was unemployed while the rural figure was 5.3%.
 - The unemployment rate among men across the country was 6.2%, while for women, it stood at 5.7%.
 - The joblessness among male on all India basis was 6.2 per cent, while it was 5.7 per cent in case of females.
 - 7. WPI inflation Slides to 3.07% in April** – Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation for April eased to 3.07%, from 3.62% in April 2018.
 - 8. Gujarat government has come up with a detailed plan to address the water shortage by limiting the supply of freshwater for drinking and irrigation purposes only.** While the growing demand of industries will be met through treated wastewater.
 - 9. Wirecard' to Work with India to Issue PAN Cards** – Wirecard, a German payments company announced that it would work with India to simplify the process of issuing tax identity cards (PAN Cards) which are required for opening bank accounts, transfer money and complete business transactions.
 - 10. 'Elephant Bond'** - A government-appointed high-level panel has suggested for issuance of 'Elephant Bonds' for infrastructure projects and people who are declaring undisclosed income will have to mandatorily invest half of that amount in these securities.
 - The duration of 'Elephant Bond' will be 25-years.
 - The 12-member panel headed by **economist Surjit Bhalla** was set up by Ministry of Commerce and Industries last year.
 - The panel has also recommended a road map for doubling India's exports of good and service to over USD 1,000 billion by 2025.
 - 11. Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies'** - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) launched an 'Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies' for Asia and the Pacific alongside an ADB Oceans Financing Initiative.
 - Through the Initiative, ADB commits to expand its investments and technical assistance in these areas to **USD 5 billion** between 2019 and 2024.
 - The Plan and Initiative aim to support the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems while promoting inclusive livelihoods, in line with SDG 14 (life below water).
 - 12. SBI ties up with FMCG arm of The Art of Living** – The State Bank of India (SBI) has announced a strategic partnership with the FMCG arm of The Art of Living – Sri Sri Tattva.
 - Under this partnership, YONO users can avail a discount of 15% on the entire range of products offered by Sri Sri Tattva such as food, personal care, healthcare, homeware, BYOGI apparels and Shankara skincare products.
 - 13. SIDBI launched a pilot Scheme for Fintech NBFCs** – Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has put together a pilot scheme to extend financial assistance of up to **Rs10 crore** to new-age fintech non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) engaged in financing small businesses and other income-generating activities.
What are Fintech NBFCs?
 - Fintech NBFCs are digital loan companies. They leverage information technology to provide fast and convenient access to funding. To be eligible

for funding assistance, Reserve Bank of India-registered new-age fintech NBFCs have to meet prescribed parameters, including minimum capital risk-weighted assets ratio of 15%; non-performing assets less than or equal to 4%; minimum net-owned fund (NOF) of Rs20 crore and minimum asset size of Rs50 crore; and at least two audited annual reports, positive net worth and leverage ratio within 5:1.

19. Govt to merge CSO with NSSO to create new stats

body - The government announced that the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) will be merged with the Central Statistics Office to form the National Statistical Office (NSO).

- The NSO will be headed by the secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI).
- Both the wings are currently part of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- While the NSSO comes out with various sample surveys such as on consumption expenditure, employment and unemployment, the CSO releases various data such as GDP and IIP.
- Chief Statistician of India is Pravin Srivastava.

14. Vice President calls for protecting Ongole Cattle

Breed - The Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu called for protecting and promoting the indigenous Ongole cattle breed.

- He also released a Compendium on Ongole breed of cattle at the Swarna Bharat Trust in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.

Note:

- The breed derives its name from the name of a place called 'Ongole', which occupies a small area between Gundlakamma and Musi rivers in Andhra Pradesh. It is also nicknamed as 'Nelore cattle' as Ongole was once part of the Nellore area.
- Ongole cattle are indigenous to Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh in India.
- National Kamadhenu Breeding Centre will be set up in Chintaladevi in Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh.

15. 7th Economic Census 2019 -

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) partnered with CSC e-Governance services India Ltd (CSC SPV) to conduct the census.
- The first Economic Census was undertaken in 1977. The 2nd edition was carried out in 1980 followed by 3rd EC in 1990. The 4th EC took place in 1998 while 5th EC was held in 2005. The Sixth edition of Economic Census was conducted in 2013.

Economic Census

- Economic Census is the complete count of all establishment located within the geographical boundary of India.
- It provides disaggregated information on various operational and structural variables of all establishments of the country.

16. SEBI bars NSE from securities market for 6 months:

Co-Location Case - The Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has barred National Stock Exchange (NSE) from accessing the securities market for six months and also imposed a fine of around **₹1,000 crore (that is, ₹624.89 crore plus 12% interest from April 1, 2014) on NSE in co-location case.**

Co-Location Case

- Co-location refers to system wherein a broker's server is kept in the exchange premises to reduce latency (as it directly influences the amount of time trader takes to interact with market), or delay in computing terms, while executing trades.

17. Chief Economic Advisor appointed as Advisory

Council Member in 15th Finance Commission - The Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) to Central government, Dr. Krishnamurthy Subramanian is appointed as twelfth (12) member of Advisory Council of Fifteenth (15th) Finance Commission (FCc).

Fifteenth Finance Commission

- It was constituted in November 2017, to give recommendations for tax devolution and other fiscal matter for five fiscal years, 1 April 2020- 31 March 2025.
- It is chaired by N. K. Singh.

April 2019

12. Government hikes customs duty on wheat to 40%

- The government has hiked the customs duty on wheat to 40 percent from 30 percent to curb imports and protect the domestic industry.

- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), through a notification, has hiked the basic customs duty (BCD) on wheat to 40 percent.

13. SEBI reduces minimum subscription requirement for REITs, InvITs

- Markets regulator Sebi has reduced the minimum subscription requirement as well as defined trading lots for Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs).
- REITs have to offer their units in lots worth at least ₹50,000 in initial and follow on public offers.
- The minimum value of a single lot should be ₹1 lakh in the case of InvITs.
- Markets regulator Sebi came out with guidelines for determination of allotment and trading lot size for REITs and InvITs.

Note:

- Currently, in the case of an REIT issue, the minimum subscription from any investor in an initial offer and follow-on public offer is not less than ₹2 lakh, while the same is ₹10 lakh in case of InvIT.

14. Microsoft becomes world's third company to be worth \$1 Trillion

- Microsoft is now the third U.S. company to surpass a market value of \$1 trillion, after Apple and Amazon.

15. IMF & World Bank launch Quasi-Cryptocurrency in Exploration of Blockchain Tech

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have jointly launched a private blockchain and quasi-crypto currency called as "Learning Coin".
- The new 'quasi-cryptocurrency' is intended to be used as a tool to explore how blockchain and cryptocurrencies work.
- It will only be available for use within the IMF and the World Bank.
- It has no monetary value, means it is not a true cryptocurrency.
- After the testing period, the IMF and the World Bank may use blockchain technology to create smart contracts, fight money laundering, and improve transparency.

16. Reliance retail become the first Indian retail company to cross more than Rs 1 lakh crore in annual revenues

- On 19th April 2019, Reliance retail has become the first Indian retail company to clock more than Rs 1 lakh crore in annual revenues.

- The retail venture of Reliance Industries reported an income of Rs 1,30,556 crore for 2018-19, 89% more than the previous year's Rs 69,198 crore.

17. ADB committed highest-ever \$3 bn in sovereign loans to India in 2018

- According to the annual report, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) agreed to provide a total of USD 3 billion in sovereign loans to India in 2018, which is the highest ever loan amount since sovereign operations began in the country in 1986.
- ADB committed several projects in India, including in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Odisha.

18. India becomes net steel importer in 2018-19

- Preliminary government data given to Reuters showed that India was a net importer of steel during the 2018-19 FY, the first time in three years.
- India's finished steel exports fell by 34% to 6.36 million tonnes while finished steel imports rose 4.7% to 7.84 million tonnes.
- India's steel imports increased by 1.9% to 7.29 million tonnes in April-February, the first 11 months of the current fiscal year, while exports fell by 35.3% to 5.77 million tonnes.

19. Job creation trebles in February at 8.61 lakh : EPFO payroll data

- According to the latest EPFO payroll data, Net employment generation in the formal sector almost increased to 8.61 lakh in February compared to 2.87 lakh in the same month of last year.

- During February 2019, the highest number of 2.36 lakh jobs were created in the 22-25 years age group, followed by 2.09 lakh in the 18-21 years age bracket.

20. Ministry of External Affairs sets up Indo-Pacific Wing

- The Ministry of External Affairs has set up an Indo-Pacific division in the foreign office.
- This division is the brainchild of current foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale.
- The Indo-Pacific Wing is currently headed by joint secretary Vikram Doraiswami.

21. Asian Tea Alliance launched in China

- The Asian Tea Alliance (ATA), a union of five tea-growing and consuming countries, was launched in Guizhou in China.
- The members of the alliance are the Indian Tea Association, China Tea Marketing Association,

Indonesian Tea Marketing Association, Sri Lanka Tea Board and Japan Tea Association.

- The Alliance will work towards enhancing global consumption of tea, while creating a sustainability agenda for the future of Asian tea.
- The Alliance was formed based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Indian tea Association and China tea Marketing Association in December 2018 to promote tea consumption in India, China, U.S., Russia, Europe, and West Asia.

22. Government meets fiscal deficit of 3.4% in 2018-19

- The Finance Ministry is believed to have met the revised fiscal deficit target of 3.4 per cent in the last fiscal 2018-19.
- The direct tax collections fell short by Rs 50,000 crore.

23. Unemployment in 11 states exceeds national average, shows NSSO report

- According to the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO's) annual survey, as many as 11 states had an unemployment rate higher than the pan-Indian average in 2017-18.
- As per the report, Haryana, Assam, Jharkhand, Kerala, Odisha, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh face higher unemployment rates than the national average.
- While nine states, including Kerala have been part of the list even back in 2011-12, states such as Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh have also become part of the list.
- The survey was conducted during the 2017-18 period.

24. Kanpur ranked 1st as the most polluted city

- According to the Air Quality in India 2014-2019' report, Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh is the most polluted city in the world and is ranked one on the list.
- Faridabad in Haryana has been ranked second and Varanasi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok Sabha constituency, is ranked third on the WHO's list of 15 most polluted cities.
- WHO's report states that Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh is witnessing a rise in the number of people suffering from allergies and respiratory problems due to huge amount of construction in the city.
- Delhi is ranked sixth on the list.
- Fourteen of the 15 cities, including four in Uttar Pradesh, on the World Health Organisation

(WHO) list of most polluted cities in the world are in India, it said.

- Gaya and Patna in Bihar are fourth and fifth on the list, while Delhi is sixth and Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow is seventh.

25. Airtel, FICCI Ladies Organisation launch women's safety app, My Circle

- Telecom operator Bharti Airtel and the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) launched a safety app – My Circle - aimed at aiding women in event of distress or an emergency situation, by sending an SOS alert.
- My Circle app enables women to send SOS alerts to any five of their family or friends in 13 languages including English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi, Punjabi, Bangla, Urdu, Assamese, Oriya, and Gujarati.

26. NGT imposes Rs 100-crore penalty on Andhra Pradesh govt over illegal sand mining

- A bench headed by National Green Tribunal (NGT) Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel has slapped an interim penalty of Rs 100 crore on the Andhra Pradesh government for inaction to prevent illegal sand mining in the state.
- The green panel said it is the duty of the government to provide complete protection to the natural resources as a trustee of the public at large.

27. Govt retains general provident fund interest rate at 8% for Apr-Jun quarter

- The government has retained the interest rate for General Provident Fund (GPF) and other related schemes at 8 per cent for the April-June quarter.
- The rate is in line with that of Public Provident Fund.
- The interest rate on GPF was at 8 per cent in the January-March quarter of 2018-19.

Note:

- GPF is a provident fund account where only central government employees are entitled to be a member and those specific government employees are allowed to contribute a part of their salary and are entitled to the lump sum fund at the time of retirement

28. India's population grew at 1.2 % average annual rate between 2010 and 2019: UN report

- According to a report by the United Nations Population Fund, India's population grew at an average annual rate of 1.2 per cent between

2010 and 2019 to 1.36 billion, more than double the annual growth rate of China.

- India's population in 2019 stood at 1.36 billion, growing from 942.2 million in 1994 and 541.5 million in 1969.
- India's population grew at average annual rate of 1.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019, the UN sexual and reproductive health agency said in the State of World Population 2019 report.
- According to the report, in India, total fertility rate per woman was 5.6 in 1969, dropping to 3.7 in 1994 and 2.3 in 2019.
- India's population composition in 2019, the report said 27 % of the country's population was in the age bracket of 0-14 years and 10-24 years each, while 67 % of the country's population was in the 15-64 age bracket.
- Six per cent of the country's population was of the age 65 and above.

29. Airtel confirms it has received conditional nod for merger with TTSL

- Bharti Airtel has confirmed that it has received in-principal approval from the telecom department for merger with Tata Teleservices (TTSL).
- For Airtel, the merger will bring in an additional 178.5 MHz of spectrum in three bands that are widely used for 4G, an area in which the Mittal-led company is expanding to keep pace with Reliance Jio Infocomm.

30. PayU acquires digital financial security firm Wibmo for USD 70 mn

- Digital payments facilitator PayU has acquired US-based financial technology firm Wibmo for USD 70 million (about Rs 484 crore), that will help the company scale-up its business.
- Wibmo, a digital payment security and mobile payment technologies firm, will continue to operate and serve all of its clients as a wholly-owned subsidiary of PayU.

31. Hong Kong's stock market overtakes Japan to be world's third largest

- Hong Kong's stock market has overtaken Japan to become the world's third most valuable, behind only the US and China.'
- According to Bloomberg data, the market value of the companies listed in Hong Kong stood at \$5.78 trillion, overtaking Japan's \$5.76 trillion tally for the first time since 2015.

32. India's steel demand to grow by over 7% in FY19, FY20

- As per the Indian Steel Association India's steel demand is likely to grow by over 7 percent in 2019 and 2020, driven by sectors like construction, capital goods and railways.
- "The Indian Steel Association has forecast India's steel demand to grow by 7.1 percent in the calendar year 2019 and by 7.2 percent in the calendar year 2020.
- The World Steel Association had recently estimated steel demand in India to touch 103 million tonnes in 2019, against 96 million tonnes logged in 2018 and 110 million tonnes in 2020.

33. Fitch keeps India rating at 'BBB-' with stable outlook

- Global rating agency Fitch Ratings kept India's sovereign rating unchanged at the lowest investment grade of 'BBB-' with a stable outlook.
- This is the 13th year in a row that Fitch has rated India at 'BBB-'. Fitch had last upgraded the rating from 'BB+' to 'BBB-' with a stable outlook on August 1, 2006.

34. NIIF-Roadis to set up platform to invest in Road Projects

- The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) and global transport infrastructure operator Roadis will jointly set up a platform to invest up to **\$2 billion** of equity in road projects in India.
- The platform would target toll-operate-transfer models and acquisitions of existing road concessions.

Note:

- Roadis is a fully owned subsidiary of the Public Sector Pension Investment Board which is one of Canada's largest pension funds.

35. GST revenue touches record high of 1.06-lakh crore in March: FinMin

- GST collections for March have hit a record high of over ₹1.06 lakh-crore.
- GST revenue in March 2019 grew 15.6 per cent year-on-year. The revenue for the March 2019 quarter was 14.3 per cent higher YoY.
- The monthly average of GST revenue during FY19 was ₹98,114 crore, 9.2 per cent higher than FY18.

36. Paytm Money receives Sebi approval to start stock broking services

- Paytm Money, the investment and wealth management arm of mobile payment platform Paytm, has received approval from securities and capital markets regulator Sebi (Securities & Exchange Board of India) to start stock broking services.

37. CCI approves L&T's proposal to acquire up to 66.15% stake in Mindtree

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) on April 05, approved engineering and construction major Larsen & Toubro's (L&T's) proposal to acquire up to 66.15 per cent stake in Mindtree.

38. Reliance Mutual Fund customers can now carry out voice-based transactions

- The Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management (RNAM) has partnered with internet major-Google, enabling the customers of Reliance Mutual Fund to carry out voice-based financial transactions.
- This is a first of its type endeavour in India.

39. Manipur's Phayeng Village Receives India's First Carbon Positive Tag

- A small village, Phayeng, in the North Eastern state of Manipur, has been tagged as India's first carbon-positive settlement.
- It is a first of its kind project in the South Asian country.
- The transformation was done using funds under National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC), a central scheme to support adaptation to climate change impact in various states.
- A village is given the tag of carbon-positive settlement if it cuts off more carbon than it emits to reduce formation of greenhouse gases and mitigate the effects of climate change.

March 2019

1. India's April-February fiscal deficit at 134% of FY target: Govt data

- According to the government data, India's April-February fiscal deficit touched Rs 8.51 trillion (\$123.07 billion), or 134.2 per cent of the budgeted target for the current fiscal year.
- The fiscal deficit for April-February 2018-19 stood at Rs 8.51 lakh crore against the revised estimate (RE) of Rs 6.34 trillion for the entire year.

2. India to be among top-10 media markets by 2021: Study

- According to a joint study by ASSOCHAM-PwC, India is expected to be among the top-10 entertainment and media markets globally by 2021 in terms of absolute numbers.
- The country's per capita media and entertainment spending is likely to be capped at \$32 or Rs 2,080 by 2021.

3. Small savings schemes' interest rates to remain unchanged for Apr-Jun quarter

- According to a government notification, interest rates on small saving schemes such as National Savings Certificate and Public Provident Fund will remain unchanged for the April-June quarter.
- Interest rates on small savings schemes is reset before each quarter and depends on government bond yields in the previous quarter.

Interest rate on Small savings scheme is as follows-

- Public Provident Fund and the National Savings Certificate - 8%.

- Kisan Vikas Patra - 7.7%
- The interest rate for the five-year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme - 8.7%
- Saving deposit - 4%
- Sukanya Samridhi Yojana - 8.5%
- Term deposits of 1-5 years will yield an interest rate in the range of 7-7.8%.

Note:

- Based on the recommendations of the Shyamala Gopinath panel, interest rates on these schemes are reviewed before the end of every quarter, and accordingly, new rates are announced for the next quarter.

4. Govt notifies new accounting standard on leases; effective from April 1

- According to the government sources; the government has notified a new accounting standard Ind AS 116 that will bring in more transparency in recognition and disclosures about leases in companies' balance sheets.
- The Indian Accounting Standard (Ind AS) 116 is expected to have a significant impact on various industries, including aviation where airlines mostly operate planes on lease.
- **Ind AS 116** — to be effective from April 1 — sets out the principles for recognition, presentation and disclosure of leases. It has been notified by the **Corporate Affairs Ministry**.
- Ind AS 116 is the equivalent of IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) 116.

5. India has highest number of poor despite 27 crores moving out of poverty in 10 years: MPI report

- The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2018 Report was recently published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.
- The MPI provides data about “who is poor” and “how they are poor”.

India's progress

- According to the report; India has reduced its poverty rate drastically from 55% to 28% in 10 years, with 271 million people moving out of poverty between 2005-06 and 2015-16.
- However, India still had 364 million poor in 2015-16, the largest for any country, although it is down from 635 million in 2005-06.

State-wise Report

- Bihar was the poorest state in 2015-16, with more than half its population in poverty.
- The four poorest states — Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh — were still home to 196 million MPI poor people, which was over half of all the MPI poor people in India.
- At the other end, Kerala, one of the least poor regions in 2006, reduced its MPI by around 92%.

6. 34th GST Council meeting held in New Delhi

- On 19th March 2019, Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley chaired 34th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax Council in New Delhi.
- The tax rate for under construction flats slashed to 5% and affordable homes to 1% without input tax credit (ITC) by the GST Council.
- Currently 12% GST is levied with input tax credit on payments made for under construction properties.

7. Bank of England recognized Metropolitan Clearing Corporation of India Ltd (MCCIL) as a Third-Country Central Counterparty (TC-CCP)

- Metropolitan Clearing Corporation of India Ltd (MCCIL) has become the first clearing corporation in India to receive recognition as a Third-Country Central Counterparty (TC-CCP) by Bank of England for offering various clearing services to UK-based entities.
- The recognition has been granted under United Kingdom's Temporary Recognition Regime (TRR).

Metropolitan Clearing Corporation of India Ltd

- It is a subsidiary of Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Ltd. (MSE) recognised by SEBI as clearing

corporation and started its operations on 16th February 2009.

8. India sets 'aspirational' target for engineering exports at \$200 billion by 2025

- Raising the bar, India has set an aspirational target of \$200 billion by 2025 for engineering exports, following a road map suggested by an EEPC India-Deloitte strategy paper, based on inputs from the Commerce Ministry and the industry.
- Engineering exports, which contribute 25% of India's total export basket are projected at \$80-82 billion in the current financial year ending March 31, according to EEPC India Chairman Ravi Sehgal.

9. India Energy Modelling Forum

- Niti Ayog in association with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) organized the first workshop on the development of the India Energy Modelling Forum (IEMF).
- The workshop was organized under the Sustainable Growth Pillar of the India-U.S. Strategic Energy Partnership.
- **Under the Strategic Partnership, the United States and India will pursue four primary pillars of cooperation:**
 - Oil and Gas
 - Power and Energy Efficiency
 - Renewable Energy and Sustainable Growth
 - Coal

10. SpiceJet becomes first Indian low-cost airline to join IATA

- SpiceJet has joined global airlines' grouping International Air Transport Association (IATA) as a member, becoming the first Indian low-cost carrier to get the membership.
- The IATA represents more than 290 airlines, including Air India, Jet Airways and Vistara.

11. Industrial production growth slows to 1.7% in January 2019

- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has released the data for the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for the month of January.
- The IIP data shows that: - Industrial output growth stood at 1.7 per cent in January against the 2.6% growth recorded in December 2018.
- The CSO has revised the industrial production growth for December 2018 has been revised upwards from 2.4% to 2.6%.

Note:

- Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is a composite indicator that measures the changes in the volume of production of a basket of industrial products during a given period with respect to the volume of production in a chosen base period.
- The base year for the IIP is **2011-12**.

12. Infosys to open innovation hub in Romania

- Infosys will be opening a new digital innovation centre in Bucharest, Romania, that would focus on developing offerings for clients based on cutting-edge digital technologies including cloud, big data, artificial intelligence and machine learning.

13. Income tax exemption limit on gratuity doubled to Rs 20 lakh

- According to the labour ministry the income tax exemption limit on gratuity has been doubled to Rs 20 lakh from the existing Rs 10 lakh, a move that will benefit employees who are not covered by the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972.
- "Ministry of Finance has enhanced the income tax exemption for **gratuity under Section 10 (10) (iii)** of the Income Tax Act, 1961 to Rs 20 lakhs.
- The Payment of Gratuity Act 1972 makes it mandatory for the employers to pay their employees gratuity at the time of quitting, provided certain conditions were met.

14. Only 61 individuals declared gross income of over Rs 100 crore in AY2017-18 –

- There were only 61 individuals who declared an income of more than Rs 100 crore during assessment year 2017-18.
- This information was provided by Minister of State for Finance Pon Radhakrishnan to the Lok Sabha.

15. NHPC to acquire Lanco Teesta Hydro Power Ltd (LTHPL)

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the acquisition of debt-laden Lanco's 500 MW Teesta hydro-electric power project in Sikkim by state-owned NHPC.
- NHPC will take over debt-laden Lanco's 500 MW Teesta hydro-electric power project for Rs 907 crore in Sikkim.

Note:

- Teesta Stage-VI Hydro Electric Project is a Run of River (RoR) project in Sirwani Village of Sikkim to utilize the power potential of Teesta River Basin in a cascade manner.

16. MSME sector created most jobs in last four years: Survey

- According to a survey by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), among all the sectors, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) was the largest job creator in the last four years – with growth of 13.9 per cent.
- The report titled 'Survey on Jobs Creation and Outlook in MSME Sector' said hospitality and tourism, followed by textiles and apparel, and metal products were the other top job-creating sectors in this period.
- Top States - Maharashtra, Gujarat and Telangana were the largest job generators.
- The survey focussed on jobs creation, ease of filling up vacancies, and impact of government initiatives on jobs creation in the report.

17. Life insurers register 33% growth in new premium income at Rs 18,209 cr in February, IRDAI data shows

- According to Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) data, India's life insurance industry witnessed a rise of 32.7 percent in its collective new premium income at Rs 18,209.50 crore during February 2019.
- The life insurers had collected first-time premium worth Rs 13,724.96 crore in same month a year ago.
- LIC, which has the largest market share of 66.26 percent, registered a growth of 42.2 percent in its new year premium at Rs 12,055.81 crore during the month.

18. OECD reduced the world economic growth forecasts for the year 2019

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has reduced its 2019 forecast for global economic growth to 3.3% for the current year, down from 3.5% it predicted earlier.

19. US withdrawal of GSP benefit from India

- The US decision to withdraw duty benefits on Indian products under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) programme will not have a significant impact on exports to America, a top government official said.
- India exports goods worth **USD 5.6 billion under the GSP**, and the duty benefit is only USD 190 million annually, Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan said.

- The withdrawal will become applicable after 60 days of the issue of a notification on the same and would affect India-US trade.

What is GSP?

- Normally, developed countries offer import duty sops to underdeveloped and developing ones for import of goods. These incentives are not available to other developed countries from whom the goods are being sourced.
- Such a system of preferential treatment to developing countries is known as generalized system of preferences (GSP) in trade parlance.

Background

- GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) was introduced in 1976 as a US trade preference programme to promote economic development by allowing duty-free entry for thousands of products from designated beneficiary countries — both developing and developed.

20. India Q3 GDP growth moderates to 6.6%, slowest in 5 quarters

- According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) data, India's economic growth slowed to a 5-quarter low of 6.6 per cent in October-December period of this fiscal.
- The CSO revised downward its GDP growth forecast for 2018-19 to 7% from 7.2% projected earlier.

21. PSBloansin59minutes.com emerges largest Fintech lending platform

- According to a report by global financial firm, Credit Suisse, web portal **PSBloansin59minutes.com**, launched has emerged as the country's largest online lending platform, with loan sanctions exceeding over Rs 35,000 crore.
- The portal was launched by PM Narendra Modi in November 2018 in a bid to make banking transparent and hassle-free.

Key points

- The portal provides credit up to Rs 1 crore to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in just 59 minutes or less than an hour.
- Upon approval, the loan is disbursed in 7-8 working days.

22. Govt Relaxes Norms, Investment limit for Angel Tax Concession to Startups

- In a major boost to budding entrepreneurs, the government raised the investment limit for angel tax exemption to **Rs 25 crore** and extended the

period of availing benefits to 10 years for startups.

- Earlier, the investment limit for a startup to seek exemption under section 56(2)(viib) of Income Tax Act, 1961 was Rs 10 crore and they were permitted to avail the benefits for seven years.
- According to the notification issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), an entity would be considered as a startup up to a turnover of **Rs 100 crore as against the earlier limit of Rs 25 crore.**

23. NGT slaps Rs 500 crore fine on Volkswagen

- The National Green Tribunal on 07 March 2019, slapped a fine of Rs 500 crore on German auto major Volkswagen for damaging the environment through the use of "cheat device" in its diesel cars in India.
- A bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the carmaker to deposit the amount within two months.

24. PM inaugurates IOC's Ennore LNG terminal

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 06 March 2019, inaugurated Indian Oil Corp's Rs 5,150 crore LNG import terminal at the Kamarajar port in Ennore, Tamil Nadu.
- The Ennore terminal is the first LNG terminal on the east coast in South India that will serve customers in the southern and eastern region.

25. Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE)

Index Report

- The Indian Banks Association (IBA) organized its conference on 'Reforms Journey for EASE in Public Sector Banks (PSBs) in New Delhi.
- EASE index is prepared by the Indian Banking Association (IBA) and Boston Consulting Group.
- It is commissioned by the Finance Ministry.
- The report shows visible progress made on each of 4 elements of Government's 4R's strategy including **recognition, recovery, recapitalisation and reforms.**

Award

- Punjab National Bank has been ranked first among public sector banks in the implementation of 'reforms agenda', followed by Bank of Baroda and State Bank of India.
- Punjab National Bank with a score of 78.4 out of 100 has been ranked first under the theme of EASE (Enhanced Access & Service Excellence).

- PNB is followed by BoB (77.8), SBI (74.6), Oriental Bank of Commerce (69), Canara Bank (67.5) and Syndicate Bank (67.1).
- Sunil Mehta, the Managing Director and CEO, of PNB, received the award.

Banking & Financial Awareness

June 2019

- 1. Canara Bank updates rules for cash deposits of up to Rs 50,000** – From July 1, Canara Bank customers can deposit cash of up to Rs 50,000 for free only thrice a month.
 - From the fourth transaction or for cash deposits of over Rs 50,000, there will be a service charge of Rs 1 per thousand, with a minimum of Rs 50 and a maximum of Rs 5,000 plus GST.
- 2. Jammu and Kashmir Bank now under RTI, CVC guidelines** – The Jammu and Kashmir Bank will now come under the purview of Right to Information Act and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) guidelines as per the decisions taken by the Board of Directors of the Jammu and Kashmir Bank to ensure greater transparency and accountability.
 - J&K Bank Interim Chairman: R K Chibber
 - Headquarters: Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir
- 3. Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the merger of the Indiabulls Housing Finance and Lakshmi Vilas Bank.**
 - **MD & CEO of Lakshmi Vilas Bank:** Parthasarathi Mukherjee.
- 4. IndusInd Bank-Bharat Financial merger to be effective from July 4**
 - IndusInd Bank and Bharat Financial Inclusion Ltd (BFIL) said their merger will be effective from July 4.
 - National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved the merger of private sector lender IndusInd Bank with Bharat Financial Inclusion (BFIL), a microfinance company.
 - Now Bharat Financial will become a subsidiary of IndusInd Bank.

Note:

- IndusInd Bank Headquarter: Mumbai, CEO: Romesh Sobti.
- NCLT Headquarter: New Delhi.

May 2019

- 1. NABARD Announces Rs700-cr Venture Capital Fund for Agriculture, Rural Startups** –
 - The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced **Rs 700-crore** venture capital fund for equity investments in agriculture and rural-focused startups.
 - NABARD has been contributing to other funds till now and this is the first time that the rural development bank has launched a fund of its own.
 - The fund has been launched by **Nabventures, a subsidiary of NABARD**, and has a proposed corpus of Rs 500 crore with an option to retain over-subscription of **Rs 200 crore**, called as the greenshoe option.
 - NABARD Chairman- Harsh Kumar Bhanwala, Headquarters- Mumbai, Established on- 12 July 1982.
 - NABARD is now 100% owned by the government.
- 2. Corporation Bank launches loan scheme for MSME sector** – Corporation Bank has launched ‘SMESuvidha’ scheme to provide loans to the GST-registered MSMEs at affordable interest rates.
 - Headquarters of Corporation Bank is in Mangaluru.
 - PV Bharathi is Managing Director and CEO of Corporation Bank.
- 3. Indian Overseas Bank launches ‘Bank on Wheels’ facility** – Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has announced that it has launched ‘Bank on Wheels’ facility in 14 of its

lead districts in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, besides Vijayawada.

4. **India Ratings downgrades Yes Bank with Negative Outlook** – India Ratings has downgraded the YES bank's long-term rating to 'IND AA-' with a negative outlook, while reaffirming short-term rating. ICRA has also downgraded the long-term ratings of the lender.
5. **Bharti AXA Ties Up with Wishfin to offer policies via WhatsApp** – Bharti AXA General Insurance, a private

non-life insurer, has tied up with financial marketplace Wishfin's insurance arm Wishpolicy, to offer two-wheeler insurance to customers via WhatsApp.

6. **LIC HFL launches Udyam Centre in Bengaluru** – LIC Housing Finance (LIC HFL) has launched 'Udyam', a skilling center in Bengaluru. It was launched in association with Lok Bharti Education Society, the implementing partner.

April 2019

1. Government raises authorised capital of Allahabad Bank to ₹8,000 crore

- The central government after consultation with the Reserve Bank of India has increased the authorised capital of the Allahabad Bank from ₹3,000 crore to ₹8,000 crore.
- The government has increased the authorised capital of the Allahabad Bank by ₹5,000 crore to ₹8,000 crore.

Note:

- The headquarters of Allahabad Bank is in Kolkata.
- SS Mallikarjuna Rao is the current MD & CEO of Allahabad Bank.

2. Kotak Bank launches debit card-based e-mandate on NPCI's API platform

- Kotak Mahindra Bank (Kotak) has launched the first debit card-based authentication solution on NPCI's (National Payments Corporation of India) e-Mandate (electronic mandate) API (Application Program Interface) platform.
- With this, it has become the first ever Destination Bank to go live with both Net Banking and Debit Card-based e-mandate authentication.

Note:

- Uday Kotak is current MD & CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank.
- Its headquarters is in Mumbai.
- e-NACH: Electronic National Automated Clearing House; OTP: One Time Password.

3. SBI launches Green Car Loan

- State Bank of India launched the country's first 'Green Car Loan' (Electric Vehicle) to encourage customers to buy electric vehicles.
- The new scheme will offer loan at 20 basis points lesser than the interest rate on the existing car loan schemes.
- The scheme comes with the longest repayment period of up to 8 years.

- The loan is offered with zero processing fee for the first 6 months of the launch.

Note:

- SBI along with Wipro joined the Climate Group's EV100 initiative for enhancing the launch of electric vehicles worldwide.
- SBI has already notified 100% migration to EVs (Electric Vehicles) by 2030 in order to decrease carbon footprints, thus being in line with the government's pledge of ensuring 30% EVs on road by 2030.

4. SBI General launches cyber defence insurance for businesses

- SBI General Insurance has launched a product – cyber defence insurance to protect businesses from financial and reputational losses due to cyber attacks. This offers protection against the growing threat of cyber breaches.
- It is designed to protect against major insurable cyber exposures like hacking attacks, identity theft, disclosure of sensitive information and business interruption.

5. Bajaj Allianz launches Total Health Secure Goal plan

- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance in collaboration with Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance launched their first product 'Total Health Secure Goal'.
- The new insurance product is a combination of two existing plans - Health Guard policy by Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, and iSecure from Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance.
- Under Health Guard policy, a customer can choose the option between a Silver or a Gold Plan with an insured sum ranging from Rs 1.5 lakh to Rs 50 Lakh.

6. Canara Bank, life insurance arm launch 'Webassurance'

- Canara Bank and its life insurance partner Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance Saturday announced the launch of 'Webassurance'.
- Four life insurance products of Canara HSBC OBC Life would be made available to customers of Canara Bank, covering the key needs of child future, savings and investments, retirement planning and protection.

Note:

- **Canara HSBC OBC Life** is jointly owned by two public sector banks - Canara Bank (51 per cent) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (23 per cent) and HSBC Insurance Holdings (26 per cent), the Asian insurance arm of banking and financial services groups HSBC.

7. Bajaj Finserv launches industry first proposition to pay electricity bill on EMIs

- Bajaj Finserv through its lending arm Bajaj Finance Ltd. has launched a unique proposition through its campaign #BijliOnEMI wherein customers buying air-conditioners on EMI can avail an Insta Credit loan in their Bajaj Finserv Wallet which they can use to pay their electricity bills on EMI.
- The campaign is aimed to help their customers finance the high electricity bills that may arise due to extensive usage of conditioners during summer.

8. Airtel Payments Bank partners with Bharti AXA General Insurance for two-wheeler insurance

- Airtel Payments Bank announced it has partnered with Bharti AXA General Insurance for a two-wheeler insurance product offering.

9. Canara Bank becomes the first public sector bank in India to meet RBI's EMV mandate

- The Reserve Bank of India had mandated all banks to migrate the magnetic strip based ATM/Debit cards to EMV chip-and-PIN payment cards by December 31, 2018.
- In this direction, Canara Bank in association with ACI Worldwide has announced that Canara Bank has successfully rolled out major new functionality for this, to support EMV card across its ATM network.
- With this Canara Bank has become the first Public Sector bank to meet RBI's EMV mandate.

Note:

- Canara Bank has around 6,300 branches and more than 10,000 ATMs.

- The headquarters of Canara Bank is in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

10. IDRBT Sets Up 5G Lab for Banking, Financial Sector

- The Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT), has launched a 5G Use Cases Lab for banking and financial sector.
- The 5G lab will develop and domesticate 5G use cases and set up a research and development experience platform for banking and financial services.

Note:

- IDRBT is established by the Reserve Bank of India in 1996, the institution works at the intersection of banking and technology.
- IDRBT headquarters is in Hyderabad.

11. IDBI Bank launches 'NRI-Insta-Online' Paperless Account Facility

- IDBI Bank has launched 'NRI-Insta-Online' account opening process for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) residing in Financial Action Task Force (FATF) member countries.

Note:

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was established in July 1989 by a Group of Seven (G-7) Summit in Paris.
- FATF is an inter-governmental body which devices policy and sets standards to promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
- The body has 38 member countries, including the US, UK, India, Japan, China and France, among others.
- FATF headquarters is in Paris, France.

12. Bandhan Bank gets CCI nod for merger with Gruh Finance

- Bandhan Bank has received approval from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for the proposed scheme of amalgamation of Gruh Finance with the bank.
- Gruh Finance, the affordable housing finance arm of HDFC Ltd, was taken over in January by Bandhan Bank in a share-swap deal.

About Bandhan Bank

- Bandhan Bank started as a micro-finance company in 2001.
- Bank received banking licence by Reserve Bank of India in 2014.
- The headquarters is in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Chandra Shekhar Ghosh is the Founder and MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank.

- Tagline – **Aapka Bhalai, Sabki Bhalai.**

13. Non-life insurers witness 13% rise in premium:

IRDAI report

- According to the IRDAI data, Non-life insurance firms registered a rise of 13 per cent in their collective premium income to Rs 1.70 lakh crore in the financial year ended March.

14. Indiabulls General Insurance gets preliminary nod from IRDAI

- Indiabulls General Insurance, a subsidiary of Indiabulls Integrated Services said it has received preliminary approval from regulator Irdai to foray into non-life business.

15. HDFC best bank in India: Forbes

- HDFC Bank emerged as the country's top bank as per the Forbes magazines' 'World's Best Bank' survey.
- After HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank took the second spot, while DBS was at the third rank in Forbes list of Indian banks.
- Forbes has compiled a first-ever list of the World's Best Bank 2019 in terms of customer services and technological advancements.
- India's largest public sector bank, the State Bank of India (SBI), did not even make it to top 10 of the list and was ranked 11th by the customers.
- Interestingly, Kotak Mahindra Bank and IDFC Bank had managed to gain the fourth and fifth spot respectively.
- Syndicate Bank, PNB, Allahabad Bank, Vijaya Bank and Axis Bank were ranked from sixth to tenth respectively.
- On the other hand, the country's second largest public sector bank, Bank of Baroda (BoB) was ranked 16th and was followed by Paytm Payments Bank.
- Canara Bank was placed at the 30th position by customers.
- Forbes had partnered with Statista, a market research company, to measure the best banks in 23 countries.
- The banks were rated on the basis of 5 key attributes - trust, digital services, financial advice and fees.

16. LIC gets 12 years from RBI to cut stake in IDBI Bank, says report

- According to the report, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) 12 years to reduce its stake by 10 percent in IDBI Bank.

- RBI has stipulated that after 12 years LIC has to reduce stake in IDBI Bank by 10 percent to 40 percent.
- LIC has 51 percent controlling stake in the bank, making the insurer the lender's majority shareholder.
- The government is the other major investor in IDBI Bank owning 46.46 per cent while the rest is with the public.

17. Emirates Islamic becomes world's first Islamic bank to launch banking via WhatsApp

- Emirates Islamic has announced the launch of Chat Banking services for customers via WhatsApp.
- With this Emirates Islamic became the first bank in the Islamic banking sector to provide such service.
- The bank's customers will now able to conduct daily banking activities via WhatsApp in a seamless and hassle-free manner.

Note:

- Emirates Islamic formerly known as Emirates Islamic Bank was launched in 2004.
- The headquarters is located in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- The bank was established to deliver banking services in line with Shari'a principles

18. SBI inks co-origination loan pact with Paisalo Digital Ltd

- With a vision to empower Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and small businesses, PAISALO Digital Limited signed the first co-origination loan agreement with State Bank of India (SBI).
- Introducing a platform for the last mile customer, the loan ticket is designed at Rs 10,000 to 2 lakh.
- The company expects to disburse 200,000 loan applications in FY20.
- PAISALO Digital Limited operates business in various states including Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Bihar.
- The company serves customers with 118 branches in rural areas, serviced by a team of persons over 1500.

Note:

- PAISALO Digital Limited is a systemically important non-deposit taking NBFC registered

with the Reserve Bank of India and has been in operations since 1992.

19. RBL Bank ties up with CreditVidya for improving customer experience

- RBL Bank has partnered with credit profiler CreditVidya to improve and boost the bank's customer experience.
- This in turn will allow it to improve user experience and build customised offerings for over 15 lakh customers, the bank said.
- "RBL Bank will leverage CreditVidya's big data underwriting platform across its credit card and mobile banking apps," the lender said.
- According to data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi),

20. HDFC MF surpasses ICICI Prudential to become India's top asset manager

- According to data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi), HDFC Mutual Fund has piped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company.
- As of December-end, HDFC MF manages assets to the tune of Rs 3.35 trillion, while those of ICICI Prudential MF stood at Rs 3.08 trillion.
- SBI Asset Management Co. Ltd climbed two places from the fifth to the third spot with an AUM of ₹2.83 trillion.

Top 5 asset management company in India:

- HDFC Asset Management, ICICI Prudential Asset Management, SBI Asset Management, Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management, Reliance Nippon Asset Management.

21. Bank of Baroda becomes second largest PSU bank after SBI

- On April 1, 2019 Bank of Baroda (BoB) became the second largest state-owned lender after merging Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank into itself as part of the first three-way amalgamation.
- Government has also infused Rs 5,042 crore into Bank of Baroda by way of preferential allotment of equity shares.
- Centre's shareholding in the merged entity is 65.7%.
- BoB now has over 9,500 branches, 13,400 ATMs, 85,000 employees to serve 12 crore customers.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had said that branches of Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank would function as BoB outlets from April following the amalgamation.

- The bank will have a business mix of Rs 15 lakh crore of balance sheet, with deposits and advances of Rs 8.75 lakh crore and Rs 6.25 lakh crore, respectively.

22. Kotak Mahindra Bank first lender to charge for UPI use

- Kotak Mahindra Bank (Kotak) stated that it will charge customers for UPI transactions starting 1st of May 2019
- For each Kotak Bank account, the first 30 UPI fund transfers will be free, after which a charge will be levied on all fund transfers from the bank account.
- This will be applicable across all platforms, including Paytm, PhonePe, Google Pay or Truecaller Pay among others.
- The bank will charge Rs 2.50 per transaction for an amount value below or equal to Rs 1,000, and Rs 5 per transaction will be levied for a payment value above Rs 1,000.

23. Lakshmi Vilas Bank board approves merger with Indiabulls Housing Finance

- The board of The Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd. has approved a scheme of amalgamation with Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd.
- Under the scheme of amalgamation, shareholders of Lakshmi Vilas Bank will receive 0.14 equity share worth Rs 2 each of Indiabulls Housing Finance for every one share of Rs 10 each they hold. This means for every 100 shares of LVB, shareholders will get 14 shares of Indiabulls Housing Finance.
- The merged entity will be "amongst the top eight private banks in India by size and profitability", with a net worth of Rs 19,472 crore, a loan book of Rs 1.23 lakh crore, and a combined workforce of 14,302 employees.

24. NPCI cuts UPI usage fees to promote wider adoption

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), which runs the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) network, has slashed usage fees for small transactions to expand the system's adoption among banks and payment service providers (PSPs).
- For UPI transactions up to ₹1,000, the charge has been cut to 10 paise from 25 paise.
- The charge for transactions above ₹1,000 has been retained at 50 paise.

Note:

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.
- The NPCI (Founded in 2008) is a not-for-profit organisation registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013.

25. In a first, SEBI gives nod to Rs 10,000 crore 'Airport Fund'

- For the first time SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) has approved an "airport' specific fund".

- The name of the fund is "Taking Off To the Future Airport Fund". It can raise a capital amounting to 1.5\$bn (Rs. 10,000 crore).
- The fund has been approved by SEBI under "Category II Alternate Investment Fund".
- A minimum capital contribution of Rs. 3500 crore and a maximum of Rs. 7000 crore is targeted by the fund.
- India is presently the third largest aviation market in the world.

March 2019

1. BoB set to develop digital agri platform 'Baroda Kisan' for farmers

- Bank of Baroda has signed a memorandum of understanding with agriculture services companies to develop an agriculture digital platform, **Baroda Kisan**, which will provide solutions for agricultural requirements.
- The initiative is being executed by **ITCoE of Bank of Baroda, in partnership with IBM India**.
- The platform intends to make a holistic approach towards solving agricultural plights by means of providing reliable and customised information, inputs for use, convenience of renting farm equipment, and market linkage for sale of agriculture produce.

2. PNB inks pacts to sell 13% in housing arm for ₹1,852 crore

- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has sold 13.01 per cent stake in PNB Housing Ltd (PNBHF) to General Atlantic Group and VardePartners for ₹1851.60 crore at ₹850 per share.
- After the transaction, Punjab National Bank will continue to hold a strategic stake of 19.78% in the housing finance company and will remain the promoter and strategic shareholder of the company, the lender informed the stock exchanges.

3. IDBI Bank receives nod to handle import, exports transactions with Iran: Sources

- The IDBI Bank has received government approval to handle import and export transactions with Iran.
- This move would help in promoting two-way trade amid US sanctions on the Persian Gulf nation.

- IDBI Bank has been identified to route the payments.
- Iran is India's third-largest oil supplier after Iraq and Saudi Arabia.
- IDBI Bank has been identified to route the payments. UCO Bank had in the previous round of sanctions handled rupee payments.

4. ICICI Pru Mutual Fund launches Bharat Consumption Scheme

- On 26th March 2019, ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund launched ICICI Prudential Bharat Consumption Scheme to get advantage from the Indian consumption market, which is considered as one of the fastest growing consumption markets globally.
- Nifty India Consumption Index is the benchmark for the Scheme.
- It will be managed by Rajat Chandak, Dharmesh Kakkad and Priyanka Khandelwal will manage the overseas investments.
- The offer will open on 26th March and close on 9th April 2019.

Features of this scheme are:

- Minimum investment of this scheme is Rs 5,000 and in multiples of one rupee thereafter.
- Penalty for leaving the scheme is 1 percent if investments are redeemed within 12 months from the date of allotment.

5. Tamil Nadu banks to amalgamate

- Indian Bank, said the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, has issued a notification for amalgamation of Pallavan Grama Bank (sponsored by Indian Bank) and Pandyan Grama Bank (sponsored by Indian Overseas Bank) in Tamil Nadu into a single Regional Rural Bank.

- The new bank will be called **Tamil Nadu Grama Bank**, with its head office at Salem, under the sponsorship of Indian Bank.

6. ICICI Bank launches two instantaneous home loan facilities

- Private sector lender ICICI Bank announced the launch of two instantaneous home loan facilities, one of which would enable instant and paperless home loan approval of up to ₹1 crore.
- The '**Instant Home Loan**' service enables pre-approved salaried customers of the bank to avail final sanction letter digitally and instantly for loans up to ₹1 crore for a tenure of up to 30 years (based on the age of the customer) using internet banking facility.
- The 'Insta Top Up Loan' initiative would enable existing home loan customers of the bank to avail the facility of topping up their loan immediately up to ₹20 lakh for a tenure up to 10 years, in a completely digital and paperless manner.

7. India posts highest growth in patent applications in WIPO during 2018

- On 19th March 2019, India registered the highest growth of 27% among countries in patent applications in 2018 with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
- India filed 2013 international patent applications during the year.
- In the volume of patent filings, India fall below China and the US. China is expected to overtake the US as the leading hub for global innovation as per WIPO.

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

- WIPO was created in 1967 "to encourage creative activity, to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world".
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

8. J&K Bank to sell a stake in PNB Metlife for ₹ 185 cr

- Jammu and Kashmir Bank said it proposes to sell its stake in PNB Metlife India to private equity player Oman India Joint Investment Fund II for ₹ 185 crore.
- According to the J&K Bank, bank has executed share purchase agreement with Oman India Joint Investment Fund II for sale of 4.1 crore shares of PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Ltd.
- Jammu and Kashmir Bank holds 5 per cent stake in the insurance venture.

Note:

- PNB MetLife India Insurance is a joint venture between MetLife International Holdings Inc,

Punjab National Bank, Jammu and Kashmir Bank, M Pallonji and Company Pvt Ltd and other private investors.

9. Avenue India joins as new sponsor shareholder of Arcil

- Asset Reconstruction Company (India) (Arcil) announced Avenue India Resurgence Pte Ltd as its new sponsor shareholder following completion of the secondary purchase from a few existing shareholders.
- Avenue India is an arm of the New York-headquartered global investment firm, Avenue Capital Group.
- In November 2018, Avenue reportedly acquired a 27 per cent stake in Arcil.

10. Aviva Life Insurance launches Wings to empower women at the workplace

- Aviva Life Insurance has announced the launch of 'Wings', a specially designed mentorship program to empower the female workforce.

Note:

- Aviva Life Insurance is a joint venture between Dabur Invest and Aviva International Holdings, a UK-based insurance group, whose association with India goes back to 1834.

11. SBI Yono App to allow cardless withdrawals

- The State Bank of India has launched the **YONO Cash service** for its customers which will allow them to withdraw cash from ATMs without their debit cards.
- Such SBI ATMs will be called YONO Cash Point.
- SBI customers can use the YONO app on their smartphones to withdraw cash from SBI ATMs, or YONO Cash Points, without using their debit and credit cards.

Note:

- On 3 December 2018, SBI appointed Swapna as the brand ambassador for its digital app 'YONO' (You only need one).
- YONO' is the first digital banking platform which offers customized products to customers.

12. Fresh NPAs to moderate in FY'20: ICRA

- According to the ratings firm Icra; fresh NPAs in the banking sector are expected to moderate to 1.9 to 2.4 per cent in FY'20.
- Icra expects gross NPAs of the banking sector to 8.3 lakh crore or 7.9 per cent for March 2020, as compared to estimated 9.2 per cent as of March 2019.

13. HDFC Bank becomes 3rd company to cross Rs 6 lakh crore m-cap

- HDFC Bank has become the third listed entity to achieve a market cap of Rs 6 lakh crore after Reliance Industries and TCS.
- On 13th March 2019, shares of the country's largest private bank gained 2.6% to hit an all-time high of Rs 2,226.
- This resulted in the market capitalisation of the bank reaching nearly Rs 6.1 lakh crore for the first time, which makes it more valuable than all the listed public sector banks put together.

Note:

- Reliance Industries, the most valuable company, has a market cap of Rs 8.5 lakh crore while TCS is slightly behind at Rs 7.5 lakh crore.

14. SBI launches doorstep banking service for senior citizens over 70 & differently-abled

- State Bank of India (SBI) has launched doorstep banking service for senior citizens over 70 years of age and differently-abled customers.
- Eligible customers can avail this service at a nominal fee of ₹100 per transaction for financial transactions and ₹60 for non-financial transactions.
- According to a statement, doorstep banking services are available to KYC- compliant account holders, with a valid mobile number registered with the bank and residing within 5 kilometres radius from their home branch.
- This service will not be available for accounts operated jointly, minor accounts, and accounts of non-personal nature.
- Cash pickup and deliver, check pickup, check-book slip, life certificate and form 15 pickup are some of the services that will be provided.

15. PNB sanctions debt worth Rs 689 cr to 1,600 MSMEs via 59minute loan portal

- The Punjab National Bank (PNB) has sanctioned loans worth Rs 689 crore to over 1,600 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the portal psbloansin59minutes.com as part of its effort to promote such industries.
- Under the Mudra Yojana, the bank has offered loan to over 2.69 lakh small entrepreneurs this fiscal (till February 14, 2019).

Note:

- psbloansin59minutes.com portal was launched by PM Narendra Modi in November 2018 to provide easy access to credit for MSMEs.
- MSMEs through this portal can avail loans of up to Rs 1 crore in 59 minutes or less than an hour.

- It is a strategic initiative of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) led PSB consortium incubated under the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance.
- Other partner banks are the State Bank of India (SBI), Bank of Baroda, PNB, Vijaya and Indian Bank.

16. SBI first bank to link savings bank interest to RBI repo rate

- In a first, State Bank of India has decided to link interest rates on savings bank account to an external benchmark from May 1, 2019.
- With this SBI becomes the first Indian bank to link both deposit rate and lending rate to an external benchmark.

17. PM releases new series of coins for Divyang kids

- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 07, 2019 released the new series of visually impaired friendly circulation coins, in New Delhi.
- Rs.1, Rs.2, Rs.5, Rs.10 and Rs.20 are the various denominations of coins released as part of the new series.
- The coins were released at a function at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, where visually impaired children were specially invited.
- The Prime Minister thanked the National Institute of Design for the design, Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited and the Ministry of Finance for the introduction of new coins.

18. Bad assets and bankruptcy code: Lenders recover almost half of Rs 1.43-lakh crore defaulting advances

- Lenders have recovered about half the defaulting advances of Rs 1.43 lakh crore stuck in 82 cases that have been resolved so far in the past two years, signalling that the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has become increasingly effective in extricating funds from bad assets.
- The law came into effect in December 2016.

19. NBFCs with Rs 1,000 crore assets want public deposit access

- Non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) with assets exceeding Rs 1,000 crore want the central bank to allow them to accept public deposits.
- Industry leaders have been making this demand with the regulator to allow the access of public deposit for large NBFCs that have been in operation for a long time and have proven track records," said Raman Agarwal, chairman, Finance Industry Development Council (FIDC).
- There are more than 10,000 NBFCs and around 100 are allowed to accept public deposits. NBFCs

with assets of at least Rs 500 crore are considered systemically important.

20. IRDAI, NHA form working group to curb fraud in Ayushman Bharat scheme

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and the National Health Authority (NHA) have formed a working group on the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- The joint working group, to be chaired by **Dinesh Arora, Deputy CEO of NHA**, will have 10 members from both the organisations.
- In six months, it will submit a report on how to detect and deter fraud through a common repository and capacity-building.

21. SBI, Hitachi arm to roll out digital payment's platform

- State Bank of India (SBI) and Hitachi Payment Services Pvt Ltd launched their merchant-acquiring joint venture, SBI Payment Services Pvt Ltd (SBIPSPL), in Mumbai, for establishing a digital payments platform for India and other countries in the region.
- The joint venture (SBI has a 74 per cent stake, and the balance is with Hitachi Payment Services) will facilitate expansion of the digital payments landscape in India via its digital payments platform.

22. United Bank, HDFC Life sign bancassurance deal

- United Bank of India has signed a bancassurance deal with private life insurer HDFC Life Insurance Company.
- Through this partnership, United Bank's customers will be able to take advantage of HDFC Life's expertise in life insurance products, distribution and customer service.

23. Resolution of complaints within 30 days:

- According to insurance ombudsman regulations, it is mandatory for insurers to comply with the awards passed by the ombudsman within a period of 30 days from the receipt of the award.

24. IFFCO Tokio launches India's first policy to protect bank locker

- IFFCO Tokio General Insurance Company announced the launch of **Bank Locker Protector Policy**, which is the first policy in the industry to protect the contents of a bank locker such as jewellery and other valuables.

Key points

- The policy offers a cover against various risks including fire, earthquake, burglary, holdup, infidelity by a bank staff or any act of terrorism.
- Apart from jewellery and valuables, one can also insure important documents kept in a locker as an add-on cover. The policy can be sold both as a retail and a group policy for banks.
- The policy offers seven options of sum insured ranging from **Rs 3 lakh to Rs 40 lakh and above**.
- The premium rate is affordable with a cover of Rs 3 lakh available at just Rs 300, which is less than Rs 1 per day.
- IFFCO Tokio is a joint venture between the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative (IFFCO) and its associates and Tokio Marine and Nichido Fire Group which is also the largest listed insurance group in Japan.
- K. Srinivasa Gowda is the Chairman of IFFCO Tokio Chairman.
- Its headquarters is in Gurugram, Haryana.

25. Google launches 'Bolo' app to tutor children to read Hindi, English

- Google launches a new app 'Bolo' that aims to help primary school students learn to read in Hindi and English.
- The app features an animated character 'Diya', who encourages children to read stories aloud and helps if the child is unable to pronounce a word.
- The app currently offers 50 Hindi and 40 English stories from Storyweaver, the open source digital platform for multilingual children's stories from Bengaluru-based NGO Pratham Books.

26. IRCTC launches payment aggregator IRCTC iPay

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has launched its own payment aggregator system, IRCTC iPay. This a step towards promoting the government's Digital India initiative.
- IRCTC iPay is a prepaid card cum wallet.
- With IRCTC iPay passengers will not need any third-party platforms as the IRCTC iPay provides payment options like credit card, debit card, UPI – Unified Payment Interface, International Card.

February 2019

1. **LIC launches Micro Bachat plan with assured sum of Rs 2 lakh** – LIC's Micro Bachat is a regular premium, non-linked, participating micro-insurance plan which offers a combination of protection and savings.
 - Minimum Basic Sum Assured: Rs. 50,000
 - Maximum Basic Sum Assured: Rs. 2 lakh
 - The Basic Sum Assured is available in multiples of Rs.5,000
 - Minimum Age at entry: 18 years (completed)
 - Maximum Age at entry: 55 years (nearer birthday)
 - Policy Term: 10 to 15 years..
2. **HDFC ERGO Launched 1st-of-its-kind Trip Protector' Policy**
 - HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, announced the launch of 'Trip Protector' insurance policy, a pioneering policy in the non-life insurance segment in India.
 - HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company is a 51:49 joint venture between the Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (HDFC) and ERGO International AG.
3. **EPFO Hikes Interest Rates on EPF by 0.1%** - Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has hiked interest rate on employees' provident fund to 8.65% from 8.55% for the 2018-19 fiscal year. The announcement was made by Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar.
4. **GST Council Reduces GST Rate on Real Estate Projects** – The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council met for its 33rd meeting and slashed GST rate on under-construction residential properties and the affordable housing projects.
 - In case of non-affordable houses, the GST rate for under-construction flats and houses has been brought to 5% without Input Tax Credit (ITC), down from the present 12%.
 - In case of affordable houses, the GST rate has been reduced to 1% without ITC from 8%.
5. **Soon 90% of GST payers to file quarterly return: FM**
 - The GST Council allowed the filing of GST returns with an annual turnover of up to Rs 5 crore at quarterly.
6. **Yes Bank wins The Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018** – Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018 announced Yes Bank as the winner in 'Innovation in Data Science' category for their industry-first project 'Yes EEE (Engage Enrich Excel)' at Panaji, Goa.
7. **Fino Payments Bank (FPB)** has announced the launch of a sweep account facility in association with Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB). This partnership will help FPB address the issue of deposit limits that all the payment banks face at the moment.
8. **NTPC signs pact with SBI for Rs 5000 crore Term Loan** - NTPC has announced that it has signed a term loan agreement for Rs 5,000 crore with State Bank of India.
9. **NPA under Mudra Yojana stands at Rs 7,277 cr** - The Government informed Parliament that loans worth Rs 7,277.31 crore of public sector banks under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) have turned bad at the end of March 2018.

Note:

 - Loans under PMMY can be covered under Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU).
 - CGFMU has been formed with the purpose of guaranteeing payment against default in micro loans up to **Rs 10 lakh** extended to eligible borrowers by the member lending institutions (MLIs).
10. **SBI UK Chief honoured 'Freedom of the City of London'**
 - Mr. Sanjiv Chadha (State Bank of India's UK chief) has been honoured with the 'Freedom of the City Of London' in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations.
 - Mr. Chadha was nominated for the honour by Lord Mayor of London Peter Estlin and Sheriff Vincent Keaveny.
11. **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Kisan Suvidha Loan** - 'Kisan Suvidha loan' for small and marginal farmers has been launched by Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.

Note:

 - It provides loans to individuals with an amount ranging from Rs. 60000 to Rs. 2 Lakh to fulfil the customized needs of the mass market segment.
 - The head office of is in Bengaluru.
12. **IRDAI constitute Randip Singh Jaggal (IRDAI chief general manager) committee** - A committee of the Indian insurance regulator, IRDAI, has recommended that a facilitating environment to support deployment of

technical innovation, similar to that for FinTech products, should be created for the insurance industry as well.

Note:

- The committee on the regulatory sandbox approach in insurance sector in India was constituted by IRDAI last September.
- The committee set up under the chairmanship of Randip Singh Jagpal has now submitted its recommendations.

13. India is the most digitally mature country in the world: Research

- According to the latest Dell Technologies Digital Transformation Index, India is the most digitally mature country in the world.
- The study revealed that emerging markets are the most digitally mature, with India, Brazil and Thailand topping the global ranking.
- In contrast, developed markets are slipping behind: Japan, Denmark and France received the lowest digital maturity scores.

January 2019

1. Cabinet approves the merger of Vijaya Bank & Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda

- The Union cabinet has approved the merger of Vijaya Bank & Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda.
- After the merger, Bank of Baroda will become third-largest bank after State Bank of India and ICICI Bank.
- **In terms of assets** - Bank of Baroda will become third biggest public sector bank, behind State Bank of India and HDFC Bank.

Note:

- The Alternative Mechanism (AM) headed by **Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley**, gave its in-principal approval for the structure of the amalgamation.

2. GST exemption limit doubled for small businesses

- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council has doubled the GST exemption limit to Rs 20 lakh for northeastern states and Rs 40 lakh for the rest of the country.
- The increased (exemption) limit (of Rs 40 lakh) is applicable for those businesses who deal in goods and also do intra-state trade and not for those who do inter-state transactions.

Note:

- The taxpayers with an aggregate turnover of Rs 40 lakh would now be exempted from the GST.
- For the north eastern states, the exemption would now be Rs 20 lakh.
- Currently, businesses with a turnover of up to Rs 20 lakh is exempt from GST registration, while the limit for hilly and north eastern states is Rs 10 lakh.
- The GST Composition Scheme, under which small traders and businesses pay a 1 per cent tax based on turnover, can be availed by businesses with a

turnover of Rs 1.5 crore, against the earlier Rs 1 crore, with effect from April 1.

3. India allows Iran's Bank Pasargad to open a branch in Mumbai - On January 09, 2019, India permitted an Iranian private bank 'Bank Pasargad' to open its branch in Mumbai. The bank is expected to begin its operations by March 2019.

About Bank Pasargad

- Bank Pasargad is an Iranian private bank which offers retail, commercial and investment banking services.
- It's headquartered in Tehran, Iran.
- The bank was established in year 2005.

4. UAE & Saudi central banks launch common digital currency called 'Aber'

- The central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia have launched a common digital currency called "Aber".
- It will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.
- It will establish an additional means for the central financial transfer systems of the two countries and enable banks to directly deal with each other in conducting financial remittances.

5. Cabinet approves recapitalisation of Exim Bank to the tune of Rs. 6,000 crores

- On 16th January 2019, the Cabinet approved a capital infusion of Rs 6,000 crore in Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank).
- The Cabinet also approved an increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from Rs. 10,000 crores to Rs. 20,000 crores.

Note:

- Exim Bank of India (Exim Bank) was established in 1982 under an Act of Parliament as the apex financial institution for financing, facilitating and promoting India's international trade.
 - It is regulated by RBI. The bank headquarters is in Mumbai.
- 6. India to surpass UK in World's largest Economy Rankings in 2019: PwC** - India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, to become the world's fifth largest economy, according to a report by global consultancy firm PwC.
- 7. WEF Report: India to become world's third largest consumer market by 2030**
- According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) report, India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030.
 - Currently, India is the world's sixth largest economy, with the annual GDP growth rate of 7.5%.
- 8. Nepal's Central Bank announces the ban of Indian Notes above Rs100**
- According to Nepal's central bank circular, Indian currency of Rs. 200, Rs.500 and Rs. 2,000 denominations cannot be carried and used for trading.
 - Under the new regulation, Nepali citizens cannot carry these denominations to countries other than India.
 - Indian notes of Rs 100 or below, are allowed for trading and conversion.
- 9. PSU banks to bring down govt equity to 52%** - The Finance Ministry has asked the public sector banks to gradually reduce the government's equity to 52 per cent. Currently, some of the public sector banks have government's holding beyond 75 per cent.
- Note:
- Dilution of the government's stake will help banks to meet 25 per cent public float norms set by the SEBI.
- 10.** The Union Cabinet approved a proposal for a **USD 75-billion** bilateral swap arrangement between India and Japan, a move aimed at enhancing the RBI's ability to manage exchange rate volatility.
- 11. Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal** - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the setting up of National Bench of Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal.
- The National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal will be situated in New Delhi.
- 12. Bihar top state in terms of GDP growth in FY18: Crisil report**
- Bihar has been ranked the top state in terms of GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) growth in financial year 2017-18, according to a report by Crisil.
 - The state has topped the list by clocking 11.3 percent GSDP growth in fiscal 2018. It was ranked at eighth spot in fiscal 2017 with 9.9 percent GSDP growth.
 - The second spot has been secured by Andhra Pradesh, whose GSDP growth in FY18 jumped to 11.2 percent. Gujarat listed third with growth of 11.1 percent.
- 13. Allahabad Bank & SBI Life join hand for bancassurance partnership -**
- Allahabad Bank and SBI Life Insurance came together and signed a bancassurance pact to sell the policies of the insurer from over 3,200 branches of Allahabad Bank across the country.
- 14. MoU between the Indian Army and Punjab National Bank**
- Indian Army and Punjab National Bank (PNB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Defence Salary Package.
- 15. HDFC Standard Life Insurance renamed to HDFC Life Insurance** - HDFC Standard Life Insurance has changed its name to HDFC Life Insurance following the receipt of relevant approvals from regulatory authorities.
- 16.** The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on January 7, 2019 released the First Advance Estimates of National Income at Constant (2011-12) and Current Prices, for the financial year 2018-19.
- Key points:**
- (i) Per capita income grew 45% under Narendra Modi regime, says CSO** - The income earned by an average Indian doubled in seven years, from Rs 63,642 per year in 2011-12 to Rs 1.25 lakh in 2018-19, the first advance estimates of national income released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show.
- Under the current National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, per capita income has grown 45 per cent, from 2014-15 to 2018-19.
 - The Per Capita Net National Income during 2018-19 is estimated to be ₹1,25,397 showing a rise of 11.1 per cent as compared to ₹1,12,835 during 2017-18 with the growth rate of 8.6 percent.
- (ii) National Income -**
- In terms of growth rates, the National Income registered a growth rate of 12.5 per

cent in 2018-19 as against the previous year's growth rate of 10.1 per cent.

(iii) Agriculture has a share of nearly 14 per cent, while industry has a little over 30 per cent and the remaining 56 per cent belongs to services.

(iv) Gross Domestic Product: The growth in GDP during 2018-19 is estimated at 7.2percent as compared to the growth rate of 6.7per cent in 2017-18.

17. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar has developed an **Android app 'Roshni'** that would help the Visually Impaired to recognise currency notes in Chandigarh.

Note:

- The Roshni app can recognise both old and new notes and gives audio information as to which note you are holding in your hands.
- The Roshni is the first Android App that works successfully with new INR currency notes.

18. Cabinet approves amendments to Currency Swap arrangement for SAARC nations - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved

23. PPF and Sukanya Samridhi interest rates kept unchanged

- The interest rate on 1-year post office time deposits, a small savings scheme, has been increased by 10 basis points (bps) for the January-March, 2019 quarter. According to a circular issued by the Finance Ministry, interest rates of other small savings schemes like Public Provident Fund (PPF) and Sukanya Samridhi Yojana (SSY) have been kept unchanged.

the amendments to the framework on currency swap arrangement for SAARC member countries. The amendments incorporate a standby facility of USD 400 million.

- 19. HDFC Mutual Fund** has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years.
- 20.** Syndicate Bank and SBI Life Insurance signed a bancassurance pact aiming to offer a comprehensive financial planning solution to its customers.
- 21. ICICI Bank, in a first-of-its-kind programme,** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Business FinCredit India Pvt. Ltd. (SBFC), a systemically important Non-Banking Finance Company for entrepreneurs, to jointly provide credit worth up to Rs 1 crore to MSMEs for a tenure of 15 years. Under this arrangement, ICICI Bank will co-originate loan against property with SBFC at a mutually agreed ratio.
- 22.** The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has established an Export Promotion Cell. The cell aims to create a sustainable ecosystem for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Schemes	Interest rate (in %)
5 yr Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (Paid Quarterly)	8.7%
Post office Savings Deposits	4%
Public Provident Fund (PPF)	8%
National Savings Certificate (NSC)	8%
Kisan Vikas Patra (maturity in 112 months)	7.7%
Sukanya Samridhi Account (SSA)	8.5%
five-year Term Deposit	7.8%
five-year post office recurring deposit	7.3%
post office Monthly Income Scheme (MIS)	7.7%
1 Year post office time deposits	7%

Banking & Financial terms

- 1. AEPS** – Aadhar Enabled Payment System
- 2. APBS** – Aadhar Payment Bridge System
- 3. ATM** – Automated Teller Machine
- 4. ALM** - Asset Liability Management
- 5. AIIB** - Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
- 6. AMFI** - Association of Mutual Funds in India
- 7. BIS** - Bureau of Indian Standards
- 8. BBPS** – Bharat Bill Payment System
- 9. BCA** -Baseline Credit Assessment
- 10. BHIM** - Bharat Interface for Money
- 11. BLRA:** Bank Led Resolution Approach
- 12. CBL** - Chest Balance Limit
- 13. CMFRI** - Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute
- 14. CBS** – Core Banking System

15. **CIDR** - Central Identities Data Repository
16. **CTS** - Cheque Truncation System
17. **CDR** - Corporate Debt Restructuring
18. **CASA** - Current Account Saving Account
19. **CAD** - Capital Account Deficit
20. **CRA** - Counterparty Risk Assessment
21. **CRR** - Cash Reserve Ratio
22. **ECS** - Electronic Clearing Service
23. **DNS** - Domain Name System
24. **DEAF** - Depositor Education and Awareness Fund
25. **EFTPOS** - Electronic funds transfer at point of sale
26. **EFT** - Electronic Fund Transfer.
27. **FRBM** - Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management
28. **LGD** - Loss Given Default
29. **LTV** - Loan To Value
30. **LRS** - Liberalized Remittance Scheme
31. **LCR** - Liquidity Coverage Ratio
32. **GNFV** - Gross Negative Fair Value
33. **SFTs**: Securities financing transactions
34. **HCE** - Host Card Emulation
35. **PFE** - Potential Future Exposure
36. **IIP** - Index of Industrial Production
37. **IBBI** - Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India
38. **IFC** - International Finance Corporation
39. **IDRBT** - Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology
40. **Ind As** - Indian Accounting Standards
41. **ICAAP** - Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process
42. **IFSC** - Indian Financial System Code
43. **IMPS** - Immediate Payment Service
44. **IMPS** - Interbank Mobile Payment Service
45. **MMID** - Mobile Money Identifier
46. **MPIN** - Mobile Personal Identification Number
47. **NPA** - Non- Performing Assets
48. **NSFR** - Net Stable Funding Ratio
49. **NPCI** - National Payment Corporation of India
50. **NFS** - National Financial Switch
51. **NSFR** - Net Stable Funding Ratio
52. **NACH** - National Automated Clearing House
53. **NEFT** - National Electronic Fund Transfer
54. **NFC** - Near field communication
55. **NDTL** - Net Demand and Time Liabilities.
56. **NASSCOM** - National Association of Software and Services Companies
57. **NIIF** - National Investment and Infrastructure Fund
58. **OTC** - Over the Counter
59. **PIN** - Personal Identification Number
60. **PAC** - Personal Access Code
61. **PCA** - Prompt Corrective Action
62. **PCR** - Public Credit Registry
63. **PCR** - Provisioning Coverage Ratio
64. **PSPs** - Payment Support Providers
65. **TC-CCP** - Third-Country Central Counterparty
66. **TRR** - Temporary Recognition Regime
67. **TReDS** - Trade Receivables Discounting System
68. **RTGS** - Real Time Gross Settlement
69. **USSD** - Unstructured Supplementary Services Data
70. **UIDAI** - Unique Identification Authority of India
71. **VPA** - Virtual Payment Address.
72. **WMA** - Ways and Means Advances
73. **TIEA** - Tax Information and Exchange Agreement
74. **NRETP** - National Rural Economic Transformation Project
75. **IBC** - Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code
76. **GSP** - Generalised System of Preferences
77. **IFFCO** - Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative
78. **PMJAY** - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
79. **NBFC** - Non-banking finance companies
80. **SWIFT** - Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications
81. **NHB** - National Housing Bank
82. **NGT** - National Green Tribunal
83. **DSIB** - Domestically Systematically Important Bank
84. **RWAs** - Risk Weighted Assets
85. **TCs** - Trade credits
86. **CSO** - Central Statistics Office
87. **ASSOCHAM** - Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India
88. **WPI** - Wholesale Price Index
89. **FTA** - Free Trade Agreement
90. **NHB** - National Housing Bank
91. **YONO** - You only need one
92. **ARC** - Asset Reconstruction Company
93. **D-SIBs** - Domestic Systemically Important Banks
94. **MFIs** - Micro Finance Institutions
95. **FPIs** - Foreign portfolio investors
96. **FVCIs** - Foreign venture capital investors
97. **PPF** - Public Provident Fund
98. **NSC** - National Savings Certificate
99. **CbC** - Country-by-Country
100. **WEF** - World Economic Forum
101. **MPI** - Multidimensional Poverty Index
102. **UNDP** - United Nations Development Programme
103. **UPI** - Unified Payments Interface
104. **NPCI** - National Payments Corporation of India
105. **CII** - Confederation of Indian Industry
106. **NBCC** - National Buildings Construction Corporation
107. **NSSO** - National Sample Survey Office
108. **EMV** - Europay, MasterCard, Visa.
109. **FATF** - Financial Action Task Force

Important Committees

- 1. Nandan Nilekani committee** – To encourage digital payments, the committee has suggested a host of measures, including elimination of charges, round-the-clock RTGS and NEFT facility, and duty-free import of point-of-sales machines.
- 2. V G Kannan committee** - The Reserve Bank of India constituted a six-member committee to review the ATM interchange fee structure with a “view to increase the ATM deployment in the unbanked areas”.
 - The committee will be led by V G Kannan, Chief Executive, Indian Banks Association.
- 3. Anil Kakodkar & Sidharth Pradhan committee** - to discuss research-related synergies and tax issues for state-run oil companies. The committee has recommended strategies to reduce import dependency.
- 4. TN Manoharan committee (Chairman Canara Bank)**- on the Development of Secondary Market for Corporate Loans to come up with recommendations to increase the efficiencies of the debt market and aid in the resolution of stressed assets.
- 5. Kasturirangan committee** - Former ISRO chief Dr. Kasturirangan led Committee submitted the draft National Educational Policy (NEP) to HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank in New Delhi.
- 6. BP Sharma (retired GOI secretary)** - The Union Government has constituted an expert committee to “revisit the criteria” for determining the “creamy layer” for OBCs which was laid down in 1993.

Note: The committee will “revisit the criteria evolved by the Prasad committee” and give recommendations for “redefining, simplifying and streamlining the concept of creamy layer” while keeping in view the SC’s observations in Indira Sawhney case.
- 7. Amitabh Kant (Niti Aayog CEO) committee** - National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage, which is being set up to promote clean and sustainable mobility initiatives in the country.
- 8. Suresh Mathur committee** – to review the regulatory framework on microinsurance and recommend measures to increase the demand for such products.
- 9. Bimal Jalan Panel** - to suggest how the central bank should handle its reserves and whether it can transfer its surplus to the government.
- 10. Anoop Satpathy Committee** - Recommends Rs 9,750 Monthly National Minimum Wage

Note:

 - submitted its report on “Determining the Methodology for Fixation of the National Minimum Wage” to the Government.
 - It recommended the fixation of need-based National Minimum Wage (NMW) for India at Rs 375 per day or Rs 9,750 per month irrespective of sectors, skills, occupations and rural-urban locations for a family comprising of 3.6 consumption units.
 - The Present NMW is Rs. 4,576.
- 11. Sanjeev Sharma (income tax commissioner) Committee** - to look into the matter of taxation related pain points and submit its final report and recommendations by mid-March.
- 12. Jasmine Shah Committee** – The Delhi government constituted a committee to “reform higher education” in the capital. The committee will be chaired by DDC vice-chairperson Jasmine Shah.
- 13. CPWD Constitutes 8-member Committee to Chart Out Design Policy** - The Central Works Public Department (CPWD) has constituted an expert committee to formulate a design policy for building construction and infrastructure development.
 - The committee has been set up under the chairmanship of CPWD’s Additional Director General M K Sharma.
- 14. Environment Ministry Constitutes Committee to Implement National Clean Air Programme** - The Union Environment Ministry has constituted a committee to implement the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), which aims to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20%-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024.
 - The committee will be chaired by the Secretary, Union Environment Ministry. It would be headquartered in New Delhi.
- 15. B V R Mohan Reddy committee** - not to allow setting up of new Engineering colleges from 2020.

Note:

 - The Panel headed by IIT-Hyderabad chairman B V R Mohan Reddy has suggested All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) not to allow setting up of new Engineering colleges from 2020.
- 16. Nandan Nilekani committee** - to boost digital payments and enhance financial inclusion.

17. **U.K. Sinha committee** - to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.
18. **Committee headed by NITI Aayog member (health)** - The Union government has constituted a high-power committee headed by NITI Aayog member (health) to monitor the pricing of medicines and healthcare products.
19. **Government sets up Committee to Explore Prepaid Payments by Discoms to Generator Companies** - On the recommendation of Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, the government constituted a committee under the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) to explore prepaid payments by state electricity distribution companies to power plants.
20. **Praveen Kutumbe committee** - Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a panel headed by Praveen Kutumbe, to identify domestically systematically important insurers (SIIs) and an augmented regulatory framework is logically established in this regard.
21. **Cherukuri Raghavendra Babu committee** - The Madras High Court has set up an expert committee to find a solution to root out invasive species of plants from the Western Ghats.
22. **Sushil Modi Committee** - Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi will head the 7-member committee to look into revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out and suggest steps for augmenting collections.
23. **Nitin Patel committee** - The government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel is the convener of the GoM.
24. **Sankar De committee** - SEBI constituted a "Research Advisory" committee which will assist in formulating policy to undertake research relevant for development and regulation of capital markets. The committee is headed by Sankar De.
25. **Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai committee** - The Lokpal Search Committee headed by former **Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai** held its first meeting and discussed modalities related to the appointments of the chief and members of Lokpal.
26. **SC sets up panel for to suggest reforms for holding competitive exams** - The Supreme Court favoured setting up of a three-member high-powered committee comprising Nandan Nilekani, a co-founder of tech giant Infosys, and renowned computer scientist Vijay P Bhatkar to suggest reforms for conducting of competitive examinations fairly by government bodies.
27. **Sudhir Mungantiwar committee** (Maharashtra Finance Minister) - to examine uniformity of taxation on lottery under GST or other issues arising out of it.
Note: Under GST, state-organized lottery falls under the 12% tax slab while state-authorized lottery attracts 28% tax.
28. **MS Swaminathan committee** - The Delhi government has decided to introduce the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for farmers based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers (NCF) headed by MS Swaminathan.
 - The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) was constituted on November 18, 2004 under the chairmanship of Professor M.S. Swaminathan.
29. **Umesh Sinha committee** - The Committee headed Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha has submitted the report on revisiting the section 126 of the Representation of the People Act.
 - The committee had nine officers from the Election Commission and one nominated member each from I&B Ministry, Law Ministry, IT Ministry, National Broadcasters Association and Press Council of India.
30. **Dr Jitendra Nagpal committee** - The Union Human Resource Development Ministry has constituted a task force to look into the issues of suicides of the students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV) residential schools.
 - The task force has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Psychiatrist, Dr Jitendra Nagpal.
31. **Akhilesh Ranjan Committee** - for drafting New Direct Tax Legislation (Law)
32. **Dr. Bibek Debroy (The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister) Committee** - to assess key challenges and suggest reforms in logistics development and associated commerce.
33. **Rajiv Kumar (NITI Aayog Vice Chairman) Committee** - to look at selling of 149 small and marginal oil and gas fields of state-owned the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) to private and foreign companies to boost domestic output.
34. **Namrita Mahindro committee** - to promote Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR/VR) technology to drive economic growth, job creation, and skill development in the country.
Note:
 - The committee is formed by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).
 - IMAI headquartered is in Mumbai.

Agreement & Deals

June 2019

1. India & Portugal to set up National Maritime

Heritage Museum - India and Portugal will cooperate in setting up of a national maritime heritage museum at ancient Indian site of Lothal in Gujarat.

- Lothal (literally means the mound of dead) was one of port cities of Indus Valley Civilization (Harappan Civilization).
- The proposed maritime museum in Indian is likely to come up on lines of similar museum at Lisbon, which is administered by Portuguese Navy.

2. DD India to be available in Bangladesh, South Korea

- The Information & Broadcasting (I&B) Ministry said that India has entered into agreements with Bangladesh and South Korea to make DD (Doordarshan) India available to viewers in the two countries respectively.
- Under this agreement, Bangladesh's BTV World and South Korea's KBS World will also be made available on DD Free Dish, which has nearly 35 million subscribers across the country.

3. India extends \$15 Million assistance to Niger for holding AU summit

– India has for the first time extended \$15 Million financial support to Niger as a support for organising African Union (AU) summit scheduled to be held in 7-8 July 2019 in Niamey (Capital of Niger).

- This will be the 1st time that Niger will be hosting an AU summit.
- India is also establishing the Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre (MGICC) in Niamey under grant assistance.
- African Union (AU), international organization established in 2002 by the nations of the former Organization of African Unity (OAU).

- There are 54-member nations; the only African country that is not a member is Morocco.
- The AU's headquarters are at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

4. India extended a financial aid of 1.6 billion Nepalese Rupees (NPR) to Nepal government for rebuilding earthquake-hit houses in two districts that were most hit.

5. **ICANN partners NASSCOM to develop tech, standards for IoT devices** – Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and Indian IT industry body National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) collaborated to develop identifier technology to manage devices and infrastructure using internet.

6. **Tamil Nadu gets \$287 million World Bank Loan for Healthcare Reform** – The Centre, the Tamil Nadu Government and the World Bank have signed a \$287-million loan agreement for the Tamil Nadu Health System Reform Programme (TNHSRP).

7. **IndianOil, BPCL And HPCL Ink JV For Kandla-Gorakhpur LPG Pipeline Project** – IndianOil, Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) had signed a joint venture in New Delhi for Kandla-Gorakhpur LPG Pipeline Project.

- They will be laying the world's longest LPG pipeline from Kandla (Gujarat) to Gorakhpur (UP).

8. **Indian Railway Station Development Corporation (IRSDC) entered a Tripartite Agreement with French Railways (SNCF) & AFD**, a French Agency which will finance up to 7,00,000 EURO, through French National Railways (SNCF)-Hubs and Connexions as a Technical Partner to IRSDC to support the Railway Station Development Program in India, so there will be no financial liability on IRSDC or Indian Railways.

May 2019

1. IIT Guwahati signs MoU with ISRO to set up space technology

– Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati has signed an MoU with The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to set up an IITG-ISRO Space Technology Cell (STC) at the institute.

2. **Sri Lanka signs tripartite agreement with India and Japan** – Sri Lanka has signed a tripartite agreement with India and Japan for development of eastern terminal of Colombo port.

- As per the agreement, Sri Lanka Port Authority (SLPA) will hold 51 percent majority stake in the port development while Japan and India will have combined stake of 49 percent.
3. **ADB to provide USD750 Million Loan to India for Railway Track Electrification** – Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced that it has signed an agreement to provide USD 750 million equivalent in Indian rupee long-term financing to electrify railway tracks in India.
 4. The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) under Ministry of Science and Technology and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), under Prime Minister of India, has signed an MoU for supporting joint collaborative research programmes in the area of Cancer.
 5. **Tech Mahindra signs Rs300 crore Defence Contract with Indian Navy** – Tech Mahindra announced its biggest defence order worth over Rs 300 crore with the Indian Navy. As part of the ‘Armed Forces Secure Access Card’ (AFSAC) Project, Tech Mahindra will implement RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) based Access Control System across all naval bases and ships.
 6. **Sri Lanka, Japan, India signs MoC to develop East Container Terminal** – Sri Lanka, India and Japan have signed an Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) to jointly develop the East Container Terminal (ECT) at the Colombo Port in Sri Lanka.
 7. **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), HCL Foundation and Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage (INTACH) signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the plantation of Rudraksha trees in Uttarakhand under the 'Namami Gange' Programme.**
 8. **IBM India has tied-up with HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, to co-create new Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solutions.**

April 2019

1. **Exim Bank funds projects worth USD 267 mn in Rawanda**
 - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Exim Bank has provided soft loans of USD 266.60 million to Rawanda for various projects.
 - The funding, done in three separate tranches to Rawanda, is to support agricultural projects, development of special economic zones (SEZs) and for financing road project in the African nation.
2. **India to partner with Japan and UAE to set up two projects in Africa**
 - India is joining hands with Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to implement two projects in Africa as it seeks to extend its footprint on the continent.
 - India will build a cancer hospital in Kenya in collaboration with Japan.
 - India will set up an information and communications technology (ICT) centre in Ethiopia in collaboration with UAE.
3. **SEFL partnered with Bank of Baroda to offer joint loans for infrastructure equipment**
 - Srei Equipment Finance (SEFL) has entered into an alliance with Bank of Baroda to offer joint loans for infrastructure equipment under a co-lending arrangement.
4. **India, Sweden ink pact to collaborate on solutions for smart cities, clean tech**
 - India and Sweden launched a joint programme that will work towards addressing a range of challenges around smart cities and clean technologies among others.
 - The programme was co-funded by Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Swedish agency Vinnova.
5. **IIT Madras collaborates with GE to establish India's first 'Cold Spray' SMART lab**
 - Indian Institute of Technology Madras has established a 'Cold Spray' SMART (Surface Modification and Additive Research Technologies) Laboratory in collaboration with General Electric (GE).
 - This is the first of its kind High-Pressure Cold Spray (HPCS) facility being installed in any academic institute in India.
6. **TCS, Google partner to build industry-specific cloud solutions**
 - Tata Consultancy Services has partnered with Google Cloud to build industry-specific cloud solutions.
7. **Microsoft, Tata Trusts tie up to help develop handloom clusters**
 - Microsoft India and Tata Trusts have signed an agreement to jointly work for the development of handloom clusters in the Eastern and North-Eastern parts of the country.

- The two entities will provide business and communication skills, design education and digital literacy to handloom weavers in order to improve their business prospects.

8. Indian Government clears procurement of 464 Russian tanks under the T-90 Project

- The Cabinet Committee of Security has cleared the procurement of 464 Russian tanks from Russia under T-90 project in a deal worth over Rs 13,500 crore.

9. CMFRI signs agreement with ISRO to save coastal wetlands

- The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) have joined hands to map, validate and protect smaller wetlands in coastal regions.
- The programme is aimed at restoring them through coastal livelihood programmes.

Note:

- The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute is one of the largest marine fishery research institutes in India located in **Kochi**, Kerala India.

10. BSE, HDFC Bank tie up to strengthen startup platform

- The BSE has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with HDFC Bank with an objective to strengthen the BSE Startups platform.

11. India, Sri Lanka agree to increase cooperation in security and defence spheres

- India and Sri Lanka have agreed to increase cooperation in security and defence spheres in several areas, including regional security, curbing drug smuggling and human trafficking.

12. NTPC signs Rs 2,000 cr term loan pact with Canara Bank

- National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has inked a term-loan agreement with Canara Bank to raise Rs 2,000 crore, which would be used to part finance its capital expenditure.
- "A term loan agreement for Rs 2,000 crore was signed with Canara Bank on April 5, 2019.

13. Karnataka Bank in pact with Bharti AXA

- Karnataka Bank has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company to distribute the latter's life insurance products.

14. BSE, India INX become first Indian exchanges to sign MoU with Moscow Exchange

- BSE (earlier known as Bombay Stock Exchange) and India International Exchange (India INX)

have signed a memorandum of understanding with Moscow Exchange (MOEX) to connect investor community and companies in both countries besides allowing a capital formation platform.

- BSE and India INX are the first Indian exchanges to enter into the MoU with Moscow exchange.

Note:

- The Bombay Stock Exchange is an Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai. Established in 1875, the BSE is Asia's first stock exchange.
- The India International Exchange is India's first international stock exchange, opened in 2017. It is located at the International Financial Services Centre, GIFT City in Gujarat.
- It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bombay Stock Exchange

15. Tata Power, Indraprastha Gas ink pact for rooftop solar projects

- Tata Power has signed a pact with Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) for setting up rooftop solar projects in the country.

Note:

- Tata Power is India's largest integrated power utility, IGL is country's largest CNG distribution company.

16. India and Chile exchange three MoUs for cooperation

- India and Chile signed three MoUs in the fields of mining, culture and empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- Chile announces it will allow visa-free entry to Indians holding valid US Visa.

Note:

- The capital of Chile is – Santiago
- The currency of Chile is - Peso

17. Bureau of Indian Standards inks an MoU with IIT, Delhi

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi to collaborate in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment.
- BIS and IIT Delhi have also agreed to set up a Centre of Excellence in the field of standardization, testing and conformity assessment.

18. US approves sale of 24 MH-60R Seahawk helicopters to India for USD 2.6 billion

- The US has approved the sale of 24 multi-role MH-60R Seahawk maritime helicopters to India at an estimated cost of USD 2.6 billion.

- The helicopters are designed to operate from frigates, destroyers, cruisers and aircraft carriers.

March 2019

9. India extends Rs. 35.5 million financial grant to Nepal

- India has extended a financial grant of 35.5 million Nepalese rupees for the construction of an educational campus in Nepal under the Development Partnership Programme.
- The educational campus was jointly inaugurated by District Coordination Committee and Campus management committee on 22nd March 2019.

10. India & Bolivia sign 8 MoUs in various fields including culture, mining, space

- India and Bolivia signed eight MoUs in the fields of culture, Visa waiver arrangement for diplomats, exchange between diplomatic academies, mining, space, traditional medicine, establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT and Bi-Oceanic Railway project.

Note:

- President Ram Nath Kovind has been conferred with the highest State honor of Bolivia, “Condor de Los Andes en el Grado de Gran Collar” during his visit to Bolivia.

11. IIT Kharagpur, Wipro partner for research in 5G & AI

- Wipro and Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IIT Kharagpur) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate on high-impact, industry-focused applied research in the areas of 5G and AI.

12. Infosys & French Open Team up for Digital Innovation

- Infosys and Roland-Garros Grand Slam tennis tournament, also called the French Open, announced a three-year strategic technology partnership.
- The partnership aims to re-imagine the tennis experience for the fans and the players globally.

13. India, US ink pact to check tax evasion by MNCs

- India and United States (US) signed an agreement for Exchange of Country-by-Country (CbC) Reports (local filing) to check tax evasion by Multi National Cooperation’s (MNCs).
- The agreement aims to ensure that all tax authorities have access to same information

about MNC’s value chain and resulting tax consequences.

14. India-African Union sign MoU on strengthening cooperation in healthcare sector: MEA

- According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), an agreement has been signed between India and the African Union to initiate and strengthen the cooperation in health sector.

15. ICICI Lombard partnered with MobiKwik to provide cyber-insurance

- ICICI Lombard and digital financial services company MobiKwik entered into a partnership to provide cyber insurance cover of Rs. 50000.
- The service will be available through an app at Rs. 99 per month along with an insured sum of Rs. 50000.

16. ADB to invest \$50 million in Solar Power Project Developer Avaada

- Asian Development Bank (ADB) has inked an agreement to invest USD 50 million in solar energy project developer Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd to help the company scale up rapidly.
- LEAP is a funding arrangement provided by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which is administered by ADB.

17. Maldives sign agreement with Exim Bank to Finance Infrastructure Projects

- Maldives finance ministry has signed an agreement with India’s Export-Import Bank (EXIM) for line of credit (LOC) of 800 million US dollars to finance the new government’s infrastructure projects.

18. SBI signed MoU with Bank of China for Business Opportunities

- State Bank of India has signed a pact with the Bank of China to boost business opportunities.
- SBI has signed an MoU to enhance business synergies between both the banks.
- SBI has a branch in Shanghai and BOC is opening its branch in Mumbai.

19. India & Afghanistan signed an MoU on digital education initiatives

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has signed a memorandum of understanding

(MoU) with the Afghanistan government at Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) Madras to work on a digital education initiative

- This collaboration hopes to contribute to bilateral relations and beget mutual benefits for the two countries.

20. India and ADB sign \$26 Million Loan Agreement for Additional Financing to Assam Urban Project

- The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$26 Million Loan Agreement to provide additional financing for improving drainage infrastructure in Dibrugarh town of Assam under the ongoing Assam Urban Infrastructure Investment Program.

21. Korea Exim Bank Extends Rs 4,100 crore Loan for Vizag Metro

- Korea Exim Bank has come forward to extend a Rs 4,100 crore loan for Visakhapatnam Metro Rail project.
- The Export-Import Bank of Korea, also commonly known as the Korea Exim bank, is the official export credit agency of South Korea.
- The bank headquarters is located in Seoul, South Korea.

22. India Extends USD 250 million To Nepal for Reconstruction of Infrastructures

- India has extended a grant assistance of up to **USD 250 million** to Nepal for the reconstruction of infrastructures in the areas of housing, education, health and cultural heritage that was destroyed during the devastating April 2015 earthquake which saw the death of over 9,000 people.
- Earlier this month, India said that it will reconstruct 72 education facilities in Nepal that were damaged during the earthquake.

23. India, World Bank and Representatives of 5 States signed loan agreement for DRIP

- The Government of India, the World Bank and the representatives of Five States sign the Loan Agreement for Additional Financing of \$137 Million for the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP).
- This agreement will help rehabilitate and modernize over 220 selected large dams in the States of Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand.
- The \$137 Million Loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

(IBRD), has a 3-year grace period, and a final maturity of 16 years.

24. World Bank to provide \$250 mn to boost rural income

- World Bank to provide 250 Million dollars for the National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP) to boost Rural Incomes across 13 States in India.
- An agreement in this regard was signed between the World Bank and the Government of India.
- World Bank said in a statement that the loan will help women in rural households develop viable enterprises for farm and non-farm products.

25. India signs loan agreement with World Bank for Uttarakhand Disaster Recovery Project

- India signed a loan agreement with the World Bank for **96 Million US dollars** for additional financing of Uttarakhand Disaster Recovery Project.
- World Bank has been supporting the State Government since 2014 to restore housing and rural connectivity and to build the resilience of communities.

26. India signs loan Agreement with the World Bank for USD 25.2 Million for Chhattisgarh Public Financial Management and Accountability Program

- The World Bank and the Government of India has signed a USD 25.2 Million Loan Agreement on March 5, 2019 to support Chhattisgarh Public Financial Management and Accountability Program.

27. AIIB to provide USD 455 mn for Andhra rural roads project

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) will provide a loan of USD 455 million to finance the Andhra Pradesh Rural Roads Project.

28. Centre, ADB sign 926 million loan agreement to operationalize two lines of Mumbai Metro

- The Centre and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a 926 million dollar loan agreement to operationalize two lines of the Mumbai Metro Rail System.
- It is the single largest infrastructure project loan in ADB history approved by the ADB Board.

29. India signs legal agreements with the World Bank –

The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh (GoHP) and the World Bank signed a \$40 Million Loan Agreement to help bring clean and reliable drinking water to the citizens of the Greater Shimla area, who have been facing severe water shortages and water-borne epidemics over the last few years.

30. India & Brunei sign pact to exchange information on tax, banking matters

- India and Brunei signed an agreement for exchange of information in tax matters which will help curb tax evasion and tax avoidance.

Note:

- The capital of Brunei is - **Bandar Seri Begawan**
- The currency of Brunei is - **dollar**
- Brunei is a country located in Southeast Asia on the island of Borneo.

January & February 2019

1. World Bank, UN Women and SIDBI plan 'women's livelihood bond' to raise ₹300 cr

- The World Bank, UN Women (a United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and empowerment of women), and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) have come together to launch a five-year tenor 'women's livelihood bond' to raise ₹300 crore.

- The bonds, which will be raised by SIDBI with the support of World Bank and UN Women.
- The coupon rate on these bonds will be 3 per cent per annum.
- SIDBI chairman - Mohammad Mustafa.
- SIDBI Hq - Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

2. Ministry of Coal signs an MoU with Ministry of Energy, Poland

- The objective of this MoU is to foster relations in the field of coal mining and clean coal technologies through the already established Joint Coal Working Group as well as research institutes and academia between the two countries.

3. India and Bangladesh have signed an MOU for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)

4. India & Germany join hands on Water and Waste Management

- India and Germany have joined hands for cooperation on Water and Waste Management.

5. IRCTC Partners with Bharti AXA General Insurance

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), the Railways' subsidiary, will offer insurance of up to INR50 lakh for free

for air passengers who book their tickets through its portal. IRCTC has tied up with Bharti-Axa for the offer.

6. India has signed a long-term contract with Uzbekistan for supply of uranium ore concentrates to widen its source base for the nuclear fuel.

Note:

- Uzbekistan is the seventh largest exporter of uranium in the world.
- The Exim Bank signed an agreement with Uzbekistan to extend a 200-million US dollar line of credit for financing housing and social infrastructure projects.

7. India and Sri Lanka signed an MoU to provide modern infrastructural facilities to Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies of Eastern University in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka.

8. India and China have signed the protocol for exports of Indian tobacco leaves to China.

9. Israel Aerospace industries announces agreement with Indian Navy and Cochin Shipyard

- Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) announced entering into agreements worth \$93 million this for providing Naval Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) systems to India.

10. India and Japan-India Cooperative Actions (JICA) signed the loan agreements under the Japanese Official Development Assistance Loan Program.

Rank of India in Different Reports/Survey

1. India to cross China's population by 2027: United Nations

- As per a United Nations report, India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country in 2027 and will have almost 1.64 billion inhabitants by 2050.

Key highlights of the report

- India is expected to add nearly **273 million people between 2019 and 2050** and remain the most populated country through the end of the current century.

- China, with 1.43 billion people in 2019, and India, with 1.37 billion, have long been the two most populous countries of the world,

World Population

- The UN report 'The World Population Prospects 2019' added that the world's population is expected to increase by two billion people in the next 30 years -- from **7.7 billion currently to 9.7 billion** in 2050.

Population Growing Older

- **By 2050**, one in six people in the world will be over age **65 (16 per cent)**, up from one in 11 in 2019 (9 per cent).
- The number of persons aged 80 years or over is projected to triple, from 143 million in 2019 to 426 million in 2050.

Average life expectancy

- The report also projected people would survive longer in the future, with global average life expectancy expected to reach 77.1 years in 2050 against 72.6 years currently.
- In 1990, the average life expectancy worldwide was 64.2 years.

2. At 9.8 GB per month, India has the highest data usage per smartphone

- According to a new study by Swedish telecom equipment maker Ericsson, India has the highest average data usage per smartphone, reaching 9.8 GB per month at the end of 2018.
- The report, released on 19th June, also forecasts that this figure is likely to double to 18 GB per month per smartphone by 2024.
- The 'Ericsson Mobility Report' added that total smartphone subscriptions in the region is likely to reach 1.1 billion by 2024, growing at 11% CAGR.
- The total mobile broadband subscriptions in India are expected to grow from about 610 million in 2018 to 1.25 billion in 2024.

3. CO2 emissions rose by 2% in 2018: Study

- As per a closely-watched review by United Kingdom (UK) based energy giant BP, titled "The BP Statistical Review of World Energy", the global carbon emissions grew by 2.0% in 2018, the highest rate since 2010-2011.
- BP is a London based, British multinational oil and gas company.

4. India to generate over 2 million outbound tourists annually by 2020: Report

- India is estimated to generate over 2 million outbound luxury and MICE tourists annually by 2020, reinforcing the country's influence as

a key source market for MICE and luxury travel.

5. Amazon India is the country's most attractive employer brand

- Amazon India is the country's most attractive employer brand, according to the findings of the Randstad Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2019.
- Microsoft India emerged as the runner-up, followed by Sony India.

6. Dell has emerged as the most trusted brand in India in 2019: TRA

- According to a report released by brand analytics firm TRA Research, "Dell" has emerged as the most trusted brand in India in 2019.
- IC and Amazon are ranked on the third and fourth spots and Apple iPhone emerged as India's fifth most trusted brand.

7. Amazon top global brand: 100 Top BrandZ report

- According to global market research agency Kantar in its 2019's '100 Top BrandZ Report', US retail giant Amazon has moved past hi-tech titans Apple and Google to become the world's most valuable brand.
- The brand value of Amazon surged by 52 percent to \$315 billion, hence jumping from third to first place to replace Google.

8. India accounts for 12% of world's internet users

- According to annual report on internet trends by venture capitalist Mary Meeker, India accounts for 12% world's internet users.
- China has the largest base, accounting for 21% of all internet users globally, and the US comes third at 8%.

9. Jay-Z named World's 1st Billionaire rapper by Forbes Magazine - Jay-Z has been named the world's first billionaire rapper by Forbes.

10. Mukesh Ambani tops Forbes' list of World's Richest Sports team owners - The chairman and managing director of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), Mukesh Ambani, made it to the top with a net worth of around \$50 billion.

- The Indian Premier League (IPL) team Mumbai Indians was bought by Ambani for over \$100 million through RIL's 100 per cent subsidiary IndiaWin Sports.
- The team had won the IPL crown in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019.
- **Steve Ballmer team owner of NBA team Los Angeles Clippers is on the second list.**

- In the third list - Dietrich Mateschitz owner of Auto racing team Red Bull-Toro Rosso Honda, Formula One team Red Bull Racing and MLS club New York Red Bulls.

11. Arunachal has highest 35% of India's Graphite Deposits: GSI Report

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) in its report revealed that about 35 % of India's total Graphite reserves are found in Arunachal Pradesh. This is the highest found in the country.

12. 2019 Global Report on Food Crises –

- The report is released by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Key points –

- More than 113 million people across 53 countries experienced “acute hunger” last year because of wars and climate disasters, with Africa the worst-hit region.
- Yemen, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan and Syria were among the eight nations accounting for two-thirds of the total number of people worldwide exposed to the risk of famine.
- African Nations were “disproportionally” affected as close to 72 million people on the continent suffered acute hunger.

About FAO –

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- Headquarters: Rome, Italy
- Founded: 16 October 1945

13. Rajiv Gandhi International Airport Ranked among top 10 in World-Air Help –

- Global air passengers right expert Airhelp came out with the list of world's best airports and Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International airport was ranked the world's eighth best airport.
- The top 3 airports in the list of world's best airports as per Airhelp are:
- Qatar's Hamad International Airport
- Tokyo International Airport.
- Athens International Airport.

14. India 4th Biggest Military Spender in 2018: SIPRI Report –

India was the world's fourth biggest military spender in 2018 behind the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia, according to new data think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

- India was the fifth largest military spender in 2017.
- According to the SIPRI data, China was the second-largest military spender in 2018. India accounts for 3.7% of the global defence spending.

15. Mukesh Ambani World's 8th Richest with Net Worth Of \$54 bn –

With a net worth of \$54 billion, Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani has broken into the global top 10 richest billionaire list compiled by Hurun Research.

- The Hurun Global Rich List 2019 is topped by **Amazon chief Jeff Bezos** for the second year in a row, while the senior Ambani is placed 8th with a network of Rs 3.83 trillion. Ambani is the only Asian among the top 10.

16. Assam's Hailakandi became the top aspirational District –

According to the Delta ranking report released by NITI Aayog, Assam's Hailakandi has become the top aspirational district among the 112 aspirational districts of the country.

- Hailakandi in Assam has made a giant leap from 52nd position to no. 1 position on the basis of its performance during November-December 2018 and January 2019.
- For securing the first rank as an aspirational district, Hailakandi will be given an allocation of Rs. 10 crore.

17. Worldwide Cost of Living Survey 2019 –

- Singapore is the world's most expensive city in the Worldwide followed by Hong Kong and Paris.
- Zurich in Switzerland stood at the fourth position followed by Japan's Osaka which shared fifth place with Geneva, also in Switzerland.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit has released the report.

18. IGI Airport Delhi becomes the 12th busiest Airport in the World –

Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) of New Delhi has ranked at 12th spot in terms of the busiest airport.

- World airport traffic rankings for 2018 released by Airports Council International (ACI).
- The list of world's busiest airports by passenger traffic ranking has been topped by **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (US)** followed by Beijing Capital International Airport

(China) and Dubai International Airport (UAE).

19. Dhanbad tops 4G Availability Chart in India – A report by OpenSignal, which is named as ‘OpenSignal’s Hottest city for 4G Availability’ reveals the 4G Availability in India’s 50 largest cities.

- Out of the 50 cities, **Dhanbad**, which is also known as the coal capital of India has the highest 4G availability of 95.3%, followed by Ranchi which has 95% of 4G Availability.
- Notably, both Ranchi and Dhanbad are two cities in Jharkhand and they are the only two cities to have over 95% of 4G coverage.
- Interestingly, Srinagar, which is one of the remote areas in the country stood third on the list with 4G Availability score of 94.9%.

20. 7 Indians Marked in “World’s 100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy for 2019” – The “100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy” list is comprised of seven Indian names including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Dr Harsh Vardhan, who took important measures to combat climate change.

- The list is prepared by Apolitical, a peer to peer learning platform for governments. The list has been topped by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (Congresswoman, US Congress).

21. India highest Recipient of remittances at \$79 billion in 2018: World Bank – As per the World Bank Report, India retained its position as the world’s top recipient of remittances with its diaspora sending a whopping USD 79 billion back home in 2018.

- India was followed by China (USD 67 billion) and Mexico (USD 36 billion).
- The Report was titled as ‘World Bank’s Migration and Development Brief’. Over the last three years, India has registered a significant flow of remittances from USD 62.7 billion in 2016 to USD 65.3 billion 2017.

22. UN Releases Global Environment Outlook 2019 Report – The United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) has released the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (2019) titled ‘Healthy Planet, Healthy People’.

23. Tata, Reliance & Airtel Emerge best Indian Brands of 2019 - Tata, Reliance, and Airtel emerged as the top three Indian brands of 2019, according to a report published by Interbrand, part of the Omnicom Media Group.

- Tata continued to hold the top position in the best Indian Brands ranking as its brand value grew by 6%, mainly due to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).
- Knocking Airtel off from the 2nd spot, Reliance’s brand value grew by 12%, bolstered by the success of Jio. Airtel stood at number 3.

24. World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2019’ report released by ILO – The International Labour Organization released World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2019 report.

- As per the report, unemployment rates will fall to 4.9% in 2019 and remains steady in 2020.
- Among the age group 15-24 the global unemployment stood at 11.8% which is much higher than it is among other age groups.
- In the global labor market, 2 billion out of 3.3 billion people worked keeping their economic security at risk in informal employment.

25. Raipur airport tops in Customer Satisfaction Survey: AAI

- According to the Airport Authority of India, Swami Vivekananda Airport of Raipur has been adjudged on top rank in the country in Customer Satisfaction Survey round two for consecutive fourth time in a row, airport officials confirmed.

26. Russia Emerges as World’s No. 2 Arms Producer: SIPRI Report

- A Swedish think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) announced that Russia has emerged as the world’s second-largest arms producer after the **United States**.
- Russia surpassed Britain, which had held that spot since 2002 and remains Western Europe’s No. 1 arms maker.

27. Gujarat Emerges as best performing State in Start-Up Ranking 2018

- Gujarat has emerged as the best-performing state in the Startup Ranking 2018.
- The National Report on States’ Startup Ranking was unveiled by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi.

- Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and Rajasthan, with a score of more than 85 percentile, have been adjudged the top performers.
- Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana have been recognised as Leaders.
- 27 states and 3 union territories participated in the ranking process.

28. Himachal Pradesh, Kerala tops NITI Aayog SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018

- Himachal Pradesh and Kerala have emerged as top performing states in Niti Aayog's SDG India index 2018, which evaluates progress in social, economic and environmental terms.
- **Himachal Pradesh** ranks high on providing clean water & sanitation, in reducing inequalities & preserving mountain ecosystem.
- **Kerala's top** rank is attributed to its superior performance in providing good health, reducing hunger, achieving gender equality & providing quality education.
- **Chandigarh** leads because of its exemplary performance in providing clean water & sanitation, affordable & clean energy, generating decent work & economic growth, & providing quality education.
- The NITI Aayog released the Baseline Report of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, which comprehensively documents the progress made by India's States and Union Territories towards implementing the 2030 SDG targets.

29. India Skills Report 2019: Andhra Tops in Employability Rate, Talent Quality

- Andhra Pradesh has topped the list of states with the highest employability followed by Rajasthan and Haryana, as per the India Skills Report 2019.
- The employability levels of B.Tech/B.E have increased across all the sectors, touching a new high of 63.11%, which remained at 42.08 last year.
- However, the employability levels of MBA and polytechnic stand low between 47.18% and 45.90%.
- The survey was conducted jointly by Wheebox, People Strong, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

30. Malaria Cases Declined by 24% in India: WHO Report

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) in a report stated that India is the only country to have recorded a substantial decline in malaria cases in 2017 out of the 11 highest burden countries worldwide.
- India registered a 24% reduction in cases over 2016, largely due to substantial declines of the disease in the highly malarious state of Odisha, home to approximately 40 percent of all malaria cases in the country.
- According to the report, India accounted for 4% of global malaria cases in 2017.
- A National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Malaria Elimination (2017-22) has been unveiled which states the year 2027 as the deadline for Malaria in India.
- The global deadline for eradicating the disease is 2030 which makes India's planned eradication 3 years early.

Schemes launched by Union/State Govt.

June 2019

1. Union Cabinet approves extension of PM-KISAN

scheme – The government has extended the extension of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) to all the farmers in the country.

- Earlier the benefit of the scheme was applicable to **farmers having two hectares of land**.
- PM-KISAN scheme was launched in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur on 24th February 2019.

Key points of the scheme

- **Aim** - to provide to provide income support to all small and Marginal landholding farmer.
- **Objective** - The main objective of the government to launch this scheme is the development of farmers by the provision of

financial assistance which can utilize by the farmer to increase the crop production every year.

Benefits of the Scheme

- As per government norms, the farmers will get the benefit of Direct Income support of **Rs. 6,000 per year** (500 Rs per month)
- This fund will be transferred directly into the bank accounts of beneficiary farmers through 3 equal instalments of **Rs. 2000** every four months into the Aadhar ceded bank accounts of eligible landholding SMFs families.
- 2 per cent interest subvention to farmers pursuing animal husbandry and fisheries.
- All farmers severely affected by severe natural calamities will get 2% interest subvention who avail loan through Kisan Credit Card and additional 3% interest subvention upon timely repayment of crop loans.

Fund allocation

- The government has allocated **Rs 75,000 crore** towards the scheme for financial year 2020.

2. **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Pension Yojana** - The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved Pradhan Mantri Kisan Pension Yojana, a new Central Sector Scheme (CSS), to provide pension cover to farmers.

Key Features of Scheme

- It is voluntary and contributory pension scheme for all Small and Marginal Farmers (SMF) across the country.
- Eligibility: Entry age of 18 to 40 years with provision of minimum fixed pension of Rs.3,000 on attaining the age of 60 years.
- Contribution: Beneficiary farmer of this scheme is required to contribute Rs 100 per month at median entry age of 29 years.

3. **Government launches DBT Tribal web portal** - Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched DBT Tribal web portal to streamline and expedite the process of releasing scholarship grants directly into bank accounts of beneficiary students.

- The portal provide single common platform to states to upload data related to beneficiaries, raise queries and give feedback.

4. **E-Governance Initiatives for ST Welfare Schemes** - Arjun Munda, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs launched the “e-governance initiatives for ST Welfare schemes” at a function organized by Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

- These e-governance initiatives will serve their purpose of the betterment of tribal communities across the nation.

5. **PM Modi hikes National Defence Fund scholarship assistance** – Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved changes to the Prime Minister’s Scholarship Scheme for wards of deceased defence personnel under the National Defence Fund.

Key points:

- **Scholarship Rate:** The rates of scholarship have been increased from Rs.2000pm (per month) to Rs.2500pm for boys and from **Rs. 2250pm to Rs.3000pm for girls.**
- **Scholarship Extended:** The ambit of Prime Minister’s Scholarship Scheme is now extended to include the wards of State Police officials who are or were martyred during terror or naxal attacks. The new scholarships quota for wards of state police officials will be 500 in one year.
- **Nodal ministry** - For the implementation of it the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will be the nodal Ministry.

About National Defence Fund

- NDF was set up in 1962.
- It was meant to take charge of voluntary donations (in cash and kind) received for promotion of national defence effort, and also to decide on their utilisation.
- National Defence Fund also accepts online voluntary contributions.
- NDF is used for welfare of members of Armed Forces, Para Military forces and Railway Protection Force, and their dependents.
- Prime Minister’s Scholarship Scheme’ (PMSS) is implemented under NDF.
- The National Defence Fund is administered by an executive committee that has the Prime Minister as the chairperson and the Defence, Finance and Home Ministers as members.

6. **Govt. approves Monthly Pension Scheme for Traders** - The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved **Rs.3000 monthly pension scheme** for small retail traders and shopkeepers after they attain the age of 60 years.

Key points of Scheme

- Under the scheme all small shopkeepers, retail traders and self-employed persons are assured a minimum of Rs.3,000 monthly pension after attaining 60 years of 60 years.

- The new pension scheme that offers pension coverage to the trading community will cover 3 crore small retail traders and shop keepers.
 - Eligibility: All small shopkeepers, self-employed persons and retail traders aged between 18-40 years and with Goods and Service Tax (GST) turnover below Rs.1.5 crore can enrol for pension scheme.
- 7. Cabinet approved new initiative to control FMD and Brucellosis** - Union Cabinet has approved new initiative (scheme) to control Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis to support the livestock rearing farmers and improve the health of animals.
- This initiative aims to fully control these diseases amongst livestock in the country in next five years and subsequently eradicate these diseases.
 - Cabinet has cleared a total outlay of Rs. 13,343 crores for this scheme and entire cost will be now borne by Central Government.
- 8. 'Aapki Beti' scheme** – Rajasthan government has increased the financial assistance given to school girls under the 'Aapki Beti' scheme.
- Under the Aapki Beti scheme, girls living under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) and whose mother or father or both have died to get annual financial assistance in the state.
 - The amount has been increased to **Rs 2,100 from Rs 1,100 for the girls studying in class 1**

to 8 and for the girls in class 9 to 12, the financial aid has been increased to Rs 2,500 from Rs 1,500.

- Similarly, the government has also increased ex-gratia payment to the next of kin of an official killed on election duty to Rs 20 lakh from Rs 15 lakh.

- 9. Telangana enhances Rythu Bandhu scheme to Rs 5000 per acre per season** - The Telangana Government has issued a notification to extend the Rythu Bandhu scheme for 2019-20, while enhancing the amount from Rs 4000 to Rs 5000.

About Scheme

- The scheme aimed at providing income support to the agriculturists directly to back their crops.
- Now the scheme provides Initial Investment support to agriculture and horticulture crops through a grant of Rs 5000 per acre per farmer each season towards purchase of inputs like seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, labour and other filed operation.
- The amount would be paid through electronic transfer to all the pattadars and title holders through e-Kuber, the RBI payment platform.
- In 2018, scheme was launched by Telangana CM K Chandrasekar Rao.

May 2019

- 1. 'Honey Mission'** - The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) distributed more than one lakh bee-boxes among farmers and unemployed youths across India in less than two years under its 'Honey Mission' initiative.

About Honey Mission

- It was launched in August 2017 in line with PM Narendra Modi's call for 'Sweet Revolution' (revolution in production of honey to increase its

production) in 2016 while introducing Banas Honey project at Deesa in Gujarat.

- 2. SPARROW project** - Government of India has now implemented Project 'SPARROW-CBIC' for online writing of Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) in SPARROW, for over 46,000 Group 'B' and Group 'C' Officers of Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) working in its various formations all across India.
- The term SPARROW stands for 'Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window'.

April 2019

- 1. Utkarsh Bangla and Sabooj Sathi Schemes of West Bengal gets Global Recognition –**

- The schemes of the West Bengal government 'Utkarsh Bangla' (skill training of youth) and 'Sabooj Sathi' (cycles for students) won the

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) awards of UN.

Note:

- Utkarsh Bangla got the topmost award and emerged as a winner in the Capacity Building

category and the Sabooj Sathi was ranked in the first five as a champion project under ICT application: E-Government category.

Utkarsh Bangla

- Utkarsh Bangla Scheme is aimed at providing vocational training to school dropouts. The beneficiaries of the scheme will be trained in driving, tailoring, repairing television and other electronic equipment's, beautician courses etc.

Sabooj Sathi

- Sabooj Sathi is a scheme of West Bengal government for distribution of bicycles to the students of class IX to XII studying in Govt. run and Govt. aided Schools and Madrashes. The scheme was launched in September 2015.

2. **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** – The Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra

Pradhan handed over the 7th Crore LPG connection under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY).

- The PMUY was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 1st May 2016 with an initial target of five crore LPG connections, which was later revised upward to eight crores connection

Key points

- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) aims to safeguard the health of women & children by providing them with a clean cooking fuel – LPG.
- Under this scheme, LPG connections will be provided to BPL families with a support of Rs.1600 per connection.
- The connection is provided in the name of the adult women of the family.

March 2019

1. **Gram Samridhi Yojana** – Gram Samridhi Yojana, a Rs 3,000 crore scheme funded by the World Bank and the Government of India, is being worked upon by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries in order to strengthen the unorganised food processing sector concentrated in rural areas.

Key points

- World Bank will be giving Rs 1,500 crore, Rs 1,000 crore will be borne by the Centre while state governments will put in Rs 500 crore.
- The scheme will be run in Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Punjab for a 5-year period in the initial phase and thereafter in other states of the country.

2. **Textiles Minister launches scheme for development of Knitwear Sector** – Union Minister of Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani launched a comprehensive scheme for the development of knitting and knitwear sector under PowerTex India in New Delhi. Apart from financial incentives, the two key elements are Yarn Bank and financial assistance for the solar energy scheme.
3. **Notun Disha' initiated by Tripura Government** – The government of Tripura announced 'Notun Disha' (New Direction) for assessing the academic level of students in classes III-VIII and then improving their current level. It was launched by state Education Minister Ratan Lal Nath.
4. **CCEA approves Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana** – The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the "Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran) Yojana" under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.

Objective –

- To create 2G Ethanol capacity in the country and attract investments in this new sector.
- To provide financial support to Integrated Bioethanol Projects using lignocellulosic biomass and other renewable feedstock.

5. **CCEA Approves Phase 2 of FAME Scheme** – The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved Rs **10,000 crore package** over three years till 2022 for the second phase of **Faster Adoption & Manufacturing of Electric (and hybrid) vehicles (FAME)** scheme.

Note:

- The FAME scheme is aimed at encouraging faster adoption of Electric and hybrid vehicle by way of offering an upfront incentive on the purchase of Electric vehicles and also by way of establishing a necessary charging Infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- FAME II emphasizes on electrification of the public transportation that includes shared transport.
- The Scheme would provide incentives on operational expenditure model for electric buses which will be delivered through State/city transport corporation (STUs).

6. **Mukhyamantri Anchal Amrit Yojana** – The government of Uttarakhand has launched the Mukhyamantri Anchal Amrit Yojana to provide milk at the Anganwadi Centres.

Note: Under the Mukhyamantri Anchal Amrit Yojana, the government would provide 100 ml milk twice a week for

- 2.5 lakh children at 20,000 Anganwadi Centres in the state.
7. **Jalamrutha Scheme of Karnataka** – The government of Karnataka has launched the water conservation scheme Jalamrutha.
- Note:
- The scheme focuses on drought-proofing measures, including protection and rejuvenation of water bodies.
8. **Yuvashree Arpan Scheme of West Bengal** – The Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee has unveiled a new scheme Yuvashree Plan II or Yuvashree Arpan to encourage entrepreneurship among youth.
- Note:** Under the Yuvashree Arpan Scheme around fifty thousand Youths who have passed out of ITI or other polytechnic institutes will be eligible to get financial support of Rs One Lakh from the state MSME department to set up their own business initiatives.

February 2019

1. **HRD Ministry launches SHREYAS Programme** – The Union Minister of Human Resources and Development Prakash Javadekar launched the **SHREYAS** programme to provide industry-specific apprenticeship opportunities to fresh graduates.
- Note:
- **SHREYAS stands for** - Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills.
 - It is a programme basket comprising of three initiatives of the **HRD, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and the Ministry of Labour and Employment.**
2. **Odisha launched 'Khushi' scheme** - The Odisha Cabinet approved the 'Khushi' scheme to provide free sanitary napkins to school girls across the state.
- The scheme will benefit nearly 17.25 lakh school girls from Class VI to XII studying in government and government-aided schools.
 - The state government will spend INR 466 crore over a period of 5 years to implement the scheme.
3. **CCEA approves launch of KUSUM scheme** - The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the launch of KUSUM, **Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan scheme.**
- The scheme aims to provide financial and water security to farmers through harnessing solar energy capacities of 25.75 gigawatts (GW) by 2022.
4. **Minister of Textiles inaugurates two Silk Projects in Assam** – The Minister of Textiles, Smriti Irani inaugurated two silk projects Soil to Silk Project and Eri Spun Silk Mill in Assam.
- Note:
- The Eri Silk Development Project aims to utilize tapioca plantation for dual purpose i.e. the tuber for food and the leaves for Eri silkworm.
5. **Jharkhand CM launches Rs 100-crore Sweet Revolution scheme**- Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das launched the first phase of the Rs 100-crore Sweet Revolution Scheme under which 1,207 farmers will be given Rs 1 lakh for bee keeping.
- Jharkhand is the best state to implement sweet revolution and there is huge potential for honey production.
 - Approximately 30% of land is covered by forest which is the most important resource for honey production.
6. **UNICEF Head lauds Poshan Abhiyaan** – POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- Poshan Abhiyaan has got global recognition for its effort to eradicate malnutrition.
 - The Mission is aimed at improving the nutritional status of Children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner during the next three years.
7. **Assam launches PRANAM Commission to protect parents of govt employees** – The Chief Minister of Assam Sarbananda Sonowal has announced a PRANAM Commission to look after the issues related to the Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) Bill.
- Note:** The bill proposes that if any complaints related to ignorance towards parents or unmarried differently abled siblings, then 10 or 15 per cent of the employee's salary will be deducted by the government and paid to the parents or differently abled siblings.
8. **MP launched the Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana** - The government of Madhya Pradesh has launched the Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana to provide employment for youth.
- Key points

- The scheme guarantees 100 days of employment every year to urban youths from economically weaker sections (EWS).
- The youth would get Rs 4,000 stipend per month and total Rs 13,500 for the 100 days period would be provided.
- During this period, they would be given skill development training, so that they become independent.

9. Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan – The government of Gujarat has launched the second edition of the water conservation scheme Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan.

- The scheme aims to deepen water bodies in the state before monsoon to increase storage of rainwater to be used during times of scarcity.

10. Odisha government launches KALIA Chhatra Bruti scholarship for Farmers Children –

- The government of Odisha has launched the KALIA Chhatra Bruti scholarship for the children of farmers.
- The Scholarship is under the KALIA, Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation, a scheme for financing farmers in Odisha.

Key points

- Under the Scheme, Odisha would spend Rs 10,180 crore over three years until 2020-21 in providing financial assistance to cultivators and landless agricultural labourers.
- The government would provide Rs 10,000 per family as assistance for cultivation, Rs 5,000 each in the Kharif and Rabi seasons, for five cropping seasons between 2018-19 and 2021-22.

11. UP CM launches Scheme for Adolescent Girls – In Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched Scheme for Adolescent girls (SAG). The scheme focuses on girls aged between 11 to 14 years who have left studies and will take steps for proper nutrition and special care for them.

12. Mega Pension Yojana - Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan – Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 05, 2019 launched the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan (PM-SYM) Yojana at Vastral in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Key points of the **scheme**

- Aim – to provide an assured monthly pension provided to workers in the unorganised sector.

Benefits of the Scheme

- Under the scheme, an assured monthly pension of **Rs 3,000 per month** will be provided to workers in the unorganised sector after 60 years of age.

Age limitation: Minimum age to invest in the scheme is **18 years and maximum age is 40 years.**

Fund allocation

- A sum of **Rs. 500 crores** have been allocated for the Scheme.

Monthly contribution

- To avail of the scheme, workers will have to contribute a minimal **Rs 100 month per month.**
- This new pension scheme will run alongside the existing Atal Pension Yojana, which guarantees returns post-retirement.
- The scheme is touted as to become the world's biggest pension scheme for the unorganised sector in five years.

13. Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna launched in Bihar- Bihar government has announced a universal old age pension scheme - Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna for all people above 60 years of age (except retired senior citizens of govt. service).

- All eligible person will get RS. 400 monthly Pension irrespective of caste, religion or community.
- The Scheme will come into force from the 1st of April 2019.
- The Chief Minister Nitish Kumar also announced a pension of Rs. 6,000 for journalists above 60 years of age.

14. Arundhati Scheme launched in Assam - The government of Assam has announced a new scheme called Arundhati to provide gold at free of cost to the brides.

Note:

- Under the scheme, the government of Assam aims to provide 1 Tola Gold, at about Rs 38K as on today, to brides belonging to all such communities of Assam where it is customary to provide gold at the time of the wedding.
- The government has set aside Rs 300 cr has been for the implementation of the Arundhati Scheme.

1. Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, Saubhagya scheme – 100% Houses in 25 States Electrified Under Saubhagya Yojana.

- The country achieved yet another milestone in the power sector with the completion of electrification in 100% households in 25 states at year end.
- Now, only about 10.48 lakh households are left to be electrified in 4 states – Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Chhattisgarh.
- The central government launched ‘Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana’ (Saubhagya) in September 2017 to achieve the goal of universal household electrification in the country by 31 March, 2019.

2. Samwad with Students - Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) has launched an outreach programme called Samwad with Students (SwS) in Bengaluru.

- Through the SwS initiative, ISRO aims to constantly engage youngsters across India to capture their scientific temperament.

3. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, (PMAY) - The Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs **Hardeep Singh Puri** announced that the loan subsidy for the middle-income group under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, (PMAY) has been extended till **31st March 2020**.

Note:

- The Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) is a component under the PMAY-Urban.
- Under the scheme, the central government provides interest subsidy or purchase/construction/extension/improvement of a house to cater Economical Weaker Section (EWS)/Lower Income Group (LIG)/Middle Income Groups (MIG).
- The CLSS is being implemented by two central nodal agencies in India, namely **Housing Urban Development Corp and National Housing Bank**.
- For MIG-I, an interest subsidy of 4% has been provided for loan amounts up to Rs.9 lakh.
- For MIG-II, an interest subsidy of 3% has been provided for loan amount up to Rs.12 lakh.
- Housing loans beyond Rs. 9 lakh and Rs. 12 lakhs will be at non-subsidized rates.

4. Yarn Bank Scheme: The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India had launched a **Yarn Bank Scheme**

as one of the components of PowerTex India scheme with an aim to avoid fluctuation in yarn price.

The objectives of the Yarn Bank Scheme are:

- To provide interest-free corpus fund to Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) or Consortium to enable them to purchase yarn at a wholesale rate and give the yarn at a reasonable price to the small weavers.
- To avoid middleman and local supplier’s brokerage charge on sales of yarn.
- Under the scheme, an interest-free corpus fund up to **Rs.2.00 crore** would be provided to the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)/Consortium formed by power loom weavers.

5. Madhya Pradesh launched Employment Scheme “Yuva Swabhiman Yojana” for Urban Youth - Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath announced the launch of the ‘Yuva Swabhiman Yojana’ for youths from the economically weaker sections in urban areas.

- Under this scheme, 100 days of employment will be provided to youths from economically weaker sections in urban areas. They will also be given skill training.

6. Kerala to launch ‘Pravasi Dividend Pension Scheme’ - The Kerala government has floated a ‘Pravasi Dividend Pension Scheme’ to provide regular pension to Non-Resident Keralites on a one-time payment of Rs 5 lakh.

7. Odisha Announces Jiban Sampark Project – Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced “Jiban Sampark” project in partnership with UNICEF India to generate awareness about the development and welfare initiatives of state government among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state.

8. Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana of Maharashtra – Aim - to reduce losses due to non-payment of electricity bills and also promote solar energy.

Key points

- The government of Maharashtra has decided to give two LED bulbs, a DC fan and a mobile charging socket as freebies to farmers enrolling under the Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana.
- The government would provide solar pumps at subsidised rates for the farmers.
- Under the Scheme, farmers with less than five acres will have to pay 5 per cent of the cost of a 3 HP solar pump while farmers with more than five acres will get a 5 HP solar pump for Rs 30000.

9. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) -

- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is the government-sponsored crop insurance scheme that integrates multiple stakeholders on a single platform.
- Under the scheme, there is a uniform premium of 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops, 1.5% for all Rabi crops and 5% in case of annual commercial and horticultural crops.

10. Rashtriya Gokul Mission: The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is implementing the scheme of Rashtriya Gokul Mission to conserve and develop indigenous breeds in a focused and scientific manner.

Key points

- The scheme comprises of two components namely National Programme for Bovine Breeding (NPBB) and National Mission on Bovine Productivity (NMBP).

11. PM launches Gangajal Project - The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Gangajal Project. The Prime Minister launched civic projects worth Rs 2,980 crore in Agra.

Key points

- The Gangajal project aims to provide a better supply of drinking water which will benefit the residents as well as tourists.
- The Gangajal project aims to bring 140 cusecs of Ganga water to Agra to help in meeting the drinking water demands in the city.

12. Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana – Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana.

- Under the scheme, a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
- The Scheme accords first preference to people from Girmitya countries such as Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica.

13. AMRUT Scheme: Only 20% of Projects completed - The data from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has revealed that -

- With only a year to the deadline, only 20 per cent of the total projects were completed utilising 3 per cent of the total funds approved.
- States like Bihar and Assam were not able to complete even a single project.

- Tamil Nadu topped the list by completing 378 projects.

Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)

- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) launched in 2015 aims to establish an infrastructure that could ensure adequate robust sewage networks and water supply for urban transformation.
- The mission period is up to March 2020.

14. Sikkim CM launched 'one family, one job' scheme - Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme in Gangtok.

- Now, Sikkim has become the first state in the country to carry out such a programme for the people entitling them to state government employee benefits.
- Under this Scheme, every family one government job has been allotted.

15. Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY) – The Odisha Government has announced a hike of Rs 200 per month in the social security pension under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY).

- The Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY) is a pension scheme under the Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for the disabled, old age persons in the state of Odisha.

16. Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) -

- Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) is aimed at the welfare of areas and people affected by mining-related operations, using the funds generated by District Mineral Foundations (DMFs).

17. MP launched 'Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana' - Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath has launched the Rs 50,000-crore farm debt-waiver scheme named 'Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana'. It would benefit 55 lakh small and marginal farmers.

18. Dharmendra Pradhan launches Ujjwala sanitary napkin initiative - The Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has launched the Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin initiative in Bhubaneswar (Odisha).

19. West Bengal Govt. announced two Initiatives for farmers –

- The West Bengal government has announced two welfare initiatives for farmers, part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme.
- The first of the two initiatives will provide Rs 2 lakh to the family of a deceased farmer.

- Under the second initiative, farmers would get Rs 2,500 twice a year for growing a single crop on one acre of land.

September

1. **Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna:** The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has approved a new scheme- Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna for Insured Persons covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act.

Key points:

- This scheme is a relief payable in cash directly to their Bank Account in case of unemployment and while they search for new engagement.
 - The eligibility for availing Super Specialty treatment for dependents of Insured Person has now been relaxed to insurable employment of **one year with 156 days of contributions**.
 - The ESIC also approved the proposal for increasing the funeral expenses from existing **10 thousand rupees to 15 thousand rupees** being paid on the death of Insured Person.
2. **Petroleum Minister to launch 'SATAT' initiative -**
- Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Skill Development and Entrepreneurship launched **SATAT** initiative to promote Compressed Bio-Gas as an alternative, green transport fuel.
 - Titled SATAT, the initiative is aimed at providing a **Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT)** as a developmental effort that would benefit both vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.
3. **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana:**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched ambitious Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), under Ayushman Bharat umbrella at Ranchi, Jharkhand.
 - The scheme aims to provide annual health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh to 10.74 crore beneficiary families i.e. over 50 crore beneficiaries across India.
 - It is touted as world's largest healthcare scheme that will serve beneficiary population that equals 27-28 European countries and almost equal to population of Canada, Mexico and US put together.

- The scheme will become operational from September 25, 2018 i.e. on birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyay.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)

- PMJAY is government-sponsored health insurance scheme, that will provide free coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year in any government or empanelled private hospitals all over India.
 - It will cover beneficiaries families identified on the basis of Socio Economic Caste Survey (SECC) 2011 in 444 districts of 30 states/Union Territories.
4. **Delhi Government launches India's first scheme for doorstep delivery of essential government services**
- Delhi Government has launched scheme for doorstep delivery of 40 essential government services like caste and marriage certificates, driving license and new water connections.
5. **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)** - The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved a new Umbrella Scheme "Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan" (PM-AASHA). The Scheme is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce as announced in the Union Budget for 2018.
- **Aim** - The scheme aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce.
 - **Objective** - To empower farmers and strengthen the Agriculture sector.
 - **Allocation** - The Cabinet has sanctioned **Rs 15,053 crore** to implement the PM-AASHA in the next two financial years, of which Rs 6,250 crore will be spent this year.
- Components of PM-AASHA:** Under the PM-AASHA, states would be allowed to choose from three schemes -
- Price Support Scheme (PSS),
 - Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS)
 - Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS).
6. **Govt. revised Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)** - The government has revised the PMJDY scheme, to further incentivize people's participation in the scheme.

Key points

- **Overdraft facility doubled** - The Finance Minister Arun Jaitley stated that the overdraft facility has been doubled from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 under the Yojana.
- **Age limit increased** - The age limit for availing overdraft facility under it has also been revised to 18 to 65 years from the earlier 18 to 60 years.
- **Accidental insurance cover raised** - The accidental insurance cover for new RuPay Cardholders has been raised from Rs. one lakh to Rs. two lakh.

Summits & Conference

June 2019

1. **G20 Finance Ministers' Meeting** – Fukuoka, Japan
 - Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will attend the two-day meeting of G-20 Finance Ministers and central bank governors in Japan.
2. **G20 Ministerial meeting on Trade and Digital Economy** – Tsukuba, Japan.
 - Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal represented the Indian delegation.

Note:

Japan will host the G20 summit for the first time in 2019

- Japan is going to host this year G20 Summit in the city of Osaka.
 - The G20 Osaka Summit will be held from June 28 to 29, 2019 in Japan.
 - The summit under Japanese presidency is centered around the theme "**Human centered future society**".
3. **The Intersessional meeting of Kimberley Process (KP)** was held in Mumbai.

Note:

- India is one of the founder members of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.
- At present, KPCS has 55 members representing 82 countries including EU with 28 members.
- The Kimberley Process is a joint initiative involving Government, international diamond industry and civil society to stem the flow of **Conflict Diamonds**.
- Conflict Diamonds means rough diamonds used by rebel movements or their allies to finance conflict aimed at undermining legitimate governments.
- It is also described in United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions.

4. **G-7 Summit 2019** will be held in France in August 2019.

Note:

- The 45th G7 summit will be held on August 25–27, 2019, in Biarritz, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France.
 - G7 member countries – China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, US.
 - The President of the European Commission has been a permanent welcome participant at all meetings and decision-making since 1981.
 - The 44th G7 summit was held on 8–9 June 2018, in La Malbaie, Quebec, Canada.
5. **2nd Global Disability Summit** - Buenos Aires, Argentina was held from 6th June to 8th June 2019.
 - India a delegation headed by Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot.
 - '1st Global Disability Summit' held at London, UK in July 2018.
 6. **14th Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Summit** was held in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.
 7. **Fifth meeting of the Governing Council** of NITI Aayog held in New Delhi.
 - The fifth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog was held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in New Delhi.
 8. **World Food India to be held in New Delhi**
 - The second edition of World Food India to be held from 1st to 4th November 2019 in New Delhi, which will position India as Food Processing Destination of the World.
 - The tagline of the event will be "Forging Partnerships for Growth".

May 2019

1. **UN to host 2020 Ocean Conference in Lisbon** – United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided to hold its 2020 high-level conference in **Portugal's Lisbon** to support the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.
2. **72nd World Health Assembly** - Geneva, Switzerland
Note: The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO).
3. The 11th Joint Consular Committee Meeting between India and Iran took place in New Delhi.
4. **TAPI Pipeline meeting held in Turkmenistan** - The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline meeting was held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.
 - The ground-breaking of the TAPI gas pipeline will be held in Pakistan in October 2019.

About TAPI Gas Pipeline -

 - The Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline, also known as Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline, is a natural gas pipeline being developed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
 - On 24 April 2008, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan signed a framework agreement to buy natural gas from Turkmenistan.
5. SCO Meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
 - Sushma Swaraj represented India in the meeting.
6. 17th Investiture Ceremony of Border Security Force, BSF held in New Delhi.
 - National Security Advisor Ajit Doval addresses the event.
7. WTO Ministerial meeting of developing countries meeting held in – New Delhi, India
8. Regional heads of Customs Administration of Asia Pacific Region of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) held in Kochi
9. 15th Finance Commission’s meeting with RBI held in - Mumbai, Maharashtra
10. The 16th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) was held in - Doha, Qatar.
Note: The theme of the meeting was “Partners in Progress”.
11. The G7’s (Group of Seven) Environment Ministers meet to discuss Climate crisis held in - Metz, France
Note: The G-7 groups together the US, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Japan, and Germany.

April 2019

1. **Saudi Arabia to host G20 Summit in 2020**
Note:
 - Saudi Arabia (first G20 meeting in the Arab world) will host the G20 summit on 21-22 November 2020 in its capital Riyadh.
 - Italy will host the G20 Summit in 2021.
 - India will host the G20 Summit in 2022 when the country celebrates its 75th year of Independence.

About G-20

 - The G20 (Group of Twenty) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union.
 - It was founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability.
2. **Global Water Summit 2019 – London, United Kingdom**
3. The second edition of Belt and Road Forum (BRF) was held in Beijing, China
Note: The theme of this event was “Belt and Road Cooperation: Shaping a Brighter Shared Future”.
4. 5th Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Media Summit on Climate Action and Disaster Preparedness held in Kathmandu, Nepal
Note:
 - The theme of the two-day summit was “Media Solutions for Sustainable Future: Saving Lives, Building Resilient Communities”.
5. **World’s foremost Artificial Intelligence (AI) Summit – Dubai, UAE**
Note: The aim of the inaugural ‘AI Everything (AIE)’ is to empower global dialogue on the future of government, business and society.
6. **The Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific (RCAP) 2019 Congress** held in – New Delhi
7. **17th Middle East and North Africa (MENA) World Economic Forum** held in – Jordan

March 2019

1. FinTech Conclave held in - New Delhi
Note:
 - NITI Aayog has organized FinTech Conclave at Dr. Ambedkar International Center, New Delhi.
 - The Conclave was inaugurated by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.
2. The first BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Sherpa meeting held in – Curitiba, Brazil
Note:
 - 11th BRICS Summit 2019 will be held in Brazil the capital city Brasilia.
 - In 2020, Russia will host the 12th BRICS Summit.
 - BRICS member countries include - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
3. 46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) – Abu Dhabi, UAE
Note:
 - The External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had been invited by Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates as the “Guest of Honour” to address the Inaugural Plenary.
4. 14th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnerships held in – New Delhi
5. International Digital Health Symposium held in – New Delhi
Note: Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Anupriya Patel, inaugurated the event.

February 2019

1. The 16th edition of BioAsia 2019 Asia’s largest biotechnology and life-sciences forum was conducted in-Hyderabad, Telangana.
Note:
 - The theme of the conference was ‘Life Sciences 4.0 – Disrupt the Disruption’.
 - It was inaugurated by the Governor of Telangana E.S.L Narasimhan.
2. ‘Aviation Conclave 2019’ – New Delhi
Note:
 - The Ministry of Civil Aviation organized the conclave.
 - Theme - **“flying for all”**.
3. Rising India Summit 2019 – New Delhi
Note:
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed Network-18 Rising India Summit, held in New Delhi and laid out his vision for a ‘New India ‘.
 - The theme of the summit was, ‘Beyond Politics: Defining National Priorities’.
4. 4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit held in – New Delhi
Note:
 - The summit was hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Digital Health Partnership (GDHP).
5. Conference on Future of Indian Banking – New Delhi
Note:
 - Niti Ayog had hosted the conference in association with the Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare (EGROW Foundation).
6. International Vision Zero Conference - Mumbai, Maharashtra
7. 8th World CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Congress 2019 – Mumbai, Maharashtra
Note: The theme of the year 2019 is ‘Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)’ to focus on corporate strategies, innovation, and strategic alliances. Dr. Soumitro Chakraborty won ‘CEO of the year’ award.
8. 4th India-ASEAN Expo and Summit – New Delhi
9. 4th Agri Leadership Summit 2019 - Sonipat, Haryana
Note:
 - Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmer’s Welfare, Radha Mohan Singh, inaugurated the Summit
 - The theme of the summit was “Entrepreneurship & Agri-Business; Agri Allied – A Promising Sector and Agri Service- Direct Marketing”.
10. World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2019 held in - New Delhi
Note:
 - The theme of WSDS 2019 was ‘Attaining the 2030 Agenda: delivering on our promise’.
 - Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji was honoured with the Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2019 for his outstanding contributions towards sustainable development in Fiji.

- The Energy and Resources Institute' (TERI) organized the summit.
 - Summit was inaugurated by Vice President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu.
11. Early Ed Asia 2019, the two-day event, which is Asia's largest **conference on Early Childhood**, was held in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**. The motto of the event was '**Our Children. Our Future**'.
 12. India-U.S. Commercial Dialogue and India-U.S. CEO Forum held in - New Delhi
Note: Union Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, chaired the meeting.
 13. **7th World Government Summit held in Dubai** - The seventh session of the World Government Summit held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).
 14. **1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference 2019 held in New Delhi** - LAWASIA, in association with the Bar Association of India, hosted its 1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference in New Delhi.
 - The theme of the conference was "**State Power, Business and Human Rights: Contemporary Challenges**".
 15. **2019 Asia LPG Summit was held in New Delhi** - Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister for petroleum and natural gas, inaugurated the 2019 Asia LPG summit in New Delhi.
Note: India is the **2nd largest consumer** of liquified natural gas (LPG) in the world after China.

16. India to host 13th Conference of Parties of Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species -

The conference will be held from 15th to 22nd February 2020 at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

Note:

- Union Environment Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, announced the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as the mascot for the 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) to be held in Gujarat in 2020.
 - He also revealed that the bird has been fondly named by the ministry as 'Gibi'.
17. The 5th International Dam Safety Conference held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
Note: Globally **India ranks third after China** and the USA in terms of the number of large dams with 5264 large dams in operation and 437 large dams under construction.
 18. **CREDAI's Event 'YouthCon-19' held in New Delhi** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the CREDAI YouthCon -19 in New Delhi's Talkatora Stadium.
 - The event is organized by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Association of India, CREDAI.
 - The theme for this YouthCon is '**Next Generation**'.

January 2019

1. **2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019** held in Goa
 - Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, inaugurated the event.
 - The theme for the forum is 'Regulation of Homeopathic Medical Products; Advancing global collaboration'.
2. **BRICS Summit 2019** - Brazil
3. 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 (Asia's largest rubber expo) was held in Mumbai.
4. 9th International Micro Irrigation conference held in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
 - The conference focused on the theme of "**Micro Irrigation and Modern Agriculture**".
5. **15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas held in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**
 - The theme of PBD convention 2019 is "**Role of Diaspora in Building New India**".
6. **29th Indian Paint Conference 2019 held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh**
 - The theme of the Conference is 'Paints Pe Charcha - Naye Aayaam'.
7. First 'National Consultation on Child Protection' for 2019 was held in New Delhi.
8. **First Global Aviation Summit held in Mumbai**
 - The theme of the summit is "**Flying for all**".
 - It was organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) in collaboration with FICCI.
9. **106th Session of Indian Science Congress Concludes in Jalandhar**
 - It was concluded in Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar on 07 January 2019.
 - It was inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and attended by Union Science & Technology Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhanon.
 - As a part of the Indian Science Congress, Women's Science Congress was held which

was inaugurated by Union Minister for Textiles & Industry Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani.

- The Children's Science Congress was inaugurated by the Nobel Laureates Avram

Hershko from Israel and F. Duncan M. Haldane from USA.

Books & Author

1. Autobiography titled '**Lessons Life Taught Me, Unknowingly**' - autobiography of veteran Bollywood actor Anupam Kher
2. Autobiography titled- '**My Life, My Mission**' - autobiography of **Yoga guru Baba Ramdev**
 - The book is co-authored with senior journalist Uday Mahurkar.
3. Book titled '**Function of Data Sovereignty: The Pursuit of Supremacy**' authored by - Vinit Goenka
4. Book titled 'Cricket World Cup: The Indian Challenge' - authored by - Ashis Ray
5. Book titled - Politics of Jugaad: The Coalition Handbook - Journalist Saba Naqvi
6. **Book titled 'Darkness to light'** - Former American professional basketball player, Lamar Odom.
7. Book titled "**No Presents Please**" is authored by - Jayant Kaikini
8. **Book titled "Game Changer" autobiography** of - Shahid Afridi (Pakistan's former Cricket team captain). The book is co-authored by Afridi and journalist Wajahat S Khan.
9. Book titled "**Indian Fiscal Federalism**" authored by - Dr. Y. V. Reddy, former Governor of RBI and Chairman of the 14th Finance Commission of India (The Chairman of 15th Finance Commission of India, N.K. Singh launched the book)
10. Book titled 'Saffron Swords' authored by - Manoshi Sinha Rawal
11. Book titled "The Third Pillar - How Markets and the State leave the Community Behind" authored by -Raghuram Rajan (Former Governor of RBI)
12. Book titled 'Every Vote Counts: The Story of India's Elections' authored by - former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla. Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari launched the book.
13. Book titled "India Positive" authored by - Chetan Bhagat
14. Book titled 'Simplicity & Wisdom' authored by - Mr. Dinesh Shahra
15. Book titled ' Khooni Vaisakhi' authored by -- Nanak Singh (Jallianwala Bagh survivor)
Note: A poem on the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, 'Khooni Vaisakhi', by Punjabi writer Nanak Singh has now been translated into English.
- It was banned by the British in 1920. Singh was present at Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919, and was 22 years old at the time.
- A book containing English translation of the 100-year-old classic Punjabi poem about Jallianwala Bagh massacre, 'Khooni Vaisakhi' has been released in Abu Dhabi.
- India's Ambassador to the UAE Navdeep Singh Suri commended the launch of the book.
- It will be published by Harper Collins India in March to mark the centenary of the Jallianwala Bagh.
16. Book titled "Quality, Accreditation & Ranking" authored by - Dr. H Chaturvedi
17. Book titled 'Mann Ki Baat - A Social Revolution on Radio'
18. Arun Jaitley releases book titled 'Mann Ki Baat - A Social Revolution on Radio' authored by - BlueKraft Digital Foundation
19. Book titled '**Moving On, Moving Forward: A year in Office**' - Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu
20. Book titled "Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India" authored by - **P Chidambaram** (former Finance Minister)
21. Book titled 'We are Displaced' authored by - **Malala Yousafzai**
22. A book titled 'Changing India' written by - **Former PM Manmohan Singh**
23. A book titled 'Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From' written by Tony Joseph
24. A book titled 'Blue Water Ahoy!' written by - Vice Admiral Anup Singh
25. A book '**Radio Kashmir in Times of Peace & War**' written by **Dr Rajesh Bhat**.
26. A book '**Yoga And Mindfulness**' - Mansi Gulati
27. Book titled 'The Rule Breakers' - **Preeti Shenoy**
28. Book titled 'Atal Ji Ne Kaha' - **Brijendra Rehi**
29. Book titled '281 and Beyond' - **VVS Laxman (veteran cricketer) autobiography**
30. Book titled 'No Spin' - **Shane Warne (veteran cricketer) autobiography**
31. Book titled "Gandhi: The years that changed the world (1914-1948)" - **Ramachandra Guha**.

32. Novel "Warlight" - **Michael Ondaatje** (named in Man Booker Prize list)
33. Novel 'The English Patient' - **Michael Ondaatje** (winner of Golden Man Booker International prize 2018)
34. Book titled 'Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly' - **Abhirup Bhattacharya**
35. The book 'Straight Talk' authored by ___ **Abhishek Manu Singhvi**
36. Book 'Calling Sehmat' authored by - **Harinder S. Sikka**
37. Author of 'Smart Cities Unbundle' book - **Dr. Samir Sharma**
38. Book titled "A Century is Not Enough" autobiography of – Sourav Ganguly.
39. Book titled 'Imperfect' autobiography of – Sanjay Manjrekar (cricketer-turned-commentator)

Obituaries

June 2019

1. **Rajnath Singh Surya** - Former BJP Rajya Sabha MP and senior journalist
2. **Mohamed Morsy** - Former Egyptian President
3. **Dinyar Contractor** - Veteran comedian, film and theatre actor
4. **Girish Karnad** - Noted actor, filmmaker and playwright
5. **Crazy Mohan** - Tamil writer, comedian and actor
6. **R V Janakiraman** - Former Puducherry Chief Minister between 1996 and 2000
7. **Pazhavila Ramesan** - Poet and lyricist
8. **Ruma Guha Thakurta** - Actor-singer Ruma Guha Thakurta, who featured in films such as Jwar Bhata, Ganga and 36 Chowringhee Lane.

May 2019

1. **Veeru Devgan** - Bollywood's most famous stunt and action choreographer.
2. **Hiralal Yadav** - Padma Shri Awardee Bhojpuri Singer. He was a well-known Bhojpuri folk singer from the 'Birha' genre,
3. **Vijaya Mulay** - Renowned filmmaker, film historian, researcher and educationist. In 1959, she founded the Delhi Film Society.
4. **Niki Lauda** - The former Formula One driver and three-time world champion
5. **Sammy Shore** - an actor and stand-up comedian who co-founded the Comedy Store, passed away.
6. **YC Deveshwar** - The Padma Bhushan awardee and ITC's Non-Executive Chairman.
7. **NR Madhava Menon** - an educationist, scholar, father of Modern Legal Education in India
8. **Prof. Kirpal Singh** - the first chronicler of Partition, who started building an archive in 1954
9. **Master Hirannaiah** - Noted Kannada theatre personality, satirist and TV actor
10. **Derek Sippy** - Former Billiards Player
11. **Maramraju Satyanarayana Rao** - Prominent writer and academician
12. **Baidyanath Mishra** - Renowned economist

April 2019

1. **J. Mahendran** - Noted Tamil Director
2. **Kartik Chandra Rath** - veteran dramatist, theatre organiser, and Economics teacher
3. **Sydney Brenner** - Biologist Sydney Brenner who helped decipher the genetic code and jointly won the 2002 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. (He was an alumnus of Oxford University and was born in South Africa)
4. **Pradeep Choubey** - Renowned Hindi poet
5. **SK Shivakumar** - Renowned Space Scientist and Former Director of Indian Space Research Organisation Satellite Centre (ISAC).
6. **Jerrie Cobb** - America's first female astronaut candidate, pilot
7. **Amar Paul** - Eminent Bengali folk singer
8. **S Muthiah** - Chennai's famed chronicler, cartographer, and journalist
9. **Rama Sengupta** - Veteran lady mountaineer
10. **Pungam Kannan** - Former India footballer
11. **Negasso Gidada** - former Ethiopian president
12. **K M Mani** - Former Kerala Finance Minister and Kerala Congress veteran (He is credited with the record of presenting the State Budget 13 times as Finance Minister)

- 13. Bhima Mandavi** - BJP MLA Bhima Mandavi killed in a massive Maoist attack at Dantewada district in Chhattisgarh.
- 14. Holkhomang Haokip** - Veteran politician and former minister of Manipur, Holkhomang Haokip

- 15. V G Patel (Viharidas Gopaldas Patel)** - Noted economist (He was the founder director of the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India)
- 16. Navtej Hundal** - Bollywood actor (The actor was last seen in Vicky Kaushal starrer 'Uri: The Surgical Strike' which released in January this year. He played the role of the Home Minister in the movie)

National Appointments

LIST OF CABINET MINISTERS & CONSTITUENCY 2019

<u>Portfolio (Department)</u>	<u>Minister Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>
Prime Minister and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Department of Atomic Energy; Department of Space; and All-important policy issues; and All other portfolios not allocated to any Minister.	Narendra Modi	Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
Ministry of Home Affairs	Amit Shah	Gandhinagar, Gujarat
Ministry of Defence	Rajnath Singh	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Minister of External Affairs	Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	-
Minister of Finance; and Minister of Corporate Affairs	Nirmala Sitharaman	Karnataka, Rajya Sabha
Minister of Road Transport and Highways; and Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.	Nitin Jairam Gadkari	Nagpur, Maharashtra
Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers	D.V. Sadananda Gowda	Bangalore North, Karnataka
Minister of Health and Family Welfare; Minister of Science and Technology; and Minister of Earth Sciences	Dr. Harsh Vardhan	Chandni Chowk, Delhi
Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Ramvilas Paswan	--
Minister of Law and Justice; Minister of Communications; and Minister of Electronics and Information Technology	Ravi Shankar Prasad	Patna Sahib, Bihar
Ministry of Minority Affairs	Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Jharkhand, Rajya Sabha
Minister of Parliamentary Affairs; Minister of Coal; and Minister of Mines	Prahlad Joshi	Dharwad, Karnataka
Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Mahendra Nath Pandey	Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh
Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises	Arvind Sawant	Mumbai South, Maharashtra
Minister of Food Processing Industries	Harsimrat Kaur Badal	Bathinda, Punjab
Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare; Minister of Rural Development; and Minister of Panchayati Raj.	Narendra Singh Tomar	Morena, Madhya Pradesh

Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Arjun Munda	Khunti, Jharkhand
Minister of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries	Giriraj Singh	Begusarai, Bihar
Minister of Women and Child Development; and Minister of Textiles	Smriti Zubin Irani	Amethi, Uttar Pradesh
Minister of Human Resource Development	Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'	Haridwar, Uttarakhand
Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment	Thaawar Chand Gehlot	Madhya Pradesh, Rajya Sabha
Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and Minister of Information and Broadcasting	Prakash Javadekar	Maharashtra, Rajya Sabha
Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas; and Minister of Steel	Dharmendra Pradhan	Madhya Pradesh, Rajya Sabha
Minister of Railways; and Minister of Commerce and Industry	Piyush Goyal	Maharashtra, Rajya Sabha
Minister of Jal Shakti	Gajendra Shekhawat	Jodhpur, Rajasthan

LIST OF MINISTERS OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

Minister Name	Portfolio
Santosh Kumar Gangwar	Ministry of Labour and Employment.
Rao Inderjit Singh	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; and Ministry of Planning.
Shripad Yesso Naik	Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH); and Ministry of Defence.
Dr. Jitendra Singh	Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region; Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Department of Atomic Energy; Department of Space.
Kiren Rijiju	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports; and the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
Prahalad Singh Patel	Ministry of Culture; and Ministry of Tourism.
Raj Kumar Singh	Ministry of Power; Ministry of New and Renewable Energy; and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
Hardeep Singh Puri	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs; Ministry of Civil Aviation; and Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
Mansukh L. Mandaviya	Ministry of Shipping; and Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

June 2019

1. Speaker of 17th Lok Sabha - Om Birla (MP from Kota, Rajasthan)
2. New executive director at RBI - Rabi N. Mishra
3. New Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court - Justice Dhirubhai Naranbhai Patel
4. New interim Chief of J&K Bank - RK Chibber
5. New acting Central Vigilance Commissioner - Sharad Kumar
6. New Chief of India Meteorological Department (IMD) - Mrutyunjay Mohapatra (Renowned scientist and cyclone warning specialist)
7. Principal Secretary to PM Modi - Nripendra Mishra
8. New Chairman of Axis Bank - Rakesh Makhija
9. New independent director of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank - Sachin Bansal
10. New National Security Adviser (NSA) - Ajit Doval

11. New Advocate General of Chhattisgarh - Satish Chandra Verma

May 2019

1. New Prime Minister of India – Narendra Modi (for second term)
2. New Navy Chief - Karambir Singh
3. New CM of Andhra Pradesh - Jagan Mohan Reddy
4. New Chairman of ITC - **Sanjiv Puri**
5. New MD & CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank - Nitin Chugh
6. New CEO of LIC Mutual Fund - **Dinesh Pangtey**
7. RBI appoints R Gandhi on YES Bank Board
8. New Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of Walmart – Suresh Kumar
9. Coach of Indian men’s national Volleyball Team - Dragan Mihailovic (Serbia)
10. BSE appoints First Independent Woman Director Jayshree Vyas to board
11. Senior IAS officer Dilip Kumar was appointed as the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the office of Lokpal.
12. Flipkart-owned fashion e-commerce platform **Myntra** announced that it had appointed celebrity couple Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma as its first brand ambassadors.

April 2019

1. First woman vice-chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia - Professor Najma Akhtar
2. Secretary of Defence Finance - Gargi Kaul
3. First Chief Justice of newly constituted Andhra Pradesh High Court - Justice Vikram Nath
4. New MD & CEO of Indian Overseas Bank - Karnam Sekar
5. New president of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) – India - Vikramjit Singh Sahney
6. Managing Director of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) - Vipin Anand
7. Deutsche Bank India CEO - Kaushik Shaparia (He succeed Ravneet Gill)
Note: Deutsche Bank AG is a German multinational investment bank and financial services company headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany.
8. Twitter India MD - Manish Maheshwari
9. New Google India head - Mayuri Kango
10. New Chief Justice of Bombay High Court - Justice Pradeep Nandrajog
11. One of the power brands of Emami Limited ‘Navratna’ has appointed Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan as Brand Ambassador
12. New Chairman cum Managing Director (CMD) of National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) - Shiv Das Meena
13. Uday Kumar Varma resigned from the post of The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Assocham) Secretary-General.

March 2019

1. New MD & CEO of ICICI Securities - Vijay Chandok
2. New Chief of Naval Staff - Admiral Karambir Singh (He replaced Admiral Sunil Lanba)
3. First Lokpal or anti-corruption ombudsman of India - Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose (former Supreme Court judge)
4. New Chief Minister of Goa - Pramod Sawant (He became the 11th Chief Minister of Goa)
5. New Chairman of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) - MR Kumar
6. Non-Executive Chairman of Axis Bank - Rakesh Makhija
7. New Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) - Scientist Ajit Kumar Mohanty
8. New Finance Secretary - Subhash Chandra Garg (He replaces Ajay Narayan Jha)
9. New Chairman of the National Commission for Backward Classes - Bhagwan Lal Sahni
10. 15th Finance Commission Member - Ajay Narayan Jha (He replaces Shaktikanta Das).
11. Non-executive chairman of Bank of Baroda - Hasmukh Adhia (Former Finance Secretary)
12. First Chairman of the newly constituted Lokayukta in Mizoram - C Lalsawta
13. Kummanam Rajasekharan resigns as Mizoram Governor
Note: Jagdish Mukhi, the Governor of Assam has been given additional charge of the post of Governor of Mizoram.

14. India's 1st Transgender Election Ambassador - The Election Commission of India has appointed transgender social activist **Gauri Sawant**, as one of the 12 election ambassadors from Maharashtra. She is the first transgender election ambassadors.
15. PhonePe (UPI based payment app company) has appointed Bollywood actor Aamir Khan as its Brand Ambassador.
16. New Chancellor of Central University of Gujarat - Hasmukh Adhia
17. Supreme Court (SC) has appointed senior advocate as a mediator for resolving various disputes related to cricket administration in the country -- **P S Narasimha**

International Appointment

June 2019

1. External Auditor for WHO - CAG Rajiv Mehrishi chosen External Auditor for WHO
2. New PM of Thailand - Prayuth Chan-ocha
3. New Pakistan ISI Chief - Lt General Faiz Hameed
4. UN Deputy Executive Director - Anita Bhatia
- Indian-origin Anita Bhatia has been appointed as the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for Resource Management, Sustainability and Partnerships.

May 2019

1. New President of Indonesia - Joko Widodo (for 2nd term)
2. New President of Ukraine - Volodymyr Zelenskiy
3. **New Deputy Attorney General of United States** - Jeffrey Rosen
4. **New President of the United Nations General Assembly** - Professor Tijjani Mohammad Bande
5. **Next Ambassador of India to State of Eritrea** - Subhash Chand
6. **Anil Kumble** re elected as ICC Cricket Committee chairman for a second term.
7. UN Secretary, General Antonio Guterres, has appointed Indian Army officer, Lieutenant General Shailesh Tinaikar, as the new Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan
8. Next President of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) - Kumar Sangakkara (Former Sri Lankan Cricket team captain)
9. India's Jagjit Padvadia has been re-elected with the highest number of votes by the UN Economic and Social Council to a five-year term on International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), while China's candidate Hao Wei lost.

April 2019

1. India's Ambassador to Seychelles - General (Retd.) Dalbir Singh Suhag
Note: General Suhag was the 26th Army Chief of the Indian Army from July 2014 to December 2016.
2. New President of Ukraine - Volodymyr Zelensky
3. New Prime Minister of Palestine - Mohammed Ishtayeh (He succeed Rami Hamdallah)
4. New Prime Minister of Haiti - Jean Michel Lapin
5. New Prime Minister of Israel - Benjamin Netanyahu re-elected for the fifth term in office
6. New President of Algeria - Abdelkader Bensalah
7. New President of World Bank - David Malpass (appointed as 13th President of World Bank) (He replaced Jim Yong Kim)
8. Chicago has created history by electing **Lori Lightfoot** an African American woman as its mayor for the first time.
9. AIIFF President Praful Patel has become the first Indian to be elected as member of FIFA Executive Council.
10. First Indian to be appointed Chair of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Health and Safety Committee by the world governing body -- Col (Dr.) Bibhu Kalyan Nayak.
11. India's Ambassador to South Africa - Jaideep Sarkar
12. India's Ambassador to Lebanon - Suhel Ajaz Khan

March 2019

1. First female President of Slovakia - Zuzana Caputova
2. New Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of International Cricket Council (ICC) - Manu Sawhney
3. Nursultan Nazarbayev President of Kazakhstan resigned after nearly 30 years in power.
4. New Prime Minister of Palestinian - Mohammad Shtayyeh
5. India's Ambassador to The Republic of Uzbekistan - Santosh Jha
6. Chief Scientist at WHO - Soumya Swaminathan, a Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organisation has been named Chief Scientist of the WHO.
7. India's Ambassador to Vietnam - Pranay Kumar Verma
8. India's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia - Dr. Ausaf Sayeed
9. UNDP appoints **Padma Lakshmi** as Goodwill Ambassador
Note: Padma Lakshmi is an Indian American television personality and food expert

Honours & Awards

June 2019

1. **Maldives to confer its highest award 'Nishan Izzuddin' on PM Modi** - Maldives will confer 'Nishan Izzuddin' award on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It is the highest award to honour foreign nationals.
2. **Miss India 2019** - Suman Rao from Rajasthan has won the Femina Miss India World 2019 beauty pageant during a star-studded ceremony at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Indoor Stadium in New Delhi.
 - Shivani Jadhav from Chhattisgarh clinched Femina Miss Grand India 2019 title and Shreya Shanker from Bihar won Miss India United Continents 2019 title during the grand finale of the beauty pageant.
3. **Ex-President Pratibha Patil awarded with Mexico's Highest Civilian Award** - Former President Pratibha Patil was bestowed on the highest civilian award of Mexico for foreigners.
4. Chinese President Xi Jinping was conferred with highest national award of Kyrgyzstan titled Manas Order of the First Degree in Bishkek (capital of Kyrgyzstan).
Note: Kyrgyzstan hosted 19th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit.
5. **Indian engineer wins Innovation for Sustainable Development Award** - An Indian engineer named Nitesh Kumar Jangir won 2019 Commonwealth Secretary-General's Innovation for Sustainable Development Award in London, United Kingdom (UK). He won the award in People category, for creating a low-cost breathing support device called 'Saans' for premature babies.
6. **Amitav Ghosh becomes first English writer to get 54th Jnanpith award** - Renowned author **Amitav Ghosh** was awarded the 54th Jnanpith Award for his contribution to the enrichment of Indian Literature in English. He was conferred the award by former governor of West Bengal Gopalkrishna Gandhi.
7. **Man Booker International Prize** - An author from **Oman, Jokha Alharthi** has won the prestigious Man Booker International Prize for "**Celestial Bodies**", the story of three sisters of a desert country confronting its slave-owning past and a complex modern world.
8. **Priyanka Chopra to be honoured with humanitarian award by UNICEF** - Priyanka Chopra, a global UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for Child Rights is going to be honoured with Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award by UNICEF at the UNICEF SNOWFLAKE BALL.
9. **WHO award for Rajasthan Health Department** - The World Health Organization has selected the Rajasthan government's Medical & Health Department for its award this year in recognition of its achievements in the field of tobacco control.
 - The department's Additional Chief Secretary, Rohit Kumar Singh has received the award at a function to mark World No Tobacco Day in New Delhi.
 - The Health Department of the State is the only government body in the country which will be awarded for its tobacco-free initiatives.
10. **J.C. Daniel Award** - Malayalam Actor Sheela J.C. has won the J.C. Daniel Award, the highest honour in Malayalam cinema. She is only the second woman to get it, after Aranmula Ponnamma in 2005.
11. **Akshaya Patra wins BBC award** - Akshaya Patra, a non-profit organisation, has been awarded the BBC World

- Service Global Champion Award. It runs one of the world's largest school meals project in India.
12. **2019 Global Leadership Award** - Google's India-born CEO Sundar Pichai and Nasdaq president Adena Friedman have been chosen for the prestigious Global Leadership Awards 2019.
 13. **Automobile major Mahindra won the Gold Award in South Africa** for fairing on various indicators, including level of satisfaction among its network of dealers and the manner of allocation of vehicles to them.
 14. **UN Sasakawa Award 2019**: The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) conferred 'Sasakawa Award 2019' for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to Pramod Kumar Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary to Prime Minister of India.
 15. **Former US President Jimmy Carter receives Statesmanship Award** - Jimmy Carter, Ex-President of United States of America (USA) won the inaugural George H. W. Bush Award for Statesmanship in recognition of his contributions to relations between U.S. and China.
 16. **Teen Climate activist Greta Thunberg wins Amnesty prize** - The 16-year old climate activist, Greta Thunberg of Sweden won Amnesty International's 'Ambassador of Conscience' Award 2019 for mobilising world public opinion global warming.
 17. **I&B Ministry institutes Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman** - The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) has instituted a new award called Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS) from year 2019 to recognise contribution made by media in spreading awareness about Yoga and for promotion and commemoration of International Yoga Day, held every year on 21 June.

May 2019

1. **McCain Institute Award** - IPS officer Chhaya Sharma, who led the investigation team of the infamous Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case, has been awarded the 2019 McCain Institute Award for Courage and Leadership.
2. **CEAT Cricket Rating Awards 2019 Announced**:
 - International Cricketer and Batsman of the Year - Virat Kohli
 - International Bowler of the Year - Jasprit Bumrah
 - International ODI Cricketer of the Year - Rohit Sharma
 - International T20 Bowler of the Year - Rashid Khan
 - International Woman Cricketer of the Year - Smriti Mandhana
 - International T20 Player of the Year - Aaron Finch
3. **Kapil Sharma acknowledged as most viewed Stand-up Comedian in India & Abroad** - Comedian-actor Kapil Sharma has been acknowledged as the most viewed stand-up comedian in India and abroad by the World Book of Records London.
4. **Shyam Saran to be Conferred with Japan's 'Order of the Rising Sun' Award** - Former foreign secretary Shyam Saran will be conferred with Japan's second highest national award, 'Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star'.

Note:

 - He will be conferred with this award for his contributions to strengthen the strategic ties and enhancing mutual understanding between India and Japan.
 - Saran, who was India's Foreign Secretary during 2004-2006, has played an important role to elevate Japan-India relationship to the strategic partnership.
5. **Horticulture award for TNAU V-C** - N Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has been conferred the lifetime recognition award by the Confederation of Horticulture Association of India.
 - The award has been conferred for his outstanding contribution in the field of horticulture and academic leadership focussed on human resource development in agriculture.
6. **Bharti AXA claims Excellence Award** - Bharti AXA Life Insurance, a private life insurer, has been conferred with the FICCI Claims Excellence Award.
7. **Nepal's 18 year old girl sets Guinness World Records for Longest Dancing** - An 18-year old girl from Nepal named Bandana set a Guinness World Records on 'Longest Dancing Marathon by an Individual'.
 - She danced exclusively to Nepalese music continuously for 126 hours (over five days).
 - She broke record set by India's Kalamandalam Hemlatha, who danced continuously for 123 hours and 15 minutes in 2011.
 - He performed classical dance form Mohiniyattam and set record at age of 37.
8. **CBSE was honoured with the Digital India Award 2019** under 'Exemplary Online Service' category on February 22, 2019.
9. **Professor Balram Bhargava**, Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), won the 2019 Dr Lee Jong-wook Memorial Prize for Public Health.

Note:

- He won the award for his achievements as an innovator, clinician, researcher and trainer.
- The award was presented at the 72nd World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

About ICMR

- ICMR was founded in 1911. It is one of the oldest and largest medical research bodies in the world.
- It is the apex body in India which formulates, coordinates and promotes biomedical research.
- ICMR headquartered in New Delhi.

10. Indian contemporary artist **Nalini Malani** has won the prestigious Joan Miro Prize for 2019. Joan Miro Prize is named after Spanish painter and sculptor Joan Miró, one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.

11. **Global Book Prize 'Nine Dots'** – Indian writer **Annie Zaidi** was announced as the 2019 winner of the USD

100,000 Nine Dots Prize, a prestigious book prize created to award innovative thinking that addresses contemporary issues around the world.

- She won for her entry 'Bread, Cement, Cactus'- combining memoir and reportage to explore concepts of home and belonging rooted in her experience of contemporary life in India.

12. **France's Highest Civilian Honour** - Former ISRO chairman A S Kiran Kumar was conferred with France's highest civilian honour, Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Legion d'Honneur, for his contribution to India-France space cooperation.

13. **V K Krishna Menon Award** - GD 'Robert' Govender, an Indian-origin journalist in South Africa, has been honoured in the UK with 2019 V K Krishna Menon award for his outstanding contribution as a pioneer of decolonised journalism.

April 2019

1. **Pulitzer Prize 2019** –

- **For Fiction** - "The Overstory" by Richard Powers
- For Drama - "Fairview" by Jackie Sibbles Drury
- For Poetry - "Be With" by Forrest Gander
- For Music - Prism, by Ellen Reid

About Pulitzer Prize

- The Pulitzer Prize is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States.
- It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of American (Hungarian-born) Joseph Pulitzer who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher and is administered by Columbia University in New York City.

2. **World Press Photo Award 2019** - John Moore

Note:

- An image of a little girl crying, as she and her mother have been taken into custody by US border officials in Texas won the prestigious World Press Photo of the Year.
- Veteran Getty photographer John Moore took the picture in the Rio Grande Valley in June 2018.
- Dutch-Swedish photographer Pieter Ten Hoopen won the "World Press Photo Story of the Year Award" for the image of 2018 mass-migrant caravan to the US border.

3. **Saraswati Samman 2018** - Telugu poet **K Siva Reddy** has been selected for the prestigious Saraswati Samman,

2018 for his collection of poetry titled **Pakkaki Ottigilite**.

Note: The award, instituted by the KK Birla Foundation in 1991.

4. **Two West Bengal Government schemes win UN Awards** - Two schemes of the West Bengal government for skill development- "Utkarsh Bangla" and distribution of bicycles to students "Sabooj Sathi" have won the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) awards of the United Nations.

Note:

- The "Utkarsh Bangla" project aims at creating a pool of skilled candidates who are industry ready,
- While under the "Sabooj Sathi" scheme, bicycles are distributed to students between class IX and XII studying in government run and government aided schools and madrasahs of the state.

5. **Indian Oil Bags AIMA Managing India Award for outstanding PSU** – Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has bagged the prestigious 'AIMA Managing India Award 2019 for outstanding PSU of the year.' The award was presented by former President Pranab Mukherjee to Sanjiv Singh, Chairman, Indian Oil.

6. **PM Modi awarded Russia's highest state honour** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded with Order of St Andrew the Apostle – the highest state decoration of Russia, for exceptional services in promoting special and privileged strategic partnership between the two countries.

- This is the seventh international award that PM Modi has been honoured with.
7. **Namami Gange Gets Global recognition at World Summit** – The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) was awarded the distinction of “Public Water Agency of the Year” by Global Water Intelligence at the Global Water Summit in London.
- The Global Water Awards are presented at the Global Water Summit, the major business conference for the water industry worldwide.
8. **Deenanath Mangeshkar Award 2019** – The prestigious Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Award 2019 was awarded to National Award-winning filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar, popular scriptwriter Salim Khan and dancing diva Helen.
- Lifetime Award – Salim Khan.
 - Special Award for the contribution to Indian cinema – Madhur Bhandarkar.
 - Special Award – Helen.
9. **2019 Tagore Literary Prize** - Rana Dasgupta
Note: The second edition of **Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize** was awarded to author Rana Dasgupta for his 2010 novel “Solo“, a tale of estrangement and the ultimate failure of material existence.
10. **Freedom of the City of London** - Alice G. Vaidyan, Chairman and Managing Director of the General Insurance Corporation (GIC) of India, India’s reinsurance major, has been awarded the Freedom of the City of London in recognition of her work to promote insurance ties between India and the UK.
11. **Ikhamanga Award 2019** - Ex-South Africa all-rounder Jacques Kallis has been honoured with the Order of Ikhamanga in the Silver Division.
Note: The national honour is bestowed by the President of South Africa on citizens who have made significant contributions to arts, literature, music, journalism, culture, and sports.
12. **National Intellectual Property Award, 2019** – Dr. **Benny Antony** has been honoured with the National Intellectual Property Award, 2019 in the category of Top Individual for Patents and Commercialization.
13. **National IP Award 2019** - The Intellectual Property Rights Cell (IPR Cell) of Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) has been selected for the National Intellectual Property Award 2019.
14. **World Press Freedom Hero** - Dawn editor and Columnist Cyril Almeida from Pakistan has won the IPI’s (International Press Institute) World Press Freedom Hero award in 2019.
Note: He won this award for his “critical” and “tenacious coverage” of the civil-military relations in Pakistan.
15. **UN Medal of Honour** - A total of **150 Indian peacekeepers serving** with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have received medals of honour for their dedicated service and sacrifice.
16. **UK Royal Society Honour** - Cipla Chairman Yusuf Hamied
17. **Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award** - Sunil Kumar Gautam, Special Commissioner of Police (Operations) was honoured with ‘Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award’ for his book titled ‘Samvidhan Kavya’
18. **Global Tech Prize** - India’s education technology startup ‘**Dost Education**’ won a \$25,000 tech prize along with two other winners from Tanzania and Egypt.
Note:
 - The Next Billion Edtech Prize 2019, run by UK-based Varkey Foundation, recognizes the most innovative technology destined to have a radical impact on education in low income and emerging world countries.
19. **Celent Model Bank 2019 Award** - Fincare Small Finance Bank (SFB) has been awarded the prestigious Celent Model Bank 2019 Award in the category of Financial Inclusion, for ‘Redesigning Lending to Reach Small Businesses’.
20. **World Press Freedom Prize 2019**- Reuters journalists, Kyaw Soe Oo, and Wa Lone selected for the award
Note:
 - The World Press Freedom Prize also known as UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize
 - Currently, they are serving 7-year prison sentences in Myanmar.
21. **Best Athletic Coach in Asia 2019** - Indonesian Eni Nuraeni was named by Asian Athletic Association (AAA) as the best athletic coach in Asia for the short-haul run category in 2019.
22. **Virat Kohli Named Wisden’s Leading Cricketer** - Team India captain Virat Kohli has been named as the Wisden Almanack’s ‘Leading Cricketer of the Year’ for the third straight time.
23. **Smriti Mandhana named Wisden’s Leading Women’s Cricketer of The Year** - Team India opener Smriti Mandhana has been named as the Wisden Almanack’s ‘Leading Women’s Cricketer of the Year’.
24. **Global Slag Company of The Year Award** - Tata Steel has been named as the ‘Global Slag Company of the Year’
25. **UAE honours PM Modi with highest Civilian award Zayed Medal** - PM Narendra Modi
Note:
 - The UAE honoured PM Narendra Modi with the prestigious **Zayed Medal** for giving a “big boost” to bilateral strategic ties.

- President of the UAE Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan conferred PM Modi with the award, the highest decoration awarded to kings, presidents, and heads of states.

26. Global Health Award - Vikram Patel

- Prof Patel has been awarded 2019, John Dirks, Canada Gairdner Global Health Award for his world-leading research in global mental health.

March 2019

1. **Pravasi Bhartiya Samman** - Swiss-based NRI scientist **Dr Rajendra Joshi** has been conferred with the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind.
2. **Oxford University's Bodley Award** - Nobel Prize-winning economist **Amartya Sen** awarded with the prestigious Bodley Medal, the highest honor granted by the University of Oxford's world-famous Bodleian Libraries.
3. **Croatia's Highest Award - President Ram Nath Kovind** has been awarded the Grand Order of King Tomislav with Sash and Grand Star by the President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic for his exceptional contribution to the advancement of overall relations and development of mutual cooperation between India and Croatia.
Note: Croatia Capital: Zagreb, Currency: Croatian kuna.
4. **Global Teacher Prize For 2019** - Peter Tabichi, a member of the Franciscan religious order has been conferred with the prestigious Global Teacher Prize for 2019 at a ceremony in Dubai.
Note:
 - A science teacher from rural Kenya Peter Tabichi gives away 80% of his monthly income to the poor.
 - The award recognises 'exceptional' teacher's commitment to pupils in a remote part of Kenya's Rift Valley.
5. **64th Filmfare Awards** - Winners of the 64th Filmfare Awards were announced at Jio Garden, BKC, Mumbai.
List of winners is as follows:
 - Best Film – Raazi directed by Meghna Gulzar
 - Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female) - Alia Bhatt for film 'Raazi'
 - Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male) - Ranbir Kapoor for film 'Sanju'
 - Best Director - Meghna Gulzar for film Raazi
 - Critics' Award for Best Film: AndhaDhun
 - Best Short Film (Fiction): Rogan Josh
 - Best Short Film (Non-Fiction): The Soccer City
6. **Vyas Samman 2018** - Hindi writer **Leeladhar Jagudi** honoured with Vyas Samman 2018 for his collection of poems "Jitne Log Utne Prem" published in 2013.

- The award carries an amount of Rs. 4 lakhs and it was started by K K Birla foundation in 1991.
- Born in Dhangal village in Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Mr. Jagudi was awarded the Padma Shri in 2004

7. Abel Prize 2019 - University of Texas professor **Karen Uhlenbeck** has become the first woman to win the Abel Prize

Note:

- It is a Norwegian prize awarded annually by the King of Norway to one or more outstanding mathematicians.
- The prize is named after the 19th century Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel.

8. Swachh Survekshans-2019 Awards - President Ram Nath Kovind has presented Swachh Survekshans-2019 Awards in New Delhi.

List of awards –

- **India's cleanest city- Indore (MP)** bagged award for the **for third straight year**
Note: The second and third positions were clinched by Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh and Mysore in Karnataka.
- **Cleanest big city** - Ahmedabad has been named the cleanest big city with a population of more than ten lakh.
- **Cleanest medium city** - Ujjain has been awarded cleanest medium city having a population between 3 lakh to 10 lakh.
- **Cleanest Small city** - New Delhi Municipal Council area was given the "Cleanest Small City" award.
- **Best Ganga Town** - Uttarakhand's Gauchar was adjudged the "Best Ganga Town".
- **Cleanest capital** - Bhopal has been named the cleanest capital.
- **Fastest Moving big city** - Raipur won the 'Fastest Moving Big City'.
- **Fastest Moving medium city** - Mathura-Vrindavan won the tag of Fastest Moving Medium City.
- Chhattisgarh has bagged the top spot in the category of best performing states.

- Jharkhand is at the second spot while Maharashtra is at the third.

Note:

- Swachh Survekshan Awards are given by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs based on the survey which covered all urban local bodies in the country
- 9. Yashwantrao Chavan National Award** - Raghuram Rajan, former governor of RBI has been chosen for the 'Yashwantrao Chavan National Award 2018' by Yashwantrao Chavan Prathisthan for his contribution to economic development.
 - 10. University for Peace Confers Honorary Doctorate on Vice President Venkaiah Naidu** - Vice President Venkaiah Naidu was conferred Honorary Doctorate from the UN established University of Peace. The university has stated that the degree of "Doctor Honoris Causa" (Doctor of Philosophy) was conferred on the Indian Vice President recognising his contribution to the Rule of Law, democracy and sustainable development in India.
 - 11. New Zealand PM's Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship** - Rio Paralympics silver medallist Deepa Malik was named as the recipient of the New Zealand Prime Minister's Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship for 2019 in recognition of her inspiring achievements.
 - 12. Shri. Venkaiah Naidu** is the first Indian to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Peace.
 - 13. Chameli Devi Jain Award** – The bilingual correspondent with the BBC **Priyanka Dubey** has been named for the Chameli Devi Jain Award for an Outstanding Woman Journalist for the year 2018.
Note: The Chameli Devi Jain Award awards **women journalists** for their exceptional contribution to the cause of journalism upholding standards of excellence through a sustained body of work.
 - 14. Pritzker Prize 2019** - Japanese Architect Arata Isozaki has received the Pritzker Prize 2019.
Note:
 - He is the 46th laureate and eighth architect from Japan to win the Pritzker Prize.
 - Pritzker Prize is an annual award to honour a living architect or architects whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities.
 - The award constituted by Pritzker family of Chicago through their Hyatt Foundation in 1979.
 - 15. Templeton Prize 2019** - Brazilian physicist and astronomer **Marcelo Gleiser** has been awarded the 2019 Templeton Prize
 - 16. Windham-Campbell Prize** - An Indian journalist, author and chief of The Wire, 'Raghu Karnad' received the prestigious Windham-Campbell prize
 - 17. Golden Peacock Award 2019 for innovative product - ACKO General Insurance** a new-age digital insurance company was awarded the coveted Golden Peacock Innovative Product Award – 2019, for their contextual micro insurance product –“Ola Ride Insurance”
 - 18. India bags 1st prize at International 'Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019'** in Berlin
 - 19. Young Global Leaders 2019** – The Forum of Young Global Leaders, the World Economic Forum's foundation for remarkable leaders under 40 has released the list of Individuals with grit, foresight and potential to improve the state of the world for the year 2019.
 - **Andhra Pradesh IT minister Nara Lokesh**, BJP MP Poonam Mahajan, Xiaomi India head Manu Kumar Jain, Telangana government's Chief Innovation Officer Phanindra Sama, SaveLife Foundation's Piyush Tewari and Kaleidofin's co-Founder Sucharita Mukherjee are the Indians featuring in the list of Young Global Leaders 2019.
 - 20. Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian Region** - A social entrepreneur from Tamil Nadu, Padmanaban Gopalan (founder of No Food Waste)
 - 21. International Sustainability 'Green Era' Award** - TVS Motor Company
 - 22. Best Bank Award from the State Government of Tamil Nadu** – Indian Bank a Public Sector Bank (PSB), headquartered at Chennai, Tamil Nadu has been awarded the Best Bank Award by the Tamil Nadu government.
 - 23. 2019 World's Most Ethical Companies** - Tata Steel
 - 24. 'Non-Life Insurer of the Year Award 2019'** - Bharti AXA General Insurance
 - 25. Missile Systems Award** - Satheesh Reddy, the Secretary of India's Department of Defence R&D and Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has been chosen by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) as the co-winner of the 2019 Missile Systems Award.
 - 26. Best Domestic Water Purifier 2019** - Kent RO Systems Pvt. Ltd. has received the Best Domestic Water Purifier Award 2018-19
 - 27. SKOCH Award, 2018** - The Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) has bagged the SKOCH Award, 2018 for its remarkable achievements in the field of disaster management.
Note: The award was presented at the 56th SKOTCH Summit held at New Delhi.
 - 28. Bhagwan Mahavir Ahimsa Puraskar** - Indian Air Force Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman has been chosen for the first Bhagwan Mahavir Ahimsa Puraskar constituted by the Akhil Bharatiya Digambar Jain Mahasamiti.

February 2019

1. **Oscar Awards 2019 announced:** The 91st Academy Awards (Oscars) has been announced at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, the USA.
Complete list of winners
 - Best Picture - **Green Book**, directed by - **Peter Farrelly**
 - Best Actress in a Leading Role - Olivia Colman for film - The Favourite
 - Best Actor in a Leading Role - Rami Malek for film - Bohemian Rhapsody
 - Best Director - Alfonso Cuarón for Roma
 - Best Foreign Language – Roma (Alfonso Cuaron's Roma from Mexico has won Best Foreign language)
 - Best Documentary Short film - Period. End of Sentence Rayka Zehtabchi and Melissa Berton Note:
 - India-based Period End of Sentence has won Documentary Short at 91stOscars Academy Awards.
 - The film talks about the stigma of menstruation in India.
 - It is directed by Rakya Zehtabchi.
2. **Gandhi Peace Prize** - President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2015, 16, 17 and 18 at a function in Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.
 List of awards –
 - **For 2015:** Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari was given the award for its contribution in Rural Development, Education and Development of natural resources.
 - **For 2016:** Jointly to Akshaya Patra Foundation for its contribution in providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India and Sulabh International for its contribution in improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers.
 - **For 2017:** Ekal Abhiyan Trust for its contribution in providing Education for Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender, and Social Equality.
 - **For 2018:** Japan's Yohei Sasakawa for his contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.
3. **META Lifetime Achievement Award** - Eminent Indian playwright Mahesh Elkunchwar has been chosen for this year's META Lifetime Achievement Award.
4. **AHF's Player of The Year** - Asian Hockey Federation has honored Indian skipper Harmanpreet Singh with the 2018 Player of the Year award.
 - Women team's striker Lalremsiami has bagged the Rising Player of The Year prize.
5. **National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 awards** - The National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 awards were given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
 The winners from the national level competition are:
 - 1st position– Shweta Umre from Maharashtra.
 - 2nd position– Anjanakshi M.S from Karnataka.
 - 3rd position– Mamta Kumari from Bihar.
 Note:
 - The “Khelo India” app, which has been developed by Sports Authority of India was also launched at the event.
6. **Future for Nature Award** - Divya Karnad became the First Indian Woman to be honoured with the 'Future for Nature Award' for her work on marine conservation.
 - She is the second Indian to receive this award after Dr. Charudutt Mishra.
 - It is a prestigious international award that celebrates achievements in protecting wild animals and plant species.
7. **National Water Awards 2018** – Maharashtra topped the chart among the states for efforts in water conservation.
 - Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority (MWRRA), Pune, was adjudged the best water regulatory body in India.
 - Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh were given second and third National Water Awards respectively in best state category.
 - The awards were presented by Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation in New Delhi.
8. **International Human Rights Prize** - Abdul Aziz Muhamat (Sudanese refugee)
9. **Football Ratna Award** - **Sunil Chhetri**, the all-time leading scorer for India in international football, has been conferred the first ever Football Ratna honour by

Football Delhi, the association governing the sport in Delhi.

- 10. Laureus World Sports Awards 2019** – The Laureus Sport for Good Award honours the achievements of those who have demonstrated a tremendous contribution to the sport or to society through sport.

List of awards is as follows:

- Sportsman of the Year: Novak Djokovic, (Serbia) Tennis.
- Sportswoman of the Year: Simone Biles (USA) Gymnastics.
- Comeback of the Year: Tiger Woods (USA) Golf.
- Breakthrough of the Year: Naomi Osaka (Japan) Tennis.
- Team of the Year: France World Cup Team (France) Football
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Arsène Wenger, France.
- Sport for Good Award: NGO Yuwa (India).

NGO Yuwa

- The NGO Yuwa has been awarded the Laureus Sport for Good Award for the year 2019.
- NGO Yuwa works specifically with girls from impoverished families in rural Jharkhand.
- The NGO uses team sports and education to build character, confidence, and courage.
- NGO Yuwa was founded in 2009 when American Franz Gastler moved to Jharkhand from Delhi.

- 11. Seoul Peace Prize 2019** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been honoured with the Seoul Peace Prize.

Note:

- The South Korean government has awarded the Seoul Peace Prize for PM Modi in recognition of

his service to international cooperation, global growth and human development.

- PM Modi is the 14th recipient of the award.

- 12. Swachhata Excellence Awards 2019** - The Raigarh Municipal Corporation of Chhattisgarh has won the “Swachhata Excellence awards 2019”.

Note: Swachhata Excellence Awards were instituted by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in 2017.

- 13. EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2018** – India - The CEO and Managing director of Eicher Motors, Siddhartha Lal has been named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year for 2018

- 14. ‘Freedom of the City of London’** - The State Bank of India’s UK head **Sanjiv Chadha** has been honoured with the ‘Freedom of the City of London’ award in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations.

- 15. Ernst & Young Lifetime Achievement Award** - Azim Premji Chairman of Wipro Ltd will be felicitated with the **Ernst & Young Lifetime Achievement Award**.

Note: Ernst & Young, famously known as EY is a multinational professional services firm and is one of the “Big Four” accounting firms.

- 16. Indo-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta** will be given the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television.

- 17. Indian Historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam wins Israel’s Dan David Prize 2019** - Noted Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam has won Israel’s prestigious Dan David Prize 2019 for his work on inter-cultural encounters between Asians, Europeans and people of North and South America during the early modern era.

- 18. National Film Development Corporation of India** has been declared winner under the Miniratna Category (Category II) by Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

January 2019

1. Bharat Ratna Award 2019

- Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh, Bhupen Hazarika awarded Bharat Ratna.
- Nanaji Deshmukh, Bhupen Hazarika were conferred the award posthumously.
- The Bharat Ratna has been conferred after a gap of four years.
- Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and founder of Banaras Hindu University Madan Mohan Malviya were given the award by the government in 2015.

About Nanaji Deshmukh

- Nanaji Deshmukh was born in 1916 in a Marathi family in Parbhani, Maharashtra. As a child, he was inspired by freedom fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
- Nanaji established India's first Saraswati Sishu Mandir at Gorakhpur in 1950.
- Nanaji Deshmukh had won in the 1977 Lok Sabha election from Balrampur.

About Bhupen Hazarika

- Bhupen Hazarika was born on September 8, 1926 in Sadiya, Assam.
- Bhupen Hazarika, popularly known as the 'Bard of Brahmaputra',

- In May 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's longest bridge (9.15 kms), which runs over the Lohit river in Assam. Modi named the Dhola-Sadia bridge after Bhupen Hazarika.

About Pranab Mukherjee

- Pranab Mukherjee was born in Mirati in Birbhum District of West Bengal on December 11, 1935 to freedom fighters.
- He served as the 13th President of India from 2012 until 2017.

2. Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskaar

- The government has instituted an annual award titled Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar.
- It will be announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
- The Award carries a certificate and a cash prize of 51 lakh rupees.
- This year, 8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force located at Ghaziabad has been selected for the Award for its commendable work in disaster management.
- The award has been instituted to acknowledge the contribution and selfless service of organisations and individuals to humanity in the aftermath of any disaster.

Note:

- This year, **8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force located at Ghaziabad** has been selected for the Award for its commendable work in disaster management.

3. PM Narendra Modi honoured with first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first recipient of the prestigious Philip Kotler Presidential award.

Note:

- The Philip Kotler Awards are bestowed in the name of world renowned Professor of Marketing at Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management, Professor Philip Kotler.

4. Namita Gokhale wins Sushila Devi Literature Award

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

inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF).

5. Dr. Rattan Lal Honoured with 2019 Japan Prize

- India born, Dr. Rattan Lal, honoured with the 2019 Japan Prize for his contributions in the field of "Biological Production, Ecology".
- He is a Distinguished University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A.

6. Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research awarded to C N R Rao

- The first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research has been awarded to C N R Rao.

7. 'No Presents Please' novel wins DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2018

- 'No Presents Please' is an English Novel translated from Kannada authored by **Jayant Kaikini**.
- The novel was translated to English by Tejaswini Niranjana.

8. 2018 ICC Awards: Virat Kohli Takes 3 Major Honours

- Virat Kohli has become the first player in history to win the **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards**.
- India captain becomes the first player to win all three of top awards after being named captain of the Test and ODI teams.

9. President confers Ashoka Chakra on Lance Naik Nazir Wani

- India's highest peacetime gallantry honour, Ashoka Chakra was awarded to **Lance Naik Nazir Wani** posthumously.
- Lance Naik Nazir Wani also holds the distinction of being the first Kashmiri to be conferred the Ashoka Chakra.

10. Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2019

- President Ram Nath Kovind conferred Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2019 to 30 awardees.
- The awards were conferred during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas being held at Varanasi.

The winner of this prestigious award includes:

- Gita Gopinath chief economist of IMF
- Nihal Singh Agar, founding president of VHP in Australia and
- Ramesh Chotai, former president of Hindu Mandir and Cultural Centre in Canada.
- **Girish Pant**, a social worker has been instrumental in rescuing several Indian sailors stranded in UAE waters.
- **Surender Singh Kandhari**, chairman of the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar Sikh Temple, is a philanthropist, businessman and a long-term Dubai resident.
- **Dr Zulekha**, founder and chairperson of Zulekha Healthcare Group, who came to the UAE in 1964, is believed to be the first female practicing doctor in the country.

11. Saraswati Samman 2017

- Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra has been awarded Saraswati Samman, 2017, for his poetry collection in Gujarati named “Vakhar”.
- This is the 27th edition of the prestigious award instituted by K.K.Birla foundation.

12. Andhra Pradesh bags CBIP award for Polavaram project

- Andhra Pradesh was conferred with CBIP’s “Best Implementation of Water Resources Project” for better planning, implementation, monitoring and speedy execution of **Polavaram multipurpose project on the Godavari River**.

Polavaram Multipurpose project

- Under the Polavaram Multipurpose project, a dam is constructed across the Godavari River in

West Godavari District and East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh.

- The reservoir of the dam also spreads to parts of Chhattisgarh and Orissa States.

13. Gandhi Peace Prize Conferred for Last 4 Years: The Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 has been conferred on the following:

- **For 2015: Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari** for their contribution in Rural Development, Education , Development of natural resources.
- **For 2016: Jointly to Akshaya Patra Foundation** for its contribution in providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India and Sulabh International for its contribution in improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers.
- **For 2017: Ekal Abhiyan Trust** for their contribution in providing Education for Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender and Social Equality.
- **For 2018: Shri Yohei Sasakawa** for his contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.

14. Vinesh Phogat becomes First Indian Athlete to nominated in Laureus World Comeback of Year Award

- Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat became the first Indian to be nominated for the prestigious Laureus World Sports Award.
- She has been nominated in “Laureus World Sporting Comeback” category for the year 2019

National Affairs

June 2019

1. **First session of 17th Lok Sabha begins on 17th June** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the first MP to take oath in the 17th Lok Sabha. The inaugural session of the new Lok Sabha has started with the swearing in of its members. The first session of the 17th Lok Sabha will continue till June 26.
 - BJP MP Virendra Kumar has been appointed as the protom speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha.
 - He is a seven-time MP from Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh.

2. **Govt. reduces the rate of ESI Contribution from 6.5% to 4%** - The government has reduced the total rate of contribution made by workers and employers towards the Employees’ State Insurance (ESI) scheme from 6.5% to 4% for the first time in over two decades.
 - At present, nearly 4.75% of a worker’s monthly salary goes towards ESI as the employer’s contribution and 1.75% of the income is the employee’s share at present.

3. **Delhi metro becomes India's 1st Project to receive power from waste-to-energy** – The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has become the first ever project in the country to receive power generated from a waste-to-energy plant.
 - It has started receiving 2 MW power from a 12 MW capacity waste-to-energy plant set up in Ghazipur.
4. **Centre sets target to provide Clean Drinking Water to all by 2024** – Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said that the Central government has set a target of providing clean drinking water to all by 2024.
 - It includes increasing coverage of piped water to households from current 18 to 100% by 2024.

- In states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha, the coverage of clean drinking water is less than five percent.
- It is only in Sikkim that 99% of households get tapped water.

5. **All States can now constitute Foreigners Tribunals** - The Ministry Of Home Affairs (MHA) has amended the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964, and has empowered district magistrates in all States and Union Territories to set up tribunals to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not.

May 2019

1. **New Jal Ministry formed** – The government has formed the new 'Jal Shakti' Ministry by merging the ministries of Water Resources and Drinking Water and Sanitation.
 - Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is the Union Minister of 'Jal Shakti' Ministry.
 - Rattan Lal Kataria is the minister of state in the newly formed ministry.
2. **Bhawana Kanth, 1st Woman to qualify to go to Day Missions on Fighter Jet** – Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth became the first woman pilot of the Indian Air Force to qualify to undertake missions by day on a fighter aircraft.
 - She completed the Day Operational syllabus on MiG-21 Bison. Bhawana joined the fighter squadron in 2017 and flew the first solo on MiG-21 Bison in 2018.
3. India is unanimously chosen as co-chair of the Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for the fiscal year 2020.
 - The decision was taken during the CG meeting of GFDRR held in Geneva, Switzerland, on the margins of the 6th Session of the GPDRR 2019.
4. The nation pays homage to first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on his 55th death anniversary on 27th May 2019. **Shantivan** is the Samadhi of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.
5. **2019 Lok Sabha Election – Highlights**
 - The 17th Lok Sabha elections was held across the 7 phases between 11 April and 19 May.
 - Results were declared on 23 May.
 - Election in one parliamentary constituency — Vellore in Tamil Nadu — was postponed.

- Sunil Arora is the Chief Election Commissioner of India.
- Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra are 2 Election Commissioner of India.
- Modi is the first non-Congress prime minister to come back to power with a majority for the second time after Indira Gandhi in 1971.

Highest ever voter turnout

- As per Election Commission of India, the 2019 Lok Sabha elections witnessed a voter turnout of **67.10% (interim)**, which is the highest ever voter turnout in the history of general elections.
- The previous highest voter turnout of **66.44%** was recorded in 2014.
- Himachal Pradesh poll: 143% voter turn-out in world's highest polling booth - The world's highest polling station at 15,256 feet in Tashigang village of Himachal Pradesh recorded an unbelievable 142.85 per cent voter turn out.

At 14%, 17th Lok Sabha has highest number of women MPs

- There are **78 women members of parliament**, the highest since independence.
- According to PRS legislative research, Parliament this time has **300 first-time MPs** and 197 MPs who have been re-elected for a second consecutive term.
- Out of the 716 women candidates who contested elections, 78 have been elected, which is 14% of the house. This is higher than 2014 where there were 62 women MPs in the house.

Performance of BJP in Lok Sabha Election 2109

- The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the single-largest party after winning 303 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.
- BJP-led National Democratic Alliance won 353 seats.
- The Congress won 52 seats and the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance won 91.
- Indian National Congress again failed to secure the requisite 10% of the seats (54 seats) in the Lok Sabha and hence India remains without an official opposition party.
- Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) emerged as the third-largest party with 23 seats.
- The BJP swept all votes in eight states and one Union Territory - Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Delhi and over 50 per cent votes in Chandigarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Youngest MP in India's history

- Biju Janata Dal (BJD) candidate Chandrani Murmu (25-year-old) engineering graduate from Odisha has become the youngest Member of Parliament to the 17th Lok Sabha.
- She was elected to the Lok Sabha, from Keonjhar, Odisha.
- Odisha has a total of seven women MPs, making it the first state ever to have 33 percent or the largest share of women MPs of its total of 21 seats.
- Until now, the record has been held by Dushyant Chautala, founder of the Jannayak Janta Party representing Hisar Lok Sabha constituency in Haryana in the 16th Lok Sabha. He is the grandson of well-known Haryana politician Om Prakash Chautala.

6. **Legislative assembly elections** held in 4 states - Legislative assembly in the states of **Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim** were held simultaneously with the general election.

New CM of Odisha

- Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Naveen Patnaik became the Chief Minister of Odisha for a record 5th consecutive term.
- He is the son of Biju Patnaik (former Chief Minister of Odisha).
- He is only the third Indian chief Minister after Pawan Chamling and Jyoti Basu to win five consecutive terms as Chief Minister of an Indian state.
- In the recent State Legislative Assembly polls, BJD won 112 of the total 146 seats.

New CM of Sikkim

- Prem Singh Tamang, popularly known as P S Golay, sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Sikkim on 28th May 2019. He is the president of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM).
- In the recent State Legislative Assembly polls, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party won 17 of the total 32 seats. Its opposition party Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) bagged 15 seats.
- Mr. P. S. Tamang succeeds Pawan Kumar Chamling who holds the record for being the Chief Minister of a state in India for the longest time.
- Pawan Kumar Chamling served as the chief minister of Sikkim from 1994 to 2019.
- Mr. Ganga Prasad is the current Governor of Sikkim.

New CM of Andhra Pradesh

- Y S Jaganmohan Reddy sworn in as chief minister of Andhra Pradesh
- **He became the second** chief minister of Andhra Pradesh.
- The YSR Congress bagged 151 of the 175 seats in the state Assembly.
- N Chandrababu Naidu, was the first chief minister of the state after it was bifurcated to carve out Telangana five years ago.
- E S L Narasimhan is the Governor of Andhra Pradesh.

New CM of Arunachal Pradesh –

- Pema Khandu was sworn- in as the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh for a second term.
- He became the 10th Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh.
- In the recent State Legislative Assembly polls, BJP led by Mr Khandu won 41 of the total 60 seats. While the opposition Congress could win only four seats.
- Brigadier (Retd.) B.D. Mishra is the present Governor of Arunachal Pradesh.

7. Iraq remains India's top supplier of Crude Oil in 2019

– According to data released by Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S), Iraq remains India's top crude oil supplier for second year in a row followed by Saudi Arabia & Iran.

Note:

- India is world's third largest importer of crude oil (7% of total crude oil imports) after China (world's

largest importer with 20.2% of total crude oil imports) and USA (13.8%).

- India's crude oil imports meets 80 % its oil needs.

8. **Konkan Railways signs agreement with Nepal Railways** – India and Nepal have inked a deal on procurement of demo train that operates on diesel.

- The contract agreement was signed between India's Konkan Railways Corporation Ltd and Nepal's Department of Railways to supply two 1600 HP Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) train sets.
- The trains will be manufactured by Integrated Coach Factory (owned and operated by Indian Railways) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

9. **Vice president issued Postage Stamp to commemorate 750th Birth Anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desika** – On 2 May 2019, Vice President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu released postage stamp in New Delhi to commemorate 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan and his great philosopher's life and highly valued work.

10. **Cyclone FANI: 1.2 mn Evacuated as Powerful Storm hits Odisha**

- The severe cyclonic storm named Cyclone Fani had recently made a landfall impact on May 3, 2019 in Puri on Odisha coast.
- Cyclone Fani, with wind speed of about 175 kilometres per hour, was the second-most powerful cyclone to have hit Odisha after 1999.
- The government, however, earned international praise for its efforts to reduce casualty by shifting away more than 11 lakh people.
- Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), has prepared nearly one lakh meals for distribution in cyclone Fani hit areas of Odisha.

Note:

- Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) is a premier food research laboratory under Ministry of Science and Technology (MoS&T), Government of India.
- It was established in 1950 and is headquartered in Mysore, Karnataka.

11. **India and Bangladesh to co-produce movie on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** – India and Bangladesh will jointly produce a feature movie on life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (founding father of People's Republic of Bangladesh) and also a documentary on Bangladesh Liberation War (1971). India's state broadcaster Prasar Bharati will co-produce the film.

12. **India Re-Elected as Observer to 'Arctic Council'** – India was re-elected as Observer to the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum.

- The decision was taken during the 11th Arctic Council ministerial meeting at Rovaniemi, Finland.
- The Council also appointed the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a new Observer.
- India successfully got the Observer status in 2013 during the Kiruna Ministerial meeting held in Sweden.
- India has its Arctic research station 'Himadri' in Svalbard, Norway since 2008.
- The Arctic Council is formed of eight circumpolar countries- Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Canada, US and Russia.

April 2019

1. **National Institutional Ranking Framework 2019** –

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings have been released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The rankings list the best institutions and universities of India.

Ranking is as follows

- **Overall rankings** - The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras** has topped the overall rankings of higher education institutions and is followed by IISc Bangalore and IIT-Delhi ranked second and third in the overall rankings.

- **Best University** - In the University Category, IISc Bangalore has been ranked one followed by Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and the Banaras Hindu University (BHU).
- Engineering institutions - IIT-Madras topped the ranking followed by IIT Delhi and IIT Bombay.
- Management schools - IIM Bangalore topped the ranking followed by IIM Ahmedabad and IIM Calcutta
- **Jamia Hamdard** has been announced as the top varsity for **Pharmacy**.

- All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has been adjudged as the best medical college.
- National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, have been adjudged as the best medical college law school.

2. RailTel turns 1600 railway stations into RailWire Wi-Fi zone

- RailWire Wi-Fi by RailTel is now live at 1600 railway stations across the country.
- The Santacruz railway station in Mumbai became the 1600th station to become a RailWire Wi-Fi zone.

Note:

- RailWire is a retail Broadband initiative of the RailTel.
- RailTel is working to establish bringing fast and free Wi-Fi at all stations (except the halt stations) within a year.

3. The union environment ministry has notified island protection zone (IPZ) 2019 for Andaman and Nicobar.

4. India's first foreign interactive bird park launched in Mumbai – India's first rain forest-themed foreign interactive bird park was launched in Gorai, Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- It is home to over 500 exotic birds from more than 60 species.
- It was launched by EsselWorld Leisure Pvt. Ltd, the entertainment arm of \$6-billion Essel Group.

5. Gagandeep Kang becomes First Indian Female FRS – Professor Gagandeep Kang has become the first Indian female scientist to be elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in the UK fellowship's 358-year-history.

6. Ratnagiri refinery may now come up in Maharashtra's Raigad - The proposed \$44 billion refinery and petrochemicals project at Ratnagiri in Maharashtra may be shifted to neighbouring Raigad district.

Note:

- Raigad is located in the Konkan region of the state.

- Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis said that the state government has decided to relocate the proposed Ratnagiri refinery following the protests by farmers and local landowners, who feared the project may damage flora and fauna in the region, and affect Alphonso mango and cashew plantations.
- The Ratnagiri refinery project, which was announced in December 2015, was to be commissioned by 2022, but delays in land acquisition have pushed the deadline to 2025.

Note:

- The Ratnagiri Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd (RRPCL), which is implementing the project is a joint venture between three state-run oil marketing companies—Indian Oil Corp. (IOCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corp. (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corp. (BPCL).
- Saudi Aramco and Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. (Adnoc) will jointly own 50% of the Ratnagiri refinery, with the remaining 50% owned by the Indian oil companies.

7. Guwahati railway station 1st to Get ISO Certification in India – The Guwahati Railway Station in Assam has become the first ever railway station in the Indian Railways to get an ISO certification from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for “providing passenger amenities in a clean and green environment.”

8. Centre allocates Rs 59 crore for Asiatic Lion conservation in Gujarat's Gir - In a bid to protect and conserve lions, identified as one of the endangered species by the government, the Ministry of Environment launched a three-year Asiatic Lion Conservation Project in collaboration with the state of Gujarat, which is the last habitat of the big cat.

- The Rs 98-crore project, for which the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has allocated Rs 59 crores, spans three years -- 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 -- will focus on better management of the lion habitat, disease control and veterinary care for them.

March 2019

1. Adani becomes first Indian port operator to record 200 MMT cargo movement – Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) announced that it has recorded cargo movement of more than 200 million metric tonnes (MMT) at nine ports along the east and west coasts, becoming the first Indian port operator to achieve the milestone.

2. India becomes Elite Space Power –PM Modi announced that India has entered its name as an elite space power.

- **An Anti-Satellite Weapon (A-SAT)** successfully targeted a live satellite on a low earth orbit.
- The name of this mission was '**Mission Shakti**'.

- **After the US, Russia, and China, India is the fourth country** to acquire this space capability.
- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), on 27th March 2019 successfully conducted an **Anti-Satellite (A-SAT)** missile test, under Mission Shakti from Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha.
- A DRDO-developed Ballistic Missile, Defence Interceptor Missile successfully engaged an Indian orbiting target satellite in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) in a Hit to Kill mode.

3. **Integral Coach Factory becomes World's Largest Rail Coach Manufacturer** - Indian Railways' Chennai based Integral Coach Factory (ICF) became world's largest rail coach manufacturer after surpassing top Chinese manufacturers.

Note:

- ICF had manufactured 2,919 coaches from April 2018 to February 2019 as compared to 2,600 coaches by Chinese manufacturers.
- The number of coaches manufactured were 40% higher than those manufactured previous year in same time period.

Integral Coach Factory (ICF)

- ICF is rail coach's manufacturer located in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
 - It is one of three coach manufacturing facilities of Indian Railways with the other two being Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala and Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli.
4. **India extends USD 250 million to Nepal for Reconstruction of Infrastructures** - India has extended a grant assistance of up to USD 250 million to Nepal for the reconstruction of infrastructures in the areas of housing, education, health and cultural heritage.
5. **CISF Creates New Guinness World Record** - The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) created a new Guinness World Record for the longest single moving line bicycle parade at the Yamuna Expressway.
6. **Government announces new Rs 20 coin** - The Centre has announced a new Rs 20 coin which will come in 12-edged polygon (dodecagon) shape. The government is also planning to release new coins of Re 1, Rs 2, Rs 5 and Rs 10.
- Note:
- The Finance Ministry stated that the new Rs 20 coin will be made in copper, zinc and nickel. It will be 27mm (millimeters) and weigh 8.54 grams.

- The Lion Capitol symbol of Ashoka Pillar with the legend "Satyamev Jayate" below it will be inscribed on its front side.
- The words "Bharat" in Hindi and "INDIA" in English will be there on the right and left-hand side of the symbol respectively.

7. **One Nation One Card** - On 4th March 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the indigenously developed National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) while inaugurating the first phase of the Ahmedabad metro train service.

Objective -

- To enable people to seamless payment for multiple transport system charges.

Key points

- The National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) program was envisaged by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- The Gate & Reader prototype for this card has been made by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) under Make in India initiative.
- The technology for this system is supported by indigenously developed payment ecosystem Automatic Fare Collection Gate (AFCG) namely Swagat and an Open Loop Automatic Fare Collection (OLAFC) system called Sweekar.
- **Single card can be used across the country - You can use one single card i.e. One Nation One Card for payments across all segments like** - bus travel, metro, toll, parking, retail shopping and even withdraw money.
- This card runs as on RuPay card, which has been merged with the mobility card. So, people can also withdraw money apart from using this Common Mobility Card for paying bills and fare.

8. **New Visa Agreement between India, Maldives Comes into Effect** - The new visa agreement between India and Maldives came into force. The new policy provides a liberal visa policy for Maldivian citizens seeking medical treatment as well as education and business opportunities in India.

9. President Ram Nath Kovind visited Croatia in March 2019. With this he became the first-ever Indian head of state to visit the country.

- Croatia capital - Zagreb
- Croatia currency - Kuna.

10. **United States to set up six Nuclear Power Plants in India** - The United States and India agreed to strengthen security and civil nuclear cooperation, including building six U.S. nuclear power plants in India.

11. **PM Modi lays Foundation stone of AK-203 Assault Rifle Manufacturing Unit in Amethi** – Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of a manufacturing unit for AK-203 assault rifles at the Ordnance Factory Board factory in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh.

Note:

- The manufacturing unit is a joint venture between India and Russia to produce a modernised version of AK-47 rifles.

12. **Hardeep S Puri launches e-Dharti App** – Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Puri has launched e-Dharti app where all the three modules- Conversion, Substitution and Mutation related to properties have been made online.

- This enables the public to submit their applications online by visiting the L&DO website.

This absolves the need to visit the office for submission of them and for follow up of their applications.

13. **Azaadi Ke Diwane’ museum inaugurated at Red Fort** – Union Minister Mahesh Sharma has inaugurated ‘Azaadi Ke Diwane’ museum, dedicated to the unsung heroes of the country’s freedom struggle, on the Red Fort premises in New Delhi.

Note:

- The ‘AzaadikeDiwane’ museum talks about the sacrifices of great freedom fighters. It pays tribute to the selfless sacrifices of the revolutionaries, brave female freedom fighters and valiant children.
- It is built by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

February 2019

1. **e-Aushadhi Portal** – Minister of State for AYUSH, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik launched the e-Aushadhi portal for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs.

- The new e-portal, e-Aushadhi is an acronym for Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy Automated Drug Help Initiative.

2. **Dera Baba Nanak Land Post Designated as Immigration Centre for visiting Kartarpur Sahib** –

The notification issued by the Union Home ministry has designated Dera Baba Nanak land post located in Punjab’s Gurdaspur district as an authorised immigration checkpoint to exit and enter for visiting Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan.

Note:

- The Kartarpur Sahib Corridor connects Kartarpur Gurdwara in Pakistan with Dera Baba Nanak shrine in India’s Gurdaspur district.
- The Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara is located on the banks of the Ravi River, about three-four km from the border in Pakistan.

3. **Union Textiles Minister Inaugurates Titanwala Museum in Rajasthan** – Union Minister for Textiles Smriti Irani inaugurated the ‘Titanwala Museum’ in Bagru that showcases the Chhipa community’s Bagru hand-block printing.

Note: Bagru printing is one of the traditional techniques of printing with natural colour followed by the chhipas of Rajasthan. The Bagru hand-block printing has a history of over 1000 years.

4. **PM Modi inaugurates National War Memorial in New Delhi** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated a new

National War Memorial, situated in the India Gate complex in New Delhi, to the nation.

5. **Virtual Experiential Museum inaugurated in Varanasi by PM Modi** – Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi inaugurated the Virtual Experiential Museum (VEM) in Varanasi, established by the National Council of Science Museum (NCSM).

- The museum is set up inside the centrally protected monument observatory of Man Mahal situated on the bank of the Ganges near holy Dashashwamedh Ghat at Varanasi.

6. **PM Modi Flagged Off 1st ever diesel to Electric Conversion Locomotive** – Under ‘Make in India’ initiative, Indian Railways has created history by converting a diesel locomotive into electric locomotive for the first time in the world. This all new converted energy-efficient electric locomotive has been flagged off by PM Narendra Modi in Varanasi.

7. **Operation Digital Board launched by HRD Ministry** – The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry launched Operation Digital Board on the lines of Operation Blackboard to provide better digital education in school.

- Operation Digital Board has been launched on the lines of Operation Blackboard to provide better digital education in schools.
- Under Operation Digital Board seven lakh classrooms of 9th, 10th and 11th standards and two lakh classrooms of colleges and Universities will be equipped with digital boards in the next three years.

- The initiative is aimed at improving the quality of education and offer new opportunities and new ways of teaching and learning.
- 8. Saudi Becomes 73rd Nation to Sign International Solar Alliance** – Saudi Arabia became the 73rd nation to sign the International Solar Alliance.
- ISA was unveiled by PM Narendra Modi and former French President Francois Hollande in 2015.
 - Headquarters is in Gwal Pahari, Gurugram, India.
- 9. India Withdraws Most Favoured Nation Status to Pakistan** –
- Following the attack in Jammu & Kashmir’s Pulwama that left 44 CRPF personnel dead, India has withdrawn the MFN (Most Favoured Nation) status that it had granted to Pakistan.
 - India granted MFN status to Pakistan in 1996, just a year after the formation of the WTO.
- Note:
- Most Favoured Nation status is given to an international trade partner to ensure non-discriminatory trade between all partner countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
 - A country which provides MFN status to another country has to provide concessions, privileges, and immunity in trade agreements.
 - It is the first clause in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).
- 10. India’s 1st Aqua Mega Food Park commissioned in Andhra Pradesh**
- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal commissioned Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park at Tundurru Village in Bhimavaram Mandal, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh.
 - It will be the first Mega Aqua Food Park operationalised exclusively for fish and marine products processing in the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- 11. Kareena Kapoor Khan appointed ambassador of Swasth Immunised India campaign** – Actress Kareena Kapoor Khan has been appointed as an ambassador of Swasth Immunised India campaign. The Swasth Immunised India campaign has been launched by Serum Institute of India (SII) and Network 18.
- 12. Railway Minister launches Rail Drishti Dashboard** – The Union Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal has launched Rail Drishti dashboard.
- It encompasses all the digitisation efforts in Indian Railways and promotes transparency and accountability.
 - The dashboard brings information from various sources on a single platform and gives access to key statistics and parameters to every citizen of the country.
- 13. Sanskrit becomes second official language of Himachal Pradesh** – Himachal Pradesh Assembly passed Official Language Amendment Bill 2019 to make Sanskrit as second official of the state without discussion.
- With clearance of bill Himachal Pradesh became second state in the in the country after Utrakhhand to adopt such bill.
- 14. President unveils a life-size portrait of Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Central Hall of Parliament**
- President Ram Nath Kovind unveiled the life-size portrait of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Central Hall of Parliament.
- 15. 12th February: National Productivity Day**
- 16. PM Narendra Modi inaugurates PETROTECH-2019**
- Narendra Modi inaugurated the three-day International Oil and Gas Conference ‘PETROTECH-2019’ (13th) at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
 - The ‘PETROTECH-2019’ is being organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India.
 - India is the 3rd largest consumer of crude oil and petroleum products.
- 17. Dera Baba Nanak land check post designated as an immigration centre** – The Union Government designated Dera Baba Nanak land Check post in Gurdaspur district of Punjab as an authorised immigration checkpoint to exit and entry for visiting Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan.
- 18. AYUSH Minister launches e-AUSHADHI portal** - Shripad Yesso Naik (Minister of State (IC) for AYUSH) has launched the e-AUSHADHI portal, for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters at New Delhi.
- 19. The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for Extension of tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karmacharis (NCSK) beyond 31st of March 2019 for three years.**
- 20. After China, India is world’s 2nd largest LPG consumer & importer**
- After achieving the target of distributing 8 crore cooking gas connections under its flagship Pradhan India became the second largest consumer of LPG in the world.

- According to the Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, imports of LPG grew 12.5 percent over the past five years to 12 million metric tons (13 million tons) in 2018-19, surpassing Japan and putting India in second place behind China.
- India imports LPG mainly from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Iran.

21. India's tourism sector registers 19% growth in 2018

- According to Union Minister K J Alphons, the country's tourism sector fetched 234 billion US Dollar revenue last year, registering a growth of over 19%.

22. The Textile Minister Smriti Irani has launched the India Size project (first-of-its-kind project in the history of the country) in Mumbai.

- The objective of the India Size to arrive at a standard Indian Size for the ready-to-wear clothing industry.

23. Cabinet approves the establishment of Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog -

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for the establishment of Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog for conservation, protection and development of cows and their progeny.

Note:

- The Aayog will work in collaboration with Veterinary, Animal Sciences or Agriculture University or departments or organizations of the Central or State Government engaged in the task of research in the field of breeding and rearing of the cow, organic manure, biogas etc.
- Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog was announced in the interim budget on the 1st Feb 2019.

January 2019

1. The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has been renamed as the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**. It will work under the Union Ministry of Commerce.
2. **National Museum of Indian Cinema Inaugurated** - The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) at Films Division of India premises in Mumbai.
3. **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Museum** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Subhash Chandra Bose museum at Red Fort in New Delhi to mark the Netaji's 122nd birth anniversary.
 - The museum in the Red Fort complex is also important for the fact that INA trails were held within the Red Fort complex.

Another Museum inaugurated at Red Fort in New Delhi is as follows

- The Yaad-e-Jallian Museum provides an authentic account of Jallianwala Bagh massacre happened on April 13, 1919.
 - The Drishyakala-Museum on Indian Art showcases Indian art works from 16th century till India's independence.
 - The Museum on 1857- India's first war of Independence portrays the historical narrative of 1857 war of independence, showcasing the valor and sacrifices made by Indians during the period.
4. **The word Nari Shakti is chosen as the word of the Year 2018** by the Oxford dictionaries. The announcement regarding this was made in the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF).

5. **Vande Bharat Express** - India's fastest indigenous train, Train 18 named as Vande Bharat Express will run between Delhi and Varanasi.

- Train 18 is an indigenously developed world-class train under Make in India.
- The 16-coach train has been built completely in India by Indian engineers in a span of 18 months at the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai.

6. **Sanrakshan Kshmeta Mahotsav (SAKSHAM)** was flagged off by Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan to promote and create awareness among people on the need of oil and gas conservation for the future and the methods to do it.

- Sanrakshan Kshmeta Mahotsav (SAKSHAM) is an annual flagship event of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Govt. of India.

7. **National Salt Satyagraha Memorial inaugurated at Dandi** - In commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 30, 2019 dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial at Dandi in Navsari district, Gujarat to the nation.

- The memorial encapsulates the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi- Agrah for Swadeshi, Swatchagrah and Satyagraha.

8. **IIT Hyderabad launches B.Tech course in Artificial Intelligence**

- IIT Hyderabad has announced the launch of a full-fledged bachelor's programme in Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology.
- IIT Hyderabad has become the first institute in the country to launch full-fledged Bachelor's programme in AI technology.
- IIT Hyderabad will be the third institute to globally to offer the B.Tech course in AI.

9. Republic Day 26th January – India celebrates 70th Republic Day

- President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa was the chief guest for this year's Republic Day parade.
- The theme of the 70th Republic Day parade is 'life of Gandhi' which is a tribute to the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary.
- Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Wani of Jammu and Kashmir was posthumously conferred with the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award by President of India.
- The all-women **Assam Rifles** contingent created history this year by participating for the first time in a Republic Day (26th January) parade.
- The ICAR tableau in the Republic Day Parade has won the first prize for its Kisan Gandhi theme.
- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research tableau with the theme "Mishrit Kheti, Khushiyon Ki Kheti" portrayed Gandhi with goats and a cow and Kasturba engaged with charkha and caring animals.

10. JNPT becomes only Indian port to be listed amongst world's top 30 Container Ports - The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), India's premier container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report.

- JNPT notched up five spots, to be 28th on the list, compared to its previous ranking.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Port also known as Nhava Sheva, is the largest container port in India.
- It is located at east of Mumbai in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.

11. Shehri Samridhi Utsav - The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is organising a fortnight of events named Shehri Samridhi Utsav all over the country with an aim to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) to the poorest of poor and the most vulnerable.

12. Centre launches 5-yr Plan to Combat pollution in 102 cities - The Environment Ministry launched the National

Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aimed at reducing toxic particulate matter in 102 Indian cities by **2024**.

Note:

- The NCAP will be a mid-term, five-year plan with 2019 as the first year, while **2017 will be the base year** for comparison of concentration.
- An amount of **INR300 crore** has been sanctioned for this purpose.
 - in the 'silent period' before elections.

13. ECI renew MoU with Election Commission of Bhutan

- On the sidelines of the international conference, the Election Commission of India renew Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the field of election management with the Election Commission of Bhutan.

14. Ministry of Textiles and Government of India launched Artisan Speak at Elephanta Caves (UNESCO heritage site) to strengthen the handlooms and textiles sector of India.

15. Union Cabinet approves setting up of 3 New AIIMS - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the setting up of three new AIIMS institutions.

- The three new institutions would come up at **Vijaynagar at Samba of Jammu Region, Awantipora in Pulwama of Kashmir Region and Rajkot in Gujarat** under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha yojana.

16. UGC to set up 'CARE' to Strengthen Research Publication - The University Grants Commission (UGC) has decided to establish a Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE).

- The Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE) is tasked to scrutinise and then compile a list of journals for social sciences, humanities, language, arts, culture, Indian Knowledge system etc.
- UGC has constituted a Committee under the **Chairmanship of Prof. P. Balram**, to review its quality mandate relating to promotion of Research and to review the existing M.Phil/ Ph.D Regulations.

17. Six monuments declared as National Importance in 2018 by ASI -

- The Ministry of Culture announced that Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared 6 monuments as 'protected and of national importance' under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, in 2018.

These sites are:

- 125-year-old Old High Court Building in Nagpur, Maharashtra,
 - The Group of Temples in Ranipur Jharail in Bolangir district of Odisha,
 - 2 Mughal era monuments in Agra- Haveli of Agha Khan and Hathi Khana,
 - The Neemrana Baori in Alwar district of Rajasthan,
 - The Vishnu Temple in Kotali, Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand.
- 18.** The Southern Railway has bagged the number one position for cleanliness in all the 17 railway zones in the country.
- This achievement was under the category of other than Premium Category trains in the recent Trains Cleanliness Survey conducted by IRCTC on all India level.
- 19.** The Union Civil Aviation minister Suresh Prabhu has inaugurated country's first Geographical Indication (GI) Store at International Airport at Dabolim, Goa.
- 20. Sakhi Centres** - Sakhi centre or One Stop Centre (OSC) is a fully sponsored scheme of Central Government.
- These centres are set up through the Nirbhaya Fund under the National Mission for Empowerment of women by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- 21. India's Satyarup becomes world's youngest mountaineer to climb 7 peaks, 7 volcano summits** – Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley.
- With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man (35 years and 262 days) to climb the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.
- 22.** Arunima Sinha has become the World's 1st woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
- Note:
- Arunima Sinha (born 20 July 1988) is the first female amputee to climb Mount Everest.
- 23.** Government sets up Export Promotion Cell for MSMEs -
- The MSME ministry has established an export promotion cell to create a sustainable ecosystem for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- 24. Go Green Initiatives in Indian Railways:** Railways have undertaken some major initiatives to Go Green.
- Ministry of Railways has planned to set up 1000 Mega Watt (MW) solar power by 2020-21 which would help Railways to source about 10% of its electrical energy from renewable source.
- 25. Indian Forest Service to be renamed as Indian Forest and Tribal Service** - The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has initiated an inter-ministerial consultation note to rename the Indian Forest Service as Indian Forest and Tribal Service.
- 26.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a **350-rupee commemorative coin** as part of the 352nd birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Gobind Singh in New Delhi.
- 27.** The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the Nation Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP), at Jharsuguda in Odisha. The Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) at Jharsuguda is built at a cost of Rs 100 Crores.
- 28. Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates ISRO's UNNATI programme in Bengaluru** - The Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has inaugurated the UNNATI- (Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training) programme organized by ISRO in Bengaluru.
- ISRO will train 90 officials from 45 countries in three batches.
- 29. National Health Authority gets Cabinet nod**
- The Union Cabinet has cleared the constitution of a National Health Authority (NHA) through an executive order, thus taking the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) out of the ambit of the Ministry of Health.
 - Now, the ministry's role will be limited to acting as the nodal ministry for NHA in parliamentary matters, like the presentation of annual reports.
 - The NHA's governing board will be chaired by the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, while its members will include NITI Aayog CEO and NHA CEO.
- 30.** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has imposed a fine of 100 crore rupees on Meghalaya government for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state.

State Affairs

June 2019

- 1. Namma Kolhapuri chappal gets GI boost**
 - Maharashtra's extremely popular footwear industry, renowned for its handcrafted leather Kolhapuri chappal has been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, which is likely to further boost its sale in other parts of the country and abroad.
 - The Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks has granted the GI tag for Kolhapuris to four districts of Maharashtra — Kolhapur, Solapur, Sangli and Satara — along with four in Karnataka — Dharwad, Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur.
- 2. Himachal Pradesh makes GPS device mandatory for trekkers**
 - The Himachal Pradesh (HP) government has made it compulsory for trekkers to carry a GPS (Global Positioning System) device to tackle any exigency.

About Himanchal Pradesh

- Himachal Pradesh state formed on 25 January 1971 and became 18th state of the Indian Union.
 - It is bounded by Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) state to the north, China's Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) to east, Uttarakhand to southeast, Haryana to its south, and Punjab to west.
- 1. Punjab bans Online Food Delivery without Hygiene Rating** - The Punjab government has decided to make it mandatory for all online food aggregators to ensure that food supplied by them should compulsorily have hygiene rating as per Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) guidelines.
 - 2. The Rajasthan government announced its decision to ban production, distribution, advertisement and sale of e-cigarette in the state.**
 - 3. Kerala first Indian state to tap into masala bond market** - Kerala became the first state to tap into masala bond market by listing the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB)'s masala bond worth of USD 312 million (Rs 2,150 crore) in London Stock Exchange (LSE)'s International Securities Market (ISM).

- 3. Assam govt to set up Skill University at Darrang district** - Assam government will set up a Skill University at the cost of 850 crore rupees at **Darrang district**.
 - This will be perhaps the first skill university of the country with a capacity of 10 thousand seats.
- 4. Assam govt hikes parental income limit under fee waiver scheme** - Assam government has waived admission fees for students taking admission up to Post Graduate level whose parental income is less than 2 lakh rupees per year.
 - All provincialized government colleges and 5 universities are incorporated under the scheme.
- 5. Unemployed Graduates to get up to Rs 3,500 in Rajasthan** - Unemployed youth having graduation or equivalent degree will be given unemployment allowance by Rajasthan government.
 - Male applicants will get Rs 3,000/month, while the women and differently-abled will get Rs 3,500/month under Chief Minister Yuva Sambal Yojana from February this year.
 - The applicants must be natives of Rajasthan and the amount will be given for two years or until they get employed.

May 2019

- It has a fixed interest rate of 9.723% per annum.
 - The bond issue builds on the Kerala government's focus to get multinational corporations to invest in the state.
- 4. e-Vidhan: Kerala Assembly to Digitize all its records** - The Kerala Legislative Assembly recently announced an initiative to digitize all its records and proceedings under its ambitious project called E-Vidhan which enables state legislature to go fully digital and completely paperless.
 - 5. Sikkim Statehood Day observed on 16th May** - On 16th May 2019, Sikkim celebrated its 44th statehood day.
 - It was on this day in **1975** that Sikkim had officially become a state under the Union of India and Kazi Lhendup Dorjee became its first chief minister.

- Sikkim officially merged with the Indian union and became the 22nd state of the country.
6. **Goa celebrates its statehood day on 30th May** - Goa celebrates its statehood day on 30th May.
 - It was on this day in 1987 Goa became the 25th state of the Indian Union.
 - Pramod Sawant is the 13th and current Chief Minister of Goa.
 7. **Meghalaya govt approves setting up of Farmers' Commission** – The Meghalaya government approved setting up of a commission to look into the problem faced by farmers.
 - The cabinet approved the proposal made by the Agriculture Department to set up the Farmers' Commission in line with the resolution passed at the 'farmers' parliament'.
 8. **Zero Pendency Courts Project** – Zero Pendency Courts Project is the pilot project of the Delhi High Court. The pilot project was undertaken in certain subordinate courts of Delhi to identify benchmarks for different types of cases timelines, number of judges required, case flow management rules and a host of other relevant factors.
 9. **Purple Frog to be crowned Kerala's state amphibian** – Purple frog could be soon designated as Kerala's state amphibian.
 - The proposal for this is being mooted by Kerala's leading Herpetologists (a specialist in study of reptiles and amphibians).
 - The odd-looking species is endemic to Western Ghats. The title would help in protecting species fragile habitat.
 - Scientific Name: *Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis* (*N. sahyadrensis*).
 - It is also known as Maveli frog or Pignose Frog.
 10. **Gujarat Assembly Passes Act to Allow Shops & Businesses Remain Open 24x7** – 'Gujarat Shops and Establishments (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 2019' passed by Gujarat Assembly which came into force from May 1, 2019. The Act will allow the shops and other businesses in the state to operate 24x7.
 11. **Chhattisgarh Deploys 1st Anti-Naxal Women Commando Unit** – The Chhattisgarh police for the first time has inducted women commandos in the District Reserve Guard (DRG), its frontline anti-Naxal force.

April 2019

1. **Himachal Pradesh Celebrates 72nd State Day** – Himachal Pradesh celebrated 72nd Himachal Day on 15th April with gaiety and fervour. Himachal Day is celebrated to commemorate its creation.
2. **Nagaland observes 75th anniversary of Battle of Kohima** – Nagaland observed the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Kohima.
 - The event was attended by the representatives from the UK and Japan who spoke on the theme of 'Remembrance, Reconciliation and Rebirth'.
 - The Battle of Kohima was fought in three stages from 3 April to 22 June 1944 around the town of Kohima in Nagaland in northeast India.
3. **Rongali Bihu Festival celebrated in Assam** – Assam's most awaited festival – the Rongali Bihu, also known as 'Bohaag Bihu' which marks the beginning of the new Assamese calendar year started. Assam celebrates major agricultural events as the festival of Bihu.
 Note: In Assam, three Bihu festivals are celebrated in a year called as Rongali Bihu or Bohag Bihu, Bhugali (Magh Bihu) and Kangali (Kati Bihu).
4. **Kandhamal Haldi Gets Geographical Indications Tag** – 'Kandhamal Haldi', a variety of turmeric indigenous to southern Odisha, has earned the Geographical indication (GI) tag from Intellectual Property India, an organization functioning under the auspices of the Union ministry of commerce & industry.
 Note: Kandhamal in Odisha's southern hinterland is famous for its turmeric cultivation, a spice that enjoys its pride of place in an array of cuisines.
5. **Decolourisation of River Periyar** – The River Periyar in Kerala is again witnessing the decolourisation.
 Note:
 - Periyar River of Kerala has turned black near the Pathalam Regulator cum Bridge.
 - Discolouration of Periyar and killing of fishes have been a serious issue for the last couple of years. About hundred Indian anchovies (Kozhuva) fishes were found dead along the banks of the Muttar river, a tributary of the Periyar.
 - According to the Pollution Control Board (PCB), the discolouration was due to the poor quality of water as a result of eutrophication.

- Periyar river is the longest river and with the largest discharge potential in the Indian state of Kerala.
- 6. Telangana tops in eLearning training for Field Staff** – For the second year in succession, Telangana ranks number 1 in the e-Learning training program of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government India.
 - 7. Bengaluru's Bellandur Lake begins to froth once again** – Bellandur Lake, which is one of the largest of the 262 lakes in Bengaluru, has spilt toxic foam many times in the recent past.
 - Taking cognizance of it, the National Green Tribunal took the matter suo motu. Earlier in

April, it had directed immediate and complete shutdown of 76 polluting industries around the lake. The directive came after a mound of garbage was set on fire in February causing massive pollution in the area.

- 8. Karnataka Government has decided to declare 2019 as the 'Year of Water'** to emphasise the importance of water becoming a scarce commodity and the need to conserve it.
- 9. The state of Odisha celebrates Odisha Divas or Utkala Divas every year on April 1st to commemorate the state formation day.**

March 2019

- 1. Rajasthan Day is celebrated every year on March 30** to commemorate the day on which the state of Rajasthan came into existence.
- 2. Vastradan Campaign sets Guinness World record** - Vastradan Campaign initiated by the erstwhile royal family of Udaipur has set the Guinness World Record for the largest collection of clothes for donation. The campaign had collected more than 3 lakh items of clothing.
- 3. Madhya Pradesh Government increases reservation Quota of OBCs to 27%** - The Madhya Pradesh government issued an ordinance increasing reservation quota for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 27% from the current 14%.
- 4. Ancient tribal language Gondi to be taught in tribal districts of MP** – In Madhya Pradesh, ancient tribal language Gondi will be taught in tribal districts.
 - Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath has decided to include Gondi in the primary

education curriculum of the state's tribal-dominated districts.

- 5. New Railway Zone Announced for Andhra Pradesh** – Union Railway Minister Piyush Goyal announced a new railway zone for Andhra Pradesh, that is the Southern Coast Railway.
Note:
 - It will be headquartered in Visakhapatnam. It will be the 18th zone in the country.
- 6. Bihar Diwas was celebrated on March 22nd** across the state to commemorate the day when Bihar was carved out of the Bengal Presidency in the year 1912. March 22nd 2019 was the 107th foundation day of the state.
- 7. 'Rice Knowledge Bank- Assam'** - Rice Knowledge Bank-Assam, is an agriculture web portal. It was launched under the World Bank funded project – Agri-business and Rural Transformation (APART).
Note: It is dedicated to magnifying knowledge on rice production technologies and techniques.

February 2019

- 1. 100 years of jallianwala bagh massacre** – On April 13, 2019 nation commemorates the 100th anniversary of the massacre of hundreds of innocent Indians by British forces at the Jallianwala Bagh.
Note: On April 13, 1919, at Jallianwala Bagh, the British armed forces under the command of General Dyer opened 1,650 rounds of fire at the people gathered for a peaceful protest, killing hundreds of men, women and children trapped inside the garden
- 2. Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram celebrate Statehood Day** – The North-Eastern States of

Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram celebrate Statehood Day celebrated statehood day on February 20. Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh celebrated the 32nd and 47th Statehood Day respectively.

- 3. Tamil Nadu became the first state in the country to get a second Coast Guard district headquarters** – Thoothukudi. The first district headquarters is Chennai.
- 4. Bihar has become the first state to deploy specially-trained dogs to check smuggling of liquor** which

- continues to take place inspite of the total ban imposed in the state for the last 3 years.
5. **First Mega Food Park of Tripura inaugurated in Agartala** – Tripura’s first mega food park named Sikaria Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd at Village Tulakona in Agartala.
 6. **India’s first district Cooling System to be built in Amravati** – India’s First District cooling system will come up in Amravati, capital of the Andhra Pradesh.
 - The government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into a 30-year concession with UAE-based international cooling provider, The agreement between the National Central Cooling Company (Tabreed) for the District Cooling System at Amaravati.
 7. **India’s first Agromet Forecast Centre inaugurated in Karnataka** – Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, inaugurated the North Karnataka Agromet Forecasting and Research Centre (NKAFC), India’s first agromet forecast centre, at University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Dharwad, Karnataka.
 8. Indus River **dolphin** declared as **state aquatic animal of Punjab**.
Note:
 - In Punjab, the Indus River Dolphins are found mainly in the Sutlej and Beas rivers.
 - Already, Punjab has Black Buck as its state animal, and Baaj, also known as northern goshawk (accipiter gentilis), as the official state bird
 9. **Shehri Samridhi** Utsav launched across the country. It is an initiative of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
 10. **Himachal’s first mega food park inaugurated in Una** - The Union Minister of Food Processing Harsimrat Kaur Badal has inaugurated the mega food park at Village Singha in Una District, Himachal Pradesh.
 11. **Meghalaya Govt. to rename Dikkibandi stadium after P A Sangma** - The Meghalaya state Cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma has decided to rename the Dikkibandi Stadium in Tura town after P. A. Sangma (former Lok Sabha Speaker & CM Meghalaya).
 - The Dikkibandi Stadium was formerly known as MP stadium.
 12. **Rajasthan passes 5% quota bill for Gujjars, four other communities** – Rajasthan government has passed a Backward Classes, Amendment Bill, 2019 to provide 5% quota in jobs and educational institutions to ‘Gurjars’ and four other communities.
 - The state government has also decided to increase the ceiling of creamy layer from Rs. 2.5 lacks to Rs. 8 lacks.
 13. The Telangana government has declared 2nd February as 'appointing day' for the newly elected Sarpanches of the Gram Panchayats in the state.
 14. Kerala has become the first Indian State to set up a Price Monitoring and Research Unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).
 15. **Himalayan Cloud Observatory has been set up in Tehri district, Uttarakhand** – The Observatory has been established in the SRT campus Badshahithaul and is currently in the testing period.
 16. The **33rd edition of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela** (33rd) inaugurated at Faridabad (Haryana).
 - This year Maharashtra is the theme state and Thailand is the Partner Nation.
 -
 17. Bharat Rang Mahotsav’ held in New Delhi. It is the international theatre festival of India, Organized by National School of Drama (NSD).
 18. India’s largest multi-cultural street festival ‘Kala Ghoda Arts Festival’(KGAF) was held in South Mumbai, Maharashtra.
 - The theme of KGAF 2019 is retrospection.
 19. Arunachal Pradesh tribes celebrated Boori Boot Yollo festival - The Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh is celebrated its Boori Boot Yollo festival (52nd) to welcome spring and a successful harvest.
 - Boori Boot Yollo is observed every year in the month of February.
 20. Krishi Kumbh was organised in Motihari, Bihar. This is the largest Krishi Kumbh of Eastern India.
 21. Kerala has become the first State to set up a Price Monitoring and Research Unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).
 22. **The 22nd AIIMS will set up in Haryana**. During the Interim Budget 2019, Piyush Goyal made the announcement to set up AIIMS in Haryana. The AIIMS would be established at Manethi village in Haryana’s Rewari district.
 23. **J&K Govt. grants divisional status to Ladakh Region** – The Jammu and Kashmir government ordered the creation of a separate administrative division for Ladakh region.
Note:

- The State of Jammu and Kashmir had two administrative divisions of Jammu and Kashmir earlier. Ladakh would be the third administrative division
24. Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 1.33 million metric ton capacity Visakhapatnam Strategic Petroleum Reserve facility at Guntur in Andhra Pradesh.
 25. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a dedicated 24x7 Satellite channel, 'DD Arunprabha' for Arunachal Pradesh.
 26. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Film and Television Institute in Jote, for Arunachal Pradesh** - The permanent campus of Film and Television Institute would be established at Jollang-Rakap (Jote), Papum Pare, Arunachal Pradesh.
 - It would be the third Film and Television Institute of Ministry of I&B (the other two are: FTII Pune and SRFTI Kolkata) and first in the North-East.
 27. **PM Narendra Modi lays the foundation for Sela Tunnel** -
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the strategically important Sela Tunnel Project (costing - Rs 687 crore) in Arunachal Pradesh.
 28. **Sarathi Sandesh Vahini flagged off by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** - The Uttar Pradesh state family welfare department has initiated the Sarathi Sandesh Vahini mission to spread awareness regarding family planning in urban and rural areas.

January 2019

1. **Andaman to be First Island to operate Seaplanes Under UDAN-3** - According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, islands in Andaman will soon be connected by seaplanes that can land on or take-off from the water under the Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.
2. **India's longest single lane Steel Cable bridge opened in Arunachal Pradesh** - The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu inaugurated India's longest single-lane steel cable suspension bridge over **Siang River in Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh**. The bridge is 300-metre-long and is also known as **byorung bridge**.
About river Siang
 - The Siang River is considered as lifeline of Arunachal Pradesh. The river is also called as Dihang in the plain regions.
3. **Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang District achieves 100% electrification**
 - East Siang District (in Arunachal Pradesh) has achieved 100% electrification under the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana-Saubhagya Scheme.
4. **Diffo Bridge in Arunachal Pradesh dedicated to the nation** - Union Minister of Defence Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 426 mtr long pre-stressed concrete box girder type bridge over Diffo river on Roing-Koron-Paya road in Arunachal Pradesh.
 - The bridge which has been constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)
5. **Arunachal Government declares Pakke Hornbill fest as 'State Festival'**
 - The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh 'Pema Khandu' has declared Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) as the 'State Festival' at Seijosa in East Kameng district at Arunachal Pradesh.
 - Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) is only conservation festival of Arunachal Pradesh.
6. **Telangana to set up 'Save Tiger Protection Force'** - The Telangana government has decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State. The 112-member-armed STPF will be headed by an Assistant Conservator of Forests to protect the tiger population in Amarabad and Kawal Tiger Reserves.
7. **India's largest Startup Ecosystem Inaugurated in Kerala** - India got its largest startup ecosystem when Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated a 1.8-lakh-square-foot facility housing incubation set-ups across a string of segments in modern technology.
8. **PM Dedicates Kollam Bypass in Kerala to Nation** - PM Narendra Modi has dedicated the Kollam Bypass on the National Highway-66 to the nation.
 - It reduces travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram.
 - This is the first National Highway project in the country taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership.
9. **Union Cabinet approves expansion of Numaligarh refinery in Assam**

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for the capacity expansion project of Numaligarh Refinery from 3 MMTPA (Million Metric Tonne Per Annum) to 9 MMTPA.
- Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) was set up at Numaligarh in the district of Golaghat (Assam) in accordance with the provisions made in the historic Assam Accord.
- The promoters of the NRL are Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd, Oil India Ltd & Government of Assam (GoA).

Note:

- **Numaligarh Refineries receives 'Best Miniratna PSU' award** - Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) has been awarded the best **Strategic Performance** (Financial Category) at the sixth edition of Governance Now PSU Awards.
10. The Union Minister for Tourism K J Alphons inaugurated the First Swadesh Darshan “Development of North East Circuit” in Gangtok.
 11. **National Health Agency to be restructured as National Health Authority** - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Modi has approved the restructuring of existing National Health Agency as National Health Authority.
 - The existing society, “National Health Agency” has been dissolved and it is now restructured as an Authority to effectively the implement Pradhan Mantri – Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).
 12. **J&K: Nitin Gadkari dedicates to nation Kerrian Gandyal bridge in Kathua** - Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on January 22, 2019 dedicated to the nation Kerrian Gandyal bridge in Kathua district of Jammu.
 - The bridge has been constructed over river Ravi in Kathua district in a record time of over three years.
 13. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation stone for the Mandal Dam Project on the North Koel River. The Mandal Dam Project would be boon for the states of Jharkhand and Bihar.
 14. **India’s second Tulip garden to come up in Uttarakhand** - Uttarakhand Government has obtained the permission to develop the Tulip garden in Pithoragarh district.
 - It will be the second Tulip garden (first in Srinagar, J&K) in the country.
 15. **Sikkim to Introduce Universal Basic Income** - The ruling party of Sikkim, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) has assured the implementation of the universal basic

income in Sikkim by 2022. If things go as per plan, Sikkim would become the first state in the country to implement the Universal Basic Income (UBI).

Universal Basic Income (UBI)

- Universal Basic Income (UBI) refers to a programme wherein the people are provided with a fixed amount of money irrespective of their income, resources or employment status.
16. The states of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya celebrated their 47th Statehood Day on 21st January. The states of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya became full-fledged states on January 21, 1972.
 17. **Cyclone Pabuk** - The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an Orange alert for the Andaman Islands as cyclonic Pabuk moves towards the island.
 18. **Agreement for Renukaji dam multipurpose project Signed** - The Agreement for the construction of Renukaji Dam Multi-Purpose Project was signed by **six states**, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in the presence of Union Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari.

The important features of the project are:

 - Renukaji Dam Multi-Purpose Project is a storage project on the Giri river which is tributary of the Yamuna at Sirmour district of Himachal.
 - A 148 m-high rock-filled dam would be constructed across the river Giri.

Note:

- Along with the Renukaji dam multipurpose project other two projects are planned in the Yamuna river basin, Lakhwar Project on the River Yamuna in Uttarakhand, Kisau Project on the River Tons in Uttarakhand and Himachal for the effective utilisation of the water resource.
19. For the first time, Antonov-32 AN-32 transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force carried out a successful landing at Sikkim’s Pakyong, one of the highest airfields in the country.

Note: Pakyong Airport is a Greenfield airport near Gangtok, the capital of the state of **Sikkim**. It is the first greenfield airport to be constructed in the Northeastern Region of India.
 20. **RPF Women Squad ‘JOYMATI BAHINI’ launched in Guwahati** - In Assam, Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Lumding Division has formally launched ‘JOYMATI BAHINI’, comprising women sub-inspector and constables of the RPF at Kamkhaya Railway Station in Guwahati.
 21. **Uttar Pradesh celebrates its 69th foundation day on 24th January**

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

- Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair has been declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/exit from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers.
- This decision of the Union Government will open up the Port Blair Airport for direct international flight and immigration facilities.

23. Himachal Pradesh celebrates 49th Statehood Day on 25th January.

24. Union Minister Gadkari inaugurates Atal Setu in Goa

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated four-lane 'Atal Setu' (5.1-kilometer long) the third Cable bridge across river Mandovi in Panaji, Goa. This is the third bridge across Mandovi River.

25. **Andhra Pradesh No 1 in Ease of Doing Business 2018** - The Asia competitiveness institute (ACI) has released the Ease of Doing Business Rankings for Indian states.

Key points

- In the latest ranking of Asia Competitiveness Institute's (ACI) EDB index, Andhra Pradesh bagged the top rank in 2018.
- **Maharashtra and Delhi** came in second and third place respectively.

Arts & Culture

1. Mela Kheer Bhawani celebrated in J&K

- The annual festival of Kheer Bhawani Mela celebrated by Kashmiri Pandit devotees at famous Ragnya Devi temple in Jammu and Kashmir's (J&K) Ganderbal district.

2. **ASI declares Chaukhandi Stupa as Monument of National importance** – According to a notification issued by Union Ministry of Culture, Chaukhandi Stupa, an ancient Buddhist site located in Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh (UP) has been declared as 'protected area of national importance' by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

Note:

- The Stupa is known as 'Chaukhandi' because of its four-armed plan.

3. **Elephanta Festival of Art and Culture**– The Elephanta Festival of art and culture commenced at the iconic Gateway of India in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- Elephanta Caves is currently maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and are also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

4. **MP's Orchha town added to UNESCO WHS tentative list** – The architectural heritage of Orchha town which is one of the prime tourists draws in Madhya Pradesh has been included in tentative list of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) World Heritage Sites.

About Orcha Town

- Orchha town is located in Niwari district of Madhya Pradesh's Bundelkhand region.

- It lies on banks of river Betwa (around 80 km from MP's Tikamgarh district) and 15 km from Jhansi district of UP.
- It was built in 16th century during the reign of Bundela dynasty by its King Rudra Pratap Singh.
- It is the only place in India where Lord Ram is worshipped as a king (not in God form) with a dedicated temple in his name called Sri Ram Raja Mandir.
- There are 37 Indian heritage sites on the UNESCO World Heritage list.
- Three historically famous sites in Madhya Pradesh includes Buddhist monuments at Sanchi, rock shelters of Bhimbetka and Khajuraho group of monuments.

5. Tripura to host 10th National Science Film Festival of India in 2020

- The 10th National Science Film Festival of India (NSFFI) will be organised in Tripura on January and February 2020.
- The film festival is being held with the objective of highlighting science, technology, innovation, energy, environment, agriculture and traditional knowledge in a simple way.
- The film festival would include films produced by UNICEF, UNESCO and filmmakers from different countries. It will also include entries from Tripura and other states.

6. **People celebrate Bhandara festival, the great turmeric festival of Maharashtra** – The Bhandara

- festival takes place on Somvati Amavasya- a new moon day at Khandoba Temple in Maharashtra.
- During the festival, devotees use the golden powder to worship the deity Lord Khandoba, widely known as a descendant of the sun, and to celebrate his victory over the demons Mani and Malla.
7. Culture Minister Prahalad Singh Patel has inaugurated the exhibition titled 'Unknown' Masterpieces of Himachal Folk Art' at National Museum in New Delhi.
 8. **Namaste Thailand Film Festival held in Delhi.** Namaste Thailand Film Festival is an annual festival organised to bridge the gap between Indian and Thai cultures.
 9. Baikho Festival - Rabha tribal Hindu women participate in a tug of war during Baikho festival at Pantan village, Guwahati, Assam.
 10. Amasebailu in Kundapura Taluk of Udupi district has become **Karnataka's first solar-powered Gram Panchayat.**
 11. **Meghalaya CM launches Aroma Mission** – Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma launched the Aroma Mission and also inaugurated the Processing Unit of Essential Oil at Byrwa village in Ri Bhoi District.
 12. **Maharashtra has become the first Indian state to provide digitally-signed land record receipts** (also known as 7/12 receipts).
 - The 7/12 receipt is the most important document which establishes the ownership of the land, and is primarily used by farmers while applying for loans
 13. Nearly after four decades, Bamboo rice has shown up in Odisha. The state of Odisha had last witnessed Bamboo rice in 1979. The Forest Authorities of Chandaka-Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary in Cuttack district have opened up the gates for the forest dwellers to collect the Bamboo rice.
 14. **New Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology Inaugurated** – Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the new Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology at Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh.
 15. **Ugadi/Yugadi** - Ugadi festival celebrated in Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh
 16. **Gudi Padwa** - Gudi Padwa is celebrated in the state of Maharashtra.
 17. **Baisakhi** - Baisakhi is the Punjabi New Year celebrated in the month of April by performing their folk dance, Bhangra and Gidda and feasting.
 18. **Puthandu** - Puthandu is the Tamil New Year celebrated in the month of April by preparing Manga Pachadi a traditional food to ring in their new year.
 19. **Bohag Bihu** - Bohag Bihu is the Assamese New year celebrated by performing the folk dance Bihu and a grand buffet.
 20. **Pohela Boishakh** - Pohela Boishakh is the Bengali New Year celebrated with making many sweetmeats.
 21. **Bestu Varas** - Bestu Varas is celebrated in Gujarat on the day after Deepavali. Marwaris in Rajasthan also celebrate their new year during Deepavali.
 22. **Vishu** - Vishu is the Malayali New Year celebrated in the state of Kerala in the month of April.
 23. **Losoong** - Losoong is the Sikkimese New Year and falls in December at the end of harvesting. It is celebrated by performing Chham dance.
 24. **Navreh** - Navreh is the Kashmiri New Year celebrated in the Hindu month of Chaitra.
 25. **Prayagraj Kumbha Mela 2019 makes it to the Guinness World Records** – The Prayagraj Kumbh Mela 2019 has made into Guinness World Records in the following three sectors:
 - Largest traffic and crowd management plan.
 - Biggest painting exercise of public sites under paint my city scheme.
 - Biggest sanitation and waste disposal mechanism.
 26. **Ghumot to be declared Goa's heritage musical instrument** – The Art and Culture Minister of Goa, Govind Gaude has announced that Ghumot, an indigenous earthen drum will soon be notified as a heritage instrument of Goa. .
 27. **'Festival of India' Begins in Kathmandu** - A month-long 'Festival of India' began in Kathmandu, Nepal, to familiarise the new generation of the country about the similarities between the two countries.
 28. **Foundation stone laid for Hastshilp complex in New Delhi** – The Union Minister for Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani laid the foundation stone of a Hastshilp Complex in New Delhi. The complex would be named after Deendayal Upadhyaya as Deen Dayal Antarashtriya Hastshilp Bhawan.

International Affairs

June 2019

1. **Imports from Pakistan to India decline by 92% in March 2019** - Imports from Pakistan to India have declined by 92% amounting to USD 2.84 Million in March 2019 after imposition of 200% customs duties on all products.
2. **UAE Cabinet adopts 'National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031'** – The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Cabinet adopted a National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031 during its meeting at Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi (UAE Capital).
3. **China launches Space Rocket from Yellow Sea for 1st time** - China launched a space rocket named “Long March 11” from a mobile launch platform in Yellow Sea off Shandong province (China) for the first time.
 - With this China became 3rd nation following the U.S. and Russia to successfully demonstrate ability to launch satellites into orbit from a floating platform.
4. **16th Asia Media Summit held in Siem Reap province in Cambodia.**
 - The 15th Asia Media Summit (AMS-2018) was hosted by India.
5. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev elected Kazakhstan president
6. **SriLankan Airlines: World's Most Punctual Airline** – SriLankan Airlines, the National Carrier of island nation has been named the '**World's Most Punctual Airline**' for second consecutive time.
7. **Russia launches 1st Arctic train service** – Russia has launched first Arctic train service running from St. Petersburg station headed to Norway
8. **Italy's Volcano Mount Etna erupts on Island of Sicily** – Europe's Highest Volcano Mount Etna, in southern Italy erupted with burst into life, spews ash, fire, and spitting molten lava high into sky.

May 2019

1. **Burnout classified as medical condition: WHO** - The World Health Organization (WHO) has for the first time recognised “burn-out” in its International Classification of Diseases (ICD).
 - The decision was taken during the World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva.
2. **India elected to Executive Board of 1st UN-Habitat Assembly** – India has been elected to the Executive Board of first United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) Assembly.

Note:

 - It is the United Nations agency for human settlements and sustainable urban development. It was established in 1978 and is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya.
3. Russia recently launched nuclear-powered Arctic icebreaker named 'Ural' at Baltic Shipyard in St. Petersburg. The move is to tap commercial potential of Arctic Ocean.
4. **WHO: Algeria and Argentina declared Malaria-Free** – The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Algeria and Argentina as 'Malaria-Free' countries after no cases of indigenous transmission of disease were recorded.

Note:

 - Algeria became second country in Africa to be declared malaria-free, after Mauritius, which was certified in 1973.
 - Argentina became second country in South America to be certified malaria free after Paraguay, which was certified in June 2018.
5. **India delivers First Pair of Mi-24 helicopters to Afghanistan** – India recently handed over two Mi-24 attack helicopters to Afghanistan.
6. **Taiwan: First Asian country to Legalise Same-Sex Marriage** – Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage thus giving gay couples the 'Right to Marry'.
7. **World Bank, CommBank Team Up For 'World 1st' Blockchain Bond Transaction** - The World Bank and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CommBank) have teamed up to enable recording of secondary market bond trading using blockchain tech.
8. British PM Theresa May announces resignation
9. **Trump becomes first foreign leader to meet new Japanese emperor Naruhito** – US President Donald Trump got the red carpet treatment at Japan's Imperial Palace where he made history, becoming the first world leader to meet with the new emperor of Japan Naruhito.

10. Japan has started testing its fastest-ever bullet train capable of reaching 400 kilometers per hour (249 mph) as it continues to develop the revolutionary mode of travel.
11. **Nepal celebrates its 12th Republic Day** - Nepal is celebrating its 12th Republic Day on 29th May 2019.
12. **India to co-chair Consultative Group of GFDRR** - India was unanimously chosen by member countries as next co-chair of Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for fiscal year 2020. This decision was taken during Consultative Group meeting of GFDRR 2019 held from 13 May- 17 May in Geneva, Switzerland.
13. **Iran announces Partial Withdrawal from JCPOA** - Iran announced it will pull out of some commitments under 2015 international nuclear agreement signed with world powers, called Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action (JCPOA).
14. **UK Parliament 1st in World to Declare Climate Emergency** - The UK parliament became the first national legislative body in the world to declare a climate change emergency.
 - It also calls for the government to work towards carbon neutrality before 2050 and for ministers to draft proposals within the next 6 months to restore the country's environment and create a "zero waste economy."
15. **Ireland becomes 2nd country to declare Climate Emergency** - Ireland has declared a climate emergency in their country, to be the second country after Britain to do so.

April 2019

1. **Vienna named the world's most liveable city** - Vienna tops the Mercer's index of most liveable cities for the 10th year in a row.
 - Vienna was closely followed by Zurich in Switzerland. Auckland, Munich, and Vancouver came in joint third.
 - The Quality of Living Index 2019 was released by the Consulting Agency Mercer.

Indian Cities in the List

 - Hyderabad and Pune topped the list among the Indian cities with a rank of 143.
 - Bengaluru was the second best with the ranking of 149.
 - Mumbai with the ranking of 154 stood third among Indian cities.
 - The capital of India, New Delhi ranked at 162 in Mercer's Quality Of Living Index.
2. **Skytrax World Airport Awards 2019** - Skytrax World Airport Awards which lists the Best 100 Airports of the World was released by the UK-based Skytrax, a consultancy firm which runs an airline and airport review and ranking site.

Key points

 - **Singapore's Changi Airport** has been crowned the world's best aviation hub for the seventh time in a row. Singapore Changi Airport is well known for its rooftop swimming pool, two 24-hour movie theatres and shopping spots.
 - Tokyo International Airport (Haneda), up one place from 2018 stood at the second place.
 - Incheon International Airport, ranked at number three spot.
 - Indira Gandhi International Airport of New Delhi stood at rank 59.
 - Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport stood at 64
 - Rajiv Gandhi Hyderabad International Airport stood at 66
 - Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport at 69
3. **India to set up agriculture institute in Malawi** - The Ministry of External Affairs has signed an MoU with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Consultancy Service (NABCONS) for setting up India-Africa Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development (IAIARD) in Malawi.
4. **Global Cooling Coalition** - The Global Cooling Coalition was launched at the first Global Conference on Synergies between the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement held at Copenhagen, Denmark.
 - The Global Cooling Coalition is supported by the UN, Climate and Clean Air Coalition, the Kigali Cooling Efficiency Program and Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL).
5. **Indonesia releases Special Stamp on Theme of Ramayana** - Indonesia has released a special commemorative stamp on the theme of Ramayana to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of its diplomatic ties with India.
6. **US declares Iran Force as Foreign Terrorist Organisation** - The US designated Iran's

Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) a foreign terrorist organisation.

- It is the first time that the US has designated an entity of another government as a terrorist organization, placing a group with vast economic resources that answer only to Iran's supreme leader in the same category as al-Qaida and the Islamic State.
- 7. US Withdraws from UN Arms Trade Treaty** – US President Donald Trump stated that his administration is withdrawing the U.S. signature from the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty, in response to concerns from gun rights activists that it could impinge on Americans' right to bear arms.
- Former US President Barack Obama signed the treaty in 2013 and sent the treaty to the Senate for ratification.
- 8. Qatar to abolish Exit Visa system by 2019** – UN's International Labour Organization (ILO) announced that Qatar will officially abolish its Exit Visa system for all foreign workers by the end of 2019.
- Amnesty International (human rights group) report accused that Qatar, which will be hosting 2022 World Cup was failing to implement reforms and stop widespread labour abuse.
 - As a result Qatar revived its pledge to reform labour section, and introduced a minimum monthly minimum of 750 riyals (\$206) and also agreed to work closely with ILO.
- 9. Sri Lankan President bans On Face-Covering in Public** – Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena used his emergency powers to issue an order to ban burqa, veil or covering of face in public places in any manner which prevents anyone from being identified.
- It is placed to ensure national security, establish peaceful and cohesive society and not aimed at inconvenience to any community people.
- 10. Beirut, Lebanon sets a New Guinness World Record** – Lebanon's capital Beirut has set a new Guinness World Record for most number of national flags displayed in one city for 24 hours.
- 11. Lose to Win Programme** – The government of UAE has launched the Lose to Win Programme to assist the overweight employees in shedding extra kilos and adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- 12. Pakistan Approves Plan to Open Sharda Peeth Corridor** – Pakistan government has approved a proposal to establish a corridor which would allow Hindu pilgrims from India to visit Sharda Peeth in the region of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK).
- Sharda Peeth Corridor will be the second corridor to be established after the Kartarpur Corridor which provides access to Gurudwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Pakistan.
- 13. Iran, Pakistan to Set up Border 'Reaction Force'** – Iran and Pakistan have agreed to set up a joint border "reaction force" to combat the attacks by militant groups on both sides their frontier. Both the nations have decided to collaborate to form the joint quick reaction force by increasing cooperation between border forces and intelligence agencies.
- 14. World's 1st Malaria Vaccine launched in Africa** – The world's first-ever malaria vaccine was launched in a pilot project in Africa's Malawi. The country is the first of three in Africa in which the vaccine, known as RTS,S, will be made available to children up to 2 years of age.
- Ghana and Kenya will introduce the vaccine soon. About 93% of the world's malaria-related deaths in 2017 occurred in Africa.
- 15. Russia Successfully Tests World's First Floating Nuclear Power Plant** – Russia has successfully tested the world's first floating nuclear power plant (NPP), **Akademik Lomonosov**, a subsidiary of Rosatom nuclear corporation stated.
- Reactors of the floating atomic block were launched in November 2018.
- 16. Google company has announced to shut down its Google + service** – Google is to shut down, its Google Plus platform, which had originally conceived as a social networking option different from Facebook and Twitter.
- Google has revealed that the consumer version of the service will shut down on April 2, 2019.
 - The company decided to shut down the service after the discovery of a privacy bug which impacted 52.5 million users.
- 17. Google's Wing launches its 1st drone delivery Service in Australia** – Wing, the drone delivery company owned by Google's parent company Alphabet, is launch its first public drone delivery service in Canberra, Australia
- Alphabet made its first delivery in Canberra after getting approval from the country's civil aviation authority.
- 18. London becomes 1st city to use pollution charge Zone** - London is the first city in the world to implement a 24-hour, seven day a week Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), inside which vehicles will have to meet tough emissions standards or face a charge.

- Introduction of the ULEZ aims to reduce toxic air pollution and protect public health.

Honour country at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, ADIBF 2019.

19. India is Guest of Honour country at ADIBF 2019 –

The UAE has announced that India is the Guest of

March 2019

1. Saudi Arabia replaces India as world's largest arms importer -

According to the premier Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Saudi Arabia has replaced India to become the largest importer of arms in the world.

- In its report on 'Trends in International Arms Transfers 2018' released, the institute identified Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia and Algeria as the five top arms importing countries.
- Five top arms exporting nations - United States, Russia, France, Germany and China.
- The US, Russia, France, Germany and China together accounted for 75 per cent of the total volume of arms exports in 2014–18.

2. UK Issues New Black Hole Coin in Honour of Stephen Hawking –

The United Kingdom has commemorated professor Stephen Hawking in a new 50p coin. The coin has references to the late physicist's pioneering work on black holes.

- The coin was designed by British engraver and printmaker Edwina Ellis.
- The Black Hole coin is a tribute to Hawking's research into black holes and his ability to make science accessible for all.

3. Oman signs agreement allowing United States Military to Use its Ports –

Oman has signed an agreement with the United States of America that allow American ships and warplanes to take advantage of his ports and airports.

- The framework agreement is aimed at bolstering Omani-American military relations.

4. President Kovind visit Croatia, Bolivia & Chile –

President Ram Nath Kovind embarked on a state visit to Croatia, Bolivia and Chile to hold talks with the leaders of these countries and strengthen ties in trade, investment and renewable energy.

- Croatia Capital: Zagreb, Currency: kuna.
- Bolivia Capital: Sucre, Currency: boliviano.
- Chile Capital: Santiago, Currency: peso.

5. World's first Wireless Electric Car charging station introduced by Norway –

Oslo, the capital city of Norway will become the world's first city to install

wireless, induction-based charging stations for its fleet of electric taxis with an aim to have a zero-emission cab system by the year 2023 according to a report by Reuters.

- Norway wants all new cars to be zero emission by 2025 whereas other nations, like Britain and France, have similar goals for 2040.

6. New Zealand bans Assault Weapons –

Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern has imposed an immediate ban on assault weapons following the Christchurch massacre that claimed the lives of 50 mosque-goers.

7. World's Largest e-waste R=recycling hub opened at the Dubai Industrial Park –

The world's largest e-waste recycling plant has been opened in Dubai Industrial Park, Dubai by 'Enviroserve' company with a total cost of \$5 million.

- It will recycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), IT asset disposition (ITAD), refrigerant gas and specialized waste.

8. In a 1st, UN Council passes resolution to Combat terrorist financing –

The UN Security Council has unanimously passed the first-ever resolution ordering members to enforce laws against terror financing.

- UNSC resolution demands all states "ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offenses" to collect funds or financial resources to terrorist groups or individual criminals.

9. Japan unveils name of its new Imperial Era 'Reiwa' –

Japan has announced that the name of its new imperial era, set to begin on 1 May, will be 'Reiwa', signifying order and harmony. The country's current era, Heisei, will end in April.

10. Kylie Jenner becomes world's youngest self-made billionaire –

According to Forbes billionaires' list, Kylie Jenner has become the world's youngest self-made billionaire.

- The 21-year-old founded and owns Kylie Cosmetics, the three-year-old beauty business that generated an estimated \$360m in sales last year.

- She reached the milestone earlier than Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg who became a billionaire aged 23.

11. Malaysia joins International Criminal Court –

Malaysia has become a member of the International Criminal Court.

- The ICC is the world’s only permanent war crimes court and aims to prosecute the worst abuses when national courts are unable or unwilling.
- Malaysia becomes the 124th member of the court since its establishment in 2002.

12. Cyclone Idai Hits Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe

– Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi have been hit by a vicious cyclone ‘IDAI’ that has killed nearly 150 people.

- Cyclone Idai has affected more than 1.5 million people in the three southern African countries, according to the UN and government officials.

13. Kazakhstan renames its Capital Astana to Nursultan

– Kazakhstan has renamed its capital Astana to Nursultan to honor outgoing leader Nursultan Nazarbayev.

- Mr. Nazarbayev, 78, served nearly 30 years as president of the nation.
- The change was announced after Kassym-Jomart Tokayev was sworn in as president, promising to seek his predecessor’s opinion on key decisions.

February 2019

1. Kelly Knight Craft is the new US ambassador to the UN

– US President Donald Trump has announced the nomination of Kelly Knight Craft as the new US ambassador to the UN.

- The post of the US ambassador to the UN was vacant due to the resignation of Nikki Haley.

2. Afghanistan launches New Export Route to India through Chabahar Port

– Afghanistan has launched a new export route to India through the through the Chabahar Port of Iran.

- Chabahar port is seen as a testimony of healthy cooperation between India, Iran and Afghanistan this will ensure economic growth.

3. FATF keeps Pakistan in Grey List for Failing to Stop Terror Financing

– The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) condemning the Pulwama Terror Attack has decided to continue the ‘Grey’ listing of Pakistan for its failure to stop funding of terrorist groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamat-ud-Dawa.

- Grey list will endanger Pakistan’s handful of remaining banking links to the outside world. This would cause real financial pain to the fragile economy of Pakistan.

About FATF -

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Member of G7.
- The FATF has developed a series of Recommendations that are recognised as the international standard for combating of money laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

- Group of 7 (G7) is a group consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

4. State of Emergency declared in Sudan

– Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has declared a year-long state of emergency, dissolving his cabinet and local governments throughout the country.

5. Zimbabwe starts trading New Currency RTGS dollar

– Zimbabwe started to trade its new currency, the RTGS dollar.

- The bank unveiled a foreign exchange trading system that effectively devalued its quasi-currency, the bond note, which was officially pegged at parity with the US dollar.
- The new currency replaces electronic bank savings called digital dollars and the bond notes and was named after the real-time gross settlement system that banks use to transfer money between each other.

6. J P Morgan became first US Bank with Cryptocurrency

– JP Morgan rolled out the first US bank cryptocurrency.

- The currency is designed to be decentralized so that no one has control over transactions being sent over the network.
- Cryptocurrencies are used successfully to move money between the bank and a client which usually runs on a blockchain technology.
- The cryptocurrency, called “JPM Coin”.

7. The first-ever World Pulses Day was celebrated on 10th February 2019.

8. Abu Dhabi declared Hindi as an official language in courts

– Abu Dhabi (capital of the United Arab

Emirates) declared Hindi as the third official language (Arabic and English) in its courts to make the justice delivery system simple.

9. Dubai Airport retains the top position as World's busiest airport in 2018 –

- Dubai International Airport (DXB) retained its position as the world's busiest airport for international customer numbers for the fifth consecutive year.

10. The International Year of the Periodic Table – The United Nations has announced, 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of the Chemical Elements to highlight its first publication in 1869.

11. Hungary to give life tax exemption to women with 4 children-

According to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, women in the country with four children or more will be exempted for life from paying income tax.

- The government has also proposed the introduction of a subsidy worth 8,825 US dollars towards the purchase of a seven-seat

vehicle for families with three or more children.

12. The government of Thailand has approved the proposal to name Siamese fighting fish as the National Aquatic Animal.

13. Pak anti-terrorism court sentences cyberstalker to 24 years in jail – This is the maximum punishment awarded to a convict in the offence related to social media crimes in the country's history.

14. Macedonia signs accord to join NATO - Macedonia signed an accord to join NATO to become the 30th member of the US-led alliance.

Note:

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an international alliance that consists of 29-member states from North America and Europe.
- It was established at the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949.
- NATO headquarter is in **Brussels, Belgium.**

January 2019

1. Qatar withdraw its membership from OPEC

- Qatar had decided to withdraw its membership from Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) effective from January 2019.
- Qatar left OPEC on 1 January 2019, after joining the organization in 1961, to focus on natural gas production, of which it is the world's largest exporter in the form of liquified natural gas (LNG).

Note:

- As of January 2019, now OPEC has 14-member countries: Algeria, Angola, Congo, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Venezuela.
- The headquarter of OPEC is in Vienna, Austria.

2. US and Israel quit UNESCO citing bias

- The United States (US) and Israel officially quit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the close of 2018.

Note:

- UNESCO headquarter is in Paris, France.

3. Five nations assume charge as Non-Permanent Members of UN Security Council

- Five nations (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa) assumed the charge as the Non-Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Note:

- The U.N. Security Council has 15 members five of which (China, France, Russia, Britain, and the United States) hold permanent membership and veto power.

4. Turkmenistan has launched its first messaging app 'BizBarde'

- BizBarde app will allow the exchange of messages, files, photos and videos.

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

- According to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro will be the World Capital of Architecture for 2020.
- The city will host the World Congress of UIA, in July 2020, an event that occurs every three years.

6. **France introduced GAFATax on Global Internet, Technology Firm** - The finance minister of France Bruno Le Maire announced that France will introduce its own tax on large internet and technology companies from January 1.
 - France has been pushing hard for a new so-called “GAFATax” — named after Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon — to ensure the global giants pay a fair share of taxes on their massive business operations in Europe.
7. **Palestine takes over chairmanship of G77** - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has pledged to protect the interests of all 134 countries in the UN’s Group of 77, as Palestine took the chairmanship of the group from Egypt for 2019.
8. **Italy, UN, launch Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development** - Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte along with UN representative has launched Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable development.
 - The new centre is located near the Food and Agriculture **Organization headquarters in Rome.**
- The major objective is boosting the agricultural sectors and promoting rural development in Africa.
- It will help in implementing the goals of the UN’s 2030 Agenda and the landmark 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to stop depending on fossil fuel and cap global warming.
9. **China is the largest producer of crude steel** - World Steel Association Report
 - China is the largest producer of crude steel and it accounts for more than 51 per cent of global production.
 - India has replaced Japan as the world’s second-largest steel producing country.
 - United States, at the 4th position, South Korea is at 5th place), Russia is a 6th place.
10. The United Nations observed the first official **World Braille Day on 4th January** to create awareness about the importance of Braille for approximately 1.3 billion people living with some form of distance or near vision impairment.

Sports

June 2019

1. **French Open Tennis 2019** – The 2019 French Open was the 123rd edition of a Grand Slam tennis tournament. It was held from 26 May to 9 June 2019, at Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France.
List of Winners
 - **Men’s single title** - Spain’s Rafael Nadal defeated Dominic Thiem of Austria.
Note: With this win Rafael Nadal won the French Open title for 12th time and 18th overall Grand Slam title.
 - **Women’s Singles title** – Ashleigh Barty of Australia defeated Marketa Vondrousova of Czech Republic in final.
 - She won the 1st Women’s Singles title at French Open tennis 2019.
 - **Women’s Doubles title** - Hungary’s Tímea Babos & France’s Kristina Mladenovic defeated Zheng Saisai & Duan Yingying of China in final.
 - **Mixed Doubles title** - Chinese Taipei’s Latisha Chan & Ivan Dodi goof Croatia defeated Gabriela Dabrowski of Canada & Mate Pavić of Croatia in final.
2. **Joshna Chinappa wins record 17th National Title in Squash** – Joshna Chinappa made a record for the most number of national titles after beating her Tamil Nadu state-mate Sunayna Kuruvilla.
3. FIH Men’s Series Finals, India defeated South Africa by 5 goals.
4. Gary Woodland won the 119th US Open Golf title after defeating two-time defending champion Brook Koepka.
5. **FIFA latest Rankings: India remains static at 101** - The Indian football team remained static at 101st place in the FIFA rankings.
 - Belgium continued to top overall world rankings, followed by France, Brazil, England, and Portugal.
6. **Peter Gilchrist wins Pacific International Billiards Championship** - Peter Gilchrist defeated India’s Sourav Kothari in final.
7. **2019 FIFA Women’s World Cup begins in France** – The 2019 FIFA Women’s World Cup is the 8th edition of the FIFA Women’s World Cup.

8. **Yuvraj Singh announces retirement from International Cricket** - Yuvraj Singh announced retirement from international cricket.
- The 37-year-old cricketer announced his decision in Mumbai.
 - Yuvraj played 40 Tests, 304 ODIs and 58 T20Is for India.
 - He put together 1900 runs in the longest format, and 8701 in the one-dayers, the format in which he enjoyed the most success.
9. **Kohli is the sole Indian in the list of top-paid athletes** – Virat Kohli, ranked 100th, remains the sole Indian in the Forbes list of world’s highest-paid athletes with estimated annual earnings of \$25 million.
- The list is topped by Barcelona and Argentina football superstar **Lionel Messi**.
 - **Top 5 athletes in the list are** - Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar, Canelo Alvarez

(Mexican professional boxer) and Roger Federer.

10. Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes won Formula One Canadian Grand Prix 2019.
11. Sunil Chhetri became the most capped India player by surpassing Bhaichung Bhutia’s 107 international matches.
12. **IAAF to rebrand as World Athletics** - World athletics’ governing body, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) will re-brand itself as World Athletics. The rebranding would be operational from October 2019.
13. **Facebook launched its first interactive Game Show in India** - The Social networking giant Facebook launched its first interactive game show, titled “Confetti” in India on 4 June 2019. The launch announcement was made on sidelines of Facebook’s Social Entertainment Summit held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

May 2019

1. **Sudirman Cup 2019: China beats Japan** - China beats Japan in men’s doubles, women’s singles and men’s singles to lift the Sudirman Cup Badminton title 2019.
2. **2020 Asia Cup** - Pakistan will host the 2020 Asia Cup cricket tournament (15th edition) in September 2020.
3. Lewis Hamilton won the Monaco Grand Prix 2019.
4. **Cricket World Cup: The Indian Challenge’ book authored by Ashis Ray.**
 - The new book he has Ray penned down the journey of Indian cricket at the World Cups since the inaugural edition of WCs in 1975.
5. **ICC launches Cricrii Campaign on eve of Men’s World Cup** – It is a celebration of all brilliant and unique ways people play cricket game which can be played by anyone, anywhere and at any time.
 - Venue of ICC Men’s Cricket World Cup 2019 – England & Wales
6. **India’s GS Lakshmi becomes 1st ever Female ICC Match Referee** - Former India women cricketer GS Lakshmi became the first female to be appointed to the ICC International Panel of Match Referees.

Note: In April 2019, Claire Polosak of Australia became the 1st ever woman umpire to stand in a men's ODI
7. Liverpool beats Tottenham Hotspur with 2-0 to win **UEFA Champions League football trophy** final at Madrid, Spain.
8. In ISSF shooting World Cup, in Munich Germany, India’s Saurabh Chaudhary has won 10m Air Pistol Gold beating his own World Record.
9. 2nd India Open International Boxing Tournament was held in Guwahati, Assam.
10. **China to host 2023 Asian Cup Football Tournament.**
11. **Spanish Grand Prix** - Mercedes’ Lewis Hamilton Wins Spanish Grand Prix.
 - Lewis Hamilton also won Bahrain and Chinese Grand Prix of 2019.
12. **Sana Mir becomes highest wicket-taking spinner in ODIs** - Pakistan off-spinner Sana Mir has become the most successful women’s ODI spinner in history after she took her **147th wicket**, highest ever by any spinner in One-day International (ODI) cricket.
 - Currently, Mir is placed on the third position in the ICC’s ODI bowling ranking, which is topped by Indian pacer Jhulan Goswami.
13. **Igor Stimac appointed Indian football team coach - Igor Stimac of Croatia** has been appointed head coach of the Indian football team for a two-year term.

Note: As a player, he was part the of the Croatia team that finished third in the 1998 World Cup, and a member of the national squad which qualified for the quarterfinals of the UEFA European Championship 1996 (Euro) in England.
14. Former Manchester City and Barcelona midfielder **Yaya Toure** has officially announced his retirement from football.

Note: He captured the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations playing for the Ivory Coast.

- He was named the African Footballer of the Year in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

15. Madrid Open 2019: The 2019 Madrid Open is a professional tennis tournament played on outdoor clay courts at the Park Manzanares in Madrid, Spain.

List of Winners

- Men's singles - Novak Djokovic (Serbia) defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece) in the final.
- Women's singles - Kiki Bertens (Netherlands) defeated Simona Halep (Romania) in the final.

16. Italian Open 2019: List of Winners

- Men's singles - Rafael Nadal (Spain) defeated Novak Djokovic (Serbia) in the final.
- Women's singles - Karolina Pliskova (Czech Republic) defeated Johanna Konta (United Kingdom) in the final.

17. Badminton World Federation (BWF) has launched two new formats of badminton game namely, AirBadminton and Triples.

- Airbadminton is an outdoor game - It has new dimensions of court and an innovative outdoor shuttlecock called AirShuttle.
- **In Triples format**, badminton match will be played between a team of total three players. Each team will mandatory have at least one female athlete. Also, players are not allowed to hit returns successively.

18. The Manchester City won the English Premier League football title for second successive year. Liverpool gained the second place in league.

19. 12th edition of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2019 – Mumbai beat Chennai by 1 run to win the 4th IPL title

- Mumbai Indian Captain – Rohit Sharma
- Man of the Match - Jasprit Bumrah

- Earlier, Mumbai won the IPL title in 2013, 2015, 2017

Cap holders

- Orange Cap: David Warner (SRH) - 692 runs
- Purple Cap: Imran Tahir (CSK) - 26 wickets
- MVP: Andre Russell (KKR) - 510 runs and 11 wickets

Other awards

- Subhman Gill (KKR): Emerging player of the year
- Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH): Playing in right spirit award
- Hardik Pandya (MI): Fastest fifty of the season (50 runs in 17 balls)
- Andre Russell (KKR): Super striker of the season
- KL Rahul (KXIP) : Stylish player of the season
- Rahul Chahar (MI): Gamechanger of the season

20. Amul to sponsor Afghanistan in 2019 World Cup - Amul has been announced as the principal sponsor of the Afghanistan cricket team for the upcoming World Cup, slated to be held in England and Wales from May 30.

21. Indian shooting ace Apurvi Chandela has been ranked the world number one in the women's 10 metres air rifle event.

22. Asian Youth Women Handball Championship - Jaipur will host the 8th Asian Youth Women Handball Championship in August 2019.
Note: The previous edition in 2017 was held at Jakarta in Indonesia.

23. Spain and Barcelona legend Xavi Hernandez has announced that he will retire from professional football at the end of the current season.

24. Sri Lanka's former captain Kumar Sangakkara will become first Non-British president of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

April 2019

1. Azlan Shah Hockey Cup 2019 - South Korea defeated India in the final of Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2019.

- The final match was held at Azlan Shah Stadium in Ipoh, Malaysia.

2. Santosh Trophy 2019 - Services' has won the 73rd edition of premier domestic football tournament 'Santosh Trophy' by defeating Punjab 1-0 in the final at Ludhiana, Punjab.

Note: The trophy is named after the late Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Roy Chowdhary of Santosh (now in Bangladesh).

3. Barcelona Open 2019 - Dominic Thiem (Austria) won the Barcelona Open 2019 after defeating Daniil Medvedev (Russia).

4. Miami Open 2019 –

- Men's Singles – Roger Federer (Switzerland) defeated John Isner (United States)
 - Women's Singles - Ashleigh Barty (Australia) defeated Karolina Pliskova (Czech Republic)
- 1. First Indian to be elected as a member of FIFA Executive Council** - Praful Patel, president of All India Football Federation (AIFF), has become the first Indian to be elected as a member of FIFA Executive Council.
 - 2. First Female Umpire in Men's ODI - Australia's Claire Polosak** will become the first female umpire to officiate in a men's one-day international at the ICC World Cricket League Division
 - 3. Azerbaijan Grand Prix 2019** - Mercedes' driver Valtteri Bottas beat his English teammate Lewis Hamilton
 - 4. Bahrain Grand Prix 2019** - Lewis Hamilton
 - 5. Sam Curran Claims First Hat-Trick Of IPL 2019** – Sam Curran bagged the first hat-trick of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2019 during Kings XI Punjab's clash against Delhi Capitals.
 - The English all-rounder bagged the wickets of Harshal Patel in the final delivery of the 18th over which was followed by two unplayable yorkers to get rid of Kagiso Rabada and Sandeep Lamichhane respectively.
 6. Saurav Ghosal became the first Indian male squash player to enter the top 10 in latest Professional Squash Association (PSA) world rankings.
 - 7. Chief Coach of India Men's Hockey Team** - Graham Reid (Australian)
 - 8. India Open 2019 (Badminton)**
 - **Men's Singles** - Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) defeated Srikanth Kidambi (India)
 - **Women's Singles** - Ratchanok Intanon (Thailand) defeated He Bingjiao (China)
 - 9. Boxing World Cup 2019** - India bagged a Gold and two Silver medals at the Boxing World Cup at Cologne in Germany.
 - Meena Kumari Maisnam (from Manipur) claimed the Gold medal in the 54 kg category.
 - 10. Shuttler Harsheel Dani clinched dutch International Badminton title** - Former junior national champion Harsheel Dani defeated Mads Christophersen of Denmark to clinch the Dutch International badminton title in The Hague, Netherlands.
 11. Lewis Hamilton wins Formula One's 1,000th Race
 - 12. Chinese Grand Prix** - Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) won the Chinese Grand Prix for a record sixth time.
 13. The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has signed an MoU with Serbian Tennis Federation (STF) to train Indian junior players under world-renowned Serbian coaches.
 - 14. Paris Marathon** - Ethiopian athletes Gelete Burka (women's race) and Abrha Milaw (men's race) won the 43rd edition of the Paris Marathon.
 - 15. Tiger Woods wins 2019 Masters to claim 15th Major in Golf** - Famous Golfer Tiger Woods completed one of the sport's great all-time comebacks to end an 11-year major title drought at the Masters by claiming a fifth Green Jacket.
 16. Bajrang regains top Spot in World Wrestling rankings - Bajrang Punia has regained the **world number one spot** in the men's 65-kilogram freestyle category rankings.
 17. Fabio Fognini became the first Italian to win an ATP Masters 1000 title at the Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters. He defeated Dusan Lajovic (Serbia)
 - 18. Asian Athletics Championships 2019 held at Doha in Qatar** - India ended at the fourth spot in the medals tally with 3 Gold, 7 Silver and 7 Bronze.
 - Bahrain topped the table with 11 Gold, 7 Silver and 4 Bronze.
 - China was second with 9 Gold, 13 Silver, and 7 Bronze.
 - Japan was third with 5 Gold, 4 Silver, and 9 Bronze.
 - 19. Pankaj Advani wins Asian Snooker Tour title**
 - 20. Stuttgart's Porsche Grand Prix 2019** - Tennis player Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic) beat Anett Kontaveit (Estonia) to win Stuttgart's Porsche Grand Prix for her second title of the year.
 - 21. Asian Wrestling Championship 2019** – Iran topped the medal tally
Note:
 - **Iran topped the medal tally with – 11 Gold, 0 Silver, 6 Bronze**
 - **China on second spot – 5 Gold, 5 Silver, 6 Bronze**
 - **Japan on third spot – 4 Gold, 7 Silver, 6 Bronze**
 - **India on 8th spot – 1 Gold, 6 Silver, 9 Bronze**
 22. All India Football Federation (AIFF) recommended names of National team footballers Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and Jeje Lalpekhlua for the prestigious Arjuna Award 2019.
 23. Cricketer Mithali Raj has been named as the goodwill ambassador of the Indian team for the Street Child Cricket World Cup.

- The first ever Cricket World Cup for street children will take place ahead of the 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup in England and Wales.

24. Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year for 2018 –

- The Wisden has named Virat Kohli as the Leading Cricketer of the Year for 2018.

- Indian player Smriti Mandhana bagged the Women's Leading Cricketer of the Year.
- Rashid Khan of Afghanistan bagged the Leading T20 Cricketer of the Year.

March 2019

1. Abu Dhabi new home of T10 cricket for next five years

- The Zayed Cricket Stadium will be the new home of T10 cricket for the next five years, starting with the 2019 season.
- The Abu Dhabi Cricket (ADC), in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Sports Council (ADSC) and the Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi), has signed a five-year agreement with the organisers of the T10 Cricket League.
- The shortest form of the game will now be played exclusively at the Zayed Cricket Stadium.

2. Suresh Raina 1st Cricketer to score 5,000 Runs in IPL – Chennai Super Kings' Suresh Raina has become the first ever cricketer to reach 5,000 runs in Indian Premier League.

- The 32-year-old left-handed batsman achieved the feat after scoring 15 runs in the IPL 2019 opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

3. SAFF Women's Championship – India defeated Nepal in the final by 3-1 in Biratnagar, Nepal.

- India has lifted South Asian Football Federation SAFF Women's Championship fifth time in a row.
- India has clinched all five editions of SAFF championship.

4. Asian Youth Championship 2019 held in Hong Kong - India finishes 2nd, China Tops

Note:

- Indian youth team finish second in the overall medals tally with a total of 26 medals including 8 gold, 9 silver and 9 bronze medals.
- China topped the overall medals tally with 31 medals that included 12 gold, 11 silver and eight bronze medals and Japan finished third with 20 medals that included 6 Gold, 8 Silver and 6 bronze.

5. Indian Super League (football) title - Bengaluru FC clinched their maiden title after beating FC Goa, in the final.

6. Australian F1 Grand Prix 2019 - Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas

7. U-17 Women's Football World Cup in 2020 - India will host the Under-17 Women's Football World Cup in 2020.

Note:

- This will be the second FIFA tournament India will be hosting, after the U-17 Men's World Cup in 2017.
- England won the U-17 World Cup for the first time after beating Spain 5-2 in the final.

8. Special Olympics World Games 2019 – UAE

Note:

- Special Olympics World Games 2019 which was held from March 14 to March 21 in the UAE has made history by welcoming a record-breaking 200 nations ahead of the Games.
- The next Special Olympic Games are set to take place in Sweden in 2021.
- India won total 368 medals (85 gold, 154 Silver, and 129 Bronze) at the Special Olympics World Summer Games, held at Abu Dhabi, UAE.

9. South African all-rounder JP Duminy announced that he would retire from ODIs after the ICC World Cup in England.

10. Chris Gayle becomes first player to smash 500 Sixes in International Cricket - West Indies opener Chris Gayle has become the first batsman ever to smash 500 or more sixes in international cricket.

11. Makran Cup - National Boxing champion Deepak Singh (49kg) was the only Indian boxer to notch up the gold medal in the Makran Cup held in Chabahar, Iran.

12. Roger Federer claims 100th ATP title of his career - Roger Federer has claimed the 100th ATP title of his career after beating 20-year-old Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the Dubai Tennis Championships.

13. The Supreme Court appointed senior advocate PS Narasimha as a mediator for resolving various disputes

related to cricket administration within the cricket body, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

reintroduce Cricket in the 2022 Asian Games to be held at Hangzhou, China.

- 14. Cricket to be re-introduced in Asian Games** - The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has decided to

February 2019

- 1. Afghanistan scores highest ever T20 International score** - Afghanistan scored 278 for the loss of three wickets from their allotted 20 overs, to register the highest-ever total in T20s at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Dehradun, Uttarakhand against Ireland.
Note: They toppled Australia's record score of 263/3 which they achieved back in 2016 against Sri Lanka.
- 2. Irani Cup title 2018-19 - Vidarbha** beat Rest of India to retain 2018-19 Irani Cup title in Nagpur.
Note: Vidarbha has now become the third team after Mumbai and Karnataka to clinch two Irani Cup titles in a row.
- 3. West Indian batsman Chris Gayle** has announced that he will retire from One-day Internationals after the forthcoming World Cup.
- 4. 'Clouded Leopard' to be Mascot for National Games 2022** - The Sports and Youth Ministry in the meeting of Executive Committee of the National Games 2022 has chosen the Smiling Clouded Leopard to be the Mascot for the National Games 2022.
Note: Meghalaya will host the 2022 National Games, which is coinciding with its 50 years of statehood.
- 5. Qatar Open title** - Elise Mertens, world number 21 from Belgium beat world number 3, Simona Halep to win the Qatar Open held in Doha, Qatar.
- 6. Malaysia's Nicol David** most successful squash players of all time announced the retirement
- 7. Cannes International Open Trophy** - Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta lifted the Cannes International Open trophy.
- 8. Sri Lanka cricket team** became the first Asian side to win a Test series in **South Africa** after winning the series by 2-0.
Note:
 - Before Sri Lanka, only Australia and England have defeated South Africa in a Test series at home.
- 9. Ranji Trophy** - Vidarbha defeated Saurashtra by 78 runs in the final.

Note:

- The defending champions Vidarbha won the 85th Ranji Trophy title.
 - Aditya Sarwate of Vidarbha was declared man of the match.
 - Vidarbha became the sixth team to successfully defend their title.
 - Mumbai (Bombay) have won the tournament the most number of times with 41 wins.
 - Ranji Trophy is named after Ranjitsinhji Vibhaji Jadeja, who was famously referred to as 'Ranji'.
- 10. India's Rohit Sharma becomes highest run-scorer in T20 cricket** - India's Rohit Sharma (31-year) has become the highest run scorer in the Twenty20 International history while playing against New Zealand in Auckland.
 - Rohit Sharma (India) scored 2288 runs in 92 matches.
 - He also became first Indian and the third overall player to smash 100 sixes in T20 cricket.
 - 11. Smriti Mandhana becomes World No.1 Women's ODI batter** - Indian women's cricket team opener Smriti Mandhana has become the top-ranked batter in women's ODI cricket, as per the latest rankings released by the ICC.
 - 12. Smriti Mandhana Scores India's fastest-ever T20I Fifty** - Indian opener Smriti Mandhana hammered the fastest fifty for India in Women's T20Is in just 24 balls against New Zealand.
 - 13. Mithali Raj became First Woman to play 200 ODIs** - India captain Mithali Raj has become the first woman cricketer to play 200 ODIs.
 - She is also the highest run-scorer in ODIs with 6622 runs at an average of 51.33, including 7 hundred.

14. **Ricky Ponting appointed** as Assistant Coach of Australia for 2019 World Cup. The main coach for the Australian Cricket team is Justin Langer.
15. The 83rd edition of Senior National Badminton Championships has begun in Guwahati.
16. **Jamie Chadwick from England** made history by becoming the first female driver to win the MRF challenge title after scoring a triple win in the final round in Chennai.
17. France's Corentin Moutet has clinched the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tournament title after beating Andrew Harris of Australia in the singles final.
18. Golfer Vani Kapoor has become the first Indian to grab Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA).
19. South Korean Footballer Ki Sung-yueng Announces retirement.
20. The INS Dronacharya team won the Regatta trophy in the Kochi Area Pulling Regatta 2019 of the Southern Naval Command (SNC) held in the Ernakulam Channel.

January 2019

1. Australian Open 2019: List of Winners

Note:

- Novak Djokovic defeated Rafael Nadal in the final to win the Australian Open 2019 title.
- With this he won a record **seventh Australian Open title** and a third successive Grand Slam.
- Novak Djokovic won the 15th Grand Slam title of his career.
- Naomi Osaka was the winner of the Women's Singles in 2019. It was her 2nd Grand Slam singles title.

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Rafael Nadal (Spain)
Women's Singles	Naomi Osaka (Japan)	Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic)
Men's Doubles	Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France) and Nicolas Mahut (France)	Henri Kontinen (Finland) and John Peers (Australia)
Women's Doubles	Samantha Stosur (Australia) and Zhang Shuai (China)	Tímea Babos (Hungary) and Kristina Mladenovic (France)
Mix Doubles	Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic) and Rajeev Ram (United States)	Astra Sharma (Australia) and John-Patrick Smith (Australia)

2. Indonesia Masters Badminton Title 2019: List of Winners

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's Singles	Anders Antonsen (Denmark)	Kento Momota (Japan)
Women's Singles	Saina Nehwal (India)	Carolina Marin (Spain)

3. Former South Africa all-rounder **Johan Botha** has announced his immediate retirement from all forms of Cricket.
4. **Mohammed Shami became Fastest Indian bowler to reach 100 ODI Wickets** - Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets, during the first one-dayer against New

Zealand at Napier. Shami reached the milestone in his **56th match**.

Note:

- The Indian record was previously held by Irfan Pathan, who got there in his 59th match, against Pakistan in Abu Dhabi in 2006.
- The world record is currently held by **Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan**, who needed only **44** games to reach the mark.

5. Virat Kohli becomes first Asian captain to win Tests in Australia, England and South Africa.

Note: Kohli became the 1st Indian captain to win the opening Test of a series against Australia in Australia

6. India become first team to win bilateral series across formats versus Australia - Virat Kohli-led Indian cricket team became the first visiting team to win bilateral series across the three formats against Australia.

7. Rishabh Pant named ICC Emerging Player of The Year - Rishabh Pant was named the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Emerging Player of The Year.

Note: With an unbeaten 159-run knock in the 4th Test in Sydney, Rishabh Pant became the **first Indian wicket-keeper to score a Test century in Australia**.

8. Rohit Paudel of Nepal became the youngest batsman to hit International Half-Century

9. West Indies captain Jason Holder has become the first player from the country in 45 years to top the list of all-rounders in the International Cricket Council Test Player Rankings after slamming an unbeaten double-century that helped script a memorable 381-run win over England in the first Test in Bridgetown.

10. Ankita Raina wins ITF's Tournament in Singapore - India's Ankita Raina has won the International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore.

11. Kartik Sharma wins New South Wales Men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia.

12. Qatar defeated Japan to win First-ever Asian Cup title in Football

13. Chennai's Gukesh Crowned India's Youngest Grandmaster - D Gukesh became the 2nd youngest Grand Master in the world and the youngest Indian to achieve the feat at 12 years, 7 months and 17 days.

14. Stephen Constantine resigns as Coach of Indian Football Team - Indian football team head coach Stephen Constantine has stepped down after the

team's shock 0-1 defeat to Bahrain which led to its exit from the Asian Cup.

15. Shakil Ahmed sets world record in Indoor Rowing - Asian Cup gold medallist Shakil Ahmed has set up a world record in indoor rowing by completing 1 lakh meters in above-40 years category in Kolkata.

16. Bengaluru Raptors won 1st ever PBL Title - Bengaluru Raptors have won their first ever Premier Badminton League, PBL title.

- In the title clash played at Bengaluru, Bengaluru edged out Mumbai Rockets, with a 4-3 win.

17. Kartik Singh becomes Youngest Indian to win Junior World title - Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship.

18. Albie Morkel retires from all forms of Cricket - South African all-rounder, announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.

19. Harendra Singh removed as Indian Men's Hockey Team Coach.

20. Mary Kom Attains No. 1 position in AIBA Rankings - M C Mary Kom has attained number one position in the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) latest world rankings.

21. Egypt to host 2019 African Cup of Nations - Seven-time champions Egypt have won the hosting rights for the 2019 edition of the African Cup of Nations.

22. Sydney & Brisbane to host \$15 million ATP Cup in 2020 - Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane have been announced as the first two host locations for the newest team event in men's tennis for the multi-million dollar ATP Cup from 2020.

23. Khelo India Youth Games 2019 - The second edition of the Khelo India Youth Games was held from 09 Jan - 20 Jan 2019 in Pune, Maharashtra.

Note:

- Maharashtra tops medal tally with 228 medals.
- Haryana stood on the second spot and Delhi is on the third spot.
- The first edition of the Khelo India Youth Games 2018 was held at New Delhi.

State	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1. Maharashtra	85	62	81	228
2. Haryana	62	56	60	178
3. Delhi	48	37	51	136

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

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

25. The 80th National Table Tennis Championship was held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack.

26. Jasprit Bumrah becomes Highest International Wicket-Taker in 2018

- Indian fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah became the highest international wicket-taker across formats in 2018.
- He took a total of 78 wickets in the calendar year.

27. Smriti Mandhana named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year

- India's opener Smriti Mandhana has been named as the International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's Cricketer of the Year.
- She also named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year.

28. ICC Awards 2018 – The list of Awards is as follows:

- Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli
- ICC Men's Test Player of the Year: Virat Kohli
- ICC ODI Player of the Year: Virat Kohli
- ICC Emerging Player of the Year: Rishabh Pant
- ICC Associate Player of the Year: Calum MacLeod
- T20I Performance of the Year: Aaron Finch
- ICC Spirit of Cricket award: Williamson
- Umpire of the Year: Kumar Dharmasena

Note:

- Virat Kohli became the first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards.
- He was also named the captain of the ICC Test and ODI teams of the year for 2018.

Science & Defense

Military Exercise

June & May 2019

- 1. Kharga Prahar** - The "Kharga Prahar", a major training exercise conducted by the Indian Army in Punjab from 27 May 2019 concluded on 4 June 2019.
 - The Indian Army's II Corps, based in Ambala is known as Kharga Corps. It has been stationed at Ambala since 1985.
- 2. SIMBEX-19 Naval Exercise** – Naval exercise between India & Singapore.
 - The 26th Edition of Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX)-19 has commenced in the South China Sea.
 - In addition to **IN Ships Kolkata and Shakti**, Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft P8I participated in the exercise.
- 3. Exercise Pacific Vanguard 2019** - US, Japan, South Korea, Australia hold 1st Naval Drills in Western Pacific in Guam.

April 2019

- 1. Varuna 19.1** - naval exercise between India & France.
 - The first part of the Indo-French joint naval exercise, Varuna 19.1 conducted in Off Goa Coast.
 - The second part, Varuna 19.2, is scheduled to be held at the end of May in Djibouti.
- 2. 'Bold Kurukshetra-2019** - joint military exercise between India & Singapore held in Babina Cantonment in Jhansi.
- 3. African Lion 2019** - joint military exercise between Morocco and the US held in southern Morocco.
- 4. IN – VPN BILAT EX** - bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and Vietnam Peoples' Navy conducted at/ off Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam.

March 2019

1. **AUSINDEX** - bilateral joint exercise between India and Australia held in held in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
2. **Mitra shakti-VI** - bilateral joint exercise between India and Sri Lanka. The exercise is conducted annually as part of military diplomacy in Sri Lanka.
3. **AFINDEX-19** – Africa-India Field Training Exercise- 2019 for India and African nations held at Aundh Military Station, Pune.
4. **Al Nagah 2019** – bilateral joint exercise between India and Oman held at at Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains in Oman.
5. **'Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019'** – b/w India & Bangladesh
 - Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) took part in the 'Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019' which was held in held in Agartala, Tripura.

February 2019

1. **'Sampriti 2019'** – (8th edition) joint military exercise between India & Bangladesh held in at Tangail, Bangladesh.
2. **Vayu Shakti' Exercise** - Indian Air Force conducted mega exercise 'Vayu Shakti' in Pokhran, Rajasthan.
3. **Cobra Gold Military Exercises** – Thailand and the United States hosted the annual Cobra Gold military exercise in Thailand.
- Apart from the 2 countries, 7 countries who participated in the exercise were India, Singapore, Japan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and South Korea.

Science & Technology

June 2019

1. **Facebook's Cryptocurrency 'Libra'** - Facebook has officially announced the details of its new global cryptocurrency called Libra. This Facebook owned cryptocurrency Libra will be launched by social media giant in 2020.
2. **NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope to Retire in 2020** – After nearly 16 years of exploring the cosmos in infrared light, NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope will be switched off permanently on Jan. 30, 2020.
 - Spitzer is a small but transformational observatory.
 - It captures infrared light, which is often emitted by "warm" objects that aren't quite hot enough to radiate visible light.
3. **ISRO opens its laboratories for Indian school students** - The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has, for the first time, opened its laboratories for Indian school students to undergo two-week training from this year.
 - The training module has been devised as part of its new Young Scientists Programme, or Yuva Vigyanik Karyakram, YUVIKA.
4. **HCL to roll out "Tech Bee" programme** - HCL Technologies is all set to roll out "Tech Bee" programme, a company initiative under which it trains and hires students who have completed XII standard, across several states.
 - Tech Bee is a HCL's early career programme in which company provides students an opportunity to start early and become financially independent and trendsetters.
 - Enrolled students are paid stipend of Rs 10,000 per month.

May 2019

1. NewSpace India Limited: ISRO's new Commercial Arm – The Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) new commercial arm called NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) was officially inaugurated in Bengaluru.

- NSIL is provided an authorised share capital worth Rs.100 crore and initial paid up capital of Rs.10 crore.
- NSIL's main objective is to scale up industry participation in Indian space programmes.
- The first commercial venture of DoS was Antrix Corporation Limited, which was set up in September 1992 to market products and services of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

2. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for astronaut selection and training for ambitious Gaganyaan Programme, scheduled for 2022.

- Gaganyaan Mission is India's maiden human spaceflight programme, scheduled for 2022.
- The Centre has officially sanctioned Rs.10,000 crore in December 2018. On 30 January 2019, ISRO has set up Human Spaceflight Centre at its headquarters in Bengaluru.

3. WHO partners with IFBA to eliminate Trans Fat - The World Health Organization (WHO) has partnered with International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA) to achieve its target under 'REPLACE Strategy' of eliminating Trans-fat from industrially produced global food supply by 2023.

4. ISRO announces Seven Mega Missions – The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), recently announced its planned seven mega missions, including Chandrayaan-2 (India's second lunar exploration mission) which will be conducted over a period of next 10 years. The ISRO has also prepared a roadmap for next 30 years.

5. ISRO inaugurates 'Yuvika 2019': The Young Scientist Programme – ISRO Chairman Dr K. Sivan inaugurated ISRO's Young Scientist Programme called 'Yuvika 2019' at Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

Key points

- The YUVIKA (or 'YUva VIgyani KARYakram') 2019, is a two week (14 days) summer vacation residential training programme, which will be conducted by ISRO from 13 May to 26 May 2019.
 - It was launched by ISRO in tune with the Centre governments vision of "Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan". This is the first time it is being held.
- 6. MoU: signed between IIT Guwahati and ISRO** – The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati has signed a Memorandum of Understanding MoU with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to set up an IITG-ISRO Space Technology Cell (STC).
- The Space Technology Cell (STC) would be a first of its kind in the North-East region that would augment research and capacity building processes in field of space-technology.
- 7. NASA unveils schedule for 'Artemis' 2024 Moon mission** – NASA unveiled the calendar for the "Artemis" program that will return astronauts to the Moon for the first time in half a century, including eight scheduled launches and a mini-station in lunar orbit by 2024.
- 8. ISRO successfully launched earth observation satellite 'RISAT-2B'** – Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched the 'RISAT-2B' Satellite from the Sriharikota's, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR.
- The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C46) lifted-off from the First Launch Pad and injected RISAT-2B into an orbit of 556 km.
 - The RISAT-2B is a radar imaging earth observation satellite, weighing about 615 kg.
 - The satellite is intended to provide services in the field of agriculture, forestry and disaster management.
- 9. Scientists carry out first ever Genetic Study on Lakshadweep Island's Natives** – For the very first time scientists carried out genetic study on people of Lakshadweep Islands.

- It was conducted by a team of researchers at CSIR's (Council of Scientific & Industrial Research) Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB).

- The authors studied major islands of Kadmat, Andorth, Chetlat, Agatti, Kalpeni, Bitra, Kiltan and Minicoy of Lakshadweep.

April 2019

1. China Launches Its 2nd Generational Data Relay Satellite, Tianlian II-01
2. **Astronomers Capture first-ever image of a Black Hole** – Astronomers have taken the first-ever image of a black hole, which is located in a distant galaxy known as 'Messier 87' (M87) around 55 million light-years away from Earth.
 - It was captured by the **Event Horizon Telescope** (EHT), a network of eight linked telescopes. It measures 40 billion km space across and has been described by scientists as "a monster".
3. **ISRO launches PSLV C-45 carrying EMISAT & 28 Nano Satellites** – The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched a Defence Intelligence Satellite, EMISAT in its 47th Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) mission, along with 28 other customer satellites, onboard the advanced PSLV-C45 Rocket.
 - The PSLV C45 was launched from ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.
4. **Tesla Builds its 'largest Energy Storage System in Asia'** – Tesla has developed its 'largest power storage system in Asia' at Osaka train station in Japan to reduce energy demand and provide emergency backup power to trains in Japan.
5. **Google launches new cloud platform Anthos** – Google launched Anthos, a new open platform from Google Cloud, that lets users run applications from anywhere.
6. **Google has opened its first African artificial intelligence (AI) centre in Ghana** – Google has opened its first African artificial intelligence (AI) centre in Accra, Ghana.
 - The research laboratory will host software engineers and research scientists to work on projects dedicated to next-generation technology.
 - Note: Accra is the capital and Cedi is the currency of Ghana.
7. **South Korea launches World's First National 5G Networks** – South Korea launches the world's first

fully-fledged 5G mobile networks. The system will bring smartphones near-instantaneous connectivity 20 times faster than the existing 4G allowing users to download entire movies in less than a second.

8. **Nepal launches Its first Satellite from USA - Nepal's first satellite NepaliSat-1** was launched into space from the Virginia-based station of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in the US.
 - NepaliSat-1 will start rotating around the Earth's orbit to collect information about the country's topography and Earth's magnetic field.
 - The satellite also bears the Nepal flag and logo of Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST).
 - The satellite is equipped with a 5MP camera to capture Nepal's topography and a magnetometer to collect data related to the Earth's magnetic field.
9. **Sri Lanka's 1st Satellite 'Raavana-1' launched into Space** – Sri Lanka's first satellite Raavana-1 was launched into space from NASA's Flight Facility on Virginia's east shore.
 - Raavana 1 weighs around 1.05 kg and is 1000 cubic centimetres in size.
 - The minimum lifespan of the satellite is around one and a half years and it is expected to be active for five years.
 - Raavana 1 satellite was designed and built at the Kyushu Institute of Technology in Japan by two Sri Lankan research engineers.
 - Raavana 1 satellite's camera mission is to capture images of Sri Lanka and its neighbouring countries.
10. **First privately funded mission to the Moon 'Beresheet'** spacecraft crashed into the moon's surface - Beresheet is an Israeli mission. It is the first privately funded lunar mission.
 - Beresheet crashed during landing on lunar surface.

- It was launched with a partnership between non-profit Spacell_ and government owned aerospace company of Israel
- .

March 2019

1. **ISRO launches 'Yuva Vigyani Karyakram' for School Children** – Indian Space Research Organisation has launched 'Yuva Vigyani Karyakram', a 'Young Scientist Programme' for the School Children to be studying in the 9th standard.
2. **NASA to launch SPHEREx Mission to Investigate Universe** – NASA has announced a new space telescope mission dedicated to understanding the origins of life and the universe.
 - It's called the Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization and Ices Explorer or SPHEREx, for short. The space agency is aiming for a 2023 launch.
3. **China's Xinhua unveils World's First Female AI News Anchor** – Chinese news agency Xinhua unveiled the world's first female AI news anchor Xin Xiaomeng.

She has been developed in collaboration with Sogou Inc, a search engine company.

4. **Bandicoot- a drainage cleaning Robot Introduced in Chennai** – Bandicoot, a drainage-cleaning robot, has been introduced for the first time in India at the Kumbakonam city corporation as part of efforts to rid of manual scavenging at the cost of Rs 18 lakh in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
5. **First Humanoid Police Robot KP-BOT launched in Kerala** – Kerala Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, inaugurated India's first Humanoid Police Robot named KP-BOT, ranked as Sub-Inspector (SI), at the Police Headquarters in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
 - The robot's gender is declared female keeping in mind women empowerment and gender equality.

January & February 2019

1. **ISRO launches GSAT31 from French Guiana**
 - India's communication satellite GSAT-31 launched successfully from Kourou Launch Base, French Guiana (at Indian time- 2:31 am).

Note:

 - GSAT-31 (India's 40th communication satellite) will provide transponder capacity for DTH television and connectivity to services like VSATs for ATMs, stock-exchanges, Digital Satellite News Gathering DSNG and e-governance applications.
 - GSAT-31 had a lift-off mass of 2536 kg and operational life of over fifteen years.
2. **Isro to set up Human Space Flight Centre in Bengaluru Gaganyaan mission** - The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) is setting up a 'Human Space Flight Centre' in Bengaluru, which will support its quest of making country's maiden manned space mission a success.

Note:

- **The total fund for the Gaganyaan programme is Rs 10,000 crore.**
3. **Facebook to set up an Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence**
 - Facebook grants \$7.5 million to set up an Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in collaboration with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) in Germany.
 4. **Young Scientist Programme**
 - Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced Young Scientist Programme to inculcate and nurture space research fervour in young minds. Young Scientist programme is part of Isro's efforts to reach out to the student community.
 5. **Samwad with Students**
 - Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched an outreach programme called Samwad with Students.
 - Isro's outreach programme was aimed at motivating young India and tapping their scientific potential.

6. Pune to soon be first city in country to see a traffic robot

- The traffic police authorities of Pune are planning to introduce a robot named 'Roadeo' which would move around city roads, functioning as a quasi-traffic policeman and cautioning commuters about traffic rules and offences.

7. First manned mission to space by December 2021: ISRO chief

- ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan has announced that the organization is well prepared to meet the targets of launching Gaganyaan manned mission to outer space by December 2021.
- Under **Gaganyaan project**, India is planning to send three astronauts to outer space for seven days and bring them back.

Union Cabinet approves budget for Gaganyaan project

- The Union Cabinet has approved a budget of **Rs 10,000 crore** for India's Gaganyaan project.

8. Japan Launches Satellite for World's 1st Artificial Meteor Shower

- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency has launched Tokyo-based startup Star-ALE's mini-satellite aimed to deliver the world's first artificial meteor shower.

9. IIT-M recreates Space Fuel

- The researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) have recreated space fuel by simulating interstellar conditions in the laboratory.

- It is a big breakthrough for India in the exploration of cleaner and sustainable alternatives to fossil fuel.

10. NASA Discovers new planet 'HD 21749b'

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of USA has discovered a new planet.
- It is the third new planet discovered by the NASA mission, Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS).
- The new planet HD 21749b is outside our solar system and orbits a dwarf star 53 light years away.
- HD 21749b orbits a bright star in the constellation Reticulum.
- It has the longest orbital period of all the three discoveries made by TESS.
- HD 21749b orbits its star in a relatively leisurely 36 days.
- The other two discoveries made by the TESS probe are Pi Mensae b and LHS 3844b.
- Pi Mensae b has an orbit of 6.3 days and LHS 3844b has an orbit of just 11 hours.

11. IIT-H Launches full-fledged B.Tech in Artificial Intelligence

- Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H) has announced the launch of a full-fledged bachelor's programme in Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology from the new academic session, a first for the country and only the third globally.
- The new course will have 20 seats and the eligibility is clearing the JEE-Advanced test.

Defense News

June 2019

1. Operation Bandar' was IAF's code name for Balakot airstrike -

- According to the senior defence sources, in order to maintain secrecy and ensure that the plans don't leak out, the Balakot operations were given the codename Operation Bandar,".
- On February 26, 12 Mirages having taken off from multiple air bases crossed over into the Pakistani air space and carried out missile

attacks on Jaish-e-Mohammed terror camp in Balakot town of Khyber Pakhtunwa province.

- The attacks carried out by the Indian Air Force, pilots had dropped five Spice 2000 bombs.

2. NASA's First Astrobee Robot Bumble Starts Flying in Space

- NASA's First Astrobee Robot Bumble Starts Flying in Space.
- NASA has revealed its first cube-shaped 'Astrobee' robot, called Bumble, flew under its

own power in space for the first time on June 14.

3. IAF inks Rs 300 crore deal to procure SPICE 2000 bombs from Israel – Indian Air Force (IAF) signed Rs.300 crore deal with Israel’s Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, an Israeli defence firm to procure a batch of SPICE 2000 guided bombs.

- The SPICE stands for Smart, Precise Impact and Cost-Effective.
- It is guidance and maneuvering kit manufactured by Israel’s Rafael Advanced Defense Systems.

4. Operation Sankalp - Indian Navy launched ‘Operation Sankalp’ in Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman to reassure safe passage of Indian flagged vessels transiting through area. This deployment is in the wake of following recent maritime incidents in region.

- Indian Naval Ships, INS Chennai (Kolkata-class stealth guided missile destroyers) and INS Sunayna (Saryu-class patrol vessel) have been deployed in region to undertake maritime security operations.

5. Operation Sunrise - The armies of **India and Myanmar** carried out a 3-week-long coordinated operation in their respective border areas called ‘Operation Sunrise 2’ to bust terror camps.

- The operation was targeted at militant groups operating in Manipur, Nagaland and Assam. This was the 2nd edition of Operation Sunrise.

6. Govt. to set up Defence Space Research Agency – The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) of the Central Government of India headed by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi has cleared setting up of new agency called Defence Space Research Agency (DSRO).

- The DSRO has been entrusted with task of creating space warfare weapon systems and technologies.
- The agency would be providing the research and development support to the Defence Space Agency (DSA) which comprises members of the three services.
- The Defence Space Agency is being set up in Bengaluru under an Air Vice Marshal-rank officer and will gradually take over the space-related capabilities of the three forces.

7. The Indian Air Force’s (IAF) Flight Lieutenant Mohana Singh became first ever woman pilot to fly by day on Hawk advanced jet aircraft.

8. ICG co-hosts 12th ReCAAP ISC capacity building workshop – Indian Coast Guard (ICG) co-hosts 12th Capacity Building workshop with Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) in New Delhi.

Note:

- The ReCAAP is the first regional Government-to-Government agreement to deal with piracy and armed robbery at sea in Asia.
- Presently 20 countries are members of ReCAAP.
- India played an active role in the setting up and functioning of ReCAAPISC along with Japan and Singapore.

May 2019

1. New version of Akash missile test-fired successfully - The DRDO successfully test-fired the new version of the Akash surface-to-air defence missile system with a new indigenously-developed seeker in Balasore off the Odisha coast.

- The medium range multi-target engagement capable missile was developed as part of the Integrated Guided-Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) other than Nag, Agni, Trishul, and Prithvi missiles.
- The supersonic missile has a range of around 25km and up to the altitude of 18,000 meters.

2. The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully fired aerial version of supersonic BrahMos cruise missile from a Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft.

BrahMos Missile

- It is a 2.5 ton supersonic air to surface cruise missile.
- Its range is close to 300 km, and is designed and developed by BrahMos Aerospace Pvt. Ltd. (BAPL).

3. Indian Navy’s 1st full-fledged SSB opened at Kolkata - The Indian Navy’s first full-fledged Services Selection Board (SSB) was inaugurated by Navy Chief

Admiral Sunil Lanba at Diamond Harbour near Kolkata, West Bengal.

- This is the fifth SSB of the Indian Navy. The other boards are located in Bhopal, Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam and Coimbatore.
4. Indian Air Force successfully fired the BrahMos air version missile from its frontline Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft.
 5. **Indian Coast Guard Ship Vighraha decommissioned** – The Indian Coast Guard ship (ICGS) Vighraha was decommissioned at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. It is a frontline offshore patrol vessel (OPV).
 6. **Inertial Guided Bomb: successfully Flight-Tested by DRDO** – The Defence Research and Defence Organisation (DRDO), under Ministry of Defence has successfully flight tested a 500 kg class Inertial Guided Bomb from Su-30 MKI Aircraft from Pokhran test range in Rajasthan.
 7. **Shaheen-II: successfully test-fired by Pakistan** – Pakistan has successfully test-fired a land-based ballistic missile named ‘Shaheen-II’. The impact point of missile was in the Arabian Sea.
 - **Range:** It is capable of hitting targets up to 1,500-2000 kilometers.
 - It is a land-based supersonic intermediate-range surface-to-surface guided ballistic missile.
 8. **Sahara: Hostel for the ‘Veer Naris’** – Lt. Governor of Delhi Anil Baijal, inaugurated the Sahara Naval Hostel for the ‘Veer Naris’ at Vasant Kunj in New Delhi.
 - It is a unique Hostel project for Naval Widows or Veer Naris.
 - It aims to provide rehabilitation of Naval Widows and their families in period immediately after unfortunate demise of their husbands serving the Indian Navy.
 9. The Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal (ACM) B.S. Dhanoa visits Air Force Station in Bhisiana and Sarsawa to pay homage to the air warriors who made supreme sacrifice during **Operation Safed Sagar** at Kargil.

Safed Sagar (or “Operation White Sea”)

 - It was the code name assigned to Indian Air Force’s (IAF) role in acting jointly with Ground troops of Indian Army during the Kargil war in 1999.
 - It was aimed at flushing out Regular and Irregular troops of Pakistani Army from vacated Indian Positions in Kargil sector along Line of Control (LOC).
 - Since 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, it was the first large scale use of Airpower in Jammu and Kashmir region.
 10. **Indian Navy successfully Test-Fires MRSAM missile** – The Indian Navy has successfully test-fired a Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM).
 11. China has delivered the first overhauled multi-role JF-17 Thunder fighter jet the Pakistan Air Force (PAF).
 12. **DRDO successfully conducts flight Test of ABHYAS** – India successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS – High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) from a test range in Odisha.
 - The trial, carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Balasore, was tracked by various radars and electro-optic systems.
 13. Indian Air Force’s AN-32 transport aircraft goes missing after taking off from Jorhat in Assam. The airborne aircraft had total 13 people on board including eight aircrew and five passengers.
 14. **Indian Army to commemorate 2019 as ‘Year of next of kin’** – The Indian Army is commemorating this year as the ‘Year of Next of Kin’ and plans to reach out to the next of kin of battle casualties, ex-servicemen and serving soldiers to inform them of entitled financial benefits, welfare schemes and help resolve pension-related problems.
 15. First AH-64E (I) – Apache Guardian helicopter was formally handed over to the Indian Air Force at Boeing production facility in Arizona, USA.
 - IAF had signed a contract with US Government and M/s Boeing Ltd in Sep 2015 for 22 Apache helicopters.
 16. **India to purchase 10 Kamov-31 Choppers from Russia for INR 3,600 cr** – Defence ministry has approved the procurement of 10 Kamov Ka-31 Airborne Early Warning and Control helicopters for the Indian Navy. The cost of the deal would be around Rs 3,600 crore.
 17. **Indian Navy launches 4th Scorpene Class Submarine INS Vela** – The fourth of Indian Navy’s stealth Scorpene class Submarines of Project 75, INS Vela was launched at the Kanhoji Angre Wet Basin of Mazagon Dock Limited at Mumbai in Maharashtra.
 18. **INS Ranjit to be decommissioned** – INS Ranjit, an Indian navy destroyer built by erstwhile USSR, is set to be decommissioned. The third of the five Kashin-class destroyers, it was commissioned in 1983 and has rendered service to the Navy for over 36 years.

- The ship will be decommissioned at a solemn ceremony at the Naval dockyard in Visakhapatnam.

April 2019

- 1. Navy Chief launches new guided Missile destroyer 'INS Imphal'** – Indigenously designed 'INS Imphal' a guided missile destroyer was launched by Navy Chief Sunil Lanba at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai. This ship is designed by the Indian Navy's Directorate of Naval Designs, New Delhi.
- 2. INS Kolkata, INS Shakti to participate in IFR in China** – The Indian Navy will participate in International Fleet Review (IFR) that is scheduled to take place in Qingdao, China as part of 70th Anniversary celebrations of People's Liberation Army Navy (PLA Navy).
 - The Indian Navy would be represented in the IFR by indigenously built stealth guided missile destroyer **INS Kolkata and fleet support ship INS Shakti.**
- 3. Indian Army builds Longest Suspension bridge over River Indus in Leh-Ladakh** – The Indian Army has successfully built the longest suspension bridge 'Matiri Bridge' over the Indus River in the Leh-Ladakh region.
 - Built in a record time of 40 days 'Maitri Bridge' is longest Suspension Bridge over Indus River.
- 4. India's 1st Indigenously built Dhanush Howitzer Inducted in Army** – In a major boost to India's firepower, country's first indigenously designed and developed Dhanush artillery gun was inducted in the Indian Army during a ceremony held at Ordnance Factory in Jabalpur, MP.
 - **Dhanush 155mm/45 calibre** towed gun system can be deployed in all types of terrains.
- 5. GRSE becomes first Indian Shipyard to deliver 100 Warships** – Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE) became the 'first Indian shipyard' to build and deliver 100 warships.
- 6. India, US navies set up first ever secure communication link under COMCASA** - India and the US have set up the first ever secure communication link between the naval headquarters in New Delhi and the US Central as well as Pacific Naval Commands under the landmark Indo-US COMCASA pact reached last year.
 - Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA).
- 7. NASA's InSight mission has recorded and measured has recently recorded "marsquake", a quake on the planet Mars, perhaps caused by land tides or volcanic eruptions. It is believed to be the first marsquake ever detected.**
 - **InSight:** Interior Exploration using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport - InSight
 - Mission type: Mars lander
 - Operator: NASA / JPL
 - Launch date: 5 May 2018
 - InSight mission is a robotic lander designed to study the deep interior of the planet Mars

March 2019

- 1. Chinook Helicopters inducted in Indian Air Force** – The Indian Air Force formally inducted the CH 47 F(I)-Chinook heavy-lift helicopters into its inventory at Air Force Station Chandigarh.
 - IAF had signed a contract with M/s Boeing Ltd in September 2015 for 15 Chinook helicopters.
- 2. Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) successfully test fired the PINAKA guided WEAPON rocket system from Pokhran range in Rajasthan.**
- 3. US Special Operations Forces hold Exercise with NSG In Hyderabad** – The United States Special Forces Group stationed in Japan is involved in a joint exercise with India's National Security Guard in Hyderabad, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries.
- 4. 'Vijit' becomes 1st Indian Coast Guard Ship to visit Indonesia** – Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vijit' became the first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit Sabang, Indonesia.

February 2019

- 1. Aero India 2019 held in Bengaluru** – The 12th edition of international aerospace and defence exhibition, Aero India 2019 was held on February 24, 2019 at air force station Yelahanka in Bengaluru.
 - It was inaugurated by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.
 - The Aero India 2019 had tagline “The Runway to a Billion Opportunities”.
- 2. PV Sindhu first woman to co-pilot Tejas in Aero India show** - Badminton ace PV Sindhu flew a desi Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas as a co-pilot at the 12th edition of Aero India.
 - With this she became the first woman to have co-piloted the Tejas.
- 3. India signed deal with US to procure 72,400 Assault Rifles** – The Indian Government has signed a deal with the US under Fast Track Procurement (FTP) to avail the Indian Army with 72,400 new ‘Sig Sauer Assault Rifles’ which will overhaul the army’s inventory of frontline rifles.
- 4. Hina Jaiswal becomes the First Indian Woman Flight Engineer** – Flight Lieutenant Hina Jaiswal from Chandigarh, became the First Indian Woman Flight Engineer of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- 5. Iran’s First Semi-Heavy Missile-Equipped Submarine Fateh Unveiled** – Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani unveiled the first Iranian made semi-heavy submarine named ‘Fateh’ capable of being fitted with missiles.
 - It has subsurface-to-surface missiles with a range of about 2,000 km (1,250 miles) and is capable of reaching Israel and U.S. military bases in the region.

January 2019

- 1. Iran announced the successful test flight of Hoveizeh long-range cruise missile.**
- 2. Diffo Bridge of Arunachal Pradesh Inaugurated**
 - In Arunachal Pradesh, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on January 18, inaugurated the Diffo Bridge over Chipu River in Lower Dibang Valley District.
 - The construction of the Bridge was undertaken by the Project Udayak of the Border Roads Organisation.
- 3. ISRO’s new station in Bhutan to counter China’s Tibet facility** - India is setting up a satellite tracking and data reception centre in Bhutan with the objective to counter a similar facility by the Chinese in the region.
- 4. PM Modi inaugurates country’s first private Howitzer plant**
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Armoured Systems Complex (ASC), developed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) at **Hazira near Surat in Gujarat**.
 - This is the country’s first private facility where the **K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns** will be manufactured. L&T had won the Rs 4,500-crore contract to supply 100 units of the K9 Vajra-T 155 mm/52 calibre Tracked Self-Propelled gun systems to the Indian Army in 2017.

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