

# Monthly GK Digest

January 2020



## Monthly Digest January -2020

**Dear readers,**

This **Monthly GK Digest** is a **complete docket** of important news and events that occurred in a month of January **2020**. This file is important for, **Bank, SSC and Railways** exams.

### **Banking & Financial Awareness**

1. The **Reserve Bank of India** (RBI) has launched **MANI** app for visually challenged to Identify currency Denomination.  
**Note:** The full form of 'MANI' is the "Mobile Aided Note Identifier". The visually challenged people can identify the denomination of a currency note by using the mobile app "MANI". The application also works offline once installed. MANI application scans currency notes using camera and gives audio output in Hindi and English.
2. India may **overtake Germany** to become the **fourth-largest** economy by **2026**.  
**Note:** The report titled 'World Economic League Table 2020' was released by the UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR). According to the report, India is expected to become the fourth-largest economy by 2026 and the third-largest by 2034. The CEBR report states that India would surpass Germany to become the fourth-largest economy by 2026 and further topple Japan in 2034 to become the third-largest economy.
3. Health insurance policy in the name 'Arogya Sanjeevani' mandatory for insurance companies -- **IRDAI**  
**Note:** The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India** (IRDA) has introduced a standard health cover policy that must be offered by all general and standalone health insurers. As per the guidelines issued by the IRDAI, every general and standalone health insurer should offer a standard health product, the Arogya Sanjeevani Policy, with a minimum sum insured of Rs 1 lakh, with the upper limit of Rs 5 lakh. The policy term will be for one year. The Arogya Sanjeevani policy is a first of its kind standard health insurance product that will help easy availability of health insurance.
4. **Public sector lender Indian Bank** has signed an MoU with the Women Entrepreneurs Welfare Association (WEWA), Tamil Nadu.  
**Note:** The bank, which has dedicated products specially designed for women customers, will provide loans to WEWA members at special discounted rates. Training will be given to the WEWA members in the INDSETIs (Indian Bank Self Employment Training Institutes). WEWA aims at adding 1,000 members by 2023 and requested the bank to provide the skill training to their members as per the interest and choice of the members.
5. **CSC e-Governance Services India Limited** has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL) for sale of **FASTags**.  
**Note:** The agreement will facilitate the sale of PPBL FASTags through the last mile network of 3.6 lakh CSCs, helping realize the government's vision of cashless and smooth transit at all toll plazas across the country. For this, CSC will integrate its platform with Paytm Payments Bank to carry out seamless transactions. FASTags, which work on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology -- have been made mandatory at toll gates on national highways.
6. **PNB MetLife** partnered with RevFin to offer life cover.  
**Note:** RevFin, a digital lending start-up has partnered with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company to provide life insurance to its customers by bundling life insurance cover on their loans. This partnership supports financial inclusion by helping to secure the families of the borrowers against loan repayment burden in the event of the unfortunate demise of the borrower during the loan term. RevFin customers who have taken a loan to buy an electric three-wheeler can take advantage of this tie-up, and cover their outstanding loan amount during the loan tenure.
7. **State Bank of India** has introduced One Time Password (OTP)-based ATM cash withdrawals.  
**Note:** The step has been taken to reduce the occurrences of unauthorised transactions happening at ATMs. SBI introduced one-time password for every cash withdrawal of Rs 10,000 and above between 8 am and 8

- pm. It has been effective from January 1, 2020 across all SBI ATMs.
- 8. Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has enabled select banks in India to offer round-the-clock (24x7) trading in the Indian rupee.  
**Note:** The select banks in India offered Indian customers foreign exchange rates only in inter-bank market hours from 9 am – 5 pm. This decision will also make the offshore currency markets in countries like Dubai & Singapore less attractive for Indian investors.
- 9. Two Indian banks Axis Bank and ICICI Bank** has decided to end their operations in Sri Lanka.  
**Note:** The Central Bank of Sri Lanka has permitted these two Indian banks to close their operations in the island nation. The licenses issued to them will be canceled once the winding-up operations are complete.
- 10. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has revised the supervisory action framework for **Urban co-operative banks (UCBs)**.  
**Note:** According to the guidelines, UCBs, with deposits of Rs 100 crore and above, will constitute the BoM, which will be a mandatory requirement for opening new branches. The main functions of the Board of Management (BoM) include recommending action for recovery of NPAs, One Time Settlement and assisting the board in monitoring the same.
- 11. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has granted in-principle approval to Co-operative Bank to convert to a small finance bank (SFB) **Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank Ltd.**  
**Note:** It becomes the first urban cooperative bank (UCB) to make the transition since the guidelines came out nearly two years ago. Approval granted will be valid for 18 months to enable the applicant to comply with the requirements under the scheme on the voluntary transition of the urban co-operative banks into a small finance bank. Under the scheme, UCBs with a minimum net worth of ₹50 crores and capital to risk (weighted) assets ratio of 9% and above are eligible to apply for the voluntary transition to SFB.
- 12. According to the National Statistics Office release,** India's GDP growth during fiscal 2019-20 is expected at **5%**.  
**Note:** The estimated growth of real Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2019-20 is 4.9% as against 6.6% in 2018-19. The manufacturing sector is expected to grow at 2% in 2019-20 as compared to 6.9% in the previous year. The growth rate in per capita income is estimated at 4.3% during 2019-20, as against 5.6% in the previous year. The agriculture sector is expected to see a growth of 2.8% as compared to 2.9% in the previous year.
- 13. According to the Deutsche Bank report Imagine 2030,** the Indian economy is likely to become \$7 trillion by **2030**.  
**Note:** The Indian economy is expected to grow almost two and half times from about \$3 trillion now and thus it becomes the world's third-largest economy. According to the report, India will grow with the Nominal GDP growth rate of just over 10% in the next decade.
- 14. State Bank of India** has announced the 'Residential Builder Finance with Buyer Guarantee' (RBBG) scheme to give a push to residential sales and improve homebuyers' confidence.  
**Note:** Under this scheme, the SBI will issue a guarantee for the completion of select residential projects to customers who have availed home loans from it. The scheme will focus on affordable housing projects priced up to 2.50 crore rupees in 10 cities initially. Under RBBG, the guarantee would be given by the bank until the project gets the Occupation Certificate (OC).
- 15. Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has enabled selected banks in India to offer forex rates to Indian clients round-the-clock (24x7).  
**Note:** In effect, this opens up the forex market in India round the clock, allowing Indians to hedge their foreign exchange risks at any time of the day. This will also make the offshore currency markets in Dubai and Singapore less attractive for Indian investors.
- 16. Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has amended the KYC norms allowing banks and other lending institutions regulated by it to use Video-based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP).  
**Note:** The V-CIP will make it easier for **banks and other regulated entities** to adhere to the RBI's Know Your Customer (KYC) norms by leveraging digital technology. The regulated entities will have to ensure that the video recording is stored in a safe and secure manner and bears the date and time stamp. As per the circular, the reporting entity should capture a clear image of the PAN card to be displayed by the customer during the process.
- 17. Central govt raised India Overseas Bank's authorized capital to Rs 25,000 crore.**  
**Note:** The Union government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced an increase in the authorized capital of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) to Rs. 25,000 crores from the previously authorized capital of Rs. 15,000 crores. The authorized capital of a company/bank/institution is the maximum amount of share capital a company is authorized to issue its shareholders.
- 18. Payment and fintech company PayU** have decided to acquire a controlling stake in digital credit platform PaySense in a deal valued at **USD 185 million**.

**Note:** After that PayU has also decided to merge its consumer lending businesses, LazyPay with PaySense. , will merge their business operations to build a full-stack digital lending platform in India. The founder and CEO of PaySense Prashanth Ranganathan will lead the PayU's credit business in India as the CEO of the new venture

19. **Michael Patra** has been appointed as the **deputy governor** of the **Reserve Bank of India** (RBI) for a three-year term  
**Note:** At present, he is serving as an executive director at the Reserve Bank of India. He replaces Viral Acharya, who left office on July 23, 2019. He will take over as the fourth deputy governor at the Reserve Bank.
20. Former Flipkart CEO **Sachin Bansal** acquires **DHFL General Insurance**.  
**Note:** Sachin Bansal (Flipkart co-founder and former CEO) has acquired DHFL General Insurance from Kapil Wadhawan-led Wadhawan Group Capital (WGC) for around Rs 100 crore. WGC is the parent company of debt-laden Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL) and this deal is seen as a distress sale.
21. The Global software major **Infosys** signed a 5-year deal with leading European automotive logistics firm GEFCO to digitize its worldwide operations.  
**Note:** Infosys is partnering with the Paris-based GEFCO to digitize its multi-modal supply chain solutions and support its digital transformation over the next five years.
22. The State Bank of India's research desk has released its report -- **Ecowrap**.  
**Note:** In its report, the SBI has lowered its GDP growth forecast for FY20 to 4.6 percent from the earlier 5 percent. Also, the latest SBI Ecowrap report even predicted the growth rate to remain below 6 percent for the two years in a row.
23. India's leading digital payments company announced the launch of its all-in-one QR for merchants across the country -- **Paytm**.  
**Note:** The QR code will enable the business to accept unlimited payments through Paytm Wallet, Rupay Cards and all UPI-based payment apps directly into their bank account at zero percent fee. The platform offers a single reconciliation of all payments through its 'Paytm for Business' app. Paytm also launched 'Paytm Business Khata', a new service to promote the Paytm merchant partners to maintain digital ledgers of all their customer transactions including cash and credit.
24. India's leading private sector lender **HDFC Bank** has launched myApps application to boost digital payments in India.  
**Note:** myApps is a unique customized suite of banking products to benefit urban local bodies, housing societies,

local clubs and gymkhanas, and religious institutions. At present HDFC Bank is offering four types of applications — mySociety, myClub, myPrayer and myCity. myApps will allow institutions to customize their branding and content. Moreover, the app can be customized in over 20 languages starting with Hindi and English

25. To provide Rs. 179 prepaid plan with life insurance of Rs 2 lakh Airtel joins hands with **Bharti AXA**.  
**Note:** On January 19, 2020, Bharti Airtel Limited has partnered with Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company Limited to offer Rs 2 lakh insurance cover to Airtel users with every recharge of Rs 179 prepaid bundle. The new plan will be accessible at any Airtel retail store or on the Airtel Thanks app.
26. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the Certificate of Authorization (CoA) of **Vodafone M-pesa Limited**  
**Note:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the Certificate of Authorisation (CoA) of Vodafone M-pesa Limited after it had voluntarily surrendered the authorization. Now Vodafone m-Pesa cannot continue to transact the business of issuance & will no longer have the right to provide payment facility as a prepaid instrument (PPI).
27. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its World Economic Outlook 2020, has reduced India's economic growth forecast for 2019 to **4.8 %**  
**Note:** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its World Economic Outlook 2020, has reduced India's economic growth forecast for 2019 to 4.8 % from 6.1% predicted earlier in October 2019. The growth projections have been lowered, citing pressure from non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and weak income growth in rural India.
28. According to the "Global Investment Trend Monitor report 2020" released by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) what is India's rank in attracting FDI in 2019 -- **8th**  
**Note:** According to the "Global Investment Trend Monitor report 2020" released by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), India ranked 8th among the top 10 countries attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2019. During this period FDI in India grew by 16 % to \$ 49 billion (bn). This led to a surge in FDI growth in South Asia (SA), which recorded a 10% increase in FDI to \$ 60 billion.
29. The Reserve Bank of India has been ranked at what position in buying gold abroad among the central banks of the world -- **6th**.

- Note:** According to World Gold Council(WGC) report titled “Outlook 2020: Global economic trends and their impact on gold”, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) became the sixth largest buyer when it purchased 25.2 tonnes in first 10 months of 2019 to hedge government’s sovereign gold bond issue. The central banks of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Poland bought more than India in 2019.
- 30.** The United Nations (UN) has predicted the India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for the year 2019-20 to **5%**.  
**Note:** The United Nations (UN) has predicted the India’s GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth forecast for the year 2019-20 to 5% . Earlier in 2019, it had projected GDP growth rate of 7.6% for FY 2019-20.
- 31.** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched a platform to make payments fast & secure -- “**Vajra Platform**”.  
**Note:** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched blockchain technology-based “Vajra Platform” to make payments fast & secure. The new platform Vajra is based on the Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT). It has been designed with the aim to offer automatic clearing and settlement of payments on NPCI products such as unified payments interface (UPI) and Rupaya card & will significantly reduce the need for manual reconciliation.
- 32.** Indian private bank has launched India’s largest API banking portal **ICICI Bank**.  
**Note:** The ICICI Bank has launched India’s largest API (application programming interfaces) Banking portal called ‘ICICI Bank API Banking portal’(<https://developer.icicibank.com/>). It consists of 250 APIs & allows bank’s partner companies across the globe to sign up on it, create an application, select the application, test it out and get the sample code.
- 33.** First-of-its-kind 24×7 self-service delivery facility ‘iBox’ was launched by **ICICI Bank**.  
**Note:** ICICI Bank has launched first-of-its-kind 24×7 self-service delivery tool for customers called “iBox” at one of its branches in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The bank has started it in over 50 branches in 17 cities.Under this facility, customers will now be able to take their debit, credit card, check book and return check from the branch close to their home or office.  
The iBox terminals are installed outside the premises of the bank’s branches, which can be used even after the bank closes.
- 34.** ‘Corporate Loan’ and ‘Ind Surya Shakthi’ two tailor made credit products were launched by **Indian Bank**.  
**Note:** On January 30, 2020 the Indian Bank has announced the launch of two tailor made credit products i.e., Corporate Loan and Ind Surya Shakthi/ Indian Bank Solar which will be available across the country for the benefit of the textile sector. The products were launched during a meeting with high officials of the textile industry under the Indian Textpreneurs Federation (ITF), in association with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.
- 35.** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has approved part of the banks request to remove interchange fees on **UPI & RuPay card transactions**.  
**Note:** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has approved part of the banks request to remove interchange fees on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and RuPay card transactions as long as the merchant discount rate (MDR) remains zero. In contrast, it still reviewing other fees like payments service provider (PSP) fee and switching fees as it is concerned that the decision will obstruct its revenues and PSPs like PhonePe & Google-Pay. NPCI is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems,
- 36.** The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in its “Economic Outlook Survey 2020”, has projected India’ s annual median GDP growth for 2019-20 at **5%**.  
**Note:** The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in its “Economic Outlook Survey 2020”, has projected India’ s annual median Gross Domestic Product growth at 5% for 2019-20. It is in line with the National Statistical Organisation’s (NSO) projected growth rate (5%, a 11-year low). FICCI has hoped that the conditions will improve further and the country’s growth rate could reach 5.5 % in 2020-21 (FY 21).
- 37.** The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in its State Focus Paper has estimated credit potential at Rs. 90,395.69 crore for the state of **Odisha**.  
**Note:** The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in its State Focus Paper for Odisha, has estimated Odisha’s credit potential at Rs 90,395.69 crore for Financial year FY- 2020-21 with a hike of around 20% over credit projection of 2019-20.Out of the total credit potential for priority sector, agriculture constitutes Rs 43,282.11 crore, in which, Rs

- 40,227.79 crore (92.94 %) is estimated under farm credit, which consists both crop loans and term loans for agriculture and allied activities.
- 38.** According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), there have been about 1000 cases of fraud in **the urban cooperative banks (UCBs).**  
**Note:** According to the India's central bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), there have been about 1000 cases of fraud in the urban cooperative banks (UCBs) of the country in the last 5 fiscal years (FY), in which banks have incurred losses of 221 crores.
- 39.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased Investment Limits Under Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) to **Rs. 1.5lakh crore.**  
**Note:** The Reserve bank of India has made certain amendments in the Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) scheme. As per the amendments the investment limit under VRR has now been increased to Rs 1,50,000 crores (1.5lakh crores) from earlier Rs.75,000 crores. The Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) scheme was introduced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2009 in consultation with the govt of India.
- 40.** For money transfer services Western Union Company, a leader in cross-border, cross-currency money movement and payments, has partnered with **Airtel Payments Bank.**  
**Note:** Western Union Company has partnered with India's largest integrated telecommunications services company, Bharti Airtel's 2 arms- Airtel Payments Bank & Airtel Africa Plc, to enable millions of latter's customers in India to receive international remittances in their bank accounts & and Mobile Wallets across 14 countries in Africa. Airtel Payments Bank customers will be able to direct a Western Union money transfer into their bank accounts 24/7 via their app in real-time. It will also allow Airtel Payments Bank customer to withdraw money from its authorized 5 lakh outlets.
- 41.** The govt of India, Govt of Maharashtra and the World Bank (WB) signed a loan agreement of **\$210 million.**  
**Note:** The govt of India, Govt of Maharashtra and the World Bank signed a loan agreement of \$210 million for Maharashtra's Agribusiness & rural transformation project. This project will help the farmers in Maharashtra to take part in competitive agriculture value chains, enhance agribusiness investments thereby increasing productivity of commodities. All 36 districts of Maharashtra will be implemented with the project and would benefit nearly 1 million farming households.
- 42.** The asset management platform under the name 'PIONEER' has been launched by **IndusInd Bank.**  
**Note:** The IndusInd Bank Limited, one of the leading Private Sector Banks of the country, has launched the asset management platform under the name 'PIONEER' Banking. Through this, services will be provided to high net-worth customers of IndusInd bank. Along with this, specially tailored banking services will also be offered, which will suit the needs of valued consumers.
- 43.** With the aim to boost foreign inflows, India's central bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the short-term investments by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to **30 %.**  
**Note:** With the aim to boost foreign inflows, India's central bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the short-term investments by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to 30 % from 20 % of the total FPI investment in Central government securities including Treasury Bills (T-bills) / state development loans. This rule also applies in corporate bonds. These directions are issued under sections 10(4) and 11(1) of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999. Till date, RBI gave exemptions for FPI investments in Security Receipts from the short-term investment limit & the issue limit.
- 44.** For the 1st time India a multilingual voice-enabled mobile banking application has been launched by **City Union Bank (CUB).**
- 45.** Which Co-operative Bank has decided to convert into a Small Finance Bank (SFB) **the New India Co-operative Bank (NICB).**  
**Note:** The New India Co-operative Bank (NICB) has decided to convert into a Small Finance Bank (SFB) after being agreed by its shareholders under Voluntary Transition of Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs) into SFB. NICB will now approach the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Central Registrar of Societies for further action. The bank is currently operating in Maharashtra and Gujarat and has networth of Rs. 230 crores.
- 46.** To fund its rural electrification programme the Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM bank) has extended \$35.80 million (nearly Rs 250 crore) Line of Credit (LoC) to **Suriname.**  
**Note:** The Export-Import Bank of India has extended \$35.80 million Line of Credit to Suriname to fund its rural electrification programme through solar Diesel Generator (DG) hybrid Photo-Voltaic (PV) systems in Suriname's 50 remote villages. Under the LoC, the

projects covered include power, water supply, purchase of helicopters, and rehabilitation and upgradation of milk

processing plant.

## Obituaries

- Senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader **DP Tripathi** passed away in New Delhi,  
**Note:** He was the general secretary of the Nationalist Congress Party and a former students' union leader. Despite visual impairment, he worked throughout life. He has also written several books, including Congress and Independent India, Jawahar Satkam, Celebrating Faiz and Nepal Transition-A way forward among others.
- Noted Assamese theatre personality **Ratna Ojha** passed away.  
**Note:** Eminent Assamese dramatist, litterateur and social activist Ratna Ojha (88) passed away in Guwahati, Assam. Recipient of the prestigious Natyasurya Award in 2005 for his contributions to theatre, Ojha had introduced street plays in Assam in 1971 with his skit 'Kokaideo' to revive the theatre movement in the state that was fading with the death of his mentor Phani Sarma.
- Irani Gen **Qassem Soleimani** killed in US airstrike on Baghdad airport.  
**Note:** General Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC's) Quds Force, and architect of its regional security apparatus has been killed following a US airstrike at Baghdad's international airport. The strike also killed Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, deputy commander of Iran-backed militias in Iraq known as the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).
- Former Karnataka Governor **T N Chaturvedi** passes away.  
**Note:** Former Governor of Karnataka T N Chaturvedi (90-years) passed away at a private hospital in Noida. Chaturvedi was the 14th Governor of Karnataka (from 2002–2007). He also served as of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) from 1984 to 1989.
- The King of Oman **Sultan Qaboos bin Said** passed away due to years-long struggle with an illness.  
**Note:** Sultan Qaboos supported by Britain came to power in 1970 in a bloodless coup against his father. Sultan Qaboos followed a moderate and a stable foreign policy and is credited with turning Oman into a modern country. During his rule, Oman often became the neutral mediator in the otherwise volatile region. The written constitution Qaboos introduced requires the ruling family to choose a successor within three days of the throne falling vacant.
- Daughter of late Bollywood actor-filmmaker Raj Kapoor passed away -- **Ritu Nanda**.  
**Note:** Ritu Nanda is the sister of Rishi Kapoor, Randhir Kapoor and Rajiv Kapoor.
- Former Indian cricketer **Man Mohan Sood** passed away at 80 years.  
**Note:** Former test Cricketer and National selector Man Mohan Sood passed away in New Delhi. Sood played 1 Test and 39 first-class matches with 1 century. Born in Lahore, Punjab on 6 July 1939, he played his lone test match against Richie Benaud, Australia at Madras in 1960.
- Sunanda Patnaik (85) passed away in Kolkata, West Bengal, she was **Indian Classical Singer**.  
**Note:** Indian Classical Singer Sunanda Patnaik, 85 years old passed away in Kolkata, West Bengal due to age-related complications. She was famously known as 'Guruma' in the classical music circle. She is the daughter of renowned Odia poet Baikunthanath Patnaik and had composed many bhajans (devotional songs) both in Odia and Hindi.
- On January 20, 2020 Shamsher Singh Surjewala passed away after in AIIMS, New Delhi, he was a renowned **Politician (Congress Chief of Haryana)**.  
**Note:** On January 20, 2020 the former Haryana Congress Chief Shamsher Singh Surjewala passed away after in All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) hospital, New Delhi after suffering from a brief illness. He was 87 and hailed from Haryana.
- On January 17,2020 Rameshchandra Gangaram Babu Nadkarni passed away in Mumbai, Maharashtra, he was a renowned **Cricketer**.  
**Note:** On January 17,2020 Former Indian all-rounder Rameshchandra Gangaram Babu Nadkarni (86) passed away in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was a left-handed batsman and slow-left arm orthodox bowler. He was best known for bowling a record of 21 consecutive maiden overs in a test match against England.
- Senior Journalist and former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Member of Parliament (MP) **Ashwini Kumar Chopra** passed away at a private hospital in Gurgaon.

- Note:** Senior Journalist and former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Member of Parliament (MP) Ashwini Kumar Chopra passed away at a private hospital in Gurgaon after battling with terminal cancer.
12. Noted Urdu poet **Ajmal Sultanpuri** passed away at the age of 97 in Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh.  
**Note:** Ajmal Sultanpuri was awarded the “LifeTime Achievement Award” by Uttar Pradesh (UP) Urdu Academy in March 2016 for his contribution to Urdu poetry. The two popular poems of Ajmal Sultanpuri are “Kahan Hai Mera Hindustan” and “Agar Main Tera Shahjahan”.
13. The former Indian basketball captain **P Matthew Satya Babu** passed away at the age of 79 in Chennai.  
**Note:** P Matthew Satya Babu, a former Indian basketball captain passed away at the age of 79 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN). Matthew Satya Babu had represented India in the Asian Basketball Championship in Seoul, South Korea in 1967, Bangkok, Thailand in 1969 and Manila, Philippines in 1970.
14. Famous social worker, environmentalist, educationist & writer passed away at 85 years in Kolkata **Tushar Kanjilal**.
- Note:** He was born on March 1, 1935 at Noakhali, Bangladesh and was attracted to Marxist ideologies & quit politics in 1967.
15. Jameela Malik passed away recently at 73 years, she was a veteran **Actress**.  
**Note:** Jameela Malik was the first Kerala woman who graduated from the Film & Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, Maharashtra. She was born in Kollam, Kerala.
16. Veteran player Sunita Chandra passed away in her hometown Bhopal, she was associated with **Hockey**.  
**Note:** She had played for the Indian women’s hockey team from 1956 to 1966. She had served as the captain of the Indian women’s hockey team from 1963 to 1966.
17. American legendary player Kobe Bean Bryant and his daughter dies in a helicopter crash. He was a veteran player of **Basketball**.  
**Note:** American basketball legend Kobe Bean Bryant has died along with his 13-years-old daughter Gianna in a Sikorsky S-76 helicopter crash near Calabasas in Southern California. Bryant is the fourth-leading scorer in National Basketball Association (NBA) history and selected to the all-star 18 times and earned a Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in 2008.

### Important Days

- The **World Braille Day** is observed across the world every year on **4th January**.  
**Note:** The day mark the birth anniversary of Louis Braille. He was the inventor of Braille script or Braille code. Braille is a tactile writing system used by people who are visually impaired. Braille users can read computer screens and other electronic supports thanks to refreshable braille displays. People can write braille with the original slate and stylus or type it on a braille writer, such as a portable braille notetaker (or computer) that prints with a braille embosser.
- National Youth Day (Yuva Diwas) is celebrated in India on **12th January**.  
**Note:** The National Youth Festival 2020 is organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and State Government of Uttar Pradesh. The theme of the 23rd National Youth Festival 2020 is “FIT YOUTH FIT INDIA”.
- The National Youth Festival will increase the EK BHARAT SHRESTHA BHARAT bonding and it will prove as a The World Hindi day being celebrated across the world every year on **10th January**.  
**Note:** Hindi is the fourth most spoken language in the world. The first World Hindi Conference was organized in Nagpur on 10th January 1975. The National Hindi Divas is being observed on 14th September every year across India. learning platform for everyone.
- Armed Forces Veterans Day is celebrated every year on **14th January**.  
**Note:** The day is being celebrated since 2017 and the day was initially called Armistice Day. Every year, January 14 is marked as Armed Forces Veteran Day as the Field Marshal KM Cariappa, the first Commander-in-chief of Indian Armed Forces retired on the day. The fourth Army Forces Veteran Day, 2020 is to be celebrated at National War Memorial.
- In India, the Indian Army Day is observed every year on **15th January**.  
**Note:** Army Day is observed on 15 January every year in India, in recognition of Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa's taking over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India. This year 72nd Army Day is being celebrated across the country.
- The 15th raising day of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) observed on **19th January, 2020**.  
**Note:** 15th Raising day of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was celebrated in New Delhi. The Union Minister of State (MoS) for home affairs Shri Nityanand Rai was the chief guest on this occasion while Shri G.V.V.

- Sarma, Member Secretary, NDMA was the Guest of Honour. NDRF came into force on Jan 19, 2006.
- National Immunization Day (NID) also known as 'Polio Ravivar' was observed on **19<sup>th</sup> January, 2020**.  
**Note:** National Immunization Day (NID) also known as 'Polio Ravivar' was observed on January 19, 2020. The Pulse Polio Programme 2020 was conducted as a part of National Immunization Day across the country. The programme aims to protect children less than five years from Polio disease and to eliminate Poliomyelitis in India.
  - India celebrates National Girl Child Day every year on **24<sup>th</sup> January**.  
**Note:** India celebrates National Girl Child Day every year on 24th January. The day aims to focus on the inequalities faced by girls, to promote the education, health & nutrition of the girl child, and to spread awareness about the rights of a girl child. The day was observed for the first time in 2008 as an initiative by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Government of India.
  - The National Voters' Day is celebrated every year in India on **25<sup>th</sup> January**.  
**Note:** 25th of January is celebrated every year in India as National Voters' Day. This is the 10th edition of the National Voters' Day. The theme for the 10th edition of National Voters' Day is 'Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy'. The theme aims to renew the citizens' faith in the electoral process as well as to educate the voters of India.
  - The National Martyr's Day is observed annually on **30<sup>th</sup> January**.  
**Note:** The National Martyr's Day is observed annually on January 30. The year 2020 marks the 72nd anniversary of the Martyr's Day or Shaheed Divas to pay homage to the freedom fighters who lost their lives for India's Independence from British rule. This day also marks the 72nd death anniversary of India's Father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi who was assassinated on Jan 30, 1948 by Nathuram Vinayak Godse.
  - World Leprosy Day is observed annually on **last Sunday of January**.  
**Note:** World Leprosy Day is observed annually on the last Sunday of January every year. This year, the day was observed on January 26, 2020. In India, it is celebrated on January 30 every year to commemorate the death of Mahatma Gandhi who was assassinated on this day in 1948. This year 2020 marked the 72nd death anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. This year's theme is "Leprosy isn't what you think"

### New Appointments

- VK Yadav** has been re-appointed as **Railway Board Chairman** for a period of one year.  
**Note:** Mr. Yadav had taken over as Railway Board Chairman from Ashwani Lohani, who had retired from the post in December 2018. Earlier, Yadav had held the post of General Manager of South Central Railway (SCR). He is an electrical engineer and belongs to the 1980 batch of the Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers.
- The **Union government** has set up a **7 members Group of Minister (GoM)** to review the crop insurance scheme, "Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) headed by **Rajnath Singh (Defence Minister)**.  
**Note:** The GoM will also make suggestions to improve the insurance scheme according to the needs of the farmers. The GoM includes home minister Amit Shah and agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar, the ministers of state for agriculture, finance, tribal affairs, and animal husbandry. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was launched on 14th January 2016 to provide financial support to farmers suffering from crop loss or damage due to an unforeseen event.
- Hillary Clinton** appointed as the new chancellor of Queen's University Belfast in Ireland.  
**Note:** Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has been appointed the new chancellor of Queen's University in Belfast, Ireland for a five-year term. She became the university's first female chancellor. The position of chancellor has been vacant since the death in 2018 of Thomas J Moran, chairman, president, and chief executive of Mutual of America Life Insurance Company.
- Iran's supreme leader named the Deputy Head of the Revolutionary Guards' foreign operations arm Esmail Qaani -- **Ayatollah Ali Khamenei**.  
**Note:** Earlier, Soleimani was killed in a pre-dawn US strike in Baghdad. Qaani was one of the most decorated commanders of the Guards during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.
- Who has been appointed as the Chairperson and Managing Director of Shipping Corporation of India (SCI)\_\_\_ **Harjeet Kaur Joshi**.  
**Note:** Harjeet Kaur is currently the Director Finance at SCI and, since September 12, has been holding the additional charge of the Chairperson and Managing Director of the navratna PSU. Harjeet Kaur will become the first lady to head SCI, which is 63.75 percent owned by the government. She will take charge of SCI at a time when the government is planning to privatize the shipping company.
- Dr. Suresh Chandra Sharma** has been appointed as Chairman of National Medical Commission.

- Note:** He is Professor and Head of ENT – Head and Neck Surgery at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). Regarding this, an order was issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). Health Ministry bureaucrat RK Vats, who has also been Medical Council of India (MCI) Secretary-General, has been named Secretary General of NMC.
7. Dubai-based Indian girl who can sing in 120 languages wins Global Child Prodigy Award -- **Sucheta Satish**.  
**Note:** The 13-year-old Sucheta Satish, known as the Dubai Indian High School's nightingale, won in the singing category. The Global Child Prodigy Award is a platform to celebrate children's talent and power in different categories such as dancing, music, arts, writing, acting, modelling, science, innovation, sports, etc.
  8. Best Motion Picture (Drama) in 'Golden Globe Awards 2020' -- '1917'.  
**Note:** The 77th Golden Globe Awards, which honor the movies and American Television were distributed on 6th January 2020 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, California.
    - Best film – drama: 1917
    - Best actress in a film – drama: Renee Zellweger, Judy
    - Best actor in a film – drama: Joaquin Phoenix, Joker
    - Best film – musical or comedy: Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
    - Best score – film: Joker
    - Best director – film: Sam Mendes, 1917
    - Best song – film: I'm Gonna Love Me Again, Rocketman
  9. **Zoran Milanovic** has won the presidential election of Croatia.  
**Note:** Zoran Milanovic is the former Prime Minister of Croatia, who has pledged to make Croatia a tolerant country. The Social Democrat candidate, Milanovic took 52.7 percent of the vote, while President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic garnered 47.3 percent. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic was the first female President of Croatia.
  10. **A Sakthivel** has been appointed as the new chairman of the organization.  
**Note:** He has been appointed for the period 2020-2021. He is also the first person in the history of AEPC, who is sworn-in for the fourth time as Chairman of the AEPC. Sakthivel along with some exporters had founded Tirupur Exporters Association in 1990.
  11. **Haitham bin Tariq al-Said** took over as Sultan of Oman.  
**Note:** Late Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed had ruled Oman since 1970 as the 8th Sultan of the House of Al Said. The late sultan had himself chose Haitham Bin Tareq Al Saeed (cousin of late Sultan Qaboos) as his successor, as the Sultan had no children. He was the longest-serving monarch among the recent Arab rulers.
  12. **Tsai Ing-wen** won the Taiwan presidential election.  
**Note:** Tsai won 8.17 million votes, while her main rival Han Kuo-yu bagged 5.52 million votes (38.6 percent). Her Democratic Progressive party retained control of the legislature, according to final results.
  13. Noted chemist has been elected as a bureau member (2020-23) of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) -- **Bipul Behari Saha**.  
**Note:** Bipul Behari Saha is the second Indian after CNR Rao (former Director of the Indian Institute of Science and Bharat Ratna) to be elected for this position in a century. IUPAC has the responsibility of naming all new elements and compounds, declare atomic weights and physical constants, update Periodic table and carry out research projects.
  14. **Lt Col Yuvraj Malik** has been appointed the Director of the National Book Trust (NBT).  
**Note:** He replaced Sahitya Akademi-awardee writer Rita Chowdhury. Malik has also served with the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Home Affairs, Raj Bhawan in Jammu & Kashmir, United Nation Missions in Africa and several operational areas in administrative and operational assignments including Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Punjab and Rajasthan.
  15. **Robert Abela** sworn in as the 14th Prime Minister of Malta.  
**Note:** He replaced ruling PM Joseph Muscat, who resigned amid accountability over the murder of an investigative journalist. Abela is the son of former President of Malta George Abela. Robert Abela secured a surprising victory in Malta's governing party's internal leadership contest to be elected as the new leader.
  16. **M Nagaraj** has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the state-owned Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO).  
**Note:** He will replace Ravi Kanth. Nagaraj is also the Director (Corporate Planning) of the company. HUDCO provides loans for housing and urban infrastructure projects.
  17. **Arjun Munda** has been elected as President of the suspended Archery Association of India (AAI).  
**Note:** Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda was elected as President of the suspended Archery Association of India (AAI). The elections were held as per the Delhi High Court order. With the support of former

- AAI president Vijay Kumar Malhotra, Munda, the president of Jharkhand Archery Association, defeated Assam Archery Association president and retired IAS officer BVP Rao by a margin of 34-18.
- 18. Lt Col Yuvraj Malik** has been appointed as the Director of the National Book Trust on deputation from the Indian Army.
- 19. Indian lawyer Harish Salve** has been appointed into Queen Elizabeth II's counsel of Senior Advocate.  
**Note:** Indian Lawyer Harish Salve was appointed into Queen Elizabeth II's counsel of Senior Advocate. He has been appointed as Queen's Counsel (QC) for the courts of England and Wales. His name featured in the list of silk appointments released by the UK Ministry of Justice on January 13. Salve and other appointees will be formally appointed as Queen's Counsel on March 16 2020. The title of Queen's Counsel is awarded to those who have demonstrated particular skill and expertise in the conduct of advocacy.
- 20. Nripendra Misra** has been appointed chairperson of the executive council of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML).  
**Note:** Nripendra Misra has been appointed chairperson of the executive council of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML). The Executive Council of the NMML has been reconstituted and it will be now chaired by Mr Misra. Dr A Surya Prakash, chairperson of the Prasar Bharati board, will be the council's vice-chairperson.
- 21. Bipul Behari Saha** has been elected as a bureau member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) for the period 2020-23.  
**Note:** A noted chemist Bipul Behari Saha has been elected as a bureau member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) for the period 2020-23. He is the second Indian after CNR Rao to be elected for this position in a century.
- 22. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** appointed as member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) -- **Janak Raj**.  
**Note:**The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appointed its Executive Director Janak Raj as member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). He will replace M D Patra, who was recently elevated as Deputy Governor of the RBI. The MPC is headed by the RBI Governor. The Monetary Policy Committee of India is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India.
- 23. Taranjit Singh Sandhu** has been appointed as the new Indian Ambassador to the United States.  
**Note:** Taranjit Singh Sandhu takes charge as the new Indian Ambassador to the United States. He will succeed Ambassador Harsh Vardhan Shringla, the new Foreign Secretary-designate, who recently left for New Delhi to take charge. Sandhu is the current High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka since January 24, 2017.
- 24. Sunil Mehta** has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA).  
**Note:** Sunil Mehta took over as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA). He will replace VG Kannan, who resigned from office as chief executive of IBA on December 31, 2019. The term of the CEO of IBA is for 3 years.
- 25. Sunil Arora** has been appointed as the Chairman of Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) for the year 2020.  
**Note:** Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India, Sunil Arora has taken the charge as the Chairman of Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) for the year 2020. He has replaced KM Nurul Huda who is the present Chief Election Commissioner of Bangladesh. Sunil Arora assumed the charge during the 10th Annual Meeting of FEMBoSA.
- 26. Katerina Sakellaropoulou** has been elected as the first female president of Greece.  
**Note:** The Parliament of Greece elected Katerina Sakellaropoulou as the country's first female president. Sakellaropoulou received the support of 261 MPs in the 300-seat Parliament, including the support of members of the ruling New Democracy Party.
- 27. Challa Sreenivasulu Setty** has been appointed as the Managing Director of the State Bank of India.  
**Note:**The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet has appointed Challa Sreenivasulu Setty as the Managing Director of the State Bank of India. Department of the Financial Services proposed his name to the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet for the position of Managing Director of the State Bank of India. Setty's appointment has been done for 3 years.
- 28. Lingam Venkat Prabhakar** has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Canara Bank.  
**Note:** The Personnel Ministry has approved the appointment of **Lingam Venkat Prabhakar** as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Canara Bank for a period of 3 years.
- 29. Sanjiv Chadha** has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of **Bank of Baroda**.  
**Note:** The Personnel Ministry has approved the appointment of **Sanjiv Chadha** as the Managing Director

and Chief Executive Officer of Bank of Baroda for a period of 3 years

30. **Atanu Kumar Das** has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Bank of India.

**Note:** The Personnel Ministry has approved the appointment of **Atanu Kumar Das** as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of **Canara Bank** for a period of 3 years

### Important News – India

1. **NITI Aayog** has released SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019.  
**Note:** Government think tank the NITI Aayog has Aayog has released the 2nd edition of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and dashboard for the year 2019 in New Delhi. The Index comprehensively documents the progress made by India's States and Union Territories towards achieving the 2030 SDG targets. Kerala achieved the first rank in the composite SDG Index with a score of 70, followed by Himachal Pradesh at 69. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu ranked at the third position with the score of 67. While Bihar is at the bottom of Niti Aayog's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index.
2. India's **second spaceport** for launching **small satellites** will be established in Tamil Nadu's **Thoothukudi district**.  
**Note:** The country's first spaceport is at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh, about 90 km northeast of Chennai. Thoothukudi is about 600 km southeast of Chennai. The new location is ideal for launching smaller satellites of less than 500 kg in the sun-synchronous orbit.
3. The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) will conduct the Asiatic Lion Census in **May 2020**.  
**Note:** Around **8,000-10,000 cameras** will be used to carry out the **2020 lion census** in Gujarat, the last abode of the Asiatic lion. The **2015 lion census** had counted 523 lions in the state. The number is expected to have risen phenomenally the population may have crossed the 1,000-mark. The entire census area is to be divided into a 3-km grid. Officers will collect hair, nails, teeth, etc. The collection process is to be carried out using scientific methods laid out by NTCA.
4. The **Ministry of Agriculture** announced that the sowing area of rabi crops has increased by **36 lakh hectares**.  
**Note:** This is mainly due to the improvement in **soil moisture in Rabi growing** states. The total area under Rabi crops was 536 hectares last year and this has increased to 571 hectares. Of these, wheat has been sown in 297 lakh hectares, rice has been sown in 14 lakh hectares, coarse cereals in 46 lakh hectares and oilseeds in 74 lakh hectares.
5. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 107th edition of Indian Science Congress in **Bengaluru**.  
**Note:** The theme of ISC 2020 is "Science and Technology: Rural Development". The event brings

together science fraternity across the world to discuss scientific innovation and research. Over 15,000 participants, including Nobel Laureates, scientists, intellectuals, academicians, policymakers, researchers, students and delegates from different institutions are participating in the event. There will be 28 Plenary Sessions during the event, on areas ranging from Climate Smart Agriculture for Food Security, Crop Improvement Towards Food and Nutrition Security to Artificial Intelligence and Medical Technology.

6. **Labour Ministry** to launch a portal for the speedy resolution of grievances -- **Santusht**.  
**Note:** The labour ministry has announced to launch a new portal 'Santusht' for the speedy redressal of workers as well as employer grievances and ensuring effective implementation of labour laws at the grassroots level. Initially, 'Santusht' would monitor all services provided by retirement fund body EPFO and health insurance and services provider ESIC to formal sector workers. Workers and employers can lodge their complaints on the portal, which would be managed by an internal monitoring cell comprising five to six officers.
7. City will host the 14th Global Healthcare Summit 2021 - **- Visakhapatnam**.  
**Note:** The brochure of the summit was released on 30 December 2019 by MP M.V.V. Satyanarayana. The focus of the Global Health Summit is an Indian-centric approach, with special events such as global impact and India's contribution in providing cost-effective medicines and addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals. For the first time, the 14th Global Health Care summit will be held in AP and is expected to boost the healthcare in the region.
8. HRD Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal** has inaugurated the **28th edition of annual New Delhi World Book Fair** at Pragati Maidan in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** As part of Mahatma Gandhiji's 150 birth anniversary celebrations, the theme of this year is Gandhi: The Writers' Writer. Eminent Gandhian scholar Girishwar Mishra is the chief guest on the occasion. The book fair organised by National Book Trust (NBT). Other features at the fair will include -- Theme pavilion, authors' corner, seminar hall, braille books, children's pavilion and foreign countries' pavilion.
9. Indian Railways launches integrated helpline number for passengers -- **139**.

- Note:** The Indian Railways has integrated its helpline numbers into a single number 139 for quick grievance redressal and enquiries by passengers during their train journeys. The new helpline number 139 will take over all the existing helpline numbers. It will be easy for passengers to remember this number and connect with Railways for all their needs during train travel.
10. Twenty-two tableau proposals (16-states and 6-Central Ministries) have been short-listed for participation in this year's **Republic Day parade**.  
**Note:** Ministry of Defence had received a total of 56 tableaux proposals comprising 32 from States and 24 from Ministries in this regard. The tableaux proposals received are evaluated in a series of meetings of the Expert Committee comprising of eminent persons in the field of art, culture, painting, sculpture, music and architecture. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro to be the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations in 2020.
  11. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the National Traders Convention in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** The convention has been organized by the Confederation of All India Traders and will deliberate upon various issues concerning traders. The aim of this convention will be to discuss the role of the trading community in achieving a 5 trillion dollar economy goal. today said NDA government is committed to protect the interests of traders and to promote ease of doing business.
  12. Third **international symposium** on marine ecosystems – **challenges and opportunities** (MECOS-3) is to be held in **Kochi**.  
**Note:** Eminent marine scientists, oceanographers, fisheries researchers, and marine biotechnologists from across the globe are expected to participate in it.
  13. 5th Global Drosophila Conference held at **Pune**.  
**Note:** The fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5) was held in Pune. The conference was organized in the country for the first time by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).
  14. India extends USD 75 mn line of credit for solar parks in Cuba.  
**Note:** Export-Import Bank (Exim Bank) has given a \$75 million line of credit to Cuba for financing 75 MW Photovoltaic Solar Parks. Exim Bank is the premier export finance institution of India. Regarding this, the Exim Bank has entered into an agreement with Banco Exterior De Cuba on July 16, 2019.
  15. **Khadi and Village Industries Commission** (KVIC) has inaugurated the first silk processing plant at Surendranagar in **Gujarat**.  
**Note:** This would help cut down the cost of production of silk yarn drastically and increase the sale and availability of raw material for Gujarati 'Patola' sarees locally. The plant has been set up by a khadi institution at a cost of Rs 75 lakh, in which KVIC has contributed Rs 60 lakh.
  16. The **Union government** has approved the release of how many Crores to seven states as assistance for the damage caused due to various disasters in 2019 -- **Rs. 5,908.56 crore**.  
**Note:** States include Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tripura. The relief amount is given under the additional central assistance to seven states from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) in a High-Level Committee meeting in New Delhi.
  17. Indian Navy has launched an expedition, to promote the maritime heritage of India in the Naval Dockyard – **Mumbai**, Maharashtra.  
**Note:** The expedition extends from Arnala fort, Northernmost fort of Maharashtra to Sindhudurg fort, the southernmost fort of Maharashtra, covering more than 555 km. The expedition will be held until 11<sup>th</sup> January.
  18. South Korean **automobile manufacturer** has entered into a partnership with US ride-hailing giant Uber to produce electric air taxis -- **Hyundai Motor Company**.  
**Note:** Hyundai also unveiled a new full-scale concept PAV (personal air vehicle), developed jointly with Uber, at the ongoing Consumer Electronics Show 2020. Hyundai is the first automotive company to join the Uber Elevate initiative. Under the partnership, Hyundai will produce and deploy the air vehicles and Uber will provide airspace support services, connections to ground transportation and customer interfaces through an aerial rideshare network.
  19. Union **Home Minister Amit Shah** has released a book on the life of Prime Minister Narendra Modi -- **Karmayoddha Granth**.  
**Note:** The Home Minister addressed the gathering at the launch and said that the qualities of a Karmayoddha such as a beautiful heart for people, a statesman, a hard taskmaster, an able administrator and an ideal leader who leads by example, are represented by Narendra Modi.
  20. Global Investors Meet 'ASCEND 2020' will be held in -- **Kochi, Kerala**.  
**Note:** The Kerala government will highlight the 18 mega projects in the meet including Kochi-to-Palakkad integrated manufacturing cluster, a defence park at Ottapalam and an electronic hardware park in Ernakulam. The meet will also see organizers showcasing 70-odd other projects classified as large, medium and small in the descending order of their capital investment. The meet will be organized by the Industries Department of Kerala.
  21. The 31st International Kite Festival was inaugurated at **Sabarmati Riverfront, Ahmedabad**.

- Note:** As a part of the official celebration of 'Uttarayan' or 'Makar Sankranti', Ahmedabad has been hosting the International Kite Festival since 1989. The festival will continue till January 13 at Sabarmati Riverfront. 150 kitists from India and abroad are participating in the event
22. 'Census India-2021' will begin on **1st of April 2020**.  
**Note:** It will be conducted through a mobile phone application, moving away from the traditional pen and paper. The reference date will be 1st March 2021 in most of the country and 1 October 2020 for Jammu and Kashmir and some areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The Indian Census is the largest single source of a variety of statistical information on different
23. Amit Shah has inaugurated the **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** and dedicated National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal - '**www.cybercrime.gov.in**'.  
**Note:** National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal is a citizen-centric initiative that will enable citizens to report cyber-crimes online through the portal. It enables filing of all cyber-crimes with a specific focus on crimes against women, children, particularly child pornography, child sex abuse material, online content pertaining to rapes. All the cyber-crime related complaints will be accessed by the concerned law enforcement agencies in the States and Union Territories for acting as per law.
24. Power Minister **R K Singh** has released the **State Energy Efficiency Index 2019**.  
**Note:** They track the progress of Energy Efficiency Initiatives in 36 States and Union Territories. The index this year incorporates qualitative, quantitative and outcome-based indicators to assess energy efficiency initiatives, programs and outcomes in five distinct sectors. The index is developed by Bureau of Energy Efficiency in association with Alliance for an Energy-Efficient Economy.
25. The fifth edition of the Pulses Conclave will be held in Lonavala, Maharashtra from -- **12-14 February 2020**.  
**Note:** IPGA expects close to 1500 trade stakeholders from India and key pulses exporting countries like USA, Australia, Canada, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi. IPGA is the nodal body for the country's pulses trade and industry. The conference aims at increasing exports, processing efficiencies, protein extraction, value addition and post-harvest management.
26. The Ministry of Steel will launch a world-class steel hub -- **Purvodaya**.  
**Note:** The hub aims at an accelerated development programme of eastern states. The Ministry will be joined by CII (Confederation of India Industries) in the implementation of "Purvodaya".
27. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will inaugurate 'Advantage Maharashtra Expo 2020' in **Aurangabad**.  
**Note:** The four-day mega industrial exhibition has been organized by the Marathwada Association of Small Scale Industries and Agriculture (MASSIA). Growth of Marathwada industries in technology and innovation and the products produced and exported from the region will be showcased in this exhibition. This exhibition will provide the opportunity for ambitious businesses and will serve as the platform for small entrepreneurs.
28. The Union Cabinet has approved a proposal to provide Rs 5,559 crore viability gap funding for building a 1,656 km gas grid in the **Northeast region**.  
**Note:** The funding will be provided to Indradhanush Gas Grid Ltd for setting up the North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid. The gas pipeline would be developed in 8 states of the northeast; this will lead to the development of an industrial climate in these states and improvement in the standard of living of people in the region.
29. India's first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant likely to be commissioned by **2021**.  
**Note:** This carrier is being built at the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) in Kochi. According to Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh, Vikrant will be fully operational by 2022 and it will have a fleet of MiG-29K aircraft
30. Union Steel Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** has launched a mission to accelerated development of eastern India through integrated steel hub -- **Mission Purvodaya**.  
**Note:** Under the mission, the government will enhance capacity through easing the setup of greenfield steel plants, develop steel clusters near integrated steel plants as well as demand centers.
31. Narendra Modi has announced to rename the Kolkata Port Trust after -- **Shyama Prasad Mukherjee**.  
**Note:** The announcement was made on the 150th anniversary of the historic **Kolkata Port Trust**. The event was also attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He dedicated a Commemorative Stamp to mark 150 years of Kolkata port trust to the nation. The Kaushal Vikas Kendra and Pritilata Chhatri Avas for 200 tribal girl students from Sundarbans were also inaugurated during the event.
32. 'Wings India 2020' to be held at Begumpet Airport Hyderabad in **March 2020**  
**Note:** Biennial International Exhibition and Conference on Civil Aviation Sector, 'Wings India 2020' will be held at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad, Telangana from March 12-15, 2020. The theme of the exhibition is "Flying for all".
33. The World Future Energy Summit 2020 held in **Abu Dhabi**.

- Note:** The four-day annual Summit is dedicated to advancing future energy, clean technologies, and energy efficiency. The theme for this year's summit is "Rethinking Global Consumption, Production, and Investment." World Future Energy Summit is the Middle East's largest future energy and sustainability event.
- 34. The Statue of Unity** has been included in 8 wonders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).  
**Note:** The Statue of Unity is the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home Minister of independent India. The 182-meter tall statue is the world's tallest statue that was inaugurated by PM Modi on the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in October 2018. The statue was inaugurated on the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in 2018.
- 35. Indian Oil Corp (IOC)** has developed a special class diesel conforming to NATO grade for use in ships and vessels of the Indian Navy.  
**Note:** Vice Admiral G S Pabby launched the Upgraded High Flash High-Speed Diesel (HFHSD- IN 512) in New Delhi.
- 36. The Henley Passport Index 2020** was released by **Henley & Partners**.  
**Note:** The report is being published every year based on the data obtained from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). According to the index, Indian passport ranked at the 84th spot among the world's most powerful passports list, which is a drop by 2 places as it ranked 82nd in 2019.
- 37. The Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU)** has released a survey that ranks the world's fastest-growing urban regions/ fastest-growing cities in the world.
- 38. Vishakhapatnam** will host the International naval exercise 'MILAN' in March 2020.  
**Note:** The theme of the exercise for the year 2020 is 'Synergy Across the Seas'. The Milan exercise which will be hosted by Eastern Naval Command (ENC) the objective of this exercise is to enhance professional interaction between foreign navies and also make use of the best practices in the maritime domain. India has invited 41 navies of different countries of which 30 navies have confirmed their participation in MILAN 2020.
- 39. The 27th edition of South Asian Trade and Travel Exchange Expo (SATTE) 2020** was held at India Expo Mart **Greater Noida – Delhi NCR**.  
**Note:** It is an annual three-day B2B trade show designed to bring together the key travel industry leaders in the region. It convenes Indian & International exhibitors and buyers to forge new partnerships and strengthen the business.
- 40. 12th National Tribal Youth Exchange Programme** was held in **Puducherry**.  
**Note:** 12th National Tribal Youth Exchange Programme begins in Puducherry. Puducherry Lieutenant Governor Dr Kiran Bedi inaugurated this Programme. Two hundred youths from Naxal-affected districts of Chattisgarh are taking part in this week-long programme. The programme has been jointly organized by the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and Puducherry Government with a view to ensuring development and empowerment of the tribal youths.
- 41. Union Minister for Heavy Industries Prakash Javadekar** was inaugurating **ELECRAMA 2020** in **Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh**.  
**Note:** Union Minister for Heavy Industries Prakash Javadekar was inaugurating **ELECRAMA 2020** in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh. **ELECRAMA** is the flagship showcase of the Indian electrical industry and a platform to connect the world with the Indian industry in respect of technology, new trends and innovation for the future energy transition. The focus of this year's event is on e-mobility, energy storage, start-ups, grid transformation, revenue security with special attention on small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
- 42. Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlaad Singh Patel** launched an exhibition titled "Indian Heritage in Digital Space" in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlaad Singh Patel launched an exhibition titled "Indian Heritage in Digital Space" at National Museum, New Delhi. This exhibition is first of its kind in the country. The exhibition will stay online until February 15, 2020.
- 43. The 7th Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region** was held in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**.  
**Note:** The 7th Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region will start in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will inaugurate the Conference. The main theme of the conference is the **ROLE OF LEGISLATORS**. In the Conference, delegates will discuss the Capacity Building of Legislators for Scrutinizing Budgetary Proposals and Enhancing Focus of Legislators on Legislative Business.
- 44. The 2nd edition of NIC Tech Conclave-2020** begins today. The Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad will inaugurate this conclave in New Delhi.  
**Note:** The 2nd edition of NIC Tech Conclave-2020 begins today. The Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad will inaugurate this conclave in New Delhi. This event is being organized by the National Informatics Centre. This conclave will contribute immensely to the capacity building of Government officers across the country and help in delivering high-quality citizen-centric services. This year conclave theme is "Technologies for Next-Gen Governance".
- 45. A Conference of the Chief Secretaries and Administrator State and Union Territories on Census 2021** was held in **New Delhi**.

- Note:** A Conference of the Chief Secretaries and Administrator State and Union Territories on Census 2021 and updating of National Population Register, NPR was held in New Delhi. The data collected in the Census helps us in framing policies for the welfare of the people of the country. Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai also inaugurated the Official Mascot for Census 2021.
46. PM Narendra Modi and Nepalese PM Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli jointly inaugurated the 2nd Integrated Check Post at **Jogbani (Bihar, India) – Biratnagar (Nepal)**  
**Note:** Indian Prime Minister (PM) Shri Narendra Modi along with the PM of Nepal Shri Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli jointly inaugurated the 2nd Integrated Check Post (ICP) Jogbani (Bihar, India) – Biratnagar (Nepal) through video conference. Jogbani – Biratnagar acts as an important trade point between the two nations and is equipped with modern facilities.
47. 'One Nation, One Ration Card' scheme will be implemented across the country by **June 1, 2020**.  
**Note:** 'One Nation, One Ration Card' scheme will be implemented by June 1, 2020 across the country. The announcement was made by the Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan.
48. Panel to create tougher law against sexual harassment at work will be headed by **Amit Shah**.  
**Note:** The Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Union Minister of Home Affairs (MoHA) Shri Amit Shah constituted to further strengthen legal frameworks to prevent sexual harassment at the workplace, has now finalised the recommendations for it. The recommendations in brief are as follows:
49. The committee set up by Supreme Court to firm up draft legislation to give legal sanctity to disputes settled through mediation is headed by **Niranjan Bhat**.  
**Note:** The Supreme Court set up a panel headed by mediator Niranjan Bhat to firm up draft legislation to give legal sanctity to disputes settled through mediation, which would then be sent to the government as a suggestion from the apex court.
50. Seismic Hazard Microzonation project in major cities of India was launched by **The Ministry of Earth Science (MoES)**.  
**Note:** The Ministry of Earth Science (MoES) has launched Seismic Hazard Microzonation project in major cities of India. The project aims to reduce the hazards of Seismic activities by taking proper measures in major Indian cities and areas falling under high-seismic Zones IV and V. The project has been completed in the State of Sikkim and in other eight cities namely Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Guwahati, Jabalpur, Dehradun Ahmedabad and Gandhidham.
51. Union Minister of Law and Justice (MoL&J) Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated the Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Blockchain Technology in **Bengaluru, Karnataka**.  
**Note:** The Union Minister of Law and Justice (MoL&J) Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated the Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Blockchain Technology set up by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The CoE has been set up with the aim of providing blockchain as a service and help all stakeholders to benefit from shared learning, experiences and resources.
52. NITI Aayog signed MoU for Development of Infrastructure Projects in **Ladakh**.  
**Note:** NITI Aayog and Union Territory of Ladakh sign MoU for Development of Infrastructure Projects in Ladakh. It was signed between NITI Aayog Senior Adviser Dr Yogesh Suri and Adviser to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Umang Narula. The agreement was executed in the presence of NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.
53. South Central Zone of the Indian Railways has signed an MoU to provide doorstep banking with **State Bank of India**.  
**Note:** To provide doorstep banking services, the South Central Zone of the Indian Railways has signed an MoU with the State Bank of India. According to the MoU, the doorstep banking facility will be provided at 585 Railway Stations of the South Central Zone. The "doorstep banking" facility will enable direct pickup of earnings from the railway stations and will save the complex activity of cash movement through cash safes by trains.
54. 1st Session of India-Norway Dialogue on Trade & Investment Held in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** 1st Session of India-Norway Dialogue on Trade & Investment Held in New Delhi. The 1st ever session of the India-Norway dialogue on Trade & Investment (DTI) was held from January 15-16 in New Delhi. The session was conducted based on the Terms of Reference (ToR) which was signed by India and Norway on 8th January 2019 in New Delhi at time of Norway Prime Minister Erna Solberg's visit to India.
55. World's largest meditation centre was inaugurated in **Hyderabad, Telangana**.  
**Note:** World's largest meditation centre was inaugurated at Kanha Shanti Vanam in Hyderabad, Telangana. This centre is built to mark the 75th anniversary of the formation of Shri Ram Chandra Mission (SRCM) and Heartfulness Institute. The meditation centre with a central hall and eight peripheral halls to accommodate 1,00,000 people will offer meditation training free.
56. Indian Railways has commissioned India's 1st governmental waste-to-energy plant in **Bhubaneswar**.  
**Note:** Indian Railways has commissioned India's 1st governmental waste-to-energy plant in Mancheswar Carriage Repair workshop at Bhubaneswar under the East Coast Railway zone. It has been built at a cost of Rs

- 1.79 crore and has the capacity to dispose of 500 kg waste, including plastic and e-waste.
- 57.** A festival to celebrate the spirit of India “Bharat Parv 2020” was celebrated in **Red Fort, New Delhi**.  
**Note:** A festival to celebrate the spirit of India “Bharat Parv 2020” has begun at Red Fort Ground in New Delhi. The objective of Bharat Parv is to encourage people to visit different tourist places of the country and to inculcate the spirit of ‘Dekho Apna Desh’.
- 58.** India’s first Mahatma Gandhi convention centre opens in **Niger**.  
**Note:** India’s first Mahatma Gandhi convention centre opens in Niger. Union External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and President of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou inaugurated the first convention centre established in Africa by India to honour the memory of Mahatma Gandhi.
- 59.** **Telangana will** emerge as Number 1 state in the ‘Decent work and economic growth’ category Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India index in 2019.  
**Note:** As per the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India, India’s youngest state Telangana has emerged as Number 1 state in the ‘Decent work and economic growth’ category with the score of 82 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India index in 2019.
- 60.** The Central Government has aimed to achieve objective of Housing for all by **2022**.  
**Note:** The Central Government has aimed to achieve objective of Housing for all by 2022 (which coincides with 75 years of Indian independence) under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen (PMAY-G) scheme. Under the 2nd phase of the scheme, the eligible people will get one crore 95 lakh houses. Government has set a target of 60 lakh houses for the current financial year-FY 20.
- 61.** 12th edition of the South Asia Conference held in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh addressed the 12th edition of the South Asia Conference at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA) in New Delhi from January 28-29, 2020. The conference deals with issues related to economic cooperation for development, changing political context in India’s neighbourhood etc. The theme of the conference was India’s “Neighbourhood First” Policy: Regional Perceptions.
- 62.** The Indian Railways has decided to provide ‘Content on Demand Service on trains and railway stations from **2022**.  
**Note:** The Indian Railways has decided to provide ‘Content on Demand Service (CoD)’ on trains and railway stations from 2022. With COD, passengers will be able to enjoy uninterrupted free subscription based entertainment service such as movies, shows, educational programs during their journey. They will also be able to enjoy high-quality buffer-free streaming on personal devices.
- 63.** The final report submitted by the Committee on Indian Academy of Highway Engineers (IAHE) headed by **Yudhvir Singh Malik**.  
**Note:** The final report of the Committee on Indian Academy of Highway Engineers (IAHE) headed by Yudhvir Singh Malik has been submitted to the Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari. The report stresses to improve the present training infrastructure, content, training methodology & to create linkages with world-famous international institutes and undertake applied research & related works.
- 64.** The Assam Rifles (military unit) has constructed a war memorial “Veer Samriti” in **Nagaland**.  
**Note:** Assam Rifles (military unit) has constructed a war memorial “Veer Samriti” in Nagaland, Kohima for 357 Army & Assam Rifles personnel, who died while fighting insurgency in north-eastern state. It is first of its kind in Nagaland.
- 65.** 1st ever Innovation festival was organized at **Arunachal Pradesh**.  
**Note:** Arunachal Pradesh state council for science & Technology (APSCS&T) in partnership with National Innovation Foundation organised the 1st ever Innovation festival at science centre IG Park, Itanagar Arunachal Pradesh. The two days festival aims to encourage the cultural innovation among the people and students of Arunachal Pradesh.
- 66.** India’s 1st Super Fab Lab facility was inaugurated in **Kerala**.  
**Note:** The Chief Minister (CM) of Kerala Shri Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated India’s 1st Super Fab Lab facility at the Integrated Startup Complex of the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM). The lab which will function in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States (US), will work in enhancing the hardware industry. It is the only such facility outside the United States (US).
- 67.** The 1st edition of Ganga-Volga Dialogue of Civilizations 2020 was held in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** The 1st edition of Ganga-Volga Dialogue of Civilizations 2020 based on the theme “Connectivity”, between India & Russia was held in New Delhi. The event was inaugurated by India’s Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan & was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in association with Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation.
- 68.** **France** will be the guest of honour at New Delhi World Book Fair for the year 2022.  
**Note:** France will be the guest of honour at the New Delhi World Book Fair in January 2022 as part of a reciprocal invitation as New Delhi is the guest of honour this year at Livre Paris (Paris Book Fair). Leading and emerging Indian authors will be invited to

Paris to meet readers, while publishing industry professionals will enhance cooperation between France and India in this area during networking events.

69. The Department of Biotechnology has organized a 2-day long International Summit on Women in STEM- "Visualizing the Future: New Skylines" in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** The Department of Biotechnology under the aegis of Ministry of Science & Technology has organized a 2-day long International Summit on Women in STEM- "Visualizing the Future: New Skylines" at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The aim of the summit is to increase the participation of women in STEM

(science, technology, engineering and math) field for development of scientific career.

70. India's first e-waste clinic was opened in **Bhopal**.  
**Note:** India's first e-waste clinic was opened in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The e-waste clinic was inaugurated by C K Mishra (Secretary to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate change, MoEFCC). The e-waste clinic was jointly set up by the Central Pollution Board Control -CPCB and Bhopal Municipal Corporation -BMC. The e-waste clinic is a 3-month project and if the project becomes successful then it will be established in other parts of the country also.

### Important News – State

- Indian e-commerce company **Flipkart** has signed an agreement with MoHUA to support DAY-NULM.  
**Note:** Flipkart has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to support the ministry's 'Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)'. Under the MoU Flipkart will sell the products made by women self-help groups under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) on the e-commerce platform. The e-commerce company will collaborate with state missions to establish the 'Flipkart Samarth programme' in 22 states in India.
- The **Andhra Pradesh government** is planning to introduce **door-delivery** of sand from **2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020**.  
**Note:** As a pilot project, it is to be started from in Krishna district on an experimental basis and then extend it. Under this initiative, the AP government will deliver sand at doorsteps and collect transportation charges from the customers. In order to make the initiative successful, the Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation will stock 15 lakh tons of sand per month for the next four months.
- The **Kerala Government** has passed a resolution to roll back the **Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)**.  
**Note:** According to the Government of Kerala, the act was against secularism and has triggered widespread protests in the country. The act also dented India's image among the international community. The Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 was passed in December 2019. The act amended the Citizenship act passed in 1955. It allows Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Christians, and Parsi religious minorities to gain Indian citizenship.
- The Pacific nation of Palau** has become the first country in the world to ban sunscreen that is harmful to corals and sea life.  
**Note:** From **January 1**, sunscreen that includes ingredients like **oxybenzone** and **octinoxate** is no longer allowed to be worn or sold in the Palau. The **compounds are commonly** used in sunscreen formulas as they absorb ultraviolet A rays. The pristine islands, which have a combined population of about 20000, are a famed diving location, and their lagoon is listed as a UNESCO world heritage site.
- UP State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) has launched a dedicated women helpline -- **Damini**.  
**Note:** It will boost women's safety in Roadways buses. As an extension of "Nirbhaya Yojana" of the central government a unique number, "81142-77777", has been subscribed for the helpline. By using this 'Damini' helpline women passengers can lodge their complaints by calling or by using WhatsApp service.
- Entire Nagaland declared 'disturbed area' for six more months under -- **AFSPA**.  
**Note:** The entire state of Nagaland has been declared a disturbed area for a period of six months under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, AFSPA. The Act empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice.
- Assam state zoo first to breed endangered -- **Hargila**.  
**Note:** Hargila is currently on the brink of extinction due to habitat loss stemming from indiscriminate felling of big trees and dwindling wetlands. The Endangered Greater Adjutant stork is one of the rarest species of Storks out of twenty species of Storks in the world. In India, eight species of residential storks are found, out of which Greater Adjutant is one of them.

8. 'Cyber Safe Women' initiative launched by the **Maharashtra** Government.  
**Note:** Maharashtra Government has launched a 'Cyber Safe Women' initiative to ensure that women and children do not fall prey to these cyber-criminal activities. Under the initiative, various awareness camps will be held across all the districts of the state regarding cyber safety to help in educating women about how the web is used by anti-social elements and child predators to commit various types of crimes. The initiative has been launched to mark the 189th birthday of Savitribai Phule (19th-century social reformer).
9. Andhra Pradesh govt has appointed as Special Officers for implementing the 'Disha Act 2019' in the state -- **Dr Kritika Shukla and M Deepika**.  
**Note:** The Act is intended for speedy trial and faster execution in cases of sexual offences against women in the state. The AP Disha Bill prescribes life imprisonment for other sexual offences against children and includes Section 354 F and 354 G in IPC. To ensure a speedy trial, the state will set up exclusive special courts in all the 13 districts to deal with cases of offences against women and children including rape, acid attacks, stalking, voyeurism, social media harassment of women, sexual harassment and all cases under POCSO Act.
10. **Uttar Pradesh** Govt. has become the 1st state to shortlist migrants for citizenship.  
**Note:** Uttar Pradesh is all set to become the first state in the country to start the exercise of shortlisting migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, eligible for citizenship under the new Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The exercise will also identify those who are living illegally in the state. All 75 district magistrates have been asked to track down migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who have settled here for decades, without citizenship.
11. Zo Kutpui Festival organized in **Mizoram**.  
**Note:** The Mizoram state government will be organizing Zo Kutpui (festival) in at least 10 states across India and countries such as the US, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. The first edition of the festival will start on January 9 in Vangmun in Tripura and will be held over three days. The festival will then move to other states which have a significant Mizo population.
12. The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has launched an AI-powered learning platform NSE Knowledge Hub in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** The hub will assist insurance, banking, and financial services. The hub has adopted the latest technology of Artificial Intelligence.
13. Women Science Congress held in **Bengaluru**.  
**Note:** DRDO Aeronautical Systems Director General Dr.Tessy Thomas who is known as Missile Woman of India graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The women's science congress aims to provide a single platform for women working in different arena of science and technology to showcase their achievements and experiences. It will also prepare a vision document or a road map for women in science and technology and recommend policies to enhance the role and utilize the full potential of women in science and technology.
14. ISRO to set up Human Space Flight Centre in **Challakere, Karnataka**.  
**Note:** The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) will establish a Massive Human Space Flight Center in the Challakere in Chitradurga district of Karnataka. For this ISRO has proposed 2,700 crores of the infrastructure plan to construct the facility that will become operational in three years.
15. **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** has decided to observe 2020 as the "Year of Mobility" for the welfare of the troops.  
**Note:** It will focus on the construction of residential units and the implementation of welfare measures for the troops. In the year 2020, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will aim at creating the infrastructure for their families.
16. Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has launched a portal to strengthen public participation in governance --**Himachal MyGov portal**.  
**Note:** He also launched the Chief Minister App. MyGov Himachal would help people to communicate their views, suggestions, feedback as well as discontentment if any. MyGov Himachal Portal and Chief Minister App would bring the administration closer to people and ensure two-way communication between the government and the people. Himachal with the launch of this app has become the 11th state to have this facility.
17. As per the report released by the **National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), Jammu and Kashmir** has registered the highest Inpatient Department, IPD care in the country.  
**Note:** As per the report, the 96 percent IPD care in rural areas of J&K is provided by Public Health Facilities which is highest against the country's average of 85 percent. In 2016, Jammu and Kashmir had surpassed Kerala as the

- state with the highest life expectancy in India for all ages, barring life expectancy at birth.
18. The Gujarat govt. has announced to set up Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) in **Gandhinagar**.  
**Note:** Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) will identify, nurture and promote children's innovation in the state. Children's Innovation Festival has been organized by Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC).
  19. The fourth 'Buxa Bird Festival' has begun in Buxa National Park in **Alipurduar, West Bengal**.  
**Note:** Over 50 birdwatchers from across the country and abroad have registered for the 2020 edition of the four-day festival. More than 300 rare species including the Great Hornbill, Sultan Tit and Greater Spotted Eagle visit the national park during this period. Bird enthusiasts watch and click photographs of the migratory birds that come from colder regions in the northern hemisphere.
  20. The famous chariot festival of the Suchindram Thanumalayan Temple is being held in **Tamil Nadu**  
**Note:** The ten-day annual festival is held in the Tamil month falling in December - January. The temple is especially significant because it is sacred to both the Shaivite as well as Vaishnavite sects. This 17th-century temple is famous for its architectural grandeur.
  21. Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** has inaugurated the country's first Cyber Crime Prevention Unit -- **AASHVAST**.  
**Note:** He also launched Video Integration and StateWide Advance Security-VISWAS project. The Cyber Crime Prevention Unit-AASHVAST will have a dedicated service helpline for victims of cyber-crimes
  22. **Meghalaya** state celebrates 48th anniversary of statehood day on 21st January.  
**Note:** Meghalaya celebrates their 48th anniversary of statehood day on 21 January. The Meghalaya Day celebration will continue till the Republic Day celebration. In 1971, the Parliament passed the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971, which conferred full statehood on the Autonomous State of Meghalaya.
  23. Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju flag off 'Fit India Cyclothon' in **Panaji, Goa**.  
**Note:** Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju flag off 'Fit India Cyclothon' in Panaji, Goa. This inaugural event of 'Fit India Cyclothon' organised by Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs and Government of Goa. This event is organized with the aim to get the people involved in outdoor activities and starting a cycling culture in the state.
  24. Chapchar Kut, the biggest and most important festival of the state will be celebrated on March 6, 2020 in **Mizoram**.  
**Note:** Government of Mizoram will celebrate Chapchar Kut, the biggest and most important festival of the Mizos, on March 6, 2020. Chapchar Kut is a spring festival celebrated usually in March after completion of the Jhum cultivation. Jhum cultivation, also known as the slash and burn agriculture, is the process of growing crops by first clearing the land of trees and vegetation and burning them thereafter.
  25. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed with International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) to red-listing of orchids by **Arunachal Pradesh**.  
**Note:** Arunachal Pradesh inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) to red-listing of orchids. Arunachal Pradesh has become the 1st state in the country to initiate the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) 'red listing' at the state level.
  26. The famous Parshuram Kund Mela was organized in **Arunachal Pradesh**.  
**Note:** The famous Parshuram Kund Mela begins in Arunachal Pradesh. Parshuram Kund is a Hindu pilgrimage centre situated on the Brahmaputra plateau in the lower reaches of the Lohit River. Thousands of pilgrims visit the place in winter every year, especially on the Makar Sankranti day for a holy dip in the sacred kund which is believed to wash away one's sins.
  27. **Andhra Pradesh** state Cabinet clears the Proposal for three capitals.  
**Note:** Andhra Pradesh (AP) Government has passed Andhra Pradesh Decentralization and Inclusive development of All Regions Bill-2020 for the tri-capital system. The bill proposes to make Visakhapatnam as the executive capital, Amaravati as the legislative capital and Kurnool as the judicial capital of Andhra Pradesh. The aim behind this bill is decentralised administration that will result in socioeconomic progress at equal levels. Now the bill is presented before the legislative council.
  28. Magh Bihu, an auspicious harvest festival is being celebrated in **Assam**.  
**Note:** Magh Bihu, an auspicious harvest festival is being celebrated in Assam. Magh Bihu falls in the local month of 'Magh' during mid-January. It is also called 'Bhogali Bihu' or 'Maghor Bihu' as it is celebrated with community feasts after the annual harvest takes place.
  29. The 1st edition of the Krishi Manthan 2020 which is a Food, Agri-business and Rural Development Summit of Asia was held in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**.  
**Note:** The 1st edition of the Krishi Manthan 2020 which is a Food, Agri-business and Rural Development Summit of Asia was held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on December 28-29, 2019. The event was organised by the Food and Agribusiness Committee of the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA).

30. Nagoba Jatara tribal festival was celebrated in the state of **Telangana**.

**Note:** Nagoba Jatara tribal festival was celebrated in the state of Telangana. The festival is prominently celebrated in Keslapur village, Indervelly Mandal, Adilabad district of Telangana. It is the 2nd biggest tribal carnival which is celebrated by the tribal people from Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Karnataka, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh belonging to the Mesaram clan of Gond tribes.

31. 'Direct Consent to operate (CTO) scheme for green industries' has been launched in **Tamil Nadu**.

**Note:** Tamil Nadu (TN) Chief Minister (CM) Shri Edappadi K Palaniswami, announced a new scheme, 'Direct Consent to operate (CTO) scheme for green industries' to get faster clearances from government for green category industries. The scheme was announced at the 125th year celebrations of the Confederation of the Indian Industry (CII) held in Chennai, TN.

32. 1st virtual police station has been launched in **Odisha** state.

**Note:** The Chief Minister (CM) of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik has inaugurated the state's 1st virtual police station at State Crime Record Bureau in Bhubaneswar, which will facilitate online registration of FIR (first information report) in unknown motor vehicle theft cases. If a case remains undetected for 21 days, the final form will be automatically reflected at the Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems (CCTNS).

33. Women with Wheels' cab service has been started at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), New Delhi by 'Sakha cabs' for the safety of women.

**Note:** The taxis are operated by women drivers and the services are provided only to women or men with family.

The cab had been installed with GPS (Global Positioning System) and panic button to help the women drivers & women passengers.

34. After Maharashtra which state government has made it mandatory for schools to read the preamble of the constitution every Saturday -- **Madhya Pradesh**.

**Note:** The govt of Madhya Pradesh has made it mandatory for schools to read the preamble of the constitution every Saturday under the name sovereignty of constitution. This has been done to make the students understand the basic principles of justice, equality, liberty & brotherhood. Earlier Maharashtra govt made the reading of the constitution's preamble mandatory in all primary and secondary schools.

35. **Andhra Pradesh Govt.** has adopted a resolution to abolish the legislative council.

**Note:** Andhra Pradesh (AP) cabinet has adopted a resolution to abolition the legislative council, which the government feels is a major hurdle for passing crucial bills. This cabinet chaired by the chief minister (CM) YS Jaganmohan Reddy.

36. Maharashtra government has made reading Preamble of the Constitution mandatory in schools.

**Note:** Reading of the Preamble of the Constitution has been made mandatory for the Maharashtra schools by the government of Maharashtra. The Maharashtra government has mandated the reading of Preamble of the Constitution after prayer in all primary and secondary schools in Maharashtra. The above decision will be implemented from 26 January 2020 through a programme "Sovereignty of Constitution, the public interest of all".

### Important News - World

1. President of Nepal has launched a much-awaited Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign at historic Dasaratha Rangashala **Kathmandu**.

**Note:** The ambitious campaign is aimed to promote tourism in Nepal and attract 2 million tourists during the year 2020. Visit Nepal Year 2020 will create a new image of Nepal in the hearts and minds of the world community. Mythical creature Yeti has been selected as a mascot of the campaign.

2. The **annual report published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):**

**Note:** UNICEF has named the last decade as "Deadly Decade" because as per the report, the number of attacks on children since 2010 has increased to three-fold. The world agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children around the world says that in 2018, around 24,000 grave violations were recorded against children and the

number has gone up highly to 1,70,000 in 2019. This includes abductions, killing, sexual violence, maiming, child recruitment, denial of humanitarian access and attacks in schools and hospitals.

3. **Piyush Jaiswal** has been awarded the Global Bihar Excellence Award 2019.

**Note:** The award was given to recognize and felicitated Piyush Jaiswal's contribution towards social welfare, women empowerment and introducing new talent in the field of arts and culture. This award was presented by Rajya Sabha MP and Padma Shri Awardee Dr. CP Thakur and Bihar Women Commission president Dilmani Devi in Patna to promote women empowerment.

4. Indian Army to sign MoU for AK-203 assault rifles with **Russia**.

**Note:** The Army is likely to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles from Russia. As per the MoU, around 1 lakh rifles are to be received directly from

Russia and the rest will be manufactured in India. The rifles will be manufactured at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh by a joint venture (JV) called Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL). Of the JV, 50.5% is to be owned by India and 49.5% by Russia.

5. Naval Exercise 'Naseem-Al-Bahr' will be conducted in **Goa**.  
**Note:** 12th edition of the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise "Naseem-Al-Bahr" will be conducted in Goa. To participate in it Two ships of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), RNOV Al Rasikh and RNOV Khassab arrived at Mormugao Port on January 06, 2020. Along with these ships, Indian Naval Ships Shubhadra and Beas will also participate in the exercise. Naseem-Al-Bahr' (or sea breeze) naval exercise between the Indian Navy and the RNO, being conducted since 1993.
6. **Iranian Parliament** has approved a triple-urgency bill that designates the US army and the Pentagon as a **Terrorist entity**.  
**Note:** Iran's IRGC's Quds Force Commander General Soleimani and Iraq's Popular Forces Commander Abu Mahdi al-Modandis, as well as eight other military men, were killed by the US Army. 233 MPs repeated the words of the speaker, Ali Larijani, warning US President Donald Trump to await the consequences of his actions.
7. Cabinet approves 'In Principle' strategic disinvestment of equity shareholding of 4 PSUs in **Neelachal**.  
**Note:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given 'in principle' approval for strategic disinvestment of equity shareholding in 4 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) & 2 Odisha State PSUs in Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited (NINL). The 4 CPSEs includes Minerals & Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC), MECON, Bharat Heavy Electricals (BHEL) and National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC).
8. The first phase of the world's second-largest Muslim congregation after Haj began on the outskirts of **Dhaka**.  
**Note:** Thousands of devotees from Bangladesh and abroad are thronging the bank of river Turag at Tongi near Dhaka to participate in the congregation called Bishwa Ijtema.
9. 50th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) was held in **Davos, Switzerland**.  
**Note:** The 50th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum begins in Davos, Switzerland. On the Indian side, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead the delegation to the WEF. This year programme will focus on achieving the maximum impact on the Forum's platform for public-private cooperation. This year 50th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum theme will be "Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World".
10. **Microsoft** company has announced that it would become "carbon negative" by year 2030.

**Note:** The US tech giant Microsoft has announced that it would become "carbon negative" by year 2030. The announcement has been made in the form of its increased efforts to combat the climate change. The company announced that it vows to eliminate all the carbon emissions created by the company since its inception in 1975.

11. **Robert Abela** elected as 14th prime minister of Malta with 57.9% of the vote.  
**Note:** Labour Party candidate Robert Abela elected as 14th prime minister of Malta with 57.9% of the vote. He defeated his closest rival Chris Fearne. He will replace Joseph Muscat, who resigned over the murder of a journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia.
12. The 10th edition of World Future Energy Summit (WFES) 2020 was held at **Abu Dhabi, UAE**.  
**Note:** Recently the 10th edition of World Future Energy Summit (WFES)2020 hosted by Masdar renewable energy company, was held at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE) from January 13-16, 2020. The theme for the year 2020 was "Rethinking Global Consumption, Production, and Investment".
13. World Health Organisation (WHO) released the Global challenges for 2020 and identified health challenges in this decade were -- **13**.  
**Note:** The World Health Organisation(WHO) released the Global challenges for 2020. 13 health challenges in this decade were also identified.
14. As per the 9th edition of Tomtom Traffic Index 2019 which city is emerged as the worst traffic congested cities in the world -- **Bengaluru**.  
**Note:** Dutch multinational developer & creator of location technology and consumer electronics Tomtom has released its 9th edition of Tomtom Traffic Index 2019. As per the index, Bengaluru (Karnataka) emerged as the worst traffic congested cities in the world. Along with Bengaluru, 3 more Indian cities were ranked in the top 10 list. The other Indian cities ranked in the top 10 places were Mumbai (Maharashtra), Pune (Maharashtra) and New Delhi in the 4th 5th and 8th places respectively.
15. **WHO** has declared novel Coronavirus(nCoV) as a global health emergency.  
**Note:** The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared novel Coronavirus(nCoV) as a global health emergency during the second meeting of the Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005) regarding the outbreak of novel coronavirus 2019 held in Geneva, Switzerland. The outbreak which was more prominent in China has now continued to spread to other countries too.
16. **Bangladesh** has launched e-passport facility.  
**Note:** Prime Minister (PM) of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina Wazed has launched e-passport in Dhaka, Bangladesh as Mujib Century year gift to the country. Bangladesh is the first country in South Asia and 119th countries in the

world to have an e-passport facility. Malaysia is the first country in the world to launch this facility in 1998.

17. Country's exit from European Union has been approved by the EU Parliament -- **Britain**.

**Note:** The European Union parliament has approved United Kingdom Brexit deal. European Parliament has voted overwhelmingly to approve the Brexit deal with London, clearing the final hurdle for Britain's departure from the EU. The vote was 621 to 49 in favour of the Brexit deal that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson negotiated with the other 27 EU leaders. UK will not have any say in policy as it will not be a member of the EU anymore. Britain is the first country to leave the EU.

18. **Britain** has launched a £4 Mn (about Rs 37 crore) 'Innovation Challenge Fund' in India.

**Note:** The government of UK (United Kingdom) has launched a £4 Mn (about Rs 37 crore) 'Innovation

Challenge Fund' in India at an event in Pune, Maharashtra. The fund is focused on 2 main tech platforms including artificial intelligence (AI) and big data in Karnataka and future mobility in Maharashtra. The fund, which is one of several new initiatives of the UK-India Tech Partnership, is aimed to boost industry and academia to collaborate & develop tech solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges in India.

19. **United Kingdom** has unveiled the new 50 pence coin to mark the country's departure from the European Union (EU).

**Note:** Britain has unveiled the new 50 pence coin to mark the country's departure from the European Union (EU). The coin bears the inscription "Peace, prosperity and friendship with all nations" and the Brexit date of 31 January 2020.

### Honor & Awards

1. **Results of Swachh Survekshan League 2020:**

**Note:** Around 4,372 cities participated in the league. It is a cleanliness survey that helps in competitive federalism. Among 10 Lakh plus population category, Indore secured first place in both the quarters. Madhya Pradesh Capital Bhopal got the second and Surat in Gujarat third spot in first Quarter. Rajkot in Gujarat was at the 2nd spot while Navi Mumbai at third. In one Lakh to 10 Lakh population category, Jamshedpur in Jharkhand got the 1st spot in both quarters. New Delhi Municipal Council and Khargone in Madhya Pradesh got the second and third spots in the first quarter in this category. Chandrapur in Maharashtra and Khargone got the second and third spots in Quarter 2 in one to ten lakh population categories.

2. **Umaro Cissoko Embalo** has won **Guinea-Bissau** presidential election.

**Note:** In the Guinea-Bissau Umaro Cissoko Embalo has won the presidential election with 53.55 percent of votes. This was announced by the National Electoral Commission (CNE) of Guinea-Bissau. He was the opposition leader also served as prime minister of the country.

3. **Sanjay Gupta** has been honoured with **Lokmanya Tilak** journalism award.

**Note:** Sanjay Gupta (editor-in-chief of 'Jagran') will be honoured with the 'Lokmanya Tilak National Journalism Award' for his contribution to the field of journalism. The award, instituted by the Kesari-Maratha Trust, will be conferred on Gupta in Pune on 139th Foundation Day of 'Kesari', the newspaper started by Lokmanya Tilak. The award is given to recognize the work of an individual, which he or she has carried out for the larger good of the journalistic field.

4. **Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS) & SUM Hospital** has been adjudged the **best medical college of the year** and conferred with the **Six Sigma Healthcare Excellence** Award for 2019.

**Note:** Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur presented the award at a special function held at New Delhi. SOA University also won a separate award on the occasion as its founder president Manojranjan Nayak was chosen as the dynamic entrepreneur of the year.

5. Five-day-long festival of '**Lai Haraoba**' has begun in **Agartala, Tripura**.

**Note:** It is a ritualistic festival observed by Manipuri Meitei communities since ancient times. The five-day-long festival is jointly organized by the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of Tripura, Puthiba Lai Haraoba Committee and Puthiba Welfare & Cultural Society, Agartala. Lai Haraoba is celebrated through oral literature, music, dance, and rituals.

6. **Ministry of Science and Technology** has awarded Swarna Jayanti Fellowships to 14 scientists to pursue basic research in frontier areas of science and technology.

**Note:** The fellowship covers all the requirements for performing the research and includes a fellowship of 25 thousand rupees per month. A research grant of five lakh rupees for five years is also being provided in addition to their salary. Instituted to commemorate India's 50th year of independence, Swarna Jayanti Fellowships are awarded to young and brilliant scientists to pursue unfettered research with financial freedom and flexibility.

7. Two youth leaders from Bihar **Kanhaiya Kumar & Prashant Kishor** included in the **Forbes India list of 20 people** to watch in the 2020s.

- Note:** **Kanhaiya Kumar** finds 12th position in the list while Prashant Kishor is at 16<sup>th</sup> position. Prashant Kishor is Janata Dal (United) National Vice President while Kanhaiya Kumar is former President of Jawaharlal Nehru University Students Union. Indian origin US-born political commentator Hasan Minhaj is on the 1st position while Keyna's Marathon runner Eliud Kipchoge in on the 20th place.
8. **India-born author** has bagged a coveted United Kingdom's Costa Children's Award 2019' -- **Jasbinder Bilan**.  
**Note:** She won the award for her debut novel 'Asha and the Spirit Bird'. "Asha and the Spirit Bird", aimed at readers aged nine years and above, beat competition from three other shortlisted books to be named the winner of the 2019 Costa Children's Award this week. Jasbinder's novel was shortlisted from 144 other entries.
  9. Status of Institution of National Importance to a cluster of Ayurvedic institutions at the Gujarat Ayurved University campus in **Jamnagar**.  
**Note:** The elevation of the status of the institution will provide it with the autonomy to upgrade the standard of Ayurveda education, frame various courses in Ayurveda as per national and international demand. It will help the institute to develop tertiary care in Ayurveda and to secure inter-disciplinary collaborations to give a contemporary thrust to Ayurveda.
  10. India-born author has bagged a coveted UK children's book award for her debut novel -- **Jasbinder Bilan**.
  13. The 29<sup>th</sup> 'Saraswati Samman 2019' will be conferred to **Vasdev Mohi**.  
**Note:** Sindhi writer Vasdev Mohi has been selected for the Saraswati Samman 2019, a literary recognition given annually by the KK (Krishna Kumar) Birla Foundation. The literary award is given for his short stories collection- 'Chequebook'. The short story talks about the sufferings of the marginalized sections in society. The work was selected by a committee headed by the former secretary-general of the Lok Sabha, Subash C Kashyap.
  14. In the 16th edition of International Cricket Council (ICC) Awards who named ODI cricket of the year -- **Rohit Sharma**.  
**Note:** International Cricket Council has announced the list of ICC award winners for the year 2019 to recognize and honor the best international cricket players of the previous 12 months. Indian opener Rohit Gurunath Sharma became ODI Cricketer of the Year for the first time. At the same time, Virat Kohli bagged Spirit of Cricket award. England's World Cup winning all-rounder Ben Stokes won the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers trophy for the Cricketer of the Year, While Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins became the best Test cricketer of the year, taking 59 wickets in 2019.
  - Note:** Her novel, '**Asha and the Spirit Bird**', aimed at readers aged nine years and above, beat competition from three other shortlisted books to be named the winner of the 2019 Costa Children's Award this week. Bilan will receive 5,000 pounds as the winner of the award. The award is open to authors resident in the UK and Ireland and presented annually across five categories of First Novel, Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children's Book.
  11. Indian pacer **Jasprit Bumrah** will receive the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)'s Polly Umrigar Award.  
**Note:** Currently he ranked as the world no.1 ODI bowler, Bumrah had made his Test debut during India's tour of South Africa in January 2018. He has picked up five-wicket hauls in South Africa, England, Australia, and the West Indies to become the first and only Asian bowler to achieve the milestone. Leg-spinner Poonam Yadav will be given the best international cricketer (women) award.
  12. India's flagship global conference on geopolitics and geo-economics Raisina Dialogue has begun in **New Delhi**.  
**Note:** Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** attended the inaugural session at which seven former heads of state or government will share their views on important challenges facing the world. Raisina Dialogue (fifth edition) jointly organized by the **Ministry of External Affairs** and the Observer Research Foundation.
  15. 17th edition of Crossword Books Awards held in Mumbai the Popular Best Fiction Award was won by -- **Twinkle Khanna**.  
**Note:** The 17th edition of Crossword Book Awards was held in Mumbai. Twinkle Khanna won the Popular Best Fiction Award for her novel 'Pyjamas Are Forgiving'. Krishna Trilok won the Popular award in the Biography category for Notes of a Dream: The Authorized Biography of AR Rahman.
  16. Madhya Pradesh government 2018 National Lata Mangeshkar Award was conferred to -- **Kuldeep Singh**.  
**Note:** Noted Indian singer Suman Kalyanpur was chosen for the 2017 National Lata Mangeshkar Award of the state govt. of Madhya Pradesh (MP). While Indian Music composer Kuldeep Singh has been chosen for the same Mangeshkar award for the year 2018. They have been chosen for this award for their contribution in the field of music and will be awarded in February 2020 at an event in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
  17. e-Governance Award of Excellence 2019 was won by -- '**cVIGIL**' and '**Voter Helpline app**'.  
**Note:** The Award of Excellence for the year 2019 was given by Computer Society of India (CSI) and Special Interest Group on e-Governance at Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology in Bhubaneswar, Odisha during the CSI 2020, 53rd annual convention of CSI. The two

- innovative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications developed by Election Commission of India (ECI), 'cVIGIL' and 'Voter Helpline App' has won the 'Award of Excellence' 2019.
18. Australia has conferred its highest civilian honour, the Order of Australia honour to **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw**.  
**Note:** Australia has conferred its highest civilian honour, the Order of Australia honour to Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw. She is founder and chairperson of biopharmaceutical company Biocon and appointed as an honorary member in the general division of the Order of Australia by Australia's High Commissioner to India Ms. Harinder Sidhu at a ceremony in Leela Palace, Bengaluru, Karnataka. She is the fourth Indian citizen to be awarded Australia's highest civilian honour. The award is given to foreign nationals who have extraordinarily contributed to Australia or for humanity.
  19. Priya Praksah has won the Global citizen prize: Cisco Youth Leadership award for 2019.  
**Note:** Priya Prakash, the founder and CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of India-based "HealthSetGo" has won the Global citizen prize: Cisco Youth Leadership award for 2019. The award was given for her school health program that provides healthcare support to children. The Award was given by Cisco Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer Fran Katsoudas at Royal Albert Hall, London, United Kingdom (UK).
  20. Prestigious French honour of 'Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) has been conferred to **Sanjana Kapoor**.  
**Note:** Well-known theatre person, Sanjana Kapoor received the prestigious French honour of 'Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) for her outstanding contribution to the field of theatre. She is the daughter of Late Bollywood actor Shashi Kapoor. L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres is a French government distinction instituted in 1957 by the Ministry of Culture and is conferred, regardless of nationality.
  21. Nobel laureate Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee conferred with honorary Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.) by **Calcutta University**.  
**Note:** Nobel laureate Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee conferred the honorary Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.) by Calcutta University at its annual convocation in Kolkata. The Vice-Chancellor of the University Ms Sonali Chakraborty Banerjee presented the Degree to him. Banerjee, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2019 along with two others for "their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty", is one of the directors of Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) which he had founded in 2003.
  22. Assam state Tableaux has won the 1st prize at the Republic Day Parade, 2020 among the States/Union Territories.  
**Note:** The Tableaux of Assam wins the 1st prize at the Republic Day Parade, 2020 among the States/Union Territories. The theme of Assam's tableau was "Land of unique craftsmanship and culture", displaying bamboo and cane work and Bhortal Nritya performed by Xattriya dancers. Best Tableaux awards for Republic Day Parade, 2020 was given by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
  23. **Dr N Kumar** has been conferred with the 'Harit Ratna Award 2019'.  
**Note:** Dr N Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, has been conferred 'Harit Ratna Award 2019'. This award is organised by the All India Agricultural Students Association. He was awarded for the dissemination of Rs 30-crore entrepreneurship project in agri-business and also for motivating students towards the agriculture sector in Tamil Nadu.
  24. **N Ram** has been selected for Kerala National Media Award.  
**Note:** The chairman of "The Hindu Group" **N. Ram** has been selected as the outstanding media person in a **national award instituted by Kerala Media Academy**. The award was instituted for fearless and brilliant journalistic work at a national level. The award carrying a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, citation and sculpture were announced as part of the academy's 40th-anniversary celebration.
  25. **Priya Prakash** has won the Global Citizen Prize: Cisco Youth Leadership Award for 2019.  
**Note:** The founder and CEO of India based HealthSetGo, Priya Prakash, has won the Global Citizen Prize: Cisco Youth Leadership Award for 2019. The award was given for her school health program that provides healthcare support to children. The prestigious award honours an individual aged 18 – 30 who is bringing about a positive change in the world by solving some of its biggest global challenges. The award includes a US \$250,000 prize.
  26. **Yusuf Jameel** has won the 2019-20 PEN Gauri Lankesh Award for Democratic Idealism for his outstanding contribution in journalism.  
**Note:** Senior journalist Yusuf Jameel from Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) won the 2019-20 PEN Gauri Lankesh Award for Democratic Idealism for his outstanding contribution in journalism. This was the 2nd edition of award instituted in 2018 by PEN South India and PEN Delhi in the name of editor late Gauri Lankesh, who was assassinated in 2017. The award carries a cash prize of Rs.1 lakh and a citation. The 1st edition was given to cartoonist P Mahamood in September 2018.
  27. **Rani Rampal** becomes the 1st ever hockey player to win the 2019 'World Games Athlete of the Year' award.  
**Note:** Indian Hockey women's team captain and 2020 Padma Shri awardee Rani Rampal became the 1st ever hockey player to win the 2019 'World Games Athlete of the Year' award. The announcement was made by the world games. Hailing from Haryana, Rani has obtained 1,99,477 votes from fans worldwide.

**28.** The Election Commission of India (ECI) awarded National Media Award for print to **“The Hindu Tamil”**.  
**Note:** Election Commission of India (ECI) awarded National Media Award for print to “The Hindu Tamil” as part of the poll panel’s national awards for voter awareness and education campaign in 2019 on the occasion of the 10th National Voters Day held at New Delhi. President Ram Nath Kovind presented National Media Award for print to K. Ashokan, Editor, The Hindu Tamil for encouraging people for ‘Right to vote based on the merit of candidates’ during Lok Sabha election 2019.

**29. Sneha Pamneja** awarded Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize 2020, a 1st of its kind award for brilliance in book design.

**Note:** Sneha Pamneja, a well known Graphic designer based in New Delhi, was awarded Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize 2020, a 1st of its kind award for brilliance in book design, at Jaipur BookMark of ongoing 13th edition of the Zee Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) at Digg Palace Hotel in Jaipur, Rajasthan. She was honoured for designing the cover of the book ‘Tiffin: Authentic Recipes Celebrating India’s Regional Cuisine’.

### Sports News

- 1. lawn bowls and cycling games** will be included in the 3rd edition of the ‘Khelo India youth games’.  
**Note:** The 3rd edition of the games is going to start from 10th January 2020 in Guwahati Assam. Around 6500 athletes from 37 teams are expected to take part. The cultural events from Assam, North East and rest of the country will be held from **13th to 15th January**. The exhibition of indigenous games will also be held. He said a mega inaugural ceremony is being planned at Sarusajai.
- The 5th Ice **Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship -2020** held in **Leh, Ladakh**.  
**Note:** The tournament will continue till 7th January in Karzoo Ice Hockey Rink in Leh, where the Army, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra and home team Ladakh are fighting for the championship in U-20 boys category. Similarly, in Girls category Ladakh, Maharashtra, Delhi, and Chandigarh are playing for the championship.
- Former India skipper **Mahendra Singh Dhoni** was picked as captain of ESPN Cricinfo's ODI and Twenty20 teams of the decade.  
**Note:** Virat Kohli was named the leader in Tests. Kuldeep Yadav, and Yuzvendra Chahal, were the only other Indians to make the Test XI. Former skipper Mithali Raj and fast bowler Jhulan Goswami were named in the same women's team picked for both the ODIs and T20s. Australia's inspirational cricketer, Meg Lanning was named the captain of the side.
- Magesh Chandran has** won the Hastings International chess title.  
**Note:** Indian Grand Master P Magesh Chandran has won the 95th edition of the prestigious Hastings International Chess Congress in Hastings, England. France's Romain Edouard, who was the only player to end the tournament a half-point behind Chandran, took the second spot. The US-based Chandran posted six wins and secured three draws to take the top spot.
- Bhubaneswar** will host the first Edition of Khelo India University Games.  
**Note:** The first edition of Khelo India University Games is scheduled to be held at the KIIT University in Bhubaneswar from February 22 to March 1, 2020. Khelo

India University Games will witness over 4,000 athletes from 100 Universities across India vying for top honours in 17 different disciplines namely archery, athletics, boxing, fencing, judo, swimming, weight-lifting, wrestling, badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, rugby and kabaddi.

- 6. Saurabh Chaudhary has** won gold medal in men's 10 m air pistol at 63rd National Shooting C'ship.  
**Note:** Ace shooter Saurabh Chaudhary has won the men's 10 meters air pistol gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship in Bhopal. Second-placed Sarabjot Singh of Haryana was well behind with a score of 243.9, while world number two Abhishek Verma settled for bronze in a high-quality final.
- India's all-rounder **Irfan Pathan** retires from all forms of cricket.  
**Note:** Indian all-rounder Irfan Pathan announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. Pathan played 29 Tests, 120 ODIs and 24 T20Is. He was part of the victorious Indian team at the 2007 World Twenty20 and was the man-of-the-match in the final against Pakistan.
- Cristiano Ronaldo has** won best Men's Player of the Year at Dubai Globe Soccer Awards 2019.  
**Note:** Cristiano Ronaldo won the Best Men's Player of the Year award at the Dubai Globe Soccer Awards in Dubai. Ronaldo has won the award six times out of its nine years of its existence. England international Lucy Bronze was crowned Best Women's Player of the Year. The 2019 Awards were presented in 16 different categories. The Globe Soccer Awards are the annual awards given for excellence in football, organised by the EFAA (European Association of Player's Agents) and the ECA (European Club Association).
- World Cup winner Italian **Daniele De Rossi** retires from football.  
**Note:** The Italian midfielder Daniele De Rossi (37-year-old) announced his decision to retire from football in order to spend more time with his family. Daniele De Rossi also earned 117 caps for Italy at the senior level, winning the FIFA World Cup in 2006. In an 18-year of his career, he made 616 appearances and scored 63 goals, winning two Coppa Italia titles

- 10. Weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur** has been slapped with a four-year ban for doping by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).  
**Note:** The sample of Sarbjeet, who won the 71kg event at the women's national weightlifting championships in February last year, was collected during 34th Women Senior National Weightlifting Championship held at Vishakhapatnam. "The Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel has found weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur guilty of anti-doping rule violation. She has been imposed a penalty of ineligibility for a period of four years.
- 11. Japanese badminton player Kento Momota** has won the Malaysia Masters 2020.  
**Note:** He defeated Denmark's **Viktor Axelsen** 24-22, 21-11. The victory in Malaysia lends credence to Momota's drive to win the gold in July's Tokyo Olympics. The reigning world champion told reporters that his eyes more success in 2020. Momota, currently the best player on the planet, won a record 11 titles last year.
- 12. Serbia** has won the inaugural 2020 ATP Cup tennis tournament in Sydney.  
**Note:** Djokovic (World No. 2) claimed a straight-sets victory over Rafael Nadal (World No. 1) 6-2, 7-6 (7-4) in singles. In doubles, Djokovic and Viktor Troicki claimed 6-3, 6-4 straight sets victory over Feliciano Lopez and Pablo Carreno Busta. ATP Cup was the opener for the 2020 ATP Tour, as well as the first ATP team tournament since the last edition of the World Team Cup in 2012.
- 13. 3rd Khelo India Youth Games** started in **Guwahati**.  
**Note:** 3rd Khelo India Youth Games 2020 started at Indira Gandhi Stadium in Guwahati, Assam. Khelo India Youth Games event is a National level multidisciplinary games conducted every year. Six thousand five hundred athletes from 37 teams will take part in the event. Cycling and Lawn Ball have been introduced as new disciplines in the games.
- 14. Ladakh** has won the 7th National Ice Hockey Championship Women trophy.  
**Note:** The match was held at the Karzoo Ice Hockey Rink in Ladakh. The tournament was organized by the Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) in association with the Ladakh winter sports club. Four women teams representing Chandigarh, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Ladakh participated in the tournament.
- 15. The Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship of 2020** held in Sharjah was won by **India**.  
**Note:** The team of the Indian Consulate has won the Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship of 2020 held in Sharjah. The team of the Indian Consulate defeated the Pakistan Consulate to win the trophy which was organized by Skyline University College in Sharjah. The trophy was organised with an aim of uniting the officials and employees of different Consulates based in UAE.
- 16. Indian wrestler** who won her first gold medal of the 2020 season at the Rome Ranking Series in Rome is **Vinesh Phogat**.  
**Note:** Vinesh Phogat won her first gold medal of the 2020 season at the Rome Ranking Series in Rome. She defeated Ecuador's Luisa Elizabeth Melendres 4-0 in the final (53 kg) category. A teen sensation Anshu Malik settled for a silver in 57kg competition. She lost to Nigeria's Odunayo Adekuroye for the score 10-0.
- 17. The Indonesia Badminton Masters 2020** women's singles title held in Jakarta, Indonesia was won by **Ratchanok Intanon**.  
**Note:** Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon wins Indonesia Badminton Masters 2020 women's singles title in Jakarta, Indonesia. She defeats Carolina Marin (Spain) 21-19, 11-21, 21-18 in the final clash. The win was her second title in the Indonesian tournament.
- 18. Sania Mirza (India) and Nadiia Kichenok (Ukraine)** have won the women's doubles title of the WTA International trophy at Hobart, Australia.  
**Note:** Sania Mirza (India) and Nadiia Kichenok (Ukraine) have won the women's doubles title of the WTA International trophy at Hobart, Australia. They beat Shuai Peng and Shuai Zhang from China 6-4,6-4. It's Sania's 42nd WTA doubles title and first since Brisbane International trophy in 2007 with American partner Bethanie Mattek-Sands.
- 19. ICC Under-19 World Cup Cricket 2020** has begun in **South Africa**.  
**Note:** The ICC Under-19 World Cup Cricket 2020 begins in South Africa. Indian team played under the captaincy of Priyam Garg. The final of the tournament will be played on Feb 09 at JB Marks Oval, Potchefstroom, South Africa. India is the most successful team in the tournament, having won four titles till date. India is the defending champions in U19 World Cup 2018. Total 16 teams are participating in the tournament, split into four groups of four.
- 20. 1st Indian woman** to sign up for foreign football club, 'Rangers FC' of Scotland --**Bala Devi**.  
**Note:**Ngangom Bala Devi, 29 years old from Manipur, has become the first Indian woman footballer to get a professional contract from Scotland's Women Premier League club Rangers (Football Club) for 18-months and to play for jersey No.10 after a successful trial in November, 2019. The formal announcement was made by Rangers FC and Bengaluru FC at Kanteerava Stadium, Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- 21. Christine Margaret Sinclair** becomes the all-time top scorer with 185 goals in international soccer.  
**Note:** Christine Margaret Sinclair, 36 years old, Canadian soccer player ,became the all-time top scorer with 185 goals in international soccer. Sinclair surpassed the

record of American Abby Wambach (original name Mary Abigail Wambach) who scored 184 goals.

**22. Joao Olavo Soares de Souza** has been banned for life due to match fixing and corruption by the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU).

**Note:** According to the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU), which is responsible for investigating match fixing in tennis, Joao Olavo Soares de Souza (31), a former Brazilian professional tennis player has been banned for life due to match fixing and corruption. It also fined Souza with \$200,000. As per the investigation of TIU, Joao Souza did match fixing in tennis at the ATP Challenger and ITF Futures tournaments in Brazil, Mexico, the United States and Czech Republic between 2015 and 2019.

**23.** The 71st edition of International Boxing Tournament "Strandja"2020 was held in **Sofia, Bulgaria.**

**Note:** The 71st edition of International Boxing Tournament "Strandja"2020 was held in Sofia, Bulgaria from January 19-26, 2020. India ranked 9th in the medal tally with 3 medals (1 Silver, 2 Bronze). The list was topped by Ukraine with 10 medals (4 Gold, 1 silver, 5 Bronze).

**24. Esow Alben** won the gold medal in the men's Keirin individual cycling event of the Six-Day Berlin Tournament.

**Note:** Indian cyclist Esow Alben has bagged a gold in the men's Keirin individual event of the Six-Day Berlin Tournament. Czech Republic's Tomas Babek, who won a silver in the 2017 World Championship, came in second while Maximilian Lev of Germany took home the bronze.

**25.** The Rowing Federation of India has lifted the ban over Indian rower -- **Dattu Bhokanal.**

**Note:** The Rowing Federation of India has lifted the ban over Indian rower Dattu Bhokanal. He was suspended in March, 2019 from the game by the Rowing Federation of India for the period of 2 years. He was suspended against the charges of leaving a single sculls race midway during the 2018 Asian Games.

**26. Maharashtra** state top in the medal tally of the 3rd season of the Khelo India Youth Games 2020.

**Note:** The 3rd season of the Khelo India Youth Games concluded. Maharashtra retained its reign in the Khelo India Youth Games held in Guwahati with 256 medals including 78 gold. Haryana stood second with a total of 200 medals. Delhi finished third with 122 medals. Shivangi Sharma of Assam won five gold and two silver in swimming. She was the most successful female player of the Khelo India Youth Games.

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