

# GK Tornado for NIACL AO Mains 2018 Exam

## GK Tornado for NIACL AO Mains 2018-19 Exam

Dear readers,

This **GK Tornado** is a complete docket of important **Banking Awareness & Current Affairs** news and events that occurred in last **4.5 months (1 October 2018 – 14th February 2019)**. **Tornado** is important and relevant for all competitive exams like Banking, Insurance, SSC and UPSC Exams.

### News related to RBI

February 2019

#### 1. RBI cut repo rate by 25 bps to 6.25%

- On 07th February 2019, the Reserve Bank of India in its sixth Bi-monthly Monetary Policy statement for 2018-19, decided to reduce the key policy rate or the repo rate by 25 bps to 6.25%
- RBI reduces the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) by 25 basis points from 6.5% to 6.25% with immediate effect.
- The reverse repo rate under the LAF stands adjusted to 6.0 per cent.
- The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate to 6.5 per cent.
- Reserve Bank also retained GDP growth estimate at 7.4 per cent for the current financial year.

Current Rates is as follows:

1. Repo Rate	6.25% (changed)
2. Reverse Repo Rate	6.00% (changed)
3. CRR (Cash Reserve Ratio)	4.00% (unchanged)
4. SLR (Statutory Liquidity Ratio)	19.25% (changed)
5. MSF (Marginal Standing Facility)	6.50% (changed)
6. Bank Rate	6.50% (changed)

#### 2. Indian Foreign Exchange Reserves increased by \$2.063 billion

- The data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) shows that the Foreign Exchange Reserves of India increased by \$2.063 billion to \$400.24 billion in the week to February 1.

#### 3. RBI doubles the limit of bulk deposits from Rs. 1 Crore to Rs 2 Crore

- Reserve Bank of India decided to treat deposits to over Rs.2 crore as 'bulk' as they doubled the limit for the same from the earlier Rs.1crore.

- According to current RBI rules, last reviewed in January 2013, banks have the option of not permitting premature withdrawals of 'large rupee term deposits' of INR 1 crore and above.

#### 4. RBI penalises banks for violating various norms

The Reserve Bank has imposed a monetary penalty of two million rupees each on **HDFC Bank, IDBI Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank** for non-compliance of various Know Your Customer/ Anti-Money Laundering norms.

- RBI also imposed a monetary penalty of 1.5 Crore rupees each on Allahabad Bank, Bank of Maharashtra and Indian Overseas Bank for non-compliance of norms related to monitoring end use of funds, exchange of information, classification and reporting of frauds and on the restructuring of accounts.

#### 5. The Reserve Bank of India has slapped a Rs1-crore penalty on Syndicate Bank and Rs20 lakh on Axis Bank for violating norms.

- The penalty on Syndicate Bank is due to non-compliance with the directions regarding frauds and risk management systems.
  - Axis Bank was fined for contravention of the directions on detection and impounding of counterfeit notes and installation of note sorting machines.
6. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lifted the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework operational curbs on Bank of India (BoI), Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC).
  7. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) set up an expert committee under former Sebi chairman U K Sinha to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.
  8. **New Policy for Overseas Borrowings** - The Reserve Bank has come out with a new policy for overseas borrowings. The RBI has rationalized the earlier policy in consultation with the Government of India.

#### Key points

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

9. **RBI raised collateral-free farm loan limit from Rs. 1 Lakh to Rs. 1.6 Lakh** - The Reserve Bank of India raised the limit of collateral-free agricultural loans to Rs. 1.6 lakh from the current Rs. 1 lakh with a view to help small and marginal farmers.
10. **The Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2018-19** - The Centre in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India has decided to allow a discount of 50 rupees per gram from the issue price to those investors who apply online and make the payment through digital mode.

January 2019

1. **RBI launches SRPHi** - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched **Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi)**. The Survey will capture payment habits of individuals in cities of **Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati**.

#### Key points -

- Sigma Research & Consulting Pvt Ltd has been engaged by RBI to conduct the fieldwork of the survey.
  - Around 6000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds across six cities would be covered under the survey.
  - The survey seeks qualitative responses from individuals on their payment habits. The findings of the survey will provide insights into awareness and usage habits of digital payment products.
2. **FDI rose 18% in FY18 to Rs 28.25 lakh crore: RBI data**
    - Reserve Bank of India has released a data on "Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct Investment Companies, 2017-18" which shows that the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has increased 18% to Rs. 28.25 lakh crore in FY18.

#### Key points

- Overseas direct investment (ODI) by Indian companies increased by 5% to Rs 5.28 lakh crore.
- The census showed that Mauritius continued to be the largest source of FDI in India (19.7%) followed by the US and UK.
- In case of overseas investment by Indian companies, Singapore (17.5%) was the major destination, followed by the Netherlands and Mauritius.

3. **RBI forms committee to boost digital payments** - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a five-member High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion.
  - The committee is headed by UIDAI's former Chairman **Nandan Nilekani**.
4. **Sri Lanka's Central Bank Gets USD 400 Million Swap from RBI** - According to Sri Lanka's Central Bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has agreed to provide **USD 400 million** under a swap arrangement to boost the island nation's reserves.
  - The RBI has agreed to provide the funds under its SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Corporation) Swap facility.

5. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IDFC First Bank for three years period.

Note:

- In December 2018, IDFC Bank and non-banking financial company Capital First completed their merger, creating a combined loan asset book of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for the merged entity IDFC First Bank.

6. **RBI slaps fine of Rs 1 crore on State Bank of India** – The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has slapped Rs 1 crore penalty on the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) for not monitoring the end use of funds in respect of one of its borrowers.

- RBI in the exercise of powers conferred under Section 47 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 has levied a penalty.

7. **RBI to inject Rs 37,500 crore through OMO in February** - The Reserve Bank of India has stated that it will inject Rs 37,500 crore into the system through the purchase of government securities in February to increase liquidity.

8. **RBI releases the Financial Stability Report**

- The Reserve Bank of India has released the 18th issue of the Financial Stability Report (FSR).
- The FSR reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on risks to financial stability, as also the resilience of the financial system.
- The Report also discusses issues relating to the development and regulation of the financial sector.

#### **Financial Institutions: Performance and risks**

- Credit growth of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) has improved between March 2018 and September 2018, driven largely by private sector banks (PVBs).
- The asset quality of banks showed an improvement with the gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of SCBs declining from

11.5% in March 2018 to 10.8% in September 2018.

- Under the baseline scenario, the GNPA ratio may decline from 10.8% in September 2018 to 10.3% in March 2019.
- Analysis of the financial network structure for the period September 2017 – September 2018 reveals a shrinking inter-bank market and increasing bank linkages with asset management companies-mutual funds (AMC-MFs) for raising funds and with NBFCs/Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) for lending.

9. **RBI provides for One-Time restructuring of Loans to MSMEs**

- Reserve Bank allowed a one-time restructuring of existing debt up to Rs 25 crore for the companies which have defaulted on payment but the loans given to them have continued to be classified as standard assets.
- The decision will help the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) which are facing a cash crunch in the wake of demonetization and GST implementation.
- To be eligible for the scheme, the aggregate exposure, including non-fund based facilities of banks and NBFCs, to a borrower should not exceed Rs 25 crore as on January 1, 2019, and the restructuring has to be implemented by 31st of March 2020.

10. **RBI forms expert U.K. Sinha committee to rejuvenate MSMEs**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has formed an expert committee to look into the various challenges being faced by MSMEs and suggest ways and measures to rejuvenate them.
- The eight-member committee would be chaired by former **Securities and Exchange Board of India chairman UK Sinha**.
- The other members of the committee are Ram Mohan Mishra, Pankaj Jain, PK Gupta, Anup Bagchi, Abhiman Das, Sharad Sharma, and Bindu Ananth.

## **December**

1. **Banks recover Rs40,400 crore from defaulters: RBI Report**

- Banks have seen a significant improvement in recovery of stressed assets helped by the

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and amendments in the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interests (SARFAESI) Act, during FY18, according to the RBI data.



- In the fiscal ended March 2018, banks recovered Rs 40,400 crore worth of bad loans as against Rs 38,500 crore recovered in FY17.
  - The various channels through which lenders recovered their bad loans include the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), SARFAESI Act, debt recovery tribunals (DRTs) and Lok Adalats.
  - While banks recovered Rs 4,900 crore of bad loans through the IBC, the amount recovered through SARFAESI was Rs 26,500 crore in FY18, the RBI said in its annual report on Trends and Progress of Banking in 2017-18.
- 2. ESAF SFB Gets RBI nod to operate as Scheduled Bank**
- ESAF small finance bank has got RBI approval to operate as a scheduled bank.
  - This makes ESAF small finance bank (SFB) the fifth scheduled bank from Kerala.
  - ESAF microfinance institution, started in 1992, was one among the ten applicants to receive approval from RBI to start banking operations in 2016.
- 3. Bimal Jalan Panel on Economic Capital Framework**
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an expert committee, headed by its former governor Bimal Jalan, to suggest how the central bank should handle its reserves and whether it can transfer its surplus to the government.
  - The committee will submit its report within 90 days of its first meeting.
  - The expert committee headed by Bimal Jalan will have former RBI deputy governor Rakesh Mohan as its vice chairman
- 4. RBI allows SIDBI to use Existing Rs. 1000-crore Corpus for lending to MFIs**
- India's institutional framework to support microfinance would get a boost with Reserve Bank of India clearing a proposal to dig in an existing Rs 1000-crore corpus for funding microlenders.
  - Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) had kept this money for some other purposes and had recently sought RBI's approval for using it for the microfinance sector.
  - The development bank will now use the money to offer soft loans to MFIs on a condition that end borrowers should get loans at 15-17% rate, which is significantly lower than the prevailing 20-22% market rate.
- 5. ICICI topped list of Banks Penalising Staff for fraud in 2015-2017: RBI data**
- According to data furnished by the Reserve Bank of India, between 2015 and 2017, private lender ICICI Bank penalized the highest number of employees for defrauding bank assets in the last three year out of 60 scheduled commercial banks operating in India.
- It is followed by State Bank of India and Punjab National Bank.
  - In all, banks took action against a staggering 13,949 officials, of which 16%, or 2,236, belonged to ICICI.
- 6. RBI limits total outstanding ECBs to 6.5% of GDP**
- The Reserve Bank of India, in consultation with the government, has decided to have a rule-based dynamic limit for outstanding stock of External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) at 6.5% of GDP at current market prices.
  - As per the statement based on the GDP figures, the soft limit works out to \$160 billion for the current financial year. The outstanding stock of ECBs as on September 30, 2018, stands at \$126.29 billion.
- 7. Six IT Firms in race to for setting up Public Credit Registry**
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has shortlisted six major IT firms to set up a wide-based digital Public Credit Registry (PCR) for capturing details of all borrowers and wilful defaulters.
  - The RBI will now seek request for proposal from the six vendors.
  - The firms shortlisted by the RBI are TCS, Wipro, IBM India, Capgemini Technology Services India, Dun & Bradstreet Information Services India, and Mindtree Ltd.
- 8. Shaktikanta Das appointed as the New Governor of RBI**
- Shaktikanta Das assumed the charge as the 25th governor of the Reserve Bank of India for three years.
  - He succeeds Urjit Patel who stepped down from the post citing personal reasons.
- About Shaktikanta Das**
- Shaktikanta Das is a former IAS officer from Odisha. He is a 1980 batch IAS officer from Tamil Nadu cadre.
  - He was the Economic Affairs Secretary when demonetisation was announced. He served the position from August 2015- May 2017.
  - Shaktikanta Das has been a vocal supporter of demonetisation.
  - He will be the first bureaucrat (IAS) to head the central bank in almost five years.
  - He was earlier a member of the Fifteenth Finance Commission of India and India's Sherpa to the G20.
- 9. Urjit Patel quits as RBI Governor**
- Urjit Patel stepped down as the Reserve Bank of India Governor on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018, about

nine months ahead of the completion of his three-year term.

- He stepped down from the post citing personal reasons.
- This is only the second time since Independence that a sitting RBI Governor has quit.
- The previous one to do so was **Sir Benegal Rama Rau**, who resigned before his second

extended tenure expired due to differences with the then Finance Minister.

Note:

- He was appointed as the 24th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 4 September 2016.
- He succeeds Raghuram Rajan.

## Rank of India in different Indexes

### 1. International IP index 2019

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

### 2. Corruption Perception Index 2018

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

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

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

### 4. Global Talent Competitive Index 2019:

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

- Last year in 2018, India was ranked at 81<sup>st</sup> position.

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

- Top 3 countries in the list are – **Norway, Iceland and Sweden**.
- Australia and New Zealand are the only “full democracies” in the entire Asia-Pacific region
- India was at the **41st place** with a score of 7.23/10 and was placed in the flawed democracies category.

### 6. India Ranks 79th, Japan Tops List of Most Powerful Passports - According to the Henley Passport Index, India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th in 2019. Japan retained its top spot as the world's most travel-friendly passport.

### 7. India 6th in GDPR Readiness Index: CISCO - Nearly 65% of Indian organizations are better prepared for the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), making the country the sixth leading nation globally in the GDPR readiness index, global networking leader, according to CISCO.

### 8. World Bank's ease-of-doing-business 2019: India ranked at 77

- India's jumped 23 places to 77 among 190 countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2019 index.
- The World Bank on October 31, 2018 released the Doing Business Report 2019 titled as 'Doing Business 2019: Training for Reform', assessing and ranking countries on the basis of ease of doing business in the year 2018.
- In its annual 'Doing Business' 2019 report, the World Bank said India has improved on six of the 10 parameters on starting and doing business in a country.

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

**9. IMD World Talent Ranking: India Ranks 53<sup>rd</sup>**

**10. India to retain top position in remittances: World Bank**

- India will retain its position as the world's top recipient of remittances in 2018 with its diaspora sending a whopping USD 80 billion back home, according to the World Bank report.
- India is followed by China (USD 67 billion), Mexico and the Philippines (USD 34 billion each) and Egypt (USD 26 billion), according to the global lender.

**11. Climate Change Performance Index 2019:**

- India ranked at 11<sup>th</sup> position.
- As per the Index, Sweden has topped the list while India was on 11th position.

- Switzerland has topped the list of the IMD World Talent Ranking 2018 for the fifth year in a row.
- Among the BRICS countries, South Africa remains in the middle position (50th) performing better than India (53rd) and Brazil (58th) but lagging behind China (39th) and Russia (46th).

The Top 3 countries in the list are:

- Switzerland, Denmark, Norway
  - Saudi Arabia came last, in 60th place, partly due to its obstructive role during international climate negotiations.

**12. WEF Gender Gap Index 2018:**

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

**Banking & Financial Awareness**

**February 2019**

**1. Retail inflation declines to 2.05 per cent in January –**

As per data released by the ministry of statistics and Programme Implementation, the Retail Inflation declined marginally to 2.05% in January over the last month on the continued decline in food prices.

- The retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Dec 2018 has also been revised downward to 2.11% from the earlier estimate of 2.19%.
- In India, retail inflation is linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which is managed by the Ministry of Statistics.

**2. Soon 90% of GST payers to file quarterly return: FM**

- The GST Council allowed the filing of GST returns with an annual turnover of up to Rs 5 crore at quarterly.

**3. Yes Bank wins The Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018 –**

Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018 announced Yes Bank as the winner in 'Innovation in Data Science' category for their industry-first project 'Yes EEE (Engage Enrich Excel)' at Panaji, Goa.

**4. Fino Payments Bank (FPB)** has announced the launch of a sweep account facility in association with Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB). This partnership will help FPB address the issue of deposit limits that all the payment banks face at the moment.

**5. NTPC signs pact with SBI for Rs 5000 crore Term Loan** - NTPC has announced that it has signed a term loan agreement for Rs 5,000 crore with State Bank of India.

**6. NPA under Mudra Yojana stands at Rs 7,277 cr** - The Government informed Parliament that loans worth Rs 7,277.31 crore of public sector banks under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) have turned bad at the end of March 2018.

Note:

- Loans under PMMY can be covered under Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU).
- CGFMU has been formed with the purpose of guaranteeing payment against default in micro loans up to **Rs 10 lakh** extended to eligible borrowers by the member lending institutions (MLIs).

**7. SBI UK Chief honoured 'Freedom of the City of London'**

- Mr. Sanjiv Chadha (State Bank of India's UK chief) has been honoured with the 'Freedom of the City Of London' in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations.
- Mr. Chadha was nominated for the honour by Lord Mayor of London Peter Estlin and Sheriff Vincent Keaveny.

**8. Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Kisan Suvidha Loan** - 'Kisan Suvidha loan' for small and marginal farmers has been launched by Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.

**Note:**

- It provides loans to individuals with an amount ranging from Rs. 60000 to Rs. 2 Lakh to fulfil the customized needs of the mass market segment.
- The head office of is in Bengaluru.

**9. IRDAI constitute Randip Singh Jagpal (IRDAI chief general manager) committee** - A committee of the Indian insurance regulator, IRDAI, has recommended that a facilitating environment to support deployment of technical innovation, similar to that for FinTech products, should be created for the insurance industry as well.

**Note:**

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

**10. Two RRBs to be merged to form Tamil Nadu Grama Bank** - Two regional rural banks (RRBs) – Pallavan Grama Bank and Pandyan Grama Bank – will be merged to form the Tamil Nadu Grama Bank as per the Finance Ministry notification.

- The integration will be effective from April 1, 2019.
- The new Tamil Nadu Grama Bank will be under the sponsorship of Indian Bank.

**11. ADB buys 14% stake in Annapurna Finance** - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has bought a 14% stake in micro-financier Annapurna Finance for Rs 137 crore, reinforcing the belief that India's microfinance sector is on course to attract long-term funds from global lenders and investors.

**12. GST collection increases in January** - The data from the Ministry of Finance shows that goods and services tax collections stood at Rs. 1,02,503 crore in the month of January.

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

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

**January 2019**

**1. GDP growth rate projection by various Org.**

International Org.	GDP growth rate projection
IMF	7.5% in 2019-20 & 7.7% in 2020-21
World Bank (Global Economic Prospects report)	7.3% in the fiscal year 2018-19 and average 7.5% in 2019 and 2020
UN's World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP)	7.6 % in 2019-20
Crisil Ratings	7.3 % in 2019-20
Central Statistics Office (CSO)	7.2% in 2018-19
India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)	7.5 % in the financial year 2019-20
Global Economy Watch Report of PwC	7.6 % in 2019
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)	7.5 % in 2019
Asian Development Bank	7.3 per cent for current fiscal and 7.6 per cent for 2019-20.



Moody's	7.2% in FY 2018-19 & 7.4% in 2019-20
Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)	7.5% in 2019 & 2020

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

- The Union cabinet has approved the merger of Vijaya Bank & Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda.
- The merger will be effective from April 2019.
- After the merger, Bank of Baroda will become third-largest bank after State Bank of India and ICICI Bank.
- **In terms of assets** - Bank of Baroda will become third biggest public sector bank, behind State Bank of India and HDFC Bank.

Note:

- The amalgamation will be the first-ever three-way consolidation of banks in the country.
- The Alternative Mechanism (AM) headed by **Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley**, gave its in-principal approval for the structure of the amalgamation.

## 3. GST exemption limit doubled for small businesses

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

Note:

- The taxpayers with an aggregate turnover of Rs 40 lakh would now be exempted from the GST.
- For the north eastern states, the exemption would now be Rs 20 lakh.
- Currently, businesses with a turnover of up to Rs 20 lakh is exempt from GST registration, while the limit for hilly and north eastern states is Rs 10 lakh.
- The GST Composition Scheme, under which small traders and businesses pay a 1 per cent tax based on turnover, can be availed by businesses with a turnover of Rs 1.5 crore, against the earlier Rs 1 crore, with effect from April 1.

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

About Bank Pasargad

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

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

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

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

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

Note:

- Exim Bank of India (Exim Bank) was established in 1982 under an Act of Parliament as the apex financial institution for financing, facilitating and promoting India's international trade.
- It is regulated by RBI. The bank headquarters is in Mumbai.

## 7. India to surpass UK in World's largest Economy

**Rankings in 2019: PwC** - India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, to become the world's fifth largest economy, according to a report by global consultancy firm PwC.

## 8. WEF Report: India to become world's third largest consumer market by 2030

- According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) report, India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030.
- Currently, India is the world's sixth largest economy, with the annual GDP growth rate of 7.5%.

**9. Nepal's Central Bank announces the ban of Indian Notes above Rs100**

- According to Nepal's central bank circular, Indian currency of Rs. 200, Rs.500 and Rs. 2,000 denominations cannot be carried and used for trading.
- Under the new regulation, Nepali citizens cannot carry these denominations to countries other than India.
- Indian notes of Rs 100 or below, are allowed for trading and conversion.

**10. PSU banks to bring down govt equity to 52% -** The Finance Ministry has asked the public sector banks to gradually reduce the government's equity to 52 per cent. Currently, some of the public sector banks have government's holding beyond 75 per cent.

Note:

- Dilution of the government's stake will help banks to meet 25 per cent public float norms set by the SEBI.

**11. The Union Cabinet approved a proposal for a USD 75-billion** bilateral swap arrangement between India and Japan, a move aimed at enhancing the RBI's ability to manage exchange rate volatility.

**12. Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal -** The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the setting up of National Bench of Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal.

- The National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal will be situated in New Delhi.

**13. Bihar top state in terms of GDP growth in FY18: Crisil report**

- Bihar has been ranked the top state in terms of GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) growth in financial year 2017-18, according to a report by Crisil.
- The state has topped the list by clocking 11.3 percent GSDP growth in fiscal 2018. It was ranked at eighth spot in fiscal 2017 with 9.9 percent GSDP growth.
- The second spot has been secured by Andhra Pradesh, whose GSDP growth in FY18 jumped to 11.2 percent. Gujarat listed third with growth of 11.1 percent.

**14. Allahabad Bank & SBI Life join hand for bancassurance partnership -**

- Allahabad Bank and SBI Life Insurance came together and signed a bancassurance pact to sell the policies of the insurer from over 3,200 branches of Allahabad Bank across the country.

**15. YES Bank ties up with Maharashtra to onboard fair price shops as BCs**

- The Maharashtra government has partnered with private sector lender YES Bank, under its e-PDS State programme, to onboard fair price shops (FPS) as Business Correspondent Agents.
- "YES Bank will onboard close to 40 percent of all fair price shops in Maharashtra, spanning 12 districts such as Palghar, Thane, Pune, Kolhapur, Latur.

**16. Direct Tax Collections for F.Y. 2018-19 up to December 2018**

- According to the provisional figures of Direct Tax collections 2018, the gross collections are at Rs. 8.74 lakh crore which is 14.1% higher than the gross collections for the corresponding period of last year.

**17. MoU between the Indian Army and Punjab National Bank**

- Indian Army and Punjab National Bank (PNB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Defence Salary Package.

**18. HDFC Standard Life Insurance renamed to HDFC Life Insurance -** HDFC Standard Life Insurance has changed its name to HDFC Life Insurance following the receipt of relevant approvals from regulatory authorities.

**19. The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on January 7, 2019 released the First Advance Estimates of National Income at Constant (2011-12) and Current Prices, for the financial year 2018-19.**

**Key points:**

**(i) Per capita income grew 45% under Narendra Modi regime, says CSO -**

The income earned by an average Indian doubled in seven years, from Rs 63,642 per year in 2011-12 to Rs 1.25 lakh in 2018-19, the first advance estimates of national income released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show.

- Under the current National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, per capita income has grown 45 per cent, from 2014-15 to 2018-19.
- The Per Capita Net National Income during 2018-19 is estimated to be ₹1,25,397 showing a rise of 11.1 per cent as compared to ₹1,12,835 during 2017-18 with the growth rate of 8.6 percent.

**(ii) National Income -**

- In terms of growth rates, the National Income registered a growth rate of 12.5 per cent in 2018-19 as against the previous year's growth rate of 10.1 per cent.

- (iii) **Agriculture** has a share of nearly 14 per cent, while industry has a little over 30 per cent and the remaining 56 per cent belongs to services.
- (iv) **Gross Domestic Product:** The growth in GDP during 2018-19 is estimated at 7.2 percent as compared to the growth rate of 6.7 per cent in 2017-18.
- 20. China's Economy Grew At 6.6% in 2018** - China's economy grew at 6.6% in 2018, its slowest rate in almost 3 decades.
- 21. Govt forms GoM for GST issues in real estate** - The Union Government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Nitin Patel (Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat) will be the convener of the GoM.
- 22. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar has developed an Android app 'Roshni'** that would help the Visually Impaired to recognise currency notes in Chandigarh.
- Note:
- The Roshni app can recognise both old and new notes and gives audio information as to which note you are holding in your hands.
  - The Roshni is the first Android App that works successfully with new INR currency notes.
- 23. Cabinet approves amendments to Currency Swap arrangement for SAARC nations** - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the amendments to the framework on currency swap arrangement for SAARC member countries. The
- amendments incorporate a standby facility of USD 400 million.
- 24. HDFC Mutual Fund** has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years.
- 25. Syndicate Bank and SBI Life Insurance** signed a bancassurance pact aiming to offer a comprehensive financial planning solution to its customers.
- 26. ICICI Bank, in a first-of-its-kind programme,** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Business FinCredit India Pvt. Ltd. (SBFC), a systemically important Non-Banking Finance Company for entrepreneurs, to jointly provide credit worth up to Rs 1 crore to MSMEs for a tenure of 15 years. Under this arrangement, ICICI Bank will co-originate loan against property with SBFC at a mutually agreed ratio.
- 27. The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** has established an Export Promotion Cell. The cell aims to create a sustainable ecosystem for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- 28. Government merges three regional rural banks into single RRB with effect from January 1**
- The government has amalgamated three Regional Rural Banks -- Punjab Gramin Bank, Malwa Gramin Bank and Sutlej Gramin Bank -- into a single RRB with effect from January 1, 2019.
  - The sponsor banks of the RRBs are National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), the Government of Punjab and Punjab National Bank, State Bank of India and Punjab and Sind Bank, it added.
- 29. PPF and Sukanya Samriddhi interest rates kept unchanged**
- The interest rate on 1-year post office time deposits, a small savings scheme, has been increased by 10 basis points (bps) for the January-March, 2019 quarter. According to a circular issued by the Finance Ministry, interest rates of other small savings schemes like Public Provident Fund (PPF) and Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) have been kept unchanged.

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

December

**1. P. V. Bharathi appointed as MD and CEO of Corporation Bank**

- P.V Bharathi has been appointed as managing director and chief executive officer of the Corporation Bank.

**2. Efficiency gap in India's power sector costs 4% of GDP: World Bank Report**

- The World Bank recently released a report titled 'In the Dark: How Much Do Power Sector Distortions Cost South Asia'.
- As per the report, Efficiency gap in India's power sector costs the Indian economy 4% every year, which equivalents to \$86 billion in 2016FY.
- The rural household's income in India can be increased by \$9.4 billion and business losses worth USD 22.7 billion can be eliminated with 24 hours access to power supply.
- There was a shortage of 14% in India in meeting coal demand in 2016FY.

**3. Security-service SMEs to grow at 18-20%: CRISIL Research**

- A research from CRISIL states that security services, where small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have 60-65 per cent market share, have logged a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18-20 per cent over the past three fiscal years and it expects them to grow at a similar pace over the next two fiscal years.
- United Nations data shows that 34 per cent of India's population lived in urban areas in 2018. The number is expected to increase further to 37.4 per cent by 2025.

**4. India's fiscal deficit hits around 115% of FY19 Target**

- India's fiscal deficit in the first eight months of FY2018-19 rose to Rs 7.17 lakh crore, hitting around 115% of the budgeted target for the current financial year, breaching the target of Rs 6.24 lakh crore set by the government for the financial year 2018-19.

**5. Capital first merged with IDFC Bank to create IDFC First Bank**

- IDFC Bank and non-banking financial company (NBFC) Capital First has announced the completion of their merger, creating a combined loan asset book of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for the merged entity IDFC First Bank.
- The merged entity to be called IDFC First Bank, subject to shareholders' approval.

- Following the merger, the board of IDFC Bank approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan, founder and chairman of Capital First Ltd, as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the merged entity.
- bonds soon. Out of these seven PSBs, Bank of India is likely to get the highest amount of Rs 10,086 crore.

**6. Economist Surjit Bhalla resigns from PMEAC**

- Noted economist Surjit Bhalla has resigned from the Prime Minister Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC). His resignation has been accepted by the Government.
- He was appointed as a member to PMEAC which is a non-constitutional, non-permanent and independent body constituted to give economic advice to the Government of India, specifically to the Prime Minister.
- The council is headed by noted economist **Bibek Debroy**.
- The six member Council consists of eminent economists : Bibek Debroy (Chairman), Shri Ratan P Watal (member secretary), Rathin Roy (part-time member), Ashima Goyal (part-time member), and Shamika Ravi (part-time member).

**7. SWIFT India appointed Arundhati Bhattacharya as board chairman**

- SWIFT India has appointed former SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya as the new Chairman of its board.
- SWIFT India is a joint venture of top Indian public and private sector banks and SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication).
- Bhattacharya will succeed former banker M. V. Nair, who is stepping down after completing five years with the company.
- Kiran Shetty is the CEO of SWIFT India.

**8. ICICI Bank unveils savings bank account for working women**

- ICICI Bank on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018, launched a savings bank account exclusively for working women.
- The saving account will be called as 'Advantage Woman Aura Savings Account' which is meant for the working women, including self-employed women who are educators,



professionals or into home business, among others.

#### Key points

- The account comes in 5 variants — **Regular, Silver, Gold, Magnum and Titanium** – and offers various privileges and benefits to the account holder.
- The bank has introduced '**Magnum**' as a variant for the first time in its suite of savings account offerings.
- Account holders would also get air and personal accident insurance of up to Rs. 40 lakh and Rs 10 lakh respectively.

#### 9. SEBI renamed ITP as 'Innovators Growth Platform'

- To make listing on stock market more attractive for start-ups, markets regulator Sebi came out with a new set of proposals that would allow more investor categories, relax shareholding norms and reduce trading lot amount.
- In this regard, Sebi has mooted changes to the framework of Institutional Trading Platform (ITP), which has not seen much traction even though it was put in place in August 2015.
- The proposed changes include renaming the **Institutional Trading Platform (ITP)** that the regulator had created for such listings as **Innovators Growth Platform (IGP)**.

#### 10. Govt. raises its contribution in National Pension System to 14% from 10%

- The cabinet has decided to raise the government's contribution to National Pension Scheme (NPS) to 14% of basic salary from the current 10 per cent.
- Minimum employee contribution will, however, remain at 10%.
- The Cabinet also approved tax incentives under 80C of the Income Tax Act for employees' contribution to the extent of 10%.
- At present, the government and employees contribute 10% of basic salary each to NPS.
- Government also has decided to make NPS fully tax free, making it on par with the provident fund scheme.
- It has decided to exempt income tax that is applicable on part of NPS corpus that is withdrawn on retirement.
- At present, while exiting scheme, 60% of corpus could be withdrawn and 20% of withdrawn amount is taxable. This portion now has been made tax free.

#### About NPS

- National Pension Scheme (NPS) is a government-sponsored pension scheme.
- It was launched in January 2004 for government employees.
- However, in 2009, it was opened to all sections.
- The scheme allows subscribers to contribute regularly in a pension account during their working life.
- On retirement, subscribers can withdraw a part of the corpus in a lumpsum and use the remaining corpus to buy an annuity to secure a regular income after retirement.

#### Regulator

- NPS is governed and administered by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

#### Age limit –

- Currently, any Indian between age of 18 to 65 years may voluntarily join the NPS.

#### PRAN

- Every NPS subscriber is issued a card with **12-digit unique** number called Permanent Retirement Account Number or PRAN.

#### 11. ECB launched 'TIPS' Target Instant Payments Settlement

- The European Central Bank rolled out the first pan-eurozone instant payment service, hoping to become a dominant player in a field crowded by US and Asian tech giants.
- The so-called **TIPS - Target Instant Payments Settlement** will allow consumers and businesses across the 19-nation euro area to send and receive money in mere seconds, without the usual lags associated with online and real-world transactions.

#### 12. CAG Rajiv Mehrishi appointed as Vice-Chair of UN Panel of Auditors

- Comptroller and Auditor General Rajiv Mehrishi has become the Vice-Chair of the UN Panel of Auditors, CAG.
- The United Nations Panel of Auditors consists of External Auditors of the United Nations and its agencies.
- Presently, the panel consists of 11 countries -- India, Germany, Chile, Canada, France, Italy, Philippines, Ghana, Indonesia, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

- Currently, the panel is chaired by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the UK.

## November

### 1. India, ADB ink \$200 mn loan pact to improve Bihar's state highways

- The Indian government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$200-million loan agreement for improving Bihar's state highways.

### 2. ADB to lend \$300 mn to boost infra funding by IIFCL

- India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$300-million loan agreement to support state-run India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) that provides long-term finance to infrastructure projects.

### 3. Govt, ADB sign \$169 mn loan to provide water, sanitation services in TN

- The Centre and Asian Development Bank signed to lend \$169 million to develop climate-resilient water supply, sewerage and drainage infrastructure in at least 10 cities in Tamil Nadu.

### 4. ADB, India Sign \$105 Million Loan to Support Hydropower Transmission in Himachal Pradesh

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$105 million loan to continue financing the transmission system upgrades in Himachal Pradesh for increased supply of hydropower to the state and the national grid.

### 5. Second quarter GDP growth likely to slow to 7.5-7.6 per cent: Report

- According to the SBI research report, the GDP growth in the September quarter is expected to decelerate to 7.5-7.6 per cent over the previous three-month period mainly due to slowdown in rural demand.
- The GDP growth at constant prices (2011-12) was 8.2 per cent in the April-June quarter of 2018-19.
- Consequently, the headline second quarter Gross Value Added (GVA) growth could be 7.3-7.4 per cent, due to the slowing of rural demand, it said.

### 6. Canara Bank celebrates 113th Founder's Day

- Canara Bank celebrates 113th Founder's Day on 19th Nov 2018.
- Canara Bank was established at Mangalore in 1906 by Ammembal Subba Rao Pai. It is one of the oldest public sector banks in the country.
- The headquarter of Canara Bank is located in Bengaluru.
- T. N. Manoharan is the current Chairman of the Canara Bank.

### 7. Akhilesh Ranjan appointed convenor of new direct tax law task force

- The Government appointed Central Board of Taxes member Akhilesh Ranjan, the Convenor of the Task Force -- set up by the Centre to draft a new direct tax legislation.
- The other members of the Task Force remain unchanged.
- He replaces Arbind Modi who retired in September 2018.

### 8. IndusInd Bank introduces India's first interactive credit card 'Nexxt'

- IndusInd Bank has launched the IndusInd Bank Nexxt Credit Card - the first interactive Credit Card in India with buttons.
- The card provides customers with the flexibility of three payment options at a Point of Sale (POS) terminal - Credit, Converting Transactions into EMIs with 4 tenure options (6, 12, 18 & 24 months) or using accumulated Reward Points, by simply pushing a button on the card.
- This Card has been created in partnership with Dynamics Inc., which is headquartered in Pittsburgh USA, and designs and manufactures intelligent, battery powered payment cards.

### 9. Govt to issue Rs 75 coin to mark the 75th anniversary of Tricolour hoisting by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose

- The government will release a Rs 75 coin to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose hoisting the Tricolour for the first time at Port Blair.
- The Ministry of Finance has issued a notification regarding the release of the Rs 75 coin along with its specifications.

- On December 30, 1943, Bose, who raised the Indian National Army (INA) to fight against the British, had hoisted the Tricolour for the first time at Cellular Jail, Port Blair.
- The commemorative Rs 75 coin will be made out of 50 percent silver, 40 percent copper, and 5 percent each of nickel and zinc, and will weigh 35 grams.
- This coin will bear the portrait of 'Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose' saluting the flag on the background of Cellular Jail in Port Blair.

#### 10. Union Bank of India turns 100 on 11th November 2018

- Union Bank of India on 11th Nov 2018 celebrated its 100th Foundation Day in Mumbai.
- Established on November 11, 1919, the bank's corporate office in Mumbai was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi.
- India Post released a postal stamp to commemorate the centenary year of Union Bank of India while Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis released a coffee table book A Century of Trust issued by the bank.
- The bank also launched two new variants of debit and credit cards, a new mobile banking app and a web and a tab-enabled module for credit to the MSME sector.

#### 11. IDFC First Bank may start operations from New Year

- IDFC First Bank, the new entity formed after the amalgamation of Capital First with IDFC Bank, is set to launch operations from the New Year.
- "It is expected that the newly merged bank will start operations from January," said the source.
- Shareholders and creditors of IDFC Bank and Capital First had approved the transaction in October and November, respectively.
- On October 25, IDFC Bank had said its board has approved making an application to the Reserve Bank of India to change its name to 'IDFC First Bank Limited'.
- Post-merger, Rajiv Lall, Managing Director, and CEO of IDFC Bank, will take over as the non-executive Chairman of the new entity.
- V Vaidyanathan, Chairman and Managing Director, Capital First who is also a veteran banker, will become MD and CEO of the new entity.

#### 12. TN gets SEBI nod for State Shelter Fund launch

- Tamil Nadu has received the nod from the market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to launch its **State Shelter Fund** for attracting investments in the affordable housing segment.
- Deputy Chief Minister of the State O Panneerselvam said that the - Tamil Nadu government established the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund which is the category-I Alternative Investment Fund.
- The Deputy Chief Minister said, "The fund is a social impact fund to provide investors with profit besides getting social and environmental benefits."

#### 13. Fitch retains rating for India at 'BBB-'

- Fitch Ratings on 15<sup>th</sup> November retained India's sovereign rating at 'BBB-', the lowest investment grade rating, although maintaining its stable outlook.
- The agency added that the economy would shrug off any lingering effects of demonetisation and GST during 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- Fitch had last upgraded India's sovereign rating from BB+ to BBB- with a stable outlook on August 1, 2006.
- The Fitch gave the country its first sovereign rating upgrade since 2004.

#### 14. Sunil Mehta panel incorporates 'Sashakt India AMC' for large NPAs

- Sunil Mehta, the chairman of a bankers' panel working on faster resolution of stressed assets in public sector banks, said an asset management company (AMC) for resolving large bad loans has been formed and will be called as **Sashakt India Asset Management**.
- He also said that the panel is now working towards identifying potential investors for an alternate investment fund (AIF) which will fund the AMC.
- 

Note:

- The government in July has proposed a five-pronged strategy under **Project Sashakt** to tackle stress in the banking sector, and had formed a panel led by **Mehta, the non-**

**executive chairman of Punjab National Bank (PNB).**

- Under the project, the committee had to float an AMC and an AIF **to resolve non-performing assets (NPAs) over Rs 500 crore.**
- The Mehta committee comprises representatives of all major banks, including State Bank of India (SBI).
- There are about 200 bad loan accounts which owe more than Rs 500 crore each to banks at present, with a total exposure of about Rs 3.1 lakh crore.

#### 15. PNB ranked as top PSU bank in online transactions in India: FinMin report

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has been ranked as the best PSU bank in the overall digital transaction's category in India.

- "Based on the recent findings of DFS (Department of Financial Services), PNB is ranked the number 1 PSU bank in digital transactions in India.
- According to the PNB statement, the report card on the banking sector's performance in digital transactions as on July 31, 2018 was prepared by the Ministry of Finance.
- The bank is rated as 'Good' by the government with a score of '71' which is the highest category of performance."

#### 16. Govt. to use MicroDots technology to check vehicle thefts

- In a bid to put an end to vehicle thefts, the government will soon launch a new standard for automobile industry, which involves use of a technology.
- In this technique, thousands of small dots laser etched will be sprayed with a vehicle identification number on all over the vehicle's body.
- This will also include their engines.
- This tech is termed as MicroDots and it is almost impossible to remove these dots.

17. **'Electoral Bond' scheme announced** which aimed at increasing transparency in political funding. The Union Finance electoral bonds scheme was announced by the Finance Minister Arun Jaitley during the 2017 Budget. **Objective** - to bring transparency in funding of political parties and elections.

**Key points -**

- **Interest free instrument** - Electoral bonds would be a bearer instrument like promissory note and an interest-free banking instrument.

- **Denomination** - Electoral bonds can be purchased for any value in multiples of **₹1,000, ₹10,000, ₹10 lakh, and ₹1 crore.**
- **Outlet** - From any of the specified branches of the **State Bank of India.**
- **KYC norms mandatory** - The purchaser will be allowed to buy electoral bonds only on due fulfilment of all the extant KYC norms and by making payment from a bank account.
- **Validity** - The bonds will have a **life of 15 days** during which they can be used to make donations to registered political parties that have secured **not less than 1% of the votes** polled in the **last election to the Lok Sabha or Assembly.**
- **Available only 4 months in a year** - The bonds shall be available for purchase for a period of **10 days each in the months of January, April, July and October**, with an additional 30 days to be specified by the Central government in the year of a general election.
- The bond shall be encashed by an eligible political party only through a designated bank account with the authorised bank.
- It will not carry the name of the payee.

#### 18. BoB, CDSL sign agreement

- Bank of Baroda has signed an agreement with CDSL Commodity Repository (CCRL), thus becoming the first public sector bank to become the repository participant for pledge finance under the repository ecosystem for registered / accredited warehouses.

19. **UN member countries are expected** to present their **Voluntary National Review (VNR)** on the implementation of- SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

- As 47 countries prepare to present their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to the July 2018 session of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF 2018), 21 countries have already announced their intention to present VNRs during HLPF 2019.
- **Sustainable development goals have specific targets to be achieved by the year 2030.** The Sustainable development goals cover some of the important issues like poverty, health, education, water sanitation etc.



## 20. Election Commission of India hold a National Consultation on Accessible Elections

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has organized a two-day “National Consultation on Accessible Elections” in New Delhi.
- The event is a part of the ECI’s pursuit of its mission ‘leave no voter behind,’ with special focus on **“Persons with Disabilities” (PwD)**.
- The theme of “Inclusion of PwD’s” has been given a special focus in the ECI’s Strategic Plan 2016-2025.
- Besides, “Accessible Elections” has been adopted as its central theme for this year’s National Voters’ Day celebrations.

## 21. Only 5 states account for 70% of exports, Economic Survey shows

- Survey points out for the first time in India's history that five States Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana account for a whopping 70 % of India's exports.
- Maharashtra (22.3%), Gujarat (17.2%), Karnataka (12.7%), Tamil Nadu (11.5) and Telangana (6.4) were the top five states when it came to exports. Haryana (4.9%) came next, bringing up the cumulative to 75 percent to total exports.
- The data also revealed that 16 of India's 30 states (29 states + Delhi) account for 97 percent of exports. The Northeastern states, Sikkim, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh together make for only 3 percent of exports.

## 22. In 2017, Delhi's IGI in world's top 20 busiest airports

- Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport ranked among the World’s top 20 busiest airports in the world in terms of passenger traffic - in 2017.
- Airports Council International (ACI), World Airport Traffic Forecasts predicts that the India will represent the third largest aviation market, in terms of passenger throughput, after the US and China by 2020.

## 23. NITI Aayog And United Nations In India Sign Sustainable Development Framework For 2018-2022

- NITI Aayog and United Nations in India signed the Sustainable Development Framework for 2018-2022.
- The agreement is a reflection of the commitment and efforts made by India towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The total planned budget outlay for the implementation of the UNSDF 2018-2022 is approximately INR 11000 crore.

## 24. Govt to take steps to promote agri commodity exports: FM Arun Jaitley

- The government will take steps to boost exports of agriculture commodities which have the potential of reaching USD 100 billion.
- The country's agricultural exports are around USD 30 billion at present.
- "India's agri exports potential is as high as USD 100 billion against a current export of USD 30 billion.
- India is one of biggest producers and exporters of agri commodities.
- Agri-products account for over 10 per cent of the country's total exports.
- India mainly exports tea, coffee, rice, cereals, tobacco, spices, cashew, oil meals, fruits and vegetables and marine products.

## 25. Benami Transactions Informants Reward Scheme, 2018

- A new reward scheme titled “Benami Transactions Informants Reward Scheme, 2018”, has been issued by the Income Tax Department.
- This reward scheme is aimed at encouraging people to give information about benami transactions and properties as well as income earned on such properties by such hidden investors and beneficial owners.
- **Reward of up to Rs 1 crore** - The tax department announced two reward schemes under which informants sharing ‘specific information’ about any benami transaction or property could get a reward of up to Rs 1 crore.
- **Reward of up to Rs 5 crore** - Information on undisclosed black money stashed abroad could fetch up to Rs 5 crore for the informant.

- **Reward of up to Rs 50 lakh** - According to the department's announcement, the 'Income Tax Informants Reward Scheme' too has been amended, under which a person can get

reward up to Rs 50 lakh for giving specific information about substantial evasion of tax on income or assets in India, which are actionable under the Income-tax Act, 1961.

### Banking & Financial terms

1. **AEPS** - Aadhar Enabled Payment System
2. **APBS** - Aadhar Payment Bridge System
3. **ATM** - Automated Teller Machine
4. **ALM** - Asset Liability Management
5. **BBPS** - Bharat Bill Payment System
6. **BCA** - Baseline Credit Assessment
7. **BHIM** - Bharat Interface for Money
8. **BLRA** - Bank Led Resolution Approach
9. **CBS** - Core Banking System
10. **CIDR** - Central Identities Data Repository
11. **CTS** - Cheque Truncation System
12. **CDR** - Corporate Debt Restructuring
13. **CASA** - Current Account Saving Account
14. **CAD** - Capital Account Deficit
15. **CRA** - Counterparty Risk Assessment
16. **CRR** - Cash Reserve Ratio
17. **ECS** - Electronic Clearing Service
18. **DNS** - Domain Name System
19. **DEAF** - Depositor Education and Awareness Fund
20. **EFTPOS** - Electronic funds transfer at point of sale
21. **EFT** - Electronic Fund Transfer.
22. **FRBM** - Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management
23. **LGD** - Loss Given Default
24. **LTV** - Loan To Value
25. **LRS** - Liberalized Remittance Scheme
26. **LCR** - Liquidity Coverage Ratio
27. **GNFV** - Gross Negative Fair Value
28. **SFTs** - Securities financing transactions
29. **HCE** - Host Card Emulation
30. **PFE** - Potential Future Exposure
31. **ICAAP** - Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process
32. **IFSC** - Indian Financial System Code
33. **IMPS** - Immediate Payment Service
34. **IMPS** - Interbank Mobile Payment Service
35. **MMID** - Mobile Money Identifier
36. **MPIN** - Mobile Personal Identification Number
37. **NPA** - Non- Performing Assets
38. **NSFR** - Net Stable Funding Ratio
39. **NPCI** - National Payment Corporation of India
40. **NFS** - National Financial Switch
41. **NSFR** - Net Stable Funding Ratio
42. **NACH** - National Automated Clearing House
43. **NEFT** - National Electronic Fund Transfer
44. **NFC** - Near field communication
45. **NDTL** - Net Demand and Time Liabilities.
46. **OTC** - Over the Counter
47. **PIN** - Personal Identification Number
48. **PAC** - Personal Access Code
49. **PCA** - Prompt Corrective Action
50. **PCR** - Public Credit Registry
51. **PCR** - Provisioning Coverage Ratio
52. **PSPs** - Payment Support Providers
53. **RTGS** - Real Time Gross Settlement
54. **USSD** - Unstructured Supplementary Services Data
55. **UIDAI** - Unique Identification Authority of India
56. **VPA** - Virtual Payment Address.
57. **GDR** - Global Depository Receipt
58. **GAAR** - General anti avoidance rule
59. **PAN** - Permanent Account Number
60. **PLR** - Prime Lending Rate
61. **SLR** - Statutory Liquidity Ratio
62. **SDR** - Special Drawing Rights
63. **DTAA** - Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement
64. **TIEA** - Tax Information Exchange Agreement
65. **EFSF** - European Financial Stability Facility
66. **PPP** - Purchasing Power Parity
67. **PPP** - Public Private Partnership
68. **NPS** - New Pension Scheme
69. **EEFC** - Exchange Earner's Foreign Currency
70. **FII** - Foreign Institutional Investor
71. **DII** - Domestic Institutional Investor
72. **GST** - Goods and Services Tax
73. **DTC** - Direct Tax Code
74. **FCNRA** - Foreign Currency Non- Resident account
75. **MFI** - Micro Finance Institutions
76. **MFDC** - Micro Finance Development Council
77. **TRAI** - Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
78. **MSF** - Marginal Standing Facility
79. **IDF** - Infrastructure Debt Fund
80. **CRIS** - Comparative Rating Index for Sovereign
81. **LIBOR** - London Inter Bank Operation Rate
82. **MIBOR** - Mumbai Inter Bank Operation Rate
83. **MICR** - Magnetic Ink Character Recognition
84. **SARFAESI** - Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest
85. **BCBS** - Basel Committee on Banking Supervision
86. **NPCI** - National Payments Corporation of India

## Important Committees

1. **B V R Mohan Reddy committee** - not to allow setting up of new Engineering colleges from 2020.  
Note:
  - The Panel headed by IIT-Hyderabad chairman B V R Mohan Reddy has suggested All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) not to allow setting up of new Engineering colleges from 2020.
2. **Nandan Nilekani committee** - to boost digital payments and enhance financial inclusion.
3. **U.K. Sinha committee** - to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.
4. Committee headed by NITI Aayog member (health) - The Union government has constituted a high-power committee headed by NITI Aayog member (health) to monitor the pricing of medicines and healthcare products.
5. **Maharashtra Sets up panel to Review Welfare Schemes for Tribals** - The Maharashtra government has set up a committee to review various schemes being implemented for the welfare of tribals in the state. The 17-member committee, headed by former MLA and Shramjeevi Sanghatna president Vivek Pandit,
6. **Government sets up Committee to Explore Prepaid Payments by Discoms to Generator Companies** - On the recommendation of Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, the government constituted a committee under the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) to explore prepaid payments by state electricity distribution companies to power plants.
7. **Praveen Kutumbe committee** - Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a panel headed by Praveen Kutumbe, to identify domestically systematically important insurers (SIIs) and an augmented regulatory framework is logically established in this regard.
8. **Cherukuri Raghavendra Babu committee** - The Madras High Court has set up an expert committee to find a solution to root out invasive species of plants from the Western Ghats.
9. **Sushil Modi Committee** - Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi will head the 7-member committee to look into revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out and suggest steps for augmenting collections.
10. **Nitin Patel committee** - The government has constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel is the convener of the GoM.
11. **Sankar De committee** - SEBI constituted a "Research Advisory" committee which will assist in formulating policy to undertake research relevant for development and regulation of capital markets. The committee is headed by Sankar De.
12. **Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai committee** - The Lokpal Search Committee headed by former **Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai** held its first meeting and discussed modalities related to the appointments of the chief and members of Lokpal.
13. **SC sets up panel for to suggest reforms for holding competitive exams** - The Supreme Court favoured setting up of a three-member high-powered committee comprising Nandan Nilekani, a co-founder of tech giant Infosys, and renowned computer scientist Vijay P Bhatkar to suggest reforms for conducting of competitive examinations fairly by government bodies.
14. **Sudhir Mungantiwar committee** (Maharashtra Finance Minister) - to examine uniformity of taxation on lottery under GST or other issues arising out of it.  
**Note:** Under GST, state-organized lottery falls under the 12% tax slab while state-authorized lottery attracts 28% tax.
15. **MS Swaminathan committee** - The Delhi government has decided to introduce the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for farmers based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers (NCF) headed by MS Swaminathan.
  - The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) was constituted on November 18, 2004 under the chairmanship of Professor M.S. Swaminathan.
16. **Umesh Sinha committee** - The Committee headed Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha has submitted the report on revisiting the section 126 of the Representation of the People Act.
  - The committee had nine officers from the Election Commission and one nominated member each from I&B Ministry, Law Ministry, IT Ministry, National Broadcasters Association and Press Council of India.
17. **Dr Jitendra Nagpal committee** - The Union Human Resource Development Ministry has constituted a task force to look into the issues of suicides of the students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV) residential schools.

- The task force has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Psychiatrist, Dr Jitendra Nagpal.
- 18. Akhilesh Ranjan Committee** – for drafting New Direct Tax Legislation (Law)
- 19. Dr. Bibek Debroy (The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister) Committee** - to assess key challenges and suggest reforms in logistics development and associated commerce.
- 20. Rajiv Kumar (NITI Aayog Vice Chairman) Committee** – to look at selling of 149 small and marginal oil and gas fields of state-owned the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) to private and foreign companies to boost domestic output.
- 21. Namrita Mahindro committee** - to promote Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR/VR) technology to drive economic growth, job creation, and skill development in the country.

**Note:**

- The committee is formed by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).
  - IMAI headquartered is in Mumbai.
- 22. Justice (Retd) G. Rohini committee** - to examine the sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes (OBCs).
- Note:**
- Union Government with approval of President had constituted five member Commission under article 340 of Constitution in October, 2017.
  - It is headed by former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court Justice (Retd) G. Rohini.

- Its report is expected to recommend earmarking sub-quotas for the extremely backward classes within the OBCs.

- 23. Rajnath Singh (Union Home Minister)** - to commemorate the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in the country and abroad.
- 24. Baba Kalyani committee submit its report on SEZ policy**
- The Baba Kalyani led committee constituted by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to study the existing SEZ policy of India submitted its report to the Union Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, in New Delhi on 19<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018.
- 25. High Level Committee to Review National Indicator Framework for Sustainable Development Goals**
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the constitution of a High Level Steering Committee for periodically reviewing and refining the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with associated targets.
  - The High-Level Steering Committee will be chaired by **Chief Statistician of India and Secretary**, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

## Agreement & Deals

### January & February 2019

- 1. Ministry of Coal signs an MoU with Ministry of Energy, Poland** - The objective of this MoU is to foster relations in the field of coal mining and clean coal technologies through the already established Joint Coal Working Group as well as research institutes and academia between the two countries.
- 2. India and Bangladesh** have signed an MOU for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)
- 3. India & Germany join hands on Water and Waste Management** - India and Germany have joined hands for cooperation on Water and Waste Management.
- 4. IRCTC Partners with Bharti AXA General Insurance**
  - Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), the Railways' subsidiary, will offer insurance of up to INR50 lakh for free for air passengers who book their tickets through its portal. IRCTC has tied up with Bharti-Axa for the offer.
- 5. India** has signed a long-term contract with **Uzbekistan** for supply of uranium ore concentrates to widen its source base for the nuclear fuel.

**Note:**

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



6. **India and Sri Lanka** signed an MoU to provide modern infrastructural facilities to Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies of Eastern University in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka.
7. India and China have signed the protocol for exports of Indian tobacco leaves to China.
8. **Israel Aerospace industries announces agreement with Indian Navy and Cochin Shipyard** – Israel

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

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

### **December**

1. **India and ADB Sign \$60 Million Loan Agreement for Assam**

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$60 Million Loan Agreement in New Delhi to continue financing riverbank protection works, renovation of flood embankments, and community-based flood risk management activities in critically flood-prone areas along the Brahmaputra River in Assam.

2. **India and Asian Development Bank Sign \$31 Million Loan Agreement for Tamil Nadu**

4. **India, Japan Sign Exchange of Notes and Loan Agreements**

- India and Japan have signed Exchange of Notes and Loan Agreements on Japan's Official Development Assistance Loan to India.

**These 3 projects are:**

- Chennai Metro Project (Phase 2) (I) for Japanese Yen (JPY) 75.519 billion,
- Program for Japan-India Cooperative Actions towards Sustainable Development Goals in India for JPY 15.000 billion,
- Project for Dairy Development for JPY 14.978 billion.

5. **Ministry Signs MoU to develop a Mobile Audio Guide App for 5 Iconic Sites**

- K J Alphons, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism, handed over a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the 'Adopt a Heritage' scheme to Resbird Technologies for development of a mobile Audio Guide App for five iconic sites.
- The five iconic sites for which the mobile Audio Guide App is to be developed are Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Kaziranga (Assam), Colva Beach (Goa), Kumarakom (Kerala) and Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).

6. **NFAI and FTII Sign MoU For Transfer of Land**

- The agreement was signed to build-up the State Tourism Industry and boost visitor arrivals in Tamil Nadu.

3. **ADB, Centre Sign \$85 million Loan to Support Odisha Skill Development Project**

- The Centre and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed an 85 million dollar loan to improve skill development eco-system in Odisha.
- An advanced skill training centre, the World Skill Center (WSC) will also be established in Bhubaneswar with the help of a loan

- National Film Archive of India (NFAI) and Film & Television Institute of India (FTII) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for transfer of three acres of land for the construction of storage facility for films and film material.

- The land belonging to FTII at their Kothrud campus in Pune will be transferred to NFAI for this purpose.

7. **MoRD Signs MoU with Maruti Suzuki India Ltd for Training Rural Youth for Skill Development**

- Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) signed MoU with Maruti Suzuki India Ltd for training rural youth for skill development in presence of Minister of Rural Development Narendra Singh Tomar.
- This partnership between the government and the leading industry from the automotive sector will provide training to atleast 5000 candidates in two years with assured placement to the rural youth of our country.
- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) is the flagship placement linked skill-training programme under the MoRD.

8. **MAHE Partners with NIAID TB Portals Program Of NIH, USA**

- Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) has partnered with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), National Institutes of Health (NIH), the USA, to become a member of the NIAID TB Portals program.

#### 9. India-Saudi Arabia Sign Bilateral Annual Haj 2019 Agreement

- India and Saudi Arabia signed the bilateral annual Haj 2019 agreement at Jeddah.
- The agreement is a part of strengthened bilateral relations of the two countries. Both India and Saudi Arabia share strong cultural, historical, economic and political relations.

#### 10. India, UAE Sign Currency Swap Agreement

- India and the United Arab Emirates signed a currency swap agreement to boost investment and enable direct trade without using dollars or other international currencies.
- The swap is for 2 billion dirhams or 35 billion Indian rupees (\$496 million), depending on which central bank requests the amount, an Indian embassy statement said.
- The bilateral currency swap agreement between India and the UAE is expected to reduce the dependency on hard currencies like the U.S. dollar.

### November

1. World Bank signed \$172 Million Project agreement with Andhra Pradesh
2. CCEA approves disinvestment of 100% Govt stake in Dredging Corporation of India
  - The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved 100% strategic disinvestment of the government's equity in the Dredging Corporation of India Ltd.
  - Presently, the government of India holds 73.44% shares in Dredging Corporation of India Limited.
3. **India and ADB Signed \$105 mn Loan Agreement for Himachal Pradesh**
  - India and Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a 105 million dollar loan agreement to continue financing the transmission system upgrades in Himachal Pradesh for increased supply of hydropower.
4. **India and World Bank Sign \$310 million loan Agreement for Jharkhand**
  - The Government of India, the Government of Jharkhand and the World Bank signed in New Delhi a \$310 million Loan Agreement for Jharkhand Power System Improvement Project

to provide reliable, quality, and affordable 24×7 electricity to the citizens of Jharkhand.

5. **Centre, ADB Sign 200 Million Dollar loan pact to upgrade State Highways in Bihar**
  - The Centre and Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a 200 million dollar loan agreement to finance widening and upgrading of about 230 Kilometers State Highways in Bihar to all-weather standards with road safety features.
6. India, South Korea signed MoU on Cooperation in Sports
7. India and Republic of Korea signed an MoU in Field of Tourism
8. **IIMC Innovation Park, ICC Signs MoU To Promote Startups**
  - IIM Calcutta Innovation Park and Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has signed an MoU for energising the startup ecosystem in East and Northeast India.
9. India, China ink Protocol on Hygiene & Inspection Requirements for Exports
10. India, Malawi signed MoUs in Extradition Treaty, Atomic Energy and VISA Waiver  
Note: Malawi Capital: Lilongwe, Currency: Malawian kwacha

## Rank of India in Different Reports/Survey

### 1. Raipur airport tops in Customer Satisfaction

#### Survey: AAI

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

### 2. Russia Emerges as World's No. 2 Arms Producer: SIPRI Report

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

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

- Gujarat has emerged as the best-performing state in the Startup Ranking 2018.
- The National Report on States' Startup Ranking was unveiled by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi.
- Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and Rajasthan, with a score of more than 85 percentile, have been adjudged the top performers.
- Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana have been recognised as Leaders.
- 27 states and 3 union territories participated in the ranking process.

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

- Himachal Pradesh and Kerala have emerged as top performing states in Niti

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

- Andhra Pradesh has topped the list of states with the highest employability followed by Rajasthan and Haryana, as per the India Skills Report 2019.
- The employability levels of B.Tech/B.E have increased across all the sectors, touching a new high of 63.11%, which remained at 42.08 last year.

Aayog's SDG India index 2018, which evaluates progress in social, economic and environmental terms.

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

### 5. 4 Indian-Origin Women in Forbes US Top 50 Females in Tech

- Four Indian-origin technology executives have made it to the Forbes' list of America's 50 women in technology space in 2018.
- The list includes Neha Narkhede, chief technology officer and co-founder of streaming platform Confluent; Kamakshi Sivaramakrishnan, CEO, and founder of identity-management company Drawbridge; Padmini Warrior, former chief technology officer (CTO) of Cisco, and Komal Mangtani, senior director at Uber.

- However, the employability levels of MBA and polytechnic stand low between 47.18% and 45.90%.
- The survey was conducted jointly by Wheebox, People Strong, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

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

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) in a report stated that India is the only country to

have recorded a substantial decline in malaria cases in 2017 out of the 11 highest burden countries worldwide.

- India registered a 24% reduction in cases over 2016, largely due to substantial declines of the

disease in the highly malarious state of Odisha, home to approximately 40 percent of all malaria cases in the country.

According to the report, India accounted for 4% of global malaria cases in 2017.

## Schemes launched by Union/State Govt.

February 2019

1. **Mega Pension Yojana - Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan** - Finance Minister Piyush Goyal announced this scheme while presenting the Interim Budget 2019-20 on February 01, 2019.

Key points of the **scheme**

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

### Benefits of the Scheme

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

### Fund allocation

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

### Monthly contribution

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

2. **Pradhan Mantri kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana (PMKSNY)** - Finance Minister Piyush Goyal announced this scheme while presenting the Interim Budget 2019-20 on February 01, 2019.

Key points of the **scheme**

- **Aim** - to provide to provide income support to all small and Marginal landholding farmer.
- The scheme is particularly focused to those group of farmers (low and marginal income) who hold very less substantial area for cultivation of their crops.

**Objective** - The main objective of the government to launch this scheme is the development of farmers by the provision

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

### Benefits of the Scheme

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

### Fund allocation

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

### First Installment to be paid by 31 March 2019

- The first instalment to eligible beneficiaries during this financial year 2018-19 shall be for the period from 01 December 2018 to 31 March 2019

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

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



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

Note:

- Under the scheme, the government of Assam aims to provide 1 Tola Gold, at about Rs 38K

as on today, to brides belonging to all such communities of Assam where it is customary to provide gold at the time of the wedding.

- The government has set aside Rs 300 cr has been for the implementation of the Arundhati Scheme.

### January 2019

1. **Govt. launches 'Womaniya on GeM' Initiative** - Government e Marketplace (GeM) has launched "Womaniya on GeM", an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups (WSHGs) to sell handicrafts and handloom, accessories and many other products.

Note:

- Government e Marketplace is a 100 percent government owned company setup under the aegis of Ministry of Commerce and Industry for procurement of common use goods and services by Government ministries, departments and CPSEs.
- Womaniya on GeM will spur hyper-local economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs and address goals and objectives under **United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**
- Radha Chauhan is a current CEO of Government e Marketplace (GeM).

2. **Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, Saubhagya scheme** - 100% Houses in 25 States Electrified Under Saubhagya Yojana.

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

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

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

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

Note:

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

5. **Yarn Bank Scheme:** The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India had launched a **Yarn Bank Scheme** as one of the components of PowerTex India scheme with an aim to avoid fluctuation in yarn price.

**The objectives of the Yarn Bank Scheme are:**

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

(SPV)/Consortium formed by power loom weavers.

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

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

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

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

**9. Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana of Maharashtra -**

**Aim** - to reduce losses due to non-payment of electricity bills and also promote solar energy.

**Key points**

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

**10. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) -**

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

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

**Key points**

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

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

**Key points**

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

**13. Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana.

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

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

- With only a year to the deadline, only 20 per cent of the total projects were completed utilising 3 per cent of the total funds approved.
- States like Bihar and Assam were not able to complete even a single project.
- Tamil Nadu topped the list by completing 378 projects.

**Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)**

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

**15. Sikkim CM launched ‘one family, one job’ scheme** - Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling launched the ‘One Family One Job’ scheme in Gangtok.

- Now, Sikkim has become the first state in the country to carry out such a programme for

the people entitling them to state government employee benefits.

- Under this Scheme, every family one government job has been allotted.

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

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

**17. Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)** -

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

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

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

**20. West Bengal Govt. announced two Initiatives for farmers –**

- The West Bengal government has announced two welfare initiatives for farmers, part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme.
- The first of the two initiatives will provide Rs 2 lakh to the family of a deceased farmer.
- Under the second initiative, farmers would get Rs 2,500 twice a year for growing a single crop on one acre of land.

## December

**1. Odisha CM announces Rs10,000 cr KALIA Scheme for Farmers**

- Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik announced a Rs10,000 crore scheme for the overall development of farmers.
- Named **Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA)**, the scheme will provide farmers with ₹10,000 a year at the rate of Rs5,000 each for Kharif and Rabi season.
- Additionally, crop loans of up to Rs50,000 will be interest-free under the scheme.

**2. Assam Govt announces 3 Schemes for Farmer's Welfare**

- Assam government has announced three schemes for the welfare of farmers.
- The schemes are the
- Assam Farmers' Credit Subsidy Scheme (AFCSS),
- Assam Farmers' Interest Relief Scheme (AFIRS) and
- Assam Farmers' Incentive Scheme (AFIS).

Note:

- Under **AFCSS**, whatever amount of loan the farmers took from banks and whatever amount they repaid, 25% of the money will be reimbursed by the state government.
- On **AFIRS**, the Minister Stated that currently 3% of the 7% interest against farm loan is paid by the

Central government and the remaining 4% is required to be paid by farmers. The state government has decided to pay the remaining 4% loan.

- About **AFIS**, Mr. Sarma stated that the government is focusing on bringing back the defaulting farmers into the banking system.

**3. Delhi Govt. launches Free Pilgrimage Scheme for Senior Citizens**

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched the 'Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana' which offers free travel packages for senior citizens from Delhi to five religious circuits.

**4. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**

- Minister of State for the Women and Child Development Ministry Virendra Kumar informed in the Lok Sabha that - **Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh** were the top three performing states under the maternity benefit programme Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above.

- The scheme is launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development Government of India.
- The programme, which became applicable from January 1, 2017 provides a cash incentive of Rs 5,000 in three instalments to pregnant women and lactating mothers for the first child through Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT).

#### 5. PRASAD Scheme of Ministry of Tourism

- The Centre has included Gangotri and Yamunotri in Uttrakhand, Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh and Parasnath in Jharkhand under a central scheme to develop pilgrimage and heritage destinations in the country.

- With the new additions, the number of sites under the PRASAD scheme has now become **41 in 25 states**.
- The scheme was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2014-15.
- PRASAD stands for -**Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive**.
- Under the scheme 'Prasad', the Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for development and beautification of the identified pilgrimage destinations.

### November

#### 1. Yuva Sahakar Scheme launched by Agriculture Ministry

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Radha Mohan Singh launched the 'Yuva Sahakar-Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme.
- Aim - The schemes aim for attracting youth to cooperative business ventures.
- The scheme will be linked to **Rs 1000 crore** 'Cooperative Start-up and Innovation Fund (CSIF)' created by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

#### 2. CCEA approves ACROSS scheme

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved continuation of nine sub-schemes of umbrella scheme "Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)" during 2017-2020.
- The scheme aims at improving skill of weather and climate forecast through sustained observations, intensive Research & Development.
- The scheme refers to the atmospheric science programs of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

#### 3. Government Launches Bhasha Sangam initiative -

- The government has launched a unique initiative called Bhasha Sangam to introduce school students to 22 Indian languages.

- The initiative, under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, was active for the period between 22nd November 2018 – 21st December 2018.
- Bhasha Sangam is a programme for schools and educational institutions to provide multilingual exposure to students in Indian languages.

#### 4. PM launches Support and Outreach Programme for MSME Sector

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Support and Outreach Programme.
- As part of this programme, PM unveiled 12 key initiatives which will help the growth, expansion and facilitation of MSMEs across the country.
- There are five key aspects for facilitating the MSME sector which include - access to credit, access to market, technology upgradation, ease of doing business, and sense of security for employees.

**Aim** - It aims to boost MSME sector it is one of important sector for major generations of employment opportunities.

#### Key points

- It will run for **100 days covering 100 Districts** throughout the country.
- Under Access to Credit aspect of this programme, Government will launch **59**



**minute loan portal** to enable easy access to credit for MSMEs.

- **Loans upto Rs. 1 crore** will be granted in-principle approval through this portal, in just 59 minutes.
- Government will give **2% interest** subvention for all GST registered MSMEs, on fresh or incremental loans.
- For exporters who receive loans in pre-shipment and post-shipment period will get increase in interest rebate ranging from **3% to 5%**.
- All MSMEs or companies with turnover more than **Rs. 500 crore** will now be compulsorily brought on Trade Receivables e-Discounting System (TReDS).
- Public sector companies have now been asked to compulsorily procure 25 percent, instead of 20 percent of their total purchases, from MSMEs.
- Out of the 25 percent procurement mandated from MSMEs, 3 percent must now be reserved for women entrepreneurs.

#### 5. **Saura Jalnidhi scheme launched by the Odisha Govt.**

- This scheme has been launched by the Odisha Government only for Farmer for their filed irrigation.

#### Key points

- Under this scheme, farmers will be given 90% subsidy and 5,000 solar pumps.

- This scheme is only for those who have farmer identical and minimum land should be 0.5 acres.

#### 6. **Swadesh Darshan Scheme: Two North East Circuit Projects inaugurated in Arunachal Pradesh**

- Union Ministry of Tourism has inaugurated two important projects as part of Development of North East Circuit under Swadesh Darshan Scheme in Arunachal Pradesh.

#### Swadesh Darshan scheme

- It was launched by Union Tourism Ministry in 2015 with objective to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country.
- These tourist circuits developed will be developed under on principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in integrated manner.

#### 7. **Govt hikes outlay for first phase of FAME India scheme to Rs 895 crore**

- The government has increased the outlay by Rs 100 crore to Rs 895 crore for the first phase of the FAME India scheme to promote mass adoption of electric vehicles, having extended the scheme four times, according to an official notification.
- The phase-I of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles (FAME India) scheme was supposed to be implemented over a two-year period commencing from April 1, 2015.

### October

#### 1. **Government opens new series of sovereign gold bonds scheme for subscription** - Union Government has opened new series of sovereign gold bonds scheme for subscription.

- Under this scheme, sovereign gold bonds will be issued every month from October 2018 to February 2019.
- This bond will be sold through Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited, Post Office, Stock Exchange (NSE and BSE).

#### **Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme**

- It is aimed at providing alternative to buying physical gold.

- Under it, bonds are denominated in units of one gram of gold and multiples thereof.
- These gold denominated bonds are restricted for sale to resident Indian entities, including individuals, Hindu undivided families (HUF), trusts, universities and charitable institutions.
- The minimum subscription for individual and HUF is 1 gram and maximum is 4 kg.
- For trusts and similar entities, maximum subscription is 20 kg per fiscal.
- RBI has notified rate of interest of **2.50% per annum** on SGB bonds is payable on half yearly basis.

#### 2. **Udyam Abhilasha:** SIDBI launches national level entrepreneurship awareness campaign

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched Udyam Abhilasha a national level entrepreneurship awareness campaign.
- It was launched in 115 Aspirational Districts identified by NITI Aayog in 28 States.

#### Objectives of Udyam Abhilasha

- To inspire rural youth in aspirational districts to be entrepreneurs by assisting them to set up their own enterprise.

- To impart trainings through digital medium across the country,
- To create business opportunities for CSC-VLEs.
- To focus on women aspirants in aspirational districts to encourage women entrepreneurship.
- To assist participants to become bankable and avail credit facility from banks to set up their own enterprise.

## September

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

#### Key points:

- This scheme is a relief payable in cash directly to their Bank Account in case of unemployment and while they search for new engagement.
- The eligibility for availing Super Specialty treatment for dependents of Insured Person has now been relaxed to insurable employment of **one year with 156 days of contributions**.
- The ESIC also approved the proposal for increasing the funeral expenses from existing **10 thousand rupees to 15 thousand rupees** being paid on the death of Insured Person.

2. **Swayangsiddha scheme** - In an attempt to combat human trafficking, the West Bengal government rolled out a scheme, Swayangsiddha, in different districts of the State. As per the NCRB data, West Bengal has highest recorded case of trafficking among the States.

#### Aim of the scheme –

- The scheme aims to empower young boys and girls to make informed choices so that they are less vulnerable to trafficking and child marriage.
- Swayangsiddha means self-reliance and it will be executed by the West Bengal Police.

3. **Petroleum Minister to launch 'SATAT' initiative** -

- Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Skill Development and Entrepreneurship launched **SATAT** initiative to promote Compressed Bio-Gas as an alternative, green transport fuel.
- Titled SATAT, the initiative is aimed at providing a **Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT)** as a developmental

effort that would benefit both vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs.

4. **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched ambitious Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), under Ayushman Bharat umbrella at Ranchi, Jharkhand.
- The scheme aims to provide annual health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh to 10.74 crore beneficiary families i.e. over 50 crore beneficiaries across India.
- It is touted as world's largest healthcare scheme that will serve beneficiary population that equals 27-28 European countries and almost equal to population of Canada, Mexico and US put together.
- The scheme will become operational from September 25, 2018 i.e. on birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyay.

#### Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)

- PMJAY is government-sponsored health insurance scheme, that will provide free coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year in any government or empanelled private hospitals all over India.
- It will cover beneficiary families identified on the basis of Socio Economic Caste Survey (SECC) 2011 in 444 districts of 30 states/Union Territories.

5. **Delhi Government launches India's first scheme for doorstep delivery of essential government services**

- Delhi Government has launched scheme for doorstep delivery of 40 essential government services like caste and marriage certificates, driving license and new water connections.

6. **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)** - The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved a new Umbrella Scheme "Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay

SanraksHan Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA). The Scheme is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce as announced in the Union Budget for 2018.

- **Aim** – The scheme aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce.
- **Objective** – To empower farmers and strengthen the Agriculture sector.
- **Allocation** – The Cabinet has sanctioned **Rs 15,053 crore** to implement the PM-AASHA in the next two financial years, of which Rs 6,250 crore will be spent this year.

**Components of PM-AASHA:** Under the PM-AASHA, states would be allowed to choose from three schemes –

- Price Support Scheme (PSS),
- Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS)
- Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS).

7. **Govt. revised Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)** – The government has revised the PMJDY scheme, to further incentivize people's participation in the scheme.

**Key points**

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

8. **Swadesh Darshan Scheme:** Tourism Ministry sanctions Rs. 80.37 crore for developing cruise tourism in Kerala.

**Note:**

- The scheme was launched by Union Tourism Ministry with an objective to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country.
- The first project under Swadesh Darshan Scheme 'North East Circuit: **Imphal and Khongjom**' was inaugurated in Manipur.
- The project covers two sites i.e. Kangla Fort and Khongjom in Manipur.

## Summits & Conference

February 2019

1. **7<sup>th</sup> World Government Summit held in Dubai** - The seventh session of the World Government Summit held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).
2. **1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference 2019 held in New Delhi** – LAWASIA, in association with the Bar Association of India, hosted its 1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference in New Delhi.
  - The theme of the conference was “**State Power, Business and Human Rights: Contemporary Challenges**”.
3. **2019 Asia LPG Summit was held in New Delhi** - Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister for petroleum and natural gas, inaugurated the 2019 Asia LPG summit in New Delhi.

**Note:** India is the **2nd largest consumer** of liquified natural gas (LPG) in the world after China.

4. **India to host 13th Conference of Parties of Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species** – The conference will be held from 15th to 22nd February 2020 at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

**Note:**

- Union Environment Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, announced the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as the mascot for the 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) to be held in Gujarat in 2020.
  - He also revealed that the bird has been fondly named by the ministry as 'Gibi'.
5. The 5th International Dam Safety Conference held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

**Note:** Globally **India ranks third after China** and the USA in terms of the number of large dams with 5264 large dams in operation and 437 large dams under construction.

6. **CREDAI's Event 'YouthCon-19' held in New Delhi** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the CREDAI YouthCon -19 in New Delhi's Talkatora Stadium.
  - The event is organized by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Association of India, CREDAI.
  - The theme for this YouthCon is '**Next Generation**'.

## January 2019

1. **2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019** held in Goa
  - Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, inaugurated the event.
  - The theme for the forum is 'Regulation of Homeopathic Medical Products; Advancing global collaboration'.
2. **BRICS Summit 2019** - Brazil
3. **Global Investors Meet 2019** held in Chennai.
4. International Conference on 'Making our Elections Inclusive and Accessible' held in New Delhi
  - The Chief Election Commissioner of India, Shri Sunil Arora and Election Commissioner Shri Ashok Lavasa inaugurated the event.
  - The event was held on the occasion of 9th National Voters Day which is observed on 25th January every year.
5. 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 (Asia's largest rubber expo) was held in Mumbai.
6. World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meet held in Davos, Switzerland.
  - The theme of the event is 'Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution'.
7. 9th International Micro Irrigation conference held in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
  - The conference focused on the theme of **"Micro Irrigation and Modern Agriculture"**.
8. **15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas** held in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
  - The theme of PBD convention 2019 is **"Role of Diaspora in Building New India"**.
9. **29th Indian Paint Conference 2019** held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh
  - The theme of the Conference is 'Paints Pe Charcha – Naye Aayaam'.
10. First 'National Consultation on Child Protection' for 2019 was held in New Delhi.
11. **First Global Aviation Summit** held in Mumbai
  - The theme of the summit is **"Flying for all"**.
  - It was organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) in collaboration with FICCI.
12. **4th edition of Raisina Dialogue** held in New Delhi
  - The Theme of the Dialogue was **"A World Reorder: New Geometries; Fluid Partnerships; Uncertain Outcomes"**.
  - It was organized by Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Observer Research Foundation.
13. **106th Session of Indian Science Congress Concludes in Jalandhar**
  - It was concluded in Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar on 07 January 2019.
  - It was inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and attended by Union Science & Technology Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhanon.
  - As a part of the Indian Science Congress, Women's Science Congress was held which was inaugurated by Union Minister for Textiles & Industry Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani.
  - The Children's Science Congress was inaugurated by the Nobel Laureates Avram Hershko from Israel and F. Duncan M. Haldane from USA.

## December

1. 42nd Indian Social Science Congress held in Odisha
  - The 42nd Indian Social Science Congress was inaugurated by Manipur governor Dr Najma Heptulla at KIIT University campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
  - The theme of the Congress was 'Human Future in Digital Era.'
2. National Children's Science Congress held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha
  - This year's theme is 'Science, Technology and Innovations: For clean, green and healthy nation'.
3. The 39th Gulf Cooperation Council Summit held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
  - 40th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit will be held in the United Arab Emirates.
4. India-Russia 18th IRIGC-MTC meeting held in New Delhi.
5. First International Conference on 'Sustainable Water Management' held in Mohali, Punjab.



- The theme of the international conference is '**Sustainable Water Management**'.
6. **55th Skoch Summit** held in New Delhi
- A book titled 'India 2030' was also released on the occasion.
7. **India Water Impact Summit-2018** held in New Delhi.
- Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated the summit.
  - The spotlight is on the 5 states, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Delhi, and Bihar.
8. **Global Agriculture & Food Summit 2018** held in Jharkhand
9. The two-day conference on the partnership between European Union and India for Cultural Heritage Conservation, commenced in New Delhi.
10. **G – 20 Summit 2018 - Buenos Aires, Argentina**
- The theme of the G20 summit is '**Building Consensus for a Fair and Sustainable Development**'.
11. **G – 20 Summit 2019 – Osaka, Japan**
- The 2019 G20 summit will be held on 28–29 June 2019 in Osaka, Japan.
  - Japan will host its first ever G20 Summit.
12. **G – 20 Summit 2020 – Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**
- The 2020 G20 summit will be held in **Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**.
13. **G – 20 Summit 2021 – Italy**
- The 2021 G20 summit will be held in **Italy**.
14. **G – 20 Summit 2022 – New Delhi, India**
- India will host the G-20 summit in 2022.

#### **About G-20**

- The G-20 is a grouping of the world's 20 major economies.
- G-20 members comprise Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the UK and the U.S.
- Collectively, the G-20 economies account for nearly 90% of the gross world product, 80% of world trade, two-thirds of the world population, and approximately half of the world land area.
- Spain is a permanent guest invitee.
- In 2008, the first G20 Leaders' Summit was held in Washington DC, US.

#### **15. Climate Change Conference 2018 held in Poland**

- The Climate Change Conference 2018 was held in Katowice, Poland.
- Previously, Poland hosted them twice – in 2008, in Poznań and in 2013, in Warsaw.

Note:

- The UN climate summits, i.e. so-called COP (Conference of the Parties) are global conferences, in the course of which action for climate policy is negotiated.

#### **16. Global Agriculture & Food Summit 2018 held in Jharkhand**

- The Global Agriculture & Food Summit 2018 was held in Ranchi, Jharkhand.
- Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh inaugurated the summit.
- The aim of the Summit is to promote Jharkhand as a key player to attract investment in the agriculture sector.

#### **17. First India-ASEAN InnoTech Summit held in New Delhi**

- The first India-ASEAN InnoTech Summit was held in New Delhi.
- It was organized by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) in association with Department of Science & Technology (DST) and Ministry of External Affairs.

#### **18. India Water Impact Summit-2018 held in New Delhi**

- The India Water Impact Summit-2018 was held in New Delhi.
- Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the summit.
- The discussions this year will be on rejuvenation of the Ganga River Basin.
- The spotlight is on the 5 states, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Delhi, and Bihar.

#### **19. Asia Pacific Summit-2018 held in Kathmandu**

- The Asia Pacific Summit-2018 held in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.
- The theme of two-day Summit is "Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, and Universal Values".

**1. India to Chair Kimberley Process from January 2019**

- India will chair the Kimberley Process (KP), a global initiative to remove conflict diamonds from the global supply chain, from January next year.
- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) Plenary **2018, was held in Brussels, Belgium.**
- EU handed over the Chairmanship of KPCS to India from 1st January, 2019.
- Botswana and the Russian Federation will serve as Vice-Chair during the period of 2019-2020.

**Note:**

- Kimberley Process (KP) is a joint initiative of different countries, industry and civil societies to control flow of conflict diamonds, which are used by rebel movements to finance wars against legitimate governments in the world.
- India is the founding member of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) and is actively involved in KP activities to ensure that almost 99 per cent of the diamond trade in the world is conflict free.
- Since August 2013, the KP has 54 participants, representing 81 countries.

**2. 12th World Congress on Mountain Medicine held in Kathmandu**

- The 12th World Congress on Mountain Medicine started in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal.
- The theme of the 4-day congress is “**Mountain Medicine in the Heart of the Himalayas**”.
- The event is hosted by Mountain Medicine Society of Nepal (MMSN).

**3. India to host 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health in 2019**

- The 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health will be held in Hyderabad.

**4. 27th BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change held in New Delhi**

- The 27th BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change was held in New Delhi, India.
- The BASIC countries comprise Brazil, South Africa, India and China.
- Brazil will host the next meeting of BASIC in 2019.

**5. 49th International Film Festival of India concludes in Goa**

**6. Sustainable Blue Economy Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya**

**7. 7th International Tourism Mart 2018 being organised in Agartala**

**8. Regional meeting of World Customs Organisation being held in Jaipur**

**9. Indo-Japan Business Council's Business Festival held in Pune**

- Indo-Japan Business Council's Business Festival was held in Pune.

**10. APEC Summit 2018 held in - Papua New Guinea**

- The summit was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinean capital.
- This is the first time Papua New Guinea (PNG), has hosted the summit.
- APEC stands for - Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

**11. 34<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit 2019 – Thailand**

- In 2019, the 34th edition of the ASEAN Summit will be held in Thailand.
- The official theme for the ASEAN chairmanship next year will be “Advancing Partnership for Sustainability”.

**12. 33rd ASEAN Summit 2018 held in Singapore**

- Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong hosted the summit.
- The theme of the Summit was “**Resilience and Innovation**”.
- This is the second ASEAN summit of this year as the 32nd edition of the ASEAN Summit 2018 was held in Singapore from 27-28 April 2018.
- The ASEAN members are - Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, The Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Brunei and Laos.

**13. FinTech Festival held in Singapore**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first head of a country who has been invited to give the keynote address.

**14. 13th East Asia Summit 2018 held in Singapore**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 13th East Asia Summit.

**15. 2nd Regional Comprehensive Economic Summit, (RCEP) held in Singapore**

- PM Modi attended the second RCEP Summit in Singapore with 16-member states.

**16. ASEAN-India Breakfast Summit held in Singapore**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the ASEAN-India Breakfast Summit in Singapore

**17. The 17th ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Council Meeting was held in Singapore**

- The meeting was attended by the ASEAN Economic Ministers and AEC Ministers.

## 18. 1st WHO Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health held in Geneva

- The First WHO Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health took place at WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

## 19. First-ever India-US Dialogue on Intellectual Property held in New Delhi

## 20. India Mobile Congress held in New Delhi

- The congress was held under the theme of **NEW DIGITAL HORIZONS**.

## 21. World Tolerance Summit held in Dubai, UAE

- The theme of the Summit was 'Prospering from Pluralism: Embracing Diversity through Innovation and Collaboration'.

## Books & Author

- Book titled 'We are Displaced' authored by - **Malala Yousafzai**
- Book titled "Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India" authored by - **P Chidambaram** (former Finance Minister)
- A book titled 'Changing India' written by - **Former PM Manmohan Singh**
- A book titled 'Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From' written by Tony Joseph
- A book titled 'Blue Water Ahoy!' written by - Vice Admiral Anup Singh
- A book '**Radio Kashmir in Times of Peace & War**' written by **Dr Rajesh Bhat**.
- A book '**Yoga And Mindfulness**' - Mansi Gulati
- Book titled 'The Rule Breakers' - **Preeti Shenoy**
- Book titled 'Atal Ji Ne Kaha' - **Brijendra Rehi**
- Book titled '281 and Beyond' - **VVS Laxman (veteran cricketer) autobiography**
- Book titled 'No Spin' - **Shane Warne (veteran cricketer) autobiography**
- Book titled "Gandhi: The years that changed the world (1914-1948)" - **Ramachandra Guha**.
- Novel "Warlight" - **Michael Ondaatje** (named in Man Booker Prize list)
- Novel 'The English Patient' - **Michael Ondaatje** (winner of Golden Man Booker International prize 2018)
- Book titled 'Winning Like Sourav: Think & Succeed Like Ganguly' - **Abhirup Bhattacharya**
- The book 'Straight Talk' authored by\_\_\_ **Abhishek Manu Singhvi**
- Author of the book "Across the Bench – Insight into the Indian Military Judicial System" - **Gyan Bhushan**
- Book 'Calling Sehmat' authored by - **Harinder S. Sikka**
- Author of 'Smart Cities Unbundle' book - **Dr. Samir Sharma**
- Author of 'My Journey from Marxism-Leninism to Nehruvian Socialism' book - **C. H. Hanumantha Rao**
- Authored of the book "India's Heritage of Gharana Music: Pandits of Gwalior" - **Meeta Pandit**
- Book titled 'Paramveer Parwane' authored by - Prabhakaran Jain.
- Book titled '**Exam Warriors**' authored by – Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi
- Book titled "**A Century is Not Enough**" autobiography of – Sourav Ganguly.
- Book titled '**Imperfect**' autobiography of – Sanjay Manjrekar (cricketer-turned-commentator)

## Obituaries

### January & February 2019

- Hiten Bhaya** - Former Planning Commission member and ex-director of Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)
- Mahesh Anand** - Noted actor Mahesh Anand, best known for playing the villain in several Bollywood films in the late 1980s and 1990s has passed away
- Ramesh Bhatkar - Veteran Marathi actor
- John Dingell - John Dingell, the longest-serving congressman in US history
- George Fernandes** - Former Defence Minister
- Krishna Sobti** - Eminent Hindi author. She was a recipient of many coveted awards like Sahitya Akademi, Jnanpith awards.
- Russell Baker - the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and Columnist for The New York Times
- Atin Bandyopadhyay - Sahitya Akademi award winning Bengali writer
- Raghubir Bhola - Former Indian hockey player

14. **Masazo Nonaka** - The world's oldest man, Masazo Nonaka of Japan, has died at the age of 113.
- Nonaka, who was officially recognized as the oldest male in the world by Guinness World Records in April 2018.
15. Mary Oliver - the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet
16. Lenin Rajendran - Malayalam director and screenwriter

17. Sir Michael Atiyah - a British mathematician who received the 1966 Fields Medal, also known as the 'Nobel for Mathematics,' passed away at the age of 89
18. Dibyendu Palit - Renowned Bengali writer and Sahitya Akademi awardee
19. CH Loknath - Veteran Kannada actor
20. Ramakant Achrekar - Veteran cricket coach Ramakant Achrekar, who trained Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kambli, among others, passed away.

## December

1. Mrinal Sen - Veteran Filmmaker
2. Kader Khan - Veteran actor
3. Sulagitti Narasamma - Social worker and Padma Shri awardee
4. Hamidi Kashmiri - Dr. Hamidi Kashmiri, the tallest literary figure in the world of Urdu language, literature and literary criticism passed away.
  - He was a prolific creative writer, an acclaimed critic and propounder of "Iktishaafi Tanqueed".
  - He has also been the Vice Chancellor of the University of Kashmir for years.
5. Paddy Ashdown - Centrist politician
6. Dipali Borthakur - Legendary Assamese singer Dipali Borthakur.
7. Tulsi Giri - Former Prime Minister of Nepal
8. Mushirul Hasan - a renowned historian, and former vice-chancellor Jamia Millia of Islamia.
9. **Mastanamma** - One of the world's oldest YouTubers, 107-year-old Mastanamma from southern India, passed away.
10. **George HW Bush** - Former US President
11. **Mohammed Aziz** - Veteran Singer

## National Appointments

### February 2019

1. New Chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) - Pramod Chandra Mody
2. New Election Commissioner - Sushil Chandra
3. New chief of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) - Rishi Kumar Shukla
4. **New Civil Aviation Secretary** - Pradeep Singh Kharola

### January 2019

1. **New Director General of NCC** - Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra
2. **New Chairman of Federal Bank** - Dilip Sadarangani
3. **New CEO & MD of IDFC First Bank** - V Vaidyanathan
4. **New MD & CEO of Yes Bank** - Ravneet Gill
5. **New Interim Finance Minister** - Piyush Goyal
6. **New MD, CEO of IDFC First Bank** - V Vaidyanathan
7. **New Director General (Investigation) of National Human Rights Commission** - Prabhat Singh
8. **New chief coach Boxing Women's Team Coach** - Mohammed Ali Qamar
9. **New Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)** - Rajesh Chandra
10. **New Chairman of Ordnance Factory Board** - Saurabh Kumar
11. **1st Chief Justice of Telangana High Court** - Justice TBN Radhakrishnan
12. **New Chairman of LIC** - Hemant Bhargava. He replaced VK Sharma.
13. **New MD & CEO of Axis Bank** - Amitabh Chaudhry
14. **New Chief Information Commissioner** - Sudhir Bhargava
15. **Additional Solicitor Generals of India** - Sanjay Jain and K M Nataraj
16. **New Railway Board Chairman** - V K Yadav. He replaced Ashwani Lohani



17. Ashok Chawla resigned as chairman of the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE)  
18. New CEO of IndiGo - Ronojoy Dutta

19. New Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) - Justice AK Sikri

## December

### 1. 1st Chief Justice of Telangana High Court

- Justice TBN (Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair) Radhakrishnan was sworn in as the first Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court.
  - With this, the state of Telangana will have its first independent high court.
2. New Chief Information Commissioner - Sudhir Bhargava  
3. New Railway Board Chairman - V.K. Yadav  
4. New MD & CEO of Axis Bank - Amitabh Chaudhry
- He replaced Shikha Sharma
5. **New Chief Minister of Rajasthan - Ashok Gehlot**
- He became the 12<sup>th</sup> CM of Rajasthan
  - He replaced Vasundhara Raje
  - Gehlot has served two terms as the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, once from 1998 to 2003 and then from 2008 to 2013.
  - Governor of Rajasthan - Kalyan Singh
6. Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan - **Sachin Pilot**  
7. **New Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh - Kamal Nath**
- Kamal Nath was sworn in as the 18th Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.
  - He replaced Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
  - Governor of MP - Anandiben Patel
8. **New Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh - Bhupesh Baghel**
- He became the third Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh since its inception in the year 2000.
  - Governor of Chhattisgarh - Anandiben Patel
9. **New Chief Minister of Mizoram - Mr. Zoramthanga**
- He became the 9<sup>th</sup> CM of Mizoram.
  - Governor of Mizoram - Kummanam Rajasekharan
10. **New Chief Minister of Telangana - K Chandrasekhar Rao**
- He was re-elected for the second term.
  - KCR is the first Chief Minister of Telangana, a new state that was carved out of Andhra Pradesh in 2014.
  - Governor of Telangana - ESL Narasimhan
11. New FTII Chairman - Producer-director Brijendra Pal Singh was appointed as the new president of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).
- He succeeds veteran actor Anupam Kher.

12. New Secretary of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) - Ashok Kumar Singh  
13. New interim Chairman of Yes Bank - Brahm Dutt  
14. **New Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of New India Assurance - Atul Sahai**
- He replaced G Srinivasan.
15. **New Director of National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) - Ramphal Pawar**  
16. **New Additional Solicitor General (ASG) - Madhavi Divan**  
17. **Vice President Of FICCI - Uday Shankar (Star India's Chairman and CEO)**  
18. **Additional Director of CBI - M Nageswara Rao**, who is currently the interim CBI Director, was promoted to the rank of Additional Director by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.  
19. **New chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) - Pranab Kumar Das**  
20. **New India Women's Cricket Team Coach - Woorkeri Venkat Raman**  
21. **New Archery Association of India President - BVP Rao**  
22. **New MD and CEO of Corporation Bank - P.V. Bharathi**  
23. **India's chief boxing coach - C A Kuttappa**  
24. **New Chief Economic Advisor - Krishnamurthy Subramanian**
- He is currently working as an Associate Professor at the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.
25. **New Finance Secretary - AN Jha**
- Ajay Narayan Jha has been appointed as new Finance Secretary.
  - He replaced Hasmukh Adhia.
26. **First Indian To Be Elected in ISSF's Judges Committee**
- Pawan Singh has become the first Indian to be elected one of seven member's of the Judges Committee of the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF).
27. **1st Indian to Be Elected ISSF's Vice-president - Raninder Singh**
- Raninder Singh has become the first Indian to be elected one of the four vice-presidents of the International Shooting Sport Federation.
28. **New MD & CEO of Bank of Maharashtra - AS Rajeev**  
29. **New CEO of Axis Capital - Dharmesh Mehta**

**30. SBI appointed Swapna Barman as Brand Ambassador for YONO**

- State Bank of India has roped in Asian Games gold medalist Swapna Barman as brand ambassador for its digital app YONO.

**November**

**1. New Chief Election Commissioner of India - Sunil Arora**

- Sunil Arora has been appointed as the new Chief Election Commissioner of India.
- He succeeds Om Prakash Rawat.

**2. New Chairman of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) – Arvind Saxena**

**3. First UNICEF ‘Youth Advocate’ of Northeastern Region**

- Popular singer Nahid Afrin of Assam has been appointed as the first ‘Youth Advocate’ of the northeastern region by the UNICEF to fight for child rights.

**4. New Revenue Secretary - Ajay Bhushan Pandey**

- He replaced Hasmukh Adhia.

**5. New IWAI Chairman - Jalaj Srivastava**

- Jalaj Srivastava, has been appointed the chairman of the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).
- The headquarter of IWAI is in Noida.

**6. New ED Chief - Sanjay Mishra**

- Sanjay Mishra was appointed as the new Enforcement Directorate Director (ED).

**7. India’s 1st Ever Youth Ambassador – Hima Das**

- The United Nations Children’s Fund-India (UNICEF) has appointed Hima Das as India’s first ever Youth Ambassador.
- Hima Das is the first Indian athlete to win the India’s first international gold in track events.

**8. Justices Hemant Gupta, R Subhash Reddy, MR Shah and Ajay Rastogi sworn-in as Supreme Court Judges**

**9. Re-Appointment of Aditya Puri as HDFC Bank CEO**

- RBI had approved the re-appointment of Aditya Puri as MD and CEO of the bank for another two years.
- Aditya Puri will now serve the office from November 1, 2018, to October 26, 2020.

**10. New MD & CEO of UCO Bank - Atul Goel**

- He replaces R K Takkar.

**11. New CCI Chairperson - Ashok Kumar Gupta**

- Ashok Kumar Gupta has been appointed as the Chairman of the Competition Commission of India (CCI).
- He replaces Sudhir Mittal.

**12. New DG of ITBP - S. S. Deswal**

- S. S. Deswal appointed as the Director General, Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

**13. DV Sadananda Gowda got the additional charge of the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers**

- Currently, DV Sadananda Gowda holds the portfolio of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

**14. Narendra Singh Tomar got the additional charge of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs**

- At present, Narendra Singh is Minister of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Mines.

**15. Sanjay Kumar Seth takes oath as chief justice of MP high court**

- Justice Sanjay Kumar Seth sworn in as the 24th Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

**International Appointment**

**February 2019**

**1. New Interim President of World Bank – Kristalina Georgieva**

- World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announced his retirement from his position

on February 1, 2019 much before the end of his term in 2022.

- Kristalina Georgieva, World Bank CEO assumed the role of interim President effective February 1.
2. **New Chairman of African Union** - Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi

3. **New Ambassador of India to The Republic of Colombia** - Sanjiv Ranjan
4. **New Nepal Ambassador to India** - Nilambar Acharya
5. **New Ambassador of India to The Republic of Argentina** - Dinesh Bhatia
6. **New Ambassador of India to Bhutan** - Ruchira Kamboj

### January 2019

1. First Ever Female Hindu Civil Judge in Pakistan - Suman Kumari has become the first Hindu woman to have been appointed as a civil judge in Pakistan.
2. **Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia** - Poonam Khetrapal Singh (re-appointed)
3. New Malaysian King - Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah

4. **New Prime Minister of Taiwan** - Su Tseng-chang
5. **New President of Venezuela** - Nicolás Maduro
6. **New President of Brazil** - Jair Bolsonaro
7. **New CEO of International Cricket Council (ICC)** - Manu Sawhney

### December

1. **New PM of Bangladesh** - Sheikh Hasina
2. **New President of Brazil** - Jair Bolsonaro
3. **New US Defence Secretary** - Patrick Shanahan
  - He replaces James Mattis
4. New India's Ambassador to the United States - Harsh Vardhan Shringla
  - He replaced Navtej Singh Sarna.
5. New Prime Minister of Sri Lanka - Ranil Wickremesinghe
  - This is the fifth time Mr. Wickremesinghe has been sworn in as Prime minister which is a record in Sri Lanka.
6. **UN's Socio-Economic Cultural Panel** - A former senior Indian diplomat, Preeti Saran, has been elected unopposed to an Asia Pacific seat on the UN's Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR).

7. **New US Ambassador to United Nation** - Heather Nauert
  - US President Donald Trump nominated State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert as the US Ambassador to the United Nations.
  - She is the former Fox News presenter.
  - She will replace Nikki Haley.
8. **Vice-Chair of UN Panel of External Auditors** - Rajiv Mehrishi, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, was elected as the Vice-Chair of United Nations Panel of External Auditors.
9. **New President of Mexico** - Andres Manuel Lopez
10. **New CEO of IAAF** - Jon Ridgeon
  - The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) announced the appointment of Jon Ridgeon as its new CEO.

### November

1. **First female President of Georgia** - Salom Zurichishvili
2. **New PM of Fiji** - Voreqe Bainimarama
3. **Youngest UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador** - Millie Bobby
  - Millie Bobby Brown, the star of hit Netflix series "Stranger Things", appointed as the youngest ever goodwill ambassador of United Nations children's agency UNICEF.
  - UNICEF Headquarters: New York.
4. **New Interpol President** - Kim Jong Yang
  - South Korea's Kim Jong-yang has been elected as Interpol's next president.

5. **Acting Executive Director of UNEP** - Joyce Msuya
  - Interpol Headquarters: Lyon, France
  - Tanzanian national Joyce Msuya was appointed as acting Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
  - UNEP headquarter - Nairobi, Kenya.
6. **New President of AIBA** - Gafur Rakhimov
  - Uzbekistan's businessman Gafur Rakhimov was elected president of the International Boxing Association (AIBA)
7. **BIS names Siddharth Tiwari as Chief Representative for Asia**

- The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) announced Siddharth Tiwari joining as the Chief Representative for Asia and the Pacific.
- He succeeds Eli Remolona.

## Honours & Awards

### February 2019

1. Indo-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta will be given the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television.
2. **Indian Historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam wins Israel's Dan David Prize 2019** - Noted Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam has won Israel's prestigious Dan David Prize 2019 for his work on inter-cultural encounters between Asians, Europeans and people of North and South America during the early modern era.
3. Father Francois Laborde, a 92-year-old priest, was conferred the Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour), the highest civilian award of France.
4. **National Film Development Corporation of India** has been declared winner under the Miniratna Category (Category II) by Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
5. **British Academy Film Awards announced** - The film "The Favourite" won seven honours in British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA)- 2019 in London.

Category	Winner
Best Director	Alfonso Cuaron, for drama - Roma
Best Film	Roma
Best Actress	Olivia Colman, for The Favourite
Best Actor	Rami Malek – for Bohemian Rhapsody

6. **61st annual Grammy award** - The 61st annual Grammy Awards were announced at Staples Center in New York, the United States.

Category	Winner
Album Of The Year	Golden Hour, Kacey Musgraves
Record Of The Year	"This Is America," Childish Gambino
Best New Artist	Dua Lipa
Best Rap Album	Invasion Of Privacy, Cardi B
Best R&B Album Winner	H.E.R., H.E.R.
Best Country Album	Golden Hour, Kacey Musgraves
Song Of The Year	"This Is America," Childish Gambino
Best Rock Album	From The Fires, Greta Van Fleet
Best Rock Song	"Masseduction" St. Vincent
Best Music Video	"This Is America," Childish Gambino
Best Country Song	"Space Cowboy," Kacey Musgraves

### January 2019



## 1. Bharat Ratna Award 2019

- Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh, Bhupen Hazarika awarded Bharat Ratna.
- Nanaji Deshmukh, Bhupen Hazarika were conferred the award posthumously.
- The Bharat Ratna has been conferred after a gap of four years.
- Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and founder of Banaras Hindu University Madan Mohan Malviya were given the award by the government in 2015.

### About Nanaji Deshmukh

- Nanaji Deshmukh was born in 1916 in a Marathi family in Parbhani, Maharashtra. As a child, he was inspired by freedom fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
- Nanaji established India's first Saraswati Sishu Mandir at Gorakhpur in 1950.
- Nanaji Deshmukh had won in the 1977 Lok Sabha election from Balrampur.

## 2. Padma Awards 2019

- The government on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019 announced names of the Padma awardees 2019 on the eve of the 70th Republic Day.
- This year 112 recipients have been selected for the prestigious awards. This includes 4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri awards.
- The Padma Vibhushan is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; Padma Bhushan for distinguished service of high order and Padma Shri for distinguished service in any field.

Here's the complete list of Padma awardees 2019:

### Padma Vibhushan:

Name	Field & State
<b>Teejan Bai</b>	Art-Vocals-Folk (Chhattisgarh)
<b>Ismail Omar Guelleh (Foreigner)</b>	Public Affairs (Djibouti)
<b>Anilkumar Manibhai Naik</b>	Trade & Industry-Infrastructure (Maharashtra)
<b>Balwant Moreshwar Purandare</b>	Art-Acting-Theatre (Maharashtra)

- **About Teejan Bai**- She is an exponent of a traditional performing art form, Pandavani, from Chhattisgarh. She was born in Ganiyari village, Chhattisgarh. She has been awarded.
- **About Ismail Omar Guelleh (Foreigner)** - He is the President of Djibouti since 1999. He was re-elected in 2005, 2011 and again in 2016.
- **Anilkumar Manibhai Naik**- He is the Group Executive Chairman of Larsen & Toubro Limited. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan award on 25 January 2019.
- **About Balwant Moreshwar Purandare** – Balwant Moreshwar Purandare popularly known as Babasaheb Purandare was conferred with the Padma Vibhushan Award 2019.

### Padma Bhushan:

### About Bhupen Hazarika

- Bhupen Hazarika was born on September 8, 1926 in Sadiya, Assam.
- He was also one of the leading author-poets of Assam with more than 1,000 lyrics and several short stories, essays and travelogues to his credit.
- Bhupen Hazarika, popularly known as the 'Bard of Brahmaputra'.
- In May 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's longest bridge (9.15 kms), which runs over the Lohit river in Assam. Modi named the Dhola-Sadia bridge after Bhupen Hazarika.

### About Pranab Mukherjee

- Pranab Mukherjee was born in Mirati in Birbhum District of West Bengal on December 11, 1935 to freedom fighters.
- He served as the 13th President of India from 2012 until 2017.

NAME	FIELD	STATE/COUNTRY
1. John Chambers (Foreigner)	Trade & Industry Technology	USA
2. Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa	Public affairs	Punjab
3. Pravin Gordhan (Foreigner)	Public affairs	South Africa
4. Mahashay Dharam Pal Gulati	Trade & Industry- Food Processing	Delhi
5. Darshan Lal Jain	Social Work	Haryana
6. Ashok LaxmanraoKukade	Medicine- Affordable Healthcare	Maharashtra
7. Kariya Munda	Public Affair	Jharkhand
8. Budhaditya Mukherjee	Art-Music-Sitar	West Bengal
9. Mohanlal Viswanathan Nair	Art-Acting-Film	Kerala
10. S Nambi Narayan	Science & Engineering-Space	Kerala
11. Kuldip Nayar (Posthumous)	Literature & Education (Journalism)	Delhi
12. Bachendri Pal	Sports (Mountaineering)	Uttarakhand
13. V K Shunglu	Civil Service	Delhi
14. Hukumdev Narayan Yadav	Public Affairs	Bihar

#### Padma Shri:

NAME	FIELD	STATE/COUNTRY
Rajeshwar Acharya	Art-Vocal-Hindustani	Uttar Pradesh
BangaruAdigalar	Spiritualism	Tamil Nadu
Illias Ali	Medicine-Surgery	Assam
Manoj Bajpayee	Art-Acting-Films	Maharashtra
Uddhab Kumar Bharali	Science & Engineering-Grassroots Innovation	Assam
Omesh Kumar Bharti	Medicine (Rabies)	Himachal Pradesh
Pritam Bhartwan	Art-Vocals-Folk	Uttarakhand
Jyoti Bhatt	Art-Painting	Gujarat
Dilip Chakravarty	Archaeology	Delhi
Mammen Chandy	Medicine (Hematology)	West Bengal
Swapan Chaudhuri	Art-Music-Tabla	West Bengal
Kanwal Singh Chauhan	Agriculture	Haryana
Sunil Chhetri	Sports (Football)	Telangana
Dinyar Contractor	Art-Acting-Theatre	Maharashtra
Muktaben Pankaj Kumar Dagli	Social Work (Divyang Welfare)	Gujarat
Babulal Dahiya	Agriculture	Madhya Pradesh
ThangaDarlong	Art-Music-Flute	Tripura
Prabhu Deva	Art-Dance	Karnataka
Rajkumari Devi	Agriculture	Bihar
Bhagirathi Devi	Public Affairs	Bihar
Baldev Singh Dhillon	Science and Engineering (Agriculture)	Punjab
Harika Dronavalli	Sports (Chess)	Andhra Pradesh
Godawari Dutta	Art-Painting	Bihar
Gautam Gambhir	Sports (Cricket)	Delhi

### 3. Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskaar

- The government has instituted an annual award titled Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar.
- It will be announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
- The Award carries a certificate and a cash prize of 51 lakh rupees.
- This year, 8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force located at Ghaziabad has been selected for the Award for its commendable work in disaster management.
- The award has been instituted to acknowledge the contribution and selfless service of organisations and individuals to humanity in the aftermath of any disaster.

Note:

- This year, **8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force located at Ghaziabad** has been selected for the Award for its commendable work in disaster management.

### 4. PM Narendra Modi honoured with first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first recipient of the prestigious Philip Kotler Presidential award.
- According to the citation of the award, Modi was selected for his “outstanding leadership for the nation”.
- The citation mentions initiatives such as Make in India, Startup India, Digital India, and Swachh Bharat have positioned India as one of the most lucrative manufacturing and business destinations in the world.
- “The award focuses on the triple bottom-line of **‘People, Profit and Planet’** which will be offered annually to the leader of a nation.

Note:

- The Philip Kotler Awards are bestowed in the name of world renowned Professor of Marketing at Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Management, Professor Philip Kotler.
- The award was conferred by Dr Jagdish Sheth of EMORY University on behalf of Kotler, who is currently unwell.

### 5. D N Chakraborty Gets Assam Republic Day Journalism Award

- Assam government has conferred the Republic Day Journalism Award 2019 to veteran journalist and former editor Dhirendra Nath Chakraborty.
- Chakraborty has been honored for his lifelong contribution to journalism in the state.

### 6. India Bags The Award of Excellence for ‘Best in Show’ At NYTTS 2019

- India received the Award of Excellence for ‘Best in Show’ at the New York Times Travel Show 2019, the largest travel show in North America. India was honoured during the Closing Bell Ceremony at the New York Stock Exchange.
- The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India participated as the ‘Presenting Partner’ in the New York Times Travel Show (NYTTS 2019) organised at Jacob K Javits Centre, New York.

### 7. Namita Gokhale wins Sushila Devi Literature Award

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

### 8. Nritya Shiromani award

- Kathak exponent Anindita Neogy Anaam has been honoured with the prestigious National Nritya Shiromani award for her contribution towards preserving and promoting the dance form across the world.

### 9. Dr. Rattan Lal Honoured with 2019 Japan Prize

- India born, Dr. Rattan Lal, honoured with the 2019 Japan Prize for his contributions in the field of “Biological Production, Ecology”.
- He is a Distinguished University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A.

### 10. Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research awarded to C N R Rao

- The first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research has been awarded to C N R Rao.
- The award will be presented to Rao by Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi ruler of Ras Al Khaimah emirate during the International Workshop on Advanced Materials at Ras Al Khaimah on February 25.

### 11. MP Anurag Thakur Honoured with Sansad Ratna Award

- Anurag Thakur, member of Parliament (MP) from Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh has been

bestowed with Sansad Ratna Award for his distinguished performance as a parliamentarian under Jury Committee Special Award category.

- He became the first BJP MP to receive the Jury Committee award.
- The Sansad Ratna Award was set up & launched in 2010 by Former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

## 12. Woman's Voice Award

- US-based Indian poet **Ranjani Murali** received the 'Woman's Voice Award' at the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF). The award carries a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh apart from a citation.

## 13. 'No Presents Please' novel wins DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2018

- 'No Presents Please' is an English Novel translated from Kannada Work of **Jayant Kaikini**.
- The novel was translated to English by Tejaswini Niranjana.
- The award was presented by eminent writer Ruskin Bond to Jayant Kaikini and translator Tejaswini Niranjana.
- For the first time the award was being given to a translated work and the jury wanted to recognise the outstanding contribution of Tejaswini Niranjana, the translator.

## 14. 2018 ICC Awards: Virat Kohli Takes 3 Major Honours

- Virat Kohli has become the first player in history to win the **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards**.
- India captain becomes the first player to win all three of top awards after being named captain of the Test and ODI teams.
- A right-handed top order batsman, Kohli has made 64 centuries in international cricket—25 in Test cricket and 39 in One Day Internationals (ODI)—as of January 2019.

## 15. President confers Ashoka Chakra on Lance Naik Nazir Wani

- India's highest peacetime gallantry honour, Ashoka Chakra was awarded to **Lance Naik Nazir Wani** posthumously.
- Lance Naik Nazir Wani also holds the distinction of being the first Kashmiri to be conferred the Ashoka Chakra.

## 16. Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2019

- President Ram Nath Kovind conferred Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2019 to 30 awardees.
- The awards were conferred during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas being held at Varanasi.

The winner of this prestigious award includes:

- Gita Gopinath chief economist of IMF
- Nihal Singh Agar, founding president of VHP in Australia and
- Ramesh Chotai, former president of Hindu Mandir and Cultural Centre in Canada.
- **Girish Pant**, a social worker has been instrumental in rescuing several Indian sailors stranded in UAE waters.
- **Surender Singh Kandhari**, chairman of the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar Sikh Temple, is a philanthropist, businessman and a long-term Dubai resident.
- **Dr Zulekha**, founder and chairperson of Zulekha Healthcare Group, who came to the UAE in 1964, is believed to be the first female practicing doctor in the country.

## 17. Saraswati Samman 2017

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

## 18. Indian-American Gurinder Singh Khalsa Presented with Rosa Parks Trailblazer Award

- The Indian-American Sikh Gurinder Singh Khalsa, who lives in Fishers of Indiana, US was presented with the prestigious 2019 Rosa Park Trailblazer award after being selected for champions of the diversity by the Indiana Minority Business Magazine.

## 19. Adi Godrej Conferred ICSI Lifetime Award

- Industrialist and Godrej Group Chairman Adi Godrej was conferred the ICSIs Lifetime Achievement Award for 'Translating Excellence in Corporate Governance into Reality'.
- The awards were instituted by The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI).

## 20. Andhra Pradesh bags CBIP award for Polavaram project



- Andhra Pradesh was conferred with CBIP's "Best Implementation of Water Resources Project" for better planning, implementation, monitoring and speedy execution of **Polavaram multipurpose project on the Godavari River**.

#### **Polavaram Multipurpose project**

- Under the Polavaram Multipurpose project, a dam is constructed across the Godavari River in West Godavari District and East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh.
- The reservoir of the dam also spreads to parts of Chhattisgarh and Orissa States.

#### **21. Gandhi Peace Prize Conferred for Last 4 Years:** The Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 has been conferred on the following:

- **For 2015: Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari** for their contribution in Rural Development, Education, Development of natural resources.
- **For 2016: Jointly to Akshaya Patra Foundation** for its contribution in providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India and Sulabh International for its contribution in improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers.
- **For 2017: Ekal Abhiyan Trust** for their contribution in providing Education for Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender and Social Equality.
- **For 2018: Shri Yohei Sasakawa** for his contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.

#### **22. The Hindu Literary Prize 2018**

- **The Hindu Prize 2018 for Fiction** - English writer **Neelum Saran Gour**, author of Requiem in Raga Janki.

- **The Hindu Prize 2018 for non-fiction** - Activist **Manoranjan Byapari**, author of Interrogating my Chandal Life: An Autobiography of a Dalit.

#### **Other awards:**

- The Hindu Young World-Goodbooks Award for Best Book Fiction to Venita Coelho for Boy No: 32.
- A Brush with Indian Art of Mamta Nainy received The Hindu Young World-Goodbooks Award for Best Book Non-Fiction.
- Vinayak Varma's Angry Akku received The Hindu Young World-Goodbooks Award for Best Picture Book: Story.
- Rajiv Eipe's Ammachi's Amazing Machines received The Hindu Young World-Goodbooks Award for Best Picture Book: Illustration.

#### **23. Mohamed Salah Named African Footballer of The Year**

- Liverpool's Mohamed Salah has been named as the 2018 Confederation of African Football Player of the Year.
- For the second consecutive year he has won the award.
- Houston Dash and South Africa forward Thembi Kgatlana was named Women's Player of the Year.
- Mohamed Salah is an Egyptian professional footballer who plays as a forward for Premier League club Liverpool and the Egypt national team.

#### **24. Vinesh Phogat becomes First Indian Athlete to nominated in Laureus World Comeback of Year Award**

- Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat became the first Indian to be nominated for the prestigious Laureus World Sports Award.
- She has been nominated in "Laureus World Sporting Comeback" category for the year 2019

### **December**

#### **1. Tansen Samman, 2018 - Manju Mehta** (eminent Sitar Player)

- **Tansen Award** was instituted by Madhya Pradesh government to honour the individual artists with significant contribution to Hindustani Classical Music.

#### **2. 'Champion of Change' award - Chamba SP Monika Bhutunguru** conferred 'Champion of Change' award.

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

- The Mrs. India My Identity Beauty Pageant 2018 finale was held in Delhi on 25th Dec 2018.

#### **4. Mohammed Rafi Awards** - Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar (Late music composer) and playback singer Usha Timothy.

- Mohammed Rafi Award instituted by the NGO Spandan Arts.
5. **Sahitya Academy Awards 2018 Announced:** Sahitya Akademi announced its annual Awards for 2018 in 24 languages.
- Complete List of Winners**
- Sananta Tanti (Assamese) - Kailoir Dinto Amar Hobo (Poetry)
  - Sanjib Chattopadhyay (Bengali) - Srikrishner Sesh Kata Din (Story)
  - Anees Salim (English) - The Blind Lady's Descendants (Novel)
  - Chitra Mudgal (Hindi) - Post Box No-203-Naala Sopara (Novel)
  - Rama kant Shukla (Sanskrit) - Mama Janani (Poetry)
6. **54<sup>th</sup> Jnanpith Award, 2018** –Amitav Ghosh (Renowned English fiction writer)
- He has become the first English author to be honoured with the award.
  - The Jnanpith Award is an Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to

an author for their "outstanding contribution towards literature".

7. **Skoch Award 2018–**
- **Skoch Chief Minister of the Year** - Mamata Banerjee (West Bengal Chief Minister)
  - **Skoch Award for National Significance** - Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.
  - **SKOCH Sprinter of the Year** - Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu
  - **Steady Reformer, Skoch Golden Jubilee Challenger Award** - Commerce and Industry and civil aviation minister Suresh Prabhu
  - J&K Bank was conferred with SKOCH Award in 'Banking and Finance (B&F) Silver Category'.
8. **PETA India's 2018 Person of the Year** - Sonam Kapoor (Actress)
- Delhi Minister Imran Hussain has been awarded PETA 'Hero to Animals' Award.
9. **Krishi Karman' Award** - Jharkhand has been selected for "Krishi Karman" award in the rice category from the Union Ministry of Agriculture.

## November

1. **Ustad Amjad Ali Khan conferred with Lifetime Achievement Award in Delhi**
- Sarod masters, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan conferred with the 'Sumitra Charat Ram Award for Lifetime Achievement' at the Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi, for his "immense contribution to the enrichment and promotion of the Indian classical music".
2. **Veteran Journalist N Ram received Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award**
- Eminent journalist and Chairman of the Hindu Publishing Group, N Ram has been selected under prestigious award category of Raja Ram Mohan Roy award.
3. **CSE Wins Indira Gandhi Peace Prize**
- Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has won this year's Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace,

Disarmament and Development, an award conferred by Indira Gandhi Trust each year on the late Prime Minister's birth anniversary.

4. **Amitabh Bachchan receives Sayaji Ratna Award**
- Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan was awarded the third Sayaji Ratna Award, established in the memory of erstwhile Baroda ruler Sayajirao Gaekwad III.
5. **Swati Chaturvedi won Press Freedom Award for Courage in UK**
- Freelance journalist Swati Chaturvedi has bagged the 2018 London Press Freedom Award for Courage for her book 'I am a Troll: Inside the Secret World of the BJP's Digital Army'.

## October

1. **First World Agriculture Prize – Prof. M.S. Swaminathan**

- M.S. Swaminathan won the first World Agriculture Prize.

- This prize instituted by the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) was presented by Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- Prof. Swaminathan is known as Father of Green Revolution in India.

## 2. Narendra Modi wins Seoul Peace Prize

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred with the Seoul Peace Prize for 2018 for his contribution to international cooperation and fostering global economic growth.
- The Seoul Peace Prize was established in 1990 to commemorate the success of the 24th Olympic Games held in Seoul.

## 3. BEML Received Top Challengers' & Best Mining Equipment Seller Award

- Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML), a Mini Ratna Public Sector Undertaking, under the Ministry of Defence, received the prestigious 'Top Challengers Award 2018' for the excellent performance during the financial year 2017-18.

## 4. Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony

- Union Government (Ministry of Culture) has announced winners of Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony for year 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Winners are –

For 2016 - **Ram Vanji Sutar.**

- He is renowned sculptor.
- His first notable work was the 45-feet Chambal monument at the Gandhi Sagar Dam in Madhya Pradesh.
- He is also recipient of Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

For 2015 - **Chhayanaut.**

- It is cultural organization of Bangladesh established in 1961.
- It has played leading role in promoting Tagore's works in Bengali culture, music and literature not only within Bangladesh, but all across the world.

For 2014 - **Rajkumar Singhajit Singh.**

- He is doyen of Manipuri dance. He is also teacher, performer and choreographer.

## 5. Hridaynath Award for Lifetime Achievement -

Veteran composer, lyricist, writer and music director Mohammed Zahur Khayyam Hashmi, famously known as Khayya was 2018 Hridaynath Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Note: The award will be conferred by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in Mumbai.

## 6. Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2018 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave awards to top Ranked State, District and State with maximum citizen participation based on the National Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 commissioned by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

- Haryana was ranked as the best State while Satara District of Maharashtra was ranked as the best district as per the ranking undertaken by Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018.

### Overall Ranking:

- Top 3 States- Haryana, Gujarat & Maharashtra.
- Top 3 Districts- Satara, Maharashtra, Rewari, Haryana, Pedapalli, Telangana.
- States with maximum citizen participation- Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat & Maharashtra.
- Districts with maximum citizens' participation- Nashik, Maharashtra, Solapur, Maharashtra & Chittorgarh, Rajasthan.

## International Awards

### December

## 1. Miss World 2018 - Mexico's Vanessa Ponce de Leon won the coveted Miss World 2018 crown at a grand event held in the Chinese city, Sanya.

- Former Miss World Manushi Chhillar (India) presented the crown to the new winner.

## 2. Miss Universe 2018 - Philippines' Catriona Gray has been crowned Miss Universe 2018.

- Tamaryn Green from South Africa was named the first runner-up while Miss Venezuela Sthefany

Gutiérrez stood third at the pageant which was held in Bangkok, Thailand.

- India was represented by 22-year-old Nehal Chudasama.

## 3. Mister Supranational 2018 - Goa's Prathamesh Maulingkar has created history by becoming the first Asian/Indian to win Mister Supranational title in a competition held at Krynica-Zdroj, Poland.

## 4. Time Magazine's "Person of the Year" - Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi

- Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was murdered in October 2018 at his country's Istanbul consulate, has been named Time magazine's "Person of the Year".
5. **Miss India Worldwide 2018** - Indian-American Shree Saini has been crowned Miss India Worldwide 2018 at a pageant held in the Fords City of New Jersey.
  6. **French Knight of the National Order of Merit** - Producer Ashok Amritraj was honoured with the French Knight of the National Order of Merit.
  7. **Oscars Shortlist** - Period. End of Sentence' has made it to the Oscar shortlist in the Documentary Short Subject category.

8. **America's most admired woman** - US former first lady Michelle Obama tops the list of America's most admired woman.
  - Former President Barack Obama was most admired man for the 11th year in a row while President Donald Trump finished second for the fourth consecutive year.
9. **Luka Modric Wins Ballon d'Or 2018**
  - Real Madrid and Croatia midfielder Luka Modric won Ballon d'Or 2018 in Paris.

### Nobel Prize Winners 2018

**1. Physiology or Medicine** – James P. Allison (USA), Tasuku Honjo (Japan)

- **Field** - For their discovery of cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation

**2. Physics** - Gérard Mourou (France), Arthur Ashkin (USA), Donna Strickland (Canada)

- **Field** - For their method of generating high-intensity, ultra-short optical pulses in the field of laser physics.

**3. Chemistry** - George Smith (USA), Frances Arnold (USA), Greg Winter (UK)

- **Field** - For control of evolution and used it for purposes that bring the greatest benefit to humankind.

**4. Peace** - Denis Mukwege (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Nadia Murad (Germany)

- **Field** - For their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict.

**5. Economic Sciences** – William Nordhaus (US), Paul Romer (US)

- **Field** - For work on climate change, and the endogenous growth theory.

**6. Alternative Nobel Literature Prize - Maryse Conde**  
**Note:**

- Maryse Conde, one of the Caribbean's most renowned authors, has won an award created to replace this year's Nobel Prize for Literature.
- The Nobel Prize for Literature was suspended after a crisis over its handling of allegations against Frenchman Jean-Claude Arnault, the husband of one of the academy's members.

### National Affairs

#### February 2019

**1. President unveils a life-size portrait of Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Central Hall of Parliament**

- President Ram Nath Kovind unveiled the life-size portrait of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Central Hall of Parliament.

**2. Clouded Leopard' to be Mascot for National Games 2022** - Clouded Leopard (Meghalaya's state animal) will be the mascot for the National Games 2022, coinciding with the 50th year of the creation of the state.

- Meghalaya will host the **National Games in 2022**.

- Meghalaya will be the third northeastern state after Manipur and Assam hosted the National Games in 1999 and 2007, respectively.

**3. 12th February: National Productivity Day**

**4. PM Narendra Modi inaugurates PETROTECH-2019**

- Narendra Modi inaugurated the three-day International Oil and Gas Conference 'PETROTECH-2019' (13th) at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- The 'PETROTECH-2019' is being organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India.



- India is the 3rd largest consumer of crude oil and petroleum products.
5. **Dera Baba Nanak land check post designated as an immigration centre** - The Union Government designated Dera Baba Nanak land Check post in Gurdaspur district of Punjab as an authorised immigration checkpoint to exit and entry for visiting Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan.
6. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the CREDAI YouthCon -19 at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi.**
- The theme for this YouthCon is Next Generation.
7. **AYUSH Minister launches e-AUSHADHI portal** - Shripad Yesso Naik (Minister of State (IC) for AYUSH) has launched the e-AUSHADHI portal, for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters at New Delhi.
8. **India and Norway launched an initiative to Combat Marine Pollution** - The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change signed a Letter of Intent establishing the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative together with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
9. The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for Extension of tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karmacharis (NCSK) beyond 31st of March 2019 for three years.
10. **After China, India is world's 2nd largest LPG consumer & importer**
- After achieving the target of distributing 8 crore cooking gas connections under its flagship Pradhan India became the second largest consumer of LPG in the world.
  - According to the Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, imports of LPG grew 12.5

percent over the past five years to 12 million metric tons (13 million tons) in 2018-19, surpassing Japan and putting India in second place behind China.

- India imports LPG mainly from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Iran.

11. **PM laid foundation stone for various development projects in Leh** -
12. **India's tourism sector registers 19% growth in 2018** - According to Union Minister K J Alphons, the country's tourism sector fetched 234 billion US Dollar revenue last year, registering a growth of over 19%.
13. The Textile Minister Smriti Irani has launched the India Size project (first-of-its-kind project in the history of the country) in Mumbai.
- The objective of the India Size to arrive at a standard Indian Size for the ready-to-wear clothing industry.
14. **Cabinet approves the establishment of Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog** - The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for the establishment of Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog for conservation, protection and development of cows and their progeny.
- Note:**
- The Aayog will work in collaboration with Veterinary, Animal Sciences or Agriculture University or departments or organizations of the Central or State Government engaged in the task of research in the field of breeding and rearing of the cow, organic manure, biogas etc.
  - Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog was announced in the interim budget on the 1st Feb 2019.

### January 2019

14. **Cabinet Approves 10% Job Quota for 'Economically Weaker' Upper Castes** - The Union Cabinet approved a 10% reservation for 'economically backward' upper castes in government jobs.

**Note:**

- On January 10, 2019 Parliament passed the Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill 2019 to provide 10 per cent reservation in jobs and educational institutions to economically backward section in the general category.
- Under the new amendment to the constitution, people with an annual income below Rs. 8 lakh and

owning 'fewer than five acres of land would be eligible for the reservation.

**Note**

15. **Gujarat became first state to implement 10% quota for economically weak in general category.**
16. President Ramnath Kovind has given the assent to the **124th constitutional Amendment Bill (which is now Constitution 103rd amendment Act)** providing 10 per cent reservation for economically weaker sections. The Important components of the 103rd constitutional Amendment are:
- The amendment changed two fundamental rights, Article 15 and 16. The amendments

provide for the advancement of the “economically weaker sections” of the society.

- The amendment aims to fulfil the commitments of the directive principles of state policy under Article 46, to promote the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the society.

**17. The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has been renamed as the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**. It will work under the Union Ministry of Commerce.**

**18. Coins to commemorate MGR's 102nd birth anniversary** - Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K

Palaniswami released two commemorative coins in the denominations of Rs 100 and Rs 5 to mark the 102nd birth anniversary of DR M G Ramachandran.

**Note:**

- DR M G Ramachandran popularly known as M. G. R is an actor, filmmaker and politician who served as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for ten years between 1977 and 1987.

**19. National Museum of Indian Cinema Inaugurated** - The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) at Films Division of India premises in Mumbai.

**20. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Museum** - Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Subhash Chandra Bose museum at Red Fort in New Delhi to mark the Netaji's 122nd birth anniversary.

- The museum in the Red Fort complex is also important for the fact that INA trials were held within the Red Fort complex.

**Another Museum inaugurated at Red Fort in New Delhi is as follows**

- The Yaad-e-Jallian Museum provides an authentic account of Jallianwala Bagh massacre happened on April 13, 1919.
- The Drishyakala-Museum on Indian Art showcases Indian art works from 16th century till India's independence.
- The Museum on 1857- India's first war of Independence portrays the historical narrative of 1857 war of independence, showcasing the valor and sacrifices made by Indians during the period.

**21. The word Nari Shakti is chosen as the word of the Year 2018** by the Oxford dictionaries. The announcement regarding this was made in the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF).

**22. Vande Bharat Express** - India's fastest indigenous train, Train 18 named as Vande Bharat Express will run between Delhi and Varanasi.

- Train 18 is an indigenously developed world-class train under Make in India.
- The 16-coach train has been built completely in India by Indian engineers in a span of 18 months at the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai.

**23. Sanrakshan Kshмата Mahotsav (SAKSHAM)** was flagged off by Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan to promote and create awareness among people on the need of oil and gas conservation for the future and the methods to do it.

- Sanrakshan Kshмата Mahotsav (SAKSHAM) is an annual flagship event of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Govt. of India.

**24. National Salt Satyagraha Memorial inaugurated at Dandi** - In commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 30, 2019 dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial at Dandi in Navsari district, Gujarat to the nation.

- The memorial encapsulates the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi- Agra for Swadeshi, Swatchagrah and Satyagraha.

**25. IIT Hyderabad launches B.Tech course in Artificial Intelligence**

- IIT Hyderabad has announced the launch of a full-fledged bachelor's programme in Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology.
- IIT Hyderabad has become the first institute in the country to launch full-fledged Bachelor's programme in AI technology.
- IIT Hyderabad will be the third institute to globally to offer the B.Tech course in AI.

**26. Republic Day 26<sup>th</sup> January** - India celebrates 70<sup>th</sup> Republic Day

- President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa was the chief guest for this year's Republic Day parade.
- The theme of the 70th Republic Day parade is 'life of Gandhi' which is a tribute to the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary.
- Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Wani of Jammu and Kashmir was posthumously conferred with the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award by President of India.
- The all-women **Assam Rifles** contingent created history this year by participating for the first time in a Republic Day (26th January) parade.

- The ICAR tableau in the Republic Day Parade has won the first prize for its Kisan Gandhi theme.
- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research tableau with the theme "Mishrit Kheti, Khushiyon Ki Kheti" portrayed Gandhi with goats and a cow and Kasturba engaged with charkha and caring animals.

**27. JNPT becomes only Indian port to be listed amongst world's top 30 Container Ports** - The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), India's premier container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report.

- JNPT notched up five spots, to be 28th on the list, compared to its previous ranking.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Port also known as Nhava Sheva, is the largest container port in India.
- It is located at east of Mumbai in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.

**28. State of Talent Acquisition 2019 Report:** The report is released by the Mercer-Mettl's

Key points

- India Companies are expected to raise their hiring budgets by 34 per cent and volumes by 31 per cent in 2019.
- Due to this increase in hiring the companies are expected to raise their hiring budgets by at least 34 per cent compared to 20 per cent of companies in 2018.
- The report notes that technology is employed extensively in sourcing (88 per cent) candidates, while it is used the least when boarding (49 per cent), candidates.

**29. Shehri Samridhi Utsav** - The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is organising a fortnight of events named Shehri Samridhi Utsav all over the country with an aim to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) to the poorest of poor and the most vulnerable.

**30. TRAI releases Tele-density data of India:**

Key facts are listed below:

- The total number of mobile phone subscribers in India by the end of November was 117.18 crore with a net addition of 17.39 lakh customers during the month.
- The private access service providers held 89.99 per cent market share of the wireless subscribers whereas BSNL and MTNL, the two PSU access service providers, had a market share of only 10.01 per cent as on November 2018.

- Reliance Jio led the subscription race in November 2018 adding around 88.01 lakh subscribers across the country.
- State-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) added around 3.78 lakh subscribers in November, taking its total tally to 11.38 crore.
- Airtel added around 1.02 lakh new customers in November, taking its total tally to 34.18 crores.
- On the other hand, Vodafone Idea lost around 65.26 lakh subscribers.

**31. Centre launches 5-yr Plan to Combat pollution in 102 cities** - The Environment Ministry launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aimed at reducing toxic particulate matter in 102 Indian cities by **2024**.

Note:

- The NCAP will be a mid-term, five-year plan with 2019 as the first year, while **2017 will be the base year** for comparison of concentration.
- An amount of **INR300 crore** has been sanctioned for this purpose.

**32. Election Commission wants ban on all party E-ads 48 hrs before polls**

- The Election Commission has sought an amendment to the law to prevent social media and other digital platforms from carrying political advertisements in the final 48 hours before elections.
- While Section 126 of the Representation of People Act prevents electronic media from airing political advertisements in the 'silent period' before elections.

**33. ECI renew MoU with Election Commission of Bhutan**

- On the sidelines of the international conference, the Election Commission of India renew Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the field of election management with the Election Commission of Bhutan.

**34. Ministry of Textiles and Government of India launched Artisan Speak at Elephanta Caves** (UNESCO heritage site) to strengthen the handlooms and textiles sector of India.

**35. Union Cabinet approves setting up of 3 New AIIMS** - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the setting up of three new AIIMS institutions.

- The three new institutions would come up at **Vijaynagar at Samba of Jammu Region, Awantipora in Pulwama of Kashmir Region and Rajkot in Gujarat** under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha yojana.

### 36. UGC to set up 'CARE' to Strengthen Research

**Publication** - The University Grants Commission (UGC) has decided to establish a Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE).

- The Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE) is tasked to scrutinise and then compile a list of journals for social sciences, humanities, language, arts, culture, Indian Knowledge system etc.
- UGC has constituted a Committee under the **Chairmanship of Prof. P. Balram**, to review its quality mandate relating to promotion of Research and to review the existing M.Phil/ Ph.D Regulations.

### 37. Six monuments declared as National Importance in 2018 by ASI -

- The Ministry of Culture announced that Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared 6 monuments as 'protected and of national importance' under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, in 2018.

These sites are:

- 125-year-old Old High Court Building in Nagpur, Maharashtra,
- The Group of Temples in Ranipur Jharail in Bolangir district of Odisha,
- 2 Mughal era monuments in Agra- Haveli of Agha Khan and Hathi Khana,
- The Neemrana Baori in Alwar district of Rajasthan,
- The Vishnu Temple in Kotali, Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand.

### 38. GST on Haj reduced from 18% To 5% - Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi stated that GST on Haj has been reduced from 18% to 5%.

### 39. Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg visited India.

- The fourth edition of the Raisina Dialogue was held in New Delhi.
- Norway Prime Minister Erna Solberg delivered an inaugural address in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.

### 40. The Southern Railway has bagged the number one position for cleanliness in all the 17 railway zones in the country.

- This achievement was under the category of other than Premium Category trains in the recent Trains Cleanliness Survey conducted by IRCTC on all India level.

### 41. The Union Civil Aviation minister Suresh Prabhu has inaugurated country's first Geographical Indication (GI) Store at International Airport at Dabolim, Goa.

### 42. Sakhi Centres - Sakhi centre or One Stop Centre (OSC) is a fully sponsored scheme of Central Government.

- These centres are set up through the Nirbhaya Fund under the National Mission for Empowerment of women by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

### 43. President gives assent to **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Act, 2019** - The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Act, 2019 which was passed by the Parliament on January 3, 2019 received the assent of the President of India on January 10, 2019.

Key points:

- The Bill seeks to amend the Right to Education (RTE) Act to abolish the "no-detention" policy in schools.
- Under the current provisions of the Act, no student can be detained up to **class VIII (8<sup>th</sup>)**.
- As per the amendment, it would be left to the states to decide whether to continue the no-detention policy.
- Now, states can choose to hold a regular examination either at the end of Classes 5 and 8, or both.
- If a student fails, the amendment bill grants a provision to give her or him additional opportunity to take a re-examination within **two months**.
- If the students still do not pass the exam, the state government may decide to detain them.
- 

### Right to Education (RTE) Act

- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (the Act) provides for free and compulsory education to all children of the age of **six to fourteen years**.
- The **Section 16** of the Act provides that no child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education.

### 44. India's Satyarup becomes world's youngest mountaineer to climb 7 peaks, 7 volcano summits - Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley.

- With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man (35 years and 262 days) to climb



the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.

45. Arunima Sinha has become the World's 1st woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.

Note:

- Arunima Sinha (born 20 July 1988) is the first female amputee to climb Mount Everest.

**46. Centre Approves renaming of Allahabad as Prayagraj**

- The Union Home Ministry has approved the Uttar Pradesh government's proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj.

Note:

- Ekana International Stadium in Lucknow renamed as 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Cricket Stadium'.
- Jolly Grant (Dehradun) airport renamed after former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee
- Agartala Airport renamed as Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport.
- British-era railway station Robertsgang renamed as Sonbhadra.
- Mughalsarai junction renamed after Deen Dayal Upadhyay.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji 'Maharaj' International Airport.

**47. Government sets up Export Promotion Cell for MSMEs -**

- The MSME ministry has established an export promotion cell to create a sustainable ecosystem for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

**48. Go Green Initiatives in Indian Railways:** Railways have undertaken some major initiatives to Go Green.

- Ministry of Railways has planned to set up 1000 Mega Watt (MW) solar power by 2020-21 which would help Railways to source about 10% of its electrical energy from renewable source.

**49. Indian Forest Service to be renamed as Indian Forest and Tribal Service** - The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has initiated an inter-ministerial consultation note to rename the Indian Forest Service as Indian Forest and Tribal Service.

**50. Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Rankings 2019**

- The London-based Times Higher Education (THE), a global organisation that produces data, analysis and expertise on higher education has released the Emerging Economies University Rankings 2019.

- The 2019 ranking comprises of 450 universities from 43 countries, across four continents.
- India has increased its representation in the latest Times Higher Education (THE) Emerging Economies University Rankings 2019, with 49 institutes making it to the list as compared to 42 last year.

The standings of Indian universities are as follows

- The Indian Institute of Science - Bangalore (IISc) **has topped the rankings among Indian institutes with 14th rank**
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay ranked at 27<sup>th</sup> position.
- IIT Roorkee ranked at 35<sup>th</sup> position
- IIT Kanpur ranked at 46<sup>th</sup> position and IIT Kharagpur at 55<sup>th</sup> rank.

Note:

- China remained the most represented nation in the annual listing, with 72 institutions in total. The nation claimed four of the table's top-five positions.
- Tsinghua University surpassed Peking University as this year's top institution overall.

**51. IRDAI Raises Minimum Driver Insurance Cover to Rs 15 Lakh**

- The regulator directed all general insurers to provide a minimum CSI of Rs 15 lakh under Compulsory Personal Accident (CPA) cover for owner-driver under Liability Only to all classes of vehicles at the premium rate of Rs 750 per annum for annual policy.

- Currently, the capital sum insured (CSI) under this section for motorised two-wheelers and private cars/commercial vehicles is Rs 1 lakh and Rs 2 lakh, respectively.

**52. Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a 350-rupee commemorative coin** as part of the 352nd birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Gobind Singh in New Delhi. The

**53. The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the Nation Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP), at Jharsuguda and in Odisha.** The Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) at Jharsuguda is built at a cost of Rs 100 Crores.

**54. Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates ISRO's UNNATI programme in Bengaluru** - The Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has inaugurated the UNNATI- (Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training) programme organized by ISRO in Bengaluru.

- ISRO will train 90 officials from 45 countries in three batches.

**55. National Health Authority gets Cabinet nod**

- The Union Cabinet has cleared the constitution of a National Health Authority (NHA) through an executive order, thus taking the Pradhan Mantri

Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) out of the ambit of the Ministry of Health.

- Now, the ministry's role will be limited to acting as the nodal ministry for NHA in parliamentary matters, like the presentation of annual reports.
- The NHA's governing board will be chaired by the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, while its members will include NITI Aayog CEO and NHA CEO.

**56.** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has imposed a fine of 100 crore rupees on Meghalaya government for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state.

**57.** The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has launched the 'Swachh Survekshan 2019'.

- The Swachh Survekshan 2019 aims to evaluate the achievements in the cleanliness level in urban areas of the country.

**58. Govt approves additional assistance of over Rs 1,146 cr to Tamil Nadu**

- The Union Government has approved the additional assistance of over 1146 crore rupees to Tamil Nadu (affected by the cyclone - Gaja) from National Disaster Response Fund.
- The approval was given by a High-Level Committee chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi.

**December**

**1. Centre Approves Rs 1,146.12 cr Cyclone 'Gaja' Assistance for Tamil Nadu**

- The High-Level Committee (HLC) chaired by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh approved additional assistance of Rs 1,146.12 crore from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to Tamil Nadu, which was affected by cyclone 'Gaja' recently.

**2. India Announces INR 4,500 Crore Assistance to Bhutan**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced Rs. 4,500 crore financial assistance to Bhutan for its 12th five-year plan after holding wide-ranging talks with his Bhutanese counterpart Lotay Tshering.
- The new five-year plan of Bhutan began in 2018 and will continue till 2022.

**3. NABCB Accreditation Secures Recognition in Asia-Pacific Region**

- The National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), India's national accreditation body, has secured equivalence for its accreditation programme for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OHSMS) Certification Bodies in Asia-Pacific region.
- It has signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) of the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC).
- NABCB is the third accreditation body in the Asia Pacific Region to become internationally equivalent in the region, the other two being the accreditation bodies of Hong Kong and Mexico.

**4. India's Vedangi Kulkarni becomes fastest Asian to Cycle the Globe**

- The 20-year old Indian woman Vedangi Kulkarni becomes the fastest Asian to cycle the globe.
- She had completed 29,000 kilometres' distance required to qualify as bicycling across the globe.

**5. Government Launches Asiatic Lion Conservation Project**

- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the "Asiatic Lion Conservation Project" to protect and conserve the population of Asiatic Lion and its associated ecosystem.
- The total budget of the project for 3 years amounts to around Rs 9784 lakh.

**6. NITI Aayog Released Strategy document for new India**

- NITI Aayog unveiled its comprehensive national Strategy for New India titled 'Strategy for New India @75', which defines clear objectives for 2022-23.
- The document was released by the Finance Minister of India Mr Arun Jaitley.
- NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman- Rajiv Kumar, CEO- Amitabh Kant.

**7. India's 1st Private UAV Factory Comes Up in Hyderabad**

- India's first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) opened at Adani Aerospace Park in Hyderabad.
- It is built by the Adani Group and Israel-based Elbit Systems.

**8. EU Ambassador Opens India's 1st CoE at MAHE**

- India's first Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence established by the European Union was inaugurated at the Department of European Studies (DES) at Manipal Academy of Higher Education, New Delhi, Manipal by Ambassador of the European Union (EU) to India and Bhutan, Tomasz Kozlowski.

#### 9. Government Sanctions 254 Projects Under National Mission for Clean Ganga

- The government has sanctioned 254 projects worth over 24 thousand crore rupees under National Mission for Clean Ganga.
- As per Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Minister Nitin Gadkari, around five thousand crore rupees have been spent in the last four years under it.
- The Announcement was made at the India Water Impact Summit 2018 in New Delhi. Mr Gadkari informed that his Ministry has taken up construction of 197 ghats in five states, including Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

#### 10. India pips China in FDI inflows for the first time in 20 years

- For the first time in two decades, India has been getting more foreign investment than its neighbour China. In 2018, India saw more than \$38 billion of inbound deals compared with China's \$32 billion.

#### 11. Arunachal touches record high revenue generation

- The Arunachal Pradesh government has created a record of a total revenue generation of Rs 1,598.49 crore in 2017-18, reaching a new high in the last 30 years.
- The revenue generation had crossed the Rs 1,000 cr mark for two consecutive years since Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood in 1987.

#### 12. All Indian airports set to install body scanners from 2019

- Airports in India will be able to use body scanners from next year and spare "clean" passengers physical frisking.
- The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) is soon going to come out with technical specifications of these scanners and then airports can install and machines meeting those norms.

#### 13. Internet access in India has crossed 50 crore milestone

- The number of internet connections in India has grown by 65% from March 2016 to cross the 50

crore mark in 2018, in line with the target set by the Narendra Modi government three years ago.

- As per the latest information from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai), by the end of September 2018, there were 56 crore narrowband and broadband connections in India.
- Just five states - Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana), Gujarat and Maharashtra — account for 20 crore or 36% of all internet connections in India.

#### 14. Central Railways introduces technology to eliminate manual examination of trains

- The mechanical branch of Central Railways' Nagpur division has introduced a new state-of-the-art technology called **Automated Train Examination System** (ATES) for the enhancement of train safety.
- The system, developed by Konkan Railway Corporation Limited, eliminates manual examination of trains and measures axle box temperature, wheel disc temperature and records the under-gear of rolling stock of running trains through infrared and other cameras.

#### 15. Triple Talaq Bill passed in Lok Sabha

- The Lok Sabha on 27<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018 passed The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2018.
- The Bill will replace the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Ordinance-2018.
- Bill makes instant triple talaq or talaq-e-biddat a criminal offence, with a jail term of up to three years with a fine.

#### 16. Niti Aayog releases second Delta Ranking of Aspirational districts

- Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant released the Second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme.
- The ranking details the incremental progress achieved by the districts during June to October this year across six key development sectors.

List of most improvement district are as follow:

- Virudhunagar district in Tamil Nadu topped the list of the most improvement district.
- Nuapada district in Odisha ranked second.
- Siddharthnagar in Uttar Pradesh ranked third.
- Bihar's Aurangabad ranked fourth.
- Koraput in Odisha ranked fifth in the list of the most improvement district.

Note: These districts have championed the development narrative in fundamental parameters of social progress.

#### Least improvement district -

- On the other side; Nagaland's Kiphire district, Jharkhand's Giridih, Chatra in Jharkhand, Hailakandi in Assam, and Pakur in Jharkhand have shown least improvement.
- The districts have been ranked in a transparent basis on parameters across various performance indicators like Health and Nutrition, Education, Skill Development and Basic Infrastructure among others.

#### 17. Andhra Pradesh gets its own High Court in Capital Amaravati

- President Ram Nath Kovind on 26 December 2018, issued orders for the creation of a separate high court for Andhra Pradesh.
- The new high court will start functioning from 1 January 2019 from Amaravati.
- With the creation of the new high court, the country will have 25 high courts.

#### 18. Three islands in Andaman and Nicobar renamed after Netaji Subash Chandra Bose

- PM Modi renamed three islands of Andaman.
- The three renamed islands of Andaman and Nicobar are:
  - (i) Ross renamed as **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep**
  - (ii) Neil renamed as **Shaheed Dweep**
  - (iii) Havelock renamed as **Swaraj Dweep**.
- The Prime Minister also released a commemorative stamp, its first-day cover and a Rs-75 coin on this special day.

Note:

- After the Japanese captured the Andaman Island during the time of the Second World War, Netaji had hoisted the flag at Port Blair on December 30, 1943.
- This was because he believed that Port Blair was the first territory to be freed from British rule.
- Bose had reportedly suggested back then that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands be renamed as Shahid and Swaraj Dweep.

#### 19. India's largest cancer institute in Haryana's Jhajjar to open in January 2019

- The largest cancer hospital in India, the National Cancer Institute will be opened in Haryana's Jhajjar district.
- The National Cancer Institute would operate under AIIMS.

#### 20. India Takes Over Iran's Strategic Chabahar Port

- Indian firm **India Ports Global Limited** took over the operations of the Shaheed Behesti Port at Chabahar on the southeastern coast of Iran, being jointly developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan.
- The company opened its office following the first meeting of the follow-up committee for implementation of the trilateral Chabahar Agreement between India, Afghanistan and Iran.
- "It was agreed to allow cargo movement at Chabahar using TIR Convention provisions."
- The Convention on International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention) is a multilateral treaty aimed at simplifying and harmonising the administrative formalities of international road transport.
- TIR stands for "Transports Internationaux Routiers" or 'International Road Transports.'
- According to the ministry statement, during meeting, it was decided to hold an event to promote and popularise the potential of Chabahar on February 26, 2019.

Note:

- India is investing **\$500 million** to develop the Chabahar port and a road link from there to Afghanistan to give access to that country, bypassing Pakistan.
- The port is also a key link in the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC), a 7,200-km-long multi-modal network of ship, rail and road routes to move freight between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe.

#### 21. PM Modi inaugurates India's longest rail-road bridge in Assam

- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Bogibeel bridge in Assam.
- The 4.94-kilometer long Bogibeel bridge on Brahmaputra river will connect the two northeast states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.
- It is India's longest rail-cum-road road bridge, on the river **Bramhaputra**.
- The bridge is constructed at an estimated cost of 5,800 crore rupees.
- It is situated 17 km downstream of Dibrugarh city in Assam

Note:

- The bridge has been inaugurated on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari



Vajpayee under whose government the work had started in 2002

- The foundation stone of the project was laid by former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda in 1997.
- The Bogibeel Bridge, which was a part of the Assam Accord and sanctioned in 1997-98, is also likely to play a crucial role in defence movement along the India-China border in Arunachal Pradesh.

## 22. Sadaiv Atal dedicated to the Nation on Good Governance Day 2018

- Sadaiv Atal, the Samadhi of Atal Bihari Vajpayee was dedicated to the Nation on the birth Anniversary of the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- On 25<sup>th</sup> December 2018 the President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated late PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's memorial Sadaiv Atal at Rashtriya Smriti Sthal to the nation.

- Sadaiv (always) Atal memorial will be managed by a trust headed by Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan.

## 23. PM Modi inaugurates Paika Rebellion chair in Utkal university

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, visited Odisha on 24th December, 2018.
- At the IIT Bhubaneswar campus, the Prime Minister released a commemorative stamp and coin on the Paika Rebellion.
- The Paika Rebellion, also called the Paika Bidroha, was an armed rebellion against British East India Company's rule in Odisha in 1817.
- The Paikas were the traditional militia of Odisha who served as warriors.
- The setting up of a Chair on the Paika Rebellion, in Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, was announced.

## November

### 1. Himachal Pradesh becomes first state to launch single emergency number 112

- Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in the country to implement Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) as Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched ERSS number 112 for the state.
- Under this system, all emergency numbers like 100 for police, 101 for fire, 102 for ambulance and disaster response have been integrated into one number '112'.
- This emergency number has been introduced on basis of US emergency number 911. Gradually this emergency number will be started in other states of the country.

Note:

- The ERSS project was approved by Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) based on the recommendations of the **Justice Verma Committee** in the backdrop of unfortunate incident of Nirbhaya in December 2012 in national capital New Delhi.

### 2. Jolly Grant airport renamed After Atal Bihari Vajpayee

- The Uttarakhand government has decided to rename the Dehradun airport after former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- The proposal to rename the Jolly Grant airport after Atal Bihari Vajpayee was approved by the

state cabinet at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat.

### 3. Casio launches world's first GST calculator

- Japanese electronics company 'CASIO' has launched world's first Goods and Services Tax (GST) calculator in India for simplify the GST calculations for tax payers.
- The company has two variants of GST calculators MJ-120GST and MJ-12GST in the Indian market. These new GST calculators will provide solutions for GST based invoicing.

### 4. CSIR To Establish a High-End Skill Development Centre in Chandigarh

- India's premier National Research Laboratory CSIR-Institute of Microbial Technology (CSIR-IMTECH) announced a new partnership with Merck, a leading German science and technology company, to establish a 'High End Skill Development Centre' in CSIR-IMTECH, Chandigarh.

### 5. 'HAUSLA-2018' Inaugurated in New Delhi

- The National Festival for Children of Child Care Institutions (CCIs)- "Hausla 2018" of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) was inaugurated by the Secretary, Shri Rakesh Srivastava, in New Delhi.

### 6. Aadi Mahotsav" Organized by Tribal Affairs Ministry in Delhi

- The 4th edition of annual “Aadi Mahotsav”, a National Tribal Festival organized by Ministry of Tribal Affairs at Dilli Haat, Shri Aurobindo Marg, INA, Delhi.
  - Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Shri Jual Oram inaugurated the event.
- 7. India to lay Foundation Stone for Kartarpur Corridor Route**
- Vice President M Venkiah Naidu laid the foundation stone of the Dera Baba Nanak Kartarpur Sahib corridor for Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan.
  - Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib is situated in district Narowal 4 KM away from Indo Pak border in Pakistan.
  - This Gurudwara has a great significance for the Sikhs because the first Guru Sh Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent the last 18 years of his life there and died there.
  - Punjab Governor VP Singh Badnore was the guest of honour.
- 8. UN Selects Noida, Greater Noida to Participate in Global Sustainable Cities 2025 Initiative**
- The United Nations has selected Uttar Pradesh’s Noida and Greater Noida to participate in its Global Sustainable Cities 2025 initiative.
  - According to UN, the twin-cities in Gautam Buddh Nagar district, adjoining the national capital, have been selected in the “University City” category ahead of Mumbai and Bengaluru as the only invitee from India.
- 9. NITI Aayog Constitutes Himalayan State Regional Council –**
- NITI Aayog has constituted the ‘Himalayan State Regional Council’ to ensure sustainable development of the Indian Himalayan region.
  - The Council will be chaired by the Dr. VK Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog.
  - The Council has been constituted to review and implement identified action points based on the Reports of five Working Groups, which were established along thematic areas to prepare a roadmap for action.
- 10. PM Modi Laid Foundation Stones of City Gas Distribution Projects**
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi the Foundation Stones of City Gas Distribution (CGD) Projects in 65 Geographical Areas (GAs) in 129 Districts under the 9th CGD Bidding Round.
- He also launched the tenth round of bidding for award of city gas licenses in 124 new districts in 14 states, which have been clubbed into 50 Geographical Areas (GAs).
- 11. Twitter launches #PowerOf18 campaign to boost youth engagement for 2019 polls**
- Twitter India has launched #PowerOf18 campaign aimed at encouraging youth to contribute in public debates and participate in civic engagement for the 2019 general elections.
  - The initiative was launched by Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and Maya Hari, Vice-President and Managing Director, Asia Pacific, Twitter during townhall chat with the students of IIT Delhi.
- 12. NDMC launches QR-enabled fridge magnets for digital payment of bills**
- New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) has launched quick response (QR)-enabled fridge magnets for digital payment of bills.
  - The magnets are personalised, and each customer will have unique QR Code mapped to their consumer account number.
  - It is powered by SignCatch – an IT and services company.
- 13. Bengaluru India’s most-congested city: US study**
- According to the National bureau of economic research (NBER) Bengaluru is the country’s most congested and second slowest city.
  - Bengaluru tops the index for most congested city in the country followed by Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata.
  - When it comes to traffic speed, Kolkata is the slowest city, followed by Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Varanasi.
- 14. Satyarup Siddhanta becomes first Indian to climb Mt Giluwe in Papua New Guinea**
- Indian mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta became the first Indian to climb Mt Giluwe - the second highest mountain in Papua New Guinea.
  - Mt Damavand is the highest peak in Iran and also a potentially active volcano.
- 15. The Ministry of Railways has launched the ‘Unreserved Mobile Ticketing’ facility (UTS on Mobile) to enable seamless booking of unreserved tickets in all Zonal Railways.**
- The facility of booking unreserved tickets, including season tickets and also platform tickets is available through the ‘UTSONMOBILE’ app,

available for Android, IOS and Windows phone users.

**16. India Meteorological Department (IMD)** has developed a new technology '**Impact Based Forecasting Approach**' to assess the **rise of water level in rivers** and reservoirs by rain.

**17. The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh** has launched the India's first Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) at **Mandi (Himachal Pradesh)**.

**26. IIT Madras develops India's first indigenous microprocessor - Shakti**

- The researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) have designed India's first indigenous microprocessor called 'Shakti'.
- It is aimed at developing industrial-grade microprocessors and other components of the microprocessor ecosystem.

**27. IRCTC launches AI chatbot to answer user queries - Ask Disha**

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered chatbot- Ask Disha ((Digital Interaction to Seek Help Anytime) to help its users answer various queries.

**28. Govt to issue Rs 75 coin to mark 75th anniversary of Tricolour hoisting by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose**

- The government will release a Rs 75 coin to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose hoisting the Tricolour for the first time at Port Blair.
- The commemorative Rs 75 coin will be made out of 50 per cent silver, 40 per cent copper, and 5 per cent each of nickel and zinc, and will weigh 35 grams.

**29. PM Modi inaugurates first multi-modal terminal in Varanasi**

- The Prime Minister inaugurated first multi-modal terminal on Ganga river in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- This is the first of the four Multi-Modal Terminals being constructed on National Waterways-I on River Ganga as part of the World Bank-aided Jal Marg Vikas project of the Inland Waterways Authority of India.
- The other three terminals are under construction at Sahibganj (Jharkhand), Haldia (West Bengal), and Gazipur (Uttar Pradesh).
- The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is the project implementing agency.

**30. eDrishti software launched to help Railways Minister keep track of punctuality of trains**

- Indian Railways unveiled 'eDrishti' software that will help Union Railway Minister to keep track of punctuality of trains as well as freight and passenger earnings and much more from anywhere in the country.

**31. Govt. launches PAISA Portal under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission**

- Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched 'PAiSA' – Portal for Affordable Credit and Interest Subvention Access during National Workshop on Municipal Finance and Urban Planning held in New Delhi.

**PAISA Portal**

- It is centralised electronic platform for quicker processing of loans under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)**.
- It aims to connect directly with beneficiaries and ensure there is greater efficiency in the delivery of services. It has been designed and developed by **Allahabad Bank**, the nodal bank under the scheme.

**Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)**

- It is Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation.
- Its objective is to uplift urban poor folks by enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities through skill development.
- It also provides subsidy to urban poor i.e. interest subsidy of 5% – 7% for setting up individual micro-enterprises with loan of up to 2 lakhs and for group enterprises with loan limit of up to Rs.10 lakhs.

**32. Sashastra Seema Bal to patrol Dudhwa tiger reserve**

- Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) and Sashastra Seema Bal have joined hands to provide security to Dudhwa forests and its rich wildlife.

**About Dudhwa Tiger Reserve**

- It is protected area in Uttar Pradesh that stretches mainly across the Lakhimpur Kheri and Bahraich districts.
- It comprises Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary.

**33. 70-feet tall statue of Lord Buddha unveiled at Rajgir in Nalanda district**

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar unveiled 70-foot tall statue of Lord Buddha at Rajgir in Nalanda district of state.
  - It is second tallest statue of Buddha in the country.
  - The statue has been installed above 16 metre radius pedestal in middle of **lake Ghora Katora**.
- 34. Cabinet approves setting up of Medical College at Silvassa in UT of Dadra and Nagar Haveli**
- This will increase the availability of doctors and increase in medical education opportunities.
- 35. IIM Calcutta Innovation Park, ICC sign MoU for energising startup ecosystem in East and Northeast India**
- IIM Calcutta Innovation Park and Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for energising start-up ecosystem in East and Northeast India.
  - The MoU will bring incubator and industry together in more formal way.
  - IIM Innovation Park is currently incubating 40 start-ups with almost half from West Bengal.
- 36. India overtakes US to become 2nd largest smartphone market: Report**
- According to a report by research firm Canalys, India has overtaken the US to become the second largest smartphone market in the July-September 2018 quarter.
  - China's smartphone shipment declined 15.2% y-o-y, India by 1.1% and the US by 0.4% in the September 2018 quarter.
- 37. Govt. launches chatbot loaded AirSewa digital platform for air passengers**
- Union Civil Aviation Ministry launched the upgraded version of AirSewa 2.0 web portal and mobile app in New Delhi.
  - It will offer passengers convenient and hassle-free air travel experience
- 38. India's first specialized hospital for elephants opened in Mathura**
- India's first specialized hospital for elephants was formally opened Churmura village in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh.
- 39. Pneumonia may kill over 17 lakh children in India by 2030: Study**
- According to global study released by UK-based NGO 'Save the Children', more than 17 lakh children in India are likely to die of pneumonia by 2030, despite the infection being easily curable.
- 40. Cabinet approves setting up of Central Tribal University in Andhra Pradesh**
- Union Cabinet has approved setting up of Central Tribal University in Andhra Pradesh.
  - It will be set up in Relli village of Vizianagaram District of Andhra Pradesh.
- 41. India elected as Member of International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Council**
- India was elected as member of International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Council for another 4-year term from 2019 to 2022.
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**
- ITU is the UN specialised agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs).
  - It is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- 42. India and Japan signs loan Agreement for Turga Hydel Project**
- India and Japan signed Loan Agreement worth Rs. 1817 crore for construction of Turga Pumped Storage (I) Hydel Project.
  - On completion, this project will contribute to Industrial Development and Living Standard Improvement in the **West Bengal**.
- 43. Cabinet approves renaming of Jharsuguda Airport in Odisha as Veer Surendra Sai Airport, Jharsuguda**
- The Union Cabinet has approved renaming of Jharsuguda Airport in Odisha as "Veer Surendra Sai Airport, Jharsuguda" after Veer Surendra Sai who is well-known freedom fighter of Odisha.

## October

- 1. PM Modi Unveils World's Tallest Statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**
- On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 'Statue of Unity' (world's tallest Statue) on the 143<sup>rd</sup> birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Surat, Gujarat.

### Tallest statue:

- The Statue of Unity (bronze statue) is the tallest statue 600 feet (182-metre) in the world, taller than China's Spring Temple Buddha statue (153-metre) and almost double the height of the Statue of Liberty (93 metres) in USA.

### Location:



- The statue of unity located on the Sadhu Bet island (near Rajpipla) on the Narmada river, located between the Satpura and the Vindhya mountain ranges.

#### Total cost

- The project cost was Rs 3,050 crore and fully funded by the Gujarat government, built within three-and-a-half years from infrastructure major **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)**.

#### Built by –

- It was built by Padma Bhushan recipient sculptor **Ram V Sutar** and intricate bronze cladding work was done by a Chinese foundry, the Jiangxi Toqine Company (JTQ).

### 2. Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation for India's largest Dry Dock at Cochin Shipyard in Kerala -

- The Union Minister for Shipping, Road Transport & Highways, Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation Nitin Gadkari and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan laid the foundation for India's largest Dry Dock at Cochin Shipyard in Kerala.
- The new Dry Dock is being constructed at a cost of Rs 1799 Crore.
- It is a 310 m long, 75m wide, with a depth of 13 m and draught of 9.5m.

### 3. India to become world's third largest aviation market around 2024: IATA

- According to the global airlines' body IATA's 20-year Air Passenger Forecast, India will become the world's third largest aviation market around 2024 surpassing the United Kingdom.
- It is projected that total air passenger numbers to touch 8.2 billion in 2037.

- According to the IATA, China would displace the United States as the world's largest aviation market in the mid-2020s.
- India will take 3rd place after the US, surpassing the UK around 2024.

### 4. India's First Domestic Cruise 'Angriya' flagged off from Mumbai

- Angriya, India's first domestic luxury cruise line, has started ferrying tourists between Mumbai and Goa.
- The 131-metre long and 17-metre wide ship has been built in Japan and will be used to boost cruise tourism in India.
- The ship is named after the first **Admiral of the Maratha Navy**, Kanhoji Angre, popularly known as the 'Shivaji of the Indian Sea'.

### 5. PM inaugurates National Police Memorial in New Delhi

### 6. Vigilance Awareness Week – 2018

- The Central Vigilance Commission observes the Vigilance Awareness Week every year during the week in which birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (31st October) falls.
- The 2018 Vigilance Awareness Week is being observed from 29th October to 3rd November 2018.
- The theme of Vigilance Awareness Week-2018 is - Eradicate Corruption-Build a New India.

### 7. The country's first India-Israel Innovation Centre (IIIC), an entrepreneurial technology hub, was launched in Bengaluru.

### 8. Textile Ministry to release Rs 7.8 Cr for construction of textile tourism complex in Nongpoh, Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya

### 9. The 36th National Games will be held in Goa from March 30 to April 14 2019.

## State Affairs

### February 2019

### 1. Indus River dolphin declared as state aquatic animal of Punjab.

### 2. Shehri Samridhi Utsav launched across the country. It is an initiative of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

### 3. Himachal's first mega food park inaugurated in Una - The Union Minister of Food Processing Harsimrat Kaur Badal has inaugurated the mega food

park at Village Singha in Una District, Himachal Pradesh.

### 4. Meghalaya Govt. to rename Dikkibandi stadium after P A Sangma - The Meghalaya state Cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma has decided to rename the Dikkibandi Stadium in Tura town after P. A. Sangma (former Lok Sabha Speaker & CM Meghalaya).

- The Dikkibandi Stadium was formerly known as MP stadium.
- 5. **Rajasthan passes 5% quota bill for Gujjars, four other communities** – Rajasthan government has passed a Backward Classes, Amendment Bill, 2019 to provide 5% quota in jobs and educational institutions to 'Gujjars' and four other communities.
  - The state government has also decided to increase the ceiling of creamy layer from Rs. 2.5 lacks to Rs. 8 lacks.
- 6. The Telangana government has declared 2nd February as 'appointing day' for the newly elected Sarpanches of the Gram Panchayats in the state.
- 7. Kerala has become the first Indian State to set up a Price Monitoring and Research Unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).
- 8. **Himalayan Cloud Observatory has been set up in Tehri district, Uttarakhand** – The Observatory has been established in the SRT campus Badshahithaul and is currently in the testing period.
- 9. The 33<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela (33<sup>rd</sup>) inaugurated at Faridabad (Haryana).
  - This year Maharashtra is the theme state and Thailand is the Partner Nation.
- 10. Bharat Rang Mahotsav' held in New Delhi. It is the international theatre festival of India, Organized by National School of Drama (NSD).
- 11. India's largest multi-cultural street festival 'Kala Ghoda Arts Festival' (KGAF) was held in South Mumbai, Maharashtra.
  - The theme of KGAF 2019 is retrospection.
- 12. Arunachal Pradesh tribes celebrated Boori Boot Yollo festival - The Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh is celebrated its Boori Boot Yollo festival (52<sup>nd</sup>) to welcome spring and a successful harvest.
  - Boori Boot Yollo is observed every year in the month of February.
- 13. Krishi Kumbh was organised in Motihari, Bihar. This is the largest Krishi Kumbh of Eastern India.
- 14. Kerala has become the first State to set up a Price Monitoring and Research Unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).
- 15. **The 22<sup>nd</sup> AIIMS will set up in Haryana.** During the Interim Budget 2019, Piyush Goyal made the announcement to set up AIIMS in Haryana. The AIIMS would be established at Manethi village in Haryana's Rewari district.
- 16. **J&K Govt. grants divisional status to Ladakh Region** – The Jammu and Kashmir government ordered the creation of a separate administrative division for Ladakh region.

Note:

  - The State of Jammu and Kashmir had two administrative divisions of Jammu and Kashmir earlier. Ladakh would be the third administrative division
- 17. Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 1.33 million metric ton capacity Visakhapatnam Strategic Petroleum Reserve facility at Guntur in Andhra Pradesh.
- 18. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a dedicated 24×7 Satellite channel, '**DD Arunprabha**' for Arunachal Pradesh.
- 19. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Film and Television Institute in Jote, for Arunachal Pradesh** - The permanent campus of Film and Television Institute would be established at Jollang-Rakap (Jote), Papum Pare, Arunachal Pradesh.
  - It would be the third Film and Television Institute of Ministry of I&B (the other two are: FTII Pune and SRFTI Kolkata) and first in the North-East.
- 20. **PM Narendra Modi lays the foundation for Sela Tunnel** –
  - Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the strategically important Sela Tunnel Project (costing - Rs 687 crore) in Arunachal Pradesh.
- 21. **Sarthi Sandesh Vahini flagged off by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** - The Uttar Pradesh state family welfare department has initiated the Sarthi Sandesh Vahini mission to spread awareness regarding family planning in urban and rural areas.

January 2019

1. World's largest religious and cultural human congregation 'Kumbh Mela' begun at Sangam at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh (conclude on 4th March 2019). Traditionally, four fairs are held periodically at one of the following places by rotation:

- Prayag Kumbh Mela, Haridwar Kumbh Mela, Nashik-Trimbakeshwar Simhastha, Ujjain Simhastha

2. **Andaman to be First Island to operate Seaplanes Under UDAN-3** – According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, islands in Andaman will soon be connected by seaplanes that can land on or take-off from the water under the Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.
3. **India's longest single lane Steel Cable bridge opened in Arunachal Pradesh** - The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu inaugurated India's longest single-lane steel cable suspension bridge over **Siang River in Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh**. The bridge is 300-metre-long and is also known as **byorung bridge**.

**About river Siang**

- The Siang River is considered as lifeline of Arunachal Pradesh. The river is also called as Dihang in the plain regions.

4. **Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang District achieves 100% electrification**
  - East Siang District (in Arunachal Pradesh) has achieved 100% electrification under the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana-Saubhagya Scheme.
5. **Diffo Bridge in Arunachal Pradesh dedicated to the nation** - Union Minister of Defence Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 426 mtr long pre-stressed concrete box girder type bridge over Diffo river on Roing-Koron-Paya road in Arunachal Pradesh.
  - The bridge which has been constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)
6. **Arunachal Government declares Pakke Hornbill fest as 'State Festival'**
  - The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh 'Pema Khandu' has declared Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) as the 'State Festival' at Seijosa in East Kameng district at Arunachal Pradesh.
  - Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) is only conservation festival of Arunachal Pradesh.
7. **Telangana to set up 'Save Tiger Protection Force'** - The Telangana government has decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State. The 112-member-armed STPF will be headed by an Assistant Conservator of Forests

to protect the tiger population in Amarabad and Kawal Tiger Reserves.

8. **India's largest Startup Ecosystem Inaugurated in Kerala** - India got its largest startup ecosystem when Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated a 1.8-lakh-square-foot facility housing incubation set-ups across a string of segments in modern technology.
9. **PM Dedicates Kollam Bypass in Kerala to Nation** - PM Narendra Modi has dedicated the Kollam Bypass on the National Highway-66 to the nation.
  - It reduces travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram.
  - This is the first National Highway project in the country taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership.
10. **Union Cabinet approves expansion of Numaligarh refinery in Assam**
  - The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for the capacity expansion project of Numaligarh Refinery from 3 MMTPA (Million Metric Tonne Per Annum) to 9 MMTPA.
  - Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) was set up at Numaligarh in the district of Golaghat (Assam) in accordance with the provisions made in the historic Assam Accord.
  - The promoters of the NRL are Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd, Oil India Ltd & Government of Assam (GoA).

**Note:**

- **Numaligarh Refineries receives 'Best Miniratna PSU' award** - Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) has been awarded the best **Strategic Performance** (Financial Category) at the sixth edition of Governance Now PSU Awards.
11. The Union Minister for Tourism K J Alphons inaugurated the First Swadesh Darshan "Development of North East Circuit" in Gangtok.
  12. World Book Fair held in New Delhi. The theme of this year is '**Readers with Special Needs**'.
    - The UAE's third largest emirate Sharjah is the guest of honour for the New Delhi World Book Fair.
  13. **Women's wall for Gender Equality in Kerala** - Around 30 lakh women stood shoulder to shoulder to form Vanitha Mathil, "women's wall" that ran across the length of Kerala. The event was organised by the Government of Kerala with the support of several political, religious and social groups.
  14. Indian Panorama Film Festival was held in **New Delhi**.

### 15. National Health Agency to be restructured as

**National Health Authority** - The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Modi has approved the restructuring of existing National Health Agency as National Health Authority.

- The existing society, "National Health Agency" has been dissolved and it is now restructured as an Authority to effectively implement Pradhan Mantri - Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).

### 16. J&K: Nitin Gadkari dedicates to nation Kerrian

**Gandyal bridge in Kathua** - Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on January 22, 2019 dedicated to the nation Kerrian Gandyal bridge in Kathua district of Jammu.

- The bridge has been constructed over river Ravi in Kathua district in a record time of over three years.
- This will reduce the distance between the two cities from 45 kms to 8.6 kms, which will save on both time and fuel cost.

### 17. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation stone for the Mandal Dam Project on the North Koel River. The Mandal Dam Project would be boon for the states of Jharkhand and Bihar.

### 18. India's second Tulip garden to come up in

**Uttarakhand** - Uttarakhand Government has obtained the permission to develop the Tulip garden in Pithoragarh district.

- It will be the second Tulip garden (first in Srinagar, J&K) in the country.

### 19. Sikkim to Introduce Universal Basic Income - The ruling party of Sikkim, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) has assured the implementation of the universal basic income in Sikkim by 2022. If things go as per plan, Sikkim would become the first state in the country to implement the Universal Basic Income (UBI).

#### **Universal Basic Income (UBI)**

- Universal Basic Income (UBI) refers to a programme wherein the people are provided with a fixed amount of money irrespective of their income, resources or employment status.

### 20. Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy has announced to ban the production, sale and use of single-use plastic products in the Union Territory from 1st March 2019.

### 21. The states of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya celebrated their 47th Statehood Day on 21st January. The states of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya became full-fledged states on January 21, 1972.

### 22. Cyclone Pabuk - The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an Orange alert for the Andaman Islands as cyclonic Pabuk moves towards the island.

### 23. Agreement for Renukaji dam multipurpose project

**Signed** - The Agreement for the construction of Renukaji Dam Multi-Purpose Project was signed by **six states**, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in the presence of Union Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari.

#### **The important features of the project are:**

- Renukaji Dam Multi-Purpose Project is a storage project on the Giri river which is tributary of the Yamuna at Sirmour district of Himachal.
- A 148 m-high rock-filled dam would be constructed across the river Giri.

#### **Note:**

- Along with the Renukaji dam multipurpose project other two projects are planned in the Yamuna river basin, Lakhwar Project on the River Yamuna in Uttarakhand, Kisau Project on the River Tons in Uttarakhand and Himachal for the effective utilisation of the water resource.

### 24. The Women of India Organic Festival was organised by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in Chandigarh.

### 25. For the first time, Antonov-32 AN-32 transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force carried out a successful landing at Sikkim's Pakyong, one of the highest airfields in the country.

**Note:** Pakyong Airport is a Greenfield airport near Gangtok, the capital of the state of **Sikkim**. It is the first greenfield airport to be constructed in the Northeastern Region of India.

### 26. RPF Women Squad 'JOYMATI BAHINI' launched in Guwahati - In Assam, Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Lumding Division has formally launched 'JOYMATI BAHINI', comprising women sub-inspector and constables of the RPF at Kamkhaya Railway Station in Guwahati.

### 27. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stones of 6 Namami Gange projects in Agra and Mathura.

- The projects in Agra include comprehensive Sewerage Scheme for the city with 'One-City-One-Operator' approach on Hybrid Annuity Mode.

### 28. Uttar Pradesh celebrates its 69th foundation day on 24th January

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

- Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair has been declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/exit



from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers.

- This decision of the Union Government will open up the Port Blair Airport for direct international flight and immigration facilities.

**30. Himachal Pradesh celebrates 49th Statehood Day on 25<sup>th</sup> January.**

**31. Union Minister Gadkari inaugurates Atal Setu in Goa**

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated four-lane 'Atal Setu' (5.1-kilometer long) the third Cable bridge across river Mandovi in

Panaji, Goa. This is the third bridge across Mandovi River.

**32. Andhra Pradesh No 1 in Ease of Doing Business 2018** - The Asia competitiveness institute (ACI) has released the Ease of Doing Business Rankings for Indian states.

**Key points**

- In the latest ranking of Asia Competitiveness Institute's (ACI) EDB index, Andhra Pradesh bagged the top rank in 2018.
- **Maharashtra and Delhi** came in second and third place respectively.

## December

**1. PM Modi UP Visit: 6th International Rice Research Institute Inaugurated**

- During the visit, he laid the foundation stone of medical College in Ghazipur in the presence of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- The PM also dedicated the 6th International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), South Asia Regional Center (ISARC) to the nation.
- The Institute is built at the campus of National Seed Research and Training Center (NSRTC) in Varanasi.
- The **One District, One Product Regional Summit** was held at Deendayal Hastakala Sankul (Trade Facilitation Centre & Crafts Museum) in Varanasi.
- The scheme is aimed at enhancing the skills of local people and increasing the reach of the indigenous trades, crafts and products from small towns and small districts in the state.

**2. Kannur International Airport in Kerala begins Operations**

- The Kannur international Airport-KIAL in Kerala began its operations.

**3. Jammu and Kashmir become 1st State to bring Law Against 'Sextortion'**

- Jammu and Kashmir has become the first state in the country to enact a law banning sexual exploitation of women "by those in positions of authority, having a fiduciary relationship or a public servant", Under Section 354E of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC).
- Any person committing the offence of sextortion shall be punished with rigorous

imprisonment for a term not be less than three years, but may extend to five years and with fine. The offence is "non-bailable" and "not compoundable".

**4. Dwijing festival held in Assam**

- In Assam, the third Dwijing Festival was held on the bank of Aye river at Chirang district.
- Around 15 lakh tourists will participate in the festival. Assam PHE minister Rihon Daimary inaugurated the festival in presence of several dignitaries.

**5. Maharashtra launches Vajpayee International Schools for Rural Students**

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has launched the 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Schools' for students in rural areas.
- Initially, 13 Zilla Parishad (ZP) schools would be part of the international board and it would be expanded in the coming years.

**6. Madhya Pradesh declares Kuno as National Park**

- Madhya Pradesh State government has declared Kuno wildlife sanctuary as a national park in compliance with the last condition imposed by a Supreme Court-appointed committee for the much awaited 'translocation of Asiatic lions from Gir in Gujarat.'
- The move is expected to pave way for translocation of lions from Gir in Gujarat to Kuno.

**7. Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi to get GI tag**

- Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi (turmeric) will soon get Geographical Indications (GI) tag.

- Kandhamal Haldi is famous for its healing properties. It is main cash crop of tribal people in Kandhamal.
- Apart from domestic use, it is also used for cosmetic and medicinal purposes.

**8. Nagaland becomes first north-eastern state to launch single emergency number '112'**

- The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on December 1, 2018 launched the single emergency number '112' under the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for the state of Nagaland.
- The launch coincided with the state's formation day and the inaugural day of the **2018 edition of the Hornbill Festival**.

**9. PEETHA scheme launched in Odisha to reinforce brand Naveen**

- Odisha government launched PEETHA scheme which aimed at creating awareness about various schemes and improving transparency in distribution of individual and social benefits.
- PEETHA stands for - Peoples Empowerment Enabling Transparency and Accountability of Odisha Initiatives (PEETHA).

**10. Rajnath Singh inaugurated 19th Hornbill Festival in Nagaland**

- Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 19th Hornbill Festival in Nagaland on 55th Nagaland Statehood Day.
- In 1963, Nagaland attains its statehood and was declared as the 16th state of the India.

**November**

**1. Himachal Pradesh Approves Sashakt Mahila Yojna**

- The Himachal Pradesh government launched the Sashakt Mahila Yojna in the state.
- The objective is to empower rural women by providing them an interface for organization and socio-economic development.

**2. India's First Justice City to set up in Andhra Pradesh**

- Andhra Pradesh is building a world-class and India's first '**Justice City**' within its new capital Amaravati with the vision to provide a state-of-the-art ecosystem built on latest technology for supporting the judicial system in the state.

**3. Nongkrem Dance festival celebrated in Meghalaya**

- Nongkrem dance festival, celebrated in Meghalaya.

**4. Sangai tourism festival held in Manipur**

- The annual Sangai Festival was celebrated in north-eastern state of Manipur.
- It is grandest festival of state named after state animal, Sangai, the critically endangered brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur.

**5. Titli', the severe cyclonic storm that devastated Odisha in October 2018 as 'rarest cyclone'.**

**6. Andhra Pradesh Government launches Bhuseva and Bhudaar web portal**

- Andhra Pradesh Government has launched Bhuseva and Bhudaar web portal through which people can view land records online.

- People can get land record records online through these portals using Aadhaar card. Bhudaar security policy was also launched to provide security to the land records of farmers.

**Bhudaar**

- It is 11 digit unique identification code to be assigned to each agriculture land holding and rural and urban property.
- It will allow people to get land details on their mobile phones.
- It will help to transparency in land records. It provides information related to all transactions of particular land or property in single source.

**7. Signature Bridge inaugurated in Delhi**

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal inaugurated the Delhi's Signature Bridge, over river 'Yamuna'.
- It is the first asymmetrical cable-stayed bridge in India.
- The bridge was constructed by the Delhi Tourism and Transport Development Corporation (DTTDC) at an expenditure of Rs 1,518.37 crore.

**8. India International Cherry Blossom Festival held in Meghalaya**

**9. Khasi fest Seng Kut Snem celebrated in Meghalaya**

**10. Wangala Festival held in Meghalaya**

- Wangala Festival of Meghalaya is a most popular festival among the Garos of Meghalaya, India.
- Also known as a **100 drums festival, Wangala Festival** is the occasion when the tribals offer sacrifices to please their main deity Saljong - the Sun God.

#### **11. Lucknow's Ekana cricket stadium renamed after Atal Bihari Vajpayee**

- Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to rename newly-built Ekana International Stadium in capital city Lucknow after former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- The stadium with a seating capacity of around 50,000 will now be known as 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Cricket Stadium'.
- Note: Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath also renamed Allahabad as Prayagraj and Mughalsarai as Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Nagar.

#### **12. Cyclone Gaja strike in Tamil Nadu**

- Parts of coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry get widespread rainfall as Cyclone Gaja comes closer to the Tamil Nadu coast.

#### **13. Mo Bus services launched in Odisha**

- The Odisha government has launched Mo Bus services for the residents of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Puri.

#### **14. New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) has launched quick response (QR)-enabled fridge magnets for digital payment of bills.**

- The magnets are personalized, and each customer will have unique QR Code mapped to their consumer account number.
- It is powered by an IT and services company 'SignCatch'. It is a two-dimensional (matrix) machine-readable bar code made up of black and white square.

#### **15. The West Bengal Govt. has decided to observe "Rosogulla Day" on - 14th November.**

#### **1. Bihar's Shahi litchi gets Geographical Indication tag**

- Shahi Litchi from Bihar has received Geographical Indication (GI) tag from Chennai based Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India.
- The GI registration was done in name of Muzaffarpur-based Litchi Growers Association of Bihar.

#### **2. India's 1st 'Methanol Cooking Fuel Program' launched in Assam**

- Northeast and Assam Petro-chemicals, a state-owned company for launched Asia's first cannisters based and India's first "Methanol Cooking Fuel Program".

#### **3. Alphonso mango from 5 districts of Maharashtra gets Geographical Indication tag** - Chennai based Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India has granted Alphonso mango from 5 districts of Maharashtra gets Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

- These five districts Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Palghar, Thane and Raigad are from western Konkan coastal region of State.
- With this recognition, Alphonso has joined list of 325 products from India with GI tag.

#### **4. BPCL to set up country's 1st Biofuel plant in Odisha**

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) will complete commissioning of its second generation (2G) ethanol bio-refinery at Baulsingha village in Bargarh district of Odisha by 2020.

#### **5. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated modern food processing facilities, including Amul's ultra-modern Chocolate Plant in Anand.**

#### **6. PM inaugurated the Mahatma Gandhi Museum in Rajkot.**

#### **7. Niwari announced as 52nd district of Madhya Pradesh** - Madhya Pradesh Government has announced creation of new district Niwari. It will be 52nd district of the state and came into effect from October 1, 2018.

October

## International Affairs

## February 2019

33. The first-ever **World Pulses Day** was celebrated on 10th February 2019.
34. **Abu Dhabi declared Hindi as an official language in courts** – Abu Dhabi (capital of the United Arab Emirates) declared Hindi as the third official language (Arabic and English) in its courts to make the justice delivery system simple.
35. **Dubai Airport retains the top position as World's busiest airport in 2018** –
- Dubai International Airport (DXB) retained its position as the world's busiest airport for international customer numbers for the fifth consecutive year.
36. **The International Year of the Periodic Table** – The United Nations has announced, 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of the Chemical Elements to highlight its first publication in 1869.
37. **Women with four children to get life tax exemption in Hungary** - According to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, women in the country with four children or more will be exempted for life from paying income tax.
38. The government of Thailand has approved the proposal to name **Siamese fighting fish** as the National Aquatic Animal.
39. World Bank President Jim Yong Kim (58-years) step down from his position on 1st February 2019, much before the end of his term in 2022.
- Kristalina Georgieva** (World Bank CEO) assume the role of interim President (from 1st of Feb 2019).
40. **Macedonia signs accord to join NATO** - Macedonia signed an accord to join NATO to become the 30th member of the US-led alliance.

Note:

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an international alliance that consists of 29-member states from North America and Europe.
- It was established at the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949.
- NATO headquarter is in **Brussels, Belgium**.

## January 2019

1. **Qatar withdraw its membership from OPEC**
- Qatar had decided to withdraw its membership from Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) effective from January 2019.
  - Qatar left OPEC on 1 January 2019, after joining the organization in 1961, to focus on natural gas production, of which it is the world's largest exporter in the form of liquified natural gas (LNG).

Note:

- As of January 2019, now OPEC has 14-member countries: Algeria, Angola, Congo, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Venezuela.
- The headquarter of OPEC is in Vienna, Austria.

2. **US and Israel quit UNESCO citing bias**

- The United States (US) and Israel officially quit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the close of 2018.

Note:

- UNESCO headquarter is in Paris, France.

3. **Five nations assume charge as Non-Permanent Members of UN Security Council**

- Five nations (Belgium, Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa) assumed the charge as the Non-Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Note:

- The U.N. Security Council has 15 members five of which (China, France, Russia, Britain, and the United States) hold permanent membership and veto power.

4. **Turkmenistan has launched its first messaging app 'BizBarde'**

- BizBarde app will allow the exchange of messages, files, photos and videos.

5. **Macedonia renamed as 'The Republic of Northern Macedonia'** - The Parliament of Macedonia has passed



- the resolution to amend the constitution of the country to rename as the 'Republic of Northern Macedonia'.
6. Justice Asif Saeed Khosa took oath as the 26th Chief Justice of Pakistan.
  7. **Rio de Janeiro will be World Capital of Architecture for 2020: UNESCO**
    - According to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro will be the World Capital of Architecture for 2020.
    - The city will host the World Congress of UIA, in July 2020, an event that occurs every three years.
  8. **Venezuela breaks all diplomatic ties with the US** - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro announced that the country has cut off diplomatic relations with the United States.
    - The capital of Venezuela is Caracas and the currency is Venezuelan bolívar.
  9. Sugarcane juice declared as 'national drink' of Pakistan.
  10. **France introduced GAFA Tax on Global Internet, Technology Firm** - The finance minister of France Bruno Le Maire announced that France will introduce its own tax on large internet and technology companies from January 1.
    - France has been pushing hard for a new so-called "GAFA tax" — named after Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon — to ensure the global giants pay a fair share of taxes on their massive business operations in Europe.
  11. **Palestine takes over chairmanship of G77** - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has pledged to

protect the interests of all 134 countries in the UN's Group of 77, as Palestine took the chairmanship of the group from Egypt for 2019.

12. **Italy, UN, launch Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development** - Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte along with UN representative has launched Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable development.
  - The new centre is located near the Food and Agriculture **Organization headquarters in Rome**.
  - The major objective is boosting the agricultural sectors and promoting rural development in Africa.
  - It will help in implementing the goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda and the landmark 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to stop depending on fossil fuel and cap global warming.
13. **China is the largest producer of crude steel** - World Steel Association Report
  - China is the largest producer of crude steel and it accounts for more than 51 per cent of global production.
  - India has replaced Japan as the world's second-largest steel producing country.
  - United States, at the 4th position, South Korea is at 5th place), Russia is a 6th place.
14. The United Nations observed the first official **World Braille Day on 4th January** to create awareness about the importance of Braille for approximately 1.3 billion people living with some form of distance or near vision impairment.

## December

1. **Sheikh Hasina wins 3rd Consecutive term as PM of Bangladesh**
  - Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's alliance won Bangladesh's election with a thumping majority, the country's Election Commission announced.
  - It gave her a third straight term following a vote that the opposition rejected as rigged.
  - She will sworn-in as the Bangladesh Prime Minister for the fourth term.
2. **Exim Bank Extends USD 500 mn Loan to Tanzania**
  - Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) has extended a credit facility of USD 500 million to

Tanzania for water supply projects in the country.

3. **Israel becomes permanent Member of Financial Action Task Force**
  - Israel became a full member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an international body set up to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other threats to the international financial system.

### About FATF

- The FATF is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other

related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

- FATF headquartered in Paris, France.

#### 4. **World's 1st Floating Nuclear Plant operational in Russia**

- **Akademik Lomonosov**, the world's first "floating" nuclear power plant (FNPP) for installation in remote areas, has been started and brought to 10% of its capacity, Russian state-run atomic energy corporation Rosatom announced.

#### 5. **UAE Declares 2019 As the Year of Tolerance**

- UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan declared 2019 as the Year of Tolerance, an extension of the Year of Zayed which has run this year.

#### 6. **President Kovind dedicates ACARE Project to People of Myanmar**

- President Ram Nath Kovind dedicated – India assisted project 'Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research & Education' (ACARE) – to the people of Myanmar.
- The project focuses on Genetics, Post Harvest Technology, Participatory Knowledge Management and capacity building for farmers in Myanmar.
- The President also dedicated the Rice Bio-Park to the people of Myanmar.

#### 7. **Burundi names Gitega as new Capital**

- Burundi declared the small central city of Gitega the country's new political capital, in line with a presidential promise, made a decade ago.

#### 8. **Turkmenistan launches First Messaging App**

- Turkmenistan has launched its first messaging app **BizBarde**.
- The privately developed BizBarde app will allow the exchange of messages, files, photos and videos, the state Yaslyk television station announced.

#### 9. **Pakistan Cabinet approves Issuance Of 'Panda Bonds' in Chinese Currency**

- Pakistan's cabinet has approved the issuance of first-ever renminbi-denominated 'Panda Bonds' to raise loans from China's capital markets, as the country moved a step forward

to give the Chinese currency status at par with the US dollar.

#### 10. **Japan decides to withdraw from IWC**

- Japan has decided to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and will resume commercial whaling July next year.

#### 17. **Luxembourg to become first country to make Public Transport Free**

- Luxembourg is set to become the first country in the world to make all public transport free, implementing the move in 2020.
- Earlier, Luxembourg introduced free transport for all people under the age of 20.

#### 18. **Patents granted by India up by 50% in 2017: WIPO**

- According to World Intellectual Property Indicators 2018 report released by United Nation's World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), number of patents granted by India shot up by 50% in 2017.

#### **World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)**

- It is the global body for promotion and protection of intellectual property rights (IPR).
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### 19. **SpiNNaker: Largest brain-mimicking supercomputer switched on**

- The world's largest supercomputer Spiking Neural Network Architecture (SpiNNaker) machine designed to work in same way as human brain was switched on for the first time.
- It designed and built at University of Manchester in UK.

#### 20. **Australia become 1st Country to recognise 'Orphanage Trafficking' as Slavery**

- Australia has become the first country in the world to recognise 'orphanage trafficking' as a form of modern slavery.

#### 21. **World Bank Unveils USD 200 billion in Climate Action Investment for 2021-25**

- The World Bank has unveiled 200 billion US Dollars in climate action investment for 2021 to 2025, adding that this amounts to a doubling of its current five-year funding.

The move coincides with a UN climate summit in Katowice.

## November

### 1. Bangladesh elected IORA Chairman for 2021-23

- Bangladesh was elected as Vice Chairman of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for the period of 2019-21 and eventually as IORA Chairman for 2021-23 at 18th IORA Council of Ministers' Meeting held in Durban, South Africa.
- The Current Chair is South Africa and Vice Chair is UAE.

### 2. Prime Minister Modi launches APIX technology in Singapore

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the APIX (Application Programming Interface Exchange), a banking technology platform designed to reach nearly two billion people worldwide who are still without bank accounts.
- Prime Minister Modi became the first leader to address the prestigious Fintech Festival in Singapore.

Note:

- APIX is a banking technology platform designed to reach two billion people worldwide who are still without bank accounts.
- Designed by software experts based in Hyderabad, Colombo and London, APIX is a sophisticated technology developed by Boston-headquartered Virtusa, especially for smaller banks, Tier 3 and 4, to reach out to people in the remote regions.
- The APIX will support banks to reach out to those without bank accounts in 23 countries including the 10 ASEAN members as well as major markets such as India, and small nations including Fiji.

### 3. Palau Becomes 1st Country in World to Ban Reef-Killing Sunscreen

- Palau has become the first country to ban reef toxic sunscreen by 2020 in an attempt to protect its coral reefs after the president of the country signed a bill into law.
- Palau Capital: Ngerulmud,
- Currency: United States Dollar

### 4. Vice President's visit to 3 South African Countries: Complete Highlights

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu was on a seven-day 3-South African nation visit to Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Malawi.

Key highlights

### Botswana

- Botswana decided to join the International Solar Alliance,
- M. Venkaiah Naidu attended the India-Botswana CEO Roundtable in Gaborone.
- Botswana Capital: Gaborone, Botswana Currency: Botswana pula

### Zimbabwe

- Vice President announced the US\$ 310 million Line of Credit for up-gradation of Hwange Thermal Power Station.
- It is Zimbabwe's second biggest power plant with an installed capacity of 920 MW
- Zimbabwe Capital: Harare, Zimbabwe Currency: US dollars, South African rand, Euro.

### Malawi

- Attended the Malawi-India Business Meet, in Lilongwe, Malawi.
- Inaugurated a very unique event, India for Humanity to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Malawi Capital: Lilongwe, Malawi Currency: Malawian kwacha

### 5. UNSC Lifts Sanctions against Eritrea after 9 Years

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has unanimously agreed to lift sanctions against Eritrea after nine years.
- An arms embargo, asset freeze, and travel ban were imposed in 2009 amid claims that Eritrea supported al-Shabab militants in Somalia.

Note:

- Eritrea Capital: Asmara
- Currency: Eritrean nakfa.

### 6. Morocco unveils Africa's First Ever High-Speed Train Line

- French President Emmanuel Macron and Morocco's King Mohammed VI have inaugurated Morocco's first high-speed rail line, the first ever such line in Africa.

### 7. World leaders mark 100 years since end of First World War

- World leaders gathered in Paris on November 11, 2018 to lead the global commemorations to mark 100 years since the end of the first World War.
- The occasion saw around 70 leaders come together including US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin to mark

the centenary of the 1918 Armistice in the French capital.

**8. France unveils bronze statue commemorating role of Indian soldiers in World War I**

- A statue commemorating the role of Indian soldiers in World War I was unveiled on November 11, 2018 in the town of Laventie, France to mark the end of the First World War in 1918.
- Another memorial was inaugurated by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu at Villers Guislain in France on November 10, 2018.

- The main motif of the Indian War Memorial at Villers Guislain is the Indian national emblem that has four Ashoka lions.

**9. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu represented India at the Armistice of World War I centenary commemoration.**

**10. EU aims to be First Carbon Neutral Economy by 2050**

- The European Commission is the first major economy to set its sight on achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

**October**

**1. Seychelles launches World's First Sovereign Blue Bond**

- The Republic of Seychelles has launched the world's first sovereign blue bond—a pioneering financial instrument designed to support sustainable marine and fisheries projects.
- Victoria is the capital of Seychelles and Seychellois rupee is the currency.

**2. World's largest airport 'under one roof' opened in Istanbul**

- The world's largest airport terminal "under one roof" with a capacity to serve 90 million passengers opened on October 29 in Istanbul, Turkey.
- The new airport is located near the Black Sea coast on the Europe side of Istanbul.

**3. China opens world's longest sea bridge linking Hong Kong, Macau and Zhuhai**

- China inaugurated Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, world's longest sea bridge with total length of 55 km.
- The new sea bridge will connect the east and west sides of Pearl River Delta of the South

China Sea, connecting two Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau with Zhuhai i.e. mainland China.

**4. India, Iran, Afghanistan hold first trilateral on Chabahar port project**

- The first trilateral meeting between India, Afghanistan and Iran of Coordination Council of Chabahar Agreement was held in Tehran, capital city of Iran.
- India, Iran and Afghanistan in May 2016, had signed agreement which entailed establishment of transit and transport corridor among three countries using Chabahar Port as one of regional hubs.

**5. China Successfully Tests 'World's Largest' Cargo Drone 'Feihong-98 (FH-98)'**

- A Chinese company has tested the 'world's largest' cargo drone Feihong-98 (FH-98) which can carry a payload of 1.5 tonnes (1,500kg).

**Sports**

**February 2019**

**1. Ranji Trophy – Vidarbha defeated Saurashtra by 78 runs in the final.**

Note:

- The defending champions Vidarbha won the 85th Ranji Trophy title.

- Aditya Sarwate of was Vidarbha was declared man of the match.

- Vidarbha became the sixth team to successfully defend their title.



- Mumbai (Bombay) have won the tournament the most number of times with 41 wins.
  - Ranji Trophy is named after Ranjitsinhji Vibhaji Jadeja, who was famously referred to as 'Ranji'.
2. **India's Rohit Sharma becomes highest run-scorer in T20 cricket** – India's Rohit Sharma (31-year) has become the highest run scorer in the Twenty20 International history while playing against New Zealand in Auckland.
    - Rohit Sharma (India) scored 2288 runs in 92 matches.
    - He also became first Indian and the third overall player to smash 100 sixes in T20 cricket.
  3. **Smriti Mandhana becomes World No.1 Women's ODI batter** - Indian women's cricket team opener Smriti Mandhana has become the top-ranked batter in women's ODI cricket, as per the latest rankings released by the ICC.
  4. **Smriti Mandhana Scores India's fastest-ever T20I Fifty** - Indian opener Smriti Mandhana hammered the fastest fifty for India in Women's T20Is in just 24 balls against New Zealand.
  5. **Mithali Raj became First Woman to play 200 ODIs** - India captain Mithali Raj has become the first woman cricketer to play 200 ODIs.
    - She is also the highest run-scorer in ODIs with 6622 runs at an average of 51.33, including 7 hundred.
  6. **Ricky Ponting appointed** as Assistant Coach of Australia for 2019 World Cup. The main coach for the Australian Cricket team is Justin Langer.
  7. The 83rd edition of Senior National Badminton Championships has begun in Guwahati.
  8. **Jamie Chadwick from England** made history by becoming the first female driver to win the MRF challenge title after scoring a triple win in the final round in Chennai.
  9. France's Corentin Moutet has clinched the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tournament title after beating Andrew Harris of Australia in the singles final.
  10. Golfer Vani Kapoor has become the first Indian to grab Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA).
  11. South Korean Footballer Ki Sung-yueng Announces retirement.
  12. The INS Dronacharya team won the Regatta trophy in the Kochi Area Pulling Regatta 2019 of the Southern Naval Command (SNC) held in the Ernakulam Channel.

January 2019

## 1. Australian Open 2019: List of Winners

Note:

- Novak Djokovic defeated Rafael Nadal in the final to win the Australian Open 2019 title.
- With this he won a record **seventh Australian Open title** and a third successive Grand Slam.
- Novak Djokovic won the 15th Grand Slam title of his career.
- Naomi Osaka was the winner of the Women's Singles in 2019. It was her 2nd Grand Slam singles title.

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Rafael Nadal (Spain)
Women's Singles	Naomi Osaka (Japan)	Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic)
Men's Doubles	Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France) and Nicolas Mahut (France)	Henri Kontinen (Finland) and John Peers (Australia)
Women's Doubles	Samantha Stosur (Australia) and Zhang Shuai (China)	Tímea Babos (Hungary) and Kristina Mladenovic (France)

Mix Doubles	Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic) and Rajeev Ram (United States)	Astra Sharma (Australia) and John-Patrick Smith (Australia)
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## 2. Indonesia Masters Badminton Title 2019: List of Winners

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's Singles	Anders Antonsen (Denmark)	Kento Momota (Japan)
Women's Singles	Saina Nehwal (India)	Carolina Marin (Spain)

3. Former South Africa all-rounder **Johan Botha** has announced his immediate retirement from all forms of Cricket.

4. **Mohammed Shami became Fastest Indian bowler to reach 100 ODI Wickets** - Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets, during the first one-dayer against New Zealand at Napier. Shami reached the milestone in his **56th match**.

### Note:

- The Indian record was previously held by Irfan Pathan, who got there in his 59th match, against Pakistan in Abu Dhabi in 2006.
- The world record is currently held by **Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan**, who needed only **44** games to reach the mark.

5. **Virat Kohli becomes first Asian captain to win Tests** in Australia, England and South Africa.

**Note:** Kohli became the 1st Indian captain to win the opening Test of a series against Australia in Australia

6. **India become first team to win bilateral series across formats versus Australia** - Virat Kohli-led Indian cricket team became the first visiting team to win bilateral series across the three formats against Australia.

7. **Rishabh Pant named ICC Emerging Player of The Year** - Rishabh Pant was named the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Emerging Player of The Year.

**Note:** With an unbeaten 159-run knock in the 4th Test in Sydney, Rishabh Pant became the **first Indian wicket-keeper to score a Test century in Australia**.

8. Rohit Paudel of Nepal became the youngest batsman to hit International Half-Century

9. West Indies captain **Jason Holder** has become the first player from the country in 45 years to top the list of

all-rounders in the International Cricket Council Test Player Rankings after slamming an unbeaten double-century that helped script a memorable 381-run win over England in the first Test in Bridgetown.

10. **Ankita Raina wins ITF's Tournament in Singapore** - India's Ankita Raina has won the International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore.

11. Kartik Sharma wins New South Wales Men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia.

12. Qatar defeated Japan to win First-ever Asian Cup title in Football

13. **Chennai's Gukesh Crowned India's Youngest Grandmaster** - D Gukesh became the 2nd youngest Grand Master in the world and the youngest Indian to achieve the feat at 12 years, 7 months and 17 days.

14. **Stephen Constantine resigns as Coach of Indian Football Team** - Indian football team head coach Stephen Constantine has stepped down after the team's shock 0-1 defeat to Bahrain which led to its exit from the Asian Cup.

15. **Shakil Ahmed sets world record in Indoor Rowing** - Asian Cup gold medallist Shakil Ahmed has set up a world record in indoor rowing by completing 1 lakh meters in above-40 years category in Kolkata.

16. **Bengaluru Raptors won 1st ever PBL Title** - Bengaluru Raptors have won their first ever Premier Badminton League, PBL title.

- In the title clash played at Bengaluru, Bengaluru edged out Mumbai Rockets, with a 4-3 win.

17. **Kartik Singh becomes Youngest Indian to win Junior World title** - Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship.

18. **Albie Morkel retires from all forms of Cricket** - South African all-rounder, announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.

19. Harendra Singh removed as Indian Men's Hockey Team Coach.
20. **Mary Kom Attains No. 1 position in AIBA Rankings** – M C Mary Kom has attained number one position in the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) latest world rankings.
21. **Egypt to host 2019 African Cup of Nations** – Seven-time champions Egypt have won the hosting rights for the 2019 edition of the African Cup of Nations.
22. **Sydney & Brisbane to host \$15 million ATP Cup in 2020** - Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane have been announced as the first two host locations for the newest team event in men's tennis for the multi-million dollar ATP Cup from 2020.
23. **Khelo India Youth Games 2019** – The second edition of the Khelo India Youth Games was held from 09 Jan – 20 Jan 2019 in Pune, Maharashtra.

Note:

- Maharashtra tops medal tally with 228 medals.
- Haryana stood on the second spot and Delhi is on the third spot.
- The first edition of the Khelo India Youth Games 2018 was held at New Delhi.

State	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1. Maharashtra	85	62	81	228
2. Haryana	62	56	60	178
3. Delhi	48	37	51	136

24. **Hopman Cup: Roger Federer & Belinda Bencic retain title for Switzerland**
  - Switzerland's **Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic** secured victory over **Germany's Angelique Kerber and Alexander Zverev** to win the Hopman Cup for the second year in a row.

25. The 80th National Table Tennis Championship was held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack.

#### 26. **Jasprit Bumrah becomes Highest International Wicket-Taker in 2018**

- Indian fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah became the highest international wicket-taker across formats in 2018.
- He took a total of 78 wickets in the calendar year.

#### 27. **Smriti Mandhana named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year**

- India's opener Smriti Mandhana has been named as the International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's Cricketer of the Year.
- She also named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year.

#### 28. **ICC Awards 2018 – The list of Awards is as follows:**

- Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli
- ICC Men's Test Player of the Year: Virat Kohli
- ICC ODI Player of the Year: Virat Kohli
- ICC Emerging Player of the Year: Rishabh Pant
- ICC Associate Player of the Year: Calum MacLeod
- T20I Performance of the Year: Aaron Finch
- ICC Spirit of Cricket award: Williamson
- Umpire of the Year: Kumar Dharmasena

Note:

- Virat Kohli became the first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards.
- He was also named the captain of the ICC Test and ODI teams of the year for 2018.

### December

1. **Hockey World Cup 2018** - Belgium defeated Netherlands in the final to win the Hockey World Cup 2018.
  - This is the Belgium first ever World Cup title.
  - They defeated the Netherlands in a dramatic shoot-out in the final of the Men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Overview of the FIH Hockey World Cup 2018:

- Best Player- Arthur Van Doren of Belgium.
- Goalkeeper of the tournament- Primin Blaak of Netherlands.
- Young player of the tournament- Thijs van Dam of Netherlands.
- Top goalscorer- Blake Govers of Australia and Alexander Hendrickx of Belgium.
- Fair play award- Spain.

2. **Ricky Ponting inducted into ICC Hall of Fame** –  
Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting was formally inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame.  
**Note:** Ponting was named in the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame along with former India captain Rahul Dravid and England woman wicketkeeper-batter Claire Taylor during the ICC Annual Conference in Dublin.
3. Renowned Kabaddi Player, Anup Kumar announced his retirement from Kabaddi.
4. Badminton World Federation 2018 concluded in Guangzhou, China.
  1. Women's Singles -
    - Winner - P. V. Sindhu (India)
    - Runner-up - Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)

Note: PV Sindhu made history, becoming the first Indian to win Badminton World Federation tournament.

  2. Men's Singles
    - Winner - Shi Yuqi (China)
    - Runner-up - Kento Momota (Japan)
5. Naomi Osaka's Coach **Sascha Bajin** becomes 1st ever WTA Coach of The Year - Sascha Bajin, coach of the world number five Naomi Osaka, has become the first-ever recipient of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Coach of the Year Award.
6. **1st Indian to win 'Breakthrough Table Tennis Star' Award** - Manika Batra won the 'Breakthrough Table Tennis Star' award at the prestigious International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Star Awards in Incheon, South Korea.
  - India coach Massimo Costantini won Table Tennis Star Coach award.

7. **2018 ITF World Champions** - The International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced that Serbia's Novak Djokovic and Romania's Simona Halep have been named the 2018 ITF World Champions.
8. **Pune International Marathon 2018**
  - Atlawim Debebe of Ethiopia won the Pune International Marathon 2018
  - **Atlawim Debebe** won the Marathon with the timing of 2 hours 17 minutes 17 seconds.
  - In women's Full Marathon Pascalia Chepkogei from Kenya stood first with the timing of 2 hour 50 minutes 27 seconds.
9. **Senior Women's National Championship**
  - Vinesh Phogat won the Gold at 57 kg category in wrestling in the Tata Motors Senior Women's National Championship.
10. **Ullas Narayan Wins India's 1st International Medal in Ultra Running**
  - Ullas Narayan won the bronze medal in the 2018 International Association of Ultra Running (IAU) 24 Hour Asia & Oceania Championships in Taipei.
  - With this he became the first ever Indian individual medal winner in an international ultra-running event.
11. Gautam Gambhir has announced his retirement from all forms of Cricket.

## November

1. **Magnus Carlsen wins the World Chess Championship 2018**
  - Current World champion Norwegian Magnus Carlsen (26-year-old) beat American Fabiano Caruana 3-0 and regain his World Chess Championship title-2018 in London, England.

Note:

  - The World Chess Championship 2018 organised by the FIDE (commercial partner-Agon) at The College in Holborn, London.
  - The headquarter of FIDE is in Athens, Greece.
2. **Harmanpreet Kaur named captain of Women's World T20 XI**
  - India's batting star Harmanpreet Kaur was named captain of the ICC Women's World Twenty20 XI.
3. India's Bhavani Devi (first Indian) has won the gold medal in the Sabre event in the Senior Commonwealth Fencing Championship 2018 in Canberra, Australia.
4. **MCG to host both men's, women's World T20 finals in 2020**
  - Australia's biggest stadium Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) will host the final match of both the men's and women's World Twenty20 cricket in 2020.
  - The women's World T20 will run from 21st February to 8th March 2020.
  - The men's tournament will be held from 18th October to 15th November 2020 in Australia.
5. **62nd National Shooting Championship held at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**



- India's 13-year-old shooter **Esha Singh** won the **Women's, Youth Women's** and Junior Women's 10m Air Pistol competitions.
- Women's Skeet National Crown** - Rajasthan's **Maheshwari Chauhan**, retained her Women's Skeet National crown at the 62nd National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC), shotgun events.
  - Government to set up National Sports Stadium for differently-abled in Meghalaya**
  - Meghalaya to host 2022 National Games**
    - The 2022 National Games will coincide Meghalaya's 50 years of statehood.
  - ICC Women's t20 World Cup 2018**
    - Venue – West Indies
    - Winner – Australia – Australia beat England by 8 wickets in final to lift the title.
    - Runner-up – England
    - This is Australia's 4th title win at Women's World T20.
    - Earlier, Australia won the trophy in 2010, 2012 and 2014.
    - ICC Women's t20 World Cup 2020 – Australia
  - 10th World Boxing Championship**
    - Venue – New Delhi, India**
    - MC Mary Kom was the brand ambassador of the 10th edition of the Women's World Championship in New Delhi.
- Mary Kom has created the history –**
- She becomes the first female boxer to win 6 Gold medals at World Boxing Championships.
  - She defeated Ukraine's Hanna Okhota in Women's 48 kg boxing final to clinch her 6th World title.
  - She previously clinched the World Championship gold on five occasions -- 2002, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010.
  - With this win, she also became the first female boxer to win a medal in seven world boxing championships.
  - Now, Mary Kom matched Cuba's Felix Savon as the joint most successful boxer (men and women) in the World Championships history.
  - Before Mary Kom, **Katy Taylor of Ireland** made five gold medals in the 60 kg category

from 2006 to 2016. She also won a bronze medal.

- Mary Kom named the best boxer of AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships**
  - India's legendary boxer MC Mary Kom was adjudged the best boxer of the 10th AIBA Women's World Boxing Championship held in New Delhi.
- India to host the first Men's World Boxing Championship in 2021**
  - As the host nation, India would be hosting the Men's World Boxing Championship in 2021.
- Subroto Cup Football Tournament** - Bangladesh Krida Shiksha Prothishtan (BKSP) won the 59th edition of the junior boys Subroto Cup International Football Tournament beating Amini School, Afghanistan by a solitary goal at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi.
- Wasim Jaffer became the first Indian batsman to touch the 11,000-run figure in the Ranji Trophy.
- Brazilian Grand Prix** - Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) won the Brazilian Grand Prix tournament.
- Former Australia all-rounder John Hastings has retired from all cricket, citing the risks posed by a bleeding lung condition.
- Lucknow Stadium renamed After Atal Bihari Vajpayee –**
  - The newly-built Ekana International Stadium of Lucknow was renamed after former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
  - The stadium will now be known as 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Cricket Stadium'.
- Bajrang Punia becomes Number 1 in World in 65kg category –**
  - Star Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia touched a new high in his career by achieving the number one rank in the world in the 65kg category.
- Pankaj Advani has won the second leg of the Asian Snooker Tour in Jinan, China.
- World Corporate Games in 2019 – Qatar**
  - Qatar will host the 23rd edition of the World Corporate Games 2019.
  - This is the first time the World Corporate Games will be held in the Middle East.

October

## 1. Hockey Asian Champions Trophy

- In Men's Hockey, India and Pakistan were declared joint winners of the Asian Champions Trophy at Muscat in Oman.

## 2. World Billiards Championship

- India's Sourav Kothari defeated Peter Gilchrist of Singapore 1134-944 to clinch the 2018 WBL World Billiards Championship title.

## 3. Kohli becomes fastest player to reach 10,000 Runs in History of ODI Cricket

- India captain Virat Kohli has become the fastest batsman to score 10,000 runs in the history of ODI cricket, achieving the feat in **his 205th innings**, against Windies.
- The 29-year-old overtook Sachin Tendulkar, who had reached 10,000 ODI runs in his 259th innings, against Australia in 2001.

## 4. DANISA Denmark Open 2018:

### Men's Single -

- Winner** - Kento Momota (Japan)
- Runner-up** - Chou Tien Chen (Chinese Taipei)

### Women's Single

- Winner** - Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei)
- Runner-up** - Saina Nehwal (India)

## 5. Praveen Kumar Retires from all forms of Cricket

- Former India fast bowler Praveen Kumar has retired from all forms of international cricket. Praveen last played for India in 2012 and represented India in 84 international matches.

## 6. Vijay Hazare Trophy 2018

- Mumbai has defeated Delhi by four wickets to win their third Vijay Hazare Trophy title at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru.

## 8. Asian Para Games 2018 -

- Venue** - Jakarta, Indonesia
- Mascot** - The official mascot of the 2018 Asian Para Games is a Bondol eagle named MOMO, which was chosen to represent motivation and mobility.
- India recorded its best-ever medal haul at the Asian Para Games by ending the 2018 edition with 72 medals (15 gold, 24 silver, and 33 bronze medals).
- Hangzhou in China** will host the fourth edition of **Asian Para Games in 2022**.

### Medal Tally

Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1.	China	172	88	59	319
2.	South Korea	53	45	46	144
3.	Iran	51	42	43	136
9.	India	15	24	33	72

## 7. Youth Olympic Games (YOG) 2018:

- Venue** - **Buenos Aires, Argentina**.
- It is the first Summer Youth Olympic Games to be held outside of Asia.
- Motto** - Feel the future
- Mascot** - Pandi
- Summer Youth Olympics 2022** - Dakar, Senegal, the first IOC event to be held in Africa.
- Winter Youth Olympic Games 2020** - Lausanne, Switzerland will host the next winter version of YOG in 2020.

### India at YOG 2018

- Flag bearer - **Manu Bhaker** is the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent for the games.
- Weightlifter **Jeremy Lalrinnunga** has become India's **first-ever gold medallist** in the history of Youth Olympic Games (YOG).
- Sixteen-year-old shooter **Manu Bhaker** has become the first-ever Indian **woman** to win gold at Youth Olympics.
- Suraj Panwar** won India's first medal in **athletics**. He won the silver medal in the men's 5000m race walk.
- 16 Year old Thangjam Tababi Devi became India's first judo medallist at the Olympic level. She won the silver medal.
- Pistol shooter Saurabh Chaudhary has bagged the Gold Medal in the 10-meter air pistol event.
- Akash Malik became India's first silver-medallist in archery at the Youth Olympic Games.

## 9. Sultan Johar Cup Junior Hockey 2018 - Great Britain lifted the 2018 Sultan of Johor Cup

- Great Britain defeated India in the final.

- Final was played at Johor Bahru, Malaysia.

## 10. U-19 Asia Cup Title - Indian under-19 cricket team has defeated Sri Lanka by 144 runs in the summit clash

of the 2018 ACC Under-19 Asia Cup in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

- The victory gave India their sixth title in the continental tournament.

**11. Richie Benaud named Sport Australia Hall Of Fame Legend** - Sport Australia Hall of Fame has announced

cricketing great Richie Benaud, who died in April, 2015, will become the 40th Legend of Australian Sport.

**12. Prithvi Shaw (18) become the youngest Indian to score a century on Test debut, achieving the feat aged 18 years and 329 days against Windies in Rajkot, Gujarat.**

## Science & Defense

### Military Exercise

#### January & February 2019

**21. 'Exercise Rahat'** - Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise 'Exercise Rahat' concluded in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

**22. 'Exercise Topchi'** - Indian Army carried out the annual exercise named 'Exercise Topchi' which was held at Deolali Camp near Nashik.

**23. 'Aman 19'** - The 5-day multinational maritime exercise 'AMAN-19' in which 46 nations participated from all over the world was formally commenced at Pakistan Navy Dockyard in Karachi.

**24. 'Cutclass Express 2019'** - INS Trikand, the frontline warship of the Indian Navy, participated in a multinational training exercise 'CUTCLASS EXPRESS 2019'.

- The annual Exercise Cutlass Express is sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF).

**25. Disaster Control Exercise:** The coast guards of India and Japan undertook disaster control, search and rescue exercises off the coast of **Yokohama in Japan**.

Note:

- Indian Coast Guard Ship ICGS Shaunak is the main Indian ship took part in the drills.
- The ICGS Shaunkak is a 105-metre class Offshore Patrol Vessel and is one of the largest ships in the Indian Coast Guard.

**26. IAFTX 2019:** Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX) will be held at Aundh Military Station and College of Military Engineering, Pune, Maharashtra. The joint training exercise is being conducted with more than a dozen African countries & India.

**27. IMBEX 2018-19:** bilateral army exercise between **India & Myanmar** was held in Chandimandir Military Station in Haryana.

**28. 'Sea Vigil':** Indian Navy commenced the largest coastal defence exercise off the Indian coast.

#### December

**1. SHINYUU Maitri-18** - Air Exercise between **India & Japan**.

- The Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) held a bilateral air exercise SHINYUU Maitri-18 with Indian Air Force at A F Station Agra

**2. Cope India 2019** – Trilateral Air Exercise between **India & US**.

- Air forces of the United States and India are set to participate in a 12-day joint exercise 'Cope India 2019' at two air force stations in West Bengal.
- The exercise will be held from December 3 to 14, at Air Station Kalaikunda and Air Station Arjan Singh (Panagarh).

#### November

1. **KONKAN-18** - Naval exercise between **India and the United Kingdom** was held in Goa.
2. **'Vajra Prahar'** - Indo-US joint Military Exercise held in Jaipur.
3. **SIMBEX - Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise**
  - The 25th edition of Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise was held in Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
4. **Hand in Hand** - joint military exercise between **India & China** will be held in southwest China's Chengdu.
5. **Dharma Guardian - India-Japan** military exercise
  - India and Japan concluded their first land-based joint military exercise in Mizoram.
6. **INDRA 2018** - joint military exercise between **Indian and Russia** held in Jhansi, UP.
7. **Samudra Shakti** - Bilateral Naval Exercise between **India & Indonesia** held at the port of Surabaya, Indonesia.

**Note:**

- Indian Navy's Rajput class destroyer INS Rana entered Surabaya port in Indonesia to participate in the inaugural edition of Indian Navy – Indonesian Navy exercise "Samudra Shakti".

## Science & Technology

### January & February 2019

#### 1. BSNL to Offer Data Connectivity Services via SMS in India

- BSNL has signed a partnership agreement with the **French company Be-Bound** to offer data connectivity through SMS in areas where there is no Internet connectivity or signal breaks.
- The SMS based data connectivity will work with the help of a technology embedded in a mobile App.
- The connectivity is based on SMS sent to and fro between the app and the Be-Bound server.
- This technology was first introduced in France and it is also being tested in some of the African countries. In India, BSNL is in talks with some apps to implement the technology.

#### 2. ISRO launches GSAT31 from French Guiana

- India's communication satellite GSAT-31 launched successfully from Kourou Launch Base, French Guiana (at Indian time- 2:31 am).

**Note:**

- GSAT-31 (India's 40th communication satellite) will provide transponder capacity for DTH television and connectivity to services like VSATs for ATMs, stock-exchanges, Digital Satellite News Gathering DSNG and e-governance applications.
- GSAT-31 had a lift-off mass of 2536 kg and operational life of over fifteen years.

#### 3. Isro to set up Human Space Flight Centre in Bengaluru Gaganyaan mission - The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) is setting up a 'Human

Space Flight Centre' in Bengaluru, which will support its quest of making country's maiden manned space mission a success.

**Note:**

- **The total fund for the Gaganyaan programme is Rs 10,000 crore.**
- #### 4. ISRO Successfully launched PSLV C44 Carrying Kalamsat & Microsat R satellite
- The Indian Space Research Organisation successfully launched the PSLV C 44 carrying Kalamsat and imaging satellite Microsat R.
  - The satellite was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

#### About Kalamsat

- Kalamsat is a payload developed by **students and Chennai based Space Kidz India for the first time.**
- Kalamsat, a 10-CM size cube and weighing 1.2 kg said to be the lightest satellite of India.

#### About Microsat-R (military satellite)

- Microsat-R is an earth observing satellite manufactured by DRDO and launched by Indian Space Research Organisation.
- Microsat-R is primarily a dedicated military satellite for the Indian Armed Forces's Integrated Space Cell.

#### 5. Facebook to set up an Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence

- Facebook grants \$7.5 million to set up an Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence (AI)



in collaboration with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) in Germany.

- The Institute will help to advance the growing field of ethical research on new technology and will explore fundamental issues affecting the use and impact of AI.
- The Institute will explore the ethical issues of AI and develop ethical guidelines for the responsible use of technology in society and the economy.
- TUM was ranked 6th in the world for AI research by the Times Higher Education magazine in 2018.

#### 6. Young Scientist Programme

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced Young Scientist Programme to inculcate and nurture space research fervour in young minds. Young Scientist programme is part of Isro's efforts to reach out to the student community.

#### 7. Samwad with Students

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched an outreach programme called Samwad with Students.
- Isro's outreach programme was aimed at motivating young India and tapping their scientific potential.

#### 8. Pune to soon be first city in country to see a traffic robot

- The traffic police authorities of Pune are planning to introduce a robot named 'Roadeo' which would move around city roads, functioning as a quasi-traffic policeman and cautioning commuters about traffic rules and offences.
- Roadeo consists of 16-inch LED display to showcase traffic rules and other important messages such as 'Wear a helmet', 'Do not jump the signal' and others.
- It is a first of its kind initiative in the entire country.
- The Robot "Roadeo" is developed by SP Robotics Maker Lab, a Pune based laboratory that trains people to learn about robotics and build tech themselves.

#### 9. First manned mission to space by December 2021: ISRO chief

- ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan has announced that the organization is well prepared to meet the targets of launching Gaganyaan

manned mission to outer space by December 2021.

- Under **Gaganyaan project**, India is planning to send three astronauts to outer space for seven days and bring them back.
- The initial training for Gaganyaan will be done in India and advanced training might happen in Russia.
- Women astronauts will be there on the team.

#### The salient features of the Gaganyaan Mission are:

- The Mission aims to carry three human beings for a maximum period of seven days in space with the support of academia, the scientific community, industry, IAF and Isro (Indian Space Research Organisation).
- India will launch two unmanned missions before the final mission.
- The first unmanned test-flight will be launched in December 2020.
- The second unmanned test will be conducted in July 2021 and the human space flight will be launched in December 2021.
- A human-rated GSLV Mk-III will be used to carry the orbital module.

#### Union Cabinet approves budget for Gaganyaan project

- The Union Cabinet has approved a budget of **Rs 10,000 crore** for India's Gaganyaan project.

#### 10. Govt allocates Rs 10,900 Cr For Development of 40 Satellite Launch Vehicles

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman Dr. K Sivan stated that the Union Government has allocated 10,900 crore rupees for the development of 40 satellite launch vehicles in the next 4 years.

#### 11. Paper Sensor to detect freshness of Milk

- Scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, have developed a paper kit to test the freshness of milk and determine how well the milk has been pasteurized.

#### 12. Chandrayaan-2 mission launch most likely in Feb: ISRO

- Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) will most likely launch Chandrayaan-2, the country's second mission to the Moon in the month of February.

#### The features of the Chandrayaan-2 mission are:

- Chandrayaan-2 mission is a totally indigenous venture comprising of an orbiter, a lander and a rover.
- The rover will observe the lunar surface and send back the data. This data will be useful for analysis of the lunar soil.
- The payloads will collect scientific information on lunar topography, mineralogy, elemental abundance, lunar exosphere and signatures of hydroxyl and water-ice.
- The 3,290-kg Chandrayaan-2 will orbit the Moon and perform the objectives of remote sensing the moon.

**Note:**

- India's first lunar probe Chandrayaan-1 was launched by the ISRO in October 2008 and operated till August 2009.

**13. China's Chang'e 4 probe makes historic touchdown**

- China's Chang'e 4 probe spacecraft has become the first spacecraft to land on the far side of the moon.
- Chang'e 4 is a Chinese lunar exploration mission that aims to achieve soft-landing on the far side of the Moon.
- The mission aims to deliver samples of Moon rock and soil to Earth.

**14. Japan Launches Satellite for World's 1st Artificial Meteor Shower**

- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency has launched Tokyo-based startup Star-ALE's mini-satellite aimed to deliver the world's first artificial meteor shower.

**15. IIT-M recreates Space Fuel**

- The researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) have recreated

space fuel by simulating interstellar conditions in the laboratory.

- It is a big breakthrough for India in the exploration of cleaner and sustainable alternatives to fossil fuel.

**16. NASA Discovers new planet 'HD 21749b'**

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of USA has discovered a new planet.
- It is the third new planet discovered by the NASA mission, Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS).
- The new planet HD 21749b is outside our solar system and orbits a dwarf star 53 light years away.
- HD 21749b orbits a bright star in the constellation Reticulum.
- It has the longest orbital period of all the three discoveries made by TESS.
- HD 21749b orbits its star in a relatively leisurely 36 days.
- The other two discoveries made by the TESS probe are Pi Mensae b and LHS 3844b.
- Pi Mensae b has an orbit of 6.3 days and LHS 3844b has an orbit of just 11 hours.

**17. IIT-H Launches full-fledged B.Tech in Artificial Intelligence**

- Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H) has announced the launch of a full-fledged bachelor's programme in Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology from the new academic session, a first for the country and only the third globally.
- The new course will have 20 seats and the eligibility is clearing the JEE-Advanced test.

**Defense News**

**January & February 2019**

1. Iran announced the successful test flight of Hoveizeh long-range cruise missile.
2. **Indian Navy test-fires LRSAM missile off Odisha coast**
  - The Indian Navy has successfully test-fired the long-range surface-to-air missile (LRSAM) from warship INS Chennai, off the coast of Odisha.

- It was jointly developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) for the Indian Navy.
- LRSAM is capable of achieving a maximum speed of Mach 2 and has an operational range of 70km.
- **LRSAM** also known as Barak 8, the missile can counter-attack aircraft, unmanned

aerial vehicles (UAVs) and incoming anti-ship missiles.

### 3. Women to get 20% jobs in Military Police

- The Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced the decision to induct women in Personnel Below Officer Rank, PBOR, role in Corps of Military Police.
- The women will be inducted in a graded manner to eventually comprise 20% of total Corps of Military Police.

### 4. Diffo Bridge of Arunachal Pradesh Inaugurated

- In Arunachal Pradesh, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on January 18, inaugurated the Diffo Bridge over Chipu River in Lower Dibang Valley District.
- The construction of the Bridge was undertaken by the Project Udayak of the Border Roads Organisation.

### 5. PM Modi inaugurates country's first private Howitzer plant

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Armoured Systems Complex (ASC), developed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) at **Hazira near Surat in Gujarat**.
- This is the country's first private facility where the **K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns** will be manufactured. L&T had won the Rs 4,500-crore contract to supply 100 units of the K9 Vajra-T 155 mm/52 calibre Tracked Self-Propelled gun systems to the Indian Army in 2017.

### 6. National Conference on Self Reliance in Defence Manufacturing is organised at Hyderabad.

The National Conference is being held by Forum for Integrated National Security in association with Indigenous Defence Entrepreneurs Association.

### 7. Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba Commissioned New Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa'

- Indian Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned the new Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa' at Diglipur in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- It will be the third naval air base in the islands.

### 8. India's second defence innovation hub to come up in Nashik, Maharashtra'

- Nashik in Maharashtra will be the site of the country's second defence innovation hub after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu.
- India's first defence innovation hub will be set up in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. It will be set up by Coimbatore District Small Industries Association (Codissia).
- In January last year, Sitharaman had announced a fund of Rs 20 crore to set up the centre under Codissia in the city.

### 9. Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor inaugurated in Tiruchirapalli

- The Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor in Tiruchirapalli, 300 km from Chennai a total investment of Rs 3,100 crore.
- The Defence Industrial Corridor will include - Chennai, Hosur, Salem and Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli as the nodes.
- The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor — also called the Tamil Nadu Defence Production Quad.

Note:

- This is the second Defence Industrial Corridor to be inaugurated in the country after Uttar Pradesh.
- The first defence corridor was launched in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh in August 2018.
- Tamil Nadu Aerospace Park opened at Sriperumbudur in Chennai.

## December

### 1. Sino-India Joint Exercise Hand-in-Hand 2018 held in China - 7th Sino-India joint exercise Hand-in-Hand 2018, was held at Chengdu, China.

### 2. Indian Coast Guard Conducts Exercise 'Clean Sea-2018' at Sea Off Port Blair

- The Indian Coast Guard has conducted the Regional Level Marine Oil Pollution Response

Exercise titled 'Clean Sea - 2018' at sea off Port Blair.

### 3. Defence Minister inaugurates Information Fusion Centre in Gurugram

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre (IFC) in Gurugram that aims to

collaborate with partner countries and multinational agencies to develop maritime awareness and share information on vessels.

**4. India Successfully Test-Fires Nuclear-Capable Agni-IV Missile**

- India successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable long-range ballistic missile Agni-IV, with a strike range of 4,000 km, as part of a user trial by the Army.

**5. World's 1st 3D-Printed Functional e-Bike Made in Germany**

- German firm BigRep claims it has produced the world's first fully functioning e-motorbike NERA using a 3D printer.

**6. Chang'e-4: China Launches 1st Mission to land on the Far Side of the Moon**

- China launched the first-ever spacecraft, Chang'e 4, that will attempt landing on the far side of the Moon, which always shows the same face to Earth as it's close enough to be locked by the planet's gravitational field.

**7. India Successfully Test-Fires Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile Agni-5**

- The indigenously built Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile Agni-5 has been test-fired successfully from Abdul Kalam island under Chandipur Interim Test Range.
- Having 17 meters length and 2 meters diameter the missile can hit the target from a distance of 5 thousand kilometers.

**8. ISRO's successfully launched heaviest satellite GSAT-11**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched India's heaviest satellite GSAT-11 (weighing 5,854 kg) by Ariane-5 VA246 rocket from Kourou Launch Zone, French Guiana in South America.

**About GSAT-11**

- The GSAT-11 also called -Big Bird.
- The GSAT-11 is the next generation high throughput communication satellite that will play a vital role in providing broadband services across the country.
- The satellite is expected to have a lifespan of 15 years.

**9. ISRO launches military communication satellite GSAT-7A from Sriharikota**

- ISRO launched its military communication satellite GSAT-7A from
- Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F11) successfully launched the communication satellite GSAT-7A from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota Andhra Pradesh.
- The satellite GSAT-7A is the 35th Indian communication satellite weighing 2,250 kg.
- GSAT-7A will be the first satellite built primarily for the IAF to qualitatively unify its assets and improve combined, common intelligence during operations.

**November**

**1. India signs \$950 million contract with Russia to buy two Stealth Frigates**

- India has signed a \$950 million contract with Russia for two upgraded Krivak III-class stealth frigates.

**2. INS Arihant successfully completes its first deterrence patrol**

- India's first indigenous nuclear submarine INS Arihant, or the "annihilator of enemies", has successfully completed its first deterrence patrol.

**3. Raksha Mantri launches 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti'**

- Raksha Mantri Smt Nirmala Sitharaman launched 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti', in New Delhi to boost Intellectual Property Right (IPR) culture in indigenous defence industry.

**4. Indian Coast Guard launches new Offshore patrol vessel - ICGS Varaha**

- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) launches new Offshore patrol vessel (OPV) ICGS Varaha at L&T Kattupalli shipyard near Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

**5. ISRO successfully launches communication satellite GSAT-29**

- On 14th November 2018, ISRO successfully launched the communication satellite GSAT-29 through its most powerful and heavy lift "rocket Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV MkIII-D2).
- The satellite was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

**Key points of GSAT-29 satellite**



- GSAT-29 satellite which weighs 3,423 kg is the heaviest satellite launched from India.
- GSAT-29 carries Ka/Ku-band high throughput communication transponders designed to improve telecommunication and internet services under the 'Digital India' program in J&K and Northeast.
- GSAT-29 is a multibeam, multiband communication satellite.

#### 6. ISRO to set up Space Science Centre in J&K

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Central University of Jammu (CUJ) in Jammu for setting up of Satish Dhawan Center for Space Science in University.
- It will be first of its kind institute coming up in Jammu and Kashmir.

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