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Must DO Current Affairs for IDBI Bank 2019 Exam

Padma Awards 2019 Announced: Complete List of Winners

Padma Awards — one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

'**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. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.

The list comprises 4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri Awards. 21 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 11 persons from the category of foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI, 3 posthumous awardees and 1 transgender person. The list also includes 3 Bharat Ratna Awardees.

The Bharat Ratna Awardees in 2019 are:

- 1. Pranab Mukherjee:** Indian politician who served as the 13th President of India from 2012 until 2017.
- 2. Bhupen Hazarika (Posthumously):** an Indian playback singer, lyricist, musician, singer, poet and film-maker from Assam, widely known as Sudhakantha.
- 3. Nanaji Deshmukh (Posthumously):** social activist from India.

Padma Vibhushan (4)

1. Ms. Teejan Bai — Art-Vocals-Folk — Chhattisgarh
2. Shri Ismail Omar Guelleh (Foreigner) — Public Affairs — Djibouti
3. Shri Anilkumar Manibhai Naik — Trade & Industry-Infrastructure — Maharashtra
4. Shri Balwant Moreshwar Purandare — Art-Acting-Theatre — Maharashtra

Padma Bhushan (14)

1. Shri John Chambers (Foreigner) — Trade & Industry-Technology — USA
2. Shri Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa — Public Affairs — Punjab
3. Shri Pravin Gordhan (Foreigner) — Public Affairs — South Africa
4. Shri Mahashay Dharam Pal Gulati — Trade & Industry-Food Processing — Delhi
5. Shri Darshan Lal Jain — Social Work — Haryana
6. Shri Ashok Laxmanrao Kukade — Medicine-Affordable Healthcare — Maharashtra

7. Shri Kariya Munda — Public Affairs — Jharkhand
8. Shri Budhaditya Mukherjee — Art-Music-Sitar — West Bengal
9. Shri Mohanlal Viswanathan Nair — Art-Acting-Film — Kerala
10. Shri S Nambi Narayan — Science & Engineering-Space — Kerala
11. Shri Kuldip Nayar (Posthumous) — Literature & Education (Journalism) — Delhi
12. Ms. Bachendri Pal — Sports-Mountaineering — Uttarakhand
13. Shri V K Shunglu — Civil Service — Delhi
14. Shri Hukumdev Narayan Yadav — Public Affairs — Bihar

Australian Open 2019 Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The Australian Open is a tennis tournament held annually in Melbourne Park, Australia. The 2018 Australian Open was the 107th edition of the tournament.

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)

Indonesia Masters Title 2019: Complete List of Winners

The **2019 Indonesia Masters** is a badminton tournament that takes place at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno in Indonesia.

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's	Anders Antonsen	Kento Momota

Singles	(Denmark)	(Japan)
Women's Singles	Saina Nehwal (India)	Carolina Marin (Spain)
Men's Doubles	M Fernaldi Gideon (Indonesia) Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo (Indonesia)	Mohammad Ahsan (Indonesia) Hendra Setiawan (Indonesia)
Women's Doubles	Misaki Matsutomo (Japan) Ayaka Takahashi (Japan)	Kim So-yeong (South Korea) Kong Hee-yong (South Korea)
Mix Doubles	Zheng Siwei (China) Huang Yaqiong (China)	Tontowi Ahmad (Indonesia) Liliyana Natsir (Indonesia)

Category	Winners
Best Motion Picture Drama	Bohemian Rhapsody
Best Motion Picture Musical/Comedy	Green Book
Best Director in Motion Picture-Drama	Alfonso Cuaron (Roma)
Best Actress in Motion Picture-Drama	Glen Close (The Wife)
Best Actor in Motion Picture-Drama	Rami Malek (Bohemian Rhapsody)
Best Actress in Motion Picture Musical/Comedy	Olivia Colman (The Favourite)
Best Actor in Motion Picture or Musical or Comedy	Christian Bale (Vice)
Best Motion Picture – Animated	Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse
Best Motion Picture – Foreign Language	Roma (Mexico, Alfonso Cuaron)
Best Original Score – Motion Picture	Justin Hurwitz (First Man)

Best Original Song – Motion Picture
Shallow (Lady Gaga, Mark Ronson, Anthony Rossomando, Andrew Wyatt) – Star Is Born, A (2018)

International Cricket Council (ICC) Awards 2018

ICC announced the winners of the men's & women's yearly cricket awards. Indian captain Virat Kohli swept the main awards, winning the awards for the ICC Cricketer of the Year, ICC Test Cricketer of the year, and ICC ODI Cricketer of the year.

Men's Awards Winners List

- Emerging Player of the Year: Rishabh Pant (India)
- ICC Umpire of the Year: Kumar Dharmasena
- ICC Spirit of Cricket Award: Kane Williamson (New Zealand)
- ICC Associate Cricketer of the Year: Calum MacLeod
- ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli (India)
- ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli (India)
- ICC Test Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli (India)

Women's Awards Winners List

- Australia's wicketkeeper-batter Alyssa Healy voted ICC T20I Player of the Year.
- England's Sophie Ecclestone named ICC Emerging Player of the Year.
- India's stylish left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana has won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year and also been named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year.

Golden Globe Awards 2019 Announced: List of Important Winners

The 76th Annual Golden Globe Awards were announced at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in California, the USA. These annual awards honour the best in Motion Pictures and Television for the year 2018.

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15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas: All You Need To Know.

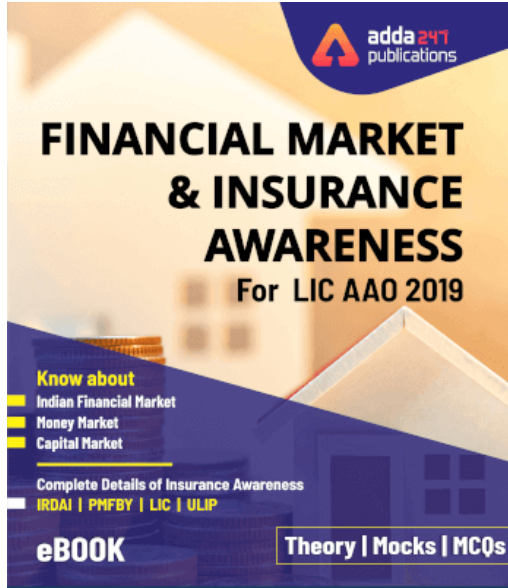
- PM inaugurated the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- For the first time, the three-day long convention is being organized in Varanasi.
- The theme of PBD Convention 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India".

Chief Guests at the Occasion:

- Chief Guest of the PBD convention: Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth.
- Special Guest: Himanshu Gulati, Member of Parliament of Norway
- Guest of Honor: Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, Member of Parliament of New Zealand.

About Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas in Brief:

- The decision to celebrate Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (PBD) was taken by the former Indian Prime Minister, late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- The 1st PBD was celebrated on 9th January 2003 in New Delhi. January 9 was chosen as the day to celebrate PBD as it was on this day in 1915 that MK Gandhi, had returned to India from South Africa.
- PBD now celebrated once in every two years, provides a platform to the overseas Indian community to engage with the government and reconnect with their roots.



PM Modi 3-Day Visit to Gujarat: Complete Highlights

- PM Modi visited Gujarat. He attended/inaugurated various initiatives at the different venues. The complete highlights of the visit of PM Modi to Gujarat:
- He inaugurated the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019 at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad. He also inaugurated Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show at Gandhinagar and the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival.
- He inaugurated the 9th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Summit. The 9th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit witnessed the participation of Heads of States, Captains of global industry and Thought Leaders.

Know All About Kumbh: Historical Significance

- In Prayagraj, hearing the word "Kumbh", creates the picturesque vision of Triveni Sangam in one's mind. Kumbh is a symbol of peace and harmony amongst all human beings. The Kumbh Mela has been inscribed on the list of "Intangible Cultural

- Heritage of Humanity" by UNESCO in 2017. This reflects the significance of Kumbh worldwide.
- The Kumbh Mela at Prayag is very different as compared to Kumbh at other places due to many reasons.
- Firstly, the tradition of long-term Kalpvas is practiced only in Prayag. Secondly, the Triveni Sangam is considered as the center of the earth in few scriptures. Thirdly, Lord Brahma performed the Yajna here for creating the universe. Fourthly, Prayagraj is called the shrine of pilgrimages, but the most important reason is that the significance of performing rituals and tapas at Prayagraj is of highest among all pilgrimages and provides one with the highest virtue.
- The Kumbh Mela at Prayag takes place for approximately 55 days, spread over thousands of hectares around the sangam area, and becomes the greatest of ephemeral city in the world.

Important Details & Significance of the 70th Republic Day

- Cyril Ramaphosa was invited by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi as chief guest for 70th Republic Day during the G20 summit which was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- The 2019 celebration will be special as this year will mark the 150th birth anniversary of 'Father of the Nation'.
- It was be the first time in history that all women contingent of Assam Rifles, which is one of the oldest paramilitary forces of India, took part in the Republic Day parade this year. It was also be the first time that a woman officer would be leading the Army Services Corps in the 2019 Republic Day parade.

All England Open Badminton Championships 2019: Complete List of Winners

2019 All England Open, officially YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships 2019 was a BWF World Tour 1000 event which took place at Arena Birmingham in England from 6 to 10 March 2019. **Here is the complete list of Winners**

Event	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Kento MOMOTA (Japan)	Viktor AXELSEN (Denmark)
Women's Singles	CHEN Yufei (China)	Tai Tzu-ying (Taiwan)
Men's Doubles	Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan	Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik (Malaysia)

	(Indonesia)	
Women's Doubles	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China)	Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara (Japan)
Mixed Doubles	Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong (China)	Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino (Japan)

2019 Swiss Open Championship Co

The 2019 Swiss Open, officially the **YONEX Swiss Open 2019**, was a badminton tournament which took place at St. Jakobshalle in Basel, Switzerland. **Here is the complete list of Winners:**

Event	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Shi Yuki (China)	B Sai Praneet (India)
Women's Singles	Chen Yufei (China)	Saena Kawakami (Japan)
Men's Doubles	Fajar ALFIAN and Muhammad Rian ARDIANTO (Indonesia)	LEE Yang and WANG Chi-Lin (Taiwan)
Women's Doubles	CHANG Ye Na and JUNG Kyung Eun (South Korea)	Nami MATSUYAMA and Chiharu SHIDA (Japan)
Mixed Doubles	Mathias BAY-SMIDT and Rikke SOBY (Denmark)	Rinov RIVALDY and Pitha Haningtya MENTARI (Indonesia)

Vice President's Visit To Paraguay And Costa Rica: Complete Highlights

The Vice President of India, **M. Venkaiah Naidu** visited the Republic of Paraguay and the Republic of Costa Rica. This was the **first high-level visit from India to both these countries**. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation including the Minister of State for Tourism (I/C), Alphons Kannanthanam, the Members of Parliament and senior officials from the Government of India.

Visit To Paraguay:

The Vice President met with the President of the Republic of Paraguay, Mr. Mario Abdo Benítez, the Vice President, Mr. Hugo Velázquez, and the President

of the National Congress (Senate), Mr. Silvio Ovelar. He also addressed the India-Paraguay business forum and interacted with the Indian Diaspora in Paraguay.

Visit To Costa Rica:

The visit of Vice President to the Republic of Costa Rica was the first ever high-level visit from India to the nation. The Vice President met the President of Costa Rica, Mr. Carlos Alvarado Quesada and held Delegation level talks with him which was followed by a joint press statement. The Vice President was also conferred an Honorary Doctorate by the University for Peace founded by the United Nations.

Mathematician Karen Uhlenbeck Becomes 1st Woman To Win Abel Prize

University of Texas professor Karen Uhlenbeck has become the **first woman to win the Abel Prize, a mathematics honour first given in 2003**. The 76-year-old was awarded for the impact of her work on **"analysis, geometry and mathematical physics"**.

64th Filmfare Awards Announced: Complete List of Winners

Winners of the **64th Filmfare Awards** were announced at **Jio Garden, BKC, Mumbai**. **Alia Bhatt** won **Best Actress** for playing the role of a spy while **Raazi** also fetched **Meghna Gulzar** the **Best Director Filmfare Award**. Raazi also grabbed the **Best Film trophy**. Meanwhile, **Ranbir Kapoor** scored the **Best Actor Filmfare Award** for playing the role of Sanjay Dutt in biopic Sanju.

Here's the complete winner's list of 64th Filmfare Awards 2019:

Category	Winner
Best Film	Raazi
Critics' Award for Best Film	AndhaDhun
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female)	Alia Bhatt, Raazi
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male)	Ranbir Kapoor, Sanju
Best Director	Meghna Gulzar, Raazi
Best Playback Singer (Male)	Arijit Singh for Ae Watan, Raazi
Best Playback Singer (Female)	Shreya Ghoshal for Ghoomar, "Padmaavat"
Best Cinematography	Pankaj Kumar, Tumbbad

Best Debut Actor(Female)	Sara Ali Khan, Kedarnath
Best Debut Actor(Male)	Ishaan Khatter, Beyond The Clouds
Best VFX	Red Chillies Fx, Zero
Critics' Award for Best Actor (Male)	Ranveer Singh for "Padmaavat"
Critics' Award for Best Actor (Female)	Neena Gupta, Badhaai Ho

Drama	"Fairview" by Jackie Sibblies Drury
History	"Frederick Douglass" by David W. Blight
Biography or autobiography	"The New Negro" by Jeffrey C. Stewart
Poetry	"Be With" by Forrest Gander
General nonfiction	"Amity and Prosperity" by Eliza Griswold
Music	"p r i s m" by Ellen Reid
Special Citation	Aretha Franklin

In a 1st, SBI Links Interest On Most Savings Account Deposits To RBI Repo Rate

SBI has become the first domestic bank to link the interest rate it offers on savings account deposits to an external benchmark — the RBI's repo rate. By doing so, the bank will effectively link all loan rates to an external benchmark either directly or indirectly.

Following are the changes:

1. Savings accounts with deposits above Rs 1 lakh would be priced at 2.75% below the prevailing repo rate of 6.25%.
2. Cash credit accounts and overdraft facilities over Rs 1 lakh would be priced at 2.25% over the repo rate. At the prevailing repo rate of 6.25%, this would mean a floor price of 8.5%.
3. For all other floating rate products, including retail and corporate loans, the impact of SBI's decision to link savings account deposit rates to the repo rate will be felt indirectly.
4. For savings account holders with balances up to Rs 1 lakh and borrowers with cash credit and overdraft limits up to Rs 1 lakh, interest rates will remain fixed.

2019 Pulitzer Prize Announced: Complete List of Winners

The **Pulitzer Prize** is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States. Here is the complete list:

Category	Winner
JOURNALISM	
Public service	Staff of the South Florida Sun Sentinel
Criticism	Carlos Lozada of The Washington Post
Editorial writing	Brent Staples of the New York Times
BOOKS, DRAMA, AND MUSIC	
Fiction	"The Overstory" by Richard Powers



PFA Awards 2018/19 Announced: Complete List of Winners

Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk and Arsenal Women Football Club's Vivianne Miedema were named **Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Players' Player of the Year** for the 2018-19 season. The Awards given were:

PFA Player's Player of the Year:

Virgil van Dijk, Liverpool.

Vivianne Miedema, Arsenal

PFA Young Player of the Year:

Raheem Sterling, Manchester City

Georgia Stanway, Manchester City

PFA Special Achievement Award:

Steph Houghton: Former England and WBA.

Miami Open 2019 Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The **Miami Open** is an annual tennis tournament for men and women now held at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida. Here is the complete list:

Event	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Roger Federer (Switzerland)	John Isner (United States)
Women's Singles	Ashleigh Barty (Australia)	Karolina Pliskova (Czech Republic)
Men's Doubles	Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan (USA)	Wesley Koolhof (Netherlands) and Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece)
Women's Doubles	Elise Mertens (Belgium) and Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)	Samantha Stosur (Australia) and Zhang Shuai (China)

India Open 2019 Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The 2019 India Open was a badminton tournament which took place at K. D. Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi, India. Here is the complete list of Winners of India Open 2019:

Event	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Viktor Axelsen (Denmark)	Srikanth Kidambi (India)
Women's Singles	Ratchanok Intanon (Thailand)	He Bingjiao (China)
Men's Doubles	Lee Yang and Wang Chi-lin (Chinese Taipei)	Ricky Karanda Suwardi and Angga Pratama (Indonesia)
Women's Doubles	Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu (Indonesia)	Chow Mei Kuan and Lee Meng Yean (Malaysia)
Mixed Doubles	Wang Yilü and Huang Dongping (China)	Praveen Jordan and Melati Daeva Oktavianti (Indonesia)

Malaysia Open 2019 Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The 2019 Malaysia Open is a badminton tournament which takes place at Axiata Arena in Malaysia. Here is the complete list:

Event	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Lin Dan (China)	Chen Long

		(China)
Women's Singles	Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei)	Akane Yamaguchi (Japan)
Men's Doubles	Li Junhui and Liu Yuchen (China)	Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda (Japan)
Women's Doubles	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China)	Du Yue and Li Yinhui (China)
Mixed Doubles	Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong (China)	Wang Yilü and Huang Dongping (China)

Singapore Open 2019 Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The 2019 Singapore Open was a badminton tournament which took place at Singapore Indoor Stadium in Singapore. Here is the complete list of Winners:

Event	Winner	Runner Up
Men's Singles	Kento Momota (Japan)	Anthony Sinisuka Ginting (Indonesia)
Women's Singles	Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei)	Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)
Men's Doubles	Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda (Japan)	Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan (Indonesia)
Women's Doubles	Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara (Japan)	Kim Hye-jeong and Kong Hee-yong (South Korea)
Mixed Doubles	Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Thailand)	Tan Kian Meng and Lai Pei Jing (Malaysia)

23rd Asian Athletics Championships Concludes: Bahrain Tops, India Finishes 4th

The 2019 Asian Athletics Championships was the 23rd edition of the Asian Athletics Championships. The 4-day event was held from at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha, Qatar. PU Chitra won gold in Women's 1,500 metres race. Here is the list of top 4 countries in the Championship:

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1.	Bahrain	11	7	4	22
2.	China	9	13	7	29
3.	Japan	5	4	9	18
4.	India	3	7	7	17

2019 Badminton Asia Championships Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The 2019 Badminton Asia Championships is a badminton tournament which took place at **Wuhan Sports Center Gymnasium in China**. Here is the complete list of winners:

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's singles	Kento Momota	China Shi Yuqi
Women's singles	Akane Yamaguchi (Japan)	China He Bingjiao
Men's doubles	Hiroyuki Endo and Yuta Watanabe (Japan)	Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo (Indonesia)
Women's doubles	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China)	Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara (Japan)
Mixed doubles	Wang Yilü and Huang Dongping (China)	He Jiting and Du Yue (China)

Asian Wrestling Championship 2019 Concludes: India Finishes With 16 Medals, Iran Tops

India wrapped up their campaign at the **Asian Wrestling Championships** on a resounding note with 16 medals (1 Gold, 3 Silver & 4 Bronze). Only **Bajrang Punia won the gold medal**. Championship was held at Xi'an, China. Here is the List of Top 3 Countries-

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Iran	11	0	6	17
2	China	5	5	6	16
3	Japan	4	7	6	17
8	India	1	6	9	16

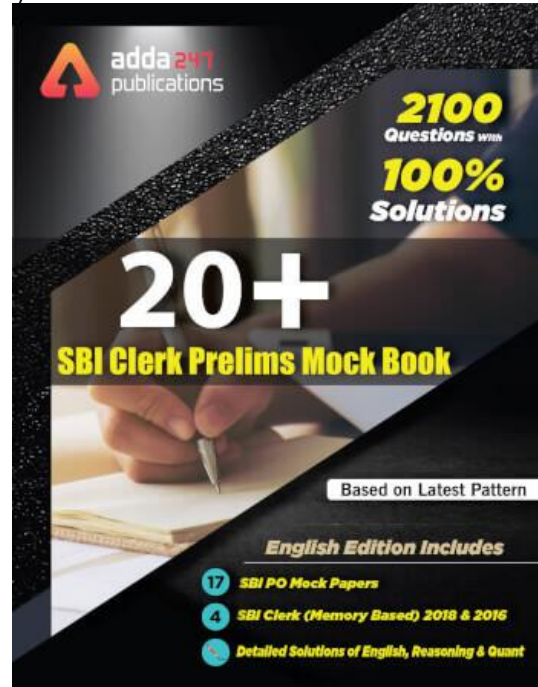
Astronomers Capture First-ever Image of A Black Hole

Astronomers have taken the first-ever image of a black hole, which is located in a distant galaxy known as **'Messier 87' (M87)**. The image which captured by a

network of **eight** telescopes across the world shows an intensely bright 'ring of fire' surrounding a perfectly circular dark hole. The **'Event Horizon Telescope'** captured the image from the galaxy that is **50 million lightyears away**.

David Malpass Named World Bank President

David Malpass appointed as the **President of the World Bank**. He was US President Donald Trump's nominee and won unanimous approval from the institution's executive board. He has replaced Former World Bank **President Jim Yong Kim** who left in January 2019.



Cyclone FANI: Odisha struck with Cyclone Storm FANI

Cyclone Fani intensified into a severe cyclonic storm and has now become an **'extremely severe cyclonic storm'** according to an **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)** report. Here's all you need to know about Cyclone FANI:

- Hurricanes, Typhoons and Cyclones** are just different names for the same kind of tropical storm that have a low-pressure centre with high wind speeds and heads towards land. The nomenclature depends on which part of the world the storm occurs.
- Cyclone FANI** is named by Bangladesh. It is pronounced **"Foni"** and loosely translates to **"the hood of a snake"**.
- Fani is currently an extremely severe cyclonic storm** with wind speeds exceeding 170-180kmph.
- The government has put the **NDRF and Coast Guard** on high alert in the event the cyclone intensifies into an extremely severe cyclonic storm.

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| <p>5. In the past (1891-2017) only 14 severe tropical cyclones formed in April over the Bay of Bengal. Only one storm crossed the Indian mainland.</p> | <p>6. Cyclone Fani is the second storm forming in April and crossing the mainland. Last severe cyclone Nargis in 2008 devastated Myanmar.</p> <p>7. Fani has affected states like Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh.</p> |
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One Liners from 1st May to 6th May

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The government has hiked the customs duty on wheat to 40% from 30% to curb imports and protect the domestic industry. ● The Central government has asked the state transport departments to make it mandatory for all EVs to use the green number plates, irrespective of the year in which they were bought. ● State-owned telecom firm BSNL has become the first operator to start optical fibre-based high-speed broadband service in Pulwama with the launch of 'Bharat Fibre'. ● Cyclone Fani intensified into a severe cyclonic storm and has now become an 'extremely severe cyclonic storm' according to an Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) report. ● Russia's Vladimir Putin and North Korea's Kim Jong Un met face-to-face for the first time and vowed to seek closer ties. ● The United Nations and the European Union (EU) have signed a joint framework aimed at strengthening partnership in counter-terrorism efforts. ● US President Donald Trump stated that his administration is withdrawing the U.S. signature from the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty, in response to concerns from gun rights activists that it could impinge on Americans' right to bear arms. ● Akihito became the first Japanese Emperor to step down from the throne in more than 200 years. ● In a huge diplomatic win for India, the United Nations Security Council designated Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist after China lifted its hold on a proposal to blacklist him under the Security Council's Sanctions Committee. ● Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed into law a new measure that aims to expand government control over the Internet. ● The UK parliament became the first national legislative body in the world to declare a climate change emergency. ● The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India and Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) signed an MoU in New Delhi for setting up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Waste to Wealth Technologies for implementation of | <p>sustainable, scientific and technological solutions for waste management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To nab tax evaders and reduce black money generation, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) signed an agreement to facilitate the exchange of data between the two. ● The second edition of Belt and Road Forum (BRF) was held in Beijing, China in which 37 heads-of-state and 159 countries had participated. Theme - "Belt and Road Cooperation: Shaping a Brighter Shared Future". ● The 5th Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Media Summit on Climate Action & Disaster Preparedness was held at Kathmandu, Nepal. Theme- "Media Solutions for Sustainable Future: Saving Lives, Building Resilient Communities". ● The 16th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) was held in Doha, Qatar. ● Insurance Regulatory & Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a 13 member committee under IRDAI Executive Director Suresh Mathur to review the regulatory framework on microinsurance & recommend measures to increase the demand for such products. ● The Union Environment Ministry has constituted a committee to implement the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), which aims to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20%-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024. ● Iraq has become India's top crude oil supplier for the second consecutive year, meeting more than one-fifth of the country's oil needs in the 2018-19 fiscal year. ● Canara Bank and its life insurance partner Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance launched 'Webassurance' to enable its customers to purchase life insurance in a convenient and hassle-free way. ● The Defence Ministry has awarded a contract of worth Rs 6,311 crore to Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE) to build eight anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft (ASWSWC) for the Indian Navy. ● Wipro Consumer Care announced that it is acquiring personal care company 'Splash', which is based in the Philippines. |
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- **Facilities management provider UDS** has acquired a **majority stake in Matrix Business Services**, which operates in the business assurance and background verification segment.
- **Bharti AXA General Insurance**, a private non-life insurer, **has tied up with** financial marketplace Wishfin's insurance arm **Wishpolicy**, to offer two-wheeler insurance to customers **via WhatsApp**.
- **India Ratings & Research (A Fitch Group Company)** has **lowered the country's growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.3%**, from the earlier projection of 7.5 %.
- **Paytm** has launched a **recurring payment service** for merchants that are working on a digital subscription model.
- Markets regulator **SEBI directed National Stock Exchange** to pay more than **Rs625 crore in the case of misuse of its co-location facility**.
- **India's largest bank SBI** has moved to a new interest rate regime on large savings account deposits as well as short-term loans.
- LIC Housing Finance (LIC HFL) has launched '**Udyam**', a skilling center in **Bengaluru**.
- The **Netherlands** has emerged as the **third** largest foreign direct investor in India during **2017-18**, with investments pegged at about **\$2.67 billion** across sectors.
- **Huawei Technologies Co** overtook **Apple Inc** to claim the **No. 2** spot in smartphones making in the first quarter, moving a step closer to its avowed ambition of displacing **Samsung** at the top of the market.
- Senior IAS officer **Dilip Kumar** was appointed as the **Officer on Special Duty (OSD)** in the office of Lokpal. Kumar, a 1995-batch IAS officer of **Punjab** cadre, is at present joint secretary, **National Human Rights Commission**.
- **BSE**, formerly known as the Bombay Stock Exchange, has appointed its first independent woman director **Jayshree Vyas**.
- **Former Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara** has been named as the **next President of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)**, becoming the **first non-British President of the club**.
- US Air Force General **Tod D. Wolters** has been sworn in as the top military officer of the 29-nation **NATO** military alliance.
- **Spain** and **Barcelona** legend **Xavi Hernandez** has announced that he will retire from professional **football** at the end of the current season.
- **India was the world's fourth biggest military spender in 2018** behind the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia, according to new data think tank **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**.
- The first part of the **Indo-French joint naval exercise, Varuna 19.1** was kicked off the Goa coast.
- Ex-South Africa all-rounder **Jacques Kallis** has been honoured with the Order of Ikhamanga in the **Silver Division**.
- **Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk** and **Arsenal Women Football Club's Vivianne Miedema** were named **Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Players' Player of the Year** for the 2018-19 season.
- **Arjuna awardee and star Indian golfer Gaganjeet Bhullar** won the **outstanding achievement as a player award** at the fourth edition of the annual India **Golf Industry Association (GIA) awards** at the Delhi Golf Club.
- **Six** environmental activists received the prestigious **Goldman Environmental Prize**. Winners are-
 - i. Alfred Brownell, Liberia
 - ii. Bayarjargal Agvaantseren, Mongolia
 - iii. Ana Colovic Lesoska, North Macedonia
 - iv. Jacqueline Evans, Cook Islands
 - v. Alberto Curamil, Chile
 - vi. Linda Garcia, United States
- Rapper **Drake** set a record with the most wins ever, taking home **12** honours at the Billboard Music Awards bringing his career total to **27**.
- Former ISRO chairman **A S Kiran Kumar** was conferred with France's highest civilian honour, **Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Legion d'Honneur**, for his contribution to India-France space cooperation.
- **Dominic Thiem (Austria)** won the **Barcelona Open 2019** after defeating Daniil Medvedev (**Russia**).
- **2019 Badminton Asia Championships winners-**
- **Men's singles-** Kento Momota, **Women's singles-** Akane Yamaguchi.
- India ended their campaign at the **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup** held in **Beijing** with a total of **four medals, three golds and a silver**.
- Australia's Claire Polosak will become the **first female umpire** to officiate in a **men's one-day international** at the ICC World Cricket League Division Two match.
- **World number three tennis player Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic)** beat **Anett Kontaveit (Estonia)** to win **Stuttgart's Porsche Grand Prix** for her second title of the year.
- **Mercedes' Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas** beat his English teammate Lewis Hamilton by 1.5 seconds to win **Azerbaijan Grand Prix**.
- 23rd edition of the Asian Athletics Championships held in Doha, Qatar. Bahrain topped, India-4th.

- **Bajrang Punia** is set to become the **first wrestler from India to fight at the iconic Madison Square Garden in New York.**
- India wrapped up their campaign at the **Asian Wrestling Championships** on a resounding note with **16 medals (1 Gold, 3 Silver & 4 Bronze).**
- India's **G Sathiyam** has become the **first Indian** to break into the **top-25** of world rankings in Table Tennis.
- Raheem Sterling has been named the 2019 footballer of the year by the Football Writers' Association (FWA).
- Indian shooting ace **Apurvi Chandela** has been ranked the world number **one** in the **women's 10 metres** air rifle event while compatriot **Anjum Moudgil** rose to number **two** after consistent performances.
- World number one **Bajrang Punia** has become the **first Indian** to win gold at the **Ali Aliev wrestling tournament** after defeating Viktor Rassadin of **Russia** in the 65 kg freestyle in Kapiisk.
- **Jaipur** will host the **8th Asian Youth Women Handball Championship** in which 10 teams will be participating.
- Abhishek Verma won the 10m air pistol gold medal at the ISSF World Cup at Beijing, China.
- India won 13 medals, including 2 gold (Pooja Rani and Amit Panghal), 4 silver, and 7 bronze at the Asian Boxing Championships in Bangkok.
- Pankaj Advani, the 21-time India's cueist defeated Ehsan Heydari Nezhad of Iran 6-4 to clinch the Asian Snooker Tour title.
- **International Dance Day** is observed globally on **29th of April.**
- International Labour Day (also known as May Day or International Workers' Day) is celebrated across the world on 1st of May every year. Theme - "Sustainable Pension for all: The Role of Social Partners".
- **May 1** is celebrated as '**Maharashtra Day**' and '**Gujarat Day**'.
- The United Nations (UN) established World Tuna Day on May 2 to raise awareness about the

- importance of tuna and to promote more sustainable fishing practices.
- World Press Freedom Day (WPDF) is celebrated all over the world on the 3rd of May.
- Theme- "Media for Democracy: Journalism and Elections in Times of Disinformation".
- **Mark Medoff**, whose acclaimed play "**Children of a Lesser God**," which won the **Tony Award** for best play in 1980 passed away at the age of 79.
- **Former India footballer Pungam Kannan** passes away at age 80 years.
- **The former Ethiopian president, Dr Negasso Gidada** had passed away in Germany where he was undergoing medical treatment.
- **John Singleton**, an Academy Award-nominated filmmaker has passed away following complications from a stroke.
- Noted Kannada theatre personality, satirist and TV actor **Master Hirannaiah** has passed away. He was 85 years old.
- Terry Rawlings, a British film and sound editor has passed away.
- **Peter Mayhew**, the actor behind the character of **Chewbacca** has passed away.
- **Mangaluru City Police** has launched an **all-women police patrol** unit '**Rani Abbakka Force**'.
- Vice President **M Venkaiah Naidu** released a postage stamp to commemorate the **750th birth anniversary** of Sri **Vedanta Desikan** in New Delhi.



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BANKING & FINANCIAL AWARENESS CURRENT AFFAIRS

RBI in News

- RBI stated that it **will inject Rs 37,500 crore into the system through** the purchase of government securities in February to increase liquidity.
- RBI 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 by 18% to Rs. 28.25 lakh crore in FY18.
- RBI **allowed Paytm Payments Bank** to restart opening new accounts for its consumers after almost six months of the ban.
- RBI 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.

- RBI 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. India's financial system remains stable, and the banking sector shows signs of improvement.
- The number of complaints registered at banking ombudsman offices have seen a **25% increase** in the fiscal year 2018, with the majority of these complaints coming from urban centres owing to increased awareness and poor internal redressal mechanisms of banks.
- RBI in the exercise of powers conferred under **Section 47 A** of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949** has levied a penalty of Rupees one crore on the SBI (SBI) for not monitoring the end use of funds in respect of one of its borrowers.
- The RBI 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.
- RBI decided to treat deposits to over **Rs.2 crore** as 'bulk' as they doubled the limit for the same from the earlier Rs.1 crore.
- As per RBI notification, **IDBI Bank has been categorized as a private sector lender** following the acquisition of majority stake by Life Insurance Corporation. **IDBI Bank** has been under the prompt corrective action framework of RBI that bans it from corporate lending and branch expansions, salary hikes and other regular activities.
- The RBI named **SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)**, which in other words mean banks that are too big to fail. As per the norms, these banks will have to set aside more capital for their continued operation.
- RBI provided no objection to **Bandhan Bank** for the proposed acquisition of **Gruh Finance**.
- The **RBI** has slapped a penalty of Rs 2 crore on **Punjab National Bank for non-compliance of regulatory directions** with regard to **SWIFT operations**. SWIFT is a global messaging software used for sharing information on inter-bank transactions by financial entities.
- The **RBI** has decided to use a new tool for the first time to enhance liquidity in the system using which it will buy **\$5 billion** from the banks in a swap deal that is capable of injecting around **Rs. 35,000 crores** into the system. Minimum bid size for the auction has been fixed at **\$25 million** and **multiple** bids submission by banks will be allowed.
- **RBI** set the average base rate to be charged from borrowers by **non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and micro-finance institutions (MFIs) at 9.21%** for the first quarter of the next fiscal (April-June).
- **RBI has tweaked Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) norms** to provide an additional **2% window to lenders**. This move will harmonise the liquidity requirements of banks and release additional money for lending.
- **The RBI** came out with **guidelines for banks to set up new currency chests**, which include a minimum area of 1,500 square feet for strong room. The new chests should have a processing **a capacity of 6.6 lakh pieces** of banknotes per day. The currency chests should have CBL of **Rs 1,000 crore**, subject to ground realities and reasonable restrictions, at the discretion of the Reserve Bank.
- The **Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT)**, an arm of RBI, has launched a **5G Use Cases Lab** for banking and financial sector. The 5G technology, along with blockchain, will be progressively adopted by banks.
- The **RBI has divested its entire stake held in National Housing Bank (NHB)**, the regulator for housing finance companies, and NABARD to the government, which now holds 100% in these entities. The central bank has sold its stake in NHB in the month of March, while it sold the stake in Nabard in February. RBI had 100% shareholding in NHB, which was divested for INR1,450 crore.
- The **RBI** has become the **first central bank** in the **Asia-Pacific (APAC)** region to begin an explicit **interest rate easing cycle**. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor **Shaktikanta Das**, cut rates in February and April.
- The **RBI** issued **Rs20** denomination banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series, bearing the signature of Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI. The new denomination has the **motif of Ellora Caves** on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage. The base colour of the note is **Greenish Yellow**. The dimension of the banknote will be **63 mm x 129 mm**.

Public Sector Banks in News

- **SBI Card and Etihad Guest**, the loyalty programme of Etihad Airways, have joined hands to launch a travel-specific Visa credit card for members and Indian travelers. This is the first international co-

brand partnership of SBI Card, the country's second-largest credit card issuer.

- **Allahabad Bank and SBI Life Insurance** came together and signed a bancassurance pact, to offer a holistic financial planning solution to consumers.
- The **government infused 10,882 crore Rupees in four public sector banks**, including UCO Bank and Syndicate Bank. It is a part of 28,615 crore rupees capital infusion to be done in about half a dozen public sector lenders. UCO Bank has received 3,074 crore rupees, Bank of Maharashtra got 4,498 crore rupees, Syndicate Bank 1,632 crore rupees and Central Bank of India 1,678 crore rupees.
- **Syndicate Bank and SBI Life Insurance** signed a bancassurance pact aiming to offer a comprehensive financial planning solution to its customers. Note: CEO of SBI Life, Sanjeev Nautiyal.
- Govt. amalgamated three Regional Rural Banks - **Punjab Gramin Bank, Malwa Gramin Bank and Suttlej Gramin Bank** - into a single RRB. The sponsor banks of the RRBs are NABARD, Government of Punjab and Punjab National Bank, SBI and Punjab and Sind Bank.
- **Bank of India, Bank of Maharashtra and Oriental Bank of Commerce** have been allowed to exit the PCA framework fully. The three lenders were part of 11 government-owned banks put under the framework in 2017 and 2018.
- 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.
- **Indian Banking Association** has issued advisory requesting banks to waive off the processing, documentation, inspection and all other service charges for Kisan Credit Card and crop loans up to 3 lakh rupees.
- State-owned power giant **NTPC has announced that it has signed a term loan agreement for Rs 5,000 crore with SBI.**
- **SBI and Hitachi Payment Services Pvt Ltd**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hitachi Ltd has launched their merchant-acquiring joint venture, SBI Payment Services Pvt Ltd (SBIPSP) in Mumbai for establishing a **digital payments platform for India** and other countries in the region.
- **United Bank of India** has signed a bancassurance deal with private life insurer **HDFC Life Insurance Company**. Through this partnership, United Bank's customers will be able to take advantage of HDFC Life's expertise in life insurance products, distribution and customer service.
- **PNB has sanctioned loans worth Rs 689 crore to over 1,600 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises**

(MSMEs) through

the psbloansin59minutes.com portal as part of its effort to promote such industries.

- **SBI** has launched doorstep banking service for senior citizens over 70 years of age and differently-abled customers. Eligible customers can avail this service **at a nominal fee of 100 rupees per transaction** for financial transactions and 60 rupees for non-financial transactions.
- The SBI has launched a new service called '**YONO Cash**' for its customers using which customers can withdraw money from ATMs without using debit cards. This facility is available over 16,500 of its ATMs through the You Only Need One (YONO), mobile app platform for the first time in the country.
- **SBI has signed a pact with the Bank of China to boost business opportunities.** SBI has signed an MoU to enhance business synergies between both the banks.
- Bank of Baroda has signed an MoU with agriculture services companies to develop an agriculture digital platform, **Baroda Kisan**, which will provide solutions for agricultural requirements. BoB has signed the agreement **with Skymet Weather Services**, Weather Risk Management Services, BigHaat, Agrostar India, EM3 Agri Services, and Poorti Agri Services.
- **The Finance Ministry has decided to infuse Rs 5,042 crore** into state-owned **Bank of Baroda** ahead of the merger of two other public sector lenders **Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank with BoB.**
- **PNB** had sold stake in its housing finance arm, **PNB Housing Finance (PNBHF)** to General Atlantic Group and VardePartners for Rs 1,851 crore at Rs 850 per share.
- **The amalgamation of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank into the BoB has come into effect and all branches of the former two will function as branches of BoB.** The merged entity would also receive Rs 5,042 crore fund infusion from the government.
- **Kotak Mahindra Bank** will charge customers for UPI transactions starting **1st of May 2019**. For each Kotak Bank account, the first **30 UPI** fund transfers will be free, after which a charge will be levied on all fund transfers from the bank account.
- **ACI Worldwide** announced that **Canara Bank** has successfully rolled out major new functionality to support EMV card acquiring across its ATM network and Aadhaar Authentication, leveraging ACI's UP Retail Payments solution to achieve market firsts. Canara Bank is the first public sector bank to shift to **EMV chip and PIN** for card present transactions across the country's vast ATM network.

- State-owned **Allahabad Bank** stated that the government has increased its authorised capital by **Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 8,000 crore**. The central government after consultation with the **RBI** increased the authorised capital of the bank.
- **Bank of Maharashtra** has partnered with **MIXchange Trade Receivables Discounting System (TREDS)** platform for MSME bill discounting.
- **SBI** has launched India's first '**Green Car Loan**' (Electric Vehicle) to encourage customers to buy electric vehicles. The new scheme 'Green Car Loan' will offer the loan at **20 basis points** lower than the interest rate on the existing car loan schemes.
- **Canara Bank** and its life insurance partner **Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance** launched '**Webassurance**' to enable its customers to purchase life insurance in a convenient and hassle-free way.
- **SBI General Insurance** has launched a product – **cyber defence insurance** to protect businesses from financial and reputational losses due to cyber-attacks. This offers protection against the growing threat of **cyber breaches**.
- **Bajaj Allianz General Insurance** and **Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance** in collaboration launched their first product '**Total Health Secure Goal**'.
- latter's life insurance products. The bank will be able to provide a wide choice of life insurance products to its customers across 836 branches, supported by the products of Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company.
- The board of **Lakshmi Vilas Bank** approved the merger of the **private sector lender with Indiabulls Housing Finance (IBH)** through a share swap deal.
- **RBL Bank** has partnered with **credit profiler CreditVidya** to improve the lender's customer experience. Through this partnership, the private sector lender will be able to gain significant insights into its customer base.
- **IDBI Bank** has launched '**NRI-Insta-Online**' account opening process for NRIs residing in the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** member countries. The person will not be required to furnish physical documents as well as **KYC proofs** for opening an account with the bank.
- **Bandhan Bank** has received approval from the **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** for the proposed scheme of **amalgamation of Gruh Finance with the bank**. The approval made under sub-section (1) of Section 31 of the Competition Act, 2002.
- **Kotak Mahindra Bank** has launched the first **debit card-based authentication** solution on **NPCI's** (National Payments Corporation of India) **e-Mandate** (electronic mandate) **API** (Application Program Interface) platform. With this, it has become the **first ever** Destination Bank to go live with both Net Banking and Debit Card-based e-mandate authentication.

Private Sector Banks in News

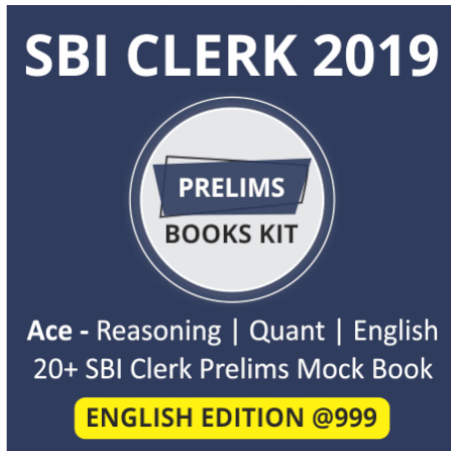
- **ICICI Bank** inducted former **SBI Managing Director B Sriram** and management consultant Rama Bijapurkar on its board as independent director.
- Axis Bank announced its Managing Director and CEO Shikha Sharma has retired from the post and Amitabh Chaudhry will be the new managing director and CEO of the bank with effect from January 1, 2019.
- **ICICI Bank**, in a first-of-its-kind programme, **signed 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 crores to MSMEs for a tenure of 15 years.
- **IFFCO Tokio General Insurance** has launched '**bank locker protector policy**', the first stand-alone bank locker cover offered by any insurance company with a plan to protect the contents of a bank locker such as **jewelry, title documents, and other valuables**. The policy offers a cover against various risks including fire, earthquake, burglary, holdup or any act of terrorism.
- **Karnataka Bank** entered into an **MoU with Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company** to distribute the

- National Company Law Tribunal (**NCLT**) approved the merger of private sector lender **IndusInd Bank** with **Bharat Financial Inclusion (BFIL)**, a microfinance company. Earlier, IndusInd Bank had received '**No Objection**' from RBI, National Stock Exchange and Bombay Stock Exchange. Bharat Financial will become a **subsidiary** of the private lender.

Small & Payments Banks in News

- '**Kisan Suvidha loan**' for small and marginal farmers has been launched by Ujjivan Small Finance Bank. The scheme will attempt to reach the bottom of the pyramid with products and services. It provides loans to individuals with an amount ranging from Rs. 60000 to Rs. 2 Lakh to fulfill the customized needs of the mass market segment.
- **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.



International Banks in News

- **Sri Lanka's Central Bank announced that the RBI** agreed to provide USD 400 million under a swap arrangement to boost the island nation's reserves.

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced that India has allowed an Iranian bank, **Pasargad Bank, to open a branch in Mumbai.**
- In a first for India, **HSBC Holdings Plc** executed a trade finance transaction using blockchain for an export by **Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)** to US-based Tricon Energy.
- **Korea Exim Bank** has come forward to extend a **Rs 4,100 crore loan for Visakhapatnam (VIZAG) Metro Rail project.** The state government had earlier sent a proposal in this regard to the Central government, which in turn forwarded it to Korea Exim Bank.
- **Emirates Islamic** has announced the launch of Chat Banking services for customers via WhatsApp, **marking a global first in the Islamic banking sector.**
- **Exim Bank** has provided soft loans of **USD 266.60 million to Rwanda** for various projects. The funding, done in three separate tranches to Rwanda, is to support agricultural projects, development of special economic zones (SEZs) and for financing a road project in the African nation.

ECONOMY/FINANCIAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Union Cabinet has approved the recapitalization of **EXIM Bank.** The details are as follows:
 1. Issuance of Recapitalization Bonds by the Government of India to the tune of Rs.6,000 crore for capital infusion in Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank).
 2. The equity will be infused in two tranches of Rs. 4,500 crore in FY 2018-19 and Rs.1,500 crore in FY 2019-20 respectively.
 3. The Cabinet also approved an increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from Rs. 10,000 crore to Rs. 20,000 crore.
- With robust private consumption and **7.4% GDP growth rate in the current fiscal**, the Indian economy is expected to accelerate at a rate of 7.6% in 2019-20, according to a report by the United Nations titled United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2019.
- **India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)**, a Fitch Group Company, estimated India's GDP growth could touch 7.5 % in the financial year 2019-20 as against 7.2 % during current fiscal i.e. 2018-19.
- The **32nd Meeting of GST Council** concluded in New Delhi. The Limit of annual turnover for composition scheme increased to 1.5 crore rupees effective from April 1, 2019. The Council decided to increase the GST registration threshold limit to 40 lakh rupees from 20 lakh.
- In its '**Growth Outlook for 2019**', Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) stated that the GDP growth will be in the range of 7.5% in 2019.
- SEBI allowed custodial services in the commodity derivatives market. The move is aimed at enabling the participation of institutional investors such as mutual funds and portfolio managers in the commodity derivatives market.
- Releasing the first advance estimates of National Income for 2018-19, **Central Statistics Office (CSO)** stated that the growth in **GDP during 2018-19 is estimated at 7.2%** as compared to the growth rate of 6.7% in 2017-18, mainly due to improvement in the performance of agriculture and manufacturing sectors.
- The income earned by an average Indian doubled in 7 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. The year-on-year growth in per capita income had touched its bottom in 2017-18 under the current national accounts series (the base year 2011-12) at 8.6 %. In 2018-19, it has bounced back to 11.1%.
- **India's GDP is expected to grow at 7.3%** in the fiscal year 2018-19, and 7.5% in the following two years, the World Bank has forecast. China's economic growth is projected to slow down to 6.2% each in 2019 and 2020 and 6% in 2021.

- India's new e-commerce policy came into effect from February 1, 2019. A new set of policy rules had been formed for the e-commerce companies.
- **National Bulk Handling Corporation (NBHC)** has released Kharif Crop estimation for the year 2018-2019. According to the report, the basmati rice production is expected to decline by 9.24% to 5.18 million metric tonnes.
- 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.
- The OECD cut forecasts again for the global economy in 2019 and 2020. The **Organisation for Economic Co-Operation & Development** forecast in its interim outlook report that the world economy would grow 3.3% in 2019 and 3.4% in 2020.
- Markets regulator **SEBI** withdrew the **20%** limit on investments by **Foreign Portfolio Investors** in corporate bonds of **an entity**. The regulator stated that the restriction is being withdrawn in accordance with a circular issued by the **RBI**.
- **GST council approved** a transition plan for **new goods and services tax rates on residential properties** under which developers of under-construction buildings may either opt to shift to the revised lower rates without input tax credit or stick to the previous rates.
- **Fitch Ratings cut India's economic growth forecast for the next financial year starting April 1, to 6.8% from its previous estimate of 7%**, on weaker than expected momentum in the economy. The rating agency has also cut growth forecasts for **FY20 and FY21 to 7% from 7.3% and 7.1% from 7.3%, respectively**.
- The **Finance Ministry has decided to keep the interest rate unchanged** on small savings schemes for the three-month period beginning April 1. The unchanged interest rate means the **NSC (5 years) and the PPF (15 years) will fetch 8% interest**, while money deposited in KVP will double in little over nine years.
- The **Asian Development Bank** downgraded economic growth forecasts for India and Southeast Asia for 2019 as global risks from trade tensions to Brexit mount. According to the ADB's latest **Asian Development Outlook report**, gross domestic product in India will probably increase by **7.2 %** in 2019, down from a December forecast of **7.6%**.
- On the basis of an assessment of the current and evolving macroeconomic situation, the **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** at its meeting decided to:
 1. **Reduce the policy repo rate** under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) by **25 basis points to 6.0%** from 6.25% with immediate effect.
 2. Consequently, the reverse **repo rate under the LAF stands adjusted to 5.75%**, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate to 6.25%.
 3. **GDP growth for 2019-20 is projected at 7.2%**.
- The **RBI** in consultation with the government of India has set the limits for **Ways and Means Advances (WMA)** for the first half of the financial year 2019-20 (April 2019 to September 2019) **at Rs 75000 crore**.
- **As per the World Bank, India's GDP growth is expected to accelerate moderately to 7.5%** in Fiscal Year 19-20, driven by continued investment strengthening, particularly private-improved export performance and resilient consumption.
- The **International Monetary Fund** cut its economic growth forecasts for **India** by 20 basis points (bps) each from its January predictions to **7.3%** for **FY20** and 7.5% for the next fiscal. Citing persistent risks from the trade war, it lowered 2019 global growth forecast by 20 basis points to **3.3%**, the weakest since 2009 when the subprime crisis had flared up.
- The government has retained the **interest rate for General Provident Fund (GPF), Contributory Provident Fund** and other related schemes at 8% for the first quarter of the current financial year. The interest rate on these funds was at **8% in January-March quarter of 2018-19** and government kept it unchanged for April to June for 2019-20.
- **ADB** committed to provide **USD 3 billion** in sovereign loans to India in 2018, the **highest level** of assistance since sovereign operations began in the country in **1986**, stated the annual report of the multilateral lending agency.
- **BuyUcoin**, second oldest Cryptocurrency Exchange in India, has introduced a new and unique platform for **wholesale cryptocurrency trading**.
- **SEBI** has reduced the **minimum subscription requirement** as well as **defined trading lots** for Real Estate Investment Trusts (**REITs**) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (**InvITs**). SEBI has also increased the leverage limit for InvITs from 49% to **70%**. While making an initial public offer and follow-on offer, the minimum subscription shall **not be less than Rs 1 lakh** for InvITs and **Rs 50,000** for REITs.

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

BUSINESS NEWS (NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL)

Companies	Key Points
Kochi Refinery project and IOCL LPG Bottling Plant	dedicated to the Nation in Kochi, Kerala
Bharat Fritz Werner Ltd (BFW)	partnered with Universal Robots to co-create robots for MSME sector.
Omega Healthcare Management Services and IIT Bangalore	signed a pact for advanced use of the latest technology in providing healthcare solutions.
Vodafone Idea	announced that its board had approved a rights issue of Rs. 25,000 crores to existing eligible equity shareholders in line with the recommendations of a capital raising committee it had set up in November 2018.
Dell	hosted an interactive hackathon, where teachers focused on their learning journey in New Delhi.
Microsoft India	launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave.
BHEL and Libcoin	are in dialogue to form a world-class consortium to initially build 1GWh lithium-ion battery plant in India.
HDFC Standard Life Insurance	changed its name to HDFC Life Insurance
Reliance Retail and Reliance Jio Infocomm	would jointly launch a new e-commerce platform in the country. Gujarat would be the first state to get it.
HDFC Mutual Fund has pipped ICICI Prudential MF	to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years.
Paytm	has launched hotel bookings on its platform and acquired Night Stay, which offers deals on last-minute bookings at luxury hotels
Food delivery startup Swiggy	Acquired Bengaluru-based AI startup Kint.io for an undisclosed amount
Ahmedabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)	approved the Rs 42,000-crore resolution plan submitted by ArcelorMittal for the debt-ridden Essar Steel Ltd.
HDFC Bank Ltd	crossed the Rs6 trillion market capitalization mark for the first time, making it only the third Indian firm, after TCS and Reliance Industries Ltd to achieve the milestone.
ICICI Lombard and Mobikwik	announced a strategic partnership to provide cyber-insurance cover, aimed to provide protection against unauthorized and fraudulent transactions online, across bank accounts, debit and credit cards. and mobile wallets.
Hyundai Motor Group and Ola	announced a strategic partnership under which Hyundai Motor Company and Kia Motors Corporation will invest a total of \$ 300 million in Ola, making it their biggest combined investment to date.
ADB and Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd	inked an agreement to invest USD 50 million in solar energy project developer to help the company scale up rapidly.
Power Finance Corporation	completed the acquisition of majority stake in REC Ltd by transferring Rs 14,500 crore to the government. This merger will make PFC second-largest government-owned financial player in the country based on the current market capital after SBI.
GAIL India Ltd and BHEL	signed an agreement for cooperation in the development of solar power projects.
Ola and Telangana Government	signed an MoU to support the latter's efforts in strengthening traffic infrastructure in the city.
Infosys and Roland-Garros Grand Slam	announced a three-year strategic technology partnership aimed to re-imagine the tennis experience for the fans and the players globally.

Wipro Limited and IIT Kharagpur	signed MoU to collaborate on high-impact, industry-focused applied research in the areas of 5G and AI.
Apple Inc & Goldman Sachs Group Inc	jointly launched the Apple Card credit card for iPhones. The card is tied to Apple Pay.
Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management (RNAM) joined hands with Google	to enable the customers of Reliance Mutual Fund to carry out voice-based financial transactions. RNAM, first company in India, to provide a conversational interface.
Paytm Money	Got approval from SEBI to the investment and wealth management platform of the mobile payments company to start offering broking services.
CCI Approved Larsen & Toubro's	proposal to acquire up to 66.15% stake in Mindtree
Tata Consultancy Services partnered with Google Cloud	to build industry-specific cloud solutions.
PayU	acquired Wibmo, a US-based financial technology firm for USD 70 million
Reliance retail	has become the first Indian retail company to clock more than Rs 1 lakh crore in annual revenues. It became the first Indian retailer to cross more than 10,000 stores.
Wipro Consumer Care	announced that it is acquiring personal care company 'Splash', which is based in the Philippines.
HCL Technologies	completed acquisition of US-based Strong-Bridge Envision , deal was worth 45 million dollars .
Microsoft	reached a valuation of one trillion dollars for the first time after posting an increase in profits.
The DoT has approved the merger of Tata Teleservices with Bharti Airtel Ltd. , subject to the condition that it furnishes a Rs 7200 crore bank guarantee.	
CRISIL Ltd will transfer its rating business to its proposed new wholly-owned subsidiary.	
Social media giant Facebook announced that it will create an independent Institute for Ethics in Artificial intelligence (AI) with an initial investment of \$7.5 million over a period of five years.	

AGREEMENTS/MOU SIGNED

Between Countries States Cities Organizations	
Between Whom	MoU/Agreement Details
NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission and Adobe	Statement of Intent to collectively drive the charter of developing creative skills and spreading digital literacy across all Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) in India.
India and Brunei	pact for the exchange of Information and Assistance in Collection with respect to taxes in order to curb tax evasion and tax avoidance in New Delhi.
India and ADB	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> signed a 926 million dollar loan agreement to operationalize two lines of the Mumbai Metro Rail System, a single largest infrastructure project loan in ADB history approved by the ADB Board. signed in New Delhi a \$26 Million Loan Agreement to provide additional financing for improving drainage infrastructure in Dibrugarh town of Assam under the ongoing Assam Urban Infrastructure Investment Program.
India and AIIB	loan agreement of USD 455 million for financing the Andhra Pradesh Rural Roads Projects.
Centre, Chhattisgarh Govt. and World Bank	signed a \$25.2 Million Loan Agreement to support the State's Reforms in Expenditure Management
India and World Bank	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Signed agreement to provide a \$250-million loan for the National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP) to help women in rural households develop viable enterprises for farm and non-farm products.

	2. With 5 States of Government of India and Implementing Agencies signed in New Delhi the Loan Agreement for Additional Financing of \$137 Million for the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP).
India and Paraguay	Agreed to identify sectors of mutual interest to promote bilateral investment and decided to explore new areas of collaboration, including information and Communication Technology and space and biotechnology
Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Entered into an MoU aimed at improving women livelihood and empowering them through skill development
India and Germany	For cooperation in the field of occupational safety and health
IBBI and International Finance Corporation	Signed a Cooperation Agreement to assist IBBI to further build the capacity of insolvency professionals, and insolvency professional agencies for the purposes of the Code.
India and Pakistan	Agreed to work expeditiously on operationalizing the Kartapur corridor
IIT Roorkee and ISRO	MoU to develop Space Technology Cells on the campus of the varsity
HRD Ministry and Afghanistan	MoU to work on digital education initiatives, which include many prominent programs developed by Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).
Maldives finance ministry and India's Export-Import Bank	Agreement for line of credit (LOC) of 800 million US dollars to finance the new government's infrastructure projects.
IBBI and SEBI	Mutual Cooperation
ADB	inked an agreement to invest USD 50 million in solar energy project developer Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd to help the company scale up rapidly
Oman and USA	To allow American ships and warplanes to take advantage of his ports and airports
India and the African Union	To establish an India-Africa health sciences collaborative platform.
India and USA	Agreement for exchange of country-by-country (CbC) report
India and Bolivia	Signed 8 MoUs in the fields of culture, Visa waiver arrangement for diplomats, exchange between diplomatic academies, mining, space, traditional medicine, establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT and Bi-Oceanic Railway project
India and China	for exports of Indian tobacco leaves to China
India and Sri Lanka	to provide modern infrastructural facilities to Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies of Eastern University in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka.
India and Japan-India Cooperative Actions (JICA)	signed the loan agreements under the Japanese Official Development Assistance Loan Program in New Delhi
India and Uzbekistan	for supply of uranium ore concentrates to widen its source base for the nuclear fuel
Ministry of Coal of India entered and Ministry of Energy, Republic of Poland	to foster relations in the field of coal mining and clean coal technologies through the already established Joint Coal Working Group
India and Germany	for cooperation on Water and Waste Management
India and Bangladesh	for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)
Engineers India Limited (EIL) and Mongolia	for Project Management Consultancy for oil refinery
India and Norway	the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative
Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and the Central Public Works Department (CPWD)	For kick-starting cooperation in building energy efficiency.
Airports Authority of India and Society for Applied Microwave	for joint research programs in the field of Communication Navigation and Surveillance (CNS).

Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER)	
Indian Coast Guard and the Airport Authority of India (AAI)	to strengthen mutual interactions, interoperability and validating procedures during conduct of search and rescue operations
Government e Marketplace (GeM) and Competition Commission of India (CCI)	to enable a fair and competitive environment in the e-Marketplace.
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and Invest India	to promote foreign investments in the country and Indian investments abroad
The NITI Aayog and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) signed a Sol	to codify, document and share best
The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh (GoHP) and the World Bank	signed a \$40 Million Loan Agreement to help bring clean and reliable drinking water to the citizens of the Greater Shimla area
India and Chile	three MoUs in the fields of mining, culture and empowerment of persons with disabilities
Tata Power and Indraprastha Gas Limited	to set up integrated customer services and optimize value for customers.
Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and IIT Delhi	to collaborate in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment.
BSE and India International Exchange (India INX)	to connect investor community and companies in both countries besides allowing a capital formation platform
National Thermal Power Corporation & with Canara Bank	to raise Rs 2,000 crore, which would be used to part finance its capital expenditure.
BSE and HDFC Bank	to strengthen the BSE Startups platform
India and Sweden	To work towards addressing a range of challenges around smart cities and clean technologies among others.
PAISALO Digital Limited and SBI	first co-origination loan agreement, the loan ticket is designed at Rs 10,000 to 2 lakh
The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and ISRO	to map, validate and protect smaller wetlands in coastal regions
India and Bolivia	On Cooperation in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources
India and Cambodia	on Cooperation in the field of Communications.
India and Bolivia	on Cooperation in the Field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy
India and Denmark	in the field of Renewable Energy with focus on Offshore Wind Energy.
TCS and Department of Posts	to transform DoP into a multi-service digital hub
BSE & Network Intelligence	to provide cybersecurity services to its members in line with the cybersecurity framework set by SEBI.
Ministry of AYUSH and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)	for cooperation in research and education in areas of traditional systems of medicine and its integration with modern science
An agreement for Renukaji Dam Multipurpose Project signed in New Delhi among the States of UP, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.	

NEW APPOINTMENTS: NATIONAL

Designation/Post	Who is Appointed?
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1.	Director General of NCC (DGNCC).	Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra
2.	Federal Bank's part-time chairman.	Dilip Sadarangani
3.	Yes Bank's MD & CEO	Ravneet Singh Gill
4.	MD and CEO of IDFC First Bank	V Vaidyanathan
5.	Director General (Investigation) in National Human Rights Commission	Senior IPS Officer Prabhat Singh
6.	chief coach for the country's female boxers	Mohammed Ali Qamar (replaced veteran Shiv Singh)
7.	TCS Independent director	Don Callahan
8.	Yes Bank's non-executive part-time chairman	Brahm Dutt
9.	1st Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court.	Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan
10.	Director General of Ordnance Factories (DGOF) and chairman of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)	Saurabh Kumar
11.	director general of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).	Kumar Rajesh Chandra
12.	New chief of the Central Bureau of Investigation	Rishi Kumar Shukla
13.	Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation Bank	P V Bharathi (1 st CEO of the Corporation Bank)
14.	Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.	Air India chief MD and Chairperson Pradeep Singh Kharola (replaced Rajiv Nayan Choubey)
15.	chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)	Pramod Chandra Mody (succeed Sushil Chandra)
16.	Election Commissioner of India	Sushil Chandra
17.	Non-Executive chairman of Bank of Baroda	Former Finance Secretary Hasmukh Adhia
18.	Member of the 15th Finance Commission	Former Finance Secretary Ajay Narayan Jha (posted in place of Shaktikanta Das)
19.	India's Ambassador to Vietnam	Pranay Kumar Verma
20.	Chairman of National Commission for Backward Classes	Bhagwan Lal Sahni
21.	Next ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia	Dr. Ausaf Sayeed
22.	Finance Secretary of India	Subhash Chandra Garg, IAS
23.	Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)	Ajit Kumar Mohanty (replaced Mr. K.N. Vyas)
24.	Axis Bank's Non-Executive Chairman	Rakesh Makhija
25.	Chairman of LIC	MR Kumar
26.	MDs of LIC	Vipin Anand and TC Suseel Kumar
27.	Next Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan	Santosh Jha
28.	11th Chief Minister of Goa	Pramod Sawant (succeeding Late Manohar Parrikar)
29.	India's 1st Lokpal	Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose (Oath Administered by President Kovind)
30.	Tata Coffee MD and CEO	Chacko Purackal Thomas (replaced Sanjiv Sarin)
31.	Next Chief of the Naval Staff of Indian Navy	Vice Admiral Karambir Singh (will replace Admiral Sunil Lanba on 31 st May)
32.	United Nations Development Programme's new Goodwill Ambassador	Indian-American television personality and food expert Padma Lakshmi
33.	Chief Scientist of the WHO	Soumya Swaminathan
34.	United Nations Development Programme's new Goodwill Ambassador	Indian-American television personality and food expert Padma Lakshmi

35.	International Cricket Council (ICC) CEO	Manu Sawhney
36.	President of the World Bank	David Malpass (replaced President Jim Yong Kim)
37.	Deutsche Bank's CEO	Manish Maheshwari (Replaced Ravneet Gill)
38.	Jet Airways Founders Naresh Goyal and wife Anita Goyal have stepped down from the board of the cash-strapped airline.	
39.	Supreme Court-appointed BCCI Ombudsman Justice D K Jain (retd) will now serve as the Ethics Officer of the Indian cricket board on an ad-hoc basis.	
40.	ECI appointed transgender social activist Gauri Sawant as first transgender election ambassadors from Maharashtra	
41.	Bajaj Finserv's Chairman and Non-Executive Director Rahul Bajaj has resigned, took over as the Chairman Emeritus	
42.	Mizoram Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan has stepped down from his post, Governor of Assam, Prof. Jagdish Mukhi given temporary charge.	
43.	Rajan Anandan , vice president for Google India and South East Asia, and essentially heading Google in India, is leaving the company after an eight-year stint.	
44.	SUN Group Chairman Vikramjit Singh Sahney elected as the new president of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) – India .	
45.	The government has announced that Karnam Sekar (MD and CEO of the erstwhile Dena Bank) will take over as MD and CEO of Indian Overseas Bank from July 1. His term will end in June 2020. Also, R A Sankara Narayanan (former MD and CEO of Vijaya Bank) will move to Canara Bank as MD and CEO .	
46.	Indian women's cricket team captain Mithali Raj named the goodwill ambassador of Team India at the Street Child Cricket World Cup (SCWC) .	
47.	Uday Kumar Varma , a former bureaucrat retired from the post of Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, resigned from the post of The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Assocham) Secretary-General .	
48.	Yes bank Senior group President and head of retail and business banking, Pralay Mondal resigned	
49.	President of the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Birendra Prasad Baishya , has been named Chef de Mission for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics	
50.	Railway Board Chairman Ashwani Lohani retired. General Manager, South Central Railway, V K Yadav replaced him.	
51.	Ashok Chawla resigned as chairman of the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE)	
52.	Indian football team head coach Stephen Constantine has stepped down	
53.	Ananth Narayanan has stepped down as CEO of Myntra and Jabong to pursue external opportunities.	

NEW APPOINTMENTS: INTERNATIONAL

	Designation/Post	Who is Appointed?
1.	Malaysia's new king	Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah (replaced Sultan Muhammad V)
2.	PM of Sweden	Stefan Lofven
3.	Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen has appointed Su Tseng-chang as Prime Minister.	
4.	Venezuela's President	Nicolás Maduro
5.	Brazil's President	Jair Bolsonaro
6.	Bangladesh Prime Minister	Sheikh Hasina for 4 th term
7.	Chairman of the African Union at the continental body's summit in Ethiopia	Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi
8.	Chairman of the African Union at the continental body's summit in Ethiopia	Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi

9.	New Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia	Sanjiv Ranjan
10.	Nepal's ambassador to India	Former Law Minister of Nepal Nilambar Acharya
11.	Next Ambassador of India to Argentina	Dinesh Bhatia
12.	Ambassador of India to Bhutan	Ruchira Kamboj
13.	Regional Director for World Health Organization South-East Asia	Poonam Khetrpal Singh
14.	IndiGo new Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Ronojoy Dutta
15.	president of Global Solar Council (GSC)	chairman of National Solar Energy Federation, Pranav R Mehta (1 st Indian to head)
16.	United Nations Development Programme's new Goodwill Ambassador	Indian-American television personality and food expert Padma Lakshmi
17.	Chief Scientist of the WHO	Soumya Swaminathan
18.	Amateur International Boxing Federation (AIBA) President Gafur Rahimov announced his resignation	
19.	Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev has announced his resignation after nearly 30 years in power, Chairman of the Kazakh Senate took over	
20.	Mohammad Shtayyeh named Palestinian Prime Minister by President of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas	
21.	Algeria's President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has resigned from the post with immediate effect, ceding power in the face of massive street protests against his 20-year rule.	
22.	The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of Nicholas Koumjian of the United States as the head of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar .	
23.	Chicago has created history by electing an African-American woman as its mayor for the first time . Lightfoot will take over office from Mayor Rahm Emanuel.	
24.	Algeria's parliament confirmed Abdelkader Bensalah as the new interim president of the country , following resignation by the ailing Abdelaziz Bouteflika .	
25.	Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu has won a fifth term in office.	
26.	President Jovenel Moise announced that Jean Michel Lapin will be the new PM of Haiti.	
27.	Bibhu Kalyan Nayak became the first Indian to be appointed Chair of International Hockey Federation (FIH) Health and Safety Committee by the world governing body.	
28.	The Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has appointed Mohammed Ishtayeh as the new PM. Mohammed Ishtayeh will succeed Rami Hamdallah.	
29.	Mali's PM Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga has resigned along with his whole government, following a motion of no confidence over its failure to handle violence in the West African country.	
30.	Madagascar president, Andry Rajoelina , has sworn into office after taking the oath in Antananarivo before nine judges of the High Constitutional Court.	
31.	Suman Kumari become the first Hindu woman to have been appointed as a civil judge in Pakistan after passing an examination for induction of judicial officers.	
32.	In the United States, Department of Defence, Chief of Staff, Rear Admiral Kevin Sweeney has resigned, a month after Defence Secretary James Mattis announced his departure.	
33.	Malaysia's King Muhammad V abdicated after two years on the throne , the first time a monarch stepped down before completing their five-year tenure.	

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

	Name of the Award	Winner
1.	Saraswati Samman, 2017	Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra for his poetry collection in Gujarati named "Vakhar"
2.	"Woman's Voice Award" at the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF)	US Based Indian poet Ranjani Murali
3.	Sushila Devi Literature Award 2019	Writer Namita Gokhale for her novel "Things to Leave Behind".
4.	1st-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award	PM Modi

5.	Freedom of the City Of London'	SBI's UK chief Sanjiv Chadha
6.	Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour), the highest civilian award of France	Father Francois Laborde, a 92-year-old priest
7.	Lifetime Achievement Award by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television	Indo-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta
8.	Awarded the 'Oscat' by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)	Bradley Cooper
9.	Sansad Ratna Award	Himachal Pradesh MP Anurag Thakur
10.	2019 Rosa Park Trailblazer award	Indian-American Sikh Gurinder Singh Khalsa
11.	ICSIs Lifetime Achievement Award for 'Translating Excellence in Corporate Governance into Reality'	Industrialist and Godrej Group Chairman Adi Godrej
12.	Dan David Prize 2019	Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam
13.	the EY Entrepreneur of the Year for 2018.	Siddhartha Lal, managing director and chief executive officer, Eicher Motors
14.	ASSOCHAM conferred 'Non-Life Insurer of the Year Award 2019'	Bharti AXA General Insurance
15.	Co-winner of the 2019 Missile Systems Award by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics	DRDO Chairman Satheesh Reddy
16.	one of the 2019 World's Most Ethical Companies award	Tata Steel
17.	Best Bank Award by the Tamil Nadu government	Indian Bank
18.	'Green Era Award for Sustainability'	TVS Motor Company
19.	Swachh Survekshan-2019 Awards	Cleanest city: Indore. Cleanest small city: New Delhi Municipal Council. Best Ganga Town: Uttarakhand's Gauchar.
20.	Golden Peacock Innovative Product Award 2019	ACKO General Insurance for their contextual micro insurance product –“Ola Ride Insurance”.
21.	First Prize in the category of TV Cinema Spot at international Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019 at ITB, Berlin	Ministry of Tourism, Government of India
22.	Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian region	Padmanaban Gopalan, founder of No Food Waste, Tamil Nadu
23.	Best Domestic Water Purifier Award 2018-19	Kent RO Systems Pvt. Ltd.
24.	Windham-Campbell prize	author and chief of The Wire, 'Raghu Karnad' for his debut book, 'Farthest Field: An Indian story of Second World War'
25.	2019 Templeton Prize	Brazilian physicist and astronomer Marcelo Gleiser (1 st Latin American to win)
26.	Vyas Samman 2018	Hindi writer Leeladhar Jagudi (for his collection of poems "Jitne Log Utne Prem")
27.	Global Teacher Prize for 2019	Peter Tabichi
28.	Grand Order of King Tomislav by the President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic	President Ram Nath Kovind
29.	Turing Award 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> University of Toronto faculty member and Google Brain researcher Geoffrey Hinton Facebook chief AI scientist and NYU professor Yann LeCun Element AI founder and University of Montreal professor Yoshua Bengio

30.	Bodley Medal, the highest honor granted by the University of Oxford's world-famous Bodleian Libraries	Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen
31.	Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award 2019	Swiss-based NRI scientist Dr Rajendra Joshi
32.	Republic Day Journalism Award 2019 by Assam Govt.	journalist and former editor Dharendra Nath Chakraborty
33.	first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research	Eminent Scientist and Bharat Ratna recipient CNR Rao
34.	2018 Confederation of African Football	Liverpool's Mohamed Salah: Men's Player of the Year South Africa's Thembi Kgatlana: Women's Player of the Year
35.	Gairdner Foundation announced the 2019 Canada Gairdner Award laureates	Goa and Boston-based Vikram Patel
36.	Asian Tour with a Special Achievement Award for contributions to Asian Golf	Dr. Pawan Munjal, Chairman, Hero MotoCorp
37.	Zayed Medal by UAE	PM Narendra Modi
38.	'Global Slag Company of the Year'	Tata Steel
39.	Wisden Almanack's 'Leading Cricketer of the Year' Men	Virat Kohli
40.	Wisden Almanack's 'Leading Cricketer of the Year' Women	Smriti Mandhana
41.	best athletic coach in Asia by Asian Athletic Association (AAA)	Indonesian Eni Nuraeni
42.	"Public Water Agency of the Year" by Global Water Intelligence	National Mission for Clean Ganga
43.	St Andrew the Apostle – the highest state decoration of Russia	PM Modi
44.	'AIMA Managing India Award 2019 for outstanding PSU of the year'	Indian Oil Corporation
45.	Saraswati Samman, 2018	Telugu poet K Siva Reddy
46.	Lifetime Achievement Award 2019 at 4th APJ Abdul Kalam Innovation Conclave	Dr. A K Singh, director at Life Sciences, DRDO
47.	Celent Model Bank 2019 Award in the category of Financial Inclusion	Fincare Small Finance Bank
48.	with Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award	Sunil Kumar Gautam for his book titled 'Samvidhan Kavya'.
49.	National Intellectual Property Award 2019	Intellectual Property Rights Cell (IPR Cell) of Kerala Agricultural University
50.	IPI's (International Press Institute) World Press Freedom Hero award in 2019	Dawn editor and Columnist Cyril Almeida from Pakistan
51.	Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Award 2019	filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar, scriptwriter Salim Khan and dancing diva Helen.
52.	National Intellectual Property Award, 2019	Dr. Benny Antony
53.	2nd edition of Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize	Rana Dasgupta for his 2010 novel "Solo"
54.	Order of Ikhamanga in the Silver Division by the President of South Africa	Jacques Kallis
55.	outstanding achievement as a player award at Golf Industry Association awards	Arjuna awardee and golfer Gaganjeet Bhullar
56.	Three Indian expats from the UAE are amongst those who won the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award the highest honor conferred on Indian diaspora. President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the award on Girish Pant, Surender Singh Kandhari and Dr. Zulekha Daud and other awardees at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention in Varanasi.	

57.	President of India, Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 . The awards were presented to 26 shortlisted awardees including one joint award for National Child Award (now renamed as Bal Shakti Puraskar) under the category of innovation, scholastic, sports, art and culture, social service and bravery.
58.	The Japan Prize Foundation announced India born professor Dr. Rattan Lal, University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A, as the recipient of the 2019 Japan Prize for his contributions in the field of "Biological Production, Ecology".
59.	A detained Chinese rights lawyer Yu Wensheng has won a Franco-German human rights award for his 'exceptional contribution' to the protection and promotion of human rights.
60.	" Black Panther " took home the top award for best performance by a cast in a motion picture at the 2019 Screen Actors Guild Awards. On the TV front, "This Is Us" nabbed the ensemble award for drama, while " The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel " won the comedy prize.
61.	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.
62.	VP Naidu presented the 2nd Chhatra Vishwakarma Awards to students and their mentors and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) Awards to institutions at an event organized by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in New Delhi.
63.	Virat Kohli 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 following an extraordinary 2018.
64.	Ace Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat become the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award.
65.	The Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 has been conferred on the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
66.	The Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA) announced 15 winners of the 60th Annual Academy Awards .
67.	Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited and Indian Oil Corporation Limited awarded the exploration rights for Abu Dhabi's Onshore Block 1
68.	Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prizes for Science and Technology for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 in New Delhi . There were 34 prize winners.
69.	Singapore's Changi Airport has been crowned the world's best aviation hub for the seventh time in a row, while New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport featured at number 59, according to the Skytrax World Airport Awards.
70.	National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) of India has been selected as Winner under the Miniratna Category (Category II) by Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
71.	Urban Local Bodies, Beneficiaries and Housing Finance Corporations (under CLSS), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has instituted the ' PMAY (U) awards for Implementation and Innovation '
72.	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
73.	India's education technology startup ' Dost Education ' won a \$25,000 tech prize along with two other winners from Tanzania and Egypt.
74.	Two schemes of the West Bengal government for skill development- "Utkarsh Bangla" and distribution of bicycles to students " Sabooj Sathi " have won the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) awards of the United Nations.
75.	An image of a little girl crying, as she and her mother have been taken into custody by US border officials in Texas won the prestigious World Press Photo of the Year.

76.	Reuters journalists, Kyaw Soe Oo, and Wa Lone have been selected for UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize 2019 .
77.	A total of 150 Indian peacekeepers serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have received medals of honour for their dedicated service and sacrifice.
78.	Prominent scientist and businessman Yusuf Hamied is among a host of Indian-origin experts honoured in the 2019 list of new fellows of the UK's Royal Society.
79.	Indian-American scientist and social activist Sree Sreenath inducted into the prestigious Cleveland International Hall of fame for his contribution in applications in systems biology, global issues, and sustainable development.

SUMMITS | EVENTS | FESTIVALS Held (NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL)

	Name of the Summit	Location/Held in
SUMMITS HELD NATIONALLY		
1.	2nd edition of Global Investor summit	Chennai
2.	2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019	Goa
3.	India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference	Mumbai
4.	15th edition of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, Theme: 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India'	Varanasi
5.	The 2-day Agri Vision 2019 Conference on envisioning Agro solutions for Smart and Sustainable Agriculture	Hyderabad
6.	25th International conference and exhibition on terrestrial and satellite broadcasting, BES EXPO 2019, Theme: Next Gen Broadcasting in the IT World	New Delhi
7.	second World Orange Festival	Nagpur
8.	10th edition of the India Rubber Expo – 2019	Mumbai.
9.	1st National Level Sports Meet for the students of Ekavya Model Residential Schools, 'EMRS Sports Meet' app launched	Hyderabad
10.	9th International Micro irrigation conference, Theme was "Micro Irrigation and Modern Agriculture".	Aurangabad, Maharashtra
11.	Aviation Summit 2019, Theme: 'Flying for all-especially the next 6 Billion'	Mumbai
12.	National Youth Parliament Festival 2019, Theme: 'Be the Voice of New India and Find solutions and contribute to policy'.	New Delhi
13.	Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) of US Chamber of Commerce launched a new innovation strategy at Raisina Dialogue, 2019	New Delhi
	4th meeting of the Council for Trade Development and Promotion (CTDP)	New Delhi
14.	25th Edition of Partnership Summit 2019	Mumbai.
15.	The Indian Paint Association's 29th biennial Indian Paint Conference, Theme: 'Paints Pe Charcha - Naye Aayaam'.	Agra, Uttar Pradesh
16.	The First 'National Consultation on Child Protection' for 2019	New Delhi
17.	106th Indian Science Congress, Theme- 'Future: India-Science and Technology'.	Jalandhar, Punjab
18.	'ICT Academy Bridge 2019 conference (largest Industry-Institute Interaction Event of Asia), Theme: "Fostering India for Industry 4.0"	Tamil Nadu
19.	Indo-Monaco Business Forum	New Delhi
20.	The Kala Ghoda festival, India's largest multi-cultural street festival begins in Mumbai to celebrate its 20 years of art and culture through cinema, theatre, dance, literature, and sculpture. Maneck Davar is Chairman of Kala Ghoda Association.	
21.	The 6-day long music and dance festival ' Sopan 2019 ', to encourage young artists to take up traditional art took place in New Delhi .	
22.	Shehri Samridhi Utsav, an initiative of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), aims to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Mission	New Delhi

	- National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) was held	
23.	2019 Asia LPG summit in	New Delhi
24.	Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) organized Parmanu Tech 2019	New Delhi
25.	The 5th India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Committee Meeting was held	New Delhi
26.	US-India CEO Forum	New Delhi
27.	The 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (CMS)	Gandhinagar in Gujarat
28.	2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit	Guwahati
29.	13th International Oil and Gas Conference – PETROTECH – 2019	Greater Noida
30.	The First Annual Conference of Media Units working under I&B Ministry	New Delhi
31.	LAWASIA, in association with the Bar Association of India, hosted its 1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference in	New Delhi
32.	CREDAI YouthCon -19 in	New Delhi
33.	5th International Dam Safety Conference–2019 is being held in	Bhubaneswar
34.	National Conference on Unani Medicine organized by the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM)	New Delhi
35.	International Digital Health Symposium	New Delhi
36.	14th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnerships (organized by Ministry of Commerce & Industry)	New Delhi
37.	4th IoT India Congress	Bengaluru in August 2019
38.	FinTech Conclave (organized by NITI Aayog)	New Delhi
SUMMITS HELD INTERNATIONALLY		
39.	The second joint secretary level meeting to review the India-Nepal Trade Treaty Held	Pokhara, Nepal
40.	The seventh session of the World Government Summit held in	Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)
41.	High-Level Dialogue on Indo-Pacific Cooperation (HLD-IPC), Theme: 'Towards a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Inclusive Region'	Jakarta, Indonesia
42.	1 st BRICS Sherpa meeting	Curitiba, Brazil
43.	46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation	Abu Dhabi

COMMITTEES IN NEWS

	Purpose for which Committee is formed	Headed by
1.	EPFO notified three new committees on Finance, Investment and Audit Committee (FIAC), the Pension and EDLI Implementation Committee (PEIC) and the Exempted Establishments' Committee (EEC).	
2.	Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) set up a panel to identify domestically systematically important insurers (SIs)	Praveen Kutumbe
3.	Government constituted a high-power committee to monitor the pricing of medicines and healthcare products.	a Niti Aayog member (Health)
4.	IBBI set up an 11-member working to go into the concept of 'Group Insolvency' and suggest a suitable framework.	former SEBI chief UK Sinha
5.	A ministerial panel will examine uniformity of taxation on lottery under GST or other issues arising out of it	Maharashtra Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar
6.	Govt. constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime	Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitiin Patel is the convener
7.	Madras High Court has set up an expert committee to find a solution to root out invasive species of plants from the Western Ghats	Cherukuri Raghavendra Babu

8.	7-member committee to look into revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out	Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi
9.	SEBI constituted a "Research Advisory" committee which will assist in formulating policy to undertake research relevant for development and regulation of capital markets	Sankar De
10.	RBI set up an expert committee to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector	former Sebi chairman U.K. Sinha
11.	HRD Ministry constituted a task force to look into the issues of suicides of the students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas	Chairmanship of Psychiatrist, Dr Jitendra Nagpal.
12.	Govt. had notified a High-Level committee for implementation of Clause 6 of Assam Accord.	Retired IAS officer M.P. Bezbaruah is chairman
13.	RBI constituted a High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion	UIDAI's former Chairman Nandan Nilekani
14.	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.	
15.	The Maharashtra government has set up a committee to review various schemes being implemented for the welfare of tribals in the state	former MLA Vivek Pandit
16.	EPFO notified three new committees on Finance, Investment and Audit Committee (FIAC), the Pension and EDLI Implementation Committee (PEIC) and the Exempted Establishments' Committee (EEC).	
17.	The Supreme Court ordered a court-monitored mediation in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case to arrive at a "permanent solution" . The five-judge constitution bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi appointed a panel of 3 mediators in the title suit with Retired Justice Kalifullah chairing the court-appointed and monitored mediation process. The other two members are spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and senior advocate Sriram Panchu .	
18.	The Delhi government's Dialogue and Development Commission set up a 17-member high-level committee	DDC vice-chairperson Jasmine Shah
19.	National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage	Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant
20.	RBI has appointed 5-member committee to strengthen digital payments as well as to boost financial inclusion through Financial Technology.	Nandan Nilekani
21.	The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and the National Health Authority (NHA) have formed a working group on the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)	Dinesh Arora, Deputy CEO of NHA
22.	a tribunal, to adjudicate if there exists sufficient cause to ban the Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir (JeI) and the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front-Yasin Malik (JKLF-Y) faction	Justice Chander Shekhar
23.	Insurance Regulatory & Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a 13-member committee to review the regulatory framework on microinsurance	IRDAI Executive Director Suresh Mathur

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

INDIA & WORLD

● PM Modi inaugurated the **15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention at Varanasi**, Uttar Pradesh. For the first time, it is being organized in Varanasi. The theme of PBD Convention 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India".

● PM Modi inaugurated the **National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in Mumbai**. The development of the Museum was guided by the Museum Advisory Committee headed by Shyam Benegal. An innovation Committee headed by Praseon Joshi provided an upgrade to the NMIC.

- India will host the **14th session of the Conference of Parties** to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to address the issue of land degradation and desertification which will have participation from over 100 countries. It is likely to be held in October 2019.
- India has taken over operations of the Chabahar port in the Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran, the first time India will operate a port outside its territory.
- PM of **Norway Erna Solberg & PM Modi held bilateral talks in New Delhi**. MoU were exchanged on India-Norway Ocean Dialogue.
- The last session of 16th Lok Sabha came to an end on **13th of February 2019**.
- Following the attack in Jammu & Kashmir's Pulwama that left 44 CRPF personnel dead, **India has withdrawn the MFN (Most Favoured Nation) status that it had granted to Pakistan**.
- **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)** was rolled out in India by the Ministry of Labour and Employment from 15 February 2019.

OTHER NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

- In commemoration of the **150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**, PM Modi dedicated grand and iconic 'National Salt Satyagraha Memorial' constructed by the Central Public Works Department at Dandi, Gujarat to the Nation.
- **Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi** stated that GST on Haj has been reduced from 18% to 5% and this will significantly lower the airfare thus saving Haj pilgrims' 113 crore rupees this year.
- **PM 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.
- 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.

- The Integrated Startup Complex under the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) includes the ultra-modern facilities of Maker Village that promote hardware startups, the BioNest that promotes medical technologies, BRINC which is the country's first international accelerator for hardware startups.
- India's longest **300-meter single lane steel cable suspension bridge inaugurated by Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu**. He also laid the foundation stone for a district secretariat building. The bridge across the Siang river at Yingking in Upper Siang district named as Byorong Bridge.
- India 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 **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)** has been renamed as the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade** with a mandate to deal with matters related to start-ups, facilitating ease of doing business among others.

CURRENT AFFAIRS RELATED TO STATES IN INDIA

NORTHERN STATES

- **Uttar Pradesh** state cabinet approved construction of a four-lane Ganga Expressway connecting Prayagraj to Western Uttar Pradesh which would cost about 36,000 crore rupees. Ganga Expressway will be 600 kilometres long and can be expanded to six-lane in future.
- **Uttarakhand's** first tulip garden will come up over 50 hectares of forest land in Pithoragarh district at a cost of Rs 50 crore.
- Union Home Ministry approved the **Uttar Pradesh government's** proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj.
- The **Punjab government approved a rural development scheme** worth Rs 384.40 crore to

supplement the ongoing works to build village infrastructure and provide essential amenities.

- Named '**Smart Village Campaign**', the scheme would be financed with funds from the 14th Financial Commission and MGNREGA works.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for various development projects, worth **nearly 12,000 crore rupees**, at Leh. He laid the foundation stone for a 480 crore rupee Terminal Building at Leh Airport. Mr Modi inaugurated the **9-megawatt Dah hydroelectric project**. Mr Modi also launched the University of Ladakh, the first-ever in the state's region.
- Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh announced a **high-powered 5-member committee** to prepare a comprehensive action plan to boost the dairy sector with the aim of supplementing the income of farmers in a result-oriented manner.
- The State Government of Jammu and Kashmir issued a notification of creation of Ladakh as 3rd Division in the state.
- A Himalayan Cloud Observatory is set up in Tehri district of Uttarakhand with a motive to forecast and monitor cloudburst incidents in the Himalayan region and help to minimize the damage.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated and laid foundation stones of several development projects at Kurukshetra in Haryana. **1.** Mr Modi dedicated to the nation **the National Cancer Institute at Bhadsa** in Jhajjar district. **2.** Mr Modi also inaugurated Employees' **State Insurance Corporation's (ESIC) medical college and hospital in Faridabad**. This will be the first ESIC medical college and hospital in north India. **3.** The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of **National Institute of Ayurveda in Panchkula** which is being set up at Shri Mata Mansa Devi Temple Complex. **4. Foundation stone of Sri Krishna Ayush University**, Kurukshetra was also be laid by Mr Modi. It will be the first university related to Indian system of medicine in Haryana as well as the first of its kind in India.
- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat** has laid the foundation stone for the **Dehradun-Mussoorie ropeway project** which is considered to be a tourist novelty. The **Rs 300-crore ropeway project** is expected to be completed in three years.

EASTERN STATES

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

government among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state.

- Odisha CM Patnaik announced **interest-free loans of up to Rs. 3 lakh** for women self-help groups (WSHG) in the state. The initiative will benefit about 70 lakh women.
- The Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari laid **the foundation stone of three major highway projects** with an investment worth Rs 2,345 crores in Odisha.
- In Bihar, Governor Lalji Tandon and Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh jointly inaugurated the **three-day Krishi Kumbh in Motihari**.
- '**Kandhamal Haldi**', a variety of turmeric indigenous to **southern Odisha**, has earned the Geographical indication (GI) tag from **Intellectual Property India**, an organization functioning under the auspices of the **Union ministry of commerce & industry**.

NORTH-EASTERN STATES

- Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu declared **Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF)** as the "**State Festival**" at Seijosa in East Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh. Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) is only conservation festival of Arunachal Pradesh.



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a dedicated 24x7 Satellite channel, '**DD Arunprabha**' for Arunachal Pradesh during his visit to Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, and Tripura.
- The Meghalaya Cabinet has decided to **rename the Dikkibandi stadium in Tura town after former Lok Sabha Speaker Purno A Sangma**.

- **Rice Knowledge Bank-Assam** is an agriculture **web portal**. It is dedicated to magnifying knowledge on rice production technologies and techniques, best production practices and state agriculture facts. It was launched under the World Bank funded project – **Agri-business and Rural Transformation (APART)**.
- **Assam's festival – the Rongali Bihu, also known as 'Bohaag Bihu'** which marks the beginning of the new Assamese calendar year started. Assam celebrates major agricultural events as the festival of Bihu.

WESTERN STATES

- **Gujarat become the first state to implement the 10% reservation** for economically weaker sections of the general category. This comes a day after President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the bill.

CENTRAL STATES

- MP CM Kamal Nath launched his **government's Rs 50,000-crore farm debt-waiver scheme** named '**Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana**'. It is expected to benefit 55 lakh small and marginal farmers. The eligibility cut-off date extended to December 12, 2018, from March 31, 2018.
- In **Madhya Pradesh**, ancient **tribal language Gondi** will be taught in **tribal districts**. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister **Kamal Nath** has decided to include Gondi in the primary education curriculum of the state's tribal-dominated districts.
- **The Madhya Pradesh government** issued an ordinance increasing reservation quota for the **Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 27% from the current 14%**. The announcement was made by the state's **Law and Legal Affairs Minister PC Sharma**.

SOUTHERN STATES

- A 5.1-km long cable-stayed "**Atal Setu**" on the Mandovi river in Goa, a third such bridge to connect the state capital with North Goa, was opened to the public by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.
- **Telangana government** decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State. The State Forest Protection Committee headed by Chief Secretary S K Joshi took the decision to form the STPF.
- **Andhra Pradesh Cabinet decided** to cater 5% reservation each for Kapu community and the economically backward classes (EBCs) among

the forward castes. It also approved the decision of doubling the welfare pensions given under the NTR Bharosa Scheme. Pensions of Rs 1000 and Rs 1500 are doubled to Rs 2000 and Rs 3000 respectively.

- **Nashik in Maharashtra** will be the site of the country's second defence innovation hub after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu.
- PM Modi launched development **projects worth Rs 1,100 cr at Solapur in Maharashtra**. Referring to the passage of The Constitution (One Hundred And Twenty-Fourth Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha, PM, Modi described it as a landmark moment in the nation's history.
- The **Polavaram project of Andhra Pradesh entered the Guinness Book of World** by pouring 32,100 cubic meters of concrete in a matter of 24 hours.
- 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).
- 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. He also inaugurated Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited's Vashishta and S1 development project located in the Krishna-Godavari Offshore Basin.

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BILINGUAL

- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries **Harsimrat Kaur Badal commissioned Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park at Tundurru Village** in Bhimavaram Mandal, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh through video conferencing. It is India's 1st Aqua Mega Food Park.
- For the **second year** in succession, **Telangana** ranks number **1** in the **e-Learning training program** of the Department of Personnel and Training (**DoPT**), Government India.
- Union Railway Minister **Piyush Goyal** announced a new railway zone for **Andhra Pradesh**, that is the **Southern Coast Railway** and it will be

headquartered in **Visakhapatnam**. It will be the **18th zone** in the country.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

- **Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte** along with UN representative launched Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable development. The new center is located near the Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome.
- In Britain, lawmakers voted in favor of an amendment in **BREXIT plan seeking alternative arrangements** to replace the Irish border arrangement known as the Irish backstop. The backstop is aimed at keeping an open border between European Union-member Ireland and British-ruled Northern Ireland after Brexit.
- Central banks of the **UAE and Saudi Arabia** launched a common digital currency called "Aber", which will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.
- Pakistan government declared **sugarcane juice as the "national drink" of the country**.
- **Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro** announced that he is breaking off diplomatic ties with the United States after his American counterpart Donald Trump recognized Opposition leader Juan Guaido as the South American country's interim President.
- **China's economy grew at 6.6%** in 2018, its slowest rate in almost 3 decades.
- Nepal's central bank banned the use of Indian currency notes of **Rs. 2,000, Rs. 500 and Rs. 200** denominations, a move that could affect Indian tourists visiting the Himalayan nation where Indian currency is widely used.
- **United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** named the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro as the World Capital of Architecture for 2020.
- The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held in Lebanon's capital Beirut.
- **World Economic Forum (WEF)** annual meet begun in **Davos, Switzerland**. The theme would be '**Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution**'.
- Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas 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.
- Parliament of Macedonia passed the resolution to amend the constitution of the country to rename it as the Republic of Northern Macedonia. The name change will help resolve a decades-long dispute with neighboring Greece opening the way for Skopje to join NATO and the European Union.
- Qatar withdrawn its membership from Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Qatar has been in OPEC for 57 years.
- United States & Israel officially quit the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** with the close of 2018.
- Finance minister of **France Bruno Le Maire** announced that France will introduce its own tax on large internet and technology companies from January 1. The so-called "GAFA tax" -- named after Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon -- to ensure the global giants pay a fair share of taxes.
- **U.S. President Donald J. Trump** signed into law the **Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA)**. The act establishes a multifaceted U.S. strategy to increase U.S. security, economic interests, and values in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Seven-time champions **Egypt won the hosting rights for the 2019 edition** of the African Cup of Nations.
- The United Nations announced 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of the Chemical Elements to highlight its first publication in 1869. The periodic table was first designed by the Russian scientist Dmitri Ivanovich Mendeleev.
- **Macedonia signed an accord to join NATO** to become the 30th member of the US-led alliance.
- The India Pavilion at the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) 2019 was inaugurated by Mr Matthijs Wouter Knol, Director European Film Market (EFM).
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB) has raised 5.2204 billion Philippine pesos (\$100 million)** from a new issue of local currency bonds in the international market.
- **Abu Dhabi has decided to include Hindi as the third official language** used in its courts, alongside Arabic and English, as part of a move designed to improve access to justice.
- The country, formerly known as the **Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia**.
- The United States has officially shuttered its consulate in **Jerusalem**, downgrading the status of its main diplomatic mission to the **Palestinians** by folding it into the U.S. Embassy to **Israel**.
- **Chinese Premier Li Keqiang** has expressed concern that the country will face a graver and more complicated environment to development, amid an ongoing **trade war with the US** and

continued economic slowdown. The world's second-largest economy has slashed its GDP target to **6.00 to 6.50 %** this year.

- **Kylie Jenner** was named the **youngest self-made billionaire of all time by Forbes** magazine. Jenner, **21**, the half-sister of reality television stars Kim, Khloe and Kourtney Kardashian, made it onto the annual Forbes list of billionaires after debuting her Kylie Cosmetics online in **2015 with \$29 lip kits** containing matching lipstick and lip liner.
- **The Venezuelan government** has announced to expel **German ambassador Daniel Kriener** from the country. President Nicolas Maduro's embattled government has declared the German ambassador persona non grata and ordered him to leave the country within 48 hours.
- **Malaysia** has become a member of the **International Criminal Court**. The ICC is the world's only permanent war crimes court and aims to prosecute the worst abuses when national courts are unable or unwilling. **Malaysia becomes the 124th member** of the court since its **establishment in 2002**.
- **India and Costa Rica** signed **two documents during Vice President Venkaiah Naidu's first visit to the Central American nation**. The documents were signed and exchanged following talks between Naidu and **Costa Rican President Carlos Alvarado Quesada**.
- **External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj left to the Maldives** on a two-day visit. She is accompanied by **Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale** and other officials.
- **Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi** have been **hit by a vicious cyclone 'IDAI' that has killed nearly 150 people**, left hundreds more missing and stranded tens of thousands who are cut off from roads and telephones in mainly poor, rural areas.
- **Kazakhstan** has renamed its capital **Astana to Nursultan** to honor outgoing leader **Nursultan Nazarbayev**. Mr. Nazarbayev, 78, served nearly 30 years as president of the nation.
- **New Zealand has imposed an immediate ban on assault weapons** following the **Christchurch massacre** that claimed the lives of 50 mosque-goers.
- **Oman has signed an agreement with the United States of America** that allow American ships and warplanes to take advantage of his ports and airports. The framework agreement is aimed at bolstering Omani-American military relations.
- **President Ram Nath Kovind** embarked on a **state visit to Croatia, Bolivia and Chile** to hold talks with the leaders of these countries and strengthen ties in trade, investment and renewable energy.
- **US President Donald Trump has signed a proclamation** recognising **Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights** and told the visiting **Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu**, that Israel has an absolute right to self-defence.
- **Oslo**, the capital city of **Norway** will become the **world's first city** to install **wireless, induction-based charging stations** for its fleet of electric taxis with an aim to have a zero-emission cab system by the year **2023** according to a report by Reuters.
- The world's largest e-waste recycling plant has been opened in **Dubai Industrial Park, Dubai** by '**Enviroserve**' company with a total cost of **\$5 million**. It will recycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (**WEEE**), IT asset disposition (ITAD), refrigerant gas and specialized waste.
- The **UN Security Council** has unanimously passed the **first-ever resolution ordering members to enforce laws against terror financing**. UNSC resolution demands all states "ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offenses" to collect funds or financial resources to terrorist groups or individual criminals.
- Tesla has developed its '**largest power storage system in Asia**' at **Osaka train station in Japan** to reduce energy demand and provide emergency backup power to trains in Japan. It was Launched in partnership with Kintetsu, a railway operator in Japan's Osaka. 7 megawatt-hours (MWh) system is its largest energy storage project in Asia and the fourth largest in the greater Asia-Pacific (APAC) region.
- Zoologists at Trinity College Dublin have discovered two **new bird species named as the Wakatobi white-eye and the Wangi-Wangi white-eye** in the Wakatobi Archipelago of Sulawesi, Indonesia.
- The **United Nations and the European Union (EU)** have signed a joint framework aimed at strengthening partnership in counter-terrorism efforts. The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism announced that the framework was enacted on the occasion of the second EU-UN high-level political dialogue on Counter-Terrorism that was held in New York.
- US President **Donald Trump** stated that his administration is withdrawing the U.S. signature from the **U.N. Arms Trade Treaty**, in response to concerns from gun rights activists that it could impinge on Americans' right to bear arms.
- Anti-graft lawyer **Zuzana Caputova** won **Slovakia's** presidential election, making her the country's **first female** head of state.

- Japan has announced that the name of its new imperial era, set to begin on 1 May, will be 'Reiwa', signifying order and harmony. The country's current era, Heisei, will end in April.
- India has signed an MoU with the **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Consultancy Service (NABCONS)** for setting up the India-Africa Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development (IAIARD) in Malawi, a landlocked country in southeastern Africa.
- The joint military exercise between **Morocco and the US, "African Lion 2019,"** kicked off in southern Morocco. The exercise marks the participation of thousands of military officers.
- The **US designated Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)** a foreign terrorist organisation. It is the **first time that the US has designated an entity of another government** as a terrorist organization, placing a group with vast economic resources that answer only to **Iran's supreme leader in the same category as al-Qaida and the Islamic State.**
- **Google parent Alphabet** has beaten Amazon to launch one of the **first commercial drone delivery businesses.** Alphabet made its first delivery in Canberra after getting approval from the country's civil aviation authority.
- London is the **first city in the world to implement a 24-hour,** seven day a week Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), inside which vehicles will have to meet tough emissions standards or face a charge.
- The UAE has announced that **India will be the Guest of Honour country at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, ADIBF 2019,** to be held at the end of April 2019.
- **Hong Kong's equity market has overtaken Japan** to be the **world's third largest in value,** behind only the U.S. and mainland China. Hong Kong's market cap was \$5.78 trillion, compared with \$5.76 trillion for Japan, **according to data compiled by Bloomberg** based on where primary securities are listed.
- The world's first armed amphibious drone boat named '**Marine Lizard**' and guided by China's BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, successfully tested by China. It possesses the capability of forming a combat triad with aerial drones and other drone ships.
- **Google** has opened its **first African artificial intelligence (AI) centre** in **Ghana's capital Accra,** one year after announcing the project.
- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** and the **World Bank** have together launched a private blockchain with a pseudo-token. The new token, called "**Learning Coin**" and only accessible within the IMF and World Bank, has a purpose to teach

- relevant individuals within the organizations about blockchain.
- To boost tea trade, cultural and technical exchanges as well as the global promotion of tea, the **Asian Tea Alliance (ATA),** a union of five tea-growing and consuming countries, was launched in Guizhou, **China.**
- **Volodymyr Zelenskiy,** an actor and comedian has won a landslide victory in **Ukraine's** presidential election. The incumbent, **Petro Poroshenko** conceded defeat.

SBI PO 2019
EDGE
 Online Test Series | Books | eBooks
 9 Printed Books
 90+ Total Tests
 90+ eBooks

- The **London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)** has announced the creation of the **Amartya Sen Chair** in Inequality Studies, named in honour of the India-born economist, philosopher, and Nobel laureate, who was Professor of Economics at LSE from 1971-82.
- Indonesia has released a special commemorative stamp on the theme of **Ramayana to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of its diplomatic ties with India.**
- Israeli PM **Benjamin Netanyahu** has announced that he would name a new community in the **Golan Heights** after US President **Donald Trump,** who officially recognised the disputed area as Israeli territory.
- **Russia** has successfully tested the world's **first** floating nuclear power plant (**NPP**), **Akademik Lomonosov,** a subsidiary of Rosatom nuclear corporation stated. Reactors of the floating atomic block were launched in November 2018.
- The **world's first-ever malaria vaccine** was launched in a pilot project in Africa's **Malawi.** The country is the first of three in Africa in which the vaccine, known as **RTS,S,** will be made available to children up to **2 years** of age.
- **Kazakhstan has set up Coordinating Council for attracting foreign investments** including from India. A decision was taken to lay down the functions of Investment Ombudsman in order to venture for new approaches to improve the investment scenario in Kazakhstan.

● **Iran and Pakistan** have agreed to set up a joint border “**reaction force**” to combat the attacks by militant groups on both sides their frontier.

● **Russia's Vladimir Putin and North Korea's Kim Jong Un** met face-to-face for the first time and vowed to seek closer ties. The meeting was held at Russia's Pacific port city of Vladivostok.

OBITUARIES (NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL)

Sl.	Person Died	Profession/Famous In?
1.	George Fernandes	Former Defence Minister
2.	John Dingell	longest-serving congressman in US history
3.	Michel Legrand	Oscar-winning French composer
4.	Lenin Rajendran	Malayalam director and screenwriter
5.	CH Lokanath	Veteran Kannada actor
6.	Kader Khan	Veteran actor
7.	Ramesh Bhatkar	Veteran Marathi actor
8.	Albert Finney	Oscar-nominated British actor
9.	Mahesh Anand	Actor
10.	Atin Bandyopadhyay	Sahitya Akademi award winning Bengali writer
11.	Krishna Sobti	Eminent Hindi author and essayist
12.	Russell Baker	the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer
13.	Mary Oliver	Pulitzer Prize-winning poet
14.	Dibyendu Palit	Bengali writer and Sahitya Akademi awardee
15.	Raghubir Singh Bhola	Former Indian hockey player
16.	Ramakant Achrekar	cricket coach who trained Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar
17.	Gordon Banks	Legendary Goalkeeper Of England
18.	Masazo Nonaka of Japan,	world's oldest man
19.	Sir Michael Atiyah	British mathematician who received the 1966 Fields Medal
20.	Hiten Bhaya	Former Planning Commission member and ex-director of IIMC
21.	Manfred Eigen	German scientist who jointly won the 1967 Nobel Prize for Chemistry
22.	Zhores Alferov,	Russian physicist and Nobel Prize laureate
23.	Andre Previn	Legendary composer and pianist
24.	Luke Perry	American actor
25.	Manohar Parrikar	Goa Chief Minister and former defence minister
26.	Darryl D'Monte	Senior journalist and environmental activist
27.	Alan Kruege	Former White House economist and Princeton University professor
28.	, Vinjamuri Anasuya Devi	folk artist, radio commentator, harmonium player, music composer, and author
29.	Scott Walker	songwriter
30.	Ashita	Malayalam writer and poet
31.	Valery Bykovsky	Russian cosmonaut, recipient of the Hero of the Soviet Union and Order of Lenin awards.
32.	Prafulla Rajguru	Veteran journalist and academician
33.	J. Mahendran	film director
34.	Kartik Chandra Rath,	dramatist, theatre organiser, and Economics teacher
35.	Sydney Brenner	Biologist who helped decipher the genetic code and jointly won the 2002 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine
36.	Pradeep Choubey	Renowned Hindi poet
37.	SK Shivakumar	Former Director of Indian Space Research Organisation Satellite Centre (ISAC)
38.	Jerrie Cobb	America's first female astronaut candidate, pilot
39.	Con de Lange	Scotland Cricket all-rounder

40.	Lorraine Warren	paranormal investigator
41.	Amar Paul	Bengali folk singer
42.	S. Muthiah,	Chennai's famed chronicler, cartographer, and journalist
43.	Rama Sengupta Paul	Veteran lady mountaineer
44.	Terry Rawlings	British film and sound editor
45.	Mark Medoff,	Play writer
46.	Pungam Kannan (the 'Pele of Asia')	Former India footballer
47.	Dr Negasso Gidada	former Ethiopian president
48.	John Singleton	Academy Award-nominated filmmaker

LIST/INDEXES ANNOUNCED RECENTLY

Name of the Index/List	Rank of India	Topped By?
Bloomberg's 2019 list of most innovative countries in the world - 2019	54 th	South Korea
Transparency International released the Global Corruption Index 2018	78 th	Somalia (Most Corrupt) Denmark (Least)
world's largest steel producing country, according to World Steel Association.	2 nd	China
global talent competitive index	80 th	Switzerland
11th Edition of EIU Democracy Index 2018 released by the Economist Intelligent Unit	41 st	Norway
Henley Passport Index 2019, world's most travel-friendly passport	79 th	Japan
world's busiest airport for international customer numbers for the fifth consecutive year with annual traffic for 2018	-	Dubai International Airport (DXB)
\ International Intellectual Property (IP) Index,	36 th	US topped
Trends in International Arms Transfers- 2018' released by SIPRI	2 nd	Saudi Arabia
World Gold Council (WGC) Report of Gold Reserves	11 th largest gold reserve	USA
PLOS Biology found that human impacts on species occur across 84% of the earth's surface	India ranks 16 th in such impacts	Malaysia ranks 1 st
Mercer's annual Quality of Living Survey 2019	Hyderabad and Pune at a rank of 143	Austria's capital city Vienna
World Happiness Report by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network for UN	140 th	Finland
World airport traffic rankings for 2018 released by Airports Council International (ACI)	Indira Gandhi International Airport of New Delhi claimed 12 th spot	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (US)
Global energy transition index by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF)	76 th	Sweden
World Bank Report, Migration and Development Brief on Top remittance receiver	1 st	India
World Press Freedom Index 2019	140 th	Norway
Startup Ecosystem Ranking for 2019	17 th	USA
Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP) by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)	19 th	Australia
SIPRI's military spender in 2018	4 th	USA
As per the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO's) periodic labor force survey (PLFS) India's unemployment		

rate hit a 45 year high of 6.1% in 2017-18. It is the first comprehensive survey on employment conducted by a government agency after demonetization.
Union Tourism Minister KJ Alphons has announced that the country's tourism sector fetched revenue of 234 billion US Dollar in 2018, registering a growth of over 19%. This revenue was contributed by 87% domestic and 13% foreign tourists.
Minister of Railways, Piyush Goyal launched the "The Future of Rail" report of the International Energy Agency (IEA).
Assam occupied the top slot in the ranking of best practices followed by states in the Budget formulation, followed by Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, as per a survey by Transparency International.
Fitch Solutions, the research arm of Fitch Group , projected the government's fiscal deficit to overshoot the budgeted target by 0.2% to 3.6% of GDP in 2019-20 fiscal.
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.
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 ranked 28th on the list.
India is among the most trusted nations globally when it comes to government, business, NGOs and media. China topped the Trust Index among both the informed public and the general population segments.
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.
World Economic Forum released the 14th edition of its annual Global Risk Report, 2019.
A report by World Economic Forum stated that India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030. The report was titled as 'Future of Consumption in Fast-Growth Consumer Market – India'
Andhra Pradesh emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) , Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business (EDB) Index ABC rankings for economies of 21 states of India
According to BCG-IBA Report – EASE Reforms for Public Sector Banks, released by Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Punjab National Bank (PNB) secured the top spot among all public sector banks in the implementation of 'Reforms agenda' . PNB which topped the list.
According to the Delta ranking report released by NITI Aayog, Assam's Hailakandi has become the top aspirational district among the 112 aspirational districts of the country.
The United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) has released the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (2019) titled 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People'.
Tata, Reliance, and Airtel emerged as the top three Indian brands of 2019, according to a report published by Interbrand, part of the Omnicom Media Group .
Reliance Industries CMD Mukesh Ambani leads Forbes' list of richest sports team owners with a net worth of around \$50 billion. Ambani purchased the IPL team Mumbai Indians through a RIL subsidiary in 2008 for just over \$100 million.
The "100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy" list is comprised of seven Indian names including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Dr Harsh Vardhan, who took important measures to combat climate change. The list is prepared by Apolitical, a peer to peer learning platform for governments. The list has been topped by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (Congresswoman, US Congress).
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A report by OpenSignal , which is named reveals the 4G Availability in India's 50 largest cities. Out of the 50 cities, Dhanbad, which is also known as the coal capital of India has the highest 4G availability of 95.3% .
President Ram Nath Kovind has released the national ranking of higher institutes by the Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) in New Delhi. Indian Institute of Technology Madras topped. Delhi University's Miranda House was ranked the best among colleges across the country. AIIMS ranked first among medical sciences institutes and National Law School, Bangalore has topped law colleges.
India's asset management companies (AMCs) own assets under management (AUM) worth Rs24.46 trillion, according to data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi). HDFC Asset Management Co. Ltd has claimed the top spot with an average AUM of Rs3.42 trillion

India's population grew at an average annual rate of 1.2% between 2010 and 2019 to 1.36 billion, more than double the annual growth rate of China, according to a report by the **United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA)**.

HDFC Bank identified as number 1 bank by customers in India, as per Forbes World's Best Bank survey. In the first edition of this survey, Forbes partnered with market research firm Statista to measure the best banks in 23 countries.

The financial year 2019 has ended on a relatively robust note for banks. They clocked a **13.23% year-on-year credit growth against 9.85% in FY2018**. Deposit growth, at 9.99% year-on-year in FY2019, was also better than the 6.15% logged in FY2018, according to the RBI's scheduled banks' statement of position in India.

The Time 100 Most Influential People 2019 list released, naming the world's most influential pioneers, leaders, titans, artists, and icons of the year. **Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani** and public-interest litigators **Arundhati Katju and Menaka Guruswamy**, who spearheaded a historic legal battle for LGBTQ rights in India, are the Indian names that appeared in the list.

IMPORTANT DAYS OBSERVED RECENTLY

Date	Day	Theme
30 th January	World Leprosy Eradication Day	'ending discrimination, stigma, and prejudice'
28 th January.	Data Protection Day	
25 th January	National Voters Day	"No Voter to be left behind"
24 th January	National Girl Child	"Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow"
24 th January	International Day of Education.	
25 th January	Indian Army Day	
12 th January	National Youth Day, birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda	
10 th January	World Hindi Day	
2 February	World Wetlands Day	Theme: 'Wetlands and Climate Change'.
4 th February	World Cancer Day	Theme: "I Am and I Will"
4 th to 10 th February	National Road Safety Week	Theme: Sadak Suraksha – Jeevan Raksha
11 February	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	
13 February	World Radio Day by UNESCO	Theme: "Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace".
3 rd March	World Wildlife Day	Life below water: for people and planet
7 th March	Janaushadhi Diwas	
8 th March	International Women's Day	"Think equal, build smart, innovate for change"
14 th March	World Kidney Day on the second Thursday in March	Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere
15 th March	World Consumer Rights Day	"Trusted Smart Products".
20 th March	International Day of Happiness	'Happier Together'
21 st March	The International Day of Forests	Forests and Education
22 nd March	Bihar Diwas to commemorate the state's separation from Bengal presidency in 1912.	
22 nd March	International World Water	'Leaving no one behind'
23 rd March	Shaheed Diwas or Martyr's Day to the great revolutionary fighters Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev who sacrificed their lives for the country	
23 rd March	World Meteorological Day	"The Sun, the Earth and the Weather".
24 th March	World Tuberculosis (TB) Day	It's time
2 nd April	World Autism Awareness Day	'Assistive Technologies, Active Participation'
4 th April	International Mine Awareness Day	"United Nations Promotes SDGs – Safe Ground – Safe Home"
5 th April	National Maritime Day	"Indian Ocean-An Ocean of opportunity".
7 th April	World Health Day	'Universal health coverage (UHC): Everyone, Everywhere'
10 th April	World Homoeopathy Day 2019	
12 th April	International Day of Human Space Flight	
7-13 th April	World Allergy Organization Week	"The Global Problem of Food Allergy".

18 th April	International Day for Monuments and Sites	'Rural Landscapes'
22 nd April	Earth Day	'Protect Our Species'
21 st April	World Creativity and Innovation Day	
23 rd April	World Book Day	
24 th April	National Panchayati Raj Day	
25 th April	World Malaria Day	"Zero malaria starts with me"
26 th April	World Intellectual Property Day	"Reach Gold-Intellectual Property (IP) And Sports
24-30 th April	World Immunisation Week	"Protected Together: Vaccines Work"
29 th April	International Dance Day	

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist **Malala Yousafzai** pens a new book, titled '**We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World**,' charting her experiences traveling the world and visiting refugee camps.
- Former Vice President Hamid Ansari launched the new book of former Finance Minister P Chidambaram named "**Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India**" at Nehru Memorial Museum, New Delhi.
- A book titled, '**Mann Ki Baat- A Social Revolution on Radio**' was released by Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley in New Delhi**. The book is a compendium encompassing 50 editions of the 'Mann Ki Baat' programme by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on All India Radio.
- **Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari** launched the book titled '**Every Vote Counts-The Story of India's Elections**'. The author of this book is **former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla**.
- The **Chairman of 15th Finance Commission** of India, N.K. Singh launched the book "**Indian Fiscal Federalism**". The book has been written by **Dr. Y. V. Reddy, former Governor of RBI and Chairman of the 14th Finance Commission of India** along with Dr. G. R. Reddy, Advisor (Finance) to the Government of Telangana.

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BILINGUAL

- The Indian Publishing company, **Garuda Prakashan** Private Limited, launched its book '**Saffron Swords- Centuries of Indic Resistance to Invaders**'. Written by **Manoshi Sinha Rawal**, it is a book on 52 unsung warriors of India from the last 1300 years.
- A book containing English translation of the **100-year-old** classic Punjabi poem about Jallianwala Bagh massacre, '**Khooni Vaisakhi**' released in Abu Dhabi. India's Ambassador to the UAE **Navdeep Singh Suri** commended the launch of the book.

DEFENCE CURRENT AFFAIRS

Indian Defence Forces

- As a new initiative in sync with the Digital India campaign of the Government, Ministry of Defence had launched a mobile app '**RDP India 2019**' on the Republic Day, with the intent of making available the highlights of the Republic Day event.
- Defence Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** inaugurated the **426 meters long Diffo Bridge over Chipu River** in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh. Border Roads Organization (BRO) has constructed the bridge along Indo-China border.
- The Defence Acquisitions Council, **DAC chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman approved indigenous construction of six submarines worth 40 thousand crore rupees**. It is the second project under the Ministry's ambitious strategic partnership model aiming to boost the government's 'Make in India' program. DAC has also approved the acquisition of about five thousand MILAN Anti Tank Guided Missiles for the Army.

- **The United States Special Forces Group stationed in Japan** is involved in a joint exercise with **India's National Security Guard in Hyderabad**, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries.
- The Indian Navy's state of the art Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Training Facility (NBCTF) was inaugurated by Chief of Naval Staff Admiral **Sunil Lanba** at INS Shivaji, Lonavala. The training facility has been named **ABHEDYA**, which means impenetrable in Sanskrit.
- **First Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition to Mt Makalu (8485m)** comprising five Officers, two JCOs and eleven OR was flagged off by Director General Military Training.
- The Indian Army has successfully built the longest suspension bridge '**Matiri Bridge**' over the **Indus River** in the **Leh-Ladakh** region. Built in a record time of **40 days** 'Maitri Bridge' is longest Suspension Bridge over Indus River.
- The Indian Navy will participate in **International Fleet Review (IFR)** that is scheduled to take place in **Qingdao**, China as part of 70th Anniversary celebrations of People's Liberation Army Navy (PLA Navy).

INS | Missile | Device Inducted/ Decommissioned

- DRDO successfully test fired **Long Range Surface to Air Missile (LR-SAM)** from naval warship **INS Chennai**. The test was conducted off the coast of Odisha. The LR-SAM hit a low flying aerial target during the test.
- Indian Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned the **new Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa'** at **Diglipur** in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **INS Trikand**, the frontline warship of the Indian Navy, participated in a multi-national training exercise 'CUTCLASS EXPRESS 2019'. The annual Exercise Cutlass Express is sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAFAF).
- **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** successfully test fired the **PINAKA guided WEAPON rocket system** from Pokhran range in Rajasthan. The weapon system is equipped with state-of-the-art guidance kit comprising of an advanced navigation and control system.
- Highlighting the close maritime proximity between India and Indonesia, **Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vijit'** became the first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit **Sabang, Indonesia**.
- The Indian Air Force formally inducted the **CH 47 F(I)- Chinook heavy-lift helicopters (By US based**

- Boeing)** into its inventory at Air Force Station Chandigarh.
- Indian Navy's frontline ASW corvette, **INS Kadmatt** arrived at **Langkawi**, Malaysia on a 7 days official visit. The ship is scheduled to participate in the 15th edition of **Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, LIMA-19** during the visit.
- **Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE)** became the '**first Indian shipyard** to build and deliver **100 warships**. GRSE Chairman and Managing Director, Rear Admiral (Retd) V K Saxena, formally handed over the 100th warship 'IN LCU L-56' to the Indian Navy.
- India's first indigenously designed and developed **Dhanush artillery gun was inducted in the Indian Army** during a ceremony held at Ordnance Factory in Jabalpur, MP. Dhanush 155mm/45 calibre towed gun system can be deployed in all types of terrains.
- **India has successfully test-fired** first indigenously designed and developed long-range sub-sonic cruise missile '**Nirbhay**' from a test range in Odisha. The all-weather missile, has a 1,000-kilometre strike range.
- Chief of Army Staff General **Bipin Rawat** commissioned the Indian Coast Guard Ship **Veera** at a ceremony held at Naval Jetty at the dockyard at Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Indigenously designed 'INS Imphal'** a guided missile destroyer was launched by Navy Chief Sunil Lanba at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai. This ship is designed by the Indian Navy's Directorate of Naval Designs, New Delhi.

International Defence Forces

- The United States and South Korea decided to call off their joint exercise "**Foal Eagle**" and "**Key Resolve**" and instead bifurcate them into **smaller exercises**. This is being done to ease tensions with **North Korea**.

Defence Exercises/Operations Conducted

- The final planning conference to work out the modalities for **Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019** was conducted at Pune, Maharashtra. It is being conducted with more than a dozen African countries & India.
- Ten years after "26/11", the Indian Navy commenced the largest coastal defence exercise off the Indian coast. Exercise **SEA VIGIL**, a first of its kind, is being undertaken along the entire 7516.6

km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India.

- The second edition of the **India-Myanmar bilateral army exercise, IMBEX 2018-19**, commenced at Chandimandir Military Station, that houses the headquarters of the Western Command, Chandigarh.
- 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, with a colorful flag hoisting ceremony.
- Indian Army showcased its artillery firepower by using ultralight Howitzers and indigenous Swathi weapon-locating radar at the **annual "Exercise Topchi"**. The exercise was held at Deolali Camp near Nashik.
- **Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB)** took part in the 3-day '**Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019**' as a part of '**Confidence Building Measures**' between **India and Bangladesh** held in Agartala, Tripura.
- **Indo Oman Joint Exercise Al Nagah III 2019**, a joint military exercise between **Indian and Royal Army of Oman (RAO)**, commenced at HQ Jabel Regiment, Nizwa, Oman.
- **Exercise Sampriti-VIII**, a joint **Indo-Bangladesh military exercise** which witnessed participation of a company group of **9th Battalion the Rajputana Rifles** from the Indian Army and the Company of **36 East Bengal Battalion, Bangladesh Army** concluded at Tangail, Bangladesh.
- The inaugural **Africa-India Field Training Exercise-2019** for India and African nations called **AFINDEX-19** started with a grand opening ceremony at **Aundh Military Station, Pune**.
- The joint training exercise **MITRASHAKTI - VI** between **Indian and Sri Lanka Army** kick-started at **Diyatalawa in Sri Lanka**. MITRASHAKTI is one of the largest bilateral armies to army exercises conducted in the region.
- **The third edition of the biennial, bilateral exercise AUSINDEX 19 between India and Australia** will be held in **Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**.
- The joint military exercise between **Morocco and the US**, "**African Lion 2019**," kicked off in southern Morocco. The exercise marks the participation of thousands of military officers.
- The sixth edition of the joint military training exercise between the **Indian Army and the Sri Lankan Army**, Exercise **Mitra Shakti** concluded in Sri Lanka.
- **Military forces of India and Singapore** got together to participate in a joint exercise in **Babina Cantonment in Jhansi**. The three-day

exercise, '**Bold Kurukshetra-2019**', is being conducted to develop military technology, boost maritime security and bolster the nations' fight against terrorism.

- The Indian Navy undertook the second edition of the bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and Vietnam Peoples' Navy, (**IN - VPN BILAT EX**) at/ off Cam Ranh Bay, **Vietnam**.
- **India and France** conducted their largest ever naval exercise '**Varuna**' in **May 2019**. It witnessed the participation of aircraft carriers, destroyers, submarines, and fighters.

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Defence Agreements Signed/Defence Summits Held

- An MoU was signed between the **Indian Army and Punjab National Bank** on the Defence Salary Package. Salient features of the improved and updated MoU are free 'RAKSHAK PLUS' Scheme for serving pers and veterans, overdraft facility range from Rs 0.75 to 3.0 lakhs, multicity 'At Par' cheques, instant credit of outstation cheques, preferential allotment of lockers at concessional AMC and free SMS alerts.
- The **Indian Government has signed a deal with the US under Fast Track Procurement (FTP)** to avail the Indian Army with 72,400 new 'Sig Sauer Assault Rifles' which will overhaul the army's inventory of frontline rifles.
- India has signed a deal with a Russian firm to manufacture **7.5 lakh AK-203 rifles**. These are the latest derivative of the **AK-47 rifles**.
- The **Indian Navy and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research inked an MoU** to undertake joint research and development of advanced technologies for the Indian Navy.
- **Indian Army signed a MOU with National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Limited**, to build four underground tunnels along China and Pakistan borders for storage of ammunition and other war-related equipment.

SPORTS CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Nepal batsman Rohit Paudel has become the youngest male cricketer to score an international fifty at the age of 16 years and 146 days, breaking Sachin Tendulkar's previous mark.
- 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.
- Former South Africa all-rounder Johan Botha has announced his immediate retirement from all forms of Cricket.
- Rishabh Pant was named the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Emerging Player Of The Year following an impressive show in India's first-ever Test series win in Australia.
- Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets, during the first one-dayer against New Zealand at Napier. The world record is currently held by Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan, who needed only 44 games to reach the mark.
- India defeated Australia in the third ODI today to clinch the three-match series 2-1. With this, India became the first visiting side to win a bilateral series (two or more matches) in all three formats in Australia.
- Albie Morkel, the South African all-rounder, announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.
- The 25-year-old 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.
- India captain Mithali Raj has become the first woman cricketer to play 200 ODIs, adding another achievement to her illustrious career.
- Former captain of the Pakistan women team Sana Mir has become the first Asian woman to play hundred T20s.
- 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.
- Indian opener Smriti Mandhana hammered the fastest fifty for India in Women's T20s.
- Cricket Australia appointed Ricky Ponting as the assistant coach for Australia's cricket team for 2019 World Cup. Ponting was appointed after David Saker's resignation from the post.
- Qatar defeated four-time champions Japan 3-1 in the final to win their first ever Asian Cup. Qatar forward Almoez Ali broke the record of most goals in a single Asian Cup after netting his ninth goal.
- Midfielder Ki Sung-yueng has announced his retirement from the South Korean national team.
- Indian men's hockey coach Harendra Singh was removed from the position and offered the task of helping the junior squad by the national federation. In the interim, the team will be overseen by Hockey India High-Performance Director David John and current Analytical Coach, Chris Ciriello.
- The Australian Open is a tennis tournament held annually in Melbourne Park, Australia. Novak Djokovic from Serbia won the Men's Singles event and Naomi Osaka of Japan won the Women's singles event.
- India's Ankita Raina has won the International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore. In the Final, Ankita defeated top seed Arantxa Rus of the Netherlands.
- 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.
- In Tennis, France's Corentin Moutet has clinched the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tournament title after beating Andrew Harris of Australia in the singles final.
- Prajnesh Gunneswaran has made it to the top-100 of Men's Singles Tennis rankings with a jump of six places that took him to 97.
- 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.
- The 2019 Indonesia Masters, officially the DAIHATSU Indonesia Masters 2019, is a badminton tournament that takes place at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno in Indonesia. Anders Antonsen won men's singles title and Saina Nehwal won the women's singles 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.
- The 83rd edition of Senior National Badminton Championships has begun in Guwahati.
- M C Mary Kom has attained number one position in the International Boxing Association's (AIBA)

latest world rankings. She became the most successful boxer in world championships' history when she claimed the 48kg category top honors in Delhi in November 2018.

- Haryana Hammers won the fourth edition of the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) as they outclassed Punjab Royals 6-3 in the summit clash at the Gautam Buddha University indoor stadium, Greater Noida.
- World champion Indian weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu notched up a gold medal at the EGAT Cup in Thailand.
- Tamil Nadu lad 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, erasing the mark set by his state-mate R Praggnanandhaa in June 2018. Gukesh becomes India's 59th Grand Master.
- Maharashtra topped the medal tally with 37 golds at the Khelo India Youth Games in Pune. It had 111 medals in its kitty with 37 gold, 31 silver and 43 bronze. Delhi was at second position.
- 80th National Table Tennis Championship held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack.
- Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane 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. The third Australian city for the tournament is yet to be determined.
- The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games officially begun in Pune, Maharashtra. Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis attended a virtual torch ceremony at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex. More than 9,000 players from different states will participate in 18 different events.
- The Sports and Youth Ministry in the meeting of Executive Committee of the National Games 2022 has chosen the Smiling Clouded Leopard to be the Mascot for the National Games 2022.
- French sailor Jean-Luc Van Den Heede won the round-the-world yacht race after 212 days alone at sea without modern instruments.
- India's Kartik Sharma won the New South Wales men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia.
- Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship organized by US kids Golf in Malaysia, which makes him the youngest Indian to win the title.
- 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.
- Golfer Vani Kapoor has become the first Indian to grab Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA) after

securing 12th Rank tied with three others in the first-ever qualifying tournament at the Ballarat Golf Club in Australia.

- 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.

BANK & INSURANCE
2019

PREMIUM PACKAGE

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- Indian squash player Ramit Tandon defeated Egyptian Mohamed El Sherbini in the finals to win the Seattle Open, a PSA challenger squash Tour event.
- **West Indies** opener **Chris Gayle** has become the **first batsman ever** to smash **500 or more sixes** in international cricket. In the 4th ODI against **England** in **Grenada**, Gayle scored 162 runs.
- National Boxing champion **Deepak Singh (49kg)** was the only Indian boxer to notch up the **gold medal**, while **five** others claimed **silver medals** in the Makran Cup in **Chabhar, Iran**. Deepak defeated Jaafar Naseri in the finals.
- **Roger Federer** has claimed the **100th ATP title** of his career after beating 20-year-old Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the **Dubai Tennis Championships**. The **20-time grand slam champion** is the second man, after American **Jimmy Connors** to claim 100 titles.
- Kavinder Singh Bisht in the 56kg-category struck gold while Shiva Thapa in the 60kg category and three others claimed silver medals to end a fine Indian campaign at the 38th GeeBee Boxing Tournament in Helsinki, Finland.
- **Young Mumbai sailor Upamanyu Dutta** bagged the **bronze medal in the Laser Standard race for men** in the Laser Asian Sailing Championship which concluded in **Singapore**. The young sailor sailed superbly to gain **India's first ever medal in the competitive single-handed Laser Standard category**.
- **Special Olympics World Games 2019** which is being held from **March 14 to March 21** in the **UAE** has made history by welcoming a **record-breaking 200 nations ahead of the Games**. Of the

200 nations, 195 will compete in the Games and five will observe. It is **being held in West Asia for the first time.**

- **The Supreme Court appointed senior advocate PS Narasimha as a mediator for resolving various disputes related to cricket administration** within the cricket body, the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).**
- **South African** all-rounder **JP Duminy** announced that he would retire from ODIs after the **ICC World Cup in England.** Duminy will, however, continue to be available for South Africa in T20 Internationals.
- **India** will host the **Under-17 Women's Football World Cup in 2020.** This was announced by the President of International Football Federation (**FIFA**) **Gianni Infantino** after the council meeting in Miami, **USA.**
- **Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas** beat his **world champion teammate Lewis Hamilton** to clinch the **season-opening Australian Formula One Grand Prix.**
- **Bengaluru FC** clinched their maiden **Indian Super League title as Rahul Bheke** found a championship-winning header in the dying minutes of the **final against FC Goa,** in Mumbai.
- In **Asian Youth Athletics Championships in Hong Kong,** boys medley relay team won a gold medal for India on the final day to help **Indian youth team** finish second in the overall medals tally with a total of **26 medals** including 8 gold, 9 silver and 9 bronze medals. **China topped the overall medals** tally with 31 medals that included 12 gold, 11 silver
- **India returned with 368 medals (85 gold, 154 Silver, and 129 Bronze)** at the **Special Olympics World Summer Games, held at Abu Dhabi, UAE.** Indian powerlifters bagged the maximum number of medals 20 gold, 33 silver and 43 bronze.
- **India has lifted South Asian Football Federation SAFF Women's Championship fifth time** in a row. Keeping its winning streak **India defeated host Nepal** in the final by 3-1 in **Biratnagar, Nepal.**
- **Chennai Super Kings' Suresh Raina** has become the **first ever cricketer to reach 5,000 runs in Indian Premier League.**
- The **Seamaster 2019 ITTF Challenge Plus** commonly called **Oman Open table tennis** held in Muscat, **Oman.** Indian players **G Sathyan and Archana Kamath** excelled in the tournament. G Sathyan won a bronze medal in the tournament. Archana Kamath bags U-21 **silver** with an excellent run in the Oman Open.
- In Shooting, **Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary** have won a Gold medal in the **10-meter Air Pistol Mixed team** event at the **12th Asian Airgun Championship** at Taoyuan in **Taipei.**

The pair made it to the Final after smashing the **world record** in the qualification.

- **Veselin Matic,** who took **Iran** to an **Asian Games bronze medal in 2010,** is set to be appointed as the new head coach of the Indian men's **basketball** team.
- 18-year-old **Diksha Dagar** has become the second Indian to win an event on **Ladies European Tour** after clinching **South African Women's Open** in Cape Town. **Aditi Ashok** was the first Indian to win on the Ladies European Tour after clinching Hero Women's Indian Open in Gurugram in **2016.**
- **South Korea** defeated **India** in the penalty shootout in the final of **Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2019.** 17th Ranked South Korea defeated World number 5, India to win the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Cup which was held at Azlan Shah Stadium in **Ipoh, Malaysia.**
- **Indian shooters** continued their dominance claiming five gold medals on the final day of the **Asian Airgun Championships** to **sign off with a total of 25 medals in Taoyuan, Taipei.** India finished with **16 gold, 5 silver, and 4 bronze medals.**
- Five times world champion **Lewis Hamilton** won **Bahrain Grand Prix 2019** title by beating **Valtteri Bottas** of Finland who secured the second position. **Charles Leclerc** was finished at the third position and became Ferrari's youngest ever race winner at the age of 21.
- **Saurav Ghosal** became the **first Indian male squash player** to enter the top 10 in latest **Professional Squash Association (PSA) world rankings.**
- **Praful Patel,** president of **All India Football Federation (AIFF),** has become the **first Indian to be elected as a member of FIFA Executive Council.**
- The **All India Tennis Association (AITA)** has signed an **MoU with Serbian Tennis Federation (STF)** to train Indian junior players under world-renowned **Serbian coaches.**
- Ethiopian athletes **Gelete Burka** (women's race) and **Abrha Milaw** (men's race) won the 43rd edition of the **Paris Marathon.** They led a record 60,000 participants to the finish line through the **French capital.**
- **Famous Golfer Tiger Woods** completed one of the sport's great all-time comebacks to end an 11-year major title drought at the **Masters by claiming a fifth Green Jacket.** A gritty two-under 70 clinched a **one-shot victory over Dustin Johnson, Brooks Keopka and Xander Schauffele.**
- In motor racing, **Lewis Hamilton won the Chinese Grand Prix** for a record sixth time. He seized the

overall lead from his **Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas** in **Formula One's 1,000th world championship race**.

- **India bagged a Gold and two Silver medals** at the **Boxing World Cup at Cologne in Germany**. **Meena Kumari Maisnam** (from Manipur) claimed the **Gold medal in the 54 kg category**. The 2014 Asian Championships bronze medallist defeated Thailand's Machai Bunyanut in the final.
- **Former junior national champion Harsheel Dani** rallied from a game down against **Mads Christophersen of Denmark** to clinch the **Dutch International badminton title** in The Hague, Netherlands.
- India's **Bajrang Punia** has regained the world number **one** spot in the men's **65-kilogram** freestyle category rankings. The rankings were released by **United World Wrestling**.
- **Fabio Fognini** became the **first Italian** to win an **ATP Masters 1000 title** at the **Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters**. He defeated **Dusan Lajovic**.
- World number one **Bajrang Punia** won gold at **Asian Wrestling Championship in China's Xian**. He defeated Kazakhstan's Sayatbek Okassov in a nail-biting 65kg men's freestyle final.
- **Asian Athletics Championships 2019** held at **Doha in Qatar**. It was the **23rd** edition of the Championships. India ended at the **fourth** spot in the medals tally with **3 Gold, 7 Silver and 7 Bronze**. **Bahrain topped** the table with 11 Gold, 7 Silver and 4 Bronze. **China** was second while **Japan** was third.
- India won **gold** each in **10 metres Air Rifle Mixed Team** and **10 metres Air Pistol Mixed** team events in the **ISSF World Cup in Beijing**. Shooters **Manu Bhaker** and **Saurabh Chaudhary** took the top spot in the 10 metres Air Pistol Mixed Team event while **Anjum Moudgil** and **Divyansh Singh Panwar** won gold in the 10 metres Air Rifle Mixed Team event.
- **Pankaj Advani**, the **21-time** India's cueist defeated **Ehsan Heydari Nezhad** of Iran 6-4 to clinch the **Asian Snooker Tour title**.

- **India won 13 medals**, including **2 gold**, **4 silver**, and **7 bronze** at the Asian Boxing Championships in **Bangkok**. Boxers **Pooja Rani** and **Amit Panghal** gave India 2 gold medals.
- **Abhishek Verma** won the **10m air pistol gold** medal at the **ISSF World Cup at Beijing, China**. He clinched the top spot with a total score of 242.7. Russia's **Artem Chernousov** took silver.
- **Mercedes' Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas** beat his English teammate Lewis Hamilton by 1.5 seconds to win **Azerbaijan Grand Prix**. With this, **Mercedes became the first team to win the opening four races of an F1 season** with one-two finishes.
- **World number three tennis player Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic)** beat **Anett Kontaveit (Estonia)** to win **Stuttgart's Porsche Grand Prix** for her second title of the year. The championship was held at **Stuttgart, Germany**.
- Australia's **Claire Polosak** will become the **first female umpire** to officiate in a **men's one-day international** at the ICC World Cricket League Division Two match.
- India ended their campaign at the **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup** with a total of **four medals, three golds and a silver**. China was on the second position with 5 medals including 2 gold. The event was held in **Beijing, China**. **Divyansh Panwar** and **Anjum Moudgil** had won the first medal for India at the Beijing ISSF World Cup after clinching **gold in 10m Air Rifle Mixed event**.
- **Dominic Thiem (Austria)** won the **Barcelona Open 2019** after defeating Daniil Medvedev (**Russia**). The Austrian became just the fourth player in the past 15 years to lift the title in Barcelona, joining Rafael Nadal, Kei Nishikori and Fernando Verdasco.
- **Bajrang Punia** is set to become the **first wrestler from India to fight at the iconic Madison Square Garden in New York**. The 25-year-old has recently won the gold medal in the 65-kg category at the ongoing Asian Wrestling Championships.

Bills passed/proposed in the Parliament

- Indian Parliament passed the **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2018** that seeks to do away with the no-detention policy in schools. The Bill seeks to amend the Right to Education (RTE) Act to abolish the "no-detention" policy in schools.
- Indian Parliament passed the **National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill, 2018**. It seeks to amend the National Council for Teacher

Education (NCTE) Act, 1993. The bill aims to grant retrospective recognition to Central and State institutions which had conducted teacher education courses without approval by the Council. This will ensure that the future of about 17 thousand students having degrees from such institutions is secured.

- Union Cabinet approved a **10% reservation for 'economically backward'** upper castes in

government jobs. Govt. announced reservation in jobs for those belonging to the upper castes and earning less than Rs 8 lakh per year. A bill to amend Article 15 and 16 of the constitution will be moved in Parliament to this effect.

- The **Citizenship Amendment bill seeking to provide Indian citizenship to persecuted** minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan passed by Lok Sabha. The Bill provides for Indian citizenship to such immigrants after six years of residence in India instead of 12 years currently. The Bill seeks to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955 in order to grant citizenship to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan if they have lived in India for six years.

- The **124th Constitution Amendment** Bill, 2019 to award 10% reservation to economically weaker sections was passed with a majority in Rajya Sabha. It was already passed in Lok Sabha.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (NASA, ISRO & OTHERS)

- **Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)** announced entering into agreements worth \$93 million for providing Naval Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) systems to India. The contracts entered with the Indian Navy and the Cochin Shipyard. IAI will provide complementary systems for the air defense system.
- Scientists developed an artificial **pancreas smartphone app** that will help in regulating blood sugar levels in diabetes patients. A clinical trial showed that the artificial pancreas system (iAPS) app is safe.
- **ISRO successfully launched the PSLV C 44** carrying Kalam sat and imaging satellite Microsat R. It was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. Kalam sat is a ten cm cube weighing one-kilogram communication satellite with a life span of two months.
- **Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H)** 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.
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency launched **Tokyo-based startup Star-ALE's mini-satellite** aimed to deliver the world's first artificial meteor shower.
- **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** along with **Doordarshan (DD), Prasar Bharati** launched two science communication initiatives, DD Science and India Science. The initiatives were inaugurated by Union Science & Technology Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan.
- **ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan** 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. 332 launches are planned this year.

- ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan stated that **the Union Government allocated 10,900 crore rupees** for the development of 40 satellite launch vehicles in the next 4 years.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) unveiled its **Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) at ISRO** Headquarter campus in Bengaluru, Karnataka for its maiden manned space mission 'Gaganyaan'.
- India's **40th communication satellite GSAT-31** has been launched successfully from French Guiana.
- NASA announced that its **Opportunity Rover mission is complete after the rover failed** to respond despite repeated trials since August 2018.
- Bengaluru-based **Signalchip** has unveiled semiconductor chips for **4G, LTE and 5G modems**. These are first such chips developed in **India**. All devices and infrastructure in India whether imported or domestically manufactured, currently use imported **silicon chips**.
- **Indian Space Research Organisation** has launched '**Yuva Vigyani Karyakram**', a '**Young Scientist Programme**' for the School Children to be studying in the 9th standard.
- Just in time for International Women's Day, **NASA announced** that it will be conducting the **first-ever, all-female spacewalk**. **Astronauts Christina Koch and Anne McClain** will exit the International Space Station on **March 29**, 35 years after the first woman performed a spacewalk.
- **National space agency ISRO** and its **French counterpart CNES** sealed an agreement to set up a joint maritime surveillance system in the country

in May. **K.Sivan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation**, and **Jean-Yves Le Gall, President of CNES of France**, signed the agreement in Bengaluru.

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has launched a special programme for schoolchildren called **Young Scientist Programme or Yuva Vigyani Karyakram (YUVIKA)**, in tune with the government's vision "**Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan**".
- China has successfully launched the **first of its new-generation data relay satellite, Tianlian II-01** into orbit that will provide data relay, measurement, and control services for its manned spacecraft. It was launched by a Long March-3B carrier rocket from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in southwest China's Sichuan Province.
- **Nepal** successfully launched its first satellite **NepaliSat-1** into space. The satellite developed by the Nepalese scientists was launched from **Virginia** in the United States. It is a low orbit satellite which will be in the **400-km** distance from the Earth's surface.
- Sri Lanka's first satellite '**Raavana-1**' was launched into space from NASA's Flight Facility on **Virginia's** east shore. 'Raavana 1' weights around **1.05 kg** and the lifespan of the satellite is around **one and a half** years.
- **The ISRO** has launched a **Defence Intelligence Satellite, EMISAT** in its **47th Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) mission**, along with 28 other customer satellites, **onboard the advanced PSLV-C45 Rocket**. The PSLV C45 was launched from **ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota**. It is the **first time ISRO is launching satellites in three different orbits**.
- **Tesla** has developed its '**largest power storage system in Asia**' at **Osaka** train station in Japan to reduce energy demand and provide emergency backup power to trains in Japan. It was Launched

in partnership with **Kintetsu**, a railway operator in Japan's Osaka.

- **South Korea** launches the world's first fully-fledged **5G mobile networks**. The system will bring smartphones near-instantaneous connectivity **20 times** faster than the existing 4G allowing users to download entire movies in less than a second.
- Google launched **Anthos**, a new open platform from **Google Cloud**, that lets users run applications from anywhere. Anthos allows users to run applications, unmodified, on existing on-premise hardware or on the public cloud and is based on the Cloud Services Platform that Google announced in **2018**.
- The most powerful operational rocket in the world, **SpaceX's Falcon Heavy**, launched its first commercial mission from Florida in a key demonstration for billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk's space company in the race to grasp lucrative military launch contracts.
- **NASA astronaut Christina Koch** is going to have her mission on the International Space Station (ISS) extended to 328 days, which would set a record for the **longest single spaceflight by a woman**.

SCHEMES

Schemes launched by Union Govt.

- PM Modi launched the **Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana** under which a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
- **Government e Marketplace (GeM)** launched "**Womaniya on GeM**", an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups (WSHG) to sell handicrafts and handloom, accessories and many other products.
- Govt. launched **Web-Wonder Women Campaign** to celebrate the exceptional achievements of women who have influenced and impacted

society through social media. The Campaign aims to recognize the fortitude of Indian women stalwarts from across the globe who have used the power of social media to run positive campaigns to steer a change in society.

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, launched the '**Swachh Survekshan 2019**', the fourth edition of the annual nationwide cleanliness survey of urban India in New Delhi. It aims to evaluate the achievements in the cleanliness level in urban areas of the country. The survey will cover 40 crore people across over 4000 towns and cities.

- Union Minister of Tribal Affairs **Jual Oram** launched the ambitious scheme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs named **Van Dhan**. The scheme is for **Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP)** and Development of Value Chain of MFPs at a National Workshop organized by **TRIFED**. The Scheme will offer remunerative Minimum Support Price for **50** commercially viable items to the Tribals.
- Union Minister of Textiles, **Smriti Zubin Irani** launched a **comprehensive scheme** for the development of **knitting and knitwear sector** under **PowerTex India** in **New Delhi**. Apart from financial incentives, the two key elements are **Yarn Bank** and **financial assistance for the solar energy scheme**.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the '**Pradhan Mantri Jaiw Indhan-Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran (JI-VAN) Yojana**' for providing **financial support** to the Integrated Bioethanol Projects. The scheme aims to incentivise the **Second Generation (2G) Ethanol sector** and support the industry by creating a suitable ecosystem for setting up commercial projects and increasing R&D in this area.
- **Gram Samridhi Yojana**, a **Rs 3,000 crore** scheme funded by the **World Bank** and the Government of India, is being worked upon by the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** in order to strengthen the **unorganised food processing sector** concentrated in rural areas. NITI Aayog has given its approval to the scheme. World Bank will be giving **Rs 1,500 crore**, **Rs 1,000 crore** will be borne by the **Centre** while state governments will put in **Rs 500 crore**. The scheme will be run in **Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Punjab**.
- **The government** has introduced a scheme for providing financial assistance for transport and marketing of agriculture products with a view to boosting export of farm commodities to certain countries in **Europe and North America**. Under the **Transport and Marketing Assistance (TMA) scheme**, the government would reimburse a certain portion of freight charges and provide assistance for marketing of agricultural produce.
- will benefit around four lakh women across the state.
- **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, 100 days of employment will be provided to youths from economically weaker sections in urban areas.
- **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. Governor P. Sathasivam announced the scheme. A non-resident Keralite can invest an amount ranging from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 50 lakh, as a whole or as 6 installments paid within 3 years. Each beneficiary will be entitled to receive pensions ranging from Rs 5,000-50,000 every month, 3 years after the total amount is deposited, at a dividend rate of 12%.
- **Tripura CM Biplab Kumar Deb** launched a project for **Sustainable Catchment Forest Management** at State Forest Academy Ground in West Tripura and stated that the project would help develop the quality of forestlands and livelihood of forest dwellers in the state.
- Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling launched the '**One Family One Job**' scheme, under which for every family one government job has been allotted, in Gangtok. New recruits were taken for Group C and Group D posts in **12 departments**. Thus, Sikkim became the first state in the country to carry out such a programme for the people entitling them to state government employee benefits.
- **West Bengal government** announced two welfare initiatives for farmers. Both initiatives, are part of the '**Krishi Krishak Bondhu**' scheme, & will come into effect from 1st January 2019. The first initiative 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.
- **Bihar Chief Minister, Nitish Kumar** announced a **Universal Old Age Pension scheme**, named **Mukhya Mantri Vriddha Pension Yojana (MMVPY)**, irrespective for all caste, community, religion, except for those who are retired from government organizations.
- '**Mukhyamantri Parivar Samman Nidhi**' scheme was launched by **Haryana** Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in **Chandigarh**. It is primarily meant for farmers of the state who cultivate on land with areas up to **5 acres** and the families with an income of less than **Rs. 15,000 per month**. The scheme would provide a sum of **Rs. 6,000**

Schemes launched by State Govt.

- **Maharashtra government** launched a special scheme to curb infant deaths. Child Development Minister distributed baby-care kits to the children born in primary health centers and government hospitals. It is applicable only for the first child &

yearly and each family has to nominate a member who will be provided with this amount.

- A water conservation scheme '**Jal Amrutha**' was launched by **Karnataka** chief minister **H D Kumaraswamy**, in **Bengaluru**. A function was organized by the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj department at Dr. B R Ambedkar Bhavan in **Bengaluru**. The state government has declared **2019** as the **Year of Water**.
- The **government of Tripura** announced '**Notun Disha**' (**New Direction**) for assessing the academic level of students in **classes III-VIII** and then improving their current level. It was launched by state Education Minister **Ratan Lal Nath**.

Schemes launched by Ministries & Other Organizations

- K.J. Alphons, Union Minister for Tourism inaugurated the **first project under the Swadesh Darshan Project** of the Union Ministry of Tourism at the Zero Point, Gangtok, Sikkim. Swadesh Darshan Scheme is one of the flagship schemes of Ministry of tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned manner.
- Minister of State in Department of Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the **UNNATI (Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training) programme** organized by ISRO in Bengaluru, Karnataka. It is an initiative by ISRO to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE-50).
- Environment Ministry launched the **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)** aimed at reducing toxic particulate matter in 102 Indian cities by 2024. 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.

- **MSME ministry established an export promotion cell to create a sustainable ecosystem for MSMEs**. It also proposed to formulate a governing council that will be chaired by the secretary of the MSME ministry.
- Dharmendra Pradhan launched 'Ujjwala Sanitary Napkins' initiative saying it will go a long way in making Odisha's 2.25 crore women empowered and self-reliant. It will cover 93 blocks in 30 districts of Odisha. Under this, **oil marketing companies (OMC) will set up 100 manufacturing units** at the Common Service Centres (CSC) at an estimated cost of Rs 2.94 crores.
- HRD ministry introduced a **70-point grading index to assess the** quality of school education offered by states. A state performance grading will be done wherein the states will be marked out of 1,000 scores on 70 parameters.
- Union Minister of State (IC) for **Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports, Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore (Retd.)** launched the sharing of **All India Radio News with private FM broadcasters**. This will be done free of cost. Any Private FM broadcaster which intends to broadcast the news bulletins will first have to register with News Services Division: All India Radio.
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched the **National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP)** to attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in the country.

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) App** has been launched on Google play store.
- '**Darwaza Band- Part 2**' campaign launched by Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen focuses on sustaining the open defecation free status of villages across the country.
- Actor Vijay Sethupathi launched the mobile App '**DigiCop**' of the Chennai police department at the Commissioner's office.
- Union Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani launched the India Size project in Mumbai. **A first-of-its-kind project in the history of the country, India Size aims** to arrive at a standard Indian Size for the ready-to-wear clothing industry, on the lines of the standardized sizes available in countries such as the USA and the UK.
- The Ministry of Environment launched a three-year Asiatic Lion Conservation Project in collaboration with the state of Gujarat.
- **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'.
- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal laid the **foundation stone of a Mega Food Park at Chhata-Barsana road in Mathura**.
- Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief **Exercise 'Exercise Rahat'** concluded in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

- Minister of State (IC) for AYUSH, Shripad Yesso Naik launched the e-AUSHADHI portal, for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters at New Delhi.
- IRCTC, the Railways' subsidiary, will offer insurance of up to INR 50 lakh for free for air passengers who book their tickets through its portal. IRCTC has tied up with Bharti-Axa for the offer. IRCTC's service charge of INR59 is the cheapest compared with travel websites.

Special Offer

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- Indian Panorama **Film Festival begun at Siri Fort Auditorium in New Delhi**. It is organized by the Directorate of Film Festivals, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Note | Minister of Information and Broadcasting: Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore (Minister of State).
- **IRCTC** launched its own digital payment aggregator called '**IRCTC iPay**'. With iPay, passengers will not need any third-party platforms as it will provide payment options like credit card, debit card, unified payment interface and international card. This will help reduce the gap between **IRCTC and banks** which will eventually lead to a substantial reduction in payment failures.
- **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**, a defence public sector undertaking, presented SWAGAT – the Automatic Fare Collection Gating System. PM Narendra Modi launched the system as part of the inaugural of Phase-I of the Ahmedabad Metro.
- **Tech giant Google** has unveiled a new app '**Bolo**' that aims to help children in primary school learn to read in Hindi and English. The free app, which is being launched in **India first**, uses **Google's speech** recognition and text-to-speech technology. The app features an animated character '**Diya**', who encourages children to read stories aloud and helps if the child is unable to pronounce a word.
- **Aviva Life Insurance** announced the launch of '**Wings**', a specially designed mentorship program

- to empower the female workforce. Wings program is an initiative of the **SHE** division of Aviva Life Insurance for mentoring all the women employees in Aviva.
- The '**i-help**' initiative to promote **digital electoral literacy in Assam** has been launched in view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls. It is a joint initiative of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (**CEO**) and Common Service Centres (**CSC**) in Assam.
- **Indian Institute of Public Health** Gandhinagar, (IIPHG) in collaboration with **National Mental Health Program**, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Gujarat has developed a mobile application called as '**Conquer Exam, Be a Warrior**' for students to reduce the exam pressure.
- The **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** launched a new podcast app '**Shiksha Vani**' that will disseminate crucial information to students and parents in a timely manner.
- IIT, Ropar, developed an app named Roshni that would help the Visually Impaired to recognise currency notes. The app can recognise both old and new notes and gives audio information as to which note you are holding in your hands.
- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India has recently awarded **Geographical Indication (GI)** to five varieties of Indian coffee. They are:
 1. Coorg Arabica coffee,
 2. Wayanaad Robusta coffee,
 3. Chikmagalur Arabica coffee,
 4. Araku Valley Arabica coffee,
 5. Bababudangiris Arabica coffee.
- **Tashigang, a Himachal Pradesh village at an altitude of 15,256 feet** has now become the highest polling station in the world. Situated about 29 km from the **India-China border**, the polling station covers two villages, **Tashigang and Gate**.
- The 3rd edition of **Namaste Thailand** festival, organised by the Royal Thai Embassy with an aim to strengthen bilateral ties and increase cultural exchange between **India and Thailand**, began at Select Citywalk in **New Delhi**.
- The Registrar of Geographical Indications, Government of India, accorded a GI tag, '**Sirsi Supari**', to arecanut grown in Sirsi, Siddpaur and Yellapur taluks of **Uttara Kannada** district in **Karnataka**.
- After an eight-year-long process, **Erode turmeric (of Tamil Nadu)** finally got a **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag from the Geographical Indication Registry.

- **Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar** was selected as Barbie role model & was presented with a **one-of-a-kind doll by Barbie as the company celebrates its 60th anniversary**. She was part of the 'Shero' program launched in 2015 by the company.
- **A 116-year-old Japanese woman** who loves playing the board game Othello is being honored as the **world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records**.
- **Idukki's The Marayoor Jaggery**, the traditional and handmade product from Idukki district of Kerala received the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** from the Central Government.
- **The National Green Tribunal** has slapped a fine of **Rs 500 crore** on German auto major Volkswagen for damaging the environment through the use of "cheat device" in its diesel cars in India. A bench headed by **NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel** directed the carmaker to deposit the amount within two months.
- The **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** created the **Guinness World Record** for '**longest single line bicycle parade (moving)**' at the Yamuna Expressway, **Noida**. CISF personnel rode **1,327** bicycles non-stop in a single line, maintaining a uniform distance between the bicycles.
- The RBI has constituted an eight-member task force on **offshore rupee markets**, **headed by Usha Thorat** former Deputy Governor, to look into issues related to the markets and recommend appropriate policy measures to ensure the stability of the external value of the rupee.
- A National Conference on "**Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)**" was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment **Thaawarchand Gehlot**. Mr. Gehlot stated that the "**7th Guinness Book of World Record**" has been created by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (**DEPwD**), at **Bharuch, Gujarat**.
- The total deposits in **Jan Dhan Account** are set to **cross Rs 1 lakh crore** soon. The scheme was launched on 28th August 2014 by the Modi-government with an aim to provide universal access to banking facilities to all households.
- The Central Works Public Department (**CPWD**) has constituted an **expert committee to formulate a design policy** for building construction and infrastructure development. The committee set up under the chairmanship of CPWD's Additional Director General **M K Sharma**.
- **WhatsApp** launched an India-focused **fact-checking feature** to combat fake news and rumours starting with the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections. Developed in collaboration with India-based media skilling startup **PROTO**, the tip line feature will help create a **database** of rumours to study misinformation during elections as part of a research project commissioned and assisted by **WhatsApp**.
- President Kovind launched '**CRPF Veer Parivar**' app, a mobile application for families of **CRPF** personnel killed in the line of duty.
- **Bharti Airtel and the FICCI Ladies Organisation** (FLO, the women business wing of apex trade body FICCI) launched a carrier agnostic safety app named '**My Circle**' which designed to empower women in the event of any distress or panic situation.
- **ETMONEY** India's largest app for **financial services** has integrated with Unified Payment Interface as a payment method. The reason for this is to double its monthly user base by the end of **2019**.
- State-owned telecom service provider **Bharatiya Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)** has received a licence from the **Department of Telecommunications** to provide **Internet and mobile services on flights**.
- **Phayeng Village** in Imphal West district of **Manipur** has become **India's first carbon-positive settlement**. A village is given carbon-positive tag if it sequesters more carbon than it emits, slowing accumulation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and mitigating effects of climate change.
- **India's first-of-its-kind 'Voter Park'** was inaugurated in **Gurugram, Haryana**, aimed at increasing voter awareness and educating people about the electoral process. **Haryana Chief Electoral Officer Rajeev Ranjan** inaugurated the park.
- The **8th edition of Home Expo India 2019** opened at India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida. The three-day exhibition organized by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH).
- **Etihad Airways**, UAE based flag carrier, has become the **first major airline** in the Gulf region to operate a flight without any **single-use plastics** on board. The objective is to raise awareness about pollution.
- Cyclone Fani intensified into a severe cyclonic storm and has now become an 'extremely severe cyclonic storm' according to an Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) report.

INDIAN RAILWAYS/ METRO in India

- India's fastest indigenous train which will run from Delhi to Varanasi has been named as Vande Bharat Express. Its previous name was Train 18.

OTHERS

- 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.
- Civil Aviation ministry launched the **country's first Geographical Indication (GI) store** at Dabolim International Airport in Goa. The GI stores will promote local products made by the artisans and handicrafts at the airport.
- Oxford Dictionaries announced '**Nari Shakti**' as the **Hindi Word of the Year**.
- '**Saksham**', an annual high intensity one-month long people-centric mega campaign of **Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA)** was launched by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- **Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta** conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley. With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man to climb the 7 highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.
- As per Ministry of Civil Aviation, islands in **Andaman will soon be connected by seaplanes** that can land on or take-off from the water. To facilitate the same, the government has approved flight operations on 13 water aerodrome routes under the Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.
- **University Grants Commission (UGC) approved a list of journals**, in that the UGC has decided to establish a Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE). The good quality Research Journals in disciplines under Social Sciences, Humanities, Languages, Arts, Culture, Indian Knowledge Systems etc., will be maintained by CARE and referred to as 'CARE Reference List of Quality Journals'. 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.
- **Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair** declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/exit from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers.
- **Arunima Sinha, the first female amputee** to have conquered Mt Everest, created yet another record as she became world's first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
- 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.
- National Green Tribunal imposed a fine of 100 crore rupees on Meghalaya government for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state.
- **Vijay Mallya became the first tycoon** to be charged under a new anti-fraud law, with a court in Mumbai naming him as an offender under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018.
- To ensure easier availability of FASTags, **Indian Highways Management Company Ltd. (IHMCL)**, a company promoted by NHAI, has signed MoUs with state-run Oil Marketing Companies (IOCL, BPC, and HPC). It will ensure availability of FASTags at petroleum outlets across India.

Person on Visit

- **EAM Swaraj visited Uzbekistan. Mrs. Swaraj will be** in Samarkand for the First India-Central Asia Dialogue which she will co-chair with Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov.
- **Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg** arrived in New Delhi for state visit to India. She will participate in the Indo-Norwegian Business Conference. She will also deliver the Inaugural address at the **Raisina Dialogue**.

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