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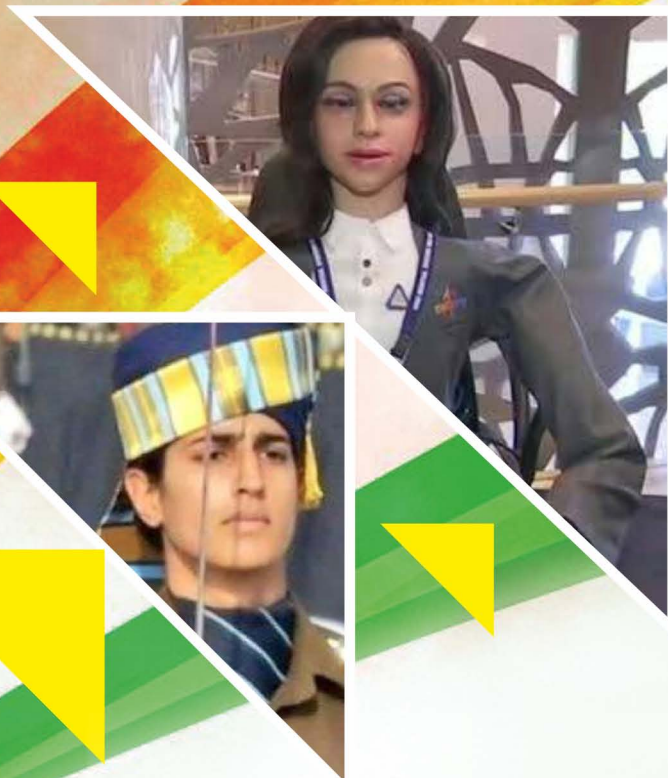
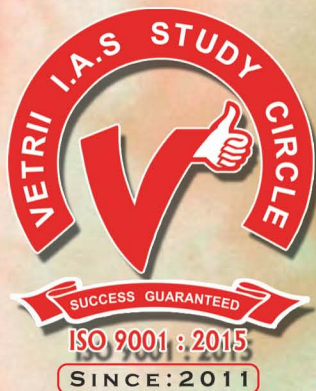
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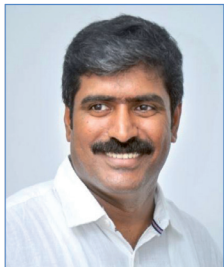
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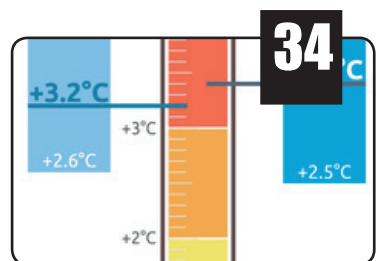
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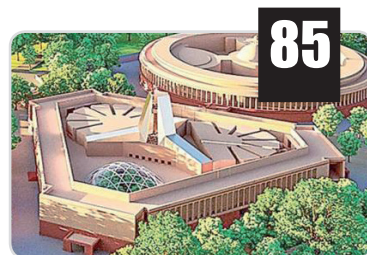
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History



1.1 Important Days

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
24-12-2019	National Consumer Day	Theme of National Consumer Day 2019 is- 'Alternate Consumer Grievance/Dispute Redressal'.
25-12-2019	Good Governance Day	Good Governance Day in India is observed on 25 December to commemorate the birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
04-01-2020	World Braille Day	
09-01-2020	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas	The 16 th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is observed on 9 January 2020. The day is celebrated to recognize the overseas Indians who have contributed to the development of India.
10-01-2020	World Hindi day	
12-01-2020	National Youth Day	Theme: Fit Youth Fit India
14-01-2020	Fourth Armed Forces Veterans' Day	Armed Forces Veteran's Day is observed every year on 14th January as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Field Marshal Kodandera Madappa Cariappa OBE (Order of the British Empire), the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 Jan 1953. Observing since 2017, the year 2020 marked day's fourth edition.
15-01-2020	Indian Army Day	
15-01-2020	145 th Foundation Day of India Meteorological Department (IMD)	
1 to 17 January	National Road Safety Week 2020	The theme for National Road Safety Week 2020 is : 'Sadak Suraksha - Jeevan Raksha'.

19-01-2020	National Immunization day	
24-01-2020	International day of education 2020	The theme for the year 2020 is 'Learning for people, planet, prosperity, and peace'.
25-01-2020	10 th National Voters' Day	Theme for NVD 2020 is 'Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy' Hon'ble President of India Sh. Ram Nath Kovind will be the Chief Guest at the 10 th National Voters' Day being organized by Election Commission of India on 25 th January 2020 at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt.
26-01-2020	Republic Day	India celebrated its 71 st Republic Day on January 26, 2020.

1.2 Defence, National Security and Terrorism

India to get its First Chief of Defence Staff

- The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the creation of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) post that will function as a single point of contact for different branches of armed forces.
- CCS also approved the report of a high-level committee headed by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, which finalised responsibilities and framework for operation of CDS.
- In the present structure, the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee (CSC) is Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) Bipin Rawat.



Role of CDS:

- Chief of Defence Staff, described as 'first among equals' among service chiefs,

will be tasked with trimming weapons procurement procedures and integrating operation of Indian armed forces- Army, Air Force, Navy. CDA will act as a military adviser to Government of India and will also head Department of Military Affairs.

- A CDS to oversee military was first recommended by the Kargil Review Committee- a committee set up after Kargil War (1999), to examine lapses in security after war, in which Pakistani soldiers infiltrated into India, occupied key positions in Kargil mountains and triggered the war.

Other Committees:

- Naresh Chandra Committee Report- 'Report of Task Force on National Security'
- General Shekatkar Committee Report- 'Committee of Experts on Enhancing Capability and Rebalance Defence Expenditure', chalked out a strategy for higher defence management.

Stamps released to commemorate contribution of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence

- Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitaraman released postage stamps to commemorate the services of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in order to protect the nation. DRI plays an immense role to counter smuggling and preserve cultural heritage and environment of the country.

Government amends rules to allow Chief of Defence Staff to serve up to maximum age of 65 years

- The defence ministry has amended the army, air force and navy rules by bringing in a new clause that allows the Chief of Defence Staff to serve upto a maximum age of 65 years.
- General Bipin Rawat, is made the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS)- he is a front runner for the post- he will continue to serve for most of the second term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, because he would have turned 65 years old by March 16, 2023.

Government creates Department of Military Affairs, to be headed by CDS

- The government has created a Department of Military Affairs in the Defence Ministry and it will be headed by newly-appointed Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat
- The new department will have under it works relating to the three forces Army, Navy and Air Force and procurement exclusive to the services, except capital acquisitions, according to prevalent rules and procedures

IAF chief formally inducts Dornier aircraft into No. 41 Squadron

- Indian Air Force Chief RKS Bhadauria has formally inducted the light utility aircraft Dornier into the No. 41 'Otters' Squadron
- The aircraft was inducted during a ceremony at the Palam Air Force Station.

International Conference on Safety in Maritime and Marine Operations

- The International Workshop on Marine Conservation and Marine Research will be held in Chennai from 6th to 10th January.
- The workshop, organized on behalf of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, will be held at the National Marine Institute of Technology (NIOT), located at Pallikaranai.
- More than 100 delegates from the USA, UK, Australia, France, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Maldives and the Congo will participate in this workshop.

I-STEM Portal; DRDO Science Expo launched at the Indian Science congress

- PM Modi inaugurated the 107th Indian Science Congress in Bengaluru. He launched the I-STEM portal at the inaugural function. Also, the Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) has installed more than 150 exhibits at the congress.

I-STEM Portal

- I-STEM is Indian Science, Technology Engineering Facilities Map. The portal will act as a gateway for the researchers and users to locate facilities that are required for their research and development work.

- Initially, similar facility was operating at IISc, Bengaluru and IIT Bombay. The I-STEM portal is a replica of these facilities. The facility at IISc Bengaluru was called the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE).

12th naval exercise 'Naseem-Al-Bahr' between India and Oman held in Goa

- 2 ships of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) arrived at Mormugao Port in Goa to participate in the 12th edition of the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise 'Naseem-Al-Bahr'. The meaning of the biennial exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr that has been conducted since 1993 between India and Oman is sea breeze.

1st tri-dimensional expedition 'Maha-Navy Connect 2020' launched by Indian Navy in Maharashtra

- The first tri-dimensional expedition 'Maha-Navy Connect 2020' was launched by Indian Navy in Mumbai. It aims to promote the heritage of Indian Navy and to spread awareness about Coastal Security amongst the coastal communities in Maharashtra.

Navy to get INS Vikrant by 2021

- India's first indigenously-manufactured aircraft carrier INS Vikrant will be inducted into the Navy in 2021.
- The ship now under construction at Cochin Shipyard was earlier scheduled to join service this year.
- A model of the 40,000 ton ship will be part of the Navy tableau on Republic Day. At present, the Indian Navy has only one aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.
- The INS Vikrant will be able to have 20 MIG-29K fighter jets, and ten helicopters

Visakhapatnam gearing up to host MILAN 2020

- Visakhapatnam is gearing up to host International Naval event 'MILAN' in March 2020. The preparations were reviewed at the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) by Vice Admiral S N Ghormade, Chief of Staff.

Key Points:

- 41 navies of different countries were invited so far, of which 30 navies have confirmed their participation in MILAN 2020.

INS vikramaditya deployed in Arabian sea

- India has deployed its aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya in the Arabian Sea at a time China and Pakistan are holding a nine-day mega naval exercise in the region.
- The exercise 'Sea Guardians' is taking place in the midst of heightened tension between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue. Both China and Pakistan, including submarines, destroyers and frigates, are part of the exercise.

LCA Navy variant successfully lands on INS Vikramaditya

- The Naval variant of the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Mk1 Tejas under development successfully completed the first arrested landing on board aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.
- Two prototypes have been flying as part of the development. The SBTF, which replicates the flight deck of an aircraft carrier, was specifically built to train Naval pilots in the complex manoeuvres of landing on the short flight deck of an aircraft carrier before they move on to the actual carrier.

- DRDO offered to develop a new twin-engine deck-based fighter jet for the Navy, tapping into its experience of developing the naval LCA, and it should be ready by 2026.
- The Navy operates the MiG-29K fighter jets from the INS Vikramaditya. These Russian jets will also fly from the first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant once it enter service. The force is also evaluating global tenders for 57 carrier-based, twin-engine fighter aircraft

Two Coast Guard ships commissioned at Kolkata

- Two Indian Coast Guard Ships (ICGS) - Annie Besant and Amrit Kaur - were commissioned at Kolkata.
- Annie Besant will be based at Chennai, Amrit Kaur will be based at Haldia.
- The ships are fitted with state of the art technology, and navigation equipment, along with Bofors 40/60 guns and 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote Controlled Guns for enhanced fighting efficiency.

Japan coast guard Ship 'Echigo PLH08' arrives Chennai to take part in the 19th edition of 'Sahyog-Kaijin' exercise

- The Japan Coast Guard (JCG) Ship 'Echigo PLH08' has arrived Chennai on a five-day goodwill visit and it will participate in the 19th edition of Annual Joint Exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin' which will be begin on January 16, 2020 with the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) off in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- It is aimed at further strengthening bilateral ties and mutual understanding

between the two Coast Guards and to enhance interoperability in communication and Search and Rescue procedures and sharing of best practices.

- First edition of 'Sahyog- Kaijin' exercise between two coast guards took place in 2000.
- Four Indian Coast Guard Ships, their aircraft and a vessel from National Institute of Ocean Technology will be participating along with Japan Coast Guard Ship.

Apache and Chinook helicopters to participate in Republic Day parade-2020

- The newly inducted Apache attack and Chinook heavy lift helicopters will be participating in the fly past of the Republic Day for the first time.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) tableau for the Republic Day 2020 will showcase scaled down models of five systems, which will include the Rafale fighter aircraft.

Russia to deliver S-400 air defence systems to India by 2025

- Russia said it has started production of S-400 long-range surface-to-air missile systems for India, and all five units will be delivered by 2025.
- The Indian Armed forces will receive the first batch of 5,000 Kalashnikov rifles this year as well. These will be produced in India under a joint venture.
- Asserting that the S-400 air defence missile systems are among best in the world, the diplomat said they will significantly bolster India's air defence mechanism.
- In October 2018, India signed a USD 5 billion deal to buy the air defence missile systems.

Winged Raider: Indian Army's largest airborne exercise-500 troops participate

- The Indian Army recently conducted the largest air borne exercise called the Winged Raider. Around 500 troops participated in the exercise.
- Around 500 troops participated in the exercise. The exercise was conducted in the north-eastern theatre.
- The exercise was conducted to demonstrate the operational readiness of the paratroopers and air warriors. The C-130 Hercules, Dhruv Helicopters and C-17 globe master transport aircraft participated in the exercise. **Thanjavur gets a Sukhoi squadron**
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) inducted a squadron of Sukhoi-30 MKI fighter jets armed with BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, at its Thanjavur Air Force Station.
- Five to six SU-30MKI fighter planes with the capability to carry BrahMos missiles would be positioned at the Air Force Station and the full capacity of 18 planes would be reached.
- This is also the first Sukhoi squadron of the IAF with BrahMos missiles.

Start Up India-first time in Republic Parade; Indian Navy

- The Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) operating under Ministry of Commerce and Industry is to showcase tableau on Start Up India at the Republic Day Parade to be held at Rajpath, New Delhi. The tableau is to be held under the theme: Reach for the sky.

- This is the first time Start Up India is participating at the Parade.

Indian Navy

- The Indian Navy is to showcase its tableau at the Republic Day parade under the theme Theme: Indian Navy-Silent, Strong and Swift.

1.3 World Organisations – Pacts and Summits

UNICEF Report: more than 1,70,000 violations against Children

- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) released its annual report. The report stated that since 1989, the number of countries experiencing conflicts has increased and the attacks on children has increased as well.

Highlights

- According to the report, the number of attacks on children since 2010 has increased three-fold. The agency has hence named the decade as 'Deadly Decade'.
- UNICEF says that in 2018, around 24,000 grave violations were recorded against children. The number has gone up highly to 1,70,000 in 2019. This is more than threefold and is deadly. The includes abductions, killing, sexual violence, maiming, child recruitment, denial to humanitarian access and attacks in schools and hospitals.

Convention on Rights of Child, 1989

- According to the convention, any child below the age of 18 is called a child. Around 140 countries have signed the convention. India is also a signatory.

For the 1st time, Vizag (Andhra Pradesh) to host 14th Global healthcare summit in 2021

- The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), a professional association for Indian American physicians, is set to organize a 3-days long 14th Global Healthcare Summit (GHS) in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP).

Key Points:

- Around 500 doctors from the United States of America (USA), Australia, Britain and other countries expected to participate in the summit, which will focus on various communicable and non-communicable diseases, public health hazards, eradication of tuberculosis (TB), preventing maternal mortality, control of Hepatitis B etc.

The Global Risks Report 2020

- The Global Risks Report 2020 presents the major risks the world will be facing in the coming year. It stresses the need for a multi stakeholder approach to addressing the world's greatest challenges, and comes ahead of the World Economic Forum's 50th Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters.

Switzerland tops the Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2020, India ranks 72nd

- The Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2020 (GTCI) report was launched

by INSEAD, a partner and sponsor of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Tent in Davos, Switzerland. India has moved up eight places to the 72nd position from 80th position in GTCI 2019. In list of 132 countries Switzerland tops the list.

- According to the report the United States (USA) is at the 2nd position followed Singapore.
- Top10 list includes Sweden at 4th, Denmark at 5th, the Netherlands at 6th, Finland at 7th, Luxembourg at 8th, Norway at 9th and Australia at the 10th position.
- China was ranked at the 42nd place, Russia at 48th position, South Africa at 70th position and Brazil at 80th position.

Nepal pitches for informal SAARC summit

- Nepal will host an informal summit of the leaders of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on the sidelines of the coming Sagarmatha Sambaad.
- To revive the forum, which has been unable to meet formally during the last four years because of the negative India-Pakistan relations. The SAARC summit could not be held in Islamabad in 2016 after India faced terror strikes blamed on elements in Pakistan.
- Kathmandu had invited all SAARC heads of government for Sagarmatha Sambaad, the first edition of a multi-stakeholder dialogue, to be held from April 2 to 4 and argued that an alternative to the formal summit model could be explored.

1.4 Places in News

Railways launches 'Him Darshan Express' with Vistadome coaches for tourists visiting Shimla

- Indian Railways started a seven coach glass-enclosed vista dome Him Darshan Express train on the heritage Kalka-Shimla route, with glass rooftop to have a panoramic view of the hilly region.

MEA included Madagascar & Comoros in Indian Ocean Region Division

- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has included Madagascar and Comoros in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Division.
- The IOR division looks after India's maritime neighbours such as Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Previously these two nations were looked after by East and South Africa Division of the MEA.
- Madagascar and Comoros are also the members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and International Solar Alliance (ISA).]

Keeladi reports in 24 Indian, global languages



- The findings of the Keeladi excavations

were released in 24 languages by Department of Archaeology.

- It has been published by the Department of Archaeology and Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation.

Statue of Unity finds place in 8 Wonders of SCO

- The 182-meter tall Statue of Unity in Gujarat has been included in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's '8 Wonders of SCO' list, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced.
- The 'Statue of Unity', the world's tallest statue, is a monumental tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, independent India's first home minister as well as deputy prime minister.
- The statue was inaugurated in October 2018 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of Patel's 143rd birth anniversary.

1.5 Eminent Persons

PM Modi to unveil statue of Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Lucknow

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unveil a statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Lucknow.
- Mr. Modi will unveil the 25-feet bronze statue at Lok Bhawan, the secretariat of Uttar Pradesh government. Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone of Atal Bihari Medical University.



120th Birth Anniversary of Shaheed Udham Singh being celebrated

- Nation is playing homage to great revolutionary, Shaheed Udham Singh, a well-known freedom fighter from Punjab on his 120th birth anniversary being celebrated on 26th December.
- He was born on 1899 in Sanguru district of Punjab. He belonged to Ghadar party and was best known for avenging the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by assassinating Michael O' Dwyer.

MS Dhoni named captain of CA's ODI team of the decade

- Former India skipper and wicket-keeper batsman MS Dhoni been named captain of Cricket Australia's (CA) ODI team of the decade and the line-up features three Indian players.
- Apart from Dhoni, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have made the cut in CA's team.
- CA's ODI team of the decade: Rohit Sharma, Hashim Amla, Virat Kohli, AB de Villiers, Shakib Al Hasan, Jos Buttler, MS Dhoni (c), Mitchell Starc, Trent Boult, Lasith Malinga, Rashid Khan.

UN declares Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai as the most famous teenager of the decade

- Malala Yousafzai (also known as Malala), a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Peace Prize (2014) laureate, was named as "the most famous teenager in the



world" by the United Nations (UN) in its 'decade in review' report released on December 23, 2019.

Nitish Kumar Unveils Statue of Arun Jaitley in Patna

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar unveiled a statue of former Union Minister Arun Jaitley in Patna on his birth anniversary and paid floral tributes.



- Jaitley, 66, died on August 24 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi. He was cremated with full state honors at the Nigambodh Ghat in the national capital on August 25

2020 Designated as "Year of Nurse and Midwife"

- In the honor of 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the World Health Organization designated the year 2020 as the "Year of Nurse and Midwife".

Highlights

- This year, WHO is to focus on nursing and midwifery in order to achieve Universal Health Coverage. The organization is leading the development of "World Nursing Report" that is to be launched in 2020.

Florence Nightingale

- Florence Nightingale was an English Social reformer born in 1820. She organized camps for wounded soldiers and also served as a manager of nurses during the Crimean War. She was called "The Lady with the Lamp" for making

rounds on wounded soldiers. The day is celebrated by the International Council of Nurses.

Guru Gobind Singh Birth anniversary Celebrated

- India celebrated the birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh. He is considered to be the 10th Guru of Sikhs. He was born on January 5, 1666.

Guru Gobind Singh

- Guru Gobind Singh founded Sikh Warrior community called Khalsa in 1699. He introduced five Ks in Sikhism. It is called the "Panj Kakar", They are uncut hair (Kesh), an iron bracelet (kara), a wooden comb (Kangha), 100% cotton undergarment (Kachera) and iron dagger (Kirpan).

PM Modi pays tribute to Savitribai Phule on her birthday

- PM Narendra Modi paid his tribute to the Indian Social Reformer Savitribai Phule. She was born on January 3, 1831.

Savitribai Phule

- Savitribai is considered as the first female teacher of India. She played vital role in improving women rights in the country. She is also regarded as "Mother of Indian Feminism".
- She along with her husband Jyotirao Phule founded the first India's girls' school in Pune in 1848.

Devi Prasad Tripathi passes away

- Devi Prasad Tripathi, general secretary of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), passed away here on Thursday.

- He began his political career as the adviser to Rajiv Gandhi in 1983. He became a founding member of the NCP alongside Sharad Pawar and PA Sangma because of differences with the Congress leadership in 1999.

Transwoman wins on DMK ticket in Namakkal

- A 30-year-old transwoman, A Riya, has created history in Tamil Nadu by winning the post of ward councillor in Tiruchengode Panchayat Union on a DMK ticket.



- Ms. Riya polled 2,701 votes, defeating her nearest rival by 950 votes.

Austria's Kurz returns as world's youngest govt. head

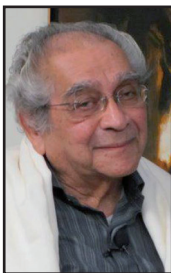
- The leader of Austria's conservatives Sebastian Kurz was sworn in as the world's youngest democratically elected leader, at the head of a coalition with the Greens.
- 'Protect the climate and the borders', the 33-year-old has become Chancellor of the Alpine country's first government to include the Greens, an arrangement called "exotic" and "unlikely" by Austrian media.



Iconic painter Akbar Padamsee passes away at 91

- Modern Indian painting, Akbar Padamsee, passed away.

- Akbar Padamsee was also a photographer, sculptor, filmmaker, engraver and lithographer, he was most recognized and decorated for his paintings which have found a place of prominence in eminent galleries in India and around the world. Padamsee was awarded Padma Bhushan in 2010



World leaders descend upon Royal Palace in Oman

- Oman's Sultan Haitham Bin Tareq Al Saeed began receiving condolences for the death of his predecessor Qaboos Bin announced at the royal palace in the capital Muscat.



Karunanidhi's statue unveiled in Andamans

- DMK president M.K. Stalin unveiled the statue of party leader M.Karunanidhi in the Andamans.
- He had already unveiled the statue of DMK founder Annadurai in 2013. Mr. Stalin agreed to include Andamans like Puducherry, as part of the DMK-Congress alliance in Tamilspeaking areas.



Freedom fighter Bhim Chandra Jana dies at 107

- The freedom fighter's youngest son Ashok Jana said his father was arrested for the first time in 1930 at the age of 17 while opposing the use of foreign goods.
- Jana was awarded by the Government of India after Independence and was an avowed Gandhian all his life

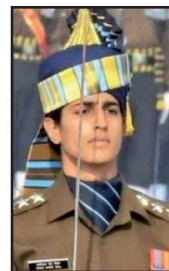
Taiwan's leader meets with U.S. official after election win

- U.S. ambassador to Taipei, as China warned that countries should stick with recognizing communist-ruled Beijing as the rightful government of "one China," including Taiwan.



Tania Shergill-trailblazer woman officer who led all-men contingents during Army Day parade

- Captain Tania Shergil created history on this Army Day by becoming the first-ever woman to 'Parade Adjutant' to lead an all-men contingent.
- The historic move came after she commanded the contingent with her head held high at the Cariappa Parade Ground in Delhi Cantonment on January 15.



Women Power at Republic Day parade: Tania Shergil and CRPF bikers

- The Republic Day parade held at Rajpath every year is one of the largest parades of the world. The parade marches from

Rashtrapati Bhawan along Rajpath until India Gate. This year the parade has certain events to express the woman power in the defence sector.

Subhash Chandra Bose Birth Anniversary 2020

- India is celebrating the 123rd birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on January 23, 2020. Subhash Chandra Bose is known for the establishment of the Azad Hind Fauj or Indian National Army (INA).
- Nation pays a tribute to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on his birthday. Several cultural programs held across the country in his respect. It is believed that Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose died in a plane accident in 1945.

1.6 Sports and Games

Abhishek-Yashaswini duo on top



- Haryana dominated the mixed air pistol competition, winning all the three gold medals in the 63rd National shooting championship.
- The Olympic quota winners Abhishek Verma and Yashaswini Singh Deswal bagged the gold, beating Harshada Nithave and Ankiet of Maharashtra 16-10.

Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy becomes women's World Rapid champion

- India's Koneru Humpy outwitted China's Lei Tingjie in a dramatic Armageddon battle to win the Women's World Rapid Chess Championship in Moscow, Russia.



- While Humpy was crowned the world women's rapid champion, Norway's Magnus Carlsen claimed the men's title in the space

Sonowal launches torch relay of Khelo India Youth Games

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and officials of the Khelo India Youth Games launched the torch relay of the competition in Guwahati on.
- The tournament will be held between 10 January 2020 to 22 January 2020.
- The opening ceremony of the third Khelo India Youth Games will take place at the Indira Gandhi Stadium in Guwahati.

Cristiano Ronaldo Wins Best Men's Player of the Year at Dubai Globe Soccer Awards

- Cristiano Ronaldo did not finish 2019, after not winning the Ballon d'Or, FIFA's The Best award or even UEFA's Men's Player of the Year awards, finished 2019 with the best men's player at the Dubai Globe Soccer Awards.



- Ronaldo has won the award six times out of its nine years of its existence, while finishing runners-up in the 'other' big football awards of the year

Lawn bowls & Cycling to be included in 3rd Khelo India Games

- Chief Executive Officer of "Khelo India Games" has announced that "Lawn bowls" and "cycling" will be included in the 3rd edition of Khelo India Games. The two games will be included in the event for the first time. The 3rd edition of the tournament will be held in Guwahati, Assam in January 2020. Athletes from all over the country will be coming to Guwahati for the Khelo India Youth Games.

Telangana's mountaineer Malavath Purna scaled Antarctica's highest peak Mt. Vinson Massif

- 18-years-old Malavath Purna from Telangana scaled Mt Vinson Massif, the highest mountain peak in Antarctica at 4,892 meters and becomes the first and youngest tribal women in the World to scale six mountain peaks in six continents.
- At the age of 13 years she became the world's youngest girl who scaled Mt. Everest.



16th edition of ICC awards 2019 announced ; Rohit Sharma named ODI cricket of the year

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the list of ICC award

winners for the year 2019 to recognise and honor the best international cricket players of the previous 12 months.

- Indian opener Rohit Gurunath Sharma became ODI (One Day International) Cricketer of the Year for the first time. At the same time, Virat Kohli bagged Spirit of Cricket award.

Jacqueline Williams of Jamaica becomes the 1st woman third Umpire in men's T20I

- Jacqueline Williams of Jamaica becomes the first woman third umpire in men's international cricket match. The 43-year-old Jamaican woman oversaw all 3 matches of the Twenty20 International (T20I) series in Grenada, West Indies between West Indies and Ireland.



India wins 7 medals in 1st UWW Rome ranking series 2020 held in Rome, Italy

- The Indian wrestling team has clinched 7 medals (4 gold, 2 silver and a bronze) in the 1st edition of UWW (United World Wrestling) Rome Ranking Series 2020 held from January 15 - 18, 2020 in the Italian Capital, Rome.
- The 4-day tournament, organized by UWW, has featured all the 3 disciplines - freestyle, Greco Roman and women's wrestling.

List of Indian winner:

Winner	Category	Medal
Bajrang Punia	65kg freestyle	Gold
Ravi Kumar Dahiya	61kg freestyle	Gold
Vinesh Phogat	53kg	Gold
Gurpreet Singh	82kg -Greco-roman	Gold
Anshu Malik	57kg	Silver
Sunil Kumar	97kg	Silver
Sajan Bhanwal	77 kg	Bronze

A blend of chess and tourism

- As the first international chess tournament to be held on a houseboat, the mascot of Kerala Tourism, the six-day tourney will be held in a 'Spice Route luxury houseboat,' which will cruise along the backwaters, blending chess and tourism and promoting Kerala globally.

World Archery lifts suspension on AAI

- World Archery removed suspension imposed on Archery Association of India (AAI). Indian archers has now been allowed to compete in World Archery Events from 23 January 2020 onwards. The decision to remove suspension was taken by World Archer's executive Board postal vote.

1.7 Books & Authors

"Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games"- Book to chronicle India's Olympic journey

- Boria Majumdar with Nalin Mehta, authored a book titled "Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games" that describes about the chronicle India's journey in the global sports arena of Olympics.

"Bharathi's Cats" Books Released

- On behalf of The Hindu 'Why do students pray for sun prayers? How?' and 'Bharathi's Cats' books were published in Chennai.
- 'Why do students pray for sun prayers? How?' books was written by Eben

A book titled "Politics of Opportunism" released by S Gurumurthy

- Noted Economist and Political Analyst S Gurumurthy released a book titled "Politics of Opportunism: Regional Parties, Coalitions, Centre-State Relations in India".
- The book is authored by R P N Singh

Sanjay Dharwadker authored "Diamond In My Palm" – Tale of 12 diamonds from Golconda that India lost forever

- Sanjay Dharwadker authored the book titled "Diamond In My Palm" that describes, how the world's 12 greatest diamonds originated from Golconda and Kollur mines in Andhra Pradesh & later took away by Mughals, Persians, Brits, French, Turks and Russians after centuries

of bloody wars, conspiracies and million-dollar deals, and now ensconced in their national treasures

Venkaiah Naidu released a book 'The Renaissance Man-The Many Facets of Arun Jaitley' on his birth anniversary

- Vice President Mr. Venkaiah Naidu has unveiled a book entitled "The Renaissance Man-The Many Facets of Arun Jaitley" with the Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla on the 67th birth anniversary of the former finance minister Arun Jaitley at a ceremony held in New Delhi.
- **Pax Sinica:** Implications for the Indian Dawn, authored by Samir Saran and Akhil deo.

Malayali novelist A Sethumadhavan's first English novel, 'The Cuckoo's Nest' published

- Malayali novelist A Sethumadhavan's 'The Cuckoo's Nest' is his first novel in english and was published by Niyogi Books.
- In this book the author attempts to fight against the division in society through the character of the eternal optimist, Madam Agatha, a former nun and also other Indian girl-child raised in an orthodox community.

Amit Shah releases a book Karmayoddha Granth

- Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah released a book Karmayoddha Granth, on the life of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in New Delhi.
- "A 'Karmayoddha' is man with a beating heart for people, a statesman, a hard task

master, an able administrator and an ideal leader who leads by example.

The Parambikkulam-Aliyar Irrigation Project

- The launch of the book 'The History of the Engineering Miracle of Asia Parambikkulam Aliyaru Irrigation Project' was published in Pollachi on behalf of 'The Hindu Group'.
- The Sakshitya Academy Award-winning poet Sculptor by Pollachi journalist S.Kobu wrote the book.

Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam pontiff releases book on Mahaperiyava

- The second volume of the book Embodiment of Truth - Kanchi Mahaswami, brought out by The Hindu, was released by Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam pontiff Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati.
- Former Union minister Ashwini Kumar's was launched book Human Dignity – A purpose in perpetuity in New Delhi.

Gandhi wanted to spend 15 Aug, 1947 in Pak: Book by MJ Akbar

- Mahatma Gandhi wanted to spend August 15, 1947, the first day of freedom, in breakaway Pakistan rather than in India, says a new book 'Gandhi's Hinduism: The Struggle new book 'Gandhi's Hinduism: The Struggle Against Jinnah's Islam' Against Jinnah's Islam' by former Union minister M J Akbar.
- According to the author, Gandhi's immediate concern after independence was the fate of partition's principal victims, the minorities: Hindus in

Pakistan and Muslims in India.

- Whether in South Africa or India, for over half of a century till the end of his public career in 1948.

Former Indian Cricketer WV Raman's book 'The Winning Sixer'

- Woorkeri Venkat Raman (WV Raman), former Indian cricket team opener has authored a book 'The Winning Sixer: Leadership Lessons To Master', which was released formally by Anil Radhakrishna Kumble during an event in Bengaluru, Karnataka. WV Raman is the current head coach of the national women's cricket team. The book was published by Rupa Publications, India.

Book 'Essays and Reminiscences: A Festschrift in Honour of Nani A Palkhivala' released on noted jurist and economist Nani A Palkhivala

- The book 'Essays & Reminiscences: A Festschrift in Honour of Nani A Palkhivala' was released to mark the birth centenary anniversary of Indian Jurist and Economist Nanaboy "Nani" Ardeshir Palkhivala. The book is published by LexisNexis publications.

1.8 India and its Neighbours

Pakistan to import polio markers from India

- The Pakistan Government decided to import Polio markers from India recently. The Government has suspended the trade with New Delhi for months after abrogation of Article 370.

Indian High Commission organizes "Art Exhibition" in Bangladesh

- The Indian High Commission has organized the "Art Exhibition" in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The "Art Exhibition" has been organized to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The art exhibition constituted unique photographs of Mahatma Gandhi from his initial days in South Africa to numerous movements he participated in India.

1.9 Awards & Honours

BCCI honour for Srikanth and Anjum



- Former India captain K. Srikanth will be conferred the Life Time Achievement Award during the BCCI Awards.
- The Life Time Award 2019 for women will be bestowed on Anjum Chopra, also a former captain

AAO bestows Life Achievement honour to Dr Santosh G Honavar

- Dr Santosh G Honavar, India's ophthalmologist is conferred with the American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO) highest award Life Achievement honor that is given to its members.



- He is the first Indian chosen for the honour. American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world's largest association of eye specialists.

Harivarasanam Award for Ilaiyaraja

- Musician and composer Ilaiyaraja has been selected for the prestigious Harivarasanam Award instituted by the state government for 2019. Each year, Harivarasanam Award is announced ahead of Makarvilakku Festival in Sabarimala.
- The award will be conferred on Ilaiyaraja on January 9 at a function to be held at Sabaraimala Sannidhanam. The award consists of a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh, citation and plaque. The award is jointly being instituted by the state government and Travancore Devaswom board, and is being awarded since 2012.

Sanjay Gupta of 'Jagran' to be honoured with Lokmanya Tilak journalism award

- Sanjay Gupta, the editor-in-chief of 'Jagran' will be honored with "Lokmanya Tilak National Journalism Award" for his great contribution in the field of Journalism.



Best Agricultural Worker Award for Tamil Nadu

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the best Agro-worker for Tamil Nadu, which has a high yield of oil seeds.
- The Agricultural Workers Award is

presented annually on behalf of the Central Department of Agriculture to honor farmers and state governments who excel in agricultural production.

- This award is the 5th time Tamil Nadu has been awarded the award for Agricultural Production.
- During the period 2017-18, Tamil Nadu produced 10.382 lakh tonnes of oil seeds with 2,729 kg / ha.
- The Government of Tamil Nadu has been the recipient of various awards in the field of agriculture from 2011-12.

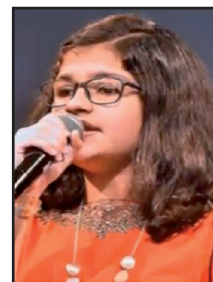
DRDO Scientist Award for scientist Chitra Rajagopal

- The 34th Indian Engineering Conference was held recently in the Telangana capital, Hyderabad.
- The National Design and Research Institute's National Design Awards for 2019 were announced at the event.



Dubai-based Indian singer, Sucheta Satish wins Global child prodigy award 2020

- A Dubai-based Indian girl, Sucheta Satish (14), who sings in 120 languages, has won the '100 Global Child Prodigy Award 2020' in the category of singing. The award ceremony was held in Ashok Hotel, Delhi.



- Suchetha, a student in Dubai Indian High School, was awarded along with 99 other child prodigies at the awards, which was attended by chief guest Nobel Peace Prize (2014) winner Shri Kailash Satyarthi.

Hello FM receives International Yoga Day Media Award

- Hello FM, an FM radio station owned by the Thanthi group was conferred the "International Yoga Day Media Award" instituted by the Central government for popularising yoga.

Aayushi Dholakia becomes Miss Teen International 2019

- Aayushi Dholakia has bagged the title of Miss Teen International 2019.
- She also bagged the titles of Best in National Costume Award and Best in Speech Award.
- Miss Teen International is the world's oldest running teen



Paramathi female farmer who won the award for Prime Minister

- Paramathi, an old woman from Kunjampalayam village, who earned high yields in sesame cultivation, has achieved a record of recognition as a pioneer farmer to the Prime Minister.
- Farmer P. Papathi belongs to Kunjampalayam, a suburb of



Kapilakurichi near Paramathi, Namakkal district.

- He has sown his own 1 hectare of land in 2017-18. Cultivated on the advice of the Agriculture Department, Papathi has taken a yield of 1,210 kg / ha.

MS Swaminathan & Dr. Gutta honored with 1st Venkaiah Naidu National Awards in Hyderabad

- Eminent Agricultural Scientist Dr M S Swaminathan has been selected as the 1st recipient of the Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence while renowned social worker Dr. Gutta Muniratnam has been selected as the 1st recipient of the Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service. The award was given at a function in Hyderabad, Telangana.

India-born author Jasbinder Bilan bags UK Costa Children's award, 2019

- Indian born-author Jasbinder Bilan's (UK resident) debut novel 'Asha and the Spirit Bird' focussing on readers of age range 9 years and above, beat the competition and named as the winner of 2019 UK(United Kingdom) children's book award named Costa Children's Award.
- The story is about eleven-years-old Asha, who is empowered with spiritual connections to her grandmother as she journeys through the wild and dangerous Himalayas with her best friend Jeevan.



TN cuts road accidents, gets Centre award

- The award titled 'Best Performance in Road Safety' was given to TN by the centre.
- Defence Minister, Mr Rajnath Singh, gave this award to TN Transport Minister Mr M.R. Vijayabaskar.
- As per official data, in the year 2018, TN witnessed a 32% drop in the deaths due to road accidents when compared to the previous year. In the years 2016 and 2017, the state of TN grabbed many eyeballs as it topped India's statewide accident chart.

Chithirai Thirunaal awards for 2019 and Tiruvalluvar award for 2020

- Former union minister Gingee N Ramachandran, senior journalist Maalan and poet Krishangini are among those chosen for awards instituted by Tamil Nadu government for 2019.
- The awards will be presented by Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami at a function in Chennai.
- The awards carry ₹ 1 lakh, a citation and a shawl. For the organisation which receives Thamizh Thaa award, ₹ 5 lakh, a citation and a shawl will be given.
- The personalities who have been chosen for Chithirai Thirunaal awards for 2019 are: ThamizhThaa award (Chicago Tamil Sangam), Kabilar award (Poet Vettrialagan), UVeSa award (V Mahadevan), Kambar award (Saraswathi Ramanathan), SollinSelvar award (Poet Kavidasan), Umaru Pulavar award (Liagat Ali Khan), GU Pope award

(Maria Joseph Xavier), ElangoAdigal award (Poet G Thirugnanasambandam), Amma Literary award (Umayal Muthu), Singaravelar award (SK Subramanian), MaraimalaiAdigal award (P Muthukumaraswamy) and AyothiDasaPandithar award (Poet V Prabhakaran).

- Senior journalist Maalan alias V Narayanan, poet Krishangini alias Brinda Nagarajan, MarabinMainthanMuthaiah, S Mohammed Yusuf, KJ Masthan Ali, Siva Murugesan, N Kadikachalam, Murugudurai and A Mathivanan have been chosen for the best translator award for 2019.

Thiruvalluvar awards for 2020

- While N Nithyananda Bharathi has been chosen for Thiruvalluvar award for 2020, the following have been selected for Thiruvalluvar Thirunaal awards for 2019: Gingee N Ramachandran (ThanthaiPeriyar award), Ambedkar award (K Arjunan), Perarignar Anna award (G Samarasam), Kamarajar award (MS Mathivanan), MahakaviBharathiyar award (P Sivaraji), Bharathidasan award (T Thenisai Chellappa), Thiru Vi Ka award (S Sundararajan) and KAP Viswanatham award (Manimekalai Kannan).

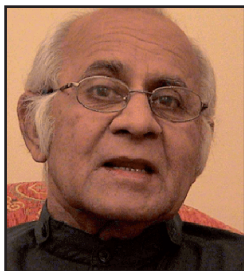
Puri, Odisha recieves Swachhata Darpan Awards 2019

- Puri, Odisha has been awarded for its initiatives for plastic waste management with the Swachhata Darpan Awards 2019. The award ceremony was held during the Open Defecation Free Sustainability Workshop held in New Delhi.

- The workshop was organised by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) and Ministry of Jal Shakti. The Puri District of Odisha has been awarded for successfully managing the plastic wastes in the district with its effective policies by engaging the people of the town through awareness programmes, hence keeping the town's environment pollution free.

Sindhi writer Vasdev Mohi to be conferred with 29th Saraswati Samman

- Sindhi (Indo Aryan language) Writer Vasdev Mohi has been selected for the Saraswati Samman 2019, a literary recognition given annually by the K K (Krishna Kumar) Birla Foundation. The literary award is given for his short stories collection- 'Chequebook'.
- The short story talks about the sufferings of the marginalized sections in the society. The work was selected by a committee headed by former secretary general of the Lok Sabha, Subash C Kashyap



Telangana-Genco and SAP bags CSI award

- The Telangana State Power Generation Corporation (TS-Genco) and SAP (India) have jointly bagged the Computer Society of India (CSI) special interest group e-governance award of excellence-2019 for their project - Leveraging TS-Genco Business Process using SAP File Life-cycle Management and Analytics.

Deepika Padukone receives Crystal Award at Davos

- Padukone was given the award for her leadership in raising mental health awareness.
- Deepika Padukone receives Crystal Award at Davos, talks about depression.

'cVIGIL' and 'Voter Helpline app' won e-Governance Award of Excellence 2019 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

- Award of Excellence for the year 2019 was given by Computer Society of India (CSI) and Special Interest Group on e-Governance (CSI SIG e-Gov) at Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- The two innovative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications developed by Election Commission of India (ECI), 'cVIGIL' and 'Voter Helpline App' has won the e-Governance award.

President confers Bal Shakti Puraskar on 49

- Ishaan Sharma, who saved a Russian tourist from two robbers, Omkar Singh, who holds the world record for the youngest theoretical author, and Gauri Mishra,



- youngest pianist in India, were among those who were given the Bal Shakti Puraskar 2020 by President Ram Nath Kovind at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- Forty-nine children in the age group of five to 18 won the award in the fields

of innovation, social service, scholastic, sports, art and culture and bravery. The award carries a medal, a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, a certificate and a citation.

Former President Pranab Mukherjee Confers 'Champions of Change 2019' Award

- Jharkhand CM (Chief Minister) Hemant Soren was conferred with 'Champions of Change Award-2019' for social welfare (Aspirational Districts) by Former President Pranab Mukherjee at a function in New Delhi.
- Award Contribution: The award is contributed to Hemant for his work in the Barhait and Dumka assembly constituencies in the state.

Sparsh Ganga initiative' wins Champions of Change Award

- Environmentalist and social activist Arushi Nishank was honoured with the Champions of Change Award 2019 for her initiative towards cleaning and saving river Ganga, the Sparsh Ganga initiative. The second edition of the Champions of Change Award was held at Vigyan Bhawan (January 20).
- The award is given under the transformation of Aspirational District Program announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January last year.
- The program identifies the progress of 115 'aspirational' districts whose development is being monitored by NITI Aayog.
- Other recipients of the award were actor Shilpa Shetty and her husband Raj Kundra for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan,

actor Suresh Oberoi for Culture and Lok Sabha MP Geeta Koda for Aspirational.

TNAU V-C gets Harit Ratna Award

- N Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, has been conferred 'Harit Ratna Award 2019' by the All India Agricultural Students Association for

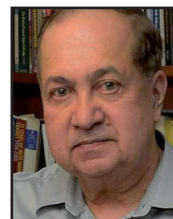


dissemination of ₹30-crore entrepreneurship project in agri-business and for motivating students to the agriculture sector in the State.

- The award was conferred at the 5th National Youth Convention at Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya in Raipur.

Kerala Media Academy award for N.Ram

- N. Ram, chairman of The Hindu Group Publishing Private Limited, has been selected as the outstanding mediaperson in a national award instituted award carrying a cash prize of ₹1



lakh, citation and sculpture was announced as part of the academy's 40th anniversary celebration.

Former IPS Officer bags disaster mitigation award

- The Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre in Uttarakhand and former IPS officer K.M. Singh have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose

Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for their contribution in the field of disaster management.

- While the Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre in Uttarakhand, an organisation working in the field of natural calamity relief, has been selected in the institution category and will be given a certificate and a cash prize of ₹51 lakh.
- The award is announced every year on January 23, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. As many as 330 nominations were received this year and the final decision was taken by the Prime Minister.

Padma honours for Mary Kom, Sindhu

- Boxing ace Mary Kom has been bestowed with Padma Vibhushan while badminton icon P.V. Sindhu has been honoured with Padma Bhushan ahead of the 71st Republic Day.
- The list, released by the Government also includes six Padma Shri Award winners with veteran hockey star M.P.Ganesh being recognised for his services to the game. Arun Jaitley and, Sushma Suvaraj were also awarded with Padma Vibushan Posthumously.



Padma awardees from Tamil Nadu, Puducherry

- Social worker Krishnammal Jagannathan, industrialist Venu Srinivasan and littérateur Manoj Das have been chosen for the Padma Bhushan awards from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.



- Carnatic vocalists C.Lalitha and C.Saroja, artist Manohar Devadoss, social worker S. Ramakrishnan, nagaswaram vidwans Kalee Shabi Mahaboob and Sheik Mahaboob Subani and IIT-Madras professor Pradeep Thalappil from Tamil Nadu, and artist V.K. Munusamy from Puducherry are the recipients of the Padma Shri awards.
- Krishnammal Jagannathan, 94, heads the Land for Tillers' Freedom (LAFTI), an NGO working for the upliftment of women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and their families, particularly in the Thanjavur region.
- Ms. Jagannathan had worked extensively in areas like Kilvenmani following the massacre in 1968, when 44 people belonging to the SC community were burnt by henchmen from an intermediate caste.

Gallantry medal for downed pilots

- Squadron Leaders Siddharth Vashisht and Ninad Mandavgane, pilots of an Indian Air Force Mi-17 helicopter accidentally shot down in Budgam were posthumously selected for the Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry) on the eve of Republic Day by President Ram Nath Kovind.
- The President approved nine Shaurya Chakras, of which four were posthumous. Six Shaurya Chakras were to Army personnel, while three were to security forces personnel under the Home Ministry.
- These include nine Shaurya Chakras, 28 Param Vishisht Seva Medals (PVSM), four Uttam Yudh Seva Medals (UYSM), 53 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals (AVSM), 10 Yudh Seva Medals (YSM), 123 Vishisht Seva Medals (VSM), 111 Sena Medals (Gallantry), five Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry), four Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry), 40 Sena Medals (devotion to duty), eight Nao Sena Medals (devotion to duty) and 14 Vayu Sena Medals (devotion to duty).

Arvind Krishna awarded Mahakavi Kanhaiyalal Sethia Award

- Renowned poet and literary critic Arvind Krishna Mehrotra was awarded 5th edition of the Mahakavi Sethia Award for poetry during JLF 2020. The award is given in memory of Rajasthani and Hindi poet Kanhaiyalal Sethia and carries a cash prize of Rs. 1 Lakh.

1.10 Latest Terminology

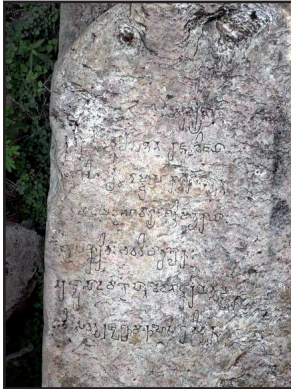
26 new Indian English words added to the Oxford Dictionary

- The Oxford Dictionary includes a range of colloquial terms, slangs, acronyms, and phrases as official new words for people to use.
- About two years ago endearing Indian words like 'Abba' and 'Anna' were added to the dictionary. The list of inclusions for 2018 also had words like 'gulab jamun', 'dadagiri', 'achcha', 'bapu' and 'surya namaskar'. As many as 70 Indian words were added that year.
- But about a month back, the dictionary assumed a more serious tone and chose 'climate emergency' as the Word of the Year 2019. Other shortlisted words included 'Climate crisis', 'climate action', 'climate denial', 'eco-anxiety' and 'extinction'.
- The latest edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary features 26 new Indian English words, including 'Aadhaar', 'chawl', 'dabba', 'hartal' and 'shaadi'.
- The 10th edition of the dictionary has 384 Indian English words and incorporates over 1,000 new words such as chatbot, fake news and microplastic.

1.1 Latest Historical Events

Earliest Sanskrit inscription in south India found in A.P.

- The Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India has discovered the earliest epigraphic evidence so far for the Saptamatrika cult.
- It is also the earliest Sanskrit inscription to have been discovered in South India.
- Saptamatrikas are a group of seven female deities worshipped in Hinduism as personifying the energy of their respective consorts.
- The inscription is in Sanskrit and in Brahmi characters and was issued by Satavahana king Vijaya in 207 A.D.
- The inscription was first copied and studied and it transpired that it records the construction of a prasada (temple), a mandapa and consecration of images on the southern side of the temple by a person named Kartika for the merit of the king at the temple of Bhagavathi (Goddess) Saktimatraka (Saptamatrika) at Tambrap; Tambrap being the ancient name of Chebrolou



1.12 India and its neighbours

List of Nuclear Installations exchanged between India and Pakistan

- India and Pakistan exchanged their nuclear installations under an agreement that prevents them from attacking each other's atomic facilities. The practice is being followed for 29 years for now.

Agreement on Prohibition of attack against Nuclear Installations

- The agreement was signed between Pakistan President Benazir Bhutto and Indian PM Rajiv Gandhi. It was signed on December 31, 1988.

History

- Between 1986 and 1987 Indian Army carried out massive exercise Brasstacks that created fear of attacks on Pakistan nuclear facilities. The fear of Pakistan was the base for the countries to sign the agreement.

Prahlad Patel to attend launch of Visit Nepal-2020

- India sent Minister of State for Tourism Prahlad Patel for the inauguration of Visit Nepal 2020, the largest economic diplomacy initiative of Kathmandu.
- The initiative is important as it will open Nepal's tourism economy which has emerged as an arena of interface between India and China.
- To generate investment for infrastructure development and also develop the tourism sector that is crucial for Nepal's economy."

President Kovind lays foundation stone of Lakshadweep's 1st super specialty hospital at Kavaratti

- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, who was on a first ever 2-day State Visit to the Union Territory of Lakshadweep, has laid the foundation stone for Lakshadweep's 1st Super Specialty Hospital at Kavaratti.

South Asia's 1st and 119th e-passport in the world

- Prime Minister (PM) of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina Wazed have launched e-passport in Dhaka, Bangladesh as Mujib Century year gift to the country. Bangladesh is the first country in South Asia and 119th country in the world to have e-passport facility. Malaysia is the first country in the world to launch this facility in 1998.

1.13 Appointments - Who is who?

Rohan shah designated as India's representative & Governor on ERIA board

- Rohan Shah, a practicing counsel at the Supreme Court (SC) and various High Courts (HC), has appointed as India's Representative and Governor on the board of Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) for a period of 3 years.
- The ERIA board meets once every 6 months in Jakarta(Indonesia) & in Japan.

Suresh Chandra Sharma Appointed Chairman of National Medical Commission

- The head of Delhi AIIMS' ENT head-neck surgery department, Professor Suresh Chandra Sharma, was on Thursday appointed as the chairman of National Medical Commission (NMC).
- The NMC has been mandated with framing policies for regulating medical institutions and medical professionals in the country.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Sharma for a period of three years or till the age of 70 years.



MHA designates senior office for Ayodhya verdict related matters

- Ministry of Home Affairs has designated an additional secretary-level officer to handle all matters related to Ayodhya Court verdict.
- To fulfill the SC verdict, the MHA has set up a new division, which will be helmed by Additional Secretary Gnanesh Kumar.

V K Yadav to lead Railway Board for 1 more year

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the re-employment of V K Yadav as the Chairman of Railway Board. The appointment has been done for a period of one year.



- He took over as Railway Board Chairman from Ashwani Lohani on January 1, 2019. He has also held the post of General Manager of South Central Railway (SCR).
- He is an electrical engineer and belongs to the 1980 batch of the Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers.

Lokpal member DB Bhosale resigns

- Justice Dilip B Bhosale has resigned as member of the country's anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal. A Lokpal member is appointed for a five-year term or till attaining the age of 70.



Newly appointed deputy governor to look after RBI's monetary policy division

- Newly appointed RBI Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra will look after the key monetary policy department along with seven other units, the central bank said after reshuffling portfolios of deputy governors.
- Besides the governor, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has four deputy governors looking after different departments.



Mikhail Mishustin becomes the next prime minister of Russia

- The Russian lawmakers have approved Russian President Vladimir Putin's proposed candidate Mikhail Vladimirovich Mishustin, the head of the

Federal Tax Service, as the next prime minister of the country. He replaced Dmitri Anatolyevich Medvedev who resigned from his post.

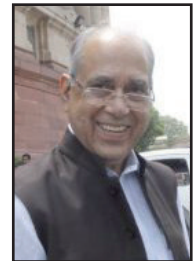
Lt.Gen.S.K.Saini to be Vice-Chief of Army Staff

- Lt.Gen.S.K.saini, currently the Southern Army Commander, will be the next Vice-chief of Army Staff. He will assume charge on January 25, defence sources said here.



Nripendra Misra to head Nehru Memorial Museum

- As part of a full revamp of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library's executive council, Nripendra Misra, former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, has been appointed as the new chairperson. This comes at a time when the institution is finalising plans to set up a Museum of Prime Ministers.



1.14 Cultural Panorama

Losar Festival: Ladakh New Year being celebrated

- Union Territory of Ladakh is celebrating Losar Festival on 27 December 2019, to mark the Ladakh or Tibetan New Year.
- Until 2018. Losar gathering used to have "UT Status for Ladakh" a resolution for new Year.

Mandu Festival begins at Mandu, Madhya Pradesh

- The first edition of Mandu Festival begins at Mandu, picturesque fort city of Madhya Pradesh. The event is organized by Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board. The festival will witness a celebration of the historic heritage blended with the modern vibrancy of the city culture.

'Dhanu Jatra' the 11-day long festival begins at Bargarh in Western Odisha

- 'Dhanu Jatra' the famous 11-day long open-air theater festival begins at Bargarh in western Odisha. Jatra's drama is based on the story of Lord Krishna and his uncle Kansa.
- It is the world's longest open-air drama named in the Guinness book of records. To celebrate Indian's Independence and to symbolize the victory of good over evil this festival was celebrated from 1947-1948.

'Lai Haraoba' ritualistic festival begins in Tripura

- In Tripura, Lai Haraoba, a ritualistic festival observed by Manipuri meitei communities began in Agartala. The 5-day long festival is jointly organised by the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of Tripura, Puthiba Lai Haraoba Committee and Puthiba Welfare & Cultural Society, Agartala.

Zo kutpui festival 2020

- In a bid to unify different tribes of Mizo community, the state Government of Mizoram will organize the 1st edition of Zo Kutpui festival 2020 across 10 states in India & also in countries such as

Maryland in US (United States), Tahan in Myanmar and Bangladesh from January 9, 2020.

Northeast-Gujarat cultural fusion to commemorate Lord Krishna's wedding with Rukmini

- The eight States of the Northern Eastern Region will participate in a big way during the Madhavpur Mela of Gujarat due to be held in the first week of April this year. The annual fair is held at Madhavpur Ghed in Porbandar district and the Mela this year will commence on 2nd April, a day after the Ram Navami festival.
- The eight North-Eastern states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura will participate in this festival. The Madhavpur Mela of Gujarat shares its connect to the Mishmi Tribe ancestry to the legendary King Bhishmak of Arunachal Pradesh.

Mizoram sets to celebrate 'Chapchar Kut' festival on March 6, 2020

- Government of Mizoram along with the organizing committee under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Zoramthanga has decided to celebrate the 'Chapchar Kut', the biggest and most important festival of the Mizos, on March 6, 2020. The two-days festival is celebrated under the theme "Promotion of Mizos' culture and moral code".

13th Jaipur Literature Festival began in Jaipur, Rajasthan

The 13th edition of the Zee Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) began at Diggi Palace Hotel in Jaipur, Rajasthan on January 23, 2020 and

will be conducted till January 27, 2020. The 5-day long festival was inaugurated by Chief Minister of Rajasthan Shri Ashok Gehlot.

Tripura Renames Baramura Hills as 'Hatai Kutul' on 'Kokborok Day'

- The Tripura government has renamed Baramura Hills in Kokborok language on 'Kokborok Day', thereby fulfilling the long-standing demand of Kokborok speaking people that prominent places of the state be renamed in the local language.
- The state government, through an emergency cabinet decision, has renamed the Baramura Hills as "Hatai Kutul" to mark "Kokborok Day" held every year on January 19.

Discovery of 18th – century 'plot stones' near Uthiramerur in Kanchipuram district

- Near the Uthiramerur, two 18th -century 'plot stones' have been discovered.
- Edamichi Village is located on the road from Salavakkam village to Uthiramerur Circle. These are thought to be 18th century plot stones.
- It has been customary for his wife to set herself on fire with a heroic death in battle to protect her ethnic group or her hometown.

Magh Bihu festival celebrated in Assam

- Magh Bihu, an auspicious harvest festival is being celebrated in Assam. Magh Bihu falls in the local month of 'Magh' during mid-january. It is also called 'Bhogali Bihu' or 'Maghor Bihu' as it is celebrated with community feasts after the annual harvest takes place.

- The night before 'Magh Bihu' is called 'Uruka' meaning the night of feasts.
- The villagers make bamboo huts called 'Bhelghor' or community kitchen where they begin with the preparations for the festival.



Best Agricultural Worker Award for Tamil Nadu

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the best Agro-worker for Tamil Nadu, which has a high yield of oil seeds.
- The Agricultural Workers Award is presented annually on behalf of the Central Department of Agriculture to honor farmers and state governments who excel in agricultural production.
- This award is the 5th time Tamil Nadu has been awarded the award for Agricultural Production.
- During the period 2017-18, Tamil Nadu produced 10.382 lakh tonnes of oil seeds with 2,729 kg / ha.
- The Government of Tamil Nadu has been the recipient of various awards in the field of agriculture from 2011-12.



2.1 Latest Court Verdicts

SC to examine Dalit Christians' quota plea

- The Supreme Court agreed to examine a plea that Dalit Christians or Christians of Scheduled Castes origin should enjoy the same quota benefits reserved for Scheduled Castes.
- A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde issued notice to the government on a writ petition filed by the National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC) that reservation for government jobs and admissions in educational institutions should be made "religion neutral".

SC affirms 3% quota for disabled in PSUs

- A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court has granted relief to persons with disabilities across the country by allowing reservation in promotion in all groups for those employed in public sector jobs.
- The Bench led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman confirmed that 3% reservation should be given to disabled persons both in direct recruitment and in promotions.
- Included under The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, were eligible for reservation in promotion.

2.2 Political parties and Political system in India

Kerala: The first state to pass anti-CAA resolution

- The Kerala Government passed a resolution to rollback the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) that was passed during this winter session of Parliament. According to the Kerala Government, the CAA act contradicts the basic principles of Constitution.

India's UJALA Programme completes 5 successful years

- Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) and LED Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP) marked their fifth anniversary.
- The schemes were implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL). EESL is a joint venture of PSU operating under Ministry of Power.

Highlights

- Under the SLNP initiative, in five years around 1.03 crore smart LED street lights were installed. This helped in reducing Green House Gas emission by 4.8 million tons annually. Also, the initiative has created 13,000 jobs.

Citizenship Amendment Act comes into effect from January 10

- The Centre announced that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA has come into force from January 10, 2020.
- The Union home ministry announced the Act under which non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan will be given Indian citizenship, will come into force from January 10.

Citizenship Amendment Act

- The CAA was passed by the Parliament on December 11, 2019. According to the CAA, members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014 facing religious persecution there will not be treated as illegal immigrants but given Indian citizenship.

2.3 Govt – Welfare oriented Govt schemes, their utility

PM Modi launches Atal Bhujal Yojana

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY), a scheme for sustainable management of ground water resources, in New Delhi.
- The scheme was launched on the occasion of 95th birth anniversary former Prime Minister Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee. On the occasion, the 8.8-kilometre long Strategic Tunnel under Rohtang Pass was also named after late Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY): Key Features

- Objective: Since, groundwater contributes nearly 65% of India's total irrigated area, with ABY, the Central Government seeks to promote Panchayat led ground water management and behavioral change with primary focus on demand side management. The scheme will also help in supplying water to every house hold by 2024.

Operational Guidelines Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) released by PM Narendra Modi in New Delhi

- Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has released the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

Institutional arrangement proposed for JJM Implementation:

- i. National Jal Jeevan Mission at the Central level
- ii. State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM) at State level
- iii. District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) at district level
- iv. Gram Panchayat and/or its sub-committees i.e. Village Water Sanitation Committee (VWSC)/ Paani Samiti at village Level :

About JJM:

- Approved on 13.08.2019, the `3.60 lakh Crore Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) aims to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC)

'One nation, one ration card' to be implemented in 12 states from January 15

- The central government's 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system, under which beneficiaries can buy subsidized food grains from ration shops in any part of the country, will be implemented on January 15, 2020.
- The initiative will come into effect initially in 12 states, and then gradually to the rest of the country.
- In its initial stage, the scheme is being implemented in 12 states Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura and Jharkhand.
- Earlier, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan had on December 3 announced that the 'one nation, one ration card' system will be "implemented without fail in the entire country" by June 30, 2020

Mukhyamantri Aawas Yojana

- Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal launched the scheme named 'Mukhyamantri Aawas Yojana' for the residents of Jhuggi Jhopri (JJ) clusters & it will provide a pucca house to every citizen in Delhi.

Maharashtra cabinet approved Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Farmer Loan Waiver & Shiv Bhojan scheme

- Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray approved the "Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Farmer Loan Waiver

Scheme" and subsidized meal scheme named "Shiv Bhojan" program for the poor.

Key Points:

- Under Farmer Loan Waiver Scheme short-term crop loan up to Rs 2 lakh taken by farmers between April 1, 2015-March 31, 2019, and short-term restructured crop loan arrears up to September 30, 2019, will be waived. It will be implemented from March 2020 and Maha Vikas Aghadi will provide Rs 21,216 crore for scheme.
- Shiv Bhojan" programme: The Rs 6.4 crore program will be started as pilot project for three months. Under this, at least one 'Shiv Bhojan' canteen will be started at district headquarters.
- Each canteen will serve 500 thalis (plates) which is available at Rs 10 each, consisting of two chapatis, one vegetable, rice and dal. Canteens serving the meal will be functional between 12 noon and 2 pm

Pm Modi to release fourth instalment of Kisan Samman Nidhi

- PM Modi is to release the fourth instalment of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Yojana in Tumakuru, Karnataka. The Prime Minister will also confer "Krishi Karmanya" award to three fishermen and 28 progressive farmers from various states.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Yojana

- The scheme was first introduced in Telangana as "Rythu Bandhu" scheme. Under the scheme, a certain amount is given to eligible farmers. Eventually, the scheme was accoladed for its huge success all over the world including World Bank.

- Under the scheme, Rs 6,000 will be provided to farmers annually. The amount is directly credited to bank accounts of eligible farmers in four installments.

Centre sets up 7-member GoM led by Rajnath singh to review crop insurance scheme-PMFBY

- The central Government has formed a 7-member group of ministers (GoM) headed by Defense Minister Rajnath Singh to review the crop insurance scheme, “Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)” & make suggestions to improve it according to the needs of the farmers.

Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana

- The Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana was launched for the development of model villages. Under the Yojana, Members of Parliament (MPs) will be responsible for developing the socio-economic and physical infrastructure of three villages each by 2019, and a total of eight villages each by 2024.
- After adopting Jayapur, Nagapur and Kakarhia villages, Modi decided to also adopt Domari village on the banks of Ganga as a model village for holistic development

GoI to confer first “Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman”

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will confer “Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman” to 30 media houses.
- The aim of the award is



to acknowledge positive role of media in disseminating outreach of Yoga.

- The awards were announced for the first time in June 2019. GoI has been pushing Yoga practices since 2014. In September 2014, during his United Nations General Assembly address proposed the idea of celebrating International Yoga Day every year.
- A resolution was passed by the UN following this and now International Day of Yoga is being celebrated every year on 21 June.

List of clean cities

- Melathiruppanthuruthi is a panchayat town in Thanjavur district in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu as well as Thanjavur district, in the list of cleanest cities in the South, has been selected as the top city.
- The Central Government’s ‘Clean India’ program, a quarterly survey of various cities in the country, is conducted once a quarter.
- Through ‘Jal Abhiyan’ schemes, we buy garbage, go to homes, and buy quality. We have been performing many tasks such as decomposing garbage, creating biofertilizers, earthworm fertilizers and using ‘plastic materials’ for road construction.

Govt to provide ₹ 15 lakh under Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi scheme

- The govt has released the National draft policy on Rare Disease in which financial support of Rs.15 lakh will be provided under the Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi scheme for one-time treatment of rare diseases.

- Beneficiaries: The scheme benefit is limited to people below Poverty Line (BPL) and also 40% of the population eligible as per Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) norms for treatment in government tertiary hospitals only.

National Policy for Treatment of Rare Diseases (NPTRD):

- Previously the health ministry formulated the National Policy for Treatment of Rare Diseases (NPTRD) in July, 2017. When this policy was introduced, there prevailed lack of clarity regarding the cost effectiveness, share of expenditure between centre and states etc. Hence the policy was decided to be reframed & the ministry constituted an expert committee in November 2018 to review it.

2.4 Latest Inventions on Science & Technology

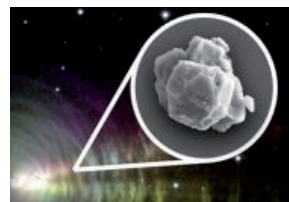
Rare variety of H9N2 virus has been reported in a 17-month-old boy of Maharashtra

- India's first case of Avian influenza or Bird flu caused by a rare variety of H9N2 virus has been reported in a 17-month-old boy of Maharashtra.
- The infection is caused by a rare variety of H9N2 virus, which is a subtype of the influenza A virus that leads to human influenza as well as bird flu.
- The viruses are found in wild birds and are endemic in poultry in some countries.

- The report was revealed in the December 2019 issue of the Emerging Infectious Diseases journal of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), by scientists of the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune.

7-billion-year-old stardust is the oldest material ever found on Earth

- Scientists recently identified the oldest material on Earth: stardust that's 7 billion years old, tucked away in a massive, rocky meteorite that struck our planet half a century ago.
- This ancient interstellar dust, made of pre-solar grains (dust grains that predate our sun), was belched into the universe by dying stars during the final stages of their lives.
- Some of that dust eventually hitched a ride to Earth on an asteroid that produced the Murchison meteorite, a massive, 220-lb. (100 kilograms) rock that fell on Sept. 28, 1969, near Murchison, Victoria, in Australia.
- New analysis of dozens of presolar grains from the Murchison meteorite revealed a range of ages, from about 4 million years older than our sun - which formed 4.6 billion years ago - up to 3 billion years older than our sun, researchers reported in a new study.



3. GEOGRAPHY



3.1 Policy on Environment and Ecology

India State of Forest Report (ISRF) - 2019

- The forest cover in the country increased by 3,976 square kilometres (sqkm) but with the sharpest declines in the northeastern States of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Mizoram, according to the 2019 edition of the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) that was made public



- At 712,249 sqkm, the forest cover constituted 21.67% of the nation's geographical area or 0.12% more than last year.
- The ISFR, a biennial exercise, assesses the forest and tree cover, bamboo resources, carbon stock and forest fires. The top

three States showing an increase in forest cover are Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

- Tree cover, defined as patches of trees less than 1 hectare and occurring outside the recorded forest area, grew by 1, 212 sqkm. Tree and forest cover together made up 25.56% of India's area. In the last assessment it was 24.39%.
- In terms of the canopy density of the trees comprising forest patches – is wavering. While 1,755 sqkm of 'moderately dense forest' (MDF) became 'Very dense forest' (VDF), 2782 sqkm of MDF regressed into lower quality 'open forest (OF),' Scrub forest' or 'Non forest.'

Result of Swachh Survekshan League, 2020 released

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on December 31, 2019, released Swachh Survekshan League in New Delhi. Around 4,372 cities participated in the league. It is a cleanliness survey that helps in competitive federalism.

Palau first country to ban sunscreen to protect Coral Reefs

- The Pacific Island, Palau has become the first country to ban sun cream that is harmful to corals. The country has banned common ingredients used in cosmetics including oxybenzone.

Highlights

- The order of the ban was passed in 2018. However, it comes into effect from January 1, 2020. The Rock Islands in the Palau is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

How are sun creams harmful to corals?

- The sun creams absorb UV radiations and make corals susceptible to bleaching. It is estimated that around 6 to 14,000 tons of sunscreen are washed into reefs annually.

India records less than 100 tiger deaths for the first time in three years

- For the first time in the past three years, the number of tiger deaths in a year in the country has been less than 100. According to data from the Ministry of Forest Environment and Climate Change (MoEFCC), there were 84 cases of tiger deaths in the country and 11 cases of seizures (in which a tiger is presumed dead on the basis of body parts seized by authorities). Both put together, the number of tiger deaths in 2019 is 95.
- In 2018, the number of tiger deaths recorded was 100 (93 mortalities and seven seizures). The number of tiger deaths in 2017 was 115 (98 mortalities and 17 seizures), and the number of tiger deaths in 2016 was 122 (101 mortalities and 21 seizures) in 2016.

Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park Census: Increase in Salt Water Crocodiles

- According to the recent census at the Bhitarkanika National Park, the population of salt water (or estuarine) crocodiles have increased to 1,757 as compared to 1,742 in 2018.

Highlights

- The peak winter is the ideal time to carry out the census as it exposes more than 50% of mud banks. The crocodile count in the park has been increasing gradually. According to the census, in 2000, there were 1,192 crocodiles in the park.

IMD's State of Climate Report: 2019 the warmest year since 1901

- The International Meteorological Organisation released its "State of Climate Report" for the year 2019.
- According to the report, the climate change has claimed 1,659 lives in India in the year 2019. It also stated that 2019 was the warmest year of India since 1901.

Highlights of the report

- The extreme weather events that occurred in the country in the year 2019 were all linked to climate change. It includes cyclones, floods, heat waves, cold waves, landslides, etc. Of all the states, Bihar reported highest deaths (650) due to extreme weather events.
- Of these 300 died in floods and 350 died due to heat waves. Following Bihar, other states such as Maharashtra, UP, Kerala, Rajasthan and Karnataka showed high numbers of deaths due to extreme weather events.
- New Delhi recorded the longest cold wave duration of 18 days since 1902.

Bird flu outbreak in Chhattisgarh: over 15,000 birds culled

- Bird flu has been reported from a state-run poultry farm in Chhattisgarh's Korea

district, prompting the authorities to cull over 15,000 birds and step up vigil on poultry birds within 10 km radius of the affected area.

- 15,426 chickens and quails have been culled and 30,000 eggs destroyed after the highly contagious H5N1 virus was detected among birds at the poultry farm and hatchery in Baikunthpur town, located around 300 km

Kaziranga has one of the highest number of wetland birds

- Kaziranga recorded 96 species of wetland birds – one of the highest for wildlife reserves in India, according to the second wetland bird count conducted.
- The survey registered a total of 19,225 birds belonging to 96 species under 80 families. The first waterfowl census in 2018 had yielded 10,412 birds covering 80 species, belonging to 31 families.
- With 6,181 individuals, the bar-headed goose led the species count, followed by the common teal at 1,557 and northern pintail at 1,359. All three belong to the family anatidae.
- The first wetland bird survey in Kaziranga, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985, was conducted in 2018.

GoI launches 'Seismic Hazard Microzonation' to minimize earthquake disasters

- The Ministry of Earth Science has launched Seismic Hazard Microzonation project in major cities of India. The project aims to reduce hazards of seismic activities by putting in adequate measures

What is Seismic Microzonation?

- It is the process of dividing earth quake prone areas based on certain factors. The factors include geological and geophysical characteristics of sites. They are ground shaking, landslide, liquefaction susceptibility, rock fall hazard and flooding caused due to earthquakes. Based on the division, mitigation measures are prepared. Hence, it is a preventive method to minimise the losses.
- The factors in the microzonation method are estimated based on response from soil layers.

Waterbird census from January 24

- The 10th edition of Tamirabharani water bird count in select water bodies in Tirunelveli, Tenkasi and Thoothukudi districts will be conducted between January 24 and 26 this year.
- As usual, thousands of migratory birds have arrived at irrigation tanks in the Tamirabharani basin and thousands of local birds started breeding in their regular nests.

Haboob

- A huge dust storm rolled through Dubbo and Parkes in New South Wales on Sunday afternoon
- The cloud was described as a 'haboob' dust cloud, which often form after a thunderstorm
- The Bureau of Meteorology also recorded wind gusts of 107km/h at 7.41pm local time in Dubbo.

Corona virus outbreak

- With China reporting an outbreak of a novel corona virus, the Directorate of

Public Health and Preventive Medicine has instructed doctors to look out for symptoms of influenza-like illnesses, regardless of patient travel history to the affected country.

- Tamil Nadu already has in place a screening mechanism for influenza-like illnesses, and doctors have been told to stay alert, look out for symptoms of respiratory infections, fever and cough and ask for the travel history of patients.
- Corona viruses are species of virus belonging to the subfamily Coronavirinae in the family Coronaviridae, in the order Nidovirales.
- Corona viruses are enveloped viruses with a positive-sense single-stranded RNA genome and with a nucleocapsid of helical symmetry.

New snake eel species discovered in Odisha

- A new snake eel species residing in the Bay of Bengal has been discovered and documented this month (January) by the Estuarine Biology Regional Centre (EBRC) of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) at Gopalpur-on-sea in Odisha.
- This new marine species has been named *Ophichthus kailashchandrai* to honour the vast contributions of Dr. Kailash Chandra, Director of ZSI, to Indian animal taxonomy.
- *Ophichthus kailashchandrai* is the eighth species of the *Ophichthus* genus found on the Indian coast. It is the fifth new species discovered by the Gopalpur ZSI in the last two years.

New species

- In 2019, two new species of marine eel, *Gymnothorax amanensis* and *Gymnothorax smithi* were been discovered by this ZSI centre.

WEF to conserve 1 trillion trees by 2030 to combat climate change through 1t.org

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) and its partners have launched 1t.org which is a multi stakeholder effort to support efforts to grow, restore and conserve 1 trillion trees around the world in order to restore the biodiversity and help combat climate change.

1t.org's aims and efforts to be taken:

- Project aim: 1t.org project aims to unite all the countries' govts, non-govt. organisations, businesses & individuals in to restore nature in a mass scale.
- Carbon locking: Locking up the carbon in the world's forests, grasslands, and wetlands can provide 1/3rd of emission reductions needed to meet the Paris Agreement targets by 2030.

A bid to restore coral reefs in Gulf of Kutch using biorocks

- The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), with help from Gujarat's forest department, is attempting for the first time a process to restore coral reefs using biorock or mineral accretion technology.
- A biorock structure was installed one nautical mile off the Mithapur coast in the Gulf of Kachchh on January 19.
- Biorock is the name given to the substance formed by electro accumulation of minerals dissolved in seawater on steel

structures that are lowered onto the sea bed and are connected to a power source, in this case solar panels that float on the surface.

3.2 Natural Disasters – Safeguard Measures

Typhoon Phanfone

- Typhoon Phanfone pummeled the central Philippines, bringing a wet, miserable and terrifying holiday to millions in the mainly Catholic nation.
- Phanfone was tracking a similar path to Super Typhoon Haiyan, the country's deadliest cyclone on record which left more than 7,300 people dead or missing in 2013.



Book titled The Story of Yoga: From India to the Contemporary World by Alistair released

- Book titled “first definitive history” of Yoga, “The Story of Yoga: From India to the Contemporary World” has been written by Scottish cultural historian Alistair Shearer, will be released by the end of January, 2020 and published by Penguin Random House. The book discusses about the practice of yoga since ancient time in India till now.

Climate change caused 15 disaster this year

- At least 15 natural disasters linked to climate change this year caused damage of over \$1 billion and seven of them cost at least \$10 billion, British charity Christian Aid.
- This year is set to be the second hottest year in history and each of the disasters in the report has a link with climate change.

Tropical Cyclone Sarai lashed Coastal area of Fiji

- Tropical Cyclone Sarai has lashed the Pacific island nation Fiji, with 140km/h winds forcing hundreds of people to evacuate to higher ground ahead of possible flooding.

Book on Kiran Bedi launched

- Mr. Purohit, who launched the book Where Kindness Spoke, published which is devoted Ms. Bedi's work in the Union Territory, said he had been her fan since 1982, when as a deputy commissioner of police she had famously ordered the removal of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's car.

Minority Affairs minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi's new novel 'Balwa' to be released

- The Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi will soon release his Hindi novel Balwa, a fiction story based on the happenings in India in the 1990s. It will be published by Diamond Pocket Books.



4. ECONOMICS

4.1 New Economic Policy & Govt. Sector

Andhra Bank receives “Best Performing Bank award” for Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (2nd rank) for 2018-19

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Narendra Singh Tomar, presented the Best Performing Award for Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETI) (2nd rank) to Andhra Bank for the financial year 2018-19.

E-commerce, new industrial policy likely this fiscal

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is working actively on the e-commerce as well as new industrial policies, and both are expected to be released by the end of this fiscal.
- The government released a draft national e-commerce policy, proposing setting up a legal and technological framework for restrictions on cross-border data flow and also laid out conditions for businesses regarding collection or processing of sensitive data locally and storing it abroad.

₹ 70,000 crore plan to revive BSNL, MTNL

- A seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) has been constituted to fast-track and oversee the implementation of the Rs 69,000 crore revival plan for state-owned telecom corporations BSNL and MTNL
- The high-level group will expedite smooth implementation of recent decisions taken on revival of BSNL and MTNL that includes crucial elements like allocation of 4G spectrum and asset monetization
- The GoM includes Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, IT and Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

Finance Minister launches ‘eBkay’ auction platform for assets attached by banks

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has launched eBkay an common e-auction platform to enable online auction of attached assets

transparently and cleanly for the improved realization of value by banks.

- The platform will help buyer to easily navigate to bank e-auction site after a notified property is selected. It also helps user to search property using State-wise, District-wise and bank-wise details.

About eBkray platform

- Objective of Portal: To enhance user experience through seamless access to information by search based on type and location of property put up for e-auction by banks in India.

India may surpass Germany to become fourth-largest economy in 2026: Report

- India is expected to overtake Germany to become fourth-largest economy in 2026 and Japan to become third largest in 2034, according to a recent report by the UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR).
- It further said India is also set to reach a gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 5 trillion by 2026, 2 years later than the government's target.
- India has decisively overtaken both France and the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy in 2019. It is expected to overtake Germany to become fourth largest in 2026 and Japan to become the third largest in 2034," the report, titled 'World Economic League Table 2020

Kerala tops NITI Aayog's index of UN goals

- Kerala has retained its top slot, while Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim have

shown the most improvement. The second SDG-zero hunger -shown sharp divergence in the performance of States, with little middle ground, Kerala, Goa and parts of the north-east, including Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, have scored above 65, with Goa at 75 points.

- 22 of the States and Union Territories have scored below 50, with the central Indian States of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Chhattisgarh scoring below 30, showing high levels of hunger and malnutrition.
- On the fifth SDG-gender equality - almost all States fare poorly. Only Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala have managed to cross 50 points, The indicators considered include crimes against women, eradicating sex selection and discrimination against daughters, and access to reproductive health schemes, as well as indicators showing women's economic and political empowerment and leadership.

SBI to implement OTP-based ATM cash withdrawals from January 1 2020

- State Bank of India will introduce One Time Password (OTP)-based ATM cash withdrawals. The step has been taken to reduce the occurrences of unauthorised transactions happening at ATMs. SBI will introduce one-time password for every cash withdrawal of Rs 10,000 and above between 8 am and 8 pm.
- The OTP-based cash withdrawal will be effective from January 1, 2020 across all SBI ATMs. When an SBI cardholder will enter the amount of cash he/she wishes

to withdraw, a screen will appear asking for the OTP.

- The customer will then have to put the OTP that the bank will send to the registered mobile number. OTP is a system-generated string of numeric characters that allow users to make a single transaction.

Finance Minister unveils plans for ₹102 lakh cr.infra projects

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has outlined plans to invest more than ₹102 lakh crore on infrastructure projects by 2024-25, with the Centre, States and the private sector to share the capital expenditure in a 39:39:22 formula.
- This will be a significant increase over the last six years, when the Centre and States together spent ₹51 lakh crore on infrastructure.
- On Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced plans to invest ₹100 lakh crore on modern infrastructure. This is the expenditure needed to achieve a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25.
- A task force of senior bureaucrats chaired by Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty then identified ₹102 lakh crore projects in 18 States as part of a National Infrastructure Pipeline.

Ministry of External Affairs creates "NEST" to increase investment coordination

- The Ministry of External Affairs is to set up a new division called NEST-New and Emerging Strategic Technologies. The

division will work to increase investment coordination among the states of the country and also with the foreign countries.

Highlights

- The NEST will act as a nodal point to exchange views with foreign governments.
- This will help in confronting emerging challenges and scenarios in new technologies. With India coping with issues of security implications in 5G and artificial intelligence, NEST division will help India spread emerging technologies among the states

AI powered National Stock Exchange Knowledge Hub inaugurated in New Delhi

- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) knowledge Hub was inaugurated. The hub will assist insurance, banking and financial services. The hub has adopted the latest technology of Artificial Intelligence.

Highlights

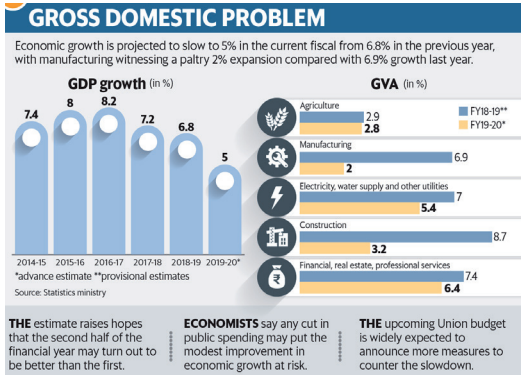
- The technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning are two major keys for India to become 1 trillion-dollar economy by 2035. The hub is one such step of the technologies to boost the economy of the country

RBI allows video-based customer identification

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to permit video-based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) as a consent-based alternate method of

establishing the customer's identity, for customer onboarding. For videobased customer authentication, PAN number and Aadhaar number will be mandatory.

5% growth cloud over Budget 2020



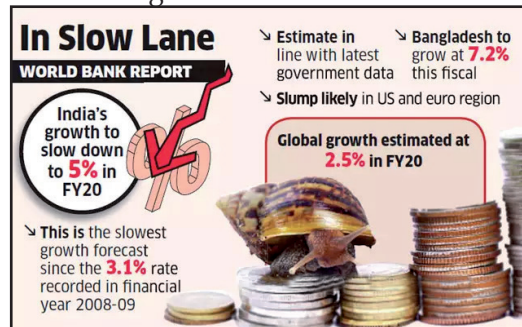
- India's GDP growth is seen dipping to an 11-year low of 5 per cent in the current fiscal, mainly due to poor showing by manufacturing and construction sectors.
- As per the first advance estimates of the national income released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the manufacturing sector output growth will decelerate to 2 per cent in 2019-20, down from 6.9 per cent in the previous financial year.

World Bank pegs India's growth for FY20 at 5%

- The World Bank cut India's growth for financial year 2020 to 5% from 6% estimated earlier, the country's statistics office pegged growth in the current financial year at 5%, the lowest in 11 years.
- The multilateral lender expects the country's growth to recover only slightly

to 5.8% in the next fiscal year.

- The bank's Global Economic Prospects report released cited a lingering weakness in credit from non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) as the main cause for the downgrade.



- This is the slowest growth forecast since the 3.1% rate recorded in financial year 2008-09.
- Global economic growth, is expected to rise to 2.5% in the current calendar year, underpinned by a gradual recovery in investment and trade from last year's significant weakness.
- Regional growth: In comparison, Bangladesh will be ahead compared to India. Its GDP growth rate is estimated to be 7.2%, while in Pakistan it is expected to be at 3 % & Sri Lanka's growth rates at 3.3% for FY-20.

RBI formulates National Strategy for Financial Inclusion for the period 2019-2024

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under the aegis of Financial Inclusion Advisory Committee (FIAC) has set up a 5 year plan of formulation of National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) for the period 2019-2024. This has been done keeping in view the global trend of financial

inclusion which acts as a key driver of economic growth.

- NSFI approval: The national strategy plan, i.e., NSFI was finalised and approved by Financial Stability Development Council (FSDC) and the final documents were released by RBI deputy director Mahesh Kumar Jain at the high level meeting on Financial Inclusion for the North East region at Agartala, Tripura.

Financial Stability Development Council:

- It is an apex body constituted by govt. of India on the recommendations of the committee headed by Raghuram Rajan (former RBI governor) in 2008.
- The chairperson of this council is the Union Minister of Finance (MoF) of India Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman.

World Gold Council report: RBI ranks 6th in buying gold abroad

- The World Gold Council (WGC) recently released its report, "World Gold Outlook 2020". The report says that gold has performed the best since 2010 in 2019.
- In 2019, the gold trade in USD has increased by 18.4% as compared to 2010.

Highlights: India

- According to the WGC, RBI (Reserve Bank of India) currently holds 625.2 tonnes of gold. This is 6.6% of the country's foreign exchange. With this, India ranks sixth in the world among other central banks.

WEF's 1st Global Social Mobility Index 2020: India ranks 76th & Denmark tops the list

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) released 1st edition of a report titled "The Global Social Mobility Report 2020: Equality, Opportunity and a New Economic Imperative". The global social mobility index (GSMI) of 82 countries were launched in this report. As per the Index, India ranked in the 76th position with a score of 42.7 while Denmark topped the list.

Rank	Country
76	India
1	Denmark
2	Norway
3	Finland
4	Sweden
5	Iceland

IMF lower India's growth forecast to 4.8%

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) lowered India's economic growth estimate for the current fiscal to 4.8% and listed the country's much lower than-expected GDP numbers as the single biggest drag on its global growth forecast for two years.
- In October, the IMF had pegged India's economic growth at 6.1% for 2019.
- Compared to the October World Economic Outlook (WEO) forecast, the estimate for 2019 and the projection for 2020 represent 0.1 percentage point reduction for each year while that for 2021 is 0.2 percentage point lower.

For the 1st time, RBI Releases Minutes of board meeting

- For the 1st time, India central bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the minutes of the 579th meeting of Central Board of Directors (BoD) held in Chandigarh on October 11, 2019 as part of the central bank's transparency initiative.

Background:

- In the recent times, RBI central board meetings have been controversial, especially considering that then governor Urjit Patel had resigned for the reason of alleged difference of opinions on policy matters with the central government.



Srinagar declared Open Defecation Free

- Mayor of Srinagar Junai Azim Mattu announced that the Srinagar has joined the list of 'Open Defecation Free (ODF)' cities. Swachata certificate: Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir received its Swachata certificate from Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Central Government and joins the list of cities that are now 'OPEN DEFECATION FREE'.
- Achievement of Srinagar: Srinagar receives 45th Rank in Cleanest cities in the country.

4.2 Current Socio-Economic Problems

IL&FS: SEBI fines 3 rating agencies ₹25 lakh each

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has penalized rating agencies India Ratings & Research, CARE and ICRA for alleged lack of proper due diligence while rating non-convertible debentures of crisis-hit IL&FS.
- In three separate orders, the SEBI imposed a penalty of ₹25 lakh each on them.
- The SEBI probe has alleged the agencies placed excessive reliance on the submissions made by the IL&FS management while failing to change the rating or placing it under 'watch' even as there were reports related to the slow pace of asset monetization and deleveraging of the group.

Top cities to help poor performers

- Finding some of the 100 cities selected for the Smart Cities Mission lagging behind in implementation of projects, the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has decided to pair up 20 of the best performers with 20 of the worst in order to improve their performance.
- The aim was that the top performing cities would inspire and help those lagging behind to improve their work.
- Among the top cities in the latest internal rankings are Nagpur, Tiruppur, Ranchi, Bhopal, Surat, Kanpur, Indore, Visakhapatnam, Vellore, Vadodara, Nashik, Agra, Varanasi, Davanagere, Kota, Pune and Udaipur.

5. SCIENCE



5.1 Latest Inventions on Science & Technology

CSIR to develop new drugs for global market

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) signed an agreement to develop new drugs and repurposing of drugs for India and for global markets. The team research work is also joined by Cipla.

What is Drug Repurposing?

- Drug repurposing is identifying new uses of approved or investigational drugs. It is used to treat common and rare diseases. The main advantage of using repurposing drugs is its reduced development cost, shortened development timings and increased use of de-risked compounds.

NTPC to invest ₹50,000 cr. For 10 GW solar capacity

- State-owned power giant NTPC is planning to add 10 GW of solar energy generation capacity by 2022, which entails an investment of around ₹50,000 crore, to be funded mainly by green bonds.
- NTPC has installed renewable energy capacity of 920 MW, which constitutes mainly solar energy.
- It has formulated a long-term plan to become a 130 GW company by 2032 with

30% non-fossil fuel or renewable energy capacity.

Indian Railways selling drinking water produced from air

- An 'atmospheric water generator' is the latest initiative of the Indian Railways.
- The South Central Railway has installed one such generator kiosk at the Secunderabad railway station.
- Known as 'Meghdoot', this atmospheric water generator has been made under the 'Make in India' programme by Maithri Aquatech. The generator can produce nearly 1,000 litres of water a day.
- A litre of water along with a bottle costs ₹8 and ₹5 per if passengers carry their own bottle. For a 300 ml glass, it costs ₹3 and ₹2 without a glass while a 500 ml glass of water will cost ₹5 with glass.

Indian Air Force decommissioned its last MiG-27 squadron

- The last of the iconic MiG-27 (Mikoyan MiG-27) fighter jet aircraft was decommissioned from the Indian Air Force (IAF) at Jodhpur base in Rajasthan. The aircraft served the IAF for over 3 decades (30 years). The Jodhpur air base previously had the squadron of 7 MiG-27.

- The aircraft served during the 1999 Kargil War. It is known by the name 'Bahadur' in India.
- MiG-27 was procured in the 1980s from the then Soviet Union(SU). The aircraft has the single most powerful engine in the world.

CSIR develop new technology of Geranium Production

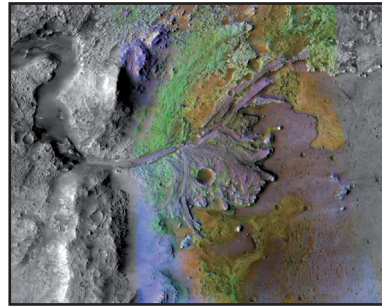
- CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) has developed a new low-cost technology to produce Geranium saplings. Geranium acts as an anti-inflammatory and anti-septic agent. It has several medicinal values. The development has been made under Aroma Mission.

Geranium

- The plant is originally from South Africa and is predominantly used in manufacturing essential oils. November is the best suitable sowing season of Geranium. In India, the plant is cultivated in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and North Eastern Regions.

NASA's Mars 2020 rover set to hunt Martian fossils and scout for manned missions

- A NASA robotic rover is nearing completion ahead of a journey next year to search for evidence of past life on Mars and lay the groundwork for the space agency's mission to send humans into deep space.
- The U.S. space agency showed off its Mars 2020 rover, whose official name will be chosen early next year.



- NASA will in February ship the rover to Florida's Kennedy Space Center, where its three sections will be fully assembled.

China launches its largest carrier rocket "Long March-5"

- China has successfully launched its largest carrier rocket "Long March-5". The rocket was launched from Wenchang Space Launch Center in south China's Hainan Province.
- The rocket is also known as CZ-5. It was China's third attempt to launch the rocket.
- The Chinese rocket carried the Shijian-20 satellite, a communication satellite and placed it into its designated orbit. The Shijian-20 satellite will lay the foundation for the development of highly sensitive space probes.
- It is China's heaviest and most advanced communications satellite in geosynchronous orbit.

Christina Koch records longest single spaceflight by woman

- NASA Astronaut Christina Koch has created a record for the longest single space flight by a woman. She has surpassed the earlier record of 288 days in space which was previously established

by NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson in 2017.

- She would return to Earth in February 2020. Till then, she would have spent more than 300 days in the space. She is onboard the International Space Station since 14th March 2019.

VSSC successfully launches Rohini (RH) 200 sounding rocket from Thumba, Kerala

- Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), a major space research centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has successfully launched Rohini (RH) 200 sounding rocket at 9.30 a.m from Thumba in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala under the mission to study changes in the earth's upper atmosphere during the eclipse.
- The Kerala district administration had warned that during the launch, near-shore waters spread over 9 kilometres off the Thiruvananthapuram coast from Valiyathura – Pallithura as a potential danger zone.

IIT Guwahati researchers developed materials to produce energy from water on a small scale

- Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati (IIT-G) have developed materials that can produce energy from water to decentralizing energy generation for every household. The findings were recently published in ACS Applied Nanomaterials.

Gaganyaan, Chandrayaan-3 in mission mode, says ISRO

- Four pilots from the Indian Air Force (IAF) will leave for Russia to receive training as astronauts of Gaganyaan, the first Indian crewed flight to space.
- The initial tests were conducted in the IAF's Institute of Aerospace Medicine, Bengaluru, and Russia.
- The four will leave in the third week of January to be trained at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Centre in Moscow, as per an agreement signed between the space agencies of the two countries last year.
- Gaganyaan, announced by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in August 2018, is the ₹10,000-crore Indian human space flight scheduled for 2022. It is designed to have 3-7 crew members spend 3-7 days in space in a 400-km orbit.
- The launch of the nearly ₹600-crore Chandrayaan-3 is targeted for the end of this year or early 2021.
- The lander and rover are estimated to cost ₹250 crore and will go to the moon on a propulsion model. The GSLV Mark III vehicle costs around ₹350 crore.
- The Tamil Nadu government has started acquiring 2,300 acres of land in Thoothukudi district for ISRO's second launch port. Currently satellites are launched from the Sriharikota launch centre in Andhra Pradesh.

ISRO sets its fourth RAC-S in Karnataka

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) sets its fourth Regional Academic Centre for Space (RAC-S) at the National

Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK) at Surathkal in Mangaluru taluk.

Key Points:

- The centre helps for the advanced research in the areas of relevance to the future technological and programmatic needs of the Indian Space programme.
- It also helps in the promotion of space technology in southern regions like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Pondicherry and Lakshadweep.

Project NETRA: ISRO Signs pact to set up optical Telescope

- The Indian Space Research Organization signed a pact with Indian Institute of Astrophysics to establish an optical telescope under "Project NETRA". The organisation also tied up with NIT-Karnataka to set up a regional academic centre for space to promote research and development.

Project NETRA

- Project NETRA was launched by ISRO in September 2019. Under the Project, ISRO plans to set up observational facilities that will help in making early warnings to satellites about debris and hazards in their orbit. It includes radars, telescopes, control centres and data processing units

2636 EV Charging Stations sanctioned under Phase II FAME India

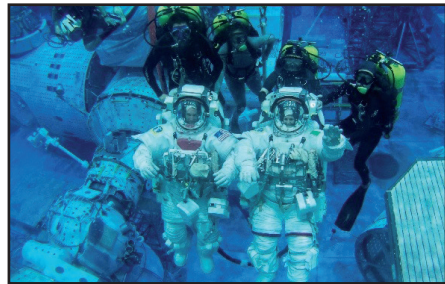
- The Department of Heavy Industries operating under Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises has sanctioned 2636 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations under FAME India

scheme Phase II. The stations are to be set in 62 cities in 24 states and Union Territories.

FAME India

- FAME India is Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles. The objective of the scheme is to increase the use of electric and hybrid vehicles by offering incentives.

Challakere to be ISRO's astronaut training hub



- India's world-class facility for training astronauts will come up not in the space headquarters in Bangalore, nor in any glitzy metropolis. It will be established in three years at Challakere, a shrubby, arid oil seeds town on the Bangalore-Pune NH4 in Chitradurga district of Karnataka.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has proposed a ₹ 2,700-crore master plan to create top infrastructure that will house its young Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC).

WHO prequalifies Serum's low-cost pneumococcal vaccine

- Pneumococcal vaccine developed by the Pune-based Serum Institute



of India has been pre-qualified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in the third week of December 2019.

- The prequalification of the vaccine by WHO was based on the results of a phase-3 trial (the final phase of human clinical trial) carried out in 2,250 children in Gambia, a small West African country.
- The pneumococcal vaccine PNEUMOSIL is a conjugate vaccine to help produce stronger immune response to a weak antigen.

BEE sets new standards for ACs: Default temperature set to 24 Degree Celsius

- The Government of India has released new performance energy standards for the performance of air conditioners after consulting Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
- The BEE operating under Ministry of Power develop strategies and policies with primary objective of reduction in energy usage. According to BEE, the total air conditioner capacity of India is 80 million tons of refrigeration. It is estimated that this will increase to 250 million by 2030.

International team of astronomers finds farthest galaxy group EGS77

- An international team of astronomers funded in part by NASA has found the farthest galaxy group identified as "EGS77".
- EGS77, the trio of galaxies dates to a time when the universe was only 680 million years old, or less than 5% of its current age of 13.8 billion years.
- EGS77 is the farthest group of galaxies to have ever been sighted. EGS77 was

discovered as part of the Cosmic Deep and Wide Narrowband (Cosmic DAWN) survey.

- The team of astronomers was led by an Indian-origin Goa-born scientist, Vithal Tilvi.

IDRSS: ISRO new satellite to help Gaganyaan crew

- The Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) will track Indian satellites in low-earth orbits. It is a new satellite series that plans to set up a communication system between the space assets of India.

Highlights

- The system is aimed to play vital role in India's space station and space docking. It will also assist distant expeditions of India to Mars, moon and Venus.
- The system will help in monitoring launches. The IDRSS is to play a major role in India's Human Space Flight Programme, Gaganyaan.

NASA Discovers Potentially Habitable Earth-Sized World "TOI 700 d" in Star's 'Goldilocks' Zone

- The Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has discovered an Earth-sized world 'Goldilocks' zone within the habitable range of the star. Scientists confirmed the find as TOI 700 d by using NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope.

About Goldilocks Zone:

- The Goldilocks Zone refers to the habitable zone around a star where the temperature is not too hot and not too

cold and liquid water to exist on this planet.

Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center to be set up in Gujarat

- The Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) will be set up in Gujarat.
- The Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) will identify, nurture and promote innovative abilities of children in the state. The above announcement was made during the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) taking place in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Indian-American among NASA's new astronauts

- Raja Jon Vurputoor Chari, an Indian-American US Air Force colonel, is among 11 new NASA graduates who have successfully completed their over two years' of basic astronaut training.
- With a goal of sustainable lunar exploration later this decade, NASA will send the first woman and next man to the surface on the Moon by 2024.
- Additional lunar missions are planned once a year thereafter and human exploration of Mars is targeted for the mid-2030s.

India's 1st Sukhoi-30 squadron to be stationed in Thanjavur, TN: IAF chief RKS Bhadauria

- As per the Chief of the Indian Air Force (IAF), Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh (RKS) Bhadauria, the induction ceremony of a Sukhoi-30 MKIs (Su-30 MKI) squadron in the southern skies will take place in the presence of Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

at Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu (TN) on January 20, 2020.

- The range of this will be in the Indian Ocean region (IOR) up to Suez Canal.

TB diagnostic test developed in India has high accuracy, says WHO

- The World Health Organization (WHO) had mentioned that the India - made Truenat MTB, a molecular diagnostic test for pulmonary and extrapulmonary TB and rifampicin-resistant TB, has high accuracy.
- Truenat MTB has "high diagnostic accuracy as initial test to diagnose TB and to sequentially detect rifampicin resistance".
- It will be used as an initial test thus replacing sputum smear microscopy.
- Truenat is developed by the Goa-based Molbio Diagnostics. The company was provided with technical assistance and resources by the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) to help commercialise Truenat. ICMR had assessed and validated the diagnostic tool.

"APNA UREA-Sona Ugle" brand of HURL launched-To increase Urea Production

- The APNA UREA-Sona Ugle brand of HURL (Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited) was launched by the Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers Shri D V Sadananda Gowda.

Recent developments in Urea Production

- In order to make India self-sufficient in Urea, the Union Government approved

revival of three Urea plants located in Sindri, Gorakhpur and Barauni. The other two major fertilizer plants at Talcher and Ramagundam are also to be reopened.

What is HURL?

- HURL is a joint venture of Indian Maharatna companies namely IOCL (Indian Oil Corporation Limited), NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation) and Coal India Limited. The objective of HURL is to make India self-reliant in Urea.

Submarine-launched ballistic missile tested

- India successfully test-fired the 3,500-km range submarine-launched ballistic missile, K-4, official sources confirmed. The test was carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from a submerged pontoon off the Visakhapatnam coast around noon.
- INS Arihant, the first and only operational SSBN, is armed with K-15 Sagarika missiles with a range of 750 km.



Xenobots: World's first living, self-healing robots

- Scientists of University of Vermont and Tufts University have created the world's first living and self-healing robots Xenobots, using stem cells from frogs. It is named after the African clawed frog,

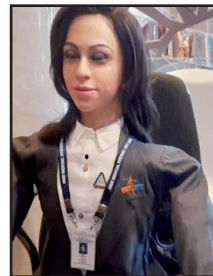
Xenopus laevis from which they take their stem cells.

Key Points:

- The machines used are less than a millimeter (0.04 inches) wide which are small enough to travel inside human bodies. They can walk and swim, survive for weeks without food, and work together in groups.
- Xenobots could be used to clean up radioactive waste, collect micro plastics in the oceans, carry medicine inside human bodies, or even travel into our arteries to scrape out plaque.

Vyom Mitra, first Indian 'woman' to ride to space

- "Young woman" named Vyom Mitra will ride to space in the first test flight of the human space mission, Gaganyaan.
- The ISRO unveiled its first 'woman' astronaut to an international gathering here on Wednesday.
- Two trial flights without crew will take place with a humanoid — the first around December 2020 and the second around July 2021. Vyom Mitra is the result of a year-long toil of the ISRO Inertial Systems Unit, Thiruvananthapuram.
- The ISRO will send the human-resembling model in a space capsule around the end of 2020 or early 2021 to study how she and later real astronauts respond to living outside earth in controlled zero-gravity conditions.



Wuhan coronavirus may have been transmitted to people from snakes

- A new coronavirus originating in Wuhan, China, that has claimed 17 lives may have been transmitted to people from snakes, according to a genetic analysis. The snakes may have caught the virus from bats in the food market in which both animals were sold.
- The source of the infection is suspected to be a food market in Wuhan that was visited by several of those first infected with the virus. The market is known to sell live wild and farmed animals, including marmots, birds, rabbits, bats and snakes.

First 'industry-made' PSLV in 2022

- The first Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) fully built by the industry will be rolled out in 2022.
- The PSLV will be manufactured by the industry as a whole product, The ISRO has announced plans to outsource the PSLV to the industry so that it can focus on other research areas and important missions.
- The first developmental flight of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) is expected in April. This mission will be carried out from Sriharikota.
- The process of acquiring 2,300 acres at Kulasekharapattanam in southern Tamil Nadu for establishing a launch facility for the SSLV is in progress.

Pakistan successfully launched ballistic missile "Ghaznavi"

- The successful training launch of nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic

missile (SSBM) 'Ghaznavi' was held in Islamabad, Pakistan. The Ghaznavi missile strike targets upto a range of 290 km (kilometers).

- In November 2019, Pakistan had carried out a successful training launch of ballistic missile Shaheen-I which was also an SSBM.

5.2 Latest Discoveries in Health Science

World's oldest rhino' dies in Tanzania

- Fausta, a female black rhino, who was believed to be the world's oldest rhino has died at the age of 57 in a Tanzanian conservation area. Fausta died of natural causes in captivity in Ngorongoro Crater, which lies in Ngorongoro Conservation Area of Tanzania.

5.3 Mass Media & Communication

President Kovind releases mobile app of Red Cross Society of India

- President Ram Nath Kovind released the mobile app of the Red Cross Society of India in Hyderabad. This app is developed by the Telangana Centre for Good Governance in less than three months, the mobile app is accessible in all languages. The developers informed that the access to blood bank and Red Cross membership will become easy with the launching of the mobile app.

Raksha Mantri launches DefExpo 2020 mobile app

- Raksha Mantri has launched the "DefExpo 2020" mobile app of the forthcoming DefExpo 2020. The app has been developed by Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- It provides detailed information about the daily events, participating exhibitors, Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), guest speakers of seminars/webinars, publications, and directions of the venues and city weather

Ravi Shankar Prasad launched a web portal to tracing of stolen mobiles in Delhi

- The Department of Telecom Minister Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad launched a web portal www.ceir.gov.in to trace the stolen mobiles for Delhi subscribers..

e-certificate portal and ePAUTI App were launched by Odisha Government

- Chief Minister of Odisha has launched an e-certificate portal and ePAUTI App. The e-certificate project is a part of 5T model of Governance by the revenue and disaster management department. According to CM, no fees will be charged for the certificates specifying these services as the rights of the people.

About e-certificate portal:

- The applicants can apply for various certificates like caste certificate and permanent residence certificates through <http://edistrict.odisha.gov.in/> without visiting Tehsil offices and once

application approved the certificate can be downloaded from the portal or from the mail.

About e-PAUTI App:

- Using this App, people can pay land revenue online with the help of their smartphones without visiting a government office.

CACS & e-BCAS launched to enhance security & ease of doing at airports

- Minister of State (I/C) for Civil Aviation launched the Biometric enabled Centralised Access Control System (CACS) and 'e-BCAS Project Training Module'. The two projects aims to enhance security and ease of doing business at airports.
- The CACS project is aimed to digitize the employee movement process at the airports. This multi-layered security system encompasses the uniqueness of the Airport Entry Permit (AEP) users, biometric authentication in addition to PIN-based identity verification through contactless smart card technology.
- The 'e-BCAS' project envisaged to achieve a "paperless office" under e-Governance initiative of Government of India.

RBI governor launched MANI app for visually challenged to identify currency notes

- The 25th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Shri Shaktikanta Das launched a mobile app named "MANI" (Mobile Aided Note Identifier) that would help visually impaired people to identify denomination of currency notes correctly.

- The currency notes will be scanned using a mobile phone's camera. The most interesting feature of the app is that it can also be used offline after installation. The audio output is available in both Hindi and English languages.

Odisha govt launches India's 1st e-Gazette portal for all gazette notifications

- The State Government of Odisha has launched an online platform called "e-Gazette portal" (<http://egazetteodisha.nic.in>), a first-of-its-kind initiative in India designed and developed by the NIC (National Informatics Centre) for all departments. With this, the Gazette notifications are now available as error-free and paperless under one platform.

NPCI launched the Vajra Platform for a fast and secure platform

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched the Vajra Platform to make payments fast and secure. The platform is based on blockchain technology.

New Facility inaugurated to tackle cybercrimes

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
- The I4C is a seven pronged system, which includes a cybercrime reporting portal, analysis of threats, capacity building, research and innovation, creating an ecosystem for cybercrime management and a joint cybercrime investigation platform for law enforcement agencies.

- Fifteen States and Union Territories have agreed to set up Regional Cyber Crime Coordination Centres.
- The MHA had unveiled its National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.

Multi-function 'smart poles' to come at 50 spots in city

- The Chennai Corporation is installing 'smart poles' in various parts of the city, to facilitate better integration of key aspects of the command and control system.
- The 'smart pole' installed near Ripon Buildings has a public address system, camera, rain gauge and equipment to monitor pollution and illumination of the roads during the night. The Corporation will share information on civic welfare schemes, civic projects, and disaster events through the public address system.

High School Portal 'Aspire' to be launched

- The Minister for School Education Dr. Prabhuram Chowdhary will launch portal 'Aspire'. The Portal has been prepared with the help of UNICEF for the students of class 9th to 12th of the govt schools.
- The 'Aspire' is in fact a future opportunity portal. Information pertaining to college fee, subjects, admission procedure etc. of all the colleges of national and state level can be obtained from this portal.

Amit Shah to launch POLNET 2.0

- Police communication services in the country are set for a major revamp with Union Home Minister Amit Shah expected to launch an upgraded POLNET

2.0, armed with a robust multi-media facility.

- The Directorate of Coordination Police Wireless (DCPW) that operates the POLNET or the police network services in the country has created a new and enhanced communication platform for police and security forces to better communicate during law and order problems and disasters including linkup from remote border and coastal areas.
- The DCPW was set up in 1946 and it was placed under the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1950 with the primary mandate of coordination between state and central police and security agencies for radio communication and frequency allocation.

CM Bhupesh baghel launches employment-oriented mobile app 'Rojgar Sangi' in Raipur

- The Chief Minister (CM) of Chhattisgarh, Bhupesh Baghel has launched a employment-oriented mobile app, 'RojgarSangi' developed by state-run Chhattisgarh State Skill Development Authority (CSSDA) at the ceremony of youth fest 2020 held at Science College premises in Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Nitin Gadkari's 5-yr roadmap

- Union Minister Nitin Jairam Gadkari in his second innings has lined up big plans - from infusing Rs 15 lakh crore in highways to propelling GDP growth by globalising khadi and MSME products. After taking charge of Road Transport and Highways and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ministries, Gadkari told PTI that the mission is to

further propel the country's economic growth through concerted efforts, be it in highways or MSME.

- The focus will be rural areas, and forming clusters of potters, people dependent on leather industries and giving them assistance with new technology aimed at promoting export of these products.

In a 1st, City Union Bank launches multilingual voice based 'All-In-One' app

- For the 1st time India, the City Union Bank (CUB) Limited, one of the leading Indian banks in India, has launched multilingual voice enabled mobile banking application.
- Now the CUB customers can converse with the chat-bot 'Ask Lakshmi' of the app in Tamil, English, Hindi / Telugu language for their general banking queries including transactions like Balance enquiry, mini statement, fund transfer over voice/text instructions.

App aims to academically empower visually impaired students

- The Swalekhan (self-writing) app is a tech offering conceptualised by the city-based Niwant Andh Mukta Vikasalaya, an NGO that works for the betterment of the visually impaired individuals, and developed by Josh Software, a Pune-based IT services company specialising in providing global tech solutions, in conjunction with Tekvision, a leading accessibility service provider whose workforce comprises a significant number of visually impaired technocrats.

6. NATIONAL – DIARY OF EVENT



Free Wi-Fi services provided to all villages till 2020

- Union Minister of Communication and IT inaugurated “Digital Village, Guruwara”. During the launch, it was announced that the Government has planned to offer free Wi-Fi services to all villages till March 2020.

Highlights

- The Government of India has so far connected 1,30,000-gram panchayats through Bharatnet. More than 50,000 Gram Panchayat are yet to be connected. The government is working under the current target that at least 15% of villages are to be digitalized in next four years.

Bharatnet Project

- The initiative was launched in 2011. Under the initiative, 100 Mbps speed internet were to be provided to around 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats. The aim is to increase their speed to around 2 to 20 Mbps in the future to all households in rural areas.

Government launched Good Governance Index

- Government of India launched Good Governance Index. Tamil Nadu topped in Good Governance Index.

Highlights of the report

- The States and Union Territories were divided into 3 groups namely Big states, North East and hill states and union territories.
- Tamil Nadu topped in Good Governance Index in the “Big States” category. It was followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. The report also said that among the big states the poor performers were Odisha, Bihar, Goa and Uttar Pradesh. Jharkhand was ranked the last in good governance index.
- In the North East and hill states category, Himachal Pradesh ranked first. It was followed by Uttarakhand, Tripura, Mizoram and Sikkim. The bad performers of the category include Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

Agricultural ranking

- In Agricultural and allied ranking, the best performing states were Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Daman and Diu. In order to frame agricultural rating parameters such as food grain production, milk and meat production, horticulture produce and crop insurance were considered.

NITI Aayog to launch SDG India Index & Dashboard 2019-20

- NITI Aayog, the policy think tank of Government will launched the second edition of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2019-20.
- The first edition of SDG India Index was launched in December 2018. It was the first tool developed by any large country to monitor progress towards achieving SDGs at sub-national level.

Cabinet approves transfer of Assam Gas Cracker Project to oil ministry

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the transfer of administrative control of Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL), the Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) implementing Assam Gas Cracker Project (AGCP) from Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals (under Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers) to Union Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MOP&NG).

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan unveils India's First CNG Bus which can run 1000 Kms in one fill

- Delhi has witnessed a revolution in shift towards cleaner gas based fuels
- In a major step towards making India a gas-based economy and making CNG as the eco-friendly option for long distance transport in the country, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, unveiled India's first long distance CNG bus fitted with composite CNG cylinders,

which can travel around 1000 kms in a single fill.

- The project has been executed by Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) and has been achieved through pioneering design of Type IV Composite Cylinders in buses, replacing traditional very heavy Type-I Carbon Steel cylinders.
- Delhi has witnessed revolution in shift towards cleaner, gas based fuels. Over 500 CNG stations are operating in Delhi NCR and about 12 lakh piped natural gas connections have been provided.

Massive locust invasion in Gujarat

- Sharing borders with neighboring Pakistan, Gujarat is under attack from hoppers new-born locusts that have flown in across the international border.
- As the swarms mature, they have ravaged farms in North Gujarat, devastating farmers in the three border districts Banaskantha, Patan and Kutch.
- The locusts, known as tiddis locally, have wreaked havoc on standing crops of castor, cumin, jatropha, cotton, and potato, and fodder grass in around 20 talukas.
- Gujarat has not witnessed such an invasion of locusts since 1993-94. According to local experts, the State administration has been caught napping despite an alert from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of a massive locust attack in South Asia covering Pakistan and India.
- The Locust Warning Organization (LWO) in Jodhpur had noticed the swarms and predicted their trajectory across the international border. Among the border districts, Banaskantha is the worst affected.

33rd National Conference of the All India Induction Furnace Association of India (AIIFA) held in New Delhi

- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan participated in the 33rd National Conference of the All India Induction Furnace Association of India (AIIFA) on Secondary Steel Sector in New Delhi
- Theme of the Conference was “Most advantageous route of Environment friendly steel making through Electric Induction Furnace (EIF) and its global acceptance”.

India first Transgender University to come up in Uttar Pradesh

- India's first university for transgender community will be opened Kushinagar district in Uttar Pradesh. It is the first of its kind university in country, where transgender community members will be able to get education.
- The university will facilitate its members to study right from class 1 to post Graduate (PG) and even do research and get PhD degree. Members of the transgender community will get education and will be able to give a new direction to the country.

Sign boards in Chinese language put up at 5 ASI sites

- Union Tourism Minister Prahlaad Singh Patel informed that sign board in Chinese Language have been put up at five Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protected Archaeological Sites located in Uttar Pradesh (UP).

- ASI Sites include- (1) Sarnath, (2) the Buddhist relics at Chaukhandi Stupa, (3) Kushinagar and the Mahaparinirvana Temple, (4) Piprahwa and (5) Shravasti.

Govt to launch Digital Radio by 2024

- Centre government is planning to revamp ‘All India Radio’ officially known as ‘Akashvani’ by introducing Digital Radio in India by 2024, when the country will be technologically- equipped for it.
- The announcement in this regard was made by Union Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Minister Prakash Javadekar at the 2019 Akashvani Annual Award in New Delhi.

About All India Radio (AIR)

- AIR was established in 1936 and is officially known as Akashvani since 1956. It is the national public radio broadcaster of India and is a division of Prasar Bharati, which is India's largest public broadcasting agency. AIR is sister service of Prasar Bharati's Doordarshan television Network.

NPR: house to house verification planned

- The Narendra Modi government proposes to update the existing National Population Register, which already has an electronic database of more than 119 crore residents, by verifying the details of all respondents through house-to-house enumeration, according to an official manual on conducting the fresh NPR exercise.
- The NPR exercise has become controversial because the Citizenship Rules 2003 link the Population Register

to the creation of a National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC) or National Register of Citizens.

- Coupled with the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, which excludes Muslims, fears about an NPR-NRC have brought lakhs of people onto the streets in protest.
- Data for the NPR was first collected in 2010, and updated in 2015. The Modi Government has proposed that the next phase of NPR will be conducted along with Census exercise between April to September 2020.

New wagon to boost cargo capacity

- The Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India, Ltd. (DFCCIL) tasked with building the over ₹81,000 crore freight corridor in the country, began testing a new wagon that will help boost the cargo carrying capacity by four times due to increased length of the train, use of double-stack containers and more payload carrying capability.
- The wagon – used for hauling freight – have been tested by the Research Design and Standards Organization (RDSO) and are manufactured at the Golden Rock Railway Workshop in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu.
- The trial was conducted at a speed of 100 km/hour on a 270-km-long section of the western freight corridor from Rewari to Kishangarh. Currently, maximum speed of goods trains varies from 40 kmph to 100 kmph on the Indian Railways tracks. The DFC tracks are separate from the

Indian Railways tracks. However, mostly they run parallel to each other.

Health Minister inaugurates 2nd edition of "Eat Right Mela"

- The Union Health Minister has inaugurated the 2nd edition of "Eat Right Mela" in New Delhi. The Eat Right Mela of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is a commendable effort and outreach activity for citizens towards eating right.
- The Union Minister launched 'The PURPLE Book' a handbook on diets for diseases.
- The Union Minister also launched NetSCoFAN (Network for Scientific Co-operation for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition), a network of research & academic institutions working in the area of food & nutrition along with the NetSCoFAN directory, covering detailed information of various heads/Directors and lead scientists of lead and associated partnering institutions.

CSMT gets 'Eat Right' station certificate

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) railway station in Mumbai has been conferred with 'Eat Right Station' certification with the five-star rating by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for food safety and hygiene.

National outreach programme 'GeM Samvaad' takes off in 4 States

- A national outreach program 'GeM Samvaad', launched by Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has begun from 19th

December 2019 in 4 States of Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh (HP) and Andhra Pradesh (AP).

All new Railway recruits to be inducted through UPSC Civil service exams

- The railway board has now decided that all new recruits in railways will be inducted through UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) Civil Services Exams under five specialties.
- The decision comes days after the Union Cabinet approved big ticket reforms in the railways by merging its eight cadres and departments services into one single entity- the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS).

Foundation laid for India's first Transit-Oriented Development Project

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for country's first transit-oriented development (TOD) project in New Delhi. Under the TOD project a state-of-the-art infrastructure zone, including national capital's tallest tower, will be built in east Delhi.

About Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Project

- The project- 'East Delhi Hub' at Karkardooma (in New Delhi), spreading over 30 ha, will come up in next 3.5 years. The hub will be developed around existing two Delhi Metro stations at Karkardooma (on Blue and Pink Lines)
- It is being implemented by Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MHUA).

Delhi's first 'Garbage Cafe' opens in Najafgarh; get food in exchange of plastic

- In a very novel idea of plastic garbage collection, the South Delhi Municipal Corporation has launched a unique initiative of providing food for garbage.
- The scheme has been started in Najafgarh area where local residents can exchange plastic waste for lunch and dinner. While people can avail lunch and dinner in exchange for 1-kg of plastic waste, breakfast can be eaten by depositing 250 grams of plastic garbage.
- India's first 'garbage cafe' was opened in Chhattisgarh by Ambikapur Municipal Corporation.

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 Contest

- Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 (PPC 2020) is inviting candidates to participate in the Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 Contest. Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 (PPC 2020) aims to take away the stress of students, who also get a chance to interact with PM Modi during the programme.

Assam Govt Launches 'Abhinandan'- Education Loan Subsidy Scheme

- Assam State Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma attended the ceremonial launch of 'Abhinandan' a progressive scheme by the state Finance department on December 26.
- According to reports, the scheme will provide one time subsidy of ₹ 50,000 in education loan to 1546 students.

Amazon to open first farm collection center in Pune

- Amazon Retail India Pvt Ltd, the retail arm of e-commerce giant Amazon, will soon open its first farm collection center in Pune, recited by the sources privy to the development.
- Under its farm-to-fork initiative, Amazon will directly purchase vegetables from farmers, who would be paid within 24 hours.

District authorities plan to conduct annual flamingo festival in January

- The annual flamingo festival in Nellore district is round the corner with the winged visitors arriving in large numbers on their annual sojourn. More than 40,000 flamingos can be seen in action at the lake. Overseeing arrangements for the Flamingo Festival from January 3 to 5.
- About 75 bird species visit the sanctuary, of which 30 bird species are migratory.

Somali epic found at NFAI

- African cinematic heritage, the negatives of an epic Somali film thought to have been lost were 'discovered' in the vaults of the Pune-based National Film Archive of India (NFAI).
- The Somali Dervish, a four-hour-long 1985 masterpiece by eminent Somali poet, playwright and film-maker Said Salah Ahmed, chronicles the revolutionary Somali Dervish movement under the leadership of the legendary anti-colonial fighter Mohamed Abdullah Hassan, revered as the 'Father of Somali Nationalism' and known by the sobriquet 'Mad Mullah'.

AIR organises National Symposium of Poets 2020

- All India Radio (AIR) organized the National Symposium of Poets 2020 on 27 December 2019. This edition of poet symposium was attended by select poets from all corners of country, who gave their presentations and captivated the hearts of people.

IRCTC to launch Tejas train from Ahmedabad to Mumbai on January 17

- The second Tejas Express train to be operated by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC NSE 1.85 %) will start running between Mumbai- Ahmedabad.
- The Western Railway announced that it shall introduce the all new air-conditioned Tejas Express train with modern facilities and features between Ahmedabad and Mumbai Central from January 19 after its inaugural run on January 17.

Maharashtra: Farmers whose crop loan exceeds Rs 2 lakh ineligible for waiver

- Farmers whose crop loan is more than Rs two lakh, will not be eligible for the loan waiver scheme announced by the Uddhav Thackeray-led 'Maha Vikas Aghadi' government in Maharashtra last week.
- As per the Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Farmer Loan Waiver Scheme, loan up to Rs two lakh taken between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2019 and which has not been repaid till September 30, 2019 will be eligible for waiver.

Amit Shah Unveils New Insignia for CRPF's VIP Security Wing

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah unveiled a new insignia for the CRPF's VIP security wing that protects 59 high-risk dignitaries, including members of the Gandhi family and a host of Union ministers.
- The logo - with a "Garuda", sword and shield - will give a distinct identity to the unit.
- The insignia will bear the motto of the force - "Always, Aware, Alert". Of the 59 protectors under this unit, 15 are under the top category of "Z+", 21 under the "Z" category and the remaining 23 under various other categories.

New Delhi hosts 49th Border Coordination Conference between BSF & BGB

- 49th Border Coordination Conference between border guarding forces of India and Bangladesh was held in New Delhi. The Indian delegation was headed by DG Border Security Force Vivek Kumar Johri and the Bangladesh delegation was headed by DG of Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) Md Shafeenul Islam.
- The conference focused on co-operation in Border Guarding and Border Management between the two forces. During the conference, both forces agreed to make all possible efforts to curb the menace of cattle smuggling or any other criminal activity and to ensure tranquility on the borders.

MOSPI constituted economic statistics committee headed by Pronab Sen

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has set up a standing committee on economic statistics (SCES) in order to develop methodologies in conducting surveys on industry, services sector and employment in place of multiple panels on these issues. The committee which consists of 28 members will be headed by India's first chief statistician Pronab Sen.

Rabung bridge in Upper Siang district of AP inaugurated

- The state Health and Family Welfare minister of Arunachal Pradesh (AP) inaugurated the Rabung bridge on the Migging-Tuting road in Arunachal Pradesh's (AP) Upper Siang district. The bridge was constructed by Project Brahmaputra of the Border Road Organisation (BRO).

Bengaluru to host Science Congress

- Bengaluru is all set to host the 107th edition of the Indian Science Congress.
- It will be the ninth time the city hosts the annual convention.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate it at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru. Coming in the time of agrarian distress, the congress has chosen 'science and technology: rural development' as its theme.

Government of India signed MoU with Flipkart under DAY-NULM scheme

- Government of India signed MoU with Flipkart for selling the products made by women self-help groups under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) on the e-commerce platform.

27th National children's science congress 2019 held for the 1st time in Thiruvananthapuram

- The Vice President of India, Shri Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu has attended the 27th edition of National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) 2019 based on the theme "Science, Technology and Innovation for a clean, green and healthy nation" held for the 1st time at Mar Ivanios College in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala from December 27 -31,2019.

National Children's Science Congress (NCSC):

- It is a nationwide Science Communication programme started in the year 1993.
- It is the program of the National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

IR creates Passenger Friendly Information System at Anakapalle Station

- The Indian Railways (IR) has introduced new Passenger Information System at Anakapalle Railway Station of Vijayawada Division of Andhra Pradesh (AP) in South Central Railway (SCR). The

system has been introduced to provide better features and an easy guidance to the passengers and also to enhance satisfactory user experience. The cost of the equipment is Rs 10 lakhs including supply, installation, commissioning and onsite warranty of 3 years.

Railways renames Railway Protection Force as Indian Railway Protection Service

- The Ministry of Railway (MoR) has accorded Organised Group 'A' status (OGAS) to Railway Protection Force (RPF) and also renamed RPF as Indian Railway Protection Service (IRPS). The notice of renaming was issued by the Joint Director of Railway Board Amitabh Joshi on December 30, 2019.

CM Khattar inaugurates 'Atal Kisan Mazdoor canteen' in Haryana

- Haryana Chief Minister (CM) Manohar Lal Khattar has inaugurated a "Atal Kisan Mazdoor canteen" (named after former PM late Atal Bihari Vajpayee) built by the Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board at a cost of Rs 4 lakh in Karnal's New Anaj Mandi, Haryana. This canteen will greatly benefit farmers and labourers, who can get food for Rs 10.

Key Points:

- The canteen, open from 11 am - 3 pm, will provide nutritious food (including 4 rotis, pulses, vegetables and rice) to the laborers. Such canteen system will also be started in the sugar mills of the state.
- The Marketing Board of Haryana has also decided to operate the canteens at 25 different locations in the state.

- Khattar also unveiled a 14-foot statue of Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Atal Park, built at a cost Rs 56 lakh.

Entire Nagaland declared 'disturbed area' for six more months under AFSPA

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) has declared the entire region of "Nagaland" as a disturbed area under section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 ie., AFSPA Act, for a further period of 6 more months with effect from 30th December, 2019.

About AFSPA:

- The act gives the military sweeping powers to search and arrest, and to open fire so as to keep maintenance of public order.
- As per Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1976 once declared 'disturbed', the area has to maintain the status quo for a minimum of 3 months.

10,000 cameras to be used in Gujarat Lion Census, 2020

- The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is to conduct Asiatic Lion Census in May 2020. The Institute will use 10,000 cameras to conduct the census.

Asiatic Lions

- The Asiatic Lions in Gujarat are restricted to Gir National Park in the state. The lions are listed as "Endangered" in the IUCN Red List.

UPSRTC launched 'Damini' helpline service for women

- UPSRTC (Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation) has launched

'Damini' helpline service considering the safety of the women passengers. As the extension of 'Nirbhaya Yojana' the unique number "81142-77777" has been subscribed for this helpline.

- Using these helpline women passengers can lodge their complaints by calling the helpline number and by using WhatsApp service.
- Women officers from UPSRTC will monitor this service from 9 a.m to 6 p.m everyday. After 6 p.m complaints can be lodged using general helpline number 1800-180-2877.

World Book Fair, 2020 at New Delhi

- The New Delhi World Book Fair organized by the National Book Trust is being held for 42 years now. The trust is an apex body of Government of India functioning under Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Highlights

- The World Book Fair is to be held between January 4, 2020 and January 12, 2020. The fair is organized jointly by National Book Trust and India Trade Promotion Organization. More than 800 exhibitors and 40 foreign exhibitors are to participate in the fair.
- The theme of the fair is Theme: Gandhi, the Writers' Writer.

Gujarat CM unveiled world's 2nd tallest statue of Vallabhbhai Patel in Ahmedabad

- The Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Vijay Ramniklal Rupani unveiled the world's 2nd largest statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Sardardham campus near

Vaishnodevi circle in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

- This bronze statue which is 50 feet tall weighing 70,000 kilograms was built at a cost of Rs 3.25 crores. Padma Bhushan awardee Ram VanjiSutar(Sculptor) who designed the world's tallest statue has built this world's second tallest statue too.

Indian Railways launches integrated helpline number 139 for passengers

- The indian Railways launched an integrated helpline number 139 for quick grievance and enquiries by the passengers during journeys.

Key Points:

- It is an integrated form of existing helpline numbers (except 182) particularly to avoid the inconvenience over multiple helpline numbers and will be easy to connect with Railways for all their needs during travel.
- The helpline number will be available in 12 languages and it will be based on an interactive voice response system and it can also be used for general complaints, accidents and safety issues.

'Cyber Safe Women' campaign was launched by Maharashtra Government

- Maharashtra Government launched 'Cyber Safe Women' campaign to mark the birth anniversary of social reformer, Savitribai Phule.

Key Points:

- The main aim of this initiative is to reduce the cyber crimes against women and children.

First Silk Processing plant in Gujarat to boost 'PATOLA SAREE' production

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) inaugurated the first "Patola Saree" production unit in Gujarat. This will help to cut down the cost of silk yarn production and also will increase the sale of raw material for Patola sarees.

Highlights

- The silk production plant has employed 90 local women of which 70 belong to Muslim community. The installation cost of the plant was Rs 75 lakh and the KVIC operating under Ministry of MSME has contributed Rs 60 lakhs. The plant has been built in a backward district of Gujarat (Surendranagar district). The aim of the plant is to make silk readily available to Patola saree manufacturers to boost its product.

5 DRDO Young Scientist Labs launched

- Five new defence laboratories led by under-35 directors and young military scientists were formally launched on Thursday to drive the country's war technologies of the future under the Defence Research & Development Organisation.
- Prime Minister, who is on a two-day visit to the State, dedicated to the nation the DYSLs or DRDO Young Scientists Laboratories that will operate from five cities across the country.
- The labs operating in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad will each pursue a key technology necessary for developing the nation's next generation of defence systems.

1st of-its kind turtle rehab centre comes up in Bihar

- A 1st of its kind rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles is to be inaugurated in January 2020 in the Bhagalpur forest division of Bihar.
- This centre spread over half a hectare will be able to shelter 500 turtles at a time. The centre will also treat turtles that are sick, severely injured or smuggled, and then be returned safely into its natural habitat.

CM Jagan mohan reddy inaugurates YSR Aarogyasri scheme at Eluru, Andhra pradesh

- In a bid to provide free medical treatment to the poor, The Chief Minister (CM) of Andhra Pradesh (AP), Yeduguri Sandinti Jaganmohan Reddy has inaugurated “YSR Aarogyasri scheme” at Eluru in West Godavari district of AP.
- The scheme will be extended to each district of the state from the month April 2020.
- Eligibility & Treatment amount: The revamped healthcare scheme is aimed at providing free medical treatment to people having an annual income of up to Rs 5 lakh & those eligible people will also be given Aarogyasri cards.
- For this, the state government will distribute 1.42 crores cards with QR (Quick Response) codes across the state. Free treatment will be provided to the person whose treatment cost is more than Rs 1,000.

MECOS-3, 2020: Global Marine Ecosystem Meet in Kochi

- The Marine Ecosystems-Challenges and Opportunities (MECOS), the third international symposium is to be held in Kochi.

Yoga Science Meet and Women Science Congress fill colours to ISC 2020

- The Yoga Science meet was organized as part of the ongoing 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) in Bengaluru. The meet was addressed by the head of SVYASA Yoga deemed University Dr. HR Nagendra.
- The participants discussed the benefits of yoga.

107th Indian Science Congress:

- The 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) is held from 3-7 January 2020 at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru, Karnataka. ISC will provide the desired platform to the farmers who introduced innovations in agriculture.
- The theme of the 107th ISC is Science and Technology: Rural Development.

Uttar Pradesh became 1st state to shortlist migrants for citizenship

- Uttar Pradesh (UP) became the 1st state in India to conduct an exercise to shortlist migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan for eligibility under the new Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) 2019. This exercise will also eventually identify the people living illegally in UP.

Key Points:

- All the 75 district magistrates of UP have been asked to track down migrants from the above three countries who have settled without citizenship for decades.

Amit Shah to head group of ministers to examine the proposed National Tariff Policy

- The minister of Home Affairs (MoHA) Shri Amit Shah has been announced to head the Group of Ministers (GOM) to discuss and examine the proposed National Tariff Policy 2016.
- **GoM:** The interministerial group will have 10 ministers comprising of 8 ministers in the cabinet rank and 2 ministers with independent charge.

Chandigarh railway station is fifth in the country to inaugurate Navigation facilities for visually impaired

- Navigation facilities for visually impaired was inaugurated in Chandigarh railway station in Punjab. It is fifth in the country and first in North India to have these facilities for visually impaired.
- It was developed by Indian Railways with the help of NGO 'Anuprayaas'

CISF observes 2020 as the 'Year of Mobility'

- The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will observe 2020 as the 'Year of Mobility'.
- It aims for the creation of more residential units and implementation of various welfare measures for the troops.

Kochi to host Global Investors Meet: ASCEND 2020

- Kochi, Kerala will host the Global Investors Meet: ASCEND 2020. ASCEND 2020 will showcase 18 mega projects with over Rs 100 crore investment each and offering direct employment to over 9,000 people.
- The meet will be organized by the Industries Department. The Invest Kerala Portal: "invest.kerala.gov.in" will also be showcased at the meet.
- Invest Kerala Portal is a single-window facilitator for hassle-free investment promotion launched under its ease of doing business initiative.

Rajnath Singh inaugurates National Traders Convention in Delhi

- Defence Minister inaugurated the National Traders Convention at Ramlila Maidan, Delhi.
- The convention has been organised by Confederation of All India Traders and will deliberate upon various issues concerning traders, including "onslaught of e-commerce companies on retail trade by their malpractices and violation of FDI policy".
- The aim of this convention will be to discuss the role of the trading community in achieving a 5 trillion dollar economy goal.

Cabinet nod for FDI in coal mining

- The Union Cabinet approved an ordinance to amend two laws to ease mining rules, enabling foreign direct investment in coal mining.
- At a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, the ordinance to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 was approved.

- The ordinance would strengthen the auction process of those mines whose leases were expiring on March 31, 2020. Seamless transfer of clearances would also be facilitated.

Doorstep delivery of rationcards for senior citizens in MP

- Senior citizens living alone in Madhya Pradesh may soon get doorstep delivery of groceries from public distribution system (PDS) ration outlets.
- This facility would be meant for people above 75 years of age who are living alone without any adult family member in their homes.
- Tomar announced the government has verified credentials of 37 per cent of the 1.18 crore PDS beneficiaries through M Ration Mitra app.

Jagan to launch Amma Vodi Scheme

- Andra Pradesh Chief Minister will launch the Jagananna Amma Vodi programme at the PVKN government Degree College grounds in Chittoor. The day also marks the completion of one year of his Praja Sankalpa Padayatra.
- Under the scheme, a financial assistance of ₹15,000 will be given to nearly 43 lakh mothers or guardians who send their children to school. Student enrolment has already increased by 30% in the current academic year after the announcement of the scheme.

J&K has registered highest IPD care in the country

- Jammu and Kashmir has registered the highest Inpatient Department, IPD care in the country.
- According to the report released by the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), New Delhi.
- As per the report, the 96% IPD care in rural areas of J&K is provided by Public Health Facilities.
- This facility is highest against the country's average of 85%.

Tamil Nadu second in suicides

- Tamil Nadu ranked second after Maharashtra in the number of suicides reported in 2018.
- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics revealed that a large number of people took the extreme step owing to illness and family problems.
- Tamil Nadu also contributed to 10.3% of the total suicides reported in the country.
- The State reported the maximum number of 6,433 suicides committed due to family problems while 3,034 people ended their lives owing to health issues.
- Maharashtra reported the maximum of 231 cases of government servants committing suicides followed by Tamil Nadu with 173 cases.

No country for elders

- Tamil Nadu was one of the top three States in India when it came to offences against senior citizens (aged above 60). As many as 3,162 crimes against senior citizens were reported during the year compared to 2,769 cases in 2017.

- While the number of such offences stood at 2,241, a majority of them (2,230 cases) related to crimes booked under the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Property (Prevention of Damage and Loss) Act.

U.P. tops list in crimes against women

- Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 59,445 cases. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) published the annual Crime in India Report 2018 on Wednesday. It was published with provisional data, as five States — West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Sikkim — did not send clarifications sought by the NCRB despite repeated reminders.

First Solar Power and plans to Link J&K with rest of India

- Indian Railways announced that it will source 1000 MW of solar power and 200 MW of wind power to zonal railways by 2021-22. Also, Kashmir is to be linked with the rest of India through railway network by December 2021.

The Pulses Conclave 2020 to be held in Lonavala, Maharashtra

- India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA), the nodal body for India's pulses trade and industry today announced that the fifth edition 'The Pulses Conclave', their biennial global pulses conference will be held at Amby Valley City in Lonavala, Maharashtra.

Panel approves scheme to 'trade' in forests

- The Forest Advisory Committee, an apex body tasked with adjudicating requests by the industry to raze forest

land for commercial ends, has approved a scheme that could allow "forests" to be traded as a commodity. It allows the Forest Department to outsource one of its responsibilities of reforestation to non-government agencies. In the current system, industry needs to make good the loss of forest by finding appropriate non-forest land-equal to that which would be razed

West Bengal tops in 2018 acid attack cases: NCRB

- There has been a marginal decline in the incidents of acid attacks in the country in 2018 compared to the previous year, West Bengal accounted for the highest number of cases of such attacks, according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report.
- The NCRB report shows that West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi contribute to almost half of acid attacks in the country.

Centre mulls mobile test labs at ports to check quality of imported fertilizers

- The Centre is mulling introducing mobile testing labs at 21 ports across the country in a bid to ensure imported fertilizers reach farmers on time after a quality check.
- Imported fertilizers are tested by Faridabad-based Central Fertilizer Control and Quality Institute (CFCQI) as well as three regional centers that come under the agriculture ministry.
- Currently, imported fertilizers are tested by Faridabad-based Central Fertilizer Control and Quality Institute (CFCQI) as well as three regional centers that come under the agriculture ministry.

4 Indian airports received international recognition for reducing emissions as per ACI

- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has announced that 4 Indian airports have received international recognition for reducing the carbon emission level as per the standards set by Airports Council International (ACI) for the grading. The 4 airports are as follows:
 - ▶ Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport (West Bengal)
 - ▶ Biju Patnaik International Airport (Odisha)
 - ▶ Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport (Uttar Pradesh)
 - ▶ Trivandrum International Airport (Kerala)

Union Power Minister RK Singh released 2nd State Energy Efficiency Index 2019 in New Delhi.

- The Minister of State (MoS - Independent Charge) for Power and New & Renewable Energy who is also MoS for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Raj Kumar Singh has released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019 in New Delhi. The index tracks the progress of Energy Efficiency (EE) initiatives undertaken in 36 states and Union Territories (UTs) based on 97 indicators.
- Progressive states: The progressive states and UTs of the 2019 index which was grouped into 4 for rational comparisons were Haryana, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Puducherry and Chandigarh

Transgender Persons Act comes into effect

- The Social Justice Ministry issued a notification, notifying the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, which was passed by Parliament on November 26 and given Presidential assent on December 5, 2019.
- The Act aims to end discrimination against transgender persons in accessing education, employment and healthcare.
- It also recognises the right to self-perceived gender identity and provides for certification from a District Magistrate; in case a transgender person has had a gender-change surgery, the law says they can obtain a certificate from the medical facility where they had the operation, and apply for a change in their certificate.
- Dr. Manabi Bandopadhyaya, who became India's first transgender college principal in 2015.

India's under-5 girls face high mortality

State	Under-five mortality rate (girls)	Under-five mortality rate (boys)	Gap	Under-five mortality rate
Jharkhand	38	30	8	34
Assam	51	45	6	48
Haryana	38	32	6	35
Uttar Pradesh	48	43	5	46
Rajasthan	45	41	4	43
Bihar	43	39	4	41

- India is among the few countries in the world where, in 2018, the mortality for girls under 5 years of age exceeded that of boys, according to the 'Levels and Trends in Child Mortality' report by the United Nations (UN) inter-agency group for child mortality.

- The report states that in 2018 fewer countries showed gender disparities in child mortality, and across the world, on average, boys are expected to have a higher probability of dying before reaching age-5 than girls.
- According to India's 2017 Sample Registration System (SRS) the States with the highest burden of neonatal mortality are Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, with 32, 33 and 30 neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively.
- In this sense, Uttar Pradesh is the State with the highest number of estimated newborn deaths in India, both because of the high neonatal mortality rate and because of the large cohort of births that occur every year in the State," noted information released by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund).
- Half of all under-5 deaths in 2018 occurred in five countries: India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia. India and Nigeria alone account for about a third.
- Current trends predict that close to 10 million 5-to 14-year-olds, and 52 million children under 5 years of age, will die between 2019 and 2030.

Raisina Dialogue to be held New Delhi

- The Raisina Dialogue is to be held between January 14, 2020 and January 16, 2020. It is a multilateral conference that is held in New Delhi annually since 2016. The dialogue is organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation.

Highlights

- This year, in 2020, number of foreign ministers are to attend the dialogue. It includes ministers from Russia, Iran, Maldives, Morocco, Australia, Bhutan, Denmark, Czech Republic, Uzbekistan and Estonia.
- **Theme:** 2120: Navigating the Alpha Century.

'Cyber AASHVAST' Cyber Crime Prevention Unit launched in Gandhinagar Gujarat

- Home Minister Amit Shah launched the country's first Cyber Crime Prevention Unit called the "Cyber AASHVAST" in Gandhinagar. Along with AASHVAST, the Video Integration and State Wide Advance Security project called VISWAS was also launched.

Highlights

- The Cyber AASHVAST is a unit that will act to prevent cyber crimes with the help of VISWAS and NETRANG. The AASHVAST will also monitor, prevent and control cyber-crimes in the state. Along with AASHVAST and VISWAS, Project NETRANG was also launched. It will establish command and control rooms in 33 districts of Gujarat.
- In India the cyber-crimes have almost doubled between 2016 and 2017 according to NCRB. Therefore, GoI is taking many measures to bring them under control.

GoI to launch Purvodaya to accelerate Eastern India Development

- The Ministry of Steel announced that it will launch "Purvodaya", a world class

steel hub. The hub aims at an accelerated development programme of eastern states. The Ministry will be joined by CII (Confederation of India Industries) in the implementation of "Purvodaya".

Highlights

- The initiative aims at developing the eastern states through an integrated steel hub. The steel hub will create 2.5 million jobs in the region. It will create world-class logistics and infrastructure. This will also help in achieving India's steel policy target of 300 MT by 2030.

Indian Heritage in Digital Space exhibition in New Delhi

- Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (IC) Shri Prahalad Singh Patel launched the first International Heritage Symposium and Exhibition (IHSE). The exhibition will be held until February 15, 2020 on "Indian Heritage in Digital Space" and first international heritage symposium will be held for two days in the National Museum in New Delhi.
- The project aims to create digital installations using 3D laser scan data, AR, holographic projections and 3D fabrication, to provide interactive and immersive experiences showcasing the glory of Hampi and five Indian monuments namely Kashi Vishwanath Temple, Varanasi; Taj Mahal, Agra; Sun Temple, Konark; Ramachandra Temple, Hampi; and Rani Ki Vav, Patan.
- Installation of 'ViRaasat' which consists of a scaled down 3D printed replica using laser-scanning, 3D modelling and rendering, 3D printing, computer

vision and spatial AR provides a mixed reality experience to visitors in selected monument.

Arunachal Pradesh becomes the 1st state in India to initiate IUCN's red-listing of orchids

- Arunachal Pradesh (AR) has become the 1st State in India to initiate the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s 'red listing' of orchids at the state level after it has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Itanagar, AR.
- IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species is an important indicator of the health of the world's biodiversity. This list is serving as a powerful tool to inform and catalyze action for biodiversity conservation and policy change. The IUCN has estimated that these are complications for protecting natural resources.

23rd National Youth Festival 2020 held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

- The 23rd edition of the National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020 was held at Indira Pratishthan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from January 12-16, 2020. It was jointly organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) and State Government of Uttar Pradesh.
- The theme of the 2020 NYF was "Fit Youth, Fit India" Inauguration: It was inaugurated by Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri Yogi Adityanath and Minister of State (MoS- independent charge) for Youth Affairs & Sports,

Shri KirenRijju on 12th January that marked the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, Indian-Hindu monk.

"Globalizing Indian Thought", an International Conclave held at Kozhikode

- The International Conclave on "Globalizing Indian Thought" was held in IIM, Kozhikode
- The conclave aimed at revealing India's thoughts in becoming one of top three economies of the world.
- India is stepping towards the goal of becoming a 5 trillion Dollar economy by 2025. This will make India one of the top three economies in the world after US and China

GoI launches Saksham, a mega campaign on fuel conservation

- The Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) operating under Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas will launch fuel conservation campaign.
- The campaign will create awareness among public about fuel conservation. PCRA has been conducting Saksham campaigns in different parts of the country.
- In collaboration with NCERT, PCRA has prepared a comic book on the theme, "Fuel Conservation".

Historic Bru-Reang Refugee agreement signed-34,000 displaced to settle in Tripura.

- Government of India, Bru-Reang representatives, Government of Tripura and Mizoram signed an agreement in

New Delhi to end the refugee crisis of Bru-Reang community.

- Under the agreement, around 34,000 Bru Refugees are to settle in Tripura. The Centre will offer their rehabilitation helps with an allocated budget of 6000 crores.
- The land is to be provided by the Tripura Government. The Centre will provide aid of Rs 1.5 lakhs to build their houses.
- Due to ethnic tension in 1997, around 5,000 families of 30,000 Bru-Reang tribes were forced out of Mizoram to seek shelter in Tripura.
- In 2010, GoI began its efforts to permanently rehabilitate them as they constantly demanded to settle in Tripura.
- In 2018, GoI signed an agreement with the State Governments of Tripura and Mizoram in order to help the families and increase the aid substantially.

Rajnath Singh flags off 51st K-9 Vajra at L&T gun making facility.

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh flagged off the 51st K-9 Vajra-T gun at the Larsen and Toubro Armored Systems Complex at Hazira, Surat.
- The L&T officials showed the minister the different manoeuvres of the K-9 Vajra-T, a tracked self-propelled howitzer.
- The gun weighs 50 tonnes and can fire 47kg bombs at 43-kilometre distant targets.
- L&T had in 2017 won the Rs 4,500-crore contract from the Ministry of Defence to supply 100 units of K9 Vajra-T 155 mm/52 calibre tracked self-propelled gun systems to the Indian Army under the Centre's 'Make in India' initiative.

National Information Centre sets up Centre of Block Chain Technology in Bengaluru

- The National Informatics Centre (NIC) will set up block chain technology centre in Bengaluru.
- The centre aims to provide Block Chain as service to all the stake holders who are interested in shared experiences, learning and resources.
- National Informatics Centre has always been the premier technology advisor and also a pioneer in introducing technologies such as National Knowledge Network, NICNET, etc.

Merger Plan of RSTV and LSTV in final stages

- The merger of Rajya Sabha Television (RSTV) and Lok Sabha Television (LSTV) is in the final stages, with a six member committee expected to submit a report by to Upper House Chairman Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. The final decision will be taken by them.
- There has been an overwhelming demand that the live transmission of the proceedings of the two Houses should not be disrupted.
- The committee consists of Prasar Bharati Chairman Surya Prakash, Additional Secretary to the RS Secretariat A. Rao, the Lok Sabha Secretariat's Ganpati Bhatt, Financial Adviser to RSTV Shikha Darbari, and CEOs of RSTV and LSTV Manoj Kumar Pandey and Aashish Joshi respectively.
- LSTV was launched in 2006 by Speaker Somnath Chatterjee.

ELECRAMA-Indian Electrical Industry Showcase inaugurated

- The ELECRAMA 2020 was held in Noida. The event showcases innovations and achievements of Indian Electrical Industry.

Significance

- The "ELECRAMA" platform is organized by Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers' Association (IEEMA). It is supported by other ministries such as ministry of renewable energy, power, MSME (Micro Small and Medium Enterprises).

Industrial Meet of 'Wings India'-Asia's largest Civil Aviation Event held at Bengaluru

- The Industrial meet of the Asia's largest Civil Aviation was held in Bengaluru. The Civil Aviation event is to be held at Begumpet airport, Hyderabad in March 2020. The theme of the event will be Theme: Flying for All.

Targets set for aviation sector

- India aims to become the third largest aviation market globally by 2024
- The number of Indian carriers is to be increased to 1,100 by 2027
- The freight traffic at the airports of India is to cross 11.4 MT by 2032.

Sanskrit to replace Urdu on railway signboards in Uttarakhand

- Names of railway stations written in Urdu on platform signboards in Uttarakhand will now be written in Sanskrit.
- As per rules of the Railway Manual appropriate change should have been

made on these signboards in 2010 after Sanskrit was made the second official language of the state.

- Sanskrit was made the second official language of Uttarakhand in 2010 during the chief ministership of Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, who is now Union HRD Minister.

New Parliament complex may seat 1,350 members

- A new Lok Sabha central hall big enough to house 900 Members of Parliament (MPs), and flexible enough to house up to 1,350 MPs for a joint Parliament session will be the center piece of the Central Vista redevelopment plan that has a deadline of 2024.
- The shape of the present circular building designed by architects Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker in 1912-13, was based on the Chausath Yogini temple, one of the oldest heritage sites in India.
- According to presentations made by the Ahmedabad-based HCP Design, the new triangular Parliament building will come up next to the existing complex, the Indira Gandhi National Centre of Arts will be relocated with some of the new government buildings coming up where it is located, and the National Archives will be remodelled.

Bahadurpur and Kheri Viran to become India's first model sports villages

- Two villages namely Bahadurpur and Kheri Veran of Uttar Pradesh (UP) has set to become India's first 'Model Sports villages' as part of the Institute of Management Technology (IMT)

Ghaziabad, UP under the 'Adarsh Khel Gram' program, IMT in association with NGO(Non Governmental Organization)' Sports: A Way of Life'.

- AIM: To evolve sports culture and increase sports literacy in the country.

Key Points:

- Under this program all the verandahs, courtyards will be developed as primary sports ground management and IMT will provide Olympic related sports equipment.
- One hour everyday from 4-5:00 pm will be the designated time to play sports.
- The main objective is to teach the Olympic games in these villages and various Arjuna Awardees would meet these kids to motivate them to participate in the games.

Govt to collect data including families headed by transgenders for census 2021

- According to the Ministry of Home affairs (MHA), the central government, for the 1st time, will collect data on households headed by a transgender and members living in the family for census 2021. Previously, the choice of the head of the household was gender - male or female.

Key Points:

- The census officer, while making a list of houses to be held from April 1 - September 30, 2020 will ask for specific information based on 31 questions from each household during the census 2021.
- Now three options will be given under the head "sex of the head of the household"- male, female and transgender.

- In addition, the government gather data on 'ownership status of the census house' – whether it is owned / rented.
- The census reference date will be March 1, 2021 but due to snowfall it will be October 1, 2020 in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

New initiative in Census 2021:

- The census 2021 will be done through a mobile phone application, deviating from the traditional pen and paper.
- Usage of census monitoring & management portal as a single source for all officers involved in Census activities to provide multi language support.

Background:

- The census has been conducted in India since 1872 without outbreak. It is conducted every 10 years. 2021 is not only the 16th census but also 8th after independence. The Census Act, 1948 and the Census Rules, 1990 provide the legal framework in conducting the Census.

UGC to Set Up National Academic Credit Bank

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) will soon set up the National Academic Credit Bank (NAC-Bank) with an aim to help students plan their learning objectives and graduate with a degree before the stipulated period. The system of academic credit bank is already prevalent in many foreign countries.
- The National Academic Credit Bank will enable non-science students (arts and commerce stream) to take up courses in the science stream after completing a bridge course/ programme.

- Through this initiative, students can plan their academic/ learning objectives and pursue courses as per their wishes and requirement.
- UGC has also released a concept note on NAC-Bank on www.ugc.ac.in. The commission has also invited the views and suggestions from all Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) including teachers, students, education personnel, on the NAC-Bank latest by December 20, 2019.

Gujarat leads in water efficiency survey under National hydrology project

- According to the rankings of 'Central and state governmental water departments based on their efficiency targets for 2019' released by Ministry of Jal Shakti, Gujarat ranked the best for parameters on efficiency targets, while National Capital Territory of Delhi remains in the worst-performing state category.
- Departments wise ranking: The Survey of India (SoI) received top spot among the 7 central government departments reviewed.
- It was followed by National Institute of Hydrology (NIH) and the Central Water Commission. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) pushed to the last in the year 2019 ranking.
- State wise ranking: However, Delhi improved its position by 6 places to get 35th rank in 2019 as against bottom 41 in 2018. Tamil Nadu (TN) ranked best among the states that significantly improved its ranking. It stood at 13th spot in 2019 as compared to 33 in 2018.

- Rajasthan has been ranked 3rd in the country this time, while in the April-May 2018 rankings, Rajasthan was ranked 16th. In the rankings released in December-2019

1st of Krishi Manthan 2020 begins in Ahmedabad, Gujarat

- The 1st edition of the Krishi Manthan 2020 which is a Food, Agri-business and Rural Development Summit of Asia was held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat from January 16-17, 2020. The event was organised by Food and Agribusiness Committee of Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA).

Govt sets up National Startup Advisory Council

- The government stated that it has set up a National Startup Advisory Council to advise the Centre on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and start-ups in the country.
- The Council will suggest measures to foster a culture of innovation among students and others.

UP Govt launches Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana

- Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana which will provide financial assistance to family of farmers who die or become handicapped while working in fields.
- Government has also decided to implement Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana to boost tourism in state. Under the 'Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana, if a farmer

or any member of his family dies while working in a field then they will be given financial assistance of five lakh rupees. For the first time, the scheme will also include the Bataidars, who work in the field of other persons and share the crop after it is harvested.

- The scheme will cover farmers and their family members in the age group of 18-70 years and will be implemented from 14th September 2019.

India drops 10 ranks in Democracy Index

- The latest edition of the Democracy Index spells gloom for India. The world's biggest democracy slipped 10 places in the 2019 global ranking to 51st place.

Index	Value in 2019	Change from 2018
Democracy	6.90	-0.33
Electoral pluralism	8.67	-0.5
Government	6.79	0
Political participation	6.67	-0.55
Political culture	5.63	0
Civil liberties	6.76	-0.59

- The survey published attributes the primary cause of "the democratic regression" to "an erosion of civil liberties in the country".
- India's overall score fell from 7.23 to 6.9, on a scale of 0-10, within a year (2018-2019) – the country's lowest since 2006.
- A year of democratic setbacks and popular protest, was done by The Economist Intelligence Unit – the research and analysis division of The Economist Group.

Uttarakhand is the 1st state in the country to implement agricultural leasing policy

- Uttarakhand has become the first state in India which has made a policy to lease agricultural land. After the approval of Rashtrapati Bhavan, the state government has issued the order.

Carbon Disclosure Project: India ranks 5th

- The Carbon Disclosure Project, an annual report on carbon reduction activities of different countries and their firms was released by a non-profit organization Global Reporting Initiative. According to the report, the countries were ranked based on their corporate responsibilities of carbon reduction. In order to assess the role played by them, their science-based targets were weighed.

India's first e-waste clinic opens in Bhopal

- The first e-waste clinic of the country has been recently opened in Bhopal. This clinic will segregate and process e-waste from household and commercial units.
- The clinic will process all types of e-Waste materials like computers, mobile, chargers, etc. The clinic will run a campaign 'junk to jugaad' for those e-waste materials which will not be possible to process.
- The e-waste clinic has been prepared in a junk low floor bus. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) are providing technical support to this clinic.

Jharkhand's Jharia is the most polluted Indian city & Lunglei, Mizoram least polluted: Greenpeace India report 2018

- The Greenpeace India report for 2018 was released based on the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). Jharia in Jharkhand which is known for Coal-belching is the most polluted Indian city with 322 µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic meter) of PM10 (Particulate matter) pollutants in 2018, according to the report analysis of 287 cities across the country. Out of 287 cities 231 cities were severely polluted.

Gujarat secures top spot the SKOCH State of Governance 2019 ranking

- According to the 'SKOCH State of Governance 2019' report, Gujarat gained the top spot on the back of better performance in Health, Education, Power and e-Governance segments. Gujarat, which was ranked 5th in 2018 replaces 2018 leader West Bengal.
- The projects undertaken by the states, have performed the best in terms of rankings across 22 different parameters have been listed as STARS.

Top 3 Star states include:

Rank	State Name	Project
1	Gujarat	104 projects
2	Maharashtra	50 projects
3	West Bengal	20 projects

India participates at United Nations AIDS Programme at World Economic Forum

- India participated at the United Nations AIDS (UNAIDS) programme at the World Economic Forum (WEF). The theme of

the programme was Theme: Access for all: Leveraging Innovations, Investments and Partnerships for Health.

UNAIDS Programme

- The main objective of the programme is to coordinate global action on the AIDS disease and alleviate its impact. It was established in 1994.

MP Government makes reading of Preamble compulsory in Schools

- MP Government has also decided to make reading of Preamble of Constitution compulsory in Schools.

Maharashtra to launch Sovereignty of Constitution Programme

- Prior to Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra Government had also announced that it will make reading of preamble to constitution compulsory in all primary and secondary schools, starting from January 26. The initiative is being launched as part of the Sovereignty of Constitution Programme which is being launched in public interest.

'Vigyan Samagam', India's 1st global Mega Science Exhibition

- The Union Minister of State Independent Charge (I/C) Ministry of Development Of North Eastern Region, Minister of State (Mos) Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension, Minister of State for Department of Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated India's first global Mega Science Exhibition "Vigyan Samagam" at National Science Centre, New Delhi. The exhibition will be held from January 21, 2020 to March 20, 2020.

- The exhibition was Organised by Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).

India's 1st War Memorial for Animals to be set up in Meerut, UP

- The govt has announced to set up country's 1st war memorial for service animals such as dogs, horses, mules in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh (UP). This war memorial will come at army's specialised breeding, rearing training centre for animals in the Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre and College in Meerut.

GSAT-30 gives India a Communication boost



- The nation's latest communication satellite, GSAT-30, was launched into space from the Guiana Space Centre in Kourou at 2.35 a.m. IST. The 3,357-kg satellite will replace INSAT-4A, which was launched in 2005 and marks the first mission of the year for Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The high-power satellite is equipped with 12 normal C band and 12 Ku band transponders, ISRO opted for a foreign launch as the GSAT-30 is much heavier than the 2,000-kg lifting capacity of its geostationary launch vehicle GSLV-MkII. While the newer and more powerful GSLV-MkIII can lift up to 4,000kg, the space agency plans to save the two or three upcoming MkIIIs for its first human space flight Gaganyaan of 2022 and two preceding crew-less trials. The first Indian crew-less test flight is planned for later the year.

7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



India-Brazil MoU on Bioenergy Cooperation gets Cabinet approval

- Union Cabinet has given its approval for signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Republic of India and Federative Republic of Brazil on Bioenergy Cooperation.

Background

- In 2016, during the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President of Brazil in India, the two sides agreed to cooperate on research and development (R&D) of renewable energies, and in field of 2nd-generation biofuels.

Russia, the only nation in the world owns hypersonic weapons: President Putin

- According to the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, Russia is the only country in the world that has hypersonic weapons. He revealed the new zircon missile at a meeting of senior military officials in Moscow.
- As per Putin, the Zircon missile, which can fly from land to land in 10 times faster than the speed of sound, has a range of more than 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles) and can carry a nuclear or conventional warhead.

- The strength of this missile indicated by Avangard, which can fly in the atmosphere at a speed 20 times the speed of sound. was a hyper sonic glide vehicle. Kinzhal, a hypersonic glide vehicle, is already part of the Russian Air Force.

China, Russia and Iran to hold naval drills in Gulf of Oman.

- China, Russia and Iran will hold joint naval drills starting Friday in the Gulf of Oman, Beijing and Tehran said, at a time of heightened tensions since the U.S. withdrew from a landmark nuclear deal with Tehran.
- The military exercises aim to “deepen exchange and cooperation between the navies of the three countries.

5th Round of India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in Tokyo

- The 5th round of India-Japan Maritime Affairs dialogue was held in Tokyo, Japan. During this dialogue, India and Japan agreed to deepen their maritime cooperation. Apart from the dialogue, the 8th Round of India-Japan bilateral consultations on disarmament, non-proliferation and export control was also held in Tokyo.

EAM S Jaishankar co-chairs 19th Joint commission meeting 2019 b/w India & Iran held in Tehran

- External Affairs Minister (EAM), Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, who was on a 2-day (22-23 December 2019) visit to Iran, co-chaired the 19th Joint Commission Meeting 2019 with his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif in Tehran, Iran.

Key Points:

- Both sides also agreed to celebrate their 70th anniversary of bilateral treaty of friendship in 2020. The Chabahar project, which was signed in May 2016, is considered a gateway to trade opportunities with the three countries of Central Asian Nations.

Chabahar port:

- It is on the Indian Ocean about 100 kilometres west of the Pakistan border. It consists of 2 separate ports - Shahid Kalantari & Shahid Beheshti. India and Iran first agreed to plans to further develop Shahid Beheshti port in 2003.

Water Resources Protection Agency Registration of Companies Act

- The Tamil Nadu Water Resources Conservation and Rivers Reorganization Corporation is registered under the Indian Companies Act.
- It is worth noting that the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has issued a certificate of registration to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

At over 65,000, India estimated to see most births on January 1: UNICEF

- The Pacific Ocean island-nation of Fiji most likely delivered 2020's first baby,

and the US, its last. About 3,92,078 babies, according to UNICEF, are estimated to be born around the world on New Year's Day.

- But India tops the list of eight countries expected to contribute to half the number of births on January 1, with an estimated 67,385 births. China follows at 46,299, Nigeria (26,039), Pakistan (16,787), Indonesia (13,020), the US (10,452), the Democratic Republic of Congo (10,247) and Ethiopia (8,493).

Iran withdraws from the JCPOA deal completely

- Iran had completely withdrawn from JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) nuclear deal. The announcement came after the US troops killed General Qassem Soleimani.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

- The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (known commonly as the Iran nuclear deal or Iran deal, is an agreement on the Iranian nuclear program reached in Vienna on July 14, 2015, between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council- China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States-plus Germany) together with the European Union.

Governor's reference to 'dual citizenship' triggers a debate

- The Tamilnadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit's address to the Assembly in which he advocated dual citizenship for Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka living in Tamil Nadu, has triggered a debate.

- It is for the first time that the matter was included in the Governor's address, by former chief Minister Jayalalithaa in April 2016 during her campaign for the Assembly election.

Ukrainian plane crash in Iran kills all 176 on board; no hint of foul play

- A Ukrainian airliner crashed shortly after take-off from Tehran killing all 176 on board, mainly Iranians and Canadians.
- Search and rescue teams were combing through the smoking wreckage of the Boeing 737 flight from Tehran to Kiev but officials said there was no hope of finding anyone alive.
- The vast majority of the passengers on the Ukraine International Airlines (UIA) flight were non-Ukrainians, including 82 Iranians and 63 Canadians.

Pedro Sanchez sworn in as Spain Prime Minister

- Pedro Sanchez was sworn in as Prime Minister becoming head of Spain's first coalition government since the return of democracy in the 1970s. He took the oath before King Felipe VI.

UAE Cabinet validates Multi-entry Tourist Visa valid for 5 years

- The UAE Cabinet has validated the Multi-entry Tourist Visa which would be valid for 5 years. The Multi-entry Tourist Visa facility would be available for all nationalities visiting the UAE.
- The decision was taken in the UAE's Cabinet meeting which was held at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi.
- The decision has been made to boost the UAE's tourism economy.

Japan world's most powerful passport

- The Henley Passport Index, which periodically measures the world's most travel-friendly passports, released its first report of the new decade.
- The index placed Japan as the world's most powerful passport, while Singapore took the second spot. South Korea tied with Germany for the third spot.
- Japanese who hold the strongest passport in the world can visit 191 destinations without visa. The year 2020 marks the third year running in which Japan has held the top spot.
- India slipped two places in 2020 to the 84th place, sharing the spot with Mauritania and Tajikistan. Indians can get visa-free entry to 58 countries, according to the index

1ST Session of India-Norway Dialogue on Trade & Investment

- The first Session of India-Norway Dialogue on Trade & Investment (DTI) was convened in New Delhi.
- The session was based on the Terms of Reference (ToR) signed between India and Norway in New Delhi, during the visit of Prime Minister of Norway.
- This was the first meeting after the signing of DTI.
- The first Session was preceded by an industry interaction on 15th January, 2020 with the representatives from Indian industry, where discussions were held on various areas of mutual interest like blue economy, shipping & maritime, ICT, renewable energy, fisheries and MSME.

10th World Future Energy Summit 2020 held in Abu Dhabi, UAE; CLIX sustainability summit held

- Recently the 10th edition of World Future Energy Summit (WFES) 2020 hosted by Masdar renewable energy company, was held at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates(UAE) from January 13-16, 2020. The theme for the year 2020 was "Rethinking Global Consumption, Production, and Investment".

3rd Climate Innovations Exchange:

- Alongside the World Future Energy Summit, 3rd edition of the Climate Innovations Exchange, 'CLIX' for short and the Future Sustainability Summit was also held in Abu Dhabi. The event showcased innovative ideas related to energy, food, agriculture and sustainability in space.

The Berlin Conference on Libya

- The Conclusions of the Berlin Conference on Libya that have just been released provide such a wide remit to please all participating parties allowing for broad and different interpretations and providing no real new solutions or mechanisms to break the impasse that has dogged the Libyan crisis since the 2015 Skhirat Libyan Political Agreement.
- The conclusions build upon the Paris, Palermo and Abu Dhabi processes and conclusions as well as the 2015 Skhirat Libyan Political Agreement and all relevant UN and UN Security Council resolutions. This includes UNSMIL's Gassan Salame current "Three-Point-Plan" for Libya.

UAE has been declared 'reciprocating territory' by India under section 44A of CPC, 1908

- The Central Government has declared the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to be a "reciprocating territory" under Section 44A of Civil Procedure Code (CPC), 1908. The order was issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice.

Key Points:

- By this the order passed by the superior Courts of UAE can now be enforced in India as if they had been passed by the local courts in India. Section 44A provides the law on the subject of execution of decrees of Courts in India by foreign Courts and vice versa.
- The other countries "reciprocating territories" are: United Kingdom, Singapore, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Trinidad & Tobago, New Zealand, the Cook Islands (including Niue) and the Trust Territories of Western Samoa, Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Aden are the some of the countries which have reciprocating territories.

60th Tiruvalluvar statue in Cambodia on behalf of the World Tamil Association

- The 60th Tiruvalluvar Statue will be installed in Cambodia on April 2020 on behalf of the VGP World Tamil Association. To establish the Thiruvalluvar statue in the Cultural Office premises in Cambodia from 1st to 6th of April. A group of about 50 Tamil writers, headed by Dr. VG Santhosam, will be attending the ceremony.

India slips two places on global corruption perception index

- India's ranking in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI-2019) has slipped from 78 to 80 compared to the previous year, said Transparency International questioning the "unfair and opaque political financing" in the country. Its score of 41 out of 100 remains the same.

Country	Score in 2019	Rank in 2019	Change in rank from '18
Denmark	87	1	0
New Zealand	87	1	1
U.K.	77	12	-1
U.S.	69	23	-1
India	41	80	-2
China	41	80	7
Brazil	35	106	-1
Pakistan	32	120	-3
Russia	28	137	1
Bangladesh	26	146	3
Somalia	9	180	0

- The report has revealed that a majority of countries are showing little to no improvement in tackling corruption.



Eco-farms across Tamil Nadu set to be new tourist hotspots

- An eco-park at Courtallam, a giant orchard at Karumandurai near Salem, a farm in Thandikudi in Kodaikanal, a farm at Devala in the Nilgiris and one in Kallar near Mettupalayam, developed by the horticulture department.

- The 2019 CPI draws on 13 surveys and expert assessments to measure public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories, giving each a score from zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

India Opens 1st Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre in Niger

- India's Minister of External Affairs (MEA) Shri Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Nigerian President Mahamadou Issoufau inaugurated the first convention centre in Africa namely "Mahatma Gandhi convention centre" (MGICC) established at the state of Niger in Western Africa by India to honour the memory of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. This is the 1st centre established in Africa by India under grant assistance.

DLF to invest Rs 5,000 crore to develop 6.8 million sq ft IT park in Chennai

- Singapore's sovereign fund GIC, is planning to invest Rs 5,000 crore to develop a 6.8 million sq ft information technology park in Chennai, making the south India city its second largest market after Gurugram.
- The project, DLF Downtown Taramani spread over 27 acre is a joint venture with Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO).

8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS



Korean Rolling Barriers to be installed in Ooty on trial basis to reduce accidents

- In order to mitigate the occurrence of accidents on hilly terrains, the Tamil Nadu Highways Department in collaboration with a private firm have come up with an idea to install Korean rolling barriers, in a pilot phase.
- Rolling barriers which are known to provide cushioning effect during a crash, reduces the high speed effect, reducing the road accidents at steep curved roads as in mountainous terrains, flat roads, curved road sections, ramps, median, entrance/exit ramps in the parking garage etc.

CM requests PM to include T.N. in Atal Bhujal Yojan

- Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting that the State be included in the Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL) that was launched recently.
- The scheme, being implemented at a cost of ₹6,000 crore, intends to strengthen participatory and sustainable groundwater management at 8,350 village panchayats in 78 districts of seven States, including Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka,

Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Andra Pradesh government releases funds for fast-track courts

- Enforcement of the Disha Act required fast-track courts in all the districts, the Andra pradesh government ordered to release of ₹2 crore for each of them.
- He also called for augmenting the capacity of the forensic laboratory at the State Police Headquarters and setting up of new ones in Visakhapatnam and Tirupati.

Innovation Technology Center Opening

- The Center for Innovative Technology at the Indian Science and Industry Research Institute in Tharami will have 100% electrification services by 2030 announced by the Union Minister Harsh Vardhan.
- The groundbreaking ceremony of the Center for Innovative Technology for Innovation (SICR) at Karakudi at the Indian Institute of Science and Industry (CSIR) campus, Chennai, at the Center for Electrochemical Research (SICRI), at a cost of Rs.100 Crore.

World Tamil Economic Forum

- Hyundai in Tamil Nadu has signed an agreement to produce 50 thousand

electric vehicles by March. For this purpose Rs. 7000 crores has been invested announced by the Tamil Nadu Industries Minister MCC Sampath.

- The sixth World Economic Forum was held in Chennai on behalf of the World Tamil Economic Institute and the Chennai Development Corporation.
- Tamilnadu is the second largest economic development of the country.

First Economic Conference of World Tamil

- The World Tamil Economic Forum on behalf of the Chennai Development Corporation and the meeting of Tamils living abroad will be held on January 6 and 7.

List of cleanliness cities: Top three places in Tamil Nadu

- In the Southern Region of the Low Population Cities category, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced that Melathiruppanthuruthi, T.Kalupatti and Ganguvarpatti had made the top three in Swachh Sarvekshan Cities list.
- The Swachh Sarvekshan League 2020 code for cities on cleanliness was released by Regional Minister of State for Health Hardeep Singh Puri.

Livestock Research Center to be arrange in Sankarankoil

- The Goat Research Institute will be set up at Sankarankoil in Tenkasi district, announced by the Livestock Development Department Chachach Udumalai K. Radhakrishnan.
- Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa has developed the Vision 2023

code plan. The objective of the program is to uplift the livelihood of the rural poor. Just dial 1962, a toll-free number, and an Animal Mobile Medical Ambulance (AMMA) with animal-friendly design and equipped with ultrasound scan, that is being implemented in 30 districts including Tirunelveli.

A.R.Rahman launches a collaborative project

- Music composer A.R. Rahman's announced 'Ta Futures', a collaborative culture project that would curate and celebrate the sounds.
- Mr. Rahman announced that the focus would be on capturing the culture of Tamil Nadu and bringing it out in the form of a new creative expression.

Government introduces three Bills

- The AIADMK government introduced three Bills in the Assembly.
- The Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies Act, 1983, has no provision to place the president or vice-president of a registered cooperative society under suspension in the event of misappropriation of funds or breach of trust or gross mismanagement of the affairs of the society.
- The proposed legislation sought to replace the Ordinance to extend the tenure of the special officers appointed to manage the affairs of the market committee pending the constitution of a new market committee by another six months beyond November 2019.
- Third bill is Fisheries University (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

Cable-Laying of Chennai-Andaman & Nicobar Islands Submarine Optical Fiber System to be inaugurated

- This system will play a pivotal role in driving the "Digital India" vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister. The total length of submarine cable to be laid exceeds 2250 km and will have an initial bandwidth capacity of 400 Gbps for supporting voice and data connectivity.
- BSNL have organised a function for commencement of cable-laying of Chennai - Andaman & Nicobar Islands Submarine Optical Fibre Cable System.
- The submarine cables will be initially laid from Chennai to Port Blair covering a distance of 1,450 kilometres. Afterwards it will be extended to Rangat, Long Island, Swaraj Island, Hut Bay, Car Nicobar, Kamorta and Campbell Bay in the Union Territory, covering an additional distance of 800 kilometres.

TN's Fishery and Music universities named after the late CM J Jayalalithaa

- Tamil Nadu (TN) Assembly passed the Bills to rename 'Tamil Nadu Fisheries University' and 'Tamil Nadu Music and Fine Arts University' as 'Tamil Nadu Dr.J.Jayalalithaa Fisheries University (TNJFU)' and 'Tamil Nadu Dr.J.Jayalalithaa Music and Fine Arts University (TNMFAU)', after the late Chief Minister and AIADMK leader J Jayalalithaa.

T.N retains third spot in SDG index

- Tamil Nadu has retained the third rank in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index 2019, released by NITI Aayog.

- The State's overall score in 2019 is 67, up from 66 in 2018.
- This time, T.N. will share the third spot with Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- The State saw major improvement in its scores relating to the goals of clean water and sanitation, sustainable cities and communities, life on land and peace, justice and strong institutions.
- It also witnessed a steep fall in the scores pertaining to zero hunger and reduced inequalities.

Top performer

- Tamil Nadu was the top-performing State in terms of the 'no poverty' goal. The indicators used to assess performance in this area include population below national poverty line, households covered by health scheme/insurance and beneficiaries of social protection under maternity, among others.
- The State's score on the 'zero hunger' goal dropped to 48 from 61. Under the goal, in terms of the annual production of rice, wheat, coarse cereals (Kg/Ha) indicator, the State dropped to 2,598.00 in 2019 from 3,788.49 in 2018.
- Tamil Nadu, along with Kerala and Maharashtra, had achieved the goal relating to maternal mortality ratio (MMR). The State's MMR stood at 63, as against the target to reduce it to 70 per 1,00,000 live births by 2030.
- In 2018-19, Tamil Nadu did not register any progress under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, which aims to provide access to all-weather roads to all eligible unconnected habitations in the country - one of the yardsticks under the

‘industry, innovation and infrastructure’ goal.

Amma Youth Sports Scheme launched

- The scheme will be implemented in all 12,524 gram panchayats and 528 panchayat unions.
- The Amma Youth Sports Scheme announced by Chief Minister Edappadi K.Palaniswami in the Assembly in July, last year has made strides in Jolarpet, Sholingur, Arni and Cheyyar.
- The scheme was launched by Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration, K.C. Veeramani and Labour Welfare Minister Nilofer Kafeel in Mandalawadi village of the Jolarpet block.
- List of Sports under Amma Youth Sport Program are Kabaddi, Football, Volleyball, Cricket.

Tamil Nadu government to set up mega food parks across state

- The Tamil Nadu government would soon set up mega food parks that would lead to creation of jobs in rural areas of the state, Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam.
- In addition to the proposed Mega food parks, an ‘Ultra Mega Food Park’ would also be set up on a 450-acre land at Pelakuppam village in Villupuram district.
- The mega food parks would evolve as hubs for food processing in fruits and vegetables, fisheries, dairy, poultry and meat by encouraging private investment and are expected to generate substantial employment in rural areas.

- The Mega Food Parks would be established in Theni, Virudhunagar, Tuticorin, Erode, Cuddalore, Salem, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Tiruvannamalai and Krishnagiri districts.

Govt to try intra-state portability of ration cards on pilot basis

- According to the GO, ration cardholders can purchase food grain from any ration shops in the state. Initially, the scheme would be tested in Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi districts on a pilot basis and once it is successful the scheme would be extended to the entire state.
- To facilitate smooth flow of intra-state portability in the state, 20 percentage of additional allotment has to be made in addition to the excess entitlement
- The Central government is ambitiously pursuing ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ despite the Opposition parties criticising them. Even the state government has accepted to implement the scheme and it is likely to come into force in June.

Mega Mohiniyattamevent in Thrissur

- ‘Ekatmakam’, a mega Mohiniyattam event, will be held at Thekkinkadu Maidan in Thrissur. The event, in which 6,000 dancers will take part, is organized with an aim to enter the Guinness World Records.

10. PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following state didn't participate on swachh survekshan-2020?
(A) Tamil Nadu (B) Tripura (C) Karnataka (D) West Bengal
2. Where is kakrapar nuclear power plant located?
(A) Maharastra (B) Gujarat (C) Odisha (D) Andra Pradesh
3. Which of the following state related to Arundhati scheme?
(A) Arunachal Pradesh (B) Tamil Nadu (C) Andra Pradesh (D) Assam
4. Who is the beneficiary of RBI launched app MANI?
(A) Visually challenged persons (B) Businessmen
(C) Citizens (D) Public Sector Banks
5. What is the recently launched general integrated helpline of Indian Railway?
(A) 135 (B) 139 (C) 138 (D) 144
6. Where is sikh temple Nankana Sahib gurdwara located?
(A) India (B) Nepal (C) Afghanistan (D) Pakistan
7. Where is ISRO planned to build a astronaut training hub with Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC)?
(A) Hyderabad (B) Bangalore (C) Tuticorin (D) Challakere
8. Saras MK2 frequently seen in news related to
(A) An assault riffle (B) A cruise missile
(C) A light transport aircraft (D) A drug for SARS
9. Qasem soleimani an army commander recently killed by USA belongs to which of the following country?
(A) Iraq (B) Iran (C) Oman (D) Qatar
10. Which of the following payment bank signed agreement with Fastag to make payment service?
(A) Equitas Bank (B) Paytm (C) Phonepe (D) Airtel
11. Which state organized Zo Kutpui festival recently?
(A) Manipur (B) Mizoram (C) Assam (D) Nagaland
12. What is officially estimated GDP growth rate for financial year 2019-20 by National statistical office?
(A) 4.5 (B) 4.8 (C) 5 (D) 5.2
13. Recently launched book "Karmayoddha Granth" revolves around which of the following person's life?
(A) Mahatma Gandhi (B) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(C) Jawaharlal Nehru (D) Narendra Modi
14. Which Public Sector Bank (PSB) has approved to financial assistance to the Women Entrepreneurs Welfare Association (WEWA) in Tamil Nadu?
(A) SBI (B) Indian Bank (C) Canara Bank (D) Bank of India

15. Which country India signed agreement on exploration and used of outer space for peaceful purpose?
(A) Sweden (B) United Kingdom (C) Mongolia (D) Switzerland
16. Who is recently chosen for "Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for excellence"?
(A) K. Sivan (B) M.S. Swaminathan (C) Narendra Modi (D) Amit Shah
17. What is the India's rank in Henley passport Index-2020?
(A) 54 (B) 84 (C) 94 (D) 64
18. Where is Global Investor meet (ASCEND 2020) held?
(A) Visakapatnam (B) Kochi (C) Tuticorin (D) Mumbai
19. Where is Raisina dialogue, which, is recently seen in NEWS held?
(A) New Delhi (B) Mumbai (C) Jakarta (D) Srinagar
20. Which state released special textbooks for intellectual disability students?
(A) Tamil Nadu (B) Uttar Pradesh (C) Odisha (D) Gujarat
21. Which of the following state first introduced 3-tier panchayat raj system?
(A) Bihar (B) Rajasthan (C) Madhya Pradesh (D) Tamil Nadu
22. The workshop and exhibition on "Bamboo-A wonder grass" was recently held in which state/UT?
(A) Assam (B) Meghalaya (C) Jammu & Kashmir (D) Arunachal Pradesh
23. 126th constitutional Amendment bill is Related to which of the following?
(A) Extended Reservation (B) Right to property (C) Right to privacy (D) Abolition of 370
24. Where is the 19th edition of sahyog kaijin exercise held recently?
(A) Visakhapatnam (B) Chennai (C) Kochin (D) Mumbai
25. What is the total number of Deputy Governors in Reserve Bank of India?
(A) 3 (B) 4 (C) 5 (D) 2
26. Which country Prime Minister has resigned along with his cabinet soon after President's call for constitutional amendments?
(A) Russia (B) France (C) Germany (D) Italy
27. What is the name of the PCRA's recently launched initiative for fuel conservation?
(A) Saksham (B) Pragati (C) Akshay (D) Vishash
28. HSN code frequently seen in NEWS related to which of the following?
(A) Astronomy (B) Customs & Tariffs (C) Visa (D) Genetic Engineering
29. Where is 1st India-Norway Dialogue on Trade & Investment held?
(A) Mumbai (B) New Delhi (C) Chennai (D) Kolkata
30. India and world bank have signed a USD 88 m loan agreement to improve inland water transport services of which of the following state?
(A) Meghalaya (B) Bihar (C) Assam (D) Tripura
31. Which country recently passed a law to make "Ethic unity" mandatory?
(A) India (B) China (C) Tibet (D) Bangladesh

32. Where is mega Mohiniyattam festival recently organised?
(A) Thiruvananthapuram (B) Kochi (C) Thrissur (D) New Delhi
33. Which country is to offer e-visa facility to-India Tourists?
(A) Canada (B) South Africa (C) Kenya (D) Ireland
34. In which state/union territory Public Interface Program launched?
(A) Jammu & Kashmir (B) Ladakh (C) Uttar Pradesh (D) Kerala
35. Where is recently Vice president of India inaugurated centre of excellence for studies in classical Telugu?
(A) Nellore (B) Mysore (C) Amaravati (D) Warangal
36. Who is the author of "Human dignity – A purpose in perpetuity"?
(A) Veerappa Moily (B) Salman Khurshid (C) Ashwani Kumar (D) Kapil Sibal
37. Which minister going to head the Indian delegation to the 50th World Economic Forum (WEF)
(A) Nirmala Sitharaman (B) Sadananda Gowda (C) Piyush Goyal (D) Amit Shah
38. How many water aerodromes are approved by Government of India?
(A) 8 (B) 9 (C) 10 (D) 11
39. POL NET 2.0 related to which of the following field?
(A) Election commission of India (B) Police Department
(C) Income Tax Department (D) Tele Communication
40. As per the recent data from the Ministry of Agriculture which State has topped the production of vegetables in 2018-19?
(A) Tamil Nadu (B) West Bengal (C) Uttar Pradesh (D) Gujarat
41. Who is the Chief guest for 2020's Republic Day?
(A) Jair Bolsonaro (B) Donald Trump (C) Zayed Bin Sultan (D) Scott Morrison
42. Where did India's first ever Global Mega Science Exhibition, "Vigyan Samagam" started recently?
(A) Jalandhar (B) Kolkata (C) Kochi (D) New Delhi
43. Which country is topped Breast Feeding support policies and programs list?
(A) India (B) China (C) Srilanka (D) USA
44. Which private sector bank launched "Card less cash withdrawal" facility from its ATM's recently
(A) HDFC Bank (B) Axis Bank (C) ICICI Bank (D) Kotak Mahindra Bank
45. What is the rank of India in Democracy Index-2019?
(A) 41 (B) 51 (C) 61 (D) 71
46. Which state unveiled plan to open it's shops 24x7 recently?
(A) Delhi (B) Maharastra (C) Karnataka (D) Tamil Nadu
47. Which state government joined hands with Tamil Nadu to decipher keezhadi script?
(A) Karnataka (B) Andrapradesh (C) Kerala (D) Telengana
48. Bru Tribe frequently seen in NEWS, is originally belongs to _____ but now they are sheltered in _____
(A) West Bengal, Tripura (B) Tripura, Mizoram (C) Tripura, West Bengal (D) Mizoram, Tripura

49. Who recently won his 100th match in Australian open who also has the same record on Wimbledon too?
(A) Rafeaf Nadal (B) Novak Djokovic (C) Roger Federer (D) Andy Murray
50. Which state made it mandatory to learn preamble of Indian constitution for school students?
(A) Uttar Pradesh (B) Madhya Pradesh (C) Odisha (D) Maharastra
51. Who is regarded as the first female teacher of India and her 188th birth Anniversary recently observed?
(A) Kadambini Ganguly (B) Kamini Roy (C) Savitribai Phule (D) Sufia Kamal
52. Which ministry planned to set up NEST-a new division to increase investment coordination?
(A) Ministry of Home affairs (B) Ministry of Extremal affairs
(C) Ministry of Commerce of Industry (D) Ministry of Finance
53. Which state the became first state to conduct exercise to shortlist migration under citizenship Amendment Act - 2019?
(A) West Bengal (B) Uttarkhand (C) Madhya Pradesh (D) Uttar Pradesh
54. India gave Line of Credit of 75 million dollar to which of the following country for developments of solar parks?
(A) Argentina (B) Chile (C) Brazil (D) Cuba
55. Where is Manas National park located
(A) Assam (B) Tripura (C) Uttar Pradesh (D) Meghalaya
56. Akbar Padamsee passed away recently, related to which of the following field?
(A) Artist (B) Musician (C) Sports men (D) Author
57. Where is National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub inaugurated?
(A) Mumbai (B) New Delhi (C) Kolkata (D) Chennai
58. Where is Vikram Sarabhai children Innovation Center going to be setup?
(A) West Bengal (B) Kerala (C) Telangana (D) Gujarat
59. Which city will host the common wealth Games-2022?
(A) London (B) New Delhi (C) Birmingham (D) Beijing
60. Which state set to conduct a dedicated state level Adalat for LGBT community?
(A) Tamil Nadu (B) West Bengal (C) Kerala (D) Maharastra
61. Which state recently adopted a new logo of foxtail orchid for it's state's legislative assembly?
(A) Assam (B) Arunachal Pradesh (C) Manipur (D) Mizoram
62. Which ministry launched Purvodaya scheme?
(A) Ministry of Finance (B) Ministry of Commerce (C) Ministry of Steel (D) Ministry of Railway
63. Vanga nari-a Jallikattu like event conducted in Khanum Pongal is famous in which of the following District?
(A) Dharmapuri (B) Selam (C) Tirunelvli (D) Kanchipuram
64. Where is National youth festival 2020-organized?
(A) New Delhi (B) Varanasi (C) Ahmedabad (D) Lucknow
65. Sultan Qaboos recently passed away ruled which of the following Arab country for last 5 decades?
(A) Oman (B) Yeman (C) Kuwait (D) Sandi Arabia

66. Ghodahada reservoir sometime seen in News is located at which of the following state?
(A) Assam (B) Bihar (C) Odisha (D) Jarkhand
67. The Vice President of India is to inaugurate the centre of Excellence for studies of Telugu language in which city?
(A) Amaravathi (B) Visakapatnam (C) Tirupathi (D) Nellore
68. 14th Annual status of Education Report (2019) is released by which of the following organisation?
(A) Pratham (B) Ministry of education (C) Ministry of statistics (D) NITI Aayog
69. Which state launched yashaswini scheme for women entrepreneurship?
(A) Karnataka (B) Maharastra (C) Goa (D) Kerala
70. Oleksiy Honcharuk has resigned as Prime Minister of which of the nation?
(A) Ukraine (B) Poland (C) Sweden (D) Switzerland
71. Which country passport is rated as most powerful passport according Hency passport index-2020?
(A) USA (B) Japan (C) Norway (D) China
72. Which state proposed Right to business bill-2020?
(A) Haryana (B) Delhi (C) Punjab (D) Tamil Nadu
73. When will Pariksha Pe Charcha-2020 event be held?
(A) 20 January (B) 22 January (C) 23 January (D) 30 January
74. The Central Drug Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) declared 49 drugs as not of standard quality and the organization comes under which of the following ministry?
(A) Ministry of chemical and fertilizer (B) Ministry of Health and family welfare
(C) Ministry of Home Affairs (D) Ministry of Food Processing Industries
75. Where is sati stones belongs to 18th century recently found in Tamil Nadu?
(A) Mandagupattu (B) Uthiramerur (C) Mahapalipuram (D) Keezhadi
76. Recently corona virus seen in NEWS, started to spread which of the following country?
(A) South Africa (B) China (C) Somalia (D) Congo
77. Where is 6.5 km long Z-morh tunnel planned to be constructed?
(A) Himachal Pradesh (B) Sikkim (C) Jammu & Kashmir (D) Assam
78. Which country's National Health commission announced recent out break of corona virus is controllable?
(A) USA (B) India (C) Brazil (D) China
79. Article 131 of Indian constitution related to which of the following jurisdiction of Supreme Court?
(A) Appellate Jurisdiction (B) Advisory Jurisdiction (C) Original Jurisdiction (D) Writ Jurisdiction
80. What is the name of the recently launched scheme by ministry of women & child development for supporting women during pregnancy?
(A) Swasthya Shakshi Project (B) Nari Shakti initiative
(C) Rageshwari scheme (D) Sakhi suraksha scheme
81. Which company recently announced an investment of USD 1 billion for small and medium enterprises in India?
(A) Flipkart (B) Walmart (C) Amazon (D) Alibaba

82. Who is the first Indian women officer to lead an all men contingent during army day?
(A) Captain Swati Pandey (B) Captain Kritika Cosain
(C) Captain Sanjana Chaudhary (D) Captain Tanya Shergil
83. Which country passport is rated as most powerful passport according Hency passport index-2020?
(A) USA (B) Japan (C) Norway (D) China
84. GSAT-30 launched by ISRO from which of the following launch pads?
(A) Sriharikota (B) Abdul Kalam Island (C) Thumba (D) French Guiana
85. India recently announced travel advisory to passengers travelling for which nation over spread of coronavirus?
(A) Taiwan (B) South Korea (C) China (D) Japan
86. Who heads fee fixation committee for private agricultural colleges in Tamil Nadu?
(A) Sankaranarayanan (B) Justice K. Chandru
(C) Justice Lodha (D) Justice Vijaya Tahiramani
87. Which Indian advocate appointed as UK's Queen counsel?
(A) Aravind Subramaniam (B) Harish Salve (C) Y.V. Chandrachud (D) Indra Malhotra
88. Which of the following country is planning to delivered S-400 missiles to India with in 2025?
(A) USA (B) Russia (C) Japan (D) France
89. Which organization releases Global Risk report – 2020?
(A) World Bank (B) World Economic Forum
(C) United Nations Organization (D) United Nations Development Program
90. Who has been recently conferred with the 29th Saraswathi Samman Award?
(A) Vikram Seth (B) Mahabalashwar Sail (C) Vasdev Mohi (D) Padma Sachdev
91. Who is appointed as head of Nehru memorial museum?
(A) M.J. Akbar (B) Nripendra Mishra (C) A. Surya Gandhi (D) Rahul Gandhi
92. Where is largest number of Irrawaddy dolphins found in a water body in the world?
(A) Sambhar lake (B) Chilika lake (C) Wular lake (D) Pulicat lake
93. Which country's National Health commission announced recent out break of corona virus is controllable?
(A) USA (B) India (C) Brazil (D) China
94. Article 131 of Indian constitution related to which of the following jurisdiction of Supreme Court?
(A) Appellate Jurisdiction (B) Advisory Jurisdiction (C) Original Jurisdiction (D) Writ Jurisdiction
95. Which state recently organized 18,034 km long human chain to create awareness about climate change and social ills?
(A) Odisha (B) Kerala (C) Karnataka (D) Bihar
96. India planned to establish "Maritime Research Coordinating Centre" in which of the following country?
(A) Srilanka (B) Maladives (C) Madagascar (D) Myanmar

97. Ramnath Goenka awards awarded for excellence in which of the following field?
 (A) Inventors (B) Journalists
 (C) Gallantry award for military action (D) Government officer
98. Article 131 of Indian constitution related to which of the following jurisdiction of Supreme Court?
 (A) Appellate Jurisdiction (B) Advisory Jurisdiction (C) Original Jurisdiction (D) Writ Jurisdiction
99. Which year Indian Council for Child Welfare was created?
 (A) 1952 (B) 1962 (C) 1972 (D) 1982
100. Where did Tamil Nadu Government planning to set up oil refinery company?
 (A) Ennore (B) Kanyakumari (C) Kayalpatnam (D) Thoothukudi

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71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
B	C	A	B	B	B	C	D	C	A
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
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91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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