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**JANUARY - 2020**



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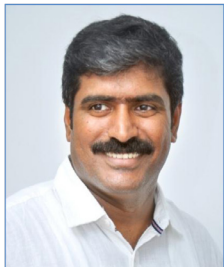
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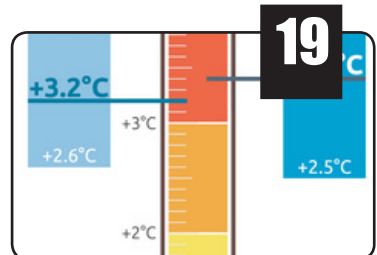
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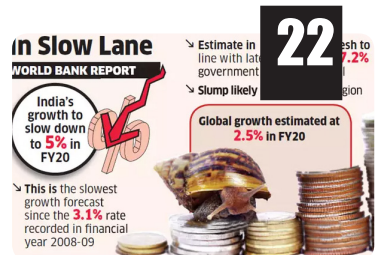
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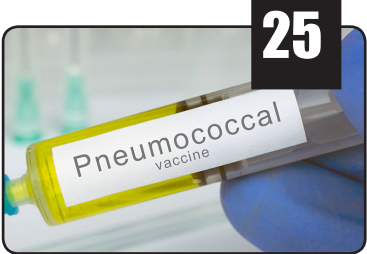
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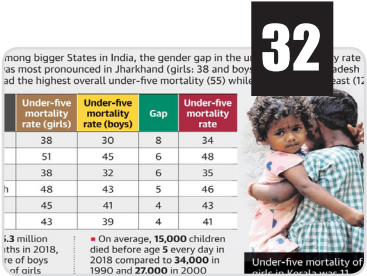
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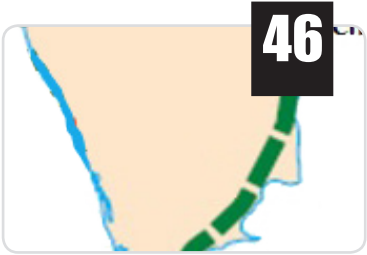
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# History



## 1.1 Important Days

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
04-01-2020	World Braille Day	
09-01-2020	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas	The 16 <sup>th</sup> 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



## 1.2 Defence, National Security and Terrorism

### 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 Bhaduria 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 107<sup>th</sup> 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).

### 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **1<sup>st</sup> 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.

### **MoD approves rules of business for DMA**

- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has approved the Rules of Business for the newly created Department of Military Affairs (DMA) headed by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).
- The DMA headed by Gen Bipin Rawat will have two Joint Secretaries, 13 Deputy Secretaries, 25 Under Secretaries and 22 Section officers.
- The DMA is the fifth department in the MoD, the others being the Department of Defence, the Department of Defence Production, the Department of Defence Research and Development and the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.
- The Services have been brought under the ambit of the DMA in addition to the Territorial Army and works relating to the three Services and procurement exclusive to the Services except capital acquisitions

### **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 by Defence Secretary 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.



## 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 1<sup>st</sup> time, Vizag (Andhra Pradesh) to host 14<sup>th</sup> 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.

## 1.4 Places in News

### 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.

## 1.5 Eminent Persons

### 2020 Designated as "Year of Nurse and Midwife"

- In the honor of 200<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **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

### **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.



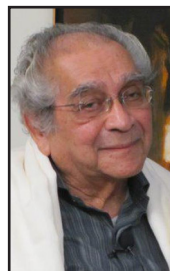
### **Austria's Kurz returns as world's youngest govt. head**

- 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.

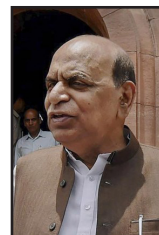


### **Iconic painter Akbar Padamsee passes away at 91**

- 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.

## 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.



## 1.6 Sports and Games

### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Khelo India Games

- Chief Executive Officer of "Khelo India Games" has announced that "Lawn bowls" and "cycling" will be included in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of Khelo India Games. The two games will be included in the event for the first time. The 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Poorna scaled Antarctica's highest peak Mt. Vinson Massif

- 18-years-old Malavath Poorna 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.



### BCCI to set up medical panel at NCA

- The National Cricket Academy, which has often been criticised for its handling of players' injuries, is set to get the help of a BCCI medical panel.
- The need for a medical panel was discussed at the NCA's which was attended by all the BCCI-officer bearers, including president Sourav Ganguly and NCA cricket head Rahul Dravid.

## 1.7 Books & Authors

- **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.

## 1.8 India and its Neighbours

### 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

### 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.



#### Key Points:

- The award was instituted by the Kesari-Maratha Trust and it will be conferred to Gupta during the 139th foundation ceremony of 'kesari' newspaper started by Lokmanya Tilak.

### DRDO Scientist Award for scientist Chitra Rajagopal

- The 34<sup>th</sup> 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.
- Governor of Tamilisai Soundararajan presented the National Design Award to the Scientist Narayanan, Director of the ISRO-Liquid Power Center at Thiruvananthapuram.



- Agni-4's Program Director and DRDO Scientist Kishore Nath was awarded the Engineering Design Award and the Architectural Design Award was awarded to scientist Ashok Kumar of the Central Architectural Research Institute in Odisha.

### 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 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.

### 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.



### 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.
- The award was presented by Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar to AdhavanAdityan, Director, Thanthi Group of Publications, Thanthi TV and Hello FM and Rajiv Nambiar, CEO, Hello FM, at a function held in New Delhi.

### 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.



### MS Swaminathan & Dr. Gutta honored with 1<sup>st</sup> Venkaiah Naidu National Awards in Hyderabad

- Eminent Agricultural Scientist Dr M S Swaminathan has been selected as the 1<sup>st</sup>



recipient of the Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence while renowned social worker Dr. Gutta Muniratnam has been selected as the 1<sup>st</sup> recipient of the Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service. The award was given at a function in Hyderabad, Telangana.

- 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."

## 1.10 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.

## 1.11 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 Gynesh Kumar.
- Gnanesh Kumar has played a key role in the central government's move to abolish the special status accorded to Jammu and Kashmir and divide it into two union territories.

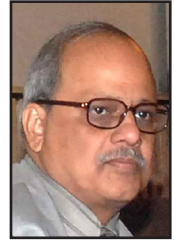
### **V K Yadav to lead Railway Board for 1 more year**

- 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.
- According to rules, an incumbent on ceasing office as a Lokpal member is barred from taking up any diplomatic assignment or contesting any election of president, vice president, member of either House of Parliament or State Legislature among others.
- There is a provision for a chairperson and a maximum of eight members in the Lokpal panel. Of these, four need to be judicial members.
- All the eight Lokpal members were administered the oath of office by Justice Ghose.



## 1.12 Cultural Panorama

### '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.

### 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.

### 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.



## 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".
- "Allow and extend the Scheduled Caste status to Christians of Scheduled Caste origin for availing special privilege in education, getting scholarships, employment opportunity, welfare measures, affirmative actions, right to contest in the reserved constituencies from panchayat, legislative assemblies up to the Parliament and for availing the legal remedy/protection under Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention) of Atrocities Act, 1989 amended in the year 2018.

## 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 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.
- Upon the success of Rythu Bandhu scheme, central government launched Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Yojana all over the country in 2018.
- 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.

- The group also includes Home Minister (HM) Amit Shah and Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Minister of State for Agriculture, Finance, Tribal Affairs and Animal Husbandry.
- This move comes after the concerns over growing dissent among farmers about the Scheme, dropping out of 4 insurance companies (ICICI Lombard, Tata AIG, Cholamandalam MS, and Shriram General Insurance).

### 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.

# 3. GEOGRAPHY



## 3.1 Policy on Environment and Ecology

### 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.

#### Highlights

- In the category of 10 lakh plus population, Indore secured first place. Indore has remained in first place for the last three years. Following Indore, Bhopal and Surat are in second and third places respectively. In the category of population between one lakh and 10 lakhs, Jamshedpur was in 1st spot following New Delhi and Khargone.

### 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.
- The last tiger census report, released in July 2019, had placed the number of tigers in India at 2,967, up by a third when compared with the numbers reported in 2014.

- Madhya Pradesh, which has the highest number of tigers in the country (526, as per the last census), has recorded the most number of cases of tiger deaths, with 31 tiger deaths reported from the central Indian State in 2019. This was followed by Maharashtra, which reported 18 deaths. Karnataka, another State with high tiger population, recorded 12 deaths, and Uttarakhand recorded ten deaths. Tamil Nadu recorded seven cases of tiger deaths.

### **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.



# 4. ECONOMICS

## 4.1 New Economic Policy & Govt. Sector

### 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

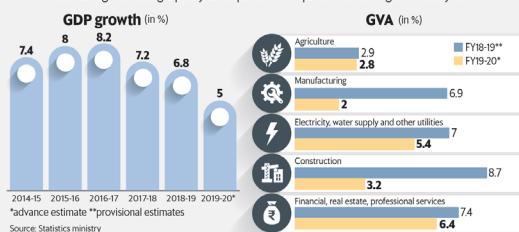
- The technologies such as Artificial

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

## 5% growth cloud over Budget 2020

### GROSS DOMESTIC PROBLEM

Economic growth is projected to slow to 5% in the current fiscal from 6.8% in the previous year, with manufacturing witnessing a paltry 2% expansion compared with 6.9% growth last year.



**THE** estimate raises hopes that the second half of the financial year may turn out to be better than the first.

**ECONOMISTS** say any cut in public spending may put the modest improvement in economic growth at risk.

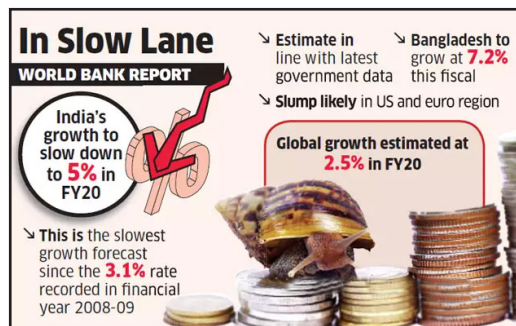
**THE** upcoming Union budget is widely expected to announce more measures to counter the slowdown.

- 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.

## 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.

## 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.

**About Reserve Bank of India(RBI):**

- Headquarters- Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Formation- 1 April 1935

# 5. SCIENCE



## 5.1 Latest Inventions on Science & Technology

### 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.

### Highlights

- The aim of the move is to make sure at least one Electric Vehicle charging station is available in a grid of 4 km × 4 km area in the selected cities.

### 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).
- The 400-acre ISRO land at Challakere will be the single-stop consolidating infrastructure and activities related to space travelers.
- The first set of four astronaut candidates for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022 are to train in Russia.
- The amount sought for the HSFC is over and above the ₹10,000-crore approved budget of Gaganyaan.



## 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.
- According to a November 2019 UNICEF report, pneumonia caused 1,27,000 deaths in India in 2018, the second highest number of child mortality under the age of five in the world. In India, pneumonia and diarrhoea cause the most deaths in children under five years.
- The pneumococcal vaccine PNEUMOSIL is a conjugate vaccine to help produce stronger immune response to a weak antigen.
- Serum Institute had optimised an efficient conjugate vaccine manufacturing processes for its meningitis.



## 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.

### Highlights of the new standards

- The ISEER (Indian Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) according to the new standard should be in the range of 2.7 to 3.5 for window ACs and 3.3 to 5 for split air conditioners.
- ISEER is the ratio between total amount of heat an AC can remove when operated in active mode to the amount of energy required during the same period.

## 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. It will help India to cover the entire mission right from its launch.
- The IDRSS satellites are to be launched on GSLV launcher. They will approximately weigh 2,000 kg. These satellites are to be placed at an orbit of 36,000 km away from earth's orbit.

## **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.
- Only School-going children up to 18 years old were allowed to participate in the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF).
- The CIF is being organized by Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC). GUSEC is an incubation centre created by Gujarat University in collaboration with UNICEF.

## **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.



## 5.2 Mass Media & Communication

### 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](http://ceir.gov.in) to trace the stolen mobiles for Delhi subscribers..

#### Key Points:

- The System has been developed by Center for Development of Telematics (CDOT) under the Department of Telecom. This will be working in collaboration with Delhi police and Telecom service providers.
- If anybody lost their mobile phone, they can register their request in <https://ceir.gov.in/> portal along with the FIR copy to block the IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number of the lost or stolen device. This can be tracked with the request ID.

### 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 25<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Kavalan app**

- In the wake of the rape and murder of a 26-year-old veterinarian in Hyderabad, the Kavalan SOS app of the Tamil Nadu Police has seen a huge jump in downloads. An intensive campaign conducted by the police across the State has also contributed to the spike.

**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.

**Aim:**

- The main objective of the Vajra Platform is to provide automated clearing and settlement of payments and drastically reduce the need for manual reconciliation.
- Vajra Platform will be used for Aadhaar authentication by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

**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.

# 6. NATIONAL – DIARY OF EVENT



## 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.

### KeyPoints:

- DAY-NULM consists of 44 lakh women across the country which aims to make women financially independent.
- According to Union Housing and Urban Affairs 12 lakh people have trained in the past five years and nearly 5.06 lakh people were given funds by the government to start their own business.
- Government is likely to sign MoU with Amazon on January 7, 2020, for the same purpose.

## 27<sup>th</sup> National children's science congress 2019 held for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in Thiruvananthapuram

- The Vice President of India, Shri Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu has attended the 27<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> time at Mar Ivanios College in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala from December 27 -31,2019.

### Key Points:

- Organizers: The Chief Minister (CM) of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan has inaugurated the congress, which was jointly organized by Kerala state council for science, technology and environment (KSCSTE) and Department of Science and Technology, Government of India (GoI).

## 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.

- Display information: Automated display information about the trains expected at the station is displayed in trilingual forms. i.e., Telugu, English and Hindi.
- Data modifications: The system will also provide facility for operator to modify the data instantly in case of any emergencies.

### **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.

### **AFSPA Act in Nagaland:**

- The implementation of AFSPA has been active in Nagaland for almost 6 decades (60 years) even after a framework agreement was signed on August 3, 2015.
- Agreement signing: The agreement was signed by Naga insurgent group National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak Muivah)-NSCN-IM General Secretary Thuingaleng Muivah and government interlocutor R.N. Ravi in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The act also remains in force even in Assam, most of Manipur, and three districts in Arunachal Pradesh

**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.

**Highlights**

- In 2015, the WII counted 523 lions in Gujarat. It is expected that the numbers have risen phenomenally and the population must have crossed 1,000. The collection process is to be carried out using scientific methods laid out by NTCA. Around 1,000 to be used to capture the lions.

**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.

#### **Key Points:**

- The world's tallest statue known as the 'statue of unity' of Sardar Patel was built at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Central Gujarat. Its height is 182 meters (597 ft) and was built at a cost of Rs 3000 crores.

### **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.

### **1<sup>st</sup> 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.

#### **Key Points:**

- NMCG & WII report: According to a report by the National Mission for Clean Ganga(NMCG) and Wildlife Institute of India (WII), the turtle species are under threat due to loss through dams and barrages, pollution, illegal poaching, accidental drowning through fishing nets and threats to their nesting habitats etc.
- Traffic India study: According to a recent study conducted by Traffic India, nearly 11,000 turtles are being smuggled in India annually which makes 1,10,000 turtles in the past 10 years.

### **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.

### **107<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress:**

- The 107<sup>th</sup> 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 107<sup>th</sup> ISC is Science and Technology: Rural Development.

### **Uttar Pradesh became 1<sup>st</sup> state to shortlist migrants for citizenship**

- Uttar Pradesh (UP) became the 1<sup>st</sup> 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'.

#### **Key Points:**

- It aims for the creation of more residential units and implementation of various welfare measures for the troops.
- It will focus on sports and physical fitness leveraging modern gadgetry and constructing infrastructure to their families

### **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.
- The Centre has also given in-principle approval for the strategic disinvestment of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL), India's largest exporter of saleable pig iron, by allowing its public sector shareholders to sell their stakes in the company. The strategic buyer will be identified through a two-stage auction procedure.

### **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**

- Andhra 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%.

### **Anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) protests in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh.**

- The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) will organise seminars in Uttar Pradesh and other parts of the country to address the misunderstanding and fear of the Muslim community over the Citizenship Amendment Act.

### **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.
- IPGA expects close to 1500 trade stakeholders from India and key pulses exporting countries like the USA, Australia, Canada, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi, etc. to participate in 'The Pulses Conclave 2020' (TPC 2020)

### **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.

### Global investor meet ASCEND 2020 held in Kochi, Kerala

- A two day organised Global Investors Meet ASCEND 2020 was held in Kochi, Kerala. The meet was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Kerala Shri Pinarayi Vijayan and was organised by states Department of Industries. Totally Rs 1 lakh crore worth investment proposals were received.

### India's under-5 girls face high mortality

State	Under-five mortality rate (girls)	Under-five mortality rate (boys)	Gap	Under-five mortality rate
Uttarakhand	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:** 21@20: 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. It will own an exclusive online portal that will have dedicated service helpline for victims of cyber-crimes. 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.

# 7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



## 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 84<sup>th</sup> place, sharing the spot with Mauritania and Tajikistan. Indians can get visa-free entry to 58 countries, according to the index

# 8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS



## 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 Survekshan 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.
- While Agriculture Minister R. Doraikkannu was introducing the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020.
- 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.