

CONTENTS

S. No.	Chapter Name	Page Nos.
1.	Budget 2019-20 Facts and Analysis	1-2
2.	National	3-17
3.	Economy and Banking	18-23
4.	International and Bilateral	24-30
5.	States	31-35
6.	Awards and Honours	36-42
7.	Persons and Appointments	43-46
8.	Science and Technology	47-49
9.	Summits and Conferences	50-53
10.	Sports	54-56
11.	Days and Dates	57
12.	Books and Authors	57
13.	Reports, Indices and Rankings	58
	Practice Bits (Current Affairs)	59-70

MAGAZINE

1. BUDGET 2019-20 FACTS AND ANALYSIS

1. Budget Expenditure is Rs.27,84,200 crores

The Indian Budget 2019 is of 27.84 lakh crore rupees. The expenditure has increased significantly when compared with the Union Budget 2018, where the expenditure figure was 24.42 lakh crore rupees.

2. Total Receipts (without considering borrowing) is only Rs.20,80,201 crores

The total revenue expected in the financial year 2019-20 (without considering borrowing) is only Rs. 20.80 lakh crores. As you can see the expenditure (Rs.27.84 lakh crores) is way higher than the receipts (Rs.20.80 lakh crores).

3. Income Tax:

Personal Income Tax rates kept unchanged at the following:

- ✓ NIL tax on income upto Rs 2.5 lacs
- ✓ 5% tax on income above Rs 2.5 lacs upto Rs 5 lacs
- ✓ 20% tax on income above Rs 5 lacs upto Rs 10 lacs
- ✓ 30% tax on income above Rs 10 lacs

However, full tax rebate under Section 87A provided to individuals earning income upto Rs 5 lacs. The limit of tax rebate has been increased from Rs 2,500 to Rs 12,500. This implies that individuals earning income upto Rs 5 lacs will not need to pay any tax. This move will benefit an estimated 3 crore middle class tax payers and it will result in a revenue loss of Rs 18,500 crores to the government.

- ✓ Taxable income above Rs 50 lacs: Surcharge of 10%
- ✓ Taxable income above Rs 1 crore: Surcharge of 15%
- ✓ Health and Education cess on Income Tax: 4%
- ✓ Standard tax deduction for salaried persons raised from Rs 40,000 to Rs 50,000

4. Pradhan Mantri - Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM - KISAN)

- ✓ An income support scheme for marginal farmers was announced in the interim Budget 2019-20 called Pradhan Mantri - Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM - KISAN).
- ✓ Under this scheme, farmers holding upto 2 hectares of agricultural land will get Rs 6,000 as assured income support every year.
- ✓ This adds upto Rs 16.40 per day income support for marginal farmers. Out of 14.57 crore agricultural holdings in the country, about 12.56 crores are less than 2 hectares whom this scheme is intended to benefit.
- ✓ However, the amount of Rs 6,000 will be transferred in the beneficiaries account in 3 instalments of Rs 2,000 each.

5. Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan.

- ✓ This will cover unorganised sector workers.
- ✓ This scheme will cover all unorganized sector workers with income less than 15,000.
- ✓ This pension yojana shall provide them an assured monthly pension of Rs. 3,000 from the age of 60 years on a monthly contribution of a small affordable amount during their working age. It is expected that at least 10 crore labourers and workers in the unorganised sector under this scheme.

6. National Programme on 'Artificial Intelligence'

Gas been envisaged by the Government. This would be catalysed by the establishment of the National Centre on Artificial Intelligence as a hub along with Centers of Excellence. ! Nine priority areas have been identified. A National Artificial Intelligence portal will also be developed soon.

7. Allocation of Rashtriya Gokul Mission has been increased by 750 crore.

- ✓ A new Commission called Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog will be set up.
- ✓ Kisan Credit Card facility will be extended to Dairyfarmers.

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| <p>8. India is the second largest fish producing nation in the world accounting for 6.3% of global production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To provide sustained and focused attention towards development of this sector, a separate Department of Fisheries will be created. <p>9. Under, Ayushman Bharat, Which is intended to provide medical treatment to nearly 50 crore people, already close to 10 lakh patients have benefited for medical treatment which would have cost them 3,000 crore through free treatment made available under the scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 22nd AIIMS will be opened in Haryana. <p>10. Recapitalization of banks with 2.6 lakh crore has improved the financial health of banks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Amalgamation of banks has resulted in bringing them out from PCA (Prompt Corrective action). ✓ The period of 2008-14 will be remembered as a period of aggressive credit growth as Outstanding loans of public sector banks | <p>ballooned from Rs. 18 lakh crore to Rs. 52 lakh crore during this period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There were high stressed and nonperforming assets (NPAs) amounting to 5.4 lakh crore in 2014. ✓ The 4Rs approach of Recognition, Resolution, Re-capitalisation and Reforms has been followed which led to close to 3 lakh crore recovery in favour of banks and creditors. <p>11. Fiscal deficit has been reduced to 3.4% of GDP. Government has target to keep fiscal deficit at 3.1 % in next financial year (2019-2020) .</p> <p>12. Current Account Deficit has reduced to 2.5% of GDP from 2.8 % last year.</p> <p>13. Average inflation has been brought down to 4.6%.</p> <p>14. Foreign Direct Investment: Rs.239 Billion FDI has been recorded in current fiscal year. This period also witnessed a rapid liberalisation of the FDI policy, allowing most FDI to come through the automatic route.</p> |
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2. NATIONAL

Rail Drishti Dashboard:

- ✓ Minister of Railways & Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal has launched Rail Drishti dashboard, encompassing all the digitisation efforts in Indian Railways and promoting transparency and accountability.
- ✓ It brings information from various sources on a single platform and gives access to key statistics and parameters to every citizen of the country.
- ✓ This dashboard can be accessed using a desktop/laptop or a mobile device such as a phone or tablet.
- ✓ The application is mobile optimized for ease of use of public. The url of the dashboard is “raildrishti.cris.org.in”.
- ✓ Chairman, Railway Board, Shri V.K. Yadav.
- ✓ The available information has been categorized under 15 user friendly sections on the Dashboard:
 1. **AT A GLANCE:** This gives information on Passenger Reservation, Unreserved Ticketing, Freight Earnings and Freight Loading.
 2. **SERVICES:** Passengers can view and avail the status of any digital service offered. Rail Drishti consists of 6 services, namely, PNR enquiry, ODC application enquiry, Complaint Enquiry, Tender Enquiry, Shramik Enquiry and Freight related enquiries. For citizen’s convenience links to eight important railway websites are available here.
 3. **TRAINS ON RUN:** Passengers can now track any train on the Indian Railways Network.
 4. **IRCTC KITCHENS:** The Dashboard provides a facility to view live feeds from the cameras installed in various IRCTC base kitchens. Passengers can now view how the food being served to them in trains is being cooked and packed.
 5. **GRIEVANCES:** This section shows status of Grievances reported via Complaint Management System (COMS).
 6. **ACHIEVEMENTS:** Achievements of Indian Railways as a whole and achievements of Railways in various states can be viewed via the dashboard.
 7. **STATION IMAGES:** It displays the images of various areas across the network before and after the work has been completed.
 8. **HERITAGE:** The tab showcases the cultural aspect of travel on Indian Railways. There are 4 main sections in this tab, this includes, rail heritage, memorable journeys, 360 degree virtual tours of routes, trains, saloons, and the IRCTC tourism desk which provides important information and tourist services.
 9. **SHRAMIK KALYAN:** This section provides information about the unorganized sector working with Railway contractors. The amount of wages distributed to the casual workers is available on the dashboard.
 10. **BILLS:** Bills required to be paid by Indian Railways to suppliers and their duration wise pendency can be viewed on the dashboard.
 11. **FREIGHT EARNINGS:** This section shows earnings of Freight across the Indian Railways Network. Earnings can be viewed for a day, for a week, for a month and for a year along with the zones and commodity wise breakup.
 12. **FREIGHT LOADING/UNLOADING:** Number of rakes and quantity of freight loaded and unloaded in a day, in a week, in a month and in a year along with their zones and commodity wise breakup is provided.
 13. **PASSENGER EARNINGS:** This section shows earnings of Passenger Reservations and Unreserved Ticketing. Number of passengers, tickets, and earnings can be viewed. Further, in Unreserved Ticketing the performance of suburban, non-suburban, and mobile bookings can be viewed.
 14. **EXPENDITURE:**Details of the expenditure and works by the Indian Railways can be viewed. Figures of four different periods are displayed - performance during the day, during last 7 days, during the month and for the year.
 15. **SUGAM – The Freight App :** This tab give access to Indian Railways freight business information. It helps customers keep track of their consignment. It provides information on various terminals and associated nodal officers, indents status, prevailing freight rates, rake allocation plans, restrictions applicable etc. Freight performance and other statistics are also available on the tab.

NID at Bhopal and Jorhat

- ✓ Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, inaugurated National Institutes of Design (NID) at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh and Jorhat in Assam through video conference from New Delhi on 22nd February 2019.
- ✓ Both institutes are autonomous institutions under Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ✓ It support various schemes of the government like "Make in India", "Skill India", "Digital India", "Startup India", and "Smart City initiatives" to name a few, and to promote design education.
- ✓ The National Design Policy 2007 had recommended setting up design institutes on the lines of NID, Ahmedabad in other parts of India to promote design programs.
- ✓ Four new NIDs have been set up in Andhra Pradesh (Amaravati), Assam (Jorhat), Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal) and Haryana (Kurukshetra) with a total outlay of Rs. 434 crore.
- ✓ Establishing new NIDs in different regions of the country will help produce highly skilled manpower in design which, in turn, will create job opportunities, both direct and indirect, by providing sustainable design interventions for crafts, handloom, rural technology, small, medium and large-scale enterprises and outreach programs for capacity, capability and institution building.
- ✓ NID Bhopal will begin its academic journey from July 2019 with 30 acres campus, 60 students in 4-year undergraduate courses in industrial design, communication design and apparel & textile design, the written test for which were held in January 2019.

Titanwala Museum:

- ✓ Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani on Monday inaugurated the 'Titanwala Museum' in Bagru, Rajasthan.
- ✓ The museum showcases the Chhipa community's hand-block printing.
- ✓ The museum will be open from Monday to Sunday between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Rapid Transit System Connecting Delhi to Meerut:

With an aim to de-congest the national capital, the government of India approved the construction of the

priority Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut rapid transit system (RRTS).

Project worth is Rs 30,274 crore covering a distance of 82.15 kilometres (68.03 km- elevated and 14.12 km-underground) with 24 stations.

The corridor is expected to connect the cities to the centre with a high-speed dedicated rail connector and serve as many as eight lakh passenger trips per day.

"The Cabinet has approved the construction of Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) covering a distance of 82.15 kilometres," Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said after the meeting.

Of the 82.15 kilometres (km), 68.03 km would be elevated and 14.12 km would be underground.

Waste to Wonder Park in South Delhi

- The Waste to Wonder Park was inaugurated near Sarai Kale Khan, New Delhi.
- The South Delhi Municipal Corporation has made this park by creating replicas of the Seven Wonders of the World and the replicas have been fabricated from scrap material.
- The park is 'world's first' wherein waste products have been used to replicate the wonders. With solar panels, solar trees and a windmill, the park is self-sustainable.
- To make the park, 150 tons of scrap, 5 artists, 7 supporting artists, 70 welders and helpers, 180 days, 3 windmills of 1 KW each and 10 KW of Rooftop Solar Panels, have been used. The waste used in the seven wonders is as follows-
 - USA's Statue of Liberty, 7-8 tonnes
 - Brazil's Christ the Redeemer: 4- 5 tonnes
 - Paris's Eiffel Tower: 40 tonnes
 - India's Taj Mahal: 30 tonnes
 - Rome's Largest Amphitheatre Colosseum: 11 tonnes
 - Italy's Leaning Tower of Pisa: 10.5 tonnes
 - Egypt's Pyramid of Giza: 10-12 tonnes

Drinking Water- Straight from the Air:

- ✓ Navratna Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has unveiled its new product, the Atmospheric Water Generator (AWG), an innovative solution to meet the ever-increasing need for drinking water worldwide, today at Aero India 2019.
- ✓ Chairman and Managing Director BEL Shri MV Gowtama.

- ✓ BEL's Atmospheric Water Generator can be used to generate water straight from the humidity present in the atmosphere.
- ✓ The AWG comes with a Mineralisation Unit, which is used to add minerals which are required to make the water potable. The AWG is configurable in static and mobile (vehicular) versions and is available in 30 litres/day, 100 litres/day, 500 litres/day and 1,000 litres/day capacities.
- ✓ The Atmospheric Water Generator can be used to provide drinking water in community centres and public places like health care centres, schools, colleges, offices, railway stations, bus stands, airports, sea ports, off-shore oil rigs, military establishments, remote field areas and remote establishments and residential complexes.
- ✓ The Atmospheric Water Generator is being manufactured by BEL in collaboration with CSIR-IICT and MAITHRI, a start-up company based in Hyderabad.

President Promulgates 4 Ordinances:

President Ram Nath Kovind promulgated four Ordinances in February 2019.

These are:

1. Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Second Ordinance
 - a. This Ordinance declares the practice of instant triple talaq to be void and illegal and also to make it an offence punishable with imprisonment up to three years and fine.
2. Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Second Ordinance
 - a. It enables the Board of Governors appointed in supersession of the Medical Council of India to continue to exercise the powers of MCI for a period of two years or till the Council is reconstituted, to ensure transparency, accountability and quality in the governance of medical education in the country.
3. Companies (Amendment) Second Ordinance
 - a. to empower the Central Government to allow certain companies to have a different financial year instead of as determined by the Tribunal.
4. Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019
 - a. to have central legislation to tackle the menace of illicit deposits taking activities in the country.

EPFO Hikes Interest Rate on Provident Fund to 8.65% from 8.55%:

- Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO has decided to provide 8.65 per cent interest on Provident Fund deposits for 2018-19 against 8.55 per cent in the last year.
- The Central Board of Trustees (CBT) headed by Labour Minister is the apex decision making body of the EPFO which finalises rate of interest on PF deposits for a financial year.

SWAYATT:

- Govt of India launched SWAYATT. It is an initiative to promote Start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage Through eTransactions on Government e Marketplace (GeM).
- This will bring together the key stakeholders within the Indian entrepreneurial ecosystem to Government e-Marketplace the national procurement portal.
- CEO GeM, Radha Chauhan, introduced the concept of SWAYATT and Start-up Runway.
- GeM Start-up Runway seeks to align certified Start-ups with Government procurement orders and contracts. It tries to enable Start-ups in scaling operations from ideation to growth stage in minimal time, and spur hyper-local job-creation and wealth-generation and for achieving socially-inclusive economic growth.
- Start-up Runway will enable Start-ups to conduct market trials with government buyers, seek time-bound feedback and gain realistic product, price comparison and market valuation from potential buyers and investors.
- **GeM:** Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is a one stop portal to facilitate online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments / Organizations / PSUs. GeM aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement. It provides the tools of e-bidding, reverse e-auction and demand aggregation to facilitate the government users achieve the best value for their money.

Operation Digital Board (ODB)

- The Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Prakash Javadekar launched Operation Digital Board to leverage technology in order to boost quality education in the country.

- A digital board will be introduced all over the country in government and government aided schools from class 9th onwards as well as in higher education institutions.
- The process will begin from the coming session of 2019 itself.
- ODB aims at converting a class room into a digital class room and in addition to availability of e-resources at any time and at any place to students.
- It will also help in provisioning of personalised adaptive learning as well as Intelligent Tutoring by exploiting emerging technologies like Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence & Data Analytics.
- Launching of e-Pathshala, DIKSHA, NROER, NPTEL, e-pgpathshala SWAYAM and SWAYAM-Prabha DTH Channels etc. by MHRD have provided adequate content of high quality which can be taken to every classroom, and thereby facilitating blended learning and flip class learning.
- These pedagogical interventions can adequately raise the standards of teaching, irrespective of the location of the Schools and Colleges/Institutes. Such technology enabled learning can also inspire teachers across the country to raise their own standards of teaching.
- UGC proposed to take up 300 universities and about 10,000 colleges in the first phase covering 2 lakh classrooms. For these the cost is estimated at Rs. 2000 crores. This can be implemented as a Central scheme, as a loan from HEFA.
- Nearly 1.5 lakh Secondary / Sr. Secondary schools will be covered under the scheme in collaboration with the State and UTs.

Rare Frog Species Found in Arunachal Pradesh:

- Scientists of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) recently found a rare convex-vented horned toad (*Megophrys pachyproctus*) from the Tale Valley Wildlife Sanctuary in Lower Subansiri district, Arunachal Pradesh.
- The medium-sized frog, belongs to the horned toad group.
- The frog was discovered in China in 1981, and since then has not been spotted anywhere, until this report was published in the journal.

New National Electronics Policy:

- The Union Cabinet approved the new National Electronics Policy 2019.

- It aims to achieve a turnover of \$400 billion (about Rs. 26 lakh crore) for the electronics system design and manufacturing (ESDM) sector by 2025, while generating employment opportunities for one crore people.
- The policy has introduced new “easier to implement” incentive schemes, including interest subvention scheme and credit default guarantee, to replace some of the existing ones under the National Electronics Policy 2012.
- The new policy proposes to provide interest subsidy of 4% on loans up to Rs. 1,000 crore on plant and machinery and in case of larger loans, the subsidy will be limited to Rs. 1,000 crore.
- The government also proposes to create a fund to provide default guarantee of up to 75% to the banks for plant and machine loans of up to Rs. 100 crore. This will eliminate the need for small and new investors to provide third party collateral and also the scheme will be on the pattern of credit guarantee being provided by SIDBI for SME sector.
- These schemes will be launched once the NPE 2019 is notified.
- To promote creation of an ecosystem, the NEP 2019 has pitched for 2.0 version of the Electronics Manufacturing Cluster scheme, under which infrastructure support will be provided for a group of industries that are part of the product supply chain rather than individual industries.
- The NPE 2019 has also proposed creating a Sovereign Patent Fund to acquire intellectual property for chips and chip components.

Virtual Experiential Museum Varanasi:

- The Prime Minister, Sri Narendra Modi inaugurated the newly established Virtual Experiential Museum (VEM) at Man – Mahal, situated on the bank of the Ganges near holy Dashashwamedh Ghat.
- Virtual Experiential Museum has been established by the National Council of Science Museum (NCSM) working under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
- NCSM has worked hard to show a glimpse of various cultural aspects, tangible and intangible, of Varanasi through the use of modern and sophisticated virtual reality technology in this museum.

- Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) helped in designing and curation of this Virtual Experiential Museum and also in preparing of script for various documentaries to be shown in this VEM.
- Visitors will get the experience of the holy ghats, classical music, weaving of sari, Ram Leela, 3D view of monuments, narrow lanes and betel shop etc. of Varanasi in an interesting way with the help of curved T.V. screen, paintings, touch screens and projectors etc. The story of the descent of the holy Ganga on earth will also be shown to the visitors in a most interesting manner.
- This building was constructed by Raja Man – Singh in 1600 A.D., a close associate of Mughal Emperor Akbar. Later, in 1734, an observatory was constructed on the roof of this monument by Sawai Jai Singh II of Jaipur, which was planned by Samarath Jagannath to calculate time, prepare lunar and solar calendar, study movement & angles of star and planet.

Phase-II of Grid Connected Rooftop Solar Programme:

- Govt of India approved for the Phase-II of Grid Connected Rooftop Solar Programme for achieving cumulative capacity of 40,000 MW from Rooftop Solar (RTS) Projects by the year 2022.
- The programme will be implemented with total central financial support of Rs.11,814 crore.
- Under Phase-II Programme, focus will be on increased involvement of DISCOMs. Performance based incentives will be provided to DISCOMs based on RTS capacity achieved in a financial year (i.e. 1st April to 31st March every year till the duration of the scheme) over and above the base capacity i.e. cumulative capacity achieved at the end of previous financial year.
- The incentives to the DISCOMs will be available only for initial capacity addition of 18,000 MW under the scheme.
- The Programmes will have substantial environmental impact in terms of savings of CO2 emission. Considering average energy generation of 1.5 million units per MW, it is expected that addition of 38 GW solar rooftop plants under Phase-II by year 2022 will result in CO2 emission reduction of about 45.6 tonnes per year.

- The programme has directed employment potential. Besides increasing self-employment the approval is likely to generate employment opportunity equivalent to 9.39 lakh job years for skilled and unskilled workers for addition of 38GW capacity under Phase-II of the scheme by the year 2022.

Eco Circuit: Pathanamthitta – Gavi – Vagamon – Thekkady’:

- ‘Development of Eco Circuit: Pathanamthitta – Gavi – Vagamon – Thekkady’ was inaugurated under the Swadesh Darshan scheme of Ministry of Tourism.
- This Eco Circuit project was sanctioned in December 2015 for Rs. 76.55 crores.
- Major works carried out under the project includes
 - Eco Adventure Tourism Park at Vagamon,
 - Cultural Centre at Kadamanitta,
 - Eco Log Huts at Peerumedu, Idukki,
 - Approach Roads, Walking trails, Rain Shelters at Pine Valley Forest, Thekkady, Kumily, Moozhiyar Dam, Penstock and Kakki Dam.
- Swadesh Darshan scheme is one of the flagship schemes of Ministry of Tourism on development of quality infrastructure in the country with objective of providing better experience and facilities to the visitors.
- The scheme was launched in 2014 -15 and as on date the Ministry has **sanctioned 77 projects worth projects for Rs. 6131.88 Crore** to 30 States and UTs.

4 Projects in North East to Develop Silk Sector:

1. Muga silk seed production centre in Tura, Meghalaya,
2. Silk printing and processing unit in Agartala, Tripura,
3. Eri spun silk mill in Sangaipat, Imphal and
4. Development of sericulture in Mamit, Mizoram.

MUDRA YOJANA recently announced income support programme for farmers – PM Kisan and pension scheme for workers in unorganized sector- Pradhan Mantri Sram Yogi Mandhan Yojna. It also supports the above.

National Rural Economic Transformation Project:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Implementation of an Externally Aided Project namely National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) through loan assistance (IBRD Credit) from World Bank.
- The technical assistance provided by NRETP and the higher level interventions facilitated by the project will enhance the livelihoods promotion and access to finance and scale-up initiatives on digital finance and livelihood interventions.
- Innovative projects will be undertaken under NRETP to look towards alternate channels of financial inclusion, creating value chains around rural products, introduce innovative models in livelihoods promotion and access to finance and scale-up initiatives on digital finance and livelihoods interventions.
- DAY-NRLM provides for mutually beneficial working relationship and formal platforms for consultations between Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan:

- Govt of India has approved launch of Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan with the objective of providing financial and water security to farmers.
- The proposed scheme consists of three components:
 - Component-A: 10,000 MW of Decentralized Ground Mounted Grid Connected Renewable Power Plants.
 - Component-B: Installation of 17.50 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.
 - Component-C: Solarisation of 10 Lakh Grid-connected Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.
- All three components combined, the scheme aims to add a solar capacity of 25,750 MW by 2022.
- The total central financial support provided under the scheme would be Rs. 34,422 crore.
- The Component-A and Component-C will be implemented on pilot mode for 1000 MW capacity

and one lakh grid connected agriculture pumps respectively and thereafter, will be scale-up on success of pilot run.

- The Scheme will have substantial environmental impact in terms of savings of CO2 emissions. All three components of the Scheme combined together are likely to result in saving of about 27 million tonnes of CO2 emission per annum.
- The scheme has direct employment potential. Besides increasing self-employment the proposal is likely to generate employment opportunity equivalent to 6.31 lakh job years for skilled and unskilled workers.

No.112 for Women Safety:

- Govt of India the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for women safety in 16 states and Union territories.
- The states include Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Jammu and Kashmir. The service has already been launched in Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland.
- Persons in distress can dial a pan-India number: 112. Under this system, all the states have to set up a dedicated Emergency Response Centre (ERC).
- A citizen may Press power button on a smartphone thrice quickly to activate a panic call to ERC. In case of a feature phone, long press on number 5 or 9 on the phone keypad will activate the panic call.
- The ERCs are connected to District Command Centres and the Emergency Response Vehicles, and assistance to victims is facilitated through them. An amount of over 321 crore rupees has been provided for this initiative through the Nirbhaya fund.
- The govt also launched two portals - Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences and Safe City Implementation Monitoring Portal.
- A separate Women Safety Division has been established in the Home Ministry and many existing laws have been amended.
- A national database of sexual offenders has been released.

Cyber Crime Fighting Facility:

Boosting country's efforts in tackling cyber crimes, govt of India inaugurated a state-of-the-art National Cyber Forensic Lab (NCFL) and the Delhi Police's cyber crime unit 'CyPAD'.

The Home Ministry's Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) consists of seven verticals, including National Cyber Forensic Laboratory (NCFL), National Cyber Threat Analytics Unit (C-TAU), National Cyber Reporting Portal and National Cyber Research and Innovation Centre.

With this initiative, law enforcers will be able to proactively address cyber threats in coordination with other law-enforcement agencies, national & international cyber security organisation and various online intermediaries.

Banned Punjabi Poem on Jallianwala Massacre to be Published in English after 99 Years:

- The poem 'Khooni Vaisakhi', written by Punjabi writer Nanak Singh on the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, was banned by the British after its publication in 1920. The poem was a scathing critique of the British Raj.
- A poem on the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by acclaimed Punjabi writer Nanak Singh, which was banned by the British after its publication in 1920, has now been translated into English.
- Singh was present at Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919. He was 22 years old at the time.
- It will be published by Harper Collins India next month to mark the centenary of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.
- Singh (1897-1971) is widely regarded as the father of the Punjabi novel. With little formal education beyond the fourth grade, he wrote an astounding 59 books and received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1962.

Government Liberalizes the e-Visa Regime:

The e-Tourist Visa which was introduced in September 2014 with 46 countries has now been made applicable for 166 countries.

- Recently, government has made series of amendments in e-visa regime, liberalizing it further and making it more tourist friendly.
- Important modifications made are highlighted as under:-
- Duration of stay in India of e-Tourist and e-Business Visas is maximum upto 1 Year with multiple entry subject to the stay stipulations.
- Also, the existing restriction of allowing foreigner for a maximum of three times has also been removed

- On e-Tourist Visa- continuous stay during each visit shall not exceed 90 days in case of nationals of all countries who are eligible for grant of e-visa except nationals of USA, UK, Canada and Japan.
- In case of nationals of USA, UK, Canada and Japan continuous stay during each visit shall not exceed 180 days.
- In all cases no registration will be required.
- **Changes in e-Business Visa:** Continuous stay during each visit shall not exceed 180 days in case of nationals of all countries who are eligible for grant of e-visa
- No registration will be required if the stay is for a period of less than 180 days.

Elevation as HC judges: Income Norm Relaxed:

The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi has relaxed the minimum income criterion of Rs 7 lakh for SC, ST and OBC candidates and government panel advocates for their elevation as high court judges.

The collegium, while recommending elevation of 10 lawyers noted that the net professional income of some of them was less than the prescribed minimum income limit of Rs 7 lakh.

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM- SYM):

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) will be started from 15.02.2019. The scheme announced in the Interim Budget was notified by the Ministry recently.

The unorganised workers mostly engaged as home based workers, street vendors, mid-day meal workers, head loaders, brick kiln workers, cobblers, rag pickers, domestic workers etc whose monthly income is Rs 15,000/ per month or less and belong to the entry age group of 18-40 years are eligible for the scheme.

They should not be covered under New Pension Scheme (NPS), Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) scheme or Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). Further, he/she should not be an income tax payer.

Following are the salient Features of PM-SYM:

- **Minimum Assured Pension:** Each subscriber under the PM-SYM, shall receive minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60 years.
- **Family Pension:** During the receipt of pension, if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary

shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension received by the beneficiary as family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.

- If a beneficiary has given regular contribution and died due to any cause (before age of 60 years), his/her spouse will be entitled to join and continue the scheme subsequently by payment of regular contribution or exit the scheme as per provisions of exit and withdrawal.

- The subscriber's contributions to PM-SYM shall be made through 'auto-debit' facility from his/ her savings bank account/ Jan- Dhan account. The subscriber is required to contribute the prescribed contribution amount from the age of joining PM-SYM till the age of 60 years.
- The chart showing details of entry age specific monthly contribution is as under:

Entry Age	Superannuation Age	Member's monthly Contribution (Rs)	Central Govt's monthly Contribution (Rs)	Total monthly Contribution (Rs)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)= (3)+(4)
18	60	55	55	110
19	60	58	58	116
20	60	61	61	122
21	60	64	64	128
22	60	68	68	136
23	60	72	72	144
24	60	76	76	152
25	60	80	80	160
26	60	85	85	170
27	60	90	90	180
28	60	95	95	190
29	60	100	100	200
30	60	105	105	210
31	60	110	110	220
32	60	120	120	240
33	60	130	130	260
34	60	140	140	280
35	60	150	150	300
36	60	160	160	320
37	60	170	170	340
38	60	180	180	360
39	60	190	190	380
40	60	200	200	400

Matching Contribution by the Central Government: PM-SYM is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme on a 50:50 basis where prescribed age-specific contribution shall be made by the beneficiary and the matching contribution by the

Central Government as per the chart. For example, if a person enters the scheme at an age of 29 years, he is required to contribute Rs 100/- per month till the age of 60 years. An equal amount of Rs 100/- will be contributed by the Central Government.

Fund Management: LIC will be the Pension Fund Manager and responsible for Pension pay out. Under Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Pulwama Attack & Its Facts and Updates:

- At least 37 CRPF personnel were killed when a convoy in which they were travelling was attacked by a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) suicide bomber, who rammed his explosives-laden vehicle into one of the convoy's buses near Awantipora on the Srinagar-Jammu highway.
- About 2,500 personnel were travelling to the Valley at the time of the attack. Gunshots followed the blast, according to locals. The personnel under attack belonged to 92, 17 and 54 Battalions of the CRPF.
- **India withdraws Most Favoured Nation status to Pakistan.**
 - Most Favoured Nation status is given to an international trade partner to ensure non-discriminatory trade between all partner countries of the WTO.
 - Under rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), a member country is not allowed to discriminate between trade partners and if a special status is granted to one trade partner, the country is required to extend it to all members of the WTO.
 - India granted MFN status to Pakistan in 1996, just a year after the formation of the WTO.
 - India increased the customs duty on all goods imported from the neighbouring country to 200 per cent with immediate effect.
- Under Article 3 of Geneva Conventions every party is required to treat prisoners humanely.

Zoologist Discovers 'Crying' Snake in Arunachal Pradesh:

A new species of 'crying' snake has been discovered in Lepa-Rada district of **Arunachal Pradesh**.

The discovery of the non-venomous crying keelback, whose zoological name is *Hebius lacrima*, has been published in *Zootaxa*, the New Zealand-based scientific mega-journal for animal taxonomy.

e-AUSHADHI Portal for Online Licensing System of AYUSH Medicine":

Govt. of India launched the *e-AUSHADHI* portal, for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters.

e-AUSHADHI portal is intended for increased transparency, improved information management facility, improved data usability and increased accountability.

The Minister informed that timelines will be fixed for processing of application through this portal with SMS and e-mail status updates at each step of the process. He said that such an initiative of the Ministry of AYUSH is a reflection of our Government's commitment towards e-governance, ease of doing business and Make in India.

Credit Linked Capital Subsidy and Technology Up-gradation Scheme (CLCS-TUS) Extended:

- Govt of India has approved the Credit Linked Capital Subsidy and Technology Up-gradation Scheme (CLCS-TUS) with a total outlay of Rs.2900 crore.
- This scheme aims at improving the competitiveness of MSMEs by integrating various ongoing schematic interventions aimed at up-grading technology through Credit Linked Capital Subsidy (CLCS), hand holding for zero defect zero effect manufacturing (ZED), increasing productivity through waste reduction (Lean), design intervention (Design), cloud computing (Digital MSMEs), facilitation of intellectual property (IPR) and nurturing new ideas (Incubation).
- The scheme will facilitate technology up-gradation to MSEs, improvement in Quality of products by MSMEs, enhancement in productivity, reduction in waste and shall promote a culture of continuous improvement.

Registration of Marriage of NRI Bill 2019:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the introduction of Registration of Marriage of Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Bill, 2019, for creating more accountability and offering more protection against exploitation of Indian citizens, mostly women by their NRI spouses.
- The Bill provides for amendment of the legal framework to act as a deterrent to the erring NRI spouses and creating more accountability and offer protection against exploitation of Indian Citizens married to NRIs.

- Once the Bill is passed, marriages performed by NRIs would be registered in India or Indian Missions & Posts abroad, and necessary changes would be carried out in the:
- Passports Act, 1967; and
- Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 by insertion of Section 86A.

National Commission for Safai

Karmacharis Term Extended:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for Extension of tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karmacharis (NCSK) beyond 31.3.2019 for three years.
- The NCSK was established in the year 1993 as per the provisions of the NCSK Act 1993 initially for the period upto 31.3.1997. Later the validity of the Act was initially extended upto 31.3.2002 and thereafter upto 29.2.2004. The NCSK Act ceased to have effect from 29.2.2004. After that the tenure of the NCSK has been extended as a non-statutory body from time to time. The tenure of the present Commission is upto 31.3.2019.
- The NCSK has been giving its recommendations to the Government regarding specific programmes for welfare of Safai Karmacharis, study and evaluate the existing welfare programmes for Safai Karmacharis, investigate cases of specific grievances etc.
- The work of NCSK is to monitor the implementation of the Act, tender advice for its effective implementation to the Centre and State Governments and enquire into complaints regarding contravention/non-implementation of the provisions of the Act.

Parliament Passes Personal Laws

(Amendment) Bill 2019:

Parliament has passed the Personal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019 with Rajya Sabha also approved it.

The Bill seeks to uphold the rights of people with leprosy as the disease is curable.

It was to amend the Divorce Act 1869, the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act 1939, the Special Marriage Act 1954, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 to end the discrimination against leprosy persons in these central laws.

Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2019:

The government introduced a bill in the **Rajya Sabha** to amend the Cinematograph Act and impose strict penalty to combat the menace of film piracy.

The Bill seeks to amend provisions of Cinematograph Act, 1952, in order to tackle film piracy by including penal provisions for unauthorised camcording and duplication of films.

To check piracy, particularly the release of pirated versions of films on the internet that causes huge losses to the film industry and the exchequer, the bill proposes to make film piracy offences punishable with imprisonment of up to three years and fines that may extend to Rs. 10 lakh or both.

The proposed amendment states that any person, who without the written authorisation of the copyright owner, uses any recording device to make or transmit a copy of a film, or attempts to do so, or abet the making or transmission of such a copy, will be liable for such a punishment.

National Cancer Institute Imnaugurated:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid foundation stones for six projects in Haryana, including a National Cancer Institute (NIC) at Badhsa in Jhajjar district and Shri Krishna Ayush University at Kurukshetra, in Haryana.

The project cost of NIC is Rs 2,035-crore.

National Institute of Ayurveda

Mr. Modi laid the foundation stones for a National Institute of Ayurveda at Shri Mata Mansa Devi temple complex in Panchkula; Sri Krishna Ayush University, the first varsity related to Indian system of medicine in Haryana as well as first-of-its kind in India; 'Battles of Panipat Museum', which will honour heroes of the battles of Panipat; and Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay University of Health Sciences in Karnal.

Steps to Revive Maithili:

- Mithilakshar or Tirhuta is the script of broader cultural Mithila.
- Mithilakshar, Bangla, Assamese, Nebari, Odia and Tibetan are a part of the same family of scripts. It is an ancient script and is one of the scripts of the broader North Eastern India.
- Maithili is a Bihari language of the eastern sub-group of the Indo-Aryan branch. Bhojpuri and Magadhi are closely related to the language.

- The language is claimed to have developed from the Magadhan Prakrit.
- The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry has asked to apply the recommendations of a committee constituted in 2018 for the promotion and protection of Maithili language and its scripts.
- A major recommendation by the committee is to establish a Script and Manuscript Centre at Darbhanga in either Kameshwar Singh Sanskrit University or at the Lalit Narayan Mithila University.
- The committee has also suggested completing the work affecting Unicode Scripts of Mithilakshar by Technology Development of Indian Languages (TDIL) early, and creating audio-visual teaching materials for teaching the mithilakshar scripts.

Exercise Cutlass Express 2019:

- Indian Navy, participated in a multinational training exercise 'CUTLASS EXPRESS – 19' held from 27 Jan to 06 Feb 19.
- The annual Exercise Cutlass Express is sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF).
- The participating nations in the exercise Cutlass Express 2019 were Canada, Comoros, Djibouti, France, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique Portugal, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania, The Netherlands and the United States. The Indian Navy was represented in the exercise through INS Trikand.
- The aim of the exercise was to improve law enforcement capacity, promote regional security and progress inter-operability between the armed forces of the participating nations for the purpose of interdicting illegal maritime activity in the Western Indian Ocean. During the exercise, Naval, Coast Guard and Marine Police personnel from a number of East African countries were jointly trained by mentors from USA, India, and Netherlands, with support of international organisations like the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Combined Maritime Force (CMF) and European Naval Forces (EUNAVFOR).

Dera Baba Nanak Land Check Post Designated as Immigration Centre

- The Central govt designated Dera Baba Nanak land Check post in Gurdaspur district of Punjab as an

authorised immigration checkpoint to exit and entry for visiting Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan.

- On November 26, 2018 Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu laid the foundation stone of the Dera Baba Nanak-Kartarpur Sahib Corridor at an event at Mann village in Gurdaspur district.

The Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill:

The Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019 will increase the financial and executive powers of the 10 Autonomous Councils in the Sixth Schedule areas of the northeastern region.

The amendment will impact one crore tribal people in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and **Mizoram**.

The proposed amendments provide for elected village municipal councils, ensuring democracy at the grassroot level.

The village councils will be empowered to prepare plans for economic development and social justice including those related to agriculture, land improvement, implementation of land reforms, minor irrigation, water management, animal husbandry, rural electrification, small scale industries and social forestry.

The Finance Commission will be mandated to recommend devolution of financial resources to them.

Tele-Law: Mobile Application & Dashboard and Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) Mobile Application:

- A tele-law mobile application 'Nyaya Bandhu' was launched by the Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad. The application will benefit 73,000 paralegal volunteers (PLVs) of National Legal Service Authority and State Legal Services Authorities (SLSA) in the country who will be associated under Tele-Law service.
- The mobile application is integrated with a dashboard to confirm and register the pre-registered cases, to enable online interface between the beneficiary and the panel lawyer through video conferencing and telephone facility.
- With more than 39 lakh cases pending in high courts, currently functioning at 60% of sanctioned strength, a difference of opinion between the Supreme Court and the Centre is delaying finalisation of a Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for judicial appointments.

GeM and CCI Sign MoU:

- Government e Marketplace (GeM) and Competition Commission of India (CCI) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to enable a fair and competitive environment in the e-Marketplace.
- Both CCI and GeM appreciate the importance of advanced analytical tools and processes for identification of malpractices like cartelization. In order to pool their knowledge of the public procurement domain for detection of Anti-competitive practices the MoU has been signed.
- GeM is a state-of-the-art national public procurement platform of Ministry of Commerce and Industries, that has used technology to remove entry barriers for bonafide sellers and has created a vibrant e-marketplace with a wide range of goods and services. CEO GeM- S. Radha Chauhan
- Competition Commission of India is a statutory body of the Government of India, responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002 throughout India and to prevent activities that have an adverse effect on competition. Chairman CCI- A.K. Gupta,

Asiatic Lion Conservation Project:

- A dedicated “Asiatic Lion Conservation Project” with a budgetary contribution of Rs 97.85 Cr from Central Government was launched.
- The project will be for three financial years FY 2018-19, FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21 under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- The Asiatic Lion, endemic to Gir landscape of Gujarat, is one of the 21 critically endangered species identified by the Ministry for taking up recovery programmes.
- Asiatic Lion, being listed in Schedule-I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, to be accorded the highest degree of protection.

Ujjwala Utsav & PMUY Anthem – Ujjwala Bharat Ujjwala:

- Oil industry observed Ujjwala Utsav, celebrating the stellar role played by all stakeholders – District Nodal Officers, Policy makers, Distributors, and beneficiaries – in making Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) a resounding success.
- The event was organised by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas to encourage, motivate as well as

felicitate all frontline field force for their outstanding contribution to PMUY.

- The occasion also saw the launch of the PMUY anthem – Ujjwala Bharat Ujjwala – composed and developed by eminent singer and film industry personality Kailash Kher. The anthem aims to reach the Ujjwala message to every household in the country by its powerful and inspiring rendition.

Abolition of of Income Tax Indirect Tax Ombudsman:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for Abolition of Institution of Income-Tax Ombudsman and Indirect Tax Ombudsman.
- It was not so effective than regular existing parallel channels of grievance redressal, both the institutions of Income-Tax Ombudsman as well as Indirect Tax Ombudsman.
- The Institution of Income-Tax Ombudsman was created in the year 2003 to deal with grievances of public related to settlement of complaints relating to Income Tax.
- However, the Institution of Ombudsman failed to achieve its objectives. It was observed that institution of new complaints have in turn fallen to single digits. Also, tax payers started preferring alternate methods of grievance redressal like CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System), AaykarSevaKendras etc. further, it was also decided in 2011 to close vacant offices of Indirect Tax Ombudsman.

J&K-based Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen Banned:

- The Union Home Ministry has banned the Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen (TuM) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for promoting terrorism and radicalising and recruiting youth for terrorist activities in India.
- It was set up in the 1990s and claims itself to be fighting for the liberation of Kashmir.
- But TuM carried out a number of terrorist attacks besides subversive acts, namely grenade attacks, weapons snatching incidents, supporting other terrorist outfits such as Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), etc. in terms of financial and logistic support in the recent past.
- The TuM's head is Jamil-ur-Rehman of Lajora in Pulwama.

Vande Bharat Express Started its Operations:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off India's first engineless train Vande Bharat Express on February 15, 2019 from the New Delhi **Railway** station. The Vande Bharat Express will cover the distance between Delhi and Varanasi in 8 hours, stopping at only two stations – Kanpur and Prayagraj.
- It will run for five days a week – Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
- Train 18, which was recently named Vande Bharat Express has been manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai at a cost of Rs 97 crore.
- It became India's fastest train by hitting speeds of over 180 kmph during a trial run on a section of the Delhi-Mumbai Rajdhani route. But its speed will be restricted to 160 kmph only to ensure more safety.
- The 16-coach train will eventually replace the 30-year-old Shatabdi Express.

Indian Coast Guard Signs MoU with AAI:

- Indian Coast Guard and the Airport Authority of India today signed a Memorandum of Understanding at Coast Guard Regional Headquarters in Port Blair (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) for coordination in the aeronautical and maritime search and rescue operations.
- Memorandum of Understanding with Airport Authority of India (AAI) is aimed at strengthening mutual interactions, interoperability and validating procedures during conduct of search and rescue operations jointly by the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) Kolkata, Airport Authority of India (AAI) and Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Port Blair, the PRO of Indian Coast Guard.

National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2019:

- The Union Cabinet approved the introduction of National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2019.
- The objective of the bill is to confer the status of institutions of National Importance to National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) at Kundli, Haryana, and the Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT) at Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.

- The legislation would provide for functional autonomy to the institutes to design and develop courses, undertake research activities and leverage enhanced status in their academic pursuits so that they become world class institutes.
- The institutes would implement the reservation policy of the government and would also undertake special outreach activities for the benefit of concerned stakeholders.

App of World's Largest Health Insurance, PM-JAY, Launched:

The world's largest cashless health insurance scheme — the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), popularly known as the Ayushman Bharat — is now active on Google Playstore and one can download the PM-JAY app to access scheme details.

The app will help people check if they are eligible for the scheme and also check the wallet which will display how much money has been used, register grievances, or check for nearby hospitals.

National Health Authority (NHA), is the implementing agency of PM-JAY.

PM-JAY's CEO Indu Bhushan

- **Project "India Size"**
- The Union Textiles Ministry launched the India Size project in Mumbai.
- It aims to arrive at a standard Indian Size for the ready-to-wear clothing industry, on the lines of the standardized sizes available in countries such as the USA and the UK.
- A size chart that is specific to Indian consumers' measurements will be developed. This will help Indian apparel manufacturers to tailor their cuts closer to the actual body measurements of consumers.
- This will benefit consumers, manufacturers and the industry as a whole. The project is being undertaken by the Ministry of Textiles, in collaboration with The Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI).

12,000 MW Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Power Projects:

- The Union Govt., has approved the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy's proposal for implementation of the Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) Scheme Phase-II for setting up 12,000 MW grid-connected Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Power Projects.

- Its total worth will be Rs. 8,580 crore.
- It may be of self-use or use by Government or Government entities, both Central and State Governments.
- The 12,000 MW or more capacity of grid connected solar power projects will be set up by the Government Producers in 4 years period, i.e. 2019-20 to 2022-23, as per the terms and conditions specified in Government Producer Scheme.
- The Scheme will mandate use of both solar photovoltaic (SPV) cells and modules manufactured domestically as per specifications and testing requirements fixed by MNRE.
- The proposal for setting up 12,000 MW Solar Power Projects will provide direct employment to around 60,000 persons for about one year in pre-commissioning activities/ construction phase and around 18,000 persons for about 25 years in the operation and maintenance period.

Exercise Rahat:

- It is a Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise in coordination with NDMA is being conducted to synergise efforts for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.
- The Joint exercise is represented by Armed Forces, National Disaster Management Response Mechanism (NDMRM), SDMA Rajasthan and DLMAAs will be participating in the exercise.

Shehri Samridhi Utsav:

- Shehri Samridhi Utsav, an initiative of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), aims to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Mission – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), to the most vulnerable, showcase its initiatives and facilitate access of Self-Help Group (SHG) members to the other government schemes.
- Job melas and fairs to market the products made by women micro-entrepreneurs were also organized by many states.
- Through Shehri Samridhi Utsav, SHG members across cities are being linked to national government schemes viz. Swachchh Bharat Mission (U), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (U), Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana and National Nutrition Mission.

- A major highlight of Shehri Samridhi Utsav is the National Exhibition cum sale of SHG products and National Street Food Festival being organized in New Delhi.

National War Memorial:

- Prime Minister Narendra inaugurated the National War Memorial, sprawled over 40 acres at the India Gate complex in the heart of the national capital.
- The Memorial has five concentric circles, a central stone obelisk, and an eternal flame.
- The Memorial has been built at a cost of Rs 176 crore.
- The NWM has been constructed to honour around 26,000 soldiers who laid down their lives in war and operations since India got independence in 1947.
- In October 2015, the Government accorded its approval for building the NWM at a cost of Rs 176 crore.
- The memorial is having a layout of four landscaped concentric circles spread over 40 acres. The four circles — Amar Chakra (circle of immortality), Veer Chakra (circle of bravery), Tyag Chakra (circle of sacrifice) and Rakshak Chakra (circle of protection) — will include a 15m tall obelisk with eternal flame, bronze murals, graphic panels, inscription of names of martyrs and busts of 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees.
- The adjacent India Gate was built by the British in memory of 84,000 Indian soldiers killed during the World War I and the Afghan campaign.
- The Amar Jawan Jyoti was constructed under the arch of India Gate to honour the 3,843 soldiers who died during Bangladesh liberation war of 1971.
- “How can man die better, than facing fearful odds, for the ashes of his father and the temples of his God”, is inscribed on the memorial

World Heritage Centre at Mayapur:

A World Heritage Centre housing ‘spiritual camps’ of 45 countries would be set up at Mayapur, the global headquarters of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), in Nadia district.

The camp of each country would reflect its culture, dress, lifestyle, food and ambiance.

The estimated project cost of the proposed centre has been fixed at Rs. 3,000 crore.

Women can Now Work in Underground and Opencast Mines:

- Women have been allowed to work in underground mines, and would be deployed in open cast mines during night hours also, as part of the government's efforts to create more employment opportunities for them.
- The labour ministry has issued new rules permitting women to work in opencast mines during 7 pm to 6 am.
- Such deployments shall be made after obtaining a written consent of the woman and she shall be provided with adequate facilities and safeguards regarding occupational safety, security and health.
- Earlier, employment of women in underground, opencast mines were restricted under Mines Act, 1952.
- The deployment of women shall be in a group of not less than three in a shift.

Special Postage Stamp on Kumbh Mela:

- Union Minister of State for Railways and Communication Mr Manoj Sinha released a special postage stamp of the Indian Postal Department on Kumbh Mela,
- Its cost is five rupees.

Govt. Renames DIPP as Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade:

- The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has been renamed as the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade with a mandate to deal with matters related to start-ups, facilitating ease of doing business among others.
- The newly-named department under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry will look into matters related to promotion of internal trade, including retail trade, welfare of traders and their employees, facilitating ease of doing business and start-ups.
- The matters related to internal trade were earlier under the domain of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.
- The President gave his nod to bring internal trade matters under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

- The move comes amidst a demand by traders' body Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) for forming a separate ministry for internal trade.

National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP):

- ICAR has launched Rs 1100 crore ambitious National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) to attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in the country.
- This project will be funded by the World Bank and the Indian Government on a 50:50 basis.
- In addition, a four year degree in Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries and Forestry has been declared a professional degree.
- At the same time, second Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) has been set up in Barhi, Jharkhand on the lines of IARI, Pusa New Delhi, and another IARI is being set up in Assam.

'Rag Rag Mein Ganga' Launched on Doordarshan:

- Govt of India launched travelogue program "Rag Rag Mein Ganga" and quiz show "Meri Ganga" on Doordarshan.
- The travelogue series "Rag Rag Mein Ganga" has been made by Doordarshan in collaboration with National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).
- The 21 episode series, covering River Ganga's journey from Gomukh to Gangasagar, has been shot using state-of-the-art techniques including Drone Cameras and Go-Pro Cameras in HD Format.
- Anchored by well-known actor Rajeev Khandelwal, the show will go on air from 2nd February, 2019.
- It will be aired on Saturdays and Sundays at 9 PM on DD National. The show relays the message of the need of rejuvenating River Ganga while also informing about the efforts of the Government to clean Ganga – presented in a unique and interesting format.
- The quiz show 'Meri Ganga' has also been made by DD in collaboration with NMCG. It attempts to cover school children from all zones of the country and trigger curiosity in them to feel closer to the cause of cleaning Ganga.

3. ECONOMY AND BANKING

GST on Under-construction Flats,
Affordable Housing Slashed by 7%:

In a big relief to home buyers, the GST Council slashed tax rates on under-construction housing properties to 5% without input tax credit, from the existing 12%.

The Council also cut GST rates on affordable housing to 1% from the current 8% and expanded the scope of affordable housing to those costing up to Rs. 45 lakh and measuring 60 sq. metre in metros and 90 sq. metre in non-metro cities.

The new tax rates will come into effect from April 1, 2019.

However, Goods and Services Tax (GST) is not levied on **real estate** properties for which completion certificate has been issued at the time of sale.

Vijaya Bank, Dena Bank Merger with BoB to be Effective from April 1:

- State-owned Bank of Baroda's proposed merger with Dena and Vijaya Bank will be affected from April 1, 2019.
- The government's amalgamation plan for these state-owned banks has already got all the necessary approvals from the regulators concerned.
- The Bank of Baroda board in a recent meeting also decided to issue and allot equity shares to Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank on March 11.
- The scheme has been named as 'Amalgamation of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda'.
- As per the Scheme of Amalgamation, shareholders of Vijaya Bank will get 402 equity shares of BoB for every 1,000 shares held. Similarly, the shareholders of Dena Bank will receive 110 equity shares of BoB for every 1,000 equity shares held.
- As per the approved plan, after the commencement of the amalgamation scheme, the boards of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank will stand dissolved.
- Any whole-time director, including the managing director, of the Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank, shall cease to hold office and shall be entitled to receive salary and allowances in lieu of the notice in accordance with the applicable law.

- The government in September 2018 announced the merger of state-owned Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with larger PSB Bank of Baroda to create the third largest lender after SBI and ICICI Bank in the country. The merger plan got the Union Cabinet nod in January. It was part of the government's strategy to promote consolidation in the sector marred by loads of non-performing assets (NPAs). However, this is the first three-way merger in the public sector banking space. Before this, the State Bank of India had merged five of its subsidiary banks with itself and took over Bharatiya Mahila Bank, which secured it a place among the top 50 global lenders.

Angel Tax Concession for Startups:

- In a major boost to budding entrepreneurs, the government raised the investment limit for angel tax exemption to Rs 25 crore and extended the period of availing benefits to 10 years for startups.
- Earlier, the investment limit for a startup under Income Tax Act, 1961 was Rs 10 crore and they were permitted to avail the benefits for seven years.
- According to the notification issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), an entity would be considered as a startup up to a turnover of Rs 100 crore as against the earlier limit of Rs 25 crore.
- In order to avail the exemption, a startup will be required to submit a self-declaration about the use of the raised amount to the DPIIT, which will be forwarded to the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

Govt. to Infuse Rs 48,239 Crore in 12 PSU Banks:

- The government on February 20 2019, announced final recapitalisation tranche amount of Rs 48,239 crore for as many as 12 public sector banks, in a bid to take them out of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) prompt corrective action framework.
- The 12 banks are Allahabad Bank, Corporation Bank, Bank of India, Bank of Maharashtra, Punjab National Bank, Union Bank, Andhra Bank, Syndicate Bank, Central Bank, United Bank, UCO Bank and IOB.

RBI Raises Limit for Collateral-free Agri Loans:

In the wake of the government announcing direct income support of Rs. 6,000 per year for small and marginal farmers in the interim Budget on February 1, the Reserve Bank of India, raised the limit for collateral-free agriculture loans to Rs. 1.6 lakh from Rs. 1 lakh.

The increased limit will enhance coverage of small and marginal farmers in the formal credit system.

Presently the banks are mandated to extend collateral-free agriculture loans up to Rs. 1 lakh. This limit of Rs. 1 lakh was fixed in 2010.

Keeping in view the overall inflation and rise in agriculture input costs since then, it has been decided to raise the limit for collateral-free agriculture loans from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 1.6 lakh.

RBI Slaps Fine of Rs 1 crore on SBI:

Reserve Bank of India has slapped Rs 1 crore penalty on the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) for violating norms.

However RBI did not share of the borrower and the loan amount given to the borrower.

IRDAI Imposes Rs 9 Lakh Fine on United India Insurance:

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority has imposed a fine of Rs nine lakh on state-owned United India Insurance Co Ltd for violating certain procedures.

The IRDAI officials during the inspection found three violations, of which two attracted fine.

On examining the sample policy files of UIIC, it was noted that the insurer had not recorded justification for the “extent of discount” given to different clients.

The discount given is derived from market forces, as the insurer relies on quotes given by other competitors.

Thus the insurer presented a false picture, as if it is offering a huge discount on the base premium and charging premium separately for AOG (Act of God) perils.

Agri-Market Infrastructure Fund:

➤ Govt of India today gave its approval for the creation of a corpus of Rs. 2000 crore for Agri-Market Infrastructure Fund (AMIF) to be created with NABARD for development and up-gradation

of agricultural marketing infrastructure in Gramin Agricultural Markets and Regulated Wholesale Markets.

- AMIF will provide the State/UT Governments subsidized loan for their proposal for developing marketing infrastructure in 585 Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) and 10,000 Grameen Agricultural Markets (GrAMs).
- States may also access AMIF for innovative integrated market infrastructure projects including Hub and Spoke mode and in Public Private Partnership mode. In these GrAMs, physical and basic infrastructure will be strengthened using MGNREGA and other Government Schemes.
- After approval of AMIF Scheme, the interest subsidy will be provided by DAC&FW to NABARD in alignment with annual budget releases during 2018-19 and 2019-20 as well as upto 2024-25. The Scheme being demand driven, its progress is subject to the demands from the States and proposals received from them.

Axis Bank, Syndicate Bank, UCO Bank Penalised By RBI:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed separate monetary penalties on three lenders -- UCO Bank, Axis Bank and Syndicate Bank -- over deficiencies in complying with different regulatory norms.
- The central bank imposed a penalty of Rs. 2 crore each on UCO Bank and Axis Bank for non-compliance with its circular on 'Collection of Account Payee Cheques - Prohibition on Crediting Proceeds to Third Party Account' and Master Directions on 'Frauds - Classification and Reporting by commercial banks and select FIs'.
- In addition, a separate penalty of Rs. 20 lakh was imposed on Axis Bank for contravention of the directions contained in 'Master Circular on Detection and Impounding of Counterfeit Notes' and, the 'Circular on Sorting of Notes - Installation of Note Sorting Machines'.
- In another statement, the RBI said it has imposed a penalty of Rs. 1 crore on government-owned Syndicate Bank for non-compliance with the directions contained in 'Master Circular on Frauds - Classification and Reporting' and 'Circular on Risk Management Systems in Banks'.

NTPC inks Rs 2,500 Crore Loan Pact with HDFC Bank:

State-run power giant NTPC said it has signed an agreement with HDFC Bank for a Rs 2,500 crore loan to part finance capital expenditure.

The loan is extended at an interest rate linked to three-month marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) of the bank.

According to the statement, the loan pact has a door-to-door tenure of 15 years and will be utilised to part finance the capital expenditure of NTPC.

The loan agreement was signed by A K Gautam, Executive Director (Finance), NTPC and Raveesh Bhatia, Regional Head, Corporate Banking, HDFC Bank in the presence of other officials.

Fino Payments Bank Partners with Suryoday Small Finance Bank:

Fino Payments Bank (FPB) has announced the launch of a sweep account facility in association with Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB).

This partnership will help FPB address the issue of deposit limits that all the payment banks face at the moment. As per the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), payment banks can only take deposits upto Rs. 1 lakh per account. However the partnership would allow customers to seamlessly transfer the excess amount from their account in FPB to SSFB (partner bank) account.

While this facility ensures RBI guidelines on Rs. 1 lakh deposit limit for payments banks is adhered to, it also gives customers the safety of a bank account to park excess funds, which can be utilised whenever they need.

Rishi Gupta - MD & CEO, Fino Payments Bank.

Swiggy Acqui-hires Bengaluru-based AI start-up Kint.io:

- Online food ordering and delivery firm Swiggy has acqui-hired Bengaluru-based AI start-up Kint.io.
- As part of this acqui-hire, the founding members of Kint.io Pavithra Solai Jawahar and Jagannathan Veeraraghavan will join the company's team.
- Acqui-hiring refers to buying out a company or an entity primarily for the skills and expertise of its staff, rather than for its products or services.
- The team at Kint.io will join the company to boost its computer vision technology and superior consumer experience.

RBI Lifts PCA on 3 banks:

In a significant move, the RBI lifted lending curbs on three out of 11 weak public sector banks (PSBs)..

Bank of India (BoI), Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) are now out of the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) Framework, a move that will help expand loan growth to prop up the economy.

It has been decided that BoI and BoM which meet the regulatory norms including Capital Conservation Buffer (CCB) and have Net NPAs (non-performing assets) of less than 6 per cent as per third quarter results, are taken out of the PCA framework subject to certain conditions and continuous monitoring.

In case of OBC, the net NPA has come down to less than 6 per cent as the government has infused sufficient capital, it said.

Eight public sector banks -- Allahabad Bank, United Bank of India, Corporation Bank, IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank and Dena Bank -- still remain under PCA framework, which imposes lending restrictions and prevents them from expanding, among other curbs.

Centre Revises FY18 GDP Growth Rate to 7.2% from 6.7%:

- The Indian economy grew at 7.2 percent in 2017-18, as compared to earlier estimates of 6.7 percent, according to first revised estimates of GDP released by the central statistics office.
- The provisional estimate of gross domestic product (GDP) for 2017-18 was released by the Centre on May 31, 2018, which showed real or inflation-adjusted GDP growth at 6.7 percent.
- Nominal GDP or GDP at current prices for 2017-18 has been revised to 11.3 percent from 10.0 percent.
- Real GDP growth rate has been revised to 8.2 percent from 7.1 percent for 2016-17, while nominal GDP has been revised upwards to 11.5 percent from 10.8 percent.
- The statistics office provisional estimates showed that Gross Value Added (GVA) grew 6.9 percent in 2017-18, driven by higher primary sector growth. It was 6.5 percent earlier.
- GVA, which is GDP minus taxes, serves as a more realistic proxy to measure changes in the aggregate value of goods and services produced in the economy.

- According to the new estimates India's real GDP grew 6.4 percent, 7.4 percent and 8.0 percent in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively from 6.1 percent, 7.1 percent and 8.1 percent.

3% Hike in DA for Central Govt. Employees, Pensioners:

Union Cabinet approved the release of an additional instalment of Dearness Allowance to central government employees and Dearness Relief to pensioners with effect from January 1, 2019.

This will involve an increase of 3% over the existing rate of 9% of the basic pay or pension.

The government said that the combined impact of the hike in dearness allowance and dearness relief will amount to Rs 9,168.12 crore per annum and Rs 10,696.14 crore in the financial year 2019-20 (for a period of 14 months from January 2019 to February, 2020).

This will benefit about 48.41 lakh Central Government employees and 62.03 lakh pensioners.

The increase is in accordance with the accepted formula based on the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission (CPC).

RBI AnyDesk Warning:

- **RBI in its AnyDesk Warning said that,** if you are suggested to download an app called "AnyDesk" through social media or any other channel then do not do this.
- After downloading this app, your bank account may become empty within minutes.
- "AnyDesk" is a software that can do transactions from your bank account through your mobile or laptop.
- Once downloaded, "AnyDesk" generates a 9-digit app code on the user's device and calls the cybercriminals and asks the user for the code in the name of the bank.
- Once this code is found, the hacker gets control of the user's device and can download all the information of his device can do the transaction.

RBI to Inject Rs 12,500-cr Liquidity via OMOs on Thursday:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said it would inject Rs 12,500 crore into the system through purchase of government securities to increase liquidity.

- The purchase will be made through open market operations (OMOs).
- OMOs are financial tools to either inject or suck out liquidity from the system. When the liquidity is tight, money is pumped into the market by purchase of government securities.
- While in the case of surplus, the excess money is sucked out by selling of government bonds.

Committee for Sale of 'Enemy Shares' Eorth Rs 3,000 Crore:

- The Centre has constituted a high-level committee, comprising top bureaucrats, to recommend the quantum and price or price band for sale of 'enemy shares' worth Rs 3,000 crore.
- Parliament in 2017 amended the Enemy Property Act to ensure that the successors of those who migrated to Pakistan and China during partition and 1962 war respectively will have no claim over the properties or shares left behind in India.
- The high-level committee, to be jointly headed by Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba and Atanu Chakraborty- Secretary, Department of Investment and Public Assets Management.
- It will recommend the quantum and price or price band for sale of enemy share or the principles or mechanism or method for sale of enemy share to the high-power committee.
- The 'enemy property' refers to any property belonging to, held or managed on behalf of an enemy, an enemy subject or an enemy firm.
- The government has vested these properties in the custodian of enemy property for India, an office instituted under the central government.
- A total 6,50,75,877 shares in 996 companies of 20,323 shareholders are under the custody of custodian of Enemy Property for India, which is worth about Rs 3,000 crore, according to a government estimate.
- Of these companies, 588 are functional or active companies, 139 of these are listed with remaining being unlisted.
- The total number of immovable property with the custodian of enemy property is 9,280 which is spread over around 11,773 acres of land.

RBI to Pay Rs 28,000 Cr as Interim Dividend to Govt:

- The Reserve Bank will pay an interim dividend of Rs 28,000 crore to the government, a move that will help the Centre keep fiscal deficit in check.
- This is the second successive year when the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will be transferring an interim surplus.
- This is in addition to Rs 50,000 crore surplus transfer announced by RBI in August 2018 for 2017-18 (RBI follows July-June financial year). Of this, Rs 10,000 crore was given as interim dividend to the government on March 27, 2018.
- RBI had given Rs 30,663 crore as dividend to the government in 2017-18.
- The central bank transfers its surplus amount to the government, under Section 47 of the RBI Act, 1934.
- As per the Budget document, the government expects Rs 82,911.56 crore as dividend/ surplus of RBI, nationalised banks and financial institutions during 2019-20.
- Fiscal deficit for 2018-19 is expected to be slightly higher at 3.4 per cent of the GDP on account of Rs 20,000 crore budgeted for income support to farmers.
- For 2019-20 too, the government has retained the fiscal deficit at 3.4 per cent.

RBI Lifts Cap on FPI Investments in Corporate Bonds:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) withdrew the 20 per cent limit on investments by FPIs in corporate bonds of an entity with a view to encourage more foreign investments.
- As part of the review of the FPI investment in corporate debt undertaken in April 2018, it was stipulated that no FPI should have an exposure of more than 20 per cent of its corporate bond portfolio to a single corporate (including exposure to entities related to the corporate).
- While the provision was aimed at incentivising FPIs to maintain a portfolio of assets, market feedback indicates that foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have been constrained by this stipulation.
- In order to encourage a wider spectrum of investors to access the Indian corporate debt market, it has been decided to withdraw this provision with immediate effect.

JP Morgan becomes First US Bank to Create Cryptocurrency for Payments

Business:

- Therefore, JP Morgan Chase imagines that the cryptocurrency could help to reduce risk and enable instant transfers
- The cryptocurrency, called “JPM Coin”, will be tied to the US dollar in a bid to make it more financially stable than other cryptocurrencies. In short, a JPM coin will have a value equivalent to one US dollar.
- Running on blockchain technology, the cryptocurrency will be initially used internally between JPMorgan Chase's wholesale business clients.
- JPM coin is designed for businesses-to-business money movement flows.
- The bank said it doesn't have plans to make the technology available to individuals at this stage.
- It's not the first time JP Morgan Chase has invested in cryptocurrency or blockchain: last year, it built an Ethereum-based blockchain platform for business customers.

RBI Imposes Rs 3.5 Cr Penalty on 3 PSU

Banks:

- The Reserve Bank has imposed Rs 3.5 crore penalties on three public sector banks, including PNB and OBC, for violation of various banking norms.
- The monetary penalty on the banks has been imposed for non-compliance with various directions issued by the RBI on monitoring of end use of funds, exchange of information with other banks, and on restructuring of accounts, the Reserve Bank of India said in a statement.
- A penalty of Rs 1.5 crore has been imposed on Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) and Rs 1 crore each on Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Bank of India.

India's First Aqua Mega Food Park:

- Govt of India commissioned Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park at Tundurru Village in Bhimavaram Mandal, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. The park is promoted by Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park Pvt. Ltd.
- It will be the first Mega Aqua Food Park operationalised exclusively for fish and marine products processing in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

- The Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park Pvt. Ltd has been set up in 57.81 acre of land at a cost of Rs. 122.60 crores.
- This mega food park will benefit the people of West Godavari-District as well as nearby Districts of East Godavari, Krishna of Andhra Pradesh and nearby districts of Telangana.
- Under the Mega Food Park Scheme, Government of India provides financial assistance upto Rs. 50.00 crore per mega food park project.
- Besides this aqua food park, the Ministry had sanctioned another mega food park in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. It was inaugurated on July 9, 2012.
- Currently, the third Mega Food Park sanctioned by the Ministry is under implementation at Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh.

NTPC Signs Pact with SBI:

- State-owned power giant NTPC has signed a term loan agreement for Rs 5,000 crore with State Bank of India (SBI).

- The loan facility is extended at an interest rate linked to 3-Month MCLR of the Bank. This loan has a door to door tenure of 15 years and will be utilised to part finance the capital expenditure of NTPC.

RBI Changes Threshold for Bulk Deposit to Rs 2 Crore:

Reserve Bank of India changed threshold for bulk deposit has been revised as single deposits of Rs 2 crore and above.

The banks are also asked to maintain their bulk deposit card rates in the core banking system for supervisory review.

Banks offer different interest rates for their fixed deposits depending on the money invested. A look at the table gives you a fair idea of what is on offer.

As of now, many private sector banks are offering higher interest rates on bulk fixed deposits. Banks can now offer differential interest rates only on fixed deposits where the amount invested is more than Rs 2 crore.

4. INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL

SpaceX Rocket launched Israel's First Lunar Lander:

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket blasted off from Florida carrying Israel's first lunar lander on a mission that if successful will make the Jewish state only the fourth nation to ever to achieve a controlled touchdown on the moon's surface.

The unmanned robotic lander dubbed “ **Beresheet**” - Hebrew for the biblical phrase "in the beginning" - soared into space from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida, USA..

The rocket's two other payloads were a telecommunications satellite for Indonesia and an experimental satellite for the US Air Force.

India, Saudi Arabia signed MoUs:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman held extensive talks in Delhi after which the two sides signed five agreements in various fields, including tourism and enhancement of bilateral investment relations.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on investing in the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund between the Government of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Both the countries also signed an MoU in the field of tourism between the Ministry of Tourism and the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage.
- Among other MoUs, the two sides also inked an agreement for cooperation in the field of housing.
- An MoU was signed for cooperation on broadcasting between Prasar Bharati and Saudi Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) for exchange of audio visual programme.
- Framework Cooperation Program between Invest India of the Republic of India and Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on enhancing bilateral investment relations.

India, Argentina Sign MoU for Co-Operation In Nuclear Energy:

- India and Argentina inked a Memorandum of Understanding to boost cooperation in the sector of nuclear energy.

- It is signed between the Department of Atomic Energy, India and National Atomic Energy Commission, Argentina for cooperation within the framework of Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership would bolster institutional linkages in civil nuclear research, development and capacity building.
- The countries also wished to enhance and explore cooperative ventures in the area of nuclear power and its societal uses in health, agriculture, industrial application, training and capacity building, the joint statement said.
- India and Argentina had signed an agreement in 2010 for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- Argentine company INVAP is working on the Fission Molly Project to build a molybdenum plant in Mumbai. The plant focuses on creating isotopes.
- Argentina also manufactures some nuclear components used in Indian power reactor.
- During the talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Mauricio Macri, the two leaders expressed satisfaction at the on-going talks in the area of space.

Afghanistan Launches New Export Route To India:

- Afghanistan began exports to India through an Iranian port as the landlocked, war-torn nation turns to overseas markets to improve economy.
- Officials said 23 trucks carrying 57 tonnes of dried fruits, textiles, carpets and mineral products were dispatched from western Afghan city of Zaranj to Iran's Chabahar port. The consignment will be shipped to Mumbai.
- India has sent 1.1 million tonnes of wheat and 2,000 tonnes of lentils to Afghanistan through Chabahar.
- Both countries established an air corridor in 2017.
- Afghan exports to India stood at \$740 million in 2018, making it the largest export destination.

Macedonia officially changes name to North Macedonia

- The country formerly known as the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia.

- The country can be called "North Macedonia" for short and the national language should continue to be referred to as "Macedonian."
- He added that its citizens should continue to be called "Macedonians," not "North Macedonians."
- After declaring independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, the country chose the name Macedonia. But that title severely strained relations with neighbor Greece, which also has a region called Macedonia.
- The Greek region of Macedonia lies in the northern, mountainous part of the country and includes its second-largest city, Thessaloniki, as well as the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Philippi.
- Greece, a member of both NATO and the European Union, had been blocking North Macedonia's membership to the military alliance and the beginning of accession talks with the EU until the name dispute was resolved.

Sudan's Declares State of Emergency:

- Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir has declared a national state of emergency, dismissed the federal government and sacked all state governors.
- Bashir, seized power in a 1989 coup, asked parliament to postpone constitutional amendments that would allow him to run for third term.
- It had been two months since tens of thousands of protesters, angry at rising food prices, began demanding an end to the 30-year rule of President Omar al-Bashir.
- Mr Bashir asked parliament to postpone constitutional amendments that would allow him to run for another term.

India, Sri Lanka ink MoU to establish business centre for ICT incubators in Jaffna:

- India and Sri Lanka today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a business centre for ICT incubators in Jaffna through grant of 25 crore Sri Lankan rupees from India.
- The centre would provide opportunities and enhance the enabling environment for Information Communication Technology (ICT) and other professional services in the Northern region inhabited by minority Tamils.
- The ongoing development projects in the province under India's grant assistance include construction of Cultural Centre in Jaffna, school buildings to 27

schools, 3000 rainwater harvesting units and 25 model villages among others.

- It is part of Government of India's continued efforts to assist and cooperate with Government of Sri Lanka in people-oriented development projects.
- India's overall commitment of development assistance to Sri Lanka stands at a total of around 3 billion US\$, out of which 560 million US\$ is pure grant assistance.

India Korea Startup Hub in Seoul:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India Korea startup hub in Seoul. He was attending India-Korea Business Symposium.
- India is among Korea's top-10 trade partners. Their trade volume has reached 21.5 billion dollars for 2018.
- Mr Modi said, in renewable energy, India has become the sixth largest producer in the world and its initiative of the International Solar Alliance, will enable it to be a pioneer in moving in the direction of a green Global economy.
- Prime Minister Modi was on a two-day visit to South Korea and he will also receive the Seoul Peace Prize in recognition of his dedication to international cooperation, global growth and human development.

Velayat 97- Iran's Navy Drill:

- Iran conducted a three-day annual navy drill in a vast area of the Gulf and the Indian Ocean including a sensitive global shipping route called "Velayat 97".
- The drill was held in the waters of Strait of Hormuz, Makran coast, Oman Sea and the north of the Indian Ocean, covering 2 million square kilometres and going on for three days.
- The exercise aims to evaluate the navy's equipment, practice launching weapons and "enable the troops to gain readiness for a real battle."
- The strait at the mouth of the Gulf is crucial to global energy supplies, with about a third of the world's seaborne oil passing through it every day.
- The show of military might comes at a time of heightened tensions with Iran's main regional rival Saudi Arabia and with Washington, which last year withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and reimposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

- The Strait of Hormuz is an international transit route where American forces routinely pass and which has seen tense encounters between them and Iranian forces in the past.

'Flying Bulldog': World's Largest Bee:

- The world's largest bee (full name Megachile pluto) -- a giant insect roughly the size of a human thumb -- has been rediscovered in a remote part of Indonesia in its first sighting in nearly 40 years.
- Despite its conspicuous size, no one had observed Wallace's giant bee -- discovered in the 19th century by British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace and nicknamed the "flying bulldog" -- in the wild since 1981.
- The bee (full name Megachile pluto), which lives in the Indonesian island region of North Moluccas, makes its nest in termite mounds, using its large fang-like mandibles to collect sticky resin to protect its home from the termites.
- The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species lists the bee as "vulnerable", meaning that while its numbers are relatively solid, the remoteness of its population makes it hard to study.

China's First Female AI News Anchor:

China's state-run news agency, Xinhua, unveiled "the world's first female AI news anchor" to read alongside its male AI news presenters.

Named **Xin Xiaomeng**, the perfectly coiffed broadcaster was developed jointly by Xinhua and search engine company Sogou, and was shown off in a video on social media.

The computer-generated journalist was modelled after real-life Xinhua news anchor Qu Meng, whose voice and image provided inspiration for developers.

First Mammal to Go Extinct Due to Climate Change:

- Climate change has just claimed its first mammalian species victim. The Australian government has officially listed the Bramble Cay melomys as extinct.
- The small brown rat has not been seen since 2009. The small rat-like was thought to be the only mammal native to the Great Barrier Reef. It was found only on a small sand island near the coast of Papua New Guinea.
- The reason for the extinction, according to the scientists was human-made climate change that

produced "extreme high water levels and damaging storm surges that could have destroyed the habitat of the species, including its sources of food, and possibly directly killed the creatures.

- Australia has the third highest extinction rate of all nations, surpassed by only French Polynesia and the Republic of Mauritius, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Argentina and Saudi Arabia Joined ISA:

- Argentina and Saudi Arabia became the 72nd and 73rd countries respectively to sign the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- ISA now has a total of 122 members.
- Countries which have signed the agreement until now include India, France, Australia, UAE, UK, Japan amongst others. The agreement was opened for signature during the COP22 at Marrakech on November 15, 2016. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is a group of solar resource-rich countries with headquarters in Gurugram, India. The organisation aims to deploy over 1,000 gigawatt of solar energy and mobilise more than USD 1,000 billion into solar power by 2030

'Festival of India' in Nepal

A month-long 'Festival of India' began in Khatmandu with the objective of familiarising the new generation of Nepal about the similarities between the Himalayan nation and India.

The festival, organised by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Embassy of India, is being held in Kathmandu and other major cities of the country from February 19 to March 21.

The festival began here with a musical drama on the life of Lord Buddha. Sanskrit conference, dance, food festival and other cultural programmes will also be held during the festival.

India-OECD Pact on Students:

- The Union Cabinet gave ex-post facto approval to the agreement between India and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for participating in the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA).
- PISA will be conducted by the OECD in 2021. The agreement was signed on January 28, 2019.

- On benefits of the pact, an official statement said learnings from participation in PISA will help to introduce competency-based examination reforms in the school system and help move away from rote learning.
- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) will be part of the process and activities leading to the actual test.
- PISA is a competency-based assessment which unlike content-based assessment, measures the extent to which students have acquired key competencies that are essential for full participation in modern societies.
- The CBSE and the NCERT will be part of the process and activities leading to the actual test, the release said.
- Schools run by the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and schools in Chandigarh will participate.

India, Morocco Sign Four MoUs:

India and Morocco on signed four MoUs following the delegation-level talks between External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Moroccan counterpart Nasser Bourita in Rabat.

MoUs include setting up of Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism, Cooperation in Housing and Human Settlement, Reciprocal facilitation of procedures for issue of Business Visa and Cooperation in Youth Matters.

Mrs Swaraj reached Rabat on her maiden visit to Morocco from Bulgaria. She is on a four-day three-nation tour to Bulgaria, Morocco and Spain as part of India's efforts to strengthen ties with these countries and expand avenues of cooperation.

Iran Launches 'Cruise Missile Capable' Submarine:

Iran on launched a new locally-made submarine capable of firing cruise missiles named

- Fateh (Farsi for 'Conqueror' in the country's latest show of military might at a time of heightened tensions with the US.
- Dezful a surface-to-surface missile / is an upgrade on the older Zolfaghar model that had a range of 700 kilometres

The launch ceremony, led by President Hassan Rouhani, took place in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas.

The new submarine is Iran's first in the semi-heavy category, filling a gap between the light Ghadir class and the heavy Kilo class submarines that the country possesses.

India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation:

- The meeting of 20th India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) held in New Delh.
- The JCEC is an institutional mechanism for bilateral trade engagement held at the level of Minister of Commerce and Industry of the two countries.
- Both India and Italy are looking towards the development of bilateral economic and trade relations through facilitating dialogue and enhancing cooperation in a wide range of sectors like machinery, infrastructure and engineering, ICT including digitalization, agriculture and IPR.

Exercise Sampriti – 2019:

As part of the ongoing India Bangladesh defence cooperation, a joint military exercise Sampriti-2019 was conducted at Tangail, Bangladesh from 02 March to 15 March 2019.

Exercise Sampriti-2019 is an important bilateral defence cooperation endeavour between India and Bangladesh and this will be the 8th edition of the exercise which is hosted alternately by both countries.

The exercise is aimed to strengthen and broaden the aspects of interoperability and cooperation between the Indian and Bangladesh Armies. The exercise will involve tactical level operations in a counter insurgency and counter terrorism environment under the UN mandate.

India and Norway Launch Initiative to Combat Marine Pollution:

- The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change today signed a letter of Intent establishing the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative together with the Norwegian ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- In January, 2019, the Indian and Norwegian governments agreed to work more closely on oceans by signing a MoU and establishing the India-Norway Ocean Dialogue during the Norwegian Prime Minister's visit to India in January.

- A joint Task Force on “Blue Economy” with government officials, researchers and experts as well as private sector was established to develop sustainable solutions within strategic areas of the blue economy, such as maritime and marine sector in addition to energy sector.
- In partnership, Norway and India will share experiences and competence, and collaborate on efforts to develop clean and healthy oceans, sustainable use of ocean resources and growth in the blue economy.

Cobra Gold Military Exercise:

- One of the Asia-Pacific region's largest multinational military exercises, Cobra Gold held in Thailand with the participation of around 10,000 personnel and 29 countries.
- The exercise is aimed at enhancing interoperability, strengthening relationships among participating nations, and handling security threats and national disasters.
- Thailand and the United States -- co-hosts of the multinational exercise -- as well as Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea and Malaysia are participating in full exercises, while China and India are joining with a limited scope.

Japan to Recognise Indigenous Ainu People for First Time:

- Japan's government introduced a bill to recognise the country's ethnic Ainu minority as an "indigenous" people for the first time, after decades of discrimination against the group.
- The Ainu people -- many of whom live in northern Hokkaido -- have long suffered the effects of a policy of forced assimilation, and while discrimination has receded gradually, income and education gaps with the rest of Japan persist.
- The Ainu have long suffered oppression and exploitation, and the modern Japanese government in the late 19th century banned them from practising their customs and using their language.
- The Ainu traditionally observed an animist faith, with men wearing full beards and women adorning themselves with facial tattoos before marriage. But like many indigenous people around the world, most of Japan's Ainu have lost touch with their traditional lifestyle after decades of forced assimilation policies.

- The Ainu population is estimated to be at least 12,300, according to a 2017 survey, but the real figure is unknown as many have integrated into mainstream society and some have hidden their cultural roots.

Legal Agreements with the World Bank:

- The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh (GoHP) and the World Bank signed here today a \$40 Million Loan Agreement to help bring clean and reliable drinking water to the citizens of the Greater Shimla area, who have been facing severe water shortages and water-borne epidemics over the last few years.
- The Shimla Water Supply and Sewerage Service Delivery Reform Programmatic Development Policy Loan 1 is expected to improve water supply and sanitation (WSS) services in and around the iconic hill city of Shimla.
- Shimla's water supply infrastructure with a capacity of 40 million litres daily (MLD) is unable to meet the current demand of 56 MLD

MOU Signed between EIL and Mongolia:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Engineers India Ltd(EIL), a PSU under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and the Government of Mongolia through Mongol Refinery State Owned LLC was signed , on the sidelines of PETROTECH-2019 event at Greater Noida, UP.
- The MoU is for Project Management Consultancy services for construction of an oil refinery plant in Mongolia by EIL. Government of Mongolia is in process to set-up 1.5 MMTPA greenfield crude oil refinery in Sainshand province, under Line of Credit (LoC) extended by Government of India.
- EIL has carried out Detailed Feasibility Study for the project. It has been pre-qualified and subsequently shortlisted for providing project management consultancy services to Mongol Refinery for the project.

Abu Dhabi added Hindi as Third Court Language:

Indians account for 38 per cent of the population. The Abu Dhabi Judicial Department (ADJD) has added Hindi as the third official language to be spoken in the city's courts, alongside Arabic and English.

According to the ADJD, this step was aimed at helping foreigners to learn about litigation procedures, their rights and duties without a language barrier, in addition to facilitating registration procedures via unified forms available through the Department's website.

Of the United Arab Emirates' population of over 9 million people, 88.5 per cent are expatriate workers, according to official figures. Indians account for 38 per cent of the population.

Multinational Maritime Exercise 'AMAN 19':

Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN 19 formally conducted at Pakistan Navy Dockyard, with a colorful flag hoisting ceremony.

Ships of the participating navies, observers, foreign diplomats and a large number of Pakistan Navy personnel attended the event.

AMAN-19 is a multinational Naval Exercise conducted biennially by Pakistan Navy since 2007. The exercise is based on Pakistan Navy led initiative to bring in world navies under one umbrella for collaborative peace and security in the maritime domain.

The current exercise, 6th in the series has a growing number of participants. This year 45 nations are participating through Ships, Aircraft, Special Operating Forces, Observers and Speakers.

India and Bangladesh Agreement:

- India and Bangladesh have signed an MOU for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) an institute under the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DAR&PG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Govt. of India, over the next 6 years.
- Bangladesh Civil Servants will be trained in e-Governance and service delivery, public policy and implementation, information technology, decentralization, urban development and planning, Ethics in Administration and challenges in implementation of SDGs

US to Sell India 2 Missile Defence Systems to Protect President, PM Planes:

The US has agreed to sell two advanced missile defence systems to India for two Boeing-777 Head-of-State aircraft for an estimated cost of \$ 190 million, a

decision that will enhance the security of the planes flying the president and the prime minister.

According to the Pentagon, the sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the US by helping to strengthen the US-Indian strategic relationship.

Two systems known as

- Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) and
- Self-Protection Suites (SPS).

India and Finland on Biotechnology:

- Govt of India has approved the MoU between India and Finland for collaborating based on mutual interest in the field of Biotechnology, for funding and implementing ambitious industry-led innovative and transnational projects within the broad scope of research development and innovation.
- The Mou will support creation of long-term Research, Development & Innovation collaboration mechanism and to establish and strengthen cooperative network between Indian and Finnish organizations.
- Environmental and energy applications of biotechnology;
- Business development of start-up and growth companies; and
- Education technologies and games in life sciences vi. Other fields of life science industry

Macedonia Joines NATO:

NATO members signed an accord with Macedonia on allowing the tiny ex-Yugoslav republic to become the 30th member of the U.S.-led alliance after a deal with Greece ended a 27-year-old dispute over its name.

The ratification process typically takes about a year. Macedonia - now known officially as North Macedonia under the terms of its name deal with Greece - to formally join the alliance in 2020.

NATO Secretary General- Jens Stoltenberg.

India Signs MoU with Russia:

India, eyeing a bigger role in Eurasia and Afghanistan amid prevailing geopolitics, has signed a memorandum of understanding with Russia for fast-tracking International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) that will enable a smoother connectivity to the region via Iran.

Pope in Historic Visit to UAE:

Pope Francis held a historic visit to the United Arab Emirates by meeting with the federation’s leader and a group of Muslim elders before addressing faith leaders in a show of religious tolerance in a Muslim region known for its restrictions on religious freedom.

India- Poland Coal Sgreement:

- Ministry of Coal entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Energy, Republic of Poland .
- The objective of this MoU is to foster relations in the field of coal mining and clean coal technologies through the already established Joint Coal Working Group as well as research institutes and academia between the two countries covering the following areas.

Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development

- Italy has opened a new centre set up by the government in partnership with the UN to fight climate change and boost sustainable development in Africa.
- The new centre is located near the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in central Rome.

- It will help develop and scale-up innovative solutions for sustainable development, implement the goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda and the landmark 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to end reliance on fossil fuels and cap global warming.
 - FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva
- Sanctions against Central African Republic (CAR) Extened:
- The United Nations Security Council has adopted a resolution to extend sanctions against the Central African Republic (CAR) for another year.
 - Resolution 2454, adopted unanimously yesterday by the 15-member council, decides to renew the sanctions regime - an arms embargo, travel ban and asset freeze till January 31, 2020.
 - It also decides to extend the mandate of the panel of experts, which helps the Security Council with the implementation of the sanctions, until Feb 29, 2020.
 - The resolution envisages the establishment of key benchmarks in various sectors that could help the Security Council review the arms embargo on the CAR government by April 30, 2019.

5. STATES

First District Cooling System of India to Come Up in Amaravati:

- India's First District cooling system will come up in Amravati, capital of the Andhra Pradesh. The government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into a 30 -year concession with UAE-based international cooling provider, The agreement between the National Central Cooling Company (Tabreed) for the District Cooling system of Amaravati.
- District cooling systems produce chilled water, steam or hot water at a central plant and then pipe that energy out (either underground or over rooftops) to buildings for air conditioning, space heating and water heating. As a result, these buildings don't require their own chillers, air conditioners, boilers or furnaces.
- They are considered to be highly efficient to address each of the challenges like high Capital and operating costs, reliability, flexibility and environmental sustainability while meeting their comfort and process cooling and heating needs.
- District cooling uses only 50% of primary energy consumption for cooling urban building n compared to other cooling systems. This also reduces carbon emissions.

Yuva Swabhimani Yojana of Madhya Pradesh:

Madhya Pradesh govtrrolled out its flagship 'Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhimani Yojana' that guarantees 100 days of employment every year to urban youth from economically weaker sections.

The scheme, as part of which youth would be imparted skill development training, was launched by Chief Minister Kamal Nath.

Under the new scheme, they will get Rs. 4,000 stipend per month during 100 days of period. During this period, they would be given skill development training, so that they become independent.

An official said, each youth enrolled under the scheme will get total Rs. 13,500 for the 100 days period.

Special Dog Squad for Detecting Liquor Consignment:

- Bihar two years after imposing a complete ban on liquor, has now become the first state in India to

have a special dog squad for detecting liquor consignment.

- At present, 20 trained dogs are part of the squad.
- The canines were provided with nine months of training.
- The training took place in at the Integrated Intelligence Training Academy in Hyderabad, where the dogs were trained in sniffing lipour.
- The Bihar Police has spent Rs Rs 1.71 lakh on each dog, including the purchase and training cost.

First Female Robocop of India:

- Kerala police has got a humanoid 'robocop' to perform front desk duties, making it the first police department in the country to use a robot for police work. Visitors of the Thiruvananthapuram headquarters will be greeted by KP-BOT which has been developed by Kerala Police's Cyberdome.
- Women empowerment and gender equality were kept in mind while deciding on the gender of the first robot. Also, the fact that most front office jobs are managed by women was considered.
- Her duties would entail guiding visitors, fixing appointments, providing visitor identity cards and also opening new files based on their grievances.
- At present, about four persons are required to do the front office duty. Now, it would be managed by the KP-BOT.

Sweet Revolution begins in Jharkhand:

In a bid to quadruple farmers' income by 2022 in the State, Jharkhand govt launched the ambitious scheme 'Meethi Kranti' (Sweet Revolution)

Rs 100 crore have been approved so that the sweet revolution can be started in the state after the success of blue revolution.

Government is providing a unit of Rs 1 lakh for the "bee keeping", after giving training to 1207 farmers, in which Rs 80,000 grant is being given by the Government, while the payment of Rs 20,000 will be done by the beneficiary.

In this way, a farmer can earn Rs 1.3 lakh annually by investing just Rs 20,000. With sweet revolution we can quadruple the income of farmers by 2022.

Tamilnadu got two Coast Guard Districts:

Tamil Nadu became the first state in the country to get a second Coast Guard district headquarters - Thoothukudi.

The first district headquarters is Chennai.

It has been set up with an aim to augment security mechanism on the eastern coast and the state in particular, a statement from the Coast Guard said here.

The facility would undertake operations in areas stretching to 680 km of the coastline along districts of Pudukottai, Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari.

Odisha approves Rs 466 Crore Sanitary Napkin Scheme for Girls:

Odisha government approved a Rs 466 crore Khusi scheme aimed at improving menstrual hygiene among adolescent girl students in the state.

Scheme would be over a period of five years.

Under the scheme, free sanitary napkins will be provided to 17.25 lakh adolescent girl students of Class-VI to XII studying in government and non-government aided schools of the state.

The Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawaharlal Navodaya Vidyalayas will also be covered under the scheme, and each girl student will be provided with 18 beltless sanitary napkins per month.

Two Silk Projects in Assam:

Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani inaugurated two projects under the ministry of textiles at Udalguri district in Assam aimed at the economic uplift of the people below the poverty line by Eri silk farming.

1. Rs 55 crore Integrated Soil to Silk Project would generate direct employment for 15,600 people during the project period and 7,000 persons per year.
 - a. The project, envisages new Eri plantation on 100 hectares and will facilitate post cocoon activities for on-farm sector like plantation, spinning and reeling.
2. Eri Spun Silk Mill, will provide indirect employment to around another 1,500 Eri farmers through backward linkage and to around 730 weavers through forward linkage
 - a. Expected turnover from this project during the first year is around Rs 10 crore with a net profit of Rs three crore.

Mega Food Park of Tripura:

- Govt. of India inaugurated Sikaria Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd at Village Tulakona in Agartala.
- This is the first Mega Food Park in the state of Tripura.
- The Mega Food Park has been set up in 50 acre of land at the cost of Rs. 87.45 crore.
- Government of India has accorded approval of a financial assistance of Rs. 50.00 Crore to the project.
- The food park is having facilities of fully operational Dry warehouse and material handling of 5000 MT, Pineapple canning and Pulping line of 2 MT/Hr each, Packing Unit, Ripening Chambers of 40 TPD, Cold Storage of 5000 MT with Frozen Storage of 1000 MT, Quality Control, Research & Development Centre etc.

Attukal Pongala:

- The Attukal Pongala - for long dubbed as the Women's Sabarimala - had, in 2009, entered the Guinness Book of Records as the largest gathering of women.
- Thousands of hearths have been lit all across **Thiruvananthapuram** city where women devotees congregated for the Attukal Pongala for making the annual offering to the deity, Attukal Bhagavathy.
- The offering to the deity is chiefly made up of rice, jaggery, coconut gratings and ghee. The ritual is celebrated on the ninth day of the annual festival at the temple.

Odisha-Kalia Scholarship:

- Odisha govt launched a scholarship programme for the children of the beneficiaries of the Kalia scheme.
- After taking steps towards transforming the economic standards of the farmers through Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (Kalia), the state government has come up with Kalia scholarship in order to ensure human resource development among the farming families across the state.
- Kalia scholarship or 'Kalia Chhatra Brutti' will ensure that not a single eligible child of Kalia beneficiaries aspiring for technical and professional education, be deprived of his/her dream.
- The state government will bear all expenditure including course fees, hostel fees and mess fees under Kalia scholarship.

A Drainage-cleaning Robot in Chennai:

- In Chennai, a drainage-cleaning robot has been introduced for the first time at the city corporation as part of efforts to rid of manual scavenging.
- The robot named **Bandicoot** has been introduced at a cost of 18 lakh ruppees.
- Drainage cleaning could be detected by viewing the blockages on the screen. The robot could be taken to any place in the corporation area.

Sanskrit the 2nd Official Language of Himachal Pradesh:

- The Himachal Pradesh Assembly passed a Bill to make Sanskrit the second official language of the state.
- The Himachal Pradesh Official Language Bill, 2019 (Amendment) was introduced in the ongoing budget session. And the bill was passed without any discussion.

Rajasthan Govt., Forms Committees to Review School Textbooks:

- The Rajasthan government has set up two committees of experts and educationists to review syllabus of school textbooks from class 1 to 8 and from class 9 to 12.
- The committee to review the syllabus of class 1 to 8 will be coordinated by I V Trivedi while the coordinator for the four-member committee for class 9-12 is former chairman of Rajasthan State Public Service Commission BM Sharma.

Revision in the List of Scheduled Tribes of Chhattisgarh:

- The Union Cabinet, has given its approval to the Cabinet note on the proposal for official Amendments in The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2016 so as to modify the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs) of Chhattisgarh.
- The following changes will be made in list of Scheduled Tribes of Chhattisgarh:-
 1. In entry 5, after "BhariaBhumia,", the following shall be inserted, namely:-
 - a. "Bhuinya, Bhuiyan, Bhuyan,";
 2. for entry 14, the following entry shall be substituted, namely:-
 - a. "14. Dhanwar, Dhanuhar, Dhanuwar"

3. for entries 32 and 33, the following entries shall be substituted, namely:-

a. "32. Nagesia, Nagasia, Kisan 33. Oraon, Dhanka, Dhangad";

4. for entry 41, the following entry shall be substituted, namely:-

a. "41 .Sawar, Sawara, Saunra, Saonra"; and

5. after entry 42, the following entry shall be inserted, namely:- "43. Binjhia".

This Act may be called the Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

Institute of Advanced Virology (IAV) in Thiruvananthapuram:

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the Institute of Advanced Virology (IAV) in Thiruvananthapuram .
- It will operate from the Bio 360 Life Sciences Park at Thonnakkal in the capital city.
- The establishment of the institute was proposed during the Nipah Virus outbreak that struck the state last year.
- The institute can confirm the viruses causing infectious diseases and detect new ones without delay in order to plan preventive measures.
- The institute is affiliated to the Global Virus Network, which has 45 centres of excellence in over 29 countries.

'Sarathi Sandesh Vahini Vehicles in Gorakhpur:

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flagged off 33 'Sarathi Sandesh Vahini' vehicles .
- The 'Sarathi Sandesh Vahini' is a mission started by the state family welfare department with an aim to spread awareness regarding family planning in urban and rural areas.
- The Abhiyan is being launched to spread awareness about the various disease and provide medical assistance to the needy.
- The first phase of the campaign has begun today and it will continue till February 28. The second phase will start from 15 May to 15 June and the third phase will begin from June 1 to June 30."

Mega Food Park of Himachal Pradesh:

- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Smt Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated Cremica Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd via video conference.
- The Park is located at Village Singhain Una District of Himachal Pradesh. This is the first Mega Food Park operationalized in the State of Himachal Pradesh. abha, Hamirpur.
- This Mega Food Park has been set up in 52.40 acre of land at a cost of Rs. 107.34 crore. The facilities being created by the developer at Central Processing Centre (CPC) of this Mega Food Park include Multi-crop pulping line with bulk aseptic packaging (24 MT/ hour), Frozen storage (1000 MT), Deep Freeze, Dry Warehouse, QC Laboratory and other food processing facilities.

Launches Zero Fatality Corridor-Delhi:

- In an attempt to bring down injuries and deaths due to road accidents, the Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government has launched the 'Zero Fatality Corridor'.
- It is to examine the cause for accidents and crashes on the stretch between Burari Chowk and Bhalswa chowk, located on the outer ring road.
- The initiative is to be run in partnership with SaveLIFE Foundation, a leading road safety non-profit organization.

Statue of Guru Padmasambhava-Odisha:

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik unveiled a 19-foot-high statue of Guru Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, at Jirang in Gajapati district.
- This 29 tonne stone statue is placed in the middle of 'Padma Sarovar', a large tank near Padmasambhava Mahavihara, the largest Buddhist monastery in eastern India.
- The Dalai Lama had inaugurated this monastery in 2010. Tibetan refugees settled in this region over six decades ago.
- Historians claim that Guru Padmasambhava, also known as second Buddha, was born and brought up in Odisha before he left for Tibet.
- The statue of Guru Padmasambhava has been sculpted by noted sculptor Padmashri Prabhakar Moharana.

Ladakh becomes Third Administrative Division of J-K:

- The Jammu and Kashmir government approved the creation of a separate Administrative Revenue Division for Ladakh.
- This division will comprise Leh and Kargil Districts with its headquarters at Leh.
- Now, Jammu and Kashmir will have three divisions - Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir.
- Ladakh is one of the most sparsely populated regions in Jammu and Kashmir and is the highest plateau in the state, with most of it being over 9,800 feet above sea level. The region is geographically isolated with an inhospitable terrain.

Boori Boot Yollo Festival:

- The Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh celebrated fortnight-long Boori Boot Yollo festival.
- Boori Boot Yollo is observed in the month of February every year to welcome spring and a successful harvest.

'Virginity Test of Brides now Punishable Offence-Maharashtra:

- The Maharashtra government will soon make forcing a woman to undergo virginity test a punishable offence.
- Certain communities in the state follow a custom whereby a newly-wed woman has to prove that she was virgin prior to the marriage.
- The demeaning custom is allegedly followed in the Kanjarbhat community among others. Some youth from the community have launched an online campaign against it.

Cabinet Approves Establishment of Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri:

- The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri.
- It will have jurisdiction over four districts namely Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar.

Oppo Signed an MoU with the Telangana Government:

- Chinese smartphone player Oppo signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana government to support and develop the startup ecosystem in the state.

- As part of the agreement, Oppo would provide technical expertise and mentoring support to startups helping the government create a supportive startup ecosystem for working in camera and image processing, battery, networks (5G), system performance, payments, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and gaming.
- The company would also provide market access to chosen startups by Alpha/Beta testing their offerings with the "Oppo Color Operating System (OS)" community and helping them with feedbacks.
- The startups would be selected on the basis of the the solutions they provide towards key problems faced by Indian mobile users, with the intention of using their idea, application, technology or service to help enhance consumer experience.

PM in Jammu & Kashmir:

Pm Narendra Modi unveiled a series of development projects to give a boost to infrastructure in the state during his recent visit to Leh, Jammu and Srinagar today.

1. Jammu visit was marked by the PM laying the foundation stone of AIIMS at Vijaypur, Samba.
2. Inaugurated University Institute of Engineering & Technology, Kathua.
3. Laid the foundation stone for the construction of Northern Regional Centre Campus of Indian Institute of Mass Communication at Jammu.
4. Laid foundation stone for 624 MW Kiru Hydroelectric project and 850 Megawatt Ratle Hydro Electric project in Kishtwar, Jammu
5. Laid the foundation stone for construction of Transit accomodation for Kashmiri migrant employees in Kashmir valley.
6. Laid foundation stone of the project aimed at reducing pollution of Rivers Devika & Tawi under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). This project is scheduled for completion by March 2021.
7. Laid the foundation stone of 1640 m span double lane bridge over River Chenab at Sajwal. It will provide an alternative route for the population of

Sajwal and Indri Pattian which will reduce the commuting distance from 47kms to 5kms between the two.

8. Rs.40000 Crore has been sanctioned to improve the connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir.
9. He inaugurated the University of Ladakh and said, "Young students constitute 40% of the population of Ladakh. This University will be a cluster University comprising of degree colleges of Leh, Kargil, Nubra, Zaskar, Drass and Khamti and will have administrative offices at Leh and Kargil for the ease of students.
10. PM inaugurated 9 MW Dah Hydroelectric project in Dah near Datang village and 220 KV Srinagar-Alusteng - Drass- Kargil – Leh transmission system.
11. Five New tourist and trekking routes in Ladakh were opened as well.
12. PM laid foundation stone of the new terminal building of Kushok Bakula Rimpochee (KBR) Airport in Leh by unveiling a plaque.

Punjab's State Aquatic Animal Declared:

- One of the world's rarest mammals, Indus River Dolphins has received an exceptional distinction. Found only in India and Pakistan in the Beas river, the generally playful Indus Dolphins have been declared Punjab's State aquatic animal.
- In Punjab, the Indus River Dolphins are found mainly in the Sutlej and Beas rivers.
- With this, the State Wildlife Department would initiate further steps to safeguard the endangered species from disappearing in Punjab.
- Already, Punjab has Black Buck as its state animal, and Baaj, also known as northern goshawk (*accipiter gentilis*), as the official state bird.
- A survey conducted by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) – India in 2018, in collaboration with the state Wildlife Department, noticed the presence of Indus River Dolphins in the Beas river for 70 years indicating that there was "no decline" in the population of the species.

6. AWARDS AND HONOURS

Oscars 2019:

Here is the complete list of all the winners of the 91st Academy Awards held at Dolby Theatre, LA.

Best Picture - *Green Book*

Best Actor in a Leading Role - Rami Malek for *Bohemian Rhapsody*

Best Actress in a Leading Role - Olivia Colman for *The Favourite*

Best Directing - Alfonso Cuarón for *Roma*

Best Supporting Actor - Mahershala Ali for *Green Book*

Best Supporting Actress - Regina King for *If Beale Street Could Talk*.

Best Original Score - Ludwig Goransson for *Black Panther*

Best Original Song - Lady Gaga, Mike Ronson, Anthony Rossomondo and Andrew Wyatt for *A Star Is Born*

Best Adapted Screenplay- Charlie Wachtel & David Rabinowitz and Kevin Willmott & Spike Lee for *Blackkkkiansman*

Original Screenplay - Nick Vallelonga, Brian Currie, Peter Farrelly for *Green Book*

Best Live Action Short - *Skin*

Best Visual Effects - Paul Lambert, Ian Hunter, Tristan Myles and J.D. Schwalm for *First Man*

Best Animated Short - Domee Shi and Becky Neiman-Cobb for *Bao*

Best Documentary Short - *Period. End of Sentence* by Rayka Zehtabchi and Melissa Berton

Best Animated Feature - *Spiderman: Into the Spider Verse*

Best Film Editing - John Ottman for *Bohemian Rhapsody*

Best Foreign Language – *Roma*

Best Cinematography - Alfonso Cuarón for *Roma*

Best Sound Editing - John Warhurst and Nina Hartstone for *Bohemian Rhapsody*

Best Sound Mixing - Paul Massey, Tim Cavagin and John Casali for *Bohemian Rhapsody*

Makeup & Hairstyling - *Vice*

Best Costume Design - Ruth Carter for *Black Panther*

Best Production Design - Hannah Beachler (Production Design); Jay Hart (Set Decoration) for *Black Panther*

Best Documentary Feature - *Free Solo*

Indian movie 'Period End of Sentence' wins Documentary Short Subject at Oscars

Gandhi Peace Prize for 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018:

Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 & 2018 was awarded by President of India on 26th Feb, 2019 at Darbar Hall, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.

The awardees are as below:

1. Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari for the year 2015.
 2. Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sulabh International for the year 2016 (Jointly).
 3. Ekal Abhiyan Trust for the year 2017.
 4. Sh Yohei Sasakawa for the year 2018.
- Gandhi Peace Prize for Social, Economic and Political transformation through Non-violence was instituted in the year 1995. The Award comprises an amount of Rs. One Crore and a Citation.
 - This annual award is given to individuals, associations, institutions or organizations who have worked selflessly for peace, non-violence and amelioration of human sufferings particularly of the less-privileged section of society contributing towards social justice and harmony.
 - The Award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or gender. Normally, contributions made during ten years immediately preceding the nomination are considered. Older contributions may also be considered if their significance has not become apparent recently.
 - Ministry of Culture, Government of India is responsible to select the awardees.

Past Awardees:

The details of prize conferred to individuals and organizations from the year of its inception in 1995 to till date are given hereunder:

Year	Awarded to
1995	Dr. Julius K. Nyerere, former President of Tanzania
1996	Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, Founder President of Sarvodaya Sharamadana Movement, Sri Lanka.
1997	Dr. Gerhard Fischer of Germany
1998	Rama Krishna Mission (India)
1999	Baba Amte (Murlidhar Devidas Amte) (India)
2000	Dr. Nelson Mandela and Grameen Bank of Bangladesh (jointly)
2001	Dr. John Hume, Ireland
2002	Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan
2003	Mr. Vaclav Havel, former President of Czechoslovakia
2005	Archbishop Desmond Tutu, South Africa
2013	Sh. Chandi Prasad Bhatt
2014	Indian Space Research Organisation

Note: This prize was not awarded for the years 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

National e-Governance Award Winners:

- Railway's ticket booking mobile application and the Chhattisgarh government's 'Khanij online' are among 14 such IT projects that have been chosen for this year's National e-Governance Awards.
- The IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation) Rail Connect mobile application was launched in January 2017 to facilitate booking of train tickets in a faster and easier way and it was later re-designed to enhance its overall booking capacity
- Another winner of the award is 'Khanij Online', portal of the Mineral Resources Department of the Chhattisgarh government. The core objective of this project is to develop an integrated and effective management of mines and minerals systems in the state.
- The National e-Governance Awards were presented by Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Jitendra Singh .
- Haryana's Bhiwani district administration will be awarded for its ultra-resolution Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)/drone-based Geo ICT-enabled property tax management system.

Others chosen for the award include

- Digital land (comprehensive system of land management) project of the Board of Revenue, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- Umang, a unified platform to provide major government services, by the National e-Governance division of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, 'MahaRERA' (Maharashtra Real Estate Regulatory Authority) and the National Scholarship Portal 2.0 by the NIC, New Delhi, are also among the award winners.
- The Mussorie Dehradun Development Authority, Dehradun, which has developed an online map approval system, Hello Doctor 555 by the office of the district magistrate of Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.
- A wind power forecasting service for the whole state of Tamil Nadu by the National Institute of Wind Energy, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, government of India.
- Gujarat-based Giribala Creative Ventures Private Ltd has been chosen for 'innovative use of information and communication technology in e-governance solutions by startups'.
- An 'iStart Rajasthan' project by the Department of Information Technology and Communication, government of Rajasthan, will be awarded under the 'excellence in adopting emerging technologies' category.
- iStart Rajasthan is an end-to-end online platform for startups across the country.

PM Modi Receives Seoul Peace Prize for 2018:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the prestigious Seoul Peace Prize for 2018 for his contribution to international cooperation and fostering global economic growth.

The award was presented to him by the Seoul Peace Prize Foundation

While conferring the award on Modi, the award committee recognised his contribution to the growth of Indian and global economies, crediting 'Modinomics' for reducing social and economic disparity between the rich and the poor.

The committee also credited him for his contribution toward regional and global peace through a proactive policy with countries around the world.

Modi is the 14th recipient of the award and the past laureates included former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and renowned international relief organizations like Doctors Without Borders and Oxfam.

The Seoul Peace Prize was established in 1990 to commemorate the success of the 24th Olympic Games held in Seoul.

The award was established to crystallise Korean people's yearning for peace on the Korean peninsula and in the rest of the world.

Shiv Chhatrapati Awards:

Noted Mallakhamb coach Uday Deshpande and aggressive opening batswoman Smriti Mandhana conferred the state government's Shiv Chhatrapati awards 2019.

The awards were presented by Maharashtra Government.

While the Shiv Chhatrapati life-time achievement award was presented to Deshpande, who has dedicated his life to the traditional sport, the Shiv Chhatrapati award for players among several others was presented to Mandhana, who hails from Sangli district in western Maharashtra.

Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony 2019:

Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony was awarded to

1. Shri Rajkumar Singhajit Singh-2014
 2. Chhayanaut (a cultural organization of Bangladesh)-2015
 3. Shri Ram Sutar Vanji-2016
- Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony was instituted by the Government of India from 2012 recognizing the contributions made by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore to humanity at large with his works and ideas, as part of the Commemoration of his 150th Birth Anniversary in 2012, for promoting values of Cultural Harmony.
- It is awarded annually and carries an amount of Rs. One Crore (convertible to foreign currency), a citation in a Scroll, a Plaque as well as an exquisite traditional handicraft / handloom item.
- The First Tagore Award – 2012 was conferred upon Pt. Ravi Shankar, the Indian Sitar Maestro and the Second Award – 2013 was conferred upon Maestro Zubin Mehta.

UNHCR Human Rights Award 2019:

Abdul Aziz Muhamat, a Sudanese refugee who has been held in Australia's notorious offshore Manus Island processing centre for over five years, has won the prestigious Martin Ennals **human rights** prize, of the UN refugee agency UNHCR.

It is the first time that the major prize has been awarded to an individual focused on **refugee** issues and who has been a victim of human rights violations by a Western democracy.

Muhamat, from the Zaghawa ethnic group of Darfur, in north-western **Sudan**, was granted refugee status in early 2015 but has been detained on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea since 2013 as he has not found a host country.

The annual Martin Ennals Awards are named after a Nobel Peace Prize-winning British human rights activist.

Swachhata Excellence Awards 2019:

- Municipal Corporations of Raigarh (Chattisgarh) has topped Swachhata Excellence Awards-2109
- Ambikapur(Chattisgarh)- 2nd
 - Kumbakonam(Tamilnadu)- 3rd

Other Winners:

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (Nagar Palika Parishad Jashpur NagarChattisgarh) & Malappuram Municipality (Kerala), and Nagar Palika Parishad Surajpurhave(Chattisgarh) got the prizes in the category of Statutory Towns.

For Aspirational Districts, Chas Municipal Corporation has been awarded with a consolation prize.

Swachhata Excellence Awards were instituted by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in 2017, to encourage Area Level Federations (ALFs) of SHGs formed under DAY-NULM, for their initiatives to make their communities Swachh and help their cities achieve the outcomes of Swachha Bharat Mission_Urban(SBM-U)

EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 Award:

Siddhartha Lal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Eicher Motors, was named the EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 at the 20th edition of the EOY Awards in India.

Other Awardees are:

1. Mr. Binish Chudgar, Vice Chairman & Managing Director of Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd., was awarded the prestigious Ernst & Young 'Entrepreneur of the Year 2018' Award in the Life Sciences & Healthcare category.
2. Azim Premji, Chairman of Wipro was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for putting the Indian information technology industry on the global map.
3. Kishore Biyani, popularly known as the king of retail was conferred the Business Transformation.
4. Byju Raveendran of Think & Learn (BYJU'S) was conferred the Start-up category award.
5. Ritesh Agarwal of Oravel Stays (OYO Hotels and Homes) was conferred the Services category award.
6. Bhaskar Bhat of Titan Company was honoured as the Entrepreneurial CEO for creating markets where none existed and building some of the largest and most trustworthy brands made in India.

The ceremony was held in Jio Garden, Mumbai, India on 12th February.

EY Entrepreneur of the Year is the world's most prestigious business award for entrepreneurs.

Bradley Cooper Wins Best Director from PETA:

PETA awarded Bradley Cooper the "Oscar" award "for his enlightened decision to cast his own canine companion in *A Star Is Born* rather than using one supplied by a notorious animal exhibitor.

Cooper cast Charlie as his dog in the self-directed musical drama also starring Lady Gaga because they already had the bond he wanted portrayed on the big screen.

Dan David Prize 2019:

Noted Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam has won Israel's prestigious Dan David Prize for this year for his work on inter-cultural encounters between Asians, Europeans and people of North and South America during the early modern era.

Mr Subrahmanyam, won the award in the category of "past time dimension" for his work in macro history.

He shares the USD 1 million award in this category with Prof Kenneth Pomeranz of University of Chicago.

The international Dan David Prize is awarded annually to those who have made outstanding scientific, technological and humanistic accomplishments in fields

representing the past, present and future of human achievement. Three Dan David Prize are given every year.

This year's winners were chosen from the three categories for their work in macro history, defending democracy and combating climate change, respectively.

The Dan David Prize is a joint international enterprise endowed by the Dan David Foundation headquartered at Tel Aviv University.

Other Winners:

- The winners in the "Present" category for "Defending Democracy" this year has been won by Reporters without Borders, an organisation that works for the freedom of the Press and Prof Michael Ignatieff.
- Michael Ignatieff is a Canadian author, academic and former politician who headed Liberal Party of Canada and was also the leader of the official opposition for almost three years.
- Christina Figueres, a Costa Rican diplomat has been awarded the prize in the "future" dimension for her role in combating climate change.

BAFTA Awards 2019:

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts or BAFTA Film Awards are presented in an annual award show hosted by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) to honour the best British and international contributions to film.

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) was founded in 1947 as The British Film Academy, by David Lean, Alexander Korda, Carol Reed, Charles Laughton, Roger Manvell and others. In 1958, the Academy merged with The Guild of Television Producers and Directors to form The Society of Film and Television, which eventually became The British Academy of Film and Television Arts in 1976.

Here's the complete list of winners from the ceremony, held at London's Royal Albert Hall:

- **Best Film:** "Roma"
- **Best Director:** Alfonso Cuarón, "Roma"
- **Best Leading Actor:** Rami Malek, "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- **Best Leading Actress:** Olivia Colman, "The Favourite"
- **Best Supporting Actor:** Mahershala Ali, "Green Book"

- **Best Supporting Actress:** Rachel Weisz, "The Favourite"
- **Best Original Screenplay:** "The Favourite"
- **Best Adapted Screenplay:** "BlacKkKlansman"
- **Best Animated Film:** "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"
- **Outstanding British Film:** "The Favourite"
- **Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer:** "Beast," Michael Pearce and Lauren Dark
- **Best Film Not in the English Language:** "Roma"
- **Best Documentary:** "Free Solo"
- **Best Original Music:** "A Star Is Born"
- **Best Cinematography:** "Roma"
- **Best Sound:** "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- **Best Makeup and Hair:** "The Favourite"
- **Best Costume Design:** "The Favourite"
- **Best Production Design:** "The Favourite"
- **Best Editing:** "Vice"
- **Best British Short Film:** "73 Cows"
- **Best British Short Animation:** "Roughhouse"
- **Best Special Visual Effects:** "Black Panther"
- **EE Rising Star Award:** Letitia Wright
- **Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema:** Elizabeth Karlsen and Stephen Woolley

Jimmy Carter Wins 2019 Grammy Award for Spoken Word Album:

Former US President Jimmy Carter won his second Grammy Award for spoken word album for his biography "Faith A Journey For All".

In 2016, Carter, the 39th president of the United States, won his first Grammy award for another one of his works, "A Full Life: Reflections at 90".

Carter is not the only US President to win a Grammy. In the past, Bill Clinton received two Grammys, one for spoken word album 2005 for "My Life", and another for spoken word children's album for "Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf/Beintus: Wolf Tracks with Mikhail Gorbachev and Sophia Loren.

Former President Barack Obama also won spoken word album in 2008 for "The Audacity of Hope".

61st Grammy Awards 2019:

- The Grammy Awards are presented annually in the United States by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) which is more commonly known as The Recording Academy

- The very first Grammy Awards were presented by NARAS on 4th May 1959 in Los Angeles. 28 prizes were given in the first Grammy Awards.
- The Grammy Awards were introduced as a part of the Hollywood Walk of Fame Project. These awards were established to give recognition to those artists who were worthy but might not have received a Walk of Fame star on the Hollywood Boulevard.

Here's the list of winners at the 61th annual Grammy Awards which are being presented at the Staples Center in Los Angeles:

1. **Album Of The Year:** "Golden Hour," Kacey Musgraves
2. **Record Of The Year:** "This Is America," Childish Gambino
3. **Song Of The Year:** "This Is America," Childish Gambino
4. **Best New Artist:** Dua Lipa
5. **Best Pop Solo Performance:** "Joanne (Where Do You Think You're Goin')," Lady Gaga
6. **Best Pop Duo/Group Performance:** "Shallow," Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper
7. **Best Country Album:** "Golden Hour," Kacey Musgraves
8. **Best Pop Vocal Album:** "Sweetener," Ariana Grande
9. **Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album:** "My Way," Willie Nelson
10. **Best Rap Performance:** "King's Dead," Kendrick Lamar, Jay Rock, Future and James Blake / "Bubblin," Anderson .Paak
11. **Best Rap/Sung Performance:** "This Is America," Childish Gambino
12. **Best Rap Song:** "God's Plan," Drake
13. **Best Rap Album:** "Invasion Of Privacy," Cardi B
14. **Best Rock Performance:** "When Bad Does Good," Chris Cornell
15. **Best Metal Performance:** "Electric Messiah," High On Fire
16. **Best Rock Album:** "From The Fires," Greta Van Fleet
17. **Best Rock Song:** "Masseduction," St. Vincent
18. **Best Alternative Music Album:** "Colors," Beck
19. **Best R&B Performance:** "Best Part," H.E.R. featuring Daniel Caesar
20. **Best Traditional R&B Performance:** "Bet Ain't Worth The Hand," Leon Bridges
21. **Best R&B Song:** "Boo'd Up," Ella Mai

- 22. **Best Country Song:** "Space Cowboy," Kacey Musgraves
- 23. **Best Country Duo/Group Performance:** "Tequila," Dan + Shay
- 24. **Best Country Solo Performance:** "Butterflies," Kacey Musgraves
- 25. **Best R&B Album Winner:** H.E.R.
- 26. **Best Dance Recording:** "Electricity," Silk City & Dua Lipa featuring Diplo and Mark Ronson
- 27. **Best Dance/Electronic Album:** "Woman Worldwide," Justice
- 28. **Best New Age Album:** "Opium Moon," Opium Moon
- 29. **Best Comedy Album:** "Equanimity & The Bird Revelation," Dave Chappelle
- 30. **Best Spoken Word Album (Includes Poetry, Audio Books & Storytelling):** "Faith - A Journey For All," Jimmy Carter
- 31. **Best Arrangement, Instruments And Vocals:** "Spiderman Theme," Randy Waldman featuring Take 6 & Chris Potter
- 32. **Producer Of The Year, Classical:** Blanton Alspaugh

France’s Highest Civilian Honour to Indian Priest:

Father Francois Laborde, a 92-year-old priest, was conferred the Légion d’Honneur (Legion of Honour), the highest civilian award of France, in recognition of his work for specially-abled children.

Data Science Innovation Award 2019:

- 1. YES BANK has been announced as the winner of the 9th edition of Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018

Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar 2017 – List of Winners:

Music:

Category	Winner
Carnatic Instrumental Music — Flute	Shashank Subramanyam
Carnatic Instrumental Music — Mridangam	Tiruvapur Vaidyanathan
Carnatic Instrumental Music — Veena	Suma Sudhindra
Carnatic Vocal Music	M.S. Sheela
Hindustani Instrumental — Shehnai/Flute	Rajendra Prasanna
Hindustani Instrumental Music — Tabla	Yogesh Samsi
Hindustani Vocal Music	Lalith J. Rao
Hindustani Vocal Music	Umakant Gundecha & Ramakant Gundecha (Joint Award)
Other Major Traditions Of Music — Gurbani	Gurnam Singh
Other Major Traditions Of Music — Sugam Sangeet	Madhurani
Other Major Traditions Of Music — Sugam Sangeet	Haimanti Sukla

- for its ‘Yes Engage Enrich Excel (EEE)’ project in data science.
 - a. YES EEE program is an industry-first analytics tool that aids the Bank’s relationship managers with top three talking points to engage with their customers.
 - 2. Uniphore as winner in "Innovation in IoT” category for their innovation "auMina". Uniphore has been lauded as the winner at the 9th edition of Aegis Graham Bell Award 2019 hosted by Government of Goa at Entertainment Society of Goa, Panaji. Aegis Graham Bell Award has been promoting innovations and entrepreneurship in the ICT domain.
- Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards 2017:
- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, presented the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for the year 2017 at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on February 06, 2019.
- Given by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, India’s National Academy of Music, Dance & Drama.
 - Highest Indian recognition given to practicing artists in the categories of music, dance, theatre, other traditional arts and puppetry, and for contribution/scholarship in performing arts.
 - Given since 1952
 - It symbolizes not only the highest standard of excellence and achievements, but also recognizes sustained individual work and contribution.
 - The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh, a Tamrapatra (brass plaque) and Angavastram (shawl).

Dance:

Category	Winner
Bharatanatyam	Rama Vaidyanathan
Chhau	Janmejoy Sai Babu
Kathak	Shobha Koser
Kathakali	Madambi Subramanian Namboothiri
Kuchipudi	Deepika Reddy
Manipuri	L.N. Oinam Ongbi Dhoni Devi
Music For Dance	Ashit Desai
Odissi	Sujata Mohapatra
Sattriya	Ramkrishna Talukdar

Theatre:

Category	Winner
Acting	Hema Singh
Acting	Deepak Virat Tiwari
Acting	Anil Tickoo
Allied Theatre Arts — Lighting	Avtar Sahni
Allied Theatre Arts — Stagecraft	Nuruddin Ahmed
Direction	Sunil Ganesh Shanbag
Direction	Bapi Bose
Other Major Traditions Of Theatre — Shumang Leela	Shougrakpam Hemanta Singh
Playwriting	Abhiram Damodar Bhadkamkar

Other Traditional / Folk / Tribal Music / Dance / Theatre and Puppetry:

Category	Winner
Folk Arts, Maharashtra	Prakash Sahadeo Khandge
Folk Music (Baul), West Bengal	Parvathy Baul
Folk Music, Bihar	Ramchandra Manjhi
Folk Music, Jharkhand	Mukund Nayak
Folk Music, Mizoram	K.C. Runremsangi
Folk Music, Punjab	Sarvjeet Kaur
Folk Music, Rajasthan	Anwar Khan Manganiyar
Folk Theatre, Chhattisgarh	Rakesh Kumar Tiwari
Puppetry, West Bengal	Sudip Gupta
Traditional Music — Khol, Assam	Jagannath Bayan

Overall Contribution / Scholarship:

Category	Winner
Overall Contribution — Dance	Sandhya Purecha
Scholarship	Vijay Verma

7. PERSONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Anupama Elected Astronomical Society of India President:

Dr.G C Anupama has been elected president of the Astronomical Society of India (ASI), becoming the first woman to head the prime association of professional astronomers in the country.

Presently the Dean and Senior Professor at the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Anupama is in the Indian core team which is part of the international team engaged in establishing the thirty meter telescope (TMT) at cost of over USD 1 billion in USA (Hawaii).

Anupama was also Project in Charge for the design and establishment of the Himalayan Telescope at Leh in Ladakh a few years ago. The Leh telescope is the only one at the highest elevation in the world and has been providing valuable data for the scientific community.

Indra Nooyi Joins Amazon's Board of Directors:

PepsiCo's India-born former CEO Indra Nooyi has joined Amazon's board of directors.

Ms. Nooyi, who stepped down as CEO of Pepsico in October last year, is the second woman of colour to be added on the Amazon's board of Directors.

Early this month, Starbucks executive Rosalind Brewer joined the Amazon Board.

She was Pepsico CEO from October 2006 to October 2018, where she also served as the Chairman of its board of directors from May 2007 to February 2019.

Saudi Arabia Appoints its First Female Ambassador to US:

- Saudi Arabia has named a princess as its first female ambassador to the United States, a key appointment as the
- Princess Reema bint Bandar replaced Prince Khalid bin Salman, the younger brother of the powerful crown prince after recent journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder controversy.

Indian as Head of Elite Foundation of AIBA:

India's boxing chief **Ajay Singh** has been elected as president of the Foundation Board for Better Boxing of the world governing body of the sport, **AIBA** for four years.

Foundation for Better Boxing was constituted by the International Boxing Association or AIBA, originally the Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur.

AIBA President-Gafur Rahimov

Ko Channabasappa Passed Away:

Freedom Fighter, Rtd. Judge and prominent Kannada writer, scholar Ko Channabasappa, breathed his last. He was 96.

He was popularly known as 'Kannada da Sakshi Prajne KoChe' (Kote Channabasappa).

Swatantrya Mahotsava', 'Prana Pakshi', 'Jeeva Teertha' are some of his poem's collections. While he also penned story collections like 'Ghadi Paru', 'Namura Deepa', 'Gayaka Nillada Sangeeta'.

He also penned several Novels, 'Hindi Rugi Baralilla', 'Nogada Nenu', 'Rakta Tarpana', 'Bedi Kalachitu – Desha Wadeyitu' among others.

He also wrote biographies of Shree Aravinda , Shree Mataji, Shree Mrithyunjay Swami.

First BCCI Ombudsman:

The Supreme Court appointed retired judge of the court Justice D.K. Jain as the first ombudsman under the new BCCI_(Board of Control for Cricket in India) Constitution.

A Court of Administrators(CoA) report filed recently in the Supreme Court pushed home the advantage of having an ombudsman - who should either be a retired Supreme Court judge or a former Chief Justice of a High Court to be appointed for a year - under the new BCCI Constitution to resolve internal disputes.

BCCI CEO Rahul Johri

First Lokayukta of Nagaland:

- Justice Uma Nath Singh will took oath as the First Lokayukta of Nagaland today.
- Justice Singh is a former Chief Justice of Meghalaya High Court.
- He will hold the office of the Lokayukta of Nagaland for a term of five years or till he attains the age of 70.

PayU India Names New as CEO:

Naspers-owned PayU, a leading online payments service provider appointed in Anirban Mukherjee as new CEO for its Indian operations.

Most recently, Mukherjee was co-CEO of Reliance Payments Solutions Ltd and was part of the leadership team of Jio, where he drove payments, merchant services, and digital financial services,

Mukherjee will now report to Laurent Le Moal, CEO, PayU Global.

Scientist who Popularized Term 'Global Warming' Dies

Was 87

A climate scientist Wallace Smith Broecker who popularized the term "global warming" has died at 87.

Broecker brought "global warming" into common use with a 1975 paper that correctly predicted rising carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere would lead to pronounced warming.

Broecker was also first to recognize what he called the Ocean Conveyor Belt, a global system of ocean currents circulating water and nutrients.

Namvar Singh Dies at 92

- Celebrated Hindi author and literary critic Namwar Singh died in New Delhi. He was 92.
- Singh who was the first chairman of JNU's Centre of Indian Languages retired from the university in 1992 but continued to remain as a 'professor emeritus.' Considered a living legend of Hindi literature, Singh has authored over a dozen works prominent among them are '*Kavita Ke Naye Pratiman*', '*Chhayavaad*' and '*Dusari Parampara Ki Khoj*' among others.
- He received the Sahitya Akademi award for literary criticism in the year 1971 for '*Kavita Ke Naye Pratiman*'.

New CBDT Chief:

Pramod Chandra Mody took charge as the new Chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the apex policy-making body for Income Tax Department.

So far, he was CBDT Member (Administration).

Mody belongs to the Indian Revenue Service (batch 1981) and takes over from Sushil Chandra, who has been appointed as an Election Commissioner ahead of the general elections.

UN Appoints Indian as Controller and ASG in Management Strategy, Policy & Compliance Department:

Chandramouli Ramanathan has been appointed as Controller, Assistant Secretary-General for Programme

Planning, Budget and Finance in the management strategy, policy and compliance department, UN.

He succeeds Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas of Uruguay,.

New Election Commissioner:

CBDT Chairman Sushil Chandra was appointed as an Election Commissioner.

Chandra, an IIT graduate, is a 1980 batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax cadre).

With his appointment, the EC now has Sunil Arora as the Chief Election Commissioner and Ashok Lavasa and Chandra as fellow commissioners.

The Law Ministry issued a notification announcing his appointment.

B P Sharma Re-employed as Pawan Hans CMD:

- B P Sharma has been re-employed as the chief of the state-run helicopter manufacturer Pawan Hans Ltd.
- Sharma took over as the CMD of Pawan Hans in March 2015.
- He superannuated last month-end.
- Pawan Hans has a fleet of more than 50 helicopters.

IAF Gets its First Woman Flight Engineer:

- Flight Lieutenant Hina Jaiswal becomes the first woman flight engineer, breaching what until last year was the Indian Air Force's men-only club.
- Commissioned in January 2015 to the IAF's engineering branch, she created history when she was chosen as the first woman candidate to pursue the elite course.
- Recently completed the six-month course at 112 Helicopter Unit, Air Force Station Yelahanka.
- In her new role, Flt. Lt. Jaiswal will serve at IAF's operational helicopter units and serve in demanding and stressful conditions from the icy heights of the Siachen glacier to the seas of the Andamans.
- A flight engineer is a member of an aircraft's flight crew and requires special skills for constantly monitoring and operating its complex systems.

Ashwani Lohani Appointed Air India CMD for Second Time:

- This will be Ashwani Lohani's second tenure as Air India chief
- Lohani, who holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering, was also ITDC chairman as well as the director of the Rail Museum in the capital
- Before this he was Railway Board chairman.

Ruchira Kamboj Appointed as Indian Envoy to Bhutan

- Senior diplomat Ruchira Kamboj has been appointed as India's next ambassador to Bhutan.
- Kamboj, a 1987-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, is presently India's High Commissioner to South Africa.

Bollywood Villain Mahesh Anand Dies:

- The body of noted yesteryear Bollywood actor, Mahesh Anand, 57, was found in his Andheri flat.
- A popular actor in the late 1980s and 1990s, known for his tall and tough body frame, he was usually seen as the main henchman of the villains in several films, but was facing huge financial constraints for many years.
- Anand acted with top actors such as Amitabh Bachchan, Govinda, Sanjay Dutt, in major films like Ganga Jamuna Saraswati and Shahenshah (1988), Majboor (1989), Thanedar (1990), Betaab Badshah (1994), Coolie No 1 (1995), Vijeta (1996), Lal Badshah, Aaya Toofan (1999), Baaghi and Kurukshetra (2000), Pyaar Kiya Nahin Jaata (2003).

Elected New Chairman of African Union:

- Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has been elected chairman of the African Union at the continental body's summit in Ethiopia.
The African Union (AU) is a continental union consisting of 55 member states located on the continent of Africa.
- The bloc was founded on 26 May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and launched on 9 July 2002 in South Africa.

Shane Warne Brand Ambassador of Rajasthan Royals:

- Australia spin legend Shane Warne was named as the brand ambassador of Rajasthan Royals (RR) for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL).
- Warne, who led Rajasthan Royals to its first and only IPL title in 2008, was the mentor of the side last season. But this year the Australian will be associated with the team in a new role.
- Warne went on to captain Rajasthan Royals for four seasons until 2011, after which he retired from all forms of cricket.

India's Oldest Elephant Dies at 88:

An elephant believed to be the oldest ever in captivity has died aged 88 in Kerala.

Awarded the title of "Gaja Muthassi" (elephant granny), Dakshayani took part in temple rituals and processions for decades

New Secretary, Ministry of Minority Affairs:

Shri Sailesh, IAS, Assam-Meghalaya Cadre, 1985 batch, assumed the charge as Secretary, Ministry of Minority Affairs.

New Civil Aviation Secretary:

Air India Ltd's chairman and managing director Pradeep Singh Kharola will be the new civil aviation secretary.

He replaced Rajiv Nayan Choubey .

SBI UK Chief Awarded 'Freedom of the City of London':

India's largest state-owned lender SBI's regional head in the UK has been honoured with the 'Freedom of the City of London' award in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations.

The award, given by the City of London Corporation, dates back to the 13th century and has since developed into an honour bestowed upon individuals who make an impact in the financial hub of London, referred to as the City or the Square Mile.

The previous Indian recipient of the honour is Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. Other recipients include author J K Rowling and actor Dame Judi Dench.

New MD & CEO of Corp Bank MD:

PV Bharathi has taken charge as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation Bank.

Earlier she was the Executive Director in Canara Bank prior to this appointment.

She joined as an officer in Canara Bank in 1982 and handled key responsibilities in branches, regional offices, circle offices and the head office. As a General Manager, she was the Chief Risk Officer of the Canara Bank.

Manipuri Filmmaker Returns Padma Award Bill:

Noted Manipuri filmmaker Aribam Shyam Sharma returned his Padma Shri award, which he received in 2006, as a mark of protest against Modi government's Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

Sharma has won several national awards for films such as 'Imagi Ningthem' (My Precious Son, 1981), 'Ishanou', and 'Sangai – The Dancing Deer'. He is also credited for revolutionising cinema in Manipur during the 1970s.

New India's Envoy to Colombia:

India appointed Sanjiv Ranjan as its new Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia.

Ranjan who is a 1993 batch Indian Foreign Service officer holds a bachelors in Economics from Delhi University and an M.A. in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University.

New India's Envoy to the Maldives:

Senior diplomat Sunjay Sudhir has been appointed as India's Ambassador to the Maldives

Sudhir, a 1993 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who is presently Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, is expected to take up the assignment shortly.

Top of Form

New DG for NCC

- Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra assumed the appointment of Director General of NCC (DGNCC).
- Commissioned in the Madras Regiment in December 1980, Lt Gen Chopra is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla and Indian Military Academy, Dehradun.

New Member for UPSC:

- Shri Rajiv Nayan Choubey, took the Oath of office and Secrecy as Member, Union Public Service Commission. The oath was administered by Shri Arvind Saxena, Chairman, UPSC.
- An officer of the 1981 batch of Indian Administrative Service of Tamil Nadu Cadre, Shri Choubey during his career spanning over more than 35 years, has held several important positions in the Central Government as well as in the Government of Tamil Nadu.

8. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India's First Fulldome 3D Digital Theatre:

India's first 'fulldome 3D Digital Theatre' at the Science City in Kolkata was inaugurated.

The 'fulldome 3D Digital Theatre' at the Science city was the first of its kind in India having a 23 metre titled dome to offer a fully immersive experience to the visitors.

The new system is capable of screening high resolution, full dome, and digital 2D/3D content by utilising six, high-end projectors in a 23-meter diameter dome using Uleria Seam technology.

The Science City is operated by the National Council of Science Museums under the Ministry of Culture.

AntBot, the First Walking Robot:

- Scientists claim to have developed the first walking robot that can explore its environment and find its way home without GPS or mapping, opening new avenues for the navigation of autonomous vehicles.
- Researchers from the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) took inspiration from desert ants, which are extraordinary solitary navigators, to design the AntBot.
- Ants use polarised light and ultraviolet radiation to locate themselves in space. Cataglyphis desert ants in particular can cover several hundreds of metres in direct sunlight in the desert to find food, then return in a straight line to the nest, without getting lost.
- Its weight is only 2.3 kg.

Infosys Launches InfyTQ App:

- Infosys has announced the launch of a digital platform offering learning and engagement experiences for engineering students.
- "InfyTQ is a free platform open to all engineering students in their third and fourth year.
- The platform encourages holistic development by imparting technical as well as professional skills and helps them become industry ready.
- InfyTQ will be available on both mobile and desktop and is equipped with a plethora of content, courses and news to establish talent readiness at an industry level through online assessments and certification.

LADIS – Least Available Depth Information System:

National Waterways, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) launched a new portal LADIS – Least Available Depth Information System.

LADIS will ensure that real-time data on least available depths is disseminated for ship/berge and cargo owners so that they can undertake transportation on NWs in a more planned way.

Initially LAD information will be available for NW-1, NW-2, Indo-Bagladesh Protocol route and NW-3, along with the date of survey. The facility will be expanded to other NWs also.

New NASA Telescope to Explore Origins of Universe:

NASA will launch a new space telescope in 2023 that could provide a glimpse of the first moments in the history of the universe, and explore how common are the ingredients for life in our galaxy's planetary systems.

The Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization and Ices Explorer (SPHEREx) mission is a planned two-year mission funded at USD 242 million.

SPHEREx will survey the sky in optical as well as near-infrared light which, though not visible to the human eye, serves as a powerful tool for answering cosmic questions.

Astronomers will use the mission to gather data on more than 300 million galaxies, as well as more than 100 million stars in our own Milky Way, NASA said.

Centre Notifies Eight New Medical Devices as Drugs:

- In a move to further regulate the medical devices industry, the Centre has notified eight new devices as "drugs".
- According to a notification issued on February 8 by the Union ministry of health and family welfare, 8 devices have been notified as drugs—
 - All implantable medical devices
 - CT scan equipment,
 - MRI equipment,
 - defibrillators,
 - dialysis machine,
 - PET equipment,
 - X-ray machine, and
 - bone marrow cell separator.
- With this notification, their import, manufacture and distribution is now regulated under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. Until last year, 27 categories of devices were notified as drugs, including blood pressure monitoring devices, digital thermometers and glucometers that were notified in December 2018.

- The eight new categories of devices in the latest notification are used to make a diagnosis. Though these devices are classified as drugs, and will be regulated under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, the parameters of regulation will be defined by the Medical Device Rules under the Act.

Successful Flight Test of SFDR:

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the second indigenously developed ‘Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR)’ propulsion based missile system from ITR, Chandipur, Odisha .
- Ground booster, separation of ground booster and Nozzle-less-booster performance were found satisfactory. Missile was guided to high altitude to simulate aircraft release conditions and subsequently nozzle-less-booster was ignited.
- SFDR based missile accelerated to achieve ramjet Mach number successfully.
- The trajectory was tracked by telemetry and radar stations till touchdown. All the mission objectives have been met.
- The success of SFDR propulsion technology is a significant milestone and will pave the way for development of long range air-to-air missiles in the country.

Observatory Set-up in Tehri:

A Himalayan Cloud Observatory has been set up in Tehri district to receive forecast and monitor cloud burst incidents in the Himalayan region and help minimise the damage.

The Observatory has been established in the SRT campus Badshahithaul and is currently in the testing period.

Cloudburst incidents are very frequent in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand, resulting in a huge loss of life.

This is the second observatory in the country to monitor cloud activities by the Indian Science and Technology Department and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur that can function in high-altitudes.

New AI and Data Science Centre:

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has inaugurated the Robert Bosch Center for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (RBC-DSAI) on February 6, 2019.
- Bosch will invest Rs. 20 crores over five years in the centre.
- The mission of the new centre is to create societal impact through multidisciplinary interactions with government, academic, research and industrial

collaborators on core challenges in data science (DS) and artificial intelligence (AI).

- The RBC-DSAI will undertake foundational research in many areas of AI and data science, namely deep learning, reinforcement learning, network analytics, interpretable machine learning, and domain aware AI.
- The areas of activity include research projects, knowledge management and dissemination, outreach projects, and setting up collaborative facilities and laboratories.
- Applied research will begin in four verticals: manufacturing analytics, financial analytics, smart cities, systems biology and health care.

2018 4th Warmest Year on Record: NASA

Earth’s global surface temperatures in 2018 were the 4th warmest since 1880, an independent analyses by NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has found.

According to scientists at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) here, global temperatures in 2018 were 0.83 degrees Celsius warmer than the 1951 to 1980 mean.

Globally, 2018’s temperatures rank behind those of 2016, 2017 and 2015.

NASA’s First Mini-spacecraft MarCO:

- NASA has lost touch with the first mini-spacecraft that ventured into deep space.
- The MarCO CubeSats were launched last year to test if such low-cost technology can operate in deep space.
- The twins, nicknamed EVE and WALL-E after characters from a Pixar film, served as communications relays during the InSight’s Mars landing, beaming back data at each stage of its descent to the Martian surface in near-real time, along with InSight’s first image.
- WALL-E sent back stunning images of Mars as well, while EVE performed some simple radio science.

‘Parmanu Tech 2019’:

‘Parmanu Tech 2019’ conference, was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).

The conference discussed issues related to Nuclear Energy and Radiation Technologies.

India Successfully Launches

Communication Satellite GSAT-31:

- India’s latest communication satellite GSAT-31 was successfully launched by European launch services provider- Arianespace’s rocket Ariane-5 , from French Guiana.

- The GSAT-31 is a “high power” communication satellite with Ku-band, and it is going to serve and replace some of the satellites that are going to expire soon.
- The Ariane-5 vehicle (Flight VA247) also carried Saudi Geostationary Satellite 1/Hellas Sat 4 along with GSAT-31.
- Weighing about 2,536 kg, the Indian satellite, GSAT-31, will provide continuity to operational services on some of the in-orbit satellites.
- GSAT-31 is the country’s 40th communication satellite which is configured on ISRO’s enhanced ‘I-2K Bus’, utilising the maximum “bus capabilities” of this type.
- With a mission life of around 15 years, GSAT-31 will be used for supporting VSAT networks, Television uplinks, Digital Satellite News Gathering, DTH-television services, cellular backhaul connectivity and many such applications.

NGT Slaps Rs 25 Lakh Fine on UP Govt.:

- Dumping of sewage in water bodies is an offence, the National Green Tribunal said while slapping a penalty of Rs 25 lakh on the Uttar Pradesh government for its failure to stop discharge of dirty water into Upper Ganga canal.
- A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said adequate steps have not been taken for proper waste management and its treatment.
- The green panel said that clean environment is a fundamental right and the apathy by the authorities has to be dealt with coercive action.

National Testing Agency Launches Mobile app for Mock Tests:

- The National Testing Agency (NTA) has launched a mobile application through which students can practice or take mock tests on their smartphones.
- In order to ensure no student is disadvantaged, the NTA has established a network of more than 4,000 Test Practice Centres (TPCs) to acquainten aspirants, especially those from rural areas, with computer-based tests (CBTs).
- Students across the country can register themselves online at the NTA Website or the NTA students app for visiting the TPCs adding all these services are provided to the students free-of-cost.
- The National Testing Agency (NTA) conducts entrance examinations for admission in higher educational institutions in the country.

Bullet Train Gets Green Light via Flamingo Haven, National Park:

Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan-led panel gives nod.

- A committee, chaired by Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan, has accorded wildlife clearance to the Mumbai- **Ahmedabad** high speed train corridor that encroaches upon a flamingo sanctuary and the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, the home to leopards, in Mumbai.
- The proposal involves diversion of 3.2756 ha of forestland from the Thane Creek Flamingo Wildlife Sanctuary and 97.5189 ha of land close to the boundary of the forest’s protected area.
- The project for one of India’s first ‘bullet trains’ was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in Ahmedabad in September, 2017. It is expected to be ready by 2022.
- Largely funded by a soft loan by Japan, the Rs 1 trillion Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project has a track-length of 508 km, and will originate at the Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai and terminate at the Sabarmati, in Gujarat.
- The length across the State of Maharashtra will be 155.64 km 4.3 km across Dadra & Nagar Haveli. The total length across the state of Gujarat would 348.2 km and would pass through the districts of Ahmedabad, Kheda, Anand, Vadodara, Bharuch, Surat, Navsari, and Valsad in Gujarat.

Air India’s First Ever Flight Simulator Ready:

- Air India’s first ever Flight Simulator is ready for public viewing at Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai.
- Known as ‘Boeing 747-200’, it was extensively used by the pilots, until due to technological obsolescence, it paved the way for new flight simulators.
- It was designed and manufactured by the CAE, Canada (earlier known as the Canadian Aviation Electronic Industries Limited) and acquired by Air India in 1980.
- The simulator has indigenous six-degree motion system operated by hydraulic jacks, which enabled the whole flight deck to move in the horizontal, vertical and lateral axes while rolling, pitching and yawing.

9. SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

India Hosts '4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit':

Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare inaugurated the '4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit in New Delhi.

- The global intergovernmental meeting on digital health is being hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Digital Health Partnership (GDHP) and officials from over 35 countries were also present at the inaugural session.
- The Global Digital Health Partnership is an international collaboration of governments, government agencies and multinational organisations dedicated to improving the health and well-being of their citizens through the best use of evidence-based digital technologies.
- The summit will provide an opportunity to support governments and health system reformers to improve the health and well-being of their citizens through digital technologies.

Regional Maritime Safety Conference 2019:

- The Regional Maritime Safety Conference 2019, being organized by India for the first time, commenced in Mumbai.
- The 2-day conference will deliberate on issues related to assuring maritime safety in the India-ASEAN sub-region, safeguarding our shores and promoting maritime trade.
- The conference will address a range of issues that affect regional maritime safety, including transport safety, maritime law, ship building, transportation of hazardous goods, marine oil spill, pollution and environmental safety.
- The inaugural edition is being organized by the National Maritime Foundation (NMF), in coordination with Ministry of Shipping and Ministry of External Affairs.

Medical Fair India 2019:

A three-day medical trade show, Medical Fair India (MFI) 2019, in Delhi.

Global medical device manufacturers, healthcare experts, industry bodies, think tanks and policy makers from over 25 countries participated in it.

3rd Edition (Software) of Smart India Hackathon- 2019:

- Ministry of Human Resources announced that 3rd edition (Software) of the biggest ever Smart India Hackathon - 2019 going to be held at 48 nodal centres across the country simultaneously.
- Smart India Hackathon is a unique initiative to identify new and disruptive digital technology innovations for solving the challenges faced by our country.
- It is a non-stop digital product development competition, where problems are posed to technology students for innovative solutions.
- The Grand Finale of third edition (Software) of Smart India Hackathon- 2019 will be held on 2nd – 3rd March, 2019.
- So far, two editions of SIH have been conducted successfully. The first two editions SIH-2017 and SIH-2018 proved to be extremely successful in promoting innovation, out-of-the-box thinking in young minds, especially engineering students from across India.

NITI Aayog hosts Conference on The Future of Indian Banking:

NITI Aayog co-hosted a conference on “The Future of Indian Banking” on February 22, 2019, with the Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare (EGROW Foundation).

The conference aimed to increase and elevate the discourse on the banking sector in India, and help develop insights to inform the continued evolution of the Indian banking sector for optimally supporting the growing credit needs of the Indian economy.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar- Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog.

AeroIndia 2019:

- Aero India 2019, the 12th edition of Asia's premier air show was held at the Yelahanka air base, Bengaluru.
- This edition of Aero India, for the first time, combines the defence and civil aviation segments into a holistic event with the co-involvement of the defence and civil aviation ministries in the event.
- More than 600 Indian Companies and 200 Foreign Companies are participating and witnessing the largest Air show of Asia.

4TH India-Asean Expo Summit:

- The 4th India-ASEAN Expo and Summit was held on 21-23 February, 2019 in New Delhi.
- This is a flagship event of Department of Commerce, being organised with FICCI to carry forward the momentum and to further strengthen India-ASEAN relations under the Act-East Policy.
- 200 plus exhibitors from India and ASEAN, and more than 100 buyers from ASEAN participated in the Expo. B2B and B2G meetings are also being organised. There will also be buyer-seller meetings to provide business leaders an opportunity to closely interact with their counterparts and consolidate B2B and B2G relations.

International Annual Desert Festival:

- The 40th International Annual Desert Festival kicked-off on the sand dune in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.
- The three-day festival, which exhibits rich cultural heritage of the desert state, commenced with a colourful procession from Gadsisar lake fort.
- The Border Security Force presented a camel tattoo show on the opening day of the festival.

India Pharma & India Medical Device 2019:

The theme of 'India Pharma 2019' is 'Enabling Quality Affordable Healthcare & that of 'India Medical Device 2019' is 'Accelerating Growth to Achieve Universal Healthcare'.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), is organising the 4th International Conference on Pharmaceutical & Medical Device sector on 18th – 19th February, 2019 in Bengaluru.

The flagship event would bring key stakeholders of the pharma and medical devices sectors under one roof and provide an opportunity to discuss Government policy and challenges facing the Industry. Government is striving to make the processes in the sector as transparent and easy as possible.

'International Vision Zero Conference':

- 'International Vision Zero Conference' was inaugurated in Mumbai, Maharashtra to promote occupational safety and health.
- 21 February 2019 Current Affairs: 'International Vision Zero Conference' was inaugurated in Mumbai, Maharashtra to promote occupational safety and health.

- The Conference was organized by Directorate General Factory Advice and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), Ministry of Labour and Employment, German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), Germany along with Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay and International Social Security Association – Manufacturing, Construction and Mining. It was inaugurated by Shri Heeralal Samariya, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment.
- 'Vision Zero' is based on four principles:
 - Life is non-negotiable.
 - Humans are fallible.
 - Limits of tolerance defined by physical resistance of humans.
 - People are entitled to safe transport and safe workplaces.

PCS1X Maritimee-Commerce Portal:

- Govt of India launched **PCS1x** at the Regional Maritime Safety Conference in Mumbai. **PCS1x** is an upgraded version of the e-commerce portal **Port Community System (PCS)**.
- It has been developed in record time by the Indian Ports Association, based on feedback from stakeholders using PCS.
- PCS has played a vital role in enhancing 'Ease of Doing Business' in the maritime sector by facilitating a transparent and paperless system for electronic submission of trade document, resulting in faster turnaround time and dwell time

Bhopal to Host History Congress:

After Pune University allegedly backed out, Madhya Pradesh govt. has decided to host the 79th Indian History Congress (IHC) in Bhopal.

The 79th session was earlier supposed to be held at Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) Bhopal.

Over 1,000 delegates including prominent historians are expected to participate in the IHC in Bhopal.

Asia's Biggest Early Childhood Conference:

- The two-day 'EarlyEd Asia 2019' was held at City Palace, Jaipur.
- It is aimed at providing a platform for learning, networking and sharing the best practices of early childhood education in Asia.
- It will bring together the brightest minds in early childhood education to discuss the latest trends in teaching and research to provide a stronger foundation to our children.

First Annual Conference of Media Units:

- Ministry of Information & Broadcasting organized the First Annual Conference of Media Units under the Ministry on 13th February, 2019 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- Through the Conference, the Ministry aims to strengthen synergy between the Media Units in order to ensure last mile delivery, while simultaneously brainstorm the use of new technology in communication.
- The participants will also discuss the ways of using Social Media to reach target audience groups and push the boundaries of communication outreach in terms of geographical and cultural barriers.

5th International Dam Safety Conference:

The 5th International Dam Safety Conference–2019 was held in Bhubaneswar

It is a joint initiative of the Government of India, Government of Odisha and the World Bank.

Globally India ranks third after China and the USA in terms of the number of large dams with 5264 large dams in operation and 437 large dams under construction. The total storage capacity of the impounded water by these dams is about 283 billion cubic meters (BCM)

CREDAI YouthCon

- CREDAI YouthCon -19 was held at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi.
- The event is organized by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Association of India (CREDAI).
- The Prime Minister will also visited and addressed the exhibition organized by CREDAI.
- YouthCon is the annual Youth Conclave of CREDAI, held to bring together the future of the real estate Industry in India.
- Established in 1999, CREDAI is the apex body representing real-estate developers from over 200 cities in India.

Aviation Conclave 2019:

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation, in association with Airports Authority of India, AAICLAS and Confederation of Indian Industry, is organizing the **Aviation Conclave 2019** with an overarching theme of **“Flying for All”** in New Delhi

- Over 30 industry leaders will discuss and deliberate across 5-key sessions covering the Drone-Ecosystem Policy Roadmap, Roadmap for Manufacturing Aircraft and associated equipment, including Regional Transport Aircraft, in India, the Project Rupee Raftaar- Aircraft Financing and Leasing from India, the National Air Cargo Policy, and the Mission to transform Indian Airports into Next-Gen Aviation Hubs.

National Conference on Unani Medicine:

The two-day National Conference on Unani Medicine organized by the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) as a part of 3rd Unani Day Celebration in New Delhi.

The conference elaborated the contributions and potentials of Unani Medicine in public health and highlighted that Unani Medicine has effective treatment for many diseases that are not effectively treated in other medical systems.

PETROTECH -2019

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the PETROTECH -2019 at India Expo Centre, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- PETROTECH - 2019 is considered to be India's flagship hydrocarbon conference. PETROTECH-2019, the 13th International Oil & Gas Conference & Exhibition is being organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India.
- The three-day mega event, showcased the recent market and investor friendly developments in India's oil and gas sector. Over 95 Energy Ministers from partner countries and 7000 delegates from around 70 countries are expected to be part of PETROTECH -2019.

Great Indian Bustard Chosen as Mascot for 13th UN Convention on Migratory Species:

- The Centre Friday announced the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as the mascot for the 13th UN Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS)(COP 13), scheduled to be held in Gujarat next year.
- The mascot was launched by Union Minister Harsh Vardhan, who also revealed that the bird has been fondly named by the ministry as 'Gibi'.

- The CMS COP-13, which has over 120 countries as participants, is a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats and brings together the states through which migratory species pass.
- So far 12 COPs (conference of parties) have been convened. The COP-13 will be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from February 15-22, 2020.

Mega Silk Event in New Delhi

Ministry of Textiles, in association with Central Silk Board, is organized an event, Surging Silk - Accomplishment and way forward, in New Delhi on.

The event is being organized to highlight the growth of silk industry in India over the past 4 years. It focusses on distribution of Buniyaad Tasar Silk Reeling Machines to women reelers from tribal areas, as part of total eradication of the age old practice of thigh reeling.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Meet on Disaster Risk Management:

- The Ministry of Home Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) organised a meeting of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Cluster Group on Disaster Risk Management (DRM).
- Indian Ocean Rim Association is an inter-governmental organisation and has many disaster-prone countries among its 22 members and nine dialogue partners. DRM is one of its priority areas and its Action Plan (2017-2021) has specific goals to improve resilience in IORA countries.

- The two-day meeting will feature interactive sessions and will focus on development of a draft Work Plan for DRM in IORA.

Words Count Festival 2019:

World Count festival 2019 was held in Pune(Maharashtra) .

The Words Count second edition of the Festival, started by the award -winning screenwriter, author and columnist Advita Kala, an initiative aimed at bringing together speakers from several socio-political spheres to share their insights on various pertinent issues.

ASEAN-India Youth Summit:

- India Foundation, in collaboration with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Government of Assam, has organised the 2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit at Guwahati.
- Its theme was “Connectivity is the pathway to shared prosperity.”
- 2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit will have youth delegates from all the 10 ASEAN countries and India.

Kala Ghoda Arts Festival:

- The Kala Ghoda Arts Festival - KGAF, India’s largest multi-cultural street festival was held at Mumbai.

Commemorating 20 years of its inception, KGAF 2019 will celebrate two glorious decades of art and culture through cinema, theatre, dance, literature and sculpture.

10. SPORTS

Tennis Rankings of Indian Players:

- In Tennis, India's Prajnesh Gunneswaran achieved his career-best ranking, rising three places to 94th in the latest list.
- Ramkumar Ramanathan dropped nine spots to 137, while Yuki Bhambri further slipped to 171. In Doubles rankings, Rohan Bopanna remained at 38th and Divij Sharan at 39th, while Leander Paes rose two spots to 73rd.
- In the Women's rankings, Ankita Raina continued to be the top-placed Indian at 164, followed by Karman Thandi at 207 and Pranjala Yadlapalli at 293.

Lifetime Achievement Award for Karthikeyan:

G.R. Karthikeyan, father of India's first Formula One driver Narain Karthikeyan, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award at the FMSCI annual awards function.

Raghul Rangasamy was applauded as he walked up to receive the Upcoming Motorsport Person of the Year award for the Raymond Gautam Singhanian Trophy.

FIA president Jean Todt was the chief guest and handed over the awards.

Abhijeet Gupta lifts Cannes International Open Trophy:

- In Chess, Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta lifted the Cannes International Open trophy.
- He took an easy draw with Pier Luigi Basso of Italy in the ninth and final round.

Indian Hockey Captain Manpreet Named AHF's Player of the Year:

Indian skipper Manpreet Singh has been honoured with the 2018 Player of the Year award by the Asian Hockey Federation while women's team striker Lalremsiami bagged the Rising Player of The Year prize.

Manpreet led the Indian team to an unbeaten streak at the Asian Champions Trophy in Muscat where the team was declared joint winners with Pakistan.

He also contributed to the team's silver medal win at the FIH Champions Trophy in Breda and continues to remain instrumental in the Indian midfield.

Brijbhushan Sharan Singh Re-elected as Wrestling Federation of India President:

Brijbhushan Sharan Singh was elected unopposed as President of Wrestling Federation of India. This marked the third time that Singh had assumed the post of WFI's president.

Singh was also chef-de-mission of the Indian contingent for the Asian Games 2018 held in Jakarta and Palembang.

He is also a Member of Parliament from the Kaiserganj constituency of Uttar Pradesh.

Nikhat, Meena Win Gold Medals at Strandja Memorial Boxing:

- Nikhat Zareen and Meena Kumari Devi became the first Indian women boxers to win gold medals at the Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.
- Zareen, a multiple-time national medallist, claimed a 5-0 win in the 51kg category finals against Filipino Irish Magno. Devi defeated another Filipino Aira Villegas 3-2, in the bantamweight (54kg) summit clash.
- However, Manju Rani (48kg) settled for a silver after a defeat from Filipina's Josie Gabuco in a split 2-3 verdict.
- Pwilao Basumatari (64kg), Neeraj (60kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) had settled for bronze medals after losing their semifinal bouts on Monday.
- India had won 11 medals including two gold at the 2018 edition.

Laureus Sport for Good Honour:

Yuwa, a Jharkhand-based NGO which works for girl empowerment, won the Laureus Sport for Good award, becoming the third Indian entry to bag the honour.

The NGO, founded by Americans Franz Gastler and Rose Thomson Gastler in 2009, runs a football program in rural Jharkhand covering 450 girls.

Mary Kom as Women's Training Ambassador:

World amateur boxing champion M.C. Mary Kom has signed a two-year deal with Puma to be their ambassador for women's training in India.

Kom, a bronze medallist at the 2012 Olympics, won her record sixth gold medal at the World Amateur Boxing Championships in November last year.

She has been roped in to lead the brand's #DoYou campaign aimed at motivating Indian women.

Chennai Open ATP Challenger Title:

France's Corentin Moutet has clinched the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tournament title after beating Andrew Harris of Australia 6-3, 6-3 in the singles final.

Smriti Mandhana Scores India's Fastest-ever T20I Fifty:

- Indian opener Smriti Mandhana scored fastest fifty for India in Women's T20Is.

- She beat it in just 24 balls in the 1st T20I against New Zealand at Westpac Stadium in Wellington.
- By this she beat her own record of a fifty in 25 balls, which she created last year against England.
- Among all the players, Mandhana lies in the 6th position in the list of fastest fifties.
- New Zealand's Sophie Devine holds the record of the quickest half century in women's T20Is. She set the record in 2005 against India when she hammered an 18-ball fifty.

Squash: Ramit Tandon won Seattle Open:

Ramit Tandon defeated Egyptian Mohamed El Sherbini to win the final of the Seattle Open, a Professional Squash Association challenger squash.

Tandon was ranked 58th in the world in squash.

Smriti Mandhana becomes World No.1 ODI Batswoman:

Smriti Mandhana has moved up three spots to achieve the number one rank in the updated ICC ODI batting rankings.

Smriti Mandhana has moved up three spots to achieve the number one rank in the updated ICC ODI batting rankings.

- Australians Ellyse Perry is on 2nd and Meg Lanning is on 3rd after scoring her fourth ODI century and an unbeaten 90 in the three-match series against New Zealand.
- Amy Satterthwaite New Zealand skipper is on 4th position, while Indian skipper Mithali Raj has moved down a spot to 5th.
- Jemimah Rodrigues, Indian young player, who blazed an unbeaten 81 in the first ODI against New Zealand, flew up 64 places to take number 61 position in the rankings. The 18-year-old has played only seven ODIs from the time she made her debut in the month of March last year.
- Among the bowlers, Jhulan Goswami is on 4th position. Indian spinners Poonam Yadav and Deepti Sharma moved ahead five places each and now hold number 8th and 9th respectively.
- Ekta Bisht is now placed at number 13 after taking five wickets in the series.
- When it comes to the all-rounders' rankings, Ellyse Perry has retained the top position.

Pro Wrestling League (PWL):

Haryana Hammers won the fourth edition of the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) as they defeated Punjab Royals 6-3 in the summit clash at the Gautam Buddha University indoor stadium.

First Asian Woman Cricketer to Play 100 T20Is:

- Former Pakistan women's cricket team skipper Sana Mir became the first Asian woman cricketer to play hundred T20 international matches.

- The 33-year-old reached the milestone when she played 3rd and final T20I against West Indies in Karachi.
- Overall, Sana is the sixth woman cricketer to complete a century of T20 Internationals. Daendra Dottin of West Indies tops the list with a total of 109 T20Is to her name.
- In the Asian list, Sana is followed by fellow Pakistan cricketer Bismah Maroo (94 T20Is) and India's Harmanpreet Kaur on third position (93 T20Is).

Vani becomes 1st Indian to Grab Australian LPGA Card:

Vani Kapoor became the first Indian to earn a card for the Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA) after coming through its first-ever Qualifying Tournament at the Ballarat Golf Club.

Other Indian girls in the Australian LPGA Qualifying were Diksha Dagar, Astha Madan and Ridhima Dilawari.

Regatta Trophy:

- The INS Dronacharya team won the Regatta trophy in the Kochi Area Pulling Regatta 2019 of the Southern Naval Command (SNC) held in the Ernakulam Channel, Kerala.
- The Boat Pulling Regatta is one of the most prestigious and traditional naval sporting activities conducted by the Navy.
- Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) School & Diving School secured the runners up position.
- Races during the regatta were conducted in the traditional pulling 'whalers' and held in four different categories - - junior sailors, senior sailors, officers and best whaler.

1st Female Cricketer to Play 200 ODIs

- India captain Mithali Raj became the first female cricketer to play 200 ODIs, adding another achievement to her illustrious career.
- The 36-year-old is also the highest run-getter in ODIs with 6622 runs at an average of 51.33, including seven hundreds.
- Mithali could not make a big impact in her 200th game, scoring nine off 28 balls as India were bowled out for 149 in the third and final ODI against New Zealand at Hamilton.
- She had hit an unbeaten 63 in the second ODI, helping India take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series.
- Mithali made her ODI debut way back in 1999 and has featured in 200 games out of the 263 ODIs India have played.
- She has also played 10 Tests and 85 T20s.

Jitendra Singh Wins 50 km Event:

- Jitendra Singh Rathore of Rajasthan won the gruelling 50 km event Sunday in the 6th Open National Race Walking Championship.
- In the second place was Joshi Sagar of Gujarat.
- Haryana's Pawan Kumar took the third place.

Elise Mertens Wins Qatar Open:

- In tennis, Belgium's Elise Mertens has claimed the biggest title of her career by beating top seed Simona Halep 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 to win the Qatar Open.
- This is world number 21 Mertens' first-ever WTA Premier-level crown, and the fifth title of her career overall.

Irani Cup-Vidarbha:

- Ranji champions Vidarbha won 2018-19 Irani Cup by defeating Rest of India (RoI) in match played at Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- This match had ended in draw, but Vidarbha was declared winner on basis of their 95-run first innings lead. In the first innings, Vidarbha had scored 425 in reply to Rest of India's 330. Later, ROI declared their second innings on 374/3, setting Vidarbha 280-run target.
- It was started during 1959-60 season to mark completion of 25 years of Ranji Trophy championship.
- It is named after late Zal R Irani, who was associated with Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) from its inception in 1928 till his death in 1970. ZR Irani was long time treasurer of BCCI and also keen patron of game of cricket.

Badminton Senior National Championships 2019:

- The 83rd edition of Senior National Badminton Championships begin in the Assamese city of Guwahati.
- Defending champion Saina Nehwal and last edition's runner-up PV Sindhu will be the biggest attractions in Women's Singles.
- The Men's Singles will be without defending champion HS Prannoy and runners-up Kidambi Srikanth who are suffering from injuries.
- This is the first time the Nationals is returning to the North-East Since Buwahati last hosted it in 2010.

Sunil Chhetri Football Ratna Award:

Sunil Chhetri, The 34-year-old Padma Shri was Friday conferred the first ever Football Ratna honour by Football Delhi, the association governing the sport in the city.

Railways Lift Senior Men's National Hockey Title:

- Railway Sports Promotion Board on Sunday lifted the 9th Senior National Men's Hockey Championship crown at Gwalior.
- They defeated champions Punjab 3-2 and claim the gold medal.

First Female Winner of MRF Challenge Series:

- Jamie Chadwick has become the first female winner of the MRF Challenge Series by mounting a turnaround at the final event of the season.
- The British driver, 20, won three of the five races in Chennai, India, to close an 18-point margin on Belgium's Max Defourny and take the title.
- Chadwick won six of the 15 races in the series, which began in November and included events in Dubai and Bahrain.
- In August, Chadwick became the first woman to win a British F3 race.

Australian Cricket Awards 2019:

- Male ODI Player of the Year: Marcus Stoinis
- Female ODI Player of the Year: Alyssa Healy
- Bradman Young Cricketer of the Year: Will Pucovski
- Betty Wilson Young Cricketer of the Year: Georgia Wareham
- Male Test Player of the Year: Nathan Lyon
- Community Champion: Moises Henriques
- Male Domestic Player of the Year: Matthew Wade
- Female Domestic Player of the Year: Heather Graham
- Male T20I Player of the Year: Glenn Maxwell
- Female T20I Player of the Year: Alyssa Healy
- Belinda Clark Award: Alyssa Healy
- Allan Border Medal: Pat Cummins
- Australian Cricket Hall of Fame Inductees: Dean Jones, Billy Murdoch and Cathryn Fitzpatrick

Suresh Raina becomes First Indian to Score 8000 Runs in T20s:

- Veteran Indian batsman Suresh Raina has scored 8001 runs in 300 T20s at an average of 33.47. He has got four centuries and 48 fifties in the shortest format.
- MS Dhoni is the only other Indian to have played 300 T20s so far.
- Raina has scored the sixth most runs in T20s. He is behind Chris Gayle (12298 runs), Brendon McCullum (9922), Kieron Pollard (8838 runs), Shoaib Malik (8603 runs) and David Warner (8111 runs).8u

11. DAYS AND DATES

Date	Event	Theme
February 1	Indian Coast Guard Day	
February 2	World Wetlands Day	Wetlands and Climate Change
February 2 – February 10	Kala Ghoda Arts Festival	
February 4	World Cancer Day	I am and I will
February 6	International Day of Zero Tolerance to female genital mutilation	
February 10	National Deworming Day	
February 10	World Pulses Day	
February 12	Darwin Day	
February 12	National Productivity Day	Circular Economy for Productivity & Sustainability National Productivity Week from February 12-18, 2019.
February 13	World Radio Day	Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace
February 20	World Day of Social Justice	If You Want Peace & Development, Work for Social Justice
February 21	International Mother Language Day	Indigenous languages matter for development, peacebuilding and reconciliation
February 22	World Scout Day	
February 24	Central Excise Day	
February 27	World NGO Day	
February 28	National Science Day	Science for the People and the People for Science

12. BOOKS AND AUTHORS

1. Law, Justice and Judicial Power – Justice PN Bhagwati’s Approach-Mool Chand Sharma
2. 'Quality, Accreditation and Ranking - A Silent Revolution in the Offing in Indian Higher Education'-Dr. H Chaturvedi
3. Simplicity & Wisdom'- Mr. Dinesh Shakra
4. JallianwalaBagh- Kim A. Wagner
5. In a Violent Land- Khushwant Singh & Others
6. A Rural Manifesto: Realizing India’s Future through Her Villages- Feroze Varun Gandhi
7. The Transformative Constitution- Gautam Bhatia
8. Virtus in Arduis: I Did It My Way- ParthasarathiShome(former adviser to the Finance Minister of India)
9. Indian Fiscal Federalism- Y.V. Reddy, G.R. Reddy
10. The Steel Frame: A History of the IAS- Deepak Gupta

13. REPORTS, INDICIES AND RANINGS

International Intellectual Property (IP)

Index:

- India climbed eight places in the 2019 International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, ranking at 36th position(44th-2018) among 50 countries. India's overall score has increased from 30.07 percent in 2018 to 36.04 percent in 2019.
- The seventh edition of the International Intellectual Property Index, "Inspiring Tomorrow" was released by the Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) of U.S. Chamber of Commerce on February 7, 2019. The Index was topped by the United States with 42.66 points out of 45, followed by the United Kingdom (42.22) at 2nd, Sweden (41.03) at 3rd and Germany (41.00) at 4th.
- The International Intellectual Property Index ranks 50 economies based on 45 unique indicators across eight separate categories that are critical to an innovation-led economy supported by robust patent, trademark, copyright, and trade secrets protection.

Mukesh Ambani Tops Hurun India

Philanthropy List:

- Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani topped the Hurun India Philanthropy List 2018.
- He has highest contribution of Rs 437 crore between October 2017 and September 2018.
- Piramal Group Chairman Ajay Piramal who made Rs 200 crore donations stands 2nd.
- The list, compiled by the Hurun Research Institute, ranks individuals from India who donated Rs 10 crore and above between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018.
- The total Indian philanthropy amount in the list stands at Rs 1,560 crore. The list included 39 Indians.
- He was also named the richest Indian by the Barclays Hurun India Rich List for 2018, released in September last year, with a net worth of Rs 3.71 lakh crore as on July 31, 2018.

"World Employment and Social Outlook

Trends 2019:

- It was relsed by the International Labour Organization

- Global unemployment levels fell one percentile to a steady 5% in 2018, the lowest figures since the economic crisis that wreaked havoc on labour markets.
- The number of jobless in real terms is estimated to rise from 172 million to 174 million in that time as the labour market expands.
- Between 2008-9, as the fallout of the near total collapse of major markets took hold, the unemployment rate jumped from 5 to 5.6%,
- Gender continued to present a real issue. The much lower labour force participation of women, which stood at 48%, compared with 75% for men, means that around three in five of the 3.5 billion people in the global labour force were men.
- Global unemployment among young people (between 15-24) stood at 11.8 per cent, higher than other age brackets.
- The ILO said it had registered around 114 million children aged between 5-14 involved in the global labour market, 73 million of whom were working in hazardous conditions, according to data from 2016.

Taj Mahal & Agra Fort among the Top Ten

Revenue Generating Monuments:

- The top ten revenue generating monuments during 2015-18 are Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Qutub Minar, Red Fort, Humayun's Tomb, Sun Temple Konark, Group of monuments Mamallapuram, Ellora Caves, Group of monuments Khajuraho, and Ajanta Caves, Aurangabad
- The year wise details of expenditure incurred for conservation of protected monuments under Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) during 2015-2018 are given below:

Sl. No.	Year	Expenditure Incurred (Amount Rs. In Lakhs)
1.	2015-16	23746.25
2.	2016-17	30176.22
3.	2017-18	41076.79

PRACTICE BITS (CURRENT AFFAIRS)

1. The Fiscal deficit pegged at ____ percent of GDP are the highlight of the interim Budget for 2019-20.
(a) 3.2 (b) 2.9 (c) 3.4 (d) 3.5
2. Finance Minister Piyush Goyal's announcement to set up an all India institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in which state during his interim Budget Speech for 2019-20?
(a) Telengana (b) Rajasthan
(c) Karnataka (d) Haryana
3. What will be the amount per year direct support to farmers through PM-KISAN programme?
(a) 8,000 (b) 5,000
(c) 6,000 (d) 12,000
4. What will be the pension for unorganized sector workers earning upto 15,000 rupees through a mega pension scheme- pradhan Manthri Shram-Yogi Maandhan
(a) 4,000 (b) 3,000 (c) 5,000 (d) 2,000
5. The overall sports budget for 2019-2020 was increased from 2002 crore rupees to ____ crore.
(a) 2216 (b) 2116 (c) 2016 (d) 2316
6. Which of following country will withdraw from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty with Russia?
(a) China (b) Israel (c) USA (d) India
7. What will be the amount allocated for MGNREGA in the interim Budget 2019-20?
(a) 48,000 cr (b) 56,000 cr
(c) 60,000 cr (d) 58,000 cr
8. What will be the amount of money allocated for Railways in the interim Budget 2019-20?
(a) 1.59 Lakh Crore (b) 1.56 Lakh Crore
(c) 1.52 Lakh Crore (d) 1.50 Lakh Crore
9. Dara Dotiwalla, who passed away recently, was associated with which sports?
(a) Badminton (b) Tennis
(c) Cricket (d) Football
10. What will be the annual income for individuals to need not pay Income Tax?
(a) 4 Lakhs (b) 5 Lakhs (c) 3 Lakhs (d) 2 Lakhs
11. Who has been appointed as the director of Central Bureau of Investigation?
(a) A.P. Mukherjee (b) R. Shekar
(c) Vijay Karan (d) Rishi Shukla
12. _____ has become the first state to set up a Price Monitoring and Research Unit (PMRU) to track violation of essential drugs and medical devices
(a) Gujarat (b) Kerala
(c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Telangana
13. Which country has become the 30th member of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)?
(a) Serbia (b) Kosovo
(c) Macedonia (d) Cyprus
14. The Union government has projected over _____ growth in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections in 2019-20 based on the rising trend in revenue.
(a) 10% (b) 12% (c) 15% (d) 18%
15. Which smartphone brand will start exporting Made in India phones to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)?
(a) Samsung (b) Xiaomi
(c) Mobeistar (d) Vivo
16. The centre is aiming to boost the air quality monitoring systems across the country by which year?
(a) 2020 (b) 2022 (c) 2024 (d) 2025
17. The Hubble Space Telescope has made an unexpected discovery of a never-before-seen dwarf galaxy in our cosmic backyard located at just _____ light-years ahead.
(a) 10 million (b) 20 million
(c) 30 million (d) 40 million
18. _____ has received tentative approval from the United States Food and Administration for Tenofovir/Lamivudine/Dolutegravir (TLD) 300/300/50 mg fixed dose combination drug.
(a) Dr. Reddy's (b) Natco Pharma
(c) Aurobindo Pharma (d) Laurus Labs
19. How much did the interim budget rebate for the income tax to those who earn upto Rs. 5 Lakh?
(a) Rs. 10,000 (b) Rs. 12,500
(c) Rs. 15,000 (d) Rs. 20,000
20. The Production of fruits, vegetables and horticultural crops reached a record of _____ as per the government's first estimates for FY19.
(a) 314 million tonnes (b) 200 million tonnes
(c) 424 million tonnes (d) 536 million tonnes

21. How many European nations joined the US in recognizing opposition leader Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's interim President?
(a) 9 (b) 10 (c) 11 (d) 12
22. In a major study scientists warned that about two-thirds of Himalayan glaciers, the World's "Third Pole", could melt by which year if global emissions are not reduced?
(a) 2025 (b) 2050 (c) 2075 (d) 2100
23. The centre may relax angel tax norms for start-ups, sets up a five member committee. Centre agrees to raise exemption threshold to Rs. _____
(a) 5 crores (b) 10 crores
(c) 20 crores (d) 25 crores
24. The fiscal deficit for the period April-December 2018 has touched _____ of the budget target of Rs. 6.24 Lakh Crore for the financial year 2018-19.
(a) 66% (b) 98% (c) 112.4% (d) 122.6%
25. The Indian Cricket Team rose to _____ position in the International Cricket Council (ICC) One-Day International rankings.
(a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fourth
26. Which airlines has announced the launch of a non-stop daily flight from Hyderabad to Jeddah from March 25th?
(a) IndiGo (b) SpiceJet
(c) Jet Airways (d) GoAir
27. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) report _____ cancer patients in South East Asia region die before the age of 70.
(a) 65% (b) 67% (c) 70% (d) 75%
28. _____ had acquired Bengaluru based Artificial Intelligence (AI) start-up Kint.io.
(a) Swiggy (b) UberEats
(c) Domino's (d) Grofers
29. Which Bank has signed on MoU with Pullela Gopi Chand Badminton foundation for setting up a new World class indoor facility and other related centres at a cost of Rs. 35 cores?
(a) State Bank of India
(b) ICICI Bank
(c) Kotak Mahindra Bank
(d) Axis Bank
30. What is the theme of World Cancer Day 2019?
(a) We can. I can.
(b) Fight against cancer
(c) To live is to help to live
(d) I am and I will
31. RBI has slapped a penalty of Rs. ____ on syndicate Bank due to non-compliance with the directions regarding frauds and risk management systems.
(a) 10 Lakhs (b) 25 Lakhs
(c) 50 Lakhs (d) 1 Crore
32. The government's total expenditure on subsidies is expected to make up _____ of its total expenditure overall in 2019-20, according to the Budget estimate of the year.
(a) 8.32% (b) 9.83%
(c) 10.36% (d) 11.42%
33. The centre has directed the messaging platform _____ to come out with effective solutions that can bring accountability and facilitate enforcement of law.
(a) Whatsapp (b) Telegram
(c) Hike (d) Snapchat
34. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed bullet Train was accorded wildlife clearance. The project is estimated at Rs. 1.08 Lakh Crore out of which 80% loan is from which country?
(a) USA (b) Singapore
(c) Russia (d) Japan
35. The Ayushman Bharat has stabilized as the largest scheme in the world, benefiting over _____ patients since its launch.
(a) 5 Lakh (b) 10 Lakh
(c) 12 Lakh (d) 15 Lakh
36. Which fish was named as Thailand's national aquatic animal?
(a) Freshwater angelfish
(b) Southern Platyfish
(c) Siamese fighting fish
(d) Green Swordtail fish
37. The Moody's Investors service downgraded Bharati Airtel's rating from Baa3 to _____.
(a) Baa2 (b) Ba1 (c) A3 (d) A2
38. The National Green Tribunal has imposed a fine of Rs. _____ on Uttar Pradesh government for failing to stop dumping of sewage and untreated water in upper Ganga Canal.
(a) 5 Lakhs (b) 10 Lakhs
(c) 20 Lakhs (d) 25 Lakhs
39. The Russia's Defence Minister said that the country will develop new types of missile systems by which year?
(a) 2020 (b) 2021 (c) 2022 (d) 2025

40. Who demanded a new constitution for Afghanistan and promised an “Inclusive Islamic System” to govern the war-torn country?
 (a) Taliban
 (b) ISIS
 (c) Al-Qaeda
 (d) Lashkar-e-Taiba
41. Who will be the CEO of Cognizant from April 1st 2019?
 (a) Brian Humphries
 (b) Francisco D’souza
 (c) Karen McLoughlin
 (d) James McNerney
42. What is the Mission life of India’s latest communication satellite GSAT-31?
 (a) 5 years (b) 10 years
 (c) 15 years (d) 20 years
43. Which district Road Transport Authority is attempting to create a record by granting licenses to 10,038 persons at one go?
 (a) Kurnool (b) Kadapa
 (c) Anantapur (d) Prakasham
44. In recent budget which state government has announced Gold for brides, a development corporation for indigenous Muslims and e-bikes for girls securing first division in higher secondary examinations?
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Assam
 (c) Odisha (d) Andhra Pradesh
45. Who has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India?
 (a) Satyendra Kumar
 (b) Ravindra Kumar
 (c) Y C Deveshwar
 (d) Pradeep Singh Kharola
46. The cabinet has approved unified regulator for International Financial services Centres (IFSC). The IFSCs are regulated by _____
 (a) RBI (b) SEBI
 (c) IRDAI (d) All the above
47. The RBI is unlikely to transfer contingency fund to the government. The RBI has set aside Rs. _____ for contingency fund.
 (a) 23,430 Crores
 (b) 24,963 Crores
 (c) 27,330 Crores
 (d) 28,420 Crores
48. JFarm services an initiative of which company has been integrated with the “Uzhavan app” of the Tamil Nadu government to offer farmers information on tractor and farm machinery rental services.
 (a) Mahindra Tractors
 (b) Tractors And Farm Equipment Ltd
 (c) Sonalika Tractors
 (d) Standard Tractors
49. Dassault systems opened its fifth global 3D experience executive centre in _____.
 (a) Hyderabad (b) Mumbai
 (c) Chennai (d) Noida
50. Which airways has announced the flyers from India would now have a new payment option for bookings in monthly Installments of 3, 6, 9 or 12 months respectively?
 (a) Singapore Airlines (b) Turkish Airlines
 (c) Emirates group (d) Qatar Airways
51. Donald Trump nominates World Bank Critic _____ as the next President of the World Bank.
 (a) Jeffrey Gerrish (b) David Malpass
 (c) Richard Branson (d) Christine Lagarde
52. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to reduce the repo rate by 25 basis points to _____.
 (a) 6% (b) 6.25% (c) 6.50% (d) 6.75%
53. What is the rank of India in International Intellectual Property (IP) Index?
 (a) 36 (b) 38 (c) 44 (d) 25
54. Insurance regulator IRDAI has imposed penalties of Rs. _____ on United India Insurance Co. Ltd (UIIC) as it has violated certain provisions.
 (a) 6 Lakhs (b) 8 Lakhs (c) 9 Lakhs (d) 10 Lakhs
55. Which country has agreed to sell advanced missile defence systems to India?
 (a) United States (b) France
 (c) Russia (d) United Kingdom
56. Who won the 85th Ranji Trophy title?
 (a) Saurashtra (b) Mumbai
 (c) Tripura (d) Vidarbha
57. Ivanka Trump has officially launched the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity initiative that aimed at helping _____ women economically in the next six years.
 (a) 10 million (b) 20 million
 (c) 25 million (d) 50 million

58. Reserve bank of India (RBI) had slapped Rs. 1 Crore penalty on which bank for Violating norms?
 (a) Syndicate Bank
 (b) Dena Bank
 (c) State Bank of India
 (d) Indian Bank
59. The Europe's next Mars rover, stated to launch next year, will be named after noted scientist _____
 (a) Rosalind Franklin (b) Lise Meitner
 (c) Marie Curie (d) Esther Lederberg
60. Who won the Women's 49 kg Gold in the EGAT Cup International Weightlifting Championship?
 (a) Punam Yadav (b) Vandana Gupta
 (c) Mirabai Chanu (d) Sanjita Chanu
61. The paid-up share capital below which startups would be eligible for an exemption from Angle tax has been set at _____.
 (a) 10 Crores (b) 15 Crores
 (c) 20 Crores (d) 25 Crores
62. Who is the author of the book "On Leaders and Icons from Jinnah to Modi"?
 (a) ManMohan Singh (b) Pawan Verma
 (c) Kuldip Nayar (d) Navtej Sarna
63. State Bank of India has decided to reduce the rate on home loans by 5 basis points for the loans upto Rs. _____.
 (a) 20 Lakhs (b) 25 Lakhs
 (c) 30 Lakhs (d) 50 Lakhs
64. Which is the most advanced anti-tank missile launched by India from the Odisha coast?
 (a) Helina (b) Amogha
 (c) Brahmos (d) Surya
65. The centre and which state government has joined hands for the conservation of the Asiatic Lion?
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Rajasthan
 (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Gujarat
66. Who became the highest run-getter in the Twenty20 Internationals, surpassing New Zealand's Martin Guptill?
 (a) Shikhar Dhawan (b) Rohit Sharma
 (c) Virat Kohli (d) MS Dhoni
67. Who has been appointed as the Union Sports Secretary?
 (a) Radheyshyam Julaniya
 (b) Rahul Bhatnagar
 (c) Rajendra Prasad
 (d) Amarendra Sharma
68. The Kuno-Palpur wildlife sanctuary is located in which state?
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat
 (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Rajasthan
69. What is the name of the mobile application launched by the election commission for the persons with disabilities?
 (a) CViGiL (b) Disability
 (c) PwD (d) Differently Abled
70. Who has been appointed as an assistant coach of Australia's men's team for the 50-over World Cup in England?
 (a) Aaron Finch (b) Mitchell Marsh
 (c) Ricky Pointing (d) Kane Richardson
71. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for setting up _____ coastal Installation Project at Krishnapatnam.
 (a) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited
 (b) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited
 (c) Indian Oil Corporation Limited
 (d) GAIL Limited Corporation Limited
72. The 22nd Indian Birding Fair, was organized on the banks of which lake?
 (a) Maota lake (b) Sambhar Salt Lake
 (c) Man Sagar Lake (d) Ramgarh Lake
73. Which country's Judicial Department has added Hindi as the third Official language of the City's Courts?
 (a) Abu Dhabi (b) Oman
 (c) Kuwait (d) Bahrain
74. How many operational Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are concentrated in South and West India?
 (a) 150 (b) 175 (c) 231 (d) 352
75. The RBI's restructuring package for small Business will help to recast Rs. _____ of loans for seven lakh Micro Small and Medium Enterprises.
 (a) 25,000 Crore (b) 50,000 crore
 (c) 1 lakh crore (d) 2 lakh crore
76. Rajasthan Royals named _____ as its ambassador for the IPL
 (a) Steve Smith (b) Anjinkya Rahane
 (c) David Warner (d) Shane Warne
77. Who claimed his ninth Senior National Snooker title?
 (a) Manan Chandra (b) Aditya Mehta
 (c) Geet Sethi (d) Pankaj Advani

78. Voltas Limited, plans to setup a new manufacturing facility at ____ in Andhra Pradesh at a cost of Rs. 500 crore.
 (a) Tirupati (b) Vijayawada
 (c) Guntur (d) Vishakapatnam
79. Over 1800 momentos received by Prime Minister Narendra Modi were auctioned. The proceeds will be used for which project?
 (a) Swachh Bharat Abhiyan
 (b) Digital India
 (c) Namani Gange
 (d) Smart cities Mission
80. Which city hosted the 13th International Oil & Gas Conference Petrotech-2019?
 (a) New Delhi (b) Noida
 (c) Gujarat (d) Bangalore
81. Which state Assembly passed two bills which seek to end the minimum education criterion for Panchayat and Civic poll candidates?
 (a) Gujarat (b) Andhra Pradesh
 (c) Rajasthan (d) Maharashtra
82. According to the Ministry of Women and Child Development between 2015 and 2018, about ____ of the children adopted in the country were girls.
 (a) 80% (b) 70% (c) 60% (d) 50%
83. The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is likely to retain the interest rate on the employees' provident fund at __ for the year 2018-19, for its 6 crore subscribers.
 (a) 6.54% (b) 7.32%
 (c) 7.89% (d) 8.55%
84. The Swachh Bharat Mission has chosen which city for its "Swachhta Excellence Award"?
 (a) Noida (b) Hyderabad
 (c) Pune (d) Bangalore
85. According to the new bill introduced by the Ministry of External Affairs, a marriage between an NRI and an Indian Citizen will have to be registered with in how many days?
 (a) 30 days (b) 45 days
 (c) 60 days (d) 90 days
86. ____ has expanded its fact checking programme in India, adding the names like India Today Group, Factly and Fact Crescendo to combat the spread of fake news.
 (a) Whatsapp (b) Facebook
 (c) Twitter (d) Instagram
87. Attukal Bhagavathy temple is located in which state?
 (a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu
 (c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh
88. India and which country has launched an initiative to combat Marine Pollution?
 (a) Sweden (b) Finland
 (c) Norway (d) Switzerland
89. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi served the 3rd billionth meal by Akshaya Patra Foundation to under privileged children in _____.
 (a) Puri (b) Agra
 (c) Rishikesh (d) Vrindhavan
90. National productivity week is observed on _____.
 (a) February 10th – 16th, 2019
 (b) February 11th – 17th, 2019
 (c) February 12th – 18th, 2019
 (d) February 13th – 19th, 2019
91. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated National Cancer Institute (NIC) in which state?
 (a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Haryana
 (c) Gujarat (d) Uttarakhand
92. Indian Army has signed a contract with Sig Sauer of which country for 72,400 SIG716 assault rifles for front-line soldiers deployed in operational areas.
 (a) US (b) UK (c) France (d) Australia
93. U.S. aircraft manufacturer Boeing has named _____ as its India head, effective from March 18.
 (a) Dinesh A. Kesar (b) Pratyush Kumar
 (c) Salil Gupte (d) Vishnu Kumar
94. Who has been named as the EY Entrepreneur of the year 2018?
 (a) Byju Raveendran
 (b) Ritesh Agarwal
 (c) Rajesh Mehra
 (d) Siddhartha Lal
95. Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) found that ____ of the companies registered with the Registrar of Companies (RoC) did not have a Permanent Account Number (PAN).
 (a) 70% (b) 85% (c) 90% (d) 95%
96. Which company has signed a global partnership with JDA software provider of end-to-end supply chain and retail solutions, to build next-generation cognitive solutions.
 (a) Infosys (b) IBM
 (c) TCS (d) Accenture

97. Which food ordering and delivery platform is moving beyond food delivery segment to deliver day-to-day needs?
 (a) Swiggy (b) Uber-eats
 (c) Domino's (d) PizzaHut
98. The Andhra Pradesh government has set a target of generating, 5000 MW of solar power by which year?
 (a) 2020 (b) 2021 (c) 2022 (d) 2023
99. Which Pharma company has launched Tadalafil tablets, a therapeutic equivalent generic version of Adcirca (Tadalafil) in US Market?
 (a) Dr. Reddy's Laboratories
 (b) Aurobindo Pharma
 (c) Cipla
 (d) Cadila Health Care
100. What is the theme of National Productivity Day?
 (a) Industry 4.0 Leapfrog opportunity for India
 (b) From waste to profits-through Reduce, Recycle and Reuse
 (c) Circular economy for productivity and sustainability
 (d) Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future
101. The government has asked which telecom company to look at all options, from a revival plan to disinvestment and even closure to tackle the loss?
 (a) MTNL (b) BSNL
 (c) Tata Docomo (d) Idea
102. Indian Air Force is planning to acquire 21 MiG-29 jets lying in an unassembled, mothballed condition with which country since the later 1980's?
 (a) USA (b) Australia
 (c) Russia (d) France
103. Who will be the first Indian Woman founder CEO of unicorn?
 (a) Ankita Bose (b) Archana Sharma
 (c) Aditi Kapoor (d) Driti Khanna
104. Which state Assembly passed a Bill giving 5% reservation in government jobs and education to Gujjars and four other nomadic communities?
 (a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra
 (c) Odisha (d) Rajasthan
105. The cabinet approved the MoU between India and which country for setting up of a Joint Working Group (JWG) on counter-Terrorism?
 (a) Tunisia (b) France
 (c) Morocco (d) Kenya
106. What is the theme of World Radio Day 2019?
 (a) Radio and Sports
 (b) Radio is you
 (c) To celebrate radio as a medium
 (d) Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace
107. _____ was declared winner under Miniratna Category by Ministry of MSME.
 (a) National Film Development Corporation of India
 (b) Mazagaon Dock limited
 (c) NHPC Limited
 (d) Rail Vikas Nigam Limited
108. The National conclave on creating synergy for MSMEs in Textile sector is held in which state?
 (a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh
 (c) New Delhi (d) Gujarat
109. The Cabinet approves continuation of sub-schemes under "Umbrella programme for development of scheduled Tribes" for the period till _____.
 (a) March 2020 (b) May 2020
 (c) August 2020 (d) December 2020
110. The Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has laid the foundation stone of which port in Balasore district of Odisha?
 (a) Paradip Port (b) Subranarekha Port
 (c) Gopalpur Port (d) Dharmapur Port
111. Who has been appointed as the new Election Commissioner?
 (a) Navin Chawla (b) Gopala Swami
 (c) Om Prakash Rawat (d) Sushil Chandra
112. _____ has been sued by Crawford and company the US-based independent providers of insurance claims-handling services for breach of contract.
 (a) Cognizant (b) TCS
 (c) IBM (d) Wipro
113. The US space agency NASA announced the demise of which rover?
 (a) Curiosity (b) Spirit
 (c) Opportunity (d) InSight
114. The India-U.S commercial dialogue and CEO forum is held in which city?
 (a) Hyderabad (b) Mumbai
 (c) Bangalore (d) New Delhi
115. What is the Maximum speed of Vande Bharat Express?
 (a) 120 kmph (b) 150 kmph
 (c) 160 kmph (d) 180 kmph

116. The centre has hiked the minimum sale price of refined sugar by mills to _____ per kg.
 (a) Rs. 30 (b) Rs.31 (c) Rs. 32 (d) Rs. 35
117. Who won the Sportstar Aces Lifetime Achievement award?
 (a) Virat Kohli
 (b) Saurabh Chaudhary
 (c) Prakash Padukone
 (d) Viswanathan Anand
118. What is the age limit for Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM)?
 (a) 18-40 years (b) 20-40 years
 (c) 21-48 years (d) 18-45 years
119. Who assumed the charge as Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command, Vishakapatnam?
 (a) Vice Admiral SN Ghormade
 (b) Vice Admiral Ashok Kumar
 (c) Vice Admiral M. S. Pawar
 (d) Vice Admiral R. Hari Kumar
120. The poem on the Jallainwala Bagh Massacre by acclaimed Punjabi writer _____ that was banned by the British after its publication in 1920 has now been translated into English.
 (a) Nanak Singh (b) Via Singh
 (c) Ved Rahi (d) Balwant Gargi
121. India has proposed incentives worth Rs. _____ to encourage power plants to install equipment to curb emissions and to develop infrastructure for electric vehicles (Evs).
 (a) 565 billion (b) 636 billion
 (c) 746 billion (d) 885 billion
122. The 12th edition of Aero India 2019, the International Aerospace and Defence Exhibition will be held during 20-24 Feb 2019 at _____.
 (a) Hyderabad (b) Bengaluru
 (c) Mumbai (d) Chennai
123. The Revenue Department has issued a final notification for the creation of 2 new Districts in Telangana. They are _____ and _____.
 (a) Mulugu, Valigonda (b) Mothkur, Valigonda
 (c) Mulugu, Narayanpet (d) Mothkur, Narayanpet
124. The High-level delegation, led by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant visited which country to discuss strengthening strategic partnership
 (a) Saudi Arabia (b) Qatar
 (c) United Arab Emirates
 (d) Iran
125. The Abohar Wild Life sanctuary is located in which state?
 (a) Tripura (b) Punjab
 (c) Kerala (d) Madhya Pradesh
126. Scientists have discovered massive mountains in the Earth's mantle. They found the topography on a layer located _____ below the surface
 (a) 500 kms (b) 550 kms
 (c) 600 kms (d) 660 km
127. The Centre expects Rs. _____ from the RBI as interim dividend for 2018-19
 (a) 20,000 Crores (b) 24,000 Crore
 (c) 26,000 Crore (d) 28,000 Crore
128. _____ was weighing an option to buy two additional astronaut seats aboard a Russian rocket against contingency plan against further delays in the launch system.
 (a) India (b) USA (c) Japan (d) Canada
129. Who won the Qatar open 2019?
 (a) Simona Halep (b) Demi Schuurs
 (c) Elise Mertens (d) Angelique Kerber
130. The Foundation Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes is observed on _____.
 (a) 16th February (b) 17th February
 (c) 18th February (d) 19th February
131. RBI announced that it would transfer _____ to centre as interim surplus for the half year ended December 2018.
 (a) 20,000 crore (b) 22,000 crore
 (c) 26,000 crore (d) 28,000 crore
132. Which state government announced interest-free loans of up to 1 lakh to poor and small farmers in its recent budget 2019-20.
 (a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh
 (c) Uttarakhand (d) Maharashtra
133. _____ is looking for potential partners to co-develop an engine for its planned Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) and five other future technologies.
 (a) ISRO (b) DRDO
 (c) BEL (d) HAL
134. Yuwa, a _____ based NGO won Laureus sports for Good Honour?
 (a) Jharkhand (b) Punjab
 (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Madhya Pradesh

135. Vienna convention is related to ____
 (a) Environment
 (b) Diplomatic Relations
 (c) Persistent Organic Pollutants
 (d) Climate change
136. The 12th edition of the Biennial Aero India is scheduled in ____ from February 20 to 24, 2019.
 (a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai
 (c) Bengaluru (d) Hyderabad
137. Which bank has announced that it will waive off all loans taken by CRPF soldiers martyred in Pulwama attack?
 (a) Syndicate Bank (b) ICICI Bank
 (c) HDFC Bank (d) SBI
138. ____ has announced that its aim to make 50% of all its shipments carbon neutral by 2030 under new initiative.
 (a) Amazon (b) Flipkart
 (c) Snapdeal (d) Paytm
139. ____ has recently joined India's No.1 sports brand, PUMA as their ambassador for women's performance category.
 (a) P. V. Sindhu (b) Sania Nehwal
 (c) Sakshi Malik (d) Mary Kom
140. Which country has approved stem cells trial to treat spinal cord injuries?
 (a) USA (b) UK (c) India (d) Japan
141. The Union Cabinet approved the National Electronics Policy 2019 aimed at achieving a turnover of ____ for the electronics system design and manufacturing sector by 2025.
 (a) \$500 billion (b) \$400 billion
 (c) \$300 billion (d) \$200 billion
142. How many Islands in Andamans, Lakshadweep are identified for seaplane operations?
 (a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 7 (d) 10
143. The Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launched two new mobile apps ____ and ____ that seeks to offer easy access to Justice and free legal advice across the country.
 (a) Tele Law, Nyaya Bandhu
 (b) Tele Justice, Nyaya Bandhu
 (c) Tele Law, Tele Justice
 (d) Tele Law, Tele Court
144. Which country will move a proposal at the U.N. in a "couple of days" to ban Masood Azhar Chief of the U.N. prescribed Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)?
 (a) USA (b) Saudi Arabia
 (c) France (d) UK
145. Who won the Laureus Sportsman of the year award 2019?
 (a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Eliud Kipchoge
 (c) Luka Modric (d) Novak Djokovic
146. ____ has commissioned its first dedicated facility for Railways.
 (a) JSW Steel Ltd (b) Bhushan Steel
 (c) Vizag Steel (d) JSL Lifestyle Ltd
147. ____ will raise Rs. 300 crore through bonds over the next few months from a clutch including Tata group companies.
 (a) RBI (b) SIDBI
 (c) NABARD (d) SEBI
148. Who became the first set of Indian women boxers to win gold medals at the Skandja Memorial Tournament in Bulgaria?
 (a) Nikhat Zareen, Manju Rani
 (b) Manju Rani, Meena Kumari
 (c) Nikhat Zareen, Meena Kumari
 (d) Kavita Chahal, Meena Kumari
149. PM. Narendra Modi has released commemorative postage stamp on completion of 100 years of which University?
 (a) IIT (BHU), Varanasi (b) IIT, Kanpur
 (c) IIT, New Delhi (d) IIT, Mumbai
150. PM Narendra Modi laid foundation stone of ____ birth place Development project to mark Jayanti Celebrations.
 (a) Kabir Das (b) Chhatrapati Shivaji
 (c) Nanived (d) Guru Ravidas
151. The Supreme Court found Anil Ambani, RCom guilty of Contempt of court and RCom must pay ____ to Ericsson in 4 weeks, else Ambani faces Jail time.
 (a) Rs. 350 Crore (b) Rs. 453 Crore
 (c) Rs. 543 Crore (d) Rs. 576 Crore
152. The centre has approved a recapitalization package at Rs. 48,239 crore for how many public sector banks?
 (a) 8 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 15
153. Which state received its first major investment with the inauguration of Rs. 85 crore mega food park?
 (a) Tripura (b) Arunachal Pradesh
 (c) Megalaya (d) Mizoram

154. Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman ordered the release of _____ prisoners from Saudi jails.
(a) 500 (b) 600 (c) 750 (d) 850
155. According to Commerce and Industry Ministry data, the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) falls by _____ to \$33.49 billion during April-December in the current fiscal.
(a) 5% (b) 7% (c) 9% (d) 10%
156. _____ has relaunched its generic version of Suboxone drug in U.S.
(a) Dr. Reddy's
(b) Aurobindo Pharma
(c) Ranbaxy Laboratories
(d) Glaxo Smithkline
157. _____ and Belcan, LLC have entered into a partnership to provide highly advanced technological product and service offerings in Defence, Aerospace, and other technical segments in India.
(a) Mahindra Group (b) Larsen & Toubro
(c) Tata Motors (d) Kalyani Group
158. Which airlines was the most punctual with 75.9% of its flights departing and arriving on time?
(a) IndiGo (b) Jet Airways
(c) Air Asia (d) Go Air
159. What is the tagline for Aero India 2019?
(a) Technology for Aerospace
(b) India-Global Aviation Hub
(c) The Runway to a Billion Opportunities
(d) India-wings of Aerospace
160. IAF has agreed that the indigenously developed and built. Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) _____ was combat ready.
(a) Boeing C-17 (b) Sukhoi Su-57
(c) Dassault Rafale (d) Tejas
161. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, all ranks of CAPF deployed in the Kashmir valley will be entitled to commercial flight services to either join duty or while proceeding on leave. CAPF consists of how many security forces?
(a) 5 (b) 6 (c) 7 (d) 8
162. _____ has been empowered by the centre to arrest anyone and search a place without warrant in the border districts of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram.
(a) Assam Rifles (b) BSF
(c) CRPF (d) CISF
163. The Employees provident Fund organization (EPFO) recommended a hike in interest rate to _____.
(a) 6.25% (b) 7.32%
(c) 7.85% (d) 8.65%
164. The centre has asked _____ and oil India Ltd (OIL) to sell of their small oil and gas fields to private firms.
(a) ONGC (b) GAIL
(c) Bharat Petroleum (d) Hindustan Petroleum
165. NIIT Technologies has announced a global collaboration with _____, to accelerate the 'Cloudification' of its enterprise clients.
(a) Google (b) TCS
(c) Microsoft (d) Tech Mahindra
166. Supreme Court appointed Retired Supreme Court Judge _____ as the first ombudsman under the new BCCI constitution.
(a) Justice H. L. Dattu (b) Justice A. K. Mishra
(c) Justice T.S. Thakur (d) Justice D. K. Jain
167. Global biopharmaceutical major Astra Zeneca has tied up with which I. T industry to help start-ups?
(a) TCS (b) Microsoft
(c) Nasscom (d) Google
168. Which of the following country has recently launched the "Study Xi" app?
(a) Russia (b) China
(c) USA (d) U. K
169. Which of the following cricketer has achieved the World's highest Cricket ball catch at MCG?
(a) Alyssa Healy (b) Kristan Baumgartner
(c) Meg Lanning (d) Beth Mooney
170. SEBI had directed acquirer of which company to pay investors 23.75 rupees per share along with 15% interest?
(a) Piramal Enterprises Ltd
(b) Polo Hotels
(c) Oberoi Hotels
(d) Taj Hotels
171. India, and which country has inked a multi-billion agreement for Ak-103 assault rifles?
(a) US (b) Russia
(c) Saudi Arabia (d) South Korea
172. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicates _____ Seoul peace prize money to Namami Gange.
(a) 1.42 Crore (b) 1.52 Crore
(c) 2.42 Crore (d) 1.62 Crore

173. So far, under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana 15.56 Crore loans worth a total of ___ have been disbursed
 (a) 6.23 Lakh Crore (b) 5.43 Lakh Crore
 (c) 7.23 Lakh Crore (d) 8.24 Lakh Crore
174. Which of the following country's Airlines announced a Code share partnership with "Vistara"?
 (a) Australia (b) Qatar
 (c) USA (d) Japan
175. India to have own "DNS" for safe browsing "DNS" stands for?
 (a) Domain Name Server
 (b) Domain Name System
 (c) Data Name Server
 (d) Data Name System
176. Hospitality firm OYO entered into a Joint Venture (JV) with _____ corporation to make a foray into the housing rental market.
 (a) Yahoo Italy (b) Yahoo Japan
 (c) Yahoo China (d) Yahoo Australia
177. Aluminium major NALCO aims to raise its net profit to more than _____ by 2020.
 (a) 2,000 Crore (b) 3,000 Crore
 (c) 4,000 Crore (d) 5,000 Crore
178. Who is the president of the National Rifle Association of India?
 (a) Rajiv Kumar (b) Rakesh Sharma
 (c) Raninder Singh (d) Srinivasa Raghavan
179. The World's largest bee-"Megachile Pluto" has been rediscovered in which of the following Country?
 (a) China (b) Indonesia
 (c) Singapore (d) Japan
180. Victoria Memorial Hall in which city exhibits 18th century copy of Gita Govinda to mark the International Mother Language Day?
 (a) New Delhi (b) Bengaluru
 (c) Kolkata (d) Mumbai
181. Who became the first woman athlete to co-pilot the indigenous Light combat Aircraft at Aero India 2019?
 (a) Saina Nehwal (b) P.V. Sindhu
 (c) Mary Kom (d) Sania Mirza
182. Who has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Sudan?
 (a) Omar al-Bashir (b) Mohamed Tahir Ayala
 (c) Mohamed Ahmed Ibn Auf
 (d) Mohamed Ansari
183. Dongria Kondh tribals belong to which state?
 (a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka
 (c) Odisha (d) Assam
184. Which state government has announced a bonus of Rs. 500 per quintal for paddy farmers?
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Karnataka
 (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Telangana
185. The Municipal Corporation of _____ signed an MoU with the Telangana State Renewable Energy Development Corporation (TSRECO) for the generation of 1.45MW of power through solar roof top panels.
 (a) Hyderabad (b) Warangal
 (c) Khammam (d) Karimnagar
186. _____ is planning to move the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) route to recover loans from Jet Airways.
 (a) Indian Bank (b) Syndicate Bank
 (c) ICICI Bank (d) State Bank of India
187. Who became the second Indian bowler to take 50 T20I wickets?
 (a) Ravichandran Ashwin (b) Umesh Yadav
 (c) Jasprit Bumrah (d) Hardik Pandya
188. The GST council announced under construction properties over Rs. 45 Lakh cut to _____ GST from the existing 12%.
 (a) 5% (b) 6% (c) 8% (d) 10%
189. Which state government has launched a boat ambulance service to ferry patients to hospitals in remote areas?
 (a) Kerala (b) Karnataka
 (c) Odisha (d) Goa
190. Bandipur National Park is located in which state?
 (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Karnataka
 (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Jharkhand
191. The National War Memorial (NWM) was constructed at the 'C' Hexagon near India Gate, to honour over _____ soldiers who have laid down their lives for the country since Independence.
 (a) 10,000 (b) 15,000
 (c) 20,000 (d) 25,000
192. _____ may head the country's first government recognized Board of Vedic Education?
 (a) Yogi Adityanath
 (b) Ramdev Baba
 (c) Jaggi Vasudev
 (d) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

193. The train passengers can now access live feed of how their meals are being cooked and packed at railway kitchens through which portal?
 (a) www.railkitchen.cris.org.in
 (b) www.railfood.cris.org.in
 (c) www.raildriшти.cris.org.in
 (d) www.raillive.cris.org.in
194. The International court of Justice asks UK to surrender _____ to Mauritius
 (a) Chagos Islands (b) Nelsons Islands
 (c) Salomon Islands (d) Egmont Islands
195. Most Commercial banks in India are likely to select RBI's repo rate as the external benchmark to decide their lending rates from _____.
 (a) March 1st (b) March 31st
 (c) April 1st (d) May 1st
196. Which Indian short film won the "Oscar Award 2019 in the "Best short Documentary" category?
 (a) End game
 (b) Period end of sentence
 (c) Black sheep
 (d) A Night at the Garden
197. The RBI has extended the deadline to complete Know Your Customer (KYC) process by PPI within another six months. PPI stands for?
 (a) Prepaid Payment Interface
 (b) Public Payment Instruments
 (c) Public Payment Interface
 (d) Prepaid Payment Instruments
198. Which company has emerged as the highest bidder for five of the six airports offered for bidding by the Airports Authority of India (AAI)?
 (a) GMR Airports
 (b) Adani Enterprises
 (c) Cochin International Airport
 (d) PNC Infotech
199. _____ has unveiled e-mobility service Glyd?
 (a) Mahindra & Mahindra (b) Ford
 (c) Tata Motors (d) Maruti Suzuki
200. Who was honoured with life-time Achievement award at the FMSCI Annual awards?
 (a) G. R. Karthikeyan (b) Gaurav Gill
 (c) Raghul Rangaswamy (d) Abhilash Verma
201. The indigenous Quick Reach surface-to-air missiles (QRSAM) developed by the ____ was successfully test fired twice from the Integrated Test Range Chandipur.
 (a) BEL (b) DRDO (c) HAL (d) NFC
202. RBI takes three banks out off Prompt Corrective Action (PCA). Which of the following bank is not among them?
 (a) Allahabad Bank (b) Corporation Bank
 (c) Lakshmi Vilas Bank (d) Dhan Laxmi Bank
203. What is the theme of "Aviation Conclave 2019"?
 (a) Flying for all
 (b) India-Global Aviation Hub
 (c) India-Wings of Aerospace
 (d) Bharat-EK Chhat
204. Who won the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018?
 (a) Vivekananda Kendra
 (b) Akashya Patra Foundation
 (c) Ekal Abhiyan Trust
 (d) Yohei Sasakawa
205. Indian Airforce has destroyed the Jaish-e-mohammad's biggest training camp in Balakot. The operation was carried by which fighter jets?
 (a) Sukhoi S4-57 (b) SEPECAT Jaguar
 (c) Mitsubishi F-2 (d) Mirage 2000
206. The Ministry of AYUSH and _____ are jointly organizing a three-day conclave for reviewing the document "Benchmarks for Training in Yoga"
 (a) World Bank (b) UNICEF
 (c) WHO (d) UNDP
207. Who became the first Indian in the top 10 richest individuals globally as per the "Loong Palace Hurun Global Rich List 2019"?
 (a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Ratan Tata
 (c) Azim Premji (d) Kumar Mangalam Birla
208. The Fiscal deficit widened in January to Rs. 7.7 Lakh crore, or ____ of the Budget estimates for the full year.
 (a) 76.3% (b) 83.5% (c) 98.2% (d) 121.5%
209. Recently who has joined the Amazon board of Directors?
 (a) Chanda Kochhar (b) Indra Nooyi
 (c) Shikha Sharma (d) Kiran Mazumdar Shaw
210. Sampriti-2019 is the Joint Military Exercise between India and which country?
 (a) Bangladesh (b) Mongolia
 (c) Nepal (d) Maldives
211. Which article of the Geneva Convention describes the humane treatment of persons detained during armed conflict?
 (a) Article 2 (b) Article 3
 (c) Article 4 (d) Article 5

212. The centre has announced the creation of a new South Coast Railway (SCoR) zone for Andhra Pradesh. Which of the following divisions is not among them?
 (a) Guntakal (b) Guntur
 (c) Vijayawada (d) Waltair
213. Who is the head of the Jury at this years Cannes film festival?
 (a) Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu
 (b) Thierry Fremaux
 (c) Emmanuel Lubezki (d) Leonardo Dicaprio
214. The US based General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc (GA-ASI) announced their collaboration with which company to produce simulation and training solutions for Sea Guardian Remotely Piloted Aircrafts (RPA) programme?
 (a) Sasken Technologies
 (b) 3i Infotech
 (c) Sankhya Infotech Ltd
 (d) Inspirisys Infotech
215. RBI pay norms may make private bank CEOs more accountable. The new norms propose variable pay to be capped at _____ of fixed pay compared with the 70% now.
 (a) 100% (b) 125% (c) 175% (d) 200%
216. Who has been banned from all cricket for two years for failing to cooperate with ICC’s Anti Corruption Unit regarding corruption in Sri Lanka?
 (a) Sanath Jayasuriya (b) Mahela Jayawardene
 (c) Kumar Sangakkara (d) Muttiah Muralitharan
217. The second summit between North Korean Leader Kim Jong-Un and U.S. President Donald Trump is held in which city?
 (a) Manila (b) Jakarta
 (c) Hanoi (d) Hiphong
218. Who has been re-elected as the President of Nigeria?
 (a) Atiku Abubaker (b) Bukola Saraki
 (c) Bola Tinubu (d) Muhammadu Buhari
219. The government detected Rs. _____ worth GST evasion between April-February 2018-19 of which Rs. 10,000 crore was recovered.
 (a) 50,000 crore (b) 40,000 crore
 (c) 30,000 crore (d) 20,000 crore
220. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of National Book Trust?
 (a) Saurabh Kumar
 (b) Srinivasan
 (c) Govind Prasad Sharma
 (d) Aravind Gupta

ANSWER KEY

1	c	2	d	3	c	4	b	5	a
6	c	7	c	8	a	9	c	10	b
11	d	12	b	13	c	14	d	15	c
16	c	17	c	18	d	19	b	20	a
21	c	22	d	23	d	24	c	25	b
26	b	27	b	28	a	29	c	30	d
31	d	32	b	33	a	34	d	35	b
36	c	37	b	38	d	39	b	40	a
41	a	42	c	43	c	44	b	45	d
46	d	47	c	48	b	49	c	50	d
51	b	52	b	53	a	54	c	55	a
56	d	57	d	58	c	59	a	60	c
61	d	62	c	63	c	64	a	65	d
66	b	67	a	68	c	69	c	70	c
71	b	72	c	73	a	74	c	75	c
76	d	77	d	78	a	79	c	80	b
81	c	82	c	83	d	84	b	85	a
86	b	87	a	88	c	89	d	90	c
91	b	92	a	93	c	94	d	95	d
96	c	97	a	98	d	99	a	100	c
101	b	102	c	103	a	104	d	105	c
106	d	107	a	108	c	109	a	110	b

111	d	112	a	113	c	114	d	115	c
116	b	117	c	118	a	119	a	120	a
121	d	122	b	123	c	124	a	125	b
126	d	127	d	128	b	129	c	130	d
131	d	132	c	133	b	134	a	135	b
136	c	137	d	138	a	139	d	140	d
141	b	142	c	143	a	144	c	145	d
146	d	147	b	148	c	149	a	150	d
151	b	152	c	153	a	154	d	155	b
156	a	157	d	158	d	159	c	160	d
161	c	162	a	163	d	164	a	165	c
166	d	167	c	168	b	169	a	170	b
171	b	172	a	173	c	174	d	175	a
176	b	177	a	178	c	179	b	180	c
181	b	182	b	183	c	184	a	185	d
186	d	187	c	188	a	189	c	190	b
191	d	192	b	193	c	194	a	195	c
196	b	197	d	198	b	199	a	200	a
201	b	202	c	203	a	204	d	205	d
206	c	207	a	208	d	209	b	210	a
211	b	212	d	213	a	214	c	215	d
216	a	217	c	218	d	219	d	220	c
