

# TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM

## CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEB , 2018

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## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Pakistan government gave extension for three more years to Thar Link Express connecting Khokhrapar in Pakistan and Munabao in Rajasthan, which is an rail link between India and Pakistan.
- ❖ The Ministry of Railways has decided to set up of a massive rail coach factory in Latur district i.e. in Marathwada region of Maharashtra. It will help to generate employment opportunities and bring economic development in Marathwada region which is one of the most Backward Parts of Maharashtra.
- ❖ Eminent musicologist Dr Premeela Gurumurthy has been appointed as vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Music and Fine Arts University.
- ❖ The Department of Defence Production has constituted a task force headed by Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran to study use of artificial intelligence.
- ❖ “Exam Warriors” -a book authored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for students facing exams.
- ❖ The Uttar Pradesh government has inaugurated the state's first ever butterfly park in Kanpur to preserve the ecosystem.
- ❖ The Indian Olympic Association appointed its joint secretary Vikram Singh Sisodia as the Chef-de-Mission for the upcoming Commonwealth Games.
  - The 21st Commonwealth Games will be held from April 4 to 15 in Gold Coast city in Australia.
- ❖ Naba Kumar Nayak has been appointed as the State Election Commissioner in Odisha .
- ❖ Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh released a book titled “Mere Sapnonka Bharat”. It is a compilation of interviews of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee by Tarun Vijay, an ex-MP, at a function in New Delhi.
- ❖ MS Dhoni became the first Indian wicketkeeper and fourth in the world after Sri Lanka’s Kumar Sangakkara, Australia’s Adam Glichrist and South Africa’s Mark Boucher to effect 400 behind dismissals of Cricket players in ODI.
- ❖ Defence Minister has constituted a 13-member advisory committee to monitor and expedite capital acquisition projects for the modernisation of the armed forces. The committee is headed by Vinay Sheel Oberoi.
- ❖ Gujarat University announced a course on spoken Sanskrit in order to popularise the ancient language. It is the first Centre for Spoken Sanskrit in the country.
- ❖ The South Central Railway (SCR) has become the 1st railway zone in the country to complete 100% LED lighting at all the stations under its jurisdiction. This is expected to save 32 lakh units of electrical energy worth Rs.2.7 crore per year.
- ❖ Bihar Government has banned sale of loose cigarettes in the state. Bihar is the 12th state in the country to bring such a ban into effect after Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Delhi and others.

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved to enhance target base of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana from 5 crores to 8 crores. The revised target of PMUY will be achieved by 2020.
- ❖ The President of India has declared Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh as 'Divyang friendly district'.
- ❖ Recently World's first robot ski competition held in South Korea.
- ❖ The President of India has inaugurated the international conference 'Agricon 2018' and 'Agri expo 2018' at Chandrashekhar Azad University of Agriculture & Technology Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ Archaeologist and historian Arvind P. Jamkhedkar will be the next Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR).
- ❖ Tri-service maritime exercise 'Paschim Lehar' was held off India's western coast with an aim to build interoperability between Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard.
- ❖ Bhalupani, a village in Balrampur district of Chhattisgarh got electricity for first time since India got Independence.
- ❖ Former Pakistan cricket team fast bowler, Shoaib Akhtar, has been appointed as the advisor to the chairman on cricket affairs and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) brand ambassador.
- ❖ The Pakistani Senate has approved a motion to declare Mandarin as one of the official languages of Pakistan.
  - Punjabi, which is widely spoken in Punjab province of Pakistan, Pashto and many other native languages have not been declared official languages of the country.
- ❖ Telecom Major Bharti Airtel and Chinese telecom equipment manufacturer Huawei announced that they have successfully conducted India's first-ever 5G trial, achieving a data speed of over 3 GB per second.

## TAMILNADU

### **Birth anniversary of Omandurar**

- ❖ Tamilnadu State government has decided to observe the birth anniversary of Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar as a government function for the first time.
- ❖ Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar is the first Chief Minister of Madras state after Independence.
- ❖ Reddiar held the post of Chief Minister barely for two years (March 23, 1947 to April 6, 1949).
- ❖ Notable achievements of Omandurar are,

- For the first time in the country, reservation in public services for Backward Classes (14.29%) were reserved.
- 14.29% reservation were given to Scheduled Castes/Tribes
- Another milestone in his innings was the adoption of Devadasi abolition law.

### **Constitution Bench for Jallikattu**

- ❖ The Supreme Court has referred to a Constitution Bench (five-judge) to decide whether the people of Tamil Nadu can preserve jallikattu as their cultural heritage under Article 29 (1) of the Constitution and demand its protection.
- ❖ It is for the first time the Supreme Court is considering the question of granting constitutional protection to jallikattu as a collective cultural right under Article 29 (1).
- ❖ Article 29(1) is a fundamental right guaranteed under Part III of the Constitution to protect the educational and cultural rights of citizens.

### **e-content generation**

- ❖ The Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMMRC) at Anna University has for the second consecutive year topped in generation of e-content and educational television learning modules.
- ❖ There are 21 EMMRCs in the country.
- ❖ The EMMRC at the Anna University has been generating e-content as well as educational television modules under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT) in various subjects.

### **Cauvery water dispute verdict**

- ❖ The Supreme Court in its verdict on the Cauvery river water dispute, reduced the allocation of water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ Court awards 14.75 tmc ft more to Karnataka, part of it for Bengaluru; Karnataka directed to release 177.25 tmc ft at Biligundlu point; Tamil Nadu advised to tap 10 tmc ft of groundwater available with it.
- ❖ The judgment concluded that the CWDT did not take into account Tamil Nadu's stock of an "empirical" 20 TMC of groundwater. The court held that it would take into account at least 10 tmc of this groundwater and reduce this amount from the 192 TMC supplied to Tamil Nadu.



### Bengaluru's drinking water requirement

- ❖ The court observed that Bengaluru had attained the “global status” and its drinking water requirement had increased multi-fold. Need for drinking water was at the top of the hierarchy. The Tribunal did not consider ground water availability in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ Thus, the court allocated 4.75 TMC to Bengaluru, even though the city is located outside the Cauvery basin.
- ❖ The court said that subject to the formulation of a scheme, the water allocation arrangement should stand unchanged for the next 15 years and there is no change for Puducherry and Kerala.
- ❖ An inter-State river is a "national asset" and no one State could claim full rights over its waters, it noted.
- ❖ The total availability of water in the 802-km long Cauvery basin is 740 TMC in a normal year.

S.No	State	Quantity of water (TMC)
1	Karnataka	284.75
2	Tamilnadu	404.25
3	Kerala	30
4	Puducherry	7

### **Chief Electoral Officer – Tamilnadu**

- ❖ IAS officer Satyabrata Sahoo has been named the next Chief Electoral Officer for Tamil Nadu, replacing the incumbent Chief Electoral Officer Rajesh Lakhoni.
- ❖ Satyabrata Sahoo is an IAS officer of the 1997 batch and a native of Odisha.
- ❖ Sahoo is currently Managing Director of the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB).

### **Tamizhaga Marakkalanjiyam**

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has introduced 'Tamizhaga Marakkalanjiyam', a mobile phone application to provide information about tress and silviculture.
- ❖ The application has been developed under an innovative project of the State Forest Department.
- ❖ All the necessary information needed for silviculture is provided in the application bilingually (English and Tamil).
- ❖ Information about 150 trees and their breeding techniques are provided.

- ❖ These trees are classified into 19 species.
- ❖ The application provides knowledge database on type of trees that can be grown in each district of Tamilnadu based on soil type of the particular district.
- ❖ The application features information on Intercropping and Agricultural Forest models.
- ❖ The application is available on Android and Apple platforms.

## NATIONAL

### India - 6th wealthiest country

- ❖ According to a report by New World Wealth, India has been ranked in the sixth position in the list of wealthiest countries.
- ❖ As per this wealthiest country list, United States is the wealthiest country in the world.
- ❖ In this report China ranked at 2nd place. Japan ranked at the 3rd place.

### High-Net-Worth Individuals

- ❖ The report further noted that India is home to 3, 30,400 HNWI's (High-Net-Worth Individuals - individuals with USD 1 million or more in net assets).
- ❖ Globally, India was ranked 9th in this aspect while the US topped the list.

### INS Karanj

- ❖ Indian Navy has launched its third Scorpene class submarine INS Karanj at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd), Mumbai.
- ❖ The new submarine is named after the earlier Kalvari class INS Karanj, which was in operation from 1969 to 2003.
- ❖ The Scorpene class is the Navy's first modern conventional submarine series.
- ❖ Six scorpene submarines being indigenously built at MDL under Project 75 with help of French naval defence and energy company DCNS.
- ❖ The launch of INS Karanj follows the launch of the first two Scorpene submarines - INS Kalavari and INS Khanderi.
- ❖ The remaining three submarines - Vela, Vagir and Vagshree will become operational gradually by 2020.

### Key Specifications of Submarines

- ❖ These are diesel-electric attack submarines equipped with anti-ship missile.

- ❖ The Scorpene submarines have superior stealth and ability to launch crippling attacks with precision-guided weapons.
- ❖ The first four submarines will be conventional, while last two will be equipped with the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system, which will enable them to stay underwater for longer duration to avoid getting deducted by enemies when It submarines make their surface appearance to recharge their batteries.

### **GeM 3.0**

- ❖ The Ministry of Commerce & Industry has launched third version of the Government e-Marketplace (GeM 3.0).
- ❖ The new version GeM would offer standardised and enriched catalogue management, powerful search engine, user rating and analytics.

#### **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)**

- ❖ GeM is an Online Market platform to facilitate procurement of goods and services by various Ministries and agencies of the Government.
- ❖ It has been envisaged as National Procurement Portal of India.
- ❖ It functions under Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D), Ministry of Commerce and Industries.

### **Global Democracy Index**

- ❖ India ranked at 42nd among 165 independent states on annual 2017 Global Democracy Index (GDI) released by UK-based company, Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- ❖ Norway has again topped as best Global Democratic country.
- ❖ India's rank has slipped 10 places from the 32 in 2016 GDI and remains classified among "flawed democracies".
- ❖ In last Global Democracy Index India was at 32nd place. But now it slipped 10 places and ranks at 42. It is under the classification - "Flawed Democracy".
- ❖ The rise of conservative religious ideologies, rise of vigilantism, violence against minority communities, individual organisation exercising power and other such issues has pushed India down the list.
- ❖ The index ranks 165 independent states based on five indicators - electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation and political culture.
- ❖ The list has been divided into four broad categories—full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime and authoritarian regime.



## Union Budget 2018

- ❖ Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley presented the Budget for the fourth time in parliament.
- ❖ This is the NDA government's last full budget.
- ❖ It is also the first annual Budget since the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax.

### Union Budget

- ❖ Union Budget of India is referred to as the Annual Financial Statement in the Article 112 of the Constitution of India.
- ❖ Till 2016, it was presented on the last working day of February. In 2017, it was presented on February 1, so that it could be materialized before the commencement of new financial year in April.
- ❖ First Union budget of independent India was presented by K. Shanmugam Chetty on November 26, 1947.
- ❖ Till Date, Morarji Desai has presented Union Budget for highest number of times (10 times).
- ❖ Till now, Indira Gandhi is the only and first women who presented Union budget (during 1970-71).
- ❖ During British era, the Railway Budget was part of the General Budget initially.
- ❖ On the basis of recommendation of Acworth Committee, the Rail Budget was separated in 1924.
- ❖ Then in 2017, On the basis of recommendation of Bibek Debroy Committee Railway Budget was merged with General Budget.

## 7th India Energy Congress

- ❖ The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of India Energy Congress (IEC) 2018 was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The theme for this edition of conference was Energy 4.0 - Energy Transition Towards 2030.
- ❖ IEC aims to make a platform for national and international decision makers, experts across the energy industry to exchange views and share knowledge, expertise and experience.
- ❖ It was the annual flagship event conducted by World Energy Council India and Ministries of Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy, Petroleum & Natural Gas, External Affairs and Department of Atomic Energy.

## **Impeachment of Allahabad HC judge**

- ❖ Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dipak Misra has recommended the impeachment of Justice Shri Narayan Shukla, judge of the Allahabad High Court, following an adverse investigation report about him by an in-house panel set up by the CJI.
- ❖ He has allowed the blacklisted private medical colleges in Lucknow to carry out the admission process.
- ❖ Which made him to come under the Impeachment scanner.
- ❖ A judge of High court and Supreme Court can be removed by the order of the President.
- ❖ The President can issue the removal order only after the Parliament's Comprehensive impeachment process on the alleged one.
- ❖ The grounds of removal are two- proven misbehavior and incapacity.
- ❖ The Judges Enquiry Act, 1968 regulates the procedure relating to the removal of judge.

## **International Kala Mela**

- ❖ The First ever International Kala Mela Festival is held at New Delhi.
- ❖ The International Kala Mela has been organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi in partnership with IGNCA (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts ) of the Ministry of Culture.

### About Festival

- ❖ The central objective of Kala Mela is to focus on direct interaction between the artist and the connoisseur and educating and raising awareness about art, which has been the mandate of Lalit Kala Akademi.
- ❖ The festival serves as a platform for National and International artists to showcase their art works.

### Lalit Kala Akademi

- ❖ The Lalit Kala Akademi or National Academy of Art is India's National Academy of Fine Arts.
- ❖ It is an autonomous organization, established at New Delhi in 1954 to promote and propagate understanding of Indian art, both within and outside the country.

## **Transfer of technology- CSIR**

- ❖ Ministry of Science & Technology has set up Communicative Mechanism in Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) to interact with Small-Scale Industry.

- ❖ The purpose is to transfer the Technology from CSIR Labs and realisation of technology for industrial benefit.
- ❖ SSI sector is largest employment provider in country, next to agriculture. It contributes almost 40% of gross industrial value added in Indian economy.

### About CSIR

- ❖ CSIR is an autonomous body and India's premier research and development (R&D) organisation. It was established in 1942.
- ❖ It operates as an autonomous body registered under the Registration of Societies Act of 1860. It is mainly funded by the Union Ministry of Science and Technology.

### **Fifth South Asia Region Public Procurement Conference**

- ❖ 5th South Asia Region Public Procurement Conference held at New Delhi Recently.
- ❖ The Government of India (GOI), through the Public Procurement Division (PPD) of the Ministry of Finance and All India Management Association (AIMA) hosted this Conference.
- ❖ The theme of the Fifth Conference is: "Public Procurement and Service Delivery".
- ❖ The Conference is held under the South Asia Region Public Procurement Network (SARPPN), which is sponsored and facilitated by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Islamic Development Bank for Effective Public Procurement Practice .
- ❖ The objective of the Conference is to provide a Platform to the Heads of Public Procurement and other key stakeholders in the eight South Asian countries to meet and learn from one another about the best practices and innovations in the field of public procurement.

### **KUSUM Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Government has announced to launch Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahaabhiyan (KUSUM) Scheme to encourage farmers for solar farming.
- ❖ KUSUM Scheme aims for decentralized solar power production of up to 28250 megawatt (MW) over a period of five years.
- ❖ It will provide additional income to farmers by giving them option to sell additional power to the power grid through solar power projects set up on their barren lands.
- ❖ Important Components of this scheme is Building 10,000 MW solar plants on barren lands and Distributing 17.5 lakh solar pumps.

- ❖ Under this Scheme Government will provide 60% subsidy on solar pumps to farmers. It will be shared between Centre and States while 30% will be provided through bank loans. The balance cost will be borne by farmers.

### **Top Think-Tank in India**

- ❖ The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) is a public interest research and advocacy organization based in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has been ranked the top environment policy think tanks in India and 16th at the global level.
- ❖ The rank was given by The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania.
- ❖ The CSE's efforts are built around five broad programs related to Environment.
  - Communication for Awareness
  - Research and Advocacy
  - Education and Training
  - Knowledge portal
  - Pollution monitoring
- ❖ CSE publishes the fortnightly Magazine 'Down to Earth'.

### **ENCORE Exercise**

- ❖ The Eastern Naval Command Operational Readiness Exercise (ENCORE), a month-long Theatre Level Readiness and Operational Exercise has been concluded recently.
- ❖ Fighter Crafts of Indian Airforce, fighter Ships and Submarines of Navy has participated in this Operational Readiness Exercise held at Bay of Bengal and South Indian Ocean.
- ❖ The exercise was conducted in phases to test various facets of war-fighting capabilities of the combat units.

### **Separate state flag - Karnataka**

- ❖ 9-member committee constituted by Karnataka govt. has recommended separate state flag and It submitted report on designing separate flag for the state and providing a legal standing for it.
- ❖ The committee has recommended new tricolour having yellow (at top), white (in middle) and red (at bottom) colours, with state's emblem Gandaberunda (a two-headed mythological bird) in centre.



- ❖ After getting formal state Cabinet approval, state govt. will make a formal application to Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) under whose purview the issue falls to amend the Flag Code 2002.
- ❖ There is No Provision in Constitution for a state Flag.
- ❖ However, Jammu and Kashmir is only state having its own flag as it enjoys special powers under Article 370 of Constitution. It had adopted its own flag in 2015.

### **CriSidEx**

- ❖ The Union Ministry for Finance and Corporate Affairs launched CriSidEx, India's first sentiment index for micro and small enterprises (MSEs) developed jointly by CRISIL (formerly Credit Rating Information Services of India Limited) & SIDBI (SIDBI- Small Industries Development Bank of India).
- ❖ CriSidEx is a composite index based on a diffusion of 8 parameters and measures MSE business sentiment on a scale of 0 to 200.
- ❖ Its readings will flag potential headwinds and changes in production cycles and thus help improve market efficiencies.

### **Railway development Authority**

- ❖ Rail Development Authority will help the Indian Railways take decisions on pricing of services, consumer interests, generating revenue and competition.
- ❖ Government has approved formation of a Rail Development Authority (RDA) comprising Chairman and three Members.

### **Start-up-India ranking framework**

- ❖ Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched three new tools for States and Union Territories for ranking of start-ups in the country.
- ❖ The tools are:



- The State and Union Territory Start-up Ranking Framework,
- The Compendium of Good Practices for Promoting Start-ups in India
- The Start-up India Kit
- ❖ These will act as catalysts to help the Start-up India initiative to drive India's economic growth.
- ❖ The Ranking Framework will measure the impact of each step initiated at the local level for building a strong Start-up ecosystem.

### **Minamata Convention ratification**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for ratification of Minamata Convention on Mercury and depositing the instrument of ratification, enabling India to become a Party of the Convention.
- ❖ India signed the Minamata Convention on Mercury on September 30, 2014.
- ❖ The Convention gives 5 years' time to India to control and reduce emissions from new power plants and 10 years' time for the already existing power plants.

### **Minamata Convention**

- ❖ The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a global treaty framed to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury.
- ❖ The objective of the convention's implementation to protect human health and environment from the anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.
- ❖ It came into being on January 19, 2013.
- ❖ The convention is named after the Japanese city Minamata as the city facing a devastating incident of mercury poisoning because of deadly mercury contamination since 1950.

### **International IP Index 2018**

- ❖ India has been ranked 44 out of 50 nations in the latest international Intellectual Property index released by the US Chambers of Commerce.
- ❖ The US, UK, Germany, Japan and Sweden were ranked the top five countries in the IP Index.
- ❖ Even though India slipped one position in this year's index it scores displayed a largest percentage increase among all countries measured.
- ❖ The index evaluates the intellectual property (IP) environment and grades countries on patents, trademarks, copyright, trade secrets, enforcement, and international treaties.

## INDIA RANK 44 / 50

### 2018 OVERALL SCORES

#### BOTTOM 10

Thailand	12.55	
Nigeria	12.38	
Indonesia	12.14	
<b>India</b>	<b>12.03</b>	
Ecuador	11.60	
Argentina	11.55	
Pakistan	10.41	
Egypt	10.10	
Algeria	9.53	
Venezuela	6.85	

#### TOP 10

US	37.98	
UK	37.97	
Sweden	37.03	
France	36.74	
Germany	36.54	
Ireland	35.98	
Netherlands	35.33	
Japan	34.58	
Singapore	33.45	
Switzerland	33.42	

### Niti Aayog health index 2018

- ❖ NITI Aayog has released a comprehensive Health Index report titled, “Healthy States, Progressive India”.
- ❖ It is the first attempt to establish an annual systematic tool to measure and understand the heterogeneity and complexity of the nation’s performance in Health.
- ❖ The report has been developed by NITI Aayog, with technical assistance from the World Bank, and in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- ❖ Among the Larger States, Kerala has topped the list, followed by Punjab and Tamil Nadu in terms of overall performance.
- ❖ Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh are the top three ranking States in terms of annual incremental performance.
- ❖ Among Smaller States, Mizoram ranked first followed by Manipur on overall performance, while Manipur ranked top in terms of annual incremental performance.
- ❖ Among UTs, Lakshadweep showed both the best overall performance as well as the highest annual incremental performance.



## INS Garuda

- ❖ INS Garuda has been upgraded with 'Integrated Automatic Aviation Meteorological System (IAAMS)'.
- ❖ INS Garuda is an Indian naval air station located in Kochi, in the state of Kerala.
- ❖ IAAMS is an ambitious project of the Indian Navy to modernise the Meteorological infrastructure of the nine Naval Air Stations.
- ❖ The IAAMS project at INS Garuda will give a major fillip to aviation safety through automation of weather monitoring process.
- ❖ The system can also provide automatic dissemination of routine weather reports of the air station as per World Meteorological Organization (WMO) standards to other Air Stations and to ATC (Air Traffic Control) tower without human intervention.

## Hunar Haat – New Delhi

- ❖ The sixth edition of 'Hunar Haat' was held at New Delhi.
- ❖ 'Hunar Haat' is a platform made available by the government for artisans from minority communities to showcase and sell their works. The theme of "Hunar Haat" organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs was "Development with Dignity".
- ❖ Till now, five editions of Hunar Haat have been organised namely,
  - International Trade Fair at Pragati Maidan, Delhi (in 2016 and 2017)
  - Baba Khark Singh Marg, Delhi (2017)
  - Puducherry (2017)

- Mumbai (2017).

### **Amendment to MSME Development Act, 2006**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for amendment to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006.
- ❖ One of the key amendments changes the basis of classifying Micro, Small and Medium enterprises to 'annual turnover' from 'investment in plant & machinery/equipment'.
- ❖ The purpose of amendment to Section 7 of MSMED Act, 2006 is to encourage ease of doing business, make MSME classification norms growth oriented and align them to new indirect tax regime revolving around Goods & Services Tax (GST).
- ❖ MSME is second largest employment generating sector after agriculture sector contributing around 31% to nation's GDP.

### **Implementation of Prime Minister Research Fellows Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved implementation of the 'Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme' for a period of seven years beginning from Financial Year 2018-19 at total cost of Rs. 1650 crore.
- ❖ The scheme was announced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in his Budget Speech 2018-19.
- ❖ Under this scheme,
  - The best students who have completed or are in the final year of B. Tech or Integrated M.Tech or M.Sc. in S&T streams from Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) and Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), will be offered direct admission in PhD programme in the IITs/IISc.
- ❖ The scheme will help tapping talent pool of country for carrying out research indigenously in cutting edge science and technology domains.

**my GOV**  
मेरी सरकार

## FACILITATING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INNOVATION

**Cabinet approves Implementation of 'Prime Minister Research Fellows (PMRF)'**

- Best students** of B. Tech or Integrated M.Tech or M.Sc. to be offered direct admission in **PhD programme in IITs/IISc**
- Per month fellowship** of ₹ 70,000/- for first 2 years, ₹ 75,000/- for 3rd year, & ₹ 80,000/- in 4th & 5th years
- Research grant of ₹ 2 lakh** to be provided to each Fellows for 5 years
- 3000 Fellows** to be selected in 3 years
- ₹ 1650 crore** earmarked for 7 years

### Protocol amending DTAA between India, China

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved signing and ratification of protocol amending Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between India and China.
- ❖ The DTAA aims for
  - Avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income
  - Update the provisions on exchange of information of the DTAA to the latest international standards.
- ❖ It also incorporates changes required to implement treaty related minimum standards under Action reports of Base Erosion & Profit shifting (BEPS) Project, in which India also had participated.
- ❖ In 2016, India signed a multilateral convention to implement measures to prevent shifting of profits by companies to low-tax nations as a way to avoid paying taxes.
- ❖ The convention is an outcome of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/G20 Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) project.



## **Placing ILO recommendation before Parliament**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has given its approval for placing the new Instrument adopted by International Labour Organization (ILO) Recommendation concerning “The Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience” before the Parliament.
- ❖ India supported the adoption of Recommendation which the International Labour Conference of ILO had adopted at its 106th Session held in Geneva in June, 2015.
- ❖ India also had supported the adoption of Recommendation. Its adoption and placing for information of Parliament does not create any immediate obligation on countries.
- ❖ ILO Recommendations are non-binding instrument which seeks to serve as guiding principle for national policy process.

### **International Labour Organization (ILO)**

- ❖ ILO was established in 1919 as an agency of the League of Nations and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ India is a founder member of the ILO. At present, it has 187 members.
- ❖ The ILO is United Nations agency dealing with labour issues, particularly international labour standards, social protection, and work opportunities for all.

## **Secondment Programme**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) for Secondment Programme between India and Australia.
- ❖ Under the Programme,
  - One officer from the Australian Treasury shall be seconded to the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and one officer from the IES (at Deputy Secretary/Director level) to be nominated by the IES Cadre, Department of Economic Affairs, shall be seconded to the Australian Treasury, Government of Australia, for a period of 3 months.
- ❖ The proposed Programme will help to deepen the understanding of current economic policy issues in both countries and also explore further opportunities for future collaboration and engagement.

## **First Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi**

- ❖ PM Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone-laying ceremony for construction of first traditional Hindu temple in Al Wathba, Abu Dhabi, the capital city of United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- ❖ It will be the first traditional Hindu stone temple in the Middle East. The temple design and structure is along the lines of the Akshardham temple in Delhi and other places.
- ❖ The UAE government had allocated land for the temple during PM Modi's first visit to the gulf country in 2015.
- ❖ It will be completed by 2020 and open to people of all religious backgrounds.

### **Richest Chief Ministers**

- ❖ Association for Democratic Reforms report has claimed that, of the 31 chief ministers of Indian states and union territories, over 35% have declared criminal cases against them.
- ❖ Stating that 25 CMs are crorepatists, the report reveals that Andhra Pradesh CM Chandra babu Naidu is the richest with 177-crore worth assets, followed by Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu with 129-crore worth assets.
- ❖ The three 'poorest' CMs are Tripura's Manik Sarkar with assets worth Rs 26 lakh, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee (Rs 30 lakh) and Mehbooba (Rs 55 lakh).
- ❖ Only three (10 per cent) CMs are women among the total 31 analysed.
- ❖ Age-wise analysis showed that Khandu, at 35 years, is the youngest CM followed by Fadnavis (44 years) and Adityanath (45 years).
- ❖ The report is based on analysis of chief ministers from 29 states and two Union Territories, done by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch.

### **Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)**

- ❖ The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) is a non-partisan, non-governmental organization which works in the area of electoral and political reforms.
- ❖ Since 2002, National Election Watch and ADR have been conducting Election Watches across the country.
- ❖ The first election watch was conducted by ADR in 2002 for Gujarat Assembly Elections.

### **India's first online radio station**

- ❖ India's first online radio station "Radio Umang" was launched on World Radio Day (Feb 13) 2018 themed around peace, humanity and hope.
- ❖ Listeners can tune this online radio station through web streaming or download the app.
- ❖ With 24 hours programming, it has found listeners in Hindi speaking regions of India and in over 60 countries worldwide.

## India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual to guide road engineers and policy makers about road expansion.
- ❖ The manual is known as Indo-HCM.
- ❖ The manual has been developed by CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) and CRRI (Central Road Research Institute) on basis of an extensive, country-wide study of traffic characteristics on different categories of roads.

## India's access to strategic Duqm port

- ❖ India and Oman have signed an annexure to the Memorandum of Understanding on Military Cooperation.
- ❖ India has secured access to the key Port of Duqm in Oman for military use and logistical support and it is a strategic move to expand its footprint in the Indian Ocean region.
- ❖ This is part of India's to counter Chinese influence and activities in the region.
- ❖ It is located in close proximity to Chabahar port in Iran and Gwadar Port in Pakistan which is developed by China as part of CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor).
- ❖ With the Assumption Island being developed in Seychelles and Agalega in Mauritius, Duqm fits into India's proactive maritime security roadmap.
- ❖ The port also has special economic zone, where about \$1.8 billion investments are being made by some Indian companies.



## Wealthiest Cities of the world

- ❖ Recently New World Wealth has released world's wealthiest Cities report.

- ❖ According to a report Mumbai, the economic hub of India is the 12th wealthiest city.
- ❖ Mumbai also features among the top 10 cities in terms of billionaire population.
- ❖ The list of 15 wealthiest cities was topped by New York with a total wealth of \$3 trillion.
- ❖ Among the 15 cities listed, San Francisco, Beijing, Shanghai, Mumbai and Sydney were the fastest growing in terms of wealth growth over the past 10 years.

### **Global Theatre Olympics –India**

- ❖ 8th Global Theatre Olympics is scheduled to organize in New Delhi.
- ❖ This theatrical extravaganza is being hosted for the first time in India by the National School of Drama under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
- ❖ The theme of the 8th Theatre Olympics is “Flag of Friendship”.
- ❖ It aims to bridge borders and bring people of different cultures, beliefs and ideologies together through the medium of theatrical art.
- ❖ The Theatre Olympics was established in 1993 at Delphi, Greece.

### **National School of Drama**

- ❖ National School of Drama is a theatre training institute situated at New Delhi, India.
- ❖ It is an autonomous organization under Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ It was set up in 1959 by the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

### **Anti-Narcotics Scheme**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has extended the Anti-Narcotics Scheme for 3 more years to combat illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances.
- ❖ The scheme was first launched in October 2004 for period of five years.
- ❖ It aims to assist states and Union Territories financially which are contributing in controlling inter-state and cross-border drug trafficking.
- ❖ The main strategy under the scheme includes reduction of both supply and demand of drugs and psychotropic substances

### **International Awards to Aadhar and Umang**

- ❖ India's Aadhaar and Umang App have won awards at recently concluded 6th World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai.
- ❖ Umang App won in Best m-Government Service Award for Accessible Government Category and Aadhaar won in the Best Government Emerging Technologies Award.

### **World Sustainable Development Summit 2018**

- ❖ First Edition of World Sustainable Development Summit is scheduled to be conducted in New Delhi.
- ❖ WSDS is the flagship forum of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).
- ❖ The theme of the 2018 Summit is 'Partnerships for a Resilient Planet'.
- ❖ An exhibition named 'Greenovation' also planned to be conducted at WSDS 2018 to showcase the latest technological advancements to meet Sustainable Development Goals.
- ❖ The summit seeks to bring together on a common platform global leaders and thinkers in the fields of sustainable development, energy and environment sectors.
- ❖ The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a leading think tank dedicated to conducting research for sustainable development of India and the Global South.
- ❖ key focus of TERI is promoting clean energy, water management, pollution management, sustainable agriculture and climate resilience.

### **Asia's first large scale CO<sub>2</sub> injection project**

- ❖ State owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is planning to introduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) injection technology in its Gandhar oil field in Gujarat.
- ❖ It will be first large scale CO<sub>2</sub>-injected project in Asia.
- ❖ Its purpose is to recover extra 20 million barrels of crude oil under enhanced oil recovery (EOR) programme.
- ❖ EOR programme aims at recovering up to 20% of residual oil from ageing oil fields to improve India's energy security.

### **CO<sub>2</sub> injection technology**

- ❖ It is a worldwide proven technology to increase the production of crude oil in ageing oil fields.
- ❖ Under CO<sub>2</sub> injection technology CO<sub>2</sub> gas is injected with residual oil in the ageing field in which total oil production has been declining.



- ❖ It reduces the oil viscosity present in the rock pores and makes it easier them to displace from the rock pores.
- ❖ CO<sub>2</sub> gas also swells oil, thereby pushing it towards the producing well for extraction.

### **Atal Bhujal Yojana**

- ❖ The Centre has formulated an ambitious water conservation scheme named Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) to tackle depletion groundwater level.
- ❖ The scheme is piloted under the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and is awaiting Cabinet's clearance.
- ❖ The objective of this scheme is to recharge ground water and create sufficient water storage for agricultural purposes.
- ❖ This scheme also focuses on revival of surface water bodies so that ground water level can be increased, especially in the rural areas.
- ❖ The duration of the ABY will be five years.
- ❖ The scheme, after Cabinet's clearance, will soon be launched in water-stressed states: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The Centre does not have any control over groundwater. The only law that deals with groundwater – the Indian Easements Act – dates back to 1882.

### **CPA - India**

- ❖ Lok Sabha Speaker, Sumitra Mahajan inaugurated the 6th India region Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference at Patna in Bihar.
- ❖ The conference held discussions mainly on two topics,
  1. 'Parliament's role in the development agenda'
  2. 'Legislature and Judiciary - Two Important Pillars of Democracy'
- ❖ India region CPA conferences are held once in two years. The 5th Conference was held in 2015 in Goa.

#### About CPA

- ❖ The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), previously known as the Empire Parliamentary Association, is an organisation which works to support good governance, democracy and human rights.
- ❖ It is divided into nine regions – Africa, Asia, Australia, British Islands and Mediterranean, Canada, Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic, India, Pacific and South-East Asia.
- ❖ The India region of CPA consists of the India Union Branch (Parliament of India) and 31 State/Union Territory branches.

## **Agriculture 2022- Doubling Farmers' Income**

- ❖ The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare organized a National Conference under the title of “Agriculture 2022 – Doubling Farmers’ Income” at National Agriculture Science Complex (NASC), New Delhi.
- ❖ The Conference is being organized with a view to discuss challenges faced by the agriculture sector and chalk out a roadmap to achieve the government's target to double farmers' income by 2022.
- ❖ The conference would focus on seven broad themes centred around farmer’s welfare and the recommendations from this conference would also be subsumed in the policy (e-NAM).
- ❖ Seven Broad Themes:
  1. Raising crop production
  2. Reducing cultivation costs
  3. Post-harvest losses
  4. Reform of agriculture markets
  5. Adding value to farm produce via food processing
  6. Risk mitigation through crop insurance; disaster relief
  7. Promotion of allied activities such as horticulture and animal husbandry

## **Jatan and Darshak**

- ❖ Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), has developed software named “Jatan” that is set to revolutionize museum experience.
- ❖ The latest technology will help online visitors get a 3-Dimensional (3D) view of hundreds of artefacts displayed at the museums.
- ❖ The software will enable virtual tours to museums.
- ❖ The group has developed “Darshak”, a mobile-based application, aimed at improving the museum visit experience among the differently-abled.
- ❖ It allows real-time museum visitors gather all details about objects or artefacts simply by scanning a QR code placed near the object.
- ❖ C-DAC is the premier R&D organization of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for carrying out R&D in IT, Electronics and associated areas.

## **Watan Ko Jano programme**

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs had recently organized Youth Exchange Programme- WatanKoJano programme.

- ❖ It aims to give exposure to youth and children of J&K about the cultural and socio-economic development taking place in other parts of country.
- ❖ Youth and children hit by militancy and from weaker sections of the society have been identified for the purpose.
- ❖ The programme is sponsored jointly by Ministry of Home Affairs, Central Government (Kashmir Cell) and J&K State Rehabilitation Council.

### **Northeast Venture Fund**

- ❖ The Ministry of Development of Northeast Region (DoNER) has invited start-ups from all over country to avail benefits of Northeast Venture Fund in a bid to make Northeast India favourite destination for young Start-ups.
- ❖ NVF is first dedicated venture capital fund for North-Eastern region.
- ❖ It has been set up by North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd (NEDFi).
- ❖ Its purpose is to encourage entrepreneurship in North-eastern region, primarily For offering support to first-generation entrepreneurs.

### **Garuda Shakti**

- ❖ A special task force (STF) of the Indian Army and the Indonesian Army began its sixth Garuda Shakti exercise at Bandung in Indonesia.
- ❖ Garuda Shakti exercise is the bilateral exercise between India and Indonesia.
- ❖ The Garuda Shakti training exercise is conducted as a part of the military diplomacy between the Indian and the Indonesian Armies.
- ❖ The joint drill will be held from the 19th of February to the 4th of March.
- ❖ The joint drill aims to build interoperability between two armies in counter terrorism operations, and sharing their experience in maritime security.

### **Agni II Missile test**

- ❖ An indigenously developed surface-to-surface nuclear capable Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) Agni-II in full operational configuration was successfully test-fired at Integrated Test Range (ITR) from the Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.
- ❖ The trial was conducted by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) of the Indian Army with logistics support DRDO.
- ❖ It can be fired from both rail and road mobile launchers.
- ❖ This was third successful trial of an Agni series missile in the last one month. Earlier 5,000-km Agni-V and 700-km range Agni-I was successfully test fired.

- ❖ The missile equipped with advanced high accuracy navigation system and it is propelled by solid rocket propellant system.

### **World Information Technology Congress 2018**

- ❖ Prime Minister has inaugurated the World Conference on Information Technology (WCIT-2018) in Hyderabad through video-conferencing.
- ❖ India is hosting the event for the very first time in partnership with NASSCOM, World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) and the government of Telangana.
- ❖ It will second time that the event will be taking place in Asia after it was hosted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2008.
- ❖ The theme of this edition of the conference is 'Future Enterprises.'
- ❖ Sophia the humanoid, who is a Saudi citizen, is also attended this conference.

### **World Information Technology Congress (WITC)**

- ❖ WITC is a biennial event and considered as the biggest event of its kind.
- ❖ It was first held in 1978 since then held after every two years. The 2014 WITC was held in Mexico and had focused on the theme of 'Digital World' and 2016 edition was held in Brasilia, Brazil.

### **First woman fighter pilot to undertake solo flight in MiG-21**

- ❖ Flying officer Avani Chaturvedi created history by becoming the first Indian woman pilot of the Indian Air Force to complete a solo flight in a MiG-21 Bison fighter aircraft.

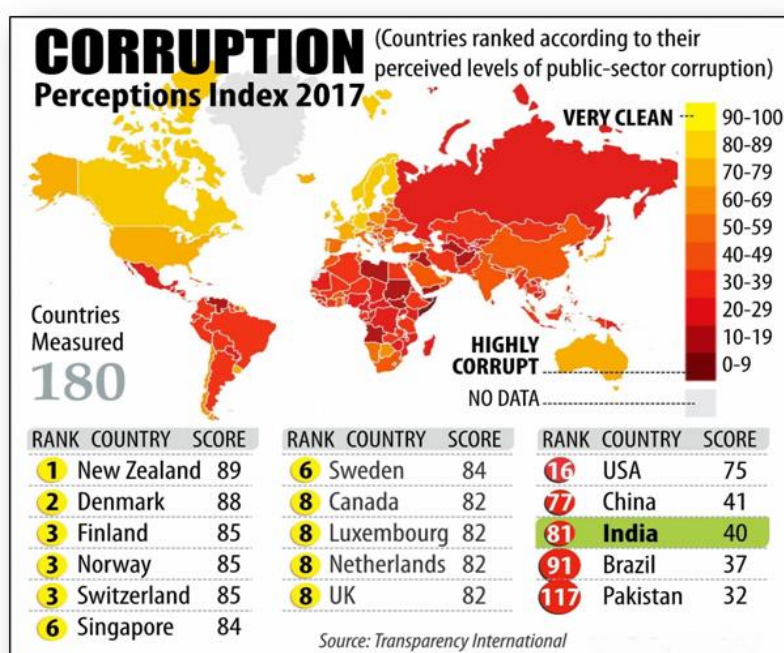


- ❖ She completed the half-an-hour long solo flight in the Russian-origin jet in the skies over Jamnagar Air Base.

- ❖ This is a major milestone in training of a fighter pilot and first time Indian woman has flown a fighter aircraft solo. It demonstrates IAF's enduring commitment to 'Nari Shakti'.
- ❖ 3 women officers Avani Chaturvedi, Bhawna Kanth and Mohana Sing were selected to be fighter pilots in June 2016 when IAF had agreed to induct women as fighter pilots on "an experimental basis" for an initial period of 5 years.
- ❖ Pakistan has about 20 female fighter pilots since Pakistan Air Force (PAF) began inducting women into combat roles in 2006.

### Global corruption perception index

- ❖ India has been ranked 81st in the global corruption perception index for 2017, which was recently released by Transparency International.
- ❖ The report also named India among the worst offenders in terms of graft and press freedom in the Asia Pacific region.



- ❖ In 2016, India was ranked at the 79th position among 176 countries.
- ❖ The index ranks 180 countries and territories on the basis of their perceived levels of public sector corruption.
- ❖ The index uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.
- ❖ India's score in the latest ranking, however, remained unchanged at 40. In 2015, the score was 38.



- ❖ New Zealand was ranked first with a score of 89 followed by Denmark at the 2nd position with a score of 88.
- ❖ Three nations -Finland, Norway and Switzerland were tied for the 3rd position, as they all had the same score of 85.
- ❖ Somalia at 180th position was the lowest ranked nation in the corruption index with a score of just 9.
- ❖ Among the South Asian nations, Bhutan was the highest ranked at the 26th position with a score of 67.

### **‘Vajra’ Decommissioned**

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard ship ‘Vajra’, which rendered three decades of service in maritime security, was decommissioned at a ceremony in Paradip, Odisha.
- ❖ The ship monitored the coastal activities along with Odisha and West Bengal.
- ❖ It was built by Mazagon Dock, named ‘Vajra’, after the weapon of Lord Indra, and commissioned on 1988.
- ❖ It was inducted into the Paradip Coast Guard on April 11, 2013.

### **"Dhanush" Missile Test**

- ❖ India successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable 'Dhanush' ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 kms from a naval ship off Odisha coast in the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ The trial was conducted by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) of the Navy, which controls all of India's nuclear weapons and their associated delivery systems.
- ❖ Dhanush missile is also known as Prithvi-III. It is naval variant of indigenously-developed Prithvi-II short-range ballistic missile (SRBM).
- ❖ It is short-range ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear as well as conventional warheads.
- ❖ The Dhanush/Prithvi-III is part of five missile platforms that have been indigenously developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as part of Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).
- ❖ The other families of missiles developed under IGMPD are Agni, Trishul, Akash and Nag.

### UGC-Expert committee

- ❖ The University Grants Commission has constituted a four-member Empowered Expert Committee (EEC), which is being entrusted to conduct the appraisal of applications for shortlisting 20 Institutions of Eminence (IoE).
- ❖ N Gopalaswami, former chief election commissioner of India is the chairperson of the committee.
- ❖ The government is likely to announce the names of the selected institutions by April 2018.
- ❖ The committee was constituted by the UGC after the approval of the central government, as per the UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulation, 2017, and UGC (Declaration of Government Educational Institutions as Institutions of Eminence) Guidelines, 2017.
- ❖ The institutions declared as Institutions of Eminence
  - Will be free from the usual regulatory mechanism to choose their path to become institutions of global repute.
  - Will have the liberty to enrol up to 30 per cent foreign students.

### Web Application Attacks - India

- ❖ According to a new report titled 'Akamai State of the Internet Security Q4 2017', India has been placed at the 7th spot in the list of targeted countries for Web Application Attacks (WAA).
- ❖ The report states that nearly 40 per cent of over 53,000 cyber-attacks in India occurred in the financial services sector during 2017.
- ❖ The report reveals that security incidents such as phishing, website intrusions and defacements, virus and ransomware have targeted the rapidly growing of the Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) sector in India.
- ❖ US-based cloud security solutions provider Akamai is the world's largest and most trusted cloud delivery platform.
- ❖ The reports are published by Akamai in each quarter with a focus on broadband connectivity and cloud security.
- ❖ The reports cover the origins, tactics, types and targets of cyber-attacks and emerging threats and trends.

### UNICEF's Report-INDIA

- ❖ According to a new UNICEF report, India's neonatal mortality rate at 25.4 deaths per 1,000 live births makes it 12th worst among 52 "lower middle-income countries" that pose risk for the newborns.
- ❖ NMR is the probability of dying during the first 28 days of life, expressed per 1,000 live births.

- ❖ Globally, 2.6 million children died in the first 28 days of life in 2016.
- ❖ With this, India is ranked below Sri Lanka (127), Bangladesh (54), Nepal (50) and Notably, India is ranked behind poorer countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal and Rwanda.
- ❖ In India 6 lakh children died within the first 28 days of their birth in 2016.
- ❖ India is also the only major country in the world to have a higher mortality for girls than boys.
- ❖ Kerala and Goa have neonatal mortality rates of ten per 1,000 live births, the figure for Bihar and Uttarakhand stands at 44 per 1,000.
- ❖ The report also noted that India is currently not on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goal target for neonatal mortality of 12 by year 2030.
- ❖ The average newborn mortality in low-income nations is nine times the rate of high-income countries.
- ❖ In low-income countries, the average newborn mortality rate is 27 deaths per 1,000 live births.

#### About UNICEF

- ❖ The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is special program of the United Nations headquartered in New York City. It is a member of the United Nations Development Group (UNDP).
- ❖ It was created by the UN General Assembly on the 11th of December 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II.
- ❖ It is devoted to aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children.

### BEST AND WORST IN BABY CARE

#### Riskiest nations for newborns

Newborn deaths per 1,000 live births

<b>Pakistan</b>	45.6
<b>Central African Republic</b>	42.3
<b>Afghanistan</b>	40
<b>Somalia</b>	38.8
<b>Lesotho</b>	38.5

#### Safest nations for newborns

<b>Japan</b>	0.9
<b>Iceland</b>	1.0
<b>Singapore</b>	1.1
<b>Finland</b>	1.2
<b>Slovenia</b>	1.3

**2.6mn**

babies die globally  
before turning a  
month old

**6,40,000**

of these deaths take  
place in India

**25.4/1,000**  
**live births**

is India's newborn  
death rate

WORST/ BEST COUNTRIES TO BE BORN			
NMR (Neonatal Mortality Rate = # of newborn* deaths per 1000 live births)			
1 Pakistan	45.6	Japan	0.9
2 Central African Republic	42.3	Iceland	1.0
3 Afghanistan	40.0	Singapore	1.1
4 Somalia	38.8	Finland	1.2
5 Lesotho	38.5	Estonia	1.3
6 Guinea-Bissau	38.2	Slovenia	1.3
7 South Sudan	37.9	Cyprus	1.4
8 Cote d'Ivoire	36.6	Belarus	1.5
9 Mali	35.7	Republic of Korea	1.5
10 Chad	35.1	Norway/ Luxembourg	1.5
India with NMR of 25.4 is ranked 12th Deaths during first 28 days of life			

## International Solar Alliance - INDIA

- ❖ India will host the first International Solar Alliance (ISA) Summit on March 11, 2018 in New Delhi.
- ❖ The International Solar Alliance aims to launch 121 projects during the summit which will be signed in two phases - with 50 on March 11 and another 71 on April 20.
- ❖ During the summit, two new programmes will be inaugurated. These programmes will be on- Scaling Solar E-Mobility and Storage, and Rooftop Solar.

### ISA

- ❖ The ISA is an Indian initiative, jointly launched by the Prime Minister of India and the president of France on November 2015 in Paris, on the side-lines of COP-21, the UN climate conference.
- ❖ The International Solar Alliance is alliance 121 countries, most of them being sunshine countries, which come either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- ❖ The primary objective is to collectively work for efficient exploitation of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil-based fuels.
- ❖ The Headquarters is in India with its Interim Secretariat being setup in Gurgaon.
- ❖ The agreement will become operational after at least 15 countries have ratified it.
- ❖ It is also expected to mobilise \$1 trillion for funding solar energy projects by 2030.
- ❖ The institutional structure of ISA consists of an Assembly, a Council and a Secretariat.

## **Baal Aadhaar**

- ❖ Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has now introduced a blue coloured 'Baal Aadhaar' card for children below the age of 5 years.
- ❖ It will be linked with one of parent's Aadhaar card. In this No biometric details will be captured.
- ❖ When the child does become 5, then he/she has to submit biometric authentication then regular Aadhaar will be issued. Failing to do so within the next 7 years would result in suspension of the Aadhaar card.

## **MILAN - 2018**

- ❖ The Indian Navy is going to host 16 countries for multi-national 2018 MILAN exercise at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar islands from March 6 to 13, 2018.
- ❖ This naval exercise will be held under aegis of Andaman and Nicobar Command with theme of 'Friendship Across the Seas'.
- ❖ MILAN 2018 aims to showcase the rich heritage and pristine natural beauty of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the foreign visitors.
- ❖ 16 countries participating in this edition of exercise.
- ❖ Those are Australia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand, Oman, Vietnam, Thailand, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya and Cambodia.
- ❖ MILAN is congregation of littoral navies conducted biennially by Indian Navy under aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command. It was first held in 1995.

## **Committee on Medicinal and Aromatics**

- ❖ The first meeting of Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) for North East Region is scheduled to be held in 12th March 2018.
- ❖ The meeting will be co-chaired by Secretaries of Development of North-East Region (DoNER) and AYUSH.
- ❖ The Ministry of Development of North-East Region will be the coordinator for the IMC of MAPs.
- ❖ IMC will also suggest actionable measures for enhancing the livelihood and economic condition based on cultivation and sustainable management of MAPs resource in North East Region.

### **"NITI Forum for Northeast"**

- ❖ The Union Government has issued order setting up the 'Niti Forum for North-East'.
- ❖ The forum will be co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Minister of State Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER).
- ❖ The forum will have its Secretariat in the Ministry of DoNER.
- ❖ 'Niti Forum for North-East' has been set up to identify constraints and recommend suitable required interventions for speedy and sustainable growth in northeast region.

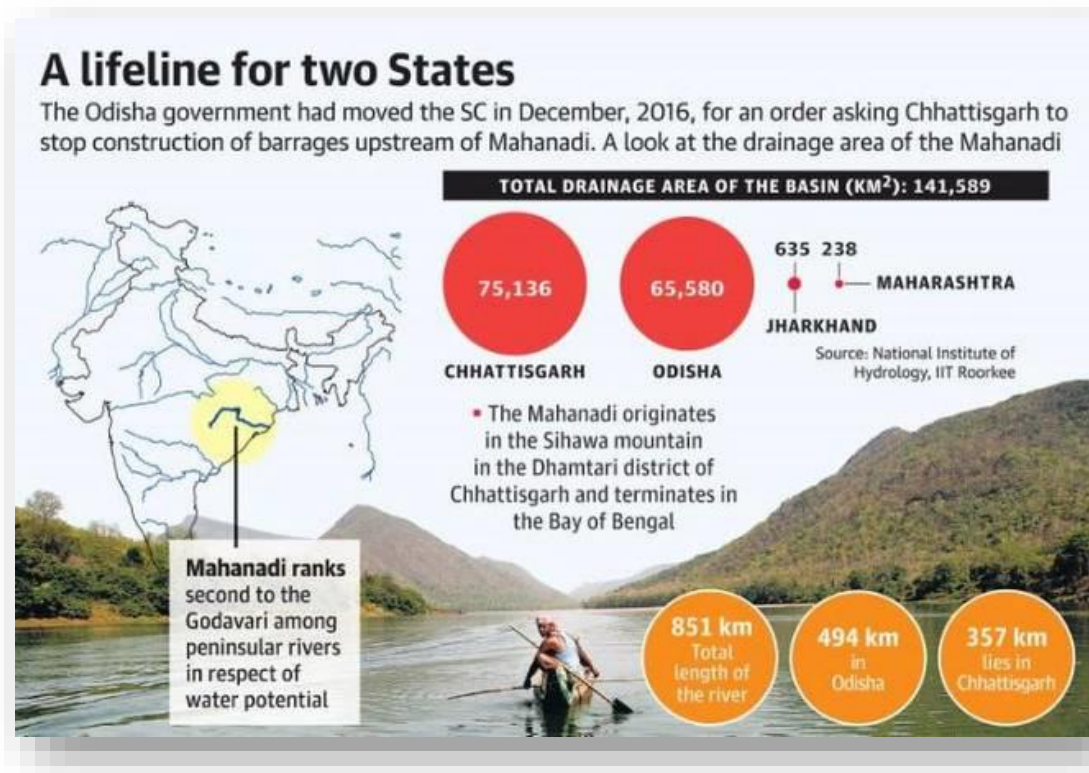
### **Tribunal to settle Mahanadi water dispute**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of a tribunal to settle a row between Odisha and Chhattisgarh on sharing the waters of the river Mahanadi.
- ❖ This is in keeping with a Supreme Court order directing the Centre to set up a tribunal in response to a plea by the Odisha government to stop the Chhattisgarh government from constructing several weirs on the river.
- ❖ With a chairperson and two other members, the tribunal will be formed according to the provisions of the Inter-State River Water Disputes (ISRWD), 1956.
- ❖ The Chief Justice of India would nominate the chairperson and members for the tribunal from among the judges of the apex court or high courts.
- ❖ As per provisions of the ISRWD Act, 1956 the Tribunal is required to submit its report and decision within a period of 3 years which can be extended to a further period not exceeding 2 years due to unavoidable reasons.

#### **About Mahanadi**

- ❖ River Mahanadi originates from Sihawa Mountain in Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ Flows through Chhattisgarh and odissa and drains in Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ The tributaries of Mahanadi
  - ✓ Right bank tributaries- Ong, Tel, Jonk
  - ✓ Left bank tributaries- Seonath, Hasdeo, Mand, Ib.
- ❖ The world's longest Hirakud dam is constructed on Mahanadi River.





## National Urban Housing Fund

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved creation of Rs. 60,000 crores National Urban Housing Fund (NUHF) to finance Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban).
- ❖ Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) which aims to build 1.2 crore affordable houses in urban areas by 2022.
- ❖ NUHF will be placed under aegis of Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC).
- ❖ NUHF will facilitate raising requisite funds in next four years so that flow of Central Assistance under different verticals i.e.,
  - Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP),
  - Beneficiary Linked Construction (BLC),
  - In-Situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR) and
  - Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)
 is sustained and construction of houses to address the gap in Urban Sector progresses smoothly.
- ❖ BMTPC is an autonomous body under Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- ❖ It is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and its primary task is the mainstreaming of new construction technologies.

### **Ombudsman Scheme for NBFCs**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched 'Ombudsman Scheme' for non-banking financial companies (NBFC) for redressal of complaints against them.
- ❖ As per the RBI, this Scheme will offer a speedy and cost-free complaint redressal mechanism relating to deficiency in the services by NBFCs covered under the Scheme.
- ❖ The NBFC ombudsmen will function and the complaints of customer as per zone wise (Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi.)
- ❖ The Ombudsman Scheme will provide an Appellate mechanism under which the complainant/ NBFC has the option to appeal against the decision of the Ombudsman before the Appellate Authority.
- ❖ The Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) - Infrastructure Finance Company (NBFC-IFC), Core Investment Company (CIC), Infrastructure Debt Fund - Non-Banking Financial Company (IDFNBF) and an NBFC under liquidation, are excluded from the ambit of the Scheme.

### **The National Integration tours**

- ❖ The national integration tour organised by the Khongbung Battalion under the aegis of Red Shield Division was flagged off.
- ❖ The National Integration Tours are educational and motivational tours for youth of North Eastern States and J&K, with an aim to provide an insight into the rich heritage of the country as well as various developmental and industry initiatives that are underway.
- ❖ This initiative will expose them to various career options and enable them to interact with renowned personalities.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **Ashgabat agreement**

- ❖ India has been admitted into Agreement on the Establishment of an International Transport and Transit Corridor".
- ❖ This agreement is also known as Ashgabat Agreement.
- ❖ India's accession to the Agreement will enter into force on February 3, 2018.



### About Agreement:

- ❖ The Ashgabat Agreement aims to develop a shortest trade route between Central Asian countries and Iranian and Omani ports.
- ❖ The Ashgabat Agreement has Oman, Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as founding members. Subsequently Kazakhstan and Pakistan also formally joined the Ashgabat Agreement.
- ❖ The Iran-Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan (ITK) railway line will be the major route according to the Ashgabat Agreement and was also included as part of India-funded North-South international transport corridor (NSITC).
- ❖ Ashgabat is the capital the city of Turkmenistan.
- ❖ It situated between the Karakum Desert and the Kopet Dag mountain range.

### **UN World Food Programme- Sweden**

- ❖ Sweden and the United Nations World Food Programme has signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement committing an 370 million dollars to WFP over the next four years.
- ❖ The contribution for the period 2018-2021 is the biggest ever made by a donor within a WFP Strategic Partnership Agreement.

### World Food Programme (WFP)

- ❖ It was established in 1961 by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Conference.
- ❖ It is headquartered in Rome.
- ❖ The WEF is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations.
- ❖ It is the world's largest humanitarian organization which addressing hunger and promoting food security worldwide.

## India-UN Development Partnership Fund

- ❖ India has contributed an additional \$1 million to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund earmarked for South-South cooperation.

### About Fund

- ❖ The India-UN Development Partnership Fund was set up as a partnership between India and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to Reduce poverty and hunger, improve health, education and equality, and expand access to clean water and energy in developing and Least Developed Countries.
- ❖ This fund has been set with the aim to fund the sustainable development projects in developing and least developed countries.

## Sri Lanka's 70th Independence Day

- ❖ India's Neighbour Sri Lanka has celebrated its 70th Independence Day on 4th February.
- ❖ The theme of the ceremony was "One Nation".
- ❖ On 4th February, 1948 Sri Lanka achieved its freedom from British rule.
- ❖ Representing Britain's Queen, Prince Edward participated in the celebrations as Chief.

## Universal Eye Care

- ❖ Rwanda has become the first low-income country to provide universal eye care to its Citizens.
- ❖ Rwanda's government has tied up with Vision for A Nation (VFAN) "to train more than 3,000 eye care nurses"
- ❖ 34% of the population in Rwanda could benefit from some form of eye care ranging from very minor symptom care to those requiring life-changing surgery.
- ❖ Short sightedness is the most common eye-related ailment in Rwanda.
- ❖ The country ranks 159th on the Human Development Index, and only 19.8% of the population have access to electricity.

## Emergency Proclamation-Maldives

- ❖ Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen has declared a 15-day state of emergency in the island nation after he refused to comply with the supreme court's order to release former President Yameen and 9 important persons.

- ❖ Earlier, Nasheed and others was sentenced in 2015 to 13 years in prison for charges of terrorism, and he has remained in exile all these years to avoid arrest.
- ❖ Supreme Court had also restored 12 MPs who had defected from Mr. Yameen's party, the majority is effectively with the opposition. Concerning this yameen has closed all businesses in the Parliament.
- ❖ The yameen government also arrested two judges of supreme court and Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.
- ❖ Maumoon Abdul Gayoom is the half-brother of the current President and ruled the country for 30 years until 2008.
- ❖ In 2008 only democratic has made it place in Maldives.
- ❖ Muhammed Nasheed is the First elected president of democratic Maldives.
- ❖ This is the second time Yameen has declared a state of emergency.
- ❖ Earlier in 2015 emergency was proclaimed.

### **Federal Reserve Bank- New Chairman**

- ❖ Jerome H Powell sworn in as the 16th Chairman of the Federal Reserve for a four-year term.
- ❖ His appointment as the Fed Chairman was approved by the US Senate in January 2018. Powell was nominated for the post in November 2017 by President Donald Trump.
- ❖ Powell succeeds Janet Yellen, the first woman to lead the US central bank in its 100-year history.

### **Saudi Arabia's National Heritage Festival – Janadriyah**

- ❖ King Salman bin Abdulaziz in presence of External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated 32nd edition of Saudi Arabia's National Heritage Festival in Janadriyah village, Riyadh.
- ❖ India is the guest of honor for this year's festival.
- ❖ Jenadriyah is cultural and heritage festival of Saudi Arabia. The festival normally falls during the month of February or March.
- ❖ It is held annually at Jenadriyah village near Riyadh. It is organised every year by National Guard. It was held for first time in 1985. It draws more than one million visitors every year.
- ❖ The India Pavilion at festival was based on the theme 'Saudi ka dost Bharat'. It showcased traditional and modern aspects of India and its culture.
- ❖ Previous guests of honor countries were Turkey, Russia, France, Japan, South Korea, China, UAE and Germany.



### **J-20 stealth fighter**

- ❖ China has commissioned its new generation J-20 fourth-generation stealth fighter into combat service.
- ❖ The introduction of stealth fighter has made waves as China is the first in the region to have the stealth bomber and 2nd country in the world to have commissioned domestically developed stealth aircraft after US.
- ❖ J-20 is China's fourth-generation medium and long-range fighter jet developed by China's Chengdu Aerospace Corporation for People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF).
- ❖ It is currently equipped with Russian Saturn AL-31 engines and in future will be fitted with domestic Chinese Taihang engines.
- ❖ It had made its maiden flight in 2011 and was first shown to public at 11th Airshow China in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province in November 2016.

### **UN refugee programme - withdrawal of Tanzania**

- ❖ Tanzania has announced its withdrawal of United Nation's "Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework" citing security reasons and lack of funds.
- ❖ Earlier, Tanzania informed the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in January that it was suspending the granting of citizenship to some Burundian refugees and that it would discourage new asylum applications.
- ❖ It has blamed international community for failing to release funds pledged to help Tanzania integrate refugees.
- ❖ Tanzania has long been considered a safe haven for refugees, particularly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

### **2018 SCO Summit -China**

- ❖ China will host 2018 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit at Qingdao, eastern Shandong Province in June 2018.
- ❖ China had taken over rotating chair of SCO after 17th SCO summit concluded in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan in 2017

#### About SCO

- ❖ SCO is a Eurasian economic, political and security organisation headquartered in Beijing, China.
- ❖ It was founded in 2001.



- ❖ The full members of the organization are China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, India and Pakistan.
- ❖ Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia have observer status at present.
- ❖ India and Pakistan joined SCO as full members on 9 June 2017 at a summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.
- ❖ Earlier India and Pakistan were in the position of Observer Countries in SCO.
- ❖ China had founded this grouping in 1996 and then it was called as Shanghai Five. It comprised of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.
- ❖ After Astana Summit Declaration in 2005, SCO has emerged as a regional security organization.
- ❖ The groupings main objective is military cooperation between members.

### **Declaration of South Africa on drought**

- ❖ South African Government has declared the Ever worst ongoing drought as a “National disaster”.
- ❖ The drought has afflicted southern and western regions of South Africa including Cape Town.
- ❖ El Nino, Global warming and Climate Change has pointed as a main reason for this ever worst drought in South Africa.
- ❖ As the drought becoming more severe, April 12 of this year is predicted as ‘Day Zero’ for Cape Town.
- ❖ However, due to water saving measures “Day Zero” has now been pushed to June 4, 2018.
- ❖ The date when all the taps are expected to run dry and no water availability for any purpose is called ‘Day Zero’.

### **23rd Winter Olympic-Norovirus**

- ❖ The ongoing 23rd Olympic Winter Games at the South Korean city of Pyeongchang, has been hit by an extraordinary outbreak of disease caused by Norovirus.
- ❖ Noro virus is similar to rota virus that induces diahorrea.
- ❖ It infects people across all age groups and it is highly contagious.
- ❖ It is notable that there are now preventable vaccines available against this Virus.
- ❖ The Primary rout of transmission of this virus is oral-faecal way.
- ❖ Virus also spreads through contaminated food and water.
- ❖ Sudden onset of vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, headaches, fever and dehydration are the major symptoms.

## **New Nepal's Prime Minister- KP Sharma Oli**

- ❖ KP Sharma Oli sworn as Nepal's new prime minister for the second time.
- ❖ He is the 41st prime minister of Nepal.
- ❖ Nepal's President Bidya Devi Bhandari administered oath of office and secrecy for him.
- ❖ It is notable that, Bidya Devi Bhandari is the First women president of Nepal.
- ❖ In 2015 Nepal had adopted new Constitution that split country into seven federal states.
- ❖ As per the new constitution adopted in 2015, general election was held 2 months before in Nepal.
- ❖ In which KP Sharma Oli's Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist–Leninist alliance secured majority in Nepal Parliament.

## **India's defence budget**

- ❖ According to a 'Military Balance 2018' report by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), India's defence budget is ranked world's fifth largest defence budget,
- ❖ For the first time Indian defence budget has taken over the UK's defence budget.
- ❖ India's total defence budget allocation is 52.5 billion dollars.
- ❖ China has world's second-largest defence budget after the US.
- ❖ China's defence budget is USD 150.5 billion which is three times of India's defence budget.
- ❖ Respectively Saudi Arabia and Russia are the third and fourth largest defence budget spending countries in the world.

### **P 5 GLOBAL DEFENCE SPENDERS (IN US \$ BILLIONS)**

• United States	602.8
• China	150.5
• Saudi Arabia	76.7
• Russia	61.2
• India	52.5

## **54th Munich Security Conference**

- ❖ The 54th Munich Security Conference (MSC-2018) was held in Munich, Germany from February 16-18.
- ❖ The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, began the session.
- ❖ It was held to discuss pressing security issues, including North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and the Syrian civil war.
- ❖ The issue of North Korea's nuclear weapons development program was high on the agenda.
- ❖ The MSC is an annual conference on international security policy that has taken place since 1963.

## **World Anti-Doping Agency - Romanian laboratory**

- ❖ The World Anti-Doping Agency has suspended Romania's drug-testing laboratory for six months, as it didn't meet the required standard.
- ❖ A sanction is imposed on the lab in Bucharest, capital of Romania due to non-conformities of the lab with the regulations of WADA.

### **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)**

- ❖ The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established in 1999 in Lausanne as an international independent agency composed and funded equally by the sport movement and governments of the world.
- ❖ The First World Conference on Doping in Sport held, in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1999 where it adopted the Lausanne Declaration on Doping in Sport.
- ❖ Its key activities of WADA is to carrying scientific research in anti doping measures, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code (Code) – the document harmonizing anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries.


## **First Arab Fashion Week**

- ❖ Saudi Arabia is set to host its first ever Arab Fashion Week in March, overturning decades of draconian policies on arts and entertainment.
- ❖ The Dubai-based Arab Fashion Council announced that the fashion week would be held in Riyadh from March 26 to March 31, with a second edition already scheduled for October.
- ❖ This is Listed as an international fashion week alongside Paris and Milan.
- ❖ In the past, Arab Fashion Week has been hosted so far exclusively by Dubai.

## New President of South Africa

- ❖ Cyril Ramaphosa, head of ruling African National Congress has sworn in as new President of South Africa.
- ❖ He was elected as new president by the ruling party politicians in parliament after the resignation of scam-tainted Jacob Zuma, former president of South Africa.
- ❖ He will have remaining one-year term of his predecessor. Prior to this, he was deputy President since 2014.

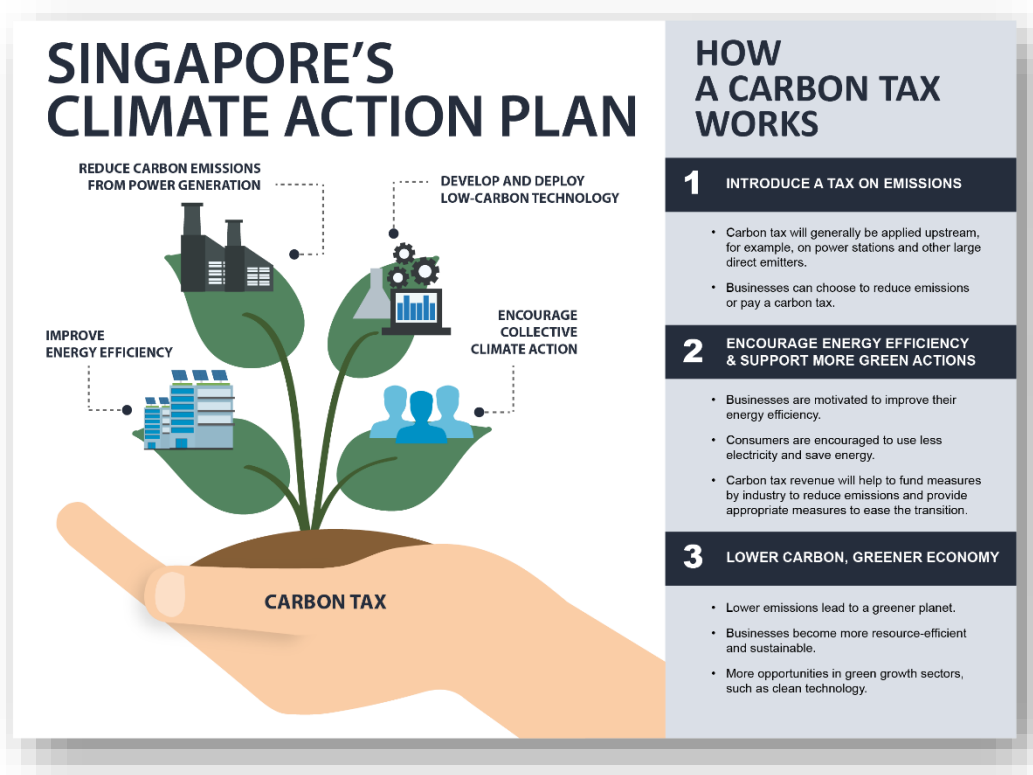
<p><b>Who is Cyril Ramaphosa:</b></p> <p><b>NOV. 7, 1952:</b> Born in Soweto township – a centre of anti-Apartheid struggle</p> <p><b>1974:</b> Arrested, spends 11 months in solitary confinement</p> <p><b>1982:</b> Founders the National Union of Mineworkers, which leads massive strikes in 1987</p> <p><b>1990:</b> Following the release of Nelson Mandela, Ramaphosa is</p>	<p>a key part of the task force that leads the transition to democracy</p> <p><b>1999:</b> After he fails to clinch the ANC nomination to succeed Mandela, he swaps politics for business</p> <p><b>2012:</b> Returns to the fray and is elected to the party's 'No. 2' post</p> <p><b>2014:</b> Becomes Deputy President</p> <p><b>FEB. 15:</b> ANC legislators</p>	<p>elect him the President after Zuma resigns</p> <p>In 2015, Ramaphosa, with a net worth of <b>\$450 MN</b>, was number 42 on the <i>Forbes</i> list of Africa's wealthiest people</p>
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## 'Carbon tax' - Singapore

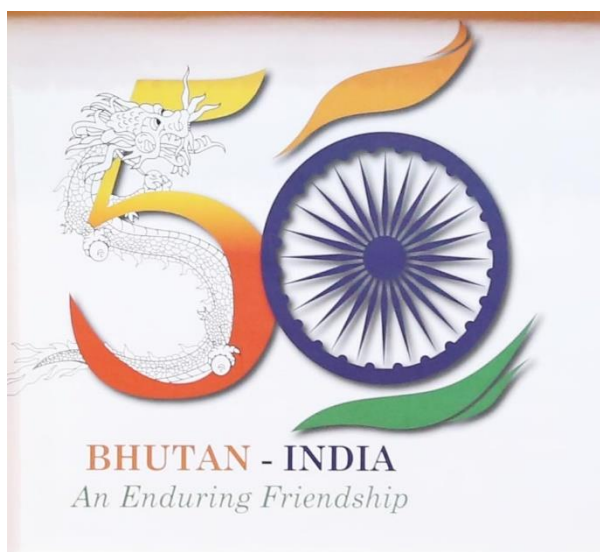
- ❖ Singapore will impose a 'carbon tax' from 2019 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to fight climate change.
- ❖ A tax of 5 Singapore dollars (\$3.81) per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions will be levied from 2019 to 2023.
- ❖ The tax would be imposed on facilities producing 25,000 tonnes or more of greenhouse gas emissions per year.

- ❖ Singapore ranks 26th out of 142 countries in terms of based on the latest International Energy Agency data largely due to its small size and dense population.



## India - Bhutan diplomatic relations

- ❖ The Golden Jubilee of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan is being celebrated in the year 2018.





- ❖ Earlier, to mark this occasion, India and Bhutan jointly unveiled the 'logo for the Golden Jubilee Celebrations in Thimphu and New Delhi through video conference.
- ❖ Meshed together in an unbreakable bond, the logo has two symbols of the countries- 5 is represented with Bhutan's national color wrapped in dragon; while 0 (zero) is completed by the India's tri-color. It highlights 50th anniversary of friendship.
- ❖ Diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan were established in 1968 with the establishment of a special office of India in Thimphu.
- ❖ The basic framework of India- Bhutan bilateral relations was the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1949 between the two countries, which was revised in February 2007.

### **Flooded Cave - Mexico**

- ❖ Recently a biggest flooded cave was found in the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico, by scuba divers.



- ❖ The Yucatan peninsula is studded with monumental relics of the Maya people.
- ❖ Archaeologists explored that cave and found fossils of giant sloths and shrine of the Mayan god of commerce.

### **Virtual currency- Venezuela**

- ❖ Cash-strapped Venezuela became the first country to launch its own version of bitcoin



- ❖ The petro is backed by Venezuela's crude oil reserves, which is the largest in the world, gas, gold and diamond reserves to circumvent US-led financial sanctions.
- ❖ Venezuelan Government will accept Petro as a form of payment of national taxes, fees, contributions and public services
- ❖ With new official cryptocurrency, Venezuela hopes to overcome economic blockade imposed by US which has resulted in 99% depreciation of value of its fiat currency Bolivar.
- ❖ Venezuela, an OPEC member has one of the largest oil reserves in the world.
- ❖ The socialist country earns 95% of its forex from oil exports is going through one of the biggest financial crisis in its history.

### **Cobra Gold Military Exercise**

- ❖ The annual multi-national military exercise code named Cobra Gold was held in Thailand's Chonburi province.
- ❖ This is the 37th edition of the exercise and is co-sponsored by the Royal Thai Armed Forces and the U.S. Armed Forces.
- ❖ This year, Exercise Cobra Gold has seven countries fully participating: Thailand, United States of America, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea and Singapore.
- ❖ Ten countries will join the drill as observers — Brunei, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Germany, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Brazil and Sweden.
- ❖ This year the exercise will focus on three major components; a Command Post Exercise (CPX), Field Training Exercise (FTX), and Humanitarian Civic Assistance (HCA) exercise.
- ❖ Cobra Gold is an Asia-Pacific military exercise held in Thailand every year
- ❖ Cobra Gold was first held in 1982 and is considered the largest military exercise in the Indo-Pacific region.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Re-introduction of LTCG tax**

- ❖ The government has re-introduced LTCG tax on equity shares.
- ❖ The Centre has said that if the gains exceeded one lakh in a year, then 10% LTCG tax had to be paid without the benefit of indexation (adjusting the profit against inflation to compute the real taxable gains).
- ❖ Investors have to pay 10% LTCG tax on gains exceeding ₹ one lakh on the sale of shares or equity mutual funds held for more than one year.

- ❖ No change has been made on short-term capital gains (STCG). It allowed to continue as such i.e 15%.

### Capital gains

- ❖ Any profit from the sale of a capital asset is deemed as 'capital gains'.

### LTCG

- ❖ If an asset is held for 36 months or more, any gain arising from selling it is treated as a 'long-term' capital gain (LTCG).

### STCG

- ❖ If an asset is held for less than 36 months, any gain arising from selling it is treated as a short-term capital gain (STCG).

## **Monetary Policy Statement – RBI**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee presented its last bi-monthly policy review for the current fiscal year.
- ❖ The repo rate was kept unchanged at 6 percent.
- ❖ The reverse repo rate under the LAF (liquidity adjustment facility) remains at 5.75 percent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the bank rate at 6.25 percent.
- ❖ The policy is determined on the basis of global uncertainty and inflation.

### Monetary Policy Committee

- ❖ Monetary Policy Committee - It is a committee of the "Reserve Bank of India" that is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India.
- ❖ It usually meets once in 2 months and is mandated to meet at least 4 times a year and it publishes its decisions after each such meeting.
- ❖ The committee comprises six members – Three officials of the Reserve Bank of India and three external members nominated by the Government of India.
- ❖ The Governor of RBI is the ex-officio chairperson of the committee and has a casting vote while taking decisions that are tied.
- ❖ The current mandate of the MPC is to maintain inflation within the targeted range of 4% (+2% or -2%) which is to be adhered till March 2021.
- ❖ The committee was created in 2016 to bring transparency and accountability in fixing India's Monetary Policy.

## **MSP for Copra**

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of "Milling Copra" for 2018 season.

- ❖ The MSP of Copra is expected to ensure appropriate minimum prices to the farmers and step up investment in Coconut cultivation and thereby production and productivity in the country.
- ❖ The approval is based on recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).
- ❖ The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) and National Cooperative Consumer Federation of India Limited (NCCF) would continue to act as Central Nodal Agencies to undertake price support operations at the Minimum Support Prices in the Coconut growing states.

### **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**

- ❖ CACP is an expert body which recommend minimum support prices (MSPs) to Government (CCEA) by taking into account cost of production, trends in domestic and international prices.
- ❖ It is an attached office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. It came into existence in January 1965.
- ❖ Currently, CCEA comprises Chairman, Member Secretary, one Member (Official) and two Members (Non-Official).
- ❖ The non-official members are representatives from farming community and usually have active association with farming community.

### **GDP – Base Year change**

- ❖ The government is set to revise the base years of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) in order to "accommodate and factor" the economic changes in the country.
- ❖ The government currently uses 2011-2012 as the base year to calculate economic output.
- ❖ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has proposed the new base year to 2017-18 for the calculation of GDP and IIP numbers, while for retail inflation(CPI) the year will be revised to 2018.
- ❖ The ministry also proposes to launch a Time Use Survey, which aims at assessing the contribution of women in non-marketed social and economic activities, which have not been measured so far.

### **NPA resolution framework**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has tightened norms for bad loan resolution by setting timelines for resolving large NPAs and withdrawing existing debt restructuring schemes such as SDR and S4A.
- ❖ For this reason, RBI has withdrawn the

- ✓ Corporate Debt Restructuring Scheme (CDR),
- ✓ Joint Lenders' Forum (JLF),
- ✓ Strategic Debt Restructuring Scheme (SDR),
- ✓ Sustainable Structuring of Stressed Assets (S4A),

and placed them under the new framework.

- ❖ According to the new rules,
  - Banks have to start insolvency proceedings against accounts with Rs. 2,000 crore or more loan default if a resolution plan is not implemented within 180 days of the initial occurrence of default.
  - Failing which the account would be referred to the bankruptcy courts.
- ❖ Further, banks have to report defaults to the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) on a weekly basis in the case of borrowers with more than Rs.5 crore of loan.
- ❖ As per the revised guidelines, Banks will now have to begin the resolution process on an account as soon as it is classified as a Separately Managed Account (SMA-0).

## A New Regime

**RBI scraps SDR, S4A, CDR, JLF frameworks from March 2018**

**RBI harmonises stressed asset resolution framework in view of enactment of IBC**


**Resolution plans for all stressed cases of over ₹2,000 cr must be completed within 180 days**

**If RP not implemented, then account to be referred to IBC in 15 days**

**For restructuring outside IBC, account should not be in default**

**Banks will now have to report credit information to CRILC on special mention accounts every month**

**Default with exposure of more than ₹5 cr have to be reported weekly**



### RBI panel for bad loan monitoring, rising cases of frauds, audits

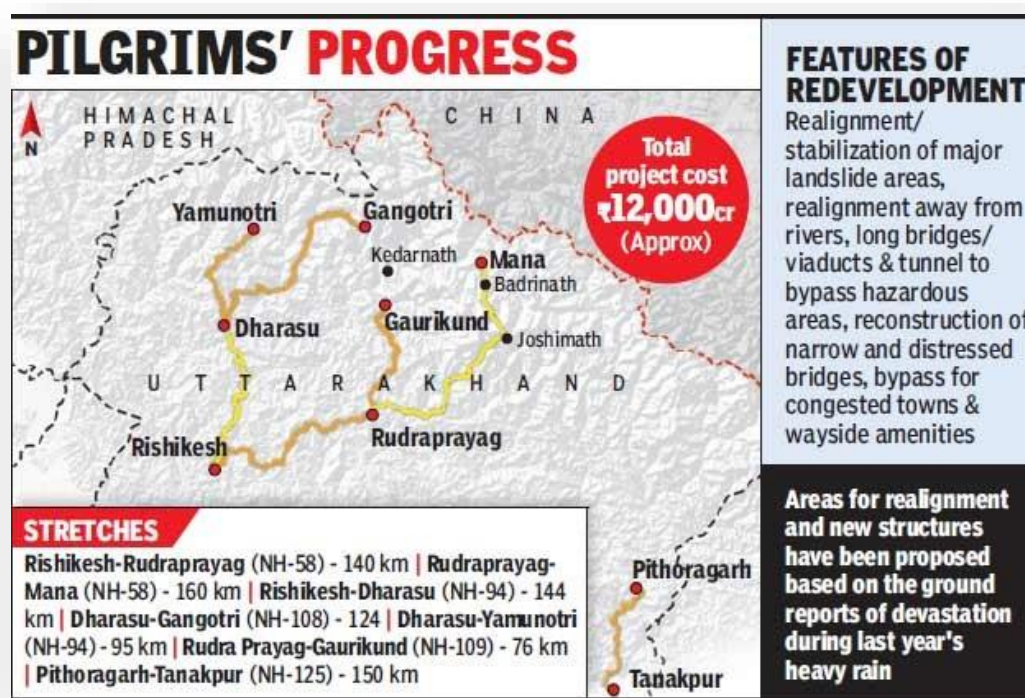
- ❖ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted an expert committee to look into the entire gamut of issues relating to classification of bad loans, effectiveness of audits and rising incidents of frauds.



- ❖ The committee will be headed by Y H Malegam, a former member of Central Board of Directors of RBI.
- ❖ A K Misra, Executive Director, RBI, will be the Member-Secretary of the committee.
- ❖ The committee was set up in wake up of Rs. 11,400 crore SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication)-related fraud in Punjab National Bank (PNB) and RBI's drive of strengthening supervisory framework in the country to avoid frauds.

### Silkyara Bend-Barkot Tunnel

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved construction of 4.531 km long 2-Lane Bi-Directional Silkyara Bend-Barkot Tunnel in Uttarakhand.
- ❖ The project will be falling along NH-134 in the State of Uttarakhand and will be built under Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode.



- ❖ This is funded under the Scheme of Ministry of Road Transport & Highways and implemented by National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL) and it forms part of ambitious 'Char dham Mahamarg Pariyojana'.
- ❖ The construction of this tunnel will
  - Provide all weather connectivity to Yamunotri, one of dham on ChardhamYatra.

- Will reduce travel distance from Dharasu to Yamunotri.
- ❖ Chardham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojna project aims at improving the connectivity to Char Dham pilgrimage centres in the Himalayas, making journey to these centres safer, faster and more convenient.
- ❖ NHIDCL is wholly state owned company, established in 2014 for development of highways in states on the international borders.

### Google Tez

- ❖ Google has integrated Google Tez with State Bank of India (SBI), allowing customers of India's largest lender to transact directly from their bank accounts through the mobile payments app.
- ❖ SBI is the first public sector bank to have partnered with Google Tez.
- ❖ SBI customers can now create a unique UPI ID to carry out the transactions.
- ❖ As of now, Google has partnered with 4 banks to allow users of Tez app to create their bank's UPI handle and transact directly from their bank accounts on the app.
- ❖ Other than SBI, the three other banks are HDFC Bank, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank.
- ❖ The government has been pushing the UPI platform to boost digital payments in India, to reduce use of cash.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Mihir

- ❖ Ministry of Earth Science has installed a High Performance Computer (HPC) System called Mihir (meaning 'Sun'), at the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF).
- ❖ This HPC facility will be India's largest HPC facility in terms of peak capacity and performance.
- ❖ The Earth Science ministry has installed HPC facility total of 6.8 Peta Flops (PF) in two instalments at two different places.
  - ✓ 4.0 PF HPC facility named 'Pratyush' at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune.
  - ✓ 2.8 Peta Flops facility at NCMRWF, Noida.
- ❖ This will propel India's ranking from the 368th position to around the top 30 in the Top 500 list of HPC facilities in the world.



### **First flight of light combat helicopter with AFCS**

- ❖ Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) has successfully conducted the maiden flight of the light combat helicopter with the indigenously built automatic flight control system (AFCS).
- ❖ The AFCS has been designed and manufactured for the first time in the country by the state-owned aerospace and defence company.
- ❖ The AFCS is a digital four-axis flight control system capable of performing control and stability augmentation function and auto-pilot modes of helicopters.

### **World's smallest rocket - Japan**

- ❖ The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) has launched the world's smallest rocket with the ability to put a tiny satellite into orbit.
- ❖ The rocket is launched from the Uchinoura Space Centre in Kagoshima, Japan.
- ❖ It carried placed a microsatellite TRICOM-1R in orbit. TRICOM-1R is capable to capture images of the Earth's surface.

### **Agni-I missile test**

- ❖ India has flight-tested the indigenously developed Agni-I missile that can carry a nuclear payload as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range off the Odisha coast.
- ❖ It was 18th version of Agni-1 and it is indigenously developed intermediate range surface-to-surface, single-stage missile.
- ❖ Agni-I is part of India's minimum credible deterrence under No first to use policy.
- ❖ It was developed by Advanced Systems Laboratory (ASL) in collaboration with Defence Research Development Laboratory (DRDL) and Research Centre Imarat (RCI).
- ❖ The missile has a specialised navigation system, which ensures it reaches the target with a high degree of accuracy and precision.
- ❖ The missile already has been inducted into the armed forces in 2004.

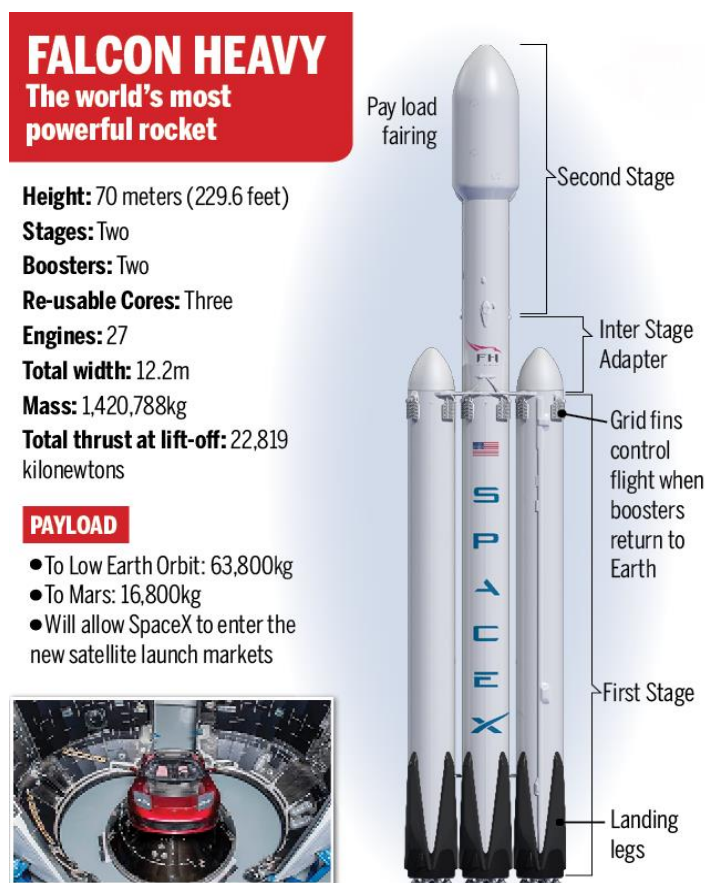
### **Prithvi-II test**

- ❖ India has successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range in Odisha.
- ❖ Prithvi-II inducted into the Armed forces of the country in 2003.

- ❖ It is a single-stage liquid-fuelled missile.
- ❖ Prithvi-II is the first missile to have been developed by the DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).
- ❖ Prithvi-II is nuclear-capable surface-to-surface.
- ❖ With a strike range of 350 km, Prithvi-II is powered by twin-engines which use liquid propulsion.
- ❖ Notably, Prithvi is India's first indigenously-built ballistic missile. It is one of the five missiles being developed under the country's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.

### World's Most powerful rocket

- ❖ Elon Musk-led SpaceX has successfully launched the world's most powerful operational rocket Falcon Heavy towards Mars at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- ❖ The rocket has taken a Tesla Roadster car along with its flight.



- ❖ Falcon Heavy is a reusable super heavy-lift launch vehicle designed and manufactured by Space X, a private American aerospace manufacturer.
- ❖ It is the most powerful operational rocket in the world.

- ❖ Its three first-stage boosters are designed to be reusable.
- ❖ It can lift about twice the payload at one third of the cost by Delta 4 rocket which was the most powerful rocket till now.
- ❖ ISRO in 2016 tested Reusable Launch Vehicle - Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) successfully.

### **Ash Track**

- ❖ Union Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy launched a Web based monitoring System and a Fly Ash mobile application named 'Ash Track'.
- ❖ The platforms will enable better management of the ash produced by thermal power plants by providing an interface between fly ash producers (Thermal Power Plants) and potential ash users such as – road contractors, cement plants etc.
- ❖ Fly ash, the end product of combustion during the process of power generation in the coal based thermal power plants.
- ❖ It is a proven resource material for many applications of construction industries and currently is being utilized in manufacturing of Portland Cement, bricks/blocks/tiles manufacturing, road embankment construction and low lying area development, etc.
- ❖ Proper management of fly ash is important not only for the environment but for us also as the ash produced by power plants occupies a lot of land space.

### **Exoplanet 100**

- ❖ Scientists have confirmed nearly 100 new planets outside our solar system, bringing the total number of exoplanets found using NASA's K2 mission to almost 300.
- ❖ They were discovered using research from National Space Institute at the Technical University of Denmark.
- ❖ Also in this research a star called HD 212657 has been found by Kepler.
- ❖ HD 212657 is brightest star discovered by K2/ Kepler mission.
- ❖ The Kepler spacecraft was launched in 2009 to hunt for exoplanets by NASA.
- ❖ An exoplanet is a planet outside our solar system that orbits a star.

### **Malacidins – New Antibiotic**

- ❖ Scientists from New York have reported discovery of a new class of antibiotics called malacidins.

- ❖ The new family of antibiotics comes from molecules present in large variety of soils.
- ❖ It has been produced by microorganisms living in soil and dirt and is capable of killing off several antibiotic-resistant pathogens.
- ❖ Malacidins are distinctive class of antibiotics that are commonly found in soil microbiomes.
- ❖ Malacidins only target gram-positive bacteria with a very thick cell wall.
- ❖ It is ineffective against gram-negative bacteria which cause cholera, pneumonia, and plague.

### **Prithvi – II night**

- ❖ India's indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile was successfully test-fired during a night trial.
- ❖ The trial of the surface-to-surface missile was carried out from a mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha.

#### **About Prithvi II**

- ❖ The s Prithvi-II missile is capable of carrying 500 to 1,000 kg Warheads.
- ❖ Prithvi-II inducted into the Armed forces of the country in 2003.
- ❖ It is a single-stage liquid-fuelled missile.
- ❖ Prithvi-II is the first missile to have been developed by the DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).
- ❖ Prithvi-II is nuclear-capable surface-to-surface.
- ❖ With a strike range of 350 km, Prithvi-II is powered by twin-engines which use liquid propulsion.
- ❖ Notably, Prithvi is India's first indigenously-built ballistic missile. It is one of the five missiles being developed under the country's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.

### **Six new user-friendly features of e-NAM Platform**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has launched six new features of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Platform with an aim to make it more users friendly.
- ❖ The new and user-friendly features of the e-NAM platform are
  - MIS dashboard for better analysis,
  - BHIM payment facility by traders,
  - Mobile payment facility by traders,

- Enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile,
- Integration of farmer's database, and
- e-Learning module.
- ❖ The e-NAM website is now available in Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and Odia besides Hindi and English, while the e-NAM trading facility is available in 6 languages.
- ❖ e-NAM was launched in 2016 with the objective of providing competitive and remunerative price to farmers for their products through online competent bidding process.
- ❖ Currently, 479 mandis across 14 states and 01 union territory are covered under it.

### Google Pay

- ❖ Technology giant Google has launched a new payments app called Google Pay in order to take on Apple Pay.
- ❖ Earlier, Google had announced it would be combining both of its payment apps, Android Pay and Google Wallet, to make Google Pay.
- ❖ The platform includes features like the ability to pay at checkout counters with a smartphone, or pay for public transportation.

### e-Saathi

- ❖ On the second and last day of the UP Investors Summit, a mobile application – 'e-Saathi' was launched.
- ❖ Through the app, people will be able to avail public services sitting at home
- ❖ The summit was inaugurated by Prime Minister and gave 4-P mantra: Potential, policy, planning and performance which leads to progress.

### Supercritical CO<sub>2</sub>-Brayton Cycle facility

- ❖ Union Ministry for Science and Technology inaugurated the India's first supercritical-CO<sub>2</sub> Brayton cycle test loop facility at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.
- ❖ It is first test loop technology coupled with solar heat source in world that will generate clean energy from power plants, including solar thermal.
- ❖ Supercritical carbon dioxide-based power generation is said to offer an efficient alternative to conventional steam-based power plants, thus reducing the carbon foot print significantly.

- ❖ It was developed as part of the Indo-U.S. consortium called Solar Energy Research Institute for India and the United States.
- ❖ Funding was provided by Department of Science and Technology (DS&T) under Indo-US Joint Clean Energy Research and Development Centre programme.

## ENVIRONMENT

### **Nilgiri marten**

- ❖ A recent study has found that Pampadum Shola National Park located on the southern portion of Western Ghats is a safe haven of rare and most elusive Nilgiri Marten.
- ❖ Nilgiri Marten is Endemic to the Western Ghats, Nilgiri Marten looks like a civet and it prefers mostly higher altitudes.
- ❖ The species is listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and Schedule II, Part 2 of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972.
- ❖ It is the smallest national park in Kerala state.

### **New wildlife sanctuary at Ghodazari**

- ❖ The Maharashtra government has approved Ghodazari in Chandrapur district as a new wildlife sanctuary in the state.
- ❖ The sanctuary includes 159 sq. km of Brahmapuri forest.
- ❖ The sanctuary includes hilly terrain, Saatbahini hills, Ghodazari lake, Muktai waterfall etc. The area is rich with flora and fauna.

### **Green Good Deeds campaign**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has launched Green Good Deeds campaign in New Delhi.
- ❖ The purpose of the people-oriented campaign is to sensitise people and students, in particular about climate change and global warming.
- ❖ The objective of the campaign is to protect and return the clean and green environment to the next generation.

### **Pelican Birds Festival-2018**

- ❖ The 'Pelican Bird Festival-2018' was held for first in Atapaka Bird Sanctuary at Kolleru lake in Andhra Pradesh.



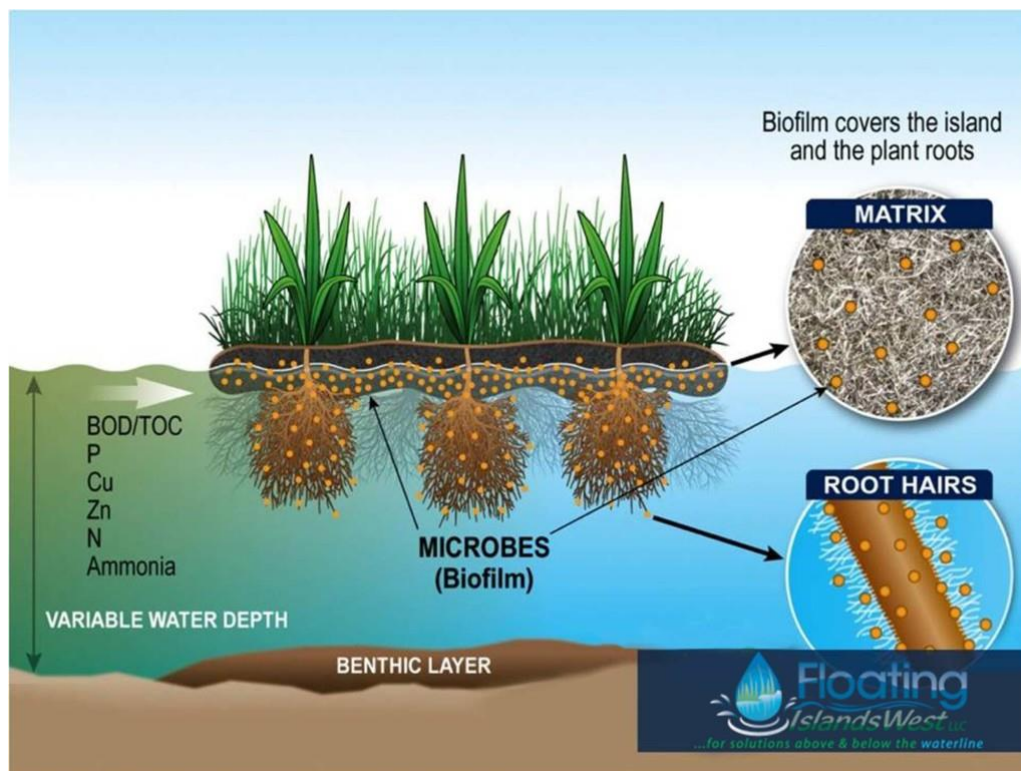
- ❖ It was jointly organised by the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority (APTA) and Krishna district administration.
- ❖ Recently, Atapaka Bird Sanctuary was recognised as one of the largest Pelicanry (a location was the Grey Pelicans nest and breed) in the world.
- ❖ The Grey Pelican also called the Spot Billed Pelican is listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act
- ❖ In the IUCN's Red Data Book categorised in "Near threaten species".
- ❖ Thousands of pelicans, painted storks and other birds will visit the lake during winter season, roost, breed and fly with their off springs.

### Kolleru lake

- ❖ Kolleru lake is one of the largest fresh water lakes in the country. It is located between Krishna and Godavari delta.
- ❖ It was declared as wildlife sanctuary in November 1999 under Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, and designated wetland of international importance in November 2002 under Ramsar Convention.

### **Floating Treatment 'Island' - Nekkampur Lake**

- ❖ The Floating Treatment Wetland (FTW) was inaugurated on World Wetlands Day (February 2) in Nekkampur Lake in Hyderabad to clean and purify the polluted waterbody.



- ❖ Plants planted on FTW can clean the lake by absorbing nitrates and Oxygen pollutants in the water.

- ❖ The FTW is a joint effort Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority, the Ranga Reddy district administration.
- ❖ It has already been recognised by the India Book of Records as the largest FTW in the country.
- ❖ Based on the soil-less hydroponics technique, the FTW has been made in this lake.
- ❖ Cleaning agents planted on FTW include vetivers, citronella, hibiscus, flowering herbs, tulsi and ashvagandha.

### **Pollution control project - River Sal**

- ❖ Union Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change has sanctioned a new project to control pollution in River Sal in Goa under the National River Conservation Plan.
- ❖ The project is scheduled for completion by January 2021 and it will help in reduction of pollution load in the river Sal and improvement in its water quality
- ❖ In the year 2015, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) had identified the Sal river stretch in Goa as one of the 302 polluted river stretches across the country based on Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) levels.
- ❖ The National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) covers conservation of 31 more rivers in overall 14 states, other than Ganga and its tributaries.
- ❖ NRCP is 100% Centrally funded scheme.

### **Rhododendron park in Tawang**

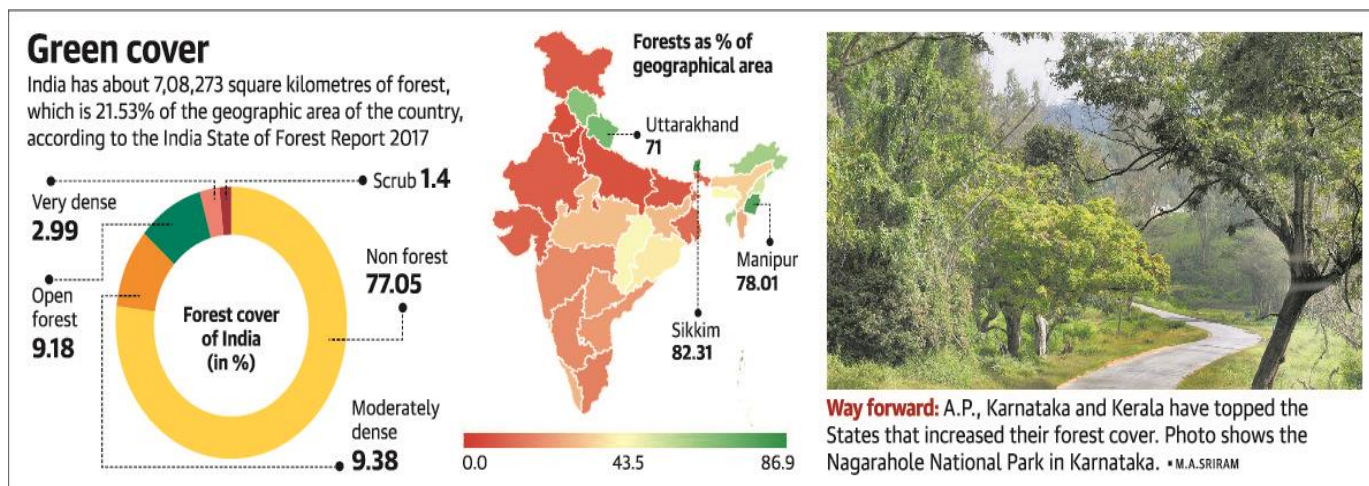
- ❖ A Rhododendron park is being established in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh in a bid to conserve the dwindling rhododendron species of Tawang.
- ❖ Over 30 species of rhododendron will be planted and conserved in the park.
- ❖ Rhododendron is a large genus of flowering plants and is found mainly in Eastern Himalayas, Western Himalayas and Nilgiris.
- ❖ The species is found in varied habitats from subtropical forest to alpine shrubs, rhododendrons range from dwarf shrubs to large trees.
- ❖ The cold, moist slopes and deep valleys of the eastern Himalayas form a conducive habitat for the luxuriant growth of Rhododendron species and rich diversity in North Eastern States.
- ❖ The species has been designated as the **State tree of Uttarakhand** and its blooming in the Garhwal Himalayas is celebrated as 'Phool Sankranti', a festival of flowers.

### Three new eel species at Bay of Bengal

- ❖ Scientists have discovered three new species of eel along the northern Bay of Bengal coast in the past few months.
- ❖ *Gymnothorax pseudotile* (Dark brown with white dots on the dorsal side) discovered at the Digba coast (West Bengal) of the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ The other two species, *Gymnothorax visakhaensis* (uniformly brown) and *Enchelycore propinqua* (reddish brown body mottled with irregular creamy white spots), were discovered from the Visakhapatnam coast of the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ Eels are elongated fish, mostly predators belonging to the order Anguilliformes. They are found mostly at the bottom of rivers and seas.
- ❖ Across the world about 1,000 species of eels have been identified. In India, the number is around 125.

### India State of Forest Report

- ❖ The Forest Survey of India (FSI) which is under the Ministry of Environment has released a report called India State of Forest Report, a biennial report.
- ❖ As per this report, India posted a marginal 0.21% rise in the area under forest between 2015 and 2017.
- ❖ The document says that India has about 7, 08,273 square km of forest, which is 21.53% of the geographic area of the country. Total geographical area of India is 32,87,569 sq. km
- ❖ The top five States where maximum forest cover has increased are Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and Telangana.
- ❖ India's northeast showed a decrease in the forest cover. The five States where forest cover has decreased most are Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Meghalaya.
- ❖ The main reasons for the decrease are shifting cultivation, other biotic pressures, rotational felling, diversion of forest lands for developmental activities, submergence of forest cover, agriculture expansion and natural disasters
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country in terms of area, followed by Arunachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ In terms of percentage of forest cover with respect to the total geographical area, Lakshadweep's the highest forest cover, followed by Mizoram and Andaman and Nicobar Island.
- ❖ India is ranked 10th in the world, with 24.4% of land area under forest and tree cover.
- ❖ The forest survey for the first time mapped 633 districts through satellite-mapping.



## BSI and NHM

- ❖ Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and Natural History Museum (NHM), UK signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in the field of genetic-taxonomic studies, research and training, conservation including species and habitat conservation assessments.
- ❖ The Objectives of MoU are,
  - Help both nations to use scientific evidence to support goals of Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES and Nagoya Protocol.
  - Capacity building and scientific exchanges between two nations and improving interoperability between them in plant resource conservation.

### Botanical Survey of India (BSI)

- ❖ BSI is the apex research organization under Ministry of Environment and Forests for carrying out taxonomic and floristic studies on wild plant resources of country.
- ❖ It was established in 1890 with objective to explore plant resources of country.
- ❖ It has nine regional circles situated at different regions of the country.

## World Environment Day 2018

- ❖ India will be the Global Host for World Environment Day (WED) 2018 which is observed annually on 5 June.
- ❖ In this regard India and UN environment have signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) in New Delhi.
- ❖ Theme for this year's World Environment Day edition is the world is "Beat Plastic Pollution"



- ❖ WED 2018 will be celebrated across all States and Union Territories, districts, local bodies and organizations.
- ❖ Moreover, a week-long environmental awareness campaign and pollution mitigation activities will be planned in Delhi and other parts of the country.
- ❖ It was established by United Nations General Assembly to mark opening of United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972.

### **Regional Centre for Agriculture - Mizoram**

- ❖ Northeast India's first regional Centre for Agriculture with collaboration of Israel will be inaugurated in Mizoram in March 2018.
- ❖ It will be first such centre in North East region of India being established with Israeli collaboration.
- ❖ There are 22 such operational centres setup across India with support of Israel including in states of Haryana, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Punjab.  
The first centre was established in 2008 in Haryana.
- ❖ This centre will be exclusively for processing of citrus fruits and will cater to the whole north east.
- ❖ It has been set up with tripartite collaboration of Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of Israel and Mizoram Government.

### **New plant species - West Bengal**

- ❖ Scientists from the Botanical Survey of India have identified a new plant species from Jaldapara National Park and Buxa National Parks National Parks in West Bengal.
- ❖ The species *Drypetes kalamii*, named after former President Abdul Kalam,
- ❖ It is a small shrub.
- ❖ The new plant species is unisexual in nature (separate male and female plants) and is a close relative of a medicinal plant known in Sanskrit as Putrajivah
- ❖ The new species is found in wet, shaded areas of subtropical moist semi-evergreen forests.
- ❖ With pale yellow flowers in clusters and bright orange to red fruits, the plant is exclusive to the two national parks- Jaldapara and Buxa National Parks.
- ❖ By following the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) rules, the scientists have assessed the plant to be "Critically Endangered".

### **Tungabhadra Otter conservation reserve**

- ❖ Karnataka declared first otter conservation reserve, 34 km along the Tungabhadra, which stretches from from Mudlapura village to Kampli in Ballari district.
- ❖ The reserve also passes through Hampi, a UNESCO heritage site.
- ❖ The reserve houses a good number of smooth-clawed otter, smooth-coated otters, mahseer fish, fresh water crocodiles and giant soft-shelled turtles.
- ❖ Despite being notified as a conservation reserve, river otters in Karnataka are currently facing many threats such as habitat loss, overfishing by trawlers, poaching and dynamite fishing.
- ❖ Increasing of Water hyacinths also a serious threat to this species.
- ❖ Smooth-coated otter is distributed throughout the country from the Himalayas and to the south in India.
- ❖ According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, Smooth-coated species is vulnerable.
- ❖ The highest protection under Schedule 1 (small-clawed otter) and Schedule 2 (smooth-coated otter) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 is provided for the otters.

### **Olive Ridleys - Rushikulya**

- ❖ The mass nesting of Olive Ridley sea turtles, a rare species has begun at in Rushikulya coast of Ganjam district in Odisha.
- ❖ The Rushikulya coast is considered to be a major nesting site in the world.
- ❖ The mass nesting season of Olive Ridley sea turtles is a unique phenomenon and each female turtle lays around 100-150 eggs.

#### **About Olive Ridley Turtles**

- ❖ Olive Ridley is the smallest of the sea turtles and omnivorous in diet.
- ❖ They are found only in warmer waters, including the southern Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.
- ❖ They are known for their behaviour of synchronized nesting in mass numbers, termed arribadas and they nest twice-thrice in a year.
- ❖ They are listed as Vulnerable in IUCN Red List and in Appendix I of CITES.
- ❖ CITES also called as Washington convention.



## STATE

### Ban on 20 insecticides

- ❖ Punjab government has issued the banning of the sale of 20 pesticides (insecticides) which are harmful to health of humans and environment with immediate effect.
- ❖ Monocrotophos, Trichlorofon, Benfuracarb are the one among twenty important harmful pesticides which have banned now by Punjab government.
- ❖ World Health Organisation categorised this pesticide as a harmful Class-I pesticides.

### Geospatial world excellence award- Odisha

- ❖ Odisha has bagged Geospatial World Excellence Award-2018 in the Geospatial World Forum Meeting held at Hyderabad.
- ❖ The award was given for successful IT application on tracking of mineral production, dispatch and value accrued on real time basis through its i3MS website-based software.
- ❖ i3MS (Integrated Mines and Mineral Management System) is GPS-linked web-based software designed by scientists of Odisha Space Applications Centre (ORSAC), Bhubaneswar.
- ❖ This is for the first time in India that GPS devices have been fixed on a large volume of moving objects in mining sector.

### Two large Solar Parks - Madhya Pradesh

- ❖ IREDA and Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Limited signed an agreement for financing the infrastructure of two large Solar Parks in Madhya Pradesh.

#### IREDA

- ❖ IREDA is a Mini Ratna Enterprise under the administrative control of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- ❖ IREDA engaged in promoting, developing and extending financial assistance for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy
- ❖ The motto of the organisation is: "ENERGY FOR EVER".

### Assam's first Global Investors' Summit

- ❖ Prime Minister of India has inaugurated the Assam's first Global Investors' Summit - 'Advantage Assam' in Guwahati.

- ❖ The 2-day event has convened to showcase the state's manufacturing opportunities and geostrategic advantages to foreign and domestic investors.
- ❖ The Summit has been organised by the Assam Govt. in association with the industry body the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- ❖ It aims to position the state as India's Expressway to Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries.

### **Welfare board for transgenders- Maharashtra**

- ❖ The Maharashtra government has decided to set up a Transgender Welfare Board to protect their Constitutional and human rights.
- ❖ This will make Maharashtra the first Indian state to have such a board.

### **32nd Surajkund International Crafts Mela**

- ❖ The annual 32nd Surajkund International Crafts Mela held at Surajkund in Haryana.
- ❖ This year Surajkund International Crafts Mela organised in partnership with Kyrgyzstan by Surajkund Mela Authority, Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs Ministry.
- ❖ It is annual cultural festival hosted since 1987 to showcase richness and diversity of the handicrafts and cultural heritage of India and is the largest crafts fair in the world.

### **88th Mahamastakabhisheka**

- ❖ 88th Mahamastakabhisheka (head anointing ceremony) of the monolithic statue of Lord Bahubali has begun at Shravanabelagola, Karnataka.



### About Mahamastakabhisheka

- ❖ The mastakabhisheka is held once in 12 years. One of the biggest festivals for the Jain community, it honors Lord Bahubali, a revered Jain icon.
- ❖ According to Jain texts, Bahubali attained liberation from the cycle of births and deaths (moksha) at Mount.
- ❖ Bahubali is also called Gommateshwara because of the Gommateshwara statue dedicated to him.
- ❖ The Gommateshwara statue was built by the Ganga dynasty.
- ❖ It is a 57-foot monolith situated above a hill in Shravanabelagola in the Hassan district, Karnataka state, India.
- ❖ It is one of the largest free-standing statues in the world.

### **DASTAK campaign**

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh State Government, in association with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has launched 'DASTAK'
- ❖ 'DASTAK' is a door to door campaign to eradicate deadly Acute Encephalitis (AE) Syndrome and Japanese Encephalitis (JE) disease from the state.
- ❖ The tagline for DASTAK is "Darwaja khat khatao, AES aur JE kobhagao".
- ❖ In DASTAK campaign, the whole state machinery with the help of UNICEF will now literally go door to door in 38 JE and AE affected districts.
- ❖ JE and AE affected areas mostly fall in the Tarai region of the state .Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh is lies adjacent with the borders of Nepal.

## **Social Media — Maha Mitra**

- ❖ To connect with the youth on social media, the Maharashtra government launched an initiative called 'Social Media — Maha Mitra'.
- ❖ The government wants youngsters to share their success stories, and felicitate those working for a good cause as 'social media leaders'.
- ❖ The state has launched a mobile application, where those interested can register to participate in the selection process.
- ❖ The objective of this initiative is to make the youth understand how social media can be used to develop a strong and healthy society.

## **21st Indian Birding Fair begins at Jaipur**

- ❖ The Tourism and Wildlife Society of India had organised the 21st Indian Birding Fair at the Man Sagar Lake in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- ❖ This year, this fair is dedicated to the White Naped Tit bird, which is quite rare in Jaipur and are at the verge of extinction.

### **White-naped tit (*Machlolophus nuchalis*)**

- ❖ White-Naped is a robust, strongly patterned, mainly black-and-white coloured bird with yellow in the flanks and sides of the breast.
- ❖ The white-naped tit (*Machlolophus nuchalis*) is endemic to India where it is found in dry thorn scrub forest in two disjunct populations, in western India and southern India.
- ❖ The bird is found in Udaipur and in some regions of Kutch as well.
- ❖ International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies the bird as vulnerable because of the scarcity of suitable habitats.

## **Manipur's first woman Chief Justice**

- ❖ Justice Abhilasha Kumari was sworn-in as new Chief Justice of the High Court of Manipur.
- ❖ Governor Dr Najma Heptulla administered her the oath of office at Raj Bhavan in Imphal.
- ❖ With this, she became first women and third full-time Chief Justice of Manipur High Court.
- ❖ Earlier She was the Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court. Also She is the daughter of the former Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadr Singh.
- ❖ The first Chief Justice is Justice Abhay Manohar Sapre. Prior to its establishment, a bench of Gauhati HC had jurisdiction over the state of Manipur.

### **India's biggest global pharma conference**

- ❖ An international exhibition and conference on Pharmaceutical & Medical Device sector 'India Pharma & India Medical Device 2018' held in Bengaluru.
- ❖ This is the 3rd International exhibition and conference on Pharmaceutical & Medical Device sector with the theme - 'Affordable and Quality Healthcare'
- ❖ The event is being organised by the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).
- ❖ A key highlight of India Pharma & India Medical Device 2018 is a workshop by World Health Organisation on 'Regulatory System Strengthening and Prequalification'.

### **Exit of Bengal from 'Modicare'**

- ❖ West Bengal has become the first state in the country to opt out of 'Modicare', ambitious healthcare insurance plan, that was announced by the Central government's in the Union Budget.
- ❖ The Bengal government has Claimed that it had already enrolled 50 lakh people under its own Swasthya Sathi programme, state Health Insurance Cover.
- ❖ Union Finance Minister had announced the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) on February 1.
- ❖ It is the biggest global plan to provide quality health cover to a population larger than the combined citizenry of the US, UK, Germany and France.

### **Friendship Gate**

- ❖ Recently "Friendship Gate" has been inaugurated at India- Bangladesh Border in Meghalaya.
- ❖ It is constructed with an aim to have a Wagah-like beating retreat ceremony for the Indian and Bangladesh border guards.
- ❖ Wagah is a Border Check post located on India and Pakistan international border.
- ❖ The Friendship Gate has been constructed near Integrated Check post near Shillong on border with Bangladesh.
- ❖ A BSF Border outpost has also inaugurated at Umsyiem in India- Bangladesh Border.



### **Madhya Pradesh's first butterfly park**

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh's first butterfly park has inaugurated at Gopalpur in Raisen district.
- ❖ The park is spread over three hectares of land.
- ❖ It houses 65 species of butterflies and nearly 137 plant varieties.
- ❖ It is expected to give boost to states eco-tourism.
- ❖ Butterfly parks are pollution-free spaces which do not have chemicals/pesticides and play an important role in conserving and breeding of butterfly species.

### **India's first artificial intelligence center - Mumbai**

- ❖ Maharashtra State government is planning set an India's first institute for artificial intelligence (AI) in Mumbai.
- ❖ Setting up the AI institute will not only play a crucial role in ushering the 'fourth industrial revolution' but will also promote Mumbai as an investment destination in innovations and data analysis.
- ❖ Maharashtra State Government has already been experimenting with AI in the health sector.
- ❖ Besides, it has also set up a joint working group for AI cooperation with the government of Canada.

### **National Banana Festival**

- ❖ The National Banana Festival (NBF) 2018 from 17 to 21 February at Kalliyoor, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- ❖ It is an attempt to showcase a wide variety of bananas in the country and multifarious uses of this unique fruit and other plant parts.
- ❖ The focal theme of NBF 2018 will be conserving diversity, preserving identity, and promoting value addition".
- ❖ The festival is organised by Centre for Innovation in Science and Social action (CISSA) in partnership with Kalliyoor Grama Panchayat.
- ❖ India is the largest producer of banana in the world.

### **Magnetic Maharashtra**

- ❖ Prime Minister inaugurated the 'Magnetic Maharashtra' Convergence Summit 2018 at Mumbai.
- ❖ This is Maharashtra's first Global Investors Summit on the lines of the 'Make in India' initiative.

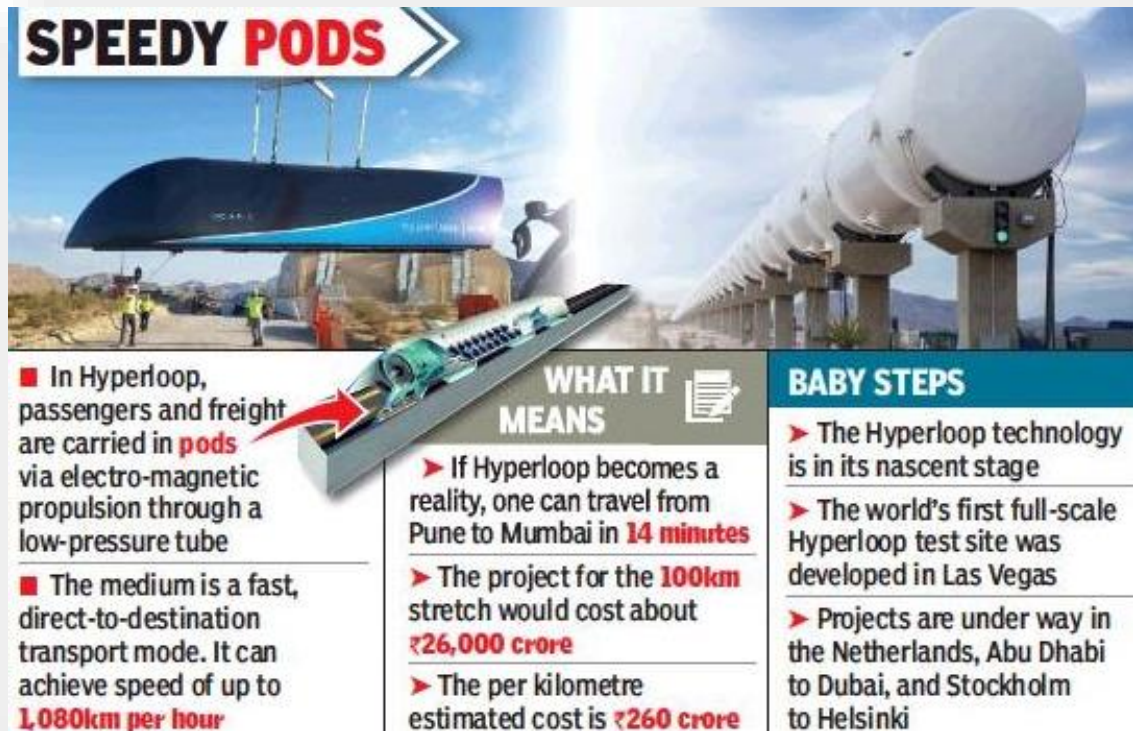
- ❖ The conference aims to bring investments to the tune of ₹10-lakh crore to the State.
- ❖ It is announced that Reliance will establish India's first ever Integrated Industrial Area for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Maharashtra.
- ❖ 'Magnetic Maharashtra' has been conceptualised on four main pillars - Employment, Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Future Industries.
- ❖ Maharashtra government is aiming to achieve a trillion-dollar economy by 2025.
- ❖ Maharashtra has bagged about 51 % of total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India.

### **Fourth Container Terminal**

- ❖ Prime Minister has inaugurated Fourth Container Terminal (FCT) of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ❖ With this, JNPT will nearly double its container handling capacity.
- ❖ This will be India's largest container terminal. The terminal will be able to dock mother vessels and handle the biggest containers ships from a quay length of one km
- ❖ The Fourth Container Terminal has been developed on Design, Built, Fund, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) basis for a concession period of 30 years at an estimated cost of 7915 Crore Rupee.
- ❖ The project was implemented in two Phases. i.e. Phase I and Phase II.
- ❖ The new FCT is also linked to dedicated rail freight corridor and can receive about 350 containers per rake.
- ❖ The rail facilities will be largest in India with only on-dock Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) compliant facility in India.

### **Hyperloop project**

- ❖ The Richard Branson-led Virgin Group on Sunday signed a framework agreement with Maharashtra to build a hyperloop transportation system between Mumbai and Pune.
- ❖ It would reduce travel time between the two cities to just 25 minutes from the three hours at present.
- ❖ The proposed hyperloop transportation system will link central Pune with Navi Mumbai international airport.
- ❖ The proposed loop will be a fully electric system and will have the capability travel up to 1,000 km per hour.
- ❖ Hyperloop Technology is dubbed as fifth mode of transportation. It envisages tube modular transport system that runs free of friction.



**SPEEDY PODS**

■ In Hyperloop, passengers and freight are carried in **pods** via electro-magnetic propulsion through a low-pressure tube

■ The medium is a fast, direct-to-destination transport mode. It can achieve speed of up to **1,080km per hour**

**WHAT IT MEANS**

- If Hyperloop becomes a reality, one can travel from Pune to Mumbai in **14 minutes**
- The project for the **100km** stretch would cost about **₹26,000 crore**
- The per kilometre estimated cost is **₹260 crore**

**BABY STEPS**

- The Hyperloop technology is in its nascent stage
- The world's first full-scale Hyperloop test site was developed in Las Vegas
- Projects are under way in the Netherlands, Abu Dhabi to Dubai, and Stockholm to Helsinki

### Motorcycle Ambulance Service

- ❖ The Goa government has launched a motorcycle ambulance service to provide quick medical help to patients in need in the coastal state.
- ❖ Goa CM Parrikar, in presence of Health Minister Vishwajit Rane, unveiled a batch of 20 two-wheeler ambulances which would be deputed in high-risk areas like the coastal belt.
- ❖ These bikes will be equipped with medical facilities, including oxygen cylinders.

### Wildlife fast-track courts

- ❖ In a major initiative for wildlife protection, the forest guards in Assam are given modern weapons like self-loading rifles (SLRs) to check poaching of rhinos, tigers and other wild animals.
- ❖ Assam government have launched a new programme - modernisation of arms and equipment for protection, rescue and rehabilitation of rhinos, tigers and other wildlife
- ❖ For the first time in the country, 10 wildlife fast-track courts have been set up to exclusively deal with poaching and other related crimes against wild animals.
- ❖ Assam has five national parks and 19 wildlife sanctuaries and is home to 91% of Indian rhinos.

- ❖ The five national parks in Assam are
  - Kaziranga
  - Manas
  - Nameri
  - Rajiv Gandhi Orang
  - Dibrusaikhowa
- ❖ Manas and Dibrusaikhowa are the Biosphere reserve in the state.

### **Haryana opens subsidised canteens**

- ❖ The Haryana government has opened subsidised canteens in four districts — Faridabad, Gurugram, Hisar and Yamunanagar — under the 'Antyodaya Aahaar Yojana' that will offer a meal at Rs.10 to the poor.
- ❖ The scheme was launched on the occasion of the Republic Day celebrations in Panchkula, Haryana.
- ❖ Its objective is to provide good quality of healthy and nutritious food at affordable lower costs to poor, homeless people who are officially designated to be below the poverty line (BPL status).

### **New Speaker of Gujarat Assembly**

- ❖ Rajendra Trivedi, the BJP MLA from Vadodara, was unanimously elected as Speaker of the 14th Gujarat Legislative Assembly on the first day of the Budget session.
- ❖ Trivedi's name was proposed by CM Vijay Rupani and it was backed by the Congress legislative party, led by the Leader of Opposition Paresh Dhanani.
- ❖ Gujarat Legislative Assembly or Gujarat Vidhan Sabha is the unicameral legislature of the Indian state of Gujarat. It is situated in the capital Gandhinagar.
- ❖ Presently, 182 members of the Legislative Assembly are directly elected from the single-seat constituencies and one member is nominated.

### **Khajuraho Dance Festival**

- ❖ The 44th Khajuraho Dance Festival 2018 has begun at the temple town in Chhatarpur district on February 20.
- ❖ The fest is being organised by the culture department of the Madhya Pradesh government.

- ❖ The 6-day fest will showcase classical dances including Kathak, Odissi, Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali and Mohiniattam.
- ❖ This year, the Art Mart (which is part of the festival) would showcase paintings of international artists from Germany, France and China among other countries.
- ❖ During the festival, dances are performed in an open- air auditorium, usually in front of the Chitragupta Temple dedicated to the Sun God and the Vishwanatha Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.
- ❖ The temples at Khajuraho, built by the Chandela dynasty between 950 AD and 1050 AD, are world-wide known for their erotic sculptures.

### **Vaccination Card Mandatory**

- ❖ The Kerala government in its new health policy, has proposed that vaccination cards mandatory for children seeking admission in first standard.
- ❖ The state Cabinet has ratified the draft medical policy in an effort to ensure that all children below the age of five are immunised and has made vaccination certificate mandatory for admission to Class-I from the next academic session.
- ❖ And also as per draft policy Transgender clinics will be set up at all district hospitals in a bid to bring them under the state's health system.

### **Parivartan Scheme**

- ❖ The Haryana government has officially launched the Parivartan scheme, which is designed to address 10 issues including cleanliness and pollution, in 46 developmental blocks of the state.
- ❖ Under this scheme, the state government will provide training (practical) to the employees and thus will create strong training workforce in the state.
- ❖ The 10 issues include facilitation of financing, making agriculture profitable and sustainable, improving health services, implementing Swachh Bharat, decongesting market areas, engaging the youth, checking air pollution, ensuring availability of identity-related services, effective policing, and ensuring road order and conduct.
- ❖ This is a unique scheme in order to ensure that the benefit of all government scheme must reach the people.

### **Rhino day - September 22**

- ❖ The Assam government will be observing September 22 as Rhino Day to generate public awareness for the protection of the one-horned pachyderm.



- ❖ A State Rhino Project, in line with the National Rhino Project, will also be launched in the state for the protection and conservation of rhinos.
- ❖ The world famous one horned rhinos are majorly present in Manas national park and kaziranga national park of Assam in India.

### **Project Clearances - Digitally**

- ❖ A digital platform Nivesh Mitra has been launched in Uttar Pradesh during state's first Investor's Summit.
- ❖ It is a digital platform that will enable investors to apply for project clearances online which means the chances of corruption will be relatively low.
- ❖ With the launch of Nivesh Mitra, Uttar Pradesh has become first Indian state where projects will be cleared digitally without human interference.

### **Rajya Sabha Election**

- ❖ The Election Commission (EC) announced polls to 58 Rajya Sabha seats which will fall vacant in April this year.
- ❖ Polling for the 58 seats will be held on March 23
- ❖ The term of office of 58 members of the Upper House, elected from 16 states, is due to expire upon their retirement in April-May 2018.
- ❖ The maximum number of seats for elections are from the state of Uttar Pradesh i.e. 10.
- ❖ In August 2017, the BJP had overtaken the Congress to become the largest political party in Rajya Sabha with 58 members against 57 of the main opposition party.

### **IHGF Delhi Fair (Spring) 2018**

- ❖ Secretary Textiles, Shri Anant Kumar Singh inaugurated the 45th edition of Indian Handicrafts and Gift Fair (IHGF)-Delhi Fair at India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida.
- ❖ Handicrafts sector plays a significant role in the country's economy and provides employment to a vast segment of craft-persons in rural and semi-urban areas and generates substantial foreign exchange for the country while preserving its cultural heritage.
- ❖ IHGF is amongst Asia's largest gifts & handicrafts fair, held biannually (Spring & Autumn edition) and is organised by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH).

### **‘One district, one product’ scheme**

- ❖ The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has approved 'one district, one product' scheme to promote products indigenous to every district.
- ❖ ODOP is aimed at giving a major push to traditional industries located in each districts of the state.
- ❖ Under this, one product indigenous to every district would be showcased at the three-day UP Diwas event.
- ❖ ODOP is basically a Japanese business development concept.

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS**

### **Ihsan Dogramaci Prize**

- ❖ In a first for an Indian, NITI Aayog Member Vinod Paul has been chosen to receive WHO's (World Health Organization) prestigious Ihsan Dogramaci Family Health Foundation Prize for his services in the field of family health.
- ❖ It will be formally presented at World Health Assembly to be held in Geneva, Switzerland in May 2018.
- ❖ He was selected unanimously for the prestigious award by WHO Board for distinguished contributions towards improving the health and well-being of families, especially in developing countries.

### **Ihsan Dogramaci Family Health Foundation Prize**

- ❖ WHO's Ihsan Dogramaci Family Health Foundation Prize is global honour conferred in recognition to services in field of family health.
- ❖ It is named after Professor Ihsan Dogramaci, a paediatrician and child health specialist.

### **SAI Director - Neelam Kapoor**

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Neelam Kapoor as Director General of the Sports Authority of India (SAI).
- ❖ Kapoor, a 1982 batch officer of the Indian Information Service (IIS) was earlier worked as a Principal Director General of the Press Information Bureau.

### **Sports Authority of India (SAI)**

- ❖ SAI is an apex National Sports body set up in 1984 by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for the development of sport in India.
- ❖ It is headquartered at, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium (Delhi).

## **Chief Executive of Nuclear Fuel Complex**

- ❖ Distinguished scientist Dinesh Srivastava has appointed as a Chief Executive of Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC).

### **Nuclear Fuel Complex**

- ❖ NFC is a major industrial unit of Department of Atomic Energy under PMO established in 1971 and is headquartered in Hyderabad, Telangana.

## **Sahitya Akademi's Bhasha Samman 2018**

- ❖ Magahi writer Shesh Anand Madhukar was honoured with the Sahitya Akademi's Bhasha Samman Award 2018.
- ❖ With this, he became the second writer of Magahi language to be given the award.
- ❖ In Magahi, his well-acclaimed works are "Eklavya" and "Magahi Bhulachal Hey".

### **Bhasha Samman Award**

- ❖ Sahitya Akademi currently honours writers from 24 regional languages, but Bhasha Samman identifies those languages (Not among Sahitya Akademi's 24 language) which are equally spoken in different parts of the country.
- ❖ The Bhasha Samman award is an attempt to make the writers of other languages feel equally important.

## **Asia University Rankings 2018**

- ❖ TIMES Higher Education World University Ranking has released the rankings for educational institutes in Asia and only two Indian institutes have made their way to the top 50 Asian institutes.
- ❖ The two institutes that have made their way to the top 50 are Indian Institute of Science(IISc) at 29th place and Indian Institute of Technology(IIT), Bombay at 44th rank.
- ❖ Total of 17 institutes from India have made their way to top 200 Asian Universities in comparison to last year.
- ❖ Representation of India has been increased in this list than last year.
- ❖ IIT Madras has witnessed biggest decline this year and has fallen from last year's 41 places to 103 this year.

### **First independent female director - ICC**

- ❖ PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi has been appointed to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board as its first independent female director.
- ❖ The independent director is appointed for a two-year term although she may be re-appointed for two further terms.
- ❖ As per the rules of ICC regarding Appointment one can be in Chairman Position with the maximum of Six years.
- ❖ The independent female director post was approved by the ICC Full Council in June 2017 as part of wide ranging constitutional change aimed at improving the global governance of the sport.

### **Brand ambassador of AICFB**

- ❖ Grand Master Vidit Gujrathi has been appointed as the brand ambassador of All India Chess Federation for the Blind (AICFB).
- ❖ Vidit Gujrathi is the fourth Grand Master from India.



- ❖ The other three are Grand Masters from India are,
  - Viswanathan Anand
  - Krishnan Sasikiran
  - Pentala Harikrishna
- ❖ The National 'A' Chess Championship for the visually challenged was held in Mumbai.

- ❖ The top players will form the Indian teams for the upcoming World Team Championships in July in Bulgaria and World Junior for the Blind to be held in Poland.

### **Sahitya Akademi new head- Chandra Sekahar Kambar**

- ❖ Jnanpith recipient and Kannada litterateur Chandra shekhar Kambar (81) was elected as President of the Sahitya Akademi.
- ❖ He will serve as president of the Akademi for a period of five years. Hindi poet Madhav Koushik has been elected as vice-president.
- ❖ Prof.Kambar is the third Kannada writer to head the country's premier literary institution.
- ❖ He is recipient of various awards including Jnanpith Award (2010), Sahitya Akademi Award, Padma Shri, Kalidas Samman.

### **Sahitya Akademi**

- ❖ It was founded in March 1954 and it is India's National Academy of Letters.
- ❖ It is headquartered in Rabindra Bhavan in Delhi.
- ❖ It is an organisation dedicated to promotion of literature in languages of India.
- ❖ It is the central institution for literary research, publication and promotion in the country.
- ❖ It is only institution that undertakes literary activities in 24 Indian languages, including English.

### **Indian envoy to Brazil**

- ❖ Ashok Das (1987 batch-IFS) was named India's new Ambassador to Brazil.
- ❖ He is presently additional secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Earlier he served as India's Ambassador to Iceland.
- ❖ Both India and Brazil are members of the BRICS economic grouping. Both the nations along with Germany and Japan is also in the G4.
- ❖ India and Brazil, along with South Africa, are part of the IBSA Dialogue Forum aimed at promoting South-South cooperation and establishing greater understanding between African, Asian and South American countries.

### **Ibrahim Prize- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**

- ❖ Former Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is Awarded with Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership for her outstanding Contribution.



- ❖ The Ibrahim prize for African Leadership is awarded to a democratically-elected African leader who had served outstandingly, served their stipulated term and finished their term within the last 3 years.
- ❖ Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is the first elected female head of state in Africa.
- ❖ She is the first female leader to receive this award.
- ❖ She served as Liberian President for 12 years. Her term ended in 22 January 2018.

### **Yash Chopra Memorial Award**

- ❖ Legendary singer Asha Bhosle was conferred with the fifth Yash Chopra Memorial Award in Mumbai.
- ❖ For her outstanding contribution to the Hindi film industry she has been given with this memorial award.
- ❖ The Yash Chopra Memorial Award was instituted by MP T Subbarami Reddy in the memory of late filmmaker Yash Chopra who died in 2012.
- ❖ Legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar, Amitabh Bachchan are the important eminent persons who also awarded earlier.

### **Sci-tech Academy Award**

- ❖ Vikas Sathaye, an embedded systems engineer from India has been honoured with the Scientific and Engineering Academy Award at the Oscars Scientific and Technical Awards 2018 held at California.
- ❖ The Scientific and Engineering Award is given for scientific achievements that produce a definite influence on the advancement of the motion picture industry.



- ❖ Sathaye and his team received the award for his contribution towards conceptualisation, designing, engineering, and the implementation of the 'Shotover K1 Camera System'.
- ❖ The Shotover K1 Camera System is a camera mount that is used in aerial filming.
- ❖ The camera mount gets attached to the base of a helicopter, which carries the camera and lens.
- ❖ The primary function of the camera mount is to eliminate any vibration from reaching the camera, thus ensuring a steady footage.
- ❖ The team that developed the camera system consists of four members- Sathaye, John Coyle, Brad Hurndell and Shane Buckham.

### **'Startup of the Year' 2017**

- ❖ Milkbasket, India's first and largest micro-delivery platform has been recognised as 'Startup of the Year' 2017 at the 7th Small Business Awards.
- ❖ The startup of the year award is dedicated to young SMEs, aged 7 years or less, with great potential to become big in local/international markets.
- ❖ Considered as the most coveted awards show Small Business Awards 2018 was organised by Franchise India Group. The award ceremony was hosted in New Delhi.

### **Krishna Kumari Kohli**

- ❖ Krishna Kumari Kohli from Thar in Pakistan's Sindh province will become the second Hindu woman Senator in the Muslim-majority country.
- ❖ The Pakistan Senate has had only one female Hindu member, Ratna Bhagwandas Chawla from the PPP, until now.
- ❖ The Election Commission of Pakistan has accepted the papers of Krishna Kumari who was nominated by the ruling PPP (Pakistan People's Party) for a Senate seat on minority from Sindh Assembly.
- ❖ Krishna Kumari Kohli will be the first-ever Dalit woman in Pakistan who becomes a Senator.
- ❖ Krishna Kumari Kohli's caste is mentioned at No. 23 in the Pakistani Schedule Castes Ordinance -1957.

### **Actress Sridevi death**

- ❖ Veteran actress Sridevi passed away in Dubai.
- ❖ She made her debut as a child artist in in Tamil film "Thunaivan" in 1969 and made her Bollywood debut in 1978 with *Solva Sawan*.

- ❖ Sridevi worked across the language spectrum of Indian cinema in Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Malayalam and Kannada.
- ❖ Sridevi was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian honour, in 2013.

### **Kunwar Bai**

- ❖ Kunwar Bai, who became the mascot of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, has passed away at the age of 106.
- ❖ Inspired by the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, she had sold off eight to ten of her goats, her only assets, to raise Rs 22,000 to build toilets at her house, in her village of Kotabharri, in Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ Kunwar Bai, who was felicitated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for her efforts to make her village open defecation free, was chosen as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan mascot in 2016.
- ❖ As a result of her efforts, the district of Dhamtari became the first to be declared open defecation free in 2016.

### **Former Cabinet Secretary T.S.R Subramanian passes away**

- ❖ Former Cabinet Secretary T S R Subramanian passed away in Delhi.
- ❖ Subramanian was a 1961-batch officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre in the Indian Administrative Services.
- ❖ Subramanian was the Cabinet secretary from August 1, 1996, to March 31, 1998.
- ❖ Subramanian was part of a group of bureaucrats and diplomats on whose petition the Supreme Court in 2013 had rolled out key civil services reforms.
- ❖ He was also posted as Secretary in the Ministry of Textiles. He later also headed several government committees including those on education and environment.
- ❖ Subramanian authored three books on Indian polity and administration and they are,
  1. Journeys Through Babudom and NetaLand: Governance in India
  2. Government in India: An Inside View
  3. India at Turning Point: The Road to Good Governance.

## SPORTS

### National Table Tennis Championship

- ❖ Achanta Sharath Kamal from Tamil Nadu has won the 79th edition of the 11Even Sports National Senior Table Tennis Championship 2018.
- ❖ With this, he lifted the National men's singles title for the 8th time and equalled the record of Kamlesh Mehta.
- ❖ Suthirta Mukehrjee from West Bengal emerged the new women champion.

### U-19 World Cup Champion- India

- ❖ India won U-19 World Cup defeating Australia in finals held at Mount Maunganui, New Zealand.
- ❖ With this victory, India became first nation to win the trophy four times.
- ❖ Shubman Gill was awarded Man of the Tournament, while Manjot Kalra was Man of the Match.
- ❖ With 14 wickets, Indian bowler Anukul Roy emerged as the leading wicket taker in the tournament.
- ❖ So far India has made six appearances in the under-19 finals.
- ❖ The Coach of the team is Rahul Dravid.

### India Open 2018

- ❖ Shi Yuqi of China defeated Taiwan player Chou Tien-chen in the finals of BWF World Tour Super 500 tournament and claimed the India Open men's singles badminton title.
- ❖ Shi became the first Chinese player to win the India Open men's singles badminton title
- ❖ In the women's singles, Beiwen Zhang beat India's Sindhu and bagged the title.
- ❖ It was Zhang's first major world title.

### First female cricketer - 200 ODI wickets

- ❖ India's veteran pacer Jhulan Goswami became the first female cricketer to take 200 ODI wickets.
- ❖ She achieved this feat when she bagged the wicket of South Africa opener Laura Wolvaardt during the 2nd one-day match at Kimberley.
- ❖ Interestingly, the first male cricketer to pick 200 ODI wickets, was also an Indian — the great Kapil Dev.

- ❖ She was also adjudged ICC Women Cricketer of the Year in 2007.

### **Khelo India School Games**

- ❖ The first (inaugural) edition of Khelo India School Games (KISG) was held from 31st January to 8th February, 2018 at Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.
- ❖ It was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and held under the Khelo India Programme.
- ❖ Haryana had emerged as overall champions, finishing with 102 medals, which included 38 gold, 26 silver and 38 bronze medals.
- ❖ Maharashtra finished second with 111 medals, which included 36 gold, 32 silver and 43 bronze medals. Delhi finished in third place.

#### **MEDALS TALLY: TOP 10**

	<b>G</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Total</b>
Haryana	38	26	38	102
Maharashtra	36	32	43	111
Delhi	25	29	40	94
Karnataka	16	11	17	44
Manipur	13	13	8	34
Uttar Pradesh	10	24	28	62
Punjab	10	5	20	35
Kerala	7	11	10	28
Tamil Nadu	6	11	11	28
West Bengal	5	4	6	15

### **National Football Championship –Tamilnadu**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu has won the Senior Women's National Football Championship for the first time at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Odisha.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu played its first-ever final and defeated Manipur by 2-1.
- ❖ Skipper Indumathi and Indrani scored each one goal for Tamil Nadu, while Ratanbala scored one goal on Manipur Side.

### **Train the Trainers**

- ❖ Badminton coach and former all-England champion Pullela Gopichand inaugurated India's largest 'train the trainers' programme.
- ❖ The programme inducted 1500 Physical Education (PE) teachers from across Gujarat for advanced training.
- ❖ The programme aims to develop the skills of PE teachers so that they can impart the right techniques to children to make them big at sports.

- ❖ Train the trainers' is a not-for-profit initiative envisioned by ELMS Sports Foundation.
- ❖ Former All-England champion Gopichand and India's lone Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra have been appointed to oversee the programme and will serve as mentors.

### ATP Tennis Ranking –Roger Federer

- ❖ Switzerland's Roger Federer became the oldest ever World No. 1 in the men's ATP world singles rankings released after his victory at the Rotterdam Open.
- ❖ The 20-time Grand Slam champion defeated Grigor Dimitrov in Rotterdam Open to win his 97th title.
- ❖ Federer is three years older than previous record holder Andre Agassi of the United States.

Oldest World Number 1s in Men's Tennis		ATP 500
Roger Federer	36 years, 195 days	
Andre Agassi	33 years, 133 days	
Rafael Nadal	31 years, 260 days	
Roger Federer	31 years, 88 days	
Jimmy Connors	30 years, 340 days	
Ivan Lendl	30 years, 158 days	

### Achievements of Bhuvanesh Kumar

- ❖ Fast bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar has become the first Indian bowler to take a five-wicket haul in all three formats in international cricket.
- ❖ Other international bowlers who had claimed a similar mark are - Umar Gul, Tim Southee, Ajantha Mendis, Lasith Malinga, and Imran Tahir.

### **Virat Kohli's records**

- ❖ Virat Kohli has become the fastest batsman to reach 17,000 international runs, achieving the feat in his 363rd innings during the sixth ODI against South Africa.
- ❖ Kohli surpassed South Africa's Hashim Amla, who had reached the feat in 381 innings last year.
- ❖ Kohli has become the only second batsman after South Africa's AB de Villiers to attain the 900-point mark concurrently in both formats (Test and ODI) and one among only five to have crossed 900 points in both forms of the game.

### **Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship**

- ❖ Indian "A" team won gold at the 5th Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship held in Gold Coast, Australia, between 14 and 18 February 2018.
- ❖ The Indian "A" team was headed by Kiran Nadar. The Indian "A" team defeated the Australian team.
- ❖ The Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championships are held in conjunction with the Commonwealth Games.
- ❖ The first Championship was held in Manchester, England.
- ❖ The 4th Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championship was held in Glasgow, Scotland in September 2014.

### **Shiv Chhatrapati State Sports Awards**

- ❖ Indian cricket team members Ajinkya Rahane and Rohit Sharma have both been awarded Shiv Chhatrapati State Sports Awards by the Government of Maharashtra.
- ❖ Rohit (for the 2015-16 season) and Rahane (2016-17) have been chosen for their outstanding performance in international cricket.
- ❖ The winners received a trophy, certificate and a cash prize of Rs. 3 lakh at a function in Mumbai.
- ❖ Former India cricketer Pravin Amre has been chosen for the coach award for 2016-17. He will receive a trophy, certificate and cash award of Rs. 1 lakh.

### **Gymnastics World Cup**

- ❖ Aruna Budda Reddy created history by becoming the first Indian gymnast to clinch an individual medal at the Gymnastics World Cup in Melbourne.



- ❖ Reddy scored 13.649 to win a bronze medal in the women's vault. Aruna Reddy finished behind gold medallist Tjasa Kysslef of Slovenia and Australia's Emily Whitehead, who bagged silver.
- ❖ Reddy won her first national medal in 2005. The 22-year-old gymnast will also be a part of India's contingent at the Commonwealth Games this year in Australia.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Wetlands Day

- ❖ The World Wetland Day (WWD) is observed every year on 2nd February to raise awareness about the value of wetlands for humanity and the planet.
- ❖ The 2018 theme 'Wetlands for a sustainable urban future' marks the role of healthy wetlands play in making cities and towns liveable.
- ❖ This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar.
- ❖ India is a party to the Convention since 1982
- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the nodal Ministry for wetlands conservation in India.
- ❖ World Wetland Day was celebrated in year 1997 for the first time.

### World Cancer Day – 04 February

- ❖ The World Cancer Day (WCD) is observed every year on 4 February across the world to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection and treatment.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2018 is "We can. I can".
- ❖ "We can. I can" is special three-year campaign for the World Cancer Day from year 2016 to 2018.
- ❖ The WCD was instituted by Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) in 2008.
- ❖ The primary goal of observing the day is to reduce illness and death caused by it by 2020.

### Maratha Light Infantry - 250th regimental day

- ❖ The Maratha Light Infantry celebrated its 250th Regimental Day on February 4.

- ❖ It is one of the oldest and most honor decorated regiments of the Indian Army.
- ❖ The first battalion of the Regiment was raised in 1768 which was later known as 'jangipaltan'.
- ❖ February 4 also has a historical significance as on this day in 1670 Chhatrapati Shivaji conquered Fort Kondana, famously known as Sinhgarh.

### **National Unani Day**

- ❖ The National Unani Day (NUD) is celebrated every year on 11th February to mark the birth anniversary of great Unani researcher Haqim Ajmal Khan.
- ❖ Hakim Ajmal Khan was an eminent Indian Unani physician who was versatile genius, freedom fighter, educationist and founder of scientific research in Unani Medicine.
- ❖ Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) under Ministry of Ayush is organizing a two-day 'International Conference on Unani Medicine' as part of celebration of National Unani Day.
- ❖ The theme of the conference is *Integration of Unani System of Medicine in main stream healthcare*.

### **National Deworming Day**

- ❖ The National Deworming Day is a single fixed-day approach to treating intestinal worm infections in all children aged 1- 19 years.
- ❖ It is held on 10 February and 10 August each year.
- ❖ The day is observed to tackle the countrywide public health threat of intestinal worm infections in children and related morbidity
- ❖ The National Deworming Day mobilize health personnel, state governments and other stakeholders to prioritize investment in control of Soil Transmitted Helminth (STH) - one of the most common infections.

### **National Productivity Day**

- ❖ The National Productivity Council is observed 12th February as National Productivity Day, and till 18th February National Productivity Week.
- ❖ "Industry 4.0 Leapfrog Opportunity for India" is the theme of the National Productivity Week -2018.
- ❖ Industry 4.0 is characterized by the increasing digitization and interconnection of products, value chains and business models.

### **National Productivity Council (NPC)**

- ❖ NPC is a mission-oriented apex, autonomous and not for profit organization.

- ❖ It is established by the Ministry of Industry, Govt. of India in 1958.
- ❖ The council is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year.
- ❖ Its objective is to promote the cause of productivity in all sectors of the Indian economy.
- ❖ NPC is a constituent of the Tokyo-based Asian Productivity Organization (APO), an Inter-Governmental Body, of which the Government of India is a founder member.

### **World Radio Day - 13 February**

- ❖ The World Radio Day is observed every year across the world on 13th February to celebrate radio as medium for entertainment, information and mode for communication.
- ❖ The Theme of the world radio day for the year 2018 is 'Radio and Sports'.
- ❖ The UNESCO at its 36th General Assembly in 2011 had proclaimed 13th February as World Radio Day.
- ❖ It was subsequently adopted as an International Day by the UN General Assembly.
- ❖ The first WRD was officially celebrated in 2012.

### **Ramakrishna Pramahansa's Birth Anniversary**

- ❖ Ramakrishna Pramahansa's 182nd birth anniversary was on February 18, 2018.
- ❖ Ramakrishna Pramahansa was born on February 18, 1836 as Gadadhar Chattopadhyay, in the village of Kamarpukur, in the Hooghly district of West Bengal.
- ❖ His spiritual movement indirectly aided nationalism, as it rejected caste distinctions and religious prejudices.
- ❖ Ramakrishna's religious and spiritual philosophy was centred around Shakto, Advaita Vedanta, universal tolerance.
- ❖ Foremost among his innumerable disciples was Swami Vivekananda, his chief disciple, who was instrumental in establishing the philosophy of Ramakrishna at a global stage.
- ❖ Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897 to carry out the visions of his Guru Ramakrishna.

### **World Day of Social Justice - 20 February**

- ❖ The World Day of Social Justice is observed every year on February 20 to promote efforts to tackle issues such as poverty, exclusion and unemployment.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2018 is “Workers on the Move: The Quest for Social Justice”.
- ❖ On 26 November 2007, the UN General Assembly declared that, starting from the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, 20 February will be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice.

### **International Mother Language Day - 21 February**

- ❖ The International Mother Language Day (IMLD) was observed across the world on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic, multilingualism and cultural diversity.
- ❖ The theme of 2018 International Mother Language Day is ‘Linguistic diversity and multilingualism count for sustainable development’.
- ❖ The day was first proclaimed by the UNESCO in November 1999 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Cyber Security campaign - Google**

- ❖ Google has launched ‘Security Check Kiya’ campaign in India to create awareness around Internet safety.
- ❖ The campaign aims to protect first-time web users from account hijacking, safeguard Android devices from malicious apps and secure all their personal data if they lose their device.
- ❖ It was launched on the occasion of Safer Internet Day which falls on 6 February.
- ❖ Moreover ‘Google Play Protect’ service scans and checks Android devices for any harmful apps.
- ❖ Find My Device app from Google helps a user to easily locate a lost Android device.

### **World’s busiest international airport**

- ❖ Airport Council international recently released its list of the busiest airports in the world.

- ❖ Dubai International Airport has listed as a world's busiest airport in terms of Passenger handling.
- ❖ London Heathrow airport is ranked as a second busiest airport.
- ❖ Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in Georgia remains the world's busiest airport in overall airport service.
- ❖ The Mumbai Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International airport has become the world's busiest amongst the single-runway facilities by handling 837 flights a day.

### **“Swachh Bharat Sanitation Park” inaugurated in Delhi**

- ❖ The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, in collaboration with the Environmental Sanitation Institute and Tata Trusts, has developed a Sanitation Park in New Delhi.
- ❖ The park is an objective to create awareness on various safe technological options.
- ❖ The Park demonstrates various options pertaining to toilet technologies and solid and liquid waste management technologies, with a brief description of these technologies.

### **Education Impact Bond for India**

- ❖ Britain's Prince Charles has launched a new 10-million-dollar Development Impact Bond (DIB) to help improve education for over 200,000 children in India.
- ❖ The DIB, the largest bond of its type in South Asia, is the latest fundraising initiative by the British Asian Trust (BAT), set up by the royal 10 years ago to fight poverty in South Asia.
- ❖ It was announced at the event held to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the British Asian Trust.
- ❖ The new bond has been launched by the trust with the support of the UK government's Department for International Development (DfID), Comic Relief, the Mittal Foundation and the UBS Optimus Foundation.
- ❖ It is intended to improve literacy and numeracy learning levels for primary school students from marginalised communities in the country.

### **Fine on Google**

- ❖ The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed Rs.136 crore fine on world's most popular search engine Google for unfair business practices in Indian market for online search.

### Competition Commission of India

- ❖ CCI is quasi-judicial statutory body established under The Competition Act, 2002.
- ❖ It works under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- ❖ CCI consists of a Chairperson and 6 Members appointed by the Central Government.
- ❖ Its mandate is to eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition, promote and sustain competition, protect interests of consumers and ensure freedom of trade in markets of India.

### **India's first radio festival**

- ❖ India's first radio festival was held at New Delhi to mark World Radio Day.
- ❖ The Radio Festival has been organised by the International Association of Women in Radio and Television in partnership with UNESCO.
- ❖ Apart from touching on the theme for World Radio Day 2018 – radio and sports – the festival organized to examine the potential of the medium as a platform for social change.

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