

TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM

CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 2019

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TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Haryana state government has decided to create a new department called the Department of 'Foreign Cooperation' to focus on initiatives taken by the state for the promotion of investment, youth employment and welfare of Non-Resident Indians.
- ❖ The International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced that Bhubaneswar will host India's home matches during the 2020 Hockey Pro League. Bhubaneswar has become a hockey hub in India.
- ❖ Microsoft has launched its “K-12 Education Transformation Framework” to facilitate comprehensive digital transformation of schools in India.
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh government signs MoU with IIM-Ahmedabad to fight corruption.
- ❖ The Government of Karnataka issued an order making way for women to work during night shifts (7 PM to 6 AM) in factories registered under the Factories Act, 1948.
- ❖ Prateep V. Philip, IPS, Director General of Police, Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies CID, will receive SKOCH order of merit. He presented two projects under the categories - Community Police - Friends of Police (1993) and Smart Policing – Know Your Criminal.
- ❖ The incumbent Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth was sworn in for a five-year term again in Mauritius.
- ❖ The Strike Corps (also known as Sudarshan Chakra Corps) of Indian Army conducted its annual exercise Sindu Sudarshan-VII, in Barmer, Rajasthan.
- ❖ Around 1,800 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in India have been banned from accepting foreign funds for allegedly violating norms of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).
 - Foreign contributions to India are regulated through the FCRA, 2010 under the control of Union Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ❖ The Union ministry of health and family welfare has cleared the proposal of Tamil Nadu to set up three new medical colleges in Krishnagiri, Nagapattinam and Tiruvallur.
- ❖ The Tamilnadu department of tourism, culture and religious endowments has proposed to establish the Governor Bungalow of Danish, located at Tharangambadi, Nagapattinam district as an ancient monument.
 - Also known as Collector's House, it is located opposite Dansborg Fort and was taken over by the British in 1845 after the exit of the Danes.
- ❖ Neenu Ittyerah of Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) has assumed charge as Principal Chief Operations Manager (PCOM) of Southern Railway.



- She is the first woman officer to occupy the post in the zonal railway.
- ❖ According to data provided in Rajya Sabha by Ministry of Environment, at the last count, the rivers of Assam and Uttar Pradesh respectively had 962 and 1,275 Gangetic dolphins (or *Platanista gangetica*).
- ❖ Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister of India S. Jaishankar, met Foreign Affairs Minister of Japan and Minister of Defense of Japan in New Delhi for the first India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting.
- ❖ Soma Roy Burman has assumed the charge as the new Controller General of Accounts (CGA).
 - She is the 24th CGA and the seventh woman to hold this coveted position. She has replaced J P S Chawla.
- ❖ Nagaland celebrated its 57th Statehood Day on 01st December 2019. It became the 16th state of the country on 01st December 1963.
- ❖ The Union government has “launched a drive” to enroll one crore beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM) and the National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self Employed Persons (NPS-Traders) by March 2020.
- ❖ The first night trial of long-range nuclear capable Agni-III surface-to-surface Ballistic Missile was carried out at APJ Abdul Kalam Island off Odisha coast.
 - However, the Agni-III missile’s maiden night trial ended in ‘failure’.
- ❖ An 18,000-year-old puppy buried for centuries in a lump of frozen mud was unveiled recently in Russia.
- ❖ The Indian army launched a month-long operation ‘Him Vijay’ exercises in Arunachal Pradesh to test its offensive capabilities.
- ❖ The Union Home Ministry has banned ‘Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council’ (HNLC), a Meghalaya-based insurgent group.
- ❖ The Ministry of Corporate Affairs issued rules that provide a framework for bringing ‘systemically important financial service providers’ under the purview of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
- ❖ The Chile government led by Sebastián Piñera to hold referendum on April 2020 for the creation of new constitution. The current charter was enacted by the military government of Augusto Pinochet in 1980.
- ❖ The European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Union's financing department is to stop funding oil, gas and coal projects at the end of 2021.
- ❖ The 5th edition of India-Europe 29 Business Forum was recently held at New Delhi. It is India’s largest European Platform.



- It was organized by industry body Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Union Ministry of External Affairs.
- ❖ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to advance a loan of US \$206 million to develop water supply and sewerage infrastructure in Tiruchi, Ambur, Tiruppur, and Vellore and other cities in Tamil Nadu.
 - It will also strengthen the capacities of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for improved service delivery.
- ❖ The Indian navy plans to set up a Tupolev TU-142 aircraft museum in Kolkata. The TU-142 is a Russian and formerly Soviet Union manufactured maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine aircraft.
- ❖ King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden have arrived in India on an official visit to Delhi, Mumbai and will also visit Uttrakhand.
- ❖ Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin have announced that they are stepping down from the leadership role of the parent company “Alphabet”.
 - Google CEO Indian-American Sundar Pichai will be assuming the role of Alphabet CEO.
- ❖ The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has launched the Independent Directors Databank in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.
 - Independent Directors have an important role in ensuring good corporate governance practices at companies.
- ❖ The Ministry for Women and Children Development along with an alliance of national and international partners has launched a new initiative called YuWaah.
 - The initiative aims to transform the country into a hub of education, skilling and employment for young people aged between 10-24 years.
- ❖ Prithvirajsing Roopun has been elected as President of Mauritius.
- ❖ Advocates Day is celebrated in India every year on December 3rd to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India. He was an advocate by profession.
- ❖ India officially handed over "Made in India" Fast Interceptor Craft to Coast Guard of the Maldives. It is expected to enhance Maldives' maritime security, and promote the blue economy and tourism.
- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has referred Dewan Housing Finance Corp. Ltd (DHFL) to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for insolvency proceedings.
 - DHFL thus becomes the first financial services player to go NCLT for a possible debt resolution.



- ❖ The RBI in its fifth bi-monthly Monetary Policy has kept the policy repo rate unchanged at 5.15%, reverse repo at 4.90% and bank rate at 5.40%.
 - The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das unanimously voted for a status quo policy.
- ❖ Indian actress Priyanka Chopra has been awarded the Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award by UNICEF. She has been associated with UNICEF for the past 15 years as a Goodwill Ambassador.
- ❖ The ministry of Finance & Corporate Affairs has decided to set up five benches of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal at Chennai, Jaipur, Cuttack, Kochi, Indore and Amaravati.
- ❖ Tennis legend Roger Federer will become the first living person in Switzerland to have a coin minted in his honour. The Federal Mint of Switzerland, Swissmint, has created a 20-franc silver coin bearing Federer's image.
 - It's the first time in its history that Swissmint has created a commemorative coin to honour a living person.
- ❖ The Union Minister for Food Processing, Harsimrat Kaur Badal has inaugurated the Central India's 1st Avantee mega Food Park in Dewas, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Chief Minister of Telangana released a book named "Kaleswaram project: Telangana Pragathi Ratham (Kaleswaram project: The Telangana Development Chariot) at Pragati Bhavan.
 - The book was authored by Sridhar Rao Deshpande.
- ❖ India has extended one Line of Credits (LOC's) and two Solar projects in Guinea.
- ❖ The 63rd edition of the National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC) in shotgun events organised by the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ A private weather monitoring company, Skymet released a report on Kharif Crop outlook. According to the report, barring cotton the Kharif crops are expected to witness a drop-in production by 4.5% to 12% as compared to 2018-19.
- ❖ Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech launched its advanced version of rotavirus vaccine – Rotavac 5D, to tackle viral diarrhoea.
- ❖ The Union Minister for Human Resource Development (HRD), Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal said Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been introduced as a subject in classes VIII, IX and X from the session 2019 to 2020 in CBSE schools.
 - The initiative has been undertaken in order to enhance the multidisciplinary approach in teaching-learning and to sensitize the new generation.



- ❖ Human Library held in the City of Palaces, Mysuru in Karnataka. It is a concept to replace books with humans.
- ❖ The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has appointed Public Interest Director Girish Chandra Chaturvedi as its Chairman replacing Ashok Chawla.
 - The appointment comes following the approval of the markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- ❖ Lt Gen Pandala Nagesh Rao has taken over the charge of General Officer Commanding, Dakshin Bharat (DB) area. DB Area has its headquarters in Chennai which is under Southern Command of Indian Army.
- ❖ South African beauty Zozibini Tunzi was crowned as Miss Universe 2019 in Atlanta, US.
 - Tunzi is the third African woman to have won the coveted star-studded crown, and the first black woman to have taken home the title, after Leila Lopes' win in 2011.
- ❖ Geological hazard monitoring group GeoNet said volcanic tremors had "significantly increased" on White Island.
 - Fatal eruption has been on White Island/Whakaari in New Zealand.
- ❖ The US has stalled appointments of members in the appellate body of WTO's dispute settlement system.
 - So, WTO members were unable to reach consensus on a proposal to address concerns regarding the functioning of the appellate body.
- ❖ Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr Harsh Vardhan launched "Green Good Deeds" initiative to protect environment and promote good living in the country.
- ❖ Alliance Air, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Air India, flagged-off its first flight operations between Guwahati to Dimapur, Dimapur to Imphal under the RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme – UdeDeshKaAamNagrik).
- ❖ Karnataka government has decided to amend the Karnataka Industrial Employment (Standing Orders), Rules, 1961 to give primacy to Kannadigas in jobs under Group C and D category in the private sector.
 - Sarojini Mahishi report had recommended granting primacy for the Kannadigas in the private sector jobs.
- ❖ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has started a pilot project for using FASTags for parking purposes at Hyderabad Airport. Conceptualised as FASTag 2.0, it covers parking payments, fuel payments, etc.
- ❖ A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed between National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Suadi Aramco (Saudi Arabian oil company) for



the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Ecosystem in India in Oil & Gas Sector.

- ❖ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reported U.S. companies, which sell arms and military services, dominate the top 5 of global largest 100 arms companies.
- ❖ The World's first fully electric commercial aircraft takes test flight in Vancouver, Canada.
 - The electrical flight was designed by the company Harbor Air.
- ❖ India and Sweden have joined hands to set up a healthcare innovation centre to promote research, broadly in non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
 - The year 2019 marks Sweden-India Year of Health marking 10 years of India-Sweden cooperation in healthcare.
- ❖ UAE and the United States commenced 'Iron Union 12' - a joint military exercise to enhance combat and tactical capabilities.
- ❖ Union Labour Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar has introduced the Code on Social Security, 2019, in the Lok Sabha.
 - The Bill subsumes eight different Bills on various welfare measures, and seeks to provide social security to 50 crore unorganized sector workers.
- ❖ Puducherry Government unveiled new Start-up Policy.
 - It aims to create a corpus fund of ₹10 crores to support the setting up of start-up incubators and to develop co-working spaces.
- ❖ 16th edition of Forbes 2019 list 'The World's 100 Most Powerful Women' has been topped by German Chancellor Angela Merkel.
 - Union Finance Minister of India Nirmala Sitharaman is ranked 34th place in the list. The 100th rank is occupied by Swedish girl Greta Thunberg.
- ❖ In Maharashtra, the Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi expressway was named after late Bal Thackeray.
 - This expressway is between Mumbai and Nagpur.
- ❖ Sushil Kumar Modi, Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar replaced Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Finance (MoF) as the head of the Group of Ministers (GoM) on the Integrated Goods and Service Tax (IGST).
 - This information was stated by the GST (Goods and Services Tax) council.
- ❖ Dr. Padmeswar Gogoi was awarded the Siu-Ka-Pha Award.
 - The award recognized his effort and contribution in the field of botany and science.



- ❖ Jamaica's Toni-Ann Singh was crowned as Miss World 2019 at a beauty pageant held in London, UK.
 - She received her crown from Mexico's Vanessa Ponce de Leon, the winner of Miss World 2018.
- ❖ The shuttle train service between Lahore and Wagah railway station resumed operation on December 2019 after a gap of 22 years.
 - The train service was operational in 1947 till 1997 but was closed due to certain operational and security reasons.
- ❖ World Design Organization (WDO) will be launching its new global programme 'World Design Protopolis' in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
 - It is aimed at implementing holistic progress in mega cities across the world and making them sustainable.
- ❖ New Development Bank (NDB) has committed \$100 million to India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF).
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has warned states about the vulnerability of the Android operating system to a bug called 'StrandHogg'.
 - MHA has rolled out a scheme 'Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)' to combat cyber crime in the country.
- ❖ Reliance Industries has displaced state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to top the Fortune 500 list in India.
 - Fortune 500 list is an annual ranking of the world's wealthiest companies.
- ❖ Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has started a dedicated matrimonial site for its staff.
 - This is the first-ever dedicated and well-managed matrimony portal among the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).
- ❖ Supreme Court of India ordered the Centre and the Delhi Governments to hasten the pilot project of setting up smog towers at Connaught place, New Delhi.
 - Smog Towers are air purification structures that are designed to work as air purifiers.
- ❖ Current Vice Chief of the Army, Lt General Manoj Mukund Naravane, will be the next Chief of Army Staff of India.
 - He will succeed Gen Bipin Rawat, who will retire on the 31st December.
- ❖ Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Nitin Gadkari launched the sale of 'Khadi Rumal' stitched by militancy affected women of Jammu and Kashmir.



- The aim is to provide employment to the women in the terrorist affected areas of J&K.
- ❖ The Government launched National Broadband Mission, all villages to get broadband access by 2022.
 - The mission envisages an investment of Rs 7 lakh crore to bring internet access to 600,000 villages across the country.
- ❖ The deepest canyon on land on earth is found in the Denman glacier in East Antarctica.
 - The measurement of the canyon is 100 km in length and 20 km in breadth.
- ❖ The FICCI has organized the 9th edition of Global Sports Summit 'TURF 2019 & India sports awards 2019 in New Delhi.
- ❖ The National Ganga Council, headed by the PM at Kanpur, discussed the proposal to save and enhance the population of Gangetic Dolphin.
- ❖ The 6th India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting held at New Delhi.
- ❖ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India's Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) and France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS)
 - Aim of the MoU is to establish a framework for cooperation in support of scientific and technological research.
- ❖ The Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard conducted large scale anti-hijacking exercise called Apharan at Cochin port.
 - This is the first time an anti-hijacking exercise is being conducted at a large scale in India.
- ❖ The Mahindra Group said Anand Mahindra will step down as Executive Chairman from April 1, 2020.
 - After that he will function as a Non-Executive Chairman. Pawan Goenka will be re-designated as Managing Director.s
- ❖ Chandrayaan-3 project director is Veerumuthuvel. The spacecraft is scheduled to be launched in November next year.
- ❖ The Ministry of Railways has granted in-principle approval for the 'Silver Line' project, a proposal of the Kerala government.
 - It involves laying of semi high-speed trains between the two corners (532 KM Long) of the state of Kerala.
- ❖ Aditya K. of Ramanattukara, Kozhikode, Kerala became the first child from the State to receive the highest honour award for bravery, the Bharat award.
 - He was awarded for saving 20 people from a burning bus on the move.



- ❖ Venkaiah Naidu released a book titled 'Turbulence and Triumph: The Modi Years' in New Delhi.
 - The book is jointly authored by Rahul Agarwal and Bharathi S Pradhan.
- ❖ The 92nd Annual Convention of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) was conducted in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Second National Conference on Uniformed Women in Prisons Administration was held at Central Academy for Police Training in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
 - The first conference was held in New Delhi in 2017.
- ❖ Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) was successfully flight-tested from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur located in Odisha.
 - QRSAM's technology is being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy laid the foundation stone for the steel plant in Kadapa district.
 - National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) will supply the required iron ore to this plant.
- ❖ Weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu won Gold medal in 6th Qatar International Cup at Doha.
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy launched the 'YSR Nethanna Nestham' scheme.
 - Under the scheme, the state government of Andhra Pradesh will provide financial assistance of Rs 24,000 annually to handloom weavers across the state.
- ❖ Spandana, an Andhra Pradesh Government initiative to make police stations more approachable for the public, especially women, is winning accolades and awards.
- ❖ The peregrine falcon, one of the world's most common predatory birds, has the fastest vision in the animal kingdom.
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Atal Bhujal Yojana which is World Bank approved Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
 - The priority areas identified under the scheme are the following 7 states of Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh to conserve & improve ground water management.
- ❖ The Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal introduced a new policy to make Delhi the capital of Electric vehicles.
 - Under the policy, the government has planned to provide subsidies to electric vehicles.



- ❖ The Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has successfully commissioned 1st Lignite based 500 MW thermal unit in Neyveli New Thermal Power Project in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ UNICEF has awarded the Kamma reddy district of Telangana for effective implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission in water sanitation and hygiene sectors for the year 2019.
- ❖ Union Finance Minister released a postage stamp to commemorate the service and contribution by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in protecting the nation by preventing smuggling activities across the country.
- ❖ For the 1st time, the Indian Railways has started the new train “Him Darshan Express”.
 - It comprising all-new coaches run between Kalka (Haryana)-Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).
- ❖ The Vice President of India has conferred the 66th National Film Awards for the year 2018 in 31 categories in New Delhi.
- ❖ Boria Majumdar with Nalin Mehta, authored a book titled “Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games”.
 - This book describes about the chronicle India’s journey in the global sports arena of Olympics
- ❖ The 5th round of India - Japan Maritime Affairs dialogue was held in Tokyo, Japan.
 - Apart from the dialogue, the 8th Round of India-Japan bilateral consultations on disarmament, non-proliferation and export control was also held in Tokyo.
- ❖ SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) has signed a bilateral memorandum of understanding with Kazakhstan-based Astana Financial Services Authority (AFSA) for mutual co-operation and technical assistance.
 - The objective of pact is to strengthen cross border co-operation in area of securities regulation.
- ❖ Central Philippines was affected by the “Typhoon Phanfone” also known as “Ursula” in Philippines.
- ❖ Delhi government launched the scheme named ‘Mukhyamantri Aawas Yojana’ for the residents of Jhuggi Jhopri clusters.
 - It will provide a pucca house to every citizen in Delhi.
- ❖ Tropical Cyclone Sarai has lashed the Pacific island nation Fiji.

TAMIL NADU

Kulasekarapattinam Spaceport

- ❖ Due to increased launch activities, ISRO has started construction of its second spaceport after Sriharikota at Tamilnadu.
- ❖ Union minister for department of space Jitendra Singh has announced a proposal to set up a rocket launching pad near Kulasekarapattinam, Tuticorin district.
- ❖ It will mainly cater to launches of newly developed Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV or mini-PSLV).

Kavalan - SOS Mobile App

- ❖ The Kavalan – SOS app was launched as part of the Tamil Nadu State Police Master Control Room initiative.
- ❖ People of Tamil Nadu can use to seek police assistance instantly in emergency situations such as physical emergencies, eve teasing, kidnapping or natural disasters such as floods, earthquake, etc.
- ❖ People residing in Tamil Nadu, especially, Women & elderly people can use the Kavalan – SOS app whenever they feel vulnerable or threatened.

Tamil Nadu Rural Development Department

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu rural development department received 13 awards from the Centre for effective implementation of rural development schemes.

சிறப்பாக செயல்படுத்திய திட்டம்	விருதுகள்
மகாத்மா காந்தி தேசிய ஊரக வேலை உறுதித் திட்டம்	2 தேசிய விருதுகள், தேவக்கோட்டை ஊராட்சி (சிவகங்கை)
நீர் தேக்கி வைக்கும் கட்டமைப்புப் பணிகள்	வேலூர் மாவட்டம்
தொழிலாளர்களுக்கு குறித்த காலத்தில் ஊதியம் வழங்கல்	திருச்சி (மாவட்ட அளவில்), புனித தோமையார் மலை ஊராட்சி ஒன்றியம் (காஞ்சிபுரம்)
பணிகளை விரைந்து சிறப்பாக முடித்தல்	கரூர்



- ❖ The state received awards in the category of state, district, panchayat union and village panchayats in programmes like MGNREGA, National Rurban Mission and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana.
- ❖ The rural development department received 31 national awards this fiscal year.

First Tripartite Agreement on Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Fund

- ❖ The department of fisheries (GoI), NABARD and Tamil Nadu Government signed an agreement to implement Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Fund (FIDF).
- ❖ The tripartite agreement set a total of Rs.7522 crores to address the infrastructure requirement of fisheries sector.
- ❖ The projects are to be implemented in the southern coasts of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The funding will also be used to augment deep sea fishing, cage culture and promote exports in the future.

Key areas

- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranks fourth in total fish production in the country.
- ❖ The state is ideal for brackish water fisheries, marine fisheries and inland fisheries.
- ❖ India ranks second in the world fish production.
- ❖ The fisheries sector in the country contributes to 1% of GDP of the country.

Local Body Elections – Tamilnadu

- ❖ The local body elections in Tamil Nadu was held on 27th and 30th December.
- ❖ These elections are conducted by Tamil Nadu State Election Commission under M.Palanisamy.
- ❖ Last election was on October, 2011.
- ❖ At present, out of 37 districts, only elections for rural local bodies in 27 districts was held.
- ❖ Elections will not be held for rural local bodies in the nine districts of Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Vellore, Tirupattur, Ranipet, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi.
- ❖ The rural voters in the state will elect four members.

- ❖ It was a direct Election for Village Panchayat Ward Members, Village Panchayat President, Panchayat Union Ward Members and District Panchayat Ward Members.
- ❖ The elections for panchayat ward member and president of the Panchayat will be on non-party basis.
- ❖ The elections for district panchayat ward member and panchayat union ward member will be on party basis.
- ❖ Indirect elections to the post of district panchayat and panchayat union chairpersons and vice-chairpersons will be held on January 11.

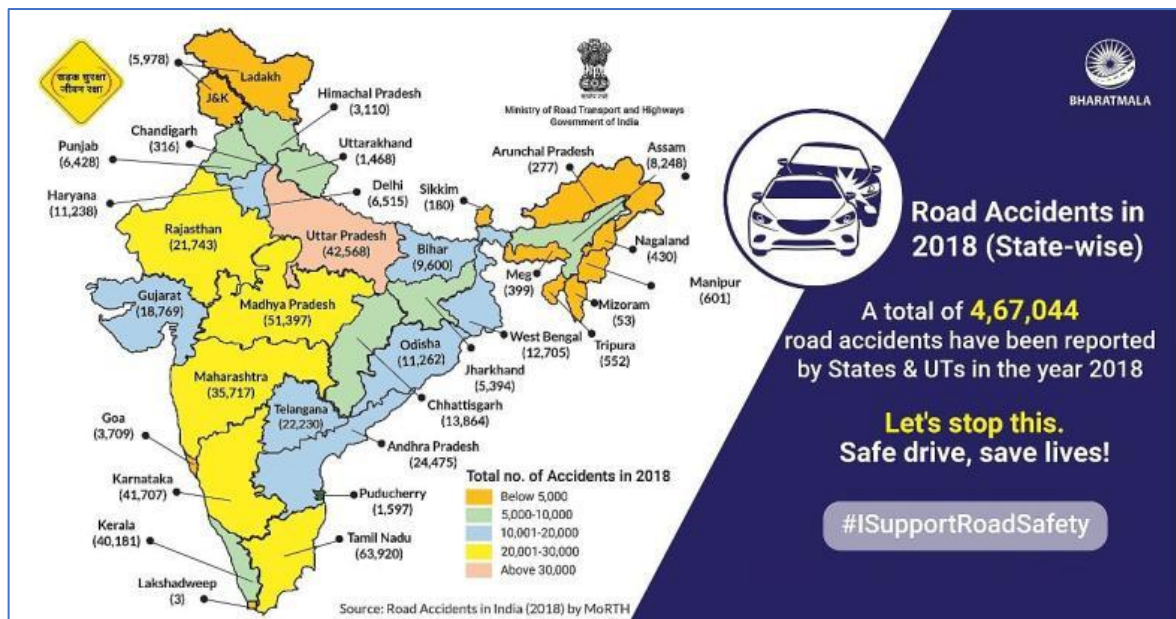
About Tamilnadu Local bodies

- ❖ Urban local bodies include 15 Municipal corporations, 148 Municipalities and 561 Town panchayats.
- ❖ Rural local bodies include 12,524 Village Panchayats, 388 Panchayat Unions, and 33 District Councils of India/District Panchayats.

NATIONAL

Road Accidents in India, 2018

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways released a report based on road accidents happened in 2018.



- ❖ In 2018, Tamil Nadu recorded the greatest number of road accidents while Uttar Pradesh had the highest number of persons died in road accidents.
- ❖ India accounts for almost 11% of accident-related deaths in the world.

Urban Mobility India Conference and Expo 2019

- ❖ The 12th edition of Urban Mobility India Conference and Expo 2019 was held in Uttar Pradesh's capital city Lucknow.
- ❖ It was organised by Institute of Urban Transport (IUT), professional body under Union Ministry of Urban Development.
- ❖ The theme of this year's conference was "Accessible and liveable Cities".
- ❖ It is an annual flagship event organised under the aegis of Union Ministry of Urban Development.
- ❖ Its genesis is from the National Urban Transport Policy of the Government of India, 2006 (NUTP).



Operation Clean Art – Protecting Mongoose

- ❖ The first pan India operation to crackdown on the smuggling of mongoose hair in the country was conducted recently.
- ❖ Codenamed "Operation Clean Art", raids were carried out in U.P, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Kerala.
- ❖ Factories which were making paint burshes with mongoose hair were targeted.

- ❖ There are six species of mongoose found in India and mostly the hair of “grey mongoose” were recovered.
- ❖ The mongoose is listed in Schedule II Part 2 of the Wildlife Protection Act and any smuggling or possession of its body part is a non-bailable offence.
- ❖ The operation was conceived by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

OPERATION CLEAN ART		
Place	Brushes seized	Accused arrested
Mumbai	18,924	5
Pune	3,642	3
Sawantwadi	4,972	4
Aurangabad	1,630	3
Total	29,168	15



National Startup Awards 2020

- ❖ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has announced institution of the first ever National Startup Awards.
- ❖ The awards seek to recognize outstanding startups with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation.





- ❖ A cash prize of Rs 5 lakh each will be awarded to the winning startup in 35 different areas.
- ❖ A cash prize of Rs 15 lakh each will be awarded to one winning Incubator and one winning Accelerator as well.

Indian Naval Air Squadron 314 (INAS 314) – Raptors

- ❖ Indian Naval Air Squadron 314, the sixth Dornier aircraft squadron was commissioned at Naval Air Enclave- Porbandar on Gujarat coast.
- ❖ The INAS 314 derives its name Raptors from the Bird of Prey family.
- ❖ The insignia of the squadron depicts a 'Raptor bird' searching over the vast blue expanse of the sea.
- ❖ This squadron will operate the Dornier aircraft, a multi-role aircraft manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautical Limited, Kanpur.

India Pavilion at International Book Fair, Mexico

- ❖ Minister of State for Human Resource Development Sanjay Dhotre inaugurated the India Pavilion at International Book Fair in Guadalajara, Mexico.
- ❖ India is the 'Guest of Honour Country' in book fair and becomes the first Asian country to participate as 'Guest of Honour' in the Fair.
- ❖ This fair is the biggest book fair in the Spanish-speaking world.

Digital Haj Pilgrimage – India

- ❖ India has become the 1st country to make the entire process for pilgrims going on Haj completely digital.
- ❖ An online application, e-visa, Haj mobile app, 'e-MASIHA' health facility, "e-luggage pre-tagging" have been introduced.
- ❖ 2 lakh Indian Muslims going for Haj in 2020 will receive information in India itself regarding accommodation and transportation in Mecca and Madina.
- ❖ Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi signed the bilateral annual Haj 2020 agreement between India and Saudi Arabia at Jeddah.

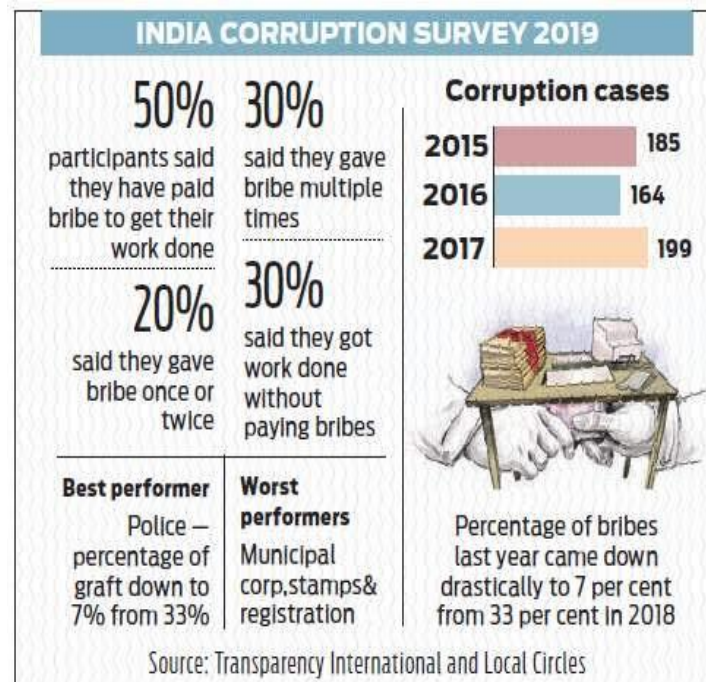
YuWaah – UNICEF Initiative for Youth

- ❖ UNICEF has informed that it has launched an initiative called 'YuWaah' Generation Unlimited in India on 1.11.2019.

- ❖ Yuwaah aims to facilitate youth to gain relevant skills for productive lives and the future of work.
- ❖ The target age group of YuWaah includes adolescent girls and boys.
- ❖ India is one of the first countries in the world to launch its national initiative linked to the global Generation Unlimited movement which began in New York in September 2018.

India Corruption Survey 2019

- ❖ As per the India Corruption Survey 2019, Rajasthan and Bihar fared the worst in country with 78% and 75% of respondents admitting to paying bribes, while Telangana topped the list in south India.
- ❖ The survey was carried out between October 2018 and November 2019 and was conducted by Local Circles, a social media firm and the Transparency International India.



- ❖ Bihar follows Rajasthan and was placed at second spot.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu ranks seventh in most corrupt state's list. Around 62% of citizens admitted to paying bribes to get their work done.
- ❖ Besides Kerala, Goa, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Haryana and Delhi are least corrupt states.

Conference on Ek Bharat Shreshta Bharat

- ❖ The 2-day Regional Conference on 'Ek Bharat Shreshta Bharat' with focus on 'Jal Shakti and Disaster Management' was held in Jammu.
- ❖ It organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in association with Governments of Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat

- ❖ It was launched by Prime Minister on Ekta Diwas (31st October 2016) on the occasion of birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel.
- ❖ It aims to Strengthen cultural relations of various parts of country and to embolden mutual connection between people dwelling in different states.

47th All India Police Science Congress

- ❖ The 47th All India Police Science Congress (AIPSC) was organised from 28-29 November 2019, at Police Headquarters in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The chief guest for event was former cop and current Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry Kiran Bedi.
- ❖ The event was organised by Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh is hosting this annual event after 22 years.
- ❖ The Congress focused on challenges in policing, and 5 other related topics which are need of the hour.

National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)

- ❖ The ambitious National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) project will be operational by December 31, 2020.
- ❖ It was started in 2009 after Mumbai attack 2008.
- ❖ The NATGRID links intelligence and investigation agencies.
- ❖ The 10 user agencies will be linked independently with certain databases which will be procured from 21 providing organisations including telecom, tax records, bank, immigration etc. to generate intelligence inputs.
- ❖ The data recovery centre of the NATGRID has been constructed in Bengaluru, Karnataka and its headquarter is nearing completion in Delhi.

- ❖ 10 agencies which will be able to access NATGRID data on real time basis are:
 - Intelligence Bureau (IB)
 - Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW)
 - Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
 - Enforcement Directorate (ED)
 - Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)
 - Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU)
 - Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)
 - Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC)
 - Directorate General of Central Excise and Intelligence (DGCEI)
 - Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)

Mission Indradhanush 2.0

- ❖ The Union Government has launched a nationwide vaccination drive to prevent eight diseases under Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 2.0 from December 02, 2019.
- ❖ Target Group: Children under the age of 2 years and pregnant women.
- ❖ Aim of the Project: to achieve targets of full immunization coverage in 272 districts spread over 27 States.
- ❖ Project Period: December 2019 and March 2020.
- ❖ The IMI covers vaccines for diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, measles, meningitis and Hepatitis B.
- ❖ Vaccines for Japanese encephalitis and influenza are also being provided in selected areas.



Nethaji Papers

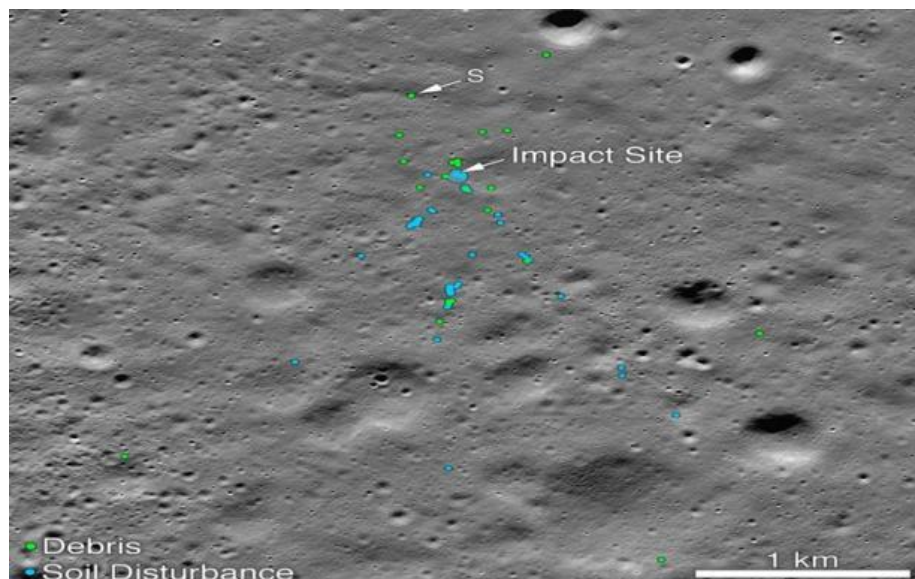
- ❖ The Minister of Culture and Tourism Prahlad Singh Patel has informed Lok Sabha that the Union Government has “de-classified” all records relating to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army).
- ❖ They have been placed in the National Archives of India.
- ❖ Out of 304 files, 303 files are already uploaded on the Netaji web portal i.e. www.netajipapers.gov.in

RTMS Party Registration Portal

- ❖ The Election Commission of India will implement the political parties Registration Tracking Management System (RTMS).
- ❖ It will be implemented through an online portal to facilitate tracking of the status of the application by applicants.
- ❖ From 1st January 2020, applicants who apply for party registration, can track progress through this portal.

NASA finds India's crashed Vikram lander

- ❖ A NASA satellite orbiting the Moon has found India's Vikram lander which crashed on the lunar surface in September.
- ❖ NASA released an image taken by its Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) that showed the site of the spacecraft's impact and associated debris field on 6th of September.





- ❖ It released a mosaic image of the site.
- ❖ Tamilnadu's Shanmuga Subramanian has been credited for identifying the lander.

Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

- ❖ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has implemented the scheme of "Development of PVTGs" which covers Total 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) for their comprehensive socio-economic development.
- ❖ These PVTGs spread over 18 states and one Union Territory (A&N Islands) in the country (2011 census).
- ❖ Among the 75 PVTG's the highest number are found in Odisha (13), followed by Andhra Pradesh (12).
- ❖ Irular (Tamilnadu) and konda reddy (Andhra Pradesh) tribes are recently included in the list of PVTG's.

Exercise Hand-in-Hand

- ❖ The 8th India-China joint training exercise 'HAND-IN-HAND 2019' with the theme of 'Counter Terrorism' under United Nations mandate is scheduled to be conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya from 7th to 20th December 2019.
- ❖ The aim of the exercise is to practice joint planning and conduct of counter terrorist operations in semi urban terrain.
- ❖ In 2018, the exercise was held in Chengdu, China.
- ❖ The exercise didn't take place in 2017 due to the 72-days long standoff between Indian and Chinese troops in Doklam.

Supreme Court approves Green Crackers Production

- ❖ The Supreme Court has approved the commercial production of 'green' crackers.
- ❖ The crackers have to comply with the new chemical composition approved by the CSIR and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute.
- ❖ To ensure compliance, cracker manufacturers have to set up a "testing unit" which will be supervised by Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organisation.
- ❖ The green crackers can reduce pollution by upto 30%.

Ganga Centralized Aqualabs @ Dehradun

- ❖ The aquatic life forms found in the 2525-km-long Ganga river would be preserved in the country's first 'Ganga Centralised Aqualabs'.
- ❖ It will be established at Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in Dehradun.
- ❖ The aqualab, first of its kind for any river in the country, will
 - Maintain genes of each species found in the river.
 - Record baseline data of the river.
- ❖ Tributaries of Ganga like Gomti, Betwa and Kosi will also be scientifically studied and their biological components will be preserved at the lab.

SURYA KIRAN – XIV

- ❖ The joint military exercise 'SURYA KIRAN – XIV' between India and Nepal will be conducted in Nepal from 3rd- 16th December 2019.
- ❖ The exercise is an annual event which is conducted alternatively in Nepal and India.
- ❖ The previous edition of the exercise was conducted in Uttarakhand, India.

Euromonitor International – Top Global Destinations 2019

- ❖ Britain based research agency Euromonitor International has released its annual list of 100 most popular destinations in the world.

TOP 10 CITY DESTINATIONS 2019

International Arrivals

in Million

1	Hongkong	26.7	
2	Bangkok	25.8	
3	Macau	20.6	
4	Singapore	19.8	
5	London	19.6	
6	Paris	19.1	
7	Dubai	16.3	
8	Delhi	15.2	
9	Istanbul	14.7	
10	Kuala Lumpur	14.1	

- ❖ Hong Kong was world's No 1 tourist destination for the tenth consecutive year in 2019.
- ❖ Delhi occupied the 11th spot globally.

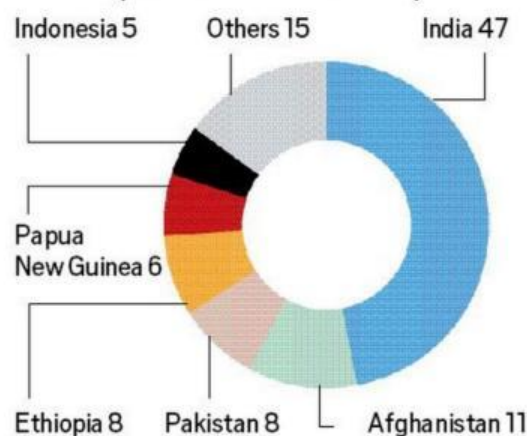
Poshan Anthem

- ❖ Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has launched the "Bharatiya Poshan Anthem" which aims at taking the message of "Making India Malnutrition-free by 2022" to all corners of the country.
- ❖ The anthem was conceptualised by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, penned by lyricist Prasoon Joshi and sung by Shankar Mahadevan.
- ❖ 'Poshan Abhiyan or National Nutrition Mission' was launched in 2018.
- ❖ According to the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey 2016-18, 34.7 per cent of Indian children aged less than five are stunted.

World Malaria Report 2019

- ❖ World Malaria Report 2019 has been released by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ❖ Globally, there were 228 million cases of malaria in 2018.
- ❖ The highest number of cases were reported from African region, followed by South-East Asia.
- ❖ Nigeria had the highest burden of all malaria cases, at 24%.

P. VIVAX MALARIA CASES, 2018 (% DISTRIBUTION)





India Specific Data

- ❖ The Incidence of Plasmodium vivax malaria (the second most common form of the disease) was the highest in India.
- ❖ In India, 7 states account for about 90% of malaria cases.
- ❖ They are Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Gujarat, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Compared to 2017, India reported 2.6 million fewer cases in 2018.
- ❖ This makes India the country with the “largest absolute reductions” among the countries that share 85% of the malaria burden.

Fit India School – Ranking Schools based on Fitness

- ❖ A new initiative called Fit India Schools has been launched.
- ❖ It is a grading/ranking system of schools across India based on
 - Importance given by the school to inculcate fitness among its students and teachers
 - Facilities available for fitness activities
- ❖ The Fit India School rankings have been divided into three categories -- The Fit India Schools, which is the first level of ranking, Fit India School (3 star) and Fit India School (5 star).
- ❖ The schools that achieve this ranking will also be able to use the official Fit India logo and flag.

Blue Flag Programme

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has selected 13 beaches across the country for ‘Blue Flag’ Certification programme.
- ❖ Chandrabhaga beach of Odisha’s Konark coast was the first to complete the tag certification process.
- ❖ It will also be the first in Asia to get the Blue Flag certification.
- ❖ The Blue Flag Programme for beaches and marinas is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE.
- ❖ It started in France in 1985 and has been implemented in Europe since 1987.
- ❖ Japan and South Korea are the only countries in South and south eastern Asia to have Blue Flag beaches.
- ❖ Spain tops the list with 566 such beaches.



- ❖ Criterion for being certified include having waste disposal facilities, being disabled- friendly, having first aid equipment and no access to pets in the main areas of the beach.

Women Help Desks @ Police Stations

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has sanctioned Women Help Desks in Police Stations across the country.
- ❖ It has sanctioned a sum Rs. 100 crores from Nirbhaya Fund for this purpose.
- ❖ Lady police officers would be employed at the desk.
- ❖ Experts like lawyers, psychologists and NGOs would also be part of the desk and will facilitate legal aid, counselling, shelter, rehabilitation and training etc

Exercise INDRA 2019

- ❖ Exercise INDRA 2019 will be conducted in India from 10 — 19 December 2019 simultaneously at Babina (near Jhansi), Pune, and Goa.
- ❖ It is a joint, tri services exercise between India and Russia.
- ❖ The INDRA series of exercise began in 2003 and the First joint Tri Services Exercise was conducted in 2017.

National Florence Nightingale Award-2019

- ❖ The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, presented the National Florence Nightingale Awards to nursing personnel on the occasion of International Nurses Day.
- ❖ The awards were instituted in the year 1973 by the Indian government as a mark of recognition for the meritorious services rendered by nurses.
- ❖ Lini PN, the nurse from Kerala who died of the deadly Nipah virus while treating a Nipah-infected patient was posthumously awarded.

Expedited Delivery of French-Meteor Missiles

- ❖ India has requested France to expedite the delivery of ten Meteor missiles.
- ❖ They will be used to counter the threat faced from American origin AMRAAM missiles, in possession of Pakistan.

INDO-FRENCH COOPERATION



Meteor Missiles were to be delivered late next year

INDIA ASKS for early delivery of at least 10 missiles that outgun all nations in the region

IAF INVITED to UAE to witness French Rafale jets performance in hot weather

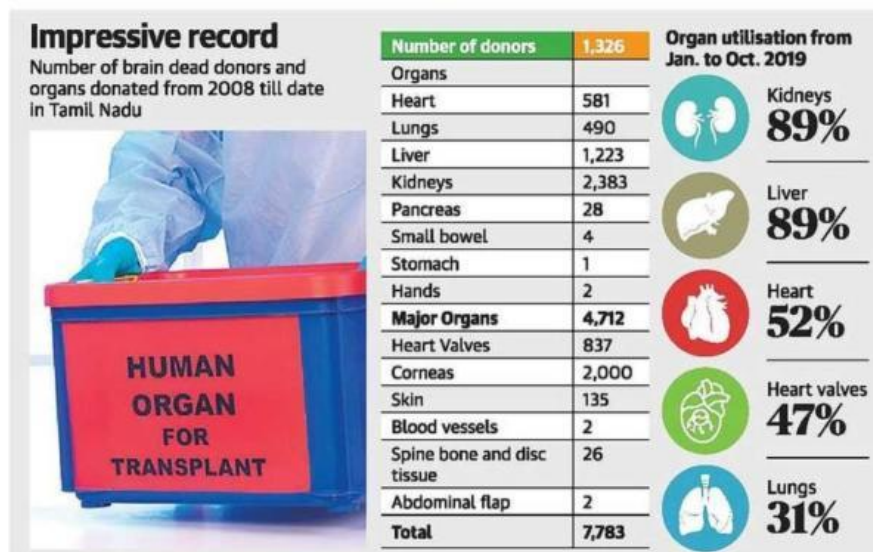
FRENCH NAVY Rafale and A 400M transport aircraft to visit India in August 2020 for joint drills

NEW TRI Services exercise with France likely soon

- ❖ Meteor is a Beyond visual range air to air missile that is possibly the best in its class.
- ❖ It can take out enemy aircraft at range of over 100 km.
- ❖ It has a no escape zone of over 60 km and the missile easily outclasses the American origin AMRAAM currently in service with Pakistan.
- ❖ The No-Escape Zone is the zone within which there is a “high kill probability” against a target, even if the target has been alerted.

NOTTO awards

- ❖ The 10th Indian Organ Donation Day was celebrated on 30 November 2019.





- ❖ Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh were bestowed with awards for organ donation the event was organized by NOTTO (National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization) of Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry (MoHFW).
- ❖ Tamil Nadu was bestowed with Best State award in cadaveric organ donation for the fifth time.
- ❖ Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital (RGGGH) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu won the Best Performing Hospital award.
- ❖ According to the Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation (GODT), India performs second largest number of transplants in the world next to the USA.

Fourth water impact summit

- ❖ The Union Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat inaugurated the fourth water impact summit in New Delhi.
- ❖ The summit is to focus on integrated management of water resources in rural and urban areas.
- ❖ The summit will hold second Water Finance Forum that focusses on bringing global financial investors and institutions together.
- ❖ During the event, report on river restoration and conservation was released by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Heat Wave 2020

- ❖ National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in collaboration with Karnataka government has organised a national workshop “Heat Wave 2020” on preparedness, mitigation and management of Heat Wave in Bengaluru city of Karnataka.
- ❖ The workshop has been conducted well in advance of the heat wave season to manage the hot weather conditions for the year 2020.
- ❖ Climate change led to rise of average summer temperature by 0.5°C in the past five years.
- ❖ This is the 4th annual workshop in a series that NDMA has been conducting since 2017.

Plogging Ambassador of India

- ❖ Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports Kiren Rijiju felicitated Ripu Daman Bevli, popularly known as Plogman of India and named him as Plogging Ambassador of India.



- ❖ Sports Minister also launched nation-wide Plogging Ambassador Mission.
- ❖ Under this Mission, Indians who have been running and cleaning their cities/ towns/ districts, will be nominated as Plogging Ambassadors of their region.
- ❖ Ripu Daman Bevli started plogging in 2017.

National Public Procurement Conclave

- ❖ Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal inaugurated the 3rd edition of National Public Procurement Conclave (NPPC) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The conclave was organized by Government e-Marketplace (GeM) in association with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- ❖ NPCC brings together a host of Buyers, Sellers and stalwarts of industry with massive opportunities in Public Procurement sector.

Child Rights and You Report on Indian Childs

- ❖ The Child Rights and You recently released a report “How Vulnerable are Children in India to crime?”.
- ❖ The report was based on the analysis of National Crime Records Bureau for 2016 - 17.

- ❖ The report says that the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh topped the list of states for crimes against children.
- ❖ The highest increase in crimes between the years 2016 and 2017 was seen in Jharkhand.

National Maritime Heritage Museum

- ❖ The Government of India is planning to establish a National Maritime Heritage Museum at Lothal in Gujarat.
- ❖ The museum will also act as an independent research centre for archaeology of boat building, reconstruction of maritime history and materials traded.
- ❖ It will hold display of salvaged materials from shipwreck sites in Indian Ocean waters.
- ❖ Lothal is an ancient city of Indus Valley Civilization.
- ❖ It was discovered in 1954 by the Archaeological Survey of India.



India's first Eat Right Station

- ❖ Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) certified Mumbai Central railway station as India's first Eat Right Station.
- ❖ It rated the station with four stars rating.



- ❖ The move comes under the Eat Right India initiative started by FSSAI in 2018.
- ❖ Indian Railways (IR) launched the Eat Right Station as a part of efforts to help passengers make a healthy and right food choice.

SPG (Amendment) Bill – 2019

- ❖ Parliament has passed the Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019.
- ❖ The SPG Bill will amend the SPG Act of 1988.
- ❖ The proposed amendments in the Special Protection Group (SPG) Bill aims to reduce the financial burden of VIP security on the state exchequer.

Amendments

- ❖ Reduced SPG Coverage - The protection to be offered only to the Prime Minister, former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members that will reside with him at his official residence.
- ❖ Time period - The security will be provided only for a period of five years to the former Prime Ministers and their immediate family after they leave the office.

About Special Protection Group

- ❖ The SPG was raised in 1985 to provide security cover to the Prime Minister, former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members.
- ❖ It was established after the assassination of PM Indira Gandhi by her own bodyguards in 1984.
- ❖ The SPG comprises of the personnel from the CRPF, Border Security Force and other Central and State force.
- ❖ The President of India does not come under SPG cover due to low threat. He is protected by the Indian Army's President Bodyguard Regiment.

National Organic Festival of Women Entrepreneurs

- ❖ In a unique collaborative effort Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) and Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to organise “National Organic Festival of Women Entrepreneurs”.
- ❖ The event will be planned and organized through NIFTEM, Haryana.
- ❖ NIFTEM is an academic institution under the administrative control of Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India.



- ❖ The festival aims to encourage Indian women entrepreneurs and farmers to connect with buyers and thus, empower them through financial inclusion, while also promoting organic food produce in India.

Prohibition of e-Cigarettes Bill - Passed

- ❖ The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Manufacture, Import, Export, Transport, Sale, Distribution, Storage, and Advertisement) Bill, 2019 was passed by Parliament on 3 December 2019.
- ❖ The Bill which seeks to prohibits the production, storage, trade, and advertisement of electronic cigarettes, replaces an Ordinance promulgated in September 2019.

Background

- ❖ The Union Government has set an ambitious goal of eliminating Tuberculosis by 2025.
- ❖ 16 states have already banned e-cigarettes.

Centre stops - online sale of medicines

- ❖ The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has directed all states and Union territories to prohibit the sale of medicines through unlicensed online platforms as per the Delhi High Court order.
- ❖ The Delhi High Court had stated that the drugs were sold online in violation of the Drugs and Cosmetics (D&C) Act, 1940.
- ❖ Under the D&C Act, 1940 and D&C Rules, 1945 sale of spurious drugs is a punishable offence and State Licensing Authorities are empowered to take action in this regard.

Santhali used for first time in Rajya Sabha

- ❖ 'Santhali' reverberated in Rajya Sabha for the first time in 67 years since its inception.
- ❖ BJD MP Sarojini Hembram spoke in the language of the tribal community Santhals in Rajya sabha.
- ❖ Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu has encouraged MPs to use their local languages for raising Zero Hour mentions.
- ❖ He ensured that English and Hindi translations are available to other members on headphones.

UNDP Report – India ranks 129 in HDI

- ❖ India climbed one spot to 129 among 189 countries in the 2019 human development index (HDI).
- ❖ In 2018, India ranked 130.
- ❖ This report was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- ❖ The rankings were listed based on the assessment of poverty, education, life expectancy and access to health care.
- ❖ The rankings were listed by the report titled “Beyond Income, Beyond Averages, Beyond Today: Inequalities in Human Development in 21st century”.
- ❖ Norway, Switzerland, Ireland occupied the top three positions in that order.

Highlights

- ❖ The report also shows that from 1990 to 2018 life expectancy at birth increased by 11.6 years and per capita income rose by over 250 percent.
- ❖ The report also dwells on the issue of social exclusion and gender bias.
- ❖ In India, 27.1 crore people were lifted out of poverty from 2005-06 to 2015-16.
- ❖ India ranked 122 in the Gender Development Index.
- ❖ However, according to the report, India is the largest country constituting to 41% of world’s poor.
- ❖ In the Inequality-Adjusted HDI (IHDI), India’s position drops by one position to 130.
- ❖ The IHDI indicates percentage loss in HDI due to inequalities.
- ❖ India has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.501, ranking it 122 out of 162 countries in the 2018 index.

Ups and downs		Country		2019 Rank	2018 Rank
Among India's neighbours Sri Lanka moved up five rungs on the HDI ladder while Maldives fell three ranks. While Pakistan slipped two spots, Bangladesh moved up one		India		130	129
		Brazil		79	79
		China		86	85
		Russia		49	49
		South Africa		113	113
		Pakistan		150	152
		Afghanistan		168	170
		Sri Lanka		76	71
		Bhutan		134	134
		Nepal		149	147
Source: Human Development Report, UN		Bangladesh		136	135
		Maldives		101	104

The top five	
Norway	
Switzerland	
Ireland	
Germany	
Hong Kong	

India & the neighbourhood	
	Ranking
Sri Lanka	71
India	129
Bhutan	134
Bangladesh	135
Pakistan	152
Afghanistan	170

Recycling of Ships Bill - 2019

- ❖ Parliament passed the 'Recycling of Ships Bill 2019' for Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships in India.
- ❖ It joins together the existing Shipbreaking Code (revised), 2013 and the provisions of the Hong Kong Convention, 2009.
- ❖ Ships to be recycled in India will need to obtain a 'Ready for Recycling Certificate' in accordance with the Hong Kong Convention.

Key Features

- ❖ It will raise brand value of India's Ships Recycling Yards located at Alang (Gujarat), Mumbai Port, Kolkata Port & Azhikkal (Kerala).
- ❖ 10% of country's Secondary steel needs will be met in an eco-friendly manner.
- ❖ Secondary steel is an outcome of Recycling of Ships.

Digital Exhibition on the History of the Constitution of India

- ❖ The 'Digital Exhibition on History of Constitution of India' was inaugurated in New Delhi on December 9, 2019.
- ❖ It is an important day as the first sitting of Constituent Assembly was held on this day in 1946.
- ❖ The current year 2019 marks 70th Year of adoption of Constitution.
- ❖ It has been organised by Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) in collaboration with Parliament Museum and Archives of Lok Sabha Secretariat and Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BOC).

1st Pashu Kisan Credit Cards of India

- ❖ The 1st Pashu Kisan credit cards (Animal husbandry Credit Card) in India were distributed in Haryana.
- ❖ These credit cards were launched to promote animal husbandry and agri business to help the livestock owners.

Indian Culture Web Portal

- ❖ Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism launched the Indian Culture Web Portal in New Delhi.
- ❖ The main aim of the portal is to promote awareness among the citizens of India about the diverse heritage of the country.

- ❖ It is available in both English and Hindi.
- ❖ The web portal was proposed by the Ministry of Culture and was developed by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay and the data were organized by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

Initiative AGNIi

- ❖ An American company- DuPont de Nemours, Inc (commonly known as DuPont), has partnered with AGNIi (Accelerated Growth of New India's Innovations) of Indian govt.
- ❖ AGNIi is a nation-wide initiative of Indian Government.
- ❖ It aims to supporting the ongoing efforts to boost the innovation ecosystem by connecting innovators across industry, and helping commercialize innovative solutions.
- ❖ AGNIi is not a funding agency and does not provide direct financial support to innovators.

DefExpo 2020

- ❖ The 11th edition of the biennial flagship event DefExpo 2020 will be held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The theme of the DefExpo 2020 is 'India – The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub' and 'Digital Transformation of Defence'.





Must-See Monuments' in India

- ❖ Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has identified 138 monuments as 'Must-See Monuments' in the country.
- ❖ There are 38 World Heritage Sites in India, out of which 22 Cultural Sites including monuments, buildings and caves are under the protection of Archaeological Survey of India.

7th India Skills Report 2020

- ❖ The 7th edition of the India Skills Report 2020 for the year 2019-20 was launched.
- ❖ Maharashtra emerged as the top ranked state in terms of employability.
- ❖ It was followed by Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh in the second and third rank respectively.
- ❖ The India Skills Report, is a joint initiative of
 - Wheebox (global talent-assessment company),
 - People Strong and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in collaboration with UNDP (United Nations Development Programme),
 - AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) and
 - AIU (Association of Indian Universities).

The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019

- ❖ The Minister of Home Affairs Mr. Amit Shah introduced this Bill.
- ❖ The Bill provides for the merger of the Union Territories (UTs) of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu into a single UT.
- ❖ The merger of the two UTs will be done for better administration and check duplications of various work.
- ❖ At present, with this merger, the number of UTs are eight.

Amendment of the Constitution:

- ❖ The Bill amends the First Schedule of the constitution to merge the territories of the two UTs: (a) Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and (b) Daman and Diu.
- ❖ The Bill seeks to amend the Fourth Schedule to allocate two Lok Sabha seats to the merged UT.

- ❖ Jurisdiction of High Court: High Court of Bombay will continue to extend to the merged UT.
- ❖ Services under the UTs: Every person employed in connection with the affairs of the existing UTs will provisionally serve the merged UT.



Gandhi Encyclopedia

- ❖ Ministry of Culture has approved 'Gandhi Encyclopedia' for the for promotion of appropriate Gandhian philosophy.
- ❖ The project is to be implemented by National Council of Science Museums, Kolkata.

About the National Council of Science Museums (NCM):

- ❖ It is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ It was established in 1978 and is headquartered in Kolkata.

International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming systems for BIMSTEC

- ❖ The 'International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems' for BIMSTEC countries has begun in New Delhi.
- ❖ This has been organized by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer's Welfare and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).



- ❖ The objective of the seminar is to enable improvement of tropical small holder farming system that are resilient to climate change and will provide greater productivity and ensure food security.
- ❖ Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture was hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

About BIMSTEC

- ❖ The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization comprising of seven member states viz. Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand.
- ❖ This sub-regional organisation came into being on 1997, through the Bangkok Declaration.

NAVARMS - 19

- ❖ The 4th edition of International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems 'NAVARMS-19' was scheduled to be held at Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), Development Enclave, New Delhi.
- ❖ The theme for 2019 edition is: "Make in India – Fight Category: Opportunities and Imperatives".
- ❖ Indian Navy in association with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has been conducting 'NAVARMS' since 2007.
- ❖ NAVARMS is the only international seminar and exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems conducted in India.

Best Police station list

- ❖ The Union Home Ministry has prepared a list of best performing police stations in the country.
- ❖ Aberdeen in Andaman and Nicobar Islands is the best police station in India, followed by Balasinor in Gujarat and Ajk Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Theni in Tamilnadu ranks 4th in the list.
- ❖ These rankings were based on a range of parameters such as addressing the number of offences at a police station.

State	District	Police Station	Ranking
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Andaman	Aberdeen	1
Gujarat	Mahisagar	Balasinor	2
Madhya Pradesh	Burhanpur	Ajk Burhanpur	3
Tamil Nadu	Theni	AWPS Theni	4
Arunachal Pradesh	Dibang Valley	Anini	5

Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019

- ❖ The Parliament has passed the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), 2019
 - in Lok Sabha on December 09, 2019.
 - In Rajya Sabha on December 11, 2019.
- ❖ The President gave his assent for the bill on December 12, 2019.
- ❖ The Act seeks to give citizenship to refugees of 6 communities (Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, and Parsi) belong to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan.
- ❖ It makes easier for non-Muslim immigrants from India's three Muslim-majority neighbours to become citizens of India.

Key features

- ❖ The Bill amends the Citizenship Act, 1955.
- ❖ For the first time, the Act will grant citizenship on the basis of religion to non-Muslims who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.
- ❖ The amendment relaxes one of the requirements for applicants of residing in India from 11 years to 5 years as a specific condition.
- ❖ Exceptions: The provisions on citizenship for illegal migrants will not apply to two categories
 - states protected by the 'Inner Line Permit' (Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Manipur)
 - areas covered under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution (administration of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram).

Background

- ❖ In India, citizenship is regulated by the Citizenship Act, 1955.
- ❖ This Act has been amended in 1986, 1992, 2003, 2005, and 2016 so far.
- ❖ The Act specifies that citizenship may be acquired in India through five methods – by birth, by descent, by registration, by naturalisation and by incorporation of territory into India.
- ❖ However, illegal migrants cannot become Indian citizens.
- ❖ Now the Act defines illegal migrants.

CITIZENSHIP ACT & AMENDMENT

A LOOK AT WHAT THE BILL AIMS TO DO IN VIEW OF THE ACT, AND THE RESPONSE IT RECEIVED

FOR SELECT FEW	CHANGE IN ELIGIBILITY
Citizenship Amendment Bill seeks to amend the Citizenship Act 1955 in order to make illegal migrants — Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan — eligible for citizenship after six years of stay in India instead of 12 even if they don't possess proper document.	Under the Citizenship Act, the applicant must have resided in India during the last 12 months, and for 11 of the last 14 years to get citizenship. The Bill relaxes this 11-year requirement to five years for persons belonging to the 6 religions and 3 countries. It also makes those who entered India till 2014 eligible.

CRITICISM RECEIVED SO FAR

The Bill has come under severe criticism with critics saying that the Bill violates Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, which stipulates “constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards” for the preserving the culture and identity of Assamese people. Critics have also said that the extensive exercise of updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC) will become null and void due to this exercise.

Delhi hosted Indian Ocean Dialogue

- ❖ Union Ministry of External Affairs hosted 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) and Delhi Dialogue XI at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi.
- ❖ This was for the first time that these two dialogues were held consecutively and on similar Indo-Pacific themes.
- ❖ Theme for 2019 Indian Ocean Dialogue is- ‘Indo-Pacific: Re-imagining the Indian Ocean through an Expanded Geography’.
 - The IOD was organized by Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA).
- ❖ Theme for 2019 Delhi Dialogue is ‘Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific’.
 - It was organized by Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), a New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute.

Infrastructure Investment Trust

- ❖ The Union Cabinet authorised National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to set up Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) and monetize National Highway projects.
- ❖ Given the magnitude of the Bharatmala, NHAI would need adequate funds to complete the projects within the prescribed timelines.
- ❖ Bharatmala is the government's flagship highway development program.

About the Infrastructure Investment Trust:

- ❖ NHAI will set up the Infrastructure Investment Trust(s) (InvIT) as per InvIT Guidelines issued by SEBI.
- ❖ Under InvIT, highway projects will be bundled to form a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to be offered to investors.

ILP – Diampur of Nagaland and Manipur

- ❖ Nagaland government has extended the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system to the district of Dimapur.



ARUNACHAL PRADESH: Entire state under ILP regime

NAGALAND: Entire state under ILP regime

TRIPURA: Sixth Schedule covers 70% of geographical area

MEGHALAYA: Almost entire state covered under Sixth Schedule, except a part of Shillong

ASSAM: 3 Autonomous District Councils under Sixth Schedule

MANIPUR: Entire state under ILP regime



- ❖ This step was taken to exempt the entire district from the purview of the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB).
- ❖ So far, Dimapur was the only place in Nagaland which was not under the ILP system.
- ❖ Because the district is a commercial hub and has a mixed population (often referred to as 'Mini India').
- ❖ The inclusion of Manipur in Inner Line Permit is also announced on 10 December 2019.
- ❖ At present ILP covers Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur.
- ❖ Moreover, the entire northeast India has been exempted from CAB except for Sikkim and non-tribal areas in Assam and Tripura.

Drug Price Control Order, 2013

- ❖ The National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) for the first-time invoked Drug Price Control Order, 2013.
- ❖ It aims to increase the prices of 21 medicines to ensure their availability.
- ❖ The NPPA was set up as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

India Design Council

- ❖ The India Design Council (IDC) launched the Chartered Designs of India (CDI) and the Design Education Quality Mark (DEQM) in New Delhi.
- ❖ These two initiatives of IDC and National Institute of design, Ahmedabad will help to address the challenges of scale,
 - quality of design,
 - quality of education for design,
 - raising the priority for design in industry and
 - design for public purpose.
- ❖ India Design Council is an autonomous body of the Government of India established under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ❖ It is a national strategic body for multi-disciplinary design and is involved in promotion of design to make India a design enabled country.

Water Quality Index – India ranks 120: 70% contaminated

- ❖ Niti Aayog published a report “Composite Water Management Index”.
- ❖ The report mentions that India is placed at 120th amongst 122 countries in the Water Quality Index, with nearly 70% of water being contaminated.
- ❖ Niti Aayog report has mentioned that 21 major cities are expected to run out of groundwater by 2020.
- ❖ This is based on the estimates of annual groundwater replenishment and its extraction.
- ❖ Government of India launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan which is a time-bound campaign to improve water availability including groundwater conditions.



T. L. Alamelu committee

- ❖ IRDAI constitutes 10 member Working Group under T. L. Alamelu to look the issues of General Insurance Industry.
- ❖ The insurance regulator, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has constituted a Working Group to make recommendations for loss prevention and loss minimization.

About IRDAI

- ❖ Founded – 1999.
- ❖ Headquarters – Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ❖ Chairman – Subhash Chandra Khuntia.

103rd LCU amphibious ship / LCU L-57

- ❖ The Warship builder GRSE (Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers) delivered 103rd LCU amphibious ship LCU L-57 to Indian Navy.
- ❖ It was the 7th in the series of 8th such vessels being made by GRSE for the Navy.



- ❖ The LCU Mk-IV Class of ships are a further improved version of the Mk-III LCU Vessels, in line with the central Government's 'Make in India' initiative.

About GRSE:

- ❖ Founded – 1884.
- ❖ Headquarters – Kolkata, West Bengal.
- ❖ In 1960, it was acquired by the Government of India from Macneill & Barry Limited.

Accessible India Campaign

- ❖ The Accessible India Campaign (AIC) also known as the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan was launched in December 2015 by Prime Minister.
- ❖ It is implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ❖ The project is aimed to make the country accessible for people with disabilities.
- ❖ The government has announced that deadline of AIC has been extended from December 2019 to March 2020.

Nirbhaya Fund – status

- ❖ According to Government data, the States and Union Territories have utilised less than 20% of the budget allocated to them under the Nirbhaya Fund by the Central government between 2015 and 2018.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu used only 3 % (the fund allocated was Rs 190.68 crore and utilisation Rs 6 crore).

No	Top 5 States/UTs	Worst 5 states/UTs
1	Chandigarh (59.83%)	Manipur (0%)
2	Mizoram (56.32%)	Maharashtra (0%)
3	Uttarakhand (51.68%)	Lakshadweep (0%)
4	Andhra Pradesh (43.23%)	West Bengal (0.76%)
5	Nagaland (38.17%).	Delhi (0.84%)

About Nirbhaya Fund

- ❖ The fund is created by Ministry of Finance in 2013 with a corpus of Rs 1000 crore.
- ❖ It is aimed at enhancing the safety and security for women in the country.



- ❖ It is a non-lapsable corpus fund.
- ❖ It is being monitored by Empowered Committee of Officers under Secretary of Women and Child Development Ministry.

Voice over Wi-Fi

- ❖ Bharti Airtel has introduced Voice over Wi-Fi (VoWiFi), a first for India.
- ❖ It uses high speed Internet connection, available via broadband, to make and receive high definition (HD) voice calls.
- ❖ Users don't have to pay extra for these calls as it is using a Wi-Fi network.
- ❖ Wi-Fi Calling is aimed especially for areas where cellular networks are not strong.

Breast milk banks

- ❖ Breast Milk Banks are established under "National Guidelines on Establishment of Lactation Management Centres in Public Health Facilities" by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- ❖ It is established for the purpose of collecting, screening, processing, storing and distributing donor human milk at Government Medical Colleges or District.
- ❖ The first Breast Milk Bank of India was established in 1989 at Mumbai.

GIMS or Government Instant Messaging System

- ❖ GIMS is an Indian equivalent of popular messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp and Telegram, for secure internal use.
- ❖ It is Designed and developed by the Kerala unit of National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- ❖ It is being packaged for employees of Central and State government departments and organizations for intra and inter organization communications.
- ❖ Like WhatsApp, GIMS employs end-to-end encryption for one-to-one messaging.

Sustainable development cell - Ministry of Coal

- ❖ The Coal Ministry is going to establish "Sustainable Development Cell" (SDC) to promote environment friendly and sustainable coal mining.
- ❖ The main objective of the cell is to address environmental concerns that arise during closure of mines.

- ❖ The SDC will focus on sustainable mine tourism, mine water management, air quality and sustainable overburden management.
- ❖ The cell will also set up Mine Closure Fund.

Steeling India 2019 – CII

- ❖ Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organized the “Steeling India - 2019: Driving metal intensity in key sectors”.
- ❖ The event discussed the strategies to augment steel consumption and to promote steel usage in rural areas.
- ❖ The conference will help India pave ways to achieve its target of 300 MT of production by 2030 (according to National Steel Policy).
- ❖ The event discussed about “Isapti Irada” campaign that aims to increase the appropriate usage of steel in India.
- ❖ P.V Sindhu, Indian Shuttle player is the brand ambassador of Isapti Irada.

India expands Indo-Pacific Policy - includes Gulf and Africa

- ❖ External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced in the joint Indian Ocean Dialogue that India is planning to expand its Indo-Pacific policy.
- ❖ This dialogue was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ So far, the Indo-Pacific covered Indian Ocean and the Arabian sea.
- ❖ With the expansion, the region will now include Gulf states and Africa.

Importance:

- ❖ The expansion will help India in its Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific policy.





- ❖ India's focus is more on the Indian Ocean element of the Indo-Pacific rather than Pacific Ocean element.
- ❖ ASEAN is a very important building block of the Indo-Pacific.

Arms (Amendment) Bill, 2019

- ❖ Home Minister Amit Shah introduced the Arms (Amendment) Bill, 2019 and it has been passed by both the houses.
- ❖ The Bill seeks to amend the Arms Act, 1959.
- ❖ The Bill was amended by reducing the number of licensed firearms allowed per person from the current three to one.
- ❖ It also introduces new categories of offences.

Features:

- ❖ License for acquiring firearms is must.
- ❖ Validity of a firearm license is increased from three years to five years.
- ❖ Ban on un-licensed firearms.
- ❖ The Bill adds following new offences – punishable with imprisonment
 - Forcefully taking a firearm from police or armed forces.
 - Celebratory gunfire which endangers safety of others.

The Constitution (126th Amendment) Bill, 2019

- ❖ This bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Law and Justice, Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- ❖ It was unanimously passed by both houses.
- ❖ The Constitution (Article 334) provides for reservation of seats for SCs and STs and representation of the Anglo-Indian community by nomination, in Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies of states.
- ❖ This provision has been provided for a period of 70 years since the enactment of the Constitution and will expire on January 25, 2020.
- ❖ The Bill seeks to extend the reservation for SCs and STs by another 10 years till January 25, 2030.
- ❖ The bill, however, does not propose an extension of reservation quota for the Anglo-Indian community, which is also set to expire on January 25.
- ❖ The government justified the same by saying that there are only 296 Anglo-Indians in the country.

37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions

- ❖ The 37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions was organized by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The theme of the symposium was 'Optimal Utilization of Resources - Through Sharing and Networking.'

The 37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions was held in New Delhi



Bureau of Police Research & Development

International Financial Services Centre's Authority Bill, 2019

- ❖ The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman.
- ❖ The Bill provides for the establishment of an Authority to develop and regulate the financial services market in the International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) in India.
- ❖ The Bill will apply to all IFSCs set up under the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005.
- ❖ The central government will appoint nine members to this authority.
- ❖ They have a term of three years, subject to reappointment.
- ❖ According to this bill, all powers exercisable by the respective financial sector regulatory (viz. RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, and PFRDA etc.) shall be solely exercised by the Authority.
- ❖ The first IFSC in India was set up at GIFT City in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Phase III - Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak yojana

- ❖ Union Minister of Rural Development Narendra Singh Tomar launched the third phase of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.
- ❖ The third phase aims at consolidation of 1,25,000 km of connectivity that primarily aiming at rural links connecting Gramin Agricultural Markets.

About Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

- ❖ The scheme was launched in 2000.
- ❖ In 2015, under the recommendation of the 14th finance commission, the project was funded by both centre and state in the ratio 60:40.
- ❖ In the north-eastern states it is set as 90:10.
- ❖ The scheme has used waste plastic and cold mix technology to build major portion of roads.

First time voting usage at GST council

- ❖ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman chaired the GST Council Meeting.
- ❖ For the first time, the GST council has used voting process.
- ❖ Council has decided to fix a uniform tax rate of 28% on both state and private lotteries with effect from 1 March 2020.

GeM Samvaad

- ❖ 'GeM Samvaad' was launched by Anup Wadhawan, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Chairman of GeM in New Delhi.
- ❖ This is to bring on-board more local sellers.
- ❖ Through GeM Samvaad marketplace is also looking forward to receive feedback from users for making improvements and advancements in system.

About GeM

- ❖ GeM was launched on 9 August 2016.



- ❖ It has transformed public procurement by leveraging technology and making procurement contactless, paperless, and cashless.

AMRUT mission got extended

- ❖ This scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- ❖ Government of India extended the deadline of its flagship scheme AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) by two more years to 2022.

About AMRUT

- ❖ The mission was launched in 2015 by PM Modi for urban renewal by March 2020.
- ❖ The programme was preceded by Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM).
- ❖ The Mission will focus on the Thrust Areas like Water Supply, Sewerage management, etc.
- ❖ The Mission covers 500 cities that includes all cities and towns with a population of over one lakh with notified Municipalities.



India-US 2+2 Dialogue

- ❖ India and United States held security dialogue in Washington.
- ❖ This was their second 2+2 dialogue.
- ❖ The countries signed agreements on space exploration and defence cooperation.
- ❖ The agreement will be signed MoU on water resources between India's Ministry of Jal Shakti and US Geological Survey on quality assessment and management of water.
- ❖ The first 2+2 dialogue was held in New Delhi in September 2018.

Scientific Articles

- ❖ India has emerged as the world's third largest publisher of science and engineering articles, according to a latest US report.
- ❖ China accounts for 20.67 per cent of all global publications in scientific articles.



- ❖ China is at the top position.
- ❖ China is followed by the US at 16.54 per cent.
- ❖ It was as per the statistics compiled by the US National Science Foundation (NSF)
- ❖ India now accounts for 5.31 per cent of the total world publications in science and engineering.

18th National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSARB)

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) organized this meeting in New Delhi.
- ❖ The annual meeting was held to discuss policy issues, formulate guidelines & procedures as well as assess the efficacy of National Search and Rescue Plan (NSRP).
- ❖ Meeting included three new permanent members to meet- Ministry of Shipping, Department of Animal husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).
- ❖ Indian Coast Guard, under the Ministry of Defence, is India's nodal agency for Maritime Search and Rescue.

First Centre of Excellence for Next Generation Transportation Systems

- ❖ The National Rail Transport Institute, a deemed to be university under the Ministry of Railways, signed an MoU with the University of Birmingham of England in Rail Bhawan, New Delhi
- ❖ It aims to set up its first Centre of Excellence for Next Generation Transportation Systems.
- ❖ Birmingham Centre for Railway Research and Education (BCRRE) is the largest university-based centre for railway research and education in Europe.

150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

- ❖ The President of India Ram Nath Kovind, presided over the second meeting of the National Committee for Commemoration of the 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at Rashtrapati Bhavan, Delhi.
- ❖ This Committee includes Vice-President, Prime Minister, Chief Ministers of all states, representatives from across the political spectrum, Gandhians, thinkers, and eminent persons from all walks of life.
- ❖ The Committee also has nine international members, including two former Secretaries-General of the United Nations - Mr Kofi Annan and Mr Ban Ki-Moon.



Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize

- ❖ Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa announced the setting up of a Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize in order to help promote Mahatma Gandhi's ideals.
- ❖ It will be given each year inspired by Gandhi's different thoughts and quotes.
- ❖ Portuguese PM is the only foreign Prime Minister to be a part of the committee.
- ❖ The first edition of this prize will be dedicated to animal welfare as Mahatma Gandhi said that the greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

Swachchh Samundra NW-2019

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard conducted a 2-day regional level pollution response exercise named 'Swachchh Samundra NW-2019' at sea off Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch.
- ❖ The aim of the exercise was to create a response mechanism by taking actions for oil pollution incidents.

EChO Network

- ❖ Krishnasamy VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Govt of India launched a national program called "EChO Network" in New Delhi.
- ❖ The EChO network provides a template for cross-disciplinary leadership in India.
- ❖ The purpose of this program is to bring citizens, govt, and others to solve problems in the areas of research knowledge, and awareness of Indian ecology and the environment.

Nagpur Resolution for Empowering Citizens

- ❖ The 'Nagpur Resolution - A holistic approach for empowering citizens' was adopted during the Regional Conference on 'Improving Public Service Delivery – Role of Governments', in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The conference was organised by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra.
- ❖ The emphasis of the government is on Minimum Government, Maximum Governance to promote transparency, citizen centricity and participation.
- ❖ For good governance, Shillong Declaration and Jammu Resolution have been adopted earlier.



Key highlights

- ❖ Better Service Delivery
- ❖ Grievance Redressal
- ❖ Use of Technology through digital platforms.
- ❖ Dynamic Policy Making
- ❖ Exchange of Technical Expertise
- ❖ Good Governance Index.

National Workshop on Accessible Elections 2019

- ❖ Election Commission of India has organized National Workshop on Accessible Elections 2019 in New Delhi.
- ❖ Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora has released a booklet named, 'Crossing the Barriers – I Got Inked' during the workshop.
- ❖ It also witnessed the release of "Accessibility Report 2019".
- ❖ It is a document underscored the work is done so far, recent initiatives, and recommendations from all States/UTs (Union Territories) and various stakeholders.

Hunar Haat

- ❖ Hunar Haats are organised by Ministry of Minority Affairs under USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme.
- ❖ The USTTAD scheme aims at preserving & promoting the rich heritage of the traditional arts & crafts of the Minority communities.
- ❖ Hunar Haat is an exhibition of handicrafts and traditional products made by artisans from the Minority communities.
- ❖ Aimed at promoting and supporting artisans from Minority communities and providing them domestic as well as international markets.

Swachh Bharat Mission achieves its urban target

- ❖ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs announced that urban areas of 35 states & UTs have been declared Open Defecation Free.

Highlights

- ❖ According to the ministry, the target has been achieved by constructing 65.81 lakh households' toilets as against the target of 59 lakhs.
- ❖ In order to achieve the target, the ministry had launched ODF+ and ODF++ protocols.
- ❖ The Swachh Bharat Mission for urban areas is being implemented by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- ❖ The mission for rural areas is being implemented by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- ❖ The rural areas of India were declared Open Defecation Free on October 2, 2019.

Good Governance Index

- ❖ On December 25, 2019, Government of India launched Good Governance Index.
- ❖ The States and Union Territories were divided into 3 groups namely Big states, North East and hill states and union territories.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu topped in Good Governance Index in the "Big States" category.
- ❖ It was followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ Jharkhand was ranked the last in good governance index.
- ❖ In Agricultural and allied ranking, the best performing states were Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Daman and Diu.

State of governance					
Rank	Big states	Score	Rank	Big states	Score
1	Tamil Nadu	5.62	10	West Bengal	4.84
2	Maharashtra	5.40	11	Telangana	4.83
3	Karnataka	5.10	12	Rajasthan	4.8
4	Chhattisgarh	5.05	13	Punjab	4.57
5	Andhra Pradesh	5.05	14	Orissa	4.44
6	Gujarat	5.04	15	Bihar	4.40
7	Haryana	5.00	16	Goa	4.29
8	Kerala	4.98	17	Uttar Pradesh	4.25
9	Madhya Pradesh	4.85	18	Jharkhand	4.23

FSSAI delinks FoPL from general labelling

- ❖ The FSSAI (Food Safety Standards Association of India) announced that the front of packet labelling (FoPL) will be delinked from its general labelling regulation.
- ❖ FoPL is aimed at making consumers aware of food products that are high in fat, sugar and salt content.
- ❖ It helps to identify the green (vegetarian foods) and red (non-vegetarian foods).
- ❖ It also includes pictorial representation of nutrients, food group nutrients and summary indicators, etc.

About FoPL

- ❖ FoPL is a policy tool that help consumers to make healthier food choices.
- ❖ It was included within the draft Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2019 in India.

National population Register

- ❖ West Bengal and Kerala have decided to put on hold all proceedings for updating the National Population Register (NPR).
- ❖ NPR is a Register of usual residents of the country.

Helping Hand

NPR will seek
verification of bio-
metrics from UIDAI

Exercise will be
carried out across
country, except
Assam

To be
conducted
between
April 1,
2020, and
Sept 30,
2020

Those holding
Aadhaar not
required to
give biometrics
for NPR

NPR will have
both biometric
& demographic
details

**15 demograp-
hic parameters**
included in NPR





- ❖ The NPR database would contain demographic as well as biometric details.
- ❖ As per the provisions of the NPR, a Resident Identity Card (RIC) will be issued to individuals over the age of 18.
- ❖ It aims to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country.
- ❖ It is being prepared at the local (Village/sub-Town), sub-District, District, State and National level under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.
- ❖ It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.
- ❖ A usual resident is defined for the purposes of NPR as a person who has resided in a local area for the past 6 months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next 6 months or more.

India's first long distance CNG bus

- ❖ Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan unveiled India's first long-distance CNG bus fitted with CNG cylinders in New Delhi.
- ❖ It can travel around 1000 kilometres in a single fill.
- ❖ The first long-range interstate CNG bus will play from Delhi to Dehradun.

Atal Bhujal Yojana

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

About the scheme:

- ❖ The scheme will also help in supplying water to every house hold by 2024.
- ❖ Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti will implement this scheme.
- ❖ The implementation period for plan is from 2020 to 2025.
- ❖ The entire funding component including World Bank's loan and Central Assistance shall be given to States as Grants.



Rohtang Tunnel

- ❖ It is in the eastern Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas on the Leh-Manali Highway.
- ❖ It is one of the two routes to Ladakh.
- ❖ The Rohtang Pass receives heavy snowfall and blizzards during winter months and is open for road traffic for only four months in a year.
- ❖ The tunnel will keep the highway open during the winter.

‘Burden of Mental Disorders Across the States of India: Global Burden of Disease Study 1990-2017’

- ❖ It has been conducted by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI).
- ❖ Mental disorders of various kinds are adversely affecting a large population of Indians, especially in South Indian States.
- ❖ Prevalence of depressive disorders was highest in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Goa and Telangana in the high Socio- demographic index (SDI) State group and Andhra Pradesh in the middle SDI State group.
- ❖ One in every seven Indians were affected by mental disorders of varying severity in 2017.
- ❖ The higher prevalence of depressive and anxiety disorders in southern States could be related to the higher levels of modernisation and urbanisation in these States.

The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019

- ❖ It was introduced in Rajya Sabha by the Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Renuka Singh Saruta in Upper House.
- ❖ The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, specifies the tribal and tribal communities which are deemed to be Scheduled Tribes.
- ❖ The Bill amends Part VI of the Order which specifies the Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka.
- ❖ It amends the Order by substituting:
 - “Naikda, Nayaka” with “Naikda, Nayaka (including Parivara and Talawara)”, and
 - “Siddi (in Uttar Kannada district)” with “Siddi (in Belagavi, Dharwad and Uttar Kannada districts)”.



Operation Dolphin's Nose

- ❖ In a joint operation with the Naval Intelligence and Central Intelligence Agencies, the Andhra Pradesh police have arrested seven navy personnel who have been allegedly involved in espionage.
- ❖ The Eastern Naval Command headquarters is based in Visakhapatnam and aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya is based in Karwar.

Future Skills

- ❖ Wipro has partnered with NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies) to launch a skilling platform called 'Future Skills' for 10,000 students from over 20 engineering colleges in India.
- ❖ This is a part of Wipro's Corporate Social Responsibility programme, TalentNext.

India's first Transgender University

- ❖ India's first university for transgender community will be opened at Kushinagar district in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ It is the first of its kind University in country, where transgender community members will be able to get education.
- ❖ The university is being built by Akhil Bhartiya Kinnar Siksha Seva Trust (All-India transgender education service trust).
- ❖ The university will facilitate its members to study right from class 1 to Post Graduate (PG) and even do research and get PhD degree.

Universal Postal Union

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the ratification of the Tenth Additional Protocol to the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union (UPU).
- ❖ UPU also oversees the Telematics and Express Mail Service (EMS) cooperatives.
- ❖ The ratification will also enable the Department of Posts to bring out any administrative orders to implement the provisions of the UPU Convention in India.

About UPU

- ❖ Established by the Treaty of Bern of 1874.
- ❖ It is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN).
- ❖ Headquarters are located in Bern, Switzerland.

- ❖ The UPU contains four bodies consisting of the Congress, the Council of Administration (CA), the Postal Operations Council (POC) and the International Bureau (IB).

Good governance Index 2019

- ❖ Latest edition of the 'Good Governance Index' has been launched on the occasion of 'Good Governance Day' – December 25, 2019.
- ❖ Good Governance Day is observed on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (25th December).
- ❖ It was observed for the first time in 2014.



Composite Ranking

#	Big States	Score	NE & Hill	Score	UTs	Score
1	Tamil Nadu	5.62	Himachal Pradesh	5.22	Pondicherry	4.69
2	Maharashtra	5.40	Uttarakhand	4.87	Chandigarh	4.68
3	Karnataka	5.10	Tripura	4.50	Delhi	4.39
4	Chhattisgarh	5.05	Mizoram	4.41	Daman & Diu	4.33
5	Andhra Pradesh	5.05	Sikkim	4.21	A&N Islands	4.12
6	Gujarat	5.04	Assam	4.07	D&N Haveli	3.12
7	Haryana	5.00	J & K	4.04	Lakshadweep	2.97
8	Kerala	4.98	Manipur	3.93		
9	Madhya Pradesh	4.85	Meghalaya	3.81		
10	West Bengal	4.84	Nagaland	3.55		
11	Telangana	4.83	Arunachal Pradesh	3.03		
12	Rajasthan	4.80				
13	Punjab	4.57				
14	Orissa	4.44				
15	Bihar	4.40				
16	Goa	4.29				
17	Uttar Pradesh	4.25				
18	Jharkhand	4.23				



GGI

- ❖ Good Governance Index (GGI) is a tool to assess the status of governance and the impact of various interventions taken up by the State Government and UTs.
- ❖ GGI was released by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances under The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has topped the Good Governance Index followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The GGI takes into consideration 10 sectors.
- ❖ These ten Governance Sectors are measured on total 50 indicators.
- ❖ The states and UTs are divided into three groups: a). Big States, b). North-East & Hill States and c). UTs.

Sector-wise ranking:

- ❖ In the environment sector:
 - The top three states are West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
 - Jammu & Kashmir has topped among the North-East and Hill States.
- ❖ Judicial and public security ranking:
 - Tamil Nadu tops in the judicial and public security ranking. West Bengal is at the bottom of the chart here.
- ❖ Economic governance:
 - Karnataka is at the top under the economic governance category.
- ❖ Health:
 - Kerala is at the top in the public health sector followed by Tamil Nadu and Goa.
- ❖ Public Infrastructure and Utilities:
 - Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh have topped their respective categories.
- ❖ Social Welfare and Development Sector:
 - Chhattisgarh has topped among big states.

Tamilnadu at a glance

- ❖ Environment (3)
- ❖ Human resource development (5)
- ❖ Economic governance (5)
- ❖ Social welfare and development (7)
- ❖ Agriculture and allied sectors (9)
- ❖ Commerce and industries (14).



Creation of a Chief of Defence Staff

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the creation of a chief of defence staff (CDS).
- ❖ CDS will be the single-point military adviser to the government as suggested by the Kargil Review Committee in 1999.
- ❖ CDS oversees and coordinates the working of the three Services.
- ❖ CDS is described as 'first among equals' among service chiefs.
- ❖ A CDS would be a four-star general from either of the Indian Armed Forces- the Army, the Air Force or the Navy.

Composition of Cabinet Committee on Security.

- ❖ Prime Minister as its Head
- ❖ Minister of Defence
- ❖ Minister of Home Affairs
- ❖ Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs.
- ❖ Minister of External Affairs.

Digital Radio by 2024

- ❖ The Central government is planning to revamp 'All India Radio' officially known as 'Akashvani' by introducing Digital Radio in India by 2024.
- ❖ This announcement was made by Union Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Minister Prakash Javadekar at the annual Akashvani Awards function held in New Delhi.

About All India Radio (AIR)

- ❖ AIR was established in 1930.
- ❖ It is officially known as Akashvani ("Voice from the Sky") since 1956.
- ❖ AIR is sister service of Prasar Bharati's Doordarshan television Network.
- ❖ Prasar Bharati is India's largest public broadcasting agency.

Digital Village Guruwara

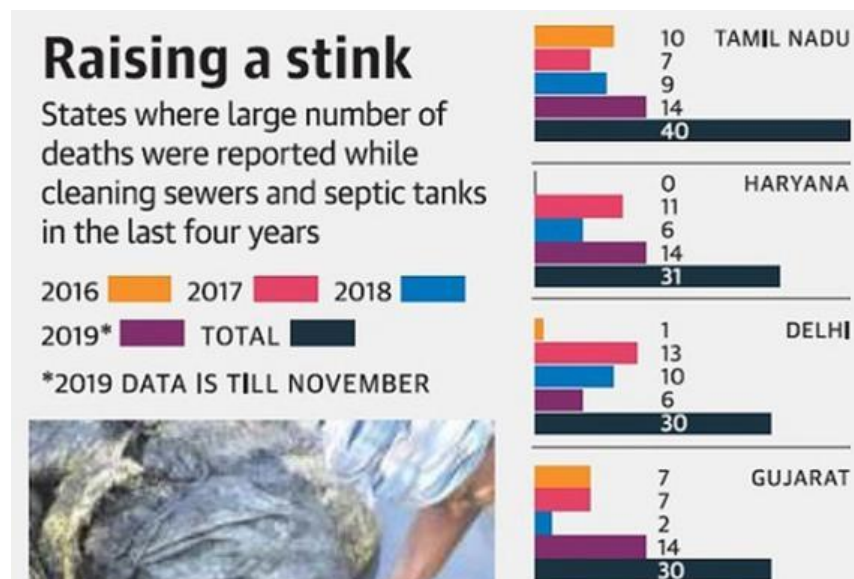
- ❖ Union Minister of Communication and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated "Digital Village Guruwara".
- ❖ During the launch, it was announced that the Government has planned to offer free Wi-Fi services to all villages till March 2020.
- ❖ The free Wi-Fi services are being announced under Bharatnet project.

Bharatnet Project

- ❖ The initiative was launched in 2011.
- ❖ The aim is to increase their speed to around 2 to 20 Mbps in the future to all households in rural areas.
- ❖ The project is a National Optical Fibre Network project.
- ❖ It is seen as a major initiative in order to succeed Digital India.
- ❖ It is being implemented by the Ministry of Telecommunications.

Manual Scavenging Data

- ❖ As per the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, as many as 282 people have died while cleaning sewers and septic tanks in the country between 2016 and November 2019.
- ❖ Among the States, Tamil Nadu has recorded 40 deaths, the highest in number, in these four years.
- ❖ This is followed by Haryana with 31 deaths, and Gujarat and Delhi with 30 deaths each.
- ❖ There has been rapid and unplanned urbanization in the above states.
- ❖ There are about 60,440 manual scavengers identified across the country, in 17 States.
- ❖ More than half of them about 35,472, have been identified from Uttar Pradesh alone.





- ❖ The Parliament had enacted the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 which came in force from December 6, 2013.
- ❖ Sanitation is a State subject and the people for cleaning of sewers and septic tanks are employed by local bodies.
- ❖ Genrobotics is an Indian robotics company headquartered in Trivandrum, Kerala.
- ❖ In 2018, GenRobotics released the Bandicoot robot for cleaning sewers.

Eat Right Mela

- ❖ The Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the 2nd edition of Eat Right Mela in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Union Minister launched 'The PURPLE Book' a handbook on diets for diseases
- ❖ He also launched NetSCoFAN (Network for Scientific Co-operation for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition).
- ❖ Eat Right India movement was launched by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in 2018 under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

New Railway Recruitments

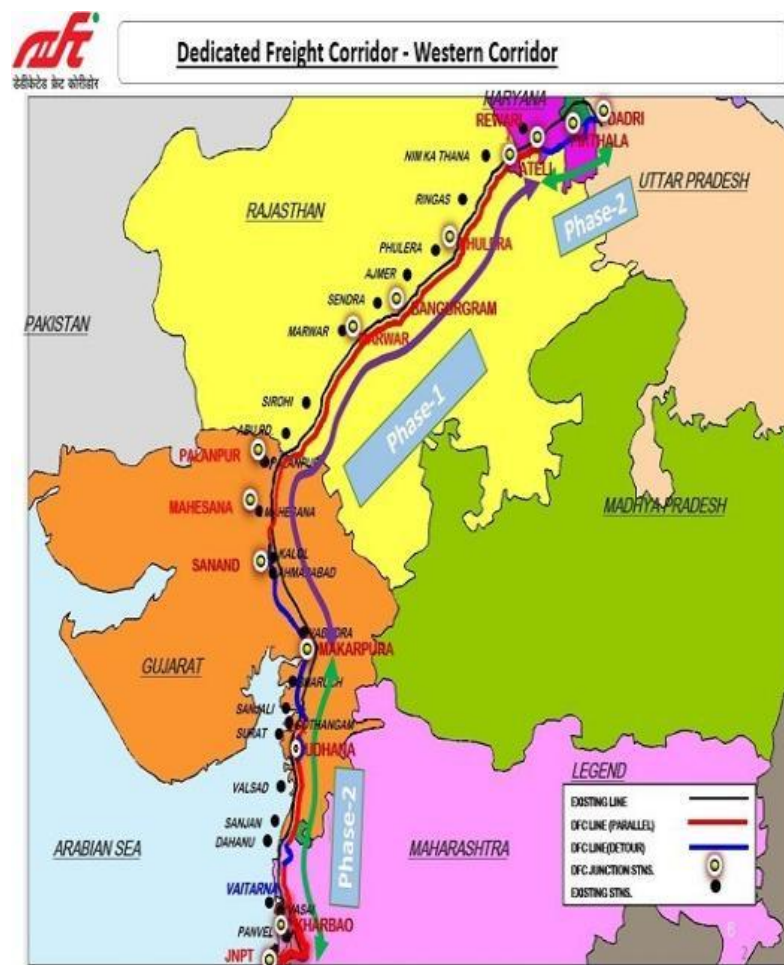
- ❖ The Railway board has now decided that all new recruits in railways will be inducted through UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) Civil Services Exams under five specialities.
- ❖ The Government has merged its eight cadres and departments services into one single entity - the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS).
- ❖ Moreover, the Chairman of Railway Board, who will also be CEO of national transporter, will be an officer of Indian Railway Service and not from any other service.
- ❖ Also, officers from Indian Railways who have experience of 35 yrs will only be posted as Chairman/CEO.

Railway Board Composition

- ❖ With new changes, the Chairman along with 4 members responsible for infrastructure, operations & business development, finance and rolling stock respectively will form Railway Board.
- ❖ The Board will also have some independent non-executive members.

Double Stack Train

- ❖ The trial run of the first freight train was conducted in the western dedicated freight corridor.
- ❖ The train was flagged off by Dedicated Freight Corporation India Limited (DFCIL).
- ❖ The train will be operated in the Rewari-Madar Section in Haryana and Rajasthan states.
- ❖ DFCIL is currently running freight trains at speed of 75 kilometre per hour.
- ❖ The double stack train is currently run only in countries such as China, Brazil, Australia, Canada, USA, Russia, South Africa, Sweden and Norway.
- ❖ The 1,504-km western freight corridor begins at Dadri in Uttar Pradesh and stretches till the country's largest container port — Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, near Mumbai Passing through Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.
- ❖ It is funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency.





Aadhaar registration work

- ❖ CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) under Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) restarted Aadhaar registration work.
- ❖ Aadhaar is now being used as primary identity document.
- ❖ The Common Service Centres (CSC) SPV has signed an agreement with Aadhaar custodian, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), to roll out Aadhaar enrollment, make corrections and changes in profile of unique ID holders within its premises.

First transit-oriented development (TOD)

- ❖ Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for country's first Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) project in New Delhi.
- ❖ Under the TOD project a state-of-the-art infrastructure zone, including national capital's tallest tower, will be built in east Delhi.
- ❖ It is being implemented by Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MHUA).

Standing Committee on Statistics

- ❖ The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has constituted a Standing Committee on Statistics (SCES).
- ❖ The objective of the committee is to improve data of the government.
- ❖ The MoSPI had then announced that the survey will be conducted in 2020-21 after incorporating data quality refinements.

About the committee

- ❖ It is headed by former Chief Statistician Pronab Sen.
- ❖ The committee is set to meet on January 6, 2020.
- ❖ There are around 28 members forming the committee.
- ❖ Further, the committee will subsume in it the four standing committees on
 - Labour force statistics,
 - Industrial statistics,
 - Services sector,
 - Unincorporated sector enterprises.



Chief of Defence Staff

- ❖ On December 31, 2019, Indian Army General Bipin Rawat was appointed as the First Chief of Defence Staff.
- ❖ He will serve as the first CDS till March 2022
- ❖ He recently retired as Chief of Army Staff and was succeeded by General Manoj Mukund.
- ❖ Recently, the Union Cabinet approved the post of Chief of Defence Staff in the rank of four-star general with 3-year tenure.
- ❖ The salaries and perks of the CDS is equivalent to Service chief.
- ❖ The CDS will also head the Department of Military affairs which is to be created with in the Ministry of Defence.
- ❖ He will act as the military advisor to the Defence minister.

About CDS

- ❖ The other countries that hold Chief of Defence Staff in the world includes Italy, France, China, Spain, UK, Canada and Japan.
- ❖ It was first officially suggested in 1999 following the Kargil War through the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee headed by Subramaniam.

Four Star Rank

- ❖ The four-star rank of an officer in India is given to 5 officers.
- ❖ It includes Admiral of Indian Navy, Air Chief Marshal of Indian Air Force, General of Indian Army and Director of Intelligence Bureau.
- ❖ <https://www.tnpscthervupettagam.com/currentaffairs-detail/creation-of-a-chief-of-defence-staff/chief>



INTERNATIONAL

Global cybercrime resolution

- ❖ A UN committee has passed a Russian-led resolution on a global cybercrime treaty.
- ❖ A final General Assembly vote to adopt the resolution will be held in December.
- ❖ The proposed treaty has been framed to serve as an alternative to the US-led Budapest Convention.
- ❖ The resolution was sponsored by China, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Syria.
- ❖ India also votes in favour of Russian led resolution.
- ❖ India maintained its status as a non-member of the Europe-led Budapest Convention.

About Budapest Convention on Cybercrime

- ❖ The Convention on Cybercrime, also known as the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime or the Budapest Convention (2001), is the first international treaty seeking to address Internet and computer crime.
- ❖ It came into effective on 2004.
- ❖ It was drawn up by the Council of Europe in France.
- ❖ It was brought with the active participation of the Council of Europe's observer states Canada, Japan, South Africa and the United States.
- ❖ It is open for ratification even to states that are not members of the Council of Europe.

WCO RCP Meeting

- ❖ India hosted the World Customs Organization (WCO) Asia Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) at Puducherry.
- ❖ The conference is being held for the fourth time in India. Previously it was held in Jaipur and Cochin.
- ❖ The World Customs Organization is an inter-governmental Organization that is involved in setting up principles and standards especially for cross border procedures and customs.
- ❖ The headquarters of WCO is located in Brussels.

G20 Presidency – Saudi Arabia

- ❖ The G20 Presidency has been taken over by Saudi Arabia from Japan.
- ❖ Saudi Arabia has become the 1st Arab nation to assume the G20 presidency.
- ❖ It will also host a global summit in its capital Riyadh in 2020.



Rare Buddha statue at Pakistan

- ❖ The Islamabad Museum has put on display a rare statue of Buddha's head after retrieving it from its reserves.
- ❖ The sculpture, from the period between the 3rd and the 4th century AD, was discovered by the first Italian archaeological mission in Pakistan.
- ❖ The artefact was excavated in the 1960s and it was last displayed in a museum in 1997.





1st International Conference on Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience

- ❖ The 1st International Conference on 'Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience – 2019' was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The first of its kind conference was organized by National Institute of Disaster management (NIDM).
- ❖ It aims to bring together all stakeholders as well as experts to discuss/debate/disseminate practically useful knowledge, experiences, information and innovations for landslides risk reduction and resilience at national and international levels.

2019 Open Doors Report on International Education Exchange

- ❖ It provides a wealth of information and data on the numbers of international students studying in the United States.
- ❖ For the 10th consecutive year, China remained the largest source of international students in the US
- ❖ The number of Indian students in the US has increased by around 3 per cent over the previous year to 202,014.

Visa on Arrival facility

- ❖ The Indian government has extended Visa-on Arrival facility to nationals of United Arab Emirates.
- ❖ Moreover, Pakistan Origin UAE nationals will not be eligible for Visa-on-Arrival Scheme.
- ❖ Japan and South Korea are the other two countries whose citizens are offered visa-on-arrival facility by India.
- ❖ However, India extends e-Visa facility to around Citizens of 170 countries.

Power of Siberia – Russo Chinese Gas Pipeline

- ❖ Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin inaugurated a new energy project called "Power of Siberia" gas pipeline.
- ❖ Under the contract, Russia will deliver 1 trillion cubic meters of natural gas to China over the next 30 years.
- ❖ The pipeline will connect Siberia to China's Yangtze River delta in Shanghai.
- ❖ It is also an emblem of closer energy integration in Eurasia, with Russia and China as the key partners.



Global Migration Film Festival

- ❖ The Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF) was organised in Dhaka.
- ❖ The day-long festival screened 15 films on the theme of migration and its various aspects.
- ❖ The festival was organised by the International Organisation of Migrants (IOM) and Dhaka University Film Society with the support of the European Union.
- ❖ IOM is the UN migration agency established in 1951.
- ❖ It works to ensure orderly and humane management of the migration issue.

INSTEX – Trading with Iran

- ❖ Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have recently joined INSTEX.
- ❖ The 'Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX)' trade mechanism was established by France, Germany and the United Kingdom in January 2019 to allow European entities to maintain trade with Iran.
- ❖ The mechanism has been designed to circumvent U.S. sanctions against trade with Iran by avoiding the use of the dollar.
- ❖ This Paris-based mechanism functions as a clearing house.
- ❖ It allows Iran to continue to sell oil and import other products or services in the exchange.

Pacific Air Chiefs Symposium 2019 (PACS 2019)

- ❖ Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria, the Chief of Air Staff represented India at the PACS 2019.
- ❖ The meet was hosted by the USA at Joint Base Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- ❖ The theme for this year's symposium is 'A Collaborative Approach to Regional Security'.

Extensive and invasive use of biometric data

- ❖ India is fifth worst country after China, Malaysia, Pakistan and United States in terms of extensive and invasive use of biometric data.
- ❖ The new report prepared by Comparitech, a Britain-based tech research firm.
- ❖ India scored 19 and was ranked relatively lower in the list of worst countries for biometric data collection.



- ❖ United Kingdom, Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland and Romania emerged as 5 best countries in terms of collection, storage and use of biometric data.

4 key development projects in Maldives

- ❖ The prime minister of India and the president of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih jointly inaugurated 4 key development projects in Maldives via video conference.
- ❖ The 4 projects are
 - Gifting of Made in India Coast Guard Ship (CGS) Kaamiyaab to Maldives,
 - Launch of RuPay card,
 - Lighting up of Malé using LED (Light Emitting Diodes) lights, and
 - Launch of 3 fish processing plants.

2019 NATO Summit

- ❖ The United Kingdom hosted 2019 NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Summit in London.
- ❖ The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the summit.
- ❖ It was attended by NATO leaders and chaired by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.
- ❖ The 2018 NATO summit was held in Brussels, Belgium.

NATO

- ❖ North Atlantic Alliance, NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries.
- ❖ It was established at the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on 4 April 1949.
- ❖ Montenegro was the 29th country to join NATO.

China introduces new digital courts

- ❖ China has unveiled a new system of digital justice with artificial-intelligence judges, cyber-courts, and verdicts delivered on chat apps.
- ❖ China developed digital courts with virtual judges conducted over social media.
- ❖ The 'mobile court' option on WeChat - China's leading social-media messaging platform - allows users to complete case filings, hearings, and evidence exchange without physically appearing in court.

Global Diplomacy Index 2019

- ❖ The 2019 Global Diplomacy Index was released by Sydney-based Lowy Institute.
- ❖ The index gives the latest statistics and marking about how the world's diplomatic networks are expanding and shrinking.
- ❖ The index ranked 61 countries across the world.
- ❖ China and US are occupied top positions in this index.
- ❖ India was ranked 12th among the 61 countries.



Malaysia records first polio case

- ❖ Malaysia has reported the first case of Polio in 27 years, when a three-month-old Malaysian infant boy was diagnosed with polio.
- ❖ The last polio case in Malaysia occurred in 1992.
- ❖ The country was declared polio-free after 2000.
- ❖ In this recent case, the child was confirmed to be infected with vaccine-derived poliovirus Type 1 (VDPV1).
- ❖ VDPV1 is classified as a Circulating Vaccine-Derived Poliovirus (cVDPV) Type 1.

India & Australia hold third 2+2 dialogue

- ❖ The third India-Australia Secretary-level 2+2 dialogue was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The 2+2 is a format of dialogue where the defense and foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country.
- ❖ The 2+2 dialogue between India and Australia at the Secretary-level was started in the year 2017.
- ❖ Currently, apart from Australia, India has a 2+2 ministerial mechanism with the US and Japan.

17th edition of BioAsia 2020

- ❖ Switzerland will be the country partner at the 17th edition of BioAsia 2020 scheduled to be held from February, 2020 in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ❖ The theme of this edition: “Today for Tomorrow”.
- ❖ In the year 2018, India was Switzerland’s 8th largest trading partner with a total bilateral trade of \$19.7 billion.



Ports of Call under “Coastal Shipping Agreement

- ❖ Mongla and Chattogram (Both in Bangladesh) have been declared as Ports of Call under “Coastal Shipping Agreement” between India & Bangladesh.
- ❖ The Port of Mongla is declared as Port of Call under PIWT&T (Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade) and Chattogram port is not part of PIWT&T.
- ❖ Under the PIWT&T between India and Bangladesh, there are 6 existing Ports of Call in the two countries on Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route.
- ❖ Chattogram is the other name of Chittagong port in Bangladesh.

39th GCC Summit

- ❖ 39th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- ❖ At the end of the summit, the council issued the 'Riyadh Declaration'.
- ❖ The 40th session of the GCC summit will be held in the UAE.

About Gulf Cooperation Council

- ❖ The GCC is a political and economic alliance of countries in the Arabian Peninsula.
- ❖ It was established in 1981 to foster socioeconomic, security, and cultural cooperation.
- ❖ Members of GCC: United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait.

World's New Nation: Bougainville

- ❖ South Pacific Archipelago of Bougainville voted to become independent of Papua New Guinea.
- ❖ Bougainville would become the world's newest and possibly the smallest independent country.
- ❖ The Panguna mine (also known as the Bougainville Copper Mine) holds some of the world's largest reserves of copper.
- ❖ It is the world's largest open-cut copper mine.
- ❖ The most widely spoken language in the country is Halia.
- ❖ The country is yet to prove its recognition in the United Nations.





World's leading Sports Tourism Destination – Abu Dhabi

- ❖ Abu Dhabi has been selected as the World's leading Sports Tourism Destination for seventh time in a row.
- ❖ This time the coveted award was conferred at 26th edition of World Travel Awards (WTA), being held in Muscat, Oman.

UK Elections 2019

- ❖ British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives party has won an outright majority in the House of Commons (Lower House) in the British Parliament (365 out of 650).
- ❖ The labour party under Jeremy Corbyn suffered major losses since the 1935 general election (202 out of 650).
- ❖ A record 15 Indian-origin politicians entered the UK's House of Commons (UK's lower house).
- ❖ It was UK's third general election since 2015 - and the first to be held in December for almost 100 years.

TECH 2019 - UNESCO and MGIEP

- ❖ The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) collaborated with the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace (MGIEP) conducted the TECH 2019.
- ❖ The TECH is to discuss the use of digital technology for learning and teaching.
- ❖ TECH stands for Transforming Education Conference for Humanity.
- ❖ The event also focused on the group of countries called 'Friends of UNESCO MGIEP', which is aiming to promote digital technology in a sustainable.
- ❖ The Vizag declaration on 'Guidelines for Digital Learning' was also focused on this event.

UN Climate Summit concludes

- ❖ The longest climate talks in the history of United Nations that was held in Madrid, Spain, ended.
- ❖ The key issues that was aimed to get resolved the regulation of carbon market.
- ❖ Carbon market puts prices on carbon dioxide emission.

- ❖ The summit failed to reach an agreement on the implementation of Paris Agreement.
- ❖ The United Nations Environment Programme released
 - Emission Gap Report at the summit
 - It warns that the Earth's average temperature may rise by 3.2 degrees Celsius by 2100.
 - The report of Global Carbon Project (GCP)
 - GCP established in 2001 seeks to quantify global carbon emissions and their causes.
- ❖ The Presidency of the summit, Chile (though summit was held at Madrid, Spain), launched the Climate Ambition Alliance (CAA).
 - The CAA will focus on Nationally Determined Contributions in order to achieve Net Zero by 2050.



Global Gender Gap Index 2020

- ❖ India has been ranked 112th among 153 countries in the annual Global Gender Gap Index for 2020.
- ❖ It is published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- ❖ First gender gap index was published in 2006.
- ❖ Over the Index, the highest possible score is 1 (equality) and the lowest possible score is 0 (inequality).

Key Findings

- ❖ Iceland (closed almost 88%) has been the frontrunner on the Global Gender Gap Index for 11 years in a row.
- ❖ Yemen is ranked the worst (153rd).

- ❖ The largest gender disparity is in political empowerment.
- ❖ India has slipped to the 112th spot from its 108th position in the last edition.
- ❖ Among the 153 countries studied, India is the only country where the economic gender gap (0.354) is larger than the political gender gap (0.411).
- ❖ India's Performance on Four Indicators:
 - Economic Participation and Opportunity - 149th place
 - Educational Attainment - 112th place
 - Health and Survival - 150th place
 - Political Empowerment – 18th place.

**GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX
RANKINGS 2020**

Rank	Country	Score
1	Iceland	0.877
2	Norway	0.842
3	Finland	0.832
4	Sweden	0.820
5	Nicaragua	0.804
6	New Zealand	0.799
7	Ireland	0.798
8	Spain	0.795
9	Rwanda	0.791
10	Germany	0.787
21	United Kingdom	0.767
50	Bangladesh	0.726
53	United States	0.724
81	Russian Federation	0.706
92	Brazil	0.691
101	Nepal	0.680
102	Sri Lanka	0.680
106	China	0.676
112	India	0.668
121	Japan	0.652
151	Pakistan	0.564
153	Yemen	0.494

Global Refugee Forum

- ❖ The first ever Global Refugee Forum is being held in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ It is being jointly hosted by United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) along with Government of Switzerland.
- ❖ Global Refugee Forum is a part of UNHCR and is guided by the Global Compact on Refugees.
- ❖ UNHCR was created in 1950, headquartered at Geneva, Switzerland.

Donald Trump impeached by US House

- ❖ Donald Trump became the third President to be impeached by the US House.
- ❖ He was accused of enlisting foreign government to investigate political rival before 2020 election.
- ❖ It is necessary to prove the charges at the senate as well, where a voting process with two-third majority is essential for conviction.
- ❖ So far only two American presidents (Bill Clinton & Andrew Johnson) have been impeached. But they have been acquitted by the Senate.

Common Currency – ‘CFA franc’ to ‘Eco’

- ❖ The eight West African nations have agreed to change the name of their common currency from ‘CFA franc’ to ‘Eco’.
- ❖ CFA franc was their currency so far.
- ❖ The 8 West African countries namely - Ivory Coast, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Guinea-Bissau currently use CFA Franc as their currency.



Ebola emerges again in Congo

- ❖ Health officials in eastern Congo have documented the first relapse of the current Ebola epidemic.
- ❖ Ebola virus disease, formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is transmitted to people from wild animals.
- ❖ Fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family are natural Ebola virus hosts.



Manuel Marrero Cruz - Cuba's first PM

- ❖ Manuel Marrero Cruz has been appointed as the country's first prime minister by the Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel in more than four decades (40 years).
- ❖ The post of prime minister was scrapped in 1976 by the then-revolutionary leader and Cuba's last prime minister Fidel Castro.
- ❖ The Prime Minister's post was reinstated under the rules of this newly passed constitution on February 2019 in Cuba.

United States – Mexico - Canada Agreement

- ❖ The House of Representatives of the USA has passed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement — the replacement for NAFTA, or the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement.
- ❖ The new deal includes stronger labor and environmental provisions.
- ❖ It is basically NAFTA 2.0.
- ❖ NAFTA is the initialism for the North American Free Trade Agreement, an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
- ❖ NAFTA was finalized under Bill Clinton's presidency with effective from 1994.

Military Space Force

- ❖ US President Donald Trump officially launched US military 'Space Force' under the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act at an army base near Washington.
- ❖ Space Force would become the sixth branch of the armed forces.
- ❖ The Space Force would be part of the Department of the Air Force.

About Space Force

- ❖ Space is a "war-fighting domain" and global powers like Russia and China are already treating it as such.
- ❖ The main goal of the Space Force is to secure and extend American dominance of the space domain.

Rohingya Crisis

- ❖ Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi is defending Myanmar in ICJ against accusations of genocide.
- ❖ It was a case brought by the country of Gambia at the United Nations' International Court of Justice.
- ❖ Rohingya Muslims represent the largest percentage of Muslims in Myanmar, with the majority living in Rakhine state.



Global Tobacco use trends

- ❖ The World Health Organization released its report on Global Tobacco use trends.
- ❖ According to the report, number of males using tobacco has declined globally for the first time.
- ❖ Of all the regions of the world, South East Asian region has the highest use of tobacco.
- ❖ According to the report, India is off track to achieve the target of 30% reduction by 2025 as compared to 2010 level.
- ❖ The only region on track to achieve the target is the Americas.

European Green Deal

- ❖ The EU has promised to bring a law, binding on all member countries, to ensure it becomes “climate neutral” by 2050.
- ❖ It was on the side-lines of recently concluded annual Madrid Climate talks.
- ❖ EU with 28 member countries are together the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world after China and the United States.
- ❖ The EU is now the first major emitter to agree to the 2050 climate neutrality target.
- ❖ The EU also happens to be only one among major emitters to retain the 1990 baseline for emission cuts, originally mandated under the Kyoto Protocol for all developed countries.
- ❖ Most other countries have shifted their baselines to 2005 or even later under the 2015 Paris Agreement.
- ❖ The Kyoto Protocol required the rich and developed countries to provide finance and technology to the developing countries to help them fight climate change.

Pakistan - polio markers to Pakistan

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

Polio markers

- ❖ The polio markers are used to mark the fingers of the children after they are vaccinated with vaccines that are approved by the WHO.



About Polio

- ❖ The disease is caused by Poliovirus.
- ❖ In 1995, India launched Global Polio Eradication initiative of WHO that aims at 100% coverage.
- ❖ With the programme successfully implemented, India has completely eradicated Polio.
- ❖ The last case of Polio was reported in 2011 in India.
- ❖ There are three countries in the world where Polio is still endemic.
- ❖ It includes Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan.

Hypersonic weapons possession

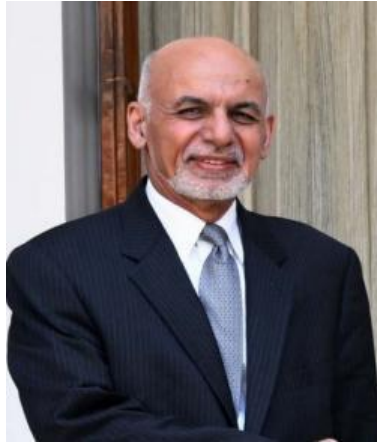
- ❖ Russia is the only country in the world that has hypersonic weapons.
- ❖ The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, revealed the new zircon missile at a meeting of senior military officials in Moscow.
- ❖ The Zircon missile, can fly from land to land in 10 times faster than the speed of sound, has a range of more than 2,000 kilometres (1,250 miles).
- ❖ It also capable to carry a nuclear or conventional warhead.
- ❖ Recently China has been testing its hypersonic aircraft.

17th India - EU Summit 2020

- ❖ The 17th India-EU summit will be held at Brussels, Belgium.
- ❖ It is aimed at expanding strategic partnerships with Europe.
- ❖ The summit will focus on areas such as Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA), Europol, counter-terrorism, Euroatom, climate change, etc.
- ❖ Previously the 13th India-EU Summit in Brussels was held in the year 2016.

Afghan presidential election

- ❖ Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani appeared to have won a second term as per the preliminary election result.
- ❖ He defeated the runner up Abdullah Abdullah.
- ❖ The current elections are the fourth Presidential poll since the Taliban's fall in 2001.



19th Joint commission meeting 2019

- ❖ External Affairs Minister Jaishankar co-chaired the 19th Joint Commission Meeting 2019 in Tehran, Iran.
- ❖ Both sides also agreed to celebrate their 70th anniversary of bilateral treaty of friendship in 2020.

UN's New international treaty on cyber crime

- ❖ The United Nations approved a new resolution in order to draft an international treaty to combat cybercrime.
- ❖ The resolution was drafted by Russia and approved by 193 member countries.
- ❖ The Budapest Convention was the first ever treaty on cyber-crime that addressed internet and computer crimes.
- ❖ It was drawn by Council of Europe.
- ❖ At present, it is the only treaty of cyber-crime under the United Nations.
- ❖ Countries like India and Brazil have not adopted the convention till now.

UN budget hike

- ❖ The United Nations has adopted 3.07 billion USD budget on December 27, 2019.
- ❖ The organization for the first time included investigation of war crimes in Myanmar and Syria in its fund allocation.
- ❖ The budget proposal for the year 2020 is slightly greater than that of 2019.
- ❖ In 2019, UN budget was 2.9 billion USD.
- ❖ It is to be noted that United Nations faced severe Financial crisis in October 2019.



ECONOMY

IRCTC revenue – doubled

- ❖ The revenue of the IRCTC has almost doubled.
- ❖ This is the first time IRCTC is releasing its revenue after it entered the stock market in October, 14, 2019.
- ❖ IRCTC is an exclusive e-ticketing partner of the Indian Railways.
- ❖ It is a subsidiary of the Indian Railways.
- ❖ It is one of the Miniratna companies of India.

BHIM - Singapore FinTech Festival 2019

- ❖ A global pilot demo of BHIM UPI QR-based payments was highlighted at the Singapore FinTech Festival 2019.
- ❖ This is the first time that BHIM app has gone international.
- ❖ This QR code-based system would allow anyone with a BHIM app to scan the Singapore Quick Response Code (SGQR) at NETS terminals in Singapore for payments.
- ❖ The project is being jointly developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and the Network for Electronic Transfers (NETS) of Singapore.

Panel on Code for Responsible Lending

- ❖ H R Khan, former deputy governor of RBI has been appointed as first chairman of steering committee panel on Code for Responsible Lending (CRL) in Micro-Credit.
- ❖ CRL is a self-regulatory step for micro-credit industry making diverse entities such as banks, Non-Banking Financial Company – Micro Finance Institution and NBFCs, adhere to standards of customer protection.

TRACE Matrix

- ❖ TRACE International, the world's leading anti-bribery standard setting organization, has released the 2019 edition of Trace Bribery Risk Matrix (TRACE Matrix).



- ❖ TRACE Matrix is a global business bribery risk assessment tool that measures business bribery risk in 200 countries, territories, and autonomous and semi-autonomous regions.
- ❖ With a total risk score of 48, India is ranked higher and has been placed in a better position than neighbouring China whose score is 59.
- ❖ Lowest Bribery Risk: New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland
- ❖ Highest Bribery Risk: Somalia, South Sudan, North Korea, Yemen and Venezuela

Bharat Bond Exchange Traded Fund

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its approval for creation and launch of Bharat Bond Exchange Traded Fund (ETF).
- ❖ This would be the first corporate Bond ETF in the country.
- ❖ This will create an additional source of funding for Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), Central Public Financial Institutions (CPFIs) and other Government organizations.

15th Finance Commissions Report for 2020/21

- ❖ The Finance Commission headed by N K Singh submitted its report for the financial year 2020-21 to President Ram Nath Kovind.
- ❖ It was constituted by the President of India under Article 280 of the Constitution on November 27, 2017.
- ❖ It was tasked with making recommendations for a period of five years from April 2020 to March 2025.
- ❖ The term of the commission was originally set to end in October 2019, but was extended by one month to November 30.

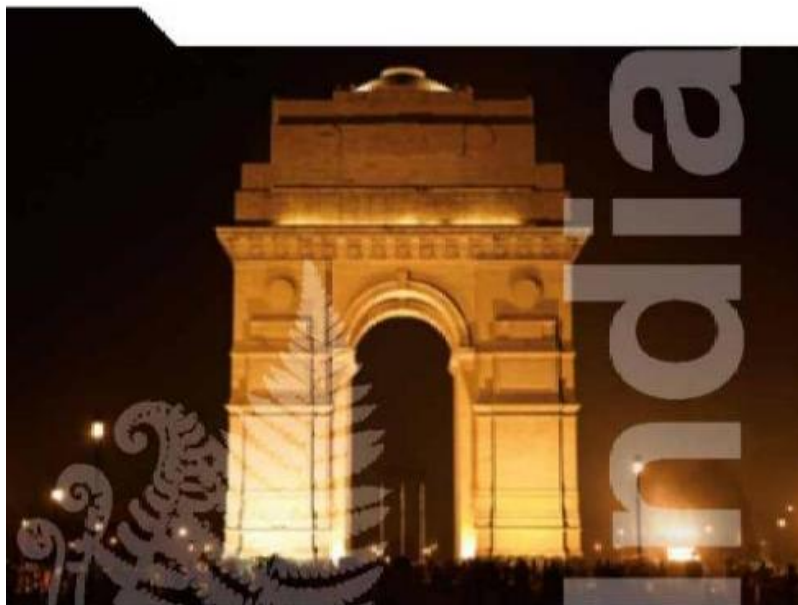
Economy survey of India - OECD

- ❖ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is the Paris-based inter-governmental economic organisation.
- ❖ The 2019 edition of OECD Economic Surveys: India report has projected India's gross domestic product (GDP) to grow at 5.8 percent for the financial year 2019-20.
- ❖ For 2020, the survey projects India's GDP growth to be 6.2 percent and 6.4 percent in 2021.

- ❖ Report has said that creation of quality jobs, underemployment and income inequality remain challenges in India.
- ❖ Higher public spending on health and education and to adhere to the set target on public debt to GDP (gross domestic product).
- ❖ The survey recommends the creation of an independent fiscal council to govern the transparency of off-budget transactions and contingent liabilities.



OECD Economic Surveys **India**



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- Addressing social challenges
- Seizing opportunities from enhanced participation in the global economy
- Providing better housing for all
- Greening growth to improve well being and limit climate change



NIIF and Canada pension fund

- ❖ Canada's largest pension fund Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) has agreed to invest about \$600 million in National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) through the NIIF Master Fund.

- ❖ The government had set up the NIIF in 2015 with 40000 crore rupees as an investment vehicle for funding commercially viable both Greenfield and Brownfield.
- ❖ It is India's first sovereign wealth fund.
- ❖ NIIF funds are registered as Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Guidelines for Licencing of Small Finance Banks

- ❖ Reserve Bank of India has released final Guidelines for 'on tap' Licencing for Small Finance Banks (SFBs).
- ❖ RBI had issued in-principle approval to ten applicants for SFB in 2015.
- ❖ An "on-tap" facility would mean the RBI will accept applications and grant licences for banks throughout the year.

Guidelines

- ❖ Capital requirement: The minimum paid-up voting equity capital / net worth requirement shall be ₹ 200 crores.
- ❖ Scheduled bank status to SFBs: SFBs will be given scheduled bank status immediately upon commencement of operations.
- ❖ Payments Banks conversion to SFBs: The payment banks can apply for conversion into SFB after 5 years of operations.

	PAYMENTS BANKS	SMALL BANKS
WHO CAN PROMOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prepaid card issuers, telecom companies, NBFCs, business correspondents, supermarket chains, corporates, realty sector co-ops & PSUs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individuals/professionals with 10 years experience in finance, NBFCs, microfinance cos, local area banks
WHAT THEY MUST DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have a minimum capital of Rs 100cr ➤ Maintain 75% of deposits in govt bonds ➤ Maintain 25% of deposits in other banks ➤ Have at least 26% investment by Indians ➤ Get listed if net worth crosses Rs 500cr ➤ Have 25% of branches in unbanked areas ➤ Be fully networked and technology driven ➤ Have Rs 1 lakh cap for deposits in one a/c 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have a minimum capital of Rs 200cr ➤ Extend 75% of loans to priority sector ➤ Have 25% of branches in unbanked areas ➤ Maintain reserve requirements ➤ Cap loans to individuals and groups at 10% and 15% of net worth ➤ Have a business correspondent network
WHAT THEY CAN DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Offer internet banking ➤ Sell mutual funds, insurance, pensions ➤ Offer bill payment service for customers ➤ Have ATMs and business correspondents (BC) ➤ Can function as BC of another bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sell forex to customers ➤ Sell mutual funds, insurance, pensions ➤ Can convert into a full-fledged bank ➤ Expand across the country
WHAT THEY CAN'T DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Offer credit cards ➤ Extend loans ➤ Handle cross-border remittances ➤ Accept NRI Deposits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Extend large loans ➤ Float subsidiaries ➤ Cannot deal in sophisticated financial products

B2C E-commerce Index 2019

- ❖ India has ranked 73rd out of 152 countries in a business-to-consumer E-commerce index.
- ❖ This index is released by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- ❖ It measures an economy's preparedness to support online shopping.
- ❖ This E-commerce Index 2019 has been topped by the Netherlands for the second consecutive year.
- ❖ Switzerland is ranked 2nd on the list, followed by Singapore, Finland, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, Ireland, Germany and Australia.
- ❖ European nations hold 8 of the top 10 spots.



National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)

- ❖ NFRA issued its first audit report of IL&FS Financial Services Limited for the year 2017-18.
- ❖ It is the first report submitted by the authority since its constitution in October 2018.
- ❖ Prior to NFRA, the audit of the IL and FS financial services were conducted by Deloitte Haskins and Sells (DHS).

About NFRA

- ❖ NFRA is a body for the establishment and enforcement of accounting and auditing standards and oversight of the work of auditors.
- ❖ It was established in 2018 under the Companies act, 2013.
- ❖ Due to the establishment of NFRA, India is now eligible for membership of International Forum of Independent Audit Regulators.



India gets Loan from Germany

- ❖ India has secured a US \$277 million (about Rs.1,900 crore) loan from Germany.
- ❖ India will use loan to establish an energy-efficient housing programme in the country.
- ❖ The programme shall be part of Indo-German Development Co-operation, guided by 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG).
- ❖ The loan agreement was signed between State Bank of India (SBI) and Germany's KfW Development Bank.

NEFT – 24x7 basis

- ❖ RBI has extended the availability of National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) round-the-clock on all the seven days of the week - 24x7 basis to facilitate beyond the banking hour fund transfer.
- ❖ NEFT is an electronic funds transfer system maintained by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ❖ The setup was established and maintained by Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT).
- ❖ NEFT enables bank customers to transfer funds between any two NEFT enabled bank accounts on a one-to-one basis via electronic messages.

7th Economic Census

- ❖ The Seventh Economic Census (EC) is being conducted nationwide through Common Service Centres (CSC) in 2019.
- ❖ 7th EC is being conducted by Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- ❖ It is expected to be completed by March 2020.
- ❖ This is the first time the census is being conducted digitally.

Indian Economic Census

- ❖ Economic Census is the complete count of all economic establishment located within the geographical boundary of the country.
- ❖ The Indian Economic Census was first launched in 1977.
- ❖ So far 6 censuses have been conducted in the years 1977, 1980, 1990, 1998, 2005, 2013.
- ❖ The economic census 1980 and 1990 were integrated with population census.

100 years of ASSOCHAM

- ❖ The PM addressed the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The event was organized to commemorate 100 years of ASSOCHAM under the theme of “New India Aspiring for 5 trillion USD”
- ❖ The ASSOCHAM is the apex trade association of India established in 1921.
- ❖ The organization is located in Kolkata, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad.

NEW ORDER		
Ranking	Country	GDP '18 (\$ trillion)
1	US	20.5
2	China	13.6
3	Japan	5.0
4	Germany	4.0
5	UK	2.8
6	France	2.8
7	India	2.7
8	Italy	2.1
9	Brazil	1.9
10	Canada	1.7
11	Russia	1.7
12	S Korea	1.6
13	Australia	1.4
14	Spain	1.4

Source: World Bank

HDFC Bank

- ❖ HDFC Bank has become India's third listed entity to enter a list of companies with market cap of \$100 billion (Rs 7 lakh crore) and above.
- ❖ The other two companies that have achieved the \$100 billion m-cap milestone are Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), that has a market cap of \$140.74 billion (Rs 10 lakh crores) and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) with \$114.60 billion market cap (Rs 8 lakh crores).

Vegetables Export

- ❖ First trial shipment of fresh vegetables sourced from Varanasi region was flagged off from Mubmai to Dubai via sea route.



- ❖ The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) aims to promote exports from India's agriculture produce rich regions.

Operation Twist

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will simultaneously buy (government bonds maturing in 2029) and sale (short-term bonds maturing in 2020) government securities worth ₹10,000 crore each under its open market operations.
- ❖ It is a move aimed at managing the yields and to make long term borrowing cheaper.
- ❖ As the central bank buys long term securities, the rise in demand for them leads to lower long-term yields.
- ❖ Eventually, it is long term interest rates that matter for investment and growth in the economy.
- ❖ This way the yield curve becomes “twisted” as short-term rates are pushed up and long-term rates are pushed down.
- ❖ The central banks opt for this measure when despite lowering interest rates, the long-term interest rates remain high.
- ❖ Open Market Operations (OMO) is one of the quantitative (to regulate or control the total volume of money) monetary policy tools which is employed by the central bank of a country to control the money supply in the economy.
- ❖ OMOs are conducted by the RBI by way of sale or purchase of government securities (g-secs) to adjust money supply conditions.

About OT

- ❖ This policy measure of buying long-term bonds and selling short-term ones is known as Operation Twist (OT).
- ❖ The US has announced OT twice, the first time in 1961 during John F Kennedy and the second in 2011 during Obama.
- ❖ Japan also announced its own version of OT called as Qualitative and Quantitative Easing program (QQE) in 2013.

New PPI for digital transactions

- ❖ In order to boost small value digital transactions, the RBI, has launched a semi-closed prepaid payment instrument (PPI) for the transaction of goods and services up to a limit of Rs 10,000.
- ❖ This direction has made under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.



Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2018 - 19

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has released the report on “Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2018 - 19”.
- ❖ It records the performance of the banking sector, including co-operative banks, and non-banking financial institutions during 2018 - 19 & 2019 - 20 till now.
- ❖ According to the report, the highest number of fraud cases have been reported in public sector banks during the financial year 2018 - 19.

Aadhar for PMVVY

- ❖ The Central government has made Aadhaar (the unique 12-digit biometric identity number) mandatory for subscribers of Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY).
- ❖ It is a pension scheme for senior citizens aged 60 or above.
- ❖ It is being implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).
- ❖ PMVVY was announced in Union Budgets of 2017-18 and 2018-19, and in Budget.

NTPC in Solar Energy

- ❖ The State-owned power giant NTPC is planning to add 10 GW (gigawatt) of solar energy generation capacity by 2022.
- ❖ It assumes significance in view of country's ambitious target of having 175GW of clean energy by 2022.
- ❖ It will be funded mainly by green bonds.
- ❖ Green Bonds are offered for pure clean energy projects.

Financial Stability Report

- ❖ The RBI released Financial Stability Report.
- ❖ The report is a biennial report.
- ❖ The report said that the non-performing asset ratio of banks is increasing.
- ❖ It is expected to increase to 9.9% by September 2020 from 9.3% in September 2019.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Hayabusa2 - JAXA

- ❖ Japan's unmanned Hayabusa2 Space Probe is on its way back to earth after reaching out ryugu asteroid mission (250 million km).
- ❖ Hayabusa2 is scheduled to return to Earth by the end of 2020
- ❖ If the return trip is completed successfully, then it will be the first-time samples from beneath an asteroid's surface have been brought back to Earth.
- ❖ Asteroids are believed to have formed at the dawn of the solar system.
- ❖ The asteroid Ryugu may contain organic matter that may have contributed to life on Earth.

Paper Based Sensor

- ❖ The Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahat have developed a paper-based sensor to instantaneously check freshness of milk.
- ❖ The research has also published in the journal of Biosensors, and Bioelectronics which was done by a team led by Pranjal Chandra.
- ❖ The quality and freshness of milk are decided by the invasion and presence of microbes in the milk.

Navy version BrahMos missile test fire

- ❖ Indian Navy test-fired the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, from the Navy's stealth destroyer INS Kochi.
- ❖ The supersonic missile successfully hit a decommissioned target ship in Arabian Sea.
- ❖ Earlier the BrahMos missile has been successfully test fired twice from INS Kolkata, (one in June 2014 and February 2015) and one successful test firing has been from INS Kochi in November 2015.
- ❖ BrahMos is the world's fastest cruise missile and has a strike-range of over 290 km.

Jupiter's moon Europa

- ❖ For the first time, scientists of NASA have discovered the presence of water vapor above the surface on Europa, the Jupiter's icy moon.

- ❖ The water vapor was measured through one of the world's biggest telescopes in Hawaii.
- ❖ It was first reached by one of the Voyager missions in 1979.
- ❖ Jupiter has 79 known moons.
- ❖ Jupiter is the fifth planet from the Sun and the largest in the Solar System.

Prithivi II

- ❖ India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-II missile.
- ❖ It was done at night as part of a user trial by Indian Army.
- ❖ These were second night trials of Prithvi-II missile.
- ❖ These tests were conducted from a mobile launcher at Chandipur Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, in Balasore district of Odisha.

About Prithvi 2 missile

- ❖ It is surface-to-surface tactical missile with a strike range of 350 km.
- ❖ It is a single-stage liquid-fuelled missile.
- ❖ It is India's first missile indigenously developed by DRDO under prestigious Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).
- ❖ It is capable of carrying 500 to 1,000 kg of warheads, both conventional as well as nuclear.
- ❖ It is deployed by India's Strategic Forces Command.
- ❖ It was inducted into the Indian defence forces in 2003.

6th International Symposium on Lighting (iSoL)

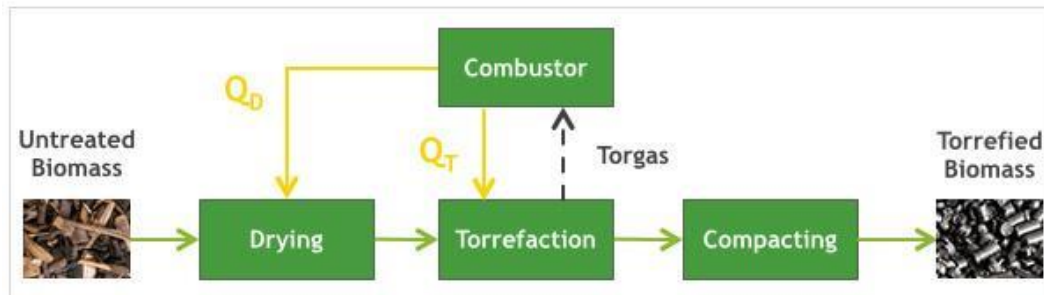
- ❖ The International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT), under the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, organized International Symposium on lighting (iSoL).
- ❖ It provides a common platform to professionals related directly or indirectly to the automotive lighting fraternity from all around the globe.
- ❖ The International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) is located at Manesar (Haryana).
- ❖ It is a leading world class automotive testing, certification and R&D service provider.

- ❖ It functions under the aegis of NATRiP (National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project), Government of India.

Swedish Torrefaction Technology

- ❖ To overcome decline in air quality in Delhi issue, India is testing Swedish technology — torrefaction that can convert rice stubble into 'bio-coal'.
- ❖ The government has funded a pilot project at the National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute in Mohali (Punjab) with a Swedish company to evaluate the feasibility of the technology.
- ❖ Torrefaction is a thermal process to convert biomass (at 250 degrees celsius - 350 degrees celsius) into a coal-like material, which has better fuel characteristics than the original biomass.
- ❖ Advantages - Torrefied biomass is more brittle, and less energy-intensive. It will reduce CO₂ emissions by 95%.
- ❖ It has lower sulfur and ash content (compared with coal), etc.

BASIC TORREFACTION PRINCIPLE



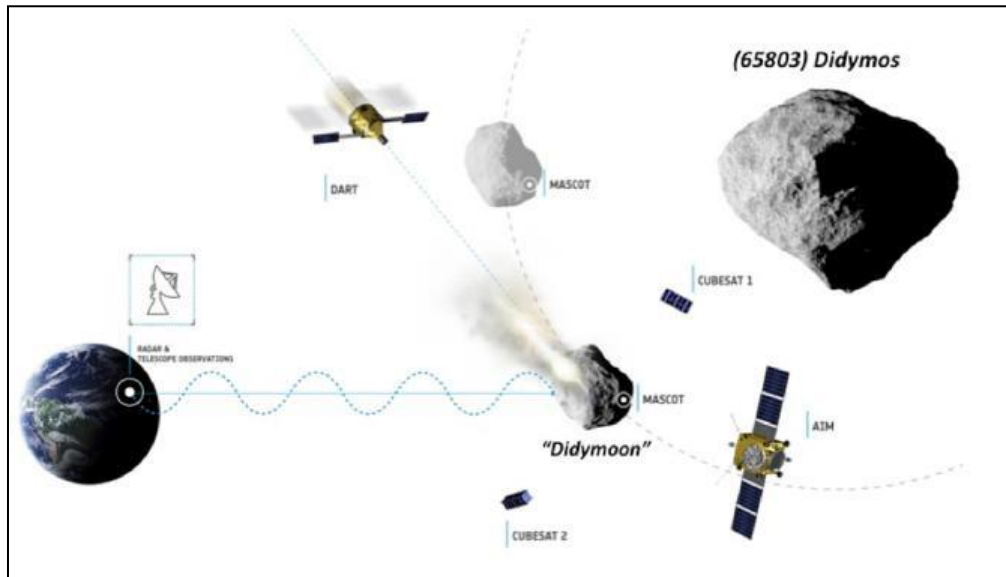
Hera mission

- ❖ The European Space Agency (ESA) has approved the budget of Hera, the European component of the mission to slam a spacecraft into an asteroid.
- ❖ Due to launch in 2024, Hera would travel to a binary asteroid system – the Didymos pair of near-Earth asteroids.

About Hera Mission & DART

- ❖ It is the first spacecraft to explore a binary asteroid.
- ❖ The mission will launch to asteroid 65803 Didymos, a binary pair made up of one large body and a smaller object that orbits around it, in 2023. Aptly nicknamed Didymoon.
- ❖ However, Hera mission won't be the first to reach Didymos.

- ❖ NASA plans to launch the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) between 2020 and 2021, which will target Didymos as part of its planetary defence programme.
- ❖ DART is a planetary defense-driven test of one of the technologies for preventing the Earth impact of a hazardous asteroid: the kinetic impactor.
- ❖ DART's primary objective is to demonstrate a kinetic impact on a small asteroid.
- ❖ DART and Hera are conceived together as part of the international 'Asteroid Impact Deflection Assessment' experiment.



Antibiotic Resistance

- ❖ According to a new study by researchers at the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), antibiotic prescription rate high in private sector.
- ❖ The study is the first ever estimate of outpatient antibiotic prescription rates and patterns in the private sector.
- ❖ The private sector clocked high levels of antibiotic prescription rates (412 per 1,000 persons per year).
- ❖ The highest rate was seen among children aged 0–4 years (636 per 1,000 persons) and the lowest in the age group 10–19 years (280 per 1,000 persons).

DISEASE	ANTIBIOTIC PRESCRIPTIONS (In per cent)
Acute upper respiratory infections	20.4
Acute lower respiratory infection	12.8
Disorders of urinary system	6.0
Cough	4.7
Acute nasopharyngitis	4.6
Acute pharyngitis	3.9
Acute bronchitis	3.4
Injury, poisoning and others	3.9
Cutaneous abscess	2.3
Asthma	2.2

Source: Outpatient prescription rate and pattern in the private sector in India: Evidence from medical audit data

CSIR Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Test gets US FDA certification

- ❖ The CSIR-IICT, Hyderabad announced that the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) cleared the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Test facility at the centre.
- ❖ The inspection was conducted with regard to Current Good Manufacturing Practices and was certified “No Action Initiated”.

About NMR

- ❖ Nuclear Magnetic Resonance is an analytical technique to determine the purity of a sample and its molecular structure.
- ❖ The technique is used to observe the local magnetic fields around atomic nuclei.
- ❖ Biochemists use NMR technique to identify proteins and other complex molecules.

New Head on Generation technology on Indian Railways

- ❖ The Indian Railways has introduced New Head on Generation technology.
- ❖ It is an environment friendly and energy efficient solution in passenger trains to address noise and air pollution.

- ❖ The Railways has developed and improvised converter that are to be fitted in electric locomotives.
- ❖ These converters can replace diesel generators as well.
- ❖ The converters make the locomotives suitable to run-on head-on generation technology.
- ❖ Huge noise making fume emitting power generators will be replaced by silent generators.
- ❖ Germany transferred this technology to the Indian Coach Factories.

RISAT-2BR1 launch

- ❖ India's 50th Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) - C48 has successfully launched on 12 December, 2019.
- ❖ It carried RISAT-2BR1 along with nine commercial satellites from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota.
- ❖ This successful mission is the 75th launch vehicle mission from SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota.
- ❖ It is a radar imaging earth observation satellite.
- ❖ It provides services in the field of agriculture, forestry and disaster management.
- ❖ Its mission life is 5 years.
- ❖ The nine customer satellites were from Israel, Italy, Japan and the USA.
- ❖ These satellites were launched under a commercial arrangement with New Space India Limited (NSIL).





Education - Dell technologies partnership with UNESCO

- ❖ Dell technologies announced a partnership with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) MGIEP (Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace) to improve educational quality in classrooms.
- ❖ It will be done by using ICT tools and enabling teachers to adopt new technologies as mentioned under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SGD 4-Education).
- ❖ The announcement regarding this was made during the Transforming Education Conference for Humanity (TECH 2019) held in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

Global High-Resolution Atmospheric Forecasting System (GRAF)

- ❖ International technology company IBM is planning to develop this high-resolution weather forecast model.
- ❖ It will also rely on user-generated data to improve the accuracy of forecasts available in India.
- ❖ IBM GRAF, as the forecast system is called, can generate forecasts at a resolution of 3 kilometres.

Wind flow pattern on Mars - NASA

- ❖ The scientists of NASA have mapped global wind circulation patterns in the upper atmosphere of Mars (red planet).
- ❖ The study was published in the journal Science.
- ❖ It was based on the data collected by MAVEN, two days per month from 2016 to 2018.
- ❖ The researchers believe the wind waves on Mars, called “orthographic waves,” lasted so long with no changes.

Brahmos missile test fire

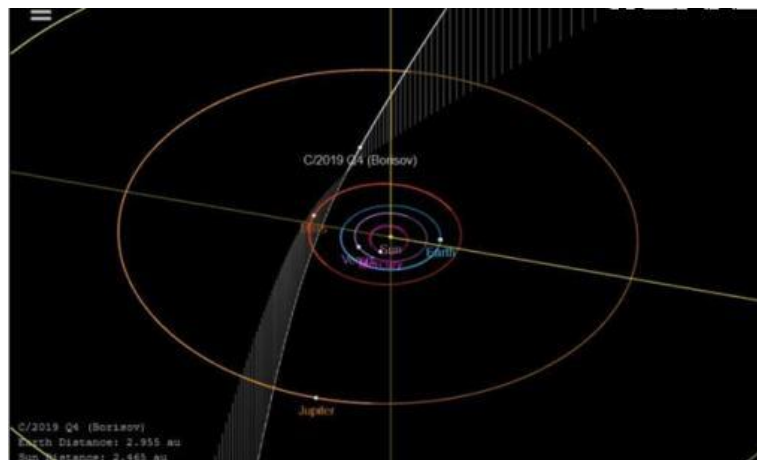
- ❖ The DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organization) test fired the supersonic Cruise missile Brahmos successfully from Odisha’s Chandipur.
- ❖ The medium range missile is capable of being launched from warships, submarines, land or fighter jets.
- ❖ The missile is operational with Indian Navy, Army and Air Force.
- ❖ Philippines confirmed the signing contract with India for medium range Brahmos Cruise Missiles.

Brahmos Missile

- ❖ Brahmos is a joint venture between DRDO of India and NPOM of Russia.
- ❖ After India entered into MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime) India extended the range of BRAHMOS missile to 600 km.
- ❖ It is also one of the fastest cruise missiles that operates at the speed of 2.8 Mach, which is three times the speed of sound.

2I/Borisov - An Interstellar Object

- ❖ The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has officially declared a recently spotted comet as an interstellar object.
- ❖ The object, provisionally called Comet C/2019, is now dubbed 2I/Borisov.
- ❖ The comet is the second interstellar object scientists have identified.
- ❖ The first was 1I/'Oumuamua, which was first spotted in October 2017.
- ❖ 2I/Borisov has a more hyperbolic path than any other comet.
- ❖ The name Borisov honours its discoverer, astronomer Gennady Borisov from Crimea.



world's 1st liquid hydrogen transport ship

- ❖ Japanese public multinational corporation has launched the world's 1st ocean-going liquid hydrogen carrier ship named as 'Suiso Frontier'.
- ❖ It is designed to carry liquid hydrogen at minus 253 ° C produced in south coast of Australia to unload in Kobe, Japan.
- ❖ Hydrogen can be produced in different ways, including using water and electricity, and then stored and shipped and re-used to generate power.



First biosimilar medicine to treat Breast Cancer

- ❖ World Health Organization launched its first biosimilar medicine “Trastuzumab” to treat breast cancer.
- ❖ It was included in the WHO Essential Medicines List in 2015.
- ❖ The WHO intends to make the expensive, life-saving treatment affordable for women all over the world.


“Bhibha” and “Santamasa”

- ❖ International Astronomical Union (IAU) named a white yellow star in Sextans Constellation as “Bhibha” and its planet as “Santamasa”.
- ❖ The star has been named in honour of a pioneering Indian woman scientist Bibha Choudhury, who discovered subatomic particle, pi-meson.
- ❖ Bhibha is an ageing star that is 6.2 billion years old and Santamsa is its only planet.
- ❖ The mass of the planet is expected to be 1.5 times as that of Jupiter and is very hot.
- ❖ Santamasa completed its revolution around its star in just about 2.1375 days.
- ❖ Significantly, the 2019 nobel prize in Physics was awarded to the discovery of an exoplanet.

INDIA

<p>NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW</p> <p>Number of proposals received in the country: 1717</p> <p>Number of votes received in the country: 5587</p>	<p>RESULTS</p> <p>Name of Star: Bibhā</p> <p>Brief explanation Name Star: Bibhā [ˈbɪbʱa] is the Bengali pronunciation of the Sanskrit word Vibha, which means a bright beam of light.</p> <p>Name of Exoplanet: Santamasa</p> <p>Brief Explanation Name of Exoplanet: Santamasa [ˈsantamasə] in Sanskrit means clouded, which alludes to the exoplanet's atmosphere.</p>
<p>CHARACTERISTICS OF SYSTEM</p> <p>Constellation: Sextans</p> <p>Star Identification: HD 86081</p> <p>Host star type: yellow, dwarf</p> <p>Coordinates: RA 09h56m05.92s DEC -03d48m30.3s</p>	<p>THEME</p> <p>Terms from Sanskrit language symbolic of the physical conditions of the star and its planets.</p>



www.iau-100.org
www.nameexoworlds.iau.org



About IAU

- ❖ It was founded in 1919, headquartered in Paris, France.
- ❖ It is the global authority for naming planetary features in the solar system.

Characterising Exoplanets Satellite (CHEOPS)

- ❖ It is intended to look for habitable exoplanets.
- ❖ It is the first mission dedicated to searching for exoplanetary transits.
- ❖ It was successfully launched by a Soyuz rocket.
- ❖ It blasted-off from the Russian Soyuz Guiana Space Center in French Guiana.
- ❖ So far, scientists have discovered some 4,000 exoplanets orbiting nearby stars, including dozens of Earth-like exoplanets -- mostly using data collected by NASA's Kepler satellite

Pinaka rocket

- ❖ An upgraded version of Pinaka MK III rocket was successfully test-fired from Chandipur in Odisha.
- ❖ It is modified as a missile by integrating with the navigation, control and guidance system to improve the end accuracy and enhance the range.
- ❖ Pinaka is an artillery missile system capable of striking into an enemy territory up to a range of 75 km with high precision.
- ❖ The navigation system of the missile is also aided by the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) also called as NAVIC.
- ❖ The missile system has been jointly developed by various Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) laboratories.
 - Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE)
 - Research Centre Imarat (RCI)
 - Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL)
 - Proof & Experimental Establishment (PXE)
 - High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL).

Vaccination on wheels Clinic

- ❖ Vaccination on wheels Clinic', claimed to be a first-of-its-kind service in India, has been launched in Pune.



- ❖ Jignesh Patel, founder of Jivika Healthcare with grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Grand Challenges Explorations), is the entrepreneur behind this collaborative venture.
- ❖ The basic objectives of the initiative are to provide low-cost vaccination service to the low-income group of the population.
- ❖ This clinic will go to schools, colleges and corporates to conduct vaccination camps at their doorsteps.
- ❖ It will offer only vaccination services.

5G trails

- ❖ The 5G (the fifth generation of wireless technology) trials are expected to begin in the last quarter of current fiscal (2019-2020).
- ❖ Any proposal on 5G is required to address twin considerations, with first being the adoption of new technology, and second the imperatives of national security.

Dunzo and throttle

- ❖ The Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA), India's civil aviation authority has given approval to the applications of Google-backed hyperlocal delivery startup Dunzo and Bengaluru-based drone maker Throttle Aerospace Systems to test long-range and autonomous drone use.
- ❖ The approvals are a part of the DGCA's experimental programme, called Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) drone operations.
- ❖ The long-range drones can significantly enhance logistic services in Indian hinterland and may become a significant multiplier to the economy.

New Star-Sharjah and its planet

- ❖ The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has announced new names of its newly discovered star and its planet.
- ❖ The star 'HIP 7943' was named as "Sharjah" and one of its planet (exoplanet) was named as "Barjeel".
- ❖ Appreciating the achievements of Sharjah city, capital of UAE, the star was named as "Sharjah".
- ❖ A barjeel is a wind tower that directs the flow of wind, where the air can be recirculated as a form of air conditioning.

Ethiopia's First Satellite / ETRSS-1

- ❖ The Ethiopian Remote Sensing Satellite-1 or ETRSS-1, was sent into space by a Chinese Long March 4B carrier rocket.
- ❖ ETRSS-1 is Africa's 41st satellite in space and the third East African satellite.
- ❖ Ethiopia is now the 11th African nation to launch a satellite.

Microdots

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways notified rules for fixation of microdots identifiers on vehicles
- ❖ Microdot technology involves spraying the body and parts of the vehicle or any other machine with microscopic dots, which give a unique identification.
- ❖ These microdots can be read physically with a microscope and identified with ultra violet light source.
- ❖ The microdots and adhesive will become permanent fixtures/affixation which cannot be removed without damaging the asset, that is the vehicle itself.



DBT and NII study - Transmission of chickenpox virus

- ❖ The researchers of National Institute of Immunology (NII) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) found that the transfer of anti - viral DNA from mother to child during their pregnancy is long lasting.
- ❖ A person being infected by the virus and treated gains immunity lifelong.
- ❖ This immunity is transferred to babies during pregnancy.
- ❖ Chicken Pox is a highly contagious disease caused by Varicella Zoster Virus.

DNA Analysis Centre

- ❖ The Home Ministry inaugurated a State-of-the-Art DNA Analysis Centre at Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL), Chandigarh.
- ❖ This new Advanced Forensic DNA Analysis Lab has been established under Nirbhaya Fund scheme.
- ❖ Directorate of Forensic Science services (DFSS) comes under Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Decommission of MiG-27

- ❖ The last of the iconic MiG-27 (Mikoyan MiG-27) fighter jet aircraft was decommissioned from the Indian Air Force at Jodhpur base in Rajasthan.
- ❖ The aircraft served the IAF for over 30 years.
- ❖ The aircraft served during the 1999 Kargil War.
- ❖ It is known by the name 'Bahadur' in India.
- ❖ It actively participated in 'Operation Parakram' in 2001/02 conflict between India and Pakistan.
- ❖ It was commissioned into Indian Air Force in 1985.



China - Brazil's satellite/CBERS - 4A

- ❖ China and Brazil's jointly developed earth observation satellite named China - Brazil Earth Resources Satellite/CBERS-4A.
- ❖ It was launched from Long March-4B rocket in the northern Chinese province of Shanxi.

- ❖ The satellite along with 8 other satellites, was launched under a bilateral programme that would enhance cooperation among the BRICS nations.
- ❖ Currently, South Africa is the only country from the BRICS nations that does not have satellites of its own.

Ink to stop fake passports and currency notes

- ❖ The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and National Physical Laboratory (NPL) developed an ink to combat the problem of fake printing of passports and counterfeiting of currency notes.
- ❖ The ink was produced based on single excitable dual emissive luminescent pigment.
- ❖ It was developed based on the concept of fluorescence and phosphorescence phenomena.
- ❖ Currently, the currency notes display only one color with the emission of wavelength.
- ❖ However, in the ink developed by the scientists features changes in pigment color after the notes are printed.
- ❖ In ambient light the ink shows white color.
- ❖ When the ink is exposed to UV light, it turns red and when the UV source is switched OFF it turns green.

Fluorescence and Phosphorescence

- ❖ Both in phosphorescence and fluorescence the radiation is electromagnetic and is spontaneous.
- ❖ In case of fluorescence, the radiation stops after the source is switched off.
- ❖ On the other hand, in phosphorescence, the glow continues for few hours.

Geranium saplings

- ❖ The CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) has developed a new low-cost technology to produce Geranium saplings.
- ❖ The geranium cultivation is being done in aerated glass house currently.
- ❖ With the help of the new technology, geranium can be cultivated at farms just like every other crop.
- ❖ Geranium acts as an anti-inflammatory and anti-septic agent.
- ❖ The Geranium plant is originally from South Africa and is predominantly used in manufacturing essential oils.

- ❖ November is the best suitable sowing season of Geranium.
- ❖ In India, the plant is cultivated in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and North Eastern Regions.
- ❖ It has several medicinal values.
- ❖ The development has been made under Aroma Mission which was launched to boost cultivation of aromatic crops and medicinal plant.
- ❖ It includes rosemary, lavender and lemon grass.
- ❖ Under the mission the crops are to be promoted in unproductive and waste lands.
- ❖ It also includes lands that are affected by drought, salinity, water scarcity and floods.



Long March - 5

- ❖ China has successfully launched its largest carrier rocket, Long March-5, from Wenchang Space Launch Center (WSLC).
- ❖ China's most powerful rocket is a critical ingredient in nation's ambitious space programme.
- ❖ It carried the Shijian-20 satellite.

About Long March-5

- ❖ The rocket is China's heaviest and most advanced communications satellite.
- ❖ This rocket is also known as CZ-5.
- ❖ It can carry a maximum payload of 25 tonnes into low Earth orbit (LEO) and 14 tonnes into geosynchronous orbit.
- ❖ The successful launch is a major step forward for China's planned mission to Mars in 2020.

Annular Solar Eclipse

- ❖ On 26th December, the annular solar eclipse was visible in places such as India, Australia, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and Singapore.
- ❖ Total Solar Eclipse - The entire central portion of the sun is blocked out by the moon.
- ❖ Partial Solar Eclipse - Only part of the sun's surface is blocked out.
- ❖ Solar eclipses happen once every 18 months and only last for a few minutes.

About annual Solar eclipse

- ❖ Annular solar eclipse happens when the moon is farthest from the Earth, which is why it seems smaller.
- ❖ In this type of an eclipse, the moon does not block the sun completely, but looks like a “dark disk on top of a larger sun-coloured disk” forming a “ring of fire”.


CELESTIAL SHOW

➤ **Solar eclipse**
When the moon passes between the earth and the sun, it either totally or partially obstructs the sun, causing an eclipse

➤ **Annular solar eclipse** | Moon's apparent diameter is smaller than the

sun's, blocking most of its light and causing the sun to look like a ring or annulus

➤ **Timings**
The eclipse will begin at 8.26am and end at 11.32am with the maximum eclipse visible at 9.52am



A representative photograph of an annular solar eclipse

MAXIMUM OBSTRUCTION OF SUN	84.6% in Chennai 78.8% in Mumbai 74.3% in Hyderabad	66% in Ahmedabad 45.1% in Kolkata 44.7% in Delhi
89.4% in Bengaluru		



ENVIRONMENT

Germany – Climate law

- ❖ The German parliament Bundestag passed the Climate Protection Act in an attempt to reach its climate target by 2030.
- ❖ This will be Germany's first climate action law.

Impact

- ❖ From 2021, companies that market diesel and petrol, heating oil and natural gas in the country will need to obtain pollution rights for the amount of greenhouse gases they emit.
- ❖ Additionally, flying domestically and within Europe will be made more expensive.

New fish species - *Schistura syngkai*

- ❖ Team of scientists have discovered a new fish species in West Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya.
- ❖ The fish which has the scientific name "*Schistura syngkai*" was found at the Twahdidoh stream, a tributary of Wah Blei river.
- ❖ Both sexes of the fish have golden-brown bodies along with blackish lateral stripes and slightly emarginate tail fins.

Idris Elba - wasp

- ❖ The wasp as recently discovered in Mexico.
- ❖ The wasp was named as Idris Elba, who is known for playing Heimdall (Character name) in Thor (Film Name) from the Marvel Cinematic Universe.
- ❖ It was found living as a parasite in the eggs of another insect.
- ❖ The insect is known as the bagrada bug, which is a major pest of cruciferous vegetables.

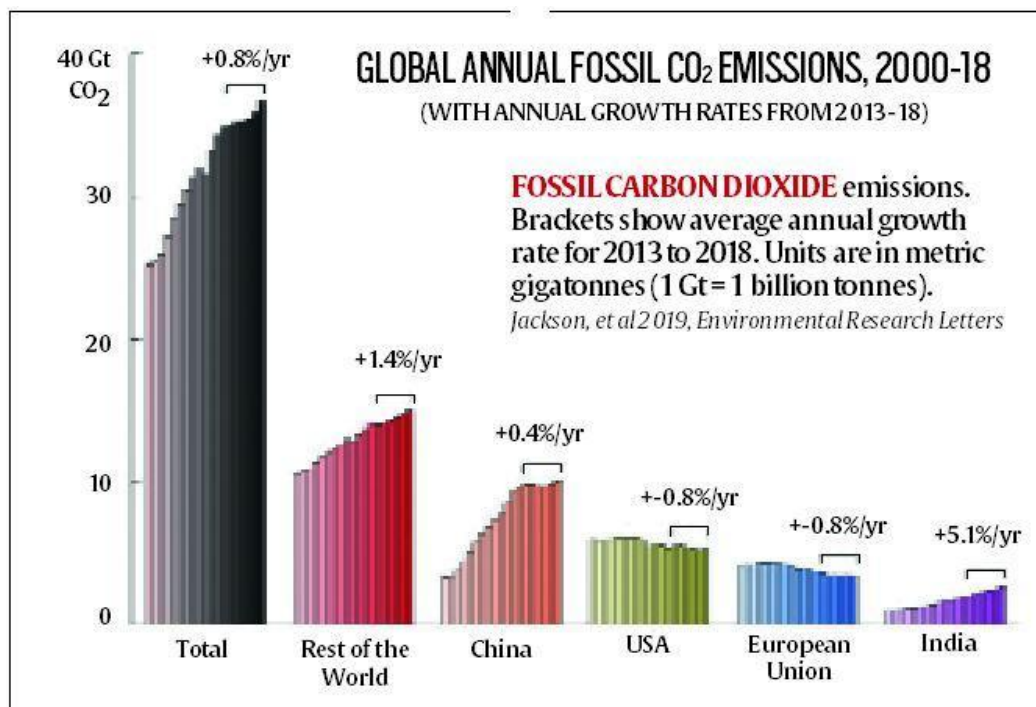
Special Diesel

- ❖ Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the supply of special winter-grade diesel for high altitude Ladakh, which faces sub-zero temperatures (upto minus 30-degree Celsius) during the winter months.
- ❖ It was developed by the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) to address the problem of loss of fuel during extreme winter conditions.

- ❖ It also meets BIS specification of BS-VI grade.

Global Carbon Budget 2019

- ❖ The Global Carbon Project (GCP) has released a report titled 'Global Carbon Budget' for the year 2019.
- ❖ Established in 2001, GCP is an organisation that releases global budgets for three dominant greenhouse gases
 - Carbon dioxide
 - Methane
 - Nitrous oxide
- ❖ The Atmospheric CO₂ concentration in 2019 are 47% above pre-industrial levels.
- ❖ Global CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels and industry have increased every decade since 1960s.
- ❖ India's emissions in 2019 (2.6 billion tonnes or giga tonnes) was likely to be only 1.8 per cent higher than in 2018.
- ❖ The slower rise in emission rates was linked to slower growth in economy.



Global Climate Risk Index – India Ranked 5th

- ❖ According to a report released by environment think tank “Germanwatch”, India is the fifth most vulnerable country to climate change.
- ❖ In the Climate Risk Index 2020, India’s rank has worsened from the 14th spot in 2017 to 5th in 2018.
- ❖ India has also recorded the highest number of fatalities due to climate change.
- ❖ It also suffered from the second highest monetary losses from climate change impact in 2018.
- ❖ Japan, Philippines and Germany were the three most infected countries in 2018.
- ❖ Germanwatch, based in Germany, is an independent development and environmental organisation which works for sustainable global development.

Ranking 2018 (2017)	Country	CRI score	Death toll	Deaths per 100 000 inhabitants	Absolute losses (in million US\$ PPP)	Losses per unit GDP in %	Human Development Index 2018 Ranking ¹²
1 (36)	Japan	5.50	1 282	1.01	35 839.34	0.64	19
2 (20)	Philippines	11.17	455	0.43	4 547.27	0.48	113
3 (40)	Germany	13.83	1 246	1.50	5 038.62	0.12	5
4 (7)	Madagascar	15.83	72	0.27	568.10	1.32	161
5 (14)	India	18.17	2 081	0.16	37 807.82	0.36	130
6 (2)	Sri Lanka	19.00	38	0.18	3 626.72	1.24	76
7 (45)	Kenya	19.67	113	0.24	708.39	0.40	142
8 (87)	Rwanda	21.17	88	0.73	93.21	0.34	158
9 (42)	Canada	21.83	103	0.28	2 282.17	0.12	12
10 (96)	Fiji	22.50	8	0.90	118.61	1.14	92

32 major tiger corridors - mapped out

- ❖ The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), under the Union environment ministry, has published a document, titled “Connecting Tiger Populations for Long-term Conservation”.
- ❖ NTCA has published this in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun.
- ❖ The document maps 32 major corridors and details the tiger conservation plan under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ❖ There has been a 6% annual increase in their numbers since 2006.

New Zealand breeds low methane-emitting sheep

- ❖ The New Zealand livestock industry has begun a “global first” genetic program “Beef + Lamb New Zealand (B+LNZ) Genetics”. It has launched a new “methane research breeding value”.
- ❖ That would help to tackle climate change by breeding low methane-emitting sheep.
- ❖ These grazing animals can be genetically modified to contribute less to the destruction of the ozone layer.
- ❖ There are about six sheep for each person in New Zealand, and the livestock industry accounts for about one-third of the country’s total greenhouse gas emissions.

10th Asian Elephant Specialist Group

- ❖ The International Union for Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN) 10th Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) Meeting started at Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.
- ❖ Conservationists will discuss the threats and challenges faced by Asian elephants and suitable conservation plans.
- ❖ It is a global network of voluntary specialists concerned with the study, monitoring, management, and conservation of Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*) that exist in 13 range states.
- ❖ Gajah is the bi-annual journal of the AsESG.

Second giant Earthworm has found in Western Ghats

- ❖ A giant earthworm was found at Kollamogaru, the foot of Western Ghats, Mangaluru, Karnataka.
- ❖ The latest discovery is the second reported finding of a giant earthworm in the same place of western ghats along the coastal belt of Karnataka.



Victoria Falls - severe drought

- ❖ A worst drought has reduced Victoria Falls' flow into something closer to the steam.
- ❖ Climate change might destroy a major tourist attraction such as this.
- ❖ The falls fed by the Zambezi River, define the boundary between Zambia and Zimbabwe in southern Africa.
- ❖ The falls are also referred to as "The Smoke that Thunders" and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



FrogPhone

- ❖ 'FrogPhone' is a novel device which allows scientists to call up a frog survey site and monitor them in the wild.
- ❖ The FrogPhone is the world's first solar-powered remote survey device.
- ❖ It relays environmental data to the observer via text messages, whilst conducting real-time remote acoustic surveys over the phone.



COP25 Climate Summit

- ❖ The 25th edition of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or COP25 has conducted in Madrid, Spain.
- ❖ The prime objective of the conference is to complete the rule-book to the 2015 Paris Agreement.
- ❖ Finally, 75 countries committed to deliver 2050 net zero emissions strategies by 2020.
- ❖ It will consider the following reports
 - Annual Emissions Gap Report, produced by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
 - a series of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Climate Change Performance Index

- ❖ It is designed by the German environmental and development organisation Germanwatch.
- ❖ The Index measures renewable energy share, emissions and climate policies of 57 countries and the European Union.
- ❖ India for the first time was ranked 9th in the ranking provided.
- ❖ The United States was included in the worst-performing countries for the first time.
- ❖ The top position was bagged by Sweden while China ranked 30th.
- ❖ However, no country could meet 100% of all standards, so the first three places in this list are vacant.
- ❖ The list has been started from the fourth position, where Sweden is on the top of the list.

Background

- ❖ 2015 Paris Agreement will become effective in 2020 to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (comes to an end in 2020).
- ❖ The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan in 1997 and entered into force in 2005.
- ❖ Kyoto Protocol has the target of reducing emissions by at least 18% by the industrialized countries.

IUCN added 1840 new species to the Red List of Threatened Species

- ❖ The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) added about 1,840 new species to its updated “Red List of Threatened Species”.
- ❖ Red List of Threatened Species is a catalogue of plants and animals that risk extinction.
- ❖ The group released its Red List update in the middle of COP25 climate talks in Madrid, Spain.
- ❖ Latest update showed that 37% of Australia’s freshwater fish species were threatened with extinction due to rising temperatures.

Heavy metal contamination in Indian Rivers

- ❖ The Central Water Commission (CWC) collected a total of 442 surface water samples, of which 287 were polluted by heavy metals.
- ❖ The most common heavy metal found was iron, and above safe limits in 156 samples.
- ❖ Lead, nickel, chromium, cadmium and copper were the other metals.
- ❖ Arsenic and zinc are the two toxic metals whose concentration is always found within the limits.
- ❖ The main sources of heavy metal pollution are mining, milling, plating that discharge a variety of toxic metals into the environment.

River	Chromium	Lead	Iron
Ganga	Exceeds		Exceeds
Yamuna			Exceeds
Brahmaputra			Exceeds
Ramganga		Exceeds	
Rapti	Exceeds		Exceeds
Narmada			Exceeds
Godavari			Exceeds

EU's 2050 climate neutrality targets

- ❖ Poland left 2050 Climate Neutrality Agreement of European Union.
- ❖ The Union demanded for more funds to support nuclear power and for economic transition.

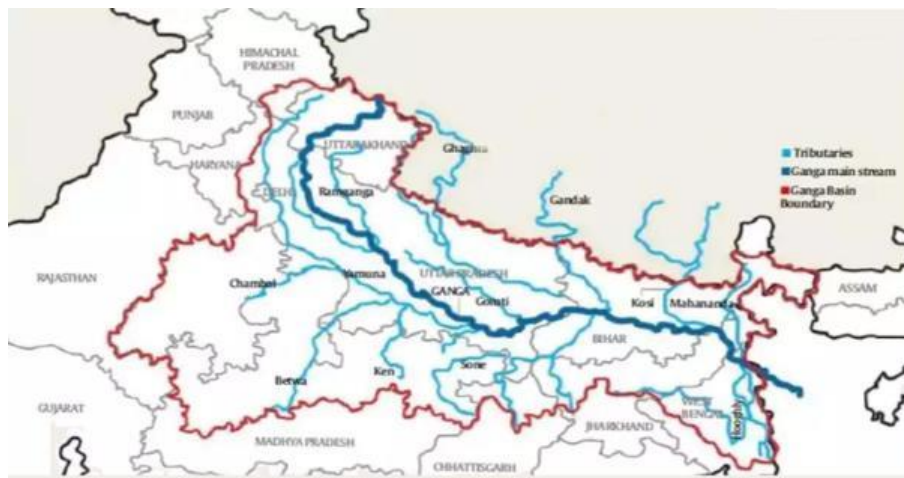
- ❖ The plan is important as the EU bloc that comprises of 28 countries is the third largest economic bloc after China and US in contributions to climate change.

About Climate Neutrality Plan

- ❖ This is a key commitment under 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change.
- ❖ It is a 100 billion Euro plan for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- ❖ It is also called European Green Deal.

National Ganga Council

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the first meeting of the National Ganga Council at Chandra Shekhar Azad Agriculture University of Kanpur (UP).
- ❖ This Council has reviewed the ambitious Namami Gange project.
- ❖ The National Ganga Council is also known as the National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management of River Ganga.
- ❖ This Council was set up in 2016 formed under the Environment (Protection) Act (EPA), 1986.
- ❖ It replaced the National River Ganga Basin Authority (NRGBA).



Carbon neutral village – Meenagnadi

- ❖ Meenagnadi village panchayat, Wayanad, Kerala has taken initiative to become a carbon-neutral village.
- ❖ It involves afforestation programs, recycling of plastic waste, providing lower-emission cooking stoves.
- ❖ Planting and upkeep of the new trees was paid out of MGNREGA funds.

World's oldest cave art – Indonesia

- ❖ According to a study published in the journal “Nature”, the oldest animal drawing has been found in Indonesia.
- ❖ The painting has been discovered in a limestone cave called Leang Bulu’Sipong 4 in the south of Sulawesi, Indonesia.
- ❖ It was dated to nearly 44,000 years ago using uranium-series analysis.



World's oldest fossil forest

- ❖ Scientists have recently discovered remnants of a 386-million-year old world's oldest fossil forest in a sandstone quarry in Cairo, New York, United States.
- ❖ This forest is around 2 or 3 million years older than the current world's oldest forest at Gilboa.
- ❖ The research showed that the forest was home to at least two types of trees Cladoxylopsids and Archaeopteris.
- ❖ The third type of tree was also uncovered but is still unidentified.
- ❖ These trees reproduced using only spores rather than seeds.

Ecoclub programme

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) organized an annual meeting of state nodal agencies implementing the Ecoclub programme for the first time.
- ❖ Ecoclub was launched under the Environment Education Awareness and Training (EEAT)
- ❖ The event was organized in collaboration with GEER foundation, Gujarat.
- ❖ Two books were released at the event namely “Glimpses of Ecoclubs” and a handbook on International Environment Conventions and Programmes.
- ❖ The National Green Corps (NGC) was launched by the MoEFCC covering 1,20,000 schools in India.



Gujarat locust invasion

- ❖ Gujarat and Rajasthan are under attack from hoppers — new born locusts or known as tiddis locally.
- ❖ Banaskantha is the worst affected district in Gujarat.
- ❖ The insects were flying from Pakistan Sindh province.
- ❖ The locusts emerged from Sudan and Eritrea in the coast of Red Sea.
- ❖ The insects fly in during the day and settle on the farms at night making it difficult to ward off the swarms.
- ❖ The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) operates the DLIS (Desert Locust Information Service) headquartered in Rome, Italy.
- ❖ The invasion was also predicted by Locust Warning Organization (LWO) in Jodhpur.
- ❖ It operates under ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research).
- ❖ The LWO monitors 2 lakh square kilometres of desert area in parts of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Haryana.

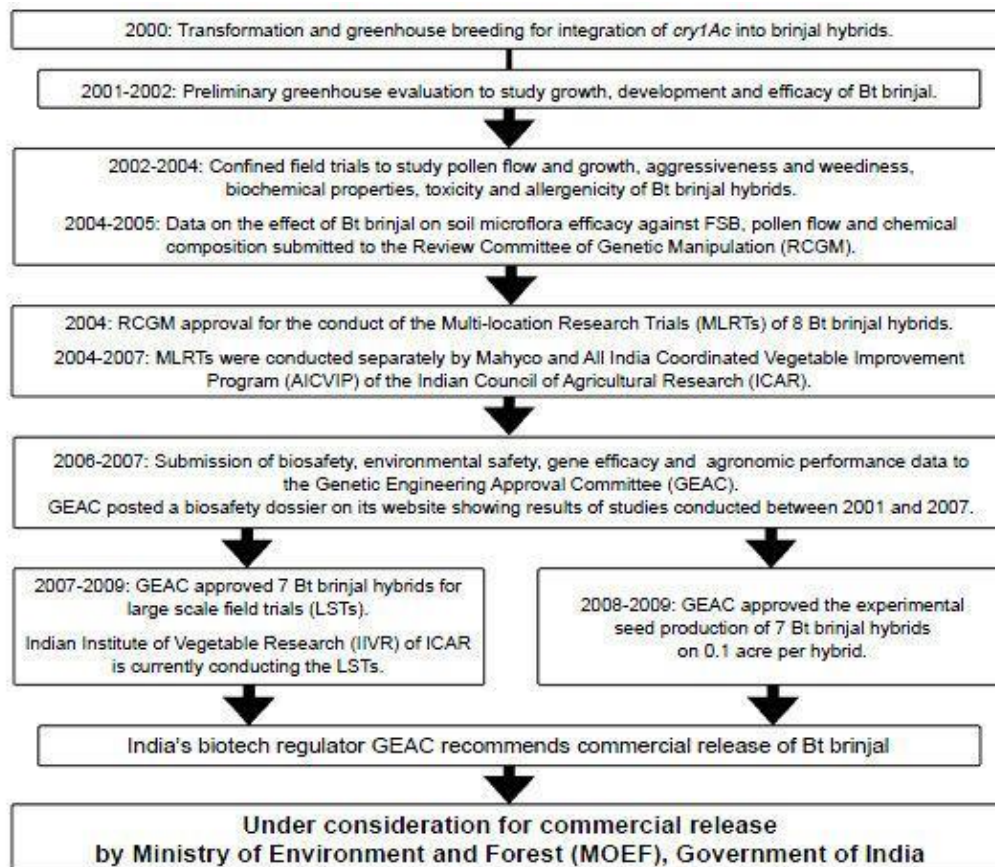
SnowEx Airborne Campaign

- ❖ NASA has launched a seasonal campaign, part of a five-year programme called SnowEx, initiated in 2016-17.
- ❖ NASA's overall target is optimal strategies for mapping global Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) with remote sensing and models.
- ❖ SnowEx 2020 will first test the instruments near Grand Mesa, Colorado, which includes both flat snow and forest.

Illegal Cultivation of Bt Brinjal

- ❖ Illegal Bt brinjal cultivation in Haryana have been confirmed recently.
- ❖ The samples have also been sent by the Haryana Government to National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR).
- ❖ India is the second largest producer of Brinjal after China.
- ❖ These genetically modified brinjals Bt Brinjals were approved by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) in 2009.
- ❖ But it was turned down by the Environment Ministry in 2010.
- ❖ The GEAC functions as a statutory body under the Environment Protection Act 1986 of the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF).

- ❖ Bt. cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop in India approved in 2002.
- ❖ Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11 or DMH-11 is a genetically modified variety of mustard developed by the Delhi University's Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants.
- ❖ If approved by the Centre, this will be the second GM crop, after Bt Cotton, and the first transgenic food crop to be allowed for cultivation in the country.



(In million hectares)

Global Area of Biotech Crops				
	2010	2011	2012	Crops
US	66.8	69	69.5	Maize, Soyabean, Cotton, Sugarbeet, Papaya, Squash
Brazil	25.4	30.3	36.6	Soyabean, Maize, Cotton
Argentina	22.9	23.7	23.9	Soyabean, Maize, Cotton
Canada	8.8	10.4	11.6	Canola, Maize, Soyabean, Sugarbeet
India	9.4	10.6	10.8	Cotton
China	3.5	3.9	4	Cotton, Papaya, Poplar, Tomato, Sweet pepper
Total*	148	160	170.3	

*Includes 22 other countries such as Paraguay, South Africa, Pakistan and Uruguay.
Source: Clive James

Fausta - World oldest rhino died

- ❖ Fausta, a female black rhino, who was believed to be the World's oldest rhino has died at the age of 57 in a Tanzanian conservation area.
- ❖ Fausta passed away from natural causes in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority.
- ❖ Rhinos' life expectancy is around 40 years in wild but they can live an extra decade in captivity.

About Black rhinoceros

- ❖ They are also called as 'hook-lipped rhinoceros.
- ❖ They are found around south and east Africa, including Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.
- ❖ IUCN Status: Critically endangered; (although South-western black rhinoceros is classified as vulnerable).

STATES

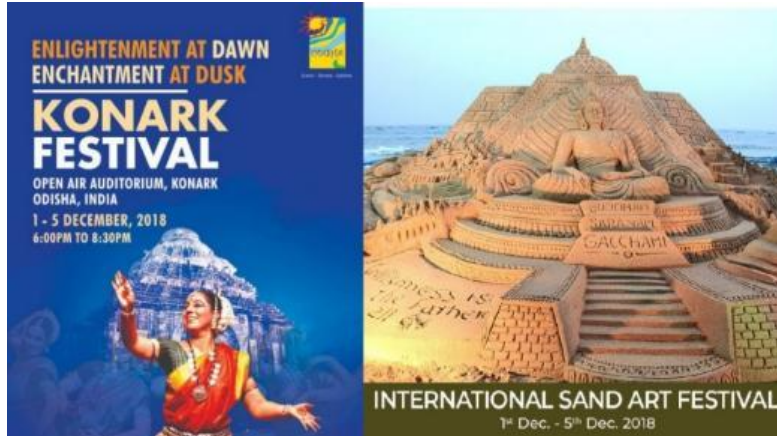
20th Hornbill Festival, Nagaland

- ❖ The 20th edition of Hornbill Festival began at the Naga Heritage Kisama in Nagaland.
- ❖ The festival organised by Nagaland Government is an annual tourism promotional event to showcase the state's traditional and rich cultural heritage.
- ❖ The opening ceremony was presided by Governor RN Ravi and included a colourful display of Naga Culture themed show called "Colours of Nagaland".



30th edition of Konark festival

- ❖ Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal has inaugurated the 5-day long 30th edition of Konark festival.



- ❖ It is a showcase of Odisha's art, culture and tradition has started in Odisha.
- ❖ The theme of the festival is based on eco-tourism, culture, Fairs, women empowerment, and no to plastic and heritage.
- ❖ Along with this, the 8th edition of the International Sand Art Festival 2019 has been started in Chandrabhaga Beach in Odisha.

Tanbo Art - Kerala

- ❖ A progressive farmer in Kerala is using Tanbo Art (a 3D art form) to depict the celebrated Guruvayur temple elephant that died in 1976.
- ❖ The farmer used several indigenous varieties of rice like Krishna Kamod, Gandhakasala and Jeerakasala to give shape to the image.
- ❖ Tanbo Art is a rice paddy art developed by the farmers of Inakadate village in Japan about three decades ago to beautify their paddy fields.
- ❖ They drew huge replicas of famous paintings, including Mona Lisa, by growing rice crops with fronds of different colours.

Madhu App for School Children - Odisha

- ❖ Odisha government has launched an e-learning mobile phone application called "Madhu" help school students to understand their subjects in a better and efficient way.
- ❖ The app is named after 'Utkala' Gouraba' Madhusudan Das, the first graduate and advocate of Odisha.
- ❖ He is known as "Kulabruddha", which means Grand Old Man in Odisha.

Startup India Global Venture Capital Summit – Goa

- ❖ The 2nd edition of Startup India Global Venture Capital Summit is being organized in Goa.
- ❖ The summit is being organized by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and government of Goa.
- ❖ The Theme for the event is 'India Opportunity- Investing in tomorrow together'.

Anti - Depredation Squad

- ❖ Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has launched the Anti- Depredation Squad of the Forest Department.
- ❖ The Squads will be to deploy in 15 major human-wildlife conflict districts to ensure the safety of both humans and wildlife.

Sarai Sewage Treatment Plant - Uttarakhand.

- ❖ King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden inaugurated Sarai Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) in Uttarakhand.
- ❖ It is the first STP to be completed under Hybrid Annuity (HAM) Based Public Private Partnership Model.

Odisha's Kalia scheme to be merged with PM- KISAN

- ❖ The Odisha government has decided to merge its flagship scheme - Kalia with the Centre's Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) yojana, apparently due to financial constraint.
- ❖ As per the plan, instead of 10,000 under the KALIA scheme, the state government will now give Rs 4,000 to farmers while the remaining 6,000 will be given to farmers under the PM-KISAN yojana.
- ❖ The state govt will continue to pay 12,000 per year under the KALIA scheme.

About Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi:

- ❖ It is a Central Sector Scheme under Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers welfare.
- ❖ Under this programme, landholding farmer families, having cultivable land up to 2 hectares, will be provided direct income support at the rate of Rs. 6,000 per year.

Darjeeling tea - GI Tag

- ❖ Two tea varieties of Darjeeling were registered under “Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999”.
- ❖ It includes Green Tea and White Tea of Darjeeling.
- ❖ India enacted the GI of Goods act, 2009 as a member of WTO and as a signatory of TRIPS agreement.



Punjab - Land banks

- ❖ With an aim to create land banks in rural areas, the Punjab Cabinet has given in-principle approval to amend the law for transfer of common village land in rural areas to the state's industry department.
- ❖ The amendment will facilitate gram panchayats to promote development of villages by unlocking the value of 'Shamlat' or village common land.

Integrated Command and Control Centre

- ❖ Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has inaugurated Gurugram's ambitious Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC).
- ❖ Gurugram has become the first such city in the state with such facility.
- ❖ It has been developed as the nerve centre to provide multifaceted online smart services to people such as traffic management system and smart parking system etc.



Draj Bridge in Rajouri, J&K

- ❖ Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Girish Chandra Murmu, inaugurated Draj Bridge in Rajouri, J&K.
- ❖ It is an important bridge for the military as well as for socio-economic development of J&K's Rajouri District as a whole.
- ❖ The important bridge has been constructed by 31 Task Force under Project Sampark of Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

Jharkhand's Mahuamilan station

- ❖ Jharkhand's Mahuamilan station of East Central Railway (ECZ) zone has become 5500th station to get free wifi facility.
- ❖ The RailTel Corporation of India Ltd. (RCIL) has provided free WiFi at 5,500 stations across country.

About RailTel

- ❖ RailTel is the digital arm of Indian Railways.
- ❖ RailTel is a 'Miniratna' enterprise that focuses on providing broadband and VPN services.

Paika memorial in Odisha

- ❖ President Ram Nath Kovind recently laid the foundation of a memorial dedicated to the 1817 Paika Rebellion.
- ❖ Paika memorial is to mark 200 years of the Paika Rebellion.
- ❖ It will come up at Barunei Hill in Odisha's Khurda district.

About Paika Rebellion

- ❖ Paikas under the leadership of Baxi Jagabandhu, the hereditary chief of the militia army of the Gajapati King of Khurda (a kingdom near Puri), rose in rebellion in March 1817.
- ❖ It was an uprising against colonial rule that predates the rebellion of the sepoys in 1857.

Workshop on Bamboo cultivation – Jammu

- ❖ A first of its kind workshop on Bamboo cultivation will be held in Jammu.
- ❖ The Workshop-cum-Exhibition titled "Bamboo-A Wonder Grass - the opportunity for sustainable development in Jammu and Kashmir".



- ❖ It will focus on the promotion of Bamboo cultivation in the potential Kandi areas of Jammu.

Odisha - 45 fast track courts

- ❖ The Govt of Odisha announced to set up 45 fast track courts for speedy disposal of rape cases registered under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012, in the state.
- ❖ The decision was taken due to the rising incidents of sexual offences against women and children and the need to dispose the cases quickly.

About Fast track courts:

- ❖ The Fast Track Courts (FTCs) were established in India in the year 2000 after the recommendation in the 11th finance commission.

Namaste Orchha festival 2020 – MP

- ❖ The Madhya Pradesh (MP) Tourism Department is going to organize a Cultural Festival 'Namaste Orchha 2020' in Orchha on March 2020.
- ❖ Its aim is to promote MP Tourism through Orchha & specially to attract tourists.
- ❖ Orchha is a town in the Bundelkhand region.
- ❖ It won the award for the best heritage city for 2017-18 at the National Tourism Awards.

First Virtual Police station – AP

- ❖ Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh (AP) Jaganmohan Reddy inaugurated the first Virtual Police Station at the Andhra University (AU) in Visakhapatnam, AP.
- ❖ The concept of Virtual police station was initiated by AU Vice Chancellor Prasad Reddy with an aim to provide security to students.
- ❖ The system includes an inbuilt complaint monitoring and action-taken mechanism.

Trakea software - by Haryana Police

- ❖ The Haryana Police Department has adopted a unique barcoding software.
- ❖ It is the country's first police force to have introduced this unique barcoding for forensic reports.

- ❖ The software is used to ensure that 1000s of digital forensic reports are stored safe and secure.
- ❖ It offers a fool proof security to the samples collected from the crime scene and to develop a tamper-free tracking system of these reports.

Andhra Pradesh - Disha Bill

- ❖ The AP Legislative Assembly has passed the Andhra Pradesh Disha Act, 2019 (Andhra Pradesh Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2019).
- ❖ It aims to reduce the judgment period to 21 days from existing judgement period of 4 months.
- ❖ It provides exclusive punishment of death penalty for rape crimes.
- ❖ It provides life imprisonment for sexual offences against children under the POCSO Act, 2012.
- ❖ It Introduces women and children offender's registry to public – First state in India.

Military Literature Festival – Chandigarh

- ❖ The third edition of Military Literature Festival (MLF) held at UT Lake Club, Chandigarh.
- ❖ The festival would bring together the finest men from battle grounds and literary fields to discuss watershed of information on defence issues.

Gujarat Police honoured with President's Colours

- ❖ Gujarat Police has become the 7th such police force in the country which has received this honour.
- ❖ Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu presented the 'President's Colours' to the Gujarat police.





- ❖ Gujarat Police will wear 'President's Colour' (an emblem) on the left shoulder of uniform on special occasions including a parade.

President's Colours honour:

- ❖ It is the highest honour bestowed upon a police force in recognition of their invaluable contribution to society.
- ❖ President's Colours also called as 'Nishaan'.

Jalsathi - Odisha Govt

- ❖ Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik launched the 'Jalsathi' programme.
- ❖ This will ensure supply of safe drinking water to all households in the state.
- ❖ There will be Women Volunteers called 'Jalasathis' who will act as links between consumers and Public Health Engineering Organisation (PHEO) or Water Corporation of Odisha (WATCO).

Tripura's first SEZ in Sabroom

- ❖ The Government of India approved the first SEZ (Special Economic Zone) at Sabroom, Tripura.
- ❖ This SEZ will primarily focus on agro-based food processing, rubber-based industries.
- ❖ The SEZ is to be developed by the Tripura Industrial Development Corporation.
- ❖ 100% Income Tax exemption will be provided on export income for SEZ units under Section 10AA of the Income Tax Act for the first 5 years.
- ❖ The SEZ is expected to generate 12,000 skilled jobs and it will attract more investments as its location is nearer to Chittagong Port.

11th Regional Quality Conclave (RQC)

- ❖ It was organized on 20 December 2019 at Rudrapur, district Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand.
- ❖ It was organized by Quality Council of India (QCI) along with PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI).
- ❖ Through this Conclave the Quality Council of India (QCI) hopes to reach out to industries in the hilly regions of the country.
- ❖ Theme of Conclave 'Rudrapur RQC': 'Advance Manufacturing with Quality, Innovation & Technology Interventions.'

Mission Shat Pratishat

- ❖ The Mission Shat Pratishat was launched by the Punjab education department.
- ❖ Its aim is to further improve the results of government schools, as compared to the previous year.
- ❖ The objective is to achieve 100 percent result in classes 5, 8, 10, and 12 of government schools.
- ❖ The department has coined a slogan: “Asambhav Nu Sambhav Banaiye, Shatpratishat Natija Liyaiye’ (Make impossible possible and secure 100 percent results).

Assamese language - The state language of Assam

- ❖ The Assam Cabinet nodded to make Assamese language the state language of Assam.
- ❖ This will exclude BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Administrative Districts), Barak Valley and Hill districts of Assam.
- ❖ Currently Assamese and Bodo are the official languages in Assam.
- ❖ Certain districts of Assam in Barak valley use Bengali as official language.
- ❖ Article 345 says that the state legislature might adopt one or more languages to be used as official languages.

Oxygen Parlour

- ❖ Indian Railways has opened an ‘Oxygen Parlour’ in collaboration with Airo Guard at Nashik railway station in Maharashtra.
- ❖ The initiative seeks to provide an experience of breathing clean air to the commuters.
- ❖ The concept of Oxygen Parlour is based on recommendation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).



“Run Through Files” Mechanism

- ❖ Haryana government has introduced a new provision of “Run Through Files” in the Centralised File Movement and Tracking Information System (CFMS).
- ❖ It would be personally monitored by Chief Minister of Haryana.
- ❖ A file shall be marked as Run Through Files only by the CM in the CFMS.

National Tribal Dance Festival

- ❖ The 2019 edition of National Tribal Dance Festival held in Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ This is for the first time that National Tribal Dance Festival is being organized in Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ This Tribal Dance Festival is held annually during the month of December and is organized by Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- ❖ The festival was inaugurated by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.



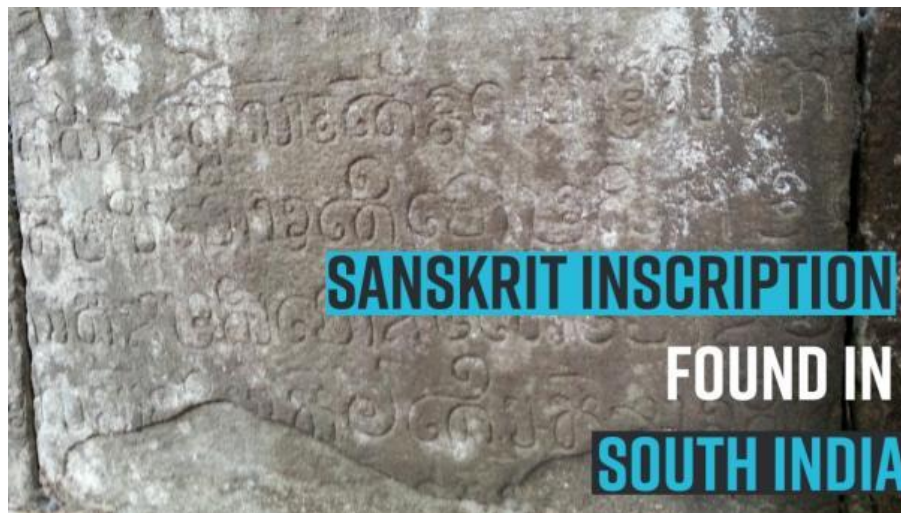
Losar Festival

- ❖ The Union Territory of Ladakh celebrated Losar Festival to mark the Ladakhi or Tibetan New Year.
- ❖ Losar festival, which has its origin in 15th century, is also observed in all Himalayan states of country but in different times.

South India's earliest Sanskrit Inscription

- ❖ The Epigraphy Branch of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has discovered the earliest Sanskrit inscription to have been discovered in South India as on date.
- ❖ The discovery was made in Chebrolu village in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.

- ❖ It is in Sanskrit and in Brahmi characters and was issued by Satavahana king Vijaya in 207 A.D.
- ❖ Until now the Nagarjunakonda inscription of Ikshavaku king Ehavala Chantamula issued in his 11th reignal year (4th century A.D.) was considered the earliest Sanskrit inscription in South India.
- ❖ This significant finding is also the earliest epigraphic evidence for 'Saptamatrika' cult so far.
- ❖ Saptamatrikas are a group of seven female deities worshipped in Hinduism as personifying the energy of their respective consorts.



New e-initiatives - Haryana

- ❖ CM of Haryana Manohar Lal Khattar launched 5 new e-initiatives on the occasion of national Good Governance Day.
- ❖ The year 2020 will be observed as "Susashan Sankalp Varsh". Reforms in governance will be invited from people in the state.
- ❖ The pilot project of 'Sirsi village' has been completed for the rural and abadi deh areas and field verification of Sirsi work has been done thus the village became the first village in the state to become 'Lal Dora free'.
- ❖ Additionally, 42 services added on Saral portal, with these additional services, the total services in the portal reached 527.

Jharkhand CM

- ❖ Jharkhand Mukti Morcha party leader Hemant Soren was sworn in as the 11th Chief Minister of Jharkhand.

- ❖ Governor of Jharkhand Droupadi Murmu has administered the oath of office and secrecy to Soren.


HEMANT SOREN

Becomes CM of Jharkhand for the second time

Age: 44

Party: JMM
(Jharkhand Mukti Morcha)

Hobbies
Cycling, playing badminton



Political Journey

- **2005:** Political debut; contested from Dumka; lost to party rebel Stephen Marandi
- **2009:** Elected MLA from Dumka. Became Rajya Sabha MP later that year
- **2010:** Became deputy CM of Jharkhand
- **2013:** Became state's youngest CM; held portfolios like Planning & Development, Cabinet (Election and Vigilance), Home, Cabinet Co-ordination, Information and Public Relations
- **2014:** Contested from two seats; won from Barhait, lost Dumka

Accession Day at J & K – Public holiday

- ❖ The government of UT of Jammu Kashmir has declared October 26, the day J-K acceded to the Union of India in 1947, as a public holiday in the calendar year for 2020.
- ❖ The list of holidays for the calendar year 2020 was issued by the General Administration Department of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ According to that order, there will be no holiday in Martyrs' day on July 13 and Sheikh Abdullah's birthday on December 5.
- ❖ 26 October 1947, when Maharaja Hari Singh signed off the Instrument of Accession with the then Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten, in which Jammu and Kashmir joined the Dominion of India.
- ❖ It gave India's Parliament the power to legislate in respect of J&K only on the matters of defence, external affairs and communications.
- ❖ Using it, Article 370 was incorporated in the Constitution of India.



PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

India for Humanity - Jaipur Foot

- ❖ The event was recently organised at United States Capitol building to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- ❖ India for Humanity initiative was launched by Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in October 2018 to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- ❖ Under it, artificial limb fitment camps are held across different countries identified through missions with financial support of Central government (MEA).
- ❖ For this initiative, MEA has collaborated with renowned charitable organisation Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS), the parent body of Jaipur Foot.

About Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS)

- ❖ It is non-profit organization founded by Devendra Raj Mehta in 1975.
- ❖ It famously known by its trademark limb 'Jaipur Foot'.
- ❖ It is world's largest non-profit organization for handicapped in terms of fitment of artificial limb, calipers etc.

Golden Leaf Award

- ❖ Tobacco Board of India, located at Guntur of Andhra Pradesh, has been awarded the Golden Leaf Award at Tab Expo 2019 event in Amsterdam, Netherland.
- ❖ This is the second time that the Tobacco Board had been awarded.
- ❖ In the year 2014, the board bagged the award for its implementation of an electronic auction system, which has made the marketing of flue-cured tobacco in India more transparent and accountable.
- ❖ The award was given in the most impressive public service initiative category for the year 2019, for its efforts to initiate various sustainability (green) initiatives in Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco cultivation in India.
- ❖ The Golden Leaf Awards are created to recognise professional excellence and dedication in the tobacco industry by Tobacco Reporter, an international magazine in the year 2006.
- ❖ India is the world's fourth largest producer of FCV tobacco.
- ❖ About 88,000 FCV tobacco farmers and their families in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are dependent on this crop for their livelihood.

CAG Rajiv Mehrishi – External Auditor of WHO

- ❖ Comptroller and Auditor General of India Rajiv Mehrishi has been elected as external auditor of the World Health Organization (WHO) for four years from 2020 to 2023.
- ❖ He was elected at the 72nd World Health Assembly in Geneva.
- ❖ This is the second major international audit assignment for the CAG this year.
- ❖ He has also been selected for the post of External Auditor of Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

Yanomami Shaman Davi Kopenawa - Right Livelihood Award

- ❖ Renowned Yanomami shaman Davi Kopenawa, the “Dalai Lama of the Rainforest,” 2019’s Right Livelihood Award.
- ❖ This award is known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize”.
- ❖ The Right Livelihood Award is an international award to “honour and support those offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us.”
- ❖ The prize was established in 1980 by German-Swedish philanthropist Jakob von Uexkull, and is presented annually in early December.
- ❖ Davi led his people’s 20-year campaign to protect their Amazonian territory.



International Press Institute India award

- ❖ India’s private news channel NDTV has been awarded International Press Institute India award for excellence in journalism.
- ❖ This award was given by the India chapter of the Vienna-based International Press Institute (IPI).

About IPI

- ❖ The annual award was instituted by IPI India in 2003.
- ❖ It recognises and honours best work done by an Indian media organization/journalist.

World's youngest PM – Sanna Marin

- ❖ Sanna Marin (34) was chosen as the prime minister of Finland.
- ❖ Marin is the world's youngest serving prime minister.
- ❖ Finland was one of the first country in Europe to give women voting rights in 1906.
- ❖ Finland was also the first country in the world to vote women to parliament in 1907.



Lily Thomas - passed away

- ❖ The first Malayali woman lawyer in the Supreme Court Lily Thomas (91) passed away.
- ❖ She became the first woman to complete post-graduation in law in India.
- ❖ Lily Thomas was also among the lawyers who dealt with the case related to assassination of Indira Gandhi.
- ❖ One of the most remembered of which is her petition which resulted in striking down of Section 8 (4) of the Representation of the People Act.
- ❖ The landmark judgement in 2013 resulted in the automatic disqualification of convicted legislators for a minimum of two years.
- ❖ Lily Thomas also had challenged section 494 (marrying again during the lifetime of husband or wife) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).



Diwali-Power of One Awards

- ❖ United Nations has honoured Four eminent diplomats with the 'Diwali – Power of One' award for a secure and peaceful world.
- ❖ The awards which have now come to be known as 'Oscars of Diplomacy' were established by Diwali Foundation USA, Inc in 2017.
- ❖ The diplomats who were honoured are:
 - Kairat Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan)
 - Nicholas Emiliou (Cyprus)
 - Frantisek Ruzicka (Slovakia)
 - Volodymyr Yelchenko (Ukraine).

World Habitat Award - 2019

- ❖ Odisha won the 'World Habitat Award' for Jaga Mission also called Odisha Liveable Habitat Mission (OLHM).
- ❖ This mission is a slum land titling project executed for the benefit of millions of urban-poor people living in slums.
- ❖ The award was given by the World Habitat, a UK (United Kingdom) based organization which gives the award annually to recognize innovative housing projects around the world.



Sunil Shetty - brand ambassador of NADA

- ❖ National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has selected Bollywood actor Sunil Shetty as its brand ambassador.
- ❖ NADA is India's anti-doping body.
- ❖ It also promotes anti-doping research and education as well as cooperates with other anti-doping organisations besides World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

FICCI - Sportsperson of the year 2019

- ❖ 'Sports Person of the Year 2019' award at the FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) India Sports Awards - 2019 honoured the following persons at FICCI Federation House in New Delhi.
 - Indian women's hockey team captain Rani Rampal (25).
 - Asian Games gold medalist shooter Saurabh Chaudhary (17).



Space Oscar award

- ❖ The Gurugram-based startup blue Sky Analytics has created an application called 'Zuri' that won the Copernicus Masters Award also called Space Oscars.
- ❖ This award was under the Social Entrepreneurship category.



- ❖ The award was given by the Earth observation program managed by the European Commission (EU) in partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA).

Sunil Chhetri - brand ambassador of Puma

- ❖ Indian men's football team captain Sunil Chhetri has signed a 3-year deal with PUMA.
- ❖ The Bengaluru FC skipper is currently the second-highest goal-scorer in international football after Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo.
- ❖ He has been named as the AIFF Player of the Year six times.
- ❖ He was also conferred with the Arjuna award in 2011 and Padma Shri in 2019.

Wharton - QS Stars Reimagine Education Award 2019

- ❖ Rahul Adhikari has won this award.
- ❖ He got this award for his program "International Changemaker Olympiad (ICO)".
- ❖ Rahul's work was the winner in "sustainable" category.
- ❖ This award is popularly known as the "Oscars" of education.
- ❖ This Award ceremony held in London, UK.
- ❖ The ICO gives a platform to young students in schools from all over the world to solve a real world problem.



2019 WTA Player Award winners

- ❖ The 2019 WTA (Women's Tennis Association) Player Awards were announced by the WTA.
- ❖ The winners were voted by the members of the International media in addition to the WTA Jerry Diamond ACES (Asia Corporate Excellence & Sustainability) Award.

Winners	Country	Category
Ashleigh Barty	Australia	Player of the year
Bianca Vanessa Andreescu	Canada	Newcomer of the year
Sofia Anna Kenin	United States (US)	Most Improved Player of the year
Timea Babos and Kristina Mladenovic	Hungary and France	Doubles Team of the Year
Belinda Bencic	Switzerland	Comeback player of the year

2020 Crystal Award – WEF

- ❖ The World Economic Forum (WEF) has announced the Winners of 26th Annual Crystal Award for the year 2020.
- ❖ WEF's 2019 Crystal Award Recipients
 - Jin Xing – China,
 - Theaster Gates – Chicago,
 - Lynette Wallworth - Australia,
 - Deepika Padukone - Indian actress.

[About World Economic Forum \(WEF\)](#)

- ❖ WEF was established in 1971 as a not-for-profit foundation.
- ❖ Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ The reports published by the WEF are
 - Global Competitiveness Report,
 - Global Gender Gap Report,
 - Global Risks Report,
 - Global Travel and Tourism Report.

Time's person of the year - Greta Thunberg

- ❖ Time magazine has chosen Greta Thunberg, a Swedish climate crisis activist, as person of the year 2019.
- ❖ She is known for “#FridaysforFuture” movement.
- ❖ It is an annual issue of the United States news magazine - Time.
- ❖ Thunberg (16) is the youngest individual to be recognized.
- ❖ This marks the third year in a row in which Time has named a person who was not a world leader.

1	Greta Thunberg	Climate activist	Person of the Year
2	Bob Iger	Chairman and CEO of The Walt Disney Company	Businessperson of the Year
3	The Public Servants	Federal workers of the US	Guardians of the Year
4	United States women's national soccer team	Women's Soccer	Athlete of the Year
5	Melissa Jefferson (Lizzo)	Singer	Entertainer of the Year



International Geological Congress

- ❖ India is gearing up to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in March, 2020.
- ❖ Theme: ‘Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Development’.
- ❖ India is the only Asian country to host the event twice.



- ❖ In 1964, India had hosted it for the first time.
- ❖ Geological Survey of India is the nodal agency for organizing the event.

About International Geological Congress

- ❖ It is popularly described as the Olympics of Geosciences.
- ❖ It is a global geoscientific event held once in four years and participated by around 5000-6000 geoscientists from all across the world.

UN medal for Indian peacekeepers

- ❖ About 850 Indian peacekeepers serving in South Sudan have been awarded the prestigious UN medal for their dedication and sacrifice.
- ❖ India is among the largest troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations.
- ❖ Currently, 2,342 Indian troops and 25 police personnel are deployed with the UN Mission in South Sudan.

DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2019

- ❖ Author Amitabha Bagchi has won DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2019, for his novel 'Half the Night is Gone'.
- ❖ This award celebrates literature of the South Asian region.
- ❖ It was instituted in 2010 by its founders, Surina Narula and Manhad Narula.
- ❖ DSC Prize Secretariat is located in New Delhi.

IMTJ Medical Travel Awards 2019

- ❖ Apollo Speciality Cancer Hospital, Chennai has won the award under International cancer centre of the year.
- ❖ The awards celebrate innovation and excellence in the medical travel, medical tourism and health tourism industry.
- ❖ IMTJ was established in 2007 in response to the increasing interest in medical travel and medical tourism.
- ❖ The winners of the IMTJ Medical Travel Awards 2019 were announced at Berlin.



ICC awards 2019

- ❖ The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the ICC awards 2019.
- ❖ It is a set of sports awards for cricket recognising and honouring the best international cricket players of the previous 12 months.
- ❖ Indian women's cricket player Smriti Mandhana was named in both ICC women's ODI (One Day International) and T20 (twenty twenty) teams of the year.
- ❖ Others Indians in the list of T20 team of the year includes Deepti Sharma and Radha Yadav.
- ❖ Other Indians included in the ODI team of the year are Shikha Pandey, Jhulan Goswami and Poonam Yadav.

PRSI National Awards - NLCIL

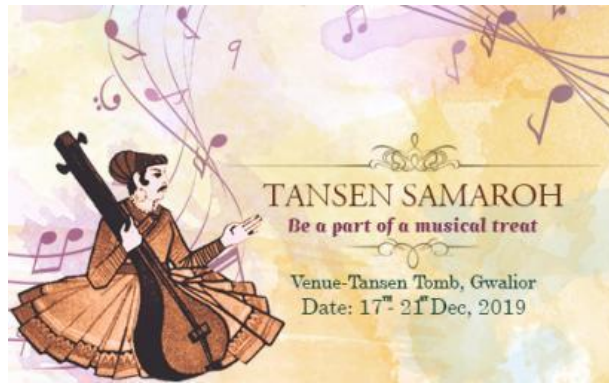
- ❖ NLC India Ltd (NLCIL) has bagged two national awards instituted by the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI).
- ❖ NLCIL has been adjudged as the best in the country in two aspects — in terms of
 - implementation of the Right to Information Act (RTI)
 - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- ❖ The awards were given away at the 41st All India Public Relations Conference held in Hyderabad.

16th Orange Festival

- ❖ The 16th edition of the State level Orange Festival began at Manipur.
- ❖ The festival is conducted annually by the Manipur government under the sponsorship of the North Eastern Council (NEC).
- ❖ It aims to promote the orange fruit and encourage its growers.

Tansen samaroh 2019

- ❖ The 95th edition of Popular classical music festival 'Tansen Samaroh 2019', has commenced in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The festival is an annual celebration started in 1924.
- ❖ It is celebrated in memory of Mian Tansen, a prominent 16-century Indian classical music composer, musician, and vocalist.



Sahitya Akademi Awards 2019

- ❖ Recently, Sahitya Akademi under the Ministry of Culture has announced its annual Sahitya Akademi Awards in 23 languages for the year 2019.
- ❖ Tamil writer Cho Dharman has won the 2019 Sahitya Akademi award for his novel Sool.
- ❖ This novel is depicting the life of the people in the lower rung of society at Urulaikuddi village in Thoothukudi district.

About

- ❖ Sahitya Akademi award established in 1954, is a literary honour.
- ❖ Award is presented to the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the 24 major Indian languages (22 scheduled languages plus English and Rajasthani).
- ❖ Sahitya Akademi award is the second highest literary honour by the Government of India, after Jnana pith award.

Sahitya Akademi Award 2019		
Language	Title and Genre	Name of the Author
Assamese	Chanakya (Novel)	Joysree Goswami Mahanta
Bengali	Ghumer Darja Thele (Essays)	Chinmoy Guha
Bodo	Akhai Athumiphrail (Poetry)	Phukan Ch. Basumatary
Dogri	Bandralta Darpan (Essays)	Om Sharma Jandriari
English	An Era of Darkness (Non-Fiction)	Shashi Tharoor
Gujarati	Mojma Revu Re (Essays)	Ratilal Borsagar
Hindi	Chheelate Hue Apne Ko (Poetry)	Nand Kishore Acharya
Kannada	Kudi Esaru (Autobiography)	Vijaya
Kashmiri	Akh Yaad Akh Qayamat (Short Story)	Abdul Ahad Hajini
Konkani	The Words (Poetry)	Nilba A. Khandekar
Maithili	Jingik Orion Karait (Poetry)	Kumar Manish Arvind
Malayalam	Achan Piranna Veedu (Poetry)	V. Madhusoodanan Nair

Sahitya Akademi Award 2019		
Language	Title and Genre	Name of the Author
Manipuri	Ei Amadi Adungeigi Eethat (Novel)	L. Birmangol Singh (Beryl Thanga)
Marathi	Kadachit Ajoonahi (Poetry)	Anuradha Patil
Odia	Bhaswati (Short Stories)	Tarun Kanti Mishra
Punjabi	Antheen (Short Stories)	Kirpal Kazak
Rajasthani	Bareek Baat (Short Stories)	Ramsawroop Kisan
Sanskrit	Prajnachakshusham (Poetry)	Penna Madhusudan
Santali	Sairjali (Short Stories)	Kali Charan Hembram
Sindhi	Jeejal (Short Stories)	Ishwar Moorjani
Tamil	Sool (Novel)	Cho. Dharman
Telugu	Septabhooni (Novel)	Bandi Narayana Swamy
Urdu	Sawaneh-E-Sir Syed: Ek Bazdeed (Biography)	Shafay Kidwai

ICC's annual awards 2019

- ❖ Australian all-rounder Ellyse Perry has won the Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award for the ICC (International Cricket Council - ICC) Women's Cricketer of the Year.
- ❖ She has been named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year also.
- ❖ Perry won Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award for the 2nd time in three years (First time in 2017).
- ❖ Australian Wicket-keeper Alyssa Healy is the T20I Cricketer of the Year.
- ❖ Thailand's Chanida Sutthiruang named as Emerging Cricketer of the Year.
- ❖ Meg Lanning named skipper of both ODI and T20I sides.



India Cyber Cop of the Year 2019

- ❖ Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officer B P Raju was awarded the 'India Cyber Cop of the Year 2019' during the Annual Information Security Summit held at Gurgaon, Haryana.
- ❖ He won the award for investigating and cracking a fraud case in an online entrance exam conducted by an engineering college in Rajasthan.
- ❖ The award was conferred by NASSCOM-DSCI (Data Security Council of India).

18th National Maritime Search and Rescue Board meeting

- ❖ Indian Coast Guard has organized the 18th National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSARB) meeting 2019 in New Delhi.
- ❖ NMSAR Board recognizes the Maritime Search and Rescue efforts of merchant mariners, Govt. Owned Vessels and Fishermen every year.

S.No	Name of the Award	Winner
1	Merchant Vessel (MV) for the year 2018-19	MV Asia Emerald III (It saved 6 lives from a distressed fishing boat)
2	Award for Fisherman	Anand A Ambhire from Maharashtra (for saving 11 lives from a sinking fishing boat)
3	Government-Owned SAR Unit	ICG Ships (ICGS) Sujoy & ICGS Vikram (for saving 46 lives from ROSV Sagar Sampada off New Mangalore)

Rashtriya Swayamsiddh Samman 2019

- ❖ Minister of Law & Justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad presented the Rashtriya Swayamsiddh Samman 2019 to 17 individuals and 10 organizations at a function held in New Delhi.
- ❖ Rashtriya Swayamsiddh Jeevan Samman for lifetime achievement was conferred upon Seturam Gopalrao Neginhal, a pioneer of urban forestry.

Details of the award

- ❖ It was Instituted in 2015.
- ❖ The award is presented under the following 10 categories:

1. Art and Culture	6. Innovation & Technology
2. Education	7. Public Service
3. Environment	8. Agriculture & Rural Development
4. Entrepreneurship & Livelihood	9. Sports
5. Health	10. Women Empowerment.

New Foreign Secretary

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) led by the Prime Minister of India, has approved the appointment of Harsh Vardhan Shringla, currently serving as India's ambassador to United States (US), as the next foreign secretary.
- ❖ HV Shringla will take over the charge from incumbent, Vijay Gokhale for a two-year tenure.

Composition of ACC

- ❖ Prime Minister.
- ❖ Minister of Home Affairs.

120th birth anniversary of Shaheed Udham Singh

- ❖ Nation paid homage to great revolutionary, Shaheed Udham Singh, a well-known freedom fighter on his 120th birth anniversary being celebrated on 26 December 2019.
- ❖ He was born on this day in 1899 in Sangrur district of Punjab.
- ❖ He belonged to Ghadar party.
- ❖ He was present in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar on the fateful Baisakhi festival (festival of harvest) on 13 April 1919.
- ❖ General Dyer opened fire without any warning on unarmed crowd.
- ❖ Many people lost their lives in that horrific massacre.
- ❖ He was best known for avenging the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by assassinating Michael O' Dwyer in March 1940 and was hanged by British in London.



**SHAHEED
UDHAM SINGH**
26 Dec 1899 – 31 July 1940

26 Dec 1899 Udham Singh was born in Sunam, Punjab	1924 He joined the Godar Party & moved overseas for organising Indians
1927 Returned to India on Bhagat Singh's orders, along with 25 associates & ammunition. Even got arrested for this move	
1931 Released from prison & moved to London	13th Mar 1940 Assassinated Gen. O'Dwyer to avenge his act of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Army Design Bureau (ADB) Excellence Award

- ❖ Indian Army Chief Gen. Bipin Rawat felicitated Major Anoop Mishra with prestigious Army Design Bureau (ADB) Excellence Award for indigenously developing 'Sarvatra Kavach'.
- ❖ Sarvatra Kavach is a bulletproof jacket that can provide protection against various ammunition including that from sniper steel bullets.



Wisden's Five cricketers of the decade

- ❖ Wisden Cricketers' Almanack (Wisden) has announced the "Wisden's Five cricketers of the decade list".
- ❖ Indian team's Captain, Virat Kohli was the only Indian to be named in the Wisden's Five Cricketers of the decade.
- ❖ It is a Cricket reference book, colloquially called as Bible of Cricket.
- ❖ Its first list was published in 1864.

ICC Men's Test rankings

- ❖ The International Cricket Council (ICC) Test ranking format was released recently.
- ❖ Indian captain Virat Kohli has topped the batting ranking in the list.
- ❖ Ravindra Jadeja ranked in 2nd Position in All-rounder format.

Team	Batting	Bowling	All Rounder
India	Virat Kohli	Pat Cummins	Jason Holder
New Zealand	Steve Smith	Kagiso Rabada	Ravindra Jadeja
South Africa	Kane Williamson	Neil Wagner	Ben Stokes
Indian Players			
-	Cheteshwar Pujara- 4 th rank	Jasprit Bumrah- 6 th rank	Ravichandran Ashwin -6 th rank
-	Ajinkya Rahane - 7 th rank	Ravichandran Ashwin - 11 th rank	Mohammad Shami - 29 th rank

Harivarananam Award

- ❖ The Musician Ilaiyaraaja has been selected for the prestigious Harivarananam Award for 2020.
- ❖ It instituted by the Kerala state government.
- ❖ Each year, Harivarananam Award is announced ahead of Makaravilakku festival in Sabarimala.

About

- ❖ The award was jointly being by the Kerala state government and Travancore Devaswom Board, and is being awarded since 2012.
- ❖ The first recipient of the award was KJ Yesudas in 2012 and Singer P Susheela was given the award last year.
- ❖ The award is given to those persons who have contributed to propagate the spirit of secularism and universal brotherhood through music.

National Symposium of Poets 2020

- ❖ All India Radio (AIR) organized the National Symposium of Poets 2020.
- ❖ Such National symposium is organised continuously every year since 1956.
- ❖ The poets of all 22 languages recognized in eighth schedule of constitution participate in symposium.

About All India Radio

- ❖ It was founded in 1936.
- ❖ It is a division of Prasar Bharati (India's largest public broadcasting agency).
- ❖ AIR is National Radio Broadcaster of India.
- ❖ Since 1956 Is officially known as Akashvani.
- ❖ It broadcasts programmes in 23 languages and 179 dialects.

SPORTS

13th South Asian Games

- ❖ The 13th edition of South Asian Games has officially kicked off after the opening ceremony at Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ❖ The President of Nepal Bidhya Devi Bhandari declared the Games open.
- ❖ The South Asian Games (formerly South Asian Federation Games) are a biennial multi-sport event held among the athletes from South Asia.
- ❖ The first such game was hosted by Kathmandu, Nepal in 1984.



3rd Khelo India Youth Games 2020

- ❖ The union sports minister Shri Kiren Rijiju launched the 3rd edition of the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) in Guwahati, Assam.
- ❖ The games are scheduled to be held from January 10-22, 2020.
- ❖ Composite logo, players jersey, mascots and theme song of the 3rd edition of the games was launched during the launch.
- ❖ Also, the Assam Olympic Association (AOA) would launch a programme called 'Grassroot Olympic – Mission Talent Hunt' to identify the sports talent in the state and groom them.

Harmeet Desai

- ❖ Indian paddler Harmeet Desai won men's singles title at International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Challenge Indonesia Open 2019 Table Tennis tournament held at Batam, Indonesia.
- ❖ He defeated compatriot Amalraj Anthony
- ❖ This was Harmeet's first title on foreign soil.
- ❖ It was his overall second International title of the year, after he had won Commonwealth championship in July 2019 held in Cuttack, Odisha.



6th Ballon d'Or for Messi

- ❖ Barcelona forward Lionel Messi has won the Ballon d'Or award for the world's best player for a record 6th time.
- ❖ It is Messi's first Ballon d'Or since 2015 and his sixth overall award.
- ❖ The Ballon d'Or Féminin (Women's Ballon d'Or) was presented to “Megan Rapinoe”.
- ❖ This special award to women has been started since 2018 only.
- ❖ Ada Hegerberg of Norway won the inaugural award.
- ❖ Both awards were organised by the magazine called France Football and voted for by a panel of journalists from around the world.

Spirit of Cricket Award

- ❖ The New Zealand cricket team has been awarded the Christopher Martin-Jenkins Spirit of Cricket award.
- ❖ The team has been awarded for its exemplary show of sportsmanship during the final match of the ICC World Cup at Lord's in July 2019.
- ❖ Martin-Jenkins was the former MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) president and BBC Test Match Special commentator.

Chennai's Chess Prodigy – R. Praggnanandhaa

- ❖ At the London Chess Classic, Chennai's R Praggnanandhaa has crossed the Elo rating of 2600 at the age of 14 years, three months and 26 days.
- ❖ He is thus the youngest Indian ever to cross 2600 and the second youngest in the world.
- ❖ Praggnanandhaa, who is also India's second-youngest Grandmaster, broke Nihal Sarin's record of the youngest Indian to cross 2600.

South Asian Games 2019 medal tally

- ❖ India concluded the South Asian Games - 2019 with their highest medal tally in the history of the tournament.
- ❖ India had claimed 309 medals in the 2016 edition of the South Asian Games and by winning 312 this time around, the contingent has broken their record.
- ❖ Indian contingent was able to win 312 medals, which includes 174 gold, 93 silver, and 45 bronze medals.

About South Asian Games

- ❖ The event was held in cities such as Kathmandu, Pokhara and Janakpur in Nepal.
- ❖ This year Cricket has also been included after a gap of 8 years.
- ❖ The official mascot of the South Asian Games is a pair of Black bucks.
- ❖ Blackbucks is an endangered species that is found in the southern region of Nepal.

Participating Country		 Gold	 Silver	 Bronze	Total
India		174	93	45	312
Nepal		51	60	95	206
Sri Lanka		40	83	128	251
Pakistan		31	41	59	131

FIFA rankings

- ❖ According to FIFA's year-ending ranking, Indian men's football team remains at number 108.
- ❖ The Indian team, however, slipped 11 places throughout the year (In December 2018, India was ranked 97 in the FIFA rankings).
- ❖ Belgium topped their second consecutive year, France remained at 2nd and Brazil in 3rd place.
- ❖ Among Asian countries, India has ranked 19th, while Japan tops the list (28th in the overall).

6th International Cup (Weightlifting)- 2019

- ❖ The 6th edition of Qatar Weightlifting International Cup 2019, held in Doha, Qatar.
- ❖ The event, hosted by the Qatar Weightlifting Federation (QWF) under the aegis International Weightlifting Federation (IWF).
- ❖ Jeremy Lalrinnunga broke 27 records that were under his name, including at the international and the national level.

- ❖ He broke 12 international (including three Youth World, three Youth Asian, six Commonwealth records) and 5 national youth records along with 5 junior national and 5 senior national records.
- ❖ Indian winner:

S. No	Winner	Category	Medal
1	Saikhom Mirabai Chanu	women's 49 kg	Gold
2	Jeremy Lalrinnunga	men's 67 kg	Silver
3	Rakhi Halder	women's 64kg	Bronze

FIFA's Team of the Year

- ❖ For the second year in a row, Belgium was announced as the FIFA's Team of the Year as it reached the top of the world rankings for the year 2019.
- ❖ Belgium was followed by France, Brazil, England and Uruguay in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th spots respectively.
- ❖ The 1st FIFA rankings of the new decade will be released on February 20, 2020.

Koneru Humpy- World Rapid Chess title

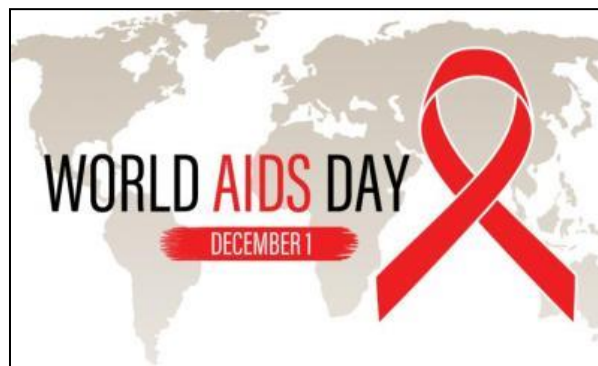
- ❖ Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy wins the World Women's Rapid Chess Championship held in Moscow, Russia.
- ❖ She won the title after drawing the Armageddon game against Lei Tingjie of China.
- ❖ Humpy is only the second Indian to win the rapid gold in the current format after Vishwanathan Anand who won it in 2017.
- ❖ World Rapid Chess Championship is a chess tournament held since 1987.



IMPORTANT DAYS

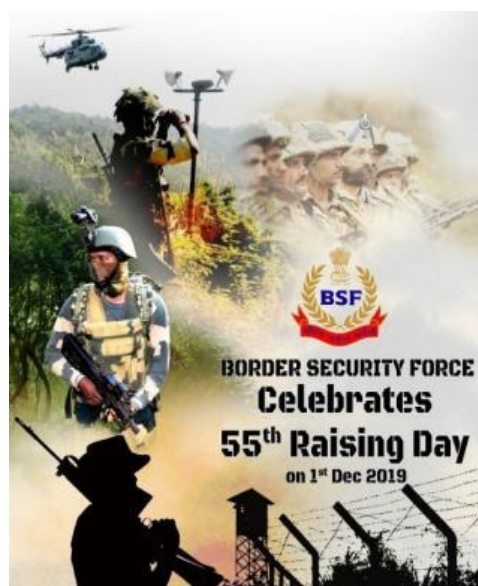
World Aids Day – December 1

- ❖ World AIDS Day 2019 is being observed on the 1st of December on the theme of “Communities make the difference.”
- ❖ Aids day is observed since 1988.
- ❖ To achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, union government implements a National Strategic Plan from 2017 to 2024.
- ❖ National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) is also implemented across the country for prevention and control of aids.



BSF Raising Day – December 1

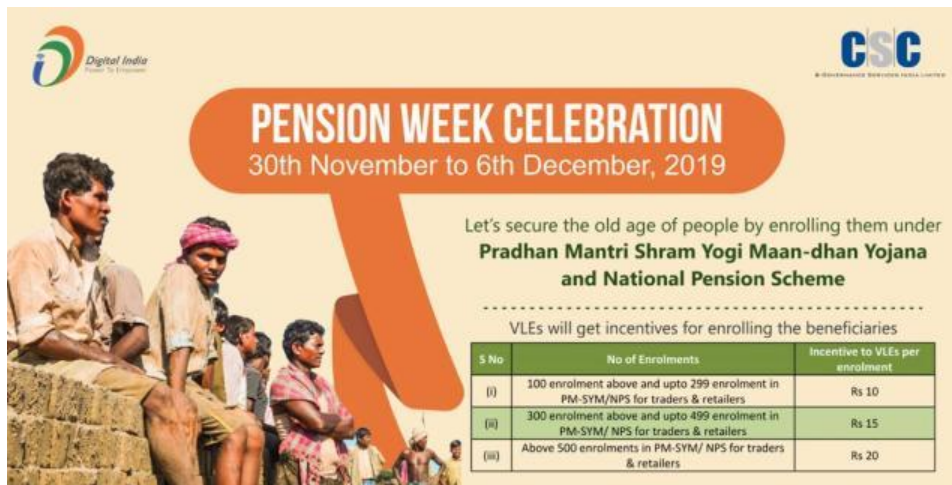
- ❖ The 55th raising day of Border Security Force was observed on December 1, 2019.



- ❖ The BSF was raised in the wake of 1965 war and with the specific purpose of manning Indian borders as the 'First Line of Defence' against infiltration, smuggling, and military assault.
- ❖ VK Johri is the current Director General of BSF.

Pension Week - 30th November - 6th December

- ❖ The Pension Week is being celebrated across India by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India from 30th Nov to 6th Dec 2019.
- ❖ It aims to generating awareness and maximizing registrations under Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) and National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed Persons (NPS).



PENSION WEEK CELEBRATION
30th November to 6th December, 2019

Let's secure the old age of people by enrolling them under
Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan Yojana
and National Pension Scheme

VLEs will get incentives for enrolling the beneficiaries

S No	No of Enrolments	Incentive to VLEs per enrolment
(i)	100 enrolment above and upto 299 enrolment in PM-SYM/NPS for traders & retailers	Rs 10
(ii)	300 enrolment above and upto 499 enrolment in PM-SYM/ NPS for traders & retailers	Rs 15
(iii)	Above 500 enrolments in PM-SYM/ NPS for traders & retailers	Rs 20

- ❖ It will organize awareness campaign among 10 crore Ayushman beneficiaries, 11 crore MGNREGA workers, 2.5 crore Self Help Group members, 40 lakh Anganwadi workers and 10 lakh ASHA workers about the benefits of these pension schemes.

World Computer Literacy Day - December 2

- ❖ World Computer Literacy Day is being Observed on 2nd December every year.
- ❖ The day is observed to mark the significance of computers and to promote awareness about computers and other electronic devices.
- ❖ World Computer Literacy Day was first observed in the year 2001 by the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT).

National Pollution Control Day - December 2

- ❖ The National Pollution Control Day is observed annually on December 2 to create awareness on controlling and managing pollution produced by industrial processes or human negligence.
- ❖ The day is observed in remembrance of the innocent lives that were lost in the Bhopal gas tragedy in 1984.
- ❖ The year 2019 marks the 35th anniversary of the Bhopal gas tragedy.



International Day for the Abolition of Slavery - December 2

- ❖ The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is observed annually on December 02.
- ❖ The day was adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in the year 1949.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD) 2019 - December 3

- ❖ It is an awareness day celebrated to bring changes in people's behaviour towards differently-abled people and to make them aware of their rights.
- ❖ The day has been promoted by UN since 1992.
- ❖ The theme of celebration of 2019 is "Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda".
- ❖ The Nagpur station of All India Radio celebrated the day in a unique way.
- ❖ The FM headlines were prepared in Braille and read by Raghuver Kurmi, a visually impaired school teacher.

Indian Navy Day – December 4

- ❖ The December 4th Indian Navy day is a commemoration of the Operation Trident and celebrates bravery of the navy.
- ❖ The operation was a counter-attack by Indian Navy on the Karachi harbour during the Indo-Pakistan war in 1971.
- ❖ India used anti-ship missiles for the first time during this operation and destroyed the Pakistani destroyer ship PNS Khaibar.

World Soil Day – December 5

- ❖ This day highlights the importance of healthy soil and advocates the sustainable management of soil resources.
- ❖ The World Soil Day (WSD) was recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002.
- ❖ 5 December 2014 was designated as the first official WSD by the UN General Assembly.
- ❖ The theme for 2019 observance of WSD is ‘Stop Soil Erosion, Save Our Future’.
- ❖ Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) also supported the formal establishment of WSD as a global awareness day under the leadership of the Kingdom of Thailand.
- ❖ FAO gives two awards on the eve of WSD,
 - The King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award,
 - The Glinka World Soil Prize.



International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development - December 5

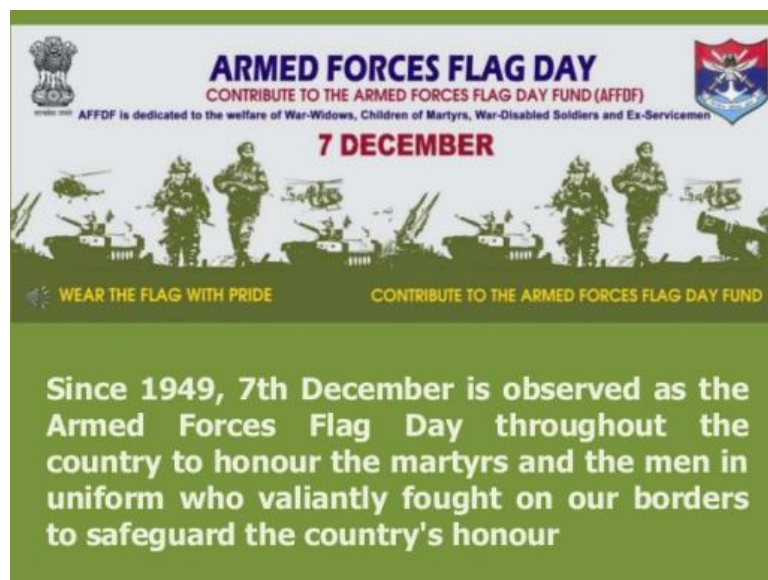
- ❖ It is mandated by the UN General Assembly in 1985.
- ❖ It is celebrated by many non-governmental organizations, civil society, and the private sector, among others.
- ❖ The theme of 2019 is "Volunteer for an inclusive future", highlighting SDG 10 and the pursuit of equality – including inclusion.

International Civil Aviation Day - December 7

- ❖ The International Civil Aviation Day is observed every year on 7 December across the world.
- ❖ It aims to generate and reinforce worldwide awareness of importance of international civil aviation to social and economic development.
- ❖ The International Civil Aviation Day was established in 1994 as part of International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) 50th anniversary activities.
- ❖ It was officially recognised in the UN system by the UN General Assembly in 1996.

Armed Forces Flag Day - December 7

- ❖ The Indian Armed Forces Flag Day is observed every year on December 7 since 1949.
- ❖ It is a day to honour the soldiers, airmen and sailors of India who fought on the borders to safeguard the country.



- ❖ On Indian Armed Forces Flag Day, funds are collected for the welfare of war-widows, children of martyrs, war-disabled soldiers, and ex-servicemen.
- ❖ The Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) is used for the welfare of the Armed Forces personnel.

International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime – December 09

- ❖ United Nations General Assembly established this day.
- ❖ The 9th of December is the anniversary of the adoption of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the “Genocide Convention”).
- ❖ This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Convention.
- ❖ The purpose of the day is to raise awareness of the Genocide Convention and its role in combating and preventing the crime of genocide.



International Anti-Corruption Day - 9 December

- ❖ International Anti-Corruption Day is observed every year on 9 December across the globe.
- ❖ It is celebrated to raise the awareness among people about corruption and what they can do to fight it.
- ❖ This day was instituted by UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 2003. The Convention entered into force in December 2005.

- ❖ This day is organised by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) every year all over the world.
- ❖ This day is celebrated worldwide under the observance of United Nations and encourages a global fight against corruption keeping the sustainable development goal of 2030 at the apex.
- ❖ Theme for 2018-2019 is “Together We Are United Against Corruption”.



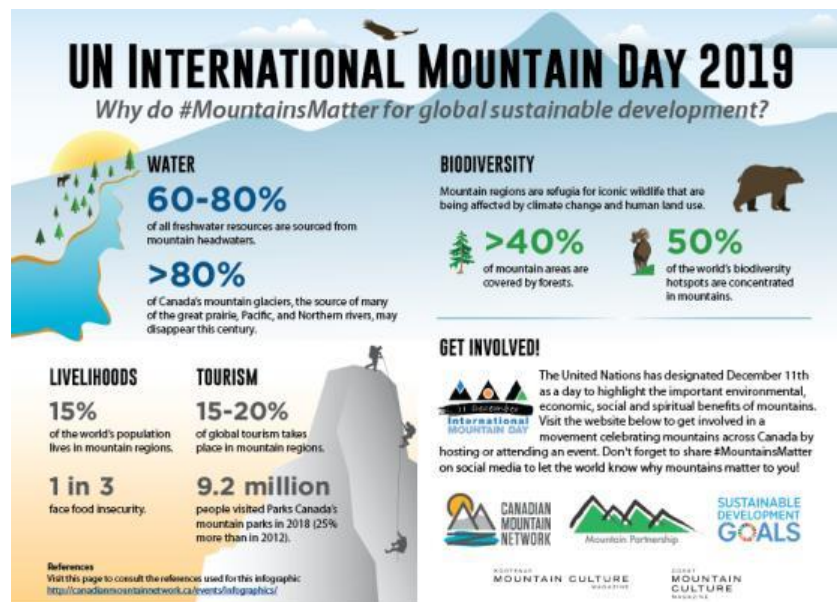
International Human Rights Day - December 10

- ❖ The theme for 2019 Human Rights Day is: ‘Youth Standing up for Human Rights.’
- ❖ The campaign, #StandUp4HumanRights has also been launched by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).
- ❖ The day marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1948.
- ❖ United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) was established in 2006 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ❖ National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was established in 1993 at New Delhi.

International Mountain Day – December 11

- ❖ This day is celebrated since 2003.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness and focus on the importance of Mountains’ inhabitants, ecosystem and the environment.
- ❖ The theme of this year is “Mountains Matter for Youth”.
- ❖ UN declared 2002 as the UN International Year of Mountains.

- ❖ As per the United Nations, mountains are home to 15 per cent of the world's population and a quarter of the world's animals and plants.



UNICEF – creation day – December 11

- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly created United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) on December 11, 1946.
- ❖ In 1953, UNICEF became a permanent part of the United Nations System.
- ❖ It provides humanitarian and developmental assistance to children and mothers in developing country.
- ❖ It is headquartered in New York City.
- ❖ It is one of the members of the United Nations Development Group and its Executive Committee.

International Day of Neutrality – December 12

- ❖ It was officially declared by a UN General Assembly resolution adopted in February 2017 and first observed on December 12 of the same year.
- ❖ The day aimed to promote the use of preventive diplomacy.
- ❖ The UN conducts aimed to enhance public awareness of the value of neutrality in international relations.
- ❖ The rights and duties of a neutral country are defined in the Hague Convention of 1907.

International Universal Health Coverage Day - December 12

- ❖ The day was adopted on December 12, 2017 at the UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- ❖ The day aims to create awareness in providing strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage.
- ❖ Theme: The theme for the UHC Day 2019 campaign is: “Keep the promise.”



National Energy Conservation Day – December 14

- ❖ The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the Ministry of Power, spearheads the celebrations.
- ❖ The day is celebrated since 1991 and its objective of the day is to demonstrate achievements of government in saving energy and conservation.
- ❖ Initiatives to Promote Energy Conservation and Energy Efficiency viz,
 - Energy Conservation Building Codes (ECBC)
 - Perform Achieve and Trade Scheme (PAT)
 - UJALA scheme

About BEE

- ❖ Founded - 1 March 2002.
- ❖ Headquarters - New Delhi.
- ❖ Act - Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- ❖ It is a statutory body.
- ❖ Responsible for - promoting energy efficiency and conservation.

National Energy Conservation Week

- ❖ National Energy Conservation Week celebrated from 14th to 20th December annually.

International Tea Day – December 15

- ❖ International Tea Day is annually celebrated in India since the year 2005 on December 15.
- ❖ The main aim of the day is to improve the condition of workers in tea plantations.
- ❖ The United Nations (UN) has already designated May 21 as International Tea Day by India's move.



Vijay Diwas – December 16

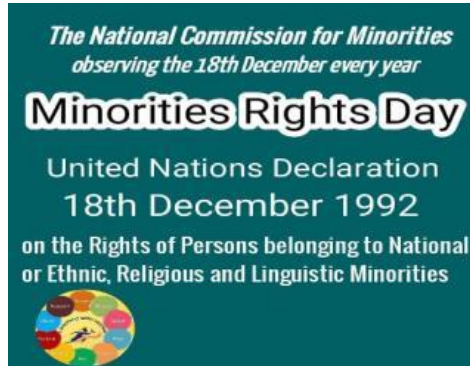
- ❖ The 49th anniversary of Vijay Diwas (Victory Day) was celebrated on December 16, 2019 to mark India's victory over Pakistan in the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971.
- ❖ The day is celebrated to honour the martyrs of the 1971 war between the two countries.
- ❖ This historic victory led to creation of Bangladesh.
- ❖ Bangladesh celebrated this day that marked its liberation from Pakistan.
- ❖ Indian Army contingent participated in Dhaka parade of 2019 for the first time.

International Migrants Day – December 18

- ❖ It is celebrated through the UN-related agency International Organization for Migration (UN Migration).
- ❖ The theme is #WeTogether.
- ❖ On this day in 1990, the UN adopted the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

Indian Minorities Rights Day – December 18

- ❖ It focuses on the religious harmony, respect, and better understanding of all minorities' communities in India.
- ❖ The Minorities Rights Day is celebrated by the National Commission for Minorities (NCM).



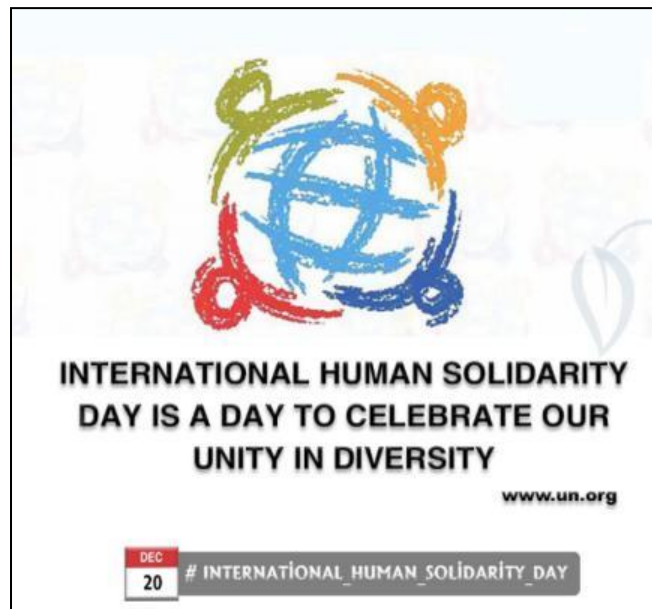
- ❖ The Government has set up the NCM under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.
- ❖ Six religious' communities of India namely Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains have been notified as minority communities in India.

Goa Liberation Day – December 19, 2019

- ❖ It is celebrated to honour the Indian armed forces who freed the state from the Portuguese in 1961.
- ❖ 'Operation Vijay' (1961) ended 451 years of rule by the Portuguese on Goa.
- ❖ Goa was given statehood status on 30 May 1987.


International Human Solidarity Day - December 20

- ❖ International Human Solidarity Day is observed annually on December 20 by the United Nations.
- ❖ This day aims to promote the culture of solidarity and the spirit of sharing to combat poverty.
- ❖ On December 22, 2005, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed to observe the solidarity day.



National Mathematics Day - December 22

- ❖ National Mathematics Day celebrated every year on the birth anniversary of mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan.
- ❖ The main objective behind the celebration is to raise awareness among people about the importance of mathematics for the development of humanity.
- ❖ on 22 December 2012, National Mathematics Day was celebrated across the country for the first time.



The Mathematical Genius SRINIVASA RAMANUJAN

22 December 1887 – 26 April 1920

All-time great mathematician, despite his lack of formal education and a short life-span, left behind 4000 original theorems.

Made extraordinary contributions to mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series, & continued fractions

Awarded the B.A. Degree by research of the Cambridge University in 1916 & elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London in Feb. 1918

Ramanujan prime & Ramanujan theta function inspired a vast amount of further research.

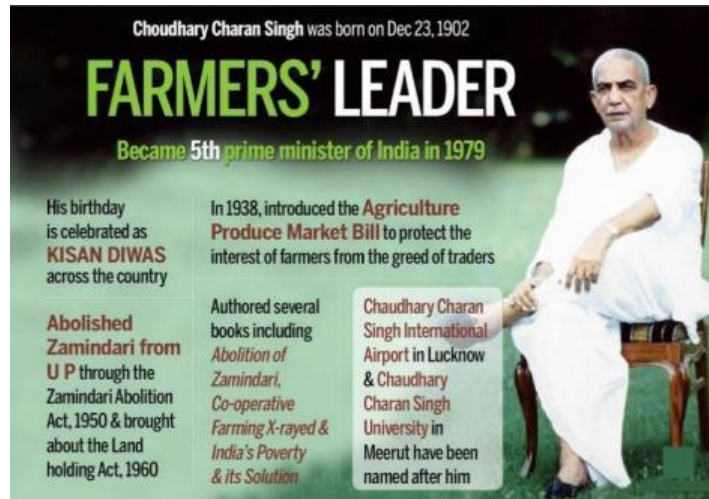
Known for Ramanujan's sum
Landau–Ramanujan constant
Mock theta functions
Ramanujan conjecture
Ramanujan Soldner constant
Rogers–Ramanujan identities
Ramanujan's master theorem

"An equation means nothing to me unless it expresses a thought of God"

PRASAR BHARATI
@prasarbharati

Kisan Diwas (Farmer's Day in India) - December 23

- ❖ The National Farmers Day or Kisan Diwas is celebrated every year in India on 23rd of December.
- ❖ This day was chosen to honour the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Choudhary Charan Singh.
- ❖ He was also known as a Kisan Leader and followed the slogan of Lal Bahadur Shastri's 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan'.
- ❖ 'Zamindari Abolition Bill -1952' was passed in parliament due to Chaudhary Charan Singh's hard work.
- ❖ This day is celebrated to promote awareness among the citizens to understand the importance of the farmers to the society and overall economic and social development of a country.



National Consumers Right Day – December 24

- ❖ This is the day when the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the President.
- ❖ The theme of 2019 is “alternate consumer grievance/dispute redressal”.
- ❖ The rights under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 flow from the rights enshrined in Articles 14 to 19 of the Constitution of India.
- ❖ National Consumer Helpline - Call 1800-11-4000 or 14404.
- ❖ The World Consumer Rights Day is observed on 15 March.
- ❖ The consumer is having the following six consumer rights under the Act:
 - Right to Safety
 - Right to be Informed

- Right to Choose
- Right to be heard
- Right to seek Redressal
- Right to Consumer Education.



Good Governance Day – December 25

- ❖ It was established by Central Government in 2014.
- ❖ It is celebrated to mark the birthday anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ❖ Atal Bihari Vajpayee was born on 25 December 1924.
- ❖ He is a three-time Prime Minister of India.
- ❖ For first time he had served as PM for just 13 days in 1996 and second time for 13 months in 1998-1999.
- ❖ In his third term as PM he completed his full five-year term, making him first PM from outside the Congress party to serve a full term.
- ❖ In December 2014, Mr Vajpayee, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (posthumously) were awarded Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.

MISCELLANEOUS

Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize 2019

- ❖ English author Tony Joseph has won 12th 'Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize' for his 2018 book, 'Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came'.
- ❖ It seeks to celebrate 'extraordinary new writing in all genres' from South Asian countries.
- ❖ In 2018, the prize was awarded to Sujatha Gidla from India for her 'Ants Among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and The Making of Modern India'.

WADA banned Russia from International sports events

- ❖ World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) executive committee has banned Russia from Olympics (2020 - Tokyo & 2022 - Beijing), world championships events for 4 years.
- ❖ WADA had first found evidence of mass doping in Russian athletics in 2015.
- ❖ Russian athletes can still compete at major international sporting events without their flag or anthem.



Nuad Thai massage - UNESCO's intangible Heritage list

- ❖ UNESCO has recognised the "Nuad" Thai massage of Thailand as a part of its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- ❖ The Nuad massage teachings focus on directing blood circulation around problem areas that help in solving muscle aches.

- ❖ The list was established in 2008 when the Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage came into effect.

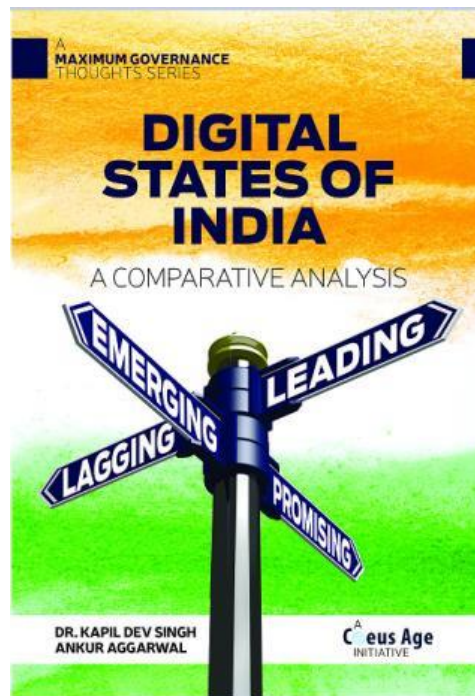
Belgium's Carnival of Aalst

- ❖ UNESCO has removed the 'Carnival of Aalst' of Belgium from its Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity List.
- ❖ The carnival was added to the Intangible Cultural Heritage list in 2010.
- ❖ The carnival of Aalst is held annually in the Belgium city of Aalst.
- ❖ It was recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.



Digital States of India report

- ❖ The second edition of "Digital States of India – A Comparative Analysis" released by research and consulting organization Coeus Age Consulting.
- ❖ As per the report's data, Chhattisgarh has emerged as the top state.
- ❖ Chhattisgarh was followed by Maharashtra, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th place respectively.
- ❖ It is to be noted that 5th ranked Madhya Pradesh was ranked 1st in 2017.
- ❖ The first report launched in 2017.



Braille Edition of Exam Warriors book

- ❖ Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot released Braille Edition of 'Exam Warriors'.
- ❖ This book was authored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ❖ The Braille Edition of book will be available in Hindi and English.

1st Recognition to Indian Pharmacopoeia

- ❖ The National Department of Regulation of Medicines and Health Products of the Ministry of Public Health of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has formally recognized Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP).
- ❖ IP is an official book of standards for drugs manufactured & marketed in India in terms of their identity, purity, and strength.
- ❖ With this, Afghanistan has become the 1st nation to recognize IP.
- ❖ It is published by the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) on behalf of the Department of Commerce, and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- ❖ The standards of the book have been made under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules 1945.



Global Alliance on Health and Pollution - Report

- ❖ Global Alliance on Health and Pollution released a report named “2019 Pollution and Health Metrics: Global, Regional and Country Analysis”.
- ❖ As per the report, India leads the world with about 2.3 million (23,26,771 deaths) in 2017 in terms of premature deaths due to pollution.
- ❖ India is followed by China (18,65,566 deaths) & Nigeria (2,79,318 deaths).
- ❖ The report estimates the global impact of contaminants in the air, water, and workplace.

Other Data

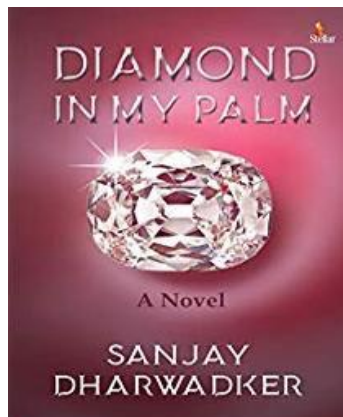
- ❖ In terms of total untimely deaths per 1 lakh population due to pollution, Chad ranks 1st with 287 deaths, followed by the Central African Republic (251) & North Korea (202).
- ❖ India ranks 10th in this list with 174.
- ❖ In terms of untimely deaths due to air pollution only, China ranks first with 12,42,987 deaths, India ranked 2nd with (12,40,529 deaths) and Pakistan ranks third (1,28,005).
- ❖ India is the only country included in the 3 lists issued by this report.

SDG India Index & Dashboard 2019 – 20

- ❖ NITI Aayog will launch the second edition of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2019 – 20.
- ❖ The first edition of SDG India Index was launched in December 2018.
- ❖ It was the first tool developed by any large country to monitor progress towards achieving SDGs at sub-national level.
- ❖ The SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019 documents the progress made by India's States and Union Territories (UTs) towards implementing the 2030 SDG targets.
- ❖ It has been developed by Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) in collaboration with United Nations in India, and Global Green Growth Institute.

Diamond in My Palm - Book

- ❖ Sanjay Dharwadker authored the book titled “Diamond in My Palm”.
- ❖ This book describes, how the world’s 12 greatest diamonds originated from Golconda and Kollur mines in Andhra Pradesh & later took away by Mughals, Persians, Brits, French, Turks and Russians after centuries and now ensconced in their national treasures.
- ❖ The important diamonds listed in the book were:
 - Koh-i-Noor (In London),
 - Pink Darya-i-Noor (now in Tehran),
 - The pale, flat-shaped Shah Diamond and the half egg eye shaped, blue-green Orlov Diamond (now in Kremlin); and
 - The fabled Blue Diamond (now the Hope Diamond in the Smithsonian).



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