

TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 2018

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TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Medical education Ministry of the Maharashtra government has appointed Dr Jagannath Dixit as the brand ambassador of its anti-obesity campaign.
- ❖ The 59th edition of Subroto Cup International Football Tournament (Junior Boys category) was won by Bangladesh's Krida Shiksha Prothishtan (BKSP) defeating Amini School of Afghanistan.
- ❖ SpaceX CEO Elon Musk has announced that he is changing the name of "BFR" rocket to "Starship". BFR was referred as the "Big Falcon Rocket."
- ❖ Four new horned frogs' species have been discovered by a team of biologists from Delhi University, University College Dublin (Ireland) and Natural History Museum (UK) in the Himalayan regions of Northeast India.
 - Team of biologists also includes S D Biju, who is known as the "Frogman of India".
- ❖ NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) has selected Jezero Crater as the landing site for its upcoming Mars 2020 rover mission.
 - The rover mission is scheduled to launch in July 2020.
- ❖ Australia and Poland refused to sign a UN pact on migration because the agreement would undermine their existing immigration policies.
- ❖ Dr. Tamilisai Soundarajan receives Emerging star of Indian politics award from American's Global community Oscar. Tamilisai Soundararajan was nominated for Emerging Indian politician category.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has released the book titled 'Tamil Nadu Police Gallant Heroes' at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chepauk. The book honours the lives all those police personnel who had sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.
- ❖ The 3rd India-Singapore Defence Minister dialogue (DMD) was held recently in Visakhapatnam. The meeting was co-chaired by the Defence ministers of the 2 countries.
 - The 4th Defence Minister's dialogue was announced to be held in Singapore in 2019.
- ❖ India and Nepal decided to set up a hotline to ensure effective coordination to combat smuggling, improve border management and facilitate trade.
- ❖ The Embassy of India in Nepal and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organized a 3-day exhibition of construction equipment and technology-ConMac 2018 in Bhaktapur near Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ❖ The 1st offshore wind investment conference was held in New Delhi, during which the European Investment Bank (EIB) and State Bank of India (SBI) agreed to cooperate on financing renewable energy and wind energy projects across India.

- ❖ The Leading tyre maker Apollo Tyres has roped in the cricketer Sachin Tendulkar as its brand ambassador for the period of 5 years. This is for the first time that the company has associated itself with a celebrity as the face of its brand.
 - Apart from Apollo Tyres, Tendulkar is also the brand Ambassador for **BMW** in India.
- ❖ The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced that it has renamed the ICC World T20 as the ICC T20 World Cup. The changes will be applicable to both men's and women's cricket.
- ❖ GRSE launched two fast patrol vessels (FPV) ICGS Amrit Kaur and ICGS Kamla Devi, (named after freedom fighters) in the river Hooghly in Kolkata.
- ❖ The UK's Cambridge Dictionary has declared nomophobia, the word that describes the stress and anxiety caused by being separated from your mobile device, as the People's Word of 2018.
 - For the first time, the Cambridge editors asked the public to vote for the word that best summed up 2018.
- ❖ United Nations selected Noida and Greater Noida, twin cities in Gautam Buddh Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh, adjoining New Delhi to participate in its Global Sustainable Cities 2025 initiative in the "University City" category.
 - It is the only invitee from India.
- ❖ Air Forces of India and the U.S began a 12-day military exercise in Kalaikunda and Panagarh air bases in West Bengal with an aim to enhance the operational coordination.
 - This 'Ex Cope India-18' is the fourth edition in the series of bilateral drills between the Indian Air Force and the U.S. Air Force and this is for the first time that the exercise is being held at two Air Force bases.
- ❖ Qatar announced that it will leave the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in order to focus on gas production. It has been a member of OPEC since 1961.
- ❖ Salman Khan, 52-year-old actor has topped Forbes India's 2018 list of richest Indian celebrities with earnings amounting to Rs 253.25 crore. He has taken the top spot for the third time in a row.
 - He is followed by the Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli and third position is taken by Akshay Kumar.
- ❖ Pakistan will soon impose a 'sin tax' on cigarettes and sugary beverages and that fund would be diverted to the health budget.
 - sin tax is an internationally recognised term and is specifically levied on certain goods deemed harmful to society, for example tobacco, candies, soft drinks, fast foods, coffee and sugar.
- ❖ India's oldest (107 age) Youtuber Karre Mastanamma, whose YouTube cooking channel Country Foods has over 12 lakh subscribers, passed away at her native village Gudiwada near Tenali in Guntur district.

- ❖ The Karnataka government decided to bear the education expenses of girl students pursuing pre-university, graduation and post-graduate courses in colleges run by it.
- ❖ Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) has assumed the Mexico's presidency, five months after winning a landslide election victory.
- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has appointed Ajay Narayan Jha, Secretary, Expenditure as new Finance Secretary after retirement of Hasmukh Adhia.
- ❖ The National Film Archive of India, a government-run film preservation and restoration body has added 2,200 short films and documentaries in the 16 mm format to its collection.
 - The prints were acquired from the State Institute for Audio-Visual Education (Maharashtra) in Pune.
- ❖ The Researchers at University of Queensland in Australia have created a new diagnostic test that can identify the presence of a tumour in the body based on a unique, DNA nanostructure that appears to be common to all types of cancer.
- ❖ Claudia Sheinbaum, the first woman elected mayor of Mexico City was sworn for a six-year term.
 - Another woman previously served as Mexico City mayor was appointed on an interim basis - Rosario Robles, (1999 - 2000) — but Sheinbaum is the first woman elected to the post.
- ❖ The Mauritius-based SBM Group has received Reserve Bank of India's approval to operate in the country through a wholly-owned subsidiary route.
 - The first foreign lender to receive such a licence after local incorporation was introduced in 2013.
- ❖ Pakistan's leg-spinner Yasir Shah became the fastest cricketer to take 200 Test wickets breaking an 82-year-old record, beating Australian leg-spinner Clarrie Grimmett's record of 36 Tests set against South Africa in Johannesburg in 1936.
 - Yasir achieved this by taking New Zealand's batsman Will Somerville wicket in Abu Dhabi.
- ❖ The government appointed Lalit Kumar, a 1995-batch Indian Economic Service (IES) officer as the new government nominee on private sector ICICI Bank.
 - He would replace **Lok Ranjan**.
- ❖ The first India-ASEAN InnoTech Summit was held in New Delhi. It was organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) in association with the Department of Science & Technology (DST) and the Ministry of External Affairs.

- ❖ A two-day “Conference on EU-India Partnership for Cultural Heritage Conservation” was held at the National Museum Auditorium, Janpath, New Delhi.
- ❖ The Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Sunil Lamba released ‘Blue Waters Ahoy!’ a book chronicling the Indian Navy’s history from 2001-10 in New Delhi. The book has been authored by Vice Admiral Anup Singh.
 - The book is the 6th volume in Navy’s history; the first five had covered the period from 1945 to 2000.
- ❖ The Delhi government announced the launch of a common mobility card called ‘One’, with a tagline of ‘One Delhi One Ride’, for easy commute on public transport. The card carries the logos of all 3 transport operators in the city – DMRC (Delhi Metro Rail Corporation), DTC (Delhi Transport Corporation) and the Delhi Government.
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs released a booklet in English language titled “A Handbook for Students on Cyber Safety” to create awareness among the Students and Adolescents about the cyber safety.
- ❖ The State Bank of India has roped in Asian Games gold medallist Swapna Barman as brand ambassador for its digital app YONO (You only need one).
- ❖ The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) announced the appointment of Jon Ridgeon as its new CEO following the approval by the IAAF Council on the first day of its 215th Council Meeting in Monaco.
- ❖ Pawan Singh became the first Indian to be elected as one of the 7 members of the Judges Committee of the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF). The Judges Committee consists of a Chairman and 7 members.
 - It is responsible for the uniform application of shooting rules. It offers guidelines for international judges.
- ❖ Mr. Imran Hussain, the Delhi Minister of Food Supplies, Environment and Forest was awarded “Hero to Animals” by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) for banning Chinese Manjha (A thread use in Kites) in Delhi.
- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik launched the ambitious “Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)” at Teacher’s Bhawan in Jammu.
- ❖ The Nagaland government signed a 5-year MoU with e-Governance Academy of Estonia to provide advisory and technical knowledge for setting up of e-Governance Academy of Nagaland (e-GAN).
 - The agreement was signed during the on-going 4th edition of the e-Naga Summit held at Kohima.
- ❖ Kohli has received a special honour as a signed jersey that he donated after scoring his maiden hundred in the 4th Test at the SCG (Sydney Ground Cricket) in 2015, got placed next to Sachin Tendulkar’s portrait at the Bradman Museum, Bowral of New South Wales in Australia.

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Krishnamurthy Subramanian as the new Chief Economic Adviser for a period of 3 years with effect from December 7th 2018.
 - He replaces Arvind Subramanian, who resigned from the post on June 20 this year.
- ❖ The World Gold Council announced the appointment of David Tait as its next Chief Executive Officer.
 - He succeeds Aram Shishmanian, who served as CEO over the last 10 years.
- ❖ Indian Navy Commander (Pilot) Vijay Varma and Captain (Pilot) P Rajkumar were honoured at the 7th 'Asian of The Year' awards for their selfless rescue service during Kerala Floods.
 - The winners were announced at the Straits Times Global Outlook Forum 2019 held in Singapore.
- ❖ The Indian cricketer Gautam Gambhir (Delhi - born) has announced his retirement from all formats of cricket on 6th December 2018. In domestic cricket, he played cricket for Delhi.
 - In IPL, he played cricket for Kolkata Knight Riders and Delhi Daredevils.
- ❖ The Chennai city police have launched an exclusive mobile application 'CCTV Chennai city' to monitor 1.5 lakh CCTV Cameras in the city.
- ❖ The 15th India Health Summit was organised by the Confederation of Indian industry (CII) with the theme 'Indian Healthcare – A Changing Paradigm' in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has launched the state's 'Tourist Police' in Kohima. Thus, it becomes the 2nd North eastern state after Arunachal Pradesh to have a separate Tourist police.
- ❖ The United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has named Rwanda's First Lady Mrs. Jeannette Kagame as Global Special Ambassador for Adolescents Health and Well-Being.
- ❖ Anil Manibhai Naik has been appointed as the new chairman of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). NSDC is a unique public-private-partnership, working under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship.
- ❖ The 24th Governor of Reserve Bank of India, Dr. Urjit Patel, has resigned from his post on 10th December, 2018 citing personal reasons. He succeeded ex-RBI Raghuram Rajan in 4th September 2016 and his term was due till September 2019.
 - With his resignation, He has become the 1st governor since 1990 to step down before the end of his term.

- ❖ The Indian economist Surjit Bhalla announced his resignation from the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC). The PMEAC was set up in September 2017 by PM as a 5-member panel.
 - It is currently headed by senior economist and **Niti Aayog member Bibek Debroy**.
- ❖ The government announced the appointment of Atul Sahai as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of New India Assurance (NIA) for a five-year period replacing G Srinivasan.
- ❖ The 2 day 175th Meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC) Conference & one day 5th OPEC and Non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting was concluded in Vienna, Austria.
 - The next OPEC and Non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting will convene in Vienna, Austria in April, 2019.
- ❖ The 3-day Military Literature Festival (MLF) 2018, jointly organized by Punjab, Haryana and Indian Army was held at Chandigarh.
- ❖ The London's Westminster Magistrates Court has ordered the extradition of Vijay Mallaya to India.
- ❖ The Crown Prince of Dubai, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, launched the Dubai Audio Library, the largest Arabic audio library in the world.
 - It is an initiative undertaken by the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) of Dubai in collaboration with the website Bookshare.org.
- ❖ **India** retains its position as the **world's top recipient of remittances** this year with its diaspora sending \$80 billion back home. India is followed by China, Mexico and the Philippines and Egypt.
- ❖ **Australia surpassed Qatar** to become the **world's leading exporter of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for the first time**.
 - The LNG is Australia's third-largest export commodity behind coal and iron ore.
- ❖ Manika Batra won the 'Breakthrough Table Tennis Star' award at the prestigious International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Star Awards in Incheon, South Korea.
 - With this, she became the 1st Indian Table Tennis player to be decorated with this award.
- ❖ NITI Aayog in partnership with a Singapore based AI start-up 'Perlin' launches 'AI 4 All Global Hackathon' to develop AI (Artificial Intelligence) Applications to make significant positive social and economic impact in India.

- ❖ The Indian Skipper Virat Kohli became the first Indian captain to win a Test in South Africa, England and Australia after defeating Australia by 31 runs in the First Test Match of the Four Match Test Series at Adelaide.
 - The Former Indian Captains Rahul Dravid and MS Dhoni won Test matches as Captains in England and South Africa but not in Australia.
- ❖ NASA's Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft has found water locked inside the asteroid Bennu.
 - It revealed the presence of hydroxyl molecules that contain oxygen and hydrogen atoms bonded together.
- ❖ The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has appointed Brijendra Pal Singh as the new chairman and President of Film and Television Institute of India.
 - He succeeded Anupam Kher, who had resigned from the post in October.
- ❖ The Delhi High Court has ordered a ban on the sale of online medicines by E-pharmacies across the country. A bench of Chief Justice Rajendra Menon and Justice V K Rao has also ordered the central and the Delhi governments to implement the order.
- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a fine amounting to Rs. 1 crore on the Indian Bank for violating the cyber security norms. The penalty was imposed under the provision of Banking Regulations Act 1949.
- ❖ Sascha Bajin, the coach of the world number five Naomi Osaka, became the first-ever recipient of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Coach of the Year Award.
- ❖ The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) India appointed the former SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya as the new Chairman of its board.
 - She will succeed former banker M. V. Nair.
- ❖ Australia became one of the few countries to formally recognize West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel while it will not move its embassy from Tel Aviv until a peace settlement is reached.
- ❖ The IPS officer Ramphal Pawar has been appointed as the Director of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).
- ❖ Ashok Kumar Singh, Lok Sabha Secretariat has assumed charge as Secretary, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST).
- ❖ On the occasion of Vijay Diwas (16 Dec), Sports Minister Col Rajyavardhan Rathore flagged off a special marathon 'Soldierathon' at JLN Stadium in New Delhi in the honour of Martyrs and wounded Soldiers.
- ❖ The India Post has started internet facility to the customers of the Post office savings bank account.

- ❖ The Punjab Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a resolution for seeking 30% reservation for women in Parliament and State legislative assembly.
- ❖ The 18th meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Central Board of Indirect taxes and Customs (CBIC) which works under the Ministry of Finance notified the **Korean Won** and **Turkish Lira** in the **List of Currencies for Exchange Rate** in order to decrease the transaction cost and enhance the ease of doing business.
- ❖ The 4th WHO (World Health Organization) Global Forum on Medical Devices “Increasing access to medical devices” concluded at Andhra Pradesh’s Medtech Zone in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
 - It was the first time the WHO Global Forum on Medical devices was held in India.
- ❖ The Ministry of Power launched the **ECO Niwas Samhita 2018**, an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings (ECBC-R) on the occasion of the National Energy Conservation Day 2018 (December 14) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) awarded the hosting rights of the 2020 Asia cup to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in a meeting held in Bangladesh Capital Dhaka.
- ❖ T.C. Barupal was appointed the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Guinea. He is presently the Consul General of India, Zanzibar of Tanzania.
- ❖ Tata Steel Limited had been declared as the winner of the Prime Minister’s Trophy for the ‘Best Performing Integrated Steel Plant’ in the country for the performance year 2016-17.
 - It thus makes it the 4th consecutive year for Tata Steel being honoured with this coveted award.
- ❖ The Merriam-Webster dictionary has declared ‘Justice’ as the 2018 Word of The Year. As per Merriam-Webster, the word ‘Justice’ is used in many phrases like racial justice, social justice and obstruction of justice.
- ❖ Interim CBI director M Nageswar Rao was promoted to the rank of an additional director by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.
- ❖ Maharashtra’s Pune district court has become the first court in India to allow e-payments of court fee, judicial deposits, fines and penalties. The new facility is started in the Shivajinagar district and sessions court.
- ❖ Sonam Kapoor has been named as the Person of the Year 2018 by PETA India. The winner of the PETA 2017 Person of the Year Award was Anushka Sharma.
- ❖ A Sivalingam, Inventor of Tamil telegraphy has passed away in Trichy. He had earlier developed Tamil telegraphy in 1955 and was helpful in putting it to public use in 1956. He was also called Tamil Thanthi Sivalinganar.

- ❖ The Greater Chennai Corporation has renamed Frazer Bridge Road near Chennai Fort has been renamed as TNPSC Road.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Government has released a G.O to start Montessori education-based kindergarten (KG) classes in 2,381 Anganwadi centres at government middle schools in the state. In this regard an order was issued on December 11, 2018 by the Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme department.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of 2 new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Tamil Nadu (Madurai) and Telangana (Bibi nagar) under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana on December 17, 2018.
- ❖ Shree Harsh Vardhan Shringla has been appointed as the Ambassador of India to the USA. He will be succeeding Navtej Sarna as the ambassador to the United States of America.
- ❖ Charles Michel has resigned from the post of the Prime Minister of Belgium. The resignation came as his government was under immense pressure from the opposition over his government's support for the UN global compact on migration.
- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had approved the appointment of Pranab Kumar Das as the new Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).
 - He will succeed S. Ramesh, who superannuates on December 31.
- ❖ Former India opener W.V. Raman has been appointed the new coach of the Indian women's cricket team.
- ❖ Hamid Nehal Ansari, an Indian national who spent 6 years in a Pakistani jail on charges of espionage after being arrested in 2012, has been released on December 18 in 2018 by Pakistan.
- ❖ 'Period. End of Sentence', has been shortlisted at the 91st Oscar in the Documentary Short Subject category.
- ❖ Gujarat was ranked as Best Performer in first ever States Start-up Ranking 2018 released by DIPP (Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion) at an event in New Delhi.
- ❖ Mohinder Pratap Singh was appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Mongolia.
- ❖ Ashok Kumar was appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Djibouti.
- ❖ The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) cleared the name of Arti Chhabra Srivastava as the first full-time Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of SEBI for an initial period of 3 years.
 - CVOs are considered an extended hand of the CVC, which is tasked with detecting graft by officials holding the public office.

- ❖ India's first private sector unit for manufacturing Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) has recently been opened at Adani Aerospace Park near Shamshabad in Hyderabad.
- ❖ The former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh released his book titled "Changing India" at an event in New Delhi.
- ❖ C.R.I. pumps has won the prestigious 'National Energy Conservation Award 2018' in the pumps category for the fourth time.
- ❖ The 'World Herbal Forest' project of Patanjali has been inaugurated at Morni Hill in Haryana (near Chandigarh).
- ❖ The Integral coach factory (ICF), Chennai rolls out the country's first ever Self-propelled Inspection Car (SPIC), which means that it is powered by diesel-electric power pack.
 - Usually a separate locomotive is employed for carrying out inspection works, which is expensive and time-consuming.
- ❖ Sadaiv Atal, the Samadhi of Atal Bihari Vajpayee was dedicated to the Nation on the birth Anniversary (December 25) of the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ❖ The 55th anniversary of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) was celebrated on December 24th at its 25th Battalion, Ghitorni, in New Delhi.
- ❖ The wrestler Bala Rafique Shaikh achieved the Maharashtra Kesari 2018 title by defeating Abhijeet Katke of Pune in the 62nd Maharashtra Kesari Wrestling Championship held at Azad ground, Jalna, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The US President Donald Trump announced that deputy secretary of defence Patrick Shanahan will take charge as Acting Secretary of Defence from January 1, 2019.
- ❖ The Ministry of Personnel appointed P V Bharathi as the MD and CEO of Corporation Bank, effective from February 1, 2019 till March 31, 2020 – the date of her superannuation.
- ❖ The RBI has mandated a three-year cooling-off period for its top retired officials before they can take over as chairman or chief executive of any other entity.
 - To join as a director of any company's board, the one-year cooling period mandate continues.
- ❖ The first meeting of the Follow-up Committee for implementation of the Trilateral Chabahar Agreement between India, Afghanistan and Iran was held in the port city of Chabahar in Iran.
- ❖ The Indian Navy commissioned its 10th Naval Hospital Ship named 'INHS Sandhani' at the Naval station Karanja in Uran near Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting organized an India-China Film festival during the first India-China High Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges in New Delhi.

- ❖ The Indian Railways won 17 awards in the National Energy Conservation awards 2018 held in New Delhi.
 - This was the highest number of awards bagged by a single organisation.

- ❖ The PM of India announced setting up of a Chair on the Paika Rebellion, in Utkal University, Bhubaneswar. He also released a commemorative stamp and coin on the Paika Rebellion.
 - The Paika Rebellion of 1817 in Odisha briefly shook the foundations of British rule in the eastern part of India.

- ❖ India successfully test fired its nuclear capable long-range ballistic missile Agni-IV with a strike range of 4,000 km off Odisha coast. This was the 7th trial of Agni-IV missile.

- ❖ The former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh received the South Indian Education Society's (SIES) Sri Chandra Sekharendra Saraswati National Eminence Award as part of the Kanchi Mahaswami festival.
 - He was awarded for his contributions to the field of public leadership.

- ❖ 'Nightingale of Assam' singer Dipali Borthakur passed away at 77 on December 21, 2018. She was a Padma Shri recipient in 1998 and was also known as "Asomiya Lata Mangeskar".

- ❖ The Maharashtra CM has launched the 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Schools' for students in rural areas on the occasion of 94th birth anniversary of the late prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
 - The schools are affiliated to the Maharashtra International Education Board (MIEB).

- ❖ The UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) has made it clear that schools cannot make Aadhaar a pre-condition to admit the students as per the provisions of law and doing so will be against the recent order of the Supreme Court.

- ❖ Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has announced the renaming of Child Care Institutes being run in the state as Jagannath Ashrams.

- ❖ The [SASTRA-Ramanujan Award, 2018](#) was presented to professors [Yifeng Liu of Yale University](#) and [Jack Thorne of University of Cambridge](#) for their "spectacular and far-reaching" contributions in the field of arithmetic geometry and number theory.

- ❖ Dr S Jayachandran, popularly known in North Chennai as 'Makkal Maruthuvar' (People's doctor) as he charged only Rs 2 (later increased to 5) as consultation fee from his patients, passed away after a brief illness.
 - Locals endearingly called him '5 rooba doctor' or '2 rooba doctor'.

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Power has mandated the use of smart prepaid electricity meters in the country beginning from April 2019. The transition is expected to be completed by next 3 years.
- ❖ The Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd (IL&FS) appointed the retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) official Bijay Kumar as its deputy managing director.
 - The company also appointed N Srinivasan as a non-executive director.
- ❖ Dronacharya awardee C.A Kuttappa has been appointed as the India's chief boxing coach at the ongoing national camp.
 - He replaced veteran coach SR Singh.
- ❖ Air Marshal Rajeev Sachdeva who had served in 3 out of 4 wings of Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) headquarters took over as the Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations).
- ❖ Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh was conferred the 'Champions of Change' award by the Vice President in Delhi. He was recognised for his leadership role in transforming the governance in the north-eastern state.
- ❖ Israel's parliament, the Knesset, approved of a law to permit exports of medical marijuana. This made Israel the 3rd country after the Netherlands and Canada, to take its medical cannabis global.
- ❖ The tribal Badaga community in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu celebrated their annual Hedдайyamman festival on 26th December.
- ❖ The Government has constituted a 6-member committee under Dr S Madhavi, Additional director of medical services to enquire into the case of negligence in transfusion of HIV-infected blood to a pregnant woman.
- ❖ M V Le Laperouse, an ultra-modern cruise vessel has become the first luxury ship to berth in the newly built 'modernized cruise terminal' at the Chennai port.
 - This was the maiden visit of the Romania-built vessel this year.
- ❖ Nilanshi Patel, a 16-year old girl from Modasa in North Gujarat has entered the Guinness World Records with the longest hair at 170.5 cm (5 feet 7 inches)
 - The record was currently held by 17-year old Keito Kawahara who had 155.5 cm hair.
- ❖ The Iraqi administration has declared Christmas day, December 25, to be a national holiday in the country. Previously, the Christmas Day had been designated as a Religious break only for the Iraqi Christian community.
- ❖ The President has appointed Justice Chagari Praveen Kumar as the new acting Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court that will come into existence on January 1, 2019.
- ❖ The Prime Minister of India has announced a Rs. 4,500 crore financial assistance to Bhutan for its 12th five-year plan.

- ❖ China has successfully tested Russia's S-400 missile air defence system. China was the first foreign buyer to seal a government-to-government deal with Russia in 2014 to procure the S-400 missile.
- ❖ Ambika Prasad Panda has been given the opportunity of discharging the duties of Chairman and Managing Director of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL).
- ❖ Andry Rajoelina, a former leader of Madagascar has won the country's presidential vote by defeating Marc Ravalomanana, who was also a former President of the country.
- ❖ Former President of USA, Barack Obama has been named as the most admired man by the Americans for the 11th year in a row according to a Gallup poll. The Present President of USA, Donald Trump ranked at 2nd for the 4th consecutive year.
 - The Former First Lady of USA Michelle Obama was also voted as the most admired women by the Americans.
- ❖ According to data from Dealogic, India has been getting more foreign investment than its neighbour China for the first time in two decades.
- ❖ The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 to mandate fitting of high security registration plates (HSRP) for all vehicles from April 1, 2019.
- ❖ The government has banned Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for its involvement in terror activities during its violent campaign for the secession of Punjab.
 - KLF will be the 40th organisation to be proscribed under the UAPA law.
- ❖ Actor and theatre artiste Cheenu Mohan passed away recently in Chennai. He was a trouper since the inception of the theatre group Crazy creations in 1979.
- ❖ The Prime Minister has recently released a commemorative stamp on Rajbhar community icon Maharaja Suheldev at Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has released a booklet titled "A Handbook for Students on cyber Safety" to inform the school children about the different aspects of cyber safety.
- ❖ Tennis Australia announced that a new "Heat Stress Scale" has been developed which takes into account air temperature, radiant heat, humidity and wind speed.
 - It will be used during the upcoming Australian Open at Melbourne, Australia.
- ❖ The IFS officer Rahul Chhabra, presently the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Kenya, has been concurrently accredited as the next

Ambassador of India to the Federal Republic of Somalia, with residence in Nairobi.

- ❖ Mr. Y.K. Sailas Thangal, who is the ambassador of the India to the Republic of Cote d' Ivoire, has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Liberia with residence in Abidjan.
- ❖ The President of India has recently inaugurated the 12th Global Healthcare Summit in Mumbai. It was organized by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin.
- ❖ A single-member Hooda panel, set up by the Defence Ministry and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) has recommended creation of new specialised units for information warfare in areas where the counter-insurgency operations are being conducted.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has launched a coffee table book about the Chairman of India Cements, Mr. N Srinivasan titled "Defying the Paradigm N Srinivasan: Fifty years of an extraordinary journey".
 - The coffee table book was authored by Kalyani Candade and its first copy was received by cricketer MS Dhoni.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved Rs 10,000 crore budget for the proposed human spaceflight mission (Gaganyaan), which envisages to send astronauts to space by 2022.
- ❖ Dr Sudha Seshayyan has been appointed the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the Tamil Nadu Dr MGR Medical University by the Governor. She will serve for next three years.
 - She succeeds Dr S Geethalakshmi as the tenth VC and the third woman holding the post.
- ❖ The book launch ceremony of Writer Su.Venkatesan, Sahitya Akademi Award Winner's book "Veerayuga Nayagan Velpari", was held at Raja Annamalaipuram in Chennai. The DMK president MK Stalin was a special guest, who published this book.
- ❖ The Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to return to power for an unprecedented third consecutive time after the ruling alliance emerged victorious in the parliamentary elections.
 - Hasina's Awami League won 287 of the 298 seats, while the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) managed just seven seats.
- ❖ The 26th International Camel Festival will be held on January 12 and 13 at Bikaner, Rajasthan.
- ❖ The number of internet connections in India has grown by 65% from March 2016 to cross the 50-crore mark in 2018, in line with the target set by NDA government three years ago.

- As per the latest information from the TRAI, by the end of September 2018, there were 56 crore narrowband and broadband connections in India.
- ❖ The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has approved the construction of another 3,10,597 more affordable houses for the benefit of urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban).
 - The approval was given in the 41st meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee.
- ❖ The Government increased the export incentives granted for Onions under the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) from existing 5% to 10% in the interest of farmers. This will result in better price for Onion in domestic markets.
- ❖ The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issued revised guidelines. Which allows food products offered by online food and grocery operators can now be sampled at any point in the supply chain.
- ❖ According to data furnished by the Reserve Bank of India, between 2015 and 2017, the ICICI Bank penalized the highest number of employees for defrauding bank assets in the last three year out of 60 scheduled commercial banks operating in India.
- ❖ The Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) has ruled that the application filed by The Embassy of Peru for geographical indication (GI) tag for alcoholic beverage Pisco is eligible for registration.
- ❖ Award-winning musician and composer Nitin Sawhney lead over 30 Indian-origin high achievers across different fields named on the UK's annual New Year's Honours List.

TAMILNADU

TN Receives Best performance award - Organ Donation Programme

- ❖ Tamil Nadu health department received Union ministry of health and family welfare's best performance award for its successful organ donation programme.
- ❖ It is for the fourth time in a row Tamil Nadu is receiving this award.

Other Awards

- ❖ Best State for promoting awareness on organ donation – Maharashtra
- ❖ Award for Performing First Hand Transplant - Dr. Subramania Iyer K, AIIMS Kochi
- ❖ Award for conducting 1st Uterine Transplant in India - Dr. Shailesh Puntambekar, Pune.

India Today Awards

- ❖ Vice President of India has recently presented the 15th India Today State of State Awards 2018 in New Delhi.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu received the awards for the best performing state in the categories of
 - Overall performance,
 - Maintenance of law & order and
 - Tourism.
- ❖ TN has become the second largest state economy in India, contributing 8.4% to national GDP.



- ❖ The India Today State of the States Survey 2018 was conducted by the leading research agency, MDRA.

Tamil Nadu increased health insurance cover

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government hiked the health insurance cover under the **Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS)** from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.
- ❖ This would come into effect from December 1, 2018 and would benefit 1.58 crore families as a cashless scheme.
- ❖ This follows the decision of the State Government to link the scheme with Centre's Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana under the Ayushman Bharat programme.
- ❖ The beneficiaries can get treatment in government hospitals or at more than 700 empanelled private hospitals, with nearly 40% of them with NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers) accreditation.

Tejas Express

- ❖ The Indian Railways operated Integral Coach Factory (ICF) has rolled out modern and feature filled coaches for Tejas Express.
- ❖ The second feature-rich Tejas superfast express train **will be operated between Chennai and Madurai.**
- ❖ This is the **first time** that we have manufactured an ultra-modern train for **Tamil Nadu.**
- ❖ The first Tejas train is being operated between Mumbai and Goa since 2017.



Tamil Nadu sets up animal welfare board

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has set up an animal welfare board with chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami as its chairman.
- ❖ The Animal husbandry minister is the vice-chairman of the 14-member board, which will have the chief secretary and heads of various departments as ex-officio members.
- ❖ There will be honorary members representing 'Society for prevention of cruelty to animals' (SPCA), which is to be established by the board.
- ❖ The move came to ensure the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 implemented in both letter and spirit.

LATE TO THE SHOW

<p>The State Animal Welfare Board will work with the government/ local authority for/ to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Form societies which will establish, manage infirmaries, animal shelters, cattle pound and monitor private gaushalas ➤ Suggest measures to prevent suffering of animals during 	<p>transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advise in design, maintenance of slaughter houses in humane ways, ensure destruction of terminally ill animals whenever necessary ➤ Advise the state on matters relating to vaccinations, medical care & animal birth control
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RERA house registration Rankings

- ❖ The Anarock Property Consultants has analysed the performance of real estate regulatory authorities in the country till November and released a statement.
- ❖ [Tamil Nadu Real Estate Regulatory Authority](#) (TNRERA) has been ranked **8th** among the Real estate regulators in India in the Housing project registrations.
- ❖ As per the statement, **Maharashtra tops the registration** followed by Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Rules, 2018 underscores that all ongoing housing projects with a minimum of 8 units must be registered with TNRERA.

Nel' Jayaraman passed away

- ❖ Eminent agriculturalist Jayaraman, who pioneered the protection and propagation of indigenous paddy varieties in Tamil Nadu, passed away in Chennai.
- ❖ Jayaraman, hailing from Thiruthuraiipoondi, has been credited with documenting and protecting more than 169 paddy varieties.
- ❖ His diligent work in the field of protecting the gene prototypes of indigenous paddy varieties won him the
 - National Award for best genome saviour in 2015 and
 - Best organic farmer award of Tamil Nadu government in 2011.
- ❖ He also has written several books including Nellathikaram and Mamarunthagum Parampariya Nel.

- ❖ He also launched “Save Our Rice” campaign and organised paddy festival (every may) at his native village Adirangam in Tiruvarur district in 2005.



Best Woman Parliamentarian Award

- ❖ DMK MP Kanimozhi has been selected for the Best Woman Parliamentarian (Rajya Sabha) set up by Lokmat newspaper for 2018.
- ❖ A jury of eminent personalities headed by Murali Manohar Joshi selected her for the award.

Mahakavi Subramania Bharathi festival

- ❖ Subramania Bharathi’s 136th birth anniversary is celebrated on 11th December 2018.
- ❖ Governor Banwarilal Purohit presented ‘Bharathi Award’ to Veteran film director K.Viswanath.
- ❖ He was awarded at the inauguration of the Mahakavi Subramania Bharathi festival and Desh Bakthi Festival at a function held at Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai.
- ❖ The festival was organised by the Department of Tamil Development and Vanavil Cultural Centre.



Mrs India Universe Globe 2018

- ❖ Coimbatore-based designer and stylist Shamyuktha Prem was crowned the 'Mrs India Universe Globe 2018'.
- ❖ She was crowned in the recently concluded 7-day long beauty pageant Mrs India Universe at Pune in Maharashtra.



- ❖ Shamyuktha was the only participant representing Tamil Nadu this year.

Global summit of Tamil entrepreneurs

- ❖ The global summit of Tamil entrepreneurs and professionals titled 'The Rise' will be hosted at Madurai.
- ❖ It is jointly organized by the Confederation of Tamil Agriculture Commerce Industry and Services, CK Prahalad Center for Emerging India, First World Community and the Pillar Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship.

TN launches 24x7 helpline '181' for women



- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Government launched a 24-hour toll free helpline number 181 for women facing domestic violence and sexual harassment.
- ❖ They will get assistance ranging from police help, legal aid or medical services including ambulance.
- ❖ It will be available round-the-clock on all days of the week and women can also get information about the welfare schemes aimed at their benefit.

India's first underwater museum

- ❖ The Indian Navy has agreed to gift **INS Cuddalore**, a **decommissioned Pondicherry-class vessel**, to the Union territory of Puducherry for the creation of country's 1st underwater museum.
- ❖ It would be sent to the seabed at a depth of 26 m and 7 km off the Pondicherry coast to act as an underwater marine museum.
- ❖ This would enhance tourism in the Union Territory of Pudhucherry.
- ❖ The vessel was decommissioned in March 2018.

TN fishermen get ISRO Gadgets

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has distributed 200 NavIC powered and satellite enabled communication devices to 80 fishing boat groups in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ These gadgets will help the Tamil Nadu fishermen to get cyclone and weather updates on a real-time basis.
- ❖ The NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) can be understood as the Indian version of the American GPS (Global Positioning System).
- ❖ The alerts will be in the Tamil language and these gadgets have been given free of cost.

TN Govt. to take over IRT (Indian Road Transport) medical college

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government will take over the administration and management of IRT-Perundurai Medical College and Hospital in Erode from the 2019-2020 academic year.
- ❖ The move comes as the transport corporations are unable to administrate the institution with dwindling funds.
- ❖ With this, the State health department will have one more college to its existing bouquet of 22 medical colleges.

Space science technology gallery lab cum training centre

- ❖ A Space science technology gallery lab cum training centre was opened in a Government School in Pudukkottai, Edappadi, Salem.
- ❖ This is the 1st time in the entire country that such a centre was inaugurated in a Government school.
- ❖ It was developed with the assistance of ISRO.

Chennaiyil Thiruvaiyaru – Music Festival

- ❖ Tamil Nadu CM inaugurated the 14th edition of Chennaiyil Thiruvaiyaru, the annual music festival organised by Lakshman Sruthi Musicals.



- ❖ He conferred the life-time achievement '**Isaiyazhwar**' title upon **thavil maestro Padmashri A.K. Palanivel**.
- ❖ The award carries a gold medal and it has been instituted by Chennaiyil Thiruvaiyaru organising committee.
- ❖ In memory of '**Mellisai Mannar**' **MS Viswanathan**, a **wax statue** of the legend was unveiled by Padma Bhushan Saroja Devi on this occasion.

Top 10 Performing Police Stations

- ❖ The list of best 10 stations was released by the Union Home Minister at the DGP conference at Kevadiya in Gujarat.

- 1-Kalu (Rajasthan)
- 2-Campbell Bay (A&N Islands)
- 3-Farakka (West Bengal)
- 4- Nettapakkam (Puducherry)
- 5- Guderu (Karnataka)
- 6- Chopal (Himachal Pradesh)
- 7- Lakheri (Rajasthan)
- 8- Periyakulam (Tamil Nadu)
- 9- Munsyari (Uttarakhand)
- 10- Churchorem (Goa)

- ❖ The Periyakulam police station in Theni has been adjudged among the top 10 performing police stations across the country.

- ❖ This police station is ranked 8th in the list.
- ❖ The rankings were based on the number of cases solved in the last year apart from the analysis of their efficiency and courtesy levels.

Keezhavenmani massacre - 50th anniversary

- ❖ December 25, 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the Keezhavenmani massacre.
- ❖ Keezhvenmani is a village in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ On December 25, 1968, 44 Dalits were locked in a hut in the village, which was then set fire to.
- ❖ Keezhvenmani was independent India's first well-chronicled massacre of Dalits.
- ❖ It signifies the suppression of a landless community raising its voice to seek something as basic as decent wages.
- ❖ Dalits raised their nascent voice under the banner of the communist movement in the unified Thanjavur district.

Tamil Isai Festival

- ❖ Tamil Isai Sangam honoured two musicians Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman and K. Venkatesan at the 76th annual Tamil Isai Festival at Chennai.



- ❖ Mridangam exponent Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman was given the title Isai Perarignar and musician K. Venkatesan the title Pann Isai Perarignar.

World Scholar's Cup

- ❖ 13-year-old Aadhi Sai Vijaykaran from Chennai has become the first Indian to win the Junior Debate Championship held at the World Scholar's Cup held at Yale University, USA.



- ❖ The Theme for the cup was 'An Entangled World: diplomacy, human relationships, the science of memory, and literature, art and music'.

Vishnupuram award

- ❖ The Novelist and researcher in Tamil literature Raj Gouthaman received the Vishnupuram Award for the year of 2018 in Coimbatore.
- ❖ Since 2010, Vishnupuram Award is bestowed every year on senior Tamil writers.
- ❖ Coimbatore-based Vishnupuram Ilakkiya Vattam awards a trophy and a cash prize of Rs1 lakh to the recipient.

Lokayukta search panel

- ❖ The Retired Madras High Court Judge K. Venkataraman has been appointed to head the 3-member Lokayukta Search Committee.
- ❖ The search committee, which was constituted by the Lokayukta Selection Committee, was chaired by the Chief Minister.
- ❖ The search committee has been tasked with submitting names of candidates to the selection committee for appointment as chairperson and members of the Lokayukta.
- ❖ It also named former Advocate General R. Krishnamoorthy and retired IPS officer A. Pari as the other members of the search committee.

Tamil Nadu Scientist Award

- ❖ 29 scientists were felicitated with the Tamil Nadu Scientist Award (TANSA), for making valuable contributions to the field of science and technology.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology hosts the event every year to mark the contributions of scientists from across the State.

Meghdoot Awards 2018

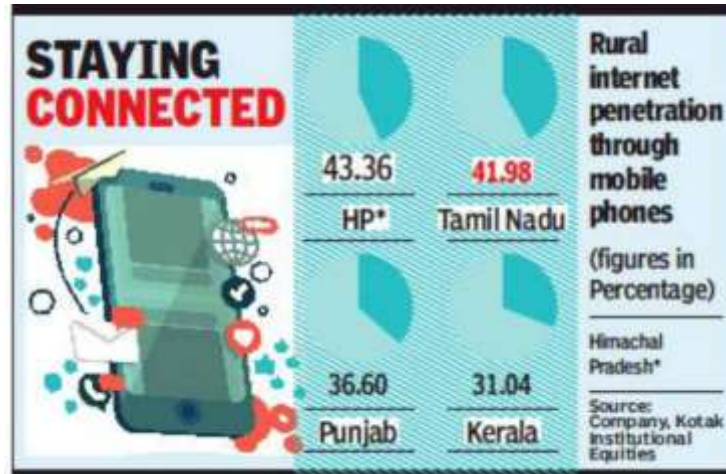
- ❖ The Minister of State for Communications (I/C) and Railways, Manoj Sinha presented the Meghdoot Awards for the year 2018, at a function, in New Delhi.



- ❖ Two persons from Tamil Nadu has been selected for this award.
 - Ms Srividya Iyer - Best Woman Employee
 - K.Ganapathy - Best Post Man
- ❖ The scheme of National awards known as Meghdoot Awards was instituted in the year 1984 to provide encouragement to the postal employees by recognizing performance of high standard.

Rural smartphone use

- ❖ The Union communication ministry has recently presented the report in the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ As per the data, Tamil Nadu is ranked at 2nd in the entire country in smartphone connectivity in rural areas.



- ❖ The maximum number of smartphones with net connection in rural areas is in Himachal Pradesh.

Chapparam (Chariot) festival

- ❖ The unique Chapparam (Chariot) festival was celebrated with traditional rituals and festivities in the famous Madurai Meenakshi temple, in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The festival symbolizes the importance of preserving all kinds of food and fodder.
- ❖ Another specialty of the festival is that the chariot of Goddess Meenakshi is pulled by lady devotees alone.

NATIONAL

6th India Skills Report

- ❖ As per the **6th edition** & **2019 version** of India Skills Report, **Andhra Pradesh** topped the list of states with the highest employability followed by Rajasthan and Haryana.
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh is one of the preferred hiring destinations in India, with the highest employability in India.
- ❖ Employability has risen to 47%, with female employability at 46% and male participation at 48%.
- ❖ It was a **joint initiative** of
 - Wheebox, a Global Talent Assessment Company,
 - PeopleStrong, a leading HR Tech Company and
 - Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- ❖ It was supported and backed by renowned partners like

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),
 - All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and
 - Association of Indian Universities (AIU).
- ❖ The report was launched in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti

- ❖ The Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti' in New Delhi.
- ❖ It has been launched to boost the Intellectual Property Right (IPR) culture in indigenous defence industry.
- ❖ It was instituted by the Department of Defence Production as part of the ongoing initiatives to enhance self-reliance in defence.
- ❖ The Directorate General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) was entrusted with responsibility of coordinating and implementing the programme.

Logo and Brochure of Logix India launched

- ❖ The Union Minister Suresh Prabhu launched logo and brochure of Logix India 2019 in New Delhi.
- ❖ Logix India 2019 is scheduled to take place in New Delhi from 31st January to 2nd February 2019.
- ❖ It is being organized by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO).
- ❖ It aims to serve as major initiative to improve logistics cost effectiveness and operational efficiencies for India's global trade.

Sahitya Academy awards

- ❖ Sahitya Akademi announced its annual Awards in 24 languages (22 Scheduled Languages+ English and Rajasthani).
- ❖ Seven books of poetry, six novels, six short stories, three of literary criticism and two of essays have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards, 2018.



- ❖ Tamil writer, traveller, essayist and scriptwriter S. Ramakrishnan has won the Sahitya Akademi Award for 2018 for his novel Sancharam.
- ❖ Sahitya Akademi is an autonomous body under the ministry of Culture.

Witness protection scheme

- ❖ The Supreme Court has approved the Centre's draft witness protection scheme and asked all the states to implement it till the Parliament comes out with a legislation.
- ❖ This scheme attempts at ensuring that witnesses receive appropriate and adequate protection.
 - Section 195 A of the Indian Penal Code deals with witness protection.
- ❖ This draft witness protection scheme, finalised in consultation with
 - The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and
 - Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD).
- ❖ It has 3 categories of witnesses based on the threat perception.
- ❖ Already, countries such as USA, United Kingdom, China, Italy, Canada, Hong Kong and Ireland have witness protection scheme.

Conference of Parties (COP-24)

- ❖ The 24th meeting of Conference of Parties (COP-24) to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held at Katowice, Poland.
- ❖ The COP-24 is very significant as it is expected to finalise guidelines for implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted in 2016.
- ❖ The theme of this year's India Pavilion is **'One World One Sun One Grid'**.

- ❖ This theme was highlighted by the Indian Prime Minister during the 1st assembly of the International Solar Alliance on 2nd October 2018.
- ❖ India will be setting up pavilion to create awareness about India's positive climate actions in various sectors of economy.

Rajiv Kumar Committee

- ❖ The Union Government has constituted 6-member committee to look at selling as many as 149 small and marginal oil and gas fields of state-owned
 - Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) and
 - Oil India Ltd (OIL)to private and foreign companies to boost domestic output.
- ❖ The panel is chaired by the NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar.

SHINYUU Maitri 18

- ❖ The first bilateral air exercise SHINYUU Maitri-18 between the Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) began at Air Force Station of Agra.
- ❖ The theme of this exercise is joint Mobility/Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) on Transport aircraft.

TROPEX 2019

- ❖ The Indian Navy will conduct its flagship large-scale coastal defence exercise Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX) from January to March 2019.
- ❖ The exercise is to test robustness of entire coastal security apparatus.
- ❖ As part of TROPEX, Indian Navy will conduct large-scale coastal defence exercise 'Exercise Sea Vigil'.
- ❖ This exercise will involve all stake holders across mainland and island territories.
- ❖ It is yearly exercise that takes place on Western Seaboard.
- ❖ It provides opportunity to test combat capability of the Indian Navy, Indian Army, IAF and ICG.

PRASAD Scheme

- ❖ The Union Government has included
 - Gangotri and Yamunotri in Uttrakhand,

- Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh and
- Parasnath in Jharkhand

under the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) to develop pilgrimage and heritage destinations in the country.

- ❖ With the new additions, the number of sites under PRASAD has now reached to 41 in 25 states.
- ❖ It was launched in 2014-15 by the Union Ministry of Tourism.
- ❖ It focuses on the development and beautification of the identified pilgrimage destinations.

Special Women Safety Feature in Pan-India App

- ❖ The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh announced the launch of a Pan-India single-number "112" under an emergency mobile app called '112 India' at Nagaland.
- ❖ A 'SHOUT' feature has been made available exclusively for women in the '112 India' app which is connected to the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS).



- ❖ The ERSS has been integrated with police, fire, health and women helpline numbers to provide emergency services through the emergency number '112'.

- ❖ Thus, Nagaland became the 1st state in the Northeast and 2nd in the country after Himachal Pradesh to launch a Pan-India single-number emergency mobile app.

India Indonesia Business forum

- ❖ The first ever India Indonesia Business forum (IIBF) was held at Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ It aims to facilitate the commercial and people-to-people linkages between Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India with Aceh and North Sumatera Province of Indonesia.

Madad 2018

- ❖ A major large-scale tri-service exercise, Madad 2018, was conducted at sea off Goa and Karwar.
- ❖ The biennial exercise was coordinated by the Indian Navy's Western Naval Command in consultation with the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQIDS).
- ❖ The drill is an effort to sharpen the joint war-fighting capabilities and enhance the operational synergy.

13th edition of CII Agro Tech India-2018

- ❖ The President of India inaugurated the 13th edition of CII Agro Tech India-2018 in Chandigarh.
- ❖ The Theme of the fair is "Technology in Agriculture: Increasing Farmer's Income".
- ❖ Great Britain was the partner country for the event whereas China and Canada were the focus countries.
- ❖ Punjab and Haryana were the host states.
- ❖ The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Ministry of Food Processing Industries are the Partner ministries.

India Water Impact Summit 2018

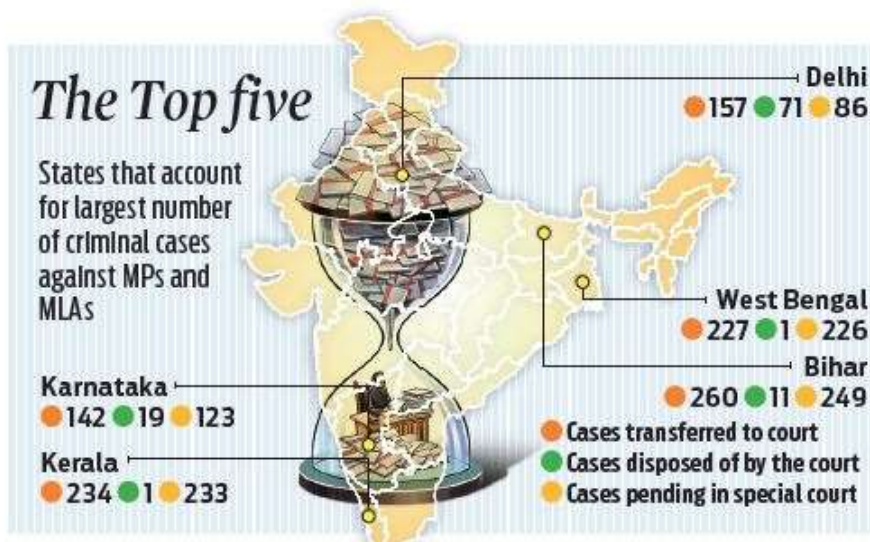
- ❖ The India Water Impact Summit-2018 was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ It was jointly organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga).



- ❖ It is an annual event and for this year the discussions were on rejuvenation of Ganga River Basin.

Special Courts in Bihar/Kerala – Supreme Court

- ❖ The Supreme Court has directed the constitution of special courts in each district of Bihar and Kerala for the trial of pending criminal cases against the present and former MPs and MLAs.
- ❖ A bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices SK Kaul and KM Joseph passed the directions.



- ❖ The SC has given the liberty of constituting as many courts as required in the districts of these 2 states for trial of cases against the legislators.
- ❖ It also directed the High Courts to send back cases from special courts, which were already constituted, to the jurisdictional district courts.

Clean Sea-2018

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard (IGC) has conducted the Regional Level Marine Oil Pollution Response Exercise titled 'Clean Sea - 2018' at sea off Port Blair.
- ❖ The objective of exercise was to ascertain preparedness of IGC, resource agencies and other stakeholders.
- ❖ The preparedness in responding to major oil spill will be in line with provisions of National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP).
- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) under the Ministry of Defence is responsible for the marine environment protection in the maritime zones of India.
- ❖ It is the coordinating authority for responding to oil spills in the Indian waters.
- ❖ It has drawn up NOS-DCP and has established 3 pollution response centres at Mumbai, Chennai and Port Blair.

Global Venture Capital Summit 2018

- ❖ The annual 'startup India Venture Capital Summit' for the year 2018 was held at Goa.
- ❖ It is a joint initiative by
 - The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and
 - The Government of Goa.
- ❖ The summit aims to attract more global capital into the country.
- ❖ The theme of the Summit was 'Mobilizing Global Capital for Innovation in India.'
- ❖ The partners for this initiative were
 - International Finance Corporation (IFC), a sister organisation of the World Bank Group,
 - Invest India and
 - the Indian private equity and Venture Capital Association (IVCA).

SCord to tackle smuggling

- ❖ The Union Government has approved Anti-Smuggling National Coordination Centre (SCord) under the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) to tackle Smuggling.

- ❖ SCord will help India to formulate a national anti-smuggling policy to tackle the smuggling on real time basis.
- ❖ Border Agencies
 - BSF (Border Security Force)
 - Assam Rifles,
 - ITBP (Indo Tibetan Border Police)
 - SSB (Sashtra Seema Bal) and
 - Coast Guards

would be member of SCord and all the organizations be coordinate with each other on real time basis.

INDRA NAVY Exercise

- ❖ The **10th Edition** of the bilateral exercise between Indian Navy and Russian Federation Navy (RuFN) was held at Vishakhapatnam.
- ❖ The aim of the exercise is to increase interoperability amongst the 2 navies, develop common understanding and procedures for maritime security.
- ❖ This year's exercise would be held in two phases,
 - The Harbour phase would be held at Visakhapatnam and
 - The Sea phase would be held at Bay of Bengal.

Lt Governors, Administrators empowered to Set Up Special Courts

- ❖ The **Lieutenant governors (LGs)** and the **administrators of Union territories** have been empowered by the central government to **designate civil courts as special courts** to adjudicate contracts relating to infrastructure projects.
- ❖ This comes under Section 20B of the Specific Relief Act, 1963 (47 of 1963).
- ❖ According to this the state government, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the High court, can designate
 - one or more civil courts as special courts within the local limits of the area to exercise jurisdiction

and to try a suit under this Act in respect of contracts relating to infrastructure projects.

Government raises NPS contribution

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has decided to raise the contribution of Central Government to National Pension System (NPS) corpus of its employees from 10% to 14%.
- ❖ This will increase in eventual accumulated corpus of all central government employees covered by the NPS.
- ❖ The Government also has decided to make the NPS fully tax free, making it on par with the Provident Fund Scheme.

Ex Aviaindra 2018

- ❖ The service specific exercise AVIAINDRA between the Indian Air Force and the Russian Federation Aerospace Force (RFSAF) was held at the Air Force Station Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- ❖ The aim of this exercise is focused towards anti-terrorist operations in bi-lateral scenario.
- ❖ The inaugural IAF-RFSAF Ex AVIAINDRA was conducted in 2014.
- ❖ The exercise is unique wherein the foreign participant does not bring its air assets.
- ❖ The EX AVIAINDRA-2018 is the 2nd in the series of bilateral joint exercise, which is planned in two phases between India and Russia.

First ever Agriculture Export Policy 2018

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the first ever Agriculture Export Policy, 2018 with the aim to double farmer's income by 2022.
- ❖ It has also approved the proposal for the establishment of Monitoring Framework at Centre with the Ministry of Commerce as the nodal Department to oversee the implementation of Agriculture Export Policy.
- ❖ The Commerce Ministry has formulated the India's 1st ever Agricultural Export Policy with a focused plan to boost India's agricultural exports to USD 60 billion by 2022.
- ❖ As per the policy, a corpus of USD 1 billion has been created to boost 12 champion sectors in services.
- ❖ The recommendations in the Agriculture Export Policy have been organised in two categories
 - Strategic and
 - Operational.

Partners Forum 2018

- ❖ The Fourth edition of Partners' Forum was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 12th December in New Delhi.
- ❖ The two-day international conference is hosted by the government of India in association with Partnership for Maternal, New born and child Health (PMNCH).
- ❖ The programme is framed on the objective of Survive – Thrive – Transform.

SC verdict over Rafale Deal

- ❖ The Supreme Court has given clean chit to the NDA government for purchase of 36 Rafale fighter Jets.
- ❖ The court gave clean chit on three aspects
 - Purchasing of 36 Rafale jets instead of 126
 - Pricing of Rafale jets and
 - Selection of Indian offset partners.
- ❖ The bench consists of Ranjan Gogoi as the chairman and other two members S K Kaul and K M Joseph.

Conference on 'Good Governance- Focus on Aspirational Districts'

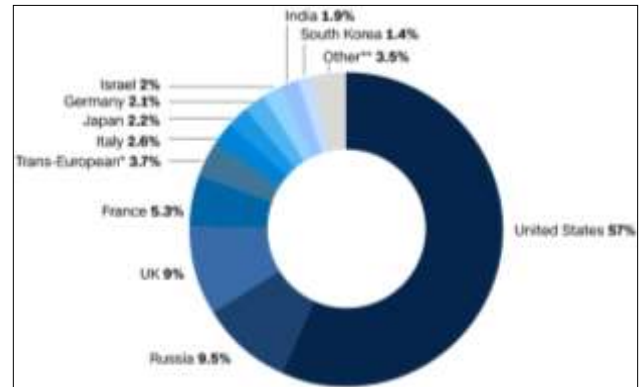
- ❖ A 2-day Regional Conference on 'Good Governance – Focus on Aspirational Districts' concluded at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- ❖ It was organized by
 - The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), the union Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and
 - The Government of Kerala.

1st International Conference on Sustainable Water Management

- ❖ The first 2-day International Conference, on the theme - 'Sustainable Water Management', commenced at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Mohali in Punjab.
- ❖ It was organized under the National Hydrology Project, Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation by the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB).

SIPRI Report

- ❖ The recently released rankings by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) have placed 4 Indian PSU's among world's top 100 arms producers.
- ❖ Those 4 Indian Public Sector Undertakings are,
 - Indian Ordnance Factories (37th Rank)
 - Hindustan Aeronautics (38th Rank)
 - Bharat Electronics (64th Rank)
 - Bharat Dynamics (94th rank)
- ❖ This was for the first time that four Indian companies have ranked in top 100 arms producers' companies of world.
- ❖ India's current share in total global arms sales stands at less than 2%.



National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED -2018)

- ❖ The first ever National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED -2018) was held at High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) Pune, Maharashtra.
- ❖ HEMRL developed OPX-Revelator was unveiled in the workshop.
- ❖ It is a portable, miniaturised, electronic detector capable of detecting almost all the explosives widely used by anti-social elements and in Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

Panel to select MD for PSU insurance firms

- ❖ The government has constituted a seven-member panel to select the Managing Directors of public sector insurance companies.
- ❖ The panel would be headed by Banks Board Bureau (BBB) chairman B P Sharma.

Operation Oliva

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard has recently launched 'Operation Oliva'.
- ❖ It has been launched as the part of its annual mission to ensure the safe mid-sea sojourn of breeding Olive Ridley sea turtles in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary area, Devi river mouth, and Rushikulya beach of Odisha.

- ❖ The turtle conservation programme is executed in a joint coordination with the forest department of Odisha.

WEF gender gap index 2018

- ❖ The World Economic Forum (WEF) has recently released the Global Gender Gap Report for the year 2018.
- ❖ India has come at 108th position, remains unchanged from the position in 2017 rankings.



- ❖ India's gap is widened in the health and survival sub index and for the very first time it has been able to fully close the gender gap in the tertiary education.
- ❖ Iceland has been ranked as number 1 in the WEF's Gender Gap Index for the 10th consecutive year.
- ❖ Norway came at 2nd spot, followed by Sweden at 3rd, Finland at 4th and Nicaragua at 5th spot in the rankings.
- ❖ According to the report, the World has closed 68 % of its gender gap and at the current rate of change, it will take
 - 108 years to close the overall gender gap and
 - 202 years to bring about gender parity in the workplace.

Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018

- ❖ The Union Government has notified Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018.
 - ❖ It thereby allows phone calls and internet on flights and ship voyage within India's territory.
 - ❖ Any Indian or foreign airlines & shipping companies operating in India can provide
 - in-flight and maritime voice and data services.
- by partnering with an Indian telecom company having a valid licence.
- ❖ The in-flight and maritime connectivity (IFMC) can be provided using telecom networks on ground as well as using satellites.
 - ❖ The services can be provided by a valid telecom licence holder in India through domestic and foreign satellites having permission of the Department of Space.
 - ❖ The services will be activated once the aircraft attains a minimum height of 3,000m in Indian airspace to avoid interference with terrestrial mobile networks.

World Bank Report on efficiency gap

- ❖ The World Bank recently released a report titled 'In the Dark: How Much Do Power Sector Distortions Cost South Asia'.
- ❖ As per the report, Efficiency gap in India's power sector costs the Indian economy 4% every year, which equivalent to \$86 billion in 2016 Financial Year.
- ❖ There was a shortage of 14% in India in meeting coal demand in 2016 Financial Year.
- ❖ In 2016, around 20% of electricity generated was lost during transmission and distribution. This rate is the highest loss rate in the World.
- ❖ India was at the 80th spot among 137 economies in the reliability of electricity supply as per the 2018 Global Competitiveness Report.

Strategy for New India@75 – NITI Aayog

- ❖ The NITI Aayog has unveiled a strategy document called the "Strategy for New India@75".
- ❖ It talks about various several economic reforms that should be taken in order to accelerate India's economy to reach the 4 trillion USD mark.

- ❖ The main idea is to go for such reforms in the economy that will keep India growing at 8% annually that could be quickened to 9-10% by 2022-23.
- ❖ The reforms should also ensure that such growth of economy is clean, inclusive, formalised and sustainable.

Goals:

- Increase the size of Indian economy from \$2.7 trillion in 2017-18 to \$4 trillion by 2022-23
- Grow the investment rate from 29% of GDP to 36%
- Raise the export of goods and services from \$478 billion to \$800 billion
- Improve the tax-to-GDP ratio from 17% to 22%
- Keep inflation within the targeted range of 2-6% of GDP

Strategies:

- Better ecosystem for innovation:**
 - ▶ Augmentation of industrial infrastructure
 - ▶ Promote MSMEs, improve ease of doing business
 - ▶ Double the mining area explored from 10% to 20%
- To address rural/farm stress:**
 - ▶ Modernise agricultural technology, increase productivity
 - ▶ Crop diversification & reorientation of fertiliser subsidy
 - ▶ Adopting the Model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing Act
 - ▶ Amend the Essential Commodities Act, stable export policy
 - ▶ Infrastructure status for agriculture value chains
 - ▶ Link production to processing, village level procurement centres
- Financial Inclusion:**
 - ▶ New scheme for comprehensive financial literacy
 - ▶ Review banking correspondents and give better incentives
 - ▶ Tech use assessment of credit-worthiness for households
- Better living:**
 - ▶ Provide every family with a pucca house
 - ▶ Water connection, toilet facilities
 - ▶ Make 24x7 power available to all by '19

Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016

- ❖ The Lok Sabha has passed Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016 on 19th December 2018 to protect surrogacy in the country.
- ❖ The bill has banned commercial surrogacy and allows only altruistic surrogacy.

CABINET CLEARS SURROGACY BILL 2016

- * Foreigners and OCI card holders barred
- * New bill proposes complete ban on commercial surrogacy
- * New bill also prohibits homosexuals from opting for surrogacy
- * Only legally-wedded Indian couples can have kids through surrogacy
- * Unmarried couples, single parents, live-in partners barred

- ❖ The bill protects the rights of the surrogate mother and the child born from surrogacy and promotes the ethical surrogacy.
- ❖ The Surrogacy is defined as an agreement between a couple who cannot conceive and a surrogate mother to carry their child.
- ❖ The bill is applicable to all the states of India except Jammu and Kashmir.
- ❖ The National Surrogacy board consists of

- Chairperson – Minister in-charge of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Vice Chairperson – Secretary to the Government of India in-charge of Department dealing with surrogacy matters.
- and 16 other members.

Eklavya Model Residential Schools

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its approval for the revamped Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) scheme.
- ❖ Under this, EMRSs will be set up in every block where the Scheduled Tribes population is more than 50% and has at least 20,000 tribal persons.
- ❖ The EMRSs will be run by an Autonomous Society, on the lines of Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti. This society will be under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- ❖ EMRS is a central government scheme.

National Cancer Institute (NCI)

- ❖ India's largest Cancer Institute, National Cancer Institute (NCI), has been opened for public services in Jhajjar, Haryana.
- ❖ The National Cancer Institute has been established under a project of Delhi's AIIMS.

WHERE?
Located in Haryana's Jhajjar, about 50 km from AIIMS Delhi campus
➤ National Cancer Institute (NCI), touted to be India's biggest cancer hospital, is spread over 60 acres of AIIMS' 300-acre Jhajjar campus

BEDS
710 beds (surgical oncology: 200; medical oncology: 200; radiation oncology: 120; palliative care: 40; ICU, daycare, other departments: 150+)

OPERATION THEATRES
25, all modular

EQUIPMENT | 2 MRI machines; 4 PET scanners; 3 brachytherapy machines and 5 linear accelerators; Asia's first automated core lab; public sector proton facility

STATUS

IPD block Civil work complete; equipment being installed	OPD block Ready; to be functional from Tuesday
➤ By January 2019, 250 beds and ICU facility to be operational, officials said	
➤ By December 2019, AIIMS plans to start 500 beds	
➤ NCI will be 100% operational by 2020	

MANPOWER: 110
doctors, nurses

- ❖ Dr G.K. Rath will head the NCI.

- ❖ NCI will act as the nodal institution for all cancer-related activities in India.
- ❖ It will be linked to regional cancer centres and other cancer institutes of India.

Highest aviation safety ranking for India

- ❖ The US regulator Federation of Aviation Administration (FAA) retained the highest aviation safety ranking for India.
- ❖ According to FAA, India's International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) rating remains 'Category 1'.
- ❖ This ranking was based on an audit of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in July 2018.
- ❖ This showed India's adherence to the standards laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and oversight of Indian Airlines.

India's first military flight using Blended Bio-Jet Fuel

- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) flown India's first military flight using Blended Bio-Jet Fuel on an An-32 transport aircraft in Chandigarh.
- ❖ The project is a combined effort of IAF, DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organization), Directorate General Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGAQA) and CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP).



- ❖ The IAF has intended to fly the An-32 with 10 % bio jet fuel on January 26, 2019 Republic Day flypast.
- ❖ This fuel is made from Jatropha oil sourced from Chhattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP, Dehradun.
- ❖ Earlier in August 2018, Commercial airline SpiceJet flew country's first ever bio-jet fuel-powered flight between Dehradun and Delhi.

Consumer Protection Bill

- ❖ The Lok Sabha has passed the Consumer Protection Bill, 2018 recently, which will replace the Consumer Protection Act (CPA), 1986.
- ❖ The Bill seeks to enforce consumer rights and to offer a mechanism for complaint redressal related to the deficiencies in goods and services.
- ❖ The Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions will be set up at District, State and National levels as per the bill passed.



- ❖ The District Commissions will have the mandate to hear complaints having claim worth one crore rupees. In the CPA, 1986 this limit was 20 lakh rupees.
- ❖ At the State level the limit has been enhanced from 1 crore rupees to 15 crore rupees.
- ❖ Complaints above 15 crore rupees worth of claim will be settled by the National Commission.

Global SME Business Summit

- ❖ The 15th edition of Global SME (Small and medium-sized enterprises) Business Summit was held recently in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Theme was 'Building Partnerships through Global Value Chains'.
- ❖ The 2-day summit was organised by the Ministry of MSME (Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in association with Government e-marketplace.

SDG India index 2018

- ❖ The NITI Aayog has recently released the Baseline Report of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index 2018.

- ❖ It documents the progress made by India's States and Union Territories (UTs) towards implementation of the 2030 SDG targets.
- ❖ According to the Index,
 - Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu have been ranked on top 3 positions and are on track to achieve the UN SDG.
 - Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are at the bottom of the rankings.
- ❖ It was developed in collaboration with the
 - Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI),
 - Global Green Growth Institute and
 - United Nations in India
- ❖ An index score of 100 signifies that the state had achieved the 2030 national targets. The SDGs came into effect from September 2015.

Quality Of Life

- NITI Aayog has developed the SDG India Index
- States and UTs are ranked based on their performance on **62 parameters**
- While there are no states with **100 score** or achievers, HP, Kerala and TN are frontrunners
- Goa, Gujarat and Karnataka are top performers in the index
- Assam, Bihar and UP are aspirants with score less than **49**

WHY THE INDEX IS NEEDED

- **Support states/UTs** to benchmark their progress
- **Help states/UTs** identify priority areas
- **Highlight data** gaps related across SDGs

ITS LIMITATIONS

- **Four goals** have been excluded out of 17 goals due to lack of data
- **Indicators emerging** from the state schemes not included

Logistics Development Committee

- ❖ The Government has constituted a Logistics Development Committee under Dr Bibek Debroy, Chairman, EAC-PM.
- ❖ It was constituted by the EAC-PM (Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister).
- ❖ The committee would be working on challenges in the logistics development and suggest policy reforms for the ease of doing trade in the country.

Best performing states under PMMVY

- ❖ The Ministry of Women and Child Development Ministry released the performance of states & UTs under the maternity benefit programme named Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY).
- ❖ Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh topped the charts as the best performing states.

SKOCH Summit & awards

- ❖ The 55th SKOCH Summit was held recently in Constitution Club of India, New Delhi.
- ❖ It was hosted by SKOCH group, the think tank for socio-economic issues with focus on inclusive growth.
- ❖ A book titled India 2030 was also released on the occasion.
- ❖ West Bengal won 31 SKOCH awards for its performance in different fields.

Category	Awardee
SKOCH Chief Minister of the Year Award	West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee
SKOCH Governance Person of the Year	K T Rama Rao
SKOCH Award for hydel project in Purulia	West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL)
SKOCH Golden Jubilee Challenger Award	Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu
SKOCH IT minister of the Year	Nara Lokesh
SKOCH Sprinter of the Year	Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu

Bogibeel Bridge inaugurated

- ❖ The PM of India inaugurated the Bogibeel Bridge on the birth anniversary of the late Atal Bihari Vajpayee i.e. December 25 which is observed as “Good Governance Day”.



- ❖ This 4.9 km bridge, built by Indian Railways, has become the India's longest and Asia's 2nd longest railroad bridge in Assam.
- ❖ Till now Vembanad rail bridge in Kerala was dubbed as the longest railway-bridge in India at 4.62km of length.
- ❖ It is the nation's only fully welded bridge and for the first time European codes and welding standards were adhered to and it has a life of about 120 years.
- ❖ It is a double-decker bridge having two railway lines on the lower deck and a three-lane road on the upper.
- ❖ It connects the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River in Assam's Dibrugarh district with Silapathar in Dhemaji district, bordering Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The three road lanes of the bridge can act as three landing strips for the Air Force.

Misperception Index'

- ❖ According to the MORI Perils of Perception Survey 2018, done by an independent market research company 'Ipsos India', Indians stood at 12th rank in the "misperception index".
- ❖ India stood behind several countries like, Italy, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Chile and Argentina, among others.
- ❖ The countries which performed poorer than India were Thailand, Mexico, Turkey, Malaysia, and Brazil.

Prime Minister Shram Awards 2017

- ❖ The Union Government has announced to confer the Prime Minister's Shram Awards 2017 to 40 workers across country.
- ❖ These awardees have been selected among the workers of Departmental Undertakings & Central and State Government PSUs and Private Sector companies having 500 or more workers.
- ❖ This year, no one was awarded the prestigious Shram Ratna Award.

SAGAR TARA Launched

- ❖ A new Coastal Research Vessel (CRV) SAGAR TARA was launched at the Titagarh Wagons Ltd. Shipyard in Kolkata.
- ❖ The vessel was built for the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) under the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences.

- ❖ Equipped with the state-of-the-art laboratories, it will enable scientists conduct various oceanographic research missions.



- ❖ Sagar Tara was one of the 2 CRVs manufactured at the shipyard. The other one is Sagar Anveshika.
- ❖ These two will replace Sagar Paschimi and Sagar Purvi in the existing Navy's fleet.

Triple Talaq Bill

- ❖ The Lok Sabha has passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, famously referred to as Triple Talaq Bill.
- ❖ The bill would replace the ordinance passed in the month of September.
- ❖ The bill makes the all declaration of triple talaq, including in written or electronic form, to be void (not enforceable in law) and illegal.
- ❖ Declaration of Triple Talaq would be a cognizable offence, attracting up to 3 years' imprisonment with a fine.

'Made in India' e-dumper

- ❖ Coal India Limited (CIL) for the first time, has started using an indigenously-made, 205-tonne electric dumper, a critical piece of equipment in mining.
- ❖ This indigenously-made dumper has been developed by the state-owned BEML (Bharat Earth Movers Limited).



- ❖ Coal India has put this electric dumper on a trial in the Northern Coalfields' Amlohri coal mine in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The current 'electric dumper' supply to CIL is dominated by Russia's Belaz, Tata Hitachi and Caterpillar.

12th Annual ISDSI Conference

- ❖ The 12th Annual Indian Subcontinent Decision Sciences Institute (ISDSI) conference was held in SPJIMR (S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research), Mumbai.
- ❖ The theme of this international conference is "Data Driven Decision Making in the Digital Age".

National Children's Science Congress

- ❖ The 26th National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) was inaugurated recently by Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik.
- ❖ The theme for this year NCSC is "Science, Technology and Innovations for a clean, Green and Healthy Nation."
- ❖ It provides a platform to the children to showcase their creativity and ability to innovate.

Indian Social Science Congress

- ❖ The 5-day long 42nd Indian Social Science Congress at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.



- ❖ The theme of the conference is “Human Future in Digital Era.”
- ❖ Its objective is to promote research in science and social sciences to reach the grassroot level.
- ❖ The event was organised by KIIT and Indian Social Science Academy (ISSA).

Countrywide survey for sub-categorization of OBC

- ❖ A commission examining the sub-categorisation of the central list of OBCs (Other Backward Classes) has decided to conduct a countrywide survey to estimate the caste-wise population figures.
- ❖ Justice G Rohini (retired), who is heading the 5-member panel, set up to suggest parameters for an equitable distribution of OBC reservation.

India submits Sixth National Report to CBD

- ❖ India has recently submitted its Sixth National Report (NR6) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- ❖ It has been submitted at the inaugural session of the 13th National Meeting of the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) in New Delhi.
- ❖ India is among the first 5 countries in the world, the 1st in Asia and the 1st among the bio-diversity rich megadiverse countries to have submitted NR6 to the CBD Secretariat.
- ❖ The NR6 provides an update of progress in achievement of 12 National Biodiversity Targets (NBT) developed under the Convention process in line with the 20 global Aichi biodiversity targets.

Some of the achievements

- ❖ In India only 0.08% of the species recorded are in the category of 'Endangered Species'.
- ❖ India has nearly 2/3rd of the population of wild tigers in the world.
- ❖ One-horned Indian Rhino which was on the brink of extinction earlier, now numbers 2400.

Three islands in Andaman & Nicobar renamed

- ❖ The Indian Prime Minister renamed three islands of Andaman and Nicobar as a tribute to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- ❖ The renamed islands are,
 - Ross Island (old name) - Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island
 - Neil Island (old name) - Shaheed Dweep
 - Havelock Island (old name) - Swaraj Dweep
- ❖ The Prime Minister also hoisted a 150-metre-high national flag at Port Blair to mark the 75th anniversary of freedom fighter Subhas Chandra Bose's declaration of the formation of the Azad Hind government in 1943.
- ❖ The PM also released a commemorative stamp, its first-day cover and a Rs 75 coin on this special day.

Background

- ❖ Subhas Chandra Bose had hoisted the flag after the Japanese captured the area during the Second World War on December 30 1943.
- ❖ He had also suggested that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands be renamed as Shahid and Swaraj Dweep.



International Rice Research Institute's South Asia Regional Centre

- ❖ The Prime Minister inaugurated the International Rice Research Institute's South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) campus in Varanasi.
- ❖ The centre will serve as a hub for rice research and training in South Asia.
- ❖ This institute will help farmers of the region to develop varieties of paddy which grow in minimum water and have low sugar content and high nutritional value.



National Commission for Homoeopathy

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the draft National Commission for Homoeopathy, Bill, 2018.
- ❖ It seeks to replace the existing regulator Central Council for Homoeopathy (CCH) with a new body to ensure transparency.
- ❖ The draft bill provides for the constitution of a National Commission with three autonomous boards entrusted with conducting overall education of Homoeopathy by Homoeopathy Education Board.

Delta Ranking of Aspirational districts

- ❖ The government think tank, Niti Ayog has released the second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme.
- ❖ This second delta ranking measures the incremental progress made by 111 Aspirational Districts between June 1, 2018, and October 31, 2018.
- ❖ The surveys were carried out in six developmental areas of health and nutrition, education, agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure.

- ❖ Virudhunagar in Tamil Nadu has topped the chart of aspirational districts and Nuapada (Odisha), Siddharthnagar (Uttar Pradesh), Aurangabad (Bihar) and Koraput (Odisha) have been termed as the most improved districts.

REPORT CARD

Most improved district			Least improved district			Fast movers		Ranking	
Rank	District	State	Rank	District	State		Jun	Oct	
1	Virudhunagar	Tamil Nadu	107	Kiphire	Nagaland	Kupwara, Jammu & Kashmir	108	7	
2	Nuapada	Odisha	108	Giridih	Jharkhand	Ranchi, Jharkhand	106	10	
3	Siddharthnagar	Uttar Pradesh	109	Chatra	Jharkhand	Siddharthnagar, Uttar Pradesh	101	3	
4	Aurangabad	Bihar	110	Hailakandi	Assam	Jamui, Bihar	99	9	
5	Koraput	Odisha	111	Pakur	Jharkhand	Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh	82	25	

Number of aspirational districts ranked: 111
Time period: 1 June 2018 to 31 October 2018

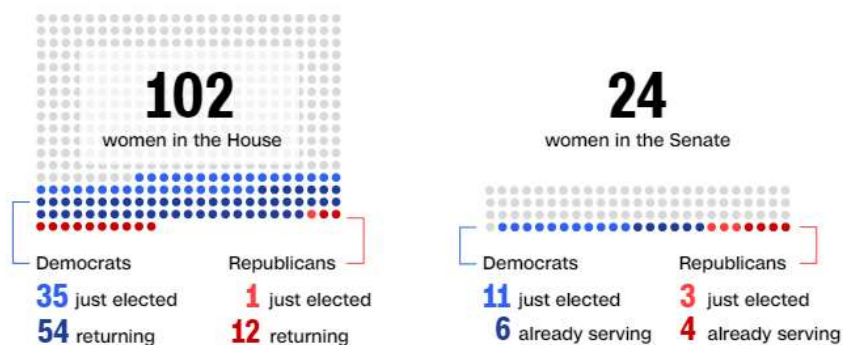
	Most improved district	Least improved district
Education	Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu	Pakur, Jharkhand
Health and nutrition	Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh	Chatra, Jharkhand
Financial inclusion	Kupwara, Jammu & Kashmir	Chandel, Manipur
Agriculture and water resources	Sitamarhi, Bihar	Giridih, Jharkhand
Basic infrastructure	Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu	Pakur, Jharkhand
Skill development	Raichur, Karnataka	Khammam, Telangana

INTERNATIONAL

Mississippi Senate election

- ❖ Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith defeated challenger Mike Espy, a Democrat, in the runoff election for the U.S. Senate in Mississippi.
- ❖ Hyde-Smith is the first woman elected to the Senate from Mississippi. Vermont is now the only state to have never elected a woman to Congress.

Women in the House and Senate



- ❖ Hyde-Smith's victory also means that there will be 24 women in the Senate next year.
- ❖ That will set a new record for women serving in the Senate, one more than the current high, set during this Congress.

50th Union World Conference on Lung Health

- ❖ The International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) has announced that the 4-day 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health will be held in Hyderabad next year (2019).
- ❖ The conference theme will be: “Ending the Emergency: Science, Leadership, Action”.
- ❖ It would be held after the first ever United Nations (UN) High-Level Meeting on TB and the third UN High-Level Meeting on non-communicable diseases.

12th World Congress on Mountain Medicine

- ❖ The 12th biennial World Congress on Mountain Medicine was held in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ❖ The theme of the 4-day congress was “Mountain Medicine in the Heart of the Himalayas”.
- ❖ The flagship event of the International Society for Mountain Medicine (ISMM) was held for the **first time in Nepal** and hosted by the Mountain Medicine Society of Nepal (MMSN).

India to Chair Kimberley Process Certification Scheme

- ❖ India will Chair Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) from 1st January 2019.
- ❖ It was handed Chairmanship by the European Union during KPCS Plenary 2018, which was held in Brussels, Belgium.

Kimberley Process

- ❖ It is a joint initiative of governments, industry and civil societies to stem flow of ‘conflict diamonds’, rough diamonds used by rebel groups to finance wars against legitimate governments.
- ❖ The KPCS completely bans import and export of rough diamonds without certification.
- ❖ KPCS came into effect from 1 January, 2003 through UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution.
- ❖ India is one of the founding members of KPCS.
- ❖ In India, the scheme is administered through Department of Commerce under aegis of the Union Commerce and Industry Ministry.

Sustainable Blue Economy Conference

- ❖ The first Sustainable Blue Economy Conference was held in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.
- ❖ It was organized by Kenya and co-hosted by Japan and Canada.
- ❖ The theme of this conference was 'The Blue Economy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.'
- ❖ India was represented Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.
- ❖ Sustainable Blue Economy is a marine-based economy that provides social and economic benefits for current and future generation.
- ❖ It restores, protects and maintains diversity, productivity and resilience of marine ecosystems.

G20 summit in 2022

- ❖ For the first time, India will host the annual G20 summit in 2022 (17th) confirmed at the closing ceremony of the 13th summit (30 November and 1 December 2018) held in Argentina's capital Buenos Aires.
- ❖ It is India's 75th Independence Day in 2022, and India had requested Italy to get 2022 instead of 2021 (for hosting G20 summit).
- ❖ India presented a nine-point agenda to G20 countries at the concluded summit, calling for "strong and active cooperation" among them to comprehensively deal with fugitive economic offenders.
- ❖ India suggested that the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to assign priority and focus on establishing international cooperation, timely and comprehensive exchange of information.

USA Elections

- ❖ The 2018 elections were held in the United States on November 6, 2018.
- ❖ These midterm elections took place in the middle of Republican President Donald Trump's term.
- ❖ 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate and all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives were contested.
- ❖ The winners in the Senate were elected to six-year terms running from January 3, 2019, to January 3, 2025.
- ❖ In the 2018 midterm elections, the Democratic Party won the majority in the House of Representatives and will have a preponderance of voting influence in selecting the next Speaker.
- ❖ In the Senate, the Republican Party slightly increased its majority, giving the U.S. a split Congress.

- ❖ The One Hundred Sixteenth United States Congress is the next meeting of the legislative branch of the Federal government of the United States, composed of the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives.
- ❖ It is scheduled to meet in Washington, D.C., from January 3, 2019, to January 3, 2021, during the third and fourth years of Donald Trump's current term as president.

Result of 2018 Elections

House of Representatives

- ❖ Democratic party – 235
- ❖ Republic Party – 200

Senate

- ❖ Democratic party – 45
- ❖ Republic party – 53
- ❖ Independent – 2

First Female Top Prosecutor - South Africa

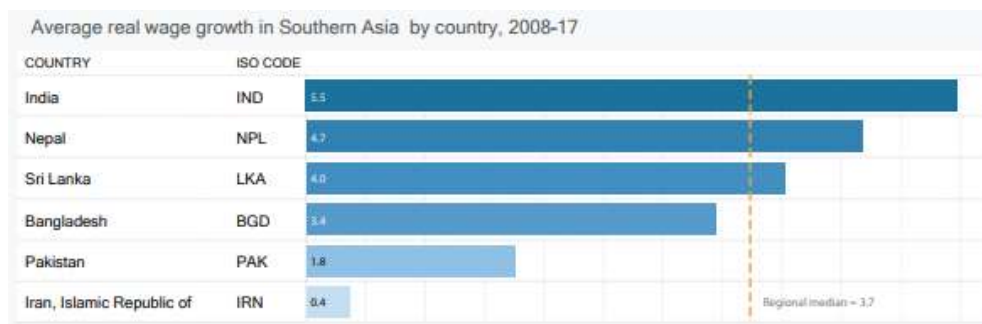
- ❖ President Cyril Ramaphosa named Indian-origin lawyer Shamila Batohi to head South Africa's prosecuting authority.
- ❖ Batohi, the first female to occupy the role and she will start her new role as the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP) in February 2019.



- ❖ She is a former prosecutions chief in KwaZulu-Natal province and has served as senior adviser to the prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) since 2009.
- ❖ In 1995, she was part of a high-level team appointed by Nelson Mandela to investigate apartheid-era hit squads.

Global Wage Report 2018/19

- ❖ Recently, the Global Wage Report 2018/19 has been published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).
- ❖ As per the report, Workers in India got the highest average real wage growth (adjusted for inflation) in the last decade in southern Asia.



- ❖ During 2008-17, the real wage growth in India stood at 5.5 %, highest among all the countries in southern Asia.
- ❖ India and Pakistan had the highest gap of 34.5 % and 34 % respectively between what men and women earnings.

Global Climate Risk Index 2019

- ❖ 14th edition of the 'Climate Risk Index 2019', was released at the annual climate summit in Poland's Katowice city.

The Climate Risk Index for 2017: the 10 most affected countries

Ranking 2017 (2016)	Country	CRI score	Death toll	Deaths per 100 000 inhabitants	Absolute losses (in million US\$ PPP)	Losses per unit GDP in %	Human Development Index 2017 ¹⁰
1 (105)	Puerto Rico ¹¹	1.50	2 978	90.242	82 315.240	63.328	-
2 (4)	Sri Lanka	9.00	246	1.147	3 129.351	1.135	76
3 (120)	Dominica	9.33	31	43.662	1 686.894	215.440	103
4 (14)	Nepal	10.50	164	0.559	1 909.982	2.412	149
5 (39)	Peru	10.67	147	0.462	6 240.625	1.450	89
6 (5)	Vietnam	13.50	298	0.318	4 052.312	0.625	116
7 (58)	Madagascar	15.00	89	0.347	693.043	1.739	161
8 (120)	Sierra Leone	15.67	500	6.749	99.102	0.858	184
9 (13)	Bangladesh	16.00	407	0.249	2 826.678	0.410	136
10 (20)	Thailand	16.33	176	0.255	4 371.160	0.354	83

PPP = Purchasing Power Parities. GDP = Gross Domestic Product.

- ❖ It is an in-depth global analysis by the German watch, an international organization based in Bonn, Germany.
- ❖ It analyses quantified impacts of extreme weather events – both in terms of fatalities as well as economic losses.
- ❖ As per the report, Puerto Rico, Sri Lanka and Dominica were at the top of the list of the most affected countries in 2017.

- ❖ India was ranked as the 14th most vulnerable country.
- ❖ With a 29% increase in deaths last year due to extreme climate events, India accounted for the second highest fatalities in the world.
- ❖ Between 1998 and 2017, Puerto Rico, Honduras and Myanmar were the countries most affected by extreme weather events.
- ❖ Massive rainfalls have led to floods across Nepal (4), Bangladesh (9) and India (14), which affected more than 40 million people.

Inclusive Wealth Report (IWR) 2018

- ❖ The Inclusive wealth index, as part of the Inclusive Wealth Report 2018 has been released by the UN Environment and partners in Paris.
- ❖ The Inclusive Wealth Report is a biennial effort led by the UN Environment.
- ❖ It provides important insights into long-term economic growth and human well-being.
- ❖ As per the report, more than one-third of the 140 countries ranked in the report's Inclusive Wealth Index had increased their GDP since 1998.
 - But experienced a decline in their inclusive wealth per head.
- ❖ The Republic of Korea, Singapore and Malta as the nations that have had the most economic growth and topped the list.

Food Sustainability Index (FSI)

- ❖ The Food Sustainability Index (FSI) has been released recently at the BCFN Food Forum in Milan, Italy.
- ❖ It is a report released by the Economist Intelligence Unit and Barilla Centre for Food and Nutrition.
- ❖ Despite the increase in food production, the Food Sustainability Index ranks India 33rd among 67 countries in 2018.
- ❖ The Food Sustainability Index is based on three broad categories:
 - Food loss & waste,
 - Sustainable agriculture and
 - Nutritional challenges.

Categories	India score	World avg.
1) Food loss	72.7	71.4
2) End-user waste	98	63.8
3) Water	72.1	74.9
4) Land (land use, biodiversity, human capital)	57.2	55.7
5) Air (GHG emissions)	71.3	78.4
6) Life quality*	32.3	71.7
7) Life expectancy	72.3	61.4
8) Dietary patterns	59.7	51.7

- ❖ It contains 38 indicators and 90 individual metrics. All parameters are scored on 100. Lower the score, less sustainable the practices are.

- ❖ France took the top spot and other countries in the top five on food sustainability includes the Netherlands, Canada, Finland, and Japan.

1st Latin American nation to join BRI

- ❖ Panama became the first Latin American Country to join China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- ❖ The move came after Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Panama to sign a range of cooperation agreements.
- ❖ China established diplomatic relations with Panama only last year.

World's fastest-growing cities

- ❖ According to Oxford Economics report, the top 10 fastest growing cities in the world from 2019 to 2035 are in India.
- ❖ Gujarat's Surat tops the list followed by Uttar Pradesh's Agra and Bengaluru (Karnataka).

TOP 10 FASTEST GROWING CITIES IN THE WORLD, 2019-35				
Rank	Growth (y/y 2019-35)	City	GDP 2018*	GDP 2035*
1	9.2	Surat	28.5	126.8
2	8.6	Agra	3.9	15.6
3	8.5	Bengaluru	70.8	283.3
4	8.2	Hyderabad	50.6	201.4
5	8.4	Nagpur	12.3	48.6
6	8.3	Tiruppur	4.3	17
7	8.3	Rajkot	6.8	26.7
8	8.3	Tiruchirappalli	4.9	19
9	8.2	Chennai	36	136.8
10	8.2	Vijayawada	5.6	21.3

*GDP: \$tn, constant 2018 prices Source: Oxford Economics

- ❖ By 2035, the GDP of Asian countries will be 17 % higher than all North American and European urban centres combined.
- ❖ Mumbai was termed as the world's 12th richest city.
- ❖ India is the 6th largest wealth market in the world (in terms of total wealth held) after USA, China, Japan, Germany and the UK.
- ❖ The fastest-growing African city is the Tanzanian port of Dar es Salaam, while the top spot in Europe is held by the Armenian capital of Yerevan.
- ❖ San Jose, a proxy for Silicon Valley, will be the best performer in the North America.

Suu Kyi stripped of freedom of Paris award

- ❖ Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar Political leader was stripped of the 'Freedom of Paris Award' conferred to her by the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo.
- ❖ The move is due to the failure of the Suu Kyi's Government on Myanmar's Rohingya minority issue.

- ❖ It makes Suu Kyi as the first person to lose the freedom at French capital.



- ❖ She was already stripped of her honorary Canadian citizenship and her Amnesty International's "Ambassador of Conscience Award".

Asia Pacific Summit 2018

- ❖ The Asia Pacific Summit 2018 was held at Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ❖ The Theme of the summit is 'Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, and Universal Values'.
- ❖ It was organised by the South Korea-based Universal Peace Federation and supported by the Nepal Government.
- ❖ This is the first international summit being held in Nepal after the 4th BIMSTEC Summit held on August 2018.

First country to make public transport free

- ❖ Luxembourg became the first country to abolish all fares on public transport by 2019.
- ❖ The move of free public transport was done to enhance the traffic congestion scenario in Luxembourg City, which is one of the worst traffic congestion-hit cities in the world.

Australia criminalises orphanage trafficking

- ❖ Australia has become the first country in the world to criminalise the act of falsely inducing Children into Orphanages as a form of 'Slavery'.
- ❖ As per the Modern Slavery Bill passed by the Government, the 'Orphanage Trafficking' will be treated as a trafficking offense and slavery.
- ❖ The move is believed to be the first move of its kind in the world.

Orphanage trafficking

- ❖ It is estimated that 80% of children in orphanages around the world have at least one living parent but are in orphanages in a bid to attract international volunteers.
- ❖ This is what's called "Orphanage trafficking".

1st NATO Country to appoint female chief of Armed Forces

- ❖ The Slovenia's government has appointed a female officer Major General Alenka Ermenc as the head of the armed forces.



- ❖ Thus, Slovenia has become the first NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) nation to appoint a female Chief of Armed Forces.
- ❖ Slovenia, which originally was part of Yugoslavia, joined NATO and the European Union in 2004.
- ❖ NATO is an international alliance that consists of 29-member countries.

UK Suspends 'Golden Visa' Scheme

- ❖ The British government has suspended the Tier-1 (Investor) visa, as a part of the drive to crackdown on money laundering and organised crimes.
- ❖ This visa scheme will be there until the new safeguarding rules are brought in 2019.
- ❖ The UK tier 1 investor visa, referred to as a "golden visa", was established in 2008.
- ❖ It was the most favoured route that high net worth individuals (HNI) from India, China and Russia used to get permanent residency in the UK.

Golden Visa Criteria

- ❖ To qualify, the foreign nationals must put down a minimum of £2 million (around \$2.5 million) as an investment in Britain.

- ❖ Such an investment in UK bonds, share capital or companies allows investors to apply for permanent residency within 5 years.
- ❖ For a £5 million investment – they can apply for permanent residency after 3 years.



- ❖ For a £10 million investment – they can apply for permanent residency after 2 years.

New framework to combat international terrorism

- ❖ The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched a new framework named as UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.
- ❖ The objective of new framework is to combat the international terrorism and coordinate efforts across the peace and security, human rights.



- ❖ It is an agreement between the UN chief, 36 organizational entities, INTERPOL and the World Customs Organisation.
- ❖ The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism will act as the Coordination Committee and will oversee the implementation of the Compact.

World's 100 most powerful women

- ❖ The Forbes has recently released the World's 100 Most Powerful Women of 2018.
- ❖ Four Indians who were featured in the list were:
 - IT stalwart Roshni Nadar Malhotra (51st)
 - Biotechnology pioneer Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (60th)
 - Media tycoon Shobhana Bhartia (88th) and
 - Actor Priyanka Chopra (94th)
- ❖ The **15th edition** of the list has been topped by the German Chancellor **Angela Merkel** who retains the top spot for the 8th consecutive year, and 13 times in total.
- ❖ She is followed by the UK Prime Minister Theresa May, for the 2nd year in a row.
- ❖ The 2018 list spanned more than 6 generations of influential women.
 - Taylor Swift - The youngest honouree at 28 (securing 68th)
 - Queen Elizabeth II - the oldest at 92 (securing 23rd).

THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL WOMEN 2018



#1 Angela Merkel



#2 Theresa May



#3 Christine Lagarde



#4 Mary Barra



#5 Abigail Johnson



#6 Melinda Gates



#7 Susan Wojcicki



#8 Ana Patricia Botin



#9 Marilyn Hewson



#10 Ginni Rometty

Legislation to ease labour shortage - Japan

- ❖ The Japanese parliament (National Diet) approved a new law allowing foreigners into the country to ease labour shortages from April 2019.
- ❖ It creates two new categories of visas for blue-collar workers in sectors facing a labour crunch,
 - **1st Category** – Workers (Limited skills) who can stay for up to 5 years but cannot bring family members.
 - **2nd Category** - More skilled foreigners who can bring relatives and might eventually be eligible for residency.

Armenia Parliamentary elections

- ❖ Armenia's acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was re-elected after winning the country's snap election by a landslide victory.
- ❖ The bloc led by Pashinyan's Civil Contract party had 70.45 per cent of the total vote.
- ❖ Pashinyan became the prime minister in May after spearheading weeks of peaceful anti-government rallies that ousted veteran leader Serzh Sarkisian.

UN Migration Deal 2018

- ❖ The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was adopted by 164 nations including India at Intergovernmental Conference.
- ❖ The Conference was held under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) at Marrakesh, Morocco.
- ❖ The Conference was hosted by the Government of Morocco.
- ❖ It is the first intergovernmental agreement to cover wide-ranging dimensions of international migration.
- ❖ It was agreed upon by all the UN member states but the United States opposed it.
- ❖ It is a non-legally binding and co-operative framework fully respecting the sovereignty of all States.

Kazakhstan opens consulate in Gujarat

- ❖ Kazakhstan opened a consulate in Gujarat to further the business partnership.
- ❖ The Honorary consulate will be headed by the businessman and Managing Director of the company Chandan Steel Limited, Dilip Chandan.

- ❖ The consulate was inaugurated on the eve of the 27th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

- ❖ Ranil Wickremesinghe has once again become the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka after the end of the weeks-long political crisis in the island nation.
- ❖ Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe was ousted as Prime minister of Sri Lanka on 26th October 2018.
- ❖ He was replaced by Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister.
- ❖ Mr. Rajapaksa resigned on 15th December 2018 after he failed to prove majority in the Sri Lankan Parliament.
- ❖ Ranil Wickremesinghe has been sworn in as the Prime minister for the 5th time which is a record in Sri Lanka.

Nepal bans Indian currency notes above Rs 100

- ❖ The Nepal government has banned the Indian currency above Rs 100.
- ❖ The New Indian notes of Rs 2,000, Rs 500 and Rs 200 denominations were banned as the Nepal government has not yet legalised them in the market.
- ❖ The move can affect the Indian tourist and Nepali people working in India, who carry the currency in Nepal for transaction.

Theresa May survives no-confidence vote

- ❖ The UK Prime Minister Theresa May survived a vote of no-confidence triggered by the members of her own Conservative party.
- ❖ In secret ballot, 200 lawmakers backed May and 117 lawmakers voted against her.
- ❖ Her victory means fellow Conservatives cannot challenge her for another year.
- ❖ May could still face a challenge in Parliament if the opposition Labour Party seeks a confidence vote in the House of Commons (Lower House) over the European Union (EU) divorce plan.

1st country in the world to deliver drone-assisted Vaccines

- ❖ Vanuatu has become the first country in the World to deliver drone-assisted Vaccines to babies as per the United Nations norms.
- ❖ A one-month old baby in Vanuatu was immunized using vaccines delivered by a drone.

- ❖ Vanuatu, previously known as the New Hebrides Islands is an archipelago nation consisting of 83 islands in the southwest Pacific Ocean.

Pentagon Chief Mattis quits

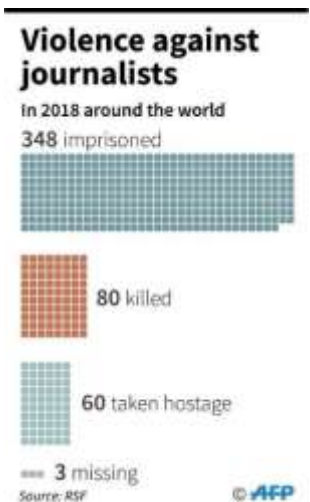
- ❖ The US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis has resigned from his post citing policy differences with the President Trump.
- ❖ The resignation comes after a day when the US President announced the pulling out of around 2000-member troops from Syria.

UN members adopt Global Compact on Refugees

- ❖ The UN member states voted in favour of the Global Compact on Refugees, affirming international solidarity and cooperation for refugee protection.
- ❖ The Global Compact on refugees received 181 votes in favour in the 193-member assembly.
- ❖ The United States and Hungary were the only two nations that voted against the Global Compact on Refugees.
- ❖ The Dominican Republic, Eritrea, and Libya abstained from the vote.

Violence on Journalists - RSF Report

- ❖ The report of annual worldwide round-up of deadly violence and abusive treatment of journalists was released by Reporters without Borders (RSF - Reporters Sans Frontières).
- ❖ According to the report, Journalists have never before been subjected to as much violence and abusive treatment as in 2018.
- ❖ The figure increased by eight percent to 80, and by 15 percent, in the category of number of professional journalists killed, from 55 in 2017 to 63 in 2018.
- ❖ The numbers had been declining for the previous 3 years.
- ❖ It added the U.S. to the worst offenders list for the first time in the annual roundup's 23-year history.
- ❖ China remains to be the world's biggest jailer of journalists with the number as high as 60. India was the 5th deadliest place for journalists.
- ❖ This report is being compiled every year since 1995.
- ❖ Earlier in April, RSF released the World Press Freedom Index 2018 in which India was ranked at 138.



New Political capital of Burundi

- ❖ The government of Burundi has declared Gitega as the country's new political capital.
- ❖ Bujumbura, the previous capital of Burundi, will serve as the economic capital of the country.
- ❖ About 85% of the population of Burundi is of Hutu ethnicity, 15% are of Tutsi origin and less than 1% are Twa.
- ❖ Burundi was ranked as the world's least happy nation in the World Happiness Report 2018.

South Korean grain silo - Guinness World Records

- ❖ A dreary grain silo that was transformed into an enormous colourful artwork in South Korea has been named by the Guinness World Records as the largest outdoor mural in the world.



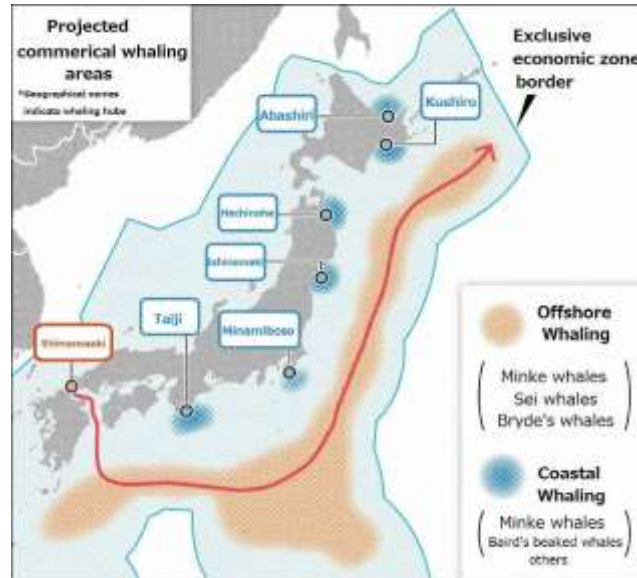
- ❖ The painting depicts a young boy's journey into adulthood covers the outside of giant storage containers in the port city of Incheon takes up 23,688 square meters.
- ❖ The mural was commissioned by the city's government and port authority. It aims at improving the negative view of aged industrial facilities.

Japan withdraws from IWC

- ❖ The Japanese government has officially announced to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission (IWC).
- ❖ It would enable Japan to pursue commercial whaling in its adjacent waters, including its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Reason for withdrawal

- ❖ The global body for the conservation of whales rejected a Tokyo-led proposal to lift a 32-year ban on the commercial hunting of the ocean mammals.



Thailand Legalizes Medical Marijuana

- ❖ Thailand has approved the use of medical marijuana, making it the first country in southeast Asia to do so.
- ❖ However, the penalty for its recreational use, up to 5 years in prison for possession, would still remain in place.

Nepal - expenditures limit of its citizens

- ❖ Nepal has imposed a monthly limit on the amount of Indian currency to its citizen who will spend in India while paying for goods and services.



- ❖ The decision was taken to deal with the growing problem of current account deficit and the balance of payment crisis between India and Nepal.
- ❖ With the approval of new restrictions, a Nepali citizen would be unable to spend more than Rs1 lakh per month while paying for goods and services in India.

6 Yunhai - 2 satellites & a test communication satellite launched

- ❖ China successfully sent six Yunhai-2 atmospheric environment research satellites and a test communication satellite of Hongyan constellation into orbit.
- ❖ The six Yunhai-2 satellites will study atmospheric environment, monitor space environment, prevent and reduce disasters and conduct scientific experiments.
- ❖ The test satellite will be used to verify the function of mobile communications in low earth orbit (LEO).
- ❖ The test satellite was developed by Aerospace Dongfanghong Development Ltd. Shenzhen, a company under the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST).

ECONOMY

J&K Bank under purview of RTI

- ❖ As per the Chief Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) guidelines and the State Legislature, the Jammu and Kashmir bank were brought under the purview of the Right to Information (RTI) act.
- ❖ The decision was taken by the State Administrative Council (SAC) chaired by Governor Satya Pal Malik.
- ❖ The objective of the decision was to strengthen better corporate governance.
- ❖ As per the proposal, hereafter, the J&K Bank Limited will be treated as a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU).
- ❖ It shall be accountable to the State Legislature like other state PSUs and the Annual Report of the bank shall be placed before the State Legislature through the State Finance Department.
- ❖ It is the only state government promoted bank in the country, with the Jammu and Kashmir government currently holding 59.3 % of the shares.

Carpet city Bhadohi gets 'export excellence' tag

- ❖ Bhadohi district of Uttar Pradesh, was granted the export 'excellence tag' for the product category 'Carpets and other floor Coverings'.

- ❖ The status was granted by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), under the commerce ministry.
- ❖ Under the 'Towns of Export Excellence' tag, carpet makers of the city will get financial assistance from the central government.
- ❖ The assistance can be used to procure modern machines, improve export infrastructure, and organise fairs and exhibitions in different parts of the world.
- ❖ Bhadohi district of UP which is known for its hand-woven carpets around the world.
- ❖ Bhadohi, which is near the river Ganges will be the 37th town in the country to get this status.

Monetary policy review

- ❖ The Six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) headed by the RBI Governor Urjit Patel voted unanimously to maintain status quo on all key policy rates in the fifth bi-monthly monetary policy review meeting.
- ❖ The Repo rate at 6.5 percent and the reverse repo rate at 6.25 percent remain same.
- ❖ Also, the RBI informed the marginal standing facility rate and the Bank Rate too remain at 6.75 percent.
- ❖ The committee comprises six members - three officials of the RBI and three members nominated by the Government of India.

DECODING THE POLICY

- ▶ RBI keeps the key repo rate **unchanged at 6.5%**, retaining its 'calibrated tightening' policy stance
- ▶ The six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) votes unanimously **in favour of a pause** on rate action
- ▶ MPC member **Ravindra Dholakia** votes to change the stance to neutral
- ▶ The committee **sharply lowers its inflation projection to 2.7-3.2%** from 3.9-4.5% for the second half of this financial year
- ▶ The MPC retains the gross domestic product (GDP) estimate for the current year at **7.4%**

If upside risks do not materialize or are muted in their impact as reflected in incoming data, there is a possibility of space opening up for commensurate policy actions by the MPC

URJIT PATEL, RBI governor

- ❖ Decisions are taken by majority with the Governor having the casting vote in case of a tie.
- ❖ Current mandate of the committee is to maintain 4% annual inflation until March 31, 2021 with an upper tolerance of 6% and a lower tolerance of 2%.

e-ATM

- ❖ ICICI Securities (ISec), a brokerage firm, launched the 'eATM' instant fund credit feature.
- ❖ It will enable real-time payments in bank accounts upon selling stocks in Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).
- ❖ This feature is available to retail investors who can get payment against sell of stocks in BSE instantly compared to earlier waiting time of T+2 days.
- ❖ The payment is made directly to the bank accounts to within 30 minutes and the limit is Rs. 50,000 per client per day.

'Chance of Approval' feature launched

- ❖ Paisabazaar.com has launched a first of its kind feature Chance of Approval, that will help loan applicants choose their most-suited lender on its platform in India.
- ❖ 'Chance of Approval', is an advanced predictive algorithm that has been created by Paisabazaar.com using the last four years of lending data.
- ❖ It will match borrower's profile with the lending criteria of banks and NBFC to provide customers with the chances of getting their loan application approved.

Gold dore imports under restricted category

- ❖ The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) which works under the ministry of Commerce and Industry has put the imports of gold dore in the restricted category.
- ❖ It means that an importer now needs a license to import this commodity.
- ❖ Gold dore is a semi-pure alloy which is refined for further purification.
- ❖ Refined gold bars are manufactured from gold dore bar.

TIPS Instant payment system

- ❖ The European Central Bank (ECB) has launched a new Smartphone payment system called 'TARGET Instant Payment Settlement' (TIPS) in Rome.
- ❖ It enables people and companies in Europe transferring Euros to each other within seconds irrespective of working hours of banks.



- ❖ TIPS system is only restricted to the European Union banks.
- ❖ The platform was developed by the Banca d'Italia – in cooperation with the central banks of Germany, France and Spain.

Crude bill pay in rupee

- ❖ India has signed an agreement with Iran to pay for crude oil it imports from the Persian Gulf nation in rupees.
- ❖ The MoU was signed following the US letting India and 7 other nations to keep buying Iranian oil despite sanctions were re imposed on Iran in November 5.
- ❖ The Indian refiners will make rupee payments in the UCO Bank account of the National Iranian Oil Corporation (NIOC).
- ❖ Earlier India paid its 3rd largest oil supplier in Euros using the European banking channels.

Conference on 'Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code'

- ❖ A conference on the theme
 - 'Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India – New Paradigm for Stressed Assets'
 was held at the Indian Consulate in New York.
- ❖ The conference was organized by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) jointly with the Consulate General of India, New York, USA.

Israel becomes a member of the FATF

- ❖ Israel has recently become a full member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- ❖ It is an international body set up to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other threats to the international financial system.
- ❖ Israel became an observer to the FATF in February 2016.
- ❖ Earlier in 2000, Israel was blacklisted by the organization and was removed from the list in 2002, but now has become the group's 38th member.
- ❖ A FATF compliance report on Israel ranked the country as one of 3 leading Country, alongside the US and the UK, for the effective FATF operations.

World's largest' free trade deal

- ❖ The European Parliament approved a free trade agreement between Japan and the European Union (EU), covering 635 million people and almost one-third of the world's economy.
- ❖ The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement will remove duties on almost all agricultural and industrial products as well as open up the service sector and procurement.

Indian Stock market overtakes Germany

- ❖ India overtakes Germany as the World's 7th largest Stock market for the first time in the last seven years.
- ❖ After the exit of United Kingdom from the European Union, now the European Union has only 'France' in the top seven economies of the world.

GST rate slashed on 23 items

- ❖ The tax rates on 23 goods and services has been reduced by the GST Council which includes movie tickets, TV and monitor screens and others.
- ❖ The new GST rates will be applicable from 1st of January 2019.

COMPLETE LIST OF GST RATE CUTS		
<p>28% to 18%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pulleys, transmission shafts and cranks, gear boxes etc., falling under HS Code 8483 > Monitors and TVs of up to screen size of 32 inches > Re-treaded or used pneumatic tyres of rubber > Power banks of lithium-ion batteries. Lithium-ion batteries are already at 18%. This will bring parity in GST rate of power bank and lithium-ion battery > Digital cameras and video 	<p>camera recorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Video game consoles and other games and sports requisites falling under HS code 9504 <p>28% to 5%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Parts and accessories for the carriages for disabled people <p>18% to 12%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Cork roughly squared or debagged > Articles of natural cork > Agglomerated cork <p>12% to 5%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Natural cork > Walking stick > Fly ash blocks 	<p>5% to Nil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Vegetables (uncooked or cooked by steaming or boiling), frozen, branded and put in a unit container > Vegetable provisionally preserved (for example by sulphur dioxide gas, in brine, in sulphur water or in other preservative solutions), but unsuitable in that state for quick consumption <p>GST on solar power generating plant and other renewable energy plants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > GST rate of 5% rate has been prescribed on renewable energy devices & parts for their manufacture (bio gas plant/solar power based devices, solar power generating system (SGPS) etc) [falling under chapter 84, 85 or 94 of the tariff]. Other goods or services used in these plants attract applicable GST
REDUCTION IN GST RATES/EXEMPTIONS ON SERVICES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > GST rate on cinema tickets above ₹100 shall be reduced from 28% to 18% and on cinema tickets up to ₹100 from 18% to 12% > GST rate on third-party insurance premium of goods carrying vehicles shall be 	<p>reduced from 18% to 12%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Services supplied by banks to Basic Saving Bank Deposit (BSBD) account holders under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) shall be exempted > Air travel of pilgrims 	<p>by non-scheduled/charter operations, for religious pilgrimage facilitated by the Government of India under bilateral arrangements shall attract the same rate of GST as applicable to similar flights in economy class (i.e. 5%)</p>

Sangeeta Verma appointed as 3rd CCI Member

- ❖ The Competition Commission of India (CCI) announced the appointment of Ex-IES Sangeeta Verma as its member in its 4-member council including the chairperson.
- ❖ The other members of the council include:
 - Chairperson - Ashok Kumar Gupta,
 - 2 other members - Augustine Peter and UC Nahta
- ❖ The Commission was established in 2003 to replace the erstwhile Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission.

Fine on HUL

- ❖ The National Anti-Profiteering Authority has imposed a fine of Rs 383 Crore to Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) for failing to reduce the maximum retail price (MRP) of products after last year's GST rate cut.
- ❖ National Anti-profiteering Authority was constituted by the central government.
- ❖ It was constituted to provide an institutional mechanism under the GST law for checking the unfair profit-making activities by the trading community.

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) report

- ❖ The World Intellectual Property Indicators 2018 report was recently released in Geneva by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
- ❖ Globally, 1.4 million patents were granted in 2017.
- ❖ According to the WIPO, China's patent authority led the world in the number of patents granted and it was followed by the US.
- ❖ The number of patents granted by India shot up by 50% in 2017, keeping up an increasing trend.
- ❖ India ranked 10th in the number of patents given last year.

Economic Capital Framework

- ❖ The RBI, in consultation with the government of India has set up a 6-member committee to review the economic capital framework of the central bank.
- ❖ It will be headed by Former RBI Chief Bimal Jalan.
- ❖ The committee will suggest how the central bank should handle its reserves and whether it can transfer its surplus to the government.
- ❖ The six-member panel has former deputy RBI governor Rakesh Mohan as its vice chairman.

Arunachal touches record high revenue generation

- ❖ The Arunachal Pradesh government has created a record of a total revenue generation of Rs 1,598.49 crore in 2017-18, reaching a new high in the last 30 years.
- ❖ The revenue generation had crossed the Rs 1,000 crore mark for the 2 consecutive years since Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood in 1987.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

World's first total-body scanner

- ❖ The world's 1st medical imaging scanner that can capture a 3D picture of the entire human body at once in as little as 20-30 seconds has produced its 1st scans.
- ❖ The scanner dubbed as Explorer has been developed by scientists from
 - The University of California – Davis in the US in partnership with
 - Shanghai-based United Imaging Healthcare (UIH)

- ❖ It can scan with a radiation dose up to 40 times less than a current PET scan.
- ❖ It is a combined positron emission tomography (PET) and X-ray computed tomography (CT) scanner that can image the entire body at the same time.



NASI-Scopus Young Scientist Awards 2018

- ❖ National Academy of Sciences India (NASI) SCOPUS Young Scientist Awards 2018 were presented to winners in New Delhi.
- ❖ This year five multi-disciplinary categories in awards were introduced.
- ❖ These categories aligned with national missions of Make in India, Digital India, Healthy India and Clean India.
- ❖ The NASI-Scopus Young Scientist Awards, currently in its twelfth year, is a joint collaboration between
 - Elsevier and
 - National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI)
 to celebrate the best and brightest young scientists in India
- ❖ The Awards program is part of Elsevier's global initiative to support young researchers in India

Awards	Winners
Agriculture, Plant Sciences and Rural Development	Dr. Jitender Giri (National Institute of Plant Genome Research, New Delhi)
Biomedical Research and Healthcare	Dr. Maddika Subba Reddy (Group Leader and Staff Scientist- V, CDFD, Hyderabad)

Environmentally Sound Sustainable Development	Dr. Vimal Chandra Srivastava (Indian Institute of Technology-Roorkee, Roorkee)
Innovation in Engineering and Physical Sciences	Dr. Ajay S. Karakoti (Associate Professor, Ahmedabad University, Ahmedabad)
Women in Science	Dr. Zhumur Ghosh (Bose Institute, Kolkata)

Enzymes developed using radio frequency

- ❖ As per study published in ACS Biomaterials Science and Engineering Journal, for the 1st time, scientists have developed enzymes using radio frequency radiation in Washington, USA.
- ❖ This was made by making a special complex consisting of enzymes and magnetic nanoparticles.
- ❖ After absorption of radio emission, it was converted to heat and enzymatic processes increased by more than four times.
- ❖ Thus, by using the radiofrequency field, one can control the activity of enzymes in the body and adjust cell metabolism.

Marathon

- ❖ Russia's state space corporation, Roscosmos planned to venture into the Internet of Things (IoT) with the launch of a new satellite system named 'Marathon'.
- ❖ The satellite system will be a part of Russia's Sphere satellite constellation, which will be fully established by 2026.

Smartphone-based system to detect adulteration in milk

- ❖ Researchers from Indian IIT, Hyderabad, has developed a smartphone-based system to detect adulteration in milk.
- ❖ They have developed detector system which can measure level of acidity in milk using indicator paper.
- ❖ They have also developed algorithms that can be incorporated in smartphone to accurately detect change in acidity.
- ❖ The sensor-chip based method measures pH, which is indicator of the acidity and colour of paper indicates different pH levels.
- ❖ In this adulteration detection system, researchers have used process called 'electrospinning'.

Google's NBU Neighbourly app

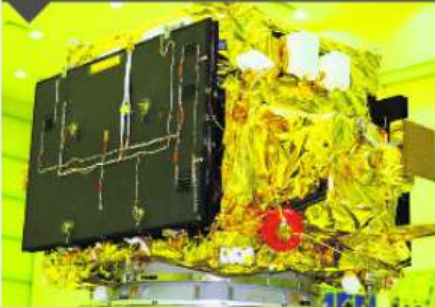
- ❖ Google's Next Billion Users (NBU) team announced the national roll-out of its Neighbourly app in Delhi and Bangalore.
- ❖ It will help people by sourcing local information from their neighbours about their neighbourhood in an easier way.
- ❖ The full-fledged app offers services in 8 vernacular languages and is a targeted app with a geographic radius between 1 to 5 km.

India's first chatbot for patients – ANYA

- ❖ The Pharma company Lupin launched India's First chatbot named 'ANYA' to provide medically verified information for health-related queries.
- ❖ It was launched at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes, in Bengaluru.
- ❖ ANYA is chatbot trained to help patients with health-related concerns as part of their disease-management.
- ❖ ANYA in Sanskrit means inexhaustible or limitless.

ISRO successfully launches earth observation satellite HysIS

- ❖ ISRO has successfully launched country's first advance earth observation satellite Hyper Spectral Imaging Satellite (HysIS) along with 30 other satellites from 8 countries.

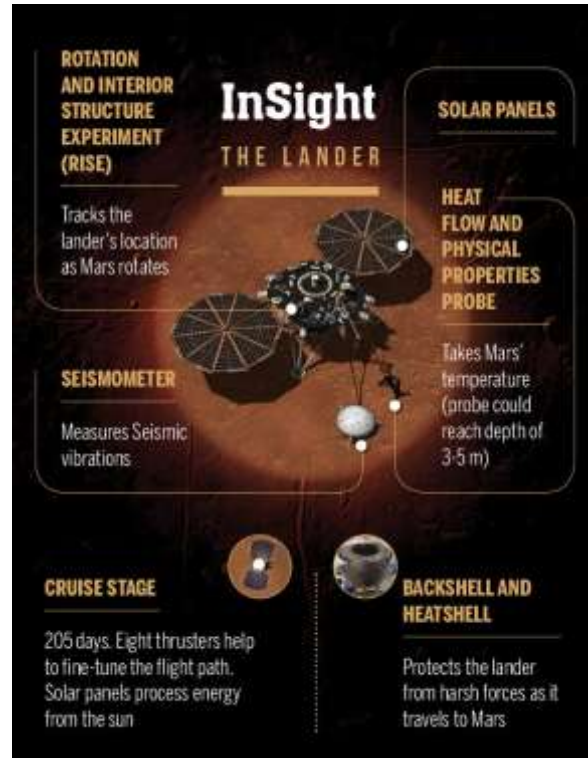
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSLV-C43 mission will launch 31 satellites in total into 2 orbits • Slated to last just under 2 hours, it will be ISRO's 3rd longest mission • 30 co-passengers include a micro satellite (100-kg class) and 29 nano satellites (under 10 kg). They are from United 	<p>States of America (23), Australia, Canada, Columbia, Finland, Malaysia, Netherlands and Spain (one satellite each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They foreign satellites together weigh around 261 kg • Their launches were booked with ISRO's arm Antrix Corporation 	<p>The main payload HysIS (in pic) - developed by ISRO - is built to work for five years. It will aid detailed, high-definition study of Earth's surface. It will be placed in a polar orbit 636 km away at an inclination of 97.957 degrees. It alone weighs 380 kg</p> 
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- ❖ These satellites were launched on board of ISRO's workhorse PSLV-C43 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ It is India's first hyperspectral imaging satellite for advanced earth observation developed indigenously by ISRO.
- ❖ PSLV-C43 was 45th flight of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and it was 'Core Alone' version of PSLV i.e. lightest version of the launch vehicle.

- ❖ PSLV is four stage launch vehicles with alternating solid and liquid stages.
 - **Hyperspectral imaging** - combines power of digital imaging and spectroscopy.

Nasa's InSight probe lands on Mars

- ❖ NASA's InSight spacecraft has landed safely on the surface of Mars at Elysium Planitia after a six-month journey.
- ❖ It was NASA's 9th attempt to land at Mars since the 1976 Viking probes with 8 of them successfully landing on the Mars.
- ❖ The last landed spacecraft on Mars by NASA was on the year 2012.
- ❖ InSight will spend 24 months – about one Martian year.
- ❖ The InSight has carried with itself, the instruments that detect planetary heat and seismic rumblings never measured anywhere else but Earth.
- ❖ InSight stands for Interior Exploration Using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport.



ISRO's GSAT-11

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation or ISRO's GSAT-11 satellite also called the "Big Bird " was successfully launched into space from the French space port of Kourou in South America.

Big push for communication

GSAT-11 will play a vital role in providing broadband services across the country. It will also provide a platform to demonstrate new generation applications.

- Launching from French Guiana between 2 a.m. & 3 a.m. IST on Dec. 5
- Will be lifted to space on a European Ariane 5 rocket
- Mass 5,854 kg, cost ₹1,200 crore, including the foreign launch
- Will rest in over the 74°E longitude, nearly 36,000 km away



- Will carry 40 transponders in the Ku /Ka bands
- Built to provide throughput data rate of 16 gbps
- Expected to work for 15 years

APPLICATIONS:

- To meet unprecedented data demands:** Greater capacity and high data rates over regions due to use of the spot beam technology
- Supporting Bharat Net connectivity:** Substantial bandwidth coverage to gram panchayats for supporting e-governance and other platforms
- VSAT terminals:** Capacity platform to support a huge subscriber base
- Unlock new applications:** Reaching out to different strata of society through Digital India platform

- ❖ It will help provide satellite-based internet to remote places where cable-based internet cannot reach.
- ❖ The satellite, weighing 5,854 kg, is the heaviest Indian-made equipment that the agency (ISRO) put into its orbit.
- ❖ GSAT-11 is equivalent to the combined power of almost all communications satellites sent into orbit by India.

Transplanted Uterus from Dead Donor

- ❖ The Brazilian doctors have reported the world's first baby born to a woman with a uterus transplanted from a deceased donor.



- ❖ Healthy baby girl was born in 2017, following the uterus transplant from a 45-year-old brain dead woman.
- ❖ The womb transplant, lasting over 10 hours, took place in Sao Paulo in Brazil in September 2016. The baby was born in December 2017.

Digital Sky

- ❖ The Civil Aviation Ministry announced that, it has started the registration process for drone operators in the country.
- ❖ It will be done through a portal called 'Digital Sky'.
- ❖ It is a first of its kind that implements 'no permission, no take-off' (NPNT), any drone without a digital permit will not be able to take off.
- ❖ Nano drones in India can start flying without restriction. For micro and above categories, operators and pilots are required to register on the Digital Sky Portal.
- ❖ Payments for Unmanned Aerial Operator's Permit (UAOP) and Unique Identification Numbers (UIN) will be accepted through 'Bharat Kosh portal'.

- ❖ Flying in the 'green zones' will require only intimation of the time and location of the flights via the portal or the app.
- ❖ Permissions will be required for flying in 'yellow zones' and flights will not be allowed in the 'red zones'.

India's first privately built satellite - ExseedSAT 1

- ❖ SpaceX has recently launched India's first privately built satellite ExseedSAT 1 from the Vandenberg air force base in California, USA.
- ❖ It has been launched along with 63 other satellite from 18 countries in the company's largest-ever "rideshare" mission on a twice-reused Falcon 9 rocket.

'V FOR VICTORY' BEAMED IN MORSE CODE

Exseed Sat-1

- It's an open radio transponder, to serve amateur radio community
- Built by Santacruz-based startup Exseed Space
- People can receive signals at 145.90 MHz with help of TV tuner, walkie-talkies with beam antenna

Size: 10 cm X 10 cm X 10 cm
height of a coffee mug

5-6 passes over India daily To orbit Earth every **90 minutes**

How action unfolded

12-10 am Tuesday (IST): Lift off from California after 10-day delay due to technical and weather reasons

- 43 minutes later, ExseedSat-1 went into orbit
- All satellites placed into low Earth orbit at a 5-minute interval over a 5 hours
- 2 tiny switches at the bottom of ExseedSat-1 keep it switched off
- Once the satellite is ejected, switches are released and the satellite wakes up
- After all satellites drift out, antenna of ExseedSat-1 deployed to start beeping signals
- Beams "V for Victory" in Morse code
- Data transmitted to a ground station at Hyderabad where it was integrated

Biggest US 'rideshare'

- Falcon 9 rocket launch broke records for tech billionaire Elon Musk's SpaceX
- 19th launch of US private firm this year, breaking last year's record of 18
- Falcon 9 carried 15 microsats, 49 cubesats
- Payloads from 18 countries and 35 organisations
- Launch chartered by a company called Spaceflight, which specializes in space "rideshares"
- Two-stage rocket is reusable; landed after mission, to be dried out for launch again

World record satellites launched in one go **India in Feb 2017** **104**

SpaceX **64**

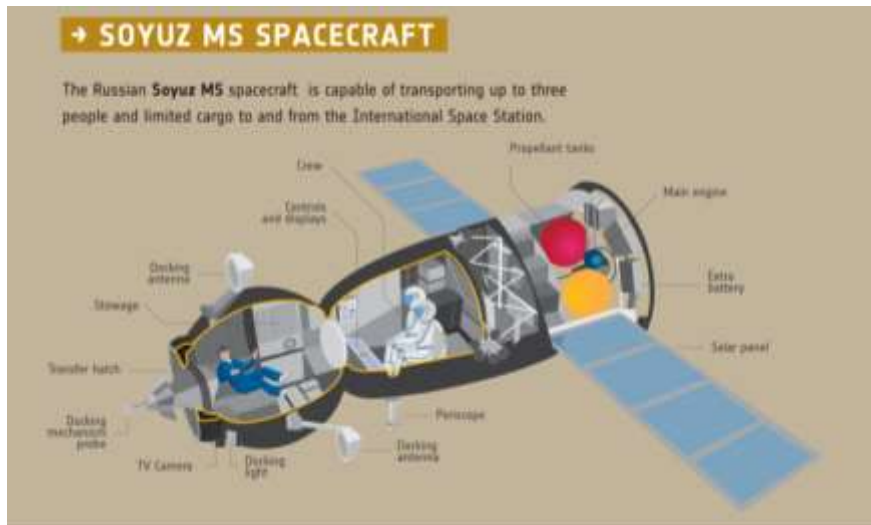
Cost ₹2Cr

- ❖ ExseedSAT 1 was built by the Mumbai based Startup Exseedspace.
- ❖ ExseedSAT 1 is an open radio transponder that works on ham frequencies. The satellite will have a life span of 5 years.

Soyuz - first manned mission

- ❖ Since the failure of 11th October launch in this year (Soyuz MS -10), the **first manned Soyuz spacecraft Soyuz MS-11** which carries Russian, American and Canadian astronauts **successfully docked** at the International Space Station (ISS).
- ❖ 3 Astronaut
 - Oleg Kononenko from Russia,
 - Anne McClain of NASA and
 - David Saint Jacques of the Canadian Space Agency
were part of this manned mission.

- ❖ They will stay at the International Space Centre for six and half months.



- ❖ It was the first manned voyage for the soviet-era Soyuz since a launch failure in October this year.

eDrishti software

- ❖ The Indian Railways unveiled 'eDrishti' software that will help the Union Railway Ministry to keep the track of punctuality of trains as well as freight and passenger earnings and much more from anywhere in the country.
- ❖ The software is also connected 'Live' to the kitchens of Indian Rail Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).
- ❖ It will also provide the 'live' status of reserved and unreserved passengers.
- ❖ The software has been developed by the Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS).

Nuclear capable Agni-5 missile successfully test fired

- ❖ India successfully test fired the surface-to-surface ballistic missile Agni-5 from Dr Abdul Kalam Island in the Bay of Bengal off Odisha coast.
- ❖ This is the 7th trial of the indigenously-developed surface-to-surface missile, while the second one in the last 6 months.
- ❖ Agni-5 is a 3-stage missile which has a strike range of 5,000 km.



AGNI V
India's first nuclear capable ICBM with a range of over 5000Km

	RANGE(KM)	PAYLOAD(KG)
AGNI I	700	1000
AGNI II	2,000	1000
AGNI III	3500	2000 - 2500
AGNI V	5000	1360

Karnataka Nuclear Reactor Sets Global Record

- ❖ The pressurized heavy water reactor (PHWR) at Kaiga in Karnataka has become the world's longest running reactor without a shutdown.
- ❖ The indigenously designed Kaiga-1 unit has been under continuous operation from May 13, 2016, completed a continuous run of 941 days.



RANK	DAYS	PLANT NAME	TYPE
1	941	Kaiga 1 (India)	PHWR
2	940	Heysham-2 (UK)	AGR
3	894	Pickering-7 (Canada)	PHWR
4	859	Torness-1 (UK)	AGR
5	825	Torness-2 (UK)	AGR

- ❖ The earlier record of 940 days of continuous operation was held by a British reactor called Heysham-2, Unit-8 reactor, which set the benchmark in 2016.
- ❖ In October, the unit set a new world record for continuous operation of a PHWR (When it completed its 895th day of continuous operation).
- ❖ The previous record for a PHWR was set in 1994 by Canada's Pickering unit 7, with an unbroken run of 894 days' operation.

Home Ministry launches Twitter account

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has launched Twitter account @CyberDost to spread awareness about the cybercrimes and normal precautions to be taken.
- ❖ It is aimed at enhancing people's basic knowledge about cybercrimes and precautions to be taken for prevention.



CROSS BOW-18

- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully concluded combined guided weapons firing of Surface-to-Air Missiles from the Air Force Station at Suryalanka in Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ It has conducted as part of a first-of-its-kind two-day exercise codenamed-CROSS BOW 18.
- ❖ The exercise was carried out for 3 days during the day and night in an integrated networked environment.
- ❖ In the exercise, successful firing of 4 different classes of missiles, like Akash, Spyder, OSA-AK-M and IGLA, took place.

ENSURE- National Livestock Mission-EDEG portal launched

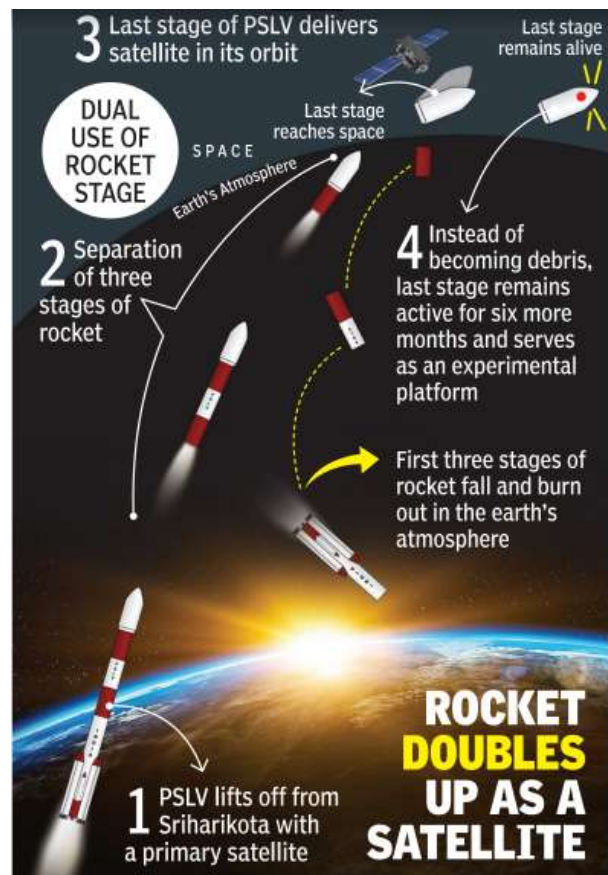
- ❖ Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh has launched a portal ENSURE- National Livestock Mission-EDEG.
- ❖ It was developed by the NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) and operated under the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries.
- ❖ The subsidy payment for activities related to poultry, small ruminants, pigs, etc. goes directly to the beneficiary's account through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- ❖ The Subsidy payments will be under the National Livestock Mission's component called the Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG).
- ❖ The portal "ENSURE" has been developed to make the process of DBT better, simpler and transparent.

World's oldest plant virus discovered

- ❖ The World's oldest plant virus dating back 1,000 years named Zea Mays Chryso Virus 1 (ZMCV1) has been discovered by the scientists at a Native American archaeological site.
- ❖ The previous oldest was found about 750 years ago.
- ❖ They discovered it from the Antelope House, an Ancestral Puebloan ruin located at Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona of the USA.

ISRO to give life to a 'Dead rocket'

- ❖ ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization) is planning to make the 'Dead rocket' come 'Alive' in space for the first time in history.
- ❖ It is currently working on a new technology where it will use the last stage of the PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) rocket for Space experiments.
- ❖ For the demonstration, it is planning to send PSLV C-44 rocket in January 2019, which will carry a Microsat as the Primary satellite.
- ❖ This microsat will have inbuilt batteries and solar panel, which will keep the last stage of the rocket 'active' for a period of 6 months for more experiments in space.



Military Communication Satellite GSAT-7A

- ❖ The ISRO has successfully launched the communication satellite GSAT-7A from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ It was launched using Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F11).
- ❖ The mission, designated as F11, will be the GSLV rocket's 13th flight.
 - F11 – F stands for Operational Flight,
 - whereas D indicates Developmental flight.

- ❖ GSAT-7A is a high-tech communication satellite having new technologies including a Gregorian Antenna.



- ❖ It is the 39th communication satellite of ISRO and will mainly be used for military applications.
- ❖ ISRO's GSAT-7A satellite is the heaviest satellite (2250 kgs) with an indigenously developed cryogenic engine.

Shiksha Setu Mobile App

- ❖ The Haryana Government has launched a mobile app named as 'Shiksha Setu' with an aim to help the students of the state.
- ❖ The 'Shikhsa Setu' App will help in bringing transparency in the Education Department and in the administration of colleges in the state.
- ❖ This mobile app will contain all the information related to attendance, fee, online admission and scholarships in all the Haryana government colleges.

Gas 2019

- ❖ The Civil aviation ministry along with the Airport Authority of India (AAI) launched an app named 'GAS 2019'.

- ❖ This app will enable users to interact with the co-delegates and speakers besides providing a platform for networking through personal and group chats.
- ❖ This was launched ahead of the global aviation summit to be held in Mumbai in January 2019.
- ❖ The 2-day summit will be hosted by
 - The Civil Aviation Ministry,
 - AAI and
 - FICCI.

India's IDRSS to be satellite communication hub in sky

- ❖ India will launch the IDRSS to improve data relay and communication links with its remote sensing/earth observation satellites.
- ❖ Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) will be launched as part of its proposed manned space mission in 2022.
- ❖ The two-satellite IDRSS will maintain a continuous communication link with
 - India's remote sensing/earth observation satellites and
 - The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III).
- ❖ The two IDRSS satellites will be placed in geostationary orbit.
- ❖ IDRSS satellites can see about 80 % of the area where Indian remote sensing satellites are orbiting.
- ❖ The proposed system will also reduce the dependence on the ground stations in tracking satellites.

First satellite for space-based broadband

- ❖ China has launched its first communication satellite to offer broadband internet services to the users worldwide.
- ❖ The communication satellite was launched using a Long March 11 carrier rocket which took off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in north-western China.
- ❖ The satellite is the first in the Hongyun project planned by the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp (CASIC).
- ❖ The Hongyun project, started in September 2016, which aims to build a space-based communications network.
- ❖ It seeks to provide broadband internet connectivity to users around the world, especially those in the underserved regions.



SEIS placed on Mars - NASA

- ❖ NASA's 'Insight' has placed its first instrument, a seismometer (SEIS) on the Planet Mars.



- ❖ The seismometer, world's first ever instrument placed on another planet's surface, will listen for quakes and wobbles in the Red planet.

SpaceX's first US military satellite launched

- ❖ SpaceX launched the U.S. Air Force's newest 'GPS III' satellite on a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida, USA.

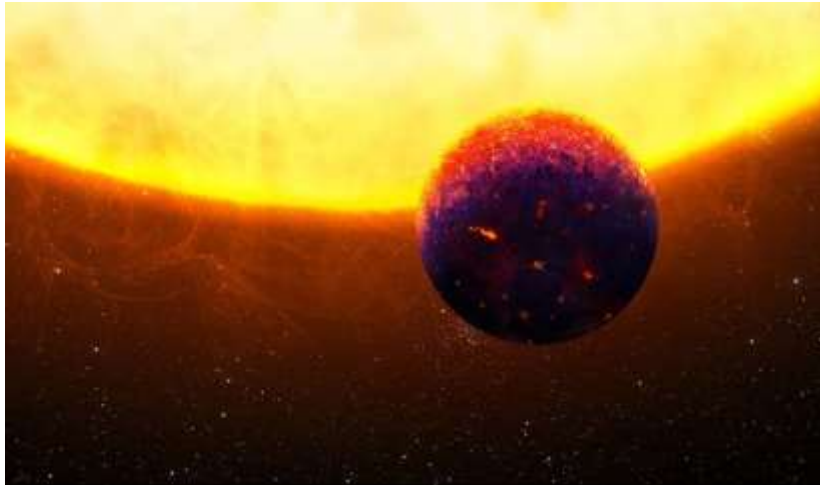


- ❖ This GPS 3 satellite replaces an aging GPS 2R spacecraft launched in 1997.
- ❖ The solar-powered spacecraft, dubbed "Vespucci," is the company's first official "National Security Space" mission.
- ❖ It will provide three-times better accuracy than current systems and will be eight-times better at anti-jamming.

- ❖ Nicknamed Vespucci, it honours Italian cartographer and explorer Amerigo Vespucci, after whom North and South America were named.
- ❖ It was competed through the Air Force's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program.
- ❖ The successful GPS III SV01 mission marked SpaceX's 21st and final launch of 2018.

Shimmering 'Super-Earth' In Constellation Cassiopeia Discovered

- ❖ Researchers have discovered a new exotic planet outside our solar system in the constellation Cassiopeia.
- ❖ Located 21 light years away from us, this planet, dubbed HD219134 b, has a mass almost 5 times that of Earth, which is considered a so-called "super-Earth".

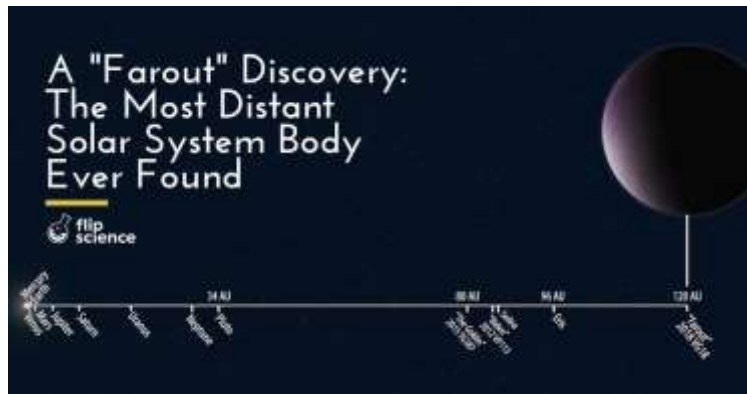


- ❖ Unlike the Earth, however, it most likely does not have a massive core of iron, but is rich in calcium and aluminium alongside magnesium and silicon.
- ❖ It shimmers red to blue like rubies and sapphires, because these gemstones are aluminium oxides which are common on the exoplanet.

Most-distant solar system object ever discovered - Farout

- ❖ Scientists have discovered the most-distant object ever observed in our solar system known as 2018 VG18 and nicknamed "Farout".
- ❖ It is the first to be observed at a distance of more than 100 AU (astronomical units) which almost 120AU or 11 billion miles from the sun.
- ❖ 1 AU is the distance between the Earth and the Sun.
- ❖ They had discovered another extremely distant object known as "The Goblin", about 80 AU from the sun.

- ❖ The second most distant observed solar system object is Eris about 96 AU from the sun.
- ❖ Pluto, a dwarf planet is currently at about 34 AU.



Information Fusion Centre

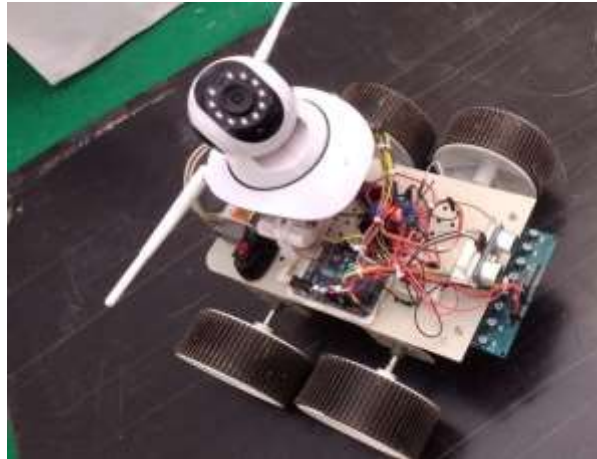
- ❖ The Union Defence Minister launched the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) Gurugram, Haryana.
- ❖ Through this, information on “white shipping” will be exchanged with countries in the region to improve maritime domain awareness in the Indian Ocean.
- ❖ IMAC is the single point centre linking all the coastal radar chains to generate a seamless real-time picture of the nearly 7,500 km coastline.

BizBarde App

- ❖ The isolated central Asian country, Turkmenistan, has launched its own and the first Turkmen messaging app BizBarde.
- ❖ The app will allow the exchange of messages, files, photos and videos.
- ❖ Turkmenistan, the ex-Soviet republic, is one of the world’s most isolated regimes that have blocked many western services like Facebook, Whatsapp and Twitter.

USTAAD

- ❖ The mechanical branch of Central Railway ‘s Nagpur division has developed a new AI-powered robot named USTAAD.
- ❖ USTAAD - Undergear Surveillance through Artificial Intelligence Assisted Droid.



- ❖ It examines parts of the coach in real time with a HD camera and transmits them over WiFi.
- ❖ It will reduce chances of human error while examining under gear equipment on Indian Railways trains.

New hypersonic nuclear missile Test

- ❖ Russia has successfully tested the new hypersonic nuclear-capable weapon.
- ❖ The weapon, named “Avangard”, had been launched from the Orenburg region in the European Russian part.
- ❖ It has the ability to fly at 20 times the speed of sound and could manoeuvre up and down, and also it could breach defence systems.
- ❖ It is designed using new composite materials to withstand temperatures of up to 2,000 degrees Celsius.

ENVIRONMENT

Pygmy False Catshark

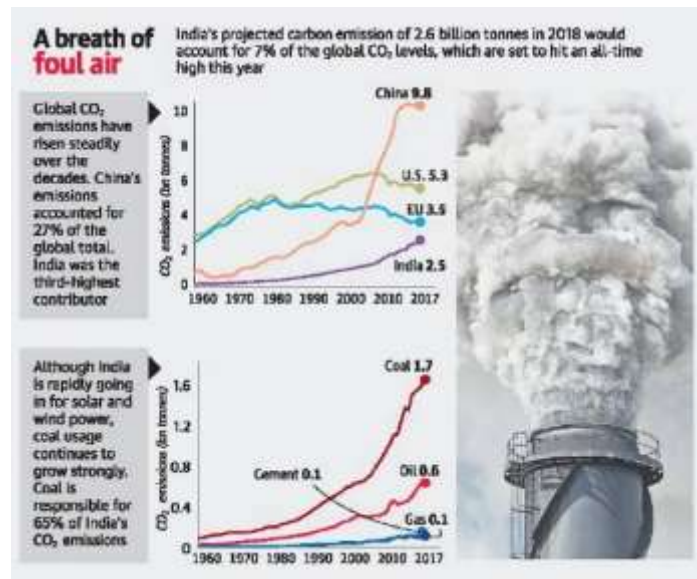
- ❖ A new deep-sea shark species named Pygmy false catshark, was discovered in the northern Indian Ocean.
- ❖ This was discovered by scientists from the US and Germany in association with the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute of Kochi (CMFRI).
- ❖ This is the first such discovery in India since the Mangalore hound shark in 2011.
- ❖ The scientific name of the species is *Planonasus indicus* – ‘planus’ meaning flat and ‘nasus’ meaning nose.

Stratospheric Barrier to Curb Warming

- ❖ Scientists at the Harvard University designed a geo- engineering technique known as **Stratospheric Aerosol Injection (SAI)** which might **half the rate of global warming**.
- ❖ This would consist of spraying sulphate particles above the earth at an altitude of 20km creating a shield against sunlight.

India and carbon emission

- ❖ India, the third-highest contributor, is projected to see emissions rise by 6.3% from 2017.
- ❖ Global carbon emissions are set to hit an all-time high of 37.1 billion tonnes of CO₂ in 2018.
- ❖ The 2.7% projected global rise in 2018 has been driven by significant growth in coal use for the second year in a row, and sustained growth in oil and gas use.
- ❖ This study has been done by the researchers at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and the Global Carbon Project.
- ❖ 10 biggest emitters in 2018 are China, U.S., India, Russia, Japan, Germany, Iran, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Canada.



Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi – GI Tag

- ❖ Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi (turmeric) will soon get Geographical Indications (GI) tag.

Exclusive Haladi

Kandhamal Haladi's production methodology, social, traditional and religious connectivity found to be of high importance

The IPFC carried out the exercise for two months

More than 60,000 families, about half the population of Kandhamal, is engaged in its cultivation

The team interacted with farmers, research scientists and reviewed technical investigation reports

A technical evaluation committee, comprising research scientists, IP experts, agriculturists, horticulturists and technologists, met on January 9 to review the test reports

- ❖ Its registration was moved by Kandhamal Apex Spices Association for Marketing and was accepted under Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- ❖ Kandhamal Haldi is famous for its healing properties. It is main cash crop of tribal people in Kandhamal.

India's highest tiger habitat

- ❖ The Dibang valley of Arunachal Pradesh at the height of 3,630 metres could be the highest tiger habitat in the country.



- ❖ A three-year camera trap study conducted in the valley confirms the presence of Tigers in the valley.
- ❖ Earlier, in Bhutan, a tiger was photographed at a height of 4,200 metres in 2012.

HC judge U C Dhyani to monitor Ganga cleaning

- ❖ The National Green Tribunal has appointed former Uttarakhand High Court judge, Justice U C Dhyani, as the head of the 3-member committee to oversee the rejuvenation work of the Ganga river.
- ❖ Earlier on 6th August 2018, Justice Arun Tandon was appointed as the head of the said panel, but later he was replaced.

Climate Vulnerable Forum

- ❖ The first 'Completely Online' Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) was held at the Marshall Islands.
- ❖ It is an intergovernmental meeting represented by Heads of Government level ministries.

- ❖ It focuses on Global warming and set a target to keep the rising temperature beyond 1.5 degree Celsius.
- ❖ The Climate Vulnerable Forum was founded by the Maldives government and India is one of the Observer States of this Forum.

International Conference on Bears

- ❖ An international conference on bears was organised in Agra for the first time.
- ❖ The conference was hosted by Wildlife SOS, a non-profit Conservation group in association with Bear Care Group from the US and Canada.



- ❖ It was focused on bear care, wildlife conservation and human wildlife conflict mitigation.

Global Nutrition Report 2018

- ❖ The WHO's (World Health Organization) Global Nutrition Report 2018, which has been released recently points out a wide variation in the stunting levels in different parts of the country.
- ❖ Nearly one-third of the World's 150.8 million stunted children (who have low height for age) under the age of 5, live in India.
- ❖ Globally 150.8 million children under five years are stunted and 50.5 million are wasted.
- ❖ With 46.6 million children who are stunted, India tops the list of countries followed by Nigeria (13.9 million) and Pakistan (10.7 million).
- ❖ With 25.5 million children who are wasted (low weight for height), India tops the list followed by Nigeria (3.4 million) and Indonesia (3.3 million).
- ❖ More than half of the world's children impacted by wasting (26.9 million) live in South Asia.

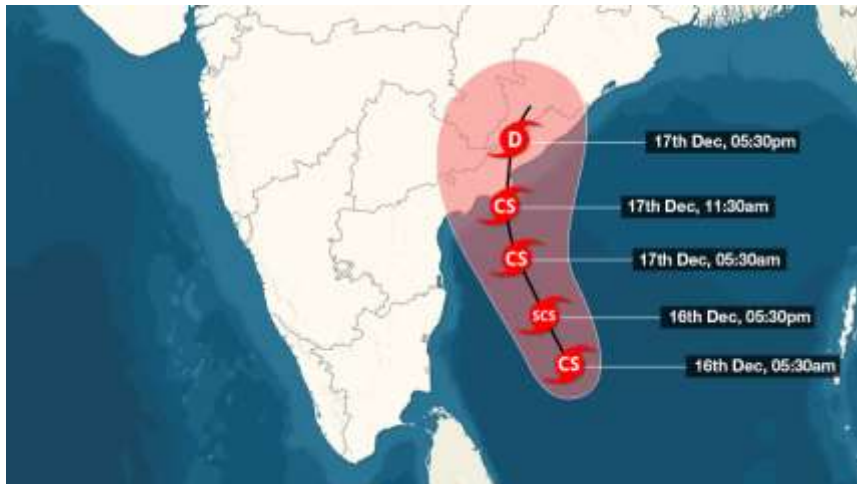
- ❖ 3 million Children in the world over are overweight, while 38.9 % of adults are overweight or obese.
- ❖ One third of all women of reproductive age have anaemia. Women also have a higher prevalence of obesity than men.

Global Nutrition Report

- ❖ The Global Nutrition Report is the world's leading report on the state of global nutrition.
- ❖ The Global Nutrition Report came into existence following the first Nutrition for Growth Initiative Summit (N4G) in 2013.

Cyclonic Storm Phethai

- ❖ The Cyclonic Storm Phethai is the sixth named cyclone of 2018 North Indian Ocean Cyclone season.
- ❖ The previous five named cyclones are Sagar, Mekunu, Luban, Titli and Gaza.



- ❖ Cyclone Pethai has emerged as a deep depression in the Bay of Bengal around 900 kms off Chennai on 15 December 2018.
- ❖ The name was given by Thailand.

Mount Soputan volcano erupted

- ❖ Central Indonesia's Mount Soputan Volcano erupted twice on Sulawesi Island sending ash about 7.5 km high in the sky.
- ❖ Mount Soputan was located on the northern part of Sulawesi island, Indonesia.
- ❖ Indonesia has around 129 active volcanoes and Mount Soputan is one of them.
- ❖ The most active volcanoes of Indonesia are Kelud and Merapi.



- ❖ Indonesia is prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific “Ring of Fire.”

Asiatic Lion Conservation Project

- ❖ The “Asiatic Lion Conservation Project” has been launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- ❖ The main objective of this project is to work for the conservation of the world’s last ranging free Asiatic Lion population and the ecosystem associated with it.
- ❖ The project will be funded under the ‘Development of Wildlife Habitat (CSS-DWH)’ scheme which is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- ❖ The cost will be borne in the 60:40 ratio by the Central and State government.
- ❖ The Asiatic Lions are listed as ‘Endangered’ under the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List. Its population is restricted to the state of Gujarat in India.

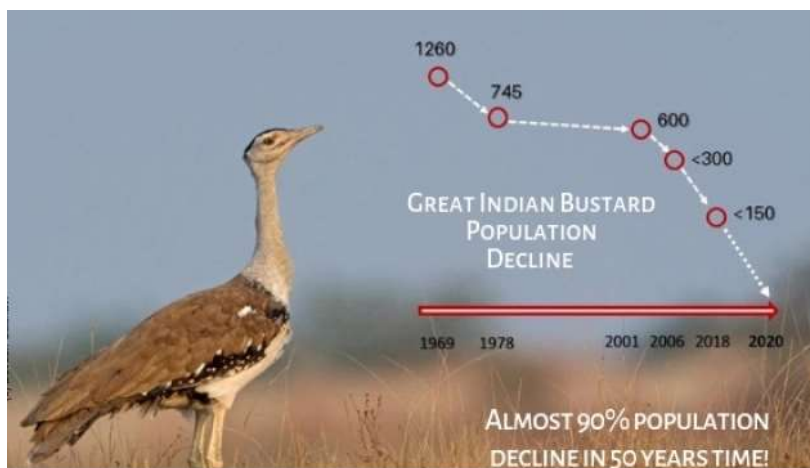
Silao Khaja gets GI tag

- ❖ The traditional delicacy of Nalanda district of Bihar, Silao Khaja was granted GI (Geographical Indication) tag by Geographical Indications Registry at Chennai.
- ❖ It is popular among the tourists visiting Buddhist sites of Rajgir and Nalanda.
- ❖ The application to obtain GI Tag was filed by Silao Khaja Audyogik Swavalambi Sahakari Samiti Limited, Bihar.



Emergency campaign launched to save the Great Indian Bustard

- ❖ The Wildlife organizations have got together to launch a campaign to save the Great Indian Bustard which in recent years has come under the critically endangered list.
- ❖ This campaign is much needed to save the bird from extinction as the total global population of the Great Indian Bustard reaching and all time low at < 150.

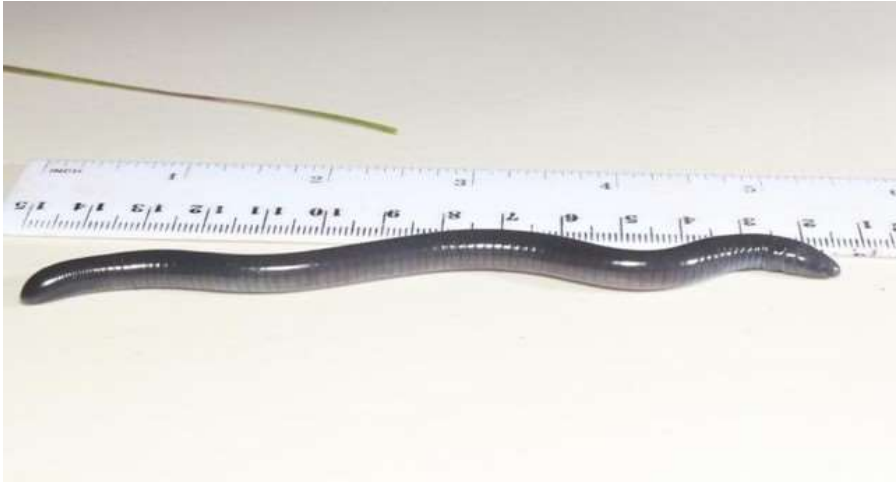


- ❖ Rajasthan is the last stronghold of the Great Indian Bustard.
- ❖ Fewer than 150 birds survive, out of which about 100 live in the Thar Desert.
- ❖ Gujarat has the next largest population of the bird – between 10 and 25 individuals.
- ❖ The wildlife organizations launched the campaign include the Corbett Foundation in collaboration with Conservation India and Sanctuary Nature Foundation.

- ❖ Many experts believe that these birds might be the first species to become extinct in Independent India.
- ❖ This grassland species is extinct from 95% of its range now.

Dermophis donaldtrumpi

- ❖ A newly discovered blind amphibian has been named after the US President Trump in recognition of the president's denial of climate change.



- ❖ EnviroBuild, a U.K. based sustainable building materials company has announced that it would be naming the amphibian as 'Dermophis donaldtrumpi'.
- ❖ The new creature has no legs, blind and has the ability to bury its head in the ground.

Indonesia hit by Volcanic Tsunami

- ❖ A tsunami following a volcanic eruption hits the Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra islands of Indonesia without any early warning.



- ❖ It caused heavy damage to the holiday makers and residents of coastal areas.
- ❖ The tsunami was caused by an underwater landslide when a chunk of the volcanic Anak Krakatau island slipped into the ocean.
- ❖ The tsunami was triggered by a volcano rather than earthquake due to which early warning could not be generated.

Italy's Mount Etna Volcano erupts

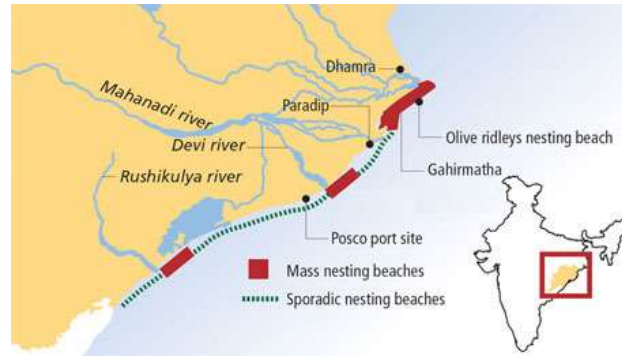
- ❖ Italy's Mount Etna volcano erupted recently resulting in more than 130 earthquakes of up to 4.3 in magnitude.
- ❖ The volcanic lava and ash spewed from a new fracture near its south-eastern crater for the first time in a decade and was visible for miles.



- ❖ Mount Etna is Europe's highest and most active volcano outside the Caucasus.
- ❖ Mount Etna has been designated a Decade Volcano by the United Nations.
- ❖ In June 2013, it was added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

New Olive Ridley Nesting Site

- ❖ Recently, the Odisha forest department added another olive ridley mass nesting site Bahuda Rookery at beach on Bahuda river mouth in Ganjam district.
- ❖ It is located around 20 km to south of Rushikulya rookery coast.
- ❖ Gahirmatha marine sanctuary and Rushikulya rookery coast in Ganjam district are the main Olive Ridley Nesting sites in Odisha.



- ❖ Of these sites, Gahirmatha marine sanctuary is the largest rookery (mass nesting site) of Olive Ridley turtles.
- ❖ Odisha is home to 50% of the total world's population of Olive Ridley and about 90% of Indian population of sea turtles.

Kuno Palpur Sanctuary

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh has notified the 'Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary' as a National park.
- ❖ The move would enable translocation of lions from Gir in Gujarat to Kuno park.
- ❖ Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary, now extended by 413 sq. km, has been developed for the translocation of Asiatic Lions project.

Swachh Survekshan 2018 award - Best Capital City

- ❖ Swachh Survekshan 2018 award for Best Capital City in the Solid Waste Management was conferred to Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).
- ❖ It was also ranked at 27th in the list of 4041 cities in the Swachh Surveysahan Rankings.
- ❖ This edition of the survey was conducted by a third-party agency, Karvy Group appointed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

Bans on Noisy fireworks

- ❖ Fireworks have been banned on the Galapagos Islands to protect the archipelago's unique fauna.
- ❖ The Local council unanimously passed a resolution that prohibits the importation, sale, distribution and use of fireworks or pyrotechnics in the Galapagos province.
- ❖ Those fireworks that produce the light but no noise have been excluded from the ban.

STATE

Jhiri Mela

- ❖ A week long 'Jhiri Mela' which is an annual event organized every year, concluded on 30 November at village Jhiri in Jammu district.
- ❖ The festival is to commemorate the martyrdom of Baba Jittoo, a farmer who gave up his life in protest against the oppressive demands of a land lord about 500 years ago.
- ❖ The governor announced the construction of a 'Sarai' (inn) at village Jhiri for the devotees.

Nari Sashaktikaran Sankalp Abhiyan

- ❖ The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister has launched a month-long Nari Sashaktikaran Sankalp Abhiyan or Women Empowerment campaign in Lucknow.
- ❖ It is aimed to empower women in the state through various programmes including education, self-employment, health, cleanliness, nutrition.

Jangalmahal festival

- ❖ West Bengal celebrated the annual three-day long 'Jangalmahal' festival.
- ❖ It has been initiated and organized by the 'Jangal Mahal Udyog'.
- ❖ The festival aims to revive and popularise the culture and heritage of Jangal Mahal.

Bali Yatra

- ❖ The historic Bali Yatra festival was inaugurated in Cuttack, Odisha on the occasion of Kartik Purnima by State Finance Minister Shashi Bhusan Behera.
- ❖ The 10 days long festival is the largest trade fair in Orissa and is likely to witness a footfall of millions of people.
- ❖ It is held on the banks of Mahanadi river in Cuttack, to mark the day when ancient Sadhabas (ancient mariners) would set sail to distant lands of Bali, for trade and cultural expansion.

Open Transit Data portal

- ❖ Delhi Government launched a dedicated Open Transit Data portal in the website www.otd.delhi.gov.in – to spot the locations of cluster buses at intervals of 10 seconds.
- ❖ This portal was designed and developed by IIT-Delhi.
- ❖ Thus, Delhi became the first city in the country to open up transit data of city buses.

5-day exhibition on 'Our Vote- Our Future'

- ❖ Telangana Chief Electoral Officer Dr Rajat Kumar inaugurated a five-day exhibition on **“Our Vote- Our Future”** in Hyderabad.
- ❖ This exhibition was organized by the Regional Outreach Bureau of Information and Broadcasting Ministry.
- ❖ It aims to increase the polling percentage at least 10%.

Hornbill Festival

- ❖ The Hornbill Festival began in the Naga Heritage village of Kisama, Nagaland. It is also called the 'Festival of Festivals'.
- ❖ Hornbill Festival is celebrated in Nagaland every year 1st week of December. It is one of the biggest indigenous festivals of the country.



- ❖ The festival coincides with the Statehood Day of Nagaland which is observed on December 1.
- ❖ The festival is a tribute to Hornbill, the most admired and revered bird for the Nagas for its qualities of alertness and grandeur.
- ❖ It exposes both the culture and tradition of tribal peoples, and reinforces Nagaland’s identity as a unique state in India’s federal union.

- ❖ It is organized by the State Tourism and Art & Culture Departments. It is also supported by the Union Government.

SMART initiative

- ❖ The Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis launched a unique initiative called- State of Maharashtra's Agribusiness and Rural Transformation or "SMART".
- ❖ This will be implemented in 10,000 villages with an objective to achieve sustainable farming within the next 3 years.
- ❖ Its objective is to propel the rural transformation and double the farmers income by 2022.
- ❖ This is a World Bank (WB) assisted project.
- ❖ Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is the industry partner of this initiative.

PEETHA

- ❖ The Odisha Chief Minister has launched a new programme for transparency and awareness on various government schemes, called- the Peoples Empowerment Enabling Transparency and Accountability or PEETHA.
- ❖ PEETHA is based on a 3-T (Technology, Transparency and Team work) model.

PEETHA
Transparent delivery of government schemes

Scheme Details:

- Create awareness about government schemes
- Improve transparency in distribution of benefits
- Run as sub-scheme of **Ama Gaon Ama Bikas**
- **Special camps** to be organised at **GP level** from **15th** to **20th** of every month
- **Block Level** Observers to monitor the scheme
- **Voluntary Social Workers** to help in implementation
- **Best Panchayat** of the **block** will be awarded **₹5 lakh** every month
- **Best Panchayat** of the **district** will also be awarded
- **Best Panchayats, Blocks and Districts** will be selected at state level and given special funds

- ❖ PEETHA is a sub-scheme of the Odisha government's flagship Ama Gaon Ama Bikas Yojana (AGAB).
- ❖ Under this initiative, camps will be organised at the gram panchayat level from the 15th to the 20th of each month, beginning December 2018.

Citizens can access government records under RTI

- ❖ The Maharashtra government issued a government resolution allowing citizens to inspect records in district-level offices and local bodies throughout Maharashtra under the Right to Information.
- ❖ This resolution is not applicable to Mantralaya, the state secretariat of Maharashtra, due to logistical issues.

Indian Owl Festival 2018

- ❖ The Indian Owl Festival 2018 was held at Pingori village in Purandar taluka of Pune, Maharashtra.
- ❖ It was organized by Ela Foundation to create awareness on owl conservation.
- ❖ It was the country's first owl festival, which featured skits and short films on owls.
- ❖ Out of the 262 species of owls that are found in the world, 75 are threatened.
- ❖ They are protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act (1972) of India.

First Muslim mayor of Kolkata since Independence

- ❖ Firhad Hakim, Minister of Municipal Affairs, West Bengal has become the first Muslim Mayor of Kolkata since Independence.
- ❖ He was chosen as the 29th Mayor of the city, defeating Meena Devi Purohit.

The International Gita Festival 2018

- ❖ The International Gita Festival 2018 was organised at Kurukshetra in Haryana (December 03-07).



INTERNATIONAL GITA MAHOTSAV 2018

- ❖ This year, it is the 3rd edition of this mega cultural event, where Mauritius is the partner country and Gujarat is the partner state.
- ❖ It is being organized to commemorate the origin of 'Srimad Bhagwat Gita'.
- ❖ The Gita festival will also be organised in Mauritius next February.

Kannur international Airport

- ❖ The Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the Union Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu jointly inaugurated the Kannur International Airport Ltd (KIAL).
- ❖ With this, Kerala has become the first state in the country to have four international airports.
- ❖ The other 3 airports were at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode.

Science and Technology Innovation fund

- ❖ The Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has approved 50-crore rupees to Science & Technology Innovation (STI) Fund for assistance in research and development.
- ❖ Assistance up to Rs. 50-lakh will be provided to UGC (University Grants Commission) and AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) recognized central and state universities and colleges.
- ❖ The assistance will be for a maximum period of 3 years.
- ❖ It aims to develop latent talents, encourage creativity research and development in strategic fields in the knowledge-based ecosystem.
- ❖ The state government had earlier announced similar assistance under the Biotechnology Policy and IT Policy.
- ❖ Gujarat government's S&T Department has identified Gujarat Council of Science and Technology (GUJCOST) to implement the scheme.

Shi Yomi - 23rd district of Arunachal Pradesh

- ❖ Shi Yomi formally became the 23rd district of Arunachal Pradesh after it was officially inaugurated by its Chief Minister Pema Khandu.
- ❖ It was created by bifurcating the West Siang district with its headquarters at Tato.
- ❖ Two more districts Pakke-Kesang and Lepa Rada will be formally inaugurated in the state, taking the total to 25.

‘Operation Minimum wage’

- ❖ The Delhi government has launched a 10-day special inspection drive named “Operation Minimum Wage”.
- ❖ The special drive is to check the implementation of minimum wage rules set by the Union Territory government.
- ❖ The operation will continue till December 21, 2018.
- ❖ The violation would be checked as per the Minimum Wages Act, 2017 and as per the Act, the labourers can lodge a complaint by calling 155214..

UN Climate Action Award

- ❖ The Uttar Pradesh based startup HelpUsGreen has been honoured by UN for its works to clean River Ganga by recycling tonnes of floral waste.
- ❖ The UN presented the award to the 14 other countries along with India at the Nations Climate Action award ceremony during the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice, Poland.
- ❖ It uses Flower cycling technology to recycle the floral wastes from the temples and produces charcoal free incense, organic vermicompost and biodegradable packaging material.

J&K passes the law on Sexual Exploitation

- ❖ The State Administrative Council of Jammu and Kashmir headed by Governor Satya Pal Malik has passed a law to ban sexual extortion of woman in offices.
- ❖ The Governor Satya Pal Malik’s administration in Jammu & Kashmir has approved an amendment to the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC).
- ❖ With this, J&K has become the first State in the country to bring a law to prevent people in power from exploiting subordinates sexually.

Note

- ❖ The Indian Penal code (IPC) is not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir and in place of IPC, a similar criminal law Ranbir Penal Code applies in the state.

Mizoram Chief Minister - Zoramthanga

- ❖ The President of Mizo National Front (MNF), Mr. Zoramthanga sworn in as the Chief Minister of Mizoram for the third time at Raj Bhavan in Aizawl.
- ❖ MNF dethroned Congress by winning 26 seats in the 40-member legislative assembly. Congress bagged 5 seats whereas BJP won just 1 seat.
- ❖ Mr Tawnluia sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister of Mizoram.



Kochi-Muziris Biennale

- ❖ The 4th Edition of the India's largest contemporary art exhibition Kochi-Muziris Biennale (KMB) was held recently in Kochi.
- ❖ It was held with a theme "Possibilities for a Non-Alienated Life" featuring a dynamic range of multi-media artworks.
- ❖ The Biennale was curated by Anita Dube and it was the first Biennale in the world where half of the participating artists are women.

Jharkhand gets "Krishi Karman" award

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Agriculture had selected Jharkhand for "Krishi Karman" award in the rice category.
- ❖ The award which carries a cash prize worth Rs 2 crore and a citation.
- ❖ As a gesture of appreciation to the farmers of the state for achieving the milestone,
 - two progressive farmers, i.e. one male and one female, would also be given 'Agriculture Minister's Krishi Karman Award'.

- ❖ Each of the farmers would receive a cash award of Rs 2 lakh along with citation.

Chief Minister of Rajasthan

- ❖ Ashok Gehlot took oath as the Rajasthan 12th Chief Minister of Rajasthan on 17 December 2018.



- ❖ Whereas Sachin Pilot took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister. The Governor Kalyan Singh administered the oath.
- ❖ Ashok Gehlot was a senior congress leader who has been selected for Chief Minister 3rd time.

Election result

- ❖ The poll was held in 199 seats out of 200, the Congress bagged 99 seats, and the BJP 73.

Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh

- ❖ The Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel Sworn in as 3rd Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh at Raipur, Capital of Chhattisgarh on 17 December 2018.
- ❖ The Swearing in Ceremony was administered by Governor Anandiben Patel.



- ❖ Bhupesh Baghel Succeeds Raman Singh, who was the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh from 2003 to 2018.

Election result

- ❖ Congress got a massive majority in 90-member Vidhan Sabha of Chhattisgarh where the party won 68 seats, and the BJP got just 15 seats.

Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh

- ❖ The Congress leader **Kamal Nath**, took oath as **18th Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh** at Kanpur, Madhya Pradesh on 17 Dec 2018.



- ❖ The Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office of Kamal Nath.
- ❖ He **Succeeds Shivraj Singh Chouhan**, who hold the Office as Chief Minister from 2005 till 16th December 2018.

Election result

- ❖ The Congress won 114 seats.
- ❖ With the support of 1 Samajwadi Party legislator and 2 Bahujan Samaj Party legislators and 4 independents, it crossed the majority mark of 116 seats in the 230-member Assembly.

International Film Festival of Kerala

- ❖ The 23rd International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) concluded recently at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- ❖ The Iranian feature film 'The Dark Room' won the top most 'Suvarna Chakoram' – The Golden Crow Pheasant Award.
- ❖ Lijo Jose Pellissery took home the Silver Pheasant for his film, Ee. Maa. Yau (Malayalam).
- ❖ Pellissery also won the NETPAC (Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema) award for Best Asian Film in Competition.

- ❖ The awards were instituted in 1996 with several national and international films premiering in the event every year.

President's rule in J & K

- ❖ The state of Jammu and Kashmir has come under President's rule from 20th December 2018 as Governor's rule in the state completed its 6 months.
- ❖ It implies that now all the policy decisions related to Jammu and Kashmir will be taken by the Union Cabinet.

92. (1) If at any time the Sadar-i-Riyasat is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, the Sadar-i-Riyasat may by Proclamation:

(a) assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State and all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by anybody or authority in the State;

(b) make such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to the Sadar-i-Riyasat to be necessary or desirable for giving effect to the objects of the Proclamation, including provisions for suspending in whole or in part the operation of any provision of this Constitution relating to any body or authority in the State:

Provided that nothing in this section shall authorise the Sadar-i-Riyasat to assume to himself any of the powers vested in or exercisable by the High Court or to suspend in whole or in part the operation of any provision of this Constitution relating to the High Court.

(2) Any such Proclamation may be revoked or carried by a subsequent Proclamation.

(3) Any such Proclamation whether varied under sub-section (2) or not, shall, except where it is a Proclamation revoking a previous Proclamation, cease to operate on the expiration of six months from the date on which it was first issued.

- ❖ Now, the legislative powers of the state shall be exercised under the authority of Parliament.
- ❖ In the case of J & K, which has a separate Constitution, six months of Governor's rule is mandatory before President's rule under Article 92 of its Constitution.

Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS-IV)

- ❖ The CM of Meghalaya Conrad K Sangma launched the Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS-IV) in convergence with that of the Centre's Ayushman Bharat scheme.
- ❖ MHIS-IV covers all citizens in the state while the Ayushman Bharat (Centre's Scheme) targeted the bottom 40 percent of lower income families.

The National Balrang - 2018

- ❖ The National Balrang-2018 has started at the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) in Bhopal to promote the artistic talent of the students.
- ❖ The 3-day cultural festival is being organised by the School Education Department of Madhya Pradesh in collaboration with the IGRMS.
- ❖ 'Balrang' is a unique programme that has been held in Bhopal since the past 23 years.

Yuva Natya Samaroh

- ❖ The sixth edition of five-day long Yuva Natya Samaroh was held at Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi.
- ❖ It was organised by Sahitya Kala Parishad, Department of Art, Culture and Languages, Government of Delhi.
- ❖ It is a theatre festival of five young directors with some of the best modern, mythological as well as Parsi style drama.

Leave to male staff for childcare

- ❖ The Maharashtra State government has recently issued directions on sanctioning childcare leave to male employees.
- ❖ Now, the state government male employee is eligible for leave for the exact period his wife is bedridden or is unable to take care of the children due to mental health problems.
- ❖ The maximum limit of this leave would be 180 days and can be availed in three spells in a calendar year.

KALIA scheme - Odisha

- ❖ Odisha has recently announced the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme.
- ❖ Its aim is to empower small, marginal & landless farmers as well as landless labourers.
- ❖ According to this scheme an amount of Rs 10,000 per family at the rate of Rs 5,000 each for Kharif and Rabi seasons shall be provided as financial assistance for taking up cultivation.
- ❖ This assistance is for five crop seasons spanning three years from 2018-19 to 2021-22.
- ❖ It would be executed through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.



KALIA
KRUSHAK ASSISTANCE FOR LIVELIHOOD AND INCOME AUGMENTATION

BUDGET
₹10,000 CR

SUPPORT FOR CULTIVATION	₹10,000 per family in Rabi & Kharif seasons, covering 30 lakh small & marginal farmer families benefitting 92% of all cultivators in the state.
SUPPORT FOR LIVELIHOOD	₹12,500 to 10 lakh landless agriculture households for livelihood activities
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	₹10,000 per annum to 10 lakh vulnerable agriculture households & landless labourers
LIFE INSURANCE COVER	Life insurance cover of ₹2 lakhs and additional Personal Accident Cover of ₹2 lakhs to 57 lakh households of cultivators and landless agri labourers
INTEREST FREE CROP LOANS	All loans up to ₹50,000 now interest free

'Dwijing Festival' – Assam

- ❖ The 3rd 'Dwijing Festival' celebrations commenced in the banks of the Aie river in Chirang district of Assam on December 26.
- ❖ The 12-day festival was organised by Assam Tourism and Bodoland Tourism.
- ❖ The festival started as Aie River Festival in 2016-17 to promote river tourism in the rural areas under the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).



- ❖ It started under the name of 'Aie River Winter Festival'.
- ❖ The name was officially changed to "Dwijing (river bank in Bodo language)" in 2017.

Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana

- ❖ Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat has launched the Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana (AAUY) on the occasion of 94th birth anniversary of Vajpayee.
- ❖ It has made the first hill state in the country to offer the universal health coverage.
- ❖ Under the scheme each household in the state will be able to avail medical treatment of up to Rs 5 lakhs annually.

Appointments for out-of-state representatives

- ❖ The Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board (MSAMB) has appointed 6 officers as its representatives outside the state to facilitate trade in semi-perishable commodities.
- ❖ With this move, the MSAMB will become the first marketing board to appoint out-of-state representatives.
- ❖ These trade representatives will not only collect relevant market information but also facilitate trade across states.

Anti-mob violence bill - Manipur

- ❖ The Manipur Assembly has unanimously passed the ‘Manipur Protection from Mob Violence Bill of 2018’.
- ❖ The bill recommends a rigorous life imprisonment for those involved in mob violence, if it results in the death of a person.

10 Ashok Chakra recipients honoured with postage stamps

- ❖ The Keonjhar Police in Odisha collaboration with the India Post has issued 10 postage stamps, each featuring the Ashok Chakra Awardees from the Police Department across the country.
- ❖ The Keonjhar Police, Odisha has issued these stamps under the “My Stamp” scheme.
- ❖ The stamps which are of Rs 5.00 denomination and have the background picture of Sun Temple, Konark.
- ❖ “Ashok Chakra”, which is India’s highest peacetime gallantry medal with 84 awardees till date, is equivalent to “Param-Veer Chakra”.

Permanent NDRF Batallion For Arunachal

- ❖ Arunachal Pradesh was given a permanent battalion of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).
- ❖ Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has laid the foundation stone for the 12th battalion headquarters at Hollongi.
- ❖ The presence of a permanent battalion will not only help Arunachal Pradesh, but will also be available for service to neighbouring Assam.

Adhyatmik Vibhag

- ❖ The Government of Madhya Pradesh has announced setting up of a new Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department).
- ❖ The proposed new department will be set up by merging several existing departments.
- ❖ The 'Anand Vibhag' (Department of Happiness) set up by the previous BJP government, a first in the country, would be incorporated into the new department.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2018

- ❖ Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has recently won 2018 Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development.
- ❖ It is conferred by Indira Gandhi Trust every year on the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary.
- ❖ CSE was established in 1980 under the leadership of late Anil Agarwal.
- ❖ It has been working on various issues like air and water pollution, food safety, waste water management, climate change etc.

Golden Peacock award

- ❖ Donbass, won the **coveted Golden Peacock award** at the 49th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) at Panaji, Goa.
- ❖ Donbass tells the story of a hybrid war taking place in a region of Eastern Ukraine, involving an open armed conflict.
- ❖ Lijo Jose Pellissery won the **Silver Peacock for Best Director** for the Malayalam film Ee.Ma.Yau.

Ustad Imrat Khan passed away

- ❖ Indian classical music stalwart Ustad Imrat Khan, who dedicated his life to propagating the Sitar and the surbahar worldwide, passed in the United States.
- ❖ He famously turned down the Padma Shri last year saying the recognition had come too late and diminished his achievements.

Former US President George HW Bush Sr passed away

- ❖ Former US president George Herbert Walker Bush has passed away at the age of 94.
- ❖ He was the 41st US President (1989-1993) and father of the 43rd US President, George W Bush Jr.



- ❖ A one-term President, Bush Sr was a popular leader of a 32-nation coalition that dislodged Iraq from Kuwait in 1991 in ‘Operation Desert Storm’.
- ❖ He ended the Cold war with Soviet Union with the signing of historic ‘Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty’ in 1991 with Mikhail Gorbachev.

French Legion of Honor

- ❖ The French Government has awarded French Legion of Honor to 100-year-old Retired Colonel William Pollard during a ceremony at the Kentucky Capitol.
- ❖ William Pollard fought in World War II and rescued 14 soldiers from a concrete caisson that was hit by enemy fire.
- ❖ The Legion of Honour was created in 1802 by first emperor of France Napoleon Bonaparte.
- ❖ It is the highest civilian award given by the French government to person for his outstanding service to France, regardless of the nationality.

International Green Apple Award

- ❖ Manipal Academy of Higher Education won silver in the International Green Apple Award for Environmental best practice 2018.
- ❖ Green Manipal, the award-winning project of MAHE was selected among the 800 global nominations.
- ❖ MAHE now will have 100 trees planted in their name as part of the UN Billion Trees Initiative and can participate in the Green World Awards 2019.

Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle

- ❖ The Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, was awarded to Professor Shyama Prasad Ganguly in the India International Center (IIC).
- ❖ It is for the first time, Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, the highest civilian honour given to a foreigner by Mexico.
- ❖ He was the first Indian Academician to receive such honour.
- ❖ The award was in recognition of his “outstanding work in the study and dissemination of the Spanish language and Mexican culture”.

International James Dyson award 2018

- ❖ The prestigious International James Dyson award 2018 was won by Nicolas Orellana of Chile and Yaseen Noorani from Kenya.
- ❖ It has been awarded for their innovative design ‘Urban wind turbine’ called O-Wind Turbine.
- ❖ It is a sphere-shaped object with vents that spins and converts the power of the wind into electricity and was inspired from NASA’s Mars Tumbleweed Rover.

3rd Sayaji Ratna Award

- ❖ Film star Amitabh Bachchan was awarded the third Sayaji Ratna Award in Laxmi Vilas Palace, Vadodara
- ❖ It was awarded for his social contribution to pay off the loans of several farmers from Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- ❖ The first 2 recipients of the award were Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy and industrialist Ratan Tata.
- ❖ It was established in the memory of erstwhile Baroda ruler Sayajirao Gaekwad III in 2013 by the Baroda Management Association to mark the 150th birth anniversary of the ruler.

First Indian to be elected ISSF’s vice-president

- ❖ Raninder Singh became the first Indian to be elected as the vice-president of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF).
- ❖ The elections were held during the General Assembly meeting of ISSF in Munich.
- ❖ The 51-year-old Raninder is currently the president of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

- ❖ **Vladimir Lisin**, of Russia was elected as the **7th president of ISSF** and **Alexander Rather** was elected as the **new secretary general of ISSF** in the same General Assembly meeting.
- ❖ Also, Indian Shooter and 2008 Olympic gold medalist, **Abhinav Bindra** was honoured with the **prestigious Blue Cross**, the highest recognition of the ISSF in the meeting.
- ❖ He is the first Indian to be conferred with shooting's highest award now.

UNESCO/Emir Jaber al Ahmad al Jaber al Sabah Prize

- Bangladeshi disabilities' advocate Vashkar Bhattacharjee and
 - Chinese private sector ICT enterprise, Tencent
- were awarded **UNESCO/Emir Jaber al Ahmad al Jaber al Sabah Prize** for **Digital Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities**.
- ❖ They were awarded for their outstanding contribution to empowerment of persons with disabilities through application of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) to access information and knowledge.
 - ❖ Vashkar Bhattacharjee was awarded in individual category whereas Tencent was awarded in organizational category.
 - ❖ The Prize will be offered biennially in 2018/2019 and 2020/2021. The Prize will be divided equally to
 - An Individual Person and
 - An Organization.
 - ❖ It is sponsored by Kuwait in memory of its late ruler Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Preeti Saran elected to UN's socio-economic, cultural panel

- ❖ The Former senior Indian diplomat Preeti Saran has been elected to the Asia Pacific seat on the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) of the UN for 4 years.
- ❖ This election to the 18-member committee of experts was done by the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).



Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

- ❖ CESCR was set up in 1985 by the ECOSOC.
- ❖ CESCR monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- ❖ The CESCR meets in Geneva for four weeks every year.

Innovative Young Biotechnologist Award

- ❖ Dr. Rajanish Giri, assistant professor IIT-Mandi, has been awarded the Innovative Young Biotechnologist Award (IYBA) 2018.
- ❖ Dr. Giri was selected for his proposed innovative idea on Zika virus Capsid Folding and inhibitor discovery.
- ❖ He has also proven expertise in understanding and solving the fundamental problems of protein folding in various structured and Intrinsically Disordered Proteins.
- ❖ The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), the Ministry of Science and Technology selected Dr. Giri for the award.

Ballon d'Or award 2018

- ❖ Croatia's midfielder Luca Modrich has won prestigious honor of football, Ballon d'Or.



- ❖ He was rewarded for his key role in Croatia's historic run to FIFA World Cup final (defeated by France) and his club Real Madrid's 3rd straight Champions League trophy.
- ❖ With this, he ended the tenure of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo for almost a decade. Messi and Ronaldo have won this award since 2008.
- ❖ Norway's Ada Hegerberg (23) wins Women's Ballon d'Or. It was the inaugural edition of Women's Ballon d'Or.
- ❖ She is 3-time Women's Champions League winner with French side Lyon and scored tournament-record 15 times in the last season.

IAAF athletes of the year

- ❖ Kenya's Marathon world record holder Eliud Kipchoge and Colombian jumper Caterine Ibarguen was awarded with Male and Female World athlete of the year.
- ❖ Both are the first-time winners of the award.
- ❖ They have been awarded at the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Athletics Awards 2018 held at the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco.
- ❖ Olympic Champion Kipchoge shattered the world marathon record by 78 seconds.
- ❖ Whereas Ibarguen was the Diamond league champion in both long jumps and triple jump.
- ❖ Eliud Kipchoge also won the London Marathon 2018.
- ❖ Sweden's Vaultier Armand Duplantis and American Sydney Mclaughlin won the Men's and Women's Rising star awards respectively.

'Outstanding Case Writer' award

- ❖ The highly prestigious ‘Outstanding Case Writer’ award was presented to the ICFAI Business School (IBS) faculty members.
- ❖ It was awarded at the inaugural Case Collection Managers Meet held at Park Hyatt, Hyderabad.
- ❖ The award was for the case "Breaking the Code of Silence", written by
 - Ms. Syeda Maseeha Qumer,
 - Dr. Debapratim Purkayastha, and
 - Dr. Vijaya N. Zinnoury (University of Denver, USA).
- ❖ The case deals with the highly topical issue of sexual harassment in the workplace, which predates the 'Me Too' movement.

Background

- ❖ To win the ‘Outstanding Case Writer’ award, one has to beat off competition from the best case writers in the world.
- ❖ The case can be about any management topic cutting across disciplines.

Glinka World Soil Prize 2018

- ❖ Rattan Lal has won the **Glinka World Soil Prize 2018** in a ceremony at the Rome, headquarters of the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- ❖ It has been awarded for his outstanding contribution to sustainable soil management.
- ❖ He is a distinguished university professor of soil science at the Ohio State University and also the **President of the International Union of Soil Science (IUSS)**.
- ❖ The Glinka World Soil Prize, named after the **pioneering Russian scientist Konstantin D. Glinka**, is considered the highest honour in the soil science profession.



- ❖ He has been listed among the World's Most Influential Scientific Minds (2012) and among the top 1% of all researchers in agriculture.
- ❖ The **first World Soil Day Award** was given to “**Practical Action**”, **Bangladesh** for organizing the best World Soil Day celebration in 2017.
- ❖ The new FAO-established award is funded by Thailand.

Turner Award 2018

- ❖ Glasgow based artist and film maker Charlotte Prodger won the 2018 Turner Award at Tate Britain in London, UK.



- ❖ He won this award for her 33-minute film called ‘BRIDGIT’, that explores queer identity, which was shot in an iPhone.
- ❖ It is the Britain's prestigious contemporary art award.
- ❖ The Award was instituted in 1984 by a group named Patrons of Art.

2018 Bharat Ratna Pandit Bhimsen Joshi LTA award

- ❖ Renowned flautist Pandit Keshav Ginde was be conferred the 2018 prestigious Bharat Ratna Pandit Bhimsen Joshi Lifetime Achievement (LTA) Award for the Classical Music.



- ❖ The annual LTA award, instituted by the Maharashtra Government, honours maestros in classical music and singing.

Miss World 2018

- ❖ Mexico's Vanessa Ponce de Leon won the Miss World 2018 crown at the 68th edition of the prestigious Miss World grand event held in the Chinese city, Sanya.



- ❖ The 26-year-old Vanessa was crowned by the Miss World 2017 Manushi Chhillar of India.
- ❖ Nicolene Pichapa from Thailand was adjudged runner up in Miss World 2018.

Shaktikanta Das - 25th Governor of RBI

- ❖ India's former economic affairs secretary and current member of the Finance Commission Shaktikanta Das is to be appointed as next RBI Governor.
- ❖ He will be the 25th Governor of the apex bank of the country and will serve as governor for the term of three years starting from December 11 of 2018.
- ❖ He replaced Urijit patel, who resigned from the post due to personal reasons.

Vice-Chair of UN Panel of Auditors - Rajiv Mehrishi

- ❖ The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Rajiv Mehrishi was elected as Vice-Chair of United Nations (UN) Panel of Auditors at its annual meeting held in New York.
- ❖ In this meeting the CAG of UK was also appointed as the Chair of Panel for another term (2019).
- ❖ The next meeting will be held in in Bonn, Germany in November-December 2019.

United Nations Panel of Auditors

- ❖ It was established by the UN General Assembly Resolution in 1959.
- ❖ Its main objectives are to further co-ordination of audits for which its members are responsible and to exchange information on audit methods and findings.
- ❖ It is made up of members of UN Board of Auditors and external auditors of Specialized Agencies of UN and of International Atomic Energy Agency.
- ❖ Currently, it is chaired by the CAG of UK and consists of 11 countries.

First Indian received honorary doctorate from ESCP biz school

- ❖ Bharti Enterprises chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal has received ESCP Europe's highest honour 'Doctor Honoris Causa'.
- ❖ He has been awarded for his innovative entrepreneurship and contribution towards philanthropy in the field of education.
- ❖ Thus, Mittal has become the first Indian to be honored with this recognition in ESCP Europe's near 200 years history.
- ❖ Established in 1819, the ESCP Europe is the world's first business school, founded by a group of economic scholars and businessmen..

Securities Appellate Tribunal Presiding Officer

- ❖ Justice Tarun Agarwala, the retired Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court, has been appointed as the presiding officer in the Securities Appellate Tribunal, Mumbai.

- ❖ He will remain the presiding officer for a period of five years or till the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.

Securities Appellate Tribunal

- ❖ The Securities Appellate Tribunal is a statutory body.
- ❖ It is established under the provisions of Section 15K of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Act, 1992.
- ❖ The tribunal is to hear and dispose of appeals against orders passed by the SEBI or by an adjudicating officer under the Act.

2018 Mister Supranational

- ❖ Goa's Prathamesh Maulingkar has created history by becoming the first Asian/Indian to win the Mister Supranational title 2018.



- ❖ He won this coveted title after defeating 37 candidates in the 3rd edition of the competition held in Krynica-Zdroj, Poland.
- ❖ He was followed by Mr. Poland at 2nd position and Mr. Brazil at 3rd position.
- ❖ Mr. Brazil was also crowned with Mr. Popularity sash.

2018 Sports Illustrated Sportsperson of the Year

- ❖ The NBA champion Golden State Warriors have been named the 2018 Sports Illustrated Sportsperson of the Year.
- ❖ The Golden State is the fourth team ever to receive the prestigious honour.
- ❖ Previous winners of this award were U.S. Men's Olympic Hockey Team (1980), the U.S. Women's Soccer team (1999) and the Boston Red Sox (2004).

Miss India Worldwide 2018

- ❖ The Indian-American Shree Saini has been crowned Miss India Worldwide 2018 at 27th annual global pageant held in the Fords City of New Jersey of USA.
- ❖ It is organised by the New York-based India Festival Committee (IFC).

Mrs. India Worldwide 2018 Category

- ❖ India's Mandeep Kaur Sandhu, (Haryana), was declared as the winner in the Mrs. India Worldwide 2018 category and crowned at the 27th annual global pageant.
- ❖ Jeya Priya Pandian from Malaysia and Kavita Malhotra Pattani from the USA were declared the 1st and 2nd runner ups of the Mrs India Worldwide 2018.
- ❖ The next edition of the Miss India Worldwide will be held in Mumbai in 2019.

French Knight of the National Order of Merit

- ❖ The Film Producer Ashok Amritraj was honoured with the French Knight of the National Order of Merit.
- ❖ It was awarded to him for his contribution to the world of cinema and the Indo-French film industry.
- ❖ The award was presented to him at the closing ceremony of 2-day Indo-French Professional Meeting for the Film and Television Industry held in Mumbai, India.

Jnanpith award - 2018

- ❖ The Renowned English fiction writer Amitav Ghosh has been selected for Jnanpith award, 2018.
- ❖ He was awarded Padma Shri in 2007 and was elected as Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2009.
- ❖ Jnanpith award was instituted in 1961.
- ❖ The Bhartiya Jnanpith recognises Indian litterateurs who write in one of the 22 Indian languages listed in the Schedule Eight of the Indian Constitution.



- ❖ He was also named Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow in 2015.
- ❖ Famous Malayalam writer G.S. Kurup was the first winner of Jnanpith award.

Women Transforming India Awards

- ❖ The Third edition of Women Transforming India Awards was recently organized by the Government think- tank NITI Aayog.
- ❖ The theme for this year awards is 'Women and Entrepreneurship' and 15 winners have been selected.
- ❖ The awards were launched in 2016 to recognize the exceptional women who are working hard and making difference in lives of others.

Miss Universe 2018 Title

- ❖ Catriona Elisa Gray from the Philippines was crowned as the Miss Universe 2018 which was held at in Nonthaburi Province, Thailand.



- ❖ She was crowned by Demi Leigh Nel-Peters from South Africa, the Miss Universe 2017 title winner.
- ❖ India was represented by Nehal Chudasama in the beauty pageant.
- ❖ Tamaryn Green from South Africa and Sthefany Guterrez from Venezuela were the first runner-up and second runner-up at Miss Universe 2018 competition.

Interesting facts

- ❖ Spain's Angela Ponce created history as the first transgender woman to participate in the Miss Universe beauty pageant.
- ❖ The event was hosted by Emmy Award-winning comedian Steve Harvey.
- ❖ The countries of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia participated for the first time in the Miss Universe competition.
- ❖ For the first time, the competition was judged by an all-women jury.

Madhavi Divan - New Additional Solicitor General

- ❖ The Union government has appointed advocate Madhavi Goradia Divan as the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) in the government of India.
- ❖ She will hold office of ASG till 30 June, 2020 and will appear in the Supreme Court on behalf of the government of India.
- ❖ She is the 3rd woman to hold the post of ASG.
- ❖ Senior advocate Indira Jaising was the 1st woman in India to become ASG. Pinky Anand was the 2nd woman and she still holds the post.
- ❖ ASG is the 3rd ranked law-officer in the Indian government. The post of ASG is not constitutional as the constitution does not have any provisions regarding this.

Sangeet Mahasamman award

- ❖ Popular singers Shaan and Arijit Singh were given the “Sangeet Mahasamman” award by the West Bengal government.
- ❖ It has been awarded at the inaugural session of the Bengal music and folk culture festival held in Kolkata.
- ❖ The West Bengal CM Mamta Banerjee inaugurated the 8-day Bangla Sangeet Mela (Bengal Music Festival) and Biswa Bangla Lok Sanskriti Utsav (Folk Culture Festival).

New FICCI President & Vice President

- ❖ Sandip Somany has been elected as the new President of FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) for the year 2018-19
- ❖ Sangita Reddy has been elevated as FICCI Senior Vice President.
- ❖ While Uday Shankar, currently Chairman and CEO of Star India and President of 21st Century Fox Asia-Pacific (Only Asia), has joined the chamber as Vice President.

Tamil writer Prapanchan passed away

- ❖ Tamil writer Prapanchan, born S. Vaithilingam, died at a private hospital in the Union Territory after battling cancer.
- ❖ Prapanchan’s first collection of short stories in Tamil was released in 1961.
- ❖ His first short story, ‘Enna Ulagamada’ was published in ‘Barani’, a Tamil magazine in 1961.
- ❖ He won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1995 for his novel Vanam Vasappadum (Beyond the Sky).
- ❖ He had written ‘Vaanam Vasapadum’ in the Tamil magazine ‘Dinamani Kadhira’ in 1993.



- ❖ Some of his acclaimed novels include Mahanadhi, Manudam vellum, Sandhya, Kagidha Manidhargal, Kaneeral Kappom, Penmai velga, Padhavi and Erodu Thamizhar uyirodu.

Drivers' Driver of the Year

- ❖ Lewis Hamilton was awarded with Drivers' Driver of the Year after claiming the 5th World Drivers' Championship.
- ❖ After this he became the 3rd man in history to secure the 5th world title.
- ❖ He was followed by Max Verstappen in the second place, Fernando Alonso in the third place.



Fastest Asian to cycle the globe

- ❖ Pune woman Vedangi Kulkarni, 20, became the fastest Asian to cycle the globe.
- ❖ She spent 159 days peddling up to 300 km a day in 14 countries.
- ❖ She started off from Perth in July and will be flying back to the Australian city to complete the record.
- ❖ British adventurer Jenny Graham, 38, is the fastest woman to have cycled the globe in 124 days in 2018.

Archery Association of India

- ❖ B V P Rao was elected as the President of Archery Association of India (AAI).
- ❖ The election was held under the Supervision of former Chief Election Commissioner S. Y. Quraishi.
- ❖ Maha Singh was elected as secretary of Archery Association of India, D K Vidyarthi was elected as the treasurer.

- ❖ Sunil Sharma was elected senior vice-president and Rajendra Singh Tomar and Purnima Mahato will be the vice presidents.

Mohammed Rafi Awards

- ❖ The Mohammed Rafi Award has been bestowed upon late music composer Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar and playback singer Usha Timothy.
- ❖ The award was instituted by the NGO Spandan Arts.
- ❖ Mohammed Rafi Lifetime Achievement Award - Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar.

‘Sulagitti’ Narasamma passed away

- ❖ ‘Sulagitti’ Narasamma, the traditional midwife who helped deliver over 15,000 babies free of charge in rural Karnataka, passed away recently in Bengaluru.
- ❖ She was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2013 and honorary doctorate in 2014 from Tumkur University.
- ❖ She was also presented with ‘The Vayoshreshtha Samman’, Lifetime achievement award by the then President, Pranab Mukherjee.

Ricky Ponting - ICC Hall of Fame

- ❖ Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting became the 25th Australian cricketer to be officially inducted into the ICC’s Hall of Fame at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).



- ❖ In February 2018, he was also inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame.
- ❖ Other 2018 inductees in the list include India’s Rahul Dravid and England’s Claire Taylor, bringing the total members in the prestigious list to 87.

Tansen Samman 2018

- ❖ The Madhya Pradesh (MP) government honoured the noted sitar player Manju Mehta with the 2018 Tansen Samman, at the Tansen Music Festival in Gwalior.
- ❖ The Raja Mansingh Tomar Honour was given to the Sankat Mochan Pratishthan in Varanasi for 2017 and the Natrang Pratishthan of New Delhi for 2018.
- ❖ The Tansen Music Festival is organised every year by the MP culture department in memory of Tansen, one of the greatest artists in Indian history.

Mrs. India 2018

- ❖ Divya Patidar Joshi from Madhya Pradesh was crowned with the Mrs. India 2018 title at the Mrs. India My Identity Beauty Pageant 2018 finale held in New Delhi.



- ❖ With this win, in the year 2019, she would be representing India for Mrs. Universe title.

Balkan athlete of the year award

- ❖ Croatia's captain and Spanish club Real Madrid's midfielder Luka Modric was named the Balkan Athlete of the year beating Men's tennis world number 1 player Novak Djokovic.
- ❖ Serbian player Novak Djokovic got 2nd position whereas women's number one tennis Romania's Simona Halep got third position in the Balkan's poll.

BALKAN ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

- 1 LUKA MODRIC
- 2 NOVAK DJOKOVIC
- 3 SIMONA HALEP



Champion of Change award

- ❖ Monika Bhutunguru, Chamba superintendent of police was conferred the 'Champion of Change' award by Vice President at New Delhi.



- ❖ She conferred one of the most prestigious award for her immense contribution, exemplary work and bringing a significant change in the district.

Asian of the Year

- ❖ The President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has been selected as “Asian of the Year” for 2018 by the Asia Journalist Association (AJA).

- ❖ The President of Uzbekistan, was named for the politics category, as he tried to settle peace and continue interaction between countries in Central Asia.
- ❖ Since he became president in Dec 2016, he has reformed policies to open the economy and improve human rights, releasing political prisoners.
- ❖ Other winners are
 - Koo Bon-moo - The late former chairman of LG Group
 - Park Hang-seo - Korean coach of Vietnam national football team
 - Magdi Habib Yacoub - an Egyptian thoracic surgeon.

SPORTS

LI NING BWF World Junior Championship 2018

- ❖ LI NING BWF World Junior Championship was recently held at Markham, Canada.
- ❖ Lakshya Sen lost to Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the semi-final of the men's single junior championship and settled for bronze medal.
- ❖ Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn won the Men's single title by defeating Japanese player Kodai Naraoka in the Finals.
- ❖ It is India's only medal in this year's championship.
- ❖ Saina Nehwal is the only Indian player who had won Gold at BWF World Junior Championship which held in the year 2008.
- ❖ DI Zijian and Wang Chang won Men's double title.

Tata Motors Senior National Championship

- ❖ Vinesh Phogat has won the Gold medal in 57 kg Wrestling at the Tata Motors Senior Women's National Championship hosted by Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ Sakshi Malik has won the Gold medal in the 62 kg category.

Women's Pro Golf Tour

- ❖ Ridhima Dilawari from New Delhi captured her maiden professional title in the 17th leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Noida Golf Course.
- ❖ The 18th and final leg of the season will be held from 11th to 14th of this month at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club.

FIH Women's Hockey Champions Trophy

- ❖ The **Netherlands** has won the **7th title** at the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Women's Hockey Champions Trophy event **by defeating Australia** in Changzhou Wujin, China.
- ❖ This is Netherland's 43rd consecutive win in the tournament's final.
- ❖ Thus, Netherlands remains the world's number one women's team in the FIH Hero World Rankings.
- ❖ They have been at the number one position since October 2011.
- ❖ Australia finished second, followed by Argentina which stood third.
- ❖ The tournament featured only six teams: Netherlands, Britain, Australia, Argentina, Asian Games champion Japan and host China.

Awards

- ❖ Eva de Goede - Best Player;
- ❖ Marijn Veen - Best Scorer (5 goals) & Rising Player.
- ❖ Best Goalkeeper award - China's Ye Jiao.

2018 Davis Cup

- ❖ Croatia defeated the defending champion France in the final of 2018 Davis Cup and secured the title second time after 13 years.
- ❖ It was organized by BNP Paribas (Banque Nationale de Paris).
- ❖ Marin Cilic of Croatia defeated France's Lucas Pouille in the final of Davis Cup and sealed the title for France.
- ❖ Croatia wins the title for the second time after 2005.

2018 IAU 24 Hour Asia & Oceania Championships

- ❖ Ullas Narayan won bronze in the 2018 International Association of Ultra Running (IAU) 24 Hour Asia & Oceania Championships in Taipei, Taiwan.
- ❖ Thus, he became the first Indian individual medal winner in an international ultra-running event.
- ❖ He finished behind Japanese runners Yoshihiko Ishikawa (253 km) and Nobuyuki Takahashi (252 km).
- ❖ The Indian team, comprising Narayan, Sunil Sharma and L L Meena, also won a bronze with their combined distance of 644 km.
- ❖ Japan won the team event gold with a distance of 756 km and Australia (684 km) got the silver.

Ultra-Running

- ❖ Ultra-races consisted of running over extremely long distances which are much longer than the traditional races.
- ❖ The competitors contested in 2 different types of race modalities: over a set distance or a set time.



Tata Open India International Challenge 2018

- ❖ Tata Open India International Badminton Challenge 2018 was held recently in Mumbai.
- ❖ Lakshya Sen (India) won the Men’s Singles title by defeating Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand.
- ❖ In women's singles, Ashmita Chaliha (India) defeated Vrushali Gummadi (India) to win the title.

Men’s Doubles	Arjun M.R., B. Sumeeth Reddy – India
Women’s Doubles	Ng Wing Yung, Yeung Nga Ting - Hong Kong



International Admiral's Cup Regatta 2018

- ❖ Italy won the 9th edition of International Admiral's Cup Regatta 2018 held at Ettikulam Beach of Kannur at Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala, Kerala.
- ❖ Singapore was the runners-up and the defending champion USA came on the 3rd spot.
- ❖ The host INA finished the 4th in overall position.
- ❖ Bulgaria participated for the first time in this tournament.

World record of highest score on first-class debut

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh batsman Ajay Rohera scored 267 unbeaten on his first-class debut against Hyderabad while playing the Ranji Trophy match in Indore.
- ❖ He also became the highest individual scorer for Madhya Pradesh surpassing J P Yadav's 265.
- ❖ He broke Amol Muzumdar's 25-year-old world record of highest score on first-class debut which Amol set against Haryana at Faridabad back in 1994.

BWF World Tour Title

- ❖ The BWF (Badminton World Federation) World Tour Finals was held recently in Tianhe, Guangzhou, China.
- ❖ PV Sindhu created history on 16th December 2018 as she became the first Indian to win the BWF World Tour Finals.
- ❖ She defeated Japan's Nozomi Okuhara, the 2017 world champion. It was the first title for her in 2018.
- ❖ Shi Yuqi of China won the Men's Singles title defeating Kento Momota of Japan.

Other winners

- ❖ Men's Doubles - Li Junhui & Liu Yuchen (China)
- ❖ Women's Doubles - Misaki Matsutomo & Ayaka Takahashi (Japan)
- ❖ Mixed Doubles - Wang Yilü & Huang Dongping (China).

Hockey World Cup 2018

- ❖ The Hockey World Cup 2018 was held at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- ❖ Belgium Hockey team won their first ever World cup title by defeating The Netherlands.
- ❖ Belgium finished first, while the Netherlands and Australia finished second and third respectively.
- ❖ India came at sixth place in the Hockey World Cup 2018.



- ❖ India was defeated in the Quarter Finals by the Netherlands.
- ❖ Best Player of the tournament - Arthur Van Doren (Belgium).
- ❖ Goalkeeper of the tournament - Primin Blaak.
- ❖ Fair Play award – Spain.

2018 ITF world champions

- ❖ The International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced that
 - Serbia's Novak Djokovic (**Men's Singles**) and
 - Romania's Simona Halep (**women's Singles**)
 as the ITF World Champions for the year 2018.
- ❖ Djokovic receives the honour for the sixth time.
- ❖ It is the first year Simona Halep has been recognised. She also won the 2018 WTA Shot of the Year.
- ❖ The ITF World Champions will receive their awards at the 2019 ITF World Champions Dinner in Paris, during Roland Garros.

Men's Doubles Category

- ❖ The USA's Mike Bryan and Jack Sock will receive the award.
- ❖ It will be the 12th time Bryan has received the award but for the first time Sock has been honoured.

- ❖ Women's Doubles Category - Barbora Krejcikova and Katerina Siniakova.

National Squash Championship

- ❖ The 75th edition of the National Squash championship was held recently in Noida.
- ❖ Joshna Chinappa won the National Squash Women's Singles title after she defeated Urwashi Josh.
- ❖ It was her 16th National title and with this win, she has equalled the record of Bhuvaneshwari Kumari of winning 16 titles.
- ❖ Mahesh Mangaonkar defeated Vikram Malhotra in the final match to win Men's Singles title.
- ❖ This is the maiden title for Mahesh Mangaonkar.

Golden Shoe Award

- ❖ Lionel Messi collected a record 5th Golden Shoe award for finishing the last season as the top goal scorer in Europe.



- ❖ The striker scored 34 goals in 68 games for Barcelona, putting himself ahead of Liverpool's Mohamed Salah and Tottenham's Harry Kane.
- ❖ Cristiano Ronaldo, who has won the award 4 times, hit 26 goals in 52 matches for Real Madrid.

Women's Asian Continental Champion

- ❖ Padmini Rout clinched the title at the 17th Asian Continental Chess Championship held at Makati city in the Philippines.

- ❖ Vidit Santosh Gujrathi won bronze in the men's section.



National Open Senior Chess Championships 2018

- ❖ Aravindh Chithambaram won his first-ever senior National Chess title in Jammu with 10 points.
- ❖ Krishna was the runner-up with 9.5 points.
- ❖ The 19-year old Aravindh became a Grand master in 2015.

FIFA global rankings

- ❖ Belgium Football team came at number one position in the end-of-the-year FIFA global rankings.
- ❖ It managed to stay at the top with one point more than the current World Champions France.
- ❖ Brazil came at third place followed by Croatia and England.
- ❖ France has been adjudged as the 2018's Best Mover team by FIFA.

First woman to reach 50 World Cup wins - ski races

- ❖ American Mikaela Shiffrin became the youngest woman to win 50 World Cup ski races with victory in the slalom in the French Alps.
- ❖ She finished 0.29 seconds ahead of Slovakia's Petra Vlhova and 0.37 seconds ahead of Sweden Frida Hansdotter to win in Courchevel victory.

India Squash Championship

- ❖ The National champion Mahesh Manganekar of Maharashtra and Yash Fadte of Goa clinched the men's and under 19 boys' titles respectively in the CCI Western India Squash Championship.
- ❖ The championship was organized by Squash Rackets Federation of India in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Club World Cup

- ❖ The European Champion, Real Madrid won 3rd straight FIFA Club World Cup with the win over home team Al-Ain in the final held in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- ❖ Real Madrid have now four FIFA club World Cup titles, one title more than Barcelona.

Senior National Rowing Championship

- ❖ 37th Senior National Rowing Championship concluded at Army Rowing Node, College of Military Engineering in Pune.
- ❖ The Army Team emerged as the champions in 2018 and was followed by the Services team that came in second.
- ❖ The mixed event was introduced for the first time in the National Championship.

Asian Tour Order of Merit Award

- ❖ Shubhankar Sharma became the youngest and the fifth Indian to win Asian Tour Order of Merit in golf.



- ❖ The Indian won it even before the finish of the last two events of the year.

- ❖ With the win, Shubhankar Sharma also captured the Asian Tour Habitat for Humanity Standings title after a ground-breaking year of achievements.

Dravid's 16-year-old Test record break

- ❖ The Indian Cricket team Captain, Virat Kohli surpassed former India's Captain Rahul Dravid's 16 years record of highest runs in overseas Tests.
- ❖ He achieved this after playing a knock of 82 runs on the second day of 3rd Test against Australia.
- ❖ Rahul Dravid had scored 1137 runs in Overseas Tests in 2002 which was broken by Virat Kohli who had scored 1138 runs in 2018.

3rd Edition of Women's national boxing championships

- ❖ The Third edition of women's national boxing championships begins in Vijayanagara, Karnataka.
- ❖ The tournament will be held at the JSW Sports' Inspire Institute of Sports, which was recently inaugurated by Olympic gold-medallist shooter Abhinav Bindra.
- ❖ This will be the first time that a national federation will be hosting a national championship at the privately-run institute.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Armed Forces Week – 1 to 7 December

- ❖ The Armed Forces Flag Day was first celebrated in India on 7th of December in the year 1949.
- ❖ The 70th Armed Forces Flag Day will be observed on December 7, 2018.
- ❖ The day celebrates the wellbeing of the staff of the Indian Armed forces by means of funds collected from all around the country.

World Aids Day – 01 December

- ❖ World AIDS Day is celebrated on December 1 every year since 1988.
- ❖ This year it marks the 30th anniversary of World AIDS Day.
- ❖ It is dedicated to raise awareness, educate and improve the understanding of HIV as a global public health problem.
- ❖ The Theme of the day for the year 2018 is 'Know Your Status'.

- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) had designated 1st December as World AIDS Day in 1987.
- ❖ It is one of the eight official global public health campaigns marked by the WHO.

International Day for Abolition of Slavery – 02 December

- ❖ The International Day for Abolition of Slavery will be marked on December 2 every year.
- ❖ It aims to end slavery which includes sexual exploitation, forced marriage, trafficking of persons and recruitment of child labour.
- ❖ This year the day marks the 32nd anti-slavery day.
- ❖ The day marks the 1949 adoption of the UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.
- ❖ This day was first celebrated by the United Nations General Assembly on 2 December, 1986.

World Computer Literacy Day – 02 December

- ❖ The World Computer Literacy Day will be celebrated on December 2 every year.
- ❖ It aims to “create awareness and drive digital literacy in underserved communities worldwide”.
- ❖ World Computer Literacy Day was founded by Indian computer company NIIT to mark its 20th anniversary in 2001.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) - December 03

- ❖ Since 1992, the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) has been annually observed on 3 December around the world.



- ❖ The theme for this year’s IDPD is “Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.

- ❖ This theme focuses on the empowering persons with disabilities for the inclusive, equitable and sustainable development envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Indian Navy day – December 04

- ❖ Indian Navy day is observed on 4th of December every year to celebrate the achievements, and role of the naval force in protecting and guarding the country.
- ❖ Navy Day is celebrated in memory of the strength and bravery of the Indian Navy who won the Indo-Pak war in 1971, Under the 'Operation Trident'.
- ❖ Theme of Navy Day 2018 was 'Indian Navy, Mission-deployed and Combat-ready'.



World Soil Day - December 05

- ❖ The World Soil Day is celebrated every year on 5th of December by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.
- ❖ It aims to communicate messages on the importance of soil quality for food security, healthy ecosystems and human well-being.
- ❖ Theme of the world Soil Day 2018: Be the Solution to Soil Pollution.
- ❖ In December 2013, the 68th UN General Assembly declared 5th of December as the World Soil Day which is proposed by International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002.



International Volunteer Day – 05 December

- ❖ December 5 is annually seen as International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development which is also called as International Volunteer Day.
- ❖ The theme of the International Volunteer Day 2018 is: “Volunteers build Resilient Communities”.



- ❖ This day celebrates the sacrifice and contributions of the volunteers and organizations.

Indian Armed Force Flag Day – 07 December

- ❖ Indian Armed Forces Flag Day is observed throughout the nation on 7th December every year.
- ❖ The day is to honour the martyrs as well as the soldiers who valiantly fight on our borders to safeguard the country from enemy.



- ❖ Since 1949, 7th December is observed as Indian Armed Forces Flag Day.
- ❖ The Government of India has constituted "Armed Forces Flag Day Fund" for the welfare and rehabilitation of the Ex-servicemen (ESM).

International Civil Aviation Day – 07 December

- ❖ The International Civil Aviation Day is observed on December 07 every year.
- ❖ Its aim is to establish and reinforce worldwide awareness of the importance of international civil aviation in the social and economic development of States.
- ❖ The theme for International Civil Aviation Day this year is: "Working Together to Ensure No Country is Left Behind."
- ❖ The International Civil Aviation Day was established in 1994 as the part of ICAO's 50th anniversary activities.
- ❖ In 1944, participants from 54 nations gathered in Chicago, US had signed Convention on International Civil Aviation, also known more popularly as the 'Chicago Convention'.
- ❖ It was officially declared by the UN in 1996.



Submarine Day - 08 December

- ❖ The Indian Navy celebrates the Submarine Day on 8th December every year.
- ❖ The day commemorates the induction of the first submarine, the erstwhile INS Kalvari, into the Navy on this day in 1967.



- ❖ The Foxtrot class submarine was decommissioned from the Indian Navy on the 31st May, 1996, after 29 years of service.

- ❖ It has to be recalled that the nuclear submarine, INS Arihant was deployed into the Navy on November 5, completing the Nuclear triad.

International Anti Corruption Day – 09 December

- ❖ The International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) is observed every year across world on December 9 to raise public awareness of corruption.
- ❖ The day aims to promote and strengthen measures to prevent and combat corruption more efficiently and effectively.



- ❖ The day has been celebrated since the passage of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) on 31 October 2003.
- ❖ UNCAC is the first legally binding, international anti-corruption instrument that provides a chance to mount a global response to corruption.
- ❖ The UN along with the UNDP and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) organized a global campaign called “Corruption: An impediment to Sustainable Development Goals”- for spreading the awareness on corruption.

International Day of Human Rights - 10 December

- ❖ The International Day of Human Rights or Human Rights Day is celebrated annually on 10 December.
- ❖ The theme of the 2018 Human Rights Day is #StandUp4HumanRights.
- ❖ Adopted in 1948 by the UN General Assembly (UNGA), 10 Dec 2018 marked the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
- ❖ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights document is the most translated document in the world, available in more than 500 languages.



Nobel Prize Day – 10 December

- ❖ The Nobel Prize Day is observed annually on December 10.
- ❖ The day has been observed to commemorate the day on which the first Nobel Prizes were awarded.



- ❖ The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 10 December 1901, 5 years after Nobel's death (10 December 1896).
- ❖ The Nobel Laureates are announced at the beginning of October each year and they were awarded on 10 December from the Swedish King.
- ❖ All Nobel Prizes are awarded in Stockholm, Sweden, except for the Nobel Peace Prize, which is awarded in Oslo, Norway.

International Mountain Day – 11 December

- ❖ The International Mountain Day is observed annually on 11 December.
- ❖ Theme for the 2018 edition of the International Mountain Day is “#MountainsMatter”.

- ❖ It is celebrated by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to spread the awareness about the contribution of mountains in the biodiversity.



- ❖ Also, to commemorate the day, there will be a side event on “Mountain adaptation: Vulnerable peaks and people” at UNFCCC COP24 in Katowice, Poland.

UNICEF Day – 11 December

- ❖ The UNICEF (United Nations International Children Emergency Fund) headquartered in New York celebrated its 71st foundation day on 11 December 2018.
- ❖ On 11 December 1946, the UNICEF was created by the United Nations General Assembly.
- ❖ It was created to provide long-standing charitable and developmental support to children and mothers in the evolving countries.

International Universal Health Coverage Day – 12 December

- ❖ The International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) was observed throughout the world on 12 December every year.
- ❖ It aims to mobilize diverse stakeholders to call for stronger, more equitable health systems to achieve universal health coverage, leaving no one behind.
- ❖ The theme for the 2018 UHC Day is: “Unite for Universal Health Coverage: Now is the Time for Collective Action.”



- ❖ The United Nations proclaimed 12 December as International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) by a resolution in 2017.

International Day of Neutrality – 12 December

- ❖ December 12 has been observed as the International Day of Neutrality.
- ❖ It is celebrated by the United Nations to ensure neutrality among nations and abstention of a state from all participation in a war.
- ❖ The UN General Assembly declared the Day of December 12 to be seen as International Day of Neutrality on February 2, 2017.

National Energy Conservation Day – 14 December

- ❖ The National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated every year on 14th December in India.
- ❖ This year marks the 28th year of its celebration.
- ❖ The observance of the day intends to create awareness on the importance of energy efficiency and conservation.
- ❖ The day was established by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in 2001 when they executed the Energy Conservation Act of India.
- ❖ The Energy Efficiency Bureau (BEE) is a statutory body which works under the Ministry of Power and helps in the development of policies and strategies to reduce use of energy.

International Tea day – 15 December

- ❖ The International Tea Day is observed annually on December 15.
- ❖ It is aimed to draw the global attention of governments and citizens to the impact of global tea trade on workers and growers in the tea producing countries.

- ❖ It was observed since 2005 in tea producing countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Uganda, India and Tanzania.
- ❖ The first International Tea Day was celebrated in New Delhi in 2005.

Vijay Diwas – 16 December

- ❖ Vijay Diwas, also called as Victory Day, is celebrated on every 16th December in India.
- ❖ 16th December 2018 marked the 47th anniversary of its victory over Pakistan in the war of Independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971.

International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers – 17 December

- ❖ The International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers is observed annually on December 17 by sex workers, their advocates, friends, families and allies.
- ❖ The day calls attention to,
 - Hate crimes committed against sex workers worldwide, as well as
 - The need to remove the social stigma and discrimination that have contributed to violence against sex workers and indifferences from the communities they are part of.
- ❖ First observed in 2003, the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers was founded by Dr. Annie Sprinkle and the Sex Workers Outreach Project USA (SWOP-USA), an American sex worker rights organization.
- ❖ The International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (ICRSE) adopted the red umbrella as a symbol of resistance to discrimination in 2005.

International Migrants Day – 18 December

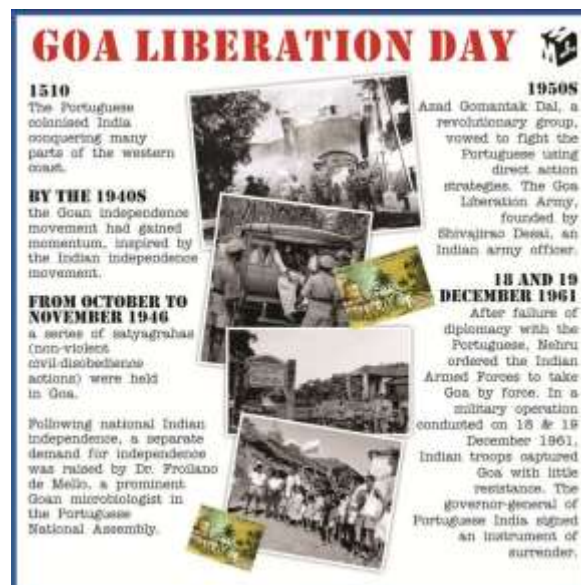
- ❖ The International Migrants Day is observed on 18th December annually to recognize the efforts, contributions, and rights of migrants worldwide.
- ❖ The Theme for the year 2018 is - “Migration with Dignity”.
- ❖ The resolution to observe the day was passed by the UN General Assembly on 4th December 2000.

Minorities Rights Day – 18 December

- ❖ The Minorities Rights Day is Celebrated on 18th of December every year.
- ❖ The day is aimed at promoting, preserving and safeguarding the rights of the people belonging to linguistic, religious, caste and colour minorities in India.
- ❖ On 18th December 1992 the UN promulgated the “Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities” to strengthen the cause of the minorities.
- ❖ The National Commission for Minorities celebrates the Minority Rights Day every year on 18th December.

Goa Liberation Day - 19 December

- ❖ Goa Liberation Day is observed every year on 19th of December,
 - To celebrate the liberation of Goa from Portuguese control after almost 450 years of colonial rule.
 - To pay their homage to the martyrs who laid down their lives on 19 Dec 1961 in the “Operation Vijay”.
- ❖ It was provided the statehood in 1987 and thereby became one of the richest and top per capita income states of India.
- ❖ It is 57th Liberation Day for Goa.
- ❖ It was on 19 December, 1961 the “Operation Vijay” was undertaken by the Indian Navy for liberation of Anjadiv Islands and Territories of Goa, Daman and Diu from the Portuguese rule.
- ❖ The deposed Governor General of Portugal in India Manuel Antonio vassalo e silva surrendered to the then Chief of Army Staff General Pran Nath Thapar.



International Human Solidarity Day – 20 December

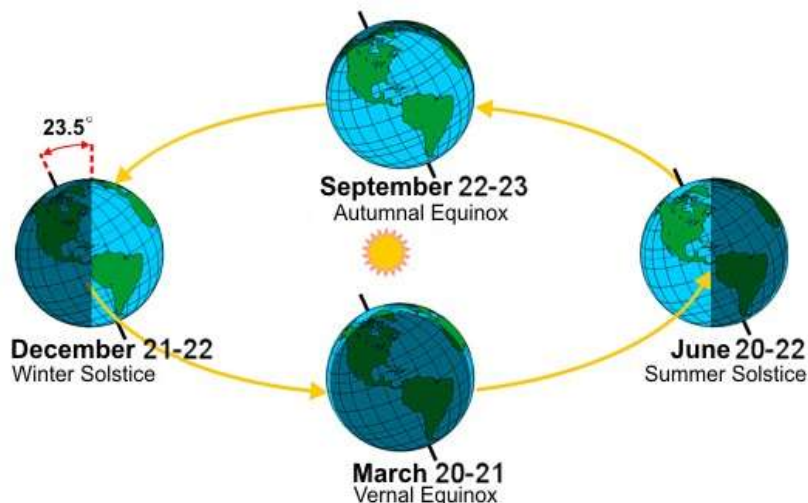
- ❖ The United Nations' (UN) International Human Solidarity Day is annually held on December 20 to celebrate unity in diversity and to raise public awareness of the importance of solidarity.
- ❖ Its objective is to eradicate poverty and promote human and social development in developing countries, in particular among the poorest segments of their populations.

'Year of Tolerance' – 2019

- ❖ The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has declared 2019 to be the "Year of Tolerance."
- ❖ It highlights UAE as the Global Capital of Tolerance, instilling the values of co-existence and peace in local, regional and international communities.
- ❖ Earlier, the country had announced 2018 as the "Year of Zayed" and 2017 as the "Year of Giving".
- ❖ In November 2018, a World Tolerance Summit was held in Dubai.
- ❖ The Year of Tolerance will focus on "Five Pillars" ..

Winter Solstice & Summer Solstice – December 21

- ❖ The days of the year with the most and fewest daylight hours are called the solstices.

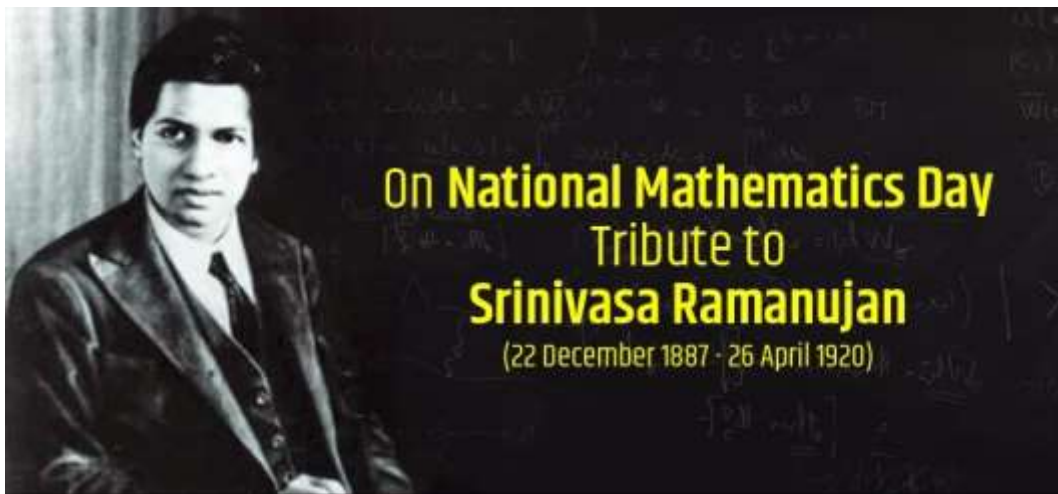


- ❖ Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year was observed in the Northern hemisphere.
- ❖ Whereas Summer Solstice, the Longest Day of the year was observed in the Southern Hemisphere.

- ❖ The roles are reversed on June 21st when the Northern Hemisphere observes Summer Solstice and Southern Hemisphere observes winter solstice.
- ❖ They are caused due to the tilt of the Earth and its elliptical path around the sun.

National Mathematics Day - 22 December

- ❖ The National Mathematics Day is celebrated on 22nd December every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of famous Indian Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan.



- ❖ This year (2018) India celebrated the 131st birth anniversary of Ramanujan.
- ❖ It has been celebrated since 2012 to mark the 125th Birth anniversary. The Indian government had also declared 2012 as the National Mathematics year.
- ❖ The day is celebrated to honour his contribution to the field of Mathematics and also to keep his legacy alive to inspire the future mathematicians.

National farmers' day - 23rd December

- ❖ The National Farmer's Day was celebrated throughout the country to mark the birth anniversary of Indian farmer's leader and 5th PM of India Chaudhary Charan Singh.
- ❖ The day aims to acknowledge the role of farmers in India's socio-economic development.
- ❖ This day, which is also observed as Kisan Diwas, is celebrated across the nation every year with the focus on the upliftment of the status of farmers.



National Consumers Day - 24 December

- ❖ The National Consumer Day is celebrated across the country on 24th December every year.
- ❖ The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution celebrated National Consumer Day 2018 at DRDO Bhawan in New Delhi.



- ❖ The theme of the 2018 National Consumers Day was "Timely Disposal of Consumer Complaints".
- ❖ It is being celebrated on the 24th December because it was on this day in 1986 the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the President.

Good Governance Day – 25 December

- ❖ The Good Governance Day was celebrated across the country on 25th December to commemorate the birth anniversary of Former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee.



- ❖ The day was established in 2014 to honour Vajpayee by fostering awareness among the people on accountability in Governance and Government.
- ❖ The Prime Minister released a commemorative 100 rupees coin in memory of the former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Siddha Day – 26 December

- ❖ Every year Sage Agathiar's birthday is being observed as Siddha Day and this year it falls on 26 December, 2018.
- ❖ Sage Agathiyar is considered as the first Siddhar in the line of "18 Siddhars" and called as "Father of Siddha Medicine"
- ❖ Agathiyar was born in the month of Markazhi in Aayilyam birth star.
- ❖ The day has been observed since last year, 2017.



MISCELLANEOUS

India gifts e-rickshaws to Senegal

- ❖ External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj handed over 2 e-rickshaws to the Ambassador of Senegal in New Delhi.
- ❖ The move is in a gesture symbolising the partnership between the two countries in the clean energy sector.
- ❖ Responding to the request of Senegal President India is supplying 250 e-rickshaws with lithium-ion batteries on grant basis to Senegal.
- ❖ The e-rickshaws to be supplied to Senegal were manufactured by Goenka Electric Motor Vehicles Private Limited.

IOC human rights advisory committee

- ❖ The IOC (International Olympic Committee) has set up an advisory committee on human rights chaired by Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein,
- ❖ Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein is the former U.N. high commissioner for human rights.
- ❖ The "human rights standards" will be included in Olympic host-city contracts, beginning with the 2024 Games in Paris.
- ❖ Beijing is the host of the 2022 Winter Olympics, and spent \$40 billion to hold the 2008 Olympics.

2023 IAAF World Championships

- ❖ The Hungarian capital Budapest was officially confirmed as the host city of the 2023 International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Championships.
- ❖ The decision in this regard was taken at the IAAF Council meeting held in Monaco.
- ❖ The World Championships will return to Europe after a six-year hiatus following Doha, Qatar in 2019 and Eugene, USA in 2021.
- ❖ The 2017 IAAF World Championships was held at London, England.
- ❖ Budapest has been awarded the title of European Capital of Sport for 2019.

“Heart Attack Rewind” - media campaign

- ❖ Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched media campaign “Heart Attack Rewind”, calling for elimination of industrially produced trans-fat in the food supply.

- ❖ It will support FSSAI's global target of eliminating trans-fat in India by 2022, a year ahead of global target by World Health Organization (WHO).
- ❖ It is in line with FSSAI's objective to get 'Freedom from Trans Fat: India@75'.

1st Indian to scale Sahayadri mountain range

- ❖ Tuhin Satarkar, became the first Indian to climb three routes in the treacherous Sahayadri mountain range in 12 days.
- ❖ He climbed 3 famous peaks
 - Dhodap,
 - Jivdhan and
 - Naneghat
- ❖ These are known to have been ascended by Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his Marathi Malvas.
- ❖ Sahyadri is a mountain range of Western Ghats, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the eight "hottest hot-spots" of biological diversity in the world.

Architecture of Justice- book release

- ❖ The Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi released a book named "Architecture of Justice: A pictorial walk-through of the supreme court and High courts of India" in New Delhi.



- ❖ It was authored by father-son duo Vinay Thakur and Amogh Thakur.
- ❖ The book is a sequel to Vinay Thakur's earlier book 'The Courts of India: Past to Present' (2016).

Workshop on Developing 'Ganga Museum'

- ❖ An international workshop on “Developing a Ganga Museum Concept: Exchanging Experiences and Ideas between India and Europe” was held in New Delhi.
- ❖ The workshop was organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) along with GIZ India, as a part of Indo German Development Co-operation.

National Rail Museum signs MoU with Madame Tussauds Wax Museum

- ❖ The National Rail Museum of the Railways Ministry has signed a MoU with the Madame Tussauds Wax Museum, Delhi to develop tourism in the Delhi - NCR (National Capital Region) region.
- ❖ This is the first ever Public-Private museum collaboration in the country.
- ❖ As per the MoU, a special discount of 35% will be provided to the visitors of the National Rail Museum, when they visit Madame Tussauds Wax Museum in New Delhi.
- ❖ Similar discounts were also provided for school children.
- ❖ Madame Tussauds Wax Museum is the first ever wax museum in India.
- ❖ It was the 23rd wax museum of the renowned Madame Tussauds in London, inaugurated in 2017.

China's richest man - Xu Jiayin

- ❖ Evergrande Group owner Xu Jiayin has become the richest person in China with a \$36.7 billion net worth, overtaking Alibaba co-founder Jack Ma.
- ❖ The Forbes "real-time ranking" of the world's billionaires places Xu at number 20, one spot ahead of Jack Ma and two ahead of Huateng.

Jana Bankable Debit Card

- ❖ Jana Small Finance Bank in association with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has launched Jana Bankable Debit Card.
- ❖ The Jana Small Finance Bank is the official sponsor of BCCI for all the cricket matches that are played in India.
- ❖ This card is designed for cricket fans who like deals and offers on online shopping, fitness related activities.



Symbol for the year 2018

- ❖ Japan has selected Chinese-character of “Disaster” as a defining symbol for the year 2018.
- ❖ The year 2018 saw the country hit by deadly floods, earthquakes and heat storms.



- ❖ A kanji symbol for peace came at second place.
- ❖ The symbol was chosen in a public vote.
- ❖ "North" won the vote in 2017 after the North Korea's missile launches.

Hovercrafts in Sir Creek

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guards has deployed two new hovercrafts in the contentious area around Sir Creek.
- ❖ It is to enhance its surveillance capabilities and to protect against any filtration bids from the Pakistan Side.



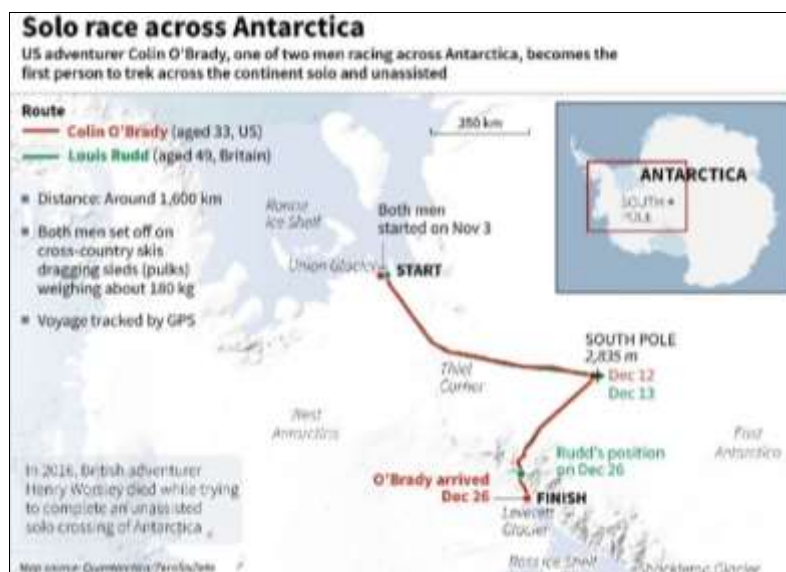
- ❖ A hovercraft is an amphibious vehicle capable of travelling over land, water, mud, ice, and other surfaces operating at 50-60 km/hr.

e-Commerce Portal - Department of Posts

- ❖ The Union Communications Minister Manoj Sinha launched the e-Commerce portal of the Department of Posts (DoP).
- ❖ It will provide an e-market place to sellers especially to rural artisans, self-help groups, women entrepreneurs, state and central PSUs and autonomous bodies to sell their products to buyers across the country.

Solo journey across Antarctica - First Person

- ❖ American adventurer Colin O' Brady became the first person to complete a solo journey across Antarctica, unaided and unsupported.



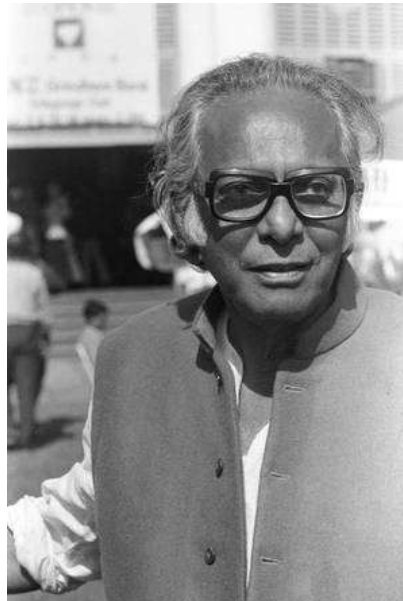
- ❖ He took 54 days to complete the nearly 1,000 miles (1,600-kilometer) crossing of the frozen continent from north to south.

Digital Transformation Hackathon

- ❖ An Indian-American teenager, Mahum Siddiqi (17) has won the inaugural “Digital Transformation Hackathon” at Cornell University, New York.
- ❖ It has been awarded to him for designing a device which can detect the actual level of pain of a patient during a diagnosis.

Mrinal Sen passed away

- ❖ The Noted filmmaker Mrinal Sen passed away in Kolkata on December 30, 2018 after a prolonged battle with age-related illnesses.
- ❖ In 2005, Mrinal received the country’s highest honour in film, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.
- ❖ In 1983, he became a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, India’s third highest civilian award.



- ❖ He was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Fifth Global Film Festival in Noida in 2012 and was inducted as a member of the Oscar Academy in 2017.
