

TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM CURRENT AFFAIRS – MARCH 2019

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TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Chennai emits 22.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide and is ranked third biggest emitter of CO₂, Delhi top the list with over 38.38 million tonnes followed by Mumbai.
- ❖ Delhi High Court upheld the Election Commission of India's order, allotting AIADMK's 'two leaves' symbol to the faction led by Edappadi K.Palaniswamy and O.Panneerselvam.
- ❖ Indian Railways launched a new feature on the IRCTC website to book seats even after the reservation chart is prepared.
 - As per the new feature, travellers can book tickets after the second reservation chart is out just 30 minutes before the departure of trains.
- ❖ Supreme Court ruled that the Centre should formulate a scheme to ensure that compensation in hit and run cases reaches genuine claimants of the victims.
- ❖ The former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was presented with the first 'P V Narasimha Rao National leadership and lifetime achievement award' by former President Pranab Mukherjee.
- ❖ Afghanistan began exports to India through the Chabahar port in Iran. This is the first time Afghanistan has exported goods to India bypassing the Pakistan route on February 24, 2019.
- ❖ U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un are met on second time less than a year in the Vietnamese Hanoi.
- ❖ International Cricket Council (ICC) banned UAE-based coach Irfan Ansari for 10 years after he was found guilty of making a "corrupt approach" to Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed in 2017.
- ❖ Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, inaugurated National Institutes of Design (NID) at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh and Jorhat in Assam.
 - Both institutes are autonomous institutions under Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- ❖ Union Cabinet approved construction of Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Corridor of Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) covering a distance of 82.15 kms.
- ❖ ISRO would be launching an electronic intelligence satellite 'Emisat' for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in March 2019.
- ❖ In Chess, Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta lifted the Cannes International Open trophy held at Cannes of France. It is his first solo International tournament victory. He beat Pier Luigi Basso of Italy.
- ❖ Myanmar set up a committee to discuss reforming the country's military-drafted constitution.

- ❖ Thiruvananthapuram hosted the Attakal Ponkala festival which is considered as one of the world's largest religious gathering of women on a single day.
 - Attakal Bhagavathy Amman temple is also called 'women's Sabarimala' as only women perform the ritual.
- ❖ Prime Minister unveiled the giant Bhagavad Gita, which is running into 670 pages and weighing 800 kg, at the ISKCON temple, Delhi.
 - According to ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness), this book will have the largest principle of sacred text ever to be printed.
- ❖ India and Brunei signed a pact for exchange of Information and Assistance in Collection with respect to taxes in order to curb tax evasion and tax avoidance in New Delhi.
- ❖ Bengaluru based semiconductor company “SIGNALCHIP” unveiled India’s first Indigenous Semiconductor Chips for 4G/LTE and 5G NR MODEMs at an event in New Delhi.
- ❖ Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani inaugurated the ‘Titanwala Museum’ which showcases the Chhipa community’s art of traditional hand-block printing at Bagru, Rajasthan.
- ❖ According to BCG-IBA Report on EASE Reforms index released by Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Arun Jaitley, Punjab National Bank (PNB) secured the top spot among all public sector banks in the implementation of ‘Reforms agenda’.
- ❖ Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani became the first Indian and the only Asian to enter the Global top 10 richest billionaire list compiled by Hurun Research, China.
- ❖ Sri Lankan batsman Sanath Jayasuriya was banned for two years starting backdated from October 16, 2018, after admitting to obstruct an anti-corruption probe.
- ❖ Kerala Governor P. Sathasivam inaugurated the memorial for the Tamil Nadu former CM M.G. Ramachandran in the Vadavannur in Palakkad in Kerala on February 26.
 - It is also a centre for preparing youth and women for competitive examinations and employment with a library.
- ❖ Actor Vijay Sethupathi adopted two white tigers (Adithya and Arthi) from the Arignar Anna Zoological Park, in Chennai’s Vandalur.
- ❖ Over 100 women were awarded in various fields of health, government and self-employment by the Non-Governmental Organization Ooruni.
- ❖ The Prime Minister declared 'April 2019-March 2020' as Construction-Technology year on March 02.

- ❖ Indian Air Force Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman will be the first recipient of the 'Bhagwan Mahavir Ahimsa Puraskar' instituted by the Akhil Bharatiya Digambar Jain Mahasamiti.
- ❖ National Health Authority (NHA) has signed MoU with Uber, a ride-hailing app to provide free healthcare services to Uber drivers under Ayushman Bharat.
- ❖ The Central government banned Jamaat-e-Islami of Jammu and Kashmir for five years under group under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act on the grounds of "in close touch" with militant outfits.
- ❖ The President has given his assent to an ordinance that allows voluntary use of Aadhaar as ID proof for obtaining mobile SIM cards and opening bank accounts.
- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved for setting up of a Centre for Disability Sports at Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, which is to be registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
 - It will work under the name of Centre for Disability Sports, Gwalior.
- ❖ The Former Vice President Hamid Ansari launched the new book of former Finance Minister P Chidambaram named "Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India" at Nehru Memorial Museum, New Delhi.
- ❖ American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics has conferred DRDO Chief G Satheesh Reddy with the prestigious "Missile Systems Award 2019" for his leadership role in the Indian missile programmes.
- ❖ IFFCO Tokio General Insurance launched 'bank locker protector policy', the first stand-alone bank locker cover offered by any insurance company with a plan to protect the contents of a bank locker such as jewelry, title documents, and other valuables.
- ❖ Agrochemical firm, Parijat Industries has been conferred the prestigious 'Sarvashreshtha Suraksha Puraskar' (Bronze trophy) for the 3rd time by National Safety Council of India (NSCI) for the year 2018.
- ❖ TVS Motor Company has bagged the international sustainability award 'Green Era Award for Sustainability' in Lisbon, Portugal.
 - It also won the Quality and Business Excellence Award in acknowledgment of its endeavour to create new benchmarks in product quality.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Police department has launched 'Kaavalar angadi' at the TN Police DGP office.
 - This app provides the details and invoice of all the goods sold in the police canteen.
- ❖ Indian Bank has been awarded the Best Bank Award by the Tamil Nadu government for successfully meeting the needs of women's self-help groups (SHGs).

- ❖ ‘Azaadi ke Diwane’ museum was inaugurated at the Red Fort premises to pay homage to hundreds of freedom fighters who do not find mention in popular culture.
- ❖ India, Bhutan, Nepal, Indonesia, and Malaysia have signed the New Delhi Declaration on Asian Rhinos 2019 for the protection of the species at the Second Asian Rhino Range Countries Meet.
- ❖ Indian-American teenager Kavya Kopparapu has been awarded the National STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Education Award 2019.
 - She has been awarded for her significant invention in enhancing treatments of glioblastoma.
- ❖ Geological Survey of India (GSI) has launched 22 permanent Global Positioning System (GPS) stations across India to identify seismically hazardous zones and encourage mapping activities.
- ❖ World Day of Fight Against Sexual Exploitation is observed on March 4 every year.
 - It aims to spread awareness about the prevalent sexual exploitation, largely among women and children.
- ❖ Macky Sall has again won the election and become the President of Senegal for the second term.
- ❖ Alastair Cook, former captain of the England cricket team was officially awarded the knighthood for his services to cricket. He was honored by Queen Elizabeth II, at the Buckingham Palace in London, England.
 - He is the 11th English cricketer to be awarded knighthood for services to cricket.
- ❖ Prime Minister announced that the Chennai Central railway station will be rechristened after the former Chief Minister of the state MG Ramachandran on March 06.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched Amma Community Radio (Amma Samudhaya Vaanoli) on March 06.
- ❖ Centre has notified a scheme for Transport and Marketing Assistance (TMA) for specified agriculture products.
- ❖ Ministers from the 16 RCEP Participating Countries (RPCs) attended the 7th RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting held in Siem Reap, Cambodia.
- ❖ Malaysia has ratified the Rome Statute making it the 124th State party to the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- ❖ Appointment Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of P.V.Ramesh as the Director-General of the National Archives of India.
- ❖ Kaja Kallas, the leader of the Reform Party has been appointed as the first female Prime Minister of Estonia.

- ❖ Ajit Kumar Mohanty has been appointed as a Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre for the period of three years.
- ❖ Reliance Industries Chairman, Mukesh Ambani, jumped six positions to rank 13th on Forbes World's Billionaires list and leads 106 billionaires from India on the list.
- ❖ Google India has unveiled an app "Bolo" which focuses on improving the reading and comprehension skills of students, especially the ones in rural areas.
- ❖ International Cricket Council (ICC) has banned former Zimbabwe Cricket director Enock Ikope for a period of 10 years for the offence of breaching 3 ICC's anti-corruption codes.
- ❖ Prime Minister dedicated Indian Oil Corp's LNG import terminal to the nation at Ennore in Tamil Nadu. This is the first LNG terminal on the east coast in South India.
- ❖ All 19 underground Chennai Metro stations in the city will have 'free-to-use' landline facilities for passengers in the concourse area.
- ❖ 16-year-old P. Iniyan, from the Erode district, has become the 61st Grandmaster of India during the Noisiel Open 2019, held in Paris.
- ❖ Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar has won the prestigious Airport Service Quality (ASQ) award for being the best airport in size and region for the year 2018.
- ❖ National Women Livelihood Meet 2019, held at Deendayal Hastkala Sankul in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on the occasion of International Women's Day 2019.
- ❖ Soumya Swaminathan has been moved from the position of WHO's Deputy Director-General to Chief Scientist.
- ❖ Findings of the study published in the journal eLife stated that 'mass measles vaccination campaign of India' helped to save the lives of tens of thousands of children between 2010 and 2013.
- ❖ Indian-American television personality Padma Lakshmi has been appointed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as its newest Goodwill Ambassador.
- ❖ Rajasthan government has amended the Lokayukta Act to reduce the Lokayukta's tenure from eight years to five years.
- ❖ Dr N Kalai selvi, a scientist from Tamil Nadu has become the first woman director of CSIR-CECRI (Central Electrochemical Research Institute) at Karaikudi in Sivagangai district.
- ❖ Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu has been conferred an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Peace for his contribution "to the Rule of Law, democracy and sustainable development in India".
 - He received the degree of 'Doctor of Philosophy' (Doctor Honoris Causa) from the Dean of the University in the Costa Rican capital of San Jose.

- ❖ Asian Games gold medallist Manjit Singh Chahal clinched the gold in men's 1500 m race in the Indian Grand Prix series.
- ❖ Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath declared that Gondi language will be included in the primary education curriculum of the state's tribal-dominated districts.
 - This move took place due to the rising concern of a rapid decline in the number of people who speak that tongue.
- ❖ Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport, New Delhi was declared as the best airport in the category of over "40 million passengers per annum (MPPA)" in Asia Pacific by Airports Council International (ACI) in the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Programme for 2018.
- ❖ A stray dog Mera becomes the first dog to scale a Himalayan peak Mera. It appears to be a cross between a Tibetan mastiff and a Himalayan sheepdog. It scaled Baruntse, a 7000-metre high peak in the Himalayas just south of Mount Everest.
- ❖ Krishna Kumari Kohli become the Pakistan's first female senator from the Hindu Dalit community.
- ❖ European Union included Pakistan in its new list of 23 "high risk third countries" with strategic deficiencies in their anti-money laundering and counter-terror financing frameworks.
- ❖ Bernard Arnoult, the chairman of Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE (LVMH) has overtaken Warren Buffett to become the third-richest person of the world, on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government launched a scheme of Online Verification of old land documents and issue land patta at Sub Registrar offices.
 - This scheme was introduced on Pilot basis in Perambalur district.
- ❖ Chennai City was crowned champions of the 12th I-League by defeating East Bengal.
- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved re-employment of Bhaskar Khulbe as Secretary to the Prime Minister for a period of six months beyond March 31, 2019.
- ❖ Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas, a book containing selected speeches of Prime Minister has been released by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley.
- ❖ Lawyer and activist Sudha Bharadwaj is among the women honoured at this year's Harvard Law School International Women's Day Portrait Exhibit.
 - 21 honourees are there including lawyer Menaka Guruswamy, who had argued for the decriminalisation of homosexuality in India.
- ❖ The Union Government has doubled the income tax exemption limit for gratuity to Rs 20 lakh. It will applicable those who are now retiring as well as those who retired over the last 12 months.

- ❖ The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi. The project envisions a massive renovation of the holy shrine and its surrounding areas.
- ❖ The Prime Minister announced that Prasar Bharati has brought 11 more State DD Channels on the Satellite footprint of India through 'DD Free Dish'.
 - These 11 channels include five from North Eastern states.
- ❖ The President of India conferred the Padma Awards 2019, one of the highest civilian awards of India to 112 awardees on March 11, 2019.
- ❖ New visa agreement between India and Maldives, which providing a liberal visa policy for Maldivian citizens seeking medical treatment as well as education and business opportunities in India, came into force on March 11, 2019.
- ❖ Mohammad Shtayyeh was named as the new Prime Minister of Palestine by the President of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas.
- ❖ Tamilnadu government employees can now receive gifts up to Rs.25,000 with prior permission from higher officials. Earlier it was Rs.5,000.
- ❖ For adopting the green building concept and being user friendly, 14 underground stations of Chennai Metro Rail have been given platinum ratings by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).
 - IGBC rating systems are voluntary, consensus based, market-driven building programmes.
 - The rating systems are based on the five elements of the nature (Panchabhutas) and are a perfect blend of ancient architectural practices and modern technological innovations.
- ❖ Suler Airforce station was awarded “Nishanth” Presidential colours by the President Ramnath Kovind.
 - The award of President's colours is one of the greatest honours bestowed upon in recognition of exceptional service rendered to the nation, both during war and in peace.
- ❖ Japanese government decided to provide Rs. 22 lakhs for the Rabindra Bharati Museum in Kolkata of West Bengal in order to establish deeper and stronger historical and cultural ties with India.
- ❖ Upamanyu Dutta from Mumbai won Bronze medal, which is India’s first ever medal in the Laser Standard race for men in the Asian Open Laser Sailing Championship held in Singapore.
- ❖ The Central government has banned the Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft after an Ethiopian Airlines flight crashed killing all 157 people including four Indians on board.
- ❖ C Lalsawta was sworn-in as the first Chairman of the newly-constituted Lokayukta in Mizoram at the Raj Bhawan, Aizawl.

- ❖ 100th birth anniversary of DK Pattammal, a doyen of Carnatic Music will be celebrated on March 19, 2019.
 - She was the first woman to perform Ragam, Talam and Pallavi in concerts.
- ❖ Vastradaan Campaign - Free clothes donation campaign conducted by a member of the erstwhile royal family of Udaipur has received over 3 lakh items of clothing and created a Guinness world record for the largest collection of clothes for donation.
- ❖ Tibetan activists observed 60th anniversary of their National Uprising Day.
 - This day on which thousands of Tibetans took to the streets of Lhasa rising up against the Communist China's occupation of their homeland.
- ❖ Supreme Court has ruled that IPS officers even with a minimum residual tenure of 6 Months are also eligible for the post of DGP (Director General of Police). Earlier minimum 2 years residual tenure was compulsory.
- ❖ Wildlife officials spotted 31 blackbuck and 87 spotted deer during the annual wildlife estimation at Guindy National Park and Raj Bhavan reserved forest in Chennai.
- ❖ 12th March 2019 marks the 89th anniversary of the Dandi Satyagraha or Salt Satyagraha, an act of nonviolent civil disobedience in colonial India led by Mahatma Gandhi.
- ❖ Corporation Bank celebrated its 114th Foundation Day on 12th March at various centres of the bank across the nation. It is the day in 1906 when it started functioning in Udupi of Karnataka under the leadership of Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim Saheb Bahadur.
- ❖ Famous Novelist and Film Director Ved Rahi will be awarded with prestigious Kusumagraj Rashtriya Sahitya Puruskar.
 - Kusumagraj award is named after Marathi Poet and playwright, late V V Shirwadkar who was popularly known as Kusumagraj.
- ❖ Pankaj Kumar has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Thoothukudi-based Sterlite Copper.
- ❖ France announced to freeze all assets of Pakistan based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar in application of its Monetary and Financial Code.
- ❖ In the worst attack in the Pacific country's history, around 49 people have been killed and over 20 injured in shootings at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.
- ❖ United States Special Forces Group stationed in Japan has involved in a joint exercise with India's National Security Guard in Hyderabad, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries.
 - National Security Guard (NSG) was raised on September 1986. Sudeep Lakhatia is the current Director General of NSG.

- ❖ China put on hold a request by Britain, France and the United States to add the leader of JeM, Masood Azhar.
 - This UN sanctions blacklist would subject him to a global travel ban, an asset freeze and an arms embargo.
- ❖ Consumer companies in India are phasing out the controversial anti-bacterial 'triclosan' from soap and toothpaste products.
 - The use of triclosan is linked to Abnormal endocrine system/thyroid hormone signalling and Weakening of immune system.
- ❖ China's Long March-3B rocket, regarded as the main stay of the country's space programme since 1970, successfully completed its 300th launch by putting a new communication satellite into orbit.
- ❖ Chennai based 13 years old Child musical prodigy Lydian Nadhaswaram has won \$1 Million prize in an International Music Talent show – "The World's Best" held at California of USA.
- ❖ Indian Grandmasters B Adhiban and Surya Shekhar Ganguly – win Gold medals at the World Chess Championships at Astana in Kazakhstan.
- ❖ Indo Oman Joint Exercise Al Nagah III, a joint military exercise between Indian and Royal Army of Oman (RAO) was conducted at Oman.
- ❖ The first BRICS Sherpa meeting under the Presidency of Brazil with a special focus on countering transnational crime and terrorism was conducted at Curitiba in Brazil.
- ❖ Valtteri Bottas beat his world champion team mate Lewis Hamilton and clinch the season-opening Australian Grand Prix for Mercedes Team.
- ❖ NASA's Nick Hague, Russian Alexey Ovchinin and Christina Koch have successfully reached ISS (International Space Station).
 - Russia's Soyuz spacecraft carried them.
- ❖ Bengaluru Football club lifts their first ISL (Indian Super League) title by beating Goa.
- ❖ The National company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) gave a conditional approval to Arcelor Mittal to proceed with its 42,000-crore proposal to take over debt-ridden Essar Steel.
- ❖ Tropical Cyclone Idai has brought massive destruction across Mozambique and Zimbabwe.
- ❖ Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas has joined international celebrities with Oprah Winfrey and Meryl Streep in USA Today's list of "50 most powerful women in entertainment".
 - USA Today is a an Internationally distributed American daily, and is the most circulated Newspaper in America.

- ❖ Haryana forest and wildlife department, which has taken the initiative to set up Sparrow Rescue and Research Centres (SRRC) in the country, is celebrating World Sparrow Day for the first time.
 - The event will be held at Bir Shikargah wildlife sanctuary in Panchkula.
- ❖ Six months after the sworn into office, Prime Minister of Haiti, Jean-Henry C ant was resigned from office after the passing of No confidence motion.
- ❖ RMS Queen Mary 2, the largest transatlantic ocean cruise liner visited the Chennai port.
- ❖ Germany has initiated a move at the European Union to designate the Chief of Jaish-e-Mohammed, Masood Azhar as a global terrorist.
 - This move comes days after China blocked a motion at the UN Security Council to ban him.
- ❖ Kazakhstan has renamed its capital Astana to Nursultan in honor of its outgoing President Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- ❖ Tiger Woman is the English version of Bengali historical novel ‘Shardulsundori’ and it talks about love, the Great Bengal Circus and India's first female trapeze artist, the central character of the novel.
 - ‘Shardulsundori’ was authored by Sirsho Bandopadhyay and translated by Arunava Sinha.
- ❖ SpiceJet is the first Indian budget carrier to join the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which has over 290 airlines as members.
- ❖ A three-day conclave on India-Africa Project Partnerships was organized by the Ministry of Commerce in association with Confederation of Indian Industry and EXIM Bank of India.
- ❖ Bihar Diwas (Bihar Day) is observed every year on March 22, it marked the formation of the state of Bihar.
 - It was on this day when the British carved out the state from Bengal Presidency in 1912.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu government has instructed government-funded schools to begin the admission process for the next academic year from April 1, 2019.
 - This step is taken to encourage more admissions in Govt schools and complete admissions at the same time as other private institutions.
- ❖ Pakistan commemorates the passing of the Lahore Resolution on March 23, 1940, when the Muslims of the Sub-continent set the agenda of a separate homeland for themselves. It is celebrated as Pakistan Day. It is also the Republic Day of Pakistan. In 1956, on this same day, Pakistan became the first Islamic Republic by adopting the first constitution of Pakistan.
- ❖ India abstained, along with 14 other countries, voting on a resolution at the UN Human Rights Council condemning Israel for violence in Gaza.

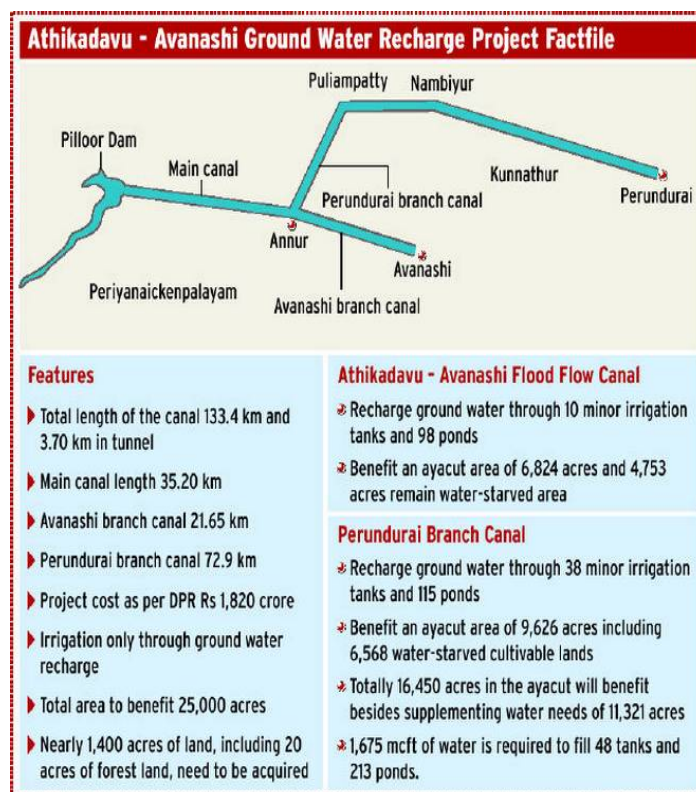
- ❖ Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Dr Harsh Vardhan are among the seven Indians who have been named in the 'World's 100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy for 2019' for taking steps in order to combat climate change.
 - Sunita Narain, the editor of the fortnightly magazine, Down To Earth also finds place in the same list.
- ❖ Former Chief Election Commissioner of India Navin Chawla's latest book 'Every Vote Counts' was launched by former Vice President of India, Hamid Ansari at New Delhi.
- ❖ Chennai Super Kings's batsman Suresh Raina, became the first batsman to make a record by surpassing 5,000 runs in the IPL in Chennai.
- ❖ India's first HIV treatment centre and holistic clinic for LGBTQ community has been launched by Humsafar trust in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ❖ Bank of Baroda has become the first public sector banks to launch a creche/child day-care facility for children of its employees.
- ❖ Union government has exceeded its disinvestment target for the fiscal year 2018-19 with Rs 85,000 crore.
 - This is the second highest disinvestment proceeds in a financial year after the government's last fiscal mopped up a little over Rs 1 lakh crore in 2017-18.
- ❖ The Art Dubai fair's 13th edition was held from with features of 92 Contemporary and Modern galleries from 42 countries.
 - It has a special focus on South Asia.
- ❖ Founder and Chairman of Jet Airways, Naresh Goyal and his wife stepped down from being board members as part of the plan to save the embattled airlines from going bankrupt.
- ❖ Ramco Cements has won Excellent Corporate Governance Award and its Ariyalur unit won gold medal in Indian Green Manufacturing Challenge organised by International Research Institute for Manufacturing.
- ❖ European Union Parliament has voted to ban single-use plastic cutlery, cotton buds, straws and stirrers as part of a law against plastic waste that despoils beaches and pollutes oceans.
- ❖ The 2nd edition of Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships (aka Tong Yun Kai Cup) 2019 was held in Hong Kong.
- ❖ China has grabbed the championship by defeating Japan.
- ❖ Oslo, the capital city of Norway will become the world's first city to install wireless, induction-based charging stations for its fleet of electric taxis.
 - It aims to have a zero-emission cab system by the year 2023.
- ❖ Banning of Unregulated Deposit Scheme Ordinance, passed by the Central Government will not affect the ongoing monthly schemes operated by jewellery and chit fund firms.

- ❖ A 10-year-old Tamilnadu boy Jaswant made an achievement by swimming across the Palk Strait from Talaimannar in Sri Lanka to Dhanushkodi covering 32 kms in ten hours and 30 minutes.
- ❖ For the first time Indian Army will start a Mountaineering Expedition to one of the most dangerous peaks and the fifth highest mountain in the world, Mt Makalu(8485m) located in the Mahalangur Himalayas.
- ❖ United states have allotted 1 billion dollar and started building a portion of a border wall along its Mexican border.
- ❖ The Governor of Reserve Bank of India, Shaktikanta Das launched the book “Indian Fiscal Federalism” authored by Dr. Y.V. Reddy and G.R. Reddy.
- ❖ Skytrax World Airport Awards named Singapore’s Changi Airport as the world’s best aviation hub for the seventh time.
 - Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, New Delhi climbed 8 places to rank at 59th Position.
- ❖ Delhi government school teacher, Manu Gulati has been honoured with the Martha Farrell Award for Excellence in Women’s Empowerment 2019.
 - This was awarded for promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment.
- ❖ After acquiring majority stake in REC Ltd (formerly Rural Electrification Corporation Limited), centre backed Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has become the India’s second largest Govt-owned Financial Firm.
 - It is preceded by the State Bank of India (SBI), based on market capitalization.
- ❖ Adani Port and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), a part of Gautam Adani-led Adani Group becomes the first Indian port to achieve a new record of handling 200 million tonnes (MT) cargo movement in 2018-19.
 - This Port achieved this milestone before their estimate time that is by 2020.
- ❖ Wipro and IIT Kharagpur will jointly take up applied research projects on industry challenges related to the design, planning and operations of 5G networks.
- ❖ Nobel laureate and the 39th Former President of United States Jimmy Carter is now the longest-living chief executive in American history. He is 94 years old.
- ❖ Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) has sanctioned a loan of \$83.11 million to Congo to finance three solar power projects in the central African country.
- ❖ Serbian national Veselin Matic, who took Iran to an Asian Games bronze medal in 2010, is set to be appointed as the new head coach of the Indian men's basketball team.
- ❖ In a first, premium mobile brand Apple has introduced Apple Credit Card for its customers.

TAMILNADU

Athikadavu-Avinashi project

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the Athikadavu-Avinashi drinking water supply-cum-irrigation scheme at Nathampalayam in Tiruppur on 28 February.



- ❖ This project was first proposed around 62 years before.
- ❖ The project aims to divert the surplus water of Bhavani river to the lakes, ponds and other water bodies in the drought-prone regions of Coimbatore, Tiruppur and Erode districts as a boost to their ground water tables.
- ❖ Around 1.5 tmc of surplus water will be pumped from the Kalingarayan anicut near Bhavani and the project cost will be 1800 crores.

Kalaimamani awards

- ❖ TN government announced the Kalaimamani awards after a gap of eight years since 2011.
- ❖ Kalaimani Awards are given to the actors, dancers, writers, musician and singers for their contribution towards the Tamil culture.

RECOGNISED FROM THE PAST

2011 Comedian P Pandu, actor B Rajeev, Kuty Padmini and 'villupaatu' artiste Rajakili from Kanniyakumari

2012 Musician Udaiyalur K Kalyanaraman, actresses T Rajasri, PR Varalakshmi, Gana singer S Ulaganathan, and director Chitra Lakshmanan

2013 Actors Prasanna, Nalini, Sharada, TP Gajendran, R Pandiarajan, and folk musician Paravai Muniamma

2014 Actors Karthik, Saravanan, and Ponvannan, director Suresh Krissna and playback singer Malathi

2015 Actor-dancer Prabhu Deva, music director Vijay Antony, lyricist Yugabharathi, cinematographer R Rathnavelu

2016 Actors Sasikumar, MS Bhaskar, Thambi Ramaiah, M Soori and journalist Nellai Sundararajan

2017 Actors Vijay Sethupathi, Priya Mani, and Singamuthu, director Hari and music composer Yuwan Shankar Raja

2018 Nirmala Periyasamy, actors Srikanth and Santhanam, producer AM Rathnam, cinematographer Ravi Varman and singer Unni Menon

- ❖ This time 201 artistes will be honoured with this award including Vijay Sethupathi, Karthi and Prabhu dheva.
- ❖ It was also announced the 'Bharathi' awards in the field of literature, 'MS Subbulakshmi award' in music and 'Bala Saraswathi award' in dance.
- ❖ For the MS Subbulakshmi award, singers S.Janaki, the Bombay sisters C.Saroja and C.Lalitha and TV Gopalakrishnan have been selected.
- ❖ Lyricist Pulamaipithan, veteran Villupattu artiste and lyricist Subbu Arumugam and writer-activist Sivasankari have been selected for the Bharathi award.
- ❖ Vyjayanthimala, VP Dhananjayan and CV Chandrasekhar have been selected for the Bala Saraswathi award.

Prime Minister visit to Tamil Nadu

- ❖ Prime Minister visited Kanyakumari on 1 March 2019 and launched a series of development projects.
 - Flag-off Tejas Express between Madurai and Chennai.
 - Laid foundation stone for the Restoration of Rail connectivity between Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi.
 - Laid foundation stone for the Restoration of Pamban Bridge.



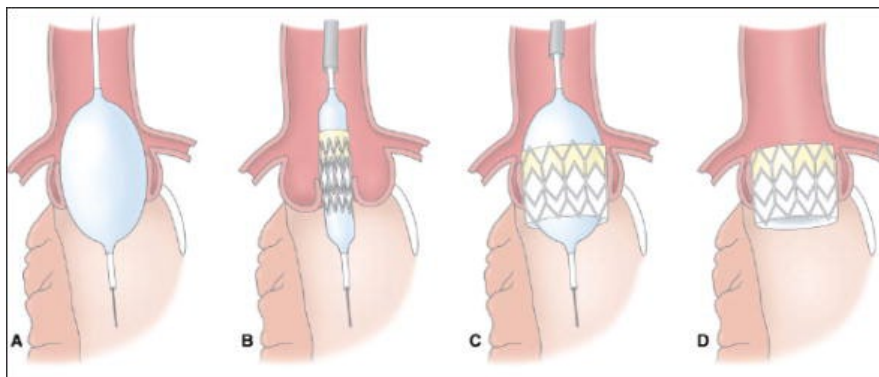
- Laid foundation Stone for Four Laning of Madurai – Chettikulam Section of NH-785
- Dedicated 2/4 Laning of Madurai- Ramanathapuram Section of NH-87 to the Nation. This section covers Madurai, Sivanganga and Ramanathapuram districts.

Natyanjali fete world record

- ❖ Over 7,000 Bharatanatyam dancers set a Guinness Book of World record for the maximum number of people performing the classical dance form at the Natyanjali fete.
- ❖ It was held in Sabanayagar Temple, also known as Natarajar Temple in Chidambaram.
- ❖ This record-creating dance was performed in unison by 7,190 dancers from various age groups.
- ❖ This event broke the record set by 4,525 dancers in Chennai in 2017.

Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI)

- ❖ Tamil Nadu is the first State in the country to introduce Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) in the government hospital.
- ❖ TAVI was launched at the Tamil Nadu Government Multi Super Speciality Hospital, Omandurar Estate, Chennai in November 2018.



- ❖ TAVI is performed on old-age heart patients who cannot undergo open-heart surgery and involves replacement of valve through a keyhole procedure.
- ❖ Two people underwent the surgery successfully at free of cost.
- ❖ TN has entered into an MoU with HeartTeam India to perform the surgery for patients.

Integrated Textile Policy

- ❖ Tamilnadu State government has announced its Integrated Textile Policy on March 06.
- ❖ It will give thrust to the sustainable growth of the entire textile industry, promoting technical textiles, and encouraging the textile industry in the southern districts.
- ❖ The earlier State policy for the textile sector was announced in 1998.
- ❖ As per the new policy,
 - The state government will provide 100% stamp duty exemption for technical textile projects
 - The state will give 6% interest subsidy for technical textile projects in addition to incentives from the Central Government
 - 9% of the project cost will be given as state grant to set up technical textile parks under the Scheme for Integrated Textile Parks (SITPs).



- ❖ For the handloom sector, the interest subsidy extended to primary handloom weavers' cooperative societies has been increased to 6 percent from the existing 4 percent.
- ❖ Allocation for the Rebate Subsidy Scheme will be hiked.
- ❖ The government will also make efforts to set up silk parks in clusters such as Kancheepuram, Salem, Arni, and Thirubhuvanam.

GI tag for Erode turmeric

- ❖ Erode turmeric got Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the Geographical Indication Registry.



- ❖ Erode Manjal Vanigargal Matrum Kidangu Urimaiyalargal Sangham had applied for the GI tag at the office of the Deputy Registrar of GI Registry in Chennai.
- ❖ Geographical Indication is a name or sign used on certain products that correspond to a specific geographical location or origin.
- ❖ Erode turmeric is a rhizome obtained from the Erode local cultivator.
- ❖ In its claim for uniqueness, the mean length of the fingers of Erode turmeric was about 4.15 cm and the mean circumference was about 3.03 cm.

Kalai Semmal Awards

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Government announced the kalai semmal awardees for the period of 2013-18, which is presented by Arts and Culture department.
- ❖ The awards are presented annually to a popular painting of traditional, modern art classes and sculptural experts to commemorate the achievements in their respective fields.
- ❖ Winners are,

Year	Winner	Category
2013-14	Nandan	Modern
	Ganapathy Stabathi	Traditional
2014-15	Gobinath	Modern
	Ramajayam	Traditional
2015-16	Ananthanarayanan Nagarajan	Modern
	tamilaraci	Traditional
2016-17	C.Douglas	Modern
	kirtivarman	Traditional
2017-18	Jeya kumar	Modern
	Gopalan Stabathi	Traditional

e-Waste and Biomedical Waste Management

- ❖ Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) has called for consultants to study the gap between waste generation and end disposal/recycling of the waste and suggest ways to bridge the gap.
- ❖ Consultants have been instructed to establish the Biomedical waste chain - linking different stakeholders, to understand the route, with economics and associated environmental impact.

GI Mark - Thirubuvanam silk saree

- ❖ Geographical Indication mark has been awarded to historically famous Thirubuvanam silk sarees.
- ❖ Silk saree weaving has been practised in Thirubuvanam region since the times of Chola king Kulothungan the Third.



Chennai Sholavaram Airstrip

- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) is setting up its first East Coast Air surveillance base at the unused World War 2 era Sholavaram airstrip.
- ❖ If operational, this air surveillance base at Sholavaram will help the forces to secure the 2,500-kilometre coastline covering Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.
- ❖ IAF is planning to station few attack helicopters here. This would bolster INS Rajali, the Indian Naval Station at Arakkonam, which carries out surveillance through Boeing P8I.
- ❖ In Sholavaram, a small airstrip is to be developed under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (UDAN) of the Union Civil Aviation Ministry.
- ❖ Sholavaram air strip was created by the British during World War II.

Information Commission recommendations

- ❖ The Tamilnadu State Information Commission (TNSIC) has recommended that TN government should implement a system where RTI petitions can be filed online, similar to the process adopted by Central government and few other states.
- ❖ TNSIC is the second appellate authority, a quasi-judicial body,
- ❖ It adjudicates RTI related disputes between applicants and the government departments.
- ❖ Under the RTI Act, it has the power to make recommendations to the government. However, it may not be binding.
- ❖ Key recommendations include appointing a nodal officer in every department to update information on its website under section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act.
- ❖ It also recommended that students have a fundamental right to access their answer books under the RTI noting.

Separate Police Wing for Women

- ❖ TN government has created a separate wing of Police in pursuance of the orders of the Supreme Court and the Madras High Court to effectively deal with crimes against women and children.
- ❖ The duties and responsibilities of the wing include monitoring and studying the patterns of all categories of crimes against women and children across the State and develop effective strategies to prevent them.
- ❖ This exclusive wing is headed by an officer of ADGP Rank and will have 3 Superintendents of Police.
- ❖ The wing also deals with child-lifting and child abuse.

African Catfish rearing banned

- ❖ Fisheries Department of Tiruvannamalai has banned rearing of African catfish and has made it an offence.
- ❖ It is an invasive species that is proliferating in water bodies across the State, posing a threat to native aquatic species.



- ❖ African catfish is Native to Africa and the Middle East, where it inhabits freshwater lakes, rivers, swamps, and urban sewage systems.

Tamil Nadu Accident & Emergency Care Initiative (TAEI)

- ❖ State Crime records bureau of 2017 indicated Tamilnadu accounted for 10.1% of the total road accident fatalities in the country.
- ❖ With the coordinated efforts of various stakeholders such as the police, health and transport officials, fatalities in road accidents in Tamilnadu have dropped by 24.39% in 2018.
- ❖ TAEI was created under the Health department to coordinate with various stake holders and avoid casualties.
- ❖ TAEI has integrated government medical college hospitals, district headquarter hospitals and government hospitals working in various locations across the State.
- ❖ Every TAEI centre has a designated trauma nodal officer and nurse coordinators on duty at all times.
- ❖ The efforts were recognised by the Supreme Court-appointed committee on road safety, which recently suggested that other States emulate Tamil Nadu's initiatives.

Special Election Expenditure observer

- ❖ Election Commission of India has appointed former IRS officer Madhu Mahajan as special expenditure observer in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ She will supervise and monitor measures taken to curb illegal distribution of cash and freebies.

- ❖ Her role is to ensure that stringent and effective enforcement action is undertaken based on intelligence inputs and complaints received through the C-VIGIL app and Voter Helpline '1950'.
- ❖ Action will be taken against persons/entities trying to induce voters by distributing cash, liquor & freebies etc.

Drought-hit 24 Districts

- ❖ Due to the widespread Northeast monsoon failure, the Tamil Nadu government has declared 24 districts as drought-affected.
- ❖ 38 blocks in seven districts have also been declared drought-affected.

Solar-powered Desalination plant

- ❖ A team of Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) has set up the country's first solar-powered desalination plant in Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The experimental project is funded by the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- ❖ The freshwater generated by the plant has only 2 ppm of dissolved salts. For drinking, WHO recommends water with 500 ppm.
- ❖ So, it is mixed with local municipal water before distribution to the public.

Vandalur Zoo - Zoo School

- ❖ For the first time in India, Zoo School at Arignar Anna Zoological Park has launched a special education YouTube channel called "Arignar Anna Zoological Park – Zoo School".
- ❖ The initiative was taken to educate and create interest for the students and the general public about wildlife and its conservation.
- ❖ The YouTube channel was launched on International Forests Day which was celebrated on 2019, March 21.

Ancient port city Poompuhar

- ❖ The Department of Remote Sensing, Bharathidasan University will conduct a research project to trace the history of the ancient port city Poompuhar.
- ❖ This program is funded by Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- ❖ Cauvery Poompattinam or Poompuhar was an ancient port city established by the Chola dynasty at the mouth of the Cauvery during Sangam period.



- ❖ It had trade links with Asian, Arabian and Mediterranean countries.
- ❖ There are elaborate narrations in the Sangam and post-Sangam literature such as Silapathigaram and Manimekalai about Poompuhar.
- ❖ But around AD 1100, it seems to have become defunct all of a sudden.
- ❖ This research program aims to bring out the socio-cultural evolution of the ancient Tamils in this country and the history of Poompuhar as well.

GRAPES-3 muon telescope at Ooty

- ❖ For the first time in the World, researchers at the GRAPES-3 muon telescope facility in Ooty, India have measured the electrical potential, size and height of a thundercloud.
- ❖ Learning about the properties of thunderclouds can be useful in navigation of aircraft and in preventing short circuits.

Gauging a thundercloud

Using GRAPES 3 facility muons were studied to understand the thundercloud properties

- Elementary particle muons are produced through interaction of cosmic rays with atoms in atmosphere
- Energy of muons changed on passing through thunderclouds
- Muon intensity variation measured was related to thundercloud potential

The facility located in Ooty.

- ❖ The subatomic particle muon is similar to the electron, with an electric charge of $-1e$ and a spin of $1/2$, but with a much greater mass.
- ❖ The GRAPES-3 experiment (or Gamma Ray Astronomy PeV EnergieS phase-3) is a collaboration of India's Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Japan's Osaka City University and Nagoya Women's University.
- ❖ GRAPES-3 is designed to study cosmic rays with an array of air shower detectors and a large area muon detector.

Exclusive Investigation Wing

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Police will soon have an exclusive investigation wing in all the 1,500 police stations across the state.
- ❖ The specially formed investigation wing will replace the existing crime wing.
- ❖ As per Tamil Nadu Police (Reforms) Act, 2013, the investigation wing will be responsible for investigation and prosecution of all cases registered in the station, including cases identified by the law and order wing.
- ❖ The police officers allotted to the investigation wing shall not be diverted to any bandobust work without permission from Commissioner or Zonal IG.

Hump-backed Mahseer Fish

- ❖ The hump-backed mahseer—a large freshwater fish also called the 'Tiger of the water' and is found only in the Cauvery river basin.
- ❖ The fish got its scientific name 'Tor remadevii' only in 2018.
- ❖ The fish is now added to "Critically Endangered" list as per the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species.
- ❖ Shoal, an international organisation working to conserve freshwater species has initiated 'Project Mahseer' to enable conservation action for the hump-backed mahseer.



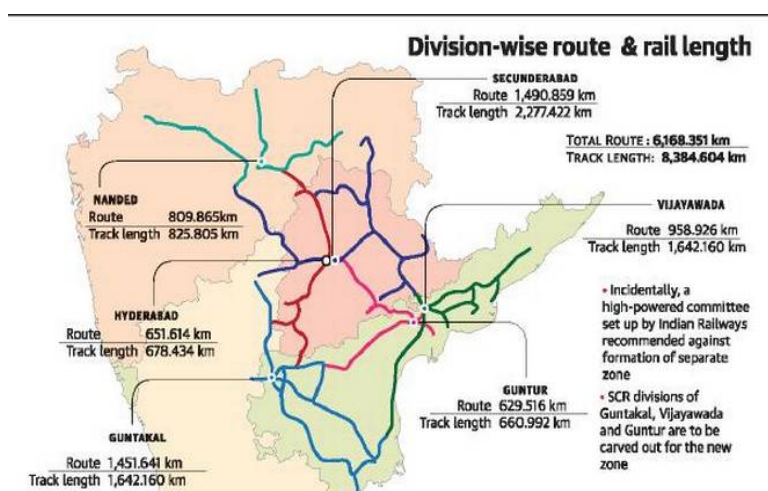
NATIONAL

Mobile Applications for Lok Sabha election

- ❖ The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Tamilnadu Satya Prasad Sahu informed four Android-based Apps specifically designed for the 2019 general election. These are cVIGIL, Voter Helpline, Suvidha, and PwD.
- ❖ cVIGIL stands for “citizens’ vigil”. It provides time-stamped evidentiary proof of model code of conduct/expenditure violation and has live photo/video facilities with auto location data.
- ❖ Voter Helpline App helps a person would be able to check the status of his/her position in the electoral roll.
- ❖ Suvidha App helps a political party’s representative, candidate and election agent to apply for various permissions for election purpose.
- ❖ PwD App is meant for people with disabilities. ECI is working towards easing the voter identification and registration process for the PwDs by offering them customized services during election time.

New railway Zone

- ❖ Railway Minister Piyush Goyal announced a new railway zone for Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ Southern Coast Railway, new railway zone will be headquartered in Visakhapatnam and it will be the 18th zone in the country.



- ❖ This new zone will comprise the existing Guntakal, Guntur and Vijayawada divisions that currently fall under the South-Central Railway.
- ❖ South Central Railway will then consist of the Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Nanded divisions.

Aviation Conclave 2019

- ❖ Union Minister of Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the Aviation Conclave 2019 with an overarching theme of “Flying for All” at Delhi.
- ❖ This Conclave is about the future of Indian aviation bringing together industry leaders, government and regulators for setting the tone and propelling us to realize our Vision-2040.
- ❖ More than 30 industry leaders will discuss and deliberate across following five-key sessions issues
 - Drone-ecosystem policy roadmap,
 - Roadmap for manufacturing aircraft and associated equipment,
 - Project Rupee Raftaar-aircraft financing and leasing from India,
 - National Air Cargo Policy,
 - Mission to transform Indian Airports into Next-Gen Aviation Hubs.

SHREYAS Portal

- ❖ Minister for HRD, Prakash Javadekar has launched the Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS) at New Delhi.
- ❖ It will be providing industry apprenticeship opportunities to the general graduates exiting in April 2019 through the National Apprenticeship Promotional Scheme (NAPS).
- ❖ SHREYAS is a programme basket comprising the initiatives of three Central Ministries viz
 - Ministry of Human Resource Development,
 - Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship
 - Ministry of Labour & Employment viz the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).
- ❖ SHREYAS portal will enable educational institutions and industry to log in and provide their respective demand and supply of apprenticeship and the matching of students with apprenticeship avenues will take place as per pre-specified eligibility criteria.

FAME India Phase II

- ❖ The Union cabinet has approved the proposal for implementation of scheme titled ‘Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II (FAME India Phase II)’ for promotion of Electric Mobility in the country.
- ❖ The scheme with total outlay of Rs 10000 Crores over the period of three years will be implemented with effect from 1st April 2019.
- ❖ This scheme is the expanded version of the present scheme titled ‘FAME India 1’ which was launched on 1st April 2015.

Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN yojana

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the "Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran) Yojana".
- ❖ The scheme aims for providing financial support to Integrated Bioethanol Projects using lignocellulosic biomass and another renewable feedstock.
- ❖ The scheme focuses to incentivise 2G Ethanol sector.
- ❖ Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has targeted to achieve 10% blending percentage of Ethanol in petrol by 2022.
- ❖ Centre for High Technology (CHT), a technical body under the aegis of MoP&NG, will be the implementation Agency for the scheme.
- ❖ Government of India launched Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme in 2003.
- ❖ Cellulosic ethanol, also known as Second generation (2G) ethanol is not produced from starch or sugar but from cellulose fibers, which are found in abundance in plant cell walls.

Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019

- ❖ Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) concluded a three-day 'Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019' as a part of 'Confidence Building Measures' between the two border guards.
- ❖ The joint exercise held in general area of BSF's Srimantapur border outpost, nearly 60 km from Agartala from Tripura.
- ❖ The exercise was named after a hill range situated 8 km west of Comilla township in Bangladesh, which is home to an ancient Buddhist archaeological site in the region.



- ❖ The main objective of this exercise was to plan and conduct anti-smuggling and anti-criminal activity related operations.

STARS Scheme

- ❖ On the National Science day, the Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Prakash Javadekar has launched 'STARS' to fund science projects.
- ❖ STARS – Scheme for Translational and Advanced Research in Science.
- ❖ The project will be coordinated by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore.
- ❖ The National Science Day is celebrated every year on February 28 in the memory of Sir C.V. Raman.

2nd Indian Sign Language Dictionary

- ❖ Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot launched the 2nd Edition of Indian Sign Language (ISL) Dictionary in New Delhi.
- ❖ The dictionary is brought out by Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.
- ❖ According to Census 2011, there are 50.71 lakh hearing impaired persons in India.
- ❖ The aim of the dictionary is to help spread the use of ISL and result in better education and employment opportunities for hearing impaired persons.

IAF Wing Commander Returns India

- ❖ Indian Air Force (IAF) pilot Abhinandan Varthaman returned to India on 01 March from Pakistan.
- ❖ He was shot down while flying a MiG-21 fighter in a dogfight with Pakistani aircraft and captured.
- ❖ Pakistani PM Imran Khan announced in his parliament speech that IAF pilot will be released as "a gesture of peace".

Geneva Conventions

- ❖ Geneva Conventions talks about the standards of international law for humanitarian treatment in war.
- ❖ Geneva Conventions comprise 4 conventions, and 3 additional protocols.
- ❖ This Convention was adopted in 1949 in the backdrop of World War II.
- ❖ First convention requires that all wounded and infirm soldiers as well as medical personnel and priests in the field are treated humanely without discrimination on the basis of race, colour, gender, religion or faith.
- ❖ It prohibits acts such as torture, mutilation, outrages upon personal dignity, and execution without judgment.
- ❖ The conventions have been ratified by 196 countries.

Anthem on 'plastic-free India'

- ❖ An anthem of "Plastic Waste-Free India" was launched by Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Harsh Vardhan.
- ❖ It has been composed and produced by a non-profit organisation, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Smriti Manch (PDUSM).
- ❖ It is a part of an initiative which aims to turn India into a plastic-free nation by 2022.
- ❖ It has been launched in 7 languages – Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam and Kannada.

National Commission for Backward Classes

- ❖ The Central government inaugurated the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).
- ❖ This move took place after two years it became defunct following the introduction of the legislation in Parliament to grant it the constitutional status.
- ❖ This new commission comprises Bhagwan Lal Sahni as a chairman and other members are
 - Kaushalendra Singh Patel,
 - Sudha Yadav,
 - Achary Talloju.
- ❖ This new commission is enshrined in the Constitution at Article 338B on a par with the panels for SCs and STs.
- ❖ It has a power to hear grievances as against the earlier limited mandate of inclusion and exclusion of castes in the national list of OBCs.

Powers Of NCBC

-  **NCBC will have all the powers of a civil court**
-  **Its powers include summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath**
-  **It can ask for production of any document, and receive evidence on affidavits**

QS World University Rankings

- ❖ QS World University Rankings is an annual publication of university rankings by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS).
- ❖ Previously it was known as Times Higher Education – QS World University Rankings.
- ❖ Indian universities improved their performance in the latest QS World University Rankings (WUR) by Subject 2019 with 22 more departments being ranked among top-200 over previous year.
- ❖ 89 departments at IISc, IITs, IIMs and Deemed Universities, among others, are being ranked among the global top-200 list.
- ❖ India is now at 21st position globally, with 20 other national systems having more top-200 departments.
- ❖ Three of top-50 subjects from India were achieved by the University of Delhi at 37th position for development studies.

National Policy on Software Products – 2019

- ❖ Union Cabinet has approved the National Policy on Software Products - 2019 to develop India as a Software Product Nation.
- ❖ Its objective is to develop India as the
 - Global software product hub through innovation,
 - Improved commercialisation,
 - Sustainable Intellectual Property (IP),
 - Promoting technology start-ups and specialised skill sets.

National Mineral Policy- 2019

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the National Mineral Policy- 2019.
- ❖ It replaces the extant National Mineral Policy 2008.
- ❖ The New National Mineral Policy will ensure more effective regulation.
- ❖ It will lead to sustainable mining sector development in future while addressing the issues of project affected persons especially those residing in tribal areas.
- ❖ It proposes a long-term export-import policy for the mineral sector.
- ❖ It introduces the concept of Inter-Generational Equity to support the future generations.
- ❖ It also intends to constitute an inter-ministerial body to institutionalise the mechanism for ensuring sustainable development in mining.

Ranjana Desai search committee

- ❖ Justice Ranjana Desai-led search committee for the appointment of [Lokpal](#) has finalised its recommendations for the chairperson and eight members of the anti-corruption ombudsman.
- ❖ The Committee submitted the list comprising five names for Lokpal chairman and 24 names for members of the Lokpal to head of the Lokpal selection committee.
- ❖ The selection committee members include,
 - PM -head
 - CJI Ranjan Gogoi,
 - Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan,
 - Former advocate general Mukul Rohatgi and
 - Mallikarjun Kharge - special invitee on the selection panel.

One Nation One Card

- ❖ Prime Minister launched the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) dubbed as 'One Nation One Card'.
- ❖ The indigenously-developed card will enable users to pay for multiple kinds of charges including transport, metro services, toll tax, parking charges, retail shopping as well as to withdraw money across the country.
- ❖ This card runs on RuPay card so that the country is no longer required to be dependent on foreign technology.
- ❖ Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs brought the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC).



PM Modi Launches National Common Mobility Card

Furthering Ease of Living, Unifying Urban Mobility

India's 1st indigenously developed automatic fare collection system

Inter-operable card, work seamlessly across Metro, City Bus, Railways, Parking, Toll, etc.

A bank-issued debit/credit/prepaid card product platform

ONE NATION. ONE CARD.

SBI **RuPay** DEBIT & PREPAID

BOLD – QIT project

- ❖ Project BOLD-QIT under CIBMS (Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System) has been inaugurated on India-Bangladesh border in Dhubri District of Assam.
- ❖ BOLD-QIT stands for Border Electronically Dominated QRT Interception Technique.
- ❖ BOLD-QIT enables BSF to equip the Indo-Bangla borders with different kind of sensors in the unfenced riverine area of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries.
- ❖ The concept of CIBMS is the integration of manpower, sensors, and command and control to improve situational awareness to facilitate quick response to emerging situations.
- ❖ This Smart border, on one hand, allow seamless movement of authorized people and goods, while on the other, minimize cross-border security challenges using innovation and technology.



Sealing the border with Pakistan using smart technology-aided fence will be in place by December next year.

KIREN RIJU Minister of state for home affairs

Underlining Role of Technology

<p>Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) to be deployed on Pakistan border</p>	<p>CIBMS will counter infiltration and cross-border terror attacks by using technology that can detect infiltration via land, underwater, air and tunnels</p>	<p>ITBP's operational requirements include better road network on LAC</p>
<p>CIBMS integrates manpower, sensors and command & control to facilitate quick responses</p>		

Yuva Vigyani Karyakram

- ❖ ISRO has launched a special programme for school children called 'Young Scientist Program' or 'YUva Vigyani KARYakram'.

- ❖ The program aims at imparting basic knowledge on space technology, space science and space applications to the younger ones.
- ❖ Students from class 9 onwards will be provided residential training of around two weeks during their summer holidays.
- ❖ Three students from each state/ Union Territory will participate in this programme every year.

NALSA executive chairman

- ❖ President nominated Supreme Court Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde as the Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)

- ❖ National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) is a statutory body constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
- ❖ It provides a free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society.
- ❖ NALSA organizes Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes.
- ❖ Chief Justice of India is the Patron-in-Chief and the Senior most Judge of the Supreme Court of India is the Executive Chairman of the Authority.

National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey

- ❖ National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) 2018-19 was conducted by an Independent Verification Agency (IVA) under the World Bank support project to the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G).
- ❖ According to the Survey,
 - 93.1% of households were found to have access to toilets.
 - 96.5% of the people who had access to toilets used them
 - 90.7% of villages which were previously declared and verified as ODF were confirmed to be ODF.

Amendment of Form 26

- ❖ Law Ministry made it mandatory for election candidates to reveal their income-tax returns of the last five years, as well as the details of their offshore assets.
- ❖ This was done by amending Form 26, after the Election Commission of India's recommendations.
- ❖ Earlier, a candidate had to only declare the last I-T return (for self, spouse, and dependents) and details of foreign assets were not considered.
- ❖ After the amendments, the following details are mandatory for candidates:
 - Should reveal their own income-tax returns of the last five years rather than only one,

- Details of offshore assets, as well as the same details for their spouse, members of the Hindu Undivided Family.

Form 26

- ❖ A candidate in an election is required to file an affidavit called Form 26.
- ❖ It has the information about their assets, liabilities, educational qualifications, criminal antecedents (convictions and all pending cases) and public dues if any.

Amendment in Hazardous Waste Rules-2016

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has amended the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016.
- ❖ It aims to strengthen the implementation of environmentally sound management of hazardous waste in the country.
- ❖ The features of the Amendments:
 - Solid plastic waste has been prohibited from import into the country.
 - Exporters of silk waste have now been given exemption from requiring permission from the MoEFCC.
 - Reverse import of defective electrical and electronic assemblies and components manufactured can be exported from India, within a year of export can be undertaken without any prior permission from MoEFCC.

PM-STIAC Nine Missions

- ❖ Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Council (PM-STIAC) has identified 9 national missions to address major scientific challenges to ensure India's sustainable development.
- ❖ Through the nine missions, the PM-STIAC aims to facilitate collaboration to solve complex problems.
- ❖ Identified missions are,
 - Natural Language Translation
 - Quantum Frontier
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - National Biodiversity Mission
 - Electric Vehicles
 - Bio Science for Human Health
 - Waste to Wealth
 - Deep Ocean Exploration
 - Agnii

Three-member panel for mediation

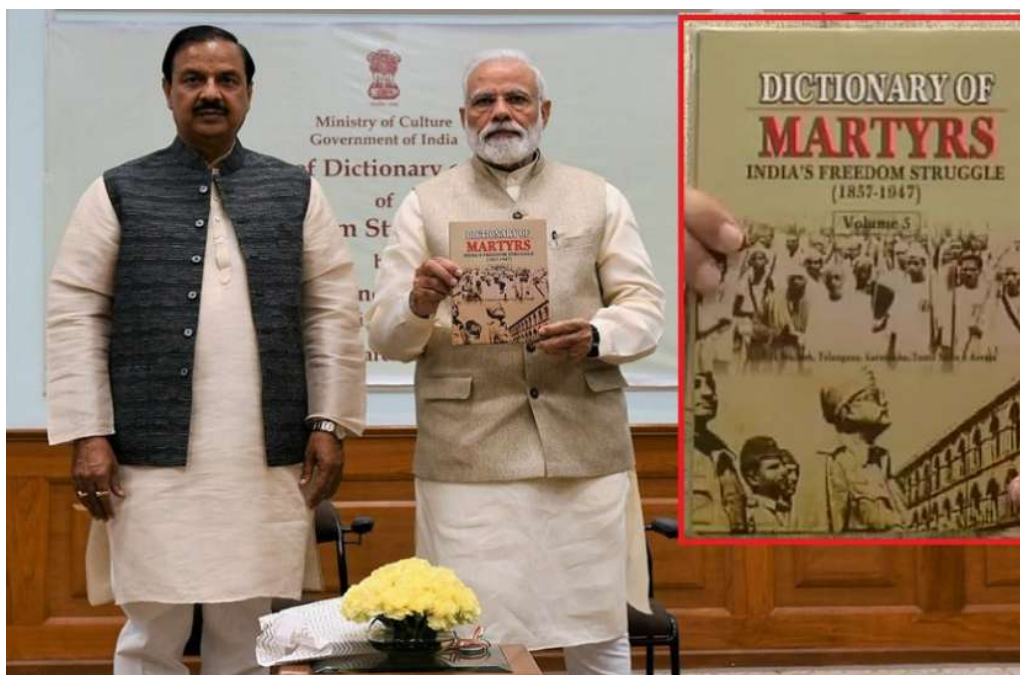
- ❖ Supreme Court decided to refer the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case to a three-member court-appointed panel for mediation.
- ❖ The panel consist of,
 - Retired Supreme Court Justice FM Kallifulla - head of the panel
 - Spiritual guru Shri Shri Ravi Shankar and
 - Senior advocate Sriram Panchu.
- ❖ All three persons are from Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ This mediation would start in a week in Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh of which the disputed area is a part with the process conducted in-camera.
- ❖ The mediation process is expected to be concluded by 15 May.

Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP)

- ❖ Union Cabinet has approved the Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP).
- ❖ It aimed to Flood Management Works in the entire country and River Management Activities and works related to Border Areas for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- ❖ This Scheme will be implemented throughout the country for effective flood management, erosion control and anti-sea erosion.
- ❖ Funding pattern for general category States will continue to be 50% (Centre): 50% (State) and for projects of North Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the funding pattern will continue to be 70: 30.
- ❖ River Management activities and works related to Border Areas (RMBA) projects will continue to be funded as 100% central assistance.

Dictionary of Martyrs

- ❖ Prime Minister released the Dictionary of Martyrs of India's Freedom Struggle (1857-1947) at New Delhi.
- ❖ This five-volume (zone wise) dictionary contains account of the martyrs from India's First War of Independence in 1857, to India's Independence in 1947.
- ❖ This is the first ever attempt by the Government to compile the names of martyrs on this scale.
- ❖ This project for compilation of "Dictionary of Martyrs" of India's Freedom Struggle was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ It was released to commemorate the 150th anniversary of uprising of 1857.



Model Code of Conduct

- ❖ The Election Commission imposed 'Model Code of Conduct' (MCC) on the entire nation with immediate effect on March 10, 2019.
- ❖ This is for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, following its announcement of the complete election schedule.
- ❖ The Lok Sabha election 2019 will be held in seven phases this year, and counting will start on 23 May 2019.
- ❖ The term of the present 16th Lok Sabha ends on June 3.
- ❖ MCC deals with eight key provisions – general conduct, meetings, processions, polling day, polling booths, observers, the party in power and election manifestos.
- ❖ If a party violates the MCC, they cannot be charged for violating a section of the code as it has no statutory backing.

Unlocking NATIONAL Energy Efficiency potential (UNNATEE)

- ❖ The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has developed a national strategy document for accelerating energy efficiency in India.
- ❖ The strategy document was titled UNNATEE (Unlocking NATIONAL Energy Efficiency potential).
- ❖ It describes a plain framework and implementation strategy to establish a clear linkage between energy supply-demand scenarios and energy efficiency opportunities.

Nari Shakti awards- 2018

- ❖ The President Ram Nath Kovind presented the Nari Shakti awards-2018 on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8th March.
- ❖ Nari Shakti awards are the highest civilian honour for women in India.
- ❖ 44 Nari Shakti awards were presented for the year 2018 and the awardees include Scientists, entrepreneurs, environmentalists, social workers, farmers, artists, masons, marine pilot, commando trainer, journalists and film-makers.
- ❖ TN State Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Department got the award for exceptional progress in improving child sex ratio at birth under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme.

Nari Shakti Awards

- ❖ Nari Shakti Awards, earlier known as Stree Shakti Awards, were constituted by the Government of India in the year 1991.
- ❖ Nari Shakti Awards are conferred on eminent women and institutions rendering distinguished service to the cause of women.
- ❖ This award is given by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- ❖ The recipients include both institutions and individuals.

National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Storage

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved setting up of a National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage.
- ❖ It aims to drive clean, connected, shared, sustainable and holistic mobility initiatives.
- ❖ This is a multi-disciplinary mission with an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee which will be chaired by NITI Aayog CEO.
- ❖ It will recommend and drive the strategies for transformative mobility and Phased Manufacturing Programmes for Electric Vehicles, Electric Vehicle Components and Batteries.

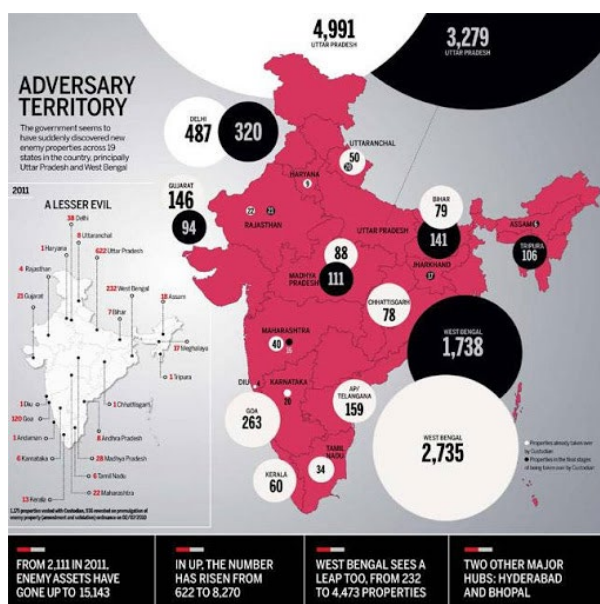
India Urban Observatory & Video Wall

- ❖ The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched the state-of-the-art India Urban Observatory and Video Wall.
- ❖ It is an important component of the recently launched Data Smart Cities strategy that envisions creating a 'Culture of Data' in cities, for intelligent use of data in addressing complex urban challenges.
- ❖ The concept of Urban Observatories was formally initiated at the UN Habitat-II Conference in 1997 in Istanbul, Turkey.



Enemy Properties in India

- ❖ The Central government has allowed the state governments to put enemy properties into public use.
- ❖ Enemy properties are the properties of people who migrated to Pakistan during partition and who left to China after the India- Sino war in 1962.



- ❖ The Enemy Property Act was enacted in 1968 and it regulates such properties and lists the custodian's powers.
- ❖ This act was amended in 2017 to ensure that the successors of the migrated people will have no claim over the properties left behind in India.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of enemy properties of Pakistani nationals.
- ❖ Meghalaya has the highest number of properties of those who took Chinese citizenship.
- ❖ Similarly, Rs.3,000 crores worth Enemy shares are under the custody of the Custodian of Enemy Property for India.

Pinaka

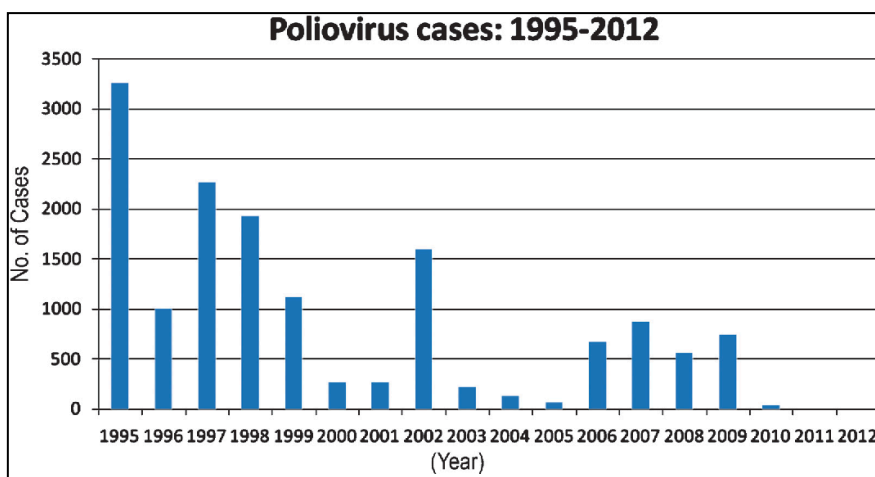
- ❖ India's defence lab DRDO successfully test-fired the indigenously developed guided rocket system "Pinaka" at Pokhran desert in Rajasthan.



- ❖ The weapon system is equipped with state-of-the-art guidance kit, comprising of an advanced navigation and control system.

Pulse Polio Program 2019

- ❖ The Government has launched the Pulse Polio Programme 2019 on March 9.
- ❖ Under this programme, polio drops would be administered to children less than five years of age.
- ❖ It is conducted every year.



- ❖ It aims to protect children from the polio disease by conducting two nationwide mass polio vaccination campaigns and two to three sub-national campaigns each year.
- ❖ This pulse polio programme 2019 is aimed at sustaining the polio eradication from the country.

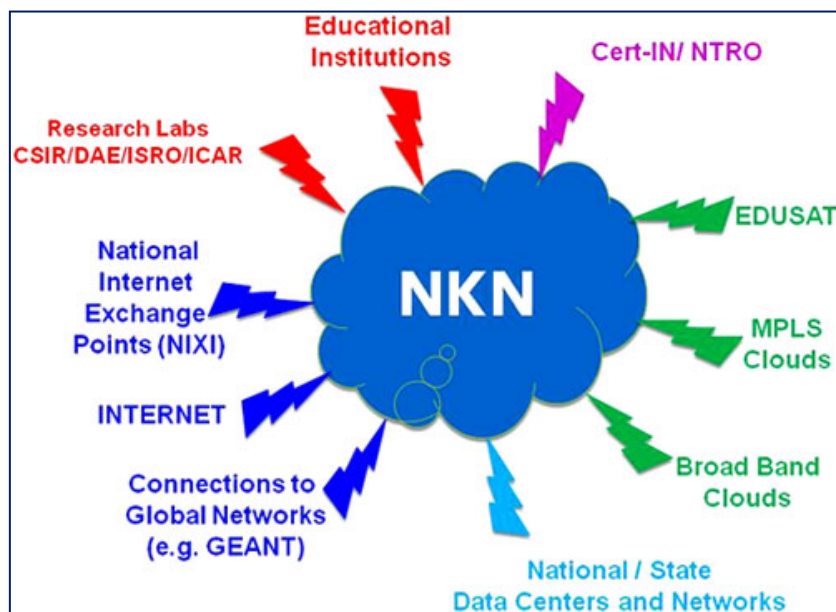
Polio

- ❖ Polio, also known as poliomyelitis, is a highly contagious viral disease.

- ❖ Children younger than 5 years old are more likely to contract the virus than any other group.
- ❖ Polio virus spreads by food or water containing human faeces and less commonly from infected saliva.
- ❖ India was declared polio-free country in the year 2014.
- ❖ India's last reported cases of wild polio were in West Bengal and Gujarat on 13 January 2011.

National Knowledge Network

- ❖ India has decided to extend its National Knowledge Network (NKN) to Bangladesh.
- ❖ NKN is a multi-gigabit pan-India network which facilitates the development of India's communications infrastructure, stimulates research and creates next generation applications and services.



- ❖ It aims to connect all universities, research institutions, libraries, laboratories, healthcare and agricultural institutions across the country to address such paradigm shift.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

- ❖ Till date since the launch (1/5/2016), Seven crore LPG connection under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) was handed over by the Ministry for Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- ❖ Under the scheme, deposit-free LPG connection is provided to a poor household or BPL.

Top five States under Ujjwala scheme

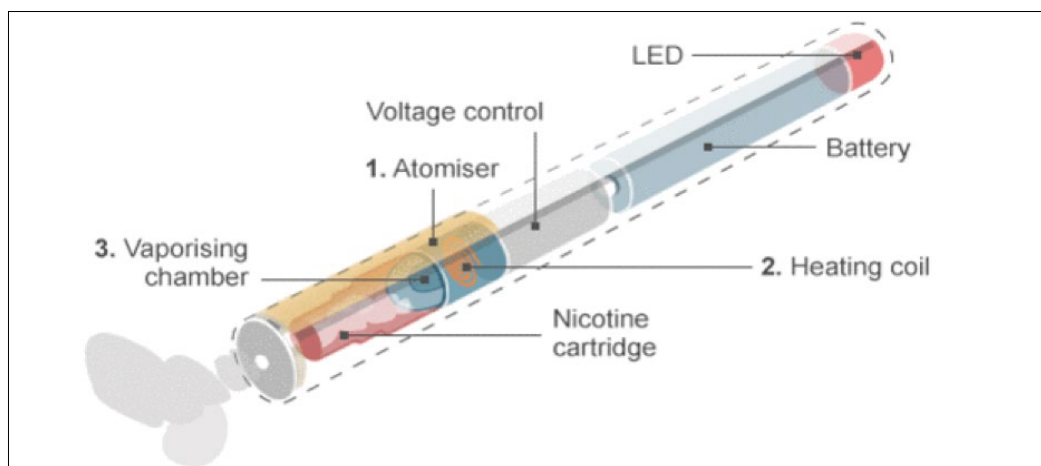
State	Number of connections
Uttar Pradesh	1,26,40,088
West Bengal	78,47,110
Bihar	77,51,825
Madhya Pradesh	63,31,815
Rajasthan	55,34,808

Source: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

- ❖ LPG connection is issued in the name of an adult woman member of the household.

Ban on e-cigarettes

- ❖ The Central Drug Regulator has directed all drug controllers in states and union territories to not allow the manufacture, sale, import and advertisement of ENDS, including e-cigarettes and flavoured hookah, in their jurisdictions.



- ❖ 12 states across the country have banned Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) or e-cigarettes following an advisory from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued in 2018.

ENDS

- ❖ Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems, as the name suggests, are battery-operated, handheld devices that are alternatives to traditional smoking of cigarettes.

- ❖ They provide nicotine via the respiratory route, without the associated ill-effects of tobacco.
- ❖ E-cigarettes, e-hookahs, e-cigars, vaporizers etc are some of the ENDS, and they are emerging as popular alternatives to smoking cigarettes.

First TIR shipment

- ❖ The first shipment under the United Nations ‘Transports Internationaux Routiers’ (TIR) convention arrived in India from Afghanistan through Chabahar Port of Iran.
- ❖ International shipments moved under TIR convention are subjected to minimal checks by customs officials.
- ❖ Reciprocal recognition of Customs is at the heart of TIR Convention.
- ❖ The customs officials only verify the document and check the seal without requiring physical checking of the contents.
- ❖ This enables shipments to pass through countries without being opened at borders.
- ❖ The convention acts as a strong catalyst for moving goods using the multi-modal transportation route like Chabahar and International North-South Transport (INSTC) Corridor.

First Workshop on India Energy Modelling Forum

- ❖ The NITI Aayog and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) organized the first workshop on development of the India Energy Modelling Forum (IEMF)
- ❖ The IEMF seeks to provide a platform for leading experts and policy makers to study important energy and environmental issues and ensure induction of modelling and analysis in informed decision-making process.
- ❖ Energy-modeling can be used to determine the best energy savings option, the best cost saving options, and the best carbon reduction options for a nation.
- ❖ Energy modeling can reduce the overall energy use in buildings and guide us on the use of Specify energy-efficient equipment and technologies.
- ❖ On a macro level, Energy modeling helps government anticipate, plan and prepare appropriate power projects – both conventional and renewable energy projects.

India’s First Lokpal

- ❖ The Former Supreme Court judge and current member of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Pinaki Chandra Ghose, is likely to be India’s first anti-corruption ombudsman, or Lokpal.

- ❖ The high-level selection committee chaired by the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan and the eminent jurist Mukul Rohatgi recommended him for the post.
- ❖ Lokpal at the centre and Lok ayuktas in the states are set up to probe corruption complaints against top functionaries and public servants, including the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers.

Operation Sunrise

- ❖ The Indian Army in a joint operation with Myanmar's Army destroyed 10 camps belonging to an insurgent group in Myanmar which had threatened the Kaladan multi-mode transit project.
- ❖ The operation was codenamed as 'Operation Sunrise'
- ❖ Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project involving India and Myanmar is critical to the connectivity between North East and Myanmar.
- ❖ Operation Sunrise was a mega task in which Arakan army, an insurgent outfit of Kachin Independent Army (KIA) backed by China, was targeted.

Country-by-country reports

- ❖ India and the US can now exchange country-by-country (CbC) reports filed by the parent corporations based in either of the countries.
- ❖ The Income-tax Act requires Indian subsidiaries of multinational companies to provide details of key financial statements from other jurisdictions where they operate.
- ❖ This provides the I-T Department with better operational view of such companies.
- ❖ The provision was a part of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) action plan.

FSSAI Draft Regulations

- ❖ Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is expected to announce the draft Food Labelling regulations.
- ❖ New regulations indicate that packaged food items across the country will carry large red labels specifying if the food is high on fats, sugar or salt (HFSS).
- ❖ They aim to address claims like pure, real, natural and sugar-free which are labelled on the food products.
- ❖ If >10% of the energy in the food is coming from sugar, it will have a red symbol.
- ❖ Red label will also be mandatory if trans-fat provides more than 1% of Energy.

National Noise Pollution Map

- ❖ National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to prepare a noise pollution map and remedial action plan to solve the issue across the country.
- ❖ NGT had said the absence of implementation of noise pollution norms affects health of citizens, especially infants and senior citizens.
- ❖ All state Police departments are directed to procure within Noise monitoring devices in consultation with respective state pollution boards.

National Green Tribunal

- ❖ National Green Tribunal has been established on 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010.
- ❖ A judge of the Supreme Court of India or Chief Justice of High Court are the Chairperson or judicial member of the Tribunal.
- ❖ Current chairperson of the NGT is Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, the retired Supreme Court Judge.
- ❖ NGT was created for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.
- ❖ Principal Bench of the NGT has been established in the New Delhi.

Indo-Japan Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction

- ❖ 3rd Indo-Japan Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Delhi.
- ❖ The objective of the workshop was to enhance collaboration between research institutes, cities and the private sector in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction.
- ❖ The collaboration between India and Japan is to be strengthened in the areas of
 - Early Warning Systems,
 - Build-back-better approach in constructions, capacity development,
 - Science & Technology application,
 - Institution strengthening.
- ❖ In India, NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority) is the nodal agency for disaster management.
- ❖ NDMA's primary purpose is to coordinate response to natural or man-made disasters and for capacity-building in disaster resiliency and crisis response.

Parrot fish

- ❖ Parrot fish (*Bolbometopon muricatum*) is an important component of coral reef ecosystem, but is highly endangered globally now.



- ❖ This species of fish is threatened in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ It is categorized as 'vulnerable' in the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- ❖ Incidental catch by fishers, spear-fishers and degradation of coral reef are potential threats to the species.
- ❖ Protection of coral cover along the existing protected marine areas in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is necessary for conservation of the endangered Parrotfish.

Amendments on Indian Forest Act- 1927

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has finalised the first draft of the comprehensive amendments to the Indian Forest Act-1927 (IFA).
- ❖ This draft has been prepared based on the inputs of a core committee constituted by the Ministry.
- ❖ The amendments also specifically deal with the Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA).
- ❖ It also introduces a new category of forests - production forest.
- ❖ This amendment has increased the focus towards,
 - Conservation, enrichment and sustainable management of forest resources.
 - Matters connected with safeguarding ecological stability.

Lokpal Members

- ❖ Former Supreme Court judge, Pinaki Chandra Ghose was appointed as India's first Lokpal, also known as the anti-corruption ombudsman by the President of India.

- ❖ The President also appointed 8 other members

Judicial Members	Non-Judicial Members
Dilip B. Bhosale (Former Chief Justice)	Archana Ramasundaram (First woman Chief of SSB)
Pradip Kumar Mohanty (Former Chief Justice)	Dinesh Kumar Jain (Former Maharashtra Chief Secretary)
Abhilasha Kumari (Former Chief Justice)	Mahender Singh (Former IRS officer)
Ajay Kumar Tripathi (sitting Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh)	Indrajeet Prasad Gautam (Former IAS officer)

33rd India- Indonesian Coordinated Patrol

- ❖ The 33rd edition of the India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (Ind-Indo Corpat) was held at Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- ❖ This also coincides with 70 years of India-Indonesia diplomatic ties.
- ❖ The coordinated patrol aims to underscore
 - India's peaceful presence and solidarity with maritime neighbours,
 - To ensure good order in the maritime domain,
 - Consolidate interoperability
 - Strengthen the existing bonds of friendship between India and Indonesia.
- ❖ As part of India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) program, Indian Navy has been assisting Indian Ocean Countries and involves in capacity building program.

Control over Election Manifestos

- ❖ Election Commission of India (ECI) has now made the release of election manifestos a part of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and has barred political parties from releasing election manifestos in the last 48 hours before polling.
- ❖ ECI has also said that manifestos for both single and multiphase elections shall not be released during the prohibitory period, as prescribed under Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- ❖ Section 126 of the RP Act, 1951 embodies "election silence", which prohibits any form of the election campaign in the last 48 hours leading up to voting.

Voluntary code of Ethics

- ❖ Social media platforms and the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) presented a 'Voluntary Code of Ethics' for the General Election 2019 to the Election Commission of India.
- ❖ Election commission together with social media platforms have developed a notification mechanism.
- ❖ Under this mechanism, the electoral body can notify them of the violations under Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

India's first forest-certification scheme

- ❖ India now has a globally recognized forest-certification scheme developed specifically for Indian forests.
- ❖ Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF), an Indian non-profit organization will be the nodal agency in India.
- ❖ It will set the standards for India's forests, forest products, and sustainable management.



- Market-based Instrument for differentiating sustainable managed forest products (voluntary green label)
 - Consistent with ISO 14001 but goes further
 - Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification was initiated in 1992 after the Rio world environmental summit in lieu of an international forestry convention such as UNFCCC (climate change), CBD (biodiversity), etc.
 - Multiple schemes evolved: SFI, PEFC, CSA, ATO, national in Indonesia, Brazil, Malaysia
- ❖ Several developed countries have put trade restrictions on the import of non-certified timber, non-timber forest products, and wood-based goods into their countries.
 - ❖ So, getting sustainable forest management certificates has become mandatory for exports.

JKLF banned under UAPA

- ❖ India has banned separatist Yasin Malik's Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) under the anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA).
- ❖ JKLF is spearheading the separatist ideology in the Kashmir valley and has been at the forefront of the separatist activities and violence since 1988.

- ❖ It is also alleged that JKLF was involved in murders of Kashmiri Pandits in 1989 which led to their exodus from the valley.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967

- ❖ UAPA is an anti-terrorist law aimed at effective prevention of unlawful activities in India.
- ❖ UAPA provides necessary powers to the investigating agencies to act against activities which harm the integrity and sovereignty of India.
- ❖ It imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of freedom of speech and expression, to assemble peaceably without arms and to form associations.

Tribunal to declaring unlawful association

- ❖ The Centre has constituted a tribunal headed by a Delhi High Court judge to decide whether there is sufficient cause for declaring Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir as an unlawful association.
- ❖ MHA issued a notification to set up the tribunal under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).
- ❖ Justice Gupta is presently heading another tribunal set up under UAPA to ascertain whether there was sufficient cause to extend the ban on the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) as an unlawful association.

New Subjects – CBSE

- ❖ With an aim to boost the analytical ability, physical and mental health of the students, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has decided to introduce 3 new subjects in school curriculum.
 - Artificial intelligence (AI)
 - Early childhood care education and
 - Yoga

Chinook Helicopters

- ❖ The Indian Air Force inducted four heavy-lift CH-47 Chinook choppers.
- ❖ The choppers were inducted by Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa in Chandigarh.
- ❖ They will be used for various military purposes including deploying of troops and machinery at high-altitude locations along the India-Pakistan border.



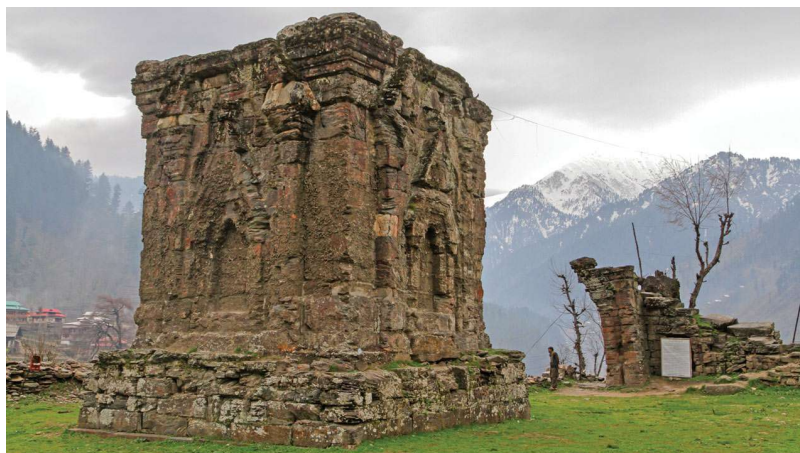
- ❖ Along with military operations, they can also be used for disaster relief, search and recovery operations, medical, evacuation, fire-fighting and civil development.
- ❖ The Boeing CH-47 Chinook is an American twin-engined helicopter jointly developed by US company Vertol and Boeing Rotorcraft Systems.

Young Scientist Programme (YUVIKA)

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched a special programme for School Children called "Young Scientist Programme" (YUva Vigiyan KARYakram).
- ❖ This program is launched in tune with the Government's vision "Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan".
- ❖ The Program is primarily aimed at imparting basic knowledge on Space Technology, Space Science and Space Applications to the young students.
- ❖ ISRO plans to create awareness amongst the youngsters who are the future building blocks of our Nation.
- ❖ The selection is based on the 8th Standard academic performance and extracurricular activities.

Sharada Temple Corridor

- ❖ Pakistan has approved a proposal to establish a corridor that will allow Hindu pilgrims from India to visit Sharada Peeth, an ancient Hindu temple.
- ❖ Sharada Peeth was established in 237 BC during the reign of Ashoka.



- ❖ This temple was an ancient centre of learning dedicated to the Hindu goddess of learning.
- ❖ Between the 6th and 12th centuries, Sharada Peeth was one of the foremost temple universities of the Indian subcontinent.
- ❖ It is also one of the three famous holy sites for Kashmiri Pandits, the other two being the Martand Sun Temple in Anantnag and the Amarnath temple.
- ❖ The Sharada Peeth corridor in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK), when opened, will be the second religious tract after the Kartarpur corridor that will connect the two neighbouring nations.

Indian Navy's ABHEDYA Centre

- ❖ The Indian Navy's Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Training Facility (NBCTF) was inaugurated at INS Shivaji in Lonavala.
- ❖ The NBCTF, renamed as "Abhedya" in Sanskrit. Abhedya means impenetrable.
- ❖ It will provide realistic training to naval personnel in detection, protection against and decontamination of nuclear, biological and chemical agents.

INS Shivaji

- ❖ INS Shivaji is an Indian Naval station located in Lonavala, Maharashtra, India.
- ❖ It houses the Naval College of Engineering which trains officers of the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard.
- ❖ It was commissioned on 15 February 1945 as HMIS Shivaji.
- ❖ INS Shivaji celebrates Platinum Jubilee year 2019-20 with the theme "Propelling the Indian Navy since 1945"

Additional posts in NCLT

- ❖ Union Cabinet has approved creation of additional posts of three Judicial Members and three Technical Members in the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).

- ❖ This will ensure to meet the mandate provided to NCLAT by the following act and the time frame provided for disposal of cases
 - The Finance Act, 2017
 - The Companies Act,
 - Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

Cruise service to Bangladesh

- ❖ India and Bangladesh will start a cruise service from March 29, 2019 that would take passengers through the Sunderbans to Dhaka.
- ❖ The move aims to strengthen inland waterway routes between the two countries.
- ❖ As movement of goods starts using inland waterways, goods from India can go in the cheapest possible form up to Narayanganj and Dhaka in Bangladesh.

India-Africa Health Sciences Platform (IAHSP)

- ❖ An agreement has been signed between India and the African Union to initiate and strengthen the cooperation in health sector in a structured and organised manner.
- ❖ This agreement will focus on cooperation in the areas of R & D, capacity building, health services, pharma trade and manufacturing capabilities for drugs and diagnostics.
- ❖ IAHSP was first established in 2016.

FB role in Election

- ❖ Facebook has launched two India-specific tools to boost civic engagement on its platform during the general elections – Candidate Connect and Share you voted.

Candidate Connect:

- ❖ Through this feature Candidates contesting in the elections can post 20 second videos of their poll promise.
- ❖ Facebook will ensure that such videos of all contestants in a constituency will show up on the timeline of people in that area.

Share You Voted:

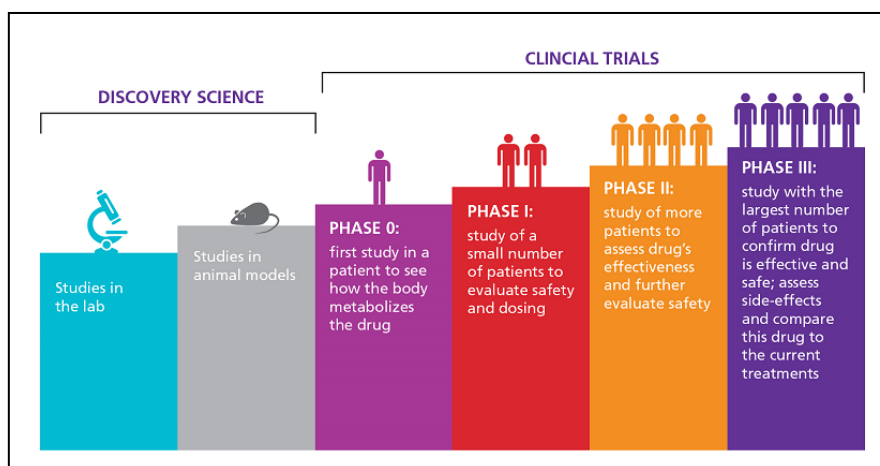
- ❖ This feature will provide people with polling information and enable them to announce and celebrate their vote.
- ❖ FB and FB-owned messaging applications such as WhatsApp have been repeatedly scrutinized by the Indian government and security agencies, and asked to prevent spread of false information.

Virtual SIM

- ❖ Indian Security agencies have identified that terrorists used Virtual SIM for communication during Pulwama attack and avoided mobile phones.
- ❖ In this technology, the computer generates a telephone number and the user downloads an application of the service provider on their smartphone.
- ❖ The number is linked to social networking sites like WhatsApp, Facebook, Telegram or Twitter and used instantly.

Drugs and Clinical Trial Rules, 2019

- ❖ The Union Ministry for Health and Family Welfare has notified the Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules with an aim to promote clinical research in the country.



- ❖ The new rules will ensure patient safety and the ethics committee will monitor the trials and decide on the amount of compensation in cases of adverse events.
- ❖ Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has waived off the clinical trial for the drugs approved and marketed in the European Union, the UK, Australia, Canada, Japan and the US.
- ❖ Clinical trial is a research study that determines whether a new drug is both safe and effective for humans.

National Family Health Survey

- ❖ Tripura ranks second in the list of states with child marriages among the girls between the age of 15 and 19.
- ❖ The study titled 'Young Lives' has been prepared from data taken from National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2015-2016.
- ❖ Tripura occupies 21.6 percent which is significantly higher than the national average of 11.9 percent of child marriage incidents.
- ❖ The four districts include Dhalai, South Tripura, North Tripura, and West Tripura have the highest number of child marriage.

- ❖ It is a collaborative research project coordinated by a team based at the University of Oxford.

Biomedical Research Career Programme

- ❖ Union Cabinet chaired has approved the extension of the Biomedical Research Career Programme beyond its initial 10-year term (2008-09 to 2018-29).
- ❖ It is an Alliance between the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Wellcome Trust (WT).
- ❖ It was launched in 2008 and has fulfilled its objectives of building and nurturing talent of highest global standards in cutting-edge biomedical research in India.

Dhanush Howitzers

- ❖ The Indian Army is set to induct the first batch of its domestically developed and manufactured Dhanush artillery howitzer.
- ❖ State-owned Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) is building the Indian Army's long-range artillery gun.



- ❖ The 155mm × 45mm calibre Dhanush artillery gun is reverse engineered based on Bofors howitzers.
- ❖ K-9 Vajra and the M-777 are the other two ultra-light howitzers used in Indian Army.

India – Bolivia Agreements

- ❖ India and Bolivia signed eight Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) during President Ram Nath Kovind's three-day visit to the country.
- ❖ Indian President was conferred with the highest State honour of Bolivia, "Condor de Los Andes en el Grado de Gran Collar" by the Evo Morales, the President of Bolivia.

- ❖ The MoUs were in the fields of mining, space, traditional medicine, establishment of Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (IT) and Bi-Oceanic Railway project.

Terror Monitoring Group (TMG)

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has constituted an 8-member multi-disciplinary Terror Monitoring Group in J & K.
- ❖ TMG is created to take action against hard core sympathisers amongst government employees, including teachers, who are providing covert or overt support to terror-related activities.

INTERNATIONAL

Gandhi's birth anniversary Commemorative notes

- ❖ To mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, a UAE-based company will globally release the first-ever limited-edition commemorative series 12 bank notes of zero value.




- ❖ Dubai based Indian artist Akbar Saheb has designed these special notes.
- ❖ As a tribute to Gandhi, each note will feature memorable incidents from his personal and political life.
- ❖ The first 2 notes with just 5000 pieces will be printed in each design and the rest will be released in different phases till October 2.
- ❖ Out of the first 2 notes released, the first note shows the 'Promise to Mother' in 1880 made by Gandhi to his mother.

- ❖ Second note features the historic incident of 1893 when the young lawyer Gandhi was thrown off from a ‘Whites only’ compartment of a train at Pietermaritzburg railway station in South Africa.

46th session of OIC

- ❖ 46th session of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers Meet held at Abu Dhabi.
- ❖ It is for the first time that India has been invited to a meeting of the OIC.
- ❖ Previously India was invited to attend the OIC meeting in 1969 but Pakistan prevailed upon and got the invite withdrawn.

AT 1ST MEET, YAHYA THREATENED PULLOUT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ India was offered membership status of OIC in 1969, when it was founded. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, then minister for indl development, led the Indian delegation to the Rabat conference 	 <p>Yahya Khan</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There, a Moroccan minister asked him to either withdraw “voluntarily” or “feign illness” and not attend the meet 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alternatively, it was suggested India attend as an “observer” – a downgrade from the membership status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The reason for Khan’s tantrum: riots in Ahmedabad ➤ The Indian delegation was not informed about any of the official meetings/sessions, which were held in secret
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The reason: Pak president Yahya Khan had locked 	

- ❖ Qatar proposed 'Observer' status for India at the OIC Foreign Ministers' meet in 2002
- ❖ This Session adopted the Abu Dhabi Declaration.
- ❖ This is the 2nd time that the Kashmir issue has not been mentioned in the final document after 2016 Tashkent Declaration.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

- ❖ Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the 2nd largest inter-governmental organization after the UN.
- ❖ It had a membership of 57 states spread over four continents.
- ❖ It was established upon a decision of the Rabat summit, Morocco on September 25, 1969.
- ❖ It laid down the blueprint called the ‘Ten-Year Program of Action’ on December 2005 in Makkah summit.
- ❖ The new programme OIC-2025 focuses on 18 priority areas with 107 goals.

U.S. and South Korea end military exercises

- ❖ The United States and South Korea announced that annual large-scale exercises between the two militaries will end and will be re-configured into smaller exercises.
- ❖ Their large scale military exercises were commonly known as “Foal Eagle” and “Key Resolve”.
- ❖ The new drills name will be "Dongmaeng" or Alliance in English (replacing “Key Resolve”).
- ❖ Foal Eagle drills will be replaced by a much smaller, battalion-sized exercise.

Red Flag 2019

- ❖ Red Flag 19 military drill is being held in the US from March 3 to 16.
- ❖ Exercise Red Flag is an advanced aerial combat training exercise held several times a year by the United States Air Force.
- ❖ The exercise offers realistic air-combat training for military pilots and other flight crew members from the U.S, NATO, and other allied countries.
- ❖ Each year the exercise will be held at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada.

Guinness World Record in Yoga

- ❖ Guinness World Record in Yoga was set by more than a thousand people who performed the Virabathrasan or the Warrior II Pose for 3 minutes.
- ❖ It was taking place at Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park, Hong Kong.
- ❖ This record is a first of its kind in the history of Hong Kong, beating the previous record of 387.

AL NAGAH 2019

- ❖ The third edition of the bilateral joint exercise between India and Oman, Al Nagah 2019 will begin at Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains in Oman.
- ❖ The exercise will see both the armies exchanging expertise and experience in tactics, weapon handling, and firing.
- ❖ Its aims to enhance interoperability in counterterrorist operations.

IEA Bioenergy TCP

- ❖ Union Cabinet gave its approval to Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for joining the IEA Bioenergy TCP as 25th member.
- ❖ International Energy Agency's Technology Collaboration Programme on Bioenergy (IEA Bioenergy TCP) is an international platform for co-operation among countries.

- ❖ It aims to improve the cooperation and information exchange between countries that have national programmes in bioenergy research, development, and deployment.
- ❖ IEA Bioenergy TCP works under the framework of International Energy Agency (IEA) and India has "Association" status since 30th March 2017.

Third IT corridor in China

- ❖ India launched its third IT corridor in China to facilitate partnerships between the Indian and Chinese companies.
- ❖ The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) entered into a partnership with China's Xuzhou city from Jiangsu Province in China to help for the development of the IT corridor.
- ❖ The corridor will facilitate match-making between Indian companies wanting to collaborate with companies in China.
- ❖ The earlier two corridors are at Dalian and Guiyang cities.

Trends in International Arms Transfers - 2018

- ❖ The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has released the Trends in International Arms Transfers 2018 Report.
- ❖ India is now the World's second largest importer of arms in 2014-18 and accounted for 9.5% of total global imports.
- ❖ India's imports are decreased partly due to delays in deliveries of arms produced under licence from foreign suppliers, such as combat aircrafts ordered from Russia in 2001 and submarines ordered from France in 2008.
 - SIPRI, established in 1966, is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
 - Based in Stockholm the Institute provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

AFINDEX-19

- ❖ Africa-India Joint Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-19) between the Indian Army and 16 African nations will be conducted in Pune from March 18 to 27.
- ❖ AFINDEX-19 aims to train the participating contingents in Humanitarian Mine Assistance (HMA) and Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) under the United Nations Charter through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises.

- ❖ It will also focus on achieving interoperability, learning each other's methodologies and tactics through synchronised operational level planning and tactical level training.

Katchatheevu Festival

- ❖ The Anthony Church festival began in March 15th in 2019. The church festival runs for two-three days.
- ❖ For the first time in recent years, local traditional and country boat fishermen have been granted permission to sail in their 'vallams' (country boats) for the festival.

About

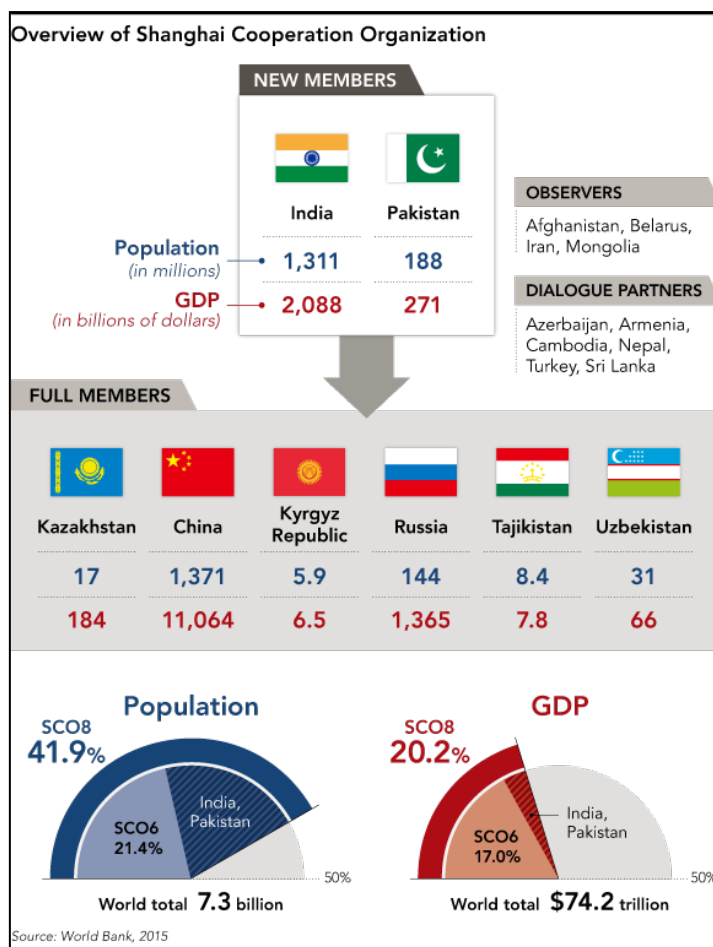
- ❖ St. Anthony's Shrine is a unique place of worship as it shares the maritime borders of two countries, India and Sri Lanka, and is a declared holy place by Sri Lanka.
- ❖ No one is required to possess an Indian passport or Sri Lankan visa for visiting Katchatheevu.
- ❖ St. Antony's Catholic Shrine holds 100+ year old traditions.
- ❖ It was dedicated in 1905 to Anthony of Padua, the patron saint of fishermen.
- ❖ It was built by an Indian Catholic (Tamilian) called Srinivasa Padaiyachi.
- ❖ Katchatheevu is a controversial uninhabited 285-acre (1.15 km) island situated on the Sri Lankan side of the maritime boundary.
- ❖ This island was with India till 1974 when it was ceded to Sri Lanka by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Joint Anti-terrorism Exercise

- ❖ India, Pakistan and the other members states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will take part in a joint anti-terrorism exercise to be held this year by the grouping.
- ❖ The decision to hold the joint exercise 'Sary-Arka-Antiterror 2019' was announced during the 34th meeting of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) council held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- ❖ Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a Eurasian political, economic, and military organisation founded in 2001.
- ❖ Its objectives are cooperation between member nations on security-related concerns, military cooperation, intelligence sharing and counter-terrorism.
- ❖ India and Pakistan joined SCO as full members on 9 June 2017.
- ❖ SCO has 8 Full member states in total.



Kazakhstan's President resignation

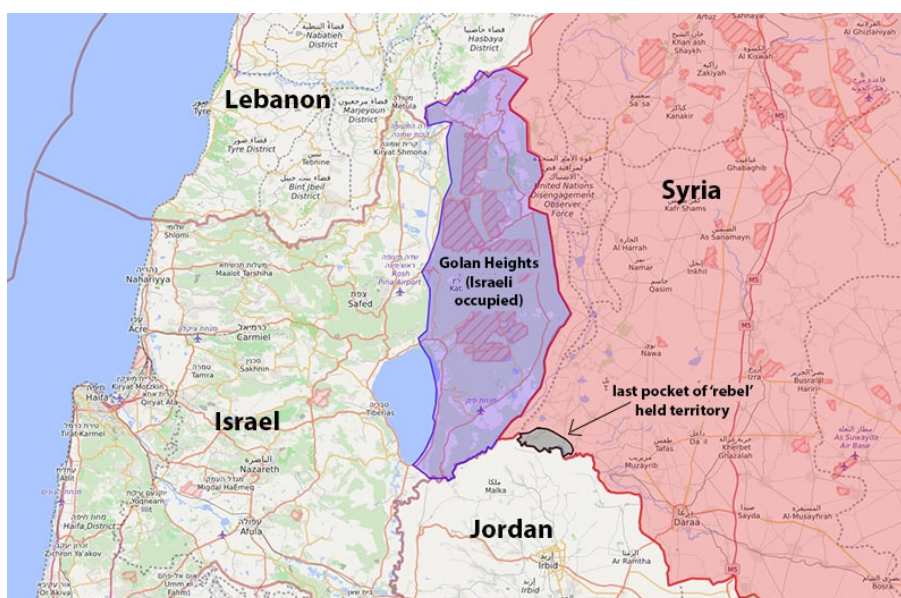
- ❖ Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev has suddenly resigned after nearly 30 years in office.
- ❖ 78-year-old leader has ruled the central Asian nation ever since it emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.
- ❖ He is the only leader that independent Kazakhstan has ever known.

Report on Russian meddling in US Elections

- ❖ Former FBI Director Robert Mueller submitted his report into a two-year investigation of Russian meddling in 2016 election for selecting the next USA president.
- ❖ These investigations were started as America suspected Russian meddling in 2016 US Presidential Elections and possible collusion by Trump team members.
- ❖ The final report has been submitted by Robert Mueller which may be helpful to impeach President Trump.

Golan Heights

- ❖ US President Donald Trump has backed Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights region.
- ❖ This is a departure from the earlier stand of US where it treated Golan Heights as occupied Syrian territory.
- ❖ Until 1967, Golan Heights was part of Syria.
- ❖ Israel occupied the Golan Heights during the Six Day war (Third Arab Israeli war) held in 1967.
- ❖ Then in 1981 Israel annexed the region unilaterally.
- ❖ This unilateral annexation was not recognized by the international community.



- ❖ Israel justifies its annexation of Golan Heights on the grounds that this region acts as a buffer zone between its country and Syria.
- ❖ Golan heights region is also important for its water resources and naturally fertile soil.

New Zealand bans assault weapons

- ❖ New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern imposed an immediate ban on assault weapons following the Christchurch massacre that claimed the lives of at least 50 people.
- ❖ All high-capacity weapons, assault rifles, and military-style automatic weapons are banned in New Zealand.

Financial Grant to Nepal

- ❖ As part of Development Partnership Programme, the Government of India had extended a financial grant of 35.5 million rupees to Nepal.

- ❖ This was used for the construction of the three storied building, the Siddheswar Education Public Campus at Ramechhap district.
- ❖ The newly built infrastructure will boost learning environment of students and improve access to education to the needy, poor and marginalised Nepalese students.

Global Influenza Strategy 2019-2030

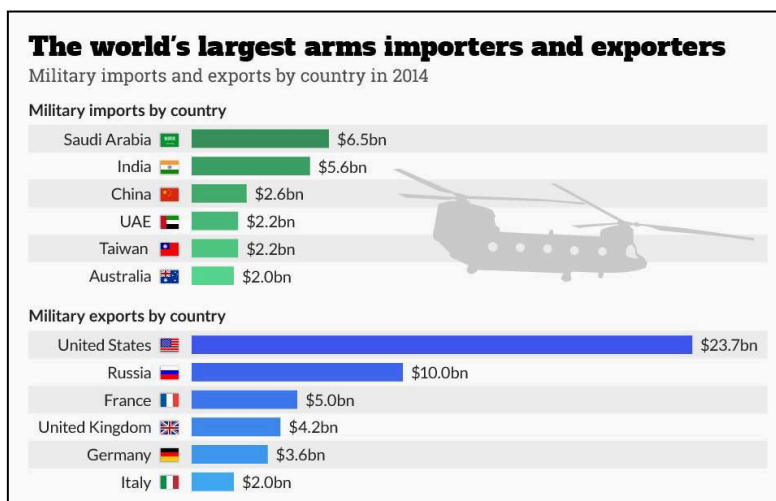
- ❖ WHO released a Global Influenza Strategy for 2019-2030, which aimed at protecting people in all countries.
- ❖ The goal of the strategy is to prevent seasonal influenza, control the spread of influenza from animals to humans, and prepare for the next influenza pandemic.
- ❖ The new strategy is the most comprehensive and far-reaching that WHO has ever developed for influenza.

Its two overarching goals

- ❖ Build stronger country capacities for disease surveillance and response, prevention and control, and preparedness.
 - To achieve this, it calls for every country to have a tailored influenza programme that contributes to national and global preparedness and health security.
- ❖ Develop better tools to prevent, detect, control and treat influenza, such as more effective vaccines, antivirals and treatments, with the goal of making these accessible for all countries.

World's largest importer of weapons

- ❖ Saudi Arabia become the world's largest buyer of weapons in the world market.
- ❖ After eight years of holding the position of the largest importer of weapons, India was dropped down to the second position.



- ❖ This is based on the annual report released by the Swedish-based think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), titled ‘Trends in International Arms Transfers-2018’.

Italy signs Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

- ❖ Italy endorsed China’s ambitious “Belt and Road” infrastructure plan, becoming the first major Western power to back the initiative.
- ❖ Italy is the thirteenth European Union country but the first G7 country to join China’s Belt Road Initiative.
- ❖ The agreement is seen as a trade-off wherein Italy needs investment and China has those investment to provide.

Belt and Road Initiative

- ❖ BRI is a development strategy adopted by the Chinese government involving infrastructure development and investments in 152 countries and international organizations in Europe, Asia, Middle East, Latin America and Africa.



- ❖ It is also known as the One Belt One Road (OBOR) or the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road.

Defeat of the ISIS

- ❖ The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) backed by the US has defeated the International terrorist group ISIS, by capturing the last piece of the territory Baghouz in Syria.
- ❖ ISIS captured and commanded large swathes of land in Iraq and Syria at its peak.
- ❖ ISIS members and sympathisers were responsible for numerous attacks and deaths worldwide.
- ❖ ISIS was founded by Global terrorist Abu bakr-al Baghdadi.

Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)

- ❖ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative has released the annual Global Multidimensional poverty index report.
- ❖ Poverty is calculated on an individual level and based on 3 dimensions and 10 factors.

Dimension	Indicators
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Mortality • Nutrition
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Years of schooling • School attendance
Living Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking fuel • Sanitation • Drinking Water • Electricity • Housing • Assets

- ❖ A person is considered poor if they are deprived in at least a third of the weighted indicators.
- ❖ According to the report, India has reduced its poverty rate drastically from 55% to 28% in 10 years, with 271 million people moving out of poverty between 2005-06 and 2015-16.
- ❖ Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are home to more than half of the poorest people in India.
- ❖ Worldwide Sub-Saharan and South Asian countries are home to 83% of the multidimensionally poor people around the world.

LIMA 2019 Aero Expo

- ❖ The 5 days long, Langkawi International Maritime Aero Expo (LIMA-2019) was conducted in Malaysia.
- ❖ Indian Air force participated for the first time to enhance the relationship between the two services.



- ❖ In LIMA 2019, India represented its indigenous supersonic fighters' jet Tejas and anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kadmat.

Exercise Mitra Shakti-VI

- ❖ India and Sri Lanka conducted a joint military exercise Mitra Shakti VI from 26 March to 8 April at Sri Lanka.
- ❖ This exercise aimed to build and promote close relations between armies of both the countries and to enhance the ability of joint exercise commander to take military contingents of both nations under command.

Mitra Shakti

- ❖ Mitra Shakti exercise is conducted annually between India and Sri Lanka.
- ❖ It was a part of military diplomacy and interaction between armies of the two countries.

Recycling e-waste

- ❖ The world's largest integrated electric and electronic waste (e-waste) recycling facility 'The Recycling Hub' was opened in Dubai.
- ❖ This plant will process Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), IT asset disposition (ITAD), refrigerant gas, industrial and military waste.

World's longest salt cave

- ❖ The Israeli cave explorers discovered the world's longest salt cave named Malham near the Dead sea.
- ❖ This is surpassed the record-holder in Iran.
- ❖ The cave is spread in an area of 10 kilometers (6.25 miles) and it runs through the Israel's largest mountain - Mount Sodom and spills out to the southwest corner of the adjacent Dead Sea.



AIDS Drug from Hyderabad

- ❖ Hyderabad-based pharma company Laurus Labs has entered into a strategic partnership agreement with Global Fund for a period of 3.5 years to manufacture AIDS drugs.
- ❖ Global Fund is a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and a global charity agency.
- ❖ The global fund was established in 2002.
- ❖ It invests nearly \$ 4 billion a year to support programmes designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics.

Statement of Guiding Principles

- ❖ Statement of Guiding Principles (SGP) agreement was signed by India and America in November 2014.
- ❖ SGP provides a framework for promoting cooperation between the two countries to meet the developmental aspirations of partner countries in Asia and Africa.
- ❖ The First Amendment to the Statement of Guiding Principles (SGP) on Triangular Cooperation for Global Development was recently renewed by India and America.

UNDP Human Development Report

- ❖ The Human Development Report (HDR) for 2019 published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) focuses on inequality.

- ❖ HDR 2019 provides a comprehensive picture of the many forms of inequality that are shaping the 21st century.
- ❖ The report was first launched in 1990 by the Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq and Indian Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.
- ❖ The goal of their report was to place 'people' at the centre of the development process in terms of economic debate, policy and advocacy.
- ❖ This report is released annually.

ECONOMY

Share capital of RBI in NHB

- ❖ The Cabinet has approved payment of the face value of the share capital of Rs.1450 crore in National Housing Bank (NHB) to Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ❖ The payment was made consequent to amendments made to the NHB Act, 1987 in 2018.

Why?

- ❖ NHB is an All India Financial Institution (AIFI), set up in 1988, under an Act of Parliament.
- ❖ NHB is an apex agency to operate as the principal agency to promote housing finance institutions in India.
- ❖ The wholesale financing role of NHB will get strengthened with the transfer of ownership to Government, thereby making possible funding support to housing finance companies.
- ❖ The change in ownership from RBI to Gol will also segregate RBI's role as banking regulator and as owner of NHB.

Usha Thorat panel

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has constituted an eight-member task force headed by Usha Thorat.
- ❖ Tasks
 - Examine issues related to offshore rupee markets.
 - Recommend policy measures to ensure stability of the external value of the domestic currency.
- ❖ Guiding objective
 - Developing deep and liquid on-shore financial markets that act as a price setter of the Rupee globally.

- ❖ Usha Thorat was a former Deputy Governor of Reserve bank of India (10 November 2005 to 8 November 2010).

Bilateral Swap Arrangement – India and Japan

- ❖ The RBI and Bank of Japan have completed signing of the bilateral currency swap agreement for USD 75 billion.
- ❖ It will help in bringing greater stability in foreign exchange and capital markets in the country.
- ❖ The Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) was negotiated between India and Japan during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Tokyo on October 29, 2018.

New Rs.20 Coin

- ❖ Finance Ministry on announced a new coin for Rs. 20 which will be shaped like a 27 mm "dodecagon", a 12-sided polygon.
- ❖ It was nearly 10 years ago, in March 2009, that the Reserve Bank of India had issued the first 10-rupee coin.
- ❖ Also, Prime Minister released the new series of "visually impaired friendly circulation" coins (Re 1, Rs 2, Rs 5, Rs 10 and Rs 20).



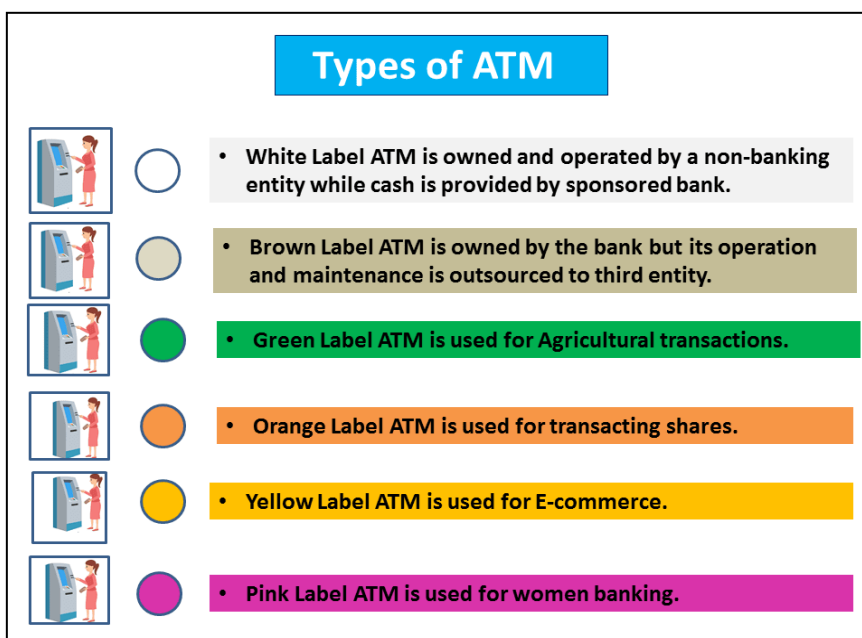
New benches of NCLT

- ❖ The Government has approved the establishment of two new benches of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- ❖ One will be at Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh and the other will be at Indore in Madhya Pradesh.

- ❖ This step has been taken keeping in view of the increasing case load, especially under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code 2016.
- ❖ NCLT is a quasi-judicial body in India that adjudicates issues relating to Indian companies.
- ❖ It was established under the Companies Act 2013 and was constituted on 1 June 2016.

Guidelines for White Label ATMs

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come up with a review of operations of White Label ATMs (WLAs) in the country.
- ❖ Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) set up, owned and operated by non-bank entities are called “White Label ATMs” (WLAs).
- ❖ They provide the banking services to the customers of banks in India, based on the cards (debit/credit/prepaid) issued by banks.



World Gold Council Report

- ❖ World Gold Council (WGC) has released a report on gold holdings of various countries.
- ❖ India has 11th largest gold reserve in the world with 607 tonnes.
- ❖ The World Gold Council is the market development organisation for the gold industry.
- ❖ Its purpose is to stimulate and sustain demand for gold.

Gold cache

Rank	Possessor	Tonnes
1	U.S.	8,133.5
2	Germany	3,369.7
3	IMF	2,814.0
4	Italy	2,451.8
5	France	2,436.0
6	Russia	2,119.2
7	Mainland China	1,864.3
8	Switzerland	1,040.0
9	Japan	765.2
10	Netherlands	612.5
11	India	607.0
12	ECB	504.8
13	Taiwan	423.6
14	Portugal	382.5
15	Kazakhstan	353.3

SOURCE:
WGC



- ❖ US occupies the top spot while China and Japan have more gold reserves than India.
- ❖ India is the world's largest consumer of Gold.

New oil and gas exploration policy

- ❖ Government has overhauled oil and gas exploration policy after two decades.
- ❖ Government will not charge any share of profit on hydrocarbons produced from less explored areas as it looks to attract the elusive private and foreign investment to raise domestic output.
- ❖ Irrespective of the basins, producers will get complete marketing and pricing freedom for oil and gas in future bid rounds.
- ❖ Companies are required to pay a share of revenue from oil and gas produced in Category-I sedimentary basins such as Krishna Godavari, Mumbai Offshore, Rajasthan or Assam where commercial production has already been established.
- ❖ Companies will be charged only prevalent royalty rates on oil and natural gas in the less explored Category-II and III basins.

India aligns with Global Trademark system

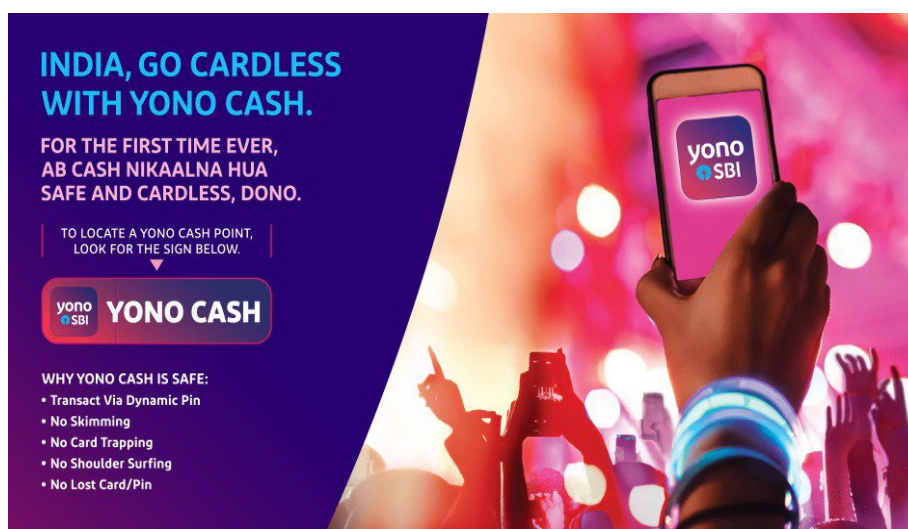
- ❖ Cabinet has agreed to sign 3 International agreements to follow global standards during classification system for examining the trademark and design applications from companies and business.

Nice Agreement	International classification of trademarks and service marks.
Vienna Agreement	International classification for marks that consist of contain figurative elements
Locarno Agreement	International classification for industrial designs

- ❖ The accession to these three agreements would give an opportunity to include Indian designs, figurative elements and goods in the international classification systems.
- ❖ It is also expected to instil confidence in Foreign Investors in relation to the protection of IPs in India

Cardless ATM withdrawals

- ❖ To avoid the usage of plastic cards in payments and withdrawals, SBI has enabled card less ATM withdrawals through its mobile App, YONO.
- ❖ This service enables the user to generate dynamic code using the Yono app to withdraw money from any SBI ATM within 30 minutes of the code generation.



Domestic Systemically Important Banks

- ❖ SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank continue to be in the Reserve Bank of India's list of Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) for 2018.
- ❖ D-SIBs are required to maintain higher capital as compared to other banks.

- ❖ D-SIB tag indicates that the bank is too big to fail.
- ❖ Some banks become systemically important due to their size, cross-jurisdictional activities, complexity and lack of substitute and interconnection.
- ❖ Banks whose assets exceed 2% of GDP are considered part of this group.
- ❖ Inclusion in the list gives additional comfort to investors that these banks won't be allowed to fail.
- ❖ Therefore, borrowing costs of these banks from the markets are cheaper than their peers.

REPCO Bank - Central Govt Ordinance

- ❖ Following the Central Government ordinance 'Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance' Chennai Headquartered REPCO Bank has become ineligible to mobilise deposits from non-voting members.

An overview

RepcO, set up in 1969, is headquartered in Chennai

- Formed to rehabilitate repatriates from Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam and other countries
- Includes as Directors two nominees of Home Affairs Ministry; 1 representative each from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana governments
- Centre's shareholding 50%; five State governments' share 6% and repatriates' 44%
- Voting members about 70,000
- Non-voting members over 10 lakh
- 108 branches in southern States with 1,300 employees
- In 2017-18, it achieved total business of ₹13,550 crore with 73% credit-deposit ratio

- ❖ Unlike other banks, REPCO bank comes under administrative control of Union Home Ministry.
- ❖ It is flourishing only on the support of 10 lakh non-voting members who are mostly repatriates from Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam and other countries.
- ❖ The ordinance that is essentially meant for unregulated private financial firms that had been collecting deposits from the public illicitly has affected REPCO bank.

India's GDP forecasts

- ❖ Fitch Ratings agency cut India's economic growth forecast for the next financial year starting April 1, 2019.
- ❖ It has projected GDP Growth up to 6.8 per cent revised down from its previous estimate of 7 per cent.
- ❖ This is due to weaker than expected momentum in the economy.
- ❖ Fitch Ratings observes that Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has adopted a more market friendly monetary policy stance.

- ❖ RBI has taken such steps because of below-target inflation rate and easier global monetary conditions than previously envisaged.
- ❖ Fitch notes that a positive oil price outlook and expectations of ‘accelerating food prices’ in the coming months should support rural households’ income and consumption.

RBI defers Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS)

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has deferred the implementation of new accounting rules, Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) for banks till further notice.
- ❖ RBI has delayed the introduction of these tough new accounting rules for the second time.
- ❖ If these accounting standards come into effect immediately India’s state-run banks would have had to increase provisions by as much as 1.1 trillion rupees (\$16 billion) in the fiscal first quarter ending June 30.
- ❖ This will be a huge burden for the banks which already struggle with large quantum of bad loans.
- ❖ The new accounting standards would require banks to make ‘provisions’ immediately when they judge that a loan is likely to default, rather than waiting for the borrower to start missing payments.
- ❖ Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) shall not be required to apply Ind AS and shall continue to comply with the existing Accounting Standards.

Indian Accounting Standards

- ❖ Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) is a new set of accounting norms which converge with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- ❖ IFRS 9 accounting standard was developed in the aftermath of 2008 Financial crisis to prevent collapse of banks.

FinTech Conclave

- ❖ To shape India’s continued ascendancy in Financial Technology (FinTech), build the narrative for future strategy and policy efforts, and to deliberate steps for comprehensive financial inclusion, NITI Aayog organized a day-long FinTech Conclave in New Delhi.
- ❖ Shaktikanta Das, Governor of RBI inaugurated the Conclave in the presence of Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog.
- ❖ RBI has also appointed 5-member committee under the chairmanship of Nandan Nilekani to further deepen digital payments and enhance financial inclusion through Fintech.

PNB fined 2 Crores

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has slapped a penalty of Rs.2 crores on Punjab National Bank (PNB) for non-compliance of regulatory directions with regard to SWIFT operations.
- ❖ SWIFT is a global messaging software used for transactions by financial entities.
- ❖ SWIFT which stands for Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications.
- ❖ SWIFT code is used for international fund transfer.

Fiscal Deficit Target

- ❖ The government missed the Fiscal deficit target for the financial year 2018-19.
- ❖ Fiscal deficit was 3.5% of GDP in FY18 as against a target of 3.2%.
- ❖ The fiscal deficit in terms of rupees was Rs 8.51 lakh crore against the budgeted Rs 6.34 lakh crore for the full year in the revised estimates.
- ❖ Lower-than-expected tax collections and continuing government spending were responsible for the widening fiscal deficit.
- ❖ Fiscal deficit target for next financial year is 3.4% of GDP.

Interest rate Derivatives

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed non-residents to participate in the rupee interest rate derivatives segment with a view to deepening the rupee interest rate swap (IRS) market.
- ❖ Rupee interest rate swap market is the most liquid among the interest rate derivatives market.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Atmospheric Waves Experiment (AWE) mission

- ❖ NASA has selected a USD 42 million mission that will help scientists understand and, ultimately, forecast the vast space weather system around our planet.
- ❖ The mission is named as Atmospheric Waves Experiment (AWE) and is planned to launch in August 2022.



- ❖ AWE will focus on colourful bands of light in Earth's atmosphere, called airglow, to determine what combination of forces drive space weather in the upper atmosphere.
- ❖ Space weather is important because it can have profound impacts - affecting technology and astronauts in space, disrupting radio communications and, at its most severe, overwhelming power grids.
- ❖ Nasa also has selected the Sun Radio Interferometer Space Experiment (SunRISE) for a seven-month.
- ❖ It would be an array of six CubeSats operating like one large radio telescope.

Crew Dragon Capsule

- ❖ SpaceX launched Falcon 9 with an unmanned crew capsule from Florida's Kennedy Space Centre at the USA.



- ❖ The Uncrewed Dragon spacecraft has successfully been docked with the International Space Station.

International Space Station

- ❖ International Space Station (ISS) is an habitable artificial satellite in low Earth orbit.
- ❖ Its first component was launched into orbit in 1998, and the ISS is now the largest human-made body in low Earth orbit.
- ❖ It is a joint project between 5 space agencies: Roscosmos (Russia), NASA (US) JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada).

World's First Female Robot Anchor

- ❖ The Chinese news agency Xinhua has used its first female Artificial Intelligence (AI) news presenter on the job.
- ❖ This artificial intelligence robot was named "Xin Xiaomeng".
- ❖ China is pushing to advance its prowess in AI technology, from surveillance equipment to self-driving cars.

Akula-1 class attack submarine

- ❖ India signed contract for the lease of an Akula-1 class nuclear-powered attack submarine from Russia for a period of 10 years.
- ❖ Under the pact, Russia will have to deliver the Akula-1 class submarine, to be known as Chakra III, to the Indian Navy by 2025.
- ❖ It will be the third Russian nuclear attack submarine to be leased to the Indian Navy.
- ❖ First Russian nuclear-powered submarine christened INS Chakra was taken in 1988 under a 3-year lease.
- ❖ Second INS Chakra was taken on lease in 2012 for a period of 10 years.

Israeli mission to the moon

- ❖ An Israeli spacecraft on its maiden mission to the moon has sent its first selfie back to Earth.
- ❖ The image shows a part of the Beresheet spacecraft with Earth in the background.
- ❖ NGO SpaceIL and state-owned Israel Aerospace Industries launched the unmanned Beresheet (Hebrew for Genesis) from Cape Canaveral in Florida.
- ❖ So far, only Russia, the United States and China have made the 384,000-kilometre journey and landed on the moon.



e-Dharti App

- ❖ The Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Puri launched e-Dharti app.
- ❖ Using this app all the three modules - Conversion, Substitution and Mutation related to properties have been made online.
- ❖ Payment system in Land and Development Office, L&DO has also been completely digitized.
- ❖ He also launched e-Dharti GeoPortal, through which the lessee of the property will be able to see the basic details of property along with map showing its location.

Communication satellite 'ChinaSat 6C'

- ❖ China sent a new communications satellite into orbit from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in southwest China's Sichuan Province.
- ❖ This satellite was named "ChinaSat 6C" and it was launched by a Long March-3B carrier rocket.
- ❖ It will provide high-quality radio and TV transmission services.
- ❖ This can cover China, Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific island countries.
- ❖ This launch marks the 300th mission of the Long March carrier rocket series developed by the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation.

ZHONGXING 6C (CHINASAT 6C)

LAUNCHING: MARCH 9TH, 2019 - 11:30 AM EST (16:30 UTC)

MISSION
THE CHINASAT 6C SATELLITE PROVIDES COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES WITH TWENTY-FIVE C-BAND TRANSPONDERS AND SUPPORTS HIGH-QUALITY AND RELIABLE UPLINK AND DOWNLINK TRANSMISSIONS OF PROGRAMS FOR THE RADIO AND TV STATIONS AND CABLE TV NETWORKS. IT WILL BE POSITIONED AT THE ORBITALSLOT OF 130° EAST.

LAUNCH PROVIDER
CASC

MISSION PAYLOAD
ZHONGXING 6C (CHINASAT 6C)

ORBIT
GEO

MISSION TYPE
COMMUNICATION

LAUNCH VEHICLE
LONGMARCH 3B/E



LAUNCHING FROM
XICHANG LAUNCH CENTER




THE SATELLITE IS BEING MANUFACTURED BY CAST AND WILL BE LAUNCHED ONBOARD A CZ-3B/G2 LAUNCH VEHICLE.

GDBARRETT.COM

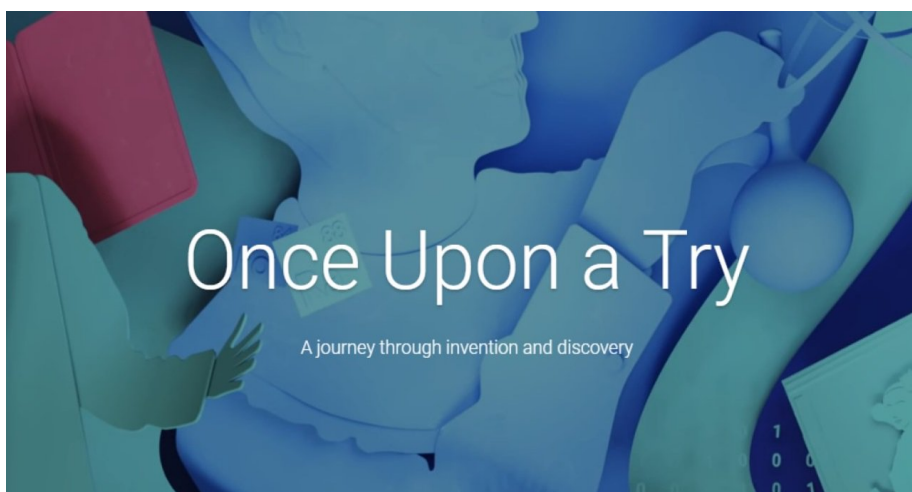
First all-female spacewalk

- ❖ NASA will conduct the first-all female spacewalk on March 29.
- ❖ It will almost 35 years after Soviet's Svetlana Savitskaya became the first woman to perform a spacewalk on July 25 1984.
- ❖ The spacewalk will be carried out by American astronauts Anne McClain and Christina Koch at the International Space Station.
- ❖ This expedition is being held to replace batteries that were installed last summer and the spacewalk is expected to last for about seven hours.
- ❖ NASA, celebrating March as the Women's History Month, has a dedicated page for information on women working in various fields such as engineering, space, mathematics, etc at the space agency.



Largest interactive online exhibition

- ❖ The National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) has collaborated with Google Arts & Culture and launched an interactive online exhibition titled “Once Upon a Try: Epic journeys of invention and discovery”.
- ❖ This exhibition showcases the World’s greatest discoveries and inventions and the inventors behind them and humanity’s greatest leaps in science and technology under 400 interactive stories.
- ❖ NCSM has contributed 6 India specific stories under the following titles:
 - Historic Beginnings,
 - Ayurveda,
 - Susrutha Samhitha,
 - Rasashala,
 - Literature and
 - Musical instruments from the subcontinent.
- ❖ NCSM is an organization under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

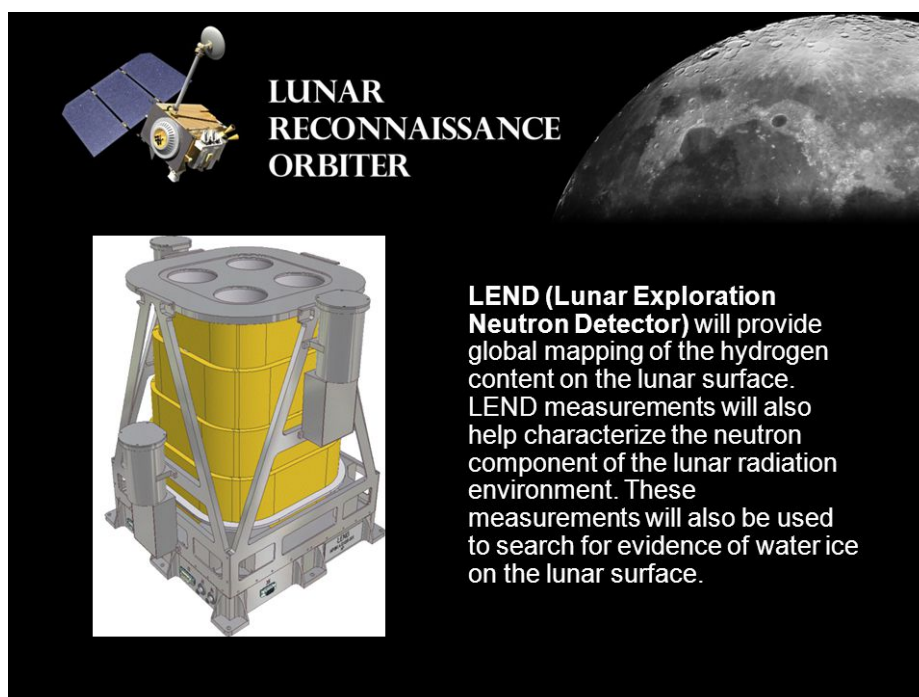


Combat drugs

- ❖ The Defence Research and Development Organisation’s (DRDO) medical laboratory came up with a range of 'combat casualty drugs' to reduce casualties in warfare like Pulwama terror attack.
- ❖ It includes bleeding wound sealants, super absorptive dressings and glycerinated salines that can save lives in the event of warfare in the jungle and high-altitude areas.
- ❖ According to developers of the drugs, chances of survival and minimum disability are highest when effective first aid care is given within the golden hour.

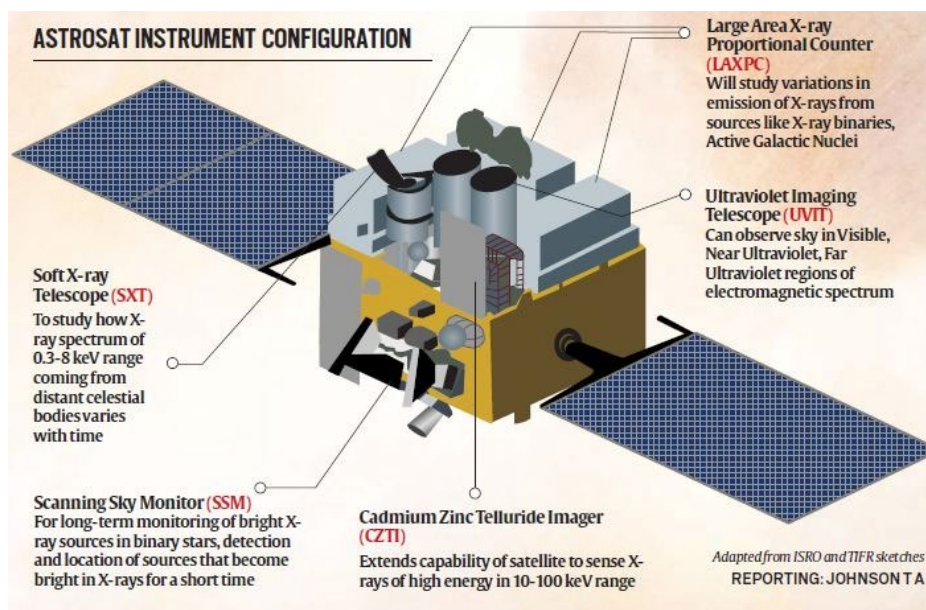
Water Molecules on Moon

- ❖ NASA spacecraft Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) has observed water molecules moving around the dayside of the Moon.
- ❖ Until the last decade, scientists thought that the Moon was arid, with any water existing.
- ❖ Lyman Alpha Mapping Project (LAMP), the instrument aboard LRO has measured sparse layer of molecules temporarily stuck to the Moon's surface.
- ❖ Lunar water can potentially be used by humans to make fuel or to use for radiation shielding or thermal management.



New Group of Stars

- ❖ Researchers from Thiruvananthapuram and Mumbai have identified a new population of ultraviolet stars in the globular cluster NGC 2808 using Indian multi-wavelength space observatory AstroSat.
- ❖ Globular clusters are collections of thousands to millions of stars, moving as one unit.
- ❖ These stars are tightly held together by gravity of the cluster, and are believed to have formed together at roughly the same time.
- ❖ NGC 2808 is one of the most massive globular clusters that we know of, and is located at a distance of 47,000 light years from us.
- ❖ This cluster was observed by the team of researchers using the Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (UVIT) on-board AstroSat.



Astrosat

- ❖ Astrosat is India's first multi-wavelength space observatory.
- ❖ It was launched on a PSLV-XL on 28 September 2015.
- ❖ With the success of this satellite ISRO has proposed to launch AstroSat-2 as a successor for Astrosat when nears its five-year life span.
- ❖ This mission has put ISRO in a very exclusive club of nations that have space-based observatories.
- ❖ Only the United States, European Space Agency, Japan and Russia have such observatories in space.

Observer App

- ❖ Election Commission has for the first time started using a mobile application, "Observer App" that will help poll observers to submit reports.
- ❖ Over 1,800 IAS, IPS and IRS officials and some others from the Central services are to be deployed as observers in the coming Lok Sabha and State Assembly polls.
- ❖ They will get all the important notifications, alerts, and urgent messages through the "Observer App".
- ❖ It will help them to get their deployment status, download the ID card and update their profile.

Khanderi Submarine

- ❖ Indian Navy is set to induct the second Scorpene submarine Khanderi by early May.
- ❖ Khanderi was launched in January 2017 and has since been undergoing a series of trials.



- ❖ Khanderi is a “KALVARI Class” Attack Submarine.
- ❖ It is a diesel-electric attack submarine which is designed by French naval defence and energy company DCNS and manufactured at Mazagon Dock Limited in Mumbai.

Topical Gel to Protect Farmers

- ❖ Researchers in Bengaluru have developed a gel for the skin to protect agricultural workers from harmful pesticide sprays.
- ❖ The base of the gel is chitosan, a natural substance extracted from the waste shells of crabs and shrimps, with that they added a nucleophile and few aqua reagents to get the consistency and desired pH.
- ❖ This gel was found to cleave a wide range of commercially available pesticides before they enter the bloodstream, thus reducing the pesticide-induced enzyme inhibition.

Harmful effects of Pesticides

- ❖ Organophosphate pesticides bring about the inhibition of important enzymes (AChE) of the human body.
- ❖ It can affect the functioning of nervous system, heart, immunity, and even the reproductive system.

1.3 PetaFlop Computer

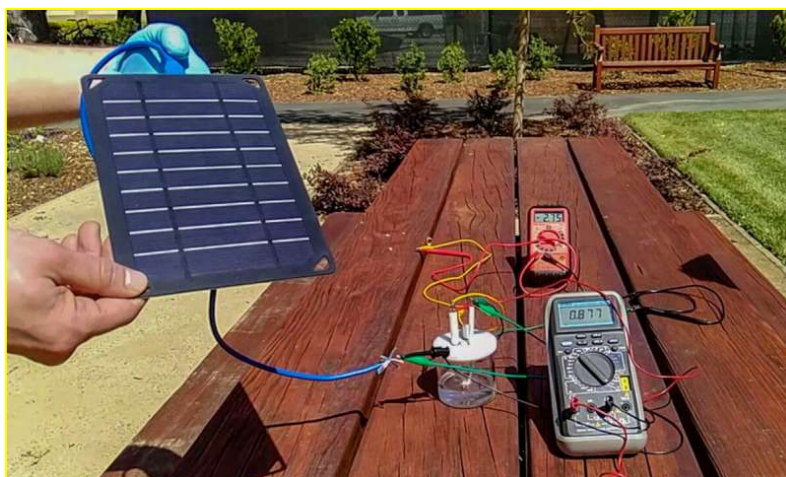
- ❖ IIT Kharagpur has signed an MoU with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to setup India's first 1.3 PetaFlop High-Performance Computing facility and data centre ecosystem under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
- ❖ Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) is an autonomous Scientific Society of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.

First blockchain-based digital currency

- ❖ Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) and the Barbados-based fintech company, Bitt Inc have signed a pact to conduct a blockchain-issued Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).
- ❖ It is a pilot project within the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU).
- ❖ This is the first of its kind in the world and will involve a securely minted and issued digital version of the EC dollar (DXCD).
- ❖ Also, EC Dollar will be the world's first digital legal tender currency to be issued by a central bank on blockchain.

Hydrogen fuel from seawater

- ❖ Stanford scientists have invented a way to generate hydrogen fuel from seawater using solar power.



- ❖ They find a new way of separating hydrogen and oxygen gas from salt water.
- ❖ Since the process also produces breathable oxygen, divers or submarines could bring devices into the ocean and generate oxygen down below without having to surface for air.
- ❖ Hydrogen is an attractive option for fuel because it does not emit carbon dioxide.
- ❖ Splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen with electricity is called as electrolysis.

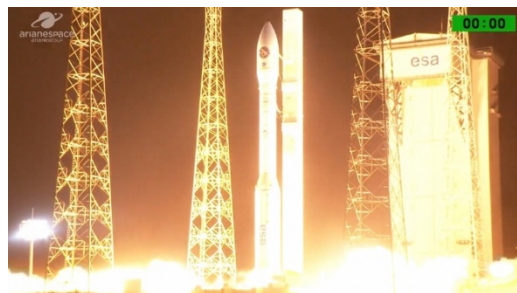
OSIRIS-REx and Asteroid Bennu

- ❖ NASA's Osiris - REx mission detected particle plumes ejecting off of the surface on January 6, followed by additional plumes over the last two months.
- ❖ This makes Bennu an active asteroid that is regularly ejecting material into space, which is rare.



PRISMA Satellite of Italy

- ❖ A European Vega rocket carried a new Earth-observation satellite into orbit for the Italian Space Agency named PRISMA.
- ❖ PRISMA is an Italian acronym for Hyperspectral Precursor of the Application Mission.
- ❖ The satellite will operate in a sun-synchronous orbit.
- ❖ This means that it circles the Earth in such a way that the sun is always in the same position as the satellite takes pictures of the planet below.
- ❖ The main purpose of PRISMA is to study the interaction between atmosphere, biosphere and hydrosphere, observation of global climate change and effects of human activities on ecosystems.



Digital information into DNA

- ❖ Microsoft and researchers from the University of Washington have built a full end-to-end automated DNA storage device.
- ❖ Using this device, they can able to translate digital information into DNA and then back to bits.
- ❖ The software used in the system converts the 1's and 0's of digital data into DNA sequence and stored it as a liquid.

Shiksha Vani App

- ❖ Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) launched a podcast app 'Shiksha Vani' app.
- ❖ It is aimed to disseminate crucial information to students and parents in a timely manner.

WHAT IT DOES

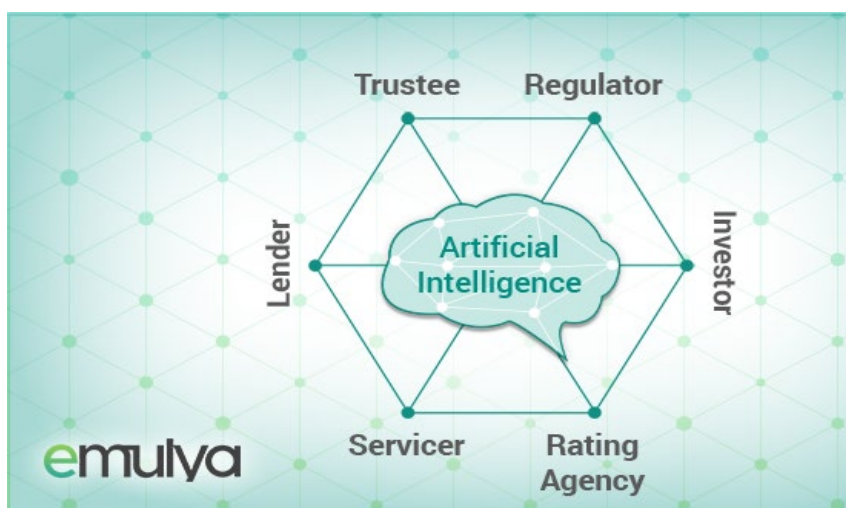
Parents and students need no registration and can access publicly available information

- Podcast will disseminate information on the board's activities
- App is available for Android users
- Has information for principals, teachers, centre superintendents and invigilators, examiners, regional officers, parents, students and the public

- ❖ CBSE also mentioned that its first episode, on the evaluation process of Class 10 and 12 board examinations, has been released on the platform.

eMulya Platform

- ❖ Intain Fintech, an AI and block chain-based software products firm, will be launching 'eMulya platform' by the end of 2019.
- ❖ It is an intelligent block chain that facilitates efficient, secure and trustworthy asset securitisation transactions for NBFCs in India.
- ❖ eMulya will utilize AI to onboard authenticated loans and asset data to the platform and allows investors, originators, issuers, rating agencies and services to manage the securitization life cycle in complete trust and transparency.

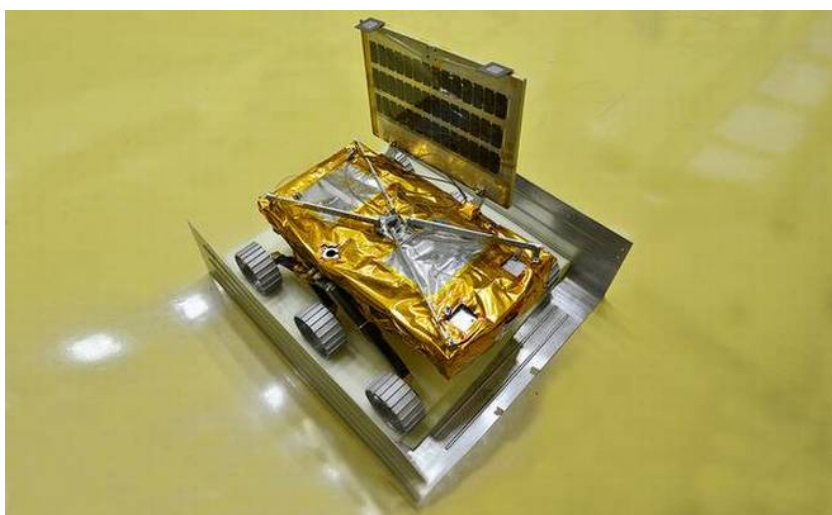


Smart weapon Test fire

- ❖ Pakistan Air Force has announced successfully test-firing an indigenously developed "smart weapon" from a JF-17 Thunder fighter jet.
- ❖ It will provide a very potent day and night capability to engage a variety of targets with pinpoint accuracy.
- ❖ This trial is a great milestone for the country as the weapon has been developed, integrated and qualified solely through indigenous efforts of Pakistan.

Chandrayaan 2

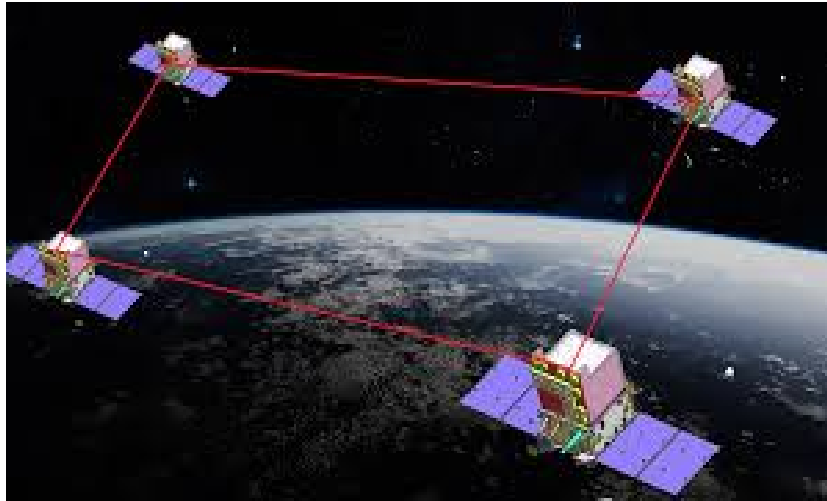
- ❖ India's lunar mission Chandrayaan 2, scheduled to launch next month, will carry NASA's laser instruments that allow scientists to make precise measurements of the distance to the Moon.



- ❖ Indian mission carries the NASA-owned laser retroreflector arrays.
- ❖ Retroreflectors are sophisticated mirrors, that reflect laser light signals sent from the Earth.
- ❖ The signals can help pinpoint precisely where the lander is, which scientists can use to precisely calculate the Moon's distance from Earth.

Electronic intelligence satellite 'Emisat'

- ❖ ISRO will launch an electronic intelligence satellite 'Emisat' for the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ❖ ISRO, for the first time, will also demonstrate its new technologies like launching three different satellites in three different orbits.



- ❖ Emisat is based on ISRO's Indian Mini Satellite -2 (IMS-2) bus platform. The satellite is intended for electromagnetic spectrum measurement.
- ❖ Emisat is dubbed as India's "Spy in the Sky".

PSLV-C45

- ❖ PSLV-C45 is a four-stage rocket where each stage uses different kind of fuel.
 - Stage 1: Composite Solid
 - Stage 2: Earth Storable Liquid
 - Stage 3: Composite Solid
 - Stage 4: Earth Storable Liquid
- ❖ This will be the first launch in PSLV C-45 history to use solar panels to make the fourth stage last longer in orbit.
- ❖ Using the solar panels in the fourth stage, the PSLV can provide power to attached payloads almost indefinitely.
- ❖ Stage four will keep the launch vehicle in orbit for about six months to carry out experiments.
- ❖ It will use microgravity to carry out the experiments and will carry a small payload built by the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST), Trivandrum.

Mission Shakthi

- ❖ Prime Minister announced that the DRDO has developed anti-satellite system A-SAT successfully destroyed a live satellite in the Low Earth Orbit.

- ❖ India is the fourth country after the U.S., Russia, and China to have this technology.
- ❖ ASAT weapons are missile-based systems to attack moving satellites.
- ❖ This test was done in the lower atmosphere to ensure that there is no space debris.
- ❖ America was the first country to develop and test ASAT. China conducted a similar test in 2007.

Low-Earth Orbit satellites (LEO)

- ❖ These are satellites roughly at an altitude of 2,000 kilometers from the earth.
- ❖ Majority of satellites are concentrated in this region.



Interceptor missile being launched by DRDO on Wednesday

AI-based system to detect malaria

- ❖ IIT-Delhi announced that they have developed an Artificial Intelligence (AI) based electronic hardware system to detect malaria, tuberculosis, an intestinal parasite, and cervical cancer in milliseconds.
- ❖ The system can detect patterns and give accurate answers within milliseconds.
- ❖ They used nanotechnology to develop a diagnostic support system which can read raw data from blood samples, patterns of a patient etc and can extract information.

Blockchain based coffee e-marketplace

- ❖ Union commerce ministry launched a blockchain-based coffee e-marketplace to help farmers integrate with markets.
- ❖ This will help integrate farmers with markets in a transparent manner and lead to realisation of fair price for the coffee producer.
- ❖ This blockchain will also reduce the number of layers between coffee growers and buyers and help farmers double their income.

Discovery of planets using AI

- ❖ Astronomers from the University of Texas at Austin, in partnership with Google have discovered two hidden planets in the data collected by the Kepler space telescope.
- ❖ They have created an algorithm that has explored the data taken by Kepler to find out signals that were missed by traditional planet-hunting methods.

- ❖ The two new planets discovered are located in the constellation of Aquarius.
- ❖ Both were named as K2-293b and K2-294b, they gravitate around a star located 1300 and 1230 light-years from our solar system respectively.











Space Junk

- ❖ With successful testing of anti-satellite missile in India, the world expressed concern over space junk generated from the satellite that was shot down.
- ❖ Space junk is an ever-growing problem with more than 7,500 tonnes of redundant hardware now thought to be circling the Earth.
- ❖ The rising population of space debris increases the potential danger to all space vehicles, especially The International Space Station (ISS).
- ❖ Kessler Syndrome, proposed by the NASA scientist Donald J. Kessler in 1978 warns of the dangers of collusion because of the space junk.

ENVIRONMENT

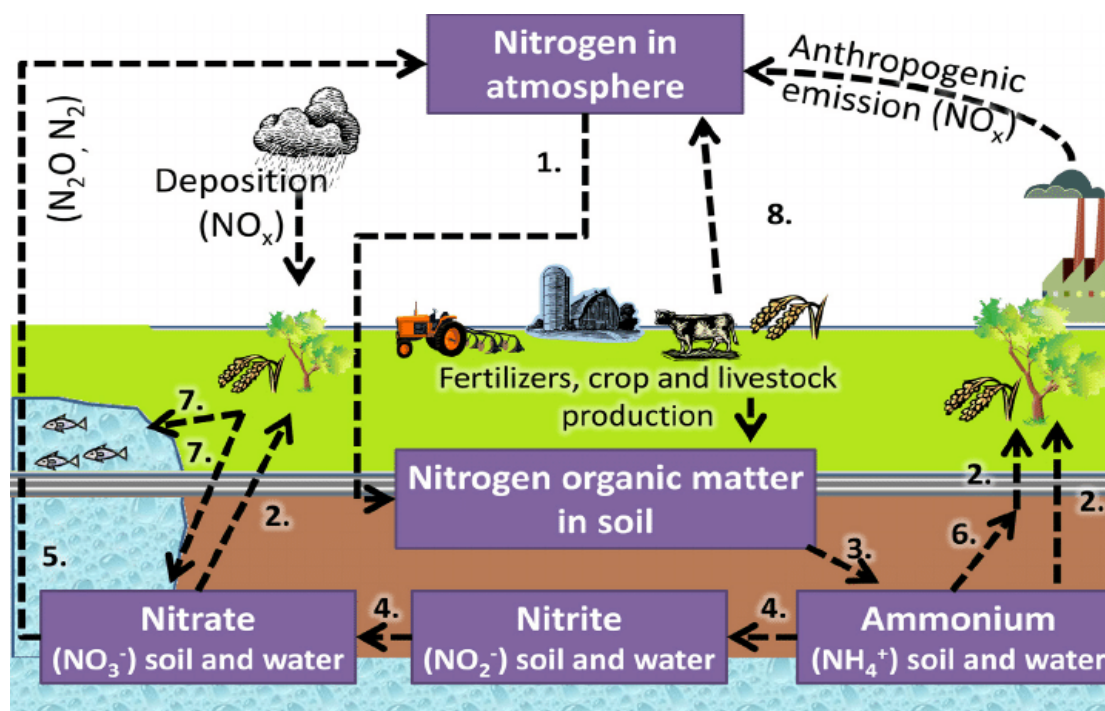
World Air Quality Report

- ❖ IQAir AirVisual 2018 World Air Quality Report was compiled by Greenpeace in association with IQAir AirVisual.
- ❖ This index measures the presence of fine particulate matter PM2.5 in the air.
- ❖ According to the report,
 - Delhi has been ranked the most polluted capital in the world.
 - Gurugram is the most polluted city.
 - 22 of the top 30 most polluted cities are in India.

Rank	City	2017 AVG	2018 AVG
1	 Gurugram, India	145.6	135.8
2	 Ghaziabad, India	144.6	135.2
3	 Faisalabad, Pakistan	-	130.4
4	 Faridabad, India	123	129.1
5	 Bhiwadi, India	-	125.4
6	 Noida, India	134	123.6
7	 Patna, India	118.5	119.7
8	 Hotan, China	91.9	116
9	 Lucknow, India	119.2	115.7
10	 Lahore, Pakistan	133.2	114.9

Nitrogen pollution

- ❖ Annual Frontiers Report 2019 was published by the United Nations (UN) which has included a chapter on nitrogen pollution.
- ❖ This report was released by the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) in Nairobi.
- ❖ It highlights that growing demand on the livestock, agriculture, transport, industry and energy sector has led to a sharp growth of the levels of reactive nitrogen ammonia, nitrate, nitric oxide (NO), nitrous oxide (N₂O) in our ecosystems.
- ❖ According to the World Health Organization, nitrate-contaminated drinking water can cause reduced blood function, cancer and endemic goitres.



Star rating to More machines

- ❖ Microwave Ovens and Washing Machines will also now be assigned star rating to indicate their Energy efficiency.
- ❖ This programme of star rating of Microwave Ovens and Washing Machines will be implemented on a voluntary basis and will be valid up to December 31, 2020.
- ❖ The criteria approved for the washing machines also include water efficiency in addition to energy performance for grant of star rating.
- ❖ Ratings will be given by Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
- ❖ BEE is a statutory body set up under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- ❖ BEE assists government with strategies to reduce overall energy intensity of Indian Economy within the framework of Energy Conservation Act.

Clownfish hatchery

- ❖ National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR) has launched a new project in coastal Maharashtra which aims to train villagers in the clownfish trade.
- ❖ Clownfish or anemonefish are most widely used in aquariums. These fishes form symbiotic mutualisms with sea anemones.
- ❖ This clownfish hatchery, the first of its kind is to be set up in Mumbai.
- ❖ It will help the villagers set up a clownfish trade business.
- ❖ Clownfish were also brought from Tamil Nadu, Andaman Islands, and Lakshadweep.

Ocean Heat-waves

- ❖ Number of heat wave days jumped by more than 50 percent in the 30 years to 2016, compared with the period of 1925 to 1954.
- ❖ As heat waves have increased, kelp forests, seagrass meadows, and coral reefs have been lost.
- ❖ Heat-waves induced wild fires also, that take out huge areas of forest.
- ❖ 10-week marine heat-wave near Western Australia in 2011 shattered an entire ecosystem and permanently pushed commercial fish species into colder waters.

Wetland of International Importance

- ❖ Indian Sundarbans was accorded with the status of 'Wetland of International Importance' in the Ramsar Convention.
- ❖ This site become 27th Ramsar Convention site of India.
- ❖ Sundarbans encompasses hundreds of islands and a maze of rivers, rivulets and creeks, in the delta of the Rivers Ganges and Brahmaputra on the Bay of Bengal in India and Bangladesh.
- ❖ Indian Sundarbans was already a UNESCO world heritage site and it is a home to the Royal Bengal Tiger.
- ❖ Sundarbans Tiger Reserve is situated within the site and part of it has been declared a "critical tiger habitat" under the national law.
- ❖ It is also a "Tiger Conservation Landscape" of global importance.

WORLD'S LARGEST MANGROVE FOREST	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The wetland falls within the Sunderbans mangrove, the largest in the world ➤ It's home to endangered species like the Irrawaddy dolphin, northern river terrapin, fishing cat and several species of kingfisher ➤ The Sunderbans is spread over a 10,000 sq km area with 4,000 sq km on the Indian side ➤ It hosts several species of migratory birds every year 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Sunderbans was recognised as a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1987 ➤ Wetlands act as a barrier against cyclones, tidal surges and intrusion of salt water

Ramsar Convention

- ❖ Ramsar Convention was adopted in February 2, 1971.
- ❖ It is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for international cooperation for the conservation and use of wetlands and their resources.
- ❖ The Convention came into force in 1975.

Wood snake

- ❖ A species of wood snake (*Xylophis indicus*) that wasn't seen for 140 years has reappeared in a survey conducted by scientists in the Meghamalai Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ The species is endemic to the Meghamalai forests and the Periyar Tiger Reserve landscape.
- ❖ The local population of wood snakes was last spotted and recorded by British military officer and naturalist Colonel Richard Henry Beddome in 1878.



New species of frog

- ❖ A new species of frog known as ‘Starry Dwarf Frog’ has been discovered in Western Ghats mountain range.
- ❖ It has been named ‘Astrobatrachus kurichiyana’ and is found in Kurichiyarmala, Kerala.
- ❖ It measures about one inch long and wears a star-like coat of spots on its back.
- ❖ This is an oddball frog and it has no close sister species for maybe tens of millions of years.



Annual Quality of Living Survey

- ❖ Global consulting firm Mercer has released its annual quality of living survey in which 231 cities across the globe were ranked based on various factors.
- ❖ This is the 21st edition of the survey.
- ❖ Following factors are evaluated in Mercer’s Quality of Living Reports, which offer city-to-city comparisons for nearly 500 global assignment destinations.
 - Recreation, Public Transport
 - Natural, Economic, Political & Social and Socio-cultural Environment
 - School and Education
 - Medical Facility
 - Housing
- ❖ Vienna tops world ranking for the Tenth consecutive time.

- ❖ Chennai leads the ranking of cities in India ranked 105 and Bengaluru second best with the ranking of 149.

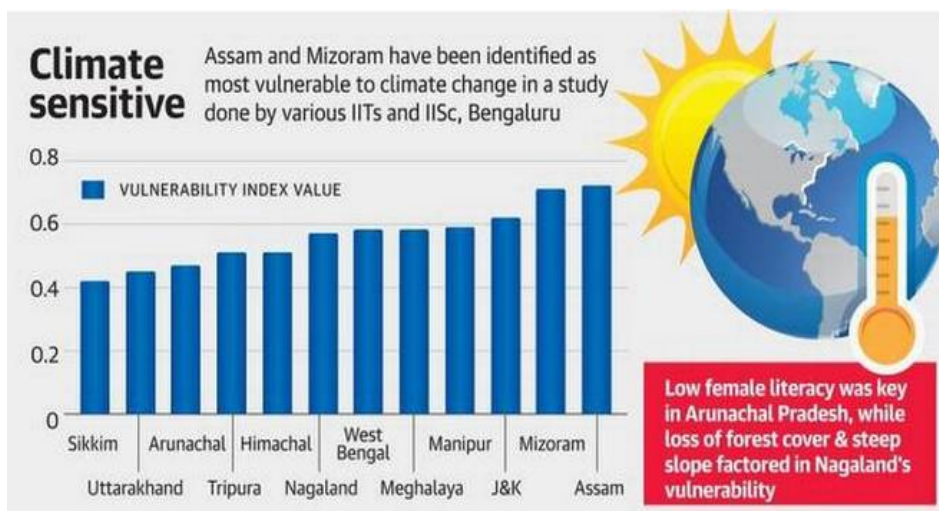
In Southern Asia, the Indian cities of New Delhi (162), Mumbai (154) and Bengaluru (149) remained unchanged from last year's ranking for overall quality of living, with Colombo (138) topping the ranking. In 105th place, Chennai ranks as the region's safest city, while Karachi (226) is the least safe.

Climate Vulnerability Index

- ❖ Indian scientists and researchers in collaboration with state authorities prepared a 'vulnerability index' of the 12 Himalayan states based on district-level data.
- ❖ The target was to evolve a common methodology, and determine how districts there are equipped to deal with the vagaries of climate change.
- ❖ Vulnerability would be a measure of the inherent risks a district faces, primarily by virtue of its geography and socio-economic situation.
- ❖ Eight key parameters on the basis of which a vulnerability score could be generated are

Percentage of Forest Cover	Yield variability of food grain
Area under slope >30%	Average-man days under MGNREGA scheme
Population density	IMR Rate
Female literacy	Percentage of BPL Families

- ❖ On a scale ranging 0-1, 1 indicating the highest possible level of vulnerability, at the top of the scale were Assam with a score of 0.72 and Mizoram at 0.71.
- ❖ The Department of Science and Technology eventually plans to have a climate portal for all the states, whereby users can zoom it on any district in the country and get a sense of what kind of risks in Climate and Socio-economic are present.



Global Environment Outlook 2019

- ❖ The United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) has released the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook, 2019 (GEO) titled 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People'.
- ❖ It was first published in 1997. This is 6th edition of GEO and GEOs are the most important and comprehensive report from UNEP.
- ❖ This report states that Human activities are degrading the global environment at a pace that could endanger the "ecological foundations of society" and human health.
- ❖ In addition to climate change, pollution and loss of biodiversity are the major crises.

India at UNEA Nairobi Meet

- ❖ India piloted a resolution passed in UN Environment Agency meeting at Nairobi to phase out the plastic use by 2030 and to create awareness on the nitrogen pollution.
- ❖ The damage to the ecosystems caused by the unsustainable use and disposal of plastic products was highlighted.
- ❖ The pollution caused by reactive nitrogen which threatens human health, ecosystem services, its contribution to climate change and stratospheric ozone depletion was also highlighted.

Bomb Cyclone

- ❖ Strong winds, heavy snow, rain and historic flooding has followed in the wake of the "bomb cyclone" that hit into the central U.S.A.
- ❖ It has created the worst floods in half a century.

Bomb Cyclone or Bombogenesis

- ❖ A winter storm that is called a bomb cyclone or “bombogenesis” by meteorologists.
- ❖ It is expected to rapidly intensify, dropping 24 millibars (or atmospheric pressure) over a 24-hour span.
- ❖ The difference in temperature between warmer seas (Atlantic Ocean) and colder land mass (American Midwest) is the reason for the creation of such strong winter storms in Mid latitude land masses.
- ❖ Such extreme climatological events are related to Global warming by prominent climatologists.

First Otter Census in UP

- ❖ For the first time, Uttar Pradesh is taking a census of Otters in its protected areas (Pilibhit Tiger Reserve).
- ❖ Otters are an important part of the forest ecosystem.

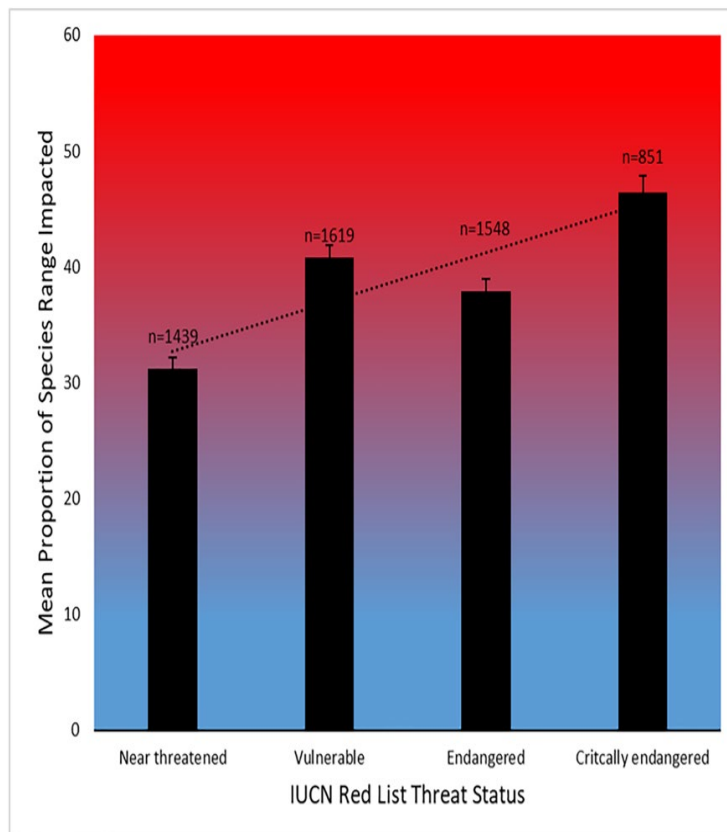


- ❖ A healthy population of otters means the water bodies of the reserve are pollution-free.
- ❖ Clean water bodies mean a healthy ecosystem of the forest.
- ❖ Three species of otters are found in India.

Otter Species Native to India	IUCN Status
Eurasian Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	Near Threatened
Smooth-coated Otter (<i>Lutra perspicillata</i>)	Vulnerable
Small-clawed Otter (<i>Aonyx cinereus</i>)	Vulnerable

Impacted species in hotspots

- ❖ A recent study published in PLOS Biology, an international journal dedicated to biological science, found that human impacts on species occur across 84% of the earth's surface.
- ❖ India ranks 16th in such impacts, with 35 species impacted on an average.
- ❖ Malaysia ranks first among the countries with the highest number of impacted species (125).



Global Energy Transition index

- ❖ World Economic Forum has released a report titled the Energy Transition Index (ETI), which compares the energy sectors of 115 countries and analyses their readiness for energy transition.

Top 10 Countries Energy Transition Index 2019¹

	Score	Rank
Sweden	74.9%	1
Switzerland	74.3%	2
Norway	73.4%	3
Finland	73.0%	4
Denmark	72.2%	5
Austria	70.7%	6
United Kingdom	70.2%	7
France	68.6%	8
Netherlands	68.5%	9
Iceland	68.5%	10

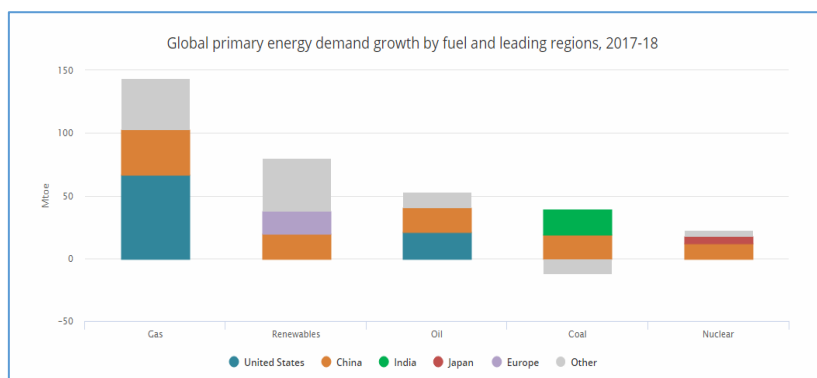
Note 1: The Energy Transition Index benchmarks countries on the performance of their energy system, as well as their readiness for transition to a secure, sustainable, affordable, and reliable energy future. ETI 2019 score on a scale from 0 to 100%.

Source: Fostering Effective Energy Transition Report 2019, World Economic Forum

- ❖ India has moved up two places to rank 76th on a global energy transition index.
- ❖ Rankings are based on how well countries are able to balance energy security and access with environmental sustainability.
- ❖ Sweden tops the list.

Global Energy and CO2 status report

- ❖ International Energy Agency (IEA) released the Global Energy and CO2 Status Report.
- ❖ It highlights worldwide trends and developments of fuels, renewable sources, energy efficiency, and carbon emissions.
- ❖ Energy consumption worldwide grew by 2.3% in 2018, nearly twice the average rate of growth since 2010.



- ❖ As per the report, India's energy demand outpaced global demand growth in 2018.
- ❖ India, China and the United States together accounted for nearly 70% of the rise in energy demand.
- ❖ Despite this growth, per capita emissions in India remain low at only 40% of the global average.

Island protection zone 2019 notification

- ❖ Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified Island Protection Zone (IPZ) 2019 for Andaman and Nicobar.
- ❖ These changes in Island Protection Zone rules are aligned with the Niti Aayog's proposal for holistic development in the Islands.
- ❖ It brings the norms for Andaman and Nicobar at par with Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) 2018 norms for other islands.

Highlights of IPZ 2019

- ❖ It allows eco-tourism projects 20 meters from the high tide line (HTL) in smaller islands like Baratang, Havelock, and Car Nicobar.
- ❖ In case of larger islands, 50 meters from the HTL is permitted.
- ❖ It allows for eco-tourism activities like mangrove walks, tree huts and nature trails in island coastal regulation zone (ICRZ) IA.
 - ICRZ 2018: ICRZ IA, provides areas classified as the most eco-sensitive region of the islands which includes turtle nesting grounds, marshes, coral reefs etc.

Micro Plastics in Water

- ❖ The presence of microplastics in some drinking water sources in the Chennai and in Puzhal reservoir was detected.
- ❖ Microplastics in drinking water, when heated over 100-degree Celsius, releases a toxic substance called dioxin.
- ❖ The dioxin is a known carcinogen, dissolves in the water, posing health risks to consumers.

State of the Global Climate Report

- ❖ World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released the "The State of the Global Climate in 2018" report.
- ❖ It is the 25th annual record of the Global climate.
- ❖ According to this report, there is a significant impact on temperatures, as 2018 was the fourth warmest year on record and almost 1°C above from the period of 1850 to 1900.
- ❖ The first statement was released in 1994.

STATE

Banglar Shiksha portal

- ❖ West Bengal government inaugurated a web portal (banglarshiksha.gov.in) to provide real-time data on state-run and aided schools.
- ❖ This was the first-of-its-kind online initiative in the state as well as in the country.
- ❖ This portal will address many issues, including attendance of students and teachers.

Auroville

- ❖ Auroville celebrated its 51st anniversary on February 28.
- ❖ Auroville is an experimental township in Villupuram district mostly in the state of Tamil Nadu, with some parts in the Union Territory of Puducherry in South India.



- ❖ It was founded in 1968 by Mirra Alfassa (known as "the Mother") and designed by architect Roger Anger. Both are from France.

BioAsia 2019

- ❖ 16th edition of BioAsia 2019 -Asia's largest biotechnology and life-sciences forum was conducted in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ❖ The theme of the conference was "Life Sciences 4.0 – Disrupt the Disruption".
- ❖ BioAsia is an annual event organised by the Government of Telangana and it largely focuses on re-imagining healthcare after technological disruptions.



4th seismometer

- ❖ The National Centre of Seismology (NCS) and India Meteorological Department (IMD) said another seismometer would be installed in Palghar district, Maharashtra.
- ❖ The fourth seismometer will be installed along the road that connects Haldipada and Udhawa in Palghar district.

Vehicles to curb manual scavenge

- ❖ The Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal flagged off a fleet of 200 sewer cleaning machines.
- ❖ The machines have been provided to skilled manual scavengers making them 'sanitation-entrepreneurs'.



- ❖ With this, Delhi becomes the first State in the country to roll-out such machines to help put an end to the practice of manual cleaning of sewers.

Rice Knowledge Bank - Assam

- ❖ Rice Knowledge Bank - Assam, an agriculture web portal was launched in Assam.

- ❖ It is dedicated to magnifying knowledge on rice production technologies and techniques, best production practices and state agriculture facts.



- ❖ It was launched under the World Bank funded project – Agri-business and Rural Transformation (APART).

Guinness World Records in Kumbha Mela 2019

- ❖ Prayagraj Kumbh Mela 2019 was organized from 15th January 2019 – 4th March 2019 in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad).
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh has made it to the Guinness World Records in the following three sectors.
 - Largest traffic and crowd management plan.
 - Biggest painting exercise of public sites under “Paint My City” scheme.
 - Biggest sanitation and waste disposal mechanism.

Jalamrutha Scheme

- ❖ Karnataka Government has launched the water conservation scheme Jalamrutha.
- ❖ This scheme focuses on drought-proofing measures, including the protection and rejuvenation of water bodies.

Yuvashree Arpan Scheme

- ❖ Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee has unveiled a new scheme Yuvashree Plan II or Yuvashree Arpan to encourage entrepreneurship among youth.
- ❖ Under this Scheme around 50000 Youths who have passed out of ITI or other polytechnic institutes will be eligible to get financial support of Rs One Lakh from the state MSME department to set up their own business initiatives.
- ❖ Yuvashree I was launched by the labour department of the state of West Bengal.

- ❖ Under the scheme, an unemployment allowance of Rs 1500 per month was provided per month to 1,00,000 unemployed youth.

Mukhya Mantri Karigar Sahayata

- ❖ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched 'Mukhya Mantri Karigar Sahayata' scheme for financial assistance to craftsmen.
- ❖ The nodal department of the scheme is the Directorate of handicrafts.
- ❖ Craftsmen with 10 years of experience and having annual income below Rs.1 lakh are eligible to get an assistance of Rs.800 per month.
- ❖ Craftsmen above 80 years of age would get Rs.1000 per month allowance for those has the same experience and annual income as above.
- ❖ For selection of beneficiaries, a selection committee will be constituted in the district level under collectors of the respective districts.

ONE Delhi App

- ❖ Delhi Government has launched ONE Delhi mobile app.
- ❖ It can be used for commute planning
- ❖ It can be used to plan travel across multiple government transport facilities such as metros and buses.
- ❖ It had earlier launched a common mobility card, ONE Delhi card, which can be used in tandem with the new app.
- ❖ The app offers facilities such as:
 - Obtaining the estimated time of arrival for buses and metros.
 - Tracking the real-time location of buses and metros.
 - Providing information about their fares.
 - Providing the best route and mode of travel between two places.
 - List of tourist spots in Delhi.

Mukhyamantri Anchal Amrit Yojana

- ❖ Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched the Mukhyamantri Anchal Amrit Yojana in Dehradun.
- ❖ Under this scheme 2.5 lakh children at 20,000 Anganwadi kendras in the state will be given 100 ml milk twice a week for free.
- ❖ As per recent data, more than 18,000 children suffer from malnutrition in Uttarakhand.

GI tag for Idukki's Marayoor Jaggery

- ❖ Traditional and handmade product from Idukki district of Kerala, Marayoor Jaggery received the Geographical Indication tag from the Central Government.
- ❖ It is not produced in modern factories or using modern equipment. It is prepared in sheds located on the sugarcane farm.



Atal Aahar Yojana

- ❖ Maharashtra government launched a special scheme for construction workers in the state called “Atal Aahar Yojana”.
- ❖ This will be implemented in some areas of the state on a pilot basis and later the scope of the scheme will be expanded.
- ❖ Under the Atal Aahar Yojana, construction workers will be provided nutritious food at their workplace for just Rs 5.
- ❖ Previously under the Shramev Jayate Yojana, a pension of Rs 3,000 was given to construction workers above the age of 60 years.

Awards for Arts & culture

- ❖ Assam government announced various awards in the field of culture as a recognition for the talent and efforts on promotion of dance and music.
- ❖ Srimanata Sankardev Award 2017
 - It was conferred to noted Satriya exponent Basistha Dev Sharma of Barpeta Satra for his works on promotion of Satriya dance and music as well as folk culture of the state.
- ❖ Madhavdev Award 2016
 - It will be given to Jugadananda Chandra Goswami of Mayamora Dinjoy Satra.

- He has taken remarkable steps for recognition of Satriya dance and music at National level and preservation of manuscripts in the Mayamora Dinjoy Satra.
- ❖ Madhavdev Award 2019
 - It would be given to Dr. Sunil Kothari who is an eminent dance historian, critic and scholar.
 - He enriched the cultural field of the country with his 12 books on different forms of Indian classical dance and allied forms.
- ❖ Kalicharan Brahma Award 2018
 - It would be bestowed on Borongajuli Srimanta Sankardev Satra of Udalguri Harekrishna Mahanta.

PM's Uttar Pradesh Visit

- ❖ PM inaugurated Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology and unveiled a statue of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya at the campus in Greater Noida of Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ He laid foundation stone of two Thermal Power Projects, one at Khurja, Uttar Pradesh and other at Buxar, Bihar.

Mizoram Liquor Prohibition Bill - 2019

- ❖ Mizoram Cabinet approved the Mizoram Liquor Prohibition Bill - 2019.
- ❖ There was total prohibition in Mizoram from 1997 till January 2015 with the Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition Act in force in the state.
- ❖ The previous government only allowed opening of Liquor shops in the state from March 2015.

Increase reservation quota of OBC

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh government issued an ordinance increasing reservation quota for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 27 per cent from the current 14 per cent.
- ❖ With the issuance of the ordinance, Madhya Pradesh has become the only state in the country to have 27 per cent quota for OBCs.

Reform and Rehabilitation for J & K Militants

- ❖ J & K Government is drafting a policy to reform and rehabilitate the militants.
- ❖ According to the draft, the new initiative addresses the need for rehabilitation at a policy level through a two-pronged approach such as
 - Reformative measures and
 - Opportunities of livelihood.

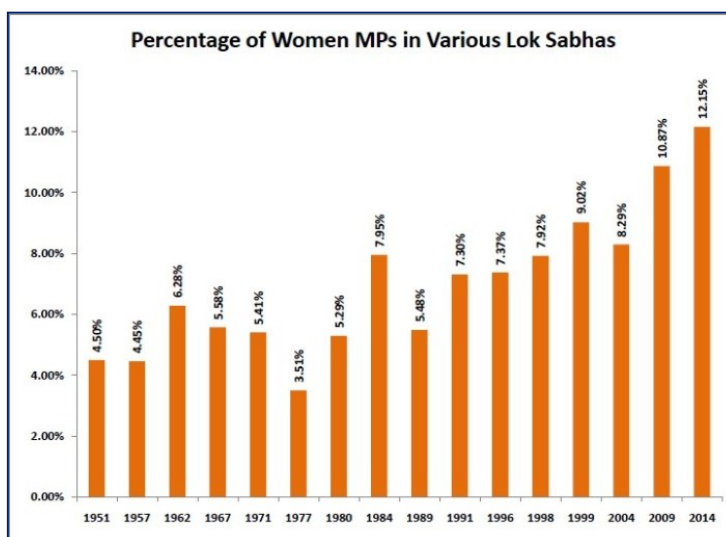
- ❖ There is provision of monthly stipend of Rs.6,000 to a militant who surrenders and joins the mainstream of the society.
- ❖ These initiatives and provisions however do not cover militants who have done heinous crimes.
- ❖ State Administrative Council (SAC) will implement these draft recommendations, subject to clearance from the State Home Department and the Chief Secretary.
- ❖ SAC is led by the Governor and includes his four advisors and Chief Secretary.

Dialogue and Development Commission

- ❖ High-level committee consist of 17 members has been constituted by the Delhi government's Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC).
- ❖ It aims to "reform higher education" in the city.
- ❖ This committee will recommend goals, metrics, policies, and actionable plans for reforming Delhi's higher education system within a year.
- ❖ Nalanda 2.0, a non-profit policy think tank with a mission to make India's higher education system world-class, is the knowledge partner of DDC in this initiative.

33% reservation for women

- ❖ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that his party BJD would allocate 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies in Odisha.
- ❖ Last year Odisha state assembly passed a resolution seeking 33% reservation for women in Parliament and state assemblies.
- ❖ Mamata Banerjee led TMC in West Bengal also set the bar higher by naming 17 women over 40% in its list of 42 candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls in West Bengal.



Boat ambulance service

- ❖ Odisha government on March 5, 2019 launched boat ambulance service for those living in the remote villages near Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara district.



- ❖ This boat ambulance can speedily reach the river and seaside villages.
- ❖ This ambulance service will be available round-the-clock, and is equipped with necessary medical equipment.
- ❖ Also, the State government has decided to introduce six more boat ambulances in riverside areas this year.

Bhitarkanika National Park

- ❖ Bhitarkanika National Park is the core area of Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary located in the north-east region of Kendrapara district in the state of Odisha.
- ❖ Bhitarkanika is the second largest mangrove forest after Sundarban in West Bengal.
- ❖ Its water bodies are the home of around 1,800 estuarine crocodiles.

GI tag for 'Sirsi Supari'

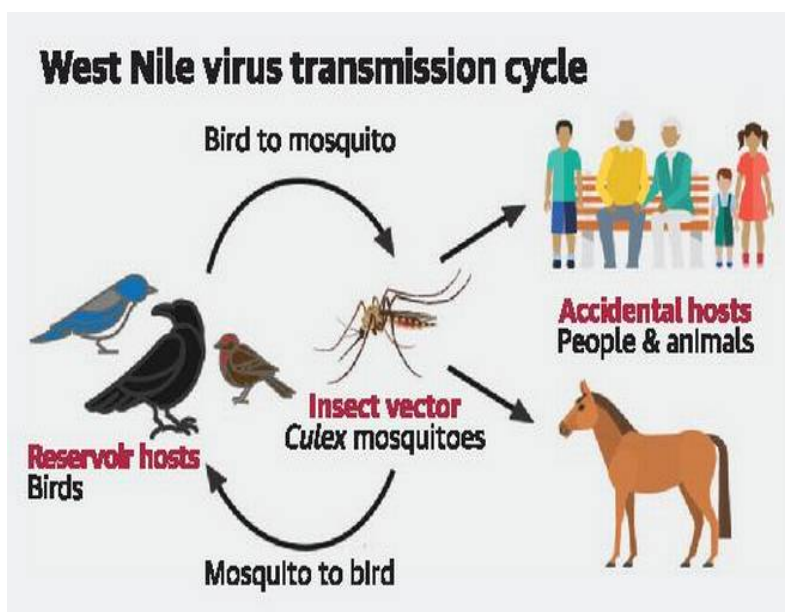
- ❖ For the first time in the arecanut sector, 'Sirsi Supari' grown in Uttara Kannada, Karnataka has received the Geographic Indication (GI) tag.



- ❖ It is cultivated in Yellapura, Siddapura and Sirsi taluks.
- ❖ This particular arecanut “is medium in size, somewhat flat and rounded in shape, somewhat ash coloured, and has a hard seed.”
- ❖ This particular variety has a unique taste due to differences in chemical composition.

West Nile fever

- ❖ A seven-year-old boy from Malappuram district, Kerala has been diagnosed with West Nile fever, a relatively unknown viral infection in the Malabar region in recent times.
- ❖ West Nile fever is spread by Culex mosquitoes.
- ❖ Its symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body, and swollen lymph glands.



- ❖ The World Health Organisation (WHO) says West Nile virus transmits to humans through bites from infected mosquitoes.
- ❖ Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds.

GI Tag for Coffee

- ❖ The Geographical Indications (GI) Registry has approved the GI tag for the following coffee varieties:

Variety of Coffee	Location and Characteristics
Coorg Arabica	Kodagu Region – Unique biotic and abiotic conditions of the region give unique aroma and flavour to the coffee when roasted
Chikmagalur	Karnataka – It is the region where coffee cultivation first began
Bababudangiri	Karnataka - Selectively hand-picked and processed by natural fermentation, the cup exhibits full body, acidity, mild flavour and striking aroma with a note of chocolate which makes it unique.
Araku Valley Arabica	Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh and Koraput district in Odisha - pleasant acidity with a citrus note of grapefruit and a mild jaggery-like sweetness with light to medium strength.
Wayanad Robusta	Kerala – This is raised both as a pure crop and as mixed crop along with pepper in the Wayanad region of Kerala.

Manohar Parrikar passes away

- ❖ Four-time [Goa](#) Chief Minister and former Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar passed away on March 17.
- ❖ Mr. Parrikar resigned as Chief Minister and served as Defence Minister from 2014-17 on the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



- ❖ Mr. Parrikar was the first Indian Institute of Technology alumnus (of IIT, Bombay) to serve as MLA of an Indian state as well as Chief Minister of Goa (in 2000).
- ❖ He became the Chief Minister for four terms but could not complete a single full term in office.

Goa Chief Minister

- ❖ Pramod Sawant (45) was sworn-in as 11th Chief Minister of Goa on March 19.
- ❖ He was given the oath of office and secrecy at Raj Bhavan by [Goa](#) Governor Mridula Sinha.



- ❖ Pramod Sawant was former Speaker of Goa legislative Assembly and MLA from Sankhelim in North Goa.

i-help initiative

- ❖ Assam chief electoral officer Mukesh Sahu launched the 'i-help' initiative at Janata Bhawan in Guwahati.
- ❖ It is a joint initiative of the office of the chief electoral officer, Assam and Common Service Centres (CSC), Assam to promote digital electoral literacy in the State.
- ❖ CSCs are internet-enabled access points spread throughout the country delivering various government and non-government digital services (e-Services) to the citizens.
- ❖ The entire programme is being launched under the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) in the state and it is geared to ensure that no voter is left behind.

Special stamp cover on Ice Stupa

- ❖ The Indian Department of Post on March 18, 2019 released a 'special stamp cover on Ice Stupa'.



- ❖ It was released by Jammu and Kashmir's Chief Postmaster during a function organised at the Ice Stupa site at Gangles Village in Leh.
- ❖ These special stamps aim to create awareness about depleting glaciers and affect the ecology around the Himalayas.

"Conquer Exam, Be a Warrior" - mobile App

- ❖ The Indian Institute of Public Health of Gandhinagar (IIPHG) has launched a mobile application – "Conquer Exam, Be a Warrior".

- ❖ It created this app in collaboration with National Mental Health Program, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Gujarat.
- ❖ This application creates awareness as well as help students to analyse their weak points and overcome from the exam pressure by providing assistance.
- ❖ At present the app is launched in English language only but in coming days it will be incorporated with Hindi, Gujarat and Marathi language.

Campus Ambassador

- ❖ 12 Campus Ambassadors have been appointed to woo young voters in Assam ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.
- ❖ They would carry out various awareness activities like street plays, poster making, VVPAT demonstration in educational institutes.

Kochi-Muziris Biennale

- ❖ The Kochi-Muziris Biennale is an international exhibition of contemporary art held in Kochi, Kerala.
- ❖ It is the largest art exhibition in India and the biggest contemporary art festival in Asia.



- ❖ The Kochi-Muziris Biennale is an initiative of the Kochi Biennale Foundation with support from the Government of Kerala.
- ❖ This art exhibition is unique because in addition to art display in closed spaces and galleries, art forms are exhibited in open spaces.

Monkey fever claims one in Kerala

- ❖ Kyasanur forest disease (KFD), also known as monkey fever, has claimed at least one life in Wayanad district in North Kerala.
- ❖ First identified in 1957, the disease is caused by Kyasanur Forest disease virus (KFDV).
- ❖ KFDV is a member of the virus family Flaviviridae, which also includes yellow fever and dengue fever.
- ❖ Kyasanur forest disease is a highly infectious tick-borne viral haemorrhagic fever and is associated with high mortality rates.
- ❖ Transmission of the disease may occur after a tick bite or contact with an infected animal, particularly a sick or recently dead monkey.

What is KFD?



KFD is a tick-borne infection which can turn fatal, and mainly spreads from monkeys and other domestic animals that carry the tick



The symptoms of this disease mimic symptoms of dengue, such as bleeding, headache, vomiting

The incubation period for this disease is between seven days and 14 days

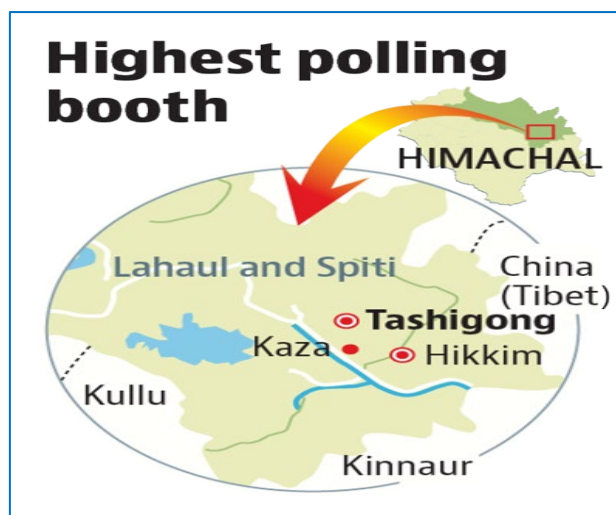
The virus is known to be active between January and May and then again starts infecting people from winter. KFD was first spotted in Karnataka in 1957 in a forest of Kyasanur village based in Shimogga district.

Ban on mentioning caste in FIRs

- ❖ The Punjab and Haryana High Court has barred the mentioning of caste in the FIRs.
- ❖ The antiquated Punjab Police Rules -1934 specified the mentioning of the caste of the complainant and the accused in the FIRs.
- ❖ The bench asserted that the right to dignity was a fundamental and basic human right.
- ❖ It also added division of society into sections cannot be determined by birth as all are born equal.
- ❖ The ruling came in a murder case where the Haryana Police mentioned during the course of the investigation the caste of the accused, witnesses and the victims.

World's highest Polling station

- ❖ Tashigang become the world's highest polling station which is located in the sleepy hamlet of Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ It is in the Buddhist-dominated Lahaul-Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh at an altitude of 15,256 feet.
- ❖ This polling station falls in one of the 17 assembly segments that form the Mandi Lok Sabha seat.
- ❖ Mandi is the second largest constituency in the country.



Bhonga App

- ❖ A hyper-local connectivity app called “Bhonga” has been developed by Mumbai-based Company Linkus Infratech.
- ❖ It aims to connect users to their neighbourhood people in the city even without an Internet connection.
- ❖ “Bhonga” is a Marathi word which means megaphone or loudspeaker.
- ❖ This app automatically provides the lists the user living within the radius of one kilometre.
- ❖ The app also supports voice notes as well as photos.

Portal for MSMEs

- ❖ Telangana government has launched a digital business networking portal for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises MSMEs.
- ❖ The portal, Telangana State GlobalLinker (ts-msme.globallinker.com) will digitise over 2.3 million MSMEs in the State which would connect them to the global economy.

Enajori initiative

- ❖ Assam Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Sahu launched the Enajori initiative in Guwahati.
- ❖ It is a special initiative for persons with disabilities with an aim that 'No Voter to be Left behind'.
- ❖ It is a joint initiative of Chief Electoral Officer of Assam and Social Welfare Department with an objective to make Lok Sabha Elections accessible to Persons with Disability, PwD voters.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Saubhagya Award

- ❖ Saubhagya Awards were presented by the Union Minister of State for Energy RK Singh on February 26, 2019.
- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir bagged 'Saubhagya Excellence Award' for being the first State in the country to achieve 100% household electrification under 'Saubhagya' scheme.
- ❖ In Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal's Central Zone Power Distribution Company and Indore's West Zone Power Distribution Company have been awarded the Saubhagya award under Pradhanmantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana.

Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana

- ❖ Union Ministry of Power launched Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – "Saubhagya" in September 2017.
- ❖ It is aimed to achieve universal household electrification in all parts of country by providing last mile electricity connectivity to all rural and urban households.

Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prizes

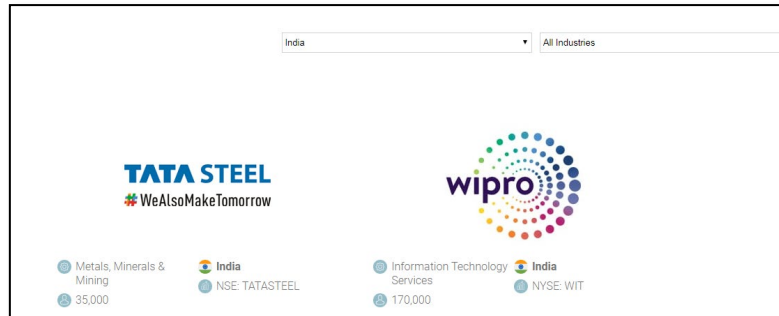
- ❖ Prime Minister conferred the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prizes for 2016, 2017 and 2018 to the awardees.
- ❖ This Prize is given each year to recognize outstanding Indian work in various disciplines of Science and Technology.
- ❖ 11 scientists were given the Prize for 2016. The awardees include Dr Rishikesh Narayan of Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and Dr Amalendu Krishna of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai.
- ❖ 10 scientists were given prize for 2017, which includes Dr Deepak Gaur of JNU, Delhi and Dr S. Suresh Babu of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre.
- ❖ 13 scientists were given prize for 2018 which includes Dr Amit Kumar of IIT, Delhi and Dr Nitin Saxena, IIT, Kanpur.

Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology (SSB)

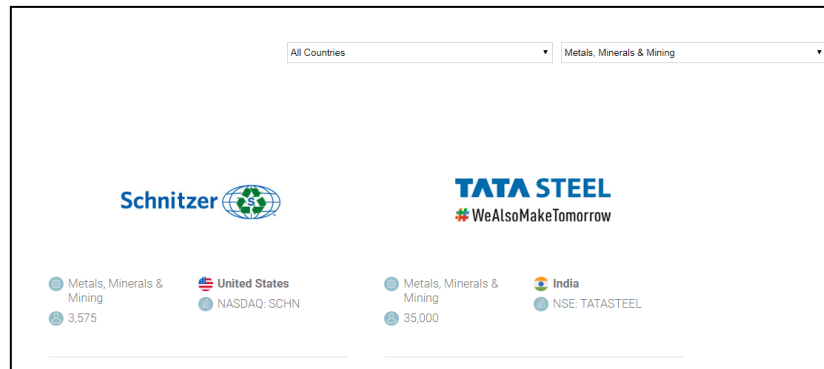
- ❖ It is a science award in India given annually by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- ❖ The award is named after the founder Director of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar.
- ❖ It was first awarded in 1958.
- ❖ Any citizen of India engaged in research in any field of science and technology up to the age of 45 years is eligible for the prize.

World's Most Ethical Companies

- ❖ Tata Steel has been recognised as one of the World's Most Ethical Companies by the Ethisphere Institute in 'Metals, Minerals and Mining' category.
- ❖ Tata Steel has got the recognition eight times.
- ❖ Industries in list from India



- ❖ Industries in 'Metals, Minerals and Mining' category (World Ranking)



Wallace Smith Broecker

- ❖ The Climate scientist, Wallace Smith Broecker, who popularised the term “global warming” has died.



- ❖ Broecker brought “global warming” into common use with a 1975 article that correctly predicted rising carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere would lead to pronounced warming.
- ❖ The article published by him in 1975 was titled “Climatic Change: Are We on the Brink of a Pronounced Global Warming?”
- ❖ He was also a pioneer in radiocarbon and isotope dating and became the first person to recognise the ocean conveyor belt, a global network of currents affecting everything from air temperature to rain patterns.
- ❖ His notable awards include,
 - Vetlesen Prize in 1987
 - Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement in 2002.

Kalam Innovation in Governance Award 2019

- ❖ Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu presented Kalam Innovation in Governance Award 2019 at the 3rd edition of Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Summit on Innovation and Governance, in New Delhi.
- ❖ Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) received this award for,
 - Providing a modern transit network with amenities on a par with global standards.
 - Adopting energy saving technologies, green initiatives in Phase I.
- ❖ First and pioneering edition of the summit was conducted on 15th October 2016.



Swachh Survekshan Awards 2019

- ❖ Swachh Survekshan awards 2019 were conferred by President at a ceremony in New Delhi.

TABLE 3: Awarded ULBs - Overall National Level Ranking

Sl. No.	Award Category	Name Of The ULB
1	India's Cleanest City - No. 1	Indore Municipal Corporation
2	India's Cleanest City - No. 2	Ambikapur Municipal Corporation
3	India's Cleanest City - No. 3	Mysuru Municipal Corporation

TABLE 4: Awarded ULBs - National Level (Above 10 Lakh Population)

Sl. No.	Award Category	Name Of The ULB
1	India's 'Cleanest Big City'	Amdavad Municipal Corporation
2	Fastest Mover' Big City	Raipur Municipal Corporation
3	Best Big City in 'Citizens Feedback'	Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation
4	Best Big City in 'Innovation & Best Practices'	Jabalpur Municipal Corporation
5	Best Big City in 'Solid Waste Management'	Surat Municipal Corporation

TABLE 5: Awarded ULBs - ULBs - National Level (3- 10 Lakh Population)

Sl. No.	Award Category	Name Of The ULB
1	India's 'Cleanest Medium City'	Ujjain Municipal Corporation
2	Fastest Mover' Medium City	Mathura-Vrindavan Nagar Nigam
3	Best Medium City in 'Citizens Feedback'	Chandrapur Municipal Corporation
4	Best Medium City in 'Innovation & Best Practices'	Jhansi Nagar Nigam
5	Best Medium City in 'Solid Waste Management'	Latur Municipal Corporation

TABLE 6: Awarded ULBs - National Level (1-3 Lakh Population)

Sl. No.	Award Category	Name Of The ULB
1	India's 'Cleanest Small City'	New Delhi Municipal Council
2	Fastest Mover' Small City	Orai Nagar Palika Parishad
3	Best Small City in 'Citizens Feedback'	Tirupati Municipal Corporation
4	Best Small City in 'Innovation & Best Practices'	Dewas Municipal Corporation
5	Best Small City in 'Solid Waste Management'	Nagda Municipal Corporation

TABLE 7: Awarded ULBs - National Level (State Capital/Union Territory)

Sl. No.	Award Category	Name Of The ULB
1	India's 'Cleanest State Capital/UT'	Bhopal Municipal Corporation
2	Fastest Mover' State Capital/UT	Chennai Municipal Corporation
3	Best State Capital/UT in 'Citizens Feedback'	Ranchi Municipal Corporation
4	Best State capital/UT in 'Innovation & Best Practices'	Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation
5	Best State Capital/UT in 'Solid Waste Management'	Chandigarh Municipal Corporation

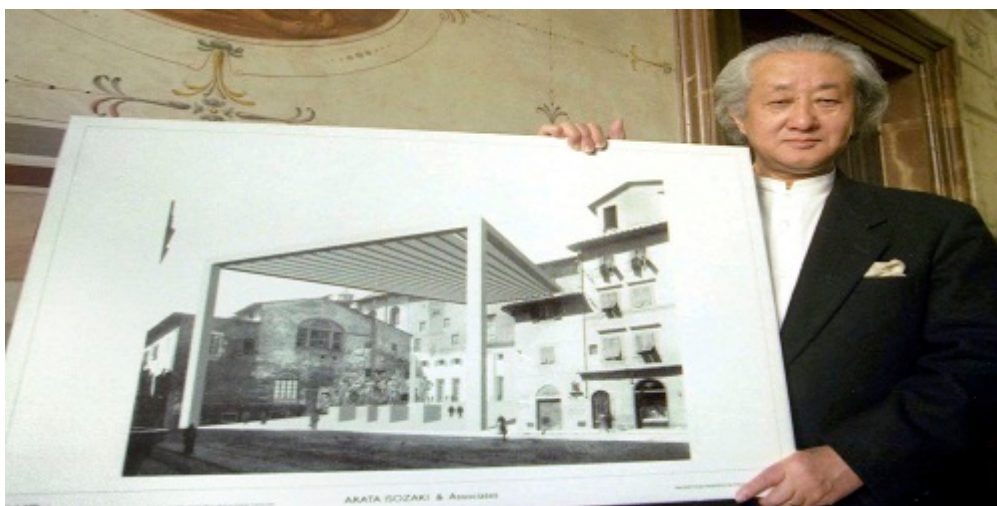
- ❖ Indore was declared as an India's cleanest city for the third straight year in the central government's cleanliness survey.
- ❖ New Delhi Municipal Council area was given the "Cleanest Small City" award.
- ❖ Uttarakhand's Gauchar was adjudged the "Best Ganga Town".
- ❖ Chennai bagged the award for 'fastest mover' state capital category.
- ❖ These Cleanliness awards are given by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Pritzker Prize 2019

- ❖ Japanese architect Arata Isozaki has been named 2019 laureate of the Pritzker Prize, architecture's most prestigious award.
- ❖ He is the 46th recipient of the Pritzker Prize, and the eighth Japanese architect to receive the honour.

Pritzker Prize

- ❖ Pritzker Prize is an annual award to honour a living architect or architects whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision, and commitment.
- ❖ The award constituted by Pritzker family of Chicago through Hyatt Foundation in 1979.
- ❖ It is often referred to as “architecture’s Nobel” and “the profession’s highest honour.”
- ❖ Earlier awardees of the coveted prize include India’s Balkrishna Doshi, Jorn Utzon who designed the Sydney Opera House.



Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019

- ❖ The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has won the First Prize in the category of TV Cinema Spot at the prestigious international Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019 at Berlin, Germany.
- ❖ The awards were given for the following promotional films and TV commercials produced under the Incredible India 2.0 Campaign:
 - Yogi of the Racetrack
 - The Reincarnation of Mr. and Mrs. Jones
 - Sanctuary in Paris
 - Maharani of Manhattan and
 - The Masala Master Chef

- ❖ The Incredible India 2.0 Campaign was started by the Ministry of Tourism in September 2017.



Chameli Devi Jain Award 2018

- ❖ Chameli Devi Jain Award for an Outstanding Woman Journalist for 2018 has been given to Priyanka Dubey.
- ❖ She was chosen for her multi-faceted, interrogative and investigative reports. She helped to uncover the reality underlying in the social and political issues.
- ❖ Chameli Devi Jain Award has been awarded to women journalist for upholding standards of excellence through a sustained body of work for the past 37 years.
- ❖ Chameli Devi was a freedom fighter. This award is the countries media award for women.

Yashwantrao Chavan National Award 2018

- ❖ Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan has been chosen for the 'Yashwantrao Chavan National Award 2018.
- ❖ This is given for his contribution towards economic development.
- ❖ This will be presented the award at a function in Mumbai on March 12 on the occasion of 106th birth anniversary of late Yashwantrao Chavan.
- ❖ Chavan was the first Chief Minister of Maharashtra.



- ❖ The award is given every year by the Yashwantrao Chavan Prathisthan to individuals/institutions in recognition to economic development.
- ❖ It recognises the outstanding contribution towards national integration, democratic values, and social and economic development.

Inspiring Second Career Woman award

- ❖ British Deputy High Commission in association with Avtar Group honoured three Tamil Nadu women for making a comeback to their careers after a long break.
- ❖ Navya C, Sugandhi Jagadeesan and Ruby Mathew were honoured with the Inspiring Second Career Woman (ISCW) award on March 8, on the occasion of International Women's Day.

Gallantry Awards 2019

- ❖ President Ram Nath Kovind conferred three Kirti Chakras and fifteen Shaurya Chakras to the Armed Forces Personnel at a solemn ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- ❖ Two Kirti Chakras and one Shaurya Chakra were given posthumously.
- ❖ President also conferred fifteen Param Vishisht Seva Medals, one Uttam Yudh Seva Medal and twenty-five Ati Vishisht Seva Medals to senior officers of the Armed Forces for distinguished service.
- ❖ One of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal was conferred on Army Chief General Bipin Rawat.
- ❖ Major Tushar Gauba of 20 Jat regiment was conferred with the Kirti Chakra.



SEN sustainability award

- ❖ Skill development institute Sona Yukti was honoured with the Social Enterprise Network (SEN) sustainability award for education by Young Presidents Organisation at its annual event held in Cape Town, South Africa.
- ❖ It is the only Indian organisation to be selected as part of the SEN awards for 2018.
- ❖ This award was given to Sona Yukti for helping over 55,000 economically disadvantaged individuals, mostly women, by training them to achieve highly skilled jobs in marginalised communities.
- ❖ It is present in rural areas of Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

National Grassroots Innovators Awards

- ❖ President awarded National Grassroots Innovators at Grambharti near Gandhinagar in Gujarat.



- ❖ President also inaugurated the exhibition of the Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship.
- ❖ Prakash Singh Raghuvanshi from Uttar Pradesh has been awarded lifetime achievement award for his innovations in new varieties of agriculture crops.
- ❖ First prize in Veterinary, Herbal medication for coccidiosis was presented to Periyasami Ramasami of Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Ritu Beri

- ❖ Popular Indian fashion designer Ritu Beri has been appointed as the Cultural and Tourism Ambassador of Uzbekistan in India by the Ministry of Tourism of Uzbekistan.
- ❖ She is the first Indian to be appointed to this position.



- ❖ In 2016 Ritu Beri was appointed as the advisor to the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

Business Line's Changemaker Award 2019

- ❖ The Business Line's Changemaker awards are given to recognise social entrepreneurs, who have achieved against immense odds.



- ❖ Changemaker of the Year Award
 - GST Council
 - Petitioners against Section 377 of the IPC
- ❖ Young Changemaker award
 - Anju Verma - Award for using education as a tool to improve the social mobility of underprivileged children.
 - Kush and Arjun Pandey - Started the ScoutMe platform to scout for football talent.
- ❖ Social Transformation award
 - Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences- Provides quality education in Maoist and Naxal-affected hinterlands.
- ❖ Digital Transformation award
 - eNAM (National Agriculture Market) - for enabling farmers to directly sell their produce in the market.

Sri Ramakrishna Birth Anniversary

- ❖ In a bid to conserve environment, the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission has decided to do away with its practice of having a firework display as part of the birth-anniversary celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna.
- ❖ Instead of fireworks, cultural activities like folk theatres “yatra” and the famed Chhau dance - a folk dance.

Windham-Campbell Prize

- ❖ Journalist and writer Raghu Karnad won the Windham-Campbell Prize in the non-fiction category for his debut book.
- ❖ The book name is “The Farthest Field: An Indian Story of The Second World War”.
- ❖ Karnad is one of the 8 winners chosen across four categories—fiction, non-fiction, drama and poetry for this year.
- ❖ Karnad is the second Indian to receive the prestigious prize.
- ❖ Jerry Pinto won it for his novel “Em And the Big Hoom” in 2016.

Windham-Campbell Prize

- ❖ Windham-Campbell Prize is administered by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University in the US and was established in 2013.
- ❖ This award was constituted in memory of Sandy Campbell, who was the partner of writer Donald Windham.

NAVROZ Celebration

- ❖ Navroz is the Iranian New Year celebrated by several ethnolinguistic communities around the world.
- ❖ It is also the day of the Spring equinox (March 21) and the rituals are performed based on the movements of the sun during the course of the day.
- ❖ March 21 is also considered the day, the most important King of Zoroastrianism, King Jamshid was crowned as the King of Persia.
- ❖ In India Parsis who follow Zoroastrianism celebrates Navroz.
- ❖ Balban introduced the Nauroz in India to impress the nobles and people.

Judge Neomi Rao

- ❖ Neomi Jehangir Rao, a prominent Indian-American lawyer, has been sworn in as US Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia.
- ❖ She is the second Indian origin American after Srinivasan, to be a part of the powerful court considered next only to the US Supreme Court.

Commonwealth Youth Award

- ❖ Social entrepreneur from Tamil Nadu has bagged the Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian region for his technology-based food rescue organisation.
- ❖ Padmanaban Gopalan, founder of No Food Waste, was named the winner of the award at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London.
- ❖ He was given this honour for his work towards achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of Zero Hunger with his innovative system of recovering excess food to distribute to those in need.



Templeton Prize 2019

- ❖ Brazilian physicist and astronomer Marcelo Gleiser has been awarded the 2019 Templeton Prize for his work blending science and spirituality.
- ❖ Templeton Prize was established in 1972 by the late Sir John Templeton.
- ❖ This honours a living person who has made an exceptional contribution to life's spiritual dimension through insight, discovery, or practical works.

Global Teacher Prize 2019

- ❖ A science teacher from rural Kenya, Peter Tabichi, has won the prestigious 2019 global teacher prize.
- ❖ He is the first teacher in Africa to win the \$1 million award.



- ❖ The prize is awarded by the Varkey Foundation under the patronage of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai.
- ❖ This award aims to recognize teachers who have been exceptional in their work and who try to improve the standards of education.

Vice Admiral Karambir Singh

- ❖ The Defence Ministry announced appointment of Vice Admiral Karambir Singh as the next Navy Chief.
- ❖ He is famous for heading Project Seabird – the building of new naval base at Karwar.
- ❖ In his earlier appointment as the Eastern Naval Commander, he was responsible for commanding the twin nuclear assets of the Indian Navy.

Lalit Kala Academy Awards

- ❖ Lalit Kala Academy has announced the 15 winners of the 60th Annual Academy Awards.
- ❖ The awardees will be honoured with a plaque, a shawl and prize money of Rs 1 lakh during the 60th National Exhibition of Art.
- ❖ This is the highest honour in the fine arts conferred by the Government of India.
- ❖ Lalit Kala Academy established in 1954 is an autonomous organisation under Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ It is head quartered in New Delhi.
- ❖ It is also called as National Academy of Art.
- ❖ Uttam Pacharne will be the Chairman of Lalit Kala Academy from April 2019.

Croatia's highest civilian order

- ❖ President Ram Nath Kovind was honoured with Croatia's highest civilian order - The Grand Order of the King of Tomislav.



- ❖ The civilian order is awarded to heads of state for their important contribution towards the development of state relations between Croatia and their respective countries.

Turing Award

- ❖ The 2018 Turing Award, known as the “Nobel Prize of computing,” has been given to a trio of researchers.
- ❖ Yoshua Bengio, Geoffrey Hinton, and Yann LeCun have received the award.
- ❖ These researchers only laid the foundations for the current boom in artificial intelligence and called as ‘Godfathers of Artificial Intelligence’
- ❖ They developed a technique in the 1990s and 2000s which enabled huge breakthroughs in tasks like computer vision and speech recognition.
- ❖ Facial recognition in phones, automated medical diagnosis, self-driving cars is some of the results of their work.

Alan Mathieson Turing Award

- ❖ The award is named after British mathematician and computer scientist Alan Mathison Turing (1912-54).
- ❖ Turing’s work in codebreaking is credited with having played a decisive role in World War II.
- ❖ The Turing award was first given in 1966.

Bodley award

- ❖ Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen has been honoured with the prestigious Bodley Medal.



- ❖ The highest honour bestowed by the University of Oxford's world-famous Bodleian Libraries for his contribution in literature, culture, science, and communication.
- ❖ He was awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for his work in welfare economics and social choice theory in 1998.

SPORTS

Makran Cup boxing

- ❖ Indian boxers bagged 8 medals, including one gold, five silver and two bronze at the Makran Cup boxing tournament in Chabahar, Iran.
- ❖ Three times Youth Nationals winner, Haryana's Deepak won the only gold for India.
- ❖ P Lalitha Prasad (52 kg), Manish Kaushik (60 kg), Duryodhan Singh Negi (69 kg), Sanjeet (91 kg) and Satish Kumar (+91 kg) won the silver medal.
- ❖ Rohit Tokas and Manjeet Singh Pangal won bronze medals in 64 kg and 75 kg respectively.



ISSF International Solidarity Archery Championship

- ❖ India bagged four gold, three silver and three bronze medals at the third ISSF International Solidarity Archery Championship in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- ❖ Winners are,

Event	Winners	Medal
Compound individual girl's	Pragati	Gold
	Isha Pawar	Bronze
Mixed pair event	Prathamesh and Pragati	Silver
Recurve boys' team	Paras Hooda, Bishal Changmai Karni Singh Chouhan	Gold
Recurve mixed pair	Paras Hooda and Komalika Bari	Gold
Recurve girls' team	R Kamolika Bari, Amanpreet Kaur, and Ridhi	Silver
Compound boys' team	Ritik Chahal, Prathamesh Smadhan Jawkar Chirag Vidyarthi	Gold
Compound girls' team	Isha Pawar, Pragati, Sanchita Tiwari	Silver

ISSF World Cup 2019

- ❖ International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF) World Cup was held in New Delhi, India from 20 February to 28 February 2019.
- ❖ It is the annual edition of the ISSF World Cup which is governed by International Shooting Sport Federation.
- ❖ It is a qualifier for 2020 Olympic Games to be held in Tokyo, Japan.
- ❖ India was ranked 1st in the World Cup along with Hungary.
- ❖ Saurabh Chaudhary and Manu Bhaker claimed gold medal in 10m Air Pistol Mixed team event.
- ❖ Apurvi Chandela won women's 10m Air Rifle and bagged India's first gold medal by breaking the world record in the Shooting World Cup 2019.

Records in Cricket match - West Indies vs England

- ❖ West Indies cricketer Chris Gayle became the first player in the world to hit 500 sixes.
- ❖ Gayle becomes the 14th batsman and second from the Caribbean after Brian Lara, to reach the milestone of 10,000 ODI runs.
- ❖ Total of 46 sixers hit by players in this match between England and West India that bettering the previous record of 38, from the match between India and Australia in 2013.

- ❖ England hit 24 sixes which is the most by a team in an ODI innings. They crossed the 23 that was hit by West Indies in the first ODI of the series.
- ❖ Total of 532 runs came in boundaries in the Grenada of West Indies, the most in any match till date.
- ❖ Morgan became the first England batsman to pass 6,000 ODI runs.



Dubai Tennis Championship 2019

- ❖ Dubai Tennis Championship 2019 commonly known as Dubai Duty-Free Tennis Championship concluded in Dubai, UAE.
- ❖ It was the 27th edition of men and 19th of women.
- ❖ Winner List:

Category	Winner	Runner-up
Men's Singles	Roger Federer (Switzerland)	Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece)
Women's Singles	Belinda Bencic (Switzerland)	Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic)
Men's Doubles	Rajeev Ram (USA) Joe Salisbury (UK)	Ben McLachlan (New Zealand) Jan-Lennard Struff (Germany)
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-wei (Chinese Taipei) Barbora Strycova (Czech Republic)	Lucie Hradecka (Czech Republic) Ekaterina Makarova (Russia)

57th International Wrestling Tournament

- ❖ 57th International Wrestling Tournament 'Dan Kolov – Nikola Petrov' conducted from 28 Feb-3 Mar 2019 in Ruse, Bulgaria.
- ❖ This International tournament was organized by the Bulgarian Wrestling Federation in the memory of Dan Kolov and Nikola Petrov.

- ❖ Indian Wrestler Bajrang Punia won a gold medal in 65 kg category defeating Jordan Oliver of USA and he dedicated the gold to wing commander Abhinandan Varthaman.
- ❖ Other Indian winners are,
 - Pooja Dhanda - Gold (59 kg).
 - Sakshi Malik - Silver (65 kg).
 - Sandeep Tomar - Silver (Men's 61kg).
 - Vinesh Phogat - Silver (Women's 53kg).

Cricket Re-introduced in Asian Games

- ❖ Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has decided to reintroduce Cricket in the 2022 Asian Games to be held at Hangzhou, China.
- ❖ Earlier, Cricket had featured in 2010 and 2014 Asian Games but was dropped from the 2018 Asian Games held at Incheon of Indonesia.
- ❖ T20 version of cricket would be introduced in the Asian Games like it happened during the 2010 and 2014 edition in Guangzhou and Incheon respectively.
- ❖ Indian Cricket Teams did not participate in both the editions.
- ❖ In another major decision it was announced that Oceania countries, including Australia, will be invited to compete at the 2022 Asian Games.

Mexican Open 2019

- ❖ Mexican open 2019 was held at Princess Mundo Imperial in Mexico.
- ❖ Australia's Nick Kyrgios defeated Germany's Alexander Zverev in the Men's Singles final and claim the fifth ATP title of his career.
- ❖ Other winners,

Category	Winner
Men's Singles	Nick Kyrgios
Women's Singles	Wang Yafan
Men's Doubles	Alexander Zverev and Mischa Zverev
Women's Doubles	Victoria Azarenka and Zheng Saisai

50 KM Race Walk World Record

- ❖ China's 2016 Olympic champion Liu Hong broke the world record in the 50 km race walk.
- ❖ She finished 50 Km in 3 hours, 59 minutes and 15 seconds (3:59:15) at the Chinese Race Walk Grand Prix in Huangshan of China.

- ❖ With this she become the first woman to break the 4-hour barrier in the event.
- ❖ She clipped more than five minutes from the previous record of 4:04:36 set by China's Liang Rui at the IAAF World Race Walking Team Championships in Taicang of China in 2018.
- ❖ She now holds the world record for both the 20 km and 50 km distances, having clocked 1:24:38 in La Coruna, Spain in 2015 for the 20 km distance.

GeeBee Boxing Tournament

- ❖ 38th GeeBee Boxing Tournament was held at Helsinki, Finland.
- ❖ India conclude the match with one gold, 4 silver and 3 bronze medals.

MEDAL TALLY	
KAVINDER SINGH	GOLD
MOHAMMED HUSAMUDDIN	SILVER
GOVIND KUMAR SAHANI	
SHIVA THAPA,	
DINESH DAGAR	
SACHIN SIWACH,	BRONZE
SUMIT SANGWAN	
NAVEEN KUMAR	

- ❖ The lone gold medal for India was won by Kavinder Singh Bisht fighting against fellow Indian Mohammed Husamuddin.

Special Olympics 2019

- ❖ The Special Olympics World Games kicked off in Abu Dhabi at Zayed Sports City Stadium.
- ❖ Special Olympics are conducted for athletes with intellectual disabilities.
- ❖ The Olympic torch is named 'The Flame of Hope' and the games' anthem is 'Right where I am supposed to be.'



Thabitha

- ❖ Thabitha from Tamilnadu claimed her second gold in the Asian youth athletics championships in Hong Kong, winning the girls' long jump with a 5.86m jump.
- ❖ The 17-year-old had earlier clinched the girls' 100m hurdles gold.



Indian Wells Masters 2019

- ❖ The professional tennis tournament Indian Wells Masters 2019 also known as BNP Paribas Open held in California, United States.
- ❖ Winners list are

Category	Winner	Runner-up
Men's Singles	Dominic Thiem (Austria)	Roger Federer (Switzerland)
Women's Singles	Bianca Andreescu (Canada)	Angelique Kerber (German)
Men's Doubles	Nikola Pietrangeli (Croatia) Horacio Zeballos (Argentina)	Lukasz Kubot (Poland) Marcelo Melo (Brazil)
Women's Doubles	Elise Mertens (Belgium) Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)	Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic) Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic)

Asian wrestling championship

- ❖ United World Wrestling (UWW) has taken away the Junior Asian Wrestling Championship from India.
- ❖ It also asked all its affiliated federations to stop dealing with the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) due to the country's diplomatic tension with Pakistan.
- ❖ India had agreed to host the re-scheduled junior Championship in July after original hosts Lebanon withdrew.
- ❖ But now UWW has shifted the junior Asian championship from India to Thailand.

Special Olympics 2019

- ❖ India created history by clinching 368 medals, including 85 gold, at the Special Olympics World Summer Games which was held at Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- ❖ A total of 284 athletes from India participated in the event, which featured over 7,000 sportspersons from 170 countries in various sports disciplines.
- ❖ In this Special Olympics women cyclist, Manimeghlai and Shruti, winning gold and silver medals respectively in 500-metre event.
- ❖ Special Olympics is the world's largest humanitarian sporting event which focuses on the empowerment of 'People of Determination' with intellectual disabilities through the power of sport.

SAFF Women's Football championship

- ❖ India won their fifth consecutive SAFF Women's Football championship defeating hosts Nepal 3-1 in the finals.

- ❖ The 2019 SAFF Women's Championship was the 5th edition of the biennial international women's football championship contested by the national teams of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF).
- ❖ India, Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are the participating countries.

SUPERSTATS

- ❖ IIT-Madras and ESPN Cricinfo have launched a new metrics to analyse the game of Cricket – Superstats.
- ❖ Superstats is a combination of three statistical metrics – Luck Index, Forecaster and Smart Stats.
- ❖ For the first time in cricket statistics analysis, luck factor is also counted to predict the outcome of the match.

Infosys – French Open

- ❖ Infosys has signed a three-year partnership agreement with Roland-Garros to provide a technology solution for tennis tournament The French Open.
- ❖ French Open is the premier clay court tennis championship event in the world and the second of four annual Grand Slam tournaments.
- ❖ Australian Open, Wimbledon and US Open are the other three Grand Slam tournaments.

Asia Cup Archers

- ❖ India finished with a rich haul of seven medals in the Asia Cup archery meet that concluded in Bangkok.
- ❖ India's women archer Muskan Kirar claimed a hat-trick of medals.

Seamaster 2019 ITTF Challenge Plus

- ❖ The Seamaster 2019 ITTF Challenge Plus commonly called Oman Open table tennis was held in Muscat, Oman.
- ❖ Indian player G Sathyan won a bronze medal in the tournament and Archana Kamath bagged U-21 silver.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Civil Defense Day- March 1

- ❖ World Civil Defence Day is celebrated every year on March 1 globally.



- ❖ It was created by a decision of the International Civil Defence Organisation's (ICDO) General Assembly in 1990.
- ❖ Theme of the World Civil Defence Day 2019 is "Children's safety, our responsibility".

Zero Discrimination Day- March 1

- ❖ Zero Discrimination Day is celebrated every year on March 1 globally.
- ❖ It aims to celebrate individuality, inclusion and human rights while promoting tolerance, compassion and peace.



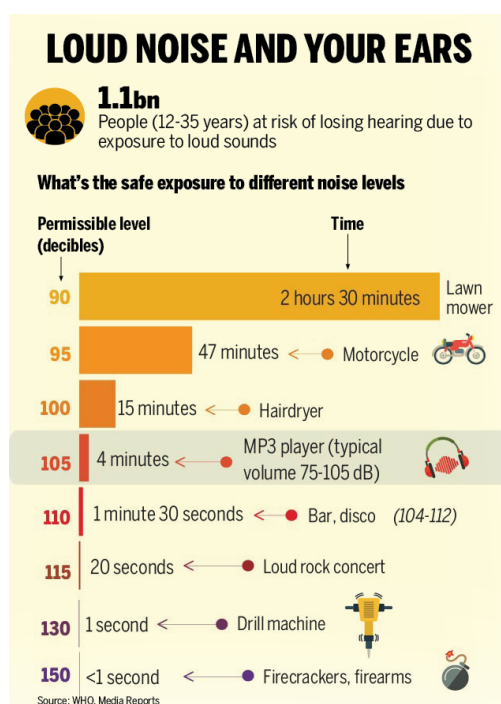
- ❖ It was first celebrated by the United Nations' HIV/AIDS Program (UNAIDS) in December of 2013.
- ❖ UN and other global organizations officially celebrated the day on March 1st, 2014.

43rd Civil Accounts Day - March 1

- ❖ Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS) has celebrated 43rd Civil Accounts Day at New Delhi on 1st March 2019.
- ❖ This year's civil accounts day has showcased the progress of the flagship project of the Indian Civil Accounts Organization namely the Public Financial Management System (PFMS).
- ❖ ICAS was constituted in 1976 and it has steadily increased in stature and played an important role in the management of public finances of the Union Government since its inception.

World Hearing Day - March 3

- ❖ The World Hearing Day is a campaign held each year by Office of Prevention of Blindness and Deafness of the World Health Organization (WHO).



- ❖ Theme for this year's commemoration is "check your hearing".
- ❖ WHO launched a free application mobile device named 'hearWHO', which allows people to check their hearing regularly and intervene early in case of hearing loss.

World Wildlife Day- March 3

- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided to proclaim 3 March as World Wildlife Day at its 68th session on 20 December 2013.
- ❖ This day marks the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



- ❖ It was proposed by Thailand, to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora.
- ❖ Theme for this 2019 is "Life below water: for people and planet".

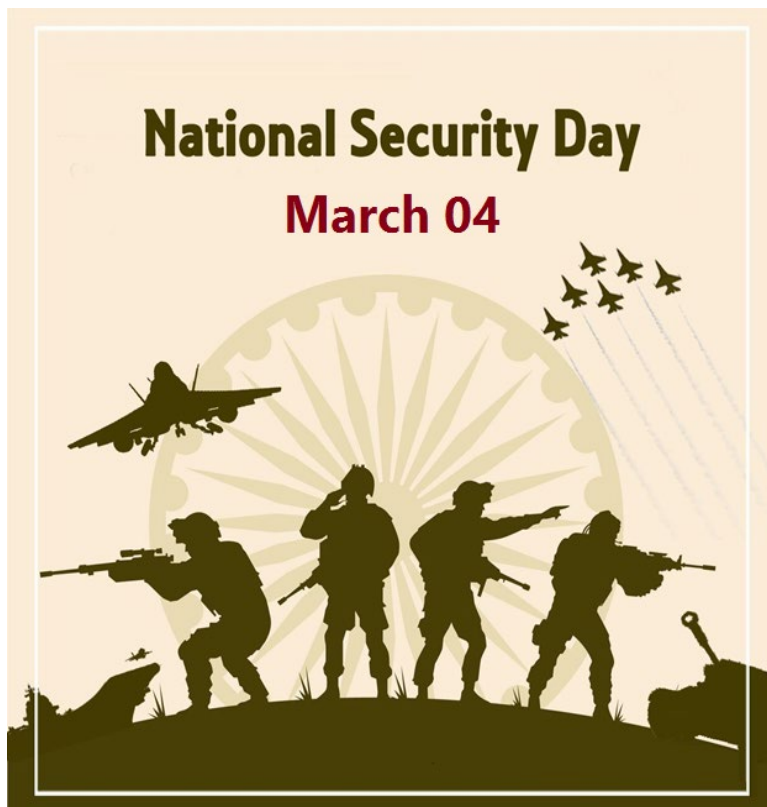
National Safety Day - March 4

- ❖ National Safety Day is celebrated every year on march 4th in India.
- ❖ The day is commemorating the Foundation Day of the National Safety Council.
- ❖ First National Safety Day (NSD) Campaign was launched in 1972 and has since been organised every year.
- ❖ It was started for a single day on 4th March as NSD.
- ❖ The campaign has now been spread over a week from 4-11 March.



National Security Day - March 4

- ❖ National Security Day - also known as Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas - was celebrated every year on 4th March.
- ❖ It praises the work of security forces such as army officers, para-military, policemen and commandos.



- ❖ This day is dedicated to all the structures of India who are always working for peace and security of the people as well as the country.
- ❖ First National Security Day was celebrated in 1972
- ❖ This year was the 48th National Security Day.

Janaushadhi Diwas - March 7

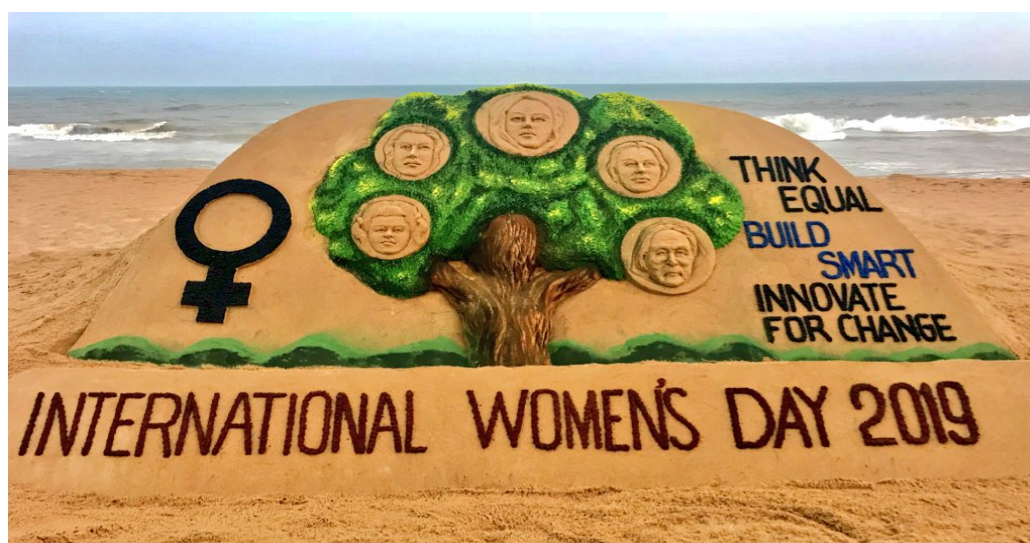
- ❖ Union Minister of State for Chemicals & Fertilisers, Mansukh Mandaviya, announced that March 7 will be observed as Janaushadhi Diwas across India.
- ❖ It aims to create awareness and provide further impetus to the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) scheme.



- ❖ The government plans to have at least one PMBJP Kendra in each block by 2020.
- ❖ The scheme has led to total savings of approximately Rs.1000 crores for common citizens, as these medicines are cheaper by 50 to 90% of average market price.

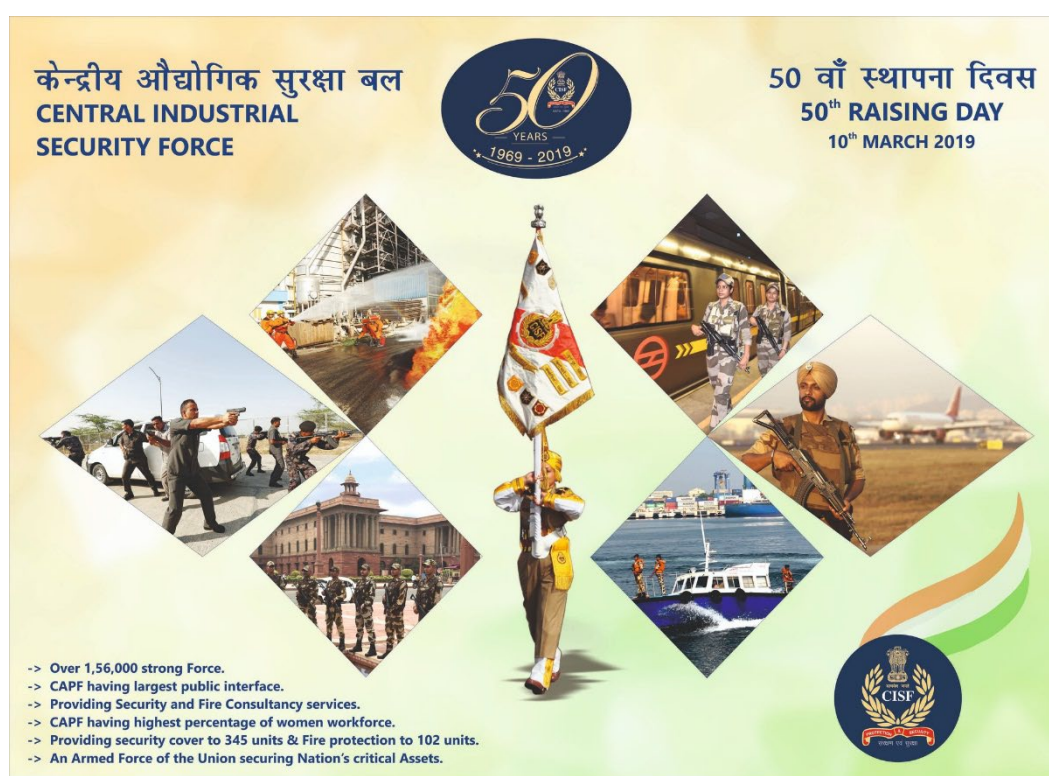
International Women's Day- March 8

- ❖ International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated on March 8 every year.
- ❖ It is a focal point in the movement for women's rights.
- ❖ Socialist Party of America organized a Women's Day on February 28, 1909 in New York.
- ❖ Women gained suffrage in Soviet Russia in 1917, March 8 became a national holiday there.
- ❖ That day was then predominantly celebrated by the socialist movement and communist countries until it was adopted in 1975 by the United Nations.
- ❖ Theme for 2019 International Women's Day 2019 is: 'Think equal, build smart, innovate for change'.



CISF Raising Day- March 10

- ❖ Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Raising Day is celebrated on every year march 10.
- ❖ This year marks 50 years of formation day.
- ❖ On this day, in 1969, the CISF was set up under an Act of the Parliament of India with a strength of 2,800.
- ❖ CISF was subsequently made an armed force of the Republic of India by another Act of Parliament passed on 15 June 1983.
- ❖ It is directly under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and its headquarters are at New Delhi.



Commonwealth Day – March 11

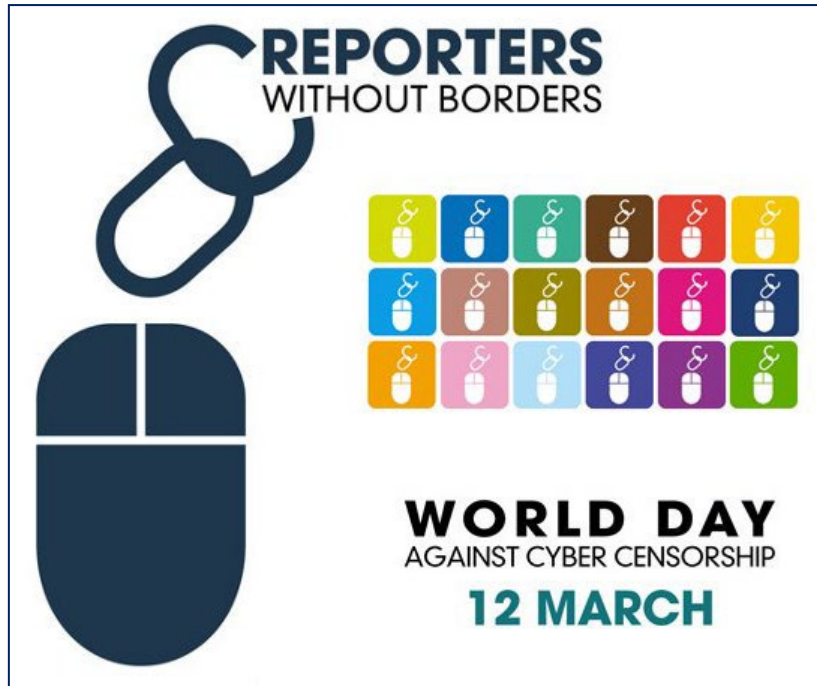
- ❖ The Commonwealth of Nations celebrate Commonwealth Day every year, on second Monday in March every year.
- ❖ Commonwealth is an inter-governmental organization consisting of 52 former British colonies along with Rwanda and Mozambique (Totally 53 Members).



- ❖ Following a 1973 proposal by the Royal Commonwealth Society, the Commonwealth Secretariat selected the second Monday in March as the Commonwealth Day.
- ❖ Since 1977, Commonwealth Day has been celebrated annually on the second Monday in March.
- ❖ Theme for the 2019 is 'A Connected Commonwealth'.

World Day Against Cyber Censorship – March 12

- ❖ World Day Against Cyber Censorship is an online event held each year on March 12 to rally support for a single, unrestricted Internet that is accessible to all.
- ❖ It draws attention to the ways that governments around the world are deterring and censoring free speech online.
- ❖ The day was first observed on 12 March 2008 at the request of Reporters Without Borders and Amnesty International.



No smoking day - March 13

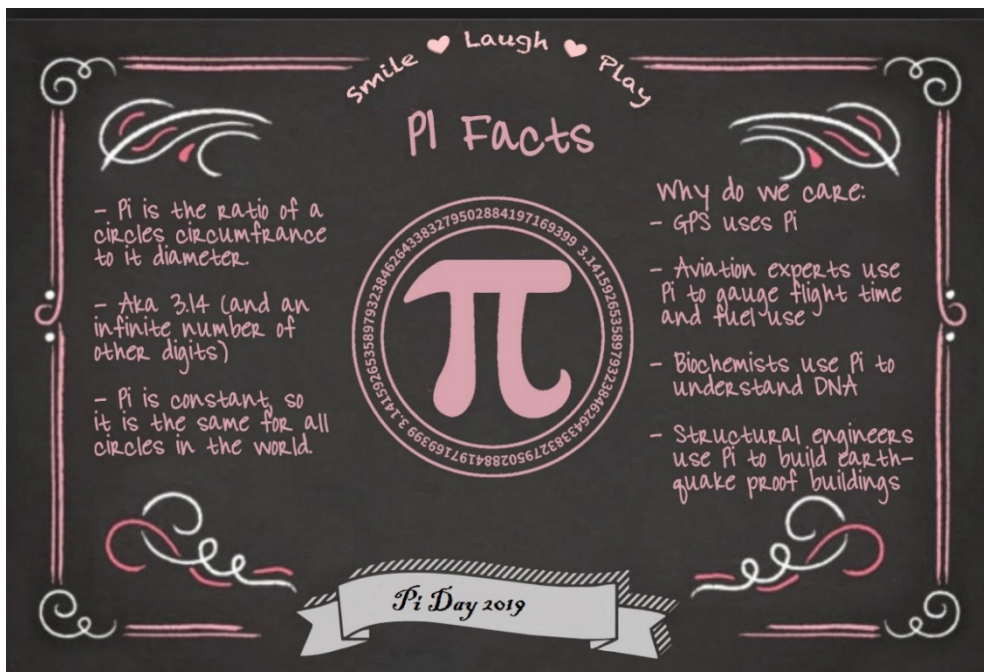
- ❖ No Smoking Day is an annual health awareness day in the United Kingdom which is intended to help smokers who want to quit smoking.



- ❖ The first No Smoking Day was on Ash Wednesday in 1984 and it now takes place on the second Wednesday in March.
- ❖ This year No Smoking Day 2019 is celebrated on 13 March.
- ❖ Main target of the day is to spread and educate people about the impacts of tobacco through cigarette and various other modes.

Pi Day - March 14

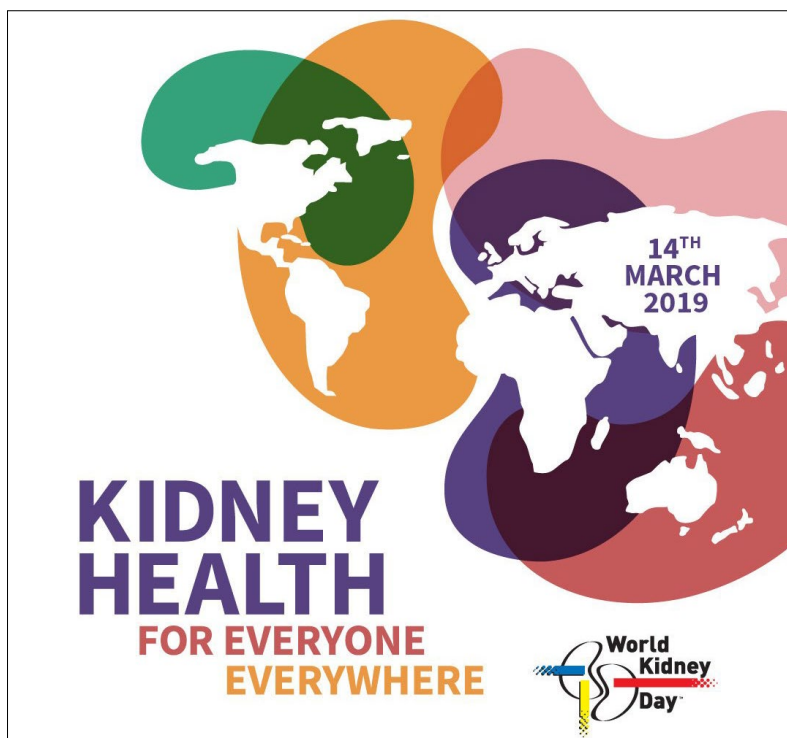
- ❖ Pi Day is celebrated on March 14th around the world, which is approximately 3.14159.



- ❖ Pi (Greek letter “ π ”) is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter.
- ❖ U.S. House of Representatives passed a non-binding resolution on March 12, 2009 and recognizing March 14, 2009 as National Pi Day.
- ❖ The entire month of March 2014 (3/14) was observed by some as Pi Month.
- ❖ In the year 2015, March 14 was celebrated as "Super Pi Day".
- ❖ Pi Approximation Day is observed on July 22 (22/7), since then fraction 22/7 is a common approximation of π .
- ❖ Two Pi Day, also known as Tau Day, is lightly observed on June 28.

World Kidney Day - March 14

- ❖ World Kidney Day (WKD) is an annual global awareness and education event, held on the second Thursday in March every year.
- ❖ March 14 of this year was observed as World Kidney Day.
- ❖ The day is meant to raise awareness about the importance of taking care of kidneys.



- ❖ This Year campaign focuses on the burden of kidney disease, disparities and access to healthcare with the theme: Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere.

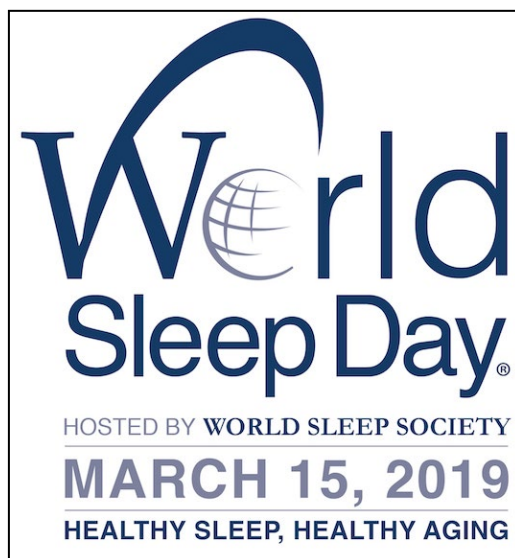
World Consumer Rights Day – March 15

- ❖ World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated every year on 15 March as part of an initiative by Consumer International, a membership organisation for consumer groups around the world.
- ❖ The day is celebrated every year, to celebrate consumer rights and build a world where everyone has access to safe and sustainable products and services.
- ❖ The theme for World Consumers day 2019 is "Trusted Smart Products" chosen in view of the increased popularity of smart gadgets.



World sleep day - March 15

- ❖ World Sleep Day is observed annually on the Friday before the northern hemisphere vernal equinox day.
- ❖ This year World Sleep Day was observed across the globe on March 15, 2019 with the theme 'Healthy Sleep, Healthy Aging'.
- ❖ It is aimed to celebrate sleep and raise awareness of how important it is for good health.
- ❖ This event is being organized by the World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society since 2008.



National Vaccination Day

- ❖ In 2019, India observed National Vaccination Day or sometimes called as National Immunization Day (NID) on March 10th.
- ❖ The observance of National Vaccination Day is an attempt to enhance awareness for the eradication of polio from planet earth.
- ❖ Every year on this day, millions of children are immunized with the polio vaccine.

Background

- ❖ Every year, India observes National Immunisation Day in January to mark the launch of pulse polio programme.
- ❖ Initially, India observed National Vaccination Day on 16th March every year.
- ❖ National Immunization Day was first observed on 16th March 1995 when first dose of Oral Polio Vaccine was given.
- ❖ In India, the last case of wild polio was reported on 13 January 2011.

Ordnance Factory Day

- ❖ Ordnance Factories Day is observed on 18 March each year.
- ❖ Ordnance Factory Board is an industrial organisation, functioning under the Department of Defence Production of Ministry of Defence, Government of India.
- ❖ It is engaged in research, development, production, testing, marketing and logistics of a comprehensive product range in the areas of air, land and sea systems.
- ❖ OFB is the world's largest government-operated production organisation, and the oldest organisation run by the Government of India.
- ❖ It is often called the "Fourth Arm of Defence", and the "Force Behind the Armed Forces" of India.
- ❖ The production of India's oldest Ordnance Factory, which is at Cossipore of Kolkata, was started in 18th of March, 1802.

Global Recycling Day - March 18

- ❖ Global Recycling Day is observed annually across the world on March 18.
- ❖ It aims to help recognise, and celebrate the importance of recycling plays in preserving the precious primary resources.
- ❖ The theme of 2019 Global Recycling Day was 'Recycling into the Future'.



UN French Language Day - March 20

- ❖ UN French Language Day is observed annually on 20th March.
- ❖ This event was established by UNESCO in 2010.
- ❖ It aims to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organization.
- ❖ French is an official language in 29 countries.

- ❖ It as well is an official language of all United Nations agencies and a large number of international organizations.
- ❖ March 20 is also recognized by the International Organization of La Francophonie as the International Day of La Francophonie.

World sparrow day - March 20

- ❖ World Sparrow Day is celebrated on 20th March every year.
- ❖ This day is designated to raise awareness of the sparrow and then other common birds to urban environments, and of threats to their populations.
- ❖ The theme for World Sparrow Day is “I LOVE Sparrows”.
- ❖ It is an international initiative by the Nature Forever Society of India in collaboration with the Eco-Sys Action Foundation (France) and numerous other national and international organisations across the world.



International Day of Happiness - March 20

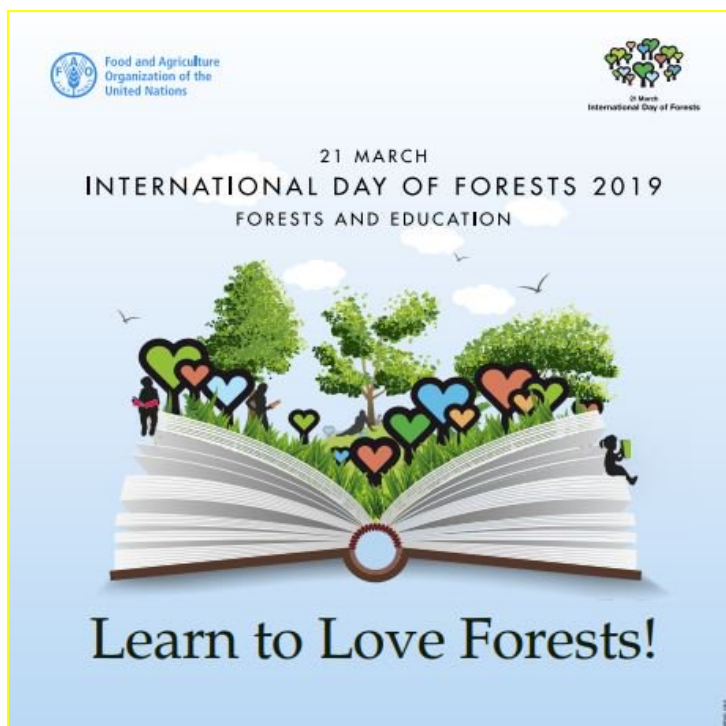
- ❖ The International Day of Happiness is celebrated worldwide every March 20.
- ❖ It was founded by United Nations special advisor Jayme Illien.



- ❖ It aims to inspire, mobilize, and advance the global happiness movement.
- ❖ UN General Assembly passed a resolution which was initiated by Bhutan and proclaimed 20th March as the International Day of Happiness in July 2012.
- ❖ The first ever international day of happiness was celebrated on March 20, 2013.
- ❖ United Nations International Day of Happiness (UNIDOHappiness) launched the “TEN Steps to Global Happiness” challenge campaign for this year celebration.

International Day of Forests - March 21

- ❖ Every year on 21st of March is to be observed as the International Day of Forests.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness of the importance of forests to people and their vital role in poverty eradication, environmental sustainability, and food security.
- ❖ International Day of Forests was established on the 21st day of March, by resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on November 28, 2012.

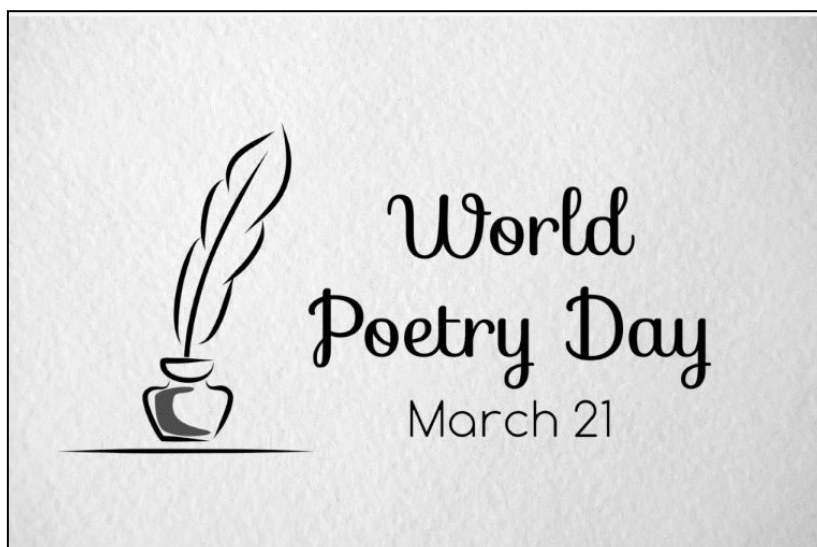


- ❖ International Day of Forests was observed for the first time on March 21, 2013.
- ❖ The theme of this year observance is “Forests and Education”.

World Poetry Day- March 21

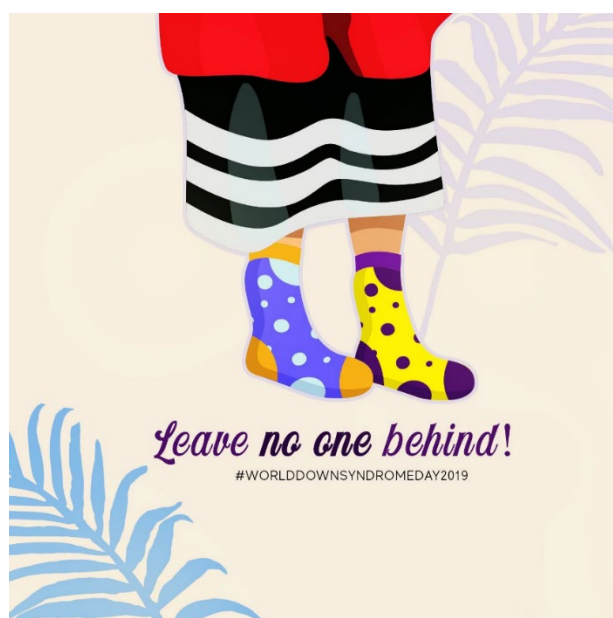
- ❖ World Poetry Day observed every year March 21st to recognize the unique ability of poetry.
- ❖ Its purpose is to promote the reading, writing, publishing, and teaching of poetry throughout the world

- ❖ UNESCO first adopted 21 March as World Poetry Day during its 30th General Conference in Paris in 1999.
- ❖ It aims to support linguistic diversity through poetic expression and increasing the opportunity for endangered languages to be heard.



World Down Syndrome Day- March 21

- ❖ World Down Syndrome Day observed every year March 21st globally.
- ❖ This day established by the United Nations in 2012 to raise awareness and promote the rights of those with Down syndrome also known as Trisomy 21.



- ❖ It's a genetic disorder that arises from a defect involving chromosome 21.
- ❖ In fact, the role of chromosome 21 that led to the selection of March 21 as the observance day for Down Syndrome.
- ❖ The disorder is associated with slow physical growth, unique facial features, and intellectual disability.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination–March 21

- ❖ International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on 21 March.
- ❖ On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against the apartheid "pass laws" in Sharpeville, South Africa.



- ❖ UN General Assembly while Proclaiming the Day in 1966, called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.
- ❖ The theme of the 2019 observance is “Mitigating and countering rising nationalist populism and extreme supremacist ideologies”.

World Puppetry Day - March 21

- ❖ World Puppetry Day is observed annually on 21st March globally.
- ❖ This idea came from the puppet theater artist Javad Zolfaghari from Iran.
- ❖ Creating a day for the Puppetry was first discussed by the UNIMA members during the 18th Congress, in Magdeburg, in the year 2000.
- ❖ The official date March 21st proposal from Dadi Pudumjee was approved in 2002 at the UNIMA Council Meeting in Atlanta.
- ❖ The first International Message was delivered in New Delhi in 2003 and gained popularity. It's now celebrated all over the world.

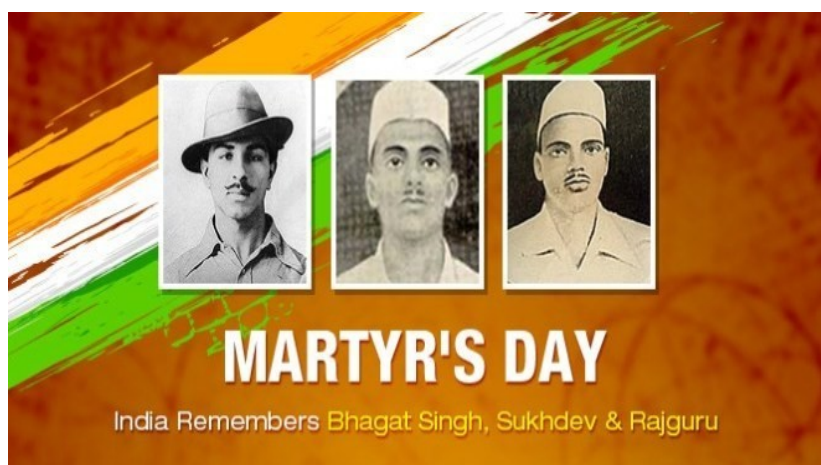


World Water Day - 22 March

- ❖ World Water Day is celebrated every year on March 22nd.
- ❖ The theme for World Water Day 2019 is 'Leaving no one behind'.
- ❖ Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water for all by 2030.
- ❖ In the year 1992, March 22 was first officially added in the schedule 21 of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as World Water Day.
- ❖ The World Water Development Report is also released by the UN every year.
- ❖ World Water Day is coordinated by UN-Water in collaboration with governments and other partners.
- ❖ UN-Water is the UN's inter-agency collaboration mechanism for all freshwater related issues.

Martyrs Day - March 23

- ❖ March 23 is observed as Martyrs Day, also known as Shaheed Diwas or Sarvodaya Day.



- ❖ It is celebrated as a tribute to martyrs Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru.
- ❖ The trio fought for the freedom of India from the colonial rulers and sacrificed their lives on March 23, 1931, when they were hanged to death by the British.
- ❖ They assassinated a British Police Officer to avenge for the lathi charge against Lala Lajpat Rai and his followers, who were protesting against the Simon Commission.
- ❖ The case under which these martyrs were tried was later known as the Lahore Conspiracy Case.

World Meteorological Day – March 23

- ❖ Every 23 March, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) commemorates World Meteorological Day.
- ❖ The WMO became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1951.



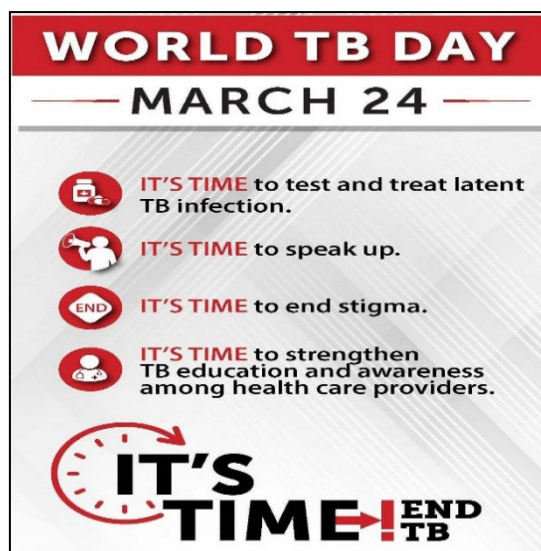
- ❖ This year the theme of WMO is “The Sun, The Earth and The Weather”.
- ❖ Its top priorities are to protect lives, livelihoods, and property from the risks related to weather, climate and water events.

International Day for Achievers – March 24

- ❖ The International Day for achievers is celebrated every year on March 24.
- ❖ It is celebrated to pay tribute to achievers in any field for their outstanding achievements.
- ❖ These achievers of their field could be scientists, teachers, doctors, engineers, social workers or students.
- ❖ These are the people who reach their goals with strong determination irrespective of their age, sex, education, colour and caste.

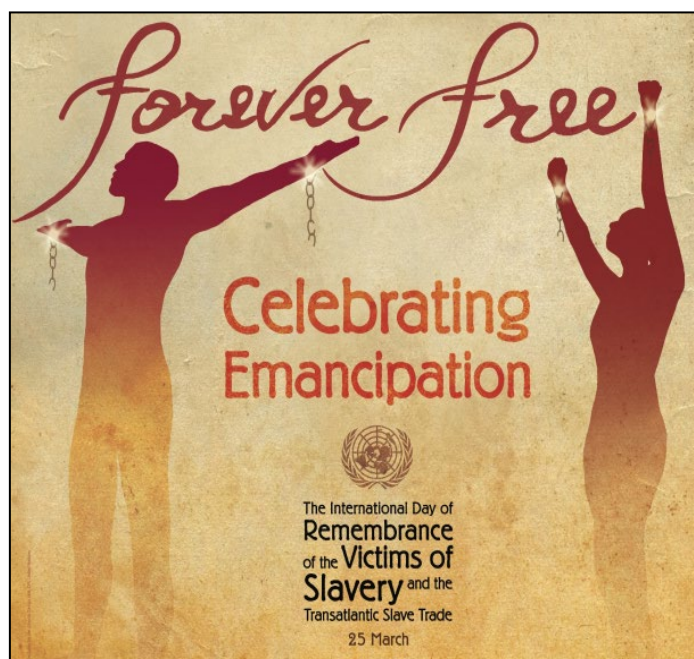
World Tuberculosis Day - March 24

- ❖ World Tuberculosis Day is observed on 24 March each year.
- ❖ It is designed to build public awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease.
- ❖ This Day commemorates the event in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus.
- ❖ Theme of World TB Day 2019 is “It’s time”.
- ❖ On the occasion of the World TB Day 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a joint initiative “Find. Treat. All. #EndTB” along with the Global Fund and Stop TB Partnership.



International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade - March 25

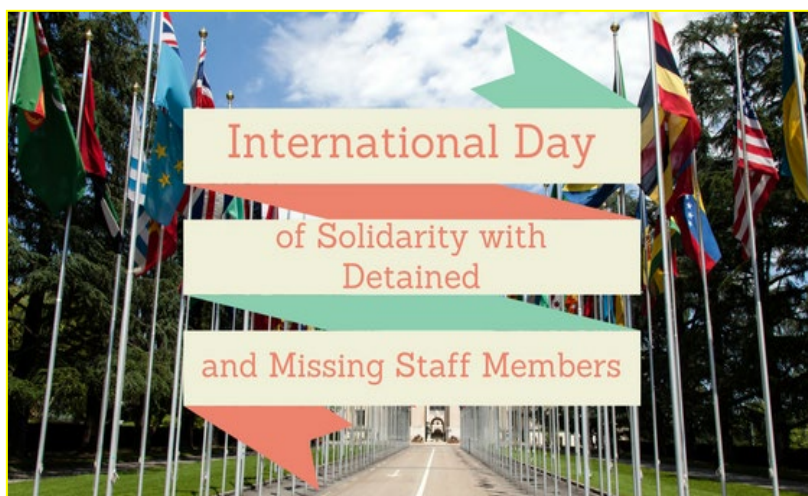
- ❖ International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is a UN international observance designated in 2007 to be marked on 25 March every year.



- ❖ The day honours those who suffered and died at the hands of the transatlantic slavery system.
- ❖ It was first observed in 2008 with the theme "Breaking the Silence, Lest We Forget".
- ❖ Theme of the 2019 is "Remember Slavery: The Power of the Arts for Justice".

International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members - 25 March

- ❖ International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members is observed annually on 25th March by the United Nations.
- ❖ It commemorates the anniversary of the abduction of Alec Collett, a former journalist who was working for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) when he was kidnapped by armed gunman in 1985.
- ❖ This is a day to mobilize action, demand justice and strengthen our resolve to protect UN staff and peacekeepers, as well as their colleagues in the non-governmental community and the press.



The Independence Day of Bangladesh – March 26

- ❖ Bangladesh celebrates its Independence Day on March 26.
- ❖ It commemorates Bangladesh's declaration of independence from Pakistan in the late hours of 25 March 1971.
- ❖ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the founding father of independent Bangladesh.

World Purple Day - March 26

- ❖ Purple day is celebrated with an aim to increase worldwide awareness of epilepsy, and to dispel common myths and fears of this neurological disorder.
- ❖ Purple day commemoration tries to reduce the social stigmas commonly endured by many individuals afflicted with the condition.



- ❖ The first Purple Day event was held on March 26, 2008.
- ❖ The goal of Purple Day is to increase general public awareness, and to empower individuals living with epilepsy to take action in their communities.

World Theatre Day – March 27

- ❖ World Theatre Day (WTD) is celebrated on 27 March.
- ❖ World Theatre Day was initiated in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI).
- ❖ Every year the ITI chooses an outstanding theatre personality to write the message for World Theatre Day.
- ❖ Carlos CELDRAN from Cuba, the outstanding stage director, playwright and theatre educator, has been selected to deliver the message for 2019.

Rajasthan Day

- ❖ Rajasthan Day is celebrated every year on March 30 to commemorate the day on which the state of Rajasthan came into existence.
- ❖ Rajasthan was earlier known as Rajputana till March 30, 1949.
- ❖ Rajasthan is the largest state in India with an area of 3,42,239 square kms.

World Idli Day

- ❖ World Idli day is celebrated every year on march 30.
- ❖ Idli day is celebrated since 2016.
- ❖ Among Indian cities Bengaluru consumes idli the most, followed by Mumbai, Chennai, Pune and Hyderabad.

- ❖ Globally, San Francisco, London and New Jersey have been found to be the top idli ordering cities.

Earth Hour Day

- ❖ The Earth hour day is celebrated on March 30.
- ❖ It is celebrated across the world at the 8.30pm to 9.30pm time slot in a given local time zone.



- ❖ The global theme of this 2019 Earth Hour is #Connect2Earth.
- ❖ Earth Hour in India was observed with #Bee4ThePlanet Challenge.
- ❖ The event was started in 2007 in Sydney and is now popular worldwide.
- ❖ It is hosted every year by the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), an international non-governmental organization.

MISCELLANEOUS

Inclusive Internet Index 2019

- ❖ India ranked 47th in the 'Inclusive Internet Index 2019' which was prepared by the 'Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) for Facebook.
- ❖ The index was expanded to include 100 countries representing 94% of the world's population and 96% of global GDP.
- ❖ Sweden topped the index whereas Singapore ranked 2nd and USA ranked 3rd. India maintained its previous year rank.

The Inclusive Internet Index 2019



World's cheapest mobile data

- ❖ India has the cheapest mobile data in the World as per the research by price comparison site cable.co.uk.
- ❖ Compared to global average of about Rs. 600, 1GB is costing just Rs. 18.5 (USD 0.26) in India.
- ❖ In the same case countries like UK has USD 12.37 for the same amount of data.



- ❖ India is the second largest smartphone market in the world after China with over 4.30 million smartphone users.
- ❖ India is followed by Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Rwanda.

India and ASEAN: Co-creating the Future' report

- ❖ 'India and ASEAN: Co-creating the Future' report was released by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and consulting major KPMG.
- ❖ According to this report, India and 10 member ASEAN are among the fastest growing economies in the world.
- ❖ India and ASEAN show a faster growth rate even for e-commerce and digital trade sectors.
- ❖ Global E-commerce Sector was topped by China.

Monster Salary Index Report

- ❖ Monster Salary Index survey has been prepared and released by Monster India in collaboration with Paycheck.in with IIM-Ahmedabad as a research partner.
- ❖ The survey is titled 'Women of India Inc'.

Important findings:

- ❖ Women in India earn 19% less than their male counterparts and 60% working women in India feel that discrimination at work.
- ❖ Sector-wise, IT/ITES services show 26 percent pay gap in favour of men, followed by manufacturing sector, where men earned 24 per cent more than women.
- ❖ In healthcare, caring services, and social work men earn 21% more than women, while Banking and Insurance is the only industry where men earn just 2 % more.

30 years of World Wide Web

- ❖ March 12, 2019 marks the 30 years of the innovation of World Wide Web.
- ❖ The inventor of WWW, Sir Tim Berners-Lee, was 33 when he first submitted the 'Information Management: A Proposal' for World Wide Web while working at Europe's CERN lab.
- ❖ He submitted his proposal on March 12, 1989, which led to the invention of World Wide Web.
- ❖ Today, it nearly has 2 billion websites online.
- ❖ Web was made public in April 1993, after which the first search engine was launched called Mosaic.



Barbie doll model

- ❖ Mattel, Barbie toy manufacturing company released a new range of barbies to honour female role models globally on their 60th anniversary.



- ❖ India also got put on the map with this model, with Dipa Karmakar being India's representation on it.
- ❖ Karmakar has won over 77 medals, including 67 gold ones at state, national and international levels.
- ❖ She was awarded with Arjuna Award in 2015, Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in 2016, Padma Shri award in 2017.
- ❖ She also became India's first gymnast to win a gold medal at an international event - the FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey.

Coin to honour Stephen Hawking

- ❖ A new 50 pence coin was unveiled to honour the legacy of Stephen Hawking by the UK Royal Mint to recognise his seminal work of black hole.



- ❖ This coin features Hawking's name, a drawing of concentric circles representing a black hole.

- ❖ The coin depicts black hole and one of the late physicist's most important formulas.

Gurkha Battalion

- ❖ British Government has announced plans to raise an additional Gurkha Battalion.
- ❖ 3rd Battalion of Royal Gurkha Rifles will be established as a Specialised Infantry Battalion with approximately 300 personnel.
- ❖ The Anglo-Nepalese War (1814-16) was fought between British and Gorkha Dynasty.
- ❖ The British were impressed by the discipline and ferocity of Gurkha soldiers.
- ❖ Gorkhas were later integrated into British Army.

#FridaysForFuture movement

- ❖ Following the thousands of youth in 123 countries around the world as part of the #FridaysForFuture movement, India saw some of its first school strikes against climate change.
- ❖ It was inspired by 16-year-old Swedish student, climate activist, and now Nobel Prize nominee, Greta Thunberg.



- ❖ She protests every Friday outside the Swedish Parliament to urge leaders to fight climate change.
- ❖ In India, students skipped schools in Delhi-NCR region.

Vijit visit to Indonesia

- ❖ Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vijit' became the first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit Sabang, Indonesia.
- ❖ It is highlighting the close maritime proximity between India and Indonesia and strengthening cooperation in the area of maritime security between India and Indonesia.
- ❖ This visit of the coast guard ship follows from the first-ever-visit of Naval Ship INS Sumitra to Sabang in July 2018.

World Happiness Report 2019

- ❖ United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network has released the World Happiness Report 2019.



- ❖ This report ranks countries on six key variables that support well-being: income, freedom, trust, healthy life expectancy, social support, and generosity.
- ❖ India has witnessed a sustained drop with a 140th place this year compared with the 133rd place in 2018.

Cheapest and Expensive Cities

- ❖ The weekly magazine The Economist's Intelligence Unit conducted Worldwide Cost of Living Survey.
- ❖ Paris, Singapore, and Hong Kong are the most expensive cities in the World while Delhi, Chennai, and Bengaluru are among the cheapest places to live.

THE 10 MOST EXPENSIVE CITIES IN THE WORLD			THE 10 CHEAPEST CITIES IN THE WORLD		
Country	City	Rank	Country	City	Rank
Singapore	Singapore	1	Syria	Damascus	133
France	Paris	2	Venezuela	Caracas	132
Switzerland	Zurich	2	Kazakhstan	Almaty	131
Hong Kong	Hong Kong	4	Nigeria	Lagos	130
Norway	Oslo	5	India	Bangalore	129
Switzerland	Geneva	6	Pakistan	Karachi	127
South Korea	Seoul	6	Algeria	Algiers	127
Denmark	Copenhagen	8	India	Chennai	126
Israel	Tel Aviv	9	Romania	Bucharest	124
Australia	Sydney	10	India	New Delhi	124

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit's Worldwide Cost of Living 2018 report

Indian Green Building Council Ratings

- ❖ Vijayawada railway station has received Gold Rating by the Indian Green Building Council.
- ❖ The council has developed the Green Railway Stations Rating System to facilitate adoption of green concepts with the support of the Environment Directorate of Indian Railways.

Global Council to Advise on AI

- ❖ Google has constituted an eight-member Advanced Technology External Advisory Council that will examine the ethical challenges related to artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies.
- ❖ The aim of the council is to provide recommendations for Google and other companies and researchers regarding the AI.
- ❖ This council will meet four times, beginning in April and will publish its report by the end of 2019.
