

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

January 2020



Summary and Multiple Choice Questions



## Current Affairs – January 2020

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This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and a huge collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **January 2020**.

This guide will help you in preparing for Indian competitive examinations like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade and Officer Grade, etc.

## Audience

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Aspirants who are preparing for different competitive exams like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade, Officer Grade, etc.

Even though you are not preparing for any exams but are willing to have news encapsulated in a roll, which you can walk through within 30 minutes, then we have put all the major points for the whole month in a precise and interesting way.

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# Appointments

## 1. Ravindra Nath Mahto elected as Jharkhand Assembly Speaker

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) legislator Ravindra Nath Mahto from Nala constituency was unanimously elected as the new Assembly Speaker of Jharkhand. He has administered the oath of the office by pro-term Speaker Stephen Marandi. The JMM-Congress-RJD pre-poll alliance stormed to power in Jharkhand with a win over 47 seats in the 81-member state assembly.



Mahato was elected for the first time from the same constituency in 2005 but he lost the seat in the subsequent elections. He won it back in 2014, following it up with his win in 2019.

## 2. Air Marshal Vibhas Pande VSM assumed charge as Air Officer-in-Charge Maintenance

Air Marshal Vibhas Pande VSM took charge as Air Officer-in-Charge Maintenance of Indian Air Force with effect from 01 Jan 2020. He started his career as Engineering Officer in IAF with fighter aircraft and later also gained experience in maintenance operations on transport aircraft and helicopters.



Some of the key appointments held by him include command of a premier Base Repair Depot, Senior Maintenance Staff Officer at HQ EAC and ACAS Eng (T&H) at Air HQ. Prior to assuming his present appointment, he was holding the appointment of Director General (Aircraft).

## 3. Air Marshal MSG Menon VSM assumed charge as Air Officer-in-Charge Administration

Air Marshal MSG Menon VSM took charge as Air Officer-in-Charge Administration of Indian Air Force with effect from 01 Jan 2020. The Air Marshal is a Cat 'AYE' Air Traffic Controller and has commanded an operational radar unit at a major flying station. He was a member of the first UN Mission to Sudan.



Prior to taking over as Air Officer-in-Charge Administration, he was the Director General (Works & Ceremonials) at Air HQ. MSG Menon VSM has served as the Commandant of the prestigious Air Force Administrative College, Coimbatore and Principal Director Ops (Air Traffic Services).

#### 4. Prof Suresh Chandra Sharma appointed as chairman of NMC

Dr. Suresh Chandra Sharma, Professor and Head, ENT Head-Neck Surgery, AIIMS, New Delhi has been appointed chairman of the National Medical Commission (NMC). Dr Rakesh Kumar Vats, Secretary General, Board of Governors, Medical Council of India has been appointed as Secretary, National Medical Commission.



The NMC will replace the Medical Council of India as the apex regulatory authority of medical education in the country. The NMC will have four boards as per the recommendations of the Group of Experts headed by Professor Ranjit Roy Chaudhury.

#### 5. H.K. Joshi appointed as CMD of Shipping Corporation of India

Harjeet Kaur Joshi has been appointed as the new Chairperson & Managing Director of the Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. She joined SCI as Director (Finance) in Feb 2015. Prior to assuming charge of the office of Director (Finance) in SCI, Mrs. Joshi was General Manager (F&A) in Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd., Mumbai.



Mrs. H K Joshi is a Fellow Member of the Institute of Cost Management Accountants of India. She is also a life member of the Institute of Public Administration, Delhi.

#### 6. Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar appointed Advisor to J&K Lt Governor

IPS officer Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar has been appointed as an advisor to the Lt Governor of Jammu-Kashmir. Bhatnagar is a 1983-batch officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre and recently retired as the CRPF DG.



With this, the Lieutenant Governor of J&K Union Territory, Girish Chandra Murmu will have three Advisors. The other two Advisors are K K Sharma and Farooq Khan. The role of the Advisor is to assist the Lieutenant Governor in the effective discharge of his functions.

### **7. A Sakthivel appointed as the new Chairman of AEPC India**

Dr. A Sakthivel was elected as the Chairman of the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) by the Executive Committee for the year 2020 to 2021. A Sakthivel was first elected to the board of Directors of Apparel Export Promotion Council in the year 1982 thus serving the council for almost four decades. He is also the first person in the history of AEPC, who is sworn-in for the fourth time as Chairman of the AEPC.



A Sakthivel was honored with Civilian Award "PADMA SHRI" in 2009 and with Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa) in 2011 by Bharathiyar University.

### **8. M Nagaraj appointed as Chairman and MD of HUDCO**

M Nagaraj was appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of State-owned Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO). He has varied experience of 28 years in various sectors such as housing, infrastructure finance, skill development and micro finance.



Prior to joining HUDCO, Mr. Nagaraj was MD of PEC limited and National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Programme. He has also worked as Director in IIFCL Projects Limited handling the Portfolios of Project Finance, especially Take-out Finance Scheme of IIFCL.

### **9. Michael Debabrata Patra appointed as RBI Deputy Governor**

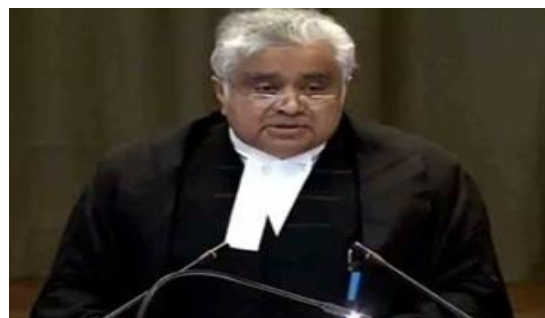
Michael Debabrata Patra has been appointed as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). He will replace Viral V Acharya who had resigned from the post in June 2019. Patra has been appointed to the post for a period of three years. He is likely to retain the Monetary Policy Department handled by Acharya, as the Deputy Governor.



The RBI, headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das, can have a maximum of four Deputy Governors. N S Vishwanathan, B P Kanungo and M K Jain are the other Deputy Governors working at the central bank.

### 10. Harish Salve appointed Queen's Counsel for courts of England & Wales

Advocate Harish Salve has been appointed the Queen's Counsel for the courts of England and Wales. The title of Queen's Counsel is usually awarded to lawyers possessing demonstrated skill and expertise in the conduct of advocacy. The appointment is done by the Queen, on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. He is advised by an independent Selection Panel which makes recommendations.



Advocate Salve served as a Solicitor General for India until 2002. He is known for representing India before the International Court of Justice in the Kulbhushan Jadhav extradition case.

### 11. Senior IPS officer AP Maheshwari appointed as Director general of CRPF

Senior IPS officer A P Maheshwari was appointed as Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), following the superannuation of its previous DG, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar. He has served in the force for nine years, including as the Inspector General (operations), and also as its IG in Kashmir. Prior to his appointment, Maheshwari was Special Secretary (Internal Security) in the Union Home Ministry.



CRPF is the world's largest paramilitary force with about 3.25 lakh personnel. The CRPF's primary role lies in assisting the State/Union Territories in police operations to maintain law and order and counter insurgency.

### 12. Bipul Behari Saha elected by IUPAC as its bureau member

Dr. Bipul Behari Saha has been elected as a bureau member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). With this appointment, he became second Indian after CNR Rao (in 1979) to be elected for this position. Currently he is Director – R&D of L.R. Research Laboratories Pvt Ltd (wholly owned subsidiary of NACL Industries Limited), Hyderabad.



Founded 100 years ago, IUPAC is the largest global organization of Chemistry professionals. It has the responsibility of naming all new elements and compounds, declare atomic weights and physical constants, update Periodic table and carry out research projects.



### 13. Lt Col Yuvraj Malik appointed as the Director of the National Book Trust

Lt Col Yuvraj Malik was appointed as the Director of the National Book Trust on deputation from the Indian Army. He will replace Sahitya Akademi-awardee writer Rita Chowdhury. Malik has experience of working with the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Home Affairs, Raj Bhawan in Jammu & Kashmir, United Nation Missions in Africa and several operational areas in administrative and operational assignments including Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Punjab and Rajasthan.



National Book Trust is an Indian publishing house, functions under aegis of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

### 14. JP Nadda elected as National President of Bharatiya Janata Party

BJP Working President J P Nadda was elected unopposed as the National President of Bharatiya Janata Party. Party's election in-charge of organization, Radha Mohan Singh gave him the certificate of his election on the occasion.

Mr. Nadda, who is from Himachal Pradesh, was appointed as the party's working president in July 2019. He has long been a member of the BJP Parliamentary Board, its highest decision-making body. He was also the Cabinet Minister in the first tenure of the Narendra Modi Government.



### 15. Centre appointed Nripendra Misra as chairman of NMML executive council

Former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Nripendra Misra, has been appointed Chairperson of the executive council of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML). Mr Misra is a 1967-batch retired IAS officer.

Dr. A Surya Prakash, Chairperson of the Prasar Bharati board, will be the council's Vice-Chairperson. The other eminent persons on the reconstituted executive council are Rajya Sabha members Vinay Sahasrabudhhe and Swapan Dasgupta. Academic Kapil Kapoor has also been nominated as a member of the committee.



### 16. Challa Sreenivasulu Setty appointed Managing Director of SBI

The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet appointed Challa Sreenivasulu Setty as the Managing Director of the State Bank of India for a period of three years. Prior to this appointment, he was serving as the Deputy Managing Director of the SBI.



Challa has worked in multiple geographies with specialized exposure in credit and stressed assets. He has served various positions in SBI such as VP (syndications) in SBI, NY branch, DGM in commercial branch Indore, GM & RH in CAG Mumbai, CGM CAG and DMD (SARG).

### 17. New MD and CEOs for Bank of Baroda, Bank of India and Canara Bank

The government appointed heads of Bank of Baroda, Bank of India and Canara Bank for three years.

Name	Post	Appointed in Bank	Previous Post
Sanjiv Chadha	MD & CEO	Bank of Baroda	DMD SBI
Atanu Kumar Das	MD & CEO	Bank of India	ED at Bank of India
Lingam Venkat Prabhakar	MD & CEO	Canara Bank	ED at PNB

### 18. CEC Sunil Arora assumed Chairmanship of FEMBoSA for 2020

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora has assumed Chairmanship of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA) for the year 2020. The Outgoing Chair of FEMBoSA, KM Nurul Huda who is also CEC of Bangladesh, handed over the Logo of FEMBoSA to Mr. Arora at the 10th Annual Meeting of FEMBoSA held in New Delhi.



FEMBoSA was established at the 3rd Conference of Heads of Election Management Bodies of SAARC Countries held at New Delhi in May, 2012. It represents a very large part of the democratic world.

### **19. India appointed Taranjit Singh Sandhu as India's next Ambassador to USA**

Senior diplomat Taranjit Singh Sandhu has been appointed as next Indian Ambassador to the United States. He will succeed Ambassador Harsh Vardhan Shringla. Prior to this appointment, Taranjit Singh Sandhu was working as High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka since January 24, 2017.



Taranjit Singh has served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Indian embassy in Washington, first secretary (political) at Embassy of India and at India's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York.

### **20. IBA appointed Sunil Mehta its Chief Executive**

Sunil Mehta was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) for 3 years. He will replace VG Kannan, who resigned from office as chief executive of IBA on December 31, 2019. At present, the managing committee of IBA includes SBI chief Rajnish Kumar as Chairman for the year 2019-20 along with 3 deputy chairmen and honorary secretary.



Indian Banks' Association is a representative body of management of banking in India operating in India. It currently represents more than 200 banking and financial institutions operating in India.

# Awards

## 1. Piyuus Jaiswal honoured with Global Bihar Excellence Awards 2019

Piyuus Jaiswal was honoured with International Peace Excellence Humanitarian & International Bihar Excellence Awards 2019. Rajya Sabha MP and Padma Shri Awardee Dr CP Thakur and Bihar Women Commission president Dilmani Devi presented the award to Piyuus in Patna.



International Bihar Excellence Awards 2019 was given to Piyuus to felicitate his contribution towards social welfare, women empowerment and introducing new talent in the field of arts and culture. He has provided a platform to many women and new talent.

## 2. Dr. N Kumar conferred with Harit Ratna Award 2019

Dr. N Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, was conferred with National Award for Agriculture sector namely "Harit Ratna Award 2019". This award was organised by the All India Agricultural Students Association.



Dr. N Kumar was honored for dissemination of ₹30-crore entrepreneurship project in agri-business, for motivating youth to the agriculture sector in the State and his contribution to increase the impact of Fertigation, precision farming, ultra high density planting system for increasing farmers' income.

## 3. I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar conferred First Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar conferred the First Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas to 30 media organizations as a unique honour to media organizations that contributed to the spread of Yoga for the benefit of society.



The awards were given in the following three categories:

- Eleven Awards were conferred under the category "Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Newspapers.
- Eight Awards were conferred under the category "Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Television.
- Eleven Awards were conferred under the category "Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Radio.

#### 4. India's Sucheta Satish won Global Child Prodigy Award in Dubai

Dubai-based Indian girl, Sucheta Satish, has won the 'Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020' for singing in most languages during one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child. She can sing in 120 languages.



The 100 Global Child Prodigy Award is supported by the Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam International Foundation and Oscar winning music director AR Rahman among others. The award celebrates the talent of children in different categories: dancing, music, arts, writing, acting, modelling, science, innovation, sports.

#### 5. Jasbinder Bilan bagged 2019 Costa Children's Award

India-born author Jasbinder Bilan was honored with the Costa Children's Book Award, a coveted UK children's book award for her debut novel 'Asha and the Spirit Bird'. "Asha and the Spirit Bird" was shortlisted among 144 other entries.



The Costa Book Awards are a set of annual literary awards honoring English-language books by writers based in Britain and Ireland. Awardees receive £5,000 under 5 categories namely novel, first novel, children's book, poetry and biography.

#### 6. Prof. M S Swaminathan presented with 'Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award'

Eminent Agricultural Scientist Dr. M S Swaminathan was presented the 'Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence' for his distinguished contribution to the field of agriculture. The Award instituted by the Muppavarapu Foundation carries a cash prize of Rs. 5 lakhs and a citation.



Mr. Swaminathan is regarded as the "Father of the Green Revolution in India and the Doyen of Agricultural Science". TIME magazine had described him as one of the 20 most influential Asians of the 20th century.

### 7. Ishwar Sharma won ‘Global Child Prodigy Award’

A 10-year-old British Indian yoga champion Ishwar Sharma won Global Child Prodigy Award 2020 for achievements in spiritual discipline yoga. Yoga champion Ishwar Sharma belongs to south-eastern England’s Kent in United Kingdom. Ishwer was honored with Certificate of Achievement by Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi and Dr Kiran Bedi, Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry.



Global Child Prodigy Award honors child prodigies from across 45 countries and 30 different categories such as palaeontology, biking, choreography, fitness and martial arts.

### 8. Puri received Swachhata Darpan Awards 2019

Puri district of Odisha received the Swachhata Darpan Awards 2019 for its initiatives for plastic waste management at Open Defecation Free Sustainability Workshop held in Delhi. Puri has successfully managed the plastic wastes in the district with its effective policies by engaging the people of the district towards single use plastic through awareness programmes, hence keeping the town's environment pollution free.



Swachhata Darpan Award 2019 was given by Indian Bollywood actor Aamir Khan to Puri Municipality Additional Executive Officer Saroj Kumar Swain.

### 9. Indian scientist Sakya Singha Sen awarded “Merck Young Scientist Award 2019

Dr. Sakya Singha Sen from CSIR-NCL received the Merck Young Scientist Award 2019 in Chemical Sciences at Bangalore instituted by Merck for doing remarkable research in chemical science. Sen has expertise in main group chemistry and involves in the synthesis of compounds with main group element and their catalytic application.



Merck Young Scientist Award is given to honor researchers with less than ten years of experience for their talent in solving some of the toughest problems in chemical sciences.

## 10. President of India presented 14th Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards

President Ram Nath Kovind presented the 14th Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards. This year's recipients of the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards constitute works from the year 2018. The key winners are:



- Photojournalism: C Suresh Kumar from The Times of India (Print/Digital)
- Books (Non-Fiction): Gyan Prakash (Print)
- Business and economic journalism category: Nidhi Verma from Thomson Reuters (Print/Digital)
- Hindi category awards: Shadab Ahmad Moizee, TheQuint.com (Broadcast), Diti Bajpai, Gaon Connection (Print/Digital)
- Investigative journalism category: Poonam Agarwal, TheQuint.com (Broadcast); Teena Thacker, Mint (Print/Digital)

## 11. President of India presented Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

President Ram Nath Kovind presented the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2020 to 49 children. Soumyadeep Jana, Ishaan Sharma, Pema and Lalkansung received the award under Bravery category. Darsh Malani, Manoj Kumar Lohar, Gauri Mishra, Korok Biswas and Omkar Singh were awarded under Art & Culture category.



The Bal Shakti Puraskar is conferred to recognize the special contribution of the children in the fields of social service, innovation, bravery, sports, art and culture and scholastic. The award carries a medal, a certificate, a citation and a cash prize worth Rs 1lakh.

## 12. Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2020

The government announced the winners of Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. For the year 2020, Disaster Mitigation & Management Centre, Uttarakhand (in the institution category) and Shri Kumar Munnar Singh (Individual category) were selected.



In case the winner being an institution, it shall receive a certificate and a cash prize of Rs. 51 lakhs. In case of the winner being an individual, winner shall receive a certificate and a cash prize of Rs. 5 lakhs.

### 13. Priya Prakash won Cisco Youth Leadership Award 2019

The founder and CEO of India based HealthSetGo, Priya Prakash won the Global Citizen Prize: Cisco Youth Leadership Award for 2019. HealthSetGo is India’s largest healthcare organization that supports the UN’s goals and ensures that every child in India grows healthy and disease-free. The organization has impacted more than 200,000 children and parents in India across more than 77 cities, and it hopes to reach 1 million people by 2023.



The award honors the individuals who have made strides to end extreme poverty and provides \$250,000 prize for achieving the UN Global Goals.

### 14. 26th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards held at USA

The winners of the 26th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards were announced at Los Angeles, USA. Joaquin Phoenix (actor) and Renee Zellweger (actress) received the award for best performance in a leading role for movie Joker and Judy respectively.

Category		Winner
Drama Series	Best Actor	Peter Dinklage (Game of Thrones)
	Best Actress	Jennifer Aniston (The Morning Show)
	Ensemble	The Crown
Comedy Series	Best Actor	Tony Shalhoub
	Best Actress	Phoebe Waller
	Ensemble	The Marvelous
Television Movie	Best Actor	Sam Rockwell
	Best Actress	Michelle Williams
Action Performance by a Stunt Ensemble in a Comedy or Drama Series		Game of Thrones



### 15. Government announced Padma Vibhushan Awards

The government has awarded the Padma Vibhushan for 2020 to seven prominent personalities. The Padma Vibhushan is the second-highest civilian award of the Republic of India, second only to the Bharat Ratna. It is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service.



The winners of Padma Vibhushan 2020 are George Fernandes (Posthumous), Arun Jaitley (Posthumous), former Prime Minister of Mauritius Anerood Jugnauth, Mary Kom, Chhannulal Mishra, Sushma Swaraj (posthumous) and Pejavara Adhokhaja Matha Udipi (Posthumous).

### 16. Government announced Padma Bhushan Awards

The government has awarded the Padma Bhushan for 2020 to 16 prominent personalities. The Padma Bhushan is the third-highest civilian award in the Republic of India, preceded by the Bharat Ratna and the Padma Vibhushan and followed by the Padma Shri. It is awarded for distinguished service of high order.

The winners of Padma Bhushan 2020 are:

Recipient	Field
PV Sindhu	Sports
Manohar Parrikar	Public Affair
Satya Paul Agarwal	Medicine
Ajoy Chakrabarty	Art
Manoj Das	Literature & Education
B. V. Doshi	Architecture
Krishnammal Jagannathan	Social work
S. C. Jamir	Public affairs
Anil Prakash Joshi	Social work
Tsering Landol	Medicine
Anand Mahindra	Trade & Industry
N. R. Madhava Menon	Public Affairs
Jagdish Sheth	Literature & education
Venu Srinivasan	Trade & Industry

### 17. Government announced Padma Shri Awards

The government has awarded the Padma Shri for 2020 to 118 prominent personalities. The Padma Shri is the fourth-highest civilian award in the Republic of India, preceded by the Bharat Ratna, the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Bhushan. It is awarded for distinguished service.

Some key winners of the award this year are:

Recipient	Field
Zaheer Khan	Sports
Karan Johar	Art
Ekta Kapoor	Art
Jitu Rai	Sports
Rani Rampal	Sports
Kangana Ranaut	Art
Adnan Sami	Art
Suresh Wadkar	Art
Yogi Aereon	Medicine
Jai Prakash Agarwal	Trade and Industry
Robert Thurman	Literature and Education
Prem Watsa	Trade and Industry

### 18. Two Sri Lankan women receive Padma awards

The Government has conferred Padma Shri award to two women from Sri Lanka for their pioneering contributions in their individual fields and for strengthening India-Sri Lanka ties. The awards have been conferred on Deshabandu Dr. Vajira Chitrasena for her contribution to dance and Late Prof. Indra Dassanayake for her contribution to Hindi literature.

Dr. Vajira Chitrasena has been adorned with one of Sri Lanka's highest national awards Deshabandhu among many other awards and she heads the Chitrasena-Vajira Dance foundation and. The other Padma Shri recipient late Professor Indra Dassanayake was a renowned Professor of Hindi at Kelaniya University.



The other Padma Shri recipient late Professor Indra Dassanayake was a renowned Professor of Hindi at Kelaniya University.

### 19. Two Bangladeshis receive Padma awards

Bangladeshi Career Diplomat late Syed Muazzem Ali and veteran museologist Enamul Haq have been nominated for the Padma Awards by the government of India this year. Syed Muazzem Ali has been honoured with the Padma Bhushan award posthumously. He was the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India.



Renowned academic and Museologist from Bangladesh Enamul Haq has been nominated for the Padma Shri award. Born in 1936, Enamul Haq has taught at many universities including Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, and BRAC University. Haque was the founder director general of the Bangladesh National Museum.

### 20. Deepika Padukone Honoured with Crystal Award at WEF 2020

Deepika Padukone was honoured with the Crystal Award 2020 at the 26th annual Crystal Award ceremony during the World Economic Forum’s opening session on January 20, 2020. She was honoured for playing a leading role in raising mental health awareness and her foundation Live Love Laugh.



The other winners of the award this year are:

- Chicago-based artist Theaster Gates for his leadership in creating sustainable communities
- China’s Jin Xing for her leadership in shaping inclusive cultural norms
- Australian artist Lynette Wallworth for her leadership in creating inclusive, immersive narratives and multi-media art about forgotten communities

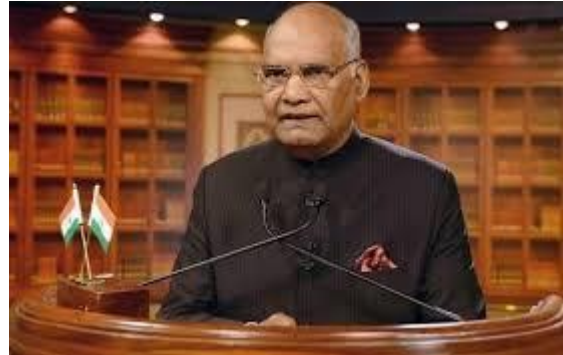
### 21. President approved Tatrakshak medals to Indian Coast Guard personnel

The President has approved Tatrakshak Medals to the following personnel of the Indian Coast Guard for their act of conspicuous gallantry/meritorious service on the occasion of Republic Day 2020.

Tatrakshak Medal (Gallantry)	Tatrakshak Medal (Meritorious Service)
Dy Comdt Abhishek Kumar (4233-S)	DIG Mukul Garg (0260-P)
Sanjay Kumar Singh, Adh (ME), 04217-P	IK Balan, P/Adh (AH), 01608-L
Subhash, P/Nvk (QA), 05655-H	

## 22. President approved 409 Gallantry awards

President Ram Nath Kovind has approved 409 gallantry and other defence decorations to armed forces personnel and others on the eve of 71st Republic Day. These awards include 9 Shaurya Chakras, 28 Param Vishisht Seva Medals and 4 Uttam Yudh Seva Medals.



The Shaurya Chakra awardees include Lieutenant Colonel Jyoti Lama, Major Konjengbam Bijendra Singh, Naib Subedar Narender Singh, Naib Subedar Sombir, Naik Naresh Kumar, Sepoy Karmdeoraon, Challapilla Narasimha Rao, Kamal Kishore and Aman Kumar.

## 23. 62<sup>nd</sup> Grammy Awards 2020 held at Los Angeles

The 62nd Annual Grammy Awards were announced in Los Angeles. It recognized the best recordings, compositions, and artists of the eligibility year.

Category	Winner
Album Of The Year	When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?
Record Of The Year	Bad Guy
Best New Artist	Billie Eilish
Song Of The Year	Bad Guy
Best Music Video	Old Town Road
Best Country Song	Bring My Flowers Now
Best Country Album	While I'm Livin'
Best Rap Song	A Lot

# Bills and Acts

## 1. JPC on Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019

The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, which was introduced in Lok Sabha in the winter session last year, has been referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) of both the Houses. The JPC has been constituted under the chairmanship of New Delhi MP Meenakshi Lekhi for examination and report.



The Bill seeks to provide for protection of personal data of individuals, create a framework for processing such personal data, and establishes a Data Protection Authority for the purpose.

## 2. Andhra Pradesh Assembly passed bill to establish three capitals

Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a bill proposing three capitals, Legislative, Executive and Judicial for the state. The Assembly passed the AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill in this regard.



Visakhapatnam is proposed to be the Executive capital, Amaravati Legislative capital and Kurnool will be the Judicial capital. The Bill also provides for dividing the State into various zones. It seeks to establish zonal planning and development boards.

## 3. Union Cabinet approved amendments in the National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill

Union Cabinet approved official amendments in the National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill therefore making changes in Homoeopathy Central Council (HCC) Act, 1973.



### Features of bill are:

- To promote the availability of affordable healthcare services in all parts of the country
- The broad functions constitution, regulation-making powers are identical to those of the Medical Council of India.
- Act provides a solid foundation for the growth of medical education and practice in Homoeopathy.
- It will not only ensure transparency but also necessary regulatory reforms in the field of Homoeopathy education.

#### 4. Centre promulgated Ordinance to amend coal-mining laws

Central government announced the promulgation of the ordinance for amendment in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957 and the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015. The amendments were made to promote FDI and ease in doing business such as auction of coal mines.



##### **Features of ordinance are:**

- Amendments will allow unexplored coal blocks for mining through prospecting license-cum-mining lease.
- Allow any India-registered company to invest in the coal mining sector.
- Enable FDI in the coal mining sector by removing the restrictions.
- Enhance ease of doing business.

# Books & Authors

## 1. Union Home Minister Amit Shah released a book 'Karmayoddha Granth'

Union Minister for Home Affairs, Amit Shah released a book 'Karmayoddha Granth', on the life of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, in New Delhi. The book explains various works by PM Narendra Modi during his tenure.

As per the book, Narendra Modi gave the states 10% of more budget which reflects the fulfillment of Antyodaya resolution of Pandit Deendayal. The book informs that Health facilities are being provided to the people under Ayushman Yojana which was a dream project of Narendra Modi.



## 2. Sindhi writer Vasdev Mohi to be conferred with 29th Saraswati Samman

Eminent Sindhi writer Vasdev Mohi will be conferred with 29th Saraswati Samman. He has been selected for this prestigious literary award for his short stories collection- Chequebook. This short stories collection talks about the agonies and sufferings of marginalized sections of the society.

Saraswati Samman carries a cash award of 15 lakh rupees, a citation and a plaque. Mr. Mohi has authored 25 books of poetry, stories and translations. He has also received Sahitya Akademi Award.



## 3. Jaipur Literature Festival

The Five-day Jaipur literature festival was held in Jaipur where many literature lovers participated. About 500 speakers of different fields participated in the festival, which is currently in its 13th year.

The festival was witnessed with celebrated writers, thinkers, journalists, historians, poets, novelists and musicians where they discussed and shared their experiences with the audiences. The Jaipur Literature Festival is described as the 'greatest literary show on Earth'.



#### 4. 44th International Kolkata Book Fair held

The 44th International Kolkata Book Fair (IKBF) was held in Kolkata with Russia as the focal theme country. It is the world's largest non-trade book fair and the most attended book fair in the world. Publishers and Booksellers Guild officials from around 22 countries from Asia, Europe and Latin America participated in the fair.

This edition of the fair not only familiarised Indian readers about the Russian Children books but also witnessed launch of many contemporary bestselling books translated into Bengali. The last edition of the fair recorded around 24 lakh visitors and books worth Rs 22 crore were sold.





# Committees

## 1. High Level Committee approved over Rs. 5,908 crore of additional Central assistance to 7 States

The High Level Committee (HLC), chaired by the Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah, additional central assistance of Rs. 5908.56 crore to seven States from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) - Rs. 616.63 crore to Assam, Rs. 284.93 crore to Himachal Pradesh, Rs. 1869.85 crore to Karnataka, Rs. 1749.73 crore to Madhya Pradesh, Rs. 956.93 crore to Maharashtra, Rs. 63.32 to Tripura and Rs 367.17 crore to Uttar Pradesh for floods/ landslides/cloudburst during south west monsoon 2019.



Earlier, the Central Government has released an interim financial assistance of Rs. 3,200 crore to 4 States - Rs 1200 crore to Karnataka, Rs 1000 crore to Madhya Pradesh, Rs 600 crore to Maharashtra and Rs 400 crore to Bihar.

## 2. Tenure of the Commission constituted under Article 340 extended

The Union Cabinet has approved the extension of the term of the Commission to examine the issue of Sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes, by six months that is up to 31.7.2020. The Commission was constituted under article 340 of the Constitution on 2nd October, 2017.

The Commission is headed by Justice (Retd.) Smt. G. Rohini. The Commission is likely to make recommendations for benefit of marginalized communities in the Central List of OBCs.



### 3. Central Government notified National Startup Advisory Council

The Central Government notified the structure of the National Startup Advisory Council to advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities.



The National Startup Advisory Council will be chaired by Minister for Commerce & Industry. The Council will suggest measures to foster a culture of innovation amongst citizens and students in particular, promote innovation in all sectors of economy across the country and create an environment of absorption of innovation in industry.

### 4. Committee to draft legislation on mediation set up by Supreme Court of India

The Supreme Court of India has set up a panel to firm up a draft legislation on giving legal sanctity to disputes settled through mediation, which would then be sent to the government as a suggestion from the apex court. The panel will have responsibility to recommend a code of conduct for mediators.



Committee will be headed by mediator Niranjan Bhat. The other members of the panel included Justice K Khandok, former ASGs AS Chandok and PS Narsimha, senior advocates Sriram Panchu and JP Singh, and senior mediators Susheela S, Sadhna Ramchandran, Laila Ollapally, and Anil Xavier.

### 5. Center sets up 3 high-level steering committees to dispose of enemy properties

Union government constituted 3 high-level steering committees to handle the disposal of enemy properties present in the country and to raise money from them.

Name of Committee	Chairman	Purpose
Group of Ministers	Union Home Minister (HM) Amit Shah	To oversee the disposal of more than 9,400 enemy properties in India.
Inter-Ministerial Group	Union Home Secretary - Ajay Bhalla and secretary of DIPAM, Tuhin Kanta Pandey	For disposal of immovable enemy properties vested in the Custodian of Enemy Property for India under the Enemy Property Act, 1968
Core Group of Secretaries on Asset Monetisation	Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba	

# Deaths

## 1. Natyasurya Awardee dramatist Ratna Ojha passed away

Eminent Assamese dramatist, litterateur and social activist Ratna Ojha passed away. Recipient of the prestigious Natyasurya Award in 2005 for his contributions to theatre, Ojha had introduced street plays in Assam in 1971 with his skit Kokaideo to revive the theatre movement in the state that was fading with the death of his mentor Phani Sarma. Ojha had also introduced cartoon theatre in the Northeast.



Ojha worked as a teacher for a brief period and news editor at the Guwahati centre of Doordarshan before joining Bongaigaon Refinery as a public relations officer.

## 2. Former Karnataka Governor T N Chaturvedi passed away

Former Governor of Karnataka Triloki Nath Chaturvedi passed away at the age of 90 years. He served as of Comptroller and Auditor General of India from 1984 to 1989. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1991.



Chaturvedi went on to become Rajya Sabha MP in the 1990s and served in several parliamentary committees before holding the office of Karnataka Governor in 2001. He also briefly took charge of Kerala governor's duties.

## 3. Veteran Odissi Danseuse Minati Mishra passed away

Famous Odissi Danseuse Minati Mishra passed away at the age of 91 years. She was honored with Padma Shri in 2012. She received Sangeet Prabhakar title for Hindustani vocal music and Kalinga Shastriya Sangeet Parishad Award, while being A-Grade artist at All India Radio (AIR). Minati acted in various movies such as Suryamukhi, Jeevan Sathi, Sadhana, Bhai Bhauja and Arundhati.



Minati worked with first-generation gurus of Odissi such as Guru Pankaj Charan Das, Guru Deba Prasad Das and Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra during her tenure at Utkal Sangeet Mohavidyalaya, Bhubaneswar.

#### 4. Veteran filmmaker Manmohan Mohapatra passed away

Renowned Odia filmmaker Manmohan Mohapatra passed away. He was winner of eight consecutive national awards and was known as the 'Father of New Wave Odia Cinema'. Some of his best known films were Nishita Swapna, Majhi Pahacha, Tired Afternoon, Neeraba Jhada, Seeta Raati, and Bhinna Samaya, among others.



Mohapatra directed documentaries like Anti-Memoirs, Voices of Silence and Konrak: The Sun Temple and hindi movies like "Forbidden Love" and "Bits and Pieces".

#### 5. Former Indian cricketer Man Mohan Sood passed away

Former cricketer Man Mohan Sood passed away. He played one Test for India and 39 first-class matches with 1 century. He served as an administrator at the DDCA. He scored 1,214 runs during his career that lasted till 1965-66.



Sood later took up administrative roles in DDCA, and served as a National Selector. He made his first class debut against Services in 1957 and played his final Ranji Trophy match against Jammu and Kashmir in 1964.

#### 6. Former India all-rounder Bapu Nadkarni passed away

Former India all-rounder Bapu Nadkarni passed away. He was popularly known for his accuracy and for bowling a record 21 successive maiden overs in a Test match against England. He played 41 Tests in which he scored 1414 runs and took 88 wickets with 6/43 as his best bowling figures. He played 191 first-class matches in which he took 500 wickets and scored 8880 runs.



In first-class cricket, Nadkarni was placed at third position after Tayfield and Manish Majithia of Madhya Pradesh, with record of playing 131 dot balls or 21 maiden overs.

### 7. World's shortest man Khagendra Thapa Magar passed away

World's shortest man Khagendra Thapa Magar passed away. Thapa, who could walk, as verified by Guinness World Records, was 67.08 cm (2 ft 2.41 in) tall. He made his first appearance in the GWR 2011 book, alongside Jyoti Amge, the shortest teenager (female) living. Thapa was born in the Baglung district of Nepal.



Khagendra Thapa was appointed as a Nepalese Goodwill Ambassador for Tourism in 2011. In 2018, Guinness World Records made a documentary on his life and about his family's shop, leisure activities.

### 8. NBA legend Kobe Bryant killed in helicopter crash

National Basketball Association (NBA) legend Kobe Bryant died at the age of 41 years in a helicopter crash in the city of Calabasas, California. Nine people on board along with his 13-year-old daughter also died in the tragic incident.



Bryant played his entire 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers. He retired in April 2016. He was twice the NBA scoring champion and a two-time Olympic champion.

### 9. Veteran artist and sculptor Sher Singh Kukkal passed away

Famous artist and sculptor Sher Singh Kukkal passed away at the age of 86 years. He was known for his drawing, painting, sculpture, printing and photography. He worked as art teacher at the Sainik School Satara and as a freelance artist.



Sher Singh was honored with senior fellowship in visual art photography by Union Ministry of Culture in 2008-09, gold medal in painting from Queens College, Lucknow and the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation Award. He won various national and international awards.

### **10. Assamese linguist Golok Chandra Goswami passed away**

Prominent linguist and renowned litterateur of Assam Prof. Golok Chandra Goswami, passed away. Some of his popular works were 'Structure of Assamese', 'Assamese: Its Formation and Development', 'Dhvani Bigyanor Bhumika', 'Asomiya Bornoprakash' and 'Asomiya Akhor Jotoni'.



Prof. Golok Chandra Goswami received awards like Asam Sahitya Sabha's 'Sahityacharya' title, 'Bhashacharya' title by Asom Bhasha Bikash Samiti and 'Anundoram Boroah Award' by the Anundoram Barooah Institute of Language, Art and Culture.

# Defence

## 1. General Bipin Rawat proposed creation of Air Defence Command

Chief of the Defence Staff, CDS General Bipin Rawat directed various branch heads to come up with recommendations for inter-service synergy in a time bound manner and prepare a proposal to create Air Defence Command.



General Rawat directed that all three services and Coast Guard must be consulted and their views obtained in a time bound manner. The Chief of the Defence Staff stressed that all must work towards accomplishing desired results and coming up with healthy views and ideas.

## 2. Indian Army to sign MoU with Russia on AK-203 assault rifles

The Indian Army is to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Russia for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles. While 1 lakh rifles will come directly from Russia, 6.5 lakh rifles will be manufactured by India-Russia joint venture (JV).



The Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) at Amethi district's Korwa town in Uttar Pradesh will manufacture the rifles. The factory is a joint-venture of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) of India and Rosoboron Exports and Kalashnikov of Russia. Major General Sanjeev Senger is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IRRPL.

## 3. 12th edition of the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise, Naseem-Al-Bahr

The 12th edition of the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise 'Naseem-Al-Bahr' was organised in Goa. Two ships of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), namely RNOV Al Rasikh and RNOV Khassab participated in the exercise along with Indian Navy ships Beas and Subhadra.



'Naseem-Al-Bahr' (which means sea breeze) is a bilateral naval exercise between the Indian Navy and the RNO. It is a biennial naval exercise being conducted since 1993.

#### 4. DRDO's Naval variant of Light Combat Aircraft makes its first successful landing

The naval variant of indigenous Light Combat Aircraft, LCA, made its first successful landing on the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya. This aircraft is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO.



With the successful landing of Light Combat Aircraft, LCA on aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, India has entered into the club of selected nations having the capability to design a fighter jet which can land on an aircraft carrier. LCA is the smallest and lightest Multi-Role Supersonic Fighter Aircraft of its class. The LCA programme intends to further expand and advance India's indigenous aerospace capabilities.

#### 5. Indian Navy start 1st 'Maha-Navy Connect 2020'

An expedition, to promote the maritime heritage of India and spread awareness about Coastal Security amongst the coastal communities in Maharashtra, was launched by the Indian Navy from the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. Western Naval Command flagged off the tri-dimensional expedition consisting of yachting, running and cycling teams of 50 naval personnel along three different axes.



The expedition extended from Arnala fort, Northernmost fort of Maharashtra to Sindhudurg fort, the southernmost fort of Maharashtra, covering more than 555 km.

#### 6. Visakhapatnam to host MILAN 2020 naval exercise in March

The Indian Navy would be hosting MILAN, a multi-lateral naval exercise in March 2020. MILAN series of biennial exercises, which commenced in 1995 and conducted at Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) till 2019, will be conducted for the first time on the mainland at the eastern naval command (ENC). The theme of the exercise for the year 2020 is 'Synergy Across the Seas'.



Milan 2020 is aimed to enhance professional interaction between foreign-friendly navies and learn from each other's strengths and best practices in the maritime domain.



## 7. India's 1st indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant to be commissioned by 2021

India's 1st indigenous Aircraft Carrier Vikrant is likely to be commissioned by early 2021. It is currently being completed at Limited (CSL) in Kochi and is currently under phase three which involves setting to work of machinery and other equipment.

The third phase of construction will go on till acceptance of harbor, aviation trials and sea trials. Vikrant will be fully operational by 2022 and it will have a fleet of MiG-29K aircraft.



## 8. India deployed INS Vikramaditya in Arabian Sea amid Ex.'Sea Guardians'

India had deployed its aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya in the Arabian Sea. The aircraft carrier was deployed amid the Pakistan-China naval exercise "Sea Guardians" taking place in North Arabian Sea.

INS Vikramaditya is a modified Kiev-class aircraft carrier and the flagship of the Indian Navy, which entered into service in 2013. It has been renamed in honour of Vikramaditya, a legendary emperor of India. Vikramaditya has been designed as a STOVAR carrier capable of operating both conventional fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, with up to 34 aircraft.



## 9. India and Japan conduct exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin'

The Japan Coast Guard Ship 'Echigo' participated in the Annual Joint Exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin' with the Indian Coast Guard off Chennai. It was the 19th such exercise being conducted between the two Coast Guards since 2000.

The exercise is aimed at further strengthening bilateral ties and mutual understanding between the two Coast Guards. It is set to enhance interoperability in communication and Search and Rescue procedures and sharing of best practices.



### 10. Indian Navy to get upgraded Fuel HFHSD – IN 512

The Indian Navy with the support of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) has managed to get new fuel (High Flash High Speed Diesel) HFHSD – IN 512. The new specification will not only ensure a better quality fuel but also result in a reduced carbon footprint.



With this, the country will be able to ensure interoperability amongst foreign navies during fleet exercises and provide fuel of quality better than that mandated to all foreign navies under bilateral/ multi-national logistics support pacts including LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement).

support pacts including LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement).

### 11. India and Finland inked MoU to enhance bilateral defence cooperation

Ministry of Defence of Finland signed a MoU with India to boost defence cooperation between India and Finland. The MoU on co-operation in the field of Production, Procurement, Research and Development of Defence related Equipment and Industrial cooperation has been inked on the sidelines of Raisina Dialogue 2020.



Finland had evidenced their interest to participate in the 'Make in India' vision and formalise an arrangement for Defence Industrial cooperation through a MoU with India.

### 12. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh flagged off 51st K9 VAJRA-T gun

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh flagged off 51st K9 VAJRA-T Gun from Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Armoured System Complex at Hazira in Gujarat. The gun weighs 50 tonnes and can fire 47kg bombs at 43-kilometre distant targets, having ability to turn around at zero radius.



Earlier in 2017, L&T had signed ₹4,500-crore contract from the Ministry of Defence to supply 100 units of K9 Vajra-T 155 mm/52 calibre tracked self-propelled gun systems to the Indian Army. It is considered as largest contract awarded to a private company by the Ministry of Defence.

### 13. Indian Navy signed MoU for offshore Data with GSI

Indian Navy has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Geological Survey of India(GSI) for 'Sharing of seabed sediments data, products and expertise for Naval Application in Meteorology and Oceanography'.



GSI's Marine and Coastal survey Division based at Mangaluru has mapped most of India's 2.1 Million sq km Exclusive Economic Zone and has a vast repository of offshore data. This data collected using GSI's state-of-the-art oceanic research vessels Samudra Manthan, Samudra Kaustubh, Samudra Shaudhikama and Samudra Ratnakar, will now be used by Indian Navy's rapidly growing blue water fleet for reliable and accurate oceanographic modeling to support their expansive maritime operations in the Indian Ocean region.

### 14. IAF inducts its first squadron of Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft equipped with BrahMos missiles

The Indian Air Force has inducted its first squadron of Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft carrying the BrahMos missiles. The newly reinstated 222-squadron, also known as the Tigersharks, would serve as a lethal weapons platform capable of carrying both aerial and maritime roles in the Indian Ocean Region.



The newly inducted squadron of Sukhoi-30MKI is armed with 2.5-ton air-launched BrahMos Missile. The supersonic cruise missile is capable of striking targets at a distance of 300 KM.

### 15. India successfully test-fired K-4 ballistic missile

India has successfully test-fired K-4 ballistic missile that can be launched from a submarine. The test of the 3,500 kilometre range nuclear capable missile was conducted off the Vizag coast in Andhra Pradesh.



With this test, India has moved one more step towards the induction of this ballistic missile on the INS Arihant class of nuclear submarines. The missile was developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The three-metre-tall missile carries a nuclear warhead of over one tonne. Only the US, Russia and China have submarine-launched ballistic missiles of 3,500-kilometre range.

## 16. Russia to deliver S-400 air defence systems to India by 2025

Russia has started production of S-400 long-range surface-to-air missile systems for India, and all five units will be delivered by 2025. In October 2018, India signed a USD 5 billion deal to buy the air defence missile systems.

The S-400, an upgraded version of the S-300, had previously only been available to the Russian defence forces. It is manufactured by Almaz-Antey and has been in service in Russia since 2007.



## 1. GST revenue collection increased by 16% in December 2019

The GST revenues during the month of December 2019 from domestic transactions, has shown an impressive growth of 16% over the revenue during the month of December, 2018. If IGST collected from imports are considered, the total revenue during December 2019 has increased by 9% in comparison to the revenue during December, 2018.



The government has settled ₹ 21,814 crore to CGST and ₹ 15,366 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement. The total revenue earned by Central Government and the State Governments after regular settlement in the month of December 2019 is ₹ 41,776 crore for CGST and ₹ 42,158 crore for the SGST.

## 2. Rabi crops sowing area increased by 36 lakh hectares

Rabi crops sowing area increased by around 36 lakh hectares in December 2019. The total area sown under Rabi crops stands at over 571 lakh hectares as compared to 536 lakh hectare. The progress in Rabi sowing has picked up significantly with the improvement of soil moisture in almost all Rabi growing states.



The wheat has been sown in over 297 lakh hectare which is about 27 lakh hectare more than 2018. The Rice has been sown in around 14 lakh hectare and Pulses in over 140 lakh hectare.

## 3. IGST refunds of Rs 1,12,000 crore paid to exporters

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, CBIC unveiled that over 1,12,000 crore rupees have been paid as Integrated Goods and Services Tax-IGST refunds to exporters and over 83,000 exporters have been benefited by these refunds. Refunds of only 3,604 crores are pending with Customs.



CBIC used data analytics to identify risky exporter entities that take input tax credit fraudulently and monetize it by paying IGST and taking refund. Such exporters are being subject to KYC and verification process before the grant of refund.

#### 4. India likely to surpass Germany to become the fourth-largest economy in 2026

India will overtake Germany to become fourth-largest economy in the world by the year 2026. UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) titled 'World Economic League Table 2020' report unveiled that India is all set to overtake Japan to become the third-largest economy by 2034. India has decisively overtaken both France and the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy in 2019.



The World Economic League Table is an annual calculation by CEBR jointly published by CEBR and Global Construction Perspectives. The base data for 2019 is taken from the IMF World Economic Outlook.

#### 5. India's Forex reserves touch all time high of 457.468 billion

India's foreign exchange reserves increased by 2.520 billion USD to touch a record high of 457.468 billion USD. Foreign currency assets, a major part of the overall reserves rose by 2.203 billion USD to 424.936 billion USD. The reserves had surged by 456 million USD to end at 454.948 billion USD. Gold reserves increased by 260 million USD to end at 27.392 billion USD.



India's special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund, however dipped by 2 million USD to 1.441 billion USD, while the country's reserve position increased by 58 million USD to 3.7 billion USD.

#### 6. Indian government signed MoU with Flipkart under DAY-NULM scheme

Flipkart, India's leading e-commerce marketplace partnered with the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, to empower skilled yet underserved sections of society by inducting them into e-commerce.



Under the MoU, Flipkart will establish the Flipkart Samarth program in 22 states. Flipkart and the State missions will work with self help groups (SHGs), including local artisans, weavers and crafts producers to provide them market access. This partnership will increase business and trade opportunities for micro, small and medium enterprises.

## 7. Finance Minister announced 102 lakh crore rupees project

Finance Minister Sitharaman announced investment of Rs 102 lakh crore of infra projects for next five years spread across 23 ministries, 18 states and union territories. A task force was formed to identify projects which identified Rs 102 lakh crore worth of projects after conducting 70 stakeholder consultations. India's first National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) is also a part of such project.



A total of 51 lakh crores that is about 5-6 per cent of the GDP has been spent on infrastructure in the last six years by Centre and states.

## 8. NSO estimates India's GDP growth rate for 2019-20 at 5%

According to the first advanced estimates of the national income released by National Statistical Office (NSO), the Indian economy is estimated to grow at 5% in 2019-20 as against 6.8% in the previous fiscal. The decline has been mainly on account of deceleration in manufacturing sector growth, which is expected to come down to 2% in 2019-20 from 6.2% in the year-ago fiscal.



The construction sector growth is estimated at 3.2% as against 8.7% in 2018-19. The previous low in economic growth was recorded at 3.1% in 2008-09.

## 9. First Advance Estimates of National Income, 2019-20

The National Statistical Office (NSO) has released the First Advance Estimates of National Income at both Constant (2011-12) and Current Prices, for the financial year 2019-20.



The highlights are:

- The growth in real GDP during 2019-20 is estimated at 5.0% as compared to the growth rate of 6.8% in 2018-19.
- GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹147.79 lakh crore.
- GDP at Current Prices in the year 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹204.42 lakh crore.
- The Per Capita Net National Income during 2019-20 is estimated to be ₹1,35,050 showing a rise of 6.8%.
- The Per Capita Income in real terms (at 2011-12 prices) during 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹96,563.

### 10. Adani Ports to acquire 75% stake in Krishnapatnam Port

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) announced acquisition of 75% stake in Andhra Pradesh-based Krishnapatnam Port Company for an enterprise value of Rs 13,572 crore. APSEZ is one of the country's largest private port operators.



The Krishnapatnam Port is located in southern Andhra Pradesh and is a multi-cargo facility. It handled 54 million tonnes (mt) of cargo in the year ended 31 March 2019. The purchase will accelerate Adani Ports' plan to expand its cargo-handling capacity to 400mt by 2025.

### 11. Uber partners with Hyundai on electric air taxi

Uber has teamed up with Hyundai Motor to develop electric air taxis. Uber plans to launch Uber Air by 2023. Hyundai will produce and deploy the vehicles while Uber will provide aerial ride-share services.



Global players like Germany's Daimler, China's Geely Automobile and Japan's Toyota have all unveiled investments in start-ups that aim to deploy electric flying cars capable of vertical takeoff and landing.

### 12. Industrial output turns positive on account of growth in manufacturing sector

The industrial output grew 1.8% in November 2019, turning positive after three months of contraction, on account of growth in the manufacturing sector. The growth in the manufacturing sector was 2.7% as against a contraction of 0.7% in November 2018.



The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) had grown by 0.2% in November 2018. The IIP growth during April-November period of the current fiscal came in at 0.6%, down from 5% in the same period of 2018-19.



### 13. CCEA approved strategic disinvestment of 49.78% equity shareholding of MMTC

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved strategic disinvestment of 49.78% equity shareholding of Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation Limited and 10.10% of National Mineral Development Corporation.



The CCEA gave approval for strategic disinvestment of 0.68% of MECON and Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited each. 12% disinvestment in Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited and 20.47% in Odisha Mining Corporation was also approved. The proposed strategic disinvestment of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited will unlock resources to be used to finance the social sector and developmental programmes of the Government benefiting the public.

### 14. Deutsche Bank projects India's economy to reach \$7 trillion by 2030

Deutsche Bank projected Indian economy to achieve \$7 trillion by 2030 in its research report titled as "Imagine 2030".



Key findings of the report are:

- India will grow with the Nominal GDP growth rate of just over 10% in the next decade.
- India will become the world's third largest economy by 2030.
- Reserve Bank of India's decision to cut the key lending rate by 135 basis points in 2019 will revive growth.
- GST will expedite formalisation of the economy and improve the fiscal growth of the country.

### 15. Retail inflation at 5-yr high of 7.35% in Dec 2019

Retail inflation rose to about five-and-half year high of 7.35% in December 2019, surpassing the RBI's comfort level, mainly due to rise in prices of vegetables. As per the data released by National Statistical Office (NSO), the spike in inflation in the vegetable segment was 60.5% during the month compared to December 2018.



The overall retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 2.11% in December 2018 and 5.54% in November 2019.

### 16. WPI surged to 2.59% in December 2019

Wholesale prices based inflation surged to 2.59% in December 2019, as against 0.58% in November due to increase in prices of food articles like onion and potato. The annual inflation, based on the monthly wholesale price index (WPI), was at 3.46% during December 2018.



The rate of price rise for food articles rose to 13.12% during December 2019 as against 11% a month earlier, while for non-food articles it rose to 7.72% from 1.93% in November.

### 17. India China bilateral trade continues to make steady growth in 2019

India China bilateral trade has continued to make steady growth in 2019. China-India bilateral trade stood at 639.52 billion yuan in 2019 which is 1.6% increase year on year. However, in US dollar terms, it has dipped by 3 billion US dollars as compared to 2018 as overall global trade was moderated in 2019.



Bilateral trade is projected to be about 92.68 billion dollars in 2019 while it was 95.7 billion US dollars in 2018, a record high till now. India's Trade deficit with China also declined to about USD 56.77 billion in 2019 as compared to about 58 billion USD in 2018.

### 18. Infosys inked with GEFCO to strengthen Digital Transformation

Infosys partnered with GEFCO, a world leader in multimodal supply chain solutions and the European leader in automotive logistics, to support its digital transformation over the next five years. Infosys will help transform the group's next-generation business application management services.



Infosys will also leverage its Live Enterprise Suite to help GEFCO evolve into a 'Digital Native' organization. The end objective is to help GEFCO create new sustainable sources of competitive advantage and continuously improve value for its customers.

### 19. India to get USD 1 billion investment from e-commerce company Amazon

Amazon.com Inc chief Jeff Bezos announced to invest USD 1 billion (over Rs 7,000 crore) investment in India to help bring small and medium enterprises online, digitize them and committed to exporting USD 10 billion worth of India-made goods by 2025.



The investment is done with an aim to clarify allegations of deep discounts. Competition Commission of India launched a probe into Amazon and Flipkart to look at allegations of deep discounts and whether the companies discriminate against small sellers.

### 20. UN lowered India's growth forecast for FY20 to 5.7%

The United Nations lowered India's growth forecast for FY20 to 5.7% from 7.6% in its World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2020 report.



#### Key findings are:

- In China, GDP growth is projected to 6% in 2020 and 5.9% in 2021.
- Global growth would slow to 1.8% in FY 20.
- Prolonged weakness in global economic activity may cause significant setbacks for sustainable development.
- East Asia remains the world's fastest-growing region.
- In the European Union, GDP growth will rise from 1.4 percent in 2019 to 1.6 percent in 2020.

### 21. IMF lowered India's 2019 growth forecast to 4.8% from 6.1%

International Monetary Fund slashed its estimate on India's 2019 economic growth to 4.8% from the 6.1%, due to slowdown in local demand and stress in the non-bank financial sector. It has estimated the economy to grow by 6.5 per cent in 2021-22 which is 0.9 percentage point lower than earlier projections.



#### Key findings are:

- World economic growth is estimated at 1.9% for 2019.
- Global economy to grow by 3.3% in FY 20.
- The downward revision primarily reflects negative surprises to economic activity in a few emerging market economies, notably India.

## 22. Adani Capital acquired Essel Finance's MSME lending business

Adani Capital, the non-banking financial company (NBFC) arm of Adani Group acquired Essel Finance's MSME loan business to focus on small and micro-entrepreneurs. Through the acquisition, Adani Capital has secured a loan book of around Rs 145 crore.

The acquisition is aimed at secured lending focused on income-generating borrowers. Adani Capital is a 100 per cent subsidiary of AdaniFinserve Private Limited, the holding company of AdaniGroup's financial services business.



## 23. Government approved up to 100% FDI in Bharti Airtel

The Department of Telecom (DoT) has approved raising of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bharti Airtel to 100 per cent from 49 per cent allowed previously. The approval will enable Bharti Airtel company to raise more funds as per its requirement.

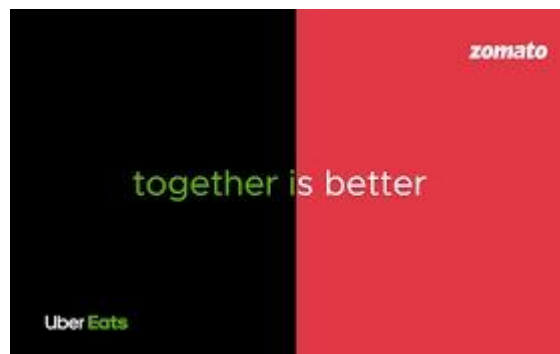
Bharti Airtel has already received nod of the RBI that allowed foreign investors to hold up to 74% stake in the company. With this approval Bharti Airtel can get the infusion of Rs 4,900 crore investment from Singapore-based Singtel and other foreign entities.



## 24. Zomato acquired Uber Eats business in India

Zomato acquired the Indian operations of Uber Eats, the food delivery biz run by Uber, for around \$350 million. Uber Eats is an Uber Technologies Inc's food delivery business in India. The deals provide Uber with the 9.99% ownership in Zomato after the acquisition. Zomato will have a 55% share of the food delivery market.

With this acquisition, the deal marked the first big consolidation move in the cash-intensive online food-delivery market.



### **25. Forex reserves rise to 462.16 bn in the week ended Jan 17**

The country's foreign exchange reserves rose 943 million US Dollars to touch a life-time high of 462.16 billion US Dollars in the week ended January 17. The rise in reserves was mainly on account of an increase in foreign currency assets, which rose by 867 million US Dollars to 428.45 billion US Dollars.



In the reporting week, gold reserves increased 70 million US Dollars to 28.56 billion US Dollars. The special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were up by 3 million US Dollars to 1.45 billion US Dollars. The country's reserve position with the IMF rose by 3 million US Dollars to 3.70 billion US Dollars.

### **26. India-Brazil set target of USD 15 billion trade by 2022**

India and Brazil set a target of USD 15 billion in bilateral trade by 2022. Both the nations drew up an ambitious plan to expand cooperation in oil, gas and minerals sectors. The decision was taken during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro.



The volume of bilateral trade in 2018-10 was USD 8.2 billion which included USD 3.8 billion worth of Indian exports to Brazil and USD 4.4 million as imports by India.

# Environment

## 1. India first time ranked among top ten in Climate Change Performance Index

India, for the first time, was ranked among the top ten in the Climate Change Performance Index, CCPI, which goes further to prove that all efforts and activities being currently undertaken by the government are setting a tone of vast improvements. Government aimed to increase the share of non-fossil fuels to 175 GigaWatt by 2022 and further take it to 450 GW.



India is among few countries in the world where forest cover is consistently increasing. The total forest and tree cover rises to over 24% of the total geographical area of the Country.

## 2. Total tree, forest cover increased by 5,188 square kilometres in two years

The total tree and forest cover increased by 5,188 square kilometres since 2017 and it has covered around 25% of the geographical area of the country. Karnataka topped the forest survey of India report of states followed by Andhra Pradesh and Kerala in terms of increase in forest cover.



The aim of the Paris Agreement is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping global temperature rise this century well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. India is among the few countries where the forest and tree covers have increased.

## 3. Palau became 1st nation to ban 'reef toxic' sun cream

The Pacific nation of Palau became the first country to ban "reef-toxic" sunscreens that contain chemicals which affect the health of coral reefs and fish and is harmful to corals and sea life. It is done with an aim to protect its coral reefs and UNESCO World Heritage site. A lagoon in Palau's Rock Islands is a Unesco World Heritage site.



Sunscreen contains 10 ingredients, including oxybenzone and octinoxate, which are known environmental pollutants. Toxic sunscreen chemicals were found throughout Palau's critical habitats, and in the tissues of our most famous creatures.

#### 4. Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park Census unveiled an increase of 15 saltwater crocodiles

Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park Census survey unveiled following observations-

- The population of the saltwater or estuarine crocodile increased in the water bodies of Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park, an increase of 15 saltwater crocodiles.
- 620 hatchlings, 325 yearlings, 288 juveniles, 185 sub-adults (six to eight feet long) and 339 adults (more than 8 feet long) reported in 2020.
- 12 albino crocodiles and four giant crocodiles more than 20 feet long were sighted in the water bodies of Bhitarkanika.



#### 5. Turtle Rehab Centre in Bihar-First of its kind

A first-of-its-kind rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles was set up in Bihar's Bhagalpur forest division. The rehab centre will provide shelter to 500 turtles at a time and prevent them from smuggling. The rehab center will help in proper upkeep of turtles before being returned to their natural habitat.

Turtles play a significant role in the river by scavenging dead organic materials and diseased fish, controlling fish population as predators and controlling aquatic plants and weeds.



#### 6. Forest Survey of India 2019 report unveiled

Forest Survey of India released the 2019 report on Forest Fires. FSI identified fire-prone forest areas across India.

##### Key findings are:

- Over 21% of forest cover is fire prone.
- An increase of mangrove cover in India by 54 sq km (1.1%).
- Extremely fire prone areas account for 3.89% of total forest cover.
- Central Indian States recorded a high number of forest fire alerts.
- One of the major reasons for forest fires in the north-east is slash-and-burn cultivation.



## 7. Centre notified new Wetland Conservation Rules

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified the new Wetland Conservation Rules which prohibit setting up or expansion of industries and disposal of construction and demolition waste within the wetlands. A wetland is a land area that is saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally, and it takes on the characteristics of a distinct ecosystem.



Each state and Union Territory will have to set up an authority that will define strategies for conservation and wise use of wetlands within their jurisdiction.

## 8. Australian Koalas set to become endangered in bush fires

The Australian government has decided to declare koalas as an endangered species after the bushfire crisis. The bushfire crises killed many people, burned over 10 million hectares of land, destroyed over 2,000 homes and pushed many species towards extinction. It has been reported that over 1.25 billion animals were dead due to bushfires. Australian government committed A\$50 million for emergency wildlife recovery program.



Bushfires have destroyed 30% of the koalas habitat. The koala is an arboreal herbivorous marsupial native to Australia.

## 9. Wildlife census conducted in Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve

The annual wildlife census was conducted in the Kalakkadu - Mundanthurai tiger sanctuary in Tamil Nadu. The survey was conducted in the entire 60,000-hectare area of the sanctuary. The first part of the survey took count of carnivores like tiger, jackals etc, while the second phase involved the enumeration of herbivores like elephants, deer etc.



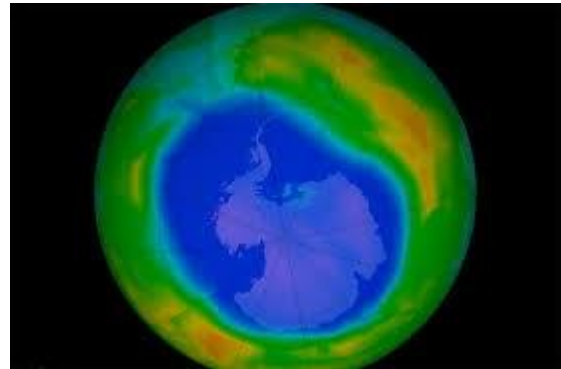
More than three hundred personnel, including forest officials, wildlife experts and college students were involved in the exercise. The census findings will be included in the annual State of Wild Life Population report of the Union Ministry of Forest and Environment.



## 10. India achieved complete phase out of one of the most potent ozone depleting chemical

India has successfully achieved the complete phase out of Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC)-141 b, which is a chemical used by foam manufacturing enterprises and one of the most potent ozone depleting chemical after Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). (HCFC)-141 b is used mainly as a blowing agent in the production of rigid polyurethane (PU) foams.

The phase out of HCFC-141b from the country has twin environmental benefits of assisting the healing of the stratospheric ozone layer and towards the climate change mitigation due to transitioning of foam manufacturing enterprises at this scale under HPMP to low global warming potential alternative technologies.



## 1. RBI launched app to help visually impaired persons

The Reserve Bank launched a mobile application for aiding visually impaired persons to identify the denomination of Indian Banknotes. "Mobile Aided Note Identifier - MANI" app is capable of identifying the denominations of Mahatma Gandhi Series and Mahatma Gandhi (New) series banknote by checking front or reverse side of the notes, including half folded notes under broad range of light conditions.



RBI has clarified that the mobile application does not authenticate a note as being either genuine or counterfeit.

## 2. Piyush Goyal inaugurated NSE Knowledge Hub

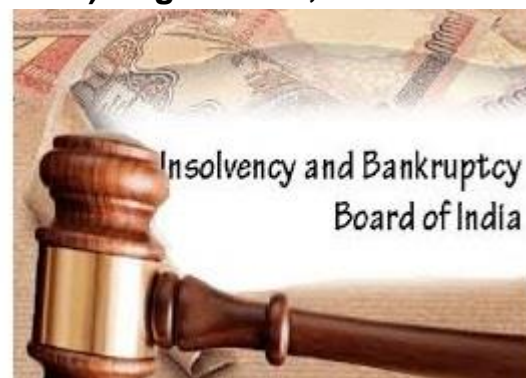
National Stock Exchange (NSE) launched an AI-powered learning platform NSE Knowledge Hub. It was inaugurated by Union Minister for Commerce and Industries Piyush Goyal. The NSE Knowledge Hub will curate the content for learners from many internal, external and premium sources for the personalised learning experience.



NSE Academy, a wholly-owned subsidiary of NSE, seeks to collaborate with organisations in the BFSI industry to enhance skills of their employees and academic institutions to prepare future-ready talent for the financial services industry.

## 3. IBBI amends the IBBI (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) (Amendment) Regulations, 2020. The amendment clarifies that a person, who is not eligible under the Code to submit a resolution plan for insolvency resolution of the corporate debtor, shall not be a party in any manner to a compromise or arrangement of the corporate debtor under section 230 of the Companies Act, 2013.



The amendment also provides that a secured creditor cannot sell or transfer an asset, which is subject to security interest, to any person, who is not eligible under the Code to submit a resolution plan for insolvency resolution of the corporate debtor.

#### 4. RBI revised supervisory framework for Urban Co-operative Bank

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised supervisory action framework (SAF) for urban co-operative banks. A UCB may be placed under supervisory action framework when its net non-performing assets (NPAs) exceed 6% of its net advances. As soon as this threshold is breached, the regulator may initiate multiple actions, depending on severity of stress.



All primary UCBs are mandated to submit a board-approved action plan for reducing its net NPAs below 6% on quarterly/monthly basis, post-review progress report.

#### 5. Shivalik Mercantile Co-op gets RBI nod to become SFB

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted "in-principle" approval to Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank for transition into a small finance bank (SFB). This is the first licence issued by the RBI to an urban co-operative bank (UCB) to become an SFB since the guidelines came out nearly two years ago.



The UCB will get 18 months to comply with the requirements under the scheme, which state that banks with a minimum net worth of ₹50 crore and capital to risk (weighted) assets ratio of 9% and above are eligible to apply for voluntary transition to SFB.

#### 6. RBI amended KYC norms allowing banks to use V-CIP

The RBI amended the KYC norms allowing banks and other lending institutions regulated by it to use Video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP), a move which will help them onboard customers remotely. The V-CIP will make it easier for banks and other regulated entities to adhere to the RBI's Know Your Customer (KYC) norms by leveraging the digital technology.



The Reserve Bank decided to permit video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) as a consent based alternate method of establishing the customer's identity, for customer onboarding with a view to leveraging the digital channels.

## 7. SBI announced 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' scheme

State Bank of India announced a 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' (RBBG) scheme. It aims at giving a push to residential sales and improve homebuyers' confidence.



Under this scheme, the SBI will issue a guarantee for completion of select residential projects to customers who have availed home loans from it. The scheme will focus on affordable housing projects priced up to 2.50 crore rupees in 10 cities. Under RBBG, the guarantee would be given by the bank till the project gets the occupation certificate (OC).

## 8. Indian banks to end their operations in Sri Lanka

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka has permitted Indian private sector lenders Axis Bank and ICICI Bank to close their operations in the island nation. The licenses issued by Central Bank of Sri Lanka will be cancelled once the winding-up operations are complete. The two banks are no longer to carry their banking operations, including accepting deposits from the public in Sri Lanka.



Axis Bank is the fifth-largest bank in India offering a wide assortment of financial products. ICICI Bank is the second largest bank in India in terms of assets and market capitalisation.

## 9. World Bank's 2020 Global Economic Prospects report released

World Bank's 2020 Global Economic Prospects report projected India's growth rate at 5% for fiscal year 2020 due to weakness in credit from Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). Global economic growth is forecast to edge up to 2.5% in 2020 as investment and trade gradually recover.



### Highlights are:

- Growth among advanced economies is anticipated to slip to 1.4% in 2020 due to continued softness in manufacturing.
- Growth in emerging market and developing economies is expected to accelerate this year to 4.1%.
- Euro Area growth is projected to slip to a downwardly revised 1% in 2020.

## 10. SBI's report 'Ecowrap' lowered India's growth rate to 4.6% for FY 2020

SBI has lowered the growth rate of India to 4.6% in the fiscal year 2020 in its report 'Ecowrap'. The report unveiled that agriculture and allied activities are expected to grow at 2.8%, while growth in industry estimated to grow at 2.5% in fiscal year 2020. The service sector is also estimated to increase to 6.9% in fiscal year 2020.



Ecowrap report projected that growth rate will remain below 6% for the two years in a row. SBI research report 'Ecowrap' highlights the impact of the slow growth of the economy on jobs creation.

## 11. RBI released “National Strategy for Financial Inclusion” report

Reserve Bank of India under the aegis of Financial Inclusion Advisory Committee (FIAC) initiated the process of formulation of National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) for the period 2019-2024 for achieving sustainable development worldwide. NSFI was finalised and approved by the Financial Stability Development Council (FSDC).



The NSFI sets forth the vision and key objectives of the Financial Inclusion policies in India to expand the reach and sustain the efforts through a broad convergence of action involving all the stakeholders in the financial sector.

## 12. SCR of Indian Railways signed MoU with SBI

The South Central Zone of Indian Railways signed a Memorandum of Understanding with State Bank of India for Doorstep Banking for direct pickup of earnings covering all 585 Railway stations over SCR Zone. The direct pick up of cash dispenses with the movement of cash earnings through “Cash Safes” by trains.



Major benefits from the MoU are as follows:

- Real time information about the cash being deposited by different stations which will help in better supervision and accountability.
- Avoidance of unwanted accumulation of cash at railway stations.
- Smart way of remittance of station earnings.

### 13. RBI raised the Investment limit for FPIs to 30%

The RBI raised the investment limit for FPIs in government & corporate bonds from 20% to 30% to bring in more foreign funds into the market. Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) can invest now up to 30% in central government securities (including treasury bills) or state development loans or corporate bonds.



RBI made amendments to the Directions governing investment through the Voluntary Retention Route (VRR). The investment cap is increased to Rs. 1,50,000 crores from Rs. 75,000 crores. FPIs are also allowed to invest in Exchange Traded Funds that invest only in debt instruments.

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### 14. Reliance Jio became 1st Telecom to launch UPI Payments Feature

Reliance Jio launched UPI payments feature through its platform after launching the feature on the MyJio app. With this, Reliance Jio became the first telecom operator to facilitate digital UPI payments through its platform and second among payments banks to have enabled UPI payments service.



Reliance JIO has integrated the UPI option in its main app MyJio, which also accommodates popular apps like JioCinema, JioCloud and JioTV. A user will get virtual payment address (VPA) with UPI handle @Jio after the successful sign-up process. Reliance JIO has over 370 million subscribers.

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### 15. ICICI Bank introduced cardless cash withdrawal facility through ATMs

ICICI Bank announced the launch of a 'Cardless Cash Withdrawal' facility from its ATMs. This service enables customers to withdraw cash from over 15,000 ATMs of the bank by simply raising a request on 'iMobile', its mobile banking application.



The 'Cardless Cash Withdrawal' service can be used for self-withdrawal when customers do not wish to carry the debit card. The daily transaction limit as well as per transaction limit is set at Rs. 20,000. The offering of 'Cardless Cash Withdrawal' from iMobile enables customers to withdraw cash securely for everyday purchases, all from the convenience of their mobile phone.

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## 16. NPCI launched Blockchain-Based Vajra Platform to Secure Payments

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched the Vajra Platform to make payments fast and secure. Vajra is a blockchain-based payments platform. Vajra platform has ability to automate clearing and perform settlement of payments, drastically reducing the need for manual reconciliation with the help of distributed ledger technology (DLT).



Blockchain technology is distributed ledger that records the provenance of a digital asset. DLT will also help the industry in minimising operations and financial risks while making transactions economical, immutable and secure.

# Important Days

## 1. World Braille Day

The World Braille Day is observed annually on January 4 to honor the birth anniversary of Louis Braille. He is credited with inventing the Braille language which helps blind people to read as well as write.

NGOs and various organizations work together on this day to raise awareness about the indifference towards blind people and to help them be equal with the rest of the people.



## 2. World Hindi Day observed worldwide

World Hindi Day is commemorated every year with the objective to promote use of Hindi language abroad. Special functions are being organized to mark the occasion. The first world Hindi Conference was organized in Nagpur to promote the language worldwide. Since then 10th January is being observed as World Hindi Day.

World Hindi Day is to promote the language at the global stage. Since 1975, the World Hindi Conference has been organised in different countries like India, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Trinidad and Tobago, United States.



## 3. 16th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas observed

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was celebrated on 9 January to mark the contribution of overseas Indian community in the development of India. It also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India on 9 January 1915.

On the occasion of 16th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar interacted with Indian Diaspora across the globe through a digital video conference. Established in 2003 the celebratory event is organised by the Ministry of External Affairs every year on this day.





#### 4. 12th January celebrated as National Youth Day

January 12 of every year is celebrated as National Youth Day in schools and colleges across India. The day marks the birth of Swami Vivekananda. The students and youth celebrated it with processions, speeches, music, youth conventions, seminars, Yogasanas, presentations, competitions in essay-writing, recitations and sports. It was celebrated with the theme 'Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building'.



In 1984, the Government of India decided to celebrate January 12 the birthday of great Swami Vivekananda as the National Youth Day every year.

#### 5. 14th January celebrated as Armed Forces Veterans Day

14th January 2020 was celebrated as 4th Armed Forces Veterans Day. Armed Forces Veterans day was also celebrated at seven other Command Headquarters of Army, Navy and IAF.



Since 2017, Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14th January as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Marshal KM Cariappa OBE - the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 Jan 53. Commemoration of Armed Forces Veterans Day acknowledges and honours the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation.

#### 6. 15 January celebrated as Indian Army Day

January 15 of every year is celebrated as the 'Indian Army Day.' It was the date (15 January 1949) on which Field Marshal Kodandera M Cariappa (then a Lieutenant General) took over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India.



In 1942, K M Cariappa became the first Indian Army Officer to command a unit. In addition to this, Army Day marks a day to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country.

### 7. IMD celebrated its 145th foundation Day on 15 January

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) celebrated its 145<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day on 15th January. With a humble beginning in 1875, the IMD has marched forward with various milestones and paradigms to serve the society.

WMO recognized 5 observatories of IMD - Chennai (Nungambakkam), Mumbai (Colaba), Panjim, Pune and Thiruvananthapuram as a long-term observing station for more than 100 years. IMD launched its new website: [www.mausam.imd.gov.in](http://www.mausam.imd.gov.in) for general public and Mobile App 'MEGHDOOT' for Agromet Advisory Services.



### 8. National Girl Child Day celebrated on January 24

The National Girl Child Day is celebrated in India annually on January 24. The day aims to provide maximum support and facilities to the girls of the country in every respect as well as to raise awareness about discrimination against girls.

Women and Child Development Department also celebrated National Girl Child Week from January 24 to 30. During the week, many important programmes like "Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao" signature campaign, plantation and name plate drive in the names of daughters, awareness campaign on women's rights and mass oaths for girl child protection were administered.



### 9. National Immunization Day

The National Immunization Day (NID) was observed all over India as a part of Pulse Polio Programme, 2020 on January 19. The National Immunization Day are one of the four strategies that are recommended by the WHO to eradicate polio completely.

According to WHO, the NID has to be conducted twice a year at a gap of 2 to 4 weeks. GoI organizes Pulse Polio immunization campaigns on the standards set by World Health Organization (WHO). The next round of National Immunization Day is to be held in March 10.



## 10. International Day of Education

The world marked the first-ever International Day of Education on 24th January 2020. It was celebrated globally as International Day of Education with the theme 'Learning for people, planet, prosperity and peace'. On the Day, UNESCO released a new right to education handbook on education inequalities showing which population groups are lagging behind in achieving SDG 4.



A new initiative called "Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning" was launched in New York, formed by representatives of Member States to the UN, to advocate for sustained commitment to education in the 2030 Agenda.

## 11. 71st Republic Day

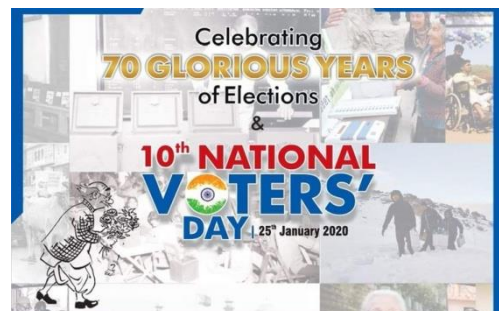
India celebrated its 71st Republic Day on January 26, 2020. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was the Chief Guest. This year, for the first time, the wreath laying ceremony was held at the newly built National War Memorial instead of Amar Jawan Jyoti.



Assam's tableau which portrayed the unique craftsmanship and culture of the state has been chosen as the best tableau, followed by Odisha and Uttar Pradesh who were tied for the second position. The tableaux of National Disaster Relief Force and Jal Shakti Mission were chosen as the best among the Ministries and Departments.

## 12. National Voters' Day celebrated

The 10th National Voters' Day has been celebrated on 25th January. The theme this year is 'Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy'. It sets the tone for year-long activities focusing on voter education and renewal of citizens' faith in the electoral process.



The Day is celebrated since 2011 to mark the Foundation day of Election Commission of India, which was established on 25th January 1950. It was the 61st Foundation Day of the Election Commission.

# International

## 1. Iran named Esmail Qaani as its new Commander

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei named the Deputy Head of the Revolutionary Guards' foreign operations arm Esmail Qaani as its new commander replacing Qasem Soleimani who was killed in a pre-dawn US strike in Baghdad. Following this incident, tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Tehran to protest against American crimes.



Qaani has served as one of the most decorated commanders of the Guards during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. The orders for the force remain exactly as they were during the leadership of Soleimani.

## 2. Nepal's President launched 'Visit Nepal Year 2020' campaign to promote tourism

President of Nepal, Bidya Devi Bhandari, launched much-awaited Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign. The ambitious campaign is aimed to promote tourism in Nepal and attract 2 million tourists during the year 2020. The government has a goal of making tourism one of the key pillars of Nepali economy.



Visit Nepal 2020 campaign was launched in all the seven provinces of Nepal. During the campaign a large number of programmes will be organized in various parts of Nepal throughout the year.

## 3. WHO designated 2020 as "Year of Nurse and Midwife"

World Health Organization (WHO) designated the year 2020 as "Year of Nurse and Midwife" so as to honor 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale. Florence Nightingale was an English social reformer and statistician, and the founder of modern nursing. Nightingale came to prominence while serving as a manager and trainer of nurses during the Crimean War, in which she organised care for wounded soldiers.



2020 will highlight the challenging conditions they often face, and advocate for increased investments in the nursing and midwifery workforce.

#### 4. Umaro Cissoko Embalo won Guinea-Bissau presidential election

Former Guinea-Bissau Prime Minister and ex-army general Umaro Cissoko Embalo was elected president with 54% of the votes. He replaced President Jose Mario Vaz. He promised to resolve political tensions in the West African country, which has seen nine coups or attempted coups since 1974.



Umaro Cissoko Embalo served as the prime minister of his country between 2016 and 2018. He served in the military and rose to the rank of Brigadier-General.

#### 5. UAE Cabinet approved issuance of 5-Year multi-entry tourist visa

The UAE Cabinet has approved the issuance of a five-year multi-entry tourist visa for all nationalities visiting the country. The decision was made during the Cabinet's first meeting of 2020 in a bid to support the UAE's tourism economy.



The country receives 21 million tourists annually and their aim is to establish the country as a major global tourist destination. The cabinet also made a decision of the introduction of a visa waiver for Mexican citizens travelling to the UAE.

#### 6. India extends \$75 million line of credit for solar parks in Cuba

India has extended a line of credit of \$75 million (over Rs 500 crore) to Cuba for financing solar parks. Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) had signed an agreement with Banco Exterior De Cuba in July 2019 in this regards which came into effect from December 12.

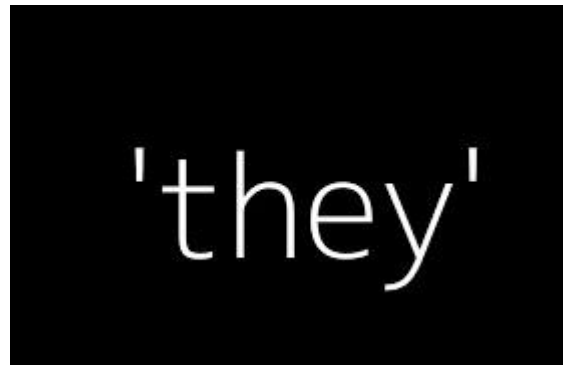


Exim Bank made available the Government of India supported Line of Credit (LoC) of \$75 million to Banco Exterior De Cuba for the purpose of financing installation of 75 MW Photovoltaic Solar Parks in the Republic of Cuba.

## 7. Neutral pronoun 'they' voted Word of the Decade

Neutral pronoun 'they' has been voted word of the decade by US language experts. "They" is used in English by a growing number of non-binary individuals, people who do not identify as either male or female. They prefer the plural neutral pronoun to bypass using the pronouns "he" or "she".

The recognition comes after US dictionary Merriam-Webster in December named "they" as word of the year. The American Dialect Society had previously named "they" word of the year in 2015.



## 8. United States officially launched "US Space Force"

United States President Donald Trump has signed the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. With the signing of the act, US has authorised the establishment of US Space Force. The US Space Force will become the 6th branch of the armed forces.

Space Force would become the youngest US military branch, and the first new service since the establishment of the US Air Force back in 1947. The launch of the Space Force will be funded by an initial \$40m for its first year. It will be led by Air Force General Jay Raymond.



## 9. Iran fully withdraws from the JCPOA deal

Iran has announced its full withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal. The move was made following the U.S. targeted strike that killed the country's Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani in Iraq.

With this, Iran is no longer committed to any limits on the level of uranium enrichment, stockpile of nuclear fuel and also nuclear research and development. The United States walked away from the nuclear deal in 2018.



### 10. British Parliament approved terms of Brexit

Britain's Parliament approved the terms of Brexit, clearing its exit from the European Union. The House of Commons rushed through a final day of hearings and ratified Prime Minister Boris Johnson's divorce deal with Brussels.



The Brexit Bill was passed by the unelected House of Lords and the European Parliament. The Brexit deal covers separation issues such as EU citizens' rights and Britain's financial settlement and sets out an 11-month transition period in which to agree a wider partnership.

### 11. Haitham bin Tariq Al Said succeeded Sultan Qaboos as ruler of Oman

Haitham bin Tariq Al Said succeeded Sultan Qaboos as ruler of Oman. Haitham bin Tariq Al Said has served in a range of government roles, including undersecretary of the ministry of foreign affairs and the secretary general for the ministry of foreign affairs, as well as minister of heritage and culture.



Sultan Qaboos had ruled Oman for almost 50 years. He was widely credited with modernising the country and in developing its unique role as a regional mediator.

### 12. Former PM Zoran Milanovic wins Croatia presidential election

Zoran Milanovic, Croatia's center-left former Prime Minister, won the country's presidential election ousting center-right Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic was the first female President of Croatia. Milanovic won 52.7% of votes, while the incumbent Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic could get 47.3% of the votes.



Milanovic has served as Prime Minister from 2011 to 2015. Croatia took over the six-month rotating presidency of the European Union on Jan 1. Croatia's president has a responsibility in foreign policy and security matters but the Prime Minister runs the country.

### 13. India attended Hormuz Peace Initiative

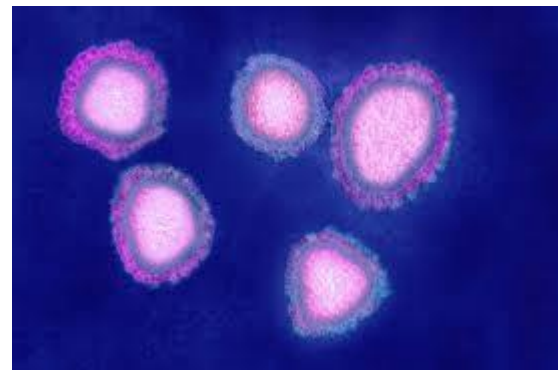
India was a key participant at a special meeting in Tehran on Hormuz Peace Initiative, which was organized for stability in one of the world's busiest and strategically located shipping lanes amid escalating US-Iran tensions. The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most strategically important choke points.



Strait of Hormuz was aimed at enhancing unity, mutual understanding as well as peaceful and friendly relations among countries in the region. The Strait of Hormuz lies between Oman and Iran and is known as world's most important oil artery.

### 14. A new stain of virus 'Corona Virus' found in China

Chinese researchers confirmed discovery of a new strain of coronavirus while finding the cause of a mysterious pneumonia outbreak. The new coronavirus's genome was identified and matched with patient's samples.



Coronavirus is found in large seafood and live animals for meat. It shows symptoms like fever, breathing issues and lesions on their lungs. The coronavirus belongs to family 'corona' that includes six other strains known to infect humans.

### 15. World Bank predicts Sri Lanka's economic growth at 3.3% for 2020

The World Bank has forecast Sri Lanka's economic growth at 3.3% for 2020 and also predicted it to remain below 4% in next three years. In its latest report of World Bank's January 2020 Global Economic Prospects, that for 2021 and 2022, it maintains the same forecast of 3.7% of economic growth in Sri Lanka.



Sri Lanka's new government headed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has set a target to achieve a 6.5% economic growth per annum from 2020 and a GDP growth of 6,500 U.S. dollars per capita.



### 16. World Future Energy Summit held in Abu Dhabi

The World Future Energy Summit was held in Abu Dhabi. The theme for this year's summit was "Rethinking Global Consumption, Production, and Investment." World Future Energy Summit is the Middle East's largest future energy and sustainability event.



The four-day annual event was held at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre. The Climate Innovations Exchange, 'CLIX' for short and the Future Sustainability Summit was also held alongside the World Future Energy Summit.

### 17. 18th Dhaka International Film Festival

The 18th Dhaka International Film Festival was inaugurated by the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen. The festival kicked off with the screening of the Spanish-Greek film Window to the Sea, directed by Miguel Angel Jimenez. During the festival 220 films from 74 countries were screened across various venues in Dhaka. The theme of the festival was 'Better Film, Better Audience and Better Society'.



The films were selected in eight categories including Asian Competition Section, Retrospective, Bangladesh Panorama, cinema of the world and Women Filmmakers.

### 18. Bangladesh hosted Muslim congregation “Bishwa Ijtema” in Dhaka

Bangladesh held the first phase of Bishwa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of Muslim community after Hajj, in Dhaka. The second phase of Bishwa Ijtema held between January 17-19. Thousands of devotees from Bangladesh and abroad thronged the bank of river Turag at Tongi near Dhaka to participate in the congregation. Noted scholars gave religious sermon to the devotees on this occasion.



Bishwa Ijtema is an annual event which is held in a 160-acre field on the bank of the Turag river at Tongi on the outskirts of Dhaka since 1967.

### 19. Treasury Department of USA removed China from “currency manipulator” list

The U.S. ended its designation of China as a currency manipulator from its currency black list. It had put the country back on a formal monitoring list reserved for countries that “merit close attention to their currency practices and macroeconomic policies.” The decision was announced ahead of the signing of a “phase one” trade deal between the world's two largest economies.



The United States designated China a currency manipulator in August, on the basis of China’s intent on continuing to receive the hundreds of billions of dollars from the US with unfair trade practices and currency manipulation.

### 20. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen won second term in landslide victory

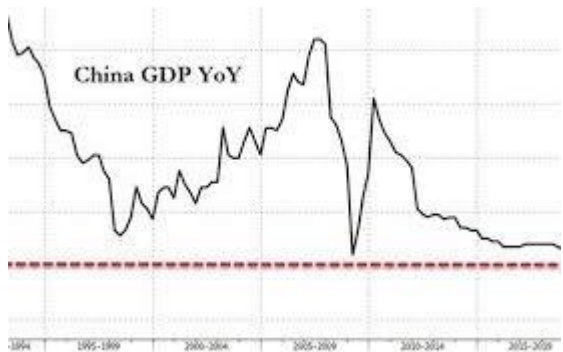
Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen secured a landslide victory in presidential elections. She defeated Han Kuo-yu of the China-friendly Kuomintang (KMT) party. Tsai got 57% of votes while Han trailed behind with 38%. Her victory is the fourth time since 2000 that her Democratic Progressive Party, which advocates for Taiwan’s formal independence has secured the presidency



Tsai is the seventh president of the Republic of China under the 1947 Constitution and the second president from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP); part of Taiwan's Pan-Green Coalition.

### 21. China's economic growth sinks to lowest level in three decades

China registered 6.1% GDP in 2019 mainly on account of sluggish domestic demand and the bruising 18-month trade war with the US. At 6.1%, it is the slowest pace of growth for the country in almost three decades.



In 2018, China's economy sank to a 28-year low slowing down to 6.6%, lower than the 6.8% growth registered in 2017. China aims to double the per capita income of its urban and rural residents.

## 22. Former President Chandrika Kumaratunga removed from organizer post of Sri Lanka Freedom Party

Former President of Sri Lanka, Chandrika Kumaratunga, has been removed from the organizer post of Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). Mrs Kumaratunga, who served as President from 1995 to 2005, has remained active in politics and was appointed as the SLFP organiser for Attanagalla in October 2017.



SLFP, founded by Chandrika's father late Bandarnaike, is headed by former President Maithripala Sirisena. Sri Lanka People's party (SLPP) headed by former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, is a breakaway group from SLFP after Rajapaksa lost the 2015 Presidential elections to Sirisena.

## 23. Robert Abela elected as Malta's Prime minister

Robert Abela of the Labour party was sworn in as Malta's 14th Prime Minister, replacing Joseph Muscat. Muscat has stepped down as his close associates have come under scrutiny after the killing of a journalist. Robert received nearly 58% of votes.



Abela is the son of George Abela, the eighth president of Malta. He was Member of Parliament since 2017. He was honored with National Order of Merit (2020) by right as a Prime Minister of Malta.

## 24. India to host SCO Heads of Government meeting

India will host the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of Government meeting later in 2020. The meeting is held annually at the Prime Minister's level and it discusses the SCO's programme and multilateral economic and trade co-operation.



All eight members and four observer states and other international dialogue partners will be invited for the meeting. SCO member states are Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Observer states are Afghanistan, Iran, Mongolia and Belarus.

## 25. World Economic Forum 2020

The 50th World Economic Forum (WEF) was held at Davos, Switzerland. The theme of this year's WEF was "Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World". The theme highlights an idea perpetrated by WEF Founder Klaus Schwab that the managers of the companies have a duty towards customers and the whole economy, besides the company's shareholders.



The Indian delegation was led by Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal. The World Economic Forum is a non-governmental organization, which was founded in 1971.

## 26. EU Chiefs signed Brexit deal

The President of the European Commission - Ursula von der Leyen and the European Council President - Charles Michel, signed off the Brexit deal. Further, the text was sent to the European Parliament on 29th of January for ratification.



The UK is set to enter a transition period in February, during which the relationship with Brussels will remain the same while trade talks are finalised before the tight 31 December deadline.

## 27. India, Bangladesh sign agreement to upgrade Ashuganj-Akhaura road into 4-lane highway

India and Bangladesh signed an agreement to upgrade the 50.58-kilometre long road between Ashuganj river port and the Akhaura land port in Bangladesh into a 4-lane highway. The deal was signed between the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of Bangladesh and an Indian Company Afcons Infrastructure Limited.



The project is part of the dollar 2 billion second line of credit extended by India to Bangladesh in 2016. The project will boost connectivity between Bangladesh and North-eastern part of India.

### 28. North Korea named former Army officer as new Foreign Minister

North Korea has named former Army officer, Mr Ri Son-gwon, as its Foreign Minister. He replaced Ri Yong-ho, an English-speaking career diplomat who took part in nuclear talks with Washington.

Ri Son-gwon's appointment comes soon after Pyongyang declared it was no longer bound by its self-imposed moratorium on long-range ballistic missile and nuclear tests, and Washington missed the North's end-of-year deadline for a breakthrough in nuclear talks.



### 29. ICJ ordered Myanmar to take steps to prevent Rohingya Genocide

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) at Hague ordered the Myanmar government to take measures to prevent the genocide of Rohingyas as part of its obligations under the Genocide Convention.

In a unanimous decision by 17 Judges of the ICJ, the court observed that there was prima facie evidence of breaches of the convention by Myanmar. The ICJ said that the estimated 600,000 Rohingya remaining in Myanmar were "extremely vulnerable" to violence at the hands of the military.



### 30. India delivers 30k doses of MR vaccine to Maldives within 72 hours

India supplied 30,000 doses of Measles and Rubella (MR) vaccine to the Maldives responding swiftly to an emergency request to contain the measles outbreak in the Maldives. The vaccine supply was quickly procured and delivered to Maldives Health Ministry within 72 hours of the request.

Health Minister Abdulla Ameen presented a certificate of appreciation to Indian Ambassador Sunjay Sudhir. India's swift response emphasized the mutually supportive roles of India's neighborhood First Policy and Maldives' India First Policy.



### 31. North Korea to attend Munich Security Conference for first time

North Korea will send a delegation to the Munich Security Conference for the first time in the 56-year history of the top diplomatic gathering. North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Son Gyong would attend the event in February 2020.



Founded in 1963, the Munich Security Conference hosts hundreds of high-ranking officials and dozens of world leaders each year to discuss security challenges. The 2020 edition will be held from February 14 to 16.

### 32. PM Sheikh Hasina launched e-passport facility in Bangladesh

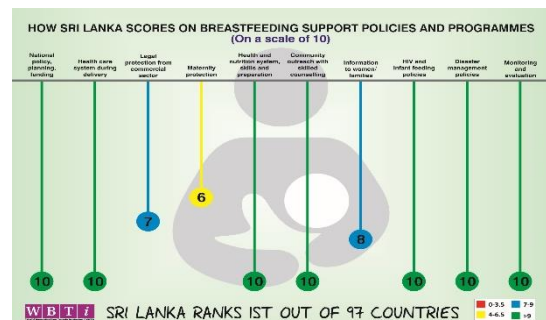
Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina launched the e-passport facility for its citizens in Dhaka. The e-passports will have an embedded chip in them which will contain the bio-metric data of the passport holder, photograph and other information contained in the passport. It will also include digital security features in it.



Bangladesh is the first country in South Asia and 119th country in the world to provide e-passport facility. According to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), over 490 million e-Passports are in circulation in the world.

### 33. Sri Lanka ranked first in Breast Feeding support Policies and Programs

According to a new survey conducted by the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi), Sri Lanka has been ranked first among 97 countries globally on breastfeeding rate. Sri Lanka's rank is based on its performance on ten indicators of policies and programs.



Sri Lanka has scored 91 out of 100 points and earned a green color code, which implies best level of performance. Experts at the Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India in Delhi developed the WBTi and launched it worldwide. So far, 120 countries have been involved in WBTi and 97 have completed assessments.

### 34. India opened its first Mahatma Gandhi convention centre in Niger

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and President of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou jointly inaugurated the first convention centre established in Africa by India to honour the memory of Mahatma Gandhi. The convention centre has been designed as a spacious, modern and eco-friendly facility, including a 2,000 capacity Plenary Hall.



Mr. Jaishankar became the first Indian Foreign Minister to visit the West African country. He was on the first leg of his three-day two-nation trip to Niger and Tunisia.

### 35. Iranian Film gets Best Film Award at Dhaka International Film Festival

The Iranian film 'Castle of Dreams' directed by Reza Mirakarimi won the Best Film Award in Asian Competition section of the 18th Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF). The film also won the Best Director Award. Indian film 'Finally Love' directed by AnjanDutt bagged Best Audience Award in Cinema of the World Category.



In the Asian Competition segment, Sri Lankan director Prasanna Vithanage's film 'Children of the Sun' won Special Jury Award. Best Actress Award went to Arezoo Ariapoor, Ferestha Afshar and Hasiba Ebrahimi for their acting in Afghanistan-Iran-France joint venture film 'Hava, Maryamk, Ayesha' while the Best Actor Award went to Lousie Abuel for his acting in the film 'Edward'.

### 36. Greece's parliament elected Katerina Sakellaropoulou as its 1st woman President

Greece elected Katerina Sakellaropoulou as first woman President. She is a high court judge and human rights activist. She was elected by 261 members in the 300-seat legislative body, creating historic parliamentary vote. She succeeded President Prokopis Pavlopoulos, whose five-year term expires in March 2020.



In 2018, Katerina Sakellaropoulou became first woman to serve as president of the Council of State, which is Greece's top administrative court. She has served as a member of the Association of Judiciary Functionaries of the Council of State.

### 37. Microsoft pledged to be carbon negative by 2030

Microsoft pledged to become 100% “carbon-negative” by 2030 and by 2050 it will remove from the environment all the carbon the company has emitted either directly or by electrical consumption since it was founded in 1975. The US tech giant announced to invest \$1 billion in “climate innovation fund” for technology for carbon capture and removal.



Microsoft will shift to 100% supply of renewable energy by 2025 and electrify all of its global campus operations vehicle fleet by 2030. It will form its carbon removal portfolio annually by assessing NET attributes of scalability, affordability, commercial availability and verifiability.

### 38. Myanmar and China signed 33 bilateral deals

Myanmar and China signed 33 bilateral deals including agreements, MoUs, exchange letters and protocols on two-day visit by the Chinese President Xi Jinping to Myanmar. Myanmar and China also signed 13 more agreements to strengthen collaboration in the infrastructure sector including roads, rail connectivity and power interconnection projects.



The two countries signed a concession agreement and shareholders’ agreement for the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone (SEZ) deep seaport project. The port will link the land locked Yunnan province of China directly to the Indian Ocean allowing China to bypass the strait of Malacca.

### 39. Qatar named Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdelaziz Al Thani new PM

Qatar appointed Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdelaziz Al Thani as the new Prime Minister. He replaced Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani who has submitted his resignation.



The new prime minister had been the head of the Amiri Diwan, the emir's office. He worked in the gas industry and was educated in the United States before going on to work for Sheikh Tamim when he was the crown prince.



#### 40. Agni Sapkota elected Speaker of House of Representatives in Nepal

The ruling Nepal Communist Party's Agni Sapkota has been elected as the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the lower house of Parliament in Nepal. The post of Speaker was lying vacant since October last year after Mr Krishna Bahadur Mahara resigned following allegations of attempted rape.



Mr Sapkota was elected unopposed. President Bidya Devi Bhandari administered oath of office and secrecy to Sapkota. The Vice President of Nepal is Nanda Bahadur Pun and Prime Minister is K P Sharma Oli.

#### 41. 13th edition of International Children's Film Festival of Bangladesh

The 13th edition of the International Children's Film Festival of Bangladesh was held in Dhaka. The festival is the only international film festival for children and young adults of the country. The theme of this year's festival was 'Under The World'.



The festival organized by the Children's Film Society, Bangladesh featured 173 films from 39 countries. The festival was inaugurated with the screening of the German film 'Rocca Changes the World' directed by Katja Benrath.

#### 42. Britain released new 50 pence coin to celebrate Brexit

The British government unveiled a new 50 pence coin minted to mark Brexit (British exit). The coin bears the inscription "Peace, prosperity and friendship with all nations" along with the Brexit date mentioned below it "31 January 2020". Various banks, shops and post offices have distributed three million of the coins.



Brexit is the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU). The bill implementing Britain's exit from the European bloc officially became law on 23rd January.

# Miscellaneous

1. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs for extending the deputation tenure of IPS Abhinav Kumar, Inspector General, Border Security Force (BSF), up to June 27, 2021, in relaxation of IPS Tenure Policy.
2. Indian Railways has renamed its security force RPF (Railway Protection Force) as Indian Railway Protection Force Service.
3. India's gold imports fell about 7%, to 20.6 billion dollars during April to November 2019-20.
4. Reserve Bank of India bought 10,000 crore rupees of long-term government securities and sold 8,501 crore rupees of three short-term bonds.
5. Pragati Maidan Metro station was renamed as Supreme Court Metro Station.
6. The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved the reappointment of Vinod Kumar Yadav as Chairman, Railway Board for a period of one year.
7. The Union Ministry of Science and Technology have awarded Swarna Jayanti Fellowships to 14 scientists to pursue basic research in frontier areas of science and technology.
8. Senior Nationalist Congress Party leader and former MP, D P Tripathi passed away in Delhi.
9. The 5th Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship -2020 has begun in Leh, Ladakh.
10. The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is to conduct Asiatic Lion Census in May 2020. The Institute will use 10000 cameras to conduct the census.
11. National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, India has taken suo motu cognizance of media reports about the death of more than 100 children at a government run hospital in Kota district of Rajasthan.
12. Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) leader and Nagaland Assembly Speaker Vikho-o Yhosu passed away.
13. "Lawn bowls" and "cycling" will be included in the 3rd edition of Khelo India Games. The two games will be included in the event for the first time.
14. President Ram Nath Kovind laid foundation stone to Lakshadweep's first Super Specialty Hospital at Kavaratti.
15. World No.1, Youth Olympics champion and Asian Games gold medallist, Saurabh Chaudhary won the men's gold in 10-metre air pistol in the 63rd National shooting championship.
16. The Journalists' Day was celebrated on 6th of January in the state of Maharashtra. It is celebrated in the memory of late thespian journalist Balshashtri Jambhekar.
17. ASCEND 2020 Global Investors Meet was held in Kochi with the aim of lending pace to the Ease of Doing Business in the state.
18. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will observe 2020 as the 'year of mobility' that will have a special focus on creation of more residential units and implementation of various welfare measures for the troops.
19. India's P Magesh Chandran lifted the title in the 95th edition of the prestigious Hastings International Chess Congress at Hastings in England.
20. The 5th Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference was held at Pune and it was organised by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research.
21. India's leading Digital lending startup, RevFin has joined hands with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company to offer protection to the RevFin's customers by bundling life insurance cover on their loans.

22. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has enabled select banks in India to offer round-the-clock (24×7) trading in the Indian rupee to allow Indians to safeguard their foreign exchange (Forex) risks at any time.
23. Indian women weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur has been banned for 4 years from the sport by the National Anti Doping Agency.
24. Three Colonial structures re-dedicated to Kolkata.
25. India erects "steel fence" across Pakistan, Bangladesh border.
26. Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated the submarine cable works on laying between Chennai – Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
27. The Ukrainian aircraft "Boeing 737" boarding 176 people crashed in Tehran, Iran.
28. The Cabinet approved conferring the status of Institution of National Importance to a cluster of Ayurvedic institutions.
29. Securities and Exchange Board of India stock market regulator has deferred the deadline to 1st April 2022 for the separation of the posts of Chairman & Managing Director or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for 500 listed companies.
30. In a major landmark for indigenous Indian aviation, the naval version of the Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA) made a successful short landing with arrestor wires on the Shore Based Test Facility (SBTF) in Goa.
31. Postal Ballot facility has been made available for the Super Senior Citizens (over 80 years of age) and PwDs in the Delhi Assembly Election.
32. Alok Kansal, a senior officer of the 1983 batch of Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE), took over the charge as General Manager of Western Railway.
33. The famous Parshuram Kund Mela was celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh.
34. Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Prahlad Singh Patel launched exhibition titled Indian Heritage in Digital Space and a two day long first international heritage symposium in Delhi.
35. The fifth edition of Science Film Festival of India (SCI-FFI) 2020 was held in Panaji, Goa.
36. The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrated its 15th Raising Day.
37. India's first-ever, global Mega-Science exhibition, 'Vigyan Samagam', was held in New Delhi. This was fourth such exhibition after being organised at Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.
38. The Department of Biotechnology organised an International Summit on Women in STEM – "Visualising the Future: New Skylines" at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.
39. Meghalaya celebrated the 48th anniversary of statehood day on 21st January with cultural fanfares immersed in remnants of the 'Hill State Movement' that led up to the declaration of Meghalaya as a separate state in the year 1972.
40. Puducherry Chief Minister Narayanasamy launched the Intensified Pulse Polio Immunisation (IPPI) programme in the Union Territory.
41. Vinesh Phogat won her first gold medal of the 2020 season at the Rome Ranking Series while teen sensation Anshu Malik settled for a silver in 57kg competition.
42. Union Minister for Heavy Industries Prakash Javadekar inaugurated ELECRAMA 2020, the flagship showcase of the Indian electrical industry, in Greater Noida.
43. Sania Mirza and her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok have won the women's doubles title of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) International trophy at Hobart in Australia.
44. In Assam, the militant outfit National Democratic Front of Bodoland signed a tripartite Suspension of Operation Agreement with the Centre and the Assam Government.

45. 'Women with wheels', a unique taxi service has been launched at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi.
46. Maharashtra Government has made the reading of the Preamble of the Constitution mandatory for the Maharashtra schools.
47. Indian airports have started thermal screening of passengers arriving in India from China and Hong Kong to stop the Corona Virus spread in India.
48. The Bilateral International Treaty organisation, an international arbitration tribunal recently dismissed all the claims against India.
49. Union Minister Arjun Munda was elected as President of the Archery Association of India (AAI).
50. Eminent journalist and chairman of "The Hindu Group" N Ram honoured by Kerala Media Academy.
51. In a major push to development in Jammu and Kashmir, around 1,256 projects worth 2,280 crore rupees financed under J&K Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation, are being completed by end of March 2020.
52. Himachal Pradesh celebrated its 50th Statehood Day. It was on this day in 1971 when Himachal Pradesh was carved out as the 18th State of the country.
53. Defence public sector undertaking (PSU) Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) is set to deliver anti-submarine warfare stealth corvette INS Kavaratti to the Navy.
54. The Union Minister Piyush Goyal announced that Indian Railways will run 100% on electricity by 2024.

# National

## 1. PM Modi disbursed 12,000 crore rupees to six crore farmers of PM-KISAN scheme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi electronically released 12,000 crore rupees under Pradhan Mantri Samaan Yojana to six crore farmers. He also awarded the Krishi Karman Award to the progressive farmers from 21 states. The fishermen of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka were also given deep sea fishing boats and transponders that will help them to navigate in the deep sea.



Prime Minister emphasised on agro exports, value-addition of produce, marketing and doubling of farmers' income by 2022.

## 2. EC launched Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System

The Election Commission (EC) launched a Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System to enable applicants to track the status of the applications.



Under it, applicants, applying for the party registration will be able to track the progress of applications and will get the status through SMS and e-mail. An association seeking registration has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days from the date of its formation.

## 3. TRAI amended new regulatory framework for cable & broadcasting services

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has made amendments to the new regulatory framework for cable and broadcasting services with a view to protect the consumer interests. Under it, cable TV users will be able to access more channels at lower subion price.



Telecom Regulatory Authority of India  
(IS/ISO 9001-2008 Certified Organisation)

The Authority has also capped at 160 rupees the amount consumers will have to pay monthly for all free to air channels. Authority has also permitted DPOs to offer discounts on long term subions which is for 6 months or more. TRAI has also reduced the maximum NCF charge to 130 rupees excluding taxes for 200 channels.

#### 4. India improved Sustainable Development Goals Index score by three positions

India improved its composite score from 57 in 2018 to 60 in the Sustainable Development Goals Index 2019-20. This has been achieved due to better works in water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy and industry, innovation, and infrastructure. Kerala topped the index followed by Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu.



The states showing biggest improvement since 2018 are Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim. The SDG India Index track the progress and ranks all States and Union Territories on 100 indicators. It indicates where the country and its States and UTs currently are on SDG implementation.

#### 5. KVIC opened first silk processing plant in Gujarat

In a historic initiative taken by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), a first Silk Processing Plant was inaugurated at Surendranagar in Gujarat which would help cut down the cost of production of silk yarn drastically and increase the sale and availability of raw material for Gujarati Patola Sarees locally.



The plant has been set up by a khadi institution at a cost of Rs 75 lakh in which KVIC has contributed Rs 60 lakh. The unit has employed 90 local women, 70 of which belong to the Muslim community.

#### 6. MEA sets up new emerging and strategic technologies (NEST)

A special desk to increase investment coordination between the different states of India and foreign countries was created by foreign ministry named as 'New emerging and strategic technologies (NEST) division. NEST will act as the nodal division within the ministry for issues pertaining to new and emerging technologies such as security implications of the introduction of 5G and artificial intelligence.



NEST will not only help assess foreign policy and international legal implications of emerging technology and technology-based resources but also safeguard Indian interests at multilateral fora like the United Nations or the G20.

## 7. Indian Railways commissions first Waste to Energy Plant in Bhubaneswar

Indian Railways has commissioned country's first governmental Waste to Energy Plant, having capacity of 500 Kg waste per day, in Mancheswar Carriage Repair Workshop at Bhubaneswar in East Coast Railway. This Waste to Energy Plant, a patented technology called POLYCRACK, is first-of-its-kind in Indian Railways and fourth in India.



The project is world's first patented heterogeneous catalytic process which converts multiple feed stocks into hydrocarbon liquid fuels, gas, carbon and water. The total plant installation cost is Rs 1.79 crore.

## 8. NITI Aayog released SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019

NITI Aayog released the second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, which comprehensively documented the progress made by India's States and Union Territories towards achieving the 2030 SDG targets.



The SDG India Index 2019 tracks progress of all States and UTs on 100 indicators drawn from the MoSPI's National Indicator Framework (NIF). The process of selection of these indicators included multiple consultations with Union ministries/departments and States/UTs. Additionally, this year, the SDG India Index report has a new section on profiles to analyse their performance on all goals in a lucid manner.

## 9. FAME India Scheme sanctioned 2636 EV Charging Stations in Phase-II

In order to give a further push to clean mobility in Road Transport Sector, the Department of Heavy Industries sanctioned 2636 charging stations in 62 cities across 24 States/UTs under FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India) scheme phase II.



Government sanctioned 2636 charging stations to 62 cities submitted by 19 public entities for 24 states. Out of these 2636 charging stations, 1633 Charging Stations will be Fast Charging Stations and 1003 will be slow charging stations. With this, about 14000 Charging Stations will be installed across the selected cities.

### 10. 2nd round of Intensified Mission Indradhanush- 2 begins

The second phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 rolled out at block level in 35 districts of Uttar Pradesh. The aim of the program launched by central government in 2017 is to achieve 90% vaccination coverage in children of less than 2 years in state.

Under the program around 66 thousand sessions will be organised for vaccination of more than 5.5 lakh children and around 1.3 lakh pregnant women of state. Intensified Mission Indradhanush will be conducted till March 2020.



### 11. Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid foundation stone of ‘Delhi Cycle Walk’

Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone of Delhi Cycle Walk project at Tughlakabad in New Delhi. It is aimed at making the city most walkable and environment friendly. This 36 kilometre project is first phase of Delhi Cycle Walk which will have whole network of over 220 km.

The estimated cost of the project is Rs 550 crore. It will be implemented by the Delhi Development Authority and likely to be completed in four years.



### 12. BEE sets default temperature of 24 degrees Celsius in ACs

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has set a default temperature of 24 degrees Celsius in all room air conditioners with effect from January 1, 2020. The central government in consultation with BEE had notified new energy performance standards for room air conditioners (RACs) on October 30, 2019.

The new norms provide that the Indian Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (ISEER) as per the new standards will range from 3.30 to 5 for split and 2.70 to 3.50 for window air conditioners.





### 13. Government released State Energy Efficiency Index 2019

Union Government released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019, which tracks the progress of Energy Efficiency initiatives in 36 States and Union Territories. The index incorporates qualitative, quantitative and outcome-based indicators to assess energy efficiency initiatives, programs and outcomes in five distinct sectors.



The index is developed by Bureau of Energy Efficiency in association with Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy. It will help states to contribute towards national goals on energy security and climate action by helping drive Energy Efficiency policies and programme implementation at the state and local level.

### 14. Government authorised Rs 5559 cr for Indradhanush gas grid project

The Union Government authorised the amount of Rs 5559 crore for 1656 Km long Indradhanush Natural Gas Pipeline Grid project which will connect eight states of the North-Eastern region. The amount will be provided as Viability Gap Funding (VGF). The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs had approved a Capital Grant as the Viability Gap Funding to Indradhanush Gas Grid Ltd for setting up the North East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid.



The total estimated cost of funding was capped at ₹9,265 crores (including interest during construction) for the project.

### 15. IP based Video Surveillance System installed by Indian Railways

In order to enhance security at Railway stations which are major hubs of transportation, Indian Railways is in the process of installing Internet Protocol (IP) based Video Surveillance System (VSS) at stations. Railway Board has approved works for provision of Video Surveillance System covering 983 stations over Indian Railways under Nirbhaya funds.



RailTel, a Miniratna PSU under Ministry of Railways, has been entrusted with the work of providing IP based VSS with video analytics and facial recognition system. Video Surveillance System is expected to ensure better security of passengers at railway stations and railway property.

## 16. Home Minister Amit Shah dedicated National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal to nation

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and dedicated National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal to the nation. This state-of-the-art Centre is located in New Delhi.



National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal ([www.cybercrime.gov.in](http://www.cybercrime.gov.in)) is a citizen-centric initiative that will enable citizens to report cyber-crimes online through the portal. All the cyber-crime related complaints will be accessed by the concerned law enforcement agencies in the States and Union Territories for taking action as per law.

## 17. Launch of Paperless Licensing for Petroleum Service Stations

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has launched paperless licensing process through Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) for petroleum service stations (retail outlets storing and dispensing petrol/diesel for motor conveyances) under the Petroleum Rules, 2002.



This initiative for petroleum pump licensing will benefit more than 70,000 petroleum pump owners and oil marketing companies. The authenticity of the license can also be verified on PESO's website <https://peso.gov.in/index.aspx>. This automation will greatly benefit the petroleum and gas industry.

## 18. Cabinet approved ordinance to amend Mineral laws

Cabinet approved promulgation of Mineral Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 2020. The Ordinance will amend Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act 1957 and Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act 2015.



These amendments will open up new era to the growth in the Coal and mining sectors. The Ordinance will ease rules for auctioning of coal mines and to open up to all sectors. The government has also done away with end-use restrictions of the mining blocks.

## 19. Cabinet approvals

-The Cabinet approved for an Agreement between India and Mongolia on Cooperation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful and Civilian Purposes.

-The Cabinet approved MoU with the Department for International Development Government of the United Kingdom for Enabling Energy Self-Sufficiency for Indian Railways.

-The Cabinet apprised MoU in polar science between Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India and Ministry of Education and Research, Sweden.

-The Cabinet gave its approval for the ratification of Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement between India and France.

-The Cabinet approved MoU between Department of Health and Family Welfare and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



## 20. Minister of Petroleum launched Purvodaya to accelerate Eastern India Development

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan launched PURVODAYA: Accelerated development of eastern India through integrated steel hub in Kolkata, West Bengal. Purvodaya, in steel sector, is aimed at driving accelerated development of Eastern India through establishment of integrated steel hub.



The proposed Integrated Steel Hub, encompassing Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Northern Andhra Pradesh, would serve as a torchbearer for socio-economic growth of Eastern India. The objective of this hub would be to enable swift capacity addition and improve overall competitiveness of steel producers both in terms of cost and quality.

## 21. IEA released India's Energy Policy Report

In partnership with NITI Aayog, International Energy Agency (IEA) released the first in-depth review of India's energy policies. It examines the country's achievements in developing its energy. The report provides insights into the rise of India in global energy markets. The IEA regularly conducts in-depth reviews of energy policies for its member and association countries.



IEA report appreciated the Indian government's efforts on its outstanding achievements in extending citizens' access to electricity, affordable efficient lighting and clean cooking in record time through historic schemes like SAUBHAGYA, UJALA and UJJWALA.

## 22. India, Bangladesh signed MoU for content exchange programme between All India Radio and Bangladesh Betar

India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh for content exchange programme between All India Radio and Bangladesh Betar. It will give more dimension to content exchange between the two countries.



An MoU between National Film Development Corporation, India and Film Development Corporation, Bangladesh, was also signed. India and Bangladesh, together, are co-producing the biopic on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The film is expected to be released by March 2020.

## 23. Hallmarking of gold jewellery, artefacts made mandatory

The government has made the process of hallmarking of gold jewellery mandatory but it has given one year's time to jewellers to register themselves with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and clear their old stock. Gold hallmarking is a purity certification of the precious metal.



Hallmarking will be done for jewellery in 3 categories - 14 carats, 18 carats and 22 carats. The mandatory hallmarking will also ensure that consumers don't get cheated while buying gold ornaments and get the same purity and carat as marked on the ornament.

## 24. NIIT to be a part of NEAT programme

National Institute of Information Technology was selected to work with AICTE and implement the vision of Ministry of HRD on NEAT. NIIT will institute 5 awards of Rs 50,000 for faculties and 10 awards of Rs 10,000 for students.

**NIIT**

National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) was launched to customise learning process using AI methodologies that can be used to address diversity in learners. Union Government has selected NIIT as one of the EdTech companies for the NEAT initiative through PPP model that aims at creating EdTech Companies.

## 25. Government awards Rs 2379 cr for completing Z Morh tunnel

The government has awarded Rs 2379 crore for completion of the 6.5-kilometre long Z-Morh tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir. The two-lane bi-directional tunnel with parallel escape tunnel will be completed in 3.5 years. NHIDCL and APCO Amarnathji Tunnelway signed an agreement in this regards.

The project includes construction, operation and maintenance of the tunnel. Z-Morh Tunnel will provide all-weather road connectivity to Sonmarg, tourist spot in Jammu and Kashmir



## 26. DV Sadananda Gowda launched APNA UREA – SonaUgle” brand of HURL

Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda launched the APNA UREA - Sona Ugle brand of Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Limited (HURL). HURL is Joint Venture Company promoted by the three Maha Ratna Companies - Coal India Limited, NTPC Limited and Indian Oil Corporation Limited.



HURL has undertaken the revival of 3 urea plants located at Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), Sindri(Jharkhand) and Barauni (Bihar) as a part of Prime Minister Modi’s direction of revival of 5 major fertilizer plants. The other two plants are at Ramagundam(Telangana) and Talcher (Odisha).

## 27. Mega campaign ‘Saksham’ launched by Petroleum Minister

Saksham, an annual one-month long fuel conservation mega campaign of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, was launched by Dr. M.M Kutty, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas in Delhi.

Saksham aims at creating mass awareness among public about conventional fuel conservation. It will help in progressively reduction of carbon footprint and lead to fulfilling government's commitment for greener environment. Publicity vans of PCRA were launched at the event which shall visit rural areas and spread messages about fuel conservation awareness.



## 28. Cabinet committee approved the closure of Hindustan Fluorocarbons plant in Telangana

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved shutting down the operations of the plant and unit of Hindustan Fluorocarbons Limited, HFL and closure of the company. HFL is a Central Public Sector Enterprise under Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

HFL has only one plant located at Rudraram, District Sangareddy in Telangana. Government granted a interest free loan of over 77 crore rupees to HFL for expenditure exclusively on closure.



## 29. NIC Tech Conclave 2020

The second edition of the TechConclave was held at Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, New Delhi. It was organised by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). The theme of the conclave is "Technologies for NextGen Governance".

The conclave covered the latest trends in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) that are applicable for the expansion of various products and platforms of eGovernance. NIC has been deeply associated with the Government for effective Governance.



## 30. Cabinet approved Model MoU with foreign countries for unilateral/bilateral recognition of Certificates of Competency of seafarers

The Union Cabinet approved the Model Memorandum of Understanding for unilateral/bilateral recognition of Certificates of Competency for the competency of the seafarers. The certificates are pursuant to Regulation 1/10 of International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) for Seafarers, 1978. The MoU will further be signed between the Directorate General of Shipping, Government of India and its counterparts in foreign countries.



The unilateral MoU would facilitate unilateral recognition by another country of the certificates issued by the Directorate General of Shipping to Indian seafarers, without seeking similar recognition by India of the certificates issued by that country.

### 31. Cabinet approved MoUs among India, Tunisia and Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission

The Union Cabinet approved for allowing the Election Commission to enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the Independent High Authority for Elections of Tunisia (ISIE) and the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) for cooperation in the field of electoral management and administration.



The MOUs would promote bilateral cooperation, aimed at building technical assistance/ capacity support for ISIE and the PNGEC. This would also result in bolstering India's international relations.

### 32. Cabinet approved MoU with Brazil on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters

The Union Cabinet approved the agreement with Brazil on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. The Agreement aims to enhance effectiveness of both the countries in investigation and prosecution of crime through cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.



In the context of transnational crime and its linkages to terrorism, the proposed Agreement will provide a broad legal framework for bilateral cooperation with Brazil in investigation and prosecution of crime as well as in tracing, restraint and confiscation of proceeds and instruments of crime as well as the fund meant to finance terrorist acts.

### 33. Cabinet approved MoU between India and Brazil for cooperation in the oil and natural gas sector

The Union Cabinet approved MoU with Brazil on cooperation in the field of oil and natural gas. The MoU will enhance cooperation between the two sides in oil and natural gas sector.



Under the MoU, both sides will work towards establishing cooperation in the E&P initiatives in Brazil and India, research & development in this sector, explore collaboration in Liquefied Natural Gas projects in Brazil, India and third countries.

### 34. Cabinet approved Revised Cost Estimates for establishment of permanent campus of new NITs

The Union Cabinet has approved the Revised Cost Estimates (RCE) for establishment of permanent campuses of new National Institutes of Technology (NITs), at a total cost of Rs.4371.90 crore for the period till 2021 - 2022. These NITs were established in the year 2009 and started functioning from academic year 2010-2011.



With the approved Revised Cost Estimates, these NITs will be fully functional from their respective permanent campuses by 31st March, 2022. The overall student capacity in these campuses will be 6320.

### 35. Cabinet approved signing of MoU between Brazil and India for bilateral cooperation in the field of early childhood

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation between the Ministry of Citizenship of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Ministry of Women & Child Development of the Republic of India for bilateral cooperation in the field of early childhoods.



The MoU will strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries and increase bilateral cooperation on the issues of early childhood care. Both countries will benefit from exchange of best practices of the respective countries in the field of early childhood.

### 36. Cabinet approved MoU between India and Brazil on Cooperation in field of Geology and Mineral Resources

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed between Geological Survey of India (GSI) and Geological Survey of Brazil – CPRM, on "Cooperation in field of Geology and Mineral Resources".



The MoU will provide an institutional mechanism between Geological Survey of India, Ministry of Mines of the Republic of India and Geological Survey of Brazil – CPRM, Ministry of Mines and Energy of the Federative Republic of Brazil for co-operation in field of Geology and Mineral Resources.



### 37. Indian Oil signed MoU with National Petroleum Authority of Ghana

Indian Oil has signed a MoU with the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) of Ghana for providing its assistance and technical expertise in the implementation of Ghana's National LPG Promotion Policy. The MoU will strengthen co-operation between the Parties in the field of Petroleum in particular LPG by which Indian Oil would support the NPA on the successful implementation of the Re-Circulation Model (CRM) of LPG.



The MoU also provides for administrative assistance to Indian Oil in case it decides to participate as a commercial participant in Ghana's downstream petroleum sector.

### 38. Ministry of Rural Development signed MoU with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

The Ministry of Rural Development signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), for furthering their mutual objectives of strengthening grassroots institutions of the rural poor.



The MoU reiterates DAY-NRLM and the Foundation's shared focus on improving the lives of India's poor and the marginalized. DAY-NRLM is also building social capital and ensuring financial linkages to alleviate poverty and enhance the quality of the life of poor rural women.

### 39. SAIL launches SERVICE - a scheme to promote Voluntary Philanthropist Activities by its employees

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has launched a scheme to promote Voluntary Philanthropist Activities (VPA) by its employees. The scheme called "SAIL Employee Rendering Voluntarism and Initiatives for Community Engagement (SERVICE)" will promote and facilitate philanthropist activities by the employees in a structured manner.



SAIL also has a dedicated interactive "SAIL SERVICE" portal for implementation of this Scheme. SAIL will undertake mass mobilisation programmes in its plants and units to spread awareness about this scheme and to encourage employees to participate in VPS.

#### 40. Government signed USD 210 million loan agreement with World Bank

The Government of India, the Government of Maharashtra and the World Bank signed a loan agreement of USD 210 million to support small holder farmers participate in competitive agriculture value chains, facilitate agri-business investments, increase market access and productivity in focus commodities.



The USD 210 million Maharashtra Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project, will help build capacity of the nodal departments and institutions and increase private sector investments in agricultural value chains. The USD 210 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a 6-year grace period and a maturity period of 13.5 years.

The USD 210 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a 6-year grace period and a maturity period of 13.5 years.

#### 41. GoI launched “Seismic Hazard Microzonation” to minimise earthquake disasters

The Ministry of Earth Science has launched Seismic Hazard Microzonation in major cities of India to minimise earthquake disasters and reduce hazards of seismic activities by putting in adequate measures. Seismic Hazard Microzonation is the process of dividing earthquake prone areas based on certain factors such as landslide, liquefaction susceptibility, rock fall hazard and prepare preventive measures to minimise the losses.



As per seismic zoning of the country, over 59% of India's land mass is under threat of moderate to severe seismic hazard, i.e. prone to shaking.

#### 42. India joined Reskilling Revolution Initiative at World Economic Forum as a founding member

India joined the Reskilling Revolution Initiative launched at the World Economic Forum as founding government member. The other founding members of this initiative are US, UAE, Russia, Pakistan, France and Brazil. According to the World Economic Forum, around 75 million jobs are to be displaced thus creating 133 million new jobs. In order to avoid large scale unemployment affecting the labour population greatly, WEF launched Reskilling Revolution initiative.



World Economic Forum's (WEF) Reskilling Revolution is an initiative to provide one billion people with better education, skills and jobs by 2030.

#### 43. India to set up Maritime Research Coordination Centre in Sri Lanka

National Security Adviser AjitDoval met with Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa during his day-long visit to Colombo. India and Sri Lanka agreed to further strengthen cooperation to ensure maritime security in Indian Ocean region and sharing of intelligence inputs.



Establishing an Earth Co-ordinating Centre was also discussed and 50 million US dollar credit line to purchase equipment for the Sri Lankan military was promised as part of the defence cooperation. Mr Doval outlined the importance of reviewing maritime domain awareness concept between Sri Lanka, Maldives and India and to include other regional states as observers.

#### 44. Government targets to install 175GW renewable energy by 2022

The Government has targeted to install 175 Giga Watt renewable energy by 2022 to build a healthy planet with less carbon intensive economy. In line to the target, through Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Surkasha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyan, PM-KUSUM scheme, government empowers the farmers to be the producer of energy.



The PM-KUSUM scheme covers grid connected renewable energy power plants, stand alone solar powered agricultural pumps and solarization of existing grid connected agriculture pumps. All three components together are likely to result in saving of about 27 million tonnes of CO2 emission per annum.

#### 45. Government invited bids to sell 100 % stake in Air India

Government has invited bids to sell its 100% stake in Air India. It has set March 17 as the deadline for submitting expression of interest. As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100% stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50% shareholding in joint venture AISATS.



Management control of the airline would also be transferred to the successful bidder. The successful bidder will continue to use Air India brand.

#### 46. Government signed accord with National Democratic Front of Bodoland

The Union Government signed an accord with the Assam-based different insurgent groups and civil societies including the National Democratic Front of Bodoland. The accord will provide political, economic, executive and land rights to Bodo tribals and also will safeguard their cultural and linguistic identities. The Centre and State Government will provide financial assistance of 1,500 crore rupees for the economic development of the community.



The government will appoint a commission which will include representatives of State Government and other stakeholders. It will submit its recommendations within six months from the date of notification.

#### 47. List of MoUs/Agreements between Brazil and India

India and Brazil signed following 15 MoUs during the visit of the President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro:

- MoU on Bioenergy Co-operation
- MoU for Co-operation in the field of Oil and Natural Gas
- Investment Co-operation and Facilitation Treaty
- Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
- MoU in the field of Early Childhood
- MoU on Co-operation in the field of Health and Medicine
- MoU co-operation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy
- Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2020-2024
- Agreement on Social Security
- MoU on co-operation in the area of Cyber Security
- Agreement on scientific and technological co-operation
- MoU on Co-operation in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources
- MoU between Invest India and the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex Brazil)
- MoU on Co-operation in the fields of Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- MoU on Co-operation for establishing a nodal institution in India to carry out research on Bioenergy.



# Persons in News

## 1. India's Malavath Purna scaled Antarctica's Highest Peak

India's Malavath Purna conquered Mt. Vinson Massif, Antarctica's highest mountain peak (4,987 mts). Malavath Purna became the first tribal woman in the world to set foot on the six tallest mountain peaks across six continents. She climbed the world's highest mountain Mt. Everest, 5 years ago. Other mountain peaks include Mt. Kilimanjaro (Africa, 2016), Mt. Elbrus (Europe, 2017), Mt. Aconcagua (South America, 2019) and Mt. Carstensz (Oceania region, 2019).



Telangana state's Malavath Purna aims to next conquer Mt. Denali, North America's highest mountain peak.

## 2. Aayushi Dholakia crowned Miss Teen International 2019

Vadodra's Aayushi Dholakia was crowned Miss Teen International 2019. She became the first Asian to win the title in the last 27 years. Yessenia Garcia from Paraguay and Anicia Gaothusi from Botswana became the First and second Runners-Up respectively.



Thu Phan from Vietnam was adjudged Miss Teen Asia, Maria Luisa Piras from Italy bagged the title of Miss Teen Europe, Anicia Gaothusi from Botswana won Miss Teen Africa and Alessandra Santos from Brazil became Miss Teen America at the event. Miss Teen International is the world's oldest running teen pageant.

## 3. UN declared Malala Yousafzai 'Most Famous Teenager of the Decade'

The UN has declared Pakistani education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai as "the most famous teenager in the world" in its 'Decade in Review' report. In 2014, Malala became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her efforts for children's rights.



Malala was also recently chosen by Teen Vogue as its cover person for its last issue of the decade. She was also appointed as the UN Messenger of Peace in 2017 with a special focus on girls' education.

#### 4. Iranian Olympic medalist Kimia Alizadeh announces her defection

Iranian Olympic medalist, Kimia Alizadeh announced leaving the country. Alizadeh is the only woman from Iran to have won the Olympic medal. She made history at the Rio Olympics in 2016, when she won the bronze medal for her country in Taekwondo.

Ms. Alizadeh's announcement came four months after Saeid Mollaei, one of Iran's biggest judo stars, defected to Germany. It is reported that Ms. Alizadeh has moved to Netherlands.



#### 5. Captain Tania Shergill became 1st Woman to lead Republic Day contingent

Captain Tania Shergill became the first woman parade adjutant for the Republic Day parade. A parade adjutant is responsible for the parade. She was commissioned in March 2017, from the Officer Training Academy, Chennai and is an officer with Army's Corps of Signals.

In 2019 during Republic Day parade, Captain Bhavna Kasturi was the first woman officer to lead an all-men contingent. Major Nikhil Maurya and Major Tarun Rathee lead the contingent of the Army's Parachute Regiment Special forces.



#### 6. Brazil President Bolsonaro was Chief Guest at 71st Republic Day

President of Brazil Jair Messias Bolsonaro was the Chief Guest at the 71st Republic Day Parade at Raj Path in New Delhi. He is the third Brazilian to attend the ceremony after Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 1996 and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2004.

On the eve of the Republic Day, India honoured two Brazilian women Lia Diskin and Gloria Areria with Padma Shri. Diskin has been disseminating Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy in Brazil and Latin America for almost 30 years. Areria is a Sanskrit scholar and Vedanta teacher.



# Places in News

## 1. 107th Indian Science Congress held in Bengaluru

The 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) was held at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru. The theme of the event was "Science and Technology: Rural Development". The aim of the summit was to bridge the gap between farmer and tech-developers.



During the inauguration of the 107th Indian Science Congress, PM Narendra Modi launched the Indian Science Technology and Engineering Facilities Map (I-STEM) Portal. The portal has been designed to be the gateway for researchers to locate a specific type of facility they require to conduct their research and development work in India.

## 2. MECOS-3 held in Kochi, Kerala

The third international symposium on marine ecosystems – challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) was held in Kochi, Kerala. It was organised by the Marine Biological Association of India. Eminent marine scientists, oceanographers, fisheries researchers and marine biotechnologists from across the globe participated in the event.



The meet focussed on the UN's sustainable development goal-14 (life under water), development of small-scale fisheries, recent developments in aquaculture, eco-labelling and green fishing technologies.

## 3. South Asian Trade and Travel Exchange Expo 2020 held in New Delhi

The 27th edition of South Asian Trade and Travel Exchange Expo (SATTE) 2020 was organised in New Delhi so as to build new business partnerships and hence was an important place for the promotion of tourism. The three-day expo was witnessed by 1,050 exhibitors, 200 foreign buyers from over 50 + countries and 500+ domestic hosted buyers from 104 Indian cities.



SATTE 2020 delivered an exciting line-up of conferences to enlighten the industry by addressing the challenges faced and opportunities that Indian tourism offers.

#### 4. Raisina Dialogue held in New Delhi

India's flagship global conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, Raisina Dialogue, was held in New Delhi. The fifth edition of the prestigious event was jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.



The theme for this year was 21@20: Navigating the Alpha Century. The three-day conference saw the participation of 12 Foreign Ministers, including from Russia, Iran, Australia, Maldives, South Africa, Denmark, Uzbekistan and the EU.

#### 5. Sardar Patel's Statue of Unity placed in '8 Wonders of SCO'

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation included India's 182-meter-tall Statue of Unity in the '8 Wonders of SCO' list. The 'Statue of Unity' is the world's tallest statue and monumental tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, independent India's first home minister as well as deputy prime minister.



Other 7 wonders include

- Kyrgyzstan — Lake Issyk-Kul
- The Golden Ring cities of Russia
- Po-I-Kalan Complex in Uzbekistan
- Tamgaly Gorge in Kazakhstan
- Mughal Heritage in Pakistan
- Navruz Palace in Tajikistan
- Daming

Palace

in

China

#### 6. Lucknow hosted the 7th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference 2020

Commonwealth Parliamentarians (CPA) from the largest democracy in the world gather at the India Regional Conference which was held for the first time in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Over 100 Commonwealth Parliamentarians from across India have renewed their focus on Parliament's role in the sustainable development agenda and reaffirmed their commitment to democracy at the 7th CPA.



In the two-day conference, discussions included increasing the efficiency of the people's representatives and improving the standard of the House's meetings. The CPA India Regional Conference brought together Speakers and Members of Parliament from the national Parliament of India.



### 7. 9th International Children's Film Festival held in Kolkata

The 9th International Children's Film Festival was held in Kolkata with the screening of Aizaz Khan directed Hamid and the closing film is Alfons Jitterbit - Countdown to Chaos. About 250 films from 45 countries were screened in the week-long festival.

The special sections at the festival included Twilight Films, Literature & Cinema, Masters & The Kid, Retrospective, Fairy Tales, World Cinema, Indian Panorama, Looking Back (Bengali), Documentary & Shorts.



### 8. 'Bharat Parv 2020' held at Red Fort

Bharat Parv 2020, a festival to celebrate the spirit of India, was held at Red Fort ground in New Delhi from 26-31 January, 2020. The objective of Bharat Parv is to encourage people to visit different tourism places of the country and to inculcate the spirit of 'Dekho Apna Desh'.

The theme of this year's Bharat Parv is 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' and celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma Gandhi.



### 9. Mumbai International Film Festival

The oldest international event for non-feature films in South Asia, the Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short Fiction & Animation Films, was held in Mumbai. It was the 16th edition of the biennial festival.

The coveted Dr. V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award was conferred on Dr. S. Krishnaswamy, one of India's most senior and active filmmakers, for his lifelong, invaluable contribution to non-fiction filmmaking. It carries a cash award of 10 lakh rupees, trophy and a citation.



### 10. 3rd Global Potato Conclave

The 3rd Global Potato Conclave was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from January 28-31. It was organised by Indian Potato Association (IPA) in collaboration with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi, and ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh and International Potato Center (CIP), Lima, Peru.



Gujarat is one of the leading producers of Potato in the country. In the last eleven years alone, while the area under potato in India, has increased by 19%, it has increased by about 170% in Gujarat.

### 11. 10 more wetlands from India get the Ramsar site tag

Ramsar has declared 10 more wetlands from India as sites of international importance. Maharashtra got its first Ramsar site – Nandur Madhameshwar. Punjab which already had three added three more Keshopur-Miani, Beas Conservation Reserve, Nangal. Uttar Pradesh with one Ramsar site has added six more – Nawabganj, Parvati Agra, Saman, Samaspur, Sandi and Sarsai Nawar.



With this, the numbers of Ramsar sites in India are now 37 and the surface area covered by these sites is now 1,067,939 hectares. The Ramsar Convention is one of the oldest inter-governmental accord signed by member countries to preserve ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.

### 12. India's first war memorial for animals to be set up in Meerut

A first of its kind war memorial for animals is being planned in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. Government has planned animal war memorial at the Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre and College in Meerut. India's first war memorial will include service animals with more than 300 dogs, 350 handlers and a few horses' mules.



It is similar to that of National War Memorial in Delhi and is dedicated to the heroics of animals who have helped the army in counter-insurgency operations in Kashmir and in the battlefield during the Kargil War.

# Regional

## 1. Ritualistic festival 'Lai Haraoba' celebrated in Tripura

Tripura celebrated Lai Haraoba, a ritualistic festival which is observed by Manipuri Meitei communities since ancient times. The five-day long festival was organised by Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of Tripura, Puthiba Lai Haraoba Committee and Puthiba Welfare & Cultural Society, Agartala.



The festival aims to uphold tradition and cultural values of Meitei community. Lai Haraobawas celebrated through oral literature, music, dance and rituals. A cultural troupe from Manipur performed various cultural and traditional musical skits including Manipuri martial arts, folk music and folk dances during the festival.

## 2. Maharashtra state launched 'Cyber Safe Women' initiative

Maharashtra Government launched a 'Cyber Safe Women' initiative under which awareness camps were held across all the districts of the state regarding cyber safety. The initiative will help in educating women about how the web is used by anti-social elements and child predators to commit various types of crimes. The state government will also organise lectures on cybercrime information



The campaign will spread awareness on cybercrimes such as cyberbullying, internet phishing, fraud identity on marriage site, bank fraud, photo shuffling, child pornography, online gaming, false information sites.

## 3. Gujarat state launched 'Study in Gujarat' campaign

Education department of Gujarat government launched 'Study in Gujarat' campaign in order to make Gujarat State an educational hub at national and international level. As a part of this campaign, a high level delegation will hold road shows in western Asian countries and in 10 cities of India including Shrinagar.



22 private and government universities and 4 colleges participated in 'Study in Gujarat' campaign. Prominent Universities and educational institutions like CEPT, Gapnat University, IIT-RAM, GNLU, Gujarat Forensic Science University, Gujarat University, PDP, Gujarat Arts & Science College, LD Engineering, SAL Institute participated.

#### 4. Government approved Grant-in-Aid of Rs 2.6 cr to J&K Pollution Control Board

Environment and Forests Ministry approved the release of Grant-in-Aid of 2.6 crore rupees to J&K Pollution Control Board. Under this scheme, the JK PCB shall provide financial assistance to 3742 number of Eco Clubs of registered schools in both the regions of J&K along with 96 Eco-Clubs for registered Colleges.



The environment education, awareness and Training scheme of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for National Green Corps (Eco-Clubs) which was closed for over a decade has been revived for J&K.

#### 5. Gujarat received Rs. 24,012-cr FDI during first half of FY 2019-20

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry released a report on Foreign Direct Investment. It stated that Gujarat received Rs. 24,012-crore Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) during the first half of FY 2019-20. This is double the amount of Rs. 12,612-crore FDI received during the previous FY 2018-19.



734 major industrial estates had been set up in Gujarat as against 2,574 units in India following the industries friendly policies of the state government. The state earned recognition as Manufacturing and Auto Sector Hubs.

#### 6. National Green Corps scheme revived in Jammu & Kashmir

The National Green Corps scheme, which was closed for over a decade was revived for Jammu and Kashmir. Under this scheme, the PCB would provide financial assistance to 3,742 Eco Clubs of registered schools in both the regions of the Union Territory along with 96 Eco Clubs of registered colleges.



J&K PCB put efforts for the revival of the scheme in the State Nodal Agency (SNA) meet organised by MoEFCC at Kevadia in Gujarat. Accordingly, the Environment and Forests Ministry approved the release of Grant-in-Aid of 2.60 crore rupees to J&K PCB.

### 7. Odisha organised 11-day long ‘Dhanu Jatra’

The famous 11-day long ‘Dhanu Jatra’, considered as the largest open-air theatre of the world was held at Bargarh in western Odisha. Dhanu Jatra is the annual drama-based open-air theatrical performance celebrated in and around Bargarh city. It is considered to be the world’s largest open-air theatrical festival that finds a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.



The Jatra is based on the mythological story of Lord Krishna and his demon uncle King Kansa. Government of India has accorded National Festival status to Dhanu Jatra in November 2014.

### 8. Indore continued to top Swachh Survekshan among cities having ten lakhs plus population

Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri announced the results of Swachh Survekshan League 2020, for first and second Quarters in New Delhi.

10 lakh plus population category		
	1st Quarters	2nd Quarters
First	Indore	Indore
Second	Bhopal	Rajkot
Third	Surat	Navi Mumbai

One lakh to 10 lakh population category		
	1st Quarters	2nd Quarters
First	Jamshedpur	Jamshedpur
Second	New Delhi	Chandrapur
Third	Khargone	Khargone

### 9. Kerala became first state to pass resolution against CAA

Kerala became the first state to pass a resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) amid widespread protests across the country. Kerala’s Chief Minister Pinarayee Vijayan and Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chennithala unanimously passed the resolution.



Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 gives eligibility for Indian citizenship to illegal migrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and who entered India on or before 31 December 2014. The bill does not mention Muslims.

### 10. Uttar Pradesh launched 'Damini' helpline service for women

UPSRTC (Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation) launched 'Damini' helpline service considering the safety of the women passengers. It is launched under 'Nirbhaya Yojana'. A unique number "81142-77777" has been subscribed for this helpline where women passengers can lodge their complaints by calling the helpline number and by using WhatsApp service.



Helpline number "81142-77777" will be functional from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day and will be exclusively handled by women officers at the UPSRTC headquarters and regional offices.

### 11. Andhra Pradesh state appointed two 'Disha Special Officers'

Andhra Pradesh government-appointed Indian Administrative Service (IAS) official Dr Kritika Shukla and Indian Police Service (IPS) official M Deepika as Disha Special officers. Appointment order issued by the Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney is done under the provisions of Disha Bill (AP Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2019).



The Act is intended for speedy trial and faster execution in cases of sexual offences against women in the state and set up of exclusive special courts in all the 13 districts to deal with cases of offences against women and children.

### 12. Gujarat to set up Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center in state

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has announced the setting up of the Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) to identify, nurture and promote children's innovation in the state. He was speaking during the felicitation ceremony of Children's Innovation Festival (CIF).



Children's Innovation Festival - CIF has been organised by Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC) - an incubation centre set up by Gujarat University in partnership with UNICEF. CIF initiative was conceptualised to identify, nurture and support children's innovations in the state.

### 13. Logo of first ever JK Global Investors Summit unveiled

Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, unveiled the logo of first-ever JK Global Investors Summit with the tagline 'Explore, Invest, Grow' at Udhog Bhawan, Jammu. The logo depicts a mix of manufacturing and service sectors of J&K as well as manpower skills, agro and horticulture potential.



The Summit is scheduled to be held in April 2020 with the event focusing on driving investment in potential sectors like Agriculture, Horticulture, Food Processing, Film Industry, Tourism, handicrafts and healthcare from leading national and global companies in order to boost economy and trade as well as employment opportunities of J&K.

### 14. HP Assembly ratifies bill to extend quota for SCs, STs

The Himachal Pradesh Assembly in its special one-day session ratified the bill that extends reservation for SCs and STs in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies by another 10 years. The Constitution (126th) Amendment Bill had already been passed by Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. It was sent to states for ratification as it requires the consent of at least 50% of the state assemblies before implementation.



The quota was included for 70 years since the enactment of the Constitution on January 26, 1950.

### 15. 31st International Kite Festival launched in Ahmedabad

The 31st International Kite Festival was launched at Sabarmati river front in Ahmedabad. It was held till 14th January-Makarsankranti - the festival of Kites. The festival was inaugurated by Chief Minister Vijay Rupani.



More than 140 kite flying experts from 40 countries participated in the event. About 800 kite fliers from Gujarat and 200 kite fliers from 12 other states also participated in this unique festival.

### 16. Kolkata Police started third edition of 'Sukanya' project

Kolkata Police started the third edition of its 'Sukanya' project to provide girls studying in schools and colleges in the city with self-defence training. It was the third such batch.

Sukanya is an initiative of the Kolkata Police's Community Policing Wing to provide self-defence training to girl students of city-based schools, colleges and universities. The initiative is funded by Women and Child Development and Social Welfare Department of the state government.



### 17. Mizoram government organised Zo Kutpui festival

The Mizoram government organised Zo Kutpui festival in 10 states across India and countries such as US, Myanmar and Bangladesh. The first edition of the festival started in Vanghmun in Tripura.

The festival aimed at re-unifying and strengthening brotherhood among different tribes of Mizo living in different parts of the world. The festival witnessed various cultural programmes by different Mizo tribes, besides performance by various artistes belonging to Zo ethnic tribes of Mizoram and the Northeast.



### 18. Tamil Nadu celebrated famous chariot festival of Suchindram Thanumalayan Temple

The famous chariot festival of the Suchindram Thanumalayan Temple, the southern most major temple in Tamilnadu, was held with great camaraderie and devotion. The ten-day annual festival is held in the Tamil month falling in December - January.

This 17th-century temple is famous for its architectural grandeur. The seven-storey white gopuram entrance tower is visible from the distance. Its 40 m facade is covered with sculptures of Hindu deities. The temple is especially significant because it is sacred to both the Shaivite as well as Vashnavite sects.





### 19. Jharkhand Assembly passed Rs 4,185 Cr supplementary budget

Assembly Session of Jharkhand passed a supplementary budget of Rs. 4,185 crores. Rural Development department received the highest share of the supplementary budget followed by Women and Child Development department and Home and Disaster Management department.

The budget was committed towards effective implementation of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNT Act) and Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act (SPT Act) across the state.



### 20. J&K registered highest IPD care in the country

National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC) report unveiled that Jammu and Kashmir has registered the highest Inpatient Department, IPD care in the country. In 2016, Jammu and Kashmir had surpassed Kerala as the state with the highest life expectancy in India for all ages, barring life expectancy at birth.



Key findings-

- Overall all women in J&K are availing Antenatal Care (ANC) services.
- 96% IPD care in rural areas of J&K is provided by Public Health Facilities.
- This facility is highest against the country's average of 85%.

### 21. Himachal Pradesh launched “Himachal MyGov” portal & “CM App”

The Himachal Pradesh Government has launched Himachal MyGov portal with a view to strengthen public participation in the governance process. The portal will help people of the state to communicate their views, suggestions, feedback as well discontentment, if any. Through this App, people of the state would be able to write directly to the Chief Minister regarding their grievances.



MyGov is an innovative platform to build a partnership between citizens and government with the help of technology for growth and development of India. This unique platform aims to enhance citizen partnership with the State Government and vice-versa.

## 22. 4th 'Buxa Bird Festival' kicks off in West Bengal

The 4th edition of 'Buxa Bird Festival' was held in Buxa National Park in West Bengal's, district Alipurduar. Over 50 birdwatchers from across the country and abroad participated in the festival. Visitors witnessed more than 300 rare species including the Great Hornbill, Sultan Tit and Greater Spotted Eagle during festival.



Bird enthusiasts visited and clicked photographs of the migratory birds that come from colder regions in the northern hemisphere.

## 23. Maharashtra state organised "Advantage Maharashtra expo 2020"

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated "Advantage Maharashtra expo 2020" in Aurangabad. The exhibition organised by the Marathwada Association of Small Scale Industries and Agriculture, displayed the growth of Marathwada industries in technology and innovation and the products produced and exported from the region.



The exhibition was organised with an aim to provide an opportunity for businesses and serve the platform for small entrepreneurs. It was announced in the exhibition that a food processing industry park will be set up in Bidkin (Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor) on 500-acre land.

## 24. Amma Vodi scheme launched in Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy launched "Amma Vodi scheme" for mothers. The scheme will be implemented from 26th of January 2020 (Republic day). Amma Vodi scheme will support lakhs of poor and needy mothers to educate their children.



-43 lakh mothers received Rs 15,000 each annual financial assistance for the benefit of 82 lakh children.

-Total Rs 6,318 crore was released for scheme.

-Amma Vodi scheme is a first of its kind government sector plan to bring about historical changes in the education system of the state.

## 25. AP-Germany signed MoU on Zero Budget Natural Farming

Andhra Pradesh Government signed MoU with a German firm to implement Zero Budget Natural Farming. Andhra Pradesh state will spend Rs 1,015 crore on the climate-resilient, Zero Budget Natural Farming project.



Out of 1,015 crore, state government has taken finance of Rs 711 crores. Rs 304 crore is spent by Andhra Pradesh government on the project, which is aimed to cover 2.39 lakh farmers in around 600 village panchayats and promote natural farming. The state government has assured to the farmers that the government will pay compensation to them in case of any loss.

## 26. The Pulses Conclave 2020 was held in Maharashtra

'The Pulses Conclave', the biennial global pulses conference, was held in Maharashtra. The key pulses exporting countries like the USA, Australia, Canada, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi, etc. participated in the conclave. Conclave discussed increasing domestic production and consumption, trade like improving processing efficiencies, increasing consumption, exports, value addition, protein extraction, post-harvest crop management, etc.



The conclave will help Indian pulses trade to contribute in making India a \$ 5 trillion economies through retail sale of pulses, processed pulses, pulse derivatives, and value additions.

## 27. Fresh investment proposals worth Rs 6,608 cr approved in Tamil Nadu

The Tamil Nadu state government has approved fresh investment proposals worth 6608 crore rupees. They have been cleared by the higher-level committee on industrial guidance and single window system, led by the state Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswamy.



The committee has given nod to fifteen new investments, with the potential of generating 6763 direct employment. Many of the industries are coming up in districts like Tuticorin, Trichy, Perambalur, Krishnagiri and Vellore, besides the traditional industrial hubs of Chennai's adjoining districts of Kanchipuram and Tiruvallur.

## 28. Lucknow, NOIDA to have Police Commissioners under Commissionerate system

The Uttar Pradesh state government cabinet has approved the Police Commissionerate system proposal in Lucknow and Noida cities. The police commissionerate system, when implemented, will leave the district magistrates with only revenue related work and all decisions regarding law and order will be taken by the police commissioners.



ADG level police officer will be posted as Police Commissioner. A woman police officer of SP rank will also be appointed for the security of women in the city.

## 29. IIFPT Bathinda signed MoU with 8 different reputed Institutes of India

The Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT), Liaison Office, Bathinda signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with 8 different reputed institutes of the region in the states of Punjab and Haryana. The MoU are intended to facilitate a collaborative programme of research, skill development, consultancy, institutional development, information dissemination and student's in-plant training.



The 8 Institutes are:

- Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana
- Maharaja Ranjit Singh Punjab Technical University (MRSPTU), Bathinda
- Central Institute of Post-Harvest Engg. & Technology (CIPHET), Ludhiana
- National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal
- Indian Institute of Wheat & Barley Research (IIWBR), Karnal
- Sant Longowal Institute of Engg. & Tech. (SLIET), Sangrur
- National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI), Mohali
- Guru Nanak College, Budhlada

## 30. Smriti Irani launched 3 welfare schemes in Goa

Union minister for women and child development, Smriti Irani launched 3 welfare schemes for women in Goa. The schemes are Yashaswini Scheme for Women Entrepreneurship, Swasthya Sahayak Project and breast cancer screening handheld device facilitating detection of cancer.



Smriti Irani Launches Yashaswini Scheme for women entrepreneurship in Goa

Under Yashaswini scheme, women self-help groups will be given interest free loans of up to Rs. Five lakh for business. Under the Swasthya Sahayak scheme, primary healthcare workers and Anganwadi workers will be given a diagnostic kit, to improve maternal and child health at the primary level.

### 31. National Youth Festival 2020 held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

On the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, 23rd National Youth Festival 2020 was organised in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The theme of the 23rd National Youth Festival 2020 was FIT YOUTH FIT INDIA. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the State Government of Uttar Pradesh jointly organised the festival. Youths from all over the country gathered and showcased their talent in different competitions.



The government has been organising NYF since 1995 with an objective to provide a platform to the youth of the country and provide them with an opportunity to showcase their talents in various activities.

### 32. Ladakh hosted first ever Food Processing Summit to attract investors

Union Territory Ladakh hosted the first ever Food Processing Summit to attract investors to the region. Ladakh region has vast scope for investment in food Processing industries in horticulture products like Apricot, SeabuckThorn, Apple and agricultural produce like buckwheat and barley. Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, the UT Administration of Ladakh organised the Summit.



Over hundred entrepreneurs from Leh and Kargil participated in the Summit. The event was aimed at encouraging the entrepreneurs to begin a StartUp to tap the potential in the Food Processing Industries in Ladakh.

### 33. First edition of Krishi Manthan held in Ahmedabad

The first edition of Krishi Manthan - the largest Food, Agri-business and Rural Development Summit of Asia was organised in Gujarat by Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. More than 1,500 delegates including students and academicians participated in the two-day event organised by the Food and Agribusiness Committee of IIMA.



The students along with working professionals from Food, Agriculture and allied sectors were benefited from the workshops during this summit. Eminent speakers like the founder of Honey Bee Network, SRISTI, NIF and GIAN Prof. Anil Gupta attended the summit.

### 34. MoU signed between NITI Aayog and Union Territory of Ladakh for infrastructure projects

In an initiative to promote the development of infrastructure sectors in the newly constituted Union Territory of Ladakh, NITI Aayog entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the UT's administration. Under this MoU, NITI Aayog will be supporting the UT's administration through its key initiative 'Development Support Services to States for Infrastructure Projects (D3S-i)'.



The partnership lays thrust on the identification of priority projects, expedited project implementation and creating unique models of development for the Union Territory of Ladakh. NITI Aayog has committed to assist the UT's administration in creating a strategic plan for identifying prioritised infrastructure projects.

### 35. World Bank and Government of India signed \$88 million loan agreement

Assam and the World Bank signed a loan agreement of \$88 million to help modernise Assam's passenger ferry sector that runs on its rivers like Brahmaputra. The project will support the Government of Assam's efforts to corporatise its own ferry activities. The Assam Shipping Company (ASC) will operate the government ferries and the Assam Ports Company (APC) will provide terminals and terminal services on a common-user basis to both public and private ferry operators.



The Assam Inland Water Transport Project (AIWTP) will help Assam improve the passenger ferry infrastructure and its services.

### 36. Arunachal Pradesh signed a MoU with IUCN

Arunachal Pradesh signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) to red-listing of orchids. With this, it became the first State in the country to initiate MoU with IUCN. As per the MoU, the State Government will collaborate with the IUCN to prepare the IUCN's Red List Assessment for all orchids in the State.



The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is a critical indicator of the health and conservation status of the world's biological species.

### 37. IIM-Indore signed MoU with TikTok

The Indian Institute of Management, Indore signed a MoU with the video sharing platform "TikTok" for the production of short video modules for students and trained professionals. IIM students can get their lessons on communication, strategy, negotiation, marketing, etc. on TikTok videos. These 'tik-tok' video modules will be implemented by Indian Institute of Management, Indore in its different courses.



TikTok is a video-sharing social networking service owned by ByteDance, a Beijing-based company founded in 2012 by Zhang Yiming.

### 38. India's first e-waste clinic opened in Bhopal

India's first e-waste clinic was opened in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. It would enable segregation, processing and disposal of waste from both household and commercial units. The e-waste clinic is jointly set up by the Central Pollution Control Board-CPCB and Bhopal Municipal Corporation-BMC.



The e-waste clinic is being started on the basis of a three-month pilot project. The CPCB will provide technical support to the clinic. The clinic has been prepared in junk low floor bus.

### 39. UP Government launched Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana

Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana which will provide financial assistance to family of farmers who die or become handicapped while working in fields. The victims will receive financial assistance of five lakh rupees.



For the first time, the scheme will also include the Bataidars, who work in the field of other persons and share the crop after it is harvested. The scheme will cover farmers and their family members in the age group of 18-70 years and will be implemented from 14th September, 2019.

#### 40. UP Government launched Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana

Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana to boost tourism in state. The government will develop one tourist point with a fund of 50 lakh rupees in each and every assembly segment of the state.



The Uttar Pradesh tourism department has set the target to make the state the most preferred tourism destination by the year 2023, and increase the domestic tourist arrivals by 15% and foreign tourist arrivals by 10%.

#### 41. 16th edition of Mumbai International Film Festival

The 16th edition of Mumbai International Film Festival started on 28th January at Nehru Centre Auditorium with a bouquet of over 76 films competing in national and international sections. MIFF will conclude on 3rd of February 2020.



Films Division of the festival has launched a mobile app, which will provide movie buffs all the information about the festival. The app will also enable delegates to vote for their favourite movie.

#### 42. Uttarakhand became 1st state to implement agricultural land leasing policy

Uttarakhand became the first state in the country where the government has made a policy to lease agricultural land. With this initiative by state, a farmer can get the rent for the land leased by him for 30 years. The upper limit has been set of 30 acres of land on lease for 30 years, providing a provision to take more land in special circumstances.



The state government has made this policy in the wake of obstacles faced in the consolidation of land, especially in hilly areas.



#### 43. IIM Indore to provide ‘mob management & communication’ training to UP Police

UP police had joined hands and signed MoU with IIM-Indore to strengthen beat policing, develop tools for better law enforcement, traffic management, improve the efficiency of police personnel while reducing stress.



The Indian Institute of Management Indore in Madhya Pradesh will guide and provide training to Uttar Pradesh Police personnel on crowd management and effective communication. It will also provide training in the data analysis, traffic management, use of artificial intelligence & social media management.

#### 44. Andhra Pradesh assembly passed resolution to abolish State Legislative Council

The Andhra Pradesh Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution to abolish the State Legislative Council. The move comes after the main Opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) sent two bills related to the decentralisation of Andhra Pradesh’s capital to a select committee.



The one-line resolution to abolish the state council was passed in the assembly by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy. The resolution was passed with 133 members voting in favour of it. This was announced by assembly speaker Tammineni Seetharam.

#### 45. West Bengal becomes highest vegetable producing state

According to a horticulture production data of the central government, West Bengal has emerged as the top state in India in vegetable production in 2018-19. The state produced 29.55 million tonne (MT) of vegetables during 2018-19. Uttar Pradesh with 27.71 million tonne of vegetable production was second in the list.



West Bengal has accounted for 15.9% of the country's total vegetable production. UP produced 14.9% while Madhya Pradesh had 9.6% followed by Bihar at 9%. Andhra Pradesh topped the list of fruits production with 17.61 mt, followed by Maharashtra (10.82 mt) and Uttar Pradesh (10.65 mt).

#### 46. 'Innovation Festival' celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh

Two days long Innovation Festival 2020 was organised in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. The festival was organised by the Arunachal Pradesh State Council for Science & Technology in collaboration with the National Innovation Foundation.



The Innovation Festival, a first of its kind in the state, aimed to foster the culture of innovation among all people of the state, especially in all the educational institutions. Shri Ha Tade won the award for innovation for Vehicle Data Recording.

#### 47. India's first Super Fab Lab inaugurated by Kerala CM

Chief Minister of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated India's 1st Super Fab Lab in Kochi, Kerala. The Super Fab Lab installed in collaboration with KSUM (Kerala Startup Mission), will allow the state to produce machines locally and will give India's hardware industry a giant leap.



The Super Fab Lab, spread across an area of 10,000 sqft. and inaugurated at the Integrated Startup Complex(ISC) of the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) is the only such facility outside of the US.

#### 48. Shiv Bhojan Scheme launched by Maharashtra Government

The state government of Maharashtra launched the 'Shiv Bhojan' scheme on a pilot basis, on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day. Under the pilot scheme, at least one 'Shiv Bhojan' canteen has been started at district headquarters for providing a meal to the poor for just Rs 10.



Under this initiative, about 18,000 thalis will be distributed every day through 125 centres. The scheme has been implemented at various hospitals such as Sir King Edward Memorial Hospital in Parel, LokmanyaTilak Municipal General Hospital in Sion, VN Desai Hospital in Santacruz etc.

#### **49. India's first underwater metro to begin in March 2022 in Kolkata**

India's first underwater metro train which is being constructed in Kolkata is set to begin operations in March 2022. The underwater metro train constructed by the Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC), will pass partly under the iconic Hooghly river, connecting the twin cities Kolkata and Howrah.



Around 9,00,000 people will be travelling by this new line daily, covering 16.6 km route with six stations. The project is built at cost of Rs 8,600 crore.

# Reports

## 1. India ranked 34th in Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index

According to a report published by WEF, India has moved up six places to 34<sup>th</sup> rank on world travel and tourism competitiveness index. The improvement was driven by rich natural and cultural resources and strong price competitiveness.



The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) covered 140 economies. Spain topped the list followed by France, Germany, Japan and USA in the top five. Pakistan (121st) remains the least competitive country in South Asia when it comes to T&T.

## 2. World Bank Study: Effect of Automation on FDI flows

According to a World Bank study on the effect of automation on FDI, automation will disrupt the flow of capital from rich to poorer countries but the poorest countries could actually gain from automation. Mary Hallward-Driemeier and Gaurav Nayyar use data sets on greenfield foreign direct investments (FDI) and industrial robot usage between 2004 and 2015 to investigate the relationship between automation and FDI flows.



The study finds that as automation increases, FDI flows from high-income countries (HICs) to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) fall. For a 10% increase of automation in a HIC, the flow of FDIs into LMIC increased by 5.5%.

## 3. IMD reports 2019 as the 7th warmest year since 1901

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), 2019 was recorded as the seventh warmest year since 1901, but the heating was substantially lower than the highest warming observed in 2016. 1,562 people died due to extreme weather events in 2019.



The five warmest years on record are 2016 (0.71 degree Celsius), 2009 (0.541 degree Celsius), 2017 (0.539 degree Celsius), 2010 (0.54 degree Celsius) and 2015 (0.42 degree Celsius). The IMD said 11 out of 15 warmest years were during the recent past fifteen years (2005-2019).

#### 4. ICMR released report on Sugar Intake of India

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) released its report on sugar intake of India. The report was released based on a joint survey conducted by ICMR, NIN (National Institute of Nutrition), Hyderabad and ILSI (International Life Science Institute of India).



According to the report, intake of added sugar in metro cities was 19.5 grams per day. Sugar intake was the highest in Mumbai at 26.3 g/day. The level recommended by ICMR is 30 grams per day.

#### 5. India listed as 5th biggest Geo-Political Risk of 2020

India has been listed as the fifth biggest geopolitical risk of 2020 by the political risk consultancy 'Eurasia's annual 'Top 10 Risks' of the year list. The list was topped by elections in the U.S. the report unveiled that Indian government has adopted a "contentious" social agenda, which not only comes "at the cost" of India's economy, but also "challenges the secular and democratic foundations" of the republic.



Eurasia's annual 'Top 10 Risks' of 2020 list is considered one of the foremost geopolitical indicators among global investors, multinational firms and various financial and business consultancies.

#### 6. Indian passport ranked 84th in Henley Passport Index 2020

According to the Henley Passport Index 2020, Indian passport has ranked 84th in the list while Japan's passport ranked 1st in the index. India's ranking fell from a decade-high ranking of 74 to a low of 84 in 2020.



Japan is followed by Singapore, Germany, South Korea, Italy in the top five. Afghanistan's passport is the world's worst passport while Pakistan's is the fourth worst.

The report is based on the data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

## 7. Shopper Malware affected 14% Indians

Global cybersecurity and anti-virus brand Kaspersky revealed that a new Trojan malware application called 'Shopper' has infected more than 14.23% Indian users. Russia was highest affected with 28.46% followed by Brazil at 18.70% and India at 14.23%. The malicious app spreads unsolicited ads, fake reviews and ratings issued in the name of the victim.



According to a report by the Data Security Council of India (DSCI), India ranks second in the list of countries affected the most by cyberattacks between 2016 and 2018.

## 8. Report unveiled that STEM jobs raising in India

One of the job sites, 'Indeed' unveiled in its report that jobs related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics have increased by 44% between November 2016 and November 2019.



Key findings

-The leading sectors hiring STEM talent include information technology, banking and financial services.

-In 2016, India produced the maximum graduates worldwide with 78 million of which 2.6 million were from STEM.

-Delhi led the way for STEM jobs with 31% of overall postings followed by Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune and Hyderabad.

-Roles in demand are software engineer, php developer, .net developer, android developer and full-stack developer.

## 9. “The Global Risks Report 2020” released by World Economic Forum

The 15th edition of the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report was published about the major risks; the world is going to face in the coming years. The report forecasts a year of increased domestic and international divisions and economic slowdown.



For the first time in the survey's 10-year outlook, the top five global risks in terms of likelihood are all environmental. The report sounds the alarm on extreme weather events, failure of climate-change mitigation, major biodiversity loss and major natural disasters.

### 10. Economist Intelligence Unit released Democracy Index 2019

Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) released the 12th edition of the "Democracy Index 2019: A year of democratic setbacks and popular protest". The index was topped by Norway followed by Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand and Finland. The average global score slipped from 5.48 in 2018, to 5.44. North Korea was placed at bottom-most in the index.



India slipped 10 places to 51st position in the 2019 Democracy index. The Democracy Index 2019 measures the state of democracy in 167 countries by 60 indicators across five broad categories.

### 11. Jharkhand's Jharia most polluted city in India

Greenpeace India's fourth Airpocalypse report unveiled that coal-belching town of Jharia in Jharkhand is the most polluted city in India.



Key Findings of report

- Six of India's 10 most polluted cities are in Uttar Pradesh.
- Delhi is the 10th-most polluted city in India.
- Jharkhand's Dhanbad is the second-most polluted city in India.
- Lunglei in Mizoram is the least polluted.
- Lunglei is also the only Indian city with PM levels under the World Health Organisation's (WHO) prescribed level of 20/ug/m3.

### 12. RBI placed at 6th position in buying gold abroad in World Gold Council report

"World Gold Outlook 2020" report released by World Gold Council placed India's central bank Reserve Bank of India at 6th position in the largest buyer of sovereign gold abroad.



Key Findings

- RBI holds 625.2 tonnes of gold, forming 6.6 per cent of its forex reserves.
- RBI bought 25.2 tonnes in first 10 months of 2019 to hedge government's sovereign gold bond issue.
- The central banks of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Poland bought more than India in 2019.
- Institutional investors in exchange traded funds reported to be the second biggest buyers of gold in 2019.

### 13. Global Social Mobility Index 2020

The 1st edition of Global Social Mobility Report 2020 titled “The Global Social Mobility Report 2020: Equality, Opportunity and a New Economic Imperative” was released by World Economic Forum. Index was topped by Denmark followed by Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Netherlands in top six list. India ranked has 76th position with a score of 42.7.



The World Economic Forum created a new index to measure social mobility, providing a much-needed assessment of the current state of social mobility worldwide. The Global Social Mobility Index benchmarks 82 global economies.

### 14. CDP India Annual Report 2019” released by Carbon Disclosure Project

CDP India Annual Report 2019” was released by CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project), a not-for-profit charity running the global disclosure system for investors, companies to manage their environmental impacts. India was placed at 5th among the countries surveyed for corporate commitments to science-based targets.



#### Key Findings

- The report surveyed a total of 6900 companies across the globe.
- U.S.A topped the list with 135 SBT companies.
- Japan, U.K. and France were placed among top 4.
- Investors checked for environmental activity from Indian companies before investing in an organisation.

### 15. International Labour Organisation released “The World Employment and Social Outlook”

International Labour Organisation (ILO) released the World Employment and Social Outlook report. This report provides an overview of global and regional trends in employment, unemployment, labour force participation and productivity.



#### Highlights

- Count of people unemployed around the world stands at 188 million.
- India became founder member of the International Labour Organisation.
- The rise in trade restrictions have a significant impact on employment.
- 165 million people don't have enough paid work.
- 120 million have either given up actively searching for work or otherwise lack access to the labour market.



## 16. Report on Central and State Water Departments based on Efficiency Targets released

The Ministry of Jal Shakti launched rankings of Central and state governmental water departments based on their efficiency targets. Gujarat was found to be the most water-efficient state in India on efficiency targets in the review of state and Central government water departments.



Government of India  
Ministry of Jal Shakti  
Department of Water Resources,  
River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

### Highlights

- Rajasthan emerged as the third most water-efficient state.
- Tamil Nadu significantly improved its ranking from 33 in 2018 to 13th in 2019.
- Delhi was found to be worst performing state.
- Among seven central departments, Survey of India was found to be the most water-efficient.
- Central Pollution Control Board was found to be least water efficient.

# Resignations & Retirements

## 1. Irfan Pathan announced retirement from all forms of Cricket

Indian all-rounder Irfan Pathan announced his retirement from all forms of Cricket. He played 29 Tests, 120 ODIs and 24 T20Is. He was part of the victorious Indian team at the 2007 World Twenty20 and was the man-of-the-match in the final against Pakistan.



One of his best performances came on the tour of Pakistan in 2006 when he became the second Indian after Harbhajan Singh to take a Test hat-trick. He also played a big role in India winning a Test match against Australia on a tough Perth wicket, which offered steep bounce.

## 2. World Cup winner Daniele De Rossi from Italy retired from football

Veteran former Italy international Daniele De Rossi announced his retirement from football, just six months after joining Argentine giants Boca Juniors. He has played 117 games for Italy from 2004-17 and won the World Cup in 2006.



Rossi is popularly known for his time playing with his hometown club Roma in Serie A. With 616 appearances for Roma in all competitions, he is the club's second-most capped player of all time. De Rossi is Italy's top scorer in the Confederations Cup, with two goals.

## 3. Ukraine PM Oleksiy Honcharuk resigned

Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk of Ukraine tendered his resignation to President Volodymyr Zelenskiy after less than six months in the role. An alleged recording emerged earlier this week where Honcharuk questioned Zelenskiy's ability to manage the economy and the Prime Minister felt this would undermine his position.



The former lawyer and deputy head of the Prime Minister's office became Ukraine's youngest-ever head of government at the age of 35 when he took on the role in August 2019.

#### 4. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev submitted resignation

The entire Federal Government in Russia including Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has resigned after President Vladimir Putin announced that a range of constitutional changes are needed. President Putin proposed a referendum on amending Russia's constitution to increase the powers of parliament, while maintaining a strong presidential system.



President Putin has nominated Medvedev to become deputy head of the National Security Council. President Putin proposed the head of Russia's tax service Mikhail Mishustin for the post of prime minister.

#### 5. Slovenian Prime Minister Marjan Sarec resigned

Slovenian Prime Minister Marjan Sarec submitted resignation to President Borut Pahor and called for fresh elections. The governing coalition of five centre-left parties held only 43 out of 90 seats in parliament. After losing the informal support of the opposition Left Party, it had found it increasingly difficult to get bills through parliament.



Mr Sarec is Slovenia's youngest-ever Prime Minister. He was previously best known as a comedian and political satirist before he launched himself as an anti-establishment politician.

# Science & Technology

## 1. ISRO will set up launch port for small satellite launch vehicles

Indian Space Research Organisation announced to establish a second launch port in Thoothukodi district in Tamilnadu exclusively to launch small satellite launch vehicles. On the lines of GPS navigation system developed by America, the Indian navigation system called Navic with the indigenous atomic clock will be operational with mobile phone manufacturers coming forward to install the regional navigation device.



Chandrayaan 3 mission to the moon, comprising of a lander and a rover is approved by the Government. The Gaganyaan mission is targeted to be launched by 2022.

## 2. ISRO inked pact to set up optical Telescope

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) inked pact for co-operation in the field of Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and Astrophysics. MOU is signed as part of ISRO's initiatives to utilise the efforts of Indian Academic Institutions in the space technology.



MoU will pave the way for future collaborations between ISRO and IIA in establishing optical telescope facilities under NETRA Project for space object tracking, studies related to space weather, Asteroids, and other Near Earth Objects (NEO). Collaboration between ISRO and IIA will help in progressing various fields of Astrophysics and Astronomy as well.

## 3. DRDO Science Expo launched I-STEM portal at the Indian Science congress

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched I-STEM portal at the 107th edition of the Indian Science Congress. Indian Science Technology and Engineering Facilities Map (I-STEM) portal will hold the database of all the R&D facilities established in institutions around the country, and enable their sharing in a transparent manner. The IP protected Portal has been built by, and is managed by, Nanoscience Centre of Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

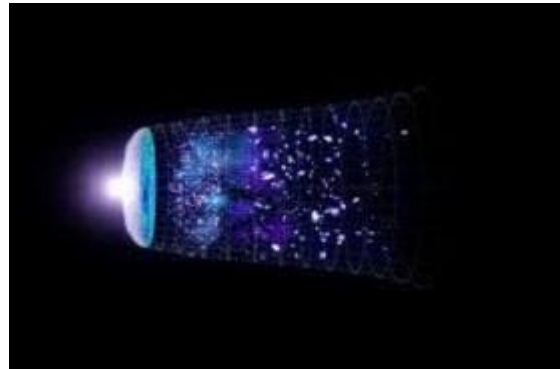


More than 17,000 equipments located at about 427 institutions across India have been listed on I-STEM. The Portal will provide comprehensive data on sharing of facilities.

#### 4. Astronomers spot distant galaxy group

An international team of astronomers has found the farthest galaxy group identified to date, called EGS77. The galaxy shows the specific wavelengths of far-ultraviolet light revealed by reionisation. This emission, called Lyman alpha light, is prominent in all members of EGS77.

The EGS77, the trio of galaxies dates to a time when the universe was only 680 million years old, or less than 5% of its current age of 13.8 billion years.



#### 5. Women Science Congress held in Bengaluru

The Women Science Congress was held in Bengaluru at the ongoing Indian Science Congress. DRDO Aeronautical Systems Director General Dr. Tessy Thomas who is known as Missile Woman of India was the Chief Guest of the occasion.

The women's science congress aims to provide a single platform for women working in different arena of science and technology to showcase their achievements and experiences. It will also prepare a vision document or a road map for women in science and technology.



#### 6. ISRO's astronaut training hub to be established in Challakere, Karnataka

The Indian Space Research Organisation has finalised Karnataka's Challakere as the location for its first Human Space Flight Infrastructure Centre (HSFIC). The proposed budget is Rs 2,700 crore and it is expected to be functional in next three years.

Various activities related to the training of astronauts to manned missions will be conducted at the centre. At present, the four selected astronauts to embark in India's first manned spaceflight mission Gaganyaan are undergoing training in Russia.



## 7. ISRO to Launch IDRSS Satellites to help Gaganyaan Mission

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced to launch its own satellite pair for space communication purposes, called Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS). IDRSS will be pivotal in maintaining communication with the astronaut crew and ground mission control at any given phase, during manned space missions.



India is set to embark upon its first ever manned space mission with Gaganyaan in 2022. The first of the two satellites will be launched into Low-Earth orbit by the end of 2020, while second satellite will be launched in 2021.

## 8. Indian Pompano Fish Cultivation-First Scientific Experiment

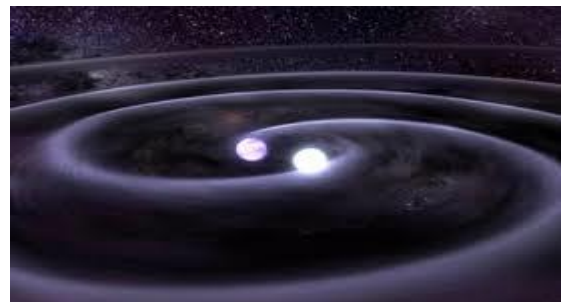
Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) scientists developed viable scientific method to cultivate Indian Pompano fish in ponds. Pompanos are marine fishes. Scientists had started scientific study in 2014 on cultivation of fishes. Scientists recorded experiment of 750 grams of meat per fish in open ponds and 1 kg in cages. CMFRI's new invention of cultivation in ponds recorded 95% of the survival of the fishes.



The funding provided by the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), registered 3 tons per acre yield and a profit of 25% to 30% of input cost per acre.

## 9. LIGO: Second Merger of Neutron Stars detected

The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) has spotted two ultra-dense stellar remnants known as neutron stars violently crashing together for a second time. The neutron stars each fitting roughly the mass of the Sun into a city-sized space have a combined mass greater than any other pair of neutron stars ever observed.



After the collision of these two particularly hefty neutron stars, the final merged product collapsed into a black hole, gobbling up any stray matter and light located nearby. The first gravitational-wave detection of merging neutron stars, called GW170817 was detected in 2017.

### 10. GSAT-30 satellite launched from French Guiana

GSAT-30, a communication satellite of India, was launched onboard Ariane-5 launch vehicle (VA 251) from French Guiana. Weighing 3,357 kg, GSAT-30 is to serve as replacement to INSAT-4A spacecraft services with enhanced coverage. The satellite provides Indian mainland and islands coverage in Ku-band. It also provides extended coverage in C-band.



GSAT-30 will be extensively used for supporting VSAT networks, Television up-linking and Teleport services, Digital Services News Gathering (DSNG), DTH-Television services, cellular backhaul connectivity and many such applications.

### 11. Oldest ever mushroom fossil discovered

The world's oldest mushroom has been discovered in the Democratic Republic of Congo and dates back to around 810 million years ago. The oldest confirmed mushroom fossil until now was dated to 460 million years ago.



In the current study, published in the journal Science Advances, researchers found fossilised remains of microscopic mushroom parts called mycelium in rocks whose age is between 715 and 810 million years.

### 12. ISRO successfully completed three orbit raising manoeuvres of GSAT-30

ISRO has successfully completed the three orbit-raising manoeuvres of communication satellite GSAT-30 and succeeded in placing it in an orbit close to its operational orbit. The satellite was launched on January 17 onboard Ariane 5 rocket from French Guiana.



The cumulative duration of operation of the propulsion system for these manoeuvres was 2 hours 29 minutes. The satellite is placed in an orbit with a perigee of 35,826 km and an apogee of 35,913 km with an inclination of 0.11 deg which is very close to its operational orbit.

### 13. ISRO unveiled 'Vyommitra' a half-humanoid robot for Gaganyaan Space Mission

ISRO unveiled 'Vyommitra' a half-humanoid robot for Gaganyaan Space Mission. Indian Space Research Organisation will send 'Vyommitra', a 'lady robot' in the unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft. Vyommitra will simulate human functions in space, interact with the environment control life support system, mimic the activity of a crew of astronauts in space, recognise them, hold conversations and answer queries.



ISRO will monitor how the human system will behave in the environment control life support system. Vyommitra is a half humanoid since she does not have legs. It can only bend sideways and forward to carry out certain experiments.

### 14. France to train Indian flight surgeons for ISRO's Gaganyaan mission

The Indian flight surgeons will be trained by France to enable them to check the health of astronauts selected for the human space mission Gaganyaan. Training will be of 2 weeks for Gaganyaan project that is aimed at sending three Indians to space by 2022. The flight surgeons will be observed by Indian Air Force doctors specialising in aviation medicines. Surgeons will take care of health of astronauts before, during and after the journey.



Gaganyaan is a fully autonomous 3.7-tonne spacecraft designed to carry a 3-member crew to orbit and safely return to the Earth.

### 15. ISRO launched Bhuvan Panchayat V3 web Portal

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the Bhuvan Panchayat web portal's version 3.0 for better planning and monitoring of government projects. The Portal will function with the help of satellite technology developed by ISRO and will enhance network application of gram panchayats.



The project is meant to provide geo-spatial services to aid gram panchayat development planning process of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The Bhuvan Panchayat web portal was launched for visualisation, planning and monitoring of schemes at panchayat levels.



# Sports

## 1. Government approved IOA's proposal to host Commonwealth shooting in India

The government approved in principle the Indian Olympic Association's proposal to host the Commonwealth shooting championships and archery events which were not part of the 2022 Commonwealth Games roster in March 2022.



IOA had withdrawn its threat to boycott the Birmingham Commonwealth Games over shooting's omission and decided to submit a formal proposal to host a shooting championship, where the medals won will be counted in the tally of the 2022 edition.

## 2. Manav Thakkar became world no.1 in latest International Table Tennis Federation rankings

Young Indian paddler Manav Thakkar became world no.1 in the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings in the Under-21 men's singles category. With this, Thakkar became the fourth Indian to achieve the feat after Harmeet Desai, G Sathiyam and Soumyajit Ghosh.



The 19-year-old Manav Thakkar achieved the top spot after clinching the Under-21 men's singles title at the ITTF Challenge Plus Benemax-Virgo North American Open in Markham, Canada in December 2019.

## 3. ICC plans to scrap five-day Tests from 2023

Cricket's apex body, the International Cricket Council, plans to scrap five-day Tests from 2023. The ICC could make four-day Tests mandatory from 2023 as part of the World Test Championship. Tests have been played over five days through most of their 140-year history.



It could provide a sustainable solution to the complex scheduling needs and players' workloads. A four-day test was played between England and Ireland earlier in 2019. South Africa and Zimbabwe too played one in 2017.

#### 4. MS Dhoni picked captain of ESPN Cricinfo's ODI and T20 teams of past decade

Former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni was picked as captain of ESPN Cricinfo's ODI and Twenty20 teams of the decade, while Virat Kohli was named the leader in Tests.



The criteria, set by the 23-member panel, for selection was a minimum of 50 Tests or six active years in the traditional format while it was 75 ODIs and 100 T20s for the limited-overs teams. Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal were the only other Indians to make the Test XI. Rohit Sharma was named in the ODI XI and Jasprit Bumrah in the T20 XI.

#### 5. 5th IHAI National Ice Hockey Championship 2020

Host Leh-Ladakh won the 5th Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship - 2020 in both Boys and Girls categories. Ladakh Scouts Regiment Centre (LSRC) won the bronze medal, in Under-20 Boys category.



Maharashtra girls stood 3rd in the championship. The Under-20 boys will be playing Asia Challenge Cup in Thailand while the girls will play in the Asian Championship in the Philippines. Ice Hockey Association of India is the governing body of ice hockey in India.

#### 6. K. Srikanth & Anjum Chopra to get CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award

Former India captain and member of the 1983 World Cup - winning team Krishnamachari Srikanth was conferred with this year's prestigious CK Nayudu Lifetime Award. Former India women's captain Anjum Chopra is the co-recipient of the lifetime achievement award for the year 2019.



Srikanth represented India between 1981 and 1992 and played 43 Tests, scoring 2062 runs with 2 hundreds and 12 half-centuries. Anjum is considered to be one of India's finest batswomen before Mithali Raj. She played 12 Tests scoring 548 runs.

### 7. Bhubaneswar to host 1st edition of Khelo India University Games

The first edition of Khelo India University Games is scheduled to be held at the KIIT University in Bhubaneswar from February 22 to March 1, 2020. Khelo India University Games will witness over 4,000 athletes from 100 Universities.



The Khelo India University Games will have 17 different disciplines namely archery, athletics, boxing, fencing, judo, swimming, weight-lifting, wrestling, badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, rugby and kabaddi.

### 8. Leo Carter became 7th cricketer to hit six 6s in an over

New Zealand's Leo Carter became the 7th cricketer in the world to score six sixes in an over. He achieved this feat during his team's Canterbury Kings' victory against Northern Knight at New Zealand's Twenty20 tournament Super Smash. He smashed left-arm spinner Anton Devcich.



Gary Sobers of the West Indies, Ravi Shastri and Yuvraj Singh of India, Herschelle Gibbs of South Africa, Ross Whiteley of England and Hazratullah Zazai of Afghanistan have scored six sixes in an over.

### 9. Jasprit Bumrah to receive Polly Umrigar Award

The BCCI has announced that Jasprit Bumrah will receive the prestigious Polly Umrigar Award for his super performance in international cricket in the 2018-19 season. He is the world's No. 1 ODI bowler and made his Test debut during India's tour of South Africa in January 2018.



Bumrah picked up a five-wicket haul in South Africa, England, Australia and the West Indies becoming the first and only Asian bowler to achieve the feat. Poonam Yadav has claimed the top prize in women's section and will be awarded the best international cricketer.

### 10. India finished 2019 as number one shooting nation in world

India finished the year as the top shooting nation in the world, leaving behind Olympic heavyweights China and the USA. India won a total of 21 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze medals as it topped all the Rifle-Pistol World Cups and Finals in 2019.

China, with 11 gold, 15 silver and 18 bronze, was second in the list. The USA is placed third with 6 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze medals.



### 11. Malaysia Masters 2020

Japan's Kento Momota won the Malaysia masters 2020 after he defeated Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the Perodua Malaysian Masters final. China's world No. 2 Chen Yufei won the women's singles against Taiwan's Tai Tzu-ying.

South Korea's Kim Gi-jung-Lee and Yong-dae won the men's doubles title while China's Du Yue and Li Yinhui won the women's doubles title. China's world No. 1 mixed doubles pair Zheng Siwei-Huang Yaqiong won the mixed doubles title.



### 12. Strandja Memorial 2020

Former world silver-winner Sonia Lather (57kg) and Four-time Asian medallist Shiva Thapa (63kg) won bronze medals at the Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria. Mohammed Hussamuddin (57kg) won a silver medal after losing 1-4 to Italy's Francesco Maietta.



India ended the competition with three medals in all. The tournament features more than 200 boxers from over 30 countries and is a season-opener in the European boxing calendar.

### 13. World Archery lifted suspension on India

The World Archery conditionally lifted the suspension on India. It instructed the Archery Association of India to make changes in its constitution regarding athlete membership, resolve governance issues and develop a strategic plan. It also asked AAI to furnish a quarterly progress report on these issues.

The AAI had been suspended since August 5, with the Indian athletes only allowed to compete under a neutral flag. With the lifting of the ban, Indian archers are now free to compete under the Indian flag.



#### 14. RFI lifts Dattu Bhokanal's ban after IOA's intervention

Rowing Federation of India lifted the two-year suspension of Rower Dattu Bhokanal. He was charged of tanking a race during the 2018 Asian Games. The ban was lifted after the intervention of the Indian Olympic Association.



Bhokanal was one of the Indian quartets that won gold in the men's quadruple sculls event in the Asian Games, but later left the single sculls race midway. He was banned by the Rowing Federation of India in March 2019.

#### 15. Khelo India Youth Games 2020

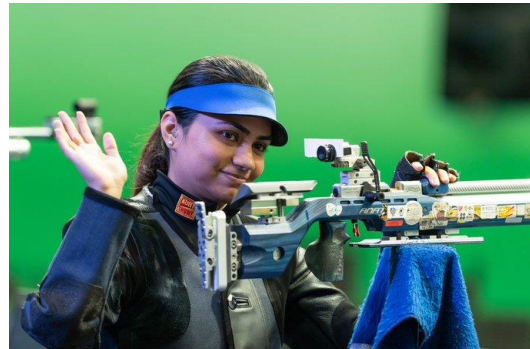
The Khelo India Youth Games 2020 was concluded in Guwahati. It was held between January 16-22, 2020. The defending champions Maharashtra won the medals tally with 256 medals, including 78 gold and 77 silver.



Haryana took the second spot on the medals tally becoming only the second state to win a total of 200 medals including 68 Golds, 60 Silvers and 72 Bronzes. Delhi was third on the tally for the second time in a row as well with 122 medals (39 Gold, 36 Silver and 47 Bronze).

#### 16. Indian shooters Divyansh Singh Pawar, Apurvi Chandela Clinch Gold in Meyton Cup

Indian shooters Divyansh Singh Pawar and Apurvi Chandela won a gold medal each in Meyton Cup in Innsbruck, Austria. While Divyansh won the gold in the men's 10m air rifle event, Apurvi bagged the gold metal in the 10m air rifle women's category.



Deepak Kumar and Anjum Moudgil also bagged a bronze medal each in men's and women's 10m air rifle events respectively. The Meyton Cup is a private tournament where shooters go on their own to participate to gain experience before international events.

### 17. Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma consolidate top batting positions in ICC ODI rankings

India Captain Virat Kohli and his deputy Rohit Sharma consolidated their top two positions in the batting chart in the One-Day International Rankings issued by International Cricket Council. Kohli has 886 points and Rohit has 868 points. Pakistan's Babar Azam is in third position with 829 points.



Indian pace ace Jasprit Bumrah continued to lead among bowlers with 764 points. New Zealand left-arm pacer Trent Boult and Afghanistan's Mujeeb Ur Rahman are second and third in the ranking.

### 18. Indonesia Masters 2020

Indonesia's Anthony Sinisuka Ginting won the men's Indonesia Masters title over defending champion Anders Antonsen. Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon won the women's singles title against Spain's Carolina Marin.



Indonesia's Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo won the men's doubles title defeating hometown rivals Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan. In women's doubles, Indonesian pair Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu beat Denmark's Maiken Fruergaard and Sara Thygesen. The 2020 Indonesia Masters is officially known as the Daihatsu Indonesia Masters 2020 and took place at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno in Indonesia.

### 19. Derrara Hurisa of Ethiopia won full marathon in elite category in Mumbai

Derrara Hurisa of Ethiopia broke the event record and won the full marathon in the elite category in the 7th edition of the Mumbai marathon. Ayele Abshero and Birhanu Teshome came in second and third in the category. Srinu Bugatha and Sudha Singh have won the Indian Elite Full Marathon Men's and Women's category respectively.



Ethiopia's Amane Beriso finished at the top in the International Elite Full Marathon Women's category. In the half marathon category, Uttar Pradesh's Parul Choudhary has emerged victorious while Mumbai's Aarti Patil comes in second and Nasik's Monica secured the third spot.

## 20. Kiren Rijiju and Pramod Sawant flagged off 'Fit India Cyclothon' in Panaji

The Fit India Mission under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of Goa, organized the inaugural event of 'Fit India Cyclothon' event in Panaji. The Cyclothon was flagged off by Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju and Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.



The Cyclothon event witnessed participation by over 500 cycling enthusiasts cycled through a five-kilometre stretch within the Panaji city.

## 21. Kuldeep Yadav becomes fastest Indian spinner to take 100 wickets in ODIs

Kuldeep Yadav became the fastest Indian spinner to claim 100 wickets in ODI during the second match against Australia in Rajkot. The left-arm wrist-spinner reached the milestone in his 58th match when he got rid of Alex Carey. Among spinners, the earlier fastest to 100 wickets was Harbhajan Singh in 76 matches.



Kuldeep is now also the third-fastest Indian bowler to take 100 ODI wickets behind current teammates Mohammed Shami, who reached the milestone in 56 matches, and Jasprit Bumrah in 57 matches.

## 22. Rajshahi Royals won Bangladesh Premier League Trophy

The Rajshahi Royals defeated Khulna Tigers in the finals of the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League (BBPL) Twenty20 trophy in Dhaka. West Indian cricket player and Rajshahi Royal skipper Andre Russel was named the player of the match for his performance in the finals. He was also declared the player of the tournament for his 225 runs and 14 wickets over the course of the tournament.



Rilee Rossouw scored the most runs in the tournament - 495 in 14 innings. Mustafizur Rahman was the most successful bowler with 20 wickets in the tournament.

### 23. Yogeshwar Dutt & Deepa Malik included in All India Council of Sports

Paralympian Deepa Malik and wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt were inducted in the All India Council of Sports along with shooter Anjali Bhagwat, footballer Renedy Singh, mountaineer Bachendri Pal and former Indian off-spinner Harbhajan Singh. AICS is reconstituted government panel on sports.



The Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal constituted All India Council of Sports (AICS) in 2015. The Council is an advisory body for the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

### 24. India beat Pakistan to lift Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship

The team of the Indian Consulate in Dubai defeated the team of the Pakistan Consulate to lift the Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship of 2020. This is the third time in succession that India has won the Diplomat Cup Championship.



The Championship was organised by Skyline University College in Sharjah. Consulates of eight countries participated in the tournament. The participating Consulates were – India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Australia and the USA. The aim of the Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship is to bring together officials and employees of different Consulates based in UAE.

### 25. India's Esow Alben bagged gold in Six Day Berlin Tournament

India's Esow Alben has bagged a gold in the men's Keirin individual event of the Six Day Berlin Cycling Tournament. Czech Republic's Tomas Babek came in second while Maximilian Lev of Germany won the bronze.



The event is a six-day track cycling race. Each cyclist competes on every day of the competition. Esow was honoured with the Young Athlete of the Year Award at the Sportstar Aces Awards 2020 in Mumbai.



## 26. Mizoram won North East Dr T Ao Trophy

Two times champion Mizoram defeated Sikkim to emerge as the champion of the Northeast Dr. T Ao Football Trophy 2020 at Indira Gandhi Stadium in Kohima. While the champion team received a cash prize of 10 lakh rupees, the runners up got six 6 lakhs. Rhitsho Mero received the golden boot for his 10 goals.



Nagaland defeated Arunachal Pradesh claim the third position. Nagaland received two lakh rupees and Arunachal Pradesh one Lakh rupees with a certificate.

## 27. ATF unanimously nominates Anil Khanna as life President

Senior Sports Administrator Anil Khanna was nominated Life President of the Asian Tennis Federation (ATF). Mr Khanna had served as ATF President from 2005 to 2019 and also ITF Vice President from 2015-19.



The ATF also appointed Mr. Khanna as the Chairman of the ATF Finance Committee. CS Sunder Raj was voted as the Senior Vice President of the federation, representing South Asia. Anil Dhupar was elected as the member of the Senior Committee, while VK Batra was voted as a member of the Constitution Committee of the ATF.