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Banking

News: Most Important

1. **ESAF small finance bank gets RBI nod to operate as scheduled bank**
   ESAF small finance bank received the first banking license in Kerala since independence and has got RBI approval to operate as scheduled bank. It makes Thrissur-based **ESAF small finance bank** the fifth scheduled bank from Kerala.

2. **RBI Directive on Data localisation**
   RBI directs payments companies to store all information about transactions involving Indians solely on computers in the country. Mastercard started all-new Indian transaction data being stored at its technology centre in Pune.

3. **Central Bank of India to raise Rs 200 crore via staff stock purchase plan**
   The Central Bank of India is set to raise about ₹ 200 Cr by issuing shares to staff under the employee stock purchase scheme. In March 2017, the govt had allowed PSBs to offer ESPS, aimed at retaining experienced hands & better incentives to raise capital.

4. **RBI allows SIDBI to use an existing Rs 1000-crore corpus for lending to MFIs**
   India’s institutional framework to support microfinance is set to get a boost with Reserve Bank of India clearing a proposal to dig in an existing **Rs 1000-crore** corpus for funding micro lenders. SIDBI will use the money to offer soft loans to MFIs.

5. **Bimal Jalan to head panel on RBI reserve**
   Reserve Bank of India appointed Bimal Jalan as the head of the expert panel that will decide on the **appropriate size of reserves** that the central bank should maintain and the dividend it should give to the government. Rakesh Mohan is the vice chairman.

6. **RBI shortlists TCS, Wipro, IBM, 3 others for setting up Public Credit Registry**
   The Reserve Bank of India has shortlisted six major IT companies, including Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS), Wipro Ltd and IBM India, to set up a wide-based digital **Public Credit Registry** for capturing details of all borrowers and wilful defaulters.

7. **SBI to raise ₹2,045 crore by issuing Basel III bonds**
   State Bank of India raised ₹2,045 crore by issuing Basel III compliant bonds. Bonds are debentures of face value of ₹10 lakh each bearing coupon of 9.37% per annum payable annually with call option after 5 years.
8. **India post introduces Internet Banking facility for savings account holders**

Minister of State for communications, *Manoj Sinha* launched India Post’s Internet banking facility for post office savings bank (POSB) customers, at the National Media Centre in New Delhi. A POSB customer can access the internet banking facility at ebanking.indiapost.gov.in.

9. **PSU Banks recover Rs 2.33 lakh cr worth of bad loans for 4 years**

Public Sector Banks (PSBs) have recovered **2.33 lakh crore** rupees worth of bad loans during the four years from financial year 2014-15 to fiscal 2017-18. As per RBI data during the financial years 2014-15 to 2017-18, PSBs recovered 2,33,339 crore rupees.

10. **RBI to release new ₹ 20 note**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to introduce a new ₹ 20 currency note with additional features. The ₹ 20 notes accounted for **9.8 per cent** of the total number of currency notes in circulation at the end of March 2018.

11. **PNB Rupay Card – Special card for Kumbh Mela**

Punjab National Bank (PNB) in collaboration with Uttar Pradesh government launched a special card called PNB Rupay card, for Kumbh Mela 2019. It is aimed to create a model for digitization at this edition of Kumbh Mela for convenient and hassle-free transactions for the participating 12 crore devotees.

**News: Others**

1. **Govt set to infuse Rs 28,615 cr in 7 PSBs**

The govt. has decided to infuse Rs 28,615 crore into seven public sector banks (PSBs) through recapitalization bonds. The amount infused will help the banks meet the regulatory capital requirement. Bank of India is to get the highest amount of Rs 10,086 cr.

2. **Provision coverage ratio of PSU banks improves to 66.85%**

Public sector banks’ provision coverage ratio, which measures the provisioning for bad loans has gone up from less than 50 per cent in 2015 to **66.85 per cent** as of September 2018, reflecting improvement in their financial health.

3. **Government infuses Rs 2159 cr in United Bank of India**

The government has decided to infuse Rs 2,159 crore in the State-owned United Bank of India. The recapitalisation would enhance the lending capacity of PSBs and help them come out of the Reserve Bank of India's Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework.

4. **RBI mulls cooling-off period for its retired top officials**

The RBI has come up with a new norm for its top officials who want to take up the job of a chairman or chief executive of any other entity, post retirement. RBI has mandated a 3-year cooling-off period for chairman or CEO of any other entity.
5. **Bank credit grows by 15.07%, deposits by 9.66%**

According to the latest RBI data, Bank credit rose at a healthy 15.07 percent to Rs 92.03 trillion in the fortnight to December 7, while deposits grew 9.66 percent to Rs 118.84 trillion. In the year-ago fortnight, advances were at 79.98 trillion.

**Quick revision**

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repo rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverse Repo rate</td>
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<td>Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate</td>
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<td>Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank Rate</td>
<td>6.75 percent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Economy**

**News: Most Important**

1. **RBI caps outstanding ECBs at 6.5% of GDP**

RBI caps funds raised via external commercial borrowing (ECB) at 6.5% of the country’s GDP. Based on GDP figures for March 31, 2018, ‘the soft limit works out to $160 billion,’. outstanding stock of ECB as on September 30, 2018, was **$126.29 billion**.

2. **November exports at the same level as four years ago**

India’s merchandise exports did miserably in November 2018 growing just 0.8 percent from a year ago. It is a huge fall from the October growth rate of 17.9 percent. merchandise exports amounted to $26.5 billion in November 2014, 4 years ago, the same level.

3. **ICICI Bank expects GDP growth at 7.2% in FY19**

Private sector lender ICICI Bank expects GDP to grow by **7.2%** in 2018-19 and is likely to grow by **7.4%** in 2019-20. The Centre’s fiscal deficit to exceed the full-year target by 0.2% to 0.3% of the GDP.

4. **Government to meet fiscal deficit target of 3.3%**

The GST Council headed by the finance minister in its 31st meeting expressed confidence of meeting the fiscal deficit target of 3.3 per cent of GDP for the current fiscal despite revenue loss due to reduction in GST rates.
5. **India’s stock market is 7th biggest in the world with m-cap of $2.1 trn**

India’s ranking improved two notches in the league table of the world’s biggest stock markets. Currently, India ranks 7th with a market cap of $2.1 trillion overtaking Germany. At the end of 2017, India was at the 9th position despite its market cap being $2.4 trillion.

6. **GST Revision of rates**

The GST Council has reduced tax rates on 23 goods and services, including movie tickets, TV and monitor. With this, only 28 goods are left in the highest 28 percent tax bracket. The annual revenue implication of the rate cuts 5500 cr.

7. **FPIs infuse Rs 4000 cr in 3 weeks on boosting Rupee**

Foreign investors have pumped in close to **Rs 4,000 crore** in the Indian capital markets on strengthening rupee and easing global crude oil prices. FPIs infused a net amount of Rs 1,332 crore in equities and Rs 2,552 crore in debt market.

8. **Investment through P-notes rises to Rs 79247 crore in November**

Investments in the Indian capital market through participatory notes climbed to **Rs 79,247 crore** in November after hitting a nine-and-a-half year low at the end of October. P-notes are issued by registered foreign portfolio investors to overseas investors.

9. **Fiscal deficit touches 115% of FY target during Apr-Nov**

The country’s fiscal deficit touched **114.8 percent** of the full-year target of Rs 6.24 lakh cr. at the end of November on account of lower revenue collections. The fiscal deficit stood at Rs 7.16 lakh crore during April-November of the current financial yr.

10. **Logistics development Committee – Bibek Debroy**

The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) constituted a Logistics Development Committee under the Chairmanship of **Dr. Bibek Debroy**, Chairman EAC-PM. The committee would be working on challenges in logistics development and associated commerce and suggest policy reforms for ease of doing trade in India.

**News: Others**

1. **Government introduces MSP for 17 new items of Minor Forest Produce**

   Government has introduced Minimum Support Price for **17 new items** of Minor Forest Produce. TRIFED assigned responsibility to keep a watch on market prices and display on website besides sharing with the States to facilitate implementation of the scheme.

2. **MSP for Copra hiked by more than Rs.2000 per quintal**

   The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) headed by PM Modi has approved hike in Minimum Support Price for Copra by more than 2K rupees per quintal for 2019 season. The MSP of Ball Copra will now be **9920 rupees per quintal** which was earlier **7750 Rs.**
3. **Committee on restructuring of the Income Tax department**

   The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) ordered creation of a 12-member committee of senior officials chaired by S K Dash for a fresh cadre review and restructuring of the Income Tax Department. It has to accomplish the task within the next three months.

4. **Centre doubles export incentives for onion farmers to 10%**

   The Government has doubled the export incentives for onion farmers from existing 5 % to 10 %. It would result in better price for Onion in domestic markets. It has been decided to encourage exports of Onions so that the domestic prices stabilize.

### Quick revision

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Organization/Parameters</th>
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<tr>
<td>ICICI bank</td>
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<td>Fiscal deficit</td>
<td><strong>114.8 percent</strong></td>
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<td>Fiscal deficit target</td>
<td>3.3 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>External commercial borrowing (ECB)</td>
<td>6.5% of the country's GDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision coverage ratio</td>
<td>66.85 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State

**News: Most Important**

1. **Karnataka awards 80 MW solar project to Tepsol**

   The Karnataka State Government awarded solar power projects of 80 MW capacity to TEPSOL Projects, a joint venture between Think Energy and EverStream Capital. This takes the firm's Karnataka portfolio to over 176 MW including 1 MW of rooftop projects.

2. **Gujarat govt waives off electricity bills worth Rs 650 crore**

   Gujarat government decided to waive off **Rs 650 crore** pending non-payment of agricultural, residential or commercial power connection. 6.22 lakh power connection in rural Gujarat is non-functional for pending non-payment of bills.

3. **Rajasthan announces loan waiver for farmers**

   Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced short term crop loans from cooperative banks and loans of up to two lakh rupees from nationalized and other banks will be waived. This will put a burden of 8000 crore rupees on the state exchequer.
4. Centre extends deadline to update NRC
   The Centre has given an extension of 6 months to complete the ongoing exercise for updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam by June 30. The draft NRC was published have included the names of 2.9 cr. people of the total 3.29 crore applicants.

5. Kuno notified as National Park
   Madhya Pradesh located Kuno was notified as national park. It is 748 sq km area in legal battle over issue of relocation of Asiatic Lion from Gir to Kuno. After Supreme Court committee it has accorded status of national park will pave way for lion.

6. India’s first music museum to be set up in Thiruvaiyaru
   The country’s first music museum will be set up with assistance from the Central government in Thiruvaiyaru, Tamilnadu, the birthplace of Saint Tyagaraja, one of the Trinities of Carnatic music, Shyama Shastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar are other two.

7. Pune becomes the first court in India to get the facility of e-payment
   Pune District court became the first court in India to allow e-payments of court fee, judicial deposits, fines and penalties. It will be eventually available across all courtrooms in the country to bring transparency to cash transactions. Its being started in the Shivajinagar district and sessions court. The court has tied up with SBI.

8. Dwijing Festival took place in Assam
   In Assam, the third Dwijing Festival has begun on the bank of Aye river at Chirang district. Around 15 lakh tourists are expected to participate in the festival. Adventure sports, food mart, cultural events, traditional games are being organized.

9. Silao Khaja – Bihar gets GI tag
   Traditional delicacy of Nalanda district of Bihar, Silao Khaja which is popular among the tourists visiting Buddhist sites of Rajgir and Nalanda was granted GI tag by Geographical Indications Registry at Chennai.

News: Others

1. President’s rule in Jammu and Kashmir
   President’s rule was imposed in Jammu and Kashmir, paving the way for the union cabinet to take all policy decisions related to the J&K. This comes after the completion of six months of Governor's rule in the state.

2. e-library of rare books launched in Pune
   The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), Pune which houses one of South Asia’s largest and most invaluable agglomeration of rare manuscripts, opened its treasure vault digitally by launching an e-library of ancient religious and historical works.
3. **Chapparam festival : Madurai Meenakshi temple**

The unique Chapparam (Chariot) festival, that symbolizes the importance of preserving all kinds of food & fodder, celebrated with traditional rituals & festivities in the famous Madurai Meenakshi temple, in Tamil Nadu.

4. **Industrial Corridor planned in Punjab**

Amritsar Kolkata Industrial Corridor (AKIC) Project has been planned by the Govt. of India. It covers 7 States including Punjab. In consultation with State Government, Rajpura- Patiala has been identified as an Integrated Manufacturing Cluster (IMC).

5. **Maharashtra government implements 7th Pay Commission recommendation**

The Maharashtra government implemented the recommendations of the 7th pay commission to its employees which will benefit the officers, employees, teachers from the unaided schools and those from Zilla Parishad institutions.

6. **India’s largest cancer hospital – Jhajjar, Haryana**

National Cancer Institute (NCI) which is the largest cancer hospital of India built at a cost of Rs 2035 crore opened for public in Jhajjar, Haryana and the formal inauguration will be held in January 2019.

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**National**

**News: Most Important**

1. **Revamping of ‘Eklavya Model Residential Schools’**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its in-principle approval for setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) in every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons.

2. **Nitin Gadkari lays foundation stone of 11 projects for Yamuna rejuvenation**

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone of 11 projects for Yamuna Rejuvenation under Namami Gange Programme in New Delhi. This initiative aims to increase the flow of the Yamuna river.

3. **Bogibeel Project: India’s longest railroad bridge inaugurated**

Bogibeel, Asia’s second-longest rail-cum-road bridge inaugurated. The 4.9 km-long Bogibeel Bridge on the Brahmaputra river is India’s only fully welded bridge for which European codes and welding standards were adhered to for the first time in the country.

4. **38th Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) Lecture Series**

The 38th lecture of the “Lecture Series” organized by the Central Vigilance Commission. It was delivered by R S Sharma, Chairman, TRAI. The topic of the lecture was “India’s Digital Leapfrog”. India’s digital development would be powered by the “India stack”.

5. **PMVVY best performing states**

Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh topped the charts as the best performing states under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
6. **Cabinet approves establishment of two new AIIMS at Tamil Nadu & Telangana**

The Union Cabinet chaired by PM has approved establishment of 2 new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Madurai, Tamil Nadu and Bibinagar, Telangana. The AIIMS will be set up under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).

7. **Centre declares Khalistan Liberation Force banned organisation**

The Union government declared the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) a banned organisation. The decision was taken under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 for the outfit's alleged involvement in the killing of innocent people.

8. **NPCIL’s Kaiga Unit-1 creates world record for continuous operation**

A 220-MW unit of Nuclear Power Corporation of India’s Kaiga Unit -1 Atomic Power Station located in Kaiga of Karnataka, has created a world record for continuous operation for 941 days. State run Bharat Heavy Electricals limited supplied equipment for the unit.

9. **7th tranche of electoral bonds sale to kick off from January 1**

Union Finance Ministry decided seventh tranche of electoral bonds for sale will take place. Registered political parties that have secured *not less than 1 percent* of the votes polled in the last election of the Lok Sabha or legislative assembly eligible.

10. **PM inaugurates the Lalitgiri Archaeological Museum**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the *Archaeological Museum, Lalitgiri*. Lalitgiri is one of the earliest Buddhist settlements in Odisha in District Cuttack. Most important finding of the Lalitgiri are relic caskets found inside the stupa.

11. **Issue of commemorative Postage Stamp on Rajkumar Shukla**

Department of Posts released a Postage Stamp on *Rajkumar Shukla*. He made a seminal contribution culminating in the launch of the Champaran Satyagraha at Bihar in 1917. He fight against suffering of peasants under an oppressive system established by British.

12. **PM Modi renames Ross, Neil & Havelock Islands in Andaman and Nicobar**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the renaming of three islands of Andaman and Nicobar, Ross Island has been renamed as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep, the Neil Island would now be known as Shaheed Dweep and the Havelock Island as Swaraj Dweep.

13. **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) approved registration of record 15 new breeds of livestock and poultry in 2018**

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare Shri Radha Mohan Singh announced that Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) approved registration of record 15 new breeds of livestock and poultry in 2018.
i. This took the total registered breeds of livestock and poultry to 40 from 2014-18.

ii. The 15 newly registered breeds include:

2 cattle breeds – Ladakh (J&K) and Konkan Kapila (Maharashtra & Goa); 3 buffalo breeds – Luit (Assam & Manipur), Bargur (Tamil Nadu), Chhattisgarhi (Chhattisgarh); 1 sheep breed – Panchali (Gujarat); 6 goat breeds – Kahmi (Gujarat), Rohilkhandi (UP), Assam Hill (Assam & Meghalaya), Bidri (Karnataka), Nandidurga (Karnataka), Bhakarwali (J&K); 1 pig breed – Ghurrah (UP); 1 donkey breed – Halari (Gujarat) and 1 chicken breed – Uttara (Uttarakhand).

News: Others

1. **Restructuring of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)**

   GoI has enlarged scope of institutions to be funded through HEFA to encompass School Education and Medical Education institutions, apart from Higher Education. Total authorized equity capital of HEFA has been raised to **Rs.10,000 crore**.

2. **Minimum Pension revised for EPS, 1995**

   As regards Employees’ Pension Scheme (EPS), 1995, a minimum pension of Rs. 1,000/- per month has been prescribed with effect from 01.09.2014 for the pensioners under employees’ Pension Scheme (EPS), 1995. In APY it’s based on the selected plan.

3. **Vice President flags-off car rally for Parliamentarians**

   Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu flagged-off a car rally for Parliamentarians in New Delhi. The objective of the rally is to promote awareness among the people on road safety and responsible driving.

4. **Railway Minister announces honeybee plan to help Railways keep off elephants from tracks in Assam**

   Railway minister announced Honey Bee plan in Assam that kept elephants away from the tracks will be expanded to other areas in India. It is a simple device that amplifies the recorded sound of honey bees to keep elephants away from the rail track.

5. **NASSCOM partnered with IIT Madras**

   National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) partnered with IIT-Madras to provide re-skilling/upskilling of four million people on digital skills. The partnership will be directly with the Sector Skills Council (SSC), the education and skill development initiative of Nasscom, through its FutureSkills Platform.

International

News: Most Important

1. **Ranil Wickremesinghe re-appointed as PM of Sri Lanka**

   Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has re-appointed Ranil Wickremesinghe as Prime Minister out of respect for democracy and parliamentary tradition. This appointment brought an end to the weeks-long political impasse in Sri Lanka.
2. **Russia expands economic sanctions on Ukraine**

   Russia has expanded its economic sanctions on Ukraine, adding more than 250 people and businesses to a blacklist. Relations between Moscow and Kiev have deteriorated since a pro-Western government came to power after 2014.

3. **Japan announces IWC withdrawal**

   Japan is withdrawing from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and resuming commercial whaling in a move expected to spark international criticism. The withdrawal means Japan joins Iceland and Norway defying the IWC’s ban on commercial whale hunting.

4. **UN grants permanent observer status to China-led AIIB**

   The United Nations granted permanent observer status to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Following a resolution passed by UN member states, now it can observe the deliberations of both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

5. **UN Human Rights Prize 2018: Pak activist Asma Jahangir honoured posthumously**

   Asma Jahangir was awarded the UN Human Rights Prize 2018 posthumously. Other winners are women's rights activist in Tanzania Rebeca Gyumi, rights of Brazilian communities activist Joenia Wapichana & Ireland's human rights organisation Front Line Defenders.

6. **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute report – 4 Indian PSUs in top 100 arms producers**

   Four Indian Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), have been featured on the world’s top 100 arms producers in 2017. The four PSU featuring in world’s top 100 arms producer are: Indian Ordnance Factories, Hindustan Aeronautics, Bharat Electronics & Bharat Dynamics.

7. **EU parliament approves ‘world’s largest’ free trade deal with Japan**

   The European Parliament approved a free trade agreement between Japan and the EU, covering 635 million people and almost one-third of the world’s economy. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement which has been under discussion since 2013 will come into effect from 1st February 2019.

8. **Intermediate Range Nuclear forces treaty**

   The Russian government announced USA’s withdrawal from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The treaty aimed to end arms race between USA and USSR during cold war and to ensure some strategic stability in Europe.

9. **Catriona Elisa Gray from Philippines bags Miss Universe 2018 title**

   Miss Universe 2018 was held at Muang Thong Thani, Pak Kret, Thailand. Filipino-Australian beauty Catriona Elisa Gray from Philippines bagged Miss Universe 2018 title. 93 contestants from various Countries participated in this contest.
News: Others

1. **Maldives’ Prez arrives in New Delhi on a 3-day visit to India**
   Maldives' President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih arrived in New Delhi on a three-day visit to India. Indians are the second largest expatriate community in the Maldives. Entire gamut of bilateral relations was discussed.

2. **4.8-magnitude earthquake hits Sicily**
   A 4.8-magnitude earthquake hit Sicily near Europe's most active volcano, Mount Etna. The epicenter was located north of Catania. The quake is the strongest in the region after Mount Etna erupted spewing ash.

3. **US military’s controversial Syria exit order signed**
   The order to withdraw American troops from Syria has been signed. US troops would leave the civil war-racked country where they have been deployed to assist in the multinational fight against the Islamic State (IS) jihadist group.

4. **Gitega new capital of Burundi**
   Burundi confirmed the small central city of Gitega the country’s new political capital. The previous capital Bujumbura, on the north-eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, became a country’s economic capital.

India & world

News: Most Important

1. **India decides to extend 1.4-billion-dollar aid to the Maldives**
   India has decided to extend 1.4 billion dollars financial assistance to the Maldives as **budget support, currency swap** and **line of credit** for the social and economic development of Maldives. Both countries reviewed diplomatic relations.

2. **Nepal caps expenditure of its citizens in India**
   Nepal imposed a monthly limit on the amount of Indian currency its citizen can spend in India. Nepali citizen would be unable to spend more than ₹1 lakh per month while paying for goods and services in India.

3. **Indigo signs codeshare agreement with Turkish Airlines**
   To expand its international footprint, IndiGo announced that it has entered into its first codeshare agreement with **Turkish Airlines**, allowing either of the airlines to book seats for its passengers on each other's flight.

4. **India, China hold talks to boost cultural cooperation**
   Sushma Swaraj & Wang Yi held talks under the ‘High Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges’ to boost people-to people contact and cultural exchanges between the two neighbours at the 3rd India-China High Level Media Forum.
5. **Microsoft Intelligent Cloud Hub to Build AI-Ready Workforce in India**

Microsoft announced a 3-year Intelligent Cloud Hub collaborative programme in India to empower institutes to skill students in AI and Cloud technologies. It will equip selected research and higher education institutions with AI infrastructure.

6. **Miss India Worldwide 2018**

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

7. **Highest Aviation safety ranking – India**

The US regulator Federation of Aviation Administration (FAA) retained the highest aviation safety ranking for India. India’s International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) rating remains ‘Category 1’.

**News: Others**

1. **India to provide Bhutan Rs 400 Cr transitional trade support**

India is set to give a transitional Trade Support Facility of 400 Cr rupees to Bhutan over a period of 5 years to strengthen bilateral trade and economic linkages. India had announced a 4500 Cr rupees financial assistance to Bhutan for its 12th five-year plan.

2. **Uzbekistan promotes 2019 as year of investment in backdrop of wider business with India**

Uzbekistan announced 2019 as the ‘Year of Active Investment and Social Development’ under the program of the Year of support of active entrepreneurship, innovative ideas and technologies in the backdrop of proposed investments from India to boost economy.

3. **India, Nepal and Bhutan joint task force for protecting wildlife**

The governments of India, Nepal and Bhutan are planned to form a joint task force that would allow free movement of wildlife across political boundaries and check smuggling of wildlife across the Kanchenjunga Landscape, a trans-boundary region spread across Nepal, India and Bhutan.

**Quick Revision: Facts**

<table>
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<th>Country</th>
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Appointments & Resignations

News: Most Important

1. **MNF Chief Zoramthanga takes oath as Mizoram CM for Third Time**
   
   The President of Mizo National Front (MNF), Mr. Zoramthanga sworn in as the Chief Minister of Mizoram for the third time at Raj Bhavan in Aizawl.

2. **W V Raman appointed India women's team coach**
   
   Former India opener, W. V. Raman has been appointed the new coach of the Indian women's cricket team. It was based on recommendations of the ad-hoc committee comprising Kapil Dev, Anshuman Gaekwad and Ms Shantha Rangaswamy.

3. **IOA Secretary General Rajeev Mehta – President of South Asian Fencing federation**
   
   Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Secretary General, Rajeev Mehta has been elected the President of South Asian Fencing Body for a period of four years after the meeting of South Asian Fencing Federation (SAFF) at Hyderabad.

4. **IL&FS names retired IAS officer Bijay Kumar as deputy MD**
   
   Cash-strapped Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) appointed retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) official Bijay Kumar as deputy managing director of the company and N Srinivasan as a non-executive director of the company.

5. **MD & CEO of Corporation bank – P V Bharathi**
   
   The Ministry of Personnel appointed P V Bharathi as the MD and CEO of Corporation Bank, effective from February 1, 2019 till March 31, 2020 – the date of her superannuation. He is presently the Executive Director of Canara Bank.

6. **CBIC Chairman – Pranab Kumar Das**
   
   The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had approved the appointment of Pranab Kumar Das as the new Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) from January 1, 2019. He is currently a Special Secretary and Member (Customs) at CBIC.

7. **Kamal Nath sworn in as MP CM**
   
   Kamal Nath took oath as the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. The Congress secured support of a total of 121 MLAs, including SP and BSP and Independent legislators to cross the majority mark of 116 seats in the 230-member Assembly.

8. **Ashok Gehlot named as Rajasthan CM, Sachin Pilot his deputy**
   
   Two-time chief minister Ashok Gehlot named as Rajasthan CM while Sachin Pilot was chosen deputy Chief Minister. Congress secured 99 seats out of the 199 seats that went to polls. Assembly had total 200 seats.
9. **Bhupesh Baghel is the new chief minister of Chhattisgarh**
   
   Senior Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel has been appointed the new chief minister of Chhattisgarh. Congress romped home to power in Chhattisgarh after 15 years with a two-third majority, winning 68 seats in the 90-member House.

10. **FICCI president**
   
   Sandip Somany was elected as the new president of FICCI. Sangita Reddy, a current Joint Managing Director Apollo Hospitals has been elevated as FICCI Senior Vice President, while Uday Shankar, current Chairman and CEO of Star India and President of 21st Century Fox Asia-Pacific for Asia has joined the chamber as Vice President.

11. **CA Kuttappa appointed as India's chief boxing coach**
   
   Dronacharya awardee **C A Kuttappa** has taken over as India’s chief boxing coach. He took over charge from veteran coach SR Singh. He is credited with shaping some of the country’s most successful boxers such as Vijender Singh, M Suranjoy Singh among others.

12. **Government appoints four new Information Commissioners**
   
   The government has appointed 4 new Information Commissioners in the Central Information Commission which was functioning with just 3 of them as against a sanctioned strength of 11. Yashwardha Sinha, Vanaja N Sarna, Neeraj Gupta & Suresh Chandra appointed.

**News: Others**

1. **Nilanjan Roy appointed as Chief Financial Officer of Infosys**
   
   Infosys Ltd. named Bharti Airtel Ltd.’s long-time executive and Global Chief Financial Officer Nilanjan Roy as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He will succeed Mavinakere Dwarakanath Ranganath.

2. **National Crime Records Bureau – New Director**
   
   Ramphal Pawar, a 1988-batch IPS officer of the West Bengal Cadre was appointed as the Director of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). He was the Joint Secretary in National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID).

3. **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) – New Secretary**
   
   Ashok Kumar Singh, Lok Sabha Secretariat has assumed charge as Secretary, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST). NCST is empowered to investigate and monitor matters relating to safeguards provided for STs under the Constitution or under other laws or under Govt. order.

4. **Facebook elevates Karandeep Anand to head Workplace**
   
   Karandeep Anand, an Indian-origin senior executive of Facebook, will head the social media giant's enterprise communications tool Workplace. Workplace, the London-based Facebook division, is a communications tool for companies and businesses.
5. **Belgium Prime Minister Charles Michel resigns over migration spat**

Belgian PM Charles Michel resigned amid pressure on his government over his support for the UN global compact on migration. Belgium holds the modern European record for going the longest time without a government for 541 days.

6. **Air Marshal Rajeev Sachdeva Takes Over as DCIDS**

Air Marshal Rajeev Sachdeva took over as Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations) (DCIDS). He has the distinction of earlier serving in three out of the four wings of Headquarter Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS).

**Quick Revision**

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<td>General Mehta</td>
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<td>Bijay Kumar</td>
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<td>Nilanjan Roy</td>
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<td>Zoramthanga</td>
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<td>Ashok kumar singh</td>
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<td>Bhupesh Baghel</td>
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<td>Sandip Somany</td>
<td>President, FICCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA Kuttappa</td>
<td>Coach, Indian Boxing</td>
</tr>
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**Ranks & Reports**

**News: Most Important**

1. **India ranks 108th in WEF gender gap index 2018**

India has been ranked **108th** in World Economic Forum (WEF) gender gap index, same as 2017, while recording improvement in wage equality for similar work and fully closing its tertiary education gender gap for the first time.
2. **States’ Startup Ranking 2018 Announced**

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) announced results of the first ever States’ Start-up Ranking 2018. **Gujarat emerged as Best Performer state.** The objective of the exercise was to encourage States for strengthening the Start-up ecosystems.

3. **NITI Aayog Released Second Delta Ranking under the Aspirational Districts Programme**

NITI Aayog released the Second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP). The ranking will measure the incremental progress made by districts between June 1, 2018, and October 31, 2018. Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu) ranks top in most improved districts.

4. **NITI Aayog releases SDG India Index - Baseline Report 2018**

In SDG Index, **Himachal Pradesh** ranks high on providing clean water & sanitation, in reducing inequalities & preserving mountain ecosystem. Kerala ranks top on providing good health, reducing hunger, achieving gender equality & providing quality education.

5. **Misperception Index – India’s Rank – 12**

Indians placed at 12th rank in the “misperception index” according to the MORI Perils of Perception Survey 2018, done by Ipsos India, an independent market research company. It behind several countries like, Italy, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Chile and Argentina, among others.

**News: Others**

1. **Reporters without borders (RSF) Report**

India fifth-deadliest place to be a journalist, Afghanistan worst based on the annual worldwide round-up of deadly violence and abusive treatment of journalists was released by Reporters without Borders (RSF). The Deadliest Place for Journalist is Afghanistan,

2. **Government to launch broadband readiness index of states**

The government is planning to launch broadband services readiness index of states based on parameters like infrastructure, approval processes and utilisation of highspeed Internet. NDCP envisages broadband connectivity at 50 megabit per second speed.

**Important days**

**News: Most Important**

1. **World’s AIDS Day**

On 1 December 2018, WHO joined global partners to commemorate World AIDS Day under the theme “Know Your Status”. It was also an occasion to celebrate the 30th anniversary of World AIDS Day – a pioneering global health campaign first initiated by WHO in 1988.
2. **Human rights day**

Human Rights Day 2018 was celebrated on Monday, the 10th of December. It was the 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This year the Human Rights Day was celebrated with the theme “Stand Up For Human Rights”.

3. **International Mountain Day**

International Mountain Day was observed worldwide on December 11.

Considering the crucial role mountain play in providing key ecosystem goods and services to the planet and their vulnerability in the face of climate change, we need to step up and raise attention to mountains.

4. **Nation celebrates Vijay Diwas – December 16th**

The nation celebrated Vijay Diwas to commemorate India’s victory over Pakistan in 1971 war. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman along with three Service chiefs paid tribute to the Martyrs at Amar Jawan Jyoti. It led to the creation of Bangladesh.

5. **Minorities Right day**

Minorities Rights Day in India 2018 was celebrated all over India on 18th December. It was introduced by the United Nations & is celebrated to protect rights of the minority communities and forge a better understanding among religious minorities in the country.

6. **Goa celebrates 57th Liberation Day**

Goa Liberation Day is being celebrated as Goa was liberated from around 450 years of Portuguese rule on 19th December 1961. Various functions have been organized across the state to mark the occasion.

7. **National Mathematics Day – December 22**

On 22nd December 2018, India celebrated National Mathematics day honouring the 131st birth anniversary of Great Indian Mathematician Srinivasan Ramanujan. India celebrate 22nd December as National Mathematics day every year.

8. **National farmers day – December 23rd**

National Farmer’s Day (NFD) was celebrated throughout the country to acknowledge the role of farmers in India’s socio-economic development and to mark the birth anniversary of Indian farmer’s leader and 5th PM of India Shri Chaudhary Charan Singh. This day is also observed as KisanDiwas.

9. **Celebration of National Consumer Day- December 24**

Every Year 24th of December is observed as National Consumer Day with a specific theme in India. This year the National Consumer Day is celebrated with the theme “Timely Disposal of Consumer Complaints”. Consumer Protection Act, 1986 passed on this day.
10. **Good Governance day – 25th December**

On December 25, 2018, the 94th birth anniversary of Former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee was celebrated as Good Governance Day across the country.

The day was established in 2014 to honour the Bharat Ratna by fostering awareness among the people on accountability in Governance and Government.

**News: Others**

1. **Google honours Baba Amte with Doodle on his 104th birth anniversary**

Google honoured the late social worker and reformer Baba Amte on his 104th (26th Dec 1914) birth anniversary with a Google Doodle. Baba spent his life serving leprosy patients and working for their rehabilitation. He founded a commune called Anandvan Ashram in Maharashtra.

2. **International Tea Day – 15th December**

On 15th December 2018, International Tea Day aimed to draw global attention of governments and citizens to the impact of global tea trade on workers and growers was observed in Tea Producing countries.

3. **2019 to be observed as ‘Year of Tolerance’**

UAE president declared 2019 as ‘Year of tolerance’ to highlight UAE as the Global Capital of Tolerance, instilling the values of co-existence and peace in local, regional and international communities.

The Year of Tolerance will focus on “Five Pillars”.

i. First one aims to deepen the values of tolerance and co-existence among cultures and peoples by concentrating on teaching the youth on the values of tolerance.

ii. The second pillar will focus on solidifying the UAE as the global capital for tolerance, via a series of projects with dialogue between various cultures and civilizations

iii. The third will enact multiple cultural programmes and contributions to build tolerant communities.

iv. The fourth pillar will see legislative and policy-oriented objectives that contribute mandating cultural and religious tolerance.

v. The fifth pillar will promote tolerance and co-existence through media initiatives.

4. **International Migration Day – December 18th**

International Migrants Day is observed on 18th December every year in many countries. Each year the UN invites governments, organizations, and individuals to observe International Migrants Day by distributing information on the human rights and migrants’ fundamental freedoms.

“2018 Theme : Migration with Dignity”
Quick Revision

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Observed Day</th>
<th>Theme/Campaign</th>
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<td>December 1</td>
<td>World’s AIDS Day</td>
<td>Know Your Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 10</td>
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<td>Stand Up For Human Rights</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
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<td>December 18</td>
<td>Minorities Right Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 18</td>
<td>International Migration Day</td>
<td>Migration with dignity</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 19</td>
<td>Goa liberation day</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 22</td>
<td>National Mathematics Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 25</td>
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<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sports

News: Most Important

1. **P V Sindhu clinches BWF World Tour Finals trophy**
   
P V Sindhu won the BWF World Tour Finals trophy at Guangzhou, China. She defeated Nozomi Okuhara of Japan. She accomplished the feat after losing seven successive summit clashes. She is the first Indian to achieve this feat.

2. **Men’s Hockey: Belgium clinches world cup title**
   
In Hockey, Belgium claimed their first ever World Cup title. They defeated the Netherlands in the final of the Men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Belgium has won the trophy after sixteen years.

3. **Senior National Rowing Championship**
   
The 37th Senior National Rowing Championship started in the Army Rowing Node in Pune. The Rowers for the World Championships-2019 will be selected from this event. World Championship is the first qualifying Championship for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
4. **Mikaela Shiffrin Youngest Woman to Reach 50 World Cup Wins in Alpine skiing**

American Mikaela Shiffrin became the youngest woman to win 50 World Cup ski races with victory in the slalom in the French Alps. The Olympic champion becomes the first woman to secure a half century of race victories before her 24th birthday.

5. **India’s Vedangi Kulkarni becomes fastest Asian to cycle the globe**

Indian woman Vedangi Kulkarni has become the fastest Asian to cycle the globe. Hailing from a suburb of Pune, 20-year old Vedangi completed the 29,000 kilometers’ distance required to qualify as bicycling across the globe.

6. **Virat Kohli - Second fastest to score 25 Test Centuries after Sir Don Bradman**

Indian Cricket Team captain Virat Kohli became the second fastest player to score 25 Test Centuries after scoring 123 runs on the third day of Second Test against Australia at Perth.

Virat Kohli is only behind of former Australian captain and cricketing legend Sir Don Bradman and also equalled Sachin Tendulkar’s record of 6 Test Centuries in Australia.

7. **2018 ITF World Champions**

Serbia’s Novak Djokovic and Romania’s Simona Halep were announced as the 2018 ITF World Champions.

In the Men’s Doubles Category: USA’s Mike Bryan and Jack Sock received the award.

In the Women’s Doubles Category: Barbora Krejcikova and Katerina Siniakova won the award.

8. **National squash championship – Delhi**

Joshna Chinappa and Mahesh Mangaonkar secured the women’s and men’s singles titles at the National Squash Championships held in New Delhi.

**News: Others**

1. **Sports Ministry embarks Rs 100 Cr for funding athletes under TOPS**

Sports ministry has embarked Rs.100 crore for funding the athletes under the “Target Olympic Podium Scheme” (TOPS) ahead of 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. The flagship scheme of the government will nurture future sporting athletes.

2. **TTFI lifts Soumyajit Ghosh’s ban**

Former national champion Soumyajit Ghosh is free to return to the game after the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) decided to revoke his suspension. Now he is eligible to participate in the Senior Nationals at Cuttack.

3. **Former Australia captain Ponting inducted into ICC Hall of Fame**

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting formally inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. To mark the occasion, Ponting received his commemorative cap from compatriot ICC Cricket Hall of Famer, Glenn McGrath.
4. **Luka Modric named Balkan athlete of the year**
   
   Croatia and Real Madrid midfielder **Luka Modric** has been named Balkan athlete of the year. Men's tennis world number one Novak Djokovic of Serbia was second in the Balkan poll, and the Women's number one, Romania's Simona Halep, was third.

5. **American adventurer O’Brady First Person to complete solo trek across Antarctica**
   
   American adventurer Colin O’Brady became the first person to complete a solo journey across Antarctica, unaided and unsupported, after finishing a two-month expedition in frigid temperatures and winds of 30 mph.

**Awards**

**News: Most Important**

1. **Amitav Ghosh honoured with Jnanpith Award 2018**
   
   Noted English writer Amitav Ghosh has been honoured with this year's **Jnanpith Award** chaired by the selection board chairman Ms. Pratibha Ray, a literary award given to an author for "outstanding contribution towards literature". His book includes - shadow Lines, The Glass Palace, The Hungry Tide.

2. **Rajan Deshpande awarded Shankar Vaidya Shree Award**
   
   Considering his contributions to children healthcare’s in the last 40 years, Rajan Deshpande, a Dharwad-based pediatrician, has been chosen for the Dr. P.S. Shankar Vaidya Shree Award for 2018. It consists of a cash prize of ₹10,000, a medal and a citation.

3. **National Energy Conversation awards 2018**
   
   Indian Railways won the highest number of awards (17) which were the highest bagged by a single organisation.

   These awards were given by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Ministry of power, Government of India. The purpose of the award was to honour Institutions for adopting Energy Efficiency measures for reducing energy consumption and the cost.

4. **Sangeet Mahasamman award by West Bengal**
   
   Singers Shaan and Arijit Singh were given the “Sangeet Mahasamman” award by the West Bengal government at the inaugural session of the Bengal music and folk culture festival held in Kolkata. Legendary singer Sandhya Mukhopadhyay gave away the awards.

**News: Others**

1. **Women Transforming India awards 2018**
   
   NITI Aayog organised the third edition of the Women Transforming India Awards 2018. This year’s theme is “Women and Entrepreneurship”. The Women Transforming India Awards recognise and celebrate stories of exemplary women from across the country.
2. Rafi Award conferred to late music composer Laxmikant and singer Usha Timothy

The Mohammed Rafi Award has been bestowed upon late music composer Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar and playback singer Usha Timothy. Mohammed Rafi Lifetime Achievement Award consisting of 1 lakh rupees and a trophy.

3. PETA India’s 2018 person of the year - Sonam Kapoor

Actor, Sonam Kapoor was named People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India’s person of the year.

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<td>PETA India’s 2018 person of the year</td>
<td>Sonam Kapoor</td>
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Obituaries

1. Geeta Iyengar passed away

Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar, the eldest daughter of legendary Yoga guru, B.K.S. Iyengar and a noted exponent of the yogic science in her own right passed away. Her book ‘Yoga: A gem for women’ became the primer for women across the world.

2. Tulsi Giri passed away

Former Prime Minister of Nepal Tulsi Giri passed away at 93. Giri had a long political career. He twice served as the prime minister of Nepal first from 1962 to 1964 and again from 1975 to 1977.

3. Chennai’s ₹5 doctor’ S. Jayachandran passed away

North Chennai’s famous ₹5 doctor’ S. Jayachandran passed away. The 71-year-old doctor, an alumnum of Madras Medical College, used to treat people often for free during his 43-year-long career.

4. Nana Chudasama passed away

Mumbai’s former mayor and founder of Giants International Nana Mansingh Chudasama, known for his witty “Talk of the Town” banners along Marine Drive in south Mumbai passed away. He plays important role in National Kidney Foundation.
5. **Padma Shri awardee Sulagitti Narasamma passed away**

Renowned social worker and Padma Shri awardee Sulagitti Narasamma passed away. She is best known for extending free of cost midwife services to women. Considering her work she has conferred with the Padma Shri in 2018.

6. **Noted film maker Mrinal Sen passes away**

Legendary filmmaker Mrinal Sen passed away at the age of 95 in Kolkata. A Padma Bhushan and Dada Saheb Phalke awardee, Sen paved the way for parallel cinema in the country with films like Ek Din Achanak, Padatik, Mrigaya, Akaler Sandhane.

7. **Prof Hamidi Kashmiri passed away**

Dr. Hamidi Kashmiri, the tallest literary figure in the world of Urdu language, literature, and literary criticism passed away. He was propounder of “Iktishaafi Tanqueed”. He has also been the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir.

**News: Others**

1. **Paddy Ashdown passed away**

India born UK Liberal Democrats leader Paddy Ashdown passed away. He was the face of centrist politics in the UK for more than a decade. He was born in India in 1941. He led the liberal party in the UK for record 11 years. He was voice of liberal democrats.

2. **Champion jockey-turned-trainer B. Prakash passed away**

Champion jockey-turned-trainer B. Prakash passed away in Mumbai. He started his career as a jockey in 1995 & was recognized for his riding skills. He rode more than 2000 winners (over 100 classic races) in his career as a jockey.

3. **Tulsi Ramsay passed away**

Filmmaker Tulsi Ramsay, 77 passed away due to chest pain in Kokilaben Hospital Mumbai. Tulsi Ramsay, was the son of F U Ramsay and was one of the seven brothers.

He was known for directing cult horror films like ‘Veerana’, ‘Purani Haveli’ and ‘Bandh Drawaza.

4. **Classical singer – Pandit Arun Bhaduri passed away**

Legendary classical singer Pandit Arun Bhaduri, 75 passed away in Kolkata due to his pro-longed illness. Pandit Bhaduri, a well-known and one of the masters of Bengali songs and Bhajans. In 2014, he had conferred Bangabibhusan award.
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<td>S Jayachandran</td>
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<td>Nana Chudasama</td>
<td>Mayor and founder of Giants international</td>
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<td>Mrinal Sen</td>
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<td>Tulsi Ramsay</td>
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<td>Pt. Arun Bhaduri</td>
<td>Classical singer</td>
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Schemes

News: Most Important

1. **Mukhya Mantri Krishi Yojana – Jharkhand**

   Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das announced a Rs 2250 crore scheme named as “Mukhya Mantri Krishi Yojana” which will help around 22.76 lakh medium and marginal farmers to double their income by 2022. The Central Government has set a goal to double the income of all the farmers by 2022.

2. **KALIA Scheme – Odisha**

   The Odisha Cabinet headed by CM Naveen Patnaik announced the **Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme** to empower small, marginal & landless farmers as well as landless labourers. According to the scheme an amount of Rs 10,000 per family at the rate of Rs 5,000 each for Kharif and Rabi seasons shall be provided as financial assistance for taking up cultivation.

3. **Tembhu Irrigation Scheme – Maharashtra**

   Maharashtra government approved a sum of Rs 4,089 crore for the Tembhu lift irrigation scheme in Tembhu village of Satara district. The perennially drought prone areas of Satara, Solapur and Sangli districts will get benefit by this scheme.
News: Others

1. **Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana launched in Uttarakhand**
   Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana' has been launched in the Uttarakhand. Under the scheme, each household in the state will be able to avail medical treatment of up to 5 lakh rupees annually. The scheme will benefit 23 lakh households.

2. **New child protection policy**
   The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) released the drafts of new child protection policy. This would be the first policy dedicated to the protection of children which was earlier under *National Child Policy 2013* and will be applicable to all institutions and organizations.

Person in News

**News: Most Important**

1. **Anup Kumar Announces Retirement**
   Anup Kumar, one of the most impactful kabaddi players the country has seen has announced retirement. He led India to memorable Kabaddi World Cup title triumph in 2016. He is awarded with Arjun Awards in recognition of his performance in kabaddi.

2. **Zubin Saxena appointed as CEO of Radisson Hotel Group**
   Radisson Hotel Group which runs hotel brands like Radisson, Radisson Blu, Country Inn & Suites in India has appointed Zubin Saxena as its new CEO for South Asia. He was previously director, development at the Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG).

3. **Tata Coffee appoints Chacko Thomas as MD & CEO**
   Tata Coffee Executive Director and Deputy CEO Chacko Thomas has been promoted as the managing director and chief executive officer. He will take over from Sanjiv Sarin. Thomas has been associated with Tata Coffee as the executive director since 2015.

4. **Rajesh Subramaniam appointed as FedEx president**
   Indian-American Rajesh Subramaniam has been named as the president and chief executive officer of US multinational courier delivery giant *FedEx*. He replaces David L Cunningham at the Tennessee-headquartered company.

5. **Aadi Sai Vijaykaran won the “Top Debater in the World” title**
   Aadi Sai Vijaykaran created history by winning the Junior Debate Championship at the World Scholar’s Cup held at Yale University. The theme for the cup was ‘An Entangled World: diplomacy, human relationships, the science of memory, and literature, art’.
News: Others

1. **Additional Solicitor General – Madhavi Divan**
   The central government has appointed advocate Madhavi Goradia Divan as additional solicitor general (ASG) in the Supreme Court. She is the third woman to be appointed as ASG in the apex court.

2. **First full time CVO – SEBI – Arti Chhabra Srivastava**
   The PMO has cleared the name of Arti Chhabra Srivastava as the first full-time Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of SEBI for an initial period of 3 years.

3. **French Knight of the National Order of Merit award**
   Producer Ashok Amritraj was honoured with the French Knight of the National Order of Merit for his contribution to the world of cinema and Indo-French film industry.
   He had Produced Hollywood Films such as Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance with Nicholas Cage and 99 Homes starring Andrew Garfield.

Summits & Conference

News: Most Important

1. **Skoch Golden Jubilee Challenger Award 2018**
   Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu has conferred the Skoch Golden Jubilee Challenger Award -2018 at the 55th Skoch Summit in New Delhi. The Skoch Challenger Awards are the highest independently instituted civilian honours.

2. **Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region inaugurated**
   Defence Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launched the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) Gurugram, Haryana. The IFC-IOR is aimed to engage with partner nations to develop maritime domain awareness and share information on vessels of interest in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

3. **First National Workshop on Explosives Detection inaugurated at Pune**
   First ever two days, National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED -2018) was inaugurated at High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) Pune, Maharashtra. Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) Chief Atulchandra Kulkarni was the chief guest of the workshop.

4. **World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting**
   Finance Minister Arun Jaitley with cabinet colleague will be attending World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting. Microsoft’s Indian-origin CEO Satya Nadella and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim will be among the co-chairs of the 2019 edition.
5. **Three day 4th WHO Global Forum on Medical Devices held in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**

Three day 4th WHO Global Forum on Medical Devices “Increasing access to medical devices” concluded at Andhra Pradesh Medtech Zone in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

It was the first time held in India. This Forum was meant to face the challenges present in the selection, regulation and use of medical devices.

6. **26th National Children's Science Congress inaugurated by Naveen Patnaik**

The 26th National Childres's Science Congress inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Odisha government is organizing various programmes for the development of scientific temper among students.

**News: Others**

1. **All-India annual conference of State DGPs and IGs begins in Gujarat**

A three-day All-India annual conference of the state Directors General (DGP) and Inspectors General (IG) of Police begins near the Statue of Unity located in Narmada district of Gujarat in the presence of Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

2. **UN Climate conference in Poland finalises rules to implement Paris climate treaty**

After intense negotiations ministers of 200 nations finally reached consensus on rules to implement the 2015 Paris climate agreement in Poland. The Paris accord aims to limit rise in global temperature to well below 2 degrees from pre-industrial level.

3. **Vice President Inaugurates Conference on Soft Power**

Vice President Venkaiah Naidu Inaugurated a three-day Conference on Soft Power in New Delhi. He emphasized on Indian cuisine, Yoga, films, sports, music, and dance, that are India’s Soft Power. Center for Soft Power established the first center in India.

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Defence

News: Most Important

1. **Exercise Hand–in–Hand 2018 concluded**
   The seventh edition of joint Sino (China)-India military exercise Hand–in–Hand 2018 concluded. The Chinese side was represented by Maj Gen Li Shizhong. Troops shared best practices being followed by both nations.

2. **India successfully test-fires Agni-IV**
   India successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable long-range Inter Continental Ballistic Missile Agni-IV, with a strike range of 4,000 km. The strategic surface-to-surface missile was flight tested from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Odisha.

News: Others

1. **India’s first military flight using Blended Bio-Jet Fuel Flown by IAF**
   India’s first military flight using blended bio-jet fuel on the An-32 transport aircraft flown by IAF’s premier testing establishment ASTE. This fuel is made from Jatropha oil sourced from Chattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA). IAF intended to fly the An-32 with 10% biojet fuel on Republic Day.

2. **ISRO’s ‘angry bird’ satellite launched successfully**
   India’s ISRO successfully launched the latest advanced satellite, GSAT-7A, from Andhra Pradesh’s Sriharikota. Dubbed ‘Angry Bird’, the satellite will give a boost to the strategic communication and networking capabilities of the Indian Air Force.

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Agreements

**News: Most Important**

1. **Cabinet approves MoU between India and Afghanistan**
   The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi has given its approval for Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Afghanistan on cooperation in the field of **Human Resource Development**. It will allow use of SWAYAM to Afghanistan.

2. **MoU between India and Russia on Joint Activities under Human Spaceflight Programme**
   India and Russia signed an agreement, to **develop the technologies** and **advanced systems** required for the human space flight programme like radiation shielding, life support systems, crew module, rendezvous and docking systems, space suit, training for astronauts etc.

3. **Paisabazaar.com, Karnataka Bank in partnership to offer home loan products**
   Paisabazaar.com and Karnataka Bank have announced a strategic partnership to offer the bank’s home loan product to customers on the Paisa bazaar platform. Through the platform, consumers can be able to choose and apply for a home loan from bank

**News: Others**

1. **Cabinet apprised of two Bilateral MoUs between India and Cuba, and India and Korea in the area of Biotechnology**
   The MoUs have been signed to strengthen the Indo-Cuba and Indo-Republic of Korea bilateral ties, to work out the future agenda for the collaboration for Innovation in S&T Diplomacy to evolve a concrete strategic plan in the area of **biotechnology** education, training and research.

2. **Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India and Australia for Cooperation in the Disability Sector**
   The MoU will encourage cooperation between India and Australia, through joint initiatives in the **disability sector**. It will strengthen bilateral ties between India and Australia. Further, the MoU will facilitate in improving rehabilitation of persons with disabilities especially for persons with intellectual disability and mental illness in both the countries.

3. **Cabinet approves MoU between India & France in the field of energy efficiency / energy conservation**
   The Union cabinet has approved MoU between India & France in Science and Technology which involves knowledge exchange and cooperation in the **nature of technical assistance** only. It is expected to take forward programmes and technologies relating to enhanced energy efficiency and demand side management.
**News: Most Important**

1. **Manmohan Singh releases 'Changing India' book**
   Manmohan Singh releases 'Changing India', a five-volume book on his public life. Changing India is a set of 5 volumes the gives his perspectives on a wide range of economic, social and political issues as they evolved through his political career.

2. **“God of Sin: The Cult, The Clout and Downfall of Asaram Bapu” released**
   A book on self-styled godman Asaram Bapu released after a Chandigarh court refused to stay its publication. The Book is authored by Ushinor Majumdar and published by Penguin Random. The book is about Asaram’s journey to spiritual godhood, his fall and the long and arduous road to bring him to justice.

3. **Centre brings booklet on cyber safety for school children titled “A Handbook for Students on cyber Safety”**
   The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India has released a booklet titled “A Handbook for Students on cyber Safety” to inform the school children about the different aspects of cyber safety. The booklet aims to create awareness among citizens especially students about cyber threats and provides details about the various safeguards.

4. **New India @75: Strategy Document for New India released by NITI Aayog**
   NITI Aayog unveiled its comprehensive national Strategy for New India dubbed as ‘Strategy for New India @75’, defining clear objectives for 2022-23. The document aims for establishing a New India by 2022 and to propel India towards a USD 5 trillion economy by 2030. The document contains 4 sections. They are: Drivers, Infrastructure, Inclusion and Governance.

**News: Others**

1. **Book “A Rural Manifesto – Realising India’s Future through her Villages” released in Bengaluru**
   The book is authored by BJP MP Varun Gandhi. The book focuses on challenges faced by farmers, labourers, student and teachers in villages across the country.

2. **Book “Prince, Patron and Patriarch Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala” released by Punjab CM**
   Captain Amarinder Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab, released the book ‘Prince, Patron and Patriarch Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala’, co-authored by the Maharaja’s grandson, Brigadier (Retd) Jagjit Singh, and Cynthia Frederick in Chandigarh.
**Quick Revision**

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**Science & Technology**

**News: Most Important**

1. **PM to inaugurate Indian Science Congress-2019 on Jan 3**
   
   Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate Indian Science Congress-2019 in Jalandhar, Punjab. This will be the 106th edition of the event based on the theme ‘Future India: Science and Technology’. Eminent personalities will participate in it.

2. **₹10,000 cr allotted for Gaganyaan space mission**
   
   The Cabinet okayed ₹10000 Cr for India’s plan to launch a manned spaceflight project to be undertaken within the next 40 months. The mission to be executed by ISRO with the help of academia, industry & other scientific institutions.

3. **IDRSS – India’s satellite communication hub**
   
   India launched the Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) to improve data relay and communication links with its remote sensing earth observation satellites.
   
   i. The two-satellite IDRSS will maintain continuous communication link with India’s remote sensing earth observation satellites. The first one is expected to be launched in 2019,
   
   ii. The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk III) would carry three Indian astronauts to the space in 2022.
   
   iii. India has the largest remote sensing satellite system orbiting in the space

4. **Russia successfully tests hypersonic missile**
   
   Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed final tests of a hypersonic missile, which he had earlier said would render existing missile systems obsolete. It is named as “Avangard” which is Intercontinental in range.
5. **Zea Virus discovered**

World’s oldest virus dating back 1000 years namely Zea mays chrysovirus 1 (ZMCV1) has been discovered by an American archaeological site. It is a member of Chrysoviridae, a family of double-stranded RNA viruses that infect plants and fungi.

6. **Most distant solar system object – “Farout”**

The most-distant object ever observed in our solar system known as 2018 VG18 and nicknamed “Farout,” has been discovered by scientists from Carnegie Institution for Science, University of Hawaii, & Northern Arizona University in the US.

**News: Others**

1. **Open ortho surgery simulator based on AI launched in India**

An 'open orthopaedic surgery simulator' based on artificial intelligence has been launched in India to offer hands-on training to young medical graduates and give them an experience similar to that of an operation theatre without risking lives of patients.

2. **China launches first satellite for space-based broadband to rival Google**

China launched its first communication satellite to provide broadband internet services worldwide in an apparent bid to rival Google and other international firms. It is the first in the Hongyun project planned by China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp.

3. **AI Powered Robot – USTAAD developed**

Central Railway's Nagpur division has developed a new AI-powered robot named **USTAAD** (Undergear Surveillance through Artificial Intelligence Assisted Droid) which examines parts of the coach in real time with a HD camera and transmits them over WiFi.

**Environment**

**News: Most Important**

1. **India submit its National Report to Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

India is among the first five countries in the world, the first in Asia and the first among the biodiversity-rich megadiverse countries to have submitted National Report to Convention on Biological Diversity.

2. **Government Launches Asiatic Lion Conservation Project**

The Ministry Environment, Forest and Climate Change, GoI has launched the “Asiatic Lion Conservation Project” with an aim to protect and conserve the world’s last ranging free population of *Asiatic Lion* and its associated ecosystem. Budget of Rs. 9784 lakhs.
3. **Swachh Surveksahan 2018 award for Best Capital city in the Solid Waste Management given to GHMC**

Swachh Surveksahan 2018 award for Best Capital City in the Solid Waste Management was conferred to Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). This edition of the survey was conducted by a third-party agency, Karvy Group appointed by MoHUA.

**News: Others**

1. **EU to reduce new car emissions by 37.5 per cent by 2030**

The European Union (EU) plans to slash carbon dioxide emissions from new cars and vans by 2030. The targets will require new cars sold in 2030 to emit 37.5 percent less carbon dioxide on average compared to 2021 levels.

2. **Cyclonic storm ‘Phethai’ in Bay of Bengal**

A deep depression in the Bay of Bengal has intensified into a cyclonic storm named ‘Phethai’. According to Cyclone Warning Centre, Visakhapatnam, the cyclonic storm is very likely to hit Andhra Pradesh’s coast.

3. **Campaign to save ‘The great Indian Bustards’**

Wildlife organizations have come together to launch a campaign to save the Great Indian Bustard which in recent years has come under the critically endangered list. Rajasthan has the highest number followed by Gujarat. The Corbett Foundation in collaboration with Conservation India & Sanctuary Nature Foundation launched the campaign.

**Apps & Portals**

**News: Most Important**

1. **PM Modi launches comprehensive pension management software SAMPANN**

PM Narendra Modi launched a comprehensive pension management software SAMPANN to facilitate pensioners of the telecom department. SAMPANN is an acronym for System for Accounting and Management of Pension, will help in timely disbursement of pensions.

2. **iGOT and RTI Portal on Judgments launched**

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched the iGOT (Integrated Government Online Training Programme) in New Delhi. He also launched RTI Portal on Judgments/Orders of Supreme Court, High Courts and CIC. It has been developed by Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM), New Delhi.

3. **Aditya Birla insurance arm launches AI enabled WhatsApp channel**

Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance has launched an artificial intelligence-enabled WhatsApp channel for customer servicing. A customer can be able to use the verified ABSLI WhatsApp account to type any general query and have it answered on a real time basis.
4. **E-Drishti Software launched**

An ‘e-Drishti’ interface has been unveiled by the Union Railway Minister. This software includes an interface which provides summary information on punctuality of trains for the previous day and current train running on the Indian Railway network.

**News: Others**

1. **Mobile app for global aviation summit launched**

   The civil aviation ministry along with the AAI launched an official mobile app named **GAS 2019** for the global aviation summit to be held in Mumbai next month. It enables users to interact with the co-delegates and speakers through the platform.

2. **Shiksha Setu App**

   Haryana government launched a mobile App ‘Shiksha Setu’ to provide students information on attendance, fee, online admission and scholarships of the government colleges of the state.

3. **BizBarde App: Isolated Turkmenistan launches first messaging app**

   The isolated central Asian country, Turkmenistan, where many of the social media sites including Facebook and WhatsApp are banned, launched its own and the first Turkmen messaging app BizBarde that will allow the exchange of messages, files, photos and videos.

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**Acquisitions & Mergers**

**News: Most Important**

1. **IDFC, Capital First completes merger process to form IDFC First Bank**

   New generation private sector **IDFC Bank** and non-banking financial company **Capital First** announced the completion of their merger creating a combined loan asset book of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for the merged entity IDFC First Bank.
2. **FinMin’s Alternative Mechanism gives nod for BoB, Dena, Vijaya Bank merger**

   The ‘Alternative Mechanism’ of the finance ministry has accorded in-principle approval for merging of **Bank of Baroda with Dena & Vijaya Bank**. BoB is the transferee bank, while Vijaya Bank & Dena Bank are the transferor banks in the amalgamation process.

3. **CCI clears Hitachi Payment’s 26% stake buy in SBI Payment Services**

   The Competition Commission of India approved the acquisition of 26% stake by **Hitachi Payment Services** in SBI Payment Services. It also gave green signal to Ageas Insurance International’s acquisition of 40% equity share in Royal Sundaram General Insurance.

**News: Others**

1. **EY buys Pune-based digital design company FCUX**

   Ernst & Young has acquired Fortune Cookie (FCUX) UX Design, a Pune-headquartered digital consulting and user experience design firm, to add a diverse set of digital capabilities to its service line at a time when many clients seek digital transformation.

2. **IndoSpace raises $1.2 bn to develop, buy logistic parks**

   Everstone-backed IndoSpace has raised $1.2 billion from investors through its new fund to develop and acquire industrial and logistics parks. IndoSpace is one of the largest provider of modern industrial and logistics real estate in India.