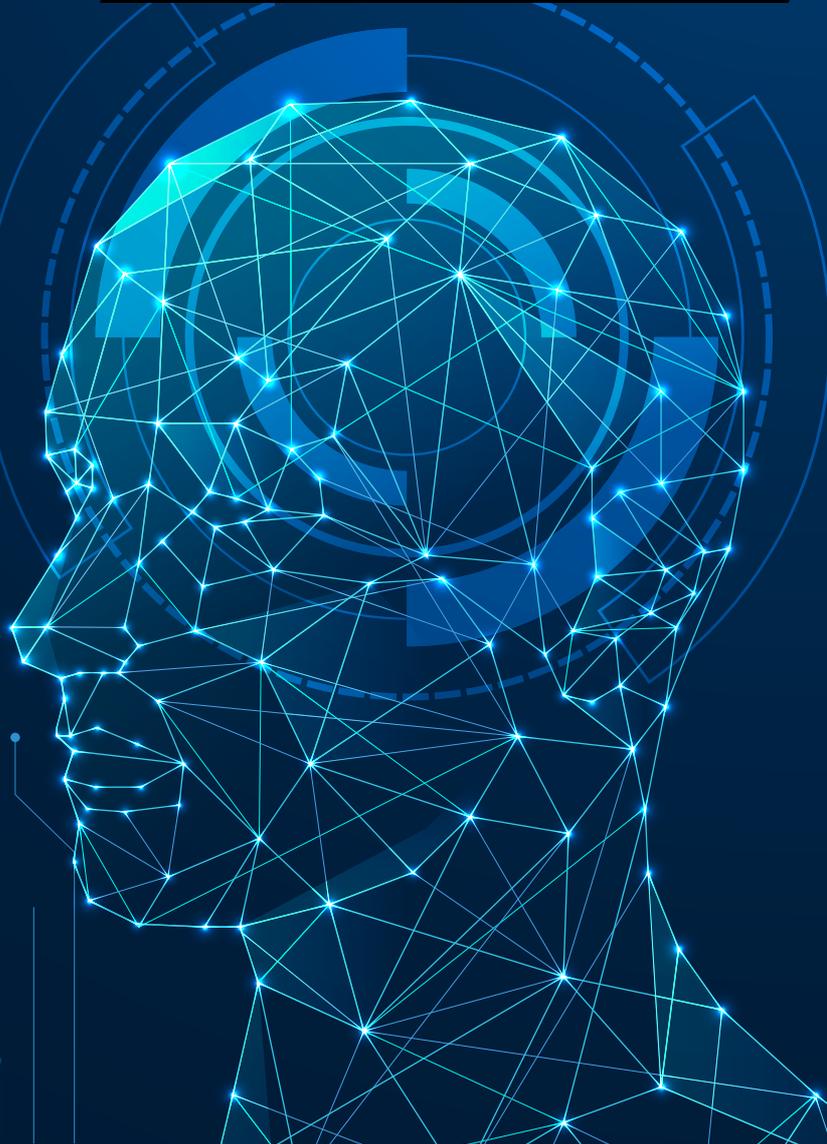


January 2019

# BOLT

*Monthly Current Affairs*



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## Table of Contents

<b>Banking</b> .....	3
<b>Economy</b> .....	6
<b>State</b> .....	8
<b>National</b> .....	10
<b>International</b> .....	13
<b>India &amp; world</b> .....	14
<b>Appointments &amp; Resignations</b> .....	15
<b>Ranks &amp; Reports</b> .....	19
<b>Important days</b> .....	21
<b>Sports</b> .....	22
<b>Awards</b> .....	23
<b>Obituaries</b> .....	25
<b>Schemes</b> .....	27
<b>Person in News</b> .....	28
<b>Summits &amp; Conference</b> .....	30
<b>Defence</b> .....	32
<b>Agreements</b> .....	33
<b>Books &amp; Authors</b> .....	34
<b>Science &amp; Technology</b> .....	35
<b>Environment</b> .....	36
<b>Apps &amp; Portals</b> .....	37
<b>Acquisitions &amp; Mergers</b> .....	38

## Banking

### News: Most Important

#### 1. **RBI to set up compliance portal to track cyber fraud**

RBI would set up a compliance and tracking system portal to tackle proliferation of cyber-fraud and seeks to establish a better redressal mechanism for consumers. With this, customer-protection measures will promote and improve confidence.

#### 2. **RBI offers relief to MSMEs; allows restructuring of debt up to Rs 25 crore**

RBI has allowed a one-time restructuring of debt up to **₹ 25 Cr** for the companies which have defaulted on payment, but the loans have classified as standard assets. It will help MSMEs which are facing cash crunch due to demonetisation & GST implementation.

#### 3. **Allahabad Bank, SBI Life join hand for bancassurance partnership**

Allahabad Bank & SBI Life Insurance came together and signed a bancassurance pact, to offer a holistic financial planning solution to consumers. This will empower the consumer to address their complete financial needs under one roof.

#### 4. **RBI sets up MSME panel**

The 8-member committee under **UK Sinha** would examine the factors affecting the timely & adequate availability of finance to MSME sector. The panel will submit its report by **June 2019**. RBI allowed one-time restructuring of existing debt up to ₹25 Cr for MSME.

#### 5. **Syndicate Bank and SBI Life Insurance sign a bancassurance pact**

Syndicate Bank & SBI Life Insurance signed a bancassurance pact to offer a comprehensive financial planning solution to its customers. Increasing life insurance penetration is a strategy focus of Syndicate bank & they start pilot project in 3 districts.

#### 6. **Government amalgamates three regional rural banks**

The govt has amalgamated 3 RRBs named **Punjab Gramin Bank, Malwa Gramin Bank & Sutlej Gramin Bank** into a single RRB. Sponsor banks of RRBs are NABARD, Govt of Punjab & Punjab National Bank, State Bank of India & Punjab and Sind Bank.

#### 7. **UBI, Srei Equipment Finance enter pact for MSME sector finance**

United Bank of India & Srei Equipment Finance have entered into an agreement for financing the MSME and agriculture sectors. UBI would leverage its low-cost loans with Srei to enable the purchase of equipment and vehicles in a seamless manner.

#### 8. **Nepal writes to RBI to declare new Indian currency notes legal**

Nepal Rastra Bank has asked the Reserve Bank of India to declare newly circulated Indian currency notes of denominations higher than Rs 100 legal tender in the country under the Foreign Exchange Management Act.

#### 9. **Nandan Nilekani to lead RBI panel on Digital Payments.**

RBI has formed a 5-member panel to investigate ways of improving Digital Payments, Identify the current gaps in the ecosystem and suggest ways to bridge them to be chaired by **Nandan Nilekani**.

### **10. ICICI Bank, Small Business Fin Credit join hands to provide loans to MSMEs**

ICICI Bank & Small Business Fin Credit signed a MoU to provide credit to small & medium enterprises. The loans of up to ₹ 1 Cr is for a tenure of 15 years per customer. ICICI Bank will co-originate loan against property with SBFC at a mutually agreed ratio.

### **11. Sri Lanka Central Bank & RBI ink \$400 mn deal**

Sri Lanka's Central Bank and the Reserve Bank of India have agreed to a \$400 million deal under a swap arrangement to boost the island nation's reserves. This facility is to be made available under the SAARC SWAP facility.

### **12. RBI launches survey to capture retail payment habits in 6 cities - SRPHi launched by RBI**

RBI has launched a 'Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi) to capture payment habits in six cities. It will cover a sample of 6000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds across Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati.

### **13. NABARD's venture capital entity**

NABVENTURES Ltd, the venture capital entity incorporated by NABARD under the Companies Act, will launch its maiden early stage capital fund offer to agriculture and rural enterprises.

This would support the agriculture & rural enterprises and fill the gap of adequate institutional support to them.

### **14. New Microfinance venture of Anushree Jindal gets RBI nod**

RBI approved starting of operations for Svamaan Financial Services promoted by Anushree Jindal which aims to offer financial products to unbanked and under-banked sections of population & an ambitious target to reach 1 lac people by 2021.

### **15. Cabinet approval of Rs 6,000 Crore recap for EXIM Bank**

The EXIM Bank will be infused with Rs 4,500 crore before March and Rs 1,500 crore in the next fiscal making it a total of **Rs 6000 cr.** capital infusion through recapitalisation bonds to boost the bank's capacity in export financing.

### **16. SBI raises \$1.25 billion from overseas market**

State Bank of India raised \$1.25 billion through bonds from overseas market. Bonds were listed at India International Exchange IFSC Ltd, a subsidiary of BSE, at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) IFSC.

### **17. RBI approves appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD, CEO of IDFC First bank**

The Reserve Bank has approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of IDFC First Bank for a period of three years. Prior to this, he was the founder and chairman of Capital First.

### **18. IRDAI sets up a panel to identify systemically important insurers**

IRDAI sets up a panel to identify domestically systemically important insurers (SII) and put in place an enhanced regulatory framework for them. The committee will be headed by **Pravin Kutumbe** & will submit report in six months.

## News: Others

### 1. *Paytm Payments Bank resumes KYC for bank, wallet customers after RBI nod*

Paytm Payments Bank Ltd has resumed Know Your Customer process as well as onboarding new customers after receiving a formal nod from the Reserve Bank of India. PPBL aims to acquire 100 million additional customers by the end of 2019.

### 2. *Bharti AXA Life uses WhatsApp to deliver policy, renewal premium*

Bharti AXA Life Insurance has started delivering policies and renewal premium receipt to customers via instant messaging platform WhatsApp. It is a part of its alternative service option to the policy holders.

### 3. *RBI extends customer protection to PPI deals*

RBI has extended customer protection to users of authorized PPIs. Users of PPIs will not be liable for losses incurred due to fraud/discrepancy. In third-party interference, there is no customer liability if the matter is brought to notice within 3 days.

### 4. *Govt allows Iranian bank (Pasargad Bank) to open Mumbai branch: Gadkari*

Govt of India has given permission to Iran to open a bank branch in Mumbai. It will open a branch within 3 months. India can provide steel rails to Iran and the Persian Gulf nation can provide urea to India. From the Indian side UCO bank will facilitate the transactions.

### 5. *Banking Ombudsman complaints surge*

According to the RBI Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India, number of complaints registered at banking ombudsman offices has increased to **25%** owing to increased awareness and poor internal redressal mechanisms of banks.

### 6. *RBI slaps Rs 3 crore penalty on Citibank India*

Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of **₹ 3 crore** on Citibank India for not complying with directions regarding the 'fit-and-proper criteria' for directors of the bank. The action is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance.

### 7. *Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Kisan Suvidha loan for farmers*

Ujjivan SFB announced the launch of Kisan Suvidha loan to offer collateral-free loans for both agriculture & allied activities to small & marginal farmers. The product provides hassle-free loans to individuals with an amount ranging from ₹ 60000 – ₹ 2 Lakh.

### 8. *RBI nod for SlicePay's entry into NBFC foray*

Bengaluru-based start-up focused on micro-lending to students has secured a licence from RBI to foray into NBFC services. SlicePay enables students to buy daily goods and services online from various platforms at a maximum credit of Rs 60000.

### 9. *RBI sets new external commercial borrowings framework, lifts sectoral curbs*

RBI came out with a new policy for overseas borrowings, allowing all eligible entities to raise foreign funding up to **\$750 million** or equivalent per financial year under the automatic route and removing sectoral curbs.

## Quick revision

Policy/Exchange rate & Reserve ratio	Percentage
Repo rate	6.25%
Reverse Repo rate	6%
Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate	6.5%
Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)	4%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)	19.25%
Bank Rate	6.5%

## Economy

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Export Promotion Council Established for MSME Sector*

Ministry of MSME has established an Export Promotion Cell with an aim to create a sustainable ecosystem for entire MSME development. It will be chaired by Secretary, M/o MSME. Council has set target of **USD 100 billion** of exports from India by **2020**.

#### 2. *World Bank pegs India's growth at 7.3%*

Attributing it to an upswing in consumption and investment, World Bank has estimated India's GDP growth at **7.3%** in fiscal 2018-19, making it fastest growing economy in the world.

#### 3. *Government Extends Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme for MIG scheme till 31st march, 2020*

The CLSS for Middle Income Group Scheme has been extended by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs by another 12 months (till 31.03.2020). Scheme is designed to provide interest concession to borrowers looking to secure a home loan under PMAY.

#### 4. *1-year post office time deposits interest hiked to 7%*

The interest rate on 1-year post office time deposits has been increased by 10 basis points to **7%** for Jan-Mar 2019 quarter. The interest rate on 3-year POTD has been reduced by 20 bps to 7%. Interest rates of PPF (8%) & SSY (8.5%) have been kept unchanged.

#### 5. *Vijay Mallya becomes 1<sup>st</sup> person to be declared a 'fugitive economic offender'*

A special court in Mumbai declared **Vijay Mallya** a fugitive economic offender on a plea of the Enforcement Directorate under the provisions of the new Fugitive Economic Offenders Act which came into existence in August last year.

#### 6. *Indian economy expects to grow at 7.2% in 2018-19: CSO*

Indian economy is expected to grow at **7.2%** in 2018-19 against 6.7% in the previous fiscal due to improvement in the performance of agriculture and manufacturing sectors. The per capita net national income in 2018-19 shows a rise of 11.1%.

#### 7. *Sushil Modi to head GoM on GST revenue shortfall faced by states*

Sushil Modi will head the seven-member committee to investigate revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out and suggest steps for augmenting collections. Among the union territories, Puducherry is facing a maximum shortfall of 43%.

## 8. *Research Advisory Committee by SEBI*

SEBI has constituted a committee under the leadership of **Sankar De**. It will make strategy for effective execution and delivery of research objectives as well as for promotion, development, maintenance of databases relevant for capital market regulation

## 9. *7-Member Group of Ministers (GoM) for boosting the Real Estate Sector*

7-Member Group of Ministers constituted for boosting the Real Estate Sector under the GST regime by providing a Composition Scheme for Residential Construction Units. **Nitin Patel**, Dy Chief Minister, Government of Gujarat is the convener of 7-member group.

## 10. *India Ratings pegs India's 2019-20 GDP growth at 7.5%*

India Ratings and Research estimated India's economy to grow **7.5%** in 2019-20 and be more evenly balanced across sectors as well as demand-side growth drivers. Recently CSO forecasted FY19 GDP growth at **7.2%** as against 6.7% in FY18.

## 11. *India to grow at 7.7% in 2019-20: IMF report*

In the World Economic Outlook report of IMF, Indian economy is estimated to grow unhindered in this as well as next fiscal. The growth for this year is projected as 7.5% while for next year it is estimated to grow at **7.7%**.

## 12. *Indian economy may grow 7.6% in FY20: UN report*

According to the World Economic Situation and Prospects report by the UN, Indian economy is expected to accelerate in 2019-20 to expand by **7.6%** from 7.4% in the year ending 31 March on the back of robust growth in private consumption.

## 13. *Unemployment up by 6% in 2017-18: NSSO*

According to the NSSO, the unemployment rate surged to over 6% in 2017-18. The unemployment rate stood at 7.8% in urban areas as compared with 5.3% in rural areas while the proportion of the population working or seeking jobs, declined to 36.9% in 2017-18.

## 14. *GDP growth rate revised to 7.2% for 2017-18*

The government revised its forecast for GDP growth for 2017-18 to 7.2% from the earlier estimate of 6.7%. CSO also revised the nation's actual growth rate in 2016-17 to 8.2% from 7.1% while nominal GDP has been revised upwards to 11.5% from 10.8%.

### News: Others

#### 1. *Government approves ₹ 600 crore subsidy sops to merchant exporters*

Govt decided to offer **3%** interest subsidy to merchant exporters, entailing an expenditure of ₹ 600 Cr to enhance liquidity with a view to boosting outbound shipment. Agriculture, textiles, leather, handicraft & machinery would be benefitted in this scheme.

#### 2. *SEBI comes out with rules for single regime for FPI, NRI fund flows*

SEBI has come out with rules for a merger of FPI & NRI routes to bring in a single regime for & regulate fund inflow. If single & aggregate NRI/OCI/RI holdings in assets are below 25% & 50% respectively then they will be allowed to be constituents of FPI.

### 3. *Hardware Exports poised to grow at 7-8%*

In harmony with India's Economic growth, Electronics & Computer Software Export Promotion Council official says Hardware exports are poised to reverse the declining trend of the past few years with a 7-8% growth this fiscal over last year's \$6 billion.

### 4. *Ease of GST burden for small businesses*

The GST Council raised the annual turnover limit under which companies would be exempt from GST to ₹40 lakh for most States and ₹20 lakh for the North Eastern and hill states, from the earlier limit of ₹20 lakh and ₹10 lakh, respectively.

#### Quick revision

Organization/Parameters	Rate
Moody's	7.4% (2018), 7.3% (2019)
Fitch	7.8% (2018-19)
Central Statistics Office	7.2%
1-year post office time deposits	7%
World Bank	7.3%
UN Report	7.6% (FY 20)
IMF	7.7% (FY 2019-20)
India Ratings and Research	7.5 % (FY 2019-20)

## State

#### News: Most Important

##### 1. *Andhra tops ACI's Ease of Doing Business index*

Andhra Pradesh emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute, Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business Index ABC rankings for economies of 21 states of India, while **Maharashtra** and **Delhi** came in second and third place, respectively.

##### 2. *Patnaik announces interest-free loans for women self-help groups*

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced interest-free loans of up to ₹3 lakh for women self-help groups (WSHG) in the state. Also, he launched a scheme to distribute ₹15,000 seed money per group to three Lakh new SHGs.

##### 3. *Govt notifies High-Level Committee for implementation of Clause VI of Assam Accord*

Govt has notified a High-Level Committee headed by **MP Bezbaruah** for execution of Clause 6 of Assam Accord. The clause envisaged Appropriate safeguards that should be provided to protect, preserve & promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity & heritage of the people of Assam.

##### 4. *9-day long International Kite Festival held in Ahmedabad*

The nine-day long international kite festival took place at Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The festival took place at Vadodara, Kevadiya, Dwaraka, Surat, Rajkot, Jetpur, Songadh, Saputara and Dhordo in following days.

##### 5. *Veer Savarkar International Airport declared as an authorized Immigration Check post*

Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/exit from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers. Direct international flight & immigration facilities would be opened.

#### **6. Dharmendra Pradhan launched Ujjwala sanitary napkin initiative in Odisha**

Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched the Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin initiative in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The objective of the initiative is to provide access to hygiene products and employment to opportunities in every district of the state.

#### **7. Gujarat becomes 1<sup>st</sup> state to implement 10% quota in jobs, education to EWS of general category**

Gujarat Government has announced that the benefits **of 10%** quota for Economically Weaker sections of the general category in educational institutions. The new quota will be applicable only for which the announcement for jobs.

#### **8. Telangana to set up 'Save Tiger Protection Force'**

Telangana government has decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State. The 112-member-armed STPF will be formed to protect the tiger population in Amarabad and Kawal Tiger Reserves.

#### **9. RPF Women Squad 'JOYMATI BAHINI' introduced in Guwahati**

An All-Women Squad named as 'JOYMATI BAHINI', comprising women sub-inspector and constables of the Railway Protection Force formally introduced at Kamkhaya Railway Station in Guwahati. Its aim is to strengthen women security around Guwahati region.

#### **10. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Orange Festival at Nagpur**

2<sup>nd</sup> World Orange Festival organised in Nagpur to showcase & brand the exquisite fruit in order to boost its export. Agricultural experts and scientists from various countries participated in the workshops and guide farmers.

#### **11. First Swadesh Darshan project in Sikkim**

Tourism Ministry inaugurated the 1<sup>st</sup> Swadesh Darshan project in Sikkim under its objective of developing the North east circuit for Swadesh Darshan at a cost of Rs. 98.05 Crores. 77 projects sanctioned under the Swadesh Darshan till date

### **News: Others**

#### **1. BHEL commissions 800 MW thermal power plant in 46 months in Telangana**

BHEL commissioned an 800 MW thermal unit at Kothagudem Thermal Power Station within a record time of 46 months in Telangana. BHEL executed this project on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) basis.

#### **2. Two-Day Global Investors Summit organised in Chennai**

TN CM E Palaniswamy inaugurated 2-day Global Investors Summit in Chennai. Adani group committed an investment of Rs 12000 cr. in Kattuppalli port expansion project & Ford Motors inaugurated its Global Technology and Business Facility.

#### **3. Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor connecting 5 cities inaugurated**

The second Defence Industrial Corridor connecting Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore & Tiruchirappalli was inaugurated. The Corridors aim to bolster defence manufacturing in India. The first Defence Industrial Corridor was thrown open in Uttar Pradesh.

#### **4. AP High Court CJ, judges sworn in; HC starts functioning in Vijayawada**

Andhra Pradesh got a separate High Court and the court is being temporarily housed in the Chief Minister's camp office, Vijayawada. Justice Chagari Praveen Kumar was sworn in as the first Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court.

#### **5. India's largest start-up ecosystem, measuring 1.8 lakh sq. ft, inaugurated in Kerala**

Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched country's largest start-up ecosystem, integrated start-up complex under the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM), at the Technology Innovation Zone (TIZ), in Kochi, Kerala.

## **National**

### **News: Most Important**

#### **1. Cabinet approves 10% quota for EWS in general category**

The Union Cabinet has given its nod for a Constitutional amendment Bill providing 10% more reservation for economically weaker sections in direct recruitment (in Government jobs) and for admission in higher educational institutions.

#### **2. Guwahati likely to be first city to get international flights under UDAN scheme**

Guwahati is likely to be the 1<sup>st</sup> city to be connected internationally under UDAN scheme. Under the scheme, Assam is likely to provide a subsidy of ₹ 2370 & ₹ 4400 for certain no. of seats on the flights operating on Guwahati-Dhaka & Guwahati-Bangkok routes.

#### **3. Andaman to be first Island to operate seaplanes under UDAN-3**

Four different islands from Andaman and one island from Nicobar have been selected to fly seaplanes with the government giving approval to 13 water aerodromes under UDAN-3.

#### **4. Online inter-state trade through the e-NAM portal started**

Online inter-state trade through the e-NAM portal was started with an objective of strengthening the Agri-market in India. The 1<sup>st</sup> inter-State trade on e-Nam between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was carried out over Groundnut trade.

#### **5. Cabinet approves GST Appellate Tribunal**

Union Cabinet approved creation of National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal for GST .It will be situated at Delhi & will consist of President and 1 Technical Member (Centre) & 1 Technical Member (State) at an expenditure of Rs. 92.50 Lakhs.

#### **6. Country's 2<sup>nd</sup> defence innovation hub to come up in Maharashtra**

India's second defence innovation hub is set to come up in Nashik, Maharashtra after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu. It will help local industries and entrepreneurs. Ministry of Defence had set a target of making the country among the top five arms exporters by 2025.

#### **7. PM Modi inaugurated National Museum of Indian Cinema**

PM Modi inaugurated the country's first National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) at Films Division of India premises in Mumbai. The government will soon start a single window clearance and a portal for the Indian film industry.

### **8. PM Modi inaugurated country's first private Howitzer plant**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Armoured Systems Complex (ASC), developed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) at Hazira near Surat in Gujarat. It is the country's first private facility where the K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns will be manufactured.

### **9. Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal announced 'Vande Bharat Express'**

Indian Railways has named the indigenously manufactured Train 18, India's first semi-highspeed train as Vande Bharat Express. It is set to run between Delhi and Varanasi at a maximum speed of 160 kmph.

## **News: Others**

### **1. 100% houses in 25 states electrified under Saubhagya Yojana**

25 states achieved 100% household electrification under PM Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya). Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya & Chhattisgarh are left to be electrified. The Scheme aims to achieve universal household electrification by 31 March 2019.

### **2. Panel suggests not to allow new Engineering colleges from 2020**

A government appointed panel headed by IIT- Hyderabad chairman B V R Mohan Reddy has suggested to the All India Council for Technical Education to stop setting up new engineering colleges from 2020 and review the creation of new capacity every two years.

### **3. NHA restructuring**

Union cabinet has given the nod to restructure the National Health Agency (NHA). It will now be called as National Health Authority (NHA). This is done in order to have better decision making and will be chaired by the Union Health minister.

### **4. 3-day seminar on topic of 'Women of India Organic Festival' at Chandigarh**

Ministry of Women and Child Development organised a 3-day seminar on 'Women of India Organic Festival' in Chandigarh to celebrate and promote women farmers and entrepreneurs in the organic sector from the remotest parts of India.

### **5. National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 begins**

Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Col Rathore (Retd) launched the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 to provide a chance to the youth to brainstorm about new India and to find ways and chalk out plans to realize our resolves before 2022.

### **6. Centre for National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development opens at Mohali**

Smt. Maneka Gandhi inaugurated the 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Centre of National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) at Sahibzada Ajith Singh Nagar (Mohali), Punjab.

### **7. 1<sup>st</sup> Ekalavya Model Residential Schools Sports Meet 2019 at Hyderabad**

Shri Jaswantsingh Bhabhor, MoS for Tribal Affairs inaugurated the "1<sup>st</sup> Ekalavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) Sports Meet 2019" at Gachibowli stadium in Hyderabad. The National Sports Meet was held from 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

### **8. Longest single lane steel cable suspension bridge**

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu inaugurated India's longest 300-meter single-lane steel cable suspension bridge over Siang River in Upper Siang district of state bordering China. It is also known as Byorong Bridge. It will reduce the distance from Yingkiong to Tuting town by almost 40 km.

### **9. ISRO to launch 2 satellites aboard PSLV C-44**

ISRO launched its first satellite mission of 2019, PSLV C-44 which lifted off from the spaceport Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, carrying a student satellite called Kalamsat and an imaging satellite known as Microsat-R.

### **10. Fourth edition of Bharat Parv begins in Delhi**

The fourth edition of Bharat Parv, showcasing the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat held at New Delhi. The objective of this festival was to generate a patriotic fervour and promote rich cultural diversity of the country.

### **11. Subhash Chandra Bose museum inaugurates at Red Fort**

PM Modi inaugurated the Subhash Chandra Bose museum at Red Fort in the dedication of Netaji and Indian National Army. It showcased various artefacts related to Netaji and INA including medals, badges, uniforms and other artefacts related to INA.

### **12. Government approves setting up of three new naval air squadrons**

The government has approved setting up of three new naval air squadrons in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu as part of efforts to bolster the Indian Navy's overall strength. A contract for procurement of 12 Dornier aircraft was signed with HAL two years back.

### **13. Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training programme of ISRO (UNNATI) at Bengaluru**

**UNNATI** is a capacity building programme on Nanosatellite development, an initiative by ISRO. The programme provides opportunities to the participating developing countries to strengthen in assembling, integrating and testing of Nanosatellite.

### **14. Union Cabinet sanctions an estimated ₹ 4,241.97 crore for modernising ITR filings**

The Cabinet committee chaired by PM Narendra Modi, gave its approval to expenditure sanction of ₹ 4,241.97 crore for Integrated E-filing and Centralised Processing Centre 2.0 Project of the Income Tax Department. It will be implemented by Infosys.

### **15. PM Modi inaugurated Kollam Bypass of NH-66**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 13-km 2-lane Kollam bypass of National Highway 66 in Kerala, a project with a cost of Rs. 352 cr. & would cut the travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram districts of Kerala.

### **16. Pariksha Pe Charcha 2.0 to be organised in Delhi**

2000 students, parents & teachers participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha to be organised at Delhi. Students from all over India & Indian students residing abroad like Russia, Nigeria, Iran, Nepal, Doha, Kuwait are to be part of the event.

### **17. Civil aviation ministry launches first GI store in Goa**

Civil Aviation ministry in association with Goa state government launched the country's 1<sup>st</sup> Geographical Indication (GI) store at Dabolim International Airport in Goa with an aim to have one GI store in every airport in the country over next few years.

## **International**

### **News: Most Important**

#### **1. Asia Reassurance Initiative Act**

President of United States of America (USA), Donald J. Trump signed the "Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA)" into law. The act establishes a multifaceted U.S. strategy to increase U.S. security, economic interests, and values in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### **2. Google wins US approval for radar-based hand motion sensor**

Google unit won approval from the FCC to deploy a radar-based motion sensing device known as **Project Soli**. Now Google can operate the Soli sensors at higher power levels than currently allowed. And the sensors can also be operated aboard aircraft.

#### **3. France introduced GAFA tax on global internet, technology firms**

France introduced a new "GAFA tax" named after the large internet and technology companies Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon to ensure the global giants pay a fair share of taxes on their massive businesses in Europe.

### **News: Others**

#### **1. Bangladesh Elections: Awami League registers landslide victory**

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League has registered a landslide victory in Parliamentary elections. The ruling Awami League-led coalition won more than 260 seats in the 300-member House. Sheikh Hasina is the Prime Minister since 2009.

#### **2. US and Israel exit UNESCO, claiming bias**

US & Israel officially quit UN's educational, scientific & cultural agency. UNESCO has been denounced by its critics as a crucible for anti-Israel bias. The withdrawals will not impact UNESCO financially, it has been dealing with funding slash since 2011.

#### **3. Jair Bolsonaro is sworn in as the 42<sup>nd</sup> president of Brazil**

Jair Bolsonaro has been sworn in as the 42<sup>nd</sup> president of Brazil. He was elected president in the October 2018 elections, defeating Fernando Haddad. He addressed Brazil's liberation from socialism, inverted values, bloated state & political correctness.

#### **4. Malaysia's King Muhammad V steps down**

Malaysia's King Muhammad V resigned which is the first time a monarch has stepped down from the throne before completing their five-year tenure. Malaysia has nine royal households, who typically take turns to sit on the throne.

### 5. *Macedonia renamed as the Republic of Northern Macedonia*

Macedonia's parliament passed an amendment to the constitution to rename the country as **Republic of North Macedonia**, on a mutual agreement with Greece. The language of the country would be referred to as Macedonian and its people known as Macedonians.

### 6. *UAE, Saudi central banks' launch digital currency 'Aber'*

United Arab Emirates Central Bank & the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority launched a common digital currency called "Aber", to will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.

## India & world

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Sushma Swaraj, Japanese FM hold strategic dialogue*

Sushma Swaraj held a strategic dialogue with her Japanese counterpart Taro Kono at the 10<sup>th</sup> India-Japan Foreign Minister-level Strategic Dialogue during which they reviewed the progress in ties and exchanged views on regional and global issues.

#### 2. *India takes over operations of part of Chabahar Port*

India has taken over operations of the strategic Chabahar port. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> time India will be operating a port outside its territory. The physical take-over of the terminal area, cargo handling equipment & Office building was completed.

#### 3. *Innovation initiative at Raisina Dialogue, 2019*

The Global Innovation Policy Center of United States Chamber of Commerce launched an innovation strategy at Raisina Dialogue, 2019 in New Delhi. The Initiative is titled as "Fair Value for Innovation". India is the first market where GIPC is launching this new innovation initiative.

#### 4. *UAE, Saudi Arabia to invest in Indian agriculture sector*

UAE & Saudi Arabia have shown interest in investing in India's agricultural sector as both the countries want to make India a base for ensuring their food security. Government is working on bilateral trade to push export trade and make WTO more efficient.

#### 5. *India, South Africa seal three-year strategic programme to boost defence partnership*

India and South Africa sealed three-year strategic programme (2019-21) to further boost cooperation in the number of key areas including defence and security, trade and investment, the blue economy, tourism, IT and agriculture.

### News: Others

#### 1. *India, Norway to collaborate for Counter-terrorism, trade and Sustainable development*

India & Norway discussed extensively to collaborate for development of Ocean Economy, achieving Sustainable Development and to Counter Terrorism.

## 2. *Norwegian PM arrives in New Delhi*

PM of Norway Erna Solberg has visited India. The visit provided an opportunity to review the progress in cooperation between two countries and discuss ways to expand the multifaceted partnership in areas of common interest.

## 3. *Sushma Swaraj discusses enhancing bilateral cooperation with Turkmenistan counterpart*

External Affairs Minister met Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Rasit Meredow on the sidelines of the India-Central Asia Dialogue which focussed on a plethora of regional issues and they discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation across sectors.

## 4. *Nepal Rastra bank bans use of Indian currency notes*

Under a new regulation, Nepal Rastra bank banned use of Indian currency notes of Rs 2,000, Rs 500 and Rs 200 denominations for use in its country. Indian notes of denomination Rs 100 and below are still valid for transactions.

## 5. *India inks deal to get uranium supply from Uzbekistan*

India and Uzbekistan signed a deal for long-term supply of uranium from the resource rich Central Asian country to power its domestic atomic reactors. After Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Central Asian country to supply uranium to India.

## 6. *India signed agreement for participation in PISA 2021*

HRD Ministry signed an agreement with Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development for India's Participation in Programme for International Student Assessment-2021, triennial international survey to evaluate the education system.

### Quick Revision: Facts

Country	Capital	Head of State / Govt.	Currency
Norway	Oslo	Erna Solberg	Norwegian krone
Japan	Tokyo	Shinzo Abe	Yen
Iran	Tehran	Hassan Rouhani	Rial
Turkmenistan	Ashgabat	Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow	Turkmen New Manat
UAE	Abu Dhabi	Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan	UAE Dirham
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud	Saudi Riyal
Uzbekistan	Tashkent	Shavkat Mirziyoyev	Som
South Africa	Pretoria(administrative)	Cyril Ramaphosa	Rand

## Appointments & Resignations

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Sudhir Bhargava named new Chief Information Commissioner*

The government has appointed **Sudhir Bhargava** as Chief Information Commissioner (CIC). After recent retirements of Chief Information Commissioner R.K Mathur post was vacant. CIC the sanctioned strength of 11, including the Chief Information Commissioner.

## **2. Hemant Bhargava appointed LIC's Acting Chairman**

The government has appointed Hemant Bhargava as the Acting Chairman of LIC. Presently, He is the Managing Director of LIC, and he replaced V K Sharma. He set up a new joint venture in collaboration with the banking industry & founded LIC Cards Services Ltd.

## **3. P K Singh appointed Competition Commission of India secretary**

The CCI has appointed **Pramod Kumar Singh** as its secretary. He was adviser (law) to the competition watchdog. He would act as the nodal officer for the Commission for making or receiving all statutory information and entering the any formal relationships.

## **4. Birendra Prasad named as Chef de Mission for Tokyo Olympics**

Birendra Prasad Baishya has been named Chef de Mission for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. He is currently the President of the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF) & also one of the Indian Olympic Association Vice Presidents.

## **5. Ashok Chawla steps down as TERI Chairman**

Former finance secretary, Ashok Chawla, got down as Chairman of The Energy Resources Institute (Teri) following the recent ongoing legal developments.

## **6. Vinod Kumar Yadav takes charge as Chairman Railway Board**

Vinod Kumar Yadav has been appointed as Chairman, Railway Board (Ministry of Railways). Prior to this he was serving as General Manager, South Central Railway.

## **7. Su Tseng-chang appointed as Taiwan PM**

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen appointed Su Tseng-chang as Prime Minister during a Cabinet reshuffle following the ruling Democratic Progressive Party's heavy losses in local elections.

## **8. ICICI Bank appoints B Sriram, Rama Bijapurkar independent directors**

ICICI Bank inducted former SBI Managing Director B Sriram on its board as independent director. Management consultant Rama Bijapurkar was also appointed director.

## **9. Ravneet Gill to replace Rana Kapoor as YES Bank MD & CEO**

YES Bank has appointed Ravneet Singh Gill as its MD and CEO. He will succeed Rana Kapoor. He is the CEO of Deutsche Bank's India operations & will join the bank on or before March 1, 2019.

## **10. Dilip Sadarangani appointed as Chairman of Federal Bank**

RBI approved appointment of Dilip Sadarangani as Chairman of Federal Bank, who has been part of Federal Bank's board since 2013. He is a veteran banker & has been instrumental in ushering in of technology in multiple banks.

## **11. Parthasarathi Mukherjee to head Lakshmi Vilas Bank for another two years**

Lakshmi Vilas Bank has reappointed Parthasarathi Mukherjee as its managing director. He will continue for the next two years. The bank is looking to issue up to 15 crore equity shares to mobilize equity capital and to raise capital adequacy ratio.

## **12. RBL Bank appoints Pankaj Sharma as its chief operations officer**

RBL Bank has appointed Pankaj Sharma as its chief operations officer to overlook the corporate services function & bank's overall operations. He was heading retail operations in Axis Bank. He also worked with GE Countrywide, ICICI Bank & ICICI Prudential.

## **13. YES Bank Appoints Ajai Kumar As Interim CEO**

Yes Bank named Ajai Kumar as interim chief executive until Ravneet Gill takes charge. Rana Kapoor stepped down as CEO on Jan 31. The RBI had denied Rana Kapoor an extension to his term twice last year without giving a reason.

### **News: Others**

#### **1. World Bank president to resign effective Feb. 1**

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim has planned to leave the bank on Feb 1 to join a firm focused on infrastructure investments. He first became president of the WB in 2012. Kristalina Georgieva will assume the role of interim president from February 1, 2019.

#### **2. Subramanian resigns from Bandhan Bank following appointment as CEA**

Krishnamurthy V Subramanian has resigned as independent director from its board following his appointment as the chief economic advisor to the government. He has been appointed as the CEA for a period of three years.

#### **3. Harendra Singh dismissed as coach of Indian Men's Team**

Considering disappointing results from Indian Men's Hockey team in recent times, Harendra Singh was relieved from the position and offered the task of helping the junior squad by the national federation.

#### **4. N. Ram of The Hindu Group is new AFMF President**

N. Ram, chairman, The Hindu Group, has been appointed President of the Alliance for Media Freedom (AMFM), a cross-media advocacy and action group of media organisations, promoters and journalists.

#### **5. New Chairman of the Railway Board**

VK Yadav appointed new chairman of Railway Board after Ashwani Lohani. Prior to this appointment, he was the General Manager of South-Central Railway (SCR).

#### **6. Axis Bank MD & CEO Shikha Sharma retires**

Axis Bank Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Shikha Sharma retired from the services of the bank and Amitabh Chaudhry will be the new MD and CEO of the Axis bank from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

#### **7. Executive Chairman of NALSA**

President Ram Nath Kovind nominated Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri as Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

#### **8. Pentagon chief of staff resigned**

Kevin Sweeney, the chief of staff of the US Department of Defence, resigned from his position. He held his post for two years from January 2017.

### **9. Daniel Callahan appointed as independent director of TCS**

Tata Consultancy Services appointed Daniel Callahan, as additional and independent director for a period of 5 years, based on the recommendations of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, and subject to approval of shareholders.

### **10. Brahm Dutt new Yes Bank chairman**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the appointment of Brahm Dutt as part-time, non-executive chairman of Yes Bank. Mr. Dutt has been on the Board of the bank since July 2013.

### **11. Axis appoints HDFC Bank veteran as CCO**

Retired HDFC Bank executive and former Federal Bank board member Deepak Maheshwari has taken charge as chief credit officer (CCO) at Axis Bank. He had taken over as CCO to oversee corporate credit appraisal and disbursement.

### **12. Ananth Narayanan quits as Myntra-Jabong CEO**

Amar Nagaram to replace Ananth Narayanan as the new Head of Myntra-Jabong following a recent re-jig at of parent company flipkart.

### **13. Justice AK Sikri nominated Executive Chairman of NALSA**

President Kovind nominated Justice Sikri as Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). It was constituted to provide free legal services to the weaker sections of the society and to organise Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes.

### **14. Prabhat Singh appointed DG in National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)**

Prabhat Singh has been appointed as Director General (Investigation) in the National Human Rights Commission. S N Pradhan has been appointed Director General of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

### **15. ICC appoints Manu Sawhney as CEO**

The International Cricket Council appointed media professional Manu Sawhney as its new chief executive officer, replacing incumbent David Richardson, who will step down after the World Cup. He is the former CEO of Singapore Sports Hub.

### **16. IndiGo appoints Ronojoy Dutta as new CEO**

IndiGo owner InterGlobe Aviation appointed Ronojoy Dutta as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company with immediate effect. He will remain as the company CEO for the next five years.

## Quick Revision

Appointment/Resignation	Post
Jim Yong Kim	President, World bank
Sudhir Bhargava	Chief Information commissioner
Hemant Bhargava	LIC's Acting Chairman
PK Singh	Secretary, CCI
KV Subramanian	Chief economic advisor
Rudratej Singh	President, Royal Enfield
Harendra Singh	Coach, India's Men Hockey team
N Ram	President, AFMF
Shikha Sharma	MD & CEO, Axis Bank
Arjan Kumar Sikri	Executive Chairman - NALSA
Kevin Sweeney	Chief of staff, US department of defence
Birendra Prasad Baishya	Chef de Mission, Tokyo Olympics
Daniel Callahan	Independent director, TCS
Ashok Chawla	Chairman, TERI
Brahm Dutt	Chairman, Yes Bank
Deepak Maheshwari	CCO, Axis Bank
Amar Nagaram	CEO, Myntra-Jabong
Ronjoy Dutta	CEO, IndiGo
Manu Sawhney	CEO, ICC
Parthasarathi Mukherjee	MD, Lakshmi Vilas Bank
Dilip Sadarangani	Chairman, Federal Bank
Ajai Kumar	Interim CEO, YES Bank

## Ranks & Reports

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Democracy Index 2019*

It was released by Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU). As per the report only 4.5% of the world's people live in a full democracy. India was at the 41<sup>st</sup> place in the flawed democracies category. Australia and New Zealand are the only "full democracies" in the entire Asia-Pacific region.

#### 2. *Max Life beats LIC in claims settlement*

According to IRDAI's Annual Report 2017-18, Max Life Insurance has overtaken LIC to the best track record in terms of claims settlement for individual deaths in FY18. Max Life settled 98.26 % of individual death claims while LIC settled 98.04%.

#### 3. *India needs renewable energy policy to achieve 175 GW solar capacity by 2022: CSE*

India needs a renewable energy policy to achieve 175 GW of solar capacity by 2022. The CSE report urged an increase in the share of dispersed renewable generation besides promoting 'smart grids' that use control systems & info tech. for efficient delivery.

#### 4. *India is now 2nd largest steel producer in the world*

World Steel Association's report estimates, India's crude steel production in 2018 stood at 106.5 MT, up by 4.9% from 101.5 MT in 2017, which makes India replace Japan as the world's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest steel producing nation. Japan produced 104.3 MT in 2018.

## 5. *Dubai ranked as world's busiest airport*

Welcoming over 89 million passengers in 2018 over last year's 88.2 mn, Dubai remains the Busiest Airport in the world for International Travel category. It has remained in top position since 2014, surpassing London's Heathrow Airport.

### **News: Others**

#### 1. *India poised to be 3<sup>rd</sup> largest consumer market by 2030: WEF*

In a report titled 'Future of Consumption in Fast-Growth Consumer Market – India' by World Economic Forum, India is set to become the world's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030. The survey was carried out by Bain & Company for this report.

#### 2. *India Manufacturing Barometer 2019 Report*

The report was released by Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in association with PwC. About 74% of manufacturers are hopeful of a faster growth rate in their respective sectors over the next 12 months while about 58% expect their sector to grow faster by at least 5% in the next 12 months.

#### 3. *Henley Passport Index*

As per the Henley Passport Index, **Japan** has retained its position to the top for the consecutive year due to its document access to 190 countries and India has leaped two steps forward to 79<sup>th</sup> rank from 81<sup>st</sup> rank.

#### 4. *Centre's debt-to-GDP falls, States' rises*

According to the Status Paper on Government Debt for 2017-18, the Centre's total debt as a percentage of GDP reduced to **46.5%** in 2017-18. The total debt of the States has been rising over to 24% in 2017-18 and is estimated to be 24.3% in 2018-19.

#### 5. *India to become 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy worldwide: PwC report*

India is likely to excel in the GDP based economy rankings in 2019, to become the world's fifth largest economy, according to a recent PwC report. World Bank released data had put India as world's 6<sup>th</sup> largest economy in 2017 and UK in 5<sup>th</sup> position.

#### 6. *Bihar state GDP growth outshines nation's growth: CRISIL*

According to the CRISIL report, in fiscal 2018, Bihar clocking 11.3% & Andhra Pradesh clocking 11.2%, were top-rankers in terms of GSDP growth among the other Indian states. Jharkhand, Kerala, and Punjab were ranked at the bottom.

#### 7. *Southern Railway tops cleanliness chart: IRCTC*

Southern Railway bagged the number one position for cleanliness in the country under the category of other than Premium Category trains in the recently conducted IRCTC survey. Southern Railway introduced 54 new trains in past 4 years.

## Important days

### News: Most Important

#### **1. World Braille Day – January 4**

World Braille Day is marked annually on January 4 as a means of realizing fully the human rights of visually-impaired and partially-sighted people and bringing written language to the forefront as a critical prerequisite for promoting fundamental freedoms.

#### **2. Bhartiya Pravasi Day or Non-Resident Day: 9<sup>th</sup> January**

This day marks the contribution of overseas Indian community in the development of India.

On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019, Mahatma Gandhi came to India from South Africa and became the greatest Pravasi who led India's freedom Struggle.

#### **3. World Hindi Day: 10<sup>th</sup> January**

World Hindi day celebrated is celebrated 10<sup>th</sup> of January. The focus of the Day is "to promote the language at the global stage" whereas National Hindi Diwas is celebrated every year on 14<sup>th</sup> September, marks the adaption of Hindi, written in Devanagari script as the official language.

#### **4. National Youth Day – January 12**

The nation celebrated the National Youth Day (Yuva Diwas) to honour the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. The National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 was launched. It will be celebrated from 12<sup>th</sup> January to 24<sup>th</sup> February in New Delhi.

Theme- "Be the Voice of New India" and "Find solutions and contribute to policy".

#### **5. Ministry of Women & Child Development celebrated National Girl Child Day- 24 January**

WCD Ministry celebrated National Girl Child Day at New Delhi with "Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow" as theme .The objective was to generate awareness on the issue of declining Child Sex Ratio & a positive environment for girl child.

#### **6. International Day of Education- 24 January**

The first International Day of Education was observed in 2019 . It recognizes learning opportunities for peoples that help them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to access opportunities to participate fully in society and contribute to sustainable development.

#### **7. International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust- 27 January**

The day(theme) encourages youth to learn from the lessons of the Holocaust, act against discrimination and defend democratic values in their communities, at a time when the spread of Neo-Nazism and hate groups fuels the rising antisemitism and other forms of hatred around the world.

Theme-"Holocaust Remembrance: Demand and Defend Your Human Rights"

## News: Others

### 1. Army Day - January 15

India celebrated 71<sup>st</sup> Army day on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> to salute the soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens. Lt Bhavana Kasturi became the first female officer to lead the Indian Army's Service Corps (ASC) contingent, comprising 144 male personnel, on the Army Day parade.

### 2. National Voters' Day to be celebrated across the Nation

The 9<sup>th</sup> National Voters' Day is celebrated on January 25 across the country for enhanced participation of citizens in the electoral process. No Voter to be Left Behind has been selected as the theme of the Day.

### 3. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) day celebrated

Every year January 1 is observed as Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO day. The DRDO was established in 1958 with just 10 laboratories to enhance the research work in defence sector.

## Quick Revision

Date	Observed Day	Theme/ Campaign
January 1	DRDO Day	NA
January 4	World Braille day	NA
January 9	Bharatiya Pravasi Day	NA
January 10	World Hindi Day	NA
January 12	National youth Day	"Be the Voice of New India" and "Find solutions and contribute to policy".
January 15	Army Day	NA
January 24	National Girl Child Day	Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow
January 24	International Day of Education	NA
January 25	National Voter's Day	No Voter to be Left Behind
January 27	International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust	Holocaust Remembrance: Demand and Defend Your Human Rights

## Sports

### News: Most Important

#### 1. Smriti Mandhana wins ICC 'Women's Cricketer' and 'ODI Player of the year' awards

Smriti Mandhana was adjudged 'Women's Cricketer of the Year' & the 'Women's ODI Player of the Year' by the ICC. She became only the second India woman player to win an ICC award after Jhulan Goswami, who was named the ICC player of the year in 2007.

#### 2. Maharashtra hosts 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Khelo India Youth Games

Maharashtra hosted the second edition of Khelo India Youth Games in Pune. Maharashtra topped the medal tally with 227 medals (Gold -85, Silver - 61, Bronze - 81) followed by Haryana with 178 medals and Delhi with 136 medals.

#### 3. USA Cricket announced as ICC's 105<sup>th</sup> member

International Cricket Council (ICC) announced USA Cricket as its 105<sup>th</sup> member. USA Cricket came into existence after USACA was expelled in June 2017 for lack of cooperation in terms of unifying the cricket community in the country.

#### **4. Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic clinches Hopman Cup**

The Hopman Cup is an annual international eight-team indoor hard-court tennis tournament was held in Perth, Western Australia. This year Switzerland's Roger Federer & Belinda Bencic secured a 2-1 victory over Germany's Angelique Kerber & Alexander Zverev to win the Hopman Cup for the second year in a row.

#### **5. Bengaluru Raptors clinches Premier Badminton League title 2018-19**

Bengaluru Raptors edged the Mumbai Rockets 4-3 to win their maiden Premier Badminton League title. World No. Mumbai became runner-up for the third time in the PBL history.

### **News: Others**

#### **1. 80<sup>th</sup> National Table Tennis Championship held in Cuttack**

The 80<sup>th</sup> National Table Tennis Championship began at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack. Odisha State Table Tennis Association is hosting the championships after a gap of 18 years.

#### **2. Khelo India Youth Games: Abhinav Shaw becomes youngest gold medallist in shooting**

10-year old Abhinav Shaw became the youngest gold medallist in the shooting. He teamed up with Mehuli Ghosh to help West Bengal win the 10m air rifle mixed team event. Delhi's Devanshi Rana bagged gold in Under-21 girls 25m pistol event.

#### **3. Youngest Indian to win junior world title – Golf**

Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh won the under-8 category Junior world title at the Kids' Golf World Championship organised by US kids Golf in Malaysia to become the youngest Indian to win the title.

#### **4. Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri received honorary membership of Sydney Cricket Ground**

Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri received honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket. Other cricketers granted are Sachin Tendulkar, India and Brian Lara, West Indies.

## **Awards**

### **News: Most Important**

#### **1. 4<sup>th</sup> annual Carnot Prize awarded to Union Minister Piyush Goyal**

Kleinman Centre for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania awarded Carnot Prize to Piyush Goyal in acknowledgement of India's climate conscious, and development driven energy governance fuelling the aspirations of 125 crore people.

#### **2. Tamil Nadu bagged Swasth Bharat Yatra award**

Tamil Nadu was awarded the Swasth Bharat Yatra award under 'The Best Performing State' category in an event organised by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Gandhiji at New Delhi.

### 3. **National Nritya Shiromani Award 2019**

US-based Kathak dancer Anindita Neogy Anaam honoured with the National Nritya Shiromani award for promoting the dance form across the world. This award is organised by utkal yuva sanskrutik sanghatan, Odisha.

### 4. **National Bravery Award by Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW)**

15-year-old student, Wahengbam Lamnganba Singh, of Kumbi area in Manipur, received National Bravery Award. He was selected by the Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW).

### 5. **Jayanta Kumar Ghosh receives National Geospatial Award**

IIT professor Jayanta Kumar Ghosh conferred with lifetime achievement award for his contribution to the geospatial science and applications development. The award was given by Indian Society for Remote sensing (ISRS).

### 6. **PM Modi receives Philip Kotler Presidential Award**

PM Narendra Modi received the first ever Philip Kotler Presidential Award for his outstanding leadership for the nation. The award focuses on the triple bottom-line of people, profit and planet.

## **News: Others**

### 1. **Andhra Pradesh Minister receives award for Polavaram Project**

Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Devineni Umamaheswar Rao has received the 'Central Board of Irrigation and Power Award' for better planning and construction of Polavaram Irrigation Project in the state.

### 2. **Three Indian-origin women scientists were awarded by Australian government**

Three Indian-origin women scientists were among the 60 Superstars of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) list awarded by Australian government. The 3 scientists are Onisha Patel, Devika Kamath and Asha Rao.

### 3. **Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja National Award**

Manoj Das, an eminent English & Odia Litterateur received the "Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja National Award for Lifetime Achievement" in literature during 53<sup>rd</sup> Foundation day ceremony organized by the Berhampur University, Odisha.

### 4. **Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards**

Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh presented the prestigious Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism awards to 29 winners in 18 categories across Print, Broad cast and purely digital to recognize the outstanding contributions of journalists in 2017 in New Delhi.

### 5. **Namita Gokhale receives Sushila Devi Literature Award**

Renowned writer Namita Gokhale was awarded Sushila Devi Literature Award for her work "Things to Leave Behind". She was honoured in the 'Best Book of Fiction Written by a Woman Author' category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival.

Contribution to bring up Nepal's long and friendly relationship with India.

## 6. *Romain Rolland Prize for a Tamil translation of French novel*

Jaipur Literary festival saw the Tamil translation of the French novel *La vie d'un homme inconnu* (The Life of an Unknown Man) by Andrei Makine, awarded the prestigious Romain Rolland Prize by the French Embassy. It was translated by S.R. Kichenamorti.

### Quick Revision

Award	Winner
Carnot Prize	Piyush Goyal
Central Board of Irrigation and Power Award	Devineni Umamaheswar Rao
National Nritya Shiromani award	Anindita Neogy Anaam
Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja National Award for Lifetime Achievement	Manoj Das
National Bravery Award	Wahengbam Lamnganba Singh
National Geospatial Award	Jayanta Kumar Ghosh
Philip Kotler Presidential Award	Narendra Modi
Sushila Devi Literature Award	Namita Gokhale
Romain Rolland Prize	Andrei Makine

## Obituaries

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Cricket coach Ramakant Achrekar passes away*

The cricket coach credited for discovering Sachin Tendulkar, Ramakant Achrekar died. He was 87. Besides Tendulkar, he also coached some prominent players in Vinod Kambli, Pravin Amre, Sameer Dighe and Balwinder Singh Sandhu.

#### 2. *US Former Defence Secretary Harold Brown dies at 91*

Harold Brown has died at age 91. He was a nuclear physicist who led the Pentagon to modernize its defence systems with weapons that included precision-guided cruise missiles, stealth aircraft, advanced satellite surveillance & improved communications.

#### 3. *Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Mary Oliver passes away*

The Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Mary Oliver whose rapturous odes to nature and animal life brought her critical acclaim and popular affection has died. She was 83. She won the National Book award in 1992 for *New and Selected Poems*.

#### 4. *Siddaganga Mutt seer Shivakumara Swami passed away*

111 years old revered Lingayat seer Shivakumara Swami, the head pontiff of 5-centuries old Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru, Karnataka recently passed away. He is known for his innumerable philanthropic works.

#### 5. *Former Union Minister George Fernandes passed away*

Former Defence Minister and Anti-Emergency fighter George Fernandes passed away in New Delhi at the age of 88. He founded the Samata Party and was elected to the Lok Sabha 9 times and once to the Rajya Sabha.

#### 6. *Famous Hindi essayist Krishna Sobti passed away*

Famous Hindi writer and essayist, Krishna Sobti passed away at the age of 94. She had won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1980 and was awarded the Jnanpith award in 2017.

### 7. *Oscar-winning French composer Michel Legrand passes at 86*

French composer Michel Legrand has died at the age of 86. He won 3 Oscars. His first was in 1969 for the song 'The Windmills of Your Mind' from 'The Thomas Crown Affair'. His second Oscar for his music for 'Summer of '42' in 1972 and third for 'Yentl' in 1984.

#### **News: Others**

### 1. *Veteran actor-writer Kader Khan dies at 81*

Veteran Actor-writer Kader Khan has died in Canada due to a prolonged illness. He was 81. He made his acting debut in 1973 with Rajesh Khanna's Daag & he was synonymous with comic roles. He also wrote dialogues for over 250 movies.

### 2. *Bengali writer Dibyendu Palit passes away*

Renowned Bengali writer Dibyendu Palit died. He was 79. He was conferred the Sahitya Akademi for his novel 'Anubhab' in 1998. He was awarded the 'Bankim Purashkar' for 'Dheu' in 1990 and 'Ananda Purashkar' in 1984 for 'Sahojodha'.

### 3. *Veteran Kannada actor CH Loknath passed away at 91*

Kannada actor CH Loknath died. He was 91. His acting career spanned almost six decades and he had acted in about 650 movies and performed in over 1,000 plays. He made his debut in the National award-winning movie 'Samskara' in 1970.

### 4. *Vanguard Group founder John Bogle passed away at 89*

Founder of Vanguard Group, the world's biggest mutual fund firm, died at the age of 89 after a prolonged illness. He built his own products around a new economic model in which the funds would be run by their own directors and staff.

### 5. *Pulitzer Prize-Winning Columnist Russell Baker Dies At 93*

Russell Baker, the Pulitzer Prize winning writer who penned thousands of columns for The New York Times, and hosted the PBS television program "Masterpiece Theatre," passed away. He was 93.

### 6. *Hockey old-timer Raghbir Bhola passed away*

Raghbir Singh Bhola who was part of Indian Hockey team that won Gold in 1956 & 1960 Olympics passed away. He was a former Group Captain IAF & a part of Indian Hockey selector group.

#### **Quick Revision**

<b>Obituary (Name)</b>	<b>Related Field</b>
Kader Khan	Actor cum writer
Ramakant Achrekar	Cricket coach
Dibyendu Palit	Bengali writer
Harold Brown	Former US defence secretary
CH Loknath	Kannada Actor
Michel Legrand	Music composer
Krishna Sobti	Writer and essayist
Raghbir Bhola	Hockey Team player
George Fernandes	Former Union Minister
Shivakumara Swami	Lingayat seer
Russell Baker	Pulitzer Prize (Columnist)

## Schemes

### News: Most Important

#### **1. ISRO launches Samwad with students to engage them on space science activities**

ISRO has launched Samwad with Students as part of its outreach programme. The Indian Space agency would engage youngsters across the country in activities concerning space science under this programme.

#### **2. Chamling launches 'One Family One Job' scheme in Sikkim**

Sikkim CM Chamling launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme which entitles one govt job for every family in the state. The appointment letters were awarded only to members of those families which do not have a government job at present in a Rojgar Mela.

#### **3. Odisha launches free LED bulb distribution scheme**

Odisha launched the 'Ama Ghare LED' scheme, under which about 95 L families in the State will each get 4 LED bulbs free of cost. 9-watt LED bulbs will be distributed to beneficiaries registered under National Food Security Act & State Food Security Scheme.

#### **4. WB govt announces two initiatives for farmers**

As a part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme West Bengal government announced two welfare initiatives for farmers. Under the scheme, if a farmer aged between 18 to 60 years dies naturally or unnaturally, the state government will pay his family Rs 2 lakh. And farmers would get Rs 2,500 twice a year for growing a single crop on one acre of land.

#### **5. Universal Basic Income to be introduced by the Sikkim Government**

Sikkim domestic front (SDF), the ruling party of Sikkim has assured the implementation of the universal basic income (UBI) in Sikkim by 2022. Sikkim would become the first state in the country to do so.

#### **6. MP govt unveils a scheme to ensure 100 days of employment to EWS youth**

Madhya Pradesh govt has unveiled a scheme named 'Yuva Swabhiman Yojana' to ensure 100 days of employment every year to the youths from the economically weaker sections in the urban areas. The scheme would provide temporary employment & develop skills.

#### **7. Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana launched by Madhya Pradesh CM**

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath launched the Rs 50,000-crore farm debt-waiver scheme named 'Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana' which is speculated to benefit around 55 lakh small and marginal farmers.

### News: Others

#### **1. Google Launchpad to retain focus on AI start-ups in India**

Google Launchpad's India accelerator programme would continue to focus on AI start-ups. Agriculture & healthcare technology is emerging themes in India which Google Launchpad is likely to back in the future given their scalability & high impact potential.

## **2. *10-day Indian Panorama Film Festival held in New Delhi***

The 10-day long Indian Panorama Film Festival held in New Delhi. The films shown in Festival reflect the economic progress the country has made & changes that society has undergone. Total of 26 Feature Films & 21 Non-Feature Films were screened.

## **3. *Web Wonder Women Campaign launched by Government***

Maneka Gandhi launched Web Wonder Women Campaign to recognize the fortitude of Indian women stalwarts from across the globe who have used the power of social media to run positive campaigns to steer a change in society.

## **4. *4 new projects under Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD schemes of M/o Tourism***

Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned four new projects for Rs. 190.46 Crores under the tourism infrastructure development schemes, Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD in the states of Meghalaya, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh.

## **5. *Record allocation for MNREGA scheme***

Government allocated an additional Rs. 6,084 cr at RE stage to MGNREGA. This brings the total allocation to the scheme to Rs. 61,084 cr in 2018-19, making it the highest ever allocation for the scheme.

## **Person in News**

### **News: Most Important**

#### **1. *Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh Bhupen Hazarika awarded Bharat Ratna***

Social activist Nanaji Deshmukh, Music maestro Bhupen Hazarika & former President Pranab Mukherjee have been awarded Bharat Ratna. 112 Padma Awards, including 4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan & 94 Padma Shri Awards are conferred by President.

#### **2. *Arunima Sinha Becomes World's First Woman Amputee to Scale Antarctica's Mount Vinson***

Arunima Sinha has become the world's first female amputee to climb the Mount Vinson which is the highest peak of Antarctica. Also, she became the world's first woman to climb Mount Everest in 2013.

#### **3. *D Gukesh is India's youngest Grandmaster***

At the age of 12 years, seven months and 17 days, D. Gukesh defeated Dinesh Sharma in the ninth round of the Delhi International Open Grandmasters chess tournament for his third and final GM norm to become the youngest Grandmaster in the country.

#### **4. *Kartik Sharma wins Australia's men's Amateur Golf Championship***

India's Kartik Sharma clinched New South Wales men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia. He pulled off an exotic win over Australia's Nathan Barberie in the scheduled 36-hole final to emerge as champion.

#### **5. *South African Cricketer Johan Botha announces retirement***

Former South Africa international and Hobart Hurricanes spinner Johan Botha has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket effective immediately. He captained South Africa in 21 matches across ODI and T20I.

## **6. Naomi Osaka wins Australian Open Grand Slam Singles title**

Japan's Naomi Osaka won her maiden Australian Open Grand Slam Singles title at Melbourne. She defeated Czech Petra Kvitova in the final. She becomes the first Asian player to achieve the world number one ranking.

## **7. Novak Djokovic beats Rafael Nadal to win Australian Open 2019**

Novak Djokovic defeated Rafael Nadal to win his 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Open Men's Singles title at Melbourne. He surpassed American legend Pete Sampras to elevate himself to outright third on the all-time Grand Slam title leader board.

### **News: Others**

#### **1. Jindal Steel and Power Ltd. names Sudhanshu Saraf as CEO of Steel Business**

Jindal Steel and Power Ltd has appointed Sudhanshu Saraf as chief executive officer of its steel business with immediate effect. Saraf succeeds Naushad Akhter Ansari, who was elevated to the post of joint Managing Director effective from January 1, 2019.

#### **2. First Indian to Head Global Solar Council, USA**

The chairman of National Solar Energy Federation of India, Pranav R Mehta, has taken over as the president of Global Solar Council. He is dubbed as the Solar Man of India. He has been conferred with the 'Visionary Disruptor Award' by Solar Future Today, which he received at the sidelines of World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi.

#### **3. Ajit Mohan joined Facebook India as VP and MD**

He succeeded Umang Bedi who left the post on October 2017. Mohan, a former CEO of Hotstar, was earlier appointed to lead as India's head for the company in September 2018.

#### **4. Vinesh Phogat 1<sup>st</sup> Indian athlete to be nominated for Laureus World Comeback of Year Award**

Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat becomes the 1<sup>st</sup> Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award. She won gold medal at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and Jakarta Asian Games.

#### **5. WHO Goodwill ambassador Yohei Sasakawa to get Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018**

Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018 will be conferred to Yohei Sasakawa in recognition of his work towards the eradication of the disease in India and across the world. He is Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organization for Leprosy Elimination.

#### **6. Dr. Rattan Lal honoured with 2019 Japan Prize**

Dr. Rattan Lal awarded 2019 Japan Prize for his work in identifying technological options adapted to various ecosystems through his intensive basic & applied research on processes & factors of soil degradation caused by inappropriate biological production

#### **7. Army Chief Bipin Rawat among 19 awarded highest medal**

Chief of the Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat, was awarded the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), the highest military medal awarded in recognition of peace-time services not relating to gallantry.

## Summits & Conference

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *PM Modi inaugurated Indian Science Congress in Jalandhar*

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the 106th Indian Science Congress in Jalandhar. The theme of this 5-day mega event was 'Future India: Science and Technology'. This meet brought together leaders in science & technology from the country & abroad every year.

#### 2. *Indus Food Meet 2019*

The Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) and union commerce ministry is going to organize a two-day mega food international event, the Indus Food Meet 2019, at the India Exposition Mart of Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh. Odisha is the 'Partner State'.

#### 3. *India Pharma 2019*

The conference on medical device and pharmaceuticals will be held in Bengaluru from Feb 18-19, 2019. The theme is "Enabling Quality Affordable Healthcare". This is organised by Ministry of chemicals and fertilisers and FICCI.

#### 4. *Rio de Janeiro to be World Capital of Architecture for 2020*

UNESCO has announced that the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro will be the World Capital of Architecture for 2020. It will be the first city to receive the title under a program launched together by UNESCO and the International Union of Architects (UIA).

#### 5. *National Conclave on Technical Textiles to be held at Mumbai*

Ministry of Textiles to put National Conclave on Technical Textiles as a curtain raiser for TechnoTex 2019 at Mumbai. Major highlights of the conclave are the release of HSN codes by Government of India for technical textiles.

#### 6. *2 National level Initiatives launched in the field of science communication*

Union S & T Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, inaugurated two science communication initiatives, DD Science and India Science which is a collaboration between Dept. of S&T and Prasar Bharti.

#### 7. *Suresh Prabhu inaugurates 10<sup>th</sup> edition of India Rubber Expo 2019*

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry inaugurated the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the India Rubber Expo - 2019 in Mumbai. National Rubber Policy will be unveiled soon to address issues concerning the sector and to boost productivity.

#### 8. *BES EXPO 2019 held in New Delhi*

25<sup>th</sup> International conference & exhibition on terrestrial & satellite broadcasting BES EXPO 2019 held in New Delhi. Nearly 300 companies were displayed their products in the Expo. It was inaugurated by I&B secretary & TRAI Chairman RS Sharma.

#### 9. *India Steel 2019 Expo at Mumbai*

3-day India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference organized in Mumbai by the Ministry of Steel. 250 exhibiting companies from 15 countries with over 200 International buyers & delegates were participated in the Expo.

## News: Others

### 1. **DIPP organises 25<sup>th</sup> Partnership Summit in Mumbai**

DIPP organised The Partnership Summit in Mumbai, expected to build new partnerships and explore investment opportunities through high level exchanges & B2B meetings, showcasing India in the present landscape of an emerging "New India".

### 2. **World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 organized in Goa**

WIMF 2019 organized on the theme, 'Regulation of Homeopathic Medical Products; Advancing global collaboration' by CCRH under Min of AYUSH in Goa. Regulators & Homeopathic companies & scientific experts worldwide are expected to attend.

### 3. **VIBRANT Gujarat Trade Show to commence**

PM Modi inaugurated the 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show' in Gandhinagar, part of the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit. The Trade Show would showcase more than 25 industrial and business sectors under one umbrella.

### 4. **3-day Gandhian Resurgence Summit at Prayagraj Kumbh**

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 3-day Gandhian Resurgence Summit at Parmarth Niketan camp at the ongoing Prayagraj Kumbh. About 300 Gandhians from different parts of the country and organisations are participating in the Summit.

### 5. **World Economic Forum Annual meet begins at Davos**

WEF annual meet took place in Davos, Switzerland with the theme, 'Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution'. 30 heads of different nations & 3000 plus eminent people were attended the event.

### 6. **Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL) organized**

NSTL organized the Academia Meet at NSTL, Visakhapatnam on the theme "Artificial Intelligence for Naval Systems". It provided the platform for deliberation & discussion on the topic of Artificial Intelligence & its application to defence systems.

## Quick Revision

<b>Summit /Conference</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Indian Science Congress	Jalandhar
Indus Food Meet	Greater Noida
India Pharma 2019	Bengaluru
25 <sup>th</sup> Partnership Summit	Mumbai
NSTL, Academia Meet	Visakhapatnam
World Economic Forum	Davos, Switzerland
Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show	Gandhinagar
World Integrated Medicine Forum	Goa
India Steel 2019 Expo	Mumbai
BES EXPO 2019	New Delhi

## Defence

### News: Most Important

#### **1. DRDO develops quick response mobile facility for nuclear incidents**

DRDO has developed a mobile facility to help provide immediate relief for nuclear incidents. The key equipment includes a whole-body radiation counter, storage system for containment of radioactive waste & provision for preliminary decontamination of the affected areas.

#### **2. INS Kohassa to be commissioned at Naval Air Station Shibpur**

Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba will commission INS Kohassa at Naval Air Station Shibpur in North Andaman Island. It will become the 3<sup>rd</sup> Naval Air Base in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands after INS Utkrosh at Port Blair & INS Baaz at Campbell Bay. It is named after a White-Bellied Sea Eagle.

#### **3. India Africa Field Training Exercise 2019 to be held in Pune**

India Africa Field Training Exercise 2019 is scheduled to be conducted at Pune in March, 19. It would see participation from more than 10 African countries & India with an aim to boost the already strong strategic cooperation between the countries.

#### **4. Largest Coastal Defence Exercise in 10 Years coordinated by Indian Navy**

Indian Navy commenced SEA VIGIL Defence exercise, along the entire 7516 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zones, involving all the 13 coastal States & Union Territories along with all maritime stakeholders, including the fishing & coastal communities.

#### **5. DAC approved construction of six indigenous submarines**

Defence Acquisitions Council chaired by Defence Minister N Sitharaman approved indigenous construction of 6 submarines worth Rs 40000 Crore aimed at providing a major boost to submarine design and manufacturing ecosystem in India.

### News: Others

#### **1. Drone Regulations 1.0 can fetch India major slice of \$100 billion industry**

India's newly-announced Drone Regulation 1.0 is a step to open the use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft commonly known as drones for commercial activities. The global market for drones and drone powered solutions is expected to cross \$100 billion by 2023.

#### **2. Defence industries received Rs 1.21 cr FDI during 2014-18: Commerce Min**

FDI equity inflow of ₹ 1.21 Cr has been reported in the sector namely 'Defence Industries' during the period 2014-2018. In 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16, defence industries had received \$0.82 million, \$0.08 million & \$0.10 million foreign inflows respectively.

#### **3. The Army Technology Seminar-2019 organised by Indian Army**

Army Technology Seminar-2019 was organised on the theme "Disruptive Impact of Emerging Technologies on Land Warfare" at Maneckshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt, aimed to bring together stakeholders to provide perspective on technological paradigm in warfare.

#### 4. *General Purna Chandra Thapa Conferred the Honorary Rank of General of The Indian Army*

President Kovind conferred the Honorary Rank of General of the Indian Army on General Purna Chandra Thapa, for his immeasurable contribution to fostering Nepal's long and friendly association with India & his commendable military prowess.

#### Quick Revision

Exercise	Countries
SIMBEX – 2018	India & Singapore
Samudra Shakti – 2018	India & Indonesia
INDRA – 2018	India & Russia
Dharma Guardian - 2018	India & Japan
KONKAN - 2018	India & UK
Vajra Prahar - 2018	India & USA

### Agreements

#### News: Most Important

##### 1. *NHAI signed MoU with fuel retailers for issuing FASTags at petrol pump outlets*

National Highways Authority of India signed agreements with state-owned fuel retailers IOC, BPCL, and HPCL to ensure availability of **FASTags** (National Electronic Toll Collection Programme) at petrol pump outlets across India.

##### 2. *Cabinet nod for MOU between India and Denmark*

Union cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitating cross-border cooperation and investments in Maritime issues between India and Denmark.

##### 3. *Cabinet approval of MoU between India and Japan*

To promote Ease of Doing Business cabinet approved the MOU between India & Japan on Development of Advanced Model Single Window for business operations, and to develop a structure in which administrative procedures are completed in an expeditious manner.

##### 4. *SBI Card & Etihad Guest tie-up to launch premium card for international travel*

SBI Card & Etihad Guest joined hands to launch a travel specific Visa credit card for members & Indian travellers. The card will be available in 2 variants, Etihad Guest SBI Card & Etihad Guest SBI Premier Card. This is the **1<sup>st</sup> international** co-brand partnership of SBI Card.

##### 5. *Cabinet approval of MoU between India and Japan*

The cabinet approved the MOU between India & Japan on Development of **Advanced Model Single Window for business operations** to promote Ease of Doing Business and to develop a structure in which administrative procedures are completed in an expeditious manner.

##### 6. *MOU signed for development and facilitation of Agriculture R&D*

The Dept of Bio-Tech and ICAR have entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for emphasis on multi-disciplinary R&D activities and nurturing innovations in Agricultural Biotechnology Research and Education.

## News: Others

### 1. *Oil PSUs sign pact with IIT Bombay to set up centre of excellence*

IIT Bombay & 7 oil PSUs inked a MoU for setting up Centre of Excellence in Oil, Gas and Energy to develop a mechanism to link up our energy industry and academics & academics to address energy requirements with new and innovative, indigenous technology.

### 2. *Mahindra, Maharashtra govt sign MoU to develop tourism in Murud*

A subsidiary of Mahindra Lifespace Developers, Deep Mangal Developers signed MoU with Maharashtra govt to develop a 1300-acre eco-friendly tourist destination at Murud, Raigad. It will be the largest medical & wellness tourism investment in the state.

### 3. *Cabinet approval for MoC between India & Japan regarding Food Processing Industry*

MoC b/w India & Japan is expected to promote understanding of best practices in **food processing** in the two countries. It will improve the food processing sector as well as market access by introducing innovative techniques and processes.

### 4. *Cabinet approves MoU between India and Kuwait*

Cabinet approved MoU between India and Kuwait for cooperation on the **Recruitment of Domestic Workers**. It will help around 3 lakh Indian domestic workers deployed in Kuwait. A Joint Committee will be set up for the implementation of this MoU.

## **Books & Authors**

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Malala Yousafzai's new book*

Malala Yousufzai has come up with the new book, "We Are Displaced" about the Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World. It is considered as the depiction of her inner self, who was devastated from her homeland.

#### 2. *Universal Brotherhood Through Yoga book launched by Vice President*

Vice President Venkaiah Naidu released the book 'Universal Brotherhood through Yoga' compiled by Bhartiya Sanskrit Pitham at New Delhi, reiterating that yoga promotes physical wellbeing and inspires spiritual and intellectual awakening.

#### 3. *NITI Aayog releases the Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook*

Atal Innovation Mission (Under NITI Aayog) released the "Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook – Naye Dishayen, Naye Nirman, Naya Bharat" on the eve of the National Youth Day, to hail and take forward the spirit of Tinkering and Innovation across the country.

## News: Others

### 1. *Union HRD Minister inaugurates 27<sup>th</sup> edition of New Delhi World Book Fair*

Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the 27<sup>th</sup> edition of New Delhi World Book Fair. The theme of 2019 is 'Readers with Special Needs'. The theme emphasizes inclusive learning which includes audio, silent tactile & braille books for the specially-abled.

## 2. *The Forest of Enchantments, a new novel launched*

Author Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni launched her new novel, *The Forest of Enchantments*, rewriting Valmiki's epic, Ramayana with a feminist slant.

Books	Authored by/brought by
We Are Displaced	Malala Yousufzai
Universal Brotherhood through Yoga	Vice President Venkaiah Naidu
Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook – Naye Dishayen, Naye Nirman, Naya Bharat	Atal Innovation Mission
The Forest of Enchantments	Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

## Science & Technology

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *NHAI to monitor traffic at toll plazas using cloud-based tech*

NHAI is gearing up to monitor traffic using cloud-based system across toll plazas. It will send automatic alerts to concerned parties for immediate solutions. Automatic alerts like SMS, calls/ emails will be sent to authorities to find requisite solutions.

#### 2. *New NIC Command & Control Centre inaugurated*

Union Minister Ravi Shankar inaugurated New Command & Control Centre (CCC) and Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence by NIC, at New Delhi to guide private sector in applying artificial intelligence to improve consumer centric services.

#### 3. *ISRO developing technology to reuse first & second stages of rocket*

In a bid to cut cost of satellite launchers, ISRO is working on reusable launch technology for using the first & second stages of a rocket multiple times. Advanced version of the reusable launch technology (RLV) test will be conducted in June-July.

#### 4. *ROADEO: robot*

Chennai Traffic Police introduced a road safety robot named ROADEO, to help in traffic management and assist citizens. With this, Chennai became the second city after Mumbai to induct robots in traffic management.

#### 5. *Lotus-inspired biodegradable water repellent material developed*

A water-repelling, biodegradable material inspired by lotus leaves has been developed by a joint team of researchers from India, Switzerland and Italy. A technique called soft lithography was used to create micro-pillars of cellulose.

### News: Others

#### 1. *NASA's New Horizons spacecraft Historic Flyby of Ultima Thule*

The American space agency NASA's New Horizons spacecraft performed the farthest flyby in history as it approached the Kuiper Belt object Ultima Thule.

## 2. *Paper Sensor to detect freshness of Milk*

scientists at Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati have developed a simple paper kit that can test freshness of milk and tell how well it has been pasteurized.

## 3. *New planet discovered by NASA's probe*

NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) discovered a new world HD 21749b, 53 light years away in the constellation Reticulum.

## 4. *India's 1st manned mission to space by December 2021: ISRO Chief*

ISRO Chairman Dr K Sivan reiterated that human space centre is set up for this mission under Gaganyaan project. In this project India is planning to send 3 astronauts to outer space for 7 days and bring them back.

## 5. *Albumin – a better indicator of Diabetes*

Scientists from the National chemical laboratory, Pune indicates that the levels of free albumin and albumin attached to glucose molecules can be a better diagnostic test for diabetes.

## Environment

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *National Clean Air Programme launched to combat Air Pollution*

Centre has launched National Clean Air Programme to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024. It is a scheme to provide the States and the Centre with a framework to combat air pollution.

#### 2. *UK to support nitrogen research in India*

UK has announced a research project to study nitrogen pollution in India and South Asia. Nitrogen pollution is caused by emissions from chemical fertilisers, livestock manure, and burning of fossil fuels etc. It will include 50 organisations from UK and South Asia.

### News: Others

#### 1. *NGT imposes Rs 100 cr. fine on Meghalaya govt for failing to curb illegal mining*

NGT imposed a fine of whopping ₹ 100 cr. on Meghalaya govt for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state. The report of 3-member committee headed by **BP Kakoti** stated that around 24000 mines in Meghalaya & majority of them were operating illegally.

#### 2. *Trishna Gas project of ONGC*

National wildlife board has given the approval for the project which falls in the trishna wildlife sanctuary, Gomti district, Tripura. ONGC has discovered 10-12 gas bearing wells in the Trishna Wildlife sanctuary.

## Apps & Portals

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *Bhoomi Rashi Portal launched*

Ministry of Road Transport & Highways launched BhoomiRashi portal to cut short delays & avoid parking of public funds with Competent Authority for Land Acquisition. A BhoomiRashi is web-based portal & automate the entire process of land acquisition.

#### 2. *Digital system application for predicting thunderstorms/lightning*

Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) and IMD have developed a Mobile App called "DAMINI" to give alerts on impending lightning activity over a certain area. The DAMINI App is available from Google Stores.

#### 3. *Dharani portal for Real Estate Management*

Telangana CM launched Dharani portal, designed to combine land administration and registration services and function as single source for all land parcels and discharge land-related functions in an efficient and effective manner on near-real-time basis.

#### 4. *ITC's e-Choupal to turn aggregator*

E-Choupal, initiative from ITC aimed to web-enable farmers to overcome challenges related to information access and procurement, plans to launch a mobile version of the programme by middle of 2019.

### News: Others

#### 1. *Bokaro Steel Plant to launch 'TA Revenue App'*

BSL management has to launch online smart bill payment system, a revenue application which enables consumers to make instant payments of their house rent, water & electricity bills. Consumers residing in the BSL township areas can use this facility.

#### 2. *Rail Kumbh Seva Mobile App*

The app was launched by the North Central Railway division to help the devotees arriving Allahabad for the Kumbh Mela. The app will assist the devotees by providing valuable information regarding the Mela.

#### 3. *Jio launches Utility App for upcoming Kumbh mela*

Reliance Jio launched Kumbh JioPhone, an app with family locator, lost and found features and other customised services for the world's largest congregation Kumbh Mela to be held between January 15 and March 4, 2019 in Allahabad.

## Quick Revision

App/Platform/Portal	Launched by
TA Revenue App	Bokaro Steel Plant
Bhoomi Rashi Portal	Ministry of road transport & Highways
Rail Kumbh Seva	North Central Railway Division
Utility App	Reliance Jio
DAMINI	IITM & IMD
Dharani portal	Telangana CM
e-Choupal	ITC

## Acquisitions & Mergers

### News: Most Important

#### 1. *IDFC Bank re-named IDFC First Bank*

Private sector lender IDFC Bank changed its name to IDFC First Bank Ltd owing to the merger of the bank with Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC) Capital First on December 2018.

#### 2. *IndiaFirst Life Insurance buys stake in CSC e-Governance Services*

IndiaFirst Life Insurance recently bought 9% stake in CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd. with an objective to reach out to the masses and underserved customers with simple, easily accessed risk management solutions.

### News: Others

#### 1. *Bandhan Bank set to acquire Gruh Finance in share swap deal*

Bandhan Bank is set to acquire mortgage lender Gruh Finance via a share swap, which aimed at cutting the bank's promoter holding & expanding its housing finance portfolio. The swap is based on a 6-month weighted average price of the shares of the 2 companies.

#### 2. *SoftBank renames early venture arm with focus on Asia*

SoftBank Ventures Korea, the early-stage investment vehicle of Japanese internet conglomerate SoftBank Group, has renamed itself SoftBank Ventures Asia and will focus on finding artificial intelligence-related start-ups globally, with an emphasis on Asia.

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