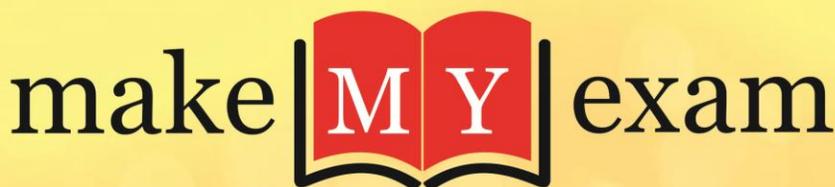


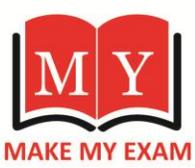
Monthly GK Capsule

December, 2018

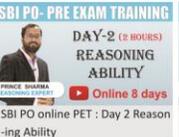


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National News

1. Government puts gold dore imports under restricted category

- ✦ The government put the imports of gold dore in restricted category.
- ✦ This means, now, an importer needs a license to import this commodity.
- ✦ Gold dore is a semi-pure alloy which is refined for further purification. Refined gold bars are manufactured from gold dore bar.
- ✦ India, the world's second-biggest gold consumer after China, imports about 900 tonnes of gold a year.

2. Train 18 is India's fastest: Country's first engine-less train crosses 180 kmph speed limit during trial run

- ✦ India's first locomotive-less train or Train 18 breached the 180 kmph speed limit during a test run.
- ✦ Train 18 breached the 180 kmph speed limit in the Kota-Sawai Madhopur section. In the process, the Rs 100 crore indigenously designed train has become the country's fastest train.
- ✦ It is about 15-20 per cent energy efficient and leaves less carbon footprint.
- ✦ The train sports an advanced regenerative braking system which saves power.

3. Hindustan Unilever board approves merger with GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare India

- ✦ FMCG major Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) has approved the merger with GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare (GSKCH India) through an all equity deal, valuing the total business of the latter at 31,700 crore.
- ✦ The transaction is an all equity merger with 4.39 shares of HUL being allotted for every share in GSKCH India, which sells consumer healthcare products, including popular drink brand Horlicks.
- ✦ The merger includes the totality of operations within GSK CH India, including a consignment selling contract to distribute GSK CH India's over-the-counter and oral health products in India.

4. The first ever Swadesh Darshan Project in the state of Nagaland to be inaugurated

- ✦ Development of Tribal Circuit: Peren-Kohima-Wokha Project" will be inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Nagaland, Shri Neiphiu Rio, in the presence of Union Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism.
- ✦ This is the first project to be implemented in the state under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- ✦ Swadesh Darshan scheme is one among the flagship schemes of the Ministry of Tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned and prioritised manner.

5. MHA Introduce 'A Handbook for Students on Cyber Safety' to Aware Students & Adolescents About Online Crimes & Threats

- ✦ In a bid to increase the awareness of cyber crimes and threats, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has come out with a booklet on cyber safety for school students and teenagers.
- ✦ This cybersecurity steps can be accessed online [cybercrime .gov. in](http://cybercrime.gov.in).
- ✦ As per the directions of Supreme court of India, MHA last year set up a Cyber and Information Security Division (C&IS) to check the rapid growth of cyber-crimes and cyber threats.

6. Delhi government launches common mobility card for buses, metro trains

- ✦ The Delhi government launched a common mobility card which can be used by people for travelling in metro trains, DTC and cluster buses.
- ✦ The minister along with Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Managing Director Mangu Singh launched the 'rebranded' common mobility card named 'ONE'.
- ✦ The 'ONE' cards with tagline 'One Delhi, One Ride' have a background of cubic grid in bright shades of red and yellow. It will also have a circular unit with sketches of metro trains, DTC buses, auto rickshaws and monuments of the city.

7. Delhi Government launches Free Pilgrimage Scheme for senior citizens

- ✦ Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwalla launched the 'Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana' which offers free travel packages for senior citizens from Delhi to five religious circuits. 1,100 senior citizens from every constituency of Delhi will be able to avail this facility at one go.
- ✦ Under this free pilgrimage scheme, a Delhi resident above 60 years will be eligible to take free pilgrimage along with his or her spouse.
- ✦ The scheme was approved by the Delhi Government on July 9, 2018. Earlier, the Delhi Cabinet had on January 8, 2018 approved the Revenue Department's proposal to begin with the Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana.

8. Cabinet approves Amendment of the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951

- ✦ The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Amendment of the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951.
- ✦ The decisions aims to suitably amend the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951 so as to secure representation as Trustees
- ✦ The proposed Amendment will empower the Government to terminate and replace a Trustee to participate in functioning of the Trust or for any other reason.

9. NITI Aayog Launches Global Hackathon On Artificial Intelligence

- ✦ NITI Aayog organises hackathons to source sustainable, innovative and technologically-enabled solutions to address various challenges in the development space.
- ✦ NITI Aayog organized its first hackathon, 'MoveHack' in August, on the sidelines of the Global Mobility Summit 2018, with the aim of garnering cutting-edge mobility applications.
- ✦ The 'AI 4 All Global Hackathon' was announced at the AI conference organized by NITI Aayog, in partnership with the ORF, held in Mumbai in November 2018.

10. Annual Startup India Venture Capital Summit 2018 to be held in Goa

- ✦ A Startup India Venture Capital Summit is being held in Goa with an endeavor to showcase the Indian startup opportunity for funds from around the world.
- ✦ The theme of the Summit is 'Mobilizing Global Capital for Innovation in India.'
- ✦ The key objectives of the Summit will be to showcase the India opportunity, increase capital flow for Indian startups and further promote ease of doing business.

11. Shri Prakash Javadekar to inaugurate Kala Utsav National Competition at New Delhi

- ✦ Union Minister of HRD, Shri Prakash Javadekar will inaugurate "Kala Utsav" (Festival of Arts) at Bal Bhavan, New Delhi on 12th December, 2018.
- ✦ Kala Utsav is an initiative of the Department of School Education and Literacy of the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- ✦ Kala Utsav National Competition was launched in 2015 with a view to promote arts in education by nurturing and showcasing the artistic talents of school students, children with special needs too will have the opportunity to display their talents.

12. Shri Nitin Gadkari flags off first container mainline vessel at Tuticorin

- ✦ Union Minister for Shipping and Road Transport & Highways and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation flagged off the first container mainline vessel from VoC Port (Tuticorin Port) along with Shri Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu.
- ✦ At present containers from Tuticorin to Far East countries viz Malaysia, Singapore, China and Hong Kong are transited by the feeder vessels to Colombo where they are further connected to the mother vessel .
- ✦ With the strategic location of the Port being so close to the East West Trade route and a draft of 16 m, the Port is poised to attract more mainline vessels and has the potential to become a transshipment hub of South India.

13. Home Ministry launches Twitter account to spread awareness about cybercrimes

- ✦ Home Ministry has launched a Twitter account to spread awareness about cybercrimes and normal precautions to be taken.

- ✦ The Twitter handles - @CyberDost - is aimed at enhancing people's basic knowledge about cybercrimes and precautions to be taken for prevention.
- ✦ Home Ministry said in the release that government is committed to creating an ecosystem to prevent and control cyber crimes to mitigate the possibility of disruption in normal business activities or losses due to cybercrimes.

14. TRS leader K. Chandrashekhara Rao sworn in as Telangana CM for second straight term

- ✦ Telangana Rashtra Samiti president K. Chandrashekhara Rao was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Telangana for the second term by Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan.
- ✦ Mr. Mohammed Mahmood Ali, who was Deputy Chief Minister holding the subject of revenue in the previous term, was the only Minister to be administered the oath of office along with Mr. Rao.
- ✦ In the recently concluded assembly election the TRS won 88 seats in the 119-member assembly, defeating the Congress-led 'Praja Kutami', which ended up with a tally of 21 while the BJP won just one seat in the state.
- ✦ Rao was unanimously elected leader of the TRS Legislature Party by the newly-elected MLAs. On Wednesday

15. Delhi HC bans online sale of medicines

- ✦ The Delhi High Court has ordered a ban on the sale of medicines online by e-pharmacists across India and has directed the Delhi government and the Centre to put the order into effect immediately
- ✦ The order was passed by Chief Justice Rajendra Menon and Justice VK Rao, acting on a PIL filed by Zaheer Ahmed, a New Delhi-based dermatologist.
- ✦ The Union Health Ministry in September had put out draft rules on sale of drugs online, aiming to regulate the sale across India and make medicines available from select authentic online portals.

16. Govt formulates Crisis Management Plan to counter cyber attacks

- ✦ The government has formulated a Crisis Management Plan to counter cyber attacks and cyber terrorism.
- ✦ It will be implemented by all Ministries and Departments of the Centre and the state governments in critical sectors.
- ✦ He said, several thousand Indian websites were hacked between 2016 and 2018. He added, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team or CERT-In conducts regular training programmes for network administrators to mitigate cyber attacks.

17. Ashok Gehlot named chief minister of Rajasthan; Sachin Pilot to be deputy chief minister

- ✦ Congress chosen Ashok Gehlot to be the chief minister of Rajasthan, while Sachin Pilot was chosen to be the deputy chief minister.

- ✦ Ashok Gehlot is the 15th chief minister of Rajasthan serving his third term since 1998. He is Congress party's national general secretary and in-charge of organizations and training.
- ✦ He is incubating this position from December 1998 to 2003 and from 2008 to 2013 and again from 17 December 2018.
- ✦ Congress had uprooted the BJP in the 200-seat assembly. Due to the death of the BSP candidate from Ramgarh seat in Alwar, only 199 seats went to poll, making the majority mark required to form the government 100.

18. India tops in road deaths; Globally fatalities increase by 1 lakh in 3 years: WHO report

- ✦ According to the Global Status Report on Road Safety, India reported a maximum of about 1.51 lakh road deaths in 2016 and globally the toll of road deaths increased from 1.25 million to 1.35 in a span of three years.
- ✦ The spike in road deaths globally has come as a shocker considering that the countries had pledged to halve their road deaths by 2020 when the United Nations had declared the 2010-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety.
- ✦ The United Nations had declared the 2010-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety.

19. Jammu And Kashmir Becomes First State To Bring Law Against "Sextortion"

- ✦ Jammu and Kashmir has become the first state in the country to have a law banning sexual exploitation of women by those in positions of authority, having a fiduciary relationship or a public servant.
- ✦ The State Administrative Council (SAC) under the chairmanship of Governor Satya Pal Malik approved the 'Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2018' and the 'Jammu and Kashmir Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018'
- ✦ The Jammu and Kashmir Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018 seeks to amend the Ranbir Penal Code, whereby specific offence under section 354 E is being inserted to provide for the offence of 'Sextortion'.

20. PM Modi Launches Rs. 33,000 Crore Metro, Housing Projects In Maharashtra

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid foundation stones for two metro lines and affordable housing projects entailing investment of over Rs. 33,000 crore in the megapolis.
- ✦ He also launched the Navi Mumbai town planning authority Cidco's (City & Industrial Development Corporation (Cidco) mass-housing scheme worth Rs. 18,000 crore, which offers around 89,771 affordable units under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.
- ✦ The 10.3-km elevated Dahisar-Mira Bhayander corridor (Metro-9) comprising eight stations, is expected to be completed by 2022, and the cost of the project is estimated at Rs. 6,607 crore.
- ✦ Maharashtra CM ; Devendra Fadnavis, Governor C Vidyasagar

21. Dr Jitendra Singh launches iGOT (Integrated Government Online Training Programme)

- ✦ The Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched the iGOT (Integrated Government Online Training Programme) developed by Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions.
- ✦ The initiative aims at “Competent Civil Services for Good Governance”. He also launched Hybrid Course on Administrative Laws developed by DoPT in collaboration with the premier law school, National Law School of India University (NLSIU).
- ✦ This online programme is a part of overall ‘Digital India’ flagship programme of the Government. The DoPT will encourage and keep adding more programmes to this platform.

22. Government Launches Asiatic Lion Conservation Project

- ✦ The Ministry of Environment, Government of India has launched the “Asiatic Lion Conservation Project
- ✦ The project aim to protect and conserve the world’s last ranging free population of Asiatic Lion and its associated ecosystem.
- ✦ Asiatic lions that once ranged from Persia (Iran) to Palamau in Eastern India were almost driven to extinction by indiscriminate hunting and habitat loss.
- ✦ The conservation of Asiatic Lions has always been a priority of Government of India. The Ministry in the past has supported Asiatic Lion in Gujarat by including it in list of 21 critically endangered species for recovery programme.

23. Assam govt announces 3 schemes for farmer's welfare

- ✦ Assam government has announced three schemes for the welfare of farmers. The schemes are the Assam Farmers’ Credit Subsidy Scheme (AFCSS), Assam Farmers’ Interest Relief Scheme (AFIRS) and Assam Farmers’ Incentive Scheme (AFIS).
- ✦ The state Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said all three schemes will cover five lakh farmers in the first phase.
- ✦ He said the state has 27 lakh agricultural households and the AFCSS scheme would benefit 2.62 lakh families of farmers.
- ✦ Under AFCSS, whatever amount of loan the farmers took from banks and whatever amount they repaid, 25 per cent of the money will be reimbursed by the state government.

24. ECO Niwas Samhita 2018-an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings launched

- ✦ Ministry of Power has launched the ECO Niwas Samhita 2018,an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings (ECBC-R).
- ✦ The Code was launched on the occasion of National Energy Conservation Day 2018 in the presence of Chief Guest Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon’ble Speaker, Lok Sabha and R.K. Singh, Minister of State (IC) for Power and New &Renewable Energy here.
- ✦ The implementation of this Codeis willgive a fillip to energy efficiency in residential sector. It aims to benefit the occupants and the environment by

promoting energy efficiency in design and construction of homes, apartments and townships.

25. President's Rule imposed in Jammu and Kashmir after 22 years

- ✦ The central government imposed President's rule in Jammu and Kashmir starting from December 20, 2018, as the Governor's rule expires in the state six months after it was imposed.
- ✦ A communication from the governor's office was sent to the centre and subsequently, it was moved to the Union Cabinet for its nod.
- ✦ President's rule was first imposed in the state in 1986, whereas the previous instance of President rule was 22 years ago.
- ✦ According to Indian Constitution, President's Rule is the imposition of Article 356 of the India Constitution on a state which gets incapable of running the constitutional machinery.

26. Gujarat emerges as best performing state in start-up ranking 2018

- ✦ Gujarat has emerged as the best performing state in the Startup Ranking 2018. The National Report on States' Startup Ranking was unveiled by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi.
- ✦ Gujarat, with 100 percentile, has performed better than all other states in all the seven areas including start up policy, incubation support, seeding innovation and scaling innovation.
- ✦ Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and Rajasthan, with a score of more than 85 percentile, have been adjudged the top performers.

27. Mobile application for Global Aviation Summit 2019 launched

- ✦ Union Minister of state for civil aviation Jayant Sinha launched an official mobile application for global aviation summit 2019.
- ✦ The Global Aviation Summit 2019 is scheduled to be held on January 15 and 16 in Mumbai.
- ✦ This event will enable the industry leaders to prepare a policy roadmap that will certainly provide a strong impetus to all players in the aviation ecosystem. The summit will also host various B2B, B2B and G2G meeting.

28. Railways launches new EMU train with 130 kmph speed

- ✦ The Integral Coach Factory (ICF) rolled out the mini version of Train 18 as it launched the new generation Mainline Electrical Multiple Unit (MEMU) with underslung equipment and some features from the Train 18.
- ✦ Train 18, a creation of the ICF is India's first modern semi-high speed train set which is currently under speed trials.
- ✦ Train 18 had many first time features including underslung propulsion that enabled the clearing of entire on-board space for passengers thus increasing the number of passengers.

29. Jharkhand Announces Rs 2,250-Crore Scheme to Help Farmers

- ✦ Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das announced a Rs 2,250-crore scheme to help 22.76 lakh medium and marginal farmers of the state double their income by 2022.
- ✦ The state government will give Rs 5,000 per acre to 22.76 lakh medium and marginal farmers from the next financial year.
- ✦ Under the new Mukhya Mantri Krishi Yojana, Rs 2,250 crore will be spent. The scheme will start from the 2019-20 financial year.

30. Andhra, Himachal and Madhya Pradesh best performing states under maternity benefit programme

- ✦ Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh were the top three performing states under the maternity benefit programme Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
- ✦ Minister of State for the Women and Child Development Ministry Virendra Kumar said the PMMVY is a centrally-sponsored scheme under which the cost sharing ratio between the Centre, states and the Union Territories with the legislation is 60:40.
- ✦ According to the finding, 51.70 lakh beneficiaries are covered annually under the PMMVY.

31. GST Council cuts rates on 17 items, 6 services; rationalises 28% slab

- ✦ The Goods and Services Tax Council cut rates on 17 items and six types of services during its 31st meeting, leaving only one common use item — cement — in the 28% bracket.
- ✦ Seven items that saw tax rates being slashed from the 28% bracket are certain vehicle parts used in agriculture, monitors and TVs up to 32 inches, retreaded tyres, power banks, digital cameras, videogame consoles (all from 28% to 18%), and parts and accessories for the carriages for disabled persons.
- ✦ Four items, mainly to do with cork, saw their tax rates cut from 18% to 12% and 5%. Another four items saw rates cut from 12%, and two from 5%.

32. Manipur Assembly Passes Anti-Mob Violence Bill

- ✦ The Manipur assembly has passed a bill which recommends life imprisonment for those involved in mob violence, if it results in the death of a person.
- ✦ Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, who also holds charge of the home department, moved the 'The Manipur Protection from Mob Violence Bill, 2018' in the state Assembly.
- ✦ The bill was passed by the assembly unanimously. The Assembly also passed the Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018 unanimously.

33. NABCB Accreditation Secures Recognition in Asia- Pacific Region

- ✦ The National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), India's national accreditation body, has secured equivalence for its accreditation

programme for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OHSMS) Certification Bodies in Asia- Pacific region.

- ✦ It has signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) of the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) on 19 December 2018.
- ✦ NABCB is the third accreditation body in the Asia Pacific Region to become internationally equivalent in the region, the other two being the accreditation bodies of Hong Kong and Mexico.

34. Tamil Nadu: India's first music museum to be set up in Thiruvaiyaru

- ✦ The country's first music museum will be set up with assistance from the Central government in Thiruvaiyaru, Tamilnadu, the birth place of Saint Tyagaraja, one of the Trinities of Carnatic music.
- ✦ This was announced by the State Minister for Culture and Tamil Development Shri K Pandiarajan in Madurai.
- ✦ The Tyagaraja Aaradhana Music Festival which is held annually in January in Thiruvaiyaru attracts musical talents from all over the world.

35. PM Narendra Modi releases Rs 100 coin in memory of Atal Bihari Vajpayee

- ✦ Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin worth Rs 100 in honour of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who died in August this year.
- ✦ The commemorative coin features the Emblem of India on the front face. The words Satyamev Jayate are inscribed below the Lion Capital of Ashoka Pillar in Devanagari script. Also inscribed on the coin are the words 'Bharat' in Devanagari and 'India' in Roman script.
- ✦ The reverse side of the coin features a portrait of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his name inscribed in both Devanagari and Roman.

36. Narendra Modi launched website of Cyber Coordination Centre during DGP Conference

- ✦ This year's Conference of Director Generals of Police held a special significance because it was organized at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Gujarat, under the shadow of the Statue of Unity.
- ✦ The Prime Minister also launched the website of the Cyber Coordination Centre. This is a one stop shop on all cyber related issues, whether it is cyber crime or cyber security.
- ✦ The focus of the Conference was on achieving better coordination amongst all the Police forces.

37. Sadaiv Atal' dedicated to nation; Prez, PM pay tributes to Vajpayee, Malaviya

- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tributes to former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee and dedicated his memorial "Sadaiv Atal" to the nation on his 94th birth anniversary.
- ✦ The President also remembered freedom fighter Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on his birth anniversary.

- ✦ Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as the Prime Minister of India for a term of 13 days in 1996, then for a period of 13 months from 1998 to 1999, and finally, for a full term 1999 to 2004.

38. PM Opens India's Longest Railroad Bridge In Assam's Bogibeel

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened the Bogibeel railroad bridge in Assam, billed as India's longest railroad bridge. Its foundation was laid in 1997.
- ✦ The five-kilometre structure spans the waters of the mighty Brahmaputra River. Bogibeel bridge will connect Assam's Dibrugarh and Dhemaji districts, bordering Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✦ It will cut the travel time between the two points by four hours and help avoid a 170-km detour.
- ✦ With its proximity to the China border, the bridge also has tremendous significance for India's defence and has been built strong enough to support the movement of tanks and even fighter jet landings.

39. Power ministry mandates use of smart prepaid meters from April 2019

- ✦ The government has mandated the use of smart prepaid electricity meters in the country beginning April next year, as it looks to complete the transition over the next three years.
- ✦ Power minister R.K Singh has, in the past, made a strong pitch for smart and pre-paid metering as a means of making state utilities more efficient and bringing down their losses.
- ✦ Smart meters are a part of the overall advanced metering infrastructure solutions (AMI) aimed at better demand response designed to reduce energy consumption during peak hours.

40. Govt extends ban on import of milk products from China for 4 months

- ✦ The government has further extended the ban on import of milk and its products, including chocolates, from China for four months till April 23 next year.
- ✦ The ban was first imposed in September 2008 and later extended from time to time.
- ✦ The ban was imposed on apprehensions of presence of melamine in some milk consignments from China. Melamine is a toxic chemical used for making plastics and fertilisers.

41. Aadhaar not mandatory for admission in schools: UIDAI

- ✦ The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has asserted that schools cannot make the 12-digit biometric identifier a pre-condition for student admission.
- ✦ UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey said in New Delhi that asking for Aadhaar cards for admissions is not as per the provisions of law and doing so will be against the recent order of the Supreme Court.

- ✦ The court had held that Aadhaar would remain compulsory for filing of Income Tax returns and allotment of Permanent Account Number, as well as welfare schemes.
- ✦ UIDAI's clarification comes at a time when admissions to nursery and entry-level classes have begun in over 1,500 private schools in Delhi

42. Atal Ayushman Yojana launched in Uttarakhand

- ✦ Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana' has been launched in the hill state. Under the scheme, each household in the state will be able to avail medical treatment of up to 5 lakh rupees annually.
- ✦ The scheme will benefit 23 lakh households and cover 1,350 critical diseases. Launching the Yojna in Dehradun , Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat distributed scheme-related golden cards to beneficiaries.
- ✦ He also signed Memoranda of Understanding with private hospitals and announced that soon free of cost OPD facilities will be available for children and elderly people in the state.

43. Power ministry mandates use of smart prepaid meters from April 2019

- ✦ The government has mandated the use of smart prepaid electricity meters in the country beginning April next year, as it looks to complete the transition over the next three years.
- ✦ For this, state-owned Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) introduced two global tenders for procuring a total of 10 million smart meters.
- ✦ The government also plans to install 10 million prepaid meters in Uttar Pradesh as part of the Saubhagya scheme which aims to electrify over four crore households till March 2019.

44. National Children's Science Congress Begins In Bhubaneswar

- ✦ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated 26th edition of National Children's Science Congress in Bhubaneswar in which as many as 800 students from ten Asian and seven Gulf countries are participating.
- ✦ It is for the second time that the National Children's Science Congress is being organized in Odisha. Earlier, the mega event was held in 2015.
- ✦ Odisha government is focusing on developing scientific temper among students by organizing events and setting up science parks and planetariums at district levels.

45. Lok Sabha clears Triple Talaq Bill as opposition walks out

- ✦ The Parliament passed the historic triple talaq bill that penalises the archaic practice of instant triple talaq after a charged up five-hour debate in the Lok Sabha.
- ✦ On a day when leaders across the benches accused each other of playing to their vote bank, the government asserted that the bill was urgently needed as triple talaq was a rampant menace despite the ordinance.

- ✦ Finally, the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill 2018 will supersede the previous bill passed on December 28, 2017 and will go to the Rajya Sabha for approval.
- ✦ The bill makes the all declaration of triple talaq, including in written or electronic form, to be void (i.e. not enforceable in law) and illegal. Talaq-e-biddat.

46. NITI Aayog to Release Second Delta Ranking under the Aspirational Districts Programme

- ✦ NITI Aayog will release the Second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP). Shri Amitabh Kant, CEO NITI Aayog will release the Second Delta Ranking under ADP and brief the media on this occasion.
- ✦ The districts have been ranked in a transparent basis on parameters across Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure through key performance indicators.
- ✦ The rankings are based on the data that is publicly available through the Champions of Change Dashboard, which includes data entered on a real-time basis at the district level.

47. Railways develops robot powered by artificial intelligence to check for faults in trains

- ✦ The Indian Railway's Central Zone has developed a robot powered by artificial intelligence to take pictures and record videos of the under-gears of trains and send them to engineers for repairs and maintenance.
- ✦ The mechanical branch of Central Railway's Nagpur division has developed the robot, which has been named USTAAD, an acronym for Undergear Surveillance Through Artificial Intelligence Assisted Droid.
- ✦ It will use a high-definition camera to scrutinise parts of train coaches in real time and transmit them over a WiFi connection.

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

- ✦ Union Minister Nitin Gadkarilaid the foundation stone of 11 projects for Yamuna Rejuvenation under Namami Gange Programme in New Delhi.
- ✦ Speaking on the occasion, Mr Gadkari said the water quality in Ganga has improved substantially.
- ✦ He also stated that the air pollution and water pollution that affects Delhi will soon be gotten rid of.

49. India's First Vertical-Lift Bridge To Reconnect Rameswaram With Mainland

- ✦ Railways will build the country's first vertical-lift bridge connecting Rameswaram in Arabian Sea to mainland India that will allow ships and steamers to pass through without any hinderance, replacing the existing 104-year-old Pamban bridge.

- ✦ The bridge, over two-kilometre-long, which is likely to cost Rs. 250 crore, will have a 63-metre stretch which will lift up while remaining parallel to the deck to allow access to the ships.
- ✦ It will be three-metre higher than the existing bridge with navigational air clearance of 22 metre above sea level. Because of the vertical lift, full horizontal width of 63m will be available for navigation.

50. Govt bans Khalistan Liberation Force

- ✦ The government has banned Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) for its involvement in several killings, bombings and other terror activities during its violent campaign for "secession of Punjab".
- ✦ The decision to ban the outfit under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) comes in the backdrop of agencies unearthing several KLF modules in recent months which has led to apprehensions that it is attempting to revive militancy in the state.
- ✦ The complete ban on Khalistan Liberation Force(KLF) has been brought into effect because of its proven contribution towards the increment in the number of events for extortion, kidnappings, bank robberies and assassination attempts of significant Government functionaries.

International News & Foreign Affairs

1. Trump signs trade pact with Canada and Mexico to replace Nafta

- ✦ Donald Trump and the leaders of Canada and Mexico signed a revised North American trade pact, a deal that fulfills a key political pledge by the US president but faces an uncertain future in the US Congress.
- ✦ The US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is meant to replace the 24-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta), which Trump has long denigrated as a "disaster".
- ✦ The deal requires ratification by all three countries legislatures before taking effect.

2. The Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Peru sign Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters

- ✦ An Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Peru on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters was signed on the side-lines of the 80th Session of the Policy Commission Meeting of the World Customs Organisations.
- ✦ The Agreement provides a legal framework for sharing of information and intelligence between the Customs authorities of the two countries and will help in the proper application of Customs laws, prevention and investigation of Customs offences.

- ✦ The Agreement is expected to facilitate trade and ensure efficient clearance of goods traded between the two countries.

3. President Kovind to embark on 4-day visit to Myanmar

- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind will be on a four-day visit to Myanmar.
- ✦ The visit is expected to maintain the momentum generated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Myanmar in September last year and the visit of Myanmar State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to New Delhi in January this year.
- ✦ Through this visit, the President will reaffirm India's commitment to developing an important partnership with Myanmar.
- ✦ He will also visit various development projects funded by India. Myanmar is a country where India's "Act East" and "Neighbourhood First" policies intersect.

4. India signs bilateral annual Haj agreement with Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage next year

- ✦ India signed the Bilateral Annual Haj 2019 Agreement with Saudi Arabia for the pilgrimage next year at Jeddah.
- ✦ At the event, Naqvi said the Saudi government has always played an active and effective role to ensure safety and better facilities to Indian Haj pilgrims, which strengthened bilateral relations.
- ✦ India-Saudi Arabia relations have achieved newer heights under the leadership and guidance of Saudi Arabia's King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✦ The Haj Committee of India has received more than 2.47 lakh applications for Haj next year of which around 1.36 lakh were online, Naqvi said, adding of the total number of applicants, 47 per cent are women.

5. Nepal government bans use of Indian currency notes above Rs 100

- ✦ The Nepal government has banned the use of Indian currency notes of Rs 2,000, Rs 500 and Rs 200 denominations in the country, The government said Rs 100 notes can be used in the country.
- ✦ This move will affect Nepali workers in India and Indian tourists. The Nepal government is also making preparations to celebrate 2020 as the "Visit Nepal Year"
- ✦ The announcement was made by Nepal's Minister for Information and Communications Gokul Prasad Baskota.

6. Kannur International Airport Now Open, First Flight Goes To Abu Dhabi

- ✦ Union Minister Suresh Prabhu and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the Kannur international airport, taking the total number of international airports in Kerala to four.
- ✦ The first flight from the airport, an Air India Express flight with 180 passengers to Abu Dhabi, was flagged off by the chief guests.

- ✦ The three other international airports in Kerala are in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode.

7. West Jerusalem as Capital of Israel recognized by Australia

- ✦ Israel signalled displeasure on Sunday with Australia's recognition of West Jerusalem as its capital, with a confidant of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying it was a mistake to gainsay Israeli control over the whole city.
- ✦ Israel captured Arab East Jerusalem in a 1967 war and annexed it as its capital in a move not recognized internationally. Palestinians want East Jerusalem as capital of the state they hope to found in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
- ✦ Both Israel and the Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital.

8. India ranks 108th in WEF gender gap index 2018

- ✦ India has been ranked 108th in World Economic Forum (WEF) gender gap index, same as 2017, while recording improvement in wage equality for similar work and fully closing its tertiary education gender gap for the first time.
- ✦ As per the WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2018 sub index, while India has many challenges as it ranks 142nd out of 149 countries in the economic opportunity and participation
- ✦ The global list was topped by Iceland having closed more than 85.8 per cent of its overall gender gap. Iceland holds the top spot in the index for the 10th consecutive year.

9. India, South Korea agree to increase bilateral trade to USD 50 billion by 2030

- ✦ India and South Korea explored new avenues of Korean investment in India's infrastructure modernisation, and agreed to intensify their efforts to increase bilateral trade to USD 50 billion by 2030.
- ✦ They also shared concerns that terrorism in all its forms is a "global scourge" and resolved to combat it through coordinated regional and global efforts.
- ✦ The Indian side also extended an invitation to South Korea to join the International Solar Alliance as South Korea as an indispensable partner in India's 'Act East' policy.

10. UN General Assembly adopts global framework on International migration

- ✦ The UN General Assembly has adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the first-ever negotiated global framework on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions.
- ✦ It is meant to address issues that concern the world's 258 million people on the move and countries of origin, transit and destination.
- ✦ The compact was adopted by the General Assembly with 152 votes in favour in Marrakesh, Morocco, on December 10.

11. Burundi names Gitega as new capital

- ✦ Burundi declared the small central city of Gitega the country's new political capital in line with a presidential promise made a decade ago.
- ✦ A government spokesman named Gitega while also stating that the previous capital Bujumbura, on the north-eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, would in future function solely as the country's economic centre.
- ✦ Capital-Gitega, Currency-Euro

12. 1st meeting of Follow-up Committee for implementation of Trilateral Chabahar Agreement held

- ✦ The first meeting of the Follow-up Committee for implementation of the Trilateral Chabahar Agreement between India, Afghanistan and Iran was held in the port city of Chabahar in Iran.
- ✦ India Ports Global Limited company opened its office and took over operations at Chabahar on this occasion.
- ✦ They agreed on the routes for the trade and transit corridors between the three countries. It was agreed to finalise at the earliest the Protocol to harmonize transit, roads, customs, and consular matters.

13. Thailand becomes 1st country in Southeast Asia to legalize medical marijuana

- ✦ Thailand's legislature agreed to amend the country's drug law to allow the licensed medical use of marijuana, as well as kratom, a locally grown plant traditionally used as a stimulant and painkiller.
- ✦ Thailand is the first country in Southeast Asia to take such action, which is also under consideration in neighboring Malaysia.
- ✦ New Zealand's government earlier this month enacted a law liberalizing the medical use of marijuana, which had previously been tightly restricted.

14. India takes over operations of Iran's strategic Chabahar Port, can bypass Pak on way to Afghanistan

- ✦ India formally took over operations at Chabahar port in Iran, giving a major boost to the country's efforts to support war-torn Afghanistan, people familiar with developments said.
- ✦ Iran formally handed over the port to India during a first meeting of the follow-up committee for the implementation of the Chabahar Agreement between Iran, Afghanistan, and India in the port city Tehran.
- ✦ The meeting discussed matters such customs tariffs, promoting customs transactions and rail transit, and the transportation process.

15. Putin heralds successful tests of Russia's new Avangard hypersonic nuclear weapons

- ✦ Russian president Vladimir Putin has announced the successful final testing of a new hypersonic nuclear-capable weapon.
- ✦ Speaking at an end-of-year meeting with the government, Mr Putin said the weapon, named "Avangard", had been launched from Orenburg region in

European Russia, hitting its target in eastern Kamchatka nearly 4,000 miles away.

- ✦ The Avangard glide vehicle is one of six weapons announced in the president's State of the Nation speech on the eve of his March re-election.

16. India announces Rs 4,500 crore assistance to Bhutan

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi on announced a Rs 4,500 crore financial assistance to Bhutan for its 12th five-year plan after holding wide-ranging talks with his Bhutanese counterpart Lotay Tshering.
- ✦ India will contribute Rs 4,500 crore in Bhutan's 12th five-year plan.
- ✦ In his media statement, Modi said hydro power cooperation with Bhutan is a key aspect of bilateral ties and that work on the Mangdechhu project will soon be completed.

Banking

17. India's economy grows at 7.1 per cent for 2nd part of 2018-19

- ✦ India's economy grew at 7.1 per cent for the second quarter of 2018-19 according to data released by Central Statistics Office(CSO).
- ✦ The CSO estimates state that GDP at constant prices was 33.98 lakh crore rupees for second quarter this fiscal, which is a marked increase from 31.72 lakh crore rupees for the same period in 2017-18.
- ✦ He further stated that the government's focus on simplifying India's business and investment eco-system has greatly improved India's economic health in the recent past.

18. Net Stable Funding Ratio Norms To Become Operational From April 2020: RBI

- ✦ The RBI said NSFR norms that mandate banks to maintain a stable funding profile in relation to the composition of their assets and off-balance sheet activities will be operational from April 2020.
- ✦ The NSFR is defined as the amount of available stable funding relative to the amount of required stable funding.
- ✦ The NSFR norms were thus issued and from the aforesaid date the NSFR norms would be active in the Indian banking sector.

19. Mauritius' State Bank gets RBI approval to merge operations with its Indian subsidiary

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India has approved merger of SBM (Mauritius), India with SBM Bank (India).

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India has sanctioned the Scheme of amalgamation of the entire undertaking of SBM Bank (Mauritius) Limited.
- ✦ The scheme will come into force with effect from December 01, 2018, it said further. All the branches of SBM Bank (Mauritius) Limited in India will function as branches of SBM Bank (India) Limited with effect from December 01, 2018.

20. Government of India and Asian Development Bank Sign \$85 Million Loan to Support Odisha Skill Development Project

- ✦ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a 85 million dollar loan to improve the skill development eco-system in Odisha
- ✦ The signatories to the Odisha skill development project were Sameer Kumar, Department of Economic affairs, Ministry of Finance.
- ✦ The Project will improve the quality and industry- relevance of the state's TVET programs by making them relevant to industry and demand driven and will impart advanced occupation.

21. World Bank unveils USD 200 bn in climate action investment for 2021-25

- ✦ The World Bank has unveiled 200 billion US Dollars in climate action investment for 2021 to 2025, adding that this amounts to a doubling of its current five-year funding.
- ✦ The World Bank said, the move represents a significantly ramped up ambition to tackle climate change and sends an important signal to the wider global community to do the same.
- ✦ In the 2018 fiscal year, running from July 2017 to June 2018, the World Bank had committed USD 20.5 billion to climate action, compared with an annual average of USD 13.5 billion for the 2014-2018 period.

22. Paisabazaar will now tell you chance of your loan application approval on its platform

- ✦ Online lending marketplace Paisabazaar has launched a new feature by the name of 'Chance of Approval' on its website which will help its loan applicants chose the most suited lender on the platform.
- ✦ With the Chance of Approval feature, they are bringing Indian consumers one step closer to the best international consumer experience for lending products.
- ✦ The 'Chance of Approval' feature will match a borrower's profile, like income, credit score, age etc., with the various lending criteria of banks.
- ✦ CEO of paisabazaar.com is Naveen Kukreja.

23. Government appoints Lalit Kumar as its nominee on ICICI Bank

- ✦ The government has appointed Lalit Kumar, a 1995-batch Indian Economic Service (IES) officer as the new government nominee on private sector ICICI Bank.
- ✦ Kumar who is at present an Economic Advisor in the department of financial services of the finance ministry will replace Lok Ranjan, who has been laterally transferred to Department of Personnel and Training (DOPT).

- ✦ Lalit Kumar has also worked with the insurance regular (Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India) as an executive director and financial adviser.
- ✦ ICICI Bank MD& CEO: Mr. Sandeep Bakshi.

24. Fitch slashes India growth forecast to 7.2% on reduced credit availability

- ✦ Fitch Ratings slashed India's GDP growth forecast to 7.2 per cent for current fiscal, from 7.8 per cent projected in September, citing higher financing cost and reduced credit availability.
- ✦ In its Global Economic Outlook, Fitch estimated India's GDP growth to be 7 per cent and 7.1 per cent in financial years 2019-20 and 2020-21 respectively.
- ✦ The 7.2 per cent GDP growth for current fiscal is substantially lower than 7.8 per cent and 7.4 per cent projections made by Fitch in September and June respectively.

25. Exim Bank extends USD 500 mn loan to Tanzania for water projects

- ✦ Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) has extended a credit facility of USD 500 million (about Rs 3,542 crore) to Tanzania for water supply projects in the African country.
- ✦ Under this agreement, of the total credit by Exim Bank, goods and services of value of at least 75 percent of the contract price shall be supplied by the seller from India.
- ✦ Exim Bank signed an agreement on May 10, 2018, with the Tanzania government for making available a Government of India-supported line of credit of USD 500 million for the purpose of financing water supply schemes.

26. India to retain top position in remittances with \$80 billion:World Bank

- ✦ India will retain its position as the world's top recipient of remittances this year with its diaspora sending a whopping USD 80 billion back home.
- ✦ India is followed by China (USD 67 billion), Mexico and the Philippines (USD 34 billion each) and Egypt (USD 26 billion).
- ✦ The Bank estimates that officially-recorded remittances to developing countries will increase by 10.8 per cent to reach USD 528 billion in 2018. This new record level follows a robust growth of 7.8 per cent in 2017.

27. AIIB Clears \$400 million loan for water supply project in Andhra Pradesh

- ✦ The board of Beijing-headquartered Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's (AIIB) has approved a \$400-million loan for a water sanitation project in Andhra Pradesh, taking the overall exposure of the bank to India to \$2 billion spread over nine projects. India is the second largest shareholder of the bank after China.
- ✦ The new project is expected to have a positive impact on women and girls in affected communities, the bank said in a statement.
- ✦ The project will also reduce health risks and health expenditures for women in Andhra Pradesh.

28. The Government of India and ADB sign a \$31 Million Loan Agreement to develop Tourism and boost Jobs in Tamil Nadu

- ✦ The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a Loan Agreement for \$31 million to build-up the State Tourism Industry and boost visitor arrivals.
- ✦ The Project will support the conservation and restoration of eight heritage monuments, one museum, three temples, and a pond.
- ✦ The total cost of the Project is \$44.04 million, of which the Government will provide \$13.04 million. The estimated completion date is June 2020.
- ✦ Approved in September 2010, the \$250 million IDIPT aims to build opportunities for local communities and boost local economy by enhancing tourism in three other states – Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand – besides Tamil Nadu.

29. Jana Small Finance Bank Launches Jana Bankable Debit Card

- ✦ Jana Small Finance Bank launched the offer-loaded, Jana Bankable Debit Card. Jana Small Finance Bank is the official sponsor of BCCI for all the cricket matches that are played in India.
- ✦ This card is designed for cricket fans who like deals and offers on online shopping, gym membership, health & wellness products, food delivery, music and travel on top brands like Snap Fitness, Snapdeal, Gaana.com, IXIGO, Myntra, Crocs, Puma and GrowFit.
- ✦ With plethora of benefits and Indian cricketers' images on the card, this Debit Card is the first-of-its-kind debit card from Jana Small Finance Bank.

30. Bandhan Bank surges 6% as RBI allows it to open 40 new branches

- ✦ Bandhan Bank shares surged over 6% as the Reserve Bank of India allowed Bandhan Bank to open as many as 40 new branches, the first time since it put a restriction on the bank's branch opening spree three months back.
- ✦ RBI had come down heavily on Bandhan Bank in the last week of September for its failure to bring down promoters' stake to 40 per cent as per the licensing agreement.
- ✦ Bandhan Financial Holdings (BFHL) is owned by Bandhan Financial Services (BFSL). The promoter holding in the bank currently stands at 82.28 per cent.

31. Sebi eases norms around cyber security ops for small market intermediaries

- ✦ Market regulator SEBI relaxed guidelines pertaining to setting up cyber security operations centre for small market intermediaries as they lack knowledge in cyber security.
- ✦ The decision has been taken after discussions with market participants, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).
- ✦ Under new framework, Small intermediaries can utilize services of market Security Operations Center (SCO) which will be set up by the Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIS).

32. Capital First, IDFC Bank rally 5% on merger to create IDFC First Bank

- ✦ Capital First and IDFC Bank shares rallied 5 percent intraday after the both companies announced completion of their merger on Tuesday. Both shares had also gained 5 percent each in previous session.
- ✦ The board of IDFC Bank approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan, founder and chairman of Capital First Ltd, as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the merged entity.
- ✦ According to the merger agreement, shareholders will receive 139 shares of IDFC Bank for each 10 shares held of Warburg Pincus-backed Capital First.

33. World Bank : Efficiency gap in India's Power sector costs 4% of GDP

- ✦ India has made great strides in expanding access to electricity in recent years, as more than 130 million people joined the power grid since 2013.
- ✦ 24 hours power supply would increase rural households income by \$9.4 billion and eliminate \$22.7 billion of business losses.
- ✦ Cheap electricity for agriculture made India the world's largest user of groundwater - a non-renewable resource - with consumption increasing 700% from 1950 to 2014.

34. RBI limits total outstanding ECBs to 6.5% of GDP

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced a cap on the outstanding stock of external commercial borrowings (ECB) at 6.5 per cent of GDP at current market prices.
- ✦ The decision to have a "rule-based dynamic limit" for outstanding stock of ECB at 6.5 per cent of GDP at current market prices has been taken in consultation with the government.
- ✦ ECBs refer to commercial loans in the form of bank loans, securitised instruments (floating rate notes and fixed rate bonds, non-convertible, optionally convertible or partially convertible preference shares), buyers' credit, suppliers' credit availed of from non-resident lenders with a minimum average maturity of 3 years.

35. Karnataka Bank partners with Paisabazaar.com for home loans

- ✦ Paisabazaar.com, India's largest online marketplace for financial products, and Karnataka Bank announced a strategic partnership to offer the bank's home loan product to customers on the Paisabazaar platform.
- ✦ Through this partnership, consumers will now be able to choose and apply for a home loan from Karnataka Bank, directly through the Paisabazaar platform.
- ✦ Paisabazaar.com works with 30 partners for its home loan product, which includes India's biggest private and public banks and HFCs

36. RBI shortlists TCS, Wipro, IBM, 3 others for setting up Public Credit Registry

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India has shortlisted six major IT companies, including TCS, Wipro and IBM India, to set up a wide-based digital Public Credit Registry (PCR) for capturing details of all borrowers and wilful defaulters
- ✦ The proposed PCR will also include data from entities like market regulator Sebi, the corporate affairs ministry, Goods and Service Tax Network (GSTN) and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) to enable banks and financial institutions to get a 360-degree profile of the existing as well as prospective borrowers on a real-time basis.
- ✦ The other three shortlisted vendors are: Capgemini Technology Services India, Dun & Bradstreet Information Services India, and MindtreeLtd.

37. RBI to soon release new Rs 20 currency note

- ✦ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will soon introduce a new Rs 20 currency note with additional features, according to a document of the central bank.
- ✦ The central bank has already issued new look currency notes in the denominations of Rs 10, Rs 50, Rs 100, and Rs 500, besides introducing Rs 200 and Rs 2,000 bank notes.
- ✦ According to the RBI data bank, there were 4.92 billion pieces of Rs 20 note in circulation as on March 31, 2016. The number more than doubled to about 10 billion pieces by March 2018.

38. RBI relaxes withdrawal limit for depositors of City Co-operative Bank

- ✦ The Reserve Bank has increased the withdrawal limit for depositors of City Co-operative Bank Ltd, Mumbai, to Rs 5,000.
- ✦ Amid weakening of the financial position of the cooperative bank, the RBI in April had imposed several restrictions on it, including limiting the withdrawal by depositors to Rs 1,000.
- ✦ Now the RBI has modified its April directions in relation to the bank.
- ✦ The City Co-operative Bank, without RBI's prior approval, cannot grant or renew any loans and advances, make any investment, and sell, transfer or otherwise dispose any of its properties or assets except as notified in the RBI directions of April 17.

New Appointments & Person in News

1. Shri Ravindra Kumar Verma assumes charge as Technical Member in the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity

- ✦ Shri Ravindra Kumar Verma has assumed the charge as Technical Member in the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL), Ministry of Power for a period of 03 years.

- ✦ Verma has served in various capacities in Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for more than 37 years. “He has rich and varied experience of power sector in generation, transmission, distribution and grid operation
- ✦ Verma had superannuated as Chairperson of CEA and Ex-officio Secretary to the Government of India on 30 June this year.

2. Bank of Maharashtra appoints AS Rajeev as MD, CEO

- ✦ A S Rajeev has joined Bank of Maharashtra as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer on 2nd December 2018. Prior to this, he was Executive Director of Indian Bank from 22 January 2016.
- ✦ Rajeev is having about three decades of professional experience in three Banks - Syndicate Bank, Vijaya Bank and Indian Bank.
- ✦ State-owned Bank of Maharashtra announced that A S Rajeev has joined the lender as its Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer.

3. Pawan Singh first Indian to be elected in ISSF's judges committee

- ✦ Pawan Singh has become the first Indian to be elected one of seven members of the Judges Committee of the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF).
- ✦ Mr Singh also holds the post of the Joint Secretary General of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).
- ✦ Mr Singh got elected onto the seven members' Judges Committee for which 22 candidates from all over the world were in the fray. Members of the administrative council of ISSF voted to select the committee during the elections held at Munich.

4. Former international Athlete and businessman Jon Ridgeon announced as new IAAF Chief Executive office

- ✦ The IAAF announced the appointment of Jon Ridgeon as its new CEO following approval by the IAAF Council on the first day of its 215th Council Meeting in Monaco.
- ✦ Ridgeon, 51, has spent his life in sport, starting out as an athlete competing in both the 110m hurdles and 400m hurdles between 1984 and 1996. He is former British record holder and silver medallist in the 110m hurdles in the 1987 World Championships in Rome.
- ✦ International Association of Athletics Federation Headquarters in Monaco.

5. Salman Khan tops Forbes' richest Indian celebrity list for third time, Shah Rukh drops out of top 10

- ✦ Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is the richest Indian celebrity, according to the 2018 Forbes India Celebrity 100 list, which he has topped for the third consecutive year. Shah Rukh Khan has fallen out of the top 10 list.
- ✦ The 2018 Forbes India Celebrity 100 List rankings are based on estimates of entertainment-related earnings of celebrities. The period under consideration is October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018.

- ✦ The actor's earnings are pegged at Rs 253.25 crore. Salman, 52, cemented his place in the top spot thanks to the commercial success of his movies

6. Axis Capital CEO Dharmesh Mehta resigns

- ✦ Dharmesh Mehta has resigned as the managing director and chief executive officer of Axis Capital, the investment banking firm's parent entity Axis Bank Ltd
- ✦ The private-sector lender has elevated Salil Pitale and Chirag Negandhi as joint MDs and co-CEOs with immediate effect to replace Mehta. It has sought regulatory approvals for the appointments.
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7. Govt appoints Krishnamurthy Subramanian as Chief Economic Advisor

- ✦ Narendra Modi-led NDA government appointed Krishnamurthy Subramanian as Chief Economic Advisor for a period of 3 years.
- ✦ A PhD from Chicago-Booth and a top-ranking IIT-IIM alumnus, Krishnamurthy Subramanian is serving as Associate Professor of Finance (with tenure) and Executive Director for the Centre for Analytical Finance at the Indian School of Business.
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8. SoftBank hires Facebook's Kirthiga Reddy to manage \$100 billion vision fund

- ✦ SoftBank hired Facebook Inc. executive Kirthiga Reddy as a partner at its \$100 billion Vision Fund, the first woman to join a group of just a dozen that oversees the world's biggest pool of technology investments.
- ✦ Kirthiga Reddy had worked at Facebook in India and the US for eight years and serves as chair of the Stanford Business School Management Board.
- ✦ She the first women coming on board in a company where the rest are all men.

9. Malala Yousafzai to be honoured by Harvard University for promoting girls education

- ✦ Nobel Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai is being honored by Harvard University for her work promoting girls' education.
- ✦ Yousafzai became the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 when she was recognized for her global work supporting schooling for all children.
- ✦ The 21-year-old Malala, received the 2018 Gleitsman Award from Harvard's Kennedy School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The award provides \$125,000 for activism that has improved quality of life around the world.

10. Urjit Patel resigns as RBI Governor

- ✦ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Urjit Patel on Monday, 10 December, stepped down from his position with immediate effect, citing “personal reasons” His resignation comes against the backdrop of increasing tensions between the Finance ministry and the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✦ Urjit Patel, 55, who took over as the 24th Governor of the central bank on September 5, 2016, had the shortest tenure since the year 1992.
- ✦ The next RBI board meeting was scheduled for December 14. Patel has resigned just days before that. In a tweet, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley acknowledged Urjit Patel's contribution.

11. Myntra chief Ananth Narayanan resigns, firm likely to dissolve CEO post

- ✦ Myntra Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ananth Narayanan has resigned from his post in the company, marking another high profile exit after Binny Bansal recently stepped down from Flipkart, the parent company of Myntra.
- ✦ The Flipkart Executive, Amar Nagaram will head Myntra after the resignation of Ananth Narayanan.
- ✦ Flipkart has also attempted to retain key personnel at Myntra, offering retention bonuses and packages to 50-75 key executives and employees.

12. Shaktikanta Das appointed as the new RBI Governor

- ✦ Former economic affairs secretary Shaktikanta Das was named the 25th governor of the Reserve Bank of India to succeed Urjit Patel. The appointment will be for three years. He is likely to join at the earliest
- ✦ The appointment means that the central bank will once again be headed by a former Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer. Patel, who had said he was resigning for personal reasons, and his predecessor Raghuram Rajan are economists.
- ✦ Das, 63, a veteran Tamil Nadu cadre officer, will first have to work on normalising the relationship between the central bank and the government that had turned frosty in the past few months as the two differed on many issues.
- ✦ Shaktikanta Das is a 1980 batch IAS officer of Tamil Nadu Cadre and a very prominent bureaucrat who served under both NDA and UPA governments.

13. SWIFT India ropes in former SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya as board Chairman

- ✦ SWIFT India said it has appointed former SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya as the new Chairman of its board.
- ✦ SWIFT India is a joint venture of top Indian public and private sector banks and SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication).
- ✦ Bhattacharya will succeed former banker M. V. Nair, who is stepping down after completing five years with the company Bhattacharya will succeed former banker.
- ✦ The company was created to deliver high-quality domestic financial messaging services to the Indian financial community.

14. Kamal Nath Will Take Oath as Madhya Pradesh CM on December 14

- ✦ The Congress legislature party has decided that a decision on the Chief Minister of the state will be taken by party president Rahul Gandhi.
- ✦ In MP, Congress defeated BJP in the final tally announced on Wednesday, finishing below the majority mark of 116 by two MLAs but stitching alliances with BSP (3) and SP (1) and enlisting the support of four independents.
- ✦ The MP Congress chief, has been almost finalised as the leader of the legislature party ahead of Jyotiraditya Scindia. A final announcement is likely to be made by Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday.

15. Manipur government confers boxer MC Mary Kom with 'Meethoileima' title

- ✦ Manipur government conferred MC Mary Kom, six times World Women Boxing Champion and Olympic bronze medalist, with the title "Meethoileima" for her outstanding achievement in the field of boxing.
- ✦ The title "Meethoileima" (loosely translated as great or exceptional lady) was conferred by Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh in a felicitation ceremony held at Khuman Lampak Sports Complex in Imphal. The function was attended by cabinet Ministers, MLAs and sportspersons.
- ✦ She was honoured by Chief minister N.Biren Singh who also handed over a cheque of Ten lakh rupees.

16. CAG Rajiv Mehrishi appointed as Vice-Chair of UN Panel of Auditors

- ✦ The United Nations Panel of Auditors consists of External Auditors of the United Nations and its agencies. Comptroller and Auditor General Rajiv Mehrishi has become the Vice-Chair of the UN Panel of Auditors
- ✦ Presently, the panel consists of 11 countries -- India, Germany, Chile, Canada, France, Italy, Philippines, Ghana, Indonesia, Switzerland and United Kingdom. Currently, the panel is chaired by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the UK.
- ✦ The panel also unanimously elected the Comptroller and Auditor General of India as the Vice Chair of the panel for the year 2019

17. Yes Bank set to name Brahm Dutt as interim chairman, share prices recover

- ✦ Yes Bank Ltd is likely to name independent director Brahm Dutt as the bank's non-executive interim chairman after former finance secretary Ashok Chawla resigned from the position last month.
- ✦ Brahm Dutt is a former bureaucrat and is one of the oldest members of Yes Bank's board.
- ✦ Yes Bank's board has witnessed a series of resignations over the past couple of months. Apart from Ashok Chawla, who resigned as chairman on 14 November, independent directors Vasant Gujarathi and R. Chandrasekhar also put in their papers last month.

18. CID producer BP Singh to succeed Anupam Kher as FTII Chairman

- ✦ The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on appointed TV producer BP Singh as President of FTII and chairman of its Governing Council. Singh will step in the shoes of actor Anupam Kher, who had resigned in October sighting 'international commitments.
- ✦ Singh was elected as vice-chairman of the FTII Governing Council during the first meeting of FTII Society on October 30.
- ✦ The tenure of Singh will be for the remaining period of block of three years starting from March 3, 2017 as per the provisions of FTII rules.

19. Zoramthanga sworn in as Mizoram's new CM

- ✦ Chief of Mizo National Front (MNF) Zoramthanga was sworn in as the chief minister of Mizoram.
- ✦ This is third time that rebel turned politician Zoramthanga took oath as the chief minister of Mizoram. Along with him 11 others ministers were also sworn in by Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan in Raj Bhavan.
- ✦ MNF dethroned Congress by winning 26 seats in the 40 member legislative assembly. Congress bagged 5 seats whereas BJP won just 1 seat.

20. Sri Lanka's disputed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigns, Ranil Wickremesinghe new PM of Srilanka

- ✦ Sri Lanka's disputed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has stepped down from his post, signalling an end to a weeks-long political crisis that has kept the Indian Ocean nation without a functional government.
- ✦ Rajapaksa signed a letter of resignation in front of supporters and journalists at his private residence in the country's capital, Colombo
- ✦ Following Rajapaksa's resignation, Sajith Premadasa, UNP's deputy leader, told reporters the party was ready to work with Sirisena in government again.
- ✦ Ranil Wickremesinghe, Father of Modern Democracy MP became the current Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, and has served as Leader of the United National Party since 1994. He was first elected Member of Parliament for Colombo District in 1977.

21. Advocate Madhavi Divan Becomes Third Woman To Be Appointed As Additional Solicitor General In SC

- ✦ Advocate Madhavi Divan has been appointed as the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) in the Supreme Court, becoming only the third woman to become an ASG in the Apex Court.
- ✦ The first woman to be appointed to the post was Senior Advocate Indira Jaising and the second such woman was Senior Advocate Pinky Anand, who is still holding the post.
- ✦ Her appointment has been approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet and she will hold office till June 30, 2020.

22. Bhupesh Baghel takes oath as the chief minister of Chhattisgarh

- ✦ Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel took oath as the chief minister of Chhattisgarh. Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office to Bhupesh Baghel at Balbir Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium in Raipur.
- ✦ The Congress registered a resounding victory in Chhattisgarh, winning 68 seats as opposed to the BJP's 15.
- ✦ Bhupesh Baghel is credited for rebuilding the party and infuse confidence and enthusiasm among workers. Bhupesh Baghel will be the third chief minister of the state.

23. Belgium's PM Charles Michel submits resignation amid migration row

- ✦ Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel has offered his resignation just days after one of his main coalition partners quit in a row over migration.
- ✦ He announced his intention to resign on Tuesday following a debate in parliament in which opposition parties refused calls to support his minority government.
- ✦ Mr Michel, 42, took office in October 2014 after forming a right-wing coalition, becoming at 38 the country's youngest prime minister since 1841.

24. PK Das to take over as Chairman of CBIC from January 1, 2019

- ✦ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Pranab Kumar Das as the Chairman of CBIC from January 1, 2019.
- ✦ The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is the apex indirect tax policy-making body under the Finance Ministry.
- ✦ The CBIC is headed by the Chairman and consists of six members, who overlook various areas such as customs, central excise, service tax, Goods and Services Tax (GST), administration and budget, among other.

25. Harsh Vardhan Shringla appointed new Indian Ambassador to US

- ✦ Harsh Vardhan Shringla appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the United States.
- ✦ Shringla, a 1984-batch Indian Foreign Service diplomat will succeed Navtej Sarna. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly.
- ✦ Senior diplomat Riva Ganguly Das, presently Director General of Indian Council for Cultural Relations, has been appointed as new High Commissioner to Bangladesh.

26. CA Kuttappa takes over as India's new chief boxing coach

- ✦ CA Kuttappa, a Dhronacharya awardee, took over as India's new chief boxing coach during the beginning of the ongoing national camp, on December 10, 2018. He succeeds veteran boxing coach SR Singh, who has now retired.
- ✦ The 39-year-old, who was an assistant coach earlier, is credited with shaping some of the country's most successful boxers such as Vijender Singh, M Suranjoy Singh and Shiva Thapa.
- ✦ Kuttappa is just one of the two coaches from the reigning national champions, the Services Sports Control Board (SSCB), in the camp.

27. Praveen Kumar appointed acting chief justice of Andhra Pradesh high court

- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind appointed Justice C Praveen Kumar, the senior most Judge among the Judges allotted to Andhra Pradesh, as acting Chief Justice of AP High court with effect from Jan 1, 2019.
- ✦ He is fortunate to preside over the affairs of judiciary in his native state that too as the first head of the AP high court which will emerge as a new entity from 1 Jan
- ✦ Praveen Kumar learnt many intricacies of criminal law and constitution during this period and later he became a judge of then AP high court on June 29, 2012.

Science Tech & Defence

1. DGAFMS Military Medicine Conclave 2018 held in New Delhi

- ✦ The first Directorate General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS) Military Medicine Conclave was held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The aim of the conclave was to deliberate on issues and challenges being faced by the AFMS today and to utilize the collective wisdom and experience of veteran leaders of the Corps who have led the Corps to its glorious present status.
- ✦ DGAFMS and Senior Colonel Commandant AMC Lt Gen Bipin Puri welcomed the delegates and highlighted the significance of this unique endeavour.
- ✦ December 1, 2018 marked the start of the Armed Forces week till December 7, 2018.

2. Indian Navy to conduct 'Exercise sea vigil' next month to test robustness of coastal security apparatus

- ✦ The Indian Navy will conduct a large-scale coastal defence exercise next month to test the robustness of the entire coastal security apparatus.
- ✦ The 'Exercise sea vigil' will involve all stake holders across mainland and Island territories, and will see the participation of all operational ships, submarines and aircraft as well as units of Indian coast guards
- ✦ Theatre level operational readiness exercise 'Tropex' will begin from January and culminate in March, next year.
- ✦ Maiden Bilateral Exercises with UAE and Indonesia and Maiden CORPAT with Bangladesh were also commenced this year.

3. After a two-year journey, a NASA spacecraft arrives at its target asteroid

- ✦ One of NASA's deep-space probes, OSIRIS-REx, arrived at the space rock it's been traveling toward for the last two years, an asteroid named Bennu.

- ✦ OSIRIS-REx came within about 12 miles (20 kilometers) of the asteroid, which is closer than ever before.
- ✦ Bennu is near-Earth carbonaceous asteroid about the size of a small mountain in the Apollo group. It was discovered in September 1999 by the LINEAR Projects.

4. India's Most Powerful Satellite, 'The Big Bird', Launched Successfully

- ✦ Indian Space Research Organisation or ISRO's GSAT-11 satellite also called the "Big Bird " was successfully launched into space from the French space port of Kourou in South America.
- ✦ The satellite, launched at 2.07 am (IST), will help provide satellite-based internet to remote places where cable-based internet cannot reach.
- ✦ The "Big Bird" has cost about Rs. 600 crore. The ariane-5 heavyweight rocket was hired from Arianespace by ISRO. The satellite is expected to have a life span of 15 years.

5. SpaceX launched 64 satellites in record-breaking mission

- ✦ SpaceX delivered 64 satellites into orbit in one fell swoop for a record-setting mission.
- ✦ It marked one of the largest satellite ride-sharing missions ever launched and the most crowded single mission in US history, according to Spaceflight, SpaceX's customer for the launch.
- ✦ The latest version of SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket, called Block 5, is designed to fly as many as 100 times before retirement, and up to 10 times without significant refurbishment between flights.
- ✦ SSO-A was the first mission Spaceflight has filled a rocket entirely with its small satellite customers. They came from 34 companies and organizations across 17 countries.

6. Cabinet approves MoU between India and the USA concerning Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the Earth Sciences

- ✦ The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has been apprised of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United States of America (USA) concerning Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the Earth Sciences.
- ✦ The collaboration between India and the USA will enable sharing of the expertise available with organizations in both countries, and adoption of the latest state-of-the-art technology in the field of Earth Science.
- ✦ The cooperation under this MoU is envisaged through various modes viz. exchange of technical information, visits, training and cooperative research consistent with on-going programmes of both countries in the fields.

7. Indian Coast Guard conducts Exercise 'Clean Sea-2018' at sea off Port Blair

- ✦ The Indian Coast Guard has conducted the Regional Level Marine Oil Pollution Response Exercise titled 'Clean Sea - 2018' at sea off Port Blair

- ✦ The preparedness of all agencies during the exercise was conducted under observation of Inspector General Maneesh V Pathak, Commander Coast Guard Region (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) and was overseen by Chief Secretary of Andaman and Nicobar Administration Shri Chetan B Sanghi, who embarked onboard Coast Guard Ship Vijith.
- ✦ Coast Guard ships Viswash, Vijith, Rajveer, Rajshri, 4 interceptor boats and its air assets Dornier and Chetak helicopters participated in the exercise.

8. Chang'e 4: China's Mission to the Moon's Far Side

- ✦ China launched its Chang'e 4 mission to the far side of the moon on Dec. 8, 2018 Beijing
- ✦ China is the first country ever to send a rover to soft-land on the lunar farside. The successful launch marked the start of a long journey to the far side of the moon for the Chang'e-4 mission, which is expected to land around the New Year to carry out experiments and explore the untrodden terrain.
- ✦ The Chang'e-4 lunar probe mission -- named after the moon goddess in Chinese mythology -- launched on a Long March 3B rocket from the southwestern Xichang launch centre in the pre-dawn hours.

9. India Successfully Test Fires Nuclear-Capable Agni-5 Missile

- ✦ India successfully test-fired nuclear-capable ballistic missile Agni-5, which has a strike range of 5,000 km, from Dr Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.
- ✦ This is the seventh trial of the indigenously-developed surface-to-surface missile.
- ✦ Agni-V is a three stage missile, 17 metres tall, two metres wide and capable of carrying 1.5 tonne of nuclear warheads.
- ✦ The first two flights of Agni-5 in 2012 and 2013 were in open configuration.
- ✦ The Agni-5 also has advantages of higher reliability, longer shelf life, less maintenance and enhanced mobility, according to sources.

10. Indian, Russian air forces to kick start war game in Jodhpur

- ✦ The Indian and Russian air forces will begin a 12-day war game in Jodhpur with an aim to enhance their operational coordination.
- ✦ The exercise — Aviandra — will be unique as the Russian Air Force will not bring its assets and will take part in the drill using Indian platforms.
- ✦ Russia has been a major partner of India in the defence sector and the cooperation has been steadily growing further.

11. Sino-Indian militaries begin 'Hand-in-Hand' drills in China

- ✦ India and China began the 7th round of their 'Hand-in-Hand' military drills in the Chinese city of Chengdu as part of the focussed efforts by the two militaries to improve ties after last year's standoff at Doklam.
- ✦ The aim of the Hand-in-Hand exercises is to build closer relations between the militaries of India and China. The exercises involve tactical level operations in

an International Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorist environment as per UN mandate.

- ✦ The exercise will involve tactical level operations in an international counter insurgency/ counter terrorism environment under UN mandate.

12. Indian Ports Association launches 'PCS 1x' to increase ease of doing business

- ✦ The Indian Ports Association (IPA) has launched the port community system 'PCS1x', a cloud-based technology that offers services like notification, work-flow and track and trace.
- ✦ This system will enable trade to have an improved communication with the customs as they have also embarked on an Application Programming Interface (API) based architecture, thereby enabling real time interaction.
- ✦ The platform offers value added services such as notification engine, work-flow, mobile application, track and trace, better user interface, better security features, improved inclusion by offering dashboard for those with no IT capability.

13. Signs of water found on asteroid Bennu: Fascinating discovery by NASA spacecraft

- ✦ ASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft discovered evidence of water on a relatively nearby skyscraper-sized asteroid, Bennu, a rocky acorn-shaped object that may hold clues to the origins of life on Earth
- ✦ OSIRIS-REx, which flew last week within a scant 12 miles (19 km) of the asteroid Bennu, some 1.4 million miles (2.25 million km) from Earth, found traces of hydrogen and oxygen molecules - part of the recipe for water and thus the potential for life - embedded in the asteroid's rocky surface.
- ✦ Bennu is near-Earth carbonaceous asteroid about the size of a small mountain in the Apollo group. It was discovered in September 1999 by the LINEAR Project.

14. Indian Navy inducts its first Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle

- ✦ The Indian Navy inducted its first Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) System at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.
- ✦ DSRV is used to rescue crew members stranded in submarines that get disabled. The Indian Navy joins a select group of naval forces in the world that boasts of this niche capability.
- ✦ The DSRV can be operated at a depth of 650 meters and can hold around 15 people. The Indian Navy in March 2016 had commissioned two DSRVs, the second will be deployed at the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam.

15. ISRO launches military communication satellite GSAT-7A from Sriharikota

- ✦ ISRO launched its military communication satellite GSAT-7A from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ✦ The satellite GSAT-7A is the 35th Indian communication satellite weighing 2,250 kg. The satellite is expected to add a new space-based dimension to the

way Indian Air Force interlinks, operates and communicates with its aircraft as they fly and with command centres on ground.

- ✦ GSAT-7A is designed to expand the communication capabilities of the Indian Air Force (IAF). It will do this by connecting many of the ground radar stations, airbases and aircrafts operated by the IAF.

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

- ✦ China launched its first communication satellite to provide broadband internet services worldwide in an apparent bid to rival Google and other international firms.
- ✦ The satellite is the first in the Hongyun project planned by China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp (CASIC).
- ✦ The Hongyun project, started in September 2016, aims to build a space-based communications network to provide broadband internet connectivity to users around the world, especially those in the underserved regions.

17. Indian Navy launches Information Fusion Centre to boost maritime security

- ✦ With an aim to strengthen maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), Indian Navy has launched its Information Fusion Centre (IFC) that will share information on vessels of interest with other friendly nations
- ✦ IFC will function as a platform where multiple friendly nations can freely exchange non-sensitive information from maritime domain.
- ✦ IFC is based at the Indian Navy's Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) at Gurugram in the National Capital Region.
- ✦ The inauguration of the maritime surveillance centre was done by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The event was attended by diplomats of various countries, including the US and the UK.

18. Cyclone Gaja washes away coastal salt pans

- ✦ The famed salt pans of Vedaranyam, directly in the path of the battering storm, have been washed away.
- ✦ Salt manufacturers claim that close to two lakh tonnes of salt was damaged, though officials were not sure about the extent of damage.
- ✦ Salt production generally lasts from January to October and manufacturers claimed a majority of the stock had been destroyed.

19. ISRO Completes Fourth Orbit-Raising Manoeuvre Of GSAT 7a Towards Its Final

- ✦ The ISRO Has Completed The Fourth Manoeuvre To Position The GSAT-7a Military Communication Satellite Closer To Its Final Position On Monday.
- ✦ The Satellite Is Now Very Close To Its Final Position In The Geostationary Orbit, Which Is Located At An Altitude Of Around 35,786 Km From Earth. The Satellite Is Currently Between 35,800 And 36,092 Kilometres Away, And Will Be Moved In A Final Orbital Manoeuvre To Its Final Position.

- ✦ GSAT-7A, A Satellite Built By Isro For The Indian Air Force, Was Launched On A Gslv-Mk2.1 Rocket (Gsat-F11) On 19 December From The Satish Dhawan Space Centre.

Important Days

1. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery ; 2 December

- ✦ The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is a yearly event on December 2, organized by the United Nations General Assembly.
- ✦ The Day was first celebrated in 1986.
- ✦ The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others was approved by the United Nations General Assembly on December 2, 1949.

2. International Day of Persons with Disabilities 3 December

- ✦ International Day of Persons with Disabilities is an international observance promoted by the United Nations since 1992.
- ✦ The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.
- ✦ In 1976, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons. It called for a plan of action at the national, regional and international levels, with an emphasis on equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and prevention of disabilities.

3. Indian Navy Day : 4 December

- ✦ Navy day is observed on 4th of December every year to celebrate the achievements, and role of the naval force in protecting and guarding the the country.
- ✦ Navy Day is celebrated in memory of the strength and bravery of the Indian Navy who won the Indo-Pak war in 1971.
- ✦ It is celebrated using a particular theme each year, like “Safe Seas and Secure Coasts for a strong Nation” because theme based celebration makes this event more powerful and effective occasion.

4. World Soil Day : 5 December

- ✦ World Soil Day is celebrated annually on the 5th of December at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) headquarters in Rome, the regional offices and through national and local events.
- ✦ The Solution to Soil Pollution campaign for World Soil Day 2018 aims to raise awareness and call people to #StopSoilPollution.

- ✦ With a growing population expected to reach 9 billion by 2050, soil pollution is a worldwide problem which degrades our soils, poisons the food we eat.

5. Armed Forces Flag Day ; 7 december

- ✦ The Armed Forces Flag Day or the Flag Day of India is a day dedicated to India towards collection of funds from people of India for the welfare of the Indian Armed Forces personnel. It has been observed annually in India on December 7 since 1949.
- ✦ Over the years, it has become a tradition to commemorate this day as an honour to the soldiers, sailors and airmen of India.
- ✦ Immediately after India achieved independence, a need arose for the government to manage the welfare of its defence personnel. On August 28, 1949, a committee set up under the defence minister decided to observe a Flag Day annually on December 7.

6. International anti-corruption day : 9 December

- ✦ International Anti-Corruption Day has been observed annually, on 9 December, since the passage of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption on 31 October 2003 to raise public awareness for anti-corruption.
- ✦ To mark the day, the United States called on all countries to implement their international anti-corruption commitments including through the U.N. Convention against Corruption.
- ✦ The 2017 joint international campaign focuses on corruption as one of the biggest impediments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

7. International Day of Human Rights December 10

- ✦ Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December – the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948.
- ✦ This year, Human Rights Day marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a milestone document that proclaimed the inalienable rights which everyone is inherently entitled to as a human being.
- ✦ The theme of the 2018 Human Rights Day is: #StandUp4HumanRights.

8. International Mountain Day : 11 December

- ✦ International Mountain day is observed on 11 December
- ✦ Theme of International Mountain Day is “#MountainsMatter”
- ✦ International Mountain Day 2018 will be an occasion to create a large social movement that can bring mountain issues on the tables of politicians.
- ✦ Mountains are early indicators of climate change and as the climate changes the liveability and development gets hampered due to many challenges thus faced by the mountain community.

9. National Energy conservation Day observed on 14 December

- ✦ National Energy Conservation day is observed everywhere throughout the India on 14th of December. The Energy Conservation Act in India was executed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency BEE in the year 2001.
- ✦ The Energy Conservation Act in India act means to utilize the expert, qualified and vigorous supervisors and additionally inspectors who are with aptitude in dealing with the vitality, ventures, arrangement examination, fund or executing the energy proficiency ventures.
- ✦ The Bureau of energy Efficiency is a constitutional body which Comes under government of India and helps in the development of policies and Strategies in order to reduce the energy use.

10. Nation celebrates Vijay Diwas on 16 December to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 war

- ✦ The nation celebrated Vijay Diwas to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 war. Rich tributes are being paid to the Martyrs who laid down their lives during the war.
- ✦ On this day in 1971, the chief of the Pakistani forces, General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, along with 93 thousand troops, had surrendered unconditionally to the allied forces consisting of Indian Army.
- ✦ This year's celebration marks the 47th anniversary of India's victory over its neighbour.

11. International Human Solidarity Day 20 December

- ✦ The United Nations' (UN) International Human Solidarity Day is annually held on December 20 to celebrate unity in diversity.
- ✦ It also aims to remind people on the importance of solidarity in working towards eradicating poverty.
- ✦ The General Assembly, on 22 December 2005, by resolution 60/209 identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations between peoples in the Twenty-first century, and in that regard decided to proclaim 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day.

12. Good Governance Day observed on 25 december

- ✦ Good Governance Day is observed in India annually on the twenty-fifth day of December, the birth anniversary of former-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ✦ Good Governance Day was established in 2014 to honor Prime Minister Vajpayee by fostering awareness among the Indian people of accountability in government.
- ✦ Atal Bihari Vajpayee was an Indian politician who served three terms as the Prime Minister of India: first for a term of 13 days in 1996, then for a period of 13 months from 1998 to 1999, and finally, for a full term from 1999 to 2004.

13. National Consumer Day observed on Dec 24

- ✦ National Consumer Day observed on Dec 24. The objective is to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and the need to make every consumer more aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- ✦ The theme this year is “Timely Disposal of Consumer Complaints”
- ✦ On this day the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was enacted. The Act aims to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation, such as defective goods, deficiency in services and unfair trade practices.

Awards

1. Tamil writer S Ramakrishnan gets Sahitya Akademi award

- ✦ Tamil writer S Ramakrishnan (52) has been honoured with Sahitya Akademi award for his novel Sancharam which deals with the lives of nadhaswaram artistes.
- ✦ Ramakrishnan is a full-time writer who has been active over the last 27 years in diverse areas of Tamil literature like short stories, novels, plays, children’s literature and translations.
- ✦ Among the many important awards won by him are Tagore Literary Award for his novel Yamam. Sangeetha Nataka Academy Award for best young playwright.

2. Sahitya Akademi announces winners in 24 languages

- ✦ The awards relate to books first published during the five years immediately preceding the year of award, between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2016.
- ✦ The Sahitya Akademi award is among the most prestigious literary honours bestowed on writers for their works across genres and languages.
- ✦ Winners include Anees Saleem in English, Rama Kant Shukla in Sanskrit, Rajesh Kumar Vyas in Rajasthani, Rahman Abbas in Urdu, Lok Nath Upadhyay in Nepali, Chitra Mughal in Hindi and S. Ramakrishnan in Tamil.
- ✦ The awards, in the form of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and a cheque of Rs 1 lakh, will be presented to the authors at a special function in January next year at Kamani Auditorium.

3. Eliud Kipchoge and Caterine Ibarguen named IAAF athletes of the year

- ✦ Kenyan distance runner Eliud Kipchoge and Colombian long and triple jumper Caterine Ibarguen have been named male and female world athletes of the year.
- ✦ Kipchoge, 34, won the London Marathon and set a world record of two hours, one minute and 39 seconds in Berlin.
- ✦ Ibarguen, also 34, claimed triple and long jump honours in the Central American and Caribbean Games, the Continental Cup and the Diamond League finals.

4. Manushi Chhillar Crowns Miss World 2018 A Year After She Won The Title

- ✦ A Mexican model and volunteer Vanessa Ponce was crowned Miss World at a glitzy event on the tropical Chinese island of Hainan
- ✦ Miss Mexico Vanessa Ponce de Leon, 26, has a degree in international business, volunteers for "Migrantes en el Camino" and is on the board of directors of a rehab centre for girls.
- ✦ Miss Belarus Maria Vasilevich, Miss Jamaica Kadajah Robinson and Miss Uganda Quiin Abenakyo were also among the final five.
- ✦ It is the eighth time the Miss World final has been held in Sanya, which first hosted the pageant in 2003.

5. Indian Railway employee conferred with prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel "Marom" in Santhali language

- ✦ Shri Shyam Sundar Besra, Chief Inspector of Ticket working in Asansol Division of Eastern Railway has been conferred the coveted Sahitya Akademi Award.
- ✦ He has been awarded for his novel "Marom" in Santhali language which is primarily based upon natural, social, economic and political conditions of Santhal Pargana.
- ✦ The novel highlights the situation emerged after the two main industrial development of the Santhal area after Independence i.e Masanjore Dam at Dumka and Railway locomotive workshop at Chittaranjan.

6. Amitav Ghosh honoured with Jnanpith Award 2018

- ✦ Noted English writer Amitav Ghosh has been honoured with this year's Jnanpith Award, a literary award given to an author for "outstanding contribution towards literature.
- ✦ The decision was taken in a meeting of Jnanpith Selection Board chaired by eminent novelist, scholar and Jnanpith laureate Pratibha Ray.
- ✦ Ghosh, one of the most prominent contemporary Indian writers, is known for a series of novels such as Shadow Lines, The Glass Palace, The Hungry Tide, and the Ibis Trilogy -- Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke and Flood of Fire -- chronicling the opium trade between India and China run by the East India Company.

7. Jharkhand gets "Krishi Karman" award in rice category

- ✦ Jharkhand has been selected for "Krishi Karman" award in the rice category from the Union Ministry of Agriculture.
- ✦ The award to be given away in February next year carries a cash prize of Rs 2 crore and a citation.
- ✦ Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das congratulated the state agriculture department and the farmers for the award.

8. Philippines' Catriona Elisa Gray crowned Miss Universe 2018

- ✦ Catriona Elisa Gray from Philippines was crowned Miss Universe 2018 at a gala ceremony, where representatives from South Africa and Venezuela secured the first runner-up and second runner-up spots. India's Nehal Chudasama failed to make it to the Top 20.
- ✦ In the final question round, Gray was asked about the most important lesson she has learnt in life and how would she apply it in her time as Miss Universe.
- ✦ The winner, who pipped 93 other contestants to win the title, has a love for the arts and holds a Master Certificate in Music Theory. She is an adventure junkie and is passionate about her love for Filipino dishes including adobo, balut and the sweetest mangoes in the world.

9. Indian Film 'Period. End of Sentence' Made it to Oscars Shortlist

- ✦ 'Period. End of Sentence,' the short documentary film on the stigma surrounding women during menstruation in rural India has made it to the 91st Oscar's shortlist in the Documentary Short Subject category.
- ✦ The film was co-produced by Monga's Sikhya Entertainment which is also known for backing movies like Masaan and The Lunchbox.
- ✦ The 26 minuter follows the exploits of two girls from Hapur village in Uttar Pradesh as they struggle to fight the stigma against menstruation.

10. Sonam Kapoor, named PETA India's Person of the Year for 2018

- ✦ Actress Sonam Kapoor, a vegan, has been named People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's Person of the Year for 2018.
- ✦ In 2016, Sonam was named PETA India's Hottest Vegetarian Celebrity, and she earned a Compassionate Business Award from the group a year later for her cruelty-free handbag line.
- ✦ Past recipients of PETA India's Person of the Year Award include Anushka Sharma, Sunny Leone, Shashi Tharoor, Kapil Sharma, Hema Malini, R. Madhavan and Jacqueline Fernandez.

11. Mamata Banerjee is the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year

- ✦ West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been conferred the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award for her contribution in the overall development of the state and emerging as the best chief minister in the country.
- ✦ The state has this year bagged 31 Skoch Awards for its performance across different fields besides implementing unique projects.
- ✦ Banerjee has been conferred with the prestigious award on the basis of the state's performance in the field of governance, culture, finance, urban and rural development, the organisation had tweeted recently.
- ✦ In the field of agriculture, West Bengal has won five consecutive krishi karman awards and bagged the IPPAI Award for rural electrification in the state.

12. Madhya Pradesh's Divya Patidar Joshi crowned Mrs. India 2018 title

- ✦ Divya Patidar Joshi was crowned Mrs.India My Identity Pageant 2018.She won all the rounds of Beauty with Brain contest along with Best Cat Walk title.

- ✦ Hailing from Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam, Divya won the crown of Mrs India this year from among 24 promising contestants.
- ✦ With this win, in the year 2019, she would be representing India for Mrs. Universe title.

Obituaries

1. Former US President George HW Bush passes away at 94

- ✦ Former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, who presided over the end of the Cold War and routed Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army, died at the age of 94.
- ✦ He was the 41st president of the United States.
- ✦ He defeated former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, the Democratic nominee, in the 1988 presidential campaign, and lost his 1992 re-election bid to Democrat Bill Clinton.

2. Padma Shri historian and former Jamia VC, Mushirul Hasan passed away at 71

- ✦ Professor Mushirul Hasan, a renowned historian and former vice-chancellor Jamia Millia of Islamia, passed away at the age of 71.
- ✦ Hasan was also formerly the director general of the National Archives of India.
- ✦ Hasan won a number of awards for his work, including the Padma Shri in 2007 and the Ordre des Palmes Académiques.

3. Former Kerala Minister and senior Congress leader CN Balakrishnan passes away

- ✦ Former Kerala minister and senior Congress leader CN Balakrishnan, passed away at the Amritha hospital in Kochi following deterioration in health caused due to pneumonia.
- ✦ Born to Narayanan Ezhuthachan and Paruama at Thrissur on November 18, 1934, Balakrishnan began his career as a Khadi worker.
- ✦ It was in 2011 that Balakrishnan first contested the polls from the Wadakkanchery constituency and went on to become the Minister of Co-operation, Khadi and village industries in the Oommen Chandy cabinet.

4. Renowned classical singer Pandit Arun Bhaduri passes away at 75

- ✦ Renowned classical singer Pandit Arun Bhaduri passed away at a city hospital after a prolonged illness. He was 75 and is survived by wife and son.
- ✦ Pandit Bhaduri, considered to be one of the masters of Bengali songs and bhajans, was suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other respiratory ailments for quite some time.

- ✦ Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee expressed grief over the sudden death of Pandit Bhaduri. She conveyed her condolences to the family members, friends and followers of Pandit Arun Bhaduri.

5. Former Union Minister Jai Narain Prasad Nishad Dies At 88

- ✦ Former Union minister Captain Jai Narain Prasad Nishad died at a hospital following prolonged illness.
- ✦ Nishad had represented the Muzaffarpur parliamentary constituency in Lok Sabha. He was the member of Bhartiya Janata Party and had even been a part of the Janata Dal United (JDU) and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in the past.
- ✦ He was elected to 11th Lok Sabha for the first time in 1996. During 1996-97, he served as the Union Minister of State, Environment and Forests (Independent Charge).

Books and Authors

1. The Republican Ethic” and “Loktantra ke Swar” books released by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu

- ✦ To promote and disseminate selected speeches of the President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Shri Venkaiah Naidu releases two books 'The Republican Ethic' and 'Loktantra ke swar'.
- ✦ The book is a collection of 95 of his selected speeches out of a total of 243 speeches made by the President in the first year of his office.
- ✦ The book has been conceived to help the readers navigate through the vision and thought that the President delves upon, especially with relation to the vision of nation and individual citizen's duty towards the nation.

2. Punjab CM releases book on Kapurthala Maharaja

- ✦ Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh released the book 'Prince, Patron and Patriarch Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala', co-authored by the Maharaja's grandson, Brigadier (Retd) Jagjit Singh, and Cynthia Frederick.
- ✦ Besides the authors, Punjab Governor VP Singh Badnore was also present on the occasion, which saw the Chief Minister hail the Maharaja as one of the scripters of modernization of Kapurthala.
- ✦ Describing the book as a candid tribute by a grandson to the erstwhile exceptional royal king of Kapurthala, the CM regaled the audience with anecdotes showcasing the far-sightedness of the Maharaja, whom he recalled meeting once as a 6-year-old, and the valour of his grandson, Brigadier Jagjit Singh.

Sports

1. Abhinav Bindra conferred with shooting's highest honour by ISSF

- ✦ Abhinav Bindra, the 2008 Olympic gold medallist was conferred with shooting's highest award by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) at the General Assembly in Munich .
- ✦ The Arjuna awardee on receiving the prestigious Blue Cross took to Twitter to express that he feels "extremely humbled."
- ✦ The 36-year-old Bindra had created history during the Beijing Olympics when he became the first Indian individual to clinch a gold medal.

2. Gautam Gambhir Announces Retirement From All Forms Of Cricket

- ✦ Indian cricketer Gautam Gambhir announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. He is a left-handed opening batsman who played domestic cricket for Delhi, and captained Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League (IPL).
- ✦ The 37-year-old, who represented India in 58 Tests, 147 ODIs and 37 T20Is, made the announcement on social media.
- ✦ The aggressive opener was India's top-scorer in the finals of the 2007 World T20 in South Africa and the 2011 ODI World Cup, both of which the country won.
- ✦ He made his One Day International (ODI) debut against Bangladesh in 2003, and played his first Test the following year against Australia.

3. Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik win gold at wrestling nationals

- ✦ Vinesh Phogat announced her return from injury after a successful day out by grabbing the 57-kilogram title while Sakshi Malik too did not disappoint the crowd as she emerged the champion in the 62 kg on the second day of the Tata Motors Senior Women's National Championship.
- ✦ Bagging her sixth National title, Vinesh just conceded two points in five bouts. She had earlier won five Nationals in a row from 2012 to 2016.
- ✦ Sakshi began with a walkover from fellow Railways grappler Apoorva and then overwhelmed UP's Pooja Tomar, winning by technical superiority.

4. Manika Batra First Indian To Win 'Breakthrough Table Tennis Star' Award

- ✦ Manika Batra became the first Indian to win a 'Breakthrough Table Tennis Star' award at the prestigious ITTF Star Awards in South Korea.
- ✦ Manika also reached her career-best ranking of 52 in 2018 and became India's highest ranked female player.
- ✦ Manika started the year on a high at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, guiding India to its first-ever gold medal in the Women's Team category as they defeated four-time gold medallists and defending champions Singapore 3-1.

5. Khelo India Youth Games to start from January 9

- ✦ Khelo India Youth Games-2019 will be held in Pune of Maharashtra from the 9th to 20th of January.
- ✦ The Minister said, under Khelo India programme, the government is providing scholarships to 1500 students from across the country.
- ✦ Addressing a press conference in New Delhi today, Sports Minister Col Rajyavardhan Rathore said, nine thousand youth will participate in this edition of the game.

6. Belgium beat Netherlands in shootout to win Men's Hockey World Cup 2018

- ✦ Belgium defeated former champions the Netherlands in sudden death in a thrilling summit clash to win their maiden men's hockey World Cup title at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.
- ✦ Olympic silver medallist Belgium created history by eking out a 3-2 win in the penalty shoot-out after the final match of the game's showpiece event ended in a goalless draw.
- ✦ 16 Teams Participated in the 2018 Men's Hockey World Cup Championship and they Played 32 Matches in this Championship.
- ✦ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released Men's Hockey World Cup anthem 'Jai Hind' composed by renowned music director and composer A.R. Rahman and penned by veteran lyricist Gulzar.

7. Virat Kohli hits 25th Test ton; Second fastest to achieve feat after Sir Don Bradman

- ✦ In Cricket, Indian skipper Virat Kohli has become the second fastest to score 25 Test centuries, only behind Sir Don Bradman. He achieved the feat when he scored 123 on the third day of the Perth Test against Australia
- ✦ It was also India's first Test ton in Perth since Sachin Tendulkar's famous knock in 1992. Kohli also equalled Tendulkar's record of most Test tons by an Indian - that is six - in Australia.
- ✦ Replying to Australia's first innings score of 326, India had resumed play this morning at the overnight score of 172 for 3, with Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane.

8. PV Sindhu beats Nozomi Okuhara to win maiden BWF World Tour Finals title

- ✦ PV Sindhu scripted history by becoming the first Indian to win a World series final title.
- ✦ The Indian shuttler was at her best in a real humdinger of a contest against Japanese Nozomi Okuhara as she walked away with the match 21-19, 21-17. Sindhu, who had finished second in the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Asian games and World Championships.
- ✦ The BWF World Tour Finals is an annual badminton competition that takes place at the end of every year. The badminton players having most points from all the events of the BWF World Tour in that calendar year compete with each other in this tournament.

9. 37th Senior National Rowing Championship begins in Pune

- ✦ The 37th Senior National Rowing Championship will start in the Army Rowing Node in Pune.
- ✦ Around 500 rowers and coaches from various rowing associations across the country will take part in the Championship which will run up to 22nd of this month.
- ✦ The Rowers for the World Championships-2019 will be selected from this event. World Championship -2019 is the first qualifying Championship for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

10. BCCI Appoints WV Raman As Head Coach Of India Women's Cricket Team

- ✦ The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) appointed WV Raman as the head coach of India women's cricket team.
- ✦ According to a media release by the BCCI, his selection was based on recommendations of the ad-hoc committee comprising Kapil Dev, Anshuman Gaekwad and Shantha Rangaswamy.
- ✦ The ad-hoc committee decided on the following three names in the order of preference -- Gary Kirsten, WV Raman and Venkatesh Prasad," the BCCI said in a statement.
- ✦ The 53-year-old played 11 Test matches and 27 One-Day Internationals (ODIs) for the national team. In the first-class cricket he had featured in 132 matches, notching up over 7,900 runs for Tamil Nadu.

11. ICC orders PCB to pay 60 per cent of cost claimed by BCCI in compensation tussle

- ✦ The ICC's Dispute Resolution Panel ordered Pakistan to pay 60 per cent of the cost demanded by the BCCI after the world body's rejection of the PCB's compensation claim which blamed India for lack of bilateral series between the two nations.
- ✦ Nearly a month after rejecting the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) compensation claim against India for allegedly failing to honour a Memorandum of Understanding on bilateral cricket, the ICC announced the costs award for the two Boards.
- ✦ The PCB had demanded Rs 447 crore compensation after alleging that the BCCI didn't honour the MoU that required India to play six bilateral series between 2015 and 2023.

12. India's Vedangi Kulkarni becomes fastest Asian to cycle the globe

- ✦ Indian woman Vedangi Kulkarni has become the fastest Asian to cycle the globe. Hailing from a suburb of Pune, 20-year old Vedangi cycled into Kolkata in the wee hours, completing the 29,000 kilometers' distance required to qualify as bicycling across the globe.
- ✦ Thirty-eight year old British adventurer Jenny Grahams the fastest woman to have cycled the globe in 124 days this year.
- ✦ Vedangi spent 159 days peddling up to 300 Kilometers a day in 14 countries

13. Lewis Hamilton awarded Drivers' Driver of the Year

- ✦ After claiming a historic fifth World Drivers' Championship, Lewis Hamilton has added to an ever-growing list of accolades after taking home the inaugural Drivers' Driver of the Year.
- ✦ This was the first time the vote had been run by the F1 bosses, with seventeen of the 20 drivers taking part.
- ✦ Unsurprisingly, Hamilton came out on top, having become just the third man in history to secure a fifth world title.

14. Madrid create history with latest Club World Cup win

- ✦ The European champions claimed the trophy for the third straight season, and fourth time overall, surpassing their rivals Barcelona in the process.
- ✦ Luka Modric opened the scoring for the European Champions against Al Ain in the final, scoring his first-ever goal for the club in a tournament final to round out his spectacular 2018.
- ✦ For the fourth time in five years, Real Madrid have claimed the FIFA Club World Cup and in doing so both made history and claimed bragging rights over their rivals Barcelona.



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