



WEEKLY G.K.

06 January - 12 January 2020

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National News

1. Government of India's UJALA & Street Lighting National Programme complete five successful years.

- ✚ UJALA and Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP) of the central government completed five successful years of illuminating the country. Over 36.13 crore LED bulbs have been distributed across the country through the UJALA initiative.
- ✚ This has resulted in an estimated energy savings of 46.92 billion kilowatt-hour per year. Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) project brought the market transformation in the energy efficiency sector.
- ✚ More than 1.03 crore smart LED streetlights have been installed till date under the Street Lighting National Programme.

2. MP govt starts Mukhyamantri Karmachari Swasthya Bima Yojana.

- ✚ The Madhya Pradesh government has given its 12.55 lakh employees a new year bonanza by approving a health insurance scheme, 'Mukhyamantri Karmachari Swasthya Bima Yojana'.
- ✚ The scheme will be effective from April 1 and will make government employees and their families eligible for medical treatment worth Rs 5 lakh annually. For some critical diseases, the eligibility will be enhanced to Rs 10 lakh.
- ✚ All permanent and contractual employees, teachers, retired employees, home guards and others getting salary from contingency fund will reap the benefits of this scheme.

Foot Notes:

About Madhya Pradesh

Governor: Lalji Tandon

Capital: Bhopal

Chief Minister: Kamal Nath

3. Uttar Pradesh first state to kickstart implementation of CAA.

- ✚ Uttar Pradesh is all set to become the first state in the country to start the exercise of shortlisting migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, eligible for citizenship under the new Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).
- ✚ The exercise will also identify those who are living illegally in the state.
- ✚ All 75 district magistrates have been asked to track down migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who have settled here for decades, without citizenship.

Foot Notes:

About Uttar Pradesh

Governor: Anandiben Patel

Capital: Lucknow

Chief Minister: Yogi Adityanath

4. NITI Aayog: List of high export potential medical devices created.

- ✚ The Government Think Tank Niti Aayog draws up list of medical devices that have high export potential. It has come up with 10 devices to provide priority subsidies. It includes surgical blades, orthopaedic implants, catheters, syringes and needles, X-ray machines, blood bags, MRI machines and CT scan.
- ✚ The devices included in the list are to be prioritized in order to boost their domestic manufacturing. Also, in order to boost their exports, GoI will create a framework to accelerate their standardization and certification.
- ✚ In December 2018, NITI Aayog announced that all medical devices will be brought under one regulatory regime. This will aid in boosting the exports as well as it will fasten the certification process.

Foot Notes:**About NITI Aayog****CEO:** Mr. Amitabh Kant**Formed:** 1 January 2015**Headquarters:** New Delhi**5. NSO estimated India's GDP growth rate as 5 percent for the current fiscal.**

- ✚ National Statistical Office (NSO) has estimated India's GDP growth rate for 2019-20 estimated at 5% on 7 January 2020. It has seen dipping to an 11-year low of 5% in the current fiscal. This is mainly due to poor showing by the manufacturing and construction sectors. The previous low economic growth was recorded at 3.1% in 2008-09.
- ✚ As per the first advance estimates of the national income released by NSO, the estimated growth of the Indian economy of 5% in 2019-20 as against 6.8% in the previous fiscal.
- ✚ The report also states that the output of the manufacturing sector is expected to decelerate to 2% in 2019-20 from 6.2% in the previous fiscal. The reduction was also witnessed in sectors like construction and electricity, agriculture, gas and water supply.

6. World's highest railway bridge to be built by 2021 December.

- ✚ The government has set a fresh deadline for the completion of the world's highest railway bridge that connects Kashmir to the rest of India by December 2021. It is the most challenging project in the post-independent history of the Indian Railways.
- ✚ The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project is important in order to provide an alternative and reliable transportation system to Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✚ It will connect Kashmir Valley to the Indian Railways network. This project will provide seamless and hassle-free connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir.

7. Institutions at Gujarat Ayurved University to get status of Institution of National Importance.

- ✚ The Cabinet approved conferring the status of Institution of National Importance to a cluster of Ayurvedic institutions at Gujarat Ayurved University campus in Jamnagar.
- ✚ The elevation of the status of institution will provide it with the autonomy to upgrade the standard of Ayurveda education, frame various courses in Ayurveda as per national and international demand. It will help the institute to develop tertiary care in Ayurveda and to secure interdisciplinary collaborations to give a contemporary thrust to Ayurveda.
- ✚ The status of National Importance will boost the role and importance of Ayurveda in Public Health.

Foot Notes:**About Gujarat****Capital:** Gandhinagar**Governor:** Acharya Devvrat**Chief Minister:** Vijay Rupani**8. 'Advantage Maharashtra expo 2020' inaugurated in Aurangabad.**

- ✚ Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated the Advantage Maharashtra expo 2020 in Aurangabad.
- ✚ The four-day mega industrial exhibition has been organised by the Marathwada Association of Small Scale Industries and Agriculture (MASSIA).
- ✚ Growth of Marathwada industries in technology and innovation and the products produced and exported from the region will be showcased in this exhibition. Over 450 exhibitors from within the state as well as outside the state are participating in this exhibition.

Foot Notes:**About Maharashtra****Governor:** Bhagat Singh Koshyari**Capital:** Mumbai

9. President Kovind lays foundation stone to Lakshadweep's first Super Specialty Hospital at Kavaratti.

- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind laid foundation stone to Lakshadweep's first Super Specialty Hospital at Kavaratti. President who is on two days visit to the union territory assured special focus for the development of Lakshadweep and directed Lakshadweep Administrator to give special attention for the completion of Super Specialty Hospital.
- ✦ Lakshadweep Administrator Dineshwar Sharma received the President at Agatti Airport. President received guard of honour from a joint group of 160 different forces.

10. 4th 'Buxa Bird Festival' started in West Bengal.

- ✦ The 4th edition of 'Buxa Bird Festival' has started in Buxa National Park in West Bengal's, district Alipurduar.
- ✦ More than 50 birdwatchers from pan India and abroad have registered in the festival.
- ✦ Over 300 rare species including the Sultan Tit, Greater Spotted Eagle and Great Hornbill visit the national park during this festival.

Foot Notes:**About West Bengal****Governor:** Jagdeep Dhankhar**CM:** Mamta Banerjee**11. Indian High Commission organizes "Art Exhibition" in Bangladesh.**

- ✦ The Indian High Commission has organized the "Art Exhibition" in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- ✦ The "Art Exhibition" has been organized to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- ✦ The art exhibition constituted unique photographs of Mahatma Gandhi from his initial days in South Africa to numerous movements he participated in India.

Foot Notes:**About Bangladesh****Prime Minister of:** Sheikh Hasina**Capital:** Dhaka**Currency:** Taka.**BANKING ALL EXAMS Video Course****• 395 VIDEOS****₹4749/- ₹3749/-****12. India Declared 5th Biggest Geopolitical Risk Of 2020.**

- ✦ India under Narendra Modi is the fifth biggest geopolitical risk of 2020, said Eurasia Group, world's leading political risk consultancy.
- ✦ Eurasia's annual 'Top 10 Risks' of the year list is considered one of the foremost geopolitical indicators among global investors, multinational firms and various financial and business consultancies.
- ✦ The list that is topped by-elections in the US and followed by events and developments like the US-China technology tug of war on 5G as well as the trade war between Beijing and Washington.

Foot Notes:

The Top 10 Risks of 2020 are as followed:

1. RIGGED! WHO GOVERNS THE US?
2. THE GREAT DECOUPLING
3. US/CHINA
4. MNCS NOT TO THE RESCUE
5. INDIA GETS MODI-FIED
6. GEOPOLITICAL EUROPE
7. POLITICS VS. ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
8. SHIA CRESCENDO
9. DISCONTENT IN LATIN AMERICA
10. TURKEY

The Eurasia Group releases its 'Top 10 Risks' of the Year report annually considering one of the principal geopolitical indicators among global investors, multinational firms and various financial and business consultancies.

13. "Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020", will be held at Talkatora Stadium on 20th Jan.

- ✚ Over 2000 students, parents and teachers will be participating from all over India in this event. The Human Resource Development Ministry in partnership with MyGov last month launched a 'short essay' competition for students of classes 9 to 12 for the third edition of Prime Minister's Interaction with school students.
- ✚ The themes given this time for PPC 2020 are 'Gratitude is Great', 'Your future depends on your aspirations', 'Examining Exams', 'Our duties, you take' and 'Balance is Beneficial'.
- ✚ The first edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha was held on 16th February, 2018 and second on 29th of January last year.

14. Budget to be presented on Feb 1; Economic Survey on Jan 31.

- ✚ Union Budget will be presented on 1st of next month and the Economic Survey on 31st January. The Budget Session of Parliament will begin on the 31st of this month.
- ✚ The first Union budget of independent India was presented by R. K. Shanmukham Chetty on 26 November 1947.
- ✚ Until 2016, the budget of the Indian Railways was presented separately to Parliament and dealt with separately.

Foot Notes:

Finance Minister: Nirmala Sitharaman.

15. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy launched Amma Vodi Scheme in Chittoor.

- ✚ Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy launched Amma Vodi Scheme in Chittoor. It is one of the nine flagship programmes of the Andhra Government. The programmes are called Navratanalalu. The scheme is first of its kind in the country.
- ✚ The scheme aims at benefitting school students studying in classes I to XII. It includes both public and private schools. Under the scheme, these students belonging to Below Poverty Line will get Rs 15,000 per annum.
- ✚ However, the guardian or mother of the child should ensure 75% attendance of the child.

Foot Notes:

About Andhra Pradesh

Governor: Biswabhusan Harichandan

Chief Minister: Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy

16. Supreme Court: Access to Internet-a fundamental right.

- ✦ Supreme Court of India said that Right of access to internet is a fundamental right. The Court had asked the administration of Jammu and Kashmir to review the curbs on internet in a week.
- ✦ Lately the Indian Government had been using internet shut down as a tool to control protest in the country against the Citizenship Amendment Bill. It was predominant in the north eastern states.
- ✦ The bench pronounced that freedom of speech and expression and freedom to practice any business or trade over internet is constitutionally protected under Article 19 (1).

Foot Notes:

Chief Justice of India: Sharad Arvind Bobde

17. Railways: First Solar Power and other plans to Link J&K with rest of India.

- ✦ Indian Railways announced that it will source 1000 MW of solar power and 200 MW of wind power to zonal railways by 2021-22. Also, Kashmir is to be linked with the rest of India through railway network by December 2021.
- ✦ In order to implement the solar and wind power in Indian Railways, GoI has planned to install 500 MW of solar plants on the roof top of Railway buildings to meet non-traction loads.
- ✦ It has also planned to install another 500 MW of land-based solar plants whose energy will be used to meet both non-traction and traction load requirements.

Foot Notes:

Minister of Railways: Piyush Goyal

18. Haryana, Karnataka and Kerala top State Energy Efficiency Index 2019.

- ✦ The Union Government has released the “State Energy Efficiency Index 2019”. The index was released during the ‘Review, Planning and Monitoring (RPM)’ meeting held in New Delhi.
- ✦ The index is developed by Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) along with Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE). The SEE Index 2019 traces the expansion and achievements of Energy Efficiency (EE) drives running in 36 states and union territories.
- ✦ The SEE Index 2019 constitutes quantitative, qualitative and outcome-based 97 indicators to check energy efficiency initiatives, programs and outcomes in five distinct areas: transport, industry, agriculture, buildings, municipalities, and DISCOMs. State Energy Efficiency Index 2019 has divided States/UTs into 4 groups on the basis of Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES) desired to meet the State’s/UT’s actual energy demand through electricity, coal, oil, gas, etc. across all the sectors. The 4 groups are: ‘Front Runner’, ‘Achiever’, ‘Contender’ and ‘Aspirant’.

Foot Notes:

- The State Energy Efficiency Index 2019 was topped by Haryana, Karnataka and Kerala while Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand and Rajasthan performed worst in their respective groups.
- The states of Haryana, Karnataka and Kerala were in “Achiever” group and there was not a single state in the “Front Runner” group.

19. Smriti Irani launches Yashaswini Scheme for Women entrepreneurship in Goa.

- ✦ Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Textiles, Smriti Irani launched Yashaswini Scheme for Women entrepreneurship in Goa. The event was held at Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium at Taleigao near Panaji.
- ✦ The Minister said that the development of women is the base for the development of the nation. Under Yashaswini scheme, women self-help groups will be given interest free loans of upto Rs Five lakh for business.
- ✦ Swasthya Sakhi Project and breast cancer screening initiative were also inaugurated on the occasion.

Foot Notes:

About Goa

Capital: Panaji
Governor: Satya Pal Malik

International News & Foreign Affairs

1. Iran takes final step by abandoning JCPOA restrictions.

- ✦ In Iran, the Cabinet announced the country's decision to take the final step to reduce commitments to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), popularly referred to as the 2015 nuclear deal.
- ✦ Iran will observe no restrictions in operational areas including enrichment capacities, enrichment percentage, and the volume of enriched material as well as research. However, Iran will continue cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency as before.
- ✦ Under the 2015 accord, Iran had agreed to limit its sensitive nuclear activities and allow in international inspectors in return for the lifting of crippling economic sanctions.

Foot Notes:

About Iran

President: Hassan Rouhani

Capital: Tehran

Currency: Iranian Rial

Supreme leader: Ali Khamenei

2. MECOS-3, 2020: Global Marine Ecosystem Meet in Kochi.

- ✦ Kochi will host the third international symposium on marine ecosystems challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) from January 7 to 10. Organised by the Marine Biological Association of India, MECOS-3 will serve as a platform for discussions on a range of topics, including the impact of the climate crisis on marine ecosystems and an unusual warming of the Arabian Sea.
- ✦ The meet will also focus on the UN's sustainable development goal-14 (life under water), development of small-scale fisheries, recent developments in aquaculture, eco-labelling and green fishing technologies.
- ✦ The symposium is aimed at reviewing the concerns involved in marine ecosystem and formulating strategies for the better and sustainable utilisation of marine wealth.

3. UAE Cabinet approves issuance of 5-Year multi-entry tourist visa.

- ✦ The UAE Cabinet has approved the issuance of a five-year multi-entry tourist visa for all nationalities visiting the country. The decision was made during the Cabinet's first meeting of 2020.
- ✦ The move comes in a bid to support the UAE's tourism economy, and affirm the country's position as a global tourist destination.
- ✦ The country receives 21 million tourists annually and their aim is to establish the country as a major global tourist destination.

Foot Notes:

About UAE

Capital: Abu Dhabi

Largest city: Dubai

President: Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan

Prime Minister: Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

4. Neutral pronoun 'they' voted Word of the Decade.

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

- ✦ They prefer the plural neutral pronoun to bypass using the pronouns “he” or “she”. The selection of “they” is an indication that how a personal expression of gender identity has become an increasing part of our shared discourse.
- ✦ The recognition comes after US dictionary Merriam-Webster in December named “they” as word of the year. The American Dialect Society had previously named “they” word of the year in 2015.
- ✦ Other contenders in the decade category included #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, climate, emoji, meme, the opioid crisis and woke.

5. India-Germany sign MoU on Zero Budget Natural Farming.

- ✦ Andhra Pradesh Government signed Memorandum of Understanding with a German firm to implement Zero Budget Natural Farming in the state.
- ✦ The state Government will take a loan of Rs 1015 crores to spend towards climate resilient Zero Budget Natural Farming. The project aims to cover 2.39 lakh farmers in 600 villages. The project was included in the Budget presentation of 2019. Along with ZBNF implementation, the Government will also implement Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.
- ✦ It is a chemical-free agricultural farming practice. The Government of India is promoting ZBNF through Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana since 2015-16.

Foot Notes:

About Germany

President: Frank-Walter Steinmeier

Capital: Berlin

Currency: Euro

6. Israel unveils revolutionary laser-based air defense system.

- ✦ Israeli Ministry of Defense announced that it has successfully developed a laser-based air defense system. The system is meant to intercept aerial threats ranging from as mortar fire, drones, medium range Grad rockets, anti-tank missiles as well as long-range missiles, currently at the disposal of Iran-backed terror groups in Syria and Lebanon.
- ✦ The system is set to be tested in six months' time at an undisclosed location in northern Israel. If the interception test is successful, the laser-based system will be dispatched for field use along Israel's border with the Gaza Strip.
- ✦ The technological development will enable the long-range targeting and stabilization of laser beams, allowing them to intercept targets at great distances.

Foot Notes:

About Israel

Capital: Jerusalem

President: Reuven Rivlin

Prime Minister: Benjamin Netanyahu

7. India's first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant to be commissioned by 2021.

- ✦ The manufacturing of the country's first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant is currently under phase three.
- ✦ It is likely to be commissioned by early 2021. This carrier is being built at the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) in Kochi.
- ✦ Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh on December 3 had said that Vikrant will be fully operational by 2022 and it will have a fleet of MiG-29K aircraft.

Foot Notes:

Navy Chief: Admiral Karambir Singh

New Appointments and Person in News

1. Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar appointed as advisor to the Lt Governor of JK.

- ✦ IPS officer Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar has been appointed as an advisor to the Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He recently retired as the Director-General (DG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).
- ✦ The position in the paramilitary force remained vacant for nearly two months after the retirement of K Durga Prasad on 28 February 2019.
- ✦ The role of the Advisor includes assisting the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in the effective discharge of his functions. The appointment will be effective from the date from which he assumes charge. G C Murmu is the LG of Jammu Kashmir UT since its creation on 31 October 2019.

2. Arun Kumar Sahu concurrently accredited as India's Next Envoy to Dominica.

- ✦ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has concurrently accredited Arun Kumar Sahu as the next ambassador of India to the mountainous Caribbean island of Dominica, with residence in Port of Spain. He succeeded Madhu Sethi.
- ✦ Sahu is a 1996 batch IFS (Indian Foreign Service) officer, who serves presently as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Foot Notes:

About Ministry of External Affairs:

Headquarters: New Delhi.

Minister of External Affairs: Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

Minister of state: V. Muraleedharan.

3. Hudco appoints M Nagaraj as Chairman, Managing Director.

- ✦ State-owned Housing and Urban Development Corporation (Hudco) said that M Nagaraj has been appointed the company's Chairman and Managing Director.
- ✦ Nagaraj is also Director (Corporate Planning) of the company. He has experience of around 28 years in a multitude of sectors such as housing, infrastructure finance, skill development and microfinance in the social sector, and international trading.
- ✦ Hudco provides loans for housing and urban infrastructure projects.

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4. Sakthivel takes over as Apparel Export Promotion Council of India Chairman.

- ✦ Apparel Export Promotion Council of India (AEPC) said it has appointed A Sakthivel as the new chairman of the organisation.
- ✦ Sakthivel said the industry had been struggling to survive and the exports growth were stagnant.
- ✦ Sakthivel along with some exporters had founded Tirupur Exporters Association in 1990.

Banking

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

- ✚ India's foreign exchange reserves swelled by 2.520 billion USD to touch a record high of 457.468 billion USD in the week that ended on 27th December 2019.
- ✚ An RBI press release has informed that foreign currency assets, a major part of the overall reserves rose by 2.203 billion USD to 424.936 billion USD.
- ✚ India's special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund, however dipped by 2 million USD to 1.441 billion USD, while the country's reserve position increased by 58 million USD to 3.7 billion USD.

Foot Notes:

About RBI

Headquarters: Mumbai

Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata

Governor: Shaktikanta Das

2. Piyush Goyal inaugurates National Stock Exchange knowledge hub.

- ✚ Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered learning ecosystem that will assist the banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI) sector.
- ✚ He hoped that the knowledge hub created by NSE in the national capital will fill in these gaps and help the financial sector to move into the future.
- ✚ AI and machine learning will contribute USD 1 trillion by 2035 and it was a good beginning by NSE to tap the potential of AI and use it as a tool to create a workforce in the BFSI sector in India.

3. Two Indian banks 'Axis Bank and ICICI Bank' to cease operations in Sri Lanka.

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

Foot Notes:

About Sri Lanka

Capitals: Colombo, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte

Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee

President: Gotabaya Rajapaksa

Prime Minister: Mahinda Rajapaksa

4. RBI allows select banks in India to offer forex rates 24X7 to Indian Clients.

- ✚ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted the select banks in India can offer forex rates to Indian clients round the clock, which is 24X7. Now the select banks can work beyond the inter-bank market hours, which now run from 9 am to 5 pm.
- ✚ The move will allow the Indians to hedge their foreign exchange risks at any time of the day. It will make the offshore currency markets in Dubai and Singapore less attractive for Indian investors.
- ✚ RBI has also decided to accept the recommendation of the task force on the offshore rupee market. Hence it permits the authorized dealers Category-I banks to offer foreign exchange prices to users at all times either by a domestic sales team or through their overseas branches.

Foot Notes:

About RBI

Headquarters: Mumbai

Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata
Governor: Shaktikanta Das

5. IBBI notifies — Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India Regulations, 2020

- ✦ The amendment clarifies that a person, who is not eligible under the Code to submit a resolution plan for insolvency resolution of the corporate debtor, shall not be a party in any manner to a compromise or arrangement of the corporate debtor under section 230 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- ✦ It also clarifies that a secured creditor cannot sell or transfer an asset, which is subject to the security interest, to any person, who is not eligible under the Code to submit a resolution plan for insolvency resolution of the corporate debtor.
- ✦ The amendment provides that a secured creditor, who proceeds to realise its security interest, shall contribute its share of the insolvency resolution process cost, liquidation process cost and workmen's dues, within 90 days of the liquidation commencement date.

Foot Notes:

About IBBI

Chairperson: M. S. Sahoo
Founded: 1 October 2016
Headquarters: New Delhi

6. Shivalik Mercantile became 1st urban cooperative bank to convert to SFB.

- ✦ RBI gave approval to Uttar Pradesh based Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank Ltd to convert to a small finance bank (SFB).
- ✦ With this, Shivalik Mercantile became the 1st urban cooperative bank (UCB) to be converted into an SFB since the release of reformed RBI guidelines which came out 2 years ago. The RBI will grant a licence to Shivalik Mercantile bank for the commencement of banking business under Section 22 (1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 as an SFB.
- ✦ RBI granted transition of a UCB into an SFB under the scheme on the voluntary transition of urban co-operative bank into a small finance bank issued on September 27, 2018.

Foot Notes:

About Shivalik Mercantile

CEO: Suveer Gupta

About RBI

Headquarters: Mumbai
Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata
Governor: Shaktikanta Das

7. SBI announces 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' scheme.

- ✦ Country's largest public sector bank, State Bank of India has announced a 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' (RBBG) scheme.
- ✦ It aims at giving a push to residential sales and improving home buyers' confidence. Under this scheme, the SBI will issue a guarantee for completion of select residential projects to customers who have availed home loans from it.
- ✦ The scheme will focus on affordable housing projects priced up to 2.50 crore rupees in 10 cities initially.

Foot Notes:

About State Bank of India

Chairperson: Rajnish Kumar
Headquarters: Mumbai
Founded: 1 July 1955
Managing director: Anshula Kant

8. SBI lowers GDP estimates to 4.6% in FY20 from 5%.

- ✚ The SBI lowered the economic growth forecast to 4.6% from the earlier 5%.
- ✚ The latest SBI Ecowrap report even predicted growth rate to remain below 6 percent for the two years in a row.
- ✚ The SBI Research Desk stated that factors like government expenditure are the key factors in determining the overall growth outlook for FY20.

Foot Notes:**About SBI****Headquarters:** Mumbai, India**Chairman:** Rajnish Kumar**9. RBI extends recurring payments feature to UPI.**

- ✚ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will now allow consumers to give an e-mandate for recurring payments made through Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- ✚ This functionality will allow UPI users to bypass additional factor authentication (AFA) every time a payment is made to a regular merchant by giving a onetime instruction to the UPI service provider.
- ✚ This facility was earlier available for card and wallet based payments. The limit on such recurring transactions has been set at Rs 2000.

Foot Notes:**About RBI****Founded:** 01 Apr 1935**Headquarters:** Mumbai, India**Governor:** Shaktikanta Das

Science Tech & Defence

1. India Russia to sign MoUs on AK-203 assault rifles.

- ✚ The Army is likely to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles with Russia. About 1 lakh rifles will come directly from Russia and the remaining will be manufactured by the JV in India.
- ✚ The rifles will be manufactured by the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh.
- ✚ The Army has been looking to replace the indigenous INSAS (Indian National Small Arms System) rifles in use with a modern rifle.

Foot Notes:**About Russia****President:** Vladimir Putin**Capital:** Moscow**Currency:** Russian ruble**2. Oman ships arrive to participate in Indo-Oman bilateral Naval Exercise “Naseem Al-Bahr”.**

- ✚ Oman ships arrived in Goa to participate in “Naseem-Al-Bahr”, the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise. RNOV are Royal Navy of Oman Vessels. RNOV al Rasikh and RNOV Khassab arrived at Goa. Along with these ships, Indian Naval Ships Shubhadra and Beas will also participate in the exercise. The Indo-Oman Naval Exercises are being conducted since 1993.
- ✚ The countries conduct regular biennial exercises between all three services namely army, navy and air force. “Al Najah” is the army exercise conducted between the countries. “Ex Eastern Bridge” is the Air Force exercise that is held between the countries. In West-Asia, Oman is one of India’s oldest defence

partners and an ally in anti-piracy campaigns. India has supplied rifles to Oman. In addition, India is considering setting up a defence production unit in Oman.

Foot Notes:**About Oman**

Capital: Muscat

Currency: Omani Rial

3. 2020 to be observed as Year of Mobility by CISF.

- ✦ The CISF observes 2020 as the “Year of Mobility” for the welfare of the troops. It will focus on construction of residential units and implementation of welfare measures.
- ✦ In the year of 2020, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will aim at creating infrastructure for their families. It will also aim at focusing on sports and physical fitness leveraging modern gadgetry. It is essential to equip the forces with modern instruments as the force plays major role in the security system of the country.
- ✦ They guard civil airports, nuclear power stations, mines, thermal power stations in private domain as well.

Foot Notes:**About CISF**

Headquarters location: New Delhi

Motto: Protection and Security

CISF DG: Rajesh Ranjan

4. Indian Army begins its work on the GOCO (Government Owned Contractor Operated) Model.

- ✦ Indian Army began its work on the GOCO (Government Owned Contractor Operated) Model. The model is extended to base workshops and ordnance depots. The workshops play vital role as they ensure the Indian Army is operationally prepared all the time.
- ✦ The workshops are assigned the role of overhauling (testing and repairing) of weapons. They also manufacture spares. The workshops have an annual turnover of Rs 10,000 crores.
- ✦ Though, the GOCO model in army workshops helps reducing government expenditure on armed forces and increase combat capability of the army, there are certain issues associated with the model.

Foot Notes:

Chief of Army Staff: Manoj Mukund Naravane

5. Indian Navy start 1st ‘Maha-Navy Connect 2020’.

- ✦ Indian Navy starts 1st Maha-Navy Connect 2020 Tri-Dimensional Expedition started from Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ✦ The aim of the expedition is to promote the maritime heritage of India and spread awareness about Coastal Security amongst the coastal communities in Maharashtra.
- ✦ The tri-dimensional expedition consisting of yachting, running and cycling teams of 50 naval personnel. This expedition will cover more than 555kms from Maharashtra’s northernmost fort Arnala to its southernmost Sindhudurg fort.

Foot Notes:

Chief of Naval Staff: Admiral Karambir Singh.

Important Days

1. GoI to confer first “Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman”.

- ✚ On January 7, 2020, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will confer “Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman” to 30 media houses. The award is being presented for the first time.
- ✚ The aim of the award is to acknowledge positive role of media in disseminating outreach of Yoga.
- ✚ The awards are to be provided in the categories of Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Television (8 awards), Best Media Coverage of yoga in Radio (11 awards), Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Newspapers (11 awards).

Foot Notes:

Yoga Day: 21 June

2. Pravasi Bhartiya Divas: 09 January

- ✚ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated every year to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. It also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India on 9 January 1915.
- ✚ Established in 2003 the celebratory event is organised by the Ministry of External Affairs every year on this day.
- ✚ On the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar interacted with Indian Diaspora across the globe through a digital video conference.

Foot Notes:

Minister of External Affairs of India: Subrahmanyam Jaishankar



3. World Hindi Day observed on 10 January.

- ✚ World Hindi Day is observed every year on 10th January 2020. The day ensures to promote the Hindi language around the world. World Hindi Day is different from National Hindi Day.
- ✚ The day aims to create a suitable environment to promote Hindi worldwide and to present Hindi as the prevalent language of the world.
- ✚ On this day, Indian Foreign Ministries located abroad organize various programs. People of Indian origin living abroad organize various programs and celebrate the day. Unique programs for Hindi on various subjects are organized in all government offices.

Foot Notes:

National Hindi Day: 14 September

4. Nation celebrated the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda as National Youth Day on 12th January.

- ✚ The nation is celebrating the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda as National Youth Day on 12 January. One of the greatest spiritual leaders of India, Swami Vivekananda introduced the world to the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga.

- ✦ He became popular in the western world after his famous speech at the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893.
- ✦ Vivekananda was the chief disciple of the 19th-century mystic Ramakrishna Paramhansa. He was the founder of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission.

Sports

1. Indian Grandmaster P. Magesh Chandran wins Hastings International Chess Congress tournament in England.

- ✦ India's P Magesh Chandran remained unbeaten in nine rounds to win the title in the 95th edition of the prestigious Hastings International Chess Congress in Hastings, England.
- ✦ He beat fellow Indian GM Deep Sengupta in the eighth round.
- ✦ France's Romain Edouard, who was the only player to end the tournament a half point behind Chandran, took the second spot. Four players shared third to sixth places with 6.5 points.

Foot Notes:

About England

Prime Minister: Boris Johnson

Capital: London

Currency: Pound sterling

2. Leh-Ladakh's boys & girls teams win 5th IHAI National Ice Hockey Championship 2020.

- ✦ In Leh-Ladakh, the home teams won the 5th Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship -2020 in both Boys and Girls categories.
- ✦ Ladakh Scouts Regiment Centre (LSRC) won the bronze medal, in the Under-20 Boys category. Maharashtra girls stood 3rd in the championship.
- ✦ Ice Hockey National teams will be shortlisted from the Championship and teams will be selected after a coaching and conditioning camp. The Under-20 boys will be playing in the Asia Challenge Cup between 10th and 15th of next month in Thailand.

3. Women weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur banned for 4 years by NADA.

- ✦ Indian women weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur has been banned for 4 years from the sport by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA).
- ✦ This ban was imposed on her for involving in doping violation. The sample of Sarbjeet was collected during 34th Women Senior National Weightlifting Championship held at Vishakhapatnam.
- ✦ The Agency found her guilty of anti-doping rule violation.

Foot Notes:

About NADA

CEO: Navin Agarwal.

Founded: November 24, 2005.

Headquarters: New Delhi.

Books and Authors

1. Amit Shah releases a book titled 'Karmayoddha Granth', on the life of PM Modi.

- ✚ The Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah released a book titled Karmayoddha Granth in New Delhi. In his book, Amit Shah has shared the life of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- ✚ The book talks about the three parts of PM Modi's life: The first part talks of Modi dedicating his life to an ideology. The second about him entering politics on the ideals of the Sangathan. The third about him Upholding the tenets of Parliamentary Democracy and the Constitution of India to construct an ideal State

Foot Notes:

Home Minister: Amit Shah

2. Jasbinder Bilan wins UK children's book award.

- ✚ India-born author Jasbinder Bilan has bagged a coveted UK children's book award for her debut novel.
- ✚ Her novel, 'Asha and the Spirit Bird', aimed at readers aged nine years and above, beat competition from three other shortlisted books to be named the winner of the 2019 Costa Children's Award this week.
- ✚ Bilan will receive 5,000 pounds as the winner of the award. The award is open to authors resident in the UK and Ireland and presented annually across five categories of First Novel, Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children's Book.

Foot Notes:

About the United Kingdom

Queen: Queen Elizabeth II

Capital: London

Prime minister: Boris Johnson



Awards

1. Saurabh Chaudhary wins gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship.

- ✚ The 17-year-old ace shooter from Uttar Pradesh Saurabh Chaudhary has won the men's 10 metres air pistol gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship in Bhopal on 4 January 2020. Chaudhary shot a 246.4 to finish on top.
- ✚ Sarabjot Singh of Haryana secured second and scored 243.9 and Abhishek Verma won bronze in a high-quality final.

2. Sucheta Satish won the 2020 Global Child Prodigy Awards.

- ✚ Dubai-based Indian girl Sucheta Satish, who can sing in 120 languages, won the Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020. The 13-year-old known is as the Dubai Indian High School's nightingale.
- ✚ Along with Sucheta Satish, 100 other Global Child prodigies across the world were honoured at the award ceremony in different categories.
- ✚ The award recognized her twin world records for singing in most languages during one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child. She had set as a 12-year-old two years ago in Dubai at the Indian Consulate Auditorium. During the concert, she sang in 102 languages over 6.15 hours.

Obituaries

1. Former Karnataka Governor T N Chaturvedi passes away.

- ✚ Former Governor of Karnataka T N Chaturvedi passed away. T N Chaturvedi served as Comptroller and Auditor General of India from 1984 to 1989.
- ✚ He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1991. He was the Governor of Karnataka from the year 2002 to 2007.

Foot Notes:

About Karnataka

Chief Minister: B. S. Yediyurappa

Capital: Bengaluru

2. Famous artist Akbar Padamsee passed away.

- ✚ One of India's best-known artists, Akbar Padamsee passed away in Coimbatore. He was 91 years old.
- ✚ Akbar Padamsee was born in Mumbai in 1928. He earned a Diploma in Painting from Sir JJ School of Art. He was one of the pioneers of modern Indian art along with S.H. Raza, F.N. Souza, and M.F. Husain.
- ✚ He was also part of the Progressive Artists' Group. He was renowned for his famous artworks like metascapes, Syzygy, Portrait of Husain, Jeune femme aux Cheveux noirs, la tête inclinée, Metascape - III. He won many honours, including a gold medal from the Lalit Kala Akademi, and the Padma Bhushan in 2010.

3. Lt Gen PN Hoon, who secured Siachen for India in 1984, dies at 90.

- ✚ Lt Gen Prem Nath Hoon, who served the army for four decades before hanging up his boots as chief of the Western Command in 1987, died in Panchkula. He was 90.
- ✚ His son Ronny Hoon said the General died after suffering a brain haemorrhage at 6:30 pm. The last rites will be performed at the electric crematorium in Sector 25 at 3:30 pm on Tuesday.
- ✚ Commissioned into the Sikh regiment two years after the Partition, Lt Gen Hoon led the Operation Meghdoot — as the commander of Srinagar-based 15 Corps — to capture the Siachen glacier in 1984.

4. Ruler of Oman Sultan Qaboos bin Said passes away.

- ✚ The longest serving ruler of Oman Sultan Qaboos bin Said passed away. He was a charismatic and visionary leader who transformed Oman into a modern and prosperous nation. He was ruling Oman since 1970.
- ✚ The Sultan is the prime decision-maker in Oman and holds the portfolio of Prime Minister, supreme commander of the armed forces, minister of foreign affairs, minister of finance and minister of defence.
- ✚ The former culture minister Haitham bin Tariq Al Said was sworn in as the country's new ruler.

Foot Notes:

About Oman

Capital: Muscat


Currency: Omani Rial.

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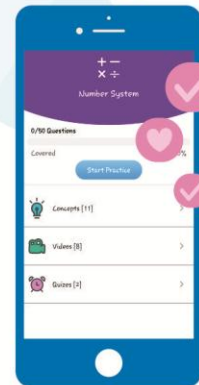


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