



## **CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL, 2019**

### TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **Tamil Nadu Agriculture University's (TNAU) newly-released 'Star Jasmine' - is expected to enter local markets in the next six to seven months**
  - ✓ TNAU first released the 'star jasmine' or 'jasmine nitidum' in January this year as an alternative to the traditional jathimalli, which becomes unavailable during winter
  - ✓ It can be grown in all types of red and black soil
- ◆ **Retired Judge P Devadass - was appointed as the Anti-corruption Ombudsman in the Tamilnadu Lokayukta on April 1**
  - ✓ While retired judges K Jayabalan and R Krishnamoorthy will be judicial members, retired IAS officer M Rajaram and senior advocate K Arumugam will be non-judicial members
  - ✓ The selection committee headed by Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami considered the names recommended by the search committee, headed by former Madras high court judge Justice K Venkataraman and later finalised the officials.
  - ✓ The Tamil Nadu Lokayukta bill was passed by the Assembly on July 9, 2018 and the Act came into being from November 13, 2018
- ◆ **In a first-of-its kind initiative, the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) department - has prepared a manual for conservation of heritage temples across the state**
  - ✓ The draft, to be notified soon, covers scientific conservation of the structure, sculptures and idols of temples.

- ✓ It was compiled by a special committee, comprising representatives from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), IIT Madras and Shivacharyas
- ✓ The HR&CE department oversees nearly 36,700 temples across Tamil Nadu
  
- ◆ **The Archaeological Survey of India - informed the Madurai bench of Madras high court that the sample artifacts from Adichanallur in Tuticorin district were about 2,900 years old**
  
- ◆ **Kodaikanal Hill garlic - gets the Geographical Indication (GI) tag**
  
- ◆ **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - has established a 'Cold Spray' SMART (Surface Modification and Additive Research Technologies) Laboratory in collaboration with General Electric (GE)**
  - ✓ This is the first of its kind High-Pressure Cold Spray (HPCS) facility being installed in any academic institute in India.
  - ✓ The project is funded under 'Uchcharat Avishkar Yojana' (UAY) of the Government of India, which is intended to boost collaboration between academia and private sector
  - ✓ The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India, was the key investor along with the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, IIT Madras, and GE.
  - ✓ Cold spray technology is different from other widely used thermal spray processes in that there is no melting and oxidation of powders leading to high-quality coatings with less powder wastage
  - ✓ This technology avoids the distortion and stresses leading to longer asset life
  
- ◆ **Tamil Nadu government - renamed Chennai railway station as Puratchi Thalaivar Dr M G Ramachandran Central Railway Station on April 5**
  
- ◆ **Radha, a transgender - is the only transsexual to contest the Lok Sabha elections in Tamil Nadu**
  - ✓ The 50-year old is contesting from south Chennai constituency as an independent candidate
  - ✓ As per Election Commission, 5472 voters in the state have registered under the third gender category.

- ✓ In the entire country, as per 2011 census, there are 4.9 lakh transsexuals present
- ◆ **Chennai's Presidency college - ranked third in the NIRF 2019 rankings**
  - ✓ It is ranked next only to two Delhi colleges, Miranda House and Hindu College
  - ✓ It had got good rankings in research and professional practices parameter along with teaching and learning resources
  - ✓ Chennai's Loyola college was also ranked within top 10, as it bagged the 6<sup>th</sup> position
  - ✓ Anna University had slipped from fourth place to seventh in the university category and from tenth to fourteenth in the overall category
  - ✓ It is ranked sixth among institutes offering architecture and 43<sup>rd</sup> among those offering management courses.
- ◆ **Chennai district - has an elector-population ratio of 78, the highest in the State**
  - ✓ Chennai district with a population of 49.59 lakh as per 2019 projections, has included 38.66 lakh electors on the rolls so far
  - ✓ T. Nagar has reported the highest number of electors for a given population, with an elector-population ratio of 87
  - ✓ The Harbour Assembly segment has the lowest elector-population ratio of 66
  - ✓ The elector-population ratio is 80 in Dr. Radhakrishnan Nagar, 77 in Perambur, 84 in Kolathur, 86 in Villivakkam, 76 in Thiru-Vi-Ka Nagar, 70 in Egmore, 68 in Royapuram, 66 in Harbour, 76 in Chepauk-Thiruvallikeni, 74 in Thousand Lights, 83 in Anna Nagar, 80 in Virugambakkam, 81 in Saidapet, 87 in Mylapore and 74 in Velachery
  - ✓ The ratio of electors for a given population in the Assembly segments is calculated ahead of polls to assess the impact of deletion and inclusion in the rolls.
- ◆ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - honoured with Russia's highest state decoration, Order of St Andrew the Apostle on April 12, for promoting partnership and friendly relations between the two countries**
  - ✓ This is the second international award the PM received this month after Zayed Medal, the United Arab Emirates' highest civilian award
  - ✓ With the Russian award, PM Narendra Modi has now been conferred with around seven top global awards.

- ✓ The Order of 'St Andrew the Apostle' is the highest order and the oldest state order of Russia, first established in 1698.
- ◆ **Senior IAS officer R Palanisamy - appointed as the new State Election Commissioner replacing Malik Feroz Khan on April 10**
  - ✓ The 2000 batch IAS officer, a native of Coimbatore, was earlier the Registrar of Cooperative Societies
  - ✓ He will oversee the local body polls, which are likely to be held after the Lok Sabha elections.
  - ✓ Malik Feroz Khan has been heading the SEC since April 7, 2017
- ◆ **Tamil Nadu's first solar-powered boat - will soon operate at the Manimuthar Dam in Tirunelveli district within 10 days**
  - ✓ Called Mahindra Odyssea
- ◆ **Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G. Ramachandran Central Railway Station in Tamil Nadu, with 57 letters - gets the honour of having the longest railway station name in India**
- ◆ **Taiwanese smartphone manufacturer, Foxconn - to commence mass production of iPhones in India this year at its factory in Sriperumbudur outside Chennai**
- ◆ **A 24 MW floating solar power plant - to come up at the Tuticorin factory complex of SPIC (Southern Petrochemicals Industries Corporation)**
- ◆ **The Ma. Aranganathan Literary Awards for 2019 - were presented to writers Veli Rangarajan and Yuma Vasuki in Chennai**
- ◆ **Tamil Nadu - ranked at 17th position in learning outcomes, 4<sup>th</sup> position in infrastructure and facilities and among the top 5 in the governance process - in the first-ever nationwide performance index for school education**
- ◆ **Greater Chennai Corporation - is likely to get Rs 100 crore funds from the Union government's Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) soon - for restoring around 59 lakes under its jurisdiction**

## TAMILNADU POLLS - A REPORT

- ◆ **Election Commission - revises Lok Sabha election turnout in Tamil Nadu to 71.8% on April 18**
  - ✓ The Dharmapuri Lok Sabha constituency stood first with a polling percentage of 80.49, while Chennai South registered 56.41%, the lowest in the State
  - ✓ The polling percentage for the 18 Assembly constituencies that went for bypolls on the same day was 75.57%
  - ✓ Among Assembly constituencies, Sholinghur recorded the highest with 82.26%, followed by Harur with 82.08% and Perambur with 64.14%, the lowest.
  - ✓ The three parliamentary constituencies in Chennai witnessed the lowest polling percentage in the entire State - Chennai North, 63.47%, Chennai South, 56.34% and Chennai Central, 58.69%
  
- ◆ **Union culture ministry - has released the categorization of Archaeological Survey of India-maintained monuments, based on their history and architectural importance.**
  - ✓ Pallava-era monuments at Unesco-notified world heritage site Mamallapuram, including the Shore Temple and the Five Rathas, are among 20 category 'A' monuments across the country including Taj Mahal at Agra, Sun Temple of Konark, besides Ajanta and Ellora Caves in Maharashtra
  - ✓ In Tamil Nadu, the Tigerheaded rock-cut temple at Mamallapuram, Rock-cut Jain Temple and natural caves monument in Sittanavasal of Pudukottai, Tirumalai Nayakar Palace in Virudhunagar, Fort St George, from where Madras (now Chennai) began and Fort Vattakottai in Kanyakumari district have been declared 'B' category monuments.
  - ✓ Besides, entry to several monuments in the state, currently free, may soon be charged
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu is home to more than 410 ASI-maintained monuments.
  - ✓ The ASI's Chennai Circle is the largest in the country with the highest number of monuments
  - ✓ The purpose of categorising such structures was to ensure they were accorded priority in funding for better preservation and conservation

- ◆ **All two-wheeler dealers and manufacturers in Tamil Nadu - to sell helmets to the buyers from May 1, along with the vehicles**
- ◆ **Asia's first balloon satellite - was launched by a girls' team from Periyar Maniammai Institute of Technology at Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with Chennai-based private organization, Space Kidz India (SKI)**
- ◆ **Chennai - could get another 'Sister city' soon, this time in South Africa**
  - ✓ It has signed six such agreements with foreign cities, in order to exchange knowledge in culture, education, trade and technology
  - ✓ Partnering with a city usually means forming a committee to coordinate and communicate about programmes, projects and activities.
  - ✓ Information, experiences and knowledge exchange take place through training, seminars and visits.
  - ✓ Projects to improve the current infrastructure and facilities by getting expertise, consultancy and equipment are undertaken
  - ✓ The city has signed the agreement with Kuala Lumpur in 2010 as there is a huge Tamil community there
  - ✓ Similarly, it had signed the agreement with San Antonio in Texas, as they had cleaned the river that flows through the city, in order to improve river Cooum
  - ✓ It also has a huge Tamil population there
  - ✓ In 2015, Chennai signed agreements with Chongqing in China to understand its public transport system and tied up with Ulsan, a port city in South Korea, in 2016 to improve trade relations.
- ◆ **TANGEDCO - has begun measuring wind power generation in real time using the global positioning system (GPS)**
  - ✓ The system has been installed in all windmills across TN and the discom has been able to measure the power generated by a windmill without going to the spot,
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu is the first state to use GPS in windmills
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu has a total wind power capacity of 8,322MW
  - ✓ In the coming months, the GPS system will be installed in solar, biomass and in thermal plants there by ruling out malpractices in billing apart from reducing discom's expenditure

- ◆ **The University of Madras - to set up a gender lab as part of creating workshop modules on gender sensitization, prevention of sexual harassment and other related topics**
- ◆ **Chennai city - to get ₹4,500 crore for development of storm water drains and large underground drains as funding from multilateral funding agencies**
  - ✓ Flood-prone areas such as Tambaram, Guduvancherry and Urapakkam will get underground macrodrains to reduce flooding
- ◆ **IIT, Madras team - has developed a unified script for nine Indian languages, named the Bharati script**
  - ✓ It has also developed a method for reading documents in Bharati script using a multi-lingual optical character recognition (OCR) scheme
  - ✓ Dr Srinivasa Chakravathy's team at IIT Madras has also created a finger-spelling method for nine Indian languages, that can be used to generate a sign language for hearing-impaired persons in collaboration with Sunil Kopparappu of Innovation Labs, TCS, Mumbai
  - ✓ The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil, which have same (Roman letter-based) script
  - ✓ English and Urdu have not been integrated so far
- ◆ **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - is collaborating with Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA) to launch 'e-Shikshanam', a free online teacher training programme to provide remedial support to 'dyslexic' children**
- ◆ **The Human Resource Development Ministry - has released ₹58.92 crore as part of grant to improve higher education institutions in Tamil Nadu**
  - ✓ The allocation is under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan scheme of the Centre, which contributes 60% of the total budget

## STATE

- ◆ **In a first, Meghalaya - to get braille-enabled ballot papers at all polling booths**
- ◆ **The Government of Goa - extends the retirement age for doctors working in its institutions from 60 to 62**
- ◆ **Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd - is planning to introduce first Driverless trains likely from 2021**
  - ✓ The driverless trains will be introduced as part of the Communication Based Train Control (CBTC) signalling system for the Yellow Line
  - ✓ This is the first time that CBTC, commonly called 'driverless technology', is being used in Namma Metro
  - ✓ Currently, Namma Metro uses DTG (distance to go) signalling system, in which the time between two trains is two-and-half minutes
  - ✓ However, CBTC can reduce train headway to less than 90 seconds.
- ◆ **Rongali or Bohag Bihu festival - celebrated in Assam**
  - ✓ It is the Assamese **new year** and spring festival, which is celebrated from **April 15 to April 21**.
  - ✓ The Rongali Bihu coincides with Punjabi New Year **Baisakhi**.
  - ✓ The seven-day festival is celebrated in seven phases - Chot, Kutum, Mela, Raati, Goru, Manuh and Chera.
- ◆ **Kerala - became the second state after Gujarat to invoke action against voters for falsely alleging mismatch in their vote.**

## NATIONAL

- ◆ **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited - has become the first Indian shipyard to deliver 100 warships to the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and Mauritius Coast Guard.**
  
- ◆ **Assam filmmaker Rima Das - has been appointed as the official ambassador of Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)'s 'Share Her Journey' campaign**
  - ✓ She has won several national and international awards for her film 'Village Rockstars', which is India's official entry to Oscars 2019
  
- ◆ **India - to post tri-services women officers as 'defence attaches' in its overseas missions**
  - ✓ The first missions have been identified in Europe and America
  - ✓ So far, only male officers have been posted as 'defence attaches'
  
- ◆ **'Kandhamal Haldi', a variety of turmeric indigenous to southern Odisha - gets the Geographical indication (GI) tag**
  
- ◆ **National Capital Region (NCR) districts - switch over to Euro-VI grade fuel (also known as Bharat Stage VI grade fuel) on April 1, 2019**
  - ✓ Several cities in the 12 neighboring districts of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh including Agra switched over to the ultra-clean fuel.
  - ✓ The Euro-VI grade fuel will be rolled out across India from April 1, 2020
  - ✓ Delhi in April 2018 became the first city in the country to roll-out ultra-clean Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) grade fuel, both petrol and diesel.
  - ✓ Bharat Stage emission standards were introduced in year 2000 in line with recommendations made by RA Mashelkar Committee

- ◆ **In a first-of-its kind apprenticeship programme for non-technical graduates, up to 5 lakh students - from across universities/colleges will join various industries and service sectors from July 2019**
  - ✓ The programme titled '**Scheme for Higher Education Youth for Apprenticeship and Skills (Shreyas)**' received huge response by the end of the registration deadline of March 25
  - ✓ The Shreyas programme has been conceived with the objective of introducing employable skills into the learning, promote apprenticeship as integral to education, and amalgamate employment facilitating efforts of the government into the education system
  - ✓ Shreyas, an initiative of three central ministries – namely the **HRD ministry**, ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship and the ministry of labour and employment It was launched in February 2019
  
- ◆ **India's first earth museum, TIME (The Indian Museum of Earth) - will be set up in the National Capital Region (NCR) soon**
  
- ◆ **Indian expat, Ravindra Bolor - is announced as the winner in the latest draw of Big Ticket Abu Dhabi, for a mammoth Dh10 million prize in cash (Rs 18.64 crores)**
  
- ◆ **Bharti Airtel - has got the licence to provide inflight connectivity for on-board Internet in Indian airspace**
  
- ◆ **The screening of the World's longest ever biographical documentary film - began in Thiruvalla, Kerala**
  - ✓ Titled '**100 years of Chrysostom**', made by the award-winning filmmaker Blessy, is soon to find a place in the Guinness World Records
  
- ◆ **India - has evacuated its entire contingent of peacekeeping forces from Libya - following the worsening of war-hit country's political situation**
  
- ◆ **The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind - released National Institutional Ranking Framework -2019 (NIRF) in New Delhi on April 8, 2019.**
  - ✓ Indian Institute of Technology, Madras – topped the HRD ministry's NIRF rankings 2019 in '**Overall category**' for the first time with a score of 83.88

- ✓ IIT, Madras had also bagged the top position in the first edition of the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA), a category introduced this year
- ✓ It had retained its first position in 'engineering category' for the fourth consecutive year
- ◆ **The service voters of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) unit located in the eastern tip of the state of Arunachal Pradesh - cast the first vote for 2019 Lok Sabha polls**
  - ✓ Votes through postal ballots have been cast from Lohitpur for many constituencies in India and the ballot papers have been dispatched
  - ✓ Service voters are those who have service qualification and include members of Armed Forces of the Union of India
  - ✓ They can cast the votes through postal ballots or through a proxy
- ◆ **The Election Commission - has decided to use the M3 EVMs in the Lok Sabha Polls in the Nizamabad parliamentary constituency of the Telangana state**
- ◆ **A Pink polling booth for the Lok Sabha elections - was inaugurated at Jamui parliamentary constituency in Bihar**
- ◆ **Tata Trusts and Microsoft India - have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly rejuvenate the handloom clusters in the eastern and north-eastern parts of the country.**
  - ✓ Microsoft's Project ReWeave will help preserve traditional weaving forms by upskilling workers, designing and marketing merchandise, and creating sustainable livelihood options
  - ✓ Microsoft will also enable digital training through Project Sangam, a Microsoft Azure-based Learning Management System, to the weaving communities
  - ✓ Tata Trusts' initiative, Antaran, aims at rejuvenating ailing handloom clusters through an end-to-end programme in Odisha, Assam and Nagaland
- ◆ **The Guwahati Railway Station - has become the first ever railway station in the Indian Railways to get an ISO certification from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for 'providing passenger amenities in a clean and green environment'**

- ◆ **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) - has signed an MoU with The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) - to protect and restore small wetlands in the coastal regions**
  
- ◆ **Essel World - launches India's first interactive bird park in Gorai, Mumbai, Maharashtra**
  - ✓ The first-of-its-kind rainforest-themed park spread across 1.4 acres is home to over 500 exotic birds from more than 60 species
  - ✓ The park is carefully designed to ensure appropriate living conditions for the birds
  - ✓ The park is equipped with small ponds for aquatic birds, dense cover of trees for birds to incubate their eggs and a water stream that offers drinking water to birds.
  
- ◆ **India - sets up an exclusive Indo-Pacific wing in Ministry of External affairs**
  - ✓ The brain child of foreign secretary, Vijay Gokhale, it aims to propagate the policy proclaimed by the Prime Minister at the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018
  - ✓ For the time being, it will be headed by joint secretary, Vikram Doraiswami, for whom it will be an additional charge apart from Myanmar and Bangladesh
  - ✓ The division will integrate the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) Association, Asean region and the Quad to the Indo-Pacific table
  - ✓ It has to be recollected that United States has recently renamed its Pacific command as 'Indo-Pacific' command
  
- ◆ **Union Cabinet - approved the continuation of the GSLV Phase - 4 programmes, consisting of five GSLV flights during the period from 2021 to 2024**
  
- ◆ **The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister - approves Rs 4,315.15 crore - for the implementation of 10% reservation for economically weaker section (EWS) from among the general category**
  - ✓ The reservation pays the way for the creation of 2,14,766 additional seats across 158 centrally funded higher education institutes over a period of two years
  - ✓ The Rajya Sabha had approved the amendment of the Constitution to provide 10% reservation to general category poor in jobs and education on January 9

- ✓ The quota will be over and above the existing reservation for OBCs, SCs and STs
- ◆ **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - launched a 'DST Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Climate Change Impacts on Coastal Infrastructure and the Adaptation Strategies' on its campus**
- ◆ **Jet Airways, India's longest-serving private carrier - shut down operations after a 26-year journey, during which it flew 650 flights a day at its peak with over 120 planes**
- ◆ **Tashigang, in the cold desert of Spiti in Himachal Pradesh - has been declared as the highest polling station in the world at 15,256 ft**
- ◆ **Union Health Ministry - to replace the words 'chemist' and 'druggist' with 'pharmacy'**
  - ✓ The phrase 'chemists and druggists' was coined first in 1945
  - ✓ The change was deliberated and recommended by the 55th Drug Consultative Committee meeting held in January and March this year
- ◆ **Twenty states and Union territories - have so far joined a pan-India network of single emergency helpline number '112'**
  - ✓ The '112' helpline is an integration of police (100), fire (101) and women (1090) helpline numbers on which immediate assistance can be sought by anyone in distress
  - ✓ The project '112' helpline is being implemented under the central government's Nirbhaya Fund.
  - ✓ The single number for emergency services is similar to '911' in the United States.
  - ✓ The 20 states and UTs include Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland
  - ✓ The Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) envisages a single pan-India emergency number '112', which is an internationally recognised number, to target all types of emergencies.
  - ✓ The '112' India app, available in Google Playstore and Apple store, provides for 'shout facility' designed especially for women, for

enlisting support of volunteers, who have registered themselves with the state police, for emergency response

- ✓ A total of Rs 321.69 crore has been earmarked for this Emergency Response Support System from the Nirbhaya fund
- ✓ The Nirbhaya Fund was set up by the central government for projects specifically designed to improve the safety and security of the women

◆ **New Delhi - allocates Rs 480 crore to set up a 'Disaster secretariat' for the proposed global 'Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure' (CDRI)**

- ✓ CDRI is a new Indian initiative on the lines of Solar alliance ISA with 122 countries
- ✓ The initiative has the support of the UN and the World Bank, apart from other multilateral development banks
- ✓ The new organization will be declared at the UN Climate Summit, scheduled at the UN headquarters in September
- ✓ It has the support of 33 countries including Italy, UK, Australia, South Africa and European Union which have agreed to fund the new organization
- ✓ The proposed initiative aims to develop standards and regulations to build resilient infrastructure to face various disasters due to climate change
- ✓ About 91% of all disasters in the past 20 years (1998-2017) were caused by floods, storms, droughts, heat waves and other extreme weather events, as per a study by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), causing disaster losses to the tune of \$3 trillion
- ✓ India suffered \$80 billion losses during the corresponding 20 year period

◆ **Bamboo rice - has shown up in Odisha nearly after four decades.**

- ✓ The state of Odisha had last witnessed Bamboo rice in 1979.
- ✓ The Forest Authorities of Chandaka-Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary in Cuttack district have opened up the sanctuary for the forest dwellers to collect the Bamboo rice.
- ✓ Whenever the bamboo rice shows up, it would be accompanied by the increase in the rat population which starts running over the bamboo rice.

- ◆ **The International Labour Organization (ILO) - has listed the Bhopal gas tragedy among the world's major industrial accidents in the last century.**
- ◆ **The London School of Economics - has announced the establishment of the 'Amartya Sen Chair in Inequality Studies'**
- ◆ **The country's first Lokpal, the anti-corruption ombudsman, will work from a five-star luxury hotel, 'The Ashok' in Chanakyapuri, Delhi**
  - ✓ The Lokpal chairperson, all of its eight members and support staff are being allocated space in the hotel premises
  - ✓ President Ram Nath Kovind had on March 23 administered the oath of office to Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose as the chairperson of Lokpal.
  - ✓ The Lokpal's eight members were administered the oath by Justice Ghose on March 27
  - ✓ Former chief justices of different high courts, Justices Dilip B Bhosale, Pradip Kumar Mohanty, Abhilasha Kumari and Ajay Kumar Tripathi, took oath as judicial members of the Lokpal.
  - ✓ Former first woman chief of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) Archana Ramasundaram, ex-Maharashtra chief secretary Dinesh Kumar Jain, former IRS officer Mahender Singh and Gujarat cadre ex-IAS officer Indrajeet Prasad Gautam were sworn-in as the Lokpal's non-judicial members
- ◆ **The government - notified the second phase of the FAME India scheme with a Rs 10,000-crore outlay - to encourage adoption of electric and hybrid vehicles.**
  - ✓ Under the second phase of the **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-II)** scheme, 10 lakh registered electric two-wheelers with a maximum specified ex-factory price will be eligible to avail incentive of Rs 20,000 each.
  - ✓ It will also support 5 lakh e-rickshaws having ex-factory price of up to Rs 5 lakh with an incentive of Rs 50,000 each.
  - ✓ FAME-II will offer an incentive of Rs 1.5 lakh each to 35,000 electric four-wheelers with an ex-factory price of up to Rs 15 lakh, and incentive of Rs 13,000 each to 20,000 strong hybrid four-wheelers with ex-factory price of up to Rs 15 lakh.
  - ✓ It will support 7,090 e-buses with an incentive of up to Rs 50 lakh each having an ex-factory price of up to Rs 2 crore.

- ◆ **India's largest IT services company, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), has partnered with the Department of Posts (DoP)**
  - ✓ The association will transform DoP into a multi-service digital hub, modernise the delivery of mail and packages, enhance customer experience, and launch innovative services that will drive new revenues.
- ◆ **India's first laboratory meat project to produce "ahimsa meat" - took off on April 25 with the Hyderabad-based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) and National Research Centre on Meat (NRCM) coming together for the project**
- ◆ **The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) - launched the 'Malaria Elimination Research Alliance (MERA) India', to eliminate Malaria from India by 2030.**
  - ✓ It is a gathering of partners working together to plan and scale up research in order to eliminate the disease completely
  - ✓ The alliance was launched on the occasion of the World Malaria Day 2019
  - ✓ The prevalence of Malaria in India declined by over 80% from 2.03 million cases in 2000 to 0.39 million in 2018.
  - ✓ Deaths by malaria also declined by over 90% from 932 deaths in 2000 to 85 in 2018
  - ✓ The National Vector Borne Diseases Control Program (NVBDCP) developed a comprehensive framework to achieve "Malaria free India by 2030"
- ◆ **Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - attended the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' conclave at Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan on April 29**

### COURT VERDICT

- ◆ **The Madras High Court - quashes the notification for land acquisition for Rs 10,000 crore, 277.30 km, eight-lane, Chennai-Salem greenfield corridor**
  - ✓ It said that the public hearing and environmental clearance was mandatory since the project would have an adverse impact on the environment, including reserved forests, fertile land and waterbodies, necessitating a mega realignment

- ✓ A Special bench of Justices TS Sivagnanam and V Bhavani Subbaroyan of the Madras High Court disagreed with the stand of the government to mutate revenue records and transfer government lands, even prior to the issuance of notification under the Land Acquisition Act.
- ✓ The judges gave eight weeks' time for retransferring the land acquired from farmers
- ✓ The court also scrapped the project feasibility study report submitted by Feedback Infra, a private consultant appointed by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)
- ✓ The Court also pointed out that the Centre had dropped the proposal for widening of Chennai-Madurai economic corridor from the Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I without mentioning any reason and instead included the Chennai-Salem expressway without the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister.



# Pros and cons of 'green highway'

Salem-Chennai Expressway will be the third highway between the two cities. Though it is claimed that the road will reduce distance and travel time, people feel that it comes at a price and affects their lives and livelihoods.

## Blueprint of the expressway

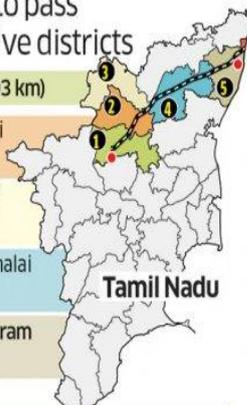
- Expressway will begin from Tambaram in Chennai and end in Uthamachozhapuram, 17 km from Salem
- Will have six/eight lanes with access-control; the revised feasibility report indicates it would be a six-lane highway
- Will have a closed toll system
- Will take a new route from the existing main highway connecting Chennai with Salem
- The revised project report says the distance inside the reserved forest would be reduced from 13 km to 9 km.
- Will cut the distance by 68 km



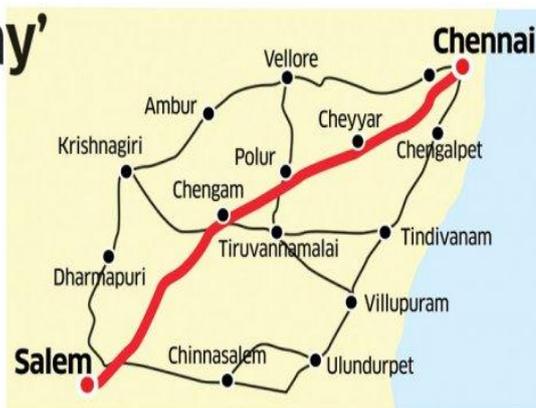
Trees cut in the Reserve Forest in Dharmapuri district.

The road to pass through five districts

- Salem (38.03 km)
- Dharmapuri (55.50 km)
- Krishnagiri (4.30 km)
- Tiruvannamalai (123.87 km)
- Kancheepuram (59.27 km)



<b>7,500 acres</b> Land to be acquired	Total distance covered <b>277.3 km</b>
<b>8 Hills/forests</b> to be affected	To be executed at a revised cost of <b>₹7,210 cr</b>
<b>Over 150</b> Villages to be affected	



Existing Routes

Chennai - Salem Expressway

## Why do farmers oppose the project?

- A majority of the land to be acquired are fertile farmlands
- The highway passes through the middle of most of the farmlands
- People would find it difficult to cross over to the other side of the road
- The highway would cut through forests resulting in ecological damage
- They want the project to be scrapped and feel upgradation of the existing highways would be a better option

## Project feasibility report says:

- The proposed highway will improve Chennai-Salem connectivity
- It will act as a significant fourth axis entry to Chennai
- It will further enhance the connectivity of underdeveloped districts such as Tiruvannamalai and Dharmapuri
- It will speed up the transportation of farm produce to farther markets
- Kancheepuram and Salem would benefit significantly from the highway
- Tourism in these districts would be benefitted
- Will halve the travel time, from six hours to three hours

- ✓ The 'Chennai-Salem Greenfield Corridor' was launched under the Centre's ambitious road programme, Bharatmala Pariyojana
- ✓ It was proposed by the state government with the aim to cut down travel time between Chennai and Salem
- ✓ The two existing highways between Chennai and Salem are 334 km and 353 km long and the proposed expressway would reduce the distance to just 277 km.
- ✓ The project would reduce average travelling time between the two destinations from 5.45 hours to 2.3 hours, save 10.4 crore litres of diesel per year and promote industrialisation in backward areas.
- ✓ It was approved by the Centre in February 2018 and the state government has issued notification last May
- ✓ Bharatmala Pariyojana-I envisions the construction of about 35,000 km of national highways across the country at an estimated cost of Rs 5,35,000 crore before 2022 to decongest six national corridors

- ◆ **The Supreme Court - ruled on April 9, 2019 that a woman can file a case of dowry harassment from the place she has taken shelter under Section 498 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)**
  - ✓ The bench led by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi relaxed Section 177 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), which mandates that criminal cases can be filed and tried only in courts within whose jurisdiction the crime occurred.
  - ✓ The verdict came as a big relief to women fighting dowry harassment cases outside the jurisdiction of their matrimonial home

## COMMITTEES

- ◆ **ISRO - has formed a 12-member special task force headed by Srinivasan R K from UR Rao Satellite Centre - to address the anomaly during the lander drop test and submit a report to the centre's director, Kunhikrishnan P**
  - ✓ The launch of Chandrayaan-2 is delayed atleast until May as Vikram, the lander for India's mission which installs a probe on the Moon, suffered minor damage to two of its four legs during a test late in February
- ◆ **Justice Indu Malhotra - appointed as the third member of the in-house inquiry panel set up to examine allegations of sexual harassment against Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi.**
  - ✓ Malhotra was appointed to the panel following the recusal of Justice N V Ramana.
  - ✓ Senior-most judge S A Bobde, who is heading the panel, appointed Justice Malhotra to the committee. Another woman judge, Justice Indira Banerjee is also a part of the panel
  - ✓ This is the first in-house inquiry on a sexual harassment complaint conducted in the Supreme Court and it is the first-ever time ever such an inquiry is being conducted against the CJI.

## INTERNATIONAL

- ◆ **Russia - has opened a training Centre for 'military helicopter pilots' in Venezuela**

- ◆ **The era of Japan's next emperor, which begins May 1 - will be named "Reiwa", symbolizing 'pursuit of harmony'**
- ◆ **Estonia - becomes first in the world with highest numbers of online voting with 44% of votes - in the recently concluded parliamentary elections in the country**
- ◆ **USA - decided to cut aid to the three Central American countries of "Northern Triangle" - El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras**
  - ✓ US government blamed these Central American countries for sending migrants to the United States
  - ✓ They have signed trade agreements with Colombia, the United States, and Mexico.
- ◆ **South Korea - to launch the world's first fully-fledged 5G mobile networks on April 5, 2019**
  - ✓ 5G's hyper speed would be able to connect one million devices within a one square kilometre zone simultaneously.
  - ✓ It will provide a connectivity speed at 20 times faster than the existing 4G.
- ◆ **State of Global Air 2019 - Report on global air pollution - Released by two US-based institutes, Health Effects Institute and Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation**
  - ✓ India and China together accounted for over 50% of the total 5 million deaths globally from air pollution in 2017
  - ✓ In India, air pollution is the third highest cause of death among all health risks, ranking just above smoking
  - ✓ In 2017, India recorded 673,000 deaths and China 852,000 deaths
- ◆ **Chicago - created history by electing its first black female mayor, Lori Lightfoot**
  - ✓ African-American woman, Lori Lightfoot will also be Chicago's first openly gay mayor
  - ✓ Lori Lightfoot is a former federal prosecutor and practicing lawyer
- ◆ **U.S. - to designate Iran's elite 'Revolutionary Guards Corps' a foreign terrorist organization**
  - ✓ This is the first time US has formally labelled another country's military a terrorist group.

- ◆ **Former Maldives president, Mohamed Nasheed - makes comeback with a landslide win**
- ◆ **Google's drone delivery - launched in Australia**
  - ✓ The first air delivery was made by the Google's parent company Alphabet Inc., in North Canberra, Australia
  - ✓ The company's drone delivery arm, Wing, delivered the services to a limited set of eligible homes
  - ✓ Wing has been testing drone delivery in Australia since 2014
- ◆ **US President Donald Trump's ban on transgender Americans in the military - came into force on April 12, 2019**
- ◆ **Sudan's long-time president Omar al-Bashir - has been removed from office and arrested following months of civilian protests**
- ◆ **Malaysia - rejoins China's ambitious OBOR project, after price cut for a China rail line**
- ◆ **London - becomes the first city in the world to launch 24x7 'pollution charge zone'**
- ◆ **Saudi Arabia - has reopened a consulate in Baghdad for the first time in nearly 30 years**
- ◆ **United Nations Security Council (UNSC) - voted unanimously to completely end its peacekeeping operations in Haiti on October 15**
  - ✓ U.N. Peace Keeping Mission in Haiti was known as MINUSTAH, a French acronym which stood for "The United Nations is not leaving"
  - ✓ MINUSTAH began operations in Haiti in 2004, when a violent rebellion swept the country and forced then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide out of power into exile
- ◆ **World's biggest single day elections - to be held in Indonesia on April 17**
- ◆ **Notre Dame cathedral, the iconic symbol of the beauty and history of Paris - was ravaged by an extensive fire on April 15**

- ◆ **UAE Cabinet - has adopted the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2031**
  - ✓ The decision is aimed at positioning the UAE as a global leader in artificial intelligence by 2031 and to develop an integrated system that employs artificial intelligence in vital areas in the country
  
- ◆ **Indonesia's Mount Agung Volcano - erupts again along with other volcanoes Mount Bromo in East Java and Mount Merapi in Yogyakarta**
  - ✓ Mount Agung stratovolcano is the highest point on Bali
  - ✓ The most important temple on Bali, Pura Besakih, is located high on the slopes of Mount Agung
  
- ◆ **The Arab League - has pledged to pay \$100 million a month to the Palestinian National Authority**
  - ✓ At present, the Arab League has 22 members but Syria's participation has been suspended since November 2011
  
- ◆ **African Nation, Malawi - will be undertaking large scale pilot tests for the world's most advanced experimental malaria vaccine under the trade name, Mosquirix**
  
- ◆ **African country Malawi - became the first to immunise children against Malaria through the vaccine 'RTS,S' (Mosquirix) under the WHO-coordinated Malaria vaccine pilot programme.**
  - ✓ Malawi is also the first of three countries in Africa (apart from Ghana and Kenya) in which the vaccine RTS,S will be made available to children up to 2 years of age
  - ✓ The Malaria vaccine pilot programme is a collaborative effort with ministries of health in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi and international partners like PATH and the vaccine developer Glaxo Smithkline
  
- ◆ **Ghana - launched medical drone service in the country**
  - ✓ It had started a fleet of drones to carry medical supplies to remote areas
  - ✓ The move is part of an ambitious plan to solve problems of medical access in a country with poor roads.

◆ **Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu - has announced that he would name a new community in the Golan Heights after US President Donald Trump.**

✓ President Trump has officially recognised the disputed area as Israeli territory.

Israel has also stated that in appreciation of the U.S. president, it intends to name a proposed train station near Jerusalem's Western Wall after him.

✓ Israel captured the Golan from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it, in a move not recognized internationally.

✓ Golan Heights is located about 60km (40 miles) south-west of the Syrian capital, Damascus, and covers about 1,200 sq km (400 sq miles).

✓ Syria has always insisted that it will not agree a peace deal with Israel unless it withdraws from the whole of the Golan.

✓ The last US-brokered direct peace talks broke down in 2000, while Turkey mediated in indirect talks in 2008.

✓ There are more than 30 Israeli settlements in the Golan, which are home to an estimated 20,000 people. The settlements are considered illegal under international law, although Israel disputes this.

✓ The settlers live alongside some 20,000 Syrians, most of them Druze Arabs, who did not flee when the Golan was captured.

◆ **Russia - has successfully tested the world's first floating nuclear power plant (NPP), Akademik Lomonosov**

◆ **The UAE's flag carrier, Etihad Airways - has become the first airline in the Gulf region to operate a flight EY484 without any single-use plastics on board, in a bid to raise awareness about pollution on Earth Day (April 22)**

◆ **Chinese President Xi Jinping - defended his ambitious 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI), vowing to prevent debt risks at the second edition of the three-day Belt and Road Forum.**

✓ India skipped the meet for the second time in protest against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a key component of the Belt and Road Initiative.

✓ The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor passes through the strategic Gilgit-Baltistan region in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), an integral part of India, held by Pakistan and claimed by it

- ✓ Russian President Vladimir Putin, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte were among the prominent dignitaries
- ✓ The Belt and Road Initiative is a development strategy proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping
- ✓ It aims to create '**One Belt, One Road**' (OBOR) by establishing new routes linking three continents - Asia, Europe and Africa by 2049.
- ✓ The initiative is geographically structured along 6 corridors along with the maritime Silk Road. They are -
  - ✓ New Eurasian Land Bridge, running from Western China to Western Russia
  - ✓ China - Mongolia - Russia Corridor, running from Northern China to Eastern Russia
  - ✓ China - Central Asia - West Asia Corridor, running from Western China to Turkey
  - ✓ China - Indochina Peninsula Corridor, running from Southern China to Singapore
  - ✓ China - Pakistan Economic Corridor, running from South-Western China to Pakistan
  - ✓ Bangladesh - China - India - Myanmar Corridor, running from Southern China to India
  - ✓ Maritime Silk Road, running from the Chinese Coast over Singapore and India to the Mediterranean

◆ **In a first, UAE - gives birth certificate to a girl born to a Hindu father and Muslim mother**

- ✓ After nine-months of her birth, Anamta Aceline Kiran, got a legal birth certificate from the UAE government, keeping its marriage rules for expatriates aside
- ✓ Anamta was born to Sharjah-based expat Kiran Babu and Sanam Saboo Siddique
- ✓ UAE is observing 2019 as the Year of Tolerance to highlight itself as an exemplary example of a tolerant nation, bridging the communication gap between different cultures and religions
- ✓ As per the marriage rules for expatriates in UAE, a Muslim man can marry a non-Muslim woman but a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim man.

◆ **Lebanon's capital, Beirut - has set a Guinness World Record for the number of national flags raised in a city for 24 hours**

- ✓ The Alive Association raised a total of 26,852 Lebanese flags on April 28, breaking New York's Waterloo record of 25,599 flags

### **INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

- ◆ **UAE - to issue equivalency for all Indian degrees that match the set criteria**
- ◆ **Bolivia - signed the framework agreement to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**
- ◆ **India - to set up the India-Africa Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development (IAIARD) in Malawi - in association with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Consultancy Service (NABCONS)**
- ◆ **United States - has approved the sale of 24 multi-role MH-60 'Romeo' Seahawk helicopters to India at an estimated cost of \$2.4 billion**
  - ✓ The MH-60 Romeo Seahawk helicopter is considered to be the world's most advanced maritime helicopter.
  - ✓ Built by Lockheed Martin, the helicopters are designed to hunt down submarines, as well as knock out ships and conduct search-and-rescue operations at sea.
  - ✓ They are expected to replace the country's aging fleet of British-made Sea King helicopters.
- ◆ **India - has built a 25-bed 'Chandra Narayan Yadav Memorial Maternity Hospital' in Nepal**
  - ✓ The hospital, built under the Union Government's Small Development Projects Scheme, will help in reducing maternal and child mortality rate among the people of 50 Village Development Committees in and around Siraha district.
- ◆ **India - signs pact with Sweden to address challenges around smart cities and clean technologies among others**
- ◆ **India - announced as the Guest of honour at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, ADIBF 2019, to be held at the end of April 2019**

- ◆ **Two Indian warships - will be taking part in China's international fleet review (IFR), scheduled to take place on April 21, 2019 in Qingdao, China**
  - ✓ **Indigenously-built guided missile destroyer INS Kolkata and fleet tanker INS Shakti will arrive at the Chinese port city of Qingdao on April 20, 2019**
- ◆ **The Asian Tea Alliance (ATA), a union of five tea-growing and consuming countries - was launched in Guizhou in China on April 19**
- ◆ **The foundation stone laying ceremony of the first Hindu temple in UAE's capital Abu Dhabi - has been completed on April 20**
- ◆ **India - to build a cancer hospital in Kenya in collaboration with Japan.**
  - ✓ **Also, India will partner with the UAE to set up an ICT centre (Information and Communications Technology center) in Ethiopia**
- ◆ **Indonesia - has released a special commemorative stamp on the theme of Ramayana on April 23, 2019**
  - ✓ **The release of the stamp marks the 70th anniversary of establishment of its diplomatic ties with India**
  - ✓ **It was designed by renowned Indonesian sculptor, Padmashri Bapak Nyoman Nuarta**
  - ✓ **It features a scene from Ramayana in which Jatayu valiantly fought to save Sita**
- ◆ **The Japan-India Institute for Manufacturing (JIM), a residential skill training centre - was inaugurated at Andhra Pradesh**

### CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- ◆ **The NuGen Mobility Summit 2019 - will be held during November 27 - 29, 2019 at Manesar, National Capital Region**
- ◆ **United Arab Emirates (UAE) - to host the world's leading Artificial Intelligence (AI) Summit -AIE from April 30 to May 1, 2019**
  - ✓ **The 2-day inaugural 'AI Everything', AIE will take place at the Dubai World Trade Centre.**

- ◆ **The 4th Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific (RCAP) 2019 Congress - concluded in New Delhi between April 15 to 17, 2019**
  - ✓ It was organised by ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability and hosted by South Delhi Municipal Corporation
  
- ◆ **Saudi Arabia - to host the annual G20 leaders' summit on November 21-22, 2020, in its capital Riyadh**
  - ✓ This will be the **first** G20 Summit to be hosted in the **Arab** world
  - ✓ **Japan** will host this year's G20 summit in **Osaka**, which will be held June 28-29, 2019
  - ✓ Group of Twenty (G20) is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from **19 countries** and the **European Union**
  - ✓ G20 economies account for around 90% of the gross world product (GWP), **two-thirds** of the **world population**
  - ✓ G20 world leaders met for the first time in **2008** with focus on rescuing the global economy from the worst financial crisis in more than 70 years.
  - ✓ G20 Member countries - Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Republic of South Africa, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America
  
- ◆ **Turkey, Poland, Spain and Argentina - have decided not to send official delegations to the Belt and Road Forum, held in Beijing**
  - ✓ The US, France, Germany, Australia and Japan are among the nations that have expressed reservations about the debt-causing aspects of projects under the Belt and Road Initiative
  - ✓ The US has announced that it will send a low-level delegation.
  - ✓ India has taken a principled stand against attending the forum.
  - ✓ Japan is sending the leader of one of its parties in the ruling coalition instead of sending a government representative.
  
- ◆ **5th Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Media Summit on Climate Action and Disaster Preparedness - began in Kathmandu**
  - ✓ The theme of the two-day summit is **"Media Solutions for Sustainable Future: Saving Lives, Building Resilient Communities"**.
  - ✓ The basic aim of the summit is to fully utilize media's potential of accelerating climate action and disaster preparedness and connect stakeholders for collaboration and joint practical projects

## DEFENCE

- ◆ **The third edition of 'AUSINDEX-19' (Australia India Exercise), bilateral maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy - began on April 2, 2019 at Visakhapatnam**
  
- ◆ **The Indian Army - has successfully built the longest suspension bridge 'Matiri Bridge' over the Indus River in the Leh-Ladakh region within a record 40 days**
  - ✓ It is the shortest time ever built for any suspension bridge of this length in the country
  
- ◆ **The Indian Army - received its first batch of Dhanush artillery guns on April 8, 2019 at a formal function organised at GCF, Jabalpur**
  - ✓ The 155x45mm gun is the first ever indigenous artillery gun of this caliber
  - ✓ It has been designed and developed by the Ordnance Factory Board at the Gun Carriage Factory at Jabalpur based on the Bofor's drawings
  - ✓ The OFB had received the bulk production clearance of manufacturing of 114 guns on February 18, among which six have been handed over for issuance to the Indian Army.
  
- ◆ **Indian Army - is planning to use a modified version of the AK-203 assault rifle in carbine role - for its troops deployed during counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.**
  - ✓ The AK-203 assault rifle would be manufactured at Uttar Pradesh's Amethi facility in a joint venture between the Ordnance Factory Board and Russia.
  - ✓ The carbines are useful in close quarter combat and can be highly effective during operations like room interventions.
  
- ◆ **The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Bold Kurukshetra 2019', a joint military exercise between India and Singapore - began on April 8, 2019 at Babina Cantonment, Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh**

- ◆ **President Ram Nath Kovind - launched 'Veer Parivar App', a mobile application for families of CRPF personnel killed in the line of duty on April 9, 2019**
- ◆ **INS Shakti and INS Kolkata - to take part in Chinese Navy's 70th anniversary celebrations on April 23**
- ◆ **Indian Naval Ship Kozhikode - was decommissioned in a ceremony held at Naval Jetty, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh on 13th April - after three decades of service**
- ◆ **The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - successfully test-fired the underdevelopment, indigenous, long range subsonic cruise missile Nirbhay from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur in Odisha on April 15**
- ◆ **"Varuna" naval exercise - to commence between India and France off Goa and Karwar from May 1**
- ◆ **The Indian Navy - launched guided missile destroyer 'Imphal' at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders in Mumbai.**
  - ✓ Imphal is the third ship to be launched under Project 15B
  - ✓ The first ship of Project 15B, a guided missile destroyer christened 'Visakhapatnam', was launched on April 20, 2015.
  - ✓ The Project 15B class comprises four ships - Visakhapatnam, Mormugao, Imphal and Porbandar all of which are being built by the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in India, and will be the largest destroyers to be operated by the Indian Navy
  - ✓ The destroyers are an improved version of the Kolkata-class (Project 15A) and will feature enhanced stealth characteristics
- ◆ **General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Army Staff - commissioned Indian Coast Guard vessel Veera, in a ceremony organised at Eastern Naval Command in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**
  - ✓ Veera, the third in the series of the new generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV)
- ◆ **Navies of India and Vietnam - held a four-day maritime exercise (IN - VPN BILAT EX) off Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam from April 13**

- ◆ **China - developed the world's first armed amphibious drone attack boat named 'Marine Lizard'**
  - ✓ It was built by Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group under China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation
  - ✓ It can possibly form an unmanned **sea-land-air** integrated combat system with aerial armed reconnaissance drones and other drone ships.
  - ✓ It has a maximum operation range of **1,200 kms** and can be remotely controlled via satellites
  
- ◆ **The Indian Coast Guard Vessel C-441 - was commissioned on April 24, 2019 at Vizhinjam harbour, Thiruvananthapuram**
  
- ◆ **In a first, the Indian Army - began online registration of women for recruitment as soldiers into the military police on April 25, 2019**
  
- ◆ **Additional Director General of the Indian Coast Guard K.R. Nautiyal - formally commissioned Coast Guard vessel 'Priyadarshini' in Kakinada**
  
- ◆ **Indian Army - signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Limited to build four underground tunnels**
  - ✓ The underground tunnels will be built along **China and Pakistan borders for storage** of ammunition and other war-related equipment.
  - ✓ Three tunnels will be built along the Chinese border and one tunnel will be built along the Pakistan border.
  
- ◆ **Cyberex is the first major joint exercise of the Army, IAF and Navy, under the aegis of the integrated defence staff, with participation from several other organizations**
  
- ◆ **Indian Army - to purchase Spike-LR Anti-Tank Missiles from Israel and Igla-S Very Short Range Air Defence Systems (VSHORAD) from Russia invoking the latest emergency financial powers sanctioned by the Defence Ministry earlier this month**

## ECONOMICS

- ◆ **GST collection in March - crossed the ₹1-lakh crore mark, the highest since the tax reform measure was rolled out in July 2017**
  - ✓ The GST revenue in March 2019 showed a growth rate of 15.6% over the receipts in the same month last year
  - ✓ The revenue for the last quarter of 2018-19 was 14.3% higher than that collected during the same period of the previous financial year
  
- ◆ **India - is the world's top recipient of remittances with the NRI's sending \$79 billion back home in 2018, as per World Bank data**
  - ✓ The remittances in 2018 grew by over 14% in India in 2018
  - ✓ India is followed by China (\$67 billion), Mexico (\$36 billion), the Philippines (\$34 billion), and Egypt (\$29 billion)
  
- ◆ **World Economic Outlook 2019 April report - Released by IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath**
  - ✓ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected that global growth will be 3.3% in 2019, down from 3.6% in 2018 and 4% in 2017
  - ✓ This lower projection is due to a slower global expansion in the second half of 2018 caused by U.S.-China trade tensions, macroeconomic stress in Turkey and Argentina, tighter credit policies in China and financial tightening, apart from a normalisation of monetary policy in advanced economies
  - ✓ India's growth is projected to pick up, from 7.1% in 2018, to 7.3% in 2019 and 7.5% in 2020
  - ✓ Beyond 2020, global growth is expected to level out at 3.6% over the medium term
  - ✓ Advanced economies are expected to slow down to 1.6% growth by 2022 and remain at that rate thereafter.
  - ✓ For emerging markets and developing countries, growth is expected to steady at 4.8% over the medium term
  
- ◆ **Hong Kong's stock market - has overtaken Japan to be the world's third largest in value, behind only the U.S. and China**
  - ✓ Hong Kong's market cap was \$5.78 trillion as of April 9 and Japan's market cap was \$5.76 trillion
  - ✓ The main driver behind the climb was Internet giant, Tencent Holdings Ltd. which has witnessed a 22% gain

- ◆ **Russia's Moscow Exchange (MOEX) - has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and India International Exchange (India INX)**
  - ✓ This will be the very first time that Indian exchanges will enter into the MoU with Moscow exchange
  - ✓ The move aims to ease the access of Indian capital to the Russian market.
  
- ◆ **Dubai-based Emirates Islamic - becomes the world's first Islamic bank to launch banking services via WhatsApp**
  
- ◆ **HDFC Bank - was ranked at the top of the 'Forbes Best Indian Banks 2019' list**
  - ✓ Another private lender ICICI Bank took the second spot, while DBS was at the third rank in Forbes list of Indian banks.
  
- ◆ **State of World Population Report-2019 - Released by 'The United Nations Population Fund'**
  - ✓ As per the report, India's population grew at an average annual rate of 1.2% between 2010 and 2019 to 1.36 billion
  - ✓ In comparison, China's population grew at an average annual rate of 0.5% between 2010 and 2019
  - ✓ In India, total fertility rate per woman was 5.6 in 1969, dropping to 3.7 in 1994 and 2.3 in 2019.
  - ✓ The life expectancy at birth in 1969 was 47 years, growing to 60 years in 1994 and 69 years in 2019
  - ✓ As per the report, 27% of the country's population was in the age bracket of 0-14 years and 10-24 years each, 67% of the country's population in the 15-64 age bracket and 6% of the country's population is of the age 65 and above.
  - ✓ The world's population in 1969 was growing at about 2% a year, meaning it would almost double within the next 25 years at that rate
  - ✓ As per the report, globally, in 1969, the average number of births per woman was 4.8, compared with 2.9 in 1994, and 2.5 today.

## RANKINGS

- ◆ **FIFA world football rankings - released on April, 04 2019**
  - ✓ Top 20 countries
  - ✓ India stands at 101<sup>st</sup> rank while Belgium tops the list.
  - ✓ San Marino remain the lowest ranked team in the world in 211th place

◆ **World Press Freedom Index 2019 - Released by 'Reporters Without Borders'**

- ✓ **The index is topped by Norway**
- ✓ **Top 10 countries in the 2018 World Press Freedom Index**
- ✓ **India has dropped two places on a global press freedom index to be ranked 140th out of 180 countries** (India was ranked 138th in 2018)
- ✓ **At the bottom of the Index, Vietnam (176th), China (177th), Eritrea at 178th, North Korea at 179th position and Turkmenistan down to 180th rank were present**

◆ **Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP) - released by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**

- ✓ **India was ranked at 19th with a score of 64.9**
- ✓ **In Cancer policy and planning, India ranks 17th with a score of 80.8**
- ✓ **India got first place for research and third for tobacco control in the country.**
- ✓ **India ranked 23rd for its national cancer control plan**
- ✓ **India's healthcare system ranks 25th with a score of 40.3 in the index**
- ✓ **It is above only Saudi Arabia, Kenya and Egypt**
- ✓ **India's healthcare infrastructure is the second worst among the index countries.**
- ✓ **In its delivery of cancer care, India ranks 20th with a score of 61.3**
- ✓ **India has a high standard of clinical guidelines, a category in which it is ranked first.**

◆ **The Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) 2019 - released by INSEAD, Adecco Group and Tata Communications**

- ✓ **India ranks 80 while Singapore takes the lead in Asia region**
- ✓ **In this sixth edition, Switzerland continues to lead the 2019 Global Talent Competitiveness index, while Singapore and the United States come in second and third respectively.**

◆ **World military expenditure report - data released by global think-tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri)**

- ✓ **The US is the world's largest spender on defence, with a military expenditure almost equal to the next eight countries combined.**

**APPOINTMENT**

- ◆ **India's Manu Sawhney - took charge as the new Chief Executive of the International Cricket Council on April 1**
- ◆ **UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres -announced the appointment of International criminal justice lawyer, Nicholas Koumjian (United States) as the head of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar**
  - ✓ The Independent Investigative Mechanism (IIM) for Myanmar was established by the Human Rights Council on September 27, 2018 and welcomed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018.
  - ✓ He will collect and analyse evidence that Myanmar perpetrated crimes against humanity against Rohingyas- the ethnic minority community, over the last eight years.
- ◆ **David Malpass - was selected as the 13th President of the World Bank for a five year term beginning April 9**
  - ✓ 63-year-old Malpass is currently Under Secretary of Treasury for International Affairs
  - ✓ All 13 presidents of the of the development lender have been American men
  - ✓ The World Bank President is Chair of Boards of Directors of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Development Association (IDA).
- ◆ **United Kingdom - had announced the appointment of a new media freedom champion in human rights lawyer, Amal Clooney**
- ◆ **Vikram Kirloskar - took charge as the new President of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**
- ◆ **Professor Najma Akhtar - appointed as the vice-chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia - for a period of five years**
  - ✓ Thus, she becomes the first woman VC of the central university in Delhi, 99 years after its inception
- ◆ **Justice Vikram Nath, the senior most judge of Allahabad High Court - was appointed as the first Chief Justice of the newly-constituted Andhra Pradesh High Court**
- ◆ **Mayoori Kango, former bollywood actress - appointed as the Industry Head of Google India**

- ◆ **Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas - sworn in a new government in Palestine on April 13**
- ◆ **Cricketer Mithali Raj - has been named as the goodwill ambassador of the Indian team for the Street Child Cricket World Cup**
- ◆ **Cipla chairman Yusuf Hamied - has been elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society, U.K. for his service to the cause of science.**
  - ✓ The Society is a Fellowship of the world's most eminent scientists and is the oldest scientific academy in continuous existence.
- ◆ **Former Cricketer Ravi Shastri - appointed as Dubai-based Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) exclusive 'Corporate Ambassador' to the Indian Business Community**

### AWARDS

- ◆ **The shallow water ROV or polar ROV (PROV), developed by National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) - wins the National Meritorious Invention Award by National Research Development Corporation (NRDC), an enterprise of department of scientific and industrial research under the ministry**
  - ✓ The 10-member team that was involved in the design and development of the ROV was awarded ₹3 lakh cash.
  - ✓ It has helped Indian scientists conduct climate change studies in the Indian and polar regions
- ◆ **Vice President Venkaiah Naidu - conferred President's Certificate of Honour and Maharshi Badrayan Vyas Samman Awards at New Delhi**
  - ✓ The President's Certificate of Honour was introduced in the year 1958 to honour the eminent scholars above 60 years of age in Sanskrit, Arabic, Pali/Prakrit, Persian, Classical Odiya, Classical Kannada, Classical Telugu, Classical Tamil and Classical Malayalam Languages
  - ✓ Maharshi Badrayan Vyas Samman distinction is conferred on persons in the age group of 30 to 45 for their notable contribution in the languages of Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Pali, Prakrit, Classical Odiya, Classical Kannada, Classical Telugu and Classical Malayalam, since 2002
  - ✓ Both the awards are conferred by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development, Government of India

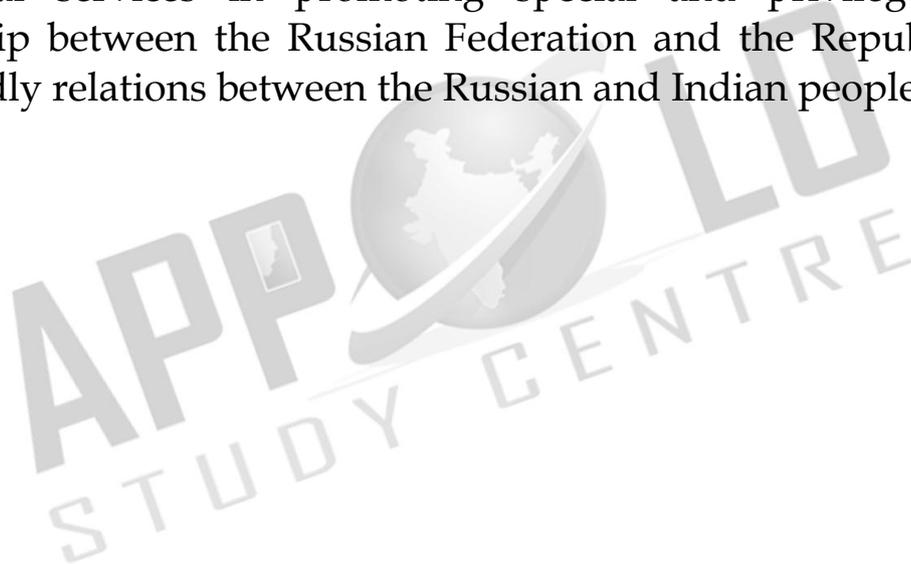
- ◆ **India's education technology start-up 'Dost education' - bagged \$25,000 Next Billion Edtech Prize 2019 - along with two other winners, Ubongo (Tanzania) and PraxiLabs (Egypt)**
  - ✓ Dost Education was awarded for its ability to empower parents to take charge of their child's early education by creating short, friendly audio content sent through mobile phones
  - ✓ Next Billion Edtech Prize 2019 is awarded by the UK-based Varkey Foundation
  - ✓ It recognises the most innovative technology destined to have a radical impact on education in low income and emerging world countries
  
- ◆ **'Namami Gange' programme - was awarded the honour of "Public Water Agency of the Year" by Global Water Intelligence at the Global Water Summit in London**
  - ✓ The National Mission for Clean Ganga or the Namami Gange programme, approved as 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014 with budget outlay of Rs.20,000 crore, aims to accomplish the twin objectives of effective reduction of pollution and the conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga
  
- ◆ **Telugu poet K Siva Reddy - was selected for the prestigious 'Saraswati Samman 2018' for his collection of poetry titled 'Pakkaki Ottigilite' (Turning Aside While Lying Down)**
  - ✓ The award is given annually by the KK Birla Foundation, since 1991, for an outstanding literary work written in any Indian language and published during the last 10 years
  - ✓ The award carries a cash prize of 15 lakh rupees, a citation and a plaque
  - ✓ It is the highest recognition in the field of Indian literature
  - ✓ Pakkaki Ottigilite, published in 2016, is an anthology of 104 poems in blank verse
  - ✓ To felicitate writers, the KK Birla Foundation has instituted three awards in the field of literature - namely the Saraswati Samman, Vyas Samman (for Hindi) and Bihari Puraskar (for Hindi and Rajasthani writers of Rajasthan)

◆ **Vikram Patel, a psychiatrist and professor of global health at Harvard Medical School, has won the prestigious John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award**

- ✓ The John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award recognizes the world's top scientists who have made outstanding achievements in Global Health Research.

### **PM's INTERNATIONAL AWARDS - A REPORT**

◆ **The Prime Minister Narendra Modi - was decorated with the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, the highest state decoration of Russia - for exceptional services in promoting special and privileged strategic partnership between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India and friendly relations between the Russian and Indian peoples**



# GLOBAL RECOGNITION

## MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AWARDS CONFERRED ON PM NARENDRA MODI

### Zayed Medal of UAE

UAE announced its highest decoration for PM Modi on April 4, 2019, in recognition of his **'pivotal role'** in strengthening ties between the two nations



### Grand Collar of the State of Palestine

On February 10, 2018, Modi was conferred with the award by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, recognising his contributions in promoting relations between India and Palestine

### Seoul Peace Prize 2018

Conferred on PM Modi for his contributions to the growth of the Indian and global economies, crediting **'Modinomics'** for reducing social and economic disparity between the rich and the poor



### UN Champions of the Earth Award 2018

The **highest environmental honour** of the UN. Modi received the award on October 3, 2018 from UN secretary general Antonio Guterres. He was selected in the leadership category for his pioneering work in championing the International Solar Alliance and also as acknowledgement for his unprecedented pledge to eliminate single-use plastic in India by 2022

### Amir Abdulla Khan Award of Afghanistan

PM Modi, during his visit to Afghanistan, was on June 4, 2016 conferred with the Amir Amanullah Khan Award, the highest civilian honour of the country by its president, Ashraf Ghani

### King Abdullaziz Sash Award of Saudi Arabia

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on April 3, 2016 conferred with Saudi Arabia's highest civilian honour **'King Abdulaziz Sash'** by King Salman bin Abdulaziz at the Royal Court of Saudi Arabia. Among other notable recipients of this honour are former US President Barack Obama and British ex-PM David Cameron

- ◆ Dr. A K Singh, director at Life Sciences, DRDO - has been honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award 2019 during 4th APJ Abdul Kalam Innovation Conclave at Chandigarh University, Mohali.
- ◆ The 2019 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize - has been awarded to Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo
- ◆ Digital Sukoon founder, Sudhanshu Kumar - was honoured with the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Nobel Award by International Human Rights Council at Mumbai

- ◆ **Three Indian student teams - won awards in NASA's annual Human Exploration Rover Challenge at the US Space and Rocket Centre in Huntsville, Alabama**
  - ✓ The team from KIET Group of Institutions in Ghaziabad won the "AIAA Neil Armstrong Best Design Award" in the college/university division
- ◆ **The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal were awarded Pulitzer Prizes for their separate investigations of President Donald Trump and his family**
- ◆ **150 Indian peacekeepers serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) - were bestowed with medals of honour by the United Nations for their dedicated service and sacrifice**
  - ✓ Currently, India is the second largest contributor of peacekeepers to UNMISS with more than 2,400 military and police personnel deployed in the mission
- ◆ **Gagandeep Kang, executive director of the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad - has been made a Fellow of the Royal Society, London**
  - ✓ She is the first Indian woman scientist to have been selected as FRS in the 359-year history of the prestigious scientific academy
  - ✓ Known for her inter-disciplinary research and work in prevention of enteric infections and their sequelae in children in India, Kang has built national rotavirus and typhoid surveillance networks, established laboratories to support vaccine trials and conducted phase 1-3 clinical trials of vaccines.
  - ✓ Among the 2019 announcements apart from Dr Gagandeep Kang, Mumbai-born Padma Bhushan awardee Dr Yusuf Hamied has also elected as Honorary Fellow.
- ◆ **Malayalam film Bhayanakam (Fear) directed by Jayaraj - won the best cinematography award at the Beijing International Film Festival.**
- ◆ **Intellectual Property Rights Cell (IPR Cell) of Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) - has been selected for the National Intellectual Property Award 2019**
- ◆ **The Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019 - was awarded to author Rana Dasgupta for his 2010 novel "Solo"**

- ✓ It is the second edition of the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize
  - ✓ Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for social achievement was awarded to Yohei Sasakawa, the World Health Organization Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy
  - ✓ Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen was awarded as a beacon of democracy
  - ✓ Tagore Prize is founded and launched with a strong vision to be a platform and a vehicle for improving and inspiring World Peace, Literature, Art and Education
- ◆ **Popular scriptwriter Salim Khan, national award-winning filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar and one of the finest dancer actress of yesteryears, Helen - were honoured with the prestigious Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Award at a ceremony in Mumbai**
- ✓ The awards were instituted by the Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Smruti Pratishthan, a charitable trust in Pune, established and run by the Mangeshkar family for the last 30 years
  - ✓ Deenanath Mangeshkar is the father of the legendary playback singer Lata Mangeshkar
- ◆ **Benny Antony, Joint Managing Director of the Kochi-based Arjuna Natural Ltd - has been conferred with the National Intellectual Property Award for 2019 in the category of Top Individual for Patents and Commercialization.**
- ✓ He is the inventor of BCM-95, the world's leading patented turmeric extract formulation, with over 80 international patents to his credit.
- ◆ **Dawn editor and Columnist, Cyril Almeida from Pakistan - won the IPI's (International Press Institute) World Press Freedom Hero award in 2019 for his "critical" and "tenacious coverage" of the civil-military relations in Pakistan.**
- ◆ **India's well-known golf administrator, Dilip Thomas - was bestowed the 'Lifetime contribution to Golf' honour at the Golf Industry Association (GIA)**
- ✓ Nonita Lall Qureshi and Vijay Divecha were the worthy awardees for their contribution as coaches.
  - ✓ Kavita Singh was chosen for the 'Inspiration to women's golf' award.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

- ◆ **'Khooni Vaisakhi' - Released in UAE and India**
  - ✓ The book contains English translation of the 100-year-old Punjabi poem about Jallianwala Bagh massacre
  - ✓ It was translated by India's Ambassador to the UAE Navdeep Singh Suri whose grandfather, revolutionary poet and novelist Nanak Singh wrote it after witnessing first-hand the events of massacre on April 13, 1919
- ◆ **The "Politics of Jugaad: The Coalition Handbook" - authored by journalist Saba Naqvi**

## PERSONALITIES

- ◆ **Bollywood Actor, Shah Rukh Khan - received honorary doctorate in Philanthropy from The University of Law, London on April 4**
  - ✓ He has earlier been honoured with honorary doctorates from The University of **Bedfordshire** and The University of **Edinburgh**
  - ✓ He is also the co-owner of a global sports franchise titled 'Knight Riders' with cricket teams across India, South Africa, and the Caribbean.
- ◆ **73-year-old Israeli Isaak Hayik - set a new world record as the oldest person to play in a professional soccer match**
- ◆ **The Australia-born WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange - arrested by British police at Ecuador's embassy in London, his home since June 2012, after it withdrew his asylum status**
- ◆ **Rahul Sharma, the co-founder of Micromax - unveils India's first Artificial Intelligence-enabled e-motorcycle brand**
- ◆ **A nine-year-old Indian girl - won \$1 million jackpot in Dubai Duty Free's Millennium Millionaire**
  - ✓ Eliza M, a grade school student, won the jackpot with ticket No.0333
  - ✓ She is the 140th Indian national to win a million dollars in the Dubai Duty Free lottery since its inception in 1999
  - ✓ In the same raffle, she had won a luxury McLaren Coupe in January 2013
- ◆ **TIME's 100 Most Influential People-2019 list - released on April 17, 2019**

- ✓ Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani, public-interest litigators Arundhati Katju and Menaka Guruswamy, who spearheaded a historic legal battle for LGBTQ rights in India, are among the Indians who have been included in the list
- ◆ **US Astronaut Christina Koch - is due to set a record for the longest spaceflight by a woman**
- ◆ **Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle - to take up new international roles in Africa as 'Commonwealth youth ambassadors'**
- ◆ **A 41-year-old Indian-origin Japanese, Puranik Yogendra (from Pune) - has been elected to Tokyo's Edogawa Ward assembly, becoming the first Indian to win an election in Japan.**

### SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- ◆ **ISRO - launches EMISAT along with 29 satellites of global customers on April 1**
  - ✓ These 28 satellites, together weighing about 220 kg, belong to Spain (1), Lithuania (2), Switzerland (1) and the United States (24).
  - ✓ These include 20 Flock-4A satellites and 4 Lemur satellites.
  - ✓ The 436 kg electronic intelligence satellite, EMISAT has been launched at an altitude of 749 km orbit, while the remaining 28 satellites were launched at an altitude of 504 km orbit
  - ✓ EMISAT will be utilized for monitoring radar network by locating the positions of enemy radars.
  - ✓ It is intended for electromagnetic spectrum measurement
  - ✓ They were launched aboard the PSLV-C45 from SatishDhawan Space Center in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
  - ✓ This was the 47th mission for ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) Programme and was the 71st launch vehicle mission from Sriharikota.
  - ✓ For the first time, ISRO invited common people to view the launch
  - ✓ It had opened a visitors' gallery with 5,000 capacity at Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota launching centre.
  - ✓ The gallery has a clear line of sight to two launch pads and large screens to explain launcher and satellite features

- ◆ **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - lists Hump-backed Mahseer as Critically Endangered in the Red List of Threatened Species**

## EMISAT

- ◆ **Electro-Magnetic Intelligence Satellite (Emisat) - is a satellite intended to protect the country's assets including fighter jets and spacecraft by detecting radars in enemy territory**
  - ✓ EMISAT is a result of a five year development jointly by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
  - ✓ ISRO's PSLV-C45 on April 1 made unique manoeuvres to three different circular orbits to also inject 28 foreign satellites along with Emisat
- ◆ **Earth Hour - was observed on March 30, 2019**
  - ✓ Beginning in Sydney in 2007, Earth Hour has spread to more than 180 countries, with tens of millions of people joining in
- ◆ **China - has successfully launched the Tianlian II-01 satellite onboard long March-3B carrier rocket from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in southwest China's Sichuan Province on March 31, 2019**
  - ✓ China launched its first data relay satellite, the Tianlian I-01, in April 2008.
- ◆ **ISRO - to launch five military satellites this year that will enhance surveillance capabilities of the country**
  - ✓ Overall, it is scheduled to launch four new series Risat satellites and an advanced Cartosat-3 satellite
  - ✓ In June-end, PSLVC47 will launch Cartosat-3
- ◆ **Scientists at the Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology - discovered a new enzyme called 'SCISSORS ENZYME'**
  - ✓ The new enzyme helps in breaking cell walls of bacteria and hence, offers a potential for a new drug delivery route to arrest the anti-bacterial resistance
  - ✓ **Dr Manjula Reddy** led the team at the Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology

- ✓ Established on April 1, 1977, the Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology (CCMB) is a premier research organization which conducts high quality basic research and trainings in areas of modern biology
- ✓ It is located in Hyderabad and operates under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- ✓ It is designated as "**Center of Excellence**" by the Global Molecular and Cell Biology Network, UNESCO

◆ **The Global Burden of Disease Study 2017 - published by Lancet**

- ✓ The study estimates that one in five deaths globally, equivalent to 11 million deaths, are associated with poor diet
- ✓ Low intake of whole grains was the leading dietary risk factor for deaths in the USA, India, Brazil, Pakistan, Nigeria, Russia, Egypt, Germany, Iran, and Turkey
- ✓ High intake of sodium was the leading dietary risk for deaths in China, Japan, and Thailand
- ✓ Low intake of whole grains was the leading risk for deaths among young adults (aged 25–50 years) and sodium ranked first among older adults
- ✓ Sodium ranked first for mortality among men followed by whole grains and fruit.

◆ **The world's first largely private lunar mission, spacecraft Beresheet - enters into lunar orbit on April 4, ahead of scheduled landing on April 11**

- ✓ It was launched by Israel's Space IL agency
- ✓ The manoeuver has been accomplished successfully by only five nations so far— the US, the former Soviet Union, China, Japan and India.

◆ **Japanese space probe, Hayabusa2 - successfully blasted the surface of asteroid Ryugu by dropping 'bombs' for the first time to form a crater**

◆ **Amazon - is planning to set up a network of 3,236 satellites - to provide a high-speed broadband internet service from space**

- ✓ The project is titled 'Project Kuiper', announced in September 2018
- ✓ It was discovered by the late Dutch American astronomer, Gerard Kuiper

- ◆ **Scientists from the Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology - have discovered a new enzyme 'Murein EndopeptidaseK' that helps in breaking cell walls of bacteria**
- ◆ **The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) - signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi - to collaborate in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment for a period of five years**
- ◆ **NASA's Parker solar probe - successfully completes its second close approach called 'perihelion' to the Sun at about 24 million kms above the surface of the Sun**
- ◆ **Professors from Anna University, Chennai - has developed a device called 'antibiogramoscope' to detect antibiotic resistance**
- ◆ **Astronomers - revealed the first ever image of a 'supermassive' black hole taken by Event Horizon Telescope with a network of eight linked telescopes - on April 10, 2019**
  - ✓ The image released shows the shadow of the hole at the center of glowing plasma.
  - ✓ The research was conducted by the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) project, an international collaboration begun in 2012, to directly observe the immediate environment of a black hole using a global network of Earth-based telescopes.
  - ✓ The black hole is about 6 billion times the mass of our sun and is in a massive galaxy called Messier 87 in the nearby Virgo galaxy cluster, at 53 million light-years from Earth
  - ✓ At the centre of the black hole, time and space become so curved upon themselves that the 2 basic laws of physics, quantum physics and general relativity, break down completely.
  - ✓ The new image confirmed Albert Einstein's theory of general relativity (1915) explaining the laws of gravity and their relation to other natural forces, thereby allowing scientists to predict the size and shape of a black hole.
  - ✓ The announcement of the image was made in simultaneous news conferences in Washington, Brussels, Santiago, Shanghai, Taipei and Tokyo

- ✓ The project's researchers obtained the first data in April 2017 using telescopes in the US states of Arizona and Hawaii as well as in Mexico, Chile, Spain and Antarctica.
  - ✓ The EHT's work focuses on two super-massive black holes - the first, dubbed Sagittarius A\* - sits at the centre of the Milky Way with a mass of about 4.3 million times that of the sun and located 25,000 light years from Earth.
  - ✓ The second lies at the core of the M87 elliptical galaxy, about 50 million light years from Earth, and is 1500 times more massive than the Sagittarius A-star
  - ✓ Black holes are formed when very massive stars collapse at the end of their life cycle
  - ✓ There are basically three types of black holes - **stellar, supermassive, and miniature black holes**
  - ✓ Stellar black holes are formed when a massive star collapses
  - ✓ Supermassive black holes are equivalent to billions of suns, and expected to exist in the centres of most galaxies, including Milky Way galaxy.
  - ✓ Miniature black holes are assumed to have been formed shortly after the "Big Bang", which is predicted to have started the universe 13.7 billion years ago.
- ◆ **The Israeli spacecraft - called Beresheet, the first privately funded mission to the Moon - has crashed on the lunar surface after the apparent failure of its main engine**
  - ◆ **Scientists - have discovered a new human species 'Homo luzonensis' in Philippines**
  - ◆ **A Hawaiian name, Powehi - was given to the world's first Black hole photographed on April 10**
    - ✓ Hawaiian language Professor Larry Kimura named the cosmic object in Hawaiian language
    - ✓ The word 'Powehi' means "**the adorned fathomless dark creation**" or "**embellished dark source of unending creation**", coming from the Kumulipo, an 18th Century Hawaiian creation chant
    - ✓ 'Po' is a profound dark source of unending creation, while 'wehi', honoured with embellishments, is one of the chant's descriptions of 'po'

- ✓ The world's first image of a black hole in a galaxy 53 million light-years from Earth was created using data from eight radio telescopes around the world
- ✓ Astronomers say giving it a Hawaiian name was justified because the project included two telescopes in Hawaii.
- ◆ **NASA's Curiosity rover in Mars - drills into a 'clay-bearing' unit and takes clay sample for the first time**
- ◆ **Google - has introduced a new open platform called 'Anthos' to run and manage apps from anywhere**
- ◆ **Phayeng village of Manipur - becomes India's first Carbon-positive village**
- ◆ **World's largest airplane called 'Roc' - was test-flighted for the very first time on April 13, 2019 at Mojave Desert, California**
- ◆ **Scientists in Israel - unveils World's first 3-D printed heart with human tissues and vessels intact**
- ◆ **A Cubesat team led by an Indian-American student - will be flown into space on future missions of NASA**
  - ✓ The team's Cubesat is named 'BLAST' (Bouchet Low-Earth Alpha/Beta Space Telescope), after physicist Edward A Bouchet, the first African-American to receive a PhD in US
  - ✓ It had designed the satellite over a period of four years through the launch grant of NASA's CubeSat Launch Initiative competition
- ◆ **Nasa's latest planet-hunting probe, The Transiting Exoplanets Survey Satellite (TESS) -has discovered its first Earth-sized exoplanet orbiting a star 53 light-years away**
- ◆ **Sri Lanka - launched its first satellite 'Raavana-1' into space from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility on Virginia's East Shore**
  - ✓ The satellite was designed and built at the Kyushu Institute of Technology in Japan by two Sri Lankan research engineers.
- ◆ **NASA's Cassini - found lakes of liquid methane on Saturn's moon 'Titan'**

- ✓ Titan is the only planetary body in our solar system other than Earth known to have stable liquid on its surface
- ◆ **Astronomers from San Diego State University - has discovered a third planet in a two-star system named Kepler-47**
  - ✓ It is seven times the size of the Earth and the largest in its system
  - ✓ In order to study this system, team used NASA's Kepler space telescope to find the Neptune-to-Saturn-size planet orbiting between two previously known planets.
  - ✓ The new planet, called Kepler-47d, was not detected earlier due to weak transit signals.
  - ✓ Kepler-47b and Kepler-47c, both having two Suns in their skies were discovered in 2012
- ◆ **Scientists from Ocean University in Qingdao, China and the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England - have discovered a bacteria that eats oil**
  - ✓ The oil eating bacteria was discovered in the western Pacific Ocean's 10,994-meter-deep Mariana Trench
  - ✓ The expedition was organised by marine explorer and film director James Cameron
- ◆ **Scientists from The Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy (MPIfR) in Germany - have detected the most ancient type of molecule in our universe in space for the first time ever**
  - ✓ Helium hydride ion ( $\text{HeH}^+$ ) was the first molecule that formed almost 14 billion years ago, due to falling temperatures in the young universe allowed recombination of the light elements produced in the Big Bang
- ◆ **Nepal - successfully launched its first satellite, NepaliSat-1, into space from the US - to gather detailed geographical information about the country**
  - ✓ Developed by two Nepalese scientists, it was launched from Virginia in US
- ◆ **The 139-foot-tall (42.5-meter) Antares rocket - launches uncrewed 'Cygnus Cargo spacecraft' for International Space Station (ISS)**
- ◆ **NASA - announced that SpaceX will fly its Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) planetary-defence mission in June 2021**

- ◆ **World Health Organization (WHO) - raised alarm over a 300% increase in the case of measles globally in the first quarter of 2019 compared with last year**
- ◆ **Tech giant, Google - has opened an Artificial Intelligence (AI) research lab in Ghana's capital Accra**
  - ✓ It is the first of its kind research lab set up in Africa
- ◆ **NASA - reveals that Mercury, the smallest planet in our solar system, has a massive solid inner core**
  - ✓ In its final trip around Mercury before crash-landing in 2015, NASA's MESSENGER mission zoomed in close to the planet and made detailed measurements of its gravity, spin and internal structure
- ◆ **UAE's Mars mission project 'Hope Probe' - is completed 85% and scheduled to be launched in July 2020**
- ◆ **China - plans to send a manned mission to the moon and to build a research station on the moon's South Pole within the next 10 years.**
  - ✓ Recently, it became the first nation to land a rover on the far side of the moon in January 2019.
  - ✓ Tiangong programme, also known as 'Heavenly Palace' is the space station program of the People's Republic of China
  - ✓ China launched its first space laboratory, Tiangong-1, on September 29, 2011 followed by the launch of more advanced space laboratory with a cargo ship, Tiangong-2 on September 15, 2016
- ◆ **NASA's Mars Lander InSight - has recorded its first 'Marsquake'**
- ◆ **Japanese scientists - successfully created the first-ever artificial crater on an asteroid, to find out the origin of solar system**
- ◆ **United States - initiated its first move towards extending protection for giraffes under the Endangered Species Act**
- ◆ **Researchers at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi - have developed an ultrasensitive quantum thermometer using graphene quantum dots**
- ◆ **IIT Madras (IITM) - in collaboration with the Central Government and General Electric (GE) has set up the Cold Spray equipment in its lab to**

research on its application to increase life expectancy of an aircraft and make flying safer

- ◆ **The Government of India - has decided to set up a second rocket testing station and a satellite launching base at Sriharikota Island, near Pulicat Lake, in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh**

## SPORTS

- ◆ **Elavenil Valarivan, 19 years old - wins her first individual gold medal in the senior category in women's 10m air rifle final of the 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Airgun Championships in Taoyuan, Taipei**
  - ✓ The Cuddalore-born Gujarat-settled girl, who trains at Gagan Narang's 'Gun For Glory' shooting academy is part of their ambitious programme 'Project Leap'
- ◆ **Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton (Great Britain-Mercedes) - won the Bahrain Formula 1 Grand prix in Manama**
- ◆ **Shreya Agarwal, 17 years old shooter - wins gold in junior women's 10m air rifle event at the Asian Airgun meet in Taoyuan, Taipei**
  - ✓ Shreya's gold came with a world record (junior) in the final with a score of 252.5
  - ✓ She broke Chinese shooter Ruozhu Zhao's previous record by 0.1 point
  - ✓ Shreya trains at Gagan Narang's Gun For Glory academy in Jabalpur
- ◆ **Former India captain and batting legend Rahul Dravid - will soon be taking over the BCCI's National Cricket Academy (NCA)**
  - ✓ BCCI has decided to hand over Dravid the responsibility of reconstructing and monitoring Indian cricket's feeder line.
- ◆ **India - retained the ICC Test Championship and won the purse of \$ one million for a consecutive third year**
- ◆ **All India Football Federation (AIFF) President Praful Patel - was elected as the first Indian to be the member of FIFA Executive Council for a four-year period**
- ◆ **Divya Deshmukh, 13-year-old chess prodigy - is now world no. 1 in the under-14 girls' category**

- ◆ **India- bagged a total of seven gold, five silver and one bronze medal at the Asian Rowing Indoor Championship in Thailand**
- ◆ **2<sup>nd</sup> edition of ESPN India Multi-Sport Awards - Winners**
  - ✓ Sportsperson of the Year (Male) - Neeraj Chopra (Athletics)
  - ✓ Sportsperson of the Year (Female) - P V Sindhu (Badminton)
  - ✓ Coach of the Year - Jaspal Rana (Shooting)
  - ✓ Team of the Year - Women's team (Table tennis)
  - ✓ Lifetime Achievement Award - Pradip Kumar Banerjee (Football)
- ◆ **Former civil aviation minister, Praful Patel - becomes the first Indian to win one of the five seats on FIFA's ruling council on April 6 - for a four year term**
  - ✓ Patel is the current president of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and senior vice-president of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC)
- ◆ **Dream11 - has become the first Indian gaming company to be valued at over \$1 billion**
  - ✓ With this, it has entered India's growing club of unicorns, or startups valued at over \$1 billion.
  - ✓ Dream 11 is the firm founded by Jain and Bhavit Sheth, which runs a fantasy league for cricket, kabaddi, football, among other sports
- ◆ **Asian Shotput champion, Manpreet Kaur - suspended for four years by National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for failing dope test four times in 2017**

### Centurion Race years

- ✓ 600 - Argentine Grand Prix, Buenos Aires. April 13, 1997
- ✓ 700 - Brazilian Grand Prix, Interlagos. April 6, 2003
- ✓ 800 - Singapore Grand Prix. September 28, 2008
- ✓ 900 - Bahrain Grand Prix. April 6, 2014
- ✓ 1000 - Chinese Grand Prix, Shanghai. April 14, 2019
- ◆ **Indian cricketer Virat Kohli - was named The Wisden Almanack's 'Leading Cricketer of the Year' for 2018**
  - ✓ It had named India's Smriti Mandhana for the Women's Leading Cricketer award

- ✓ Kohli has won the title thrice, is third only to Sir Don Bradman and Jack Hobbs who have won it 10 and eight times respectively
  - ✓ In January this year, Kohli became the first player in the history of the game to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, his second consecutive, the ICC Test and the ODI Player of the Year awards for the year 2018
  - ✓ Mandhana became only the second India woman player to win an ICC award after fast bowler Jhulan Goswami, who was named the ICC Player of the Year in 2007
- ◆ **India's A Harshini - wins Silver in the Asian youth U-18 girls competition held in Sri Lanka**
    - ✓ She finished second with 6.5 points from 9 rounds while Vietnam's Nguyen Hong Anh won gold with 8 points
  - ◆ **The All India Tennis Association (AITA) - has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Serbian Tennis Federation (STF) to train Indian junior players under world-renowned Serbian coaches at New Delhi.**
  - ◆ **Viswanathan Anand - secured 5th place in the Shamkir Chess 2019 tournament, Shamkir, Azerbaijan.**
  - ◆ **Meena Kumari Maisnam - wins gold medal in the 54 kg at the Boxing World Cup in Cologne on April 13**
    - ✓ Sakshi (57kg) and Pwilao Basumatary (64kg) lost their final bouts and had to settle for the silver while Pinki Rani (51kg) and Parveen (60kg) won bronze as India finished with five medals.
  - ◆ **Bibhu Kalyan Nayak - became the first Indian to be appointed Chair of International Hockey Federation (FIH) Health and Safety Committee by the world governing body**
  - ◆ **Lewis Hamilton (Great Britain - Mercedes) - wins the Formula one's 1000th race, Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai**
    - ✓ Five-time world champion, Hamilton already entered into record books as only one of the three drivers to have won five or more championship titles
    - ✓ The victory brings his 75th career title, just 16 short of the all-time record held by Michael Schumacher

- ◆ **Pakistan's Inzamam-ul-Haq and South African Mark Boucher - were inducted as the Honorary Life Members of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)**
  
- ◆ **M Senthilnathan - was named chairman of the TNCA senior state selection committee for the 2019-20 season**
  - ✓ He replaces S Sharath who was the chief selection of the state since 2016
  - ✓ This is Senthilnathan's third term as the state selector
  
- ◆ **India's young paddlers Manush Shah and Raegan Albuquerque - clinched the bronze at the Belgium Junior and Cadet Open, a part of the ITTF Junior Circuit Premium, held in Chennai**
  - ✓ The duo paired up with Iran's Amin Ahmadian and Radin Khayyam to win the medal in the junior boys' team event
  
- ◆ **Youth Olympics Gold medallist, Jeremy Lalrinnunga - smashed three world records at the Asian Weightlifting championship at Ningbo, China**
  
- ◆ **India's Harsheel Dani, a former junior national champion - defeated Mads Christophersen of Denmark, world no 149, to clinch the 20th Victor Dutch International Badminton title in Wateringen**
  
- ◆ **Trichy girl Gomathi Marimuthu - gave India their first gold by winning the women's 800m event at the Asian athletics championships in Doha**
  - ✓ Gomathi won the race with her personal best timing of 2:02.70
  - ✓ It was the 30-year-old Tamil Nadu athlete's first major gold.
  
- ◆ **World No.1 Bajrang Punia - won India's first gold medal in the 65 kg category at the Asian Wrestling Championships 2019 in Xi'an, China.**
  
- ◆ **Asian Games champion Swapna Barman - finished with silver medal in women's heptathlon event in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Asian Athletics championships in Doha**

- ◆ P U Chitra - defended her 1500 m title to give India its third gold on the fourth and final day of the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of Asian Athletics Championships in Doha
- ◆ India's 16-year-old Saurabh Chaudhary and 17-year-old Manu Bhaker - won gold in the 10m Air Pistol mixed team event at the ISSF World Cup 2019 in Beijing.
- ◆ India's Divya Kakran and Manju Kumari - bagged bronze medals for the country in the women's competition of the Asian Wrestling Championships in Xi'an, China
- ◆ The United States Cricket Team - sealed one-day international status for the first time with a third straight victory at the World Cricket League Division 2 event in Namibia.
- ◆ 23<sup>rd</sup> Asian Athletics championships, Doha

✓ Winners

**India on the podium**

**Gold:** Gomathi Marimuthu (women's 800m), P.U. Chitra (women's 1500m), Tajinder Pal Singh Toor (men's shot put).

**Silver:** Ajay Kumar Saroj (men's 1500m), Avinash Sable (men's 3000m steeple chase), Shivpal Singh (men's javelin throw), Annu Rani (women's javelin), women's 4x400m relay, 4x400m

mixed relay, Swapna Barman (heptathlon).

**Bronze:** Dutee Chand (women's 200m), M.R. Poovamma (women's 400m), Parul Chaudhary (women's 5000m), Gavit Murli Kumar (men's 10,000m), Sanjivani Jadhav (women's 10,000m), M.P. Jabir (men's 400m hurdles), Saritaben Gayakwad (women's 400m hurdles).

- ✓ India finished fourth with 17 medals – three gold and seven silvers – behind Bahrain (11 gold), China (9) and Japan (6)
- ✓ India had earlier topped the medals table with 12 golds at the 2017 Asians
- ✓ Incidentally, both Shivpal (No. 2 in 2019 World performance list) and Jabir (No. 5) have achieved the qualification standards for this September's World Championships in Doha.
- ◆ Indian swimmer S.P. Likith - achieved the 'B' qualifying standard for the 2019 FINA World Championships in the men's 100m breaststroke at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Malaysia Open swimming championships in Kuala Lumpur
- ◆ Indian wrestling sensation, Bajrang Punia - to soon become the first Indian wrestler to fight at iconic famed venue of Madison Square Garden in New York, USA

- ◆ **Divyansh Singh Panwar - bagged the individual silver in the men's 10m air rifle event at the ISSF World Cup in Beijing**
- ◆ **India's Abhishek Verma - won the 10m Air Pistol gold at ISSF World Cup in Beijing**
- ◆ **Doru Isac (Romania) - to take charge as India's next football technical director on a three year contract**
- ◆ **India's Pardeep Singh - won a bronze in clean and jerk in the 102kg category of the Asian weightlifting championships**
- ◆ **Indian para swimmer Niranjana Mukundan - achieved the Minimum Entry Time (MET) in the men's 200m IM (SM7 class) for the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships**
- ◆ **India's Greco-Roman wrestlers, Sunil Kumar (87kg) and Gurpreet Singh (77kg) - have clinched the silver medal in the ongoing Asian Wrestling Championship 2019 in Xi'an, China**
- ◆ **The BCCI - had recommended India pacers Mohammad Shami and Jasprit Bumrah, all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja and women's team player Poonam Yadav for the Arjuna award**
- ◆ **Australia's Claire Polosak - will create history as the first woman umpire ever to stand in a men's ODI when she takes the field in the final of the ICC World Cricket League Division 2 at Windhoek, Namibia**
- ◆ **India - finishes with 16 medals (one gold, six silver and nine bronze) at the Asian Wrestling Championships in Xi'an, China**
  - ✓ On the final day, India's Harpreet Singh secured his first silver medal after three consecutive bronze in 82kg while Gyanender won a bronze in 60kg
- ◆ **The Wrestling Federation of India - recommended the names of Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2019**

- ◆ **All India Football Federation (AIFF) - recommended names of National team footballers Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and Jeje Lalpekhlua for the prestigious Arjuna award 2019**
- ◆ **India's G Sathyan (Chennai) - becomes the first Indian Table Tennis player to break into the top-25 of world rankings**
  - ✓ Sathyan rose four spots to be 24th in the latest ITTF rankings, following his impressive sixth place finish in the Asia Cup in Yokohama earlier this month

### OBITUARY

- ◆ **Silamboli S Chellappan, Tamil scholar and Orator (91 years)**
  - ✓ He was born on September 24, 1928 at Siviyampalayam village near Namakkal
  - ✓ The late Tamil scholar Ra Pi Sethupillai hailed him as 'Silamboli Chellappan' after listening to his speech in 1953, as his discourses on Tamil epic Silappathikaram were well known
  - ✓ Souvenirs for World Tamil Conferences at Chennai and Madurai and the souvenir for 'World Semmozhi Conference' at Coimbatore were prepared under his supervision.
  - ✓ He was also the founder-director of World Tamil Research Centre
  - ✓ Mr. Chellappan helped former Chief Minister Mr. Karunanidhi pen the script for the film Ponnar Sankar

### INTERNATIONAL DAY

- ◆ **World Autism Awareness Day - April 2**
  - ✓ According to the World Health Organisation one out of every 160 children is living with autism

- ✓ **Theme 2019 - 'Assistive Technologies. Active Participation'**
- ✓ The United Nations General Assembly announced 2nd April as World Autism Awareness Day in 2008

#### ◆ **World Health Day 2019 - April 7**

- ✓ The observance of the day is an initiative by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to make people more aware of health issues
- ✓ The World Health Assembly took place for the first time on April 7 in 1948 at Geneva
- ✓ World Health Day is commemorated every year on this date because this was when WHO was founded to address vital health care issues and provide equal health care facilities all over the world
- ✓ Theme 2019 - 'Universal Health Coverage: Everyone, Everywhere'
- ✓ WHO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland

#### ◆ **National maritime day - April 5**

- ✓ Theme 2019 - "Indian Ocean - An Ocean of opportunity"
- ✓ The day was first observed on April 5, 1964 to create awareness about maritime commerce between the continents across the world
- ✓ The World Maritime Day is celebrated on September 26 every year to highlight the importance of shipping, maritime security and environment

#### ◆ **World Homoeopathy Day 2019 - April 10**

- ✓ The day commemorates the birth anniversary of the founder of Homoeopathy, Dr. Christian Fredrich Samuel Hahnemann
- ✓ Samuel Hahnemann discovered Homeopathy in the year 1796
- ✓ The observance of the day aims to create better awareness about homoeopathy, improve its accessibility and to modernise the system of healing
- ✓ Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician, a great scholar, linguist and an acclaimed scientist, is known as the Father of Homeopathy, Father of Human Pharmacology, Father of Nano Medicine and the Father of Infinite Dilution concept in Chemistry
- ✓ The week following the birth date of Hahnemann, that is, 10 April- 16 April is observed as the World Homeopathic Awareness Week.

#### ◆ **100 years of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (April 13, 1919 to April 13, 2019)**

- ✓ On the fateful afternoon of Sikh festival Baisakhi, the troops of the British Indian Army under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer fired ruthlessly into a crowd of Indian civilians gathered at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, Punjab on April 13, 2019
- ✓ The civilians assembled for a peaceful protest to condemn the arrest and deportation of two national leaders, Satya Pal and Saifuddin Kitchlew.
- ✓ The massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, is remembered as one of the deadliest attacks in Indian history.
- ✓ As per the records of the British Government, the massacre killed 379 and caused 1200 injuries
- ✓ The bullet marks can be still seen on the walls of the Jallianwala Bagh which is now a national memorial.
- ✓ It was the result of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, famously known as the Rowlatt Act
- ✓ The Act, which came into force a month before the massacre, allowed political cases to be tried without jury, and imprisonment of suspects without trial.
- ✓ Gandhi started a campaign against Rowlatt Act and there were violent protests throughout the country, leading to several disruptions
- ✓ Following the massacre, the Hunter Commission was appointed to investigate into the matter, which concluded Dyer 'guilty' and relieved of his command
- ✓ Udham Singh, a Punjabi revolutionary, killed Michael O' Dwyer, former Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, on March 13, 1940 in London in revenge for the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.
- ✓ He was subsequently convicted and hanged in July 1940
- ✓ Bengali poet and Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore renounced the knighthood he had received in 1915
- ✓ Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu released a postage stamp and a coin commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre on April 13, 2019

#### ◆ **National Safe Motherhood Day - April 11**

- ✓ The day intends to raise awareness about the proper healthcare of women and maternity facilities to pregnant and lactating women apart from striving to prevent child marriages, an indirect cause of maternal deaths
- ✓ Theme 2019 - "Midwives for Mothers"

- ✓ This day is an initiative of the White Ribbon Alliance India (WRAI) to provide women with various healthcare programs during pregnancy, childbirth and post-natal services.
- ✓ The day was first observed in 2003
- ✓ 11 April marks the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi

#### ◆ **National Handloom week - April 7 to April 14**

- ✓ It is a celebration of the country's 5,000-year old tradition of hand weaving cloths
- ✓ On this occasion, a book named 'The Indian textile Sourcebook' authored by Avalon Fotheringham and published by Thames and Hudson was launched on 9th April.
- ✓ In 2018, the National Handloom Week was observed during December month.
- ✓ The National Handloom Day is observed on 7th August every year across India.
- ✓ It was on this day that the Swadeshi Movement was launched in 1905.
- ✓ The First National handloom day was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on August 7, 2015 in Chennai.

#### ◆ **Prevention of Blindness week - April 1 to April 7**

- ✓ It is observed to alert and awaken the society towards various factors which causes blindness.
- ✓ It is organised by National Society for the Prevention of Blindness-India (NSPB-I) along with the support of state and local branches
- ✓ Initiated in 1960, Prevention of Blindness Week was launched by Jawaharlal Nehru and Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, under Societies Registration Act of 1860
- ✓ Indian Government has also launched another campaign 'Vision 2020: The Right to Sight' in collaboration with WHO to prevent blindness

#### ◆ **World Heritage Day - April 18**

- ✓ UNESCO approved of this day in the year 1983 during its 22nd General Conference
- ✓ World heritage day also aims to seek recognition for the people involved in preserving these sites
- ✓ The day is also known as the 'International Day for Monuments and Sites'
- ✓ Theme 2019 - 'Rural landscapes'

- ✓ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has recognised 35 World Heritage Sites in India, of which 27 are cultural sites and the other 8 are natural sites.
- ✓ In a first, UNESCO had inscribed Nalanda Mahavihara or old Nalanda University of Bihar as World Heritage Site on July 15, 2016.

#### ◆ World Haemophilia Day - April 17

- ✓ The day commemorates the birthday of Frank Schnabel who established the World Federation of Haemophilia in 1963
- ✓ Haemophilia is a medical condition in which the ability of blood to clot is severely reduced, leading to severe bleeding even for a minor injury
- ✓ Britain's Queen Victoria is the world's most widely known carrier of haemophilia, giving it a name of the 'Royal disease'
- ✓ It is mostly inherited and is attributed to the defect in the X chromosome, due to which it is more common among men
- ✓ Haemophilia A, occurs in about 1 in 5,000 births, while Haemophilia B is even rarer at about 1 in about 20,000 births
- ✓ According to the World Federation of Haemophilia's Annual Global Survey 2017, there were over 1.96 lakh persons living with haemophilia across the world and India tops the list with nearly 19,000 persons

#### ◆ 49<sup>th</sup> annual Earth Day - April 22

- ✓ The day aims to promote education of earth sciences, acknowledging its importance in sustainable use of natural resources as well as for sustainable development.
- ✓ The term 'Mother Earth' implies the interdependent relationship which exists between all the species of planet earth and to acknowledge earth's role in sustaining them all. World Earth Day 2019 theme - '**Protect Our Species**'
- ✓ The first Earth Day was observed in 1970 on the day of Vernal equinox
- ✓ It will mainly focus on saving species which are on the verge of extinction due to climate change, deforestation, pollution and illegal poaching. The founder of the Earth Day was Gaylord Nelson, a US senator from Wisconsin.
- ✓ He had been a witness to the devastation caused by an enormous oil spill in Santa Barbara, California in 1969

- ✓ Earth Day Network (EDN), the organization that leads Earth Day worldwide, has chosen the theme for 2018 as 'End Plastic Pollution'
- ✓ In 2005 the United Nations General Assembly declared 2008 as the "International Year of Planet Earth"

### ◆ 'World Book Day' or 'World Book and Copyright Day' - April 23

- ✓ World Book Day' is celebrated by UNESCO every year on April 23<sup>rd</sup> to celebrate the importance of literature and reading
- ✓ The date, April 23<sup>rd</sup> was finalized in the year 1995 in the UNESCO General Conference, held in Paris, to honor authors and book worldwide.
- ✓ April 23<sup>rd</sup> marks the death anniversary of many prominent literary figures like William Shakespeare and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, while the date also marks the birth anniversary of many other prominent authors including Maurice Druon, Vladimir Nabokov, Josep Pla, Haldor K. Lazness and Manuel Mejia Vallejo
- ✓ This year, the city of Sharjah has been selected as the World Book Capital for a period of one year.
- ✓ The theme for this year is centred around celebrating literature and reading with a particular focus on enhancing and protecting indigenous languages

### ◆ Zero Shadow Day - April 24

<b>JUMP AND SEE</b>		
<p><b>WHAT IS ZERO SHADOW DAY?</b></p> <p>➤ In tropical region, shadow of an object appears exactly under it twice a year as the sun is right at zenith</p> <p><b>SHADOW</b></p> <p>➤ Shadow helps us know the angular position and the motion of the sun at any time of the day</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Representative Image</p> 	<p><b>WHAT IS ZENITH?</b></p> <p>➤ Imagine the sky as an arc. The highest point in the sky (arc) is the zenith</p> <p><b>CONCEPT</b></p> <p>➤ When the sun has its declination equal to the latitude of the place, then the sun is at zenith because of the tilt of the earth's axis</p>
<p>This will happen in Chennai on April 24, around 12.07pm</p>		

- ✓ It is the day in which the shadow cast under a person around noon will be almost zero, when the Sun crosses the local meridian, an imaginary line connecting north, south and overhead

- ✓ On this day, the Sun's declination will be at 13 degrees and cities such as Chennai, Bengaluru and Mangaluru are at 13 degree latitude. So, these cities can see zero shadow
- ✓ Every location on earth between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn will witness this phenomenon twice a year.
- ✓ In India, this happens between April and September
- ✓ For one degree rotation, the earth takes four minutes. Hence, after Chennai sees shortest shadow, it will be followed by Bengaluru, which may take around 10 minutes and then Mangaluru

#### ◆ **National Panchayat Raj Day - 24th April**

- ✓ The Constitution of India recognizes Panchayats as 'Institutions of self-government'.
- ✓ This day marks the passing of Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force with effect from 24 April 1993.
- ✓ The Amendment Act permits states to take steps to organize village panchayats and provide them with necessary powers and authority necessary to facilitate them to function as units of self-government.
- ✓ In turn, it had led to the institutionalization of Panchayati Raj (PR) through the village, Intermediate and District level Panchayats.
- ✓ The 73rd Amendment 1992 added a new Part IX to the constitution titled The Panchayats covering provisions from Article 243 to 243(O).
- ✓ A new Eleventh Schedule covering 29 subjects within the functions of the Panchayats
- ✓ It implemented article 40 of DPSP which says that State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government
- ✓ The first National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated in 2010.

#### ◆ **World Malaria Day - April 25**

- ✓ The observance of the day highlights the need for continued investment and sustained political commitment towards malaria prevention and control
- ✓ According to WHO's latest World Malaria Report, no significant efforts were made in reducing malaria cases during 2015 - 2017 with the estimated number of malaria deaths in 2017 standing at 435000 with no change from previous year
- ✓ Theme 2019 - 'Zero malaria starts with me'

- ✓ In the recent years, the WHO had certified 7 countries as Malaria-free countries after 3 consecutive years of zero locally-acquired cases of malaria. These are - United Arab Emirates (2007), Morocco (2010), Turkmenistan (2010), Armenia (2011), Maldives (2015), Sri Lanka (2016) and Kyrgyzstan (2016).
- ✓ The day was established in May 2007 by the 60th session of the World Health Assembly to provide education and understanding of malaria

#### ◆ **International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace - April 24**

- ✓ The first ever official 'International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace' was observed by the United Nations (UN) on April 24, 2019
- ✓ The observance of the day every year on April 24 was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly on December 12, 2018

#### ◆ **World Immunization Week 2019 is being observed from 24-30 April, 2019**

- ✓ **Theme - Protected Together: Vaccines Work**
- ✓ Every year last week of April is observed as World Immunisation Week to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease
- ✓ Immunization Week was observed uniformly for the first time in 2012, with the participation of more than 180 countries and territories worldwide

#### ◆ **World Intellectual Property Day - April 26**

- ✓ The day intends to spread awareness about the role that intellectual property rights like patents, trademarks, industrial designs and copyright play in encouraging innovation and creativity
- ✓ On this day, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) works together with various agencies to hold different events and activities to promote the day
- ✓ Theme 2019 - "Reach for Gold: IP and Sports"
- ✓ In 2000, the WIPO designated 26 April as an annual World Intellectual Property Day
- ✓ It was on April 26 that the Convention establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization first entered into force in 1970
- ✓ World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is formed on 14 July 1967 with its headquarters at Geneva, Switzerland

- ✓ WIPO is one of the 15 specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN)
- ✓ It has 191 member States
- ✓ WIPO was created to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world

#### ◆ **World Day for Safety and Health at Work - April 28**

- ✓ The day is observed annually to promote safe, healthy and decent work by preventing occupational accidents and diseases globally
- ✓ The day has been observed every year on April 28 by the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 2003

#### ◆ **World Veterinary Day - 28th April, 2019**

- ✓ **The day intends to celebrate the contributions of veterinarians to the health of animals and society**
- ✓ **The World Veterinary Association (WVA)** will co-host the 2019 World Veterinary Day Award with **Health for Animals**, the global animal medicines association
- ✓ The theme for the day is the 'Value of Vaccination'
- ✓ World Veterinary Day is celebrated on the last Saturday of April

#### ◆ **International Dance Day - April 29**

- ✓ The day is celebrated worldwide to encourage participation and education in dance through events and festivals
- ✓ The aim of the day is to celebrate dance, revel in the universality of this art form, cross all political, cultural and ethnic barriers, and bring people together with a common language - dance
- ✓ It was instituted by the dance committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) – the main partner for the performing arts of UNESCO.
- ✓ In 1982 the Dance Committee of ITI founded International Dance Day on April 29, the birthday of Jean-Georges Noverre (1727-1810), creator of modern ballet