Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Edappadi K Palaniswami – launched the QR code enabled ‘Encumbrance Certificate’ facility of the Registration department on December 10, 2018
  - The details can be accessed by scanning the QR code through ‘online’ from home itself by remitting the fee
  - Another facility for sending the scanned copies of completed property registrations through email has also been introduced
  - The marriage registrations, chits and societies registrations have also been made ‘online’ under the STAR 2.0 (Simplified and Transparent Administration of Registration) portal

- Union Government – signs $31 million loan agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) – for the ‘Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism’ (IDIPT) of Tamil Nadu Government
  - The program aims to develop tourism and boost related jobs in the state
  - This is the 4th installment of the overall project fund
The total cost of the Project is $44.04 million, of which the Government will provide $13.04 million.

- **Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism**
- It was approved in September 2010 with a funding of $250 million.
- Apart from Tamil Nadu, it also aims to develop tourism infrastructure in 3 other states, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
- The estimated completion date of the program is June 2020.

- **P Hanifa Zaara, a seven year old girl** – was named as the brand ambassador for the Swachh Bharat scheme for Ambur Municipality.

  - The Class II girl had earlier lodged a police complaint against her father for not constructing a toilet at their house.

- **Pramod Kumar** – was appointed as the Chief vigilance officer and Senior deputy general manager of Southern Railways.
  - He succeeds J P Pandey, who is appointed as the Principal chief material manager of Western Railway.
  - Kumar has worked in various fields over seven railway zones till now.

- **Airports Authority of India (AAI)** – sets up a mobile air traffic control (ATC) tower at Vellore airport.
This is the first-of-its-kind facility at an airport in South India
The tower, mounted on a trailer truck, has been positioned on a concrete platform in an open space near the airport
The mobile tower, which can be elevated up to 8 metres and provides a 360-degree view, is one of eight such equipment imported by AAI
Jharkhand’s Bokaro airport got the country’s first mobile ATC during November 2018
The towers are imported from MSM Martin Company in Slovakia
Vellore Airport is expected to be commissioned in April 2019 by AAI

- **Southern Railway** – received the Railway Minister’s Rajbhasha trophy
  - The trophy was awarded for the propagation and implementation of Rajbhasha in headquarters office during 2016
  - Madurai division of the Southern Railways – was conferred Rajbhasha Rajath Padak during the ceremony in New Delhi
  - It was given in recognition of the excellent performance in implementation of Rajbhasha in Madurai

- **Tamil Isai Sangam** – to confer ‘63rd Isai Peraringnar award’ to Mrudanga vidwan Padmavibhushan ‘Umayalpuram K Sivaraman’ and ‘10th Pann Isai Peraringnar award’ to ‘Palani K Venkatesan’

The awards will be presented during the 76th annual Tamil Isai festival organized by the Sangam on December 21
Isai Peraringnar award is donated by P Lakshmanan in memory of his mother Lakshmi Achi, who is the daughter of Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar
Pann Isai Peraringnar award is donated by A C Muthiah in memory of his father Dr M A Chidambaram
The awards each comprise a gold medallion, a silver plaque and an endowment purse of Rs 10,000
**STATES**

- Delhi Government – launches a special 10-day inspection drive ‘Operation Minimum Wage’
  - The drive will check the implementation of minimum wage rules set by the Government
  - As per the Minimum Wages Act, 2017, the violators would be slapped with a fine of Rs. 50,000 fine or a jail term for three years or both

- Arunachal Pradesh – inaugurates 2 new districts, Shi yomi and Lepa Rada in the state
  - Shi yomi was the 23rd district created with its headquarters at Tato
  - Lepa Rada was the 24th district created with its headquarters at Basar
  - The state assembly had earlier passed a bill for creation of three new districts – Pakke-Kesang, Lepa Rada and Shi Yomi – on 29th August 2018

**NATIONAL**

- Ministry of Home – launches a new twitter account ‘@CyberDost’ – to create awareness about cybercrimes and the precautions to be undertaken by the General public
  - The move is aimed to reduce the disruption of normal business activities or losses due to cybercrimes

- European Union – opens India’s first ‘Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence’ (CoE) in New Delhi
  - It will be established at Department of European Studies at Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) – with a grant of 1,00,000 Euros
  - It intends to promote India-EU interdisciplinary studies in culture, literature, education and society
With this, MAHE is receiving the grants under Erasmus+Jean Monnet initiative for the fifth time

Jean Monnet – was a French political economist and diplomat
Hailed as ‘Father of Europe’, he established the European Coal and Steel Community, the predecessor of today’s European Union, in the 1950’s

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) – test flies indigenously developed ‘Light Utility Helicopters’ (LUH) up to an altitude of 6 km in Bengaluru
Its first flight was carried in September 2016 and second Prototype was flown in May 2017
The LUH is a 3-tonne class, single-engine helicopter under development by Rotary Wing Research and Design Center of HAL
It is expected to replace the aging Cheetah and Chetak choppers used by the Indian armed forces
With the successful completion of mandatory 6 km trial, the LUH will now undertake high altitude ‘Cold weather’ trials planned in January 2019

Ministry of Agriculture – launched ‘ENSURE’, an online portal that connects with the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) activities related to Poultry, small rudiments and pigs

The Portal, ENSURE- National Livestock Mission- EDEG, was developed by NABARD and operated under the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries
Under EDEG (Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation) of NLM, the related subsidies are paid directly to the beneficiaries bank accounts
The new online portal ‘Ensure’ will make the process simpler, better, real-time and transparent
SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- Supreme Court – directs the Print and Electronic media – not to reveal the names of victims of sexual assault even in a remote manner
  - The SC bench comprising Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta delivered the verdict on December 11, 2018
  - The bench said that the name of victims should not be furnished to any person under the Right to Information Act, 2015
  - It also said that the Police should ensure all the correspondences with the names are kept in a sealed cover without any disclosures

INTERNATIONAL

- Jamal Khashoggi, the murdered Saudi journalist – was named Time magazine’s ‘Person of the Year’
  - He shared the honour with other persecuted journalists dubbed as ‘Guardians’ of the truth
  - The other journalists named by the magazine includes Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, currently imprisoned in Myanmar and the staff of ‘Capital Gazette’ in Annapolis, Maryland
  - Time has been awarding the annual honour since 1927
  - This is the first instance that a person has been chosen posthumously for the prestigious cover

- New Zealand – makes medical marijuana ‘legal’ and widely available in the country
  - The new legislation will allow terminally ill patients to smoke the illegal ‘pot’ without facing any charges
The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration – was accepted by 164 UN member nations including India – at the Intergovernmental conference on the global compact for migration - held in Marrakech, Morocco

- It provides a framework for the commitments agreed upon in New York Declaration for refugees and migrants of December 2016
- The US, Australia, Israel, Chile, Luxembourg, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Latvia, Croatia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia were among the countries that did not adopt the compact
- The US condemned the Compact as an effort by the United Nations to advance global governance at the expense of the sovereign right of states
- According to UN, there were 258 million international migrants in the world in 2017

Israel – becomes the 38th member of Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- The body was set up to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other threats to the international financial system
- Earlier in 2000, Israel was blacklisted and removed as a member country in 2002, and later in 2016 it became an observer to FATF

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- 4th edition of ‘Partners’ Forum’, a two day international Conference – to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi on December 12 at New Delhi

- Hosted by - The Government of India in association with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)
- Partners’ Forum is a global health partnership launched in September 2005 to boost efforts to reduce child and maternal mortality
- It has over 1000 members from 92 countries
PERSONALITIES

- Surjit Bhalla, eminent Economist – quits as member of the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC)

- PMEAC is an independent body to give advice on economic and related issues to the Government
- His resignation is effective from December 1, 2018
- He joined CNN-IBN group after the resignation
- He was the author of a book called ‘Citizen Raj: Indian Elections 1952-2019’, focusing on Indian elections since 1952
- The six-member council has been created by the Government in September 2017
- It is headed by Bibek Debroy with 4 part-time members that include economists Rathin Roy, Ashima Goyal and a member Secretary in Ratan P Watal, a former bureaucrat

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- NASA’s OSIRIS-REx spacecraft – finds evidence of water on Asteroid Bennu
  - Data obtained from spacecraft’s two spectrometers has revealed presence of hydroxyl molecules that exist in water-bearing Clay minerals, indicating the existence of water at some point
  - OSIRIS-REx - Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer
  - Launched – September 2016
  - Reached Bennu – December 2018
  - Proposed return back to Earth - 2023
  - It is NASA’s first Asteroid Sampling mission
  - Bennu, one of the oldest known Carbon-rich asteroids, was discovered in September 1999 by the LINEAR project
Voyager 2 probe of NASA – had become the second human-made object in history to reach the edge of our solar system i.e., the interstellar space- the space between the stars

- It had now exited the heliosphere – the protective bubble of particles and magnetic fields created by the Sun
- Its twin, Voyager 1, crossed this boundary in 2012
- Voyager 2, launched in 1977, carries a working instrument that will provide first-of-its-kind observations of the nature of this gateway into interstellar space
- Voyager 2 is the only spacecraft to have visited all four gas planets — Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune
- It had also discovered 16 moons, as well as phenomena like Neptune’s mysterious transient Great Dark Spot, the cracks in Europa’s ice shell and ring features at every planet

APPOINTMENTS

- Rajiv Mehrishi, Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) – appointed as Vice-Chair of United Nations (UN) Panel of Auditors – at its annual meeting in New York

- CAG of UK – has been re-elected as the Chair of the Panel for another term (2019)
- The next meeting of the panel will be held in in Bonn, Germany in November-December 2019
- The UN Panel of Auditors – was established in 1959 for the co-ordination and exchange of information of audits
- It consists of 11 countries namely India, Germany, Chile, Canada, France, Italy, Philippines, Ghana, Indonesia, Switzerland and United Kingdom

- Arundhati Bhattacharya, former SBI chief – appointed as Board Chairman of ‘Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication’ (SWIFT) India

- She succeeds M V Nair, who has completed his 5 year tenure
- Earlier, she was named as an independent additional director on the board of Reliance Industries Ltd in October 2018
AWARDS

- Mary Kom – conferred the title of ‘Meethoi leima’ (Outstanding Queen) by the Manipur Government

- The honour was provided in recognition of her unprecedented feat of winning the sixth gold medal in the recently concluded World Boxing Championship and her illustrious career in Boxing

- N Biren Singh, State’s Chief Minister handed over a cheque of Rs 10,00,000 to Mary Kom, first woman boxer in the world to win 6 world titles

- The chief minister also named a road in Imphal as ‘MC Mary Kom Road’

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- The book ‘Of Counsel: The Challenges of the Modi-Jaitley Economy’ - written by former chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian - was launched in Mumbai

- In the book, the author has provided with an inside account of his journey as the CEA from 2014 to 2018, succeeding Raghuram Rajan
SPORTS

- Sascha Bajin, coach of the world number five Naomi Osaka - became the first-ever winner of the Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) Coach of the Year Award

- Under his training, Naomi had won her maiden Grand slam title at the US open and her career first WTA title at the Paribas Open, Indian Wells
- He also served as a Gold Member of the newly implemented WTA Coach Program

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- UNICEF Day – December 11

- The day commemorates the creation of UNICEF (United Nations International Children Emergency Fund) on December 11, 1946 with its headquarters in New York
- UNICEF was created by the UN General Assembly for providing support to children and mothers in developing countries
International Mountain Day – December 11

- The day is observed by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to spread awareness about the contribution of mountains in the biodiversity.
- It was established by the UN General Assembly in 2003 to highlight the importance of sustainable mountain development.
- Theme 2018 - “#MountainsMatter”

STATE ELECTIONS 2018 - UPDATE

Chhatisgarh Election Results 2018

- Indian National Congress (INC) – wins majority by winning 68 seats in the 90-member Assembly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chhattisgarh Result Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status Known For 90 out of 90 Constituencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahujan Samaj Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharatiya Janata Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biju Janata Dal (BJD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- After the results, Chief Minister Raman Singh (BJP) resigned from his post after becoming the longest serving Chief Minister of the state for 3 successive terms of 15 years.
- The state was created out of Madhya Pradesh in the year 2000, when Congress was in power from 2000-2003 with Ajit Jogi being the first CM of the state.
Rajasthan Elections Result 2018

- Indian National Congress (INC) wins 99 seats in the 199-member assembly and emerges as the single largest party in the state.
- Following the results, Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje of the BJP tendered her resignation to the Governor Kalyan Singh after her second tenure in the office from 2013-2018 (1st one being 2003-2008).
- A total of 100 seats is required to obtain majority in the assembly.
- The First Rajasthan Legislative Assembly was formed in March 1952 with a strength of 160 members.

Madhya Pradesh Elections Result 2018

- The Indian National Congress emerged as the single largest party with 114 seats followed by Bharatiya Janata Party, which won 109 seats in a neck-to-neck battle for the State’s 230-member assembly.
- The number of seats required to form the government is 116.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madhya Pradesh Election Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The incumbent Chief Minister is Shivraj Singh Chouhan (BJP), who has been in power since 2005.

Telangana Elections Result 2018

- The ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) has won 87 seats in the 119-member state assembly and securing a simple majority on its own for the second term in office.
The state’s incumbent Chief Minister, K Chandrasekhar Rao dissolved the assembly in September 2018, almost nine months before the completion of its term.

The state’s first elections were held in 2014, after it got separated from Andhra Pradesh.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats Won in 2014</th>
<th>Seats Won in 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRS</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDP</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mizoram Assembly Elections 2018

The Mizo National Front (MNF) has won a majority by winning 26 seats in the 40-member assembly.

The state’s five-time Chief Minister, Lal Thanhawla of Congress party lost both the seats he was contesting from.

The Indian National Congress had been in power in the state since 2008, being the last North Eastern State with its rule.

The MNF, a former ally of BJP, is led by Zoramthanga.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Name</th>
<th>Number of Seats Won</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MNF</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>