

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DEC 30, 2019

NATIONAL

- **The Government – proposes to amend the Army, Navy and Air Force rules to allow the Tri-Service chief to serve till the age of 65.**
- ✓ The frontrunner for the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) post is General **Bipin Rawat**
- ✓ He completes his three-year term as the Army chief on December 31, and turns 62 in March next year



- ✓ According to the existing Government rules, the Army, Navy and IAF chiefs can only serve up to the age of 62 or for 3 years, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ However, the highest positions in the civilian bureaucracy like the Cabinet Secretary do not usually go beyond the age of 62, though the government can provide extensions
- ✓ The Centre amended the Army Rules 1954, Naval (Discipline and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations, 1965, Naval Ceremonial, Conditions of Service and Miscellaneous Regulations, 1963 and Air Force Regulations, 1964 for increasing the age limit.
- ✓ The CDS will now be the “first among equals” as the Permanent chairman of the Chiefs of staff committee (CoSC) and Head of a new Department of military affairs in the Defence ministry.
- ✓ The CoSC comprises the Army, Navy and IAF chiefs, with the senior-most of them acting as the “Rotational” chairman till he retires.
- ✓ Gen Rawat will hand over the baton to Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh at the formal ceremony scheduled later
- ✓ Last week, the Union Cabinet had approved the creation of the CDS post who will be a four-star General
- ✓ He will also function as the Principal Military Adviser to the Defence Minister

- **The Government - is planning to revamp 'All India Radio', officially known as 'Akashvani', by introducing Digital Radio in India by 2024**
- ✓ Union Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Minister Prakash Javadekar announced this at the 2019 Akashvani Annual Awards in New Delhi.
- ✓ The Digital Radio will ensure more audio 'clarity' and will be heard for a longer range
- ✓ There will also be four times more stations.
- ✓ AIR was established in 1936 and is officially known as Akashvani since 1956.
- ✓ It is a division of Prasar Bharati, which is India's largest public broadcasting agency

- **Chinese language sign boards - have been put up at 5 Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protected Archaeological Sites located in Uttar Pradesh (UP).**
- ✓ This was announced by Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (IC) Shri Prahlad Singh Patel
- ✓ The sites are - Sarnath, the Buddhist relics at Chaukhandi Stupa, Kushinagar and the Mahaparinirvana Temple, Piparahwa and Shravasti.
- ✓ Earlier, sign boards in Sinhali language have been completed in November 2019 as large number of Sri Lankan tourists visit Sanchi.
- ✓ Sign boards of foreign languages will be installed where over 1 lakh tourists from a particular country visit those places every year.

- **Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan - inaugurated the second edition of 'Eat Right Mela' in New Delhi on December 27**



- ✓ The Eat Right Mela, part of Eat Right Movement, encourages citizens to eat healthy diet and reduce the disease burden in the country.
- ✓ At the event, the minister launched "The Purple Book" that provides guidelines for hospitals.
- ✓ Theme of the Mela – 'Healthier Diets'
- ✓ Organized by - FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) & National Association of Street Vendors of India.
- ✓ The first Eat Right Mela was launched in New Delhi in December, 2018
- ✓ The Eat Right Movement is aligned with Ayushman Bharat, POSHAN Abhiyaan, Swachh Bharat Mission and Anaemia-Mukt Bharat
- ✓ The movement aims to reduce the prevalence of non-communicable diseases like hypertension, diabetes, widespread deficiencies in vitamins and minerals

INTERNATIONAL

- **The United Nations - has adopted a budget of \$3.07 billion for the year 2020 on December 27**
- ✓ The budget proposal for the year 2020 is slightly greater than that of 2019, in which \$2.9 billion was allotted
- ✓ This year the investigation of crimes in Syria, Myanmar has been made as compulsory contributions to the member countries for the first time
- ✓ Of the total allocated budget, the top most preference is given to humanitarian assistance (34%)
- ✓ The other preferential categories include development assistance (24%), peacekeeping operations (19%), knowledge-creation operations (16%) and technical cooperation

- **The United Nations - approved a new resolution, drafted by Russia, in order to draft an international treaty to combat cyber crime.**
- ✓ Under the new draft, an expert committee will be established to combat cyber crime
- ✓ The committee includes all regions of the world and will meet in August 2020
- ✓ The United States suggests that the world should expand the accord on existing 2001 Budapest Convention, which is the only cyber crime treaty under the UN
- ✓ The Budapest Convention was the first ever treaty on cyber crime that addressed internet and computer crimes.
- ✓ It was drawn by Council of Europe
- ✓ India and Brazil have not adopted the convention on the grounds that they did not participate in its drafting.

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **The Pakistan Government - decided to import Polio markers from India recently.**



- ✓ The polio markers are used to mark the fingers of the children after they are vaccinated with WHO-approved vaccines
- ✓ Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan are the only three countries in the world in which Polio is still endemic
- ✓ In 2014, Pakistan had the highest number of polio cases in the world.
- ✓ As of December 2019, there have been 111 documented cases of wild polio virus in Pakistan.

- ✓ The cabinet has provided one-time permission for the import of these markers.
- ✓ India had suspended trade with Pakistan after the revocation of Article 370 recently.
- ✓ In 1995, India launched Global Polio Eradication initiative of WHO that aims at 100% coverage.
- ✓ The last case of Polio was reported in 2011 in India.

COMMITTEES

- **The Government - constituted a 7-member Group of ministers (GoM) to fast track the implementation of revival plan of BSNL and MTNL**
- ✓ The revival plan includes allocation of 4G spectrum, workforce, business viability, issue of bonds and asset monetization
- ✓ The seven-member group of ministers include Defence Minister Raj Nath Singh, Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, Finance minister Nirmala Sitaraman, Home Minister Amit Shah, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.
- ✓ The Centre had allocated Rs 69,000 crores for reviving BSNL and MTNL, which have been reporting continuous losses in the last decade

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **India and Japan - held the 5th round of Maritime Affairs Dialogue in Tokyo recently**



- ✓ Alongside the dialogue, both the countries also held their 8th round of bilateral consultations on disarmament and non-proliferation.
- ✓ The countries have signed 'Acquisition and Cross Serving Agreement' that allows access to each other's military bases.
- ✓ Through this agreement, India is now able to access Japan base in Djibouti and Japanese Navy are able to access Indian Naval base in Andaman and Nicobar islands
- ✓ The first round of India-Japan Maritime dialogue was held in New Delhi in 2013.
- ✓ The countries also hold JIMEX (Japan-India Maritime Exercise) which is conducted annually.
- ✓ Apart from the US, Japan is the only country with which India holds 2+2 defence dialogue
- ✓ The first such 2+2 dialogue with Japan was held in New Delhi in November 2019.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **US astronaut Christina Koch - set a record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman on December 28**



- ✓ She broke the record set by former space station commander Peggy Whitson, who spent 288 days in space during 2016-2017.
- ✓ Christina Koch, a 40-year-old electrical engineer from Montana, arrived at the International Space Station (ISS) on March 14, 2019
- ✓ Koch is expected to spend a total of 328 days, or nearly 11 months, on board the ISS before returning to Earth.
- ✓ She breaks the record with about two months still left in her mission
- ✓ NASA Missions last typically for six months, but it had announced in April that the mission will be extended until February for further experiments.
- ✓ The US record for longest space flight is 340 days set by Scott Kelly in 2015-2016.
- ✓ The world record is 15 months set in the 1990s by a Russian cosmonaut aboard the former Mir space station.
- ✓ Before breaking this endurance record for a woman in space, Koch set another record earlier
- ✓ She was part of the first all-female spacewalking team in October during her fourth spacewalk

DEFENCE

- **The Indian Navy - has banned the use of Facebook and other social media platforms by the naval personnel.**



- ✓ It had also banned the use of messaging apps, networking and blogging apps, content sharing, hosting and e-commerce sites
- ✓ The use of smartphones is also prohibited at naval bases, dockyards and aboard warships.
- ✓ The move follows after an incident in which 7 naval personnel were caught leaking confidential information to enemy intelligence agencies using social media platforms.

SPORTS

- **India's first Woman Grand Master, Koneru Humpy - claimed the World Women's Rapid Chess Championship title at the Grand Sports Arena of the Luzhniki Olympic Complex in Moscow.**



- ✓ Her victory came at the King Salman World Rapid Chess Championships in Moscow, Russia, on December 28
- ✓ While classical World champion, Magnus Carlsen won his third world crown in the Open group, Humpy emerged winner among the Women
- ✓ Humpy, seeded 13th, was tied with China's Lei Tingjie collecting 9 points each in 12 rounds to become the first Indian woman to win the title
- ✓ Humpy's previous best in this format was a bronze in the 2012 edition.
- ✓ Humpy has four World Championship crowns across various age groups as a Junior from 1997 to 2001.
- ✓ In January 2010, her FIDE score was 2614 that put her at the second position (next to the No. 1 player Judit Polgar) in the world female chess player rankings.
- ✓ In 2015, she won a bronze medal in Women's World Team Chess Championship.
- ✓ Viswanathan Anand had won the World rapid title in 2017 in a similar format via blitz tie break
- ✓ In 2009-2011, 2011-12, 2013-14, and 2015-16 Koneru Humpy finished runner-up in the FIDE Women's Grand Prix series.
- ✓ Humpy had taken a two-year break after becoming a mother in 2016 to concentrate in setting up her family.
- ✓ In 2003, Humpy was conferred with the Arjuna Award while in 2007, she was awarded Padma Shri.

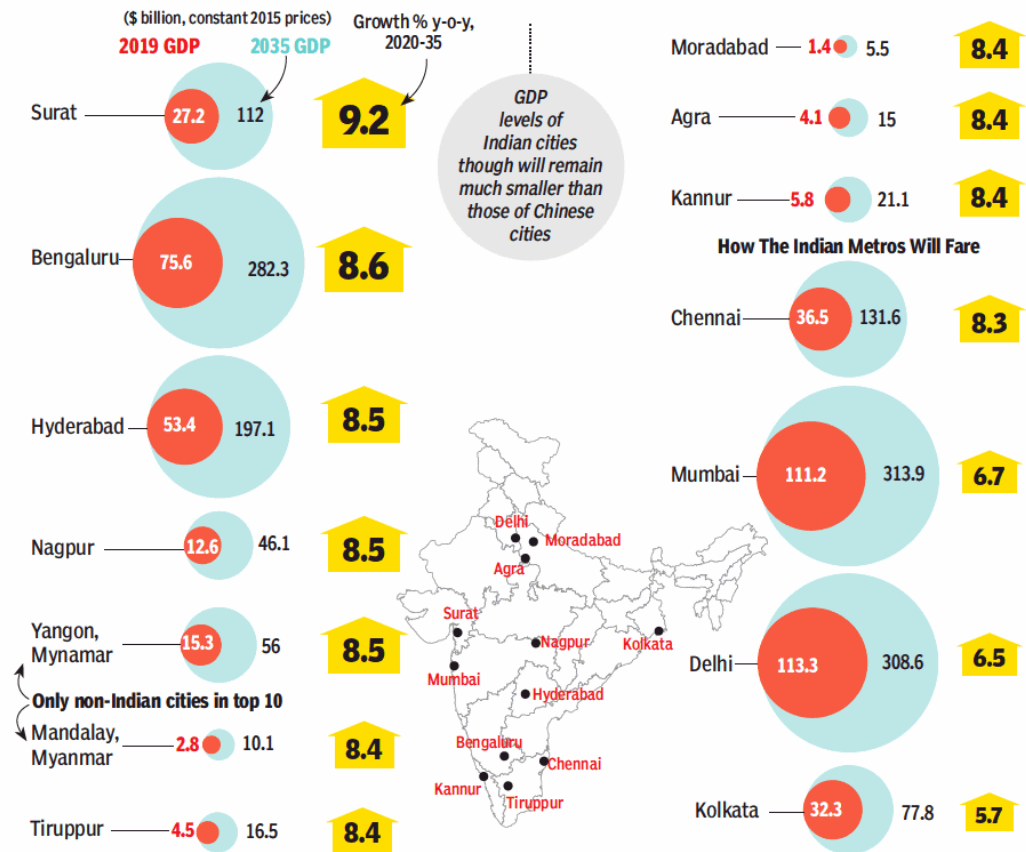
REPORT

SURAT COULD SOON BE WORLD'S FASTEST-GROWING CITY

Cities are the drivers of India's economic growth, but very little is known about the size and growth of the economies of our cities. London-based **Oxford Economics** has been estimating the GDP of key Indian cities. Here are its latest estimates

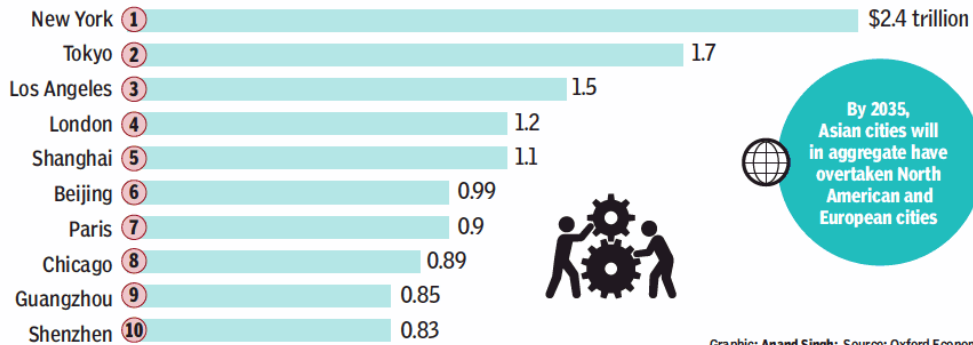
IN 2035, 8 OF THE WORLD'S 10 FASTEST-GROWING CITIES WILL BE IN INDIA

Cities Ranked By Annual Growth In GDP



ON GDP SIZE THOUGH, CHINA & US WILL CONTINUE TO DOMINATE

GDP in 2035 (\$ trillion, constant 2015 prices)



Graphic: Anand Singh; Source: Oxford Economics