Prime Minister Narendra Modi - is likely to inaugurate the Chennai-Madurai Tejas Express on March 1

The most-awaited launch has been postponed twice due to the non-availability of the appointment of the Prime Minister.
The Prime Minister is likely to inaugurate it when he visits Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu.
The premier daytime linking service, Tejas will also be the fastest train between the two destinations.
Tickets may cost around Rs 1,000 for a chair car seat, taking into account dynamic pricing.
Jammu and Kashmir - bagged ‘Saubhagya Excellence Award’ for being the first state in the country to achieve 100% household electrification under ‘Saubhagya’ scheme

✓ The 100-crore award for achieving 100% household electrification was presented by Union Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy, R K Singh during the ‘Power Ministers’ Conference’ held in Gurugram

Madhya Pradesh’s Central Zone Power Distribution Company, Bhopal and West Zone Power Distribution Company, Indore - have been awarded the Saubhagya award

✓ The Central Zone Power Distribution Company, Bhopal is the first power distribution company in the country that has illuminated more than 7 lakh 85 thousand houses while around 4 lakh houses have been electrified by the West Zone Power Distribution Company, Indore under the Saubhagya scheme

✓ The Pradhanmantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana- Saubhagya, which was implemented by the union government from September 25, 2017, aims to provide electricity to all BPL houses of rural and urban areas
Assam – launches ‘PRANAM’ commission – to hear cases of neglect of parents by state government employees

- PRANAM - The Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring
- Pranam is the first-of-its-kind bill in the country aiming to protect elderly parents of government employees in their times of need
- It ensures that no state government employee ignore their elderly parents and unmarried differently-abled siblings.
- According to the bill, in cases of neglect of parents by the government employees, 10% to 15% of the employee's salary will be deducted by the government and paid to the parents or differently-abled siblings.

NATIONAL

- The Centre – asked the states to ensure 24x7 power for all, starting from April 1, 2019
  - It also said that the discoms (distribution companies) will be held accountable for wilful blackouts and fined, except for the agriculture consumers where 8-10 hours of power supply is sufficient
  - According to the Centre’s ambitious ‘Power for all’ scheme, 100% household electrification scheme is nearly complete. Only 22,691 of the 2.52 unelectrified households remain to be electrified by March 31
Union Government – launches the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Indian Sign Language (ISL) Dictionary with 6000 words

- It was launched by Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment on February 27, 2019
- It was prepared by the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) under Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- The first edition of the dictionary was launched on March 23, 2018 with 3000 words
- According to Census 2011, there are 50.71 lakh hearing impaired persons in India, with most of them using the sign language to communicate

The recently inaugurated National Cancer Institute (NCI) at Jhajjar, Haryana – to remain as part of AIIMS, New Delhi

- It recently dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 12
- It was built at a record period of 3 years with an investment of Rs 2035 crore
- The NCI has 710 patient care beds dedicated for cancer prevention, treatment, research and education.
- The institute also has the first public sector proton facility in the country, a new prototype in the treatment of cancer patients.
- India’s first public sector ‘Robotic Core Clinical Laboratory’ has been established at NCI at a cost of Rs. 15 crores.

AIIMS, Rewari – to come up as the country’s 22<sup>nd</sup> AIIMS and the first in Haryana

- It was announced in the Interim Budget 2019, to be established under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)
- This will be a greenfield project to be built at the cost of Rs. 1299 crores on 223 acres of land

The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) - signed a MoU - for jointly developing infrastructure for fuels, lubricating oil, LPG, natural gas and any other related fuel and gas for meeting the requirement of national waterways
The agreement is expected to lead to development of business activities along the national waterways.

According to National Waterways Act 2016, 106 new national waterways have been declared in addition to the existing 5 national waterways.

The Centre had also launched ‘Jal Marg Vikas’ project for capacity augmentation of NW apart from developing multimodal terminals.

**India’s 4th White cement factory – to come up at Himachal Pradesh**
- It will be established by The FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited near village Nohra Dhar in Sirmour district, Himachal Pradesh.
- The plant, to be set up at a cost of Rs 605 crores, is expected to be commenced by the year 2022.
- The installed capacity of the plant would be 0.3 million tonnes per annum and it will generate the direct employment of approximately 150 persons.

Aravali operates 15 gypsum mines in Rajasthan.

J.K. White Cement, a unit of J.K. Cement Limited is the leading producer of White Cements in India and the world’s 3rd largest producer of white cement followed by Birla White (UltraTech).
Two new National Institutes of Design – inaugurated at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh and Jorhat in Assam

- They were inaugurated by Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation through video conferencing from New Delhi
- Both institutes are autonomous institutions under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- They were set up to promote design programs as per the National Design Policy 2007, which had recommended setting up more design institutes on the lines of NID, Ahmedabad
- Four new NIDs have been announced to be set up in Andhra Pradesh (Amaravati), Assam (Jorhat), Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal) and Haryana (Kurukshetra) with a total outlay of Rs. 434 crore.

INTERNATIONAL

US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un - arrived in Vietnam for their second summit in Hanoi on February 27 and 28 – as part of the efforts to denuclearize North Korea

- Vietnam has diplomatic ties with both Washington and Pyongyang.
- During the meeting, it is expected that North Korea will likely be exchanging the destruction of its main Yongbyon nuclear complex with a formal declaration of the end of 1950-53 Korean War by the US.
- The two leaders have met earlier at their first summit in Singapore on June 12, 2018 and signed a historic agreement
- South Korean President, Moon Jae-in was the one who had helped set up the first Trump-Kim meeting
CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- The National Disaster Management Authority – to conduct a two-day ‘National workshop on heat wave risk reduction’ in Nagpur from February 27-28, 2019
  - The workshop, to be organized in association with the Government of Maharashtra, aims to advise the states to the need of preparing and implementing specific heat action plans.
  - The workshop will also provide an opportunity to the most vulnerable states in sharing their experiences and best practices to mitigate the heat wave impact in summer.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- ISRO – to launch an electronic intelligence satellite ‘Emisat’ for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - in March 2019
  - Weighing about 420 kg, it will be launched at an altitude of 763 km using a PSLV rocket with four strap-on motors
  - For the first time, it will be trying to orbit the rocket at three different altitudes.
  - After launching Emisat, the PSLV rocket will be brought down at an altitude of 504 km to put the 28 third-party satellites into orbit
  - These 28 satellites would cumulatively weigh about 250 kg
  - Following that the rocket will be brought down further to 485 km where the fourth stage will turn into a payload platform carrying 3 experimental payloads
  - The experimental payloads include one developed by the students of Thiruvananthapuram’s Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology, ISRO’s own technology demonstrator and a Hamsat
  - In January 2019, the space agency launched a defence imaging satellite Microsat R for the DRDO

DEFENCE

- ‘Exercise Sampriti 2019’, a joint military exercise between India and Bangladesh – to be held at Tangail, Bangladesh from March 2 to March 15, 2019.
  - This will be the eighth edition of the exercise which is hosted alternately by both countries.
  - It was first held in Assam in 2011
SPORTS

- Indian archers - bagged four gold, three silver and three bronze medals and emerged Champions - at the 3rd ISSF International Solidarity Archery Championship in Dhaka
  - Hosts Bangladesh finished runners-up with two gold, three silver and four bronze medals
  - In the compound individual girls’ event, Pragati won the gold while Isha Pawar settled for a bronze
  - India got a second gold when the recurve boys’ team of Paras Hooda, Bishal Changmai and Karni Singh Chouhan secured the top spot

- Tamil Nadu’s T N Anuradha – wins Gold in 87 kg category in the senior National weightlifting championships at Vishakapatnam
  - Purnima Pandey of Uttar Pradesh won the women’s plus 87kg category gold medal
  - K Ravikumar of Odisha won the men’s 89kg gold while 2018 Commonwealth Games gold medallist RV Rahul, clinched bronze in the same event
Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta - lifted the Cannes International Open trophy in Chess

- Having been tied for the top spot in the previous edition, Abhijeet won the tournament with 7.5 points
- It was a clear point lead over nearest rivals Nikita Maiorov of Belarus, Nasuta Grzegorz of Poland and Yuri Solodovnichecko of Ukraine.

Legendary Sri Lanka batsman Sanath Jayasuriya - banned for two years starting backdated from October 16, 2018

- The move follows after his admission in obstructing an anti-corruption probe by “destroying” the phones which were sought as evidence by the International Cricket Council (ICC)
- However, he wasn’t given the maximum punishment of 5 years for his breach after ICC took his “previous good conduct” into account
- The cricketer was charged in October 2018 for failing to co-operate with an investigation and concealing, tampering with or destroying evidence.
- Former Sri Lanka Captain, Jayasuriya was a key member of the 1996 World Cup-winning team before going on to serve two terms as the chairman of selectors