TAMIL NADU

◆ **Aavin milk – is now available in Qatar**

- State Dairy development Minister, K T Rajendra Balaji had introduced the milk produced by state cooperative Aavin in Doha, the capital of Qatar.
- The state had earlier sent a container with a capacity of 15,000 litres of milk along with other products like ghee and flavoured milk to Doha.
- Around 2.4 lakh litres had been exported to Singapore and 10,000 litres to Hong Kong by the Aavin.

STATES

◆ **Mizoram Government - issued an order to ban the import of pigs and piglets**

- The State had cited the reason that there is a possibility of outbreak of Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome or Swine Flu.
- It is generally transmitted from pigs and affects both pigs and human.
- The state had also banned the import of pigs from other countries like Myanmar, which are also the prime suspects of the disease.
Punjab Government – declares ‘Indus River Dolphin’ as the state aquatic animal

- Indus River Dolphin, a rare mammal, is found only in Beas River

Sikkim Government – signs MoU with Microsoft – for the improvement of education system in the state

- This agreement will also help the state to upgrade its curriculum from class VI to class X with IT course
- Microsoft will also adopt 2 schools to enhance digital literacy, develop student-teacher capacity in digital skills and improve digital citizenship

INTERNATIONAL

Russia – suspends ‘Intermediate-Range nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty’ after the decision of United States to pull out of it

- The treaty was signed by US President Ronald Reagan and the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at the White House in 1987

- The treaty prevented US and Russia from possessing, producing or test-flying ground-launched nuclear missiles with a range of 500 km to 5,500 km
- United States had alleged a new Russian cruise missile, the Novator 9M729, violates the pact and gave a notice period of 6 months to withdraw from the treaty
CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- 4th edition of International Spice Conference 2019 - was held in Hyderabad, the capital city of Telangana

- Theme 2019 – ‘Challenges of Change, Redefining the Value Chain’
- The last edition of the conference was held in Jaipur with the theme ‘Managing disruptions through Transformation and Collaboration’

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- Russia – started to test ‘Accident-tolerant Fuel’ (ATF) for nuclear reactors
  - The ATF is resistant to severe accidents at nuclear power plants
  - Russian national atomic power corporation, Rosatom is the technical consultant for the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu
  - According to Rosatom, the first phase of the reactor tests will be completed in 2019 while the next stage includes the loading in commercial power reactor in Russia

DEFENCE

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) - approved the indigenous construction of 6 submarines under ‘Project 75(India)’
  - This the 2nd project under the Strategic Partnership model approved at a budget of Rs 40000 crore
  - The council, chaired by Defence Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman also approved the acquisition of around 5000 French-origin MILAN Anti-Tank Guided missiles for the Indian Army
  - The first SP model project was the acquisition of 111 utility helicopters for navy at the cost of 21000 crore in August, 2018
 Defence Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman – had approved the procurement of around 73000 Sig Sauer rifles from United States within a year – to modernize the infantry

- The Sig Sauer rifles are used by US forces as well as several other European forces
- They will replace INSAS rifles and will be used by the troops deployed along the 3600 km border with China

**ECONOMY**

- The Government - has revised the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) Growth forecast to 7.2% from earlier estimate of 6.7% for the year 2017-18

- The revised GDP growth rate shows that the effect of demonetization was not as severe as predicted earlier
- The new estimate was released by the Central Statistical Office (CSO) along with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation
- The actual growth rate for 2016-17 has also been revised to 8.2% from the earlier estimate of 7.1% by the CSO.
APPOTMENTS

- Rishi Kumar Shukla – was appointed as the new CBI Chief for a tenure of 2 years

- Shukla, a 1983-batch Madhya Pradesh-cadre IPS Officer, was the former DGP of Madhya Pradesh
- He is currently serving as the Chairman of Madhya Pradesh Police Housing Corporation in Bhopal
- He was selected by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi-led selection panel comprising of CJI, Ranjan Gogoi by a 2-1 vote, with Congress leader in Lok Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge giving a note of dissent
- Shukla was removed as the MP police chief by the newly elected government in the state last week
- Kharge cited the lack of experience of Shukla in anti-graft investigations but the Government cited the criteria of CJI to have 100 months of experience in investigation to overrule his concern as Shukla has 117 months of experience
- He has been appointed in the place of former CBI Director Alok Kumar Verma, who was removed from the post on January 10, 2019

SPORTS

- India – loses to Italy by 3-1 in the Davis Cup Qualifiers at Kolkata
  - Italy had won all the three singles matches, while India won the doubles encounter
  - The Indian team was represented by Prajnesh Gunneswaran and Ramkumar Ramanathan in the singles while Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan represented the country in doubles matches

- With the win, Italy have qualified for the Davis cup final berth along with Serbia, Australia, Germany, Japan and Kazakhstan
- Other countries which have qualified automatically for the finals include US, Spain, Argentina, Britain, Croatia and France