TAMIL NADU

- A Riya of Tiruchengode block in Namakkal district - has become the first transsexual panchayat union ward member in the state.

- Riya bagged 2,701 votes while her opponent C Kandhammal secured 1,751 votes.
- She contested in ward 2 of Karuweppampatty panchayat union.

- 21-year-old J Sandhiya Rani - has become the youngest woman village panchayat president in the state.

- She won with a margin of 210 votes in the Kattinaikanthotty village panchayat in Krishnagiri district.
Sandhiya contested as an independent
She is a third year BBA student studying in Christ college at Malur in Karnataka.
Her father Jayasarathi is a farmer and former president of the Kattinaikanthotty panchayat.
He decided to field his daughter as the panchayat was reserved for women.
There are a total of 5,090 seats for the post of panchayat union ward members and 515 seats for the post of district panchayat members across the 27 districts where polls were held.
The local body elections in Tamil Nadu were held after a gap of eight years

NATIONAL

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority - has made it mandatory for all general and health insurance companies to offer a standard health insurance product — Arogya Sanjeevani Policy – from April 1, 2020

POLICY FEATURES

- Will offer both individual and family floater policies
- Minimum of ₹1 lakh and maximum sum insured will be ₹5 lakh
- Minimum entry age at 18 years and maximum 65 years, and children under family floater policies at 3 months to 25 years
- No add-ons or optional
- SUM-ASSURED | Minimum of ₹1 lakh and maximum of ₹5 lakh with the policy term of one year
- Insures shall offer a uniform premium pricing across the country
- Covers will be provided, e.g. critical illness or benefit-based covers

Henceforth, both non-life insurers and standalone health insurers will have to offer the policy compulsorily.
The product will cover basic expenses related to hospitalization, pre- and post-admission treatment and also Ayush treatment.
The Arogya Sanjeevani Policy can be taken as both individual lives and on a family floater basis.
The minimum and maximum sum insured will be ₹1 lakh and ₹5 lakh respectively.
The product will allow minimum and maximum entry age of 18 and 65 years, respectively.
Similarly it will be from 3 months to 25 years for children under family floater policies.
The policy will have no exit age.
It shall be offered with a policy term of one year.
The product will allow all modes of premium payment i.e. monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and yearly.
Treatment for cataract and age-related eye ailments, ulcers, piles, sinus, benign ENT disorders, tonsilitis, adenoidectomy, mastoidectomy, tympanoplasty, hysterectomy, and all internal and external tumours will have a waiting period of 24 months.

Treatment for joint replacement, unless arising from accident and age-related osteoarthritis, will have a waiting period of 48 months.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi - inaugurated five DRDO Young Scientists Laboratories (DYSLs) in Bengaluru on December 2, 2019

The DRDO had set up the laboratories to promote focused research by youth in advanced technologies

It has identified a group of scientists under the age of 35 years to focus in specific futuristic research areas in these labs.

The Labs were located in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad

They will work on five niche areas - Artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, cognitive technologies, asymmetric technologies and smart materials respectively

The one in Chennai will focus on cognitive technologies.

The idea for setting up these labs were first mooted by the PM Modi in August 2014, while speaking at a DRDO award function

Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will launch the Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities map (I-STEM) portal on December 3

The portal will provide a gateway for researchers to identify the ‘right fit’ for their R&D work in India.

It is labelled as ‘One Nation One Research Web Portal’ for scientific community

The portal will link researchers and resources, hold database of all the R&D facilities established in institutions around the country, and enable their sharing in a transparent manner.

The portal has listed more than 17,000 equipment located at about 427 institutions across India

It will help researchers to get ‘seamless’ access to such research facilities
India – gave birth to an estimated 67,385 babies, the highest in the world, on New Year’s Day, 2020

- It was followed by China (46,299), Nigeria (26,039), Pakistan (16,787), Indonesia (13,020), the United States (10,452), Republic of Congo (10,247) and Ethiopia (8,493) among others
- As per UNICEF, Indian babies will account for 17% of the estimated 392,078 babies to be born globally on January 1, 2020.
- It announced that Fiji most likely delivered 2020’s first baby, while the United States will most likely delivered its last
- Overall, a total of 3,92,078 babies were born around the world on January 01, 2020.

The Indian Railways - has integrated its helpline numbers into a single number, 139

- It will assist in enquiries and quick grievance redressal of passengers during their train journeys.
- The new helpline number 139 will subsume all existing helpline numbers (except 182)
- The new helpline will be an easy remembrance for passengers to connect with railways for all their requirements during train travel
- The helpline number-182 will be in use for railway security also.

DEFENCE

Chief of Defence staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat - has instructed his tri-Service integrated defence staff (IDS) to prepare a plan for the creation of an ‘Air Defence Command (ADC)’

- The “proposal” for the ADC should be prepared by June 30, 2019
- The new CDS has also called for the creation of common logistics support pools in stations where two or more Services are located.
- The Army and Navy, for example, can share their logistics in Mumbai to avoid duplication
- Once the proposed ADC becomes a reality, it will only be the third tri-Service or unified command in the country.
- The first and the only theatre or “geographical” command till now was created in the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago in October 2001
- The second “functional” command, Strategic Forces Command was set up in January 2003 to handle the country’s nuclear arsenal
- Apart from these two, there are as many as 17 single-Service commands (Army 7, IAF 7 and Navy 3).
- General Bipin Rawat took charge as the country’s first Chief of Defence Staff on January 1, 2020
The main aim behind the creation of the new post is to ensure coordination among the three armed services of India - Indian Army, Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force.

The Chief of Defence Staff will serve as the principal military advisor to the Union Defence Minister on most matters related to the tri-services.

He will also head the newly created Department of Military Affairs.

**APPOINTMENTS**

- **Prof Suresh Chandra Sharma** – is appointed as Chairman of the National Medical Commission (NMC).

- Sharma is the current head of the ENT head-neck surgery department at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi
- He was also nominated as the President of AIIMS, Jodhpur by the Government
- Dr Rakesh Kumar Vats is appointed as the Secretary of the Commission
- He served as the secretary general in the board of governors of the Medical Council of India
- Both the tenures will be for a period of three years or till the attainment of 70 years of age, whichever earlier
- National Medical Commission is the country's new medical regulator, replacing the scam-tainted Medical Council of India (MCI)
- It has been set up as per the recommendations of the Group of Experts headed by Professor Ranjit Roy Chaudhury and constituted by the Union health ministry
- On August 8, 2019 National Medical Commission Bill 2019 was introduced which replaces Indian Medical Council Act, 1956.

**SPORTS**

- **Tamil Nadu** - won the men’s crown in the senior National volleyball championships with a victory over Railways in the final at Bhubaneswar, Odisha

- This was Tamil Nadu’s ninth title overall and the first after six years.
- Kerala defeated Railways to retain the women’s title.