**STATES**

- Bihar's Bhagalpur forest – will have the country's first Turtle Rehabilitation Centre to be set up in January 2020
  - It will accommodate more than 500 turtles in an area of over half a hectare
  - The centre will rehabilitate sick and severely injured turtles which are being rescued from smugglers
  - It will also monitor these turtles after rehabilitation, before releasing them into rivers.
  - River Ganga flows through Bhagalpur
  - Hence, there are number of sandbanks in the region that act as ideal breeding ground for the turtles.
  - As these turtles are quite heavy, they are smuggled to a great extent
  - They are targeted for their meat as turtle meat boosts energy and keeps diseases away.
  - According to a study of Traffic India, every year around 11,000 turtles are smuggled from India

- The Andhra Pradesh Government - announced that it will deliver sand at customers’ door steps across the state
  - The pilot project will help address issues of sand scarcity and sand mafia, besides preventing illegal sand mining.
  - Under the initiative, the government will collect transportation charges from the customers and deliver sand at door steps of the customers
  - In order to make the initiative successful, the Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation will stock 15 lakh tons of sand per month for the next five months.
  - At present, the sand demand in the state is around 80,000 tonnes a day.
NATIONAL

➢ The Ministry of Labour - has decided to launch 'Santusht' portal for the speedy redressal of employees and employers’ grievances
  ✓ Through the portal, employees can submit their complaints which will be attended by a monitoring cell.
  ✓ This portal will manage all services provided by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and ESIC.

➢ The Election Commission - has launched a new ‘online’ tracking system for the registration of political parties

✓ The new system called as ‘Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System’ (PPRTMS) will be applicable to the political parties registering from January 1, 2020.
✓ It will allow these political parties to track their registration applications submitted to the Election Commission on a real-time basis.
✓ The status of the application can also be tracked through the Election Commission’s portal - https://pprtms.eci.gov.in
✓ The registration of political parties is governed under the provisions of section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
✓ Under the act, a political party is eligible to get registered as “National Political Party of India” only if it satisfies following criteria -
  ✓ The party should secure at least 6% of votes in 4 or more states at an election to assembly or parliament
  ✓ Also, the party should win at least 4 seats in House of People
✓ A political party is eligible to get registered as “State Political Party” if it satisfies the following criteria
  ✓ The party should win 6% of votes polled in state elections
  ✓ It should win at least 2 seats in legislative assembly of the state.
The Income Tax Department – has extended the deadline to link PAN card with Aadhaar till March 2020.

- The earlier deadline was December 31, as announced by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) through order in September 2019.
- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has extended the deadline now for the eighth time.
- The earlier deadline to link the PAN card with the Aadhaar card was September 30, 2019.
- The Supreme Court had upheld the constitutional validity of the centre’s Aadhaar scheme in its judgement on September 26, 2018.
- Aadhaar is a 12-digit unique identification number, which is issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to every Indian resident.
- PAN is a 10-digit personal account number, allotted to taxpaying public by the IT Department.

India - celebrated the birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh recently on January 2, 2020.

- Born on January 5, 1666, Guru Gobind Singh is the 10th and last Guru of Sikhs.
- He founded Sikh Warrior community called Khalsa in 1699
- He introduced five Ks in Sikhism, which is called the “Panj Kakar”
- In Sikhism, the holy text ‘Dasam Granth’ is dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh.
- Guru Gobind Singh was the only son of the ninth Sikh Guru, Bahadur, who was beheaded for not following Islam
- Guru Nanak founded Sikhism in 1469 and was the first Sikh Guru.
- In 1708, the guruship was passed on to the holy sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib.

India - will overtake Germany to become the world’s fourth largest economy in 2026.

- This is revealed as per the a report released by UK based Centre for Economics and Business Research
- The report titled “World Economic League Table” is based on the data from IMF’s World Economic Outlook report.
As per the report, India will overtake Japan and become third largest economy in the world in 2034.

Today, India is the fifth largest economy in the World after US (20.49 trillion USD), China (13.41 trillion USD), Japan (4.97 trillion USD) and Germany (4 trillion USD).

In 2019, India had successfully overtaken France and UK to reach rank 5.

India will achieve its $5 trillion target by 2026, as per the report.

The Government of India - launched “Central Equipment Identify Register” (CEIR) portal recently to block and trace mobile phones

- The web portal will be operated by Department of Telecom.
- The portal will have a complete database of IMEI numbers of blacklisted handsets.
- The CEIR has powers to block the usage of the phone by not allowing the wireless carriers to connect to the network.
- IMEI, abbreviation of the International Mobile Equipment Identity, is a unique number that can be found in batteries of phones.
- Australia was the first country to adopt IMEI.

INTERNATIONAL

World Health Organisation (WHO) - selected the year 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife”

- The year was named in the honor of 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale.
- World Health Organisation will also launch the world’s first ‘State of the World’s Nursing Report’ in 2020.
- This year, WHO has decided to focus on nursing and midwifery in order to achieve ‘Universal Health Coverage’.
- Nurses and midwives are the people who devote their lives to caring for children and mothers, looking after senior citizens and giving lifesaving immunizations.
- Florence Nightingale was an English Social reformer, who organized camps for wounded soldiers during the Crimean War.
- She was called “The Lady with the Lamp” for making rounds on wounded soldiers with a lamp in her hand.
- Every year, the International Nurse Day, is observed on May 1.
- The day is celebrated by the International Council of Nurses.

PERSONALITIES

The Catholic Church of Kerala - has decided to declare Archbishop Joseph Attipetty as Servant of God on January 21 at St Francis Assisi Cathedral, Broadway, Ernakulam.

- It marks the commencement of the cause for his canonization and Sainthood.
- This coincides with the 50th year commemoration of the prelate’s death.
Archbishop Joseph Attipetty was born on June 25, 1894 on the island of Vypeen across Cochin Harbour.
He died on January 21, 1970

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- The Indian Space Research Organization signed a pact with ‘Indian Institute of Astrophysics’ to establish an optical telescope under “Project NETRA”.
- Project NETRA was launched by ISRO in September 2019
- Under the Project, ISRO plans to set up observational facilities to provide early warnings to satellites about debris and hazards in their orbits
- The project consists of several radars, telescopes, control centres and data processing units.
- Currently, India operates 15 communication satellites, 13 remote sensing satellites and 8 navigation satellites.
- The project aims to shield the Indian satellites from the debris arising from old rocket bodies to defunct space crafts
- There are more than 7,500 tonnes of space debris that are rotating the earth at present.
- Apart from Isro, DRDO also operates another ‘NETRA’, (Network Traffic Analysis) which is a software that monitors internet traffic
- It is used by Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Intelligence Bureau (IB) and other intelligence agencies of Government of India.

TAMILNADU RURAL LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS – A UPDATE ON THE RESULTS

- District Panchayat Councilor Election:
  - DMK: 41.18% (265 seats)
  - AIADMK: 34.64% (214 seats)
  - INC: 2.57% (176 seats)
  - BDDK: 1.91% (111 seats)
  - RSP: 1.65% (94 seats)
  - CPI: 1.22% (73 seats)
  - CPI: 0.65% (33 seats)
  - MDK: 0.5% (33 seats)
- Panchayat Union Ward Election:
  - DMK: 41.10% (2,395 seats)
  - AIADMK: 34.64% (2,163 seats)
  - INC: 2.57% (176 seats)
  - BDDK: 1.91% (111 seats)
  - RSP: 1.65% (94 seats)
  - CPI: 1.22% (73 seats)
  - CPI: 0.65% (33 seats)

Elections were held in three wards in K. Pudurpetti panchayat in Manampara, panchayat (13 seats), Kondandur panchayat (10 seats) and Singamalai panchayat (10 seats) due to deaths of candidates.

The SEC stopped counting of votes as it took the candidates’ names were missing in the supplementary electoral rolls.