The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the extension of President’s rule under article 356(4) of Indian Constitution, in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) for a period of 6 more months, beginning from 3 July 2019

- The decision was based on the recommendation of the state Governor, Satya Pal Malik.
- A resolution seeking approval of parliament for extending President’s Rule in J&K will be moved in both houses of parliament during the upcoming session.
- The state has been placed under the Governor’s rule since June 2018, following the pulling out of BJP from the coalition government with J&K’s Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).
- President’s Rule in a state can continue for a period of 6 months at a time and for a maximum period of 3 years, after extension with approval of both houses of Parliament.

The home ministry has started an exercise to rank the country’s best police stations based on various parameters:

- A similar exercise had been undertaken in 2017, but the current exercise is expected to be more comprehensive.
- The home ministry has suggested at least seven dimensions for assessment.
- Each police station will be assessed on crime prevention, including economic offences, and the proactive measures adopted by it.
- Disposal of cases and community policing apart from police station infrastructure along with its maintenance and office administration are other parameters.
- The evaluation will also look at the Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems and other technology, including forensic systems.
- But one of the most important parameters will be citizen perception and feedback.
The evaluation itself will be a two-stage process with the first one focused on objective short-listing of police stations using the crime data available with the National Crime Record Bureau.

In the second stage, a detailed evaluation will be done based on valuation across seven parameters.

**The government think tank NITI Aayog - has proposed that only electric vehicles should be sold after 2030**

- Earlier, a panel headed by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant had suggested that only electric-powered three-wheelers and two-wheelers with engine capacity of up to 150 cc should be sold from 2025.
- It has also suggested that the ministry pilots an e-highways programme — with an overhead electricity network — to enable plying of trucks and buses on select National Highways.
- The proposals are part of the Government’s plan to manufacture 50 Gigawatt hour (GWh) batteries by 2030.
- As per NITI Aayog, the sale of EVs will help save about ₹3 lakh crore on account of the import of crude oil to meet the growing demand.

**Air India’s Delhi- flight, AI 865 – undertakes its final trip after 25 years of service**

- AI 865 was the last flight by Airbus 320 Classic aircraft, which will be replaced by advanced and fuel-efficient Airbus 320 Neo.
- Unlike modern aircraft, this had a set of bogey wheels.
- Bogey wheels are a set of four tyres making up one wheel, thereby distributing the load over a large area.
- The first A320 Classic was rolled out of the final assembly line on February 14, 1987 and made its maiden flight on February 22.
- In order to facilitate replacement of its old fleet, the national carrier commenced induction of A320 Neo planes.

**COMMITTEES**

**The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) committee led by Bimal Jalan (former RBI governor) - delayed submitting its report after lack of consensus among its members on the transfer of RBI surplus funds to the Government**
The RBI committee was appointed in December 2018 to review Economic Capital Framework (ECF) for central bank, as the Finance ministry was of the view that the 28% gross asset buffer held by RBI was above the global norm of about 14%

It was supposed to have submitted its report in April 2019

It has to be recalled that the former governor of RBI, Urjit patel had differences with the government over Rs.9.6 lakh crore surplus capital that central bank keeps with itself

**CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**

**For the first time, India - will be hosting the 14th session of Conference of Parties (COP-14) of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in September 2019**

- The session intends to address the issue of land degradation and desertification
- India will be taking over the COP presidency from China for the next two years until the next COP is hosted in 2021
- At least 5,000 delegates from nearly 197 countries will be participating in the event
- It will be held from 29th August to 14th September 2019 at India Expo Mart Limited, Greater Noida
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in its 2016 report found that over 29% of India’s land (in 2011-2013) was degraded which was 0.57% increase from year 2003-2005
- Ahead of COP-14, Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has launched a flagship project which is a part of a larger international initiative called ‘Bonn Challenge’.
- It is aimed at enhancing India’s capacity for Forest Landscape Restoration
- During the pilot phase of project (initial 3.5 years), it will be implemented in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland and Karnataka.
- The project will be implemented by MoEFCC in partnership with International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The challenge aims to bring 150 million hectares of world’s degraded and deforested land under restoration by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030
- The United Nations has three major Conventions - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
- Established in 1994, the UNCCD is the only legally binding international agreement linking environment and development issues to the land agenda.
DEFENCE

The armies of India and Myanmar - to carry out a 3-week-long coordinated operation named as 'Operation Sunrise 2' in their respective border areas to remove terror camps, starting from May 16, 2019

- The operation was targeted at militant groups operating in Manipur, Nagaland and Assam, including NSCN-K (National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang), Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO), United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) (I) and Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB)
- From Indian side besides Indian Army, troops from Assam Rifles were also part of operation.
- The ‘Operation Sunrise 1’ was conducted 3 months ago (February 2019) along the Indo-Myanmar border to bust north-east base military groups
- During the first phase, Indian Army targeted members of Arakan Army (Myanmar’s insurgent group) who were opposed to Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, which is viewed as India’s gateway to Southeast Asia.

ECONOMY

The Digital Communications Commission (DCC) - has approved levying of penalty on Bharti Airtel Ltd. and Vodafone Idea Ltd. for denial of interconnection to Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd.in 2016 during its arrival to the market

- Despite the approval, it had asked Telecom Regulatory authority of India (TRAI) to review penalty amount worth Rs 3,050 crore considering the financial stress in telecom sector.
- But, TRAI recommended penalty, instead of revoking operator’s license so as to avoid consumer inconvenience.
- In October 2016, Airtel and Vodafone were imposed a penalty of Rs 1,050 crore each apart from Idea, which was imposed a fine of Rs 950 crore
- Post merger of Vodafone-Idea, the new entity will have to bear the combined burden.

APPOINTMENTS

Om Birla - has been named as the new Speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha

- He is elected Member of Parliament from Kota, Rajasthan.
As soon as the new Speaker is appointed, the Protem speaker Virendra Kumar’s role will cease to exist.
Om Birla will be replacing the erstwhile Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, who did not contest the recent elections.
Om Birla was a three time Member of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly from Kota South.
Apart from this, he was a member of the Standing Committee on Energy in Parliament, member of Committee on Petitions and Consultative Committee for Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

**AWARDS**

- **Chinese President Xi Jinping** - was conferred with highest national award of Kyrgyzstan titled ‘Manas Order of the First Degree’ in Bishkek (capital of Kyrgyzstan)

  Kyrgyzstan has hosted the two-day, 19th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit that started on 14 June 2019.

  Sooronbay Jeenbekov, President of Kyrgyzstan appreciated Xi’s special contributions to development of Kyrgyzstan-China comprehensive strategic partnership.

  The founding member of SCO includes China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

  India and Pakistan were admitted to Beijing-based regional security grouping in 2017.

- **Actor Priyanka Chopra** - will be awarded Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award by United Nations International Children’s Fund’s (UNICEF) American chapter at their Snowflake Ball in December 2019.

  She is a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and most recently she visited Ethiopia as part of it.

  She also has been a part of United Nation’s global “Girl Up” Campaign.

  She is also associated with several NGOs in India to raise awareness about ways to improve the education, health and safety of girl child in the country.

  Danny Kaye was UNICEF’s first Goodwill Ambassador appointed in 1954.

  He was an American actor, singer, dancer, comedian, musician, and philanthropist.