The Department of social welfare – is planning to set up three special fast track courts to ‘exclusively’ handle cases booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

- The courts proposed will be at Chennai, Thoothukudi and Kancheepuram districts.
- At present, there are no courts that are exclusively dealing with POCSO cases.
- Cases under this Act are currently being tried by Mahila courts, which also handle cases pertaining to women, as they are present in most of the districts in the state.
- As per the latest amendment in the POCSO Act, the trial must be completed within six months period.
- Keeping this in mind a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi had recently suggested that every district in the country, where there are over 100 such cases pending, must set up a special fast track court for trial and speedy disposal.
- He had also asked the Centre to arrange the required funds for the same and the Centre has earmarked ₹767.25 crore under the Nirbhaya Fund.
- Currently there are over 2,000 cases pending under the Act and Chennai has over 300 cases pending since the last two years.

Kerala and Karnataka along with Rajasthan and Haryana – to join the pilot project of Ration card portability scheme from October 1

- With this facility, Ration card holders in these states will be able to buy subsidised food from ration shops in the neighbouring State.
Now, these two new state clusters will join the existing State pairs of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and Maharashtra and Gujarat in inter-State portability of ration cards.

The Centre is planning the “One nation, one ration card” system of complete nationwide portability and hopes to implement by June 2020. By January 1, 2020, the Centre hopes the eight States in these initial pilot clusters and Jharkhand, Punjab and Tripura can be clubbed into a single grid. By March 2020, intra-State portability will be implemented in another 13 States and Union Territories, viz., Tamil Nadu, Goa, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

Dawood Ibrahim, Hafiz Saeed and Zakir-ur-Rahman Lakhvi and Masood Azhar - have been declared terrorists by the Union government under the new anti-terror law.
Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed were declared individual terrorists under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 1967.

The move follows the recent amendment to UAPA Act by which individuals can be declared as terrorists.

The government had already issued red corner notices against all four terrorists.

Azhar was also designated as a global terrorist by the UN on May 1, 2019, and was declared as a proclaimed offender by the special judge (POTA), New Delhi.

Saeed, also the founder of Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD), was designated as a global terrorist by the UN on December 10, 2008.

Lakhvi, LeT commander, was designated by the United Nations as a global terrorist on the 10th December 2008.

Gangster Dawood was designated as a global terrorist by the UN and he is listed in al-Qaeda sanction list on November 3, 2003 and the United Nations Security Council had also issued a special notice in his name on April 6, 2006.

**INTERNATIONAL**

Qatar's public works authority - has painted the roads in capital Doha with a blue coloured ‘heat-reflecting pigment’ to cool down surface temperature as part of a Pilot project

Painting asphalt will reflect UV rays and absorb solar radiation, thereby contributing to overall temperature reduction by 15-20 degrees, as well as increase the service life of the roads.

Currently, roads are painted only on one of the central streets of the city, where the temperature can rise to 50\(^{\circ}\) Celsius.
Ashok Leyland - has become the first Indian company to get BS-VI certification for its entire range of heavy-duty trucks with gross vehicle weight of 16.2 tonne and above

✓ The company has become the first Indian original equipment manufacturer (OEM) to meet BS-VI emission norms, which come into force from April 1, 2020.
✓ It has received the BS-VI compliance certificate from Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI)
✓ ARAI is an autonomous body affiliated to the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, which offers comprehensive certification and homologation services for all kinds of vehicles.
✓ However, the company is not in a position to produce and sell such vehicles due to non-availability of BS VI-fuel in the country, except in some select regions like NCR-Rajasthan

DEFENCE

The Indian Air Force - inducted the first batch of 8 Apache helicopters at the Pathankot airbase on September 3
✓ Codenamed AH-64E, the Apaches have a wide range of capabilities required for any mission.
✓ The new fleet of Apache helicopters will be part of 125-Helicopter squadron, popularly called “Gladiators” of the IAF.
✓ Apaches are expected to replace the aging Mi-35 fleet, which have been used by the IAF for more than three decades.
✓ Select aircrew and ground crew, supposed to handle Apaches, have already been trained at the headquarters of the US Army Aviation at Fort Rucker in Alabama.
✓ Apache is one of the fiercest and modern attack helicopters in the world with a capability to fire and forget and launch air-to-air missiles.
✓ The Apaches are presently being used by the US and 18 other armed forces of the world.
India was the 16th nation to select the Apache and the AH-64E was the most advanced variant

The IAF has signed a contract with Boeing and the US government for 22 Apache attack helicopters in September 2015.

First batch of IAF pilots who were trained in the US to fly Apache helicopters, at the Pathankot airbase on Tuesday.
The first 8 helicopters have been delivered on schedule, while the last batch of helicopters will be delivered to IAF by March 2020.

The Apaches arrived at the Air Force Station, Hindon, on July 27 this year and henceforth will remain part of the 125 Helicopter Unit at Pathankot

The government has also cleared the acquisition of six additional Apaches for the Indian Army, which has been formally approved by the U.S.

Pathankot airbase, which was targeted by terrorists in January 2016, is one of the most strategic forward airbases of the IAF considering its proximity to Pakistan during war as well as in peacetime surveillance.

**APPOINTMENTS**

◆ **Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora** - assumed charge of the post of the Chairman of the Association of World Election Bodies (AWEB) on September 3

  India took over as the chair of the organisation from Romania for 2019-21
  The general assembly of the AWEB, held in Bengaluru, was attended by delegates of 45 countries
  AWEB is a multilateral platform for election management bodies from across the world to share best electoral practices.
  It was established in October 2013 and has been involved since in empowering democratic framework of member countries

**SPORTS**

◆ **Virat Kohli** - has surpassed Mahendra Singh Dhoni to become India’s most successful Test skipper with the team’s 28th win under his captainship in the second Test against West Indies at Kingston

  The 28 wins have come from 48 matches for Kohli as captain.
  Former Indian skipper, Dhoni led India to 27 wins from 60 Test matches during his tenure.
Overall, former South Africa skipper Graeme Smith remains the most successful captain in the world with 53 Test wins, followed by ex-Australia skipper Ricky Ponting, who recorded 48 Test wins in his captaincy tenure.

Mithali Raj, India’s highest run getter in T20 Internationals - announced her retirement from the game’s shortest format

Mithali played 89 matches in which she scored 2364 runs at an average of 37.5 and a strike rate of 36.3.

She made her debut as captain in the first-ever T20 International played by India — against England in Derby in 2006

Mithali also led the country in three T20I World Cups — 2012 (Sri Lanka), 2014 (Bangladesh) and 2016 (India) without lifting the cup in all the three occasions

Mithali Raj was the first Indian cricketer to reach the landmark of 2000 T20I runs.
Mamallapuram – is expected to host the proposed second edition of the India-China informal summit between PM Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping

Mamallapuram, 50km south of Chennai, was the centre of defence and trade ties with China that are more than 1,700 years old.

The ancient port town had a defence pact between Pallava king Narasimhavarman II and the Chinese rulers during the early 8th century that was aimed at securing Chinese territory from Tibet.

Chinese declared Pallava king Narasimhavarman II as the general of South China to fight Tibet as the latter had emerged a strong power and a threat to China.

Buddhist monk Bodhidharma, an icon in China, was the third prince of a Pallava king.

He travelled from Kancheepuram through Mamallapuram to China in 527AD and became the 28th patriarch of Buddhism succeeding Prajnatara.

Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang visited Kancheepuram in 7th century.

Mamallapuram also flourished as a massive business hub on the Bay of Bengal.

It remained as a major gateway for exports and imports from China to Tamil Nadu for almost eight centuries till 1,000 years ago.