Union Government – notifies Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018

- The rules allow phone calls and internet on flights and ship voyage within the country
- **Highlights**
  - Any Indian or foreign airline company having permission to enter the Indian airspace can apply for an in-flight license
  - The IFMC, In-flight and maritime connectivity, can be provided by using telecom networks on the ground as well as using satellites, after taking due permission from the Department of Space
  - An airline company will be authorized to provide in-flight connectivity services for a period of 10 years after meeting all the requirements
  - The airline can provide mobile communication service on the flight only after attaining a height of 3000 meters in the Indian airspace- to avoid interference with terrestrial mobile networks.
Mount Soputan Volcano – erupts twice on the same day (December 16) on Sulawesi island in Indonesia

- It is one among the most active volcanoes of Indonesia, which is led by Java Island’s Kelud and Merapi volcanoes
- Indonesia is highly prone to earthquakes and volcanoes as it is located in the ‘Pacific Ring of fire’
- The Ring-of-Fire, also called as the Circum-Pacific Belt, is the place where many major and minor tectonic plates meet
- The movement of these tectonic plates leads to volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and formation of deep trenches in the ocean
- The Mariana trench, world’s deepest ocean trench, is also located in the Ring-of-Fire

Indian Navy – to set up a ‘Information Fusion Centre’ for the Indian Ocean region – at the ‘Information Management and Analysis Centre’- in Gurugram, Haryana

- The proposed center will facilitate information exchange regarding ‘White shipping’ or Commercial shipping – within the Indian ocean region and boost maritime security
- So far, around 21 countries have signed ‘White shipping’ agreement with India and only these countries will be able to utilise the service of the proposed center
- India had also signed the Trans Regional Maritime Network (T-RMN) agreement, regulated by Italy, for information exchange between commercial ships in high seas
APPOINTMENTS

- Ranil Wickremasinghe – sworn-in as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka for the second time

- He was earlier ousted from the position on October 26, 2018 and replaced by Mahinda Rajapaksa
- Overall, Ranil has been sworn in as the Prime minister for the fifth time which is a record in Sri Lanka
- He was the leader of United National Party since 1994
- He was appointed as the PM on January 8, 2015

AWARDS

- Catriona Elisa Gray from the Philippines - was crowned as the Miss Universe 2018 at Thailand

- She was crowned by Demi Leigh Nel-Peters from South Africa, the 2017 Miss Universe
- India’s Nehal Chudasama failed to enter the Top 20 in the competition, which saw the participation of 94 contestants
- The last Miss Universe winner from India was Lara Dutta in the year 2000
- Tamaryn Green (South Africa) and Sthefany Gutierrez (Venezuela) were the first and second runner-up respectively in the competition
- Spain’s Angela Ponce created history as the first transgender woman to participate in the beauty pageant
- Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia participated for the first time in this year’s event
- For the first time, the competition was judged by an all-women jury
- The event took place on December 17, 2018 at Nonthaburi Province in Thailand
Geeta Iyengar, acclaimed Yoga Guru (74 years)

- Geeta, the daughter of renowned yoga guru B K S Iyengar, was one of the directors of the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, Pune.
- She had also authored the famous book, “Yoga — A Gem For Women” that contributed immensely in yoga techniques for women.

A Sivalingam (94 years), Inventor of Tamil telegraphy – passed away in Trichy

- He had earlier developed Tamil telegraphy in 1955 and was helpful in putting it to public use in 1956.
- Born in 1924, he joined the postal department as telegraph clerk in 1944.
- He was also called Tamil Thanthi Sivalinganar.
SPORTS

- P V Sindhu – becomes the 1st Indian women to win the BWF World Tour Finals

- Sindhu, the 2016 Rio Olympic silver medalist, defeated Nozomi Okuhara of Japan, the 2017 World champion, in the finals
- This is the first title for Sindhu in the year 2018 and 14th title overall
- She won silver medal this year at the World Championships 2018, Thailand Open 2018, Asian Games 2018, Commonwealth Games 2018 and India Open
- The BWF World Tour Finals is an annual badminton competition which features the players with most points from all BWF events in that calendar year
- Shi Yuqi of China won the Men’s Singles title defeating Kento Momota of Japan

- 75th edition of National Squash Championships 2018, Noida
- Joshna Chinappa – wins National Squash Women’s singles title

- She defeated Urwashi Joshi in the final to win her 16th national title
- With this win, she equals the record of Bhuvaneshwari Kumari of winning 16 titles
- Joshna is the first Indian squash player to win the British Squash Championship in 2003 in U-19 category
- She is also the youngest Indian women’s national Squash champion
- She partnered with Dipika Palikal Karthik at the 2014 Commonwealth games and won the country’s 1st ever squash gold medal in women’s doubles
- In the Men’s event, Mahesh Mangaonkar defeated Vikram Malhotra – to win the singles title for the first time in his career
Belgium – wins their first ever World Cup Hockey 2018 title - by defeating Netherlands in the final in Bhubaneshwar, Odisha

- Belgium had earlier won silver medal in Rio Olympics, 2016 and finished runner-up in the 2017 Euro Hockey Championships
- Australia defeated England to secure third place
- India finished at sixth place in the tournament
- Arthur Van Doren (Belgium) was awarded as the Best Player of the tournament
- Blake Govers (Australia) and Alexander Hendrickx (Belgium) scored most number of goals (7) in the tournament
- Spain won the Fairplay award in the tournament

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- Vijay Diwas – December 16

- The day marks the anniversary of India’s victory over Pakistan in the war of Independence of Bangladesh in 1971
- At the end of the war, Bangladesh was created out of East Pakistan