Tamil Nadu Government – will soon constitute 32 Juvenile justice boards across the districts in the state

✓ The move follows the recent setting up of Child welfare committees across the state
✓ As per the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the state can constitute one or more boards in every district – to discharge functions relating to children in conflict with the law
✓ Each board will have a metropolitan or a judicial magistrate along with two social workers
✓ However, the board in Chennai will have a judicial magistrate and one member

✓ Tamil Nadu Government – to make 1,656 km of roads in various cities across the state as ‘Smart Roads’
The initiative will be funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB) at an estimated cost of Rs 20,000 crore.
It will be executed under a project titled ‘Smart Complete Street Project’.
Apart from ADB, the Government plans to approach World Bank, KfW and Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) apart from its own contribution along with the Centre.
The project, which was proposed in April, would increase the life of a road from the current 3 years to 30 years.
The cost of setting up 1 km of smart road is between Rs 2 crore and Rs 10 crore based on the amenities provided.
In Chennai, 45 km of road length may be taken up under the project - as already 25 km of roads in T Nagar are taken up under ‘Smart City Project’.
The project, once funded, will start in 2020 and complete in 2023.

**STATES**

- **Manipur** – passes the ‘Manipur Protection from Mob Violence Bill, 2018’
  The new bill seeks to eliminate mob violence by recommending life imprisonment for those involved, in case if it leads to the death of a person.

**NATIONAL**

- **Google** – has selected 10 Indian News organizations for receiving YouTube innovation funding under its ‘Global News Initiative’ (GNI)
  Globally, Google has chosen 87 news organizations across 23 different countries.
  The funding will help these newsrooms to develop their own ‘online’ video capabilities and experiment with new formats for video journalism.
  During the launch of the initiative in March 2018, YouTube had committed $25 million funding to support the future of news.

- **Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Defence** – inaugurates the ‘Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region’ (IFC-IOR) - at the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in Gurugram on December 22.
✓ The Centre is mainly responsible for monitoring the Indian Ocean region
✓ Internationally, India has White Shipping Agreements with 36 countries, and 3 multinational agencies which provides details of all commercial ships passing through the ports in their region
✓ IMAC is planning to replace soon its current international data software with a BEL-developed indigenous software called ‘Sangraha’
✓ The Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in Gurugram was sanctioned in March 2012 and became operational in November 2014

➢ Prime Minister, Narendra Modi – released a commemorative Rs 100 coin - in honour of former Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee

✓ Vajpayee’s birth anniversary on 25th December, is celebrated as 'Good Governance Day'
✓ Vajpayee was the first non-Congress Prime Minister to serve a full five-year term.
✓ He served three terms as the Prime Minister of India
✓ He was conferred with the Bharat Ratna in 2015
Vajpayee passed away on August 16, 2018

Prime Minister, Narendra Modi – announced a new annual award ‘Sardar Patel Award for National Integration’ - at the DGPs/IGPs Conference at Kevadia in Narmada district of Gujarat
This award would be given for outstanding efforts to further national integration

President, Ram Nath Kovind – inaugurated ‘Centre of Excellence for Genetic Blood Disorders’ at the ‘Prathima Institute of Medical Sciences’ in Karimnagar, Telangana

This centre will focus research work on Sickle Cell Anaemia, Thalassemia and Other Genetic Blood Disorders

INTERNATIONAL

A deadly Tsunami swept across Indonesia’s Sunda Strait – following the eruption of Volcano, Anak Krakatau
The Tsunami attacked the coastal areas along western Java and southern Sumatra islands on the night of December 22 killing at least 281 people.

This is the 2nd deadly tsunami to hit Indonesia, following the one on the island of Sulawesi on September 28 that killed more than 2,500 people.

Anak Krakatau (or Child of Krakatoa) is a volcanic island formed from the sea in 1927 from the legendary Krakatoa volcano.

Krakatoa underwent one of the most violent volcanic eruptions in August 1883 killing 36,000 people.

Indonesia lies on the Pacific ring of fire - where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are frequent - due to the movement and collisions of lithospheric plates of the earth.

**Burundi - names ‘Gitega’ as its new Political capital**

The earlier capital, Bujumbura, has been announced as its economic capital.

The decision to shift the capital was announced way back in 2007 by its President, Nkurunziza.

Burundi is a land-locked, underdeveloped African country having extreme levels of poverty and rampant corruption.

It had achieved its independence in the year 1962 from the colonial rule.

It has to be recalled that Burundi was ranked as the world’s least happy nation in the World Happiness Report 2018.
PERSONALITIES

- Vedangi Kulkarni (20 year old from Pune) – became the fastest Asian woman to cycle around the globe on December 23

- She had spent 159 days in 14 countries on her bicycle covering 300 km daily, thereby completing the mandatory 29,000 km required to qualify the record
- She had started her record-setting cycling trip from Perth (Australia) in June
- She encountered temperatures ranging from -20 degree Celsius to 37 degrees Celsius during the ride, which was majorly funded by her parents
- Vedangi did not have anyone accompanying her for over 80% of the route
- British adventurer Jenny Graham, 38, is the fastest woman to have cycled the globe in 125 days in 2018
- In the men's category, Mark Beaumont holds the record for completing the journey in 78 days

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- India – test fires nuclear capable ‘Agni IV’ ballistic missile on December 23
The Agni-IV surface-to-surface missile was tested from the Integrated Test Range of Dr Abdul Kalam Island, off Odisha coast

The two-stage missile, having a strike range of 4000 km, was developed by DRDO

This was the 7th trial of Agni-IV missile, with the last trial conducted from the same base on January 2, 2018

It has to be recalled that the three-stage, 5000-km strike range ‘Intercontinental ballistic missile’ (ICBM) Agni V had recently underwent its second pre-induction trial on December 10

The first pre-induction trial of Agni V took place in January 2018, following four developmental trials since April 2012

Wheeler Island has been renamed as Dr Abdul Kalam Island since September 4, 2015

The strategic forces command (SFC) comprising the tri-service already has Prithvi-II (350 km), Agni-I (700 km), Agni-II (2,000 km) and Agni-III (3,000 km) missiles

ECONOMY

 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) – shortlists 6 IT firms for setting up ‘Public Credit Registry’

The shortlisted firms are -- TCS, Wipro, IBM India, Capgemini Technology Services India, Dun & Bradstreet Information Services India, and Mindtree Ltd

Public Credit Registry is a digital registry capturing details of all borrowers and wilful defaulters – created to tackle the issue of bad loans in banks

APPOINTMENTS

Patrick Shanahan – to be the new Acting US Defence Secretary from January 1, 2019
He replaces James Mattis, who resigned recently on December 20 – citing policy differences with the President, Donald Trump
Shanahan is the US Deputy Secretary of Defense since March 2017
Shanahan has held several leadership positions in Boeing since 1986

- B V P Rao – elected as the President of Archery Association of India (AAI)

- He had earlier served as vice president of the archery association of Assam
- He has also worked with Sports Authority of India in various capacities
- For the last four years, he held the position of ‘Advisor’ to Telangana Government

SPORTS

- Real Madrid (Spanish football club) – won the record fourth FIFA Club World cup in Abu Dhabi
It had defeated UAE’s Al Ain by 4-1 goal margin – to claim the third straight Club world cup for the team

Strikes from Ballon d'Or winner Luka Modric, Marcos Llorente, skipper Sergio Ramos and an own goal from Yahia Nader clinched the match in Real’s favour

For Al Ain, Tsukasa Shiotani scored the lone goal

**RANKINGS**

- Performance of States and UTs under ‘Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana’, the maternity benefit programme – Released by Ministry of Women and Child Development

  - The states of Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh emerged as the best performing states in the country
  - As per the report, 51.70 lakh beneficiaries are covered annually under the scheme, which was launched in 2016
  - An assistance of Rs 2,048.59 crores and Rs 369.31 crores have been sanctioned - during the year 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively
INTERNATIONAL DAY

- National Consumer Day – December 24

  - Theme 2018 - “Timely Disposal of Consumer Complaints”
  - The observance of this day highlights the importance of consumer movement and the need to make the consumer more aware of their rights and responsibilities
  - On this day in the year 1986, the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, had received the assent of the President of India
  - Recently, on December 20, Lok Sabha passed the Consumer Protection Bill 2018 to amend the Act, calling for strict punishments to food adulteration and misleading advertisements

- National Farmers Day (Kisan Diwas) – December 23

  Kisaan Diwas
  - India observes 23rd December, the Birthday of Chaudhary Charan Singh, as Kisan Diwas (Farmers Day) every year.
  - This day, Farmer’s seminars are organised at the divisional, district and the block levels.

- The observance of the day commemorates the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh, who is fondly referred as 'Champion of farmers'
Chaudhary Charan Singh was the fifth Prime Minister of India and he is well known for the budget he represented in 1979 with several policies for the welfare of farmers.

- He served as the Prime Minister from 28 July 1979 to 14 January 1980.
- The Union Government had decided in 2001 to observe 23rd December every year as Kisan Diwas.
- He followed the famous slogan ‘Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan’ given by the second Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri.
- Carrying farmer leader Chotu Ram’s legacy forward, he founded the ‘Kisan Trust’ on his 76th birthday on December 23, 1978 to create awareness of farmers issues among the rural masses.
- Chaudhary Charan Singh is credited to formulate and implement the Zamindari Abolition Act.
- The famous ‘Kisan Ghat’ in New Delhi is dedicated to Chaudhary Charan Singh due to his services for the farmers.

**OBITUARY**

- **K P Aravanann, Tamil Scholar and Educationist (77 years)**

- Aravanann was the former Vice-Chancellor of Tirunelveli Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, who brought a sociological and anthropological approach to Tamil studies.
- He was a native of a small village, Kadalangudi in Nagapattinam district.
- Aravanann was a student of V.I. Subramaniam, the first Vice-Chancellor of Tamil University, Thanjavur.
- He completely revamped the syllabus of the Tamil course at Loyola College, Chennai during his tenure as the Head of the Department there.
✓ He had recalled his experience in Loyola College in his book, En Ezhuthu-P-Payanam (My literary journey)
✓ He even introduced an integrated five-year course in the Tamil Department
✓ He became the head of the Department of Tamil, Pondicherry University before becoming its Vice Chancellor later
✓ He also served as the Director, Centre of Advanced Study in Linguistics, Annamalai University
✓ He also had a stint at the Dakar University in Senegal
✓ Another important work of Aravananan is Tamilil Ara Ilakkiyam, a treatise on didactic literature
✓ Aravananan’s talent was demonstrated by the fact that he was able to become the principal of a college at the age of 27
✓ Some of his works included Dravidian Studies, Notable Negroid Elements in Dravidian India, Matriarchy and Mother Goddess, which he compiled in English and presented at the global level
✓ He has written 56 books apart from serving as the Chair in various universities
✓ The State government awarded him thrice for his best research works that included the prestigious Thiruvalluvar award and Tamizhar Thanthai SP Adithanar award