STATES

- Jammu & Kashmir – celebrates the annual week-long ‘Jhiri Mela’ festival
  - It was inaugurated by the Governor of J&K, Satya Pal Malik in Jammu
  - The festival is celebrated as a commemoration to a martyred farmer named, ‘Baba Jittoo’
  - Baba Jittoo’ was a farmer who died about 500 years ago in protest against the oppressive demands of a land lord

- West Bengal – celebrates the annual three-day long ‘Jangalmahal’ festival
  - The festival aims to revive and popularise the culture and heritage of Jangal Mahal
Odisha – celebrates the 10-day long historic ‘Bali Yatra’ festival

- It was inaugurated in Cuttack, Odisha on the occasion of Kartik Purnima on November 23, 2018
- The festival is the largest trade fair in Odisha showcasing various ethnic items
- It is held on the banks of Mahanadi river in Cuttack
- The festival marks the day when the ancient mariners would set sail to distant lands of Bali, for trade and cultural expansion

NATIONAL

India – signs $200 million loan with Asian Development Bank (ADB) – to improve State highways in Bihar

- The agreement would facilitate the widening and upgrading of 230 kms of state highways
- ADB has lent $1.43 billion, since 2008, for the upgradation of 1,453 km of state highways and also for building the India’s longest river bridge over Ganga near Patna
- ADB – promotes social and economic development in the Asia and Pacific region
- It was established in December 1966 with its headquarters in Manila, Philippines

India and China – signs agreement for the avoidance of double taxation and for the prevention of fiscal evasion

- The pact was signed under Section 90 of Income-tax Act, 1961, for the exchange of information on the related standards

The Research Designs and Standards Organisation – had announced the successful completion of the trial run of ‘Train 18’

- The indigenously developed, engineless train ran upto a speed of 115 km per hour on tracks in Moradabad division of Northern Railway
- The train will now be sent to Kota division in West Central Railways for validating its performance at its designed speed of 160 kmph
- It was launched by Ashwani Lohani, Railway Board Chairman at the Chennai’s Integral Coach Factory (ICF) on October 29, 2018
- It was developed at a cost of Rs 100 crore within a period of just 18 months
- It is expected to replace the Shatabdi Express, which was introduced in 1988
Vice President, Venkaiah Naidu – lays the foundation stone for the construction of Dera Baba Nanak - Kartarpur Sahib Road Corridor - on the Indian side at Mann village in Gurdaspur district of Punjab

- Indian Sikh pilgrims can now visit the holy site of Gurudwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Pakistan through this corridor
- The decision to build the corridor was announced by the Indian and Pakistan Governments on November 15, 2018
- India had first proposed the Kartarpur Sahib corridor in 1999 during the historic bus ride to Lahore by the then PM, A B Vajpayee
- The corridor will be developed by National Highways Authority of India and funded by the Central Government
- The Gurudwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur is the final resting place of Guru Nanak until his death in 1539
- It is located on the bank of river Ravi in Pakistan and is about 4 km from the Indo-Pak border in Pakistan

Government – has transferred over Rs 1,600 crore to 48.5 lakh mothers – under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

- As per the scheme launched from January 1, 2017, Rs 5,000 would be given in 3 installments to pregnant women and lactating mothers for the first child through direct benefit transfer (DBT)
- These details were provided by the Centre for Digital Financial Inclusion (CDFI) through the PMMVY-CAS (Common Application Software) System
Top states in implementing Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (As of November 23, 2018)

- **Gujarat tops the entire country** with 26% of the total number of sanctioned hospital admissions under the scheme

Rankings of the States
- 1 – Gujarat (76,000 hospital admissions)
- 2 – Tamil Nadu (54,273 admissions)
- 3 – Chhattisgarh (53,180 admissions)
- 4 – Karnataka
- 5 – Maharashtra

- It has to be recalled that Gujarat is already implementing a similar scheme, known as the Mukhyamantri Amrutam (MA) Yojana, since 2012
- Regarding the most beneficiaries, UP had verified 1.18 crore families as beneficiaries and in Bihar the number is 1.09 crore families
- The Ayushman Bharat scheme was launched on September 23, 2018 by the Prime Minister
- It provides a health coverage of Rs 5 lakh per family per year

**Easyfone, the feature phone maker – launches ‘Easyfone Star’, India’s first mobile phone for Kids**

- It has various first-of-its-kind security features like restricting calls to only pre-configured numbers, GPS which allows parents to track their child and SOS key which allows children to get quick help in emergency

**Government – increases the outlay for the first phase of ‘Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles’ (FAME India) scheme**
- The new budget is Rs 895 crore from the earlier Rs 795 crore
- The implementation of the first phase of the scheme was earlier extended upto March 2019
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways – notifies the inclusion of ‘Quadricycle’ as a ‘non transport’ vehicle under the Motor Vehicles Act 1988

- A Quadricycle is a vehicle of the size of a 3-wheeler but with 4 tyres and fully covered like a car
- Earlier, these vehicles were allowed for transport usage under the Act

Government – sets Classwise School bag weight limit
- Details of the Weight limit
  - Classes I and II - they should not be more than 1.5 kg
  - Classes III to V - would be between 2 kg and 3 kg
  - Classes VI and VII - it should be 4 kg
  - Classes VIII and IX – it should be 4.5 kg
  - Class X schoolbags - must not exceed 5 kg

Government – to offer 50-year lease to privatise 6 airports - Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram and Mangaluru
- The process is scheduled to be completed by February 28, 2019
- Airports Authority of India already has a joint venture with GMR and GVK for Delhi and Mumbai airports respectively

INTERNATIONAL

World’s first underground luxury hotel – inaugurated in Shanghai, China

- The hotel named ‘InterContinental Shanghai Wonderland’ houses 18 storeys with 16 of them below the ground level
PERSONALITIES

- Bollywood Actress, Shilpa Shetty Kundra – led India to a new Guinness World Record at ‘Bajaj Allianz Life Plankathon’ event

- The event involved 2,353 people holding the abdominal plank position for 60 seconds simultaneously
- The earlier record was held by China with 1,779 people holding the plank for one minute
- The event was organized by Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company as part of their successful ‘#36SecPlankChallenge’ campaign urging people to hold a plank for 36 seconds

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- ISRO – to launch HySIS (Hyperspectral imaging satellite) - an earth observation satellite - along with 30 foreign commercial satellites on November 29, 2018
  - The satellites will be launched through Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C43) from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh
  - HySIS is the primary satellite of the PSLV-C43 mission
  - PSLV-C43 is the Core Alone version of PSLV which is the lightest version of PSLV
  - The primary goal of HySIS is to study the earth’s surface in visible, near infrared and shortwave infrared regions of the electromagnetic spectrum
  - The foreign satellites to be launched along with HySIS include 1 Micro and 29 Nano satellites from 8 different countries
  - Out of the 30 commercial satellites, 23 are from the United States, whose launch are contracted through Antrix Corporation Limited, the commercial arm of ISRO
  - Being an earth observation satellite, it can be used by the military for surveillance purpose apart from wide applications in agriculture, forestry and coastal zone assessment
APPOINTMENTS

- Sunil Arora – has been appointed as the new Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)

- He succeeds O P Rawat, who retired on November 24, 2018
- He will be the country’s 23rd CEC
- He will have a tenure of nearly two and half years starting from December 2, 2018
- He is 1980-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre
- A former bureaucrat, Arora was appointed as election commissioner on August 31, 2017, replacing Nasim Zaidi
- Earlier, he had served as the information and broadcasting secretary and the secretary in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- He also served as joint secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation during 1999-2002 and the CMD, Indian Airlines, for 5 years
- In Rajasthan, Arora was secretary to the chief minister, Vasundhara Raje, during 1993-1998 and then the principal secretary to CM during 2005-2008
- After his retirement in April 2016, he was appointed as an advisor to Prasar Bharti and then as director general and CEO of the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs
- The Election commission of India is a permanent and independent constitutional body established directly by Constitution of India to ensure fair and fair elections in the country
- It has 3 members, including a Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two election commissioners (ECs), who are appointed by the President
- They hold office for a term of six years or until they attain age of 65 years, whichever is earlier

AWARDS

- Bharat Electronics Limited (Bengaluru) – becomes the 1st PSU to win ‘CII-Exim Bank Business Excellence Award’ for being a Role-model organization – at the CII Quality summit in Bengaluru

- Three other BEL units at Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, Chennai in Tamil Nadu and Machilipatnam in Andhra Pradesh received Platinum recognition for business excellence
**BOOKS & AUTHORS**

- ‘The Illustrated History of Indian Hockey: A Saga of Triumph, Pain and Dreams’ – Released by Arun Jaitley, Union Finance Minister

- The book documents the journey of Hockey in India from the days of India’s participation in the 1928 Olympics
- It was launched in the run-up to the Hockey World Cup 2018 that begins in Bhubaneswar from November 28, 2018

**SPORTS**

- Lewis Hamilton (Great Britain, Mercedes) – wins Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the season’s 21st and last Formula one event

- This was the 11th win of this year for the champion driver, edging out Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari and Max Verstappen of Red Bull to second and third positions respectively
- Due course, he became the first driver to score more than 400 points in a season with a final tally of 408
- This was the 73rd career win for the five time World champion, who is 18 wins away from Michael Schumacher’s all-time record
- **Bangladesh Captain, Shakib Al Hasan became the fastest player** - to complete the double of 200 wickets and 3000 runs in the Test cricket

  - He achieved the feat in his 54th Test beating the long-standing record of 55 matches by England all-rounder Ian Botham
  - In due course, he also became the first Bangladeshi bowler to claim 200 Test wickets

- **Pravin Tambe, 47 year old Indian Cricketer** – becomes the first player to pick up a hat-trick in the history of cricket’s newest format, T-10 League

  - He picked 5 wickets in his two-over spell by giving just 15 runs for his team, Sindhis against Kerala Knights
  - The tournament began on 21st November 2018 in United Arab Emirates (UAE)

- **World T20 – renamed as T20 World cup**
  - The change was announced by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for both Men’s and Women’s cricket
  - The next edition of the events in 2020 in Australia will be known as the ‘ICC Women’s T20 World Cup 2020’ and the ‘ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2020’