Dr C Vijayabaskar, Health Minister - launches the integrated version of the Chief minister’s Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMHIS) and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)

- This will enhance the free insurance coverage to Rs 5 lakh per family a year to all beneficiaries of the CM’s scheme
- The integrated scheme will benefit around 77 lakh more families, apart from the existing 1.57 crore families already covered by the CMHIS

K A Sengottaiyan, School Education Minister – announces that the Students of Class X, XI and XII – will get only one additional chance in a year (in June) to retake the Public examination from the next academic year
- Currently, the students were given 2 additional chances (one in July and another in September) to clear the exam
SCHEMES

- PM – inaugurates World’s largest health insurance scheme ‘Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana’ (PMJAY), also known as ‘Ayushman Bharat’ or the ‘National Health Protection Mission’ (AB-NHPM) – at Ranchi, Jharkhand on September 23, 2018

- On the occasion, the PM also launched a toll free number ‘14555’ for the people to get more information about Ayushman Bharat scheme
- The scheme will become operational from September 25, 2018, the birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyay
- The scheme, dubbed ‘Modicare’, will provide free coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year in any government or selected private hospitals all over India
- It covers about 10.74 crore beneficiary families and about 50 crore Indian citizens
- The scheme has an estimated budget of Rs 12,000 crore with 60% funding from Centre and 40% from the respective states
- The National Health Agency (NHA), the apex body implementing the scheme, has already launched the website (mera.pmjay.gov.in) for the scheme
- So far 25 states & 6 UTs have signed MoUs with the Union Government to implement the programme over the next two to three months
- The states Telangana, Odisha, Delhi, Kerala and Punjab have not signed the MoUs till now
- States will be required to form a ‘State Health Agency’ to implement the scheme
- On Sep 9th, 2018, Government had announced that ‘Child cancer’ would also be covered under the scheme
- Jharkhand was chosen to launch the scheme as it was one of the most backward state with poor health infrastructure
STATES

➢ Arunachal Pradesh CM, Pema Khandu - launches Government e-Marketplace (GeM) with 26,000 Government agencies in Itanagar – to bring more transparency in Procurements of the Government and achieve ‘paperless’ and ‘cashless’ transactions

Thus, Arunachal Pradesh becomes the sixth State/UT in India to have signed MoUs with GeM, after Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Telangana and Puducherry

NATIONAL

➢ President – inaugurates Centenary celebrations of ‘Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha’ in New Delhi on 22nd Sep, 2018

The sabha aims to improve Hindi literacy among non-Hindi speaking people of South India
➢ It has its headquarters at Chennai and is recognised as one of the ‘Institutes of National Importance’ in 1964
➢ It has 4 divisions, one each at Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu
➢ The sabha was established by Annie Besant with support from Mahatma Gandhi in 1918
➢ Gandhiji was the founder president of the sabha till his death
PM Narendra Modi – launched India’s 1st Coal-Gasification Fertiliser plant in Talcher, Odisha

- It is developed by Talcher Fertilisers limited
- The plant to be built with an investment of Rs 13,000 crore will be commissioned by 2022
- It will produce ‘Neem-coated Urea’ using Gas-converted coal and petcoke as feedstock

Government – inaugurates ‘National orientation workshop on National e-Vidhan Application’

- National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) – is a digital application that provides ‘online’ information about day-to-day functioning of Legislative houses
- It is a Rs 739 Crore project, aiming to bring legislatures on digital platform, covering all Houses
- It is to be used by the Legislatures as well as all the Government Departments
- The mobile NeVA app is also available, which is already used by the Assemblies of the following states, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Puducherry, Manipur
- e-Vidhan – is the Mission mode project – which aims to digitize and make the functioning of state’s legislatures ‘paperless’
- It is part of Digital India programme of the Union Government, with Min of parliamentary affairs being the nodal agency
- The Ministry aims to roll out e-Vidhan as NeVA covering all 40 Houses including two Houses of Parliament in a single platform as per the theory of ‘One Nation One Application’
PM – inaugurates Sikkim’s first ever Airport on Sep 24th, 2018 at Pakyong

- The airport is India’s 100th functional airport and also one of the country’s five highest airports
- It was constructed by the Airports Authority of India at a distance of around 30km from its capital, Gangtok
- It has to be noted that Sikkim was the only state in India until now, without a functional airport
- It was built at an estimated budget of Rs 605 crore
- The first commercial flight from Pakyong will commence from October 4, when Spicejet starts its daily Kolkata-Sikkim flights
- Earlier, on March 5, IAF’s Dornier-228 aircraft was tested from Pakyong
- On the same month, Spicejet also tested its 78-seater Bombardier Q400 from Kolkata to Pakyong
- Other Notable Distinctions of Sikkim
  - India’s 1st ‘Organic state’
  - India’s 1st ‘Open defecation free’ (ODF) state’

- Delhi’s Indira Gandhi International Airport – ranked as 16th busiest airport in the world – handling 6.34 crore passengers in the year 2017 – as per World Air Traffic Report of Airports Council International (ACI)
  - It was ranked at 22nd in 2016 and handled 14% more passengers in 2017
  - Atlanta Harstfield-Jackson (United States) – ranked as the World’s busiest airport by handling 10.39 crore passengers in the year 2017, followed by Beijing with 9.58 crore passengers
INTERNATIONAL

- **Norway** – has chosen ‘What Will People Say’ movie as its official entry to Oscars in Foreign Language Film category

- The movie stars Adil Hussain, Bollywood actor hailing from Goalpara district in Assam
- Earlier, India’s official entry for the same category, ‘Village Rockstars’ was chosen by a 12-member jury of Film Federation of India (FII), led by Kannada producer-director SV Rajendra Singh Babu from 29 other films

- **Nepal** – becomes the 1st country in the world to double its Tiger population as part of World Wildlife Foundation's (WWF) 'TX2' programme

- On the occasion of National Conservation Day on Sep 23, 2018, Government of Nepal announced that there are an estimated 235 wild tigers in the nation from around 121 in 2009
- WWF and Nepal had earlier set 2022 as deadline for doubling the tiger population
- Nepal was the first country to achieve global standards in managing tiger conservation areas, an accreditation scheme governed by the Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS)
- The World Wildlife Foundation had launched its ambitious TX2 programme at the St Petersburg Tiger Summit in 2010
- As per the estimates in 2016, India has the highest tiger population with 2226 tigers, followed by Russia with 433 and then Indonesia which had 371 tigers
- China had less than five and Vietnam less than seven in 2016
Pakistan – launches nationwide ‘Anti-polio’ vaccination drive for children of less than 5 years of age
✓ Pakistan is one of the 3 countries in the world, along with Afghanistan and Nigeria, that suffers from endemic polio
✓ As per WHO standards, a country must have no cases for 3 consecutive years in order to be considered as eradicated polio

Israel – to demolish the village ‘West Bank’ occupied by the Palestinians and announced October 1 as the ‘deadline’ to leave the village
✓ Israel had earlier offered resettlement for the residents of the ‘illegally built’ village

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

India & Israel – commemorated Centenary of ‘Battle of Haifa’ on Sep 23, 2018
✓ It marked the completion of 100 years of liberation of Haifa in Israel by the Indian troops in 1918
✓ Indian Army commemorates September 23 as ‘Haifa Day’ every year, paying tribute to the two Indian Cavalry Regiments, Mysore and Jodhpur Lancers that helped to liberate Haifa

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

Scientists – have developed a miniature ‘Human Oesophagus’ for the first time in the lab using ‘Pluripotent stem cells’
✓ The discovery will lead to more studies regarding various diseases and defects associated with the human food pipe
✓ Oesophagus – is a part of human digestive system connecting the mouth to stomach to actively pass food
✓ It is a 25cm long muscular tube, also called as gastro-intestinal tract (GI tract) or gullet
✓ It has 4 layers, Mucosa, SubMucosa, Muscularis and Adventitia
DEFENCE

- India – successfully conducts the testing of its indigenously designed ‘Prithvi’ ballistic missile defense system off the coast of Odisha from Abdul Kalam Island (Formerly Wheeler Island)

- The mission, named Prithvi Defence Vehicle (PDV) mission, intends to attack ‘missile’ targets at an altitude of above 50km of the earth's atmosphere
- The PDV was first tested ‘with a miss’ in April 2014 and later successfully in February 2017
- It is expected replace the existing Prithvi Air Defense/Pradyumna Ballistic Missile Interceptor

ECONOMY

- RBI – has shortlisted 5 IT firms for the implementation of ‘Centralised Information and Management System’ (CIMS)
  - The 5 IT firms are –
    - Infosys
    - Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)
    - Capgemini Technology Services India
    - IBM India
    - Larsen & Toubro Infotech
  - CIMS will provide for seamless Data collection from about 130 entities/banks and enable big data analytics
APPOINTMENTS

- Jayapradha, Actress – appointed as ‘Goodwill ambassador’ to promote Nepal Tourism – for a period of 4 years
  - She was the former Member of Parliament
  - Nepal government has also decided to observe the year 2020 as the 'Visit Nepal Year'

- WhatsApp – appoints ‘Komal Lahiri’ as ‘Grievance Officer’ for India – to flag complaints and concerns, including about Fake news

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- International Day of Sign Languages – September 23
  - The day is celebrated annually along with International Week of the Deaf
  - The day celebrates the importance of sign language helping the human rights of ‘hearing impaired’ people
  - This year it was the first International Day of Sign Languages
  - Theme - “With Sign Language, Everyone is Included!”
  - The day was proposed by ‘World Federation of the Deaf’ (WFD) a federation of 135 national associations of deaf people
  - United Nations announced the day in December 2017
The choice of 23 September commemorates the Date of establishment of WFD in 1951
According to WFD, there are 72 million deaf people globally using 300 different sign languages
In India, on the occasion, a special calendar of year 2019 with Sign Languages was released
It was designed by Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) under Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

- **International Week of Deaf** – Last week of September (24-30 September, 2018)
  - International Week of the Deaf was first celebrated in September 1958
  - It was also an initiative of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)
  - The International week of the Deaf is celebrated on the same month when 1st World Congress of the WFD was held in Rome, Italy
OBITUARY

Kalpana Lajmi, film maker (64 years)

- She had directed critically acclaimed and Women-centric Hindi movies like Rudaali, Darmiyaan and Daman.
- She had also written a book titled “Bhupen Hazarika – As I Knew Him”
- Her last directorial venture was the 2006 film, Chingari