

APPLO



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India's First Tree Ambulance Launched

- ❖ Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu flagged off a unique service called 'Tree Ambulance' in Chennai to revive and provide care to trees on May 27, 2019.' The Tree Ambulance service has been founded by, Dr. K. Abdul Ghani, also known as Green man of India. Helpline number to avail the service-9941006786.
- ❖ The service includes providing first aid treatment to trees, uprooted tree planting, seed bank, seed ball distribution, plant distribution, aiding tree plantation, shifting trees, survey of trees and removal of dead trees

Not All Animals Migrate by Choice Campaign Launched

- ❖ The UN Environment India and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) of India have jointly launched an awareness campaign named 'Not all animals migrate by choice'.
- ❖ It create awareness and public support for the protection and conservation of wildlife, prevention of trafficking, smuggling and reduction in demand for wildlife products.
- ❖ In the first phase of the campaign, Tiger, Pangolin, Star Tortoise and Tokay Gecko will be displayed as they are highly endangered due to illegal trading in International markets.

GRIHA for Existing Day schools' Launched

- ❖ Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) Council has launched GRIHA for Existing Day Schools in India on May 7, 2019.
- ❖ GRIHA for Existing Day Schools is a rating device that would be able to assess the environmental performance of the existing schools in India.
- ❖ The integrated rating system also acquaints the school students with the concepts of 'sustainability' and 'greenery' by involving them in assessing the environmental impact of schools on the environment as a whole

Certain Observation of FAME-II Plan Notified

- ❖ The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has notified certain observations regarding the second phase of the Faster Adoption and Manufacture of (Hybrid and) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India).
- ❖ It has observed that India can save 64% of anticipated road-based mobility-related energy demand and 37% of carbon emissions by 2030.
- ❖ The government has allocated Rs. 10000 cr for FAME-II which is Rs. 895 cr higher than allocated for FAME- I

Cyclone Fani Hits Odisha and West Bengal

- ❖ Cyclone Fani with a maximum wind speed of 240-250 kmph, is one of the most biggest and fiercest cyclonic storm over the east coast in nearly two decades.
- ❖ The word Fani (pronounced as Foni) means snake was suggested by Bangladesh.
- ❖ According to the government, around 10000 villages and 52 towns in Odisha got affected by cyclone Fani.
- ❖ Fani was picked up from a pool containing 64 names suggested by eight countries in the North Indian Ocean basin. (Eight Countries are India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan and Thailand)

Green Number Plates Mandatory for All-Electric Vehicles

- ❖ The government of India has made it mandatory for Electric Vehicles to have number/license plates in Green Color.
- ❖ The font color for private cars will be white while that for taxis/commercial vehicles will be yellow. The green number plates will be the fifth type of number plate.
- ❖ Electric vehicles will be given special privileges like free parking, free entry in congested areas and a concessional toll on highways.

Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Inaugurated

- ❖ The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated FINE 2019, the Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on March 15, 2019.
- ❖ On the occasion, President Kovind also presented the 10th Biennial National Grassroots Innovation Awards.
- ❖ The four day event is being hosted outside Rashtrapati Bhavan for the first time since its establishment in 2000, with the assistance of Department of Science and Technology, Government of India

Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid Land Dispute

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India on March 8, 2019 has, appointed 3 member panel as mediator for the Ayodhya's Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case to find a permanent solution.
- ❖ Former Supreme Court Judge, FMI Kalifulla, will be the head of the Panel.
- ❖ Other member of the panel will be spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and senior advocate Sriram Panchu.

PM-STIAC Announced Nine Missions of National Importance

- ❖ Nine missions of national importance have been unveiled by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) on March 8, 2019.
- ❖ These missions cover important fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, electric vehicles and deep ocean exploration.

- ❖ The Nine Missions are Natural Language Translation, Quantum Frontier, Artificial Intelligence,
- ❖ National Biodiversity Mission, Electric Vehicles, BioScience for Human Health, Waste to Wealth Deep Ocean Exploration and AGNI.

Bharat Electronics Launched SWAGAT

- ❖ Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a defence public sector undertaking, presented SWAGAT - the Automatic Fare Collection Gating System .
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the system as part of the inaugural of Phase I of the Ahmedabad Metro on March 6, 2019.
- ❖ SWAGAT is an initiative steered by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in collaboration with BEL and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) with the support of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) and SBI

One Nation One Card Launched

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi ^aunched One Nation One Card for in sport mobility at a function in Ahmedabad on March 4, 2019.
- ❖ It has three parts - First is the Card: National Common Mobility Card (NMC), Second is the Fare Collection Software : SWEEKAR - Swachalit Kiraya : Automatic Fare Collection System and The third is the SWAGAT (Swachalit Gate). Developed by BEL.
- ❖ NCMC is the first of its kind in India Developed by NPCI in collaboration with CDAC.
- ❖ SWAGAT is the first gate and the reader which has been manufactured by an Indian company.
- ❖ The One Nation One Card model aims for payments across all segments including metro, bus, suburban railways, toll, parking, smart city and retail across the country using this single card.

Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana Approved

- ❖ The Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan-Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran) Yojana was approved by the Union Cabinet on March 4, 2019.
- ❖ Scheme approved for providing financial support to Integrated Bioethanol Projects using lignocellulosic biomass and other renewable feedstock.
- ❖ The scheme focuses to incentivise 2G Ethanol sector and support this nascent industry by creating a suitable ecosystem for setting up commercial projects and increasing Research and Development in the area

New Scheme for Unorganised Food Processing Sector

- ❖ India's Food Processing Ministry is working on a new scheme, Gram Samridhi Yojana, to bolster the unorganised food processing sector concentrated in rural areas.

- ❖ Roughly 66% of unorganised food processing units are in rural areas and of these, 80% are family run.
- ❖ The Rs. 3000 crore scheme funded by the world Bank will help the cottage industry, farmer producers' organisation and individual food processors to increase capacity, upgrade technology besides skill improvement, entrepreneurship development and strengthening the farm-to market supply chain

Anthem on 'Plastic-Free India'

- ❖ Union Minister Harsh Vardhan launched an anthem as a part of a campaign to make India plastic-free by 2022, and stressed on strengthening plastic waste management and recycling ecosystem in the country.
- ❖ The 'Plastic Waste-Free India' has been anthem, prepared and produced by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Smriti Manch (PDUSM), a non-profit organisation which claims to be working on various social and environmental issues.
- ❖ The anthem has been launched in seven languages-Hindi, Marathi, Gujarat Tamil, Telegu, Malyalam and Kannada

PRANAM Commission Launched

- ❖ Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched the Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) Commission, a panel set up to look after the issues with respect to the PRANAM Bill brought in for protection of parents of state government employees at Guwahati, Assam.
- ❖ According to the Bill, if the PRANAM Commission gets a complaint that parents of a state government employee is being ignored, then 10% or 15% of the employee's salary will be deducted by the government and paid to the parents or differently abled siblings.
- ❖ It is first-of its-kind Bill in India and would benefit 8 lakh parents of 4 lakh state government employees. It was approved by the state cabinet in 2018.

Commerce Ministry Launched SWAYATT Initiative

- ❖ Union Minister Suresh Prabhu, launched SWAYATT initiative and Start-up Runway in New Delhi on February 19,2019.
- ❖ SWAVATT is an initiative to promote Start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage using e-Transactions on Government e Marketplace (GeM).
- ❖ GeM is an online market place for procurement of common use goods and services by government ministries, departments and CPSEs and was setup in 2016

India's First Institute of Advanced Virology

- ❖ India's first Institute of Advanced Virology was inaugurated by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on February 11,2019.

- ❖ The Institute of Advanced Virology is affiliated to Global Virus Network, which has 45 centres of excellence in over 29 countries. The institute was announced after the outbreak of the Nipah virus in the state in May 2018.

Facebook Launched Digital skilling Initiative

- ❖ Facebook has launched an initiative named GOAL (Going Online As Leaders) that is a digital skilling and mentorship initiative in 5 states of India on February 7, 2019. The 5 states are West Bengal, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Odisha & Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The GOAL initiative will train young girls from these 5 states in digital literacy, life skills, leadership and entrepreneurship for an year.
- ❖ The programme will specifically focus on girls who have dropped out of school due to financial constraints but reside near the skilling centre to ensure regular participation.

World's Biggest Cyclothon Swasth 'Bharat Yatra' Concluded

- ❖ The Swasth Bharat Yatra, world's biggest cyclothon to motivate people to eat right, culminated in New Delhi on January 29, 2019.
- ❖ It was a part of the pan India 'Eat Right India movement' of FSSAI aimed to create healthy diet habit by noting individual awareness, collective action, strengthening institutional system and fostering mentorships.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu was awarded the 'Best State Overall' for its active participation in the national campaign 'Swasth Bharat Yatra', which was organized from 16th October 2018 by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

India Observed 70th Republic Day

- ❖ India is celebrating its 70th Republic Day on January 26, 2019 with the main function organized at Rajpath in the New Delhi.
- ❖ President of South Africa Mátamela Cyril Ramaphosa was the chief guest of Republic Day 2019.
- ❖ He was the second chief guest from South Africa after Nelson Mándela (1995). Republic Day 2019 marks the 150th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and so the theme of tableaux was Gandhi.
- ❖ First time Shankhanad tune replaced the age old Martial Tune of Indian Armed Forces. A woman officer was leading the Army Services Corps in parade and The Daredevils Motorcycle Team also included a women officer in their team this year first time.
- ❖ Participation of 1st all women contingent of Assam rifle. Total 33 aircraft and 4 helicopters participated in flypast. Republic Day Parade 2019 witnessed the inclusion of M777
- ❖ Howitzer and K9 Vajra, the self propelled gun which are the latest artilleries inducted in the Indian Army.

- ❖ Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Naik Wani was honored with the Ashok Chakra, the country's highest peace-time gallantry award, at the Republic Day parade. He is the first Kashmiri to receive this award.
- ❖ This was the first time in the history that 4 veteran soldiers of the 'Azad Hind Fauz' aged above 90 years took part in the parade at Rajpath.
- ❖ First time Republic Day Parade 2019 witnessed the winners of Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar got the chance to walk at Rajpath parade.

RPF Women Squad JOYTI BAHINI' Launched

- ❖ The Northeast Railway sector has launched a dedicated woman squad 'JYOTI BAHINI' on January 19, 2019 to enhance security of women in railway station and trains.
- ❖ This has been launched in Kamkhya station of Guwahati. The squad is named after the brave queen Ahom of 17th century.

Two National Level Initiatives Launched

- ❖ Union Science & Technology Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated two national level initiatives in the field of Science and Communications on January 15, 2019.
- ❖ The initiatives were DD Science and India Science. These were launched by The Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Doordarshan (DD), Prasar Bharati.
- ❖ These are aimed to integrate and elevate science in everyday life and to make India reach in top 3 of countries propagating science and technology by 2030.

Hunar Haat Expositions inaugurated

- ❖ Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi initiated Hunar Haat expositions in New Delhi on January 14, 2019.
- ❖ Hunar Haat plays an imperative role in national & International branding of the heritage of master artisans in India.
- ❖ Hunar Haat expositions are planned by the Ministry of Minority affairs under its Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development scheme.

National Clean Air Programme Launched

- ❖ Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in New Delhi on January 10, 2019.
- ❖ NCAP is a time bound national level strategy for pan India implementation to tackle the increasing air pollution problem across the country in a comprehensive manner.

- ❖ Under NCAP, the government has proposed to reduce the concentration of PM2.5 (fine, respirable pollution particles) and PM10 (coarse pollution particles) by 20%-30% by 2024 taking 2017 as the base year for the comparison of concentration.

India's Longest Single Lane Steel Cable Suspension Bridge

- ❖ Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu inaugurated India's longest 300-meter single-lane steel cable suspension bridge over Siang River in Upper Siang district of state bordering China on January 9, 2019.
- ❖ The suspension bridge, also known as Byorung Bridge was built at a cost of Rs. 4843 crore and funded by the ministry of development of North Eastern Region under Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources scheme.
- ❖ It will reduce the distance from Vingjong to Tuting town by almost 40 km.

MP Bezbaruah Committee Constituted for Assam Accord

- ❖ Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India has notified a High-level committee on January 5, 2019 for implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord.
- ❖ The Committee will submit its report within 6 months from the date of notification. The 9 member Committee headed by retired IAS MP Bezbaruah includes eminent Assamese persons from different fields.
- ❖ Clause 6 of the Accord states that the constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people.

Tele-law Mobile App, Nyaya Bandhu Launched

- ❖ A tele-law mobile application 'Nyaya Bandhu' was launched by the Union Minister for Law and Justice and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad on February 19, 2019.
- ❖ It is pro bono legal service which is designed to connect practising lawyers and the registered eligible beneficiaries in a hassle-free manner.
- ❖ It contains facility to confirm and register the pre-registered cases, to enable online interface between the beneficiary and the panel lawyer through video conferencing and telephone facility.

IWAI Launched Portal LADIS

- ❖ Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) launched a new portal Least Available Depth Information System (LADIS) on February 15, 2019 for real time data on available depth on stretches of National Waterways.
- ❖ LADIS will ensure real time data for ship and cargo owners on which they can undertake transportation on NW in a more planned way.
- ❖ It is a step towards ensuring optimum use of NW. For smooth movement of vessels is required for an assured depth of waterway

Mobile App 'MooFarm' Launched

- ❖ Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' has launched a mobile application named 'MooFarm' on February 7, 2019 to provide advisory services to dairy farmers.
- ❖ The app will help in building a self-sustained dairy farming community by leveraging ICT applications, creating employment opportunities for the youth, financially empowering women, and doubling farmer income

Chennai Police Launches Mobile App DIGICOP

- ❖ The app will enable the user to track the status of stolen two-wheelers and cell phones.
- ❖ The app, DIGI COP can tell a buyer if the mobile phone they have purchased second hand is a stolen mobile or not.
- ❖ Using DigiCop App, people can verify IMEI, report lost two-wheelers and phones, know the nearest police station, police news and traffic alerts

Womaniya on Government e-Marketplace Initiative Launched

- ❖ The Union government launched the 'Womaniya on Government e-Marketplace (GeM)', an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) on January 14, 2019.
- ❖ Purpose of its to sell handicrafts, handloom, accessories, and other products directly to Government departments and institutions.
- ❖ The Womaniya on GeM initiative aims to develop women entrepreneurship on the margins of society to achieve gender-inclusive economic growth.
- ❖ Government e Market place [GeM] is a 100% government owned company setup under the aegis of Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Web-Wonder Women' Campaign Launched

- ❖ The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched an online campaign, '#www : Web-WonderWomen'.
- ❖ The Campaign aims to discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been driving positive agenda of social change via social media.
- ❖ The partners of the campaign was Breakthrough and Twitter India.

SHREYAS Scheme Launched

- ❖ Minister for Human Resources Development, Shri Prakash Javadekar has launched the Scheme for Higher " Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS).

- ❖ The scheme has been launched for graduates passing in April 2019 and will be provided industry apprenticeship opportunities through the National Apprenticeship Promotional Scheme (NAPS).
- ❖ SHREYAS is a programme basket comprising the initiatives of three Central Ministries -Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Ministry of Labour& Employment

Kandhamal Haldi Got GI Tag

- ❖ Kandhamal Haldi' has earned the Geographical indication (GI) tag from Intellectual Property India, an organisation functioning under the auspices of the Union ministry of commerce er industry on April 3, 2019.
- ❖ Kandhamal Haldi a variety of turmeric indigenous to southern Odisha. Kandhamal Haldi is so well known because of its potent medicinal properties. Apart from Kandhamal Haldi, almost 75 Odisha producís have already received the GI tags.

India's 'First Coffee' Along With 4 Others Obtains GI Tag

- ❖ The Geographical Indications Registry granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to the following varieties of coffee on March 1, 2019.
- ❖ Geographical Indication (GI) tags have been granted to Coorg Arábica Coffee, Wayanad Robusta Coffee, Chihnnagalur Arábica Coffee, Araku Valley Arábica Coffee and Bababudangiris Arábica Coffee, by the Geographical Indications Registry.
- ❖ Coorg Arábica Coffee is grown in Kodagu, Karnataka. Wayanad Robusta Coffee is grown in Wayanad, Kerala while Chikmagalur Arábica Coffee and Bababudangiris Arábica Coffee are kown in Chikmagalur, Karnataka

Erode Turmeric of Tamil Nadu Obtained GI Tag

- ❖ The famous Erode Turmeric grown in the Erode district of Tamil Nadu has obtained the Geographical Indication (GI tag) from the Geographical Indication Registry on March 13, 2019.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu is famous for 2 varieties of turmeric namely 'peria naadan' and 'chinna naadan'. The 'chinna naadan' variety is cultivated in Erode.

STARS Scheme Launched

- ❖ The Union Human Resource Minister Prakash Javadekar launched the STARS scheme on February 28, 2019 (National Science Day).
- ❖ STARS stands for Scheme for Translational and Advanced Research in Science aims to provide funds for projects related to science. It will be used for around 500 science projects. The project will be coordinated by the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

- ❖ National Science Day is celebrated in India on 28 February each year to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by Indian physicist Sir CV Raman on February 28, 1928.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh on February 24, 2019.
- ❖ The scheme will provide ₹ 6000 per year to small and marginal farmer families having combined land holding/ownership of upto 2 hectares.
- ❖ The amount will be given in three installments of ₹ 2,000 each and will be transferred directly to the bank account of the beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer, ensuring transparency in the entire process and saving time for the farmers

PM Launched Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana

- ❖ PM Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana on January 22, 2019 to promote religious tourism in the country.
- ❖ Under the scheme, a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
- ❖ The government will bear all the expenses of the NRIs, including the airfare from their country of residence for the 25 days nationwide tour program.
- ❖ Indian-origin people between 45 to 65 yrs are eligible to apply. A group will be selected out of them with first preference given to people from 'Girmitiya countries' such as Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica.

NITI Aayog Organises Fin Tech 2019 Conclave

- ❖ NITI Aayog organised a day-long FinTech Conclave at Dr. Ambedkar International Center in New Delhi on March 25, 2019.
- ❖ The Conclave was inaugurated by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das.
- ❖ The objective of the conclave was to shape India's continued dominance in FinTech, suggest future strategy and policy efforts and deliberate steps for comprehensive financial inclusion

BioAsia 2019 Concluded

- ❖ The 16th edition of the BioAsia 2019 was held in Hyderabad, Telangana on February 25 to 27, 2019.
- ❖ It is Asia's largest Biotechnology and Life-sciences forum. The 3 days event was based on the theme 'Life Sciences 4.0 - Disrupt the Disruption'

3rd Edition of VIVID 2019 UnatKJU rated

- ❖ 3rd Edition of 'VIVID-Vision Insight and Voices as India goes Digital'- the District Informatics Officer (DIO) meet, was organised by National Informatics Centre (NIC) on February 21 to 22, 2019.
- ❖ Union Minister of Electronics and IT, Law and Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, inaugurated the event with conferring of NIC TechGov Awards and Swachhta Awards.
- ❖ He also released the Digital India Compendium and launched Digidhan Mitra Chatbot and Technology incubation and development of entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0) scheme.

2nd National Conference on 'SEIP' Held

- ❖ Second National Conference was organised on February 15, 2019 in New Delhi on 'Sustainable and Environment-friendly Industrial Production (SEIP) Project'.
- ❖ It was organised by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) under Indo-German Development Cooperation. SEIP is joint programme by MoEFCC and GIZ- a German development agency

World Sustainable Development Summit 2019

- ❖ The Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit 2019 in New Delhi. It was held from February 11-13, 2019.
- ❖ The theme for 2019 edition of the Summit is 'Attaining the 2030 Agenda: Delivering on Our Promise'.
- ❖ Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2019 - TERI honoured Prime Minister of Fiji Frank Bainimarama in recognition of his outstanding contributions towards sustainable development in Fiji.
- ❖ The WSDS is an annual flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute's (TERI) to provide a common platform to deliberate on issues related to sustainable development

Global Cooling Coalition Launched

- ❖ The Global Cooling Coalition was launched at the first Global Conference on Synergies between the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement held at Copenhagen, Denmark.
- ❖ The Global Cooling Coalition is supported by UN, Climate and Clean Air Coalition, the Kigali Cooling Efficiency Program and Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL)

Ireland Declare Climate Emergency

- ❖ Ireland has become the second country in the world to declare a climate and biodiversity emergency on May 11, 2019.
- ❖ It happened after the Oireachtas (Irish parliament) report on Climate Action was accepted by the government and opposition parties without a vote.
- ❖ Ireland followed in the footsteps of the United Kingdom, which declared a climate emergency earlier this month (May 2019)

World's Longest Salt Cave Unveiled

- ❖ The Israeli cave explorers discovered the world's longest salt cave named Malham near the Dead sea, beating the record-holder in Iran on March 28, 2019.
- ❖ The cave is spread in an area of 10 kilometers and it runs through the Israel's largest mountain, Mount Sodom and spills out to the southwest corner of the adjacent Dead Sea.

Italy Joined Belt and Road initiative

- ❖ Italy joined China's signature foreign policy Belt and Road initiative (BRI) and making it the first G7 country to officially do so. Already, China has signed BRI cooperation agreements with over 40 countries.
- ❖ The BRI, also known as the One Belt One Road (OBOR) or the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road, is a development strategy adopted by the Chinese government involving infrastructure development and investments in 152 countries and international organizations in Europe, Asia^iddle East, Latin America and Africa

Japan Notified New Imperial Era 'Reiwa'

- ❖ The government of Japan has announced the name of its new imperial era as "Reiwa". 'Reiwa' can be translated to "beautiful harmony".
- ❖ On May 1, 2019, Japanese Emperor Akihito's elder son, Prince Naruhito ascended to the Chrysanthemum Throne as the 126th Emperor of Japan.
- ❖ Each Japanese emperor's reign is given a name that is then used alongside the Western calendar to mark the years.
- ❖ The country's current era is named as 'Heisei' and ended on April 30, 2019 with Emperor Akihito's retirement

UK Becomes First Parliament to Declare Climate Emergency

- ❖ The UK Parliament passed a motion a national declaration of an Environment and Climate Emergency on May 1, 2019.

- ❖ Hence the Parliament of the UK has become the first parliament, or the UK has become the first country to pass a declaration on climate emergency.
- ❖ This move marks a serious emergency in dealing with climate change

Global Multidimensional poverty Index 2018

- ❖ According to the global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2018 on March 28, 2019, India poverty rate 28% in 2015-16. The report was developed by the United Nations Development Programme and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.
- ❖ According to report, India still had 364 million poor in 2015-16, the largest for any country, although it is down from 635 million in 2005-06. Globally the poverty rate was found to be 23%

World's Largest e-Waste Recycling Hub Opened

- ❖ The world's largest e-waste recycling plant has opened in Dubai Industrial Park, Dubai on March 26, 2019 by 'Enviroserve' company with a total cost of \$ 5 million.
- ❖ It will recycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), IT asset disposition (ITAD), refrigerant gas and specialized waste.
- ❖ The processing capacity of this recycling hub is 100,000 tonnes of total integrated waste (per year), of which 39,000 tonnes is e-waste.

World Happiness Report 2019

- ❖ The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) for the United Nations (UN) released the World Happiness Report on March 20, 2019 on International Day of Happiness.

World Air Quality Report 2018

- ❖ Gurugram in the National Capital Region (NCR) emerged as the most polluted region in the world in 2018 as per 2018 World Air Quality Report on March 5, 2019.
- ❖ As per the report, Delhi is the most polluted capital in the world. In the list of polluted cities, Delhi ranked 11th.
- ❖ Bangladesh became the most polluted country closely followed by Pakistan and India while Iceland, Finland, Australia, Estonia and Sweden were among the least polluted countries.
- ❖ The report was based on a new study by Swiss based company IQ Air AirVisual and non profit organization Greenpeace on information from over 3000 cities.

Multinational Maritime Exercise Cutlass Express 2019

- ❖ The annual multinational maritime exercise Cutlass Express was held from January 26 to February 6, 2019 in the vicinity of Djibouti, Mozambique and Seychelles.
- ❖ The exercise is aimed to improve law enforcement capacity, promote regional security and progress interoperability between the armed forces of the participating nations for the purpose of interdicting illegal maritime activity in the Western Indian Ocean.
- ❖ The annual Exercise Cutlass Express is sponsored by US Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF)

TAPI Gas Pipeline Meeting Held

- ❖ Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan -India (TAPI) gas pipeline meeting was held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan on May 19, 2019.
- ❖ The TAPI project envisages laying a 56-inch diameter and 1,680-kilometre pipeline with a capacity of transporting 33 billion cubic meters (BCM) of natural gas per annum from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Fazilka near the India-Pakistan border.
- ❖ The project is supported by the United States and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is acting as the facilitator and coordinator for the project.

Ram Nath Kovind Visited to Bolivia

- ❖ President Ram Nath Kovind was on a visit of Bolivia from March 28 to 30, 2019. This was the first visit by an Indian President to Bolivia
- ❖ During Ram Nath Kovind's visit to Bolivia, India and Bolivia have signed 8 MoUs.
- ❖ These MoUs were signed in the fields of culture, mining. Visa waiver arrangement for diplomats, the exchange between diplomatic academies, space, traditional medicine, establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT and Bi-Oceanic Railway project.
- ❖ President of Bolivia, Evo Morales Ayma honoured Ram Nath Kovind with the highest State Honour of Bolivia "Condor de Los Andes en el Grado de Gran Collar" in Santa Cruz.
- ❖ A Plaque of Mahatma Gandhi Hall was inaugurated by the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind at the Gabriel Rene Moreno University in Santa Cruz.

New Norms for FDI in e-Commerce

- ❖ The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), under Ministry of Commerce & Industry had reviewed guidelines for Foreign Direct Investment in E-commerce companies to protect the interests of domestic players. It will be effective from February 1, 2019.
- ❖ The Government has reviewed and made changes in consolidated FDI policy circular 2017 in order to provide clarity to FDI policy on e-commerce sector.

- ❖ 100% FDI under automatic route is permitted in marketplace model of e-commerce only. FDI is not permitted to inventory based model of e-commerce.

BoB Becomes the 3rd Largest Bank

- ❖ All branches of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank will function as branches of Bank of Baroda (BoB).
- ❖ The amalgamation of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda will be effective from April 1, 2019.
- ❖ With this amalgamation, Bank of Baroda will become the third largest bank in the India after State Bank of India and HDFC Bank and India's 2nd largest public sector bank behind SBI. » This is the first threeway merger of banks in India.
- ❖ The combined bank will have a geographical reach of more than 9,500 branches, more than 13,400 ATMs with 85,000 employees serving 120 million customers

World's First Living Organism Created

- ❖ "The researchers at Cambridge University have created the world's first living organism with a fully synthetic DNA structure on May 17, 2019.
- ❖ The microbe created is a strain of bacteria normally found in the soil and living in human intestines and requires much smaller set of genetic instructions as compared to natural microbes of its type.
- ❖ The main purpose of such creation was to show that life can survive with less genetjtxoding than it naturally occurs with.

Mega-Science Exhibition 'Vigyan Samagam' Held

- ❖ India's first global, Mega-Science Exhibition 'Vigyan Samagam' was held in Mumbai on May 8, 2019 at the Nehru Science Centre, Worli.
- ❖ In the span of 11 months, the exhibition will also be held in Bengaluru, Kolhata and New Delhi.
- ❖ This is jointly organised by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Department of Science and Technology (DST), the funding ' agencies of these projects, the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) and Ministry of Culture.

World's First Floating Nuclear Power Plant Tested

- ❖ Russia has successfully tested the World's First Floating Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), Akademik Lomonosov, a subsidiary of Rosatom nuclear corporation said.
- ❖ The floating nuclear power plant's two reactors were successfully brought up to 100% capacity on March 31, 2019. Reactors of the floating atomic block twre launched in November 2018

First Humanoid Police Robot in India Launched

- ❖ Kerala Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, inaugurated India's first Humanoid Police Robot named KP-BOT, ranked as Sub-Inspector (SI), at the Police Headquarters in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- ❖ With this, the Kerala State Police Headquarters has become the first police department in the country to use a robot for police work.
- ❖ The robot's gender is declared female keeping in mind women empowerment and gender equality. She will perform Front Office duties of the police headquarters like receiving visitors and direct them as required

World's First Female AI News Anchor Launched China

- ❖ Chinese news agency Xinhua unveiled the world's first female AI news anchor Xin Xiaomeng on February 19, 2019.
- ❖ She has been developed by Xinhua in collaboration with Sogou Inc, a search engine company. She was modelled after ^ real-life Xinhua news anchor Qu Meng.

ISRO Launched Young Scientist Programme

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched 'Yuva Vigyani Karyakram' on March 6, 2019.
- ❖ It is a 'Young Scientist Programme' for the School Children to be studying in the 9th standard.
- ❖ ISRO Scientists will impart basic knowledge on Space Technology, Space Science and Space Applications to the young ones with the intent of arousing their interest in the emerging areas of Space activities.
- ❖ The 'Catch them young' residential training programme will be of around two weeks duration during summer holidays with a proposal to select 3 students from each State and Union Territory, covering CBSE, ICSE and State syllabus

ISRO Launched India's 40th Communication Satellite GSAT-31

- ❖ India's GSAT-31 was successfully launched on February 6, 2019 by ISRO from Kourou launch base in French Guiana by Ariane-5 VA-247 launch vehicle. GSAT-31 is a telecommunications satellite designed and manufactured by the ISRO.
- ❖ It is India's 40th communication satellite and derives its heritage from ISROs earlier INSAT/GSAT satellite series

Satellites Microsat-R and Kalamsat Launched

- ❖ India successfully launched military satellite Microsat-R and students-built nano-satellite Kalamsat-V2 on January 24, 2019 from the First Launch Pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota.

- ❖ PSLV-C44 successfully injected the 740-kg primary satellite Microsat-R and 1.2 kg Kalamsat-V2 into their designated orbits. Microsat-R is a small Indian earth observation satellite built for the Indian military Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).
- ❖ Kalamsat, a 10-CM size cube students' payload has been developed by college students and Chennai-based organisation Space Kidz India. It is lightest satellite of India. Kalamsat is the first satellite to use PSLV-C44's fourth stage (PS4), as platform to orbit around the earth

ISRO's UNNATI Programme Inaugurated

- ❖ Minister of State in Department of Space Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the 1st batch of UNNATI programme of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Bengaluru, Karnataka on January 17, 2019. The full form of UNNATI is Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly and Training programme.
- ❖ It has been launched by ISRO as part of initiative by United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE - 50)

ISRO Inaugurated Human Space Flight Centre

- ❖ Dr. K. Sivan, Chairman of ISRO, inaugurated Human Space Flight Centre on January 30, 2019 at ISRO Headquarter campus in Bengaluru. HSFC will be responsible for implementation of Gaganyaan Project.
- ❖ India's first manned mission was announced on August 15, 2018 by ISRO and it is set to happen by 2022 which is going to be the 75th year of Independence,

First Real Image of Black Hole

- ❖ An international team of astronomers announced on April 11, 2019 that it had successfully captured the first-ever image of a black hole.
- ❖ The image was released during a press event at the National Science Foundation in Washington, DC Press events were also held in several other world cities. The picture shows the black hole having a dark center, encircled by a bright orange and yellow ring spreading outward.
- ❖ The image was captured by the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), a network of eight linked telescopes. Until now, every image of a black hole has been an artist's impression.

About Black Hole

- ❖ Black holes are extraordinary cosmic objects with enormous masses but extremely compact sizes. A black hole is an extremely dense object from which no light can escape.

- ❖ Anything that comes within a black hole's 'event horizon,' its point of no return, will be consumed, never to re-emerge, because of the black hole's unimaginably strong gravity.
- ❖ By its very nature, a black hole cannot be seen, but the hot disk of material that encircles it shines bright Against a bright backdrop, such as a disk, a black hole appears to cast a shadow.

Mission Shakti

- ❖ India announced the successful launch of the India's first Anti-satellite weapons (A-SAT) on March 27, 2019. The interceptor was able to strike a test satellite at a 300 km altitude in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), thus successfully testing its ASAT missile.
- ❖ The interceptor was launched from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Chandipur, Odisha and hit its target Microsat-R after 168 seconds.

About Mission Shakti

- ❖ India has long developed the ability to intercept incoming missiles. In 2011, a modified Prithvi missile mimicked the trajectory of a ballistic missile with a 600-km range.
- ❖ The DRDO-developed Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) Interceptor Missile successfully engaged an Indian orbiting target satellite in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) in a 'Hit' to Kill' mode.
- ❖ The interceptor missile was a three-stage missile with two solid rocket boosters.

About the LEO

- ❖ The Indian satellite that was shot down was a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite. These are satellites roughly at an altitude of 2000 km from the earth and that's the region where the majority of satellites are concentrated.

India's Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Missile Program

- ❖ India has become the fourth country in the world after successfully tested its Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Missile on March 27, 2019 by destroying a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite.
- ❖ US first tested ASAT technology in 1958, followed by USSR in 196a and China in 2007. In 2018, Russia tested its ASAT missile.
- ❖ The Indian ASAT test has destroyed the Microsat-R built by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ❖ India's ASAT programme, first time acknowledged in 2012 when an Agni V missile's parabolic trajectory tested to reach up to 600 km in space.
- ❖ Mission Shakti is special and unique for its complex launch configuration. It was conducted at extremely high speed with remarkable precision.

CCMB Scientists Discovered a New Enzyme

- ❖ The Center for Cell and Molecular Biology (CCMB) scientists have discovered a new enzyme called Murein EndopeptidaseK while studying the cell growth in bacteria.
- ❖ This new discovery has paved the way for a new drug treatment that prevents anti-bacterial resistance by existing antibiotics.
- ❖ It would act on the protein of cell wall in Escherichia coli (E. coli), a bacterium found in the lower intestine of warm-blooded organisms

TN Defence Industrial Corridor Inaugurated

- ❖ Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Tamil Nadu (TN) Defence Industrial Corridor in the Tiruchirapalli district of Tamil Nadu on January 20, 2019.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor is India's second defence industrial corridor after the first one was launched in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh August 2018.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu corridor has six nodes at Trichy, Salem, Hosur, Kovai, Madurai and Chennai

Test Flight of ABHYAS Drone

- ❖ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the test flight of ABHYAS drone on May 14, 2019 from Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Balasore, Odisha.
- ❖ ABHYAS drone is a High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) designed for autonomous flight with the help of an autopilot.
- ❖ ABHYAS is being built by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of the DRDO for the Indian Armed Forces

India Successfully Tested Missile 'Nirbhay'

- ❖ DRDO successfully test-fired the long-range sub-sonic cruise missile 'Nirbhay' from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, off the Odisha coast on April 15, 2019.
- ❖ The state-of-the-art, all-weather Nirbhay cruise missile is the country's first indigenously designed and developed long-range cruise missile that can be launched from multiple platforms

DRDO Conducts Successful Test-Firing of MPATGM

- ❖ The indigenously developed, low weight, fire and forget 'Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile' (MPATGM) was successfully test fired by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on March 14, 2019 in the ranges of Rajasthan desert.

- ❖ This was the second successful testing of the missile. The first test was conducted on March 13, 2019.
- ❖ The third-generation ATGM, having fire and forget capability has been incorporated with advanced features including state-of-the-art imaging Infrared Radar (HR) Seeker

Anti-tank Missile 'HeliNa' Successfully Test-fired

- ❖ India test-fired Helina, a helicopter- launched version of the Nag anti-tank guided missile, with a hit range of 7-8 km, from the Odisha Coast on February 8, 2019.
- ❖ Helina was launched from an Army chopper and the weapon system was tested for its full range near the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur in the Balasore District of Odisha.
- ❖ Developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Helina is said to be one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world. It is guided by an Infrared Imaging Seeker (HR) operating in the lock-on-before-launch mode.

Exercise Vayu Shakti 2019

- ❖ The Indian Air Force on February 16, 2019 carried out the Exercise Vayu Shakti-2019 involving almost all variants of its fighter jets and attack helicopters, in a fire power demonstration in Polhran, Rajasthan.
- ❖ In the Vayu Shakti exercise, the IAF showcased fire power capability of indigenously- developed platforms like Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and efficacy of the Akash surface-to-air missile and Astra air-to-air missile

Military Exercise 'Bold Kurukshetra 2019'

- ❖ The 12th edition of the India Singapore Bilateral Defence Exercise Bold Kurukshetra 2019 is being held at Babina Military Station in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh from April 8'11, 2019.
- ❖ Aim of the exercise to help the Contingents of both the participating nations to attain high level of interoperability through mutual understanding and familiarisation with each other's operational procedures and equipment.

Exercise SEA VIGIL Conducted

- ❖ Indian Navy commenced largest ever coastal defence exercise SEA VIGIL in Indian Coast on January 22,2019.
- ❖ It covered 7516.6km Indian Coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India.
- ❖ Sea Vigil Exercise was a tri service exercise TROPEX (Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise) which is conducted by Indian Navy in every 2 years. The

aim of the Exercise Sea Vigil is to validate the effectiveness of measures taken since terror attack in Mumbai on 26/11

'INS KOHASSA' Commissioned

- ❖ Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned new Naval Air Base 'INS KOHASSA' at Diglipur, Andaman and Nicobar Islands on January 24, 2019.
- ❖ INS Kohassa being the third air base in Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be used for surveillance of Chinese ships and submarines entering the Indian Ocean through Malacca Strait

CHINOOK (CH-47F) HELICOPTERS INDUCTED IN IAF

- ❖ Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa on March 25, 2019 inducted four CH-47 Chinook heavy-lift choppers into the Indian Air Force in Chandigarh.
- ❖ A multi-mission heavy-lift transport helicopter. Chinook will be used to move troops, artillery, ammunition, barrier materials, supplies and equipment on the battlefield.
- ❖ Apart from military operations, Chinook can also be used for medical evacuation, disaster relief, search and recovery, fire-fighting and civil development.
- ❖ It is highly manoeuvrable, which makes it suitable for operating in tough, dense terrain. Its 24 x 7, all-weather operational capabilities are crucial for Indian Air Force.
- ❖ India has paid close to \$ 1.5 billion for 15 of these helicopters which would be also used at high altitude locations with India and Pakistan.

Australian Open 2019

- ❖ Australian Open 2019 tennis tournament took place at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia from January 14 to 27, 2019. It was the 107th edition of the Australian Open, the 51st in the Open Era, and the first Grand Slam of the year. The tournament consists of events for professional players in singles, doubles and mixed doubles.

Men's Singles

- ❖ Serbia's Novak Djokovic defeated Spain's Rafael Nadal 6-3, 6-2, 6-3, to win his 7th Australian Open men's singles title at Melbourne on January 27, 2019.

Women's Singles

- ❖ Japan's Naomi Osaka defeated Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova 7-6 (2), 5-7, 6-4 in the women's single final to win 2019 Australian Open title at Melbourne. This is her second major Grand Slam title. She also won the 2018 US Open title where she defeated Serena Williams

French Open

12th French Open for King of Clay - Rafael Nadal

Rafael Nadal was the two-time defending champion and won a record-extending twelfth French Open men's singles title, defeating Dominic Thiem in a rematch of the 2018 final, 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, 6-1. By winning the title, Nadal broke the all-time record for the most singles titles won by a player at the same Grand Slam tournament - a record he previously co-held with Margaret Court, who won the Australian Open eleven times.

Nadal has won **18** Grand Slam singles titles, Roger Federer **20**.

Simona Halep of Australia was the defending champion, but lost to Amanda Anisimova in the quarterfinals. Anisimova was the first player, male or female, born in the 21st century to reach the quarterfinals and semifinals of a Grand Slam tournament.

ISSF Munich World Cup 2019

- ❖ Saurabh Chaudhary won the gold medal in 10m Air Pistol Event at the ISS Shooting World Cup in Munich on May 27, 2019.
- ❖ Indian shooter Rahi Sarnobat also bagged the top podium spot in the 25 metre pistol event at the ISSF World Cup 2019 in Munich.
- ❖ With this, the total gold won by India has now reached three. The first gold was won by Apurvi Chandela in 10 m air rifle event.
- ❖ The 2019 ISSF World Cup is the annual edition of the ISSF World Cup in the Olympic shooting events, governed by the International Shooting Sport Federation.

ISSF Rifle/Pistol World Cup 2019

- ❖ India topped the medals tally in International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup 2019 by bagging total 4 medals comprising 3 Gold and 1 Silver at the Beijing edition of the Rifle/Pistol event.
- ❖ Gold Medals won by Indian Shooters- Anjum Moudgil and Divyansh Singh Panwar in 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team competition, Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary in 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team Pistol event and Abhishek Verma in Men's 10m Air Pistol event.
- ❖ Host country China secured the second position with 5 medals

ISSF World Cup 2019

- ❖ The 2019 ISSF World Cup was held from February 20 to 28, 2019 in New Delhi by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF).
- ❖ India finished joint 1st with Hungary on Medal Tally list with 3 medals (all gold).

- ❖ Three gold medals from India are - Women's 10m Air Rifle event - Apurvi Chandela, Men's 10m Air Pistol event - Saurabh Chaudhary and 10-metre Air Pistol Mixed Team Event - Sourabh Chaudhary and Manu Bhaker.

Cannes International Open Trophy

- ❖ Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta won the Cannes International Open held in Cannes, France

Boxing World Cup 2019

- ❖ Meena Kumari Maisnam from Manipur claimed the Gold medal in the 54 kg category at the Boxing World Cup at Cologne in Germany on April 14, 2019.
- ❖ India bagged a Gold, two Silver and two bronze medals at the Boxing World Cup. Sakshi and Pwilao Basumatary clinched Silver medals. Pinki Rani and Parveen clinched Bronze medals. Cologne Boxing World Cup is earlier known as Chemistry Cup.

Asian Athletics Championships 2019

- ❖ The 23rd edition of the Asian Athletics Championships was held from April 21 to 24, 2019 at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha, Qatar.
- ❖ India secured fourth position in the overall medal table by tinning 17 medals including 3 Gold, 7 Silver and 7 Bronze.
- ❖ Bahrain topped the medal table with 22 [11-7-4] medals while the host nation Qatar was placed sixth in the medal table with 6 medals

Smriti Mandhana

India's Smriti Mandhana topped in the ICC ODI batswomen rankings on February 3, 2019. She grabbed the first position after the match against New Zealand. Ellyse Perry from Australia followed her in the second position.

Mithali Raj

- ❖ Indian Women's Cricket Team One-day International (ODI) and Tests captain Mithali Raj became the first female cricketer to play 200 ODIs on February 1, 2019.
- ❖ The 36-year-old achieved the milestone during the third ODI against New Zealand at Seddon Park in Hamilton.

Vinesh Phogat

- ❖ Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat from Haryana, became the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award on January 18, 2019.

- ❖ She was nominated due to her comeback after battling a long injury lay-off to win a gold medal at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and Jakarta Asian Games.

MC Mary Kom

- ❖ MC Mary Kom attained the first position in the latest women ranking released by the International Boxing Association (AIBA) on January 10, 2019 in the Light Fly 45-48 kilograms category with 1700 points.
- ❖ Ukraine's Hanna Okhota ranked number 2 in the ranking released by AIBA with 1100 points.
- ❖ Mary Kom has already achieved the feat to become the first woman boxer to win six world championships.

Special Olympics World Games 2019

- ❖ The 15th Special Olympics World Summer Games 2019 was a multi-sport event for athletes with intellectual disabilities in the tradition of the Special Olympics movement. It was held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates from March 14 to 21, 2019.
- ❖ The host UAE had introduced the term people of determination as part of a new National Strategy for Empowering People with Disabilities.

Highlight of India's Achievements

- ❖ Indian powerlifters bagged the maximum number of medals – 20 gold, 33 silver and 43 bronze. Roller Skating earned India 49 medals – 13 gold, 20 silver and 16 bronze.
- ❖ In cycling, the Indians won 11 gold, 14 silver and 20 bronze to total 45 medals, while the country's track and field athletes returned with 39 medals – 5 gold, 24 silver and 10 bronze.

Khelo India Youth Games 2019 Concluded

- ❖ Second edition of Khelo India Youth Games concluded at the Shri Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Pune in the presence of Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar.
- ❖ The game was held between 9 to 20 January, 2019 in Pune. At the Games, hosts Maharashtra topped the medals tally with 85 Gold, while Haryana was second and Delhi on third.
- ❖ Maharashtra won 228 medals with 85 gold, 62 silver and 81 bronze. The performances of the athletes at the Games had underlined the Prime Minister's idea of "5 minute aur" for sports.

Andhra's Polavaram Wrgation Project Created Guinness World Records

- ❖ The Polavaram irrigation project in Andhra Pradesh created 2 Guinness world records for 'pouring the highest amount of concrete' and 'largest continuous concrete pour in 24 hours' on January 9, 2019.
- ❖ The Polavaram irrigation project is located in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. The project has entered the Guinness World Records for pouring 32100 cubic meters of concrete non-stop in 24 hours.

Arunachal has Highest 35% of India's Graphite Deposits

- ❖ According to Geological Survey of India (GSI) report, about 35% of India's total Graphite reserves are found in Arunachal Pradesh. This is the highest found in the country.
- ❖ The GSI presented the data during its annual interactive meeting with the Department of Geology and Mining & Industries, Government of Arunachal Pradesh in Itanagar on May 18, 2019.

Universal Old Age Pension Scheme in Bihar

- ❖ Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced Mukhya Mantri Vriddha Pension Yojana (MMVPY) for all caste, community, religion, except for those who are retired from government organizations.
- ❖ The scheme will come into its enforcement from April 1, 2019.
- ❖ The scheme facilitates the amount of ₹ 400 monthly pension for all in the state above the age of 60 years who are not getting pension from the government.
- ❖ Other than this scheme, Bihar's govt, has also proclaimed a pension of ₹ 6000 for journalists above 60 years of age, which will get implemented from April 1, 2019

Kerala Allows Women for Agastyaarkoodam Trek

- ❖ The Kerala Forest Department opened online registration for women to trek Agastyaarkoodam.
- ❖ Agastyaarkoodam is a pilgrimage centre within the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary which had an unofficial ban on women entry until the Kerala High Court ruled out the gender-based restriction in November 2018.
- ❖ The annual trek will be held from January 14 to March 1, 2019

Odisha Approved 'Khushi Yojana'

- ❖ The Odisha cabinet has approved 'Khushi Yojana' to provide free sanitary napkins to around 17.25 lakh school girls from Class VI to XII across the state on February 23, 2019.
- ❖ Free sanitary napkins will be provided to 17.25 lakh adolescent girl students of Class 6 to 9 studying in government and non-government aided schools of the state.

- ❖ It will also cover Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawaharlal Navodaya Vidyalayas. Each girl student will be provided with 18 bdtless sanitary napkins per month

New Announcement Under Mission Shakti in Odisha

- ❖ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced interest-free loans of up to ₹ 3 lakh for 6 lakh women self-help groups (WSHG) benefitting about 70 lakh women in Odisha.
- ❖ This was announced at the 'Mission Shakti' convention attended by about 50000 women on January 5, 2019. The 'Mission Shakti' programme was launched in 2001

Sikkim CM Launched "Onefamily, One Job' Scheme

- ❖ Sikkim Chief Minister Pawon Kumar Chamling has launched the 'One Family One job' scheme which entitles one government job for every family in the state.
- ❖ At a 'Rojgar Mela' (employment fair) organised at the Patjor stadium in Gangtok, over 11772 unemployed youths were handed out appointment letters on January 12, 2019. Sikkim has become the first state in the country to carry out such an exclusive programme for the people who would now be entitled to state government employee benefits.

'Tamil Nadu Released startup and Innovative Policy 2018-23

- ❖ Tamil Nadu government released 'Startup & Innovation policy 2018-23' on January 18, 2019.
- ❖ Mission of policy' is to provide an innovative ecosystem for startups registered in the State and to make Tamil Nadu a 'Global Innovation hub for startups' by 2023.
- ❖ The government formed a 5-point plan to implement the policies which include creating ecosystems, ensure resources availability for Startup ecosystem, enable skill development and job creation, support social entrepreneurship and establish global accessibility and partnerships,

Indus River Dolphin Declared Punjab's State Aquatic Animal

- ❖ Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh declared Indus River Dolphins Punjab State Aquatic Animal on February 2, 2019.
- ❖ Indus River Dolphin is one of the rarest mammal and only found in Beas River. In Punjab, the Indus River Dolphins are found mainly in the Sutlej and Beas rivers

FeFA Girls Initiative Launched

- ❖ At Initiative named 'FeFA Girls' has been launched in Telangana on March 17, 2019 to tackle a low iron level and malnutrition among adolescent girls of the state.
- ❖ The initiative has been launched by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

FeFA Girls (with Fe being the scientific symbol for iron and FA for Adolescent) initiative will target girls in the age group of 16 to 19 years.

Krishak Bandhu Scheme of West Bengal Declared

- ❖ The government of West Bengal has declared the Krishak Bandhu scheme on January 2, 2019 to address the farm distress in the state. The West Bengal government will issue yearly financial help of ₹5000 per acre in two instalments, including 1st during Kharif & 2nd during Rabi season.
- ❖ The scheme also delivers for a life insurance cover of ₹200000 in case of death, irrespective of the reason, of an earning farmer aged between 18-60 years.
- ❖ Framers are not needed to pay any premium to gain the insurance advantage.

Jaganmohan Reddy

- ❖ YSR Congress Party Leader YS Jaganmohan Reddy took oath as the new Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on May 30, 2019.
- ❖ Reddy is the second Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh post its bifurcation, after N Chandrababu Naidu.
- ❖ The YSR Congress bagged 151 of the 175 seats in the state Assembly

Pema Khandu

- ❖ BJP leader Pema Khandu, took oath as the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh on May 29, 2019. BJP had won 41 seats in the 60-member Arunachal Pradesh Assembly. On the other hand, the Janata Dai-United (JDU) won seven seats, while Congress and National People's Party (NPP) could manage to win only four seats each

GS Lakshmi

- ❖ "GS-Lakshmi has been appointed to the ICC International Panel of Match Referees on May 13,2019, becoming eligible to referee international matches with immediate effect.
- ❖ With this. She has become the first ever woman to be inducted to Match Referees panel of ICC.
- ❖ Lakshmi first officiated in domestic women's cricket in 2008-09 and has supervised 3 women's ODI matches and 3 women's T20I matches.

Naveen Patnaik

- ❖ Naveen Patnaik, took oath as the Chief Minister of Odisha in Bhubaneswar on May 29, 2019 for the consecutive 5th time.
- ❖ Odisha Governor Prof. Ganeshi Lai administered the oath-taking ceremony. In addition, 11 Cabinet Ministers and 9 other Ministers also took the oath.

MadanLokur

- ❖ Madan B. Lokur, Retired Indian Judge, has been appointed to the Supreme Court of Fiji as a judge of its non-resident panel. He will join the office from August 15, 2019 and has been appointed for a term of 3 years.

Pinaki Chandra Ghose

- ❖ Former Supreme Court Judge Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose appointed as the country's first Lokpal by President Ram Nath Kovind on March 20, 2019.
- ❖ Pinaki Chandra Ghose is serving as a member of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) since June 29, 2017. He is a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India.
- ❖ Prior to his elevation to the Supreme Court, he had served as Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, and before that, as a Justice of the Calcutta High Court

Sudhir Bhargava

- ❖ The government has appointed Sudhir Bhargava the 9th Chief Information Commissioner along with four new Information Commissioners in the CIC on January 1, 2019.
- ❖ CIC is the highest appeal body under the Right to Information Act

Joko Widodo

- ❖ Joko Widodo has been re-elected as Indonesia's president on May 19, 2019. According to the elections commission, Widodo and his vice-presidential running mate Ma'ruf Amin won the election by a 55.5% to 44.5% margin over Subianto and Sandiaga Uno.
- ❖ On October 20, 2014, Joko Widodo (also known as Jokowi) became the seventh president of Indonesia

Cyril Ramaphosa

- ❖ South African President Cyril Ramaphosa's ruling ANC won re-election with an absolute majority in parliament on May 15, 2019.
- ❖ The African National Congress (ANC) held a comfortable lead with 57.73%.
- ❖ President Ramaphosa took over last year when the ANC forced then- president Jacob Zuma to resign after nine years dominated by corruption allegations and economic decline

David Malpass

- ❖ "Davis Malpass was unanimously chosen as the next president of the World Bank on April 9, 2019.

- ❖ He succeeds Jim Yong-Kim who stepped down on February 1, 2019.
- ❖ He was senior Treasury official and staunch supporter of President Donald Trump.
- ❖ Kristalina Georgieva was the interim President of the World Bank during this period from February to March. She is the chief executive officer of the World Bank

Zuzana Caputova

- ❖ Zuzana Caputova won Slovakia's presidential election on March 30, 2019 and become Slovakia's first female president.
- ❖ She is lawyer and she will succeed Andrej Kiska.
- ❖ She was honoured with the Goldman Environmental Award in 2016 for her strong and resolute leadership regarding the Pezinok landfill affair, Caputova.

Poonam Khetrapal Singh

- ❖ Poonam Khetrapal Singh has been appointed as the Regional Director of the South-East Asia region of the World Health Organisation (WHO) for a second 5-year term.
- ❖ The WHO Executive Board unanimously re-appointed Khetrapal Singh on January 26, 2019 after she was unanimously nominated by 11 member-countries of the region for another five years.
- ❖ She is the first woman to become Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia Region

Manu Sawhney

- ❖ The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the appointment of Manu Sawhney as its new Chief Executive Officer.
- ❖ He will replace David Richardson as the CEO in July after the ICC men's World Cup (to be held in England)

Nicolas Maduro

- ❖ Nicolas Maduro was sworn in as Venezuela's President for the 2nd term for a new 6-year term on January 11, 2019. He won the presidential elections in May 2018 with 67.84% of the votes cast.
- ❖ Venezuela is one of the world's largest oil producers and holds the presidency of oil cartel Opec until 2025

Jair Bolsonaro

- ❖ Jair Bolsonaro was sworn in as Brazil's 42nd president on January 3, 2019. He won the presidential election by a wide margin against Fernando Haddad of the left-wing Workers' Party

Sheikh Hasina

- ❖ PM Sheikh Hasina's alliance won Bangladesh's election with a thumping majority giving her a third straight term.
- ❖ The alliance dominated by her Awami League, won 287 of the 298 seats for which results have been declared.
- ❖ The main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which boycotted the last poll in 2014, won just 6 seats

Volodymyr Oleksandrovych Zelensky

Volodymyr Oleksandrovych Zelensky is a Ukrainian politician, screenwriter, actor, comedian, and director serving as the 6th and incumbent President of Ukraine since 20 May 2019.

Obituary

MB Balakrishnan

- ❖ Former South Asian Games gold-medalist and Swimming Champion MB Balakrishnan passed away in road accident in Chennai on May 14, 2019.
- ❖ The Tamil Nadu based player won the 100 m and 200 m backstroke events at the South Asian Games.
- ❖ He was a former 50 metre national record holder.

Hiralal Yadav

- ❖ The veteran Bhojpuri vocal artist Hiralal Yadav passed away in Varanasi on May 12, 2019.
- ❖ Yadav was a well known Bhojpuri folk singer from the 'Birha' genre. He received the Padma Shri award in January 2019. In 2015, he was felicitated with the Yash Bharti award for his contribution in the field of music

Thoppil Mohamed Meeran

- ❖ Noted Tamil author and Sahitya Akademi winner Thoppil Mohammed Meeran passed away on May 11, 2019.
- ❖ Meeran authored the novels Oru Kadalora Kiramathin Kathai (1988, The Story of Sea Side Village), Turaimugam (1991, Harbour), Koonan Thoppu (1993, The Grove of a Hunchback), Saivu Narkkali (1995, The Reclining Chair) and Anju vannam them (2011).
- ❖ In 1997, Saaivu Naarkkaali bagged him the Sahitya Akademi Award

Amar Paul

- ❖ An eminent Bengali folk singer, Amar Paul passed away at Kolkata, West Bengal at the age of 97 on April 20, 2019.
- ❖ He was awarded by Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to the folk music of West Bengal.
- ❖ He honored with numerous other awards including West Bengal State Academy of Dance, Music and Visual Arts, and Lalan Puraskar for folk music

Kamakant Achrekar

- ❖ Dronacharya awardee cricket coach Kamakant Achrekar, who coached Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar passed away in Mumbai on January 3, 2019.
- ❖ Besides Tendulkar, he also coached some prominent players in Vinod Kambli, Pravin Amre, Sameer Dighe and Balwinder Singh Sandhu.
- ❖ He was bestowed with country's fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri (in 2010) and Dronacharya Award (for Outstanding Coaches in Sports and Games) in 1990

Bhawana Kanth

- ❖ Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth has become the first woman pilot of the Indian Air Force on May 22, 2019 to qualify to undertake combat missions on a fighter jet.
- ❖ She is from the first batch of women fighter pilots of the IAF. Three women – Kanth, Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh – were commissioned as flying officers in July 2016

Dia Mirza

- ❖ Indian actress Dia Mirza has been named as one of the 17 advocates for the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by United Nations on May 12, 2019.
- ❖ The new class of 'SDG Advocates' are 17 influential public figures 'committed to raising awareness, inspiring greater ambition and pushing for faster action on the SDGs', which were adopted by world leaders on September 25, 2015.
- ❖ SDGs is a set of 17 Universal Goals, that seeks to meet urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing our world. For ex-Poverty, Hunger, Education, Climate Change, Peace etc.
- ❖ Alibaba Group founder and Executive Chairman Jack Ma, has been an SDG Advocate since 2016

Lydian Nadhaswaram

- ❖ A teen pianist from Chennai Lydian Nadhaswaram won a million dollars for his performance on the American reality show 'The World's Best' on March 18, 2019.

- ❖ Lydian impressed the judges and the audience by playing two piano medleys in the finale of the show.
- ❖ The young prodigy also made his debut on The Ellen Show.
- ❖ Lydian Nadhaswaram is a student of the Chennai-based KM Music Conservatory which is run by AR Rahman in Chennai.

Abhinandan Varthaman

- ❖ Indian Air Force (IAF) pilot Abhinandan Varthaman returned by Pakistan to India on March 1, 2019.
- ❖ Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman was captured by Pakistani military on February 27, 2019 after his MiG-21 jet was shot down in PoK (Pakistan occupied Kashmir).
- ❖ Tensions between India and Pakistan flared up when 40 CRPF personnel were killed and many injured on February 14 in one of the deadliest terror attacks in Pulwama district.
- ❖ After the pilot's release, the Pakistan Foreign Office^scribed him as a Prisoner of War

Hina Jaiswal

- ❖ Flight Lieutenant Hina Jaiswal from Chandigarh, became the First Indian Woman Flight Engineer of the Indian Air Force (IAF) on February 17, 2019.
- ❖ A Flight Engineer is the member of an aircraft's flight crew who monitors and operates its complex aircraft systems requiring a specialised skill set. The Flight Engineer branch was opened to women officers in 2018

Satyarup Siddhanta

- ❖ Software engineer and mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta became the first Indian and youngest man to climb the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents on January 15, 2019.
- ❖ This feat was attained after he conquered Antartica's highest point, Mount Sidley.
- ❖ In 2018, Satyarup had scaled the highest volcanic peak in North America, Pico de Orizaba

D. Gukesh

- ❖ Tamil Nadu boy D. Gukesh became the youngest Grand master in India and second in the world.
- ❖ He achieved this feat by beating DK Sharma at 17th Delhi International Open Chess tournament in Delhi on January 15, 2019. D. Gukesh became India's 59th Grand Master. Sergey Karjakin of Ukraine is the world's youngest Grand master.

Arunima Sinha

- ❖ Arunima Sinha became the world's first female amputee on January 3, 2019 to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak of Antarctica.

Amartya Sen

- ❖ The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) has created a new academic position in honor of India-born philosopher and economist Amartya Sen, called as Amartya Sen Chair in Inequality Studies.
- ❖ The Nobel laureate Sen won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998. He served as a professor in the economics department at the LSE institute from 1971-82

Krishna Kumari Kohli

- ❖ Krishna Kumari Kohli has been appointed as the first female senator of Pakistan from the Hindu Dalit community. She is also the first Thari Hindu woman to be elected to the Pakistan senate. She chaired the session

Suman Kumari

- ❖ Suman Kumari became the first Hindu woman to be appointed as a civil judge in Pakistan after passing an examination for induction of judicial officers on January 29, 2019.
- ❖ The first judge from the Hindu community was Justice Rana Bhagwandas, who served in Pakistan from 2005-2007

Tashigang (Himachal Pradesh)

- ❖ Tashigang at an altitude of 15,256 feet has now become the world's highest polling station in the sleepy hamlet of Buddhist-dominated Lahaul-Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ This polling station covers two villages of Tashigang and Gete. As per the revised electoral rolls, the two villages have 48 voters, of which 30 are men and 18 women.
- ❖ Tashigang polling station falls in one of the 17 assembly segments that form the Mandi Lok Sabha seat

Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh)

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for setting up of a Centre for Disability Sports at Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh on March 3, 2019.
- ❖ It will be the first ever specialized sports training facilities for Divyangjan in India. The Centre will be registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

Hailakandi (Assam)

- ❖ Assam's Hailakandi has become the top aspirational district among the 112 aspirational districts of the country.
- ❖ It is mentioned in Delta ranking report released by NITI Aayog on March 1, 2019.
- ❖ For securing first rank as aspirational district, Hailakandi will be given an allocation of ₹10 crore.
- ❖ Hailakandi in Assam has made a giant leap from 52nd position to number 1 position on the basis of its performance during November- December 2018 and January 2019

Tehri (Uttarakhand)

- ❖ A Himalayan Cloud Observatory is set up in Tehri district with a motive to forecast and monitor cloudburst incidents in the Himalayan region and help minimising the damage.
- ❖ This is the 2nd observatory in the country to monitor cloud activities by the IIT Kanpur that can function in high-altitudes.

Narayanpet and Mulugu (Telangana)

- ❖ The Government of Telangana, on February 16, 2019, issued a notification about creation of two new districts namely, Narayanpet and Mulugu.
- ❖ Mulugu district has been carved out from the existing Jayashankar Bhupalpally district and Narayanpet district has been carved out from the present Mahbubnagar district.

Kallakurichi (Tamil Nadu)

- ❖ Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K, Palaniswam announced the formation of a new district Kallakurichi by bifurcating Villupuram district which is one of the large districts in the State.
- ❖ With this, the state will now have 33 districts. The newly formed region is renowned for its rice productions

Shanghai (China)

- ❖ China's Shanghai claimed to have the world's first district with 5G coverage and a broadband gigabit network on March 30, 2019
- ❖ Shanghai's 5G network is backed by state-run telecom carrier China Mobile.

Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

- ❖ Riode Janeiro the capital city of Brazil has been named as the World Capital of Architecture for 2020 by the UNESCO.

- ❖ Rio de Janeiro will be the first city to receive the title under 'World Capital of Architecture initiative' launched together by UNESCO and the UIA in November 2018. Rio defeated Paris and Melbourne in the race

Astana (Kazakhstan)

- ❖ Kazakhstan has renamed its capital Astana on March 20, 2019 to Nursultan to honour outgoing leader Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- ❖ Nursultan Nazarbayev has served nearly 30 years as president of Kazakhstan. The announcement regarding this was made by the new president Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and was approved by the parliament of Kazakhstan

Life Time Recognition Award

- ❖ Prof N Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), has been conferred with the 'Life Time Recognition Award' by the Confederation of Horticulture Associations of India on May 28, 2019.
- ❖ Award given during the International Conference on Innovative horticulture at Pantnagar, Uttarakhand.
- ❖ He was recognised for his outstanding contribution in the field of horticulture and academic leadership focussed on human resource development in agriculture

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award

- ❖ Sunit Kumar Gautam has been honoured with the 'Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award for the year 2018-19 for his book 'Samvidhan Kavya.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Nobel Award

- ❖ Sudhanshu Kumar, the founder of digital Sukoon has been honoured with the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Nobel Award by International Human Rights Council at Hotel Sea Princess Jahu Mumbai
- ❖ Digital Sukoon is a Mumbai based Digital solutions agency.

Presidential Award of Maharshi Badrayan Vyas Samman

- ❖ Vice-President M. Vainkaiya Naidu gave the Presidential Award of Maharshi Badrayan Vyas Samman to Dr. Gyanaditya Shakya in New Delhi on April 5, 2019. He has conferred the award for his outstanding contribution in the field of Pali language and literature. Currently, Dr. Shakya is working as an Assistant Professor in Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman

- ❖ NRI Scientist Dr. Rajendra Joshi conferred with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind on March 31, 2019

Vyas Samman 2018

- ❖ Hindi writer Leeladhar Jagudi honoured with Vyas Samman 2018 on March 15, 2019 for his collection of poems 'Jitne Log Utne Prem' published in 2013. The award carries an amount of ₹ 4 lakhs and it was started by KK Birla foundation in 1991.

Nari Shakti Puraskar

- ❖ Renowned Kathak dancer Seema Mehta has been conferred the 'Nari Shakti Puraskar' award for her contribution towards women empowerment over the last 15 years.
- ❖ She received the award from President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi as part of the Women's Day celebrations.
- ❖ Mehta, who began her journey in Kathak set up her dance school in Mumbai in 2010

National Water Awards 2018

- ❖ The-Union Minister for Water Resources, River development and rejuvenation Nitin Gadkari presented 82 National Water Awards 2018 in 14 categories in New Delhi on February 27, 2019.
- ❖ The department of Geology at Kakatiya University, Warangal (Telangana) received the best campus in India in terms of water usage.
- ❖ Madurai district received first prize for rejuvenations and creating new water bodies in the National Water Awards 2018. In best state category Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra
- ❖ Pradesh bagged first, second and third prizes for resource management in India respectively

Bhagwan Mahavir Ahimsa Puraskar

- ❖ Abhinandan Varthaman confirmed for the first ever 'Bhagwan Mahavir Ahimsa Puraskar' on March 5, 2019. The award has been instituted by the Akhil Bharatiya Digambar Jain Mahasamiti.
- ❖ Abhinandan is a wing-commander in the Indian Air Force, who was held captive by Pakistan

Future For Nature Award 2019

- ❖ Dr Divya Karnad, professor at Asoka University has won the prestigious Global Future For Nature Award 2019 for her work on marine conservation that included sustainable fishing of sharks and Olive Ridley sea turtles.

- ❖ She is the first Indian woman and the only second Indian to receive this honour. The Future For Nature Award is an international award to recognise tangible achievements in protecting wild animal and plant species.
- ❖ The first Indian to receive the award was Dr Charudutt Mishra.

Bharat Ratna 2019

President Ram Nath Kovind announced the recipients of Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award, they are former president Pranab Mukherjee, social activist Nanaji Deshmukh (posthumously) and musician Dr Bhupen Hazarika (posthumously) in New Delhi on January 25, 2019.

Rabindranath Tagore Award

President Ram Nath Kovind presented the Rabindranath Tagore Award on February 19, 2019 for Cultural Harmony for the year 2014, 2015 and 2016 at the Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, New Delhi.

The awardees were Shri Rajkumar Singhajit Singh for the year 2014, Chhayanaut (a cultural organization of Bangladesh) for the year 2015 and Shri Ram Sutar Vanji for the year for 2016. The Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony was instituted by the Government of India for promoting values of Cultural Harmony from 2012 and it is awarded annually and carries an amount of ₹1 crore.

4th Carnot Prize

Union Finance Minister Piyush Goyal received the Carnot prize on January 30, 2019 for his work towards sustainable energy solutions from Kleinman Center for Energy Policy University of Pennsylvania in New Delhi.

Padma Awards

- ❖ Some important winners of Padma Bhushan 2019 are Shri Mahashay Dharam Pal Gulati (MDH Masala)- Delhi, Shri Kariya Munda -Jharkhand, Shri Mohanlal Viswanathan Nair (Art-Acting-Film)-Kerala, Shri Kuldip Nayar (Posthumous) - Delhi, Ms. Bachendri Pal - Uttarakhand and Shri Hukumdev Narayan Yadav - Bihar
- ❖ Some important winners of Padma Shri 2019 are Gautam Gambhir, Sharath Kamal, Kader Khan (Posthumous-Foreigner), Shankar Mahadevan Narayan, Bajrang Punia, Prashanti Singh, Hiralal Yadav, Manoj Bajpayee, Prabhu Deva, Rajkumari Devi, Bhagirathi Devi, Godawari Dutta.
- ❖ Nartaki Nataraj, the first transgender awarded the Padma Shri for her Bharatanatyam artist'

Saraswati Samman for the Year 2017

- ❖ Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra has been awarded Saraswati Samman, 2017, for his poetry collection in Gujarati named 'Vakhar'.

Sushila Devi Literature Award

- ❖ Writer Namita Gohhale won the Sushila Devi Literature Award ON January 12, 2019 for her novel 'Things to Leave Behind'.
- ❖ She was awarded in the 'Best Booh of Fiction Written by a Woman Author' category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF).

Nine Dots Prize 2019

- ❖ Indian playwright and journalist Annie Zaidi has been named for the 2019 Nine Dots Prize on May 30, 2019 for her essay Bread, Cement, Cactus.
- ❖ The book will be published by Cambridge University Press in May 2020. The Nine Dots Prize is a global book prize for creative thinking that tackles contemporary societal issues. Entrants for the prize are asked to respond to a question in 3,000 words.

UNSDG 10 Most Influential People in Healthcare Award

- ❖ Acharya Balkrishna, the Managing Director of Patanjali Ayurved Ltd., has received the 'UNSDG 10 Most Influential People in Healthcare Award' on behalf of Patanjali Group of Institutions in Geneva, Switzerland.

Global Asian of the Year 2018-19

- ❖ Bengaluru-based medical doctor Hema Divakar was honoured with the 'Global Asian of the Year 2018-19' award in Dubai on May 23, 2019.
- ❖ Hema received the award for her yeomen services and contributions to the women's healthcare ecosystem, in India.
- ❖ She received the award at the Asian Business & Social Forum 2019 under the 'In Service of the Society and the Nation' category.

Joan Miro Prize

- ❖ Indian artist Nalini Malani has won the Joan Miro Prize for 2019.
- ❖ The award is named after Spanish painter and sculptor Joan Miró. He was one of the most influential artists the 20th century.

German Chemistry Prize

- ❖ The first prize was received by Dr. Ramia Al Bakain with ₹50000 for his project 'New green technique to remove toxic metal from wastewater'.

Sasakawa Award 2019

- ❖ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) has conferred the Sasakawa Award 2019 for Disaster Risk Reduction to Dr. Pramod Kumar Mishra.
- ❖ The award was announced at the Award Ceremony during the ongoing 6th Session of Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) 2019 at Geneva on May 17, 2019.
- ❖ The United Nations Sasakawa Award is the most prestigious international award in the area of Disaster Risk Management. The theme of the 2019 Sasakawa award was 'Building Inclusive and Resilient Societies'

Man Booker International Prize 2019

- ❖ Jokha Alharthi, an author from Oman, has won the prestigious Man Booker International Prize 2019 for her book 'Celestial Bodies' on May 22, 2019.
- ❖ Her original work 'Sayyidat el-Qamar ' has been translated into English by Marilyn Booth under the title Celestial Bodies. She is the first Arabic-language writer to win the prize

Pulitzer Prizes 2019

- ❖ The-prestigious Pulitzer Prizes for achievements in journalism, literature and musical composition were announced on April 15, 2019. This was the 103rd edition of Pulitzer Prizes.
- ❖ Explanatory Reporting David Barstow, Susanne Craig and Russ Buettner of The New York Times (For the 18-month investigation of President Trump's finances debunked his claims of self-made wealth and revealed a business empire riddled with tax dodges

World Press Photo Award 2019

- ❖ An image of a little girl crying, titled 'Crying Girl on the Border', as she and her mother have been taken into custody by US border officials in Texas, won the prestigious

World Press Photo of the Year on April 12, 2019.

- ❖ Veteran Getty photographer John Moore took the picture in the Rio Grande Valley on June 12, 2018.
- ❖ The little girl in this picture name Yanela and her mother Sandra Sanchez illegally crossed the US-Mexican border last year

Abel Prize 2019

- ❖ University of Texas professor Karen Uhlenbeck has become the first woman to win the Abel Prize on March 18, 2019.

- ❖ She was awarded for the impact of her work on 'analysis, geometry and mathematical physics

Commonwealth Youth Awards for the Asian Region

- ❖ Tamil Nadu based social entrepreneur, Padmanaban Gopalan, was awarded the Commonwealth Youth Award worth ₹ 3000 for the Asian region on March 13, 2019 in London. This award given for his technology- based food rescue organisation.
- ❖ Padmanaban Gopalan is the founder of 'No Food Waste', that works with volunteers and local authorities to collect excess food from functions and restaurants and delivers them to 'hunger spots' mapped by the company to feed hungry people

Gandhi Peace Prize 2018

- ❖ Yohei Susakawa was named to receive Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018 on January 17, 2019. He is the Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organisation for Leprosy Elimination.
- ❖ The award given to Yohei Sasakawa in recognition of his work towards the eradication of the disease in India and across the world.
- ❖ The award was instituted by the Government of India in 1995 during the commemoration of 125th Birth, anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

TAMILNADU ISSUES CONTENT

◆ **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - laid the foundation stone to Athikadavu-Avinashi drinkingwater supply-cum-irrigation scheme at Avinashi on February 28**

- ✓ The project aims to divert the surplus water of Bhavani river to the lakes, ponds and other water bodies in the drought-prone regions of Coimbatore, Tiruppur and Erode districts as a boost to their ground water tables.
- ✓ The project would be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs 1,652 crores
- ✓ A pumping facility will be established at Kalingarayan Anicut to pump around 1.5tmc of surplus water, as per the project
- ✓ In order to avoid flooding and wastage of water due to dams reaching full capacity, the Athikadavu-Avinashi project was proposed in 1957 by the then MLA of the region Marappa Gounder
- ✓ Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami has also laid the foundation stone for AMRUT water supply scheme and Smart City works at a cost of Rs 1,875.47 crores in Tirupur on February 28.

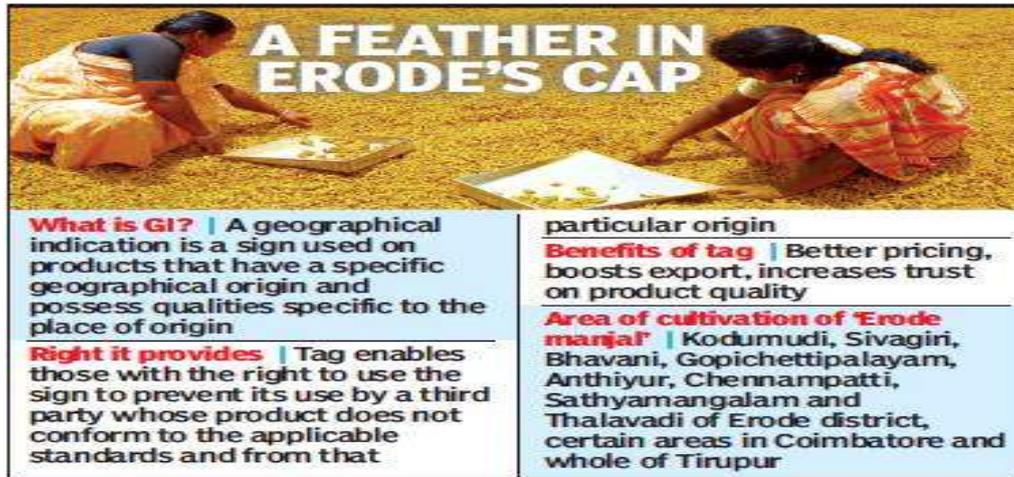
◆ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - flagged off the Tejas Express through videoconferencing in Kanyakumari on March 1, 2019**

- ✓ Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palaniswami and Governor Banwarilal Purohit were present on the occasion

<p>HIGHWAYS PROJECTS Four-laning of Madurai to Paramakudi and two-laning of Paramakudi to Ramanathapuram section of NH87 Length 115 km Cost ₹1,134.35 crore</p>	<p>RAILWAY PROJECTS Superfast Tejas Express flagged off between Chennai Egmore and Madurai Distance covered 496km Time taken 6 1/2 hours</p>
<p>> Four laning of Panagudi-Kanyakumari section of New NH44 and completion of balance work between Narikulam Tank portion in Kanyakumari district Length 550 metres Cost ₹27.24 crore</p>	<p>FOUNDATION STONES LAID HIGHWAY PROJECTS Four-laning of Madurai-Chettikulam section of NH785 and to a flyover from Pandian Hotel Junction to Chettikulam in Madurai Length 7.3KM Cost ₹679.98Cr</p>
<p>> Steel flyover at Marthandam Junction on Nagercoil to Kanyakumari NH47 Length 2.808km Cost ₹209.48 crore</p>	<p>> Launching of road safety park and transport museum in Kanyakumari, statue of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, theatre and auditorium Total area 5 HECTARES Cost ₹75.32 Cr</p>
<p>> Steel flyover at Parvathipuram Junction on Nagercoil to Kanyakumari NH47 Length 1.534km Cost ₹104.54 crore</p>	<p>RAILWAY PROJECTS > Restoration of rail connectivity between Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi Length 17.2km Cost ₹208 crore</p> <p>> New bridge at Pamban Viaduct Length 2.05km Cost ₹250 crore</p>

- ✓ During the occasion, the Prime Minister unveiled several projects for the state worth more than Rs 2,000 crore

◆ **Erode 'Manjal' (Turmeric) - granted GI tag by the Geographical Indication Registry of India on March 6**



- ✓ The traditional cultivation methods and the peculiar agro-climatic conditions in Erode and bordering areas of the district make it unique
 - ✓ The certification has been granted under spices category which falls under Class 30 of the GI classification.
 - ✓ The Planting season of the turmeric in the districts is June-July and harvesting season is January to March.
 - ✓ Erode farmers raise only Chinna Nadan variety of the turmeric, while the other variety is PerumNadan
 - ✓ Erode Turmeric Traders and Godown Owners Association filed the GI tag application 10 years ago
- ◆ **Tamil Nadu government - unveiled a new integrated textile policy on March 6**
- ✓ It seeks to achieve higher and sustainable growth in the textile value chain, from fibre to fashion, with emphasis on balanced regional development.
 - ✓ Major thrust has been given to handloom, power loom, spinning, processing to produce cost effective and high-quality yarn, textiles and apparel to meet the requirements of domestic and export sectors.
 - ✓ As per the policy, the state will offer 10% credit-linked capital investment subsidy for the processing sector, and assistance of 15% capital subsidy will be provided for setting up treatment plants with zero liquid discharge, subject to a maximum of Rs 5 crore
 - ✓ Processing clusters will be promoted in Ramanathapuram district with financial assistance under the Integrated Processing Development scheme
 - ✓ The state will also encourage setting up of silk parks in prominent silk clusters Kancheepuram, Salem, Arni and Thirubuvanam
 - ✓ 9% of project cost, subject to a maximum ceiling of Rs 9 crore will be provided as state grant for setting up technical textile parks
 - ✓ The state also offers additional 10% capital investment subsidy to garmenting units for benchmarked eligible machinery.

- ✓ The state offers 2% interest subvention for investments on technological upgradation and modernization in existing spinning mills with a vintage period of minimum 15 years on installed machinery.
- ✓ The Textile industry is the largest economic activity after agriculture in the state, giving direct employment to around 31 lakh people and more than Rs 50,000 crore exports.

◆ **Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - launched Amma community radio on March 6 - to propagate government welfare schemes for members of women self-help groups**

- ✓ The project implemented by TN women's development corporation focuses on poverty eradication programmes, health and nutrition schemes, which are propagated through self-help group members to the community.

◆ **Pugalur - has been named as the 7th taluk in Karur district - with its headquarters at Velayuthampalayam**

- ✓ Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami announced this on March 6
- ✓ The new taluk, with 27 revenue villages, has been created merging Thennilai, K Paramathi and Pugalur revenue sub divisions.
- ✓ Initially, when Karur district was carved out of Trichy district, there were only Kulithalai and Karur taluks.

◆ **Dr N Kalaiselvi, a scientist from Tamil Nadu - has become the first woman director of CSIR-CECRI (Central Electrochemical Research Institute) at Karaikudi**

- ✓ She joined the institute as an entry-level scientist in the advanced batteries division and rose through the ranks

◆ **Indian Institute of Technology-Madras - to represent the country in SpaceX this July - through its innovative design 'Hyperloop pod'**

HOW IT WORKS?



- Hyperloop pressure pod uses magnetic levitation to float on the track in a low-pressure tube
- Motors (linear induction) propel the pressurized pod with air bearings at a required speed
- Motors, magnets will help decelerate when required
- Developers across the world working to achieve supersonic speed of more than 1,200kmph

Project specs

- Self-propelled and autonomous, with DC motor
- Powered by batteries similar to lithium ion

Max speed | 480kmph

Pod Length | 267cm

Width | 36cm

Status of IIT-M pod: Design ready; fabrication for prototype under way

- ✓ IIT-M becomes the only team to represent India in the finals at the International Hyperloop Pod Competition organised by SpaceX in Los Angeles, US
- ✓ Hyperloop system, a concept promoted by Elon Musk of SpaceX, uses magnetic levitation to float above a track in a low-pressure tube
- ✓ Globally, research is under way to achieve a supersonic speed of more than 1,200kmph.
- ✓ The country's first hyperloop project – where passenger pods moving at 600kmph can reach Pune from Mumbai in a matter of 20 minutes – is under construction in Maharashtra

◆ **Tamil Nadu - to unveil its 'Electric vehicle policy' soon**

- ✓ The new policy is expected to bring in a change in the development regulations of installing charging points in buildings and public charging stations (PCS)
- ✓ Hyundai, a private automobile manufacturer, is planning to launch their electric vehicle in the state soon
- ✓ The Government is holding talks with a UK delegation to explore potential areas of partnership (including fleet transition programmes, vehicle to grid system, pilots and charging infrastructure development in three cities) with Tamil Nadu on e-mobility.
- ✓ The Government plans to buy 2,000 new electric buses with German assistance.
- ✓ In the first phase, 500 of them will ply in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai.
- ✓ Government has already signed a 'Clean Bus Declaration' with C40 Cities, a climate leadership group for the e-buses

◆ **Chennai - may get its 2nd airport in Mamandur, 80km south of city soon**

- ✓ *The developer Gigi George, who is a realtor in KGS Developers, said the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has cleared the site in Mamandur after inspection*
- ✓ The Greenfield airport is set to come up on 3,500 acres at an investment of Rs 4,500 crore

◆ **Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) - develops new 'technology' to use coolant water discharge from thermal power plants to produce fresh water**

- ✓ It is planning to implement the project at Thoothukudi Thermal Power Station (TTPC) at a cost of Rs 40 crore
- ✓ Before this, an experimental plant generating 2-3 lakh litres per day was demonstrated at North Chennai Thermal Plant.

✓

◆ **'Mother Sago' - A new scheme through which Sago (Javvarasi in Tamil) will be distributed by the Government through the Public distribution system (PDS) outlets soon**

- ✓ The scheme will be implemented through 30,000 ration shops in the state, benefitting around 2.01 crore card holders

- ◆ **14 Underground metro stations in Chennai - awarded Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Platinum rating**
 - ✓ With this, all 32 metro stations of phase-I have been awarded the IGBC platinum rating
 - ✓ The platinum rating is a certification awarded for adopting green and user-friendly measures in a public facility

- ◆ **Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - laid the foundation stone for a new barrage across the Kollidam river on March 5**
 - ✓ It will be constructed across the river connecting Kumaramangalam village in Nagapattinam district and Athanur village in Cuddalore district
 - ✓ The proposal to construct the barrage was announced by the Late chief minister J Jayalalithaa under rule 110 in the assembly on August 4, 2014
 - ✓ The Rs 428-crore barrage will be helpful to supply water to irrigate 37,000 acres of ayacuts of Thanjavur, Nagapattinam and Cuddalore districts
 - ✓ The construction of the barrage is expected to be completed within two years.

- ◆ **Chola-era 'Thirubuvanam Silk' sarees - granted GI tag**

- ◆ **Tamil Nadu - is ranked at 5th place among various states in attracting FDI (foreign direct investment) inflows into the country, as per the data released by DIPP (Department for promotion of industry and internal trade)**
 - ✓ The New Delhi region, comprising of the national capital and parts of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, is ranked at 1st position during the first 9 months of FY 2018-19 (April to December)
 - ✓ Maharashtra along with Diu & Daman, Haveli is ranked at 2nd position followed by Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh
 - ✓ Gujarat is ranked at 6th position

- ◆ **Valparai - to get a botanical garden and a boathouse soon**
 - ✓ Municipal administration minister S P Velumani recently laid the foundation stone for the two projects at an event in Valparai on March 3
 - ✓ The botanical garden would come up at a cost of Rs 5 crore on a 4.25 acre site and the boathouse at a cost of Rs 2 crore in the ChinnakkallarNirar Dam

- ◆ **Planys Technologies, an IIT madras incubated startup - develops 'Mikros', an underwater Remotely operated vehicle (ROV) for Oil & Gas industries**
 - ✓ The indigenous ROV can navigate through narrow areas like pipelines under extreme sea conditions that are difficult for commercial divers to reach
 - ✓ It will be useful for scanning shipwrecks and underwater inspections for the process industries like desal plants, nuclear plants, petrochemical refineries without shutting down the plant

- ✓ The vehicle was developed under the Bharat Petroleum corporation Ltd's startup scheme project 'Ankur'
- ✓ Built on a sturdy aluminium frame, the 39 kg weighing Mikros can perform specific tasks under rough sea conditions
- ✓ This is the third underwater vehicle developed by the IIT-M startup, with one of its earlier versions used in the rescue operations at the mining accident in Meghalaya last year
- ✓ The new ROV can travel nearly one kilometer distance from the ship it is deployed and up to a depth of 120 m.

◆ **Tamil Nadu Government - declares 17 districts and 38 blocks in 7 other districts - as drought hit**

- ✓ These districts have recorded a rainfall between 19% and 59% last year
- ✓ The 17 affected districts are Chennai, Karur, Salem, Vellore, Trichy, Perambalur, Tiruvallur, Namakkal, Virudhunagar, Kancheepuram, Madurai, Dindigul, Erode, Pudukottai and Sivaganga
- ✓ 38 blocks in 7 other districts, including Thanjavur, Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, Ariyalur, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore and Ramanathapuram had an annual rainfall deficiency, even though the north east monsoon was normal last year
- ✓ Dharmapuri tops the list in water shortage followed by Krishnagiri and Chennai
- ✓ The declaration of drought is a pre-requisite for Central and state governments to provide relief for the affected including waiver of crop loan in cooperative banks
- ✓ Chief Minister had sanctioned Rs 158 crore to Metro Water and Twad to tackle the summer water crisis in January

◆ **Integral Coach Factory (ICF), the rail coach manufacturing factory at Chennai - has become the single largest rail coach manufacturer in the world surpassing top Chinese manufacturers**

- ✓ ICF has set a target to manufacture 3,200 coaches in this financial year 2019
- ✓ It had crossed 300 coaches per month mark twice in the last fiscal and stayed bigger than the remaining five coach factory's of India put together.
- ✓ The ultra-modern, engine-less 'Train 18' (renamed as Vande Bharat Express) with self-propelled coaches like metro was indigenously developed at Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai
- ✓ Indian Railways has placed an order for 44 more Vande Bharat Express train sets with ICF within the next three production years in phases
- ✓ Integral Coach Factory in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, was established in 1952 and is owned and operated by the Indian Railways.

- ◆ Tamil Nadu Agriculture University's (TNAU) newly-released 'Star Jasmine' - is expected to enter local markets in the next six to seven months

YEAR-ROUND AFFAIR

Farmers have already started cultivating TNAU's new star jasmine variety across Dharmapuri, Sathyamangalam in Erode and Ramanathapuram

➤ **Year-round flowering** | Flowers will be available during lean season/off-season (**November-February**)

➤ **Attractive bold buds** (comparable with *J. grandiflorum*)

➤ **Longer life span** | Buds remain unopened for **12 hours** under room temperature and up to

60 hours on refrigeration

➤ **Milder scent**

➤ **Easy to pluck** and highly suitable for **string-making** due to bold buds with **long corolla tube**

➤ **Free of pests & diseases**

Per plant yield **2.21kg/** plant a year



A PLEASANT FIND: TNAU first released the Star Jasmine (*Jasminum nitidum*) in January

- ✓ TNAU first released the 'star jasmine' or 'jasmine nitidum' in January this year as an alternative to the traditional jathimalli, which becomes unavailable during winter
- ✓ It can be grown in all types of red and black soil

◆ Retired Judge P Devadass - was appointed as the Anti-corruption Ombudsman in the Tamilnadu Lokayukta on April 1

- ✓ While retired judges K Jayabalan and R Krishnamoorthy will be judicial members, retired IAS officer M Rajaram and senior advocate K Arumugam will be non-judicial members
- ✓ The selection committee headed by Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami considered the names recommended by the search committee, headed by former Madras high court judge Justice K Venkataraman and later finalised the officials.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Lokayukta bill was passed by the Assembly on July 9, 2018 and the Act came into being from November 13, 2018

◆ Kodaikanal Hill garlic - gets the Geographical Indication (GI) tag

- ✓ It is known for its medicinal and storage properties
- ✓ It has an extended storage life period of 8 to 11 months unlike other garlic varieties, because the cloves of the garlic do not get separated for months.

◆ Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - has established a 'Cold Spray' SMART (Surface Modification and Additive Research Technologies) Laboratory in collaboration with General Electric (GE)

- ✓ This is the first of its kind High-Pressure Cold Spray (HPCS) facility being installed in any academic institute in India.

- ✓ The project is funded under 'UchchatarAvishkar Yojana' (UAY) of the Government of India, which is intended to boost collaboration between academia and private sector
- ✓ The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India, was the key investor along with the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, IIT Madras, and GE.
- ✓ Cold spray technology is different from other widely used thermal spray processes in that there is no melting and oxidation of powders leading to high-quality coatings with less powder wastage
- ✓ This technology avoids the distortion and stresses leading to longer asset life

◆ **Radha, a transgender - is the only transsexual to contest the Lok Sabha elections in Tamil Nadu**

- ✓ The 50-year old is contesting from south Chennai constituency as an independent candidate
- ✓ As per Election Commission, 5472 voters in the state have registered under the third gender category.
- ✓ In the entire country, as per 2011 census, there are 4.9 lakh transsexuals present

◆ **Tamil Nadu Government - instructs schools not to detain any student till Class VIII**

- ✓ The state education minister, KA Sengottaiyan had earlier announced that no board exams will be conducted this year for the classes V and VIII
- ✓ The Central Government had earlier amended the Right to Children for Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, allowing the states to decide on no-detention policy upto Class VIII

◆ **Project Kannamma - an initiative of the Rotary Club of Madras North to provide sanitary napkins to the students is carried out successfully in the state**

- ✓ It was started in August 2018 by providing free, biodegradable sanitary napkins to 82 students at the Government High School in Uthandi of Tamil Nadu
- ✓ Now it covers over 300 students across Government schools in and around Chennai
- ✓ The sanitary napkins are provided by the Irula Tribal Women's Welfare Society, using Arunachalam Murugantham machines
- ✓ The sanitary napkin, under the brand Aavaram,

◆ **The Ma. Aranganathan Literary Awards for 2019 - were presented to writers Veli Rangarajan and Yuma Vasuki in Chennai**

- ✓ The awards carry a citation and a cash prize of ₹1 lakh each from Munril Literary Society, run by Justice R. Mahadevan of Madras High Court.
- ✓ He had instituted the awards last year in memory of his father, a noted Tamil writer, who died on April 16, 2017 at the age of 83.

◆ **IIT, Madras team - has developed a unified script for nine Indian languages, named the Bharati script**

- ✓ It has also developed a method for reading documents in Bharati script using a multi-lingual optical character recognition (OCR) scheme
- ✓ Dr Srinivasa Chakravathy's team at IIT Madras has also created a finger-spelling method for nine Indian languages, that can be used to generate a sign language for hearing-impaired persons in collaboration with Sunil Kopperappu of Innovation Labs, TCS, Mumbai.
- ✓ The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil, which have same (Roman letter-based) script
- ✓ English and Urdu have not been integrated so far.

◆ **Chennai district - has an elector-population ratio of 78, the highest in the State**

- ✓ Chennai district with a population of 49.59 lakh as per 2019 projections, has included 38.66 lakh electors on the rolls so far
- ✓ T. Nagar has reported the highest number of electors for a given population, with an elector-population ratio of 87
- ✓ The Harbour Assembly segment has the lowest elector-population ratio of 66

◆ **TANGEDCO - has begun measuring wind power generation in real time using the global positioning system (GPS)**

- ✓ The system has been installed in all windmills across TN and the discom has been able to measure the power generated by a windmill without going to the spot,
- ✓ Tamil Nadu is the first state to use GPS in windmills
- ✓ Tamil Nadu has a total wind power capacity of 8,322MW
- ✓ In the coming months, the GPS system will be installed in solar, biomass and in thermal plants there by ruling out malpractices in billing apart from reducing discom's expenditure

The Sugarcane Breeding Institute (SBI) in Coimbatore - has developed a new variety of sugarcane which is expected to give better returns in shorter duration

- ✓ Called CO 11015, the new variety has been found to have about 2% more sucrose content than CO 86032, the variety widely used now
- ✓ The new variety also requires only nine months maturing unlike the existing variety that needs 12 months to fully develop.

- ✓ CO 11015 is one of the 20 crops clone tested in the nine sugar mills as part of 'Sweet Bloom' project
- ✓ The sweet bloom project was launched by SBI and SISMA in 2016 to improve sugar content from sugarcane

Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - announced cash incentives of Rs.10 lakh and Rs. 5 lakh to Gomathi Marimuthu and Arokia Rajiv, who won gold and silver medals in the recently-held Asian Athletics Championship at Doha in Qatar .

- ✓ Gomathi won in the 800m, while Arokia Rajiv was part of the Indian team that placed second in the 400m mixed relay.

The Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation's (TANGEDCO) - proposed its 13th Master plan for infrastructure development in Chennai

- ✓ The five-year plan focuses on infrastructure works consisting of substations, lands to be acquired, underground cable network and the equipment needed to be installed in these substations.
- ✓ It plans to construct 20 substations, including a 230 kilo volt (KV) of gas insulated substation at Thanikachalam Road and a 110 KV substation at the B&C Mills located on Cooks Road near Perambur
- ✓ The electricity department has planned to construct 18 substations of 33-KV capacity to improve the distribution network in highly congested localities
- ✓ As per the proposed master plan 33/11-KV plants would come up at CIT Nagar 4th Main Road, Corporation Colony, Pudupet, Kannamapet, Egmore, Nungambakkam, Wallajah Road, Fore Shore Estate and Vepery

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department - to start the much-awaited „glass bottom boats eco-tourism“ in the Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park during June first week

- ✓ It had demarked the eco-tourism zone covering four of the 21 islands in the Mandapam sub-group, by installing buoys by May end
- ✓ Indian Institute of Technology Madras has been awarded the contract for installing the buoys
- ✓ The 28 buoys would be installed around Kurusadai, Poomarichan, Pullivasal and Shingle, at a distance of 500 meters between two buoys

For the first time, environmentalists - have sighted 300 nests of Grizzled Giant Squirrel at Pakkamalai Reserve Forests near Gingee (in Eastern Ghats) in Tamil Nadu

- ✓ Known by the scientific name, *Ratufa macroura*, it is found along Kaveri River and in the Western ghats hill forests of southern states-Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala
- ✓ In 1988, The Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary located in Tamil Nadu was established to protect vulnerable grizzled giant squirrel
- ✓ It has been placed under „Near Threatened“ category in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List

Food grain harvest - crossed 100 lakh tonnes last year in the state and stood at 101 lakh tonnes

- ✓ The state had set a target to achieve 110 lakh tonnes of food grain production last year by formulating region-specific and crop-specific technological interventions
- ✓ The failure of both monsoons affected production, as per the third advance estimates available with the agriculture department for the last fiscal year.

- ✓ The final estimates will be slightly revised in the months of July and August, but the fact remains that production stood at 107 lakh metric tonnes in the previous financial year
- ✓ A special kuruva package of Rs 115 crore from the state government - that came with three phase power supply for 12 hours a day, subsidies for highyielding paddy seeds, power tiller and rotavator, solar powered pump sets, diesel engines, mechanised farming, micro-nutrients, fertilizers and PVC units - also helped raise the coverage.
- ✓ The millet production could be sustained given the assistance to rain-fed farmers under Mission on Sustainable Dry Land Agriculture and National Food Security Mission
- ✓ With the Centre declaring 2018 as National Year of Millets, the less water intensive crop cultivation was promoted among small and marginal farmers
- ✓ Millets are commonly cultivated in districts like Villupuram, Cuddalore, Salem, Namakkal, Perambalur, Ariyalur, Theni and Dindigul.
- ✓ The situation was worse two years ago, when a foodgrain production plummeted to 52 lakh tonnes, owing to drought.

Tamil Nadu - to get a Kidney exchange registry soon in Coimbatore

- ✓ It will serve as an online platform where kidney donors and recipients, in need of a kidney transplant, can register themselves in the hope of finding another pair who are compatible with them

Tamil Nadu - to soon include milk in midday meals for Classes I to V in all government schools

- ✓ In 2018, the Union ministry of human resource development had written to all states asking them to include milk in midday meals.
- ✓ Haryana and Rajasthan were the first two states to begin supplying milk to their students in a few districts.

The Union Government - has issued a drought advisory to 6 states including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu

- ✓ It had asked them to use water wisely as water storage in dams is dropping to a critical level.
- ✓ The advisory was issued to the state of Tamil Nadu on May 18. The drought advisory is issued to concerned states when the water level in reservoirs is 20% less than the average of live water storage figures of the past 10 years
- ✓ The southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have 31 reservoirs in total (two of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana combined and one individually in Andhra Pradesh and two in Telangana, four in Karnataka, six each in Kerala and Tamil Nadu)
- ✓ The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 6.86 BCM, which is 13% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs (51.59 BCM)
- ✓ The storage during corresponding period of last year was 13% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 16%.
- ✓ The water storage level in 91 major reservoirs across the country is monitored by the Central Water Commission.
- ✓ Currently, the total water storage available is 22% of total storage capacity of these reservoirs (161.993 BCM)

The 100-bed Institute of Mental Health in Theni - becomes the second hospital exclusively for treatment of mental illness after Chennai-based Institute of Mental Health

For the first time, the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board - will be organizing an 'Inter Slum Olympics', where children of all resettled families can participate

- The programme will be held at the Perumbakkam tenements by the board and Chennai Rivers Restoration Trust on May 26
- The day-long programme will have around 20 games, including volleyball, kabaddi, cricket, shot put, carrom, chess as well as dance performances

The Cauvery Water Management Authority - ordered Karnataka on May 28 to release 9.19tmcft (thousand million cubic feet) of Cauvery water from the Biligundlu reservoir to the Mettur Dam in Tamil Nadu for the month of June

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) - has directed the formation of another expert committee to look into the issue of fly ash dumping in the Ennore creek and ascertain the damage caused to the environment.

India's first tree ambulance - was inaugurated in Chennai by Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu on the eve of International Day for Biological Diversity

- The initiative was proposed by Green man of India, Dr K Abdul Ghani and it is sponsored by the SASA Group
- The ambulance can be availed through the number 9941006786 and volunteers can register on www.treeambulance.org.
- The ambulance has helpers and a plant expert, who carry gardening tools, water, manure, and pesticide with them.
- The reallocation of trees will be done free of cost
- Services provided by Tree Ambulance includes uprooted tree planting, seed bank, seed ball distribution, plant distribution, aiding tree plantation, shifting trees, a survey of trees and removal of dead trees.

The Tamil Nadu government - has unveiled a plan to set up five mini-desalination plants of one million litre capacity each

- The plants, costing ₹120 crore, will start operation at Kasimedu, Thiruvottiyur, Triplicane, MRC Nagar and Thiruvannamiyur within the next six months
- Since these plants are small, they don't require much space or infrastructure
- However, clearances from central and state pollution control board and coastal regulation authorities are a must.
- The proposal is likely to get the government's nod soon and will be announced on the floor of the assembly.
- As of now, Metrowater is dependent on Chembarambakkam, Cholavaram and Red Hills reservoirs that are almost dry
- Veeranam water supply scheme, quarries and borewells, and 100MLD desalination plants at Nemmeli and Minjur are the other sources of water to the city.

Tamil Nadu - unveils its first draft Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, suggesting reduction of stamp duties from 11% to 7% to make dwelling units affordable

- At present, at 11% the state has the highest collective stamp duty and registration fee in the entire country.
- It further recommended discounts on properties that are registered jointly or exclusively in the name of women. Earlier, the state government revised the guideline value by 33% but increased the registration fee by 3% matching the revenue to its exchequer.

- The draft policy prepared by an international agency looks at a range of issues related to land and infrastructure availability, planning, housing finance, housing project development, providing access to structurally safe dwelling units for each household in the state
- As per the draft policy, emphasis has been given to special housing schemes such as hostels and 1 BHK units for single working women to be promoted and developed near IT parks and industrial zones.
- Women should be involved at all stages from planning, designing, constructions and maintenance of housing projects particularly in SHG and slum upgradation projects
- Government shall create GIS-based land bank for affordable housing with detailed inventory of the land parcels including all spatial, ownership and infrastructure attributes

The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) - launched the third of its six planned Space Technology Incubation Centres (S-TIC), at National Institute of Technology-Tiruchi on May 29

- The S-TIC will enable start-ups to build applications and products that could be used in future space missions.
- The first and second such centres are functioning out of NIT-Agartala and NITJalandhar.
- Three more centres will be opened in Rourkela, Nagpur and Indore.

Tamil Nadu Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - to lay the foundation stone for the construction of Chennai's third desalination plant in Nemmeli in June

- The objective of the project is to augment the drinking water supply in the southern parts of the city with per capita supply of 135 LPCD as per norms.
- The plant, scheduled for commissioning in 2021, can treat 150 million litres of water per day
- The multi-crore project is funded by German agency KfW and partly sponsored by the Union and state governments under a revenue model.
- M/s Cobra, Spain - M/s Tecton joint venture was awarded the work costing ₹1,689.35 crore
- The existing desalination plants at Nemmeli and Minjur treat 100 million litres a day, at present
- The first desal plant in Minjur was inaugurated in July 2010
- The finalization of bids is underway for the Rs 6,078 crore, 400MLD desalination plant at Perur with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to vet the bids
- Former chief minister J Jayalalithaa announced the project after inaugurating the first plant in Nemmeli in 2012
- The Union environment ministry accorded clearance in October last.

Tamil Nadu's Sreekiran Nandakumar - won the boys' 800m gold at the U-20 Eurasian athletics championships which concluded in Almaty (Kazakhstan)

- He won silver at the Khelo India Games at the start of 2018.
- He followed it up with another silver to his name at the Federation Cup in April.
- The 17-year-old Coonoor boy bagged his first international medal after winning the 800m gold in the youth Olympics Games' Asian area athletics qualification meet at Bangkok in July
- India finished the two-day event with 5 gold and 3 silver medals

Tamil Nadu - to allow soon the 24x7 functioning of shops and establishments in the state - for a period of next three years

- A notification in this connection will be published in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette soon.

- The permission will be granted provided the establishments follow certain conditions, which include ensuring the safety of women employees.
- Every employee shall be given one day off in a week on a rotation basis. The details of every employee will be provided in the prescribed form and exhibited by the employer at a conspicuous place in the establishment premises
- An employer shall not require or allow any person to work for more than eight hours in any day or 48 hours in any week
- The period of work, including overtime, shall not exceed 10.5 hours in any day and 57 hours in a week. Women need not work beyond 8 p.m. on any day under normal circumstances
- The employer, after obtaining her written consent, can allow a woman to work between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. subject to providing her adequate protection
- In 2016, the Centre had finalised a model legislation called the Shops and Establishments (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Bill, which allowed cinema halls, restaurants, shops, banks and other such workplaces to stay open 24x7.
- It was left to the states by the Centre to decide how to adopt the bill
- In 2018, Maharashtra became the first State to allow shops, hotels and restaurants to remain open 24x7
- Earlier, Tamil Nadu had allowed shops and establishments to stay open all year round for a period of one year up to March 22, 2017.

Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram districts - were chosen in Tamil Nadu under National Pulses development project for the intensive cultivation of pulses

- Both these district have received over Rs 550 crores under crop insurance scheme for the years 2017 and 2018
- The centre has already announced the year 2019 as the Year of Pulses to promote the cultivation of pulses in drought-prone districts against cultivation of paddy etc.,

For the first time in Tamil Nadu, transgender people - will have access to an exclusive clinic at the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital

- ✓ The clinic, which will bring specialists such as a plastic surgeon, endocrinologist and venereologist under a single roof, will provide sex reassignment surgeries for transgender people.

The country's first 'away from reactor' (AFR) facility to store spent nuclear fuel - is likely to come up at Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu

- ✓ It will store spent fuel generated at the two nuclear power plants at Kudankulam. The Russia-supported Kudankulam power plants are run by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), a central government entity.
- ✓ The decision comes after the Supreme Court, in July last year, extended the deadline to build an AFR facility at Kudankulam from July 2018 to April 2022
- ✓ According to the TNPCB's draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report, a pool building and a utility building will be the AFR's main components.
- ✓ Spent fuel will be transported from the reactor to the pool building in containers using overhead cranes.
- ✓ Spent fuel assemblies will be stored underwater in fuel racks in the fuel pool using specialised handling machines
- ✓ The pool will be lined with stainless steel plates and will have a provision for leak detection along with other systems for water cooling, purification and ventilation

- ✓ The utility building will have support systems to store spent fuel, including a control room and alarms.
- ✓ The fuel pool has the capacity to accommodate spent fuel generated up to seven years of reactor operations.

The World Bank - to provide Rs 1,990 crore (\$287 million) to improve healthcare in Tamil Nadu

- ✓ A loan agreement in connection with the project, Tamil Nadu Health System Reform Programme, was signed between the Centre, state and World Bank, the international financial institution on June 4
- ✓ The funds will be used to focus on improving quality of healthcare, reducing noncommunicable diseases (NCD) and bridging the gaps in reproductive and child health services.
- ✓ Special focus will be on the nine priority districts in Tamil Nadu, which feature in the bottom of the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) indicators in the state and have a relatively large proportion of tribal population.
- ✓ To tackle road injuries, the programme will improve 24x7 trauma care services and establish a trauma registry
- ✓ Tamil Nadu recorded the highest number of road accidents compared to other Indian states in 2016 and 2017.

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - will soon make a formal announcement of the launch of electric buses in Chennai.

- ✓ Tamil Nadu will buy 2,000 new electric buses with German assistance. In the first phase, 500 of them will ply in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai.
- ✓ The government had signed a 'Clean Bus Declaration' with C40 Cities, a climate leadership group.
- ✓ This agreement will pave way for promoting pollution-free electric buses and 12,000 BS-IV buses.

Two more one-stop centres for women in distress - will be set up in Chennai within next three months.

- ✓ The centres will help provide support to women facing physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or economic abuse.
- ✓ One centre will be opened in north Chennai and the other in the central part of the city. Currently, the city has one centre in Tambaram.
- ✓ Apart from the one in Chennai, there are nine centres functioning across the state as against the requirement of one in each of the 32 districts
- ✓ They are in Kancheepuram, Salem, Trichy, Madurai, Coimbatore, Karur, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli and Tiruvannamalai.

A two-day traditional paddy festival organized by an organic farming group - began at Thiruthuraiipoondi in Tiruvarur district on June 8

- ✓ The festival aims to revive and promote traditional paddy breeds among farmers

- ✓ It being held after the demise of noted organic farmer Nel Jayaraman who played a crucial role in reviving many traditional paddy varieties
- ✓ More than 5,000 farmers from West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and various districts of Tamil Nadu are participating
- ✓ Those who obtained seeds in previous editions of the paddy festival handed over to the organizers double the quantity of seeds after cultivating and harvesting them.
- ✓ A seed committee comprising the organizers from Create (Consumer, Research, Education, Action, Training and Empowerment) organic farming group verified the quality of seeds received
- ✓ A few farmers who were participating in the event for the first time were provided the seeds of traditional varieties such as Poonkar, Karuppu Kavani, Maapillai Samba, Kullakaar and Kaatuyanam free of cost
- ✓ Around 80 stalls have been established to display the 174 traditional paddy breeds revived through the farmers' group
- ✓ The organizers urged the government to set up a traditional paddy research centre in Jayaraman's name in Tiruvarur.
- ✓ Nel Jayaraman died fighting cancer in December last year

Government Royapettah hospital - to commence the state's first exclusive 'pain' relief centre for cancer patients from next week

- ✓ It will be the first instance of a government hospital having the exclusive centre for cancer patients
- ✓ It will be set up with the assistance of National health mission, at a budget of Rs 15 lakhs
- ✓ Apart from Chennai, such centres will be set up at 12 places including Ariyalur, Karur, Pudukottai, Dharmapuri and Dindugul.

Tamil Nadu - is planning to implement 10% reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) in medical education

- ✓ The move has come in response to the Medical Council of India (MCI) offering 25% increase in number of medical seats for states adopting EWS quota.
- ✓ If it gets through, 10% of the 25% additional seats should go to economically weaker sections within forward castes and the remaining should be made available for allotment under the 69% quota.
- ✓ The state, however, is not keen on implementing the quota in other streams of education and employment
- ✓ The MCI had in April this year said medical colleges could increase their intake by 25% and offer 10% of these additional seats to EWS candidates.
- ✓ In January, the Union cabinet had cleared 10% quota in education and employment to people from the economically weaker section among forward castes.

Minister for Tamil language, culture and archaeology Mafoi K Pandiarajan — officially inaugurated the work for the fifth phase of archaeological excavation in Keeladi in Sivaganga district

- ✓ A total of 13,638 artefacts had been unearthed during the first four phases that took place between 2014 and 2018.
- ✓ The fifth phase would last about four to five months.
- ✓ The foundation stone for the onsite museum, to come up on two acres of land, would be laid soon

Tamil Nadu government - sanctioned ₹499.68 crore to implement the kudimaramath scheme on June 13

- ✓ The traditional restoration of water bodies, with the support of locals, will be implemented in 29 districts
- ✓ This is the third sanction in the last three years by the state government towards kudimaramath.
- ✓ The project intends to strengthen tank bunds and canals, repair and reconstruction of sluices, weirs, shutters, and rehabilitation and desilting of canals.
- ✓ The works are implemented through farmers' organizations/councils/ ayacutdars and 10% of the estimated cost is borne by them either by way of providing labour or material or cash.

The Greater Chennai corporation - has received a grant of ₹40 crore from German bank KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) for setting up a disaster management control centre in the city

- ✓ This aid comes after the bank sanctioned the ₹1,230 crore Kovalam basin project at the Indo-German-States Tripartite meeting held in New Delhi on June 13
- ✓ The fund will be used for planning and designing the water-carrying infrastructure along the course of rivers Cooum, Adyar, Kovalam and Kosasthalaiyar
- ✓ This will include studying the network of stormwater drains in Thiruvottiyur, Manali, Madhavaram, Ambattur, Teynampet, Valasaravakkam, Alandur, Perungudi and Sholinganallur zones.
- ✓ The fund will also be used to update the existing Geographic Information System (GIS) – by geotagging drains and creating a map of existing and planned stormwater drains in the city – for better management of the drain network.
- ✓ Greater Chennai Corporation will meet with the KfW bank in July over the ₹1,230 crore loan sanctioned by the bank to improve the 360-km drain network of Kovalam basin
- ✓ After this, the loan agreement is expected to be signed in January 2020.
- ✓ Feasibility study, design and consultancy will be done by KfW. It will also oversee GCC's work with bid documents, tender process and project management.

Avishkar Hyperloop , the team of Indian Institute of Technology Madras - to unveil an indigenously designed and developed hyperloop pod at the finals of a competition organised by SpaceX, whose founder Elon Musk, first proposed the concept

- ✓ They will operate a selfpropelled and autonomous pod prototype in a 1.6km vacuum tube at the International Hyperloop Pod Competition in California in July
- ✓ The city team, which unveiled the final pod prototype at IIT-M campus on June 14, is the only Asian team to compete at the finals along with 20 other teams across the world.
- ✓ With a funding of ₹1 crore, a 30-member team took three months to design and develop the nearly 3-m long and 120kg pod designed to achieve maximum speed to grab the top spot at the competition
- ✓ But unlike the original hyperloop concept propelled by a linear induction motor and that uses magnetic levitation to float above a track in a low pressure tube, the pod developed by the students works on a DC electric motor, to power and provide the required traction, and uses wheel drive
- ✓ The outer shell is made of glass fibre reinforced plastic and was manufactured in Pune.
- ✓ Assembling of the pod and coding of the system software were done at the IIT-M

Chennai - has gone without rain for 191 days since the northeast monsoon last year, as on June 15, which is a record by itself

- ✓ Dry spell was between last day of northeast monsoon in the previous year and the first day of the southwest monsoon of the current year.
- ✓ Ironically, the highest number of rainless days was recorded before the 2015 flood – from December 29, 2014 to July 10, 2015 (193 days)

