

CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY (1 - 31), 2019

TAMIL NADU

- The Kavalan mobile app – has reached a download of 1 million in the state



- ✓ The recent increase in the download of the app followed the call to the Public by Tamil Nadu Director general of police J K Tripathy to install the app to help police respond to SOS calls.
- ✓ According to police, at least 9.4 lakh android smart phone users in the state have installed the app, while about 60,000 iPhone users have downloaded it on their phones
- ✓ As per the data provided by police, Chennai tops the download list with about 1.60 lakh users of the app, followed by Coimbatore district, including the city, with 45,000, Kancheepuram with 40,000 and Tiruvallur with 35,000 users.
- **Tamil Nadu's cities and major towns – did not figure in the Top 20 in both quarters in the Swachh Survekshan League 2020 rankings.**
 - ✓ The best-ranked city/town of the state was Madurai, which was placed 27th in the first quarter in the greater than 10 lakh population category.
 - ✓ However it fell down to the 32nd spot in the second quarter.
 - ✓ Coimbatore and Chennai were ranked behind Madurai, at 31st and 38th position respectively, in the first quarter in the same category.
 - ✓ Both these cities had also dropped to the 34th and 43rd rank, respectively, in the second quarter.

- ✓ In the category of cities with a population of between 1 and 10 lakh, Tiruchi was ranked 38 in the first quarter.
- ✓ But the city slipped to 56th rank in the second quarter.
- ✓ Other towns and cities that found a place in the top 100 in the first quarter includes Kumbakonam (48), Salem (77), Vellore (83), Tambaram (84) and Pallavaram (91).
- ✓ **St. Thomas Mount Cantonment**, which secured the **Top** position among 60 Cantonment Boards across the country in the first quarter, ended with the 24th rank in the second quarter.
- ✓ The Wellington Cantonment, which was ranked 4th in the first quarter, was ranked at 10th in the second quarter.
- ✓ Swachh Survekshan League 2020 is being conducted for 3 different quarters — April-June, July-September and October-December 2019, with 2000 marks allocated for each quarter.
- **The Tamil Nadu government – has decided to undertake a study to assess the pollution caused by Micro-plastics in coastal areas, estuaries and lakes.**
 - ✓ The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board will fund the study.
 - ✓ The study will be done by the Environment Management Agency of Tamil Nadu through the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute in Thoothukudi for a period of 3 years, between 2019-20 and 2021-22
 - ✓ A fund of Rs 81.20 lakh has been allotted for the study
- **The Tamil Nadu government – plans to commence a ₹3,000 crore flood mitigation and water conservation project.**
 - ✓ The project will aim to conserve 4.76tmcft (thousand million cubic feet) of rainwater and minimise the impact of severe floods in Chennai and coastal districts.

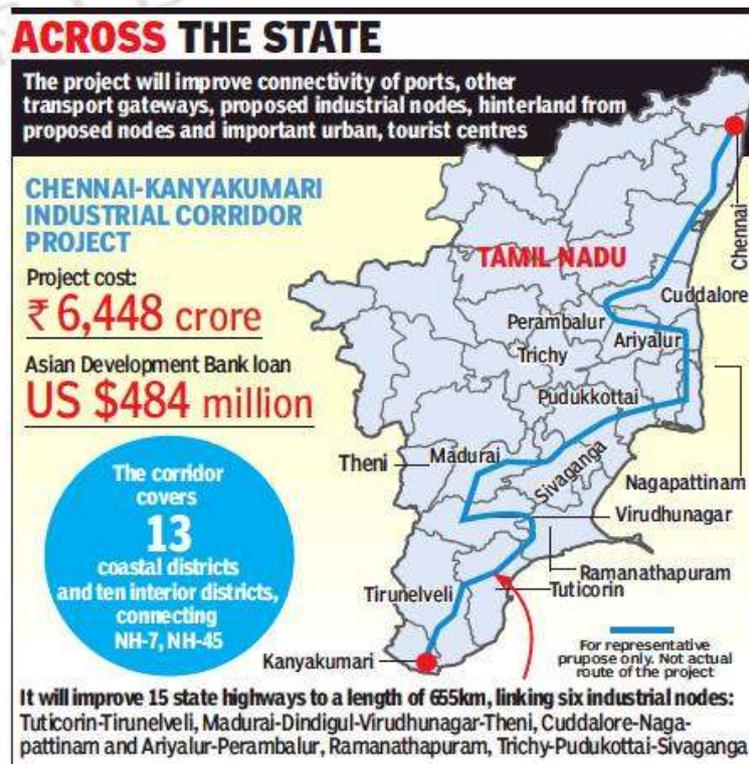
IN THE PIPELINE

The flood mitigation and management works to be adopted have been categorized into three different approaches

Conservation of floodwater 41 works at ₹1,157 cr	
Climate change and adaptive rehabilitation 25 works at ₹931 cr	
Flood protection and river training work 27 works at ₹ 911 cr	

The project aims to store **4.7 tmcft** of rainwater, minimize damages during flood

- ✓ The comprehensive Flood mitigation and management project will focus on Chennai and its neighbouring urban areas in Chengalpet, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts, besides targeting other vulnerable areas in the state's coastal districts.
 - ✓ The state government had already obtained the Centre's approval to utilize financial aid from the World Bank for the project, which has been also approved by the Central Water Commission.
 - ✓ The Commissionerate of revenue administration and state disaster management agency would be the nodal agencies of the project
 - ✓ The water resources wing of the public works department (PWD) would be responsible for implement the project.
 - ✓ The project consists of more than 620 works that are grouped into 93 packages
 - ✓ These include construction of 14 check dams, barrages with shutters and reservoirs across Palar, Adyar, Kovalam and Kosasthalaiyar rivers at a cost of ₹396 crore.
 - ✓ As part of the project, more than 400 water bodies in Chengalpet and Kancheepuram districts would be desilted to restore water storage capacity to the optimum level at a budget of ₹750 crore.
- **The Tamil Nadu government – to release tenders for improving 6 of the 15 State highways which form part of the long-pending Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor project.**
- ✓ The Asian Development Bank will be the external funding agency for the project
 - ✓ The ADB will be providing an assistance of \$484 million towards the project.



- ✓ The objective of the project is to improve ease of doing business and make the corridor more competitive in attracting potential investments.
- ✓ The corridor has also identified Tuticorin, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Trichy, Cuddalore, Thanjavur, Pudukottai Manapparai, Perambalur, Karaikudi as anchor cities
- **A Riya of Tiruchengode block in Namakkal district - has become the first transsexual panchayat union ward member in the state**



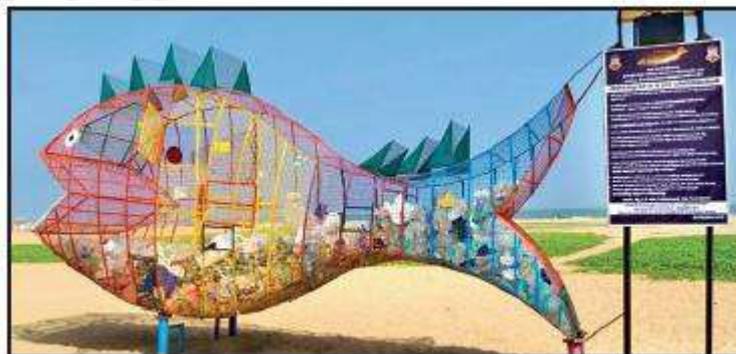
- ✓ Riya bagged 2,701 votes while her opponent C Kandhammal secured 1,751 votes.
- ✓ She contested in ward 2 of Karuveppampatty panchayat union.
- **21-year-old J Sandhiya Rani - has become the youngest woman village panchayat president in the state**



- ✓ She won with a margin of 210 votes in the Kattinaikanthotty village panchayat in Krishnagiri district
- ✓ Sandhiya contested as an independent
- ✓ She is a third year BBA student studying in Christ college at Malur in Karnataka.
- ✓ Her father Jayasarathi is a farmer and former president of the Kattinaikanthotty panchayat.
- **The sixth phase of Keeladi excavations – to begin in the second fortnight of January**
- ✓ It will be done alongwith the excavations in Keeladi cluster, at Konthagai burial site, Agaram and Manalur habitation sites.



- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department (TNAD) has associated with Madurai Kamaraj University for assistance during and after the exercise.
- ✓ Madras Institute of Technology, Chromepet will assist in carrying out a preliminary survey of all the sites alongwith an aerial survey of the site using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)
- ✓ The TNAD will also simultaneously commence excavations at Kodumanal in Erode district and Sivagalai and Adichanallur in Thoothukudi district.
- **Greater Chennai Corporation - declared Elliot's Beach in Besant Nagar a 'litter-free zone' on January 6**
- ✓ The Corporation has set up various colour-coded bins to collect different types of dry waste from along the shore and on the adjoining road near the beach.
- ✓ The collected waste will be sent to the material recovery facilities for further action.



- ✓ The civic body has also installed a giant fish-shaped transparent enclosure in which plastic pet bottles and other plastic waste littered on the beach will be collected and stored
- **The Tamil Nadu government – is planning to launch a common portal soon for all Government services, including Tangedco, civic services, kavalan, digi-cop, traffic police, viewing of FIR, and lost document reporting**

- ✓ It will soon announce the tenders for launching the portal
 - ✓ The project will be handled by the Commissionerate of e-governance
 - ✓ It will be completed within three months by subsuming all mobile applications currently in use.
- **The Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine - is targetting the vaccinating of around 70.50 lakh children in the age group of 0 to 5 years in a single round of the Intensified Pulse polio immunisation campaign on January 19.**



- ✓ This year, Tamil Nadu has entered the 16th polio-free year.
 - ✓ On January 19, the directorate would administer oral polio drops to children through 43,051 booths.
 - ✓ The immunisation booths would function from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - announced that foundation stone will be laid soon for the 'Cauvery-Gundar interlinking scheme' to divert surplus water down south**
- ✓ The chief minister announced the estimated project cost at ₹20,000 crore.
 - ✓ The State Government is preparing a detailed project report to execute the scheme jointly with the assistance of Centre.
 - ✓ The public works department (PWD) has planned to initiate the project with a link canal near Mayanur barrage in Karur district.

FIRST PHASE TO COST ₹7,677 CRORE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The new link canal will be 256-km long ➤ The project will benefit Karur, Trichy, Pudukottai, Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram and Virudhunagar districts ➤ The 1st phase of the 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-phase project will link Mayanur barrage in Karur and South Vellar in Pudukottai district ➤ The proposed link will benefit a total culturable command area of 20,249.27 hectares
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- ✓ The Phase I of the project is estimated to cost ₹7,677 crore

- ✓ The project would pass through Trichy, Pudukkottai and Sivaganga before finishing at Gundar, thereby benefitting the irrigation needs of these districts.
- ✓ The Chief Minister also announced that the government had requested the support of the Centre for modernisation of Grand Anicut scheme that would benefit 35,000km long canals.
- **Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam– announced in the Assembly on January 8 that the state government extends the Health insurance for its pensioners and family pensioners by another four years up to 2022**
 - ✓ With a premium of ₹350 each, the scheme covers 7.30 lakh pensioners and family pensioners with a network of 988 hospitals.
 - ✓ The scheme provides a health cover upto Rs 4 lakh to the Pensioners and family pensioners
 - ✓ The limit has been further enhanced to Rs 7.5 lakh for specified approved treatment such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy, transplantation of liver, kidney, open heart surgeries and implants, besides accident and trauma cases
- **The Tamil Nadu government - introduced three bills in the assembly on January 8**



- ✓ The first bill was to extend the tenure of special officers appointed to agriculture market committees.
- ✓ The second bill intends to change the name of TN Fisheries University to TN Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University
- ✓ The third bill provides power to the Government to place a president or vice-president of a registered cooperative society under suspension
- ✓ At present, the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies Act, 1983, has no provision to place the president or vice-president of a registered cooperative society under suspension following misappropriation of funds or breach of trust or gross mismanagement of the affairs of the society
- ✓ Cooperation Minister Sellur K. Raju introduced the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2020
- ✓ Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar introduced the Tamil Nadu Fisheries University (Amendment) Bill, 2020
- ✓ Agriculture Minister R. Doraikkannu was introducing the Tamil Nadu Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020

- **The Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) - to fund the construction of about 18km elevated stretch between Meenakshi College in Kodambakkam and Poonamallee Bypass in Chennai**
 - ✓ The stretch is part of Chennai Metro Rail Limited's (CMRL) 118.9km 3-corridor phase-2 project.
 - ✓ The AIIB will fund around ₹2,306 crore (\$320 million) to build the stretch covering 18 elevated stations
 - ✓ Asian Development Bank (ADB) will fund the remaining part of the corridor between Light House and Meenakshi College covering around 8km
 - ✓ The 52km stretch between Madhavaram and Sholinganallur and Madhavaram to CMBT will be funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

- **Tamil Nadu assembly – passes a Bill on January 9 to replace an ordinance for extending time for registrations under the Tenancy Act**
 - ✓ Now, landlords and tenants can register under the Act till third week of February this year.
 - ✓ The bill was introduced by deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam, who holds housing and urban development portfolio
 - ✓ The Tamil Nadu Regulation of Rights and Responsibilities of Landlords and Tenants Act, 2017 was brought into force on February 22, 2019 repealing the Tamil Nadu Buildings (Lease and Rent Control) Act, 1960.
 - ✓ The bill seeks to replace the promulgated ordinance.

- **Tamil Nadu Government – announces that the bull tamers taking part in jallikattu events this year should be from 21 to 45 years of age and should weigh at least 55kg**
 - ✓ Last year, the age limit for the bull tamers was fixed to be in between 20 to 40 years.
 - ✓ The participants will be given fitness certificates only after being examined by doctors.
 - ✓ The annual jallikattu at Palamedu and Alaganallur will be held on January 16 and 17 this year.

- **The Tamil Nadu assembly - passed 15 bills in the recent assembly session on January 9**
 - ✓ The bills include the one reverting to indirect elections to heads of urban local bodies, mayors of corporations, chairpersons of municipalities and town panchayats.
 - ✓ The assembly unanimously adopted a resolution ratifying the amendment to the Constitution, which proposed to extend the reservation for the

Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes in Lok Sabha and Assemblies by another 10 years and ending reservation for the Anglo-Indians.

- ✓ At present, one member of the Anglo-Indian community is nominated to the Legislative Assembly though the member cannot vote in the House.
- ✓ Nancy Ann Cynthia Francis is the lone Anglo-Indian member in the House
- ✓ The passed bills include the Tamil Nadu District Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Tamil Nadu Municipal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020, and the Tamil Nadu Municipal Laws (Second Amendment) Bill 2020.

- **The Madurai bench of Madras high court – ordered to conduct the Avaniapuram jallikattu this year under the supervision of a committee headed by a retired District Judge, similar to last year**



- ✓ A division bench of Justice M Duraiswamy and Justice T Ravindran made this oral observation on hearing the petitions regarding organising jallikattu events in Madurai district.
- ✓ The state government has passed an order permitting jallikattu at Avaniapuram from January 15 to 31.
- ✓ The order was passed by the animal husbandry, dairying and fisheries department.
- ✓ Earlier, in 2019 the court had passed an order constituting a committee headed by a retired district judge to conduct the jallikattu.
- ✓ Last year, a committee comprising a retired judge, eight members of Thenkal Pasana Vivasayigal sangam, 16 villagers and three advocates has conducted the event.

- **The Greater Chennai Corporation - has submitted a proposal requesting ₹53,000 crore funding from the World Bank for host of projects across Chennai**

- **The Chennai Corporation - is installing 'smart poles' in various parts of the city**

- ✓ It will facilitate better integration of key aspects of the command and control system.
- ✓ The smart poles will have a rain gauge, public address system, camera and equipment to monitor pollution.
- ✓ They will also involve in collecting data on traffic at important roads.
- ✓ The 'smart pole' installed near Ripon Buildings has a public address system, camera, rain gauge and equipment to monitor pollution and illumination of the roads during the night.

- **The Indirect elections to the posts of District Panchayat Presidents and Vice-presidents and Panchayat Union Chairperson and Vice-chairperson - were conducted in rural local bodies across the state on January 11**
- ✓ The ruling party, AIADMK and its ally PMK won 14 district panchayat president posts and 13 vice-president posts.
- ✓ The opposition, DMK had to settle with 12 presidents and 13 vice-presidents
- ✓ The election for Sivaganga district panchayat was cancelled as a result of a tie with both the AIADMK and the DMK ending up with 12 votes each.
- ✓ The AIADMK front won 150 posts and the DMK front won 133 chairpersons in the indirect elections held for the panchayat union chairpersons and vice-chairpersons across 314 panchayat unions
- ✓ The AIADMK front won 124 posts and the DMK front won in 118 places in the vice-chairperson elections.
- ✓ Earlier, in the panchayat union election, the DMK and its allies had won 2,325 panchayat union councillors and AIADMK front had won 1,966 councillors out of the total 5,090.
- ✓ Also, the DMK and its allies won 268 of the 515 district councillor posts in the state earlier.
- ✓ Direct elections took place in two phases on December 27 and 30, for which the results were declared between January 2 and 4.

- **Greater Chennai Corporation - to conduct a polio vaccination drive on January 19 for vaccinating children up to the age of five**
- ✓ The population of children aged five and below in Chennai is estimated to be around 7.03 lakh.

- **Metrowater - has improved its capacity to recycle grey water from 45MLD (million litres a day) to 60MLD in its 2 tertiary treatment reverse osmosis (TTRO) plants in Koyambedu and Kodungaiyur.**

- **The Madurai district police - is now planning to 'live stream' the jallikattu events scheduled to take place in Palamedu and Alanganallur on January 16 and 17 through 'Madurai Kavalan' mobile application**

- **The Northeast monsoon (NEM) - officially withdrew on January 10 without producing any cyclones or major systems to the state.**

- **Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu – inaugurated the 173rd annual Thyagaraja Aradhana at the saint's 'Samadhi' in Thiruvaiyaru on January 11**



- ✓ The festival will be held for five days on the banks of the Kaveri in Thiruvaiyaru, a confluence of five rivers, in the Thanjavoor district
- ✓ The music festival is famous for the rendering of devotional songs composed by Saint Thyagaraja by well known and emerging artists
- ✓ The most important event in the festival, the group-singing of the five Ghana Raga compositions of Saint Thyagaraja, is known as the Pancha Rathna Keertanas - the five jewels of the Saint's compositions
- ✓ This is usually held on the Pushya Bahula Panchami day, commemorating the passing away of Saint Thyagaraja on, 6th January 1847, at the age of 79.
- ✓ This year the day falls on 15th of January.
- ✓ On January 15, more than 1,000 musicians are expected to participate in the group singing of the Pancha Rathna Kritis to pay homage to the musical genius.
- ✓ The trinity of Carnatic music refers to the three greats of Carnatic music - Thyagaraja Swamy (1767–1847), Muthuswamy Dikshithar (1775-1835) and Shyama Sastry (1762–1827)

- **Tamil Nadu - has received an award from the Centre for 'Best Performance in Road Safety'**

- ✓ Defence minister Rajnath Singh presented the award to state transport minister M R Vijayabaskar on January 13.
- ✓ The state had registered a 32% decrease in road accident deaths in 2018, compared to last year



- ✓ Tamil Nadu topped India's state-wise accident chart twice in a row in 2016 and 2017.

- **The Madras high court - has set up a committee headed by a retired District Judge to organize jallikattu at Avaniapuram and Alanganallur in Madurai district this year.**
 - ✓ The committee is also entrusted to monitor the jallikattu events at Palamedu
 - ✓ A division bench of justice M Duraiswamy and justice T Ravindran appointed retired Principal district judge C Manickam as the Chairman of the committee to conduct jallikattu at Avaniapuram on January 15
 - ✓ It had also appointed collector T G Vinay, Madurai city commissioner of police S Davidson Devasirvadam and corporation commissioner S Visakan as members of the organizing committee to conduct jallikattu at Avaniapuram on January 15.
 - ✓ The retired judge, the collector, south zone IG K P Shanmuga Rajeswaran and assistant director of town panchayat were appointed as members of the organizing committee to conduct jallikattu at Alanganallur on January 17.

- **The Tamil Nadu government - announced the winners of the Thiruvalluvar Day awards and Chithirai Tamil New Year awards for the years 2019 and 2020**
 - ✓ The awards for individual winners carry a prize money of ₹1 lakh, while the award for associations will be ₹5 lakh.
 - ✓ The awardees named include former Union minister Gingee N Ramachandran, N Nithyanadabharathi, professors K Arjunan, K Samarasam, S Sundarajan and writer Liyaquat Ali Khan.
 - ✓ Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami will present the awards at a function in Chennai on January 20.
 - ✓ These annual awards have been named after Ambedkar, former chief ministers C N Annadurai, K Kamaraj, as well as Bharathiyar and Bharathidhasan, among several other prominent personalities.
 - ✓ During the event, Tamil scholars will also be awarded, along with prominent foreign littérateurs from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, France and the US.

- **The Tamil Nadu government - has appointed Justice K. Chandru, retired judge of the Madras HC, as the Chairman of a fee fixation committee for private agricultural colleges in the State**
 - ✓ The fee fixation committee consists of a Member Secretary and seven other members.

- **Tamil Nadu - to hold the annual Pulse Polio immunisation camp on January 19, 2020**
 - ✓ The camp aims to vaccinate 70.5 lakh children under 5 years as part of a nationwide campaign.



- ✓ The state will hold the mass vaccination drive in a single phase between 7am and 5pm on January 19 and use the next one week for the mop-up activities.
- **The Thiruverkadu police – had introduced the first set of boards with QR (quick response) codes recently within their limits**

HOW QR SCANNER WORKS



Step 1 | Open the QR Code Scanner application on your phone

Step 2 | Hold the phone steadily for 2-3 seconds towards the QR Code you want to scan

Step 3 | Once the code is scanned, you will be directed to open a link in Google maps. This will lead you to the nearest police station

- ✓ It had erected the QR coded boards at 9 places within their jurisdiction
 - ✓ The boards are intended to help people find the nearest police station
 - ✓ To access the service, the QR code has to be scanned by using a mobile phone
 - ✓ The phone will then guide the person to the nearest police station
 - ✓ As per the police, the boards will be placed on main roads, places of worship, bus stops and some prominent interior roads.
 - ✓ The system would also help solve confusion and conflict over the jurisdiction of different police stations
 - ✓ The QR code is designed and laminated in such a way that it doesn't get damaged in rain or heat.
 - ✓ A QR code is a square barcode that stores information.
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - handed over the Thiruvalluvar Award for 2020 and the Thanthai Periyar Award for 2019 to N. Nithyanandha Bharathi and former Union Minister Gingee N. Ramachandran respectively, in Chennai on January 20.**



- ✓ The winners of awards includes –

- ✓ Annal Ambedkar Award - K. Arjunan
 - ✓ Perarignar Anna Award - K. Samarasam.
 - ✓ Perunthalaivar Kamarasar Award - M.S. Mathivanan
 - ✓ Mahakavi Bharathiyar Award - P. Sivaraji
 - ✓ Pavendhar Bharathidasan Award - Thenisai Chellappa
 - ✓ Thamizhthendral Award - S. Sundararajan
 - ✓ Muthamizh Kavalar K.A.P. Viswanatham Award - Manimekalai Kannan
 - ✓ Thamizhthai Award for 2019 - Chicago Tamil Sangam.
 - ✓ Kabilar Award - Poet Vetriyazhagan
 - ✓ U. Ve. Sa. Award - V. Mahadevan
 - ✓ Kamar Award - Saraswathi Ramanathan
 - ✓ Sollin Selvar Award - Kavidasan
 - ✓ Umaruppulavar Award - Liakath Ali Khan
 - ✓ G.U. Pope Award - Maria Joseph Xavier.
 - ✓ Ilango Adigal award - Gnanaselvan alias Thirugnanasambandham
 - ✓ Amma Literary Award - Umayal Muthu
 - ✓ Sinthanai Sirpi Singaravelar Award - Ashoka Subramanian alias S.K. Subramanian
 - ✓ Maraimalai Adigalar Award - P. Muthukumaraswamy.
 - ✓ Ayothidas Pandithar Award - V. Prabhakaran.
 - ✓ Awards for Best Translation - S. Mohammad Yousuf, K.J. Masthan Ali, Siva. Murugesan, N. Kadikasalam, Marabin Maindhan, Vatsala, Murugudurai, Malan alias V. Narayanan, Kirusangini alias Brinda Nagarajan and A. Mathivanan.
 - ✓ Chief Minister's Tamil Computing Award for 2018 - T. Nagarajan.
 - ✓ All award-winning personalities received a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, a citation and a shawl.
 - ✓ The institution that won the Thamizhthai Award received a cash prize of ₹5 lakh
- **The Tamil Nadu cabinet, chaired by the Chief Minister - cleared investment proposals worth ₹50,000 crore on January 20 to project the state's image as an attractive investment destination**
- **The Union Government – has given the approval for making announcements in Chennai airport in Tamil, besides Hindi and English.**
- ✓ Minister of state for civil aviation, Hardeep Singh Puri announced that the Directorate of general aviation has already issued advisory to all the airlines to start making additional in-flight announcements in local languages without comprising any safety requirements
 - ✓ The Chennai airport has been designated as a 'silent airport' by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) since May 1, 2017.
 - ✓ However, announcements are made only in times of emergency.

- **Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - have designed and monitored the construction of a checkdam across the Palar river.**

- **Tamil Nadu – to receive a group of 110 students from various government schools of Chenab region districts in Jammu and Kashmir, as part of ‘Samagra Shiksha’ exchange programme.**
 - ✓ ‘Samagra Shiksha’ is an ambitious programme of the Ministry of HRD
 - ✓ It is intended for the school education sector starting from preschool to Class XII students.
 - ✓ The programme enables the students to explore new avenues and education facilities across the country
 - ✓ Organising such tours provide a platform to students to know more about their country and also to familiarise themselves with culture and history of the nation.

- **Chennai Metrowater – to collaborate with National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) soon for use of renewable energy in its water treatment facilities and reduce power consumption.**

- **Tamil Nadu School education minister K A Sengottaiyan–announced that Class V and Class VIII students will write board exams in their respective schools and not in common exam centres.**

- **The Tamil Nadu Government – has decided to expand its Speed Violation Detection System (SVDS) project to Poonamallee - Krishnagiri and Ulundurpet - Salem highways as well**
 - ✓ This was announced by the State transport minister MR Vijayabaskar, while inaugurating 31st road safety week celebrations across the state on January 20.

- **Trichy - to become the first district in the state to sensitise school heads on identifying gender non-conformed children**
 - ✓ Gender non-conformed children can be easily identified in their adolescence, even though hormonal imbalance begins as early as five years

- **The Tamil Nadu Government – has sanctioned a new helipad for the upcoming new government medical college in Ooty**

- **The Tamil Nadu government - constituted a 21-member high-level committee to conduct consecration of the Thanjavur big temple in accordance with Tamil culture and tradition and also to monitor the overall arrangements of the event.**



- ✓ The State Chief secretary K Shanmugam will be the chairman of the committee
- ✓ The forthcoming kumbabishekam of the Big temple is scheduled to take place on February 5
- **The Southern Railway - has planned to install toilets at 200 stations, out of which 33 to come up at stations in Chennai division**
- **Oscar winning composer A R Rahman - to mentor 20 children from Nagaland and train them to become professional musicians**
- ✓ The renowned music director will train the children through his K M Music Conservatory (KMMC) and the Sunshine Orchestra which trains such underprivileged children for free
- **The Tamil Nadu's tableau at this year's Republic Day parade - will showcase a statue of Iyyanar, the guardian deity of villages**
- ✓ It will also highlight and present some of the folk dances of Tamil Nadu during the parade
- ✓ The front of the tableau would have a model of deity Iyyanar riding a horse, surrounded by his attendants.
- ✓ The second portion will have a live performance of Pinnal Kolattam, while the third portion will feature a model of musicians playing kombu
- ✓ The fourth portion will display a model of Thappattam and the fifth portion will feature a model of Oyilattam
- **The Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) - has directed the setting up of a joint committee to monitor the mixing of sewage in Tamirabarani river**

- **Tamil Nadu – to purchase equipment at a cost of ₹110.13 crore to implement the Safe City Project under the Nirbhaya Fund**
- **The Water Resources Department - has finalised a tie-up with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Development Bank (AIIB) for the ₹3,000-crore flood mitigation flagship project.**
- **Tirumurai, a Tamil compendium of hymns in praise of Lord Shiva - will be recited on the day of consecration (kumbabishekam) of the Brihadeeswarar temple in Thanjavur on February 5.**
 - ✓ In the last 40 years, this will be the third time that the temple is going to have the consecration.
 - ✓ On April 3, 1980, the event took place after 177 years.
 - ✓ In 1997, it was originally planned for June 8, but was held the next day as a fire broke out at the yagasalai on the evening of June 7
- **The Tamil Nadu Government – announced that the first phase of Census 2021 will be held for 45 days in June and July, 2020**
 - ✓ The second phase will be held between February 9 and 28, 2021.
 - ✓ The first phase will consist of house listing and housing census in which 34 questions will be asked to every household.
- **Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - laid the foundation for DLF's 'DownTown IT Park' at Taramani on January 23.**



- ✓ It will be coming up at a cost of ₹5,000 crore and will create 6.8 million sqft of IT space in Chennai
- **Greater Chennai Corporation – has decided to charge extra money for removing garbage from the localities, starting from April 2020**

- **The state government - ordered artificial recharge structures in rivers and tanks to augment groundwater resources in the delta districts of Tiruvarur and Thanjavur.**
- **The Tamil Nadu government - has granted administrative approval for the implementation of intra-State portability of ration cards in the State..**
 - ✓ The centre's ambitious 'One Nation, One Ration Card' scheme is expected to be rolled out by the Centre in June throughout the country.
 - ✓ The scheme enables ration cardholders to purchase foodgrain from any fair price shop within the State.
 - ✓ The intra-State portability would be introduced in Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli districts on a pilot basis and then it will be rolled out across the entire State
 - ✓ Presently, there are 35,233 fair price shops run by various agencies such as Cooperatives, the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation and women's self-help groups, among others
 - ✓ Overall, 2,05,03,379 families have been provided with smart ration cards in the State.
- **The Governments of Tamil Nadu and Kerala - plan to conduct a joint study of the archaeological sites at Muziris near Kodungallur, Kerala, and Keeladi in Sivaganga district.**



- ✓ The artefacts unearthed in Keeladi can also be compared with the artefacts found in Muziris to throw more information on the Sangam era and the life of the Tamil people.
- ✓ The archaeologists involved in the excavation of Muziris visit Keeladi quite frequently and vice versa for a long time, to understand and relate the artefacts excavated in both the heritage sites
- ✓ The fifth phase of excavation was completed at Keeladi and the preliminary study for starting the sixth phase is being conducted currently.

- **Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - announced that the state government would set up its ambitious Financial Tech city on 300 acres at Kattupakkam near Chennai.**
- **Eight prominent people from Tamil Nadu - have been nominated for Padma awards on the eve of the Republic Day on January 25**



- ✓ TVS group chairman and Managing Director, Venu Srinivasan, littérateur Manoj Das and social worker Krishnammal Jagannathan have been chosen for Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award.
 - ✓ Well known Carnatic vocalist and Sangita Kalainidhi awardee Bombay Sisters C Saroja and C Lalitha, artist Manohar Devadoss, Amar Seva Sangam founder S Ramakrishnan, Nagaswara vidwans Kalee Shabi Mahaboob and Sheik Mahaboob Subani and IIT-Madras chemistry professor Pradeep Thalappil have been chosen for Padma Shri.
 - ✓ Krishnammal Jagannathan and her late husband Sankaralingam Jagannathan were famous for their noteworthy contributions for promoting social justice.
 - ✓ The couple started 'Land for the Tillers' Freedom', an organisation based in Nagapattinam district, which brought the landlords and landless poor to the negotiating table to help them work in a cooperative environment.
- **Governor Banwarilal Purohit - unfurled the National flag on the Marina beach front in Chennai to lead the Republic Day celebrations in the State**



- ✓ Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam, Assembly Speaker P. Dhanapal, the Council of Ministers and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.
- **The Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) - has slammed the Kamarajar Port Ltd (KPL) and the North Chennai**

Thermal Power Station (NCTPS) for failing to clear the pollution caused by them in the Ennore Creek.

- ✓ The Bench also imposed an interim penalty of ₹8.34 crore on KPL as environmental compensation
- ✓ It had ordered the port to deposit the amount with the Central Pollution Control Board within two months.

- **Ponni M Concessao, founder of Oscar and Ponni Architects, Chennai – won the International Inspirational Women Awards (IIWA) 2020 in the category of best woman performer in architecture at a function recently held in Noida.**



- ✓ One among 1,300 nominees, Ponni bagged the best women performer in architecture award.

- **Indian Red Cross Society – to celebrate its centenary year on January 28, 2020.**



- ✓ Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit will be the chief guest and will inaugurate the celebrations at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai.

- **Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit - inaugurated a new 'Red cross museum' as part of centenary celebrations of Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) on January 28**



- **Tamil Nadu government - will conduct a survey on bonded labours in the state after a gap of 24 years**

- ✓ In 1996, the state government had conducted a similar survey and identified around 25,000 bonded labourers across the state.
- ✓ Hiring bonded labours has been banned after the enactment of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 by the Parliament.

- **The Tamil Nadu government - told the Madras high court on January 28 that the consecration of the Brihadeeswara Temple (Big Temple) in Thanjavur would be done in both Tamil and Sanskrit as per agama dictum**
- ✓ As per the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments department, the Yagasalai poojas and the Mahaabishekam include the practice of rendition of Thirumurai parayanam (panniru thirumurai, abhirami anthathi, thirupugal) which is done in Tamil.
- ✓ Yagasalai poojas will be performed from February 1 to 5 and the Mahaabishekam will be performed on February 5, 2020.

- **The Tamil Nadu and Centre - have jointly taken up repair, renovation and restoration of 89 water bodies in drought-hit Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Coimbatore and Tirupur districts in 2018-19 to augment groundwater table.**
- ✓ Under the Pradhan Mantri Sinchayi Yojana, the government will spend ₹49 crore to restore these water bodies following approval by the state technical advisory committee and sanctioning committee in 2018.
- ✓ The tanks have been categorised under drought prone area programme.
- ✓ The severely drought-hit Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram in 2018-2019 received the largest share of allocation with 24 and 23 tanks being identified for restoration, followed by Dharmapuri (15) and Virudhunagar (10).

- **The Union government - has sanctioned two more medical colleges to Tamil Nadu in Ariyalur and Kallakurichi districts**
- ✓ This increases the total number of new medical colleges allotted to the State within a year to 11.
- ✓ The Centre had approved 6 medical colleges to the State in October last year and 3 more in November the same year.

- **Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - launched various projects in the State via video-conferencing from the secretariat on January 29**



- ✓ The sanctioned strength of the new stations will be 162 personnel.
- ✓ The 240 buses cost Rs 83.83 crore.

- **The Directorate of government examinations - has announced that Questions in Class X board exam will not follow any fixed format and they can be asked from anywhere in the textbook**
- **The State – has launched a rescue services station with a special force of 50 commandos to rescue people washed away by tidal waves in Marina beach, on Wednesday.**
- **Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami - announced various schemes on January 30 to promote industrial growth in the state.**

STATES

- **The Kerala assembly - passed a resolution on December 31 demanding that the Centre withdraw the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 immediately**
 - ✓ Thus, Kerala becomes the first state in the entire country to oppose the law legislatively
- **Kerala – announces ban on single-use plastics from January 1, 2020**
 - ✓ The state has banned 19 types of plastic materials, which includes Plastic carry bags, trays, disposable glasses, bottles, straw, plates, cups, cooling film, bowls, flask, sheets for food parcelling, spoon, juice packet, PVC flex materials and plastic containers for parcelling
 - ✓ The move is part of the ambitious effort to secure Green certification for 9 key tourist destinations in the State by 2021.
 - ✓ With the ban in force, Kerala Tourism is targeting to announce Kumarakom as the first plastic-free tourist destination in the State in January 2020
- **The Maharashtra Government – inaugurates ‘Cyber Safe Initiative’ on January 3**
 - ✓ The initiative was launched on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Indian Social Reformer and the country’s first female teacher, Savitribai Phule.
 - ✓ It aims to create awareness on various cyber crime laws and about atrocities committed against children and women.
 - ✓ Earlier this year, the Home Affairs Ministry had launched the Cyber Crime Prevention against women and children Scheme in January 2019 with a budget allocation of Rs 223.198 crores.
 - ✓ Savitribhai Phule, hailed as “Mother of Indian Feminism”, was instrumental in promoting women rights in the country

- ✓ She along with her husband Jyotirao Phule founded the first India's girls' school in Pune in 1848.
- ✓ They both have also founded Satyashodhak Samaj that supported inter-caste marriages.
- ✓ In 2015, The Union Government renamed University of Pune as 'Savitribai Phule Pune University'.

➤ **Bihar's Bhagalpur forest – will have the country's first Turtle Rehabilitation Centre to be set up in January 2020**



- ✓ It will accommodate more than 500 turtles in an area of over half a hectare
- ✓ The centre will rehabilitate sick and severely injured turtles which are being rescued from smugglers
- ✓ It will also monitor these turtles after rehabilitation, before releasing them into rivers.
- ✓ River Ganga flows through Bhagalpur
- ✓ Hence, there are number of sandbanks in the region that act as ideal breeding ground for the turtles.
- ✓ As these turtles are quite heavy, they are smuggled to a great extent
- ✓ They are targeted for their meat as turtle meat boosts energy and keeps diseases away.
- ✓ According to a study of Traffic India, every year around 11,000 turtles are smuggled from India

➤ **The Andhra Pradesh Government - announced that it will deliver sand at customers' door steps across the state**

- ✓ The pilot project will help address issues of sand scarcity and sand mafia, besides preventing illegal sand mining.
- ✓ Under the initiative, the government will collect transportation charges from the customers and deliver sand at door steps of the customers
- ✓ In order to make the initiative successful, the Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation will stock 15 lakh tons of sand per month for the next five months.
- ✓ At present, the sand demand in the state is around 80,000 tonnes a day.

➤ **The Election Commission – announced that the assembly polls in Delhi will be held on February 8**

- ✓ Chief election commissioner Sunil Arora along with election commissioner Ashok Lavasa announced the poll schedule in New Delhi



- ✓ Over 1.47 crore voters will exercise their right to vote in 70 assembly seats across the state on February 8
 - ✓ The counting of votes and the announcing of results will be on February 11
 - ✓ The current Delhi assembly expires on February 22.
 - ✓ The last assembly election in 2015 delivered a massive win for Aam Aadmi Party which won 67 seats, leaving only 3 for BJP.
- **A.P. Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy - will launch the Jagananna Amma Vodi programme in Chittoor on January 9.**



- ✓ Under the scheme, a financial assistance of ₹15,000 will be provided to nearly 43 lakh mothers or guardians who send their children to school.
 - ✓ Student enrolment in the schools has increased by 30% after the announcement of the scheme.
- **Gujarat Government – to set up Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center soon**
- ✓ This was announced by Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani while speaking during the felicitation ceremony of Children’s Innovation Festival (CIF) in Gandhinagar
 - ✓ The Gujarat University also exchanged a letter of intent with the UNICEF on the occasion for setting up the Center
 - ✓ The Center will be set up as a Joint Venture between UNICEF and the Government of Gujarat
 - ✓ The Center will help to identify, nurture and promote innovation by children in the state
 - ✓ Father of Indian Space program, Vikram Sarabhai, a noted Indian physicist and astronomer, originally hailed from Gujarat.
- **The Jammu & Kashmir government – begins the implementation of the central ‘Right to Information Act, 2005’ in the state**
- ✓ The bifurcation of the state of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union Territories — J&K and Ladakh — has led to the repeal of more than 150 ‘erstwhile’ laws
- **The Andhra Pradesh Government - signed Memorandum of Understanding with a German firm to implement Zero Budget Natural Farming in the state.**

- ✓ The state Government will take a loan of Rs 1015 crores from the German firm to fund climate resilient Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF).
 - ✓ Along with ZBNF implementation, the Government will also implement Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana in the State.
 - ✓ The ZBNF was first adopted by Karnataka.
 - ✓ Andhra Pradesh will become the first state in the country to introduce an ambitious plan of 100% natural farming in the State by 2024.
- **The Kerala government – moves to the Supreme Court challenging the constitutionality of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 under Article 131, making it a Centre-state dispute**
- ✓ It had contended that the CAA is ‘unconstitutional’ in denying Indian citizenship to Muslims, Rohingyas, Hazaras, Tamils and even minorities, such as Indian-origin people from Fiji and Malaysia.
 - ✓ Earlier, on December 31, 2019, the Kerala government assembly had passed a resolution requesting the Centre to scrap CAA.
 - ✓ The Article 131 provides exclusive jurisdiction to the apex court to decide suits relating to Centre-state and state-state disputes.
 - ✓ In 1961, West Bengal government had filed a suit in the SC under Article 131 against Parliament passing the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957, which had empowered the Centre to acquire land vested or owned by the state.
 - ✓ In recent years, two judgments were reported on the issue of state vs centre or state vs state cases
 - ✓ The first judgment reported in 2012 — State of Madhya Pradesh vs Union of India — concluded that States cannot challenge a Central law under Article 131.
 - ✓ The second judgment reported in 2015 — State of Jharkhand vs State of Bihar — took the opposite view and referred the question of law to a larger Bench of the Supreme Court for final determination.
 - ✓ The CAA came into effect all over the country from January 10

- **Himachal Pradesh – sets a Guinness World Record by making a record-breaking 1995kg Khichdi on the eve of Makar Sankranti**



- ✓ The earlier record in this category stood at 918.8kg.
- **Arunachal Pradesh - has signed an agreement with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to prepare a Red List Assessment of all orchids in the State**



- ✓ With the signing of the pact, Arunachal Pradesh becomes the first State in the country to initiate IUCN's "red listing" at the State level
- **The Gujarat Government – has decided to import water-soluble fertilizers from China.**
- ✓ The Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation (GAIC) had commenced the import, packing and selling of the water-soluble fertilizers to farmers in the State.
- ✓ The new fertilizers have been named 'AGRO', which will be used for Precision agriculture
- ✓ Precision agriculture is the farming management concept in which the inputs such as pesticides, nutrients, water and seeds are used at minimal amount to get maximum output.
- ✓ GAIC is the nodal agency appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture to implement its schemes in the state of Gujarat.
- ✓ The move will also assist in achieving the Government's target of doubling farmer's income by 2022
- ✓ Gujarat has the maximum acreage of land under drip irrigation among all the states in the entire country.
- **The Assam government and the Centre - signed a \$88 million loan agreement with the World Bank on January 16, 2020 to implement the Assam Inland Water Transport Project in the state**



- ✓ The project intends to modernise the infrastructure and services of **Assam's passenger ferry sector**, which operates on its rivers including the Brahmaputra.
- ✓ Overall, there are around 15 waterways in Assam on rivers including Tiwang, Barak, Kopili, Puthimari, Doyang and Lohit.
- ✓ Assam has more than 361 ferry routes with a majority of them cross the Brahmaputra or serve its islands

- **Rajasthan – has elected the country’s youngest and oldest sarpanch (Head of Panchayat) after the completion of the first phase of the panchayat elections**
- ✓ Bharatpur’s Asruni Khan, aged 21 years and 18 days, has emerged as the youngest sarpanch in the entire country
- ✓ She won the polls from Chulhera gram panchayat under Deeg panchayat samiti in Bharatpur.
- ✓ The seat is reserved for OBC women
- ✓ Apart from Asruni, there are two other Sarpanches who are of 21 years of age in the State



- ✓ Meanwhile, at 97 years, Vidya Devi is elected as the oldest sarpanch in the country
- ✓ She won the panchayat election from Puranabas gram panchayat in Sikar by a margin of 207 votes.
- **Delhi's Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajaj- granted Delhi Police Commissioner the power to detain persons under the National Security Act, 1980 for the next three months**
- ✓ With the permission, the Delhi Police will now get emergency detention power with effect from January 19, 2020 till April 18, 2020.
- ✓ The National Security Act was promulgated on September 23, 1980 during the tenure of Indira Gandhi Government
- ✓ It allows the preventive detention of a person who is seen as a threat to the law and order of the state or country.
- **The Kerala state cabinet - has decided to inform the Registrar General of census, who comes under the Union home ministry, that Kerala will not implement the National Population Register (NPR) in totality**
- ✓ However, Kerala would fully cooperate with Census 2021.
- **A special session of the Andhra Pradesh Assembly - passed the A.P. Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020 and the A.P. Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) Repeal Bill, 2020 on January 20.**

- ✓ The Bills will facilitate the creation and development of Amaravati, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool as legislative, executive and judicial capitals respectively.
- ✓ The bill was earlier approved by the AP cabinet chaired by CM Jaganmohan Reddy
- ✓ The proposal has been submitted to enable decentralisation and inclusive development of all regions, thereby ensuring "**balanced and inclusive growth**" of Andhra Pradesh.

- **The Maharashtra government - has made compulsory recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution by students in all schools starting January 26.**
- ✓ The objective of the move was to instill the values such as justice, freedom and equality enshrined in the Constitution in the students.
- ✓ In 2016, the Directorate of Secondary Education issued a directive asking all schools to recite the Constitution.

- **The Madhya Pradesh government - has made the recitation of the preamble to the Constitution compulsory in all government schools every Saturday.**

- **The Maharashtra cabinet - has approved the 'Mumbai 24 hours' policy, a pet project of Tourism Minister Aaditya Thackeray since 2013**

- **The Kerala State Election Commission - launched the facial recognition technology for voters of select 10 polling stations in Kompally Municipality of Medchal Malkajgiri district.**

- **The Chhattisgarh government - has decided to stop the monthly pension scheme for those jailed under MISA during Emergency**
- ✓ The money set aside for the scheme by the previous BJP government will now be used for employment schemes.
- ✓ Chhattisgarh has about 300 such beneficiaries, who have undergone jail term.
- ✓ They are given ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 a month depending on the period of spending in jail between 1975 and 1977.
- ✓ Earlier, the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh, too, had scrapped MISA pensions in January 2019 after it came to power, but a high court has since ordered the pension restored.

- **India's first e-waste clinic – was opened in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**



- ✓ This clinic will segregate and process e-waste from household and commercial units.
 - ✓ The clinic will process all types of e-Waste materials like computers, mobile, chargers, etc.
 - ✓ The e-waste clinic is being started on the basis of a three-month pilot project.
 - ✓ If this project is successful, such e-waste clinics will be established at other places in the country.
 - ✓ The e-waste clinic has been prepared in a junk low floor bus.
 - ✓ The bus is decorated with e-waste material from outside and inside
 - ✓ The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) provide the lead technical support to the clinic.
 - ✓ The clinic is planning to run a campaign 'junk to jugaad' for those e-waste materials which will not be possible to process.
- **The Rajasthan Assembly - passed a resolution urging the Centre to repeal the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act on January 25**
- ✓ Rajasthan is the third state to pass a resolution against the CAA after Punjab and Kerala.
- **The Maharashtra government - launched its 'Shiv Bhojan' scheme, aimed at providing a meal to the poor for just ₹10, on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day**



- ✓ States like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have launched similar schemes before, such as Amma Unavagam and Indira Canteen.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu had set up the first such canteen in 2013.

- **The Andhra Pradesh assembly - passed a statutory resolution to abolish the Legislative Council by 133-0 on January 27**
- ✓ The Opposition Telugu Desam Party, which has a majority in the Council, had already announced to boycott the proceedings.
- ✓ **Assam** was the first state to abolish its state legislative council in 1947
- ✓ After Assam, West Bengal had abolished its legislative council in 1969 and Punjab abolished it in 1970
- ✓ Tamil Nadu abolished it in 1986 followed by Jammu and Kashmir in 2019
- ✓ Currently, five states viz., Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana have the bicameral legislature.
- ✓ Article 169 of the constitution defines Legislative Council.

- **West Bengal - passed a resolution against the contentious Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) on January 27 to become the fourth non-BJP state to take the legislative route against the Act**

- **The Madhya Pradesh government – to launch a ramped up version of Yuva Swabhimana Yojana, a scheme for the unemployed on February 1**
- ✓ The scheme aims to increase the monthly stipend to ₹5,000 apart from increasing the number of working (hence payable) days to 365.

- **India's first of its kind 'Fruit train' - was flagged off from Tadipatri Railway Station in A.P.'s Anantapur district on January 30**



- ✓ The train was carrying a load of 980 metric tonnes of locally grown bananas to the Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) in Mumbai, from where the consignment will be exported to Iran.

NATIONAL

- **Indore city in Madhya Pradesh - was ranked India's Cleanest City for the fourth time in a row among cities with over 10 lakh population as per the quarterly Swachhta survey rankings released.**
- ✓ In this category, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) was ranked second in first quarter results (April-June) of Swachh Survekshan League 2020,
- ✓ Kolkata and Howrah stood at the bottom of the rankings among 49 cities with population of more than 10 lakh, as West Bengal did not participate in the nationwide exercise.

- ✓ The report was released by Urban affairs minister Hardeep Singh Puri on December 31 in New Delhi
 - ✓ This year a total of 4,372 cities participated in the league
 - ✓ It is carried out by the Quality Council of India (QCI).
 - ✓ It was first conducted in 2016 covering 73 cities
- **In its first fare hike in five years, the Railways - announced an increase in passenger charges on December 31, but did not touch suburban train fares and its season tickets**
- ✓ The increase would be effective from January 1, 2020,
 - ✓ The Railways expects to generate an additional ₹2,300 crore annual revenue with an increase in the range of 1 paise - 4 paise per km for different classes of travelers
 - ✓ The last fare revision was done by the Railways in 2014-15.
- **About 21.40% of forest cover in India - is susceptible to forest fires, as per the 2019 report by the Forest Survey of India (FSI)**
- ✓ The forests in the north-eastern region and central India were found to be the most vulnerable, as per the report
 - ✓ The findings are released based on a study carried out by the FSI along forest fire points identified across the country from 2004 to 2017.



- ✓ The forest fire points (FFP) identified during the 13 year period adds up to 2,77,758
- ✓ According the report, 'extremely' fire prone areas account for 3.89% of total forest cover, 'very highly' fire prone areas account for 6.01% and 'highly' fire prone areas for 11.50%.
- ✓ Together, these three categories account for 21.40 % of the forest cover in the entire country.
- ✓ The total number of alerts issued for each state based on the available data from November 2018 to June 2019 were 29,547
- ✓ Mizoram, a small State, recorded the highest number of fire alerts (2,795).
- ✓ The seven States of the north-eastern region accounted for 10,210 fire alerts, which make up about one-third of alerts in the country.

- ✓ While the overall green cover has increased in the country, it has decreased in the north-east, particularly in Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland
- ✓ Central Indian States also recorded a high number of forest fire alerts, with Madhya Pradesh accounting for 2,723 alerts, Maharashtra 2,516, Odisha 2,213 and Chattisgarh 1,008 alerts between November 2018 to June 2019.
- **The Railways – has renamed the ‘Railway Protection Force’ (RPF) as ‘Indian Railway Protection Force Service’**
 - ✓ It has been accorded organised Group A status, as per the order issued by the Railways
 - ✓ On July 10, the Cabinet approved grant of Organised Group ‘A’ status to the RPF
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – to disburse ₹12,000 crore to 6 crore farmers through e-transfer at an event in Tumkur, Karnataka on January 2**
 - ✓ During the event, the Prime Minister will also hand over keys of ‘Deep Sea Fishing’ vessels and ‘Fishing Vessel Transponders’ to select farmers of Tamil Nadu and distribute ‘Kisan Credit Cards’ (KCC) to select Fishermen of Karnataka.
 - ✓ The payment will be the third instalment of the current financial year as part of the ‘PM-Kisan’ (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi) scheme

INTERIM BUDGET 2019-20

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

Direct income support of ₹6,000 p.a for farmers, effective 01.12.2018

To benefit 12 cr small and marginal farmer families having cultivable land upto 2 ha

Direct transfer into the bank accounts in three equal instalments

First installment upto 31.03.2019, to be paid this year itself

₹75,000 cr in outlay for 2019-20 and ₹20,000 cr in RE 2018-19

- ✓ The move will help landholder farmers get ₹2,000 each directly into the beneficiaries’ bank accounts

- ✓ Earlier, over ₹2,000 crore had been transferred to bank accounts of over 1.01 crore farmers at the launch event of the PM-Kisan scheme in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh on February 24, 2019
 - ✓ The Agriculture ministry had earlier transferred the first instalment (of ₹2,000 each) of current financial year to 7.46 crore farmers and the second instalment to 5.96 crore farmers as on December 31, 2019.
 - ✓ Under the scheme, nearly 14.5 crore landholder farmers are eligible to receive ₹6,000 per annum in 3 equal instalments of ₹2,000 each in a financial year
 - ✓ In 2019 budget, annual expenditure of Rs 75,000 crores was allocated to the scheme.
 - ✓ The scheme was earlier meant for only marginal and small farmers (having landholding up to maximum five acres), but it was later expanded under Modi 2.0 covering all farmers irrespective of the size of their landholdings.
 - ✓ The scheme is not meant for landless farmers or tenant farmers.
 - ✓ Punjab, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Odisha figured among top 10 performers in the project
 - ✓ West Bengal figured at the bottom as it has decided not to cover around 72 lakh of its farmers with the benefits of the scheme.
- **Reserve Bank of India - launched a mobile application, MANI (Mobile Aided Note Identifier) on January 1**

2 easy steps for the visually impaired to identify the denomination of a currency note.

1 Download and install the MANI app 2 Open the app and point the camera of the mobile phone to the currency note

RBI launches the MANI App (Mobile Aided Note Identifier)
Empowering the visually impaired.

- Identifies denomination of Mahatma Gandhi Series and Mahatma Gandhi (New) series banknotes.
- Identification by audio notification in Hindi and English and vibration mode
- After downloading, internet is not required and works in offline mode
- Available on both Google and Apple Store without any charges/payment

The mobile application does not authenticate the note as genuine or counterfeited

For more details, give a missed call to 14440 or visit www.rbi.org.in/MANI
For feedback on this advertisement, write to itskehtaaha@rbi.org.in

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www.rbi.org.in

RBI Kehta Hai... Jaankaar Baniye, Satark Rahiye!

- ✓ It will assist visually impaired persons in identifying the denomination of currency notes.
- ✓ The app was launched by RBI governor Shaktikanta Das
- ✓ For those who are hearing impaired, the user can detect the note by counting the number of vibrations which increases with the increasing value of denomination.
- ✓ The MANI mobile app will not authenticate a rupee note as 'genuine' or 'fake'.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India released a batch of new currency notes under the latest 'Mahatma Gandhi Series' after demonetization in November 2016.
- ✓ The new currency notes were launched in different denominations ranging from Rs 2000, Rs 500, Rs 200, Rs 100, Rs 50, Rs 20 and Rs 10
- ✓ The Mahatma Gandhi Notes were first introduced in 1996, replacing the Lion Capital Series.
- **The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority - has made it mandatory for all general and health insurance companies to offer a**

standard health insurance product — Arogya Sanjeevani Policy – from April 1, 2020

POLICY FEATURES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Will offer both individual and family floater policies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers will be provided, e.g. critical illness or benefit-based covers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Minimum of ₹1 lakh and maximum sum insured will be ₹5 lakh 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > SUM-ASSURED Minimum of ₹1 lakh and maximum of ₹5 lakh with the policy term of one year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Minimum entry age at 18 years and maximum 65 years, and children under family floater policies at 3 months to 25 years 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Insures shall offer a uniform premium pricing across the country
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > No add-ons or optional 		

- ✓ The Arogya Sanjeevani Policy can be taken as both individual lives and on a family floater basis.
- ✓ The minimum and maximum sum insured will be ₹1 lakh and ₹5 lakh respectively.
- ✓ The product will allow minimum and maximum entry age of 18 and 65 years, respectively

➤ Prime Minister Narendra Modi - inaugurated five DRDO Young Scientists Laboratories (DYSLs) in Bengaluru on December 2, 2019



- ✓ The DRDO had set up the laboratories to promote focused research by youth in advanced technologies
- ✓ It has identified a group of scientists under the age of 35 years to focus in specific futuristic research areas in these labs.
- ✓ The Labs were located in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad
- ✓ They will work on five niche areas - Artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, cognitive technologies, asymmetric technologies and smart materials respectively
- ✓ The one in Chennai will focus on cognitive technologies.

YOUTH POWER

Location	Technology domain
DRDO Bengaluru	Artificial Intelligence (AI)
IT-Mumbai	Quantum technology
IT-Chennai	Cognitive technology
Jadavpur University, Kolkata	Asymmetric technologies
IT-Hyderabad	Smart materials

- ✓ The idea for setting up these labs were first mooted by the PM Modi in August 2014, while speaking at a DRDO award function
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will launch the Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities map (I-STEM) portal on December 3**
- ✓ The portal will provide a gateway for researchers to identify the 'right fit' for their R&D work in India.
- ✓ It is labelled as 'One Nation One Research Web Portal' for scientific community
- ✓ The portal has listed more than 17,000 equipment located at about 427 institutions across India
- ✓ It will help researchers to get 'seamless' access to such research facilities
- **India – gave birth to an estimated 67,385 babies, the highest in the world, on New Year's Day, 2020**
- ✓ It was followed by China (46,299), Nigeria (26,039), Pakistan (16,787), Indonesia (13,020), the United States (10,452), Republic of Congo (10,247) and Ethiopia (8,493) among others
- ✓ As per UNICEF, Overall, a total of 3,92,078 babies were born around the world on January 01, 2020.
- **The Indian Railways - has integrated its helpline numbers into a single number, 139**
- ✓ It will assist in enquiries and quick grievance redressal of passengers during their train journeys.
- ✓ The new helpline number 139 will subsume all existing helpline numbers (except 182)
- ✓ The helpline number-182 will be in use for railway security also.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – inaugurated and delivered the inaugural address at the 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC-2020) at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru on January 3, 2020.**
- ✓ The PM advocated the concept of "innovate, patent, produce and prosper" as a new 'motto' for young scientists
- ✓ Referring to the theme of ISC-2020 — Science and Technology: Rural Development — the Prime Minister stressed that science and technology (S&T) will play a major role in achieving the nation's goal of \$5 trillion economy in this decade

- ✓ The Prime Minister urged the scientists to find technological solutions to pressing issues like stubble burning, depleting groundwater table, prevention of communicable diseases, eradication of TB and environment-friendly transportation
- ✓ A highlight of the event is a Farmers' Congress, which is expected to see 110 "innovative" farmers discussing climate change and novel practices.
- ✓ About 15,000 participants are expected to attend the event that will be held between January 3 and 7, 2020
- ✓ Two Nobel Prize winners, Stefan Hell and Ada Yonath are also expected to attend the congress and conduct lectures.
- ✓ The Congress is hosted by the Department of Science and Technology.

➤ **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone - to acquire a majority 75% stake in Krishnapatnam Port Company (KPCL) at an estimated budget of around ₹10,125 crore.**

- ✓ The balance stake will be held by the Hyderabad-based engineering major, CVR Group
- ✓ Krishnapatnam port is located in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh
- ✓ It is the second-largest private sector multi-cargo port in India.
- ✓ It handled 54 million metric tonnes (MMT) in FY19.
- ✓ It had recorded a revenue of ₹2,394 crore in FY19 compared with ₹1,969 crore in FY18
- ✓ The country's largest private port is operated by Adani Group at Mundra in Gujarat's Kutch district

➤ **The Government - has approved setting up of 2,636 charging stations in 62 cities across 24 States/UTs under the Phase II of FAME India scheme**



- ✓ FAME India refers to 'Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles';
- ✓ The phase I of the scheme was launched on April 1, 2015 with a budget allocation of Rs 895 crores.
- ✓ The phase II of the scheme was launched on April 1, 2019 with an allocated budget of Rs 10,000 crores.

➤ **The Ministry of External Affairs – has decided to set up a new division called NEST – 'New and Emerging Strategic Technologies'**

- **The Ministry of Labour - has decided to launch 'Santusht' portal for the speedy redressal of employees and employers' grievances**
- ✓ Through the portal, employees can submit their complaints which will be attended by a monitoring cell.
- ✓ This portal will manage all services provided by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and ESIC.

- **The Election Commission - has launched a new 'online' tracking system for the registration of political parties**



- ✓ The new system called as 'Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System' (PPRTMS) will be applicable to the political parties registering from January 1, 2020.
- ✓ It will allow these political parties to track their registration applications submitted to the Election Commission on a real-time basis.
- ✓ The status of the application can also be tracked through the Election Commission's portal - <https://pprtms.eci.gov.in>
- ✓ The registration of political parties is governed under the provisions of section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- ✓ Under the act, a political party is eligible to get registered as "National Political Party of India" only if it satisfies following criteria -
 - ✓ The party should secure at least 6% of votes in 4 or more states at an election to assembly or parliament
 - ✓ Also, the party should win at least 4 seats in House of People
- ✓ A political party is eligible to get registered as "State Political Party" if it satisfies the following criteria
 - ✓ The party should win 6% of votes polled in state elections
 - ✓ It should win at least 2 seats in legislative assembly of the state.

- **The Income Tax Department – has extended the deadline to link PAN card with Aadhaar till March 2020.**
- ✓ The earlier deadline was December 31, as announced by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) through order in September 2019.

- ✓ The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has extended the deadline now for the eighth time.
 - ✓ The earlier deadline to link the PAN card with the Aadhaar card was September 30, 2019.
 - ✓ The Supreme Court had upheld the constitutional validity of the centre's Aadhaar scheme in its judgement on September 26, 2018.
 - ✓ Aadhaar is a 12-digit unique identification number, which is issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to every Indian resident.
 - ✓ PAN is a 10-digit permanent account number, allotted to taxpaying public by the IT Department.
- **India - celebrated the birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh recently on January 2, 2020.**



- ✓ Born on January 5, 1666, Guru Gobind Singh is the 10th and last Guru of Sikhs.
 - ✓ He founded Sikh Warrior community called Khalsa in 1699
 - ✓ He introduced five Ks in Sikhism, which is called the “Panj Kakar”
 - ✓ In Sikhism, the holy text ‘Dasam Granth’ is dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh.
 - ✓ Guru Gobind Singh was the only son of the ninth Sikh Guru, Bahadur, who was beheaded for not following Islam
 - ✓ Guru Nanak founded Sikhism in 1469 and was the first Sikh Guru.
 - ✓ In 1708, the guruship was passed on to the holy sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib.
- **India - will overtake Germany to become the world's fourth largest economy in 2026.**
- ✓ This is revealed as per the a report released by UK based Centre for Economics and Business Research
 - ✓ The report titled “World Economic League Table” is based on the data from IMF's World Economic Outlook report.
 - ✓ As per the report, India will overtake Japan and become third largest economy in the world in 2034

- ✓ Today, India is the fifth largest economy in the World after US (20.49 trillion USD), China (13.41 trillion USD), Japan (4.97 trillion USD) and Germany (4 trillion USD).
- ✓ In 2019, India had successfully overtaken France and UK to reach rank 5.
- ✓ India will achieve its \$5 trillion target by 2026, as per the report

- **The Government of India - launched “Central Equipment Identify Register” (CEIR) portal recently to block and trace mobile phones**
- ✓ The web portal will be operated by Department of Telecom.
- ✓ The portal will have a complete database of IMEI numbers of blacklisted handsets.
- ✓ Australia was the first country to adopt IMEI

- **India - has adopted a ‘National framework’ to overcome gender barriers and ensure ‘equitable’ access to TB care and services to all.**
- ✓ The framework aims to eradicate tuberculosis in the country by 2025
- ✓ Based on a data available with the Government, a higher proportion of the 27.4 lakh diagnosed with TB in India are men and the ratio is approximately 2:1 between men and women
- ✓ The framework deals with interventions under the subjects of ‘Detect, Treat, Prevent and Build’.

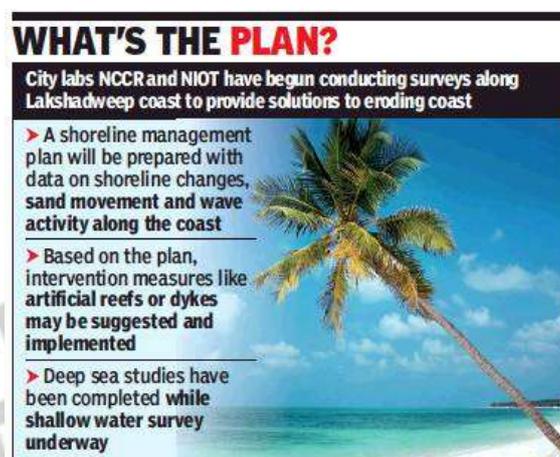
- **The Road transport ministry – announced new ‘provision’ to allow only the security vehicles “accompanying” the specific dignitaries a ‘free’ ride across all toll plazas without paying the user fee on NH networks.**
- ✓ As per the new provisions, a “security vehicle” is one which carries security personnel from central armed forces or central para-military forces or state police.
- ✓ According to the old NHAI rules, vehicles transporting and “officially accompanying” 25 dignitaries including President, Prime Minister, chief justices of the Supreme Court and high courts, Union ministers, chief ministers, judges of SC and HCs, defence chiefs and MPs are exempted from paying toll.

- **Tamil Nadu - to get 256 EV charging stations, which have been approved by the Government under FAME II scheme.**
- ✓ Overall, the government has approved installation of 2,600 EV charging stations in 62 cities under FAME II project.
- ✓ Maharashtra tops the number of charging stations with 317 followed by Andhra Pradesh with 266.
- ✓ Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh will be provided with 228, 205, and 207 EV charging stations respectively.

- ✓ The union territories of Delhi and Chandigarh are expected to get 72 and 70 charging stations
 - ✓ The union territory of Puducherry will get 10, while the newly created union territory of Jammu and Kashmir will get 25 charging points.
 - ✓ Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh will get 10 each
 - ✓ The Government intends to create “atleast one charging station” in a grid of 4 square km area
- **The Government - to confer the first ever ‘Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman’ for 30 media houses on January 7**
- ✓ This award will be conferred by Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar
 - ✓ The award was instituted in June 2019 to mark the role of media in spreading the art of Yoga to the World
 - ✓ A six-member jury, headed by Justice C. K. Prasad (Chairman, Press Council of India), has analysed the nominees for the award
 - ✓ The awards will be conferred in the categories of Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Television (8 awards), Best Media Coverage of yoga in Radio (11 awards) and Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Newspapers (11 awards).
 - ✓ The International Yoga Day was recognized by the United Nations on December 11, 2014, when a proposal was approved by 177 member countries.
 - ✓ The first ever International Yoga Day was celebrated on June 21, 2015.
 - ✓ It was initiated by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi.
 - ✓ The fifth International Yoga Day was observed on June 21, 2019, with the theme "Yoga for Climate Action"
 - ✓ On this day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in a ‘mass’ yoga program in Ranchi, Jharkhand.
- **The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) - has notified new Energy standards for the performance of Air conditioners**
- ✓ It notifies that 24-degree Celsius default setting will be mandatory for all room air conditioners.
 - ✓ These energy standards will be applicable from January 01, 2021, onwards.
 - ✓ As per the new energy standards, the Indian Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (ISEER) will be - 3.30 to 5.00 for split air conditioners and - 2.70 to 3.50 for window air conditioners
 - ✓ The concept of default setting was introduced in 2018.
 - ✓ Countries like Japan has regulation to keep temperature set default at 28 degree Celsius.
 - ✓ According to BEE, the total air conditioner capacity of India is 80 million tonnes of refrigeration.
 - ✓ It is estimated that this capacity will increase to 250 million by the year 2030.

- **India Meteorological Department – announced that the decade 2010-2019 is the country’s warmest decade with temperatures in the country 0.36°Celsius higher than the average**
- ✓ This is as per the “State of Climate Report” released by the IMD for the year 2019
- ✓ According to the report, the climate change has claimed 1,659 lives in India in the year 2019, with Bihar registering the highest with 650 deaths due to floods and heatwaves in 2019

- **Researchers from two Chennai laboratories — National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) and National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) — will be mapping the shores of the slowly eroding islands of Lakshadweep to provide a solution**



- **A Delhi court - ordered the hanging of the 4 convicts in 2012 Nirbhaya rape and murder case at 7am on January 22 inside Tihar Jail**
- ✓ Mukesh Singh, Vinay Sharma, Pawan Gupta and Akshay Thakur are the four convicts to be executed.

- **The National Statistical Office – forecasts a GDP growth of 5% in 2019-20, lesser than the previous year’s growth of 6.8% and in line with the RBI estimate**

- **A high-level panel - has granted the permission for rolling out nearly 150 private trains on 100 routes, including Mumbai-Delhi and Howrah-Delhi sectors, which will compete with Rajdhani Express**

IDENTIFIED ROUTES		
From	To	Frequency
Mumbai Central	New Delhi	Daily
Howrah	Anand Vihar, Delhi	Daily
New Delhi	Haridwar	Daily
New Delhi	Chandigarh	6 days
New Delhi	Patna	Daily
Howrah	Chennai	Daily
Bandra, Mumbai	Jaipur	Weekly
Okhla, Delhi	TCTB (Bangalore)	Daily
Guwahati	Tilak Bridge, Delhi	Tri-weekly
Allahabad	Ahmedabad	Weekly
Chennai	Coimbatore	Daily



PERFORMANCE PARAMETERS

- Min 16 coach trains
- Flexibility in class composition, halts
- Max 15 mins delay allowed, damages to be paid beyond this
- 160 kmph max permitted speed

Source: Govt

- ✓ Currently, 2 Tejas trains have been handed over for running by Railways-controlled IRCTC on the Delhi-Lucknow and Mumbai-Ahmedabad routes as an experiment with the “private sector”
- ✓ The panel was constituted by Railway minister Piyush Goyal after Railway Board chairman VK Yadav flagged private trains in the government’s 100 days’ agenda.
- **Railway Police Force (RPF) - has maximum share of women among all the central paramilitary forces with 1 in every 10 of its personnel being a woman**



- ✓ Currently, they have nearly 8,000 women personnel among its total strength of around 80,000 personnel.
- ✓ According to official data taken in March 2019, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) had the maximum number of women personnel, but their share was barely 5.55% of the total strength.
- ✓ CISF has 1,56,013 personnel, out of which 8,588 were women.
- ✓ Similarly, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has close to 2.96 lakh personnel among which 2.64% (7,824) are women.
- ✓ In case of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), only 2,000 out of its total 80,000 strength are women and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has only 1,817 women in its total strength of 98,000 personnel.

- ✓ The Border Security Force (BSF) has 2,45,000 personnel, out of which only 5,129 are women.
- **The Government - lifts restrictions for coal mines to put an end to the captive mining regime, enabling foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector.**
 - ✓ The relaxation paves way for increased private sector participation in the auction of coal blocks for commercial mining
 - ✓ On January 8, the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi cleared an ordinance to introduce the amendments needed to relax conditions in the two Acts -- Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act of 1957 and the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015.
 - ✓ The ordinance will be ratified by Parliament within the next 6 months.
- **The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs - approved viability gap funding (VGF) of Rs 5,559 crore for a gas pipeline network proposed to be built in the northeast region**
 - ✓ This the second instance in which a public funding was approved by the Government for a gas pipeline.
 - ✓ The VGF amount sanctioned by the Cabinet's panel on economic affairs will be able to cover 60% of the Rs 9,265-crore project.
 - ✓ The proposed 1,656-km pipeline will connect Guwahati in Assam to major cities in the region such as Itanagar, Dimapur, Kohima, Imphal, Aizawl, Agartala, Shillong, Silchar, Numaligarh and Gangtok.
 - ✓ The pipeline will enable to transmit cooking gas to households and supply CNG (compressed natural gas) for automobiles in the northeast as well as to fuel industry.
 - ✓ The system is already in place in the UT of Delhi
 - ✓ The Natural Gas Pipeline Grid will be developed in the **eight states of the north east** including Sikkim and the seven sisters- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.
 - ✓ The project will be monitored by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- **Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union minister of communication, electronics & IT, law & justice - inaugurates the 'undersea' cable laying work for submarine optical fibre link from Chennai to Andaman & Nicobar Islands, in Chennai on January 9**
 - ✓ The cost of the project is Rs.1,224 crore
 - ✓ The project is being executed by the national service provider, BSNL
 - ✓ The 'underground' cable will connect a distance of 2,250km, including connecting seven major islands

- **The Ministry of Home Affairs - issued a notification that the provisions of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 will come into force from January 10.**
- ✓ The Act was passed by Parliament on December 11 and got the President's assent on December 12.
- ✓ Earlier, a person will be given citizenship of India after staying in the country for a minimum period of 11 years.
- ✓ The CAA will not apply to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura, as these areas are included in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution
- ✓ Also, it will not be applicable in the areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram, where Inner Line Permit (ILP) was notified under Bengal Eastern Border Regulation, 1873
- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah - inaugurated the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) on January 10 in New Delhi**



- ✓ The I4C is a seven-pronged system, which includes
 - ✓ National cyber Crime Threat Analysis Unit,
 - ✓ Platform for Joint Cyber-crime Investigation team,
 - ✓ National Cyber Crime reporting portal,
 - ✓ Cyber-crime ecosystem management unit,
 - ✓ National cyber-crime training centre,
 - ✓ National Cyber Research and Innovation centre and
 - ✓ National Cyber-crime forensic laboratory
- ✓ The project was approved in October 2018 at an estimated cost of ₹415.86 crore
- ✓ So far, fifteen States and UTs have agreed to set up Regional Cyber Crime Coordination Centres
- ✓ Apart from I4C, the central government has also launched NIC-CERT (National Informatics Centre-Computer Emergency Response Team).
- ✓ Earlier, on August 30, the Home Ministry had unveiled its National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.
- **The Social Justice Ministry - issued a notification on January 10, 2019, notifying the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019**
- ✓ The act was passed by Parliament on November 26 and given Presidential assent on December 5, 2019.

- ✓ It intends to end discrimination against transgender persons in the areas of education, employment and healthcare
 - ✓ It also recognises the right to self-perceived gender identity and allows the certification from a district magistrate
 - ✓ As per the new law, in case a transgender person has had a gender-change surgery, they can obtain a certificate from the hospital where they had the operation, and apply for a change in their certificate.

 - **The Union Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change - has recently notified the new 'Wetland Conservation Rules'.**
 - ✓ The new rules prohibit expansion or setting up of colonies or industries and disposal of demolition waste within the wetland areas.
 - ✓ Each state and union territory (UT) has to establish an 'authority' to define strategies for wetland conservation and to enable a wiser usage of these wetlands within their jurisdiction
 - ✓ As per the notification, the wetland authority has to publish a list of all wetlands situated in the States or UTs within 3 months from the date of publication of these rules
 - ✓ The Ministry has also launched a web portal for sharing information regarding the implementation of the Wetlands Rules
 - ✓ The National Wetland Management Committee was formed in 1987
 - ✓ These wetland ecosystems provide habitats for aquatic animals, birds, etc.

 - **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - will present her second budget on February 1, 2020.**
 - ✓ The budget session will begin from January 31 and will be held in two phases till 3 April
 - ✓ The first phase of Union Budget 2020-21 will be held from January 31 to February 11 and the second phase from March 2 to April 3
 - ✓ The gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate in the July-September quarter of the current fiscal year has come down to 4.5% which is six-year low.
 - ✓ This will be the lowest rate of growth since the economic recession in 2009

 - **The Union government - has decided to completely withdraw NSG commandos from the task of protecting VIPs**
- 
- ✓ The 'black cat' commandos of the elite counter-terror force will be shifted out from VIP protection duties, a task not originally meant for it when the force was created in 1984.

- ✓ The NSG force provides proximate and mobile security cover — commandos armed with sophisticated assault weapons — under the top 'Z+' category to 13 'high-risk' VIPs that consists of about two dozen personnel for each one of them.
- ✓ The protection duties of the commandos, which include giving security to Defence minister Rajnath Singh and Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath, will soon be transferred to paramilitary forces.
- ✓ The other NSG protectees include ex-CMs Mayawati, Mulayam Singh, Chandrababu Naidu, Parkash Singh Badal and Farooq Abdullah, Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, former Deputy Prime Minister L K Advani.

➤ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - rechristened Kolkata Port Trust after Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on January 12**



- ✓ The Prime Minister addressed the 150th anniversary programme of Kolkata Port Trust and launched commemorative stamps of the port trust
- ✓ During the event, the PM also launched Rs 600 crore worth port development activities.
- ✓ Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was the founder of Bharatiya Jana Sangh
- ✓ He laid the stone for the development of Chittaranjan Locomotive Factory, Damodar Valley Corporation and Hindustan Aircraft Factory.

➤ **The Union Aviation ministry - issued a public notice for a 'one-time opportunity' for voluntary disclosure of such drones and drone operators by January 31**

- ✓ After the deadline of January 31, 2020, anyone flying an unregistered drone will face action under various sections of the Indian Penal Code as well as Aircraft Act, 1934
- ✓ The offenders would be handed a prison sentence of up to 2 years or a fine of up to ₹10 lakh.
- ✓ Currently, drone registration starts on January 14, 2020.

➤ **The Union Health ministry - has released a new draft National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2020 to address concerns of patients suffering from any rare disease and struggling under the high cost of treatment**

➤ **The Union Government - launched a central accident database management system, known as the Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD) on January 13**

- ✓ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the IRAD at the road safety stakeholders' meet.
 - ✓ It has been developed by the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) and will be implemented by the National Informatics Centre.
 - ✓ The project was developed at a cost of ₹258 crore and is being supported by the World Bank.
 - ✓ The system will be first tried out as a 'Pilot' project in 6 States with highest fatalities from road crashes — Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
- **The enchanting “Beating Retreat” ceremony - is likely to conclude this year with the country’s national song “Vande Mataram” instead of “Sare Jahan se Achha”**



- ✓ It is held at Vijay Chowk at one end of the majestic Rajpath in New Delhi
 - ✓ The popular Christian hymn “Abide with Me” was composed by poet Henry Francis Lyte.
 - ✓ This year, ‘Vande Mataram’ is all set to replace ‘Abide With Me’ indicating the end of western tunes.
- **No jeweller in the country - will be allowed to sell gold jewellery without getting hallmark certification from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) from January 15, 2021 onwards**
- **The Environment Ministry - has relaxed Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules for ‘Blue Flag’ certified beaches**
- ✓ The rules restrict construction near beaches to help states construct the necessary infrastructure near the beaches, thereby enabling them to receive ‘Blue Flag’ certification
 - ✓ Last year, the Ministry selected 13 beaches in India to vie for the certificate
 - ✓ The selected beaches are — Ghoghala beach (Diu), Shivrajpur beach (Gujarat), Bhogave beach (Maharashtra), Padubidri and Kasarkod beaches (Karnataka), Kappad beach (Kerala), Kovalam beach (Tamil Nadu), Eden beach (Puducherry), Rushikonda beach (Andhra Pradesh), Miramar beach (Goa), Golden beach (Odisha), Radhanagar beach (Andaman & Nicobar Islands) and Bangaram beach (Lakshadweep).
 - ✓ The ‘Blue Flag’ certification is an international recognition for beaches that meet certain criteria of cleanliness and environmental propriety.

- ✓ The certification will cover 33 stringent criteria under 4 major heads for the beaches - (i) Environmental Education and Information (ii) Bathing Water Quality (iii) Environment Management and Conservation and (iv) Safety and Services.
 - ✓ The Blue Flag Programme was started in France in 1985
 - ✓ It has been implemented in Europe since 1987, and in areas outside Europe since 2001,
- **Indian Railways - planning to offer access to “high quality, buffer free” video content to passengers by the year 2022**
- ✓ The project will be implemented by PSU RailTel
 - ✓ The project will cover all 17 Zones of Indian Railways and a total of approximately 8,731 trains.
- **Union Home Minister, Amit Shah - launched the country’s first Cyber Crime Prevention Unit called the “Cyber AASHVAST” in Gandhinagar, Gujarat**
- ✓ The Minister had also launched ‘VISWAS’, a Video Integration and State Wide Advance Security project along with ‘ Cyber AASHVAST’
 - ✓ During the occasion, along with AASHVAST and VISWAS, Project NETRANG was also launched.
 - ✓ The Cyber AASHVAST will focus on the prevention of cyber crimes with the help of VISWAS and NETRANG.



- ✓ The AASHVAST will monitor, prevent and control cyber-crimes in Gujarat
 - ✓ It will establish command and control rooms in 33 districts of the State.
- ✓ **India – has decided to erect non-cut steel fence along the borders of sensitive areas of Pakistan and Bangladesh**



- ✓ In order to implement these projects, the Home Ministry’s Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIMBMS) has been utilized.
- **The Ministry of Steel - announced the launch of “Purvodaya”, a world class steel hub in the country.**

- ✓ The Ministry will collaborate with CII (Confederation of India Industries) in the implementation of “Purvodaya”
 - ✓ The hub will focus on the accelerated development programme of eastern states.
 - ✓ The steel hub will be able to create 2.5 million jobs in the region
 - ✓ The initiative will also help in achieving India’s steel policy target of 300 MT by 2030.
 - ✓ The 5 eastern states namely West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Northern Andhra Pradesh are extremely rich in coking coal, bauxite and dolomite reserves
 - ✓ The region also has major ports such as Haldia, Paradip, Kolkata and Vizag
 - ✓ So far, 12 major steel zone has been identified under the ‘Purvodaya’ initiative in the region.
-
- ✓ **Smart phone users - have been infected with a new Trojan called ‘Shopper malware’**
 - ✓ Prior to Shopper Malware, the largest such infection was created by “Trojan-Dropper”, between October to November 2019
 - ✓ The Government has set up Cyber Swachhta Kendra (CSK) to identify such malware infections and clean them at the earliest.
 - ✓ The CSKs operate under Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) under Ministry of Electronics and information Technology.
 - ✓ They are basically Botnet cleaning and Malware analysis centres
-
- **The NIIT (National institute of Information Technology), a multi-national company -has been selected as one of the EdTech companies for the Centre’s NEAT initiative**
 - ✓ The National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) was launched to customize learning process using Artificial Intelligence.
 - ✓ It will be a common one-stop access to technological solutions
 - ✓ The NEAT programme is being implemented by AICTE.
 - ✓ NIIT, a non-profit university of higher education and research, was established in 1991
-
- **The Statue of Unity in Gujarat - has been included in 8 wonders of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization).**



- ✓ The statue was a monumental tribute to Sardar Vallabhai Patel
- ✓ It was inaugurated by PM Modi in October 2018

- ✓ The world's tallest statue at 182 metres was unveiled on the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhai Patel.
 - ✓ In one year, since its inauguration, it attracted 2.9 million tourists and earned 82 crores of rupees to the exchequer
 - ✓ It includes Statue of Unity in India, Daming Palace in China, Navruz Palace in Tajikistan, Mughals Heritage in Pakistan, Tamgaly Gorge in Kazakhstan, Po-i-Kalan Complex in Uzbekistan, The Golden Ring of Russia and Lake Issyk-kull in Krygyzotan.
 - ✓ India, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are the member countries of SCO
 - ✓ India and Pakistan became members of the economic bloc in 2017
 - ✓ For the first time, India is hosting heads of Government meet of SCO countries this year.
- **The South-Central Railways and SBI - signed MoU to implement door step banking in 585 railway stations on January 14**
 - **The Government – has proposed to conduct ‘Saksham’ campaigns across the country to highlight the importance of fuel conservation**



- ✓ The Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) operating under Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas will launch the campaign on January 16, 2020
- **A quadripartite agreement - was signed between the Centre, the State governments of Tripura and Mizoram, and Bru-Reang representatives on January 16**
 - ✓ It facilitates permanent settlement of Bru refugees in Tripura
 - ✓ The Government has also agreed to provide a ₹600 crore rehabilitation package for the refugees.
 - ✓ The agreement brings an end to the 23-year-old Bru-Reang refugee crisis
 - ✓ It will benefit around 34,000 Bru refugees living in 6 camps in Tripura
 - ✓ Reangs or Brus are the second largest ethnic group in Mizoram



- ✓ They were forced to leave Mizoram following violent clashes with the Mizo groups in Mamith subdivision, a Reang-dominated area, in 1997.
 - ✓ These refugees were living in temporary shelters at Kanchanpur, in North Tripura.
 - ✓ Union Home minister Amit Shah presided over signing of the “historic” pact.
 - ✓ As per the new agreement, each Bru family living in Tripura would be given a 40x30 sqft residential plot
 - ✓ Apart from the land, they will be provided a fixed deposit of ₹4 lakh, ₹5,000 cash aid per month for two years, free ration for two years and ₹1.5 lakh aid to build a house.
 - ✓ The Tripura government would provide the land under this agreement.
 - ✓ The funds to buy land would be jointly shared by the Centre and the State government.
- **Punjab - became the second state in the country after Kerala to pass an assembly resolution seeking repeal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act on January 17**
 - **The J&K Union territory government - has decided to hand over internal security at Jammu and Srinagar airports to the CISF by January 31**
 - ✓ Till now, security at the airports was jointly handled by J&K Police and the CRPF
 - ✓ However, the CRPF would still continue to take care of security of the outer areas of the airports.
 - **The Centre - decided to take over real estate giant Unitech, which is in a financial mess, to streamline its company management**
 - **The Union Government - renamed its ‘National TB Control Programme’ to ‘National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme’**
 - ✓ India has set a goal of 2025 for eliminating the disease, five years ahead of the goal of United Nations Sustainable Development target.
 - **The Railway authorities in Uttarakhand - have decided to replace Urdu language on signboards at platforms with Sanskrit.**



- ✓ The signboards having names of railway stations written in Hindi, English and Urdu will hereafter be written in Hindi, English and Sanskrit.
- ✓ According to railway officials, the decision has been taken as per provisions of the Railway Manual, which says that names of the railway stations should be written in Hindi, English and in the second language of the state
- ✓ In 2010, the Uttarakhand government had become the first in the country to give Sanskrit the status of second official language of the Himalayan state
- ✓ Later in 2019, Himachal Pradesh became the second state to provide Sanskrit the status of second official language in the state.

➤ **Patna's Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport - launches a regular air ambulance service from a dedicated round-the-clock counter.**

- ✓ The counter was inaugurated by Bihar health minister Mangal Pandey on January 16



- ✓ The Airports Authority of India has given its approval to similar counters at airports in Gaya and Ranchi
- ✓ On an average, up to 12 patients use the air ambulance service in Bihar per month

➤ **The National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) - has recently launched a real estate portal to potential home buyers**

➤ **The Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Home Minister Amit Shah - has finalised its recommendations to prevent sexual harassment of women at work places.**

- ✓ The GoM was constituted to strengthen the legal framework to prevent sexual harassment of women at the workplace

Workplace woes

The most incidences* of sexual harassment at the workplace occurred in Karnataka (89). The total number of such instances stood at 401 in 2018 as compared to 479 in 2017

On October 24, 2018, a Group of Ministers was constituted to address sexual harassment of women at the workplace as well as to suggest steps to bridge the lacunae in the legal remunerations offered to survivors



The GoM was reconstituted on July 18, 2019 and was led by Union Home Minister Amit Shah after the BJP-led government returned to power in May last year

*NCRB 2018, chart lists top five States

- ✓ The recommendations include addition of new stringent provisions to the Indian Penal Code, drafted in 1860, to deal with the issue of sexual harassment at the workplace
- ✓ The GoM was constituted first in October 2018 in the aftermath of the #MeToo movement emerging on social media
- ✓ It was reconstituted in July 2019 under Amit Shah.
- ✓ The other members are Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal and Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani.
- ✓ The Women and Child Development Ministry had introduced the Sexual Harassment of Women and Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act in 2013
- ✓ The Act was applicable to all government offices, the private sector, NGOs and the unorganised sector.
- ✓ The proposed amendments would also be based on the Vishaka Guidelines provided by the Supreme Court in 1997, on which the 2013 Act was based.
- ✓ It made the employer responsible to prevent or deter acts of sexual harassment at the workplace.
- ✓ The recommendations would also take into account the recommendations of Justice J.S, Verma Committee, that was constituted following the Nirbhaya Gang Rape and murder in 2012
- ✓ The 2013 Act had various shortcomings like imposing a fine of only ₹50,000 on employers for non-compliance among others.
- **The Commerce and Industry ministry - has proposed to reduce the number of alcohol bottles and cigarette packets that a passenger can buy at duty-free shops on returning from an overseas trip**
- ✓ It also seeks further reduction in the value of goods and gifts that one can get in without paying duty, which is currently fixed at Rs. 50,000.

- **Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu - will inaugurate the Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Telugu (CESCT) in Nellore in Andhra Pradesh on January 21**
 - ✓ He will inaugurate the centre in the presence of Union Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'.
 - ✓ Till now, the CESCT has been functioning from the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru
- **The 3rd edition of PM Modi's interaction programme Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 – took place at 11am on January 20 with students from across the country and abroad**
 - ✓ During the discussion, the PM advised the students various ways to overcome and beat exam stress.
 - ✓ He also urged students to value time and learn how to balance academics and extracurricular activities.
 - ✓ The PM also advised students not to be afraid of failures
 - ✓ About 2.6 lakh students from Classes 9 to 12 participated in an essay competition, out of which 2,000 were selected to attend the event in Delhi
 - ✓ There were 50 differently-abled students in the audience.
- **Prime Ministers of India and Nepal, Narendra Modi and K P Sharma Oli - jointly inaugurated the second integrated check-post (ICP) on the Jogbani-Biratnagar border on January 21 through video-conferencing.**



- ✓ The Rs140 crore ICP was built with Indian assistance and spread over 260 acres
 - ✓ India helped in the construction based on its “Neighbourhood First Policy”
 - ✓ It is the second such facility after the Raxaul – Birgunj ICP which was opened in 2018
 - ✓ At present, there are 7 Integrated Check Posts in India
- **Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro - will be the chief guest at the Republic Day parade this year.**



- ✓ During his four-day visit to India, the Brazilian President will sign a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with India
- ✓ Brazil will become the first country to sign such an investment protection agreement with India
- ✓ Brazil is the largest producer and exporter of sugar in the world

- **For the first time in its history, CBSE – has decided to allow the use of calculators for students with dyscalculia, (difficulty in learning or performing arithmetic's) starting from this summer's board exams**

- **India – seeks the shifting out of the world's largest Telescope project from the proposed site at Mauna Kea, a dormant volcano in Hawaii.**
- ✓ India is a partner in the construction of one of the largest telescopes in the world in Hawaii
- ✓ The TMT or Thirty Metre Telescope, as it is known, is a joint venture (JV) involving five countries – USA, Canada, China, Japan and India

- **Interpol - has issued a blue corner notice seeking information about controversial self-styled godman, Nithyananda**

- **The Union Cabinet - approved ₹4,371.90 crore for setting up permanent campuses for 6 National Institutes of Technology (NITs) on January 22**
- ✓ The Cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved funds for the National Institutes of Technologies in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Puducherry and Delhi
- ✓ These NITs have been functioning from temporary structures, ever since they were set up in 2009

- **The traditional Christian hymn 'Abide with me' - is back on the list of tunes for this year's Beating Retreat ceremony.**

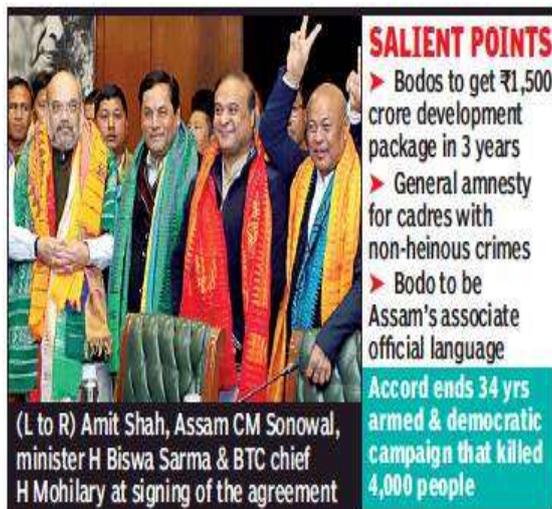
- **The Ministry of Women and Child Development – announced on January 24 that it would set up 10 Chairs across different universities**
- ✓ These chairs would be named after prominent women administrators, artists, scientists and literatures to motivate women to pursue higher education and excel in their chosen fields.
- ✓ A Chair in the field of administration will be named after late Ahilyabai Holkar, the Malwa queen known as a proficient ruler and an eminent politician.
- ✓ Renowned carnatic singer late M.S. Subbulakshmi will have a Chair named after her in the field of performing arts

- ✓ Activist, reformist and educator late Hansa Mehta will have a Chair in the field of education reforms.



- ✓ The other fields for which Chairs will be established include literature, medicine and health, forest or wildlife conservation, science, maths, poetry mysticism and freedom fighter.
 - ✓ According to the proposal, each Chair will be established at a budget of ₹50 lakh for a period of 5 years to begin with.
 - ✓ The Chairs will be engaged in various academic activities including research, strengthening the role of university in public policy making and designing and executing short-term capacity-building programmes for teachers in higher education.
- **Starting from February 2, a Schengen visa – can be applied for a trip to Europe up to six months in advance of your proposed travel date**
- ✓ At present, a Schengen visa can be applied a maximum of three months before.
 - ✓ The travellers with a “positive history” can also get visas with validities of one to five years, against the usual Schengen visas which are for very limited periods
 - ✓ The visa cost, however, will increase from €60 to €80, or ₹4,720 to ₹6,293 at the current exchange rate of ₹78.7.
 - ✓ The fee for children in the age group of 6 to 12 will also increase from €35 to €40, or ₹2,753 to ₹3,146
 - ✓ The changes come after the EU council adopted amendments to the Schengen visa code in June 2019

- ✓ The new rules will provide faster and clearer procedures for legitimate travellers
- ✓ A Schengen visa is needed for 26 European countries, including Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Switzerland and Spain.
- **The Centre - is all set to sign a comprehensive peace deal with the four factions of the National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB) and the All Bodo Students Union on January 27.**
- **India - showcased its anti-satellite (A-SAT) missile capability to the world as the weapon, Mission Shakti, rolled out on the Rajpath during the 71st Republic Day parade in New Delhi**
- ✓ Mission Shakti was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- **AIIMS - becomes the first hospital in the capital and the second public institution in the country to offer the Lung transplant procedure after PGIMER, Chandigarh.**
- **The Centre – signed a tripartite agreement with Assam government and Bodo representatives, including all factions of National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU)**
- ✓ The 'historic' pact provides for setting up of a commission to reconstitute the Bodo Territorial Areas District (BTAD)
- ✓ The new areas will include Bodo-dominated villages in the existing BTAD area and excluding villages with a predominantly non-tribal population
- ✓ BTAD in Assam is currently spread over the four districts of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri.



WHAT THE BODOS GET

1 A national sports university		12 Bodoland institute of rural development, polytechnic and vocational training	
2 A central university named after Upendra Nath Brahma, former president of All Bodo Students' Union		8 Institutes of livelihood management and hotel management	institute, organic university at Rwota, paramedical institute, provincialisation of music and fine arts colleges, Birsa Munda cultural centre, Swami Vivekananda youth centre, Gorkha memorial, Bhupen Hazarika memorial multi-utility auditorium and a Mother Dairy plant
3 A railway coach factory		9 A regional campus of Indira Gandhi National Tribal University	13 Centre to expedite the process of granting ST Hills status to Bodos living in the hill areas
4 Sports Authority of India (SAI) centres at Udalguri, Baksa and Chirang		10 A Bodo memorial museum	
5 A cancer hospital and medical college at Tamulpur		11 A National Institute of Technology campus in Udalguri	
6 A veterinary college at Kumarikata			
7 A central university and RIIMS			

*The Bodoland Territorial Area District will now be known as Bodoland Territorial Region

- ✓ It will be renamed as Bodo Territorial Region.
 - ✓ Bodo language will be notified as an associate official language in Assam.
 - ✓ The surrendered Bodo cadres too will get a rehabilitation package
- **The Centre - offered for sale its 100% stake in Air India and AI Express — instead of 76% in the first attempt — and the entire 50% it owns in ground handling company AISATS, which is a joint venture with the Singapore-based ground handling company SATS Limited.**
 - **10 Indian wetland sites - have been announced to receive the tag of International importance under the Ramsar Convention**

CONSERVING WETLANDS		PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES WITHIN WETLANDS
WHAT ARE THEY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Any kind of encroachment ➤ setting up of any industry ➤ Expansion of existing industries ➤ Solid waste dumping ➤ Discharge of untreated wastes and effluents from industries, cities, towns, villages and other human settlements ➤ Poaching ➤ Any construction of a permanent nature except for boat jetties within 50 metres from the mean high flood level observed in the past 10 years
➤ Land area covered by water, either temporarily/seasonally or permanently (Marsh, fen and peatland come under this category)	➤ It has characteristics of a distinct ecosystem	
WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT		
➤ Play a key role in hydrological cycle and flood control, water supply, providing food, fibre and raw materials	➤ Wetlands support lakhs of migratory birds from colder regions of the world in summers, apart from mangroves that protect coastlines and filter pollutants	
WETLANDS IN NUMBERS	ISRO had in 2011 prepared a national wetlands atlas on the basis of satellite image	
It mapped 2,01,503 wetlands	They comprise around 4.63% of the geographic area of India	No. of wetland sites in India under Ramsar Convention 37
INDIA'S PROMINENT WETLANDS	Chilika lake areas (Odisha) Wular lake (J&K) Renuka (Himachal Pradesh) Sambhar lake (Rajasthan) Deepor Beel (Assam) East Kolkata wetlands (West Bengal) Nal Sarovar (Gujarat) Harika (Punjab) Rudra Sagar (Tripura) and Bhoj wetland (Madhya Pradesh)	

- ✓ Of these 10 sites, one was identified for the very first time in Maharashtra, three were in Punjab and six in Uttar Pradesh
 - ✓ The new Indian sites include –
 - ✓ Nandur Madhameshwar bird sanctuary (Maharashtra)
 - ✓ Beas conservation reserve (Punjab)
 - ✓ Keshopur-Miani community reserve (Punjab)
 - ✓ Nangal wildlife sanctuary (Punjab)
 - ✓ Nawabganj bird sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh).
 - ✓ Parvati Arga bird sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh).
 - ✓ Saman bird sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh).
 - ✓ Sarsai Nawar lake (Uttar Pradesh).
 - ✓ Samaspur bird sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh).
 - ✓ Sandi bird sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh).
 - ✓ The other Ramsar sites are already present in Rajasthan, Kerala, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Tripura.
 - ✓ Ramsar Convention (or Convention on Wetlands) is an intergovernmental global treaty intended to preserve ecological character of selected wetlands across the world.
 - ✓ Under the Ramsar (a city situated in Iran) Convention of 1971, the member countries identify those sites which are recognised as being of significant value not only for the country or the countries in which they are located, but for humanity as a whole.
- **Oxford University Press (OUP) - named 'Samvidhaan' (Constitution) as the Oxford Hindi Word of 2019**
- **Assam's tableau - was adjudged the best among those of the 16 States and the Union Territories that took part in the Republic Day parade this year**



- ✓ The floats of **Uttar Pradesh** and **Odisha** were jointly named as the winners of second best tableaux.
- ✓ **The Union Cabinet, under the chairmanship of PM Narendra Modi - approved the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020, which intends to amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971- on January 29**
- ✓ The Shah Committee had recommended legalization of abortion for the first time.
- **The Beating Retreat ceremony – was conducted on January 29, which marked the end of the four-day Republic Day celebrations.**
- **In a first, the Road transport ministry - will notify henceforth the third-party insurance premium for motor vehicles in consultation with the insurance regulator, IRDA**
- ✓ The change was introduced in the Motor Vehicle Act to ensure that consumer interest is protected and to have a control on insurance firms in increasing the premium for mandatory third party insurance
- **The Tri services (Army, Navy and Airforce) - have decided to issue a common Toll tax exemption Identity card to their personnel.**
- ✓ Exemption under the Indian Toll (Army and Air Force) Act, 1901 is available to the service persons who are 'on duty' and does not pertain to retired personnel
- **The first case of the new strain of a coronavirus (nCoV) in the country - was identified from Thrissur, Kerala, on January 30**
- **Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan – announced that One Nation One Ration Card Scheme will be implemented across India from June 1, 2020**
- ✓ The all-India launch of the scheme has been preponed from its original date of 30th June to 1st June.
- ✓ At present, the scheme is operational in 12 states across the country from January 1, 2020 onwards
- ✓ These include Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Tripura, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Kerala, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Telangana.
- ✓ Under this scheme, a beneficiary will be able to avail benefits across the country using the same ration card.

➤ **The Ministry of Tribal Affairs - has recommended the Central Government to declare Ladakh as a 'Tribal area' under the 6th Schedule of Indian constitution**

✓ Fifth and Sixth Schedules were discussed and passed by Constituent Assembly between September 5-7, 1949.

✓ The Sixth Schedule of the constitution provides special provisions for the administration of the tribal areas in 4 north eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram

✓ It provides the power to create autonomous district councils (ADCs) to protect the rights of tribal populations

✓ Part X of Indian constitution deals with the scheduled and Tribal areas and it consist of Article 244 and 244 A

✓ As per Article 244, the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution deals with the administration and control of Scheduled Areas as well as of Scheduled Tribes residing in any State other than the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram

➤ **India's first submerged metro rail - is under construction in Kolkata, under the Hooghly river**



➤ **The Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari - recently launched online Web Portal 'GATI', that can be accessed via NHAI website**

SCHEMES

➤ **Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani - inaugurates 'Yashaswini Scheme' for women entrepreneurship and 'Swasthya Sakhi project' in Taleigao town near Panaji district of Goa recently**



- ✓ The Yashaswini Scheme for Women entrepreneurship will provide women Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Goa with interest-free loans up to Rs 5 lakh for a tenure of 5 years.
- ✓ The Swasthya Sakhi Project intends to ensure the **wellness and welfare of women**, especially during pregnancy.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **A nine-judge constitution bench – will start to hear the review petitions regarding the entry of women in the 10-50 year age group into Sabarimala Ayyappa temple from January 13, 2020**



- ✓ On September 28, 2018, a five-judge constitution bench had permitted the entry of women of all ages into Sabarimala temple.
- ✓ Without staying the earlier decision, another five-judge bench, by 3-2 majority, had referred the issue to a seven-judge bench on November 14, 2019
- **The Supreme Court - stays the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's December 18 decision reinstating Cyrus Pallonji Mistry as executive chairman of Tata Sons**
- ✓ A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant stayed the order within 10 seconds of hearing
- **A nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court – to examine the larger issue of faith-based customs violating fundamental rights of women in the Sabarimala women entry case**

LARGER BENCH, LARGER ISSUE

SC Bench | CJI S A Bobde, Justices R Banumathi, Ashok Bhushan, L Nageswara Rao, M M Shantanagoudar, S Abdul Nazeer, R Subhash Reddy, B R Gavai and Surya Kant



➤ Bench will only hear larger issue of faith-based customs violating fundamental rights of women, not adjudicate pleas seeking a review of SC's order overturning the Sabarimala tradition of barring female worshippers aged 10-50

➤ On Nov 14, 2019, then CJI Gogoi-led 5-judge bench asked a 7-judge bench to evolve guidelines for deciding cases involving clash of fundamental rights and faith emerging from women's entry to shrines. CJI Bobde then decided to constitute a 9-judge bench

- ✓ The bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices R Banumathi, Ashok Bhushan, L Nageswara Rao, M M Shantanagoudar, S Abdul Nazeer, R Subhash Reddy, B R Gavai and Surya Kant has indicated that it will not limit the arguments not just to Sabarimala verdict, but to a whole 'larger' issue.
- ✓ The bench will also review the petitions "regarding the prohibition of entry of Muslim women in dargah/ mosque, the ban on Parsi women who married Non Parsi men from entering the fire temple and practice of female genital mutilation (FGN) among Dawoodi Bohras"
- ✓ However, it had clarified that it would not go into the legality of issues such as the practice of polygamy and 'nikah-halala' in Islam.
- ✓ The SC had also announced that it will not hear arguments on pleas challenging SC's September 28, 2018, judgment quashing the ban on entry of women in the specified age group, a tradition based on the presiding deity Ayyappa being a "naishtik brahmachari"
- ✓ On November 14, 2019, a five-judge bench led by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi, by 3-2 majority, decided not to alter the September 28 judgment allowing the entry of women of all ages
- ✓ Chief Justice S A Bobde then constituted a nine-judge bench instead of seven judges.

- **The Supreme Court of India – has held that Right of access to internet is a fundamental right**
- ✓ The internet services were banned in Kashmir also in the last five months now, since the scrapping of Article 370.
- ✓ The bench had declared that freedom of speech and expression and freedom to practice any business or trade over internet is constitutionally protected under Article 19 (1)

- **The Supreme Court - has ruled that casual workers are also entitled to social security benefits under the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act.**
- ✓ The bench of Justices U U Lalit and Indu Malhotra held that an employer cannot differentiate between contractual and permanent employees as per Section 2(f) of the EPF Act

- **The Supreme Court - accepted the Centre's proposal to take control of embattled real estate giant Unitech Limited on January 20**
- ✓ The Centre has decided to set up a new board of directors, headed by retired IAS officer Yudvir Singh Malik, to take over the management and initiate steps to finish the housing projects in which over 30,000 people have invested
- ✓ A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and M R Shah also approved the names of other Directors in the company

- **The Supreme Court - set three months as the outer limit for the Speaker to complete the disqualification proceedings against an MP or an MLA who has switched sides for money and power, in an order aimed at strengthening the anti-defection law**

'FINISH PROCEEDINGS IN 3 MTHS'

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SC sets three months as the outer limit for Speakers to conclude disqualification proceedings against defectors ➤ Recommends that Parliament should amend Constitution to set up a permanent tribunal to decide cases. Tribunal can be headed by retired SC judge or HC CJ ➤ SC emphasises that ensuring purity of anti-defection law under 	<p>the 10th Schedule is vital to democracy's functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SC decision came in a case related to Manipur Congress MLA T Shyam Kumar, who switched to BJP and became a minister after the party formed govt in 2017 ➤ A dozen pleas seeking Shyam's disqualification were filed but Speaker sat over them. SC asks Speaker to decide in four weeks
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- ✓ It has also recommended the Parliament to amend the Constitution by setting up a permanent tribunal to decide such cases under the 10th Schedule.
- ✓ The Tribunal will substitute the Speaker of Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies as the Chief arbiter of disputes concerning disqualification of 'defectors'
- ✓ A permanent tribunal headed by a retired Supreme Court judge or a retired chief justice of a high court, or some other outside independent mechanism can be constituted to ensure that such disputes are decided both swiftly and impartially
- ✓ A bench of Justices R F Nariman, Aniruddha Bose and V Ramasubramanian held that a person liable to be disqualified must not be allowed to sit in the House even for a single day as the term of an assembly was just five years.
- ✓ The SC verdict came in a case related to Manipur Congress MLA T Shyam Kumar, who switched to BJP and became a minister after the party formed government in 2017

- ✓ The SC asked the Manipur speaker to decide on the petitions seeking the disqualification within four weeks and on failure to do so, the SC may have to interfere.
- **A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court – announced that it would refer the contentious constitutional issue to scrap Jammu & Kashmir’s special status under Article 370 of the Constitution and its reorganization into two Union territories to a larger ‘seven-judge’ bench.**
- ✓ A bench of Justices N V Ramana, Sanjay K Kaul, B Subhash Reddy, B R Gavai and Surya Kant observed that there were three separate SC rulings by five-judges benches on the nature and character of Article 370 which were conflicting and hence it had sought reference of the matter to a seven-judge bench
- **The Supreme Court - refused to stay the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) without hearing the views of Government**
- **A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court - has confirmed that 3% reservation should be given to disabled persons both in direct recruitment and in promotions.**
- ✓ The Bench led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman, also comprising Justices Aniruddha Bose and V. Ramasubramanian, gave the verdict as to whether the disabled, included under The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995”, were eligible for reservation in promotion.
- **The Supreme Court - lifted its seven-year old stay on a proposal to introduce African cheetahs from Namibia into a ‘suitable’ Indian habitat on an experimental basis**
- ✓ The verdict is intended to revive the Indian cheetah population, which is deemed extinct.
- **The Supreme Court - held on January 29 that the discretionary power of courts to grant anticipatory bail cannot be curtailed and such ‘anticipatory bails’ can be provided even till the end of trial, as arbitrary arrests are still continuing in the Country**
- ✓ A five-judge Constitution bench led by Justice Arun Mishra, comprising of Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran, M R Shah and S Ravindra Bhat, unanimously announced that there should not ordinarily be a limited or a fixed period for providing anticipatory bail to the accused.
- ✓ The provision of anticipatory bail under Section 438 was introduced when CrPC was amended in 1973

- ✓ As per the bench, such anticipatory bail does not end when the accused is summoned by court, or after framing of charges, but can continue till the end of trial.

COMMITTEES

- **The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) - has constituted an advisory board that will serve as the first level of scrutiny in cases of banking and financial frauds above ₹ 50 crore in state-run banks and financial institutions**

LESS DREAD, MORE DECISIONS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advisory Board for Banking and Financial Frauds is renamed version of a panel set up in August 2019 ➤ It's set up to ensure bankers take business decisions without the fear of facing investigation if a bona fide action goes wrong ➤ The board will filter all alleged cases of financial 	<p>fraud over ₹50 crore involving officers of the level of general managers and above in public sector banks and financial institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Institutions to refer all suspected large frauds to the board and its advice will be taken into account by investigating agencies
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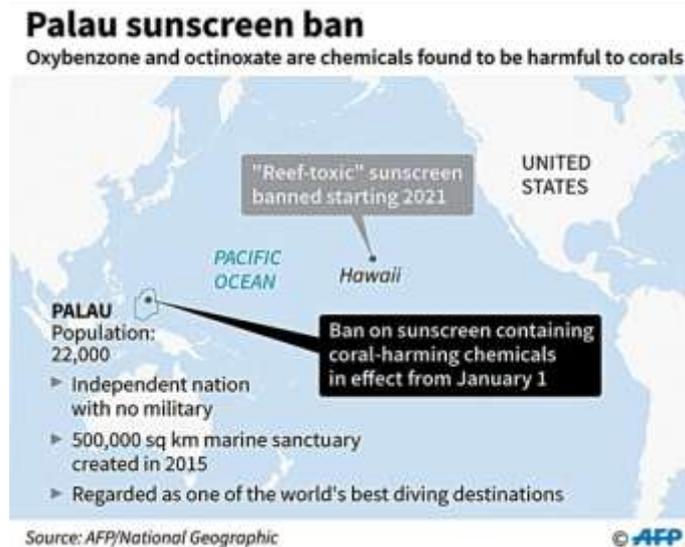
- ✓ The five-member panel will be headed by T M Bhasin, Ex-Chairman & Managing Director of Indian Bank and a former vigilance commissioner
- **The Union Cabinet - approved a six-month extension in the tenure of the commission to examine sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBC) on January 22.**
- ✓ The commission is headed by the G. Rohini, former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court.



- ✓ The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a proposal to extend the commission's term till July 31, 2020
- ✓ It has also approved an addition to the commission's terms of reference.
- ✓ The commission will now also "study the various entries in the Central list of OBCs and recommend correction of any repetitions, ambiguities, inconsistencies and errors of spelling or transcription"
- ✓ The Commission was appointed in 2017 with an initial time frame of 12 weeks.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Palau – becomes the first nation in the entire world to ban “reef-toxic” sunscreens from January 1, 2020**



- ✓ The Western Pacific island nation introduced strict environmental measures to protect one of the world's largest marine sanctuaries located in the island
- **World Health Organisation (WHO) - selected the year 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife”**
- ✓ The year was named in the honor of 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale
- ✓ World Health Organisation will also launch the world's first ‘State of the World's Nursing Report’ in 2020.
- ✓ This year, WHO has decided to focus on nursing and midwifery in order to achieve ‘Universal Health Coverage’
- ✓ Florence Nightingale was an English Social reformer, who organized camps for wounded soldiers during the Crimean War

- ✓ She was called “The Lady with the Lamp” for making rounds on wounded soldiers with a lamp in her hand
- ✓ Every year, the International Nurse Day, is observed on May 1
- ✓ The day is celebrated by the International Council of Nurses
- **The linguists at the American Dialect Society in New Orleans, Louisiana – have chosen ‘They’ as the ‘Word of the Decade’ on January 4**
- ✓ The American Dialect Society has picked only two ‘Word of the decade’ winners till now- ‘web’ for the 1990s decade and ‘Google’ for 2000s.
- ✓ It has to be recalled that Merriam-Webster dictionary had chosen the word ‘They’ as the ‘Word of the Year’ earlier
- **Finland’s new Prime Minister, Sanna Marin – proposes a four day working week to enable people spend more time with their families.**
- ✓ Sanna Marin, a social democrat, assumed office in December, leading a broad coalition in Finland

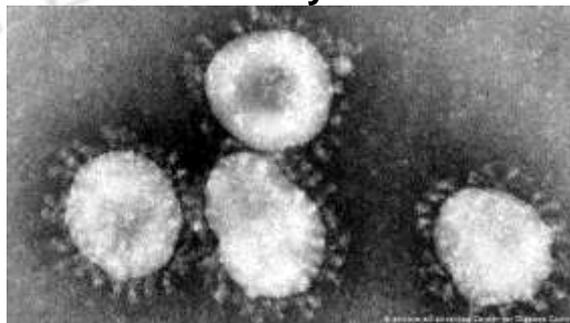


- ✓ Marin, who is the world’s youngest serving national leader, also announced the standard working day should be reduced to 6 hours, down from the current 8 hours.
- ✓ Similarly, a policy to work for 6 hours was brought in Sweden in 2015
- **Britain’s House of Commons – passes a bill approving the country’s departure from the European Union at the end of the month.**
- ✓ British lawmakers voted by 330-231 to pass the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, which sets the terms of Britain’s departure from the 28-nation ‘EU’ bloc.
- ✓ Thus, Britain will become the first nation ever to quit the EU bloc on January 31.
- ✓ The move is facilitated following the recent massive victory of British PM, Boris Johnson on December 12, 2019
- ✓ The Conservative Party of Johnson won 364 seats in the 650-member House of Commons
- ✓ Brexit was one of his key campaign promises of Johnson
- ✓ The people of Britain had voted to leave the European Union in a **historic referendum** on June 24, 2016.
- ✓ The UK was earlier scheduled to leave the European Union on March 29, 2019, which was later postponed till May 22 and October 31, before settling for January 31 deadline

- **The Australian government - committed A\$50 million to an emergency wildlife recovery programme following the massive bushfire in the region.**

- **The Lahore high court - declared as “unconstitutional” the formation of a special court that had awarded the death sentence to former military ruler General Pervez Musharraf last month after finding him guilty of treason.**
- ✓ In a unanimous verdict, a three-member bench of the Lahore HC ruled that the treason case against Musharraf was not dealt with by following the due process of the law
- ✓ The special court which convicted Musharraf was formed without the approval of the cabinet as per the requirements of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, which was passed in 2010
- ✓ The death sentence, therefore, stands void, according to the federal government
- ✓ Musharraf had challenged the special court’s decision in the Lahore high court on December 27, 2019, stating that the verdict was a mix of mistakes, errors and contradictory statements
- ✓ Earlier, Musharraf was sentenced to death in absentia by a special court in Islamabad on December 17, 2019
- ✓ The treason case was filed against Musharraf by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government headed by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2013

- **China - reported the first death due to pneumonia caused by the outbreak of a new virus in the city of Wuhan.**



- ✓ As per the Chinese scientists, the new strain of virus is that of the ‘corona’ virus.
- ✓ Corona Viruses were first found in humans in 1960s.
- ✓ The viruses cause flu and gastro intestinal problems.
- ✓ The virus has protrusions on its surface, which makes it look like an emperor’s crown and hence they have been given a name of ‘Corona’ virus.
- ✓ The Virus can also infect cattle, dogs, pigs, camels and birds apart from human beings.

- ✓ In 2002-03, the flu-like Sars virus that belongs to Corona virus family, killed more than 700 people in the world.
- ✓ The Sars virus originated in China.
- ✓ The other deadly virus belonging to the family of the corona virus is the MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), which does not have any specific vaccine till now.
- ✓ The MERS virus was first identified in 2012 in Saudi Arabia with most of the cases being identified in Arabian peninsula

- **Japan - reported its first case of a new corona virus on January 16**
- **China – reports the death of a second person from the new corona virus that has caused the onset of pneumonia in Wuhan of central China, the epicenter of the outbreak.**
- **Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle – have decided not to use the title of “Royal Highness” under a deal struck with the Buckingham Palace to step aside as senior royals**



- **China and Myanmar – signed 33 agreements to speed up infrastructure projects as part of the flagship Belt and Road Initiative in Myanmar**
- **The Team leader of a Chinese government expert team, ZhongNanshan, a respiratory expert – has confirmed human-to-human transmission in the outbreak of a new coronavirus in China**
- **Queen Elizabeth II - gave her formal assent for Brexit bill on January 23 to expedite the exit of Britain from the European Union by January 31**
- ✓ Her Majesty approved the bill in accordance with the Royal Assent Act 1967.
- **Pakistan - conducted a training launch of the surface to surface ballistic missile, Ghaznavi, on January 23**

- **The UK - unveiled an “unlimited” fast-track visa offer to attract top scientists, researchers and mathematicians from across the world**
- **US President Donald Trump - unveiled his Middle East peace plan aimed at solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on January 28**



- ✓ **Palestinians have already rejected the leaked proposals**

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **The Ministry of External Affairs – announced that Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will be invited to participate in the Heads of Government Council meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) that will be hosted in India this year**
- **Ghana - has sought to replicate the Indian Government’s ‘Ujjwala’ scheme to provide access to clean cooking fuel (LPG) for poor households at affordable rates**
- **India - supplied 30,000 doses of measles/rubella vaccine to Male from the Serum Institute of India, Pune on January 23, responding to an emergency requirement in the Maldives**
- ✓ **The outbreak comes within three years after the World Health Organisation declared the Maldives measles-free.**
- ✓ **Four fresh cases have been tested positive in the last week**
- **India and Brazil - signed 15 agreements as Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on January 25**



- ✓ **Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro will also be the chief guest at the Republic Day parade at Rajpath on January 26.**
- ✓ **The two sides signed a joint statement and an action plan with specific goals to deepen cooperation in defence and security; trade and investment; agriculture and energy; civil aviation; energy; environment; and health and innovation.**

- ✓ The 15 agreements cover a wide range of areas including oil and gas, mineral resources, traditional medicine, animal husbandry, bio-energy and trade and investment.
- **US President Donald Trump - is scheduled to visit India between February 24-26, even though the dates are yet to be formally announced.**

TRADE DEAL SET TO BE CONCLUDED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dates of US President Donald Trump's visit yet to be formally announced ➤ The visit, which will be his first as US President, will see the two sides arriving at a trade deal that has been months in negotiation ➤ Trump's visit comes close on 	<p>the heels of an impeachment process and virtually days before election campaign season begins in the US</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New envoy to US Taranjit S Sandhu will hit the ground running, as he takes charge of the Washington DC mission from early Feb



- ✓ This will be the first visit of US President, Trump to India
- ✓ During the visit, both sides are expected to conclude a trade deal that has been in negotiation for long.
- ✓ Earlier, Indian PM Narendra Modi had hosted the former US President Barack Obama as the chief guest on Republic Day in 2015
- **India and France - will work together in the field of museums, cultural spaces and research**
- **The European Parliament - decided to postpone voting on a critical anti-CAA resolution to March even after a debate on January 29**
- **Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar and Nigerien President Mahamadou Issoufou - jointly inaugurated the Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Center in Niger**



- ✓ It is the first convention center that was established in Africa with the assistance of India to honour the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, whose 150th Birth Anniversary was observed in 2019
- ✓ S Jaishankar is the first foreign minister of India to visit Niger.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Minister of State for Tourism Prahlad Patel – will represent India at the inauguration of ‘Visit Nepal 2020’, the largest economic diplomacy initiative of Kathmandu.**
 - ✓ The initiative aims to open Nepal’s tourism economy and generate investment for infrastructure development and also develop the tourism sector
 - ✓ The inauguration is expected to be attended by Ministers and diplomats from at least 40 countries that will include high-level delegations from India and China.
 - ✓ As part of the initiative, India, Nepal and China will hold the first-ever trilateral tourism expo in February 2020.
 - ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 2014 visit had mentioned the link between the Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu and the Vishwanath temple in Varanasi announcing the plans to connect both countries through the Hindu tourism circuit
 - ✓ Similarly, Chinese Premier Xi Jinping during his October 11 visit announced plans to build road links and infrastructure with Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha.

- **The Lai Haraoba festival - began in Tripura on January 2**
 - ✓ It is celebrated by Meitei people to please sacred trees called “Umang Lai”
 - ✓ The Meitei people speak the language called “Meiteilon”, which is included in the Eighth Schedule of Constitution of India among the other 22 languages
 - ✓ The community is spread across other states like Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Meghalaya and also in Myanmar and Bangladesh
 - ✓ The followers of the religion mainly worship natural elements such as mountains, water and fire
 - ✓ The Lai Haraoba Festival is also celebrated in the state of Manipur during the month of May.

- **The 5th Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference - was held at Pune on January 6, 2020**



- ✓ It will be organized by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research between January 6, 2020 and January 10, 2020
 - ✓ The event will witness the largest meeting of Drosophila researchers on a global level.
 - ✓ The flies have 15,500 genes on four chromosomes, whereas humans have 22,000 genes in 23 chromosomes.
- **Home Minister Amit Shah - chaired the 6th Island Development Agency meeting in New Delhi.**
- ✓ The meeting focused on “Green Development in the Islands to reach new heights”
 - ✓ It had reviewed the progress of the programme, “Holistic Development of Islands”, taken up by the Island Development Agency (IDA)
 - ✓ In the first phase, the plan will be implemented in 4 islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and 5 islands of Lakshadweep Islands.
 - ✓ In the second phase, 12 more islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and 5 Islands of Lakshadweep islands are to be covered.
 - ✓ Also, the city of Port Blair and other 7 islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands are to be digitally connected through submarine optical fibre cable by June 2020
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will attend the inaugural session of the “Raisina Dialogue” on January 14**
- ✓ It was organised by the External Affairs Ministry jointly with the Observer Research Foundation in Delhi
 - ✓ Former leaders, including former Afghan President Hamid Karzai and former Prime Ministers Helen Clark of New Zealand, Stephen Harper of Canada, Carl Bildt of Sweden, Anders Rasmussen of Denmark, Tshering Tobgay of Bhutan and Han Seung-soo of South Korea, will be attending the inaugural session
 - ✓ The title of the Raisina Dialogue this year is “Navigating the alpha century”.
 - ✓ The Raisina Dialogue is to be held between January 14, 2020 and January 16, 2020 in New Delhi
 - ✓ Since its inception in 2016, it is considered as India’s flagship conference on geo-economics and geopolitics
 - ✓ The conference is named after, “Raisina Hills”, which is the seat of Government of India and Rashtrapati bhavan.
 - ✓ The dialogue was designed on the lines of Shangri-La dialogue.
- **The World Future Energy Summit - began at Abu Dhabi on January 13.**
- ✓ It will be held for four days until January 16.
 - ✓ The Summit will have 33,500 participants from 170 countries
 - ✓ Theme - Rethinking Global Consumption, Production and Investment



WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT

13-16 January 2020 | ADNEC, Abu Dhabi

SMART CITIES EXPO & FORUM

- ✓ The summit focuses on five main pillars namely energy, water, solar, waste and smart cities.
- ✓ The summit is an annual event being conducted at Abu Dhabi since 2011
- **Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal - will be leading the Indian delegation at the 50th World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos, Switzerland.**
- ✓ The four day WEF event will begin on January 21, 2020
- ✓ It is expected to witness participation of over 50 heads of State from 117 countries.
- ✓ The theme of World Economic Forum (WEF) 2020 is 'Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World'.
- ✓ The theme focuses on the idea of WEF Founder Klaus Schwab.
- ✓ The World Economic Forum was established in 1971 with its headquarters at Geneva, Switzerland
- **Nepal - has invited the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, along with several other heads of governments and states, for the Sagarmatha Dialogue**
- ✓ The three-day event from April 2 will be the biggest diplomatic dialogue in Nepal's recent history
- ✓ It is expected to be attended by many global leaders apart from the leaders of the SAARC countries.
- ✓ The event is expected to focus on the threat of climate change to the modern world.
- **The Global Potato Conclave - is scheduled to be held between January 28 and January 31, 2020 in Gujarat**
- **The 50th World Economic Forum (WEF) – was held at Davos, Switzerland from January 21-24**
- ✓ The event witnessed the participation from over 50 heads of state from 117 nations across the world.
- ✓ US President Donald Trump, young environmental activist Greta Thunberg and the European Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen spoke at the inaugural day of the event

- ✓ Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal led the Indian delegation
 - ✓ The US will join One Trillion Trees initiative, launched at the World Economic Forum
 - ✓ It holds its annual meeting in January every year at Davos
- **Rajasthan's Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot - inaugurated Jaipur Literature Festival 2020 on January 23, 2019**



- ✓ It is the 13th edition of the Jaipur Literature Festival.
 - ✓ The five day festival will witness over 250 speakers from different parts of the country and the world
- **The Ganga-Volga Dialogue - was held in New Delhi between Russia and India recently.**

DEFENCE

- **The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) - has been newly created in the Defence Ministry**
- ✓ General Bipin Rawat, who will take charge as the new Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) on January 1, will be heading it.
 - ✓ The CDS will also function as a Secretary in the Defence Ministry
 - ✓ Under the new guidelines announced by the government last week, the CDS will function as the Principal Military Adviser to the Defence Minister and the Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.
 - ✓ The CDS will have a new peak cap, shoulder rank badges, belt buckle and a new car flag.
 - ✓ The DMA will be the fifth department in the Ministry after the Department of Defence, the Department of Defence Production, the Department of Defence Research and Development and the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.
 - ✓ Under the guidelines, the DMA would deal with the armed forces, the integrated headquarters of the Ministry, comprising the Army, Naval and Air and defence staff headquarters, the Territorial Army and works relating to the triservices and procurement exclusive to them, except capital acquisitions.

- **The Chief of Defence staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat – to prepare a roadmap for the first new theatre command to be set up in four to five years**

INTEGRATED MILITARY PUNCH

Indian Military Manpower	
ARMY	
Officers 42,913	Soldiers 11.9 lakh
IAF	
Officers 12,142	Airmen 1.3 lakh
NAVY	
Officers 10,012	Sailors 57,240



WHAT ARE THEATRE COMMANDS?	WHY INDIA NEEDS INTEGRATED COMMANDS?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All Army, Navy, Air Force & other military assets/ manpower under one operational commander in a geographical region ➤ US has 11 unified combatant commands: 6 'geographic' to handle different part of the globe (Indo-Pacific Command covers entire Asia-Pacific, including India); 5 'functional' to handle nuclear arsenal, special operations, space, cyberspace and transport/mobility ➤ China re-organised 2.3-million PLA into 5 theatre commands in early-2016. The Western Theatre Command handles entire Line of Actual Control with India, from eastern Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Such commands are cost-effective, save resources and prepare forces for integrated land-air-sea operations ➤ Will help in right-sizing the almost 1.5-million strong armed forces, who are starved of funds for modernisation due to defence budget being hit by ballooning pay and pension bills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ India has 17 single-Service commands (Army 7, IAF 7 & Navy 3) and only 2 unified commands ➤ Andaman & Nicobar Command, set up in Oct 2001, is the only theatre command ➤ Strategic Forces Command, set up in Jan 2003, to handle nuclear arsenal

- ✓ The proposed theatre command aims to build an integrated land-air-sea war-fighting machinery for a greater combat punch
- ✓ India's only theatre or geographical command is currently located in the strategically-located Andaman and Nicobar archipelago
- ✓ It places all the assets and manpower of the three services under one operational commander
- ✓ It was commenced in 2001.
- ✓ There was another proposal to establish theatre commands in the shape of one or two (one each for west and east of Nepal) for the "northern borders" with China, a western command for Pakistan, a counterinsurgency operations command and one southern or two peninsular commands for the maritime borders.
- **Chief of Defence staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat - has instructed his tri-Service integrated defence staff (IDS) to prepare a plan for the creation of an 'Air Defence Command (ADC)'**
- ✓ The "proposal" for the ADC should be prepared by June 30, 2020
- **The Army – is on the process of creation of agile and self-contained integrated battle groups (IBGs) for better theatre commands**

- **The Army - is likely to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Russia soon for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles**
- **India - is all set to kick off the “Naseem-Al-Bahr” (sea breeze) naval combat exercise with Oman on the western coast off Goa from January 7.**
- **The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) - observes 2020 as the “Year of Mobility” for the welfare of the troops.**
 - ✓ The CISF guard civil airports, nuclear power stations, mines, thermal power stations in Government and private domain as well.
 - ✓ It was initially established under the CISF act, 1968 and later converted into armed force by an amendment to the act in 1983.
 - ✓ It is the largest security system in the world with more than 1,65,000 soldiers
- **Sea Guardians, a nine-day Naval drill – was launched in North Arabian Sea between China and Pakistan navies on January 6, 2020**
- **The naval variant of the Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA) - Mk1 - successfully conducted an “arrested landing” for the first time on the deck of 44,400-tonne aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya on January 11**



- **Two Indian Coast Guard Ships (ICGS) — Annie Besant and Amrit Kaur — were commissioned by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar at Kolkata on January 12.**



- ✓ Annie Besant will be based at Chennai and Amrit Kaur will be based at Haldia

- **The Army - has approved the creation of the new post of Deputy chief (strategy) as part of the overall restructuring**

- **The Indian Navy - has decided to use a new fuel with higher technical specifications called 'High Flash High Speed Diesel' (HFHSD – IN 512)**

- **The Cabinet Committee on Security - has cleared a deadly weapons and sensors package for the 4 guided-missile destroyers under construction at Mazagon Docks in Mumbai**

- **Indian Navy – has conducted a multinational military drill called 'Milan 2020' at Visakhapatnam recently**
 - ✓ MILAN stands for 'Multilateral Naval Exercise'.
 - ✓ Theme 2020 - Synergy Across the Seas
 - ✓ The biennial 'MILAN' series of naval exercises were commenced in 1995
 - ✓ The exercise was conducted at Eastern Naval command (ENC) this year.
 - ✓ It was carried out at Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) until last year



- ✓ More than 30 countries from South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe that shares defence cooperation with India have participated in the drill

- **Indian and Japanese coast guard – have conducted a joint exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin' on January 16 off Chennai port**
 - ✓ Earlier, India and Japan had signed a cooperation agreement in 2006 to conduct such joint exercises and training exchanges.



- ✓ India and Japan have conducted the “Shinyuu Maitri”, a joint Air Force exercise that was held in October 2019 for the first time.
- ✓ Both the countries also hold a maritime exercise called “JIMEX”, which was first conducted in 2013.
- ✓ “Dharma Guardian” is the military exercise that is conducted between the armies of both the countries.

- **Lieutenant General S K Saini - will take over as the new Army vice-chief on January 25**



- ✓ He is an alumnus of Sainik School, Kapurthala

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh - flagged off the 51st unit of K-9 Vajra-T cannon at the Larsen & Toubro armored system complex at Hazira, Surat on January 16**



- **The Indian Army - recently conducted the largest air borne exercise called the ‘Winged Raider’.**



- ✓ Around 500 troops participated in the exercise, which has demonstrated the operational readiness of the paratroopers and air warriors

- ✓ The exercise was conducted in the north-eastern theatre

- **The Indian Air Force (IAF) - to commission a new squadron of Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets, named 'Tiger Sharks' at its Thanjavur airbase in Tamil Nadu on January 20**

- **India - test fired K4, a nuclear capable ballistic missile successfully on January 19, 2020 from an submerged platform in sea in the East Coast of Andhra Pradesh**



- ✓ The K4 missile, having a range of 3,500 km, is meant for Arihant-class submarines.
- ✓ India already operates Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile, K-15 or Sagarika missiles, whose range is limited to 750 km
- ✓ The other under water missile being developed by India is BO-5, whose range is 700-km
- ✓ Till now, only the US, Russia and China have submarine-launched ballistic missiles capability with a strike range of 3,500km.
- ✓ The K-series missiles are named after former president APJ Abdul Kalam
- ✓ They are much faster than Agni missiles.
- ✓ The other K-series missiles are K-15, K-5 and K-6, of which K-5 and K-6 are under development by DRDO
- ✓ The K-15 missiles are replica to the land-based Shaurya missile.

- **Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat- dedicated the newly resurrected 222 Squadron with BrahMos-embedded Sukhoi-30MKIs to the nation at the Air Force Station (AFS) in Thanjavur on January 20.**

- **The Ministry of Defence - has short-listed defence shipyard Mazagon Docks (MDL) and private ship-builder L&T to construct 6 new stealth**

submarines with foreign collaboration in the over Rs 50,000 crore deal

- **India - tested its nuclear capable K-4 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) for the second time in six days on January 24**



- ✓ The missile test, similar to the one conducted on January 19, was also undertaken from an undersea platform in the shape of a submersible pontoon off the coast of Andhra Pradesh.
 - ✓ The solid-fuelled K-4 missile, designed to have a strike range of 3,500km, is being developed by DRDO to equip the country's nuclear-powered submarines like INS Arihant and its under-development sister vessels.
 - ✓ INS Arihant is currently equipped with the much shorter K-15 missiles with a 750 km range.
 - ✓ It became fully operational in November 2018 to complete India's nuclear triad
 - ✓ India also has the land-based Agni missiles, with the over 5,000-km Agni-V inter-continental ballistic missile now in the process of being inducted
- **The President of India - has approved awards of 409 gallantry and other defence decorations to armed forces personnel and others on the eve of 71st Republic Day celebrations**
 - **India - is considering inviting Australia to take part in its trilateral 24th Malabar naval exercise with the US and Japan scheduled to take place this year**
 - **The Navy - launched Operation Vanilla in support of the national disaster in Madagascar on January 28 and diverted a large amphibious ship to provide assistance in the Southern Indian Ocean.**
 - ✓ INS Airavat, which was mission deployed, has been diverted for the same

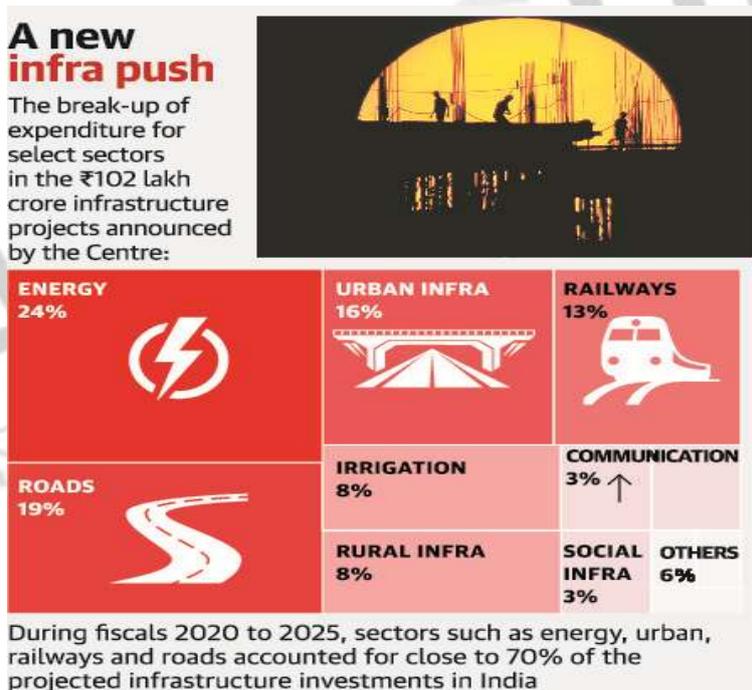
- The 11th edition of DefExpo-2020 – will commence at Lucknow from February 5-9 with the theme of ‘Digital transformation of defence’

ECONOMY

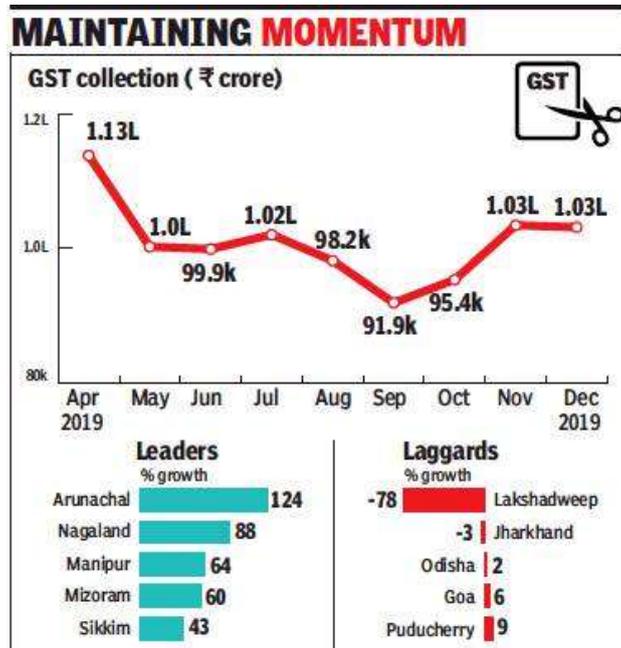
- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - outlined plans to invest more than ₹102 lakh crore in infrastructure projects by 2024-25



- ✓ The Finance minister released a report of task force on ‘National Infrastructure on Pipeline (NIP) 2019-2025’ on December 31
- ✓ The Centre, the States and the private sector will be sharing the capital expenditure in a 39:39:22 formula



- The Goods and services tax (GST) collections by the Government - crossed ₹1lakh crore for the second straight month in December 2019 (for November sales)



✓ This is almost 9% higher than the December 2018 GST collection of ₹94,726 crore

➤ **Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank** - has become the first co-operative bank in the country to get permission from the RBI to convert into a small finance bank (SFB)



✓ The Saharanpur-headquartered Shivalik MCB is a multi-state co-operative lender with significant presence in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

✓ The bank had deposits of ₹1,051 crore and advances of ₹715 crore as of end-March 2019.

✓ The RBI's 'in-principle' approval will be valid for 18 months, within which Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank had to comply with the norms of a SFB.

✓ In general, Co-operatives are governed under state laws as well as by RBI norms.

➤ **The Rubber Skill Development Council (RSDC)** – to train and certify 5 lakh tyre mechanics by 2022, as part of the government's Saamarth skilling project

✓ The Government had already trained 64,000 people and plans to train another 1.5 lakh by March 31, 2020

➤ **Retail inflation, as measured by the Consumer price index (CPI)** - increased to a five and a half-year-high of 7.4% in December

- **Google-parent Alphabet - became the fourth US company to reach a market value of more than \$1 trillion on January 16**
- ✓ Alphabet joins Apple, Amazon and Microsoft as the next US firm to hit \$1 trillion in market value
- ✓ Apple was the first company to hit the market cap milestone in 2018
- ✓ It was followed by Microsoft and then by Amazon

- **RBI (Reserve Bank of India) – is ranked sixth in the world among other central banks in buying Gold from other countries**



- ✓ It currently holds 625.2 tonnes of gold, which is 6.6% of the country's foreign exchange.
- ✓ These details were revealed by the report, "World Gold Outlook 2020", released by World Gold Council (WGC)
- ✓ As per the report, gold has performed the best since 2010 in 2019.
- ✓ In 2019, the gold trade has increased by 18.4% as compared to 2010
- ✓ The other 5 countries that have bought more gold than India include China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Poland
- ✓ In 2019, the largest gold sellers were Uzbekistan and Venezuela, which sold 16.6 tonnes and 30.3 tonnes respectively.
- ✓ The headquarters of WGC is located in London.
- ✓ Its offices are located in China, India (in Mumbai), US and Singapore

- **The International Monetary Fund (IMF) - reduced India's GDP growth estimate to 4.8% for 2019-20 citing slowing domestic demand, stress in the non-banking financial sector and a decline in credit growth**

CHINA BACK AS GROWTH CHAMP

Country	2019 Estimate In %
India	4.8
China	6.1
Brazil	1.2
Russia	1.1
South Africa	0.4
US	2.3
World	2.9

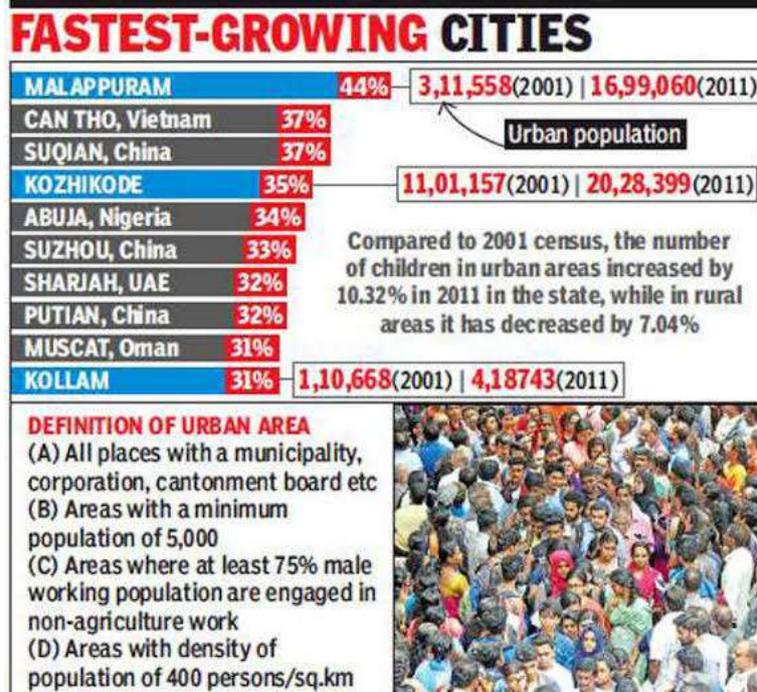
- India - was listed among the top 10 recipients of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2019, as per the Global Investment Trend Monitor report compiled by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Zomato - announced the acquisition of Uber's food delivery business Uber Eats, in India



- ✓ The all-stock deal gives the US-headquartered Uber 9.99% stake in Zomato
- The Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) – has been named as the fastest growing brand of the decade by brand valuation firm Brand Finance in its 2020 Global 500 report.
- The Board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - has decided to nominate Janak Raj as its third internal member of the monetary policy committee (MPC).
- ✓ Janak Raj is the current executive director in-charge of the monetary policy department
- ✓ The Committee, which sets the interest rate, has 6 members, of which 3 are from the RBI.
- ✓ As per law, two of RBI's internal members are the Governor and the Deputy Governor in-charge of monetary policy.

RANKINGS

- Three of the world's 10 fastest-growing urban areas - are located in Kerala, as per a survey published by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), a sister company of The Economist.



- **The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) – has recently launched the ‘State Energy Efficiency Index, 2019’ in association with Alliance for Energy Efficient Economy.**
 - ✓ The index was prepared in accordance with the basic energy requirements such as coal, electricity, gas and oil.
 - ✓ The report monitors the progress of Energy Efficiency initiatives in 36 states and Union Territories.
 - ✓ This year, BEE has included Energy Conservation Building Code as one of the new indicator.
 - ✓ Karnataka, HP, Haryana and Puducherry were identified as the best performers
 - ✓ Manipur, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir were the least performers, as per the index.
 - ✓ The first such Index in the country was released in August 2018.
- **India - is ranked as the second largest market worldwide for app downloads, as per analytics firm AppAnnie’s recent ‘State of Mobile’ report.**
- **India - ranked 84th in the Henley Passport Index, released recently**
 - ✓ Japan is holding first position from last three years.

MOST POWERFUL PASSPORTS, 2020

Passport	Henley rank	Access to destinations
Japan	1	191
Singapore	2	190
SKorea	3	189
Germany	3	189
Italy	4	188
Finland	4	188
Spain	5	187
Luxembourg	5	187
Denmark	5	187

*All information: Henley Passport Index
2020 and earlier editions*

INDIAN PASSPORT OVER THE YEARS

Year	Henley rank	Access to destinations
2006	71	25
2007	73	—
2008	75	37
2009	75	—
2010	77	50
2011	78	53
2012	82	51
2013	74	52
2014	76	52
2015	88	51
2016	85	52
2017	87	49
2018	81	60
2019	82	59
2020	84	58

- ✓ Japan's passport holders can visit 191 countries without any visa.
- ✓ Other top rankings of the index are - Singapore (2nd) Germany (3rd), South Korea (3th), Italy (4th), Finland (4th), Spain followed by Luxembourg and Denmark (5th)
- ✓ In 2006, India has been ranked 71st in the inaugural year of index.
- ✓ Currently, Indian passport holders can go to 58 countries without obtaining a visa.
- **With 373 green buildings, Maharashtra - tops the US Green Building Council's LEED green building certification for the consecutive second year**
- ✓ Maharashtra was ranked as the No. 1 state in the entire country, followed by Karnataka, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, respectively.



- ✓ In a change from last year, Haryana has moved up in the list, edging out Tamil Nadu for the third spot.
- **India - has slipped 10 places to stay at 51st position among 167 countries on the Democracy Index, primarily due to an "erosion of civil liberties in the country".**
- ✓ India's score dropped from 7.23 (out of 10) in 2018 to 6.9 in 2019, the lowest since the index began in 2006.

- ✓ India's highest score was 7.91, which was achieved in 2014.
- ✓ Norway is on the top of the EIU's democracy index, while North Korea is at the bottom with the 167th position.

Democracy Index 2019

FE BUREAU

India falls 10 places to 51st position

India slipped 10 places to 51st position in the 2019 Democracy Index's global ranking, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, which cited "erosion of civil liberties" in the country as the primary cause for the downtrend. India's overall score fell from 7.23 in 2018 to 6.90.

Top 5

Rank	Country	Score
1	Norway	9.8
2	Iceland	9.58
3	Sweden	9.39
4	New Zealand	9.26
5	Finland	9.25

Bottom 5

163	Chad	1.61
164	Syria	1.43
165	Central African Republic	1.32
166	Dem Republic of Congo	1.13
167	North Korea	1.08

Saarc nations

Rank	Country	Score
51	India	6.90
69	Sri Lanka	6.27
80	Bangladesh	5.88
91	Bhutan	5.30
92	Nepal	5.28
108	Pakistan	4.25
141	Afghanistan	2.85

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit Report



- **India's ranking in the Corruption Perceptions Index, 2019 - has dropped from 78 to 80 compared to the previous year**
- ✓ The Corruption Perceptions index was released by Transparency International on January 23 during the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos

1

- ✓ India has scored 41 out of 100 this year, same like last year.
- ✓ India shared the 80th position along with Benin, China, Morocco, and Ghana.
- ✓ India's neighboring country Pakistan was ranked 120 on the list.
- ✓ The top ranked countries are New Zealand and Denmark, with scores of 87 each, followed by Finland (86), Singapore (85), Sweden (85) and Switzerland (85).
- ✓ The bottom countries are Syria, South Sudan and Somalia with scores 13, 12 and 9 respectively.

- **India - is now ranked at second spot after global leader China in terms of smartphone units shipped, as per a recent data from Counterpoint Research.**
- ✓ However, Apple was the surprise performer this year in India stimulated by price cuts on the iPhone XR, manufactured in India, and success of iPhone 11 series.
- ✓ iPhone shipments grew 6% in 2019 compared to a 43% decline in 2018.
- **Bengaluru - has become the topmost city in the country with the highest traffic congestion and emerged on top of the list globally.**
- ✓ The vehicle navigation company, TomTom's, said in its annual traffic index that it has surveyed in 416 cities, in 57 countries and 6 continents



- **India climbed eight ranks and secured the 72nd rank - in the Global Talent Competitive Index (GTCI) 2020, released at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) recently**



- ✓ Switzerland is in the first place while the USA and Singapore grabbed the second and third positions respectively.

Global Talent Competitiveness Index		RANK-COUNTRY→	SCORE
Talent diversity to fuel the future of work		1→	Switzerland → 81.26↑
		2→	US → 79.09↑
		3→	Singapore → 78.48↑
		4→	Sweden → 75.82↑
		5→	Denmark → 75.18↑
		6→	Netherlands → 74.99↑
		7→	Finland → 74.47↑
		8→	Luxembourg → 73.94↑
		9→	Norway → 72.91↑
		10→	Australia → 72.53↑
		72→	India → 40.42

- ✓ Among the top ten countries, Sweden ranked fourth, Denmark fifth, Netherlands sixth, Finland seventh, Luxembourg eighth, Norway ninth and Australia 10th.
- ✓ The index indicates the ability of countries to make the world progress, retain and attract talent
- **Jharkhand's coal-based industrial town, Jharia - is the most polluted city in the country, according to a Greenpeace India report Airpocalypse IV**
- ✓ Another city in Jharkhand, Dhanbad, is the second most polluted city in India
- ✓ Dhanbad is known for its coal reserves and industry.

APPOINTMENTS

- **Prof Suresh Chandra Sharma – is appointed as Chairman of the National Medical Commission (NMC).**



- ✓ Sharma is the current head of the ENT head-neck surgery department at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi
- ✓ He was also nominated as the President of AIIMS, Jodhpur by the Government
- ✓ Dr Rakesh Kumar Vats is appointed as the Secretary of the Commission
- ✓ Both the tenures will be for a period of three years or till the attainment of 70 years of age, whichever earlier
- ✓ National Medical Commission is the country's new medical regulator, replacing the scam-tainted Medical Council of India (MCI)
- ✓ It has been set up as per the recommendations of the Group of Experts headed by Professor Ranjit Roy Chaudhury and constituted by the Union health ministry

- ✓ On August 8, 2019 National Medical Commission Bill 2019 was introduced which replaces Indian Medical Council Act, 1956.
- **Haitham bin Tariq al-Said - was sworn in as the new Sultan of Oman after the death of long-time ruler Qaboos bin Saeed Al Said.**



- ✓ **Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed** had ruled Oman since 1970 as the 8th Sultan of the House of Al Said
- ✓ He was the Arab world's longest-serving ruler
- ✓ The Sultan of Oman is the highest decision-maker and holds the parallel position of the Prime Minister, Defence Minister, Finance Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister and the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces in the country.
- **Michael Debabrata Patra – is appointed as the new Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**
- ✓ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved Patra for a three-year tenure.
- ✓ A fellow of Harvard University, Patra joined the RBI in the year 1985
- **Senior IPS officer A P Maheshwari - was appointed Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on January 13**
- ✓ Maheshwari is a 1984 batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre.
- ✓ He is currently serving as special secretary (internal security) in the home ministry
- **Senior Indian Advocate Harish Salve - has been appointed as the Queen's Counsel (QC) for the courts of England and Wales.**



- ✓ In January 2019, Indian advocate **Dipen Sabharwal** was appointed as the Queen's Counsel.
- **Nripendra Misra, former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister - has been appointed as the new Chairperson of Nehru Memorial Museum**



- **Former health minister Jagat Prakash Nadda - was elected unopposed as the 11th President of BJP on January 20, with the support of 21 states units and the parliamentary party**



- ✓ He replaces home minister Amit Shah, who held the position for five-and-a-half years.
- **The Central Vigilance Commission - has appointed A.D.M. Chavali as a member in the Advisory Board for Banking & Financial Frauds.**



- ✓ He was the retired executive director of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)
- ✓ The Advisory board is headed by T.M. Bhasin, ex-Vigilance Commissioner and former chairman-cum-managing director of Indian Bank.
- **Union Minister Arjun Munda - has been elected as the new President of the Archery Association of India (AAI).**



- ✓ He will now serve a full term of four years
 - ✓ The election was conducted in the presence of 3 observers, one each from World Archery, Sports Ministry and the Indian Olympic Association.
 - ✓ Overall, 26 states participated in the elections among AAI's 31 state associations
 - ✓ Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jammu and Kashmir did not participate in the elections
 - ✓ Arjun Munda is a three-time Chief Minister of Jharkhand.
 - ✓ AAI's executive committee will comprise President, Secretary General, Senior Vice-President, 8 Vice Presidents, 7 Joint Secretaries and one treasurer.
 - ✓ Due to factionalism, AAI was suspended by the World Archery in August 2019 for not adhering to its guidelines.
 - ✓ Due to AAI's suspension, Indian archers cannot compete under the Indian flag in international sporting events.
- **Senior diplomat Taranjit Singh Sandhu - will be the next Indian Ambassador to the United States.**



- ✓ He replaces Harsh Shringla, who will take over as foreign secretary from January 29
- ✓ Sandhu is the current Indian envoy to Sri Lanka

AWARDS

- **Indian-origin writer Jasbinder Bilan - has been conferred with the UK Children's Book Award for her debut novel 'Asha and the Spirit Bird'.**

- **Agricultural Scientist Prof M S Swaminathan - was awarded the first “Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National award for Excellence” on January 14.**



- ✓ During the celebrations, the professor was given the title of “Father of Green Revolution and the Doyen of Agricultural Science”.
- **Deepa Venkat, the daughter of Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu - was conferred the ‘Champion of Change’ Award by former President Pranab Mukherjee**



- ✓ She was handed over the award in recognition of her contributions in the field of social welfare.
- ✓ Deepa was managing the Swarna Bharat Trust, which conducts skill development programmes in various trades, for the last 20 years.
- **President Ram Nath Kovind- awarded the Bal Shakti Puraskar to 49 children in the age group of 5-18 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on January 22.**
- **Former IPS officer Kumar Munnan Singh - has been selected for the first-ever ‘Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar’ for his contribution in the field of disaster management in the individual category.**



- ✓ The award carries a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh along with a certificate
 - ✓ The Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre in Uttarakhand, an organisation working in the field of natural calamity relief, has been selected in the institution category
 - ✓ Established in 2006, the centre will be given a certificate and a cash prize of ₹51 lakh
 - ✓ The award is announced every year on January 23, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
 - ✓ It was constituted last year by the Government
- **Deepika Padukone - was conferred with the Crystal Award 2020 at the 26th annual Crystal Award ceremony during the World Economic Forum's opening session held recently**



- ✓ The Indian actress was awarded for being exemplary in raising mental health awareness and also for her foundation 'Live Love Laugh'.
 - ✓ The winners of Crystal Awards 2020 include Deepika Padukone, artist Theaster Gates, choreographer Jin Xing and artist Lynette Wallworth
 - ✓ Deepika was feted with the award for raising mental health awareness by going public with her own experience of tackling depression and anxiety.
 - ✓ She was diagnosed with clinical depression in 2014 and sought professional help to aid her recovery.
 - ✓ She founded the 'Live Love Laugh' Foundation in June 2015 to assist and give hope to every person experiencing stress, anxiety and depression.
 - ✓ The Crystal Awards are conferred to honour the everlasting contributions to society by exceptional artists
- **The Centre – announced the winners list of Padma Awards this year on January 25**
- ✓ It has decided to confer 141 awards, including 7 Padma Vibhushan, 16 Padma Bhushan and 118 Padma Shri.

- ✓ BJP stalwarts Arun Jaitley and Sushma Swaraj and socialist icon George Fernandes, all of whom passed away last year, have been honoured with the Padma Vibhushan



- ✓ The honours for Jaitley and Swaraj are in keeping with the central role they played in the government and their long record as parliamentarians and eminent persons in public life
- ✓ Swaraj was a charismatic campaigner who made an early mark in electoral politics.
- ✓ Jaitley graced the world of law as a top-notch lawyer and was a well-regarded parliamentarian in opposition and government.
- **Senior journalist from Jammu and Kashmir Yusuf Jameel - has been selected for the 2019-2020 PEN Gauri Lankesh Award for democratic idealism**
- The award carries a purse of ₹1 lakh.
- **Sanjana Kapoor, a famous Indian theatre artist – to be conferred with the prestigious French honour of "Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters).**



- **Indian environmental economist Pavan Sukhdev - was awarded the 2020 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement on January 27, 2020 for his outstanding work in the area of the Green economy.**
- ✓ Sukhdev was the head and special adviser of UNEP's 'Green Economy Initiative'.
- ✓ It was instituted in 1973 by the late John and Alice Tyler.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah - released the book 'Karmyodha Granth', based on the life of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently.**
- ✓ The book explains various works and schemes of PM Narendra Modi during his tenure

- ✓ It mentions that the government provides better health facilities to the deprived people under Ayushman Yojana, which was a dream project of Narendra Modi.

PERSONALITIES

- Major General Qassem Suleimani, the Head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC's) Quds Force – was killed by the US-authorized airstrikes near the International airport at the Iraqi capital, Baghdad

THE UNMANNED KILLER IN BAGHDAD STRIKE

The strike that killed Iranian general Qassim Suleimani is not the first time that US has used a drone against hostile targets. Here's all about the one that carried out Friday's strike

It can both spy and destroy

➤ The MQ-9 Reaper drone was developed to support overseas ops. The "M" indicates US defence dept designation of multi-role; "Q" means remotely piloted aircraft and "9" says it's ninth in the series of remotely piloted aircraft systems

➤ It is useful for striking against or doing recon on fleeting, and time-sensitive targets

On board: Cameras and missiles

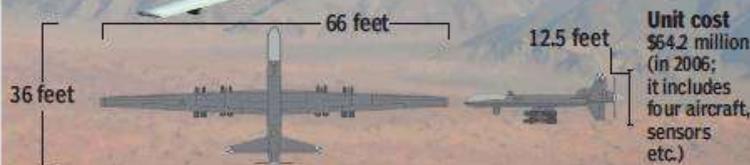
The MQ-9 Reaper carries a targeting system that comes with a suite of visual sensors

Among its weapons are four laser-guided air-to-ground Hellfire missiles for highly accurate, low-collateral damage strikes

Remote Crew 2 (pilot and sensor operator)	Max. takeoff weight 4,760 kg	Payload 1,701 kg	Flight ceiling Up to 50,000 feet	Range 1,150 miles
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Fuel capacity
2,200 litres

Speed
230 mph



Maker
General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc

Unit cost
\$64.2 million (in 2006; it includes four aircraft, sensors etc.)

- ✓ The 62 year old, General Qassem Suleimani was one of the most influential person in Iran, often labeled as the next leader of the nation.
- ✓ He is also a well known personality in other countries like Syria, Lebanon and Iraq
- ✓ He was responsible for carrying out operations beyond Iran in West Asian countries and was a major opponent of the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia.

- **The Catholic Church of Kerala - has decided to declare Archbishop Joseph Attipetty as Servant of God on January 21 at St Francis Assisi Cathedral, Broadway, Ernakulam**

- ✓ This coincides with the 50th year commemoration of the prelate's death
- ✓ Archbishop Joseph Attipetty was born on June 25, 1894 on the island of Vypeen across Cochin Harbour.
- ✓ He died on January 21, 1970

- **Raja Jon Vurputoor Chari, an Indian-American based in Hyderabad - is one among 11 NASA graduates who have completed the initial astronaut candidate training and have been shortlisted for NASA's moon mission assignment.**
- **Captain Tania Shergill - will lead the marching contingent at the Army Day parade on January 15, 2020**



- ✓ Tania represents the fourth-generation in her family to serve in the military
 - ✓ She was commissioned into the Corps of Signals from the Officers' Training Academy at Chennai in 2017
 - ✓ Tania will also lead the Army's contingent down the majestic Rajpath during the Republic Day parade on January 26.
- **Khagendra Thapa Magar, the world's shortest man who could walk, as verified by Guinness World Records, died in Nepal on January 17.**



- ✓ Measuring just 67.08 cm, Magar first won the title in 2010 after his 18th birthday.
 - ✓ He lost it briefly later and regained it in 2015
- **Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister of Russia – tendered his resignation to the President Vladimir Putin on January 15, 2020 along with his cabinet**
 - ✓ According to President Putin, Medvedev's cabinet failed to achieve its goals.
 - ✓ Later, Putin suggested Mikhail Mishustin's name as the new Prime Minister of the country.
 - ✓ Mishustin was the chief of the tax department of the country.
- **Captain Tania Sher Gill - will lead an all-men contingent comprising 147 personnel on Republic Day Parade.**



- ✓ Captain Tania belongs to a family where men had served in the Army for three generations
- ✓ The girl from Punjab's Hoshiarpur, Tania, was the first woman officer to be a 'parade adjutant' in the Army Day parade in Delhi a few days ago
- **45 year old Manisha Mhaske - will be the first woman to pilot an AC train in Central Railway from January 30, when she drives an AC train in Central Railway's trans-harbour corridor in Thane-Panvel route.**



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The final four astronauts selected for Gaganyaan - to begin their training in Russia from the third week of this month.**
- ✓ The shortlisted astronauts will be trained at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Centre in Moscow, as per an agreement signed between the space agencies of the two countries last year.
- ✓ This was announced by the Isro chairman K Sivan on January 1, 2020

FINAL FRONTIER

➤ PM Modi, in his 2018 Independence Day speech, announced the first manned space mission

➤ Gaganyaan, which is set to take off in 2022, will cost less than ₹10,000cr, the Centre said in 2018

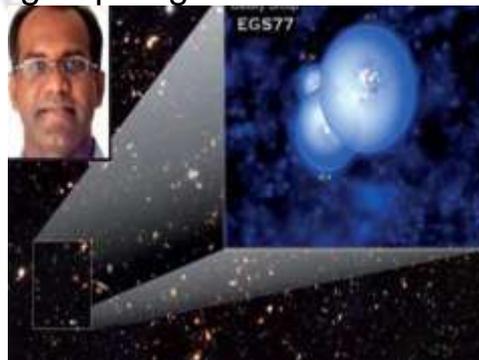
➤ If successful, India will be the fourth nation to send humans into space after Russia, US and China



- ✓ Seven Indian Air Force test pilots chosen for Gaganyaan had completed the screening process in India and Russia during November and another 5 completed this process in December.
- ✓ Out of these 12, the final 4 have been shortlisted for training now after a series of fitness and endurance tests
- **The Indian Space Research Organisation - is set to launch Chandrayaan-3 by this year end**
- ✓ The agency has set an internal target of November 2020 for the project, but it may further move into early next year
- ✓ The third Moon mission is estimated to cost more than ₹600 crore
- ✓ The lander, rover and propulsion module will cost ₹250 crore, while GSLV Mark III vehicle launch service will cost another ₹365 crore
- ✓ Chandrayaan-3 will have a lander, rover and a propulsion module
- ✓ It will be utilizing the Chandrayaan-2 orbiter, which is fully functional.
- ✓ M Vanitha, the project director of Chandrayaan-2 has been replaced in Chandrayaan-3 by **P Veeramuthuvel** of the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre, who was also the associate project director of Chandrayaan-2
- ✓ Isro is targeting 25 missions this year
- ✓ Isro has already requested for ₹120 crore for a new launchpad for SSLV (small satellite launch vehicle), which will be part of the proposed spaceport in Tamil Nadu's Kulasekarapattinam in Tuticorin
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government has began the process of acquiring 2,300 acres of land in Thoothukudi district for ISRO's second launch port.
- ✓ Currently satellites are launched from the Sriharikota launch centre in Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The first experimental flight of SSLV will happen this year at Sriharikota, while Aditya mission is scheduled for mid-2020
- ✓ SSLVs are meant to launch a payload of up to 500 kg in space.

- **Isro - is in talks with Chinese phone-maker Xiaomi to include NaVIC chipsets in its products within India**
- **The Indian Space Research Organization - signed a pact with 'Indian Institute of Astrophysics' to establish an optical telescope under "Project NETRA".**
 - ✓ Project NETRA was launched by ISRO in September 2019
 - ✓ Under the Project, ISRO plans to set up observational facilities to provide early warnings to satellites about debris and hazards in their orbits
 - ✓ The project consists of several radars, telescopes, control centres and data processing units.
 - ✓ Currently, India operates 15 communication satellites, 13 remote sensing satellites and 8 navigation satellites.
 - ✓ The project aims to shield the Indian satellites from the debris arising from old rocket bodies to defunct space crafts
 - ✓ There are more than 7,500 tonnes of space debris that are rotating the earth at present.
 - ✓ Apart from Isro, DRDO also operates another 'NETRA', (Network Traffic Analysis) which is a software that monitors internet traffic
 - ✓ It is used by Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Intelligence Bureau (IB) and other intelligence agencies of Government of India.

- **Indian-origin Goa-born scientist, Vithal Tilvi - has discovered a never before-seen group of galaxies, now labelled EGS77**
- ✓ Nasa's international team of astronomers led by Tilvi has sighted EGS77, which is the farthest group of galaxies to have ever been identified.



- **Researchers at Monash University - have developed a new lithium-sulphur batteries that can replace lithium-ion batteries in the nearby future**



- **India's new world-class facility for training astronauts – to come up at Challakere on the Bengaluru-Pune NH4 in Chitradurga district of Karnataka in the next 3 years.**
- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has proposed a ₹ 2,700-crore master plan to create a world class infrastructure that will house its 'Human Space Flight Centre' (HSFC).
- ✓ When ready, the 400-acre ISRO land at Challakere will be the single-stop infrastructure comprising of all activities related to space travellers.
- ✓ The HSFC, formally announced in January 2019, has been functioning from a temporary place at the ISRO headquarters, Antariksh Bhavan.
- ✓ S. Unnikrishnan Nair has been named its Founder-Director and R. Hutton the project director of Gaganyaan.

- **Pathanga Suchaka, a new artificial intelligence (AI) based system – was unveiled on the sidelines of the 107th Indian Science Congress on January 6**
- ✓ The system is designed to identify about 800 species of butterflies and 500 species of moths using the AI technology
- ✓ It was developed by Ecologist and writer, KN Ganeshaiah, who was formerly associated with University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS)

- **A group of scientists, including from India - has mapped the genome of the Indian cobra**
- ✓ Every year, approximately 5 million people are bitten by venomous snakes globally, resulting in about 4,00,000 amputations and more than 1,00,000 deaths.
- ✓ In India, about 46,000 people die and 1,40,000 are disabled annually from snake bites from the 'Big 4' — the Indian cobra, common krait, Russell's viper, and the saw-scaled viper.
- ✓ Indian cobra are among the most poisonous snakes in the world.

- **European scientists - have confirmed that 2019 was a very hot year, with global average temperatures registering the 'second' highest on record.**

- ✓ Compared with 2019, only 2016 was hotter by less than one-tenth of a degree Fahrenheit.
- ✓ **Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) - is planning to set up its own satellite communication system for constant monitoring and contacting Indian astronauts in space**
- ✓ The first geo satellite will be launched this year before the first unmanned test flight of Gaganyaan, which is likely to be launched in December or first half of 2021.
- ✓ Isro is planning to launch the Gaganyaan or manned mission by 2022.
- **Indian Space Research Organization - will launch GSAT-30 satellite on the launch vehicle Ariane-5 on January 17, 2020**
- ✓ It will be launched in Ariane Launch Complex at Kourou
- ✓ The GSAT-30 is a communication satellite, which seeks to replace INSAT-4A.
- ✓ The mission life of GSAT-30 is 15 years.
- ✓ The INSAT-4A was launched in 2005 mainly to facilitate communication.
- ✓ APPLE Experimental was the first Indian 'experimental' satellite launched by Ariane in 1981
- ✓ It was used for TV and radio communications.
- ✓ Ariane Space is a commercial satellite launching organization, founded in 1980
- ✓ Since then, it has launched 23 Indian satellites.
- **US researchers - have developed the first-ever "living robot" or 'xenobot' by engineering bits of frog embryo to behave like "living, programmable organisms."**
- **World Health Organization (WHO) - releases list of Global Health Challenges of the forth coming year**
- ✓ The list included 13 potential threats with the foremost being Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and climate crisis, which were listed there in 2019 as well
- ✓ The climate change has increased malnutrition and was the main reason behind the spreading of infectious diseases such as malaria.
- ✓ Stroke, heart attack, chronic respiratory disease and lung cancer were responsible for causing around 25% of the total deaths.
- ✓ Unhealthy food diets are also listed as another major threat in the list.
- ✓ A new entrant to the list of top 13 potential threats is Lack of Access to vaccines, diagnostic tools, medicines and other essential health products.
- ✓ Shortage of health care workers is also the major global concern.

- ✓ As per WHO, about 18 million health workers are required for the hospitals by 2030
- **ISRO'S communication satellite GSAT-30 - was successfully launched by European space agency's heavy-lift launch vehicle Ariane-5 (VA 251) from French Guiana at 2.35am (IST) on January 17.**
- ✓ This is the country's first satellite launch of this year
- **Vyom Mitra, the prototype with feminine features – has been unveiled by Isro for the first unmanned human spaceflight programme, Gaganyaan, slated for 2022**
- **Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany - have developed a new class of material for use as cathode or positive electrode that can increase the lifetime and the performance of lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries.**
- **India's first Super Fab Lab - was inaugurated in Kerala on January 25**



- ✓ Also, it was the first fab lab to be opened outside USA (MIT).
- **Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) - have developed a through-the-wall radar (TWR) built on a chip smaller than a grain of rice.**
- ✓ The team was led by Gaurab Banerjee, associate professor in the department of electrical communication engineering.
- **A team of Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Isro researchers - have developed "Space Bricks" using lunar soil simulant (LSS) to assist the construction of future settlements on Moon**
- **India - has successfully 'phased-out' one of the most dangerous ozone-depleting chemical - Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) -141 b as on January 1, 2020.**

SPORTS

- **Spain's Fernando Alonso - is set to become the first Formula One champion to compete in the Dakar Rally, which starts in Saudi Arabia on January 5**
- **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) - released a list of substances and methods that are prohibited in 2020**
- **Tamil Nadu - won the men's crown in the senior National volleyball championships with a victory over Railways in the final at Bhubaneswar, Odisha**



- ✓ This was Tamil Nadu's ninth title overall and the first after six years.
- ✓ Kerala defeated Railways to retain the women's title.
- **Indian Table Tennis star, Manav Thakkar - has jumped 9 places to become the World no.1 in the Under-21 men's singles category in the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings.**
- **The 3rd edition of 'Khelo India Youth Games' - are scheduled to be held between February 10, 2020 and February 22, 2020 in Guwahati, Assam.**



- ✓ It includes two categories namely under-17-year school students and under-21-year college student
- ✓ The event will be held in 20 disciplines.
- ✓ Under the event, an annual scholarship of Rs 5,00,000 is given for 1000 kids to prepare them for international sporting events.
- ✓ The first edition of the event was held in New Delhi and the second edition in Pune
- ✓ Khelo India games were launched by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in January 2018.
- ✓ Haryana topped the medals tally in the inaugural games.

- **New Zealand batsman Leo Carter - entered the record books by becoming the seventh cricketer in the world to hit six sixes in an over**



- ✓ He entered the elite list that includes Gary Sobers (West Indies), Ravi Shastri (India), Herschelle Gibbs (South Africa), Yuvraj Singh (India), Worcestershire's Ross Whiteley (England) and Afghanistan's Hazratullah Zazai.
- ✓ Carter also became only the fourth batsman to achieve the feat in T20 cricket.
- ✓ The others are Yuvraj Singh (2007), Ross Whitely (2017) and Hazratullah Zazai (2018).
- **India's P. Magesh Chandran – wins the 95th edition of the prestigious Hastings International Chess Congress in Hastings, England.**
- **Indian star, Fouaad Mirza - has officially secured a berth for the country in equestrian at this year's Tokyo Olympics**



- **India's P. Iniyan - finishes second in the Stauffer Open chess tournament held in Germany recently.**

- **Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju and Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal - launched the third edition of the Khelo India Youth Games at Guwahati, Assam on January 10**
- ✓ Assam's star runner, Hima Das lit the symbolic Games Flame
- ✓ Close to 6,800 athletes from 28 States and 9 union territories will compete.

- **The Indian women's hockey team captain Rani Rampal - has been nominated for the 'World Games Athlete of the Year' by Hockey governing body, FIH**
- ✓ Overall, 25 athletes have been nominated for this award from their respective sports by their international federations

- **Cheteshwar Pujara - slammed his 50th first-class century during Saurashtra's Ranji Trophy group 'B' match against Karnataka at Rajkot**



- **Batting legend Sachin Tendulkar - has been shortlisted as one of the 20 contenders for the greatest Laureus Sporting Moment 2000-2020 Award.**

- **Indian weightlifter Sarbjeet Kaur - has been banned from the sport for 4 years by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) for doping violation**



- **Kanhaiya Kumar, Prashant Kishor, and Mahua Moitra - have been named in the Forbes' list of '20 people to watch in the 2020s'**



- **Tamil Nadu's Sherin Abdul Gafoor - won the silver with a jump of 6.30m in the Under 21 Long jump event in the Khelo India Youth Games on January 12**

- **Jasprit Bumrah – received the Polly Umrigar Award, the highest award of Indian Cricket, on January 12**

✓ **BCCI Awards: Full List of Winners**

- ✓ **Kris Srikanth** - Col. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award
- ✓ **Jasprit Bumrah** - Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer (Men)
- ✓ **Anjum Chopra** - BCCI Life Time Achievement Award For Women
- ✓ **Poonam Yadav** - Best International Cricketer (Women)
- ✓ **Dilip Joshi** - BCCI Special Award
- ✓ **Mayank Agarwal** - Best International Debut (Men)
- ✓ **Jasprit Bumrah** - Dilip Sardesai Award for Highest Wickets in Test Cricket- 2018-19
- ✓ **Cheteshwar Pujara** - Dilip Sardesai Award for Highest Run Getter in Test Cricket- 2018-19
- ✓ **Shafali Verma** - BCCI Best International Debut (Women)
- ✓ **Jhulan Goswami** - Highest Wickets in One Day Internationals (2018-19) Women

- ✓ **Shivam Dube** - Lala Amarnath Award For the Best All-Rounder in the Ranji Trophy
 - ✓ **Smriti Mandhana** - Highest Run Getter in One Day Internationals - 2018-19 (Women)
 - ✓ **Vidarbha Cricket Association** - Best Performance in BCCI Domestic Tournaments (2018-19)
 - ✓ **Virendra Sharma** - Best Umpire in Domestic Cricket (2018-19)
 - ✓ **Shafali Verma** - Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy for Best Woman Cricketer (Junior Domestic) of 2018-19
- **Norway's Chess genius, Magnus Carlsen - sets a world record of 111 unbeaten classical games during the fourth round of Tata Steel Masters chess tournament at Wijk Aan Zee, Netherlands on January 14**



- **Abhijeet Gupta – clinched a clinical win over Aleksey Aleksandrov to regain the title in the Delhi International Open Grandmasters chess tournament in New Delhi**



- **Indian skipper Virat Kohli - was named captain of both ICC Test and ODI teams of 2019 and also awarded ICC 2019 'Spirit of Cricket' award**
- ✓ Rohit Sharma was named as the winner of ICC ODI Cricketer of the year 2019 award
 - ✓ Richard Illingworth won ICC **2019 Umpire of the Year** award.
- **RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group and Mohun Bagan Football Club (India) Private Limited - have merged to establish a new football club.**
- **India's Greco-Roman wrestler Gurpreet Singh – wins the Rome ranking series tournament in a 82kg final in Italy**

- **Three-time doubles Grand Slam winner Sania Mirza – claimed her 42nd WTA doubles title in the WTA Hobart International doubles final on January 18**



- **Star Wrestler Vinesh Phogat - won her first gold medal of the 2020 season in the 53 kg category at the Rome Ranking Series event**



- **Sachin Tendulkar and Viswanathan Anand- have been excluded from an the government constituted advisory panel 'All India Council of Sports' (AICS)**

- **The Badminton World Federation (BWF) - has given the approval for using synthetic feather shuttlecocks at its sanctioned international tournaments at all levels from the year 2021**

- **Shivangi Sarma– won the fifth 'individual' swimming gold medal to emerge as the most successful individual athlete at the ongoing Khelo India Youth Games in Guwahati, Assam**



- **Maharashtra - retained Khelo India Youth Games champions trophy with a huge collection of 256 medals, including 78 gold**

KHELO INDIA TABLE				
State	G	S	B	Total
M'shtra	78	77	101	256
Haryana	68	60	72	200
Delhi	39	36	47	122
K'taka	32	26	22	80
UP	29	28	30	87
TN	22	32	22	76
Assam	20	22	34	76
WB	19	14	20	53
Gujarat	16	16	20	52
Punjab	16	15	28	59

- **Apurvi Chandela and Divyansh Singh Panwar – won two gold medals each in the women’s and men’s air rifle events in the Meyton Cup International shooting championship**
- **Australia - is set to host the 11th edition of the Indoor Cricket World Cup from October 10 to 17 this year.**
- **The Ministry of Sports – has de-recognised the Rowing Federation of India (RFI) on January 22**
- ✓ The move is attributed to the violation of the Sports Code of 2011 during its elections held in December.
- **Rowing Federation of India – has lifted rower Dattu Bhokanal’s two-year suspension on January 23.**
- ✓ He was banned by the RFI (Rowing Federation of India) in March, 2019
- **Chinese Grandmaster Ju Wenjun - defeated Russia’s Aleksandra Goryachkina in tiebreaks 2.5-1.5 to retain her women’s world title in Vladivostok, Russia on January 24**



- ✓ The keenly-fought clash went into tiebreaks after Aleksandra won the 12th and final regulation match that left both on 6 points each
 - ✓ The first two games in the tiebreaker were draws.
- **S. Shrikrishna (PSPB) - retained the National under-21 billiards championship at the Manisha-Vascon National billiards and snooker championship**



- ✓ He won all his matches in the top 4 round robin league.
- **Top-seed Russian Grand Master Pavel Pankratov - clinched the title in the 12th Chennai Open international GM chess tournament 2020 here on January 25**



PADMA AWARDS – COMPLETE LIST OF WINNERS



Padma Vibhushan (7)

SN	Name	Field	State/Country
1.	Shri George Fernandes (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Bihar
2.	Shri Arun Jaitley (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Delhi
3.	Sir Anerood Jugnauth GCSK	Public Affairs	Mauritius
4.	Smt. M. C. Mary Kom	Sports	Manipur
5.	Shri Chhannulal Mishra	Art	Uttar Pradesh
6.	Smt. Sushma Swaraj (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Delhi
7.	Sri Vishveshateertha Swamiji Sri Pejavara Adhokhaja Matha Udupi (Posthumous)	Others-Spiritualism	Karnataka

Padma Bhushan (16)

SN	Name	Field	State/Country
8.	Shri M. Mumtaz Ali (Sri M)	Others-Spiritualism	Kerala
9.	Shri Syed Muazzem Ali (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Bangladesh
10.	Shri Muzaffar Hussain Baig	Public Affairs	Jammu and Kashmir

- **Vasant Raiji, India's oldest living First Class cricketer, turned 100 on January 26.**



- ✓ Raiji, a right-handed batsman, played 9 First Class matches in the 1940s, scoring 277 runs with 68 being his highest.
- ✓ Raiji, also a historian and a writer, was 13 when India played his first Test at the Bombay Gymkhana in South Mumbai
- **Former Karnataka captain Vinay Kumar - reached the rare milestone of 500 first-class wickets in a match for Puducherry against**

Chandigarh in the Plate Group Ranji Trophy match at Chandigarh on January 27

- Tamil Nadu's Nethra Kumanan - became the first Indian woman to win a medal at the Sailing World Cup after clinching a bronze medal in round 2 of the Hempel World Series which concluded in Miami, United States on January 25
- Five-time champion Viswanathan Anand - finished tied sixth in the Tata Steel Masters chess tournament at Wijk Aan Zee



- Pankaj Advani - claims 10th National billiards championship title in Pune



- ✓ For the title, the 23-time world champion defeated Sourav Kothari with a 5-2 margin in the final.
- ✓ This is Advani's 33rd National title in total and 10th in the senior category.
- Bala Devi, Manipuri striker - made history by becoming the first Indian woman footballer to bag a professional contract from a foreign club.

- The Indian cricket board's (BCCI) grand project to build a new Centre of Excellence (CoE) - is likely to cost around ₹500 crores
- ✓ It will replace the National Cricket Academy (NCA) with the active involvement of NCA Director, Rahul Dravid.
- ✓ The project is likely to be completed in the next two years.

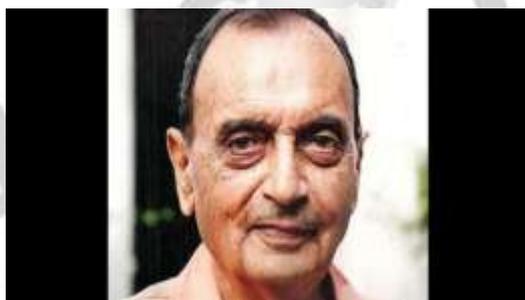
- **Star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra - achieved the Tokyo Olympics qualification mark (85m), throwing the javelin to an impressive distance of 87.86m, at a low-key Athletics Central North East (ACNE) meet in Potchefstroom, South Africa**



- **The Indian women's team captain Rani Rampal - became the first-ever hockey player to win the prestigious World Games Athlete of the Year Award.**

OBITUARY

- **Kamal Singh, the last Maharaja of Dumraon and the last surviving member of the first Lok Sabha (94 years)**

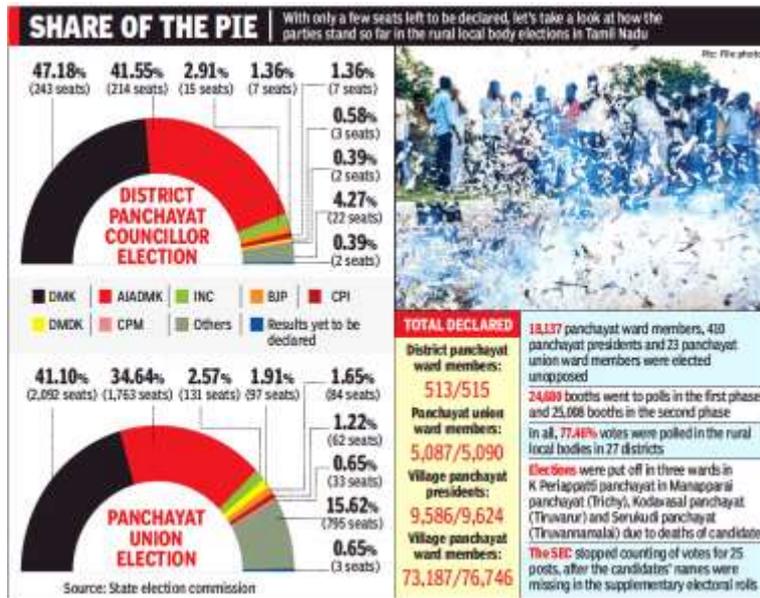


- ✓ Singh was the country's youngest MP, having been elected to the first Lok Sabha in 1952 at the age of 25
 - ✓ He represented Buxar parliamentary constituency (Bihar) in the Lok Sabha as an Independent till 1962.
 - ✓ He contested parliamentary elections again in 1989 and 1991 from Buxar constituency unsuccessfully
 - ✓ He has opened a number of educational institutions and health facilities for the poor in the old Shahabad region
- **Former Tamil Nadu chief secretary, T V Antony (86 years) – passed away in Chennai on January 24**



REPORT

TAMILNADU RURAL LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS – A UPDATE ON THE RESULTS

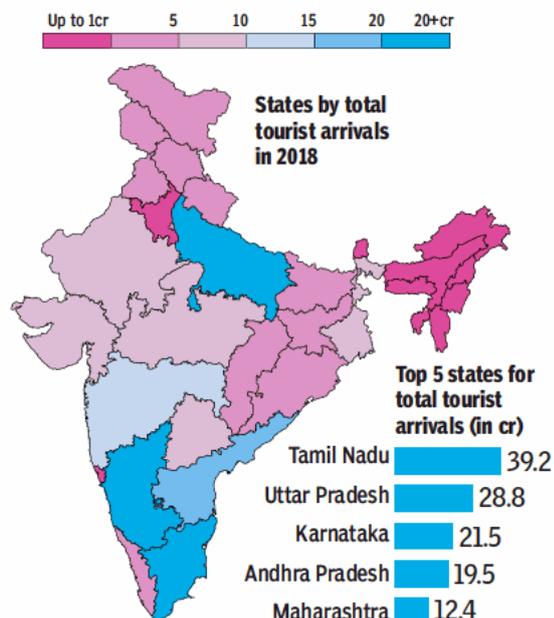


TOURISM IN INDIA – A REPORT

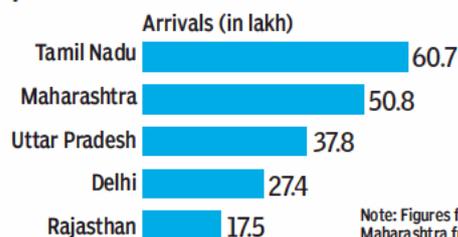
APP
STUDY CENTRE

For a second straight year, Tamil Nadu saw the most tourist arrivals despite having one of the lowest expenditures on tourism, finds a study by World Travel and Tourism Council – India Initiative. In 2018, India had nearly 2 billion tourists, both domestic and foreign. A look at how states performed

Agra, Varanasi make UP second-most visited state



Top 5 states for international tourist arrivals in 2018



185cr

Total tourist visits in 2018, a 12% increase from 2017

2.89cr

International tourist visits in 2018, up 7% from 2017

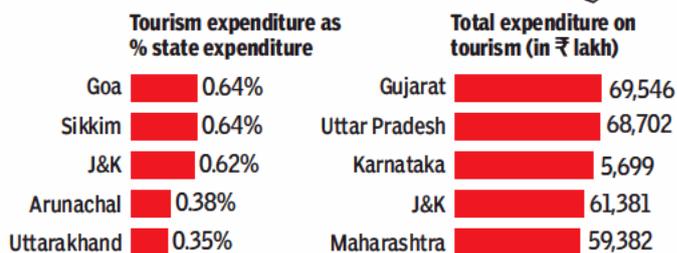
Tamil Nadu accounted for **21% of all tourist visits** in 2018, followed by UP at 15%

India at present ranks 34 out of 140 economies in terms of travel and tourism competitiveness

Though the government has introduced the e-visa scheme and made efforts to increase India's rank in the 'Ease of Doing Business' index, it is still a long road to becoming a major destination for international tourism

Goa, Sikkim spend biggest chunk of budget on tourism

Top 5 states for expenditure on tourism in 2018-19



\$247 billion

India's tourism GDP in 2018, up by 6.7% from 2017. Tourism contributed about 9% to the country's total GDP

4.3cr

Jobs generated, directly and indirectly, by the tourism and travel industry in 2018

➤ The growth was largely driven by domestic tourism

₹1,518cr

Combined states' spending on marketing and publicity for tourism

HOW REPUBLIC DAY TABLEAUX ARE SELECTED? –A REPORT

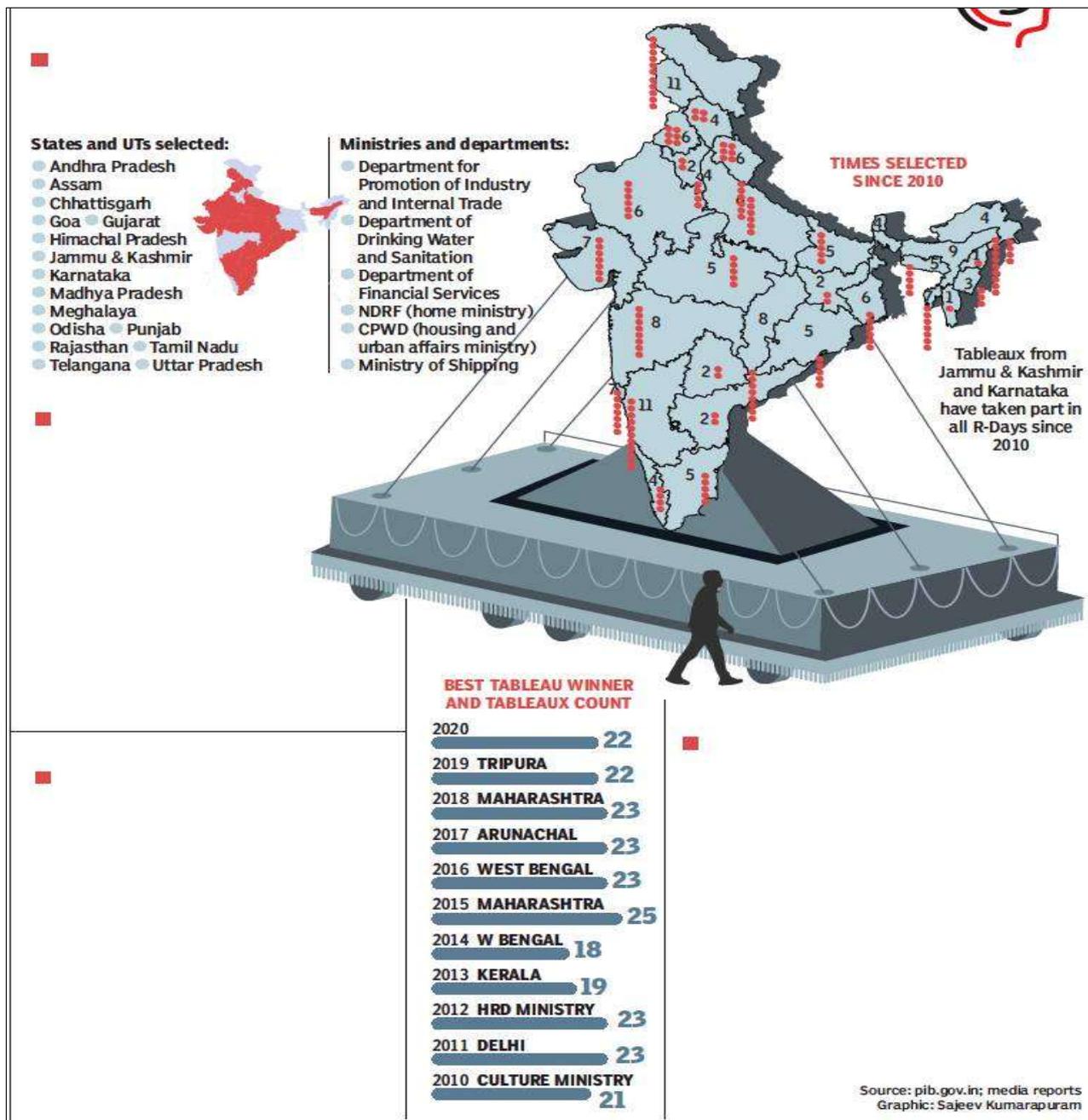
- **Which tableaux proposals got selected for R-Day 2020?**
- ✓ 15 states, 1 UT and 6 ministries or departments (Overall -22) were selected to present tableaux on Republic Day this year.
- ✓ 22 proposals were selected from a total of 56 received — 32 from the states and UTs, and 24 from ministries and departments

- **How are tableaux selected?**
- ✓ The Ministry of Defence conducts the selection process for tableaux.
- ✓ A committee of experts constituted from art fields invites proposals from states, Union Territories, ministries and departments.

- ✓ The deadline to submit proposals was August 31, 2019 for the 2020 Republic Day parade.
- ✓ The committee makes its decisions over two rounds –
 - ✓ It first evaluates sketches and designs of the tableaux and provides suggestions for alterations, if any
 - ✓ Next, the participants are asked to develop three-dimensional models for a second round of examination.
- ✓ These models are then judged by the committee for its final decision on their selection.

➤ **What are the criteria for selection?**

- ✓ The Ministry of Defence suggests tableaux should be developed around broad themes — an event in the state or UT's history, festivals, cultural or architectural heritage, a development scheme, the environment.
- ✓ Each participant is allowed to design only one tableau.
- ✓ The cost of designing and constructing models for the selection process are to be borne by participants.
- ✓ If participants fail to attend their meetings with the committee, they will be disqualified.
- ✓ As per the guidelines, there should be, as far as possible, “some movement, sound and animation on the tableaux.”
- ✓ The tableaux should not carry any logos, and must have the state or agency name in Hindi on the front, English on the back, and the regional language on the side where applicable.



THE 3 CAPITAL TALE OF ANDHRA PRADESH – A REPORT

- The State Government of Andhra Pradesh - has decided to create three capital cities with “decentralised” development in its three regions — north coast, south coast and Rayalseema
- ✓ The move will be finalised in a special session of the assembly on January 20.
- ✓ This is the brainchild of Andhra chief minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy.
- ✓ The plan aims to create “equitable” development of 3 regions - north coastal Andhra, south coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema by splitting the ‘state capital’ into three — as an administrative or executive capital, a judicial capital and a legislative capital.

- ✓ This means, basically, shifting the state administration out of the present capital, Amaravati.
- ✓ As per the plan, most of the government offices, including chief minister's office, Raj Bhavan and the secretariat will be shifted to Visakhapatnam.
- ✓ The High court will also be moved to Kurnool.
- ✓ Amaravati will serve as a mere 'legislative' capital, being the seat of state assembly meeting whenever the assembly is in session.

LOCUST ATTACK IN RAJASTHAN – A REPORT

- In the longest- and worst-ever locust attack in Rajasthan in the last 60 years, 10 western districts of the state - have suffered crop damage in at least 3.6-lakh-hectare area
- ✓ Sriganga nagar district has been hit the hardest, with 75% of its crops eaten up.
- ✓ The other nine affected districts are Hanumangarh, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Jodhpur, Jalore, Sirohi, Nagaur and Churu.

AMAZON'S INDIAN INVESTMENTS – A REPORT

- E-commerce giant, Amazon Inc founder and CEO Jeff Bezos – announced an investment of \$1 billion (over Rs. 7000 crore) to digitise small Indian sellers

ALANGANALLUR JALLIKATTU – A REPORT

- The Tamil Nadu's highly popular Alanganallur Jallikattu - concluded with all the traditional fanfare associated with the event on January 17
- ✓ In all, 739 bulls were sent into the arena, and 688 bull tamers came to tame the bulls.

ALANGANALLUR JALLIKATTU FIGURES			
Number of bulls in the field	Number of tamers in the field	Total injured	Tamers
739	688	36	18
		Owners	Viewers
		10	8

- ✓ The spectator count as per estimates was 15,000, which included people from across the state and tourists from other countries
- ✓ The first prize of one car each was given to the participant who tames the highest number of bulls and the best bull in the event
- ✓ The second and third prizes in the event were motorbike and Rs 10,000 in cash.
- ✓ Ranjith Kumar from Alanganallur was adjudged the Best Bull Tamer at this year's event — he caught 16 bulls



- ✓ Ranjith was presented with a Hyundai Santro car and four milch cows worth Rs 7 lakhs by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Edapaddi K Palaniswami.
- ✓ Interestingly, last year, his brother Ram Kumar got the Best Tamer award.
- ✓ The second prize of a motorbike was bagged by Karthik from Alagarkoil, who tamed 14 bulls
- ✓ The third prize was won by Ganesan from Arittampatti, who tamed 13 bulls, and awarded Rs 10000 cash
- ✓ In January 2017, massive protests were held in Tamil Nadu seeking nod to hold Jallikattu, which was banned by the Supreme Court
- ✓ Following the protests, a bill to allow the sport was unanimously adopted by the Tamil Nadu Assembly on January 23, 2017 by amending the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

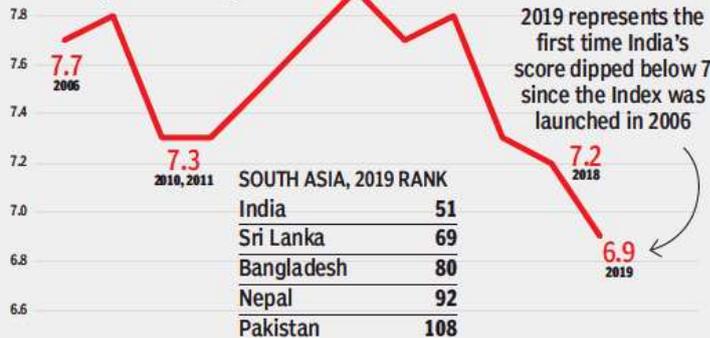
GLOBAL DEMOCRACY INDEX – A REPORT

WHY 2019 WAS A BAD YEAR FOR DEMOCRACY



India dropped 10 places in the 2019 global Democracy Index, compiled by Economist Intelligence Unit. While there was on the whole a decline in democracy globally in 2019, nearly half the world's people live in some form of democracy. Civil liberties faced increasing pressure last year but political participation improved with more people willing to take to the streets against faulty government policies

In India, a declining trend



Globally, a 10-year low

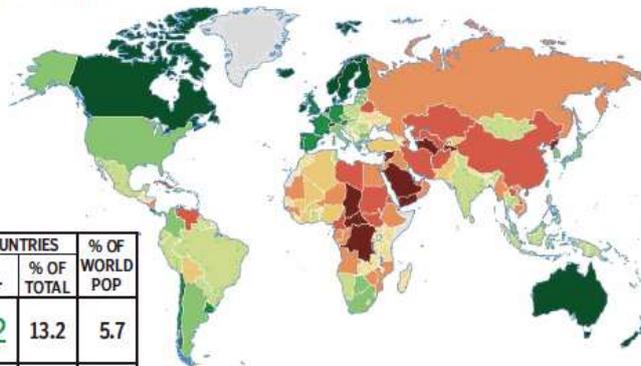
5.44 The average global score for democracy in the 2019 Index. The fall from 5.48 in 2018 (on a scale of 0-10) marks the **worst score** since the index was launched in 2006

- The decline in the score was due to sharp slides in **Latin America** and **Sub-Saharan Africa**, as also in a lesser way in the Middle East and North Africa region
- **Thailand** registered the biggest improvement in score, and **China** the greatest decline

48.4% of world's people live in some kind of democracy

But only 5.7% reside in a "full democracy", down from 8.9% in 2015 as a result of the US being demoted from a "full democracy" to a "flawed democracy" in 2016. More than one-third of the world's population live under authoritarian rule, with a large share being in China

76 of 167 Or 45.5% of the countries analysed were described as democracies



TYPE OF DEMOCRACY	COUNTRIES		% OF WORLD POP
	NO.	% OF TOTAL	
Full democracy	22	13.2	5.7
Flawed democracy	54	32.3	42.7
Hybrid regime	37	22.2	16.0
Authoritarian regime	54	32.3	35.6

Source: EIU Democracy Index 2019

22 Number of "full democracies" in 2019, up from 20 in 2018. The number of "flawed democracies" fell by one to 54 in 2019

54 Number of "authoritarian regimes", up from 52 in 2018. The rest 37 were "hybrid regimes", down from 39 in 2018

TOP 10

- Norway
- Iceland
- Sweden
- New Zealand
- Finland
- Ireland
- Denmark
- Canada
- Australia
- Switzerland

Norway top-scored with 9.87 (out of 10), Switzerland rounded off the top 10 with 9.01. Denmark and Canada tied for 7th with 9.22

BOTTOM 10

- North Korea
- Congo DR
- Central African Rep
- Syria
- Chad
- Turkmenistan
- Equatorial Guinea
- Tajikistan
- Saudi Arabia
- Yemen

North Korea brought up the rear (Rank No. 167) in the category of authoritarian regimes with a score of 1.08, with Yemen sitting nine places below it (No. 158, score 1.95) in the list of 10 worst countries

REPORT

- **NBA Legend Kobe Bryant (US, 41 years)** - died in a helicopter crash along with his daughter Gianna and seven others in California on January 26

TAMILNADU POLICE EQUIPMENT – A REPORT

- **The Tamil Nadu police department - is set to purchase riot gear and equipment to protect its personnel from life threatening injuries sustained during riots.**
- ✓ From 24 in 2014, the number of injuries sustained by policemen increased to 100 in 2018, as per a data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).
- ✓ This issue was first highlighted by a study funded by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD).
- ✓ Along with this, 525 'super cop belts' are also set to be procured.
- ✓ These black-coloured nylon belts have cases to accommodate pistols, handcuffs, batons, torches, gloves and radio sets (walkie-talkies).

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **World Braille Day - January 4**



- ✓ The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille system, a language of 6 dots designed for visually impaired persons.
- ✓ Louis Braille, born in France, lost both his eyes at the age of 3
- ✓ The day is observed to spread awareness about the significance and importance of Braille as a means of communication
- ✓ The first World Braille Day, celebrated by the United Nations, was observed in 2019
- ✓ The Braille system, consisting of six dots to represent each alphabet and number, is used by the visually disabled people to read and write.
- ✓ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted in 2006, aims to secure the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

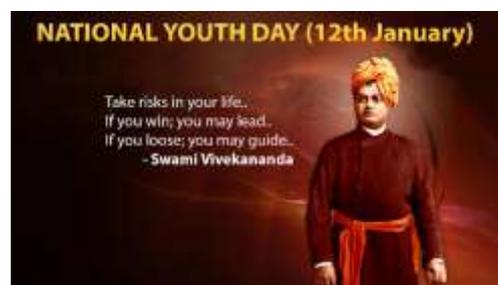
- ✓ According to the World Health Organization, around 36 million people were affected globally with blindness and around 216 million people have 'moderate' to 'severe' visual disability.

➤ **World Hindi Day – January 10**



- ✓ Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh announced to celebrate World Hindi Day on January 10 every year in 2006.
- ✓ It is the fifth most spoken language among the total languages spoken in the world.
- ✓ 'National Hindi Day' is celebrated on September 14 every year.
- ✓ September 14 marks the day when the Constituent Assembly gave Hindi the status of official language in 1949
- ✓ The day also marks the birth date of Beohar Rajendra Simha.
- ✓ Hindi was adopted the official language of India on his 50th birthday.
- ✓ It is spoken by about 43 crore people in the world
- ✓ Hindi is believed to be derived from Sanskrit and written in the Devanagari script.

➤ **National Youth Day – January 12**



- ✓ The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda
- ✓ The Ministry of Youth affairs and sports celebrate the day this year with the focus on the state of Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ The day is being observed across the country since 1985.

- ✓ On this day, the National Youth festival is observed across the country since 1995
- ✓ This year, the 23rd edition of the festival will be held between January 12, 2020 and January 16, 2020 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Theme 2020 – ‘Fit Youth Fit India’
- ✓ Several classical dance programmes including Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Manipuri, Kuchipudi are to be held on the occasion.

NATIONAL DAY

➤ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas – January 9



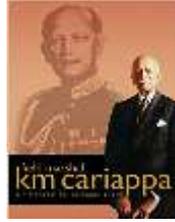
- ✓ The celebration of the day intends to recognize the overseas Indians who have contributed to the development of India
- ✓ It was first observed in 2003
- ✓ On this day in 1915, Mahatma Gandhi returned India from South Africa and hence the day is observed as ‘Pravasi Bharatiya Divas’, considering Mahatma Gandhi as the greatest migrant
- ✓ In 2019, it was celebrated by the Government of India at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- ✓ In 2018, it was observed in Singapore.
- ✓ Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (PBSA) is conferred every year on this day
- ✓ It is conferred to NRIs or, PIOs (Person of Indian Origin) or an organization established by NRIs or PIOs, who have made a significant contribution in supporting, promoting and building Indian links at overseas.

➤ Indian Army Day – January 15



- ✓ **The country celebrates the 72nd Army Day this year on January 15**
- ✓ Army Day Parade is also organized at Parade Ground, Delhi on this day

- ✓ **On this day in 1949**, Field Marshal KM Cariappa took the command of Indian Army from General Francis Butcher



- ✓ General Butcher served from January 1, 1948, to January 15, 1949, at the top post of the army.
- ✓ KM Cariappa led the Indian army along the western border in the Indo-Pak war of 1947.
- ✓ After his retirement, he served as the High Commissioner of India in Australia and New Zealand till 1956
- ✓ The Indian Government had honored him with the rank of 'Field Marshal' in 1986.

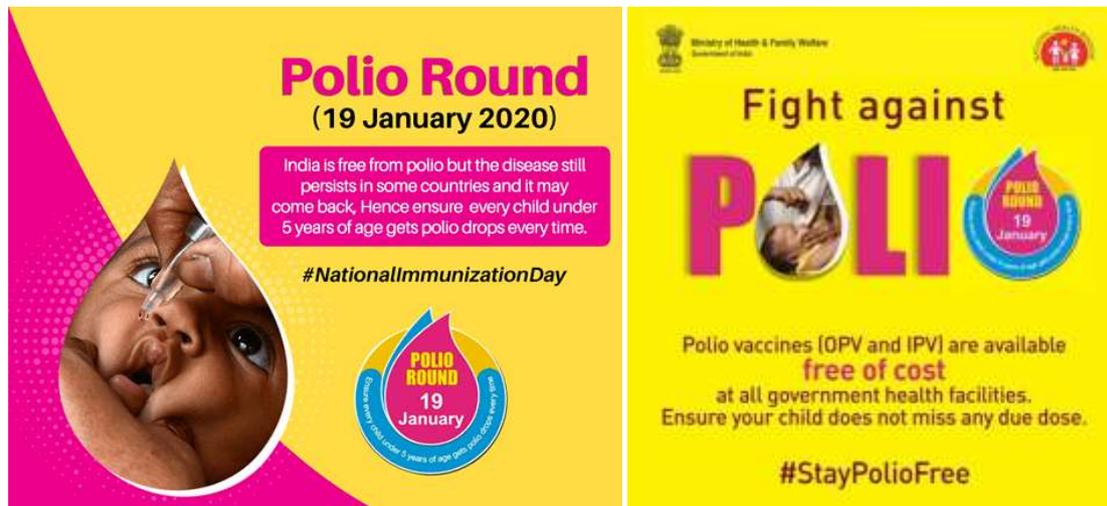
➤ **The IMD - celebrates its 145th Foundation Day on January 15, 2020**

- ✓ The day is celebrated by Ministry of Earth Sciences under which IMD (Indian Meteorological Department) functions.



- ✓ The observance of the day was begun in 1875.
- ✓ Five observatories of IMD received recognition from World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- ✓ The five observatories are located at Chennai, Mumbai, Pune, Thiruvananthapuram and Panjim.
- ✓ IMD is one of the six regional specialised Meteorological centres of WMO
- ✓ The headquarters of IMD is in Delhi
- ✓ IMD operates observatory stations in India and also in Antarctica.

➤ **National Immunization Day – January 19**



- ✓ The day was observed throughout the country as a part of Pulse Polio Programme, 2020

➤ **National Girl Child Day – January 24**



- ✓ The day was first observed in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Government of India
 - ✓ The Government of India has initiated National Girl Child Day to bring equality in society as a campaign.
 - ✓ The International day of girl child is celebrated on October 11 every year.
- **National Voters' Day – January 25**
- ✓ The celebration of the day aims to create awareness about voting among the youths of the country
 - ✓ Theme 2020 - 'Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy'.



- ✓ National Voters' Day was observed for the first time on January 25, 2011
- ✓ It was the 61st Foundation Day of the Election Commission
- ✓ The Election Commission of India was established on January 25, 1950
- ✓ The main role of the Election Commission is to identify all eligible voters who have turned 18 on January 1 every year in all polling booth areas across the country.
- ✓ It provides an identity card to the voter, which is also called the voter identity card of the elector.
- ✓ The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for conducting Union and State elections in India along with the posts of President and Vice-President in the country.

➤ **International Education Day – January 24**



- ✓ The observance of the day highlights the role of education in peace and development.
- ✓ The United Nations passed a resolution on December 3, 2018, and declared January 24 as International Education Day.
- ✓ This year, the second International day of education was observed across the world
- ✓ In India, National Education Day is observed on November 11 every year.