

# The Most Important Current Affairs JANUARY 2019

## Padma Awards 2019 Announced: Complete List of Winners

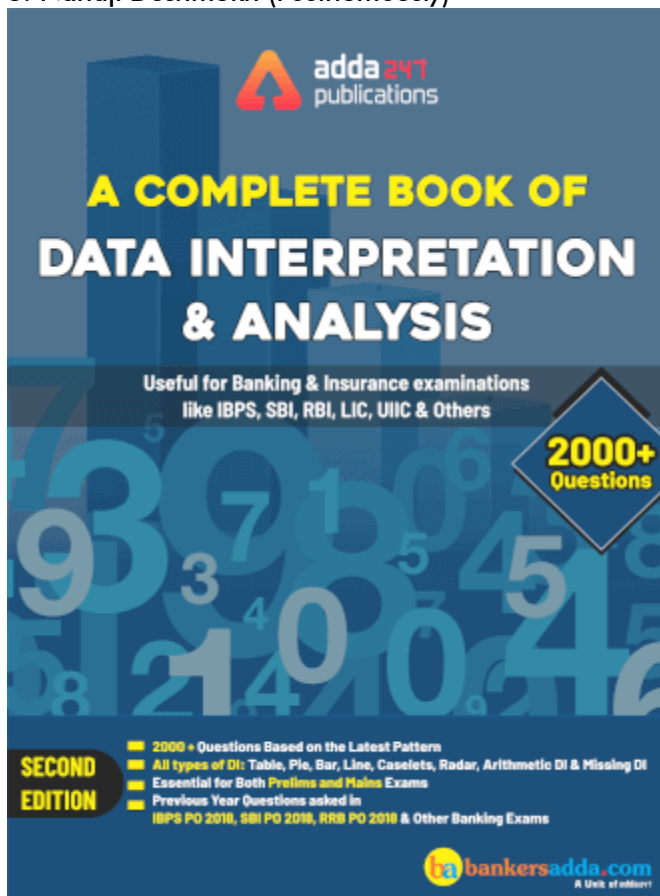
**Padma Awards** — one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The Awards are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities, viz. art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc.

'Padma Vibhushan' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; 'Padma Bhushan' for distinguished service of high order and 'Padma Shri' for distinguished service in any field. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.

The list comprises 4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri Awards. 21 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 11 persons from the category of foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI, 3 posthumous awardees and 1 transgender person. The list also includes 3 Bharat Ratna Awardees.

The Bharat Ratna Awardees in 2019 are:

1. Pranab Mukherjee
2. Bhupen Hazarika (Posthumously)
3. Nanaji Deshmukh (Posthumously)



**Pranab Mukherjee:** Mukherjee is an Indian politician who served as the 13th President of India from 2012 until 2017.

**Bhupen Hazarika:** Hazarika was an Indian playback singer, lyricist, musician, singer, poet and film-maker from Assam, widely known as Sudhakantha.

**Nanaji Deshmukh:** Chandikadas Amritrao Deshmukh also known as Nanaji Deshmukh was a social activist from India.

### Padma Vibhushan (4)

1. Ms. Teejan Bai — Art-Vocals-Folk — Chhattisgarh
2. Shri Ismail Omar Guelleh (Foreigner) — Public Affairs — Djibouti
3. Shri Anilkumar Manibhai Naik — Trade & Industry-Infrastructure — Maharashtra
4. Shri Balwant Moreshwar Purandare — Art-Acting-Theatre — Maharashtra

### Padma Bhushan (14)

1. Shri John Chambers (Foreigner) — Trade & Industry-Technology — USA
2. Shri Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa — Public Affairs — Punjab
3. Shri Pravin Gordhan (Foreigner) — Public Affairs — South Africa
4. Shri Mahashay Dharam Pal Gulati — Trade & Industry-Food Processing — Delhi
5. Shri Darshan Lal Jain — Social Work — Haryana
6. Shri Ashok Laxmanrao Kukade — Medicine-Affordable Healthcare — Maharashtra
7. Shri Kariya Munda — Public Affairs — Jharkhand
8. Shri Budhaditya Mukherjee — Art-Music-Sitar — West Bengal
9. Shri Mohanlal Viswanathan Nair — Art-Acting-Film — Kerala
10. Shri S Nambi Narayan — Science & Engineering-Space — Kerala
11. Shri Kuldip Nayar (Posthumous) — Literature & Education (Journalism) — Delhi
12. Ms. Bachendri Pal — Sports-Mountaineering — Uttarakhand
13. Shri V K Shunglu — Civil Service — Delhi
14. Shri Hukumdev Narayan Yadav — Public Affairs — Bihar

### Padma Shri (94)

1. Shri Rajeshwar Acharya — Art-Vocal-Hindustani — Uttar Pradesh
2. Shri bangaru Adigalar — Others-spiritualism — Tamil Nadu
3. Shri Illias Ali — Medicine-Surgery — Assam

4. Shri Manoj Bajpayee — Art-Acting-Films — Maharashtra
5. Shri Uddhab Kumar Bharali — Science & Engineering-Grassroots Innovation — Assam
6. Shri Omesh Kumar Bharti — Medicine-Rabies — Himachal Pradesh
7. Shri Pritam Bhartwan — Art-Vocals-Folk — Uttarakhand
8. Shri Jyoti Bhatt — Art-Painting — Gujarat
9. Shri Dilip Chakravarty — Others-Archaeology — Delhi
10. Shri Mammen Chandy — Medicine-Hematology — West Bengal
11. Shri Swapan Chaudhuri — Art-Music-Tabla — West Bengal
12. Shri Kanwal Singh Chauhan — Others-Agriculture — Haryana
13. Shri Sunil Chhetri — Sports-Football — Telangana
14. Shri Dinyar Contractor — Art-Acting-Theatre — Maharashtra
15. Ms. Muktaben Pankajkumar Dagli — Social Work-Divyang Welfare — Gujarat
16. Shri Babulal Dahiya — Others-Agriculture — Madhya Pradesh
17. Shri Thanga Darlong — Art-Music-Flute — Tripura
18. Shri Prabhu Deva — Art-Dance — Karnataka
19. Ms. Rajkumari Devi — Others-Agriculture — Bihar
20. Ms. Bhagirathi Devi — Public Affairs — Bihar
21. Shri Baldev Singh Dhillon — Science & Engineering-Agriculture — Punjab
22. Ms. Harika Dronavalli — Sports-Chess — Andhra Pradesh
23. Shri Joravarsinh Jadav — Art - Dance (folk) — Gujarat
24. Ms. Godawari Dutta — Art-Painting — Bihar
25. Shri Gautam Gambhir — Sports-Cricket — Delhi
26. Ms. Draupadi Ghimiray — Social Work-Divyang Welfare — Sikkim
27. Ms. Rohini Godbole — Science & Engineering-Nuclear — Karnataka
28. Shri Sandeep Guleria — Medicine-Surgery — Delhi
29. Shri Pratap Singh Hardia — Medicine-Ophthalmology — Madhya Pradesh
30. Shri Bulu Imam — Social Work-Culture — Jharkhand
31. Ms. Friederike Irina (Foreigner) — Social Work-Animal Welfare — Germany
32. Shri Joravarsinh Jadav — Art-Dance Folk — Gujarat
33. Shri S Jaishankar — Civil Service — Delhi
34. Shri Narsingh Dev Jamwal — Literature & Education — Jammu & Kashmir
35. Shri Fayaz Ahmad Jan — Art-Craft-Papier Mache — Jammu & Kashmir
36. Shri K G Jayan — Art-Music-Bhakti — Kerala
37. Shri Subhash Kak (Foreigner) — Science & Engineering-Technology — USA
38. Shri Sharath Kamal — Sports-Table Tennis — Tamil Nadu
39. Shri Rajani Kant — Social Work — Uttar Pradesh
40. Shri Sudam Kate — Medicine-Sickle Cell — Maharashtra
41. Shri Waman Kendre — Art-Acting-Theatre — Maharashtra
42. Shri Kader Khan (Posthumous-Foreigner) — Art-Acting-Films — Canada
43. Shri Abdul Gafur Khatri — Art-Painting — Gujarat
44. Shri Ravindra Kolhe (Duo)\* — Medicine-Affordable Healthcare — Maharashtra  
Ms. Smita Kolhe (Duo)\* — Medicine-Affordable Healthcare — Maharashtra
45. Ms. Bombayla Devi Laishram — Sports-Archery — Manipur
46. Shri Kailash Madbaiya — Literature & Education — Madhya Pradesh
47. Shri Ramesh Babaji Maharaj — Social Work-Animal Welfare — Uttar Pradesh
48. Shri Vallabhbhai Vasrambhai Marvaniya — Others-Agriculture — Gujarat
49. Ms. Gita Mehta (Foreigner) — Literature & Education — USA
50. Shri Shadab Mohammad — Medicine-Dentistry — Uttar Pradesh
51. Shri K K Muhammed — Others-Archaeology — Kerala
52. Shri Shyama Prasad Mukherjee — Medicine-Affordable Healthcare — Jharkhand
53. Shri Daitari Naik — Social Work — Odisha
54. Shri Shankar Mahadevan Narayan — Art-Vocals-Films — Maharashtra
55. Shri Shantanu Narayen (Foreigner) — Trade & Industry-Technology — USA
56. Nartaki Natraj — Art-Dance-Bharatnatyam — Tamil Nadu
57. Shri Tsering Norboo — Medicine-Surgery — Jammu & Kashmir
58. Shri Anup Ranjan Pandey — Art-Music — Chhattisgarh
59. Shri Jagdish Prasad Parikh — Others-Agriculture — Rajasthan
60. Shri Ganpatbhai Patel (Foreigner) — Literature & Education — USA
61. Shri Bimal Patel — Others-Architecture — Gujarat
62. Shri Hukumchand Patidar — Others-Agriculture — Rajasthan
63. Ms. Madurai Chinna Pillai — Social Work-Microfinance — Tamil Nadu
64. Ms. Tao Porchon-Lynch (Foreigner) — Others-Yoga — USA
65. Ms. Kamala Pujhari — Others-Agriculture — Odisha
66. Shri Bajrang Punia — Sports-Wrestling — Haryana
67. Shri Jagat Ram — Medicine-Ophthalmology — Chandigarh
68. Shri R V Ramani — Medicine-Ophthalmology — Tamil Nadu

69. Shri Devarapalli Prakash Rao — Social Work-Affordable Education — Odisha
70. Shri Anup Sah — Art-Photography — Uttarakhand
71. Ms. Milena Salvini (Foreigner) — Art-Dance-Kathakali — France
72. Shri Nagindas Sanghavi — Literature & Education-Journalism — Maharashtra
73. Shri Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry — Art-Lyrics — Telangana
74. Shri Shabbir Sayyad — Social Work-Animal Welfare — Maharashtra
75. Shri Mahesh Sharma — Social Work-Tribal Welfare — Madhya Pradesh
76. Shri Mohammad Hanif Khan Shastri — Literature & Education — Delhi
77. Shri Brijesh Kumar Shukla — Literature & Education — Uttar Pradesh
78. Shri Narendra Singh — Others-Animal Husbandry — Haryana
79. Ms. Prashanti Singh — Sports-Basketball — Uttar Pradesh
80. Shri Sultan Singh — Others-Animal Husbandry — Haryana
81. Shri Jyoti Kumar Sinha — Social Work-Affordable Education — Bihar
82. Shri Anandan Sivamani — Art-Music — Tamil Nadu
83. Ms. Sharada Srinivasan — Others-Archaeology — Karnataka
84. Shri Devendra Swarup (Posthumous) — Literature & Education-Journalism — Uttar Pradesh
85. Shri Ajay Thakur — Sports-Kabaddi — Himachal Pradesh
86. Shri Rajeev Tharanath — Art-Music-Sarod — Karnataka
87. Ms. Saalumarada Thimmakka — Social Work-Environment — Karnataka
88. Ms. Jamuna Tudu — Social Work-Environment — Jharkhand
89. Shri Bharat Bhushan Tyagi — Others-Agriculture — Uttar Pradesh
90. Shri Ramaswami Venkataswami — Medicine-Surgery — Tamil Nadu
91. Shri Ram Saran Verma — Others-Agriculture — Uttar Pradesh
92. Shri Swami Vishudhananda — Others-Spiritualism — Kerala
93. Shri Hiralal Yadav — Art-Vocals-Folk — Uttar Pradesh
94. Shri Venkateswara Rao Yadlapalli — Others-Agriculture — Andhra Pradesh

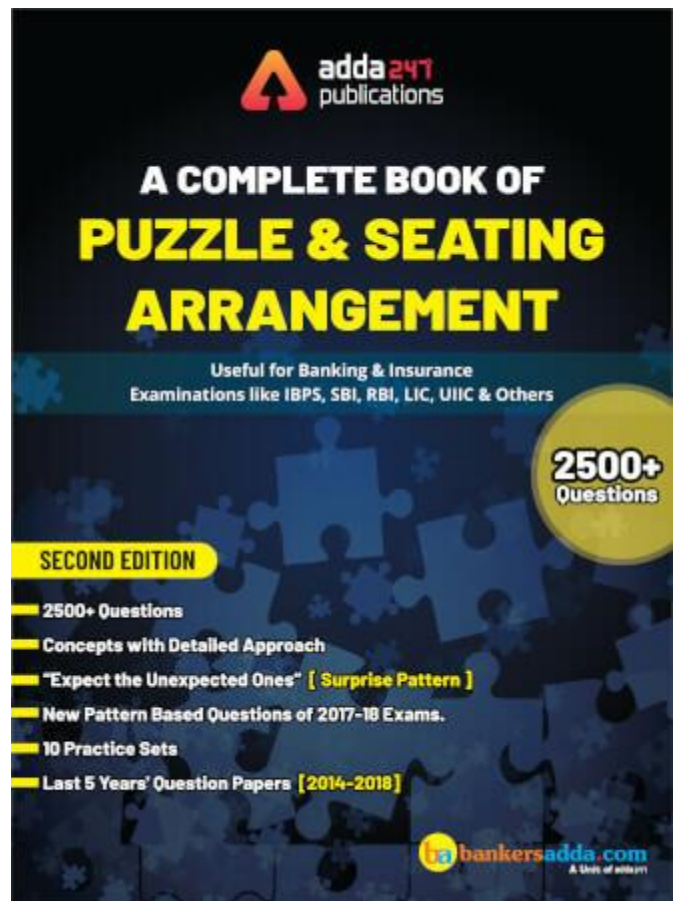
\* indicates duo case. (counted as one award)

### Australian Open 2019 Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The Australian Open is a tennis tournament held annually in Melbourne Park, Australia. The tournament

is chronologically the first of the four Grand Slam tennis events of the year – the other three being the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open. The 2018 Australian Open was the 107th edition of the tournament.

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
<b>Men's Singles</b>	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Rafael Nadal (Spain)
<b>Women's Singles</b>	Naomi Osaka (Japan)	Petra Kvitova (Czech Republic)
<b>Men's Doubles</b>	Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France) and Nicolas Mahut (France)	Henri Kontinen (Finland) and John Peers (Australia)
<b>Women's Doubles</b>	Samantha Stosur (Australia) and Zhang Shuai (China)	Tímea Babos (Hungary) and Kristina Mladenovic (France)
<b>Mix Doubles</b>	Barbora Krejčíková (Czech Republic) and Rajeev Ram (United States)	Astra Sharma (Australia) and John-Patrick Smith (Australia)



**Indonesia Masters Title 2019: Complete List of Winners**

The 2019 Indonesia Masters, officially the DAIHATSU Indonesia Masters 2019, is a badminton tournament that takes place at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno in Indonesia. Anders Antonsen won the men's singles title and Saina Nehwal won the women's singles title.

Event	Winner	Runner-Up
<b>Men's Singles</b>	Anders Antonsen (Denmark)	Kento Momota (Japan)
<b>Women's Singles</b>	Saina Nehwal (India)	Carolina Marin (Spain)
<b>Men's Doubles</b>	M Fernaldi Gideon (Indonesia) Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo (Indonesia)	Mohammad Ahsan (Indonesia) Hendra Setiawan (Indonesia)
<b>Women's Doubles</b>	Misaki Matsutomo (Japan) Ayaka Takahashi (Japan)	Kim So-yeong (South Korea) Kong Hee-yong (South Korea)
<b>Mix Doubles</b>	Zheng Siwei (China) Huang Yaqing (China)	Tontowi Ahmad (Indonesia) Liliyana Natsir (Indonesia)

**International Cricket Council (ICC) Awards 2018**

ICC announced the winners of the men's & women's yearly cricket awards. Indian captain Virat Kohli swept the main awards, winning the awards for the ICC Cricketer of the Year, ICC Test Cricketer of the year, and ICC ODI Cricketer of the year. This was the first time he won the award for the Test cricketer of the year and the second time in a row that he won the award for the ODI cricketer of the year. He was also named the captain of the Test and ODI sides. Smriti Mandhana wins Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award.

**Men's Awards Winners List**

- Emerging Player of the Year: Rishabh Pant (India)
- ICC Umpire of the Year: Kumar Dharmasena
- ICC Spirit of Cricket Award: Kane Williamson (New Zealand)
- ICC Associate Cricketer of the Year: Calum MacLeod
- ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli (India)
- ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli (India)
- ICC Test Cricketer of the Year: Virat Kohli (India)

**Women's Awards Winners List**

- Australia's wicketkeeper-batter Alyssa Healy voted ICC T20I Player of the Year.
- England's Sophie Ecclestone named ICC Emerging Player of the Year.
- India's stylish left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana has won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year and also been named as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year.

**Golden Globe Awards 2019 Announced: List of Important Winners**

The 76th Annual Golden Globe Awards were announced at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in California, the USA. These annual awards honour the best in Motion Pictures and Television for the year 2018.

Category	Winners
<b>Best Motion Picture Drama</b>	<b>Bohemian Rhapsody</b>
<b>Best Motion Picture Musical/Comedy</b>	Green Book
<b>Best Director in Motion Picture-Drama</b>	Alfonso Cuaron (Roma)
<b>Best Actress in Motion Picture-Drama</b>	Glen Close (The Wife)
<b>Best Actor in Motion Picture-Drama</b>	Rami Malek (Bohemian Rhapsody)
<b>Best Actress in Motion Picture Musical/Comedy</b>	Olivia Colman (The Favourite)
<b>Best Actor in Motion Picture or Musical or Comedy</b>	Christian Bale (Vice)
<b>Best Motion Picture – Animated</b>	Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse
<b>Best Motion Picture – Foreign Language</b>	Roma (Mexico, Alfonso Cuaron)
<b>Best Original Score – Motion Picture</b>	Justin Hurwitz (First Man)
<b>Best Original Song – Motion Picture</b> <b>Shallow (Lady Gaga, Mark Ronson, Anthony Rossomando, Andrew Wyatt) – Star Is Born, A (2018)</b>	

**15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas: All You Need To Know.**

- PM inaugurated the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- For the first time, the three-day long convention is being organized in Varanasi.
- The theme of PBD Convention 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India".

**Chief Guests at the Occasion:**

- Chief Guest of the PBD convention: Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth.



- Special Guest: Himanshu Gulati, Member of Parliament of Norway
- Guest of Honor: Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, Member of Parliament of New Zealand.

**About Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas in Brief:**

- The decision to celebrate Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (PBD) was taken by the former Indian Prime Minister, late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- The 1st PBD was celebrated on 9th January 2003 in New Delhi. January 9 was chosen as the day to celebrate PBD as it was on this day in 1915 that MK Gandhi, had returned to India from South Africa.
- PBD now celebrated once in every two years, provides a platform to the overseas Indian community to engage with the government and reconnect with their roots.

**PM Modi 3-Day Visit to Gujarat: Complete Highlights**

- PM Modi visited Gujarat. He attended/inaugurated various initiatives at the different venues. The complete highlights of the visit of PM Modi to Gujarat:
- He inaugurated the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019 at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad. He also inaugurated Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show at Gandhinagar and the Ahmedabad Shopping Festival.
- He inaugurated the 9th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Summit. The 9th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit witnessed the participation of Heads of States, Captains of global industry and Thought Leaders.

**Know All About Kumbh: Historical Significance**

- In Prayagraj, hearing the word “Kumbh”, creates the picturesque vision of Triveni Sangam in one’s mind. Kumbh is a symbol of peace and harmony amongst all human beings. The Kumbh Mela has been inscribed on the list of “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity” by UNESCO in 2017. This reflects the significance of Kumbh worldwide.
- The Kumbh Mela at Prayag is very different as compared to Kumbh at other places due to many reasons.
- Firstly, the tradition of long-term Kalpvash is practiced only in Prayag. Secondly, the Triveni Sangam is considered as the center of the earth in few scriptures. Thirdly, Lord Brahma performed the Yajna here for creating the universe. Fourthly, Prayagraj is called the shrine of pilgrimages, but the most important reason is that the significance of performing rituals and tapas at Prayagraj is of

- highest among all pilgrimages and provides one with the highest virtue.
- The Kumbh Mela at Prayag takes place for approximately 55 days, spread over thousands of hectares around the sangam area, and becomes the greatest of ephemeral city in the world.



**Important Details & Significance of the 70th Republic Day**

- Cyril Ramaphosa was invited by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi during the G20 summit which was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He was especially chosen for this occasion because India is celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi who had very close association with the people of South Africa.
- The 2019 celebration will be special as this year will mark the 150th birth anniversary of ‘Father of the Nation’.
- It will be the first time in history that all women contingent of Assam Rifles, which is one of the oldest paramilitary forces of India, will take part in the Republic Day parade this year. Major Khushboo Kanwar, 30, will lead a contingent of the Assam Rifles. It will also be the first time that a woman officer would be leading the Army Services Corps in the 2019 Republic Day parade. Captain Shikha

Surabhi from the Corps of Signals, will perform bike stunts alongside her team mates.

- This year, IAF will be flying an aircraft which will run by blended bio-fuel on the Republic Day 2019 fly-past. The aircraft will fly over Rajpath with a 'V' shape formation resembling 'Victory' sign.

### Cabinet Approvals in January 2019

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the following set of approvals.

- MoU between India and Australia on the safety in Mines, Testing and Research Station.
- Revised Cost of Estimates (RCE) for 13 new Central Universities in the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir (Two), Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu, set up under Central Universities Act, 2009.
- Recapitalization of Export-Import Bank of India: Issuance of Recapitalization Bonds by the Government of India to the tune of Rs.6,000 crore for capital infusion in Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank). The equity will be infused in two tranches of Rs. 4,500 crore in FY 2018-19 and Rs.1,500 crore in FY 2019-20 respectively. The Cabinet also approved an increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from Rs. 10,000 crore to Rs. 20,000 crore.
- MoU on Maritime issues between India and Denmark.
- Signing of the TOR provide tax assistance to Swaziland.
- Bilateral Swap Arrangement between India and Japan.
- Creation of the post of Vice Chancellor for National Rail & Transport Institute (Deemed to be University) set up in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- Setting up of three new AIIMS at Vijaynagar in Jammu, Awantipur in Pulwama in Kashmir and at Rajkot in Gujarat.
- Apprised of MoU between India and Morocco on Cooperation in the area of Cyber Security.
- First-ever three-way merger in Indian Banking with amalgamation of Vijaya, Dena and Bank of Baroda.
- Amendment to the Trade Unions Act, 1926 to make provisions regarding Recognition of Trade Unions.
- Ex post facto approval to India's Approach for COP 24, Katowice, Poland (2-15 December 2018).
- Restructuring of National Health Agency as "National Health Authority" for better implementation of Pradhan Mantri – Jan Arogya Yojana.
- Continuation of Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram Scheme for the Period 2017-18 to 2019-2020.

- 'The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2018' for revision in list of Scheduled Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Extension of Delhi Metro corridor from Dilshad Garden to New Bus Adda Ghaziabad
- Amendment to the 'Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries' to incorporate 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD 400 million operated within the overall size of the facility.
- Creation of the National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT).

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### Banking Current Affairs

- RBI stated that it will inject Rs 37,500 crore into the system through the purchase of government securities in February to increase liquidity.
- RBI released a data on "Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct Investment Companies, 2017-18" which shows that the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has increased by 18% to Rs. 28.25 lakh crore in FY18.
- IIT, Ropar, developed an app named Roshni that would help the Visually Impaired to recognise currency notes. The app can recognise both old and new notes and gives audio information as to which note you are holding in your hands.
- SBI Card and Etihad Guest, the loyalty programme of Etihad Airways, have joined hands to launch a travel-specific Visa credit card for members and Indian travelers. This is the first international co-brand partnership of SBI Card, the country's second-largest credit card issuer.
- Union Cabinet has approved the recapitalization of EXIM Bank. The details are as follows:
  1. Issuance of Recapitalization Bonds by the Government of India to the tune of Rs.6,000 crore for capital infusion in Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank).

2. The equity will be infused in two tranches of Rs. 4,500 crore in FY 2018-19 and Rs.1,500 crore in FY 2019-20 respectively.
  3. The Cabinet also approved an increase in the authorized capital of Exim Bank from Rs. 10,000 crore to Rs. 20,000 crore.
- Private sector ICICI Bank inducted former SBI Managing Director B Sriram and management consultant Rama Bijapurkar on its board as independent director.
  - Sri Lanka's Central Bank announced that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) agreed to provide USD 400 million under a swap arrangement to boost the island nation's reserves.
  - Union Minister Nitin Gadkari announced that India has allowed an Iranian bank, Pasargad Bank, to open a branch in Mumbai.
  - Axis Bank announced its Managing Director and CEO Shikha Sharma has retired from the post and Amitabh Chaudhry will be the new managing director and CEO of the bank with effect from January 1, 2019.
  - Allahabad Bank and SBI Life Insurance came together and signed a bancassurance pact, to offer a holistic financial planning solution to consumers.
  - The government infused 10,882 crore Rupees in four public sector banks, including UCO Bank and Syndicate Bank. It is a part of 28,615 crore rupees capital infusion to be done in about half a dozen public sector lenders. UCO Bank has received 3,074 crore rupees, Bank of Maharashtra got 4,498 crore rupees, Syndicate Bank 1,632 crore rupees and Central Bank of India 1,678 crore rupees.
  - Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed Paytm Payments Bank to restart opening new accounts for its consumers after almost six months of the ban.
  - RBI allowed a one-time restructuring of existing debt up to Rs 25 crore for the companies which have defaulted on payment but the loans given to them have continued to be classified as standard assets.
  - RBI released the 18th issue of the Financial Stability Report (FSR). The FSR reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on risks to financial stability, as also the resilience of the financial system. India's financial system remains stable, and the banking sector shows signs of improvement. The asset quality of banks showed an improvement with the gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of SCBs declining from 11.5% in March 2018 to 10.8% in September 2018.
  - The number of complaints registered at banking ombudsman offices have seen a 25% increase in the fiscal year 2018, with the majority of these complaints coming from urban centres owing to increased awareness and poor internal redressal mechanisms of banks.
  - Cabinet has approved the merger of Vijaya Bank & Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda. After this merger, Bank of Baroda will become the third biggest public sector bank. The merger will be effective from April 1. This is also the first ever three-way merger in Indian banking. As per the Scheme of Amalgamation, shareholders of Vijaya Bank will get 402 equity shares of BoB for every 1,000 shares held. In case of Dena Bank, its shareholders will get 110 shares for every 1,000 shares of BoB.
  - Syndicate Bank and SBI Life Insurance signed a bancassurance pact aiming to offer a comprehensive financial planning solution to its customers. Note: CEO of SBI Life, Sanjeev Nautiyal.
  - ICICI Bank, in a first-of-its-kind programme, signed MoU with Small Business FinCredit India Pvt. Ltd. (SBFC), a systemically important Non-Banking Finance Company for entrepreneurs, to jointly provide credit worth up to Rs. 1 crores to MSMEs for a tenure of 15 years.
  - Govt. amalgamated three Regional Rural Banks - Punjab Gramin Bank, Malwa Gramin Bank and Sutlej Gramin Bank - into a single RRB. The sponsor banks of the RRBs are NABARD, Government of Punjab and Punjab National Bank, State Bank of India and Punjab and Sind Bank.

### Economy Current Affairs

- With robust private consumption and 7.4% GDP growth rate in the current fiscal, the Indian economy is expected to accelerate at a rate of 7.6% in 2019-20, according to a report by the United Nations titled United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2019.
- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra), a Fitch Group Company, estimated India's GDP growth could touch 7.5 % in the financial year 2019-20 as against 7.2 % during current fiscal i.e. 2018-19.
- The 32nd Meeting of GST Council concluded in New Delhi. The Limit of annual turnover for composition scheme increased to 1.5 crore rupees effective from April 1, 2019. The Council decided to increase the GST registration threshold limit to 40 lakh rupees from 20 lakh.
- In its 'Growth Outlook for 2019', Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) stated that the GDP growth will be in the range of 7.5% in 2019.
- SEBI allowed custodial services in the commodity derivatives market. The move is aimed at enabling the participation of institutional investors such as mutual funds and portfolio managers in the commodity derivatives market.
- Releasing the first advance estimates of National Income for 2018-19, Central Statistics Office (CSO) stated that the growth in GDP during 2018-19 is estimated at 7.2% as compared to the growth rate of 6.7% in 2017-18, mainly due to improvement in the

performance of agriculture and manufacturing sectors.

- The income earned by an average Indian doubled in 7 years, from Rs 63,642 per year in 2011-12 to Rs 1.25 lakh in 2018-19, the first advance estimates of national income released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show. The year-on-year growth in per capita income had touched its bottom in 2017-18 under the current national accounts series (the base year 2011-12) at 8.6 %. In 2018-19, it has bounced back to 11.1%.
- The interim budget for 2019 will be presented on 1 February during the budget session of the parliament. The budget session of the Parliament to be held from 31 January to 13 February.
- India's GDP is expected to grow at 7.3% in the fiscal year 2018-19, and 7.5% in the following two years, the World Bank has forecast. China's economic growth is projected to slow down to 6.2% each in 2019 and 2020 and 6% in 2021.

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**Business Current Affairs**

- PM Modi dedicated Kochi Refinery project and IOCL LPG Bottling Plant to the Nation in Kochi, Kerala. He laid the foundation stone of AIIMS in Tamil Nadu's Madurai.
- Bharat Fritz Werner Ltd (BFW), a Bengaluru-based machining solution provider partnered with Universal Robots, a Danish robot maker and a leader in collaborative robots, to co-create robots for MSME sector.
- Omega Healthcare Management Services signed a pact with IIIT-Bangalore for advanced use of the latest technology in providing healthcare solutions.
- Social media giant Facebook announced that it will create an independent Institute for Ethics in Artificial intelligence (AI) with an initial investment of \$7.5 million over a period of five years.

- India's largest telecom operator by subscriber base Vodafone Idea announced that its board had approved a rights issue of Rs. 25,000 crores to existing eligible equity shareholders in line with the recommendations of a capital raising committee it had set up in November 2018.
- Dell, as a part of its three-city PolicyHack series, hosted an interactive hackathon, where teachers focused on their learning journey in New Delhi. The initiative allows the teaching fraternity to come up with solutions for problems faced by teachers inside and outside the classroom.
- Microsoft India launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave, part of its philanthropic initiatives.
- Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and Libcoin are in dialogue to form a world-class consortium to initially build 1GWh lithium-ion battery plant in India. Its capacity will be scaled up to 30GWh in due course.
- HDFC Standard Life Insurance has changed its name to HDFC Life Insurance following the receipt of relevant approvals from regulatory authorities.
- Reliance Industries Ltd Chairman and managing director Mukesh Ambani announced that group companies Reliance Retail and Reliance Jio Infocomm would jointly launch a new e-commerce platform in the country. Gujarat would be the first state to get it.
- IRCTC, the Railways' subsidiary, will offer insurance of up to INR 50 lakh for free for air passengers who book their tickets through its portal. IRCTC has tied up with Bharti-Axa for the offer. IRCTC's service charge of INR59 is the cheapest compared with travel websites.
- HDFC Mutual Fund has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years. Mr. Milind Barve is the Managing Director of HDFC MF.

**Schemes/ Portals/ Missions/ Apps/ Missions Launched by the Union & State Govt.**

- Maharashtra government launched a special scheme to curb infant deaths. Child Development Minister distributed baby-care kits to the children born in primary health centers and government hospitals. It is applicable only for the first child & will benefit around four lakh women across the state.
- K.J. Alphons, Union Minister for Tourism inaugurated the first project under the Swadesh Darshan Project of the Union Ministry of Tourism at the Zero Point, Gangtok, Sikkim. Swadesh Darshan Scheme is one of the flagship schemes of Ministry of tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned manner.



- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) to attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in the country.
- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath announced the launch of the 'Yuva Swabhiman Yojana' for youths from the economically weaker sections in urban areas. Under this, 100 days of employment will be provided to youths from economically weaker sections in urban areas.
- Kerala government has floated a 'Pravasi Dividend Pension Scheme' to provide regular pension to Non-Resident Keralites on a one-time payment of Rs 5 lakh. Governor P. Sathasivam announced the scheme. A non-resident Keralite can invest an amount ranging from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 50 lakh, as a whole or as 6 installments paid within 3 years. Each beneficiary will be entitled to receive pensions ranging from Rs 5,000-50,000 every month, 3 years after the total amount is deposited, at a dividend rate of 12%.
- PM Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana under which a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
- Tripura CM Biplab Kumar Deb launched a project for Sustainable Catchment Forest Management at State Forest Academy Ground in West Tripura and stated that the project would help develop the quality of forestlands and livelihood of forest dwellers in the state.
- Minister of State in Department of Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the UNNATI (Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training) programme organized by ISRO in Bengaluru, Karnataka. It is an initiative by ISRO to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE-50).
- Government e Marketplace (GeM) launched "Womaniya on GeM", an initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups (WSHG) to sell handicrafts and handloom, accessories and many other products.
- Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme, under which for every family one government job has been allotted, in Gangtok. New recruits were taken for Group C and Group D posts in 12 departments. Thus, Sikkim became the first state in the country to carry out such a programme for the people entitling them to state government employee benefits.
- Environment Ministry launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aimed at reducing toxic particulate matter in 102 Indian cities by 2024. The NCAP will be a mid-term, five-year plan with 2019 as the first year, while 2017 will be the base year for comparison of concentration.
- Govt. launched Web-Wonder Women Campaign to celebrate the exceptional achievements of women who have influenced and impacted society through social media. The Campaign aims to recognize the fortitude of Indian women stalwarts from across the globe who have used the power of social media to run positive campaigns to steer a change in society.
- MSME ministry established an export promotion cell to create a sustainable ecosystem for MSMEs. It also proposed to formulate a governing council that will be chaired by the secretary of the MSME ministry.
- Dharmendra Pradhan launched 'Ujjwala Sanitary Napkins' initiative saying it will go a long way in making Odisha's 2.25 crore women empowered and self-reliant. It will cover 93 blocks in 30 districts of Odisha. Under this, oil marketing companies (OMC) will set up 100 manufacturing units at the Common Service Centres (CSC) at an estimated cost of Rs 2.94 crores.
- West Bengal government announced two welfare initiatives for farmers. Both initiatives, are part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme, & will come into effect from 1st January 2019. The first initiative will provide Rs 2 lakh to the family of a deceased farmer. Under the second initiative, farmers would get Rs 2,500 twice a year for growing a single crop on one acre of land.
- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, launched the 'Swachh Survekshan 2019', the fourth edition of the annual nationwide cleanliness survey of urban India in New Delhi. It aims to evaluate the achievements in the cleanliness level in urban areas of the country. The survey will cover 40 crore people across over 4000 towns and cities.
- HRD ministry introduced a 70-point grading index to assess the quality of school education offered by states. A state performance grading will be done wherein the states will be marked out of 1,000 scores on 70 parameters.
- Union Minister of State (IC) for Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports, Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore (Retd.) launched the sharing of All India Radio News with private FM broadcasters. This will be done free of cost. Any Private FM broadcaster which intends to broadcast the news bulletins will first have to register with News Services Division: All India Radio.

### National Current Affairs

- In commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, PM Modi dedicated grand and iconic 'National Salt Satyagraha Memorial' constructed by the Central Public Works Department at Dandi, Gujarat to the Nation.

- Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi stated that GST on Haj has been reduced from 18% to 5% and this will significantly lower the airfare thus saving Haj pilgrims' 113 crore rupees this year.
- PM Modi inaugurated the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. For the first time, it is being organized in Varanasi. The theme of PBD Convention 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India".
- PM Modi inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in Mumbai. The development of the Museum was guided by the Museum Advisory Committee headed by Shyam Benegal. An innovation Committee headed by Prasoon Joshi provided an upgrade to the NMIC.
- India will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to address the issue of land degradation and desertification which will have participation from over 100 countries. It is likely to be held in October 2019.
- PM Modi has dedicated the Kollam Bypass on the National Highway-66 to the nation. It reduces travel time between Alappuzha and Thiruvananthapuram. This is the first National Highway project in the country taken up on a 50:50 Centre-State partnership.
- India got its largest startup ecosystem when Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated a 1.8-lakh-square-foot facility housing incubation set-ups across a string of segments in modern technology. The Integrated Startup Complex under the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) includes the ultra-modern facilities of Maker Village that promote hardware startups, the BioNest that promotes medical technologies, BRINC which is the country's first international accelerator for hardware startups.
- India's longest 300-meter single lane steel cable suspension bridge inaugurated by Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu. He also laid the foundation stone for a district secretariat building. The bridge across the Siang river at Yingkiang in Upper Siang district named as Byorong Bridge.
- The 124th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2019 to award 10% reservation to economically weaker sections was passed with a majority in Rajya Sabha. It was already passed in Lok Sabha.
- India has taken over operations of the Chabahar port in the Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran, the first time India will operate a port outside its territory.
- India achieved yet another milestone in the power sector with the completion of electrification in 100% households in 25 states at year end. Now, only about 10.48 lakh households are left to be electrified in 4 states - Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Chhattisgarh.

- Indian Parliament passed the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2018 that seeks to do away with the no-detention policy in schools. The Bill seeks to amend the Right to Education (RTE) Act to abolish the "no-detention" policy in schools.
- Indian Parliament passed the National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill, 2018. It seeks to amend the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Act, 1993. The bill aims to grant retrospective recognition to Central and State institutions which had conducted teacher education courses without approval by the Council. This will ensure that the future of about 17 thousand students having degrees from such institutions is secured.
- Union Cabinet approved a 10% reservation for 'economically backward' upper castes in government jobs. Govt. announced reservation in jobs for those belonging to the upper castes and earning less than Rs 8 lakh per year. A bill to amend Article 15 and 16 of the constitution will be moved in Parliament to this effect.
- PM of Norway Erna Solberg & PM Modi held bilateral talks in New Delhi. MoU were exchanged on India-Norway Ocean Dialogue.

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**States Current Affairs**

- Uttar Pradesh state cabinet approved construction of a four-lane Ganga Expressway connecting Prayagraj to Western Uttar Pradesh which would cost about 36,000 crore rupees. Ganga Expressway will be 600 kilometres long and can be expanded to six-lane in future.
- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced "Jiban Sampark" project in partnership with UNICEF India to generate awareness about the development and welfare initiatives of state government among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state.

- Uttarakhand's first tulip garden will come up over 50 hectares of forest land in Pithoragarh district at a cost of Rs 50 crore.
- A 5.1-km long cable-stayed "Atal Setu" on the Mandovi river in Goa, a third such bridge to connect the state capital with North Goa, was opened to the public by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.
- Telangana government decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State. The State Forest Protection Committee headed by Chief Secretary S K Joshi took the decision to form the STPF.
- Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu declared Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) as the "State Festival" at Seijosa in East Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh. Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF) is only conservation festival of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Andhra Pradesh Cabinet decided to cater 5% reservation each for Kapu community and the economically backward classes (EBCs) among the forward castes. It also approved the decision of doubling the welfare pensions given under the NTR Bharosa Scheme. Pensions of Rs 1000 and Rs 1500 are doubled to Rs 2000 and Rs 3000 respectively.
- Nashik in Maharashtra will be the site of the country's second defence innovation hub after Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu.
- MP CM Kamal Nath launched his government's Rs 50,000-crore farm debt-waiver scheme named 'Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana'. It is expected to benefit 55 lakh small and marginal farmers. The eligibility cut-off date extended to December 12, 2018, from March 31, 2018.
- Gujarat become the first state to implement the 10% reservation for economically weaker sections of the general category. This comes a day after President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the bill.
- PM Modi launched development projects worth Rs 1,100 cr at Solapur in Maharashtra. Referring to the passage of The Constitution (One Hundred And Twenty-Fourth Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha, PM, Modi described it as a landmark moment in the nation's history.
- The Polavaram project of Andhra Pradesh entered the Guinness Book of World by pouring 32,100 cubic meters of concrete in a matter of 24 hours.
- Union Home Ministry approved the Uttar Pradesh government's proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj.
- Odisha CM Patnaik announced interest-free loans of up to Rs. 3 lakh for women self-help groups (WSHG) in the state. The initiative will benefit about 70 lakh women.
- Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra assumed the appointment of Director General of NCC (DGNCC).
- Kerala based private sector lender Federal Bank has appointed Dilip Sadarangani as the part-time chairman.
- Suman Kumari become the first Hindu woman to have been appointed as a civil judge in Pakistan after passing an examination for induction of judicial officers.
- Poonam Khetrpal Singh appointed as Regional Director for World Health Organization South-East Asia, for a second five-year term.
- Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah elected as Malaysia's new king by the members of the country's royal families. He replaced Sultan Muhammad V of Kelantan.
- IndiGo owner InterGlobe Aviation has appointed Ronojoy Dutta as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company with immediate effect.
- Yes Bank has appointed veteran banker Ravneet Singh Gill as its new MD & CEO and the lender has also received the RBI's approval for the same. He will join the bank on or before March 1, 2019.
- Piyush Goyal has been named the interim Finance Minister and interim Minister of Corporate Affairs during Arun Jaitley's indisposition. Goyal will retain his existing portfolios of coal and railways. Union Minister Arun Jaitley, 66, had left for the United States for a regular medical check-up.
- Madagascar president, Andry Rajoelina, has sworn into office after taking the oath in Antananarivo before nine judges of the High Constitutional Court.
- The Swedish Parliament approved Stefan Lofven as Prime Minister for a second four-year term.
- RBI approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of IDFC First Bank for a period of three years.
- The Department of Personnel & Training, Government of India appointed Senior IPS Officer Prabhat Singh as Director General (Investigation) in the National Human Rights Commission.
- Mohammed Ali Qamar, the man who won India's first Commonwealth Games gold medal in boxing, has taken over as the chief coach for the country's female boxers. He replaced veteran Shiv Singh.
- International Cricket Council (ICC) announced that Manu Sawhney has been appointed as the organization's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- Indian football team head coach Stephen Constantine has stepped down after the team's shock 0-1 defeat to Bahrain which led to its exit from the Asian Cup.
- Ananth Narayanan has stepped down as CEO of Myntra and Jabong to pursue external opportunities. Amar Nagaram has been named as Head, Myntra and Jabong, reporting to Kalyan Krishnamurthy, CEO of Flipkart Group.

### New Appointments (National & International)

- India's largest software exporter Tata Consultancy Services has appointed Don Callahan as an additional and independent director for a period of 5 years, based on the recommendations of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee.
  - Yes Bank, India's fourth-largest private sector bank, announced the appointment of Brahm Dutt as non-executive part-time chairman up till July 4, 2020.
  - Ashok Chawla resigned as chairman of the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) with immediate effect "in light of recent legal developments".
  - Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen has appointed Su Tseng-chang as Prime Minister, during a Cabinet reshuffle following the ruling Democratic Progressive Party's heavy losses in local elections.
  - Nicolás Maduro was sworn in for a second term as Venezuela's President amid the economic and humanitarian crisis faced by the Latin American country.
  - President of the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF), Birendra Prasad Baishya, has been named Chef de Mission for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. It is for the first time that the Weightlifting accorded with the honor of Chef de Mission for the Olympics.
  - Railway Board Chairman Ashwani Lohani retired. General Manager, South Central Railway, V K Yadav replaced him.
  - Jair Bolsonaro sworn in as Brazil's President in a ceremony at Brazil's National Congress Building.
  - Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan sworn in as the first Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court.
  - Saurabh Kumar appointed as the Director General of Ordnance Factories (DGOF) and chairman of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB).
  - The government has appointed Hemant Bhargava, Managing Director, Life Insurance Corporation of India, as the Acting Chairman. The move comes after VK Sharma retired from the top job at LIC on December 31.
  - In the United States, Department of Defence, Chief of Staff, Rear Admiral Kevin Sweeney has resigned, a month after Defence Secretary James Mattis announced his departure.
1. Sheikh Hasina sworn-in as the Bangladesh Prime Minister for the fourth term. It is her third consecutive term after her victory in the 11th Parliamentary elections. President Mohammad Abdul Hamid administered the oath of office to Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka.
  2. Malaysia's King Muhammad V abdicated after two years on the throne, the first time a monarch stepped down before completing their five-year tenure.
  3. Civil Aviation Security head and senior IPS officer Kumar Rajesh Chandra appointed as the director general of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

4. Alok Verma has been reinstated as the CBI chief by the Supreme Court, three months after the government divested him of his powers and sent him on forced leave.
- World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim made the surprise announcement that he is stepping down after six years in the post. His resignation will take effect from 1 February.
  - A visionary in the field of Solar Energy and the chairman of National Solar Energy Federation, Pranav R Mehta, has taken over as the president of Global Solar Council (GSC). He has become the first Indian to head the GSC.



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### Sports Current Affairs

- French sailor Jean-Luc Van Den Heede won the round-the-world yacht race after 212 days alone at sea without modern instruments.
- India's Kartik Sharma won the New South Wales men's Amateur Golf Championship in Australia.
- Nepal batsman Rohit Paudel has become the youngest male cricketer to score an international fifty at the age of 16 years and 146 days, breaking Sachin Tendulkar's previous mark.
- The 2019 Indonesia Masters, officially the DAIHATSU Indonesia Masters 2019, is a badminton tournament that takes place at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno in Indonesia. Anders Antonsen won men's singles title and Saina Nehwal won the women's singles title.
- The Australian Open is a tennis tournament held annually in Melbourne Park, Australia. Novak Djokovic from Serbia won the Men's Singles event and Naomi Osaka of Japan won the Women's singles event.
- West Indies captain Jason Holder has become the first player from the country in 45 years to top the list of all-rounders in the International Cricket Council Test Player Rankings after slamming an unbeaten double-century that helped script a memorable 381-run win over England in the first Test in Bridgetown.



- Former South Africa all-rounder Johan Botha has announced his immediate retirement from all forms of Cricket.
- Rishabh Pant was named the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Emerging Player Of The Year following an impressive show in India's first-ever Test series win in Australia.
- Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian bowler to claim 100 ODI wickets, during the first one-dayer against New Zealand at Napier. The world record is currently held by Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan, who needed only 44 games to reach the mark.
- India's Ankita Raina has won the International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore. In the Final, Ankita defeated top seed Arantxa Rus of the Netherlands.
- India defeated Australia in the third ODI today to clinch the three-match series 2-1. With this, India became the first visiting side to win a bilateral series (two or more matches) in all three formats in Australia.
- Tamil Nadu lad D Gukesh became the 2nd youngest Grand Master in the world and the youngest Indian to achieve the feat at 12 years, 7 months and 17 days, erasing the mark set by his state-mate R Praggnanandhaa in June 2018. Gukesh becomes India's 59th Grand Master.
- Asian Cup gold medallist Shakil Ahmed has set up a world record in indoor rowing by completing 1 lakh meters in above-40 years category in Kolkata.
- Maharashtra topped the medal tally with 37 golds at the Khelo India Youth Games in Pune. It had 111 medals in its kitty with 37 gold, 31 silver and 43 bronze. Delhi was at second position.
- Gurgaon's 8-year-old Kartik Singh has won the under-8 category at the Kids' Golf World Championship organized by US kids Golf in Malaysia, which makes him the youngest Indian to win the title.
- Bengaluru Raptors have won their first ever Premier Badminton League, PBL title. In the title clash played at Bengaluru, Bengaluru edged out Mumbai Rockets, with a 4-3 win.
- Albie Morkel, the South African all-rounder, announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.
- Indian men's hockey coach Harendra Singh was removed from the position and offered the task of helping the junior squad by the national federation. In the interim, the team will be overseen by Hockey India High-Performance Director David John and current Analytical Coach, Chris Ciriello.
- M C Mary Kom has attained number one position in the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) latest world rankings. She became the most successful boxer in world championships' history when she

- claimed the 48kg category top honors in Delhi in November 2018.
- The 25-year-old fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah became the highest international wicket-taker across formats in 2018. He took a total of 78 wickets in the calendar year.
- 80th National Table Tennis Championship held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack.
- Switzerland's Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic secured victory over Germany's Angelique Kerber and Alexander Zverev to win the Hopman Cup for the second year in a row.
- Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane announced as the first two host locations for the newest team event in men's tennis for the multi-million dollar ATP Cup from 2020. The third Australian city for the tournament is yet to be determined.
- The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games officially begun in Pune, Maharashtra. Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis attended a virtual torch ceremony at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex. More than 9,000 players from different states will participate in 18 different events.

**International Current Affairs**

- Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte along with UN representative launched Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable development. The new center is located near the Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome. The major objective is boosting the agricultural sectors and promoting rural development in Africa.
- In Britain, lawmakers voted in favor of an amendment in BREXIT plan seeking alternative arrangements to replace the Irish border arrangement known as the Irish backstop. The backstop is aimed at keeping an open border between European Union-member Ireland and British-ruled Northern Ireland after Brexit.

- Central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia launched a common digital currency called "Aber", which will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.
- Pakistan government declared sugarcane juice as the "national drink" of the country.
- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro announced that he is breaking off diplomatic ties with the United States after his American counterpart Donald Trump recognized Opposition leader Juan Guaido as the South American country's interim President.
- China's economy grew at 6.6% in 2018, its slowest rate in almost 3 decades.
- Nepal's central bank banned the use of Indian currency notes of Rs. 2,000, Rs. 500 and Rs. 200 denominations, a move that could affect Indian tourists visiting the Himalayan nation where Indian currency is widely used.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) named the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro as the World Capital of Architecture for 2020.
- The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held in Lebanon's capital Beirut.
- World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meet begun in Davos, Switzerland. The theme would be 'Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution'.
- Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas pledged to protect the interests of all 134 countries in the UN's Group of 77, as Palestine took the chairmanship of the group from Egypt for 2019.
- Parliament of Macedonia passed the resolution to amend the constitution of the country to rename it as the Republic of Northern Macedonia. The name change will help resolve a decades-long dispute with neighboring Greece opening the way for Skopje to join NATO and the European Union.
- Qatar withdrawn its membership from Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Qatar has been in OPEC for 57 years.
- United States & Israel officially quit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the close of 2018.
- Finance minister of France Bruno Le Maire announced that France will introduce its own tax on large internet and technology companies from January 1. The so-called "GAFA tax" -- named after Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon -- to ensure the global giants pay a fair share of taxes.
- U.S. President Donald J. Trump signed into law the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA). The act establishes a multifaceted U.S. strategy to increase U.S. security, economic interests, and values in the Indo-Pacific region.

- Seven-time champions Egypt won the hosting rights for the 2019 edition of the African Cup of Nations.

### Defence Current Affairs

- The all-women Assam Rifles contingent created history this year by participating for the first time in a Republic Day (26th January) parade. Contingents of the Navy, India Army Service Corps and a unit of Corps of Signals were all led by women officers. Capt Shikha Surabhi from the Corps of Signals became the first woman to perform bike stunts. Lt. Bhavana Kasturi, a lady officer, for the first time led the transportable satellite terminal's contingent.
- As a new initiative in sync with the Digital India campaign of the Government, Ministry of Defence had launched a mobile app 'RDP India 2019' on the Republic Day, with the intent of making available the highlights of the Republic Day event.
- DRDO successfully test fired Long Range Surface to Air Missile (LR-SAM) from naval warship INS Chennai. The test was conducted off the coast of Odisha. The LR-SAM hit a low flying aerial target during the test.
- The final planning conference to work out the modalities for Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019 was conducted at Pune, Maharashtra. It is being conducted with more than a dozen African countries & India.
- Indian Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba commissioned the new Naval Air Base 'INS Kohassa' at Diglipur in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Ten years after "26/11", the Indian Navy commenced the largest coastal defence exercise off the Indian coast. Exercise SEA VIGIL, a first of its kind, is being undertaken along the entire 7516.6 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India and is involving all the 13 coastal States and Union Territories along with all maritime stakeholders.
- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 426 meters long Diffo Bridge over Chipu River in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh. Border Roads Organization (BRO) has constructed the bridge along Indo-China border.
- The second edition of the India-Myanmar bilateral army exercise, IMBEX 2018-19, commenced at Chandimandir Military Station, that houses the headquarters of the Western Command, Chandigarh.
- An MoU was signed between the Indian Army and Punjab National Bank on the Defence Salary Package. Salient features of the improved and updated MoU are free 'RAKSHAK PLUS' Scheme for serving pers and veterans, overdraft facility range from Rs 0.75 to 3.0 lakhs, multicurrency 'At Par' cheques, instant credit of outstation cheques, preferential allotment of lockers at concessional AMC and free SMS alerts.

### Ranks/ Indexes Released

- Dubai International Airport (DXB) retained its position as the world's busiest airport for international customer numbers for the fifth consecutive year with annual traffic for 2018.
- India has been ranked in Bloomberg's 2019 list of most innovative countries in the world - 2019 Bloomberg Innovation Index - for the first time ever. India has grabbed the 54th spot. South Korea has topped the Index for the sixth time.
- Transparency International released the Global Corruption Index 2018. India ranked 78 in the list of 180 countries in the world with a score of 41.
- India has replaced Japan as the world's 2nd largest steel producing country, while China is the largest producer of crude steel, accounting for more than 51% of production, according to the World Steel Association.
- Nearly 65% of Indian organizations are better prepared for the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), making the country the sixth leading nation globally in the GDPR readiness index, global networking leader, according to CISCO.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), India's premier container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report. JNPT ranked 28th on the list.
- India moved up one position to rank 80th on the global talent competitive index, but remains a laggard among the BRICS nations. Switzerland continues to top the list.
- India is among the most trusted nations globally when it comes to government, business, NGOs and media. China topped the Trust Index among both the informed public and the general population segments. India was at the 2nd place in the informed public category and 3rd place in the general population category.
- India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, to become the world's fifth largest economy, according to a report by global consultancy firm PwC.
- World Economic Forum released the 14th edition of its annual Global Risk Report, 2019. The report's findings are based on the annual Global Risks Perception Survey, in which nearly 1,000 decision-makers from the public sector, private sector, academia, and civil society assess the risks facing the world.
- 11th Edition of EIU Democracy Index 2018 released by the Economist Intelligent Unit compiling the state of democracies in 167 countries in the world. In the list, Norway topped and India ranked 41st place on the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual Global Democracy Index.

- As per the Henley Passport Index, India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th in 2019. Japan retained its top spot as the world's most travel-friendly passport.
- A report by World Economic Forum stated that India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030. The report was titled as 'Future of Consumption in Fast-Growth Consumer Market – India'. As per the report, consumer spending in India is expected to grow from 1.5 trillion US dollar at present to six trillion US dollar by 2030.
- Andhra Pradesh emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI), Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business (EDB) Index ABC rankings for economies of 21 states of India, while Maharashtra and Delhi came in second and third place, respectively.



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### Important Days

- 30<sup>th</sup> January celebrated as World Leprosy Eradication Day which stresses the need of eradicating the disease. This year's theme for World Leprosy Day is 'ending discrimination, stigma, and prejudice'.
- The Council of Europe had launched a Data Protection Day to be celebrated each year on 28 January. Data Protection Day is now celebrated globally and is called Data Privacy Day outside Europe.
- 25 January is celebrated every year as National Voters Day to spread awareness about the necessity of voting and to encourage young generation towards the voting rights. National Voters Day Theme 2019 is "No Voter to be left behind".
- National Girl Child Day is celebrated in India on 24 January. The theme of National Girl Child Day 2019 was "Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow".
- 24th January celebrated as the International Day of Education.

- Army Day is observed on January 15 in India. On this day in 1949, Field Marshal Kodandera M Cariappa took over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief.
- The National Youth Day is celebrated across the country on 12th January. NYD 2019 is the 156th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.
- World Hindi Day is celebrated on January 10 every year, marking the anniversary of first World Hindi Conference which was held in 1975. The first World Hindi Conference was inaugurated by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi. World Hindi Day was first observed on January 10, 2006.

### Agreement Signed/ MoU Approved

- India and China signed the protocol for exports of Indian tobacco leaves to China. The protocol was signed during the recent visit of Commerce Secretary, Dr. Anup Wadhawan to Beijing.
- India and Sri Lanka signed an MoU to provide modern infrastructural facilities to Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies of Eastern University in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka.
- India and Japan-India Cooperative Actions (JICA) signed the loan agreements under the Japanese Official Development Assistance Loan Program in New Delhi. The agreements under the Japanese Official Development Assistance Loan were signed for two projects. These are:
  - (a) Project for the Construction of Chennai Peripheral Ring Road (Phase 1) for Japanese Yen 40.074 billion (around Rs 2470 Crore).
  - (b) Program for Japan-India Cooperative Actions towards Sustainable Development Goals in India for Japanese Yen 15.000 billion (around Rs 950 Crore).
- India signed a long-term contract with Uzbekistan for supply of uranium ore concentrates to widen its source base for the nuclear fuel. Uzbekistan is the seventh largest exporter of uranium in the world.
- An agreement for Renukaji Dam Multipurpose Project signed in New Delhi among the States of UP, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand in the presence of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Minister Nitin Gadkari. Under the agreement, three storage projects proposed to be constructed on the river Yamuna and two of its tributaries – Tons and Giri in the hilly regions of UK and HP.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) signed an MoU, kick-starting cooperation in building energy efficiency.
- Airports Authority of India signed MoU with Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER) for joint research programs in

the field of Communication Navigation and Surveillance (CNS).

### Awards & Recognition

- India received the Award of Excellence for 'Best in Show' at the New York Times Travel Show 2019, the largest travel show in North America.
- "Black Panther" took home the top award for best performance by a cast in a motion picture at the 2019 Screen Actors Guild Awards. On the TV front, "This Is Us" nabbed the ensemble award for drama, while "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" won the comedy prize.
- Assam government conferred the Republic Day Journalism Award 2019 to veteran journalist and former editor Dharendra Nath Chakraborty.
- The government has instituted an annual award titled Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar. It will be announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. This year, 8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force located at Ghaziabad selected for the Award for its commendable work in disaster management.
- Three Indian expats from the UAE are amongst those who won the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award the highest honor conferred on Indian diaspora. President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the award on Girish Pant, Surender Singh Kandhari and Dr. Zulekha Daud and other awardees at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention in Varanasi. Girish Pant is a social worker, Surender Singh Kandhari is chairman of the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar Sikh Temple and a philanthropist, businessman, Dr Zulekha is founder and chairperson of Zulekha Healthcare Group.
- President of India, Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019. The awards were presented to 26 shortlisted awardees including one joint award for National Child Award (now renamed as Bal Shakti Puraskar) under the category of innovation, scholastic, sports, art and culture, social service and bravery.
- Noted Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashashchandra awarded Saraswati Samman, 2017, for his poetry collection in Gujarati named "Vakhar". This is the 27th edition of the prestigious award instituted by K.K.Birla foundation.
- VP Naidu presented the 2nd Chhatra Vishwakarma Awards to students and their mentors and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) Awards to institutions at an event organized by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in New Delhi.
- US Based Indian poet Ranjani Murali was awarded the "Woman's Voice Award" at the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF). Ranjani Murali's second



- book "Clearly you are ESL" won the Great Indian Poetry Collectives (GIPCs) Editor's Choice award.
- Virat Kohli become the first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards following an extraordinary 2018. ICC also announced the men's Test and ODI teams of the year with Virat Kohli named captain of both sides.
- Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research announced that the Centre for Advanced Materials of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) chose Eminent Scientist and Bharat Ratna recipient CNR Rao for the first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research.
- Himachal Pradesh MP Anurag Thakur bestowed with Sansad Ratna Award for his distinguished performance as a parliamentarian under Jury Committee Special Award category. Thakur became the first BJP MP to receive the Jury Committee award.
- Indian-American Sikh Gurinder Singh Khalsa, 45, who lives in Fishers of Indiana, US was presented with the prestigious 2019 Rosa Park Trailblazer award after being selected for champions of the diversity by the Indiana Minority Business Magazine.
- Ace Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat become the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award.
- The Japan Prize Foundation announced India born professor Dr. Rattan Lal, University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A, as the recipient of the 2019 Japan Prize for his contributions in the field of "Biological Production, Ecology". Dr. Yoshio Okamoto announced to be the recipient of the 2019 Japan Prize on of "Materials and Production" field.
- The Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 has been conferred on the following:
  - 1. For 2015: Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari for their contribution in Rural Development, Education , Development of natural resources.
  - 2. For 2016: Jointly to Akshaya Patra Foundation for its contribution in providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India and Sulabh International for its contribution in improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers.
  - 3. For 2017: Ekal Abhiyan Trust for their contribution in providing Education for Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender and Social Equality.
  - 4. For 2018: Shri Yohei Sasakawa for his contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.

- A detained Chinese rights lawyer Yu Wensheng has won a Franco-German human rights award for his 'exceptional contribution' to the protection and promotion of human rights.
- Writer Namita Gokhale has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel "Things to Leave Behind".
- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, received the first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award, in New Delhi. The Award focuses on the triple-bottom-line of People, Profit, and Planet. It will be offered annually to the leader of a Nation.
- Industrialist and Godrej Group Chairman Adi Godrej was conferred the ICSIs Lifetime Achievement Award for 'Translating Excellence in Corporate Governance into Reality'. 18th ICSI National Awards for Excellence in Corporate Governance bagged jointly by Cipla Ltd and Dabur India Ltd and five others: ACC Ltd, Hindustan Unilever Ltd, Indian Oil Corp, Tata Metaliks Ltd and Indian Hotels Co Ltd.
- Liverpool's Mohamed Salah has been named as the 2018 Confederation of African Football Player of the Year. For the second consecutive year he has won the award. Houston Dash and South Africa forward Thembi Kgatlang was named Women's Player of the Year.
- Home Minister Rajnath Singh presented Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism awards in 18 categories across print, broadcast, and purely-digital for outstanding work done in 2017.
- The 76th Annual Golden Globe Awards announced at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in California, the USA. These annual awards honour the best in Motion Pictures and Television for the year 2018.

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- Summits/Events Held
- Ministry of Textiles and Government of India launched Artisan Speak at Elephanta Caves (UNESCO heritage site) to strengthen the handlooms and textiles sector of India.

- Tamil Nadu Government organised the 2nd edition of Global Investor summit in Chennai. State government would soon unveil e-vehicle policy to give a boost to electric vehicles manufacturing in the state.
- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, inaugurated the 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 on the 'Regulation of Homeopathic Medical Products; Advancing global collaboration' in Goa.
- India Steel 2019 Exhibition and Conference begun in Mumbai.
- 15th edition of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas begins at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. The theme is, 'Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India'.
- The 2-day Agri Vision 2019 Conference on envisioning Agro solutions for Smart and Sustainable Agriculture was held in Hyderabad. It was inaugurated by Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu.
- Information and Broadcasting Secretary Amit Khare and TRAI Chairman RS Sharma inaugurated the 25th International conference and exhibition on terrestrial and satellite broadcasting, BES EXPO 2019 in New Delhi. The theme was Next Gen Broadcasting in the IT World.
- The second World Orange Festival held in Nagpur.
- Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo – 2019 in Mumbai.
- The 1st National Level Sports Meet for the students of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) inaugurated by Jaswantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs at G.M.C Balayogi Stadium, Hyderabad. The Minister also launched an app 'EMRS Sports Meet' dedicated on the occasion.
- In order to promote Micro irrigation amongst farmers, Ministry of Water resources and River development organized 9th International Micro irrigation conference in Aurangabad, Maharashtra. The theme was "Micro Irrigation and Modern Agriculture".
- Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 'Global Aviation Summit 2019' in Mumbai. The summit held with a theme 'Flying for all-especially the next 6 Billion'.
- Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Col Rajyavardhan Rathore launched the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 at a function in New Delhi. The theme is- 'Be the Voice of New India and Find solutions and contribute to policy'.
- A 2+2 Inter-Sessional meeting between the United States and India took place in New Delhi, focusing on the progress of defence and foreign policy issues between the two countries.
- Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) of United States Chamber of Commerce launched a new innovation strategy at Raisina Dialogue, 2019 in New Delhi. The Initiative is titled as "Fair Value for Innovation".
- Suresh Prabhu, chaired the 4th meeting of the Council for Trade Development and Promotion (CTDP) in New Delhi. GOI formulated an Agricultural Export Policy for the first time with a focused plan to boost India's agricultural exports to USD 60 billion by 2022.
- 25th Edition of Partnership Summit 2019, a global platform for dialogue, debate, deliberation and engagement among Indian and global leaders on economic policy and growth trends in India held in Mumbai.
- The Indian Paint Association (IPA), the apex body of the country's paint industry announced that the 29th biennial Indian Paint Conference held in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. The theme is 'Paints Pe Charcha - Naye Aayaam'.
- The First 'National Consultation on Child Protection' for 2019 held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- PM Modi inaugurated the 106th Indian Science Congress (ISC-2019) at Jalandhar, Punjab. The theme is 'Future: India-Science and Technology'.
- 27th New Delhi World Book Fair begun at Pragati Maidan with the theme 'Readers with Special Needs'.
- Indian Panorama Film Festival begun at Siri Fort Auditorium in New Delhi. It is organized by the Directorate of Film Festivals, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Note | Minister of Information and Broadcasting: Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore (Minister of State).
- The 106th session of Indian Science Congress (ISC), 2019 concluded in Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, Punjab.
- 4th Edition of the Raisina Dialogue held in New Delhi. Norway Prime Minister Ms. Erna Solberg delivered inaugural address. The theme of the Dialogue was "A World Reorder: New Geometries; Fluid Partnerships; Uncertain Outcomes".
- The 1st Global Aviation Summit 2019 with the theme "Flying for all" will be organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) in collaboration with FICCI in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

### Committees

- EPFO notified three new committees on Finance, Investment and Audit Committee (FIAC), the Pension and EDLI Implementation Committee (PEIC) and the Exempted Establishments' Committee (EEC).
- Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a panel headed by Praveen Kutumbe, to identify domestically systematically important insurers (SIIs) and an augmented regulatory framework is logically established in this regard.

- Government constituted a high power committee to monitor the pricing of medicines and healthcare products. The committee will be headed by a Niti Aayog member (Health).
- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) set up an 11-member working group under the Chairmanship of former SEBI chief UK Sinha to go into the concept of 'Group Insolvency' and suggest a suitable framework.
- A ministerial panel headed by Maharashtra Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar will examine uniformity of taxation on lottery under GST or other issues arising out of it.
- Govt. constituted a seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) to boost the real estate sector under the GST regime. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel is the convener of the GoM.
- Madras High Court has set up an expert committee to find a solution to root out invasive species of plants from the Western Ghats. The committee shall be headed by Cherukuri Raghavendra Babu.
- Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi will head the 7-member committee to look into revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out and suggest steps for augmenting collections.
- SEBI constituted a "Research Advisory" committee which will assist in formulating policy to undertake research relevant for development and regulation of capital markets. It will be headed by Sankar De.
- Cabinet took several key decisions including setting up of a high-level committee (HLC) to implement Clause 6 of Assam Accord to hold discussions with all stakeholders on the quantum of reservation of seats in Assam Legislative Assembly and local bodies for Assamese people among other decisions.
- RBI set up an expert committee under former Sebi chairman U.K. Sinha to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.
- HRD Ministry constituted a task force to look into the issues of suicides of the students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalyas. The task force is constituted under the Chairmanship of Psychiatrist, Dr Jitendra Nagpal.
- Govt. had notified a High-Level committee for implementation of Clause 6 of Assam Accord. Retired IAS officer M.P. Bezbaruah is chairman of the 9-member Committee. It will examine the effectiveness of actions since 1985 to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord.
- RBI constituted a High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion. The five-member committee will be headed by UIDAI's former Chairman Nandan Nilekani.

### Visits

- EAM Swaraj visited Uzbekistan. Mrs. Swaraj will be in Samarkand for the First India-Central Asia Dialogue which she will co-chair with Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov.
- Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg arrived in New Delhi for state visit to India. She will participate in the Indo-Norwegian Business Conference. She will also deliver the Inaugural address at the Raisina Dialogue.

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### Science & Technology Current Affairs

- Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) announced entering into agreements worth \$93 million for providing Naval Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) systems to India. The contracts entered with the Indian Navy and the Cochin Shipyard. IAI will provide complementary systems for the air defense system.
- Scientists developed an artificial pancreas smartphone app that will help in regulating blood sugar levels in diabetes patients. A clinical trial showed that the artificial pancreas system (iAPS) app is safe.
- ISRO successfully launched the PSLV C 44 carrying Kalam sat and imaging satellite Microsat R. It was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. Kalam sat is a ten cm cube weighing one-kilogram communication satellite with a life span of two months.
- Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H) announced the launch of a full-fledged bachelor's programme in Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology from the new academic session, a first for the country and only the third globally.
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency launched Tokyo-based startup Star-ALE's mini-satellite aimed to deliver the world's first artificial meteor shower.

- Department of Science and Technology (DST) along with Doordarshan (DD), Prasar Bharati launched two science communication initiatives, DD Science and India Science. The initiatives were inaugurated by Union Science & Technology Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan.
- ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan announced that the organization is well prepared to meet the targets of launching Gaganyaan manned mission to outer space by December 2021. Under Gaganyaan project, India is planning to send three astronauts to outer space for seven days and bring them back. 332 launches are planned this year.
- ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan stated that the Union Government allocated 10,900 crore rupees for the development of 40 satellite launch vehicles in the next 4 years.

### Books & Authors

- Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai pens a new book, titled 'We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World,' charting her experiences traveling the world and visiting refugee camps.

### Miscellaneous Current Affairs

- Civil Aviation ministry launched the country's first Geographical Indication (GI) store at Dabolim International Airport in Goa. The GI stores will promote local products made by the artisans and handicrafts at the airport.
- India's fastest indigenous train which will run from Delhi to Varanasi has been named as Vande Bharat Express. Its previous name was Train 18.
- Oxford Dictionaries announced 'Nari Shakti' as the Hindi Word of the Year.
- 'Saksham', an annual high intensity one-month long people-centric mega campaign of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) was launched by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley. With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man to climb the 7 highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.
- As per Ministry of Civil Aviation, islands in Andaman will soon be connected by seaplanes that can land on or take-off from the water. To facilitate the same, the government has approved flight operations on 13 water aerodrome routes under the Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.
- University Grants Commission (UGC) approved a list of journals, in that the UGC has decided to establish a Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE). The good quality Research Journals in

disciplines under Social Sciences, Humanities, Languages, Arts, Culture, Indian Knowledge Systems etc., will be maintained by CARE and referred to as 'CARE Reference List of Quality Journals'. UGC has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. P. Balram, to review its quality mandate relating to promotion of Research and to review the existing M.Phil/ Ph.D Regulations.

- Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/exit from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers.
- Arunima Sinha, the first female amputee to have conquered Mt Everest, created yet another record as she became world's first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
- Ministry of Culture announced that Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared 6 monuments as 'protected and of national importance' under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, in 2018. These sites are: 125-year-old Old High Court Building in Nagpur, Maharashtra, The Group of Temples in Ranipur Jharail in Bolangir district of Odisha, 2 Mughal era monuments in Agra- Haveli of Agha Khan and Hathhi Khana,
- The Neemrana Baori in Alwar district of Rajasthan, The Vishnu Temple in Kotali, Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand.
- National Green Tribunal imposed a fine of 100 crore rupees on Meghalaya government for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state.
- Vijay Mallya became the first tycoon to be charged under a new anti-fraud law, with a court in Mumbai naming him as an offender under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018.
- The Citizenship Amendment bill seeking to provide Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan passed by Lok Sabha. The Bill provides for Indian citizenship to such immigrants after six years of residence in India instead of 12 years currently. The Bill seeks to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955 in order to grant citizenship to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan if they have lived in India for six years.
- To ensure easier availability of FASTags, Indian Highways Management Company Ltd. (IHMCL), a company promoted by NHAI, has signed MoUs with state-run Oil Marketing Companies (IOCL, BPC, and HPC). It will ensure availability of FASTags at petroleum outlets across India.

### Obituaries

- Former Defence Minister George Fernandes passed away in Delhi at the age of 88. Fernandes also



served as the Railways Minister in former Prime Minister VP Singh's government.

- Oscar-winning French composer Michel Legrand has passed away aged 86. During a career spanning more than half a century, Legrand won three Oscars.
- Sahitya Akademi award winning Bengali writer Atin Bandyopadhyay passed away of brain stroke.
- Eminent Hindi author and essayist Krishna Sobti passed away in Delhi. She was 93.
- Russell Baker, the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer who penned thousands of columns for The New York Times passed away in Leesburg, Va. He was 93.
- Former Indian hockey player Raghbir Singh Bhola, a two-time Olympic medallist, has passed away aged 92. In 2000, he was honored with the Arjuna Award for his achievements in hockey.
- The world's oldest man, Masazo Nonaka of Japan, has died at the age of 113.
- Mary Oliver, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet passed away. She was 83. The cause of death was lymphoma.
- Malayalam director and screenwriter Lenin Rajendran has passed away at 67.
- Sir Michael Atiyah, a British mathematician who received the 1966 Fields Medal, also known as the 'Nobel for Mathematics,' passed away at the age of 89.
- Veteran actor-writer Kader Khan passed away in Canada at the age of 81.
- Veteran cricket coach Ramakant Achrekar, who trained Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kambli, among others, passed away following a heart attack.
- Veteran Kannada actor CH Lokanath passed away after suffering cardiac arrest. He was 91.
- Renowned Bengali writer and Sahitya Akademi awardee Dibyendu Palit passes away due to age-related ailments. He was 79-year-old.

**Countries | Capital | Currencies**

- Brazil Capital: Brasilia, Currency: Brazilian real.
- Norway Capital: Oslo, Currency: Norwegian krone.
- Bangladesh Capital: Dhaka, Currency- Bangladesh taka.
- Malaysia Capital: Kuala Lumpur, Currency: Malaysian ringgit.
- Egypt Capital: Cairo, Currency: Egyptian pound.
- Australia Capital: Canberra, Currency: Australian Dollar, Prime Minister: Scott Morrison.
- Qatar Capital: Doha, Currency: Qatari riyal.
- Emmanuel Macron is the President of France. Paris is the capital city of France.
- Israel Capital: Jerusalem, Currency: Israeli new shekel.
- China Capital: Beijing, Currency: Renminbi.
- Venezuela Capital- Caracas, Currency- Venezuelan bolívar.

- Ranil Wickremesinghe is the Prime minister of Sri Lanka and Maithripala Sirisena is the President.
- Madagascar Capital: Antananarivo, Prime Minister: Christian Ntsay.
- United Arab Emirates Capital: Abu Dhabi, Currency: UAE dirham.
- Sweden Capital- Stockholm, Currency- Swedish krona.
- Uzbekistan Capital: Tashkent, Currency: Uzbekistani soʻm.
- Japan Capital: Tokyo, Currency: Japanese yen.
- Palestine Capitals: Ramallah, East Jerusalem.
- Macedonia Prime Minister: Zoran Zaev, Capital: Skopje, Currency: Macedonian Denar.
- Venezuela Capital- Caracas, Currency- Venezuelan bolívar.
- The 2020 Summer Olympics, officially known as the Games of the XXXII Olympiad and commonly known as Tokyo 2020, is a forthcoming international multi-sport event that is scheduled to take place from 24 July to 9 August 2020.
- Taiwan Capital: Taipei, Currency: New Taiwan dollar.

**International Organizations / Companies in News**

- Present World Bank President: Jim Yong Kim, Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States.
- The Global Solar Council (GSC) has its headquarters in Washington D.C., USA.
- Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) Chairman: Chris Kermode, Headquarters: London, United Kingdom.
- France's Audrey Azoulay- 11th DG of UNESCO, UNESCO Headquarters- Paris, France.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Headquarters: Rome, Italy, Director General: Jose Graziano da Silva.

- WHO Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland, Director general: Tedros Adhanom.
- Facebook Co-founder, Chairman and CEO: Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook India Head: Ajith Mohan.
- ICC Chairperson: Shashank Manohar, Headquarters: Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Manu Sawhney has been recently appointed as the ICC's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- Microsoft CEO: Satya Nadella, Headquarters: Washington, United States.
- Founder and Chairman of WEF- Klaus Schwab. WEF Headquarters in Switzerland.
- Fitch Rating company Headquarter: New York, Founder: John Knowles Fitch.

**Financial Organizations in News**

- Axis Bank Headquarters in Mumbai.
- ICICI Bank Headquarters: Mumbai, MD& CEO: Mr. Sandeep Bakshi, Tagline: Hum Hain Na!
- RBI 25th Governor: Shaktikant Das, Headquarters: Mumbai, Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata.
- Sunil Mehta is the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of PNB.
- PNB Headquarters in New Delhi.
- Allahabad Bank MD and CEO: S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao, Headquarters in: Kolkata.
- SBI Life MD and CEO: Sanjeev Nautiya, Headquarters in: Mumbai.
- Satish Kumar Gupta is the managing director and CEO of the Paytm Payments bank.
- CII President (2018-19): Mr. Rakesh Bharti Mittal, Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Mr. Milind Barve is the Managing Director of HDFC MF. It headquarters in Mumbai.
- Syndicate Bank Headquarters: Manipal, Karnataka, Tagline: Faithful and Friendly.
- SEBI- Securities and Exchange Board of India. SEBI Chairman- Ajay Tyagi, Headquarters- Mumbai.
- Federal Bank Headquarter: Aluva, Kerala, MD & CEO: Shyam Srinivasan, Tagline: Your perfect banking partner.
- IRDAI Chairperson- Subhash Chandra Khuntia, Headquarters- Hyderabad.
- Kumar Mangalam Birla is the chairman of Vodafone Idea merged entity.
- Nepal's central bank is called as Nepal Rashtira Bank. It was established in 1956 under the Nepal Rashtira Bank Act 1955. Dr. Chiranjibi Nepal is the Governor of Nepal Rashtira Bank.
- IDFC First Bank Headquarters in Mumbai.
- HDFC Life Insurance Headquarters: Mumbai, Tagline: Sar Utha Ke Jiyo, MD & CEO: Ms. Vibha Padalkar.
- HDFC Bank Headquarters: Mumbai, MD: Aditya Puri, Tagline: We Understand your world.

- Exim Bank of India (Exim Bank) was established in 1982. It is regulated by RBI. David Rasquinha is the MD and CEO of EXIM Bank.
- Sri Lanka's central bank is called as Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy is the Governor of CBS.
- Yes Bank Headquarters: Mumbai, CEO: Rana Kapoor. R. Chandrashekhar, an independent director at Yes Bank Ltd has recently resigned.

**TELANGANA COOPERATIVE APEX BANK**

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**States | CMs | Governors | Capital | Ministers | Static General Awareness**

- Meghalaya CM: Conrad Sangma, Governor: Tathagata Roy.
- Odisha CM: Naveen Patnaik, Governor: Ganeshi Lal.
- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister: N. Chandrababu Naidu, Governor: E. S. L. Narasimhan, Capital: Amaravati
- Assam Capital: Dispur, CM: Sarbanand Sonowal, Governor: Jagdish Mukhi.
- West Bengal CM: Mamata Banerjee, Governor: Keshari Nath Tripathi.
- Sikkim Chief Minister: Pawan Kumar Chamling, Sikkim Governor: Ganga Prasad.
- Goa Capital: Panaji, Chief minister: Manohar Parrikar.
- Uttarakhand State Governor- Baby Rani Maurya, CM-Trivendra Singh Rawat.
- Piyush Goyal is the present Railways Minister of India.
- Anandiben Patel is the Present Governor of Madhya Pradesh.
- Tamil Nadu Governor: Banwarilal Purohit, Chief Minister: Edappadi K. Palaniswami (AIADMK), Capital: Chennai (Madras).
- Maneka Sanjay Gandhi is the Union Cabinet Minister for Women & Child Development.

- Arunachal Pradesh CM: Pema Khandu, Governor: B. D. Mishra, Capital- Itanagar.
- P Sathasivam is the present governor of Kerala.
- Maharashtra CM: Devendra Fadnavis, Governor: C Vidyasagar Rao.
- Gujarat Governor- Om Prakash Kohli.

### Other Static General Awareness Current Affairs

- Agartala Airport renamed as Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport.
- British-era railway station Robertsgang renamed as Sonbhadra.
- Iconic Mughalsarai junction renamed after Deen Dayal Upadhyay.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji 'Maharaj' International Airport.
- Chairman of AAI: Guruprasad Mohapatra, Director General of SAMEER: Sulabha Ranade.
- Chairman of Prasar Bharati is A. Surya Prakash.
- CEO of Prasar Bharati is Shashi Shekhar Vempati.
- General Bipin Rawat is the present Chief of Staff of Indian Army.
- ISRO Director: K. Sivan, Headquarters: Bengaluru, Established in: 1969.
- Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO. DRDO was established in 1958. It Headquarters in New Delhi.
- Chaudhary Birender Singh is the Cabinet Minister of Steel of India.
- BHEL Headquarters in New Delhi.
- NHRC Chairperson: Shri Justice H. L. Dattu, Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Tata Sons Chairman: N Chandrasekaran.
- CTDP was constituted in July 2015. The Union Commerce & Industry Minister is Chairperson of CTDP Ministers' in-charge of Trade and Commerce in State Governments/ UTs are its members.