The Most Important Current Affairs December 2019

Hemant Soren sworn as CM of Jharkhand

- Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader Hemant Soren was sworn in as the 11th Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Governor of Jharkhand Droupadi Murmu has administered the oath of office and secrecy to Soren, in the presence of senior political leaders and chief ministers from across states.
- This will be the 44-year-old JMM leader's second stint as Jharkhand Chief Minister. In the just-conducted Assembly elections, the JMM, Congress and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) alliance triumphed over the BJP, winning 47 seats in the 81 member House.

India State of Forest Report 2019 Released

The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change released the biennial “India State of Forest Report (ISFR)”, in New Delhi.

Some key highlights of the report:
- The total forest and tree cover of the country is 80.73 million hectare. It is 24.56% of the total geographical area of the country.
- The forest and tree cover has increased by more than 130 million hectares in the last 4 years.
- Area-wise, Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country.
- In terms of forest cover as percentage of total geographical area, the top five States are Mizoram (85.41%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.63%), Meghalaya (76.33%), Manipur (75.46%) and Nagaland (75.31%).
- In comparison with ISFR 2017, the increase in the forest cover has been observed as 3,976 sq km and that in tree cover is 1,212 sq. km.
- The top 3 states showing increase in forest cover are Karnataka (1,025 sq. km) followed by Andhra Pradesh (990 sq km) and Kerala (823 sq km).
- Mangrove cover has been separately reported in the ISFR 2019 and the total mangrove cover in the country is 4,975 sq km which showed an increase of 54 sq Km as comapre to that of 2017. Top three states showing mangrove cover increase are Gujarat (37 sq km) followed by Maharashtra (16 sq km) and Odisha (8 sq km).
- The extent of bamboo bearing area of the country has been estimated 16 million hectare showing an increase of 0.32 million hectare.
- The total carbon stock in country’s forest is estimated 7,124.6 million tonnes and there an increase of 42.6 million tonnes in the carbon stock of country as compared to the last assessment of 2017.
- There are 62,466 wetlands covering 3.8% of the area within the Recorded Forest Area (RFA)/Green Wash (GW) of the country.

General Bipin Rawat named as country's 1st Chief of Defence Staff

- Indian Army General Bipin Rawat named as the country's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). The Chief of Defence Staff will be a 4-star General, the principal military advisor to the defence minister, and will head the new Department of Military Affairs.
- The Defence Ministry had also amended the army, air force and navy rules by bringing in a new clause that allows the CDS to serve up to a maximum age of 65 years.

RBI keeps the repo rate unchanged at 5.15% in 5th Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy

- In its 5th Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Committee meeting, the Reserve Bank of India has decided to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 5.15%.
- The MPC has also decided to maintain the accommodative stance of monetary policy to revive growth, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target.
- The main decisions taken in the 5th Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Committee meeting are:
  - The repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) left unchanged at 5.15%.
  - The reverse repo rate under the LAF stands same i.e. 4.90%.
  - The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate also remains same i.e. 5.40%.

RBI releases “Guidelines for ‘on tap’ Licensing of SFB in the Private Sector”

- The Reserve Bank of India released guidelines for ‘on tap’ Licensing of Small Finance Banks in the Private Sector.
- Now payments banks willing to convert themselves into small finance banks (SFBs) can apply for such a licence only after 5 years of operations.
- Existing payments banks (PBs), which are controlled by residents and have completed five years of operations, are also eligible for conversion into small finance banks after complying with all legal and regulatory requirements of various authorities and if they conform to these guidelines.

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The licensing window will be open on-tap. The minimum capital for setting up an SFB has been mandated at ₹200 crores, adding for primary (urban) co-operative banks (UCBs), which wish to become SFBs, the initial requirement of net worth will be ₹100 crores, which will have to be increased to ₹200 crores within five years from the date of commencement of business.

SFBs will be given scheduled bank status immediately upon commencement of operations.

**NEFT transactions to be made 24×7 from December 16**

- The Reserve Bank of India announced round-the-clock transactions will be allowed 24×7 facility under the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) system on all days including weekends and holidays from December 16.
- These transactions after the usual banking hours are set to be automated initiated using ‘Straight Through Processing (STP)’ modes by the banks.
- The existing discipline for crediting the beneficiary's account or returning the transaction within 2 hours of settlement to the originating bank will also continue.
- Member banks are also advised to initiate necessary action and ensure availability of all necessary infrastructural requirements at their end for providing seamless NEFT 24×7 facility to their customers.

**India becomes 1st country to make entire Haj process digital**

- **India** has become the 1st country to make the entire process for pilgrims going on Haj completely digital.
- An online application, e-visa, Haj mobile app, ‘e-MASIHA’ health facility, “e-luggage pre-tagging” providing all information in India itself regarding accommodation and transportation in Mecca and Madina will be provided to 2 lakh Indian Muslims going for Haj in 2020.
- Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi signed the bilateral annual Haj 2020 agreement between India and Saudi Arabia with Haj and Umrah Minister of Saudi Arabia.

**Nationwide vaccination drive launched under Mission Indradhanush 2.0**

- The centre is launching a nationwide vaccination drive to prevent eight diseases under Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 across the country.
- The government’s flagship scheme is aimed at immunizing children under the age of 2 years and pregnant women against 8 vaccine-preventable diseases.
- The IMI covers vaccines for diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, measles, meningitis and Hepatitis B. Vaccines for Japanese encephalitis and Hemophilus influenza are also being provided in selected areas.
- The IMI 2.0 aims to achieve targets of full immunization coverage in 272 districts spread over 27 States. The IMI 2.0 will be carried out between December 2019 and March 2020.

**Vice Prez M Venkaiah Naidu launches Bharatiya POSHAN Anthem**

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched the ‘Bharatiya Poshan Anthem’ in New Delhi.
- The aims towards taking the message of making India malnutrition free to all corners of the country.
- The anthem was conceptualised by Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and has been penned by noted lyricist Prasoon Joshi and sung by Shankar Mahadevan.

**India among top 10 countries with higher climate performance**

- **India** has been ranked 9th in 2019’s Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) at the COP25 climate summit in the Spanish capital Madrid. The index is jointly presented by Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute and Climate Action Network.
- The authors of the report noted that the first three places of the ranking remain unoccupied.
- While some EU countries such as Sweden (4th) and Denmark (5th), one of the best climbers, achieve overall high or very high ratings, the performance of EU countries varies largely.
- Only two G20 countries i.e. the UK (7th) and India (9th) are ranked in the high category while eight G20 countries were placed in the worst category of the index.
- Australia (56th out of 61), Saudi Arabia and above all the US perform particularly poor.
- **China**, the largest global emitter slightly improves its ranking in the index to 30th place.
India ranks 129th in Human Development Index 2019

- The Human Development Index measures average achievement of the countries in 3 basic dimensions of human development i.e. life expectancy, education and per capita income. The index is released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- India has been ranked 129th among 189 countries in the Human Development Index 2019.
- India was ranked 130th last year in the index. Norway, Switzerland, Ireland occupied the top three positions in the index.
- According to the report, South Asia was the fastest growing region in human development progress showing a 46% growth over 1990-2018, followed by East Asia and the Pacific at 43%.

Facts related to India:

- India’s HDI value increased from 0.431 to 0.647, which places it above the average for countries in the medium human development group (0.634) and above the average for other South Asian countries (0.642).
- In the Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI), India was ranked 130th, losing nearly half the progress (0.647 to 0.477) made in the past 30 years.
- The IHDI indicates percentage loss in HDI due to inequalities. In the Gender Inequality Index (GII), India is at 122 out of 162 countries.

ISRO launches earth observation satellite "RISAT-2BR1"

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch its earth observation satellite "RISAT-2BR1" on PSLV-C48 from the First Launch Pad (FLP) of Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- RISAT-2BR1 is a Radar imaging earth observation satellite weighing about 628 kg and will be placed into an orbit of 576 km at an inclination of 37 degrees.
- PSLV-C48 is the 50th mission of PSLV and will also carry 9 customer satellites of Israel, Italy, Japan and USA as co-passengers.
- These international customer satellites are being launched under a commercial arrangement with New Space India Limited.

Greta Thunberg named Time Person of the Year for 2019

Sweden's Greta Thunberg has been named as Time magazine’s Person of the Year for 2019. Greta Thunberg is the Swedish schoolgirl who inspired a global movement to fight climate change and became popular with the "#FridaysForFuture". She is the youngest person to be chosen by the magazine in a tradition that started in 1927. TIME is also expanding Person of the Year to reflect the full range of subjects that TIME covers. For the first time, TIME has chosen the most influential person in a range of fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Greta Thunberg</td>
<td>Climate activist</td>
<td>Person of the Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bob Iger</td>
<td>Chairman and CEO of The Walt Disney Company</td>
<td>Businessperson of the Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Public Servants</td>
<td>Federal workers of the US</td>
<td>Guardians of the Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>United States women's national soccer team</td>
<td>Women's Soccer</td>
<td>Athlete of the Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Melissa Jefferson (Lizzo)</td>
<td>Singer</td>
<td>Entertainer of the Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forbes releases the list 'The World’s 100 Most Powerful Women'

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has been ranked 34th by Forbes in 'The World's 100 Most Powerful Women'. HCL Corporation CEO and Executive Director Roshni Nadar Malhotra and Biocon Founder Kiran Mazumdar Shaw are two other Indians who also featured in the above list.

The Forbes 2019 list of ‘The World's 100 Most Powerful Women' has been topped by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, followed by President of the European Central Bank Christine Lagarde in the 2nd spot and Speaker of
the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, ranked 3rd. Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also featured on the list on the 29th position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Angela Merkel</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Christine Lagarde</td>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nancy Pelosi</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ursula von der Leyen</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Mary Barra</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Melinda Gates</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Abigail Johnson</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ana Patricia Botín</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ginni Rometty</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Marilynn Hewson</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Nirmala Sitharaman</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Roshni Nadar Malhotra</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Greta Thunberg</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Sahitya Akademi award 2019 released**

- **Sahitya Akademi** announced its annual **Sahitya Akademi Awards** in 23 languages. Seven books of poetry, four of the novel, six of short stories, three of essays and one each of non-fiction, autobiography and biography have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2019. This time, the awards for the Nepali language will be announced later.

The complete list of winners in a different language and genre categories is given in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Title and Genre</th>
<th>Name of the Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>Chanakya (Novel)</td>
<td>Joysree Goswami Mahanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>Ghumer Darja Thele (Essays)</td>
<td>Chinmoy Guha</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bodo</td>
<td>Akhai Athumniphrai (Poetry)</td>
<td>Phukan Ch. Basumatary</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dogri</td>
<td>Bandralta Darpan (Essays)</td>
<td>Om Sharma Jandriari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>An Era of Darkness (Non-Fiction)</td>
<td>Shashi Tharoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>Mojma Revu Re (Essays)</td>
<td>Ratilal Borisagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>Chheelate Hue Apne Ko (Poetry)</td>
<td>Nand Kishore Acharya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kannada</td>
<td>Kudi Esaru (Autobiography)</td>
<td>Vijaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kashmiri</td>
<td>Akh Yaad Akh Qayamat (Short Stories)</td>
<td>Abdul Ahad Hajini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Konkani</td>
<td>The Words (Poetry)</td>
<td>Nilba A Khandekar</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Maithili</td>
<td>Jingik Oriona Kariat (Poetry)</td>
<td>Kumar Manish Arvind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Malayalam</td>
<td>Achan Piranna Veedu (Poetry)</td>
<td>V. Madhusoodanan Nair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Manipuri</td>
<td>EiAmadi Adungegi Eethat (Novel)</td>
<td>L. Birmangol Singh (Beryl Thanga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td>Kadachit Ajoonahi(Poetry)</td>
<td>Anuradha Patil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Odia</td>
<td>Bhaswati (Short Stories)</td>
<td>Tarun Kanti Mishra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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| 16 | Punjabi | Antheen (Short Stories) | Kirpal Kazak |
| 17 | Rajasthani | BareekBaat (Short Stories) | Ramswaroop Kisan |
| 18 | Sanskrit | Prajnaacakshusham (Poetry) | Penna Madhusudan |
| 19 | Santali | Sisirkali (Short Stories) | Kali Charan Hembram |
| 20 | Hindi | Jeejal (Short Stories) | Ishwar Moorjani |
| 21 | Tamil | Sool (Novel) | Cho Dharman |
| 22 | Telugu | Septabhoomi (Novel) | Bandi Narayana Swamy |
| 23 | Urdu | Sawaneh-E-Sir Syed: Ek Bazadeed (Biography) | Shafey Kidwai |

- The Award in the form of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and an amount of Rs. 1,00,000/- towards cash content will be presented to the authors of these books at a special function to be held on 25 February 2020 at New Delhi during the Festival of Letters organized by Sahitya Akademi.

**RBI to buy and sell govt bonds worth Rs 10,000 crore**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will simultaneously purchase and sell government securities worth Rs 10,000 crore under a special Open Market Operation (OMO).
- On a review of the current liquidity and market situation and an assessment of the evolving financial conditions, the Reserve Bank has decided to conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities on December 23, 2019.
- The purchase will be for government securities worth Rs 10,000 crore for the instrument '6.45 per cent GS 2029'.
- The Reserve Bank reserves the right to decide on the quantum of purchase/sale of individual securities and to accept bids/offers for less than the aggregate amount.

**India celebrates Vijay Diwas: 16 December**

- The nation celebrates **16 December** as **Vijay Diwas** to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 war.
- The **Indo-Pakistan war** of 1971 which began on December 3 lasted for 13 days and officially ended on December 16, after which Pakistan surrendered to India.
- It was on this day in 1971, the chief of the Pakistani forces, General AA Khan Niazi, along with 93 thousand troops, had surrendered unconditionally to the allied forces consisting of Indian Army and Mukti Bahini.
- The end of the war also resulted in subsequent secession of East Pakistan into Bangladesh.

**Lt Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane to be next Army Chief**

- Lt Gen **Manoj Mukund Naravane** will be the next Chief of Army Staff of India.
- He is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Army. Lt Gen Naravane will succeed Gen Bipin Rawat, who will retire on the 31st December.
- He has served in numerous command and staff appointments in peace, field and highly active counter-insurgency environments in Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast.
- In a distinguished military career spanning almost four decades, Lt Gen Naravane has the distinction of tenancy of key appointments in active Counter Insurgency environments, both in the North East and in Jammu and Kashmir and was a part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka during Operation PAWAN.
- He has been awarded the Sena Medal (Distinguished) for effectively commanding his battalion in Jammu and Kashmir.
- He is also a recipient of the Vishisht Seva Medal for his services as the Inspector General Assam Rifles (North) in Nagaland and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal for commanding of a prestigious strike corps.
- He was honoured with Param Vishisht Seva Medal for his distinguished services as the General Officer Commanding in Chief of the Army Training Command.
India slips to 112th place on WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report

- **India** has slipped four places to rank **112th globally** as per the Global Gender Gap Report 2020. The report was released by World Economic Forum (WEF) headquartered at Geneva.
- **Iceland** has topped the report and remains the world’s most gender-neutral country while Yemen was ranked the worst (153rd) in the report. As per report, the most improved countries were Albania, Ethiopia, Mali, Mexico and Spain.
- Among regions, Western Europe has made the most progress on gender parity (standing at 76.7%).
- As per WEF, the time it will take to close the gender gap has narrowed to 99.5 years in 2019 while the number was 108 years in 2018. WEF stated that this year’s improvement can largely be ascribed to a significant increase in the number of women in politics.

**Insights of WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report:**

- The Global Gender Gap Report 2020 has assessed 153 countries on their progress towards gender parity in 4 dimensions:
  1. Economic Participation and Opportunity
  2. Educational Attainment
  3. Health and Survival
  4. Political Empowerment
- The report also examines gender gap prospects in the professions of the future.

**From World perspective:**

- Political Representation: According to the report, it will take 95 years to close the gender gap in political representation, with women in 2019 holding 25.2% of parliamentary (lower-house) seats and 21.2% of ministerial positions.
- Labour Market: Only 55% of women (aged 15-64) are engaged in the labour market as opposed to 78% of men.
- Economic participation and opportunity: In this dimension, the progress has regressed with a deteriorating situation forcing gender parity to a lowly 57.8%, which in time represents a massive 257 years before gender parity can be achieved.

**From India’s perspective:**

- With a score of 0.668, India has been ranked 112th in the WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report 2020.

India’s ranking in different dimensions:

- In terms of Economic participation and opportunity, India has been ranked 149th with a score of 0.354 in the WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report 2020.
- In terms of Educational attainment, India has been ranked 112th with a score of 0.962 in the WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report 2020.
- In terms of Health and survival, India has been ranked 150th with a score of 0.944 in the WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report 2020.
- In terms of Political empowerment, India has been ranked 18th with a score of 0.411 in the WEF’s Global Gender Gap Report 2020.
- Overall around the world, this year’s index highlights areas where policy makers need to focus greater attention. At the federal level, greater political representation and in some nations, any representation at all for women is a pressing need. Policy makers are also required to take action to better equip younger generations particularly in developing nations with the skills to succeed in the world of future jobs.

**RBI waives NEFT, RTGS transfer charges for savings account holders**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has waived NEFT, RTGS transfer charges for savings account holders. In an order, RBI instructed banks to make all online payments done through RTGS and NEFT free of cost for savings account holders.
- The new rule will be effective from January 1, 2020.

**GST Council fixes 28% uniform tax rate for lottery**

- The Goods and Services Tax or GST Council has fixed a uniform tax rate of 28% on both state-run and private lottery.
- It also decided to rationalise the GST rate on woven and non-woven bags to 18%.
- It was for the first time that the GST Council resorted to voting to decide on an issue as it fixed a uniform tax rate on both state and private lotteries.
- The GST Council also decided to exempt upfront amount payable for long term lease of industrial and financial infrastructure plots by an entity having 20% or more ownership of Central or State Government.
India and the US have signed an agreement to facilitate the transfer of defence technology.

During a 2+2 dialogue held at Washington DC, the top foreign affairs and defence leaders on growing strategic relations between the world’s largest and most powerful democracies.

India and the US have a common vision of a free, seamless and peaceful Indo-Pacific region.

India has bought weapons worth more than $15 billion from the United States over the past decade as it seeks to replace its Russian-origin military and is in talks for helicopters, armed drones and a bigger Indian plan for local production of combat planes together worth billions of dollars.

HDFC Bank has become the 3rd Indian firm to cross $100 billion mark in market capitalisation.

HDFC Bank has joined the league of Reliance Industries Ltd, which has a market cap of $140.74 billion, and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) that has a market cap of $114.60 billion.

With this achievement, HDFC Bank is now ranked 110th in the list of world’s most valued companies.

Among the world’s most valued banks and financial companies which have a market cap of over $100 billion, HDFC Bank is ranked at 26th position.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL) which aims to improve groundwater management. The scheme has been designed with the principal objective of strengthening the institutional framework for participatory groundwater management.

It aims to bring behavioral changes at the community level for sustainable groundwater resource management in 7 States: Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

The scheme will promote panchayat led ground water management and behavioural change with primary focus on demand side management.

The Government has outlaid Rs. 6000 crore for the scheme. Out of the total outlay of Rs. 6000 crore to be implemented over a period of 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25), 50% shall be in the form of World Bank loan, and to be repaid by the Central Government.

The remaining 50% shall be through Central Assistance from regular budgetary support. The entire World Bank’s loan component and Central Assistance will be passed on to the States as Grants.

Ashleigh Barty and Rafael Nadal were named International Tennis Federation’s (ITF) World Champions in singles for 2019. The awards will be given at the 2020 ITF world champions 2nd June, in Paris.

Atal Bhujal Yojana launched by Government of India

The Central Government has released the “Good Governance Index” on the occasion of Good Governance Day to assess the state of governance in Indian States and Union Territories.

The prime objective of the GGI is to provide quantifiable data to compare the state of governance in all states and Union Territories, enable them to formulate and implement suitable strategies for improving governance and shift to result oriented approaches and administration.

The Index was launched by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, and the Centre for Good Governance.

The GGI takes into consideration ten sectors. These ten Governance Sectors are measured on total 50 indicators. The 10 sectors are: Agriculture and Allied Sectors; Commerce & Industries; Human Resource Development; Public Health; Public Infrastructure & Utilities; Economic Governance;
Some key results of the Index:

- Among the "Big States", Tamil Nadu topped the Good Governance Index. The poor performers are Odisha, Bihar, Goa, and Uttar Pradesh with Jharkhand finishing last in the group.
- Among the "North-East and Hill States", Himachal Pradesh topped the index, followed by Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Mizoram and Sikkim. The worst performers in this group are Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, with Arunachal Pradesh finishing last in the group.
- Among the “Union Territories”, Puducherry topped the index followed by Chandigarh and Delhi. Lakshwadeep is the worst performing UT.

**Kamareddy wins Unicef-2019 Award for Swachh Bharat implementation**

- Kamareddy district of Telangana has secured the United Nations International Children’s and Education Fund (Unicef)-2019 Award for effective implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission in water sanitation and hygiene sectors.
- Kamareddy district was on top in the country among other districts in construction of individual sanitary lavatories, swachh darpan wall paintings, swachh survekshan, swachh sundar shouchalay and many other activities.

**RBI caps lending on P2P platforms at Rs 50 lakh**

- The Reserve Bank of India has capped the permissible exposure limit of a lender on a Peer-to-Peer lending (P2P) platform for all borrowers. The aggregate exposure has been set at Rs 50 lakh at any given point of time. The step has been taken to protect the consumers interest.
- The lender investing more than Rs 10 lakh across P2P platforms has to produce a certificate to P2P platforms from a practising Chartered Accountant certifying minimum net-worth of Rs 50 lakh.
- The central bank also stated that the "Escrow accounts" to be operated by bank promoted trustee for transfer of funds need not be mandatorily maintained with the bank which has promoted the trustee. It also mandates that all the transactions through bank accounts, and cash transaction are strictly prohibited.

**Banking and Financial Current Affairs**

- Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) and Canara, HSBC, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Life Insurance Company Ltd. signed an MoU for bancassurance (for selling life insurance products through the branches of KVGB).
- HDFC ERGO general insurance company, India’s third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, has launched “my: health Woman Suraksha policy”, a comprehensive medical insurance scheme specially designed for women.
- Google searches for “Operation Twist” surged in India after the central bank announced its version of the U.S. Federal Reserve’s unconventional monetary policy. The Reserve Bank of India will buy longer-tenor bonds while selling shorter debt. The concept is similar to Operation Twist used by the Fed in 2011-2012 in an effort to cheapen long-term borrowing and spur bank lending.
- The Government of India has approved the release of Rs 8,655 crore as fresh capital to three public sector banks: Allahabad Bank (Rs 2,153 crore), Indian Overseas Bank (Rs 4,630 crore) and UCO Bank (Rs 2,142 crore) for preferential allotment of shares.
- The Reserve Bank of India has introduced a new semi-closed prepaid payment instrument (PPI) which can be used for the transaction of goods and services up to a limit of Rs 10,000. The loading facility of the instrument will be linked only from a bank account.
- The Reserve Bank of India has directed large cooperative banks to report all exposures of Rs 5 crore and more to the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) with effect from December 31, 2019. The CRILC was created by the Reserve Bank of India.
- The Union Finance Minister has announced that the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) charges for businesses with over Rs 50 crore annual revenues will be waived off from January 1, 2020.
- A Group of Ministers (GoM) has been constituted to to expedite revival plan of BSNL & MTNL. The GoM will fast-track and oversee the implementation of the Rs 69,000 crore revival plan for state-owned telecom corporations BSNL and MTNL.
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has announced that it has paid Rs 1,12,000 crore as Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) refunds to exporters.
**Finance Minister has launched an e-auction platform “eBkray”**. The platform will enable online auction of attached assets by banks.

**HDFC Life Insurance has partnered with Paytm** to expand its distribution. The partnership is aimed to enable customers of Paytm to purchase insurance products from HDFC Life.

### Economy Current Affairs

- The **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, a unit of the World Bank Group, has anchored an investment round of $200 million in Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Limited (MMFSL).
- The **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank** has announced a loan of $210 million for irrigation and solar energy projects in India. The bank will lend $145 million to improve irrigation services and strengthen flood risk management in West Bengal and $65 million for a 250-megawatt solar project in Rajasthan.
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and the Government of India has signed a $490 million loan. The loan is signed for public-private partnership (PPP) project through the hybrid-annuity model (HAM) to upgrade about 1,600 km of state highways and major district roads in the state of Madhya Pradesh.
- Export-Import Bank of India has provided $500 million (Rs 3561 crore) Line of Credit to Bangladesh for defence-related procurement in the neighbouring country.
- Union Government informed that loans worth over 10 lakh crores rupees have been sanctioned till 1st November 2019 under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, PMMY.
- National Stock Exchange has launched interest rate options on 10-year Government bonds maturing in 2029 with a coupon rate of 7.26% and 6.45%.
- **Xiaomi** has formally launched its lending platform “Mi Credit” in India for Android phones. Under this, the individuals can avail up to Rs 1 lakh loan.
- The **Asian Development Bank** has lowered its forecast for India’s economic growth in fiscal year 2019-20 to 5.1%.
- The **Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)** have signed a $250 million loan for Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL).

### Business Current Affairs

- **Infosys** has announced the launch of three blockchain-powered distributed applications. The applications will be dedicated for government services, insurance, and supply chain management domains.
- French carmaker “**Peugeot SA**” and US-Italian “**Fiat Chrysler**” have signed an agreement to create the world’s fourth largest automaker.
- The country's foreign exchange reserves crossed the $450-billion mark for the first time ever on the back of strong inflows which enabled the central bank to buy dollars from the market, thus checking any sharp appreciation of the rupee.
- **Edelweiss Asset Management Company (AMC)**, a subsidiary of Edelweiss Capital Limited (ECL) has launched India's 1st Corporate Bond ETF (exchange trade fund) called the **Bharat Bond ETF**.

### Schemes/Committees by the Union & State Government

- The government has launched a drive to enroll one crore beneficiaries under the **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM)** and the **National Pension Scheme** for Traders and Self Employed Persons (NPS-Traders) by March next year.
- The **Pondicherry government** unveiled a start-up policy which aims to create a corpus fund of Rs 10 crores to support the setting up of **start-up incubators** and to develop **co-working spaces**.

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Ministry of Information & Broadcasting is organising a "Multi Media Exhibition" at World War II museum, Kisama in Nagaland.

President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted the people of Nagaland on its 57th Statehood Day on 01st December 2019.

The 20th Edition of Hornbill Festival began with a colourful blend of culture and tradition with a modern twist at Naga Heritage Kisama in Nagaland.


Uttar Pradesh government has decided to provide 25 per cent subsidy and 100 per cent stamp duty waiver for setting up the defence industry in the state.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched ‘Madhu’ app. It is an e-learning mobile phone application which will help school students to understand their subjects in a better and most efficient way. The app is named after ‘Utkal Gourab’ Madhusudan Das.

Union Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated the 14 MLD sewage treatment plant (STP) in Sarai village near Haridwar in the presence of Sweden’s King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia.

The Union Minister for food processing inaugurated Avantee mega Food Park in Dewas, Madhya Pradesh.

Gurgaon’s ambitious Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) has been inaugurated and will serve as the nodal point for all online data related to the Smart City applications, including CCTV-based public safety and adaptive traffic management system, smart parking system, water supply management system, pollution monitoring, property tax management system and asset management system.

Human Library event will be held in Mysuru, Karnataka and will generate greater human cohesion across various social, religious and ethnic diversities.

Odisha to set up 45 new fast track courts out of which 21 courts would be dedicated to cases of rape and sexual harassment of women while the remaining 24 fast track courts will specifically deal with Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) cases.

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approves the A.P. Disha Bill, 2019 (A.P. Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2019) paving the way for awarding the death penalty for the offences of rape and gang-rape and expediting the verdict in trials of such cases to 21 days.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy inaugurated the Virtual Police Station at Andhra University, Andhra Pradesh.

The Coal Ministry will establish ‘Sustainable Development Cell’ (SDC) for promoting sustainable coal mining in the country.

The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Kamal Nath will inaugurate the International Film Festival in Shilpkala village of Khajuraho.

Haryana police have introduced a unique barcoding software “Trakea” to enable foolproof security of the samples collected in Forensic reports. Haryana became the first state in the country to introduce this unique barcoding system.

In Madhya Pradesh, popular classical music festival ‘Tansen Samaroh’ began with traditional style in Gwalior with the recitations of Harikatha and Milad.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh inaugurated the State-level Orange festival at district Tamenglong in Manipur.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched the ‘Jalsathi’ programme to ensure supply of safe drinking water to all households in the state. The Odisha CM also launched the ‘JalSathi’ App on the occasion.

The Meghalaya Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Government of India to implement Inner Line Permit in the state under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.

Ltd. (a joint venture between IFFCO and Government of Sikkim) in Rangpo, East Sikkim.

Rajasthan Chief Minister inaugurated its first “Janta clinic” in the Malviya Nagar area of Jaipur. The clinic will provide free primary health care to people living in slums.

Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy launched the ‘YSR Nethanna Nestham’ scheme at Dharmavaram in Anantapur district to provide financial assistance of Rs 24,000 annually to handloom weavers across the state.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh and also laid the foundation stone for the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical University in the Uttar Pradesh capital.
• The 1st edition of Mandu Festival begins at Mandu, picturesque fort city of Madhya Pradesh and organized by Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board.
• The 11-day long ‘Dhanu Jatra’ begins at Barghar in western Odisha. Dhanu Jatra is considered as the largest open-air theatre of the world.

**Appointments/Resignations (National & International)**

- **Soma Roy Burman** has assumed the charge of new Controller General of Accounts (CGA). She is the 24th CGA and the seventh woman to hold this coveted position.
- **Lt Gen Podali Shankar Rajeshwar** took over as the 14th Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman & Nicobar Command (CINCAN).
- **Hari Mohan** has taken over the charge as Chairman, Ordnance Factory Board (OFB). He will replace Saurabh Kumar who superannuated from the services.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) board has unanimously elected Masatsugu Asakawa as its new president.
- Sundar Pichai promoted as Alphabet Inc. CEO after Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin have announced that they are stepping down from the leadership role of the parent company Alphabet.
- **K Vijay Kumar** has been appointed as a senior security advisor in the Union Home Ministry headed by Amit Shah.
- The News Broadcasters Federation (NBF) has elected editor-in-chief of Republic TV Arnab Goswami as the President of its governing board.
- The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd has appointed Girish Chandra Chaturvedi as its new chairman.
- C. Sugandh Rajaram has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana. He will replace Birender Singh Yadav.
- IAS officer Ravi Mittal took charge as the new Secretary, Information and Broadcasting Ministry.
- Nagaland Governor R N Ravi has been given additional charge of Meghalaya.
- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has won the historic UK General Election as his Conservative Party crossed the magic number of 326 required for a majority in the Parliament.
- **Sudhar Patra** was appointed as the chairman-cum-managing director of National Aluminium Company Ltd (NALCO). He is at present Director (Finance) in NALCO.
- The Laura Alexandra Marsh, England cricketer announced her retirement.
- The Union Government appointed a senior Gujarat Cadre IPS officer Atul Karwal, as Director of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy in Hyderabad.
- **Devesh Srivastava** has been raised to the position of Chairman and Managing Director (MD) at the General Insurance Corporation India (GIC Re).
- Former High Court Judge Justice CV Ramulu has been appointed as the Lokayukta of Telangana. Former Law Secretary V Niranjan Rao has been appointed as Upa Lokayukta.
- In Cuba, President has appointed Manuel Marrero Cruz as the country’s first prime minister in more than 40 years since its scrapping in 1976.
- Dr Monisha Ghosh has been appointed as the first woman Chief Technology Officer at the US government’s powerful Federal Communications Commission (FCC). She will replace Dr Eric Burger.
- **Sangita Reddy**, Joint Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals Group, has taken over as the President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) for 2019-20. She will succeed Sandip Somany.
- Harsh Vardhan Shringla has been appointed as the new Foreign Secretary. He will take over from incumbent Vijay Gokhale.
- **Niranjan Hiranandani** will succeed Balkrishan Goenka as the new president of The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (Assocham), the country’s apex organisation of industry and trade.
- S S Deswal has been given the “additional” charge to head Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The Union home ministry took the decision as CRPF’s serving Director General (DG) R R Bhatnagar retired on 31st December, 2019.
- **General Manoj Mukund Naravane** took charge as the 28th Chief of Army Staff. He succeeded General Bipin Rawat who retired on 31st December, 2019.
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Sports Current Affairs

- Mercedes racer Lewis Hamilton has won the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix held in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- The 13th edition of South Asian Games has officially kicked off after the opening ceremony at Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Star wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik registered convincing wins in the finals to claim gold medals at the Senior Wrestling National Championships in Jalandhar, Punjab.
- World Anti-Doping Agency has banned Russia for 4 years from participation in global sporting events including the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.
- Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has inaugurated the special edition of Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League T20 cricket championship to mark Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth centenary in 2020.
- R. Praggnanandhaa from India has won the FIDE Open category of the London Chess Classic held in London. He finished joint first with Anton Smirnov of Russia.
- Wasim Jaffer has become the first player in Indian cricket to feature in 150 Ranji matches. He is followed by Madhya Pradesh batsman Devendra Bundela (145 matches) and Amol Muzumdar (136 matches), who have played for Mumbai and Assam.
- Actor Suniel Shetty has been selected as the brand ambassador of National Anti-Doping Agency NADA.
- India has finished on top with 312 medals comprising 174 gold, 93 silver and 45 bronze in the 13th South Asian Games recently concluded in Nepal.
- Indian match referee GS Lakshmi is set to become the first woman match referee to officiate a men's ODI match.
- Indian women's hockey team captain Rani Rampal and ace pistol shooter Saurabh Chaudhary won the Sports Person of the Year awards at the FICCI India Sports Awards 2019.
- The International Hockey Federation unveiled a new world ranking system for 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland. It will come into effect from the 1st January 2020. The new ranking will be match-based instead of tournament-based calculation.
- The top tier of Spanish club football “La Liga” has announced cricketer Rohit Sharma as its brand ambassador in India.
- India opener Smriti Mandhana was named in both the International Cricket Council's ODI and T20 teams of the year. She has Jhulan Goswami, Poonam Yadav and Shikha Pandey for the company in the ODI team of the year and all-rounder Deepa Sharma in the T20 side.
- The Indian men's football team remained static at 108th spot in the year-ending FIFA rankings.
- Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu won the women’s 49kg category gold medal to open India's account at the 6th Qatar International Cup in Doha.
- Belgium has been crowned FIFA 'Team of the Year' for the second successive time after a record-breaking year for the global ladder.
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced that it has extended its partnership with UNICEF through to the Women’s T20 World Cup 2020 with the focus on empowering women and girls through cricket.
- India’s shuttle Maisnam Meiraba Luwang beats Ken Yong Ong to won the Men’s singles Bangladesh Junior International Badminton Series 2019 held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- South African all-rounder Vernon Philander announced international retirement from all forms of cricket.
- Former India skipper and wicket-keeper batsman MS Dhoni has been named Captain of Cricket Australia's (CA) ODI team of the decade. Apart from Dhoni, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma also made into the CA's team.
- Indian tennis ace Leander Paes has announced to retire from Tennis in 2020 as a professional tennis player.
- Abhinav Lohan has won the Bengaluru Open Golf Championship 2019 powered by Karnataka Tourism.
- Indian skipper Virat Kohli is one of the five players named in the Wisden Cricketers of the Decade. Other players in the list are: Australian batsman Steve Smith, and South Africans: Dale Steyn, and AB de Villiers. Australian all-rounder Ellyse Perry is the only female cricketer in the list.
- Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy wins the World Women’s Rapid Chess Championship held in Moscow, Russia.
• The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has withdrawn its boycott call for the 2022 Commonwealth Games to be held in Birmingham.

• Assam Chief Minister has launched the torch relay of the Khelo India Youth Games in Guwahati, Assam. The 3rd edition of the tournament will be held in January 2020.

• India skipper Virat Kohli and pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah were the only Indians in Wisden’s T20 International team of the decade. Australia’s limited overs skipper Aaron Finch was named captain of the Wisden’s T20 International team of the decade.

• Australian pace bowler Peter Siddle has announced his retirement from International Cricket. In his career of 11 years, he represented Australia in 67 Tests, 20 ODIs and 2 Twenty20 matches.

### Important Days

- **World AIDS Day**, designated on 01st December every year. The theme of this year’s World AIDS Day is “Communities make the difference”.

- The **United Nations observes International Day for the Abolition of Slavery** on 2nd of December every year.

- **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** is being observed on the 3rd of December every year. The theme this year is – **Promoting the Participation of Persons with Disabilities and their leadership: Taking Action on the 2030 Development Agenda**.

- The **International Volunteer Day (IVD)** is observed across the world on 5 December every year. This year theme is "Volunteer for an inclusive future".

- **World Soil Day** is celebrated annually on the 5th of December at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) headquarters in Rome, Italy.

- The United Nations General Assembly officially recognized 7 December as **International Civil Aviation Day globally**. The theme of this year Civil Aviation Day is “75 Years of Connecting the World”.

- The **United Nations observes Human Rights Day** on 10 December every year to acknowledge the advocates and defenders of human rights around the world. The theme for year 2019 is “Youth Standing Up for Human Rights”.

- The United Nations observes 9 December as the **International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime**. It aims to raise awareness of the Genocide Convention and its role in combating and preventing the crime of genocide and to commemorate and honour its victims.

- The United Nations observes **International Anti-Corruption Day** on 9 December to raise public awareness of corruption and what people can do to fight it. The theme for 2019 is “United Against Corruption”.

- The United Nations observes **International Day of Neutrality** on December 12 every year.

- **International Universal Health Coverage Day** (UHC Day) is celebrated globally on 12 December to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage with multi-stakeholder partners. The theme for the 2019 UHC Day is “Keep the promise”.

- The **International Migrants Day** is organized across the world on 18th December to protect the rights of migrant workers and members of their families.

- **International Human Solidarity Day** is organized across the world on 20th December.

- **National Mathematics Day** is celebrated on 22nd December every year to mark the birth anniversary of legendary mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan.

- **Kisan Diwas** or National Farmers’ Day is observed across India on December 23 to honour Chaudhary Charan Singh, the 5th Prime Minister of India.

- **Good Governance Day** is observed in India annually on the 25th of December to mark the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna and former-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

- **India** observes 24th December every Year as National Consumer Day with a theme “alternate consumer grievance/dispute redressal”.

### Summits And Conferences

- Defence Minister addresses the **Armed Forces Flag Day-CSR Conclave** in New Delhi.

- The government has launched the 4th round of **Regional Connectivity Scheme – UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik)** to further enhance the connectivity to remote and regional areas of the country.

- Chief of the Air Staff of India is participating in the **Pacific Air Chiefs’ Symposium 2019 (PACS 2019)** at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. The theme for this year’s symposium is ‘A Collaborative Approach to Regional Security’.
• The United Kingdom(UK) hosted two days organised 2019 NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Summit in London.

• Commerce and Industry Minister inaugurated the 3rd edition of National Public Procurement Conclave in New Delhi.

• The Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the valedictory session of the 54th edition of DGsP/IGsP Conference which was held in Pune.

• Switzerland will be the partner country at the 17th edition of BioAsia2020 to be held with the theme “Today For Tomorrow” in Hyderabad, Telangana.

• The ‘International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems’ for BIMSTEC countries began in New Delhi.

• Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D) has organized the 37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions in New Delhi with the theme of ‘Optimal Utilization of Resources-Through Sharing and Networking’.

• Defence Minister Rajnath Singh chaired a meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Defence in New Delhi.

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the first meeting of the National Ganga Council. The meeting was held in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

• The World Design Organization is all set to launch its new global programme World Design Protopolis in Bengaluru. It is aimed at implementing holistic progress in megacities across the world and thus making them sustainable.

• Rashtrapati Bhavan hosted a conference of 46 Heads of Central Universities and Institutes of Higher Learning in several fields including agriculture, pharmaceuticals, aviation, design, petroleum and energy.

• The 5th meeting of the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) of the 15th Finance Commission was held in New Delhi.

• Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla inaugurated the 79th Conference of Presiding Officers of Legislative Bodies. The conference was held in Dehradun.

• Union Minister of State for Home affairs inaugurate a National Conference on ‘Uniformed Women in Prisons Administration’ begins in Central Academy for Police Training in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

• Summit on “Environmental Sustainability and Economic Development” was held in Delhi.

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) annual conference in Delhi. The theme of the event was ‘New India Aspiring for a USD 5 trillion economy’. The event was organised on the completion of 100 years of ASSOCHAM.

• External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar co-chaired the 19th Joint Commission meeting with Foreign Minister of Iran in Tehran, Iran.

• The 5th Round of India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in Tokyo, Japan.

• 49th Border Coordination Conference between border guarding forces of India and Bangladesh was held in New Delhi. The Indian delegation was headed by DG Border Security Force Vivek Kumar Johri and the Bangladesh delegation was headed by DG of Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) Md Shafeenul Islam.

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**National News**

• The government announced Rs 436 crore outlay for skilling 4 lakh professionals in futuristic areas such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and cybersecurity over the next 3 years.

• Hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts will be made mandatory across the country from January 15, 2021. The step aims to ensure the purity of the precious metal.

• Public sector trading firm MMTC has ordered import of 11,000 metric tonnes of onions from Turkey.

• The Election Commission of India will implement the political parties Registration Tracking Management System (RTMS).

• Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ and Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports Kiren Rijiju has jointly launched the Fit India School Rating System.

• The Central Government launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) as a long-term, time-bound, national-level strategy to tackle the air pollution problem across the country in a comprehensive manner.

• Walmart will train 50,000 entrepreneurs from the micro, small & medium enterprises (MSME) sector by opening 25 institute hubs in India under the 'Walmart Vriddhi Supplier Development Programme' across the nation in next 5 years which would train the MSME entrepreneurs.
• President Ram Nath Kovind has laid the foundation stone of the memorial to be built in the memory of the Paika rebellion, a 200-year-old armed revolt in 1817 against the British East India Company in Odisha.

• The “Duchifat-3” is an Israeli student’s made satellite to be launched from ISRO’s Sriharikota launch site. The satellite is jointly built by Herzliya Science Center and Sha’ar HaNegev High School students of Israel.

• The external affairs ministry is organising the 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue with the theme “Indo-Pacific: Re-imagining the Indian Ocean through an Expanded Geography” and Delhi Dialogue XI with the theme of “Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific” in New Delhi.

• Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has started the scheme of National award for outstanding service in the field of Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug abuse. The award will be distributed on the occasion of International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26th of June 2020.

• Jammu and Kashmir will host the workshop on Bamboo cultivation which focuses on the promotion of Bamboo cultivation in the potential Kandi areas of Jammu.

• Indian Space Research Organization has begun preparatory works for setting up a 3rd rocket launchpad in the small coastal hamlet of Kulashekhrapattinam in the Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu.

• A National Tribal Dance Festival will be held in Chhattisgarh’s capital Raipur.

• FASTags or prepaid rechargeable tags for toll collection have become mandatory for all vehicles from 15th December 2019.

• Bureau of Energy Efficiency has organised the “29th National Energy Conservation Awards” under the guidance of Ministry of Power, Government of India.

• The Union government has launched National Broadband Mission to provide Broadband access to all villages by 2022.

• Government e-commerce portal GeM has launched a national outreach programme, “GeM Samvaad”, to bring on-board more local sellers.

• Indian Railways has decided to grant 50% concession for the youth participating in the “Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat” programme.

• Chennai Corporation, Tamil Nadu launched India’s first waste exchange platform namely “Madras Waste Exchange” (www.madraswasteexchange.com) to buy and sell municipal solid waste online.

• Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa announced the setting up of a Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize.

• The Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) has been recognised formally by the National Department of Regulation of Medicines and Health Products of the Ministry of Public Health of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

• The Government of India has constructed Girls’ Hostel for Nepal Armed Police Force School, Kirtipur, Nepal. The new infrastructure is constructed with the GoI’s grant assistance of 40.42 million Nepali Rupees.

• President Ram Nath Kovind released the mobile app of the Red Cross Society of India, developed by the Telangana Centre for Good Governance.

• Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban has achieved its target of creating Urban India Open Defecation Free as urban areas of 35 states and Union Territories have become ODF.

• Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister unveiled India’s 1st long-distance CNG bus fitted with CNG cylinders in New Delhi. It can travel around 1000 kilometres in a single fill and will ply from Delhi to Dehradun.

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi named Rohtang passageway in Himachal Pradesh as Atal Tunnel to mark the 95th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

5 verticals of Quality Mandate developed by UGC was launched in New Delhi to equip country’s next-generation with vital skills, knowledge and ethics for leading a rewarding life. The 5 documents covers evaluation reforms, eco-friendly and sustainable university campuses, human values & professional ethics, faculty induction and academic research integrity.
- The Union Health Minister has inaugurated the 2nd edition of “Eat Right Mela” in New Delhi organized by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). ‘The PURPLE Book’ a handbook on diets for diseases was also launched during the event.
- Network for Scientific Co-operation for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (NetSCoFAN), a network of research & academic institutions working in the area of food & nutrition along with the NetSCoFAN directory was launched during the “Eat Right Mela”.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) railway station in Mumbai has been conferred with ‘Eat Right Station’ certification with the five-star rating by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for food safety and hygiene.
- All India Radio organized the National Symposium of Poets 2020 which was attended by select poets of all 22 languages recognized in the constitution.
- Union Home Minister laid the foundation stone of Directorate General Building of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in New Delhi. The new building at a cost of Rs 280 crore will have all modern facilities and green amenities.
- Minister of State (I/C) for Civil Aviation launched the Biometric enabled Centralised Access Control System (CACS) and ‘e-BCS Project Training Module’.
- NITI Aayog has released the 2nd edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index. According to the SDG India Index, India’s composite score has improved from 57 in 2018 to 60 in 2019.
- Indian Railways introduced a new “Passenger Information System” at Anakapalle Railway Station of Vijayawada Division in South Central Railway.
- The Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF) was organised in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The festival screened 15 films on the theme of “migration and its various aspects”.
- The National Assembly of Republic of Mauritius has unanimously elected Prithviraj Roopun, as new President of the island nation, a largely ceremonial post.

**International Current Affairs**

- The G20 Presidency has been taken over by Saudi Arabia from Japan. Saudi Arabia has become the 1st Arab nation to assume the G20 presidency.
- Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi has submitted his resignation to Parliament amid ongoing anti-government protests across the country.
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- 34 year old Sanna Marin has been elected as Finland’s new prime minister, making her the youngest head of government in the country’s history.
- The 8th edition of the Embassy’s annual film festival titled “Ambassador’s Choice: Screening of Films” was inaugurated at the auditorium of Embassy of India, Riyadh.
- The world’s first fully-electric commercial aircraft took its inaugural test flight by taking off from the Canadian city of Vancouver.
- The representatives from the United States, Mexico and Canada inked a revamped version of their regional trade pact “United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)”.
- Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa announced the setting up of a Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize.
- Thailand’s famous 2000-year-old massage, Nuad Thai was added to UNESCO’s (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) prestigious heritage list.
- Abdelmadjid Tebboune, former Prime Minister (PM) of Algeria was elected as the President of Algeria succeeding Abdelkader Bensalah.
- Sri Lankan government has formally released its new National policy Framework titled ‘Vistas of Prosperity and Splendor’.
- Donald Trump has become the third US President in history to be impeached by the House of Representatives.
- Ethiopia launched its first satellite, a landmark achievement for the country’s space program that caps a banner year for the African space industry.
- US President Donald Trump has picked Indian-American computer scientist Sethuraman Panchanathan to lead the prestigious National Science Foundation (NSF) in USA.
- Ecuador has activated the emergency protocols in the Galapagos Islands to contain the environmental impact of a fuel spill in the Galapagos Islands. The step was taken after the accident occurred in a port on San Cristobal Island when a crane collapsed while loading a container onto the barge.
- Eight West African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo have agreed to change the name of their common currency to Eco and severed their earlier currency CFA Franc’s links to former colonial ruler France.
• David Calhoun will replace Dennis Muilenburg as the CEO of the world’s largest aerospace company Boeing.

• China has successfully launched its largest carrier rocket "Long March-5" also known as "CZ-5" from Wenchang Space Launch Center in south China’s Hainan Province. It carried a communication satellite "Shijian-20".

• Russia’s 1st missile unit equipped with Avangard Hypersonic glide vehicle with latest strategic missiles of intercontinental range, enters into service.

Defence Current Affairs

• The 7th edition of India-Sri Lanka joint exercise "MITRA SHAKTI" begins at Aundh Military Station, Pune.

• India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed surface-to-surface nuclear-capable Prithvi-II missile off Odisha coast.

• The 8th India-China joint training exercise ‘HAND-IN-HAND 2019’ with the theme counter-terrorism under United Nations mandate is scheduled to be conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya from 07 to 20 December 2019.

• Exercise INDRA 2019 a joint, tri-services exercise between India and Russia will be conducted in India from 10-19 December 2019 simultaneously at Babina (near Jhansi), Pune, and Goa.

• The Indian Air Force has decided to put tail numbers in 30 Rafale jets with "BS" initials after the recently retired Air Force Chief Birender Singh Dhanoa. 6 Rafale trainer aircraft will carry RB series tail numbers which stands for Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, the current Chief of Air Staff.

• The UAE and the United States has commenced a joint military exercise 'Iron Union 12' to enhance the combat and tactical capabilities.

• 4th edition of International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems 'NAVARMS-19' begins in Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Development Enclave, New Delhi with the theme "Make in India – Fight Category: Opportunities and Imperatives".

• A joint military training exercise “SURYA KIRAN-XIV” was held in Salijhandi, Rupendehi district of Nepal. The exercise was conducted between the armies of India and Nepal.

• India successfully conducted a developmental trial of the land-attack version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from Chandipur Integrated Test Range, off Odisha coast.

• The Indian Navy, in collaboration with Indian Coast Guard, Cochin Port Trust and all other concerned stakeholders, conducted a large-scale anti-hijacking exercise off the Port of Kochi.

• An upgraded version of the indigenously developed Pinaka-guided rocket system with enhanced strike range and guidance system was successfully test-fired from the DRDO’s Proof and Experimental Establishment firing test range off Odisha coast.

• The “Duchifat-3” is an Israeli student’s made satellite to be launched from ISRO’s Sriharikota launch site. The satellite is jointly built by Herzliya Science Center and Sha‘ar HaNegev High School students of Israel.

• The Indian Coast Guard has conducted a regional level pollution response exercise named ‘Swachchh Samundra NW-2019’ at sea off Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch.

• Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile system developed by DRDO was successfully flight-tested from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the Odisha coast.

• The Indian Air Force bids farewell to the iconic “MiG-27” with a decommissioning ceremony at the Jodhpur air base.

Ranks and Reports

• India has emerged as the world’s 3rd-largest publisher of science and engineering articles as per the statistics compiled by the US National Science Foundation (NSF). China is at the top position, followed by the US.

• The Comptroller and Auditor General’s report stated that the railways recorded an operating ratio of 98.44% in 2017-18. The above operating ratio was the worst in the last 10 years. Operating ratio is a measure of expenditure against the revenue.

• Aberdeen Police station in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands ranks 1st in the list of the best-performing police stations in the country while dealing with a property offence, a crime against women and weaker sections.

• According to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the worldwide arms sales rose by nearly 5% in 2018 and the market is dominated by the United States. US firm Lockheed Martin is the world’s largest arms maker with the sales accounting for 11% of the world market.
The Port of Mongla is declared as Port of Call under PIWT&T (Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade) and Chattogram port is not part of PIWT&T.

**Maldives government** has signed a contract with a joint venture of **Indian companies** which aims to prepare project report and the development of Addu, which is the 2nd biggest city in the island nation. The project will be financed by **EXIM bank** of India through line of credit of USD 800 million.

**The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** and the **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient farming systems.

**State Bank of India (SBI)** has signed a loan agreement worth of **$277 million** (about Rs 1,958 crore) with Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) German development bank for establishing an energy-efficient housing programme in India.

“Amazon.com Inc”, “Apple Inc” and Alphabet Inc’s “Google” have announced a partnership to lay the groundwork for better compatibility among their smart home products.

**Wipro** has partnered with **Nasscom** to train students on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, data science, internet of things, cybersecurity as a part of its corporate social responsibility programme "TalentNext". The programme will be extended to students through **Future Skills**, a Nasscom platform.

**Bank of Baroda** has signed an MoU with the **Gujarat government** to facilitate the flow of credit in the **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)** sector for greenfield projects, startups, women entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs from backward areas.

**Federal Bank** has tied up with online real estate platform **Magicbricks** for listing and e-auctioning of immovable properties repossessed by it in recovery proceedings.

**Kotak Mahindra Bank** has tied up with **Pine Labs** to enable debit card facility for their debit cardholders across point-of-sale terminals by Pine Labs. Banks customers can avail EMI facility with a minimum purchase of Rs 8,000 and repay over 3 months to 12 months.

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**Agreement/Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU)**

- **The Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has agreed to advance a loan of US $206 million to develop water supply and sewerage infrastructure in **Tiruchi and other cities in Tamil Nadu**.
- **Walmart India**, in partnership with HDFC Bank, launched a co-branded credit card exclusively for members of its Best Price Modern Wholesale "B2B Cash & Carry" stores, offering “free credit up to 50 days.
- The **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** of India and **Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB)** have agreed for CPPIB to invest up to $600 million through the NIIF Master Fund.
- The **Online trucking platform BlackBuck** has partnered with private lenders IDFC Bank and Yes Bank to provide **FASTags to truck owners free of cost**.
- The ties between **India and Bangladesh transcend the strategic partnership**. The multidimensional relationship between the two countries covers not only traditional areas like trade, commerce, security and border management but also new areas such as IT, space and nuclear science among others.
- **Investor Education & Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)** works under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **Bank of Baroda (BoB)** to spread customer awareness and investor education and reaching out to investors and stakeholders.
- An MoU has been signed between **National Small Industries Corporation** and **Suadi Aramco (Asia)** for the development of **MSME Ecosystem in India** in Oil & Gas Sector.
- **National Thermal Power Corporation Limited** has signed a term loan agreement of **Rs 5,000 crore** with **State Bank of India** to part finance the capital expenditure of NTPC.
- Dell Technologies partnered with **UNESCO MGIEP** (Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace) to enable school teachers to adopt technology in classrooms by using **ICT tools** which are developed by Dell Aarambh and **FramerSpace platform**.
- The **Ministry of Shipping** (MoS) has announced that **Mongla** and **Chattogram** (Both in Bangladesh) have been declared as **Ports of Call** under “Coastal Shipping Agreement” between India & Bangladesh.
Awards & Recognition

- The Ministry of Environment gave away awards for a short film competition on the environment. Several school students and professionals were awarded prizes for their documentaries and films by Ravi Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment at the ceremony organised by the ministry and Centre for Media Studies (CMS).
- English author Tony Joseph has won the 12th 'Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize'. He was awarded for his 2018 book, “Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From”.
- Barcelona forward Lionel Messi has won the Ballon d’Or award for the world's best player for a record 6th time.
- The Mumbai Central station of Railways was conferred with the 'Eat Right Station' certification with four stars rating by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), as a part of ‘Eat Right India’ movement launched last year. The Mumbai Central Railway Station is the country's first “Eat Right Station.”
- Arun Jaitley former Finance Minister of India was bestowed with the Economic Times (ET) Lifetime Achievement Award for Public Service 2019.
- Joker' fame Joaquin Rafael Phoenix, American actor from California, United States (US) has been bestowed with the PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) 'Person of the Year’ Award 2019.
- The New Zealand cricket team has been awarded the Christopher Martin-Jenkins Spirit of Cricket award.
- Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty’s fitness app “Shilpa Shetty App” has been awarded Google Play's Best Apps of 2019. The app was awarded in the category of 'Personal Growth'.
- President of India conferred 36 awardees with the National Florence Nightingale Awards 2019 at an event in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The award was given to Late Lini Sajeesh from Kozhikode, Kerala, who died while on duty caring for a Nipah (NiV) virus-infected patient in Kerala.
- Kairat Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan), Nicholas Emiliou (Cyprus), Frantisek Ruzicka (Slovakia), Volodymyr Yelchenko (Ukraine) have been honoured with 'The Diwali – Power of One’ award 2019 also known as 'Oscars of Diplomacy' in recognition and celebration of their work, especially at the United Nations, for a secure and peaceful world.
- Abu Dhabi (UAE) has been selected as the world’s leading Sports tourism Destination at the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA) being held in Muscat, Oman.
- Miss South Africa Zozibini Tunzi was crowned Miss Universe 2019 in Atlanta, US.
- Under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, the Photo Division has invited entries for the 8th National Photography Awards. The National Photography Awards are conferred under three categories: Lifetime Achievement Award, Award for Professional Photographers, Award for Amateur Photographers. This year’s theme for Professional Photographers is 'Life and Water' and for the Amateur Photographers is 'Cultural Heritage of India'.
- Gulu Mirchandani, the founder chairman of Mirch Electronics Ltd. (Onida) has been conferred with “Lifetime Achievement Award” by the Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association for his extensive contribution to the consumer electronics industry (CEAMA).
- Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has received the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to achieve international peace and co-operation. This year’s Nobel Peace Prize was the 100th to be awarded.
- Indian actress Priyanka Chopra was honoured for her 20 years of work and contribution in cinema at the Marrakech Film Festival held at the famous Jemaa el Fna square. Hollywood actor Robert Redford, Moroccan actress Mouna Fettou and filmmaker Bertrand Tavernier were among other people who were honoured at the festival.
- Odisha has won the ‘World Habitat Award’ for Jaga Mission which is also called Odisha Liveable Habitat Mission (OLHM). It is a slum land titling project executed for the benefit of millions of urban poor people living in slums.
- The Gurugram-based startup blue Sky Analytics has created an application called ‘Zuri' that won the Copernicus Masters Award also called Space Oscars, under the Social Entrepreneurship category.
- The FICCI India Sports Awards 2019 has been awarded to Railway Sports Promotion Board under the category of Best Company Promoting Sports.
- Tony-Ann Singh of Jamaica was announced as the winner of the Miss World 2019 beauty pageant held at the ExCeL London.
- Indian peacekeepers have been recognized for their strong contribution to building peace in conflict-affected South Sudan as well as for going above and beyond their duties to support local communities.
• **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** has been selected for the national award by Union Rural Development Ministry for best performance in the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

• The **state police of Gujarat** were honoured with ‘President’s colours’. The Gujarat police were presented with the President’s colours by Vice President of India Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

• **England cricketer Ben Stokes** has been voted BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2019.

• **Aditya K. of Kozhikode, Kerala** has become the 1st child from the State to bag the Bharat Award for bravery given away by the Indian Council for Child Welfare. Two more children Muhammed Mohsin & Fatah from Kerala are also the recipients of the awards.

• Noted archaeologist **R. Nagaswamy** was honoured at the Silver Jubilee International Conference of Art in Dhaka by Bangladesh.

• India’s ophthalmologist **Dr Santosh G Honavar** has become the 1st Indian to be conferred with the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s (AAO) highest award Life Achievement honour.

**Science and Technology**

• **Indian Space Research Organization** has begun preparatory works for setting up a 3rd rocket launchpad in the small coastal hamlet of Kulashekhrapattinam in the Thuthukudi district of Tamil Nadu.

• The **International Astronomical Union (IAU)** announced the names of the newly discovered stars and planets, where the name “Sharjah” was chosen for a star with “Barjeel” being the name of one of its planets.

• The **World Health Organization** has approved a “biosimilar” medicine of Trastuzumab named “Ontuzant” to make cheaper breast cancer treatment at an affordable rate to women globally.

• **NASA Astronaut Christina Koch** has created a record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman. She has surpassed the earlier record of 288 days in space which was previously established by NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson in 2017.

• **The National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) and IIT (Indian Institutes of Technology) Gandhinagar and Kharagpur**, have joined hands to develop Gandhipedia, an online repository of books, letters and speeches written by Mahatma Gandhi, to commemorate his 150th birth anniversary.

• The yearly magazine called ‘Borderman’ was released by Nityanand Rai, Minister of State for Home Affairs on the occasion of 55th raising day of BSF (Border Security Force) organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

• **Viswanathan Anand** has launched his autobiography ‘Mind Master’. Anand’s autobiography is co-authored by sports journalist Susan Ninann.

• Social Justice and Empowerment Minister launched the Braille version of the book “Exam Warriors” written by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi**.

• A book titled ‘Turbulence and Triumph: The Modi Years’ jointly authored by Rahul Agarwal and **Bharathi S Pradhan** was released in New Delhi. The book is about the life journey of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi from his days as a young boy in Gujarat to becoming the Prime Minister of India.

A book titled “Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games” authored by Boria Majumdar with **Nalin Mehta** will be published by HarperCollins India in January 2020.

A book titled “Politics of Opportunism: Regional Parties, Coalitions, Centre-State Relations In India” and authored by **R P N Singh** was released by noted economist and political analyst S Gurumurthy.
Minister of State for Human Resource Development Sanjay Dhotre inaugurated the India Pavilion at International Book Fair in Guadalajara, Mexico. India is the ‘Guest of Honour Country’ in book fair and becomes the first Asian country to participate as ‘Guest of Honour’ in the Fair. This fair is the biggest book fair in the Spanish-speaking world.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended greetings to Border Security Force (BSF) personnel on the organization’s 55th raising day (01st December 2019).

The 35th anniversary of Bhopal Gas Tragedy is being observed across the country. It is one of the world’s worst industrial disaster that claimed thousands of lives on the night of December 2, 1984.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched the new Rotavirus vaccine: ROTAVAC-5D designed and developed by Bharat Biotech in New Delhi.

Government of India (GoI) & Portugal has decided to cooperate in the setting up of an India's 1st National Maritime Heritage Museum at the ancient Indian site of Lothal in Gujarat with the aim to boost the underwater or marine archaeology.

Tennis legend Roger Federer will become the first living person in Switzerland to have a coin minted in his honour. The Federal Mint, Swissmint, has created a 20-franc silver coin bearing Federer’s image.

The nation is paying homage to Bharat Ratna Dr BR Ambedkar on his 64th Mahaparinirvan Divas (death anniversary) on 6 December.

Jammu and Kashmir Government has approved the Leave Travel Concession (LTC) in favour of its employees.

Ripu Daman Bevli was appointed as Plogging Ambassador of India by Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) on the 50th Fit India Plogging Run held in Delhi’s Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission distributed 500 Bee Boxes, 500 Electric Pottery Wheels and 200 Leather Tool Kits in an event in Boondi District of Rajasthan.

The UNESCO-recognized Nilgiri Mountain Railway conducted a special service for foreign tourists on special steam engine from Coonoor to Ooty.

The Federation of Indian Association has invited Super 30 founder Anand Kumar to a function on the eve of India’s Republic Day celebrations in New York. Year “2020” also marks the 50th anniversary of FIA.

Jammu and Kashmir’s Lt Governor Girish Chandra Murmu has inaugurated the 72-metre long Multi Cell Box Type Load Class 70 bridge built by Border Roads Organisation in Rajouri. The bridge spans over Draj nullah and connects Draj Area to Tehsil Kotranka area under District Rajouri.

Archaeological Survey of India has identified 138 numbers of monuments as Must-See Monuments. The ‘Must See’ list of ASI features first-class Indian monuments and archaeological sites including those that feature on UNESCO’s (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage List.

PUMA has signed Indian men’s football team captain Sunil Chhetri as its brand ambassador.

PepsiCo has appointed actor Salman Khan as the new brand ambassador of its flagship Pepsi brand of carbonated beverage in India.

Amazon’s audiobook company Audible has launched a new app “Audible Suno” in India which features original audio series aiming to expand Audible’s reach in India’s highly competitive digital entertainment and streaming space.

Search engine giant Google has revealed that it’s powerful mapping service, Google Earth now covers more than 98 per cent of the world, and has captured 10 million miles of Street View imagery, a distance that could circle the globe more than 400 times.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), has removed the ‘Carnival of Aalst’ of Belgium from its Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity List.

In a unique approach, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has started a dedicated matrimonial site for its staff. The website started will be managed by ITBP and only the staff will be able to access it.

In Turkey, the main body of the 610-year-old Er-Rizk mosque was removed from the town of Hasankeyf ahead of its submergence as part of a Ilisu dam project.

Prof. Krishnasamy VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Govt of India launched a national program called “EChO Network” in New Delhi. The EChO network provides a template for cross-disciplinary leadership in India.

Integral Coach Factory (ICF) of Indian Railways has produced its 3000 Coaches in record 215 days and retained its position as the largest coach-maker in the world.
To battle rising air pollution in cities, an ‘Oxygen Parlour’ has been opened at Nashik railway station with the efforts of Airo Guard in collaboration with the Indian Railways. The parlour will provide an experience of breathing clean air to the commuters.

Finance minister of India released a postage stamp to commemorate distinguished service and glorious contribution of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in protecting the nation.

Indian Railways started a glass-enclosed vistadome “Him Darshan Express” train on the heritage Kalka-Shimla route, with glass rooftop to have a panoramic view of the hilly region.

Central government will launch the “Digital Radio” in 2024.

Raksha Mantri has launched the “DefExpo 2020” mobile app of the forthcoming DefExpo 2020, developed by Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence (MoD).

### Obituaries

- Former Hollywood actress Shelley Morrison passed away recently.
- Baskar Menon, Veteran Journalist in the Press Trust of India (PTI) passes away.
- Braj Bihari Kumar, the Chairman of Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) passed away. He was appointed as the chairman of the ICSSR in May 2017.
- The inventor of Universal Product Code (UPC) or Barcode, George Joseph Laurer, passed away.
- The former US Federal Reserve chief Paul Volcker passed away.
- Former Nandi Award winner and renowned Telugu actor and writer Gollapudi Maruti Rao passed away recently.
- New Zealand’s 3-times Olympic middle-distance champion Peter Snell passed away.
- Veteran film actor Danny Aiello, known for his roles in the movies Do The Right Thing and The Godfather Part II passed away.
- Veteran actor Shriram Lagoo passed away. He played important role in the growth of theatre movement in Maharashtra in the post-Independence era.
- Bollywood actress Gita Siddharth Kak passed away. Her most well-known movies include Garm Hava (1973), Parichay (1972), Gaman (1978) among others.
- Former Union Minister ID Swami passed away. He served as the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs in 1999 in former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government.
- Nationalist Congress Party’s Kerala State President and former Minister Thomas Chandy passed away.
- Kannada writer and critic L.S. Sheshagiri Rao passed away. His first work was Idu Jeevana, an anthology of short stories was released in 1948.
- Renowned Hindustani classical vocalist Vidushi Savita Devi known for her thumirs and her book ‘Maa...Siddheshwari’ passed away.
- Former West Ham and Tottenham midfielder Martin Peters passed away.
- Renowned Hindi author Ganga Prasad Vimal from Uttarakhand, passed away recently.
- The American songwriter Allee Willis who penned the iconic “I’ll Be There For You” track for the long-running television show “Friends” passed away recently.
- China’s brilliant storyteller, Da Chen, who created the critically acclaimed memoir “Colours of the Mountain” passed away recently.
- Veteran Political cartoonist Vikas Sabnis has passed away recently.
- The pontiff of Pejawar Mutt, Vishwesha Tirtha Swami passed away in Udupi. He was born at Ramakujna in Dakshina Kannada district on April 27, 1931.

### Static Takeaways

- Barham Salih is the current President of Iraq.
- Baghdad is the capital of Iraq.
- The Iraqi dinar is the currency of Iraq.
- Secretary-General of the United Nations: Antonio Guterres.
- Chief of International Organisation of Migrants (IOM) in Bangladesh: Giorgi Gigouri.
- IOM is the UN migration agency established in 1951.
- Chief Minister of Nagaland: Neiphiu Rio; Governor of Nagaland: R N Ravi.
- Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh: Pema Khandu.
- Governor of Arunachal Pradesh: B. D. Mishra.
- Ordnance Factory Board Founded: 1712.
- Ordnance Factory Board Headquarters: Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Defence Minister of India: Rajnath Singh.
- President of Nepal: Bidya Devi Bhandari.
- Vice President: Nanda Bahadur Pun.
- Prime Minister of Nepal: KP Sharma Oli.
- Sunil Arora is the Chief Election Commissioner of India.
The Prime Minister of Mauritius: Pravind Kumar Jugnauth.


ADB established: 1966, ADB is owned by 68 members.

Google established: 4 September 1998; Headquarters: Mountain View, California, United States.

Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission: Kenichi Yokoyama.

Headquarters of Walmart India: Gurgaon, Haryana.

President and CEO of Walmart India: Krish Iyer.


UDAN scheme came under: Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Civil Aviation: Hardeep Singh Puri.


Membership of International Finance Corporation: 184 countries.

CEO of International Finance Corporation: Philippe Le Houérou.

Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS): Admiral Karambir Singh.

Governor of RBI: Shaktikant Das; Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata.


FSSAI Chairman: Ritesh Kumar; Founded: 2002.

FSSAI Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

FSSAI Chairperson: Rita Teatia.

FSSAI Chief Executive Officer: Shri Pawan Kumar Agarwal.

China Capital: Beijing; Currency: Renminbi.

Chief of the Air Staff: Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria.


Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank Headquarters: Dharwad, Karnataka.

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank Chairman: Puttaganti Gopi Krishna.

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank Sponsored by: Syndicate Bank.

Gujarat CM: Vijay Rupani; Governor: Acharya Dev Vrat; Capital: Gandhinagar.

Capital of Uttarakhand: Dehradun; Governor: Baby Rani Maurya.

Union Minister for food processing: Harsimrat Kaur Badal.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund of India MD and CEO: Sujoy Bose.

IDFC Bank MD & CEO: V. Vaidyanathan; HDFC Tagline: Always You First.

Yes Bank MD & CEO: Ravneet Gill; Yes Bank Tagline: Experience our Expertise.

Vladimir Putin is President of Russia.

Moscow is the capital city of Russia.

The Russian ruble is the currency Russia.

Member countries of NATO: 29; Founded: 4 April 1949; Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium.

Union Commerce and Industry Minister: Piyush Goyal.

RBI 25th Governor: Shaktikant Das; Headquarters: Mumbai; Founded: 1 April 1935, Kolkata.

HDFC ERGO MD & CEO: Ritesh Kumar; Founded: 2002.

HDFC ERGO Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

National Council of Science Museums Director-General: A. D. Choudhury; Founded: 4 April 1978; Headquarters: Kolkata, India; Parent Organization: Ministry of Culture.

Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change: Prakash Javadekar.

India’s High Commissioner to Bangladesh: Riva Ganguly Das.


Bank of Baroda (BoB) Headquarters: Vadodara, Gujarat.

Bank of Baroda (BoB) Non-Executive Chairman: Hasmukh Adhia.

Bank of Baroda (BoB) Tagline: India’s International Bank.

UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France. Director-General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay.

President of WADA: Sir Craig Reedie; Headquarters: Montreal, Canada.

Indian Airforce founded: 8 October 1932, India; Headquarters: New Delhi.

Chairman, President & CEO of Lockheed Martin: Marillyn A. Hewson.

President of the UAE: Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan; Capital: Abu Dhabi; Currency: Dirham.

Diwali Foundation USA Chairman: Ranju Batra.

National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) established in 1955.

NSE’s Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer: Vikram Limaye.

Exim bank Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra; Founded: 1 January 1982.

Gurdeep Singh is the Chairman and Managing Director of NTPC.

Chief Minister of Haryana: Manohar Lal Khattar, Governor: Satyadeo Narayan Arya.
• Saudi Arabia Capital: Riyadh; Currency: Saudi riyal.
• Finland Capital: Helsinki; Currency: Euro.
• Odisha Governor: Ganeshi Lal; Chief Minister: Naveen Patnaik.
• Nepal Prime Minister: K P Sharma Oli; Capital: Kathmandu.
• Ethiopia capital: Addis Ababa; Currency: Ethiopian birr.
• Odisha CM: Naveen Patnaik; Governor: Ganeshi Lal.
• founder of Archaeological Survey of India: Alexander Cunningham.
• Capital of Switzerland: Bern; Currency of Switzerland: Swiss franc.
• Asian Development Bank Headquarters: Manila, Philippines; President: Takehiko Nakao.
• Chief of the Naval Staff: Karambir Singh.
• UNESCO formation: 4 November 1946; Headquarters: Paris, France; Director-General: Audrey Azoulay.
• Capital of Odisha: Bhubaneswar; Governor of Odisha: Ganeshi Lal.
• Canada Capital: Ottawa; Currency: Canadian dollar.
• Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment: Thaawar Chand Gehlot.

• The BIMSTEC member states Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal.
• Lt. Governors Puducherry: Dr Kiran Bedi.
• Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Shipping: Mansukh L. Mandaviya.
• FICCI stands for Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.
• CM of Andhra Pradesh: YS Jaganmohan Reddy.
• CM of Chhattisgarh: Bhupesh Baghel; Governor of Chhattisgarh: Anusuiya Uikey.
• ISRO Director: K Sivan; Headquarters: Bengaluru; Established: 1969.
• CM of Andhra Pradesh: YS Jaganmohan Reddy.