Monthly Current Affairs Capsule & Quiz
December 2019 (English)

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World AIDS Day: 01 December

World AIDS Day is being observed every year on 01 December to raise public awareness about Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome, AIDS.

- This year, the theme is "Communities Make the Difference"
- It is a pandemic disease caused due to the infection of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
- The day also provides an opportunity for people to unite in the fight against HIV and to show support for those living with HIV.
- As per the latest estimate of 2017, there are around 21 lakh 40 thousand people living with HIV in the country.
- The government is implementing the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) as a hundred per cent Central Sector Scheme for prevention and control of AIDS.

UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Spain from Dec 2-13

UN Climate Change Conference, known as COP25 gets underway in the Spanish capital, Madrid, under the Presidency of Chile from 2-13 December 2019.

- COP 25 is an important conference as countries prepare to move from the pre-2020 period under the Kyoto Protocol to the post-2020 period under the Paris Agreement.
- India's approach will be guided by principles and provisions of UNFCCC and Paris Agreement.
- The Indian delegation will be led by Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar.

India, Japan hold first 'two-plus-two' dialogue

India and Japan held their inaugural 'two-plus-two' foreign and defence ministerial dialogue with an aim to give further momentum to their special strategic partnership, particularly in the maritime domain.

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar led the Indian delegation while the Japanese side was headed by Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Minister of Defence Taro Kono.
- The talks under the new framework are taking place following a decision taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe during the 13th India-Japan annual summit last year.
- The 2+2 dialogue reflects the synergy between India's Act East Policy and Japan's vision for free, open Indo-Pacific vision.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities: 03 December
International Day of Persons with Disabilities is being observed on 03 December.

- This day is observed every year to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development and to increase awareness.
- The theme this year is ‘Promoting the Participation of Persons with Disabilities and their leadership: Taking Action on the 2030 Development Agenda’.

Typhoon Kammuri makes landfall at Luzon, Philippines

In the Philippines, typhoon Kammuri has made landfall at Luzon, the country's largest and most populous island.

- Around two lakh residents have been evacuated from coastal and mountainous areas over fears of flooding, storm surges and landslides.

- Kammuri is now expected the pass to the south of the capital Manila, which is hosting thousands of athletes for the regional Southeast Asian Games.

NATO leaders meet to mark the 70th birthday of alliance

The leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, met to mark the 70th birthday of the organization in London.

- The two-day summit includes receptions at Buckingham Palace and Downing Street plus a working session at a golf resort in outer London.
- The 29 member alliance is the world’s biggest military alliance.
- NATO was founded in 1949 for the collective defence of its members, linking the security of the United States with its European allies against the Soviet Union.

Points to Remember

- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium
- Secretary-General: Jens Stoltenberg

Exercise ‘Hand-in-Hand-2019’

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.
The Chinese contingent from the Tibet Military command comprising of 130 personal and the Indian Contingent of similar strength will participate in the 14-day long training exercise.

The exercise is planned at the company level with respective Battalion Headquarters controlling the training.

The aim of the exercise is to practice joint planning and conduct of counter-terrorist operations in semi-urban terrain.

**World Soil Day: 05 December**

World Soil Day is observed on 5 December every year to raise awareness about the importance of soil on Earth.

- As per the UN, every 5 seconds, the equivalent of one soccer field of soil is eroded.
- Theme: 'Stop Soil Erosion, Save our Future'

**Bosnia takes full control of its air space**

Bosnia took full control of its air space for the first time ever after its 1990s war of independence led to a period of oversight by international peace forces.

- Control over its air space was maintained by NATO-led peace forces from 1995 until 2003 when it was transferred to neighbouring Serbia and Croatia while Bosnia built up and modernised its own system.
- Bosnia took control of air space below 10,000 metres (33,000 feet) in 2014 following a 10-year project to establish its own air navigation management system and after the training of some 400 staff.

**Points to Remember**

- Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country on the Balkan Peninsula in southeastern Europe.
- Capital: Sarajevo

**OPEC, allies agree to deepen oil output cuts**

Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak has said OPEC plus countries will discuss the allocation of quotas on the reduction of oil production during a ministerial meeting in Vienna.

- OPEC plus has been reducing oil production since 2017 to counter oversupply on the global market caused by a recent boom in oil output in the United States.
The current version of the OPEC plus oil output cut deal, which will be in force until March 2020, expects parties to reduce overall oil output by 1.2 million barrels per day compared to October 2018 levels.

Points to Remember

- OPEC Headquarters: Vienna, Austria
- Secretary general: Mohammed Barkindo

2019 NATO Summit held in United Kingdom

The leaders of 29 countries gather in London at the NATO summit.

- The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the summit. It was attended by NATO leaders and chaired by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.
- NATO was founded in the wake of the Second World War by the U.S. and the main European powers as a means of military defense against Soviet Russia.

International Anti-Corruption Day: 9 December

International Anti-Corruption Day has been observed annually, on 9 December to raise public awareness for anti-corruption.

- Theme of the day is, ‘United Against Corruption.’
- As per the data, given by the United Nations, every year $1 trillion is paid in bribes while an estimated $2.6 trillion are stolen annually through corruption, a sum equivalent to more than 5 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product.

World observes Human Rights Day: 10th December

The world observes Human Rights Day every year on the 10th of December.

- The day is observed to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948.
- The Declaration recognizes that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of mankind are the foundation of justice, freedom and peace in the world.
- It reaffirms the faith of the people of the United Nations in the fundamental human rights.
- The United Nations’ theme for this year’s Human Rights Day is - Youth Standing up for Human Rights.
Five people killed in New Zealand volcano eruption

In New Zealand, five people were killed and eight others were still missing after White Island volcano popular with tourists erupted unexpectedly.

- Among the missing are tourists from Australia, the United States, Britain, China and Malaysia, as well as New Zealanders who were acting as tour guides.
- New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern offered condolences on behalf of the country.

UAE, US joint military exercise 'Iron Union 12' commences

The ground troops of the United Arab Emirates and the United States has started a joint military exercise 'Iron Union 12'.

- The drill will see the two sides taking part in military collaboration to enhance combat and tactical skills.
- The joint exercise is conducted in the presence of Maj. General Saleh Mohamed Al Amiri, Commander of the UAE Land Forces, and Lt. General Terry Ferrell, Commander of the U.S. Army Central.

Abu Dhabi selected as world’s leading sports tourism destination

Abu Dhabi 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.

- This is the seventh time in a row that Abu Dhabi has been selected for this coveted award.
- Abu Dhabi shined as a premium destination once again for sports tourism in 2019 after hosting some of the world’s top sporting events, such as the FIFA Club World Cup 2017 and 2018, the first edition of the UAE Tour, the AFC Asian Cup 2019, the Special Olympics World Games 2019, the UFC 242 showdown and the Brazil vs South Korea international friendly match.
- Sports tourism has been labelled by the United Nations World Travel Organisation, UNWTO, as one of the fastest growing sectors of tourism worldwide.
- The World Travel Awards was established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries.

Nilgiri Mountain Railway conducts special service for foreign tourists

The UNESCO-recognized Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR) conducted a special service for foreign tourists.

- 71 tourists from several countries, including the USA, the UK and France travelled by a special steam engine service from Coonoor to Ooty.
- They were presented with special mementoes and gift hampers as well as served with the replica of the original Edmonton type cardboard ticket.
- The NMR is one of the few railways in the world that uses the unique rack and pinion system.
- In July 2005, UNESCO added the Nilgiri Mountain Railway as an extension to the
World Heritage Site of Darjeeling Himalayan Railway.

**World's 1st fully electric commercial aircraft takes inaugural test flight in Canada**

Signifying the start of the electric aviation age, the world's first fully-electric commercial aircraft took its inaugural test flight, in Vancouver, Canada.

- The technology would mean significant cost savings for airlines, not to mention zero emissions.
- The range is enough to start the revolution, adding that batteries and electric motors will eventually be developed to power longer flights.
- The company designed the plane's motor and worked in partnership with Harbour Air.

International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval weapon Systems – NAVARMS-19


- The two day event spread over five plenary sessions will provide opportunity for exchange of ideas, create awareness and identify emerging prospects for Indian/International defence industry in the domain of Naval Weapon Systems.
- The theme of this day is to “Make in India - Fight Category: Opportunities and Imperatives”.
- NAVARMS is the only international seminar and exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems conducted in the country to invite all the stakeholders in life cycle management of Naval Weapons.

**Universal Health Coverage Day: 12 December**

Universal Health Coverage Day is celebrated annually on December 12 and is promoted by the World Health Organization.

- This day reminds of the quality health care that people need and deserve without facing financial hardship.
- December 12 is the anniversary of the first unanimous United Nations resolution calling for all nations to provide for their citizens affordable, quality health care.
• The theme of Universal Health Coverage Day 2019 is "Keep the Promise".

US, Mexico, Canada sign USMCA trade deal

The representatives from the United States, Mexico and Canada inked a revamped version of their regional trade pact after months of negotiations.

• The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) will now go to the countries' legislatures for final approval.
• The accord is meant to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a deal in place since 1994.
• The US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that the modified agreement was definitely better than what was initially proposed by the administration.

Maldives sign contract with joint venture of Indian companies for development of Addu

Maldives government signed a contract with a joint venture of Indian companies for preparation of project report and development of Addu, the second biggest city in the island nation.

• This will upgrade existing infrastructure and mitigate the flood situation in Addu.
• It will be financed through 800 million US dollars line of credit extended by EXIM bank of India for strengthening of Indo- Maldives development cooperation.
• It is the second project after water and sanitation project in 34 islands.

2-plus-2 India-US dialogue to be held on Dec 18

The Second India-US 2-Plus-2 Ministerial Dialogue will be held in Washington DC on 18th December.

• Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will lead the Indian delegation.
• In addition, both sides will exchange views on salient regional and global issues.
• The India-US 2 plus 2 Ministerial Dialogue was initiated in September 2018 in order to provide a positive, forward-looking vision for the India-US strategic partnership and to promote synergy in diplomatic and security efforts.

Mongla and Chattogram declared as Ports of Call under the “Coastal Shipping Agreement’
The Ministry of Shipping (MoS) announced that Mongla and Chattogram (Both in Bangladesh) have been declared as Ports of Call under “Coastal Shipping Agreement” between India & Bangladesh.

- 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.
- An MoU (Memorandum of Understanding), agreement and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the use of Chattogram Port & Mongla Ports for goods movement between India and Bangladesh has been signed between both the nations.
- The Ports of Call in India are Kolkata (West Bengal), Haldia (West Bengal), Pandu, Karimganj (Assam), Silghat (Assam), Dhubri (Assam).

International Tea Day 2019

The United Nations (UN) has declared May 21 as International Tea Day on the recommendations of India, however, this day is celebrated on December 15 Every Year.

- The proposal was made by India at the International Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) Intergovernmental Group meeting held in Milan 4 years ago.
- The United Nations General Assembly has also recognized the tea’s medicinal properties as well as cultural importance.
- The season of quality tea production starts in May only in most of the tea producing countries.

Longest UN climate talks COP25 end with no deal on carbon markets

The longest UN climate talks ended in Madrid with no deal on carbon markets.

- Delegates from almost 200 countries failed to come up with more ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gases at UN climate talks.
- It failed to fulfill the terms of the 2015 Paris agreement prompting UN chief Antonio Guterres to lament a "lost opportunity" to fight global warming.
- The two-week long negotiations saw no agreement on major issues such as Article 6, loss and damage, and long term finance.
- Under Article 6 of the Paris agreement signed in 2015, the countries had agreed to set up a global carbon market system to help developing countries decarbonise their economies at lower cost.
- Next year summit COP26 will take place in Glasgow in the UK.

British PM Boris Jhonson wins General Elections in UK
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.

- Johnson hailed the projected win for his Conservative Party as a powerful new mandate to move forward with his deal to leave European Union, the 28-member economic bloc.
- The latest projections put the Johnson-led Conservatives at around 363, but the party can safely celebrate its victory as it comfortably crossed over the half-way finish line for the 650-member House of Commons.
- The Opposition Labour is projected to get 203 seats, a disastrous performance for the party which resulted in leader Jeremy Corbyn announcing that he would be stepping down.

**Australia: Massive bushfire in Blue Mountains**

Firefighters urged residents to evacuate areas near Gospers Mountain in Australia as a bushfire that has razed almost 400,000 hectares approached residential areas.

- The Gospers Mountain fire, a combination of several fires burning to the northwest of Sydney, stretches almost from Lithgow to the New South Wales central coast.
- This large fire continues to burn on multiple fronts.
- Firefighters worked overnight to contain the blaze around Mt Wilson, Mt Tomah and Berambing in the Blue Mountains.

**Exercise SURYA KIRAN-XIV**

Exercise SURYA KIRAN-XIV, a joint military training exercise between India and Nepal culminated at Nepal Army Battle School (NABS), Rupendehi district of Nepal.

- The troops of both the Armies participated in 14 days long joint training based on counter insurgency operations in jungle and mountainous terrain and also practised response mechanism in the eventualities of natural and man made disasters.
- As part of the exercise, important lectures, demonstrations and drills related to counter insurgency, counter terrorism operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief response mechanism were rehearsed and executed jointly.
- The training culminated with a 72 hours outdoor exercise in which troops of both contingents carried out drills of counter insurgency operations.

**International Migrants Day: 18 December**

**Closing Ceremony of Indo-Nepal Joint Military Exercise Surya Kiran – XIV**
The United Nations declared to observe 18th December as the International Migrants Day every year.

- On International Migrants Day, we celebrate the many contributions that migrants make to communities across the globe.
- The International Organization for Migration use International Migrants Day to highlight the contributions made by the roughly 272 million migrants) and the challenges they face.

**Former Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf gets death penalty in treason case**

Pakistan's ex-military ruler Pervez Musharraf was sentenced to death in the high treason case by a special court in Islamabad.

- A three-member bench of the special court handed Musharraf death sentence in the long-drawn high treason case against him for suspending the Constitution and imposing emergency rule in 2007, a punishable offence for which he was indicted in 2014.
- The former Army chief left for Dubai for medical treatment in March 2016 and has not returned since, citing security and health reasons.
- Musharraf is a Pakistani politician and retired four-star general of the Pakistan Army, who was the 10th President of Pakistan.

China withdraws request from UNSC to hold discussions on Kashmir, but may proceed to hold talks in a 15-nation council.

- The Himalayan region has long been a flashpoint between nuclear-armed neighbours India and Pakistan, with both claiming Kashmir in full but ruling it in part.
- UN peacekeepers have been deployed since 1949 to observe a ceasefire between India and Pakistan in the region.
- The matter was expected to be discussed in the Security Council Consultations Room under "other matters" during closed consultations.

**International Human Solidarity Day: 20 December**

The United Nations' (UN) International Human Solidarity Day is annually held on December 20 to celebrate unity in diversity.

- It also aims to remind people on the importance of solidarity in working towards eradicating poverty.
On International Human Solidarity Day, governments are reminded of their commitments to international agreements on the need for human solidarity as an initiative to fight against poverty.

International Astronomical Union names new star as 'Sharjah'

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 announcement was made during a press conference of the IAU in the French capital, Paris, celebrating the centennial of the union.
- During the announcement, the organisers lauded the efforts and contributions of the Emirate of Sharjah to the global scientific community.

Trump becomes third US president in history to be impeached

Donald Trump has become the third US President in history to be impeached by the House of Representatives, setting up a trial in the Senate that will decide whether he remains in office.

- The House voted on two charges - that the President abused his power and that he had obstructed Congress.
- Nearly all Democrats voted for the charges and every Republican against.
- President Trump’s Republicans control the Senate, so it is highly unlikely he will be removed from power.
- Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton were two former Presidents who had been impeached.

Afghanistan becomes 1st country to recognize Indian Pharmacopoeia

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.

- With this Afghanistan has become the 1st country to recognize IP pursuant to the efforts of the Department of Commerce and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- It specifies the standards of drugs manufactured and marketed in India in terms of their identity, purity and strength.

Ethiopia launches its first satellite

Ethiopia launched its first satellite, a landmark achievement for the country's space program that caps a banner year for the African space industry.

- The launch of the Ethiopian Remote Sensing Satellite (ETRSS) took place at a space station in China.
The live broadcast was watched by a group of Ethiopian and Chinese officials and scientists who had gathered at the Entoto Observatory and Research Centre outside the capital, Addis Ababa.

**Eight West African nations rename common currency to Eco**

Eight West African countries 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.

- The CFA Franc was initially pegged to the French franc and has been linked to the euro for about two decades.
- Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo currently use the currency.
- All the countries are former French colonies with the exception of Guinea-Bissau.
- The announcement was made during a visit by French President Emmanuel Macron to Ivory Coast.

**Ecuador declares emergency after Galapagos fuel spill**

Ecuador activated emergency protocols to contain the environmental impact of a fuel spill in the Galapagos Islands, after a barge carrying 600 gallons of diesel fuel sank.

- The Galapagos archipelago, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is home to one of the most fragile ecosystems on the planet.
- The accident occurred in a port on San Cristobal Island, the easternmost island in the chain, when a crane collapsed while loading a container onto the barge.

**Saudi Arabia: Five sentenced to death over Khashoggi's murder**

In Saudi Arabia, a court has sentenced five people to death and jailed three others over the murder of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year.

- The court issued death sentences on five men who directly took part in the killing.
- Three others were handed lengthy sentences amounting to 24 years in jail and two other top officials escaped sentencing.
- Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi was a Saudi Arabian dissident, author columnist for The Washington Post, and a general manager and editor-in-chief of Al-Arab News Channel who was assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October 2018.

**IAF Chief visits Egypt for bilateral talks**

Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria is on a five-day visit to Egypt with an aim to strengthen the long-standing bilateral relations between New Delhi and Cairo.
During the visit, the Chief of Air Staff is scheduled to visit various operational and training establishments of the Egyptian Air Force and also interact with senior officials of the Egyptian Armed Forces.

The visit will provide an impetus towards enhancing defence cooperation between the two air forces as well as strengthening the long-standing bilateral relations between India and Egypt.

**Points to Remember**

- Egypt Capital : Cairo
- Currency: Egyptian Pound

**Pakistan to import polio markers from India**

The Federal Cabinet of Pakistan has decided to import polio markers from India in a bid to reduce the price of medicines.

- The Federal Cabinet took the decision to give a one-time permission for import of polio markers from India as it would reduce prices of 89 medicines by at least 15%.
- Pakistan had suspended trade ties with India following New Delhi’s decision to abrogate Article 370 on August 5, 2019 to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The markers used to mark the fingers of children after administering them polio vaccine are approved by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- There are only two WHO prequalified manufacturers in the world, India and China, which manufacture non-toxic markers to prevent children from swallowing the ink.

**Russia ‘only country in world’ with hypersonic weapons**

Russia is the only country in the world that has hypersonic weapons- weapons that travel faster than Mach5 (~6174kmph) and have the capability to manoeuvre during the entire flight.

- The first unit equipped with the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle is set to go on duty by Dec 2019, while the air-launched Kinzhal hypersonic missiles already have entered service.
- Putin has said that the missile flies 10 times faster than the speed of sound, has a range of more than 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles) and can carry a nuclear or a conventional warhead.

**Points to Remember**

- Mach Number is the ratio of the speed of the body to the speed of sound in the undisturbed medium through which the body is traveling.
- Subsonic (M < 1)
- Transonic (M = 1)
- Supersonic (1 < M < 3)
- High Supersonic (3 < M < 5)
- Hypersonic (M > 5)
- High Hypersonic (M ~ 25)

**Typhoon Phanfone hits hard centre of Philippines killing 20 people**

In the Philippines, a strong typhoon, 'Phanfone' has killed at least 20 people leaving a trail of devastation through the centre of the country.

- The storm-battered several islands with gusts of 190km/h, destroying homes and power
lines and spoiled Christmas celebrations in the predominantly Catholic country.

- About 20 typhoons and storms batter the Philippines each year.
- The Southeast Asian nation is also located in the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions often occur, making the country of more than 100 million people one of the world's most disaster-prone.

Pakistan receives second tranche of $452 mn from IMF

Pakistan on received USD 452.4 million as a second tranche of the USD 6 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

- The release of the second tranche amounting to over USD 452 million showed IMF's confidence over the government's economic policies.
- The IMF had approved the second tranche of the loan for Pakistan under the USD 6 billion Extended Fund Facility in a meeting of its executive board in Washington on December 20.
- Pakistan had received the first tranche from IMF under its loan program in July.
- The country has long suffered from a weak tax base, with only about one per cent of its 208 million population filing income tax returns and major industrial sectors dominated by powerful lobbies paying little or no tax.

MEA includes Madagascar, Comoros in Indian Ocean Division

Ministry of External Affairs has included Madagascar and Comoros in the Indian Ocean Region Division, which looks after India's maritime neighbours such as Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and the Seychelles.

- Earlier these two island nations were looked after by East and South Africa Division of the MEA.
- The recent step reflects the growing strategic importance of the Indian Ocean islands within the framework of Indo-Pacific.
- Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros along with Reunion (French territory) are known as Vanilla Islands and are members of the Indian Ocean Commission.

Astronaut Christina Koch creates a record for longest single spaceflight by a woman

NASA Astronaut Christina Koch creates a record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman, surpassing the earlier record of 288 days in space.

5th Round of India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue

5th Round of India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in Tokyo.
• When she arrives back on Earth in February 2020, she will spend more than 300 days in space.
• She is onboard the International Space Station since 14th March 2019.

**China successfully launches largest carrier rocket**

China has successfully launched the largest carrier rocket of the country, Long March-5, from Wenchang Space Launch Center in south China's Hainan Province.

- The rocket, also known as CZ-5, blasted off with more than 1,000 tonnes of thrust.
- The Chinese space authorities declared the mission a "complete success" just over half an hour after the lift-off when the Shijian-20 satellite it carried entered its designated orbit.
- It is the country's third attempt to launch the rocket.
- The first attempt was made in 2016.

**New Russian weapon can travel 27 times the speed of sound**

Russia has operationalised a new intercontinental hypersonic weapon that can fly 27 times the speed of sound.

- Russia's defence minister Sergei Shoigu informed President Vladimir Putin that the first missile unit equipped with the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle entered combat duty.
- The Avangard is launched atop an intercontinental ballistic missile, which is capable of sharp manoeuvres in the atmosphere en route to target making it much harder to intercept.
- Avangard is designed using new composite materials to withstand temperatures up to 2,000 degree Celsius.
- It carries a nuclear weapon of up to 2 megatons.

**UN declares Malala decade’s ‘most famous teenager’**

The UN has declared Pakistani education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai as “the most famous teenager in the world” in its ‘Decade in Review’ report.

- In 2014, Malala became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her efforts for children’s rights which started even before she was shot in the head two years ago by Taliban militants.
- She became a UN Messenger of Peace in 2017, with a special focus on girls.

**Sri Lankan govt says Batticaloa airport to be developed as an international airport**

Sri Lankan government has said that it will develop Batticaloa airport in eastern province as an international airport with Indian assistance.

- Minister of Tourism and aviation Prasanna Ranatunga said, the Indian government has extended its fullest cooperation to develop
the domestic airport and it has been discussed with the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Taranjit Singh Sandhu recently.

- The Government of India would like to extend its air services to Batticaloa airport as well.
- Currently, airline services to India are available to Bandaranaike International Airport near Colombo and Jaffna international Airport in Tamil-majority north.

India becomes the first country to make entire Haj process digital

India has become the first country to make the entire process for pilgrims going on Haj completely digital.

- This came after the minister signed the bilateral agreement for the pilgrimage with the Saudi Haj Minister in Jeddah.
- 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-Madina.
- This year, a 100-line information centre has been established at the Haj House, Mumbai for providing information regarding the entire Haj process.

BSF celebrates its 55th raising day on 1 December

The Border Security Force sentinels, who are India's first line of defence, celebrated BSF's 55th Raising Day.

- The ceremony was attended by Union Minister of State Affairs Nityanand Rai at BSF headquarters in New Delhi.
- BSF, the border security force, that guards the nation is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces of Union of India.
- The BSF was raised on 1 December 1995, in the wake of the 1965 War.

Nagaland celebrates its statehood day on 01 December

Nagaland celebrated its 57th Statehood Day on 01 December.

- It became the 16th State of the Union of India on 1st December 1963.
- The formal inauguration was done by the then President of India Dr S. Radhakrishnan.
The state has come a long way in the midst of all the turmoil.

Points to Remember

- Nagaland Capital: Kohima
- Governor: RN Ravi
- Chief minister: Neiphiu Rio

Sardar Patel Narmada Trek flagged off

In Gujarat, the Sardar Patel Narmada Trek (SPNT), a national level trekking camp for NCC Senior and Junior Division Cadets, has been flagged off at Statue of Unity-Kevadia in Narmada district.

- More than 1,000 cadets from Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal and Punjab participated in this camp.
- The aim of organizing SPNT camp is to promote National Integration by gathering enthusiastic Nationalist youth from all faiths, castes and cultural identity at a place which is towered by the Iron Man of India.
- During the event, the NCC cadets will first trek from the Base Camp at NCC Academy Jeetnagar to Junaraj located 20 kilometres away in the Sundarpura.
- They will visit Karjan Dam and power generation plant to study the scientific developments of the country.

20th Edition of Hornbill Festival begins in Nagaland

The much-awaited festival, the Hornbill Festival began with a colourful blend of culture and tradition in Nagaland.

- This is the 20th edition of Hornbill Festival.
- The festival organised by Nagaland Government is an annual tourism promotional event to showcase the state’s traditional and rich cultural heritage in all its ethnicity, diversity and grandeur.
- The 10 Days Hornbill Festival will witness the cultural performance of different tribes of Nagaland and Northeastern States, indigenous games, city tour, night carnival, art exhibition, photo-fest and many more.

Government extends mandatory FASTag roll-out date to Dec 15

The government extended till December 15 the date for making FASTag mandatory for toll payments on national highways.
- It will now charge double user fee from vehicles entering FASTag lane without FASTag from December 15, instead of December 1.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) had earlier announced that toll payments on highways would be accepted through FASTags only from December 1.
- FASTag is a prepaid tag, affixed on vehicle's windshield, that enables automatic deduction of toll charges and lets the vehicle pass through the toll plaza without stopping for the cash transaction.
- NHAI has equipped all fee plazas with Electronic Toll Collection System.
- FASTag will continue to be provided free of cost till December 15.

**Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 to be launched across the country**

Centre launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 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 eight 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 influenzae 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.

**MoS Sanjay Dhotre inaugurates India Pavilion at International Book Fair in Mexico**

Minister of State for Human Resource Development Sanjay Dhotre inaugurated the India Pavilion at International Book Fair in Guadalajara, Mexico.

- This fair is the biggest book fair in the Spanish-speaking world.
- India is the ‘Guest of Honour Country’ in this book fair and it becomes the first Asian country to participate as ‘Guest of Honour’ in the Fair.

**Indo Sri Lanka joint exercise MITRA SHAKTI commences**

The 17th edition of exercise MITRA SHAKTI aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational
efficiency amongst the armies of India and Sri Lanka commenced at Aundh Military Station, Pune.

- The objective of the exercise is to build and promote positive relations between armies of both countries through a focus on sub-unit-level training on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in the urban and rural environment.
- The joint training exercise also signifies the strength of India-Sri Lanka relations in the field of military cooperation and engagement.
- The exercise is designed for incorporating the current dynamics of United Nations peacekeeping operations through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises.

**Nagaland CM inaugurates Multi-Media Exhibition at World War II museum**

The Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF) was organised in Dhaka.

- The focus of the event is to present Gandhian values and principles both to the people and through the people in a contemporary idiom.
- Commemorating the event, in remembrance of late Natwar Thakkar, his son Dr Aotoshi was felicitated.
- Lt. Thakkar, is popularly known as Nagaland's Gandhi.

**Global Migration Film Festival organised in Dhaka**

-Nagaland Chief Minister, Neiphiu Rio officially inaugurated the Multi-Media Exhibition at World War II museum, Kisama in Nagaland.

- For the first time in the history of Hornbill festival, Bureau of Outreach & Communication, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting is organising a Multi-Media Exhibition commemorating the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

**50 children killed by measles in Samoa as outbreak worsens**
A measles outbreak in Samoa has killed 50 children as authorities race to vaccinate the entire population.

Another five children had died within the past day as the epidemic continues to spread.

- In all, 53 people have died since late October, including one adult and two teenagers older than 14.
- Samoa declared an emergency last month and mandated that all 200,000 people living on the island nation get vaccinated.
- It says about 33,000 people were vaccinated before last month and since then another 58,000 people have been vaccinated.

**Points to Remember**

- Samoa Capital: Apia
- Currency: Samoan tālā

**PM Modi holds a meeting with King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi holds a meeting with King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden at Hyderabad House in New Delhi.

- King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia arrived on a state visit to India at the invitation of President Ram Nath Kovind.
- This is His Majesty’s third visit to India.

**NABI, Mohali & Bioendev, Sweden set up joint 'Waste to Bio Coal' project**

'To convert Agriculture waste to Bio Coal' is a project established by the support of the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India at National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute, Mohali in partnership with Bioendev, Sweden.

- On 17th April 2018, India and Sweden signed a joint innovation partnership to deepen the collaboration between the two countries and contribute to sustainable growth and new job opportunities.
- The partnership was signed during the visit of Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi to Sweden.

**NASA finds India's crashed Vikram lander**

NASA satellite orbiting the Moon has found India's Vikram lander which crashed on the lunar surface in September.

- The United States space agency said the NASA released an image taken by its Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, LRO that showed the site of the spacecraft’s impact and associated debris field on 6th of September.
- NASA released a mosaic image of the site on 26th of September and invited the public to search it for signs of the lander.
- A person named Shanmuga Subramanian contacted the LRO project with positive identification of debris.
35th anniversary of Bhopal Gas Tragedy

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.
- The disaster took place in a pesticide production plant, named the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL).
- On the night of December 2-3, 1984, water entered the tank no 610 containing 42 tons of Methyl Isocyanate (MIC), resulting in a runaway chemical reaction that vented highly-toxic MIC gas into the atmosphere.
- The gas cloud killed 3,787 people in and around Bhopal, according to Madhya Pradesh government’s estimates.
- However, other reports suggest the actual death tally to be anywhere between 16,000 and 30,000, and the injury count close to 500,000.

Sub Lieutenant Shivangi becomes first woman pilot of Indian Navy

Sub Lieutenant Shivangi has created history to become the first woman pilot of the Navy.

- A native of Muzaffarpur, Bihar, Shivangi was inducted into the Indian Navy under the Short Service Commission Pilot entry scheme.
- She was commissioned into the Navy in June last year.

3. Indian Navy Day: 04 December

Navy Day in India is celebrated on 4 December every year to recognize the achievements and role of the Indian Navy to the country.

- The day is celebrated in honour of the maritime force's role during the war with Pakistan in 1971 when Indian warships attacked Karachi port and successfully thwarted Pakistani operations in the western coast.
- The Day is also celebrated to highlight the achievements and role the Navy plays in securing the country's marine borders.

4. Election Commission of India to implement “Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System” (PPRTMS)
The Election Commission of India has reviewed the system and process of registration of political parties.

- The new guidelines will be effective from 1 January 2020.
- Accordingly, the “Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System” (PPRTMS) will be implemented through an online portal, to facilitate tracking of the status of the application by applicants.
- The salient feature in the Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System is that the applicant (who is applying for party registration from 1st January 2020 onwards) will be able to track the progress of his / her application and will get the status update through SMS and email.
- The applicant is required to provide contact mobile number and email address of the party / applicant in his application if he/she wishes to track the progress of the application.

5. Govt launches 4th round of Regional Connectivity Scheme-UDAN

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.

- The focus in this round will be North East Region, Hilly States, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Islands.
- The scheme was launched in October 2016, which seeks to provide connectivity to under-served and under-served regions through the revival of existing airstrips and airports.
- In the last three years the government has successfully completed three rounds of bidding under the Scheme and awarded about 700 routes.

6. India successfully test-fires indigenously developed nuke-capable Prithvi-II missile

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

- The Strategic Forces Command of the Indian Army conducted the user trial of the 350 km range missile from a mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur at around 7.50 p.m.
- The missile weighs about 4,600 kg, is capable of carrying 500 kg to one thousand kilograms of warheads and is thrust by liquid propulsion twin engines.
- This trial was a part of regular training exercise by the armed forces which reconfirms the Army’s readiness to fire it at short notice.
- Developed under the joint collaboration of Defence Research and Development
Organization and Bharat Dynamics Limited, the missile was first test-fired on 27 January 1996.

**INDIA and ADB sign $206 million loans to strengthen urban services in 5 Tamil Nadu cities**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a $206 million loan to develop water supply and sewerage infrastructure in 5 cities of Tamil Nadu and strengthen capacities of urban local bodies (ULBs) for improved service delivery.

- This is the second project loan for the ADB-supported $500 million multi-tranche financing for Tamil Nadu Urban Flagship Investment Programme, approved in September 2018, that will overall develop climate-resilient water supply, sewerage, and drainage infrastructure in 10 cities of Tamil Nadu.
- The first project under the Programme with $169 million financings is currently under implementation.

**UP govt announces 25% subsidy & full stamp duty waiver for the defence industry**

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.

- The decision was taken at a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

- The state will also provide all facilities including power, road and fencing of land to the companies that will set up defence industries.
- Builders will only get this exemption if they pass on this benefit to the home buyers.

**ISRO set up a research Lab at Tiruchirappalli**

ISRO has set-up a Space Technology Incubation Centre (S-TIC) at the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Tiruchirappalli.

- The centre will work with ISRO on the technical problems at hand related to the future Space programmes and shall provide solutions.
- This S-TIC will cater to the southern region of India, including Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Telangana, the Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Puducherry.

**Vice Prez M Venkaiah Naidu launches Bharatiya POSHAN Anthem**
Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched the Bharatiya POSHAN Anthem in New Delhi.

- It aims at taking the message of making India malnutrition-free by 2022 to all corners of the country.
- The anthem was conceptualised by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, penned by noted lyricist Prasoon Joshi and sung by Shankar Mahadevan.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in March 2018 launched the 'Poshan Abhiyan or National Nutrition Mission' with an objective to make India malnutrition free by 2022 by ensuring holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children.

**The National Museum of Indian Cinema tickets will now be available on BookMyShow**

The National Museum of Indian Cinema, NMIC tickets will now be available on BookMyShow.

- A Memorandum of Understanding for online ticketing of NMIC has been signed between Films Division and BookMyShow in New Delhi.
- Information and Broadcasting Ministry said, with this, booking a ticket to visit NMIC will be a click away, benefiting film lovers in India and abroad.
- NMIC, the only museum in India dedicated to the cinema is an institution of national importance and was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January this year at Films Division complex, Mumbai.

**Madhu app for e-learning launched in Odisha**

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched ‘Madhu App’, an e-learning mobile phone app, to make classroom learning easier for students.

- By using this Android App, students will be able to download video lectures and exercises by qualified teachers in Odia language.
- The App has been named after the noted freedom fighter and social reformer Madhusudan Das.
- Initially, the App contains videos and exercises in mathematics and science subjects for students from classes 5 to 8.

**Mumbai Central gets first 'Eat Right Station' certification from FSSAI**

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).

- With this, Mumbai Central Railway Station is the country's first "Eat Right Station."
- FSSAI, along with Western Railways (WR) and Indian Railways Catering Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), has trained food handlers, both in canteens and base kitchens.
- They inspected catering establishments at the station and certified and rated the standard of food.

'Joker' fame Joaquin Phoenix named PETA's Person of the Year

'Joker' Star Joaquin Phoenix has been named 2019 Person of the Year by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

- Phoenix is vegan since the age of three and has been a longtime supporter of the animal rights organisation.
- He recently appeared in PETA's "We Are All Animals" billboards in Times Square and on Sunset Billboard as he promoted legislation to ban travelling wild-animal circuses.
- Previous PETA Person of the Year winners includes Pope Francis, Oprah Winfrey, Anjelica Huston, Olivia Munn, Eva Mendes and Alicia Silverstone.

Govt sanctions Rs 100 cr to set up women help desks in police stations

Union Home Ministry has sanctioned a sum of 100 crore rupees from Nirbhaya Fund for setting up and strengthening of Women Help Desks in Police Stations.

- This scheme would be implemented by the States and Union Territories.
- The Help Desks would focus on making the Police Stations more women-friendly and approachable, as they would be the first and single point of contact for any woman walking into a police station.
- Essentially, lady police officers would be deployed at these help desks.
- The officials of Women Help Desk would be trained to be sensitive towards women.

Piyush Goyal inaugurates third edition of National Public Procurement Conclave

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated the third edition of National Public Procurement Conclave in New Delhi.
The two-day conclave has been organized by Government e-Marketplace, GeM in association with Confederation of Indian Industry.

This conclave will prepare a road map for the future of GeM will be put in place that will unify all government procurement, across all Ministries and Departments.

Country's first aqua lab to be set up in Dehradun

Country's first aqua lab to be set up in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

- State forest minister Shri Harak Singh Rawat laid foundation stone of India’s first Ganga centralised aqualab at Wildlife Institute of India (WII) Dehradun
- The aqualabs will be set up under the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).
- Tributaries of river Ganga such as Gomti, Betwa, Kosi will be scientifically studied and their biological components will be preserved in the lab.

Fifteenth Finance Commission submits report to President

Fifteenth Finance Commission has submitted its report for 2020-21 to President Ram Nath Kovind.

- Chairman of the Commission N K Singh, Members Ajay Narayan Jha, Ashok Lahiri, Ramesh Chand, Anoop Singh and Secretary Arvind Mehta called on the President and submitted the report for further necessary action.
- On this occasion, the Commission apprised President Kovind of the recommendations contained in the report.
- The Finance Commission was constituted by the President on the 27th of November 2017 to make recommendations for a period of five years from 1st April 2020 to 31 March 2025.

Exercise INDRA 2019 to be conducted from Dec 10-19

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

- The INDRA series of exercise began in 2003 and the first joint tri-services exercise was conducted in 2017.
- The exercise will consist of a five day training phase consisting of a comprehensive training curriculum.
- The contingents of both the countries will share expertise and their professional experience.

Canada's CPPIB to invest up to $600 million in Indian infrastructure fund

Canada's biggest public pension fund is investing up to $600 million in India's National Investment and
Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), as it seeks to grow its infrastructure bets in Asia's third-largest economy.

- The deal includes a commitment of $150 million in NIIF’s Master Fund and co-investment rights of up to $450 million in future opportunities to invest alongside the Master Fund, the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB).
- India needs investments worth about $778 billion for highways, urban transport and renewable energy by 2022, according to the India Brand Equity Foundation, a government body.

**India 5th worst country for people's privacy, biometric data collection**

According to a new report from Britain-based tech research firm Comparitech India is the fifth worst country in terms of extensive and invasive use of biometric data.

- India is behind China, Malaysia, Pakistan and the US.
- India shares the fifth position with Taiwan, Indonesia and the Philippines, said the study.
- Ireland, Portugal, Cyprus, the UK and Romania emerged as the five best countries in terms of collection, storage and use of biometric data, the results showed.

**Andhra CM Jagan Mohan Reddy launches YSR LAW Nestham**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched 'YSR Law Nestham Scheme' at his camp office at Tadepalli.

- Under this scheme, a stipend of Rs 5,000 has been credited in the accounts of beneficiary junior lawyers with the click of a button.
- Lawyers thanked the Chief Minister for granting Rs 100 crore to Lawyers' Welfare Fund and also for giving a stipend of Rs 5,000 to junior lawyers.

**Punjab Cabinet approves amendment to create rural land banks for industrial development**

The Punjab Cabinet led by Captain Amarinder Singh gave in-principle approval to amend the Punjab Village Common Land (Regulation) Rules, 1964, to create land banks in rural areas to boost industrial development in the city.

- It was, however, decided to further fine-tune the amendments to ensure that the Panchayats get their dues, with all decisions to be taken
on a case to case basis, keeping their interests in view.

- The Cabinet cleared the proposal to provide special provision for transfer of Shamlat Lands for development of industrial infrastructure projects, to be implemented by Industry Department and Punjab Small Industries & Export Corporation.

Avantee mega Food Park inaugurated in MP’s Dewas

In Madhya Pradesh, Union Minister for food processing Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated Avantee mega Food Park in Dewas.

- This first food park of central India is spread over 51 acres and has been constructed at a cost of about 150 crore rupees.
- About 5 thousand local people will get employment from this Mega Food Park.
- Processing of soyabean, gram, wheat and other grains and vegetables will be done in the park. Warehouses will also be opened in Indore, Ujjain, Dhar and Agar in the next phases.

Armed Forces Flag Day: 07 December

Armed Forces Flag Day was observed across the country on 7th of December.

- The day honours the martyrs and Armed Forces personnel, who safeguard the motherland.
- The day is dedicated towards the collection of funds from people for the welfare of the Armed Forces personnel.
- The fund collected on this day is also used for the welfare of the serving personnel and ex-servicemen.

8th India-China joint training exercise commences in Meghalaya

The 8th India-China joint training exercise ‘HAND-IN-HAND 2019’ with the theme counter-terrorism under United Nations mandate commenced at Joint Training Node (JTN), Umroi in Meghalaya.

- The People’s Liberations Army (PLA) contingent from the Tibet Military Command comprising of 130 personnel and the Indian Contingent of similar strength is participating in the 14-day long training exercise.
- The exercise is planned at the company level with respective Battalion Headquarters controlling the training.
- The Chinese contingent is led by Col Hu Chunguang, 1st Infantry Battalion, Tibet Military Command while the Indian contingent is led by Col KJ Singh of the Kumaon Regiment.

Aberdeen in Andaman and Nicobar Islands adjudged best police station in Country
Aberdeen Police station in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands ranks first 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.

- Home Ministry released the list of ten best-performing Police stations in the country.
- Balasinor police station in Gujarat secured the second rank while and Ajk Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh got the 3rd position.
- The ranking of top ten Police Stations out of over 15 thousand 500 Police Stations in the country was done through data analysis, direct observation and public feedback.

Human Library held in Mysuru

In Karnataka, Human Library, a concept which seeks to replace books with humans, will be held in the City of Palaces, Mysuru.

- It intends to generate greater human cohesion across various social, religious and ethnic diversities.
- Copenhagen, Denmark-headquartered Human Library is a registered international non-profit organization.
- The notion of Human Library was initially launched in the year 2000 and currently exists in more than 85 countries, known as The Human Library Organization.

Assam forms a squad to tackle human-wildlife conflicts in state

Aiming to control the human-elephant conflicts, the Assam government launched Anti-Depedration Squads of the state forest department.

- The squad would be stationed at 15 major human-wildlife conflict districts in order to mitigate the problem and to ensure the safety of both humans and wildlife.
- The state forest department engaged specially trained 50 frontline staff to handle conflict situations.
- The squads will be currently equipped with 150 numbers of 12 bore pump action guns, 15,000 rounds of rubber bullets and other essential items.

NEFT facility to be available round the clock from December 16
In a bid to promote digital transactions, Reserve Bank has said that round-the-clock transactions will be allowed under the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) system from December 16.

- RBI said that the 24x7 NEFT system will be available on all days of the year, including holidays.
- NEFT transactions are settled in hourly batches.
- For weekdays, the batches are from 8 am to 7 pm.
- On first and third Saturdays, the settlement happens from 8 am to 1 pm.

Worldwide arms sales rise by nearly 5% in 2018

- According to a new report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the market is dominated by the United States.
- The turnover of the 100 biggest arms manufacturers came to 420 billion dollars.
- US manufacturers alone accounted for 59 per cent of the market, or a turnover of 246 billion dollars, up 7.2 per cent on the previous year.
- Russia was second in the rankings for arms production, with 8.6 per cent of the market, just ahead of the United Kingdom on 8.4 per cent and France on 5.5 per cent.
- The world's largest arms maker remains the US firm Lockheed Martin, as it has been since 2009.

Rafale jet tail numbers to feature former Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa’s initials

In recognition of Air Chief Marshal (retd) B S Dhanoa’s unrelenting backing for the Rafale deal, the Indian Air Force has decided to put tail numbers in 30 Rafale jets with ‘BS’ initials.

- Six Rafale trainer aircraft will carry RB series tail numbers which stand for Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, the current Chief of Air Staff who played a key role as lead negotiator for the mega deal.
- The political controversy relating to purchase of 36 Rafale jets from French aerospace major Dassault Aviation for the IAF at a cost of Rs 59,000 crore peaked during Dhanoa’s tenure as chief of the air staff and he had stoutly defended the deal.
- Out of 36 Rafale jets, 30 will be fighter jets and six will be trainers.
• The trainer jets will be twin-seater and they will have almost all the features of the fighter jets.

EAM Jaishankar meets Israeli counterpart Katz

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Israel, Katz.

• The Israeli Foreign Minister raised the issue of the need to increase trade between the two countries and discussed measures required to encourage it.
• External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Israel, Katz.
• Katz presented his "Tracks for Regional Peace" initiative to his Indian counterpart.

Incredible India Road Show to be held in Singapore

The Incredible India Road Show will be held in Singapore, positioning the country as a preferred destination for tourists.

• India Tourism Office in Singapore said the roadshow by Indian delegation will provide a platform to the stakeholders of India's tourism industry to interact with their Singaporean counterparts.
• Indian delegation comprises 25 tour operators and destination management companies along with representations from the state governments of Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.
• A total of 1,75,852 tourists from Singapore visited India in 2017, a growth of 7.4 per cent on the year, said the India Tourism Singapore office.

Prez Kovind lays foundation stone for Paika Rebellion memorial in Odisha

In Odisha, President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for a memorial to mark completion of 200 years of Paika Rebellion, a valiant uprising of Paikas in 1817 against the British Rule which is often termed as the First War of Independence.

• The proposed project will come up at the foothills of Barunei hills in Khurda district.
• The memorial is seen as an epitome of Odisha’s valour and will serve as an inspiration for the youth.
• The Paika Rebellion memorial which will come up in 10 acres of land will be a source
Eklavya Model Residential School All India Sports Competition will start at Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.

- Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) scheme is one of the flagship interventions of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs introduced in 1997-98 to ensure tribal students get access to quality education in the remote tribal areas.
- Tribal Folk artists from Madhya Pradesh and other states will perform cultural programmes during the event.
- As many as 4500 players of 284 Eklavya Schools of 20 states will exhibit their skills in 16 sports disciplines during the competition.

Lok Sabha has passed the Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019 after a marathon discussion and division.

- In all, 311 members voted in favour of the bill and 80 members opposed it.
- The bill, among other things, seeks to grant citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Parsis, Buddhists and Christians who migrated to India till the end of 2014 from countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, due to reasons like persecutions.
- However, the bill exempts certain tribal areas included in the Sixth Schedule and those falling under the Inner Line Permit Regime in the North Eastern States.
- It amends the Citizenship Act 1955, the Passport Act 1920 and the Foreigners Act 1946 for implementation of its provisions.

Govt to allow girls’ education in all Sainik School

Union Government will allow girls’ education in all Sainik School in a phased manner.

- Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik said, presently entry of girls in five Sainik Schools has been allowed.
- These 5 schools are Kalikiri (Andhra Pradesh), Kodagu (Karnataka), Ghorakhal (Uttarakhand), Chandrapur (Maharashtra) and Bijapur (Karnataka).
- The co-educational policy adopted on a pilot-basis at Sainik School in Mizoram and now is being implemented across the country.
Finland elects Sanna Marin, the youngest-ever Prime Minister

Finland’s Social Democrats elected a 34-year-old former transport minister to the post of the prime minister, making her the youngest head of government in the country’s history.

- Sanna Marin narrowly won vote to replace outgoing leader Antti Rinne, who resigned on after losing the confidence of the coalition partner Centre Party over his handling of a postal strike.
- Former PM Antti Rinne had headed Finland’s centre-left five-party coalition since June.

NSE launches interest rate options on 10-yr govt bonds

National Stock Exchange launched interest rate options on ten-year Government bonds.

- The exchange recorded a turnover of 5,926 contracts on the first day of its launch.
- Interest rate options will provide institutional investors the ability to manage risk through a non-linear product.
- Interest rate options are based on the underlying ten-year government bonds, which are 7.26 per cent 2029 bond and 6.45 percent 2029 bond.

MEA to host 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue, Delhi Dialogue XI

Ministry of External Affairs will host the 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue and Delhi Dialogue XI at the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi on 13th and 14th of this month.

- For the first time, these two track 1.5 dialogues will be held consecutively and on similar Indo-Pacific themes.
- The Indian Ocean Dialogue will take place on 13th December and the theme is " Indo-Pacific: Re-imagining the Indian Ocean through an Expanded Geography”.
- The theme for this year’s Delhi Dialogue is "Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific”, and is being organized with the assistance of the Research and Information System for Developing Countries.

India among top 10 countries with higher climate performance
India, for the first time, ranks among the top 10 in this year's Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) released at the COP25 climate summit in Spanish capital Madrid.

- The current levels of per capita emissions and energy use in India ranked 9th in the high category showing that emissions are still comparatively low.
- India's 2030 renewable energy target is rated very high for its well-below 2 degrees Celsius compatibility.
- As none of the countries assessed is already on a path compatible with the Paris climate targets, 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.
- China, the largest global emitter slightly improves its ranking in the index to 30th place.

**ISRO launches earth observation satellite, RISAT-2BR1 from Sriharikota**

The ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) launched its earth observation satellite, RISAT-2BR1 on PSLV-C48 from the First Launch Pad (FLP) of Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

- RISAT-2BR1, a Radar imaging earth observation satellite weighing about 628 kg, will be placed into an orbit of 576 km at an inclination of 37 degrees.
- PSLV-C48, which is the 50th mission of PSLV, will also carry 9 customer satellites of Israel, Italy, Japan and the USA as co-passengers.
- These international customer satellites are being launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited.

**3 Day “International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems” for BIMSTEC countries begins in New Delhi**

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

- Participants from all the Seven BIMSTEC Countries viz. Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and BIMSTEC Secretariat is attending the Seminar.
- The seminar is being organized as a Government of India initiative as announced earlier by the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi at the 4th BIMSTEC Summit at Kathmandu on 30-31st August, 2019.

**Points to Remember**

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation of seven nations of South Asia and SouthEast Asia.
- The BIMSTEC member states ‘Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal.

**Saudi Aramco becomes most valuable listed company in history**

Saudi Aramco has secured its position as the most valuable listed company in history after investor appetite for the world’s biggest fossil fuel producer pushed its market value to $1.9tn (£1.4tn) on its first day of trade.

- Shares in the Saudi state-backed oil company defied Aramco’s critics by climbing nearly $200bn above the $1.7tn valuation set before its market debut on Riyadh’s stock exchange.
- The world’s biggest contributor to the climate crisis had been valued at more than Apple and Facebook – previously the world’s most valuable and fifth-most valuable companies respectively – combined.
- It is also twice the size of Amazon and Google's parent company, and bigger than the next five listed oil companies put together.

**Parliament passes "The Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019"**

The Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019 has been passed by the Parliament, with the Rajya Sabha approving it.

- 125 members supported the legislation while 105 opposed it.
- The House also negated the amendments moved by Opposition parties while approving the Bill.
- The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 9 December.
- 311 members had voted in its favour and 80 members opposing it.
- The bill amends the Citizenship Act, 1955 to make illegal migrants of six communities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan eligible for Indian citizenship.
- The communities are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians.

**Justice Nanavati-Mehta Commission gives clean chit to then Gujarat govt in 2002 riots**

Justice Nanavati-Mehta Commission has given a clean chit to the Gujarat government in 2002 riots.

- The commission tabled its final report in the state assembly.
- The report said that the riots were not organised.
- Minister of State for Home Pradeepsinh Jadeja tabled the report in the House, five years after it was submitted to the then state government.
- The first part of the report of the commission, formed to inquire into the cause of the Godhra train burning incident and subsequent communal riots, was tabled in the Assembly on 25th September 2009.

**Odisha to set up 45 new fast track courts**
To expedite the trial of cases relating to women and children, 45 new fast track courts will be set up in Odisha.

- State Law Minister Pratap Jena said 21 courts would be dedicated for cases of rape and sexual harassment of women.
- The remaining 24 fast track courts will specifically deal with the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) cases.
- The State government’s action comes after Centre’s decision to formulate a scheme for setting up 1,023 fast track special courts for expeditious trial and disposal of rape cases.

Andhra cabinet approves Disha Act providing for harsher punishments for crimes against women

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved the enactment of the Andhra Pradesh Criminal Law (Amendment) Act also known as the Disha Act that provides for harsher punishments, including death sentence to those guilty of heinous crimes against women.

- As announced earlier in the assembly by Chief Minister, in the presence of adequate conclusive evidence in cases of crime against women such as rape, acid attacks among others the judgment must be pronounced within 21 days and trial must be completed in 14 days.
- The cabinet also approved the Andhra Pradesh Special Court for Specified Offences against Women and Children Act 2019, which allows the establishment of special courts in each district to address crimes against women and children.
- The bill allows taking actions under Indian Penal Code section 354 (E) against those who upload posts on social media that degrades women's reputation.
- For the same, first time offenders would be punished with two years imprisonment, second-time offenders with four years of imprisonment.

National Tribal Dance Festival to be held in Raipur from Dec 27-29

A three-day National Tribal Dance Festival will be held in Chhattisgarh’s capital Raipur from December 27 to 29.

- In the event international folk artists from 23 states and six other countries are expected to take part and portray their respective tribal folk culture.
- Nearly 1,400 artists belonging to 151 art troupes from 23 states and guest artists from six countries including Sri Lanka, Belarus,
President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019, turning it into an Act.

- The Act comes into effect with its publication in the official gazette.
- The Act makes illegal migrants of six communities - Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014 eligible for Indian citizenship.
- The amendment is not applicable to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and in the areas covered under the Inner Line Permit.
- The Inner Line Permit regime is applicable in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram.

GIFT city welcomes Lok Sabha nod to IFSC Authority Bill, 2019

Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gujarat has welcomed the passing of the International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019 by Lok Sabha.

- Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of GIFT City- India’s only IFSC-International Financial Services Centre- Mr. Tapan Ray said that the International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019 passed by Lok Sabha is a welcome step.
- This will further accelerate and fast track development of the IFSC at GIFT City.

ISRO begins preparations for setting up third rocket launchpad

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has begun preparatory work for setting up a third rocket launchpad in the small coastal hamlet of Kulashekhrapattinam in the Thuthukudi district of Tamil Nadu.

- The District Administration has appointed a Special Tehsildar along with eight more Tahsildars to speed up the process of land acquisition for the centre.
- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has two launch pads at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- The demand for additional launch pads has arisen as a result of the increase in the number of satellite launches from India, both for domestic and international customers.
Indian 'Greta' urges global leaders to take immediate action to save planet

Eight-year-old Licypriya Kangujam, known as Indian 'Greta' for her passion towards the fight against climate change has urged global leaders to take immediate action to save the planet and the future of young children like her.

- Speaking at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP-25 at Madrid, the young activist from Manipur who has already spoken in 21 countries on climate change, gave the world a glimpse of her resolve as she urged global leaders to act now against climate change.
- The little girl has quickly shot to limelight with Spanish newspapers hailing her as 'Greta' of the Global South.

Union Cabinet authorises NHAI to set up Infrastructure Investment Trust

The Union Cabinet recently authorizes the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to set up the Infrastructure Investment Trust based on the guidelines of the Securities and Exchange Board of India.

- This will enable NHAI to monetize completed National Highways that have a toll collection track record of atleast 1 year and the NHAI reserves the right to levy toll on identified highway.
- InvIT Trust will be under Indian Trust Act, 1882 and Securities and Exchange Board of India (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014.

French firm Suez to rehabilitate Mangaluru’s drinking water at Rs 565.79 cr

Suez, a leading French multinational corporation headquartered in Paris with operations primarily in water, electricity and natural gas supply and waste management, has won the €72 million (Rs 565.79 crore) contract for the extension, rehabilitation and operation of the drinking water distribution system of the entire city of Mangaluru, Karnataka.

- This 11.5-year contract is to ensure a 24/7 water supply for the city's 550,000 inhabitants.
- The objective of this 24/7 water supply project, financed by the Asian Development Bank, is to upgrade the entire distribution system to cater to demand as per the needs of the year 2036.

Puducherry Govt introduces Rs 10 crore Innovation & Startup Policy 2019
The Government of Puducherry launched an “Aspiring Puducherry-Innovation & Startup Policy 2019” to create a corpus fund of Rs 10 crores to support start-up incubators and to develop co-working spaces.

- The policy was launched by M.O.H.F Shahjahan, Minister for Industries and Revenue, Puducherry.
- The Puducherry Start-up Cell will be the nodal agency for implementing the policy and will facilitate filing of patents, trademarks and designs.

**Indian Passports to have lotus symbol**

Lotus will be on Indian Passport according to MEA.

- Ministry of External Affairs said it was part of the enhanced security features to identify fake passports and involves using other national symbols as well on rotation.
- Apart from the lotus, other national symbols will be used on rotation.
- Right now it is lotus and then next month there will be something else.

**Govt to sell 100% stake in Air India**

India is gearing up to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in the capital during the first week of March 2020.

- The theme of this conference is ‘Geosciences: The Basic Science for Sustainable Development'.
- Popularly described as the Olympics of Geosciences, the IGCs are a prestigious global geoscientific events held once every
four years and participated by around 5,000-6,000 geoscientists from all across the world.

- India is the only Asian country to host the event twice.
- In 1964, India had hosted it for the first time, which was the 22nd IGC, inaugurated by the then President Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharam on Forbes 100 most powerful women list

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, HCL Corporation CEO and Executive Director Roshni Nadar Malhotra and Biocon Founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw have been named among the world's 100 most powerful women by Forbes.

- 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 second spot and Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, ranked third.
- Sitharaman is ranked 34th.
- CEO of HCL Corporation, Nadar Malhotra is ranked 54th on the list.
- Mazumdar-Shaw, ranked 65 on the list, is India's richest self-made woman and founder of the country's largest biopharmaceutical firm Biocon in 1978.

West Bengal tops in a 100-day work programme for promoting livelihoods

West Bengal has been selected for the 1st prize in 100-Day Work Programme for Promoting Livelihoods.

- The Rural Development Ministry has selected Bankura and Cooch Behar Districts of the state for 1st and 2nd positions among districts in the country in implementation of rural job scheme.
- The Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also informed that Baburmahal Gram Panchayat of Kulpi in South 24 Parganas District has also bagged the best performance award from the Centre.

Amazon launches Audible Suno app in India

Amazon-owned company, Audible, has launched the Audible Suno app on the Google Play Store.

- It offers audio content from nearly 60 content creators including celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan, Karan Johar, Tabu and Anurag Kashyap, both in Hindi and in English.
- On Apple's App Store, these shows are available in the company's existing Audible app.

Nation celebrates Vijay Diwas
The nation celebrates Vijay Diwas on 16 December to commemorate India’s victory over Pakistan in 1971 war.

- 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.

**Coal Min to set up Sustainable Development Cell to promote clean mining**

The Ministry of Coal has decided to establish a Sustainable Development Cell (SDC) in order to promote environmentally sustainable coal mining in the country.

- It will also address the environmental concerns during the decommissioning or closure of mines.

- The SDC will advise, mentor, plan and monitor the mitigation measures taken by the coal companies for maximising the utilisation of available resources in a sustainable way.

**WDO to launch World Design Protopolis in Bengaluru**

The World Design Organization is all set to launch its new global programme World Design Protopolis in Bengaluru.

- It aims at implementing holistic progress in mega cities across the world and making them sustainable.
- The announcement was made at the ongoing three-day Kochi Design Week (KDW), India's largest design conclave that kicked off at Bolgatty Island.
- The project aims to measure the progress of the city, attract investments and solve problems so that the city becomes a better place for the citizens.

**FASTag system functioning smoothly**
FASTags or prepaid rechargeable tags for Vehicle toll collection with automatic payment has come into force from 15 December.

- It became mandatory for all vehicles.
- Chief General Manager of National Highways Authority of India Amarendra Kumar said that the system is working very smoothly.
- Now the drivers will not have to stop their vehicles at toll plazas to pay tax.
- National Highways Authority of India has equipped all fee plazas with Electronic Toll Collection System.
- A FASTag uses radio frequency identification technology to enable direct toll payments from a moving vehicle.
- If anyone goes into an electronic toll collection lane without a FASTag, he or she has to pay double charges.

Google Earth covers 98 percent of the entire population

Search engine giant Google has revealed that its powerful mapping service, Google Earth now covers more than 98 percent of the world.

- It has captured 10 million miles of Street View imagery, a distance that could circle the globe more than 400 times.
- When it comes to Google Earth, the software that lets you browse the globe with 3D representation, right from the comfort of your couch, offers 6 million square miles of high definition satellite images, covering more than 98 percent of the entire population.

Google also shared more information about how exactly all these images are captured.

Three-day state-level orange festival begins in Manipur

In Manipur, a three-day State-level Orange Festival began.

- Chief Minister N. Biren Singh inaugurated the festival at district headquarters Tamenglong.
- Tamenglong district is the largest producer of orange fruit in Manipur.
- The state government under the sponsorship of North Eastern Council organise the festival annually to promote the fruit and encourage its growers.
- This year, there are more than 300 orange stalls in the festival.
- On day one, orange growers’ competition was held and prizes were distributed to top position Tamenglong orange would received Geographical Indication Tagging Certificate very soon.

7-Day International Film Festival in Khajuraho
In Madhya Pradesh, the Chief Minister Kamal Nath inaugurated the 7-Day International Film Festival in Shilpkala village of Khajuraho.

- Films from the country and abroad including Bundelkhandi will be screened at the Tapra Talkies made for the festival.
- The International Khajuraho Film Festival is being organized by the Prayas Sanstha in collaboration with the State Government.
- Events like interaction with film stars, filmmaking workshop, mobile filmmaking workshop, plays, programmes for promoting local art and culture, herbal forest fair, animal fair etc are also organized during the Film Festival.

**Portuguese PM Antonio Costa to visit India from 19-20 December**

Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Costa will be on a two-day visit to India from 19 December.

- He will attend the second meeting of the Organising Committee on the celebrations for the 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- The Organising Committee meeting will be presided over by President Ram Nath Kovind.
- The Portuguese Prime Minister is also scheduled to hold official talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- This will be the third official meeting between the two leaders in a span of 3 years.

**GEM launches national outreach programme 'GeM Samvaad'**

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

- The outreach programme will take place with stakeholders across the country and with local sellers to facilitate on-boarding of local sellers on the marketplace.
- The programme was launched by Commerce Secretary Anup Wadhawan in New Delhi.
- The programme will take place till the 17th of February next year and will cover all the States and Union Territories of the country.
- GeM has more than 15 lakh products and around 20,000 services, more than 3 lakh registered sellers and service providers and more than 40 thousand government buyer organizations.

**SSB starts laser fencing along Indo-Nepal border**

Sashastra Seema Bal has started laser fencing along the Indo-Nepal border.

- The main purpose of laser fencing is to prevent third party nationals from entering without permission.
- SSB Director General K Rajesh Chandra gave this information during a press conference held on the occasion of 56th Foundation Day of SSB in New Delhi.
- He said that cases of unauthorized entry of Third Party Nationals have increased this year as compared to previous years.
- The SSB is deployed to guard the 2450-km-long border with Nepal and Bhutan.

**India’s gender gap widens, slips 4 places in WEF survey**

India has slipped four places to rank 112th globally in terms of gender gap amid widening disparity in terms of women’s health and survival and economic participation.

- While Iceland remains the world’s most gender-neutral country, India has moved down the ladder from its 108th position last year on the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Report.
- It ranks below countries like China (106th), Sri Lanka (102nd), Nepal (101st), Brazil (92nd), Indonesia (85th) and Bangladesh (50th).
- Yemen is ranked the worst (153rd), while Iraq is 152nd and Pakistan 151st.

**Three capitals for Andhra Pradesh**

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy indicated that the State could have three capitals following the decentralisation concept.

- The Chief Minister said, the existing Capital Amaravati could become the "Legislative Capital", the Port city Visakhapatnam the "Executive Capital" and the Kurnool the "Judiciary Capital".
- Meanwhile he also added that a final call would be taken only after the Expert Committee constituted to look into the issue submitted its report.

**Five-day music festival ‘Tansen Samaroh’ begins in Gwalior**

In Madhya Pradesh, popular classical music festival ‘Tansen Samaroh’ began with traditional style in Gwalior.

- The five-day festival is celebrated every year in the memory of one of the most eminent singers of Indian history, ‘Mian Tansen’.
- Tansen Samaroh, the oldest and esteemed classical music festival in India is organised by Ustad Alauddin Khan Kala Evam Sangeet Academy, under the Madhya Pradesh culture department.
- It attracts thousands of musicians and aspiring singers from all over the country.
- It is the 95th year of the festival. Artistes from Greece, USA, Iran and Belgium will perform in different sessions of Tansen festival.

**Phase-III of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana launched**

Rural Development Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched Phase-III of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in New Delhi to further enhance connectivity
of villages with hospitals, schools and agricultural markets.

- The Phase-III of PMGSY aims at consolidation of 1 lakh 25 thousand Kilometers through Routes and Major Rural Links that connect habitations to Gramin Agricultural Markets, Higher Secondary Schools and Hospitals with an estimated cost of 80 thousand 250 crore rupees for the period 2019-20 to 2024-25.
- The Central Share will be 53 thousand 800 crore rupees.
- The funding pattern for the scheme will be 60:40 between Centre and the States.
- For North-East and the Himalayan States the ratio will be 90:10.

'OCTOPUS' inducted into Andhra CM's security cover

In order to enhance the security cover of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, special force 'OCTOPUS' has been inducted into his security.

- Organisation for Counter-Terrorist Operations, also called 'OCTOPUS', is a specialised and elite counter-terrorism unit of the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- A team of 32 members divided into five teams would be part of the security.

Odisha CM launches 'Jalsathi' programme

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 'Jalsathi' programme which will ensure supply of safe drinking water to all households in the state.

- Patnaik also distributed water quality testing kits and POS (point of sale) machines to the women volunteers - 'Jalasathis'.
- Inclusion of women volunteers from Mission Shakti for piped water supply is a cherished step as they will serve the people as 'Jalasathis'.
- Under the 'Jalsathi' programme, about 5,000 women will be engaged for supplying safe drinking water.

National conference on ‘Uniformed Women in Prison Administration’ begins in Bhopal

In Madhya Pradesh, a two-day National Conference on ‘Uniformed Women in Prisons Administration’ begins at Central Academy for Police Training at Bhopal.

- Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai inaugurated the conference.
- For the first time, the conference is being held in Madhya Pradesh outside Delhi.
- At present, there are more than 900 uniformed women government servants working in the state jail department.

**Upgraded version of Pinaka guided rocket system, QR-SAM successfully test fired**

India had successfully test-fired two missiles from Chandipur in Odisha.

- The upgraded version of Pinaka guided rocket system was test-fired from the DRDO’s Proof and Experimental Establishment firing test range while the all-weather tracked-chassis Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QR-SAM) tested from a mobile launcher at a launch complex of the Integrated Test Range.
- The indigenously developed Pinaka and QR-SAM weapon system test achieved the desired accuracy by hitting the intended target with a high degree of precision and met all mission objectives.
- Pinaka system has a maximum range of 75 km for Mark-II variant and can fire a salvo of 12 rockets in less than 45 seconds.

**Exercise ‘Apharan’**

The Indian Navy, in collaboration with Indian Coast Guard, Cochin Port Trust conducted a large scale Anti Hijacking Exercise “Apharan” off the Port of Kochi.

- This was the first time that such a large scale exercise involving all stakeholders has been conducted in Kerala.

- The Exercise ‘Apharan’ was aimed at streamlining the response mechanism/preparedness to any attempt by Anti-National Elements to hijack a merchant vessel or attempt forced entry of a rogue/commandeered merchant vessel into Kochi harbour.

**Tripura gets its first SEZ**

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has notified the setting up of the first ever Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Tripura.

- The SEZ is being set-up at Paschim Jalefa,, South Tripura District, which is 130 km away from Agartala.
- It will be a Sector Specific Economic Zone for Agro-Based Food Processing.
- The estimated investment in the project will be around 1550 Crore.
- The SEZ is estimated to generate 12,000 skilled jobs.
- Rubber based industries, textile and Apparel Industries, bamboo and Agri-food Processing Industries will be set-up in the SEZ.
- After it is set up, 100 percent Income Tax exemption will be provided on export income for SEZ units under Section 10AA of the Income Tax Act for the first 5 years.

**ICG conducted ‘Swachchh Samundra NW-2019’ off Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch, Gujarat**

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) conducted a two-day regional level pollution response exercise named 'Swachchh Samundra NW-2019' at sea off Vadinar in Gulf of Kutch.
The exercise was conducted to validate and reinforce the response mechanism for oil pollution incidents and enable the Indian Coast Guard to fine-tune the actions required in such eventualities.

- The exercise was conducted in two phases.
- The Gulf of Kutch (GoK) region handles 70 per cent of the oil imported by India and 11 Single Point Moorings (SPMs) out of total 27 SPM.

**ADB’s 490 million dollars loan to upgrade Indian state's roads**

Asian Development Bank, ADB and Government of India signed a 490 million dollars loan for public-private partnership PPP project.

- It will upgrade about one thousand six hundred kilometres of state highways and major district roads from single-lane to two-lane widths in Madhya Pradesh.
- An additional 286 million dollars investment will be mobilised through private sector participation under the PPP modality.
- State highways and major district roads provide a crucial link between rural roads and national highways and up-gradation of these roads.
- The project will upgrade 750 kilometres of state highways and 850 kilometres of major district roads to two-lane and all-weather standards with road safety features.

Chief Justice of India SA Bobde constituted a panel of two Supreme Court judges to speed up sexual assault cases that remain stalled in courts across the country.

- The judicial committee, comprising Justices Subhash Reddy and MR Shah, will monitor rape cases being heard in trial courts and expeditiously dispose of them in coordination with the state high courts concerned.
- The decision was taken in view of a perception that the people were losing faith in the judiciary due to delays in resolving such cases.

**India is the world's third largest producer of scientific articles**

With over 1.35 lakh scientific papers published, India has become the world's third largest publisher of science and engineering articles, according to a US government agency data.

- As per the statistics compiled by the US National Science Foundation (NSF), the number of scientific papers published worldwide increased from 17,55,850 in 2008 to 25,55,959 in 2018.
- China, which accounts for 20.67 per cent of all global publications in scientific articles, is at the top position, followed by the US at 16.54 per cent.

**National Mathematics Day: 22 December**

The Indian government declared 22 December to be National Mathematics Day.

- This was announced by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on 26 February 2012.
- Srinivasa Ramanujan was born on 22 December, 1887, Erode.
- He made substantial contributions to mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series, and continued fractions, including solutions to mathematical problems then considered unsolvable.

**PM Modi addresses ASSOCHAM Annual Conference**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the annual general meeting of Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India in New Delhi.

**Wipro to upskill 10,000 students with Nasscom**

Software major Wipro has partnered with the Indian IT industry apex body Nasscom to upskill 10,000 students from 20 engineering colleges across the country.

- The company’s TalentNext prepares faculty and academic leaders to train students through future skills, a new age platform built to bridge the industry-academia skill gap and help the former keep pace with emerging technologies.
- As the IT apex body aims to add nine crore techies to the industry by 2030, partnership with global firms like Wipro will ensure the students are equipped with the right skills to be employed soon after their graduation.
- The initiative will also create a talent pool of students, certified by the partners (Wipro and Nasscom).

**National Farmers Day: 23 December**

December 23 is celebrated as ‘Kisan Diwas’ or ‘National Farmers’ Day’ every year.

- The day honours Chaudhary Charan Singh, the 5th Prime Minister of India who was born this day.
- It is believed that ‘Zamindari Abolition Bill-1952’ was passed due to Chaudhary Charan Singh’s hard work.
• He served as the Prime Minister of India between 28 July 1979 and 14 January 1980.

India constructs Girls' Hostel for Nepal Armed Police Force School at Kirtipur

The Government of India has constructed Girls' Hostel for Nepal Armed Police Force School, Kirtipur.

• Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, Dr Ajay Kumar inaugurated hostel building at Kirtipur in Kathmandu district.
• Nepal Armed Police Force (APF) School is an academic institution created under the APF Welfare Service Centre of Nepal Armed Police Force.
• The school was established in 2005 and it has over 21 per cent of girls students.
• The new infrastructure constructed with the Government of India’s grant assistance of 40.42 million Nepali Rupees is a two-storied girls’ hostel.

Integral Coach Factory produces 3000 Coaches in record 215 days

Integral Coach Factory (ICF) of Indian Railways, Chennai has produced its 3000th coach of the year in less than nine months.

• This would help in meeting the growing demand for coaches.
• The number of working days to achieve the above figure has been reduced from 289 days in the last year to 215 days in the current year.

• Points to Remember
• Integral Coach Factory is a manufacturer of rail coaches located in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.
• It was established in 1952, is owned and operated by the Indian Railways.

Prez Kovind releases mobile app of Red Cross Society of India in Hyderabad

President Ram Nath Kovind released the mobile app of the Red Cross Society of India in Hyderabad.

• He inaugurated the mobile app formally at a dinner hosted by Telangana governor Tamilisai Sounderarajan at Rajbhavan in his honour.
• Developed by the Telangana Centre for Good Governance in less than three months, the mobile app is accessible in all languages.
• So far, 13 lakh members including junior red cross members downloaded the app.

EChO Network launched to catalyze cross-disciplinary leadership in India

Prof. K VijayRaghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, launched EChO Network program to foster cross-disciplinary leadership in India.
- Named the EChO Network, it focuses on increasing research, knowledge, and awareness of Indian ecology and the environment.
- It is hoped that this program would develop a national network to catalyse a new generation of Indians who can solve real-world problems in medicine, agriculture, ecology, and technology.
- The network aims to identify gaps in knowledge regarding environment and then train leaders in research and outreach on these topics.

'Rajasthan government starts first Janta Clinic'

Rajasthan Chief Minister Gehlot inaugurated the first Janta clinic at in the Malviya Nagar area of Jaipur to provide free primary health care to people living in slums.

- In its first phase, 12 Janta Clinics will be opened in Jaipur where people would get free medicines, and free medical examination in some cases.
- Later, in the second and third phases of this scheme, Janta Clinics will be opened in other areas.

National Consumer Rights Day: 24 December

National Consumer Day is observed every year on Dec 24.

- The objective is to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and the need to make every consumer more aware of their rights and responsibilities.
• On this day the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was enacted.
• The Act aims to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation, such as defective goods, deficiency in service and unfair trade practices.

Urban India declared Open defecation free

Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban has achieved its target of creating Urban India Open Defecation Free.

• Urban areas of 35 states and Union Territories have become ODF.
• In all, 4,320 cities out of 4,372 have declared themselves ODF, of which 4,167 cities have been certified through third-party verification.
• This has been achieved by the construction of nearly 65.81 lakh individual household toilets against Mission target of 59 lakhs and 5.89 lakh seats of public toilets against Mission target of 5.08 lakh seats.

India, Iran satisfied with progress of Chabahar Port

India and Iran have expressed satisfaction at the progress achieved in the operationalization of the Shahid Beheshti Port, Chabahar.

• External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar and the Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif recognized that it has a potential to act as a gateway between the Indian subcontinent, Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia and Europe.
• They also welcomed the utilization of the port for exports from Afghanistan and discussed ways to promote it for enhancing wider regional connectivity for trade and transit.
• The 19th session of the India-Iran Joint Commission was held in Tehran.

JMM-Congress-RJD alliance set to form new govt in Jharkhand

JMM-Congress-RJD Alliance is set to form a new government in Jharkhand.

• The alliance has won 47 seats in the 81-member assembly while BJP got 25 seats.
• The JMM bagged 30 and the Congress won 16 seats.
• While Jharkhand Vikas Morcha has won 3 seats, AJSU bagged 2.
• RJD, NCP and CPI-ML have bagged 1 seat each.
• Two independent candidates were also declared elected.
• Polling for the 81-member State Assembly took place in five phases between 30th of November and 20th of December.
Indian Railways to modernize its signalling system

Indian Railways has decided to modernize its Signalling system on its entire network by implementing Modern Train Control System (MTCS).

- This is one of the most ambitious modernization projects which envisages upgradation of a signaling system for improving safety, Line Capacity and to run trains at a higher speed.
- Four works of the total 640-kilometre route at a cost of 1810 crore rupees have been sanctioned as pilot projects in Supplementary Works Programmes 2018-19 for extensive trials of Modern Train Control System.
- The work includes revision of Automatic Train Protection System, Electronic Interlocking System and Remote Diagnostic and Predictive Maintenance System.

First tripartite Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed under Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Fund (FIDF)

The first tripartite Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the department of Fisheries Government of India, NARBARD and the Government of Tamil Nadu for the implementation of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Fund (FIDF).

- A dedicated fund has been created namely the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund with a total of Rs 7522.48 crore to address the infrastructure requirement for fisheries sector.
- FIDF provides concessional finance to the eligible entities, cooperatives, individuals and entrepreneurs for development of identified fisheries infrastructure.
- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and all scheduled banks are Nodal Loaning entities (NLEs) to provide concessional finance under the (FIDF).

PM Modi unveiled Atal Bihari Vajpayee statue in Lucknow

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow.

- The event coincides with the birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the co-founder of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).
- Atal Bihari Vajpayee served three terms as the Prime Minister of India.
- He was the first Indian prime minister who was not a member of the Indian National
Congress party to have served a full five-year term in office.

**Cabinet approves Atal Bhujal Yojana with total outlay of Rs. 6000 crore**

The Cabinet approved Atal Bhujal Yojana, a Central Sector Scheme with total outlay of six thousand crore rupees.

- The scheme will be implemented over a period of 5 years in identified areas in Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
- The Cabinet also approved conduct of Census of India 2021 and updation of National Population Register.
- Cabinet approved expenditure of over 8 thousand 754 crore rupees for the exercise of Census of India 2021 and over 3 thousand 941 crore rupees for updation of National Population Register.

**Andhra CM Jagan launches YSR Nethanna Nestham to benefit weavers**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy launched welfare scheme ‘YSR Nethanna Nestham’.

- The government had started a new scheme for the well-being of every handloom weaver.
- Every handloom weaver would get Rs 24,000 annually as part of the new scheme started by the government.
- Mr Reddy said nearly 85,000 handloom weaver families in the State would be benefited by the new scheme.

**PM Modi launches Atal Bhujal Yojana**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the 'Atal Bhujal Yojana' on the occasion of 95th birth anniversary of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee

- The scheme with a total outlay of Rs.6000 crore will be implemented over a period of 5 years.
- It aims to improve ground water management through community participation in identified priority areas in seven States.
- The states identified are Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
- Out of the total outlay of Rs. 6000 crore for the scheme, 50% shall be in the form of World Bank loan.

**Government launched Good Governance Index**

Minister of State for Public Grievances and Pensions Dr Jitendra Singh launched Good Governance Index in New Delhi on the occasion of Good Governance Day i.e 25 December.
The Good Governance Day is observed on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Tamil Nadu topped the Good Governance Index launched by the Centre.

Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh followed among the ‘Big States’.

Among the ‘Big States’, the poor performers are Odisha, Bihar, Goa, and Uttar Pradesh with Jharkhand coming last.

The States and UTs are divided into three groups: Big States, North-East and Hill States, and Union Territories.

Among the North-East and Hill States, Himachal Pradesh was ranked first, followed by Uttarakhand, Tripura, Mizoram and Sikkim.

Puducherry is the best governed Union Territory followed by Chandigarh and Delhi.

Lakshadweep is the worst performing UT.

NITI Aayog to launch SDG India Index on Dec 30

NITI Aayog will launch the second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, which documents the progress made by India’s States and Union Territories towards implementing the 2030 SDG targets, on December 30.

The SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019–20 have been developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the United Nations in India, and the Global Green Growth Institute.

It will be launched by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar.

The SDG India Index, whose first edition was launched in December 2018, was the first tool developed by any large country to monitor the progress towards achieving SDGs at the sub-national level.

Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India & Brazil on Bioenergy Cooperation

The Cabinet has given its approval for signing of Memorandum of Understanding between India and Brazil on Bioenergy Cooperation.

- India and Brazil are major consumers of energy in the world and Brazil is one of the most important trading partners of India in the entire Latin America and Caribbean region.
- Brazil is currently the world's second largest producer and consumer of biofuels.
- Biofuels and bioelectricity accounted for 18 percent of Brazil's energy mix.
- India also has a strong focus in the area of bio-fuels and has set a target to achieve 20 percent blending of ethanol in petrol and 5 percent blending of biodiesel in diesel by 2030 with the announcement of new policy on Biofuels in 2018.

Rohtang tunnel in Himachal Pradesh named as Atal tunnel

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.
The strategic Atal tunnel will change the fortunes of this region and will help in promoting tourism in the region.

The tunnel has been named as a tribute to the former Prime Minister who took the historic decision of constructing this strategic tunnel.

After completion of the tunnel, it will provide all weather connectivity to remote areas of Lahaul and Spiti Valley and also reduce the distance between Manali and Leh by 46 Kilometres.

Dharmendra Pradhan unveils India's first long distance CNG bus

Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan unveiled India's first long distance CNG bus fitted with CNG cylinders at a function in New Delhi.

- It can travel around one thousand kilometre in a single fill.
- The first long range interstate CNG bus will ply from Delhi to Dehradun.
- Such type of buses will soon ply between Delhi to Jaipur, Chandigarh and Agra.
- The project has been executed by Indraprastha Gas Limited, the largest CNG distribution company in the country.

Health Minister inaugurates second edition of Eat Right Mela in New Delhi

Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the second edition of Eat Right Mela in New Delhi.

- He stressed upon the importance of having a people's movement, encouraging people to have healthier diets which will help in reduction of the disease burden in the country.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan stated that the Eat Right Mela is a commendable effort and outreach activity for citizens to nudge them towards eating right.

WCD Ministry invites application for Nari Shakti Puraskar for 2019

Ministry of Women and Child Development has invited applications for Nari Shakti Puraskar for the year 2019.

- The National Award is given annually to individuals, groups, institutions in recognition of their exceptional work towards the cause of women empowerment, especially for vulnerable and marginalized women.
- Nearly 40 Nari Shakti Puraskar will be given on International Women's Day observed on 8th March 2020.
- The last date for submission of applications is 7th of January.

Nation pays homage to Shaheed Udham Singh on his 120th birth anniversary

Nation pays homage to the great revolutionary, Shaheed Udham Singh on his 120th birth anniversary on 26 December 2019.

- He was born on this day in 1899 in Sangrur district of Punjab.
• Udham Singh was present in the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar on the fateful Baisakhi Day of 13 April 1919.
• He avenged the massacre by killing General O’Dwyer in March 1940, and was hanged by the British in London.

Telangana govt raises retirement age of RTC staff

Telangana government has decided to raise the retirement age of employees of the Road Transport Corporation, RTC to 60 from the current 58 years.

• The decision will be applicable to all cadres of employees of the state-owned RTC.
• Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao also asked RTC management to launch cargo and parcel services to all destinations wherever an RTC bus could reach in the state.

Ladakhi New Year being celebrated

Union Territory Ladakh is celebrating Losar Festival, to mark the Ladakhi New Year.

• People of various parts of Ladakh region, celebrate Losar on the 1st Day of the Eleventh Month of Tibetan Calendar correlating to a date in the Gregorian calendar.
• The celebrations continue for three to nine days in different parts of Ladakh.

• Losar is also observed in all the Himalayan states of the country in different times.
• Losar Festival celebrations include making symbolic meals and offerings to God and Goddess.
• Dough Models of Sun, Moon, Sheep, Goats, Ibex and Antelope are kept in kitchen shelves for good omen.
• This year, it will be joyous Losar festival celebrations in the newly born Union Territory Ladakh.

Points to Remember

• Union territory: 31 October 2019
• Districts: 2
• Lieutenant Governor: Radha Krishna Mathur

For Telangana, 2020 will be year of artificial intelligence

The Telangana government has decided to observe 2020 as the Year of AI.

• The government will promote enterprises working on artificial intelligence solutions and taking leadership in this emerging technology space.
• Telangana IT Minister KT Rama Rao will formally make the announcement on January 2 here, declaring 2020, the Year of AI, and release a calendar of events for the next 12 months.
• The event will see signing of memorandum of agreements between the government and AI start-ups.
• The Information and Technology Ministry is in the process of preparing a document with strategy framework to offer incentives exclusive to the AI initiatives.
Indian Air Force Bids farewell to MiG 27

The MiG-27, which proved to be an ace attacker during the 1999 Kargil War roared through the skies for one last time today after serving the Indian Air Force for over three decades.

- The swing-wing fighter has been the backbone of ground-attack fleet of the Air Force for several decades and the IAF bidding adieu to its squadron of seven aircraft from Jodhpur Air Base.
- The upgraded variant of this last swing-wing fleet has been the pride of IAF strike fleet since 2006.
- All other variants, such as MiG-23 BN and MiG-23 MF and the pure MiG-27 have already retired from IAF.
- The Squadron was raised on March 10, 1958, at Air Force Station Halwara.

India ranks 47th globally in home price appreciation: Knight Frank

The Knight Frank Global House Price Index Q3 2019 released on ranked India at 47th spot among 56 countries tracked in terms of appreciation in residential real estate prices with a marginal 0.6 per cent year-on-year rise in home prices.

- India stood at 11th position in the previous edition of the report with a 7.7 per cent year-on-year rise in home prices.
- Slow sales, high inventory and lack of liquidity with developers have restricted rise in home prices.
- The Global House Price Index tracks the movement in mainstream residential prices across 56 countries and territories worldwide using official statistics.
- Hungary leads the index this quarter with 15.4 per cent annual price growth, followed by Luxembourg at 11.4 per cent and Croatia at 10.4 per cent.

All railways recruits to be inducted through UPSC

All new recruits in railways will be inducted through the UPSC civil services exams under five specialities.

- The Cabinet approved the merger of its eight services into one - the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS).
- Candidates aspiring to get into railways will have to appear for their prelims after which they will indicate their preference for IRMS under five specialities -- four of them engineering specialities for 'technical' operations comprising of civil, mechanical, telecom and electrical, and one 'non-technical' speciality which will recruit officers for accounts, personnel and traffic.
- The aspirants take the prelim and then indicate their choices.
- The first batch will be recruited in 2021.

National Tribal Dance Festival begins in Raipur
National Tribal Dance Festival has begun in Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh.

- Congress leader Rahul Gandhi inaugurated the festival.
- The inaugural function was presided over by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.
- The National Tribal Dance Festival is being organized in Chhattisgarh for the first time.
- More than 1300 participants from 25 states & UTs of the country and six countries are participating in this three-day dance fest.

India's first university for transgender community to come up in UP's Kushinagar district

The country's first university for transgender community will be opened in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar district.

- It will facilitate its members to study right from class one to PG and even do research and get a PhD degree.
- The university is being built by the Akhil Bhartiya Kinnar Siksha Seva Trust (All-India transgender education service trust).

Earliest Sanskrit Inscriptions in South India Found in A.P.

The Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India has discovered the earliest epigraphic evidence so far for the Saptamatrika cult.

- The inscription was discovered in Chebrolu village in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.
- Saptamatrikas are a group of seven female deities worshipped in Hinduism as personifying the energy of their respective consorts.
- The inscription is in Sanskrit and in Brahmī characters and was issued by Satavahana king Vijaya in 207 A.D.
- It is also the earliest Sanskrit inscription to have been discovered in South India as on date.

Boxer Sumit Sangwan banned for one year for consuming prohibited substance

Former Asian Games silver medalist boxer Sumit Sangwan has been banned for one year with immediate effect by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) for failing doping test.

- Sangwan's sample was collected by the body on October 10 during the Elite Men Boxing Championship.
- The governing body for the anti-doping in sports announced its decision.
- The boxer who was set to appear for the Tokyo Olympics 2020 and was named in the
Olympics Qualifiers list will surely miss the event.

**Rajnath Singh launches the mobile app of forthcoming DefExpo 2020**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the mobile app of the forthcoming DefExpo 2020 to be held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

- The app provides detailed information about the day-to-day events, participating exhibitors, guest speakers of seminars, maps and directions of the venues.
- Mr Singh also reviewed the preparations of DefExpo.
- A record number of over 880 exhibitors, including foreign companies, have registered so far.
- Dozens of MoUs are also expected to be inked during the Expo.

**JMM leader Hemant Soren took oath as Jharkhand CM**

JMM leader Hemant Soren took oath as the 11th Chief Minister of Jharkhand.

- Governor Draupadi Murmu administered him the oath of office and secrecy at Morhabadi ground in Ranchi.

- Two Congress leaders Rameshwar Oraon and Alamgir Alam are also likely to take oath as Ministers.
- Grand Alliance comprising JMM, Congress and RJD bagged 47 seats in the 81-member Jharkhand Assembly polls.

**Mandu Festival starts in Mandu, Madhya Pradesh**

In Madhya Pradesh, the 5-day Mandu festival has been started in Mandu, a world-famous picturesque tourist destination located in Dhar district of the state.

- The Mandu festival, which will run till January 1, will see the amalgamation of cultural activities as well as adventure sports.
- The rich classical and traditional folk arts of dance, singing and playing will once again come alive through the Mandu festival.
- Based on the idea of Khojne Me Kho Jao, the Mandu festival is offering an eclectic mix of performing arts, workshops, nature trails, food, architecture and music to the visitors.

**PM Modi says ISRO is planning to launch satellite Aditya to study Sun**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that ISRO is planning to launch a satellite called Aditya to study the sun.
- The aim of the mission is to keep a permanent eye on the sun without any disturbance.
- Aditya-L1 is meant to observe the solar corona.
- In his 'Mann ki Baat' programme of AIR, Mr Modi said, India is quite advanced in the field of astronomy and ISRO has taken path-breaking initiatives in this field.

**India likely to surpass Germany to become the fourth-largest economy in 2026: Report**

India will overtake Germany to become the fourth-largest economy in the world by the year 2026.

- According to a report by the UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), India is all set to overtake Japan to become the third-largest economy by 2034.
- The report titled 'World Economic League Table 2020' said that India is also set to become a 5 trillion dollar economy by 2026, 2 years later than the government's target of 2024.
- India has decisively overtaken both France and the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy in 2019.
- The base data for 2019 is taken from the IMF World Economic Outlook.

**MyGov reaches 1 crore registered users**

Central government's citizen engagement platform, MyGov has reached one crore registered users.

- MyGov is a citizen engagement platform founded by the Government of India to promote the active participation of Indian citizens in their country’s governance and development.
- It is also aimed at creating a common platform for Indian citizens to “crowdsource governance ideas from citizens”.
- The portal is hosted and managed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

**Belum Caves Festival in Andhra Pradesh postponed**

The Belum Caves Festival has been postponed to January after the dates clashed with Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan’s visit to the district.

- The plan was to organise the festival on December 21 and 22.
- Belum Caves, also known as Belum Guhalu in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh is the second-longest cave in the Indian subcontinent open to the public.

**India State of Forest Report, 2019**
The total tree and forest cover in the country increased by 5,188 square kilometer in the last two years, said the India State of Forest Report 2019.

- The top three states in terms of forest cover are Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.
- While Karnataka grew the maximum forest-and-tree cover at 1,025 sq km, Andhra Pradesh grew a 990-sq km cover and a 823-sq km of forest cover was created by Kerala in the last two years.
- The total forest cover of the country is 7,12,249 sq km which is 21.67% of the geographical area of the country.
- The tree cover of the country is estimated as 95,027 sq km which is 2.89% of the geographical area.

India improves Sustainable Development Goals Index score by three positions

India has improved its composite score from 57 in 2018 to 60 in the Sustainable Development Goals Index 2019-20.

- This has been achieved due to better work in water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy and industry, innovation, and infrastructure.
- Kerala achieved the first rank in the composite SDG Index with a score of 70, followed by Himachal Pradesh at 69.
- Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu ranked at the third position with a score of 67.
- The states showing the biggest improvement since 2018 are Uttar Pradesh which has moved from the 29th position to the 23rd, Odisha from 23rd to 15th and Sikkim from 15th to 7th position.

Assam CM launches torch relay of Khelo India Youth Games

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has launched the torch relay of the Third Khelo India Youth Games.

- The games will be held in Guwahati from 10th to 22nd of next month.
- The officials of the competition are preparing a total of eight venues for the tournament and they are on track to make the Games one of the largest sporting spectacles of the country.

GST revenue collection crosses Rs 1 lakh crore in November

GST revenue collection crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore mark after a gap of three months in November with the revenue growing by 6 per cent to Rs 1.03 lakh crore in the month.
• The GST collection was Rs 95,380 crore in October while it was Rs 97,637 crore November 2018.
• After negative growth, the GST revenue witnessed an impressive recovery with a growth of 6 per cent in November 2019 over the November 2018 collections.

Reserve Bank keeps repo rate unchanged at 5.15 %

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its fifth bi-monthly Monetary Policy has kept the policy repo rate unchanged at 5.15 per cent.

• The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das unanimously voted for a status quo policy.
• The reverse credit policy has also maintained the reverse repo rate at 4.90 per cent and the marginal standing facility rate and Bank Rate at 5.40 per cent.
• The real GDP growth for 2019-20 has been revised downwards from 6.1 per cent in the October policy to 5.0 per cent.

Razorpay recognized As 'Most Innovative Payment Start-Up' At IFTA 2019

Razorpay, the neo-banking platform, successfully added three more accolades to its bouquet at the India FinTech Awards (IFTA) 2019, organised by India Fintech Forum in association with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

Payment Banks can become SFB after five years under new RBI norms

The Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI)'s new draft guidelines for on-tap licensing of small finance banks (SFBs) allows payment banks to convert into SFBs after five years of operations.

• If the promoter of a payments bank desires to set up an SFB separately, both the banks should come under the non-operative financial holding company (NOFHC) structure.
• The central bank also raised the minimum paid-up capital requirement for SFBs from ₹100 crore to ₹200 crore. It said the promoter should hold a minimum of 40% of the paid-up voting equity capital for five years.

HDFC ERGO launches My:Health Woman Suraksha - A special health insurance for women
HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India’s third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, announced the launch of 'my:health Woman Suraksha' policy.

- The my:health Woman Suraksha policy is specially designed to cover women against numerous illnesses and contingencies they may face during their lifetime, thereby providing financial aid in case of medical contingencies.
- According to the National Health Portal of India, women in India face numerous health issues like breast cancer, malnutrition, lack of maternal health.
- This policy will cover various types of cancers & related surgeries, pregnancy and neonatal (newborn baby) complications and assaults & burns.

NTPC signs pact for ₹5,000-crore term loan with SBI

NTPC has signed a term loan agreement for ₹5,000 crore with State Bank of India.

- The loan facility has been extended at an interest rate linked to 3-Month MCLR of the bank and has a door to door tenure of 15 years.
- The loan will be utilised to part finance the capital expenditure of NTPC.

SBI announces reduction in one-year MCLR by 10 basis points

Country’s largest lender State Bank of India has announced the reduction in its marginal cost of fund based lending rate (MCLR) by 10 basis points across all one-year products.

- It is effective from 10 December 2019.
- This is the eighth consecutive cut in MCLR by the lender this fiscal.
- The new one-year MCLR has been cut to 7.90 per cent from 8 per cent.

November retail inflation reaches 5.54%, at 3-year high

- The new one-year MCLR has been cut to 7.90 per cent from 8 per cent.
India's retail inflation in November rose to 5.54% from 4.62% in October, highest since 2016 and over RBI's medium-term target of 4%.

- Higher food prices contributed to the spike. Food price inflation (Rural and urban) climbed 10.01% in November.
- During the month, inflation in vegetables shot up to 35.99 per cent, as against 26.10 per cent in October.
- Inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 4.62 per cent in October, and 2.33 per cent in November 2018.

**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 per cent on both state-run and private lottery.

- It also decided to rationalise the GST rate on woven and non-woven bags to 18 per cent.
- The decisions were taken at the 38th meeting of the Council, chaired by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi.
- The rates on the lottery and woven and non-woven bags will be effective from the 1st of March next year.
- It was 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.

**French carmaker PSA and US-Italian rival Fiat Chrysler sign merger**

French carmaker PSA and US-Italian rival Fiat Chrysler have signed an agreement to create the world's fourth largest automaker.

- The combined group will have a workforce of more than 400,000, total revenues of close to 170 billion euros ($190 million) and annual unit sales of some 8.7 million vehicles of the brands Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Citroen, Dodge, DS, Jeep, Lancia, Maserati, Opel, Peugeot and Vauxhall.
- The combined group would be headquartered in the Netherlands, and continue to be listed on the Paris, Milan and New York stock exchanges.
- Fiat Chrysler chief John Elkann will be chairman and PSA’s Carlos Tavares chief executive.

**MDR charges will not be applicable on transactions through RuPay, UPI platforms from 1st of January**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that no Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) will be applicable on transactions through homegrown RuPay and UPI platforms beginning 1st of January next year.
• Ms Sitharaman announced this in New Delhi after meeting Chiefs of Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Chief executive of Indian Banks’ Association and representatives of leading private sector banks to discuss banking issues.
• Department of Revenue (DoR) will soon notify RuPay and UPI as the prescribed mode of payment for digital transactions without any MDR.
• MDR is the cost paid by a merchant to a bank for accepting payment from their customers via digital means.

RBI directs large co-op banks to report exposures above Rs 5 cr

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed large cooperative banks to report all exposures of 5 crore rupees and more to the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC).

• The move is aimed at early detection of financial distress.
• The Reserve Bank has created a CRILC of commercial banks, all India financial institutions and certain non-banking financial companies with multiple objectives, including strengthening offsite supervision and early recognition of financial distress.
• Earlier in its bi-monthly monetary policy review this month, the RBI had announced to bring UCBs with assets of Rs 500 crore and above under the CRILC reporting framework.

SBI to launch OTP-based cash withdrawal at all its ATMs from January 1, 2020, onwards

The State Bank of India (SBI) will switch to a one-time password (OTP) based cash withdrawal system at all its ATMs from January 1, 2020, onwards.

• With this latest move, the lender aims to ensure the protection of its customers from unauthorised transactions at ATMs.
• The new OTP-based ATM withdrawal will be applicable for transactions above Rs 10,000, between 8 pm to 8 am.
• Customers withdrawing cash from SBI ATMs will receive an OTP on their mobile number registered with the bank.
• However, the facility won't apply in case of transactions made by SBI cardholders at any other bank's ATM.

HDFC Lifes partners with Paytm, to offer insurance through m-com platform

Life insurance company, HDFC Life, has announced its tie-up with Paytm.

• This partnership will enable Paytm customers to purchase life insurance products offered by HDFC Life, via the mobile commerce platform.
• The platform enables individuals to purchase life insurance in a quick and easy manner.
In a few simple steps, Paytm customers can secure themselves and their families using HDFC Lifes innovative product offerings.

Finance Minister Sitharaman launches 'eBkray' auction platform for assets attached by banks

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched eBkray, an e-auction platform to enable online auction of attached assets by banks.

- The eBkray platform provides navigational links to all PSB e-auction sites, property search feature and presents single-window access to information on properties up for e-auction, comparison of similar properties, and also contains videos and photographs of the uploaded properties.
- Indian Banks Auctions Mortgaged Properties Information (IBAPI) portal is an initiative of Indian Banks Association (IBA) under the policy of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance.

Congress leader Nana Patole has been elected as the Speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly after Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Kisan Kathore withdrew his nomination.

- Pro tem speaker Dilip Walse Patil made the announcement.
- Maharashtra BJP legislature party leader Devendra Fadnavis was named Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly.

Iraq PM Adel Abdul Mahdi resigns

Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi has submitted his resignation to Parliament amid ongoing anti-government protests across the country.

- The formal resignation came after an emergency cabinet session in which ministers approved the document and the resignation of key staffers, including Abdul Mahdi’s chief of staff.
- The resignation came after Iraq’s top Shia religious leader withdrew his support to the government.
- More than 400 people have been killed in Iraq since early October with thousands of
people taking to the streets in Baghdad and southern part of the country over corruption, poor services, lack of jobs and calling for an end to the post-2003 political system.

Soma Roy Burman takes charge as new Controller General of Accounts

Soma Roy Burman took charge as the new Controller General of Accounts, CGA.

- She is the 24th CGA and the seventh woman to hold this coveted position.
- She took over from J P S Chawla.
- Burman, a 1986-batch Indian Civil Accounts Service officer has held cadre positions at different levels in Central government Ministries during her 33-year long career.
- Prior to assuming the charge of CGA, Burman served as Additional Controller General of Accounts in the office of the CGA.

Shri Hari Mohan takes over as Chairman, Ordnance Factory Board

Shri Hari Mohan has taken over the charge as Chairman, Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) w.e.f. December 01, 2019.

- He is a 1982-batch Indian Ordnance Factories’ Service (I.O.F.S.) officer with Post Graduate Degree in Mechanical Engineering.
- He has made significant contributions in improving the production of Armoured Fighting Vehicles like Ajeya Tanks, MBT Arjun, Bridge Layer and Trawls Tanks.
- He has also made a significant contribution to the modernisation of steel plants of the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) during his tenure in Ministry of Steel & Mines.

Upender Singh Rawat appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Costa Rica

Upender Singh Rawat, presently Ambassador of India to the Republic of Panama has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Costa Rica.

- He is an Indian Foreign Service officer (IFS) of 1998 batch.
- Costa Rica Capital: San José
- Currency: Costa Rican colón
K Vijay Kumar appointed senior security advisor in MHA

Former advisor to the Governor of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, K Vijay Kumar, has been appointed as a senior security advisor in the Union Home Ministry headed by Amit Shah.

- The 1975 batch officer of Indian Police Service will "advise the ministry on security-related matters of Union Territory of J&K and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected States.
- The appointment order is issued by the Union Home Ministry on December 3 stated that 67-year-old Kumar will be in the position for a period of one year from the date of his taking charge.
- Kumar has served as Director-General of CRPF, Director of the National Police Academy in Hyderabad and his most talked-about stint was as the chief of the Tamil Nadu police special task force that killed forest brigand Veerappan in 2004.

National Stock Exchange appoints Girish Chandra Chaturvedi its chairman

Girish Chandra Chaturvedi, the former petroleum secretary, was appointed chairman of the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

- The appointment comes within weeks of him joining the NSE board as a public interest director.

Dhanlaxmi Bank's Board appoints V Viswanathan as additional director

V Viswanathan has been appointed as an Additional Director on the Board of Dhanlaxmi Bank with effect from December 09, 2019.

- The Bank had appointed G Venkatanarayanan as Additional Director with effect from October 31, 2019, holding office up to the date of the next Annual General Meeting.

Salman Khan appointed as Pepsi’s new brand ambassador

The chairman’s post was vacant since January, following Ashok Chawla’s resignation amid CBI-related developments in the Aircel-Maxis case.

- Girish also serves as non-executive chairman of ICICI Bank.
Food and beverage giant PepsiCo has roped in Bollywood actor Salman Khan as the new face of its flagship Pepsi brand of carbonated beverage in India.

- The actor has been the face of rival Coca-Cola’s popular ThumsUp brand for years and was recently seen promoting Parle Agro-backed soft drink Appy Fizz.
- Khan had previously endorsed PepsiCo’s Mountain Dew drink.
- PepsiCo will also associate itself with Khan’s next big release Dabangg 3 that is scheduled to release later this month.

**Graeme Smith appointed as South Africa’s first acting director of cricket**

Former South African captain Graeme Smith has been appointed as the nation’s first acting director of cricket.

- He has been appointed to the post by Cricket South Africa.
- Graeme Smith will be holding the position temporarily for a period of three months.
- He has already committed to serve as a commentator for the 2020 IPL season.

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

Lt Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane will be the next Chief of Army Staff.

- He is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Army.
- Lt Gen Naravane will succeed Gen Bipin Rawat, who will retire on the 31st of this month.

- Before taking charge as Vice Chief in September, Lt Gen Naravane was heading the Eastern Command of the Army.
- An alumnus of the National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy, Lt Gen Naravane, was commissioned into the 7th battalion, the Sikh Light Infantry Regiment in June 1980.

**IAS Ravi Mittal takes charge as new I&B Secretary**

IAS officer Ravi Mittal took charge as the new Secretary, Information and Broadcasting Ministry.

- Mr Mittal took charge from Amit Khare who has been appointed as Secretary, Department of Higher Education.
- Before this, Mr Mittal, a 1986 batch IAS officer of Bihar Cadre, was working as the Special Secretary in the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.

**Nagaland Governor R N Ravi to hold additional charge of Meghalaya**

Nagaland Governor R N Ravi has been given additional charge of Meghalaya.
• The decision has been taken by the President of India in the wake of the “absence of leave” of Tathagata Roy, Governor of Meghalaya.
• Ravi is also the Centre's interlocutor for talks with Naga insurgents.

Sridhar Patra appointed NALCO CMD

Sridhar Patra was appointed as the chairman-cum-managing director of NALCO.

• Patra is at present Director (Finance) in the National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO).
• He has been appointed as the CMD of NALCO till the date of his superannuation, i.e. October 31, 2024.

IPS officer Atul Karwal appointed as Director of National Police Academy

The Union Government appointed a senior Gujarat Cadre IPS officer Atul Karwal, as Director of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy.

• Atul Karwal, a 1988 batch IPS officer, is currently posted as Additional Director General of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).
• The post was vacant as the previous Director of the Police Academy, Abhay, a 1986 batch IPS officer, was posted as Director-General of Police of Odisha.

Former HC Judge CV Ramulu appointed as Lokayukta of Telangana

In Telangana, former High Court Judge Justice CV Ramulu has been appointed as the Lokayukta.

• Governor Tamilisai Sounderarajan has issued the orders to this effect.
• Former Law Secretary V Niranjan Rao has been appointed as Upa Lokayukta.
• The governor also appointed another former judge Justice G Chandraiah as Chairman of the State Human Rights Commission.
• This is the first time that the state government has constituted the Lokayukta and Human Rights Commission since the state was formed in 2014.

Devesh Srivastava appointed GIC chief

The government has appointed Devesh Srivastava as chairman and MD of national reinsurer General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re).

• The government has also appointed Malay Kumar Poddar as chairman and MD of Agriculture Insurance Corporation of India.
• The appointment comes nearly four months after the Banks Board Bureau made its
recommendation on appointments to the
government.
- Srivastava succeeds Alice Vaidyan, who retired in July 2019.

**US Prez Trump picks Indian-American computer scientist Sethuraman Panchanathan to lead National Science Foundation**

US President Donald Trump has picked Indian-American computer scientist Sethuraman Panchanathan to lead the prestigious National Science Foundation (NSF).

- The NSF is a US government agency that supports fundamental research and education in all the non-medical fields of science and engineering.
- Panchanathan would succeed France Cordova when her six-year term as the NSF Director ends in 2020.
- Panchanathan is currently the Executive Vice President and the Chief Research and Innovation Officer at the Arizona State University.

**Cuba names Manuel Marrero Cruz as first PM since 1976**

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel named Tourism Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz as the country's first prime minister since 1976.

- Marrero, 56, has been tourism minister for 16 years.
- Diaz-Canel cited Marrero's experience in negotiating with foreign investors as one of his prime qualifications, according to state media.
- The position of prime minister was held by Fidel Castro from 1959 to 1976, when a new constitution changed his title to president and eliminated the post of prime minister.

**Indian-American Dr Monisha Ghosh named 1st woman CTO at FCC in US**

Indian-American 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 advise Indian-American Chairman of the FCC Ajit Pai and the agency on technology and engineering issues, and work closely with the Office of Engineering and Technology.
- Dr Ghosh will take charge on January 13.
- The FCC regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and US territories.
- Ghosh received her PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of Southern California in 1991, and B.Tech from IIT Kharagpur in 1986.

**Harsh Vardhan Shringla appointed next foreign secretary**
Harsh Vardhan Shringla, India's Ambassador to the US, has been appointed as the new Foreign Secretary.

- Mr Shringla is a 1984-batch officer of the Indian Foreign Service.
- He will take over the charge of the foreign secretary on January 29 from incumbent Vijay Gokhale.
- The appointment has been cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sangita Reddy takes over as FICCI President

Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group, has taken over as the President of industry chamber FICCI for 2019-20.

- She succeeds Sandip Somany, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, HSIL.
- The Walt Disney Company APAC President and Star & Disney India Chairman Uday Shankar has been elevated as Senior Vice-President of the chamber, and Sanjiv Mehta, Chairman and Managing Director, HUL, has taken charge as as Vice-President.

Boeing CEO Dennis Muilenburg steps down

Boeing CEO Dennis Muilenburg has stepped down as the company is facing tough period following two fatal crashes.

- Muilenburg will be replaced by Chairman David Calhoun effective January 13, 2020.
- Muilenburg, 55, became the CEO of the world's largest aerospace company in July 2015.
- The company's best selling commercial jet was grounded worldwide in March 2019 after two fatal crashes killed 346 people.

General Bipin Rawat named India's first Chief of Defence Staff

General Bipin Rawat has been named the country's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

- General Rawat is the first officer to hold the post of the Chief of Defence Staff, which was set up recently.
- CDS will function as a single-point advisor to the government on matters related to the military and will focus on the better synergy between the Indian Army, Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy.
- General Rawat was appointed as the Chief of Army Staff on 31 December, 2016.
- The defence ministry had recently amended the army, air force and navy rules by bringing in a new clause that allows the Chief of Defence Staff to serve up to a maximum age of 65 years.
- The Union Cabinet had given its approval to create the post of Chief of Defence Staff in the rank of a four-star General with salary and benefits equivalent to a Service Chief.
9. Lionel Messi wins Ballon d’Or for the sixth time

Lionel Messi won a record sixth men's Ballon d'Or award at a ceremony in Paris, beating Liverpool defender Virgil van Dijk to take the honours.

- Now aged 32, it is Messi's first Ballon d'Or since 2015 and his sixth overall as he moves one ahead of his old rival Cristiano Ronaldo, who finished third in the voting.

Former FM Arun Jaitley conferred with ET Lifetime Achievement Award

Former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was conferred posthumously with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Public Service at the Economic Times Award 2019.

- His wife Sangeeta Jaitley and daughter Sonali received the special award on behalf of late Arun Jaitley from Amit Shah.
- Arun Jaitley served as the Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs of the Government of India from 2014 to 2019.

UNICEF honours Priyanka Chopra with Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award

Priyanka Chopra has been awarded the Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award from UNICEF.

- Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra is quite active not only in the entertainment and fashion world but also in social work.
- The award was announced in June 2019 and Priyanka was nominated for the award by the United Nations Children's Fund.
- Priyanka Chopra has been associated with UNICEF for the past 15 years as a Goodwill Ambassador.

Photo Division announces 8th National Photography Awards

Photo Division, Press Information Bureau, under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, has invited entries for the 8th National Photography Awards.
- The Lifetime Achievement Award carries a Cash Prize of Rs 3,00,000.
- This year's theme for the Professional Photographers is 'Life and Water.'
- The awards under the Category for Professionals are one ‘Professional Photographer of the Year award with a Cash prize of Rs 1,00,000 and five Special Mention Awards with a cash prize of Rs 50,000 each.
- This year's theme for the Amateur Photographers is 'Cultural Heritage of India.'
- The awards under the Category for Amateurs are one ‘Amateur Photographer of the Year award with a Cash prize of Rs 75,000 and five Special Mention Awards with a cash prize of Rs 30,000 each.

Ethiopia's PM receives Nobel Peace Prize

Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has received the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to achieve international peace and cooperation.

- This year's Nobel Peace Prize was the 100th to be awarded.
- The Nobel Peace Prize consists of a diploma, a gold medal and a cheque for 9 million Swedish kronor (850,000 euros).
- The Nobel Committee announced in October it was honouring Abiy Ahmed for his efforts to resolve the long-running conflict with neighbouring for Eritrea.

Greta Thunberg named Time magazine's person of the year

Greta Thunberg, the teen activist from Sweden who has urged immediate action to address a global climate crisis, was named Time magazine’s person of the year for 2019.

- She is the youngest person to have ever received the accolade.
- Thunberg, 16, was lauded by Time for starting an environmental campaign in August 2018 which became a global movement, initially skipping school and

Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has started the scheme of National award for outstanding services in the field of Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug abuse.

- The scheme is applicable to institutions and individuals working in the field of prevention of alcoholism and drug abuse.
- The national award will be presented to the awardees on the occasion of International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26th of June next year.
caring out in front of the Swedish parliament to demand action.

**Odisha receives Best State Promoting Sports award at the FICCI Sports Awards-2019**

Odisha government bagged the prestigious Best State Promoting Sports Award at the FICCI India Sports Awards 2019 in New Delhi.

- State sports minister Tusharkanti Behera and sports secretary Vishal Dev received the award on behalf of the state government.
- This award is a recognition of the state’s exemplary contribution towards the development of sports infrastructures and promotion of various sports.

**Space startup with AI solution to stubble burning wins ‘Space Oscar’**

The application ‘Zuri’ developed by Blue Sky Analytics, A Gurgaon-based startup, won Copernicus Masters award given by the Earth observation program managed by the European Commission in partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA).

- It is also dubbed as ‘Space Oscars’.
- Zuri was selected under social entrepreneurship category.
- The startup is working in utilizing satellite data to solve environmental problems and using its AI (artificial intelligence)- based tool to measure and monitor farm fires and stubble burning across India.
- It is an AI-enabled platform that uses satellite data for improved monitoring, supply chain and pricing analysis as well as allocation of crop waste for use in other industries as raw material.

**Deepika Padukone wins Crystal award for spreading mental health awareness**

Deepika Padukone won the 26th Annual Crystal Award for spreading awareness about the importance of mental health.

- She is the only Indian actress to appear in the list of winners of Davos 2020.
- Deepika will receive the award in January 2020 at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland.
Apart from Deepika, artist Theaster Gates and choreographer Jin Xing have also been felicitated with the Annual Crystal Award.

**Rohit Sharma named La Liga's brand ambassador in India**

La Liga, the top tier of Spanish club football, announced cricketer Rohit Sharma as its brand ambassador in India.

- He becomes the first non-footballer in the league’s 90-year-old history to endorse the brand.
- Rohit Sharma came on board after being sounded out by Jose Antonio Cachaza, Managing Director, La Liga India last year.
- LaLiga has been actively taking initiatives to promote the football, including group screenings, and friendly games.

**Jamaica's 'Tony-Ann Singh' crowned as 'Miss World 2019'**

Tony-Ann Singh of Jamaica was announced as the winner of the Miss World 2019 beauty pageant held at the ExCeL London.

- She was crowned by her predecessor, Miss World 2018 Vanessa Ponce from Mexico.
- 23 year old Singh is a Florida state university student and wanted to use her title to work for "sustainable change" for women and their children.
- Meanwhile, Ophely Mezino of France and Suman Rao of India were the first and second runners up of the beauty pageant respectively.
- Miss World 2019 was the 69th edition of the contest and contestants from 120 countries competed for the title.

**Indian peacekeepers in South Sudan receive prestigious UN medal**

About 850 Indian peacekeepers serving in South Sudan have been awarded the prestigious UN medal.

- The have been awarded for their service and contribution to building peace in the conflict-affected nation and going above their duties to support local communities.
- India is among the largest troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations.
- Currently, 2,342 Indian troops and 25 police personnel are deployed with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).
- The UNMISS said that the 850 Indian troops serving with the UNMISS received the United Nations Medal for their dedication and sacrifice.

**Ben Stokes wins BBC Sports Personality of the Year award 2019**
England all-rounder Ben Stokes was named as the BBC’s Sports Personality of the Year.

- He became the first cricketer since Andrew Flintoff in 2005 to bag the coveted trophy.
- In a public vote, Lewis Hamilton was second and Dina Asher-Smith came third in Aberdeen.
- Stokes played various breathtaking knocks for England while helping the team win the 50-over World Cup for the first time.

Amitabha Bagchi wins 2019 DSC Prize

The 8th edition of the IME Nepal Literature Festival at Pokhara, concluded with the announcement of the winner of DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2019.

- The $25,000 award went to Amitabha Bagchi for his 2018 novel, Half the Night is Gone.
- The DSC Prize, instituted in 2010, awards fiction from the South Asian region, which includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as well as from the diaspora.

Sahitya Akademi announces its annual Award

Sahitya Akademi announced its annual Award- 2019 in 23 languages.

- In Hindi, Nand Kishore has been awarded for his Poetry ‘Chheelate Hue Apne Ko’ and in English Dr Shashi Tharoor has been awarded for his Non-Fiction ‘An Era of Darkness’.
- In Tamil, Cho Dharman has been awarded for his Novel ‘Sool’ and in Gujarati, Ratilal Borisagar has been awarded for his Essays ‘Mojama Revu Re’.
- In Sanskrit, Penna Madhusudan will get the award for his Poetry ‘Prajnachakshusham’ and in Urdu, Shafey Kidwai will be awarded for his Biography ‘Sawaneh-E-Sir Syed: Ek Bazdeed’.

Portugal announces Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize

Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio Costa has announced that, Portugal will be launching a Gandhi
Citizenship Education Prize, each year inspired by his different thoughts and quotes.

- The first edition of this prize will be dedicated to animal welfare as Mahatma Gandhi said that the greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.
- Mr. Antonio Costa was addressing the second meeting of the National Committee for Commemoration of the 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Gujarati movie Hellaro gets best feature film award

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu presented the 66th National Film Awards at a ceremony in New Delhi.

- Bollywood stars Ayushmann Khurrana and Vicky Kaushal were jointly awarded the best actor award for their roles in Andhadhun and Uri.
- Keerthy Suresh got the best actress award for her portrayal of yesteryear's star Savitri in Telugu film Mahanati.
- Gujarati movie Hellaro was awarded for the best feature film.
- Aditya Dhar was awarded with the Best Director award for his debut Uri: The Surgical Strike.
- Andhadhun was awarded for Best Hindi film.
- Akshay Kumar-starrer Padman was awarded for the best film on social issues.

Manushi Chhillar is the 'Sexiest Vegetarian Personality' by PETA

Former Miss World Manushi Chhillar, has been voted the Sexiest Vegetarian Personality by American animal rights organization PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

- Manushi is a strong advocate for vegetarianism and has expressed her views on the subject even on global platforms.
- Manushi has been roped in for Yash Raj Films' biggest historical drama 'Prithviraj' where she will be seen in the lead role opposite Akshay Kumar.

American Academy of Ophthalmology bestows Life Achievement honour to Indian Ophthalmologist Dr Santosh G Honavar

Dr Santosh G Honavar, India's ophthalmologist is conferred with American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO) highest award Life Achievement honour that is given to its members.

- He is the first Indian chosen for the honour.
- American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world's largest association of eye specialists.
• Formerly the Associate Director of LV Prasad Eye Institute, Dr Honavar currently heads the Department of Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery and Ocular Oncology and National Retinoblastoma Foundation at Centre for Sight, Hyderabad.

Amitabh Bachchan honoured with Dada Saheb Phalke award

Veteran actor Amitabh Bachchan received Dadasaheb Phalke award for his outstanding contribution to the film industry.

• President Ram Nath Kovind gave away the award in New Delhi.
• The award, named after the father of Indian cinema, Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, was instituted in 1969.
• The award is conferred by the government for outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian Cinema.
• It consists of a Swarn Kamal and a cash prize of ten lakh rupees.

Kris Srikkanth, Anjum Chopra to Get CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Awards

Former India captain and member of the 1983 World Cup-winning team Kris Srikkanth will be the recipient of this year's prestigious CK Nayudu Lifetime Award given by the BCCI.

• Former India women's captain Anjum Chopra is the co-recipient of the lifetime achievement award for the year 2019.
• The BCCI Annual Award function will be held in Mumbai on January 12 ahead of the first ODI against Australia on January 14.

13th South Asian Games formally begins in Kathmandu

13th South Asian Games have formally begun in Kathmandu, Nepal.

• President of Nepal Bidya Devi Bhandari declared games open in a glittering ceremony at Dasaratha Rangshala in Kathmandu this evening.
• Over 2700 athletes from seven South Asian Countries participated in the march past.
• A cultural presentation showcasing the rich traditional heritage of Nepal was also made.
• During 10 days biggest sporting event of South Asia, 2715 athletes compete for 1119 medals including 319 Gold in 26 game categories.
• India is represented by 487 athletes.

Priyam Garg to lead India at ICC U-19 World Cup 2020
Uttar Pradesh batsman Priyam Garg will lead defending champions India in next year's Under-19 ICC Cricket World Cup to be held in South Africa.

- The All-India Junior Selection Committee, which met in Mumbai, picked the squad for the tournament to be held from 17th January to 9th February next year.
- The 19-year-old Garg, a right-handed top-order batsman, has a first-class double hundred and a List 'A' century to his name.
- The 13th edition of the U-19 World Cup will be played among 16 teams, split into four groups.

**10. India bag ten Gold medals at 13th South Asian Games in Kathmandu**

India dominated the 13th South Asian Games in Nepal by clinching 10 Gold in Athletics, Volleyball, Shooting and Table Tennis.

- In track and field events Archana Suseendran in women's 100 metres, M. Jashna in women's high jump, Sarvesh Anil Kushare in men's high jump and Ajay Kumar Saroj in men's 1500 metres won a gold each to begin India's athletics campaign on an impressive note.
- In Volleyball, Indian men's and women's team won gold. Men's team defeated Pakistan 3-1.
- Indian women's volleyball team defeated host Nepal by 3-2 in the final at Kathmandu.
- In Shooting, India swept all the medals on offer in the women's 10 metres air rifle event with Mehuli Ghosh winning the gold.
- The Indians have so far claimed 40 medals, including 15 gold, 16 silver and nine bronze. The country is currently second in the medals tally behind hosts Nepal with 44 medals.

**Virat Kohli regains no.1 spot in ICC Test rankings**

India captain Virat Kohli regained the top spot in the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Test rankings in batting.

- Australian Steve Smith slipped a rung in the latest list issued in Dubai.
- Kohli, who had struck a fine 136 in the day-night Kolkata Test against Bangladesh last week, reached 928 points.

**Former World No. 1, Caroline Wozniacki announces retie from tennis**

Former World No. 1, Caroline Wozniacki announces retie from tennis.
Former world number one Caroline Wozniacki announced that she will retire from tennis after next month's Australian Open.

- The 29-year-old Dane won her only Grand Slam singles title in Melbourne last year in her third major final.
- Wozniacki, who turned professional at the age of 15 in 2005, spent 71 weeks at the top of the WTA rankings after first becoming the world's best player in October 2010.
- She has won 30 WTA titles so far in her career, including the 2017 Tour Finals in Singapore.

Boxing: Joshua recovers his world heavyweight crown from Andy Ruiz

Britain's Anthony Joshua reclaimed his world heavyweight crown from Andy Ruiz, outclassing the Mexican-American to score a unanimous points victory.

- Joshua, who suffered a stunning knockout defeat to Ruiz in New York in June, produced a masterclass performance to regain his IBF, WBA and WBO titles in emphatic fashion at Ad Diriyah in Saudi Arabia.
- Dominating from the outset, Joshua won by margins of 118-110 on two scorecards with the third judge making it 119-109.

WADA bans Russia from international sporting events for four years

The World Anti-Doping Agency, WADA, banned Russia for four years, from participation in global sporting events, including the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

- The ban came after accusing Moscow of falsifying data from an anti-doping laboratory.
- Russia's anti-doping agency can appeal the decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport within 21 days.
- The Russian flag and national anthem have also been banned in global events.

13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal

13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal.

- Thousands of sports lovers witnessed gala closing ceremony held at historic Dasaratha Rangshala in Kathmandu.
- India finished on top with 312 medals comprising 174 gold, 93 silver and 45 bronze.

Defending champion PV Sindhu eliminated from BWF World Tour Finals
Defending champion P.V. Sindhu was knocked out of the year-ending BWF World Tour Final after losing to China’s Chen Yufei.

- Sindhu lost 22-20, 16-21, 12-21.
- With this loss Sindhu had ended the second part of the year on a disappointing note.

Shooter Ravi Kumar, four others banned for doping

Three weightlifters, a boxer and a shooter have been banned by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) - from two to four years - for various doping offences.

- Indian boxer Sumit Sangwan was also found positive in the dope test.

FIH unveils new world ranking system for 2020

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) unveiled a new world ranking system for 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland.

- It will come into effect from the 1 January 2019.

- For a better reflection of current performances, the new ranking will be match-based instead of tournament-based calculation.
- It cited numerous restrictions of the tournament-based system for the change.
- The outgoing world ranking system was in existence since 2003.

Zeena Khitta wins women's national 10m Air Rifle

Himachal's Zeena Khitta stunned West Bengal's Mehuli Ghosh and World No.3 Apurvi Chandela to emerge as the new national champion in the Women's 10 metres Air Rifle event.

- He won at the ongoing 63rd National Shooting Championship Competitions Rifle/Pistol in Bhopal.
- Mehuli had to settle for the silver while Apurvi won the bronze.

Pat Cummins becomes most expensive overseas IPL player

Pat Cummins, with a base price of two crore rupees, became the most expensive overseas buy as he was
sold to Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) for a whopping 15.50 crore rupees.

- Glenn Maxwell was sold to Kings XI Punjab for 10.75 crore rupees while Aaron Finch was picked up by Royal Challengers Bangalore for 4.4 crore rupees in the Indian Premier League auction at Kolkata.
- Yusuf Pathan remained unsold while India's Test specialist Cheteshwar Pujara also failed to find any bidders in Kolkata.
- England captain Eoin Morgan will be playing for KKR in the upcoming IPL season as he was bought by KKR for 5.25 crore rupees.
- Robin Uthappa, who was released by KKR, has been bought by Rajasthan Royals for 3 crore rupees.

**Mirabai Chanu wins gold at Qatar International Cup**

Former world champion, weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu won the women's 49kg category gold medal to open India's account at the 6th Qatar International Cup in Doha.

- Chanu bagged gold with an effort of 194 kg in the Olympic qualifying event.
- The 24-year-old Manipuri lifted 83kg in snatch and 111kg in clean and jerk to finish on top of the podium.

**Abhinav Lohan wins Bengaluru Open Golf Championship**

Abhinav Lohan lifted PGTI title securing a narrow one-shot triumph at the Bengaluru Open golf championship.

- Lohan shot four-under 68 to take his four-day total to 13-under-275 with seven birdies, a bogey and a double-bogey to show on his card.
- It was Lohan's first title on the TATA Steel PGTI and second win of the year as he had also emerged victorious at the PGTI Feeder Tour event in Lucknow two months back.
- Chandigarh's Karandeep Kochhar with 71 finished runner-up at 12-under-276.

**Maisnam Meiraba Luwang wins Bangladesh Junior International Badminton Series**

India's shuttlr Maisnam Meiraba Luwang has won the Men's singles Bangladesh Junior International Badminton Series 2019 in Dhaka.

- Top-seeded Meiraba, who hails from Manipur, beat Ken Yong Ong 21, 14, 21-18 in the final.
- Meiraba had defeated another Malaysian, M Fazriq Mohamad Razif, in the semifinals.
- Meiraba had also clinched the boys' singles U-19 title at the Woncheon Yonex Korea Junior Open International Challenge last month.
- In women's singles, Indian shuttlr Treesa Jolly lost to Thailand's third seed Krittaporn Jiantanet 21-12, 16-21, 21-16 in finals.

**ICC extends partnership with UNICEF for Women's World T20**

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.

- During the Men's 50-over World Cup held in England and Wales earlier this summer, UNICEF raised $180,000 as part of 'One Day 4 Children' and this money will go directly to fund a girls' cricket project in Afghanistan.
- The money raised during the Women's World T20 will go to similar projects in cricket playing nations, including an innovative program to promote girls' participation in cricket in Sri Lanka and build peace in communities.
- The ICC and UNICEF partnership commenced in 2015, as part of the ICC's global community outreach program "Cricket 4 Good".
- The Women's World T20 will take place across Australia from February 21-March 8, culminating in the final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on March 8.

Belgium crowned FIFA Team of the Year

Belgium have been crowned FIFA 'Team of the Year' for the second successive time after a record-breaking year for the global ladder.

- World champions France remains in second place ahead of Brazil in third.
- The ranking's Mover of the Year was Qatar.

Indian weightlifter Rakhi creates two new national records

Indian weightlifter Rakhi Halder with creating two new national records clinched a bronze medal in the women's 64kg weight category at the Qatar International Cup in Doha.

- The Commonwealth Championship gold medallist, superseded the senior national record in both snatch and total lift with her personal best effort of 218kg 95kg in the snatch with 123 kg in clean and jerk last night.
- At the Commonwealth Championship in June, Halder had clinched the gold with a

Qatar to host African Football Super Cup until 2022

Qatar Football Association signed an agreement with the Confederation of African Football (CAF) stipulating that Doha will host the African Super Cup for the next three years.

- The African Super Cup in Doha with the next edition will be held on February 14, 2020.
- At the beginning of this year, Qatar hosted the African Super Cup for the first time when the Moroccan "Confederation" champion of the Confederation succeeded in beating the Tunisian "champions" Esperance 2-1.
combined effort of 214kg including 94kg and 120kg in clean and jerk.
- India ended the Olympic qualifying silver level event with three medals.
- Former world champion Mirabai Chanu had won the gold on the opening day while teenager Jeremy Lalrinnunga had claimed silver in a power-packed performance.

**MS Dhoni named captain of CA's ODI team of the decade**

Wicket-keeper batsman MS Dhoni has been named captain of Cricket Australia's (CA) ODI team of the decade.

- CA announced the ODI team of the year and the lineup features three Indian players.
- Apart from Dhoni, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have made the cut in CA's ODI lineup of the year.
- CA's ODI team of the decade: Rohit Sharma, Hashim Amla, Virat Kohli, AB de Villiers, Shakib Al Hasan, Jos Buttler, MS Dhoni (c), Mitchell Starc, Trent Boult, Lasith Malinga, Rashid Khan.

**Kohli among five Wisden cricketers of the decade**

Indian skipper Virat Kohli is one of the five players named in the Wisden Cricketers of the Decade.

- Kohli joins 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.

**Leander Paes to retire from Tennis in 2020**

Indian tennis ace Leander Paes has announced that 2020 will be his last year as a professional tennis player.

- The 46-year old will bid adieu to the sport after next season.
- Leander, who made his Olympic debut in 1992, will look for one final flourish at Tokyo Olympics next year.
- The Indian has made 7 appearances in a row at the Olympics making him the only tennis player ever to do so.
- Paes has won eight doubles and ten mixed doubles Grand Slam titles.

**Koneru Humpy becomes Women's World Rapid Chess Champion**

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- Paes has won eight doubles and ten mixed doubles Grand Slam titles.
Indian grandmaster Koneru Humpy has become the 2019 Women's World Rapid Champion.

- She defeated China's Lei Tingjie in a dramatic final in Moscow, Russia.
- After losing the opening game, Humpy made an impressive comeback and collected nine points each in 12 rounds to be tied with Tingjie.
- Norway's Magnus Carlsen claimed the men's title.

Mujeeb youngest bowler to take 100 T20 wickets

Afghanistan spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman has become the youngest bowler in history to take 100 wickets in T20 cricket.

- Mujeeb achieved the feat at the age of 18 years and 271 days.
- He broke the record of Afghanistan all-rounder Rashid Khan, who had reached 100 T20 wickets at the age of 18 years and 360 days.

Dorothy Catherine "DC" Fontana, the first female writer for 'Star Trek', has died.

- The writer penned numerous stories for the original Star Trek TV series, and developed one of its signature characters, Spock.
- She wrote 1967's 'Journey to Babel', which introduced Spock's father Sarek and mother Amanda.

Former Odisha minister Bhagabat Mohanty passes away

Former Odisha Minister Bhagabat Prasad Mohanty passed away.

- Mohanty represented Kendrapada thrice in the state Assembly.
- Mohanty was elected to the state Assembly in 1971 as Praja Socialist Party (PSP) candidate and in 1985 and 1995 as a Congress nominee, said sources.
- He had served as the Higher Education Minister of the state.

Roxette singer Marie Fredriksson dies at 61
Marie Fredriksson, half of the Swedish pop-rock duo Roxette, died at 61.

- The Swedish band had huge hits in the 1990’s, including “The Look”, and “It Must Have Been Love.”
- According to a report, the 'Roxette' singer battled cancer for 17 long years.

Actor Gollapudi Maruthi Rao passes away

Veteran actor and literary figure Gollapudi Maruthi Rao passed away.

- Gollapudi, who began his career with hit film ‘Intlo Ramayya Veedhilo Krishnayya’, has acted in more than 290 films.
- He was also well-known as a writer and won six Nandi awards of erstwhile AP government for writing and acting.
- His films ‘Aathmagouravam’ and ‘Kallu’ won him the award for writing.

Danny Aiello, a prolific actor who was nominated for an Academy Award for his role as pizzeria owner Sal in Spike Lee's "Do the Right Thing," has died.

- He also played Madonna's father in the 1986 video for Papa Don't Preach.
- A veteran of stage and film, Aiello was best known for playing the pizza parlour owner Sal in Spike Lee's 1989 Do the Right Thing.

Veteran actor Shriram Lagoo passes away

Veteran actor Shriram Lagoo passed away in Pune.

- Lagoo played an important role in the growth of theatre movement in Maharashtra in the post-Independence era.
- His roles in Marathi plays such as “Natsamrat” and “Himalayachi Saoli”, and films such as “Pinjra” made him popular.
- In Hindi, he essayed memorable roles in films such as “Ek Din Achanak”, “Gharonda” and “Lawaris”, to name a few.

Former Kerala minister Thomas Chandy passes away
Former Kerala minister and NCP state president Thomas Chandy, MLA, passed away.

- The businessman-turned politician represents Kuttanad constituency in Alappuzha district in the state Assembly.
- Chandy was forced to quit as Kerala Transport Minister from the Pinarayi Vijayan-led LDF government in November 2017 after facing encroachment allegations.

England's football World Cup winner Martin Peters passes away

England World Cup winner Martin Peters passed away at 76.

- Peters was part of the 1966 World Cup-winning side and scored in the final against West Germany.
- Peters is the fifth member of England's World Cup final team to have died, after captain Bobby Moore, Alan Ball, Ray Wilson and Gordon Banks.
- Peters joined West Ham in 1959 as a 15-year-old, made his debut in 1962 and was a key player in the side who won the 1965 Cup Winners Cup final at Wembley.

Renowned Hindustani classical vocalist Vidushi Savita Devi passes away

Renowned Hindustani classical vocalist Vidushi Savita Devi has passed away at the age of 80.

- Daughter and disciple of late Siddheshwari Devi and recipient of the Padma Shri award, Savita Devi had carved a niche for herself in the world of Indian classical music as an inimitable vocalist.
- She imbibed the nuances of various semi-classical vocal forms such as thumri, dadra, chaiti, kajri and tappa of the Banaras Gharana (Purabang).
- She had also received training in sitar from Pandit Ravi Shankar.

Renowned Hindi author Ganga Prasad Vimal killed in road accident

Renowned Hindi author Ganga Prasad Vimal was killed in a road accident in Sri Lanka.

- HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' condoled his demise.
- Born in 1939 in Uttarkashi, Vimal wrote more than a dozen poetry collections, short story collections and novels.
Veteran Political cartoonist Vikas Sabnis passes away

Veteran Political cartoonist Vikas Sabnis passed away due to cardiac arrest.

- He was unwell and undergoing treatment since last few days.
- He had completed 50 years of an illustrious career in 2018.
- Inspired by Bal Thackeray and RK Laxman, he had started his career in 1968.
- Since then, for over 50 years, Sabnis has worked as a staff cartoonist at various newspapers, including The Times of India and the Mid-day.
- He made caricatures and political cartoons on various subjects and issues.
- These ranges from local to international levels.

Vishwesha Theertha Swami of Pejawar Mutt passes away in Karnataka

Vishwesha Theertha Swami of Pejawar mutt passed away in the coastal town of Udupi in Karnataka.

- Swamiji is the 32nd in the lineage of Pejawar Mutt following Vishvamanya Tirtha.

- Known for philanthropic work, the Swamiji had opened several hostels, hospitals and schools benefitting the poor.

'World's oldest rhino' dies in Tanzania

A female black rhino, Fausta, who was believed to be the world’s oldest rhino has died at the age of 57 in a Tanzanian conservation area.

- Fausta died of natural causes in captivity in Ngorongoro Crater, which lies in Ngorongoro Conservation Area of Tanzania.
- The records showed that Fausta lived longer than any rhino in the world.

Nagaland Assembly Speaker passes away

Nagaland Legislative Assembly Speaker Vikho-o Yhoshü passed away.

- Yhoshü was diagnosed with lung cancer and was undergoing treatment in Mumbai.
- Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party leader Vikho-o Yhoshü, an alumnus of Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, was elected as the Speaker of the 13th Nagaland Legislative Assembly in March last year.
Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawarchand Gehlot launched Braille version of the book Exam Warriors written by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

- The braille version in English and Hindi has been printed by Rajasthan Netraheen Kalyan Sangh in Jaipur.
- The book will surely benefit visually-impaired students who face mental stress during examinations.
- The book contains a detailed description of the animated picture and various yoga asanas which will let students imagine the pictorial graphics with ease.

"Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games": Book to chronicle India’s Olympic journey

A new book will chronicle India's journey in the global sports arena of Olympics - the wins, the misses, the star sportspersons, their stories, and the challenges and possibilities that lie ahead of India to make its mark at the mega sporting event.

- "Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games" written by Boria Majumdar with Nalin Mehta will be brought out by HarperCollins India in January 2020.
- The book provides an inside view of what goes on backstage in the Indian Olympics world alongside a quick history of how India has fared at the Olympics over the past century and a look at how the Indian Olympics world has changed in the last decade.

Quiz December 2019 English

Q. World AIDS Day is observed every year on _______.

28 November
29 November
30 November
01 December
02 December

Q. Which of the following country became the first country in the world to make the entire process for pilgrims going on Haj completely digital?

Indonesia
Bangladesh
India
Sri Lanka
Pakistan
Q. The Border Security Force celebrated its 55th raising day on _______.

28 November
29 November
30 November
01 December
02 December

01 December

Q. Nagaland became the ______ State of the Union of India on 1st December 1963.

13th
16th
18th
19th
22nd

Q. The Sardar Patel Narmada Trek (SPNT), a national level trekking camp for NCC Senior and Junior Division Cadets has been flagged off in _______.

Madhya Pradesh
Jharkhand
Maharashtra
Gujarat
Karnataka

Q. Hornbill Festival begins in which of the following Indian state?

Assam
Sikkim
Nagaland
Arunachal Pradesh
Manipur

Q. Who among the following has been elected as Speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly?

Nana Patole
Raju Shetti
Pankaja Munde
Omprakash Babarao Kadu
Nitin Raut

Q. Adel Abdul Mahdi resigns from the Prime Minister of which of the following country?

Iraq
Sudan
Cyprus
Turkey
Greece

Q. Who among the following took charge as the new Controller General of Accounts?

PS Pradyumna
Saurabh Kumar
Soma Roy Burman
Q. Who among the following is the current governor of Nagaland?

Anusuiya Uikey

Vajubhai Vala

RN Ravi

B. D. Mishra

Najma Heptulla

Q. Which of the following country is the host for UN Climate Change Conference from Dec 2-13?

Denmark

Spain

Austria

China

Japan

Q. Recently India held its first 'two-plus-two' foreign and defence ministerial dialogue with which of the following country?

Australia

Japan

India

Q. The government has extended mandatory FASTag roll-out date to ______.

15 December

20 December

31 December

01 January

26 January

Q. Mission Indradhanush 2.0 aims at immunizing children under the age of _____ and pregnant women.

1 year

2 years

5 years

7 years

10 years

Q. Which of the following country is the ‘Guest of Honour Country’ at the International Book Fair in Mexico?

China

Japan

India

USA

Thailand

Q. Which of the following city is the host for the 17th edition of joint military exercise ‘MITRA SHAKTI’?
Anuradhapura

**Pune**

Shimla

Chennai

Colombo

Q. Who among the following is popularly known as Nagaland's Gandhi?

Mukunda Das

**Natwar Thakkar**

Rameshwar Pathak

Bhupen Hazarika

Achyut Lahkar

Q. After a gap of _______ GST revenue collection crosses Rs 1 lakh crore in November.

2 months

3 months

4 months

5 months

6 months

Q. Who among the following took over as Chairman, Ordnance Factory Board?

Vivek Chaand Sehgal

**Shri Hari Mohan**

Kalanithi Maran

Pawan Munjal

Dilip Shanghvi

Q. Which of the following country is the host for 13th South Asian Games?

Nepal

Bhutan

Bangladesh

India

Pakistan

Q. International Day of Persons with Disabilities is observed every year on _______.

29 November

30 November

01 December

02 December

03 December

Q. Typhoon Kammuri makes landfall in which of the following country?

China

Japan

Bangladesh

Myanmar

Q. Which of the following city organised the Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF)?
London
New Delhi

**Dhaka**

Lahore
Kathmandu

**Q.** Recently, 50 children killed by measles in Samoa. What is the capital of Samoa?

Port Vila

**Apia**

Suva
Port Moresby
Melekeok

**Q.** Recently, PM Modi holds a meeting with King Carl XVI Gustaf. He is the king of which of the following country?

Sweden
Germany
Vietnam
Bhutan
Austria

**Q.** Recently, National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute, Mohali has set up a 'Waste to Bio Coal' project, with the help of which of the following country?

Japan

China

**Sweden**

Russia

Canada

**Q.** Recently, NASA has found India’s crashed Vikram lander with the help of image taken by its LRO. R in LRO stands for _______.

Resistance

**Reconnaissance**

Rendering

Redirecting

Revolving

**Q.** Bhopal Gas Tragedy took place in the year _______.

1981
1977
1984
1991
1993

**Q.** Who among the following has become the first woman pilot of Indian Navy?

Sub Lieutenant Chitra Raj
Sub Lieutenant Shivangi
Sub Lieutenant Meenakshi Chauhan
Sub Lieutenant Reena Das
Q. Who among the following will lead India at ICC U-19 World Cup 2020?

- Divyansh Joshi
- Priyam Garg
- Tilak Varma
- Divyaansh Saxena
- Shashwat Rawat

Q. World Soil Day is observed every year on _______.
- 02 December
- 01 December
- 05 December
- 03 December
- 04 December

Q. Recently, Bosnia took full control of its air space. What is the capital of Bosnia?
- Ljubljana
- Sarajevo
- Belgrade
- Mostar
- Trieste

Q. Who among the following penned down Bharatiya POSHAN Anthem?
- Ehsaan Noorani
- Javed Bashir
- Prasoon Joshi
- Loy Mendonsa
- Vishal Khurana

Q. The National Museum of Indian Cinema tickets will now be available on which of the following platform ______? 
- Paytm
- PhonePe
- Amazon
- Mobikwik
- BookMyShow

Q. Which of the following state has launched the ‘Madhu app’ for making classroom learning easier for students in the state?
- Maharashtra
- Odisha
Q. Which of the following station gets first 'Eat Right Station' certification from FSSAI?

- Old Delhi Railway Station
- Mumbai Central
- Kanpur Central
- Vijayawada Station
- Charbagh Railway Station

Q. Who among the following has been named as the PETA's Person of the Year 2019?

- Marc Maron
- Todd Phillips
- Joaquin Phoenix
- Jack Nicholson
- Marc Maron

Q. Recently, Who among the following has been conferred with Economic Times Lifetime Achievement Award?

- Arun Jaitley
- Sushma Swaraj
- Virat Kohli
- Nirmala Sitharaman
- Manmohan Singh

Q. In December 2019, Virat Kohli regains no.1 spot in ICC Test rankings by defeating ________.

- David Warner
- Steve Smith
- Glenn Maxwell
- Joe Root
- Ben Stokes

Q. Recently, OPEC and its allies agree to deepen oil output cuts. OPEC is headquartered in ______.

- Austria
- Switzerland
- France
- New York
- Russia

Q. In December 2019, Government has sanctioned _______ to set up women help desks in police stations.

- Rs 50 crore
- Rs 100 crore
- Rs 200 crore
- Rs 250 crore
- Rs 300 crore

Q. Which of the following city is hosting the third edition of National Public Procurement Conclave?

- New Delhi
Q. India’s first aqua lab will be set up in which of the following Indian city?

- Pune
- Varanasi
- Dehradun
- Agra
- Kolkata

Q. In December 2019, Fifteenth Finance Commission has submitted its report to President. Who among the following is the Chairman of 15 Finance commission?

- Ramesh Chand
- Anoop Singh
- N K Singh
- Ajay Narayan Jha
- Rakesh Sharma

Q. Reserve Bank of India has kept its repo rate unchanged in its fifth bi-monthly Monetary Policy. What is the current Repo Rate?

- 5.10 %
- 5.15 %
- 5.25 %
- 5.35 %
- 5.75 %

Q. The RBI has revised its GDP growth at ______ for 2019-20 in its fifth bi-monthly Monetary Policy.

- 5.0 %
- 5.10 %
- 5.20 %
- 5.50 %
- 6.0 %

Q. Which of the following payment service has won 'Most Innovative Payment Start-Up' at India FinTech Awards (IFTA) 2019?

- PhonePe
- Paytm
- Razorpay
- MobiKwik
- PayPal

Q. In December 2019, who among the following has been awarded the Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award from UNICEF?

- Sachin Tendulkar
- Virat Kohli
- Akshay Kumar
- Priyanka Chopra
Sourav Ganguly

Q. In December 2019, who among the following has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Costa Rica?

Upender Singh Rawat

Ranjeet Singh

Amit Pandey

Prachi Singh Chaudhary

Ranjan Kumar

Q. 2019 NATO Summit was held in _______.

United Kingdom

Switzerland

France

USA

Canada

Q. ‘INDRA 2019’ is a joint tri-services exercise between India and _______.

Russia

China

France

Japan

Sri Lanka

Q. In December 2019, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) has announced to invest _______ in India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF).

$200 million

$400 million

$600 million

$800 million

$900 million

Q. According to Britain-based tech research firm Comparitech, India ranked ______ worst country in terms of extensive and invasive use of biometric data.

2nd

5th

6th

9th

10th

Q. Which of the following state government has launched 'YSR Law Nestham Scheme'?

Jharkhand

Odisha

Telangana

Andhra Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh

Q. Which of the following state has announced to create rural land banks for industrial development?
Punjab
Uttar Pradesh
Jharkhand
Rajasthan
Himachal Pradesh

Q. Avantee mega Food Park has been inaugurated in which of the following India state?
- Uttar Pradesh
- Andhra Pradesh
- Jharkhand
- Rajasthan
- Madhya Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh
Andhra Pradesh
Jharkhand
Rajasthan

Madhya Pradesh

Q. According to the The Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) new guidelines, Payment Banks can be converted into Small Finance Banks after _______.
- 2 Years
- 3 Years
- 4 Years
- 5 Years
- 6 Years

5 Years

Q. Which of the following insurance company has launched ‘My:Health Woman Suraksha’?
- Bajaj Allianz
- HDFC ERGO
- New India Assurance
- Iffco Tokio
- ICICI Lombard

K Vijay Kumar
Rahul Trivedi
Anoop Kuamar
Ravi Bajaj
Amit Singh

Q. Armed Forces Flag Day is observed every year on _________.
- 03 December
- 05 December
- 06 December
- 07 December
- 08 December

07 December

Q. Which of the following Indian state is hosting the 8th India-China joint training exercise ‘HAND-IN-HAND 2019’?
- Meghalaya
- Assam
- Rajasthan
- Maharashtra
- Rajasthan
Q. Recently, Aberdeen police station has been named as ranks first in the list of the best-performing police stations in the country. It is situated in which of Indian State/UT?
- Jammu and Kashmir
- Andaman and Nicobar
- Gujarat
- Madhya Pradesh
- Tamil Nadu

Q. In December, Which of the following Indian city is the host of Human Library in India?
- Pune
- Gwalior
- Mysuru
- Agra
- Ranchi

Q. Recently, Which of the following Indian state has formed a squad to control the human-elephant conflicts?
- Kerala
- Assam
- Meghalaya
- Gujarat
- Karnataka

Q. NEFT facility to be available round the clock from December 16. E in NEFT stands for ______.
- Extra
- Economical
- Electronic
- Extensive
- None of these

Q. In December 2019, NTPC has signed a term loan agreement of ₹5,000 crore with which of the following bank?
- State Bank of India
- ICICI Bank
- Punjab National Bank
- Bank of Baroda
- Axis Bank

Q. Who among the following has been appointed as the chairman of National Stock Exchange?
- Ashish Kumar Sharma
- Girish Chandra Chaturvedi
- Raman Mishra
- Alok Kumar Pandey
- None of these

Q. Recently, Caroline Wozniacki announces her retirement. She was associated with which of the following sports?
- Tennis
- Basketball
- Football
- Cricket
- None of these
Badminton
Basketball

**Tennis**
Football
Cricket

**Q.** The Human Library is an international organization non-profit organisation headquartered in ______.
USA
Denmark
Switzerland
Canada
France

**Q.** International Anti-Corruption Day is observed every year on ______.
5 December
9 December
11 December
7 December
8 December

**Q.** According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s report (SIPRI), Which of the following country is the biggest manufacturer of arms in the world?
United States
Russia
United Kingdom
France
None of these

**Q.** According to a recent announcement, 30 Rafale jets will have initials of ______ name on it.
Arjan Singh
Sam Manekshaw
B S Dhanoa
Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon
Bipin Rawat

**Q.** Katz presented his "Tracks for Regional Peace" initiative to Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. Katz is the Foreign Minister of ______.
Germany
Russia
Israel
Jordan
Turkey

**Q.** In December 2019, Which of the following country is hosting Incredible India Road Show 2019?
Laos
Vietnam
Singapore
Bangladesh
Thailand

Q. Recently, President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for a memorial to mark completion of 200 years of Paika Rebellion in which of the following Indian state?

Uttar Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh

Jharkhand

Tamil Nadu

Odisha

Q. Which of the following Indian city will host Eklavya Model Residential School All India Sports Competition?

Agra

Bhopal

Gwalior

Mumbai

New Delhi

Q. What is the 2019 theme for the Professional Photographers for the 8th National Photography Awards?

Women Security

Life and Water

Smog

Child Abuse

None of these

Q. In December 2019, Who among the following has reclaimed his world heavyweight crown in Saudi Arabia?

Eddie Hearn

Deontay Wilder

Anthony Joshua

Tyson Fury

Dillian Whyte

Q. Recently, Bhagabat Mohanty passed away. He served as the Higher Education Minister of which of the following Indian state?

Jharkhand

Tamil Nadu

Odisha

Assam

Uttar Pradesh

Q. World observes Human Rights Day is observed every year on ________.

7 December

8 December

9 December

10 December

11 December
Q. Recently, Five people died in White Island volcano eruption. This volcano is located in which of the following country?

Japan

New Zealand

Indonesia

Vietnam

South Africa

Q. 'Iron Union 12' is a joint military exercise between _______ and _______.

Russia, Japan

United States, Japan

Japan, China

United States, United Arab Emirates

France, South Africa

Q. In December 2019, Which of the following city has been selected as the world's leading sports tourism destination at the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA)?

Doha

Paris

Abu Dhabi

Moscow

Shanghai

Q. Recently, UNESCO-recognized Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR) conducted a special service for foreign tourists. NMR was recognised as a World Heritage Site in the year ________.

2001

2011

1999

2005

2004

Q. Lok Sabha passes Citizenship Amendment Bill. The bill seeks to grant citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Parsis, Buddhists and Christians who migrated to India till the end of ________.

2001

2007

2008

2011

2014

Q. Union Government will allow girls’ education in which of the following Sainik Schools?

Kalikiri, Andhra Pradesh

Kodagu, Karnataka

Ghorakhal, Uttarakhand

Chandrapur, Maharashtra

All of these
Q. Recently, Sanna Marin has been elected as the youngest-ever Prime Minister of which of the following country?

- Denmark
- Finland
- Norway
- Austria
- None of these

Q. State Bank of India has announced the reduction in its marginal cost of fund based lending rate (MCLR). The current MCLR stands at _______.

- 7.50%
- 7.70%
- 7.90%
- 8.00%
- 8.10%

Q. World's 1st fully electric commercial aircraft took its inaugural test flight in which of the following country?

- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Russia
- Japan

Q. The World Anti-Doping Agency, WADA has banned which of the following country from international sporting events for four years.

- Canada
- Russia
- China
- South Africa
- Germany

Q. Which of the following Indian city will host International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval weapon Systems- NAVARMS-19?

- Pune
- Mumbai
- New Delhi
- Agra
- Gwalior

Q. National Stock Exchange has launched interest rate options on ________ Government bonds.

- 5 year
- 7 year
- 10 year
- 12 year
- 15 year
Q. Which of the following Indian ministry will host the 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue and Delhi Dialogue XI in New Delhi?

Ministry of External Affairs
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
Ministry of Defence

Q. Which of the following bank has appointed V Viswanathan as its additional director?

Dhanlaxmi Bank
South Indian Bank
Federal Bank
DCB Bank
None of these

Q. India ranked at ______ place on Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) released at the COP25 climate summit?

4th
9th
11th
13th
15th

Q. ISRO launched earth observation satellite, RISAT-2BR1 from Sriharikota. It is an _______ satellite.

Communications Satellite
Remote Sensing Satellite
Navigation Satellite
Earth Observation Satellite
None of these

Q. Recently, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has started National award for outstanding services in the field of Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug abuse. These awards will be given on _______.

26 June
10 April
11 January
17 October
9 November
Q. Which of the following country hosted the 13th South Asian Games?

India
Bangladesh
Bhutan
Nepal
Pakistan

Q. Universal Health Coverage Day is observed every year on ________.

10 December
11 December
12 December
13 December
14 December

Q. USMCA is a trade deal between the United States, Mexico and ________.

China
Chile
Canada
Cambodia
Croatia

Q. Which of the following city is hosting 3 day “International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems” for BIMSTEC countries?

Lahore

Q. In December 2019, Which of the following company has become the most valuable listed company in history?

Apple
Amazon
Saudi Aramco

Q. Recently, Rajya Sabha passed the “Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019”, It makes migrants of how many communities eligible for Indian citizenship?

3
4
5
6
7

Q. Which of the following commission tabled its final report gave a clean chit to the Gujarat government in 2002 riots?

Justice Ranjit Singh Commission
Justice Nanavati-Mehta Commission
Justice Narasimham Commission
Justice Sarkaria Commission
None of these

Q. Recently, Which of the following state has announced to set up 45 new fast track courts in the state?

- Odisha
- Jharkhand
- Uttar Pradesh
- Tamil Nadu
- Assam

Q. Andhra cabinet has approved _____ providing for harsher punishments for crimes against women.

- Suraksha Act
- Disha Act
- Tejas Act
- Safal Act
- Samriddhi Act

Q. Recently, India has signed a contract for the development of Addu city. This city is located in _______.

- Bangladesh
- Sri Lanka
- Maldives
- Myanmar
- Vietnam

Q. Which of the following place will host second 2-plus-2 India-US dialogue on 18 December?

- Washington DC
- New Delhi
- New York
- Chennai
- Chicago

Gangtok

Q. Who among the following has been appointed as the new brand ambassador of Pepsi?

- Akshay Kumar
- Hrithik Roshan
- Salman Khan
- Shahrukh Khan
- Ranveer Singh

Q. Which of the following place will host the National Tribal Dance Festival from Dec 27-29, 2019?

- Raipur
- Imphal
- Pithoragarh
- Bastar
Q. President Kovind gives assent to Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019. The bill is not applicable in ILP. L in ILP stands for ________.

- Land
- Legal
- Line
- Lower
- None of these

Q. ISRO begins preparations for setting up third rocket launchpad Kulashekhrapattinam. Kulashekhrapattinam is located in which of the following Indian state?

- Andhra Pradesh
- Jharkhand
- Karnataka
- Tamil Nadu
- Odisha

Q. GIFT city welcomes Lok Sabha nod to IFSC Authority Bill, 2019. GIFT City is located in ________.

- Pune
- Bangalore
- Gandhinagar
- Chennai
- Udaipur

Q. Who among the following is referred to as India’s ‘Greta’?

- Debananda Gogoi
- Denis P Rayen
- Haj Yakang
- Oinam Doren
- Licypriya Kangujam

Q. Who among the following has been named as the Time magazine’s person of the year?

- George Soros
- Luisa Neubauer
- Boyan Slat
- Greta Thunberg
- Carola Rackete

Q. Which of the following state has won the Best State award for promoting sports at the FICCI Sports Awards-2019?

- Uttar Pradesh
- Haryana
- Assam
- Odisha

Q. An application named as ________ developed by Blue Sky Analytics, Gurugram has won the Copernicus Masters award.
In November 2019, retail inflation reaches at _______.

3.46%
5.19%
5.54%
4.99%
4.84%

Who has been appointed as South Africa’s first acting director of cricket?

Herschelle Gibbs
Graeme Smith
Jacques Kallis
Mark Boucher
None of these

The Union Cabinet recently authorised which organisation to set up Infrastructure Investment Trust?

NITI Aayog
NHAI
SEBI
RBI
NPCI

Which state government Suez, a leading French multinational corporation to rehabilitate drinking water?

Kerala
Karnataka
Tamil Nadu
Andhra Pradesh
Assam

Chen Yu Fei defeated PV Sindhu to win the BWF World Tour 2019 title. Chen Yu Fei belongs to which country?

Indonesia
China
Hongkong
Malaysia
Japan

Marie Fredriksson passed away at 61. She was a _______.

Actress
Journalist
Singer
Director
Football player
Q. Which of State/ UT government has introduced start up policy?

Delhi
Andhra Pradesh
Puducherry
Tamil Nadu
Uttar Pradesh

Q. Ravi Kumar and Sumit Sangwan failed dope tests. Sumit Sangwan related to which Sports?

Shooting
Boxing
Wrestling
Weight Lifting
Cricket

Q. Which of the following symbol will have on Indian passport?

Banyan
Lotus
Water
Fire
Rose

Q. Which of the following country will host the 36th International Geological Congress in March 2020?

France
China
India
Bangladesh
Vietnam

Q. Ministry of Shipping declared Mongla and Chattogram Ports of Call under “Coastal Shipping Agreement” between India and ________.

Myanmar
Sri Lanka
Pakistan
Both a) & c)

Q. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ranked ______ on Forbes 100 most powerful women list.

22
34
55
45

Q. How much percent Indian Government sell in Air India as a part of disinvestment?

75%
100%
Q. Recently, Nadar Malhotra ranked 54th rank on Forbes 100 most powerful women list. She is the CEO of _______.

HCL
TCS
NTPC
SBI
None of these

Q. Which of the following Indian state has topped 100-day work programme for promoting livelihoods?

Bihar
Uttar Pradesh
Jharkhand
West Bengal
Haryana

Q. Recently, Audible Suno app has been launched. Which of the following company is the parent company of Audible?

Walmart
Amazon
Apple
Google
TCS

Q. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) unveiled a new world ranking system for 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland. It will come into effect from _______.

1 January 2019
1 March 2019
1 June 2019
1 July 2019
1 August 2019
Q. Recently, Gollapudi Maruthi Rao passed away. He was a famous _______.

Singer

Actor

Journalist

Painter

Politician

Q. Who among the following has topped the Forbes 100 most powerful women list?

Greta Thunberg

Theresa May

Angela Merkel

Christine Lagarde

Nancy Pelosi

Q. The United Nations (UN) has declared ________ as International Tea Day.

21 May

08 June

12 April

9 March

11 November

Q. COP26 will take place in _______.

Liverpool

Paris

Bern

Glasgow

Budapest

Q. Who among the following has won the General Elections in the UK?

Nigel Farage

Dominic Cummings

Boris Jhonson

Jeremy Hunt

Priti Patel

Q. Vijay Diwas is observed every year in ________ to commemorate India’s victory over Pakistan in 1971 war.

12 December

13 December

14 December

15 December

16 December

Q. In December 2019, Which of the following has decided to establish a Sustainable Development Cell (SDC)?

Ministry of Coal

Jal Shakti Ministry

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Q. The World Design Organization will launch World Design Protopolis in which of the following Indian city?

Pune
Mumbai
Gandhinagar
Bengaluru
Kolkata

Q. A FASTag uses _______ technology to enable direct toll payments from a moving vehicle.

Radio Frequency Identification
Global Positioning System
Geographic Information System
Optical Character Recognition
None of these

Q. Recently, Google has revealed that its mapping service, Google Earth now covers more than _______ of the world.

92 %
100 %
96 %
98 %
95 %

Q. Recently, 'Tony-Ann Singh' has won the 'Miss World 2019'. She is from which of the following country?

Mexico
Jamaica
South Africa
Iceland
Germany

Q. Recently, Danny Aiello passed away. He was a famous _______.

Actor
Painter
Journalist
Writer
Scientists

Q. Firefighters urged residents to evacuate areas near Gospers Mountain due to bushfire. Gospers Mountains are located in ________.

Venezuela
Australia
Germany
Peru
Brazil
Q. Recently, Military exercise Surya Kiran – XIV concluded. Surya Kiran is a joint military exercise between India and ________.

Nepal
Vietnam
Sri Lanka
Russia
Japan

Q. In December, A three-day state-level orange festival begins in Tamenglong district. Tamenglong district is situated in ________.

Assam
Manipur
Mizoram
Meghalaya
Nagaland

Q. A 7-Day International Film Festival in has been inaugurated at which of the following places of Madhya Pradesh?

Rewa
Betul
Bhopal
Khajuraho
Ujjain

Q. Antonio Costa will be on visit India from 19-20 December. He is the Prime Minister of which of the following country?

Germany
Austria
Denmark
Portugal
Sweden

Q. Who among the following will become the next Chief of Army Staff?

Abhay Krishna
Devraj Anbu
Manoj Mukund Naravane

Q. Who among the following took charge as the new Secretary, Information and Broadcasting Ministry?

B K Dubey
Ravi Mittal
O P Mathur
Rajneesh Singh
Vipin S Jain
Q. Recently, About _______ Indian peacekeepers serving in South Sudan have been awarded the prestigious UN medal.

222
436
368
728
850

Q. Who among the following will hold the additional charge as the governor of Meghalaya in absence of Tathagata Roy?

Jagdish Mukhi
R N Ravi
B. D. Mishra
Najma Heptulla
P. S. Sreedharan Pillai

Q. Who among the following has won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award 2019?

Rafael Nadal
Tiger Woods
Ben Stokes
Lewis Hamilton
Sebastian Vettel

Q. International Migrants Day is observed every year on _______.

14 December
15 December
16 December
17 December
18 December

Q. Recently, Former Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf gets death penalty in treason case. He served as the _______ president of Pakistan.

4th
7th
10th
11th
12th

Q. Government e-commerce portal GeM has recently launched a national outreach programme, named as _______, to bring on-board more local sellers.

GeM Aadarsh
GeM Samvaad
GeM Deshaj
GeM Ashray
GeM Tejas

Q. According to a recent announcement, Which of the following has police force has started laser fencing along the Indo-Nepal border?
Border Security Force
Central Reserve Police Force
Indo-Tibetan Border Police

**Sashastra Seema Bal**

None of these

**Q.** India ranks _____ on the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Report?

101th
109th
112th
124th
118th

**Q.** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister indicated that the state could have three capitals named as _______, _______, and _______.

Amaravati, Vijayawada, Nellore
Amaravati, Visakhapatnam, Nellore

**Amaravati, Visakhapatnam, Kurnool**

Amaravati, Tirupati, Kurnool
Amaravati, Vijayawada, Guntur

**Q.** Five-day music festival ‘Tansen Samaroh’ begins in _______.

Ujjain
Varanasi
Gwalior

**Amaravati**

Ranchi

**Q.** Who among the following has been appointed as the chairman-cum-managing director of National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO)?

Akshat Jain
Shrinath Teja

**Sridhar Patra**

Sachin Aggarwal
None of these

**Q.** Who among the following has won the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2019?

Vikram Seth

**Amitabha Bagchi**

Jhumpa Lahiri
Anita Desai
Amitav Ghosh

**Q.** Recently, Shriram Lagoo passed away. He was a famous _______.

Journalist
Actor
Painter
Politician
Footballer
Q. Which of the following country withdrew its request from UN Security Council to hold discussions on Kashmir?

Nepal

China

Iran

Israel

None of these

Q. The funding pattern for Phase-III of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana scheme will be ________ between Centre and the States.

70:30

50:50

60:40

70:30

80:20

Q. Which of the following state Chief Minister has inducted Organisation for Counter-Terrorist Operations (OCTOPUS) into its security cover?

Odisha

Jharkhand

Uttar Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh

West Bengal

Q. The Goods and Services Tax or GST Council has fixed a uniform tax rate of _______ on both state-run and private lottery.

28%

18%

12%

10%

8%
Q. Recently, Fiat Chrysler has signed a merger with which of the following company?

PSA
Alfa Romeo
Volkswagen
Isuzu
Nissan

Q. Recently, IPS officer Atul Karwal appointed as Director of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy. SVPNPS is located in ________.

Pune
Hyderabad
Chandigarh
Dehradun
Gaya

Q. Who among the following has won the Sahitya Akademi-2019 award in English language?

Vikram Seth
Arundhati Roy
Shashi Tharoor
Kiran Desai
Salman Rushdie

Q. International Human Solidarity Day is observed every year on ________.

17 December
18 December
19 December
20 December
21 December

Q. In December 2019, International Astronomical Union has named a new star as ________ on the name of an Emirate.

Ajman
Sharjah
Fujairah
Ras Al Khaimah
Umm Al Quwain

Q. Recently, Thawarchand Gehlot launches Braille version of the book 'Exam Warriors’. Who among the following is the author of 'Exam Warriors’?

Salman Rushdie
Narendra Modi
Subramanian Swamy
Ram Nath Kovind
Nirmala Sitharaman
4th

5th

Q. Upgraded version of Pinaka guided rocket system successfully test fired. Pinaka system has a maximum range of _______ for Mark-II variant.

125 km

100 km

75 km

30 km

200 km

Q. The Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard conducted a large scale Anti Hijacking Exercise “Apharan” at______.

Mangalore

Kochi

Visakhapatnam

Chennai

Kolkata

Q. Who among the following has became the Chairman and Managing Director (MD) at the General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re)?

Raman Asthana

Devesh Srivastava

Akash Anjum

Rahul D Dev

Rohit Tripathi

रोहित त्रिपाठी

Q. Recently, CV Ramulu has been appointed as the Lokayukta of _______.

Telangana

Assam

Tripura

Jharkhand

Punjab

Q. In December 2019, Which of the following country has announced Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize?

Australia

Denmark

Portugal

France

Japan

Q. In December, Who among the following has emerged as the new national champion in the Women’s 10 metres Air Rifle event.

Zeena Khitta

Aparvi Chandela

Mehuli Ghosh

Anjum Moudgil

None of these
Q. In 2019 IPL auction, Who among the following player has become the most expensive overseas IPL player?

Glenn Maxwell

Eoin Morgan

**Pat Cummins**

Aaron Finch

None of these

Q. Which of the following country has became the 1st country to recognize Indian Pharmacopoeia?

Afghanistan

Bangladesh

Sri Lanka

UAE

Nepal

Q. In December 2019, Which of the following African country has launched its first satellite?

Tanzania

Ethiopia

South Africa

Gambia

Egypt

Q. Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has conducted a two-day regional level pollution response exercise named 'Swachchh Samundra NW-2019' in _______.

Gulf of Kutch

Bay of Bengal

Andaman Sea

Goa Coast

Gulf of Kambhat

Q. In December 2019, Asian Development Bank has signed a _______ loan to upgrade Indian state's roads.

520 million dollar

700 million dollar

490 million dollar

240 million dollar

330 million dollar

Q. Recently, Chief Justice SA Bobde sets up a 2-judge panel comprising of _______ and _______ to speed up rape trials across nation.

Y.S Thakur, Naveen Das

Subhash Reddy, M.R Shah

Amit Tripathi, Raj Dev Verma

Kumar Shiv, Tapan Pal

None of these

Q. According to a US government agency data, India is the world's _______ largest producer of scientific articles.

First
Q. Who among the following Indian has been appointed by U.S government to lead its National Science Foundation?

Jayakanthan
Varadarajan Mudaliar
Sethuraman Panchanathan
Sivaji Ganesan
None of these

Q. Who among the following has won the women’s 49kg category gold medal at the 6th Qatar International Cup in Doha?

Santoshi Matsa
Swati Singh
Mirabai Chanu
Kumukcham Sanjita Chanu

Q. Abhinav Lohan is associated with which of the following sports?

Badminton
Table Tennis
Carrom

Golf
Football

Q. Recently, Thomas Chandy passed away. He was a famous _______.

Actor
Writer
Journalist
Politician
Painter

Q. In December 2019, Eight West African nations rename common currency to ________.

Kyat
Eco
Rubel
Ripple
Danish

Q. National Mathematics Day is observed every year on ________.

19 December
20 December
21 December
22 December
23 December
Q. In December 2019, The annual general meeting of Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India ASSOCHAM was held in_______.
Kolkata
Mumbai
New Delhi
Chennai
Pune

Q. Recently, Which of the following company has partnered with Nasscom to upskill 10,000 students from 20 engineering colleges across India.
TCS
HCL
IBM
Wipro
None of these

Q. Which of the following country has named Manuel Marrero Cruz as its first PM since 1976?
South Sudan
Egypt
Ghana
Cuba
Algeria

Q. Who among the following Indian has been appointed as the first woman Chief Technology Officer at the US government's Federal Communications Commission (FCC)?
Roshni Mihir
Monisha Ghosh
Akansha Dalal
Amita D Kumar
Rachna Desh Pandey

Q. Maisnam Meiraba Luwang is associated with which of the following sports?
Table Tennis
Badminton
Golf
Hockey
Long Jump

Q. The Women' T20 World Cup 2020 will take place in ________.
England
India
Australia
UAE
South Africa

Q. Which of the following team has been named as the FIFA Team of the Year?
Belgium
Argentina

Q. Indian Mathematician, Srinivasa Ramanujan was born in ________.
Salem
Chennai
Erode
Coimbatore
Tirupur

Erode
Q. Recently, Which of the following country has declared an emergency after Galapagos fuel spill?
Ecuador
Chile
Venezuela
Cuba
Peru

Q. National Farmers Day is observed every year on ________.
20 December
21 December
22 December
23 December
24 December

Q. Chaudhary Charan Singh served as the _________ Prime Minister of India.
3rd
4th
5th
6th
7th

Q. The Government of India has constructed Girls' Hostel for Armed Police Force of which of the following country?
Bhutan
Nepal
Bangladesh
Sri Lanka
Myanmar

Q. Integral Coach Factory produces 3000 Coaches in record 215 days. ICF is located in ________.
Rourkela
Jamshedpur
Ranchi
Visakhapatnam

Q. Who among the following has launched the mobile app of the Red Cross Society of India in Hyderabad?

France
Denmark
Brazil

Q. Recently, Which of the following country has declared an emergency after Galapagos fuel spill?
Ecuador
Chile
Venezuela
Cuba
Peru

Q. National Farmers Day is observed every year on ________.
20 December
21 December
22 December
23 December
24 December

Q. Chaudhary Charan Singh served as the _________ Prime Minister of India.
3rd
4th
5th
6th
7th

Q. The Government of India has constructed Girls' Hostel for Armed Police Force of which of the following country?
Bhutan
Nepal
Bangladesh
Sri Lanka
Myanmar

Q. Integral Coach Factory produces 3000 Coaches in record 215 days. ICF is located in ________.
Rourkela
Jamshedpur
Ranchi
Visakhapatnam

Q. Who among the following has launched the mobile app of the Red Cross Society of India in Hyderabad?
Q. Recently, Indian government has launched a/an _______ Network program to foster cross-disciplinary leadership in India.

DeSh
SAMRADDHI
EChO
TeJ
KIRAN

Q. Recently, 'Chilai-Kalan' begins in Jammu & Kashmir. Chilai-Kalan is a/an _____.

Cultural Festival

Harsh Winter Period
Harvest Festival
Annual Pilgrimage
None of these

Q. In December a unique 'Oxygen Parlour' to combat air pollution has been inaugurated at which of the following railway station?

Nashik
Gandhinagar

Q. In December 2019, Rajasthan Chief Minister inaugurated the first Janta clinic of Rajasthan in ________.

Udaipur
Ajmer
Jaipur
Bikaner
Bharatpur

Q. Which of the following country will host African Football Super Cup until 2022?

UAE
Qatar
France
Oman
Russia

Q. National Consumer Rights Day is observed every year on ________.

21 December
22 December
23 December
24 December
25 December
**Q.** Saudi Arabia court has sentenced five people to death and jailed three others over the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Khashoggi was a/an _______.

Painter

Football Player

**Journalist**

Social activist

Politician

**Q.** Recently, Urban areas of _______ states and UTs have been declared Open defecation free.

30

32

33

34

35

**Q.** The 19th session of the India-Iran Joint Commission was held in _______.

Tehran

New Delhi

Mashhad

Pune

Shiraz

**Q.** What is the total number of the Legislative assembly seats in Jharkhand?

77

80

81

73

91

**Q.** In December 2019, Who among the following has been appointed as the new Foreign Secretary?

Atish Shah

Ranjan Dev Tyagi

Harsh Vardhan Shringla

Rahul Kumar Sangwan

Amish Singh

**Q.** In December 2019, Who among the following has taken over as the President of industry chamber FICCI for 2019-20?

Pratibha Shukla

Akaksh Deep

Sangita Reddy

Rohan Singh

Ankita Mohan

**Q.** Who among the following has been awarded the best actor award at the 66th National Film Awards?

Ayushmann Khurrana

Vicky Kaushal

Akshay Kumar

Nawazuddin Siddiqui
Q. Recently, Rakhi Halde created two national records. She is associated with which of the following sports?

Boxing

Weightlifting

Shot Put

400m race

Long Jump

Q. Recently, Martin Peters passed away. He was associated with which of the following sports?

Cricket

Football

Badminton

Hockey

Basketball

Q. Indian Railways has decided to modernize its signalling system by implementing (MTCS). M in MTCS stands for _________.

Mega

Modern

Multilateral

Mode

None of these

Q. In December 2019, IAF Chief visits Egypt for bilateral talks. What is the capital of Egypt?

Cairo

Luxor

Tripoli

Ankara

Sana'a

Q. Which of the following is/are are Nodal Loaning entities (NLEs) to provide concessional finance under the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund?

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)

Small Industries Development Bank of India

1&2

1,2&3

Q. PM Modi unveiled Atal Bihari Vajpayee statue in Lucknow. Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as the prime minister of India ________ times.

1

2

3

4

5
Q. Who among the following has been named as the 'Sexiest Vegetarian Personality' by PETA?

Suman Rao
Reita Faria
Urvashi Rautela
Manushi Chillar
Priyadarshini Chatterjee

Q. Under ‘YSR Nethanna Nestham’ Scheme, Every handloom weaver would get ________ annually.

Rs 15,000
Rs 20,000
Rs 24,000
Rs 28,000
Rs 30,000

Q. Recently, Cabinet approves Atal Bhujal Yojana with total outlay of ________.

Rs. 1000 crore
Rs. 2000 crore
Rs. 5000 crore
Rs. 6000 crore
Rs. 10,000 crore

Q. Recently, Dennis Muilenburg steps down from the post of CEO. He was serving as the CEO of ________.

Dassault Aviation

Lufthansa

Boeing

Intel

None of these

Q. Who among the following has been named as the captain of Cricket Australia's (CA) ODI team of the decade?

AB de Villiers
Shakib Al Hasan
Jos Buttler
MS Dhoni
David Miller

Q. Recently, Vidushi Savita Devi passed away. She was a/an ________.

Classical Vocalist
Journalist
Sitar player
Painter
None of these

Q. In December 2019, Federal Cabinet of Pakistan has decided to import polio markers from which of the following country?

Bangladesh

India

Japan
Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the 'Atal Bhujal Yojana'. 50% of the total outlay of this scheme will be in the form of loan from ________.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

**World Bank**

Asian Development Bank

World Trade Organization

African Development Bank

**Q.** Good Governance Day is observed every year on ________.

22 December

23 December

24 December

25 December

26 December

**Q.** Which of the following organisation will launch the second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index?

NITI Aayog

Reserve Bank of India

Central Vigilance Commission

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

Central Statistics Office

**Q.** In December 2019, The Cabinet has given its approval for signing of MoU between India and ________ on Bioenergy Cooperation.

**Brazil**

Russia

Japan

Indonesia

Thailand

**Q.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has named Rohtang passageway in Himachal Pradesh as ________.

Madan Mohan Malaviya Tunnel

Atal Tunnel

Bhagat Singh Tunnel

Swaraj Tunnel

None of these

**Q.** Dharmendra Pradhan unveils India’s first long distance CNG bus. The first long range interstate CNG bus will ply from Delhi to_______.

Agra

Mathura

Dehradun
Lucknow
Kanpur

Q. Leander Paes will retire in 2020. He is associated with which of the following sports?

Football
Tennis
Badminton
Hockey
Table Tennis

Q. Recently, Ganga Prasad Vimal died in a road accident. He was a/an ________.

Classical Vocalist
Painter
Author
Journalist
None of these

Q. Who among the following is the only female cricketer among five Wisden cricketers of the decade list?

Nicola Carey
Smriti Mandhana
Nicole Bolton
Ellyse Perry
Sarah Taylor

Q. Which of the following country is the only country in the world that has hypersonic weapons?

China
Japan
Russia
USA
North Korea

Q. Recently, A strong typhoon, 'Phanfone' made landfall and killed at least 20 people in which of the following country?

Mexico
Philippines
USA
Japan
None of these

Q. In december 2019, Health Minister inaugurates second edition of Eat Right Mela in which of the following city?

Kolkata
Chennai
New Delhi
Pune
Varanasi

Q. Nari Shakti Puraskar will be given on the occasion of ________.

International Women’s Day
International Day of Rural Women

International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation

National Women's Day of India

None of these

Q. Nation pays homage to Shaheed Udham Singh on his 120th birth anniversary. Shaheed Udham Singh is associated with _______.

Kakori conspiracy

Murder of James Sanders

Chauri Chaura incident

Murder of General O'Dwyer

None of these

Q. Which of the following state government has decided to raise the retirement age of its Road Transport Corporation employees to 60 from the current 58 year?

Jharkhand

Telangana

Uttar Pradesh

Punjab

Rajasthan

Q. The Union Territory Ladakh is celebrating______, to mark the Ladakhi New Year.

Pavarana Festival

Cheti Chand Festival

Losar Festival

Gangaur Festival

None of these

Q. Which of the following Indian state government has decided to observe 2020 as the Year of Artificial Intelligence?

Rajasthan

Uttar Pradesh

Telangana

Maharashtra

Karnataka

Q. Who among the following has become the first Indian to receive the Life Achievement honour by the world’s largest association of eye specialists, American Academy of Ophthalmology?

Anita Sethi

Santosh G Honavar

Vivek Garg

Suraj Munjal

Sudipto Pakrasi

Q. Who among the following is the author of the book "Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games”?

Boria Majumdar

Nalin Mehta

J. A. Mangan

Ayaz Memon
**Both A and B**

**Q.** Recently, Pakistan has received the second tranche of $452 mn from which of the following organisation?

- European Investment Bank
- Asian Development Bank
- African Development Bank
- International Monetary Fund

**Q.** The 5th Round of India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in _______.

- New Delhi
- Yokohama
- Chennai
- Tokyo
- Osaka

**Q.** In December 2019, Ministry of External Affairs has included Madagascar and Comoros in its _______ division.

- Indo-Pacific Division
- Indian Ocean Division

**Q.** In December 2019, Ministry of External Affairs has included Madagascar and Comoros in its _______ division.

- East & Southern Africa Division
- East Asia Division
- None of these

**Q.** On 27 December 2019, The Indian Air Force has retired its _______ fighter aircraft after serving over three decades.

- MiG-27
- MiG-29
- Mirage 2000
- Jaguar
- None of these

**Q.** According to Knight Frank Global House Price Index Q3 2019, India ranks _______ globally in home price appreciation.

- 52th
- 12th
- 12th
- 34th
- 36th
- 47th

**Q.** All of the new recruits in railways will be inducted through Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS) conducted by _______.

- SSC
- CET
- UPSC
- ICST
- RRC

**Q.** National Tribal Dance Festival begins in _______.

- Gwalior
- Jaipur
- Raipur
- Dibrugarh
- Kolkata
Q. India's first university for transgender community will come up in _______ district of Uttar Pradesh.

Agra  
Varanasi  
Kushinagar  
Faizabad  
Moradabad

Q. The Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India has discovered the earliest Sanskrit Inscriptions so far in _______.

Tamil Nadu  
Telangana  
Andhra Pradesh  
Kerala  
Karnataka

Q. Recently, Sumit Sangwan has been banned for one year for consuming prohibited substances. He was associated with which of the following sports?

Weightlifting  
Boxing  
Swimming  
Hockey  
Shot Put

Q. Recently, Who among the following has created a record for longest single spaceflight by a woman?

Jessica Meir  
Christina Koch

Q. Russia’s Avangard missile can travel _______ times the speed of sound.

4  
6  
12  
18  
27

Q. Which of the following country has recently successfully launched its largest carrier rocket, Long March-5?

USA  
Russia  
Japan  
China  
Canada

Q. Which of the following city will host DefExpo 2020?

Agra  
Kanpur  
Lucknow  
Gwalior  
Ranchi

Q. JMM leader Hemant Soren took oath as the ______ Chief Minister of Jharkhand.
7th
9th
11th
13th
14th

**Q.** Who among the following administered the oath of office and secrecy to Hemant Soren?

- Draupadi Murmu
- Jagdish Mukhi
- Anusuiya Uikey
- Satyadev Narayan Arya
- Lalji Tandon

**Draupadi Murmu**

**Q.** Which of the following Indian state is hosting the Mandu Festival?

- Jharkhand
- Assam
- Nagaland
- Madhya Pradesh
- Gujarat
- Uttar Pradesh

**Jharkhand**

**Q.** Recently, Vishwesha Theertha Swami passed away. He was the 32nd in the lineage of Pejawar Mutt in ________.

- Jharkhand
- Karnataka

**Karnataka**

**Q.** What is the prize money given to the recipient of Dada Saheb Phalke award?

- 1 lakh rupees
- 2 lakh rupees
- 5 lakh rupees
- 10 lakh rupees
- 20 lakh rupees

**10 lakh rupees**

**Q.** Recently, Vikas Sabnis passed away. He was a/an ________.

- Journalist
- Cartoonist
- Classical Vocalist
- Army Officer
- None of these

**Journalist**

**Q.** Recently, Vishwesha Theertha Swami passed away. He was the 32nd in the lineage of Pejawar Mutt in ________.

- Jharkhand
- Karnataka

**Karnataka**

**Q.** Who among the following has been declared as “the most famous teenager in the world” by the UN in its ‘Decade in Review’ report?

- Malala Yousafzai
- Greta Thunberg
- Nadia Murad
- Christina Lamb
- None of these

**Malala Yousafzai**

**Q.** Aditya is a programme by ISRO to study ________.

- Mars
- Titan
- None of these

**Titan**
Q. According to 'World Economic League Table 2020', India will overtake Germany to become the fourth-largest economy in the world by the year \textbf{2026}.

Q. In December 2019, the Central government's citizen engagement platform, MyGov has reached \textbf{1 Crore} registered users.

Q. Belum Caves Festival has been postponed to January. Belum Caves are located in \textbf{Andhra Pradesh}.

Q. MDR charges will not be applicable on transactions through RuPay, UPI platforms from 1st of January. M in MRD stands for \textbf{Merchant}.

Q. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directs large cooperative banks to report exposures above \textbf{Rs 5 crore} to the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC).

Q. The SBI will launch OTP-based cash withdrawal for transactions above \textbf{Rs 10,000} at all its ATMs.

Q. Who among the following will be the recipient of this year's prestigious CK Nayudu Lifetime Award given by the BCCI?
Kris Srikkanth
Anjum Chopra
Virat Kohli
Rohit Sharma

Both A and B

Q. Koneru Humpy is associated with which of the following sports?
Badminton
Chess
Golf
Tennis
Boxing

Q. Which of the following country will develop Batticaloa airport as an international airport?
Sri Lanka
Bangladesh
Nepal
Indonesia
Vietnam

Q. According to the India State of Forest Report, 2019, which of the following Indian state grew the maximum forest-and-tree cover in the last 2 years?
Jharkhand
Sikkim
Karnataka
Tamil Nadu
Uttar Pradesh

Q. Which of the following Indian state has achieved the first rank in the composite SDG Index
Sikkim
Kerala
Karnataka
Telangana
Tamil Nadu

Q. Which of the following Indian state will host Khelo India Youth Games in January 2020?
Jharkhand
Assam
Gujarat
Tamil Nadu
Odisha

Q. HDFC Lifes has partnered with _______ to offer insurance through m-com platform.
Phonepe
Airtel Money
MobiKwik
Paytm
None of these

Q. Recently, Finance Minister Sitharaman has launched an auction platform named as ______ for assets attached by banks.
eBkray
eSamay

eKharid

eTrans

None of these

Q. Who among the following has been named as India's first Chief of Defence Staff?

Bipin Rawat

Karambir Singh

Dalbir Singh Suhag

Birender Singh Dhanoa

Bikram Singh

Q. Who among the following has became the youngest bowler to take 100 T20 wickets?

Mohammad Hasnain

Noor Ahmad

Mujeeb Ur Rahman

Yasim Murtaza

SC Burns

Q. Fausta was the name of the world's oldest _____ that has recently died in Tanzania.

Elephant

Crocodile

Rhino

Turtle

Tiger

Q. Recently, Vikho-o Yhoshü passed away. He was the assembly speaker of _____ Assembly.

Uttarakhand

Nagaland

Telangana

Goa

Assam

Thank You
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