

## Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – April 2019

S. No	Topics	Page No.
1.	Important Days	2
2.	Important Banking News	3
3.	Important Financial & Economy Affairs	8
4.	Important Business News	11
5.	Important Cabinet Approvals	13
6.	Important State Wise National News	14
7.	Important International News	18
8.	Important Appointments	21
9.	Important Awards and Honors	23
10.	Important Committees	27
11.	Important MoU	27
12.	Important Summit & Conference	32
13.	Important Mobile App and Web Portal	34
14.	Important Defence News	35
15.	Important Science And Technology	38
16.	Important Ranking and Indexes	39
17.	Important Books And Authors	41
18.	Important Sports News	42
19.	Important Obituaries	47

## Important Days

Date	Important days	Theme
April 2	World Autism Awareness Day	Assistive Technologies, Active Participation
April 4	International Day for Mine Awareness	‘United Nations Promotes SDGs – Safe Ground – Safe Home’
April 5	National Maritime day (India)	Indian Ocean-An Ocean of opportunity
April 6	International Day of Sport for Development and Peace	-
April 7	World Health Day	Universal Health Coverage: Everyone, Everywhere
April 7-13	World Allergy Week	The Global Problem of Food Allergy
April 10	World Homoeopathy Day	Linking Education and Clinical Practice with Research: Advancing Scientific Collaborations
April 11	National Safe Motherhood Day	‘Midwives for Mothers’
April 12	The International Day of Human Space Flight	To honour the first ever flight of a human (Yuri Gagarin) in space
April 17	World Haemophilia Day	“Reaching Out: The First Step to Care”
April 18	World Heritage Day	“Rural Landscapes”
April 19	World Liver Day	-
April 21	National Civil Service Day	-
April 21	World Creativity and Innovation Day (WCID)	-
April 22	World Earth day	Protect Our Species
April 23	World Book and Copyright Day	-
April 24	National Panchayati Raj Day	-
April 24	International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace	-
April 25	World Malaria Day	Zero malaria starts with me
April 26	World Intellectual Property Day	“Reach for Gold: IP and Sports.”
April 24 - 30	World Immunization Week 2019	Protected Together: Vaccines Work
April 28	World Day for Safety and Health at Work	Safety and Health and the future of work
April 28	International Workers Memorial Day	Dangerous substances – get them out of the workplace
April 29	International Dance Day	Dance and spirituality!
April 30	Ayushman Bharat Diwas	-

## Important Banking News

### RBI

#### RBI sets NBFC-MFIs' average base rate at 9.21% for April-June

- The Reserve Bank set the average base rate to be charged from borrowers by non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and micro-finance institutions (MFIs) at 9.21 per cent for the first quarter of the next fiscal.
- RBI, on the last working day of every quarter, comes out with the average of the base rates of the five largest commercial banks for the purpose of arriving at the interest rates to be charged by NBFC-MFIs to its borrowers in the ensuing quarter. The regulator in February 2014 had issued directions to NBFC-MFIs regarding pricing of credit

#### Supreme Court quashes RBI circular on debt resolution

- The Supreme Court struck down a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) circular that gave defaulting companies 180 days to agree on a resolution plan with lenders or be taken to bankruptcy court to recover debt of Rs. 2,000 crore and above.
- The bench said the February 12, 2018, circular was beyond the scope of the RBI's powers. The decision was taken by a two-judge bench headed by RF Nariman.

#### RBI to inject USD 5 bn more liquidity through 2nd dollar-rupee swap auction

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will inject long-term liquidity worth USD 5 billion into the banking system through dollar-rupee buy-sell swap for a tenure of three years on April 23, the second such auction within a month.
- The swap will be in the nature of a simple buy/sell foreign exchange swap from the Reserve Bank side. Under the swap, a bank would sell US dollars to the RBI and simultaneously agree to buy the same amount of US dollars at the end of the swap period. The minimum size of each bid should be USD 10 million and in multiples of USD 1 million thereafter

#### First Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Statement 2019-20

- Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to reduce the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) by 25 basis points to 6.0 per cent from 6.25 per cent with immediate effect
- Reverse repo rate under the LAF stands adjusted to 5.75 per cent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate to 6.25 per cent.
- GDP growth for 2019-20 is projected at 7.2 per cent – in the range of 6.8-7.1 per cent in H1:2019-20 and 7.3-7.4 per cent in H2. The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled during June 3, 4 and 6, 2019.

USEFUL INFO	
Repo Rate	6.00%
Reverse Repo Rate	5.75%
MSF Rate	6.25%
Bank Rate	6.25%
CRR	4%
SLR	19.25%

#### RBI sets WMA Limit for Government at Rs. 75000 crore

- The Reserve Bank of India, in consultation with the Government of India, has decided that the limits for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) for the first half of the financial year 2019-20 (April 2019 to September 2019) will be Rs. 75000 crore. The Reserve Bank may trigger fresh floatation of market loans when the Government of India utilises 75% of the WMA limit. The interest rate on WMA will be Repo Rate and overdraft will be 2% above the Repo Rate.
- The Reserve Bank of India gives temporary loan facilities to the centre and state governments as a banker to government. This temporary loan facility is called Ways and Means Advances (WMA).
- The WMA scheme for the Central Government was introduced on April 1, 1997, after putting an end to the four-decade old system of adhoc (temporary) Treasury Bills to finance the Central Government deficit

#### RBI issues guidelines for banks to set up currency chests

- The Reserve Bank of India came out with guidelines for banks to set up new currency chests, which include a minimum area of 1,500 square feet for the strong room.
- For those situated in hilly/ inaccessible places, the strong room/ vault area of at least 600 sq ft.
- Besides, the new chests should have a processing capacity of 6.6 lakh pieces of banknotes per day.

- For those situated in the hilly/ inaccessible places, the capacity of 2.1 lakh pieces of banknotes per day.
- An RBI appointed committee had recommended that the apex bank should encourage banks to open large currency chests with modern facilities and Chest Balance Limit (CBL) of at least Rs 1,000 crore.
- This has been done on the recommendation of Shri D.K. Mohanty Committee.

### **RBI Issues Rs. 50 notes with Governor Shaktikanta Das' signature**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued banknotes of Rs. 50 denomination bearing the signature of Governor Shaktikanta Das. The design of these notes is similar in all respects to Rs. 50 banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi (new) series. The dimension of Rs. 50 note is 66 mm x 135 mm. In the back side of the note has Hampi with chariot as motif.

### **RBI signs up for FX global code**

- The RBI has signed a Statement of Commitment (SoC) to the FX Global Code. The code, launched on May 25, 2017, is a compilation of best market practices, formulated by central banks and market participants, developed under the auspices of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), Basel.
- The RBI said the code is applicable to the wholesale FX market participants covering sell-side, buy-side and financial intermediaries, and is voluntary in nature. It does not impose any legal or regulatory obligations, and is intended to be a supplement to the local laws, rules and regulations. It is currently being implemented globally by the Global FX Committee (GFXC) in co-ordination with the Local FX Committee (LFXC) in each jurisdiction

### **RBI has Rs. 3 lakh crore in excess reserves, says BofAML**

- The Bimal Jalan committee formed to study the RBI's capital structure is likely to identify excess reserves of up to Rs. 3 lakh crore (\$43million), Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BofAML) said.
- Capping overall reserves at 20% from 25.5% will release Rs. 1.96 lakh crore.
- There's no restriction which prevents RBI from transferring the money to government

### **RBI sells entire stake in NHB, Nabard to govt for Rs. 1,470 crore**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has divested its entire stake in Nabard and National Housing Bank (NHB) for Rs. 20 crore and Rs. 1,450 crore, on 26 February and 19 March, respectively. With this, the Government of India now holds 100% stake in both the financial institutions.
- RBI held 100% shareholding in NHB, which was divested on 19 March 2019. The current change in the capital structure of both the financial institutions was brought in by the Government of India through amendments to the NABARD Act, 1981 and the NHB Act, 1987

### **RBI became the first APAC central bank to begin interest rate easing cycle**

- The Reserve Bank of India is the first central bank in the Asia-Pacific region to begin an explicit interest rate easing cycle. The monetary policy committee led by Shaktikanta Das cut the repo rate by 0.25 percentage point in February 2019 and again by 0.25 percentage point in March 2019, taking the total repo rate down to 6 per cent, the lowest in about nine years since 2010
- Inflation at 2.9 per cent has remained within the RBI's comfort zone of 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent).
- Fitch has predicted GDP growth rate of 6.8% in FY20 for India.

### **RBI to introduce new Rs. 20 banknote**

- The Reserve Bank of India announced it will "shortly" issue banknotes of Rs 20 denomination in the Mahatma Gandhi (new) series. The new Rs. 20 note will feature a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi on the front and a motif of the Ellora caves on the back, "depicting the country's cultural heritage",
- The RBI said the base colour of the note is greenish yellow. It will bear the signature of RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. Dimension of the banknote will be 63 mm x 129 mm

### **RBI extends deadline for legal entity identification**

- The RBI extended the deadline for Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) codes for participation in non-derivative markets. Now, the deadline for entities with net worth of over Rs. 1,000 crore to get the code is December 31, 2019, against the earlier deadline of April 30 this year.
- This is also the deadline for those with net worth between Rs. 200 crore and Rs. 1,000 crore, while for entities with net worth of less than Rs. 200 crore, the deadline has been extended to March 31, 2020.

### **RBI extends ombudsman scheme to non-deposit taking NBFCs**

- Reserve Bank of India has announced to extend the ambit of Ombudsman scheme for NBFCs to all eligible non-deposit taking NBFCs as well. The scheme which lays down rules for redressal mechanism in cases of customer complaints was earlier applicable only to deposit-taking NBFCs.

- All Non-Deposit Taking Non-Banking Financial Companies having customer interface, with assets size of Rupees 100 crore or above will come within the ambit, and shall comply with the provisions of the Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies.
- The scheme still excludes various NBFC groups such as Infrastructure Finance Companies (NBFC-IFC), Core Investment Company (CIC), Infrastructure Debt Fund-Non-Banking Financial Company (IDF-NBFC) and also NBFCs under liquidation.

## **SBI**

### **SBI Minimum Balance Rules, Charges for this Financial Year**

- Customers of the State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest nationalised bank, are required to maintain an average monthly balance in their savings accounts.
- The branches have been categorised into four types – metro, urban, semi-urban and rural. The bank levies charges ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 excluding the GST if any customer fails to maintain the average monthly balance.
- For SBI branches in metro and urban areas, the average monthly balance is Rs. 3,000 whereas customers are required to maintain Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 1,000 minimum balance in saving accounts at branches in semi urban and rural areas, respectively.

### **SBI cuts interest rates on home loans**

- The State Bank of India has re-priced home loans up to Rs. 30 lakh by 10 basis points.
- Accordingly, the interest rate on housing loans of such size will now be in the range of 8.6 to 8.9 per cent.
- The new one-year marginal cost of funds-based lending rate is down to 8.50 per cent now from 8.55 per cent. This is the first reduction by SBI in over 17 months.

### **SBI General launches cyber defence insurance for businesses**

- SBI General Insurance has launched a product to protect businesses from financial and reputational losses due to cyber attacks. In the initial phase, the focus will be on SMEs and mid-market businesses.
- This offers protection against the growing threat of cyber breaches and is designed to protect against major insurable cyber exposures like hacking attacks, identity theft, disclosure of sensitive information and business interruption.
- The new insurance plan of SBI General Insurance comes with CyRUSS (Cyber Risk Underwriting and Solution Suite). CyRUSS is a cloud-based tool for commercial cyber polices including risk assessment, ongoing risk management and claim management as well.

### **SBI Launches first Green Car Loan**

- State Bank of India announced the country's first 'Green Car Loan' (Electric Vehicle) to encourage customers to buy electric vehicles. The new scheme will offer loan at 20 basis points lesser than the interest rate on the existing car loan schemes.
- The EMI per Rs. 1 lakh will be lower at Rs. 1,468 for 96 months against Rs. 1,622 for 84 months, based on the maximum tenor, in line with the existing scheme.

## **ADB**

### **ADB committed \$3 billion in sovereign loans to India in 2018**

- ADB committed to provide USD 3 billion in sovereign loans to India in 2018, the highest level of assistance since sovereign operations began in the country in 1986.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB), owned by 68 member countries, committed a total of USD 3.88 billion, including sovereign loans and co-financing during the year ended December 2018.

## **OTHER BANKING NEWS**

### **NCLT approves merger of IndusInd Bank with Bharat Financial Inclusion (BFIL)**

- NCLT Mumbai approves IndusInd Bank and Bharat Financial Inclusion Ltd merger
- As per the report, the merger is expected to complete within 2-4 weeks. Post-merger, microfinance firm Bharat Financial will become a subsidiary of the private lender

### **Vijaya Bank, Dena Bank to merge with Bank of Baroda**

- In a first three-way amalgamation, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank will merge with Bank of Baroda to create the third-largest lender of the country.
- The customers including depositors of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank will be treated as customers of Bank of Baroda with effect from 1st April this year.
- The first-ever three-way consolidation of banks in India, with a combined business of 14.8 lakh crore rupees, making it the third-largest bank after State Bank of India and ICICI Bank.

#### **Kotak Bank to levy charges on UPI transactions like Paytm, Google Pay, PhonePe**

- From the 1st May 2019, Kotak Mahindra Bank will charge for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions.
- UPI was the leading contributor of the digital payments push since demonetization. For each bank account, first 30 UPI fund transfers will continue to be free, every month.
- The charges Rs. 2.50 per transaction for below or equal to Rs. 1,000, and above Rs. 1,000, Rs. 5.00 per transaction, will be applicable for all fund transfers done via UPI using a Kotak Bank account. This will also include payment apps, such as Paytm, Google Pay, and PhonePe.
- The 30 free UPI funds transfers will also include money transfer made to any bank account using the account number and IFSC code. That will also attract the same charges as UPI transactions

#### **Cardif sells 5 crore shares in SBI Life Insurance for 2,889 crore**

- BNP Paribas Cardif, the foreign partner of SBI Life Insurance, sold 5 crore shares of the company for Rs. 2,889 crore.
- The sale was done at average price of Rs. 577.93 per equity share. Canada Pension Plan Investment Board has bought 2 crore shares at an average price of Rs 577.50 per shares, as per the regulatory filing.
- The company is required to increase its public shareholding to 25 per cent of its paid-up equity share capital on or before October 2, 2020.

#### **Bank of Maharashtra gets Rs. 205 crore capital from government**

- State-owned Bank of Maharashtra stated that the government has infused Rs. 205 crore into the bank in lieu of preferential allotment of shares. Following the allotment of shares, the shareholding of the government has increased to 87.74 per cent in the bank from 87.01 per cent earlier. The paid-up capital of bank had increased from Rs 2,598.45 crore to Rs 2,753.17 crore

#### **Karnataka Bank signs MOU with Bharti Axa Life Insurance**

- Karnataka Bank has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Bharti AXA Life Insurance Company to distribute the latter's life insurance products
- This is the third such tie-up by the bank after PNB MetLife Life Insurance Company and LIC of India, both of which continue to provide insurance solutions to the customers of Karnataka Bank.

#### **Priority Sector Lending Certificates volume crosses Rs. 3-trillion mark**

- The priority sector lending certificates (PSLCs) volume rocketed to Rs. 3.3 trillion in FY19, up from Rs. 1.9 trillion in the last financial year and Rs. 50,000 crore in FY17.
- PSLCs are used to enable banks to achieve the priority sector lending target and sub-targets by purchasing these instruments in the event of shortfall.
- Those falling short of targets have the choice to place money with Nabard and Sidbi at low interest rates or invest in PSLCs issued by fellow lenders which carry higher coupon.

#### **RBI tweaks LCR norms to boost liquidity**

- RBI has tweaked liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) norms to provide an additional 2 per cent window to lenders. LCR indicates the proportion of highly liquid assets held by banks to ensure their ability to meet short-term obligations.
- RBI has extended the timeline for linking floating interest rates on personal, home, auto and MSEs loans to external benchmarks.

#### **Bank of India to sell 25% stake in life insurance JV SUD Life Insurance for Rs. 1,106 crore**

- Public sector lender Bank of India offered to sell a 25 per cent stake in its joint venture company Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co Ltd for approximately Rs. 1,106 crore (\$159.87 million).
- Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co. Ltd. (SUD Life) is a joint venture (JV) of Bank of India, Union Bank of India and Dai-ichi Life, a leading life insurance company of Japan.



- Bank of India to sell 6.49 crore shares, or 25.02 per cent stake, in Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co at a floor price of 170.50 per share.

### **IDRBT sets up 5G Lab for banking, financial sector**

- The Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT), an arm of Reserve Bank of India, has launched a 5G Use Cases Lab for banking and financial sector. The 5G technology, along with blockchain, will be progressively adopted by banks.
- 5G had already arrived in the world and the department had already launched test beds for 5G use in the academia in Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore to develop 5G for Indian use.
- It will also collaborate with various stakeholders including banks, government and financial institutions for 5G promotion and absorption of best practices.

### **IDBI Bank launches paperless account facility for NRIs**

- The Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) living in nearly 40 countries will now be able to open account in IDBI Bank without submitting paper documents.
- IDBI Bank has launched 'NRI-Insta-Online' account opening process for NRIs residing in Financial Action Task Force (FATF) member countries. The person will not be required to furnish physical documents as well as KYC proofs for opening an account with the bank.
- FATF is an inter-governmental body which devises policy and sets standards to promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

### **Canara Bank becomes the first public sector bank in India to meet RBI's EMV mandate**

- ACI Worldwide, a global provider of realtime electronic payment and banking solutions, announced that Canara Bank has successfully rolled out major new functionality to support EMV card acquiring across its ATM network and Aadhaar Authentication. Canara Bank, one of India's largest public sector banks with nearly 6,300 branches and a network of more than 10,000 ATMs, is the first public sector bank to shift to EMV chip and PIN for card present transactions across the country's vast ATM network.
- The EMV shift, as in other major global markets, is aimed at reducing lost and stolen card fraud and making counterfeit card fraud more difficult. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had set a deadline of December 31, 2018 for the switch, mandating use of an embedded chip to replace the traditional magnetic stripe card.

### **The IMF and World Bank launches 'Learning Coin' to explore blockchain technologies**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are launching their own blockchain and digital currency to familiarize staff with the concepts.
- The currency will only be accessible within the organizations and will not be able to buy real-world goods and services. But a model digital currency economy will operate, as a kind of trial run. Staff will earn the tokens by achieving training goals, then exchange their earnings for rewards of some kind.
- The tokens will be accessed on an app called 'Learning Coin' to emphasize its educational use. The app will also support the institutions' blogs, research and video content.

### **Bank of Baroda, Srei Equipment Finance tie up for infra equipment loans**

- Srei Equipment Finance Ltd (SEFL) and India's second largest state-run lender Bank of Baroda have entered into a co-lending arrangement for infrastructure equipment. The offerings would include both business to business (B2B) and business to customer (B2C) propositions
- The partnership will allow Kolkata-based Srei Infrastructure Finance Ltd's equipment finance arm and Bank of Baroda to collaborate and widen their respective customer base.
- As part of the arrangement, the companies will use iQuippo, a digital marketplace for origination of loans, collection of loan dues, and auction and valuation of equipment

### **Exim Bank funds projects worth USD 267 million in Rwanda**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stated that Exim Bank has provided soft loans of USD 266.60 million to Rwanda for various projects. The funding, done in three separate tranches to Rwanda, is to support agricultural projects, development of special economic zones (SEZs) and for financing road project in the African nation
- According to the agreements, Exim Bank will provide USD 100 million for financing the development of two SEZs and expansion of the Kigali SEZ in Rwanda.

- USD 100 million for financing three agriculture project schemes -- Warufu Multipurpose Project, Mugesera Irrigation Project and Nyamukana Irrigation Project. USD 66.60 million will be funded for the Base-Butaro-Kidaho Road Project.

#### **Kotak Bank launches debit card-based e-mandate on NPCI's API platform**

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has announced the launch of an industry-first debit card-based authentication solution on NPCI's e-Mandate API platform.
- Kotak becomes the first Destination Bank to go live with Net Banking and Debit Card-based e-mandate authentication, the bank said in a statement adding that the capability will enable its customers to create electronic mandates (similar to the erstwhile eNACH with Aadhaar + OTP) via both the Debit Card and Net Banking channels.
- In a first-of-its-kind initiative in the industry, customers can register both physical and e-mandates on a single platform with validation on the mandate fields to remove rejections on account of various reasons.

#### **Government raises authorised capital of Allahabad Bank to Rs. 8,000 crore**

- State-owned Allahabad Bank the government has increased its authorised capital by Rs. 5,000 crore to Rs. 8,000 crore. The central government after consultation with the Reserve Bank of India has increased the authorised capital of the bank from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 8,000 through Gazette Notification.
- The increase in authorised capital will help enable the bank to raise further fund up to a maximum ceiling of Rs. 8,000 crore.

#### **Canara Bank, Canara HSBC OBC Life launch 'Webassurance'**

- Public sector lender Canara Bank and its life insurance partner Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance announced the launch of 'Webassurance'.
- Four life insurance products of Canara HSBC OBC Life would be made available to customers of Canara Bank, covering the key needs of child future, savings and investments, retirement planning and protection.
- Canara HSBC OBC Life is jointly owned by two public sector banks Canara Bank (51 per cent) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (23 per cent) and HSBC Insurance (Asia Pacific) Holdings (26 per cent), the Asian insurance arm of banking and financial services groups HSBC.

### **Important Financial & Economy Affairs**

#### **GST collections for March hit record high of Rs. 1.06 lakh crore**

- Finance Ministry stated that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection stood at Rs. 1.06 lakh crore in March, recording the highest-ever monthly collection since GST launch.
- Around 75.95 lakh GSTR-3B returns were filed for February up to March 31, as against 73.48 lakh a month ago. This is the fourth time the collections crossed Rs. 1 lakh crore this fiscal.
- Total gross GST revenue collected in March, 2019 is Rs. 1,06,577 crore of which Central GST is Rs. 20,353 crore, State GST is Rs. 27,520 crore, Integrated GST is Rs. 50,418 crore and cess is Rs. 8,286 crore
- The collection in March 2019, has been highest since introduction of GST and also reflects a 15.6 per cent growth over March 2018, collection of Rs. 92,167 crore.
- Monthly average of GST revenue during 2018-19, stood at Rs. 98,114 crore which is 9.2 per cent higher than the previous fiscal.
- The government has lowered the GST collection target for 2018-19 fiscal to Rs 11.47 lakh crore in the revised estimates, from Rs 13.71 lakh crore budgeted initially

#### **Eight core industries show 2.1% growth in February 2019**

- The combined index of eight core industries stood at 125.8 in February 2019, which indicates a marginal increase of 2.1 per cent during the month.
- The eight core industries, including coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity, are responsible for almost 41 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- **Coal production:** It grew by 7.3% in February 2019 against 1.3% growth in the same period a year ago.
- **Steel production:** It recorded 17.92% growth as against 5% growth in the same period a year ago.
- **Natural gas production:** It grew by 3.8%.
- **Fertilizers Sector:** It grew by 2.5%.



- **Cement production:** It grew by 8%.
- **Electricity production:** It grew by 0.7%, falling from 4.6% growth in February 2018.
- **Production of crude oil:** It recorded -6.1% growth.
- **Refinery products:** It recorded -0.8% growth

### **Paytm gets SEBI approval to offer stock broking services**

- Alibaba-backed Paytm's subsidiary Paytm Money has received approval from Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to begin stock broking services to let its users buy shares through the platform.
- The broking services will allow investors to trade in the cash segment, derivatives, exchange-traded funds (ETFs), among other listed entities. In addition to this, Paytm Money's membership with exchanges BSE & NSE was also approved.

### **Sebi extends phase 1 deadline of UPI for retail IPO investors till June 30**

- Markets regulator Sebi extended the timeline for the implementation of phase 1 of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as an alternative payment mechanism for retail investors buying shares in a public issue from March 31 2019 to June 30 2019. The timeline for implementing phase 2 and phase 3 shall remain unchanged from the date of completion of phase 1.
- In November 2018, SEBI has issued a circular to introduce the use of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as a payment mechanism with Application Supported by Block Amount (ASBA) for applications in public issues by retail individual investors through intermediaries.

### **Lakshmi Vilas Bank approves merger with Indiabulls Housing Finance**

- Private lender Lakshmi Vilas Bank has approved a scheme of amalgamation with Indiabulls Housing Finance.
- For every one share of Rs 10 each, shareholders of Lakshmi Vilas Bank will receive 0.14 equity share of Rs 2 each of Indiabulls Housing Finance. The merged entity's net worth will be Rs. 19,472 crore, with 14,302 employees and a loan book of Rs 1.23 lakh crore.
- The merger is subject to approval from shareholders, Competition Commission of India (CCI), National Housing Bank (NHB) and National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)

### **Government sells enemy shares worth Rs. 1,150 crore in Wipro**

- The government sold enemy shares worth around Rs. 1,150 crore in IT firm Wipro to Life Insurance Corporation and two other state-owned insurers.
- Enemy property refers to the assets left behind by people who migrated to Pakistan or China and are no longer citizens of India. According to block deal data available with BSE, the Custodian of Enemy Property for India sold more than 4.43 crore Wipro shares at a price of Rs. 258.90 per share.
- Apart from Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), General Insurance Corporation and The New India Assurance Corporation have bought the shares. The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management has been authorised to sell the shares.

### **Government manages to meet revised fiscal deficit target of 3.4% of GDP**

- The Government has managed to meet the revised fiscal deficit target of 3.4 per cent of the GDP after it cut last minute expenditure and rolled over fuel subsidies to make up for the shortfall in tax collection.
- The interim Budget presented in February revised upward the fiscal deficit target to 3.4 per cent from 3.3 per cent of GDP estimated earlier for 2018-19.
- The direct tax collections fell short by Rs. 50,000 crore, GST collections has touched Rs. 1.06 lakh crore in March and the gross GST revenues has achieved the target of Rs. 11.47 lakh crore.

### **IMF cuts India GDP growth forecast to 7.3% for 2019-20**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) cut India's GDP growth forecast for 2019-20, following similar action by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- In India, growth is projected to pick up to 7.3% in 2019 (2019-20) and 7.5% in 2020 IMF said in its World Economic Outlook report.
- Both ADB and RBI last week cut their 2019-20 growth projection for India to 7.2% from 7.4% earlier.
- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) to trim its 2018-19 forecast to 7% in February from 7.2% estimated in the previous month.

### **Government retains GPF interest rate at 8% for Apr-Jun quarter**

- The government has retained the interest rate for General Provident Fund (GPF) and other related schemes at 8 per cent for the April-June quarter. The interest rate on GPF was at 8 per cent in the January-March quarter of 2018-19.
- The interest rate will be applicable on provident funds of central government employees, railways and defence forces.

### **IRDAI asks insurers to share status of claims with policyholders from July 1**

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has advised all the insurance company to devise a framework to share the status of claims by developing a tracking mechanism for policyholders so as to enable them to know the status of their claim.
- Insurance companies will have to inform about claim settlement status to policyholders at various stages of processing from July.

### **SEBI reduces minimum subscription requirement for InvITs, REITs**

- Markets regulator Sebi has reduced the minimum subscription requirement as well as defined trading lots for Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs).
- REITs have to offer their units in lots worth at least Rs. 50,000 in initial and follow on public offers.
- The minimum value of a single lot should be Rs. 1 lakh in the case of InvITs.

### **Deposits in Jan Dhan bank accounts set to cross Rs. 1 lakh crore**

- The total deposits in bank accounts opened under the Jan Dhan scheme are set to cross Rs. 1 lakh crore soon.
- Government data claimed that the cumulative balance in 35.29 crore accounts under the flagship programme of the Modi government reached Rs. 97,665.66 crore as on April 3.
- The Modi government launched the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) on August 28, 2014, with universal banking access in focus. More than half of the Jan Dhan account holders are women, while nearly 59 per cent accounts are from rural and semi-urban areas.
- Four years after its launch, the government enhanced the accident insurance cover under the scheme to Rs 2 lakh from the earlier Rs. 1 lakh in 2018. The overdraft limit in Jan Dhan was doubled to Rs. 10,000 in September 2018.

### **Mudra loans miss target by Rs. 27,000 crore in FY19**

- Small business loans disbursed under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) have fallen short of the target set for 2018-19.
- Against a target of Rs. 3-lakh crore, only Rs. 2.73-lakh crore was disbursed as on March 31, 2019, according to government data. This is first time that the target was unmet in the last three years.
- There have been reports of a 50 per cent increase in the non-performing assets of Mudra loans in the first three quarters of last fiscal.

### **Sebi fixes minimum net worth for clearing corporations at IFSC**

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has prescribed that all recognised clearing corporations in International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), need to maintain Rs. 50 crore net worth in the form of liquid assets on commencement of operations.
- SEBI has announced that the minimum Net worth Requirements for Clearing Corporations in International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) over a period of three years from the commencement of operations should be at least Rs 100 Crore. This has been reduced from Rs. 300 crore earlier.

### **IRDAI forms panel to review microinsurance framework**

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a committee to review the regulatory framework on microinsurance and recommend measures to increase the demand for such products.
- With IRDAI Executive Director Suresh Mathur as the chairman, the 13-member panel has been tasked with suggesting product designs with customer-friendly underwriting, including easy premium payment methods and simple claims settlement procedures.

## **Ratings**

### **Fitch affirms India's rating at BBB- with stable outlook for 13th year in row**

- Fitch retained India's sovereign rating at 'BBB-', the lowest investment grade, with stable outlook, saying a weak fiscal position continues to constrain its rating.

- This is the 13th year in a row that global rating agency Fitch has rated India at 'BBB-'. It had last upgraded India's sovereign rating from 'BB+' to 'BBB-' with a stable outlook on August 1, 2006. Fitch expects growth of 6.8 per cent in the current fiscal and 7.1 per cent in the next. Fitch Ratings is a subsidiary of Hearst Corporation.

#### **WTO trims global trade growth forecast for 2019 to 2.6% from 3.7%**

- The World Trade Organization forecast that the Global trade growth is expected to be lower in 2019 than it was last year. The WTO had in its preliminary estimates predicted a 3.7 percent expansion of trade for this year, but has revised that down to 2.6 percent, marking a decline on the three-percent growth recorded in 2018.
- In its forecast report in September 2018, the WTO had lowered the global 2018 and 2019 trade growth to 3.9 and 3.7 percent, respectively

#### **ADB cuts its India GDP growth forecast for 2019-20**

- According to Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2019, Asian Development Bank (ADB) has lowered India's growth forecast for 2019-20 to 7.2 per cent from 7.6 per cent estimated earlier
- The growth rate in FY 2020-21 likely to be 7.3 per cent.
- Recent policy measures by the government to improve the investment climate and boost private consumption and investment will help India to lift economic growth in the next two fiscal years. India will remain one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world this year given strong household spending and corporate fundamentals.
- Consumer price inflation is expected to rise to 4.3% in FY2020 and 4.6% in FY2021. The current account deficit is expected to widen a bit to 2.4% of GDP in FY2020 and 2.5% of GDP in FY2021.

#### **World Bank Projects India's GDP to Expand 7.5% in FY20**

- India's GDP growth is expected to accelerate moderately to 7.5 percent in fiscal year 2019-20.
- The Economy driven by continued investment strengthening, particularly private-improved export performance and resilient consumption. The real GDP growth is estimated at 7.2 percent in financial year 2018-19, Meanwhile, agriculture growth was robust at 4 per cent

#### **IMF cuts India GDP growth forecast to 7.3% for 2019-20**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) cut India's GDP growth forecast for 2019-20, following similar action by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- In India, growth is projected to pick up to 7.3% in 2019 (2019-20) and 7.5% in 2020 IMF said in its World Economic Outlook report.
- Both ADB and RBI last week cut their 2019-20 growth projection for India to 7.2% from 7.4% earlier.
- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) to trim its 2018-19 forecast to 7% in February from 7.2% estimated in the previous month.

### **Important Business News**

#### **Wipro acquires Philippines largest personal care company Splash Corporation**

- Wipro Consumer Care signed an agreement to acquire Splash Corporation, a Philippines-based personal care company. Wipro stated that this is the company's 11th acquisition in the consumer line business, and the 9th acquisition in the personal care segment overall.
- Splash is the largest Philippine personal care player and among the top five in the Philippines market. It recorded a revenue of \$80 million last year.

#### **Infosys arm to buy 75% stake in Dutch bank subsidiary**

- Global software major Infosys stated that its consulting arm would buy 75 per cent equity stake in Starter N.V., a subsidiary of the Dutch-based ANN AMRO Bank for Rs. 999 crore (\$144 million) for strategic partnership in The Netherlands.

#### **Reliance Jio acquires chatbot making startup Haptik for Rs. 700 crore**

- Reliance Industries (RIL) subsidiary Reliance Jio Digital has acquired a majority stake in Mumbai based Artificial Intelligence-based conversational platform Haptik for Rs. 700 crore.
- In the Rs. 700-crore deal, Rs. 230 crore will go for business transfer and Rs. 470 crore will go towards expansion.
- Reliance will hold about 87% of Haptik while the company's founders and employees will own the rest of the shares through stock option grants. All of Haptik's business and holdings will be transferred to Reliance Jio Digital Services.

### **BSNL gets licence for in-flight connectivity**

- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has received the In-Flight Connectivity license from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for enabling in-flight and maritime connectivity (IFMC) within Indian airspace.
- BSNL and Inmarsat, which is the satellite partner of BSNL, also operates the GX Aviation service will be able to offer in-flight connectivity to airlines. With this facility users can send messages, surf the internet and/or tweet, when a flight is at a minimum height of 3,000m in Indian airspace.
- Presently any form of internet connectivity for both domestic and international flights is not available on Indian flights. After, this facility enabled, users will still have restricted amounts of data available for their uses, applicable for all airlines.

### **HDFC AMC ranked 1st in terms of Assets**

- India's asset management companies (AMCs) own assets under management (AUM) worth Rs24.46 trillion, according to data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi).
- HDFC Asset Management Co. Ltd has claimed the top spot with an average AUM of Rs3.42 trillion, overtaking ICICI Prudential Asset Management Co. Ltd with an average AUM of at Rs3.20 trillion.
- Out of the total industry assets, a huge 82.7% is owned by the top 10 AMCs, who have owned around 80% of the industry assets over at least three years now.

### **Dream11 becomes the first Indian gaming company to be a unicorn**

- Dream11 an online gaming firm has received secondary investment by Steadview Capital. With this Dream11's valuation has become more than \$1 billion and hence making it the first Indian gaming company to enter the Unicorn club. Dream11 is also the official fantasy cricket partner of IPL 2019. MS Dhoni is the brand ambassador of Dream11

### **PayU acquires digital financial security firm Wibmo for USD 70 mn**

- Digital payments facilitator PayU has acquired US-based financial technology firm Wibmo for USD 70 million (about Rs. 484 crore), that will help the company scale-up its business. Under the agreement, PayU and Wibmo businesses will continue to run separately.
- Wibmo, a digital payment security and mobile payment technologies firm, will continue to operate and serve all of its clients as a wholly-owned subsidiary of PayU.

### **ETMONEY becomes India's first comprehensive financial services app to integrate UPI**

- India's largest app for financial services, ETMONEY has integrated Unified Payment Interface (UPI) as a payment method on its platform as it looks to double its monthly user base by the end of the year. The integration of UPI will simplify the mutual fund payment experience for millions of ETMONEY users as the company continues its journey to simplify the financial lives of new age Indians.
- They can select from a list of UPI-enabled apps installed on their phone including Google Pay, BHIM UPI and PhonePe among others.

### **CRISIL board gives nod for transfer of ratings business to new subsidiary**

- CRISIL Ltd, a diversified global analytics company, will transfer its ratings business to its proposed new wholly-owned subsidiary. The board of CRISIL gave the nod for the transfer. CRISIL covers more than 28,000 large and mid-scale corporates and financial institutions.
- SEBI had last year modified its regulations for credit rating agencies and mandated the segregation of rating and non-ratings businesses of credit-rating agencies.
- CRISIL proposes to undertake the transfer of its ratings business through a scheme of arrangement in terms of Section 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013, to be approved by the stock exchanges and the National Company Law Tribunal.

### **Bandhan Bank gets CCI nod for merger with Gruh Finance**

- Bandhan Bank has received approval from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for the proposed scheme of amalgamation of Gruh Finance with the bank. Gruh Finance, the affordable housing finance arm of HDFC Ltd, was taken over by Bandhan Bank in a share-swap deal in January
- The approval has been made under sub-section (1) of Section 31 of the Competition Act, 2002. As part of the deal, Bandhan Bank has to transfer 14.9% stake to HDFC for merging Gruh Finance with itself.

### **Cholamandalam MS General Insurance gets ISO 31000:2018 certification**

- Cholamandalam MS General Insurance Company Limited has been certified with ISO 31000

- ISO 31000:2018 is an international risk management standard. The standard provides guidelines, principles, framework, and a process for managing risk. It can be used by any organization regardless of its size, activity or sector. The Certificate is valid for a period of 3 years from April 07, 2019, to April 06, 2022.

#### **5 Asian tea producers form ATA to boost trade**

- Indian Tea Association, China Tea Marketing Association, Indonesian Tea Marketing Association, Sri Lanka Tea Board and Japan Tea Association- the five bodies from five tea growing and consuming countries in Asia- have now come forward to form what is called The Asian Tea Alliance (ATA).
- The whole idea is to boost tea trade from these countries. ATA, which was floated in **Guizhou in China**, will now work towards enhancing tea trade, cultural exchanges, technology exchanges, promoting tea globally, enhancing global consumption of tea, while creating a sustainability agenda for the future of Asian tea.
- Earlier, Indian Tea Association and China Tea Marketing Association teamed up to promote green and black tea consumption in major tea markets of Europe, the US, Russia and West Asia, besides India and China.

#### **Reliance retail crosses Rs. 1 lakh crore revenue milestone in FY19**

- Reliance retail has become the first Indian retail company to clock more than Rs. 1 lakh crore in annual revenues.
- The retail venture of Reliance Industries reported an income of Rs. 1,30,556 crore for 2018-19, 89% more than the previous year's Rs. 69,198 crore
- Reliance Retail also became the first Indian retailer to cross more than 10,000 stores. It operates 10,415 retail stores in more than 6,600 cities and towns, covering an area of over 22 million sq ft, as on March 31

#### **BuyUcoin Introduces first Indian platform for wholesale Cryptocurrency trading**

- BuyUcoin, is a New Delhi based Indian Cryptocurrency Exchange, which is the second oldest Cryptocurrency Exchange in India, has announced the launch of a new and unique platform for wholesale cryptocurrency trading which allows its users to trade on a large scale with low price fluctuations.
- The platform currently works on free trading model, charges zero fee on any trade.
- The platform is aptly described and known as OTC (Over-the-counter) desk. It is preferred by traders who deal with cryptocurrency in bulk and want to resist much price fluctuations during the trade.

#### **Microsoft becomes world's third company to be worth \$1 trillion**

- Microsoft has reached a valuation of one trillion dollars for the first time after posting a 19pc increase in profits.
- It makes Microsoft only the third publicly-traded company in history to reach the threshold, after Apple and Amazon passed it. Apple was the first to hit the historic mark in August, followed by Amazon, which operates cloud-computing services that compete with Microsoft

#### **HDFC Bank and Max Bupa launch AnyTimeHealth machines to distribute health insurance products**

- HDFC Bank and Max Bupa (insurance company) have launched a "AnyTimeHealth (ATH)" machines.
- ATH machine is completely automated, technology-based model which allows customers to avail health assessment and buy a policy instantly, without any manual intervention.
- In the phase-1, 15-20 ATH machines will be installed at HDFC Bank branches across multiple cities.

### **Important Cabinet Approval**

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the creation of 1 post of Deputy Comptroller & Auditor General (Coordination, Communication and Information System).
- The Cabinet has given the approval for ongoing GSLV continuation programme Phase-4 that consists of 5 GSLV rocket flights during 2021-2024. The total fund requirement for the phase 4 programme is Rs2,729.13 crore. This amount includes the cost of 5 Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicles (GSLVs), addition of essential facility, programme management, launch campaign and extra funds required to meet the scope of the programme.
- They given approval for the proposal of the Department of fertilizers for extension of the duration of New Urea Policy-2015 for existing gas-based area unit from April 1, 2019 until further orders.
- Cabinet approves pact between India and Denmark in the field of Renewable Energy
- Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, Government of India and The Ministry of Science and ICT (Korea Post), Government of the Republic of Korea have mutually collaborated to issue Postage Stamps on the theme "Queen Hur Hwang-ok of Korea".



- To enhance the ties between India and Brazil to work out the future agenda for the amalgamation for innovation in Science & Technology diplomacy to develop a concrete deliberated plan in the area of biotechnology education, training and research.
- Memorandum of Understanding between India and Bolivia on collaboration in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources.
- To strengthen bilateral cooperation and mutual understanding between India and Cambodia in the field of communications.
- Memorandum of Understanding between India and Bolivia in the Field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy. The pact was signed in March 2019 in Bolivia.

## **Important State Wise National News**

### **Assam**

**Capital – Dispur; CM – Sarbananda Sonowal; Governor –Jagthesh Muki**

#### **(Bohag Bihu) Rongali Bihu festival celebrated in Assam**

- The Bihu Festivals is one of the most popular festivals of Assam, a north-eastern state in India. The Bihus are the most important festivals of Assam, which are celebrated each year on April 14<sup>th</sup> with loads of fun and abundance.
- Of the three Bihu Festivals held in Assam, the Rongali Bihu Festival is celebrated in Spring. The Assamese people, irrespective of caste, creed, faith, religion and belief, take part in the Bihu Festival. Three Bihu festivals are celebrated in a year called as Rongali Bihu or Bohag Bihu, Bhugali (Magh Bihu) and Kangali (Kati Bihu) for marking the distinctive phase in the farming calendar.
- This festival is observed at almost the same time as Baisakhi in Punjab, Poila Baisakh in Bengal, Puthandu in Tamil Nadu and Vishu in Kerala this year

### **Andhra Pradesh**

**Capital – Amravati; CM – Chandrababu Naidu; Governor - ESL Narasimhan**

#### **NGT imposes Rs. 100-crore penalty on Andhra Pradesh government over illegal sand mining**

- The National Green Tribunal has slapped an interim penalty of Rs 100 crore on the Andhra Pradesh government for inaction to prevent illegal sand mining in the state.
- The tribunal headed by Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel who is the chairperson of NGT directed the state government to deposit Rs. 100 crore 'environment compensation' with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPSB) within a month.

### **Arunachal Pradesh**

**Capital –Itanagar; CM –Pema Khandu; Governor - B. D. Mishra**

#### **Centre extends "disturbed area" tag under AFSPA for three districts of Arunachal Pradesh**

- The Centre has extended the "disturbed area" tag under Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) for three districts of Arunachal Pradesh for another six months.
- The decision was taken after considering the present law and order situation in the six districts of the state. The three districts which will continue to be designated as disturbed areas under AFSPA are Tirap, Changlang and Longding.
- The designation, which allows imposition of AFSPA, will also continue for the four police stations areas of the state's three other districts bordering Assam. They include Namsai and Mahadevpur police stations in Namsai district, Roing in Lower Dibang Valley district and Sunpura in Lohit district.

### **Haryana**

**Capital –Chandigarh; CM - Manohar Lal Khattar; Governor - Satyadev Narayan Arya**

#### **First-of-its-kind 'Voter Park' inaugurated in Gurugram**

- India's first-of-its-kind 'Voter Park' was inaugurated in Gurugram, aimed at increasing voter awareness and educating people about the electoral process. Haryana Chief Electoral Officer Rajeev Ranjan inaugurated the park in



Vikas Sadan building complex. At the park, voters will get information about the polling process and the history of elections in the country.

## **Maharashtra**

**Capital – Mumbai; CM – Devendra Fadnavis; Governor – Vidyasagar Rao**

### **EsselWorld Launches India's First Foreign Interactive Bird Park in Mumbai**

- India's first exotic Bird Park 'EsselWorld Bird Park' was launched by EsselWorld Leisure Pvt. Ltd., the family entertainment arm of the \$6-billion Essel Group in Mumbai. It is home to over 500 exotic birds from more than 60 species of flying, terrestrial and aquatic birds and has 200 species of special plants and trees for the birds.
- The star attractions at the Bird Park are the African Grey Parrot, Blue Gold Macaw, Cockatiel, Rainbow Lorikeet, Toucan, Black Lory, Violet Turaco and many other varieties of bird. EsselWorld is the largest amusement park in the country

## **Manipur**

**Capital – Imphal; CM - Nongthombam Biren Singh; Governor – Najma Heptulla**

### **Manipur Assembly Passed Anti-mob Violence Bill**

- The Manipur Assembly has passed a bill which recommends life imprisonment for those involved in mob violence,
- It recommends a rigorous life imprisonment term if the crime results in the death of a victim. The Assembly also passed the Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018

### **Phayeng Village Becomes India's 1st Carbon-Positive Settlement**

- Phayeng Village in Imphal West district of Manipur **has become** India's first carbon-positive settlement.
- A village is given carbon-positive tag if it sequesters more carbon than it emits, slowing accumulation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and mitigating effects of climate change. Phayeng Village is scheduled caste village of the Chakpa community. It provides 100% funding to activities under it which are implemented in project mode. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) nodal implementation agency for these projects.

## **Nagaland**

**Capital – Kohima; CM -Neiphiu Rio; Governor – Padmanabha Acharya**

### **Around 5,000 Naga Konyak women dance to set a new world record**

- In an attempt to set a new Guinness World Records in the category of 'largest traditional Konyak dance display,' around 5,000 Konyak community women, all decked up in colourful traditional attire, danced to the tune of a ceremonial song, coinciding with the Aoleang festival. The theme of this year's Aoleang, also called Mini Hornbill festival, was 'Empowering women for cultural heritage.'

## **Odisha**

**Capital – Bhubaneswar; CM – Naveen Patnaik; Governor – Prof Ganeshi Lal**

### **Odisha celebrates 84th foundation day**

- Odisha is celebrating 84 years of its foundation on 1st April 2019. The day is also known as 'Utkal Divas.'
- Earlier, Odisha was a part of Bihar, it became the first state to be formed on the linguistic basis in 1936.
- The name of the state was changed from Orissa to Odisha, and the name of its language from Oriya to Odia, in 2011

### **Odisha receives GI tag for 'Kandhamal Haldi'**

- 'Kandhamal Haldi', a variety of turmeric indigenous to southern Odisha, has earned the Geographical indication (GI) tag from Intellectual Property India. The recognition coincided with the state's Foundation Day (Utkal Divas). Odisha, on April 1 1936.
- This unique variety of turmeric is grown in Odisha's southern hinterland. It is key cash crop of tribal people from Kandhamal district of Odisha.
- It has multifaceted utility in food, medicine and cosmetics considering its unique aroma and color to food items and various cuisines.

## **Tamil Nadu**

**Capital – Chennai; CM – Edappadi Palanisamy; Governor – Banwarilal Purohit.**

### **Rotary Club of Madras North initiated Project Kannamma**

- Project Kannamma is the initiative of the Rotary Club of Madras North to provide sanitary napkins to the students.
- Under the Project Kannamma, sanitary napkins are provided to over 300 students from across Government Schools in and around Chennai.

## **Telangana**

**Capital – Hyderabad; CM – Chandrasekhar Rao; Governor – ESL Narashiman.**

### **Telangana secured top spot in eLearning Training for Field Staff**

- Telangana state has ranked number one in eLearning training by reaching to 20,000 field staff during 2018-19
- This is the second year in succession that the State got the distinction under the Department of Personal and Training (DoPT). Dr MCR HRD Institute enrolled over 20, 000 field staff in different districts of the State to impart training on 12 soft skills modules and three domain-specific modules on RTI, Office Procedures, and Finance & Accounts, apart from Sustainable Development Goals. The training is being imparted to achieve the goal of 'training for all'.

## **Other National News**

### **Environmental Ministry forms panel for effective implementation of NCAP**

- The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEFCC) announced that the committee will be under the chairmanship of its Secretary, C K Mishra, and will have one chief secretary each from over 20 states and union territories, including Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh, as its members.
- In its endeavour to implement the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), launched to tackle the air pollution menace in the country, the Centre has constituted a steering committee.
- The committee will provide overall guidance and directions for effective implementation of the NCAP for each financial year

### **CRPF celebrating its 54th Valour Day**

- Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is celebrating its 54th Valour Day on April 9<sup>th</sup>.
- On this day in 1965 a small contingent of 2nd Battalion of CRPF, successfully fought and repulsed an attack by a Pakistani Brigade on Sardar Post in the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat. They eliminated 34 Pakistani soldiers and captured four soldiers alive

### **Pan-Aadhaar linking deadline extended by 6 months**

- The CBDT extended the deadline to link PAN with Aadhaar by six months from March 31 to September 30, 2019.
- However, it'll be mandatory to quote and link Aadhaar while filing income tax return from April 1, 2019 unless specifically exempted.
- This is the sixth time the government has extended the deadline for individuals to link their Permanent Account Number (PAN) to Aadhaar.

### **Government to set up Multi Disciplinary Terror Monitoring Group for J&K**

- The government set up a multi-disciplinary terror monitoring group (TMG) to ensure synergised and concerted action against terror financing and other terror-related activities in Jammu & Kashmir.
- The multi-disciplinary terror monitoring group will have representatives from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Intelligence Bureau, CBI, NIA, and Income Tax Department. The body will take coordinated action in all registered cases relating to terror and terror financing and bring them to logical conclusion
- It will also investigate the network of various channels being used to fund terror and terror related activities and take coordinated action to stop flow of such funds. The Terror Monitoring Group will meet on weekly basis and submit their action taken report regularly

### **WhatsApp launched tip line to curb fake news**

- WhatsApp has launched a tip line for Indians to submit rumors and uncertain information to combat false news in India during the national election.

- Developed in collaboration with India-based media skilling startup PROTO, the tip line feature will help create a database of rumors to study misinformation during elections as part of a research project commissioned and assisted by WhatsApp

### **‘Experimental learning’ to be punch line for CBSE in 2019-20**

- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has come up with a new idea in order to replace rote learning with practical learning. The idea is to have a unique punchline every year by CBSE. This year, the punchline that CBSE will be using is ‘experimental learning’. This has been confirmed by the CBSE secretary Anurag Tripathi.
- CBSE has also launched a new App called ‘Shiksha Vani’ for disseminating the information to all its stakeholders. The mobile App is available for download only on the android platform as of now.

### **NGT monitoring committee to prepare plan for polluted rivers**

- The Nation Green Tribunal (NGT) bench headed by Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, has formed a Central Monitoring Committee that will prepare and implement a national plan to make over 350 river stretches across the country pollution free.
- The committee would comprise a representative of NITI Aayog; Secretaries of Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Urban Development and Ministry of Environment; Director General of National Mission for Clean Ganga and Chairman of Central Pollution Control Board.
- The NGT has directed the Central Monitoring Committee to give its report by July 31, while the first meeting of the Committee may be held by June 30.

### **India becomes YouTube’s largest and fastest growing market**

- India has become YouTube’s largest and fastest growing market with 265 million Indians watching the video-sharing website every month. In the last year, YouTube’s consumption on mobile has increased to 85%, with 60% of the watch time coming from outside the six largest metros in India.
- Today, YouTube creators have become effective storytellers, with more than 1,200 Indian creators crossing the million subscriber-milestones, compared to five years ago, when there were only two creators.

### **Baisakhi harvest festival**

- The festival of harvest Baisakhi is being celebrated with traditional enthusiasm in the northern part of the country. Baisakhi is celebrated with much fanfare in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh.
- Traditional folk dances are performed on this day. Baisakhi also commemorates the formation of Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

### **128th Birth Anniversary of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar**

- India celebrated Ambedkar Jayanti on April 14, 2019, to commemorate the 128th birth anniversary of the architect of the Indian Constitution, Dr BR Ambedkar. Often called as Babasaheb, he was born on 14 April 1891.
- He was independent India’s first law and justice minister as well as a founding father of the Republic of India. Ambedkar was posthumously conferred with the Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian award, in 1990.

### **Vice President releases postage stamp, Rs. 100 coin to commemorate 100 years of Jallianwala Bagh massacre**

- Commemorating the 100 years of Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Vice-President of India M Venkaiah Naidu released the commemorative postage stamp at the Jallianwala Bagh memorial. The Vice-President also released coins of Rs 100 with ‘Centenary of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre’ written on it and the memorial drawn on it.
- The postage stamp also bears the image of the Jallianwala Bagh memorial and one of the stamps is dedicated to the martyrs who lost their lives in the massacre.
- It took place on 13 April, 1919 at Amritsar and is also known as Amritsar massacre. On this day, British troops under the Command of Gen Dyer fired on a large crowd of unarmed Indians in Amritsar in Punjab of India. Several hundred peoples were killed and many hundreds were wounded.

### **CBDT sets June 30 deadline to dispose of demonetisation cases**

- Tax authorities have set a deadline of June 30 to clear up all demonetisation-related cases.
- In its interim action plan for the first quarter of 2019-20, the Central Board of Direct Tax (CBDT) has instructed its officials to dispose of all cases related to demonetisation where assessment is required to be framed.

### **Finance Ministry ratifies 8.65% interest on EPF for 2018-19**

- The Finance Ministry has approved 8.65 per cent rate of interest on Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) for 2018-19 as decided by retirement fund body EPFO, benefitting more than 6 crore formal sector workers.
- The Department of Financial Services (DFS), a wing of Finance Ministry, has given its concurrence to Employees Provident Fund Organisation's (EPFO) decision to provide 8.65 per cent rate of interest for 2018-19 to its subscribers.
- The EPFO had provided a five-year low interest rate of 8.55 per cent to its subscribers for 2017-18.

### **ICMR launches 'MERA India' to eliminate malaria from India by 2030**

- The Indian Council of Medical Research has launched the 'Malaria Elimination Research Alliance (MERA) India' - a conglomeration of partners working on malaria control - in order to prioritise, plan and scale up research to eliminate the disease from India by 2030.
- The National Vector Borne Diseases Control Program (NVBDCP) of India has developed a comprehensive framework to achieve the overarching vision of "Malaria free India by 2030".

### **Government hikes customs duty on wheat to 40%**

- The government has hiked the customs duty on wheat to 40 percent from 30 percent to curb imports and protect the domestic industry.
- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has hiked the basic customs duty (BCD) on wheat to 40 percent. In May last year, the government had hiked BCD on wheat to 30 percent from 20 percent.
- The country's wheat production this season might cross 100 million tonnes, an all-time high. The output stood at record 99.70 million tonnes in the 2017-18 crop year (July-June).

## **Important International News**

### **World Health Organization Issues First-Ever Screen Time Guidelines for Young Kids**

- The World Health Organization has issued its first-ever guidance for how much screen time children under 5. The U.N. health agency said that kids under 5 should not spend more than one hour watching screens every day. That group recommends children younger than 18 months should avoid screens other than video chats.

### **Iran, Pakistan to set up joint border 'Reaction Force'**

- Iranian President Hassan Rohani and Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan have agreed to set up a joint border "reaction force" to counter terrorism
- Both the nations have decided to collaborate to form the joint quick reaction force by increasing cooperation between border forces and intelligence agencies.

### **Etihad becomes first major airline to fly plastic-free**

- The UAE's flag carrier Etihad Airways has become the first airline in the Gulf region to operate a flight without any single-use plastics on board. The objective is to raise awareness about pollution
- The milestone flight is part of Etihad's pledge to reduce single-use plastic usage by 80 per cent not just in-flight, but across the entire organisation by the end of 2022

### **Japan reveals new imperial era name – Reiwa**

- Japan named its next imperial era Reiwa, or roughly 'auspicious calm', as the nation prepared for a once-in-a-generation transition in the world's oldest continuous monarchy, with a new emperor set to ascend the Chrysanthemum Throne next month. The word 'reiwa' implies the people's hearts coming together in beauty to create and develop culture.
- Emperor Akihito, 85, is preparing to step down at the end of the month, drawing the curtain on his three-decade reign. His eldest son, Crown Prince Naruhito, 59, will replace him May 1, marking the beginning of the new era

### **South Korea to launch world's first national 5G networks**

- South Korea will launch the world's first fully-fledged 5G mobile networks on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Until now, no mobile networks have offered nationwide 5G access. On April 05, 2019 all three of South Korea's mobile networks namely KT, SK Telecom and LG UPlus will go live with their 5G services.
- Japan is expected to roll out a limited deployment in 2019 before full services start in time for next year's Tokyo Olympics.

## **Over 113 mn people across 53 countries experienced acute hunger last year: UN**

- According to a new joint UN and European Union (EU) report, more than 113 million people across 53 countries experienced acute hunger last year, with conflict, climate-related disasters and economic turbulence mainly driving the food insecurity crisis,
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP) and EU 'Global Report on Food Crises 2019' shows that the number going chronically-hungry has remained well over 100 million over the past three years
- Yemen, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan and Syria were among the eight nations accounting for two-thirds of the total number of people worldwide exposed to the risk of famine, according to Food and Agriculture Organisation's 2019 global report on food crises.
- There were 11 million fewer people believed to be in food crisis in 2018 compared with 2017
- An additional 143 million people in another 42 countries are just one step away from acute hunger. Living in "stressed conditions"
- short-term outlook of food insecurity for 2019 showed that "Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Sudan, South Sudan and northern Nigeria are expected to remain among the world's most severe food crises in 2019"

## **Karan Johar unveils his wax statue at Madame Tussauds Singapore**

- Bollywood filmmaker Karan Johar has unveiled his wax statue at Madame Tussauds in Singapore with his mother Hiroo Johar. He became India's first film-maker to have a wax statue at Madame Tussauds in Singapore

## **Emirates Islamic becomes world's first Islamic bank to launch banking via WhatsApp**

- Emirates Islamic has announced the launch of Chat Banking services for customers via WhatsApp, marking a global first in the Islamic banking sector. The bank's customers will now be able to conduct daily banking activities via WhatsApp in a seamless and hassle-free manner.
- The Chat Banking solution, supported by Infobip, further enhances Emirates Islamic's suite of digital banking channels and allows customers to use features such as checking account balances and temporarily blocking or unblocking of an existing card.

## **UK introduces world's first online safety regulations**

- The UK government has introduced the world's first framework designed to hold internet companies accountable for the safety of those using their services, as well to tackle potential harm to users.
- Under the Online Harms whitepaper, which is a joint proposal from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Home Office, social media and technology companies will need to take reasonable steps to protect their customers from threats stemming from their offerings.

## **London becomes first city to implement 24x7 pollution charge zone**

- London became the first city in the world to implement a special Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) that would charge an entry fee for older vehicles if they do not meet the emission standards.
- The Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will help address London's toxic air health crisis that currently leads to thousands of premature deaths annually, and increases the risk of asthma, cancer and dementia
- Motorists who drive into the zone in a vehicle that does not meet the new emission standard (petrol-run vehicles that do not meet Euro 4 standards and diesel-run vehicles that do not meet Euro 6) will have to pay a daily charge

## **Google Launched First Drone Delivery Service in Australia**

- Google's parent company Alphabet was launched its first public drone delivery service in Canberra, Australia
- Alphabet made its first delivery after getting approval from the country's civil aviation authority
- Wing, the company's drone delivery arm, was testing drone delivery in Australia since 2014 and delivered medicines, chocolate to 3,000 homes in the last 18 months

## **India builds maternity hospital in Nepal**

- India has built a 25-bed maternity hospital in Nepal. The hospital has been built under the Government of India's Small Development Projects Scheme. Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri inaugurated the Chandra Narayan Yadav Memorial Maternity Hospital in Siraha district.
- It will also help in reducing maternal and child mortality rate. Health is one of the core areas of cooperation between India and Nepal. Several health posts, nursing campuses maternity centres, eye hospitals,



naturopathy hospitals have been undertaken under the Government of India's Small Development Project scheme

### **UK, European Union agree to extend Brexit until 31st October**

- The UK and the European Union have agreed to extend Brexit until October 31.
- The decision was taken at an emergency meeting in Brussels where the EU leaders agreed to offer British Prime Minister Theresa May a six-month extension. In March, British Prime Minister Theresa May had requested the European Union to grant the United Kingdom a short term extension till June 30 to prevent the U.K. leaving the bloc without a deal, because the British Parliament has repeatedly failed to decide on the terms of the exit.
- If United Kingdom stays beyond May 22, it will have to take part in European Parliament elections in May 2019 or else leave the bloc on June 1 without deal. If the extension had not been agreed to, Britain would have left the bloc without a deal on April 12.

### **Hong Kong's stock market overtakes Japan to be world's third largest**

- The city's equity market has overtaken Japan to be the world's third largest in value, behind only the U.S and mainland China, courtesy of a rebound in Hong Kong stocks after their worst year since 2011.
- Hong Kong's market cap was \$5.78 trillion as of Tuesday, compared with \$5.76 trillion for Japan, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

### **Google opens first Africa Artificial Intelligence lab in Ghana**

- Tech giant Google is all set to exhibit itself as AI first company in front of the world by opening new research centers across the globe such as in Tokyo, Zurich, New York, and Paris. Following this idea, the company has opened its first center in Africa in Ghana capital city, Accra.
- Using Google's AI machine app 'TensorFlow', farmers analyze the issue with their plants and boost their production. TensorFlow was outsourced by the company to help developers generate solutions to real-world problems.

### **Singapore's Changi Airport touts the world's tallest indoor waterfall**

- Singapore's Changi Airport has long been touted as the "best airport in the world." when it will officially open a dazzling presecurity attraction known as Jewel. The Jewel Changi Airport is about \$1.3 billion dollar project, connecting three of the four terminals at Changi Airport with the aim to increase the number of passengers coming to Singapore for visits and stopovers.
- Inside is a lush four-story tiered garden, more than 280 retail and dining outlets, a hotel, a multi-screen IMAX theater and its centerpiece: a 130-foot-tall Rain Vortex, which is the world's tallest indoor waterfall.

### **Saudi government raises India's Haj quota to 2 lakh**

- Saudi Arabia has issued a formal order increasing the Haj quota of India to two lakhs from one lakh seventy five-thousand. In February this year, the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman at a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that Indian Haj quota would be increased by 25 thousand to two lakhs. This is the third hike in three consecutive years.
- As many as 2,340 Indian Muslim women will go for the pilgrimage without male companion or Mehram. This is the third hike in three consecutive years. In 2017, the quota was increased by 35,000 while last year, it was raised by 5,000 to take the number to 1,75,000

### **UAE adopts new national AI strategy aimed at becoming global leader**

- The UAE's Cabinet has adopted a new 'National Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2031' aimed at positioning the UAE as a global leader in AI. The strategy will also seek to develop an "integrated system that employs artificial intelligence in vital areas in the UAE."
- The strategy includes eight objectives, including establishing an incubator for AI innovations, the employment of AI in customer service, attracting and training AI talent and research capabilities and providing a data-driven infrastructure to support AI experiments.

### **Foundation stone laying ceremony of 1st Hindu temple in UAE**

- The Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony (Shilanyas Vidhi) of the first traditional Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi.
- Mahant Swami Maharaj, the sixth spiritual successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the spiritual head of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, will also preside over the foundation stone laying ceremony of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi.
- The first traditional temple in Abu Dhabi will act as a catalyst for the flourishing of humanitarian values and harmony between the two countries. The temple will become a medium to represent India's identity.



### World's first malaria vaccine launched in Malawi

- The world's first malaria vaccine has been launched in Malawi after concerted efforts of over 30 years to protect children from the deadly disease that claims over 435,000 lives globally every year.
- The launch of the first and only malaria vaccine, known as RTS,S makes Malawi the first of three countries in Africa where it will be made available to children up to 2 years of age. Ghana and Kenya will introduce the vaccine in the coming weeks.

### Indonesia releases Ramayana stamp

- Indonesia released a special commemorative stamp on the theme of Ramayana to mark the 70th anniversary of diplomatic ties with India. The stamp, designed by renowned Indonesian sculptor Padmashri Bapak Nyoman Nuart, features a scene from Hindu epic Ramayana in which Jatayu valiantly fought to save Sita.
- India's Ambassador Pradeep Kumar Rawat and Indonesia's Deputy Foreign Minister Abdurrahman Mohammad Fachir jointly presided over the inaugural event organised to flag off the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

### Israeli PM intends to name Golan Heights settlement after Donald Trump

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu intends to name a new settlement in the Golden heights after US President Donald Trump. This decision has been taken as an expression of gratitude towards Mr Trump for his historic decision to recognise Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights.
- Israel captured the Golan from Syria in a 1967 war and annexed the territory in 1981, however, the move was not recognized internationally, until Trump signed a decree recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the strategic plateau.

### Russia successfully tests world's first floating nuclear power plant

- Russia has successfully tested the world's first floating nuclear power plant (NPP), Akademik Lomonosova subsidiary of Rosatom nuclear corporation

### Beijing Hosts Second Belt and Road Forum

- The second edition of Belt and Road Forum (BRF) was held in Beijing, China from April 25th to April 27th, 2019 in which 37 heads-of-state and 159 countries had participated along with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and International Monetary Chief (IMF) Christine Lagarde. The theme of this event was "Belt and Road Cooperation: Shaping a Brighter Shared Future".

## Important Appointments National Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Air Marshal NS Dhillon	New Strategic Forces Command Chief
2.	Satish Magar	President of the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI),
3.	Vipin Anand	Managing Director of LIC
4.	Rakesh Malhotra	Next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Cameroon
5.	Mayoori Kango (Former Bollywood actress)	Google India industry head
6.	CS Rajan	Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) Managing Director
7.	Vikram Kirloskar	President of the Confederation of Indian Industry
8.	Keshav Murugesh	Chairman of Nasscom
9.	UB Pravin Rao	Vice Chairman of Nasscom
10.	Sana Dua ( Femina Miss India 2017 runner up)	Brand ambassador of Jammu and Kashmir for general polls
11.	Justice Pradeep Nandrajog	New Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court
12.	Vikramjit Singh Sahney	President of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) - India
13.	Karnam Sekar ( MD and	MD and CEO of Indian Overseas Bank from July 1

	CEO of the Dena Bank)	
14.	R A Sankara Narayanan	MD and CEO of Canara Bank
15.	Vikram Nath	First chief justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court
16.	Murali Kartik	Brand ambassador of Funtasy11
17.	Shiv Das Meena	Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC)
18.	Gargi Kaul	Secretary, Defence Finance
19.	Najma Akhtar	Vice Chancellor of New Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia
20.	Actor Varun Dhawan	Brand Ambassador of Navratna Cool
21.	R. Mohan	City Union Bank part-time chairman
22.	Rajesh Yaduvanshi	Executive Director of Punjab National Bank
23.	Padmaja Alaganandan	Chief people officer of PwC
24.	Mithali Raj	Goodwill ambassador at the Street Child Cricket World Cup
25.	Mahendra Singh Dhoni	Brand ambassador of Redbus
26.	Kaushik Shaparia	Deutsche Bank India CEO
27.	Sairee Chahal	Paytm Payments Bank board of director
28.	Manish Maheshwari	Managing Director of Twitter, India
29.	Ravi Shastri	Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) Corporate Ambassador
30.	Mini Ipe	First woman Zonal Manager of LIC
31.	Dilip Kumar	Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the office of Lokpal
32.	Mr. Isac Doru	New Technical Director of All India Football Federation
33.	Air Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria	Vice Chief of Indian Air Force

### International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Lori Lightfoot	Chicago's First Black Female Mayor
2.	David Malpass	World Bank President
3.	Praful Patel	Member of the FIFA Executive Council
4.	Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa	Re-elected as President The Asian Football Confederation (AFC)
5.	Manu Sawhney	CEO of the International Cricket Council (ICC)
6.	Nicholas Koumjian	Head of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar
7.	Mohammed Ishtaye	Palestine Prime Minister
8.	Benjamin Netanyahu	Israel Prime Minister (5 <sup>th</sup> Term)
9.	Jean-Michel Lapin	Haiti's new prime minister
10.	Abdelkader Bensalah	Algeria's interim president
11.	Sanjay kumar (Indian)	Geospatial advisory committee
12.	Jaideep Sarkar	India's next High Commissioner to South Africa
13.	Gagandeep Kang	First Indian woman to be elected Royal Society Fellow
14.	Suhel Ajaz Khan	Next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Lebanon
15.	Ex-army chief Dalbir Singh Suhag	India high commissioner to Seychelles
16.	Volodymyr Zelensky	Ukrainian president

17.	Javier Perez-Tasso	CEO of SWIFT
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### Resignation

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Abdelaziz Bouteflika	Algerian President
2.	Rajan Anandhan	Google India head
3.	Soumeylow Boubeye Maiga	Prime Minister of Mali
4.	U K Varma	Assocham Secretary General

### Important Awards and Honors

Sl.No	Winners	Awards
1.	Vikram Patel	John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award
2.	Pawan Munjal	Asian Tour for contribution to golf in Asia
3.	PM Narendra Modi	UAE's highest civilian honour Zayed Medal
4.	Tata Steel	'Global Slag Company of the Year'
5.	Telugu poet K Siva Reddy	Saraswati Samman Award 2018
6.	Deepa Malik (Rio Paralympics silver medallist)	New Zealand Prime Minister's Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship for 2019
7.	Eni Nuraeni	Best athletic coach in Asia for short-haul run category
8.	Narendra Modi	The Order of Saint Andrew The Apostle (Russia's highest state honour )
9.	Alice G. Vaidyan (GIC India CMD)	ETPrime 'Woman CEO of the Year' award
10.	Scientist Dr A K Singh	Lifetime Achievement Award (4th APJ Abdul Kalam Innovation Conclave at Mohali )
11.	John Moore	World Press Photo of the Year award
12.	Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo	2019 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize
13.	Pieter Ten Hoopen	World Press Story of the Year
14.	'Dost Education' an Indian startup	National Billion Edtech Prize 2019
15.	Fincare Small Finance Bank	Celent Model Bank 2019 Award in the category of Financial Inclusion
16.	Paytm Payments Bank	Celent Model Bank 2019 Award under Beyond Banking category
17.	Yusuf Hamied ( Cipla chairman)	UK Royal Society honour
18.	Sree Sreenath (Indian-American Professor)	Cleveland International Hall of Fame
19.	IPR cell of Kerala Agricultural University (KAU)	National Intellectual Property Award 2019
20.	Malayalam film Bhayanakam	Best cinematography at 2019 Beijing International Film Festival
21.	Mike Budenholzer	National Basketball Coaches Association's 2019 Coach of the Year
22.	Sunil Kumar	"Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award" for the year 2018-19

		for his book "Samvidhan Kavya"
23.	Cyril Almeida (Pakistani journalist)	World Press Freedom Hero award of The International Press Institute (IPI)
24.	Benny Antony	National Intellectual Property Award for 2019 in the category of Top Individual for Patents and Commercialization
25.	Rana Dasgupta	Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for his 2010 novel "Solo", a tale of estrangement and the ultimate failure of material existence
26.	Jacques Kallis	Order of Ikhamanga in the Silver Division

### **Batman to be first inductee into Comic-Con Museum's Character Hall of Fame**

- Batman, who turned 80 years old, got a birthday gift at WonderCon in Anaheim, with the fictional character being announced as the first entrant to the Comic-Con Museum's Character Hall of Fame
- The ceremony will take place at the Federal Building in San Diego's Balboa Park, the future site of the Comic-Con Museum, on July 17. Batman first appeared in the 'Detective Comics No. 27' published on March 30, 1939, created by Bob Kane and Bill Finger.

### **London's Law University honours Shah Rukh Khan with a doctorate degree**

- The Badshah of Bollywood, Shah Rukh Khan, has added yet another feather to his cap. The actor was conferred an honorary doctorate in Philanthropy by The University of Law, London. Earlier, Shah Rukh Khan had received two honorary doctorates from The University of Edinburgh and The University of Bedfordshire

### **Dr. Sohini Sastri honoured with D. Litt**

- Indian Astrologer Dr Sohini Sastri has been honoured with 'D. Litt in Astrology' by National American University, USA. The announcement was made at an event held in Mumbai recently at Classique Club.
- Other prominent personalities who were also awarded Doctorates at the same event includes Bollywood singer Mohit Chauhan and choreographer Terence Lewis.
- Last year, Sohini was honoured with Doctorate in Astrology by Victoria Global University, USA for her immense knowledge and contribution towards Astrology. She is also a recipient of 'Champions of Change Award'

### **Tata Steel gets award at Global Slag Conference & Exhibition**

- Tata Steel has been named as the 'Global Slag Company of the Year' at the 14th Global Slag Conference and Exhibition 2019. The award was presented to Tata Steel for its innovative practices in development of new applications for Steel by-products (Slag).
- The conference, held recently in Aachen, Germany, was one of the largest global annual slag event, attended by major steelmakers, steel mill service providers & associated companies.

### **Namami Gange gets global recognition at world summit**

- National Mission for Clean Ganga or Namami Gange was felicitated with the coveted 'Public Water Agency of the Year' award at the Global Water Summit in London. The coveted Global Water Awards are presented by the Global Water Intelligence at the Global Water Summit, the major business conference for the water industry worldwide.
- The Global Water Awards recognise excellence across the entire international water industry and reward those initiatives in the water, wastewater, and desalination sectors which bring remarkable improvements in the lives of people.
- The Namami Gange Mission aims at providing comprehensive and sustainable solutions for major pollution hot spots along the stretch of 97 towns and 4,465 villages on the Ganga stem. In Namami Gange programme, a total of 289 projects have so far been sanctioned at a cost of Rs 28,377 crore out of which 87 projects have been completed.

### **India to be Guest of Honour country at ADIBF 2019**

- UAE has announced that India will be the Guest of Honour country at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, ADIBF 2019, to be held from 24th to 30th of this month.
- The fair aims to highlight the UAE's rich heritage, showcasing its authenticity and modernity, as well as its cultural and literary output. India's participation in the fair is expected to attract significant increase in the

number of visitors with various events and activities which will be held throughout the entire duration of ADIBF. The Indian Pavilion will host Indian writers, authors and literary scholars who will serve as ambassadors for the literature and art of their country.

## **2 West Bengal government schemes win UN awards**

- Two schemes of the West Bengal government for skill development and distribution of bi-cycles to students have won the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) awards of the United Nations. The schemes are "Utkarsh Bangla" and "Sabooj Sathi".
- The "Utkarsh Bangla" project aims at creating a pool of skilled candidates who are industry ready, while under the "Sabooj Sathi" scheme, bi-cycles are distributed to students between class IX and XII studying in government run and government aided schools and madrasahs of the state.

## **3 Indian teams win awards at NASA rover challenge**

- Three Indian student teams won awards in NASA's annual Human Exploration Rover Challenge at the US Space and Rocket Centre in Huntsville, Alabama.
- The team from KIET Group of Institutions in Ghaziabad won the "AIAA Neil Armstrong Best Design Award" in the college/university division. The Mukesh Patel School of Technology Management and Engineering from Mumbai won the "Frank Joe Sexton Memorial Pit Crew Award". Lovely Professional University from Phagwara, Punjab, won the STEM Engagement Award.

## **Indian peacekeepers awarded Medal of Honour under UNMISS**

- A total of 150 Indian peacekeepers serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have received medals of honour for their dedicated service and sacrifice. India is one of the top troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping missions. More than 200,000 military and police have served over the past 70 years and 168 Indian military personnel have lost their lives under the UN flag.
- India is the second largest contributor of peacekeepers to UNMISS with more than 2,400 military and police personnel currently deployed the mission.
- UNMISS stated that the Indian Horizontal Mobility Engineering Company serving with the mission completed the renovation of 145 km of roadway connecting Bentiu and Leer "easing the way for the delivery humanitarian aid, trade and inter-communal dialogue."

## **Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards announces its 2019 winners list**

- Winners in the sixth annual Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards, the awards programme to recognise innovation in business throughout the entire Asia-Pacific region.
- Among the winners of the 2019 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards are 18 organisations in India. In total, they'll receive 43 Stevie Awards: 10 Gold Stevies, 19 Silver and 14 Bronze. This high number of Gold, Silver and Bronze Stevies is evidence of the great performance of organisations in India.
- Among the top overall winners are PT Petrokimia Gresik (Indonesia) with eight Gold, nine Silver and 15 Bronze Stevie Awards and SM Supermalls (Philippines) with three Gold, 25 Silver and 20 Bronze Stevie wins.

## **All India Radio, Publication Division & Children's Film Society of India given Swacchta Pakhwada Awards-2019**

- All India Radio, Publication Division and Children's Film Society of India were given Swacchta Pakhwada Awards-2019 in New Delhi.
- Secretary in the Information and Broadcasting Ministry Amit Khare gave away the awards. Director General of All India Radio F. Sheheryar and Director General (News) Ms. Ira Joshi received the Award for All India Radio.

## **LSE names a professorship after economist Amartya Sen**

- The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) has announced the creation of the Amartya Sen Chair in Inequality Studies, named in honour of the India-born economist, philosopher and Nobel laureate, who was Professor of Economics at LSE from 1971-82.
- Sen won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998 and National Humanities Medal in 2012, and is the recipient of many other honors. He works in welfare economics, development economics, social choice theory, economic theory, and political philosophy.

## Helen, Salim Khan and Madhur Bhandarkar get Deenanath Mangeshkar award

- National Award-winning filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar, popular scriptwriter Salim Khan and yesteryears dancing diva Helen were honoured with the prestigious Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Award at a ceremony
1. For music and art - Classical dancer, Smt. Sucheta Bhide-Chapekar
  2. Lifetime award (Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar) - Salim Khan
  3. Special Award - Madhur Bhandarkar (for his contribution to Indian Cinema)
  4. Special Award - Helen (for her contribution to Indian Cinema)
  5. The Vagvilasini Award - Vasant Abaji Dahake (for Literature)
  6. Mohan Wagh Award - Bhadrakali Productions "Soyare Sakal" (for Best Drama of the Year)
  7. Anandmayee Puraskar - Pandit Suresh Talwalkar of Taalyogi Ashram (for espousing a social cause)

## Neeraj, Sindhu picked for ESPN India Multi-Sport Awards

- Olympic silver medallist P V Sindhu and star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra were named as female and male sportsperson of the year in the ESPN India Multi-Sport Awards for their achievements in 2018.
- Sportsperson of the Year (Male) - Neeraj Chopra (athletics)
- Sportsperson of the Year (Female) - P V Sindhu (badminton)
- Comeback of the Year - Saina Nehwal (badminton)
- Coach of the Year - Jaspal Rana (shooting)
- Emerging Sportsperson of the Year - Saurabh Chaudhary (shooting)
- Team of the Year - Women's team (table tennis)
- Match of the Year - Amit Panghal vs Hasanboy Dusmatov (boxing)
- Differently-abled athlete of the Year - Ekta Bhyan (para-athletics)
- Moment of the Year - Women's 4x400m relay
- Lifetime Achievement Award - Pradip Kumar Banerjee (football)

## Pulitzer Prize: 2019 Winners List

- Pulitzer Prize is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States.
- It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of American (Hungarian-born) Joseph Pulitzer who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher, and is administered by Columbia University in New York City
- Prizes are awarded yearly in twenty-one categories. In twenty of the categories, each winner receives a certificate and a US\$15,000 cash award
- The winner in the public service category of the journalism competition is awarded a gold medal

Sl.No	Category	Winner
1.	Public service	South Florida Sun-Sentinel
2.	Criticism	Carlos Lozada of The Washington Post
3.	Editorial Writing	Brent Staples of The New York Times
4.	Breaking News Reporting	staff of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
5.	Investigative Reporting	Harriet Ryan, Matt Hamilton and Paul Pringle
6.	Explanatory Reporting	David Barstow, Susanne Craig and Russ Buettner of The New York Times
7.	Local Reporting	staff of The Advocate of Baton Rouge, Louisiana
8.	National Reporting	staff of The Wall Street Journal
9.	International Reporting	1. Maggie Michael, Maad al-Zikry and Nariman El-Mofty 2. Wa Lone, Kyaw Soe Oo and a team from Reuters
10.	Feature Writing	Hannah Dreier of ProPublica



11.	Commentary	Tony Messenger
12.	Editorial Cartoons	Darrin Bell
13.	Breaking News Photography	The photography staff of Reuters
14.	Feature Photography	Lorenzo Tugnoli of The Washington Post
<b>BOOKS, DRAMA, AND MUSIC</b>		
15.	Fiction	The Overstory by Richard Powers
16.	Drama	Fairview by Jackie Sibblies Drury
17.	General Nonfiction	Amity and Prosperity: One Family and the Fracturing of America by Eliza Griswold
18.	Drama	Fairview by Jackie Sibblies Drury
19.	History	Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom by David W. Blight
20.	Autobiography or Biography	The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke by Jeffrey C. Stewart
21.	Poetry	Be With by Forrest Gander
22.	Special Citation	Aretha Franklin

## Important Committees

### Government proposed 2 committees to probe complaints against Information Commissioners

- Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has proposed to constitute two bureaucratic committees to probe and decide on complaints against Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) and Information Commissioners (ICs).
- It envisages setting up of two committees — one, to receive and decide on complaints against CIC and second one for complaints against ICs.
- **Committee for CIC:** It will comprise of Cabinet Secretary; DoPT Secretary and retired CIC.
- **Committee for ICs:** It will include Secretary (Coordination) in Cabinet Secretariat; DoPT Secretary, and retired IC.

## Important MOU

### UNICEF, NITI Aayog tie up for children empowerment

- NITI Aayogs Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and UNICEF India signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to provide an open platform to promote participation, skilling and empowerment among young children across different communities.
- As per a release, the plan will be implemented through Atal Tinkering Lab initiative to orient the burgeoning innovation ecosystem towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on child rights.

### Indian Army signs MoU with NHPC for construction of tunnels on China, Pakistan borders

- Indian Army signed an MoU with National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (NHPC) to construct tunnels on borders with China and Pakistan for storage of ammunition and other war-related equipment.
- Under the pilot project, three tunnels will be built on China border while one will be built along the Line of Control with Pakistan.
- It is difficult to move heavy equipment in the mountainous region bordering China due to lack of infrastructure development, the tunnel will strengthen the defensive capabilities of the Army as well as protect the ammunition and other stored equipment from the air-strikes and detection by the enemy satellite.

### India offers USD 100 Million LOC to Bolivia, inks multiple agreements

- Under the framework of South-South Cooperation, India has offered \$100 million Line of Credit to Bolivia for financing development projects. Accompanied by a 100-member strong official delegation, President Ramnath Kovind had wide ranging discussions with his counterpart President Evo Morales of Bolivia.
- The discussions focussed on political, economic and cultural issues including space, mining, IT, pharmaceutical and traditional medicines.

### **Reliance Mutual Fund customers partners with Google to launch voice-based transactions**

- Customers of Reliance Mutual Fund can now carry out voice-based financial transactions, with Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management (RNAM) partnering with internet major Google.
- With this, RNAM becomes the first company in India, to provide conversational interface that would help customers regarding funds transactions.
- In the first phase, the functionality would be launched in Reliance Simply Save app for the customers.
- RNAM is a joint venture between Anil Ambani-led Reliance Capital and Japan's Nippon Life Insurance Co Ltd.

### **India and Chile exchange three MoUs for cooperation**

- India and Chile signed three MoUs in the fields of mining, culture and empowerment of persons with disabilities
- President Kovind arrived in Chile on a three-day visit is on the last leg of his three-nation tour that included Bolivia and Croatia. Chile announced that it will allow visa-free entry to Indian nationals holding a valid visa of the United States of America.
- In addition, both India and Chile agreed to explore opportunities for other cooperation in the defence, space research and explorations.

### **India inks an agreement with a development bank for setting up Institute of Agriculture & Rural Development in Malawi**

- India signed an agreement with a development bank for setting up India-Africa Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development (IAIARD) in Malawi. The ministry of External affairs signed the MoU with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Consultancy Service (NABCONS).
- The agreement was signed as a part of India's efforts to enhance capacity in the areas of agro-financing and entrepreneurship development for African countries.

### **ICC to join hands with Interpol to tackle corruption in sport**

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has sought closer working relations with the Interpol to widen the scope of its fight against corruption in the sport. The idea is to ensure that players are better educated about the corruptors and Interpol's vast network would be helpful in this.

### **Tata Power, Indraprastha Gas ink pact for rooftop solar projects**

- Tata Power has signed a pact with Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) for setting up rooftop solar projects in the country. Tata Power is India's largest integrated power utility, IGL is country's largest CNG distribution company.
- The pact signed between Tata Power and IGL is for green energy solutions including rooftop solar projects, various integrated services including setting up of commercial scale EV charging/battery swapping stations

### **18 Advance Pricing Agreements signed in March by CBDT**

- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has entered into 18 Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs) in March this year, including three bilateral APAs. The three bilateral APAs were signed with Australia, Netherlands and the US. The BAPAs and Unilateral APAs (UAPAs) pertain to various sectors and sub-sectors of the economy like anti-friction bearings, risk management solutions platforms, BPO, IT/ITeS, ATMs, industrial and institutional cleaning and hygiene products.
- With the signing of these APAs, the total number of APAs entered into by the CBDT in the year 2018-19 stands at 52, which includes 11 bilateral APAs. The total number of APAs entered into by the CBDT as of now stands at 271, which includes 31 bilateral APAs

### **Bureau of Indian Standards inks an MoU with IIT, Delhi**

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi to collaborate in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment
- The MoU was signed by IIT Delhi Director Professor V Ramgopal Rao and Director General of BIS Surina Rajan.
- According to the MoU, IIT Delhi will provide infrastructure support for research and development projects of relevance to standardisation and BIS will provide financial support to IIT Delhi for projects.

### **BSE, India INX become first Indian exchanges to sign MoU with Moscow Exchange**

- BSE (earlier known as Bombay Stock Exchange) and India International Exchange (India INX) have signed a memorandum of understanding with Moscow Exchange (MOEX) to connect investor community and companies in both countries besides allowing a capital formation platform.

- With this, BSE and India INX has become the first Indian Exchanges to enter into the MoU with Moscow exchange and will facilitate the development of channels of communication. The MoU will help to boost professional intermediaries in both markets to share their know-how and expand their client network in their home market and abroad.

### **Saudi Arabia's King Salman grants Iraq \$1 billion to build sport city**

- Saudi Arabia will fund the construction of a \$1 billion sports city in Iraq as well as open four consulates.
- Riyadh has been courting Baghdad in efforts to boost economic and trade ties and fend off Tehran's influence in the region. The sports city would be located in Baghdad. There are 13 agreements which are ready to be signed.

### **NTPC signs Rs. 2,000 cr term loan pact with Canara Bank**

- State-run power giant NTPC has inked a term-loan agreement with Canara Bank to raise Rs. 2,000 crore, which would be used to part finance its capital expenditure. The loan facility is extended at an interest rate linked to 3-Month MCLR of the Bank.
- In February this year, NTPC had signed a term loan agreement for Rs. 5,000 crore with State Bank of India. The loan facility from SBI was also aimed at part financing the company's capital expenditure.

### **NIIF, ROADIS to create a platform to invest \$2 billion in road projects**

- National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) and PSP Investment owned ROADIS will together create a platform to invest \$2 billion in road projects.
- The platform will invest up to \$ 2 billion of equity to target Toll Operate Transfer (TOT) models, acquisitions of existing road concessions and investment opportunities in the road sector with the aim of creating a large roads platform in the country

### **BSE, HDFC Bank tie up to strengthen startup platform**

- The BSE has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with HDFC Bank with an objective to strengthen the BSE Startups platform. The exchange had launched the startup platform on December 22, with an aim to encourage entrepreneurs to get listed and raise equity capital for their growth and expansion.
- BSE is the first exchange to have launched the Start Up platform. The idea was to help entrepreneurs look beyond the conventional channels of raising capital and enable them to list on the stock exchange to further enhance the credibility of the firm.

### **PFS partners USICEF for financing solar projects**

- Infrastructure finance company PFS has joined hands with the US-India Clean Energy Finance (USICEF) to leverage funds for solar projects in India.
- It is an innovative facility which presents PFS with an opportunity to finance and deploy high-impact development projects which can contribute in achieving India's distributed energy target of 40 GW by 2022.
- PFS has sanctioned 3 distributed solar power projects with a total debt of Rs. 242 crore.
- Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) manages USICEF that was founded in partnership with the Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, OPIC (Overseas Private Investment Corporation), IREDA (Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd.) and leading U.S. Foundations in 2017.

### **Indiagets its first 'Cold Spray' SMART lab with IIT Madras-GE collaboration**

- IIT Madras in collaboration with General Electric (GE) established India's first 'Cold Spray' SMART (Surface Modification and Additive Research Technologies) Laboratory. With this, IIT Madras is now the only academic institution in India, which has a first-of-its-kind High-Pressure Cold Spray (HPCS) facility.
- The lab has been set up with the Government of India's support under its 'Uchchatar Avishkar Yojana' (UYAY).

### **Google Pay users can now buy gold from app in partnership with MMTC-PAMP India**

- Aiming to make Google Pay more useful for Indian users, Google announced its partnership with MMTC-PAMP India for buying and selling of gold through the application.
- MMTC-PAMP India Pvt. Ltd is an internationally recognised metal and mining service provider.
- Google Pay users can purchase gold for any value that will be stored in secure vaults on their behalf by MMTC-PAMP. The users can buy and sell the gold any time at the latest price, refreshed every few minutes, as displayed on the Google Pay app.

### **India, Sweden ink pact to collaborate on solutions for smart cities, clean tech**

- India and Sweden launched a joint programme that will work towards addressing a range of challenges around smart cities and clean technologies among others.
- The programme was co-funded by Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Swedish agency Vinnova.
- Vinnova will provide funding to Swedish participants up to 2,500,000 Swedish Krona (around Rs 1.87 crore) as grant. On the Indian side, conditional grant of up to 50 per cent (with a limit of Rs 1.5 crore) per project will be provided to the Indian partners.

#### **RBL Bank ties up with CreditVidya for improving customer experience**

- RBL Bank has partnered with credit profiler CreditVidya to improve the lender's customer experience.
- Through this partnership, the private sector lender will be able to gain significant insights into its customer base.
- This in turn will allow it to improve user experience and build customised offerings for over 15 lakh customers.
- The bank had first partnered with CreditVidya in 2018 for instant and automated verification of employment details of salaried card applicants.

#### **AITA signs MoU with Serbian Tennis Federation to train junior players**

- The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has signed an MoU with Serbian Tennis Federation (STF) to train Indian junior players under world renowned Serbian coaches, at the RK Khanna Stadium.
- The two federations expressed their intention to cooperate within the scope of mandates and sphere of competence to work towards the development of junior tennis players in India.
- Both the federations have also agreed to work on the education of officials, coaches and physical trainers and their exchange for tournaments.

#### **SBI and PAISALO Digital Limited enable MSME segment with income generation loans**

- PAISALO Digital Limited signed the first co-origination loan agreement with State Bank of India, the first agreement of its kind in the country that State Bank of India has signed. Introducing a platform for the last mile customer, the loan ticket is designed at Rs 10,000 to 2 lakh. The company expects to disburse 200,000 loan applications in FY20.
- PAISALO Digital Limited is a leading systemically important non-deposit taking NBFC registered with the Reserve Bank of India, in operations since 1992. The agreement was signed with a vision of empowering the AGRI, MSME segment and small businesses.

#### **Airtel merger with TTSL**

- Bharti Airtel has confirmed that it has received in-principal approval from the telecom department for merger with Tata Teleservices (TTSL), subject to the condition that Sunil Mittal firm provides bank guarantees of about Rs. 7,200 crore.
- Manoj Sinha, telecom minister has conditionally approved the merger and that letters mentioning the guarantees were sent to Tata Teleservices Limited and its listed unit Tata Teleservices Maharashtra (TTML).

#### **CMFRI, ISRO ink MoU to protect smaller wetlands**

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the CMFRI and the Space Applications Centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). As per the MoU, the two institutes aim to identify and demarcate wetlands, and restore the degraded wetlands through suitable livelihood options like coastal aquaculture.
- The app will be used for real-time monitoring of the wetlands and giving advisories to stakeholders and coastal people. The collaborative move was part of a national framework for fisheries and wetlands recently developed by the National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project of CMFRI.

#### **India to partner with Japan and UAE to set up two projects in Africa**

- India is joining hands with Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to implement two projects in Africa as it seeks to extend its footprint on the continent where strategic rival China has made deep inroads.
- While India will build a cancer hospital in Kenya in collaboration with Japan, it will partner with the UAE to set up an information and communications technology (ICT) centre in Ethiopia.
- Through this partnership, India has undertaken many projects like the ambitious Pan African e-network project on tele-education and tele-medicine which provides “integrated” satellite, fiber optics and wireless network between educational and medical institutes in Africa and India.

## **ICC partners with UNICEF to deliver ‘One Day for Children’ at Men’s Cricket World Cup 2019**

- ICC Cricket for Good, in partnership with UNICEF, announced ‘One Day for Children’ bringing together cricket’s one billion fans to help build a better world for every child.
- #OneDay4Children will use the power and reach of the ICC Men’s Cricket World Cup 2019 to help children learn play and be healthy. The money raised will support UNICEF’s work for children in cricket playing nations across the world
- The campaign will conclude at the England v India game at Edgbaston on 30 June.

## **BoM joins M1Xchange TReDS platform for MSME bill discounting**

- Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has partnered with M1Xchange Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform for MSME bill discounting. TReDS is a digital platform to support micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to get their bills financed at a competitive rate through an auction where multiple registered financiers can participate.
- Mynd Solutions is a technology management firm which runs the TReDS platform of M1Xchange.
- The cost of funds will be reduced for MSMEs as banks will be bidding based on the risk rating of a corporate.

## **IIT Hyderabad to set up drone development centre for India**

- IIT Hyderabad has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Japanese firm Terra Drone Corporation and its Indian subsidiary to set up a first-of-its-kind Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, or drones. Terra Drone India
- It will help IIT Hyderabad in organising workshops, seminars, lectures and joint projects. It plans to offer internship programmes to students.

## **Airtel Payments Bank ties up with Bharti AXA for two wheeler insurance**

- Airtel Payments Bank has tied up with Bharti AXA General Insurance to offer two-wheeler insurance to its customers across India. This insurance will be available on My Airtel app and at over 40,000 Airtel Payments Bank - banking points, with presence even in rural India.

## **TCS modernises 1.5 lakh post offices under multi-year deal with India Post**

- India's largest IT services company Tata Consultancy Services has deployed an integrated solution for India Post that has helped modernise a network of more than 1.5 lakh post offices in the country.
- The partnership was aimed at equipping India Post with modern technologies and systems to enable it to offer more services to the customers in an effective manner. In 2013, the Mumbai-based company had announced receiving an over Rs 1,100- crore multi-year contract from the Department of Posts (DoP) for an end-to-end IT modernisation programme.

## **BSE ties up with Network Intelligence to provide security services**

- BSE, India’s largest stock exchange has entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Network Intelligence, a global cybersecurity services provider to provide cybersecurity services to its members in line with the cybersecurity framework set by SEBI.
- Network Intelligence will be using its own developed platform – BlueScope to offer 24x7 cyber security operations to the members. Earlier, BSE had associated with John Chambers’ backed Lucideus to secure stock brokers as per SEBI guidelines using SAFE
- BSE (formerly Bombay Stock Exchange) established in 1875, is Asia's first & now the world's fastest Stock Exchange with a speed of 6 microseconds

## **Ministry of AYUSH in MoU with CSIR**

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of AYUSH and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for cooperation in research and education in areas of traditional systems of medicine and its integration with modern science.
- Under the MoU, both the organisations will jointly pursue R&D covering fundamental research; AYUSH specific diagnostic tools; linking microbiome, gene expression and prakriti; multi-ingredient herbal formulations, including their standardisation; exploring modern scientific methods for integration with traditional Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM); linking disease signatures; preserving and protecting traditional knowledge related to the Indian systems of healthcare through the existing TKDL platform; and, Development of international standardised terminologies (disease-morbidity codes) in Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU), Database on Medicinal plants, Foods, etc.



### **BEML ties-up with Syndicate Bank for financing of equipment**

- Syndicate Bank and BEML have signed a MoU for financing Earth Moving & Construction Equipment manufactured by BEML. Under the MOU, BEML will nominate Syndicate Bank as a preferred financier for financing its customers.
- The customers under the tie-up arrangement will be provided loans in the range of Rs. 20 lakh to Rs. 3 crore and preferential pricing by Syndicate Bank. Financing Equipment of BEML will be covered under 'SPECIAL' scheme of the Bank. Syndicate Bank and BEML expect to book business worth Rs. 100 crore by March 2020.

### **Huawei, Infosys ink partnership pact for cloud computing business**

- Chinese telecom company Huawei's business arm, Huawei Cloud, and IT firm, Infosys, signed a memorandum on strategic cooperation to jointly develop solutions around cloud computing services for business organisations.
- The cloud computing system helps entities use software, store data and other IT related work without the need to buy complete software or hardware that they may need for computing purposes.

### **Wirecard Expands Partnership with India's RBL Bank to Further Drive Financial Inclusion**

- The new services are powered by India's Aadhaar Enabled Payment Services (AEPS) to enable customer identification at the point-of-sale Wirecard, the global innovation leader in digital financial technology, announced an expanded partnership with RBL Bank to promote financial inclusion in India.
- This partnership will make digital payment and banking transactions more readily accessible to all Indian citizens, including those living in remote areas. In partnership with RBL, Wirecard will empower its retail agents, who serve as customer service representatives in various areas across the country, to enable the financially underserved to access basic payment and banking services. These include cash withdrawals and deposits as well as balance enquiries.

### **Aegon Life and MobiKwik launch a smart digital insurance product**

- Aegon Life Insurance, pioneer of digital insurance in India and MobiKwik, India's leading FinTech Company; have joined hands to launch an Rs. 20 smart digital insurance product.
- The strategic partners have announced the launch of an assorted insurance product called the Aegon Life Group Term Plus Plan with both death and accidental disability benefit, available exclusively on MobiKwik App.
- One can purchase this plan by paying as little as Rs. 20 in premium for a sum assured of Rs 2 lakhs which includes term insurance and accidental disability.

## **Important Summit & Conference**

### **Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman holds bilateral meet with her Chinese counterpart**

- Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman held a bilateral meeting with her Chinese counterpart, General Wei Fenghe at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO Defence Ministers' Meet at Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan.
- India is also keen on deepening its security-related cooperation with SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.

### **India to organize NuGen Mobility summit 2019 in November**

- India's International center for Automotive Technology (ICAT) will organize a NuGen Mobility summit 2019 in November. The summit would be held at Manesar, falling in the national capital region (NCR) of Indian capital - New Delhi from November 27 to 29.
- The objective of the summit is to share new ideas, learnings, global experiences, innovations and future technology trends for faster adoption, assimilation and development of advanced automotive technologies for a smarter and greener future. This event will help in building a platform for bringing together all stakeholders in the automotive industry to understand global advancements in technologies.

### **4th Session of India-Ukraine working group on Trade and Economic Cooperation held in New Delhi**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of India-Ukraine Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation (IU-WGTEC), under the India-Ukraine Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical, Industrial and Cultural Cooperation was held in New Delhi.

- Cooperation in Enhancing the Bilateral Trade
- Cooperation in the field of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship
- Cooperation in Leather, Tobacco, Gems and Jewellery and Tea Sectors



- Cooperation in the field of Technical Regulation (Standardization, Metrology, Certification, Conformity Assessment)
- Cooperation in the field of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and Investment
- Granting Ukraine Market Economy Status within the framework of anti-dumping investigations
- Cooperation in the field of Energy Sector
- Cooperation in the field of Finance and Banking
- Cooperation in Tourism

### **7th Foreign Office consultations between India and Italy held in Delhi**

- The 7th Foreign Office consultations between India and Italy were held in New Delhi.
- These consultations provided an opportunity to review the follow-up actions taken after the visit of Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte in October last year as well as the entire range of bilateral relations, including political, defence, scientific, economic and commercial ties.
- They also exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues, including cooperation in the United Nations and other international organizations

### **3-day National Cardiology Conference held at Lucknow**

- Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the National Cardiology Conference 2019 being held at Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of medical sciences.
- The 3-day conference organised by Dept of Cardiology in which leading national and international experts from Europe, USA, Japan, Singapore South Korea, Indonesia and Australia will deliberate on the latest topics of Interventional cardiology and cutting edge technology.
- The conference being held for the first time in Uttar Pradesh offers an opportunity to showcase newer innovations in Cardiology that can help deliver cost-effective cardiology care to patients.

### **World Economic Forum Mena 2019**

- The World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa is being held at the Dead Sea. It is the tenth such meeting in Jordan and the 17th in the region.
- The Dead Sea meeting will highlight long-term responses to encouraging economic growth, humanitarian crises, sustainability, health care, energy, water, gender equality, the future of jobs and cybersecurity.

### **21st ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting held at New Delhi**

- The 21st ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held from 11-12 April 2019 at New Delhi. India congratulated Thailand on its assuming the Chairmanship of ASEAN for 2019 and welcomed its role as Country Coordinator of the ASEAN-India dialogue partnership for the period 2018-2021.
- The Meeting decided to impart urgency to Cooperation in Renewable Energy and hold an ASEAN-India Conference on Renewable Energy in 2019. The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) would be the co-partners for this project.
- The ASEAN-India partnership is being implemented through the 'Plan of Action (2016-20) to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity'.

### **Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group**

- The Spring Meeting 2019 of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was held between April 8-14, 2019 in Washington DC, US.
- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg represented India in the meeting.

### **UAE to host world's foremost Artificial Intelligence Summit**

- UAE is set to host the world's foremost Artificial Intelligence, AI Summit to empower global dialogue on the future of government, business and society. The inaugural 'AI Everything', AIE will take place at the Dubai World Trade Centre, between 30th of this month and 1st of next month.
- The two day event will be hosted by the UAE National Programme for Artificial Intelligence, with the support of International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), and in strategic partnership with Smart Dubai

### **4th Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific (RCAP) congress 2019**

- Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu addresses at the 4th Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific Congress 2019, organised by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, in New Delhi.

- The RCAP 2019 is a platform for discussing the opportunities and mechanisms of executing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

### **Home Expo India 2019 begins in Greater Noida**

- The 8th edition of Home Expo India 2019 began at India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida.
- It covers sectors with maximum thrust and growth potential in home decor, furnishing, furniture, flooring and textiles. About 500 companies in permanent marts will be exhibiting their collection under these categories. The three-day exhibition has been organized by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts.
- Handicrafts exports during the year 2018-19 was to the tune of 26 thousand 590 crore rupees registering a growth of 15.46 per cent over the previous year.

### **India nominated as Guest of Honour at 29th Abu Dhabi International Book Fair**

- India has been nominated as the “Guest of Honour” country at the 29th edition of the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF). India's selection as the guest of honour reflects the strong relations between the leadership and the people of the UAE and India.
- Indian Ambassador to the UAE, Navdeep Singh Suri added that 30 publishing houses from India will take part in the fair.
- Books on the life and struggle of Mahatma Gandhi will be on display as part of the 150th birth anniversary celebrations. An annual fair is a major event in the publishing sector in the Middle East and North Africa. It will conclude on the 30th of this month.

### **ABU Media Summit on Climate Action and Disaster Preparedness began in Kathmandu**

- 5th Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Media Summit on Climate Action and Disaster Preparedness began in Kathmandu. The theme of the two-day summit is “Media Solutions for Sustainable Future: Saving Lives, Building Resilient Communities”.
- Nepal's Minister for Communication and Information Technology Gokul Prasad Baskota inaugurated the summit. The basic aim of the summit is to address the issue of fully utilizing media's potential of accelerating climate action and disaster preparedness and connect stakeholders to media professionals for collaboration and joint practical projects.

## **Important Mobile App and Web Portal**

### **Sahulat App Launched To Facilitate Elderly Voters in Rajouri**

- Sahulat', a mobile app aimed to facilitate voting by elders has been launched in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district. District Election Officer Mohammad Aijaz Asad launched the Android-based application to reach out to the voters who are 90 years old or above. Rajouri district, which is part of the Jammu parliamentary constituency, goes to polls along with Baramulla constituency in the first phase on April 11.
- The voters can request for the facilities like the provision of wheelchair, vehicle for transportation and any helper who will assist them during casting of vote.

### **Airtel, FLO launch 'My Circle' app for women's safety**

- Bharti Airtel in collaboration with FICCI Ladies Organisation launched a mobile app, My Circle, to help women in case they face any problem or a panic situation. The application is carrier agnostic which would work on phones with any telecom service network, both Airtel and non-Airtel.
- "My Circle app enables women to send SOS alerts to any five of their family or friends in 13 languages including English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi, Punjabi, Bangla, Urdu, Assamese, Oriya, and Gujarati”.

### **Election Commission launched Voter Turnout app**

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched a new mobile app for the voters across the country to see the realtime availability of voter turnout during the election season in the country.
- The beta version of the ECI's Voter Turnout app is available for download on the Google Play Store and as of now it has been downloaded over 5,000 times.

### **France launched government only chat app 'Tchap'**

- France made good on its promise to launch a secure government-only chat app although it almost didn't turn out that way. The country has introduced a beta version of Tchap, a messaging app that helps officials communicate with each other through Android, iOS and the web with reportedly greater security.

- All private conversations are encrypted end-to-end, antivirus software screens all attachments and all data is stored in France. You only need a French government email address to sign up, though, and that's where the security issue resided.

## **Important Defence News**

### **INS Kolkata and INS Shakti Reached South Korea to Participate in ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Exercise**

- Two warships of the Indian Navy have reached the South Korean port city of Busan after participating at an international maritime parade off the coast of Qingdao in China. INS Kolkata and INS Shakti are in Busan as part of a deployment of the eastern fleet to the South China Sea.
- In a demonstration of India's Act East policy and the Indian Navy's increasing footprint and operational reach, Indian naval ships Kolkata and Shakti have arrived at Busan, South Korea on a three-day visit as part of deployment of the Eastern Fleet to the South China Sea on April 28.
- The Navy said the two ships will participate in the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Field Training Exercise (FTX) at Busan.

### **ISRO opened its first visitor's gallery to watch rocket launches**

- In a first, ISRO opened a visitors' gallery with 5,000 capacity at Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota island.
- The gallery has a clear line of sight to two launch pads and large screens to explain launcher and satellite features.
- This comes as ISRO is launching defence satellite EMISAT along with 28 foreign satellites.

### **ISRO successfully launched India's latest EMISAT defence satellite**

- The Indian Space Research Organization, ISRO, launched India's latest satellite EMISAT and 28 other smaller satellites was launched from the Sriharikota spaceport
- PSLV-C45 successfully injected EMISAT in a 748-km orbit and 28 other satellites in a 504-km orbit
- The rocket PSLV C45 flew in a new configuration called "QL." In this configuration, the rocket is fitted with four longer versions of strap-on motors that provide the vehicle the required additional thrust. Earlier, the rocket used to be in "XL" version with six strap-on motors or two with no strap-on motors known as core alone configuration
- The other 28 international satellites are 25 3U type, two 6U type and one 2U type nano satellites. They are from Lithuania (two), Spain (1), Switzerland (1) and the United States (24).

### **Army constructs Maitri Bridge on Indus river to link villages in Leh**

- The bridge is constructed over the Indus river at Choglamsar in Leh and is the longest suspension bridge over the Indus river.
- The Army undertook the task of building the Maitri Bridge on Indus river following requests received from the civil administration to help the locals of Choglamsar, Stok and Chuchot villages (largest villages of Ladakh region).
- The 260 feet cable suspension bridge, which has been built using innovative engineering methods, is the longest suspension bridge over the Indus river.
- It was constructed by the Combat Engineers (Sahas aur Yogyata Regiment) of the Fire & Fury Corps in a record time of 40 days, ferrying almost 500 tonnes of bridging equipment and construction material.

### **US approves sale of 24 MH 60 Romeo Seahawk helicopters to India for \$2.4 bn**

- The US has approved the sale of 24 multi-role MH-60R Seahawk maritime helicopters to India at an estimated cost of USD 2.6 billion. These choppers are considered as the world's most advanced maritime helicopter.
- It will provide the Indian defence forces with the capability to perform anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare missions. MH-60 Romeo Seahawk helicopters have been designed and manufactured by Lockheed Martin for hunting submarines as well as knocking out ships and conducting search-and-rescue operations at sea.

### **India's first indigenously built Dhanush howitzer inducted in Army**

- Country's first indigenously designed and developed first batch of six Dhanush artillery gun was inducted in the Indian Army during a ceremony held at Gun Carriage Factory (GCF), Jabalpur.
- Dhanush is a 155 mm, 45-calibre towed artillery gun with a range of 36 km and has demonstrated a range of 38 km with specialised ammunition

- The Dhanush gun system is based on the designs of the Bofors howitzer. Dhanush is the third type of artillery gun to be inducted into the force after the K-9 Vajra and the M-777 ultra-light howitzers.

### **ITBP organises first National Sky Running Championship**

- Border guarding force Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) along with Sky Running Association of India organised the National Sky Running Championship at Mountaineering and Skiing Institute of ITBP at Auli in Uttarakhand.
- This is the first time such championship was organised at a high altitude of up to 4000 metres. The high altitude marathon was organised for both junior and senior categories.
- Various athletes from ITBP, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Uttarakhand participated in the championship.
- Mayank Dimri of Uttarakhand won the race while ITBP's constables Vinod Singh and Padma Tundup finished at second and third places.
- In the women's category, ITBP's Babita and Rakhi got the first and second positions while Tripti Dimri of Uttarakhand finished at the third spot.

### **INS Kolkata, INS Shakti to take part in Chinese Navy's anniversary celebrations**

- Two Indian naval ships — INS 'Kolkata' and 'Shakti' — would take part in the Chinese Navy's 70th anniversary of celebrations
- The two ships are scheduled to visit Chinese port of Qingdao from 21 to 26 April to participate in an International Fleet Review to celebrate the 70th anniversary of PLA Navy
- INS Kolkata is the lead ship of the Kolkata-class stealth guided-missile destroyers of the Indian Navy.
- INS Shakti is tanker and supply ship.

### **VRC launched to boost indigenous warship design capabilities**

- A new state-of-the-art, Virtual Reality Centre (VRC) to provide a major boost to indigenous warship design capabilities of the Navy was inaugurated by Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba in New Delhi.
- The VRC at the Directorate of Naval Design (Surface Ship Group), seeks to also provide impetus to 'self-reliance and greater fillip' to warship construction under the 'Make in India' initiative of the Indian government.

### **China develops world's first armed amphibious drone boat**

- China has successfully tested the world's first armed amphibious drone boat which the Chinese military analysts claimed could be used in land assault operations and is capable of forming a combat triad with aerial drones and other drone ships.
- Built by Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group under China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC), the drone ship, named Marine Lizard, successfully passed delivery checks and left factory on April 8 in Wuhan, capital of Central China's Hubei Province. Having a maximum operation range of 1,200 km, the Marine Lizard can be remotely controlled via satellites,
- The 12-meter-long Marine Lizard is a trimaran propelled by a diesel-powered hydrojet and can reach a maximum speed of 50 knots while maintaining stealth

### **Commissioning of Off Shore Patrol Vessel (OPV) ICGS Veera**

- Indian Coast Guard Ship Veera, the third in the series of 98 metre Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) was commissioned at Visakhapatnam by General Bipin Rawat in the presence of Director General Rajendra Singh, PTM, TM, Director General Indian Coast Guard and senior dignitaries of the central and state government.
- "Veera" meaning "Audacious Brave Courageous" is a projection of Indian Coast Guard's will and commitment 'To Serve and Protect' the maritime interest of the nation. This is indigenously designed and built by Larsen & Toubro Ltd. at its shipbuilding facility at Kattupali in Chennai.
- The 98 metre long, 15 metre wide patrol vessel has a 3.6 metre draft and a range of 5,000 nautical miles. The vessel is fitted with a 30mm naval gun and will be fitted with 12.7mm Gun with FCS.

### **Navy chief launches new guided missile destroyer 'INS Imphal'**

- Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba launched the third ship of Project 15B, a guided missile destroyer Imphal, at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, Mumbai.
- The launch marks yet another significant milestone in the annals of the indigenous warship design and construction programme of India. With a launch weight of 3,037 tonnes, the vessel made its first contact with water with full fanfare during the launching ceremony.

## **INS Kolkata, Shakti to participate in IFR in China**

- The Indian Navy ships Kolkata and Shakti are scheduled to arrive at Qingdao in China on April 21 to participate in the International Fleet Review (IFR) as a part of the 70th anniversary celebrations of People Liberation's Army (PLA-Navy). International Fleet Review (IFR) is a parade of naval ships, aircraft, and submarines, and is organised by nations to promote goodwill, strengthen cooperation and showcase their organisational capabilities.
- The Indian Navy would be represented in the Chinese IFR by indigenously built stealth guided missile destroyer INS Kolkata and fleet support ship INS Shakti.

## **India hands over 100 motorized wheelchairs to Afghan National Army**

- Indian Ambassador Vinay Kumar presented 100 motorized wheelchairs to the Afghan National Army (ANA).
- India also remains committed to extending medical relief and assistance to the ANA personnel.
- Till date, Indian Army has also trained 4880 ANA personnel in various professional, educational and military training programs, including training ANA doctors and medical technicians

## **Army starts process to induct women as jawans in military police**

- Opening up a new avenue for females, the Indian Army kicked off the process of inducting women as jawans by starting their online registration for recruitment in the corps of military police.
- This is being seen as a major breakthrough for women in armed forces as so far, they were being inducted only as officers and this is the first time they would be taken in as soldiers.
- Women will be inducted in a graded manner to eventually comprise 20 per cent of total Corps of Military Police and their role would range from probing crime cases to assisting the Army in field operations wherever required.

## **EXERCISES**

### **The Indian and Vietnamese Navies Conclude Bilateral Exercise (IN – VPN BILAT EX)**

- The Indian Navy undertook the second edition of the bilateral maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Vietnam People Navy at/ off Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam from 13 to 16 Apr 19. The maiden edition was conducted from 21 to 26 May 18 at Da Nang, Vietnam.
- The exercise was undertaken as a part of the ongoing Overseas Deployment of Eastern Fleet ships to South East Asian countries. IN Ships Kolkata under the command of Capt Aditya Hara and Shakti under the command of Capt Sriram Amur participated in the exercise, comprising a harbour and a sea phase.

### **India, Singapore joint military exercise Bold Kurukshetra-2019 kicks off in Babina**

- Armed forces of India and Singapore kicked off a joint military exercise, 'Bold Kurukshetra-2019', in Jhansi's Babina Cantonment.
- The three-day exercise is aimed at bolstering cooperation against terrorism, developing defence technology and improving maritime security.

### **Srilanka Army to hold Exercise 'Western Shield' in July**

- The biggest-ever military exercise organised by the Sri Lanka Army - Exercise Western Shield - with the largest-ever contingent of infantrymen is scheduled to begin on July 1, with the support of other service regiments and Navy and Air Force troops.
- In which 5,000 infantrymen, three General Officers Commanding, nine Brigade Commanders, 15 Commanding Officers and other supportive Army personnel are expected to take part.
- Exercise Western Shield will extend from Mannar to Puttalam, including Kalpitiya, Wilpattu National Park, Mavillu and Thabbowa Forest Reserves and the Western coastal belt and provide the opportunity for Army trainees to march through those areas which are not usually accessible, except to Forest Conservation authorities.

### **Morocco-US joint military exercise 'African Lion 2019' starts In Morocco**

- The Morocco-US sponsored exercise "African Lion 2019" takes place from March 16 to April 7, 2019, in Morocco
- The annual exercise involves various types of training including command, maneuvering, peace-keeping and aerial refueling. The drills also include training on counter-terrorism operations, land and air exercises as well as a tactical simulation

### **25th CARAT Exercise Series Kicks Off with Sri Lanka in Indian Ocean**

- 25th annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise series between the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps and the armed forces of partner nations held on April 19, 2019 at Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka.



- CARAT, the U.S. Navy's oldest and longest continually-running regional exercise in South Asia and Southeast Asia, strengthens partnerships between regional navies and enhances maritime security cooperation throughout the Indo-Pacific.

### **India and France to hold largest ever 'Varuna' naval exercise off Goa coast**

- India and France will conduct their largest ever naval exercise 'Varuna' in May 2019. The objective of this exercise is to expand the strategic partnership between India and France in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).
- Varuna Naval Exercise will take place off Goa and Karwar from 1 May 2019.

## **Important Science and Technology**

### **GAIL, BHEL tie up for development of solar power projects**

- Maharatna public sector units GAIL India Ltd and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) have inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the development of solar power projects.
- The MoU is aimed at building a closer strategic partnership between the two state-owned companies for jointly pursuing commercial solar power projects through participation in tariff and viability gap funding based competitive bidding process.
- India has set a target to achieve 100 GW of solar power by 2022 so that all citizens can have round-the-clock access to uninterrupted electricity.

### **China launches new data relay satellite**

- China launched the first of its new-generation data relay satellites as part of the preparatory work for the nation's next manned space missions. The Tianlian II-01 was lifted off at a Long March 3B carrier rocket at the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan province.
- The spacecraft is the first in China's second generation of data relay satellite, adding its entry into service will substantially improve the country's space-based data relay capability.
- The satellite is developed by the China Academy of Space Technology under the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation. The launch marks the 301st mission of the Long March carrier rocket series. China launched its first data relay satellite, the Tianlian I-01, in April 2008

### **Google Unveils Hybrid Cloud Platform Anthos**

- Google launched Anthos, a new open platform from Google Cloud, that lets users run applications from anywhere.
- Anthos allows users to run applications, unmodified, on existing on-premise hardware or on the public cloud, and is based on the Cloud Services Platform that Google announced last year.

### **First-ever real image of a black hole released**

- Scientists have captured the first direct image of a black hole, using Event Horizon Telescope observations of the center of the galaxy M87 (Messier 87), 55 million light-years from the Earth.
- The image which has been captured by a network of eight telescopes across the world
- The image shows the event horizon, a bright ring formed as light bends in the intense gravity around the black hole that is 6.5 billion times more massive than the Sun.

### **Stratolaunch Flies World's Largest Plane for the First Time**

- Stratolaunch, the private launch company founded by the late billionaire Paul Allen, has just flown the world's largest aircraft for the first time. The massive airplane, which has a wingspan bigger than a football field and is designed to launch rockets from the air, took off on its maiden test flight from the Mojave Air and Space Port in Mojave, California

### **India's sub-sonic cruise missile 'Nirbhay' successfully test fired from Odisha**

- India successfully test-fired its first indigenously designed and developed long-range sub-sonic cruise missile 'Nirbhay' from a test range in Odisha. The missile is equipped with a Ring Laser Gyroscope (RLG) based guidance, control and navigation system. It is also armed with a MEMS- based Inertial Navigation System (INS) and the GPS system. The Nirbhay missile also has capability of striking a multiple targets at a time.
- The missile is nuclear capable, can be equipped with 300kg warhead. It has an ability to reach speed of 0.6-0.7 Mach and can be deployed from multiple platforms. The missile weighs 1,500 kg, width of 0.52 meters and has a wingspan of 2.7 metre.

### **Nepal successfully launches its 1st satellite NepaliSat-1 into space**

- Nepal successfully launched its first satellite NepaliSat-1 into space from Virginia in the United States. The satellite, developed by two Nepalis -- Abhas Maskey and Hariram Shrestha -- at Japan's Kyushu Institute of Technology. NepaliSat-1 is a low orbit satellite. It will be stationed at the International Space Station for a month and then it will be sent to orbit the earth.
- The satellite will take photographs on a regular basis to gather geographical information of the country. It weighs 1.3 kilograms, making it a small satellite with limited capability.

### **Sri Lanka's 1st satellite 'Raavana-1' launched into space**

- Sri Lanka's first satellite 'Raavana-1' was launched into space from NASA's Flight Facility on Virginia's east shore. 'Raavana 1' weighs around 1.05 kg and the lifespan of the satellite is around one and a half years.
- The satellite was designed and built at the Kyushu Institute of Technology in Japan by two Sri Lankan research engineers.

### **NASA astronaut to set record for longest spaceflight by a woman**

- NASA astronaut Christina Koch is going to have her mission on the International Space Station (ISS) extended to 328 days. This would set a record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman. Koch arrived at the space station on March 14 and now is scheduled to remain in orbit until February 2020. She will eclipse the record of 288 days set by former NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson in 2016-17
- The longest single spaceflight by a NASA astronaut is 340 days, set by former NASA astronaut Scott Kelly during his one-year mission in 2015-16.

### **First Marsquake detected by NASA's InSight mission**

- The American space agency's InSight lander appears to have detected its first seismic event on Mars.
- It is the first seismic signal detected on the surface of a planetary body other than the Earth and its Moon.
- "Marsquake" could either be movement in a crack inside the planet or the shaking from a meteorite impact.
- It aims to identify multiple quakes, to help build a clearer picture of Mars' interior structure.

### **Japan creates first artificial crater on asteroid**

- Japanese scientists have succeeded in creating what they called the first-ever artificial crater on an asteroid, a step towards shedding light on how the solar system evolved.
- The announcement comes after the Hayabusa2 probe fired an explosive device at the Ryugu asteroid early this month to blast a crater in the surface and scoop up material, aiming to reveal more about the origins of life on Earth.

## **Important Ranking and Indexes**

### **Jharkhand's Dhanbad tops 4G availability list in India**

- According to report 'OpenSignal's Hottest city for 4G Availability' released by OpenSignal, Dhanbad, which is also known as the coal capital of India has the highest 4G availability of 95.3%, followed by Ranchi which has 95% of 4G Availability. The report revealed 4G Availability across the top 50 Indian cities
- Both Ranchi and Dhanbad are two cities in Jharkhand and they are the only two cities to have over 95% of 4G coverage. Srinagar is one of the remote areas in the country stood third on the list with 4G Availability score of 94.9%.

### **IIT Madras tops NIRF ranking 2019, Miranda House best college**

- The National Institutional Rankings Framework list for the best institutes of 2019 has been released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has topped the list of higher education institutes. IISc Bengaluru has come in second and IIT-Delhi has been ranked third in the HRD ministry's national ranking of higher institutes.
- Among the colleges, Delhi University's Miranda House has topped the national ranking of colleges while St. Stephens has been ranked fourth.
- The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi came out as the foremost medical sciences institute in the country. The National Law School-Bengaluru has topped the law list. Among the pharmacy institutes, Jamia Hamdard has come out as the leader, with IIM-Bengaluru being ranked the top most institute among management institutes.

### **Guwahati Railway Station first in India to get ISO certification**

- The Guwahati Railway Station has become the first ever railway station in the Indian Railways to get an ISO certification from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for providing passenger amenities in a clean and green

environment. The station also has amenities such as High-class reserve (VIP) lounge, waiting rooms, AC and non-AC retiring rooms, food courts and sanitation facilities.

- ISO stands for “International Organisation for Standardisation” that is responsible for establishing the standard in different areas of activities.

### **India tops remittances list, received \$79 billion in 2018**

- According to the latest edition of the World Bank report, India has retained its top spot on remittances.
- India was followed by China (\$ 67 billion), Mexico (\$ 36 billion), the Philippines (\$ 34 billion), and Egypt (\$ 29 billion). Remittances grew by more than 14 percent in India.

### **India's population grew at 1.2 % average annual rate between 2010 and 2019**

- India's population grew at an average annual rate of 1.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019 to 1.36 billion, more than double the annual growth rate of China, according to a report by the United Nations Population Fund.
- India's population in 2019 stood at 1.36 billion, growing from 942.2 million in 1994 and 541.5 million in 1969.
- India's population grew at average annual rate of 1.2 per cent between 2010 and 2019, the UN sexual and reproductive health agency said in the State of World Population 2019 report.
- According to the report, in India, total fertility rate per woman was 5.6 in 1969, dropping to 3.7 in 1994 and 2.3 in 2019.
- India's population composition in 2019, the report said 27 per cent of the country's population was in the age bracket of 0-14 years and 10-24 years each, while 67 per cent of the country's population was in the 15-64 age bracket.
- Six per cent of the country's population was of the age 65 and above.
- The report noted that Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in the country dropped from 488 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1994 to 174 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015.

### **HDFC Bank ranked No. 1 in India by Forbes**

- HDFC Bank has been at the forefront in leveraging technology to give its 43 million customers a superior banking experience.
- Apart from HDFC Bank, it was another private-owned lender ICICI Bank which took the second spot in Forbes list for India. At third rank was DBS, followed by Kotak Mahindra Bank and IDFC Bank taking fourth and fifth spot.
- Banks like Syndicate Bank, PNB, Allahabad Bank, Vijaya Bank and Axis Bank were also in top 10.

### **As per Air Quality in India 2014-2019' report, Kanpur ranked 1st as the most polluted city**

- The quality of air in Varanasi, Prime Minister Modi's 2014 Lok Sabha constituency, is positioned 3rd on the WHO's (World Health Organisation) list of 15 most polluted cities in the world, by the 'Political Leaders Position and Action on Air Quality in India 2014-2019' report, released by Climate Trends. Kanpur (in Uttar Pradesh) is the most polluted city in the world and is positioned 1 on the list.
- 14 of the 15 most polluted cities in the world (mentioned by World Health Organisation (WHO) are in India. Out of them, 4 are in Uttar Pradesh.
- WHO's report states that Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh is witnessing a rise in the number of people suffering from allergies and respiratory problems due to huge amount of construction in the city. Faridabad in Haryana is in 2nd position after Kanpur.

### **Mukesh Ambani, Arundhati Katju, Menaka Guruswamy among TIME's list of 100 most influential people**

- Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani and public-interest litigators Arundhati Katju and Menaka Guruswamy, who spearheaded a historic legal battle for LGBTQ rights in India, are among the Indians who have been named by TIME magazine in its prestigious list of the 100 most influential people in the world.
- The list includes Indian-American comedian and TV host Hasan Minhaj, US President Donald Trump, Pope Francis, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, iconic golfer Tiger Woods and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg.
- The illustrious list also includes US Open winner Naomi Osaka, actor Mahershala Ali, Oscar-winning actor Rami Malek, former first lady Michelle Obama, South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa, Oscar-winning singer and actor Lady Gaga, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed, Special counsel Robert Mueller and Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

## India ranked 140 in World Press Freedom Index 2019

- India has dropped two places on a global press freedom index to be ranked 140th out of 180 countries in the annual report released by Reporters Without Borders. The World Press Freedom Index 2019 topped by Norway
- Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), or Reporters Without Borders, is a non-profit organisation that works to document and combat attacks on journalists around the world.
- At the bottom of the Index, both Vietnam (176th) and China (177th) have fallen one place and Turkmenistan (down two at 180th) is now last, replacing North Korea (up one at 179th).

## India Rises to 17th Spot from 37th in StartupBlink's Startup Ecosystem Ranking

- India ranked 17 among 100 countries, based on the strength of its startup ecosystem.
- Top three spots remained unchanged with the United States, United Kingdom and Canada.
- Bangalore, New Delhi and Mumbai were the top cities in the Indian startup ecosystem

## India ranks 19th in Index of Cancer Preparedness

- India was ranked at 19 out of 28 countries in Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP) released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- It was released as part of the report titled "Cancer preparedness around the world: National readiness for a global epidemic"
- Top 3 countries are: Australia (1st), Netherlands (2nd) and Germany (3rd).
- Bottom three are: Saudi Arabia (28th), Romania (27th) and Egypt (26th)

The ICP explores the issue of cancer preparedness through three broad domains:

- policy and planning;
- care delivery;
- Health systems and governance.

India and ICP: Its overall rank was 19th with a score of 64.9. India ranked 17th in cancer policy and planning.

- India has relatively high score of 80.8 and it largely stems from its strong cancer research and tobacco control measures.
- India ranked first for research and third for tobacco control. It ranks 23rd for its national cancer control plan.
- India's healthcare system was ranked 25th in the index. In its delivery of cancer care, it was ranked 20th with a score of 61.3.
- India's healthcare infrastructure is the second worst among these countries. It has high standard of clinical guidelines category where it is ranked first. But it falls short on immunization, screening and early detection

## Arunachalam Muruganantham, the maker of low-cost sanitary napkins, in Fortune's list of world's greatest leaders

- Arunachalam Muruganantham known as the maker of low-cost sanitary napkins in India with his invention of cellulose-based pads, has made it to Fortune magazine's 2019 list of the world's greatest leaders.
- He ranks 45th in the list released by the American publication.
- Bill and Melinda Gates top the list for the work of their charitable organisation Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who earned much acclaim for her response to Christchurch mosque shootings in February, ranked second while the US special counsel Robert Mueller, who recently submitted his findings of the Donald Trump campaign's collusion with Russia, rounded off the top three.

## Important Books and Authors

Author	Book
Manoshi Sinha	'Saffron Swords: Centuries of Indic Resistance to Invaders'
Aabhas Maldahiya	'#Modi Again: Why Modi is right for India'
Sharad Dutt	Kundan: Saigal's Life & Music
Wajahat Saeed Khan	Shahid Afridi's biography Game Changer

Dr. Chandrasekhar	A ray of hope
Jeff Kinney	Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid
Salman Rushdie	Quichotte
Navdeep Suri	Khooni Vaisakhi

## Important Sports News

### Cricket

#### India win ICC Test C'ship mace for 3rd straight year, get \$1 million

- India has won ICC Test Championship mace for the third year in a row after finishing at the top of ICC Test team rankings. India have also been awarded \$1-million cash prize. New Zealand, who are ranked second, won \$500,000 prize money after finishing with 108 points, eight behind India.

#### Virat Kohli, Smriti Mandhana Named Wisden's Leading Cricketers Of 2018

- Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli and women's cricketer Smriti Mandhana were named the Leading Cricketers in the World in the 2019 edition of the Wisden Cricketers.
- Kohli has won the honour for an unprecedented third year in a row while it's the first time Smriti has won the honour. Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan was named the Leading T20 cricketer for the second year in a row.
- Kohli was also named as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year alongside English cricketers Jos Buttler, Sam Curran, Rory Burns and Tammy Beaumont.
- Wisden has been awarding cricketers since 1889 and it is considered one of the most prestigious honours in the sport.

#### Jhulan Goswami wins CSJS award for best sportsperson of 2018

- Jhulan Goswami, world's leading wicket-taker in women's one-day internationals, was awarded the 'Best Sportsperson' award by the Calcutta Sports Journalists' Club.
- The CSJS also honoured Bengal's Ranji Trophy winning captain and former national selector Sambaran Banerjee and former India winger Sukumar Samajpati with the 'Lifetime Achievement' awards.
- Awardees: Best Sportsperson: Jhulan Goswami; Lifetime Achievement awards: Sambaran Banerjee and Sukumar Samajpati; Special award (bridge): Shibnath De Sarkar and Pranab Bardhan; Special award (kabaddi): Payel Chowdhury; Promising Sportsperson of the Year: Neelash Saha.

#### Australia's Claire Polosak set to become first woman umpire to stand in men's ODI

- Australia's Claire Polosak will create history as the first woman umpire ever to stand in a men's One-Day International when she takes the field in the final of the ICC World Cricket League Division 2.
- She has also performed well in ICC events, standing in the semifinal of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2018 between England and India and four matches at the ICC Women's World Cup 2017, reflecting her rapid rise to success.

### Football

#### Indian Football team climbs two places to 101; Belgium maintains top spot in FIFA Rankings

- Indian Football Team climbed two places to move to 101 rank in the FIFA rankings.
- Iran continued to top the Asian rankings at 21, followed by Japan (26), South Korea (37), Australia (41) and Qatar (55). The top three positions are unchanged Belgium remained on top with 1737 points and World Cup winners France (1734) in the second spot ahead of Brazil (1676), in third.

#### Former Brazil football president Marin given life ban by FIFA

- Former Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) president Jose Maria Marin has been banned for life from all football activities by FIFA. He was found to have taken bribes in exchange for the media and marketing rights to various tournaments, including the Copa America.
- Marin, who has been informed of FIFA's decision, has also been ordered to pay a CHF 1million fine (£760,000).

#### International Hockey Federation imposes fine on Pakistan

- The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has imposed a hefty fine of one lakh seventy-six thousand Euros on Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) for not honouring the Pro League commitments.
- PHF was fined for not sending the national team for the Pro League matches in Argentina, Australia and New Zealand.



## **Stéphanie Frappart to become first female referee in France's top football league**

- Stephanie Frappart will become the first woman to referee a French Ligue 1 football match when Amiens host Strasbourg on Sunday (April 28). Stephanie Frappart, selected by FIFA for the Women's World Cup in France, has been appointed by the FFF Refereeing Direction for the match on the 34th day of Ligue 1 between Amiens SC and RC Strasbourg.
- She will also be the only referee from France who will be officiating at the Women's World Cup to be held there this June.

## **Lionel Messi Becomes 1st Barcelona Player to Win 10 La Liga Titles**

- Barcelona successfully defended its Spanish La Liga crown after beating Levante 1-0, courtesy of the magical Lionel Messi. It's the fourth title Barcelona has won in the past five years and it kept alive hopes of a prestigious treble this season.

## **Hockey**

### **South Korea defeats India in Sultan Azlan Shah cup**

- India has lost to South Korea in the final of Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey tournament at Ipoh in Malaysia.
- The host Malaysia has secured the 3rd place. Manpreet Singh was the captain of Indian Hockey Team.
- Asian games Gold medalist Japan stood at 5th place

## **Others**

### **Lewis Hamilton wins Bahrain Grand Prix**

- Five times world champion Lewis Hamilton won the Bahrain Grand Prix
- Valtteri Bottas, winner of the opener in Australia, took second place to stay top of the championship standings by a point from team mate Hamilton.

### **Roger Federer lifts his 4th ATP Miami Open title**

- Roger Federer lifted his fourth ATP Miami Open title with an emphatic 6-1, 6-4 win over defending champion John Isner. It was his 28th Masters title and the 101st overall and he also won 20 Grand Slam singles titles
- Federer is now behind only America's Jimmy Connors with 109 career singles titles.

### **India finish with 16 gold medals at Asian Airgun C'ships**

- India finished with 16 gold, five silver and four bronze in 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Airgun Championships to sign off with a total of 25 medals in Taoyuan, Taipei. Yash Vardhan and Shreya Agrawal bagged three gold medals each.
- Throughout the championship, both the senior and junior teams showed extraordinary performance to win 16 out of 18 gold medals on offer during the tournament.

### **India's first professional Kho Kho league launched**

- The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI), along with eminent industrialist Amit Burman has launched the country's first franchise-based league for the sport – Ultimate Kho Kho. KKFI has partnered with Dabur India for this event. Eight teams will participate in the event. CEO of the Ultimate Kho-Kho league: Tenzing Niyogi (former sports advisory leader at Ernst and Young)
- Chairman of the Ultimate Kho-Kho league: Rajeev Mehta

### **Ghosal 1st Indian male to enter top-10 in PSA world rankings**

- Saurav Ghosal became the first Indian male squash player to enter the top 10 in the PSA world rankings.
- Indian women squash players, Joshna Chinappa and Dipika Pallikal, had earlier reached the top-10 in the women's world rankings. Ghosal has moved up two places to a career-high ranking of tenth.
- Egypt's world champion Ali Farag, meanwhile, maintains his position at the top of the ladder.

### **China wins both singles title at Asian Cup Table Tennis Tournament 2019**

- The 2019 ITTF-ATTU Asian Cup was the 32nd edition of the table tennis competition held from 5–7 April in Yokohama, Japan. The tournament had Men's singles and women's singles events only, both of which were dominated by China. Fan Zhendong (China) and Zhu Yuling (China) won the Gold medal in Men's and women's single category respectively.

### **India clinch 7 gold, 3 silver, 2 bronze in Ghana Junior & Cadet Open**

- In table tennis, India's young paddlers clinched seven gold, three silver and two bronze medals in the Ghana Junior & Cadet Open, a ITTF Junior circuit event. Ananya Chande and Diya Chitale, both from

Maharashtra **won** seven gold, one silver and one bronze. Ananya also cornered a silver in the junior doubles along with Ruby Chan of England and a bronze in the junior girl's singles.

- Mainak Nistala and Arnav Manoj Karnavar added to the rich tally, combining to win two silver medals in the cadet boy's doubles.

### **Shot putter Manpreet Kaur banned for 4 years for dope flunk**

- Asian champion shot putter Manpreet Kaur has been banned for four years by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) for flunking four dope tests in 2017. The period of suspension would begin from July 20, 2017, the date of her provisional suspension, according to an order of the anti-doping disciplinary panel (ADDP) of the NADA.
- Manpreet tested positive four times in 2017. The first was at the Asian Grand Prix at Jinhua, China on April 24, followed by Federation Cup in Patiala (June 1), Asian Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar (July 6) and the Inter-State Championships in Guntur (July 16). She won gold in all these meets.

### **Lewis Hamilton wins the 2019 Chinese Grand Prix**

- Lewis Hamilton won the Chinese Grand Prix to seize the overall lead from his Mercedes team mate Valtteri Bottas in Formula One's 1,000th world championship. The win was the 75th of Hamilton's career, second in a row after his lucky triumph in Bahrain and sixth in China.

### **Meena Kumari Maisnam clinches gold in Boxing World Cup**

- India finished with 5 medals in the Boxing World Cup which concluded at Cologne, Germany. Meena Kumari Maisnam continued her fine run to win gold in the 54 kg.
- Reigning youth world champion Sakshi (57 kg) and India Open champion Pwilao Basumatary (64 kg) settled for the silver. Pinki Rani (51 kg) and Parveen (60 kg) won bronze.

### **FC Goa pip Chennaiyin FC to win 2019 Super Cup**

- The 2019 Super Cup was the second edition of the Super Cup, the main club knockout football competition in India. The competition is sponsored by Hero MotoCorp and is officially known as the Hero Super Cup.
- FC Goa emerged as champions of the 2019 Super Cup as they pipped Chennaiyin FC 2-1 in a tense affair at the Kalinga Stadium, Odisha.

### **Tiger Woods bags fifth Masters at Augusta**

- American professional golfer **Tiger Woods** clinched his fifth Masters and an overall 15th major title, after winning **2019 Masters Tournament** held at Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia between April 11-14, 2019. His earlier Masters victories came in 1997, 2001, 2002 and 2005.

### **Harsheel Dani clinches Dutch International badminton title**

- India's s recovered from a game down to get the better of Denmark's Mads Christophersen to clinch the Dutch International badminton title in Wateringen, The Netherlands.
- The 22 year old won the Ghana international crown in 2018 second Karvy All India junior-ranking badminton tournament in 2012.

### **Garin becomes first Chilean ATP champion in a decade**

- Chilean professional tennis player Christian Garin (22) won his first ATP title in 10 years in the final of the US Men's Clay Court Championships in Houston. He beat Norway's Casper Ruud.

### **Ethiopian runners Gelete Burka and Abrha Milaw win 2019 Paris Marathon race**

- Ethiopian athletes Gelete Burka (women's race) and Abrha Milaw (men's race) won the 43rd edition of the Paris Marathon. Milaw won the men's race with a time of 2 hours :07 minutes and :50 seconds.
- Burka was the fastest woman with 2 hours :22 minutes and :48 seconds. Kenyan Paul Lonyangata, a two-time Paris Marathon winner, was the third-fastest man.

### **Bajrang regains top spot in world wrestling rankings**

- India's Bajrang Punia has regained the world number one spot in the men's 65-kilogram freestyle category rankings.
- The rankings were released by United World Wrestling. He won Gold in the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games as well as a silver in the World Championships last year, secured 58 points ahead of Akhmed Chakaev of Russia

### **Chandigarh to host Asian Billiards, Snooker C'ships**

- Chandigarh will host the 18th Asian Billiards, the 20th Under-21 Asian Snooker Championship and the 3rd Ladies Asian Snooker Championship from April 27 to May 3. Internationally renowned players from around 15 Asian countries will be participating in this championship.

- The participating countries include India, China, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Qatar, Syria, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Iran and others.

### **Services lift Santosh Trophy title over Punjab**

- Services won their sixth Santosh Trophy title with a 1-0 victory over home side Punjab, thanks to a second-half strike by Bikash Thapa at the Guru Nanak Stadium. This was the 73rd edition of the game.

### **Kenyan Asbel Kiprop handed four-year doping ban**

- The International Association of Athletics Federation Disciplinary Tribunal has banned former Olympic and World 1,500m champion Asbel Kiprop for four years.
- Kiprop, the 2008 Beijing Olympics 1500m champion, was tentatively suspended by IAAF's Athletes Integrity Unit (AIU) in May last year after having tested positive to blood boosting Erythropoietin (EPO) in an out-of-competition test in Iten in November 2017.

### **Fognini Beats Lajovic to Win Monte-Carlo Title**

- Fabio Fognini became the first Italian to win an ATP Masters 1000 title at the Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters, defeating Dusan Lajovic.
- Fognini earns 1000 ATP Rankings points and receives €958,055 in prize money. Lajovic gains 600 points and €484,950 for his run to the championship match. Fognini is the eighth player to win his first Masters 1000 title over the past 17 events at the elite level.

### **India's Bajrang Punia wins Gold in Asian Wrestling C'ship**

- India clinched one gold, one silver and bronze at the Asian Wrestling Championship in China's Xian.
- World number one Bajrang Punia logged 10 points in a row in the gold medal bout to reclaim his Asian Championship crown. He defeated Kazakhstan's Sayatbek Okassov.
- Another Indian Parveen Rana, lost to Bahman Mohammad Teymouri of Iran in the final 0-3 in 79kg category securing a silver medal. In 97 Kg category Satywart Kadian, picked a bronze medal defeating Haobin Gao of China by 8-2.

### **Badminton Asia Championships begins at Wuhan in China**

- The Badminton Asia Championships began at Wuhan in China
- The Indian contingent comprises PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal in Women's Singles, and Kidambi Srikanth and Sameer Verma in Men's Singles.
- Dinesh Khanna who had become the Men's Singles champion in 1965. Last year, Saina and HS Prannoy had won bronze medals

### **Advani wins inaugural Asian Snooker Tour title**

- India's ace cueist Pankaj Advani defeated Ehsan Heydari Nezhad of Iran 6-4 to claim the inaugural Asian Snooker Tour title. Advani had earlier won the second leg of the Tour in China.
- The Tour was held in three parts and played in Doha (Qatar), Jinan (China) and Bengaluru (India).

### **Valterri Bottas wins F1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix**

- Valtteri Bottas won the Azerbaijan Grand Prix to retake the Formula One world championship lead from teammate Lewis Hamilton after a stunning fourth successive one-two finish for Mercedes held at Baku.
- Sebastian Vettel in his Ferrari was a distant third.

### **Bhullar wins outstanding achievement as player award**

- Arjuna awardee and star Indian golfer Gaganjeet Bhullar won the outstanding achievement as a player award at the fourth edition of the annual India Golf Industry Association (GIA) awards at the Delhi Golf Club.
- The GIA awards were held along with the 8th India Golf & Turf Expo (IGTE), South Asia's largest golf trade show.
- Vijay Divecha and Nonita Lal Qureshi were awarded for their contribution to golf coaching.

### **ISSF World Cup: Abhishek Verma Wins Gold In 10m Air Pistol**

- India topped the standings at the International Shooting Sport Federation, ISSF World Cup on the final day in Beijing, bagging four medals comprising 3 Gold and a Silver.
- Indian shooter Abhishek Verma on Saturday won the gold medal in the 10m Air Pistol event at the ISSF World Cup being held in Beijing.

- Abhishek Verma's brilliant performance in the Shooting World Cup Final also secured a fifth Olympic quota for India. Anjum Moudgil and Apurvi Chandela (10m air rifle women), Saurabh Choudhary and Divyansh Panwar had earlier secured India four Olympic spots.
- Abhishek Verma topped the charts in the final.

### **Bajrang Punia to become first Indian wrestler to fight at New York's iconic Madison Square Garden**

- Bajrang Punia is set to become the first wrestler from India to fight at the iconic Madison Square Garden in New York. The 25-year-old, who won the gold medal in the 65-kg category at the ongoing Asian Wrestling Championships earlier this week, is the first Indian wrestler to be invited by the American governing body.
- Bajrang Punia will take part in the "Grapple at the Garden -- Beat the Streets" fight night, scheduled to be held on May 6. He is currently the World No.1 in the 65-kg weight category.

### **Dominic Thiem defeats Medvedev to win Barcelona Open**

- Dominic Thiem overpowered Daniil Medvedev to win the Barcelona Open title, boosting his credentials as a potential Roland Garros champion. He is also the first Austrian to take the Barcelona title since Thomas Muster in 1996.

### **Petra Kvitova Beats Anett Kontaveit to Win Porsche Grand Prix**

- Petra Kvitova beat No. 8 Anett Kontaveit 6-3, 7-6 (2) to win the Porsche Grand Prix at Stuttgart, Germany.
- The 29-year-old Czech clinched her second title of the year after winning Sydney in January.

### **Sharath Kamal wins sportsperson of year award**

- Ace table tennis player A Sharath Kamal was honoured with the Sportsperson of the Year Award at the annual awards and scholarships function organised by the Tamil Nadu Sports Journalists' Association (TNSJA) and the India Cements.
- Legendary Indian tennis player Vijay Amritraj, former India leg-spinner V V Kumar and Asian Games gold medallist (200m) R Gnanasekaran were felicitated with the India Cements-TNSJA Lifetime Achievement awards.
- Coach of the year : R B RAMESH (chess coach)
- India Cements -TNSJA Team of the year 2018-19 : Tamil Nadu Women's Football team.
- India Cements -TNSJA Young Achiever of the year 2018-19 : P M Tabitha( athlete)
- India Cements -TNSJA Young Achiever of the year 2018-19 : D.Gukesh (world's second youngest Grand Master).

### **23<sup>rd</sup> Asian Athletics Championship 2019**

- The 23rd edition of the Asian Athletics Championship concluded in Doha, Qatar.
- India ended at the fourth spot in the medals tally with 3 Gold, 7 Silver and 7 Bronze. Bahrain topped the table with 11 Gold, 7 Silver and 4 Bronze. China was second with 10 Gold, 13 Silver and 7 Bronze
- The four-day event saw participation from 63 nations across the world.

#### **Gold winners**

Tejinder Pal Singh Toor- Men's Shot put

Gomathi Marimuthu- Women's 800 m

P. U. Chitra- Women's 1500 m

### **2019 Singapore Open Complete Winners List**

The 2019 Singapore Open, was a badminton tournament which took place at Singapore Indoor Stadium in Singapore from 9 to 14 April 2019.

CATEGORIES	WINNERS	RUNNER UP
Men's Single	Kento Momota (Japan)	Anthony Sinisuka Ginting (Indonesia)
Women's Single	Tai Tzu-ying (Taiwan)	Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)
Men's Double	Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda (Japan)	Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan (Indonesia)
Women's Double	Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana	Kim Hye-jeong and Kong Hee-yong

	Nagahara (Japan)	(South Korea)
Mixed Double	Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Thailand)	Tan Kian Meng and Lai Pei Jing (Malaysia)

### Complete Winners list of Malaysia Open 2019

- The 2019 Malaysia Open, officially the CELCOM AXIATA Malaysia Open 2019, is a badminton tournament which takes place at Axiata Arena in Malaysia from 2 to 7 April 2019 and has a total purse of \$700,000.

Category	Winner	Runner
Men's Single	Lin Dan (China)	Chen Long (China)
Women's Single	Tai Tzu-Ying (Taiwan)	Akane Yamaguchi (Japan)
Men's doubles	Li Junhui and Liu Yuchen	Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda
Women's doubles	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan	Du Yue and Li Yinhue
Mixed doubles	Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong	Wang Yilu and Huang Dongping

### 2019 Badminton Asia Championships

- The 2019 Badminton Asia Championships was held at Wuhan Sports Center Gymnasium in China from 23 to 28 April 2019.

Category	Winners	Runners
Men's singles	Kento Momota (Japan)	Shi Yuqi (China)
Women's singles	Akane Yamaguchi (Japan)	He Bingjiao (China)
Men's doubles	Hiroyuki Endo and Yuta Watanabe (Japan)	Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo (Indonesia)
Women's doubles	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China)	Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara (Japan)
Mixed doubles	Wang Yilü and Huang Dongping (China)	He Jiting and Du Yue (China)

## Important Obituaries

Person	Field
J. Mahendran	Noted Tamil film director
Kartik Chandra Rath	Noted Odia theatre personality
Padma Shri Dr. Viharidas Gopaldas Patel	Noted economist
Arie Irawan	Malaysian golfer
Elriesa Theunissen-Fourie	Former South African Women cricket all-rounder
Sydney Brenner	Nobel Prize-winning biologist
Silamboli Su. Chellappan	Noted Tamil Scholar and orator
Nadja Regin	Serbian actress
K M Mani	Former Kerala Finance Minister
George Francis	Indian motorsport photographer
Navtej Hundal	Actor
Pradeep Choubey	Renowned Hindi poet
Dr SK Shivakumar	Space scientist and Padma-Shri awardee



Jerrie Cobb	America's first female astronaut candidate
Alan Garcia	Ex-president of Peru
Con de Lange	Scotland all-rounder
Rama Sengupta Paul	Mountaineer
Amar Pal	Bengali folk singer
S. Muthiah	Writer, journalist and teacher
Terry Rawling	British film and sound editor
Negasso Gidada	Former Ethiopian president
Pungam Kannan	'Pele of Asia' Former Indian footballer
Chaudhary Vidyasagar	Former Himachal Pradesh minister