

## Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – May 2019

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## Important Days

Date	Important days	Theme
May 1	International Labour Day	Sustainable Pension for all: The Role of Social Partners
May 2	World Tuna Day	-
May 3	World Press Freedom Day	Media for Democracy: Journalism and Elections in Times of Disinformation
May 4	International Firefighters' Day	-
May 4	Coal Miners Day	-
May 5 (first Sunday of May of every year)	World Laughter Day	-
May 5	International Midwives Day	Midwives: Defenders of Women's Rights
May 6	International No Diet Day	-
May 7	World Athletic Day	-
May 6 - 12	UN Global Road Safety Week	"Leadership for road safety"
May 7 (first Tuesday of May)	The World Asthma Day	STOP for Asthma
May 7	59th Raising Day of Border Roads Organization	-
May 8	World Red Cross Day	"#love" or simply "love"
May 8	World Thalassaemia Day	'Universal access to quality thalassaemia healthcare services: Building bridges with and for patients.'
May 11	National Technology Day	Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future
May 11 (Second Saturday of May)	World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) (twice in a year) (Second Saturday of October)	Protect Birds: Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution
May 12	International Nurses Day	Nurses: A voice to lead - Health for All
May 12 (second Sunday in the month of May)	International Mother's Day	#BalanceforBetter
May 15	International Family Day	"Families and Climate Action: Focus on SDG13"
May 16	The International Day of Living Together	-

	in Peace	
May 17	World Telecommunication and Information Society Day	Bridging the standardization gap
May 17	World Hypertension Day	Know Your Numbers
May 17 (third Friday in May)	Endangered Species Day	-
May 18	Worlds AIDS Vaccine Day or HIV Vaccine Awareness Day	-
May 18	International Museum Day	Museums as Cultural Hubs: The future of tradition
May 20	World Bee Day	-
May 20	World Metrology Day	The International System of Units – Fundamentally better
May 21	National Anti-Terrorism Day	-
May 21	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	-
May 22	International Day for Biological Diversity	Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health
May 23	The World Turtle Day	Adopt, Don't Shop
May 24	International Commonwealth Day	A Connected Commonwealth
May 29	International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers	Protecting Civilians, Protecting Peace.
May 30	Goa statehood day	-
May 31	World No Tobacco Day	"tobacco and lung health"

## Important Banking News

### RBI

#### RBI imposes penalty on five PPI issuers

- The Reserve Bank of India has imposed penalties on five prepaid payment instrument (PPI) issuers, including Vodafone m-pesa and PhonePe, for violation of regulatory norms
- Also, penalties have been imposed on Western Union Financial Services Inc and MoneyGram Payment Systems Inc, both US firms, for non-compliance of guidelines
- A penalty of Rs. 3.05 crore has been imposed on Vodafone m-pesa and Rs. 1 crore each on Mobile Payments, PhonePe and G.I. Technology Private Ltd.
- Also, a penalty of Rs. 5 lakh has been imposed on Y-Cash Software Solutions.
- In a separate statement, the central bank said it had imposed a penalty of Rs. 29.67 lakh on Western Union Financial Services Inc., USA., and Rs. 10.12 lakh on MoneyGram Payment Systems Inc, USA, for non-compliance of regulatory guidelines.
- RBI also imposed a penalty of Rs. 11.25 lakh on private sector lender Yes Bank for violation of norms pertaining to issuance and operations of PPIs
- According to the section 30 of the Payment and Settlement System Act, 2007, the penalty has to be paid within 30 days of the order being passed

#### RBI directs banks to enhance housing loan limits for eligibility under priority sector lending

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the eligibility cap on home loans extended by regional rural banks and small finance banks to Rs. 35 lakh in metropolitan areas and Rs. 25 lakh in other centres, provided the overall cost of the dwelling unit in the metropolitan centres and other centres does not exceed Rs. 45 lakh and Rs. 30 lakh.

- All such loans will be now classified by these banks as priority sector loans.
- The existing family income limit of Rs. 2 lakh per annum to be eligible for loans for housing projects exclusively for construction of houses for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Groups (LIG), is revised to Rs. 3 lakh per annum for EWS and Rs. 6 lakh per annum for LIG, in alignment with the income criteria specified under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

### **RBI slaps Rs. 1-cr fine on Nainital Bank**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹1 crore on Nainital Bank for its failure to fully automate the non-performing asset (NPA) identification process, despite specific directions issued in this regard.
- This action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance, and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.

### **RBI releases 'Vision 2021' for payment systems for 'cash-lite' society**

- Aiming at a 'cash-lite' society, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a vision document for ensuring a safe, secure, convenient, quick and affordable e-payment system as it expects the number of digital transactions to increase more than four times to 8,707 crore in December 2021.
- The 'Payment and Settlement Systems in India: Vision 2019 - 2021', with its core theme of 'Empowering Exceptional (E)payment Experience', envisages to achieve "a highly digital and cash-lite society" through the goal posts of competition, cost effectiveness, convenience and confidence (4Cs).
- The previous vision document covered the period 2016 to 2018.
- The latest vision document said payment systems like UPI/IMPS are likely to register average annualised growth of over 100% and NEFT at 40% over the vision period (period up to December 2021).
- The number of digital transactions is expected to increase more than four times from 2,069 crore in December 2018 to 8,707 crore in December 2021.

### **RBI directs NBFCs with asset size of Rs 5,000 crore must have chief risk officers**

- A non-banking finance companies (NBFC) with an asset size of at least Rs. 5000 crore must appoint a chief risk officer (CRO). The CRO is required to function independently so as to ensure highest standards of risk management.
- The CRO shall be a senior official in the hierarchy of an NBFC and shall possess adequate professional qualification and experience in the area of risk management.

### **RBI allows modern currency chests to hike service charges**

- The Reserve Bank of India will allow large modern currency chests to increase the service charges on cash deposited by non-chest bank branches from the existing rate of Rs. 5 per packet of 100 pieces to a higher rate subject to a maximum of Rs. 8 per packet.
- For this, only a currency chest (CC) that fulfils the minimum standards will be eligible to be classified as a large modern CC. The increased rates can be charged only after such classification by the issue office concerned.

### **RBI tweaks norms on VRR investment by FPIs**

- The Reserve Bank of India fixed the investment limit at Rs. 54,606.55 crore for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) under the voluntary retention route (VRR), which allows to park funds in both government securities as well as corporate debt.
- VRR for investments by FPIs was introduced on March 1, 2019. Limits for investment in debt by FPIs were offered for allotment 'on tap' during the March 11-April 30 period. Earlier there was an aggregate investment limit of Rs. 40,000 crores for VRR-Govt and Rs. 35,000 crores for VRR-Corp.
- The minimum retention period shall be three years. During this period, FPIs shall maintain a minimum of 75% of the allocated amount in India. (No Change). Investment limits shall be available 'on tap' and allotted on 'first come, first served' basis. The 'tap' shall be kept open till the limit is fully allotted or till December 31, 2019, whichever is earlier.
- FPIs may apply for investment limits online to Clearing Corporation of India Ltd. (CCIL) through their respective custodians.

### **RBI releases draft norms on liquidity risk management for NBFCs**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released draft circular for all non-deposit-taking non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) with an asset size of Rs. 5,000 crore and above, and all deposit-taking NBFCs irrespective of their asset size, have to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of a Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR).
- In a draft on liquidity risk management framework for NBFCs and core investment companies, RBI said these measures will promote resilience of NBFCs to potential liquidity disruptions by ensuring they have sufficient High-Quality Liquid Asset (HQLA) to survive any acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days. The banking regulator proposed that it will implement LCR through a glide path from April 1, 2020, to April 1, 2024.

- The LCR requirement shall be binding on NBFCs from April 1, 2020, with the minimum High-Quality Liquid Assets (HQLA) to be held being 60 percent of the LCR, progressively increasing in equal steps reaching up to the required level of 100 percent by April 1, 2024

### **RBI to purchase govt securities under OMO**

- RBI has decided to conduct purchase of Government securities under Open Market Operation (OMO) for Rs. 150 billion (Rs. 15,000 crore) on June 13, 2019
- In the current financial year so far, it conducted OMO purchase of five government securities on two occasions — on May 2 and May 16 — infusing Rs. 12,500 crore in each auction. The total amount of government securities offered by market participants was Rs. 27,426 crore (face value) on May 2, and was Rs. 29,479 crore on May 16.
- Total durable liquidity injected by the RBI through OMOs aggregated Rs. 2,98,500 crore for 2018-19

### **RBI extends timings for RTGS from 4:30 pm to 6 pm**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended timings for customer transactions in the Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system to 6 pm from 4:30 pm. The new time window for RTGS will come into effect from June 1.
- The RTGS is an online fund transfer system, supported by the RBI, which enables transmission on a real-time basis. The minimum amount for the transaction to be eligible as an RTGS transfer is Rs 2 lakh.
- As per RBI data, Rs 112 lakh crore worth of transactions were processed using RTGS in April 2019.
- The customer is charged a 'time-varying charge' on each outward transaction in addition to the flat processing charge. The fee for transfers between 8 am to 11 am is nil, from 11 am to 1 pm is Rs 2, and from 1 pm to 6 pm is Rs 5. The fee for transfers made after the initial cut off of 6 pm will be Rs 10.
- The initial cut off for customer transactions will be 6 pm and the final cut off for inter-bank transactions will be 7:45 pm. The IDL reversal will take place between 7:45 pm and 8 pm.

### **RBI sets up panel to develop secondary market for corporate loans**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a six-member committee on the Development of Secondary Market for Corporate Loans to come up with recommendations to increase the efficiencies of the debt market and aid in the resolution of stressed assets
- The six-member body, headed by Canara Bank Chairman T N Manoharan, has been set up to review the existing state of the market for loan sale/transfer in India as well as the international experience in loan trading

### **RBI sets up committee for development of housing finance securitisation market**

- The Reserve Bank of India has constituted a six-member committee on Development of Housing Finance Securitisation Market. The committee, headed by Harsh Vardhan, Senior Advisor, Bain & Co, will review the regulations relating to mortgage-backed securitisation (MBS) currently in place, and make specific recommendations on suitably aligning the same with international norms
- The committee will review the existing state of mortgage securitisation in India and various issues constraining market development, and to develop the market further. The committee will submit its report by the end of August 2019

## **SBI**

### **SBI new rules on savings account**

- Earlier, the savings bank account of SBI carried an interest rate of 3.50 per cent for deposits up to Rs 1 crore and 4 per cent for deposits above Rs 1 crore. Savings account balance below Rs 1 lakh will continue to carry the fixed rate of interest of 3.5 per cent.
- Or in other words, interest rates on large SBI savings account deposits and interest rate on some short-term loans will automatically change as and when RBI changes its repo rate. SBI savings account with a balance of up to Rs 1 lakh will continue to earn 3.50 per cent interest as per the current fixed rates for under RBI norms
- SBI's domestic savings bank deposits stood at more than Rs. 10.64 lakh crore at end-December 2018.

## **ADB**

### **India biggest recipient of funds from ADB last year**

- India was the biggest recipient of funds from Asian Development Bank last year and would continue to get sovereign loans in excess of USD 3 billion in 2019. ADB will continue to make investment in rural connectivity, urban development and skill development, among others.

- India received nearly 25 per cent of the total loans sanctioned last year. New commitments included USD 21.6 billion in loans, grants and investments from ADB's own resources, exceeding the target of USD 19.71 billion and up 10 per cent from 2017.

#### **ADB launches \$5 billion healthy oceans action plan**

- The Asian Development Bank has launched a 5 billion dollar action plan aimed at protecting the Pacific Ocean and promoting economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region. The initiative was launched at the 52nd Annual Meeting of ADB's Board of Governors in Fiji. The \$5 billion action plan will run between 2019 – 2024.
- The ADB announced the launch of the Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies.
- The organization wants to help reduce land-based sources of marine pollution, including waste water and plastic waste. It also wants to protect marine ecosystems and create sustainable business opportunities in tourism and the fisheries industry.

#### **Asian Development Bank to provide USD 750 million loan to India for railway track electrification project**

- Multilateral funding agency Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement to provide USD 750 million equivalent in Indian rupee long-term financing to electrify railway tracks in India.
- It is the largest single non-sovereign loan ever committed by ADB to Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) to fund the railways track electrification project.
- IRFC will use the proceeds from the loan to install electric traction equipment along about 3,378 kilometres of existing railway lines to enable migration of passenger and freight traffic from diesel to electric traction.

### **World Bank**

#### **World Bank and CommBank Launch the First Blockchain-Based Bond**

- World Bank had partnered with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CommBank) to enable blockchain-based secondary market bond recording.
- The secondary trading project was performed on the Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument (bond-i), a platform based on the Ethereum blockchain.
- It was reportedly developed by CommBank's Blockchain Centre of Excellence at the CommBank's Innovation Lab in Sydney as part of the global banking institutions mission to explore and build on the potential of distributed ledgers.
- Just last year, the World Bank issued the bond-i, claiming that it was created, allocated, and managed with the use of blockchain technology.

### **OTHER BANKING NEWS**

#### **Chola Investment gets \$222 mn from International Finance Corporation**

- Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co. Ltd. (CIFCL), a Murugappa Group company, has received an investment of \$222 million from a foreign investor anchored by the IFC
- This is the company's first U.S. dollar-syndicated deal since January 2019, when RBI permitted NBFCs to tap into offshore credit market. CIFCL would use the funds to help small road transport operators (SRTOs) and micro, small and medium (MSMEs) borrowers, especially in the rural and semi-urban areas.
- The present round of funding was anchored by IFC, a member of the World Bank Group. Of the total amount, IFC invested \$92 million and the rest syndicated from First Abu Dhabi Bank (\$50 million), MUFG Bank Ltd. (\$50 million), National Bank of Ras Al-Khaimah PJSC (\$20 million), and CTBC Bank Co., Ltd. (\$10 million)

#### **KVB to form venture with Centrum Wealth**

- Karur Vysya Bank Ltd. has entered into a pact with Centrum Wealth Management Ltd. (Centrum) to form a private limited joint venture (JV) to offer wealth management services to its clients. The private sector bank will hold 51% of the share capital of the JV, Centrum 45% and the balance by the JV's staff
- The board would comprise five directors of whom three would be from the bank. KVB does not hold any shares in Centrum

#### **Indian Overseas Bank launches 'Bank on W heels' facility**

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has launched 'Bank on Wheels' facility in 14 of its lead districts in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, besides Vijayawada.
- The bank said the mobile van facility will enable the public, especially senior citizens, conveniently get door-step banking facility available at identified locations of the lead districts. A dedicated banking correspondent will



accompany the vehicle with a micro ATM inside the van to take care of services such as account opening, enrollment of customers in Social Security Scheme, passbook printing, and other in Tamil Nadu.

### **SEBI, IRDAI set up regulatory sandbox for fintech innovations**

- After the Reserve Bank of India released a draft framework for setting up a regulatory sandbox (RS) for fintech players in the counter, the market and insurance regulators have also launched similar initiatives.
- The market regulator SEBI and insurance regulator IRDAI have announced initiatives to encourage tech start-ups, especially fintech, by making data and systems available to them through the RS.
- RS is an infrastructure that helps fintech players live test their products or solutions, before getting the necessary regulatory approvals for a mass launch. It saves start-ups time and cost. SEBI is proposing an 'Innovation Sandbox', which would be a testing environment, where fintech firms and entities not regulated by SEBI.
- IRDAI recommended setting up a regulatory sandbox to test new digital and tech-based innovations, before launching them in the market.

### **Karnataka Bank launches savings bank product for salaried class**

- Private sector lender Karnataka Bank launched a new savings bank product called "KBL SB Salary" for salaried class with three variants of Executive, Prime and Classic.
- All these 3 variants of our KBL SB Salary Scheme are available for the Salaried People with a host of Digitally Powered features and without any Minimum Balance Criteria. No annual charge on Debit Cards, Unlimited free access to Karnataka Bank ATMs, Free Cash Deposit facility across all branches, Free Fund Transfer within the Bank, Free NEFT & RTGS through Internet and Mobile Banking, Free Outstation Cheque Collection, No Annual Fee on Demat & Trading Accounts are some of the major features of these schemes.
- The bank will provide, free of cost, an insurance coverage of up to Rs. 50,000 against chain snatching, theft and burglary for women employees falling in the top category of the salary scheme

### **Bank credit to infra sector grows 18.5% in FY19**

- As per RBI data, Bank credit to infrastructure sector grew by 18.5 per cent to Rs. 10.55 lakh crore as of 2018-19, the highest since 2012-13 fiscal. Outstanding bank credit to the sector was Rs. 8.91 lakh crore as at March 2018.
- Within infrastructure, bank loans to power sector had increased by 9.5 per cent to Rs. 5.69 lakh crore compared to Rs. 5.19 lakh crore in FY18. Roads sector witnessed a credit growth of 12.2 per cent to Rs. 1.86 lakh crore as of end-March 2019. Credit to telecommunications and other infrastructure (excluding roads, power and telecom) rose by 36.7 per cent and 53.5 per cent, respectively over FY18.

### **SEBI gives nod to mutual funds to invest in exchange traded commodity derivatives with investment limits**

- Markets regulator SEBI allowed the much-awaited mutual fund's entry into commodity derivative market trading.
- However, it has not allowed investment in physical goods. Experts feel that asset class will also enter as they will have new avenue for investment, adding that this is positive news for investors.
- Mutual funds are now allowed to invest in exchange traded commodity derivatives, except those on 'Sensitive commodities'. Mutual fund schemes participating in ETCDs may hold the underlying goods in case of physical settlement of contracts, in that case mutual funds shall dispose of such goods from the books of the scheme, at the earliest, not exceeding 30 days from the date of holding of the physical goods

### **Shadow banking assets fairly small by global standards: Fitch**

- Shadow banking assets as a percentage of total financial assets within the country were at 14.3 per cent, in line with the global percentage of 13.7 per cent, a Fitch reports.
- The reports pointed out that India's shadow banking assets were fairly small by international standards, ranking 17th globally at \$571.7 billion as of YE17, according to the Financial Stability Board's (FSB).

### **HDFC ERGO launches cover for vector borne diseases**

- HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, announced the launch of 'Mosquito Disease Protection Policy'. This new policy will cover an individual against common mosquito-borne diseases like Dengue Fever, Malaria, Chikungunya, Japanese Encephalitis, Kala-azar, Lymphatic Filariasis and Zika Virus.
- This cover is available for individuals between the age group of 91 days to 65 years. This policy also provides international cover to individuals and covers all the vector-borne diseases listed in the policy document.

### **NABARD announces Rs. 700-crore venture capital fund for agri, rural start-ups**

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced a Rs 700-crore venture capital fund for equity investments in agriculture and rural-focused startups. NABARD has been contributing to other funds till now and this is the first time that the rural development bank has launched a fund of its own.
- The fund has been launched by Nabventures, a subsidiary of NABARD, and has a proposed corpus of Rs 500 crore with an option to retain over-subscriptions of Rs 200 crore, called as the greenshoe option.
- NABARD has given an anchor commitment for the fund, which will be investing across startups engaged in agriculture, food and rural development space

### **Sebi allows FPI investment in municipal bonds**

- SEBI allowed foreign portfolio investors can invest in municipal bonds.
- Reserve Bank of India permitted FPIs to invest in municipal bonds as a measure to broaden access of non resident investors to debt instruments in the country. As per the RBI, foreign investment in municipal bonds should be within the limits set for FPI investment in State Development Loans (SDLs).

### **Max Life Insurance to Mark 6th of Every Month as Protection Day**

- Max Life Insurance, one of industry's foremost life insurance companies, announced that it will dedicate 6th day of every calendar month as 'Protection Day' towards driving awareness around the concept of financial protection.
- The decision came in line with the Company's launch of Max Life India Protection Quotient survey conducted in collaboration with Kantar IMRB. It denoted that the extent to which the Indians feel protected from financial uncertainties is extremely low, and that level was as 35. The Company will also start an initiative called the "Super Customer Week", in which the customers will be taught about the different facets of financial protection.

### **Bank credit grows 13.2% in FY19**

- Bank credit grew by 13.2% in financial year 2018-19 as compared to 10.3% in the previous financial year, mainly aided by loans to services and retail sector. Deposit growth also gained momentum, growing by 10% as compared to 6.7% a year ago.
- Credit growth in services sector till the middle of February was 23.7% and in retail sector it was 16.7%. Credit growth in the industry sector was 5.6%.

### **Talocity to enable AI-backed hiring in Yes Bank**

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based HR solutions provider Talocity would provide Yes Bank its AI-supported "touchless" technology for the bank's hiring process and human resource (HR) operations.
- In the process of recruitment, candidates are interviewed by an AI bot on a one-way video platform. Talocity's machine learning and AI capabilities will create personality report of each job applicant.
- This creates a unique evaluation platform which is effective without any human involvement and helpful in large volume hiring.

### **SIDBI 's pilot scheme for fintech NBFCs to boost digital lending**

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched a Scheme for Assistance to New Age Fin-Tech NBFCs registered as Investment and Credit Company (ICC) with the RBI. It has been launched on pilot basis.
- SIDBI will extend financial assistance of up to Rs. 10 crore to new-age fintech non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) engaged in financing small businesses and other income-generating activities
- Fintech NBFCs are digital loan companies. They leverage information technology to provide fast and convenient access to funding.
- Minimum Net Owned Fund: Rs. 20 Crore, Minimum Asset Size: Rs. 50 Crore, Maximum Exposure/Maximum Assistance: Rs 10 Crore

### **HDFC Capital Advisors launches HeART initiative**

- HDFC Capital Advisors Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of HDFC, has announced the launch of its new initiative termed 'HeART' that seek to promote technologies to make affordable housing more affordable.
- The HDFC Affordable Real Estate and Technology (HeART) programme seeks to mentor, partner and invest in real estate technology companies that drive innovation and efficiencies within the affordable housing ecosystem. HeART will support businesses which are innovating and building technology solutions to enhance the supply of affordable housing

### **Tripura Gramin Bank among top banking performers in country**

- Posting net profit for seven consecutive years, the Tripura Gramin Bank (TGB) is among India's top three out of 46 regional rural banks (RRBs) in terms of profit, business and growth. TGB Chairman is Mahendra Mohan Goswami.
- After some of them merger with commercial banks, currently India has 46 RRBs against the earlier 56.



- The Central government has a 50 percent stake in TGB, the United Bank of India (UBI) has 35 per cent, while the 15 per cent is held by the Tripura government.
- Like other nationalised banks, the TGB has been providing all modern facilities to the customers, including computerised, online financial transactions and mobile banking, besides ATM (Automated Teller Machine) services.

#### **Corporation Bank launches 'Corp SME Suvidha' for MSMEs**

- Corporation Bank has launched 'Corp SME Suvidha', a product for GST-registered MSMEs.
- The product has been designed as part of the bank's efforts to provide best products to MSME sector.
- PV Bharathi, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the bank, launched the product in Mangaluru.

#### **Paytm Payments Bank turns profitable in second year of operation**

- Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPB) has posted profit to the tune of Rs. 19 crore within second year of its operation in fiscal 2019. The bank had reported loss of Rs. 20.7 crore for the fiscal ended March, 2018. Satish Kumar Gupta, MD and CEO of Paytm Payments Bank, claimed that PPB was the first payments bank in the country to announce profit, that too within two years of its operations.
- Earlier, RBI data on payment banks revealed that Paytm Payments Bank and Airtel Payments Bank together command over 88% of the deposits in payment banks in India in 2018. PPB now aims to introduce more products and features on its platform to increase the monthly processing of savings account payments from Rs 24,000 crore to Rs. 40,000 crore in FY'20.
- Paytm Founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma holds 51 per cent share in Paytm Payments Bank, while the rest is held by One97 Communications.

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

#### **GST collections touch all-time high of over Rs. 1.13 lakh crore in April**

- The Goods and Services Tax, GST collection scaled all-time high of over 1.13 lakh crore rupees in April, up from 1.06 lakh crore rupees in the previous month.
- Out of the total gross GST revenue collected in April, Central GST is 21 thousand 163 crore rupees, State GST is 28 thousand 801 crore rupees, Integrated GST is 54 thousand 733 crore and cess is 9 thousand 168 crore rupees.
- Revenue in April 2019 was 10.05 per cent higher than April 2018 (Rs. 1,03,459 crore). The total number of GSTR 3B Returns filed for March up to April 30 is 72.13 lakh. The revenue in April 2019 is 16.05 per cent higher than the monthly average GST revenue reported in financial year 2018-19 (Rs. 98,114 crore).
- The total revenue earned by the central government and state governments after regular and provisional settlement in April 2019 is 47 thousand 533 crore rupees for CGST and 50 thousand 776 crore rupees for SGST.
- For FY20, GST collection has been budgeted at Rs. 13.71 lakh crore, which means the average monthly collection should be slightly over Rs. 1.14 lakh crore.

#### **Netherlands Becomes the Third Largest Foreign Direct Investor in India**

- The Netherlands has emerged as the third largest foreign direct investor in India during 2017-18, with investments pegged at about \$2.67 billion across sectors.
- The Netherlands was also the second largest destination for foreign investment by Indian companies, after Singapore, with investments worth \$12.8 billion in 2017.

### **Ratings**

#### **India Ratings cuts India GDP growth forecast for FY20 to 7.3%**

- India Ratings and Research marginally lowered country's GDP growth projection for 2019-20 fiscal to 7.3 per cent mainly due to below normal monsoon prediction and loss of momentum in industrial output.
- The Fitch group company had earlier projected India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 7.5 per cent.

#### **Asia-Pacific to grow 5.7% this year**

- According to the bank's Asian Development Outlook 2019 report released in April, developing Asia — which comprises 45 nations ranging from China to Tuvalu — is projected to grow by 5.7 percent this year
- However, the growth outlook for developing Asia is expected to moderate to 5.6 percent in 2020, according to the report
- The bank's lending grew to a record \$21.6 billion in 2018, 10% higher compared to 2017. Mr. Nakao elaborated on the Strategy 2030 plan of ADB which will focus on six key areas — operational and action plans for the private sector,

addressing remaining poverty and inequality, accelerating progress in gender equality, continuing to foster regional cooperation and integration, expanding private sector operations and using concessional resources effectively.

- Addressing the opening session of the Board of Governors at ADB's 52nd Annual Meeting in Nadi, Fiji, Mr. Nakao stated that consumer and investor behaviour could be undermined by trade tensions between countries

### **India's economy to grow 7.5% by 2020- OECD**

- India's economic growth will regain strength and approach 7.5% by 2020 buoyed by rural consumption and subdued inflation, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Gross domestic product (GDP) growth in India is projected to strengthen to close to 7.25% in FY19 and close to 7.5% in FY20. India's healthy growth forecast came amidst the OECD cutting the projection for global GDP growth from 3.5% in 2018 to a sub-par rate of 3.2% this year, before edging up to 3.4% in 2020.

### **India projected to grow at 7.1% in FY'20: UN report**

- According to United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2019 report, India's economy is projected to grow at 7.1 per cent in the fiscal year 2020 on the back of strong domestic consumption and investment.
- The Indian economy expanded by 7.2 per cent in 2018. GDP growth is a downward revision from the 7.4 per cent estimated in January this year. Strong domestic consumption and investment will continue to support growth, which is projected at 7.0 per cent in 2019 and 7.1 per cent in 2020.

### **Ind-Ra lowers FY 19 GDP estimate to 6.9 pc with Q4 forecast at 6.3 pc**

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said that it expects India's GDP growth rate during 2018-19 to be 6.9 per cent as against the advance estimate of 7 per cent. It said the fourth quarter (January to March) GDP growth to decelerate to 6.3 per cent from 6.6 per cent in the third quarter (October to December 2018).
- There will be another fourth-quarter GDP slowdown starting from the fourth quarter of 2017-18. Clearly, FY19 will be the second consecutive year of an economic slowdown in India. It said that 2018-19 will be the second consecutive year of an economic slowdown in India. The GDP growth was 7.2 per cent during 2017-18.

### **FICCI survey forecasts India's GDP growth at 7.1% for FY20**

- The country's median GDP is forecast at 7.1 per cent for FY20 and 7.2 per cent for FY 21. The industry body FICCI's economic outlook survey stated that the minimum and maximum growth estimate stood at 6.8 per cent and 7.3 per cent, for 2019-20.
- The survey was conducted in May 2019 among economists belonging to the industry, banking and financial services sectors. Inflation is expected to remain moderate and the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation rate is projected at 3.1 per cent in 2019-20, while, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation has a median forecast of 4 per cent for 2019-20.

## **Important Business News**

### **Facebook planning to launch its own cryptocurrency, GlobalCoin, by 2020**

- Facebook plans to launch its cryptocurrency by the first quarter of next year
- The currency, which is being referred to internally as "GlobalCoin," will reportedly be available in around a dozen countries at launch, where it's expected to offer people affordable and secure payments without the need for a bank account.

### **Uber Just Launched a Submarine Service in the Great Barrier Reef**

- Uber has partnered with Australian tourist group Tourism Queensland to offer the world's first rideshare submarine, scUber. scUber will offer riders the opportunity to explore the Great Barrier Reef in the shared vehicle. Each scUber ride is priced at USD 3,000 for two passengers.

### **Infosys completes acquisition of 75% stake in ABN AMRO Bank subsidiary Stater**

- IT services major Infosys has completed the acquisition of 75 per cent shareholding in ABN AMRO Bank's wholly-owned Stater NV.
- In March, the country's second largest IT services Infosys had stated that it will acquire 75 per cent stake in Stater for about Rs. 989 crore. ABN AMRO continues to hold the remaining 25 per cent.
- Founded in 1997, Stater is the largest mortgage service provider of the Benelux. It services 1.7 million mortgage and insurance loans for approximately 50 clients in The Netherlands and Belgium

### **HDFC Group overtakes Tata Group as India's largest**

- The HDFC group has overtaken the 151-year-old Tata group to emerge as India's most valuable by way of market capitalization (m-cap).

- The combined market value of the five listed companies of the HDFC group - HDFC, HDFC Bank, HDFC Life, HDFC Asset Management and Gruh Finance - stood at Rs. 11.66 lakh crore as on May 20, 2019 while the combined m-cap of 29 Tata group companies stood at Rs. 11.64 lakh crore, about Rs 2,000 crore less than that of the HDFC group.

#### **Doordarshan launches souvenir store on Amazon India**

- Public service broadcaster Doordarshan has launched a souvenir store on online shopping website Amazon India.
- The company, one of PrasarBharti's divisions, is also trying to make younger viewers familiar with their famous shows, such as Hum Log, Buniyaad, Ye Jo HaiZindagi, Malgudi Days, Ramayana and Mahabharat.
- DD Souvenir gallery was started on 21 June, 2018 and in view of its success and demand, India's public service broadcaster Doordarshan has started an online store through on Amazon India platform, for selling branded articles like cup, T-shirt and Water bottles. Doordarshan is India's first broadcaster which has started Souvenir store. Online souvenir store will not only strengthen the relation with viewers but also help in establishing Doordarshan brand value.

#### **Standard Life sells 1.78% in HDFC Life Insurance**

- Standard Life has successfully divested 1.78 per cent of its stake in HDFC Life Insurance to raise Rs. 1,400 crore.
- The divestment was done through offer for sale (OFS) route and the issue managed to sail through successfully with both qualified institutional investors (QIBs) and retail investor quotas seeing full subscriptions.
- The Standard Life (Mauritius Holdings) proposed to sell up to 3,60,00,000 equity shares (1.78% stake) at a floor price of Rs 390 per equity share and DSP Merrill Lynch will be the broker for the sale process on behalf of Standard Life (Mauritius Holdings).

#### **SEBI fines NSE Rs. 1,000 crore in co-location case**

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has barred the National Stock Exchange (NSE), which has the largest market share in equity segment and almost a monopoly in equity derivatives, from accessing the securities market for six months.
- The capital markets regulator has further ordered the exchange to disgorge around Rs. 1,000 crore that is, Rs. 624.89 crore plus 12% interest from April 1, 2014 for its alleged failure to exercise proper due diligence while offering co-location facility thereby affecting market fairness and integrity.

#### **Bharti AXA General to sell two-wheeler policies via WhatsApp**

- Bharti AXA General Insurance will sell policies through social media messaging platform WhatsApp and has tied up with web aggregator Wishfin Insurance for speedy delivery of two-wheeler cover.
- Bharti AXA General Insurance, a joint venture between Bharti Enterprises and global insurance firm AXA, will sell the policies on the website of Wishfin's insurance arm Wishpolicy.
- Wishfin has launched 'Buy Two-Wheeler Insurance on WhatsApp' through web aggregator Wishfin Insurance, which is available on (Wishpolicy's) site, provided by Bharti AXA General Insurance

#### **Paytm launches recurring payments service for merchants**

- Paytm has launched recurring payment (auto pay) service for merchants that are working on a digital subscription model. The move will allow the subscription-based businesses to collect payments from their subscribers effortlessly.
- The auto pay service is targeted at people who use Paytm for bill payments, content subscription, grocery purchases, membership fees, housing society payments etc. The service is being offered as an additional mode of payment other than credit/debit cards, internet banking and other Paytm proprietary instruments.

#### **LIC HFL launches Udyam centre**

- LIC Housing Finance (LIC HFL) has launched 'Udyam', a skilling centre in Bengaluru.
- It was launched in association with Lok Bharti Education Society, the implementing partner.
- Centres of Excellence (CoE) have been launched in Delhi and Bengaluru, and later on will expand to other cities

#### **PNB Housing Finance to mop up USD 1 bn from foreign markets**

- PNB Housing Finance stated that it will raise up to USD 1 billion (around Rs 6,954 crore) from foreign markets, and additional Rs 10,000 crore by issuing bonds.
- The fund raising move comes days after CARE Ratings placed various facilities of the housing finance company under "credit watch"
- The housing arm of the state-run Punjab National Bank (PNB) stated that it will consider raising up to \$1 billion through external commercial borrowings (ECB) and issuing non-convertible debentures worth up to Rs. 10,000 crore

### **BSNL launches 'Bharat Fibre' broadband service in Kashmir Valley**

- State-owned telecom firm BSNL has become the first operator to start optical fibre-based high-speed broadband service in Pulwama with the launch of 'Bharat Fibre'.
- This is the first such FTTH (fibre-to-the-home) service deployment in the (Kashmir) Valley under this unique revenue share model. Since the Bharat Fibre services are provided on the optical fibre right up to the customer premises, reliable and high-speed internet services are delivered to the customers.

### **Huawei overtakes Apple to become second biggest Smartphone maker**

- Huawei Technologies Co overtook Apple Inc to claim the No. 2 spot in smartphones in the first quarter, moving a step closer to its avowed ambition of displacing Samsung at the top of the market
- Huawei's been steadily gaining on Apple and Samsung Electronics Co. with an increasingly high-end line-up of devices, particularly in its home market of China. Huawei grew shipments 50% from a year earlier

### **Mastercard to invest \$1 billion in India over five years**

- Mastercard announced a \$1 billion investment in India over the next five years aimed at converting India into a vital node in the company's infrastructure, and also to continue business expansion.
- About \$350 million of the total amount would be invested in setting up a local payments processing center as per the Reserve Bank of India's mandate to store all payments data locally.

### **NHB gives nod to DHFL to divest stake in Aadhar Housing Finance**

- Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL), has received approval from the National Housing Bank to sell its entire stake of 9.15% in Aadhar Housing Finance to Blackstone's arm.

### **India to soon get its first Apple retail store in Mumbai**

- India is set to get its first Apple Inc retail store in Mumbai. The company has finalised a list of locations for its retail store. The move comes as the tech giant is trying to establish a strong presence in the world's fastest-growing smartphone market. However, the final place is not finalized yet.

### **Reliance to acquire British toy-maker Hamleys for Rs. 620 crore**

- The Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries announced it will acquire iconic British toy maker Hamleys, a 259-year-old toy-maker, for around Rs. 620 crore (nearly 68 million pounds) in an all-cash deal
- It is currently owned by Chinese fashion conglomerate C Banner International, which had acquired it for 100 million pounds in 2015. Hamleys started with a single-store shop, Noah's Ark, in 1760. It now has 167 stores across 18 countries. Besides the UK, it has stores in China, Germany, Russia, India, South Africa and West Asia.

### **Facebook chooses London as base for WhatsApp payments**

- Facebook has chosen London as the centre for the global roll-out of WhatsApp pay, before the social media giant launches its digital payments service on the mobile messaging platform in India
- WhatsApp, which has 1.5 billion users globally, would hire nearly 100 people in London to focus on the digital payments service and additional operations staff would be hired in Dublin
- Facebook chose the UK, where WhatsApp is far more popular than the US, because it attracts a multicultural workforce from many of the countries

### **Niti Aayog pushes for Rs. 7,500-crore proposal for AI platform, research institutes**

- Niti Aayog has circulated a cabinet note to provide Rs 7,500 crore for the establishment of AIRAWAT, a cloud computing platform along with research institutes. This is part of the policy think tank's proposal to create an institutional framework for artificial intelligence (AI) in the country. The expenditure Finance Committee is expected to take up the note soon.
- According to the proposal, the funding would be used to set up five institutes or centres of research excellence (CORE), 20 international centres for transformational AI (ICTAI), along with AIRAWAT, a cloud computing platform that can be accessed by anyone. It is estimated that AI will add \$957 billion to India's GDP by 2035, boosting India's annual growth by 1.3 percentage points.

### **Facebook registers new cryptocurrency firm Libra Networks in Switzerland**

- Facebook has registered a new financial technology company, Libra Networks, in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The new subsidiary, with Facebook Global Holdings as the stakeholder, aims to provide financial and technology solutions and develop related hardware and software.
- It focus on "investing, payments, financing, identity management, analytics, big data, blockchain, and other technologies." Facebook was working on "Facebook Coin." - a stablecoin pegged to a basket of different foreign



currencies. The cryptocurrency project even reached the US Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

### **FSSAI relaxes certification norms for small organic food producers**

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has decided to relax certification norms for small original producers or producer organisations with an annual turnover of up to Rs. 12 lakh till April 1, 2020.
- According to the regulations, all organic food sold in the country needs to be certified either under National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) or Participatory Guarantee System for India (PGS-India).
- However, these small organic producers and aggregators will not be allowed to use 'Jaivik Bharat logo' on their products. The Jaivik Bharat logo is an identity mark to distinguish organic products from non-organic ones.

### **BSNL partners with Google to expand Wi-Fi footprint**

- BSNL has partnered with Google to increase access to its Wi-Fi footprint in the country. With the launch of this service, people across the country will be able to enjoy BSNL's free Wi-Fi services. This initiative will allow customers use BSNL's high speed internet services on Wi-Fi.
- There are 38,000 BSNL Wi-Fi hotspot locations operational in India. One can access these by buying Wi-Fi vouchers that are priced starting at Rs 19. Google has previously completed the rollout of RailW According to an Analysys Mason study, public Wi-Fi will connect 40 million new users to the internet by 2019

## **Important State Wise National News Chhattisgarh**

### **Capital –Raipur (Atal Nagar); CM – Bhupesh Baghel; Governor - Anandiben Patel Chhattisgarh Deploys 1st Anti-Naxal Women Commando Unit**

- The Chhattisgarh police for the first time has inducted women commandos in the District Reserve Guard, its frontline anti-Naxal force. Comprising 30 women led by Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Dineshwari Nand, have received extensive training in jungle combat.
- With the induction of the women commando contingent, the number of platoons of the DRG in Dantewada now stands at six. Of the 30 recruits, 10 are surrendered women Naxals, while 10 others are assistant constables who were part of the erstwhile Salwa Judum (anti-Naxal militia) movement

## **Gujarat**

### **Capital: Gandhinagar; CM: Vijay Rupani; Governor: Om Prakash Kohli Shops, businesses in Gujarat can remain open 24X7 now**

- Shops and other businesses in Gujarat can remain open round the clock now with the Gujarat Shops and Establishments (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 2019 coming into force from May 1.
- With this, commercial establishments in municipal corporations limits, or those near national highways, railway stations, state transport depots, hospitals and petrol pumps will be allowed to operate 24 hours.
- The shops and commercial entities operating near state highways and within municipality limits can now operate between 6 am to 2 am.
- The act replaced the Gujarat Shops and Establishments Act of 1948, which prohibited shops and other businesses from operating between 12 am to 6 am.
- Under the new act, working hours for women employees can be between 6 am and 9 pm, which could be relaxed only if a written request is made and after the authorities consider safety issues.

## **Jammu & Kashmir**

### **Capital – Jammu (winter) Srinagar (summer); CM - Vacant; Governor - Satya Pal Malik Jammu and Kashmir Government Unveils Healthcare Investment Policy-2019**

- Jammu and Kashmir Government unveiled Healthcare Investment Policy-2019.
- This follows the State Administrative Council decision taken in this regard on March 08, 2019. As per the new Health Care Investment Policy, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir will promote and encourage the private parties and entrepreneurs for setting up healthcare infrastructure in the state by providing subsidies and incentives
- Accordingly, 30% subsidy on capital investment will be provided for setting up of multi-speciality Hospitals, Super Specialty Hospitals, Medical Colleges, Nursing Colleges and Paramedical Colleges.
- Interest subsidy shall be provided @ 5% per annum on term loan subject to a ceiling of Rs. 15 lakh per year for a period of five years from the date of operationalization of the project.

- Also, the subsidized power tariff rates shall apply as applicable to Industries Sector. 100 % subsidy on purchase and installation of DG sets with an upper ceiling of Rs. 45 lakh.

## **Karnataka**

**Capital – Bengaluru; CM – Kumarasamy; Governor - Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala**

### **Mangaluru City Police launches all-women police patrol unit**

- Mangaluru City Police has launched an all-women police patrol unit in the city.
- Flagging off the 'Rani Abbakka Force' in Mangaluru
- Karnataka police is giving utmost importance to the protection of women and children.

### **Brahmakalashotsava Festival 2019 started in Karnataka**

- The 6-day Brahmakalashotsava festival is celebrated in the ancient Chandkuru Sri DurgaParameshwari Temple annually in Polali, Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka.
- The presiding deity of the temple, which has a history of nearly 1,700 years, is ShriRajarajeshwari. The highlight of this temple is its mud idols and this is probably the only idol of this size (about 9ft height) in Karnataka. Other than the presiding deity Rajarajeshwari - two other idols Bhadrakali on the left (may be bigger than the presiding deity in height) and Lord Subrahmanya and Ganesha are on the right hand side.
- It is in news recently because several Dalits and OBCs from Chandkuru and surrounding villages in Belthangadytaluk boycotted festival in a centuries-old temple due to separate seating arrangement had been made for people of the upper caste.

## **Madhya Pradesh**

**Capital – Bhopal; CM – Kamal Nath; Governor – Anandiben patel**

### **Orchha town in Madhya Pradesh makes it to tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites**

- The architectural heritage of Orchha town in Madhya Pradesh which depict peculiar style of the Bundela dynasty have been included in the tentative list of the UNESCO's world heritage sites following a proposal sent by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to the United Nations (UN) body.
- Orchha is situated on the banks of the Betwa river. It is located around 80 km away from Tikamgarh district in Madhya Pradesh and 15 km from Jhansi of Uttar Pradesh. Orchha was built by king Rudra Pratap Singh of Bundela dynasty in the 16th century. The ancient town is famous for its Chaturbhuj Temple, Orchha fort complex, Raja Mahal among others.

## **Maharashtra**

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

### **Mumbai most vulnerable to cyberattacks, Delhi, B'luru next**

- Mumbai topped the 15-city list of the most vulnerable cities to cyberattacks in 2019, followed by Delhi, Bengaluru and Kolkata, Quick Heal Security Labs revealed. The 'Annual Threat Report 2019' put Maharashtra, Delhi and West Bengal as the top three states at most risk. The report compiled data from several cyberattacks that took place in 2018 on Windows and Android.

## **Meghalaya**

**Capital – Shillong; CM - Conrad K Sangma; Governor – Tathagata Roy**

### **Meghalaya Cabinet approves creation of Directorate of Dairy Development**

- The Meghalaya Cabinet approved the proposal for creation of a new Directorate of Dairy Development in the state to increase milk production. Home Minister James K Sangma had launched the Meghalaya Milk Mission and Rs 215 crore has been sanctioned.
- The state Cabinet has also approved a proposal for enhancing the grant-in-aid to night and morning ad-hoc secondary schools in the state.

### **Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma Launches 'Aroma Mission'**

- The Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma have made yet another effort to strengthen the economy of the hill state by ushering in employment opportunities for the people by launching the 'Meghalaya Aroma Mission 2019'.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants-CIMAP and the MBDA (Meghalaya Basin Development Authority) for collaborative work on medicinal and aromatic plants. This partnership is expected to strengthen the livelihood condition of farmers and create employment opportunities in the State.



## **Rajasthan**

**Capital – Jaipur; CM – Ashok Gehlot; Governor - Kalyan Singh**

### **Rajasthan government gives funds to over 30 startups under iStart**

- Rajasthan government has given out funds ranging from Rs. 1.2 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh to over 30 startups as part of its program iStart Rajasthan. The funds were disbursed under the program's financial incentives like sustenance allowance, seed funding, marketing assistance and Techno Fund.
- The startups that received funding reportedly included Hippo Cabs, mPass and others.

### **Rajasthan set to revamp 'Ujala Clinics' for adolescents**

- Rajasthan Government is set to revamp 'Ujala Clinics' for adolescents. It will appoint peer educators and shadow educators for counseling the youngsters in order to ensure coordination with other medical and health schemes.
- Ujjala Clinics function under Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram(RKSK) in 10 districts of the state. They are established at district hospitals, community health centers and selected primary health centers in Udaipur, Rajsamand, Banswara, Dungarpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Jalore, Bundi, Karauli and Dholpur districts.
- The adolescent health strategy is aimed at reducing malnutrition and anaemia. It will improve the knowledge and behaviour of the adolescents with regards to sexual and reproductive health. Ujala Clinic is the new name of Adolescent Friendly Health Clinic(AFHC).

## **Tamil Nadu**

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

### **Chennai to get its first unmanned substation**

- The Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco) has identified a substation to be upgraded into an unmanned substation — the first of its kind in the city.
- The 33 kilo volt (KV)/11 KV substation, located right at the heart of the central business district of Anna Salai, near the Express Mall on Woods Road, has been chosen for the upgrade. It was constructed only a year ago.
- Once the substation becomes unmanned, there will not be any need for posting maintenance staff and it can be operated remotely.

### **Tree Ambulance launched in Chennai**

- A unique 'Tree Ambulance' service - an initiative to provide care to trees besides spread green cover, was launched by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu. The service launched for the first time in the state, aims at providing first aid treatment to trees, uprooted tree planting, seed bank, seed ball distribution, plant distribution, aiding tree plantation, shifting trees, survey of trees and removal of dead trees.
- The ambulance can be availed through the helpline number - 9941006786. People can register themselves as volunteers in their website- [www.treeambulance.org](http://www.treeambulance.org). Expressing delight over flagging off the 'Tree Ambulance' on the occasion of International Day for Biological Diversity 2019.

## **Telangana**

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

### **Telangana to have India's first blockchain district**

- With Blockchain estimated to generate \$3 trillion a year in business value by 2030, the government of Telangana is gearing up to leverage this opportunity by developing a conducive ecosystem for Blockchain in the state.
- Hyderabad, the capital city of Telangana is uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in the development of blockchain technology due to the critical mass of industries leveraging blockchain technology located in Hyderabad (financial services, insurance, pharmaceuticals and life sciences, supply chain and logistics etc.), access to talent, support of entrepreneurship, and collaboration with enterprises.
- The state wants to make Hyderabad one of the top 10 Blockchain cities of the world and has decided to create India's first 'Blockchain District', which will be a physical area within Hyderabad and with the aim to create the world's best blockchain technology ecosystem.
- The Blockchain District will house all major blockchain technology companies, will have a huge incubator and a world-class facility for promoting research, innovation and industry collaboration. This one of its kind initiatives will aim to put all blockchain companies based out of Hyderabad at a strategically advantageous position globally.

## **Uttarakhand**

**Capital – Dehradun; CM – Trivendra Singh Rawat; Governor – Baby Rani Maurya**

### **Chardham Yatra begins in Uttarakhand**

- The annual Char Dham Yatra began with the opening of the portals of Gangotri and Yamunotri shrines in Uttarkashi district on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. The shrines were closed during winter for nearly six months. Kedarnath and Badrinath shrines will open on May 9 and 10 respectively. The Chardham pilgrimage is one of the biggest Yatra circuits in the world.

### **NMCG, HCL Foundation and INTACH inked MoU for Rudraksh Plantation in Uttarakhand**

- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between National Mission for Clean Ganga, HCL Foundation and INTACH for taking up a project of Plantation of Rudraksh Trees in Uttarakhand as a part of CSR initiative under the NamamiGange Programme.
- The project aims at planting 10 thousand Rudraksh trees in the catchment area of river Ganga in Uttarakhand.

## **West Bengal**

**Capital – Kolkata; CM – Mamta Benerjee; Governor - Keshari Nath Tripath**

### **Navy Service Selection Board inaugurated in Kolkata**

- Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba Tuesday inaugurated the Navy's first full-fledged Service Selection Board (SSB) at the Diamond Harbour near Kolkata. Vice Admiral Karambir Singh, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, has attended the inauguration.
- This is the fifth SSB of the Indian Navy and caters for selection of both permanent and short service commission officers. The other boards are located in Bhopal, Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam and Coimbatore.

## **Other National News**

### **India removed from US currency monitoring list, China stays**

- The US Treasury Department has removed India from its currency monitoring list of major trading partners.
- US Congress on International Economic and Exchange Rate Policies, the department removed India and Switzerland from the previous currency watch list of countries with potentially questionable foreign exchange policies.
- India, along with China, Japan, Germany, Switzerland and South Korea, was placed in the bi-annual currency watch list in October last year. Now nine major trading partners continue to be placed on Treasury's 'Monitoring List' of major trading partners that merit close attention to their currency practices.

### **Song 'Hawa Aane De' launched to spread awareness about Air pollution**

- Union Environment Ministry today launched the song 'Hawa Aane De' to spread awareness about Air pollution. The song was launched by Secretary, Ministry of Environment C K Mishra ahead of the World Environment Day on 5th of June.
- This year the theme of Environment Day is Air Pollution. The centre has launched the National Clean Air Programme to control and reduce air pollution across the country.

### **India elected to Executive Board of first UN-Habitat Assembly**

- India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly. India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly at the Plenary Session of the Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The special theme for the UN-Habitat Assembly is "Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities".

### **Four judges elevated to Supreme Court of India**

- The Centre has cleared four names recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium for elevation as judges of the apex court. Justices Aniruddha Bose (Chief Justices of the Jharkhand High Court), AS Bopanna (Chief Justices of Gauhati High Court), Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai (a judge of the Bombay High Court) and Surya Kant (Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court) have been elevated to the top court. With their appointment, the Supreme Court will reach its full sanctioned judicial strength of 31 judges.

### **Campaign launched to raise awareness on illegal wildlife trade**

- UN Environment India and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau of India launched an awareness campaign 'Not all animals migrate by choice' to be displayed at major airports across the country ahead of the International Day of Biological Diversity celebrated on 22nd of May.

- The campaign will be displayed at major airports across the country in collaboration with Airports Authority of India and GMR Group. The event was inaugurated by actor, producer, UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador and recently appointed Secretary-General's SDG Advocate, Dia Mirza.
- In the first phase of the campaign, Tiger, Pangolin, Star Tortoise and Tokay Gecko will be displayed as they are highly endangered due to illegal trading in International markets.

#### **Sushma Swaraj to attend SCO Foreign Ministers meet in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan**

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will attend the meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- She had a productive discussion with Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Aidarbekov on all aspects of bilateral relations, including in political and defence, trade and investment, health, capacity building and people-to-people ties. The participating Foreign Ministers will call on Kyrgyz President Sooranbay Jeenbekov.
- This is the second Council of Foreign Ministers meeting that India is attending as a full member of SCO.

#### **India to co-chair Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)**

- India has been unanimously chosen as co-chair of the Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for the fiscal year 2020.
- The decision was taken during the meeting of GFDRR held in Geneva, Switzerland
- GFDRR is a global partnership that helps developing countries better understand and reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change. It is a grant-funding mechanism, managed by the World Bank, that supports disaster risk management projects worldwide.

#### **IGNOU to launch awareness programme on GST**

- The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) will launch an awareness programme on Goods and Services Tax (GST) in collaboration with Bombay Stock Exchange Institute Limited from its July 2019.
- The programme, which will be launched by IGNOU's School of Management Studies aims to impart basic knowledge and skills required to fulfil various requirements under the GST Act.
- This programme would be beneficial to people who are engaged in maintaining accounts and filing of various indirect tax returns.

#### **Electric vehicles to get green number plates**

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has announced a green registration mark for all battery-operated vehicles, where private vehicles will bear white fonts on a green background on the number plate and commercial vehicles will have a yellow font on a green background.
- The new mandate is supposed to help provide a preferential treatment to the vehicles with no carbon emissions, like parking, free entry in congested areas as well as a concessional toll on highways.

#### **VP Venkaiah Naidu releases postage stamp to commemorate 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan**

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu released a postage stamp to commemorate the 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan in New Delhi.
- Sri Vedanta Desikan called for world peace and said that peace and humanity formed the basis of the spiritual teachings of great saints.

#### **India to attend G-7 meet in France**

- India will be attending the Group of 7 industrialised nations meet organised by France in Biarritz in August along with Australia, Chile and South Africa, in a sign of the recognition of India's growing economic heft in the international arena. The invitation to Australia, France and Chile besides India reflects the French emphasis on the Indian Ocean and the Pacific region.
- The G-7 groups together the US, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Japan and Germany.

### **Anti-dumping duty imposed on saccharin imports from Indonesia**

- The Finance Ministry has, on the recommendations of the Commerce Ministry, imposed an anti-dumping duty of \$1,633.17 per tonne on the import of saccharine from Indonesia. Saccharine is a compound most commonly used in sugar-substitute sweeteners.
- Indonesia, until recently, accounted for a large chunk of India's saccharine imports. In 2017-18, India imported \$4.36 million worth of saccharine from Indonesia, which is 43% of the total imports of the sugar-substitute compound.
- However, imports from Indonesia have declined since then. In the April 2018 to February 2019 period, India imported only \$1.48 million worth of saccharine from Indonesia, about 20% of its total imports from around the world.

### **India re-elected as observer to inter-governmental forum Arctic Council**

- India re-elected as Observer of the Arctic Council at the 11th Arctic Council ministerial meeting at Rovaniemi, Finland
- Arctic Council a high level intergovernmental organisation set up in 1996 to promotes cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic states on common issues, particularly on sustainable development and environmental protection. Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States are members of the Arctic Council.
- Besides India, 12 other nations including China, France, Germany, Japan, UK, Switzerland and Netherlands have observer status.

### **Government Organises 'Chintan Baithak' with RE Industry Stakeholders**

- To provide a further boost to the renewable energy sector in the country, the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) held a meeting, termed as 'Chintan Baithak', with the industry stakeholders.
- The government's motive behind organizing this meet, which was chaired by the MNRE Secretary Anand Kumar, was to address various issues with respect to the renewable energy sector in the country.
- This meeting was attended by a number of industry stakeholders including renewable energy developers, regulators, think-tanks, equipment manufacturers, financiers, industry bodies and skill developers.

### **WHO reports Road accidents still cause most deaths**

- Road accidents are the leading cause of death among people in the 5-29 age-group worldwide with more than 1.35 million lives lost each year and 50 million sustaining injuries, according to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report released during the on-going global road safety week.
- As per the data released by the Indian government, road crashes kill close to 1,50,000 people each year. However, the WHO global status report on road safety had challenged the numbers and stated that India might be losing over 2,99,000 people each year.

### **Government to set up panel under DGFT to look at steel availability for engineering exporters**

- The government has decided to set up a committee under the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to look into availability of steel at competitive prices for engineering goods exporters.
- The committee will submit its report to steel and commerce ministries within two months. It will suggest measures which will be a win-win situation for both steel producers and engineering exporters. The country's engineering exports rose by 6.36 per cent to USD 83.7 billion in 2018-19 from USD 78.7 billion in 2017-18.

### **Government plans compulsory QR code payment option at all shops: Report**

- Government is looking to make QR code payments option via UPI compulsory at all shops and the GST Council has already given the proposal a go-ahead, as per a report.
- The move will provide GST benefit to both shopkeepers and consumers. The government is stated to have roped in NPCI for a nationwide rollout of the plan.

### **India hosted a 2-day ministerial meeting of WTO in New Delhi**

- A WTO Ministerial meeting of developing countries is being hosted by India in New Delhi.
- Sixteen developing countries, Six Least Developed Countries (LDC)(Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Brazil, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, China, Egypt, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Nigeria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda)and DG, WTO are participating in the meeting.
- Issues such as impasse on the appointment of WTO's appellate body members and way forward on reforms at the global trade body would be discussed in the meeting of developing countries in New Delhi.
- The meeting is being held at a time when the multilateral rule-based trading system is facing serious and grave challenges.

- The Ministerial Meeting had hosted by the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, in which Roberto Azevedo, the Director General of WTO, were also present.

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### **Kerala CM rings opening bell at London Stock Exchange as KIIFB lists masala bonds**

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan rang the opening bell at the London Stock Exchange (LSE) to mark the listing of masala bonds sold by Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB).
- KIIFB, a state government agency, had raised Rs 2,150 crore through its debut masala bond issue at a fixed interest rate of 9.723% per annum. KIIFB plans to raise Rs. 5,000 crore through masala bonds to fund large and critical infrastructure projects in Kerala. Indian Rupee denominated overseas bonds are popularly known as masala bonds.

## **Important International News**

### **India elected to Executive Board of first UN-Habitat Assembly**

- India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly, announced Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly at the Plenary Session of the Assembly started in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The special theme for the UN-Habitat Assembly is "Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities".

### **Nepal celebrating its 12th Republic Day**

- Nepal is celebrating its 12th Republic Day on May29,2019. A number of programmes are being organised in different parts of the country to mark the occasion.
- The main function was held at Army Pavilion in Kathmandu, which was attended by the President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Prime Minister K.P.Sharma Oli, cabinet ministers, senior government officials, heads and representatives of various diplomatic missions and other dignitaries

### **Sri Lanka, Japan, India sign deal to develop East Container Terminal at Colombo Port**

- Sri Lanka, Japan and India signed an agreement to jointly develop the East Container Terminal at the Colombo Port.
- The joint initiative is estimated to cost between \$500 million and \$700 million. The signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) is significant, given that the countries had been negotiating the deal since last year, with little success.
- As per the agreement signed, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) retains 100% ownership of the East Container Terminal (ECT), while the Terminal Operations Company, conducting its operations, is jointly owned. Sri Lanka will hold a 51 per cent-stake in the project and the joint venture partners will retain 49%.

### **UN says Women bosses are good for businesses and economies**

- Companies that improve gender diversity especially at the top, perform better and rake in higher profits, while countries that increase women employment see better economic growth.
- The UN's International Labour Organisation found in a fresh study that companies that improve gender diversity in their management report significant profit increases. According to the report, which based its findings on a survey of nearly 13,000 companies across 70 countries.
- According to the survey, nearly three-quarters of companies that tracked gender diversity in their management reported profit hikes of between 5% and 20%.

### **Trump becomes first world leader to meet Japan's new emperor**

- Donald Trump became the first foreign leader to meet with Japan's newly enthroned Emperor Naruhito
- Emperor Naruhito ascended to the throne on May 1, opening what is called the era of "Reiwa," or "beautiful harmony." The US President, who is on a four-day state visit to Japan, was treated to a welcome ceremony full of pomp and pageantry.



### **Algeria and Argentina certified malaria-free by WHO**

- Algeria and Argentina have been officially recognized by WHO as malaria-free. The certification is granted when a country proves that it has interrupted indigenous transmission of the disease for at least 3 consecutive years.
- Algeria is the second country in the WHO African Region to be officially recognized as malaria-free, after Mauritius, which was certified in 1973. Argentina is the second country in the WHO Region of the Americas to be certified in 45 years, after Paraguay in June 2018. Algeria and Argentina reported their last cases of indigenous malaria in 2013 and 2010 respectively.

### **UAE unveils 'golden card' permanent residency scheme for expats**

- The UAE has launched a permanent residency scheme for expatriates dubbed the 'Golden Card'.
- The country's Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai said about 6,800 will benefit from the scheme under the first round of applications. A new "Golden Card" system to grant permanent residency to investors and exceptional doctors, engineers, scientists and artists.

### **TAPI gas meeting being held in Turkmenistan**

- A delegation led by Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Petroleum, Nadeem Babar departed for Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, to participate in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline meeting.
- The TAPI gas pipeline project is expected to be completed by 2022 in Pakistan. Once completed; Pakistan is expected to receive 1.320 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas. Groundbreaking of the TAPI gas pipeline will be held in Pakistan in October

### **World gets the redefined units of measurement of kilogram, Kelvin, mole and ampere**

- After decades of ground-breaking laboratory works, the world's scientific and technical community, in a landmark and historic decision taken in the recent open session of the General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM) at BIPM, has unanimously adopted the resolution to redefine four of the seven base units, the kilogram (SI unit of weight), Kelvin (SI unit of temperature), mole (SI unit of amount of substance), and ampere (SI unit of current).
- This decision has now enabled scientists and researchers to base the SI units entirely on fundamental properties of nature, which will ensure their ongoing refinement and improvement for years to come. The fundamental constants are invariants of time and space and successfully replaced the artifact based units, and aptly opened up the new era for quantum world by linking all seven base units to fundamental constants/quantum standards.
- The new SI is being implemented worldwide from 20th May 2019 i.e. the World Metrology Day. The World Metrology Day (WMD) is celebrated annually on this very day as the Metre Convention was signed by representatives of seventeen nations on May 20, 1875. The Convention set the framework for global collaboration in the science of measurement and in its industrial, commercial and societal applications
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- On this occasion CSIR-NPL also published a book entitled, "Redefined SI Units and Glimpses of NPL Metrological Activities" of almost 100 pages to percolate and disseminate the information accommodating details on new changes

### **Taiwan becomes first in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage**

- Taiwan has legalised same-sex marriage, the first of any Asian state, with the passage of legislation giving same-sex couples the right to marry.
- Taiwan's constitutional court had imposed deadline two years ago, which said that excluding same-sex couples from marriage was unconstitutional and the legislature must pass laws allowing same-sex marriage by May 24, 2019, or they would automatically become law.

### **UK Becomes First Parliament to Declare Climate Emergency**

- The UK Parliament has passed a declaration for Environment and Climate Emergency on May 01, 2019. Hence the Parliament of the UK has become the first parliament, or the UK has become the first country to pass a declaration on climate emergency.
- This was a lot of pressure from the opposition Labour leaders for "rapid and dramatic action" to protect the environment for generations to come. The fight for this Climate Emergency was lead by a group called Extinction Rebellion.
- What does Climate Emergency mean: It means that from now climate and the environment would be at the very centre of all government policy, rather than being on the fringe of political decisions.



## **Bank of Canada, Monetary Authority of Singapore Complete Cross-Border and Cross-Currency Payment**

- The Bank of Canada and the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) have conducted a successful experiment on cross-border and cross-currency payments using central bank digital currencies.
- This is the first such trial between two central banks, and has great potential to increase efficiencies and reduce risks for cross-border payments

## **Canada's redesigned \$10 bill recognized as best international banknote of the year**

- Canada's redesigned \$10 bill has earned the Bank of Canada a Bank Note of the Year Award from the International Bank Note Society (IBNS).
- The competition came from Mexico's 500-peso note, Russia's 100-ruble note, Norway's 500-krone note and China's 50-yuan note, among many others.

## **Malaysia Set to Open World's First Crypto Powered City**

- Malaysia is set to become the site of the world's first crypto city, where cash will be shunned in favor of a new cryptocurrency called DMI.
- DMI is a company that provides mobile enterprise, business intelligence and cybersecurity services and it has collaborated with the Melaka Straits City on this project. Visitors will be able to exchange normal money for DMI coins when they arrive in the city.

## **Microsoft unveils free 'ElectionGuard' tool to help secure U.S. polls**

- Microsoft has launched a software named "ElectionGuard" to help countries ensure secure and verifiable voting.
- The tool "ElectionGuard" will enable end-to-end verification of elections, open results to third-party organisations for secure validation, and allow individual voters to confirm their votes were correctly counted.
- However, it should be noted that "ElectionGuard" is not designed to support internet voting and is aimed at supplementing and improving the paper ballot systems.

## **Qantas operates world's first 'zero waste' commercial flight**

- The world's first 'zero waste' commercial flight took to the skies as part of a new initiative from the Australian airline Qantas to cut single-use plastics that end up in landfill.
- Flying from Sydney to Adelaide, the airline stated that all products and packaging aboard QF739 will either be reused, recycled or disposed of as compost. The Australian carrier stated that it will cut 100 million single-use plastics by the end of next year and eliminate 75 per cent of the airline's waste by the end of 2021. It Head Quartered in Australia.

## **Australia central bank prints 184 million A\$50 notes with spelling mistake**

- The Reserve Bank of Australia confirmed a printing error on the new 50 dollar note after a radio station posted a photo on social media sent in by a listener. An Instagram post by radio station Triple M revealed the typo mistake on the note just above the shoulder of Edith Cowan
- The note came into circulation on Oct. 18, 2018 with new security features designed to deter counterfeiting and with tactile elements for the visually impaired. Cowan was the first Australian woman to serve as a member of parliament from 1921 to 1924. She has featured on the reverse of Australia's 50-dollar note since 1995

## **'World's fastest bullet train' starts test runs in Japan**

- Japan has started testing its fastest-ever bullet train capable of reaching 400 kilometers per hour (249 mph) as it continues to develop the revolutionary mode of travel.
- The ALFA-X (Advanced Labs for Frontline Activity in rail eXperimentation) version of the Shinkansen train began three years worth of test runs. Once it enters operation sometime around 2030, it will run at speeds of up to 360 kph (224 mph), comfortably making it the world's fastest bullet train.
- It will also outpace China's Fuxing train, which runs at 10 kph slower despite being designed with the same top speed capabilities as the ALFA-X. It'll be tested on the line between the cities of Sendai and Aomori, which are about 280 kilometers apart

## **Ireland becomes second country to declare 'climate emergency'**

- Ireland has become the second country in the world to declare a climate and biodiversity emergency.
- Ireland followed in the footsteps of the United Kingdom, which declared a climate emergency earlier this month
- The governments of Wales and Scotland have also declared climate emergencies.

## **Taiwan becomes first in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage**

- Taiwan has legalised same-sex marriage, the first of any Asian state, with the passage of legislation giving same-sex couples the right to marry.

- Taiwan's constitutional court had imposed deadline two years ago, which said that excluding same-sex couples from marriage was unconstitutional and the legislature must pass laws allowing same-sex marriage by May 24, 2019, or they would automatically become law.

### **Saudi Arabia approves permanent residency for first time**

- The Saudi government has approved for the first time a scheme that gives permanent residency to certain expatriates, allowing them to own real estate in the kingdom and reside with their families without a Saudi sponsor
- The decision is aimed at attracting long-term investments as the government tries to diversify the economy and boost domestic spending. The "Privileged Iqama" system will offer a permanent residence scheme and one that can be renewed annually to highly skilled expatriates and owners of capital funds.

## **Important Appointments**

### **National Appointments**

<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Jayshree Vyas	Bombay Stock Exchange first independent woman director
2.	K. Kadiresan	South Zonal Manager of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)
3.	Dragan Mihailovic	India's head coach of Volleyball men's team
4.	Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma	first official brand ambassadors of Myntra
5.	Krishnamurthy Subramanian ( Chief Economic Advisor)	member of Advisory Council of 15th Finance Commission
6.	Sunil Sharma	Archery Association of India (AAI) acting president
7.	Sujatha V Kumar	Visa's Head of Marketing for India and South Asia
8.	Balvinder Singh Nakai	Iffco Chairman
9.	Dileep Sanghani	Iffco Vice Chairman
10.	Croatia's Igor Stimac	Indian football team coach
11.	Dinesh Pangtey	CEO of LIC Mutual Fund
12.	Sanjiv Puri ( ITC Managing Director)	Chairman of ITC
13.	Salman Khan	Brand Ambassador of BharatPe
14.	Major General A K Dhingra	first Special Operations Division Commander
15.	R. Gandhi	additional director on Yes Bank's board
16.	Justice A. K. Sikri	Chairperson of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA)
17.	Nitin Chugh	MD and CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank ( from December 1)
18.	Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant	Brand ambassadors of Himalaya MEN
19.	Jagan Mohan Reddy	CM of Andhra Pradesh
20.	Naveen Patnaik	CM of Odisha
21.	Akshay Kumar	Brand ambassador of TAFE
22.	Lieutenant General Shailesh	commander of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

	<b>Tinaikar</b>	
23.	Himanta Biswa Sarma	vice-president of Badminton Asia Council
24.	Prem Singh Golay	Chief Minister of Sikkim
25.	Justice DN Patel	Chief Justice of Delhi High Court
26.	Pema Khandu	Arunachal Pradesh CM
27.	Naveen Patnaik	Odisha CM for 5th term
28.	Karambir Singh	New Navy Chief
29.	Narendra Modi	Prime Minister of India
30.	Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain	Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command

### International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Kumar Sangakkara	First non-British President of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)
2.	Tod Wolters ( US Air Force General)	NATO commander
3.	Reza Baqir	State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor
4.	Stevo Pendarovski	North Macedonian president
5.	Laurentino Cortizo	Panama's president
6.	Rakesh Sharma ( Bajaj Auto Executive Director)	Vice-President of Geneva-based International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA)
7.	Jagjit Pavadia (India)	International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)
8.	Justice (Retd.) KS Radhakrishnan	Member of Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal
9.	Dia Mirza and Jack Ma	New 'SDG Advocates' of UN
10.	Muhammad-Bande ( Nigerian professor)	President of UN General Assembly
11.	Former SC Justice MB Lokur	Supreme Court of Fiji for three years ( non-resident panel)
12.	Cyril Ramaphosa	re-elected as President of South Africa
13.	Jeffrey Rosen	United States' next deputy attorney general
14.	Joko Widodo	President of Indonesia
15.	Peter Mutharika	President of Malawi
16.	Suresh Kumar	chief technology officer of Walmart
17.	Scott Morrison	Australia's prime minister
18.	James Marape	Papua New Guinea prime minister

### Resignation

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Bhushan Patil	Paytm President
2.	Theresa May	Prime Minister of U.K.
3.	Peter O'Neill	Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

## Important Awards and Honours

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Raheem Sterling	Football Writers' Association (FWA) Footballer of the Year 2019
2.	A. Alfred Brownell (Liberia) B. Bayarjargal Agvaantseren (Mongolia), C. Ana Colovic Lesoska (North Macedonia), D. Jacqueline Evans (the Cook Islands), E. Alberto Curamil (Chile), F. Linda Garcia (United States)	Goldman Environmental Prize 2019 (Green Nobel Prize)
3.	Rapper Drake	The Billboard Music for his album 'Scorpion'
4.	A S Kiran Kumar (Former ISRO chairman)	Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Lgion d'Honneur
5.	Nileena M S	ACJ (Asian College of Journalism) Award for Investigative Journalism, 2018 for her article 'Coalgate 2.0'
6.	G D 'Robert' Govender	V K Krishna Menon award
7.	Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty	PC Chandra Purashkaar 2019 award
8.	Actress Anne Hathaway	Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
9.	Hinduja brothers	UK's wealthiest people for the third time
10.	Chhaya Sharma	McCain Institute's 2019 Award for Courage and Leadership
11.	Ajeay Nagar ( Indian YouTuber)	Time magazine Next Generation Leaders' 2019
12.	Dr P.K. Mishra	Sasakawa Award 2019 by UNDRR
13.	Sir Andy Murray	Knighthood from the Prince of Wales
14.	Sunny Pawar	Best Child Actor award at New York Indian Film Festival
15.	Nancy Pelosi	2019 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award
16.	Kapil Sharma	Most viewed stand-up comedians in the world by World Book of Records
17.	Chancy Chitete ( Late Malawian soldier)	UN highest peacekeeping award
18.	Shyam Saran	Japan's 'Order of the Rising Sun' award
19.	Jokha Alharthi (Oman)	Man Booker International Prize for "Celestial Bodies"
20.	Hi-Tech Pipes	SAIL's 'Top Performer Award'
21.	Bharti AXA Life Insurance	FICCI Claims Excellence Award

22.	Hema Divakar	Global Asian of the Year 2018-19'
23.	Acharya Balkrishna	'UNSDG 10 Most Influential People in Healthcare Award'
24.	Nalini Malani	first Indian to win \$78K Joan Miro Prize
25.	Guy Gunaratne	£30,000 Dylan Thomas prize for In Our Mad and Furious City
26.	Balram Bhargava (ICMR head)	Dr Lee Jong-wook Prize for Public Health
27.	Indian writer Annie Zaidi	\$100,000 Nine Dots Prize 2019
28.	Professor N. Kumar	'Lifetime Recognition Award' by the Confederation of Horticulture Association of India

### **Indian's charity in UAE enters Guinness World Records for holding longest iftar**

- A charity run by an Indian in the UAE has entered the Guinness Book of World Records for its hunger relief efforts during the holy month of Ramzan in Abu Dhabi.
- The charity set the new Guinness World Records for "Longest Line of Hunger Relief Package" in Abu Dhabi.
- Pehal charitable Trust (PCT) has been founded by Joginder Singh Salaria.

### **Nepali teen Bandana sets new world record**

- A Nepali teenager danced continuously for 126 hours to set a Guinness World Records on 'Longest Dancing Marathon by an Individual'. Bandana beat the record set by Kalamandalam Hemlatha, who danced continuously for 123 hours and 15 minutes in 2011

### **Two Indians, among 115 UN personnel, staff honoured for sacrifice in line of duty**

- Police Officer Jitender Kumar serving in the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and Shikha Garg, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) consultant attached with India's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, along with 113 UN personnel and staff, lost their lives in the service of peace between January 2018 and March 2019.
- Both are among 115 UN peacekeepers and staff honoured by the global organisation for their sacrifice in the line of duty.

### **NAARM gets mandate for World Bank – funded NAHEP project**

- The National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) has been awarded a World Bank-funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) project. The project, which is referred to as component 2A, calls for investments in Indian Council of Agricultural Research Leadership in Agricultural Higher Education.
- With a budget outlay of Rs. 69.41 crore, the three-year project is aimed at establishing partnerships with globally recognised agricultural higher education institutions. It is also for establishing career development centres at agriculture universities.
- Besides NAARM, Indian Agricultural Statistical Research Institute (IASRI) and National Institute of Agricultural Economics and Policy Research of Indian Council of Agricultural Research will take part in the implementation of the project.

### **India sets Guinness World Records of 'largest laundry lesson'**

- With 400 young Indian men participating across the country to learn laundry lessons to share the responsibility of cleaning clothes along with the female members of their homes, India achieved the Guinness World Records certificate for the largest laundry lesson.
- National award-winning actor Anil Kapoor joined the function which was initiated by Ariel India and hosted by Mandira Bedi. The event was part of the #sharetheload campaign.
- Earlier, the largest laundry lesson involved 318 people, achieved by Lion NANOX Team (Japan) at Lion Hirai Research Laboratory, in Edogawa, Tokyo, Japan, on November 29, 2017.

### **Pune scientist Ankur Patwardhan wins German chemistry prize**

- In a international competition 'Elsevier Foundation-ISC3 Green and Sustainable Chemistry Challenge', a project idea by Ankur Patwardhan from Pune has bagged the second prize of €25,000.

- His project named 'Butterfly attractant for pollination and ecosystem health' is about the relation between chemistry and ecosystem. Patwardhan is currently working as head of the 'Annasaheb Kulkarni Biodiversity Department' at Abasaheb Garware College, Pune.

### **Bhawana Kanth becomes 1st fighter pilot to qualify to go on combat missions**

- Scripting history, Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth became the first woman pilot of the Indian Air Force to qualify to undertake combat missions on a fighter jet. Kanth has completed operational syllabus for carrying out combat missions on Mig-21 Bison aircraft during day time. She is the first woman fighter pilot to be qualified to undertake missions by day on a fighter aircraft.
- Three women -- Kanth, Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh -- were commissioned as flying officers in July 2016, less than a year after the government decided to open the fighter stream for women on an experimental basis.

### **Statue of Unity enters 2019 World Architecture News Awards**

- The world's tallest, Statue of Unity in Gujarat built by Larsen & Toubro (L&T), has entered the globally-acclaimed 2019 World Architecture News (WAN) Awards. The WAN Awards showcase the best international design in current and future projects, and the award ceremony is likely to be held in July.
- The Statue of Unity was by far one of the most complex and challenging assignments we have executed and being featured along with several other global engineering marvels is a truly remarkable achievement, not only for L&T but for the entire nation.
- The statue, designed by Maharashtra's legendary architect Ram V. Sutar, was conceived as a naturalistic depiction of Sardar Patel in his characteristic style in a walking pose, rising out of a star-shaped geometric base that covers the entire Sadhu Hill.

### **Winners of 2019 BAFTA Awards**

The 72nd British Academy Film Awards also known as the BAFTA was held on 10 February 2019 by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts.

- BAFTA Fellowship –Thelma Schoonmaker
- Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema – Elizabeth Karlsen and Stephen Woolley for Number 9 Films
- Best Film-Roma – Alfonso Cuarón and Gabriela Rodríguez
- Best Director – Alfonso Cuarón – Roma
- Best Actor in a Leading Role- Rami Malek – Bohemian Rhapsody as Freddie Mercury
- Best Actress in a Leading Role-Olivia Colman – The Favourite as Queen Anne
- Best Actor in a Supporting Role-Mahershala Ali – Green Book as Don Shirley
- Best Actress in a Supporting Role-Rachel Weisz – The Favourite as Sarah Churchill
- Best Original Screenplay-Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara – The Favourite
- Best Adapted Screenplay-Spike Lee, David Rabinowitz, Charlie Wachtel, and Kevin Willmott– BlackKkKlansman
- Best Cinematography-Roma – Alfonso Cuarón
- Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer- Michael Pearce (Writer/Director) and Lauren Dark (Producer) – Beast-
- Outstanding British Film-The Favourite – Yorgos Lanthimos, Ceci Dempsey, Ed Guiney, Lee Magiday, Deborah Davis, and Tony McNamara
- Best Documentary-Free Solo – Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin, Shannon Dill, and Evan Hayes
- Best Original Music-A Star Is Born – Bradley Cooper, Lady Gaga, and Lukas Nelson
- Best Sound-Bohemian Rhapsody – John Casali, Tim Cavagin, Nina Hartstone, Paul Massey, and John Warhurst
- Best Production Design-The Favourite – Fiona Crombie and Alice Felton
- Best Special Visual Effects-Black Panther – Geoffrey Baumann, Jesse James Chisholm, Craig Hammack, and Dan Sudick
- Best Costume Design-The Favourite – Sandy Powell
- Best Makeup and Hair-The Favourite – Nadia Stacey
- Best Editing-Vice – Hank Corwin
- Best Film Not in the English Language-Roma – Alfonso Cuarón and Gabriela Rodríguez
- Best Animated Film-Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse – Bob Persichetti, Peter Ramsey, Rodney Rothman, and Phil Lord
- Best British Short Animation-Roughhouse – Jonathan Hodgson and Richard Van Den Boom



- Best Short Film-73 Cows – Alex Lockwood
- EE Rising Star Award (voted for by the public)-Letitia Wright

### **Important Committees**

#### **CPWD constitutes 10-member committee to bring 'Safety Manual' of dept**

- The Central Public Works Department (CPWD) has constituted a 10-member committee to bring out 'Safety Manual' of the department. According to a CPWD official, the committee, headed by Additional Director General (ADG) K M Soni.
- The move is aimed at ensuring safety of engineers and workers working in various projects of the agency which comes under the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry.

### **Important MOU's**

#### **IAF signs MoU with ISRO for crew selection, training for Gaganyaan Programme**

- Indian Air Force has signed an MoU with ISRO for crew selection and training for the prestigious Gaganyaan Programme. Air Vice Marshal R G K Kapoor handed over the MoU to R Hutton, Project Director of Gaganyaan Programme.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address last year, had announced the launch of Gaganyaan - India's maiden human spaceflight programme by 2022.
- This programme will provide a unique micro-gravity platform in space for conducting experiments and test for future technologies.

#### **NSIC signs MOU with Ministry of MSME for the Year 2018-19**

- The National Small Industries Corporation Limited, NSIC signed an MoU with Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises for the year 2019-20.
- The MoU envisages provision of enhanced services by NSIC under its marketing, financial, technology and other support services schemes for MSMEs in the country. The Corporation projects to increase revenue from operation by 22 per cent from two thousand 540 crore rupees in the year 2018-19 to three thousand 100 crore rupees in the year 2019-20

#### **Tech Mahindra signs Rs. 300 crore defence contract with Indian Navy**

- Tech Mahindra announced its biggest defence order worth over Rs 300 crore with the Indian Navy. As part of the 'Armed Forces Secure Access Card' (AFSAC) Project, Tech Mahindra will implement RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) based Access Control System across all naval bases and ships.
- The new AFSAC Card will replace the existing paper based Identity Card for all Navy personnel including dependents and ex-servicemen. Using the CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration) level 5 processes.
- Tech Mahindra will develop a secure application to manage the access control devices, network devices and the AFSAC Card through a data center. Scheduled to be implemented over the next two years, the project will ensure smooth issuance, handling, administration, management and life cycle support of AFSAC Cards on turnkey basis.

#### **MoU for Joint Collaboration on Cancer Research**

- Department of Biotechnology (DBT), M/o Science and Technology and the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Government of India today signed an MOU for supporting joint collaborative research programmes in the area of Cancer. MOU shall help strengthen the various initiatives specifically for cancer viz. Strategizing and prioritizing cancer research, development of new and affordable technologies, jointly design and fund clinical trials, coordinate and collaborate for translational research, interventions, training of manpower and infrastructure development.
- The clinicians shall work in coherence with Researchers to identify and develop collaborative research programmes and public health initiatives for awareness of the public at large.
- Various activities like joint clinical fellowships, intensive workshops on clinical research methodologies and protocol development shall work towards creating a community of trained manpower and provide a platform to utilize their acquired skills in the best possible manner.

#### **SBI ties up with FMCG arm of the Art of Living**

- The State Bank of India (SBI) has announced a strategic partnership with the FMCG arm of The Art of Living — Sri Sri Tattva. Under this partnership, YONO users can avail a discount of 15 per cent on the entire range of products offered by Sri Sri Tattva such as food, personal care, healthcare, homecare, BYOGI apparels and Shankara skincare products

### **HDFC Ergo and IBM to jointly setup data lab in India**

- IBM India announced that it has tied-up with HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, to co-create new Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solutions.
- Teams from HDFC ERGO and IBM Services will work together to develop and test new solutions. This will help to better address customer queries, ensure faster turnaround time and draw deeper customer insights for a better omni-channel experience.

### **ICICI Bank joins hands with travel portal Goibibo to launch multi-currency card**

- ICICI Bank announced the launch of a co-branded multi-currency card with online travel booking portal Goibibo.
- Anyone travelling abroad, whether they hold an ICICI Bank savings account or not, can apply for the Goibibo ICICI Bank Travel Card on the Goibibo website and mobile app. The card also includes benefits of up to Rs. 20,000, including gift vouchers of Rs. 15,000 from Goibibo. Additionally, customers get 40 paise discount on currency conversion rate on loading of a minimum of \$1,000.
- Further, they get the advantage of complimentary card protection from theft and loss up to Rs. 5 lakh. It also provides flat 15 per cent discount at more than 100 Indian restaurants across six foreign cities, including Kuala Lumpur, Dubai, London, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Bangkok. The card also offers travel insurance between Rs. 2 lakh and Rs. 10 lakh.

### **BHEL signs MoU with ARAI for e-mobility projects**

- Bharat Heavy Electricals and Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), an autonomous body affiliated to the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises have signed an MoU for cooperation on various projects related to e-mobility.
- BHEL's unique strength as technology developer and implementer and ARAI's advanced facilities and expertise in design, testing and certification of mobility products, will generate synergies in implementing solutions for Electric & Trolley Bus, EV Chargers, Battery & Charger testing, etc.

### **DCIL inks MoU with WAPCOS to identify suitable future projects**

- The Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCIL) has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with WAPCOS Limited to jointly identify suitable future projects and carry out geotechnical investigation and engineering consultancy in fields like Water Resources, Power and Infrastructure Port and Harbour dredging.
- The other areas include shallow water dredging, beach nourishment, lake rehabilitation, flood management, erosion control, river morphology and other related sectors.
- WAPCOS Limited is a mini-ratna public sector undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation

### **IIT Delhi to Build a Centre of Excellence for Waste to Wealth Technologies**

- Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government, Prof K. Vijay Raghavan, and Director, IIT Delhi, Prof V. Ramgopal Rao, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi for setting up the CoE
- The waste to wealth mission project has been approved under the recently constituted Prime Minister's Science Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC), which is an overarching body for assessment, creation and implementation of major scientific, technology and innovation interventions for India.

### **CBDT and GSTN sign pact to nab evaders, reduce black money generation**

- To nab tax evaders and reduce black money generation, the income tax department and Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) signed an agreement to facilitate exchange of data between the two.
- The I-T department will share key financial information, including status of I-T return filings, turnover of business, gross total income, and turnover ratio among others with GSTN, the information technology backbone of the two-year-old indirect tax regime
- The move will allow the I-T department to verify the information filed by businesses in income tax returns, compared to the annual GST returns.

### **Vodafone Idea signs multi-million dollar IT deal with IBM**

- India's largest telecom operator Vodafone Idea Ltd announced a five-year multi-million-dollar IT outsourcing deal with tech giant IBM. Vodafone Idea is collaborating with leading global technology partners including IBM to deploy new age technologies with built-in customisations and novel innovations.
- This five-year collaboration with IBM, opens new opportunities for us to partner together in domains like cloud, AI (Artificial Intelligence) and IoT (Internet of Things). We will also be able to leverage collateral from the cloud partnership already announced between Vodafone and IBM in Europe.

### **E-Governance Services India ties up with IIT – Kanpur to upscale Unnat Bharat Abhiyan**

- Common Service Centre's (CSC) e-Governance Services India Limited, a special purpose vehicle under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, has tied up with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Kanpur to upscale 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan'.
- 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan' is an initiative of the Ministry of HRD. It aims to find solutions to accelerate sustainable growth in rural India. Under the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, IIT-Kanpur has brought together 15 leading higher education institutions from Uttar Pradesh.
- These institutions have agreed to work with CSC for the development of villages under the scheme.

### **India, UK in talks to build copycat Naval supercarrier under 'Make in India'**

- The United Kingdom is in talks with the Indian government on building a new state-of-the-art aircraft carrier along the lines of Britain's HMS Queen Elizabeth as part of the ongoing 'Make in India' negotiations,
- The talks are under way for the Indian Navy to buy detailed plans for the 65,000-ton British warship to build a so-called "copycat supercarrier" to be named INS Vishal in 2022.
- The report noted that such a new Naval carrier would serve alongside India's 45,000-ton carrier INS Vikramaditya — bought from Russia in 2004 — and the currently under-construction 40,000-ton INS Vikrant. The design for UK aircraft carriers is owned by the British and French aerospace giants BAE and Thales.

### **India, US agree to strengthen economic co-operation**

- India and the United States have agreed to strengthen economic co-operation and bilateral trade by ensuring greater collaboration amongst stakeholders, including government, businesses and entrepreneurs.
- A bilateral trade meeting was held between the two countries in New Delhi. Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu and US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross co-chaired the meeting.

### **Shyam Benegal to direct Indo-Bangla film on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**

- A feature film on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to be jointly produced by India and Bangladesh will be directed by acclaimed filmmaker Shyam Benegal.
- The meeting focussed on various aspects of making the feature film on the founder of Bangladesh, co-production of which had earlier been announced by the prime ministers of both the countries.

### **Singapore-based cloud-services provider Deskera partners with IIT Kanpur**

- Singapore-headquartered Deskera, a cloud-services provider, partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur to provide small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of south-east Asia and India access to research opportunities.
- According to the partnership deal, around 100,000 SMEs associated with Deskera will be able to benefit from modern facilities offered by IIT Kanpur for industries such as manufacturing, aviation, logistics, and supply chain.
- IIT Kanpur is well-equipped with cutting-edge capabilities and will provide an additional layer of research to help enterprises in improved decision-making

### **Airtel to merge broadband satellite business with Hughes India unit**

- Bharti Airtel has decided to merge its broadband satellite, or VSAT, business with that of market leader Hughes Communications India, to create a stronger no. 1 in the space, in a bid to increase scale, improve operational efficiencies and target new customers in areas such as in-flight connectivity.
- After a merger, Hughes Communication will own 67% share of new entity and the remaining 33% will own by Bharti Airtel.

### **TAFE signs MoU with PCRA to aid efficient energy utilization in agriculture**

- Home-grown tractor maker Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE) and Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) have signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at promoting conservation of resources across the country.
- Under the collaboration, it is planned to jointly conduct Agriculture Workshops and Melas by involving TAFE's extensive dealership network in spreading awareness / sensitizing farmers on the advantages of better maintenance and upkeep of their tractors and implements, resulting in lesser fuel consumption and efficient utilization of resources, thereby helping farmers maximize their productivity and profitability

### **India, Turkey hold foreign office consultations**

- Turkey's Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Sedat Onal, who is on a three-day visit to India, met Gitesh A Sarma, Secretary (West) in the Ministry, and held cordial discussions on various aspects of bilateral ties including examining opportunities for enhancing trade and investment relations.
- Bilateral trade at present stands at around \$8.6 billion with a target of \$10 billion by 2020.

### **WHO Partnered with IFBA for eliminating industrially produced trans fats by 2023**

- Trans fat, also called the worst form of fat in food, responsible for over 5,00,000 deaths globally from coronary heart disease each year, could be eliminated from the industrially produced global food supply by 2023.
- The WHO has welcomed its partnership with the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA) to achieve this target. Eliminating industrially produced trans fat is one of the simplest and most effective ways to save lives and create a healthier food supply

### **Konkan Railways signs contract agreement with Nepal to supply two 1600 HP DEMU train sets**

- Konkan Railways Corporation Ltd has signed a contract agreement with Nepal's Department of Railways to supply two 1600 HP DEMU train sets. These trains will be used to operationalise railway link between Jayanagar in India and Kurtha in Nepal.
- The train sets will be manufactured by the Integrated Coach Factory, Chennai. The 34 kms Jayanagar-Kurtha Railway Link has been built by IRCON with Government of India financial grant under India-Nepal Development Partnership programme.
- The agreement was signed in Kathmandu in the presence of Indian Ambassador Manjeev Puri and Nepal's Secretary, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport Madhusudan Adhikari

### **BhartiAirtel and HDFC Life tied up to offer insurance for prepaid customers**

- BhartiAirtel and HDFC Life Insurance have tied up to offer life cover for customers who get a prepaid recharge done.
- Airtel's new Rs. 249-prepaid bundle — which will include 2 GB data, unlimited calls across networks, and 100 SMSes per day — will also offer a cover worth Rs. 4 lakh from HDFC Life. The recharge is valid for 28 days and the policy cover till recharge is active. A customer needs to enrol for insurance after the first recharge through either an SMS, the My Airtel App.
- The insurance will renew automatically for subsequent recharges. The policy will be available to all customers aged between 18-54, and requires no paperwork or medical examination, except for a declaration of good health from the customer. The policy or Certificate of Insurance (CoI) will be instantaneously delivered digitally, and a physical copy can be provided on request.

### **Paytm collaborated with Citibank to launch its 'Paytm First Card'**

- Paytm, has launched a credit card in partnership with global payments company Citi Bank. Called Paytm First Card, this is the first card of its kind launched in India by the American card company, which has similar exclusive partnerships across sectors in the US.
- It is also the first white-label credit card of its kind to offer unlimited one per cent cash-back without restrictions that would get auto-credited to the card every month. For example, on a spend of Rs 100, a person will get an assured Rs 1 as cash-back. The company's cash-back driven credit card comes at a time when cash-backs are drying up.
- The card will be accepted internationally and is contactless enabled. There is also a full waiver of annual fee of Rs 500 on spends exceeding Rs 50,000 per year.

### **HDFC partners with IMGC to provide mortgage-guarantee-backed home loan**

- Housing finance major HDFC Limited has partnered with India Mortgage Guarantee Corporation (IMGC) to offer a mortgage-guaranteed home loan product.
- The partnership aims to make it possible for HDFC to further penetrate home loan market and access an enlarged customer base, helping them to own a home of their choice. This product will help HDFC to offer more loan to a home loan customer on an enhanced eligibility.
- It also helps customers to avail loans beyond their retirement period. The finer details of the product are being worked out and will be known to market soon.

### **Ola launches credit card in partnership with SBI**

- The ride-hailing company unveiled Ola Money SBI Credit Card in partnership with SBI Cards, one of the largest credit card issuers in the country. The card is powered by payments technology company Visa.
- The SoftBank-backed cab aggregator is targeting 10-million Ola Money SBI Credit Cards to be issued by 2022.

### **SRFI-HCL tie-up for improving Indian squash**

- The Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) announced a tie-up with HCL with an aim to improve the health of the sport in the country. Through 'HCL Squash Podium Programme', multiple tournaments will be organised at both the senior and junior level besides clinics for the existing coaches.
- SRFI president Debendranath Sarangi plan to conduct 12 PSA World Tour and Challenger Tour events every year across the country.



### **Tech Mahindra partners with French digital content solutions firm RakutenAquadas**

- IT services firm Tech Mahindra and French digital content publishing firm RakutenAquafadas signed an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) to collaborate on building enhanced customer experience offerings.
- RakutenAquafadas and Tech Mahindra aim to build a Customer Experience Offering leveraging the suite of software that RakutenAquafadas provides for digital publishing.
- Collaboration with RakutenAquafadas will help us further drive innovation in the Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Digital Transformation space, and enable us to enhance customer experience from the forefront

### **Ola launches credit card in tie-up with SBI Card**

- Ride-hailing company Ola has launched Ola Money SBI Credit Card in partnership with SBI Card, one of India's largest credit card issuers. Powered by Visa, the Bangalore-based company aims to provide a flexible and convenient payment system alongside several benefits to its customers.
- The company says that it offers a simplified application process with no joining fees as Ola users will be able to apply, view and manage their credit card directly on the Ola app. Ola is targeting 10 million Ola Money SBI Credit Cards by 2022. SBI Card is looking at strengthening its card portfolio through unique initiatives.

### **MOSPI decides to merge NSSO, CSO into NSO in a major restructuring move**

- The Statistics and Programme Implementation has decided to merge the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) into National Statistical Office (NSO) in a major restructuring move.
- According to the order, Statistical Wing, comprising the NSO with constituents as the CSO and the NSSO, to be an integral part of the main ministry. The NSSO conducts large-scale surveys and brings out reports on health, education, household expenditure and other social and economic indicators. The NSSO and the CSO were functioning independently.

## **Important Summit & Conference**

### **Urban 20 Mayors Summit Held in Tokyo**

- The 2019 Urban 20 Summit was hosted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, led by Governor Yuriko Koike from 21-22 May 2019. The Urban 20 Mayors Summit takes place one month ahead of the G20 Summit.
- The U20 cities convey their joint recommendations in a form of a Communiqué, to the G20 Chair, to be presented to the G20 Leaders during the Summit. The 2019 G20 Summit will be the fourteenth meeting of Group of Twenty and will be held on 28–29 June 2019 in Osaka, Japan. It will be the first-ever G20 summit to be hosted in Japan.

### **Fifth Smart Cities India Expo inaugurated in New Delhi**

- The 5th Smart Cities India 2019 expo, including Transport India, Solar India, Buildings India and Water India expos, was inaugurated by Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, at the Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- Organised by India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) and Exhibitions India Group, the event builds upon Government of India's 'Smart Cities Mission' through a display of a vast array of products and solutions relevant to building smart cities in India.

### **Taiwan Expo 2019 begins in Delhi**

- Taiwan Expo 2019 began in New Delhi. Representative of Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre Tien Chung-Kwang and Chairman of Taiwan External Trade Development Council, TAITRA James CF Huang inaugurated the three-day event in the presence of Joint Secretary Praveen Bonigala and ITPO Chairman LC Goyal.
- There are 10 theme pavilions at the expo focusing on green products, health care, agriculture, tourism, biotechnology and electrical equipments. 150 exhibitors are showcasing their products in 230 stalls. The expo is open between 10 AM to 6 PM and the entry is free.

### **IBSA Sherpas Meet Concluded In Cochin**

- The IBSA (India, Brazil & South Africa) Sherpas' Meeting, following the 9th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Meeting, was held in Cochin from May 3-5, 2019.
- Sherpas reviewed the progress made under IBSA, since their last meeting. IBSA Sherpas also reviewed the functioning of the Joint Working Groups. The Sherpas appreciated the various events organized during last one year to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of IBSA and the other events planned in this context.

### **The first global science exhibition in Mumbai**

- India's first global science exhibition, 'Vigyan Samagam', began at the Nehru Science Centre in Mumbai.

- This multi-venue science exhibition, which will take place in planned in the four cities - Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and New Delhi - is scheduled to take place for a duration of 11 months.
- This is jointly organised by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Department of Science and Technology (DST), the funding agencies of these projects, the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) and Ministry of Culture.

### **WTO ministerial meeting of developing countries to take place on May 13-14**

- The World Trade Organisation, WTO, ministerial meeting of developing countries will take place on 13-14 in New Delhi.
- It will provide an opportunity to the Ministers to discuss various issues and the way forward. On the first day, there will be a meeting of senior officers of the participating countries. Sixteen developing countries and six Least Developed Countries are participating in the meeting.

### **India Participates in Venice Biennale First Time in 8 Years**

- The Venice International Art Exhibition or simply the Venice Biennale is one of the oldest, most important and prestigious international art exhibitions in the world started in 1895. The 58th International Art Exhibition is being held from May 11 to November 24, 2019 curated by Ralph Rugoff.
- The theme of the 58th International Art Exhibition 'May You Live in Interesting Times'
- India is participating at the art world's oldest Biennale after a gap of 8 years since 2011.
- The India Pavilion has been curated by Roobina Karode of KNMA (Kiran Nadar Museum of Arts) on the title *Our Time for a Future Caring* which reflects upon Gandhi's values of *satyagraha* (non-violence) and unity & equality.

### **UN to hold 2020 ocean conference in Lisbon**

- United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided to hold its 2020 high-level conference in Portugal's Lisbon to support the sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources.
- United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Lisbon, from June 2 to 6, 2020.
- The theme of the 2020 conference will be- Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions.

### **Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations to open in Beijing**

- Conference on Asian Civilizations Dialogue (CDAC) will be held in Beijing, China. The conference will host the opening ceremony and six parallel sub-forums around the theme of Asian civilization exchanges and mutual understanding. The Asian Cultural Carnival, Asian Civilization Week, Asian Food Festival and other activities are planned to be organized alongside this conference.
- Around 1500 experts from around the world, including heads of state and high-level governmental representatives, are invited to attend the conference which seeks to promote intercultural dialogue in view of building an "Asian Community of Shared Future".
- As part of this conference, the Ministry of Education of China in collaboration with UNESCO will organize the parallel panel: *Safeguarding the Diversity of Asian Civilizations*.

### **2019 Meetings of the COPs to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions**

- The fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-14), the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-9) and the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-9) will be held from 29 April to 10 May 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The meetings will include joint sessions covering matters of relevance to at least two conventions and separate sessions of the meetings of the each of the three COPs. The theme of the meetings will be "Clean Planet, Healthy People: Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste".

### **India-Botswana hold Foreign Office Consultations in Delhi**

- The third round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Botswana was held in New Delhi.
- The Indian side was led by Joint Secretary, East and Southern Africa in the Ministry of External Affairs Dr. Neena Malhotra. The Botswana side was headed by Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation of Botswana Government, Tapiwa Mongwa.
- The deliberations provided an opportunity to review the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including political, economic, commercial, defence, consular and international cooperation.

### **11th Joint Consular Committee meet between India and Iran held in New Delhi**

- The 11th Joint Consular Committee meeting between India and Iran took place in New Delhi.



- The early conclusion of Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance on civil and commercial matters and extending the longer duration of e-Visa for each other nationals on reciprocity.
- The meeting provided an opportunity to review the status of ongoing cooperation in consular and visa related issues and to discuss ways and means to further expand people to people contacts and promote friendly exchanges between India and Iran.

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

#### **BSE launches 'BSE StAR MF' mobile app for its mutual fund platform**

- BSE has launched 'BSE StAR MF' app to enable more participation and help mutual fund distributors process transactions faster.
- BSE StAR MF mobile app supports real-time client registration and paperless transactions, creates and uploads mandate for SIPs, generates the basket of multiple orders, tracks and allows the distributor to analyse his business at his fingertips. BSE StAR MF is the exchange's mutual fund platform which helps distributors purchase and redeem mutual fund units on behalf of their clients

### **Important Defence News**

#### **Army Conducts Children Summer Adventure Camp 2019 at Manali**

- Western Command Children Summer Adventure Camp 2019 is being organised at Manali from 27 May to 02 June 2019. The seven day camp is being conducted under the aegis of Rising Star Brigade.
- This camp aims to provide a wholesome outdoor exposure to young boys and girls through educational, recreational and adventure activities. A total of 218 children from various units of Western Command of Indian Army have volunteered to attend the camp.

#### **DRDO successfully test fires Akash-1S surface to air defence missile system**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired the Akash-1S surface to air defence missile system.
- Akash-1S is a new version of the missile which is fitted with an indigenous seeker. In the last two days, this is the second successful test of the missile by the DRDO. The Akash-1S is capable of striking down enemy fighter jets and drones very effectively.

#### **DRDO test fires guided bomb from Sukhoi combat jet**

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired an indigenously-developed 500 kg class guided bomb from a Sukhoi combat jet at Pokhran in Rajasthan. The defence ministry said the guided bomb achieved the desired range and hit the target with high precision.
- The DRDO successfully flight tested a 500 kg class Inertial Guided Bomb from Su-30 MKI Aircraft from the Pokhran test range in Rajasthan. The Indian Air Force successfully test fired the aerial version of the supersonic BrahMos cruise missile from a Sukhoi jet at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The BrahMos cruise missile travels at a speed of Mach 2.8, nearly three times that of sound.

#### **Assam Rifles battalion, Indian Coast Guard ship sign affiliation charter**

- An affiliation charter was signed between 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion of the Assam Rifles and the Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Shaurya' with an aim to enhance inter-armed forces cooperation and utilise each other's assets for training and sports. The objective of the affiliation is to promote bilateral cooperation between the Assam Rifles and the ICG in the field of exchange of information/personnel, build-up camaraderie for training, sports/adventure and sustainable development
- The charter was signed by the director generals of the two sides at an impressive ceremony held at Laitkor in Shillong. The Indian Coast Guard, with 142 ships and 62 aircraft, is one of the youngest armed force under the Ministry of Defence.
- Third (Naga Hills) Battalion Assam Rifles is the oldest battalion of the force raised in 1835 as 'The Cachar Levy' comprising 750 personnel of all ranks for guarding the Eastern Frontier of Assam from Brahmaputra river to the Cachar Hills.

#### **Pakistan Successfully Test-Fires Ballistic Missile Shaheen-II**

- Pakistan successfully test-fired a long-range ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, capable of hitting targets as far as 1,500 kilometers away, bringing major Indian cities under its range. The launch was aimed at ensuring operational readiness of the Army Strategic Forces Command.

- Shaheen-II is a highly capable missile which fully meets Pakistan's strategic needs towards maintenance of desired deterrence stability in the region.

### **Australia, Japan, South Korea and US kick off inaugural Pacific Vanguard naval exercise near Guam**

- The United States, Japan, South Korea and Australia have kicked off “first-of-its-kind” naval drills near Guam, the U.S. Navy. The “Pacific Vanguard” exercise brings together more than 3,000 sailors from the four countries to “sharpen skills and strengthen practical cooperation at sea.
- The drills will focus on live fire exercises, defensive counter-air operations, anti-submarine warfare, and replenishment at sea.
- The Royal Australian Navy contributed two frigates to the exercise, HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Parramatta. The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force sent destroyers JS Ariake and JS Asahi, and South Korea the Republic of Korea Navy destroyer ROKS Wang Geon.

### **IAF successfully fires BrahMos air version missile from frontline Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft**

- Indian Air Force successfully fired the BrahMos air version missile from its frontline Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft.
- The missile, designed and developed by BAPL, weighing 2.5 tonnes, has a range of 290km and speed of Mach 3 making it difficult for the air-defence elements of the enemy to counter it. One Mach is equal to the speed of sound.
- The Indian Air Force became the first Air Force in the world to have successfully fired an air launched 2.8 Mach surface attack missile of this category on a sea target on November 2017. This was the second such live launch of the weapon. The software development of the aircraft was undertaken by the IAF engineers while HAL carried out mechanical and electrical modifications on the aircraft. The missile has been developed jointly in collaboration with Russia.

### **GRSE to build 8 anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft for Indian Navy**

- Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE) and India's defence ministry signed a contract for construction and supply of eight anti-submarine warfare shallow water crafts (ASWSWCs) for Indian Navy.
- The contract worth Rs. 6,311.32 crore was signed today by Joint Secretary and Acquisition Manager (Maritime Systems) Ravi Kant on behalf of Ministry of Defence and S S Dogra, Director (Finance), on behalf of GRSE, in New Delhi. The first ship is to be delivered within 42 months from contract signing date and subsequent balance ships delivery schedule will be two ships per year. The project will have to be completed within 84 months from date of signing the contract.
- Kolkata based GRSE has been a pioneer warship builder of the nation having delivered the highest number of warships till date since its inception as a DPSU in 1960

### **Defence ministry approves Navy's Rs. 3,600-crore deal with Russia for 10 Kamov-31 helicopters**

- Defence ministry has approved the procurement of 10 Kamov Ka-31 Airborne Early Warning and Control helicopters for the Indian Navy. The cost of the deal would be around Rs. 3,600 crore and the 10 helicopters would be deployed on the aircraft carriers and warships of the Navy including the INS Vikrant and Grigorovich-class frigates.
- The aim of the choppers is to sanitise the air space around the battle groups led by the aircraft carriers while carrying out operations in the sea or anti-submarine warfare operations.

### **Indian Navy's submarine 'Vela' of Project 75 launched**

- The Navy launched the Scorpene-class submarine Vela, the fourth of six underwater warships being built in India with French collaboration, with an aim to boost Indian capability to defend and secure the strategic sea lanes. The Vela submarine will undergo a number of tests conducted by the Navy before it is commissioned in the defence fleet.
- The state-owned Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited has entered into a contract for construction and transfer of technology for six Scorpene-class subs with French collaborator Naval Group (formerly DCNS). INS Vela is the fourth in that series.

### **INS Ranjit decommissioned at Visakhapatnam**

- Frontline missile destroyer of the Indian Navy 'INS Ranjit' was decommissioned at the Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam, after serving the Indian navy for 36 years.
- INS Ranjit, the third of the five Kashin-class destroyers built by the erstwhile USSR, was commissioned on September 15 1983. INS Rajat has sailed for 2,190 days, covering over 7,43,000 nautical miles, equivalent to navigating around the world 35 times and 3.5 times the distance from the earth to the moon

### **Indian Army to commemorate 2019 as 'Year of next of kin'**

- The Indian Army is commemorating this year as the 'Year of Next of Kin' and plans to reach out to the next of kin of battle casualties, ex-servicemen and serving soldiers to inform them of entitled financial benefits, welfare schemes and help resolve pension related problems.
- Bipin Rawat, Army Chief General in January stated that the army will observe 2019 as the year for the next of kin. Last year, stress was laid on the disabled soldiers, while this year its on the next of kin of the deceased soldiers.
- It will also seek the involvement of the defence ministry, Nepal Embassy (due to several soldiers being recruited from Nepal), Sainik Boards, banks and welfare agencies such as the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS). The Directorate of Indian Army Veterans will be the nodal agency.

### **IAF gets first Apache Guardian attack helicopter**

- US aerospace major Boeing has handed over first of the 22 Apache Guardian attack helicopters to the Indian Air Force, nearly three-and-half years after a multi-billion dollar deal for the choppers was sealed. Air Marshal AS Butola accepted the first Apache on behalf of the Indian Air Force from US Government.
- The first AH-64E (I) - Apache Guardian helicopter was formally handed over to the Indian Air Force at Boeing production facility in Mesa, Arizona, the US. The AH-64E Apache is a leading multi-role attack helicopter and is flown by the US Army.
- The IAF had signed a multi-billion dollar contract with the US government and Boeing Ltd in September 2015 for 22 Apache helicopters. The first batch of these helicopters is scheduled to be shipped to India by Jul this year.

### **Chinese navy launches two new guided missile destroyers**

- China has commissioned two more guided missile destroyers taking the total of such warships to 20 with more in the pipeline. Two Type 052D guided missile destroyers were launched in Dalian, a coastal city,
- Their commissioning marked the 19th and 20th of launches of their kind, and are named as Tangshan and Suzhou, the report said and quoted Chinese analysts as saying that plans are afoot to build more guided missile destroyers.
- China now has 20 Type 052Ds either in active service or being fitted out for service soon. Destroyers are fast, highly manoeuvrable long distance warships which are also used to accompany the aircraft carriers.

### **India to host part of International Army Games**

- India for the first time will host and participate in a major army competition involving eight countries, including China and Russia, in Jaisalmer. The event called the 'Army International Scout Masters Competition 2019' will be held in August this year.
- The fifth Army International Scouts Masters Competition 2019 is being held in Jaisalmer. Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe, Armenia, Belarus and China besides India are participating. The competition is being held in India for the first time under the Indian Army and being organised by its Konark Corps at Jaisalmer Military Station.
- India will host the fifth Army International Scout Masters Competition as a part of the Games.

### **ICGS Vighraha decommissions at Vizag**

- Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Vighraha, a frontline offshore patrol vessel decommissioned on May 15<sup>th</sup>. After 29 glorious years of service from 1990 to 2019, the ship was decommissioned at the coast guard jetty. ICGS Vighraha was the seventh offshore patrol vessel built by the Mazagaon Dock Limited, Mumbai and it was commissioned on April 12, 1990.
- The ship was later based at Visakhapatnam and has been instrumental in protecting the east coast in general and Andhra Pradesh coast in particular since then.

### **Indian Navy successfully test-fires MRSAM missile**

- The Indian Navy has successfully test-fired a Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM), achieving a significant milestone to enhance its anti-air warfare capability. The test-firing of the missile was undertaken on the western seaboard by Indian naval ships Kochi and Chennai.
- The test-firing of the missile was carried out jointly by the Indian Navy, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries.

### **Spanish Naval ship on Mumbai visit from May 18 to 23**

- Spanish Navy ship 'Mendez Nunez' (Frigate) with a crew of 30 officers and 135 sailors is on Mumbai visit from May 18 to 23. The ship is on Overseas Deployment and is docked at the Mumbai Port Trust.
- According to the communique, Indian Naval Ships (INS) and submarines have been visiting Spanish ports during overseas deployments. The visit by the Spanish Navy ship to Mumbai would further strengthen the existing bonds between the two navies

## Exercises:

### Indo-French joint naval exercise Varuna 19.1 begins off Goa coast

- The first part of the Indo-French joint naval exercise, Varuna 19.1 is being held off the Goa coast from 1 to 10 May 2019. The exercise will see the participation of the French Navy's aircraft carrier FNS Charles de Gaulle, two destroyers, FNS Forbin and FNS Provence, the frigate FNS Latouche-Treville, the tanker FNS Marne and a nuclear submarine.
- From the Indian side, the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, destroyer INS Mumbai, the Teg-class frigate, INS Tarkash, the Shishumar- class submarine, INS Shankul, and the Deepak- class fleet tanker, INS Deepak, are taking part in the exercise.
- Varuna 19.2, the second part of the exercise, is scheduled to be held in May end in Djibouti.

### Indian Armed Forces carried out Exercise Bull Strike at Teresa Island in Andaman and Nicobar

- The military drill, called Exercise Bullstrike, was conducted to showcase joint operations capability of the armed forces. During the exercise, the army personnel got the chance to display their prowess by undertaking company level airborne operation at Teressa Island.
- A number of combat drills were carried out during the exercise, with 170 troops from the three services undertaking para drop operations in a Combat Free Fall and Static Line mode.

### India, Singapore conduct SIMBEX-19 naval exercise in the South China Sea

- The 26th Edition of Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) -19 has commenced in the South China Sea. In addition to IN Ships Kolkata and Shakti, Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft P8I will also participate in the exercise along with Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) Ships steadfast and valiant, maritime patrol aircraft Fokker-50 and F-16 fighter aircraft.
- The four-day naval exercise will include various maritime combat drills such as advanced aerial tracking, coordinated targeting tactical exercises and weapon firing on aerial and surface targets

### 8th Indo-Myanmar coordinated Navy patrol begins

- Navy ships from Myanmar reached Port Blair to attend the opening ceremony of the 8th Indo-Myanmar Coordinated Patrol (IMCOR) which will be held from May 20-28.
- Myanmar Navy Ship UMS King TabinShweHtee (773) and UMS Inlay (OPV-54) have arrived at Port Blair on May 20 for the 'Opening Ceremony' of the 8th Indo-Myanmar coordinated patrol (IMCOR), at Andaman and Nicobar Command. Myanmar ships UMS King TabinShweHtee and UMS Inlay would undertake a coordinated patrol (CORPAT) with Indian Naval Ship Saryu under the program.
- CORPAT initiative between the two navies is meant to address issues of terrorism, illegal fishing, drug trafficking, human trafficking, poaching and other illegal activities inimical to the interest of both nations.

## Important Science and Technology News

### ISRO launches earth observation satellite RISAT-2B

- Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully launched its earth observation satellite RISAT-2B from Sriharikota. ISRO's trusted workhorse PSLV-C46 carrying RISAT-2B blasted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.
- The 615 kg satellite was released into the orbit 15 minutes after the lift-off. RISAT-2B meant for application in fields such as surveillance, agriculture, forestry and disaster management support. It will replace the RISAT-2, which was launched in 2009.
- There are several new features in RISAT-2B, it is having expanded Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) making it an advanced earth observation satellite, operating in spotlight mode, mode and mosaic mode.

### ISRO plans to conduct seven mega missions over next 10 years

- Space Agency ISRO, which is gearing up for the ambitious Chandrayaan-2 this July. It's planning to accomplish six other mega missions over the next 10 years, apart from Chandrayaan-2. Of these, only two have been defined — XPoSat and Aditya-L1 missions.
- The four other undefined missions, which are in the planning stage, are: Mangalyaan-2, Venus mission, Lunar Polar Exploration and Exoworlds. The XPoSat, or the X-ray Polarimeter Satellite, is a dedicated mission to study polarisation. The spacecraft will carry Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays (POLIX) payload which will study the degree and angle of polarisation of bright X-ray sources in the energy range 5-30 keV. The satellite has a mission life of five years.

- Aditya-L1 is an important mission planned for 2021, to study the solar corona. The spacecraft will be placed in a halo orbit around the Sun-Earth Lagrangian point (L1), about 1.5 million km from the Earth

### **China launches two satellites for scientific experiments**

- China successfully sent two Tianhui II-01 satellites into orbit from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China's Shanxi Province.
- The satellites were launched by a Long March 4B carrier rocket, which was the 303rd mission of the Long March series carrier rockets. The satellites will be used for scientific experiments, land resource survey, geographic survey and mapping.

### **ISRO Launch of RISAT-2BR1 Radar Imaging Satellite to Happen by End-May 2019**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch its latest radar imaging satellite (RISAT), the RISAT-2BR1, by the end of next month. The launch will reportedly take place on May 22, as per the present schedule.
- India will use one of ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) reusable rockets, which have offered significant progress and sophistication of technology in terms of advancement in space technologies.

### **Momo-3 is Japan's first private rocket to reach space**

- A Japanese aerospace startup successfully launched a small rocket, making it the country's first privately developed model to reach outer space.
- The unmanned rocket launched from its test site in Taiki on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido and it reached about 110 km in altitude before falling into the Pacific Ocean after 10 minutes of flight time.

### **SpaceX launched the Falcon 9 rocket with Dragon spacecraft**

- Elon Musk's Space Exploration Technologies Corp. launched its 17th commercial resupply mission to the International Space Station for longtime customer NASA
- The 213-foot-tall (65-meter) rocket lifted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. Dragon will deliver almost 5,500 pounds of science, supplies and hardware to the Space Station

### **The US Air Force successfully tested a laser system to shoot down missiles**

- The US Air Force has successfully used a laser weapons system to shoot down multiple missiles while in flight. The system is designed to eventually be mounted on aircraft to be used to protect the vehicle from attacks. The Air Force Research Laboratory conducted the test at the US Army's White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.
- The system, called the Self-Protect High Energy Laser Demonstrator (SHiELD), was used from the ground, and was used to shoot down "multiple air launched missiles in flight."
- SHiELD also not the only laser technology that's in testing by the US military — the US Army tested a system mounted on an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter last summer, and the US Navy is working with Lockheed Martin on its own systems to install on warships.

### **IIT-B researchers develop 'Made in India' microprocessor**

- Engineers from the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) have developed a microprocessor called AJIT, the first to be conceptualised, designed, developed and manufactured in India.
- The innovation, which has brought industry, academia and the government together, could reduce the country's dependence on imports.
- The project was funded by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and IIT Bombay. Powai Labs, a Mumbai-based company, has invested in the venture, and will own, market and support the product.

### **Amazon's Jeff Bezos unveils lunar lander project 'Blue Moon'**

- Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world and head of space company Blue Origin, announced his intent to participate in the new race to the Moon with a high-tech lander to carry vehicles and equipment.
- Blue Moon is a vehicle and has been under development for the last three years. However, no specific date of launch has been announced by Jeff yet. The vehicle will be capable of carrying scientific instruments, four self-driving rovers and a future pressurised vehicle for humans.

### **Samsung has launched a new sensor for ultra-high resolution mobile photography**

- Samsung Electronics Co has introduced the world's highest-resolution image sensors that will help smartphones capture images at vibrant ultra-high resolution. Samsung Electronics has come up with ISOCELL Bright GW1, which is a 64MP image sensor.
- Samsung's 0.8 micrometer pixel image sensor line up, which is now available from existing 20 megapixel to the new ultra-high 64 megapixel resolutions.



- ISOCELL Bright GM2 is a 48Mp image sensor that also adopts Tetracell technology in low-light environments and a remosaic algorithm in well-lit settings, bringing highly-detailed pictures with natural and vivid colors. GM2, like GW1, adopts DCG as well for added performance and Super PD for fast autofocus.

### **ISRO launched 'India Young Scientist Programme' (Yuvika-2019)**

- Indian Space Research Organisation has launched a special programme for School Children called "Young Scientist Programme" "YUvaVigyanIKaryakram" from this year, in tune with the Government's vision "Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan".
- The programme will be of two weeks duration during summer holidays (second half of May 2019) and the schedule will include invited talks, experience sharing by the eminent scientists, facility and lab visits, exclusive sessions for discussions with experts, practical and feedback sessions.
- It is proposed to select 3 students each from each State/ Union Territory to participate in this programme covering CBSE, ICSE and State syllabus. ISRO Chairman Dr K. Sivan inaugurated ISRO's Young Scientist Programme called 'Yuvika 2019' at SatishDhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

### **DRDO successfully conducts flight test of ABHYAS drone from ITR in Odisha**

- India successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS - High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) from a test range in Odisha. The trial, carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Balasore, was tracked by various radars and electro-optic systems.
- The configuration of ABHYAS is designed on an in-line small gas turbine engine and it uses indigenously developed MEMS based navigation system.

### **Isro's new commercial arm NewSpace India officially inaugurated**

- NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro), was officially inaugurated in Bengaluru. NSIL's main objective is to scale up industry participation in Indian space programmes
- NSIL was inaugurated by Isro's honorary adviser, Dr K Kasturirangan in the presence of chairman Dr K Sivan.
- NSIL was incorporated on March 6 2019, for commercially utilising research and development activities carried out by ISRO in the area of space with an authorised share capital of Rs 100 crore and initial paid up capital of Rs 10 crore.
- NSIL will act as an aggregator for all space related activities in industry and develop private entrepreneurship in space related technologies. Specifically, it will be responsible for manufacturing the and production of Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) through technology transfer mechanisms.

### **ISRO chairman flags off shipment of India's largest liquid hydrogen storage tank**

ISRO Chairman K Sivan flagged off the shipment of India's largest liquid hydrogen storage tank at the VRV Asia Pacific's manufacturing plant at Sri City in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

- VRV Asia Pacific manufactured the storage tank with a Liquid Nitrogen (LIN) shield, in a collaborative effort with Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, under the Make in India initiative.
- The storage capacity of the tank is 120 kilo liters. Liquid hydrogen is used as fuel for satellite launch vehicles.

## **Important Ranking and Indexes**

<b>Index</b>	<b>India's Rank</b>	<b>Top</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Kids Right Index	117 / 181	Iceland	5
IMD World Competitiveness Ranking	43	Singapore	-

### **Reliance Industries overtakes Indian Oil to become largest company by revenue**

- Richest Indian Mukesh Ambani's oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries has toppled state-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) to become the country's biggest company by revenue.
- Reliance in the 2018-19 fiscal year that ended March 31, reported a turnover of Rs 6.23 lakh crore. In comparison, IOC posted a turnover of Rs 6.17 lakh crore for the fiscal, according to regulatory filings by the two companies.
- It was also the most profitable company in the country with a net profit of more than double that of IOC in FY2019

### **India was 4th biggest military spender last year**

- India was the world's fourth biggest military spender last year behind the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia, according to new data think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released. India was the fifth largest military spender in 2017. According to the SIPRI data, China was the second-largest military spender last year. Beijing increased its military expenditure by 5% to \$250 billion in 2018. It accounted for 14% of global military

spending. In contrast, India's military spending went up by 3.1% to \$66.5 billion. India accounts for 3.7% of the global defence spending.

### **PM Narendra Modi 2nd most followed politician globally on social media**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the second most followed politician in the world on social media after former US President Barack Obama.
- Modi has a total audience of 110.9 million on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Obama's total following stood at 182.7 million, the report released by digital marketing platform SEMrush. Narendra Modi has overtaken the present US President Donald Trump who has 96 million followers globally.

### **TCS overtakes RIL to become most valued company again**

- Software services major Tata Consultancy Services reclaimed the status of the country's most valued firm by market valuation, surpassing Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL). RIL's market valuation dropped to Rs. 7,95,628.55 crore on the BSE. The market capitalisation (m-cap) of TCS stood at Rs. 8,13,779.67 crore, which is Rs. 18,151.12 crore more than that of RIL's valuation.

### **Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi Airport ranked among top 10 in the world**

- Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport has been ranked as the world's eighth best in a survey conducted by AirHelp.
- According to the survey, Hamad International Airport in Doha in Qatar was rated the world's best airport with 8.39 out of 10, followed by Tokyo International Airport in Japan and Athens International Airport in Greece.
- The Hyderabad airport was ranked eighth, with a score of 8.27 out of 10, just below Singapore's Changi Airport and above the Tenerife North Airport in Spain
- Kuwait International Airport and Lisbon Portela Airport in Portugal were given the least scores in the survey.
- The New Jersey Hub was ranked as the worst airport in the United States (US) in the 2019.
- Qatar Airways ranked as the top airline for the second consecutive year, followed by American Airlines, Aeromexico, SAS Scandinavian Airlines, and Qantas in the top five.
- Hamad International Airport, Qatar (DOH) ranked as top.

## **Important Books and Authors**

Author	Book
Jairam Ramesh	"Chequered Brilliance: The Many Lives of V K Krishna Menon",
Ruskin Bond	Coming Round the Mountain

### **Science, Technology Secretary releases four popular science books**

- Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Professor Ashutosh Sharma released four popular science books published by Vigyan Prasar in New Delhi.
- The books released are 'Voyage to Antarctica' authored by Felix Bast, 'Story of Consciousness' by Govind Bhattacharjee, 'An Autobiography of Moon' written by Ramesh Shishu and 'Shambhu Nath De - The discovery of cholera toxins' by MS Murthy.

## **Important Sports News Cricket**

### **India retains top spot in ICC Test rankings**

- India retained its top position in the ICC Test rankings, while England remained the number one ODI side in the latest annual rankings released in Dubai.
- India also moved two points in second position in the ODI rankings behind England.

### **Amul to be principal sponsor of Afghanistan cricket team at ICC World Cup**

- Dairy major Amul will be the principal sponsor of the Afghanistan cricket team for the upcoming ICC World Cup hosted by England and Wales. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which markets dairy products under Amul brand, exports around Rs. 200 crore worth of products annually to the neighbouring country.

- This is the third time that Amul is sponsoring a cricket team in the World Cup.
- Amul's logo will appear on the leading arm of Afghanistan team playing jerseys as well as on the training kits throughout the World Cup from May 30 to July 14, 2019.

### **Mumbai beat Chennai by one run to win record 4th IPL title**

- Mumbai Indians became IPL champions for the fourth time after defeating Chennai Super Kings by one run in a thrilling final in Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium Hyderabad.
- Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the most successful wicket-keeper in the history of IPL by taking his dismissals tally to 132, surpassing his India teammate Dinesh Karthik.

### **GS Lakshmi appointed first female match referee by ICC**

- GS Lakshmi has become the first ever woman to be appointed to the ICC International Panel of Match Referees. The 51-year-old's appointment comes close on the heels of Claire Polosak becoming the first ever woman umpire to stand in a men's ODI. Lakshmi first officiated in domestic women's cricket in 2008-09, and has overseen three women's ODI matches and three women's T20I matches.

### **Kohli Bags CEAT International Batsman & Cricketer of the Year Award**

- India captain Virat Kohli bagged the International Cricketer and Batsman of the Year award during the CEAT Cricket Rating (CCR) International Awards 2019. Jasprit Bumrah was adjudged as International Bowler of the Year.
- CEAT awarded Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan for outstanding bowling and Australian batsman Aaron Finch for his exceptional performance in T20.
- Young prodigy Yashasvi Jaiswal, who performed exceptionally over the year was awarded Junior Cricketer of the Year while Kuldeep Yadav took home outstanding performance of the year award. Ashutosh Aman was awarded Domestic Cricketer of the Year. The legendary Mohinder Amarnath was bestowed with the 'CCR International Lifetime Achievement Award'.

### **ICC Releases Official Song for Cricket World Cup 2019**

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Friday released the official song for Cricket World Cup 2019 - 'Stand By', a collaboration between new artist LORYN and well-known British band, Rudimental.
- The World Cup is one of the world's biggest global sporting events. The 10-team tournament will get underway with hosts England facing South Africa at the Kennington Oval, London. India will begin their World Cup 2019 campaign against South Africa on June 5 at the Rose Bowl in Southampton.

### **Helo becomes team sponsor of Indian Wheelchair Cricket**

- Helo, India's social media platform, has announced its partnership with the Indian Wheelchair Cricket Association as the team sponsor for Team India during the Asia Cup 2019.
- This association makes Helo the first social media app to host and promote Indian Wheelchair Cricket on its platform. In preparation for the tournament, more than 200 Wheelchair Cricket players have joined Helo as part of this campaign to connect with their local communities across India.

### **ICC launches criiio campaign on eve of World Cup**

- The ICC has launched the criiio campaign on the eve of the men's World Cup, bringing together 460 million people playing cricket globally to celebrate the magnificent diversity of cricket.
- The ICC asked the fans to join the social cricket tribe by sharing pictures and videos of where and how they play cricket across the world using the newly launched #criiio and visiting criiio.com
- This builds on the success of the recent user-generated social media initiative #WorldWideWickets and is the first of a series of programs that will be launched by the ICC over the next 12 months.

## **Football**

### **Raheem Sterling awarded with Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year**

- Manchester City's forward Raheem Sterling has been named as the Football Writers' Association (FWA) Footballer of the Year 2019.
- With this win, Sterling became the first Manchester City player to win the football's oldest individual award. The player also received praise for his courageous stance against racism in the game.

### **Barca legend Xavi Hernandez announces his retirement**

- FC Barcelona legend midfielder Xavi Hernandez has announced that he will retire at the end of the season to move into coaching.

- Xavi went on to win 25 titles, including the treble seasons of 2008-09 and 2014-15. In total he holds eight La Liga, three Copa del Rey, four UEFA Champions League, two FIFA Club World Cup, six Spanish Super Cup, and two UEFA Super Cup. Xavi is a six-time Copa Catalunya and one-time Catalunya Super Cup winner.

### **Chelsea beat Arsenal in the Europa League final**

- Chelsea scored four goals in a devastating second-half display to beat Arsenal 4-1 and lift the Europa League trophy in the Baku Olympic Stadium, Azerbaijan.
- Chelsea won their fifth major Uefa European competition final, with only Liverpool winning more among eight English clubs. Arsenal have lost five of their six major European finals, with their only victory coming in the 1994 Cup Winners' Cup against Parma

## **Other Sports News**

### **Rahi Sarnobat, Saurabh Chaudhary Bag Gold Medals in ISSF world cup**

- Saurabh Chaudhary won the gold medal in 10m Air Pistol Event at the ISS Shooting World Cup in Munich on May 27, 2019. This is the second gold of the season for the 17-year-old sensation. The first was secured in New Delhi tournament.
- Indian shooter Rahi Sarnobat also bagged the top podium spot in the 25 metre pistol event at the ISSF World Cup 2019 in Munich. With this, the total gold won by India has now reached three. The first gold was won by Apurvi Chandela in 10 m air rifle event.

### **Samiya, Maisnam clinch junior badminton titles**

- In the Yonex-Sunrise All-India Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament held from May 21-26, 2019 in Chennai, Manipur boy Maisnam Meiraba outplayed Aakash Yadav of Delhi 21-9, 12-7 to clinch the Under-19 Boys Singles title.
- Telanganas No. 5 seed Samiya Imad Farooqui continued her meteoric rise as she clinched the U-19.

### **India bags 57 medals at India Open International tournament**

- India bags a total of 57 medals including 12 Gold, 18 Silver and 27 Bronze at India Open International Boxing tournament in Guwahati.
- MC Mary Kom, Shiva Thapa, L Sarita Devi and Naman Tanwar won gold in their respective finals. The London Olympic bronze medallist blew away the challenge of Vanlal Duati in a facile 5-0 win.
- In women's 54 kg, local favourite Jamuna Boro defeated Sandhyarani and also qualified for the World Championship. In men's 69 kg Aashish clinched the Gold, while in women's 57 kg category Neeraj won the final.

### **Koepka returns to world No. 1 with PGA win**

- After successfully defending a major title (again), Brooks Koepka is back atop the Official World Golf Ranking.
- Koepka teed off at Bethpage ranked No. 3 in the world, but after retaining the Wanamaker Trophy he moved to the top spot even though former world No. 1 Dustin Johnson finished alone in second. It marks the first time Koepka has held the No. 1 ranking since the start of the year.
- But now it's Koepka followed by Johnson, with Rose down one spot to No. 3. The rest of the top 10 remained the same after the second major of the year: Rory McIlroy, Justin Thomas, Tiger Woods, Francesco Molinari, Bryson DeChambeau, Xander Schauffele and Rickie Fowler.

### **BFA launches two new formats of game - AirBadminton & Triples**

- The world body governing Badminton, BFA, has launched two new formats of the game --AirBadminton and Triples with new dimensions of the court and an innovative shuttlecock called Airshuttle. Traditional competitive badminton has been an indoor game.
- The new formats launched globally at Guangzhou last week, AirBadminton will be outdoor sports. In Triples format, the match will be played between a team of three players each with presence of at least one female

### **Indian para-athletes win 1 silver & 2 bronze at Asian Road Para-Cycling Championships 2019**

- Indian para-athletes put up a brilliant performance to secure 1 silver and 2 bronze at the Asian Road Para-Cycling Championships 2019 that saw 28 countries vying for the podium at Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 23-28 April.
- Divij Shah continued his remarkable record at this prestigious tournament by clinching his third consecutive silver medal in the C5 category.
- Hand cyclist Sudhakar Marathe from Maharashtra made a debut to remember when he got hold of the bronze medal in H5 category.
- Asian Para Games bronze medallist Gurlal Singh, who is the only Indian cyclist (able-bodied or otherwise) to win a medal at the Asian Games level helped swell India's medal tally further by grabbing the bronze in the C4 section.

### **G Sathiyam becomes first Indian to break into top-25 of table tennis world rankings**

- G Sathiyam became first Indian to break into the top-25 of ITTF rankings.
- Sathiyam rose four spots to be 24th in the latest ITTF rankings.
- Sharath Kamal dropped 9 spots to be in 46th position

### **Apurvi Chandela attains world number one spot in women's 10 m air rifle event**

- Indian shooting ace Apurvi Chandela attained the world number one position in the women's 10 metres air rifle event while compatriot Anjum Moudgil rose to number two.
- The rifle ace from Jaipur is among the five Indian shooters to have already secured 2020 Olympics quotas for the country. Anish Bhanwala, another of India's talented young shooter, secured the 10th spot in 25 metres Rapid Fire Pistol category.

### **Bajrang Punia wins gold at Ali Aliyev tournament**

- World number one Bajrang Punia won the gold medal as he defeated Viktor Rassadin in the finals of men's 65kg freestyle in the Ali Aliyev wrestling tournament in Kaspiisk, Russia.
- The 25-year-old Indian grappler had won a gold medal at the Asian Championships in Xi'an, China.

### **Jaipur to host Asian youth Women Handball Championship**

- Jaipur will host the 8th Asian Youth Women Handball Championship in which 10 teams, including defending champions South Korea, will be participating. It is the first time that the tournament will be hosted by Pink city Jaipur. Earlier Delhi had hosted it in 2015 where the hosts India had finished seventh
- The previous edition in 2017 was held at Jakarta in Indonesia where South Korea was the champion while Japan and China were placed second and third respectively

### **Saurav Ghoshal & Joshna Chinappa win Asian Individual Squash Ch'ship titles**

- Ace Indian squash players Saurav Ghoshal and Joshna Chinappa won their respective Asian Individual Squash Championship titles in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Saurav Ghoshal defeated Leo Au Chun Ming of Hong Kong.
- Joshna Chinappa on the other hand retained her title as she beat top seed Annie Au of Hong Kong.
- Ghoshal who had become the first Indian male player to reach top ten of the world rankings

### **Indian boxers win six medals at 36th Feliks Stamm International Boxing**

- Indian boxers finished with a rich haul of six medals, including two gold at the 36th Feliks Stamm International Boxing Tournament in Warsaw, Poland. Gaurav Solanki and Manish Kaushik bagged one gold each. Indian boxers also clinched a silver and three bronze.

### **Marc Marquez wins the Spanish Grand Prix and regains world championship lead**

- World champion Marc Marquez of Honda won the Spanish motorcycling GP ahead of compatriots Alex Rins of Suzuki and maverick Vinale
- Having won two of the four MotoGPs so far this season, Marquez tops the standings with 70 points, one more than US race winner Rins on 69. Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso is third on 67

### **Roger Federer climbs to third in men's rankings**

- Former world number one Roger Federer has returned to third in the ATP Men's ranking, replacing Alexander Zverev
- Federer has won a record 20 Grand Slams, is making his return to clay at the Madrid Open this week after three years' absence. Novak Djokovic(11160 pts) remains first ahead of Rafael Nadal (7765 pts) to mark the Serb's 250th week as world number one,
- Japan's Naomi Osaka (6151 pts) remained atop of WTA Women's rankings, ahead of Czech Petra Kvitova (5835 pts) and Romanian Simona Halep (5682 pts)

### **Mukesh Kumar wins PGTI Players Championship**

- Seasoned golfer Mukesh win the TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship in Panchkula.
- This was his 20th title on the TATA Steel PGTI (Professional Golf Tour of India).

### **Inaugural edition of world's first women's cricket magazine 'CRICZONE'**

- The inaugural issue of world's first exclusive women's cricket magazine 'Criczone' was released here with Indian team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana featuring as the cover story.
- The magazine "CRICZONE" was launched on the sidelines of the inaugural women's T20 challenge event which was attended by international cricketers like Mithali Raj, Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur and overseas player like Danielle Wyatt and Sophie Davine. The objective of this magazine is to empower young aspiring women cricketers to take the sport as a profession and able to make sustainable living.



### **Novak Djokovic wins Madrid Open title**

- Novak Djokovic of Serbia beat Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece to win his third Madrid Open title.
- He held his serve to add the 2019 Madrid Open title to those he won in 2011 and 2016.

### **Hamilton beats Bottas in Spanish GP**

- British racing driver Lewis Hamilton won the Spanish Grand Prix for a third consecutive year after overtaking Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas.
- It marks the Mercedes' record-breaking win as the pair of Hamilton and Bottas has been taking the top two positions on the podium in all five races of 2019 season. Red Bull's Max Verstappen was third.

### **Mumbai girl is world's 1st to cross Atlantic Ocean in Light Sports Aircraft**

- Captain Aarohi Pandit, a 23-year-old pilot from Mumbai became the world's first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo in a Light Sports Aircraft (LSA) christened as 'Mahi'.
- when she landed her tiny aircraft at Iqaluit Airport in Canada, after a gruelling 3,000 km long flight, under adverse and extreme weather conditions following take-off from Wick, Scotland (United Kingdom), with brief stopovers in Greenland and Iceland.
- The journey is part of Pandit's ongoing year-long global circumnavigation flight from UK to Canada, which was launched with her friend Keithair Misquitta on July 30, 2018 and they will return back to India by July 30, 2019.

### **China set to host 2023 AFC Asian Cup after South Korea withdrawal**

- China has been confirmed as the hosts for the 2023 Asian Cup soccer tournament after its only bidding rival, South Korea, withdrew from the bidding process. The Korean Football Association (KFA) informed the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), the governing body for Asian soccer, of its decision to withdraw its bid and thus allow China to run unopposed.
- Last time China hosted Asian Cup in 2004 when China lost to Japan by 3-1 in the final held in Beijing. This year the Asian Cup was held in UAE in which Qatar defeated Japan by 3-1 in the final.

### **Double Olympic biathlon champion Dahlmeier retires aged 25**

- Germany's double Olympic biathlon champion Laura Dahlmeier announced her retirement at the age of just 25 after struggling with health issues.
- She has won seven world championship gold medals, and last year in Pyeongchang she became the first female biathlete to win both the sprint and the pursuit at the same Olympics.

### **2nd India Open International Boxing Tournament begins in Guwahati**

- The Second India Open International Boxing Tournament begins at Sarusajai stadium in Guwahati.
- India has fielded a strong contingent of 38 men and 37 women in the tournament including Mary Kom in 51-kilogram category. 16 countries will participate in the tournament where nearly 200 boxers will vying for the podium.
- The gold medalist will get 2500 US dollar and Silver medalist will earn 1000 US dollar. The competition will be held in a total of 18 categories, 10 in men and 8 in women.

### **Saray Khumalo Hailed As Strong Woman after Conquering Mount Everest**

- Saray Khumalo is being hailed as a strong woman as the country celebrates her successful climb to the top of Mount Everest. Khumalo made history as she became the first African black woman to summit Mount Everest in her fourth attempt.

### **Apurvi Chandela Wins Gold in 10m Air Rifle at ISSF Munich World Cup**

- Apurvi Chandela from India won the 10m Air Rifle Women's Final at the 2019 ISSF World Cup in Munich.
- Luyao Wang from the Republic of China took the Silver medal, scoring 631.9 points in qualification and 250.8 in the final. Another of China's shooters, Hong Xu, won the Bronze medal with a qualification of 630.8 points and 229.4 in the final. The two Tokyo 2020 Olympic Quota places went to Laura-Georgeta Coman from Romania and Eszter Meszaros from Hungary.

### **Mahesh Mungaonkar wins Sekisui Open title**

- India's Mahesh Mungaonkar defeated Spain's Bernat Jaume, in the final to clinch the Sekisui Open title for the second time in his career in Kriens, Switzerland.
- This was Mahesh's eighth PSA title. He had won the corresponding title for the first time in 2016.

### **Men's compound team win bronze in Archery World Cup**

- The men's compound team of Rajat Chauhan, Abhishek Verma and Aman Saini earned India a solitary bronze medal in the Archery World Cup Stage III at Antalya in Turkey.
- The Women's compound team of Jyoti Surekha Vennam, Muskan Kirar and Swati Dudhwal lost to Great Britain's Layla Annison, Ella Gibson and Lucy Mason by two points in the contention for a bronze medal.

### Lewis Hamilton wins Monaco Grand Prix

- Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton won his Monaco Grand Prix title.
- Valterri Bottas and Vettel finished with second and third respectively.

### China beat Japan to win 2019 Sudirman Cup

- China won the badminton world mixed-team championship, Sudirman Cup 2019 in Nanning today. They beat Japan in men's doubles, women's singles and men's singles to clinch the title for an 11th time.
- In the latest Men' singles match Shi Yuqi stunned world champion Kento Momota 15-21, 21-5, 21-11. Japan have never won the Sudirman Cup

### Ivo Karlovic becomes oldest man to win match at French Open

- Croatia's Ivo Karlovic became the oldest man to win a match at the French Open for 46 years as he beat Spain's fellow veteran Feliciano Lopez in a first-round duel.
- Karlovic became the oldest man to win at Roland Garros since Torben Ulrich in 1973 at the age of 44. He is also the oldest male player to win a Grand Slam match since Ken Rosewall, also 44, did so at the 1978 Australian Open.

### India concludes best ever ISSF WC performance in Munich

- In Shooting, India produced their best ever show at the ISSF World Cup with a total tally of five gold medals in Munich, Germany.
- India topped the medals tally with five golds and a silver. Second-placed China bagged nine medals - two gold, two silver and five bronze medals
- India gold medallists included Apurvi Chandela in the Women's 10 metre Air Rifle, Rahi Sarnobat in the Women's 25m Pistol and Saurabh Chaudhary in the men's 10m Air Pistol
- The pair of Anjum Moudgil and Divyansh Singh Panwar first won the 10m Air Rifle mixed team gold. Teenage pair of Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary backed them up with the 10m Air Pistol mixed team title.
- in the Mixed Air Rifle, it was an all India gold medal match and Apurvi Chandela and Deepak Kumar landed the country its lone silver
- Manu and Saurabh, in the Air Pistol finals, found it a bit tough against the experienced Ukranian pair of Olena Kostevych and Oleh Omelchuk but they won 17-9 in the end.

### Italian Open 2019 Winners Title

- The 76<sup>th</sup> edition of Italian Open which is also known as "Rome Masters" or "the Internazionali BNL d'Italia" held at Foro Italico in Rome, Italy from May 13 to 19, 2019.
- Rafael Nadal defeated Novak Djokovic to win a ninth Italian Open title and a record 34th Masters.

CATEGORY	WINNER	RUNNER
Men's Singles	Rafael Nadal	Novak Djokovic
Women's Singles	Karolina Pliskova	Johanna Konta
Men's Doubles	Juan Sebastian Cabal / Robert Farah	Raven Klaasen / Michael Venus
Women's Doubles	Victoria Azarenka / Ashleigh Barty	Anna-Lena Gronefeld / Demi Schuurs

### Madrid open 2019 Winners List

- The 2019 Madrid Open (sponsored by Mutua) is a professional tennis tournament played on outdoor clay courts at the Park Manzanares in Madrid, Spain from 3 May–12 May 2019.

CATEGORY	WINNER	RUNNER
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic	Stefanos Tsitsipas
Women's Singles	Kiki Bertens	Simona Halep
Men's Doubles	Jean-Julien Rojer / Horia Tecău	Diego Schwartzman / Dominic Thiem
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-wei / Barbora Strýcová	Gabriela Dabrowski / Xu Yifan

### Asia-Pacific Diamond Cup

- Indian Professional golfer RahilGangjee finished tied 39th while 23-year-old VirajMadappa faltered on the final day and ended tied 53rd at the Asia-Pacific Diamond Cup 2019. Japan's Yosuke Asaji capped the title at the Sobu Country Club.
- Asaji's winning total of three-under-par 281 also secured him a spot at The 148th Open which will be held at Royal Portrush, Northern Ireland in July 2019.

### Important Obituaries

Person	Field
John Singleton	African-American Filmmaker
Justice B Subhashan Reddy	Former Chief Justice of the Madras and Kerala High Courts
Master Hirannaiah	Kannada theatre personality
Peter Mayhew	British-US Actor
Maramraju Satyanarayana	Writer and Academician
Bajirao	The last captive white tiger at Sanjay Gandhi National Park
Seymour Nurse	Former West Indies cricketer
Derek Sippy	Former billiards player
Eranholi Moosa	Singer of Mappila Paattu
NR Madhava Menon	Father of modern legal education
Mrinal Mukherjee	Bengali TV and film actor
Prof Kirpal Singh	First chronicler of Partition
Baidyanath Mishra	Renowned Odisha economist
Thoppil Mohamed Meeran	Noted Tamil novelist and Sahitya Akademi Award winner
Hiralal Yadav	Bhojpuri folk singer
Peggy Lipton	US Actress
Y.C. Deveshwar	ITC chairman
Doris Day	Hollywood actor-singer
Bob Hawke	Former Australian PM
Ieoh Ming Pei	Chinese-American architect
Rallapalli Venkata Narasimha Rao	Veteran Telugu actor
Niki Lauda	The former Formula One driver
Vijaya Mulay	Renowned Filmmaker & Film Historian
Sammy Shore	Actor and Standup comedian
Sultan Ahmad Shah	Former Malaysian King
Prem Tinsulanonda	Thailand's ex-prime minister
Murray Gell-Man	Nobel Prize-winning Physicist
Veeru Devgan	Veteran Filmmaker and Action Choreographer
Kalpna Dash	Odisha's first woman mountaineer
Carmine Caridi	American Actor
Binny	India's Only Orangutan