

Important Monthly Current Affairs – November 2019

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Important Days

November 1	World Vegan Day	-
November 5	World Tsunami Awareness Day	-
November 6	International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict	-
November 7	Infant Protection day	-
November 7	National Cancer Awareness Day	-
November 8	International Day of Radiology	Sports Imaging (Musculoskeletal Radiology)
November 9	National Legal Services Day	-
November 10	World Science Day for Peace and Development	“Open science, leaving no one behind”
November 11	National Education Day	-
November 12	World Pneumonia Day	“healthy lungs for all”.
November 12	Public Service Broadcasting Day	-
November 14	World Diabetes Day	-
November 14	Children's Day	-
November 16	International Day for Tolerance	-
November 16	National Press Day	-
November 17	National Epilepsy Day	-
November 17 (Third Sunday in November)	World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims	-
November 17	International Students' Day	-
November 19	International Men's Day	-
November 19	World Toilet Day	Leaving No One Behind
November 20	Universal Children's Day	-
November 21 (third Thursday of November)	World Philosophy Day	-
November 21	World Television Day	-
November 21	World Fisheries day	Social Responsibility in the fisheries value chain
November 25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women	-
November 26	Law day or Constitution Day	-
November 29	International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People	-

Important Banking News

RBI

RBI tells banks not to charge transaction fees for NEFT from Jan 2020

- Banks will not be able to charge their savings account customers for online transactions done via the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) system from next year.
- Mandate banks not to charge savings bank account customers for online transactions in the NEFT system with effect from January 2020.

- NEFT can be done by bank customers either online or offline through bank branches. While several major banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, and YES Bank, do not charge for online NEFT transactions, Bank of Baroda and Union Bank of India charge Rs 2.25, excluding the goods and services tax (GST), for such transfers up to Rs 10,000.
- According to the RBI, in the period between October 2018 and September 2019, digital payments constituted 96 per cent of the non-cash retail payments.
- NEFT and Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in the same period handled 2.5 billion and 8.7 billion transactions with year-on-year growth of 20 per cent and 263 per cent, respectively.
- To further promote digital payments, the RBI has decided to operationalise the acceptance development fund with effect from January 1, 2020.
- The fund was created to improve the payments infrastructure in small towns and villages with the help of various stakeholders, including banks, card payment networks, and the government.
- The RBI will also constitute a committee to assess the need for plurality of Quick Response (QR) codes and merits of their co-existence or convergence from both systemic and consumer viewpoints.
- Furthermore, the central bank has permitted all authorised payment systems and instruments, including non-bank prepaid payment instruments (PPIs), cards and UPI for linking with National Electronic Toll Collection FASTags. This will facilitate the use of FASTags for parking, fuel, etc., payments in an interoperable environment.

RBI supersedes DHFL board, to initiate insolvency proceedings

- Reserve Bank of India superseded the board of debt-laden Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL) as it intends to shortly initiate process of resolution of the company under the insolvency and bankruptcy rules
- The company is all set to become India's first financier to land up in bankruptcy courts. The move comes after the Centre on November 15 empowered the central bank to refer stressed NBFCs and HFCs having assets worth at least Rs 500 crore to insolvency court.
- R Subramaniakumar, ex-MD and CEO of Indian Overseas Bank has been appointed as the administrator.

RBI Announces Revised Framework On Currency Swap Arrangement For SAARC Countries

- The Reserve Bank of India, with the concurrence of the Government of India, has decided to put in place a revised Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC countries 2019-2022, to further financial stability and economic cooperation within the SAARC region.
- The Framework is valid from November 14, 2019 to November 13, 2022. Based on the terms and conditions of the Framework, the RBI would enter into bilateral swap agreements with SAARC central banks, who want to avail swap facility.
- The SAARC Currency Swap Facility came into operation on November 15, 2012 with an intention to provide a backstop line of funding for short term foreign exchange liquidity requirements or balance of payment crises till longer term arrangements are made.
- Under the Framework for 2019-22, RBI will continue to offer swap arrangement within the overall corpus of US \$ Two billion.
- The drawals can be made in US Dollar, Euro or Indian Rupee. The Framework provides certain concessions for swap drawals in Indian Rupee.
- The Currency Swap Facility will be available to all SAARC member countries, subject to their signing the bilateral swap agreements.

ADB

ADB clears \$250-mn loan to help EESL expand energy efficiency investments

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a loan of USD 250 million (about Rs 1,775 crore) as part of an assistance package to EESL to expand energy efficiency investments in India.

- Activities to be undertaken by the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) in eligible states include energy efficiency opportunities not targeted by traditional energy service company investments, such as smart meters, distributed solar photovoltaic systems, and e-vehicles.
- The total cost of the project is USD 592 million, of which the Clean Technology Fund will provide USD 46 million to be administered by ADB, and the EESL will contribute USD 296 million.
- Accompanying the loan will be a technical assistance (TA) of USD 2 million to support EESL in implementing the project, due for completion in March 2025.

ADB, India Sign \$91 Million Loan for Comprehensive Water Management in Karnataka

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$91 million loan to modernize the Vijayanagara Channel irrigation systems and prepare river basin management plans in the Krishna river basin that will help improve irrigation water use efficiency and contribute to improving sustainable water security in Karnataka.
- The investment program will help Government of Karnataka in strengthening its institutions involved in integrated water resource management and modernizing the irrigation system infrastructure for improving water use efficiency in the State.
- The investment program, consisting of two project loans, will help Karnataka's water agencies better draw up and roll out effective river basin management plans. The first project is helping the modernization of the Gondi irrigation system and supporting the state with preparing a new water resources policy and other water governance strengthening activities.

ADB to give \$451 mn for Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor power links

- Asian Development Bank will provide a \$451 million (about Rs 3,200 crore) loan to strengthen power connectivity between the southern and northern parts of the Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor (CKIC) in Tamil Nadu.
- The total cost of the project is \$653.5 million, of which the government will provide \$202.5 million
- The estimated completion date is the end of 2024
- The project will help promote economic development by delivering a more reliable and competitive power supply for industry and services in the state, which will in turn spur jobs and improve livelihoods,
- The project will establish an extra-high voltage 765-kilovolt (kV) transmission link to transfer the 9,000 MW of extra capacity from Virudhunagar in the southern CKIC northwards to Coimbatore, a major industrial center, and Chennai.
- The project includes construction of a 400-kV network to pool power generated at renewable and thermal power plants in Thoothukudi district to Virudhunagar

ADB approves \$300 million for power transmission expansion in Bangladesh

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a 300 million dollar loan for a project to expand power transmission lines in Greater Dhaka and western zone of Bangladesh.
- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is considering 200 million dollars in co-financing to fund transmission lines, substations and an enterprise resource planning system. The assistance also comprises a 750,000 dollar grant from China's Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund.
- The project will improve the reliability and efficiency of the electricity supply in Greater Dhaka and western zone of Bangladesh, helping to bolster economic growth and achieve the government target of electricity for all by 2021.
- The project will construct 40 km of transmission lines and 4,450 megavolt-ampere (MVA) of substations in Greater Dhaka as well as 368 km of transmission lines, 3,070 MVA of substations and 20 bay extensions in the western zone.
- It will also establish an enterprise resource planning system, a drone inspection centre to improve operational efficiency and enhance workspace safety in the executing agency, the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd.
- The government and executing agency will contribute 249 million dollar equivalent toward the 750 million dollar total cost of the project which is due for completion by June 2024.

Other Banking News

Merger of three RRBs to form Baroda UP Bank

- Three regional rural public sector banks - Baroda Uttar Pradesh Grameen Bank, Kashi Gomti Samyut Gramin Bank and Purvanchal Bank will be amalgamated on April 1, 2020 into a single regional rural bank which will be called Baroda UP Bank.
- The headquarters of the Baroda UP Bank will be in Gorakhpur under the sponsorship of Bank of Baroda according to the notification. Bank of Baroda is the sponsor of Baroda Uttar Pradesh Grameen Bank, Union Bank of India is the sponsor of Kashi Gomti Samyut Gramin Bank while the State Bank of India is the sponsor of Purvanchal Bank.

ICICI Lombard partners with Fino to offer sachet based insurance products

- ICICI Lombard has been partnering with Fino Payments Bank to offer non-life insurance solutions to its customers since 2017
- As part of this association, ICICI Lombard has introduced several innovative insurance solutions that complement Fino's technology enabled platforms and harness its customer reach.
- Some of these offerings include Hospicash that provide customers the means to cover their loss of income, especially in the case of migrant workers, if they are hospitalized
- Continuing with their health insurance focus, ICICI Lombard and Fino are launching a Dengue and Malaria policy that covers treatments pertaining to these diseases upto Rs. 10,000 at a premium as low as Rs. 49.
- In addition to introducing affordable sachet-based insurance products, the insurance purchasing process has also been made simple for customers. Fino Payments Bank provides end to end digital customer enrolment process that takes only five to seven minutes to complete.

AIIB clears \$575 million loan to Mumbai for boosting investment in renewable energy

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has approved \$575 million loan to ease congestion in Mumbai and boost private capital investment in renewable energy, power transmission and water infrastructure.
- The loan includes \$500 million for Mumbai's suburban railway network and \$75 million to Tata Cleantech Capital LTD which funds renewable energy projects.

ICICI Bank launches 'Maha Loan Dhamaka'

- ICICI Bank announced the launch of 'Maha Loan Dhamaka', an initiative to provide a bouquet of on-the-spot loan approvals and exclusive manufacturer-led offers including Hyundai Motors India Ltd. in semi urban and rural locations, and at large corporate premises to individuals, including non-customers of the Bank.
- The Bank will host around 2000 such 'Maha Loan' camps across the country by end of March 2020.
- The Bank provides a comprehensive bouquet of exciting offerings and special packages on two and four wheelers, trucks, farming equipment and tractors, personal loan, gold loan and Kisan Credit Card at the 'Maha Loan Dhamaka'.
- These 'Maha Loan' camps are one-stop shops for people from the surrounding towns/ villages to access the entire range of the Bank's tailor-made products and services. In large corporate premises, the Bank offers instant approvals for loans---home, personal, two and four wheeler---and credit cards.

Karnataka Gramin Bank launches Mobile ATMs in Rural Areas to Push Digitization

- Karnataka Gramin Bank (KGB) has launched 'mobile ATMs' in Kalaburagi among several other districts in the state to boost digitisation in rural areas
- The special vehicle includes an ATM and a screen to show videos of different banking schemes.
- The project was assisted by a Financial Inclusion Fund by the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- The mobile ATMs will go to the doorsteps of the farmers and make them aware of the banking schemes and digital operating systems.

Irdai directs Reliance Health Insurance to stop selling new policies

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) has directed the standalone health insurance arm of Reliance Capital — Reliance Health Insurance — to transfer its entire portfolio to Reliance General Insurance, and stopped it from selling new policies.
- The regulator has also directed Reliance Health Insurance, which commenced operations in October 2018, to transfer all the investments pertaining to policyholders, along with its financial assets.

- Irda noted that Reliance Health Insurance was facing solvency issues, as its solvency margin was reported at 106 per cent in the June quarter (Q1FY20), well below the regulatory requirement of 150 per cent. Since then, the solvency margin has dipped further to 77 per cent as of August and 63 per cent in Q2FY20.
- Reliance Capital, the holding company of both Reliance General and Reliance Health Insurance, proposed to merge Reliance Health Insurance into Reliance General after it failed to bring in new investors for its health insurance arm.

Exim Bank gives USD 30 mn line of credit to Ghana

- The Export-Import (Exim) Bank has provided a USD 30 million line of credit to Ghana for potable water project in the country.
- Exim Bank has entered into an agreement with Ghana for a line of credit (LoC) of USD 30 million (about Rs 210 crore) for financing rehabilitation and up-gradation of potable water system in Yendi, Ghana.
- Under the arrangement, financing of export of eligible goods, works and services from India would be allowed subject to their being eligible for export under the Foreign Trade Policy of India and whose purchase may be agreed to be financed by the Exim Bank.
- Out of the total credit by Exim Bank under the agreement, goods, works and services of the value of at least 75 per cent of the contract price shall be supplied by the seller from India and the remaining 25 per cent of goods and services may be procured by the seller for the purpose of eligible contract from outside India
- Under the LoC, the terminal utilisation period is 60 months after the scheduled completion date of the project.

RBI increases household income limits for borrowers of NBFCs and MFIs

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the household income limits for borrowers of Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and microfinance institutions (MFIs) from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.25 lakh for the rural areas with an aim to strengthen credit to those in the bottom of the economic pyramid.
- Similarly, the limit has been increased from Rs 1.6 lakh for urban or semi-urban areas to Rs 2 lakh
- Further, the limit on total indebtedness of the borrower has been increased from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.25 lakh
- With the revision to the limit on total indebtedness, the limits on disbursement of loans have been raised from Rs 60,000 for the first cycle to Rs 75,000, and from Rs 1 lakh for the subsequent cycles to Rs 1.25 lakh

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Launches 'Farmitra' App

- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, the private general insurer launched industry's first mobile app 'Farmitra' catering to the specific needs of farmers.
- Through this app, farmers will not only get insurance solutions, but also a range of other information and advisories which will cater to their day to day farming needs.
- Users of this app can see regular weather forecast specific to their area, advisories customized as per the selected crops, market price of crops, news related to agriculture developments and also a locator for seed/soil testing labs, fertilizer dealers, Cold Storage around the area.
- In terms of insurance, users can access the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) portal to buy crop insurance, check their application status, register claims and reach out to program coordinators. They can also buy Motor and Health insurance policies offered by the Company.
- This app is user friendly wherein all one needs to do is register mentioning their state, block, area of farm land, crops and other relevant details. Through this information, all the above mentioned features will then be customized in the region specific language as per the crop chosen and geographical area selected.
- Farmitra will also act as a portal for farmers enrolled with Bajaj Allianz General Insurance to get a single view of their policies and get claim support.

GeM partners with Central Bank for payment related services

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) signed MoU with Central Bank of India.
- Through this partnership, Central Bank of India will be able to offer an array of services including transfer of funds through GeM Pool Accounts (GPA), advising of electronic Performance Bank Guarantees (e-PBG) and Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) to the registered users on the portal

- Integration for payments and various banking services is one of the priorities for GeM towards the goal of paperless, contactless and cashless system.
- GeM has already signed MoU with 18 Public Sector and Private Banks to enable this.
- GeM is also working with Banks, TReDs, and SIDBI to provide bill discounting and financing of working capital where the cost of capital is linked to the performance & rating of a seller on GeM
- GeM is an initiative of the Government of India which offers a one stop platform for facilitating online procurement of goods and services by Central and State government organizations.
- GeM provides tools for Direct Purchase, bidding and reverse auction for ensuring transparent and efficient procurement

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Launches Instant Digital Savings and Instant Fixed Deposit

Account

- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Digital Savings Account along with Fixed Deposit and Privilege Savings Account to offer distinctive banking and digital services to its customers.
- Instant Savings Account will allow customers to instantly open and operate a savings account through mobile phones or a computer with just two documents – Aadhaar Card and Pan Card
- One can deposit up to a maximum amount of Rs. 1 Lakh in this account and additional deposits can be done by ensuring due full KYC in Ujjivan SFB's respective branches.
- Instant FD can also be opened to a maximum of Rs. 1 Lakh without a Savings Account.
- Customers will also enjoy unlimited free transaction on Ujjivan SFB ATM and six free transactions on other bank ATMs every month with Digital Savings Account.
- Ujjivan SFB has also launched a Privilege Savings Account that offers Platinum Debit card, domestic airport lounge access, home branch facility across 552 Ujjivan SFB branches with unlimited transaction on any ATM and a higher accidental insurance cover of Rs. 2 Lakh

ICICI Bank crosses milestone of issuing 2 million FASTag, highest in India

- ICICI Bank announced that it has crossed a milestone of issuing 2 million FASTag till date, the most by any financial institution in the country. The Bank aims to double the number in next six months.
- FASTag is a brand name owned by Indian Highways Management Company Ltd. (IHMCL) which carries out electronic tolling and other ancillary projects of NHAI. This Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) tag is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle. It is an easy to use, reloadable tag which enables automatic deduction of toll charges and lets the vehicle pass through the toll plaza without stopping for cash transaction.
- ICICI Bank is by far the leader in the Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) market in terms of value as well as volume. The Bank commands more than half of the market share in terms of the number of transactions on FASTag. In terms of value, the Bank's share is even higher, at 60%, of the market. In September 2019, out of 29 million FASTag transactions across the industry, ICICI Bank undertook nearly 15.4 million transactions, totaling nearly Rs. 395 crore.

CCI nod for merger of BNP Paribas Mutual Fund and Bank of Baroda Mutual Fund

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the merger of the BNP Paribas (BNPP) Mutual Fund and the Baroda (BOB) Mutual Fund, under the Competition Act, 2002
- The Proposed Combination relates to merger of the BNP Paribas Mutual Fund and the BOB Mutual Fund. The Parties propose to amalgamate (i) BOB Asset Management Company (AMC) into BNPP AMC; and (ii) BNPP Trustee Company (TC) into BOB TC. After the merger BNPP AMC and BOB TC will be the surviving entities.

U GRO Capital signs loan co-origination partnership with SBI

- U GRO Capital, a tech-enabled lender to small businesses, has signed a loan co-origination partnership with State Bank of India (SBI) to offer credit at a competitive rate of interest.
- The collaboration will use GRO Capital's technology platform 'GRO- Xstream' to provide in-principle loan approval within 60 minutes.

- U GRO Capital is focusing on entering into co-origination partnerships with larger banks or NBFCs. Loan co-origination is a key component in the company's three-pronged liability strategy involving balance sheet lending, an off-balance sheet model including assignments and securitization to create a truly hybrid lending model.
- U GRO Capital had entered into its first loan co-origination partnership with Bank of Baroda in October this year.
- U GRO Capital had earlier raised about \$140 million from a diversified set of global private equity investors such as NewQuest, ADV Partners, PAG and Samena Capital and public market investors such as Abakkus, PNB Metlife and multiple Indian family offices.

Important Financial & Economy Affairs

ORGANISATION	GDP RATE	
	2019 – 20 (FY20)	2020 – 21(FY21)
Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BofAML)	5.8%	-
National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)	4.9%	-
Moody's	5.6%	-

India Ratings lowers India's Q2 GDP growth to 4.7%; FY20 forecast at 5.6%

- Indian economy may have slowed for the sixth consecutive quarter in July-September to 4.7 per cent, Fitch group firm India Ratings and Research, as it lowered GDP growth forecast for current fiscal for the fourth time.
- India Ratings and Research has revised its GDP growth forecast for FY20 to 5.6 per cent.

OECD Cuts Global Growth to 2.9% in 2020

- The world economy is projected to grow by a decade-low 2.9 percent this year and 2020, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said in its latest Economic Outlook.
- Also, OECD sees the global economic growth edging back up to 3% in 2021.

SBI cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 4.2% for Q2, 5% for FY20

- State Bank of India, the country's largest lender, has predicted that India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth may slip to a record low of 4.2 per cent in the second quarter amid low automobile sales, deceleration in air traffic movements, flattening of core sector growth and declining investment in construction and infrastructure.
- India GDP growth has already hit a 6-year low of 5 per cent during June quarter of this fiscal (Q1FY20).
- The lender has also cut GDP forecast for FY20 to 5 per cent from 6.1 per cent earlier, but expects growth rate to pick up pace in FY21 to 6.2 per cent.

India's economy to grow 6.6% in 2020-24: OECD

- India's gross domestic product (GDP) could grow 6.6% in 2020-24, lower than its 2013-17 average of 7.4%, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- It was revealed by OECD in its report titled Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India 2020.
- Overall Southeast Asia region is expected to record 5.7 per cent growth on average in 2020-24.

Nomura slashes India's FY20 GDP forecast to 4.9% from 5.7% earlier

- Japanese brokerage Nomura massively cut its GDP forecast to a low 4.9 percent for the year from 5.7 percent earlier.
- For 2020-21 (FY21) Nomura has predicted India's GDP Growth rate at 6.1%.

Moody's cuts India's credit outlook to negative

- Global ratings agency Moody's cut its outlook for India's credit ratings to "negative" from "stable", citing the ongoing economic slowdown, financial stress among rural households, weak job creation, and the liquidity crunch in non-banking financial companies.
- Moody's has affirmed India's Baa2 long-term sovereign rating, the second-lowest investment grade score, but said the negative outlook indicated that an upgrade was unlikely in the near term.

Important Business News

RIL becomes first Indian firm to hit Rs 10 lakh crore m-cap mark

- Reliance Industries (RIL), became the first Indian company to hit the Rs 10 lakh crore market valuation level in intra-day following a spike in its share price.
- The oil-to-telecom conglomerate's market capitalisation (m-cap) zoomed to Rs 10.02 lakh crore during morning trade on the BSE.
- The company's stock rose 0.73 per cent to a record peak of Rs 1,581.25 in intra-day trade on the stock exchange.
- Over the past few session, RIL's market valuation has been hovering near the Rs 10 lakh crore mark. In October this year, its shares hit the Rs 9 lakh crore m-cap level. In August 2018, it became the first Indian company to have crossed the Rs 8 lakh crore m-cap mark.
- TCS is the country's second most valued firm with a market valuation of Rs 7,79,708.02 crore, followed by HDFC Bank with a market cap of Rs 6,96,494.75 crore, Hindustan Unilever (Rs 4,49,252.62 crore) and HDFC (Rs 3,99,599.38 crore).

Intel Partners With MediaTek to Bring 5G Support to Laptops

- MediaTek is partnering with Intel, the Taiwanese chipmaker.
- Dell and HP are expected to be among the first original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to deliver laptops powered by Intel and MediaTek's 5G solution.
- The first rollout of devices is expected for early 2021.
- Through this partnership, Intel has been working with MediaTek on the 5G solution for deployment in key consumer and commercial laptop segments.
- MediaTek is developing the 5G modem and working with partners to manufacture the solution.
- Intel's partnership with MediaTek brings together industry leaders with deep engineering, system integration and connectivity expertise to deliver 5G experiences on the next generation of the world's best PCs

Railways sets up Institute for Financial Management in Hyderabad

- The Indian Railway Institute of Financial Management (IRIFM) has been set up in Hyderabad.
- The new entity, set up to impart professional training in management of railway finances, was formally inaugurated by Vinod Kumar Yadav, Chairman, Railway Board, on a 14-acre campus at Moula-Ali, Secunderabad.
- The project was conceived and constructed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) at a cost of Rs 85 crore. IIRFM marks an important addition to the list of premier professional institutions in the country in the field of financial management in Indian Railways.
- The ensuing batch of probationers belonging to Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS) will have the opportunity to get trained.

Ashok Leyland, ICICI Bank ink MoU for vehicle financing

- Commercial vehicle major Ashok Leyland has tied up with ICICI Bank for vehicle loans for a period of two years.
- The agreement will enable both the partners to offer customised financial solution to customers across the country with focus on semi-urban and rural geographies
- With this MoU, ICICI Bank will be a preferred financier for providing finance to customers buying ALLAshok Leyland vehicles.
- The bank will work in close coordination with the authorised dealers of Ashok Leyland to provide financial solutions to the customers,

Digital Gurukul becomes India's first institute to offer blockchain powered certificates

- Digital Gurukul awarded Asia's best digital marketing institute from Indore partnered with Germany based company - Certif-ID to issue blockchain powered Certificates to its students - a feat that has yet to be achieved by any other digital institutes in India, and among the very few to have taken this disruptive step globally.

- The rollout of the diplomas on the blockchain will allow the students of Digital Gurukul and their prospective employers to access the diploma from any geographical location, without any need to send or present physical certificates.
- All students graduating from Digital Gurukul will now be able to share the credential of their diplomas with future employers and higher education institutions around the world without any hassle.

Modern railway coach factory to use humanoid robot 'Sona 1.5'

- The modern railway coach factory is establishing new dimensions in the field of modernity. A humanoid robot 'Sona 1.5' is a full-service robot made in India which can be used to transport documents from one place to another in the modern railway coach factory.
- The humanoid robot 'Sona 1.5', built by Najavunjpavad Jaipur, was tested.
- It is the first robot in the world with human-like spine technology due to which they are able to balance. The design of Sona 1.5 is much more unique than the current robot designs.
- This robot is based on navigation and mapping and due to which it is much better than other robots.

Microsoft launches 'K-12 Education Transformation Framework' to facilitate digital transformation of schools

- Microsoft has launched its "K-12 Education Transformation Framework" to facilitate comprehensive digital transformation of schools in India, a model which has been adopted in over 50 countries so far.
- According to officials at Microsoft's Education wing, the framework comprises four pillars -- leadership and policy, modern teaching and learning, intelligent environments and technology blueprint.
- Over 700 schools had participated in the "Education Days" conducted by the tech giant where the framework was launched.
- To help school principals initiate their journey of digital transformation, the programme will offer a series of workshops based on each of these pillars. Education leaders in more than 50 countries have already adopted the framework to help plan their learning strategies.
- The framework is aimed at providing education leadership, government decision makers, teachers and most importantly learners, tools to achieve the ambitious change many schools seek, and to thoughtfully integrate technology in powerful and productive ways.

Indian Oil launches special winter-grade diesel for UT of Ladakh

- State-run Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC) launched a special winter-grade diesel that remains unfrozen up to minus 33 degree Celsius.
- The fuel would help provide year-round access to snow-capped border regions, and is part of India's efforts to speed up strategic road connectivity.
- This new fuel will help Indian security forces to stock up on crucial supplies and ammunition that gets cut off due to bad weather in winters.

Vodafone Idea posts India's biggest ever quarterly loss at Rs 50,921 crore on AGR hit

- Telecom firm Vodafone Idea reported a record loss of Rs 50,921 crore for the September quarter, as it made a provision for the Supreme Court's ruling on payment of average gross revenue (AGR) dues, even as ongoing brutal pricing war continued to hurt. The company had posted a loss of Rs 4,947 crore in the year ago period.
- The loss was reported as the company made a provision for the Supreme Court's ruling on payment of average gross revenue (AGR) dues. Rs 30,774.5 crore was a one-time loss the company incurred due to the recent Supreme Court verdict.
- Reliance Communications posted a mega loss of Rs 30,142 crore, registering India's second biggest quarterly loss after Vodafone Idea. The firm was mainly hit due to provisioning for liabilities after the Supreme Court ruling on the AGR issue. Anil Ambani has submitted his resignation as director of Reliance Communications, even as the firm continues to remain under CIRP (Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process). Four other directors, including Smt. Chhaya Virani, Ryna Karani, Manjari Kacker and Suresh Rangachar have also submitted their resignation
- Bharti Airtel posted a loss of Rs 23,044 crore for the quarter ended September 30, due to Rs 28,450 crore provisions towards adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues.

MELPL – Visionary Indo – French Collaboration (Largest FDI Project of Railways)

- Indian Railways has entered into Procurement cum Maintenance Agreement with Madhepura Electric Locomotive Pvt. Ltd. (MELPL), a joint venture of Indian Railways and M/s Alstom.
- As part of largest Foreign Direct Investment project of Indian Railways, Ministry of Railways and Alstom came together in 2015 to transform the heavy freight transportation landscape of the country.
- A landmark agreement worth 3.5 billion Euro was signed to manufacture 800 electric locomotives for freight service and its associated maintenance.
- The new design of locomotive has been inspected by RDSO at Madhepura factory and cleared for dispatch from factory.
- This is the first time such High Horse Power locomotive is being tested on Broad Gauge network in the World by any Railways.

Pay Nearby launches own micro ATMs at retail shops

- PayNearby, the hyperlocal fintech network builder, has launched its own micro ATMs at retail shops to address the issue of money dispensing machines running dry, and aims to deploy 1 lakh terminals in the first year.
- The company has tied up with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Equitas Small Finance Bank for this initiative. With the launch of micro ATM business terminal, PayNearby has strengthened its product portfolio of money withdrawal services. Now along with Aadhaar enabled money withdrawals, PayNearby retailers can also offer cash withdrawals through debit cards.
- PayNearby's micro ATM is a cost effective and a smart cash management tool for small retail stores and traders who deal in large chunks of cash on a daily basis.
- The company aims to add over 1 lakh POS enabled micro ATMs in the first year of its launch. Considering its USPs such as portability, affordability and low maintenance, micro ATMs can very effectively drive financial inclusion while curbing down the infrastructure costs incurred, especially in rural India, where a full-fledged ATM becomes unviable.

Saudi Aramco to float initial public offering

- Saudi Aramco, world's largest integrated oil and gas company, will float initial public offering (IPO).
- Saudi Arabia's Aramco is considered one of the world's most profitable oil producing enterprise.
- It has decided to sell an unspecified percentage of its shares on the Saudi stock exchange, the Tadawul.

Trai mandates minimum call ringer duration of 30 seconds

- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has fixed call ring time at 30 seconds for mobile phones and 60 seconds for landline phones, in case the call is neither answered nor rejected by the subscriber.
- The time duration of alert for an incoming voice call, which is neither answered nor rejected by the called party, shall be thirty seconds for cellular mobile telephone service and sixty seconds for basic telephone service.
- The typical ring time in mobile networks is between 30-45 seconds, while it ranges between 60 and 120 seconds for landline networks.

Tech Mahindra acquires New York-based BORN Group for \$95 million

- IT major Tech Mahindra Ltd has acquired New York headquartered media outsourcing firm Born Group Pte. Ltd for \$95 million.
- Born Group offers end-to-end digital engagement, such as strategy consulting, content creation, digital production, eCommerce and CMS (Content Management System) implementations and data driven UX (User Experience).
- Born is owned by private equity firm True North and Zodiuss Capital
- Tech Mahindra will acquire the Indian subsidiary of Born Group - Born Commerce Private Ltd

Important State Wise National News

Andhra Pradesh

Capital – Hyderabad (Amravati); CM – Chandrababu Naidu; Governor - Biswabhusan Harichandan

Robot CYBIRA launched to aid cops in Visakhapatnam to take complaints

- Visakhapatnam Police have launched first of its kind cybersecurity interactive robotic agent robot, CYBIRA stationed at Maharanipeta Police Station, which can automatically take complaints in an effective manner.
- A start-up company Robo Coupler Private Limited has designed a robot 'CYBIRA' (cybersecurity interactive robotic agent) for registering and disposing of complaints at the police station in an effective manner.
- The new facility was launched by the Commissioner of Police (CP) R K Meena .
- CYBIRA will deliver an acknowledgement to the respective complainant and investigating officer to resolve the issue within 24 hours. Each complaint will have a deadline for a maximum of three days to get resolved.

AP government to introduce English medium for state schools

- The Andhra Pradesh Government is set to introduce English medium in government schools right for first to eighth standard starting from the next academic year.
- The programme, to be launched by the Chief Minister in Prakasam district, the basic amenities in schools will be improved and in the first phase it would be taken up in 15,000 schools. This phase would be completed by March 2020, and in the next phase remaining schools will be taken up, the total number being around 40,000.
- From the next academic year, instruction in English will begin. In subsequent years, it will be extended to cover the ninth and tenth standards as well. Teachers will be trained to teach in English and new teachers to be recruited would be tested for their proficiency in English.

Andhra Pradesh CM launches 'Nadu-Nedu' Programme

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy has launched the 'Nadu-Nedu' programme to introduce English medium from classes 1 to 6 in state-run schools.
- He also announced that the government will introduce another scheme called 'Amma Vodi' in January 2020 to give incentives to mothers who send their children to school and continue their education till class 12.
- In the first phase, the 'Nadu-Nedu' programme will be implemented in 15,715 schools. It will cover all schools in three years under a budget of Rs 12,000 crores. For the first year in the initial phase, Rs 3,500 crores will be spent for infrastructure development,

Jagan Govt Launches Helpline to Deal with Graft-Related Complaints in Andhra Pradesh

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched '14400', a citizen helpline number meant to enable people to complain about corruption in government departments.
- The chief minister made the first call on the occasion to the call centre and enquired about its functioning.
- Citizens could directly call the helpline and lodge a complaint against corruption in any government department and asked officials to ensure the grievances are resolved within 15 to 30 days.
- The state government has already engaged the Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (IIM-A) to study the structural issues in government departments vis-à-vis corruption and come out with measures required to tackle them.
- The IIM-A team is expected to submit its report in February 2020.

Arunachal Pradesh

Capital – Itanagar; CM – Pema Khandu; Governor - BD Mishra

Arun Bhoomi: First Hindi daily launched in Arunachal Pradesh

- After launching the first Hindi daily of the state, 'Arun Bhoomi', in a ceremony.
- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu said that the state government would soon review its advertisement policy that would also benefit the newly launched Hindi daily of the state.
- He hoped that the major population of the country, who speak and read Hindi, would get easy access to news, information and knowledge about Arunachal Pradesh.
- Khandu called Hindi as the bond that unites the diverse ethnic tribes of the state who speak different dialects.

Assam

Capital – Dishpur; CM – Sarbananda Sonowal; Governor - Jagdish Mukhi

Assam bans gutka, pan masala containing tobacco-nicotine for one year

- In a move to make Assam a tobacco free state, the state government imposed a complete ban on the sale, manufacture, storage, distribution, transportation and display of gutka, pan masala and chewing materials containing tobacco and nicotine.
- The Assam government has banned the gutka, pan masala and chewing materials containing tobacco and nicotine for a period of one year in the state under Clause (A) of Sub-Section 2 of Section 30 of the Food Safety & Security Act, 2006.
- The prohibition has been made under the regulations of 2, 3 and 4 of the Food Safety & Standards (Prohibitions and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations 2011 of the Food Safety & Standards Act.

Assam government releases the new Land Policy 2019 after 30 years

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal released the new Land Policy 2019 in Guwahati.
- The Land Policy was approved by Cabinet on 21st October and it has been prepared by the Revenue and Disaster Management Department after 30 years. It was last prepared in 1989.
- Chief Minister stated that the state government has given a lot of emphasis in preparing the Policy to safeguard the interest of the indigenous people. The Policy would remove complications regarding land allotments and settlements.

Assam Govt approves 1 Tola Gold to Brides free of cost under Arundhati scheme

- The Assam Cabinet has approved the Arundhati scheme to provide gold at free of cost to the brides.
- Under the scheme the government has proposed to give 1 tola of gold (11.66 grams) to brides' parents belonging to the economically weaker sections of the society.
- With the aim to reduce child marriage under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act that a girl in India can't get married before the age of 18, and a boy can't get married before 21 years of age, this scheme can be availed by formal registration of the marriage under the Special Marriage (Assam) Rules, 1954 at the time of marriage.
- This is only limited to the weaker section of the society whose annual income is below Rs 5 lakh irrespective of caste, creed, religion etc.

Assam government sign Rs 400-crore (50 mn Euro) pact with French Development Agency

- The French Development Agency (AFD) and the Government of Assam signed a 50 million euro project agreement (total budget of 62.5 million euro) towards supporting the state government's initiative to restore Assam's forest ecosystems and preserve their biodiversity.
- The loan of 50 million euro (Rs 400 crore) would be utilised for implementing the second phase of the Assam Project for Forest and Biodiversity Conservation (APFBC), which aims to reforest an additional 12,000 hectares of land, scale up efforts in biodiversity conservation and skill the members of 135 additional communities in different trades.
- The total budget of the second phase is Rs 500 crore (the State government will contribute Rs 100 crore).
- Under the first phase of the project which began in 2013, reforestation was done in 21,000 hectares of land, 33 flood refuge sites (highlands) built in Kaziranga and over 6,000 members of local communities trained in alternative livelihood.
- AFD Country Director Bruno Bosle and Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam, Environment and Forest Department Jishnu Barua signed the agreement in presence of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Ambassador of France to India Emmanuel Lenain and Assam Environment & Forest Minister Parimal Suklabaidya in Guwahati.

Sishu Suraksha App to be launched in Assam

- The Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights is going to launch a mobile app Sishu Suraksha on the occasion of Children's Day.
- The purpose of the app is to empower citizens to take moral responsibility of protecting future generations.
- The app can be used by anyone in the state to lodge a complaint which will be directly registered at Commission.

Chhattisgarh

Capital: Atal Nagar; CM: Bhupesh Baghel; Governor: Anusuiya Uikey

Chhattisgarh to get fourth tiger reserve

- Chhattisgarh is set to have Guru Ghasidas National Park in Kotiya district as its fourth 'tiger reserve'.
- The decision was taken in the 11th meeting of Chhattisgarh State Wildlife Board chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.
- Presently there are three tiger reserves in the state which are: Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, Udanti-Sitanadi Tiger Reserve and Indravati Tiger Reserve. With this new announcement, four tiger reserves will get functional in the state.
- The Lemru Elephant Reserve will come into existence soon by merging the forest areas of Korba, Katghora, Dharamjigarh and Surguja forest divisions of Korba, Raigad and Surguja districts. The total area records to be of about one thousand 995 square kilometers.

Gujarat

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

Gujarat government gives nod for world's first CNG port terminal at Bhavnagar

- Gujarat Government has given its nod to the world's first CNG port terminal at Bhavnagar.
- The U.K. based Foresight group and Mumbai based Padmanabh Mafatlal group joint venture will invest Rs.1900 crore to set up a CNG port terminal at Bhavnagar port.
- Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board- GIDB under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has also approved this proposal.
- The proposed CNG port terminal will have annual capacity of 6 million metric tone, which will increase the total handling capacity of the port to 9 million metric tones.
- MoU for this project between Gujarat government arm Gujarat Maritime Board and London based Foresight Group was signed during the 2019 Vibrant Gujarat summit.
- The new facility will be developed in the Northern side of present port, under which RoRo terminal, liquid terminal and container terminal will be developed in future

Himachal Pradesh

Capital – Shimla; CM - Jai Ram Thakur; Governor - Bandaru Dattatreya

Himachal Pradesh governor inaugurates Lavi Fair in Shimla

- Himachal Pradesh Governor Bandaru Dattatreya inaugurated the four-day-long International Lavi fair in Shimla district's Rampur
- The campaign should be launched to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society to save the younger generation from its ill effects.
- Dattatreya lauded the efforts of the organisers for carrying forward the rich tradition of the fair and added that woollens, dry fruits and other traditional crafts and products exhibited in the market were unique
- The fair provided a good opportunity for promotion and sale of these products, besides benefiting the traditional craftsmen and farmers.
- The governor also inaugurated the "Kinnauri market" and an exhibition organised by various government departments and other organisations

Jharkhand

Capital – Ranchi; CM - Raghubar Das; Governor - Draupadi Murmu

Jharkhand celebrates the State Formation day on 15 November

- Jharkhand celebrates the 19th State Formation day on 15 November 2019.

- Jharkhand, the land of forests, was formed on 15 November 2000. It is celebrating its 19th year of constitution in the year 2019. It was previously the southern half of Bihar.
- The foundation day of the State falls on the birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda who is also known as Bhagwan Birsa. He played a vital role in India's struggle for freedom.
- Jharkhand means bravery and compassion. It should be noted that the have always lived in harmony with nature.

Jammu & Kashmir

Capital –Jammu (winter) Srinagar (summer); Governor - G.C. Murmu

Jammu And Kashmir, Ladakh To Get New Bamboo Technology Parks

- Union Minister and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region Dr. Jitendra Singh announced that Bamboo Technology Parks would be set up in the two new Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.
- He also mentioned that The Cane and Bamboo Technology Centre (CBTC) under NEC will help implement the project.
- The project for setting up three new Bamboo Technology Parks in Jammu, Srinagar, and Leh would be in consonance with the National Bamboo Mission (NBM). A Bamboo Industrial Park has already been approved to be set up in the DimaHasao district of Assam.

J-K achieves highest road length in country under PMGSY, 11,400 km construction completed

- The Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir has achieved the highest road length in the country under the Pradhan Mantri Grameen Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in this year.
- The region has witnessed construction of 11,400 kilometres covering 1,838 habitations so far.
- The PMGSY is an initiative launched by the central government to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages in the country.
- The central government has released Rs 836.64 crores under the Prime Minister's Development Programme (PMDP) for vital health projects in the UT.

Maharashtra

Capital – Mumbai; CM – Uddhav Thackeray; Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari

Maharashtra under President's rule for 3rd time in 59-year history

- Imposition of President's rule in Maharashtra is the first instance in the 59-year-old history of the state when Article 356 has been invoked due to inability of political parties to form a government after an assembly election.
- Overall, this is third time that Maharashtra has come under the central rule. The present-day Maharashtra came into existence on May 1, 1960.
- The BJP emerged as the single largest party with 105 seats followed by the Shiv Sena 56, the NCP 54 and the Congress 44.
- Article 356 of the Constitution, under which President's rule is imposed in a state, deals with 'failure of constitutional machinery in the state'.
- The Union Cabinet recommended President's rule in Maharashtra.
- Hence, this is the first time that central rule has been imposed in the state due to inability of political parties to form a government after an assembly election.

Manipur

Capital – Imphal; CM - N Biren Singh; Governor – Najma Heptulla

Sangai Festival 2019 begins in Manipur

- In Manipur, week-long Manipur Sangai Festival 2019 started.
- The festival is organized by the State Tourism Department and biggest festival held annually to promote tourism.
- The formal inaugural function of the festival was held at Hapta Kangjeibung at Imphal.

- During the festival, cultural programmes, traditional games, folk dance and classical music will be performed by different communities of the State as well as from other States. The festival will conclude on the 30th of this month.

Meghalaya

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

4th India International Cherry Blossom Festival concludes at Shillong

- The 4th edition of the India International Cherry Blossom Festival 2019 was organised in Shillong, Meghalaya from November 13 to 16, 2019.
- It may be mentioned that South Korea is the partner country in this year's Cherry Blossom Festival.
- It may be mentioned that a bilateral summit between South Korea and Meghalaya to foster socio-economic friendship was also held.

New Delhi

Capital – New Delhi; CM -Arvind Kejriwal; Governor – Anil Bajaj

Robotic surgery facility inaugurated at Centre-run Safdarjung Hospital

- A robotic surgery facility was opened for public at the Centre-run Safdarjung Hospital.
- Safdarjung Hospital is the first central government-run healthcare institution to have this latest facility.
- Robotic surgery has the advantage of providing minimally invasive surgery, reducing significantly morbidity and mortality of critically ill, cancer and kidney failure patients.
- The operating time also decreases resulting in improvement in turnover of patients and decrease in waiting list of patients for surgery significantly.
- This is the first such program in urology in India. The department is going to start international LIVE webcast of robotic surgeries from the second week of November. A national robotic training centre has also been set up for training of young doctors.

Delhi CM announces free septic tank cleaning service

- Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a scheme — Mukhyamantri Septic Tank Safai Yojana — which will allow the residents to avail of free septic tank cleaning service.
- The scheme would entail the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) deploying 80 trucks along with trained staff to ensure the cleaning and maintenance of septic tanks across the city.
- The scheme to fulfill the three-fold objective of collecting the waste from the septic tanks from the colonies, ensuring safe disposal of the waste in the Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) of the government, and deploy trained staff with all the safety equipment for the cleaning.
- It will ensure the safety of sanitation workers and proper septic waste management to prevent contamination of the Yamuna.

Odisha

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

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Inaugurates National Tribal Craft Mela

- Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik inaugurated National Tribal Craft Mela-2019 in Bhubaneswar.
- The 7-day long 8th National Tribal Crafts Mela has been organised with the objective of promotion and popularisation of traditional tribal arts and crafts.
- Handloom products, iron and bamboo products, handicraft items, puppets, tribal textiles, and embroidery work, tribal paintings and many more tribal products will be showcased during the fair.

Odisha government signs pact with Tata Strive, Tech Mahindra for skill upgradation

- The Odisha state government signed agreements with Tata Strive and Tech Mahindra to add new dimensions in skilling and employability of the youth

- The agreement between Directorate of Technical Education and Training and Tata Strive is aimed at imparting life skills to the students of all 49 government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in the state
- The pact between Tech Mahindra and the BijuPatnaik University of Technology will see setting up of a centre for excellence in artificial intelligence and machine learning. It will work on the proof of concept for real-life business problems to keep up with the market demand and enhance employability of engineering students.

'Bali Yatra' Festival Begins In Cuttack, Odisha

- The festival 'Bali Yatra', which is organised every year in memory of the rich maritime history of Odisha, was inaugurated in Cuttack.
- The festival is organised at the bank of River Mahanadi every year to mark the day when ancient mariners from the state would set sail to the distant land of Bali, Sumatra, Java (Jawa) in Indonesia, Borneo and Sri Lanka, for the expansion of trade and culture.

Punjab

Capital—Chandigarh; CM—Amarinder Singh; Governor—V.P.Singh Badnore

CM Amarinder Singh launches first-of-its-kind 'Punjab job helpline' for job seekers

- Punjab government has launched first of its kind Punjab job helpline number 76260-76260 for the job seekers.
- Launching the Punjab Job Helpline as part of the State Government's flagship 'GharGharRozgar' programme,
- Chief Minister CaptAmarinder Singh described it as a platform to generate massive job opportunities to lakhs of job seekers across the State every year, connecting them effectively with prospective employers.
- The helpline aims to reach every household in Punjab and is designed to call 75,000 mobile and landline numbers daily.
- To enable the data that will get created through an operation of this scale, the Punjab Job Helpline has a 110-seat backend call centre.

Tamil Nadu

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

Tamil Nadu becomes first State to enact law on contract farming

- Tamil Nadu has become the first State in the country to enact a law on contract farming with President Ram NathKovind giving assent to the Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act.
- In March 2018, the Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister O Panneerselvam while presenting the State Budget for 2018-19 said that the State would enact a contract farming law to sustain agricultural production and promote agro-processing industries.
- According to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, contract farming refers to varied formal and informal agreements between producers and processors or buyers. It may include loose buying arrangements, simple purchase agreements and supervised production with input provision, with tied loans and risk coverage.
- Contract farming usually involves the following basic elements - pre-agreed price, quality, quantity or acreage (minimum/maximum) and time (Manage 2003). Contracts can range from oral deals to formal, registered written contracts.

Telangana

Capital – Hyderabad; CM – Chandrasekhar Rao; Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan

Telangana gets its first 'child-friendly' police station at Hyderabad's Medipally

- The state of Telangana got its first 'child-friendly' police station at Medipally in Hyderabad
- The child-friendly police station was decorated with wall paintings, furnished with beds and water coolers in order to make children visiting the police stations, comfortable and feel relaxed.
- The police station was designed and built in collaboration with NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), founded by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi.

- In addition to this, the presence of books, toys and games in these rooms will aid in making children less anxious

Uttar Pradesh

Capital – Lucknow; CM – Yogi Adityanath; Governor – Anandiben Patel

4-day Northeast festival in Varanasi

- A four-day festival showcasing art, culture, cuisine, handicrafts and handlooms of the northeastern region will be held for the first time in Varanasi.
- 'Destination North East' festival, which will begin in the temple town of Uttar Pradesh, will exhibit the striking similarities between the Ganga and Brahmaputra basins in terms of ancient culture, diverse handlooms and silk products, spiritual heritage and vibrant tourist hubs.
- All eight Northeastern states will participate the event, to be held at the IIT (BHU) ground, to display their handicrafts, handloom, organic products and cultural troupes.
- During the festival, the visitors will have live experience of the artisans and artistes from the Northeast working on their looms and crafts, performing their songs and dances in the open stage

Yogi Adityanath inaugurates North India's 1st sugar mill which will produce ethanol

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has inaugurated North India's first sugar mill which will produce ethanol direct from sugarcane.
- The mill was inaugurated in Pipraich area of Gorakhpur.
- Government is working to restore the pride of Sugar Bowl' of east Uttar Pradesh.

UP govt launches e-Ganna app, web portal

- Uttar Pradesh government has launched a dedicated web portal and a mobile application, e-Ganna App, for sugarcane farmers of the state. Cane supply slip will now be issued to the farmers by sugar mills online.
- The portal and the App will ensure transparency in the process of getting slips, and facilitate sugarcane supply by farmers to mills and check irregularities.

Lucknow railway station gets 'Health ATM'

- The Indian Railways has installed two 'Health ATMs' at the Charbagh railway station in Lucknow.
- The kiosks, promoted by YOLO Health ATM, provide 16 health check-ups for Rs 50-100. There are two types of check-ups -- a 9-minute one that costs Rs 100, and a 6-minute one that costs Rs 50. The report is delivered instantly to the email or smartphone of the user.
- Health ATMs can be defined as private, walk-in medical kiosks with integrated medical devices for basic vitals, cardiology, neurology, pulmonary testing, gynecology, basic laboratory testing and emergency facilities and staffed by a medical attendant.
YOLO plans to install similar 'Health ATMs' in Bareilly and Moradabad soon.
- The NorthEastern Railway has decided to extend the primary health check-up facility to other stations such as Gorakhpur, Gonda, Prayagraj and Basti.
- The check-ups include body mass index, blood pressure, body fat, hemoglobin, metabolic age, muscle mass, weight, height, temperature, muscle mass, basal metabolic rating, visceral fat, oxygen saturation, pulse rate, blood glucose, and bone mass.

India's first elephant memorial comes up in Mathura

- India-based conservation charity Wildlife SOS unveiled the country's first elephant memorial in Mathura .
- The memorial symbolises the sacrifice of these gentle giants who lost their lives while suffering brutality at the hands of humans.
- Most elephants used in circuses and tourist rides are taken from the wild and undergo a lifetime of misery.
- This unique memorial with stone boulders and engraved black granite plaques names some elephants who suffered this fate. The memorial has been set up with the support of UP forest department.

Etawah lion safari opened for public

- The Etawah Lion Safari was thrown open for public in UP.

- Formally known as Etawah Safari Park, it is spread in 350 hectares of land and has been developed as an educative tourist destination for children as well as youths.
- Besides the lion breeding centre, the facility is equipped with hospital, staff quarters backed by assured water and electric supply and is manned by trained staff.
- It was envisioned by then Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav in 2005 and the permission to establish a lion breeding centre and lion safari were obtained from the Central government in 2013.

Uttar Pradesh govt to set up state's 1st vulture conservation

- Uttar Pradesh government will set up state's first vulture conservation and breeding centre in farenda area of Maharajganj district to conserve the endangered vulture population
- There has been a sharp decline in the population of vultures in the country which has come down from 40 million to 19,000 in a span of over three decades.
- States' first vulture conservation and breeding centre of its kind will be set up on the lines of Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre at Pinjore in Haryana, which is also the first in the country

West Bengal

Capital – Kolkata; CM – Mamata Banerjee; Governor – Jagdeep Dhankhar

Kolkata Becomes First City to Install 'Third Umpire' RT-PCR Machines for Speedy Detection of Dengue

- Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) has installed first of its kind high-end reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) machines in India for quick detection of diseases like dengue, tuberculosis and swine flu.
- These machines are to serve as a 'third umpire' in situations when medical reports and blood tests reveal contradictory results.
- Through these machines, tests will be conducted free of cost.
- Four machines have been installed in the initial stages of the project at Hatbagan in North Kolkata, Behala, Jadavpur and at Haji Mohammad Mohsin Square in central part of the city.

Other National News

India gifts 2 electric vehicles to Pashupati Temple Trust to help elderly pilgrims

- The government gifted two electric vehicles to Pashupati Area Development Trust (PADT) in Nepal to help elderly pilgrims and differently-abled visiting the holy temple.
- After handing over the eco-friendly vehicles, manufactured by India's Gayam Motor Works, Namrita Puri, president of Indian Women's Association (IWA) in Kathmandu said that the vehicles will also create employment opportunities for two women.
- It provides a forum for the interaction with Nepali women and works to promote goodwill and friendship between the Indian and Nepali community.
- The two 8 seater electric vehicles with high-end Lithium-ion batteries were handed over to Pradip Dhakal, Member-Secretary of the PADT.
- The PADT is established to conserve and operate the Pashupatinath Temple and adjoining Area, which is enlisted as UNESCO's World Heritage Site.

Ministry of Shipping approves Loktak Inland Waterways Project

- The Ministry of Shipping gave approval for the development of Loktak Inland Waterways Improvement Project in Manipur under the Central Sector scheme.
- The estimated cost of the project is Rs 25.58 crore. The Loktak Lake is the largest freshwater lake in the Northeast located at Moirang in Manipur.
- The project will develop the inland water transport connectivity in the Northeast States and give a boost to the tourism sector also.

Lok Sabha passes bill to merge Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu

- The Lok Sabha passed the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019.
- The bill, which seeks to merge the two union territories into one, now awaits passage in the Rajya Sabha. The move comes three months after Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two UTs—Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.
- Dadra and Nagar Haveli has just one district while Daman and Diu has two.
- For the government to have Minimum Government, Maximum Governance, and considering small population and limited geographical area of both the Union Territories and to use the services of officers efficiently, it has been decided to merge the UTs of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman Diu into a single UT.

HRD Minister launches Kartavya portal

- Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched the kartavya.ugc.ac.in portal on the occasion of 'Constitution Day', as a part of year-long Nagrik Kartavya Paalan Abhiyan being observed throughout the country.
- The portal will be used primarily for holding monthly essay competitions for students as well as other activities like quizzes, debates, poster making, etc pertaining to Nagrik Kartavya Paalan Abhiyan.
- Nagrik Kartavya Paalan Abhiyan will give direction to the youth of the country.

PM Modi launches Fit India School grading system

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Fit India School grading system in schools across the country.
- The Fit India School rankings have been divided into three categories -- The Fit India Schools, which is the first level of ranking, Fit India School (3 star) and Fit India School (5 star).
- The level of ranking will depend on how much importance the school gives to inculcating fitness among its students and teachers, besides facilities available for fitness activities.

India to host SCO forum of Young Scientists and Innovators next year

- India will host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Forum of Young Scientists and Innovators in 2020.
- The 5th Meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States Heads of Ministries and Departments of Science and Technology and Permanent Working Group on S&T Cooperation concluded in Moscow, Russia.
- Eight SCO member states' heads of delegation signed the Protocol of the 5th Meeting of Ministries and Departments of Science and Technology.
- India will be the host of Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of SCO Member States in 2020, which will approve the Draft SCO Roadmap on cooperation between research institutions of SCO Member States for the period 2021-2023.

Over 7 crore farmers benefited under PM-KISAN scheme

- Over seven crore farmers have been benefited under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme.
- Under this scheme, six thousand rupees per year are being given in three instalments to the farmers.
- Over one crore 67 lakh farmers in Uttar Pradesh are benefited under the scheme which is the highest among all the all states.

Kalaburagi Airport Inaugurated Under UDAN

- Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa inaugurated the newly-constructed Kalaburagi airport which will now connect Bengaluru with the Hyderabad-Karnataka region
- The first flight from Kalaburagi Airport to Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru took off today after the inauguration of Kalaburagi airport
- The airport has been built under the UDAN-RCS Scheme of Govt. of India and is spread across 742 acres and developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 176 crores.
- So far, 230 routes and 42 airports have been operationalized under UDAN. UDAN will connect all States and UTs of the country with around 700 routes, laying the foundation of a new regional segment in India's aviation market.

AP bureaucrat to head panel on petrochemical investment

- The Centre has appointed senior Andhra Pradesh bureaucrat Rajat Bhargava as head of a high-level committee to suggest necessary policy initiatives for attracting more investments into the Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemical Investment Regions (PCPIR) in the country.

- Bhargava, the AP Industry and Infrastructure Principal Secretary, was appointed by the Union Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

Jal Shakti Minister releases short documentary film on Water Conservation named 'SHIKHAR SE PUKAR'

- Union Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat released a short documentary film on Water Conservation named 'SHIKHAR SE PUKAR' in New Delhi.
- The film has been made to promote 'Jalshakti Abhiyan' and is based on the Journey of an IAS Officer Ravindra Kumar, who climbed Everest this year to attract the attention of people from top of the Everest on the serious issue of Water Conservation and stopping Water Pollution.
- It also picturizes the difficulties and challenges in climbing the highest peak of the world.

I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurates Film Bazaar on sidelines of golden jubilee edition of IFFI 2019

- The Film Bazaar, which is being organised by the National Film Development Corporation, was inaugurated by the Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar on the sidelines of the golden jubilee edition of the International Film Festival of India.
- The Film Bazaar encourages creative and financial collaboration between the South Asian and International film communities
- 'Film Bazaar' is held every year at the Marriott Resort in Goa between November 20 and 24.

E-Cigarette bill banning production, import & sale of E- Cigarette & related products introduced in Lok Sabha

- Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan today introduced a bill to prohibit the production, manufacture, import, export, transport, sale, distribution, storage and advertisement of electronic cigarettes
- Home Ministry on 20th of November issued an order to all states and UTs, enabling law enforcement officials to conduct searches on-premises for the product without a warrant.
- A punishment of one-year imprisonment and a fine of one lakh rupees have been proposed for first-time offenders. The storage of e-cigarettes is punishable with imprisonment of up to six months or a fine of up to 50 thousand rupees or both.
- E-cigarettes are the most common form of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems.
- These are basically devices that do not burn or use tobacco leaves. Instead, they vaporise a solution using a battery

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Finland for strengthening cooperation in the field of Tourism

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for strengthening cooperation in the field of Tourism.

The main objectives of the Memorandum of understanding,

- Establish the basis for a cooperative relationship to encourage and promote successful bilateral cooperation in the field of tourism .
- Sharing data, knowledge, expertise etc. related to tourism
- Sharing experiences in making policies, regulation and standards in planning, implementation and development of tourism policy
- Facilitating the identification and expansion of joint projects, pilots and partnerships between companies and organizations through visits, meetings, workshops, co-creation sessions and site evaluations
- Exchanging best practices through workshops and study visits for experts of Finland and India on the field of cooperation
- Encouraging development of partnerships in the context of multilateral development programs and projects of international Financial Institutions, in which both Participants have common interests

Cabinet approves extension/renewal of the extant Pharmaceuticals Purchase Policy (PPP) with the same terms and conditions

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved extension/renewal of Pharmaceuticals Purchase Policy (PPP) for pharmaceutical Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) till their closure/strategic disinvestment.
- Extension/renewal of the policy would help the pharma CPSUs in optimum utilization of their existing facilities, enable them to generate revenues to pay salaries to their employees, help them in keeping the costly, sophisticated machinery in running condition resulting in higher return at the time of disposal in case of CPSUs under closure and better valuation in case of CPSUs under disinvestment.
- Pharmaceuticals Purchase Policy (PPP) was approved by the Cabinet on 30.10.2013 for a period of five years in respect of 103 medicines manufactured by pharma CPSUs and their subsidiaries. The policy is applicable to purchases by Central/ State Government departments and their Public Sector Undertakings etc. The pricing of the products is done by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA).
- The procuring entity can purchase from Pharma CPSUs and their subsidiaries subject to their meeting Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) norms as per Schedule 'M' of the Drugs & Cosmetic Rules. The term of the policy expired on 09.12.2018.

Union Cabinet approves import of 1.2 lakh tonnes onion

- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to the Food Ministry's recent decision to import 1.2 lakh tonnes of onions in a bid to improve the domestic availability of the key kitchen staple and check prices.
- Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan had announced that the government will import 1,00,000 tonnes of onions through state-run MMTC, which has already floated a tender for buying 4,000 tonnes of the commodity from the global market. The government is also facilitating private imports and also relaxed phytosanitary and fumigation norms till December.
- Retail prices of onions are continuing to rule above ₹60/kg in the national capital and other consuming centres.
- Onion prices have come under pressure due to 26% fall in the production to 52.06 lakh tonnes during the kharif output late-kharif seasons of 2019-20.

Cabinet approves amendments in TOT model

- The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs approved amendments in National Highways Authority of India's (NHAI's) Toll Operate Transfer (TOT) model to make it more attractive for private investors.
- The TOT model is part of the government's efforts to monetize public infrastructure and build new assets.
- As a part of the changes, public funded projects-- engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) and Build Operate Transfer (BOT) -- that are operational for more than a year after beginning commercial operations can be monetized through TOT model. Till now, the model authorized NHAI to monetize such projects that were operational for atleast two years.
- Another key change that the Cabinet approved is that now NHAI has been allowed to vary the concession period of toll projects between 15-30 years.
- The government has identified around 75 operational highway projects for potential monetization under the TOT, bundled into 10 separate bids to attract economics of scale for the private sector.

Cabinet approves establishment of National Institute for Sowa-Rigpa in Leh

- The Union Cabinet has approved setting up of the National Institute for Sowa-Rigpa in Leh as an autonomous organization.
- Sowa-Rigpa is a traditional Tibetan system of medicine practised in the Himalayan belt of India. It is popular in Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal's Darjeeling, Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the establishment of the NISR as autonomous body under the Ministry of AYUSH at an estimated cost of Rs 47.25 crore.

Home Ministry Launches Campaign To End Violence Against Women

- The Home Ministry in collaboration with the UN Women today flagged off an awareness campaign to end violence against women from Sultanpur metro station in Delhi
- The initiative is part of the #OrangeTheWorld global campaign. As part of the campaign, people would be made aware about India's single emergency helpline 112, an internationally recognised emergency number used in several countries
- The 112 service can be reached through voice call, 112 India App, SMS, email, respective state's 112 website and the panic button on mobile phones

Union Minister Smriti Irani along with Bill Gates launch Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh

- Union Minister of Women and Child Development (WCD) and Textiles, Smriti Irani, along with Bill Gates, co-chair of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, launched the Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh (BPKK).
- It seeks to promote healthy dietary practices and tackle under-nutrition in a sustainable manner.
- It would be accessible to policy-makers, administrators, experts and communities in order to help meet nutritional outcomes in the country

CBIC to organise 29th Regional Contact Points (RCP) meeting of Asia Pacific (A/P) region

- The 29th Regional Contact Points (RCP) meeting of Asia Pacific (A/P) region of the World Customs Organization (WCO) is being organised by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) at Puducherry from 18th to 20th November, 2019
- WCO is the only inter-governmental international organisation engaged in setting up and implementation of principles and standards for cross border procedures and Customs.
- Globally, WCO consist of six regions, each headed by a member country as Vice Chair of that region of WCO. India is member of Asia Pacific region of WCO and is also currently the Vice Chair since July 2018.
- The last RCP was organised in Nov 2018 in Jaipur.
- This is an important annual meeting in the region and is designed to address regional development in a number of areas, to discuss on various issues linked to cross border trade procedures and to enhance communication and experience sharing between the member countries.

SAANS campaign launched to curb pneumonia deaths in kids

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Harsh Vardhan launched 'SAANS', a campaign aimed at reducing child mortality due to pneumonia, which contributes to around 15 per cent of deaths annually of children under the age of five.
- SAANS, short for 'Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully' was launched by the Union Health Ministry to mobilise people to protect children from pneumonia, and train health personnel and other stakeholders to provide prioritised treatment to control the disease.
- The government aims to achieve a target of reducing pneumonia deaths among children to less than three per 1000 live births by 2025.
- A mass awareness campaign will also be launched about the effective solutions for pneumonia prevention like breast feeding, age appropriate complementary feeding, immunisation, good quality air etc.

National Tribal Festival Aadi Mahotsav to begin in New Delhi

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the National Tribal Festival "Aadi Mahotsav" in New Delhi.
- The theme of the 15-day Mahotsav being held at Dilli Haat in INA, is celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Craft, Cuisine and Commerce.
- The tribal textiles manufactured by master tribal craftsmen from Jammu & Kashmir in the North to Tamil Nadu in the South and from Gujarat in the West to Nagaland/Sikkim in the East will be the main attractions.

Rajnath Singh to inaugurate Sisseri River Bridge in East Siang

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated Sisseri Bridge, built by the Border Road Organisation (BRO) on Pasighat-Bomjir Highway
- The 200-metre long bridge between Jonai-Pasighat-Ranaghat-Roing road will provide connectivity between Dibang Valley and Siang to meet the long-pending demand of the people of Arunachal Pradesh
- Mr Singh attended the Maitree Diwas celebration at strategically important Tawang District along the Indo-China Border.
- The Government has adopted the Border Area Development Programme (BADP) in its plan keeping in view security of the people residing in the border areas

India saw second highest pneumonia deaths of kids under 5 in 2018: UN

- India had the second-highest number of deaths of children under the age of five in 2018 due to pneumonia, a curable and preventable disease that claimed the life of one child every 39 seconds globally, according to a new report by the UN.
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that globally, pneumonia claimed the lives of more than 800,000 children under the age of five last year--or one child every 39 seconds. Most deaths occurred among children under the age of two, and almost 153,000 within the first month of life.
- Five countries were responsible for more than half of child pneumonia deaths: Nigeria (162,000), India (127,000), Pakistan (58,000), the Democratic Republic of Congo (40,000) and Ethiopia (32,000).
- This "forgotten epidemic" is now responsible for 15 per cent of deaths in children under the age of five, and yet, just three per cent of global infectious disease research spending is allocated to the disease,

National Mission 'NISHTHA' launched in J&K

- National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) was launched in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
- NISHTHA is a pioneer scheme being launched across the country, with a total of 86000 Elementary teachers of Government Schools being trained in J&K under the programme
- The programme was formally inaugurated by Commissioner Secretary, School Education Department, Sarita Chauhan, which was attended by around 300 teachers, Key Resource Persons (KRPs) and Chief Education Officers, DIET Principals and Educational Administrators.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro is 2020 Republic Day chief guest

- Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro will attend next year's Republic Day celebrations as the chief guest, as New Delhi and Brasilia seek to upgrade their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership with larger cooperation in defence and space sectors.
- He is the third Brazilian President to be invited for Republic Day celebrations, after Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 1996 and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2004.

India gets USD 43 million from Green Climate Fund to boost climate resilience in 3 coastal states

- India kicked-off a USD 43 million project to boost climate resilience in three coastal states in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund, established within the framework of the
- Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to assist developing countries.
- The six-year project will build climate-resilient livelihoods for 1.7 million people in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha, offset 3.5 million tonnes of carbon, protect vulnerable ecosystems, and benefit another 10 million people with improved shoreline protection.
- This pace-setting new initiative will help enhance resilience and adaptability, lead to emissions reductions and support sustainable livelihoods

Nitin Gadkari Inaugurates Khadi Pavilion at I.I.T.F.

- Union Minister of MSME and Road Transport & Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the Khadi Pavilion at the India International Trade Fair - IITF in New Delhi

- The Pavilion entrance has been themed upon Sabarmati Ashram, with melodious Shehnai celebrating the ‘spirit of Indianness’
- A wide range of products which includes food, handicrafts, leather, textiles and hosiery, readymade garments, wooden toys, cosmetics and herbal products offering a discount of up to 20% are being displayed in the Khadi Pavilion at IITF 2019

Union Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurates exhibition of Technologies in Food Processing

- Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated an exhibition of Technologies in Food Processing developed by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.
- The exhibition organized in New Delhi showcases CSIR technologies in food sector to the industries and MSMEs. It also highlights the latest research and development being done in the food processing sector in the country.
- The products developed through these technologies and innovations are cost-effective and healthier for people.

Cyclone Bulbul hits part of West Bengal and Odisha

- Cyclone Bulbul hit several areas in West Bengal.
- It made landfall between Sagar Island and Frazerganj. Bulbul triggered heavy rains in Odisha & West Bengal. Two people have been reported dead; one each from both states.

Newly Discovered Species of Spider Named After Sachin Tendulkar

- Sachin Tendulkar’s legendary status in the game of cricket has seen his fans find numerous ways to pay tribute to him.
- Dhruv Prajapati, a junior researcher with the Gujarat Ecological Education & Research (GEER) Foundation, discovered two new species of spiders and named one after Tendulkar and the other after Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara, who played a key role in creating awareness on education in Kerala.
- One named (one spider) Marengo sachintendulkar.
- Another name is inspired by Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara who was a crusader in creating awareness about education in Kerala.
- The two new species are a part of the Indomarengo and Marengo genus of Asian jumping spiders.

Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan” week-long intensive Beach Cleaning Drive in 50 identified beaches of India

- To strive to make our beaches clean and create awareness amongst citizens about the importance of coastal ecosystems, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change are undertaking a mass cleanliness-cum-awareness drive in 50 identified beaches under the “Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan”, from 11th -17th November, 2019.
- The identified beaches are in 10 coastal States/Union Territories namely Gujarat, Daman and Diu, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha. The beaches have been identified after the consultation with the States/UTs.
- The Ministry has also decided that on completion of the drive, best three beaches will be suitably awarded along with a Certificate of Appreciation for all the participating Eco-clubs.

IOCL gets Environment Ministry’s clearance to set up 2G ethanol plant in Panipat

- The Ministry of Environment has granted clearance to the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) to set up a Rs 766-crore 2G ethanol plant in Haryana’s Panipat district.
- This project not only promotes use of environment friendly fuel but also aids in fulfilment of government’s goal of doubling farmers’ income.
- The IOCL had submitted a proposal seeking environment clearance for its proposed 100 KLPD Ligno-Cellulosic 2G ethanol plant at Baholi in Panipat district of Haryana.
- Ethanol produced will be used for blending in transportation fuel.
- Recently, the central government had notified that no environmental clearance would be required by sugar mills to produce additional ethanol from sugarcane juice.

11,379 farmers committed suicide in 2016

- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) said that 11,379 farmers committed suicide in India in 2016.
- The NCRB in its latest Accidental Death and Suicide report for 2016 says that there were 948 farmer suicides every month, or 31 suicides every day. The last report was released in 2015.
- As per the data in the report, the number of farmer suicides in the country has plunged to 11,379 in 2016 from 12,360 in 2014 and 12,602 in 2015.
- Overall, the data suggests that while farmer suicides have dipped by about 21%, those by farm labourers have risen by 10%.
- The NCRB report also states that a vast majority of farmers who died by suicide in India were men, while women accounted for just 8.6% of farmer suicides in the country.

SC paves way for temple at disputed site at Ayodhya, alternative land for mosque

- In one of the most important and most anticipated judgements in India's history, a 5-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi put an end to the more than a century old dispute.
- The Supreme Court in a unanimous verdict granted the entire 2.77 acre of disputed land in Ayodhya to deity Ram Lalla in a set of four directions.
- A 5-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi also directed the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government to allot a 5-acre land to Muslims at a "prominent" place in Ayodhya for building a mosque.

Integrated Check Post of Kartarpur Corridor inaugurated by the Prime Minister at Dera Baba Nanak in Punjab

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has formally inaugurated the Integrated Check Post of the Kartarpur Corridor.
- Kartarpur Sahib Corridor is a 4.7 kilometre long passage that connects Dera Baba Nanak Sahib in India's Gurdaspur and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan's Kartarpur.
- Narendra Modi flagged off the first batch of 500 pilgrims led by Akal Takhat Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh.
- The state-of-the-art Passenger Terminal Building is on 15 acres land. The fully airconditioned building akin to an airport has over 50 immigration counters for facilitating about 5000 pilgrims a day.
- The corridor will facilitate visa-free movement but Indian pilgrims are required to carry their passports and will have to just obtain a permit to visit Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara (Pakistan) , which was established by Guru Nanak Dev in 1522.

Thaawarchand Gehlot Visits 'Shilpotsav -2019'

- Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment, Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot visited the "Shilpostav- 2019" to encourage the artisans at Dilli Haat, INA, in New Delhi.
- Shilpostav- 2019 is the annual fair of artisans from across the country, belonging to the weaker sections of the society, which began on 1st November and will continue till 15th November 2019.
- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is working towards empowering disadvantaged and marginalized artisans nationwide and in continuance of this, Shilpostav has been organized every year.
- The range of products in this fair include - silk sarees, durries, readymade garments, Terracotta products, Jute Products, dress materials, Kashmiri shawls/stoles, leather, cane & bamboo products, hand embroidery, bead products, pearls, imitation jewellery, lakh products, decorative candles, wood carving, block printing, wooden toys, tie & dye, wood, marble artefacts and handloom etc.

Indian Railways launches 3 online applications for all-India rollout to strengthen IT enablement

- Indian Railways has launched three applications for all-India roll out to strengthen its IT-enabled services which will help ensure proper monitoring of projects being undertaken by Railways.
- The applications, namely CRS Sanction Management System, Rail-road crossing GAD approval system and TMS for construction aim at beefing up IT-enabled services.
- The CRS Sanction Management System is an important aspect in construction, maintenance and up-gradation of railway assets.

- Whereas Rail-road crossing GAD approval system will expedite preparation, processing and approval of general agreement drawings related to the construction of Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges.
- Application TMS for construction has been developed for new assets being constructed by the construction organization.

India's maternal mortality rate declines by 6.2 per cent in a year

- India's maternal mortality rate declined by 8 points in one year from 130 per lakh live births in 2014-16 to 122 per lakh live births in 2015-17, (registering a 6.2% decline) as per the latest special bulletin on MMR released by the Registrar General of India
- with this persistent decline, India is on track to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) set for reducing the MMR by 2025 which is five years ahead of the fixed time-line of 2030.
- India recently launched the 'Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan' (SUMAN) programme for zero preventable maternal and newborn deaths.
- Eleven states have already achieved the ambitious target of MMR of 100 per lakh live births by 2020 set under the National Health Policy 2017.
- These states are Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Telangana, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Karnataka and Haryana.
- Seven states — Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala, West Bengal, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana — have shown decline in MMR that is greater than or equal to the national average of 6.2%.

Khadi gets separate unique HS code

- The Ministry of Commerce and Industries has allocated a separate HS code for Khadi.
- HS stands for Harmonized System and it is a six digit identification code.
- It was developed by the WCO (World Customs Organization) and custom officers use HS Code to clear every commodity that enters or crosses any international border. Governments use HS codes and product descriptions to detect fraudulent activities.

Uttam rake: Indian Railways introduce first non-AC local train with CCTV cameras

- Indian Railways' Western Railway Zone has introduced state of the art 'Uttam Rake' for the local trains in Mumbai.
- The newly introduced rake has improved interiors and advanced features to make traveling in local a better experience.
- The Uttam rake is equipped with better seats, CCTV cameras, red emergency buttons, anti-dent partitions, modular luggage racks.

Government sets up Rs.25,000 crore fund to revive stalled housing projects

- The Union Cabinet approved the setting up of a Rs 25,000-crore alternative investment fund (AIF) to revive around 1,600 stalled housing projects across top cities in the country.
- The government will put in 10 thousand crore rupees in the Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) while State Bank of India and Life Insurance Corporation will provide 15 thousand crore rupees taking the total size to 25 thousand crore rupees
- The AIF will be a special window to provide priority debt financing for completion of projects in the affordable and middle-income categories,
- The government has decided to include projects declared as non-performing assets and those which are undergoing insolvency at the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to be considered for financing from the AIF.
- The funding will be possible only if they are registered under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act or RERA.
- However, those which have already got orders from NCLT for liquidation will not be considered.

PM Modi inaugurates Global Investors' Meet at Dharamshala

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the global investors meet at Dharamshala
- The two day Global Investors' Meet will be attended by diplomats, leaders from the corporate sector, senior policymakers, development agencies, entrepreneurs and investors from across the world.

- The Investor Meet is being organised by Himachal Pradesh to attract foreign investment and create employment opportunities in the state.

Finance Minister launches IT initiatives ICEDASH, ATITHI for improved customs clearance

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled two new IT Initiatives - ICEDASH and ATITHI for improved monitoring and pace of customs clearance of imported goods and facilitating arriving international passengers.
- ICEDASH is an Ease of Doing Business monitoring dashboard of the Indian Customs helping the public see the daily Customs clearance times of import cargo at various ports and airports.
- The ATITHI app will facilitate hassle-free and faster clearance by Customs at the airports and enhance the experience of international tourists and other visitors at the airports.

Ministry of Shipping Announces First Ever Movement of Container Cargo On Brahmaputra

- The first ever containerised cargo movement via Indo-Bangladesh protocol route and Brahmaputra river will start from West Bengal's Haldia
- The vessel MV Maheshwari, carrying 53 containers of petrochemicals, edible oil and beverage will take 12-15 days to reach the IWAI terminal at Pandu in Assam's Guwahati,
- The vessel will sail through national waterway-1 (river Ganga), NW-97 (Sunderbans), Indo-Bangladesh protocol route and NW-2 (river Brahmaputra)
- The latest IWT movement is aimed at providing a fillip to North East Region's industrial development by opening up an alternate route for transportation of raw material and finished goods

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar to attend 15th meeting of Governing Council of SACEP in Dhaka

- Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Information & Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar will attend the 15th meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) in Dhaka.
- The SACEP is an inter-governmental organization which was established in 1982.
- Its member countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka aim to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region.
- The 14th meeting of the SACEP Governing Council was held in March last year in Colombo.

MSDE and IBM jointly launched SkillsBuild platform

- The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) launched the SkillsBuild platform in collaboration with IBM.
- As part of the programme, a two-year advanced diploma in IT, networking and cloud computing, co-created and designed by IBM, will be offered at the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) & National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs).
- The platform will be extended to train ITI & NSTI faculty on building skills in Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- SkillsBuild offers digital learning content from IBM and partners such as CodeDoor, Coorpacademy and Skillsoft.
- The digital platform will provide a personal assessment of the cognitive capabilities and personality via MyInnerGenius to the students.

Agriculture Minister releases 5th edition of Wastelands Atlas – 2019

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar released the fifth edition of Wastelands Atlas - 2019.
- The Atlas, published jointly by Department of Land Resources and National Remote Sensing Centre, provides robust geospatial information on wasteland.
- It is helpful in rolling back the wastelands for productive use through various land development programmes and schemes.
- Wastelands Atlas-2019 also provides State and district wise distribution of different categories of wastelands area in the country and will be helpful in addressing land degradation.
- Wastelands Atlas's last edition was published in 2011.

- This is significant as it takes into account 12.08 Mha of unmapped area of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) for the first time.
- The effort has resulted in estimating the spatial extent of wastelands for entire country to the tune of 55.76 Mha (16.96 per cent of geographical area of the country i.e. 328.72 Mha) for the year 2015-16 as compared to 56.60 Mha (17.21 per cent) in the year 2008-09. during this period 1.45 Mha of wastelands are converted into non wastelands categories

AYUSH Minister Inaugurates National Research Institute of Unani Medicine for Skin Disorders

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Shri Shripad Yesso Naik inaugurated National Research Institute of Unani Medicine for Skin Disorders (NRIUMSD) upgraded from Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine (CRIUM) at AG Colony Road, Erragadda, Hyderabad.
- NRUMSD has been upgraded from the Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine (CRIUM) to a premier institute under the CCRUM.
- CRIUM is the only medical institution in the world which has treated more than 1.5 lakh patients of Vitiligo alone.

Atal Pension Yojana has more than 1.9 crore subscribers

- Atal Pension Yojana (APY), an emblematic government pension scheme to cover workers in the unorganized sector, has crossed the subscriber mark of Rs 1.9 million.
- The main reason for the increase in enrolment was the achievement of the objectives assigned to banks for the opening of new APY accounts.
- In this financial year, the response to APY enrolment was overwhelming and more than 36 lakh APY accounts were added until October 31, 2019, indicating a 33% growth compared to 26% growth during the corresponding period.

Kolkata International Film Festival

- The Kolkata International Film Festival will start on November 8. Satyajit Ray directed GupiGayen, BhaghaBayen will be the inaugural film of this festival. Cine Super-star Amitabh Bachchan and Shahrukh Khan, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and a galaxy of Bollywood and Tollywood stars will be present at the inaugural programme of the festival.
- Germany is the Focus Country of this year's festival.
- In all, 214 Feature Films and 152 Short and Documentary Films from 76 countries will be screened at 17 venues during eight-day long extra-vaganza.

Nirmala Sitharaman releases special commemorative coin of Paramahansa Yogananda

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has released a special commemorative coin on Paramahansa Yogananda to mark his 125th Birth Anniversary.
- Paramahansa Yogananda was a great son of India, who became so recognized globally.
- The importance lies in his universal message of bringing harmony among mankind and making it so acceptable globally even when communications modes were limited.

Centre hikes e-payments target for FY20 to 45 billion

- The government is making changes in its digital payments road map as it has now increased the target for e-transactions in the financial year ending March 2020 to 45 billion (by volume) from 40 billion.
- The ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) has also redistributed individual targets for banks and payments firms for the same period.
- The Noida-based Paytm's payments bank and private sector lender HDFC Bank have seen their targets increasing the most.
- Paytm Payments Bank has to clock close to 1 billion additional transactions at over 5.9 billion from the earlier target of 5 billion, while HDFC Bank's target has been increased to 3 billion from 2.5 billion earlier.
- State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank and Axis Bank have seen a minor increase in their overall e-transaction targets. Smaller regional banks have also seen a hike in allocation for the current financial year.

Government accords 'Maharatna' status to Hindustan Petroleum, Power Grid Corp

- The government on Wednesday accorded 'Maharatna' status to state-owned Hindustan Petroleum and Power Grid Corporation
- These orders were issued by the Department of Public Enterprises, under the Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises.
- The Boards of Maharatna central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) can make equity investments to undertake financial joint ventures and wholly owned subsidiaries and undertake mergers and acquisitions in India and abroad, subject to a ceiling of 15 per cent of the net worth of the concerned CPSE, limited to Rs 5,000 crore in one project.
- HPCL was incorporated in 1974 after the takeover and merger of erstwhile Esso Standard and Lube India through the Esso (Acquisition of Undertaking in India) Act passed by Parliament.
- Power Grid Corporation of India Limited is India's largest electric power transmission utility firm. It is a listed company since 2007

UNESCO includes Mumbai, Hyderabad in network of 'Creative Cities' on occasion of World Cities Day

- UNESCO has announced that Mumbai and Hyderabad have been included in its network of 'Creative Cities' on the occasion of World Cities Day 2019.
- Mumbai has been designated as Creative City of Films and Hyderabad a Creative City of Gastronomy.
- In India, Chennai and Varanasi are UNESCO cities of music while Jaipur is the City of Crafts and Folk Arts.
- By joining the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), the cities pledge to share their best practices and develop partnerships involving public and private sectors as well as civil society to strengthen creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities, goods and services
- The network covers seven creative fields: crafts and folk arts, media arts, film, design, gastronomy, literature and music.

5 lakh government vehicles to be converted into e-vehicles to make them eco-friendly

- Minister for Environment and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar said that all the 5 lakh government vehicles on conventional fuel will be converted into e-vehicle in a phased manner.
- These e-vehicle are eco-friendly and save consumption of petrol and diesel.
- These e-vehicles can play major role in curbing high level of pollution in Delhi.

PM Modi in Bangkok Releases Coin Marking Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin marking the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev besides releasing a Thai translation of the Tamil classic 'Tirukkural' at the "Sawasdee PM Modi" community event in Bangkok.
- The Indian community in Thailand is about 2,50,000-member strong.
- 'Tirukkural' is written by poet Thiruvalluvar and has been translated into many languages. The Tamil community in Thailand got it translated into Thai language for the first time.
- The PM is on a three-day visit to Thailand to participate in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), East Asia, and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) summits.

India's Oct unemployment rate rises to 8.5%, highest in over 3 years: CMIE

- India's unemployment rate in October rose to 8.5%, the highest since August 2016, and up from 7.2% in September, according to data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), reflecting the impact of a slowdown in the economy.
- India's infrastructure output fell 5.2% in September from a year earlier, the worst performance in years, while the industrial output shrank at its fastest rate in more than six years in August.

New Indian map shows UTs of J&K, Ladakh

- The Survey of India has redrawn the map of India to depict the newly formed Union Territories (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh. Areas such as Gilgit, Gilgit Wazarat, Chilas and the Tribal Territory of 1947 that have been occupied by Pakistan are included in the Ladakh UT.

- Other areas in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) such as Mirpur and Muzaffarabad have been included in the J&K UT.
- The new UT of Ladakh consists of two districts of Kargil and Leh. The rest of the former State of Jammu and Kashmir is in the new UT of J&K.
- The names of the new districts are as follows – Kupwara, Bandipur, Ganderbal, Srinagar, Budgam, Pulwama, Shupian, Kulgam, Rajouri, Ramban, Doda, Kishtivar, Samba and Kargil.

Coal India to meet 1 billion tonne output aim by FY24

- Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi asked mining major Coal India Ltd to fast track its ambitious one billion tonne production target and look to achieve the goal by 2023-24.
- The Minister announced this target during his address at the 45th Foundation Day of CIL in Kolkata.
- The CIL is currently given the target of producing 660 million tonnes of coal amounting to 82% of the country's coal output.
- The CIL is also likely to offer around ten thousand new jobs to boost employment. Shri Joshi directed CIL to take necessary steps to achieve this goal in light of growing energy requirements of the nation and assured CIL of all possible help from the Ministry of Coal in this regard.

Shri Santosh Gangwar Launches 3 Apps: Uan Registration, E-Inspection and DIGI Locker to Benefit EPF Subscribers And Stakeholders

- Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister of State (I/C) for Labour and Employment launched 3 Apps: UANREGISTRATION, E-INSPECTION AND DIGI LOCKER, developed by Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) at its 67th Foundation Day.
- These Apps will immensely enhance the Ease of Doing Business and promote transparency in the working in the EPFO.
- Online Facility for UAN generation by worker: Now any workers can obtain Universal Account Number (UAN) directly on EPFO website which enrolls them for PF, Pension and Life Insurance benefits and a worker need not depend on his employer alone for UAN. This is in the direction of ease of living and ensuring universal social security.
- EPS Pensioner's PPO in DigiLocker website/Application (APP) EPFO integrates with DigiLocker of NeGD to create depository of electronic PPOs which is accessible to individual pensioners. This is a move towards paperless system and ease of living for pensioners.
- e-Inspections: Digital interface of EPFO with employers: The E-Inspection Form would be available in user login of employers not filing ECR which enables employer to inform either closure of business or unpaid dues with proposal for payment.

Amit Shah inaugurated SCO Joint Exercise on Earthquake Rescue in New Delhi

- Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search and Rescue (SCOJtEx) in New Delhi
- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is hosting the exercise with the aim to rehearse disaster response mechanisms and share knowledge, experience and technology
- There will be participants from all eight SCO member countries -- China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

Important International News

UAE and Saudi Arabia sign four memorandums of understanding

- The UAE and Saudi Arabia signed four memorandums of understanding (MoUs) during the second meeting of the Saudi-Emirati Coordination Council in Abu Dhabi.
- The meeting comes as part of efforts by the two countries to activate all aspects of cooperation that leads to full integration in economy, knowledge and human development, and military.

- The meeting, chaired by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, also reviewed seven strategic initiatives.

Saudi Arabia elected to UNESCO's world heritage committee

- Saudi Arabia was elected to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee for the first time.
- The announcement comes after the Kingdom was elected to the UN heritage body's executive board for 2019-2023.
- The World Heritage Committee meets once a year, and consists of representatives from 21 member states to the convention elected by the general assembly.
- There are five sites in Saudi Arabia that are currently on UNESCO's World Heritage List: Al-Ahsa Oasis, Al-Hijr Archaeological Site (Madain Saleh) in AlUla, Al-Turaif district in Diriyah, Historic Jeddah, and rock art in the Hail region.

Ocean Dance Festival 2019 starts in Cox Bazar

- The four day long Ocean Dance Festival 2019 kicked off in Cox Bazar of Bangladesh.
- Ocean Dance Festival is the largest international dance festival of Bangladesh in which more than 200 dancers, choreographers and scholars from 15 countries are participating.
- The theme of this year's festival is 'Bridging the distance' or Durotter Shetubandhan. The dances performed at the event will show the idea of bridging the cultural and economic distances.
- The festival is being organised by the Nrityajog which is the Bangladesh wing of World Dance Alliance (WDA). The festival aims to expand cultural tourism in Bangladesh. It also features seminars and discussion apart from the dance performances by the artists.
- On the opening day of the festival Zuairiyah Mouli from Bangladesh performed *Ardhanarishwara*. Ananya Dance Theatre troupe from USA put up a powerful performance named *Trikone-Connectivity*. Dance troupes from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Canada, Lithuania, India and Bangladesh also performed on the inaugural day of the festival at Cox Bazar.

Oxford Dictionaries declares 'climate emergency' the word of 2019

- Oxford Dictionaries has named "climate emergency" as its 2019 Word of the Year, choosing it from an all-environmental shortlist that also included "climate action," "climate denial," "eco-anxiety," "extinction" and "flight shame."
- The Word of the Year citation is intended to highlight "a word or expression shown through usage evidence to reflect the ethos, mood, or preoccupations of the passing year, and have a lasting potential as a term of cultural significance."
- Usage of the term "climate emergency" is up 10,789 percent over the previous year
- In 2019, "climate" became the most common word associated with "emergency", three times more than "health emergency" in second.

Pakistan becomes first country to introduce new vaccine to combat typhoid

- Pakistan is the first country in the world to introduce World Health Organisation-recommended typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) in its national immunisation program.
- An India-made vaccine Typbar TCV, will play a significant role. About 1.2 crore doses of the vaccine have been supplied by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech for this initiative.
- Pakistan is launching the project in Sindh province, which is the centre of an ongoing extensively drug-resistant (XDR) typhoid outbreak that began in November 2016.

Dhaka International Folk Festival Inaugurated

- The 5th edition of the Dhaka International Folk Festival was inaugurated by the Information Minister of Bangladesh Dr Hasan Mahmud at a grand ceremony at Bangladesh Army Stadium. Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen was present as chief guest in the opening ceremony.

- The event began with performance by artistes of Bhabna Nrityadal, a prominent dance troupe from Bangladesh. Daler Mehendi from India, Shah Alam Sarkar from Bangladesh and Georgian folk band Chveneburebi performed on the first day of the programme.
- More than 200 artistes from 6 countries are be performing in the largest folk festival of Asia.
- During the three-day festival a large number of popular and renowned artistes from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Russia and other countries will perform in Dhaka

Russian President Vladimir Putin invites PM Narendra Modi for Victory Day

- Russian President Vladimir Putin has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the massive Victory Day celebrations in May next year.
- Modi, who is in Brazil for the 11th BRICS Summit which will focus on building mechanisms for counter-terrorism cooperation and strengthen India's ties with the world's five major economies, met Putin on the sidelines of the meeting and reviewed the full range of India-Russia relations.
- India and Russia are cooperating extensively in areas such as trade, security and culture. The people of our nations will benefit due to close bilateral ties.

India Pledges to Give \$5 Million to UN Palestine Refugee Agency In 2020

- India has pledged to contribute USD 5 million in 2020 to the UN Palestine refugee Agency
- India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador K. Nagaraj Naidu stated as a mark of solidarity with the Palestine refugees, the Indian government has increased its annual financial contribution fourfold to the core budget of the UN Relief and Works Agency(UNRWA), from \$1.25 million in 2016 to \$5 million in 2018.

Dubai to host World Tolerance Summit

- Dubai plans to launch a tolerance award and teach the values of tolerance in schools.
- The tolerance award would be given by Dubai-based International Institute for Tolerance (IIT), which organises the summit.
- The first winner of the award is expected to be announced in 2020 and the award would be held under patronage of his Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.
- The two-day summit, themed 'Tolerance in Multiculturalism: Achieving the Social, Economic and Humane Benefits of a Tolerant World'

World's first blockchain-based carbon trading exchange in Singapore

- Singapore-based AirCarbonPte launched the worlds' first blockchain-based carbon trading exchange. This will allow airlines and other corporate buyers to buy as well sell tokens backed by carbon offset credits approved by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.
- The company is applying to the Monetary Authority of Singapore for a recognized market operator license and targets for the exchange to be fully operational in 2020.
- The AirCarbon Exchange will finance the registration costs of some carbon-mitigation projects at no charge to developers to help generate credits to trade.

China to roll out world's largest 5G mobile phone network

- China's three state-owned wireless carriers will announce the introduction of 5G mobile phone services, a milestone in the country's push to become a technology power even as it remains locked in a trade war with the U.S.
- The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology will unveil the service debuts at a technology exhibition in Beijing.
- While some other countries launched 5G services earlier this year, China will have the largest commercial operating 5G network in the world.
- Subscribers in China -- more than 10 million have pre-registered to take the service -- will have access to faster videos and games, more virtual reality applications and improved performance for mobile videoconferencing.
- The largest cities including Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen will get full coverage first.

Australia announces 2020 New Colombo Plan India Mobility Grants

- The Australian Government to announce that 1607 Australian university students will undertake study and work-based experiences in India as part of the 2020 New Colombo Plan Mobility Program.
- The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government, providing Australian students opportunities to gain the cross-cultural awareness and experiences that are vital to globally connected workforce.
- In addition to the 1607 students who received mobility grants, six Australian undergraduate students have been awarded the prestigious New Colombo Plan scholarship to live, study and undertake internships in India in 2019.
- In the 2020 Mobility Program round, the New Colombo Plan will support more than 11,196 students from 40 Australian universities to participate in 685 projects in 36 locations across the Indo-Pacific.

Important Appointments National Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Datta Padsalgikar	Deputy National Security Advisor (NSA)
2.	Arvind Dutta (Lieutenant General)	Next Adjutant General of the Indian Army
3.	Air Marshal Amit Tiwari	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) of the Southern Air Command (SAC)
4.	Aditya Mishra	Chairman of Land Ports Authority of India
5.	Sumant Kathpalia	New MD & CEO of IndusInd Bank
6.	Sudhir Mital	President of Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI)
7.	Shantikumar Singh	General secretary of Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI)
8.	Arun Alagappan	Managing Director of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company
9.	Sanjay Gupta	Google India country manager and vice president of sales and operations
10.	Justice Sanjay Karol	Chief Justice of Patna High Court
11.	Prakash Javadekar	takes charge as Union Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises
12.	Nilam Sawhney	Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh
13.	Justice Akil Abdul hamid Kureshi	Chief Justice of the High Court of Tripura
14.	Dr Ravi Ranjan	Chief Justice of Jharkhand High Court
15.	Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde	47th Chief Justice of India
16.	Lt Col Jyoti Sharma	Army's first female Judge Advocate General officer to be deployed on a foreign mission
17.	Mrinal Kanti Das	Special Police Observer for Jharkhand assembly polls
18.	General Bipin Rawat	Chief of Defence Staff
19.	Uddhav Thackeray	Maharashtra Chief Minister
20.	Soma Roy Burman	New Controller General of Accounts

International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan	President of the UAE
2.	Dr Vinaya Shetty	General Vice President (GVP), International Organisation Development Association (IODA)
3.	Mohammad Imran	Bangladesh High Commissioner to India
4.	Anjani Kumar	Next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Mali
5.	Shane Watson	President of the Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA)
6.	Pravind Jugnauth	Mauritius Prime Minister
7.	Nils Andersen	Chairman of Unilever
8.	Justice Muhammad Raffiq	Chief Justice of Meghalaya HC
9.	Padmaja	Next High Commissioner of India to of Tonga
10.	Arsene Wenger	FIFA's Chief of global football development
11.	Mahinda Rajapaksa	New prime minister of Sri Lanka
12.	Gotabaya Rajapaksa	President of Sri Lankan
13.	Nita Ambani	Honorary trustee of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art
14.	Anita Anand	first Hindu to be appointed cabinet minister in Canada
15.	Suman Billa	Director at Madrid-Headquartered Unwto
16.	Lt General Sahir Shamshad Mirza	New Chief of Joint Staff of Pakistan Army

Resignation

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	T Latha	Dhanlaxmi Bank MD & CEO and director
2.	Devendra Fadnavis	Maharashtra CM
3.	Evo Morales	Bolivia President

Important Awards and Honors

Sl.No	Winners	Awards
1.	Nawazuddin Siddiqui (Actor)	Golden Dragon Award at the Cardiff International Film Festival for excellence in cinema in the global arena
2.	Rajinikanth (Actor)	Special Icon of Golden Jubilee award at 50th International Film Festival of India (IFFI)
3.	Isabelle Huppert (French actor)	Lifetime Achievement Award at 50th International Film Festival of India (IFFI)
4.	Sudarsan Pattnaik (sand artist)	Italian Golden Sand Art Award 2019
5.	Writer Anand	27th Ezhuthachan Puraskaram (highest literary honour of the Kerala State government) Cash prize of Rs 5 lakh and a citation

6.	Madhuri Vijay's debut novel 'The Far Field'	2019 JCB prize for Literature (Award worth ₹25 lakh)
7.	Neeraj Sharma	'Early Career Researcher of the Year (Physical Sciences)'
8.	Sara Damnjanovic (Serbia)	'Miss Asia Global 2019' at the international beauty contest
9.	Nguyen Thi Yen Trang (Vietnam)	'Miss Asia' title
10.	Samiksha Singh (India)	Sub-title of 'Miss Beautiful Face'
11.	Documentary on Real Kashmir Football Club	British Academy of Film and Television Awards (BAFTA) and Scotland Awards
12.	Venu Srinivasan (Chairman of TVS Motor Company)	Deming 'Distinguished Service Award For Dissemination and Promotion Overseas by the Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE)
13.	Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla	ABLF Global Asian Award
14.	Shanta Gokhale (writer, translator and film critic)	Tata Literature Live! Lifetime Achievement Award for 2019
15.	K. Ullas Karanth (Wildlife biologist)	George Schaller Lifetime Award in Wildlife Conservation Science
16.	Luka Modric (Croatia)	2019 Golden Foot award
17.	Robert De Niro	Life Achievement Award from Screen Actors Guild (SAG)
18.	Tobacco Board of India	Golden Leaf Award at Tab Expo 2019 event in Amsterdam, Netherlands
19.	Sridevi	ANR National Award for 2018
20.	Rekha	ANR National Award for 2019
21.	Sir David Attenborough	Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2019
22.	Bajrang Punia (Wrestler)	Indian Personality of the Year Award (Sports) at the Indo Arab Leaders Summit & Awards 2019 in Dubai.
23.	Mahant Gaurav Sharma (Powerlifting)	Visionary Leaders of the Year (Sports) award at the Indo Arab Leaders Summit & Awards 2019 in Dubai
24.	Divina Maloum (Cameroon) Greta Thunberg (Sweden)	Children's Peace Prize, awarded by the Dutch KidsRight organisation
25.	Susan Choi	National Book Award for fiction for "Trust Exercise,"
26.	Neha Dixit (Indian journalist)	International Press Freedom Award
27.	Billie Eilish	Billboard's 2019 Woman of the Year
28.	Suresh Krishna	Quality Ratna award
29.	Manisha Kulshreshtha	28th Bihari Puraskar for 2018 for her novel 'Swapnapash' by the KK Birla Foundation
30.	Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri	55th Jnanpith Award

Royal Aeronautical Society honour for DRDO chief G Satheesh Reddy

- Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) London has conferred the Honorary Fellowship of the Society for the year 2019 to G Satheesh Reddy, Secretary Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO.
- Reddy is the first Indian recipient of this prestigious award in over 100 years.
- The Society's highest award is bestowed in recognition of Reddy's pioneering technological contributions over the past three decades which has enabled the country to realise frontline military systems and world class missile technologies.
- Reddy has made outstanding contributions to Defence Research and Development and is renowned for his pioneering contributions to the Indian defence and aerospace sector.

'World's Largest Flower Carpet' Made Out of Bengaluru's Marigold in Dubai Enters Guinness Records

- The Bengaluru Kempegowda International Airport shipped 41,444 kg of marigold flowers to Dubai, enabling the creation of the world's largest flower carpet.
- The flowers were laid out at 'Flowers of Tolerance' at the Dubai Festival City. It has entered the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest natural flower carpet.
- Over the years, Air India SATS CoolPort has facilitated flowers export from the Bengaluru airport due to its ability to keep the blossoms fresh and fragrant

Nawazuddin Siddiqui wins Lesley Ho Asian Film Talent Award for Sacred Games at SIFF

- The 30th edition of Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) commenced on November 21. It is set to conclude on December 8.
- Actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui received Lesley Ho Asian Film Talent Award at the Singapore International Film Festival for his Netflix's Emmy-nominated original series Sacred Games.
- The actor received the award from a business tycoon from Beijing, Charles Ho.

Kerala man becomes first from India to get Mr Universe title at bodybuilding event

- As many as 38 countries participated in the annual congress and India won 23 medals in total, including 6 gold, 13 silver and 4 bronze medals.
- India also secured the second position in the team championship category, with Thailand at first place.
- Indian bodybuilder Chitharesh Natesan has become the first Indian to be titled Mr Universe 2019. He was crowned the Champion of Champions at the 11th World Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Championship (WBPF) 2019.
- The championship was held by the World Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Federation at the Island city of Jeju, South Korea.
- Chitharesh Natesan (33) from Kerala won the title in the 90 kg category in the WBPF 2019.

Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2019

- The Union Minister of the Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers, Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda and the Union Minister of State of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Shri Rattan Lal Kataria, conferred the Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2019 awards to top ranked states, union territories, and districts in the various categories on the occasion of World Toilet Day at Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, New Delhi.
- The top ranked state – Tamil Nadu, and the top ranked district – Peddapalli (Telangana), along with the state with the maximum citizen participation – Uttar Pradesh, had also been felicitated by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, at the Swachh Bharat Diwas event commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Ahmedabad on 2nd October, 2019.
- Corporates were also felicitated for their contribution under the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign this year, for their efforts towards effective plastic waste management. These were: the Cement Manufacturers Association (CMA), Hindustan Unilever Limited and AMUL.
- The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) had commissioned “Swachh Survekshan Grameen-2019” (SSG 2019) through an independent survey agency to develop ranking of all districts of India on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation (Swachhata) parameters.
- This ranking was done based on a comprehensive set of parameters including surveys of public places like schools, Anganwadis, PHCs, Haat/ Bazaars, Panchayat and citizen's perception of Swachhata and their recommendations for improvement of the program and data from the SBM-G IMIS.

Delhi Metro wins 2 awards at Urban Mobility India Conference

- The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has been conferred with two awards for its commendable initiatives in promoting the metro as a green and sustainable mode of transport among the masses.
- DMRC was awarded for the 'Last Mile Connectivity' project in the category of best non-motorised transport and the 'Green Metro project - An Initiative for Sustainable and Viable Urban Transport' in the category of best green initiative in urban transport, at the 12th Urban Mobility India Conference and Expo 2019 held from November 15 to 17 in Lucknow,

GI Tag for Darjeeling Green, White Tea

- Darjeeling Tea Association mentioned green and white tea of the hills were registered as geographical indication (GI) merchandise within the nation.
- These two kinds of Darjeeling tea were registered below Geographical Indications of Items (Registration and Protection) Act 1999.

India bags first position at BRICS Young Scientist forum

- India has received the first prize at BRICS Young Scientist forum's conclave in Brazil
- Ravi Prakash, who is a PhD scholar from Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Dairy Research Institute, has bagged the first position for inventing an affordable indigenously designed milk chilling unit for small to marginal rural dairy farmers.
- The first BRICS Young Scientist Conclave hosted by India in September 2016. The Second forum was hosted by China in Hangzhou in July 2017.
- South Africa hosted the third Conclave during June 2018 in Durban

Latest Guinness World Records Include 80 Indian Feats

- The longest hair on a teenager, the shortest woman alive, and the largest collection of paper cups are among the 80 record-breaking achievements by Indians that have made it to the latest edition of the Guinness World Records, publisher Penguin Random House.
- The book, "Guinness World Records 2020", lists thousands of new record titles and holders that will "educate and entertain curious readers of all ages" across topics such as the classics amazing animals, jaw-dropping geography and spectacular sporting achievements to the cutting-edge including streaming, viral sports, robots, and artificial intelligence.
- While 16-year-old Nilanshi Patel recorded the longest hair on a teenager for her 5 ft 7 inches long hair, Jyoti Amge of Nagpur made the cut for her 24.7 inch height, making her the shortest woman living (mobile).
- The record of "longest fingernails on a single hand" was achieved by Shridhar Chillal from Pune City who boasts of an aggregate length of 909.6 cm (358.1 in) on his left hand.
- Jotshna Mishra and Durga Charan found themselves a place in the records for "The longest journey by scheduled public transport in a single country" by travelling for 29,119 km across India, from February 18 to March 30, 2018.
- V Sankaranarayanan from Tamil Nadu recorded the largest collection of paper cups with 736 units, while Naveen Kumar recorded the fastest time to skate under 10 bars at 2.06 seconds, the book noted.

Indian-origin researcher wins award for work on batteries

- Dr Neeraj Sharma from the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney – considered one of the global leaders in the use of neutron and X-ray scattering methods to study materials for next-generation lithium-ion batteries – has won the 'Early Career Researcher of the Year (Physical Sciences)'.
- NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian honoured 35-year-old Dr Sharma, from the School of Chemistry at UNSW, with the award at the Government House in Sydney.
- The award was given for his work in lithium-ion batteries found in electronic devices, electric vehicles and the grid, as well as next-generation battery systems such as sodium-ion batteries that will leave a minimal environmental impact, and transition away from fossil fuels for energy generation and transportation.

Rajasthan Patrika group chairman Gulab Kothari to be awarded Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award by PCI

- Rajasthan Patrika group chairman Gulab Kothari has been chosen for the prestigious Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award, presented by the Press Council of India, for his outstanding contribution towards journalism.
- The award will be presented on November 16 on the occasion of the National Press Day.
- Press Council of India (PCI) also announced other winners of the National Awards for Excellence in Journalism 2019.
- Sanjay Saini, Correspondent, DainikBhaskar, Mandi, and Raj Chengappa, Group Editorial Director, India Today, have been jointly named as winners of the award in the category of 'Rural Journalism'.
- Shiva SwarupAwasthi, Senior Reporter of DainikJagran, and AnuAbraham, sub-editor of Matrubhumi, Calicut, have been selected under the award category of Developmental Reporting.
- KrishnKaushik and Sandeep Singh of Indian Express have been selected as winners under the award category of 'Financial Reporting'.
- P G Unnikrishnan, Senior Photographer, The Matrubhumi, and Akhil E S, News Photographer, Matrubhumi, were named as winners of the award in the 'Photo Journalism-Single News Picture' category.
- Sipra Das, Consulting Editor (Photography), India Empire Magazine and Parliamentarian Magazine, has been selected in the category of 'Photo Journalism-Photo Feature'.
- Ruby Sarkar, Special Correspondent, Deshbandhu, Bhopal, has been selected for the award category of 'gender based reporting'.
- The selection of awardees was carried out by a jury comprising eminent members of the PCI such as Jai Shankar Gupta, Balwinder Singh and Ashok Upadhyaya among others.

Important MOU's

India announces \$400 million line of credit for infrastructure in Sri Lanka

- India has announced a line of credit of \$400 million for development projects in Sri Lanka and a \$50 million fund to fight terrorism on marking Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's two-day visit to the country.
- This is Rajapaksa's first foreign visit after taking over as President of Sri Lanka on November 18 after winning a keenly fought national election.
- The two leaders had decided to utilise the \$100 million credit line earlier announced for setting up solar projects in the country.

20th Edition of Hornbill Festival begins in Nagaland

- The much-awaited festival, the Hornbill Festival began with a colourful blend of culture and tradition with a modern twist at Naga Heritage Kisama in Nagaland. This is the 20th edition of Hornbill Festival.
- The festival organised by Nagaland Government is an annual tourism promotional event to showcase the state's traditional and rich cultural heritage in all its ethnicity, diversity and grandeur.
- Highlights of the ceremony include a colourful display of Naga Culture themed as "Colours of Nagaland."

NIFTEM to conduct National Organic Festival of Women Entrepreneurs

- Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) and Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to organise "National Organic Festival of Women Entrepreneurs".
- The event will be planned and organized through NIFTEM, Kundli, Sonapat, Haryana which is an academic institution under the administrative control of Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India.
- The festival aims to encourage Indian women entrepreneurs and farmers to connect with buyers and thus, empower them through financial inclusion, while also promoting organic food produce in India.

AIIA signs MoU with Western Sydney University to promote Ayurveda

- The All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) has signed an MoU with Western Sydney University, Australia aimed at promoting and developing guidelines for integrating Ayurveda principles with modern medicine.
- The memorandum was agreed and exchanged on the occasion of the event 'India- Australia International Education and Research Workshop' held at the Ambedkar International Centre.

Singapore signs MOU with South Korea on cybersecurity cooperation

- Singapore has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with South Korea to enhance cooperation and information-sharing on cybersecurity.
- The MOU was signed by David Koh, chief executive of the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore, and Kim Seok-hwan, president of the Korea Internet & Security Agency. The MOU was witnessed by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and South Korean President Moon Jae-in.
- Singapore has signed similar agreements with New Zealand, Canada, India, Australia, France, the Netherlands, the UK and the United States.
- The city-state, a trade-reliant nation with a rapidly aging population, is trying to restructure its economy to make it a global centre of innovation. As a hyper-connected financial hub, it's also been a target for hackers.

IIM Indore inks MoU with Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy

- IIM Indore has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie.
- The MoU has been signed with a view to exchange faculty members for various training programmes.
- The MoU signed by Prof Himanshu Rai, Director, IIM Indore, and Sanjeev Chopra, Director, LBSNAA, intends to strengthen technical cooperation between the two institutes through sharing experiences, best practices and knowledge in the area of capacity building of public officials and public private education.
- The two organisations have agreed for joint participation in research activities of common interest in the areas of public administration, management and public policy.

IRCTC inks MoU with Karnataka tourism to market, run Golden Chariot train

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC), a tourism arm of Indian Railways, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) to market and operate the Golden Chariot train.
- Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) will soon hand over the reins of the train to IRCTC. IRCTC is planning a revamp of the train itineraries also to add different flavours that Karnataka has to offer. The new itineraries shall be a mix of history, culture, wildlife and nature.
- It is proposed to include Bandipur, Mysore, Halebid, Chikmagalur, Hampi, Bijapur and Goa in the itinerary.
- IRCTC is expected to carry out an internal refurbishment of the train and commence operations from March 2020.
- The Golden Chariot train which commenced operations in 2008 is a Government of Karnataka initiative in a joint venture with the Ministry of Railways.

Google to launch Citi-backed checking accounts next year

- Google is partnering with Citigroup and Stanford Federal Credit Union to offer checking accounts beginning next year in a project code-named Cache.
- Checking accounts may be an advantageous jumping-off point for Google in banking. They offer loads of personal information, including salary, where people shop and what bills they pay. Additionally, they have a long shelf life: The average U.S. adult has used the same primary checking account for about 16 years.

NCDEX ties up with NSE Indices to launch AGRIDEX, India's first agri index

- In a major move, the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) has launched India's first agri index — 'NCDEX Agridex', for easy reference to price variations in agricultural commodities.
- Launched with a composition of 10 leading liquid contracts on the NCDEX platform at present, the index is now available as 'indicative'. It will be made tradable after being approved from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

- NCDEX has already applied for a formal approval from Sebi, which, according to trade sources, is likely to be cleared soon.

Ficci signs Fintech MoU with Singapore

- Industry body Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) signed an agreement with Singapore Fintech Association (SFA) to boost cooperation for development of financial technology industry in India and the southeast Asian country.
- The FICCI-SFA MoU is a partnership agreement to share information about fintech and collaborate on mutually beneficial initiatives that will further development of fintech industry in both the countries
- A soft launch is scheduled of the acceptance of BHIM-UPI QR based payments in Singapore with a live transaction at a merchant terminal at the festival on Wednesday.
- This is the first time that BHIM app will go international. The project is being jointly developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Network for Electronic Transfers (NETS) of Singapore.
- This is a QR based payment system that will allow anyone with a BHIM app to make payments at NETS terminals in Singapore

Indian Bank sign MoU with Muthoot Microfin to serve MSME

- Indian Bank has signed a memorandum of understanding with Muthoot Microfinance to serve micro, small and medium enterprises.
- Under the memorandum of understanding, the bank and the non-banking finance company will jointly lend to the MSME borrowers
- Indian Bank general manager-MSME Sudhakar Rao exchanged documents with Muthoot Microfin deputy CFO Praveen T in the presence of the bank's managing director and CEO Padmaja Chunduru

US university to collaborate with AIIMS, Kasturba Medical College for genetic testing in India

- A top American university will expand genetic testing in India in partnership with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi and the Kasturba Medical College in Manipal.
- A 2.3 million US dollar grant from the National Institute of Health over five years will help the University of Michigan and Indian geneticists identify and confirm genetic changes that are the basis of developmental disorders.

MSTC ties up with Allahabad Bank to develop e-auction platform

- MSTC Ltd has signed an agreement with Allahabad Bank for the development of a dedicated e-Auction platform directly linked with the Indian Banking Association's portal (<https://ibapi.net>) for sale of non-performing assets (NPAs) through the SARFAESI (Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest) Act.
- The e-Auction platform will be a one-of-a-kind solution, where a bidder once registered, will be able to participate in auctions for all banks
- MSTC is a Kolkata-headquartered Central Government of India company engaged in domestic and international trading.
- It specialises in the international trade of ferrous input materials and has imported millions of tonnes of ferrous melting scrap, old ships for breaking, sponge iron, hot briquetted iron, re-rollable scrap,

GeM Signs MoU With Indian Bank and Canara Bank For Payment Related Services

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has signed MoU with Indian Bank and Canara Bank.
- The MoU will facilitate a cashless, paperless and transparent payment system on the portal and would create an efficient procurement system for government entities.
- Through this partnership, both the banks will be able to offer an array of services including transfer of funds through GeM Pool Accounts (GPA), advising of Performance Bank Guarantees (e-PBG), Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Payment Gateway to the registered users on the portal.
- GeM is also working with Banks, TReDs and SIDBI to provide bill discounting and financing of working capital where the cost of capital is linked to the performance and rating of a seller on GeM.

- GeM is an initiative of the Government of India which offers a one stop platform for facilitating online procurement of common use goods and services required by various government departments, organisations and PSUs.
- GeM provides tools for direct purchase, bidding and reverse auction for ensuring transparent and efficient procurement. Online integration for payments and various banking services is one of the priorities for GeM. GeM has already signed

Siemens signs MoUs with NTPC, TERI on decarbonisation, energy transition

- Siemens Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) with NTPC Limited to identify, evaluate and set up reference use cases of hydrogen sector-coupling for various upstream and downstream applications.
- The collaboration is aimed at developing innovative technologies, solutions and techniques to reduce the dependence on Hydrocarbons in India.
- It has also inked a separate MoU with TERI for collaboration on technologies to support the energy transition in India including sector-coupling. Among the objectives of the MoU with TERI is realizing the research and technology development projects to enable energy transitions across the electricity, transport and industrial sectors.

Important Summit & Conference

Two day DEFCOM INDIA 2019 seminar commenced at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi

- The two day DEFCOM INDIA 2019 seminar commenced at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi.
- The theme for the seminar is, “Communications: A Decisive Catalyst for Jointness”.
- The seminar is devoted to the seminal theme of leveraging communications for achieving jointness between the three services.
- DEFCOM 2019 one the first day witnessed active participation from the armed forces, industry, research and development organisations and the academia.
- It provided an excellent opportunity for the industry to understand the requirements of the Armed Forces.
- The DEFCOM exhibition showcased cutting edge communication solutions from the industry and gave officers from the three services an opportunity to gain insights on technology and industry capabilities. The prestigious DEFCOM journal was also released during the seminar.

WATEC 2019 Conference Held at Tel Aviv,Israel

- The 8th edition of the World Water Technology and Environmental Control (WATEC) Conference and Exhibition 2019 was held at David InterContinental, Tel Aviv, Israel from November 18-21, 2019.
- The focus of WATEC 2019 was “Water Stewardship and Innovation – driving global leadership in the responsible planning management, and protection of water”.
- The Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat represented India at the WATEC Conference.
- WATEC 2019 provided a comprehensive forum where water industry executives, academia, institutional investors, venture capitalists, analysts, and other experts have the opportunity to shape the future collaboration of the water technology arena.

1st International Conference on “Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience-2019”

- The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated the 1st International Conference on “Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience”.
- MoS, Shri G. kishan Reddy called for developing technology to anticipate disasters like landslides and develop infrastructure to quickly respond to minimise the damage.
- The Minister said that landslides have attracted global attention as they may cause huge havoc on communities, live stock, environment leading to huge loss of lives . On the one hand landslides effect loss of infrastructures-roads, buildings, bridges, communication systems etc, on the other, they may lead to stagnation of human activity and mobility.

47th All India Police Science Congress begins in Lucknow

- The 47th All India Police Science Congress (AIPSC) is being organised in Lucknow. The chief guest for the event is a former cop and Puducherry LG Kiran Bedi.

- The venue of the 2-day AIPSC is the Signature Building in the new Police headquarters.
- Uttar Pradesh is hosting this event after 22 years.
- Police officials from every state of the country are participating in the Police Science Congress. The Congress will focus on challenges in policing, and five other related topics.

8th Edition Of International Tourism Mart Opens At Imphal

- The 8th International Tourism Mart has been organised at Imphal, Manipur. The Theme of 2019 International Tourism Mart is "Sustainable Tourism an engine for Economic Growth and Employment".
- It was inaugurated by the Minister of State (I/C) for Culture & Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel and Chief Minister of Manipur, Shri N. Biren Singh.
- The event has been organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, in association with the North Eastern States.
- It is an annual event organised in the North Eastern region with the objective of highlighting the tourism potential of the region in the domestic and international markets.

G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting

- Foreign ministers from the Group of 20 major economies gathered in Nagoya, where they were set to discuss free trade, sustainable development and how to best assist rapidly growing economies in Africa.
- The two-day event — the last of the eight ministerial G20 meetings to be chaired by Japan this year — will be attended by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan.
- The G20 is made up of 19 countries and the EU. The 19 countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the UK and the US.

Four-day Aalmi Tablighi Ijtima, world's biggest Islamic Congregation begins in Bhopal

- In Madhya Pradesh, the four-day Aalmi Tablighi Ijtima, world's biggest Islamic Congregation began in Bhopal. More than one million people from 54 countries are expected to attend the congregation.
- One of the most prominent features of Alami Tablighi Ijtima is that it has no political affiliation. It is a forum for delivering some important religious-spiritual messages to Muslims around the world.
- Ijtima started in the era of Nawabs in Bhopal and now it has become the identity of Bhopal worldwide. The first Alami Tablighi Ijtima took place in Bhopal in 1944 and only 14 people attended it then. Now the number has increased to millions.
- Thousands of people from various countries across the world including Russia, France, Indonesia, Malaysia, Iraq and Saudi Arabia have reached Bhopal to participate in this event.

11th Agrovision: India's Premier Agri Summit

- 11th edition of Agrovision is scheduled from 22-25 November, 2019 at Reshimbagh Ground, Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- The journey of Agrovision over the years has been remarkable and it has become one of "India's Premier Agri Summit". The vision is to create a prosperous agrarian society where farmers are well informed about the latest practices and agriculture becomes a remunerative and attractive profession.
- Focus this year will to bring latest technologies and products to the farmers. Keeping this in mind, the theme of the 11th Agrovision has been aptly chosen as "Smart Technologies for Sustainable Development".

New Initiatives in 11th Agrovision

- IT in Agriculture
- Start-Ups in Agriculture
- International Pavilion
- MSME Pavilion
- Agrovision is a great opportunity to connect with lakhs of farmers from the districts of Vidarbha and Marathwada in Maharashtra and adjoining districts of MP, Chhattisgarh, AP and even some from far away states like Haryana, UP, Bihar etc. This is a unique platform to interact with who's who from the agriculture fraternity.

President of India to preside over two-day Conference of Governors and Lt. Governors at Rashtrapati Bhavan

- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, will preside over a two-day Conference of Governors and Lt. Governors at Rashtrapati Bhavan. This will be the 50th such Conference to be held in Rashtrapati Bhavan and the third Conference to be presided over by President Kovind.
- The two-day Conference will discuss important thematic issues in various sessions. It includes tribal issues, reforms in agriculture, Jal Jeevan Mission, new education policy for higher education and governance for ease of living.

HRD Minister attends 5th Australia-India Education Council meeting

- Union Minister for Human Resource Development (HRD) Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank attended the 5th Australia-India Education Council (AIEC) meeting in Delhi.
- He also met Australia's Education Minister Dan Tehan at the event.
- Both the countries in 2010 had signed a Joint Ministerial Statement to continue to expand collaboration in education, training and research. To support this expansion, both Governments agreed to the establishment of the AIEC.

Global Bio-India Summit in Delhi

- Three-day Global Bio-India Summit will begin in New Delhi.
- Theme: Power to Transform Lives: Bioscience to Bioeconomy – USD 100 Bn by 2025
- It will bring academia, innovators, researchers, start-ups, medium and large companies together on the same platform.
- More than 200 exhibitors, 275 start-ups and more than 100 biotechnology incubators will participate in Global Bio-India.
- Biotechnology has been recognized as a sunrise sector and a key driver for contributing to India's five trillion dollar economy target by 2025.

NuGen Mobility Summit 2019

- The International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) is organizing a NuGen Mobility Summit, 2019, at Manesar, NCR, from 27th to 29th November 2019.
- Theme 2019: “Smart & Green Mobility”
- The objective of the Summit is to share new ideas, learnings, global experiences, innovations and future technology trends for faster adoption, assimilation and development of advanced automotive technologies for a smarter and greener future.
- This event will help in building a platform for bringing together all stakeholders in the automotive industry to understand global advancements in technologies.
- The Summit is being organized in association with SAENIS, SAE INDIA, SAE International, NATRiP, DIMTS, Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, SIAM and ACMA. More than 2500 participants and over 250 exhibitors are expected to take part in the Summit.

India ASEAN InnoTech Summit 2019

- India ASEAN InnoTech Summit 2019, a three-day Technology & Innovation Summit, exhibition, B2B and B2G meetings to be held on 20 - 22 November 2019, SMX Convention Center, Davao, Philippines.
- India ASEAN InnoTech Summit: Accelerating towards innovative development
- Participating ASEAN Member Countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam
- Exhibition to showcase best Indian Innovative Technologies, with potential implementation in the ASEAN region

29th RCP meeting of Asia Pacific Customs begins in Puducherry

- The 29th World Customs Organisation (WCO) Asia Pacific Regional Contact Points (RCP) meeting hosted by the Chennai Customs Zone at Puducherry began.
- The 3-day meeting, which is being discussed to facilitate customs functions, operations and services in the Asia-Pacific region.
- This is the fourth time that the conference is being held in India, Jaipur, Cochin had earlier held the meeting as well.

2nd edition of South Asia Safety Summit held in New Delhi

- The South Asia Safety Summit is being organized to highlight the issue of safety while individuals and communities are connected on the digital platform
- The Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani was addressing the 2nd edition of South Asia Safety Summit in New Delhi
- Union Minister Smriti Irani has stressed the need to ensure the safety of women and children within their homes, and create safe neighbourhoods to protect them against violence and abuse.
- South Asia Safety Summit organized by the Ministry of WCD and Facebook.
- During the Summit, Union Minister of WCD launched “We Think Digital” website. This website is an online education portal with interactive tutorials aimed at helping people think critically and share thoughtfully online

VIT launches 9th world engineering education forum

- The 9th World Engineering Education Forum will take place at ITC Grand Chola Hotel in Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- This prestigious event, held for the first time in India, features the IX World Engineering Education Forum (WEEF) and the International Engineering Student Summit.
- This is the largest engineering education gathering in the world and brings together a large number of stakeholders, including engineering educators, leaders, students, industry, governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, etc., to learn, share, and build fruitful and long-term collaborations.
- The conference theme is Disruptive Engineering Education for sustainable development.
- Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, will host the combined WEEF-IESS.

International Principal’s Education Conference (IPEC) inaugurated at Nagpur

- RSS Chief Dr. Mohan Bhagwat inaugurated the International Principal’s Education Conference (IPEC) at Nagpur
- Super 30 founder and noted mathematician Anand Kumar was honored with Nachiketa Sarvottama Award on the occasion.
- Principals and educationalists from all over the country are attending the 3-day conference based on the theme-Scripting the Legends of Human Excellence through Schools

2nd World Religious Leaders Summit begins in Baku, Azerbaijan

- Azerbaijan has hosted the second World Religious Leaders Summit in the country's capital, Baku.
- Religious leaders from more than 30 countries attended the event to discuss ways to tackle a range of issues and build dialogue.
- The summit held on November 14-15, 2019

21st Annual Meeting of International Society of Addiction Medicine Held in New Delhi

- The 21st edition of the Annual Meeting of International Society of Addiction Medicine was held in New Delhi from 13 to 16 November 2019.
- The theme of the conference was “Addiction in a Rapidly Changing World”.
- The conference was organised by the Department of Psychiatry & National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.
- This bring together diverse professionals working in the field of addiction medicine from across the globe, to facilitate exchange of ideas and enrichment of expertise.

Two-Day Conference on Yoga For Heart Care Begins In Mysuru

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH and Defence, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik inaugurated two days “International Conference on Yoga for Heart care” at Mysuru, Karnataka.
- The theme of the event was: ‘Yoga for Heart Care’.
- This conference is fifth in the series to commemorate the unanimous adoption of Resolution by the United Nations General Assembly during its 69th Session for observing 21st June as International Day of Yoga

India to host the 8th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics in New Delhi

- The 8th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS-VIII) will be organized by the Ministry of Agriculture in New Delhi from 18th to 21st November 2019.

- Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra DG ICAR & Secretary DARE informed that the conference will be inaugurated by the Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar and Chief Guest will be Bill Gates.
- The conference will be organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, ISI-CAS, FAO, the USDA, ADB, World Bank, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Eurostat, AfDB and various other organizations.
- The theme of this year's ICAS is 'Statistics for Transformation of Agriculture to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'.

Regional Conference on “Replication of Good Governance Practices in Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh” begins

- A two-day Regional Conference on the theme: “Replication of Good Governance Practices in Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh” began in Jammu
- The Conference is organised by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh
- The conference was inaugurated by Minister of State for PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh along with Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, G. C. Murmu.
- The main objective of the Conference is to bring national and state-level organizations on a common platform and to share experiences in Digital Governance, Citizen-Centric Governance and Capacity Building and Personnel Administration

UK India Business Council releases annual doing business in India Report for 2019

- The UK India Business Council (UKIBC) released its 5th annual Doing Business in India Report.
- The report is based on the results of extensive discussions, including a roundtable in London with Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, and a survey that captured the views of UK companies and higher education institutions on the operating environment in India and their reform priorities.
- Overall, the survey respondents were positive about India, with 56 per cent stating that it is getting easier to do business in India, and only 21 per cent saying that it has not improved (while 23 per cent were undecided).
- Maharashtra has topped in terms of States and Union Territories that are performing best on the ease of doing business followed by Delhi on second.

6th World Congress on Rural and Agricultural Finance held in New Delhi

- The 6th World Congress is being jointly hosted by Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India
- The congress will also aim to tackle in a multi-perspective setting on the opportunities, gaps and priority actions for developing sustainable and viable financial services and investments with actionable insights on rural financial services as a viable business strategy and as a meaningful contribution to the inclusive growth across the globe.

Two day International Conference on Yoga for Heart care to be organised at Mysuru, Karnataka

- Ministry of AYUSH is organizing the International Conference on Yoga on 15-16 November 2019 at Mysuru, Karnataka.
- The Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri B.S. Yediyurappa will inaugurate the two day conference on 15th November, 2019 in the presence of Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH and Defence, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik.
- The theme of the conference is 'Yoga for Heart Care'.
- The Governor of Karnataka Shri Vajubhai Vala will be the Chief Guest at the valedictory function of the conference.

Hyderabad to host 'IndiaJoy' from November 20-23

- The city is all set to host the four day prestigious 'IndiaJoy', an important global platform for Digital, Media and Entertainment Corporations to collaborate and innovate, from November 20.

- IndiaJoy Festival in its 2nd edition, supported by the state government, has a line up of nine world-class events that include IGDC (India Game Developer Conference), Desi Toons, VFX Summit, InfluencerCon, Investor-Publisher Connect, E-Sports, (Over the Top) OTT Pulse and Indiajoy Music Fest.
- The government will be promoting its flagship initiative IMAGE Towers during the event.
- In order to make the city and the State the most favored destination for investment in Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics sector, the Telangana Government launched IMAGE Policy in April 2016.
- IMAGE Tower will be a Center of Excellence with state- of-the-art facilities to act as a catalyst for the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming & Comics sector.

PM Modi to attend 11th BRICS Summit beginning in Brasilia

- The 11th BRICS Summit will begin in Brazil's capital Brasilia. BRICS comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- The theme of this year's summit is "Economic Growth for an Innovative Future."
- There is great potential in sectors like trade, defence, agriculture and energy.
- BRICS will also discuss counter-terrorism cooperation as one of its priority areas this year. BRICS Innovation Network, BRICS Institute of Future Network and a Women Business Alliance will also be launched.

India to Host Shanghai Summit's Heads of Government Council Meet In 2020

- India will host the 19th council of heads of government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation next year, the first such high level meeting of the eight-member grouping to be organised by New Delhi.
- The SCO is a China-led eight-member economic and security bloc in which India and Pakistan were admitted as full members in 2017. Its founding members included China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- The SCO has four observer states, namely Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia. It has six dialogue partners, namely Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka.
- The SCO, which has its headquarters in Beijing, holds summits of heads of states as well as heads of government meetings annually in member countries. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi attends the summit, the heads of the government meetings are attended by senior Cabinet Ministers.

Air Chief to inaugurate ISAM Conference in Bengaluru

- Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria will inaugurate the 58th Indian Society of Aerospace Medicine (ISAM) Annual Conference which aims to address contemporary issues and applications in the subject of aerospace medicine.
- The event will take place at the Institute of Aerospace Medicine, Indian Air Force, Bengaluru from November 14-16.
- The theme for this year's conference is 'Changing Paradigms in Aerospace Healthcare'

“National Capital Region -2041” held in Delhi

- Shri Durga Shankar Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, chaired the inaugural conclave on “National Capital Region -2041” organized by the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) in Delhi
- The theme of the conclave was “Planning for Tomorrow’s Greatest Capital Region”.
- Regional Plan - 2041 should be a citizen-centric plan, with liveability as the hallmark, to ensure ease of living

Sanskrit Bharati Vishwa Sammelan begins in New Delhi

- Thousands of Sanskrit lovers from 17 countries are attending Sanskrit Bharati Vishwa Sammelan, the three-day mega event that began in New Delhi.
- Minister of State for External Affairs V.Muraleedharan said Sanskrit continues to be prevalent in the society as it is used by the people across the country.
- The Minister said, Sanskrit words are found in most of the Indian languages.
- Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr.Harsh Vardhan was also present on the occasion.

19th IORA Council of Ministers Meeting in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE), as the incoming IORA Chair, will host the 19th IORA Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting in Abu Dhabi under the theme of “Promoting a Shared Destiny and Path to Prosperity in the Indian Ocean”.
- At the COM, the UAE will assume the Chairship of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for the period 2019-2021. The Chairship passes from the Republic of South Africa, which has been IORA Chair for the period 2017-2019. The People’s Republic of Bangladesh will assume the position of Vice Chair of IORA (also for 2019-2021), and form part of the Troika along with the UAE (as incoming Chair) and South Africa (as past Chair).
- The UAE, as a maritime nation, recognises the enduring importance of the ancient trade routes connecting the Middle East to South and Southeast Asia, and coastal East Africa which heralded the dawn of globalisation in the Indian Ocean region

5th edition of GES to be held from Nov 26-28 in Bengaluru

- The fifth edition of Global Exhibition on Services, GES 2019 is being held from November 26 to 28 at Bengaluru in Karnataka.
- The Global Exhibition on Services is an annual event which aims to engage industry and governments across the world and to promote greater exchange of trade in services between India and the rest of the world.
- With an aim to engage industry and Governments across the world and to promote greater exchange of trade in services between India and rest of the world, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in association with Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has created a dedicated platform, the Global Exhibition on Services (GES)

Prakash Javdekar to attend 15th meeting of Governing Council of SACEP in Dhaka

- Union Minister Prakash Javdekar to attend 15th meeting of Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, SACEP in Dhaka.
- India will put forward the demand for clean technology at affordable cost and liberal financing from developed countries to developing countries during the forthcoming Madrid Meeting on Climate Change.
- The SACEP is an inter-governmental organization which was established in 1982. Its member countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka aim to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region.
- The 14th meeting of the SACEP Governing Council was held in March 2018 in Colombo.

27th Conference of Central and State Statistical Organizations (COCSSO) to be held on 11th-12th November 2019 at Kolkata

- Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is organizing 27th Conference of Central and State Statistical Organizations (COCSSO) during 11-12th November 2019 at Kolkata.
- The Conference will be inaugurated by Shri Pravin Srivastava, Chief Statistician of India cum Secretary, MoSPI on 11th November, 2019.
- The Conference, a major national annual event, provides a platform for discussion and improved coordination between the Central and State Statistical agencies for enhancing the efficiency of the Indian Statistical System.
- The theme of this year’s Conference “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”, has been chosen for intensive and focused discussions aimed at filling the data gaps and improvement of timelines/quality in SDG monitoring.
- MoSPI, which is responsible for monitoring the progress of SDGs, has developed the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring country’s progress on SDGs, in consultations with Central Ministries and State/UT Governments. It has also released the NIF Baseline Report 2015-16 setting the benchmark for measuring SDGs progress up to 2030.

Om Birla addresses 6th Parliamentary Speakers’ Summit of G 20 Countries

- Mr Birla, who was in Tokyo to attend the 6th Parliamentary Speakers’ Summit of G 20 Countries from November 3-5, 2019, shared his views with Presiding Officers of Parliaments of G20 countries.

- The G20 has 19 countries and the European Union. The 19 countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

India to host 'No Money For Terror' meet in 2020

- India will host the next edition of the 'No Money For Terror' conference to be held in 2020.
- The 'No Money For Terror' conference is organised by Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) of over 100 countries, jointly called The Egmont Group.
- Recognising the importance of international cooperation in the fight against money laundering and financing of terrorism, a group of FIUs met a few years ago at the Egmont Arenberg Palace in Brussels, Belgium, and decided to establish an informal network of FIUs for the stimulation of international co-operation.
- Money laundering and the financing of terrorism are serious crimes that threaten to destabilise the global economy.
- The Egmont Group was created to provide FIUs around the world a forum to exchange information confidentially to combat money-laundering, the financing of terrorism and other predicate offences.

Venkaiah Naidu inaugurates 10th Asian Conference of Emergency Medicine

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu Inaugurated 10th Asian Conference of Emergency Medicine in New Delhi
- The main objective of this conference is to develop programs and manuals to train citizens in emergency first aid procedures such as Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation as it will help in saving a life while waiting for emergency services
- The Government of India has made it mandatory for all medical college hospitals to have full-fledged Emergency Departments by 2022 with an aim to improve trauma care

First ever 'BIMSTEC Ports' Conclave' held in Vishakhapatnam

- The Minister of State (I/C) for Shipping, Shri Mansukh Mandaviya will inaugurate tomorrow the first ever 'BIMSTEC Ports' Conclave' at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh
- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an International Organization involving a group of countries in the South Asia and South East Asia namely, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal
- The conclave will discuss on how ports can become centres for industrialisation and tourism. Safety and security of ports, ease of doing business, green port operations and other aspects will also be deliberated

PM Modi inaugurates 5th India International Science Festival 2019 in Kolkata

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 5th edition of India International Science Festival (IISF) 2019 through video conferencing in Kolkata.
- The four-day science festival, being organized from November 5-8, aims to build a strategy for inclusive advancement of Science and Technology
- The Theme for this year's festival is "RISEN India – Research, Innovation, and Science Empowering the Nation.
- The third edition of IISF 2017 was held in Chennai. The fourth edition of IISF was held in Lucknow.

50th World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting to be held in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland

- The 50th World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting will be held on 21-24 January 2020, in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland.
- WEF annual meetings aim to engage world leaders in collaborative activities to shape the global, regional, and industry agendas at the beginning of each year. The development of the meetings' programme is driven by WEF's mission — improving the state of the world
- The theme of its 50th Davos summit would be "Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World".

Biennial Commonwealth Law Ministers' Conference begins in Colombo, Sri Lanka

- In Sri Lanka, the biennial Commonwealth Law Ministers' Conference began in Colombo under the theme Equal Access to Justice and the Rule of Law.

- The four-day conference participated by Law Ministers and Attorney Generals from Commonwealth countries seeks to address challenges faced by millions of people seeking to resolve legal problems or disputes.

Katowice to host WADA congress in 2019

- Katowice to host WADA congress in 2019 on 5-7 November 2019.
- The International Congress Centre in Katowice will become the world anti-doping centre.
- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) decided to hold the World Conference on Doping in Sport in the Polish city.

35th ASEAN Summit begins in Bangkok

- The 35th ASEAN Summit began today in Bangkok. The summit will continue till November 4.
- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a group of ten member countries that encourages political, economic and social co-operation in the region.
- During five days summit East Asia summit (EAS) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Summit (RCEP) will be also held.
- Apart from leaders of 10 Asean countries head of Eight dialogue partner countries including India, USA, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand are also participating in the summit. The summit would discuss comprehensive and sustainable ASEAN economic development and on negotiations related to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) including market opening.
- The RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the ten members state of ASEAN and its partner countries.

Kerala Governor inaugurates Ayurveda summit

- As many as 400 industry leaders and delegates from SAARC, GCC and African countries have gathered in Kochi for the third edition of Global Ayurveda Summit 2019.
- The two-day summit organized by CII will deliberate on the theme “Mainstreaming Ayurveda through Startups, Innovation and Branding”.
- Ayurveda has been one of the treasures of ancient Indian knowledge that has stood the test of time. It has attracted worldwide attention and is growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 16.2 per cent.
- The demand for Ayurveda treatments are increasing and called for focussed efforts to spread this ancient medicine.

7th India-US Economic and Financial Partnership meeting held in Delhi

- The 7th India - US Economic and Financial partnership meeting was held in New Delhi.
- During meeting both sides took stock of the efforts undertaken to further improve mutual cooperation on a wide range of multilateral subjects including anti-money laundering and combating financing of terrorism.
- They also discussed capital flows investment in infrastructure and deepening of financial relations.

Vigyanika-International Science Literature Festival to showcase Science Book Fair

- Vigyanika-International Science Literature Festival, being organised as part of the 5th India International Science Festival (IISF) 2019 at Kolkata, will also feature a Science Book Fair where more than thirty publishers will display their scientific publications.
- IISF 2019 is an annual event organised jointly by the Ministry of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and Vijnana Bharati (Vibha). The fifth edition of IISF this year is being held at Kolkata during November 5–8, 2019.
- Vigyanika-International Science Literature Festival is being coordinated by the CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (CSIR-NISCAIR), Vigyan Prasar and Vigyan Bharati. The event would be held at the Biswa Bangla Convention Centre in Kolkata.

Important Defence News

Joint military exercise ‘SURYA KIRAN – XIV’ between India and Nepal will be conducted at Salijhandi

- Joint military exercise ‘SURYA KIRAN – XIV’ between India and Nepal will be conducted at Salijhandi, Rupendehi district of Nepal from 03 to 16 December 2019.

- The exercise will comprise of 300 soldiers from both Indian and Nepal Army who would be sharing their experience in conduct of various counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations as also various humanitarian assistance missions by both the Armies.
- Exercise SURYA KIRAN – XIV is an annual event which is conducted alternatively in Nepal and India. Notably, in the series of military training exercises undertaken by India with various countries.
- The aim of this exercise is to conduct a Battalion level combined training between Indian Army and Nepal Army to increase interoperability in jungle warfare and counter terrorist operations in mountainous terrain, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, medical and environmental conservation including aviation aspects.
- The joint military exercise will enhance the level of defence cooperation which will further foster the bilateral relations between the two nations.

Indo Sri Lanka joint exercise MITRA SHAKTI

- The seventh edition of exercise MITRA SHAKTI aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational efficiency amongst the armies of India and Sri Lanka commenced at Aundh Military Station, Pune.
- The objective of the exercise is to build and promote positive relations between armies of both the countries through focus on sub unit level training on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in urban and rural environment.
- The joint training exercise also signifies the strength of India-Sri Lanka relations in the field of military cooperation and engagement.
- The exercise is designed for incorporating the current dynamics of United Nations peace keeping operations through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises.

Indian Navy to host drill 'Milan 2020' in March

- The Indian Navy will host military drill 'Milan 2020' in March next year which will witness the participation of several countries.
- Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik said 41 nations from South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe that share defence cooperation with India have been invited for the drill.
- The countries to whom invitations have been sent are Indonesia, France, Mozambique, Sudan, Israel, Qatar, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, Somalia, Kenya, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Myanmar, New Zealand, USA, Tanzania, Comoros, Maldives, Brunei, Philippines, Japan, UK, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Mauritius, Cambodia, Singapore, South Korea, South Africa, Kuwait, Iran, Madagascar, Bangladesh, Russia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Bahrain, UAE and Seychelles.
- The Government pursues cooperation initiatives with friendly countries, including in Indian Ocean Region, through structured interactions like Staff Talks, Empowered Steering Group.

Indian Army Organises 'Epic Run 2019' To Honour Soldiers And NOK

- The Indian Army conducted the 'Epic Run 2019' in recognition of martyred soldiers and their NOK and to spread awareness about the sacrifices made by the Army.
- The Indian Army conducted the 'Epic Run 2019', which was held at Pedong, West Bengal in recognition of the soldiers and their Next of Kin.
- This event was held to mark the Indian Army's initiative of dedicating 2019 as the 'Year of NOK' (YoNoK).
- The event witnessed over 1500 participants. The event was divided into three categories with a '2 Km Walk & Run', for children and senior citizens, '5 Km Walk & Run' for children between 13-17 and a 10 Km Walk & Run which saw a participation of 213 people between ages 18 to 60.

NCC celebrates its 71st Raising Day

- The National Cadet Corps (NCC), the world's largest uniformed youth organization, celebrated its 71st Raising Day on Nov 24th.
- The NCC Raising Day was also celebrated all over the country with the cadets participating in marches, cultural activities and social development programs.

- The multifaceted activities and varied curriculum of NCC provides unique opportunities to the youth for their development.

Army Dedicates Goodwill Park To Celebrated Soldier Lt. Naib Subedar Chuni Lal

- Indian Army dedicates Army Goodwill Park to one of the most decorated soldiers of Indian Army Late Naib Subedar Chuni Lal, Ashok Chakra (Posthumous), Vir Chakra, Sena Medal.
- The park was dedicated as a mark of tribute by Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, GOC in-C, and Northern Command at the native place (village Bhara, Doda) of Late Naib Subedar Chuni Lal.
- The Army Goodwill Park dedicated to Late Naib Subedar Chuni Lal was constructed with a statue of the martyred soldier, children park and open gym equipment for the villagers.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to inaugurate 3rd Military Literature Festival in Chandigarh

- The three-day long Military Literature Festival (MLF) with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurating the gala event on December 13 at the Lake Club of the City Beautiful Chandigarh.
- Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will inaugurate the event, while Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh will preside over the closing ceremony and honour the descendants and units of Victoria Cross winners of the Burma Campaign of the Second World War.

First woman pilot of Indian Navy to join operations on December 2

- First woman pilot of Indian Navy will join Naval operations here on December 2, two days ahead of Navy Day on December 4.
- The first woman pilot, Lieutenant Shivangi, will join naval operations on completion of operational training here on December 2.
- Shivangi will graduate to become the First female Pilot of Indian Navy. She hails from Muzzafarpur, Bihar.
- Shivangi will join naval operations as a Lieutenant on completion of her operational training which she has been undergoing at the Southern Naval Command in Kochi.

US approves sale of \$1 billion worth of naval guns to India

- The Trump Administration has notified to the US Congress its determination to sell \$1 billion worth of naval guns to India for use against warships, anti-aircraft and shore bombardment, in a move that would enhance the lethal capabilities of the Indian Navy.
- The proposed foreign military sale of up to 13 MK-45 5inch/62 caliber (MOD 4) naval guns and related equipment is at an estimated cost of \$1.02 billion.
- To be manufactured by the BAE Systems Land and Armaments, the proposed sale will improve India's capability to meet current and future threats from enemy weapon systems.
- The MK-45 Gun System will provide the capability to conduct anti-surface warfare and anti-air defence missions while enhancing interoperability with US and other allied forces

GRSE delivers warship ICGS Amrit Kaur to Indian Coast Guard

- Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) delivered its 102nd warship, ICGS Amrit Kaur, to the Indian Coast Guard.
- This is the third in the series-of-five Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) that the miniratna-category-1 warship building company under the Ministry of Defence is building.
- Earlier, GRSE delivered its 101st Warship ICGS Annie Besant, second in the series to the Indian Coast Guard, in November 05, 2019.
- ICGS 'Amrit Kaur' is a 50-metre-long and 7.5-metre-wide medium-range surface vessel, with displacement of around 308 tonne. It is capable of performing rescue, patrolling, anti-smuggling and anti-poaching operations in the maritime zones of the country.
- The vessel can attain a maximum speed of 34 knots with an endurance of over 1,500 nautical miles.
- The ship is equipped with three main engines and has advanced control systems, water jet units and an 'Integrated Bridge System' constituting all communication and navigation systems

Pakistan conducts test launch of nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile 'Shaheen-I'

- Pakistan conducted a successful test-fired a nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile which can strike targets up to 650 kilometres
- The launch of 'Shaheen-I' missile was held as part of a training exercise 'aimed at testing the operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command'.
- The 'Shaheen-I' missile is capable of delivering all types of warheads up to range of 650kms
- Pakistan successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile 'Ghaznavi' with a range of up to 290kms August 29

Qatar-India maiden bilateral maritime exercise flagged off

- The maiden bilateral maritime exercise between the Qatari Amiri Naval Forces (QANF) and Indian Navy started.
- Named Za'ir-Al-Bahr (Roar of the sea), the five-day exercise is carried out in order to enhance co-operation between the two forces.
- The exercise will be attended by Indian Navy Guided Missile Stealth Frigate INS Trikand and Patrol Aircraft P8-I that arrived at Hamad Port yesterday and Anti-Ship Missile equipped Barran Class Fast Attack Craft along with Rafale multi-task fighter aircraft.

Indian Army conducts 'Sindhu Sudarshan' exercise in Rajasthan's Barmer

- The Sudarshan Chakra Corps of the Indian Army conducted 'Sindhu Sudarshan' exercise in Rajasthan's Barmer on November 16. Around 40,000 jawans of the Indian Army are participating in the exercise.
- 'Sindhu Sudarshan' exercise will continue till December 05.

Navy selects Karabi Gogoi as assistant naval attache in India's Moscow Embassy

- Lt. Cdr. Karabi Gogoi will become the first woman officer from the Navy to be posted as a Defence Attache at an Indian mission abroad.
- She has been posted as the Assistant Naval Attache at the Indian embassy in Moscow.
- Lt. Cdr. Gogoi was commissioned into the Navy in 2010 and is currently posted at Karwar.
- Last month, the IAF became the first Service to post a woman officer abroad at a diplomatic mission. Wing Commander Anjali Singh was posted as the Deputy Air Attache also at the same embassy.
- India has over 100 Defence Attaches or Defence Advisors posted at missions across the world with all three Service Attaches posted at important missions like the U.S., the U.K. and Russia with which it has significant defence ties

India-US tri-services exercise 'Tiger Triumph' to begin in Vizag

- The maiden India-US joint tri-services Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise named 'Tiger Triumph' is scheduled to begin at Visakhapatnam.
- In consonance with the growing partnership between India and the US, Tiger Triumph is scheduled on the Eastern seaboard from November 13 to 21, 2019.
- Indian Naval ships Jalashwa, Airavat and Sandhayak, Indian Army troops from 19 Madras and 7 Guards, and Indian Air Force MI-17 helicopters and Rapid Action Medical Team (RAMT) would be participating in the exercise.
- The US would be represented by US Navy Ship Germantown with troops from the US Third Marine Division. The Exercise is aimed to develop interoperability for conducting HADR operations.
- The opening ceremony along with a Joint Flag Parade will be held onboard INS Jalashwa on November 14.
- The Exercise would culminate with a closing ceremony onboard US Naval Ship Germantown on November 21.

Defence innovations conference showcasing accomplishments of IDEX

- Defence ministry is organising Def-Connect in New Delhi to showcase the accomplishments of the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) initiative.
- The conference aims to bring together all stakeholders of the iDEX ecosystem, Ministry of defence, iDEX selected startups, Partner Incubators, Defence Innovation Organisation, Nodal agencies (Indian Army, Navy, Airforce), Defence Research and Development Organisation and Defence Public Sector Undertakings and Indian Ordnance Factories.

- Launch of iDEX Portal and launch of Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC)-III are some of the major activities.

Air-Fest 2019 held in Nagpur

- The 'Air Fest-2019' was held at the headquarters maintenance command (HQMC) at Nagpur in Maharashtra.
- The event was part of the 87th anniversary celebrations of the Indian Air Force and the 65th anniversary of the HQMC.
- The objective of the Air Fest was to showcase the IAF with a view to instill a sense of patriotism and motivate the younger generation to join the IAF.
- The show started with a formation of three Mi-17 V5 helicopters in formation followed by an Avro transport aircraft flying low in front of the spectators.
- The Mi-17 VS helicopters boast of high-tech machinery, avionics and armament to match the best in the world.

Indo-Russian joint tri-service exercise to be held from December 10-19

- The first-ever joint tri-service exercise between India and Russia codenamed INDRA 2019 will be conducted from December 10-19.
- Company-sized mechanised contingents, fighter and transport aircraft as well as ships of respective Armies, Air Forces and Navies will participate in this 10-days exercise.
- INDRA 2019 is expected to enhance interoperability between both National Armed Forces to jointly undertake operations under the UN flag.

India-Indonesia joint naval exercise 'Samudra Shakti' underway in Bay of Bengal

- Anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kamorta is jointly exercising with Indonesian warship KRI Usman Harun, a multi-role corvette, in the Bay of Bengal as part of an ongoing bilateral exercise 'Samudra Shakti'.
- The joint exercises include, manoeuvres, surface warfare exercises, air defence exercises, weapon firing drills, helicopter operations and boarding operations.
- KRI Usman Harun arrived at Visakhapatnam on November 4 to participate in the second edition of Ex 'Samudra Shakti'

IAF releases multiplayer version of 'Indian Air Force - A Cut Above' game

- The Indian Air Force has launched the multiplayer version of its interactive mobile game which lets users experience the thrill of flying a combat aircraft.
- The multiplayer version of the game named "Indian Air Force - A Cut Above" was launched by Vice Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Harjit Singh Arora
- The first version of the mobile game was launched on 31 May 19 and has been downloaded by more than 2.2 million online users since then
- The game, available for Android and iOS, is a combat simulator which lets the players choose from an array of fighter aircraft, including Tejas, Rafale Mirage-2000, Su-30 among others.
- The multiplayer version has two modes - team battles, where players team up, and death match, a free for all where the last man standing is the winner

GRSE delivers fast patrol vessel, 'Annie Besant' to Indian Coast Guard

- Defence PSU Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE) delivered 'Annie Besant' fast patrol vessels (FPV) to the Indian Coast Guard.
- This is second in the series of five FPVs being built by GRSE for the Coast Guard and the 101st warship to be delivered by the shipyard.
- The FPV, a medium range surface vessel with a length of 50 m, width of 7.5 m and displacement of around 308 T, is capable of operations in the maritime zones of India
- The vessel is designed for a maximum speed of 34 knots with an endurance of more than 1500 nautical miles
- The powerful, fuel-efficient platforms are designed to perform multipurpose operations like patrolling, anti-smuggling, anti-poaching and rescue operations.

Coast Guard's two-day rescue exercise 'ReSAREX- 19' conducted off Goa shore

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) tested its efficiency and preparedness during the Regional Level Search and Rescue Workshop and Exercise 2019 (ReSAREX- 19) conducted off Goa coast
- The two days event organised by the Coast Guard District Headquarters - 11 (Goa) comprised of search and rescue workshop and table top exercise conducted on November 5 and was followed by search and rescue exercise at sea on November 6
- Five ICG ships, Dornier aircraft, two Chetak helicopters were used for the workshop, he said, adding that resources from Captain of Ports, State Marine Police, Indian Mission Control Centre (Bengaluru), Goa state administration, Goa Medical College and Marmugao Port Trust were also pressed into service.

US-Bangladesh Navy exercise 'CARAT- 2019' begins in Chattogram, Bangladesh

- The second phase of the biggest US- Bangladesh Navy exercise named 'Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)- 2019' started in Chattogram, Bangladesh
- The exercise provides an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the operational activities of the Navies of two countries and to get acquainted with advanced technology through various theoretical and practical training.
- The second phase of the exercise is being conducted from 4 to 7 November with different subject-based training and exercise.

India to conduct 1st joint military exercise with Uzbekistan, focus on counter-terrorism

- India and Uzbekistan will carry out a joint military exercise 'Dustlik-2019', the first-ever exercise between the armies of the two nations, will be held from November 4 to 13 at Chirchiq training area in Uzbekistan.
- It will focus on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations in mountainous, rural and urban areas.
- "The aim of the exercise is to build and promote positive relations between the armies of India and Uzbekistan.
- A 45-member Indian Army contingent will participate in the exercise. The troops have been put through a strenuous training schedule, including firing, heliborne operations, combat conditioning, tactical operations and house intervention drills.

Indian Army to have first Dhanush regiment by March 2020

- The Indian Army, which began inducting the indigenously upgraded Dhanush artillery guns, will have the first regiment in place by March 2020 and will get all 114 guns by 2022.
- Dhanush is the indigenously upgraded variant of the Swedish Bofors gun imported in the 1980s.
- In April, the Ordnance Factory Board had handed over the first batch of six Dhanush guns. The Gun Carriage Factory, Jabalpur, received the Bulk Production Clearance to manufacture 114 guns from the Army on February 18, 2019.
- Dhanush is a 155 mm, 45-calibre towed artillery gun with a range of 36km and has demonstrated a range of 38 km with specialised ammunition. It is an upgrade of the existing 155mm, 39 calibre Bofors FH 77 gun.

Important Science and Technology

ISRO to Launch Cartosat-3, 13 Commercial Nano Satellites On November 25

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) would launch its earth imaging and mapping satellite Cartosat-3 along with 13 commercial nano satellites from the US, on November 25,
- The satellites would be launched by India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C47 into a Sun Synchronous Orbit from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- The Cartosat-3 is a "third generation agile advanced satellite" having high resolution imaging capability
- PSLV-C47 is the 21st flight of PSLV in 'XL' configuration (with 6 solid strap-on motors).
- PSLV-C47 would also carry 13 commercial nano satellites from United States of America as part of commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), Department of Space

IIT-Guwahati scientists develop paper based sensor to check milk quality at home

- Indian scientists have developed a paper based sensor to instantaneously check freshness of milk. Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed this simple visual detection technique to detect the quality of milk, without the need for special equipment and instruments.
- The researchers have used simple filter paper, chemically modified it, and loaded it with a recognition element anti-ALP, which captures the ALP present in the milk.

Surface-to-surface medium-range missile Agni-II trial test conducted successfully

- India has successfully conducted the first night trial of Agni-II, its versatile surface-to-surface medium-range nuclear-capable missile from Dr Abdul Kalam Island off Odisha coast.
- Agni-II, an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM), has already been inducted into the armed forces.
- The entire trajectory of the trial was tracked by a battery of sophisticated radars, telemetry observation stations, electro-optic instruments and two naval ships located near the impact point in the down-range area of Bay of Bengal.
- The test was carried out by the specially formed Strategic Forces Command (SFC) of the Army with logistic support from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The two-stage ballistic missile can carry a payload of 1000 kg over a distance of 2000 km.

SpaceX launches 60 mini satellites for cheaper global Internet

- Elon Musk-run SpaceX has launched 60 "Starlink" satellites into low-Earth orbit from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida that will bring cheaper Internet access to the world.
- The 60 mini satellites went into space aboard Falcon 9 rocket, ending a nearly three-month launch hiatus for the company.
- The "Starlink" satellites will be deployed at an altitude of 280 km to beam broadband Internet services.
- The 60 Starlink satellites are part of the second batch of SpaceXs broadband Internet mega constellation.
- SpaceX is developing a low latency, broadband internet system to meet the needs of consumers across the globe.

IIT-Madras launches affordable standing wheelchair 'Arise'

- Indian Institute of Technology-Madras, in collaboration with Phoenix Medical Systems, launched the country's first indigenously-designed standing wheelchair
- The wheelchair was launched at IIT Madras Research Park in the presence of Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment
- Wheelchair named 'Arise,' was designed and developed by the TTK Centre for Rehabilitation Research and Device Development (R2D2), headed by Sujatha Srinivasan, a professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at IIT-Madras

China launches Sudan's first satellite "SRSS-1"

- Sudan's first satellite, the Sudan Remote Sensing Satellite (SRSS)-1, was successfully launched by a Chinese Long March 4B satellite launch vehicle from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in China's northern Shanxi Province
- The Long March 4B launch included the Gaofen-7, Xiaoxiang-1 08, and Whampoa-1 satellites, all owned and operated by Chinese entities.
- The SRSS-1 was developed and built by Chinese satellite manufacturer Shenzhen Aerospace Oriental Red Sea Satellite Co. on behalf of the Sudanese government, and will be used for both civil and national security Earth observation missions.
- Gaofen-7 will play an important role in land surveying and mapping, urban and rural construction and statistical investigation

IIIT Hyderabad researchers create first ever Indian Brain atlas

- Researchers at the IIIT Hyderabad said that the first ever Indian Brain Atlas (IBA) has been created.
- They stated that the next step is to prepare atlases for different age groups to study age related affects on brain anatomy.
- The average brain size of an Indian was smaller in height, width and volume in comparison to people of the Caucasian and eastern races.

- Medical practitioners depend on Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan to decide on the line of treatment. The references they use are the one's created by the Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI), based on Caucasian brains.
- The immediate implication of this finding can be seen in treatment outcomes of neurological problems or brain related ailments - like dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease etc

Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter Payload Detects Argon-40 in Lunar Exosphere

- The Chandra's Atmospheric Composition Explorer-2 (CHACE-2) payload aboard the Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter has detected Argon-40, said Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- According to ISRO, the Orbiter that is orbiting the moon has detected Argon-40 from an altitude of about 100 km.
- Argon-40 (40Ar), which is one of the isotopes of the noble gas Argon, is an important constituent of the lunar exosphere.
- Planetary scientists prefer to call the thin gaseous envelope around the Moon as the 'Lunar exosphere' since it is so tenuous that the gas atoms very rarely collide with each other.
- Argon-40 or 40Ar originates from the radioactive disintegration of Potassium-40 (40K).

IIT Delhi to Set up Space Technology Cell in Collaboration with ISRO

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) is going to set up a space technology cell in collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- IISc Bangalore, IIT Bombay, IIT Kanpur, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Madras, IIT Guwahati and IIT Roorkee where the Space Technology Cells (STCs) have been set up to play a major role in taking up the space technology research and applications to the newer heights.

ISRO Successfully Launches Earth Imaging Satellite Cartosat-3, 13 Other Nano Satellites from Sriharikota

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched its earth imaging and mapping satellite CARTOSAT-3 along with 13 other nano-satellites from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota
- PSLV-C47 on its 49th mission will carry CARTOSAT-3 along with 13 commercial nano satellites from the United States.
- The 1,625 kg CARTOSAT-3 is a third generation agile advanced satellite having high resolution imaging capability.
- The 13 commercial nano satellites from the United States are being carried as part of the commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL), Department of Space
- The mission life of CARTOSAT-3 would be for five years
- PSLV-C47 is the 21st flight of PSLV in the 'XL' configuration (with six solid strap-on motors)

Important Ranking and Indexes

Index	India's Rank	Top	Bottom	Other Info
IMD World Talent Ranking	59 th	Switzerland		based on the performance in three main categories -- investment and development, appeal and readiness
Global Terrorism Index	7 th / 163	Afghanistan		Report released by Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP)

India Corruption Survey-2019

- Andhra Pradesh ranked 13th in the 'India Corruption Survey-2019' conducted by Transparency International India. Compared to other states in the country, it can be said that AP is far better. Andhra Pradesh does not make a big difference to Delhi, where a corruption-free rules Kejriwal. The survey is an example of the level of corruption in the field after the response and the Grama Volunteer System. Telangana, another Telugu state, ranks fifth.
- Top 15 Corrupt States in India are as follows, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi

China now has most diplomatic posts in the world, India ranked 12th

- The 2019 Global Diplomacy Index released by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute gives the latest statistics.
- China overtook the US in 2019 with 276 embassies and consulates worldwide, which is three more than the US.
- The study said both countries have an equal number of embassies but Beijing has three more consulates.
- The next three spots are occupied by France, Japan, and Russia.
- India is 12th among the 61 countries ranked by the Lowy Institute.
- As of 2019, New Delhi has 123 embassies and high commissions and 54 consulates globally.

India has 96 universities ranked, including 20 brand new entries in QS World University Rankings: Asia 2020

- India has 96 universities ranked, including 20 brand new entries in the QS World University Rankings: Asia 2020.
- The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB) leads nationally at overall 34th place, and it is followed by IIT Delhi (IITD) in the 43rd place and by IIT Madras (IITM) in the 50th position.
- Overall for the second consecutive year, the National University of Singapore stands top among Asia's best universities. It is followed by Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and the University of Hong Kong, China.
- Only Mainland China is more represented than India, with 118 featured universities. Among these, 4 stands in the top 10 list.
- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) reported 8 Indian universities are placed among the top 100.

NOMURA'S FOOD VULNERABILITY INDEX (NFVI)

- According to a new report by Nomura Global Market Research, India is ranked 44 out of 110 countries in Nomura's Food Vulnerability Index (NFVI).
- Nomura's Food Vulnerability Index (NFVI) ranks countries on the basis of their exposure to large swings in food prices.
- Nomura is an Asia-headquartered financial services group with an integrated global network spanning over 30 countries

India ranks 8th in WHO study on physical activity among adolescents

- India is ranked among the top ten countries in the list of most physically active adolescents, according to a World Health Organization (WHO) study. While Bangladesh tops the list with most active teenagers, USA comes fourth in the list of 146 countries.
- India is ranked eighth overall, with almost 26.1 per cent of its adolescents leading a healthy life. The Philippines was the most inactive country among boys, whereas South Korea had the least active girl adolescents, with just 3 per cent indulging in physical activity daily.
- The new WHO study also finds that at least 80% of the school-goers who are in their teen years do not have an hour of physical activity a day. In a study by the Lancet Child and Adolescent Health, the reason for the high activity among teenagers in India could be due to the high craze for sports like cricket, while in the USA, the focus on sports like volleyball, football and baseball have ensured more adolescents take the field.

Bangalore is India's top-ranked city in new global prosperity index

- Bangalore emerged as India's highest ranked city at No. 83 in a new index of the world's 113 cities in terms of economic and social inclusivity, topped by Zurich in Switzerland.
- Delhi at 101 and Mumbai at 107 are the other Indian cities to make at the index, with the top 20 awarded a PICS Seal as the world's highest-ranked cities building inclusive prosperity.
- Bilbao, the host city of the new index, is ranked at 20.

New Delhi 9th fastest-growing prime residential market in the world

- New Delhi is now the 9th fastest growing prime residential market in the world with average luxury home prices in areas such as Greater Kailash, Vasant Vihar, Anand Niketan, Defence Colony and Green Park rising by 4.4 percent year-on-year in the third quarter of 2019, according to a new report by Knight Frank.
- While Delhi's ranking has moved up by one place to 9th spot, Mumbai is at 28th position, up two places from 30th rank. The country's financial capital clocked a 0.8 percent year-on-year rise in prices.

- However, Bengaluru has slipped five places to 20th spot, registering a 2.1 percent year-on-year rise in prices.
- Globally, Moscow leads the index this quarter with prime home prices rising by 11.1 percent over the 12 months to September 2019, followed by Frankfurt (10.3 percent) and Taipei (8.9 percent). Seoul was the weakest-performing global city in the year to September, with luxury home prices falling by 12.9 percent.

Satya Nadella tops Fortune's Businessperson of the Year list

- Microsoft's India-born Chief Executive Officer Satya Nadella has occupied the top spot in Fortune's Businessperson of the Year 2019 list, an annual compilation that also includes Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga and Arista head Jayshree Ullal.
- Banga is ranked 8th, while Ullal comes in at the 18th spot in the list for which Fortune looked at 10 financial factors ranging from total return to shareholders to return on capital. Both Banga and Ullal are of Indian-origin.
- Elizabeth Gaines of Fortescue Metals Group is on second, Brian Niccol is on third.

BIS study: Mumbai tops ranking for quality of tap water, Delhi lowest

- According to a Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) study, Mumbai ranks the highest in the quality of water among capital cities in states where samples of tap water were tested.
- In Mumbai, all 10 samples of tap water passed the BIS test. Second in the list is Hyderabad, where only one sample failed. However, at the bottom of the list is Delhi, where all 11 samples failed the BIS test — thereby reaffirming that the capital city has the poorest water quality, the BIS study put.

Bill Gates just overtook Jeff Bezos to reclaim his spot as world's richest person

- Billionaire philanthropist and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates regained his status as the world's richest person for the first time in two years on Friday, topping Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, Bloomberg reported.
- Shares landed Gates' net worth at \$110 billion, while Bezos is at \$108.7 billion.
- Bernard Arnault, Europe's richest person, came third on the list with fortune \$102.7 billion.
- Reliance Industries Limited Chairman Mukesh Ambani is the richest Indian in the list positioned at 14th spot with net worth of \$56.7 billion.

Bangladesh tops business bribery risk in South Asia

- Bangladesh has the highest business bribery risk among South Asian courtiers, according to the Trace Bribery Matrix which releases annual ranking for 200 countries.
- The Matrix evaluates countries under four parameters which are business interaction with the government, anti-bribery deterrence, transparency and civil society oversight.
- Bangladesh has been placed at 178 position among 200 countries in terms of business bribery risk. It has been on the high risk country list of Trace Bribery Matrix since 2014 when the first matrix was released.
- In South Asia, Pakistan and Afghanistan are the only countries where the bribery risk is 'high'. Bhutan has the lowest risk of bribery on the index in South Asia as it is placed at 52 in the ranking.
- Overall, according to this year's TRACE Matrix data, Somalia, South Sudan, North Korea, Yemen and Venezuela presented the highest risk of bribe demands. New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland presented the lowest bribery risk.
- TRACE is a US based organisation which provides ranking to various countries in terms of the risk of bribery companies face in doing business in those countries.

India adds over 1100 start-ups in 2019, continues to be 3rd

- Adding over 1,100 start-ups in 2019, India continues to reinforce its position as the third largest start-up ecosystem across the world, taking the total number of tech start-ups to 8900-9300 in the last five years.
- The IT industry body also said that Indian startup ecosystem is geared up for "10X" growth trajectory by 2025.
- As per the "Indian Tech Start-up Ecosystem" released by NASSCOM, the Indian start-up ecosystem continues to be the third-largest in the world with a total of 24 Unicorns. (unicorn is a start-up with >\$1Bn valuation).
- China is on top with 206 Unicorns and US is on second with 203 unicorns.

India among top nations with most conducive environment for financial inclusion: Global Microscope report

- India is placed among the top nations with the most conducive environment for financial inclusion in terms of allowing non-banks to issue e-money, proportionate customer due diligence and effective consumer protection.
- According to The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2019 Global Microscope on Financial Inclusion report, the overall environment for financial inclusion has improved globally with India, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay and Mexico having the most favourable conditions for inclusive finance.
- Only four countries - Colombia, India, Jamaica and Uruguay - scored perfectly across all four parameters.

Maharashtra tops list in delivering justice to citizens, Goa among smaller states

- Maharashtra is the top state in delivering justice to its citizens, according to the India Justice Report by Tata Trusts. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Haryana are some of the top states that fared well in delivering justice to its citizens.
- The India Justice Report is a quantitative analysis of the four pillars of justice - judiciary, police, prisons and legal aid.
- They are being quantitatively studied on the basis of budgetary allocation, human resources, workload, diversity, infrastructure and trends using only government data.
- Among the seven small states, Goa topped the list, followed by Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh.

Indian firms in Fintech 100 list: Paytm, OlaMoney make it to top 10

- Eight Indian fintech firms were featured in the KPMG and H2 Ventures' 'Fintech100' list, with Paytm and OlaMoney making it to top 10.
- The Fintech100 list comprises 27 payments and transaction firms, 19 wealth companies, 17 insurance companies, 15 lending companies, 9 neo banks and 13 companies that operate across multiple fintech sectors.

Important Books and Authors

Authors	Books
Dinesh Shahra	Simplicity and Wisdom
Harish Bhat	'An Extreme Love for Coffee'
Christopher Paolini	"To Sleep in a Sea of Stars"

Hrd Ministry Launches 3 Children Books -Kumbh, Garam Pahad And Dilli Ki Bulbul (Sindhi Edition) Penned By Dr. Anita Bhatnagar Jain

- Union Minister of Human Resource Development (HRD) Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has launched 3 books for children namely Kumbh, Garam Pahad, and Dilli ki Bulbul (Sindhi edition) in New Delhi.
- The 3 books, penned by Dr. Anita Bhatnagar Jain (Indian Administrative Services (IAS-1985 batch)), are a collection of stories for children and have documented the environmental issues & topics like socio-cultural unity, cultural heritage along with the message of save environment in a very lucid manner.
- National Book Trust has been published the Kumbh (Green Stories) and Garam Pahad. Kumbh is a collection of 3 stories (Garam Pahad, Son Chiraiya Talab and Polythene Ki Pralay).

Arundhati Roy, Salman Rushdie's books among BBC's 100 'novels that shaped our world'

- The British Broadcasting Corporation announced a list of '100 Novels That Shaped Our World'. A panel of leading writers, curators and critics compiled the list for the network.
- The panel comprised Stig Abell, editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*, Syima Aslam, director of the Bradford literature festival, authors Juno Dawson, Kit de Waal and Alexander McCall Smith, and journalist Mariella Frostrup.
- The books were divided into 10 categories – identity, love, sex and romance, adventure, life, death and other worlds, politics, power and protest, class and society, coming of age, family and friendship, crime and conflict and rule breakers.
- Pakistani author Kamila Shamsie and British-Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid were also on the list for their books *Home Fire* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

Here are the books by Indian writers that were on the list:

- The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy

- *The Moor's Last Sigh* by Salman Rushdie
- *Swami and Friends* by RK Narayan
- *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth
- *A House for Mr Biswas* by VS Naipaul

HRD Minister and HarsimratKaur launched 3 books on Guru Nanak

- Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh PokhriyalNishank and Food Processing Industries Minister HarsimratKaurBadal unveiled three books on Guru Nanak DevJi in New Delhi.
- The books were launched in the run-up to 550th Birth Anniversary celebration of Guru Nanak DevJi at a function at Sri Guru TegBahadurKhalsa College.
- The National Book Trust has published these titles - 'Guru Nanak Bani', 'Nanak Bani', and 'Sakhian Guru Nanak Dev' to spread the message of Guru Nanak Dev's writings among readers of Indian sub-continent. These books, published originally in Punjabi, shall be translated into 15 major Indian languages

Important Sports News **Cricket**

Ireland's Amy Kenealy Retires from International Cricket

- Ireland Women's Amy Kenealy has announced her retirement from international cricket after an 11-year career with the senior side
- 31-year old Kenealy made her debut against West Indies Women in 2008 at her club cricket home ground in Rathmines. Since then she has played 72 times for the national team, claiming 45 wickets at an average of 32.84

Rohit Sharma becomes 1st Indian male cricketer to play 100 T20I

- Rohit Sharma became the first Indian man and second in world cricket to complete 100 T-20 Internationals
- He reached the milestone when he led the team in the second match against Bangladesh at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium.
- Shoaib Malik with 111 games from Pakistan is the only player to have played more than 100 T20 Internationals.
- India women's captain Harmanpreet Kaur was the 1st Indian player to the landmark.

Shafali is youngest Indian to score international fifty, surpasses Tendulkar's 30-year-old record

- Fifteen-year-old Shafali Verma became the youngest Indian cricketer to score a half-century in international cricket, her 49-ball 73 in the first T20 International against West Indies surpassing Sachin Tendulkar's 30-year-old record.
- Playing in only her fifth T20I, Shafali put the West Indies attack to the sword, blasting six fours and four sixes on way to her maiden fifty at the Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium.
- Shafali achieved the feat at 15 years and 285 days, surpassing batting legend Tendulkar, who had notched up his maiden Test fifty at 16 years and 214 days.

Football

Thomas Dennerby takes charge as Indian Football Head Coach of U-17 Women's team

- Sweden's Thomas Dennerby has been appointed as the Head Coach of the Indian Women's U-17 team,
- All India Football Federation (AIFF) has announced the appointment of Thomas Dennerby (Sweden) as the Indian head coach of the Women's U-17 football team.
- The FIFA U-17(under 17) women's football World Cup 2020 will be hosted by India. Thomas led the Sweden Women's national team to finish third in the FIFA World Cup in 2011

Spanish star striker David Villa retires from football

- Spain's all-time top scorer David Villa announced retirement from football
- The 37-year-old is currently playing for Vissel Kobe in Japan after a glittering career at international and club level that has included stints at Barcelona, Atletico Madrid and Valencia.

- Villa played in three World Cups and was a member of the Spanish side that lifted the trophy in 2010, and won the European Championships in 2008. He netted 59 times for Spain, a national record.
- His silverware also includes a Champions League title with Barcelona, as well as two La Liga wins and a World Club Cup medal.

Brazil beats Mexico to lift U-17 World Cup title

- Brazil to beat Mexico in the finals for 2-1, to win the 18th edition of the FIFA under 17 World Cup trophy held in Brasilia, Brazil.
- The victory added to Brazil's successes in 1997, 1999 and 2003 as it moved within one of Nigeria's record of five championships.

FIFA Rankings: India drop two places to be ranked 108

- India rank 108th in the world and 18th in Asia in the latest FIFA Rankings.
- With Belgium continuing to stand atop, followed closely by France and Brazil, the top 10 teams in the world remain unaltered with the exception of Croatia (6) doing one better over Portugal.

Other Sports News

Sports Ministry forms expert committee for reviewing National Sports Code draft

- The Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports has decided to constitute an expert committee to review the National Sports Code draft for good governance.
- The committee will also be suggesting measures for making the code acceptable to all the stakeholders so that a balance is struck between autonomy of National Sports Federations (NSF).
- The experts will be reviewing the code vis-a-vis the present code and they will also be examining the comments received by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and various NSFs related to the new draft.
- Justice Mukundakam Sharma (retired) will be the chairperson of the committee.

Third Edition of Khelo India Youth Games Logo Launched in Guwahati

- The third edition of Khelo India Youth Games-2020 Logo was launched in Guwahati by Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Chief Minister of Assam in presence of Shri Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports.
- The Mascot, Jersey and Theme song of the event was also launched at Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Indoor Stadium, Sarusajai.
- The Khelo India programme has been introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root level by building a strong framework for all sports played in our country and establish India as a great sporting nation.

Odisha to host 2023 men's hockey World Cup

- The 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup will be held in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced.
- India will host the Men's Hockey World Cup for the second consecutive time after the country was picked to stage the game's showpiece event in 2023 by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) earlier this month.
- The tournament will be held from January 13 to 29.
- The state capital is also one of the venues for the 2020 FIFA Women's U-17 World Cup.

Jon Rahm won 2019 DP World Tour Championship

- Jon Rahm won the 2019 DP World Tour Championship in Dubai. This is his second title in three years. The award has crowned him as European Number One on the final day at Jumeirah Golf Estates, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Rahm shot four-under 68 to reach 19-under 269. He defeated Tommy Fleetwood to clinch the title.

Weightlifter Jhili Dalabehera To Get Prestigious Ekalabya Puraskar

- Odia Weightlifter Jhili Dalabehera, who has brought laurels for Odisha and the country in several national and international events, will receive the prestigious Ekalabya Puraskar for the year 2019. The annual award is instituted by IMPaCT, the charitable wing of Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys (IMFA).
- Apart from Dalabehera, two other sportspersons- hockey player Namita Toppo and Footballer Jabamani Tudu will also receive citation awards for their outstanding achievements in their respective fields.

Marathon Man Eliud Kipchoge, Hurdle Heroine Dalilah Muhammad Win Athlete of the Year

- Eliud Kipchoge, the first man to run a marathon in less than two hours, and 400 metres hurdles world champion Dalilah Muhammad won the World Athlete of the Year awards.
- Kipchoge, 35, claimed governing body World Athletics' year-ending prize in Monaco after making history last month when he ran the marathon distance of 42.195 kilometres (26.219 miles) in 1hr 59min 40.2sec.
- American Muhammad won her award after a magnificent year that saw her set a world record of 52.20 seconds at the US Trials in Iowa in July -- breaking a record that had stood since 2003 -- before winning gold at the World Championships in Doha with a new world best time of 52.16sec.

India bag 28 medals including 13 gold in U-15 Asian Wrestling C'ships

- In wrestling, India concluded its campaign at the Under-15 Asian Championships with 28 medals, including 13 gold, 14 silver and a bronze as they won 5 gold on the last day at Taichung, China.
- 2019 Cadet World Championships bronze medallist Deepak Chahal, the freestyle grapplers captured four gold while one gold came in the Greco-Roman category.
- While Chahal won the gold in 75kg, Vishal in 62kg, Sagar Jaglan in 68kg and Jatin in 85kg were the others who finished on the top podium.
- For the first time, India finished on top of the team rankings in freestyle category with 225 points as all 10 wrestlers finished on the podium. Kazakhstan finished second while Japan was third.

Lakshya Sen wins Scottish Open title

- India's Lakshya Sen has won the Scottish Open men's single title, defeating Brazilian Ygor Coelho to seal his fourth title in three months.
- The 18-year-old Indian started his year with a silver medal at the Polish Open International Challenge in March.
- Sen went on to win the Belgian International in September, his first title of the year.
- Lakshya won his first BWF Super 100 title at the Dutch Open, and the SaarLorLux Open in Germany. He will be next seen in action in the Syed Modi International Championship, in Lucknow.

Rafael Nadal clinches sixth Davis Cup title

- World number one Rafael Nadal has clinched sixth Davis Cup title for Spain after beating Denis Shapovalov of Canada in Madrid.
- In 2010 Nadal won three majors, but the 33-year-old will likely look back on 2019 as an extraordinary year as he won the French Open and the US Open, made the Australian Open final and also reached the Wimbledon semifinals.

Sangram Dahiya, Varsha Varman win double trap national titles

- Haryana's Sangram Dahiya and Varsha Varman of Madhya Pradesh clinched double trap titles, winning gold at the 63rd National Shotgun Shooting Championship in New Delhi
- In men's category, Sangram shot 142 out of 150 targets to leave behind former world champion Ankur Mittal, who managed 137 hits over the five rounds of 30 targets each to win a silver.
- Punjab's Prithvi Singh Chahal won bronze with a score of 135.
- Both Sangram and Varsha also won the team gold for their respective States.

Vijender Singh claims 12th successive professional win

- Indian boxing star Vijender Singh demolished Ghana's former Commonwealth champion Charles Adamu to claim his 12th successive win.
- The 34-year-old former Olympic bronze-medallist prevailed unanimously in an eight-round super middleweight contest against the 42-year-old.

Virat Kohli named PETA India's Person of the Year

- India captain Virat Kohli was, named People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's 'Person of the Year for 2019' for his animal advocacy efforts.

- Virat Kohli is a fierce animal rights proponent who never hesitates to run out cruelty to animals any way he can. PETA India encourages everyone to follow his lead and always be an advocate for animals in need.
- Past recipients of PETA India's Person of the Year award include Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, former Supreme Court Justice KS Panicker Radhakrishnan, and actors Anushka Sharma, Hema Malini, R Madhavan, and Jacqueline Fernandez.

Bajrang Punia, Mahant Gaurav Sharma honoured in Dubai

- Star Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia has been conferred the Indian Personality of the Year Award (Sports) at the Indo Arab Leaders Summit & Awards 2019 in Dubai.
- World powerlifting champion Mahant Gaurav Sharma was honoured with Visionary Leaders of the Year (Sports) award.

2020 Hockey Pro League: Bhubaneswar to host home matches

- Bhubaneswar will host India's home matches of the 2020 Hockey Pro League.
- The second Hockey Pro League will be played between January 11 and June 28.
- The first team that India will host is the Netherlands on Jan. 18. The Pro League will feature 144 matches in the coming season.
- Australia's home matches will be played in Perth and Sydney, while England will be playing in London.

Manu Bhaker bags gold medal in ISSF World Cup Finals

- India's Manu Bhaker created history at World Cup Finals in Women's 10m Air Pistol event as she bagged India's first gold medal in the tournament this year
- The 17-year-old Bhaker shot 244.7 to claim the top prize in the season-ending tournament of International Shooting Sport Federation at Putian in China
- Serbia's Zorana Arunovic won the silver while Quian Wang of China bagged the bronze.

Max Verstappen wins Brazilian Grand Prix

- Max Verstappen has won the Formula One Brazilian Grand Prix 2019.
- Hamilton collided with Red Bull's Alexander Albon, and Toro Rosso's Pierre Gasly held off the Mercedes for second place on the line.

Sarita elected unopposed as member of AIBA athletes' commission

- India's boxing ace, Laishram Sarita Devi, has been elected unopposed as a member of the first-ever international boxing body (AIBA) athletes' commission.
- The 37-year-old is an eight-time Asian Championships medalist -- five of them gold -- has been an athletes representative in the executive committee of the Boxing Federation of India, which nominated her for the position in the world body.

Tsitsipas beats Thiem to win maiden ATP Finals crown in marathon final

- Stefanos Tsitsipas beat Dominic Thiem to win the ATP World Tour Finals trophy (officially 2019 Nitto ATP Finals) held at O2 Arena in London on November 17, 2019.
- The 21-year-old has become the first Greek player to win the title as well as the youngest winner of the ATP Finals in 18 years.

South Korea's Kim Joo Hyung wins Panasonic Open

- South Korea's Kim Joo Hyung has won the Panasonic Open held at the Classic Golf and Country Club in Gurugram, India.
- India's Shiv Kapur finished tied runner-up with S. Chikkarangappa. The victory has made Hyung the second-youngest winner behind Thailand's Chinnarat Phadugsil on the Tour at 17 years and 149 days.

Harmeet Desai Beats Anthony Amalraj to Win Men's Singles Gold at ITTF Challenge Indonesia Open

- Experienced Indian paddler Harmeet Desai defeated his compatriot Amalraj Anthony to win the gold medal in the ITTF Challenge Indonesia Open 2019 played in Batam, Indonesia.
- This was the second International title of the year for Harmeet, after the Commonwealth championship in July in Cuttack.

Shooter Shreyasi Singh crowned National Champion in Women's Trap

- Reigning Commonwealth Games champion Shreyasi Singh won the women's Trap crown at the ongoing 63rd National Shooting Championship for shotgun events at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range (KSSR) in New Delhi
- Shreyasi representing Bihar shot 42 out of 50 birds to claim the crown, while Rajeshwari from Punjab managed 38 hits to settle for silver. Pragati Dubey of Madhya Pradesh won bronze with a finals score of 31.
- This was Shreyasi's fourth individual career National title but her first in Women's Trap.

IAAF officially changes name to World Athletics

- The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has changed its name and will now be officially known as World Athletics
- The name change had been suggested in a bid to make the sport more accessible.
- The body has also changed the name of its Twitter handle and URL of its official website.
- The IAAF was founded in 1912 as the International Amateur Athletic Federation, but changed its name to the International Association of Athletics Federations in 2001

India set to host 2019 World Kabaddi Cup from December 1 to 9

- The 2019 World Kabaddi Cup will take place from December 1 to 9 and will be organised by the Punjab government, revealed the state's Sports Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi in Chandigarh.
- This year's tournament will be dedicated to the 550th birth anniversary of Sikh guru, Guru Nanak Dev ji.
- Nine teams -- India, USA, Australia, England, Sri Lanka, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan and Canada -- are expected to take part in the tournament.
- Pakistan and Canada are yet to get clearance from the Indian government.

Dutee Chand named in TIME 100 Next list

- India sprinter Dutee Chand has been named in the TIME 100 Next, an expansion of the TIME 100 list of the most influential persons in the world.
- The list, an initiative of TIME magazine, highlights 100 rising stars who are shaping the future of business, entertainment, sports, politics, health, science, activism etc.
- Chand had won two silver medals — 100m, 200m — at the Jakarta Asian Games and had become the first Indian woman sprinter to win gold at the Universiade in Napoli, where she competed in 100m

Sri Lanka Becomes First South Asian Nation to Criminalise Match Fixing & Sports Betting

- Sri Lanka has become the first South Asian nation to criminalise several offences related to match-fixing as its parliament passed all three readings of a bill labelled "Prevention of Offences Related to Sports".
- If a person is found guilty of committing an offence related to corruption in sports, then he may find himself jailed for a term up to 10 years and he will also be required to pay various fines

2019 World Kabaddi Cup to be held from December 1 to 9

- Punjab government will organise 2019 World Kabaddi Cup from December 1 to 9
- The tournament would be dedicated to the 550th birth anniversary of Sikh guru, Guru Nanak Dev ji.
- Nine teams – India, USA, Australia, England, Sri Lanka, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan and Canada – are expected to take part in the tournament
- The inauguration of the event would be held on December 1 at Guru Nanak Stadium, Sultanpur Lodhi and four matches would be held that day.
- The closing ceremony would be held at the Shaheed Bhagat Singh Sports Stadium in Dera Baba Nanak.
- The semifinals would be held at Charanganga sports stadium in Sri Anandpur Sahib.

Aradhya Garg, Srishti Pandey become National junior chess champions

- Delhi's Aradhya Garg capped a dream run with a sixth straight victory and became the National junior chess champion
- The girls' title went to Maharashtra's Srishti Pandey who emerged worthy champion with a one-point margin

Javelin thrower Sundar Singh wins gold in World Para Athletics Championships

- Javelin thrower Sundar Singh Gurjar has won India's second gold defending his World Para Athletics Championships title in the men's F46 javelin throw event in Dubai.
- With this, India has secured three Tokyo Paralympic Games quota, along with the bronze winner Ajeet Singh and Rinku
- Yogesh Kathuniya added a silver for India in men's discus throw F56 event with a best throw of 42.05m

Saurabh Chaudhary wins silver medal in Men's 10m air pistol event at Asian Championship

- Saurabh Chaudhary claimed the silver medal in men's 10m air pistol event at the 14th Asian Championship in Doha
- World Cup and Asian Games gold-medallist shot 244.5 to finish second on the podium behind North Korea's Kim Song Guk, who won the top prize with a world record 246.5. Iran's Foroughi Javed bagged the bronze.
- The trio of Chaudhary, Verma and Sharvan Kumar bagged the team bronze with a total of 1740 in the qualifying
- Shreya Agrawal and Dhanush Srikanth won the gold medal in the 10m air rifle mixed team junior competition, while Gurnihal Garcha, Abhay Singh Sekhon and Ayush Rudraraju claimed the team gold in the junior men's skeet.
- Gurnihal Garcha also won an individual silver with a score of 50 in the finals.

France clinches Fed Cup with epic win over Australia

- France defeated Australia, 3-2, to claim their first Fed Cup title in 16 years, held in Perth, Australia.
- Fed Cup is an international team competition in women's tennis.
- Caroline Garcia and Kristina Mladenovic of France surpassed Ashleigh Barty and Samantha Stosur, 6-4, 6-3, winning the deciding doubles match to break the tie.
- This was France's third Fed Cup title and first since they beat the United States in 2003.

China Open 2019: Kento Momota defeats Chou Tien-chen to defend Fuzhou crown, win 10th title this year

- Kento Momota won his 10th title of a remarkable year as Japan's world number one defeated Chou Tien-chen to retain his Fuzhou China Open crown.
- Home hope Chen Yufei similarly successfully defended the women's title with a gritty victory over Japan's Nozomi Okuhara.

India to host 2023 FIH Men's World Cup, Spain, Netherlands to co-host 2022 Hockey Women's World Cup

- The Executive Board of the International Hockey Federation announced that India would be hosting the Men's Hockey World Cup in 2023. Spain and Netherlands have been confirmed as the co-hosts for the 2022 FIH Hockey Women's World Cup.
- The Men's Hockey World Cup would be played from January 13-29, 2023 while the Women's World Cup would be played from July 1-17, 2022. The venues for the tournaments will be announced by the host nations.

Asian Shooting Championships 2019: Manu Bhaker clinches gold in women's 10m air pistol event

- Deepak Kumar secured India's 10th Olympic quota in shooting while Manu Bhaker claimed the women's 10m air pistol gold medal in the 14th Asian Championship.
- Vivaan Kapoor and Manisha Keer won the second-highest honour in junior trap mixed event at the Asian Shooting Championships in Doha.

Shiva Thapa, Pooja Rani win gold at Olympic Test event for Boxing

- Shiva Thapa (63kg) and Pooja Rani (75kg) clinched gold medals with impressive wins, while Ashish (69kg) settled for a silver as India ended with a decent haul of seven medals at the Olympic Test Event for Boxing.
- The other four medals (bronze) came after semifinal losses of Nikhat Zareen (51kg), Simranjeet Kaur (60kg), Sumit Sangwan (91kg) and Vahlimpuia (75kg).

Lakshya Sen wins SaarLorLux Open badminton tournament in Germany

- India's Lakshya Sen has won the SaarLorLux Open badminton tournament at Saarbrücken in Germany. He defeated Sen Weng Hong Yang of China.
- World number 51 Lakshya took 59 minutes to overcome Weng in the summit clash.
- The 18-year-old from Uttarakhand had entered the final beating Kiran George in an all-Indian semifinal.

South Africa wins Rugby World Cup

- South Africa galloped by England to win the Rugby World Cup in Japan.
- The Springboks claimed the Cup for the first time since 2007. It was a rematch of the final game of 2007. Both teams scored only penalty kicks in the first half.
- In the second half, the Springboks' Makazole Mapimpi and Cheslin Kolbe each pushed the ball across the line for the only two tries of the game.
- The Springboks became the second team after New Zealand to win three World Cup titles.

Pooja Gehlot wins silver in UWW Under-23 World Championships

- Pooja Gehlot (53kg) in wrestling claimed India's second silver medal after going down to Japan's Haruna Okuno in the finals of the UWW Under-23 World Championships in Budapest
- Pooja lost 0-2 to Okuno in the summit clash. She had entered the finals after beating Turkey's Zeynep Yetgil in the semifinals of the tournament.
- Ravinder (61kg), had won India's first silver earlier this week

Valtteri Bottas Wins The 2019 United States Grand Prix

- Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes – Finland) has won the Formula One, United States Grand Prix 2019.
- Lewis Hamilton was on second, Max Verstappen on third, Charles Leclerc on fourth and Alexander Albon on fifth.
- However, it must be noted that, after the US Grand Prix 2019, Lewis Hamilton was awarded his sixth F1 world title i.e Lewis Hamilton has won the Formula One World Drivers' Championship for 2019.
- The maximum number of Formula One World Drivers' Championship has been won by Michael Schumacher with 7 titles.

Ashleigh Barty beats Elina Svitolina in WTA Finals

- Ashleigh Barty arrived for her final showdown in Shenzhen against Elina Svitolina.
- Barty has won the French Open and reached No 1.
- Svitolina to win the WTA Finals and its \$4.42m (£3.42m) cheque, the biggest prize money in tennis history.

Novak Djokovic beats Denis Shapovalov to win fifth Paris Masters title

- Novak Djokovic recorded his 77th ATP title with a win over Canada's Denis Shapovalov at the Paris Masters.
- The 32-year-old Serb will be replaced as world number one by Rafael Nadal despite sealing his 34th Masters title, his fifth in Paris and fifth overall ATP victory of the year.

Important Obituaries

Person	Field
Gurudas Dasgupta	Veteran CPI leader
Sadako Ogata	First woman head to the UN's refugee agency UNHCR
Geetanjali Ramakrishna	Veteran Telugu actress
K K Modi	Industrialist
Justice N. V. Balasubramanian	Retired Judge of Madras High Court
Babasaheb Dhabekar	Former Maharashtra minister
Nabaneeta Dev Sen	Bengali Author
Anjan Mitra	Former General Secretary of Mohun Bagan club

Tirunellai Narayana Seshan	Former Chief Election Commissioner
Vashishtha Narayan Singh	Renowned mathematician
Veteran actor	Shaukat Kaifi
Kailash Joshi	Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister
Sudhir Dhar	Renowned cartoonist
Admiral Sushil Kumar	Former Indian Navy Chief
Yasuhiro Nakasone	Former Japanese Prime Minister
Brad Gobright	Renowned US rock climber