

Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – FEBRUARY

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Important Days

Date	Important days	Theme
February 2	World Wetlands Day	-
February 4	World Cancer Day	I Am and I Will
February 10	National Deworming Day	-
February 11	International Day of Women and Girls In science	Investment in Women and Girls in Science for Inclusive Green Growth
February 12-18	National Productivity Week	Circular Economy for Productivity & Sustainability
February 13	World Radio Day	Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace'
February 13	National Women's Day	-
February 20	World Day of Social Justice	If You Want Peace & Development, Work for Social Justice
February 21	International Mother Language Day	Indigenous languages matter for development, peace building and reconciliation
February 24	Central Excise Day	-
February 28	National Science Day	Science for people and people for science

Important Banking News

RBI

Reserve Bank of India lifts lending curbs on three public sector banks

- RBI lifted lending curbs on three public sector banks (PSBs), Bank of India, Bank of Maharashtra and Oriental Bank of Commerce to exit the PCA framework following capital infusion by the government and a decline in net non-performing asset ratio.
- Eight public sector banks -Allahabad Bank, United Bank of India, Corporation Bank, IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank and Dena Bank still remain under PCA framework, which imposes lending restrictions and prevents them from expanding
- Last month, the government announced infusion of Rs. 28,615 crore into seven public sector banks (PSBs) through recapitalisation bonds. Out of the seven state owned banks, Bank of India got the highest amount of Rs 10,086 crore, followed by Oriental Bank of Commerce Rs 5,500 crore and Bank of Maharashtra (Rs 4,498 crore).
- PSBs have also made a record recovery of Rs 60,726 crore in the first half of the current financial year

RBI imposed penalties on Axis Bank, UCO Bank and Syndicate Bank

- The RBI has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 2 crore each on UCO Bank and Axis Bank, and Rs. 1 crore on Syndicate Bank.
- Penalty of Rs. 2 crore has been imposed each on Axis Bank and UCO Bank for non-compliance of norms related to payment through cheques
- In another case, a penalty of Rs. 20 lakh has been imposed on Axis Bank for contravention of the directions related to detection and impounding of counterfeit notes.
- The penalty on Syndicate Bank has been imposed for violation of guidelines related to checking fraud and managing risk

RBI imposed a penalty of Rs. 1 crore fine on Union Bank of India

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs. 1 crore on Union Bank of India for delay in exchange of information regarding the conduct of the borrower's account with other lenders.

- The Banking Regulation Act, 1949 confers power on Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under Section 47(A) to impose penalties if there has been any default or contravention.

Sixth Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Statement: Repo Rate Reduced to 6.25%

- On the basis of an assessment of the current and evolving macroeconomic situation, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to reduce the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) by 25 basis points from 6.5 per cent to 6.25 per cent with immediate effect
- Reverse repo rate under the LAF stands adjusted to 6.0 per cent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate to 6.5 per cent.

Repo Rate	6.25%
Reverse Repo Rate	6.00%
MSF Rate	6.50%
Bank Rate	6.50%
CRR	4%
SLR	19.25%

RBI removed Allahabad Bank, Corporation Bank, Dhanlaxmi Bank from PCA framework

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) removed three commercial banks -Allahabad Bank, Corporation Bank and Dhanlaxmi Bank from the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework allowing them to resume their normal lending activities. With the removal of Allahabad Bank and Corporation Bank, six public sector banks are still under the PCA framework. Bank of India (BoI), Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) were taken out of PCA framework on January 31

RBI raised collateral-free farm loan limit to Rs 1.6 lakh

- RBI raised the limit of collateral-free agricultural loans to Rs. 1.6 lakh from the current Rs. 1 lakh with a view to help small and marginal farmers. RBI also set up an internal working group to review agriculture credit and arrive at a "workable solutions and policy initiatives". Currently, the banks are mandated to extend collateral-free agricultural loans up to Rs. 1 lakh. This limit was fixed in the year 2010.

RBI doubles the limit of 'bulk deposit' from Rs. 1crore to Rs. 2 crore

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to raise the criteria for 'bulk deposits' for banks to Rs. 2 crore from the current Rs. 1 crore, to provide more operational freedom to lenders to raise funds. Interest rates on bulk deposits are marginally higher than on smaller-amount fixed deposits for similar maturity period. The instructions regarding bulk deposits were last reviewed in January 2013 and defined as single rupee deposits of Rs 1 crore and above.
- The proposal was suggested by the National Federation of Urban Cooperative Banks and Credit Societies Ltd. (NAFCUB). RBI also proposed that banks would maintain their bulk deposit interest rate cards in the core banking system for supervisory review.

RBI imposed monetary penalty on seven banks

- The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 1.50 crore each on Allahabad Bank, Bank of Maharashtra and Indian Overseas Bank, and Rs. 1 crore on Andhra Bank.
- The penalty has been imposed on the public sector banks (PSBs) for non-compliance with various directions issued on monitoring of end use of funds, exchange of information with other banks, classification and reporting of frauds, and on restructuring of accounts
- The central bank also imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 20 lakh each on HDFC Bank, IDBI Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank for non-compliance with various directions issued by the RBI on Know Your Customer (KYC) norms / anti-money laundering (AML) standards

RBI imposed monetary penalty on 3 banks

- The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 1.50 crore on Oriental Bank of Commerce and Rs. 1 crore each on Bank of India and Punjab National Bank.
- The penalty has been imposed on the banks for non-compliance with various directions issued on monitoring of end use of funds, exchange of information with other banks, classification and reporting of frauds, and on restructuring of accounts.

RBI lifts cap on FPI investments in corporation bonds

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted the 20% limit on investments by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in corporate bonds of an entity with a view to encouraging more foreign investments
- In April 2018, RBI was stipulated that FPI should not have an exposure of more than 20% of its corporate bond portfolio to a single corporate

RBI to give Rs. 28,000 crore to Government as interim dividend

- The Reserve Bank has announced that it will transfer an interim surplus of 28,000 crore rupees to the central government for the half-year ended 31st December 2018. With this interim transfer, the government will get a total Rs. 68,000 crore from the central bank in the current fiscal. The RBI had transferred Rs. 40,000 crore to the government in August 2018. This will be the highest receipt from RBI in a single financial year for the government, exceeding the Rs 65,896 crore it received in FY16 and Rs 40,659 crore in FY18.

SBI

RBI imposed fine of Rs. 1 crore on State Bank of India

- Reserve Bank of India has slapped Rs 1 crore penalty on the country's largest lender for not monitoring the end use of funds in respect of one of its borrowers. The Banking Regulation Act, 1949 confers power on Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under Section 47(A) to impose penalties if there has been any default or contravention.

SBI reduced home loan interest rate by 5 basis points

- Country's largest lender State Bank of India announced a cut in interest rates by 5 basis points on its home loans up to Rs 30 lakh.
- Now the home loan rates up to Rs. 30 lakh stands at 8.70%

OTHER BANKING NEWS

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launched Ujjivan Bank Kisan Suvidha loan for small and marginal farmers

- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (SFB) launched Ujjivan Bank Kisan Suvidha loan to offer financial credit services to small and marginal farmers. The product provides collateral free loans to individuals with amount ranging from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 2 lakh. With this Ujjivan becomes the first bank to offer loans for agriculture and allied activities such as dairy purchase and maintenance, post-harvest transportation, farm implements purchase, fishery, sheep rearing, sericulture, floriculture etc. The product is launched in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Karnataka and Odisha

Government revised GDP growth from 6.7 to 7.2 per cent

- The government revised its forecast for GDP growth for 2017-18 to 7.2% from the earlier estimate of 6.7%. It also revised the actual growth rate in 2016-17 to 8.2% from the 7.1% estimated earlier
- The revisions were made by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in its First Revised Estimates of National Income, Consumption Expenditure, Saving and Capital Formation for 2017-18
- The government has also estimates GDP growth to be at 7.2 per cent for the current financial year

Lendbox receives NBFC - peer-to-peer (P2P) certification from RBI

- Delhi based P2P Lending platform, Lendbox has received its NBFC - Peer-to-Peer (P2P) certification from the RBI. NBFC-P2P is a new class of NBFCs, for non-banking institutions which carry on the business of Peer to Peer Lending in adherence to the guidelines released by Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Lendbox began operations in November 2015 and is one of India's largest P2P Lending platforms with almost 200,000 registered users and a loan book size of almost 40 crores.

Asian Development Bank buys 14% stake in Annapurna Finance

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has bought a 14% stake in micro-financier Annapurna Finance for Rs. 137 crore, reinforcing the belief that India's microfinance sector is on course to attracting long-term funds from global lenders and investors. The expansion of equity will help the firm expand its loan portfolio in asset classes such as MSME and affordable housing. ADB has backed MFIs to help achieve its broader objective of reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific. The investment by ADB will expand Annapurna's net worth to Rs 580 crore.
- This was Annapurna second equity expansion in as many years, following OIJIF's Rs 155-crore investment in June last year. OIJIF is backed by State Bank of India and State General Reserve Fund of Oman.

Two RRBs to be merged to form Tamil Nadu Grama Bank

- The Ministry of Finance has announced the amalgamation of two regional rural banks in Tamilnadu- Pallavan Grama Bank, sponsored by Indian Bank and Pandyan Grama Bank, sponsored by Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) into a single regional rural bank in the state and name the new entity as Tamil Nadu Grama Bank
- The amalgamated regional rural bank Tamil Nadu Grama Bank will be under the sponsorship of Indian Bank, with its head office at Salem. The amalgamation would be effective from 1 April.

Fitch Group arm projects fiscal deficit to slip to 3.6% in 2019-20

- Fitch Solutions, the research arm of Fitch Group, projected the government's fiscal deficit to overshoot the budgeted target by 0.2 per cent to 3.6 per cent of GDP in 2019-20 fiscal. Fitch Solutions revised its forecast for the central government fiscal deficit to come in at 3.6 per cent of GDP in FY 2019-20, from 3 per cent previously

FDI declines 11% to \$22.66 billion during April-September

- According to commerce and industry ministry, Foreign direct investment (FDI) into India has declined 11 per cent to \$ 22.66 billion during April-September period of the current fiscal. The foreign fund inflows during April-September 2017-18 stood at \$ 25.35 billion.
- Key sectors that received maximum foreign investment during the first six months of the fiscal include services (\$4.91 billion), computer software and hardware (\$2.54 billion), telecommunications (\$2.17 billion), trading (\$2.14 billion), chemicals (\$1.6 billion), and automobile industry (\$1.59 billion)
- Singapore was the largest source of FDI during April-September 2018-19 with \$8.62 billion inflow, followed by Mauritius \$3.88 billion
- FDI had increased at a five-year low growth of 3 per cent at \$ 44.85 billion in 2017-18.

Fino Payments Bank introduced sweep account facility in association with Suryoday Small Finance Bank

- Fino Payments Bank (FPB) has announced the launch of a sweep account facility in association with Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB). As per the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), payment banks can only take deposits upto Rs. 1 lakh per account. The partnership would allow customers to seamlessly transfer the excess amount from their account in Fino Payments Bank (FPB) to Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB) (partner bank) account.

IBA issues guidelines to waive off various fees to Kisan Credit Card

- The Indian Banking Association (IBA) issued advisory guidelines requesting banks to waive off the processing, documentation, inspection, ledger folio charges and all other service charges for crop loans **up** to Rs 3 Lakhs or for the Kisan Credit Card Scheme. Agriculture Ministry stated that, there are over 21 crore small and marginal farmers in the country and providing them timely and affordable credit is the key to attaining inclusive growth.
- The Kisan Credit Card Scheme aims at providing adequate and timely credit support from the banking system to the farmers to meet the short term credit requirements for cultivation of crops, investment credit requirements for agriculture and allied activities and other needs. The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme is a credit scheme introduced in August 1998 by Indian banks. This model scheme was prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on the recommendations of R.V.GUPTA committee

EPFO hikes provident fund interest rate by 0.1% to 8.65%

- The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) hiked the interest rate on employees' provident fund by 10 basis point from 8.55 per cent to 8.65 per cent for the 2018-19 fiscal year
- Central Board of Trustees (CBT) headed by the Union labour minister is the highest decision making body of the EPFO that finalises rate of interest on PF deposits.
- The proposal approved by the trustees would now go to the finance ministry for its approval

Government to infuse Rs. 48,239 crore in 12 PSU banks for 2018-19

- The government approved the infusion of Rs. 48,239 crore in 12 public sector banks to help them meet regulatory capital requirements and boost overall growth. With this latest of capital infusion, the government has now provided Rs. 1, 00,958 crore out of the Rs. 1.06 lakh crore bank recapitalisation plan.
- Allahabad Bank will receive Rs. 6,896 crore, Union Bank will receive Rs. 4,112 crore, Bank of India Rs. 4,638 crore, Bank of Maharashtra Rs. 205 crore, Corporation Bank Rs 9,086 crore, Andhra Bank Rs. 3,256 crore, Syndicate Bank Rs. 1,603 crore, Punjab National Bank Rs. 5,098 crore and Central Bank of India Rs. 2,560. The government also infuse Rs. 2,839 crore in United Bank and Rs. 3,330 crore in UCO Bank

Foreign direct investment during April-December 2018-19 falls 7% to USD 33.49 billion

- Foreign direct investment (FDI) in India falls by 7 per cent to USD 33.49 billion during April-December in the current fiscal. Foreign fund inflows during April-December 2017-18 stood at USD 35.94 billion. The key sectors received the maximum foreign investment during the nine months of the fiscal. Services USD 5.91 billion, computer software and hardware USD 4.75 billion, telecommunications USD 2.29 billion, trading USD 2.33 billion, chemicals USD 6.05 billion, and the automobile industry USD 1.81 billion. Singapore was the largest source of FDI during April-December 2018-19 with USD 12.97 billion inflow

Syndicate Bank to bring down NPA in the current year

- Syndicate Bank to bring down NPA in the current year. The bank is aiming at bringing down the gross NPA to below 12% and the net NPA to below 6% in the current year from the existing level of 12.5 and 6.5 % respectively.
- The bank has made a profit in the third quarter after loss in the previous quarters of FY 19. The bank is planning to launch employee share purchase scheme in the first week of March. The scheme offers shares of the bank at a discount ranging from 23 to 25 % with lower grade employees getting maximum discount. The bank is expecting to raise Rs 500 to 600 crore from the process.

RBI to soon put into circulation Rs. 100 bank notes in new series

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will shortly put into circulation new series Rs. 100 denomination bank notes bearing the signature of New Governor Shaktikanta Das. The design of these notes is similar in all respects to the Rs. 100 bank notes in circulation currently. All bank notes in the denomination of Rs. 100 issued by the RBI in the past will continue to be legal tender

Kotak Mahindra Bank raises foreign investment limit

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has raised the limit on total shareholding of foreign institutional investors and foreign portfolio investors in the company to 45 percent from 43 percent.
- The hike in the shareholding limit comes after central bank directive on reducing its Chief Executive Uday Kotak's stake in the bank.

April – January Fiscal deficit touches 121.5% of FY19 target

- India's fiscal deficit during April-January stood at Rs. 7.7 lakh crore or 121.5% of the budgeted estimate of Rs 6.24 lakh crore for 2018-19. The gap between the government's revenue and expenditure had stood at 113.7% in January 2018. While presenting the Interim Budget earlier this month, the government had revised the fiscal deficit target for FY19 to 3.4% of GDP from 3.3%.

BoB ties up with German KfW for USD 130m to refinance solar units

- State-run Bank of Baroda has tied up with Germany's KfW Development Bank for funding of USD 113 million to refinance solar projects.
- The tie-up is part of an Indo-German Solar Energy Partnership signed in 2015

ICICI Bank introduced super-premium credit card Emerald

- ICICI Bank has launched a super-premium credit card, the ICICI Bank Emerald Credit Card, in two variants – American Express and Mastercard. The Emerald Credit Card is targeted at salaried customers with a minimum income of Rs 3 lakh a month and self-employed customers with an annual income tax return of at least Rs 30 lakh.

IDBI Bank, LIC ink bancassurance pact

- IDBI Bank will now have to offer LIC's insurance products at its branches. IDBI Bank and Life Insurance Corporation of India have signed a bancassurance agreement under which the lender will offer LIC's insurance products at its branches. IDBI Bank as a corporate agent of LIC would get a window to provide LIC's entire gamut of insurance offerings to the bank's 1.80-crore customer base spread over 1,800 branches across the country.

DCB Bank launches Open Banking for gen-next banking solutions

- DCB Bank announced the launch of its Open Banking Platform as part of efforts towards creating a collaborative ecosystem with enterprises, fintechs and app developers, and enhancing customer-service delivery.
- Over 20 start-ups, fintechs, merchants, enterprises and developers will partner with DCB Bank for access to its Open Banking Platform APIs as well as collaboration on innovation and customer centric products.

NTPC inks Rs 2,500 crore loan pact with HDFC Bank

- State-run power giant NTPC has signed an agreement with HDFC Bank for a Rs 2,500 crore loan to part finance capital expenditure. The loan is extended at an interest rate linked to three-month marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) of the bank. The loan has a door-to-door tenure of 15 years and will be utilised to part finance the capital expenditure of NTPC

PSU Banks bad loans decline to Rs. 8, 64, 433 crore in April-Dec FY19

- Bad loans of public sector banks declined by more than Rs 31,000 crore to Rs 8,64,433 crore in the first nine months of the current fiscal as compared to end of March 2018. Non Performing Assets (NPAs) or bad loans of the banks stood at Rs 8,95,601 crore at the end of previous fiscal. NPAs declined as a result of the government's 4Rs strategy of recognition, resolution, recapitalisation and reforms

HDFC ERGO Launched the first-of-its-kind 'Trip Protector' Policy

- HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third-largest non life insurance provider in the private sector, launched the Trip Protector insurance policy, a pioneering policy in the non-life insurance segment in India.
- In the event of a cancellation, either a flight or hotel booking, Trip Protector insurance policy will safeguard travellers financially against the cost of cancellation levied by Hotels or Airlines. The policy is initially offered to customers of HDFC Bank on the purchase of Airline tickets or Hotel Bookings done using their individual HDFC Bank credit cards

Important Cabinet Approvals

1. MoU between India and Malaysia for Mutual Cooperation in the field of Company Secretaryship
2. MoU between India and Election Management Bodies of Namibia and Panama
3. MoU between India and Norway on India-Norway Ocean Dialogue
4. MoU between India and Brazil on cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy
5. MoU between India and Maldives for Establishing Mutual Cooperation to Improve the Ecosystems for Agribusiness
6. MoU between India and the UAE on Development cooperation in Africa
7. Signing of Agreement between India and Ukraine for cooperation in Agriculture and Food Industry
8. MoU between India and Finland in the field of Biotechnology
9. MoU between India and Uzbekistan for promoting Bilateral cooperation in the area of e-Governance
10. Establishment of Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri
11. Introduction of National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2019 in the Parliament
12. Establishment of Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog for Conservation protection and development of cows and their progeny
13. Proposal for Official Amendments to the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2018
14. Abolition of Institution of Income-Tax Ombudsman and Indirect Tax Ombudsman
15. Framework Agreement between India and Indonesia on cooperation in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful purposes
16. MoU between India and Morocco for setting up of a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism
17. MoU between India and Finland on Cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of outer space
18. Proposal for leasing out of 1.61 acres of land at Alipur, Delhi, owned by Delhi Milk Scheme to Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium for setting up of Kisan Mandi
19. Proposal for allotment of land measuring 30 acres to Pasteur Institute of India for establishment of New Viral Vaccine Manufacturing Unit at Coonoor, Tamil Nadu

20. Extension of tenure of the National Commission for SafaiKarmacharis beyond 31.3.2019 for three years
21. Introduction of Registration of Marriage of NRI Bill 2019
22. Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between India and Argentine in tourism
23. Revision in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Chhattisgarh
24. Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between India and Saudi Arabia on establishing a mechanism for Investment Infrastructure in India
25. Memorandum of Understanding between India and Saudi Arabia on cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs matters
26. Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between India and Saudi Arabia in the field of tourism
27. Continuation of Credit Linked Capital Subsidy and Technology Up-gradation Scheme (CLCS-TUS) beyond 12th Plan for three years from 2017-18 to 2019-20
28. Minimum Support Price for Raw Jute for 2019-20 season hiked to Rs.3950/- from Rs.3700/- per quintal by the Cabinet

Important Business News

Paytm Acquired Noida-Based NightStay

- Indian payments conglomerate Paytm Acquired hotel booking platform Nightstay, launching the domestic hotel bookings on its platform for an undisclosed amount. The digital payments brand owned by One97 Communications is set to invest Rs. 500 crores to scale up its operations and expand the hotel-booking portfolio
- In the first phase of hotels launch, the company has partnered with over 5,000 hotels across the budget, luxury and business segments. NightStay co-founder and CEO Nasr Khan will be leading the newly launched hotel-booking category at Paytm

PNB MetLife introduced P.V. Sindhu as brand ambassador

- The Punjab National Bank associated life insurance company, PNB MetLife has introduced the ace shuttler PV Sindhu as its brand ambassador. Sindhu will support various initiatives under project Damini, a CSR initiative intended to empower girls at every stage of the journey into womanhood.

Indostar Capital Finance to buy India Infoline Finance's Commercial Vehicle Finance Business

- IndoStar Capital Finance Ltd (IndoStar) , a non-banking finance company, has signed a binding agreement to acquire the Commercial Vehicle (CV) finance business of India Infoline Finance Ltd (IIFL Finance), a subsidiary of IIFL Holdings Ltd.

Swiggy acqui-hires Bengaluru-based AI startup Kint.io

- Online food ordering and delivery firm Swiggy announced it has acqui-hired Bengaluru-based AI startup Kint.io an artificial intelligence (AI) startup, for an undisclosed sum. Acqui-hiring refers to buying out a company or an entity primarily for the skills and expertise of its staff, rather than for its products or services. The team at Kint.io will join the company to boost its computer vision technology and superior consumer experience. The founding members of Kint.io, Pavithra Solai Jawahar, and Jagannathan Veeraraghavan, will join the Swiggy team

Adani Group wins bids to operate five Airports for 50 years

- Gautam Adani's Adani Group has won bids to operate five out of six airports, put up for privatisation by the central government, for the next 50 years. The AAI chose the winner on the basis of "per-passenger fee" offered by the bidders. The Airports are Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Lucknow, Mangaluru and Jaipur airports

Facebook acquired GrokStyle virtual search start-up to boost AI capabilities

- Facebook acquired US-based virtual search startup GrokStyle, to enable users shop better using artificial intelligence capabilities, for an undisclosed amount.
- San Francisco Based GrokStyle was founded in 2015

Government relaxes Angel Tax norms for Start-ups

- In a move to provide relief to and boost investments into start-ups in India, the government has decided to simplify the process for them to get exemptions under the Income Tax Act 1961. The government has increased the age cap for start-ups from 7 to 10 years. It will also recognize an entity as a start-up if its turnover for any of the financial years since its incorporation or registration does not exceed Rs. 100 crore instead of the existing Rs. 25 crore. Currently the limit for tax exemption is Rs. 10 crore.

Important State Wise National News

Assam

Capital – Dispur; CM – Sarbananda Sonowal; Governor – Jagdish Mukhi

Assam launched PRANAM Commission to protect parents of government employees

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched the PRANAM Commission, a panel set up to look after the issues concerning a Bill, for protection of parents of state government employees.
- The Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) is an effort to protect elderly parents of government employees in their times of need.

Andhra Pradesh

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

PM Modi dedicates Visakhapatnam SPR facility to the nation

- Prime Minister dedicated to the nation the 1.33 million metric tonnes of Visakhapatnam Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) facility of the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL) built at a cost of Rs. 1,178 crore
- He also inaugurated Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited's Vashishta and S1 development project located in the Krishna-Godavari Offshore Basin. Modi also laid the foundation stone for setting up of a new terminal of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) at Krishnapatnam. It will be built at a cost of Rs 700 crore.

India's first district cooling system to be built in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh

- UAE-based international cooling provider (Tabreed) has entered into a 30-year concession with Andhra Pradesh government to build, India's first district cooling system in the state's new capital Amaravati. The agreement is for a contracted cooling capacity of 20,000 refrigeration tonnes. This will be the Tabreed's first plant outside its Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) market

Arunachal Pradesh

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

'Boori Boot Yullom' festival begins in Arunachal Pradesh

- The Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh is celebrating its fortnight-long Boori Boot Yollo festival. Boori Boot Yollo is observed in the month of February every year to welcome spring and a successful harvest. During the festival, people invoke God to bless them with prosperity and seek protection from any kind of disease. This festival is celebrated particularly in two districts of Arunachal, Upper Subansiri and Lower Subansiri district

PM Modi launched a dedicated channel 'DD Arunprabha' for Arunachal Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a dedicated 24x7 Satellite channel, 'DD Arunprabha' for Arunachal Pradesh. DD Arunprabha is the Doordarshan's second channel for the northeastern region, DD Northeast was the first one.
- Modi also laid the foundation stone of Film and Television Institute (FTI). The permanent campus of the institute will come up at Jollang-Rakap (Jote) in Arunachal Pradesh.

Bihar

Capital – Patna; CM – Nitish Kumar; Governor - Lalji Tandon

Bihar 1st state to deploy dog squad to check liquor smuggling

- Bihar has become the first state in the country to have raised a special dog squad to detect liquor consignment.
- As many as 20 liquor-tracker dogs which were imparted training for nine months in Hyderabad have been deployed in nine police ranges in the state. Bihar had banned liquor in the state in 2016.

Bihar government approved 10 % quota for weaker sections in general category

- Bihar government has approved 10 percent quota for weaker sections in general category in jobs and educational institutions. The reservation is meant for individuals whose annual income is below 8 lakh rupees and who possess less than 5 acres of agriculture land. Other states which are implemented the reservation Bill - Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Assam. Parliament recently passed the Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill, 2019, approving 10 per cent reservation for the economically weaker section in general category

3-day Krishi Kumbh to begins at Motihari in Bihar

- Bihar Governor Lalji Tandon and Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh jointly inaugurated the Krishi Kumbh in Bihar. This is the largest Krishi Kumbh of Eastern India. Over fifteen thousand farmers across different states and about two hundred agricultural scientists are participating in the Kumbh. There will be 14 technical

sessions during three day Krishi Kumbh. The objective of Krishi Kumbh is to promote modern techniques and diversification in agriculture that could help in doubling farmer's income. This Kumbh will be meeting point for policymakers, government, media, industries and other stakeholders to share knowledge discuss problems and presenting solutions for geometric progression growth of the agriculture in India.

Bihar government announced universal old age pension scheme

- Bihar government has announced a universal old age pension scheme - Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna (MVPY) for all people above 60 years of age. The scheme will come into force from the 1st of April this year.
- Except those who are retired from the government service, all other people above 60 years will be eligible for 400 rupees monthly pension irrespective of caste, religion or community. Currently old age pension scheme is applicable to only the BPL category. The Chief Minister also announced a pension of 6,000 rupees for journalists above 60 years of age.

Haryana

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

Haryana government approved new MSME, Pharma policies to boost development

- The Haryana government approved new policies for MSME and pharmaceutical sectors with a view to boosting the industrial growth and attracting investment in the state.
- Haryana Pharmaceutical Policy 2019, aiming to attract investment in the pharmaceutical sector to the tune of Rs 2,000 crore and to generate 25,000 new jobs, and establish a state-of-the-art Pharma Park at Karnal and to develop Haryana into a hub for pharmaceutical manufacturing.
- Haryana Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Policy 2019, It enables access to finance to MSMEs, promote entrepreneurship through start up and incubation support, support for revival of sick enterprises and enhance competitiveness through ease of doing business

Jammu & Kashmir

Capital – Jammu (winter) Srinagar (summer); CM - Vacant; Governor - Satya Pal Malik

Jammu and Kashmir government grants Divisional Status to Ladakh region

- Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik granted Ladakh a divisional status, thus creating three administrative units of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in the State. The J&K government has approved the creation of a separate administrative and revenue division for Ladakh. It will comprise Leh and Kargil districts, with headquarters at Leh. Earlier, Ladakh was a part of the Kashmir division. Kashmir valley geographically the smallest division at 15,948 sq. km, Jammu division at 26,293 sq. km and Ladakh, the biggest division, at 86,909 sq. km

Karnataka

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

India's first agromet forecast center inaugurated in Dharwad, Karnataka

- Union Minister for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, and Environment Dr Harsha Vardhan inaugurated the North Karnataka Agromet Forecasting and Research Centre (NKAFC) in Dharwad, Karnataka.
- This is country's first agromet forecast centre which will provide accurate information on weather. About 25 lakh farmers in the region would get information on various platforms including SMS, Whatsapp, social networking sites and community radio stations.

Kerala

Capital – Thiruvananthapuram; CM – Pinarayi Vijayan; Governor – P.Sadasivam

Kerala State sets up Price Monitoring and Research Unit

- Kerala has become the first State to set up a price monitoring and research unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO). The move comes more than five years after the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) proposed such a system for the States and the Union Territories.

Union Tourism Minister K.J. Alphons inaugurated the 'Eco Circuit' Project in Kerala

- K.J. Alphons, Union Minister for Tourism inaugurated the project 'Development of Eco Circuit: Pathanamthitta – Gavi – Vagamon - Thekkady' under the Swadesh Darshan scheme of Ministry of Tourism

- This Eco Circuit project was sanctioned in December 2015 for Rs. 76.55 crores. Major works carried out under the project includes Eco Adventure Tourism Park at Vagamon, Cultural Centre at Kadamannitta, Idukki. Swadesh Darshan scheme is one of the flagship schemes of Ministry of Tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country
- The scheme was launched in 2014 -15 and as on date the Ministry has sanctioned 77 projects worth projects for Rs. 6131.88 Crore to 30 States and UTs.

Madhya Pradesh

Capital – Bhopal; CM – Kamal Nath; Governor – Anandiben Patel

Madhya Pradesh government makes it mandatory for industries to hire 70% locals

- Madhya Pradesh state government has made it mandatory for all industries to provide seventy percent of the jobs to locals. The government has decided to set up training sessions and employment fairs in each district to register unemployed youths. Youth will be first provided a stipend and later jobs under state's 70 percent clause.

Madhya Pradesh government launched 'Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana'

- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath launched state's flagship scheme 'Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana' (MYSY). The scheme guarantees 100 days of employment a year to urban youth along with a stipend of Rs. 4,000 a month. Only those youths, whose family's annual income is less than Rs 2 lakh and who are in the age group of 21-30 years, are eligible for the scheme

Maharashtra

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

Maharashtra government sets up panel to review welfare schemes for tribals

- The Maharashtra government has set up a committee to review various schemes being implemented for the welfare of tribals in the state. The 17-member committee, headed by former MLA and Shramjeevi Sanghatna president Vivek Pandit, will undertake the study of various works done for providing employment opportunities, minimum wages and proper livelihood to tribals. The committee will suggest measures to ensure that children in tribal regions were not deprived of education. The committee will hold its meetings every three months and submit its recommendations to the government

Maharashtra government sets up transgender welfare board

- The Maharashtra government has formed a Transgender Welfare Board to provide formal education, employment opportunities, conduct health programmes and give legal help to the community.
- Eligible third gender students would be provided hostel accommodation under the Babasaheb Ambedkar Swadhar Scheme. Under this scheme, Rs. 48000-60000 would be given as scholarship annually. The board would implement skill development programmes to help educated transgenders get jobs.

Maharashtra government hikes bonus for paddy farmers to Rs. 500 per quintal

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis increased the bonus for paddy cultivation from Rs. 200 to Rs. 500 per quintal.
- Fadnavis also waived annual lease for fishing in ponds up to 500 hectares of area.

Manipur

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

Manipur Assembly Passed Anti-mob Violence Bill

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

Mizoram

Capital – Aizawl; CM - Zoramthanga; Governor – Kummanam Rajasekharan

Mizoram government bans import of pigs and piglets

- Mizoram government has banned import of pigs and piglets to prevent outbreak of a disease that has cost the lives of thousands of swines in the state. The porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) has cost the lives of over

10,000 swines in Mizoram since 2013 and it is believed that it happened due to import of pigs and piglets from Myanmar where the disease was known to be prevalent

Meghalaya

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

Meghalaya government to rename Dikkibandi stadium after P A Sangma

- The Meghalaya Cabinet has decided to rename the Dikkibandi stadium in Tura town after former Lok Sabha Speaker Purno A Sangma. The Dikkibandi Stadium formerly known as MP stadium
- Purno A Sangma served as Chief Minister of Meghalaya from 1988 to 1990

New Delhi

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

"Sopan 2019" The Festival of Young Musicians and Dancers held in New Delhi

- Music and dance festival 'Sopan 2019' has started, to encourage young and upcoming artistes to take up traditional art, in New Delhi. It is organised by Sahitya Kala Parishad and the Delhi government in association with New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC). These six day long festival is an opportunity for upcoming talents from vocals and instruments to dance forms to set an audience base for themselves

Delhi government presents Rs. 60,000 crore budget for 2019-20

- Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Manish Sisodia resented a Rs 60,000 crore budget for 2019-20 in the Assembly. Allocation of Rs. 100 crore for providing Minimum Support Price (MSP) to farmers as recommended by the Swaminathan Commission. Rs. 15,000 crore allocated for education sector. A total of 375 crore rupees have been set aside for 100 mohallah clinics and Rs. 6,380 crores have been made in the budget for Municipal corporations of Delhi.

Delhi government launched bike ambulance services

- Delhi government has launched bike ambulance services to ensure health assistance reaches on time in the congested areas of the national capital. The bike ambulances, which will be called the "First Responder Vehicles", will have a portable oxygen cylinder, first aid kit and dressing materials, air-splints, GPS and a communication device. Against the sanctioned funds of Rs 40 lakh, the project was completed at Rs 23 lakh

Odisha

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

Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for Rs 2,345 crore highway projects in Odisha

- Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for three highway projects worth over Rs. 2345 crore rupees. The projects including four-laning of the 41.7-km Talcher-Kamakhyanagar section of NH 200/23 (new NH 53) at a cost of Rs 795.18 crore. 51.1-km Kamakhyanagar-Duburi section of NH 200 (new NH 53) at a cost of Rs 761.11 crore and 39.4-km Duburi-Chandikhole section of NH 200 (new NH 53) at a cost of Rs 789.23 crore.

Odisha government launches boat ambulance service for remote areas

- The Odisha government has launched a boat ambulance service to ferry patients to hospitals in remote areas at a cost of Rs 5.40 crore. Six boat ambulances, being added to the road fleet for now, will be part of the '108' ambulance service. Two boat ambulances each have been sanctioned for Malkangiri and Kendrapara districts, and one each for Koraput and Kalahandi

Odisha to provide free sanitary napkins to 17 lakh girl students

- Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik announced his Government's decision to launch a scheme under which sanitary napkins will be provided free of cost to girl students of government and government-aided schools in the state. The scheme called Khushi will benefit 17 lakh girl students from Class VI to XII. In addition to this, the state government will also expand social marketing of sanitary napkins for women and girls in the community at subsidised rate

Skill Development Minister inaugurated Skill Saathi Youth Conclave in Odisha

- Union Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Inaugurated a "Skill Saathi Youth Conclave in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Skill Saathi is a career counselling initiative of the National Skill Development Corporation, under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, to create awareness about the Skill India Mission and guide candidates by providing them with information on career paths and opportunities. The conclave mobilised over 2 lakh candidates who were counselled across 427 locations covering all blocks and urban local bodies, across 30 districts in the state.

Odisha cabinet approved State Film Policy 2019

- With an aim to promote Odia films and create an conducive eco-system for production of films in the region, the state government rolled out Odisha State Film Policy-2019. The policy will promote quality Odia films, facilitate film tourism in the state, establish Odisha as a destination for film shooting and improve screen density in the state
- To encourage filmmakers to shoot in Odisha, a subsidy upto Rs. 2.5 crore will be provided to English/Hindi/International/other language films that promote Odisha, it's culture, heritage, tourist destinations

Odisha Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for Subarnarekha port

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation stone of the Subarnarekha port in Balasore district of Odisha.
- The proposed port is being developed by Tata Steel and Creative Port Development Pvt. Ltd, which would own 51% and 49% stakes in the project respectively. The Port Estimated to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 5,000 crore
- Patnaik also attended the Talasari festival and addressed a large gathering of youth in Balasore

Odisha government launched KALIA Chhatra Bruti scholarship scheme

- Odisha government has launched the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) Chhatra Bruti scholarship for the children of farmers, who studying in government professional colleges on merit
- The state government will bear all expenditure including course fees, hostel fees and mess fees under Kalia scholarship. The Kalia scholarship funds would be directly sent to the bank accounts of the eligible students through DBT.

Punjab

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

Indus River Dolphin declared Punjab's State aquatic animal

- Punjab government declared the endangered Indus river dolphins, one of the world's rarest mammals, as the state's aquatic animal. The decision was taken at the meeting of the state board for wildlife chaired by chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh. At present, there are only around 1,800 of these in the Indus in Pakistan. Their population in the Beas is between 8 to 10. The chief minister also gave approval to declare the Kanjli Wetland and the holy Kali Bein River as a wildlife conservation reserve to mark the historic 550th birth anniversary of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev.

Punjab to build Jallianwala memorial with soil from its 13k villages

- To commemorate 100 years of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. Punjab government has decided to build a memorial in Amritsar with soil from all 13,000 villages of the state. The memorial is being built to "eulogize the immense contribution of Punjabis in the national freedom struggle". The spot for the memorial is yet to be identified.

Rajasthan

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

Union Minister Rathore inaugurated Passport Service Centre at Kotputli, Rajasthan

- Union Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore inaugurated a Passport Service Centre at Kotputli in Rajasthan. This center would provide a number of services to the local people at their home. He also inaugurated a solar plant at a school in Kotputli, Rajasthan. Solar power generated by this plant would fulfill the energy requirements of the school and people residing in the area will also be benefitted by the power generated by this plant

Rajasthan government announced monthly allowance scheme for educated, unemployed youth

- Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot announced the monthly allowance scheme for educated, unemployed youth from March 1. Through this scheme unemployed boys will receive Rs. 3,000 while girls will get an assistance of Rs. 3,500 as monthly unemployment allowance. The new scheme is likely to benefit one lakh educated youth in the state and cost the exchequer Rs 525 crore

International annual Desert festival held in Jaisalmer

- The 40th International Annual Desert Festival held on the sand dune, Rajasthan
- The three-day festival, exhibits rich cultural heritage of the desert state, commenced with a colourful procession from Gadsisar lake fort. The festival is organised by the Rajasthan tourism and district administration.

Rajasthan assembly passed a bill to scrap minimum qualification for local polls

- Rajasthan Legislative Assembly passed Rajasthan Municipalities (Amendment) Bill, 2019, and The Rajasthan Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2019 to remove the minimum education criterion for panchayat and civic polls candidates. The previous BJP government had introduced the minimum qualification of class 10 for Zila Parishad/Panchayat member election, and class 5 or 8 class for the post of sarpanch.

Sikkim

Capital – Gangtok; CM – Pawan Kumar Chamling; Governor – Ganga Prasad

Sikkim signs MoU with Microsoft for digital learning

- Microsoft India entered into a pact with the Sikkim state government to improve the education system in the state by boosting digital literacy and the knowledge of new-age technology among students and teachers in government schools. As part of the collaboration, Microsoft would support the state in integrating IT content in the state board curriculum and build student capacity besides building teacher capacity through the Microsoft Educator Network and Innovative Educator Program

Tamilnadu

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

Tamilnadu becomes first state to get second Coast Guard district headquarters

- Tamil Nadu became the first state in the country to get a second Coast Guard district headquarters Thoothukudi. The first district headquarters is Chennai. Second Coast Guard district headquarters Inaugurated, by state Governor Banwarilal Purohit, with an aim to augment security mechanism on the eastern coast and the state in particular

NGT imposed Rs. 100 crore fine on Tamil Nadu government for its failure to prevent pollution of the Adyar and Cooum rivers and the Buckingham Canal.

- National Green Tribunal (NGT) has slapped a whopping Rs. 100 crore on Tamil Nadu government for its failure to prevent pollution of the Adyar and Cooum rivers and the Buckingham Canal.
- The Bench comprising the Chairman Adarsh Kumar Goel, Judicial member Justice K. Ramakrishnan and expert member Nagin Nanda directed the constitution of a joint committee comprising of representatives of CPCB, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, Madras School of Economics, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute and the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board to assess the causes and quantum of damage to the environment as well as further steps required for restoration of environment

Drainage cleaning robot introduced in Chennai, Tamil Nadu

- A drainage-cleaning robot has been introduced for the first time at the Chennai city corporation as part of efforts to rid of manual scavenging. The robot named Bandicoot has been introduced at a cost of 18 lakh rupees
- Drainage cleaning could be detected by viewing the blockages on the screen. The robot could be taken to any place in the corporation area

Telangana

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

Telangana to give Rs. 25 lakh each to families of Pulwama martyrs

- Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao announced Rs. 25 lakh assistance to families of each of the 40 CRPF jawans martyred in the Pulwama terror attack.
- The Assembly and Council adopted a resolution condemning the attack and expressing sympathy with the families and martyrs.

Uttarakhand

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

Himalayan Cloud Observatory set up in Tehri district to monitor cloud activities

- A Himalayan Cloud Observatory has been set up in Tehri district to receive forecast and monitor cloud burst incidents in the Himalayan region and help minimise the damage. The Observatory has been established in the SRT campus and is currently in the testing period.
- This is the second observatory in the country to monitor cloud activities by the Indian Science and Technology Department and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur that can function in high-altitudes.

Uttar Pradesh

Capital – Lucknow; CM – Yogi Adityanath; Governor – Ram Naik

Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur laid foundation stone of Mega Food Park in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh

- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal laid foundation stone of a Mega Food Park in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. The Mega Food Park is being set up in over 57 acre of land at a cost of around 121 crore rupees. The Centre has also approved a financial assistance of 50 crore rupees to the project.
- The Park will provide direct and indirect employment to five thousand persons and benefit about 25,000 farmers.

Other National News

Horticulture production to hit record 315 MT this year

- The agriculture ministry released the final estimates for 2017-18 and the first estimates for 2018-19 of area and production of horticulture crops. As per the final estimates of 2017-18, horticulture production stood at record 311.7 MT, which is 3.7 per cent higher than the previous year and 10 per cent higher than the past five years' average production. The area under coverage rose to 25.87 million hectares from 25.43 million hectares. The production of fruits is estimated at 97.35 MT, while that of vegetables at about 187.5 MT.

India's tourism sector registers 19% growth in 2018

- The country's tourism sector fetched 234 billion US Dollar revenue last year, registering a growth of over 19%. This revenue was contributed by 87 per cent domestic and 13 per cent foreign tourists.
- According to the 2018 report of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC), India is ranked third in the tourism sector

Department of post to soon set up its own insurance company

- Department of post will soon set up its own insurance company which will deal with its business of two products Postal life insurance and Rural Postal Life Insurance. Union Minister of state for Communications Manoj Sinha stated that the proposal has been moved to Cabinet
- Target to set up Passport Seva Kendra in all Lok Sabha constituencies will be achieved by end of February

Piyush Goyal launches the IEA's 'The Future of Rail' report

- Minister of Railways & Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the report “The Future of Rail” of International Energy Agency (IEA). “The Future of Rail” the first-of-a-kind report analyses the current and future importance of rail around the world through the perspective of its energy and environmental implications. The report reviews the impact of existing plans and regulations on the future of rail and explores the policies that could help to realise an enhanced future of the railways.

PM Modi dedicates 294 km long electrified railway lines in West Bengal, to the nation

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated Railway electrification of 294-km long Andal-Sainthia-Pakur-Malda and Khana-Sainthia sections in West Bengal. Electrification of this section will enable ease of transportation of coal, stone chips and ballast to North and North East India in a seamless manner. He also dedicated the twenty kilometre long Hijli- Narayangarh third line to the Nation

India-Monaco Business forum held in New Delhi

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, addressed the India-Monaco Business Forum in New Delhi. Bilateral trade between India and Monaco in 2017-18 was USD 3.01 million, and there is immense potential to scale up the bilateral trade between the two nations. Monaco is ranked 106th among foreign direct investor in India (from April 2000 to June 2018) with USD 2.51 million FDI equity inflow

India's steel production increased by over 14 million tonnes in 3 years

- The total steel production in the country has increased from 88.98 MT in 2014-15 to 103.13 MT in 2017-18. The Government has notified the National Steel Policy, 2017 and the Policy for Providing Preference to Domestically

Manufactured Iron and Steel (DMI&SP) in Government procurement. According to World Steel Association (worldsteel) India has jumped ahead of Japan to become world's second largest steel producing country in the world. Crude steel production of India in 2018 stood at 106.5 MT, an increase of 4.9 percent from 101.5 MT in 2017

NBHC released kharif crop estimates for the year 2018-19

- National Bulk Handling Corporation (NBHC) has released kharif crop estimation for the year 2018-19 which shows that basmati rice production is expected to decline by 9.24% to 5.18 million metric tonne. The pulses production is projected to drop marginally to 9.10 million tonne from 9.35 million tonne last year. Total oilseeds production is estimated to be 19.87 million metric tonne which is 5.36 % lower than last year's of 21 million metric tonne.

NGT imposed Rs. 25 lakh fine on U.P. government

- The National Green Tribunal imposed a cost of Rs. 25 lakh on the Uttar Pradesh government for failing to stop dumping of sewage and untreated water in the Upper Ganga Canal.
- A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the urban development ministry to deposit a performance guarantee of Rs. 35 lakh.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation launched Shehri Samridhi Utsav

- Shehri Samridhi Utsav, an initiative of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), launched with an aim to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Mission – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), to the most vulnerable, showcase its initiatives and facilitate access of Self-Help Group (SHG) members to the other government schemes. Through Shehri Samridhi Utsav, SHG members across cities are being linked to national government schemes like Swachh Bharat Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana and National Nutrition Mission. A major highlight of Shehri Samridhi Utsav is the National Exhibition cum sale of SHG products and National Street Food Festival being organized in New Delhi.

India and Germany join hands on water and waste management

- 3rd Indo-German Working Group for cooperation on water and waste management concluded in New Delhi
- Indian delegation was led by Additional Secretary in the Environment Ministry Anil Kumar Jain while the German Delegation was headed by Director-General for Water Management and Resource Conservation, Dr. Regina Dube

Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen launched 'Darwaza Band - Part 2' campaign in Mumbai

- The Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) launched the 'Darwaza Band -Part 2' campaign for sustainability of the Open Defecation Free (ODF) status of villages across the country. The campaign was launched by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in Mumbai in the presence of brand ambassador Amitabh Bachchan.
- The 'Darwaza Band- Part 2' campaign is supported by the World Bank. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) or Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is a nation-wide campaign in India for the period 2014 to 2019 that aims to clean up the streets, roads and infrastructure of India's cities, towns, and rural areas.
- The objectives of Swachh Bharat include eliminating open defecation through the construction of household-owned and community-owned toilets, the mission aims to achieve an "open-defecation free" (ODF) India by 2 October 2019, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, by constructing 90 million toilets in rural India at a projected cost of Rs. 1.96 lakh crore (US\$30 billion).
- Swachh Bharat Abhiyan ("gramin" or 'rural'), operates under the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
- Swachh Bharat Abhiyan ('urban'), operates under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

HRD Ministry launched Operation Digital Board

- The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry launched Operation Digital Board on the lines of Operation Blackboard to provide better digital education in schools. Under the initiative, 7 lakh classrooms of 9th, 10th and 11th standards and 2 lakh classrooms of colleges and Universities will be equipped with digital boards in the next three years. It aims to converting a class room into a digital class room and in addition to availability of e-resources at any time and at any place to students

PM Modi dedicates 'National War Memorial' to nation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the National War Memorial near India Gate in New Delhi.
- The memorial honours soldiers who have laid down their lives in the service for the country since Independence.
- More than 25,000 soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces have made the supreme sacrifice to defend the country's sovereignty and integrity.

Union Minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey launches national programme to eliminate viral hepatitis

- Union minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey launched a national programme aimed at eliminating viral hepatitis, recognized as an important public health problem.
- The minister of state for health launched the National Action Plan - Viral Hepatitis at Mumbai in presence of Amitabh Bachchan, the goodwill ambassador for hepatitis, WHO South-East Asia Region.

Government launched online portal Rail Drishti Dashboard

- Railway Minister Piyush Goyal launched Rail Drishti Dashboard in New Delhi
- Rail Drishti Dashboard, an online portal to keep people informed about ongoing Railway works

Rajnath Singh inaugurated Waste to Wonder Park in Delhi

- The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated “Waste to Wonder” Park in Delhi. The park has been built by South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC). It is the first-of-its-kind tourist attraction in the world, with the replicas of the Taj Mahal, the Great Pyramid of Giza, Eiffel Tower, Leaning Tower of Pisa, Christ the Redeemer statue of Rio de Janeiro, Rome's Colosseum, and the Statute of Liberty which were opened for the public at the inauguration. The SDMC has installed solar trees and rooftop panels that will generate 50 KW powers to lighten the park

PM unveiled world's largest Bhagwad Gita at ISKCON Temple

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled world's largest Bhagwad Gita prepared by ISKCON Temple devotees in New Delhi on the occasion of Gita Aradhana Mahotsav. Measuring over 2.8 meters and weighing more than 800 kilogram. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is a worldwide confederation of more than 400 temples and runs 100 vegetarian restaurants and a wide variety of community serving projects.

Andhra Pradesh gets new railway zone called 'South Coast Railway' in Vishakhapatnam

- Indian Railways will be making a new zone in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh named 'South Coast Railway', Railway Minister Piyush Goyal. The present divisions, including Guntakal, Guntur and Vijaywada and Waltair division will be split into two and will have the headquarter at South Coast Railway.
- Goyal added that a part of the Waltair division will be converted into a new division with its headquarter at Rayagada, Odisha.

5th India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Committee Meet held in Delhi

- 5th India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Committee Meet held in Delhi
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Foreign Affairs Minister of Bangladesh Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen co-chaired the meeting. The last Joint Consultative Committee Meeting between the two countries was held in October 2017 at Dhaka. The Foreign Affairs Minister of Bangladesh arrived in New Delhi on a four day visit to India. It is the first high-level visit from Bangladesh since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's victory in the parliamentary elections in December last year

Smriti Irani launched India Size project in Mumbai

- Union Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani launched the India Size project in Mumbai. A first-of-its-kind project in the history of the country. India Size aims to arrive at a standard Indian Size for the ready-to-wear clothing industry, on the lines of the standardized sizes available in countries such as the USA and the UK.
- India size project will benefit manufacturers, consumers and generate data which will help tap into the potential of the sector

Health ministry notified eight medical equipment as 'drugs'

- To regulate medical and diagnostic devices in India, The health ministry has notified eight medical equipments including all implantable devices, as "drugs" under Section 3 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, with effect from April 1, 2020. The medical equipment include all implantable medical devices, CT scan, MRI equipment, defibrillators, dialysis machine, PET equipment, X-ray machine and bone marrow cell separator

India and Norway launched initiative to combat Marine Pollution

- The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change signed a letter of Intent establishing the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative together with the Norwegian ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Indian and Norwegian governments agreed to work more closely on oceans by signing a MoU and establishing the India-Norway Ocean Dialogue during the Norwegian Prime Minister's visit to India in January.
- Norway and India will share experiences and competence, and collaborate on efforts to develop clean and healthy oceans, sustainable use of ocean resources and growth in the blue economy

India's First Aqua Mega Food Park commissioned in Andhra Pradesh

- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal commissioned Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park at Tundurru Village in Bhimavaram Mandal, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. The park is promoted by Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park Pvt. Ltd. It will be the first Mega Aqua Food Park operationalised exclusively for fish and marine products processing in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The Mega Park has been set up in 57.81 acres at a cost of Rs 122.60 crore.

AYUSH Ministry launched e-AUSHADHI portal

- Minister of State (IC) for AYUSH, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik launched the *e-AUSHADHI* portal, for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs. This e-AUSHADHI portal is intended for increased transparency, improved information management facility, improved data usability and increased accountability.
- The Minister informed that timelines will be fixed for processing of application through this portal with SMS and e-mail status updates at each step of the process.

Government implemented new pension scheme Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PMSYM)

- Government implemented new pension scheme Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PMSYM)
- Under the scheme workers of the unorganised sector will receive a minimum assured pension of Rs. 3000 per month after attaining the age of 60 years. Around 42 crore workers are estimated to be engaged in the unorganized sector in the country. The workers whose monthly income is fifteen thousand rupees per month or less and belong to the entry age group of 18 to 40 years are eligible for the scheme

Expert committee recommends Rs. 9,750 monthly national minimum wage

- The 7-member expert panel headed by V V Giri National Labour Institute (VVGNI) Fellow Anoop Satpathy submitted its report titled "Determining the Methodology for Fixation of the National Minimum Wage",
- The expert committee recommended a uniform national minimum wage of Rs. 375 per day or Rs. 9,750 per month or region-wise minimum wages ranging from Rs. 8,892 - Rs. 11,622 per month for five regions, with supplementary house rent allowance of Rs. 1,430 per month for urban workers
- This wage-level is irrespective of sectors, skills, occupations and rural-urban locations for a family comprising 3.6 consumption units. The Present is National Minimum Wage Rs. 4,576.

Dera Baba Nanak land check post designated as immigration centre

- The Centre designated Dera Baba Nanak land Check post in Gurdaspur district of Punjab as an authorised immigration checkpoint to exit and entry for visiting Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan.
- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu laid the foundation stone of the Dera Baba Nanak-Kartarpur Sahib Corridor at an event at Mann village in Gurdaspur district. The Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara is located on the banks of the Ravi river.

India's first fulldome 3D Digital theatre inaugurated in Kolkata

- Union Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma inaugurated the India's first 'fulldome 3D Digital Theatre' at the Science City in Kolkata, West Bengal. This facility is the first of its kind in the country and having a 23 metre titled dome to offer a fully immersive experience to the visitors. It is fully funded by the Ministry of Culture at a cost of Rs 20 crore.
- The Science City is operated by the National Council of Science Museums under the Ministry of Culture.

Rajnath Singh launched pan-India number 112 for women safety

- Home Minister Rajnath Singh and Minister for Women and Child Development Maneka Gandhi launched a range of citizen safety initiatives in New Delhi. It includes the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), for women safety in 16 states and Union territories. The service has already been launched in Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Persons in distress can dial a pan-India number **112**. Under this system, all the states have to set up a dedicated Emergency Response Centre (ERC)
- A citizen may Press power button on a smartphone thrice quickly to activate a panic call to ERC. In case of a feature phone, long press on number 5 or 9 on the phone keypad will activate the panic call. The ERCs are connected to District Command Centres and the Emergency Response Vehicles. An amount of over 321 crore rupees has been provided for this initiative through the Nirbhaya fund

Rajnath Singh inaugurated cyber crime fighting facility

- Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the national cyber forensic lab (NCFL) and the Delhi Police's cyber crime unit Cyber Prevention, Awareness & Detection Centre (CyPAD). Both the cybercrime fighting units are based in a complex at Dwarka, New Delhi. NCFL is part of the Union Home Ministry's Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Center. CyPAD of Delhi Police deal with crypto-currency frauds and international tech-supported frauds.

14th Agricultural Science Congress inaugurated in New Delhi

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Animal Welfare Radha Mohan Singh inaugurated the 14th Agricultural Science Congress in New Delhi. A four-day event aims to doubling farmers' income by 2022
- Theme of 14th Agricultural Science Congress is 'Innovations for Transformation'. The event being organised by the National Academy of Agricultural Science (NASS), Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) and Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI). The Congress, organised once every two years, About 2,000 delegates from 17 countries are expected to attend the event

79th Indian History Congress to be held in Bhopal

- The 79th Indian History Congress (IHC) will be held at Barkatullah University in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh from February 26. This session was earlier scheduled at Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) from December 28. but it was cancelled by the local hosts due to financial reason. This is the second time the IHC would be held in Madhya Pradesh, Earlier it was hosted in 2011. Over 1,000 delegates including prominent historians are expected to participate in the IHC in Bhopal. Indian History Congress was established in 1935 and this is the largest professional and academic body of Indian historians. It promotes and encourages scientific study of Indian history

Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu launched 'SWAYATT' on GeM in New Delhi

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, launched SWAYATT in New Delhi
- SWAYATT is an initiative to promote Start-ups, women and youth advantage through e-transactions on Government e Marketplace (GeM). This will bring together the key stakeholders within the Indian entrepreneurial ecosystem to Government e-Marketplace the national procurement portal.

Textiles Minister Smriti Zubin Irani launched four projects in North East for the development of Silk Sector

- Union Minister of Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani, launched four projects in North East for the development of silk sector through video conference in New Delhi
- Smriti Irani inaugurated Muga silk seed production centre in Tura, Meghalaya, silk printing and processing unit in Agartala, Tripura. Eri spun silk mill in Sangaipat, Imphal. Development of sericulture in Mamit, Mizoram.
- The Minister also inaugurated new office buildings of Weavers Service Centres (WSC) in Indore, Madhya Pradesh and Kannur, Kerala.

Saudi Arabia becomes 73rd nation to join international solar alliance

- Saudi Arabia signed the framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) becoming the 73rd country to join the India-led renewable energy organisation
- International Solar Alliance (ISA) was unveiled by PM Narendra Modi and former French President Francois Hollande in 2015.

PM Modi flags off world's first diesel to electric converted locomotive

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the first ever diesel-to-electric converted locomotive at the Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) in Varanasi. The 10,000HP freight locomotive has been converted from two units of old diesel locomotives of 2600HP each with indigenous technology
- The feat was achieved in record time with the help of engineers from Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO), Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW), and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL).
- The work on the project began on December 22, 2017 and from concept to execution of the conversion of the diesel locomotive to electric was carried out in just 69 days

Important International News

Italy, UN, launched Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development

- Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has opened a new centre, set up by the government in partnership with the UN to fight climate change and boost sustainable development in Africa. The new centre is located near the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome
- It will help develop and scale up innovative solutions for sustainable development, implement the goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda and the landmark 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to end reliance on fossil fuels and cap global warming.

2019 is the International Year of the Periodic Table

- The United Nations announced 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of the Chemical Elements to highlight its first publication in 1869. The periodic table was first designed by the Russian scientist Dmitri Ivanovich

Mendeleev. The announcement by the United Nations will help to raise the profile of how chemistry can provide solutions to global challenges in agriculture, education, energy and health.

Sri Lanka celebrating its 71st Independence Day

- The National Day of Sri Lanka is celebrated on **4 February** to commemorate its internal political independence from British rule on that day in 1948. The main function will be held at Galle face grounds in Colombo where President Maithripala Sirisena will be chief guest. Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih will attend the function as guest of honour. A total of 545 prisoners have been granted Presidential pardon to mark the occasion and will be released

Thailand makes Siamese fighting fish national aquatic animal

- Tiny, testy and eye-catching with a colourful fin plumage, the Siamese fighting fish was named Thailand's national aquatic animal
- Thailand's official national animal is the elephant.

Macedonia signs accord to join NATO

- Macedonia signed an accord to join NATO to become the 30th member of the US-led alliance
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries.

Australian Rat becomes the first mammal to go extinct

- A small brown rat of northern Australia is the world's first mammal to become extinct due to climate change. It was found only on a small sand island near the coast of Papua New Guinea
- The Australian government has officially listed the Bramble Cay melomys as extinct

International Paralympics Committee lifts Russia's doping ban

- The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) lifts the ban on Russian Para athletes by March 15, under certain conditions. Russia has been barred from international competitions since August 2016. Russia had met 69 of its 70 reinstatement criteria

Abu Dhabi included Hindi as third official court language

- Abu Dhabi has decided to include Hindi as the third official language used in its courts, alongside Arabic and English, as part of a move designed to improve access to justice.
- The Abu Dhabi Judicial Department (ADJD) stated that, it has extended the adoption of interactive forms of statement of claims filed before courts by including Hindi. The move was aimed to provide foreigners with better access to justice, without a language barrier.

Macedonia officially changed its name to North Macedonia

- The country formerly known as the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia on paper ending a decades-long dispute that should pave the way for NATO membership
- Macedonia was internationally known as FYROM – the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia because Greece objected to the use of Macedonia, the name used for its own northern region. After declaring independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, the country chose the name Macedonia.

J.P. Morgan becomes first U.S. Bank with a Cryptocurrency

- JPMorgan Chase & Co, America's largest bank, is launched its own Cryptocurrency
- The cryptocurrency, called "JPM Coin," which has a fixed value redeemable for one U.S. dollar
- The bank operates a massive wholesale payment business, with more than \$6 trillion in client funds transferred each day. The crypto-currency, which runs on blockchain technology, has been used successfully to move money between the bank and a client account.

Iran unveiled first semi-heavy missile-equipped submarine

- Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has unveiled the first Iranian made semi-heavy submarine. The submarine named 'Fateh' ('Conqueror' in Persian), capable of being fitted with missile. The Fateh has subsurface-to-surface missiles with a range of about 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles), capable of reaching Israel and U.S. military bases in the region

'Festival of India' begins in Nepal

- A month-long 'Festival of India' began in Kathmandu to familiarise the new generation of the country about the similarities between the two countries.
- Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Rabindra Adhikari and Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri jointly inaugurated the event. The festival, organised by the Indian Embassy and Swami

Vivekananda Cultural Centre, is being held in Kathmandu and other major cities of Nepal from February 19th to March 21st.

Important Appointments National Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra	Director General of NCC (DGNCC)
2.	Vice Admiral Ajit Kumar P	Western Naval Command Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief
3.	Ajai Kumar	Interim MD-CEO of YES bank
4.	Rishi Kumar Shukla	CBI director
5.	Pradeep Singh Kharola	Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation
6.	Rahul Jain	General Manager of Integral Coach Factory (ICF)
7.	Shri Sailesh	Secretary, Ministry of Minority Affairs
8.		
9.	Ruchira Kamboj	Ambassador of India to Bhutan
10.	Salil Gupte	Boeing India President
11.	DIPP secretary Ramesh Abhishek	Secretary, Civil Aviation Ministry
12.	India's boxing chief Ajay Singh	President of the Foundation Board for Better Boxing of AIBA
13.	Justice DK Jain	First Ombudsman for BCCI
14.	Tarun Sridhar (Secretary of Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying)	Secretary, Department of Fisheries
15.	Sushil Chandra	Election Commissioner
16.	SN Ghormade	Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command
17.	Ashwani Lohani	Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Air India
18.	Derrick Pereira	Head coach of the Indian Under-23 football team
19.	Pramod Chandra Mody	Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)
20.	Sandeep Mohan Bhatnagar and Ashok Kumar Pandey	CBIC members
21.	Anirban Mukherjee	PayU India CEO

International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Sanjiv Ranjan	India's Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia
2.	Nilambar Acharya	Nepal's ambassador to India
3.	Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi	Chairman of the African Union
4.	Ricky Ponting	Assistant coach of Australia's men's cricket team
5.	Saudi Arabia's Reema bint Bandar	First female ambassador to the United States.
6.	Indra Nooyi	Amazon board of directors
7.	Muhammadu Buhari	Re-elected as Nigerian President

8.	William Barr	US Attorney General
9.		

Resignation

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Mohammad Javad Zarif	Iranian Foreign Minister
2.	Harshil Mehta	Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL) CEO

Important Awards and Honors

Sl.No	Awards	Winners
1.	SBI's UK head Sanjiv Chadha	'Freedom of the City of London' award
2.	playwright Mahesh Elkunchwar	Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) lifetime Achievement Award
3.	Freance - Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour)	Francois Laborde
4.	Allan Border medal (Australian cricket's highest individual honor)	Pat Cummins (Australia)
5.	Belinda Clark award	Alyssa Healy (Australia)
6.	PETA Oscat Award (Best Directoor)	Bradley Cooper for 'A Star Is Born'
7.	Lifetime Achievement Award by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television	Indo-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta
8.	EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2018	Siddhartha Lal, MD and CEO, Eicher Motors
9.	Israel's Dan David Prize	Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam (category of "Past Time Dimension")
10.	2019 Martin Ennals Award	Abdul Aziz Muhamat
11.	Football Ratna Award	Sunil Chhetri

Oscar Awards 2019

- 91st Academy Awards (Oscars) has been announced at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood & Highland Center, the USA.
- Rami Malek won the Best Actor for "Bohemian Rhapsody", Olivia Colman won Best Actress for 'The Favourite' and Filmmaker Alfonso Cuarón won the Best Director award for 'Roma' at the 91st Academy Awards in Los Angeles.

Category	Winner
Best Picture	Green Book
Best Actor in a Leading Role	Rami Malek for Bohemian Rhapsody
Best Actress in a Leading Role	Olivia Colman for The Favourite
Best Actor in a Supporting Role	Mahershala Ali for Green Book
Best Actress in a Supporting Role	Regina King for If Beale Street Could Talk.
Best Animated Feature	Spiderman: Into the Spider Verse
Best Cinematography	Alfonso Cuarón for Roma
Best Costume Design	Ruth Carter for Black Panther

Best Directing	Alfonso Cuarón for Roma
Best Documentary Feature	Free solo
Best Documentary Short	Rayka Zehtabchi and Melissa Berton for Period. End of Sentence
Best Film Editing	John Ottman for Bohemian Rhapsody
Best Foreign Language	Roma (Mexico)
Makeup & Hairstyling	Greg Cannom, Kate Biscoe and Patricia Dehaney for Vice
Best Music Original Score	Ludwig Goransson for Black Panther
Best Music Original Song	Lady Gaga, Mark Ronson, Anthony Rossomando and Andrew Wyatt for SHALLOW from A Star Is Born
Best Production Design	Hannah Beachler (Production Design); Jay Hart (Set Decoration) for Black Panther
Best Short Film Animated	Domee Shi and Becky Neiman-Cobb for Bao
Best Short Film Live Action	Guy Nattiv and Jaime Ray Newman for Skin
Best Sound Editing	John Warhurst and Nina Hartstone for Bohemian Rhapsody
Best Sound Mixing	Paul Massey, Tim Cavagin and John Casali for Bohemian Rhapsody
Best Visual Effects	Paul Lambert, Ian Hunter, Tristan Myles and J.D. Schwalm for First Man
Best Writing (Adapted Screenplay)	Charlie Wachtel & David Rabinowitz and Kevin Willmott & Spike Lee for Blackkklansman
Best Writing (Original Screenplay)	Nick Vallelonga, Brian Currie, Peter Farrelly for Green Book

President Conferred 'Gandhi Peace Prize'

YEAR	AWARDEES	LOCATED AT	FIELD
2015	Vivekananda Kendra	KANYAKUMARI, TN	Rural Development, Education and Development of natural resources.
2016	Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sulabh International	BENGALURU, KARNATAKA	1.For Providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India 2. Sulabh International for its contribution in improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers
2017	Ekal Abhiyan Trust	KOLKATA, WEST BENGAL	For Providing Education for

			Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender and Social Equality
2018	Yohei Sasakawa (Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organisation for Leprosy Elimination)	Japan	His contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.

BAFTA Awards 2019

- **72nd edition** of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) awards were presented
- Legendary British actress Joanna Lumley hosted the show in London's Royal Albert Hall.
- "The Favourite" took the most awards with seven, including both actress categories for Rachel Weisz and Olivia Colman and best original screenplay, though "Roma" nabbed the top prize for best film
- The leading actor prize went to Rami Malek for "Bohemian Rhapsody" while favorite Mahershala Ali was lauded for "Green Book."

Category	Winner
Best film	Roma
Best Outstanding British film	The Favourite
Best Actress	Olivia Colman (The Favourite)
Best Actor	Rami Malek (Bohemian Rhapsody)
Best Director	Alfonso Cuaron (Roma)
Best Costume Design	Sandy Powell (The Favourite)
Best Film Not in the English Language	Roma
Best Special Visual Effects	Black Panther
Best Outstanding Debut By A British Writer, Director or Producer	Beast
Best Cinematography	Alfonso Cuaron (Roma)
Best Supporting Actor	Mahershala Ali (Green Book)
Best Original Screenplay	The Favourite (Deborah Davis, Tony McNamara)
Best Original Music	A Star is Born
Best Adapted Screenplay	BlackKkklansman (Spike Lee, David Rabinowitz, Charlie Wachtel, Kevin Willmott)
Best Rising Star	Letitia Wright
Best Supporting Actress	Rachel Weisz (The Favourite)
Best Makeup and Hair	Nadia Stacey (The Favourite)
Best Editing	Hank Corwin (Vice)
Best Sound	Bohemian Rhapsody
Best British Short Film	73 Cows
Best Production Design	The Favourite
Best Animated Film	Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse
Best British Short Animation	Roughhouse
Best Special Visual Effects	Black Panther
EE Rising Star Award	Letitia Wright
Best Documentary	Free Solo
BAFTA Fellowship	Thelma Schoonmaker

Grammy Awards 2019

- The **61st Annual Grammy Awards ceremony** was held at Staples Center in Los Angeles.
- The show was hosted by Alicia Keys, She has won 15 Grammys in her career.

Category	Winner
Album of the Year	Golden Hour, Kacey Musgraves
Record of the Year	Childish Gambino, "This Is America"
Song of the Year	Childish Gambino, "This Is America"
Best New Artist	Dua Lipa
Best Music Film	"Quincy"
Music Video/Film	Childish Gambino, "This Is America"
Producer of the Year, Non-Classical	Pharrell Williams
Best Pop Solo Performance	Lady Gaga, "Joanne"
Best Pop Duo/Group Performance	Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper, "Shallow"
Best Country Album	Kacey Musgraves, "Golden Hour"
Best Pop Vocal Album	Ariana Grande, "Sweetener"
Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album	Willie Nelson, "My Way"
Best Rap/Sung Collaboration	Childish Gambino, "This Is America"
Best Rap Song	Drake, "God's Plan"
Best Rap Album	Cardi B, Invasion of Privacy
Best Rock Performance	Chris Cornell, "When Bad Does Good"
Best Rock Song	St. Vincent, "Masseduction"
Best Rock Album	Greta Van Fleet, "From the Fires"
Best Recording Package	St. Vincent, "Masseduction"
Best Song Written for Visual Media	Lady Gaga & Bradley Cooper - "Shallow"
Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media	Ludwig Göransson, "Black Panther"
Best Compilation Soundtrack for Visual Media	"The Greatest Showman"
Best Comedy Album	Dave Chappelle, "Equanimity & the Bird Revelation"
Best Dance/Electronic Album	Justice, "Woman Worldwide"
Best Dance Recording	Silk City & Dua Lipa, "Electricity"

De Goede and Van Doren won 2018 FIH world's best players award

- Netherlands' Eva de Goede and Arthur Van Doren of Belgium were named as the International Hockey Federation's (FIH) Players of the Year for 2018.
- De Goede, 29, was named the Female Player of the Year, world champions Belgium's Van Doren, 24, was picked up as the Male Player of the Year for a second consecutive time.

Other Awards

Person	Category
Vincent Vanash (Belgium)	Men's Goalkeeper of the Year
Maddie Hinch (England)	Female Goalkeeper of the Year

Arthur de Sloover (Belgium)	Male Rising Star of the Year
Shane McLeod (Belgium)	Male Coach of the Year
Alyson Annan (Netherlands)	Female Coach of the Year
Michelle Meister (Germany)	Female Umpire of the Year
Marcin Grochal (Poland)	Male Umpire of the Year
Luciana Von Der (Argentina)	Emerging women player

Laureus World Sports Awards 2019 Monaco

- The Laureus World Sports Awards is an annual award ceremony honouring individuals and teams from the world of sports along with sporting achievements throughout the year.

Category	Winner	Country	Sports
Sportsman of the year	Novak Djokovic	Serbia	Tennis
Sportswoman of the year	Simone Biles	USA	Gymnastics
Comeback of the year	Tiger Woods	USA	Golf
Breakthrough of the year	Naomi Osaka	Japan	Tennis
Action sportsperson of the year	Chloe Kim	USA	Snowboarding
Team of the year	France World Cup Team	France	Football
Academy exceptional achievement award	Eliud Kipchoge	Kenya	Running
Lifetime achievement award	Arsene Wenger	France	Football (Manager)
Spirit for sport award	Lindsey Vonn	USA	Skiing
Sportsperson of the year with a disability	Henrieta Farkksova	Slovakia	Skiing

Jharkhand-based NGO Yuwa wins Laureus Sport for Good honour

- Jharkhand based NGO Yuwa won the Laureus Sport for Good award. Yuwa works for girl empowerment and became the third Indian entry to receive this honour. The NGO, was founded in rural Jharkhand in 2009 by Americans Franz Gastler and Rose Thomson Gastler, runs a football program in rural Jharkhand covering 450 girls.
- Laureus Awards for the first time in 2004 when the Indian cricket team and its Pakistani counterpart shared the Sport for Good honour for resuming bilateral ties despite tensions between the two countries.
- Magic Bus from India won the Laureus Sport for Good award in 2014.

Yes Bank wins 9th edition of Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018

- Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018 announced YES BANK as winner in “**Innovation in Data Science**” category for their industry-first project “Yes EEE (Engage Enrich Excel)”. 9th edition of Aegis Graham Bell Award 2018 hosted by Government of Goa at Entertainment Society of Goa, Panaji.
- Aegis Graham Bell Awards (AGBA) has been promoting innovations and entrepreneurship in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) domain. Yes-EEE is a customer engagement program for the Bank's Relationship Managers to give them the most relevant communication point for interaction with the customer

Lifetime Achievement Award for G.R. Karthikeyan

- G.R. Karthikeyan, father of India's first Formula One driver Narain Karthikeyan, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award and Raghul Rangasamy was named the Upcoming Motorsports Person of the Year and received the Raymond Gautam Singhanian Trophy at the FMSCI Annual Awards in Mumbai
- FIA president Jean Todt was the chief guest and handed over the awards.

NFDC to be felicitated by MSME ministry for promotion of SC/ST entrepreneurs

- The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) has been named a winner under the 'miniratna' category by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. This has been done as part of endeavour by Ministry of MSME to felicitate select CPSEs to recognize their exemplary work towards promotion of SC/ST entrepreneurs.

- National Film Development Corporation Ltd. (NFDC), incorporated in the year 1975, was formed by the Government of India with the primary objective of planning and promoting an organized, efficient, and integrated development of the Indian film industry

PV Sindhu becomes first woman to co-pilot Made-In-India Tejas at Aero India 2019 in Bengaluru

- Ace shuttler PV Sindhu flew in the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft Tejas, at the Aero India 2019 air show in Bengaluru.
- Ms Sindhu, who is among the youngest to co-pilot the HAL-manufactured fighter jet, waved as she climbed into the two-seater trainer variant of the aircraft.

Important Committees

Punjab government sets up committee to boost dairy sector

- Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh announced a high-powered committee to prepare a comprehensive action plan to boost the dairy sector with the aim of supplementing the income of farmers in a result-oriented manner. The committee would consist of Chairman State Farmers Commission, Director Animal Husbandry, Director Dairy Development, a representative of Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (GADVASU). It will suggest measures to promote diversification of agriculture with the aim of enhancing farmers' income from allied sources.

Government sets up committee to explore prepaid payments by discoms to generator companies

- The government has constituted a committee under the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), On the recommendation of Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, to explore prepaid payments by state electricity distribution companies to power plants. The formed committee consists of the chairman of distribution companies of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, and representatives from Union power ministry and power associations to look into problems of delayed payments from distribution companies to power generators.

Important MOU's

Ministry of Coal signs a MoU with Ministry of Energy, Republic of Poland

- Ministry of Coal entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Energy, Republic of Poland. The MoU has been signed between Sh. Haribhai Parathibhai Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State for Coal and Mines and Mr. Grzegorz Tobiszowski, Secretary of State, Ministry of Energy, Republic of Poland. The objective of this MoU is to foster relations in the field of coal mining and clean coal technologies through the already established Joint Coal Working Group as well as research institutes and academia between the two countries.

Indian Coast Guard signed MoU with AAI for maritime search and rescue

- Indian Coast Guard and the Airport Authority of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding, at Coast Guard Regional Headquarters in Port Blair, for coordination in the aeronautical and maritime search and rescue operations. MOU with Airport Authority of India (AAI) is aimed at strengthening mutual interactions, interoperability and validating procedures during conduct of search and rescue operations jointly by the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) Kolkata, Airport Authority of India (AAI) and Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Port Blair.

BEL signs Teaming Agreement with Hughes India for Helicopter SATCOM solutions

- Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Hughes India entered into a Teaming Agreement for design, development, supply, installation, integration and commissioning of Satellite Communication solutions for helicopters.
- Hughes India is a majority owned subsidiary of Hughes Network Systems, LLC, USA. Hughes India is the largest satellite service operator in India providing a comprehensive range of broadband networking technologies, solutions, and services for businesses and governments.

India, Sri Lanka signed MoU to establish business centre for ICT incubators in Jaffna

- India and Sri Lanka signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a business centre for ICT incubators in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, through grant of 25 crore Sri Lankan rupees from India.
- The MoU was signed by High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka Mr. Taranjit Singh Sandhu, and Secretary, Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade Mr. S. T. Kodikara in Colombo. The centre will

provide opportunities and enhance the enabling environment for Information Communication Technology (ICT) and other professional services in the Northern region inhabited by minority Tamils

MoUs signed between India and South Korea

- MoU on release of commemorative postal stamp on Queen Hur (Suriratna)
- MoU on Start-up Cooperation
- MoU between Korean National Police Agency and MHA on Combating Transnational Crime And Developing Police Cooperation
- MoU between Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and Prasar Bharti on Cooperation in Broadcasting
- MoU between National Highways Authority of India and Korea Expressway Corporation

IIT-M ties up with THSTI to address public health issues

- IIT-Madras has entered into an agreement with Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) to address public health issues and predict adverse pregnancy outcomes using technology.
- A research collaboration agreement was signed during a conclave held here on 'Transforming Maternal and Child Healthcare Using Data Science'. The objective is to apply advanced analytical approach for prediction of adverse pregnancy outcomes, evaluate maternal and childhood consequences of exposure to environmental pollutants, among others.

FAGMIL signed MoU with Himachal Pradesh Government to establish White cement Plant Project

- FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited (FAGMIL) signed MoU with Himachal Pradesh Government to establish a white cement plant near village NohraDhar in Sirmour district, Himachal Pradesh, at a project cost of approximately Rs. 605 crores. It will be the 4th white cement plant in the country. The installed capacity of the plant would be 0.3 million tonnes per annum and it will generate the direct employment of approximately 150 persons. The plant is expected to be commenced by the year 2022
- FAGMIL is a Government of India Undertaking, under the administrative control of Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India. It is engaged in mining and marketing of mineral gypsum in Rajasthan.

GeM and CCI signed MOU to enable a fair and competitive environment in the e-Marketplace

- Government e Marketplace (GeM) and Competition Commission of India (CCI) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to enable a fair and competitive environment in the e-Marketplace. GeM is a state-of-the-art national public procurement platform of Ministry of Commerce and Industries, which has used technology to remove entry barriers for bonafide sellers and has created a vibrant e-marketplace with a wide range of goods and services.
- Competition Commission of India is a statutory body of the Government of India, responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002 throughout India and to prevent activities that have an adverse effect on competition.

India and Bangladesh signed MOU for training 1800 Bangladesh civil servants

- India and Bangladesh have signed an MOU for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) an institute under the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DAR&PG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Government of India, over the next 6 years.
- The MOU was signed between the NCGG and the Ministry of Public Administration, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh during the visit of the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh. The NCGG is planning to conduct 15 training programs in 2019 each of 2 weeks duration. The trainee officers will undergo training at the NCGG Mussoorie centre.

ICAI signs pact with Invest India to promote foreign investment

- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has signed a pact with Invest India to promote foreign investments in the country and Indian investments abroad. Invest India is a government agency that promotes and facilitates investment in the country. The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by ICAI President Naveen N D Gupta and Invest India MD and CEO Deepak Bagla.

EIL and Mongolia signed MOU for Project Management Consultancy for oil refinery

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Engineers India Ltd and Mongolia for Project Management Consultancy for oil refinery. Engineers India Ltd, a PSU under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
- The MOU was signed on the sidelines of PETROTECH-2019 event at Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh. The MoU is for Project Management Consultancy services for construction of an oil refinery plant in Mongolia by EIL.

- Government of Mongolia is in process to set-up 1.5 MMTPA greenfield crude oil refinery in Sainshand province, under Line of Credit (LoC) extended by Government of India

NTPC signed a pact with SBI for Rs. 5000 crore term loan

- State-owned power giant NTPC has signed a term loan agreement for Rs. 5,000 crore with State Bank of India
- The loan facility is extended at an interest rate linked to 3-Month MCLR of the Bank. This loan has a door to door tenure of 15 years and will be utilised to part finance the capital expenditure of NTPC

NITI Aayog signed Statement of Intent with the MSDF to document systemic transformation in education

- NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent with the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) to codify, document and share best practices to improve learning outcomes in public school education through systemic reforms, based on their collective experiences of working with various state governments in India
- The SOI was signed in the presence of NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, by Alok Kumar, Adviser (HRD), NITI Aayog and Barun Mohanty, Managing Director (International), MSDF.

India signed a legal agreements with the World Bank

- The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh and the World Bank signed a \$40 Million Loan Agreement to help bring clean and reliable drinking water to the citizens of the Greater Shimla area
- The Shimla Water Supply and Sewerage Service Delivery Reform Programmatic Development Policy Loan is expected to improve water supply and sanitation (WSS) services in and around the iconic hill city of Shimla. The \$40 Million Loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a 4-year grace period and a maturity of 15.5 years.

GS1 India signed MoU with Government eMarketplace

- GeM and GS1 India Sign MoU to Empower Buyers to Make Informed Choice
- This MoU will enable GeM's buyers and vendors to access accurate and standardised information on attributes of thousands of products across categories, empowering them to make more informed decisions. GS1 India, a standards organisation set up by the commerce and industry ministry. GeM will access product data from GS1 India's DataKart, the National repository of information on attributes of millions of retail products in the country.

Indian Oil Corporation signed USD 1.5 billion deal to buy US crude oil

- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has signed an annual deal worth USD 1.5 billion to import 3 million tonnes of crude oil in the fiscal year beginning April 1. This is the first time Indian refiner has signed an annual contract since the country in 2017 began importing crude oil from the US. India first imported US crude oil in October 2017, and since then oil firms have been buying oil from that country on a tender basis.

Important Summit & Conference

13th International Oil & Gas Conference & Exhibition 'PETROTECH-2019' to be organised from 10th to 12th February, 2019

- **PETROTECH-2019**, the 13th International Oil & Gas Conference & Exhibition, being organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India, is all set to be inaugurated on February 10, 2019
- Over 95 Energy Ministers from partner countries have been invited by the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas to participate in the Conference
- The three day mega event will showcase the recent market and investor friendly developments that have taken place in the India's oil and gas sector. Along with the Conference, the event will have a concurrent Exhibition spread over 20,000 square meters at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida

'ICT Academy Bridge 2019' conference inaugurated in Chennai

- Dr. M. Manikandan, Minister for Information Technology, Government of Tamil Nadu, inaugurated 'ICT Academy Bridge 2019' conference. The 37th edition of the conference is the largest Industry-Institute Interaction Event of Asia, Organized by ICT Academy. Theme of the event - "Fostering India for Industry 4.0",

International Spice Conference 2019 held in Hyderabad

- International Spice Conference 2019 held in Hyderabad. The International Spice Conference aims to provide a platform for all stakeholders of the industry including the business houses, the spice associations, the policymakers, the farmers and the end users, to address and interact. Theme of the conference is "Challenges of Change: Redefining the Value Chain"

67th Annual Armed Forces Medical Conference organised by AFMC, Pune

- Armed Forces Medical College, Pune organised the 67th Annual Armed Forces Medical Conference. The conference was inaugurated by Lt Gen Bipin Puri, Director General, Armed Forces Medical Services. The four-day conference will be organised under the overall supervision of Surg Vice Admiral Ravi Kalra NM, VSM, director and commandant. The conference is the largest gathering of armed forces medical personnel and the only multi-specialty conference of its kind in the country. A highlight of the conference will be a special session on innovations and creativity in health care practice and delivery within the Armed Forces.

WLPGA 2019 ASIA LPG summit held in New Delhi

- Union Minister for petroleum and natural gas Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, inaugurated the 2019 Asia LPG summit in New Delhi. The summit is being organized by the World LPG Association (WLPGA) in association with major Indian public-sector oil companies (OMCs) Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum, and Bharat Petroleum
- The two-day 'WLPGA Asia LPG Summit', focusing on 'LPG – Energy for Life'
- India is the 2nd largest consumer of liquified natural gas (LPG) in the world.

BPRD organized 2nd National Conference of Micro Missions of National Police Mission

- Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) organized the 2nd National Conference of Micro Missions of National Police Mission in New Delhi.
- The two day Conference, inaugurated by former governor of Jammu and Kashmir N. N. Vohra, discuss the issues of Skills and Competence at the grass-root level, Attitudinal Changes in Police, Gender Sensitization, harnessing technology and Community Policing

NITI Aayog organized the conference on Future of Indian Banking

- Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, inaugurated the Future of Indian Banking conference with the Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare (EGROW Foundation).
- The conference aims to increase and elevate the discourse on the banking sector in India, and help develop insights to inform the continued evolution of the Indian banking sector for optimally supporting the growing credit needs of the Indian economy.

Health Minister inaugurated 4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit

- Health Minister JP Nadda inaugurated the 4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit in New Delhi
- The global intergovernmental meeting on digital health is being hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Digital Health Partnership (GDHP).
- The summit will provide an opportunity to support governments and health system reformers to improve the health and well being of their citizens through digital technologies

American members of US-India CEO Forum announced

- The first meeting of the US-India CEO forum will be held in New Delhi on February 14. US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross has announced the names of the American private sector members of the US-India CEO Forum among whom are MasterCard CEO Ajay Banga and Qualcomm CEO Steve Mollenkopf. The US CEOs serve two-year terms and are selected from respondents to a Federal Register Notice calling for CEO-level applicants to the US Section of the Forum. It will be co-chaired by Ross and Minister of Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu. James Taiclet, chairman, president, and CEO, American Tower Corporation will be the US private sector co-chair of the forum.

'Parmanu Tech 2019' conference held in New Delhi

- Parmanu Tech 2019' conference held in New Delhi. The conference was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) to discuss issues related to Nuclear Energy and Radiation Technologies.
- The Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh delivered the keynote address at the 'Parmanu Tech 2019' conference

India to host 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (CMS)

- The 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (CMS) is going to be hosted by India during 15th to 22nd February, 2020 at Gandhinagar in Gujarat. CMS an environmental treaty under the aegis of United Nations Environment Programme. India has been a Party to the CMS since 1983. The Conference of Parties (COP) is the decision-making organ of this convention. The Union Environment Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, inaugurated the Logo and Mascot (GIBI) along with website for the international event, in New Delhi

7th session of World Government Summit held in Dubai

- Seventh session of World Government Summit held in Dubai with the participation of more than 4,000 people from 140 countries. The World Government Summit is a neutral, non-profit organization at the intersection of government and innovation. The World Government Summit is a global platform dedicated to shaping the future of governments worldwide. Each year, the Summit sets the agenda for the next generation of governments

Third Indo-German Environment Forum held in New Delhi

- Under the chairmanship of Honourable Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, Dr. Harsh Vardhan and his German counterpart Federal Environment Minister Svenja Schulze, The third Indo-German Environment Forum was held in New Delhi. The theme of the forum is "Cleaner Air, Greener Economy". The one-day event through panel discussions and parallel sessions focuses on challenges, solutions and necessary framework conditions of air pollution control, waste management and circular economy as well as implementation of NDCs and SDGs based on Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030 of UN respectively.
- Around 250 representatives of ministries, business and science as well as non-governmental organizations participated in the forum,

First Annual Conference of Media Units under I&B Ministry organized in New Delhi

- The First Annual Conference of Media Units working under Information & Broadcasting Ministry was organized at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. Union Minister of State (IC) for Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore chaired the Conference. The focus of the Conference was on ensuring synergy between the Media Units in their day to day functioning. The participants also discussed the ways of using Social Media to reach target audience groups and push the boundaries of communication outreach in terms of geographical and cultural barriers.

First LAWASIA Human Rights conference 2019 was held in New Delhi

- LAWASIA, in association with the Bar Association of India hosted its 1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference in New Delhi with a motive to explore a broad range of human rights issues of relevance in the Asia Pacific region
- The theme of the conference was "State Power, Business and Human Rights: Contemporary Challenges".
- The conference was aimed at providing unique opportunity for lawyers and associated professional members to exchange insights and expertise on topics of significant importance to all

CREDAI YouthCon- 19 annual Youth Conclave held in New Delhi

- PM Modi addressed the CREDAI's YouthCon – 19 event at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi. The event is organized by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Association of India (CREDAI)
- CREDAI YouthCon is the annual Youth Conclave of CREDAI, held to bring together the future of the real estate Industry in India. The CREDAI Youth Wing or CYW was formed to bring together the next generation of real estate builders and developers in order to nurture them to become better professionals
- CREDAI, Established in 1999, is the apex body representing real-estate developers from over 200 cities in India.

Fifth International Dam Safety Conference to be Held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

- The 5th International Dam Safety Conference 2019 is held in Bhubaneswar as a joint initiative of the Government of India, Government of Odisha and the World Bank under aegis of the ongoing World Bank assisted Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) as a part of institutional strengthening.
- Dam Safety Conferences are being organized as an annual event in different DRIP States in collaboration with the Implementing Agencies and leading academic institutes to provide a common platform for all stakeholders including non-DRIP States. Globally India ranks third after China and the USA in terms of the number of large dams with 5264 large dams in operation and 437 large dams under construction.

National Conference on Unani Medicine Concluded in New Delhi

- The conference was inaugurated by Dr. Najma Heptulla, Governor of Manipur in the presence of Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Union Minister for Minority Affairs. The two-day National Conference on Unani Medicine organized by the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) as a part of 3rd Unani Day Celebration concluded in New Delhi. Theme of the conference was 'Unani Medicine for Public Health'.
- The conference witnessed exchange of MoU for scientific collaboration in Unani Medicine between the CCRUM and Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi

Asia's largest early Childhood Conference - Early Ed Asia 2019 held in Jaipur

- Early Ed Asia 2019 the two day educational event was held at the City Palace in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

- This was the first time such a conference was held in India with over 6000 eminent early childhood educators, policy-makers, researchers and other stakeholders from India and foreign countries. The motto of the conference was 'Our Children. Our Future'. The conference will bring together the brightest minds in Early Childhood Education on to discuss the latest trends in teaching and research to provide a stronger foundation to children.

World Sustainable Development Summit 2019 held in New Delhi

- The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) was inaugurated by vice president Venkaiah Naidu at New Delhi.
- Theme of the summit was 'Attaining the 2030 Agenda: delivering on our promise'. Prime Minister of Fiji Frank Bainimarama was honoured with the Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2019 for his outstanding contributions towards sustainable development in Fiji.

ASCEND Kerala 2019 conference held in Kochi

- Kerala government inaugurated the Ascend 2019 conference in Kochi.
- 'ASCEND KERALA 2019' is an event planned to showcase the various initiatives undertaken by the Government of Kerala as part of the Ease of Doing Business reforms. The initiatives would make the state a top investment destination and empower entrepreneurs to launch their enterprises in a speedy and hassle-free manner
- Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan released the 'Invest Kerala Guide' at the inaugural session of the event. Union minister of commerce & industries and civil aviation Suresh Prabhu was the chief guest at the opening ceremony.
- The government also launched the two software applications, K-swift (Kerala single window interface for fast, transparent clearances) and intelligent building plan management system (IBPMS). K-swift an online clearance mechanism has been developed to simplify and speed up issuance of clearances from departments or agencies for launching enterprises in the state.

4th Agri Leadership Summit held at Sonipat in Haryana

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Radha Mohan Singh inaugurated the 4th Agri Leadership Summit at the proposed International Fruit and Vegetable Terminus in Ganaur, district Sonipat in Haryana
- The theme of the summit is "Entrepreneurship & Agri Business; Agri Allied – A Promising Sector and Agri Service-Direct Marketing". The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind addressed the closing ceremony of the Summit. He also presented the Haryana Kisaan Ratna Puraskar and the Haryana Krishi Ratna Puraskar.

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the International Conference & Exhibition on Energy and Environment

- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the International Conference and Exhibition on Energy and Environment – Challenges and Opportunities (ENCO-2019) in New Delhi. This conference was organized by CSIR-Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research, Dhanbad
- The 3 day conference aims to deliberate and identify the R&D needs to innovate new techniques, technologies and applications for clean, safe, symbiotic sustenance of society, environment, energy and industries

One Health India Conference Inaugurated in New Delhi

- Union Science & Technology Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, inaugurated the One Health India Conference 2019 in New Delhi. The conference plans to launch India's new One Health Initiative - an intersectoral approach to tackling the most urgent health threats in India as well as in low and middle income countries across South and South East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. The main objective of the conference is to formulate a roadmap for the response, preparedness, and management of current regional, national and global health challenges using a One Health collaborative approach.

4th India-ASEAN Expo summit begins in New Delhi

- The 4th India-ASEAN Expo and Summit inaugurated in New Delhi
- This is a flagship event of Department of Commerce, being organised with FICCI to carry forward the momentum and to further strengthen India-ASEAN relations under the Act-East Policy. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) comprises of Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Myanmar, Malaysia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Cambodia and Brunei. Trade Ministers of ASEAN Countries, Secretary General of ASEAN and business delegations will participate in the New Delhi Expo and Summit.

Eighth World CSR Congress 2019 held in Mumbai

- Eighth World Corporate Social Responsibility Congress 2019 held in Mumbai

- World Corporate Social Responsibility Congress (World CSR Congress 2019) popular meeting about Entrepreneurship, Social Responsibility, Sustainability and Social Development. Dr. Soumitro Chakraborty, Chief Executive Officer, Innovative Financial Advisors Pvt. Ltd. (Fiinnovation) was honoured with 'CEO of the year' award
- This congress witnessed participation from 33 countries and recognized the efforts of individuals and organizations

International Vision Zero Conference held in Mumbai

- Heeralal Samariya, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment inaugurated the three days Conference on the VISION ZERO to promote occupational safety and health in Mumbai. The conference provides a forum for promoting safety and health at work by exchanging knowledge, practices and experience.
- The Conference has been organized by Directorate General Factory Advice and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), Ministry of Labour and Employment, German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV)

Important Mobile App and Web Portal

National Testing Agency (NTA) launched mobile application for mock tests

- The National Testing Agency (NTA) has launched a mobile application through which students can practice or take mock tests on their smartphones. The candidates who are appearing for JEE Main, NEET or NTA NET exams will be able to practice for these competitive exams using an official app. National Testing Agency, the newly formed organisation which conducts Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) main for undergraduate engineering admissions and National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical admissions. The NTA recently conducted two competitive examinations under its supervision, the first edition of JEE Main 2019 in January and National Eligibility Test (NET) in December last year

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana App launched on Google play store

- The world's largest cashless health insurance scheme Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), popularly known as the Ayushman Bharat is now active on Google Playstore to access scheme details. Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Scheme, which will cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage up to 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya run by Yojana National Health Authority (NHA)

Chennai city Police Launched Mobile App 'DigiCop'

- Tamil film actor Vijay Sethupathi launched the mobile App 'DigiCop' of the Chennai police department. The application was developed by Nasscom. Using the App, people can track the status of stolen two-wheelers and cell phones. The details of 18,000 stolen mobile phones are stored in the App. So next time someone is buying a phone from a second hand shop they can verify if the phone is stolen or genuine. Using DigiCop App, people can verify IMEI, report lost two-wheelers and phones, know the nearest police station, police news and traffic alerts.

IWAI launched a new portal LADIS for real-time information

- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) launched a new portal LADIS (Least Available Depth Information System) for real-time information on available depth on stretches of National Waterways
- LADIS will ensure that real-time data on least available depths (LADs) is disseminated for ship, barge and cargo owners so that they can undertake transportation on national waterways (NWs) in a more planned way.

Hardip Singh Puri launched the PMAY-U Mobile Application

- Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep S Puri launched the PMAY (U) Mobile Application
- The Mobile Application will allow beneficiaries to capture and upload high resolution photographs of completed houses along with their families and a 30 – 60 seconds video clip where beneficiaries share their stories of owning a house under PMAY (U). The PMAY (U) mission was launched on 25th June 2015 with the aim to provide houses to every eligible urban household in India by the year 2022

Infosys launched learning app 'InfyTQ' for engineering students

- Infosys the country's 2nd largest IT firm has launched its next-generation digital platform called 'InfyTQ' that aims to offer learning and engagement experiences for engineering students
- InfyTQ is a free platform open to all engineering students in their third and fourth year across India
- This platform available on both mobile and desktop includes content, courses, and news as well as online assessments and certification.

Department of Justice launched tele-law Mobile Application

- Union Minister for Law and Justice and IT Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad launched a tele-law mobile application that is integrated with a dashboard and an application called Nyaya Bandhu.
- The application will benefit 73,000 PLVs of National Legal Service Authority and State Legal Services Authorities (SLSA) in the country who will be associated under the tele-law service. This mobile application is integrated with a Dashboard created to confirm and register the pre-registered cases, to enable online interface between the beneficiary and the panel lawyer through video conferencing and telephone facility

Important Defence News

DAC approved indigenous construction of 6 submarines worth Rs. 40,000 crore

- The Defence Acquisitions Council, DAC chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman approved indigenous construction of six submarines worth 40,000 crore rupees. It is the second project under the Ministry's ambitious strategic partnership model aiming to boost the government's 'Make in India' program.
- The first project to get the government's nod for implementation under the new model was the acquisition of 111 utility helicopters for the Navy at a cost of over 21,000 crore rupees in August last year
- Defence Acquisitions Council has also approved the acquisition of about five thousand MILAN Anti Tank Guided Missiles for the Army

Israel Aerospace Industries announced agreement worth \$93 million with Indian Navy and Cochin Shipyard

- Israel Aerospace Industries announced entering into agreements worth \$93 million for providing Naval MRSAM (Medium Range Surface to Air Missile) systems to India. The contracts for the air defence system were entered with the Indian Navy and the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)
- They involve follow up orders for a range of maintenance and other services for various sub-systems of IAI's advanced MSRAM ADS

Pakistan Successfully Test-Fires Short-Range Ballistic Missile Nasr

- Pakistan Army successfully test-fired the short range surface-to-surface ballistic missile "Nasr" with a strike range of about 70 km
- Nasr is a high precision, shoot and scoot weapon system with the ability of in-flight maneuverability

Defence Ministry approves procurement of 73,000 assault rifles from US

- The Defence Ministry has cleared a long-pending proposal of the Army to procure around 73,000 assault rifles from the US under fast track mode. Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman approved procurement of the Sig Sauer rifles which will be used by troops deployed along the nearly 3,600-km border with China. The US-manufactured rifles will replace the Insas rifles.

DAC approved acquisition of defence equipment worth Rs. 2700 crore

- The Defence Acquisition Council has approved the acquisition of defence equipment for about 2700 Crores rupees. The Defence Acquisition Council, is the highest decision-making body for defence purchase, was chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The Council granted approval for procurement of three cadet training ships for the Indian Navy which would be utilised to provide basic sea training for officer cadets including women officer under trainees. The ships would be capable of undertaking hospital ship duties, providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, undertaking search and rescue (SAR) missions

US approved sale of two missile defence systems for Air India One

- The Trump administrations approved purchase of the two systems known as Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCAM) and Self-Protection Suites (SPS) for an estimated cost of \$190 million. that will enhance the security of planes flying the prime minister and the president. The purpose of the LAIRCM programme is to protect large aircraft from man-portable missiles. Once installed, the LAIRCAM system increases crew-warning time, decreases false alarm rates and automatically counters advanced intermediate range missile systems
- SPS will facilitate a more robust capability into areas of increased missile threats

INS Trikand participated in multinational training exercise "Cutlass Express 2019"

- INS Trikand, a front-line warship of the Indian Navy, participated in a multinational training exercise 'CUTCLASS EXPRESS – 19'. The aim of the exercise was to improve law enforcement capacity, promote regional security and progress inter-operability between the armed forces of the participating nations for the purpose of interdicting illegal maritime activity in the Western Indian Ocean

- Naval Coast Guard and Marine Police personnel from a number of East African countries were jointly trained by mentors from USA, India, and Netherlands, with support of international organisations like the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Combined Maritime Force (CMF) and European Naval Forces (EUNAVFOR)
- The exercise was conducted in two phases. The first, called the Command Post Exercise (CPX) was conducted from Jan 27 to Feb 2. The second phase called the Final Training Exercise (FTX) was conducted from Feb 3-5. The closing ceremony of the event was held at the Djibouti Naval Base

Indigenously developed "Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR)" missile system was successfully flight tested in Odisha

- The second indigenously developed 'Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR)' propulsion-based missile system was successfully flight tested in Odisha by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- Unlike conventional rockets that carry propellant and oxidizer, Ramjet uses the air as an oxidizer just like a jet engine. Therefore the weight of the fuel required is eliminated
- The first flight of SFDR, developed under a joint Indo-Russian R&D project, was tested in 2018. It had achieved the speed of Mach 3.

Hina Jaiswal becomes IAF's First Woman Flight Engineer

- Hina Jaiswal from Chandigarh, became the first Indian Woman Flight Engineer of the Indian Air Force. Hina was commissioned in the Indian Air Force's engineering branch in 2015. She completed a six-month Flight Engineer course from 112 helicopter unit, Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru
- A flight engineer is the member of an aircraft's flight crew who monitors and operates its complex aircraft systems requiring a specialised skill set

OFB gets nod for producing long-range artillery gun 'Dhanush'

- The Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) has received clearance from the Indian Army and the Ministry of Defence for production of 114 'Dhanush' long range artillery guns . 'Dhanush' is the first long-range artillery gun to be produced in India. It is the product of joint efforts by the OFB and the Army with contributions from the DRDO, DGQA, Bharat Electronics Limited, SAIL and several private enterprises.

PM Modi inaugurated Asia's biggest air show 'Aero India- 2019' in Bengaluru

- 12th edition of Asia's premier Air show 'Aero India-2019' begins at Yelahanka air force station, Bengaluru
- The five-day long biennial event Aero India-2019, will showcase India's air defence prowess, and also act as a platform for aviation companies, the defence sector and government to forge new alliances and contracts
- Sixty-one aircraft would be on display and 403 exhibitors are participating in the aero India show. Over 600 companies, including 295 Indian and 328 foreign ones, are participating in the exhibition.

S.No	Name of the countries		Name of exercises
1.	Bangladesh	India	'Sampriti 2019'
2.	Pakistan	-	Multinational maritime exercise 'AMAN-19'
3.	India (Deolali Camp near Nashik)	-	"Exercise Topchi"
4.	India (Jaipur, Rajasthan)	-	disaster relief joint Exercise 'Rahat'
5.	India (Pokhran, Rajasthan)	-	Indian Air Force's exercise 'Vayushakti 2019'

Important Science and Technology News

ISRO set to launch GSAT-31 from French Guiana

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has planned to launch the GSAT-31 communication satellite, from the French Guiana on 6th February, to replace INSAT-4CR. The satellite will be used for high-speed internet, telecommunication services and broadcasting.
- The 2,600 KG-satellite GSAT-31 will be launched in the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-MK III)

Scientists create AI based system that translates thoughts into speech

- Scientists have created an artificial intelligence (AI) based system that directly translates thoughts into intelligible, recognisable speech. The technology developed by researchers from Columbia University in the United States. The research will help people who cannot speak regain their ability to communicate with the outside world.

Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated India's first humanoid police robot KP-BOT

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated KP-BOT, first humanoid police robot in India, in Thiruvananthapuram. The robot ranked as Sub-Inspector and it will perform duties of the front office of police headquarters. It'll receive the visitors, issue identity cards and allot time for them and direct them to different places according to their needs. KP-Bot has been developed by State Police Cyberdome in cooperation with Asimov Robotics, a Kochi-based startup firm

SpaceX launches world's 1st private Moon lander for Israel

- Elon Musk-led aerospace startup SpaceX deployed Israel's first Moon lander mission aboard its Falcon 9 rocket, making it the world's first such fully-private mission. 'Beresheet' (Hebrew for 'in the beginning') is set to land on the Moon on April 11. If successful, Israel will become only the fourth nation to have achieved a controlled touchdown on the Moon.

NASA launches website to check daily weather on Mars

- NASA has launched a website to share the daily weather report of Mars with its temperature, atmospheric pressure and wind speed collected by the InSight lander.
- Temperature on Mars regularly drops below -90°C and rarely rises above -9°C, the data revealed.

ISRO to launch defence satellite 'Emisat' in March for DRDO

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch an electronic intelligence satellite 'Emisat' for the DRDO in March.
- ISRO will also launch 28 third-party satellites and will demonstrate its new technologies like three different orbits with a new variant of 'Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle' rocket in March.

Israel to launch its first moon mission

- Israel is to launch its first moon mission, sending an unmanned spacecraft to collect data to be shared with NASA
- The 585-kilogram Beresheet spacecraft is to lift off atop a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida. Mission control will be in Yehud, near Tel Aviv. The \$100-million project will measure the lunar magnetic field to help understanding of the moon's formation

Important Ranking and Indexes

Index	Rank 2019	Based on
US Chamber's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) ranks - Global Intellectual Property (IP) Index	36	45 indicators
FIFA Rankings	103 – India 1 - Belgium	-

World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2019 report released by ILO

- The International Labour Organization released World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2019 report. According to the report, unemployment rates will fall to 4.9% in 2019 and remains steady in 2020. Global unemployment among young people (between 15-24) stood at 11.8 per cent, higher than other age groups
- In the global labour market 2 billion out of 3.3 billion people worked keeping their economic security at risk in informal employment. The unemployment rate increased from 5 to 5.6% between 2008-09

Important Books and Authors

Books	Authors
Quality, Accreditation & Ranking – A Silent Revolution in the	Dr H Chaturvedi

Offing in Indian Higher Education”	
“Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India”	Former Finance Minister P Chidambaram
“What Marx Left Unsaid” - Production of Skills by Means of Skills	Dr. Malay Chaudhuri, Dr. Arindam Chaudhuri and Che Kabir Chaudhuri
'Simplicity & Wisdom'	Dinesh Shahra

Important Sports News

Cricket

ICC announced a five year global partnership with Coca-Cola

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced a five year global partnership deal with beverage manufacturer Coca-Cola Company. Coca-Cola the exclusive non-alcoholic beverage partners of the ICC until 2023.
- The five-year agreement includes the upcoming ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2019 in England and Wales, the ICC men's and women's T20 World Cups in Australia in 2020, the ICC Women's World Cup 2021 in New Zealand and the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India in 2023, among other tournaments.

Mithali Raj becomes first woman cricketer to play 200 ODIs

- Mithali Raj, India's One-day International (ODI) captain becoming the first female cricketer to play 200 ODIs. The Indian captain also holds the record for most runs scored in ODIs with 6,622 runs including 7 centuries and 52 half centuries. She already holds the record for the most-capped women's cricketer in the history of the game. Mithali Raj had achieved the milestone when she played her 192 ODI of the career

India's Smriti Mandhana becomes number 1 in latest ICC women's ODI rankings

- Indian opener Smriti Mandhana has climbed three spots in the batters' list to become number one in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings. Ellyse Perry is second in the rankings, while another Aussie Meg Lanning is third. Indian ODI skipper Mithali Raj has slipped to the fifth position. In the ODI Bowler's rankings, veteran pacer Jhulan Goswami is fourth, with Poonam Yadav at eighth, and fellow spinner Deepti Sharma at ninth.
- Deepti is fourth in the All-rounders standings and is the sole Indian in the top-10.

Ishan Kishan becomes first Indian wicketkeeper-captain to score T20 century

- Jharkhand batsman Ishan Kishan became the first Indian wicketkeeper-captain to score a century in T20 format.
- The left-handed batsman achieved the milestone in Jharkhand's 2nd Syed Mushtaq Ali fixture against Jammu and Kashmir.

Sri Lanka first ever Asian team to win Test series in South Africa

- Sri Lanka became the first Asian side to win a Test series in South Africa.
- Chasing a target of 197, Sri Lanka had a 137-run deficit to deal with at the start of Day 3 with eight wickets in hand.
- Kusal Mendis and Oshada Fernando ensured that the visitors don't lose any more wickets.
- They won the Test by eight wickets and thus sealed the series 2-0. It also ended South Africa's run of seven consecutive series wins at home.

Pakistan's Sana Mir becomes first Asian woman to play hundred T20Is

- Former captain of the Pakistan women team Sana Mir has become the first Asian woman to play hundred T20Is. Sana Mir is one of Pakistan's most senior women cricketers and has been representing the country since 2005. The 33-year-old reached the milestone when she walked into the field for the ongoing third and final T20I against West Indies in Karachi. Mir is the only sixth woman from around the world to play 100 T20Is. West Indian Deandra Dottin leads the list with 109 T20Is

21-year-old Mayank Markande becomes India's 79th T20I cricketer

- Leg-spinner Mayank Markande became the 79th cricketer to represent India in T20I cricket, achieving the feat against Australia in the first T20I at Visakhapatnam.
- Markande, who plays for Punjab in domestic circuit and Mumbai Indians in IPL, has taken 99 wickets in 47 professional matches across formats.
- Meanwhile, wicketkeeper-batsman Peter Handscomb is making his T20I debut for Australia.

Sanath Jayasuriya banned from cricket for two years

- Former Sri Lanka captain and World Cup winner Sanath Jayasuriya was handed a two-year ban from all forms of cricket by the International Cricket Council's (ICC) anti-corruption code

- This was after Jayasuriya refused to co-operate with investigations surrounding corruption activities in Sri Lanka

Gayle 1st batsman in the world to smash 500 sixes in int'l cricket

- Windies' 39-year-old opener Chris Gayle has become the first ever batsman to smash 500 sixes in international cricket and the second batsman to slam 300 ODI sixes.
- Gayle smashed 14 sixes during his 97-ball 162-run knock against England in fourth ODI to reach 506 international sixes. He has hit 98 sixes in Tests, 305 in ODIs and 103 in T20Is.

Vidarbha lift their second consecutive Ranji Trophy

- Vidharbha lifted the Ranji Trophy for the second time in a row, defeating Saurashtra by 78 runs at Nagpur
- Vidarbha became the sixth team to win back to back Ranji Trophy titles. Left arm spinner, Sarwate was adjudged man of the match.

Ranji champion Vidarbha beat Rest of India to retain Irani Cup

- Ranji champions Vidarbha beat Rest of India at the **Jamtha Stadium** in **Nagpur** to retain the Irani Cup
- Vidarbha has now become the third team after Mumbai and Karnataka to clinch two Irani Cup titles in a row
- Vidarbha captain - Faiz Fazal

Chris Gayle announced retirement from One-day Internationals

- West Indian batsman Chris Gayle has announced retirement from One-day Internationals after the ICC World Cup 2019. The 39-year old left-hander has scored 9,727 ODI runs, second only to the legendary Brian Lara among West Indians in 284 matches. He needs 677 more runs to surpass Lara as the West Indies' all-time record ODI run scorer. The World Cup will be held in England and Wales from 30th May to 14th July 2019

Football

Qatar defeat Japan to secure first ever Asian Cup Football

- Qatar won its first soccer title by beating four-time champion Japan 3-1 in the Asian Cup final. Qatar's Almoez Ali became the first player to score nine goals at a single Asian Cup. This was the first time that Japan lost in an Asian Cup final.

Others

Vani Kapoor becomes first Indian to grab Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA)

- Vani Kapoor became the first Indian to earn a card for the Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA) after coming through its first-ever Qualifying Tournament at the Ballarat Golf Club in Ballarat, Australia. Vani Kapoor finished tied-12th in the first-ever Australian LPGA Qualifying Tournament. The top-20 from a field of 81 earned playing rights on the Australian LPGA

INS Dronacharya wins Kochi area boat pulling regatta trophy

- The Boat Pulling Regatta is one of the most prestigious and traditional naval sporting activities conducted by the Navy. The boats had to cover a distance of 1.6 km in the Ernakulam Channel
- The INS Dronacharya team won the Regetta trophy in the Kochi Area Pulling Regatta 2019 of the Southern Naval Command (SNC) held in the Ernakulam. Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) School & Diving School secured the runners up position. The boats used in the regatta are 27 feet long 'whalers' a type of seaboat - each having a crew of five 'pullers' (rowers) and one coxswain (helm)

Haryana Hammers beat defending champions Punjab Royals to lift PWL 4 title

- Haryana Hammers won the fourth edition of the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) as they outclassed Punjab Royals 6-3 in the summit clash at the Gautam Buddha University indoor stadium
- Riding on Aleksander Khotsianivski, Ali Shabanov, Kiran, Ravi Kumar and Anastasia Nichita's dominating performance, the runners-up in the last three editions, Haryana Hammers, turned the tables on the defending champions Punjab Royals winning all the first five bouts of the evening to clinch the title

India's Ramit Tandon wins Seattle Open

- Indian squash player Ramit Tandon defeated Egyptian Mohamed El Sherbini in the finals to win the Seattle Open, a Professional Squash Association challenger squash Tour event
- The Indian won 11-4, 11-7, 2-11, 11-2 for his first PSA title in 2019 and fourth title overall in his career.

Manpreet Pawar named Player of the Year 2018 by Asia Hockey

- Indian hockey player Manpreet Pawar was named as the Male Player of the Year 2018 by the Asian Hockey Federation. The Indian women's team striker Lalremsiami bagged the Rising Player of The Year prize.
- The Indian men's team was awarded the Best Performance of The Year after being the only Asian side to reach the World Cup's top-eight in Bhubaneswar.

Abhijeet Gupta wins Cannes International Open trophy

- Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta finished with 7.5 points to win the Cannes International Open
- He took an easy draw with Pier Luigi Basso of Italy in the ninth and final round. This was Gupta's first solo International tournament victory. Abhijeet had also tied for the first place at the Delhi International open in January

Prajnesh Gunneswaran reached career best 94th Rank

- India's Prajnesh Gunneswaran achieved his career-best ranking, rising three places to 94th in the latest list.
- Ramkumar Ramanathan dropped nine spots to 137, while Yuki Bhambhani further slipped to 171.
- In Doubles rankings, Rohan Bopanna remained at 38th and Divij Sharan at 39th, while Leander Paes rose two spots to 73rd.
- In the Women's rankings, Ankita Raina continued to be the top-placed Indian at 164, followed by Karman Thandi at 207 and Pranjala Yadlapalli at 293

Hungary's Veronika Major wins gold medal at ISSF World Cup

- Hungary's Veronika Major won a gold medal at the ongoing ISSF World Cup in New Delhi.
- She bagged the medal in 10-metre air pistol event.
- Taipei's Chia Ying Wu won a silver medal, with 238.4 points Korean Bomi Kim came third, with 218.3 points.

Mirabai Chanu won gold at EGAT Cup in Thailand

- World champion Indian weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu notched up a gold medal at the EGAT Cup in Thailand. Chanu won the 48kg category gold with an effort of 192 kg in the silver level Olympic qualifying event.
- The 24-year-old Manipuri lifted 82 kg in snatch and 110 kg in clean and jerk to finish on top of the podium.

9th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2019 Begins In Hisar, Haryana

- The 9th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2019 begins in Hisar's Astroturf International Hockey Stadium, Haryana Agricultural University.
- RSPB will begin their campaign against Hockey Rajasthan in the Pool A opening match during the 11-day domestic extravaganza

Corentin Moutet clinched Chennai Open ATP Challenger title

- France's Corentin Moutet has clinched the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tournament title after beating Andrew Harris of Australia 6-3, 6-3 in the singles final.
- It was the second Challenger title for Moutet, who received \$7,200 and 80 ATP points.

RSPB lift Senior National Men's Hockey title

- Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) lifted the 9th Senior National Men's Hockey Championship crown at Gwalior. RSPB beat defending champion Punjab 3-2 and claim the gold medal
- Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) beat Punjab & Sind Bank 4-1 to clinch the bronze medal.

Senior National Badminton Championships begin in Guwahati

- The 83rd edition of Senior National Badminton Championships begin in the Assamese city of Guwahati
- Defending champion Saina Nehwal and last edition's runner-up PV Sindhu will be the biggest attractions in Women's Singles. The Men's Singles will be without defending champion HS Prannoy and runners-up Kidambi Srikanth who are suffering from injuries. This is the first time the Nationals is returning to the North-East since Guwahati last hosted it in 2010

Jamie Chadwick became the first female driver to win the MRF championship

- Jamie Chadwick from England made history by becoming the first female driver to win the MRF challenge after scoring a triple win in the final round of the season in Chennai.
- Chadwick ended the championship with 280 points, including two bonus points for the fastest lap in the last race
- Chadwick became the first woman to win a British F3 race in August

Clouded Leopard will be mascot for National Games 2022 in Meghalaya

- Meghalaya's state animal Clouded Leopard will be the mascot for the National Games 2022

- This decision was taken at the first National Games 2022 executive committee meeting chaired by Meghalaya Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Banteidor Lyngdoh. Meghalaya will be the third northeastern state after Manipur (1999) and Assam (2007) hosted the National Games

Prajnesh Gunneswaran 3rd Indian to reach top-100 in ATP rankings

- Prajnesh Gunneswaran broke into men's singles top-100 for the first time in his career with a jump of six places to 97th Rank. He is only third Indian player to break into the top-100 in the past decade after Somdev Devvarman and Yuki Bhambri. In the doubles, Rohan Bopanna stayed put at 37 and was followed by his partner Divij Sharan at 39.

83rd Senior Badminton Nationals:

Saina wins Women's singles Title, Sourabh Verma bags Men's singles Title

- Saina Nehwal beats PV Sindhu in the women's final of the **83rd Yonex Sunrise** Senior Badminton National Championship, claiming her second successive and fourth overall (2006, 2007, 2018, 2019) Nationals title, in Guwahati. In men's single, Sourabh Verma completed a hat-trick of titles, claiming the men's singles crown after defeating young Lakshya Sen in straight games of 21-18, 21-13. The singles winners were awarded prize money of Rs. 3.25 lakhs while the runners-up got Rs. 1.7 lakhs. Each of the singles semi-finalists and the quarter-finalists got richer by Rs. 62500 and Rs. 27500 respectively.

Mary Kom named as brand ambassador of PUMA

- Six-time world women boxing champion MC Mary Kom was named as a brand ambassador for global sportswear giant PUMA for a two-year period. Mary Kom is now PUMA India's new ambassador for their women's training category and will be representing the brand in marketing campaigns.
- She will lead PUMA's #DoYou conversation that aims to motivate women across the nation to be strong and accomplish their goals

Important Obituaries

Person	Field
Hiten Bhaya	Former Planning Commission member and ex-director of IIMC
Ramesh Bhatkar	Marathi actor
Priyanath Dey	freedom fighter and former Odisha MLA
Harihar Karan	Senior Congress leader and former minister of Odisha
Ladu Kishore Swain	Odisha MP
John Dingell	US congressman
Albert Finney	Oscar nominee and British actor
Mahesh Anand	Bollywood Actor
Former England football team goalkeeper	Gordon Banks
Chemistry Nobel Prize Winner	Manfred Eigen
Raj Kumar Barjatya	Bollywood film producer
Pratik Choudhury	Bengali singer and music composer
Rajendran	Tamil Nadu, sitting Lok Sabha member from AIADMK
Kodi Ramakrishna	Veteran Telugu film director
Francis D'Souza	Former deputy chief minister of Goa and BJP MLA
Andrea Levy	British author
Bruno Ganz	Swiss actor
Sibghatullah Mojaddedi	Former Afghan interim president and ex-Jihadi leader
Namvar Singh	Hindi writer
William E. Butterworth III	American military veteran and novelist

Wallace Smith Broecker	Climate scientist

