Guinea-Bissau: Former PM Embalo wins presidential election
• Umaro Sissoco Embalo, has won presidential elections in the West African state of Guinea-Bissau.
• The 47-year-old opposition leader picked up 53.55 percent of vote
• His rival Domingos Simoes Pereira, head of the country’s historic ruling party PAIGC, took 46.45 percent.
• Capital: Bissau;
• Currency: West African CFA franc

Kerala Becomes the First State Assembly to Pass Anti-CAA Resolution
• Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has moved a resolution in the state Assembly on December 31, 2019, to scrap the controversival Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).
• With this, it has become the first state in the country to do so.
• The Chief Minister is of the view that the implementation of the controversival act will lead to religion-based discrimination in granting citizenship, which was against the secular values enshrined in the Constitution.

Khattar launches Atal Canteen in Karnal; labourers, farmers to get food for Rs 10
• The Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar has inaugurated the first Atal Kisan-Mazdoor canteens in Karnal where the farmers and labourers will get food for Rs 10.
• The canteen will provide Veg-thali comprising four chapatis, rice, dal and seasonal vegetable, all for Rs 10, with the capacity to serve 300 persons daily.
• The canteen has been named after former PM late Atal Bihari Vajpayee
• It has been set up by the Haryana State Agriculture Marketing Board (HSAMB) in collaboration with the state rural livelihood mission.
• The actual cost of a thali-served in this canteen is Rs 25 and the HSAMB will provide for the remaining Rs 15.
• This is the first canteen in the state and 25 more such canteens would be set up by next year and four such facilities will be made operational in January.

Odisha govt launches e-certificate portal and PAUTI App: Now Get Caste, Residence Certificates Online
• The Odisha government has launched ‘e-Certificate portal’, a unique project to provide official documents such as caste certificate, permanent residence certificates, income or similar other certificates online without the need to visit Tehsil offices or Common Service Centres.
• The initiative has been launched by the Revenue and Management department of the state as part of its 5T model of governance.
• The applicants will not be required to pay any fees as well for the service.
• Patnaik also launched a mobile App “Pauti”, to facilitate online payment of land revenue so that citizens need not visit government offices for the same. They can download the application and make payment.

Nirmala Sitharaman unveils Rs 102L-cr infra project pipeline
• Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced an infrastructure project pipeline worth over Rs 102 lakh crore to be implemented over the next five years, as a major step towards achieving the government’s ambition of turning India into a $5 trillion economy by 2024-25.
• The total expected capital expenditure amounts to Rs 10,250,704 crore during the fiscals 2020 to 2025.
• According to the plan, of the total investments, 39 percent each will come from the Central and state governments while the remaining 22 percent from the private sector.
• India has been spending an average Rs 8 lakh crore annually since FY13 on infrastructure.

**SPORTS**

**ICC plans to scrap five-day Tests from 2023; set to be limited to four**
• The Cricket’s apex body, the International Cricket Council has planned to reduce all Test matches, including the Ashes, from five days to four from 2023, to ease workload on players in the crowded calendar.
• Test matches have been set at five days since 1979.
• England are backing the plans as it could provide a sustainable solution to the complex scheduling needs and player workloads.

**APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

**Harjeet Kaur Joshi: First Woman CMD Of Shipping Corporation**
• Harjeet Kaur Joshi has been appointed as the full-time Chairperson and Managing Director of privatisation-bound Shipping Corporation of India (SCI).
• She is the first female to head the Mumbai based Public Sector Enterprise and the 13th chairperson and managing director of country’s biggest ocean carrier by fleet size.
• She will serve the post till her superannuation on May 31, 2022 or until further orders.
• It must be noted that the government has decided to sell its 63.75 percent in SCI, to a private strategic buyer and the stake sale is in process.

**Vinod Kumar Yadav Re-appointed as Chairman Railway Board for One Year**
• The Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) has approved the reappointment of Shri Vinod Kumar Yadav as Chairman, Railway Board and Ex-Officio Principal Secretary to Government of India, for a period of one year effective from January 01, 2020.

**Days**

**1 January – Global Family Day**
It is celebrated as a day of peace and sharing. Its aim is to unite and spread message of peace by considering and promoting an idea that Earth is a one Global Family so as to make world a better place to live for everyone.

**8 January - African National Congress Foundation Day**
South African Native National Congress (SANNC) was founded in 8 January 1912 by John Langalibalele Dube in Bloemfontein. Behind this the primary motive was to give voting rights to black and mixed race Africans or to unite African people and spearhead the struggle for fundamental political, social and economic change.

**9 January – NRI (Non-Resident Indian) Day or Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**
NRI or Pravasi Bharatiya Divas observed every year on 9 January to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India. This day also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January, 1915.

**11 January – Death anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri**
He was the second Prime Minister of Independent India. He popularised the slogan 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' He actively participated in the India’s freedom struggle. Due to cardiac arrest he died on 11 January, 1966.

**12 January – National Youth Day**
The birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda also called Swami Vivekananda Jayanti is celebrated every year on 12 January. He was born on 12 January, 1863. The government had decided to
observe it as National Youth Day because the philosophy of Swamiji and the ideals for which he lived and worked could be a great source of inspiration for the Indian Youth. He had given speech at the Parliament of the World’s religions in Chicago and glorified India’s name.

15 January – Indian Army Day
Every year 15 January is observed as Indian Army Day because on this day in 1949 field Marshal Kodandera M Cariappa took over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief.

15 January -- Makara Sankranti
Makara Sankranti or Maghi, is a festival day in the Hindu calendar, dedicated to the deity Surya. It is observed each year in January. It marks the first day of the sun’s transit into Makara, marking the end of the month with the winter solstice and the start of longer days.

Observances: Kite flying.
Date: Wednesday, 15 January, 2020
Celebrations: Kite flying, bonfires, fairs, surya puja in river, feast, arts, dance, socialization
Featured in religions: Hinduism
Significance: Harvest festival
Also called: Magha, Môkôr Sôngkrânti, Mela, Maghi, Bhogi

23 January - Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti
Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was born on 23 January, 1897 in Cuttack, Orissa. He was one of the most prominent Indian freedom fighter. His army was known as Indian National Army (INA) or Azad Hind Fauj. He also led an Indian national force from abroad against the Western powers during World War II.

24 January- National Girl Child Day
On 24 January every year National Girl Child Day is celebrated to highlight the inequalities faced by a majority of the girls in India, importance of education, nutrition, legal rights, medical care and safety of girl children etc.

25 January- National Voters Day
Every year on 25 January National Voter’s Day or Rashtriya Matdata Diwas is celebrated to encourage young voters to take part in the political process. In 2011 first time this day was celebrated to mark Election Commission’s Foundation Day.

25 January- National Tourism Day
Every year on 25 January National Tourism Day is celebrated in India to raise the awareness and educate people about the importance of tourism and the role it plays in the Indian economy.

26 January- Republic Day
On 26 November, 1949 Indian Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution the supreme law of the land and replaced the Government of India Act 1935. It came into effect on 26 January 1950 with a democratic government system. This day marks with the largest parade took place at Rajpath, Delhi every year.

26 January – International Customs Day
International Customs Day (ICD) is celebrated every year on 26 January by Custom Organisation to recognise the role of custom officials and agencies in maintaining border security. It also focuses on the working conditions and challenges that custom officers face in their jobs.

28 January- Birth Anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai
Lala Lajpat Rai was born on 28 January, 1865 in Punjab. He was a prominent nationalist leader who played an important role in India’s struggle for freedom. He also earned the title of ‘Punjab Kesari’ or ‘the Lion of the Punjab’. He initiated the foundation of Punjab National Bank. He died on 17 November, 1928, due to serious injuries. The University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences in Hisar, Haryana is named after Lala Lajpat Rai.

30 January – Martyrs Day or Shaheed Diwas
30 January is celebrated as Martyr's Day or Shaheedi Diwas every year in the memory of Mahatma Gandhi and sacrifice of three revolutionaries of India. As, on 30 January, 1948, the ‘Father of Nation’ was assassinated. And on 23rd March 3 heroes namely Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar of the nation were hanged to death by British.

**30 January – World Leprosy Eradication Day**

World Leprosy Day is observed on 30 January every year to focus on the target of zero cases of leprosy-related disabilities in children. As, we know that disabilities do not occur overnight but happen after a prolonged period of undiagnosed disease.

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**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**36th international geological congress, 2-8 march, 2020**
- The 36th International Geological Congress will be held in New Delhi from March 2-8, 2020.
- India is the only Asian country to host the Congress twice. The 22nd session of IGC was held in New Delhi in 1964.
- The International Geological Congress, described as the “Olympics of Geosciences,” is aimed at the development of Earth Sciences.
- The theme of the 36th IGC is Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Future.
- The event will be jointly funded by the Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India and supported by the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) along with the science academies of Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- The first session of IGC took place in France in 1878.

**Palau is first country to ban 'reef toxic' sun cream**
- In a bid to safeguard and protect coral reef and other sea life from declining, the Pacific nation of Palau has announced to ban sunscreen containing chemicals linked to coral bleaching, thus becoming the first country in the world to do so.
- From January 01, 2020, sunscreen that includes ingredients such as oxybenzone and octinoxate (chemicals that absorb ultraviolet A rays) would no longer be allowed to be applied or sold in the country to safeguard the island nation's environment from tourists.
- Earlier, in 2018, Hawaii also announced similar legislation to impose ban against sunscreen that contained the toxic chemicals. The law in Hawaii will come into effect from January 1, 2021.
- As per the International Coral Reef Foundation, the banned chemicals are ‘known environmental pollutants’ which are incredibly toxic to juvenile stages of many wildlife species.

**NATIONAL NEWS**

**EC launches online system to let new parties track status of registration applications**
- The salient features of the Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System is that applicants, applying for the party registration from January 1, will be able to track the progress with the poll panel on a real-time basis of his/her application and will get the status update through SMS and e-mail.
- The new norms have come into force from Wednesday, a statement by the poll panel said.
- The registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- An association seeking registration has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days from the date of its formation.

**Uttar Pradesh: SRTC launches women’s special helpline Damini**
- The Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) has launched a dedicated women helpline called ‘Damini’ for the safety of women.
- The unique number “81142-77777” is a calling as well as a WhatsApp service, and is an extension of the ‘Nirbhaya Yojana’ that aims to ensure safety of women.
- The service will be functional from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day.
• After 6 p.m., women passengers can lodge their complaints on the general helpline number, 1800-180-2877.
• The service will be exclusively handled by women officers at the UPSRTC headquarters and regional offices.
• The helpline number will be made functional 24-hours a day after three months, depending on the response.

**Delhi: Pragati Maidan metro station renamed as Supreme Court Metro Station**

• The Delhi government’s naming committee has on January 1, 2020, decided to rename Pragati Maidan metro station as Supreme Court metro station.
• The entire renaming process including changing of audio in metro train announcements will take around a month to be completed.
• The Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has announced that the committee has also decided to rename Mukarba Chowk and its flyover as Captain Vikram Batra Chowk, Mehrauli Badarpur Road as Acharya Sri Mahapragya Marg and the Lajpat Nagar flyover as Shri Jhulelal Setu among others.

**28th World Book Fair to focus on Gandhi as writer**

• The 28th edition of the annual New Delhi World Book Fair will begin at the Pragati Maidan on January 4, 2020.
• The nine-day fair will conclude on January 12.
• The fair is being organised by National Book Trust (NBT) in association with ITPO.
• The Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank will inaugurate the event.
• The 2020 edition of the fair will focus on how Mahatma Gandhi influenced generations of writers through his writings.
• Among everything, the fair will witness an exclusive exhibition of 500 books on and by Gandhi in different languages.
• The number of countries at the book fair 2020 has come down from 20 to 15.
• Also, the fair will not be hosting any ‘guest country’ this year, due to the ongoing construction and the subsequent lack of space in Pragati Maidan.

**Govt creates new Department of Military Affairs, to be headed by Gen Rawat**

• On December 30, 2019, the government has created a new ‘Department of Military affairs (DMA)’ in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to be headed by Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat.
• The new department works for the unity of the three forces Army, Navy and Air Force and will also monitor the services except for capital acquisitions according to prevalent rules and procedures.
• The DMA is the 5th department in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and was created after a change in Government of India (Allocation of Business), Rules 1961.
• The other existing 4 departments under MoD are the Department of Defence, the Department of Defence Production, the Department of Defence Research and Development and the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.

Chief of Army Staff- Manoj Mukund Naravane.
Chief of the Naval Staff- Admiral Karambir Singh.
Chief of the Air Staff – Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria.

**BANKING AND ECONOMICS**

**Launch of Mobile Aided Note Identifier (MANI) by RBI to aid visually impaired persons.**

• Reserve Bank of India has launched a mobile application named “Mobile Aided Note Identifier (MANI)” for aiding visually impaired persons to identify the denomination of Indian Banknotes.
• The app MANI contains the following features:
• Capable of identifying the denominations of Mahatma Gandhi Series and Mahatma Gandhi (New) series banknote by checking front or reverse side/part of the note including half folded notes at various holding angles and broad range of light conditions (normal light/day light/low light/ etc.).
• Ability to identify the denomination through audio notification in Hindi/English and non-sonic mode such as vibration (suitable for those with vision and hearing impairment).
• After installation, the mobile application does not require internet and works in offline mode.
• Ability to navigate the mobile application via voice controls for accessing the application features wherever the underlying device & operating system combination supports voice enabled controls.
• The application is free and can be downloaded from the Android Play Store and iOS App Store without any charges/payment.
• This mobile application does not authenticate a note as being either genuine or counterfeit.

**Small savings schemes: Govt keeps interest rates unchanged for Jan-Mar quarter**

• The government has kept the interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged for the fourth quarter of FY 2019-20 (January-March).
• The interest rates on small savings schemes are reviewed every quarter by the government.
• The formula to arrive at the interest rates of the small savings scheme was given by the Shyamala Gopinath Committee.

**SPORTS**

**Sunita Lakra announces retirement from international hockey**

• On January 2, 2020, Indian women's hockey team defender Sunita Lakra aged 28, who was part of the 2018 Asian Games silver-winning side, announced her international retirement, citing a knee injury.
• However, she will continue to represent domestic hockey and NALCO (National Aluminium Company Limited), Odisha.
• Sunita has so far played 139 matches for India that also included the 2014 Asian Games bronze medal.

**Cycling and Lawn bowls to be included in 3rd Khelo India Games**

• Chief Executive Officer of “Khelo India Games” has announced that “Lawn bowls” and “cycling” will be included in the 3rd edition of Khelo India Games.
• The two games will be included in the event for the first time.
• The 3rd edition of the tournament will be held in Guwahati, Assam in January 2020.
• Athletes from all over the country will be coming to Guwahati for the Khelo India Youth Games.
• Chief Executive Officer of “Khelo India Games”: Avinash Joshi.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**107th Indian Science Congress will begin in Bengaluru from 03 January 2020**

• The 107th edition of the Indian Science Congress is scheduled to be held at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru from January 3 to 7, 2020.
• It is the ninth time that Bengaluru is hosting the annual convention.
• The event will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
• The theme of the congress is ‘Science and Technology: Rural Development’
• For the first time, a Farmer's Science Congress will also be part of the event, providing a platform for innovative farmers.

**ISRO to set up second launch port in Thoothukodi district of Tamil Nadu for small satellite launch vehicles**

• The ISRO Chairman announced that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will establish a 2nd launch port in Thoothukodi district in Tamil Nadu.
• This launch port will be used exclusively to launch small satellite launch vehicles. The launch port will be established in 2300 acres.
• He announced that the process of Astronaut selection is over for India’s 1st manned mission to outer space i.e. “Gaganyaan” to be launched by 2022.
• The ISRO Chairman also announced that the Government has approved the Chandrayaan-3 mission to the moon, comprising of a lander and a rover.
• Chairman of ISRO: K.Sivan; Headquarters: Bengaluru; Established: 1969.

**OBITUARY**

Senior NCP leader DP Tripathi dies at 67 after prolonged illness

• On January 2, 2020, General Secretary of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and former Member of Parliament (MP) Devi Prasad Tripathi passed away after battling with cancer in New Delhi.
• He was the former MP of Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra.
• He was one of the founders of NCP along with Sharad Pawar and P.A. Sangma.
• He was also the Editor-in-Chief of the quarterly journal Think India.
• He played an important role in the establishment of democracy in Nepal.

**Current Affairs PDF- January03, 2020**

**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**World’s Second Tallest Statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Unveiled in Ahmedabad**

• On 3rd January 2020, Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani unveiled the second tallest statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the world at Ahmedabad.
• The 50 feet tall bronze statue of Sardar Patel weighs 70 thousand kilograms. This is the second highest statue of India’s first home home minister after the Statue of Unity (597 ft) situated at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Central Gujarat.
• The Statue has also been designed by Padma Bhusan Ram V. Sutar, the same sculptor who had designed the Statue of Unity.

**‘Cyber Safe Women’ initiative Launched by Maharashtra Government**

• The state government of Maharashtra Government has launched a ‘Cyber Safe Women’ initiative to ensure that women and children do not fall prey to these cyber criminal activities.
• Under the initiative, various awareness camps will be held across all the districts of the state regarding cyber safety to help in educating women about how the web is used by anti-social elements and child predators to commit various types of crimes.

**Odisha Government Launches e-Gazette portal for Gazette notifications**

• The State Government of Odisha has launched an e-Gazette portal, a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, to make available the Gazette notifications from all state departments under one platform.
• The system will expedite the process of Gazette publication, make it error-free and paperless and also save transportation of trucks of papers from Government Press to departments, districts and other quarters.

**Indian Railways Launches Integrated Helpline Number 139**

• The Indian Railways has integrated all its helpline numbers into a single number, 139, to help its passengers in quick grievance redressal and enquiries during their train journeys.
• 139 helpline will be available in twelve languages.

**Railway Protection Force (RPF) is Renamed as Indian Railway Protection Force Service**

• The Indian Railways has renamed its security force RPF (Railway Protection Force) as Indian Railway Protection Force Service.
• The ministry has accorded organised Group A status to RPF and renamed it.
• The Railway Protection Force (RPF) is a security force, enacted by the Indian Parliament for “the better protection and security of railway property”.
• The force is under the authority of the Indian Ministry of Railways.
• Union Railway Minister: Piyush Goyal.

**SPORTS**

**National Ice Hockey Championship-2020**
• The 5th Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship -2020 has begun in Leh, Ladakh.
• The tournament will continue till 7th January in Karzoo Ice Hockey Rink in Leh. Where the Army, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra and home team Ladakh are participating for the championship in U-20 boys category.
• In Girls category Ladakh, Maharashtra, Delhi and Chandigarh are playing for the championship.
• In the inaugural match in Under-20 Boys category between Chandigarh and Haryana.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**PM Modi Dedicates 5 Young Scientists Laboratories of DRDO to the Nation**

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the nation 5 Young Scientists Laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on 02 January 2020 from Bengaluru.
- The 5 DRDO Young Scientist Laboratories (DYSLs) are located in five cities namely Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad.
- Each lab will work on a key advanced technology of importance to the development of futuristic defence systems such as, Artificial intelligence, Quantum technologies, Cognitive technologies, Asymmetric technologies and Smart materials.

**SUMMITS AND MOU’S**

**GOI signed MoU with Flipkart under DAY-NULM scheme**

- Government of India signed MoU with Flipkart for selling the products made by women self-help groups under DeendayalAntyodayaYojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) on the e-commerce platform.
- Under the DeendayalAntyodayaYojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), self-help groups consisting of 44 lakh women have been working across the country, a move aimed at making women financially independent.
- Flipkart established: October 2007; Headquarter of Flipkart: Bengaluru.

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**NATIONAL NEWS**

**Central Ministry Sanctions 2,636 Charging Stations Across 62 Cities**

- On January 3, 2020 the Department of Heavy Industries had sanctioned 2636 EV (Electric Vehicles) charging stations in 62 cities across 24 State/UTs under FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India) scheme phase II to clean the mobility in Road Transport Sector.
- It aims to increase the electric vehicle users and also encourage Original Equipment Manufacturer’s (OEM) to launch new electric models.
- A total of 317 EV charging stations have been allotted in Maharashtra which is highest among 24 states. Under FAME India scheme, the Department of Heavy Industries invited the “Expressions of Interest (EoI) “from various cities across the country and received 106 proposals for 7000 EV charging station. Out of which 2636 EV charging stations were selected with the help of Project Implementation and Sanctioning Committee (PISC)

**About FAME India II:**

To promote the Electric vehicle in the country Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi implemented the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles II scheme in India.

With the effect from April 1, 2019 this scheme was implemented with the total outlay of Rs 10000 crore for a period of three years.
About Ministry of Heavy Industries:
Founded- April 2015
Headquarters- New Delhi
Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises– Prakash Javadekar

MEA sets up new emerging technologies division (NEST)
• The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has set up a New, Emerging and Strategic Technologies (NEST) division which helps to deal with new and emerging technologies. NEST helps to partner with 5G and artificial intelligence areas of other countries.

About MEA:
External Affairs Minister of India- Subrahmanyam Jaishankar (Constituency- Gujarat)
House- Rajya Sabha

About NEST:
• Under NEST, central government allows data sharing of various network makers in which Huawei shares its customer details with Chinese government under 5G trails.
• This division acts as the intermediate agency within the Ministry for issues pertaining to new and emerging technologies.
• It Create's HR capacity within MEA for technology diplomacy.
• NEST also negotiates “technology governance rules, standards and architecture” in multilateral frameworks.
• India's national security goal and developmental priorities will also be aligned with this policy.

Narendra Modi paid a 2 day visit to the state of Karnataka
• PM paid visit to Karnataka to attend events in Tumakuru and Bengaluru cities of the state. He arrived at the yelahanka air base.
• PM Shri Modi released the 3rd installment of PM Kisan scheme i.e., Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nitdi Yojana of Rs.2000 for the December 2019 - March 2020 period.
• PM Modi inaugurated 5 new scientific DRDO (Defence Research Development Organisation) laboratories in Bengaluru. In this laboratory only scientists under the age of 35 years will be deployed.
• Prime Minister was inaugurating the 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Bengaluru. The theme of ISC for the year 2020 was “Science and Technology: Rural Development”.
• Prime Minister also launched the Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities Map (I-STEM) Portal during ISC

KVIC opened first silk processing plant in Gujarat to boost production of signature Patola Saree.
• On January 3, 2020 Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) opened its first Silk Processing Plant in Surendranagar district of Gujarat to increase the production of Gujarat Patola Sarees.
• The Plant was set up at a cost of Rs 75 lakh by Khadi institution where RS 60 lakh was contributed by KVIC. Patola Sarees are the trademark of Gujarat.
• The Plant helps in reducing the production cost of silk yarn this helps in increasing the availability of raw materials for Gujarat Patola sarees.
• 90 local women were employed in the plant.
• Patola sarees are costly because raw materials of silk yarn were purchased from Karnataka and West Bengal.
• According to KVIC, cocoons will be brought from Karnataka and West Bengal to the plant and silk yarn will be processed, this helps in reducing the cost of Patola Sarees.

About KVIC:
Chairman- V K Saxena
Headquarters- Mumbai
• About Gujarat:
  Chief Minister- Vijay Rupani
  Governor- Acharya Devvrat
  State Animal- Asiatic lion
  State Bird- Greater flamingo
  State Tree- Banyan
  State Flower- Marigold

**First-of-its kind turtle rehab centre comes up in Bihar**
• rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles is to be inaugurated in January 2020 in the Bhagalpur forest division of Bihar.
• This centre spread over half a hectare will be able to shelter 500 turtles at a time.
• The centre will also treat turtles that are sick, severely injured or smuggled, and then be returned safely into its natural habitat. The turtles will be properly monitored before being released back.
• According to a report by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) , the turtle species are under threat due to loss through dams and barrages, pollution, illegal poaching, accidental drowning through fishing nets and threats to their nesting habitats etc.
• According to a recent study conducted by Traffic India, nearly 11,000 turtles are being smuggled in India annually which makes 1,10,000 turtles in the past 10 years.

**About Bihar**
Capital- Patna.
Chief Minister- Nitish Kumar.
Governor- Phagu Chauhan.
National parks- Valmiki National park.

**India, Pakistan exchange list of nuclear installations**
• Continuing a 29-year unbroken practice, India and Pakistan on Wednesday exchanged a list of their nuclear installations under a bilateral arrangement that prohibits them from attacking each other’s atomic facilities.
• This was done simultaneously through diplomatic channels in New Delhi and Islamabad.
• The agreement was signed on December 31, 1988 and came into force on January 27, 1991.
• The pact mandates the two countries to inform each other of nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under the agreement on the first of January of every calendar year.
• This is the 29th consecutive exchange of the list with the first one taking place on January 1, 1992.

**BANKING AND ECONOMICS**

**India extends USD 75 mn line of credit for solar parks in Cuba**
• Export-Import (Exim)Bank, the premier export finance institution of India has given a $75 million (over Rs 500 crore) line of credit (LoC, a soft loan / loan with low interest rate) to Cuba for financing 75 MW (megawatt) Photovoltaic Solar Parks.
• The Agreement in this regard between Exim Bank & Banco Exterior De Cuba, a nominated agency of the Government of Cuba, signed on July 16,2019 & is effective from December 12,2019.
• Out of the total assistance by Exim Bank under the agreement,financing of eligible goods, works and services of the value of at least 75 % of the contract price shall be supplied by the seller from India and the remaining 25 % of goods and services may be procured by the seller for the purpose of eligible contract from outside India. It will be subject to the eligibility for export under the Foreign Trade Policy of India.
• As per the agreement, the terminal utilisation time is 60 months period after the scheduled completion date of the project.
About Exim Bank:
Founded– 1 January 1982
Headquarters– Mumbai, Maharashtra
Managing Director- David Rasquinha

About Cuba:
Capital– Havana
Currency– Peso (CUP)
President– Miguel Díaz-Canel
Prime Minister- Manuel Marrero Cruz

CSC inks pact with Paytm Payments Bank for sale of FASTags
• CSC e-Governance services India ltd has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Paytm Payments Bank ltd (PPBL) for selling FASTags.
• Through this MoU, FASTags will be sold through the last mile network of 3.6 lakh CSCs (Common Service Centres).
• This will help in enhancing govt’s vision of cashless and smooth transit at toll plazas in the country.
• CSC will integrate its platform with PPBL to carry out the transactions. Village level entrepreneurs will be trained on conducting online sales which are cashless and paperless.
• CSCs have been providing FASTag services since 2 years. It initially partnered with Equitas bank in September 2017 and later with State Bank of India (SBI) and HDFC (Housing Development Finance Corporation) bank.
• Since March 2019, CSCs tied up with National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) also for selling FASTags.
• Fastags have been mandatory in the country at toll gates on national highways (NH). It allows toll payments directly from prepaid or savings account linked to it. The FASTags work on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology

Forex reserves hit record high at $457.46 bn
• According to the “Bulletin Weekly Statistical Supplement – Extract” released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India’s foreign exchange (Forex) reserves rose by $ 2.520 billion to a record $ 457.468 billion during the week ended 27 December, 2019.
• During the previous week, Forex reserves had increased by $ 456 million to $ 454.948 billion.
• The main reason for increase in foreign exchange reserves is the increase in foreign exchange assets, which is the main component of forex.
• Foreign Currency Assets (FCA): Foreign currency assets rose by $ 2.203 billion to $ 424.936 billion during the week.
FCA's include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and the yen held in the forex reserves.
• Gold Reserve: The country’s gold reserves also increased by $ 260 million to reach $ 27.392 billion during the week.
• SDR: The country’s special drawing rights (SDR) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declined by $ 2 million to $ 1.441 billion.
• Reserve Position in the IMF: India’s reserve position with the IMF Fund increased by $ 58 million to $ 3.7 billion.
Note: Total Reserves = Foreign Currency Assets + Gold + SDRs + Reserve Position in the IMF
• Foreign exchange reserves:
These are assets held on reserve by RBI in foreign currencies. These reserves are used to back liabilities and influence monetary policy. It includes any foreign money held by a central bank, such as the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
Sucheta Satish: 13-year-old Indian girl wins Global Child Prodigy Award in Dubai
• A 13-year-old Indian girl in Dubai has won the 100 Global Child Prodigy Award for singing in most languages during one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child, according to a media report on Friday.
• Sucheta Satish, a student in Dubai Indian High School, can sing in 120 languages.
• She made her double world record in January 2018 Dubai at the Indian Consulate Auditorium, as a 12-year-old when she sings in 102 different languages over 6 hours and 15 minutes.
• Recently she released her second album ‘Ya Habibi’ in Arabic.
• About 100 Global Child Prodigy Award: This award is a platform to showcase the talent of children in dance, music, art, writing, acting, modeling, science, sports etc. The award is supported by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam International Foundation and Oscar Award winning music producer AR Rahman among others.

**SPORTS**

**Shri Nityanand Rai inaugurates 4th All India Police Judo Cluster Championship 2019**

• Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai, inaugurated the 4th All India Police Judo Cluster Championship 2019, in New Delhi on 3rd January 2020.
• The five-day 4th All India Police Judo Cluster Championship has been organized this year by CRPF and will conclude on January 7.
• The sporting event is being attended by 34 participating teams consisting of 1207 sports persons from across the country, with a total of 15 Trophies and 214 Medals.
• This event is part of the Sports Calendar of All India Police Sports Control Board (AIPSCB) for the Year 2019-20. These are hosted on rotation basis by the members of the board.
• Earlier, this cluster were organized by Sashtra Seema Bal (SSB) in 2016, West Bengal Police in 2017 and Odisha Police in 2018.

**APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

**Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev resigns**

• North Macedonia Prime Minister (PM) Zoran Zaev submitted his resignation. His resignation paves a way to form a new caretaker government under the country’s former interior minister Oliver Spasovski until April 12, 2020 election.
• He was born on 8 October 1974 in Strumica, North Macedonia.
• Zaev was a member of North Macedonia’s parliament between 2003 and 2005 and mayor of Strumica between 2005 and 2016.
• He belongs to Social Democratic Union of Macedonia party.

**About North Macedonia:**
Capital- Skopje
Currency- Macedonian denar

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**ISRO inks pact with NITK to set up Regional Academic Centre for Space**

• Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) sets its fourth Regional Academic Centre for Space (RAC-S) at the National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK) at Surathkal in Mangaluru taluk.
• The centre helps for the advanced research in the areas of relevance to the future technological and programmatic needs of the Indian Space programme.
• It also helps in the promotion of space technology in southern regions like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Pondicherry and Lakshadweep.
• RAC-S encourages institutions to take part in advanced research technologies related to space technology.
• Joint Policy Management committee (JPMC) in RAC-S consists of experts from ISRO and NITK. These members will conduct activities in institutions on advanced space research technology.
• ISRO has set its first RAC-S in Jaipur, second at Guwahati and third at Kurukshetra.
• ISRO will provide Rs 2 Crore annually per year for the conduct of research and development project.
**About ISRO:**
Chairman- K Sivan  
Headquarters- Bengaluru  
ISRO CPBO director- Dr P V Venkitakrishnan

**OBITUARY**

**NBA mastermind David Joel Stern New York, United States passes away at 77**
- David Joel Stern born in New York, United States is a former commissioner of the NBA (National Basketball Association) passed away due to brain haemorrhage.
- He took the NBA's growth into a global sports powerhouse.
- He served as commissioner of the NBA for 30 (1984-2014) years.
- David Stern retired on February 2014.

**Centenarian Freedom fighter Bhim Chandra Jana passes away at 107**
- Centenarian Freedom fighter Bhim Chandra Jana has died of old-age related ailments in West Bengal's Howrah District at the age of 107.
- Bhim Chandra Jana was also known as 'Nanu' to other freedom fighters of Bengal.
- Jana was awarded by Government of India after Independence.
- About West Bengal:
  Capital- Kolkata.  
  Chief Minister- Mamata Banerjee.  
  Governor- Jagdeep Dhankhar.  
  Districts- 23.  
  State Bird- White-throated Kingfisher.  
  State Animal- Fishing cat.  
  State Tree- Chatim tree.  
  State Flower- Night-flowering jasmine.

**Former Tamil Nadu Assembly speaker, P.H. Pandian passes away at 74.**
- On January 04, 2020, Paul Hector (PH) Pandian passed away at a private hospital in Chennai, Tamil Nadu after prolonged illness. He was 74.
- Born on 29 March 1945 in Cheranmahadevi town in Tirunelveli district of TN, Pandian joined AIADMK in 1972. He was the Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly from February 27, 1985 – February 5, 1989.
- A lawyer by profession, Pandian was elected as an Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from his native Cheranmahadevi assembly seat in 1977, 1980 and 1984 & he went on to be elected as Member of Parliament (MP) in 1999, from Tirunelveli constituency.
- He also served as former Chief Minister (CM) J Jayalalithaa's legal advisor from 1996 – 1999.

**Current Affairs PDF- January 05, 2020**

**PM Modi Launches I-STEM Portal to Link Researchers with Resources**
- The I-STEM Web Portal is the gateway for users to locate the specific facilities they need for their R&D work and identify the one that is either located closest to them or available the soonest.
- It is a unique One Nation One Research Web Portal for national collaboration among all institutions and private laboratories.

**India’s Biggest Defence Expo to be held in UP’s Lucknow in February 2020**
- The Defence Expo- 2020 will be held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from February 5 to 8, 2020.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the biennial Defence Expo-2020 on February 5.
- The theme of the 11th edition of expo is 'India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub'.
International Symposium on Marine Ecosystems Challenges and Opportunities 2020 to be held in Kochi from January 7
• The third edition of the International Symposium on Marine Ecosystems Challenges and Opportunities (MECOS-3) will be held in Kochi, Kerala from 7 to 10 January 2020.
• MECOS3 is being organized by the Marine Biological Association of India (MBAI) at Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Kochi.

MP Government Launches Mukhyamantri Karmachari Swasthya Bima Yojana for its Employees
• The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath has approved a health insurance scheme named Mukhyamantri Karmachari Swasthya Bima Yojana on 04 January 2020 as a new year bonanza for its 12.55 lakh employees.
• The scheme will be effective from 01 April 2020.
• Under the scheme every government employee and their families will be eligible for medical treatment worth Rs 5 lakh annually.
• For some critical diseases, the eligibility will be enhanced to Rs 10 lakh.

Kolkata Police to begin third edition of ‘Sukanya’ project from January 6th
• The third edition of the ‘Sukanya’ project of Kolkata Police will begin from 06 January 2020.
• Sukanya is an initiative of the Kolkata Police’s Community Policing Wing to provide self-defence training to girl students of city-based schools, colleges and universities in martial art forms such as taekwondo, judo, kick-boxing and aikido.
• The Sukanya project covers those schools that come under Kanyashree scheme.

First International Yoga Day Media Award to be conferred on 30 Media Houses
• The first edition of the ‘Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman’ will take place in New Delhi on 7th January, 2020.
• The Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting, Shri Prakash Javadekar will confer the award on 30 Media Houses for their contribution in popularizing of Yoga at national and international level.
• The Ministry of I&B had instituted the first Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS) in June, 2019 to acknowledge the positive role & responsibility of media in spreading the message of Yoga.

PM Modi Launches Braille Version of his Book ‘Exam Warriors’ On World Braille Day
• Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Braille version of his book Exam Warriors on World Braille Day on 04 January 2020.
• The book is a guide to bust examination related stress, and has illustrations, activities and yoga exercises
• The braille version is in both Hindi as well as English.

Neutral Pronoun ‘They’ Voted Word of the Decade by US Linguists
• The US language experts have voted neutral pronoun “They” as the Word of the Decade.
• The third-person plural pronoun “They” is increasingly being used in English as singular form to refer to people who identify their gender as neither entirely male nor entirely female.

Irfan Pathan Announces Retirement from all forms of Cricket
• Indian all-rounder Irfan Pathan has announced his retirement from all forms of Cricket on January 5, 2020.
• Irfan made his Team India debut at the age of 19 in 2003.
• He has played 29 Tests, 120 ODIs and 24 T20Is for the Team India.

Shooter Saurabh Chaudhary wins men’s 10 metres air pistol gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship
• Ace Indian shooter Saurabh Chaudhary has won the men’s 10 metres air pistol gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship in Bhopal on January 05, 2020.
• The 17-year-old from Uttar Pradesh scored 246.4 to finish on top.
• Sarabjot Singh of Haryana stood second, while world number two Abhishek Verma settled for bronze.
• Also, Abhishek and Sarabjot together won the team gold for Haryana.
• Sarabjot also won the junior men's gold.

**Current Affairs PDF - January 06, 2020**

**HM Amit Shah lays foundation stone of 220 km Delhi Cycle Walk project**
• Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone of Delhi Cycle Walk project on 6th January 2020 at Tughlakabad in New Delhi to make the city most walkable and environment friendly.
• The first phase of the Delhi Cycle Walk project will cover 36 kilometre of the whole network of over 220 km.

**International team of astronomers finds farthest galaxy group EGS77**
• An international team of astronomers funded in part by NASA has found the farthest galaxy group identified as “EGS77”. EGS77, the trio of galaxies dates to a time when the universe was only 680 million years old, or less than 5% of its current age of 13.8 billion years.
• EGS77 is the farthest group of galaxies to have ever been sighted. EGS77 was discovered as part of the Cosmic Deep And Wide Narrowband (Cosmic DAWN) survey.
• The team of astronomers was led by an Indian-origin Goa-born scientist, Vithal Tilvi.
• Vithal Tilvi is currently a visiting researcher at the School of Earth & Space Exploration, at the Arizona State University, US.
• Headquarters of NASA: Washington, D.C.
• Established: July 29, 1958.

**Piyush Goyal Inaugurates NSE’s AI Powered Knowledge Hub in New Delhi**
• The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated the National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub in New Delhi on 06 January 2020.
• NSE Knowledge Hub is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered learning ecosystem that will assist the banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector to enhance their skills in AI and Machine Learning.
• The Knowledge Hub created by NSE will help academic institutions in preparing future-ready talent for the BFSI sector.
• The initiative is also available on mobile as state-of-the-art and future-ready platform to bring together world class content and learners.
• Government is committed to achieve USD 1 trillion by 2035 through AI and Machine Learning.

**Rajnath Singh Inaugurates National Traders Convention in New Delhi**
• The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the three-day National Traders Convention at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi on 06 January 2020.
• The convention has been organised by Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT).

**Journalist Day Observed in Maharashtra on January 6**
• Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray-led Maharashtra state celebrates the Journalist Day on January 6th every year in the memory of late journalist Balshastri Jambhekar.
• Balshastri Jambhekar, is also known as ‘The Father of Marathi Journalism’, for his efforts in starting journalism in Marathi language.
• The first newspaper in the Marathi language named ‘Darpan’, was published on January 6, 1832, the date which also marks his birth anniversary.

**Adani Ports to buy 75% stake in Krishnapatnam Port Company for Rs 13,572 cr**
• The Gautam Adani-led Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ), India's largest private sector port operator has announced to acquire controlling stake (75%) in Krishnapatnam Port Company Limited (KPCL).
• The company will buy a 75% stake in KPCL at an enterprise value of Rs 13,572 crore.
• It is the largest acquisition in the port sector in India.
RevFin Ties-up with PNB MetLife to offer life cover to customers
- RevFin, a digital lending start-up, has partnered with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited (PNB MetLife) to offer protection to its customers through life insurance on their loans.
- The insurance will cover loans up to Rs 3 lakhs for a term of 3 years.

CSC inks MoU with Paytm Payments Bank for sale of FASTags
- CSC e-Governance Services India has signed a memorandum of understanding with Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL), to jointly sell FASTags.
- Under the agreement, CSC will integrate its platform with Paytm Payments Bank for the sale of PPBL FASTags, to carry out seamless transactions
- In September 2017, CSCs started selling FASTags when it partnered with Equitas Bank. Later on, State Bank of India and HDFC Bank came onboard.
- Since March 2019, CSC has tied up with National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) also for selling FASTags.
- Around 2.84 lakh FASTags have been sold by CSCs across the country so far.

Delhi AIIMS’ Professor Suresh Chandra Sharma Appointed as First Chief of National Medical Commission
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Professor Suresh Chandra Sharma, head of Delhi AIIMS’ ENT head-neck surgery department, as the Chairman of National Medical Commission (NMC) on 2nd January 2020.
- Besides him, Rakesh Kumar Vats, the Secretary General in the Board of Governors of the Medical Council of India, has been appointed as secretary of the commission.

About National Medical Commission (NMC)
- The National Medical Commission (NMC) is the new medical education regulator to replace the Medical Council of India (MCI).
- President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to the National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019 on August 8, 2019.
- The MCI has been dissolved after countless allegations of corruption in medical education came up.

Dubai-based Indian girl Sucheta Satish, wins Global Child Prodigy Award 2020 for Twin World Records in Singing
- The 13-year-old Sucheta Satish was selected for the award for her twin world records, which included singing in most languages during one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child.

Global Child Prodigy Award
- The 100 Global Child Prodigy Award is a first of its kind platform with the objective of recognizing child’s talent and power in different categories such as arts, music, dance, writing, modeling, acting, science and sports to give them the global exposure that they deserve and provide them with the right opportunities at the right time to ensure that they create a major impact on society.
- The Global Child Prodigy Award is supported by the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam International Foundation and Oscar winning music director AR Rahman among others.

Former Governor of Karnataka T N Chaturvedi Passes Away at 90
- Former Governor of Karnataka Triloki Nath Chaturvedi has passed away. He was 90.
- T N Chaturvedi served as the 14th Governor of Karnataka from 2002–2007.
- He was also the Comptroller and Auditor General of India from 1984 to 1989.
- Mr Chaturvedi was the recipient of Padma Vibhushan award in 1991.

UN declares Malala Yousafzai ’Most Famous Teenager of The Decade’
• The United Nations has declared Pakistani education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai as "Most Famous Teenager of The Decade". The revelation has been made in its 'Decade in Review' report.
• Malala is working towards children’s rights ever since she was a teenager. In recognition of her efforts, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 and also become the youngest recipient of the award.
• Secretary-General of the United Nations: Antonio Guterres.

Current Affairs PDF- January07, 2020

NATIONAL NEWS

2020 Edition of Buxa Bird Festival Begins in West Bengal
• The fourth edition of the 'Buxa Bird Festival' began at Buxa National Park in West Bengal on January 6, 2020.
• The four-day festival is being attended by over 50 birdwatchers from across the country and abroad.
• It will witness more than 300 rare species of birds including the Great Hornbill, Sultan Tit and Greater Spotted Eagle, migratory birds from colder regions in the northern hemisphere, as well as other rare avian species.

SPORTS

Bhubaneswar to host 1st edition of Khelo India University Games
• The first edition of Khelo India University Games will be held at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology University in Bhubaneswar from February 22 to March 1, 2020.
• Over 4,000 athletes from 100 Universities across India will take part in the sports meet to be held in 17 different disciplines.
• The meet is being organised by the Sports Authority of India, Association of Indian Universities, the Indian Olympic Association and the National Sports Federation.
• The 17 disciplines include: archery, athletics, boxing, fencing, judo, swimming, weight-lifting, wrestling, badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, rugby and kabaddi

Governor of Odisha: Ganeshi Lal.
Odisha Chief Minister: Naveen Patnaik.

Leo Carter of New Zealand Becomes 7th Batsman to Hit Six Sixes in an Over
• cricket to smash six 6s in an over. He achieved the feat in New Zealand’s domestic T20 tournament Super Smash. Representing Canterbury, he smashed Knight’s bowler Anton Devcich for six 6s in the 16th over of the innings.
• Other 6 players who have achieved the feat are: Gary Sobers (West Indies), Ravi Shastri (India), Herschelle Gibbs (South Africa), Yuvraj Singh (India), Ross Whiteley (England) and Hazratullah Zazai (Afghanistan). When it comes to T20 cricket, Carter is just the fourth batsman to achieve the feat. Yuvraj is the only batsman to have scored six 6s in an international T20I.

India’s P MageshChandran lifts Hastings International Chess Congress title
• He remained unbeaten and finished in clear first place with 7.5 points from nine games after securing a 33-move draw in the final round against compatriot G.A. Stany
• The 36-year old US-based Chandran has FIDE rating of 2479.

BANKING AND ECONOMICS

RBI revises supervisory framework for Urban Co-operative Bank
• The Reserve Bank of India has revised its supervisory framework for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs). The revised framework aims to expedite resolution of UCBs experiencing financial stress. The revised framework stipulates the thresholds for various parameters that could trigger a corrective action by the UCBs or a supervisory action by the central bank.
  • A UCB may be placed under supervisory action framework under the following conditions:
    When its Net Non-Performing Asset (NPA) exceeds 6% of its net advances.
    When its Capital to Risk (Weighted) Assets Ratio (CRAR) falls below 9%.
    When it incurs losses for two consecutive financial years or has accumulated losses on its balance sheet.
  • RBI could also undertake different actions like imposition of all-inclusive directions under section 35A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. Issue of show cause notice for cancellation of banking license may also be considered by the RBI if continued normal functioning of the UCB is no longer considered to be in the interest of its depositors.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**ISRO to Set up Human Space Flight Centre at Challakere in Karnataka**
• The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has proposed to create India’s world-class infrastructure to house its young Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) at Challakere in Chitradurga district of Karnataka.
  • The Rs 2,700-crore master plan is estimated to be established in three years.
  • The facility spread over 400-acre ISRO land at Challakere will be a self-contained facility having infrastructure and activities related to space travellers.
  • The first set of four astronaut candidates selected for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022 will be trained in Russia.
  • The new facility will help to save hefty sum to use such facilities abroad and in future, whatever training and activities would be done in Russia for the Gaganyaan crew can all be done at Challakere facility.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

**List of Winners of 77th Golden Globe Awards**
• The 77th Golden Globe Awards took place at California on January 5, 2020 to honor the best in film (both American and International) and American television of 2019.
  • In film category, Once Upon a Time in Hollywood won the most awards with three.
  • In television, Succession, Fleabag, and Chernobyl were the most awarded, with two awards each.

**Winners List (Films)**
• Best Motion Picture – Drama: 1917
• Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy: Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
• Best Actor – Drama: Joaquin Phoenix for Joker as Arthur Fleck / Joker
• Best Actress – Drama: Renée Zellweger for Judy as Judy Garland
• Best Actor – Musical or Comedy: Taron Egerton for Rocketman as Elton John
• Best Actress – Musical or Comedy: Awkwafina for The Farewell as Billi Wang
• Best Supporting Actor: Brad Pitt for Once Upon a Time in Hollywood as Cliff Booth
• Best Supporting Actress: Laura Dern for Marriage Story as Nora Fanshaw
• Best Director: Sam Mendes for 1917
• Best Screenplay: Quentin Tarantino for Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
• Best Original Score: Hildur Guðnadóttir for Joker
• Best Original Song: “(I’m Gonna) Love Me Again” (Elton John, Bernie Taupin) from Rocketman
• Best Animated Feature Film: Missing Link
• Best Foreign Language Film: Parasite (South Korea)

**Winners List (Television)**
• Best Television Series (Drama): Succession
• Best Television Series (Musical or Comedy): Fleabag
• Best Actor (Drama): Brian Cox for Succession as Logan Roy
• Best Actress (Drama): Olivia Colman for The Crown as Queen Elizabeth II
• Best Actor (Musical or Comedy): Ramy Youssef for Ramy as Ramy Hassan
• Best Actress (Musical or Comedy): Phoebe Waller-Bridge for Fleabag as Fleabag
• Best Actor (Miniseries or Television Film): Russell Crowe for The Loudest Voice as Roger Ailes
• Best Actress (Miniseries or Television Film): Michelle Williams for Fosse/Verdon as Gwen Verdon
• Supporting Actor: StellanSkarsgård for Chernobyl as Boris Shcherbina
• Supporting Actress: Patricia Arquette for The Act as Dee Dee Blanchard
• Best Miniseries or Television Film: Chernobyl

Current Affairs PDF- January08, 2020

NATIONAL NEWS

Pune to host fifth edition of global Drosophila conference
• The Asia Pacific drosophila research conference (APDRC) is being conducted in India for the 1st time from January 6-10 in Pune, Maharashtra.
• Overall this is the 5th edition of the biennial conference and is known by the name APDRC5. It is organised by Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).
• The conference aims to promote the interaction of Drosophila researchers in the Asia-Pacific region with the rest of the world.
• The previous 4 editions of the conference took place in Taipei (Taiwan), Seoul (South Korea), Beijing(China) and Osaka (Japan).
• About Maharashtra:
  Governor- Bhagat Singh Koshyari.
  Chief minister- Uddhav Thackeray.
  Capital- Mumbai.
  National Parks(NP)- Tadoba NP, Sanjay Gandhi NP, Chandoli NP, Gugamal NP.

Overview of Cabinet Approvals on 8th January, 2020
The Union Cabinet meeting chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was held on 8th January 2020. Following decisions were taken during the meeting:
• Approval for the ratification of Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement between India and France.
• Approval for Agreement between India and Mongolia on Cooperation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful and Civilian Purposes.
• Approved Agreement on cooperation in polar science between India and Sweden.
• Approved Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and United Kingdom for Enabling Energy Self-Sufficiency for Indian Railways.
• Ex-post-facto approval on the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between Government of India and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) on cooperation in the field of Health
• Approved Capital Grant as Viability Gap Funding to Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited for setting up the North East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid
• Approved 'In Principle' strategic disinvestment of equity shareholding of Minerals & Metals Trading Corporation Limited, National Mineral Development Corporation, MECON and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. in Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited. a JV Company with two Government of Odisha State PSUs
• Confer the status of Institution of National Importance to the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Jamnagar, Gujarat

Second National GST Conference held for streamlining GST
On January 07, 2020 the 2nd edition of the National GST Conference of the Commissioners of State Tax and Chief Commissioners of Central Tax was held in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Dr Ajay Bhushan Pandey, Revenue Secretary of the Ministry of Finance (MoF). The conference was held to streamline the GST (Goods and Service Tax) system and also to plug revenue leakages.

Measures taken in 2nd National GST Conference: After the conference, following measures were decided for necessary action.

- Committee constitution: A committee of the centre and state officers for examining and implementing quick measures to curb fraudulent refund claims was decided to be constituted. The committee will be implemented by the end of January 2020.
- Investigation: Major cases with fake Input Tax Credit (ITC), fraudulent refund cases will soon be compulsorily investigated.
- Linking foreign exchange remittances: Considering the increased amount of fraudulent IGST (Integrated GST) refund claims, the foreign exchange remittances will be linked with IGST refunds.
- CBDT, CBIC and GSTN Mou Signing: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would be signed among Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and GST-Network (GSTN) to exchange data through Application Program Interface (API) among them.
- Data sharing: This data will be shared on a quarterly basis instead of yearly basis.
- Bank transaction exploration: Access to explore bank transactions including bank details by GST in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India) will be made. Suggestions were also made to align GST system with the Financial Intelligence Units (FIU) to get bank account details.
- Fraud refund detected by CBIC & CBDT: Data will be shared for cases involving fraudulent refund detected by CBIC with CBDT and vice versa.
- Single bank account: Formation of a single bank account for foreign remittance receipt and refund disbursement was suggested.
- Business closure: In case of closure of businesses, a self-assessment declaration should be prescribed by suitable amendments in GSTR (GST - Return) forms.
- Unmatched ITC availed by taxpayers should be verified.
- About GST:

  Goods and Services Tax (GST) is an indirect tax (or consumption tax) used in India on the supply of goods and services.

  Launch - 1 July 2017.

**Gujarat: 31st International Kite Festival launched in Ahmedabad**

- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani inaugurated the 31st edition of International Kite Festival at Sabarmati river front in Ahmedabad on January 07, 2020.
- The colourful kite festival will continue till 14th January 2020, the day which is observed as Makarsankranti (festival of Kites) in different parts of the state.
- The International Kite Festival will be held at nine other places across the state simultaneously including Statue of Unity - Kevadiya, Surat and Vadodara.
- More than 140 kite flying experts from 40 countries, about 800 kite fliers from Gujarat and 200 kite fliers from 12 other states are participating in this unique festival.
- Static About Festivals:
  - Lai Haraoba festival - Tripura.
  - Hornbill festival - Nagaland.
  - Lohri festival - Punjab.

**Gujarat: Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center to be set up soon.**

- The state government of Gujarat has planned to set up Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) to identify, nurture and promote children’s innovation in the state.
- The announcement regarding this was made by the Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, during the felicitation ceremony of Children’s Innovation Festival (CIF) held at Swarnim Sankul in Gandhinagar on 07 January 2020.
• CIF has been organized by Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC), an incubation centre set up by Gujarat University in partnership with UNICEF to identify, nurture and support children’s innovations in the state.

• About Gujarat:
  Chief Minister- Vijay Rupani
  Governor- Acharya Devvrat
  State Animal- Asiatic lion
  State Bird- Greater flamingo
  State Tree- Banyan
  State Flower- Marigold

• About UNICEF:
  Founded- December 11, 1946
  Headquarters- New York, United States
  Executive Director- Henrietta H. Fore

Indian Navy launches awareness program about Coastal Security in Maharashtra
• The Indian Navy has launched an expedition, Maha-Navy Connect 2020, on 05 January 2020 from the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, as a part of its initiative to promote the maritime heritage of India and spread awareness about Coastal Security amongst the coastal communities in Maharashtra.
  • The Vice Admiral Ajit Kumar, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command flagged off the first-ever tri-dimensional expedition which consists of yachting, running and cycling teams of 50 naval personnel along three different axes.
  • The expedition, concluding on January 11, extends from Arnala fort, Northernmost fort of Maharashtra to Sindhudurg fort, the southernmost fort of Maharashtra, covering more than 555 km.
  • During the expedition, the teams will visit various schools and local establishments, undertake community interaction, Swachhta Abhiyan and awareness campaigns amongst the locals.

Paris Book Fair 2020 : India invited as guest of honour
• India will be attending the Paris Book Fair 2020 as the guest of honour country.
  • The annual fair will be held in March 2020.
  • This will be the third time that India would be the guest country at the fair after 2002 and 2007.
  • To continue the cultural exchange, France is expected to be the guest of honour at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2022.

8. JK shines in provision of health services at National level
• On January 7,2020 Jammu and Kashmir (J&K),Union territory of India has registered the highest Inpatient Department, IPD care in the country.
  • The state-wise fact sheets was released by National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC),New Delhi.
  • Overall, all women in J&K are availing Antennal Care Services (ANC).
  • The report says that about 96% of IPD care in rural areas of J&K is provided by Public Health Services(PHS) which is highest against the country's average of 85%.
  • J&K had surpassed Kerala as the state with the highest life expectancy in India for all ages barring life expectancy at birth in the year 2016.

About J &k:
Lieutenant Governor- Shri Girish Chandra Murumu.
National Park(NP)- Hemis NP, Dachigam NP, Kazinag NP, Kishwar NP, Salim Ali NP.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0: All you need to know
• Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 2.0 at block level in 35 districts of Uttar Pradesh (UP).
  • It aims to achieve 90% vaccination coverage among children under 2 years of age & pregnant women against 8 vaccine preventable diseases(diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, measles, meningitis and Hepatitis B).
  • Under IMI2.0, the government will provide the immunization activity in 4 rounds over seven working days excluding the Regular immunization days, Sundays and holidays between December 2019 & March 2020.
• It will primarily focus on those people left out from earlier immunisation drives including dropouts, resistant families and under-served population, tribal areas and the urban areas.
• It is the 2nd phase of the nationwide immunisation drive to mark the 25 years of Pulse polio programme. The previous version (IMI 1.0) was launched by the centre in 2017. Prior to this, Mission Indradhanush launched in the year 2014, which sought to achieve 90% immunisation coverage in India by 2020.
• The 1st round of IMI 2.0 was completed in December 2019 and the next/ 3rd round of the mission will be launched in February 2020, where it will cover 425 blocks of 73 districts of Uttar Pradesh (UP) state and 4th round will be launched in March 2020.

BANKING AND ECONOMICS

NSO pegs India’s GDP growth at 5% for FY20
• The first advanced estimates of the national income was released by National Statistical Office (NSO) on 07 January 2020.
• As per the report, the Indian economy is estimated to grow at 5 percent in 2019-20 as against 6.8 percent in the previous fiscal, mainly due to slow deceleration in manufacturing and construction sectors

Sri Lanka: Two Indian lenders, Axis Bank & ICICI Bank, to cease functioning.
• The Indian private sector lenders Axis Bank and ICICI Bank are all set to close their operations in Sri Lanka.
• The Central Bank of Sri Lanka has permitted the two banks to cease their operations in the island nation following the requests by their parent banks.
• The licenses issued to them will be cancelled once the winding-up operations are complete, after which the two banks will no longer be permitted to carry on banking operations, including accepting deposits from the public.

Air India disinvestment: Group of Ministers approve EoI, share purchase agreement
• The GoM also approved a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) & also a debt restructuring plan for Air India.
• The central government had planned to sell its stake in Air India in 2018, but it could not succeed. In 2019, the Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) once again approved the sale of 100% government stake in Air India along with Air India Express and the carrier’s stake in joint venture AISATS (Air India -SATS (Singapore Airport Terminal Services Private Limited).
• Air India is incurring a loss of Rs 20-26 crore every day. The airline's debt has increased to about Rs 80,000 crore & its deficit was around Rs 8,556 crore in 2018-19.
• The debt burden on Air India has reached such an extent due to its debt management inability. So, the government is working on all methods for its disinvestment & approved to transfer the management control to private players.
• In July 2019, Union Government reconstituted the Group of Ministers (GoM) called the Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) on Air India disinvestment. It consists of 3 other ministers namely finance minister (FM) Nirmala Sitharaman, commerce, and railway minister Piyush Goyal and civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri.
• The last meeting of the GoM was held in September 2019.
• About Air India:
  Founded– 15 October 1932 (as Tata Airlines)
  Headquarters– New Delhi
  Chairman & MD– Ashwani Lohani

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
Prashant kishor and Kanhaiya kumar are among the ‘20 people to watch in 2020s’ list of Forbes; political commentator Hassan minhaj of US tops

SPORTS
Former PM Zoran Milanovic wins Croatia presidential polls
On January 6, 2020, Zoran Milanovic, 53 years old won Croatia's presidential election. Zoran Milanovic is Croatia's center-leftist former Prime Minister.

He defeated center-right incumbent Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic (51 years old), who was the first female president of Croatia.

The Presidential election was held on 22 December 2019.

Milanovic belongs to the Social Democratic Party (SDP) won 52.7% vote while Grabar-Kitarovic of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) won 47.3%.

About Croatia:
Capital- Zagreb.
Currency- Croatian Kuna.
Prime Minister- Andrej Plenkovic.

Socialist leader Pedro Sanchez took the oath as PM of Spain

On January 8, 2020, Pedro Sanchez Perez-Castejon (47), a Spanish politician & Socialist leader took the oath as Spanish prime minister (PM) before Spanish King Felipe VI.

He assumed his office after his proposal to form a leftist coalition government with support from smaller parties by narrowly won a parliamentary confidence vote. The Vote, by a simple majority of MPs (member of parliament), went 167 in the 350-seat assembly.

The new Cabinet under Pedro Sanchez will have members of the anti-austerity United We Can party, including party leader Pablo Iglesias as deputy prime minister.

About Spain:
Capital- Madrid
Currency- Euro

A Sakhivel appointed as the new Chairman of AEPC

On January 6, 2020 Apparel Export Promotion Council of India (AEPC) has appointed A Sakhivel as the new chairman of the organisation from 2020 to 2021.

He succeeded HKL Magu. He is also the first person in the history of AEPC, who is sworn-in for the fourth time as Chairman of the AEPC.

About AEPC:
Founded- 1978
Headquarters- Gurgaon, Haryana.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Dhadi folk singer Idu Sharif passes away

Noted sufí singer Idu Sharif, known for his Dhadi folk singing passed away due to paralysis.

The Sangeet Natak Akademi award winner was from Patiala’s Laloda.

Dhadi folk singing is a Punjabi folk music which includes singing ballads using Dhadd and Sarangi, the folk instruments of Punjab.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

3 of world’s 10 fastest-growing urban areas are in Kerala: Economist ranking

On January 08, 2020 latest ranking based on fastest growing urban regions/ fastest growing cities in the world was released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

As per the report 3 of the cities in Kerala were ranked in the top 10 places. Malappuram city of Kerala was ranked 1st in the list, while Kerala’s Kozhikode and Kollam cities were ranked in the 4th and 10th place respectively.

List preparation: The list was compiled on the basis of the data provided by the United Nations Population Division (UNPD).

Top rankers: Malappuram was followed by Can Tho region in Vietnam at 2nd spot and Suqian in China in the 3rd spot.

Other Indian cities: Thrissur city of Kerala was ranked at the 13th spot with a growth rate of 30.2%.
Surat (Gujarat) was ranked at 27th spot and Tiruppur (Tamil Nadu) at the 30th spot.

- **Growth rate:** Malappuram grew 44% from 2015 to 2020. In the past 5 years, Kozhikode had a growth rate of 34.5%, while Kollam had 31.1%.

- **About the Economist Intelligence Unit:**

  Fact- EIU, is a part of the popular Economist Magazine, provides forecasting and advisory services through research and analysis.

  Founded- 1946.


  Managing Director(MD)- Robin Bew.

**World's most powerful passports in 2020: Indians don't need prior visa in 58 countries says Henley Passport Index released on 8th January 2020.**

- **Report on India:**

  India ranks at 84th place which is tagged along with Mauritania and Tajikistan, which is a drop by 2 places as it ranked 82nd in 2019

  India provides visa free access to 58 countries.

  Visa free visits: Some of the countries where Indian passport holders can visit without a prior visa include Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Macao, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Iran and Qatar etc

- **General Report:**

  Mobility scores: The index measures the strength of all the passports around the world, based on mobility scores which denotes the number of destinations that could be accessed by the passport-holders of a specific country, without a pre-departure visa.

  IATA covers 199 passports and 227 travel destinations.

  Japan tops the list, provides visa-free access to 191 countries.

  - Top 10 countries: The countries in the top 10 list and no of destinations that could be visited without a prior visa is listed below in brackets:

    - Singapore ranks 2nd (190); Germany and South Korea at 3rd (189); Finland & Italy at 4th (188);
    - Denmark, Luxembourg and Spain at 5th (187); France and Sweden at 6th (186);
    - Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Switzerland at 7th (185); Belgium, Greece, Norway, United Kingdom(UK) and the United States of America (USA) at 8th (184);
    - Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Malta, New Zealand at 9th (183); Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia ranked at 10th place (181).

  - Worst passport: Afghanistan’s passport is the world's worst passport with mobility score 26 while India’s neighbouring country Pakistan's is the fourth worst with mobility score 32. Afghanistan was followed by Iraq (mobility score-28) and Syria (mobility score- 29) having World's worst passport.

**NATIONAL NEWS**

**MILAN 2020: Visakhapatnam gears up to host International Naval event.**

- The City of Destiny, Visakhapatnam, is set to host the International Naval event ‘MILAN’ in March 2020.

  - MILAN 2020 is a multilateral naval exercise to enhance professional interaction between participating foreign navies and learn from each other's strengths and best practices in the maritime domain.

  - The theme of the exercise is ‘Synergy Across the Seas’.

  - Of the 41 navies invited, confirmations from over 30 navies have been received towards their participation in MILAN 2020

**MHA issues revised norms for mutual legal assistance treaties.**

- On 8th January 2020, The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued revised guidelines to expedite the delivery of mutual legal assistance and justice in criminal matters with other countries under the government's policy of zero tolerance for crime at all.

  - In this regard, India has signed Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with 42 countries in November 2019 for cooperation in criminal matters & the MHA is also designated ‘Central Authority of
India’ for it.

- The guidelines, issued in December 2019, are steps to speed up the delivery of justice. The revised guidelines will provide investigative agencies with step-by-step guidelines on drafting and moving request letters, mutual legal aid requests or Letters Rogatory (LR) and summon requests, notices and other judicial documents.
- Aim: By incorporating various legal and technological developments in recent years, its goal is to make documentation more concise, focused and suited to international needs in this regard. Concerns raised by various courts have also been taken into consideration for fast and timely receipt of documents of people living abroad.
- India is also the signatory of various international conventions like the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).
- Mutual Legal Assistance: It is a mechanism whereby countries cooperate with each other with the aim to provide and obtain formal assistance in prevention, investigation and prosecution of crime to ensure that the criminals do not escape for want of evidence available in various countries.

Over eight crore farmer families benefitted under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme, with more than Rs 48 thousand 937 crore released under the scheme till date.

Crime in India increased by 1.3% in 2018: NCRB

- On January 09, 2020 National Crime Record Bureau’s (NCRB) report on Crime in India for the year 2018 was released. The report finds that over 50 lakh crimes have been registered in 2018 which is 1.3% more than that of 2017.
- The report findings in detail are as follows:
  - The report stated that Uttar Pradesh (UP) accounted for the maximum number of economic offences in 2018 with 22,822 cases recorded. It was followed by Rajasthan (21,309 cases), Maharashtra (14,854 cases), Telangana (10,390 cases) and Bihar (9,209 cases) in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th rank respectively.
  - Crimes in 2018: Totally 50,74,634 cognizable crimes were committed in 2018. It included 31,32,954 Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes and 19,41,680 Special and Local Laws (SLL) crimes.
  - IPC crimes: crimes under IPC have increased by 2.3% and stood at 61.7% in 2018.
  - SLL crimes: Crimes under SLL have declined by 0.1% compared to 2017 and stood at 38.3% in 2018.

About National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB):
- Headquarters- New Delhi.
- Motto - Empowering Indian Police with Information Technology
- Director- Ramphal Pawar, IPS (Indian Police Service).

BANKING AND ECONOMICS

Indian economy likely to grow to USD 7 tln by 2030: Deutsche Bank

- Deutsche Bank has predicted India’s economy to grow to $7 trillion by 2030, which is two and half times more from about $3 trillion now, making India the world’s third largest economy.
- In its research report titled, Imagine 2030, it said that the nominal GDP growth is likely to average just over 10% through the next decade.
- Deutsche Bank Headquarters: Frankfurt, Germany.

SBI lowers GDP estimates for FY20 to 4.6% from 5%.

- The state-run largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI) has lowered its GDP growth forecast of India for FY20 to 4.6 percent from the previous estimate of 5 percent.
- According to the latest SBI Ecowrap report, the growth rate is predicted to remain below 6 percent for the two years in a row.

9. CCI report on ‘Market Study on E-commerce in India’ released.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) released a report titled “Market Study on E-commerce in India: Key Findings and Observations” after it was initiated by CCI in April 2019 for better
understanding a functioning of e-commerce in India. The study was also launched to identify impediments (obstructions) to competition.

Findings:
o  Revenue sector: Revenue from the e-commerce sector is expected to increase from $39 billion in 2017 to $120 billion in 2020, growing at an annual rate of 51%, the highest in the world.
o  Internet sector: The no. of internet users have increased from 445.96 million in 2017 to 665.31 million in 2019 and is also expected to increase to 829 million in 2021.
o  Goods sector: E-commerce in the goods category in India has grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 57% in the last 7 years, and is expected to grow by 18.6% till 2022
o  Food sector: The food tech industry in India is estimated to grow at a CAGR (Compounded Annual Growth Rate) of more than 12% between 2016 and 2021.

83% of the respondent restaurants reported to have an online presence. Their online sales accounted for an average nearly 29% of the respondent restaurants’ revenue.

Market Study on E-commerce in India:
o  The study is a combination of secondary research, questionnaire survey, group discussions, one-on-one meetings etc covered in 3 categories of e-commerce in consumer goods, accommodation services and food services.
o  Participation: 16 online platforms, 164 business entities and 7 payment system providers participated in the study. 11 industry associations, representing different stakeholder groups, also participated in the study.
o  Key issues discussed in the study: Issues that directly or indirectly have a bearing on competition were discussed. These include issues of lack of platform neutrality, unfair platform-to-business contract terms, exclusive contracts between online marketplace platforms and sellers/service providers, platform price parity restrictions and deep discounts.
o  Transparency measures for e-commerce platforms: The transparency measures include
  Search ranking- General description of the search ranking parameters should be drafted in plain and intelligible language with up to date prescriptions.
  Collection, use and sharing of data- A policy on the data should be set.
  User review and rating mechanism- This has to be done to ensure information symmetry, which is a prerequisite for fair competition.
  Revision in contract terms- The contract should be revised in a timely manner and revision should not be implemented before expiry of a notice period.
  Discount policy- A clear and transparent policy on discounts should be brought up.

About Competition Commission of India (CCI):
Founded- 14 October 2003.
Headquarters- New Delhi.
Chairperson- Ashok Kumar Gupta.
First executive- Dhanendra Kumar.

**Sunteck Realty jumps 6% on tie-up with SBI**
- On January 08, 2020 the State Bank of India (SBI) has announced a new scheme named Residential Builder Finance with Buyer Guarantee (RBBG).
- This new scheme's purpose is to safeguard home buyers financially by issuing guarantee for completion of projects to customers availing SBI Home Loans.
- The ongoing home projects of SBI customers will be financed by the bank itself.
- Home price range: Housing segment with home price of up to Rs. 2.50 crores in 10 cities will be focused in the RBBG scheme initially.
- Residential builder finance with buyer guarantee:
  a. Builders loan availability: Under the scheme, all reputed builders fulfilling the bank criteria can avail loan ranging between Rs 50 crores and Rs 400 crores. The criteria also include star rating and CIBIL (Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited) score.
  b. RERA act: The buyer guarantee will be available for RERA (Real Estate Regulatory Act, 2016) registered projects and a project will be considered stuck after it crosses the RERA deadline.
c. Amount refund: The lender would refund the entire principal amount in case the developer fails to deliver the project within the assured deadline. The refund scheme will be valid till the occupation certificate is procured by the builder.

Zero-Budget Natural Farming: AP govt inks Rs 711 cr loan pact with German bank

- On January 8, 2020 Andhra Pradesh government signs a loan pact for Rs.711 crore with Kfw, Germany Development bank for expanding the climate-resilient Zero-Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) in the state for the next five years.
- Key Points:
  a. To take up the insurance scheme Andhra Pradesh government will spend Rs 304 crore in addition to encourage 2.39 lakh farmers in 591 village panchayats.
  b. ZBNF already covers about 1.28 lakh hectares in 3,011 villages of Andhra Pradesh and the financial assistance from German bank helps to cover about 2 lakh hectares in the addition.
  c. The helpline number "1800 599 3366" was also launched for enquiries related to the insurance scheme.
  d. The state government under takes ZBNF along with the Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVV) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana's (PKVY) of the Centre government and technical supported by Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives.
- About Zero-Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF): ZBNF is a method of Chemical-free agriculture practice which aims to bring down the cost of production to zero and doubles the farmer's income. ZBNF was also highlighted in budget 2019 for doubling farmer’s income by 2022.

About Kfw:
- Founded- 1948
- Headquarters- Frankfurt, Germany

About Andhra Pradesh:
- Chief Minister- Jagan Mohan Reddy
- Governor- Biswabhushan Harichandan
- Capital City- Amaravati
- State Tree- Neem tree
- State Flower- Water lilies
- State Animal- Blackbuck
- State Bird- Indian roller

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Indian-origin author's debut novel wins book award in UK

- Jasbinder now lives near Bath, largest city in the county of Somerset, England, with her husband and her two sons.
- The Costa Book Awards are a set of annual literary awards recognising English-language books by writers based in Britain and Ireland.
- The award is presented across five categories namely First Novel, Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children’s Book.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

State-owned Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) has appointed M Nagaraj as CMD.

- On January 8, 2020 State-owned Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) has appointed M Nagaraj as company's Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) for a period of 3 months.
- M. Ravi kanth was the former Chairman and Managing Director of HUDCO.
- Nagaraj is also Director (Corporate Planning) of the company.
The shares of Hudco were trading at Rs.37.40 a piece on BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange).

HUDCO provides loans for housing and urban infrastructure projects.

Static about HUDCO:
Headquarters- New Delhi.
Founded- 25 April 1970.

**Former Allahabad HC chief justice Dilip B Bhosale quits as Lokpal member.**

- On January 9, 2020 Lokpal Member and the Former Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court, Justice Dilip Babasaheb Bhosale has resigned from his post due to some personal reasons.
- He was appointed by Lokpal Chairman Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose on March 27, 2019.
- 63-years-old Bhosale was the acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad for the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from 2015-2016.
- He also served as a judge of the high courts of Bombay and Karnataka.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**New data relay satellites to keep Gaganyaan crew in touch with Earth**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has planned to launch its own satellite communication system called Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) for tracking and communication of its space assets.
- The IDRSS will have a constellation of two geo satellites, which will be deployed in phases.
- The first satellites will be launched into low-Earth orbit by the end of 2020, ahead of the unmanned Gaganyaan test flight, while the second satellite will be launched in 2021, before the manned mission is embarked in 2022.
- IDRSS will help ISRO’s ground control room to uniformly monitor India’s spaceflights and communicate with them at any given point of time, and can be used in both low orbit missions and farther missions such as those to the moon, Mars and beyond.
- The first beneficiary of IDRSS would be the prospective crew members of the Gaganyaan mission of 2022 who can be fully and continuously in touch with mission control throughout their travel.

**Railway stations to have smart cameras for facial recognition**

- On January 8, 2020 Face recognition technology developed using Artificial Intelligence (IP) has been installed in Bengaluru, Manmad and Bhusawal stations as test cases.
- The objective of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) is to link the facial recognition system with existing databases and identify the criminals.
- Indian Railways is also in the process of installing Internet Protocol (IP) based Video Surveillance System (VSS) at railway stations.
- Key Points:
  - In the last budget Rs 250 crore was allocated to Indian Railways from Nirbhaya funds for installation of VSS in 983 railway stations.
  - RailTel, a miniratna PSU under Ministry of Railways are working for install Internet Protocol (IP)-based VSS and facial recognition system in the railway stations.
  - In the first phase of installation VSS is being installed at 200 stations and as on date work has been completed at 81 stations across India.
  - Under VSS, four types of full HD cameras namely Dome type, Bullet type, Pan Tilt zoom type and Ultra 4k-HD cameras will be installed. Each HD camera at the station consumes approximately 1TB of data and 4k camera consumes 4 TB data per month.
  - South Western Railway (SWR) has recently installed Video Surveillance system at 6 major stations namely Ballari, Belagavi, Vasco-Da Gama, Bengaluru, Bangarpet and Hassan. Thus SWR completes the work at the end of the year 2020 in 20 stations.
  - Western Railways has installed in 10 stations namely Bhavnagar Terminus, Udhna, Valsad, Veraval, Nagda, Navsari, Vapi, Viragam, Rajkot and Gandhidham.
- About Indian Railways:
  - Founded- April 16, 1853
  - Headquarters- New Delhi
  - Ministry of Railway- Piyush Goyal
China: Long March 3B launches TJSW-4

China has successfully launched a new communication technology experiment satellite, Tongxin Jishu Shiyan Weixing-5 (TJSW-5) by its Long March-3B (also known as CZ [Chang Zheng]-3B) carrier rocket.

- The mission lifted off from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan Province, a southwestern Chinese province.
- It was the 324th mission for the Long March series of carrier rockets.

**Key Points:**

1. The satellite, entered into space, will be used in communication, radio, television and data transmission, as well as high throughput technology test.
2. Earlier in December 2019, China launched its heaviest and most advanced communications satellite, Shijian-20 with its largest new carrier rocket Long March-5 (also known as CZ-5) from Wenchang Space Launch Center (WSLC) in south China's Hainan Province.

**About TJSW (Tongxin Jishu Shiyan Weixing):**

It is a series of satellites are officially Communications Engineering Test Satellites, built by Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology(SAST) and the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT), under the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC).

**About Long March-3B carrier:**

It has the capacity to launch 11,200 kg satellite to a low Earth orbit or a 5,100 kg cargo to a geosynchronous transfer orbit (GTO).

**India's first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant likely to be commissioned by early 2021.**

- On January 8, 2020 the manufacturing of the country's first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant is likely to be commissioned by early 2021.

**Key Points:**

1. This carrier is being built at the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) Kochi, Kerala.
2. The third phase of construction will go till acceptance of harbour, sea trials and aviation trial will also take a year and it will be fully operated by 2022.
3. The first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant complemented with Mikoyan MiG-29k aircraft will be showcased as part of the Navy's tableau during the ceremonial parade on Rajpath, New Delhi on the Republic day.

**About Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL):**

- Headquarters: Kochi, Kerala
- Chairman and Managing Director (MD) – Shri Madhu S Nair.

**About Indian Navy:**

- Chief of the Naval Staff – General Admiral Karambir Singh.
- Founded: 5th September 1612.
- Navy Day: December 4.

**BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

**Amit Shah releases a book 'Karmayoddha Granth'**

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah released a book titled 'Karmayoddha Granth' which depicts the life of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- 'Karmayoddha' means a man with a beating heart for people, a statesman, a hard taskmaster, an able administrator and an ideal leader who leads by example.

**SUMMITS AND MOU'S**
The MoU on electoral cooperation between Election Commission of India and Electoral Commission of Mauritius renewed

- On January 08, 2020, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of electoral management with the electoral commission of Mauritius.
- The renewal was done at Port Louis of Mauritius and was signed by India’s Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora and Mohammed Irfan Abdool Rahman, Electoral Commissioner of Mauritius.
- The MoU was previously in existence from April 2013 - April 2018.
- About Mauritius:
  - Capital: Port Louis.
  - Currency: Mauritian rupee.
  - Prime minister: Pravind Jugnauth.

SBI and Sunteck Realty Limited (SRL) signed MoU:

- On January 08, 2020, SBI and real estate development company Sunteck Realty Limited (SRL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost the residential housing sector under the public sector lender’s RBBG scheme with tagine “Sapna Aapka – Bharosa SBI Ka” to the home buyers.
- Under this MoU three projects will be constructed in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region of Maharashtra.
- Home buyers can choose their dream homes from SBI approved projects in 10 cities enhancing trust and transparency.
- About State Bank of India (SBI):
  - Formation: 1 July 1955.
  - Chairperson: Rajnish Kumar.
  - Headquarters: Mumbai.
  - Tagline: The banker to every Indian; With you- all the way; A bank of the common man; Pure banking, nothing else.

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NATIONAL NEWS

1. **India-2021 census to begin on 1st April.**
   - The Census India-2021 exercise is scheduled to start on 1st April 2020 and conclude on 30th September 2020.
   - Also, for the first time, the Census India-2021 will be conducted through a mobile phone application, instead of the traditional pen and paper method as used earlier.

2. **Tamil Nadu: Famous chariot festival of Suchindram Thunamalayan Temple being held today.**
   - The annual chariot festival of the Suchindram Thunamalayan Temple in Tamil Nadu began on 09 January 2020.
   - The ten-day festival involving pulling of the chariot is held every year in the state in the Tamil month falling in December - January.
   - Suchindram Temple, also known as Sthunamalayan Temple is located in the Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu.
   - The main deity of the temple is Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma in a single form called Sthanumalayan, where Sthanu means Trtrimurti – Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

3. **Central Govt To Set Up 1023 Fast Track Special Courts For Speedy Disposal of POCSO and Rape Cases**
   - On January 09, 2020, 24 states and union territories (UTs) have joined together to set up a total of 1,023 ‘fast-track special courts’ (FTSCs) to dispose of over 1.60 lakh cases of rape of children below the
age of 12 years and women pending in various courts across the country.

- This has been done to bring out fast and time bound completion of trial of these cases for which Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 was enacted.
- The FTSC will be set up as part of National Mission for Safety of Women (NMSW).
- Project cost: Total financial implication of the project is over Rs 767.25 crore.
- Operational courts: 216 POCSO courts have already been operationalized in 12 States under the scheme.
- Courts for POCSO cases: Out of the 1023 FTSCs, 289 courts were proposed in 2019 to be set up exclusively for POCSO Act related cases in Districts having more than 100 such cases.
- Cases to be heard in a year: Each FTSC is expected to dispose of 41-42 cases in each quarter and at least 165 cases in a year.

4. **India's first “fully solar powered” railway section between Nandyal-Yerraguntla**
- On January 9, 2020 the Nandyal-Yerraguntla section in Guntakal Division of Andhra Pradesh has been declared as the first solar section in South Central Railway.
- In 2016 August Indian Railways opened Nandyal-Yerraguntla section in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.
- All the 8 stations in the Nandyal-Yerraguntla section has been provided with solar panels which are capable of meeting all the power needs in these railway stations.
- Anticipated savings in terms of revenue is around Rs 5 lakh per annum and it also helps in reducing carbon footprint to the tune of 49 metric tonnes per annum.
- By 2021-22, Indian Railways has planned to source about 1000 MegaWatt (MW) Solar Power and about 200 MW of wind power across Zonal Railways & Production Units.

5. **Chenab Bridge: Indian Railways on track for world’s highest railway-arch bridge in J&K**
- On January 9, 2020 Government of India set a new deadline for the completion of the world's highest railway bridge- Chenab bridge. Kashmir will be connected to the rest of India by Indian railways by December 2021.
- Konkan railway is the implementing agency of this project.
- The Chenab bridge will be 35m taller than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.
- Once completed, it will surpass the record of the Beipan river Shuibai railway bridge (275 m) in China.
- The massive arch-shaped structure being constructed in hostile-terrain, have used over 5462 tonnes of steel will be 359 meters above the Chenab river bed.
- It is designed to withstand the wind’s speeds of up to 260km per hour.
- The 1.315-km-long ‘engineering marvel’ will connect Bakkal (katra) and Kauri (Srinagar).
- The bridge forms a crucial link in the 111-km stretch between Katra and Banihal, which is part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project.
- The project was declared as a national project in 2002.
- **About Chenab River:**
  i. The Chenab river is formed by the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers at Tandi in the upper himalayas in Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh, Republic of India.
  ii. In its upper reaches it is also known as Chandrabhaga.
  iii. It is the tributary of the Indus river.
  iv. The total length of Chenab river is about 960 km.
- **Konkan Railway:**
  Chairman and Managing Director- Shri. Sanjay Gupta.

6. **Forest Committee approves scheme to ‘trade’ in forests.**
- On January 09, 2020 the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) which is an apex body that considers questions on the diversion of forest land for non-forest uses such as mining, industrial projects, townships etc and also issues granting of forest clearances has approved Green Credit Scheme that would allow forests to be traded as a commodity.
- **Green Credit scheme:**
Agencies identifying lands: The scheme allows agencies like private companies, village forest communities etc to identify lands for forest cultivation and ensures plantations are grown.

Compensatory forest land: After 3 years, these identified lands would be considered as compensatory forest land after meeting forest department’s criteria.

Industry approaching agencies: An industry that needs forest land could approach these agencies and pay them for such forested land. This would then be transferred to the forest department & also recorded as forest land.

Current system: In the current system the industry should find appropriate non forest land equal to that which would be razed for industrial purposes.

**BANKING AND ECONOMICS**

7. **World Bank cuts India’s FY20 growth estimates to 5% from earlier 6%.**
   - The WB report has cuts India’s GDP growth for financial year 2020-21 to 5% from its previous estimate of 6 percent.
   - Also, for fiscal 2021-22, GDP projection has come down to 5.8 percent,
   - The Global economic growth in 2020-21 is expected to rise to 2.5%.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

8. **4 Indian airports receive international recognition for reducing carbon emissions.**
   - On January 10, 2020 the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has announced that 4 Indian airports have received international recognition for reducing the carbon emission level as per the standards set by Airports Council International (ACI) for the grading.
   - The 4 airports are as follows:
     - Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport (West Bengal)
     - Biju Patnaik International Airport (Odisha)
     - Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport (Uttar Pradesh)
     - Trivandrum International Airport (Kerala)
   - The reduction in emissions was achieved by constituting Carbon Management Plan (CMP) and reducing carbon emissions at airports as per the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) Program. ACI’s grading system is based on 4 categories. They are mapping, reduction, optimization and neutrality.

9. **Prof. MS Swaminathan & Dr. G Muniratnam chosen for Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Awards.**
   - Eminent Agricultural Scientist Dr M S Swaminathan and veteran social worker, Dr. Gutta Muniratnam have been chosen as the first recipients of ‘Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence’ and ‘Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service’ respectively.
   - The announcement for the awards was made during the 10th Anniversary Celebrations of Muppavarapu Foundation and Sankranthi Sambaralu (festivities) organized in Hyderabad on 09 January 2020.
   - The Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence is instituted by the Muppavarapu Foundation.
   - Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service has been launched by the Swarna Bharat Trust.
   - Each award carries a cash prize of Rupees Five Lakh and citation.
   - Prof. M.S. Swaminathan has been awarded for his distinguished contributions to the field of agriculture.
   - Dr G Muniratnam, Founder Secretary of Tirupati-based Rashtriya Seva Samiti, was awarded for his extraordinary contribution in improving quality of people’s lives through social service.

**SPORTS**

10. **TTFI to host ITTF EC Meeting in New Delhi.**
    - The two-day Executive Committee meeting of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) began in New Delhi on 10th January 2020.
    - This is the second time that India is hosting such a meeting.
    - Previously such meeting of the ITTF was held in New Delhi in 1987.
• The EC meeting is being chaired by ITTF President Thomas Weikert to discuss the development of table tennis in India, among other issues.
• The other members in the Executive Committee of the ITTF comprises deputy president Khalil Al-Mohannad, Secretary General Raul Calin, seven executive vice-presidents and CEO Steve Dainton.
• International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) headquarter- Lausanne, Switzerland.

OBITUARY

11. Former MP Gopinath Deo Dies At 76 In Odisha After Illness
• On January 10, 2020 Odisha’s Gajapati dynasty head and the former MP Gopinath Gajapati Narayan Deo passed away due to prolonged illness in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
• He was 76. He was born on March 6, 1943 in Paralakhemundi town of Gajapati district in Odisha.
• He was member of Indian National Congress (INC) representing the Berhampur parliamentary constituency.
• He later joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1998 and moved to Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in 2009.

12. Minati Mishra Passes Away at 91
• Eminent Odishi dancer and Padma Shri awardee Minati Mishra passed away in Switzerland. She was 91.
• Born in Cuttack, Minati was a recipient of Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi award for 1975, and the Padma award in 2012.

Current Affairs PDF - January 11, 2020

NATIONAL NEWS

India’s energy policy: Key findings of the IEA’s In-Depth Review 2020
• On January 10, 2020 the International Energy Agency (IEA) in partnership with NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog has released the first in-depth review of India’s energy policies 2020.
• The IEA conducts review on energy policies of its member countries.
• This is the 1st time the review is done for India after it became an IEA-association country in March 2017.
• Renewable energy growth: India has strong growth in renewables in India accounting for almost 23% of the country’s total installed capacity.
• Doubling of energy demand: India’s energy demand is expected to be doubled by 2040 and also the electricity demand may triple.
• Share of variable renewables: The share of variable renewables in India is already above 15%.
• Reduction in energy demand: The improvements made in energy efficiency helped India to avoid 15% of additional energy demand, oil and gas imports, and air pollution as well as 300 million tonnes of CO2 (carbon dioxide) emissions between 2000 and 2018.

State Energy Efficiency Index 2019: Haryana, Karnataka and Kerala Tops
• The State Energy Efficiency Index 2019 was released on 10 January 2020 in New Delhi by RK Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and New & Renewable Energy and Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship.
• The Index has been developed by Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE) under the leadership and guidance of the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) to access the efforts and achievements of states and union territories towards energy efficiency implementation.
• The top performing states for State EE Index 2019, Haryana, Kerala and Karnataka

Basic Features of the Index
• The first such Index named the State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index, was launched on 01 August 2018.
• The State EE Index 2019 draws on the previous index and has enhanced the indicator framework,
with this year’s Index based on 97 indicators.
- 36 states and union territories have been assessed in State EE Index 2019.
- The State EE Index 2019 has categorized states in 4 groups namely ‘FrontRunner’, ‘Achiever’, ‘Contender’ and ‘Aspirant’ based on their efforts and achievements towards energy efficiency implementation.
- Also, for a rational comparison, the States and Union Territories were grouped into four groups based on the aggregated Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES) required to meet the state's actual energy demand across sectors.

Key Findings of the Index
- None of the states were ranked as ‘front runner’ state which means that a lot more can be done at the state level to realise energy savings from energy efficiency.
- Haryana, Kerala and Karnataka topped the index and were the only three states to be ranked in the ‘Achiever’ category.
- Karnataka (Group 1), Haryana (Group 2), Himachal Pradesh (Group 3) and Puducherry (Group 4) led their groups.
- Rajasthan (Group 1), Jharkhand (Group 2), Jammu & Kashmir (Group 3) and Manipur (Group 4) performed the worst in their groups.

Amit Shah inaugurates state-of-the-art portal (14 C) to tackle cyber crimes
- The Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the state-of-the-art Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) in New Delhi on 11 January 2020.
- The minister also dedicated National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal to the nation.
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- Government had approved the scheme to set up I4C in October 2018 at an estimated cost of around Rs 416 crore to deal with all types of cyber-crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.
- 15 States and UTs have given their consent to set up Regional Cyber Crime Coordination Centres.
- National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal
- The National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (www.cybercrime.gov.in) has been launched as a citizen-centric initiative by Home Ministry to enable citizens report cyber-crimes online.
- All the cyber-crime related complaints will be accessed by the concerned law enforcement agencies in the States and Union Territories for taking action as per law.
- This portal was launched on pilot basis on 30th August, 2019.
- So far, over 700 Police Districts and 3,900 Police Stations have been connected with this portal.

First-of-its-kind ‘CYBER AASHVAST’ and VISWAS projects Inaugurated by HM Amit Shah in Gandhinagar
- The Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated various people centric projects at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar on 11 January 2020.
- Some of the major projects inaugurated includes:
  - Video Integration and State Wide Advanced Security (VISWAS)
  - VISWAS is a first of its kind project in the country launched for major e-governance initiative.
  - It aims at improving Law and Order Management, Proactive traffic management and control, Crime detection through video analytics and Post incident Investigation and video forensics.
- Cyber Crime Prevention Unit-AASHVAST
- Cyber AASHVAST Project is a first of its kind unit launched by Gujarat Police to make cyber-space safe for common man through a dedicated helpline service for victims of cyber crimes to provide cyber-security solution.

Paperless licensing process for petroleum road tankers launched by DPIIT
- On January 10, 2020 Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has launched paperless licensing process through Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) for road tankers for transportation of petroleum under the Petroleum Rules, 2002.
- This is a significant move towards paperless and green India that provides ease of doing business
for petroleum road tankers.
- Moving towards digitalisation the process will include filing the applications through online processing of the application at every stage will be intimated via e-mail (electronic mail) and SMS (Short Message Service) whether discrepancy or approval or grant of license.
- This initiative directly benefits more than one lakh petroleum road tanker owners who together hold more than half of total licenses issued under the Petroleum Rules, 2002.
- The authenticity of the license can be verified through public domain available on PESO's website.

About Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO):
It is headed by Chief Controller of Explosives.
Founded- 9 September 1898.
Headquarters- Nagpur.
Joint Chief Controller of Explosives, HOD(HEAD OF DEPARTMENT)- M.K.Jhala.

Asia’s largest Civil Aviation platform- 'Wings India 2020' to be held at Hyderabad from 12-15 March 2020
- Wings India 2020, an international exhibition and conference on civil aviation sector, will be held at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad, Telangana from March 12-15, 2020.
- The theme of the event is “Flying for all”.
- The biennial event will be inaugurated by the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi in presence of Minister for Civil Aviation and Minister of State for Civil Aviation.
- Ministry of Civil Aviation (MCA), Federation Of Indian Chambers Of Commerce And Industry (FICCI), Airports Authority of India (AAI) are the organizers of the event
- The event will provide a fillip to the aviation and restructured focused forums will be instrumental in attaining the objective of connecting the Buyers, Sellers, Investors and other stakeholders at a common forum.
- The maiden edition of “WINGS INDIA AWARDS” for Excellence in the Civil Aviation Sector will be announced during the event. The award will be conferred upon the Aviation-related Companies/Institutions/Organizations.
- About Ministry of Civil Aviation:
  Founded- October 21, 2016
  Ministry of Civil Aviation- Hardeep Singh Puri
  Ministry of State for Civil Aviation- Suresh Prabhu
  Director General of Directorate General of Civil Aviation- Arun Kumar
- About FICCI:
  Founded- 1927
  Headquarters- New Delhi
  President- Sandip Somany
- About AAI:
  Founded- April 1, 1995
  Headquarters- New Delhi
  Chairman- Arvind Singh
- About Telangana:
  Chief Minister- K. Chandrashekar Rao
  Governor- Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan
  State Flower- Senna auriculata
  State Tree- Jand
  State Animal- Chital
  State Bird- Indian roller

NSO’s IIP data : Industrial production grows 1.8% in November 2019
- On January 10, 2020, According to the Index of industrial production (IIP) data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Growth in manufacturing sector has resulted in 128.4 in November 2019, which is 1.8 % higher as compared to the level 126.1 in the month of November 2018.
• The result turning positive after 3 consecutive months (August to October 2019) of decline.
• Manufacturing sector: As per the data, the manufacturing sector (13 of the 23 industry groups in the manufacturing category) grew by 2.7% in November 2019, compared to a decline of 0.7% in the same month in 2018.
• Electricity generation: While there was a 5.1% increase in power generation in November 2018, it declined by 5% in November 2019.
• Mining sector: Mining sector production was down 1.7% as compared to a decline of 2.7% in the reporting period.

‘Jagananna Amma Vodi Scheme’ to financially help mothers educate their children: Andhra Pradesh
• On 9th January 2020, the state government of Andhra Pradesh under Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy launched first-of-its-kind scheme for mothers in India named Jagananna Amma Vodi scheme.
• The ‘Amma Vodi’ scheme is AP government’s flagship programme to support mothers (or recognized guardian in the absence of mother), who is below poverty line household, irrespective of caste, creed, religion and region to enable her to educate her child/children from Class I to XII from the Academic year 2019-2020.
• The government has allocated Rs 6455.80 crore budget in the fiscal year 2019-20 for the scheme.
• The minister released Rs 6,318 crore on January 9 for the scheme under which Rs 15,000 each was credited into the accounts of around 43 lakh mothers as an annual financial assistance for the benefit of 82 lakh children in the state this year.
• For further details visit: http://jaganannaamavodi.ap.gov.in
Click here to see the Beneficiaries of AMMAVODI SCHEME

Yashaswini Scheme for Women entrepreneurship launched in Goa.
• Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Textiles, Smriti Irani launched Yashaswini Scheme for Women entrepreneurship in Goa on 11 January 2020 at Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium at Taleigao near Panaji.
• Under Yashaswini scheme, women self-help groups will get interest free loans of upto Rs 5 lakh for business.
• To begin with, Adarsha Satari Mahila Mandal Guleli -Sattari, Umang Self-Help Group, Salcete, Phoenix Womens Wing Self-Help Group Valpoi -Sattari were given loans under newly launched Yashaswini scheme.

INS Vikramaditya deployed amid China-Pak Navy drill
• China and Pakistan are conducting their nine-day mega naval exercise ‘Sea Guardians’ in the North Arabian Sea from 06 January 2020 to increase inter-operability and strategic cooperation between their two navies.
• On the other hand, India Navy too deployed its aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya in the Arabian Sea, to send a clear strategic signal to them about its operational readiness and combat capability in the maritime domain.
• Top officials of the Naval headquarters are personally keeping close watch on the ‘Sea Guardians’ from the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya deploying MiG29K fighters on board.

BANKING AND ECONOMICS

HDFC completes acquisition of controlling majority stake (51.16%) in Apollo Munich.
• The mortgage lender Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) has announced the completion of the acquisition of majority stake (51.16%) in Apollo Munich Health Insurance Company for Rs. 1,495.81 crore.
• The acquisition was approved by the Competition Commission of India (CCI), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRADI) by 01 January 2020.
• Controlling Stake: HDFC has acquired 50.80% share of Apollo Hospital Group in Apollo Munich Health Insurance Company (Apollo Munich) for Rs 1485.14 crore.
It has also acquired 0.36% shareholding held by few employees for Rs 10.67 crore.

- Name of new Entity: Subsequently, the Apollo Munich has been renamed as HDFC ERGO Health Insurance and will operate as a subsidiary of HDFC.
- MD and CEO: Anuj Tyagi, Executive Director and Chief Business Officer at HDFC ERGO Health Insurance has been appointed as the new MD and CEO of the new entity HDFC ERGO Health Insurance. However, the appointment is subject to approval of IRDAI.
- Future plans: HDFC will merge HDFC ERGO General with ERGO Health and will soon apply to seek approval for the same to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- Post merger, the merged entity will be the second largest private insurer in accident and health segment in the country”.

**National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) 2019-2024 released by RBI.**

- The NSFI sets forth the vision and key objectives of the Financial Inclusion policies in India to expand the reach and sustain the efforts through a broad convergence of action involving all the stakeholders in the financial sector.
- NSFI enlists 6 visions:
  - Universal Access to Financial Services
  - Providing Basic Bouquet of Financial Services
  - Access to Livelihood and Skill Development
  - Financial Literacy and Education
  - Customer Protection and Grievance Redressal
  - Effective Co-ordination
- The document highlights the major issues that act as impediments to financial inclusion and comes up with a set of recommendations and action plans to support sustainable financial inclusion over the next 5 years.

**RBI now allows e-mandate on UPI.**

- Reserve Bank of India has allowed the Processing of e-mandate for recurring transactions for UPI transactions.
  - The maximum permissible limit for a transaction under this arrangement shall be ₹ 2,000/-.
  - No charges shall be levied or recovered from the UPI User for availing the e-mandate facility on UPI for recurring transactions.

14. Govt raises authorised capital of Indian Overseas Bank to Rs 25,000 crore
- On January 10, 2020 the central govt in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced an increase in the authorized capital of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) to Rs 25,000 crores from the previous authorized capital of Rs. 15,000 crores, thus making an increase by Rs. 10,000 crores.
- Authorised capital: It is the maximum amount of share capital a company/bank/institution is authorised to issue its shareholders.
- Paid-up capital: It is the amount of money a company has received from shareholders in exchange for shares of stock.
- About Indian Overseas Bank (IOB):
  - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)- Shri Karnam Sekar.
  - Headquarters- Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
  - Founder- Chidambaram Chettyar.
  - Founded- 10 February 1937.
  - Tagline- Good people to grow with.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**
Merck announces Young Scientist Award winners in India

- On January 9, 2020 Merck Young Scientist Awards 2019 in chemical science, instituted by Merck was announced in Bengaluru in Karnataka.
- Indian Scientist Dr. Sakya Singha Sen and his team won the Merck Young Scientist Award 2019.
- The award is given to the given to researchers with less than ten years of experience with expertise in solving some of the toughest problems in chemical sciences.
- The winners will receive a cash award of Rs 2,00,000 and Travel Award of Rs 1,50,000 each.

SPORTS

7th National Ice Hockey Championship : Ladakh wins women trophy

- Ladakh women team has won the 7th National Ice Hockey Championship women trophy. In the final match, Ladakh scoring 2 goals against Delhi and won the tournament.
- The tournament was organised by the Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) in association with the Ladakh winter sports club.
- 4 women teams representing Chandigarh, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Ladakh participated in the tournament.
- President of Ice Hockey Association of India: K. L. Kumar.

Rani Rampal nominated for 'World Games Athlete of the Year'

- On January 10, 2020 Rani Rampal from Haryana, India the captain of the Indian women's hockey team has been nominated for the "World Games Athlete of the Year" award, 2019 by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).
- Rani was instrumental in India qualifying for the first time in back-to-back olympic games.
- World Games Athlete of the Year award is an initiative of IWGA (International World Games Association) that recognizes and honours an athlete or a team for their outstanding performance or for their social commitment or particularly, fair behavior.
- 2019 will be the 6th edition of the IWGA.
- Twenty-five athletes have been nominated for this award from their respective sports by their international federations.
- The winner will be decided by online voting which closes on January 30.
- Rani helped India qualify for the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

About International Hockey Federation:
- Headquarters- Lausanne, Switzerland.
- President- Narinder Batra.
- CEO (Chief Executive Officer)- Thierry Weil.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Scientist Dr. Saha elected as IUPAC bureau member

- On January 10, 2020 Dr. Bipul Bihari Saha of Hyderabad, India has been elected as a bureau member of the IUPAC (International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry) for the period 2020-23.
- Saha is the only second Indian after "Bharat Ratna" Professor Chintamani Nagesa Ramachandra Rao (CNR Rao), to be elected (1979) for this position in a century.
- IUPAC is the largest global organization of Chemistry professionals and comprises of 12 Committees and 8 Divisions.
- The Bureau Member are elected considering his/her scientific contribution in the field of Chemistry, his leadership qualities etc.,
- Saha is a Chief Director of R&D (Research and Development) L.R Research Laboratories is a wholly owned subsidiary of NACL (Nagarjuna Agrichem Limited) Industries Limited, Hyderabad.
- Saha has been closely associated with the IUPAC as the Executive Committee Member of "IUPAC Committee on Chemistry and Industry" (First Indian to hold this position), National Representative of India in "IUPAC Division of Chemistry and Environment" and member of "IUPAC Inter-Divisional Committee on Green Chemistry for Sustainable Development".
• Saha was also a Principal Investigator and member of the steering Committee of Government of India sponsored "New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative Project".
• Dr. Saha has been awarded Homi Bhabha Gold Medal by Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).
• About IUPAC (International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry):
  IUPAC has the responsibility of naming all new elements and compounds, declare atomic weights and physical constants, update Periodic Table and carry out research Projects.
  Headquarters- Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, United States.
  Founded- 1919.
  Motto- Advancing Chemistry Worldwide.
  President- Professor Qi-Feng Zhou (China).

**National Book Trust appointed Lt Col Yuvraj Malik as director.**
• On January 11, 2020 Lt Col Yuvraj Malik was appointed as the director of National Book Trust (NBT) on deputation. Malik succeeds Sahitya Akademi-awardee writer Rita Chowdhury.
• Previously Malik has served with the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), Raj Bhawan in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), United Nations Missions in Africa and also in several operational assignments.
• About National Book Trust (NBT):
  Founded- 1 August 1957.
  Headquarters- New Delhi.
  Chairman- Govind Prasad Sharma.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**LCA Tejas’ lands on Indian Navy’s aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya for the first time.**
• On January 11, 2020 the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas has made a successful landed on the India’s biggest warship INS Vikramaditya.
• The maiden landing was conducted by Commodore Jaideep Maolankar.
• For the first time an indigenous fighter aircraft has been landed on an aircraft carrier.
• India becomes sixth nation to master the art of an arrested landing and ski-jump take off on the deck of a carrier after Russia, the United States (US), France, the United Kingdom (UK) and China.
• LCA was developed by Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) along with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
• About LCA Tejas:
  Tejas is India’s Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) together with its variants, is the smallest and lightest Multi-Role Supersonic Fighter Aircraft of its class.
  This single engine, Compound-Delta-Wing, Tailless Aircraft is designed and developed by ADA with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) as the principal partner along with DRDO, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Directorate General Of Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGAQA) to meet the needs of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian Navy (IN).
• About DRDO:
  Founded- 1958
  Headquarters- New Delhi
  Chairman- Dr. G Satheesh Reddy
• About HAL:
  Chairman- R Madhavan
  Headquarters- Bengaluru
• About CSIR:
  Founded- September 26, 1942
  President- Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi
• About BEL:
  Headquarters- Bengaluru
  Chairman- S.K. Sharma
OBITUARY

Qaboos bin Said, Oman’s Longest Serving Sultan, passes Away at 79.

• The Sultan of Oman, Qaboos bin Said, has passed away at the age of 79 due to health issues.
• He was the longest serving Arab leader who ruled the Gulf Arab state for 50 years since overtaking in 1970.
• Meanwhile, Oman’s culture minister, Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, has been named as the Arab country’s new ruling sultan.

Kannada Scholar M Chidananda Murthy passes away at 88.
Veteran broadcaster, academic-poet Obaid Siddiqui passes away at 63.
Canadian rock group drummer Neil Peart passed away at 67 years.

SUMMITS AND MOU’S

ASCEND 2020: Global Investor Meet held in Kochi, Kerala

• A two day organised Global Investors Meet ASCEND 2020 was held in Kochi, Kerala at Lulu Bolgatty International Convention Centre, Grand Hyatt, from January 9-10.
• The meet was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Kerala Shri Pinarayi Vijayan and was organised by states Department of Industries.
• Totally Rs 1 lakh crore worth investment proposals were received.
• The key highlights of the meet are as follows:
  o Proposed mega projects: Mega projects are those that has more than Rs 100 crore investment. A total of 18 mega projects were announced by the state govt. Some of them include setting up of Propylene Oxide plant, Electronic hardware park, Rs.131 crore defence park, Rs. 1,864-crore KINFRA (Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation)-initiated Petrochemical Park, Rs. 900-crore Super Absorbent Polymer Plant etc.
  o Pact by KIFML & ADIA: Kerala infrastructure Fund Management Ltd.(KIFML) and Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) have signed 1 projected but have designated Rs 8110 crore for six projects.
  o Wage subsidy scheme: Apart from announcing mega projects, a wage subsidy scheme was also introduced. Wage subsidy will be provided for the first 5 years for new ventures getting registered on April 1, 2020. The benefit will only be available to those units that provides ESI (Employee State Insurance) and PF (Provident Fund) benefits to workers

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NATIONAL NEWS

Govt launches mission to develop steel sector in eastern India

• The Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan ‘Mission Purvodaya’ during an event in Kolkata on 11 January 2020 to strengthen steel sector in the Eastern region.
• Mission Purvodaya is aimed at accelerated development of eastern India through establishment of Integrated Steel Hub.
• The proposed Integrated Steel Hub, encompassing Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Northern Andhra Pradesh, would help towards socio-economic growth of Eastern India.
• The Minister informed that the eastern belt has the potential to add over 75 percent of the country’s incremental steel capacity envisioned by the National Steel Policy.
• Out of the 300 Million Tonne capacity by 2030-31, over 200 Million Tonne can come from this region alone.
• The Integrated Steel Hub would thus enable swift capacity addition, improve the overall competitiveness of steel producers both in terms of cost and quality, growth of steel industry along with employment opportunities across the entire value chain.
PM Modi launches projects worth 600 crore rupees on 150th year celebrations of Kolkata Port Trust

- The Kolkata Port has been renamed as Syama Prasad Mukherjee Port on 12 January 2020, on the occasion of 150 years of operation of Kolkata Port.
- This announcement was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an event at the Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kolkata to celebrate 150th year of celebrations of the port.
- PM Modi also launched several Port led development projects worth Rs 600 crore as a part of the celebrations.
- Some of the projects launched include:
  - Upgraded Ship repair facility at Netaji Subhash Dry Dock
  - Upgraded railway infrastructure of Kolkata dock system of the Kolkata Port for smooth cargo movement and river front development scheme
  - Released a commemorative stamp on 150th years of the Kolkata Port Trust
  - Mechanization of Berth No. 3 at Haldia Dock
  - Inaugurated the Kaushal Vikas Kendra and Pritilata Chhatri Avas for 200 tribal girl students from Sundarbans.
  - Honored two oldest pensioners of the Port Smt. Nagina Bhagat (105 years) and Mr. Naresh Chandra Chakraborty (100 years)
  - Launched the Port Anthem
  - Handed over a cheque of Rs 501 crore to the chairman of LIC Mr. M.R. Kumar towards final installment to meet deficit of pension funds of the Kolkata Port Trust.

India aiming at USD 250 billion maritime economy by 2024: Defence Secretary

- India is aiming at a $250 billion maritime economy by 2024, which the Indian Coast Guard has the responsibility to safeguard.
- With a target of becoming a USD 5 trillion economy by 2024, we are looking at over USD 250 billion coming from the maritime zone.
- The maritime economy constitutes nearly five per cent of the world economy

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Jasprit Bumrah to receive Polly Umrigar Award.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Annual Awards for 2018-19 were presented on 12 January 2020 in Mumbai. Given below is the complete list of winners.

1. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award: Krishnamachari Srikkanth
2. BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award For Women: Anjum Chopra
3. BCCI Special Award: Dilip Joshi
4. Dilip Sardesai Award (Highest run getter in Tests): Cheteshwar Pujara
5. Dilip Sardesai Award (Highest wicket taker in Tests): Jasprit Bumrah
6. Highest run getter in women's internationals: Smriti Mandhana
7. Highest wicket taker in women's internationals: Jhulan Goswami
8. Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer (Men): Jasprit Bumrah
10. Best International debut (Men): Mayank Agarwal
12. Lala Amarnath Award for Best all-rounder in Ranji Trophy: Shivam Dube (Mumbai)
13. Lala Amarnath Award for Best all-rounder in Domestic Limited Overs competition: Nitish Rana (Delhi)
14. Madhavrao Scindia Award for highest run getter in Ranji Trophy: Milind Kumar (Sikkim)
15. Madhavrao Scindia Award for highest wicket taker in Ranji Trophy: Ashutosh Aman (Bihar)
16. MA Chidambaram Trophy for Highest Run Getter in CK Nayudu Trophy: Manan Hingrajia (Gujarat)
17. MA Chidambaram Trophy for Highest Wicket Taker in CK Nayudu Trophy: Sidak Singh
18. MA Chidambaram Trophy for Highest Run Getter in Cooch Behar Trophy: Vathsal Govind (Kerala)
19. MA Chidambaram Trophy for Highest Wicket Taker in Cooch Behar Trophy: Apurva Anand (Bihar)
22. Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy for Best Senior Women’s Cricketer in Domestic competition: Deepti Sharma (Bengal)
23. Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy for Best Junior Women’s Cricketer in Domestic competition: Shafali Verma (Haryana)
24. Best Umpire: Virender Sharma
25. Best Performance in Domestic Tournaments: Vidarbha

SPORTS

Badminton: Japan’s Kento Momota easily wins Malaysia Masters.
- World number one Kento Momota of Japan won the 2020 Malaysia Masters defeating Denmark’s Viktor Axelsen 24-22, 21-11 on 12 January 2020.
- The 2020 Malaysia Masters was the first tournament of the 2020 BWF World Tour.
6. Karolina Pliskova wins in Brisbane but ‘starts from zero’ heading into Australian Open.
- Czech Republic’s Karolina Pliskova defeat Madison Keys of United States 6-4, 4-6, 7-5 to win 2020 Brisbane International Tennis Tournament held at Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.
- This was Pliskova’s third Brisbane title in four years and her 16th on the WTA tour.
- In doubles category, Hsieh Su-wei and Barbora Strýcova defeated Ashleigh Barty and Kiki Bertens.
- Brisbane International is a WTA Premier tournament of the Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) Tour.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Tsai Ing-wen wins second term as Taiwan president.
- Taiwan’s President Tsai Ing-wen has secured a landslide victory in 2020 presidential elections with 57 percent of the vote in favour to win second term as the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan).
- 63-year old Tsai was the first female leader of the country, when she assumed charge for first term in May 2016.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Naval variant of LCA Tejas successfully lands on carrier
- The naval version of the indigenously-built Tejas light combat aircraft (LCR) successfully undertook the maiden ski-jump take-off from the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya on 12 January 2020.
- Earlier on 11 January 2020, the aircraft made its first landing on the deck of INS Vikramaditya, which is currently deployed in the Arabian Sea.
- The successful landing and take off by the aircraft on INS Vikramaditya is a “great event” in the history of Indian fighter aircraft development programme.
- The achievement put India among a select group of nations having the capability to design such a jet which can operate from an aircraft carrier.
- The naval variant of Tejas has been developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) along with Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), Aircraft Research and Design Centre of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, Centre for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC) and CSIR among others.

OBITUARY

Veteran PTI journalist Babul Baruahhas died of prolonged illness.
He was associated with the premier news agency for nearly 40 years.
He was 80.

Current Affairs PDF- January 13, 2020

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Tehran to host dialogue forum on Hormuz peace initiative.

- India participated in the Tehran Dialogue Forum, the 23rd Persian Gulf International Conference held in Tehran, Iran from January 06-07, 2020.
- During the forum, India supported the Hormuz Peace initiative 2020.
- The initiative was done so as to seek stability in one of the world's busiest and strategically located shipping lanes i.e., Strait of Hormuz amid escalating US-Iran tensions.
- Oman, India, China and Afghanistan were the key participants.
- Hormuz Peace initiative 2020 in Tehran Dialogue Forum:
  - Plans under HOPE: The meeting reviewed the latest developments in the Persian Gulf region and also evaluated the regional cooperation plans under the 'Hormuz Peace Endeavor' (HOPE), proposed by Tehran at the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that was held in September 2019. It was presented by Iran President Hassan Rouhani at UNGA.
  - Strait of Hormuz: The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most strategically important choke points. It has Iran in the northern coat, UAE (United Arab Emirates) and Musandam, an enclave of Oman in the southern coast. It acts as an important gateway for significant amount of global oil supplies.
  - Length: The strait is 90 nautical miles (167 km) long, with a width varying from about 52 nautical miles to 21 nautical miles.
  - Oil & LNG supply to India: 2/3rd of oil and 50% of liquefied natural gas (LNG) imported to India comes through the strait between Iran and Oman.
  - General statistics: Everyday 18 million barrels of oil pass through the Strait of Hormuz that accounts for 1/3rd of the global oil trade. 1/3rd of the world's LNG trade also passes through the strait.
  - Waterway issues: In June 2019, 2 oil tankers were damaged by explosions. The United States (US) blamed Iran for the attack as a response to the US tightening sanctions in Iran. However, Iran denied it. Since the explosion, Indian ships under the assistance of Indian Navy (IN) passes through the waterway.
  - Members present: Foreign Minister of Oman Yusuf bin Alawi and former President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai and members from China and experts, directors of various foreign think tanks, and ambassadors participated in the forum.

- About Iran:
  - Capital- Tehran.
  - Currency- Iranian rial.
  - President- Hassan Rouhani.
  - Supreme leader- Ali Khamenei.

World Future Energy Summit | Abu Dhabi | 13-16 Jan 2020

- The four-day summit is expected to see nearly 33,500 visitors. It will conclude on January 16.
- As a part of the event, the Climate Innovations Exchange (CLIX) and the Future Sustainability Summit will also be conducted.
- The Future Sustainability Summit is being held under the theme “Rethinking Global Consumption, Production, and Investment.”

Bangladesh to hold world’s second largest Muslim congregation ‘Bishwa Ijtema’ in January 2020

- First phase of “Bishwa Ijtema” has commenced in Dhaka, Bangladesh. It is the second largest
congregation of Muslim community after Hajj.

• The second phase of the congregation will be held from January 17 to 19.
• Bishwa Ijtema is an annual event which is taking place on the outskirts of Dhaka since 1967.
• It is being organised in a field of 160 acres, on the bank of the Turag river at Tongi on the outskirts of Dhaka.
• The congregation draws devotees of Muslim community from about 150 countries, hence making it the second largest congregation of Muslim community after Hajj.

Prime Minister of Bangladesh: Sheikh Hasina; Capital: Dhaka; Currency: Taka.

NATIONAL NEWS

Ordinance promulgated for amendment of MMDR Act and CMSP Act; paves way for growth in Coal and Mining sector

• The central govt has promulgated ordinance for amendment in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act 1957 (MMDR act 1957) and The Coal Mines (special provisions) act, 2015 (CMSP act 2015) in order to ease new areas of growth in the coal & mining sector.
• The amendments in detail are as follows:
  o Enhance ease of doing business & Democratization of coal mining sector.
  o Unexplored and partially explored coal blocks mining through prospecting license-cum-mining Lease (PL- cum-ML) will be offered.
  o Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) promotion in the coal mining sector.
  o Attracting large investment in coal mining sector.
  o Allowing of successful bidder/allottee to utilise mined coal in any of the plant of its subsidiary or holding company Attracting large investment in coal mining sector as restrictions of end use has been dropped.
  o New Section in mines created: A new section 4B (after section 4A) has been inserted to enable the Central Govt. to prescribe conditions for ensuring sustained production by the holder of mining leases, who have acquired clearances etc. The Central govt has the power to prescribe the conditions for the new lessees to commence production without prejudice to the time period of 2 years for starting the production prescribed in Section 4A.
  o Flexibility in deciding the end use of Schedule II and III coal mines: The end use of Schedule II and III coal mines under the CMSP Act has been provided with flexibility through omission of sub-section (3) of Section 4 of CMSP Act.

Sachin Bansal acquires DHFL General Insurance

• Flipkart co-founder and former CEO Sachin Bansal has acquired DHFL General Insurance from Kapil Wadhawan-led Wadhawan Group Capital (WGC) for around Rs 100 crore.
• WGC is the parent company of debt-laden Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL) and this deal is seen as a distress sale.
• With this acquisition, Bansal has entered into insurance business, and the investment is also seen as part of his strategy to enter into financial services industry.
• In the recent past, Bansal had done multiple investments in insurance business to increase his portfolio of firms in the sector.

National Youth Festival 2020: Begins in Lucknow

• The 23rd edition of the National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020 was inaugurated at Indira Pratishthan, Lucknow on 12 January 2020. It will continue till 16 January 2020.
• The 5-day long festival has been jointly organised by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and State Government of Uttar Pradesh.
• Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath and the Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju inaugurated the NYF 2020, on the occasion of birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the great Youth icon.
• The theme of the 23rd National Youth Festival 2020 is ‘FIT YOUTH FIT INDIA’
• NYF 2020 would have around 6000 participants from each State.
• The Government has been organizing National Youth Festival (NYF) since 1995 to provide a
platform to bring the youth of the country together in an attempt to provide them opportunity to showcase their talents in various activities.

**BANKING AND ECONOMICS**

**SEBI CMD Post Split: SEBI Extends Deadline By Two Years.**
- January 13, 2020, Stock market regulator SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) has extended the deadline for the separation of the posts of Chairman and MD (Managing Director) or chief executive officer (CEO) for 500 listed companies by 2 years.
- Now this rule has to be followed by April 2022.
- The first deadline issued by SEBI was April 2020. The move comes after the companies were asking for more time to keep expenses down due to the slowdown in the economy.
- Background: The rules to separate the post of Chairman-MD are part of the recommendations of the Uday Kotak (MD of Kotak Mahindra Bank) Committee appointed by SEBI on Corporate Governance. Having a post of chairman and MD or CEO is expected to cause a conflict of interest to the board of directors and management. In many companies including Reliance Industries, the chairman and MD are handled by the same person.
- About SEBI:
  - Formation– April 12, 1988
  - Headquarters– Mumbai, Maharashtra
  - Chairman– Ajay Tyagi

**RBI puts curbs on Sri Guru Raghavendra Sahakara Bank in Bengaluru from doing business**
- On January 10, 2020 the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has curbed Sri Guru Raghavendra Sahakara Bank, a private bank in Bengaluru, Karnataka from doing business with immediate effect.
- This has been done after finding alleged irregularities in transactions.
- The bank’s savings and current account customers and depositors can however withdraw cash up to ₹35,000 only till further notice.
- Act: RBI’s Chief General Manager Yogesh Dayal issued the directive under Sections 35A and 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, from Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Without the approval of RBI, the bank cannot write, grant or renew loans and advances, make investment, borrow funds or accept fresh deposits from January 10, 2020.
- The directive will remain in force for 6 months from January 10 and is subject to review,” added the official.
- About Sri Guru Raghavendra Sahakara Bank:
  - Established- 1964
  - Headquarters- Bangalore, Karnataka.
  - Tagline- A cooperative bank with corporate vision.
  - President- Dr. K Ramakrishna.
  - Motto- Service to the Common Man.

**SPORTS**

**ISSF rankings: India finishes 2019 as No. 1**
- Based upon the International Shooting Sport Federation's (ISSF) overall rankings of Nation for 2019, India finished the year as the top shooting nation in the world leaving behind China and USA.
- In terms of overall medals, India's tally stood at 30 medals overall consisting 21 gold, six silver and three bronze as India topped all the Rifle-Pistol World Cups and Finals.
- China was second with 44 medals overall, including 11 gold, 15 silver and 18 bronze.
- The USA stood third with 15 medals including six gold six silver and three bronze.
- National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) President: Raninder Singh.

**Novak Djokovic leads Serbia to victory over Spain in ATP Cup**
- Serbia has won the inaugural 2020 ATP Cup tennis tournament, defeating Spain 2–1 in the final on 12 January 2020 in Sydney.
• Serbia’s Novak Djokovic was the key performer in the tournament.
• The World No. 2 Djokovic claimed a straight sets victory over the World No. 1 Rafael Nadal, 6-2, 7-6 (7-4) in singles.
• Further, in doubles also, Djokovic and Viktor Troicki claimed 6-3, 6-4 straight sets victory over Feliciano Lopez and Pablo Carreno Busta.
• ATP Cup was the opener for the 2020 ATP Tour, as well as the first ATP team tournament since the last edition of the World Team Cup in 2012.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Robert Abela wins election to be prime minister of Malta
• On January 12, 2020 Malta’s governing party has elected a new leader Robert Abela as 14th prime minister of Malta. He replaces Joseph Muscat, who resigned over the murder of a journalist.
• Robert Abela is the son of the Malta’s Former President George Abela.
• Robert Abela, 42-years old lawyer won the Labour Party Leadership contest with 57.9% of the vote and beat his closest rival Chris Fearne 56-years old surgeon by more than 2,500 votes.
• Joseph Muscat announced his resignation last month over the scandal surrounding the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia.
• Galizia was killed by a car bomb in 2017 as she investigated corruption in Malta.
• Caruana Galizia, known as the “one woman WikiLeaks”, exposed corruption at the highest levels of government and business circles in Malta.
• About Malta:
  Capital- Valletta.
  Currency- Euro.
  President- George Vella.

Haitham bin Tariq sworn in as Oman’s new sultan
• On January 11, 2020 Haitham bin Tariq Al Said (66) was appointed as the new ruler of the Oman after the death of Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said who ruled the country from 1970.
• Haitham bin Tariq Al Said who is the cousin of the deceased Sultan Qaboos, was the Cultural and Heritage Minister of Oman.
• In 2013 he was appointed by the Sultan Qaboos to chair the main committee responsible for Oman’s development.
• Haitham bin Tariq was an Oxford graduate who spent 16 years in various roles with the Foreign Ministry from 1986.
• He was also incharge for Oman’s Vision 2040 Program.
• About Oman:
  Capital- Muscat
  Currency- Omani rial

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The United States Treasury Department removes China from its Currency Manipulator list, which was imposed in August 2019.

NATIONAL NEWS

Japanese Coast Guard ship arrives in Chennai for joint exercise
• On January 13, 2019 the Japan Coast Guard Ship ‘Ichigo PLH08’ has arrived Chennai on a five-day goodwill visit and it will participate in the 19th edition of Annual Joint Exercise ‘Sahyog-Kaijin’ which will be begin on January 16, 2020 with the Indian Coast Guard off in Chennai.
• Admiral Takahiro Okushima, Commandant, Japan Coast Guard and Director General (DG) Krishnaswamy Natarajan, DG of Indian Coast Guard will witness the 19th edition of ‘Sahyog-Kaijin’
exercise.

- It is aimed at further strengthening bilateral ties and mutual understanding between the two Coast Guards and to enhance interoperability in communication and Search and Rescue procedures and sharing of best practices.
- First edition of 'Sahyog - Kaijin' exercise between two coast guards took place in 2000.
- Four Indian Coast Guard Ships, their aircraft and a vessel from National Institute of Ocean Technology will be participating along with Japan Coast Guard Ship.
- Activities like official calls, reciprocal visit onboard ships, sporting, cultural interactions and professional interactions between personnel of both the Coast Guards will take part in the exercise.

Centre identifies 26 islands of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshawadeep for holistic development by promoting tourism

- On January 13, 2020 the Union Minister of Home Affairs (MoHA) Shri Amit Shah chaired the 6th meeting of Island Development Agency (IDA) in New Delhi.
- During the meeting progress made towards "Holistic development of islands" were reviewed. It is also for the first time in India, under the IDA's guidance an initiative of sustainable development has been undertaken with scientific assessments.
- A total of 26 islands i.e, 16 from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and 10 from Lakshadweep islands have been identified for promoting tourism.
- Digital connectivity by June 2020: In order to strengthen the infrastructure improving air and digital connectivity are also being implemented. Port Blair (Andaman & Nicobar) and 7 islands of Andaman & Nicobar will be digitally connected through submarine optical fibre cable by June, 2020.
- Communication services: Information Technology (IT) based and other Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the islands would be set up through Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands Industrial Development Scheme (LANIDS), 2018 notified on 1st January, 2019.
- Airport development in Great Nicobar Island of Andaman & Nicobar and Minicoy Island of Lakshadweep have been proposed.

1st time India to host 19TH SCO heads meeting and Statue of Unity finds place in '8 Wonders of SCO'

- On January 13, 2020 the secretary general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Vladimir Norov who is on a 4-day visit to India to attend the Raisina dialogue 2020 in New Delhi from January 16-16,2020, has announced that India has been selected to host the SCO’s annual meeting of council of heads of government for the 1st time.
- Raisina dialogue host: The dialogue which addresses the issues faced by global community is hosted by Observer Research Foundation(ORF) in collaboration with Ministry of External Affairs(MEA).
- The Statue of Unity in Gujarat, India has been included in the SCO’s “8 wonders of SCO” list.
- India’s membership with SCO: India became a member of the SCO at the SCO summit held in Astana (now renamed as Nur-sultan), Kazakhstan in the year 2017 along with Pakistan. Before becoming a member of SCO, India was granted with the observer status from 2005.
- SCO members: The members of the SCO include China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan. Thus there totally 8 member nations of SCO

The Pulses Conclave 2020 to be held at Lonavala, Maharashtra

- The 5th edition of the biennial global pulses conference, 'The Pulses Conclave 2020' (TPC 2020), will be held from February 12 to 14, 2020 at Lonavala, Pune, Maharashtra.
- The conclave is being organised by India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA).
- IPGA is the apex body of India's pulses and grains industry and trade based in Mumbai.
- The aim of the conclave is to discuss increasing domestic production and consumption and improving processing efficiencies, increasing consumption, exports, value addition, protein extraction, post-harvest crop management, etc.

11-17 January 2020 : National Road Safety Week

- In 2020, India is observing the 31st National Road Safety Week from 11 to 17 January 2020.
- The theme for National Road Safety Week 2020 is : ‘Sadak Suraksha – Jeevan Raksha’.
- The National Road Safety Week is observed throughout the country every year to highlight and
emphasize the need for safe roads and provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to contribute to the cause by taking up activities to promote the concept.

- It is organised every year in January by the National Safety Council of India.

**Neonatal and under-five mortality rate in India**
- On January 12, 2020, the United Nations (UN) inter agency group for child mortality has produced a report titled “Levels and Trends in Child Mortality”.
- As per this report India is among 5 countries where in 2018, the mortality of girls under the age of 5 exceeds that of the boys.
- Half of all under-5 deaths in 2018 occurred in the following five countries: India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Ethiopia.
- **Gender gaps:** Considering overall states and Union Territories (UTs), Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttarakhand showed largest gender gaps in under-5 age mortality.
- India and Nigeria alone accounted for about 1/3rd of under 5 age deaths.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>State with largest gender gap</td>
<td>Jharkhand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State with highest newborn deaths</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>State with highest under 5 mortality rate</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>State with least under 5 mortality rate</td>
<td>Kerala.</td>
</tr>
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**11-member panel to discuss the royalty rate issues on minerals**
- On January 13, 2020 the centre has decided to set up an 11-member panel that will look into the issues related to revision of royalty rates for minerals (other than coal, lignite, sand for stowing and minor minerals).
- The panel will be headed by additional secretary of the mines ministry Dr. K. Rajeswara Rao.
- Mines secretaries from states of Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha will be the members of the panel.
- Report submission: The members will have to submit the report within 1 month to the Mines ministry after examining the issues raised by stakeholders.
- Previously in February 2018, the mines ministry had set up a study group to revise royalty rates and rent for minerals. The group submitted its report in July 2019.
- **About Ministry of Mines:**
  - Headquarters- New Delhi.
  - Union minister- Prahlad Joshi. (Constituency- Dharwad, Karnataka).

**Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD) developed by IIT-Madras, Launched**
- On January 13, 2020, Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs (Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) Shri Nitin Gadkari & Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh have jointly launched an IT (Information Technology) tool “Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD)” developed by the Indian Institute of Technology–Madras (IIT-M) that will help in proper monitoring and accurate analysis of road accidents.
- It was launched during ‘Road Safety Stakeholders’ Meet held in New Delhi.
- Developed with the help of Rs.258 crore financial assistance given by the World Bank, the database will be implemented by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- Initially this system is being implemented in 6 states (Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh (MP), Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu (TN) and Uttar Pradesh (UP)) with highest fatalities of road crashes

**BANKING AND ECONOMICS**

**Rs 14000 crore Approved by World Bank & ADB to enhance road safety in India**
- The World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have approved Rs 7 thousand crore each to reduce the number of ‘blind spots’ from Indian roads and addressed various aspects of road safety in India.
- This was announced by the Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari on 13 January 2020 at the Road Safety Stakeholders’ Meet in New Delhi, held to mark the 31st National Road
Safety Week 2020.

- As a part of the event, the Defence Minister awarded Tamil Nadu as the best performing state in reducing road accidents.

7.35% rise in Retail inflation in December 2019, highest in last 5 years: NSO

- On January 13, 2020, according to the Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) / Retail inflation figures, released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), retail inflation rose to a 5-year high of 7.35% in December 2019.
- Earlier, in July 2014, the retail inflation had reached 7.39%.
- Retail inflation was more affected in December due to high food prices.
- Retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at only 2.11% in December 2018 & 5.54% in November 2019.

- The retail inflation has crossed the upper limit set by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The central government has asked the Reserve Bank to keep inflation in the range of 2-6%

AWARDS, RECORDS AND RECOGNITION

Himachal holds Guinness World Record by preparing largest quantity of Khichdi on Makar Sankranti

- Himachal Pradesh has made the Guinness Book of World Records for preparing the largest-ever quantity of 'bean and rice' dish (khichdi) on 14 January 2020, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, at Tattapani in Mandi district of the state.
- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur accepted the certificate on behalf of the state's Tourism and Civil Aviation department.
- A team of 25 chefs from Holiday Home hotel in Shimla, cooked 1995 kg of the dish in a vessel weighing 270 kg, with the dimensions of four feet depth and seven feet diameter, that was especially acquired from Jagadhari in Haryana.
- The chefs' team took five hours, 4 AM to 9 AM, to prepare the stew.
- The khichdi container was too heavy to be carried that a crane was used to tilt out the khichdi from the enormous container for serving khichdi to devotees at Tattapani.
- Earlier, the record for making the largest amount of khichdi (918.8 kg) was held by celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor when he represented the Indian ministry of food processing industries at an event in New Delhi on November 4, 2017.

Republic Day parade of 2020: Captain Tania Shergill to become first woman parade adjutant

- On 13th January 2020, it was announced Captain Tania Shergill, an officer with Army's Corps of Signals, will be the first woman parade adjutant for the Republic Day (26th January) parade of 2020.
- A parade adjutant is responsible for the parade.
- She is an electronics and communications graduate, her father, grandfather and great-grandfather have also served in the Army. She was commissioned in March 2017 from the Officer Training Academy, Chennai.
- In the 2019 Republic Day parade, Captain Bhavna Kasturi was the first women officer who led an all-men contingent.
- The Republic Day parade will witness Infantry Combat Vehicle BMP-2K of the 18 Mechanised Infantry, Dhanush Gun System and the Army Air Defence on the Rajpath.
- Contingents of the Corps of Signals, Sikh Light Infantry, Kumaon Regiment, the Grenadiers, the Parachute Regiment will also take part in the parade.

British Indian yoga champion Ishwar Sharma wins Global Child Prodigy Award

Actor Aamir Khan in New Delhi conferred 2020 Swachhata Darpan plastic management awards

- On January 12, 2020 the Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) under Ministry of Jal Shakti, organised the ODF (Open Defecation Free) sustainability workshop in New Delhi. The workshop had a special session by Bollywood actor Aamir Khan (founder of Paani foundation) who distributed awards to the best performing districts on key swachhata parameters.
- Swachhata Darpan Awards:
Actor Aamir Khan presented the Swachhata Darpan Awards for best performing districts which includes East Godavari (Andhra Pradesh), West Kameng (Arunachal Pradesh), Bemtara (Chhattisgarh), Diu (Daman and Diu), Panipat (Haryana), Vadodara (Gujarat), Kolhapur (Maharashtra), Moga (Punjab), East Sikkim (Sikkim) and Pedappali (Telangana).

- Award for plastic waste management:
  4 districts i.e. Dibrugarh (Assam), Sirmaur (Himachal Pradesh), Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Puri (Odisha) were awarded for innovations and initiatives in plastic waste management.

**SPORTS**

**Football player Mbappé named as the most valuable player at €265 million: CIES Football Observatory**

**APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

Appointment : Michael Debabrata Patra as Deputy Governor of RBI

- Michael Debabrata Patra has been appointed as the 4th Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a period of three-year.
- Patra replaces Viral Acharya, who quit the post in July 2019.
- RBI can have a maximum of four Deputy Governors.
- Currently N S Vishwanathan, B P Kanungo and Mahesh Kumar Jain are the other three Deputy Governors working at the central bank.

Lt General Girish Kumar reappointed as the Surveyor General of India for one year

A P Maheshwari appointed as the new DG of CRPF

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**ISRO : GSAT-30 Satellite ready to Launch from French Guiana on 17 January**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch a communication satellite named GSAT-30 on 17 January 2020 onboard the Ariane-5 launch vehicle (VA 251) from the Ariane Launch Complex at Kourou in French Guiana.
- The GSAT-30 is a 3,357 kg satellite with a mission life of 15 years.
- It will serve as a replacement to INSAT-4A spacecraft services to provide communication services from geostationary orbit in C and Ku bands with enhanced coverage.
- The satellite would be extensively used for supporting VSAT network, television uplinking and teleport services, digital satellite news gathering (DSNG), DTH television services, cellular backhaul connectivity, and many such applications.

**Indian scientists detect India’s 1st case of infection in Maharashtra : H9N2 virus**

- In December 2019, Scientists of the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, Maharashtra have detected the 1st case of H9N2 virus, a rare subtype of influenza virus A, in a 17-month-old boy in Maharashtra.
- The discovery has been published in the journal ‘Emerging Infectious Diseases’ of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- It is a rare variant of the virus, which causes human influenza as well as bird flu. These viruses, found exclusively in wild birds, could potentially play a major role in the worldwide emergence of influenza.
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the avian influenza virus is spreading rapidly in poultry firms, exposure to infected poultry or contaminated environments poses a risk to human groups as well.
- H9N2 virus infections in humans are rare, although cases of the infection do not come to light due to unclear symptoms. In humans, the first case of H9N2 virus infection occurred in Hong Kong in 1998.

**Special NATO class diesel for Indian Navy launched by IOC**

- On January 13, 2020 Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has developed a special class diesel (HFHSD- IN 512) High Flash High Speed Diesel conforming to NATO grade for use in ships and vessels of Indian Army and results reduced carbon footprint.

**Wolf Cukier, A 17-year-old intern at NASA, discovers new planet ‘TOI 1338b’ 1300 light years away.**

**OBITUARY**
National Award Winner Manmohan Mohapatra passed away at 69

**SUMMITS AND MOU’S**

Indian Railways and RailTel signs MoU for Phase 2 execution of e-office
- On January 13, 2020 Indian Railways signs Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with RailTel, a miniratna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Railways for Phase 2 project of e-office execution.
- Under this project, RailTel will register 39,000 users over 34 divisions on National Informatics Centre (NIC) e-office platform by June 30, 2020.
- MoU was signed by Executive Director (ED/TD), Railway Board, Shri Umesh Balonda, and General Manager (GM)/Information Technology (IT) project/RailTel, Smt. Haritima Jaipuriar.
- Under the Phase 1 execution of e-office, RailTel trained more than 50,000 users in 58 divisions of Indian Railways.
- e-office is a paperless culture which helps to reduce the operational cost and carbon footprints.
- Thus 58 units of Indian Railways became paperless under Phase 1 execution of e-office.
- NIC e-office is a cloud enabled software based on Central Secretariat Manual of e-Office Procedure (CSMeOP). It contains four modules namely File Management System (eFile), Knowledge Management System (KMS), Collaboration & Messaging Services (CAMS) and Personnel Information Management System (PIMS).
- Participants: Chairman, Railway Board, Shri Vinod Kumar Yadav, Member S&T, Railway Board, Shri Pradeep Kumar, CMD, RailTel, Shri Puneet Chawla and other senior officials of Railways and RailTel.

**About Indian Railways:**
*Founded* - April 16, 1853
*Headquarters* - New Delhi
*Minister of Railway* - Piyush Goyal
*Chairman of Railway Board* - Vinod Kumar Yadav

**5th Raisina Dialogue Begins in New Delhi**
- The Dialogue has been jointly organized by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Observer Research Foundation.
- Raisina Dialogue is India’s flagship global Conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, and also one of the largest gathering of its kind.
- The inaugural session on 14 January will be attended by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi along with Seven former Heads of State/Government, to share their views on important challenges facing the world.
- The Raisina Dialogue 2020 will bring together 700 international participants from over a 100 countries.
- The conference will see deliberations over 80 sessions around 5 thematic pillars including
  - Nationalist impulses challenging global institutions and collective action,
  - Debate on the global trading architecture,
  - Role of technologies in determining political, economic and military power,
  - Global development agenda and
  - State-individual relationship in the age of digital communities and cyberspace.

**SBI Signs MoU with South Central Zone of Indian Railways for Doorstep Banking**
- The South Central Zone (SCR) of Indian Railways and State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding for 'Doorstep Banking' to enable direct pickup of cash earnings from all 585 Railway stations on SCR Zone.
- The direct pick up of cash from all the railway stations on SCR by SBI will save the tedious and complex activity of movement of cash earnings through ‘cash safes’ by trains.
• The door step banking will increase the pace of financial transactions and digitization of remittance of cash earnings of the Railways into accounts.

Current Affairs PDF- January 15, 2020

NATIONAL NEWS

Arunachal Pradesh: Parshuram Kund Mela Begins
• The famous Parshuram Kund Mela began in Arunachal Pradesh on 14 January 2020.
• Parshuram Kund is a Hindu pilgrimage centre situated on the Brahmaputra plateau in the lower reaches of the Lohit River in Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh.
• Devotees from across the country visit the sacred place to take a holy dip in the Kund on the occasion of Makar Sankranti every year.

PwDs and super Senior Citizens can now vote too through Postal Ballot
• Person with disabilities(PwDs) and people over 80 years of age can now cast their vote in Delhi Assembly Election through postal ballot.
• For the first time, Delhi Metro, Northern Railway Employees and media persons covering polling can also use postal ballot facility to cast their votes.
• Till now, voting through postal ballot was available to armed forces and those assigned in poll duties. Briefing media in New Delhi today, Chief Electoral Officer Ranbir Singh said, employee of essential service can fill the form 12(D) and submit before 19th of this month to avail the postal ballot facility. He said, nodal officers have been deployed for this process for essential service employees.
• Mr Singh said, under postal ballot facility, these absentee voters, including those who are unable to vote due to some immobility can vote.
• He said, ramp, sign language, Braille and pick and drop facilities will be available for disabled persons at polling stations.
• Mr Singh said, commission is trying, with its objective of inclusive and accessible election, to make each and everyone to participate in the election process.

Government relaxes FASTag norms for 65 toll plazas
• The government today said, to facilitate smooth flow of traffic FASTag norms for 65 toll plazas with high cash transactions have been relaxed to allow them to convert up to 25 per cent of FASTag lane of Fee Plaza into hybrid lanes for 30 days.
• Transport ministry statement said, it has been done on the request of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) so that the citizens are not put to any inconvenience.
• The government has rolled out FASTag-based electronic toll collection mechanism from December 15 last across all toll plazas of the NHAI and has mandated the use of FASTags across at least 75 per cent lanes of toll plazas and has restricted use of cash mode of payment to a maximum of 25 per cent lanes of toll plazas.
• These 65 plazas are located Pan-India including Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Chandigarh and Andhra Pradesh. FASTags-based toll collection system has been rolled out across 527 national highways.

BANKING AND ECONOMICS

Amazon to invest $1 billion to digitise small and medium businesses in India
• Amazon.com Inc chief Jeff Bezos has announced USD 1 billion (over Rs 7,000 crore) investment in India over the next five years, to bring small and medium businesses online.
• The initiative will help to digitise micro and small businesses across India, and help them reach more customers than ever before.
• The company is also committed to exporting USD 10 billion worth of India-made goods by 2025.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
National Highways Excellence Awards 2019

- The Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Shri Nitin Gadkari presented the 'National Highways Excellence Awards 2019' to 12 outstanding performers in NH sector on 14 January 2020 in New Delhi.
- National Highway Excellence Awards were instituted in the year 2018 to recognize the well-performing companies in the field of construction, operations, maintenance, toll collection and road safety on National Highways.
- The award is given in seven categories namely:
  1. Excellence in Project Management,
  2. Excellence in Operation and Maintenance
  3. Excellence in Toll Management,
  4. Excellence in Highway Safety
  5. Innovation
  6. Outstanding Work in Challenging Conditions
  7. Green Highway

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Dmitry Medvedev, Russian Prime Minister submits resignation

- Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has resigned. The Tass news agency said that Medvedev submitted his resignation to President Vladimir Putin today.
- It said, President Putin thanked Mr. Medvedev for his contribution. The agency also reports that Mr. Putin will name Mr. Medvedev as deputy of the presidential Security Council.
- Russian President asked Medvedev's Cabinet to keep working until the new Cabinet is formed.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

145th Foundation Day of India Meteorological Department (IMD)

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) is celebrating its 145th Foundation Day on 15 January. It was established in 1875. The day will be celebrated by Ministry of Earth Science under which IMD (Indian Meteorological Department) functions.
- History of India Meteorological Department: Indian Meteorological Department was established in 1875 with its headquarters at Calcutta. But Later it was shifted to Shimla in 1905, to Pune in 1928 and then to Delhi in 1944.
- What is the India Meteorological Department? : The India Meteorological Department (IMD) is work under the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India. It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology. IMD is headquartered in Delhi and operates hundreds of observation stations across India and Antarctica. Its Regional offices are in Mumbai, Kolkata, Nagpur and Pune.
- Recent Achievements of India Meteorological Department: World Meteorological Organization recognized 5 observatories of India Meteorological Department as a long-term observing station for more than 100 years. These 5 Observatories are:
  (1) Chennai (Nungambakkam)
  (2) Mumbai (Colaba)
  (3) Panjim
  (4) Pune
  (5) Thiruvananthapuram
- New Aeronautical Meteorological Stations commissioned under RCS-UDAN Scheme.
- Modelling & Forecasting System of India Meteorological Department
- IMD in collaboration with NCMRWF & IIIM implemented Thunderstorm and Lightning Modelling and Warning System.
- Global Forecast System (GFS) model upgraded and run 4 times a day to generate 10 days forecast.
India and Bangladesh Signs MoU for Co-production of biopic on BangaBandhu

- India and Bangladesh signed some of the key agreements in the field of Information and Broadcasting on 14 January 2020 during the Information and Broadcasting Minister’s meet 2020 held in New Delhi.
- Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Shri Prakash Javadekar and his Bangladeshi counterpart Muhammad H Mahmud signed the agreement.
- Agreements include:
  - MoU for the co-production of a film on “BangaBandhu” Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (first President of Bangladesh).
    - The film will be directed by Indian director/producer Shri Shyam Benegal.
    - It is proposed to be released in March 2021, as part of centenary celebrations of BangaBandhu.
  - An airtime content exchange programme was signed between Prasar Bharati and Bangladesh Radio Betar.
  - India committed to extend all possible cooperation to Bangladesh in setting up the BongoBandhu film city.
  - Bangladesh will celebrate the ‘Mujib Year’ from March 17, 2020 to March 17, 2021 to mark the centenary year of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

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National

Petroleum Minister to launch fuel conservation campaign ‘Saksham’

Secretary, Petroleum and Natural Gas Dr. M M Kutty inaugurated fuel conservation mega campaign ‘Saksham’ in New Delhi on 16 January 2020. The campaign was organized by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA). The campaign will be held for a month.

- Saksham:
  - GoI has set to double to 11% by 2040.
  - The campaign is aimed to address the target and India’s share of primary energy demand not only petroleum conservation but the creation of a sustainable development model.
  - It highlights the major advantages of fuel conservation, and help in a progressive reduction of carbon footprint

No documents or biometric required for National Population Register (NPR): Home Ministry

- The Government has informed that no documents will be asked and no biometric will be taken for National Population Register (NPR) exercise to be carried out between April and September 2020.
- The NPR is a register of usual residents of the country.
- The NPR exercise will be carried out in all states and UTs, except Assam, along with the house listing phase of the census 2021 exercise.
- The Union Cabinet has approved Rs. 3,941.35 crore for the NPR exercise.
- Assam has been excluded because the National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise has already been conducted in the state.

Super Senior Citizens and PwDs now vote through Postal Ballot

- Super Senior Citizens (over 80 years of age) and PwDs now vote through Postal Ballot in Delhi Assembly Election.
- A postal ballot is a facility for those absentee voters, including those who are unable to vote due to
some immobility can vote. For the first time, Delhi Metro, Northern Railway Employees and media persons covering polling can also use postal ballot facility to cast their votes. Till now, voting through the postal ballot was available to armed forces and those assigned in poll duties.

5th Science Film Festival of India (SCI-FFI) 2020 Begins in Goa

- The 5th edition of Science Film Festival of India (SCI-FFI 2020) was started in Goa's capital city Panaji.
- The aims of the festival are instilling the knowledge of science among the youth with the help of exhibitions, masterclasses, workshops, and other activities.
- Films that have been selected to be screened at the event are ‘Mission Mangal’, ‘Antariksham 9000 KMPH’, ‘Everest’, ‘Aamorie’, ‘Terminator: Dark Fate’, ‘Geostorm’ and, ‘Virus’ among others.
- Chief Minister of Goa: Pramod Sawant; Governor of Goa: Satya Pal Malik.

International

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev along with entire Cabinet Submits Resignation as Prez Putin proposes constitutional changes

- Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has resigned. They submit their resignation to President Vladimir Putin. Medvedev would take on a new job as deputy head of Russia's Security Council.
- The changes would include giving parliament the power to choose the prime minister and senior cabinet members, instead of the president as in the current system.

Banking and Economy

SBI cuts Fixed Deposit rates by 15 bps

- For deposits below Rs.2 crore, SBI will now offer 6.10% as compared to 6.25% for all maturities of 1 year to 10 years.
- Senior citizens will continue to get 50 bps higher than the card rate.
- Whereas, the deposits maturing in 7 days to 1 year, the bank has kept the rates unchanged.
- The new rates came into effect from 10 January 2020.
- SBI's move is to cut the fixed deposit rates at a time when consumer price index-based inflation shot up to 5 years high of 7.35%.

The FD rates of SBI are:

- For 7 days to 45 days 4.50%
- For 46 days to 179 days 5.50%
- For 180 days to 210 days 5.80%
- For 211 days to less than 1 year 5.80%
- For 1 year to less than 2 years 6.10%
- For 2 years to less than 3 years 6.10%
- For 3 years to less than 5 years 6.10%
- For 5 years and up to 10 years 6.10%

7th edition of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference 2020

- The 7th Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region was inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in the Vidhan Bhawan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh on 16 January 2020.
- During the two-day event, Madhya Pradesh Governor Lalji Tandon will address the inaugural session, while Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel will address the valedictory session on 17
January 2020.

- The main theme of the conference is ‘ROLE OF LEGISLATORS’.

**Appointment**

**Harish Salve Appointed As Queen’s Counsel, Official Appointment On March 16**

Top legal eagle Harish Salve was appointed into Queen Elizabeth II's counsel of Senior Advocate. He has been appointed as Queen's Counsel (QC) for the courts of England and Wales. Salve's name appeared on the list of silk appointments released by the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Justice Department on January 13.

Salve is best known for representing India in many important matters on international waters. Having being called to the Blackstone Chambers in 2013, Salve went on to represent India at the International Court of Justice for the Kulbhushan Jadhav extradition case.

He was also applauded by many people when he stated that for representing India in the Kulbhushan Jadhav extradition case, he will charge the Indian Government an amount of Re. 1 as his legal fees for the proceedings.

- Capital of United Kingdom: London; Currency: Pound sterling.
- Prime Minister of United Kingdom: Boris Johnson.

**Robert Abela elected as Malta’s new PM**

Labour Party candidate Robert Abela elected as 14th prime minister of Malta with 57.9% of the vote. He defeated his closest rival Chris Fearne.

He will replace Joseph Muscat, who resigned over the murder of a journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia.

- Capital of Malta: Valletta; Currency: Euro; President: George Vella.

**WHO released 2020 Global Health Challenges report**

The World Health Organization (WHO) released the list of Global Health Challenges of the forthcoming year on 13 January 2020.

**Report Highlights:**

- The list of Global Health Challenges highlighted 13 potential threats.
- The top among the listed threats was Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and climate crisis.
- As per the report, around 7 million people are affected because of climate change.
- The report said that climate change has increased malnutrition and is fueling the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria.
- Following these 2, the other threats mentioned in the list include the influenza and the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis.
- The report stated that most of the death is due to stroke, chronic respiratory disease, heart attack, and lung cancer. These diseases are increased by raising levels of air pollution.
- For the first time, Lack of Access has entered the list.

**Current Affairs PDF- January 17, 2020**

**National**

**Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis: Home Minister presides over signing of Historic Agreement to end the Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis**

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently signed a historic pact between Bru-Reang representatives, Central Government and Governments of Tripura and Mizoram and to end 23-year old Bru-Reang refugee crisis.
• Under the agreement, each displaced family of Bru-Reang Tribals will be given 40x30 sq. ft. of residential plots along with Rs. 1.5 lakhs to build their houses, a fixed deposit of Rs. 4 lakhs, free ration for 2 years and Rs. 5000 cash every month for 2 years.
• Bru-Reang are one of the 21 scheduled tribes. The Bru can be found Tripura, Mizoram and Assam

1st edition of Krishi Manthan begins in Gujarat
The 1st edition of Krishi Manthan- the largest Food, Agri-business and Rural Development Summit of Asia begins in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. This summit is organized by Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad.

Defence Minister dedicates 51st K9 Vajra-T guns to nation
• Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicates the 51st K9 Vajra-T guns to the nation.
• This gun is self-propelled Howitzer gun made by L&T's Armoured System Complex at Hazira in Gujarat.

‘K9 VAJRA-T’ Guns
• The ‘K9 VAJRA-T’ Tracked, Self-Propelled Howitzer Guns are being manufactured by Larsen & Toubro under the contract awarded to the company by Ministry of Defence through global competitive bidding to deliver 100 such guns.
• More than 75 percent of K9 Vajra has been manufactured in India.
• The gun weighs 50 tonnes and can fire 47-kilogram bombs at targets up to a distance of 43 kilometres. It can also turn around at zero radius.

Arunachal Pradesh Becomes First State to ink Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IUCN
• Arunachal Pradesh has become the first State in India to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
• As per the MoU, the state government will collaborate to prepare the IUCN's Red List Assessment for all orchids in the State.
• The Department of Environment and Forest is the nodal department for execution of the project.
• IUCN Headquarters: Gland, Switzerland

International

Microsoft promises to be carbon negative by 2030
• The US tech giant Microsoft has announced that it would become “carbon negative” by year 2030. The announcement has been made in the form of its increased efforts to combat the climate change.
• The company announced that it vows to eliminate all the carbon emissions created by the company since its inception in 1975.
• Microsoft has also announced its investment of $1 billion in a “climate innovation fund” for technology for carbon capture and removal.
• Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Microsoft: Satya Nadella.
• Founded: April 4, 1975; Headquarters: Washington, United States (US).

Banking and Economy

World Bank and GOI Inks USD 88 million loan agreement for the implementation of Assam Inland Water Transport Project
• The Government of India, the Government of Assam and the World Bank has signed a loan agreement worth $88 million for the implementation of the Assam Inland Water Transport Project (AIWTP).
• The loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) will help to
  o Modernize the passenger ferry infrastructure and its services
  o Strengthen the capacity of the institutions running the inland water transport
  o Make ferry services more sustainable with least disruption to nature, because of technically better designed terminals and energy-efficient vessels (both new and retrofitted).

Science & Technology
**ISRO’s GSAT-30 satellite successfully launched aboard Ariane rocket**
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on January 17, 2020 launched the first satellite of the year 2020 - 'GSAT-30’ from French Guiana. GSAT-30 is a telecommunication satellite and has a mission life of around 15 years.
- The GSAT 30 satellite was launched onboard Ariane 5 launch vehicle (VA 251) along with the European Space Company’s Eutelsat Konnect, a telecommunication satellite. It has been configured to give a boost to communication services such as television uplink, DTH, digital satellite news and VSAT. It weighs approximately 3357 kg.
- The satellite derives its heritage from ISRO’s previous INSAT/GSAT satellite series. It will replace INSAT-4A spacecraft services with enhanced coverage.

**WEF Global Risks Report 2020: Climate action failure, biodiversity loss, extreme weather top global risks**
- WEF Global Risks Report 2020 was released by the World Economic Forum on January 15, 2020. The report is based on the Global Risks Perception Survey of the WEF that is conducted annually.
- The report categorized all Global Risks into five categories - Economic Risks, Environmental Risks, Geopolitical Risks, Societal Risks and Technological Risks.
- The Global Risks Report 2020 comes at a time when the global economy is facing a synchronized slowdown, cyber-attacks are on a rise and climate change is becoming an increasingly concerning phenomenon with the past five years being the warmest on record.

**Most Powerful Passports of 2020: India ranks 84th**
- The Henley Passport Index 2020 was released recently, revealing the most powerful passports of the year 2020. Japan’s passport was ranked as the Most Powerful Passport of 2020.
- Indian passport was ranked at 84th position in the index that listed passports of 199 countries and 227 tourist places. The index is prepared on the basis of data of the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- According to the Henley Passport Index, Japan has the most powerful passport in the world. Japan's passport holders can visit 191 countries without any visa.
- Top 10 countries in the index are – Singapore, Germany, South Korea, Italy, Finland, Spain, Luxembourg, and Denmark.
- Chairman of Henley & Partners: Christian Kalin.
- Chief Executive Officer(CEO): Juerg Steffen.

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**National**

**Conference on Census 2021 held in New Delhi**
- A Conference of the Chief Secretaries and Administrator State and Union Territories on Census 2021 and updating of National Population Register, NPR was held in New Delhi today.
- Inaugurating it, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai laid emphasis on the need of conducting Census 2021 and the role of the States in doing the same.
- He also said that the data collected in the Census helps us in framing policies for the welfare of the people of the country. Mr Rai also inaugurated the Official Mascot for Census 2021.

**International**

**Russia to deliver S-400 air defence systems to India by 2025**
- Russia started the production of S-400 long-range surface-to-air missile systems for India. The five
units will be delivered to India by 2025.

S-400 air defence missile systems

• The S-400 air defence missile systems are among the best in the world. This will significantly bolster India’s air defence mechanism. In October 2018, India signed a USD 5 billion deal to buy the air defence missile systems.
• The S-400, an upgraded version of the S-300 previously been available to the Russian defence forces. It is manufactured by Almaz-Antey and has been in service in Russia since 2007

Oleksiy Honcharuk Resigns as Prime Minister of Ukraine

• The incumbent Prime Minister of Ukraine, Oleksiy Honcharuk submitted his resignation to President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. The resignation is however still to be confirmed by the President.
• Oleksiy Honcharuk has been the Prime Minister of Ukraine since 29 August 2019 becoming the youngest-ever head of government at the age of 35.

Banking and Economy

UN slashes India's GDP growth forecast to grow at 5.7%

• On January 16, 2020, According to the 'World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2020' report released by the United Nations (UN), it has slashed India's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth forecast for the year 2019-20 by 1.9% to 5.7%. Earlier in 2019, it had projected GDP growth rate of 7.6% for FY 2019-20.
• It has lowered the India's growth rate to be 6.6% in the next financial year-FY 2020-21 from 7.4% earlier. It has also estimate a growth rate of 6.3% for the fiscal beginning in 2021, while the growth rate was 6.8% in FY 2018-19.

3 major reasons for the reduction in GDP growth

Auto Industry: In 2019, this sector saw the slowdown, whereby the vehicle sales volume witnessed the fastest decline in 19 years. The auto industry records for 7% of the India's GDP and 49% of the manufacturing GDP.

IIP (Index of Industrial Production): India’s industrial activity continuously at a sluggish manner due to the major steps like corporate tax cuts in September 2019. The IIP (Index of Industrial Production) rose by 1.8% in November 2019, after declining between August –October, 2019.

NBFCs: One of the main reasons for the decline in GDP growth is the cash crisis of non-banking finance companies (NBFCs). The crisis came in September 2018 after the Indian infrastructure development and finance company, Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Limited (IL&FS) defaulted in debt payments.

SUMMITS AND MOU’S

NITI Aayog and UT of Ladakh sign MoU to promote development in Ladakh

• NITI Aayog and Union Territory of Ladakh sign MoU for Development of Infrastructure Projects in Ladakh. It was signed between NITI Aayog Senior Adviser Dr Yogesh Suri and Adviser to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Umang Narula. The agreement was executed in the presence of NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.
• Under this agreement, NITI Aayog will be supporting the UT’s administration through its key initiative ‘Development Support Services to States for Infrastructure Projects (D3S-i)’. In an important initiative to promote the development of key infrastructure sectors in the newly constituted Union Territory of Ladakh.

Obituary

Former Indian legendary All-Rounder Bapu Nadkarni passed away

Former Test all-rounder Rameshchandra Gangaram 'Bapu' Nadkarni passed away on Friday (January 17) in Mumbai at the age of 86. Nadkarni, best known for bowling a record 21 consecutive maiden overs in a Test match.
Sports

The journey to ICC U19 Cricket World Cup 2020 set to begin
• The ICC Under-19 World Cup Cricket 2020 begins in South Africa. Indian team played under the captaincy of Priyam Garg.
• The final of the tournament will be played on Feb 09 at JB Marks Oval, Potchefstroom, South Africa. India is the most successful team in the tournament, having won four titles till date.
• India is the defending champions in U19 World Cup 2018. Total 16 teams are participating in the tournament, split into four groups of four.

Sania Mirza and Nadiia Kichenok wins WTA doubles title
• Sania Mirza (India) and Nadiia Kichenok (Ukraine) have won the women's doubles title of the WTA International trophy at Hobart, Australia.
• They beat Shuai Peng and Shuai Zhang from China 6-4, 6-4. It's Sania's 42nd WTA doubles title and first since Brisbane International trophy in 2007 with American partner Bethanie Mattek-Sands.

Vinesh Phogat wins gold medal in UWW Rome Ranking Series 2020
• The 2020 season's first UWW Ranking Series was held from January 15 to 18 in the Italian Capital, Rome.
• India's wrestling champion Vinesh Phogat defeated Ecuador's Luisa Elizabeth Melendres 4-0 in the final (53 kg) to win her first gold medal of the season at the UWW Rome Ranking Series.

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National

Piyush Goyal to lead Indian Delegation to World Economic Forum 2020
• The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways, Piyush Goyal, will lead the Indian delegation to the 50th World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting at Davos from January 20 to 24, 2020.
• The theme of the 2020 meeting is "Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World".

National Immunization Day 2020
In India, the National Immunization Day was observed on 19 January 2020.
• As a part of the celebrations, Pulse Polio Immunization programme 2020 was launched where President Ram Nath Kovind administered Polio drops to children below five years at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
• Under this programme, approximately 17.4 crore children of less than five years of age across the country will be administered polio drops as a part of the immunization drive of the Central Government to sustain polio eradication from the country.

International

New Disease: Novel virus Grips China's Wuhan City
• The Wuhan City of China is in a grip of a new disease caused by new respiratory virus called Novel virus, codenamed as 2019-nCoV.
• Viruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).
• 2019-nCoV is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.
• The has so far killed two people in China and sickened at least 45 persons including overseas cases with some new cases being detected in the city.
• It is believed to have contracted through exposure to animals market that sells seafood and meat in Wuhan.
Banking and Economy

Mastercard to invest $1 bn in India over 5 years towards tech development
• Global payments company Mastercard planned to invest nearly $1 billion in India over the next five years. The proposed investment will be made over five years in our India operations includes an R&D facility at Pune and another center at Vadodara.
• The company is also working closely with technology and financial startups in the country by focusing on the innovation and digital payments matrices under its flagship Start Path program,

Half of World’s GDP Moderately or Highly Dependent on Nature: WEF study
• The report has been published by WEF in collaboration with PwC, UK.

RBI Ranks 6th among central banks in buying gold abroad in 2019: WGC Report
• The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was the sixth largest gold buyer abroad in the year 2019, as per the World Gold Council (WGC) report titled, "World Gold Outlook 2020".
• The RBI currently holds 625.2 tonnes of gold, which is 6.6 percent of its forex reserves.
• RBI bought 7.5 tonnes of gold in October 2019, to increase its foreign exchange reserves to $450 billion.
• The central banks of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Poland bought more than India in 2019 respectively.

NPCI Launches Blockchain-based ‘Vajra Platform’ to Secure Online Payment
• The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched a blockchain-technology based payment system ‘Vajra Platform’ for automating payment clearing and settlement processes.
• Vajra platform is based on Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT), to provide highly secure and tamper-evident transactions stored in a distributed and immutable database.
• Vajra is a permissioned network that will be set up so that only the parties who have been approved by the Network Administrator can be a part of the network.
• The platform has three types of nodes: Clearing House node (CHN) for NPCI, UIDAI node for Aadhaar authentication, and Participant node (PN) for all banks/ASP/PPI/PSP

Ranking

Gujarat ranked top for water efficiency Delhi among worst performing states
• Gujarat ranked the best for parameters on efficiency targets in the review of state and Central government water departments by the ministry of Jal Shakti.
• Rajasthan is the third-best, and Delhi is among the worst-performing states, according to the ranking for 2019 circulated to different state governments recently.
• The seven Central departments reviewed, the Survey of India, got the top billing followed by the National Institute of Hydrology (NIH) and Central Water Commission.

Current Affairs PDF- January 20, 2020

National

Printing process for Union Budget 2020-21 begins
• The Printing process for the Union Budget 2020-21 began with the Halwa ceremony in North Block on January 20, 2020.
• The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be presenting the Union Budget 2020-21 on February 1, 2020.
• At present, all the officials involved in the preparation of Union Budget 2020 have been subject to “Lock-in” to avoid any prospective leak of information.

PM Modi interacts with students at Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020
• The 3rd Edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha was held on January 20, 2020 at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi.
• Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with over 2000 students who would appear for the Board Exams 2020.
• PM Modi shared interesting tips for exam preparations and also talked about the ways to handle stress and anxiety.

**First squadron of Sukhoi-30 aircraft inducted into Indian Air Force**
• The first squadron of Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft was inducted into the Indian Air Force at its Thanjavur base, Tamil Nadu on January 20, 2020.
• The Sukhoi-30 aircraft has been integrated with the supersonic BrahMos missiles.
• This 222-squadron known as the Tigersharks will serve as a platform for conducting aerial and maritime missions in the Indian Ocean Region.

**NDRF Celebrates its 15th Raising Day**
• The National Response Force (NDRF) celebrated its 15th Raising Day on 19th January. National Response Force (NDRF), a specialized multi-skilled, humanitarian force of the country, came into existence on January 19th, 2006 has been playing a vital role in Management and Community awareness for Risk Reduction (DRR) in the country.
• The NDRF has earned good name and fame nationally and internationally with its selfless service and unmatched professionalism in management. NDRF has saved more than One lakh lives in its 3100 operations and rescued/evacuated over 6.7 lakh people during s. A workshop was also be conducted on ‘Urban flooding & challenges’ and ‘Biological Emergencies & New Technology in Management’.

**International virus in China: 139 new cases reported so far**
• The of deadly novel virus has now spread to Beijing and Shenzhen cities of China.
• So far, the authorities have reported a total of 198 confirmed cases of virus containment and death of 3 people.
• A few cases of virus infection have been reported from Thailand and Japan as well.

**Awards**
• The Iranian film ‘Castle of Dreams’ directed by Reza Mirakarimi won the Best Film Award in Asian Competition section of the 18th Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF). The film also won the Best Director Award.
• Indian film ‘Finally Love’ directed by Anjan Duttagupta bagged Best Audience Award in Cinema of the World Category. Sri Lankan director Prasanna Vithanage’s film ‘Children of the Sun’ won Special Jury Award.

**SAG Awards 2020 winners list**

The winners of the 26th Screen Actors Guild Awards were awarded at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, California, the US on 19 January. The award honours the biggest achievements in TV and film for the year 2019.

**Winners’ List:**

Television Awards:
Television Movie/Miniseries (Male): Sam Rockwell, Fosse/Verdon
Television Movie/Miniseries (Female): Michelle Williams, Fosse/Verdon
Drama Series (Male): Peter Dinklage, Game of Thrones
Drama Series (Female): Jennifer Aniston, The Morning Show
Comedy Series (Male): Tony Shalhoub, The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel
Comedy Series (Female): Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Fleabag
Ensemble in a Drama Series: The Crown
Ensemble in a Comedy Series: The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel
Stunt Ensemble in a Comedy or Drama Series: Game of Thrones
Motion Picture Awards:
Leading Role (Male): Joaquin Phoenix, Joker
Leading Role (Female): Renée Zellweger, Judy
Supporting Role (Male): Brad Pitt, Once Upon A Time In Hollywood
Supporting Role (Female): Laura Dern, Marriage Story
Cast in a Motion Picture: Parasite
Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture: Avengers: Endgame

Science & Technology
APEDA sets up 186 Agri products testing laboratories
- 20 January 2020 Current Affairs: Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has added 135 laboratories to existing 51 recognized laboratories. With this addition of laboratories, APEDA recognition of laboratories has reached 186 laboratories in India.
- The move is significant as the Laboratory testing requirements are crucial in the Agri export supply chain. The number of laboratories added includes 35 in Maharashtra, 23 in Gujarat, 10 in Andhra Pradesh & Telangana, 23 in Tamil Nadu 17 in and Karnataka.
- APEDA introduced a policy decision for the simplification of APEDA recognition of laboratories to increase the laboratory network further. It has been decided that the laboratories which are National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited will be recognized by APEDA. These laboratories will be added in the network of APEDA recognition laboratories.

Appointment
Union Minister Arjun Munda was elected as the President of AAI
- Union Minister Arjun Munda was elected as the President of the Archery Association of India (AAI) elections. Arjun Munda defeated his rival BVP Rao by a margin of 34-18 votes.
- Munda was elected for a full tenure of four years. The AAI elections were held according to the Delhi High Court order.
- The election was held in the presence of an observer each from World Archery (WA), Sports Ministry and Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

GoI appoints Nripendra Misra as chairman of NMML
- Nripendra Misra has been appointed chairperson of the executive council of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML). The Executive Council of the NMML has been reconstituted and it will be now chaired by Mr Misra. Dr A Surya Prakash, chairperson of the Prasar Bharati board, will be the council’s vice-chairperson.
- The Nehru Memorial Museum & Library (NMML) established in the memory of Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 – 1964) is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

Current Affairs PDF- January 21, 2020

National
Brazil President Bolsonaro to be chief guest at 71st Republic Day
- Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro will be the Chief Guest at the 71st Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi on January 26, 2020.
- President Bolsonaro will be on a four-day visit to India and will be leading a delegation of 7 Ministers and the Chairman of Brazil-India Friendship Group.
- President Bolsonaro will also hold talks with President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

50th Annual Meeting of WEF begins in Davos
- The 50th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum begins in Davos, Switzerland. On the Indian side, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead the delegation to the WEF.
- This year programme will focus on achieving the maximum impact on the Forum’s platform for
public-private cooperation. This year 50th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum theme will be "Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World".

**Madhya Pradesh to observe National Girl Child Day on January 24**
- Madhya Pradesh will observe the National Girl Child Day on January 24, 2020 on the theme "Aware girl child-able Madhya Pradesh" under Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao scheme.
- On the occasion, the state government will examine the health of girls and will create awareness about the rights of girls & daughters.

**PM to chair 32nd PRAGATI meeting**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on January 22, 2020 chair the 32nd PRAGATI meeting.
- PRAGATI is an ICT-based multi-modal platform for effective governance and timely implementation of projects.
- In previous 31 PRAGATI interactions, PM Modi has approved projects worth over Rs 12 lakh crore.

**Banking and Economy**

**Rs 70,000 crore loan amount has been disbursed till Jan 13 under MSMEs scheme: Govt**
- The Finance Ministry has stated that a loan amount of nearly seventy thousand crore rupees has been disbursed till 13th of this month under the scheme of providing loan to Micro Small and Medium Enterprises – MSMEs within 59 minutes.
- Out of the 2.73 lakh applications received, 2.19 lakh applications have been approved.
- For ease of access to credit for MSMEs, the government has introduced loan provision to MSMEs through a dedicated online portal - psbloansin59minutes.com.
- The portal acts as a single interface portal which facilitates in principal approval of bank loans to Micro Small and Medium Enterprises upto five crore rupees within 59 minutes.

**BEL commissions real time train info system for Railways**
- Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL), the Bengaluru-based defence PSU, has commissioned Phase I of the Real Time Train Information System (RTIS) for the Railways.
- RTIS provides real-time train information to the Railways thereby increasing its operational efficiency, in addition to enhancing passenger safety.
- The system has been commissioned through the Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS), under the technical guidance of Space Applications Centre (SAC), ISRO.

**India among top 10 FDI recipients, attracts $49 billion inflows in 2019: UN report**
- India was among the top 10 recipients of Foreign Direct Investment in 2019, attracting $49 billion in inflows, a 16 per cent increase from the previous year, driving the FDI growth in South Asia, according to a UN report.
- The Global Investment Trend Monitor report compiled by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) states that the global foreign direct investment remained flat in 2019 at $1.39 trillion, a one per cent decline from a revised $1.41 trillion in
- This is against the backdrop of weaker macroeconomic performance and policy uncertainty for investors, including trade tensions.

**Sports**

**India wins Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship 2020**
- The team of the Indian Consulate has won the Diplomat Cup Cricket Championship of 2020 held in Sharjah. The team of the Indian Consulate defeated the Pakistan Consulate to win the trophy which was organized by Skyline University College in Sharjah.
- The Consulate team of 8 countries participated in the tournament. The participating Consulates were: India, Australia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, South Africa, Pakistan and the US.
Zomato acquires UberEats India for nearly Rs 2,500 crore in all-stock deal
• Zomato announced that it has acquired Uber’s Food Delivery Business in India in an all-stock deal and Uber will have 9.99 per cent stake in the Deepinder Goyal-led food delivery platform.
• It is in the range of over USD 350 million or nearly Rs 2,500 crore. Uber Eats in India will discontinue operations and direct restaurants, delivery partners, and users of the Uber Eats apps to the Zomato platform.
• We are proud to have pioneered restaurant discovery and to have created a leading food delivery business across more than 500 cities in India. This acquisition significantly strengthens our position in the category stated Goyal, Founder and CEO, Zomato.

Current Affairs PDF- January 22, 2020

National

Supreme Court forms committee to draft mediation law
• The Supreme Court has set up a committee to firm up draft legislation to give legal sanctity to disputes settled through mediation. The panel, to be headed by mediator Niranjan Bhat.
• The other members of the panel, appointed by the Mediation and Project Conciliation Committee (MCPC) of the Supreme Court, included Justice K Kanan, former ASGs AS Chandok and PS Narsimha, senior advocates Sriram Panchu and JP Singh, and senior mediators Susheela S, Sadhna Ramchandran, Laila Ollapally, and Anil Xavier.
• Chief Justice of India: Sharad Arvind Bobde; Founded: 28th January 1950.

UP Govt launches Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana
• Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana. This scheme will provide financial assistance to the family of farmers who die or become handicapped while working in fields.
• Government has also decided to implement Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana to boost tourism in state. under Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana one tourist point will be developed with a fund of 50 lakh rupees in each and every assembly segment of the state.

International

Greece elects Katerina Sakellaropoulou as first female President
Katerina Sakellaropoulou has been elected as the first woman President of Greece. She received majority votes cutting across party lines.
• She will succeed Prokopis Pavlopoulos and will be the first President who does not belong to any party.
• She has also Greece’s traditional norm of men mostly taking senior government positions.

World Economic Forum 2020: US joins One Trillion Trees initiative, Greta Thunberg says emissions have to stop
• US President Donald Trump affirmed during the first day of the 50th World Economic Forum that the United States harbours the cleanest air and drinking water on Earth.
• He also announced that the US will be joining the One Billion Trees initiative and continue to work towards restoring and growing forests and trees.

Banking and Economy
Telecom department approves FDI limit in Bharti Airtel to 100%
The Telecom department of India has approved the Bharti Airtel Ltd to increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the company to 100%.

The approval from the Telecom department will enable Singtel or Singapore Telecommunications Ltd to increase its stake in Bharti Airtel Ltd. Singapore Telecommunications Ltd currently owns 35% stake in Bharti Airtel.

Bharti Telecom is the single-largest shareholder in Bharti Airtel with about a 41% stake while Singtel owns 48% in Bharti Telecom, which provides it a 35% stake in Bharti Airtel.

RBI ranked 6th among central banks in buying gold abroad; China's central bank tops

On January 15, 2020 India's central bank i.e., the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been ranked 6th largest buyer of sovereign gold abroad after it purchased 25.2 tonnes in the first 10 months of 2019 according to World Gold Council (WGC) report titled “Outlook 2020: Global economic trends and their impact on gold”. The central banks of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Poland have purchased more gold than India in 2019.

Sports
Celebrated wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt and Paralympian Deepa Malik inducted in AICS

Celebrated wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt and Paralympian Deepa Malik are among the new inductees in the government's All India Council of Sports (AICS).

It is an advisory body to the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports which was formed in 2015 by the then Sports Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.

Its term has also been extended by three years and it will continue to be led by veteran sports administrator V K Malhotra as President.

Some other renowned new entrants in the Council are former shooter Anjali Bhagwat, footballer Renedy Singh, and mountaineer Bachendri Pal. Senior India off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has also been inducted in the council.

Current Affairs PDF- January 23, 2020

National

Cabinet approves closure of Hindustan Fluorocarbons Ltd

The Union Cabinet recently approved the closure of public sector Hindustan Fluorocarbon Ltd (HFL). Only 88 employees are working in this company.

HFL has been at a loss since 2013-14 and its net worth has come down to a negative mark. As on March 31, 2019, the company incurred a cumulative loss of Rs 62.81 crore and its net worth is Rs 43.20 crore.

NBCC (India) will be a land management agency for facilitating the disposal of land assets. Hindustan Fluorocarbon Ltd is a subsidiary company of Hindustan Organic Chemicals.

Jaipur Literature Festival begins

Rajasthan’s Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot inaugurated Jaipur Literature Festival 2020 on January 23, 2019. Litterateurs of the country participate in the festival.

It is the 13th year of the Jaipur Literature Festival. This time more than 550 speakers are joining the festival from different parts of the country and the world.

Some issues like NRC, CAA and Delhi’s JNU can also be discussed during the festival. Although the organizers have not listed these issues in the list of discussions.

ECI to conduct first Sukumar Sen Memorial lecture

Election Commission of India (ECI) has organized an annual lecture as a tribute to Sukumar Sen, the first Chief Election Commissioner of India.

Sukumar Sen (1898–1963) admirably conducted the first two general elections for the Lok Sabha and the state legislatures. Former President of India Pranab Mukherjee delivered a lecture on this occasion.
Sukumar Sen was born on January 02, 1898. He completed his education from Presidency College, Kolkata and University College, London. He joined the Indian Civil Service in 1922.

**S Jaishankar inaugurates Gandhi Convention Center in Niger**
- Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar and Nigerien President Mahamadou Issoufou jointly inaugurated the Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Center.
- It is the first convention center that started in Africa on the 150th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.
- This convention center was designed as a spacious, modern and environmentally friendly facility. S Jaishankar is the first foreign minister of India to visit Niger.

**Banking and Economy**

**ICICI Bank introduces cardless cash withdrawal facility through ATMs**
- ICICI Bank has rolled out “Cardless Cash Withdrawal” service through ATM. The “Cardless Cash Withdrawal” service can be used for cash withdrawal having a per day transaction limit of Rs 20,000.
- The service will enable the ICICI customers to withdraw cash from the ATM by putting a request on ICICI Internet Banking App “iMobile”.

**UN lowers India's GDP growth rate to 5.7% for FY 2019-20**
- The United Nations has lowered India’s GDP growth rate to 5.7% for the Fiscal Year 2019-20 in its World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2020 report.
- UN has lowered the growth rate to 5.7% from 7.6% which it projected in its WESP 2019 report.
- UN has also projected India’s growth rate at 6.6% for FY 2020-21 and 6.3% for FY 2021-22. According to the UN, India’s growth rate for FY 2018-19 was 6.8%.

**Awards**

**Priya Prakash wins Cisco Youth Leadership Award 2019**
- The founder and CEO of India based HealthSetGo, Priya Prakash, has won the Global Citizen Prize: Cisco Youth Leadership Award for 2019. The award was given for her school health program that provides healthcare support to children.
- HealthSetGo is a healthcare organisation that supports the UN's (United Nation) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to improve the health & lives of children.

**Indian shooter Divyansh & Apurvi wins gold medal at Meyton Cup**
- Indian shooters Divyansh Singh Pawar and Apurvi Chandela have clinched a gold medal each in Meyton Cup, a private tournament in Innsbruck, Austria.
- While Divyansh won the gold in the men's 10m air rifle event with an effort of 249.7, Apurvi bagged the yellow metal in the 10m air rifle women's category with a 251.4.

**Appointment**

**Challa Sreenivasulu Setty becomes SBI MD**
- Challa Sreenivasulu Setty has been appointed as the new Managing Director (MD) of the State Bank of India (SBI). He will remain on this post for the next three years.
- Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved his name proposed by the Department of the Financial Services.
- Challa is currently working as the deputy managing director of the SBI. This post is extendable by two years or until any other orders. However, such orders come only after reviewing performance.

**BOB, BOI and Canara Bank get new MD & CEOs**
- The government on Monday appointed heads of three large public sector banks - Bank of Baroda, Bank of India and Canara bank for a period of three years. Sanjiv Chadha has been appointed as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bank of Baroda (BoB) by Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). He succeeds P S Jayakumar, whose term ended in October last year.
The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) appointed Lingam Venkat Prabhakar as MD & CEO of Canara Bank and Atanu Kumar Das as MD & CEO of Bank of India. Prabhakar was the executive director of Punjab National Bank and he will be replacing RA Sankara Narayanan who will retire end of this month.

Atanu Kumar Das has been appointed as the MD and CEO in Bank of India. He will head the bank for three years from date of assuming office. He is at present working as the Executive Director in the same bank.

**Ranking**

**Greenpeace India Report: Jharia most polluted city in India**
- The coal-belching town of Jharia in Jharkhand to be the most polluted city in India according to a Greenpeace India Report. Jharkhand’s Dhanbad, known for its rich coal reserves and industries, is the second-most polluted city in India.
- Delhi is the 10th-most polluted city in India, according to the report. As per the report, 6 of the top-10 polluted cities are in Uttar Pradesh comprising of Noida, Ghaziabad, Bareilly, Allahabad, Moradabad and Firozabad.
- Lunglei in Mizoram is the least polluted city in the country. The report is based on analysis of PM10 data from 287 cities across the country.

**Current Affairs PDF- January 24, 2020**

**National News**

**National Girl Child Day 2020:**
- India observed the National Girl Child Day 2020 on January 24, 2020 with an aim to raise awareness about the importance of girl child and create facilities for them.
- The Day is utilised as a platform to share about the atrocities and inequalities faced by girls in their lives.

**India’s first e-waste clinic opens in Bhopal:**
- The first e-waste clinic of the country has been recently opened in Bhopal. This clinic will segregate and process e-waste from household and commercial units.
- The clinic will process all types of e-Waste materials like computers, mobile, chargers, etc. The clinic will run a campaign ‘junk to jugaad’ for those e-waste materials which will not be possible to process.
- The e-waste clinic has been prepared in a junk low floor bus. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) are providing technical support to this clinic.

**India, Bangladesh signed agreement to upgrade a road into 4-lane highway:**
- India and Bangladesh have signed an agreement to upgrade Ashuganj-Akhaura road (50.58-kilometer) into a four-lane highway.
- A stretch of 39 kilometers between Ashuganj river port to Dharhar area will be developed by Indian Company, Afcons Infrastructure Limited and Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of Bangladesh.
- This road up-gradation project is a part of two billion second line credit extended by India to Bangladesh. Apart from that, 46 other projects have been identified in Bangladesh that would improve connectivity within and outside of Bangladesh.
**International News**

**US amends visa rules to restrict ‘birth tourism’:**
- The United States recently announced new visa rules to restrict ‘birth tourism’ wherein no temporary visitor visas (B-1/B-2) will be issued to foreigners seeking birth tourism.
- As per the US White House, the move is aimed at boosting national security and public safety on the whole.

**International day of education 2020 observed:**
- International Education Day is observed every year on January 24. The United Nations passed a resolution on December 3, 2018, and decided to declare January 24 as International Education Day.
- Its purpose is to underline the role of education in peace and development. The proposal for International Education Day was prepared by 58 countries including Nigeria.
- In India, National Education Day is observed on November 11 every year. It is the second year of the International Day of Education.

**Banking and Economy**

**RBI cancels certificate of authorisation of Vodafone m-pesa:**
- The Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday said it has cancelled the Certificate of Authorisation (CoA) of Vodafone m-pesa on account of voluntary surrender of authorisation.
- Following the cancellation of the CoA, the company cannot transact the business of issuance and operation of prepaid payment instruments, the central bank said.
- Vodafone m-pesa was one of the 11 firms that was given payments bank licence by the RBI in 2015.

**Investment limit for FPIs in government & corporate bonds increased to 30%:**
- The investment limit for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in government and corporate bonds have been raised by the Reserve Bank of India. The decision aims to bring in more foreign funds into the market.
- The investment limit for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have been raised from 20% to 30% in government & corporate bonds.
- Along with increase in the investment limit for Foreign Portfolio Investors, the RBI has also announced relaxations in the voluntary retention route (VRR) for FPI investments in debt.
- According to the RBI circular, the investment cap through VRR has been increased to Rs 1.5 lakh crore from Rs 0.75 lakh crore. The central bank has also permitted the FPIs to invest in exchange-traded funds that invest only in debt instruments.

**Awards**

**Subhash Chandra Bose AapdaPrabandhanPuraskar 2020 winners announced:**
The Ministry will confer the award upon Kumar Munnan Singh in Individual Category and Mitigation & Management Centre, Uttarakhand in Institution Category. The award is announced on the occasion of the Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

**Sports**

India successfully chased the biggest T20 target abroad:

- Team India has completed its biggest run chase overseas by achieving a target of 204 against New Zealand in the first T20I in Auckland on January 24, 2020.
- India completed its last biggest run chase abroad on July 8, 2018, by achieving the target of 199 runs given by England in Bristol.
- In this match, Shreyas Iyer (58) and KL Rahul (56) smashed rapid 50s with Captain Virat Kohli scoring 45 runs.

**Ranking**

Corruption Perception Index 2019: India slips two positions to 80th rank:

- The Transparency International on January 23, 2020 launched the Corruption Perception Index 2019 during the ongoing World Economic Forum 2020 in Davos. India’s rank slipped to 80th place on the index from 78th position in the year 2018.
- Denmark and New Zealand have been ranked as the most honest countries on the index.

**Current Affairs PDF - January 25, 2020**

**National News**

India’s First War Memorial for Service Animals to come up in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh:

- The Government of India has planned to set up a first-of-its-kind war memorial for service animals in Meerut city of Uttar Pradesh.
- The memorial will be set up at the army’s specialized breeding, rearing and training centre for animals: the Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre and College in Meerut.
- It will be similar to the National War Memorial in Delhi, but on smaller scale.
- India’s first war memorial for animals including dogs, horses and mules will be dedicated to the contributions and heroics of animals who lost their lives in counter-insurgency operations in Kashmir and in the battlefield during the Kargil War, while helping the Army.

India & Brazil Signs 15 Pacts to Boost Strategic Ties:

- President of Brazil Jair Messias Bolsonaro arrived in New Delhi on 24 January 2020 on four-day state visit to India.
- He is also the chief guest at the 2020 Republic Day of India celebrations.
- Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro and Prime Minister Narendra Modi inked 15 agreements on 25 January to boost cooperation in a wide range of areas between the two countries.
• List of MoUs Signed Include:
  1) MoU on Bioenergy Cooperation
  2) MoU for Cooperation in the field of Oil and Natural Gas
  3) Investment Cooperation and Facilitation Treaty
  4) Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
  5) MoU in the field of Early Childhood
  6) MoU on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine
  7) MoU in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy.
  8) Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2020-2024
  9) Agreement on Social Security
  10)MoU on Cooperation between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) of India and the General Coordination of Network Incident Treatment Centre, Department of Information Security, Institutional Security, Cabinet of the Presidency of Brazil (CGCTIR/DSI/GSI) on cooperation in the area of Cyber Security
  11) Programme of Scientific and Technological Cooperation for implementing the agreement on scientific and technological cooperation for the period 2020-2023
  12) MoU on Cooperation in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources
  13) MoU between Invest India and the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency
  14) Joint Declaration of Intent (DoI) for Cooperation in the fields of Animal Husbandry and Dairying
  15) MoU for establishing a nodal institution in India to carry out research on Bioenergy

**CJI S.A. Bobde Inaugurates All India Members’ Conference of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal in New Delhi:**
• The Chief Justice of India, Justice S.A. Bobde, inaugurated the All India Members' Conference of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) in New Delhi on 24 January 2020.
• The two day event was held as a part of the 79th Foundation Day Celebrations of ITAT.
• India's Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) was set up on 25 January 1941.
• ITAT functions under the Department of Legal Affairs in the Ministry of Law and Justice.

**Banking and Economy**

**World Bank Approves USD 210 Million Loan for Maharashtra Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project:**
• The Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra has signed a USD 210 million loan agreement with the World Bank. The loan agreement has been signed for Maharashtra Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project.
• The USD 210 million loan will be funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), having a 6-year grace period with a maturity period of 13.5 years.

**Switzerland Mints World’s Smallest Gold Coin; Features Albert Einstein:**
• In Switzerland, State-owned Swissmint has minted world’s smallest gold coin measuring 2.96-millimeter (0.12-inches).
• The coin features the image of Albert Einstein sticking out his tongue.
Swissmint has minted just 999 such coins.
The size of the coin is 2.96-millimeter (0.12-inches). It weighs 0.063 grams (1/500th of an ounce).
The coin has a nominal value of 1/4 Swiss francs (USD 0.26).
It will be sold for 199 francs, along with a special magnifying glass so that owners can see the famous physicist on its face.

SUMMITS AND MOU’S

Election Commission of India to sign MoU with EC of Tunisia and Papua New Guinea:
The Election Commission of India has received the approval from the Union Cabinet to sign Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission and Independent High Authority for Elections of Tunisia. The MoU aims to enhance the cooperation in the field of electoral management and administration.
The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also approved the agreements in the field of mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, cooperation in the field of early childhood care, oil and natural gas, and Geology and Mineral Resources between India and Brazil.

Ranking

India celebrates National Voters’ Day on 25th January:
In India, the National Voters’ Day is celebrated on 25 January every year in a bid to encourage more young voters to take part in the political process.
The day is being observed since 2011 to mark the foundation day of Election Commission of India (ECI), formed on 25 January 1950, to overlook the smooth running of elections in India.
The theme of National Voters’ Day 2020 is ‘Electoral Literacy for a Stronger Democracy.’

National Tourism Day: 25 January:
The National Tourism Day is celebrated on 25th January in India every year to raise awareness about the importance of tourism for the country’s economy.
The Indian government established the National Tourism Day to cultivate awareness among the global community on the importance of tourism and to demonstrate how it affects social, political, financial, cultural worth and economic values worldwide.

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National News

Republic Day 2020: India celebrates its 71st Republic Day:
This year’s Republic Day was unique for India in many different ways as compared to the previous years. Starting from the military might that was displayed through indigenously developed artillery gun system ‘Dhanush’ or with first woman parade adjutant for the Republic Day with Captain Tania Shergill leading the parade; there were many ‘firsts’ that marked India’s 71st Republic Day Celebrations.
Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was the chief guest at India’s 71st Republic Day Parade on January 26.
• At the 71st Republic Parade, for the first time, newly appointed Chief of Defence Staff Gen BipinRawat attended the Republic Day parade. General Rawat welcomed PM Modi for the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the National War Memorial along with the service chiefs for all the three armed forces i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force.
• Continuing the theme of women power, the day also saw an all-woman biker contingent of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) make its debut as a part of the 71st Republic Day Parade. The contingent was commanded by Inspector Seema Nag, who is posted with the Rapid Action Force (RAF).
• The Indian Air Force (IAF) also participated in the Republic Day Parade with its tableau showcasing scaled system of the five-fighter system. The models on display during Parade included Rafale Fighter Jet and Tejas Aircraft.

NitinGadkari Launches Web Portal “GATI” to Monitor Road & Highways Projects:
• The Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs ShriNitinGadkari has launched an online Web Portal ‘GATI’ on the pattern of ‘PRAGATI’, the portal used by the Prime Ministers’ Office (PMO) for monitoring projects.
• The GATI portal has been created by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and can be accessed from NHAI Website.
• The portal was launched by the minister during the two-days long review meeting of NHAI-Ministry projects in Haryana’s Manesar on 23 & 24 January 2020.
• A total of 500 projects (including delayed ones) costing around Rs 3 lakh crore were taken up for review during the meeting.

Inaugural Ganga-Volga Dialogue of Civilizations between India and Russia held in New Delhi:
• The maiden Ganga Volga Dialogue of Civilization took place in New Delhi on 22 January 2020, to provide a platform for enhancing the special and privileged strategic partnership between India and Russia.
• The idea of the Dialogue was conceptualized during the October 2018 India-Russia Summit between President Putin and Prime Minister Modi.
• The event was inaugurated by India’s Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan.
• The Dialogue was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with Dr.Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation.

International News

Global Unemployment to increase by around 2.5 million in 2020: ILO Report:
• The International Labour Organization (ILO) has released a report titled “World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2020” which predicts that unemployment is likely to increase by around 2.5 million in 2020.
• However, the report also revealed that after nine years in decline, the rate of global unemployment remained unchanged in 2019, at 5.4%, and is expected to stay the same for the next two years, due to fluctuations in the population seeking work.

Researchers discovered a new species of Allosaurus in Utah:
• Paleontologists have unveiled a remarkable new species of the meat-eating dinosaur at the Natural History Museum of Utah.
• It is suspected that the species must have evolved at least 5 million years earlier than fragilis.

Banking and Economy

India's GDP to grow at 5.0% in FY20 & 5.5% in FY21: India Ratings:
• India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has projected India's GDP growth rate for fiscal 2019-2020 at 5 percent, which is a multi-year low.
• Ind-Ra expects gross domestic product (GDP) to grow at 5.5 percent in FY21.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

India signs 15 MoU with Brazil including Cyber Security:
• India and Brazil on Saturday signed 15 MoUs in various fields including cybersecurity, bioenergy and health and medicine among others, following the bilateral talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro.
• An MoU on bioenergy cooperation, investment cooperation and facilitation treaty, agreement on cooperation in the field of health and medicine, cultural exchange programme for the period 2020-2024 were exchanged between the two sides.

Appointment and Resignation

EU Appoints Joao Vale De Almeida As First Ambassador To Post-brexit UK:
EU named Joao Vale de Almeida its first ambassador to the post-Brexit United Kingdom after PM Boris Johnson on Friday signed the agreement to leave the bloc.

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National News

GeM Signs MoU with Uttar Pradesh to Set Up Project Management Unit:
• The Uttar Pradesh government has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Government eMarketplace (GeM), under the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, to set up a GeM Organizational Transformation Team (GOTT) Project Management Unit (PMU) in the state.
• Uttar Pradesh government is the second state after Punjab to establish a GOTT-PMU for inclusive, efficient and transparent procurement system.

Government of India to sell 100% stake in Air India:
• The government of India announced a sale of 100% stake in debt-laden Air India. As part of the strategic disinvestment and has set March 17, as the deadline for submitting an expression of interest (EoI).
• Air India would also sell 100% stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 percent shareholding in joint venture AISATS.
• The financial position of Air India is very fragile and the Government has limited resources. Air India is under a debt trap and the private sector can bring required capital to the Airline.
• Air India staff will be offered three per cent of the airline’s total shares in the government’s disinvestment process.

**Indian Railway’s First Waste-To-Energy Plant Commissioned In Bhubaneswar:**
• The first waste-to-energy plant of the Indian Railways, has been commissioned at Carriage Repair Workshop, Mancheswar, in Bhubaneswar by the East Coast Railway (ECoR) zone.
• The plant is the first Government of India initiative in waste to energy plant and fourth such plant in the country.
• It has been built at a cost of Rs 1.79 crore and has the capacity to dispose 500 kg waste, including plastic and e-waste.
• This waste-to-energy plant uses a patented technology called ‘Polycrack’, which is world’s first patented heterogeneous catalytic process to convert multiple feed stocks into hydrocarbon liquid fuels, gas, carbon and water.
• This process will produce energy in the form of light diesel oil which is used to light furnaces.

**Kerala Partners MIT To Unveil India’s First ‘Super Fab Lab’ in Kochi:**
• Kerala Chief Minister PinarayiVijayan inaugurated India’s first Super Fab Lab at the Integrated Startup Complex of the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) in Kochi on 25 January 2020, that will give India’s hardware industry a huge leap.
• Fab Labs are fabrication laboratories offering digital fabrication and computation. A Fab Lab lets you make almost anything; make the products you can consume.
• A Super Lab lets you make a Fab Lab. It is an amazing facility that has the tools not just to make anything, but make the tools that make things.

**Govt signs ‘Historic’ Bodo Accord 2020:**
• The central government on January 27, 2020 signed the historic Bodo Accord 2020 with the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and All Bodo Students Union (ABSU). The NDFB is one of the dangerous militant groups of Assam and the ABSU is the influential student union of Assam.
• The peace agreement provides political as well as economic benefits to the tribal areas of Assam without a separate Bodoland.

**Andhra Pradesh Cabinet passes resolution to abolish State Legislative Council:**
• The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet on January 27, 2020 passed a resolution to abolish the Legislative Council. The ruling Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSR Congress in the state has a minority representation in the Legislative Council. Out of total 58 members, the YSR Congress has only 9 members.

**International News**
International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust:
• International Holocaust Remembrance Day is held on 27 January to commemorate the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War due to the genocide that resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews and 11 million others, by the Nazi regime and its collaborators
• Theme 2020: “75 years after Auschwitz – Holocaust Education and Remembrance for Global Justice”.

Awards and Recognition

Padma Awards 2020: Arun Jaitley, Kangana Ranaut among 118 Padma Awardees:
• Padma Awards — one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The Awards are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities, viz. art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc.
• ‘Padma Vibhushan’ is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; ‘Padma Bhushan’ for distinguished service of high order and ‘Padma Shri’ for distinguished service in any field. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.

• This year the President has approved conferment of 141 Padma Awards including 4 duo cases (in a duo case, the award is counted as one) as per list below. The list comprises 7 Padma Vibhushan, 16 Padma Bhushan and 118 Padma Shri Awards.
• 33 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 18 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 12 Posthumous awardees.

Grammy 2020 winners: List of Winners:
The 62nd Annual Grammy Awards announced on January 26, 2020. The Awards ceremony was held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. The show was hosted by Singer-songwriter Alicia Keys. It recognized the best recordings, compositions, and artists of the eligibility year, running from October 1, 2018, to August 31, 2019.

Here is the complete list of winners of Grammy Awards 2020:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Album Of The Year</td>
<td>When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go? (Billie Eilish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Record Of The Year</td>
<td>Bad Guy (Billie Eilish)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Best New Artist</td>
<td>Billie Eilish</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Best Rap Album</td>
<td>Igor (Tyler, The Creator)</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Best R&amp;B Album Winner</td>
<td>Ventura (Anderson .Paak)</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Best Rap Song</td>
<td>A Lot</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Best Country Album</td>
<td>While I’m Livin’ (Tanya Tucker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Song Of The Year</td>
<td>Bad Guy (Billie Eilish O’Connell &amp; Finneas O’Connell)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Best Rock Album</td>
<td>Social Cues (Cage The Elephant)</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Best Rock Song</td>
<td>This Land (Gary Clark Jr.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Best Dance/Electronic Album</td>
<td>No Geography (The Chemical Brothers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Producer Of The Year, Classical</td>
<td>Blanton Alspaugh</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Best Music Video</td>
<td>Old Town Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Best Country Song</td>
<td>Bring My Flowers Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Best Folk Album</td>
<td>Patty Griffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Best Comedy Album</td>
<td>Sticks &amp; Stones (Dave Chappelle)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Obituary**

**NBA legend Kobe Bryant passes away:**
- Veteran American professional basketball player Kobe Bean Bryant, has passed away in a helicopter crash on 26 January 2020. He was 41.
- The National Basketball Association (NBA) legend died when a helicopter he was riding in crashed and burst into flames in thick fog, killing all nine people on board including his 13-year-old daughter Gianna.
- Bryant was a five-time NBA champion and two-time Olympic gold medallist

**Appointment and Resignation**

**Sunil Mehta Sworn in as IBA Chief Executive:**
- Former MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank, Sunil Mehta, has taken charge as the chief executive of the Indian Bank’s Association (IBA) from 27 January 2020.
- He succeeds VG Kannan, who demitted office as chief executive of IBA on December 31, 2019.

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**National News**

**Bharat Parv 2020’ begins at Red Fort to celebrate spirit of India:**
- The ‘Bharat Parv 2020’ is being held at Red Fort ground in New Delhi from 26 to 31 January 2020 to celebrate the spirit of India.
- The Bharat Parv festival is organised every year by the Government of India as a part of Republic Day celebrations, to encourage people to visit different tourism places of the country and to inculcate the spirit of ‘DekhoApnaDesh’ (See Your Country).
• The theme of 2020 Bharat Parv is ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’ and ‘Celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma Gandhi. Samvidhaan’ Chosen as Oxford’s Hindi word of 2019.
• The word Samvidhaan (Constitution) has been chosen as the Oxford Hindi Word of 2019 by the Oxford University Press (OUP).
• The Oxford Hindi Word of the Year is a word or expression that has attracted a great deal of attention and reflects the ethos, mood, or preoccupations of the past year.
• ‘Samvidhaan’ means a body of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organisation is acknowledged to be governed.

Andhra Pradesh Assembly passes resolution to abolish Legislative Council:
• The Andhra Pradesh legislative assembly unanimously passed a resolution on January 27, 2020 to abolish the state legislative council. The state cabinet had approved the resolution earlier in the day. The proposal will now be sent to the centre for further action.
• The one-line resolution to abolish the state council was passed in the assembly by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy. The resolution was passed with 133 members voting in favour of it. This was announced by assembly speaker Tammineni Seetharam.

Maharashtra govt launches ‘Shiv Bhojan’ scheme:
• Maharashtra government launched ‘Shiv Bhojan’ scheme. The scheme aims to provide a meal to the poor for just 10 rupees, on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day.
• Under the scheme, which has been launched on a pilot basis, thalis or lunch plates would be available to people at designated centres/ canteens during a stipulated time in all the districts.

GRSE set to deliver anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kavaratti to Navy soon:
• Defence PSU Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) is set to deliver anti-submarine warfare stealth corvette INS Kavaratti to the Indian Navy. INS Kavaratti is 104th warship constructed by GRSE.
• INS Kavaratti can be used during nuclear, chemical and biological warfare conditions and its weapons and sensors suite is predominantly indigenous.

Banking and Economy
Indian Bank Association (IBA) appoints Punjab National Bank’s former MD and CEO Sunil Mehta as its chief executive:
• Sunil Mehta took over as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Indian Banks’ Association (IBA). He will replace VG Kannan, who resigned from office as chief executive of IBA on December 31, 2019.
• The term of the CEO of IBA is for 3 years. At present, the managing committee of IBA has SBI chief Rajnish Kumar as Chairman for the year 2019-20 along with 3 deputy chairmen and honorary secretary.

Awards and Recognition
Assam tableau wins first prize at 71st Republic Day parade:
• Assam tableau wins first prize at 71st Republic Day parade. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today gave away Best Tableaux awards for Republic Day Parade, 2020 in New Delhi.
• The tableaux of National Relief Force and Jal Shakti Mission were chosen as the best among the Ministries and Departments.

Appointment and Resignation

Taranjit Singh Sandhu appointed India’s Ambassador to US:
• Taranjit Singh Sandhu takes charge as the new Indian Ambassador to the United States. Sandhu, a 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, is currently posted as High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka.
• He replaces Harsh Vardhan Shringla as India’s envoy in Washington. Shringla named as India’s next foreign secretary.

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National News

Union Cabinet approves Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill:
The cabinet has approved new amendments to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy bill that will increase the upper gestation limit to 24 weeks for special categories of women, including vulnerable women such as rape survivors, minors and victims of incest.

BSE signs licensing agreement with ICE Futures Europe:
• The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has signed a licensing agreement with Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) Futures Europe.
• Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) Futures Europe is an operator of global exchanges and Clearinghouses.
• This agreement will serve the needs and interests to the Indian energy commodities space and market participants to access Rupee-dominated Brent benchmark prices.

India’s first underwater metro expected to be complete by March 2022:
• The country’s 1st underwater metro project is set to complete its East-West Project of Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation, which runs partly under the Hooghly river, West Bengal, by March 2022.
• 74% of the East-West Metro project is owned by India’s Railway & remaining 26% by the nation’s Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

CM Uddhav Thackeray inaugurates Nagpur Metro’s Aqua Line:
• The Chief Minister of Maharashtra Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated 18.5 kilometre-long stretch of Nagpur Metro Aqua line of Maha Metro Rail Network.
• The newly inaugurated Nagpur Metro Aqua line passing over the Ambazarilake in the city will connect the east and west parts of the city. This Line will have six stations starting from Lokmanya Nagar to Sitabuldi Interchange Metro Station.
Indian Railways opens its 1st waste-to-energy plant; here’s why it’s a welcome move:
Indian Railways has commissioned the country's first governmental waste to energy plant in Mancheswar Carriage Repair workshop at Bhubaneswar under the East Coast Railway zone. It has been built at a cost of Rs 1.79 crore and has the capacity to dispose of 500 kg waste, including plastic and e-waste. This waste-to-energy plant uses a patented technology called ‘Polycrack’, which is the world’s first patented heterogeneous catalytic process to convert multiple feedstocks into hydrocarbon liquid fuels, gas, carbon and water. This process will produce energy in the form of light diesel oil which is used to light furnaces.

International News
Qatar's Emir appoints new Prime Minister:
• Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Qatar, succeeding Sheikh Abdullah who has resigned from the post.
• Sheikh Khalid is a close associate of Qatar’s Emir and has played an influential role in the royal court.

Awards and Recognition
India’s PavanSukhdev wins 2020 Tyler Prize:
Indian environmental economist PavanSukhdev has jointly won the 2020 Tyler Prize along with conservation biologist Gretchen C Daily. Sukhdev has been honoured with the award for his work towards enabling a green economy.

Science & Technology
ISRO launches BhuvanPanchayat 3.0 to aid gram panchayat development:
• Union Minister of State for PMO Jitendra Singh launched the BhuvanPanchayat V3 web Portal in AntharikshBhavan, ISRO Head Quarters in Bengaluru.
• This web Portal will enhance network application of gram panchayats. The Portal will function with the help of satellite technology developed by ISRO.

Obituary
Former women’s hockey team captain Sunita Chandra passes away:
• Former Indian women’s hockey team captain Sunita Chandra died here on Monday, her son said. Chandra, an Arjuna awardee, was 76 and is survived by her husband Yatish Chandra and two sons.
• She had played for the Indian women’s hockey team between 1956 to 1966 and served as skipper from 1963 to 1966

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National News
Indian Navy launched ‘Operation Vanilla’
Indian Navy recently sent INS Airavat to Madagascar as post-natural relief. Indian Navy will provide basic help to the people of Madagascar like food, drinking water, shelter, medicines, sanitary pads, etc.

The INS Airavat is capable to carry more than 500 troops and 10 battle tanks. It was commissioned in the Indian Navy on May 19, 2010.

Nepal creates Guinness World Record for highest altitude fashion show event:
Nepal has created a new Guinness World Record for organizing highest altitude Fashion Show on the earth.
- The Mount Everest Fashion Runway was held at 5340 meters (17515 feet) elevation at Kala Patthar, near Everest base camp.
- The Guinness world record registered the title and awarded a certificate to the organizers including Dr Pankaj Gupta from India and Ms Ramila Nemkul and Mr Riken Maharjan from Nepal.
- The main objective of the fashion show was to create awareness about climate change and also to give a message to the world that Nepal is the destination for all activities.

World’s largest meditation centre inaugurates in Telangana:
World’s largest meditation centre was inaugurated at Kanha Shanti Vanam in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- This centre is built to mark the 75th anniversary of the formation of Shri Ram Chandra Mission (SRCM) and Heartfulness Institute.
- The meditation centre with a central hall and eight peripheral halls to accommodate 1,00,000 people will offer meditation training free.

YuvaSwabhimanYojana:
The MP government launched on January 31, 2019, guaranteeing 100 days of work and pay to unemployed youth who have registered themselves with the Madhya Pradesh government.
- The stipend has been hiked by Rs 1,000 to Rs 5,000 per month.
- On the lines of MNREGS, the government is ready to extend the guarantee of 100 workdays to 365 days of temporary employment a year.

16th Mumbai International Film Festival begins:
The 16th Mumbai International Film Festival-2020 for Documentary, Short Fiction and Animation films), inaugurated at Nehru Centre Auditorium, Worli, Mumbai.
- The oldest and largest film festival for non-feature films in South Asia, which began in 1990 is organized by the Films Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India.
- The festival directorate has received 874 entries, with 144 entries from 24 countries in the International competition and 730 entries in the National competition.

Reliance Industries launching new project to use plastics in road construction:
Reliance Industries organization will try to work with India’s highway authority and individual states to possibly supply a plastics-implanted blend.
• India, which utilizes around 14 million tons of plastic every year, comes up short on a sorted out framework for the administration of plastic waste.

Nobel Laureate Abhijit Banerjee conferred D.Lit degree by Calcutta University:
Nobel laureate AbhijitVinayak Banerjee conferred the honorary Doctor of Letters (D.Litt.) by Calcutta University at its annual convocation in Kolkata. The Vice-Chancellor of the University Ms SonaliChakraborty Banerjee presented the Degree to him.

Banking and Economy

RBI appoints Executive Director Janak Raj as member of MPC:
• Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appoints its Executive Director, Janak Raj, as a member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).
• The Monetary Policy Committee takes decisions based on a majority vote. Raj replaces M D Patra recently promoted as Deputy Governor of the RBI.
• The decision to appoint Janak Raj taken at the 581st meeting of the central board held in Mumbai.
• The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das heads the MPC.

Google announces USD 1 million grant to promote news literacy in India:
• Technology giant Google has announced USD 1 million grant to promote news literacy among Indians to avoid spreading of misinformation.
• The money will be given to Internes, a global non-profit organisation, which will select a team of 250 journalists, fact checkers, academics and NGO workers for the project.
• A curriculum will be developed by a team of global and local experts, who will roll out the project in seven Indian languages.

Sports

EsowAlben wins gold at Berlin cycling tournament:
• Indian cyclist EsowAlben has bagged a gold in the men’s Keirin individual event of the Six-Day Berlin Tournament.
• Czech Republic’s Tomas Babek, who won a silver in the 2017 World Championship, came in second while Maximilian Lev of Germany took home the bronze.

Ranking

Bengaluru has the worst traffic in the world:
• According to a report by Tom-Tom, the Netherlands-based global provider of navigation, traffic, and map products, Bengaluru is the world’s most traffic-congested city.
• Manila in the Philippines took the second place.
• Mumbai, Pune, and New Delhi were the other Indian cities that also featured in the top 10, taking fourth, fifth, and eighth places, respectively.
National News

Economic survey likely to peg India’s FY21 growth at 6-6.5%: Report:
• India’s economic survey is seen projecting growth of 6 to 6.5 per cent in the next year starting April 1, boosted by a series of fiscal measures to revive demand that the government is likely to announce in the budget.
• India faces its worst economic slowdown in a decade. Growth slipped to 4.5 per cent in the July-September quarter, imperilling job prospects for millions of young people entering the workforce each year.
• The government has estimated gross domestic product expansion at 5 per cent for the financial year ending on March 31, which would be the slowest pace since the global financial crisis of 2008/09.
• An economic survey by chief economic adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian will be officially announced later in the day and the government will present its budget.

India-Bangladesh Joint Exercise ‘SAMPRITI-IX’ to Begin in Meghalaya from February 3:
• The ninth edition of the bilateral joint military training exercise between India-Bangladesh named SAMPRITI-IX will be held at Umroi, Meghalaya from February 3 to February 16, 2020.
• The annual exercise is hosted alternately by both countries to get familiar with each other’s organizational structure and tactical drills, besides strengthening military trust and cooperation between two nations.

Govt aims to achieve objective of Housing for All by 2022 under PMAY-G:
• Union Government aims to achieve objective of Housing for All by 2022 under PradhanMantriAwasYojana-Grameen.
• A total of over one crore 50 lakh rural houses have been completed in the last five years.
• Ministry of Finance stated, the eligible beneficiaries will get one crore 95 lakh houses in the second phase of the scheme. Government has set a target of 60 lakh houses for the current financial year.

A special Supreme Court bench to frame issues about gender inequality at religious places:
The apex court recently announced that a nine-judge bench will frame issues related to the discrimination against women in different religious places in India. The court will consider issues like restriction on Muslim women to enter into mosques. The court will also hear issues related to female genital mutilation in DawoodiBohra Muslim community.

Indian railways to equip over 3.5 lakh coaches with RFID tags:
Indian Railways will make its coaches smarter and safer with radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags.
The ministry of Railway of India has recently announced that all freight and passenger coaches will be equipped with RFID tags. These RFID tags will help the ministry to locate
and monitor coaches. At present, about 20,000 coaches have already equipped with RFID tags.

**Banking and Economy**

**FICCI survey projects FY20 GDP growth at 5%, to improve to 5.5% in FY21:**
- Industry body FICCI stated its Economic Outlook Survey has projected the country’s annual median GDP growth for 2019-20 at 5 per cent, in line with the projections made by the National Statistical Organisation (NSO).
- The survey has put the median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities at 2.6 per cent for 2019-20, the industry and services sector at 3.5 per cent and 7.2 per cent, respectively, during the current year.
- Growth is likely to improve to 5 per cent in 2020-21 as per the projections, the survey stated.

**About FICCI:**
- Headquarters location: New Delhi
- Founded: 1927
- President Sangita Reddy
- Senior Vice-President: Uday Shankar
- Vice President: Sanjiv Mehta

**Obituary**

**Padma Shri awardee TusharKanjilal passes away:**
Famous social worker, environmentalist, educationist & writer TusharKanjilal passed away. The Government of India awarded TusharKanjilal the 4th highest civilian honour of Padma Shri in 1986.

**Sports**

**India hockey captain Rani Rampal named 2019 World Games Athlete of the Year:**
- Rani Rampal wins the World Games Athlete of the Year 2019. The long wait is over! The Indian women’s hockey team captain Rani Rampal has been voted as the ‘World Games Athlete of the Year’.
- Toppling all the 25 athletes, the Indian skipper won with a massive 199,477 votes.

**Ranking**

**ICICI Bank Launches a unique self-service delivery facility ‘iBox’ for customers:**
- The private lender ICICI Bank has launched a first-of-its-kind, unique self-service delivery facility, called ‘iBox’, that will enable its customers to collect their deliverables such as debit card, credit card, cheque book and returned-cheques, in a hassle free manner, anytime any day.
- This facility is especially useful for customers who are not available at home to receive their package during working hours.
- The Bank has introduced the iBox facility at over 50 branches in 17 cities in the country.