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.

Sports

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 22, 2020
**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 Narshima, 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 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- psbloan.sin59minutes.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 2018.
- 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.

**ACQUISITION AND MERGERS**

**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.
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 Thiruvananthapuram 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.

‘Castle of Dreams’ gets Best Film Award at DIFF
• 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 Dutt 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
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.

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.

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.

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 virus 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.
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 Zelensky. 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.
- Ukraine capital – Kyiv; Currency – Ukrainian hryvnia

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.

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.

**Ranking**

**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.

---

**Current Affairs PDF - January 16, 2020**

**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.