COP 25 concluded

Centre mandates FASTags

ISRO launched RISAT-2BR1

India won 2019 SAG championship
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BANKING & FINANCE

ADB reduced Indias growth forecast for 2020-21 cut 5.1 percent

Asian Development Bank (ADB) reduced India's economic growth forecast for FY 2019-20 to 5.1%. It reduced upon analyzing the slowing job prospects, rural distress exacerbated by poor harvest and credit crunch. The bank has predicted the growth will pick up to 6.5% next year on supportive government policies. The bank has also reduced the estimate for the next fiscal, FY 2020-21 to 6.5% from 7.2%.

In September 2019, ADB forecasted the GDP growth of 6.2% in 2019 and 6% in 2020.

RBI's report:
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its fifth bi-annual monetary policy revised its FY 2019-20 outlook to 5% t from 6.1%. It said that the July-September GDP growth was significantly lower than the estimated. RBI also said that various high-frequency indicators suggested that domestic and external demand conditions have remained weak. The growth rate for the second quarter has dipped to a 6-year low of 4.5%.

SBI reduced MCLR by 10bps

State Bank of India (SBI) announced a reduced 1-year marginal cost-based lending rates (MCLR) by 10 bps. MCLR will be reduced to 7.90% from 8%. The new rates will come to effect from 10 December 2019. All the other rates remain the same. This is the eighth consecutive MCLR cut in the financial year 2019.

The bank did not reduce the interest rates on its repo linked loans or fixed deposit rates. The bank aims to ensure that the transmission turns more effective since much needs to be passed on.

MCLR:
MCLR is abbreviated as the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate. MCLR is the minimum interest rate of a bank below which any bank cannot lend, except in some cases allowed by the RBI. MCLR is the reference rate or an internal benchmark set by and for the bank.
INTERNATIONAL

N.Korea carried out a VERY IMPORTANT test at Sohae facility

North Korea carried out a very important test at its long-range rocket launch site, Sohae Satellite Launching Station, on 8 December. North Korea stated that the result of the latest test will have an important effect on changing the strategic position of North Korea. This latest test comes as N.Korea is ramping up pressure ahead of its 31 December deadline for the US to propose a new offer to kickstart stalled nuclear talks.

Sohae facility:
Sohae is located on North Korea's northwest coast. It is ostensibly a facility designed to put satellites into orbit. North Korea had promised to close the Sohae facility. The site was rebuilt after having partially dismantled it at the start of denuclearization talks with the United States 2018.

Sanna Marin elected the youngest-ever as PM of Finland

Sanna Marin has been elected as the Prime Minister of Finland. She became the world's youngest Prime Minister ever. She also became the third female government leader of the country. She defeated Antti Lindtman to take over the government's top post from incumbent Antti Rinne. The new government will be approving her appointment quickly.

Sanna Marin:
Marin was a lawmaker since 2015. She was the Social Democratic Party's vice chairwoman. She served as the minister for transport and communications.

Finland:
President: Sauli Niinisto
Official languages: Finnish, Swedish
Capital: Helsinki
Currency: Euro (€) (EUR)
Forder is bordered by:
Baltic Sea, Gulf of Bothnia, and Gulf of Finland, between Norway to the north
Sweden to the northwest
Russia to the east
Malaysia reported the first polio case in 27 years

Malaysia reported the first polio case in 27 years. The health authorities reported that a three-month-old Malaysian infant has been diagnosed with polio. This is the first case reported in the Asia-Pacific country in 27 years.

Cause: It has been identified that the main issue that has lead to the new polio case is the lack of vaccination in the region. The incident has exposed the areas that don't have enough vaccination to prevent the spread. Malaysia was declared polio-free in 2000.

Polio in Asia-Pacific country:
The last reported known case of the disease in 1992. Pakistan and Afghanistan are the last countries where the disease is endemic.

Polio:
Polio is also known as poliomyelitis. It is a highly contagious viral disease caused by Poliovirus. It attacks the nervous system. Children younger than 5 years old contract the virus than any other age group of people. Poliovirus spreads by means of food or water containing human feces and less commonly from infected saliva. The poliovirus spreads especially in unsanitary conditions in underdeveloped and war-torn regions where healthcare access is limited.

The 2nd phase of AIM-SIRIUS Programme concluded on 8 December

The second phase of NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Russia's Scientific International Research In Unique Terrestrial Station (SIRIUS) Deep Technology Learning and Innovation Programme 2019 culminated as the 25 Indian students returned with best practices of contemporary innovation and entrepreneurship.

SIRIUS Deep Technology Learning and Innovation Programme:
SIRIUS hosted an 8-day project-oriented educational program for Indian and Russian students under the MoU signed between AIM and SIRIUS in 2018.
The program was held from 28 November to 8 December 2019.
50 Russian and Indian students participated in the program.
The students shared innovation practices under categories namely Biotech, IT & Data Analysis, Clean Energy, Remote Earth Sensing, and Drones & Robotics.
Note: SIRIUS Innovation Festival was held in India in 2018. Delegation
including 10 Russian student innovators and 10 Indian innovators from the best performing Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) participated in the event.

**Exercise Iron Union 12 commenced on 10 December**

*Exercise Iron Union 12* commenced on 10 December 2019. It is a joint military exercise between the ground forces of the **UAE and the United States**. The exercise was commenced in the presence of Lieutenant General Terry Ferrell, commander of US Army Central, USARCENT and Major General Saleh Mohamed Saleh Al Amiri, UAE Commander of Land Forces.

*Iron Union 12:*  
The joint military cooperation between the two countries was aimed to enhance combat and tactical capabilities.  
The exercise reflects the determination of the UAE Armed Forces. The UAE military has proved to stand firm against all threats and challenges facing the region.

**Worlds first fully electric commercial aircraft was successfully tested in Canada**

The Australian company, *Harbour Air and magniX* flight-tested an **all-electric powered seaplane**. It has taken flight in Vancouver, Canada. The company aims to electrify its entire fleet by 2022.

*Test:*  
It was described as the *world's first* for the aviation industry.  
The test involved a six-passenger *DHC-2 de Havilland Beaver with a 750-horsepower (560 kW)* magni500 propulsion system.  
The invention is aimed to boost the electric which will help to reduce the carbon emissions in the high-polluting aviation sector.  
The aim to provide a clean and efficient way to power airplanes.  
The new technology will mean significant cost savings and zero emissions for airlines.

**The US imposed new sanctions on Iran's Mahan Air**

The **United States** imposed new sanctions on Iran's biggest airline and its
shipping network on 11 December 2019. US accused them of transporting lethal aid and weapons of mass destruction proliferation.

**New sanctions:**
The new sanctions were also imposed on Mahan Air and three of its general sales agents by the State Department and the U.S. Treasury Department. The sanctions on ESAIL and additional sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines will take effect in June 2020.

The tensions between the US and Iran escalated after US President Donald Trump withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear accord. The US blacklisted the Iranian shipping network as it allegedly involved in smuggling lethal aid from Iran to Yemen on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and its elite foreign paramilitary and espionage arm, the Quds Force.

**Fifteen Indian-origin candidates elected to House of Commons in UK**

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative party won the UN's General election with a majority vote. Indian-origin candidates in both the ruling Conservative and opposition Labour parties have registered equally strong results of seven wins on each side. Around 15 MPs have made into the UK's House of Commons, the lower house.

**Indian origin candidates include:**
The former UK Home Secretary Priti Patel who is likely to remain in Johnson's top team in the new Cabinet after her comfortable win.

Gagan Mohindra and Claire Coutinho won for the Conservative Party. Also, Navendru Mishra for Labour Party and Munira Wilson for the Liberal Democrats are among the first-timers.

Former International Development Minister Alok Sharma, Shailesh Vara, Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, Goan-origin Suella Braverman, Preet Kaur Gill, Virendra Sharma are among others.

**US cuts new tariffs on China and enters into a new deal**

The United States and China have agreed to a phase one trade deal that includes canceling the tariffs on Chinese goods. The announcement was made by US President Donald Trump.
Agreement:
China has agreed to many structural changes and massive purchases of agricultural products, energy and manufactured goods, and many more.
Also, the US has agreed to suspend tariffs on $233 billion in Chinese goods that were due to come into effect on 15 December.
The agreement covers technology transfer, intellectual property (IP), currency, agriculture, financial services, and foreign exchange.
The US will still maintain 25% tariffs on $US250 billion of Chinese imports, but cut tariffs in half to 7.5% on $US120 billion in imports.

North Korea conducted another crucial test on 13 December

North Korea has conducted another crucial test on 13 December. The test was aimed to help the country to boost its reliable strategic nuclear deterrent.

Crucial test:
The unspecified test took place at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground.
The success marked the reliable strategic nuclear deterrent of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.
It is said that the test might be related to an intercontinental ballistic missile launch.
On 8 December 2019, North Korea conducted a very important test at its key satellite launching station.

Sohae facility:
Sohae is located on North Korea's northwest coast. It is ostensibly a facility designed to put satellites into orbit. North Korea had promised to close the Sohae facility. The site was rebuilt after having partially dismantled it at the start of denuclearization talks with the United States 2018.
INDIAN AFFAIRS

Karnataka conducted a Human Library event in Mysuru

Karnataka conducted a Human Library event in Mysuru on 8 December 2019. Human Library is spread across various metropolitan cities including Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru in India.

Aim:
The aim of the Human Library event is to break long-standing prejudices and stereotypes of the past and create a safe framework for conservation by using a library analogy of lending people rather than books. The event aims to generate greater human cohesion across various social, religious and ethnic diversities.

Human Library event:
The event was free of cost. But a participant needed to do free registration. One reading session lasted about 30-45 minutes. The readers of the human library were given an opportunity to borrow Human Books and to engage in conversation with the books. If they had any doubt they can about the topic and clarify them. The event had the potential to acknowledge the need for a change in societal attitudes and encourage social reforms. It was the first Human Library event that was held in India.

The Human Library:
The Human Library is a concept that replace books with humans to address people's prejudices by helping them to talk to those they would not normally meet. The international movement was first started in 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The first event was held at Roskilde Festival in Roskilde, Denmark. The first permanent Human Library was established in 2006 in Lismore, Australia. The organization is active in around 70 countries.

Madhya Pradesh approved Rs.156 crore for development of Omkareshwar

Madhya Pradesh State government sanctioned a sum of Rs.156 crore for the development of Omkareshwar. It was approved in a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Kamal Nath.

The State government had earlier sanctioned Rs.300 crore for development of areas in and around Ujjains Mahakaleshwar and a jyotirlinga shrine located in
Madhya Pradesh.

**Omkareshwar:**
It is a famous pilgrimage centre.
It houses one of the **12 jyotirlinga shrines** of Lord Shiva.
It is located about 80km from **Indore**.
It would be developed as a world-class tourist and religious destination.
The state government directed the officials to draft legislation to regulate the Omkareshwar temple area.

**NMR conducted a special service for foreign tourists**

The **Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR)** conducted a special service for foreign tourists on 9 December. 71 tourists from countries including the US, the UK, and France travelled by a special steam engine service from Coonoor to Ooty. Until 8 December, the routine services of the NMR was cancelled as the cascading rocks made the trip totally unsafe. The rocks were blasted out of the railway track, using controlled explosion tactics during the special service.

**Nilgiri Mountain Railway:**
NMR was recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in **July 2005**. The site is known as Mountain Railways of India. The metre gauge railway was built by the British in 1908. It is one of the few railways in the world that uses the unique rack and pinion system. NMR switched to diesel locomotives on the section between Coonoor and Udhagamandalam in Tamil Nadu in India.

**MoCA invites bids for the fourth phase of UDAN Scheme**

Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has invited bids after the launch of the **fourth phase of UDAN** in December 2019. It invited bids for 3 unserved airports/airstrips in Andaman & Nicobar Island and 1 underserved airport/airstrip in Lakshadweep Island. The aim is to focus on the connectivity of the Islands under UDAN 4.0. Under the fourth phase of the scheme, MoCA is to provide additional Viability Gap Funding (VGF) of around 25% to the airlines.

**UDAN scheme:**
**Launched on:** 27 April 2017
Located at: Delhi  
Ministry: Ministry of Civil Aviation (India)

The Regional Connectivity Scheme is also known as Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik or UDAN.

The scheme aimed to make air travel affordable and widespread in the country. It also aims to boost inclusive national economic development, job growth and air transport infrastructure development of all regions and states of India.

The airlines compete to win subsidies to operate flights that link small airports with bigger airports in the country.

India climbs one spot to 129th Human Development Index

According to a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India climbed one spot to 129 among 189 countries in the 2019 human development index. In India, 27.1 crore people lifted out of poverty from 2005-06 to 2015-16.

India ranked 130 last year. The steady progress due to nearly three decades of rapid development, which had seen a dramatic reduction in absolute poverty, along with gains in life expectancy, education, and access to health care.

South Asia is the fastest-growing region witnessing 46 percent growth during 1990-2018, followed by East Asia and the Pacific at 43 percent.

Countries in the list - UNDP

Norway, Switzerland, Ireland are the top three nations on the index. Germany occupies the fourth position along with Hong Kong, and Australia secured the fifth rank on the global ranking. India's neighbors Sri Lanka and China ranked higher, at 71 and 85 positions, respectively. Bhutan (134), Bangladesh (135), Myanmar (145), Nepal (147), Pakistan (152) and Afghanistan (170) ranked lower on the list.

According to the report, South Asia was the fastest-growing region in human development progress, witnessing a 46% growth over 1990-2018, followed by East Asia and the Pacific at 43%.

Ministry of Tourism sanctioned a project in Sri Anandpur Sahib under its Swadesh Darshan Scheme

The union government formulated a special action plan for the development of
tourism in Sri Anandpur Sahib parliamentary constituency under the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme**.

Ministry of Tourism, under its Swadesh Darshan scheme, sanctioned a project Development of Heritage Circuit that includes, Anandpur Sahib - Fatehgarh Sahib - Chamkaur Sahib - Ferozpur - Amritsar - Khatkar Kalan - Kalanour - Patiala, in Punjab for Rs.99.95 crore in the year 2018-19. The execution of the project on the ground started.

The submission of project proposals by the State Governments/ UT Administrations under the above scheme is a continuous process. The projects under the schemes are identified in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations and are sanctioned subject to their adherence to relevant scheme guidelines, submission of suitable Detailed Project Reports, availability of funds, and utilization of funds released earlier.

**Union Government formulated rules to prevent Crime against Women**

Union Government took several initiatives for the safety of women across the country. The **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013** enacted for effective against sexual offenses. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2018, enacted to prescribe even more stringent penal provisions, including the death penalty for rape of a girl below the age of 12 years. The Act completion of investigation and trials within two months each. Emergency Response Support System provides a pan-India, single, internationally recognized number (112) based system for all emergencies, with the computer-aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress. Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) launched a cyber-crime portal on 20th September 2018 for citizens to report obscene content. The National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO) to facilitate investigation and tracking of sexual offenders across the country by law enforcement agencies. The States/UTs, MHA on 19th February 2019, launched an online analytic tool for police called Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences'to monitor and track time-bound investigation in sexual assault cases in accordance with the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2018. One-Stop Centre**

One-Stop Centre (OSC) scheme is implemented across the country since 1st April 2015 exclusively designed to provide integrated services such as medical aid, police assistance, legal counseling/ court case management, psycho-social
counseling, and temporary shelter to women affected by violence under one roof. MHA issued advisories from time to time with a view to helping the States/UTs to deal with crimes against women.

**Criminal Law (Amendment) Act**

Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Nirbhaya Act) is an Indian legislation passed by the Lok Sabha on 19 March 2013, and by the Rajya Sabha on 21 March 2013, which provides for amendment of Indian Penal Code, Indian Evidence Act, and Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 on laws related to sexual offenses.

**Draj Bridge for all-weather connectivity inaugurated in Jammu and Kashmir Rajouri**

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Shri Girish Chandra Murmu opened 72-metre-long Bridge to the Nation in Rajouri. The bridge over Draj nallah connects Draj Area with Tehsil Kotranka area under District Rajouri and is constructed to bear heavy load up to 70 tons. **Draj Bridge** The Draj bridge is an essential bridge for the military as well as for the socio-economic development of the Rajouri District. This bridge will facilitate the all-weather and speedy movement of Army troops as well as locals. The 110 Road Construction Company of the 31 Task Force under Project Sampark of Border Roads Organisation (BRO). BRO is involved with more projects in the area to strengthen the road network. The support extended by the residents and civil administration in overcoming various challenges faced by the BRO during the construction of the bridge. The nation-building through infrastructure development and war preparedness through the construction of roads, bridges, and tunnels. The BRO is playing an essential role in the field of surface transport by connecting far-flung inaccessible remote areas along borders. General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Northern Command Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, 16 Corps Commander Lt Gen Harsha Gupta, and Divisional Commissioner Jammu were also present during the occasion.

**International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime observed on 9 December**

International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime observed on the 9th of
December. The adoption of the 1948 Convention. This year marked the **70th anniversary** of the Convention. **Significance of the day** To raise awareness of the Genocide Convention and its role in combating and preventing the crime of genocide as defined in the Convention and to commemorate and honor its victims. **What is the Prevention of Genocide?** Genocide and genocidal are more important for Genocide and related atrocities tend to occur in societies with diverse national, racial, ethnic, or religious groups that are locked in identity-related conflicts. It is simply differences in identity, whether real or perceived, that generate conflict, but the implication of those differences in terms of access to power and wealth, services and resources, employment, development opportunities, citizenship, and the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms.

**Ministry of Tourism identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites**

The union government identified some world-class iconic tourist stations in India to attract foreign and domestic tourists.

In the Budget Announcements of 2018-19, Ministry of Tourism identified **17 sites in 12 clusters** in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites

**Iconic Tourist Sites**
The iconic sites are Taj Mahal & Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh), Ajanta & Ellora (Maharashtra), Humayun’s Tomb, Red Fort & Qutub Minar (Delhi), Colva (Goa), Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Somnath & Dholavira (Gujarat), Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), Hampi (Karnataka), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Kaziranga (Assam), Kumarakom (Kerala) and Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).

The holistic manner with a focus on issues concerning connectivity to the destination, better facilities/experience for the tourists at the site, skill development, and involvement of local community, promotion & branding and by bringing private investment. The development of the Iconic Tourist sites scheme is awaiting approval of the Ministry of Finance. This information was given by the Minister of State (I/c) of Culture and Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

**Odisha to set up 45 fast-track special courts**
The **Odisha State government** has planned to set up **45 fast-track special courts** (FTSC) in the State. It aims to ensure speedy trial of cases involving crime against women and children. The announcement was made by the State law minister Pratap Jena.

**FTSC:**

The state also stated that of the total **45 courts, 21 courts** will deal with cases that are related to rape and sexual assault.

The 24 other courts will **exclusively deal** with cases that were registered under the **protection of children from sexual offences (POCSO) Act**.

24 courts have already been established. The courts will soon be made functional. They are aimed to deal with POCSO cases.

**Reason for the establishment of FTSC in Odisha:**

In Odisha, that rate of conviction in rape cases is low. It has been seen as a reason behind the rise in crime against women. In 2018, the conviction rate in rape cases in Odisha was only 18.35%. But, more than 2502 rape cases were reported in 2018 in the state. Of 2502 cases, 1430 cases involved minor girls. In 2018, only 197 of total disposed cases ended with conviction while accused in the remaining cases were acquitted.

**Centre's measure:**

These 45 special courts of the state will be a part of the total **1023 fast track courts** proposed by the Centre for speedy trial and disposal of rape and other sexual assault cases in 2019.

The **Uttar Pradesh** cabinet has also approved a proposal to set up 218 fast track courts in the state.

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**India, Maldives to review bilateral cooperation at Joint Commission Meeting**

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** held talks with his Maldivian counterpart **Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid**. He is on a four-day state visit to India.

**Highlights:**

The Ministers of India and Maldives have agreed to review the entire range of their bilateral relations.

The Ministers will co-chair the **India-Maldives 6th Joint Commission Meeting**. Earlier, India has committed to partner with the Maldives for its development.
The two countries have decided to enhance cooperation for peace and mutual security in the Indian Ocean Region.

**Ministry of Culture Prahlad Singh Patel Indian Culture web portal**

**Ministry of Culture** launched the **Indian Culture web portal** in New Delhi. It was launched by the State for Culture and Tourism (IC), Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.  

**Developed by:**  
The portal was developed by a team from the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay** and the curation of the data was done by **Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)**, New Delhi.  

**Indian Culture web portal:**  
The knowledge and cultural resources of various organizations of the Ministry of Culture are now available in the public domain on a single platform.  
This is the first government-authorized portal of such kind.  
The portal is a part of the Prime Minister's **Digital India initiative**  
It will showcase information about the rich cultural heritage of India.  
This portal will host images, **documents, audio-video files** and other data from archives, museums, academies and libraries across India.  
Information about more than **90 lakhs items** are currently available in the portal.  
The portal has a collection of **rare books, manuscripts, e-books, virtual galleries**, artefacts from the museum, photo archives, archives, gazetteers, Indian National Bibliography, videos, cuisine, images, UNESCO, Musical Instruments of India and many more.  
The content is available in **English and Hindi** language.  
The portal will be interactive and user-friendly.

**Centre approved allowances worth Rs.4,800 crore for JK, Ladakh employees**

The Centre approved allowances worth **Rs.4,800 crore** for 4.5 lakh of its employees in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh under the 7th Pay Commission. The announcement was made by the Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy. Since J&K and Ladakh are UTs now, all the **7th Central Pay Commission (CPC)** pay and allowances will be given to all the government employees working in these UTs.
7th CPC allowance:
The 7th CPC allowances were released to the employees of the erstwhile state of **J&K** who are working in the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu & Kashmir and the UT of Ladakh since its creation on **31 October 2019**.
The annual finance measure of 7th CPC allowances are:
- Children Education Allowance - Rs.607.00
- Hostel Allowance - Rs.1823.00
- Transport Allowance - Rs.1200.00
- Leave Travel Concession (LTC) - Rs.1000.00
- Fixed Medical Allowance - Rs.108.00
- Other Allowances - Rs.62.00

**Background:**
Earlier, the people of J&K and Ladakh were **denied full rights** that were marked on the Constitution of India. They were also denied the other benefits of various Central Laws that were being enjoyed by other citizens in India because of the article 35A and other constitutional ambiguities.

After the abrogation of **Article 370** and reorganization of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir into Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh, the Centre addressed all the aspects and said the Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh regions can develop and progress like any other parts of India.

**Employability of graduates increased by nearly 50 percent in 2019 in India**

The **India Skills Report** said that nearly half of the professional degree holders are employable now. The report was released by **Wheebox, People Strong, CII**.

**Survey highlights:**
- Earlier, nearly 70% of the professional degree holders were found to be unemployable.
- The report said that there is an overall positive trend in talent supply. Nearly **47%** of the students who were surveyed are found to be employable or ready to take-up jobs in 2019.
- In 2014 the employment rate was only **33.9%**.
- It highlighted that the MBA pass outs are 54% employable.
- BPharma, polytechnic, BCom and BA graduates have seen an improvement in their employability which has increased by over 15%.
There has been a decline in the employability range for MCA, BTech, other engineering streams, technical and computer-related courses.

**Maharashtra** topped with the highest employability rate.

It is followed by **Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka**.

In terms of most employable cities, **Mumbai** ranked the list. It is followed by Hyderabad, Bengaluru, New Delhi, Pune, Lucknow, and Chennai.

On the other hand, Bengal and Haryana states saw a dip in their ranking of employment and employability.

It found the employability scores among men and women both are equal.

The talent pool of women was found in states like Telangana, Rajasthan, and Delhi. In the city level, the most employable women talent pool is Hyderabad, Ghaziabad, and Visakhapatnam.

**India Skills Report:**
The India Skills Report is based on the analysis by the talent management specialist Wheebox. It conducted the national employability test survey from July-November 2019. More than 3 lakh participants from 3,500 educational institutions across India participated in the survey.

**US became Indias sixth oil supplier by replacing Kuwait**

Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas stated that the **United States** has surpassed **Kuwait** to become **India's sixth-largest oil supplier**. The US has supplied 5.4 million tonnes of crude oil during the first six months of 2019-20. Overall, the US supplied 70% more crude to India during April-September.

**Crude oil-importing:**

India began to import crude oil from the US in 2017 as a move to diversify India's import basket beyond the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations.

As per the data, India imported around 1.9 million tonnes of crude oil from the US in 2017-18 and 6.2 million tonnes in 2018-19.

**Iraq India's top oil supplier:**

**Iraq** remains as India's top crude oil supplier. It meets almost one-fourth of India's oil needs.

Iraq sold 26 million tonnes of crude oil to India from April to September.
**Saudi Arabia, the second:**

Saudi Arabia was dethroned by Iraq as India's top oil source for the first time in the **2017-18 fiscal year**. Saudi Arabia has stayed in the second spot ever since. It exported 20.7 million tonnes of crude oil in the first six months.

**Nigeria in third:**

India ceased to import crude oil from Iran after the **reimposition of economic sanctions** in May 2019 by the US. It supplied 23.9 million tonnes of oil in 2018-19 fiscal.

Nigeria replaced the third spot vacated by Iran. It supplied 9.9 million tonnes of crude oil in April-September 2019.

**UAE and Venezuela:**

It was followed by the UAE with 8.9 million tonnes and Venezuela with 8 million tonnes of sales.

**US in 6th:**

The US supplies to India were higher than Kuwait's during the first six months of 2019-20. Kuwait supplied 5.1 million tonnes in the period.

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**Andhra Pradesh is to set up a virtual police station**

Andhra Pradesh is to set up a **virtual police station (VPS)** in the **Andhra University** (AU). It will be the first of its kind. It will help the students to report violence or any other crime online. The plan to establish VPS was initially proposed by AU vice-chancellor Prasad Reddy in August 2019.

**Virtual Police Station (VPS):**

Violence or any other crime can be reported online.

Once a complaint is filed, the concerned police station will take up the issue and initiate a probe.

It is one of the measures taken by the State/city police to protect women and children in distress.

The police team will reach the spot no later than five minutes after a distress call was received through the Dial 100 service.

In another measure, under the state's Mahila Mitras scheme 23 police stations are working in the city. The woman constables are serving as coordinators. Also, volunteers conduct awareness campaigns in schools, colleges, and workplaces to sensitize people on issues being faced by women.
Government to implement Vocationalisation of School Education scheme

The Ministry of Human Resource Development is to implement the Scheme of Vocationalisation of School Education under Samagra Shiksha. It is an integrated scheme for school education.

**Vocationalisation of School Education:**
A vocational subject is offered for Classes IX to XII along with the general education to provide necessary employability and vocational skills for a variety of occupations under the scheme.

The scheme has been implemented in 8654 schools, with reported enrolment of more than 10 lakhs students till 2018-19.

The basic contents on Goods and Services Tax (GST) have been included by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in the textbooks of Economics, Accountancy and Business Studies at different stages.

It has already included and incorporated the contents relating to the basics of Indian Law and the Constitution.

NCERT has also developed the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Curriculum for students and teachers in school education.

As part of this Curriculum, social and ethical issues related to using of internet have been dealt with. The focus of the Curriculum is on the safe and secure use of web space by students and teachers.

Cabinet approvals on 11 December

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the following on 11 December 2019.

**The list of Cabinet approvals:**
1) The Union Cabinet approved the bilateral Social Security Agreements (SSAs) between India and Brazil. The SSAs aimed to protect the interests of Indian professionals and skilled workers who are working abroad for short durations and enhance the competitiveness of Indian companies. It will provide easy remittance of benefits (Exportability), avoid making double social security contributions by the workers (detachment), and aggregate the contribution periods in both the countries to prevent loss of benefits (Totalization). It will provide for disability insurance
benefits to the Indian nationals working abroad. So far, India has signed SSAs with 18 countries.

2) The cabinet approved the revision in the funding pattern of three approved priority corridors of Delhi Metro Phase-IV projects, namely, Aerocity to Tughlakabad, R.K Ashram to Janakpuri (West) and Mukundpur - Maujpur with sharing of land cost in the ratio of 50:50 between India and Delhi. The total cost allocated for the project is Rs. 24,948.65 crore. The contribution from the Centre increased from the existing Rs. 4,154.20 crore to Rs. 4,643.638 crore.

3) Cabinet gave ex-post facto approval to the MoU signed between India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and Saudi Food and Drug Authority in the field of Medical Products Regulation. The MoU was signed on 29 October 2019. It will facilitate more understanding between the countries and help in increasing India's export of medical products to Saudi Arabia.

4) It also approved the proposal to provide the additional equity support to Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) to the tune of Rs. 5,300 crore in financial year 2019-20 and Rs. 10,000 crore in financial year 2020-21. It will create requisite headroom to IIFCL for borrowing and enable it to finance the infrastructure projects.

5) The proposal to make amendments to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 was approved by the cabinet. The amendments will be made through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019. It will remove issues that are faced during the insolvency resolution process and increase the ease of doing business.

6) Cabinet approved the Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme to be offered to Public Sector Banks (PSBs). Under the scheme, the PSBs can purchase high-rated pooled assets from financially sound Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). It also said one-time partial credit guarantee window offered by the government will be open till 30th June 2020 or till such date by which Rs. 1,00,000 crore assets get purchased by the Banks.

7) Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed between India and Japan to constitute the India-Japan Steel Dialogue. It aims to strengthen and examine the steel sector. It also aims to promote investment in high-grade steel making in India.

8) Cabinet approved the MoU signed between Central Electricity Authority,
India and Japan Coal Energy Centre. The MoU aimed to enhance Japan-India cooperation for Efficiency and Environmental Improvement for Sustainable, Stable and Low-Carbon supply of Electricity.

9) It also approved the proposal of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to set up Infrastructure Investment Trust(s) (InvIT) according to the InvIT Guidelines issued by market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

10) The cabinet approved to introduce the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019. It will carry out the amendments to the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934). The Bill will be introduced in the Parliament in the winter session of 2019. The Bill will enhance the maximum limit of fine from the existing Rs.10 lakhs to Rs.1 Crore. It enlarged the scope of the existing Act to include regulation of all areas of Air Navigation.

11) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) extended the timeline up to 31 March 2022 and revision or re-appropriation of approved components of the Prime Ministers Development Package (PMDP). It will be used for the development of Horticulture in the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).

India Design Council launched two initiatives

The India Design Council (IDC) launched the Design Education Quality Mark (DEQM) and Chartered Designs of India (CDI) in New Delhi on 12 December 2019.

Aim:
The designs are aimed to address 5 challenges of scale, quality of design, quality of education for design, raising the priority for design in industry and design for a public purpose.

Features of DEQM and CDI:
The two initiatives will aid and support the profession of design
It will help to enhance the profession and to establish professional standards.

DEQM:
The DEQM will act as a benchmark design education programmes on predetermined standards. It will grant Design Education Quality Mark to institutions that meet the provisions of the published standard.
DEQM will be granted to institutions that undergo the review process. The institutions should meet or exceed the level set for quality and standards as prescribed in the Quality Code.

The **Quality Mark** has been set to guarantee a minimum level of quality and standards. It includes a trademark-protected logo, which could be used by the recipient institutions in all forms of internal and external communication.

The Quality Mark will help students to choose the right design programme from a wide choice. It will help prospective employers understand the standing of the design institute and communicate to the society about the adherence of Quality Code by the design institute.

**CDI:**

CDI will establish and uphold the professional standards of design practice in India. It aims to identify the Professional Designers by a design qualification and or experience.

The aim of the **Quality mark** is to harmonize the different education systems amidst great diversity.

The **Quality Code** is basic to create a guiding framework. It has been based on the UK Quality Code for Higher Education published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK.

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**Odisha included the Department of Agriculture under Mo Sarkar**

The **Odisha State Government** included the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment under the state's **Mo Sarkar programme**. It was announced by the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Under this, the Chief Minister would personally call up the farmers and take their feedback on the services that are provided by the department.

Action will be taken on the employees of the department if the Government receives negative feedback from the farmers.

**Aim:**

The move aims at meeting farmers' expectations and effectively providing services to them.

**Mo Sarkar:**

Mo Sarkar aimed at making governance people-centric. The initiative functions under the 5T model of governance to herald a transformation in government office
Under the programme, feedback will be collected on government officers from the public.

**Feedback:**
The Chief Minister, Departmental Minister, Director General of Police and Departmental Minister, Secretary, and Director (in case of hospitals) would dial common citizens to get the feedback on the response they get during recent visits to police stations and district headquarter hospitals (DHH).
The employees will be ranked as good or bad on the basis of the feedback received.

**Note:** It should be noted that the State's achievements in agriculture have received a five-time Krishi Karman Award for Odisha.

**Indonesia foreign minister Retno L P Marsudi is to attend Delhi Dialogue XI**

Indonesia foreign minister Retno L P Marsudi arrived on 13 December on a two-day visit to India.

**Agenda:**
The Minister will attend key talks on the Indo-Pacific region.
She will hold talks with the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on 13 December.
The ministers have been scheduled to attend the sixth Joint Commission Meeting between India and Indonesia at the Hyderabad.
Marsudi is expected to deliver a keynote address at a combined session of the Indian Ocean Dialogue and the Delhi Dialogue XI.
The two Track 1.5 dialogues aims to build an inclusive approach for a cooperative, free, and rules-based Indo-Pacific region. It is hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs.
Delhi Dialogue XI will be held from 13-14 December. The theme of the Delhi Dialogue is Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific.
India emphasizes the open and inclusive approach to foster a cooperative, free, and rules-based Indo-Pacific domain through these dialogues.

**Karnataka govt. is to work with Suez to provide drinking water distribution system**
French-based company **Suez** won a contract to extend, rehabilitate and operate the **drinking water distribution system in Mangaluru**. The total cost of the project is Rs.792.42 crore.

**Aim:**
The state aims to give pure drinking water to the citizens of Mangaluru in all the wards of the city corporation. The state has implemented a 24/7 water supplying scheme. The entire project will be funded by the state government.

**Project implementation:**
There has been a heavy demand for clean drinking water across the city to cater to the need of the people.
The project has been introduced in four phases.
In the **first phase**, planning for design and validation will happen.
The **second phase** comprises of 36 months for the construction period.
The **third phase** is for three months for the transaction period.
The **fourth phase** comprises of 96 months for the construction period. The project is expected to begin in the month of March-April 2020.

**SUEZ-Karnataka agreement:**
The Karnataka State government has made an agreement with the SUEZ Projects Private Limited, a French Company in November 2019. SUEZ is already having a joint venture with the Haryana based DRS infrastructure company.

**The Winter session of the Parliament concluded on 13 December**
The **winter session of the Parliament** in the year 2019 began on 18 November and concluded on 13 December. Some key Bills were tabled and passed during the session. A few other Bills have been sent to a Rajya Sabha select committee and a joint select committee.

It was the **250th session of the Rajya Sabha**. The year 2019 was also the **70th Constitution Day**. A total of 18 bills were introduced in the session. 15 bills were passed by both the houses. Lok Sabha marked the productivity of 116%, Rajya Sabha was 100% productive in a fitting tribute to its 250th session.

**Few important bills that were passed during the current session are:**
- Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019
- The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019
The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019
The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Manufacture, Import, Export, Transport, Sale, Distribution, Storage and Advertisement) Bill, 2019
The Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019
The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019
The Recycling of Ships Bill, 2019

Centre to deploy drones to destroy marijuana

The Centre has decided to deploy drones with an aim to destroy marijuana plantations before the crop is harvested and finds its way into the hands of the drug cartels. The move by the government was adopted from the US in dealing with marijuana plantations.

Drones:
The decision was taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs with states and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on board to investigate illegal operations.
The operation will be carried out by the farmers in some states, along with other crops to conceal the prohibited activities.
Government will use satellites to detect marijuana crops by penetrating the lighter foliage. The drones will subsequently destroy the plants.

Marijuana cases in India:
In India, 414 tons of plants being seized in more than 24,000 cases in 2018 alone. It is expected that then number will increase in 2019 once the NCB data is collated.

Haryana Police adopted Trakea to make forensic reports tamper-proof

Haryana Police has adopted Trakea, a unique barcoding software to make forensic reports tamper-proof. The technique will ensure the thousands of forensic reports that form the backbone of the criminal investigation system and subsequent trials in the courts of law, are not tampered with.

Trakea:
Trakea ensures foolproof security of the samples collected from the scene of the crime, and the forensic analysis reports.
The software streamlines the functioning of Forensic Science Laboratories.
It helps to automate the entire procedure, right from the moment when forensic
experts collect vital samples from the scene of crime to conducting analysis of the samples, followed by tracking casewise forensic reports electronically through barcodes.

It is different from traditional methods that the state police force has been following for decades.

Haryana became the first police force to introduce the unique barcoding for forensic reports.

**Govt. mandates FASTag from 15 December**

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had announced that FASTags will become mandatory for all vehicles, private and commercial from 15 December. Earlier the deadline was set to 1 December 2019.

If the vehicle owners do not have a FASTag, they should pay twice the regular amount if you pass a toll booth and your vehicle.

The government has made it mandatory for all vehicle owners to adopt electronic toll payment using FASTags and not cash payment which will attract penalties. FASTags can be bought through e-tailers, banks, payment apps, fuel bunks, and toll plazas.

**FASTag:** It is an electronic toll collection system. The prepaid rechargeable tags that employ Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly from the prepaid or savings account linked to it or directly toll owner.

**Puducherry unveiled a startup policy of the Industries Department**

The Union Territory Puducherry unveiled a startup policy of the Industries Department. It was announced by Puducherry Industries Minister Shajahan. The policy lays emphasis to provide financial grants, monthly stipend, fiscal incentives to interested entrepreneurs and bring new business ventures to the Union Territory.

**New policy for startup:**

The policy creates a corpus fund of **Rs.10 crore** to support the setting up of startup incubators and to develop co-working spaces.

It will provide a grant of **Rs.3 lakh** to the projects recommended by incubators that are established by the government or private sector as a startup grant.
A committee of experts will be constituted under the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Committee. It will approve the projects and monitor the progress.

A monthly allowance of **Rs.10,000** will be given to individuals up to a maximum of 5 years with an aim to reduce their financial burden. If the co-founder of the venture is a **woman, from the Scheduled Caste community, differently-abled or third gender**, the department will give a monthly allowance of **Rs.15,000**.

The corpus fund will be utilized to provide infrastructure support such as workstation, cloud services, laboratory, and marketing facility.

All the incentives announced in the 2016 industrial policy will be applicable to start-ups.

The new industrial policy had envisaged 40 pc capital investment subsidy to **micro and small enterprises** subject to a maximum of Rs.40 lakh.

The **medium and large enterprises** will be eligible for a **35% subsidy for the investment** made on land, plant, building, and machinery subject to a maximum of Rs.35 lakh, women and SC/ST entrepreneurs will be given capital investment subsidy of 45 pc subject to a maximum of **Rs.5 lakh**.

**Government is to allot 6 Coal Mines to reduce coal imports**

On 13 December 2019, the **Ministry of Coal** initiated the auction process of coal mines. The move by the government is to reduce coal imports. After the poor participation of investors in the previous rounds of coal auctions, the government is now finally considering allotment of **six mines soon**.

**Coal Mines:**

It initiated the auction process for **27 coal mines** under tranches 8, 9 and 10 for the non-regulated sector.

It also started the allotment process for 15 coal mines under tranches 6, 7, 8 and 9 for various specified end-uses such as power, iron, and steel.

In the auction process, the successful bidders for all the mines except Gare Palma IV-1 have been recommended by the Central Government.

Applications were received in the case of **6** out of 15 coal mines in the allotment process.

On the basis of the evaluation of the applications, received in the allotment processes, these 6 coal mines are under consideration for allotment. These include
Durgapur II, Mandakini, Utkal C, Sugia, Tokisud north.

**Government invoked DPCO, 2013 for the first time**

The Government invoked **Drug Price Control Order, 2013** on 13 December 2019 for the first-time. It aimed to increase the prices of 21 medicines to ensure their availability.

**Invoking DPDO 2013:**

The pharma industry persuaded this for almost 2 years. The industry faced a steep rise in prices of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) or bulk drugs largely imported from China.

The prices of API have gone up in the range of **5.88% depending on the products.**

API prices constitute 40-80% of the formulation cost. For some medicines like paracetamol, the API cost is around 80% of the finished product. Paragraph 19 of the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO), 2013, deals with an increase or decrease in drug prices under extraordinary circumstances.

The prices were increased by **50%**.

In January 2019, **National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA)** received 49 applications for 72 drugs.

**Over 1,65,000 lakh farmers across India have been registered on e-NAM**

Government said that over **1,65,000 lakh farmers** across India have been registered on the **National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform.** The announcement was made by the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

**Report highlights:**

585 wholesale regulated markets have been integrated with e-NAM platform. An additional of **415 markets** have been approved for integration with it.

Till November 2019, 2,99,000 metric tonnes of agri-commodities have been recorded on e-NAM platform.

The government promotes the inter-state trade and inter mandi trade through e-NAM platform. It adds the states that have been advised to strengthen quality assaying facilities in e-NAM for proper quality testing of commodities, e-trading,
online payment facility.

**PM led the first meeting of the National Ganga Council was held in Kanpur**

*Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi* chaired the **first meeting of the National Ganga Council** in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on 14 December.

**Aim:**
The first meeting of the Council was aimed to reinforce the importance of a Ganga-centric approach in all departments of the concerned states and relevant Central Ministries.

**National Ganga Council Highlights:**
The Council is given overall responsibility for superintendence of pollution prevention and rejuvenation of River Ganga Basin, including Ganga and its tributaries.

The council reviewed the progress of the amount of work done on various aspects of cleaning river Ganga with a focus on swachhta, aviralta and nirmalta.

The Central Government made a commitment of Rs.20,000 crores for the period 2015-20 to the five states through which Ganga passes. It aims to ensure adequate and uninterrupted water flows in the river. The government has already spent Rs.7700 crores prominently for the construction of new sewage treatment plants.
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Israeli students to launch self-made satellite from Sriharikota on 11 December

Three youngsters, Alon Abramovich, Meitav Assulin and Shmuel Aviv Levi, from an Israeli school, will travel to India to launch a satellite, Duchifat 3. The three 17 to 18 years old are the students of Sha'ar HaNegev High school in Israel's southern region. The satellite was designed and built by the students aboard PSLV C48 from ISRO's Sriharikota launch site. The satellite is to be launched on 11 December.

Duchifat 3:
Duchifat 3 is the third satellite made by the Israeli student. The satellite was jointly built by Herzliya Science Center and Shaar Hanegev High School students. The satellite was designed to serve children from across the country to observe the Earth.

It is an imaging satellite that will be used for ecological research of Earth from space.

The size of the satellite is 10x10x30 cm and weighs 2.3 kg.

The satellite will provide good help to agriculturists.

The students worked on the project for almost two and a half years. The work included satellite planning, writing the airborne and ground software and testing it up for satellite launch.

Diabetic population is close to hitting alarming mark of 69.9 million by 2025 in India

Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) reported that the diabetic population in the country is close to hitting the alarming marks of 69.9 million by 2025. It is expected to witness an increase of 266%. It was stated by Minister of State for Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy Shripad Naik.

NBRMAP-DB:
The Central of Research in Ayurveda Sciences (CCRAS), that functions under the Ministry of AYUSH, has been engaged in extending research-oriented Ayurveda based or integrative health care services for the management of
Madhumeha, which is Diabetes Mellitus.

The research centre Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) engaged with CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal & Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow and CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI), Lucknow and developed **NBRMAP-DB**, a scientifically validated herbal product, as anti-diabetic formulation.

The know-how NBRMAP-DB was licensed to AIMIL Pharma Ltd, Delhi. AIMIL is manufacturing and marketing it as **BGR-34** in India.

**Airtel launches Wi-Fi calling service in Delhi-NCR**

Bharti Airtel launched the Wi-Fi calling service for its subscribers. The service is currently rolling out in Delhi-NCR, gradually implemented in other cities. This service will significantly enhance indoor calling services without incurring any extra charges. Airtel Wi-Fi to enhance voice calling experience for Airtel smartphone customers, especially when they are indoors. The **Airtel Wi-Fi Calling** customers with Wi-Fi at home or office will get excellent signal quality indoors.

There will be no extra charge for calls made over **Airtel Wi-Fi Calling**, and the application consumes minimal data. The service is currently available to Airtel customers in Delhi NCR. This service is presently compatible with Airtel Xstream Fiber home broadband and will soon be compatible with all broadband services and Wi-Fi hotspots.

**Bharati Airtel**

It is an Indian global telecommunications services company based in Delhi. It operates in 18 countries across South Asia and Africa.

**ISRO launched RISAT-2BR1 with nine commercial satellites**

**ISRO** launched the **RISAT-2BR1 satellite** on 11 December 2019. India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) launched RISAT-2BR1, the **fiftieth flight (PSLV-C48)**, along with nine commercial satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) **SHAR**, Sriharikota.

RISAT-2BR1 was injected successfully into an orbit of 576 km. Also, nine commercial satellites were injected into their respective orbits. Along with this, the
two solar arrays of RISAT-2BR1 were deployed automatically. The ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network at Bengaluru has assumed the control of the satellite. It will be brought to the final operational configuration.

**RISAT-2BR1:**
RISAT-2BR1 is a **radar imaging satellite.**
It is dubbed as a spy satellite.
The mission life span of RISAT-2BR1 is 5 years.
The satellite weighs about 628 kg
It can take pictures of the earth during day and night even under cloudy conditions.
The satellites will help monitor the border 24/7 along with checking infiltration
It will keep an eye on terror or anti-national activities across the borders
The satellite aims to provide services in the field of **Forestry, Agriculture, and Disaster Management.**
ISRO also plans to launch radar imaging satellite 2BR2 with synthetic aperture radar after the launch.

**BEE organized the International Workshop on Energy Efficient Cooling**

**Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE),** Ministry of Power, conducted an **International Workshop on Energy Efficient Cooling** from 12-13 December 2019 at Scope Convention Centre, New Delhi. It was organized as a part of the Energy Conservation Week that was observed from 9-14 December 2019.

**Organized by:**
The workshop was conducted by BEE in association with the International Energy Agency (IEA) under the SEAD initiative of Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM).

**Workshop highlights:**
The workshop served as a platform for global experts, industries, and policymakers to explore opportunities to accelerate deployment of energy-efficient cooling, across different sectors and establishments.
The main objective of the workshop was to chart out steps towards accelerating the development and deployment of efficient cooling appliances, equipment, and systems.
The workshop helped to explore policies, technologies, innovation, new approaches and business models across space cooling and cold chains.
It highlighted the action plans, international best policy practices, measures to
stimulate innovation and deliberations on steps forward. The initiatives and knowledge sharing sessions are aimed to frame the best policies and support industry bodies to adopt technologies from across the globe.

**Participants:**
Various delegates involving regulatory bodies, policymakers, Government officials, Public sector undertakings (PSUs), etc. from across the world participated in the workshop.

**NASA select site Nightingale for observation**

NASA has finally selected a sample collection site on asteroid Bennu after the arrival of OSIRIS-REx spacecraft in December 2018. The OSIRIS-Rex mission team has selected the site designated Nightingale, which is located in a crater high in Bennu's northern hemisphere. The team has also selected site Osprey of Bennu as a backup sample collection site.

**Site-selection:**
OSIRIS-REx spacecraft mapped the entire asteroid in order to identify the safest and most accessible spots for the spacecraft to collect a sample so far. The team evaluated close-range data from four candidate sites in order to identify the best option for the sample collection. After the complete study and analysis of the four candidate sites, the team selected a site that has the greatest amount of fine-grained material and how easily the spacecraft can access that material and keep the spacecraft safe.

**Site Nightingale:**
Site Nightingale is located in a northern crater 460 feet wide of the asteroid. As per the observation, Nightingale's regolith or rocky surface material is dark, and images show that the crater is relatively smooth. As the site is located so far north, the temperatures in the region are lower than elsewhere on the asteroid and the surface material is well-preserved. OSIRIS-REx sample collection has been scheduled for the latter half of 2020. The spacecraft is expected to return the asteroid samples to Earth on 24 September 2023.
ENVIRONMENT

Rajnath Singh flagged off massive campaign against single-use plastic

Ministry of Defence (MoD) organized a special plogging awareness drive rally in Delhi Cantt as part of Swachhta Pakhwada. The massive campaign against single-use plastic was flagged off by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on 7 December 2019.

Aim:
The campaign was conducted to spread awareness against the ill-effect of plastic on the environment, bring about behavioural change with respect to sanitation. The drive sent a message to give up the use of plastic including carry bags, plastic cutlery, plastic water bottles, etc. to the people of India.

Massive plogging programme:
The massive plogging programme was organized at more than 400 locations throughout the country by MoD. Along with MoD, Indian Army, Navy, Indian Air force, Indian Coast Guard, Border Road Organisation (BRO), Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), National Cadet Corps (NCC), Defence Public Sector Undertakings, and various other defence establishments organized similar campaigns in various location of the country.

The massive exercise intended to raise awareness in the society to collect plastic waste and make the surroundings clean.

The slogan for the event was Plastic Se RakshaSwachhata Hi Suraksha. Swachhta anthem was played in all the events across the country.

Community awareness programmes such as debates, quizzes, nukkad nataks, painting competitions were held among students.

During the event, India Army cleaned up waste at 17 locations across the country right from Siachen to Jaisalmer and Bhuj to Bairengte, Mizoram.

The Indian Navy cleaned up waste at 30 locations from Mumbai to Karwar and Kolkata to Vishakapatnam.

Indian Air Force cleaned up waste at 150 locations from Hindon to Upper Shillong and Nagpur to Trivandrum.

ICG conducted the programme in its 47 locations, Cantonment Boards in 62 locations, BRO in 18 locations, Sainik Schools in 31 locations, NCC in 18 locations, Comptroller General of Defence Accounts in 20 locations across the
Participants:
More than 3,000 people, including schoolchildren, participated in the Massive plogging programme and collected sizeable single-use plastic waste.

Ganga has become one of 10 cleanest rivers in the world

Minister of Jalshakti said that Ganga has become one of 10 cleanest rivers in the world among the major rivers category. The announcement was made by the Jalshakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat at the 4th India Water Impact Summit, 2019 in New Delhi.

Centre's measure:
The Centre is committed to ensuring the cleanliness and uninterrupted flow of the Ganga.

India has only 4% of the world's drinking water while 18% of the world's human and equivalent livestock population.

The Integrated water management is need of the hour and people's participation is also required to make it successful.

Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan, a massive river rafting expedition, was launched on 10 October 2019.

Centre approved the establishment of the Clean Ganga Fund (CGF).

Centre launched the NamamiGange Mission as an integrated mission. The mission aimed at the conservation and rejuvenation of Ganga and its tributaries with a comprehensive basin based approach. SabkaSaath, SabkaVikas, SabkaVishwas is the motto of the mission.

IREDA plans to set up Green Window

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) is planning to set up a dedicated Green Window with an aim to serve the unserved segments of renewable energy. It was announced by Shri Anand Kumar, Secretary for the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

IREDA Green Window:
IREDA Green Window aims to provide a significant boost to the renewable energy market.
As India is currently moving towards becoming a $5 trillion economy, it aims to install 450 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy capacity. It is expected to be one of the major drivers of economic growth. The Centre is planning to allocate approximately $20 million for the Green window. It also plans to leverage $80 million from other agencies to establish a facility of $100 million.

The Green Window will support underserved clean energy markets. It will also support the scaling up of new clean energy technologies. It will be used to leverage additional sources of capital from both private domestic banks and international sources.

An estimate of Rs.21,45,000 crore is needed for India to accomplish the commitments, between 2018 and 2030, under the Paris Agreement.

**Green windows:**
These are the public entities that are created to work with the private sector to increase investment in green energy. It will bring clean energy financing into the mainstream. Green windows are innovative and new tools that were proved successful in countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, and the United States.

**IREDA:**
Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) is a Mini Ratna (CategoryI) Enterprise. It functions under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). It was established in 1987. It aims to promote, develop and extend financial assistance to set up projects that are related to new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency.

**Poland was left out of European Union's 2050 climate neutrality agreement**

The European Union (EU) left Poland out of a 2050 climate neutrality agreement. The agreement is part of a plan to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent. Poland was left out as it demanded more funds for economic transition and support for nuclear power.

**2050 goal:**
The 2050 goal is a key commitment under the 2015 Paris Agreement of the Europe Union on climate change. To achieve the goal, the EU countries will have to slash carbon emissions generated by fossil fuels and find ways to offset remaining
emissions.

**Poland:**
Poland gets 80% of its power from coal. The country resisted the plan during hours of intense debate and was left out of the new commitment. Poland is expected to reach climate neutrality at its own pace. The country asked for an extension of the period to **2070**. The other countries said that Poland's position would not deter the commission from moving ahead with the next steps of the green deal.

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**Researchers found intense sunshine may be melting ice on Mount Everest**

The newly installed **weather stations atop Mount Everest data** were presented at the American Geophysical Union annual meeting in San Francisco on 13 December 2019. The data is among the first scientific results to emerge from the National Geographic Society's and Rolex's Perpetual Planet Extreme Expedition to Everest.

**Report highlights:**

The data reported that the mountain experiences some of the **most intense sunlight on the planet**.

It is suspected that it might hasten ice melt atop the world's highest mountains and impacting glaciers in ways that are not fully understood.

The data helps the researchers to understand the amount of energy available to melt snow and ice in high alpine environments.

**5 weather stations:**

In June 2019, the researchers installed a network of five automatic weather stations at elevations of up to **27,600 feet**. It includes the two highest weather stations on the planet. All stations are collecting data on air, pressure, temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed. Every station, except for the highest one, is outfitted with a net radiometer and the lower stations also carry rain gauges and present weather sensors.

**Note:** Radiometer is an instrument that measures incoming and outgoing radiation.
Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill was tabled in Lok Sabha

External affairs minister S. Jaishankar introduced the Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill 2019 at Lok Sabha. The bill seeks to provide for stringent punishment, including death penalty or life imprisonment, to those involved in piracy at sea. **Reason:** The Bill was introduced after 18 Indians aboard a crude oil carrier were kidnapped off the coast of Nigeria. India is still negotiating to release the kidnapped nationals.  

**Aim:**  
The Bill was introduced with an aim to promote the safety and security of India's maritime trade, and the safety of the crew members.  

**Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill Provision:**  
The Bill includes a provision of automatic death penalty was against the law. The Bill said that any person who commits any act of piracy shall be punished with imprisonment for life or with death if such person in committing the act of piracy causes death or an attempt thereof.  
The Bill was drafted to keep up with India's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which concluded in 1982. India had ratified the UNCLOS in 1995.  

**UNCLOS:**  

**Lok Sabha passed the 2019 International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill**

The Lok Sabha passed International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019 on 11 December 2019. The bill aims to set up a unified authority to regulate all financial activities in international financial services centres (IFSCs) in India. The bill was withdrawn in Rajya Sabha.  

**Provisions of the Bill:**
The bill will amend 14 Acts, including the SEBI Act, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) Act and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Act.

The bill will bring several regulators together as one unit (an authority) to deal with various institutions that are present in the IFSC.

The unified authority will regulate various financial activities in the IFSC.

The authority will follow all that processes that are applicable to such financial services, financial products, and financial institutions.

All the laws of the land and the unified authority will be subject to audit by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).

The bill defines various financial products including IT-enabled services in the financial sector.

As per the bill, there will be a tax holiday only for 10 years in the IFSC after which it will not become a tax haven.

The first IFSC was set up at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

President gave his assent to the 2019 Citizenship Amendment Bill

President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on 12 December 2019. The bill amends the Citizenship Act, 1955. The Bill was passed in Lok Sabha in January 2019 but lapsed without being cleared in Rajya Sabha. The law came into effect on 12 December.

Provisions:

As per the Act, the members of Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, and Parsi communities who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till 31 December 2014 will not be treated as illegal immigrants.

The Bill will grant citizenship to non-Muslims from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan who came to India before 31 December 2014.

The Bill will provide citizenship to six communities namely Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Parsis.

It will help the minority communities who face religious persecution.

The government said that the new law will be followed by a National Register of Citizens. Hence, the Muslims must prove they were original residents of India and
not refugees from these three countries.

**Rajya Sabha passed the bill to extend the reservation for SC, ST by 10 more years**

*Rajya Sabha* passed a *Constitution amendment bill to extend reservation to SCs and STs* in Lok Sabha and state assemblies by another 10 years. The bill was passed by Lok Sabha on 10 December. The bill will now be sent to the states for ratification by 50% of the assemblies before it comes into force.

**Provisions:**
Reservation for members of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) was given for the past 70 years in Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The reservation is due to end on 25 January 2020.
All those who do not come from the SC/ST communities have also extended help for their welfare.

**Note:**
During India's Independence, the population of SC and ST were 5.13 crore and 1.91 crores respectively. As per the 2011 Census data, the SC and population were 20.13 crore and 10.45 crore respectively.
In Parliament, there are 84 members from the Scheduled Caste and 47 from the Scheduled Tribe communities. There are 614 SC members and 554 ST members in the state assemblies across India.

**Lok Sabha passed the 2019 Sanskrit Central Universities Bill**

Lok Sabha passed the *Sanskrit Central Universities Bill, 2019* on 12 December 2019. The Bill was initiated by the Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'.

**Provisions:**
The bill seeks to set up central Sanskrit universities.
The Bill also seeks to convert three deemed Sanskrit universities into central universities. The three universities are Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, the Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth in New Delhi and the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth in Tirupati.
The approval will grant power to the universities to affiliate to colleges and attract
more students from within India and abroad.

**Note:**
The Sansthan was established in 1970. Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth was set up in 1962. The Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth in Tirupati was established in 1961. Later, all three universities were granted deemed university status by the UGC.

**AP approved the draft Disha Act**

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved the draft Disha Act to ensure rape verdicts in 21 days. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that the State government will make amendments to the AP Criminal Law Act to hand out harsh punishments after a swift process.

**Provisions:**
- The act provides harsher punishments, including the death sentence, to those guilty of heinous crimes against women.
- The Bill called for completion of trial in 21 days and awarding death sentences in rape cases.
- The Act covers sexual offences against women and children, harassment of women and acid attacks.
- The state government is to set up special courts in districts to try the cases related to attacks, sexual offences on children and women.
- Sexual abuse and attacks on children would attract 354(F), with punishments ranging from 14 years in jail to life term.
- It also decided to slap cases on people who slander women in social media. First-time offenders could face a two-year jail term, while a repeat offence could attract double the punishment.

**Rajya Sabha passed the 2019 International Financial Services Authority Bill**

Rajya Sabha passed the International Financial Services Authority Bill, 2019. The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on 11 December. It is expected that IFSCs will provide Indian companies easier access to global financial markets and also enable the development of financial markets in India.

**Provisions of the Bill:**
The bill aims to set up world-class unified regulator for international financial services combining powers and functions of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) And Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

The authority comprises a chairperson and one member each nominated by the RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, and PFRDA.

There will also be two members of the central government and full-time or part-time members.

It will regulate all the financial services and products

The authority can recommend any other financial products to the central government as the development of financial services and products in IFSCs requires focused and dedicated regulatory interventions.

**Cabinet approved the 2019 Aircraft Amendment Bill**

The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the introduction of the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019. The Bill amend the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934).

**Provisions:**

The bill will enhance the maximum limit of fine from the existing Rs.10 lakh to Rs.1 crore.

It will include the regulation of all areas of air navigation to the Aircraft Act, 1934.

It will fulfill the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) by enabling the three regulatory bodies in the Civil Aviation sector in India to become more effective. This will lead to enhancement in the level of safety and security of aircraft operations in the country. The 3 regulatory bodies are Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB).
Exercise Hand-in-hand 2019 to commence from 7 December

Exercise Hand-in-Hand-2019 commenced at Umroi, Meghalaya on 7 December 2019. The exercise is held between India and China. The 8th edition of the exercise is being held under the United Nations mandate. The 14-day long exercise will be held from 7-20 December 2019.

Aim:
The main objective of the exercise is to enrich both Indian and Chinese contingents from each other's experience to combat counter-terrorism.

Theme:
The theme of the 14-day long training exercise is Counter-terrorism. Under the theme, both the countries will practice joint planning and conduct of counter-terrorist operations in semi-urban terrain.

Participants:
From the Chinese side, the Tibet Military command comprises 130 personal who will be participating in the event. From the Indian Contingent, more than 100 personnel will participate in the training exercise.

Events:
The exercise between the countries will be held at the company level. The training will be controlled by the respective Battalion Headquarters.

The events include discussions on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

The exercise will have various lectures and drills associated with counter-terrorist handling and firing with each other's weapons.

Special heliborne operations and case studies of various operations will be carried out in a counter-terrorism environment.

The exercise will have two tactical exercises: one on counter-terrorism scenario and the other on HADR operations.

MoD to organize the Naval weapon Systems seminar NAVARMS

The fourth edition of the International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems NAVARMS-19 is to be held on 12-13 December 2019. The conclave is
organized by the Ministry of Defence at Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Development Enclave, New Delhi.

**Theme:**
The theme of the two-day event is Make in India - Fight Category: Opportunities and Imperatives. The seminar aims to create awareness and identify the emerging prospects for the National and International defence industry in the domain of Naval Weapon Systems.

**Events:**
Indian Navy speakers will bring out Opportunities for Industry in Naval Weapon Systems - 2030 in all the three dimensions namely surface, air and underwater.

A session on Needs and Concerns of the User and Industry will be held. It will provide a platform for the users and the industry to bring out their respective needs and concerns with prevailing policies/issues.

The participating delegations will discuss views from all the stakeholders to bridge the gap between the expectations of the user and the industry.

A session that focuses on Naval Weapon Systems - Modern Trends and Technology in Upgrade & Upkeep will be held to share the views.

An interactive session of Panel Discussion on Govt Policy Imperatives to Encourage Indigenisation.

A discussion on the Building of Indigenous Capability through Collaborative Approach between Industry, R&D organizations and IN will be held. The session will highlight the capability gaps existing in the system and way ahead to bridge them using modern technology, infrastructure augmentation, increased investment in R&D, etc through a collaborative approach.

**NAVARMS:**
NAVARMS is the only international seminar and exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems conducted in India. The seminar aims to enhance maritime security in the region and nation-building.

It invites all the stakeholders in the life cycle management of Naval Weapons and provides a common platform to share their views and concerns.

The first edition of the NAVARMS was organized in 2007. The second and third was organized in 2010 and 2013 respectively.
Russian ships have arrived to participate in 2019 Indra exercise

The Russian Federation Navy (RuFN) Ships namely Yaroslav Mudry, Viktor Konetsky, and Elyna, have arrived in Goa to participate in the second edition of a tri-services exercise INDRA 2019. The exercise was held between the armed forces of India and Russia.

Aim:
The aim of exercise INDRA 2019 is to enhance interoperability between the two countries. It also aims to develop an understanding among the countries in order to effectively tackle common security challenges.

Exercise INDRA:
Exercise INDRA series began in 2003. The first Joint Tri-Services of the INDRA exercise was conducted in 2017. The aim of the exercise is to boost interoperability and cooperation between the Indian Navy and the Russian Navy.
AWARDS AND HONOURS

Zozibini Tunzi was crowned as the 2019 Miss Universe

South Africa's Zozibini Tunzi was crowned as the Miss Universe 2019. Zozibini and Miss Universe Puerto Rico Madison Anderson were the top two contestants for the 2019 Miss Universe title. Miss Universe Mexico Sofia Aragon won third place. Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray crowned Zozibini Tunzi, the winner of the title, at the event held in Atlanta on 8 December.

Zozibini Tunzi:
Zozibini Tunzi, 26-year-old, is from South Africa. She fights against gender-based violence. She devoted her social media campaign to change the narrative around gender stereotypes. She is a proud advocate for natural beauty. She encourages women to love themselves the way they are.

Miss Universe pageant:
Miss Universe beauty pageant is held every year. It was formed on 28 June 1952. It is run by Miss Universe Organization.

2019 Miss Universe pageant:
The 2019 Miss Universe pageant was held on 8 December 2019 in Atlanta, the US. 90 finalists participated in the pageant contest.

Result:
Winner: Zozibini Tunzi, South Africa
Runner up: Madison Anderson, Puerto Rico
3rd place: Sofia Aragon, Mexico

Abu Dhabi selected as the worlds leading sports tourism destination

Abu Dhabi is selected as the world's leading Sports tourism Destination for the seventh consecutive time. The decision was made at the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA) that is being held in Muscat, Oman.

Abu Dhabi:
Abu Dhabi stands as a premium destination for sports tourism in 2019. It hosted some of the world's top sporting events, such as the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Club World Cup 2017 and 2018, the AFC Asian Cup 2019, the Special Olympics World Games 2019, the 1st edition of the UAE Tour,
and the Brazil vs South Korea international friendly match.

The Kingdom is to host annual acclaimed sports events including the ADNOC Abu Dhabi Marathon, Formula 1 Etihad Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the Abu Dhabi Golf Championship, the Mubadala World Tennis Championship, and the ITU World Triathlon Abu Dhabi.

Recently, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi announced a five-year partnership with the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) to host annual premier fixtures in the capital as part of Abu Dhabi Showdown Week.

**World Travel Awards (WTA):**

WTA was established in 1993. WTA acknowledges and rewards excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries. The winners of the award are selected by an international jury of hospitality experts, mainly from the World Travel and Tourism Council.

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**Abiy Ahmed Ali received the Nobel Peace Prize**

Ethiopian Prime Minister **Abiy Ahmed Ali** received the **Nobel Peace Prize** on 10 December 2019 at Oslo's City Hall. The Norwegian Nobel Committee conferred the 100th Nobel Peace Prize to the Prime Minister in the presence of the Norwegian royal family.

**Awarded for:**

Abiy Ahmed was awarded for his extraordinary efforts to end the decades-long conflict with neighbouring Eritrea.

It recognized his three major achievements for his crucial role in creating peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia, his contribution to peace and reconciliation processes in East and North East Africa and his efforts to build democracy in Ethiopia by strengthening civil liberties and developing institutions.

**Abiy Ahmed Ali:**

Abiy Ahmed was born on 15 August 1976 at Beshasha, Ethiopia. He is the fourth Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

**Eritrea-Ethiopia crisis:**

Eritrea got independence from Ethiopia in **1991**. It fought a disastrous border war during 1998-2000 with Ethiopia. More than 80,000 people were killed in the war. Mr. Abiy took measures to resume the stalled peace process. He led Ethiopia's first state visit to Eritrea and met Isaias Afwerki, the President of Eritrea. They declared
the end of the border war in few days after the meeting.

**Asom Natya Sanmilan announced the 2019 Asom Natya Sanmilan Awards**

The **Asom Natya Sanmilan** has announced the annual awards of **Asom Natya Sanmilan Award-2019** is Nandeswar Saikia Auditorium, Nalbari, Assam. The awards were announced by Dulal Roy, president, and Bipul Chaliha, principal secretary of Asom Natya Sanmilan. The awards will be presented at the 58th conference of Asom Natya Sanmilan that will be held at Nalbari in January 2020.

**Awardees:**

One of the noted personalities of the award is actor Sayad Nazim Ahmed of Lakhimpur.

The Mahendra Borthakur Award will be presented to senior actor and professor Parag Sarma.

Other awards are given to actor Pabin Sarma of Nalbari, playwright and director Ajit Borthakur of Sipajhar, playwright Pankaj Jyoti Bhuyan of Sootea, actress Bina Patangia of Tezpur, critic Atul Mazumdar of Guwahati, playwright Nitul Medhi of Pathsala and playwright Ganesh Das of Tezpur.

**Greta Thunberg and 3 other are to be awarded the Right Livelihood Award**

Four people won the Right Livelihood Award for the year 2019. The awardees are Greta Thunberg, Aminatou Haidar, Guo Juanmei and Davi Kopenawa Yanomami.

**Awarded for:**

The award aims to honour Greta Thunberg for her fight against climate change Davi Kopenawa Yanomami for her commitment and efforts to protect the indigenous rights and land

Guo Juanmei was awarded for her work for women's rights in China for 25 years

The award recognized Aminatou Haidar's efforts for the independence of Western Sahara. She spent four years in a secret prison, isolated from the outside world.

**Right Livelihood Award:**

The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980. It was instituted by German-Swedish writer Jakob von Uexkll. The award is widely known as the alternative Nobel Prize.
Peter Handke received the Nobel Literature Prize

Author Peter Handke was conferred the Nobel Literature Prize. He received the 9 million-kronor ($948,000) award from King Carl XVI Gustaf at a ceremony in Stockholm.

Peter Handke:
Peter Handke, 76, is an Austrian author and playwright. He was recognized for his influential work that with linguistic ingenuity has explored the periphery and the specificity of human experience. He has been a controversial figure as he supported the Serbs during the 1990s Yugoslav war. He was charged in 2001 with the Bosnian Genocide.
Handke was a staunch supporter of the Serbs and has disputed that the massacre of 8,000 Bosnian Muslims in the town of Srebrenica was genocide.

Other Laureates:
The Nobel laureates in medicine, chemistry, physics, and economics received the prizes from the Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf. The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded separately in Oslo to Ethiopia’s prime minister.

Railway Sports Promotion Board won the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) India Sports Awards 2019 was presented to the Railway Sports Promotion Board under the category of Best Company Promoting Sports (Public Sector) on 11 December 2019 at New Delhi. The award was conferred by a jury headed by Justice Mukul Mudgal, retired Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Awarded for:
Railway Sports Promotion Board was awarded for the immense contribution provided by the board in the field of sports eco-system. The organization provided support for the budding sports athletes to nurture and expose themselves to their optimum limits and bring laurels to the nation.
It provided a friendly policy to develop the sports infrastructure and give all possible support to fulfill the needs of athletes

Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB):
Founded on: 1928
RSPB is owned by the Indian Railways. It is a member of the Board of Control
for Cricket in India (BCCI). It promotes 29 sporting disciplines. Railway Sports Promotion Board is not only providing all facilities and coaching to its in-serving and active 8000 athletes but also has started Summer Coaching Camps for school children to attract them towards the field of Sports and help them with mental and physical fitness.

**Harsh Vardhan presented the UHC awards**

The **Universal health coverage (UHC) Awards** were awarded to the best performing Primary Healthcare teams of States and Union Territories (UTs) on the occasion of Universal Health Coverage Day on 12 December. The awards were presented by the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan at an event organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

**Events:**
The Ministry organized three policy labs for extensive brainstorming and deliberations on three themes namely Providing CHPC in urban areas, Communitisation for wellness, and Strengthening delivery systems.

**Measures taken by the Centre:**
The States and UTs performed well under the **Health and Wellness Centres (HWC)** and the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).**

India has various significant steps towards UHC through Ayushman Bharat with HWCs & PMJAY, National Health Policy (NHP) 2017, banning of e-cigarettes, the NMC Act, approving 22 new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), upgradation of 157 District Hospitals as Medical Colleges, etc.

The government has plans to address the increasing and diversifying disease burden, expanding population, accountability through social audits, devising different models for urban healthcare, engaging the private sector through effective partnerships, etc.

**Other launches:**
During the event, the release of the CPHC Booklet for AB-HWCs, a Synthesis Report of Regional Workshops on AB-HWCs, Oral Healthcare Guidelines, AB-PMJAY 2020 Calendar and launch of the revamped AB-HWC portal.

**Odisha received the 2019 World Habitat Award**
Odisha State government was honoured with the **2019 World Habitat Award**. The award recognized the State's ambitious project **Jaga Mission**. The award was conferred by the World Habitat, a UK based organization, in association with the United Nations (UN)-Habitat. The programme has set a global benchmark to empower the urban poor.

**Jaga Mission:**
Jaga Mission was launched by the Odisha State government. The mission aims to leverage and converging various schemes and programs. The land titling initiative works towards turning slums into liveable habitat with all necessary civic infrastructure and services at par with the better off areas within the same Urban Local Body (ULB).

The mission improves the standards of the infrastructure and services and provide access to livelihood opportunities.

**World Habitat Award:**
The World Habitat Award was established in **1985**. The award recognizes and promotes good habitat practices. The **first awards** were presented in **1986** in London by HRH the Prince of Wales and the Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, UN-HABITAT Executive Director. The awards were initiated as **World Habitat's contribution** to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in **1987**.

**World Habitat:** It is an independent charity working internationally to help bring the best housing to the people who need it the most.

**Greta Thunberg was named as the 2019 Person of the Year by TIME magazine**

The news magazine **Time** has named the teenage climate activist **Greta Thunberg** in **2019 Person of the Year**. She was named as she inspired millions of people in 150 countries to protest climate change. She has also delivered blunt and powerful speeches to leaders urging them to address the issue.

**Others honoured by TIME for the year 2019:**
- **Disney CEO Bob Iger** was named the Business Person of the Year
- **US Women's Soccer Team** has been named as the Athlete of the Year
- **The US Public Servants** was named as the Guardians of the Year
- **Singer Lizzo** has been named as the Entertainer of the Year
About Greta Thunberg:
The 16-year-old is a Swedish environmental activist on climate change. In 2018, she became known for her activism as she spent her school days outside the Swedish parliament to call for stronger action on global warming. She has won awards including Goldene Kamera in 2019, Rachel Carson Prize in 2019, Fritt Ord Award in 2019, Right Livelihood Award in 2019, Ambassador of Conscience Award in 2019, Fellow of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (including Geddes Environment Medal) in 2019, International Children's Peace Prize in 2019.

Angela Merkel named as the world's most powerful woman by Forbes

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has been named as the world's most powerful woman by Forbes in the 2019 list of the 100 most powerful women in the world. She has won the title for the consecutive ninth year running. She is followed by the European Central Bank head Christine Lagarde from France, and US Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi and new president of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen.
She was praised for her steely reserve as she stood up for the US President Donald Trump. She has opened the door to refugee policy. The policy saw more than a million Syrian refugees enter the country amid the 2015 migrant crisis.

Indian Personalities:
Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ranked 34th in the world's 100 Most Powerful Women in the recently released list by Forbes Magazine.
Roshni Nadar Malhotra ranked 54th, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw ranked 65th in the list.

Other noted people:
Guler Sabanc from Turkey ranked 73rd in the list of the 100 most powerful women in the world. She is the first woman to run her family business Sabanc Holding.
Queen Elizabeth II ranked 40th on the list.
Ivanka Trump, the daughter and the advisor of U.S. President Donald Trump, ranked 42nd in the list.
Greta Thunberg, the 16th-year-old climate activist, has been listed as the 100th most powerful woman of 2019. The news magazine TIME selected her as the Person of the Year.
Top personalities from list:
1. Angela Merkel
2. Christine Lagarde
3. Nancy Pelosi
4. Ursula von der Leyen
5. Mary Barra
6. Melinda Gates
7. Abigail Johnson
8. Ana Patricia Botn

Blue Sky Analytics won the Space Oscars awards at Copernicus Masters competition

Blue Sky Analytics won the Space Oscars awards on the international competition Copernicus Masters. The awards were presented in a ceremony on 4 December 2019 during the European Space Week held at Helsinki, Finland. Blue Sky Analytics became the first Indian Startup to win the Space Oscars award presented by the European Space Agency.

Awarded for:
The company was awarded for its innovation in using geospatial data for improved environmental monitoring, Blue Sky Analytics received the award on

Copernicus Masters:
Copernicus Masters is a competition held globally. The awards are presented to innovative solutions based on Earth observation data. Big data that are produced by various Earth Observation (EO) satellites hold huge potential for the creation of innovative products and services.

Blue Sky Analytics:
Blue Sky Analytics was co-founded by Ms. Abhilasha Purwar, a Yale and IIT alum and Mr. Kshitij Purwar. It is one of the pioneering Indian startups analyzing large volumes of Copernicus data.
WADA bans Russia from all major sporting events

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) banned Russia for a four-year term from all major sporting events. The decision was made at Wada's executive committee in a meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland. Under the ban, the Russian national flag and anthem will not be allowed at events such as the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics and football's 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Reason:
After a three-year suspension for Russia's vast state-sponsored doping scandal, Russia had to hand over data to Wada as a condition of its controversial reinstatement in 2018. The ban comes after Russia's Anti Doping Agency (Rusada) was declared non-compliant to manipulate laboratory data that was handed over to investigators in January 2019.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA):
- Formed on: 10 November 1999
- President: Sir Craig Reedie
- Headquarters: Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- Official language: English, French
The institution of WADA was initiated by the International Olympic Committee. The aim of WADA is to cooperate, promote, monitor the fight against drugs in sports.

India won the 2019 South Asian Games championship

The 13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal on 10 December 2019. India topped the championship with a medal tally of 312 medals, of which 174 gold, 93 silver, and 45 bronze. It was followed by Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan.

Participants:
In 2019 SAG, athletes from 7 countries namely Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Maldives, and Sri Lanka are participating in 26 different sports. More than 2,715 athletes participated in the event.

South Asian Games (SAG):
SAG was held for the first time in September 1984 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The
games are held once every 2 years. It is held among the Asian athletes. South Asia Olympic Council (SAOC) is the governing body of SAG. The 8 members of SAG are India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

**2019 South Asian Games:**
The 13th edition of the South Asian Games was held from 1-10 December 2019 at Kathmandu, Nepal. It was held in three cities namely, Pokhara, Kathmandu, and Janakpur.

**The Final list of the medal tally of the countries participated in the SAG 2019 are:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
<th>Total medals</th>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>312</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>206</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>128</td>
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<tr>
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<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>316</strong></td>
<td><strong>316</strong></td>
<td><strong>431</strong></td>
<td><strong>1063</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wasim Jaffer became the first player in Indian cricket to feature in 150 Ranji matches**

**Wasim Jaffer,** the former India opener, became the first player in Indian cricket to feature in **150 Ranji matches.**

**Wasim Jaffer:**
Wasim Jaffer, 41, from Maharashtra, played an important role in the title-winning Vidarbha team in the last two years. He is also less than 1000 runs away from completing 20,000 runs in first-class cricket. Jaffer has played 253 first-class
games. He has scored 19,147 runs at an average of 51.19. He has scored 57 hundred and 88 fifties with 314 being his highest score.

**FICCI India Sports Awards 2019 were awarded**

FICCI India Sports Awards 2019 were bestowed upon sportspeople including Rani Rampal, Saurabh Chaudhary, Sandeep Chaudhary. The awards recognized the contribution of sportspersons and various stakeholders for the year. The jury for the awards included Justice (Retd) Mukul Mudgal.

*The awardees are:*

- **Best National Sports Federation:** National Rifle Association of India
- **Sports Person (Female):** Rani Rampal (Hockey)
- **Sports Person (Male):** Saurabh Chaudhary (shooting)
- **Para-Athlete:** Sandeep Chaudhary (javelin)
- **Special Recognition Para-Athlete:** Manasi Joshi (badminton)
- **Breakthrough Sports Person:** Amit Panghal
- **Special Recognition Breakthrough Sports Person:** Esow Alben (cycling)
- **Coach or Support Staff:** Satyanarayana
- **Lifetime Achievement (administrator):** Govindaraj Kempareddy
- **Lifetime Achievement:** Pankaj Advani (cue sport)
- **Best State Promoting Sports:** Odisha
- **Best Sports Journalist:** Kamesh Srinivasan
OBITUARY

The co-inventor of barcodes, George Laurer, passed away

George Laurer, the US engineer who helped develop the barcode, has passed away at the age of 94.

George Laurer:
Mr. Laurer has been recognized as the co-inventor of the Universal Product Code (UPC) or barcode. It is found on millions of products, services, and other items for identification. When he was working as an electrical engineer with IBM, he developed UPC or barcode. He developed a scanner that could digitally read codes. He used stripes to print the codes.
The first product that was scanned was a packet of Wrigley's Juicy Fruit chewing gum. It took place in June 1974 in Ohio.

Tara Sinha, founder of ad agencies Clarion and Tara Sinha Associates, passed away

Tara Sinha, the founder of ad agencies Clarion and Tara Sinha Associates, passed away on 11 December 2019 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. She was 88 years old. She was the first woman to set up a national advertising agency in India.

Tara Sinha:
Sinha completed the advertising diploma in the early 1950s from London. She joined DJ Keymer, Kolkata. In 1955, Sinha and others launched Clarion. She became its first director at 23.
Sinha had good client and agency experience having worked at Coca-Cola in the 1970s and early 1980s. Tara Sinha Associates was launched in 1985. Sinha was a fearless woman, who spoke her mind and never hesitated to take tough decisions. Her career acquired skills across the marketing, advertising, and research spectrum, working with some of the best brands in fast-moving consumer goods.
India-Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi

The 18th India-Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 6 December 2019. The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary, Shri Vijay Gokhale, and the Myanmar delegation was led by Permanent Secretary, U Soe Han.

**Highlights:**

India and Myanmar reviewed the entire details of bilateral relations. They discussed the status of India's ongoing projects in Myanmar, capacity building initiatives, bilateral trade relations, border cooperation. The discussion aimed to provide bilateral ties. It plans to enhance the implementation of bilateral agreements.

India reaffirmed its priority for the partnership with Myanmar which is at the intersection of **Neighbourhood First and Act East policies.**

Myanmar also reaffirmed the high priority to relations with India, which were based on historic and civilizational contact.

The development assistance and capacity building support offered by India especially in recent years was appreciated.

India co-hosted the Improving peacekeeping performance A year since 2436 UNSCR at UN

India along with Portugal, Senegal, Uruguay, and Vietnam co-hosted the high-level event **Improving peacekeeping performance: A year since UNSCR 2436.** The event was initiated by the US for United Nations peacekeeping operations.

**Highlights of the event:**

The event highlighted the sacrifice made by the UN peacekeepers who operate in highly dangerous environments.

It suggested that all the individuals/countries involved in peacekeeping, including governments, local organizations, and every individual, should perform their role.

The countries participated in the event reaffirmed to support peace processes and political solutions.

UN earlier introduced new systems and tools for the evaluation of the performance.
It includes evaluation of military and police units, hospital systems and other mechanisms to address the work of civilian personnel.

Discussion to strengthen peacekeeping performance was held. It can be strengthened by improving the safety and security of peacekeepers. It adopted 10 steps to strengthen the partnership for collective action to improve peacekeeping performance:

1) Provide more support missions in the most challenging environments.
2) To build greater capacity in the peacekeeping forces so that they can fully implement their mandates, particularly the protection of civilians.
3) To enhance intelligence, situational analysis, and understanding.
4) To build on progress made by several missions over the past year to establish and strengthen the implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence policy.
5) To deploy women peacekeepers, as they are a force multiplier.
6) To reduce peacekeeping fatalities by enhancing force protection and improving trauma care.
7) To fill critical equipment gaps, including with helicopters, quick reaction forces and enabling units like engineers, transport and medical units.
8) To commit unlawful acts and engage in misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, must be prosecuted and punished.
9) To build a framework, in cooperation with Troop and Police-Contributing Countries and to better systematize performance evaluation and accountability.
10) To set standards for sustainability and environmental management.

UNSCR:
United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) is a UN resolution that was adopted by the 15 members of the Security Council. The aim is to maintain international peace and security. The 5 permanent council members are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

MoD to organise series of webinars in run up to DefExpo 2020
Ministry of Defence (MoD) organizing a series of web seminars (webinars) from December 10, 2019 (1500 Hrs to 1600 Hrs IST). The 11th edition of the biennial flagship event will be held in Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow between February 05-08, 2019. The webinars will be conducted by leading luminaries namely Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Defence Research and Development
Organisation (DRDO) Chairman Dr. G Satheesh Reddy, Padma Shri Dr. Kota Harinarayana, Chairman & MD Bharat Forge Ltd Shri Baba Kalyani, Founder & President of Synergia Foundation Shri Tobby Simon, IIT Bhilai Director/Member of Artificial Intelligence Task Force for Defence Dr. Rajat Moona and officials from MoD/Department of Defence Production & Invest India. **Main Aim:** To focus on path-breaking topics and will be streamed worldwide. The topics would be of academic interest and relevance to Defence, Aerospace and Security Industry, academia and student fraternity. The details of the webinars, schedule, speakers profile, brief on the topics, and the link for participation for each session available on the DefExpo 2020 website (www.defexpo.gov.in). The webinars will be streamed live on YouTube. The DefExpo 2020 will cover the complete spectrum of the country's aerospace, defence, and homeland security interests. **Theme** The theme is India The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub and Digital Transformation of Defence. The event focuses on bringing to the forefront of digital advances in the industry and provide a platform for drivers of such transformation to come together.

**India has reduced the emissions intensity of its GDP by 21 percent**

Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change **Prakash Javadekar** said that India has reduced the emissions intensity of its GDP, that is emissions per unit of GDP, by 21% at the 25th session of Conference of Parties (COP-25) under the UN Framework Convention of Climate Change.

The country is aiming to achieve the goal of 35% emissions reduction as promised in the Paris summit in 2015. It was mentioned that the Indian government has provided 80 million LPG gas connections, effectively replacing conventional firewood cooking stoves.

**COP-25:**

The conference is being held from 2 December 2019 to 13 December 2019 at Madrid, Spain.

COP-25 concentrates on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and not digress.

The conference aims to provide a convenient action plan.

Every government shared their ideas and views to tackle the challenges of climate change.
Paris agreement:

Paris Agreement is an international agreement that was initiated with an aim to combat climate change. The governments of 195 nations were gathered in Paris, France, and discussed a possible new global agreement on climate change from 30 November to 11 December 2015. It aimed to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

The main objective of the Paris Agreement is to strengthen the ability of every country to deal with the impacts of climate change, to keep the rise of global temperature in the current century well below 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level and to pursue various efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Switzerland is to partner for 2020 BioAsia

Switzerland is to serve as a partner for BioAsia 2020 has scheduled to be held between 17-19 February 2019 in Hyderabad, Telangana. The announcement was made by Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary of the Industries and Commerce and Information Technology of Telangana. The event is being organized by the Federation of Asian Biotech Association and the Government of Telangana.

Theme:
The theme of the BioAsia 2020 is Today For Tomorrow. The focus of BioAsia is centred around innovation in the past years. The countries aimed to bring the life sciences together and drive significant developments in the life sciences industry globally.

Switzerland as a partner:

Switzerland has maintained a global reputation in an extremely specialized production location for innovative life science products. Switzerland became a partner for its strong academics in applied sciences and financially sound and research-based pharmaceutical companies.

AYUSH organized a Symposium on Scope of Science of Ayurveda in Global Health

Government organized a Symposium on Scope of Science of Ayurveda in Global Health on 11 December at New Delhi. It was organized by the Ministry of
AYUSH in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs. It is in line with the Ministry of AYUSH's commitment to promote Ayurveda and Traditional systems of Medicine globally.

**Aim:**
The symposium aimed to sensitize all the Ambassadors and High Commissioners and impart them with the information about advanced research and recent developments in Ayurveda. It is expected that these personalities play a vital role in exploring the possibilities to establish age-old Ayurveda a Traditional Medical System in different countries.

**Events:**
The event aims to achieve the propagation and recognition of Ayurveda across the globe.
The government has taken many initiatives to strengthen quality standards for AYUSH Services and ASU & H Products.
The symposium highlighted the principles of Ayurveda in the universe and created awareness regarding the potentials and efficacy of Ayurveda among the diplomats of various countries.
Ambassadors and High Commissioners were explained and familiarized with the robust Infrastructure and regulatory provisions of the Ayurveda system in the country.
Exhibition on the recent research publications were organized for the diplomats.

**Participants:**
The Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and Diplomats from various Missions of 61 countries participated in the Symposium. Delegations including Director All India Institute of Ayurveda Dr. Tanuja Nesari, Prof. Rama Jayasundar, Head Department of NMR, AIIMS, Prof. Vaidya K. S. Dhiman DG, CCRAS participated in the symposium.

**India organizes an International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems**
The International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems for BIMSTEC countries began on 11 December 2019. It will be held from 11-13 December in New Delhi. The seminar was inaugurated by Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Secretary DARE.

**Organized by:**
It is organized by the **Department of Agricultural Research & Education**, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer's Welfare and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The seminar is organized as per the announcement made by the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi at the 4th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit at Kathmandu, Nepal on 30-31st August 2019.

**Seminar highlights:**

The seminar aims to emphasize the farmers' income despite **climate change**. It aims to enhance effectiveness by adopting technological interventions. The seminar urged the farmers to adopt modern technologies in farming and agriculture in accordance with the changing climate scenario in the world. Discussions were held to maintain the nutritional quality of crops and food products.

The International Seminar will provide experience sharing to enable the improvement of tropical smallholder farming systems for greater productivity and resilience to climate change through ecological approaches. The participants will share case studies for the benefit of the BIMSTEC countries. It includes visits to state-of-art facilities and field visits to have first-hand experiences.

**Participants:**

Participants from all the Seven BIMSTEC Countries namely **Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand**, and BIMSTEC Secretariat are attending the three-day long Seminar.

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**The 37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions was held in New Delhi**

The **37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions** is being held at BPR&D Headquarters, New Delhi. The two-day symposium is held from 12-13 December 2019. The symposium is organized by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), Ministry of Home Affairs.

**Theme:**

The theme of the two-day Symposium is **Optimal Utilization of Resources Through Sharing and Networking.**

**Participants:**

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Around 200 Heads of the Training Institutions of the States, Union Territories (UTs), Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Central Police organizations (CPOs) are participating in the symposium.

**Events:**

The symposium includes discussions on topics including **Optimizing Capacity Building: Through Partnership and Collaboration**, Skill Development: the Role of Co-ordination and Networking, Understanding the Learner's Psychology, and Optimal Utilization of Resources- through Sharing and Networking.

Group Discussions and Presentation on topics like Trainer Development Programme, Police Training Policy, and Training Needs Analysis for the Indian Police will be held in the event.

Expert consultants will assist the groups for value addition and guide the discussions.

Various papers on the best practices and topics like **State of the Art Training Infrastructure- Bihar Police Academy**, Rajgir, Autonomy in Governance-Maharashtra Police Academy, and State of the Art Training Infrastructure-CAPF Academy, Khadarpur, Haryana will be presented.

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**CPWD organized a National level Business meet in New Delhi**

The **Central Public Works Department (CPWD)** organized a **Business Meet** with the Clients and stakeholders on 11 December 2019. It aimed to share and familiarize the important activities and achievements of the Department. The meeting was a part of Confidence Building Measure

**Highlights:**

The national-level meeting was held to get the views from the Clients and stakeholders about the **Services provided by CPWD**.

The meeting showcased a rejuvenated CPWD through a process of all-inclusiveness and wider consultations.

CPWD caters to the infrastructure requirement of most of the Government Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and Autonomous Bodies.

Measures to provide the best services to CPWD's esteemed Clients and Stakeholders were discussed.

Interaction with the esteemed Clients and stakeholders during the meet enhanced
the transparency and created trust of the Clients in CPWD.

**Central Public Works Department (CPWD):**

**Formed on:** 1854

**Minister responsible:** PM Narendra Modi, Hardeep Singh Puri (Minister of MoHUA)

CPWD functions under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). It deals with roads, bridges, flyovers, buildings, complex structures including stadiums, auditoriums, laboratories, bunkers, border fencing, border roads (hill roads), etc. CPWD consists of three wings namely Buildings and Roads (B&R), Electrical and Mechanical (E&M), Horticulture.

**The second 2 plus 2 dialogue between India and the US to be held on 18 December**

The second 2+2 dialogue between India and the US has been scheduled to be held on 18 December 2019 in Washington, the US. Both countries are expected to take stock of the entire range of strategic ties between the two countries. The information was announced by the Ministry of External Affairs. The Indian side will be represented by Minister of external affairs S Jaishankar and defence minister Rajnath Singh.

**First round of 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue:**

The first round of the meeting on the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue was held in New Delhi in September 2018. The dialogue focused on the need to uphold the peaceful resolution of territorial maritime disputes. It also aimed to promote market-based economics, fundamental rights, supporting good governance, and liberties and to prevent external economic coercion.

The Ministerial Dialogue was held between Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and the US Secretary of State Micheal Pompeo, Secretary of Defence James Mattis.

**India to host the 36th IGC in New Delhi**

India is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in New Delhi during the first week of March 2020. It is popularly described as the Olympics of Geosciences.
In a move to boost the IGC preparation, a half-day interactive workshop was held here on 12 December. It was inaugurated by Dr. M. Rajeevan, the Secretary, Ministry of Earth, and Anil Kumar Jain, Secretary Coal & Mines.

**Theme:**
The theme of the event is **Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Development.** The IGCs are global geoscientific events held once in four years.

**Focus:**
The event aims to provide a platform for international cooperation in all major fields of geosciences including the provision of investment opportunities in mining, launching of collaborative programs, mineral exploration and environmental management and related enterprises.

IGC will help in dealing with the problems of energy and water crisis, sustainability, environmental issues, climate change, and resource management.

A geo exposition has been planned to be held alongside the Congress. Leading companies in the mines and mineral sector will showcase their products and services in the exhibition.

**Participants:**
Around 5,000-6,000 geoscientists from all across the world are expected to participate in the event.

**India as a host:**
India is the only Asian country to host the IGC event twice. For the first time, India hosted the 22nd IGC in 1964. The event was inaugurated by the then President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The IGC is making a comeback to Indian soil after 56 long years.
**APPOINTMENTS / RESIGN**

**Anuranjita Kumar to exit from RBS Bank**

**Anuranjita Kumar**, MD & Head of HR, at the **Royal Bank Of Scotland** has announced her exit from the UK bank. Her exit comes almost two years after she joined the bank in September 2017. It is after a 22-year stint at Citibank.

**Anuranjita Kumar:**
Anuranjita Kumar joined the bank in September 2017. She led a variety of initiatives, especially in the D&I space including a medical cover for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) couples. She created an improved growth prospects for women in the technology space through the Women In Tech Forum amongst others.

She is a business management graduate from XLRI. She began her professional journey at Procter & Gamble in 1994. She joined Citibank in 1995. She worked across geographies, the US, Middle East, Africa, Europe, and South Asia before joining RBS in 2017.

**The Royal Bank Of Scotland:**
RBS was founded in 1727. It is headquartered in Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. It is owned by NatWest Holdings.

**CEO:** Alison Rose
**Chairman:** Howard Davies

**Girish Chandra Chaturvedi appointed as the new chairman of NSE**

Public Interest Director **Girish Chandra Chaturvedi** has been appointed as the **new chairman** of the leading stock exchange **National Stock Exchange (NSE)**. The appointment was approved by the markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). The position has been lying vacant after the resignation of **Ashok Chawla** as the chairman of NSE in January 2019.

**Girish Chandra Chaturvedi:**
Mr. Chaturvedi is a retired IAS officer and former Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. He completed M.Sc. from the London School of Economics, University of London, United Kingdom and M.Ss Physics from the University of Allahabad.
He held various key positions including **Special Director General of Finance & Accounts**, Organizing Committee Commonwealth Games, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, **Additional Secretary & Mission Director**, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and **Additional/Joint Secretary**, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance. He also served in various capacities at important positions in the State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

**National Stock Exchange:**
- **Founded in:** 1992
- **Location:** Mumbai, India
- **MD & CEO:** Girish Chandra Chaturvedi

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**Sri Lanka appointed as a military officer as spy chief**

Sri Lanka, a military officer, appointed as head of the country's main intelligence agency. **Brigadier Suresh Sallay**, former director of Military Intelligence appointed as head of the **State Intelligence Service (SIS)**.

It is the first time in the history of Sri Lanka that a military officer appointed as head of the SIS. His appointment comes three weeks after former defense secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa was elected president promising greater security. The three-decade civil war of the island nation against the Tamil Eelam Liberation Tigers (LTTE) during his tenure as secretary of defense. He survived an assassination attempt carried out by the LTTE with minor injuries. Brigadier Sallay's predecessor, Nilantha Jayawardana attached to the police headquarters.

Jayawardana accused by the island's suspended police chief, Pujith Jayasundara, for not taking seriously the intelligence shared by India, which warned of an imminent attack by the extremist group. The SIS did not share the information warnings with the police department initiated actions to alert its older men but had no comments from the main spy agency. The 250 people died in eight coordinated suicide bomb attacks carried out by a local jihadist group on April 21. Two days after the attacks, Jayasundara said Sirisena asked him to take responsibility for the failure to avoid the bombings and resign in exchange for a diplomatic post.
Actor Suniel Shetty is appointed as the brand ambassador for NADA

National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) appointed Bollywood actor Suniel Shetty as the brand ambassador for the agency in New Delhi. It is expected that the celebrity status will help NADA's efforts to clean up sports in the country from the menace.

NADL suspension:
In 2019, more than 150 athletes have failed dope tests. Of the 150, one-third of offenders are the bodybuilders. The National Anti-Doping Laboratory (NADL) was suspended by NADA in 2019. Because of this, dope samples collected by the National Anti-Doping Agency from the athletes will have to be tested outside India.

National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL):
NDTL is the analytical testing and research organization in India. It was established in 2008. It functions under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. This laboratory is responsible for human sports dope testing.

C. Rajaram is appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana

C. Sugandh Rajaram has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana. Rajaram is presently the Consul General, Consulate General of India to Southern Germany. He will replace Birender Singh Yadav as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana. The announcement was made by the Ministry of External Affairs.

C. Sugandh Rajaram:
Mr. Sugandh Rajaram is an IFS officer of 2001 batch. He is an electronics engineer by graduate. He began his diplomatic career at the Indian Mission, Moscow. The career diplomat served in the Indian Diplomatic Missions in Jakarta and later in New York.
He has also served at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), New Delhi. He monitored India's relations with Sri Lanka and Pakistan. He has served to Southern Germany and dealt with Media Relations & Public Diplomacy in the Foreign Office.

Vikas Swarup is appointed as the Secretary West in MEA
Senior diplomat Vikas Swarup is appointed as the Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs. The Appointments Committee (ACC) of the Cabinet has approved the appointment.

Vikas Swarup:
Swarup is a 1986 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer. As the Secretary (West), he will be responsible for India's affairs with the UK and other European nations.

Sanjay Bhattacharyya:
In another appointment, career diplomat Sanjay Bhattacharyya has been appointed Secretary of Consular, Passport, Visa and Overseas Indian Affairs. Bhattacharyya is a 1987 batch IFS officer. He is currently India's Ambassador in Turkey.

Ravi Mittal is appointed as the new Information and Broadcasting Secretary

Ravi Mittal has been appointed as the new Information and Broadcasting Secretary. He will replace Mr. Amit Khare who has been appointed as the new secretary of the Department of Higher Education. The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of Union Cabinet (ACC).

Ravi Mittal:
Ravi Mittal belongs to a 1986 batch of Bihar Cadre of Indian Administrative Service. He is currently serving as the Special Secretary in the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.

Other appointments:
Mr. Sushil Kumar has been appointed as the Mines Secretary.
Mr.Praveen Kumar is appointed as the Secretary in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
Mr. Rajesh Bhushan has been appointed as the Secretary, Department of Rural Development.

TV Somanathan is appointed as expenditure secretary in the finance ministry

The government appointed TV Somanathan as an expenditure secretary in the finance ministry. Somanathan will replace Girish Chandra Murmu, who was named the first lieutenant governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in
October.

**TV Somanathan:**

TV Somanathan is a 1987 batch IAS officer from the Tamil Nadu cadre. Somanathan served as a commercial tax commissioner and principal secretary, Planning & Development, in the Tamil Nadu government. He was awarded the Gold Medal for the Best IAS trainee of his cohort. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Calcutta University and is a chartered accountant, chartered management accountant, and chartered secretary.
**IMPORTANT DAYS**

**International Anti-Corruption Day is observed on 9 December**

**International Anti-Corruption Day** is observed on 9 December. The day aims to raise awareness about corruption and the measures that can be taken to combat corruption.

**Theme:**
The theme for the year 2019 is **United Against Corruption.** The theme was set by the UN to support the 2030 Agenda. UN conducts the #UnitedAgainstCorruption. **#UnitedAgainstCorruption:** The campaign focuses on corruption as it is one of the biggest obstacles to achieve the SDG.

**Corruption:**
*Corruption* is exercising the use of powers by government officials or their network contacts for illegitimate private gain. The form of corruption includes patronage, influence peddling, graft, bribery, nepotism, extortion, cronyism. Corruption can undermine social and economic development in all societies. Sadly, no country, region or community is immune from corruption.

UN reported that every year $1 trillion is paid in bribes. It also estimated $2.6 trillion is stolen annually through corruption. The amount that is bribed in a year is the sum equivalent to more than 5% of the global Gross domestic product (GDP). The United Nations Development Programme report stated that in developing countries the funds that are lost to corruption are estimated at 10 times the amount of official development assistance.

**History:**
On 31 October 2003, the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** adopted the United Nations Convention against Corruption. It passed a resolution and designated 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day. The day was designated to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the Convention in combating and preventing it. The Convention came into force in December 2005.

**Human Rights Day is observed on 10 December**

**Human Rights Day** is observed on 10 December every year. The day aims to recognize and empower human rights. The day includes social, economic, cultural
rights and international commitments on civil and political rights.

**Theme:**
The theme of the 2019 Human Rights Day is **Youth Standing Up for Human Rights.** The United Nations kept the theme with a belief that the participation of youth is an essential element to achieve sustainable development for everyone.

**India:**
On **28 September 1993**, Human rights law came into existence in India. The [National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)](https://www.nhrc.nic.in/) was constituted on 12 October 1993. NHRC, after its formation, made recommendations to the Government to protect the rights of ordinary citizens, children, women, elderly human rights, and people of the LGBT community in the country. The government implemented appropriate amendments in the Constitution, following several recommendations made by NHRC.

**International Mountain Day is observed on 11 December**

**International Mountain Day** is observed on **11 December**. The day aims to raise awareness about conserving the mountains. A report says that **15%** of the world's population lives in the mountains. It is necessary to conserve the mountains. Mountain conservation is a crucial factor for **sustainable development Goal 15 (SDG-15).**

**Theme:**
The theme of the 2019 International Mountain Day is **Mountains Matter for Youth.** The theme highlights the struggles faced by rural youth who lives in the mountains.

Migration from the mountains leads to land degradation, loss of ancient cultural traditions and mainly abandoned agriculture. The theme urges the youth to take the lead and demand that mountains and mountain peoples become central in the national and international development agendas.

**History:**
The initiation of the day was from the document **Managing Fragile Ecosystems:** **Sustainable Mountain Development**, called Chapter 13. The day was adopted as a part of the action plan Agenda 21 of the Conference on Environment and Development in **1992**.

The UN declared 2002 as the UN International Year of Mountains. The first
international day was celebrated for the first time in 2003.

International Day of Neutrality is observed on 12 December

International Day of Neutrality is observed on 12 December. The day aimed to promote the use of preventive diplomacy, which is the core objective of the UN. The UN conducts aimed to enhance public awareness of the value of neutrality in international relations.

History:
International Day of Neutrality was officially declared by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution adopted in February 2017. The day was first observed on 12 December 2017. The observance of the day shows that Neutrality is very important for the United Nations to gain the confidence and cooperation of all the member countries to operate independently and effectively.

Neutral country:
Any sovereign state that restrains from all participation in a war between other states and maintains an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents is referred as a neutral country. In their turn, the belligerents should recognize this abstention and impartiality.

International Universal Health Coverage Day is observed on 12 December

International Universal Health Coverage Day is observed on 12 December every year. The day is observed globally to highlight the importance of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for strong and resilient health systems. The day reminds that every person, despite who they are or where they live, should be able to get the quality health care they need without facing financial hardship.

Theme:
The theme of the International Universal Health Coverage Day is to 'Keep the promise'. The theme reminds all the governments, leaders, and organizations to support and provide health investments. It ensures to provide strong, equitable health systems to the population of the world so that no one left behind and get health care facilities.

History:
On 12 December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed the
resolution on global health and accelerate the progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC). On 25 September 2015, the UNGA passed a resolution on Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and adopted the target of UHC by 2030. The target includes financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to effective, safe, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

UHC ensures people of all groups, religion, caste, etc. to get quality health services without any financial hardships. It includes quality treatment, health services, rehabilitation, from health promotion to prevention and palliative care.

President Kovind paid tribute to Victims of 2001 Parliament Attack on 13 December

President Ram Nath Kovind and the Union Ministers paid tribute to those who lost their lives in the 2001 Parliament attack. The day marks the 18th anniversary of the attack on Indian Parliament.

2001 Parliament attack:
On 13 December 2001, five terrorists of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) attacked the Parliament complex and opened fire killing nearly nine people and injuring 16 others.

The victims included a woman Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) trooper, 5 Delhi Police personnel, two Parliament ward staff and watch, and a gardener. A journalist who was injured died later. All five terrorists were shot dead. The attack increased tensions between India and Pakistan which resulted in the 2001-2002 India-Pakistan standoff.

World Energy Conservation Day is observed on 14 December

World Energy Conservation Day is observed on 14 December. The day aims to highlight the importance of energy consumption. This Day creates a sense of urgency on the issues involved.

Aim:
The day aims to create awareness about the use, scarcity and the impact of energy conservation on the sustainability of global eco-systems. The day focuses on concentrating on significant issues that will be faced by mankind with respect to
Energy conservation:
The day raises awareness regarding the need for energy conservation, energy efficiency and frugality in energy use. The most important known sources of energy are Coal, Petroleum, Products, Nuclear energy.
Conservation of energy means avoiding unnecessary use of energy and to use at least energy in order to save the energy sources for future uses. It is the duty of every individual to include energy conservation in their behaviour and to make energy conservation plan more effective.

National Energy Conservation Day:
In India, the National Energy Conservation Day is observed on 14 December every year. The day is organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the Ministry of Power. The day aims to showcase the achievements of the country in energy efficiency and conservation. National Energy Conservation Day celebrations are held in New Delhi.

National Energy Conservation Week:
BEE observed National Energy Conservation Week from 9 to 14 December 2019, in order to drive mass awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation. National Energy Conservation Awards Programme was conferred to the winners by BEE on the day. The Ministry of Power (MoP) organized programmes to sensitize the school children towards Energy Efficiency and Energy.
AGREEMENTS MOU

NSIC, Aramco Asia signs MoU for the development of Ministry of MSME

A Memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Aramco Asia. The MoU was signed by Sh. P. Udayakumar, Director (P&M) from NSIC and Mr. Mohammed Al Mughirah, President, Aramco Asia.

MoU highlight:
The MoU is aimed for the development of Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Ecosystem in India in Oil & Gas Sector.
The MoU will pave a way for accredited Indian MSMEs to carve out a space as vendors in the Global space.

NSIC:
Founded on: 1955
Headquarters: New Delhi, India
Chairman & MD: Vijayendra
NSIC functions under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. NSCI acts as the nodal agency for various schemes of Ministry of MSME including Single Point Registration, Performance and Credit Rating, National SC-ST Hub, MSME Databank, etc.

ICAR signed MoU with NABARD for sustainable agriculture

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Board of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on 13 December to promote sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient farming systems. The MoU was signed by Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Secretary (DARE) & Director General (ICAR) and Shri Harsh Kumar Bhanwala, Chairman, NABARD.

MoU highlights:
The MoU aims to facilitate the action research that is carried out with the active participation of farmers to provide solutions for the challenges.
It also facilitates the up-scaling of various technologies and innovative farmer models that are developed by the ICAR including the climate-resilient practices,
models and integrated and hi-tech farming practices in a participatory model through adoptive research on watershed platforms.

Under the MoU, the ICAR will support training and capacity building of channel partners and NABARD Officers.

The initiative is expected to strengthen the competence of channel partners under the promotional and developmental programmes of NABARD technology transfer under the climate-resilient agriculture, contingency and adaptation planning.

The ICAR will help in the impact evaluation of the NABARD assisted projects, Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) preparation for the climate change projects, farm mechanization, Agri-Incubation Centres and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and resource conservation, etc.

DELL partners will UNESCO to adopt technology in classrooms

Dell Technologies has signed an agreement with UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace (MGIEP) to enable school teachers to adopt technology in classrooms by using Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools.

The ICT tools were developed by Dell Aarambh and FramerSpace platforms.

MoU provisions:

Dell Aarambh aims to provide a springboard for teachers in information and communications technology. It will be spread over three phases, with the first in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

FramerSpace which will help teachers with rich content creation abilities coupled with analytical insight to improve the quality of education will be provided by Dell Aarambh. FramerSpace is an artificial intelligence (AI)-based digital platform.

The training aims on teaching the teachers the use of ICT and frontier technologies to achieve quality education. It is on line with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SGD 4) by the member-states of the United Nations.

India, Indonesia resolve to strengthen cooperation in several areas

India and Indonesia have joined together to strengthen cooperation in areas of defence and security, connectivity and trade. It happened during talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Indonesian counterpart Retno
Marsudi in New Delhi. Retno Marsudi is on her visit to India.

**Highlights:**

Both the countries reviewed the entire range of ties at the 6th India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting (JCM).

During the meeting, India and Indonesia reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen bilateral ties in the areas including people-to-people exchanges.

India and Indonesia called for greater synergy in the region, guided by the shared vision on maritime cooperation. The two countries are the key partners in the Indo-Pacific.

**India and Maldives exchange agreements for cooperation between the countries**

India and Maldives exchanged Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) on 13 December 2019. It was exchanged during the Maldivian FM's visit to India. FM Abdulla Shahid is on a five-day visit to India.

**Highlights:**

India and Maldives signed three agreements and MoUs including an Exchange of Instrument of Ratification for the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

It was decided and signed at the 6th India-Maldives Joint Commission Meeting. The meeting was by Maldivian Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid attended among others.

The MoUs included cooperation between the Election Commissions of India and the Maldives.
India ranked 5th in the Global Climate Risk Index

India ranked 5th in the 15th edition of the Global Climate Risk Index 2020. It was released by Bonn-based think-tank Germanwatch. Japan topped the list as the most vulnerable of 181 countries to the effects of climate change, with its poorest being the most at risk. The report released at the 25th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) where 197 countries around the world meet at Spain's capital, Madrid participating.

Report highlights:
The Global Climate Risk Index was prepared on an analysis of worldwide data on extreme weather events. The report on the weather events was provided by German reinsurer MunichRe's NatCatSERVICE, a comprehensive database of natural catastrophes.

The index does not consider the slower processes of glacier melting and rising sea levels, or more acidic and warmer seas due to climate change.

India:
In 2017, India ranked 14th and in 2018 India ranked 5th because of the weather events.

The report highlighted that 2,081 deaths that happened in 2018 are due to extreme weather events caused by climate change like heavy rainfall, floods, cyclones, landslides among others.

In 2018, the yearly monsoon season, which lasted from June to September, severely affected India. Kerala was severely affected. Around 324 people died because of landslides that were set off by the flooding. Around 2,20,000 people had to leave their homes, 20,000 houses and 80 dams were destroyed. The damage amounted to Rs.20,000 crore.

India's east coast was hit by two cyclones namely Titli and Gaja, in October and November 2018, respectively.

India also suffered from severe heatwaves with temperatures rising to 48 degrees Celsius. It resulted in hundreds of deaths.

The Global Climate Risk Index study and analyses the extent to which the countries have been affected by the impacts of weather-related loss events like storms, floods, heatwaves, etc.
**The top 10 countries in the list are:**
- Japan
- Philippines
- Germany
- Madagascar
- India
- Sri Lanka
- Kenya
- Rwanda
- Canada
- Fiji

**Germanwatch:**
Germanwatch was established in **1992**. It is located in **Bonn, Germany**. The organization preserves the livelihood and promotes North-South equity. It aims to represent a strong lobby for sustainable development.

**India ranked 129 in the Human Development Index**

India ranked **129** in the Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2018. The index was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report said that India has improved marginally by a notch.

**Report highlights:**
- UNDP warned about the **inequalities** that India might have to struggle with. The report said that the group-based inequalities persist in India, especially affecting women and girls.
- It stated that more Indians showed biases in gender social norms, indicating a backlash to women's empowerment.
- The overall index showed that India scored **0.647** in 2018, as against **0.643** in 2017. The score is calculated in the range of 1 to 0.
- Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: inequalities in human development in the 21st century report stated that 271 million Indians were lifted out of poverty from 2005-06 to 2015-16.

**HDI:**
- HDI is a statistical tool that is used to measure the overall achievement of the country in its social and economic dimensions as it is based on the health of people,
the level of education attained and the standard of living. It emphasizes people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria to assess the development of a country, not the economic growth alone.

**India has ranked 9th in the 2019 Climate Change Performance Index**

India has ranked 9th in the high category of 2019 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) presented on 10 December at the COP25 climate summit in Madrid, Spain. This is the first time India has ranked among the top 10 among the list.

**Report highlights:**
- The current levels of per capita emissions and energy used in India are still comparatively low for the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy use categories.
- The report suggest the Indian government to develop a roadmap for the phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies that would consequently reduce the country's high dependence on coal.
- India received an overall medium rating in the renewable energy category.
- India's 2030 renewable energy target has been rated very high for its well-below 2 degrees Celsius compatibility.
- National experts have recommended the government for strong policies to support the expansion of renewable energy.
- The first three places of the ranking remain unoccupied as none of the countries assessed is already on a path compatible with the Paris climate targets.
- Sweden ranked 4th and Denmark ranked 5th among the list. These countries achieved the overall high or very high ratings, the performance of EU countries varied largely.
FESTIVALS

EEPC celebrates 50th year of Engineering Exports Awards

Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Minister of State Independent Charge of Civil Aviation and Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri, gave away the Engineering Export Promotion Awards (EEPC) for the year 2017-2018 at a function in New Delhi. The next year India's engineering exports will reach the target of USD 1 trillion.

EEPC celebrates and completes 50 years of rewarding exporters, and 111 winners were given national awards for 2017-18 across eight categories in over 32 product panels. The Quality Control of India (QCI) invited to evaluate EEPC member companies, and EEPC India-QCI Quality awards were given away to 7 winners.

EEPC for completing 50 years of rewarding exporters and also complemented 111 winners who received national awards. The engineering sector, which employs 40 lakh workers to get with global engineering standards and adopt new technology to upgrade their core efficiency and improve their competency and achieve cost competitiveness. The fifty-five percent of EEPC members are MSMEs electronic refund module and an online filing and issuance of preferential certificate of origin.

A web portal of industrial schemes of different Ministries of the Government of India is also available to the engineering industries, and the NIRVIK scheme announced to ensure enhanced loan availability for exporters.

The exporters to tap emerging markets like Africa, the CIS countries, countries of Latin America and the GCC, and Mexico and thereby ensure that by 2025 India's engineering exports will reach a target of USD 200 billion.

National Tribal Dance Festival to begin in Raipur from 27 December

A three-day National Tribal Dance Festival will be held in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The festival is to be held on 27-29 December 2019.

Events:

The National Tribal Dance event will be organized at the Science College Ground from 10 am to 8:30 pm.

During the event, artists from various states and the countries will march past in their traditional attires.
Nearly 1,400 artists of 151 art troupes from 23 states and guest artists from 6 countries will participate in the three-day programme.

Odisha CM Bhupesh Baghel reviewed the preparations for the National Tribal Dance Festival. He also directed the concerned officials to ensure proper arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the artists, participants, and guests as well as the audience.

**Participants:**

International folk artists from 23 states and 6 other countries including Bangladesh, Belarus, Sri Lanka, and Uganda are expected to participate and portray their respective tribal folk culture at the festival.
1) Who was crowned as the 2019 Miss Universe?

A. Madison Anderson  
B. Zozibini Tunzi  
C. Sofia Aragon  
D. Catriona Gray

**Answer B**

**Explanation** South Africa's Zozibini Tunzi was crowned as the Miss Universe 2019. Zozibini and Miss Universe Puerto Rico Madison Anderson were the top two contestants for the 2019 Miss Universe title.

2) Which river has become one of 10 cleanest rivers in the world?

A. Yamuna  
B. Brahmaputra  
C. Ganga  
D. Indus

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Minister of Jalshakti said that Ganga has become one of 10 cleanest rivers in the world among the major rivers category. The announcement was made by the Jalshakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat at the 4th India Water Impact Summit, 2019 in New Delhi.

3) When is the International Anti-Corruption Day observed?

A. 31 November  
B. 2 December  
C. 9 December  
D. 12 December

**Answer C**

**Explanation** International Anti-Corruption Day is observed on 9 December. The day aims to
raise awareness about corruption and the measures that can be taken to combat corruption.

4) Who was crowned as the Miss Universe in 2018?

A. Catriona Gray  
B. Pia Wurtzbach  
C. Gazini Ganados  
D. Megan Young

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Catriona Elisa Magnayon Gray is a Filipino-Australian model, singer, visual artist, and beauty queen who was crowned Miss Universe 2018. She is the fourth Filipina to win the Miss Universe competition. Previously, Gray was crowned Miss Universe Philippines 2018 and Miss World Philippines 2016.

5) India ranked ________ in the Global Climate Risk Index 2020.

A. 32nd  
B. 24th  
C. 16th  
D. 5th

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Indian ranked 5th in the 15th edition of the Global Climate Risk Index 2020. It was released by Bonn-based think-tank Germanwatch.


A. 4th  
B. 6th  
C. 8th  
D. 10th

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Minister of Jalshakti said that Ganga has become one of 10 cleanest rivers in the world among the major rivers category. The announcement was made by the Jalshakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat at the 4th India Water Impact Summit, 2019 in New Delhi.
7) Who released the Global Climate Risk Index 2020?

A. Germanwatch  
B. Frenchwatch  
C. Climate Watch  
D. Fatih Birol

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The Global Climate Risk Index 2020 was released by Germanwatch. Germanwatch was established in 1992. It is located in Bonn, Germany. The organization preserves the livelihood and promotes North-South equity. It aims to represent a strong lobby for sustainable development.

8) Who is elected as the Prime Minister of Finland?

A. Antti Lindtman  
B. Sauli Niinisto  
C. Sanna Marin  
D. Antti Rinne

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Sanna Marin has been elected as the Prime Minister of Finland. She became the world's youngest Prime Minister ever. She also became the third female government leader of the country.

9) When was the Miss Universe pageant formed?

A. 1952  
B. 1963  
C. 1934  
D. 1975

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Miss Universe beauty pageant is held every year. It was formed on 28 June 1952. It is run by Miss Universe Organization.
10) After appointment, who will be the world's youngest Prime Minister?

A. Mari Kiviniemi  
B. Elisabeth Rehn  
C. Maria Guzenina  
D. Sanna Marin

**Answer D**

**Explanation**  Sanna Marin has been elected as the Prime Minister of Finland. She became the world's youngest Prime Minister ever. She also became the third female government leader of the country.

11) The theme of the Exercise Hand-in-hand 2019 is __________.

A. Maritime Security  
B. Counter-terrorism  
C. White Shipping Information and Safe Data  
D. Data Security

**Answer B**

**Explanation**  The theme of the Exercise Hand-in-hand 2019 is Counter-terrorism. Under the theme, both the countries will practice joint planning and conduct of counter-terrorist operations in semi-urban terrain.

12) What is the currency of Finland?

A. Finnish pounds  
B. Finnish rupees  
C. Finnish rial  
D. Finnish euro

**Answer D**

**Explanation**  The Finnish Markka was replaced in 2002 with the euro, making Finland the only Nordic country to join the European single currency. The Markka is now out of circulation and the Euro is the only form of legal tender in Finland.

13) Where is the Sohae Satellite Launching Station located?
A. Japan  
B. N. Korea  
C. S. Korea  
D. China

**Answer B**

**Explanation** North Korea carried out a very important test at its long-range rocket launch site, Sohae Satellite Launching Station, on 8 December. North Korea stated that the result of the latest test will have an important effect on changing the strategic position of North Korea.

14) ________, the MD & Head of HR at The Royal Bank Of Scotland announced her/his exit from the position.

A. Usha Sangwan  
B. Anuranjita Kumar  
C. Shikha Sharma  
D. Chanda Kochhar

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Anuranjita Kumar has left her seat as the managing director and head-HR, international hubs, Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS).

15) Where was the Human Library event held?

A. Bengaluru  
B. Hyderabad  
C. Mysuru  
D. Delhi

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Karnataka conducted a Human Library event in Mysuru on 8 December 2019. Human Library is spread across various metropolitan cities including Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru in India.

16) When was the Royal Bank Of Scotland established?
A.1727  
B.1796  
C.1818  
D.1857

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The Royal Bank Of Scotland was founded in 1727. It is headquartered in Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. It is owned by NatWest Holdings.

17) When was the Human Library movement first started?

A.1990  
B.1995  
C.2000  
D.2004

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Human Library is a concept that replace books with humans to address people's prejudices by helping them to talk to those they would not normally meet. The international movement was first started in 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

18) Where is the headquarters of Royal Bank Of Scotland located?

A.Edinburgh  
B.Glasgow  
C.Livingston  
D.Dunblane

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Royal Bank Of Scotland was founded in 1727. It is headquartered in Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. It is owned by NatWest Holdings.

19) Where was the first Human Library event held?

A.Copenhagen, Denmark  
B.Roskilde, Denmark  
C.Odense, Denmark
D. Vejle, Denmark

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The Human Library is a concept that replace books with humans to address people's prejudices by helping them to talk to those they would not normally meet. The international movement was first started in 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The first event was held at Roskilde Festival in Roskilde, Denmark.

20) **Which countries student is to travel to India to launch Duchifat 3, a satellite?**

A. Russian  
B. Japanese  
C. Israeli  
D. Chinese

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Three youngsters, Alon Abramovich, Meitav Assulin and Shmuel Aviv Levi, from an Israeli school, will travel to India to launch a satellite, Duchifat 3. The three 17 to 18 years old are the students of Sha'ar HaNegev High school in Israel's southern region.

21) **Where was the first permanent Human Library located?**

A. London, England  
B. Roskilde, Denmark  
C. Atlanta, US  
D. Lismore, Australia

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The international Human Library movement was first started in 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The first event was held at Roskilde Festival in Roskilde, Denmark. The first permanent Human Library was established in 2006 in Lismore, Australia. The organization is active in around 70 countries.

22) **Where was the India-Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations held?**

A. Yangon
Babo
C. New Delhi
D. Hyderabad

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The 18th India- Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 6 December 2019. The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary, Shri Vijay Gokhale, and the Myanmar delegation was led by Permanent Secretary, U Soe Han.

**23) Which Ministry conducted a massive campaign against single-use plastic?**

A. Ministry of Defence  
B. Ministry of Jal Shakti  
C. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
D. Central Pollution Control Board

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Ministry of Defence (MoD) organized a special plogging awareness drive rally in Delhi Cantt as part of Swachhta Pakhwada. The massive campaign against single-use plastic was flagged off by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on 7 December 2019.

**24) The ________ India-Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations was held on 6 December 2019.**

A. 12th  
B. 25th  
C. 10th  
D. 18th

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The 18th India-Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 6 December 2019. The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary, Shri Vijay Gokhale, and the Myanmar delegation was led by Permanent Secretary, U Soe Han.

**25) Which country topped the Global Climate Risk Index 2020?**

A. Philippines
B. Germany  
C. Japan  
D. Madagascar

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Japan topped the Global Climate Risk Index 2020 as the most vulnerable of 181 countries to the effects of climate change, with its poorest being the most at risk.

26) **When is the Human Rights Day observed?**

A. 14 July  
B. 21 September  
C. 12 November  
D. 10 December

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Human Rights Day is observed on 10 December every year. The day aims to recognize and empower human rights. The day includes social, economic, cultural rights and international commitments on civil and political rights.

27) **Where is the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA) held?**

A. Doha, Qatar  
B. Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
C. Muscat, Oman  
D. Manama, Bahrain

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Abu Dhabi is selected as the world's leading Sports tourism Destination for the seventh consecutive time. The decision was made at the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA) that is being held in Muscat, Oman.

28) **What is the theme of the 2019 Human Rights Day?**

A. Let's stand up for equality, justice, and human dignity  
B. Youth Standing Up for Human Rights  
C. Our Rights. Our Freedoms.
D. Stand up for someone's rights today

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The theme of the 2019 Human Rights Day is Youth Standing Up for Human Rights. The United Nations kept the theme with a belief that the participation of youth is an essential element to achieve sustainable development for everyone.

**29) Which city is selected as the world's leading Sports tourism Destination for the seventh consecutive time?**

A. Abu Dhabi  
B. Melbourne  
C. New York  
D. London

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Abu Dhabi is selected as the world's leading Sports tourism Destination for the seventh consecutive time. The decision was made at the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards (WTA) that is being held in Muscat, Oman.

**30) When was the World Travel Awards (WTA) established?**

A. 1993  
B. 1997  
C. 2000  
D. 2004

**Answer A**

**Explanation** World Travel Awards (WTA) was established in 1993. WTA acknowledges and rewards excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries. The winners of the award are selected by an international jury of hospitality experts, mainly from the World Travel and Tourism Council.

**31) When did Human rights law came into existence in India?**

A. 1950  
B. 1967
C.1988  
D.1993  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Human rights law came into existence in India from September 28, 1993. This Commission has made its recommendations to the Government to protect the rights of ordinary citizens, children, women, elderly human rights, and people of the LGBT community in the country.

32) **Malaysia was declared polio-free in _________.**  
A.1993  
B.2000  
C.2003  
D.2006  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Malaysia reported the first polio case in 27 years. The health authorities reported that a three-month-old Malaysian infant has been diagnosed with polio. This is the first case reported in the Asia-Pacific country in 27 years. Malaysia was declared polio-free in 2000.

33) **When was the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) constituted?**  
A.1985  
B.1988  
C.1991  
D.1993  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** On 28 September 1993, Human rights law came into existence in India. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was constituted on 12 October 1993. NHRC, after its formation, made recommendations to the Government to protect the rights of ordinary citizens, children, women, elderly human rights, and people of the LGBT community in the country.

34) **Which country reported the first polio case in 27 years (December 2019)?**  
A.Maldives
B. Sri Lanka
C. Malaysia
D. Pakistan

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Malaysia reported the first polio case in 27 years. The health authorities reported that a three-month-old Malaysian infant has been diagnosed with polio. This is the first case reported in the Asia-Pacific country in 27 years.

35) When was World Anti-Doping Agency established?

A. 1985
B. 1992
C. 1999
D. 2004

**Answer C**

**Explanation** World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established on 10 November 1999 by the International Olympic Committee. The aim of WADA is to cooperate, promote, monitor the fight against drugs in sports.

36) Where is the headquarters of the World Anti-Doping Agency located?

A. London
B. Montreal
C. Madrid
D. Melbourne

**Answer B**

**Explanation** World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established on 10 November 1999 by the International Olympic Committee. It is headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

37) World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) banned _______ for a four-year term from all major sporting events on December 2019.

A. Russia
B. China
C. Japan
d. Sweden

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) banned Russia for a four-year term from all major sporting events. The decision was made at Wada's executive committee in a meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland.

38) Who is appointed as the new chairman of the National Stock Exchange (NSE)?

A. Rajiv Varma  
B. Karan Singh  
C. Girish Chandra Chaturvedi  
D. Armstrong Pame

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Public Interest Director Girish Chandra Chaturvedi has been appointed as the new chairman of the leading stock exchange National Stock Exchange (NSE). The appointment was approved by the markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). The position has been lying vacant after the resignation of Ashok Chawla as the chairman of NSE in January 2019.

39) Where was the 2019 Wada's executive committee held?

A. Abu Dhabi, the UAE  
B. Melbourne, Australia  
C. Vienna, Austria  
D. Lausanne, Switzerland

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The 2019 Wada's executive committee meeting was held in Lausanne, Switzerland.

40) When was the National Stock Exchange (NSE) established?

A. 1985  
B. 1987
C.1992
D.1995

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The National Stock Exchange (NSE) was established in 1992.

41) **WADA is an independent agency working towards eradicating the improper use of drugs in sport. What does WADA stand for?**

A. World Anti-Doping Agency
B. World Anti-Drug Agency
C. World Anti-Doping Association
D. World Anti-Drug Authority

**Answer A**

**Explanation** WADA stands for World Anti-Doping Agency. World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was initiated by the International Olympic Committee. The aim of WADA is to cooperate, promote, monitor the fight against drugs in sports.

42) **India ranked _______ in the Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2018.**

A. 113
B. 129
C. 143
D. 152

**Answer B**

**Explanation** India ranked 129 in the Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2018. The index was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report said that India has improved marginally by a notch.

43) **National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) signed MoU with ________ for the development of Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Ecosystem in India in Oil & Gas Sector.**

A. ONGC
B. Reliance  
C. TATA  
D. Aramco Asia  

Answer D  

Explanation A Memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Aramco Asia. The MoU was signed by Sh. P. Udayakumar, Director (P&M) from NSIC and Mr. Mohammed Al Mughirah, President, Aramco Asia.  

44) Who released the Human Development Index (HDI)?  
A. UNDP  
B. WHO  
C. World Health Watchdog  
D. International Health Care Institute of Australia  

Answer A  

Explanation Human Development Index (HDI) was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). HDI is a statistical tool that is used to measure the overall achievement of the country in its social and economic dimensions as it is based on the health of people, the level of education attained and the standard of living.  

45) The second phase of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Scientific International Research In Unique Terrestrial Station (SIRIUS) Deep Technology Learning and Innovation Programme 2019 culminated. Which Country's programme is SIRIUS?  
A. The US  
B. China  
C. Russia  
D. Japan  

Answer C  

Explanation The second phase of NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Russia's Scientific International Research In Unique Terrestrial Station (SIRIUS) Deep Technology Learning and Innovation Programme 2019 culminated as the 25 Indian students returned with best practices of contemporary innovation and entrepreneurship.
46) Which country obtained 129th position at Human Development Index?

A. Pakistan  
B. India  
C. Saudi Arabia  
D. Iran  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** India obtained 129th position at Human Development Index which is officially released at United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

47) Which network launched Wi-Fi calling service in Delhi-NCR?

A. BSNL  
B. Reliance Jio  
C. Vodafone  
D. Airtel  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Airtel launched Wi-Fi calling service in Delhi-NCR. This service is presently compatible with Airtel Xstream Fiber home broadband and will soon be compatible with all broadband services and Wi-Fi hotspots.

48) Where is the headquarters of National Small Industries Corporation located?

A. Chennai  
B. New Delhi  
C. Mumbai  
D. Hyderabad  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The headquarters of National Small Industries Corporation is New Delhi.

49) How many sites in the country is marked for development as Iconic Tourist Sites by Ministry of Tourism?
A.19
B.17
C.18
D.24

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Ministry of Tourism identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites.

50) _________ Report said that nearly half of the professional degree holders are employable now.

A. India Employability Report
B. India Skills Report
C. India Working Group Report
D. Indian Corporate ranking Report

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The India Skills Report said that nearly half of the professional degree holders are employable now. The report was released by Wheebox, People Strong, CII.

51) **When did the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) suspend National Anti-Doping Laboratory (NADL)?**

A. 2015
B. 2016
C. 2018
D. 2019

**Answer D**

**Explanation** In 2019, more than 150 athletes have failed dope tests. Of the 150, one-third of offenders are the bodybuilders. The National Anti-Doping Laboratory (NADL) was suspended by NADA in 2019. Because of this, dope samples collected by the National Anti-Doping Agency from the athletes will have to be tested outside India.

52) As per the report submitted at the 25th session of Conference of Parties
(COP-25), how much has India reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP in 2019?

A. 18%
B. 21%
C. 33.9%
D. 47%

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar said that India has reduced the emissions intensity of its GDP, that is emissions per unit of GDP, by 21% at the 25th session of Conference of Parties (COP-25) under the UN Framework Convention of Climate Change.

53) When was the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) established?

A. 1992
B. 1996
C. 2002
D. 2008

**Answer D**

**Explanation** NDTL is the analytical testing and research organization in India. It was established in 2008. It functions under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. This laboratory is responsible for human sports dope testing.

54) Who prepared the India Skills Report?

A. Wheebox
B. People Strong
C. CII
D. All the above

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The India Skills Report said that nearly half of the professional degree holders are employable now. The report was released by Wheebox, People Strong, CII.
55) Who won the Right Livelihood Award for the year 2019?

A. Aminatou Haidar  
B. Guo Juanmei  
C. Davi Kopenawa Yanomami  
D. All the above

Answer D

Explanation Four people won the Right Livelihood Award for the year 2019. The awardees are Greta Thunberg, Aminatou Haidar, Guo Juanmei and Davi Kopenawa Yanomami.

56) How many fast-track special courts (FTSC) is to be established by the Odisha state government in the state?

A. 21  
B. 45  
C. 67  
D. 82

Answer B

Explanation The Odisha State government has planned to set up 45 fast-track special courts (FTSC) in the State. It aims to ensure speedy trial of cases involving crime against women and children. The announcement was made by the State law minister Pratap Jena.

57) Which of the young activist won the Right Livelihood Award for the year 2019?

A. Emma Gonzalez  
B. Malala Yousafzai  
C. Greta Thunberg  
D. Yara Shahidi

Answer C

Explanation Greta Thunberg won the Right Livelihood Award for the year 2019. The award aims to honour Greta Thunberg for her fight against climate change.
58) How much did the Centre approve under the 7th Pay Commission?

A. Rs.2,500 crore  
B. Rs.3,200 crore  
C. Rs.4,800 crore  
D. Rs.5,200 crore  

Answer C

Explanation The Centre approved allowances worth Rs.4,800 crore for 4.5 lakh of its employees in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh under the 7th Pay Commission.

59) When was the Right Livelihood Award established?

A. 1965  
B. 1974  
C. 1980  
D. 1985  

Answer C

Explanation The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980. It was instituted by German-Swedish writer Jakob von Uexkull. The award is widely known as the alternative Nobel Prize.

60) Which State is to set up fast-track special courts (FTSC)?

A. Odisha  
B. Tamil Nadu  
C. Karnataka  
D. Bihar  

Answer A

Explanation The Odisha State government has planned to set up 45 fast-track special courts (FTSC) in the State. It aims to ensure speedy trial of cases involving crime against women and children. The announcement was made by the State law minister Pratap Jena.

61) Which of the following award is known as the alternative Nobel Prize?

A. The BAFTA Awards
A. 2nd
B. 4th
C. 6th
D. 8th

Answer B

Explanation The fourth edition of the International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems NAVARMS-19 is to be held on 12-13 December 2019. The conclave is organized by the Ministry of Defence at Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Development Enclave, New Delhi.

63) Who became the first player in Indian cricket to feature in 150 Ranji matches?
A. K.L. Rahul
B. Wasim Jaffer
C. Jasprit Bumrah
D. Wriddhiman Saha

Answer B

Explanation Wasim Jaffer, the former India opener, became the first player in Indian cricket to feature in 150 Ranji matches.

64) Which of the following Russian Ship/s have arrived on 10 December to participate in the exercise INDRA 2019?
A. Yaroslav Mudry  
B. Viktor Konetsky  
C. Elyna  
D. All the above

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Russian Federation Navy (RuFN) Ships namely Yaroslav Mudry, Viktor Konetsky, and Elyna, have arrived in Goa to participate in the second edition of a tri-services exercise INDRA 2019. The exercise was held between the armed forces of India and Russia.

65) How many fast-track special courts (FTSC) did the Centre propose to set up in India?

A. 685  
B. 900  
C. 1023  
D. 1112

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Centre has proposed to set up 1023 fast-track special courts (FTSC) for speedy trial and disposal of rape and other sexual assault cases in 2019.

66) Exercise Iron Union 12 is held between __________.

A. India, US  
B. India, Russia  
C. Russia, Afghanistan  
D. UAE, US

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Exercise Iron Union 12 commenced on 10 December 2019. It is a joint military exercise between the ground forces of the UAE and the United States. The exercise was commenced in the presence of Lieutenant General Terry Ferrell, commander of US Army Central, USARCENT and Major General Saleh Mohamed Saleh Al Amiri, UAE Commander of Land Forces.

67) Where was the International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon
Systems conclave held?

A. Beijing  
B. New Delhi  
C. Bangkok  
D. Hanoi

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The fourth edition of the International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems NAVARMS-19 is to be held on 12-13 December 2019. The conclave is organized by the Ministry of Defence at Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Development Enclave, New Delhi.

68) Which of the following state is to set up 218 fast track special courts in the state?

A. Telangana  
B. Maharashtra  
C. Uttar Pradesh  
D. Kerala

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Uttar Pradesh cabinet has approved a proposal to set up 218 fast track courts in the state.

69) What is the theme of the 2019 NAVARMS conclave?

A. Make in India - Fight Category: Opportunities and Imperatives  
B. Centrality of Sea Power to Global Politics  
C. Security and Growth for All in the Region  
D. Role of Sea Power in Shaping of Nations

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The theme of the two-day event is Make in India - Fight Category: Opportunities and Imperatives. The seminar aims to create awareness and identify the emerging prospects for the National and International defence industry in the domain of Naval Weapon Systems.
70) Who is the Foreign Minister of Maldives?
A. Faisal Naseem  
B. Abdulla Shahid  
C. Mohamed Jameel Ahmed  
D. Mohammed Waheed Deen  

Answer B  

Explanation Abdulla Shahid is the current Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Maldives as of the 2018 election. He served as the Speaker of the Peoples Majlis of the Maldives from 2009 to 2014.

71) Who organized the NAVARMS-19?
A. Ministry of Defence  
B. Ministry of External Affairs  
C. NITI Aayog  
D. Ministry of AYUSH  

Answer A  

Explanation The fourth edition of the International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems NAVARMS-19 is to be held on 12-13 December 2019. The conclave is organized by the Ministry of Defence at Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Development Enclave, New Delhi.

72) India ranked _________ in the 2019 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI).
A. 6th  
B. 7th  
C. 8th  
D. 9th  

Answer D  

Explanation India has ranked 9th in the high category of 2019 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) presented on 10 December at the COP25 climate summit in Madrid, Spain. This is the first time India has ranked among the top 10 among the list.
73) When was the first edition of the NAVARMS organized?

A.2002
B.2004
C.2007
D.2010

Answer C

Explanation The first edition of the International Seminar cum Exhibition on Naval Weapon Systems was organized in 2007. The second and third was organized in 2010 and 2013 respectively.

74) How many place/s of the ranking remain unoccupied as none of the countries assessed is already on a path compatible with the Paris climate targets?

A.First
B.First two
C.First three
D.First five

Answer C

Explanation The first three places of the ranking remain unoccupied as none of the countries assessed is already on a path compatible with the Paris climate targets.

75) Which Bill aims to promote the safety and security of India's maritime trade, and the safety of the crew member?

A.Maritime Piracy Bill 2018
B.Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill 2018
C.Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill 2019
D.Oversea Security Bill 2019

Answer C

Explanation External affairs minister S. Jaishankar introduced the Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill 2019 at Lok Sabha. The bill seeks to provide for stringent punishment, including death penalty or life imprisonment, to those involved in piracy at sea.
76) When was the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) signed?

A. 1978  
B. 1982  
C. 1986  
D. 1993

**Answer B**

**Explanation** UNCLOS was signed on 10 December 1982 at Montego Bay, Jamaica. It is the result of the third edition of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) international agreement.

77) Which portal that was launched by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism showcases the information about the rich cultural heritage of India?

A. Indian Culture web portal  
B. Culture and Tourism web portal  
C. Data Tour web portal  
D. Culture and Tourism data web portal

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Ministry of Culture launched the Indian Culture web portal in New Delhi. It was launched by the State for Culture and Tourism (IC), Shri Prahlad Singh Patel. The knowledge and cultural resources of various organizations of the Ministry of Culture are now available in the public domain on a single platform. It will showcase information about the rich cultural heritage of India.


A. 1978  
B. 1982  
C. 1986  
D. 1994

**Answer D**

**79) Who won the Asom Natya Sanmilan Award-2019?**

A. Parag Sarma  
B. Ajit Borthakur  
C. Bina Patangia  
D. All the above  

**Answer D**

Explanation The Asom Natya Sanmilan has announced the annual awards of Asom Natya Sanmilan Award-2019. The Mahendra Borthakur Award will be presented to senior actor and professor Parag Sarma. Other awards are given to actor Pabin Sarma of Nalbari, playwright and director Ajit Borthakur of Sipajhar, playwright Pankaj Jyoti Bhuyan of Sootea, actress Bina Patangia of Tezpur, critic Atul Mazumdar of Guwahati, playwright Nitul Medhi of Pathsala and playwright Ganesh Das of Tezpur.

**80) When did India ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)?**

A. 1994  
B. 1995  
C. 1997  
D. 1999  

**Answer B**

Explanation UNCLOS was signed on 10 December 1982 at Montego Bay, Jamaica. It is the result of the third edition of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) international agreement. It happened between the year 1973 and 1982. India had ratified the UNCLOS in 1995.

**81) Which country topped the 2019 South Asian Games championship?**

A. Nepal
82) Which Ethiopian Prime Minister received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019 for the peace category?

A. Hailemariam Desalegn  
B. Abiy Ahmed Ali  
C. Hailemariam Desalegn  
D. Meles Zenawi  

Answer B  

Explanation Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali received the Nobel Peace Prize on 10 December 2019 at Oslo's City Hall. The Norwegian Nobel Committee conferred the 100th Nobel Peace Prize to the Prime Minister in the presence of the Norwegian royal family.

83) What is the image tally of India in the 13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal?

A. 129  
B. 143  
C. 153  
D. 174  

Answer D  

Explanation The 13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal on 10 December 2019. India topped the championship with a medal tally of 312 medals, of which 174 gold, 93 silver, and 45 bronze. It was followed by Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan.

84) Abiy Ahmed was awarded for his extraordinary efforts to end the decades-long conflict with neighbouring _________.

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Answer C  

Explanation The 13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal on 10 December 2019. India topped the championship with a medal tally of 312 medals, of which 174 gold, 93 silver, and 45 bronze.

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Answer C  

Explanation The 13th South Asian Games concluded in Nepal on 10 December 2019. India topped the championship with a medal tally of 312 medals, of which 174 gold, 93 silver, and 45 bronze. It was followed by Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan.
A. Djibouti  
B. Somalia  
C. Sudan  
D. Eritrea

Answer D  

Explanation  Abiy Ahmed was awarded for his extraordinary efforts to end the decades-long conflict with neighbouring Eritrea.

85) Which country is to partner for BioAsia 2020?  
A. Sweden  
B. Switzerland  
C. Russia  
D. China

Answer B  

Explanation  Switzerland is to serve as a partner for BioAsia 2020 has scheduled to be held between 17-19 February 2019 in Hyderabad, Telangana. The announcement was made by Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary of the Industries and Commerce and Information Technology of Telangana.

86) Ethiopian Prime Minister Nobel Peace Prize received the ________ Nobel Peace Prize.  
A. 75th  
B. 100th  
C. 125th  
D. 150th

Answer B  

Explanation  Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali received the Nobel Peace Prize on 10 December 2019 at Oslo's City Hall. The Norwegian Nobel Committee conferred the 100th Nobel Peace Prize to the Prime Minister in the presence of the Norwegian royal family.

87) What is the theme of the BioAsia 2020?
A.Today For Tomorrow
B.Life Sciences 4.0
C.Right Time, Right Now
D.Unleashing New Opportunities

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The theme of the BioAsia 2020 is Today For Tomorrow. The focus of BioAsia is centred around innovation in the past years. The countries aimed to bring the life sciences together and drive significant developments in the life sciences industry globally.

88) When did Eritrea get independence from Ethiopia?

A.1983
B.1987
C.1991
D.1995

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Eritrea got independence from Ethiopia in 1991. It fought a disastrous border war during 1998-2000 with Ethiopia. More than 80,000 people were killed in the war.

89) Who is appointed as the brand ambassador of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)?

A.Suniel Shetty
B.Akshay Kumar
C.Aamir Khan
D.Hrithik Roshan

**Answer A**

**Explanation** National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) appointed Bollywood actor Suniel Shetty as the brand ambassador for the agency in New Delhi. It is expected that the celebrity status will help NADA’s efforts to clean up sports in the country from the menace.

90) Which year was declared as the UN International Year of Mountains?
A. 1996
B. 1999
C. 2002
D. 2006

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The UN declared 2002 as the UN International Year of Mountains. The first international day was celebrated for the first time in 2003.

91) Where was the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) signed?

A. Jamaica
B. Brazil
C. Ethiopia
D. Italy

**Answer C**

**Explanation** UNCLOS was signed on 10 December 1982 at Montego Bay, Jamaica. It is the result of the third edition of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) international agreement. It happened between the year 1973 and 1982.

92) When is the International Mountain Day observed?

A. 5 Dec
B. 11 Dec
C. 16 Dec
D. 21 Dec

**Answer B**

**Explanation** International Mountain Day is observed on 11 December. The day aims to raise awareness about conserving the mountains. A report says that 15% of the world's population lives in the mountains. It is necessary to conserve the mountains. Mountain conservation is a crucial factor for sustainable development Goal 15 (SDG-15).

(UNCLOS) happen?
A. 1964 and 1973  
B. 1973 and 1982  
C. 1975 and 1984  
D. 1984 and 1993

**Answer B**

**Explanation** UNCLOS was signed on 10 December 1982 at Montego Bay, Jamaica. It is the result of the third edition of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) international agreement. It happened between the year 1973 and 1982.

**94) What is the theme of the 2019 International Mountain Day?**
A. #MountainsMatter  
B. Mountain Conservation for Tomorrow  
C. Mountains Matter for Youth  
D. Mountains and Climate Change

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The theme of the 2019 International Mountain Day is Mountains Matter for Youth. The theme highlights the struggles faced by rural youth who lives in the mountains.

**95) When did Eritrea-Ethiopia border war happen?**
A. 1998-2000  
B. 1999-2001  
C. 2000-2002  
D. 2001-2003

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Eritrea got independence from Ethiopia in 1991. It fought a disastrous border war during 1998-2000 with Ethiopia. More than 80,000 people were killed in the war.

**96) When was the first International Mountain Day celebrated?**
A. 2003
97) When is the International Day of Neutrality observed?

A. 14 August
B. 21 October
C. 10 November
D. 12 December

Answer D

Explanation International Day of Neutrality is observed on 12 December. The day aimed to promote the use of preventive diplomacy, which is the core theme of the UN. The UN conducts aimed to enhance public awareness of the value of neutrality in international relations.

98) Andhra Pradesh state government is to set up a virtual police station (VPS) in the ________.

A. Andhra University
B. Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University
C. Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences
D. Indian Institute Of Technology Tirupati

Answer A

Explanation Andhra Pradesh is to set up a virtual police station (VPS) in the Andhra University (AU). It will be the first of its kind. It will help the students to report violence or any other crime online.

99) Who organized the International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems in New Delhi?

A. Department of Agricultural Research & Education
The International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems for BIMSTEC countries began on 11 December 2019. It will be held from 11-13 December in New Delhi. The seminar was inaugurated by Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Secretary DARE. It is organized by the Department of Agricultural Research & Education, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer's Welfare and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

100) The IFSCs Authority Bill, 2019, which was passed by Lok Sabha will amend ________ Acts, including the SEBI Act, IRDA Act, and PFRDA Act.

A.6  
B.8  
C.12  
D.14

Answer D

Explanation The International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019, which was passed by Lok Sabha will amend 14 Acts, including the SEBI Act, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) Act and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Act.

101) When did the UN General Assembly (UNGA) officially declare the International Day of Neutrality?

A.2006  
B.2009  
C.2014  
D.2017

Answer D

Explanation International Day of Neutrality was officially declared by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution adopted in February 2017. The day was first observed on 12 December 2017.
102) Where was the first IFSC set up?

A. Bihar  
B. Gujarat  
C. Maharashtra  
D. Madhya Pradesh

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The first IFSC was set up at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

103) The International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems was organized for the ________.

A. BIMSTEC  
B. ASEAN  
C. G-20 group  
D. BRICS

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming Systems for BIMSTEC countries began on 11 December 2019. It will be held from 11-13 December in New Delhi. The seminar aims to emphasize the farmers' income despite climate changes.

104) Asian Development Bank (ADB) reduced India's economic growth forecast for FY 2019-20 to ________.

A. 5%  
B. 5.1%  
C. 5.17%  
D. 5.25%

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Asian Development Bank (ADB) reduced India's economic growth forecast for FY 2019-20 to 5.1%. It reduced upon analyzing the slowing job prospects, rural distress exacerbated by poor harvest and credit crunch. The bank has predicted the growth will pick up to 6.5% next
year on supportive government policies.

105) When was the first International Day of Neutrality observed?
A. 2004
B. 2008
C. 2013
D. 2017

**Answer D**

**Explanation** International Day of Neutrality was officially declared by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution adopted in February 2017. The day was first observed on 12 December 2017. The observance of the day shows that Neutrality is very important for the United Nations to gain the confidence and cooperation of all the member countries to operate independently and effectively.

106) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its fifth bi-annual monetary policy revised its FY 2019-20 outlook to ________ from 6.1%.
A. 54.75%
B. 5%
C. 5.25%
D. 5.5%

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its fifth bi-annual monetary policy revised its FY 2019-20 outlook to 5% from 6.1%. It said that the July-September GDP growth was significantly lower than the estimated.

107) Where was the 4th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit held?
A. New Delhi
B. Colombo
C. Kathmandu
D. Beijing
Answer C


108) Which company flight-tested World's first fully electric commercial seaplane?

A. Qantas  
B. Boeing Australia  
C. Tigerfish Aviation  
D. Harbour Air and magniX

Answer D

Explanation The Australian company, Harbour Air and magniX flight-tested an all-electric powered seaplane. It has taken flight in Vancouver, Canada. The company aims to electrify its entire fleet by 2022.

109) When is the International Universal Health Coverage Day observed?

A. 12 December  
B. 14 August  
C. 13 March  
D. 17 May

Answer A

Explanation International Universal Health Coverage Day is observed on 12 December every year. The day is observed globally to highlight the importance of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for strong and resilient health systems. The day reminds that every person, despite who they are or where they live, should be able to get the quality health care they need without facing financial hardship.

110) Who conferred the 2019 Nobel Literature Prize to the winners?

A. King Carl XIV Gustaf  
B. King Carl XV Gustaf  
C. King Carl XVI Gustaf  
D. King Carl XVII Gustaf
Answer C

Explanation King Carl XVI Gustaf conferred the 2019 Nobel Literature Prize to the Nobel laureates in medicine, chemistry, physics, and economics.

111) Which country is not a member of the BIMSTEC group?
A. Bhutan
B. India
C. Thailand
D. Maldives

Answer D

Explanation The Seven BIMSTEC Countries are Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand.

112) Who among the following did not win Nobel Prize in 2019?
A. Peter Handke
B. Dr. Sophie Lewis
C. Peter J. Ratcliffe
D. William G. Kaelin

Answer B


113) When did United Nations General Assembly pass the resolution on global health and accelerate the progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC)?
A. 2004
B. 2008
C. 2012
D. 2016

Answer C
Explanation On 12 December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed the resolution on global health and accelerate the progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

114) The ________ National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions is being held at BPR&D Headquarters, New Delhi.
A. 20th 
B. 23rd 
C. 34th 
D. 37th 

Answer D

Explanation The 37th National Symposium of Heads of Police Training Institutions is being held at BPR&D Headquarters, New Delhi. The two-day symposium is held from 12-13 December 2019. The symposium is organized by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), Ministry of Home Affairs.

115) George Laurer who passed away recently is the co-inventor of ________.
A. radium 
B. QR code 
C. barcode 
D. smartphones 

Answer C

Explanation George Laurer, the US engineer who helped develop the barcode, has passed away at the age of 94. When he was working as an electrical engineer with IBM, he developed UPC or barcode. He developed a scanner that could digitally read codes. He used stripes to print the codes.

116) Under which Ministry does the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) function?
A. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs 
B. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution 
C. Ministry of External Affairs 
D. Ministry of Human Resource Development
Answer A

Explanation CPWD functions under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). It deals with roads, bridges, flyovers, buildings, complex structures including stadiums, auditoriums, laboratories, bunkers, border fencing, border roads (hill roads), etc.

117) ISRO launched the RISAT-2BR1 satellite and ________ commercial satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota on 11 December 2019.

A.7
B.9
C.11
D.13

Answer B

Explanation ISRO launched the RISAT-2BR1 satellite on 11 December 2019. India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) launched RISAT-2BR1, the fiftieth flight (PSLV-C48), along with nine commercial satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota.

118) When was the barcode scanned for the first time?

A.1953
B.1974
C.1986
D.1998

Answer B

Explanation The first product that was scanned was a packet of Wrigley's Juicy Fruit chewing gum. It took place in June 1974 in Ohio.

119) RISAT-2BR1 is a __________ satellite.

A.radar imaging
B.radar infrared
C.radio intensive
D.radio information
120) Who was replaced by Rajaram as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana?

A. Ruchi Ghanashyam  
B. Birender Singh Yadav  
C. Harsh Vardhan Shringla  
D. Santosh Jha

**Answer B**

**Explanation** C. Sugandh Rajaram has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana. Rajaram is presently the Consul General, Consulate General of India to Southern Germany. He will replace Birender Singh Yadav as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana.

121) Where was the Symposium on Scope of Science of Ayurveda in Global Health 2019?

A. Mumbai  
B. Hyderabad  
C. New Delhi  
D. Pune

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Government organized a Symposium on Scope of Science of Ayurveda in Global Health on 11 December at New Delhi. The symposium aimed to sensitize all the Ambassadors and High Commissioners and impart them with the information about advanced research and recent developments in Ayurveda.

122) Which country is India's top crude oil supplier from April to September 2019?

A. Iran
B. Iraq
C. US
D. Saudi Arabia

Answer B

Explanation Iraq remains as India's top crude oil supplier. It meets almost one-fourth of India's oil needs. Iraq sold 26 million tonnes of crude oil to India from April to September 2019.

123) Who organized the 2019 Symposium on Scope of Science of Ayurveda in Global Health?

A. Ministry of AYUSH
B. Ministry of Human Welfare
C. Ministry of External Affairs
D. A&C

Answer D

Explanation Government organized a Symposium on Scope of Science of Ayurveda in Global Health on 11 December at New Delhi. It was organized by the Ministry of AYUSH in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs. It is in line with the Ministry of AYUSH's commitment to promote Ayurveda and Traditional systems of Medicine globally.

124) Who is appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana?

A. Rahul Shrivastava
B. C. Sugandh Rajaram
C. Shri Mridul Kumar
D. Dr. T. Suresh Babu

Answer B

Explanation C. Sugandh Rajaram has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana. Rajaram is presently the Consul General, Consulate General of India to Southern Germany. He will replace Birender Singh Yadav as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Ghana.

125) _________ is to set up a dedicated Green Window with an aim to serve
the unserved segments of renewable energy in India.

A. Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)
B. International Energy Agency (IEA)
C. Indian New and Renewable Energy Agency (INREA)
D. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

Answer A

Explanation Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) is planning to set up a dedicated Green Window with an aim to serve the unserved segments of renewable energy. It was announced by Shri Anand Kumar, Secretary for the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

126) The US became India's _________ oil supplier, by replacing Kuwait during the first six months of 2019-20.

A. 3rd
B. 4th
C. 5th
D. 6th

Answer D

Explanation The United States has surpassed Kuwait to become India's sixth-largest oil supplier. The US has supplied 5.4 million tonnes of crude oil during the first six months of 2019-20. The US supplies to India were higher than Kuwait's during the first six months of 2019-20. Kuwait supplied 5.1 million tonnes in the period.

127) What is the estimate for India to accomplish the commitments, between 2018 and 2030, under the Paris Agreement?

A. Rs. 15,00,000 crore
B. Rs. 17,25,000 crore
C. Rs. 21,45,000 crore
D. Rs. 23,65,000 crore

Answer C

Explanation An estimate of Rs. 21,45,000 crore is needed for India to accomplish the
commitments, between 2018 and 2030, under the Paris Agreement.

128) Who became the first woman to set up a national advertising agency in India?

A. Priya Paul  
B. Naina Lal Kidwai  
C. Tara Sinha  
D. Neelam Dhawan

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Tara Sinha, as she was popularly called, was the first woman to set up a national advertising agency, Tara Sinha Associates (TSA) in the 1980s.

129) Which state is to set up a virtual police station in the State's university?

A. Andhra Pradesh  
B. Karnataka  
C. Kerala  
D. Tamil Nadu

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Andhra Pradesh is to set up a virtual police station (VPS) in the Andhra University (AU). It will be the first of its kind. It will help the students to report violence or any other crime online. The plan to establish VPS was initially proposed by AU vice-chancellor Prasad Reddy in August 2019.

130) When was the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) established?

A. 1976  
B. 1987  
C. 1992  
D. 1998

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) is a Mini Ratna
Enterprise. It functions under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). It was established in 1987.

131) Which of the following bill aims to set up a unified authority to regulate all financial activities in IFSCs in India?

A. Indian Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2018  
B. Indian Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019  
C. International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2018  
D. International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Lok Sabha passed International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019 on 11 December 2019. The bill aims to set up a unified authority to regulate all financial activities in international financial services centres (IFSCs) in India.

132) With which Country did India sign bilateral Social Security Agreements (SSAs) to protect the interests of Indian professionals and skilled workers who are working abroad for short durations and enhance the competitiveness of Indian companies?

A. Germany  
B. Spain  
C. Brazil  
D. Sweden

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Union Cabinet approved the bilateral Social Security Agreements (SSAs) between India and Brazil. The SSAs aimed to protect the interests of Indian professionals and skilled workers who are working abroad for short durations and enhance the competitiveness of Indian companies.

133) Who is appointed as the Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs?

A. Vijayalakshmi Pandit  
B. K.P.S. Menon
Senior diplomat Vikas Swarup is appointed as the Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs. The Appointments Committee (ACC) of the Cabinet has approved the appointment.

134) Which bill will enhance the maximum limit of fine from the existing Rs.10 lakhs to Rs.1 Crore?

A. Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019  
B. Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2018  
C. Aircraft and Aviation Bill, 2019  
D. Aircraft and Aviation Bill, 2018

Answer A

The cabinet approved to introduce the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019. It will carry out the amendments to the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934). The Bill will be introduced in the Parliament in the winter session of 2019. The Bill will enhance the maximum limit of fine from the existing Rs.10 lakhs to Rs.1 Crore. It enlarged the scope of the existing Act to include regulation of all areas of Air Navigation.

135) Who is appointed as the Secretary of Consular, Passport, Visa and Overseas Indian Affairs?

A. Subimal Dutt  
B. Vijay Keshav Gokhale  
C. Kanwal Sibal  
D. Sanjay Bhattacharyya

Answer D

Career diplomat Sanjay Bhattacharyya has been appointed Secretary of Consular, Passport, Visa and Overseas Indian Affairs. Bhattacharyya is a 1987 batch IFS officer. He is currently India's Ambassador in Turkey.
Scheme of ________ under Samagra Shiksha.

A. Free books of School Education  
B. Vocationalisation of School Education  
C. Free books of Higher Secondary Education  
D. Vocationalisation of Higher Secondary Education

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The Ministry of Human Resource Development is to implement the Scheme of Vocationalisation of School Education under Samagra Shiksha. It is an integrated scheme for school education.

137) Which state won the 2019 World Habitat Award?

A. Uttar Pradesh  
B. Madhya Pradesh  
C. Odisha  
D. Bihar

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Odisha State government was honoured with the 2019 World Habitat Award. The award recognized the State’s ambitious project Jaga Mission. The award was conferred by the World Habitat, a UK based organization, in association with the United Nations (UN)-Habitat. The programme has set a global benchmark to empower the urban poor.

138) Which State has received the Krishi Karman Award five times?

A. Odisha  
B. Karnataka  
C. Kerala  
D. Punjab

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Odisha, in the agriculture field, has received the Krishi Karman Award five times.

139) Who launched the Design Education Quality Mark (DEQM) and Chartered Designs of India (CDI) to enhance the profession and to establish
professional standards?

A. National Educational and Design Institute  
B. India Design Council  
C. National Design Association  
D. National Instructional and Design Council  

Answer B

Explanation The India Design Council (IDC) launched the Design Education Quality Mark (DEQM) and Chartered Designs of India (CDI) in New Delhi on 12 December 2019. The designs are aimed to address 5 challenges of scale, quality of design, quality of education for design, raising the priority for design in industry and design for a public purpose.

140) Which state included the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment under Mo Sarkar?

A. Punjab  
B. Bihar  
C. Odisha  
D. Tamil Nadu  

Answer C

Explanation The Odisha State Government included the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment under the state's Mo Sarkar programme. It was announced by the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Under this, the Chief Minister would personally call up the farmers and take their feedback on the services that are provided by the department. Action will be taken on the employees of the department if the Government receives negative feedback from the farmers.

141) Which State launched the Mo Sarkar initiative?

A. Rajasthan  
B. Uttar Pradesh  
C. Odisha  
D. Madhya Pradesh  

Answer C

Explanation The 'Mo Sarkar' programme was launched by Odisha state government. It aimed at
making governance people-centric.

142) Who is the foreign minister of Indonesia?

A. Retno L P Marsudi  
B. Puan Maharani  
C. Susi Pudjiastuti  
D. Megawati Sukarnoputri

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Indonesia foreign minister Retno L P Marsudi arrived on 13 December on a two-day visit to India.

143) Where was the sixth Joint Commission Meeting between India and Indonesia held?

A. New Delhi  
B. Hyderabad  
C. Mumbai  
D. Bengaluru

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The sixth Joint Commission Meeting between India and Indonesia is held at the Hyderabad.

144) Which of the following scheme is a land titling initiative works towards turning slums into liveable habitat with all necessary civic infrastructure and services at par with the better off areas within the same Urban Local Body (ULB)?

A. Jaga Mission  
B. Adarsh Gram scheme  
C. Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana  
D. Indira Aawas Mission

**Answer A**
**Explanation** Jaga Mission was launched by the Odisha State government. The mission aims to leverage and converging various schemes and programs. The land titling initiative works towards turning slums into liveable habitat with all necessary civic infrastructure and services at par with the better off areas within the same Urban Local Body (ULB).

145) **What is the theme of the Delhi Dialogue XI?**

A. Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Security  
B. Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific  
C. Charting the course for India-ASEAN relations for the Next 25 Years  
D. ASEAN-India Relations: A New Paradigm

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Delhi Dialogue XI will be held from 13-14 December. The theme of the Delhi Dialogue is Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific.

146) **When was the World Habitat Award established?**

A. 1965  
B. 1878  
C. 1985  
D. 1992

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The World Habitat Award was established in 1985. The award recognizes and promotes good habitat practices. The first awards were presented in 1986 in London by HRH the Prince of Wales and the Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, UN-HABITAT Executive Director.

147) **With which company did the Karnataka government sign to extend, rehabilitate and operate the drinking water distribution system in Mangaluru?**

A. Wesfarmers  
B. Suez  
C. Woolworths Limited  
D. Mirvac
**Answer B**

**Explanation** French-based company Suez won a contract to extend, rehabilitate and operate the drinking water distribution system in Mangaluru. The total cost of the project is Rs 792.42 crore. The state aims to give pure drinking water to the citizens of Mangaluru in all the wards of the city corporation.

**148) When was the first World Habitat Award presented?**

A. 1985  
B. 1986  
C. 1987  
D. 1988

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The World Habitat Award was established in 1985. The award recognizes and promotes good habitat practices. The first awards were presented in 1986 in London by HRH the Prince of Wales and the Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, UN-HABITAT Executive Director.

**149) What is the total cost estimated for the project to provide a drinking water distribution system in Mangaluru?**

A. Rs.436.32 crore  
B. Rs.578 crore  
C. Rs.620.75 crore  
D. Rs.792.42 crore

**Answer D**

**Explanation** French-based company Suez won a contract to extend, rehabilitate and operate the drinking water distribution system in Mangaluru. The total cost of the project is Rs 792.42 crore.

**150) When was the World Habitat Award initiated as World Habitat's contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless?**

A. 1985  
B. 1987  
C. 1990
D.1995

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The World Habitat Award was established in 1985. The award recognizes and promotes good habitat practices. The first awards were presented in 1986 in London by HRH the Prince of Wales and the Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, UN-HABITAT Executive Director. The awards were initiated as World Habitat's contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987.

151) The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 will amend ________.

A. Citizenship Act, 1948  
B. Citizenship Act, 1955  
C. Citizenship Act, 1963  
D. Citizenship Act, 1968

**Answer B**

**Explanation** President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on 12 December 2019. The bill amends the Citizenship Act, 1955. The Bill was passed in Lok Sabha in January 2019 but lapsed without being cleared in Rajya Sabha. The law came into effect on 12 December.

152) When did the Parliament Attack happen in India?

A. 1993  
B. 1996  
C. 1998  
D. 2001

**Answer D**

**Explanation** President Ram Nath Kovind and the Union Ministers paid tribute to those who lost their lives in the 2001 Parliament attack. The day marks the 18th anniversary of the attack on the Indian Parliament.

153) The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 will provide citizenship to ________ communities.
A.3
B.4
C.5
D.6

Answer D

Explanation President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on 12 December 2019. The Bill will provide citizenship to six communities namely Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Parsis.

154) Which terrorist organizations attacked the Parliament in 2001?

A. Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)
B. Manipur Peoples Liberation Front (MPLF) and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
C. United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and Communist Party of India (Maoist)
D. Dukhtaran-E-Millat (DEM) and Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA)

Answer A

Explanation On 13 December 2001, five terrorists of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) attacked the Parliament complex and opened fire killing nearly nine people and injuring 16 others.

155) Railway Sports Promotion Board won the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards. What does FICCI stand for?

A. Federation of International Chambers of Commerce and Industry
B. Federation of Indian Commerce, Chain and Industry
C. Federation of International Chambers of Commerce and Industry
D. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Answer D

Explanation Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) India Sports Awards 2019 was presented to the Railway Sports Promotion Board under the category of Best Company Promoting Sports (Public Sector) on 11 December 2019 at New Delhi.

156) When was the Parliamentary attack happen?
A. 15 June  
B. 20 August  
C. 30 October  
D. 13 December  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** On 13 December 2001, five terrorists of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) attacked the Parliament complex and opened fire killing nearly nine people and injuring 16 others.

157) **Who won the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards?**

A. Railway Sports Promotion Board  
B. IAF Sports Promotion Board  
C. Naval Sports Promotion Board  
D. Army Sports Promotion Board  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) India Sports Awards 2019 was presented to the Railway Sports Promotion Board under the category of Best Company Promoting Sports (Public Sector) on 11 December 2019 at New Delhi.

158) **Where will the National Tribal Dance Festival be held?**

A. Jaipur  
B. Raipur  
C. Lucknow  
D. Ahmedabad  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** A three-day National Tribal Dance Festival will be held in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The festival is to be held on 27-29 December 2019.

159) **Who founded the Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB)?**

A. 1928  
B. 1937
The Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) was established in 1928. RSPB is owned by the Indian Railways. It is a member of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). It promotes 29 sporting disciplines.

160) Where is Raipur located?
A. Madhya Pradesh
B. Chhattisgarh
C. Rajasthan
D. Gujarat

Answer B
Explanation Raipur is the capital city of Chhattisgarh state in central India. In the center, the ancient Dudhadhari Math temple is a sacred monument dedicated to Lord Rama, decorated with scenes from the epic poem Ramayana.

161) Who presented the Universal health coverage (UHC) Awards?
A. President Ram Nath Kovind
B. PM Narendra Modi
C. Dr. Harsh Vardhan
D. Smriti Irani

Answer C
Explanation The Universal health coverage (UHC) Awards were awarded to the best performing Primary Healthcare teams of States and Union Territories (UTs) on the occasion of Universal Health Coverage Day on 12 December. The awards were presented by the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan at an event organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

162) Rajya Sabha passed a Constitution amendment bill to extend reservation to SCs and STs in Lok Sabha and state assemblies by another ________ years.
A.5  
B.9  
C.10  
D.12

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Rajya Sabha passed a Constitution amendment bill to extend reservation to SCs and STs in Lok Sabha and state assemblies by another 10 years. The bill was passed by Lok Sabha on 10 December. The bill will now be sent to the states for ratification by 50% of the assemblies before it comes into force.

163) State Bank of India (SBI) announced a reduced 1-year marginal cost-based lending rates (MCLR) by ________.

A.5 bps  
B.7.5 bps  
C.10 bps  
D.15 bps

**Answer C**

**Explanation** State Bank of India (SBI) announced a reduced 1-year marginal cost-based lending rates (MCLR) by 10 bps. MCLR will be reduced to 7.90% from 8%. The new rates will come to effect from 10 December 2019. All the other rates remain the same. This is the eighth consecutive MCLR cut in the financial year 2019.

164) On which Country did the United Nations imposed new sanctions on December 2019?

A.Iran  
B.China  
C.Japan  
D.N.Korea

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The United States imposed new sanctions on Iran's biggest airline and its shipping network on 11 December 2019. US accused them of transporting lethal aid and weapons of mass destruction proliferation.
165) What is the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR) of SBI as of December 2019?

A. 7.90%
B. 8%
C. 8.25%
D. 8.5%

Answer A

Explanation State Bank of India (SBI) announced a reduced 1-year marginal cost-based lending rates (MCLR) by 10 bps. MCLR will be reduced to 7.90% from 8%. The new rates will come to effect from 10 December 2019. All the other rates remain the same. This is the eighth consecutive MCLR cut in the financial year 2019.

166) Which Indian Personality has entered the top 100 women in the Forbes list of the 100 most powerful women in the world?

A. Nirmala Sitharaman
B. Roshni Nadar Malhotra
C. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw
D. All the above

Answer D

Explanation Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ranked 34th in the world's 100 Most Powerful Women in the recently released list by Forbes Magazine. Roshni Nadar Malhotra ranked 54th, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw ranked 65th in the list.

167) Who is appointed as the new Information and Broadcasting Secretary?

A. Mahadevan Yadav
B. Ravi Mittal
C. Govind Kumar
D. Raja Singh Patti

Answer B

Explanation Ravi Mittal has been appointed as the new Information and Broadcasting Secretary. He will replace Mr. Amit Khare who has been appointed as the new secretary of the Department
of Higher Education. The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of Union Cabinet (ACC).

168) Who was named as the Business Person of the Year 2019 by TIME?

A. Tim Cook  
B. Ginny Rometty  
C. Larry Page  
D. Robert Iger

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Disney CEO Robert Iger was named the Business Person of the Year.

169) Which country was left out of the European Union's 2050 climate neutrality agreement?

A. Germany  
B. Greece  
C. Poland  
D. France

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The European Union (EU) left Poland out of a 2050 climate neutrality agreement. The agreement is part of a plan to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent. Poland was left out as it demanded more funds for economic transition and support for nuclear power.

170) Who was named as the Entertainer of the Year 2019 by TIME?

A. Lizzo  
B. Madonna  
C. Danny La  
D. John Goodman

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Singer Lizzo has been named as the Entertainer of the Year.
171) Who was named as the world's most powerful woman by Forbes in the 2019 list of the 100 most powerful women in the world?

A. Ursula von der Leyen  
B. Christine Lagarde  
C. Guler Sabanc  
D. Angela Merkel

**Answer D**

**Explanation** German Chancellor Angela Merkel has been named as the world's most powerful woman by Forbes in the 2019 list of the 100 most powerful women in the world. She has won the title for the consecutive ninth year running.

172) European Union has agreed to attain climate neutrality agreement by ________.

A. 2030  
B. 2040  
C. 2050  
D. 2070

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The European Union (EU) left Poland out of a 2050 climate neutrality agreement. The agreement is part of a plan to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent. The 2050 goal is a key commitment under the 2015 Paris Agreement of the Europe Union on climate change.

173) Who is appointed as the Secretary of Mines?

A. Praveen Kumar  
B. Ajit Dev  
C. Kiran Arjun  
D. Sushil Kumar

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Mr. Sushil Kumar has been appointed as the Mines Secretary.
174) Which of the following bill eeks to convert three deemed Sanskrit universities into central universities?

A. Sanskrit Central Universities Bill, 2018  
B. Sanskrit Central Universities Bill, 2019  
C. Conversion of Deemed Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2018  
D. Conversion of Deemed Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019

Answer B  

Explanation The Bill also seeks to convert three deemed Sanskrit universities into central universities. The three universities are Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, the Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth in New Delhi and the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth in Tirupati.

175) Poland asked for an extension up to _______ in the European Union's climate neutrality agreement?

A. 2055  
B. 2060  
C. 2070  
D. 2075

Answer C  

Explanation The European Union (EU) left Poland out of a 2050 climate neutrality agreement. The country resisted the plan during hours of intense debate and was left out of the new commitment. Poland is expected to reach climate neutrality at its own pace. The country asked for an extension of the period to 2070.

176) Who was named as the 2019 Person of the Year by TIME magazine?

A. Malala Yousafzai  
B. Gloria Steinem  
C. Jamie Margolin  
D. Greta Thunberg

Answer D  

Explanation The news magazine Time has named the teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg in 2019 Person of the Year. She was named as she inspired millions of people in 150 countries to
protest climate change. She has also delivered blunt and powerful speeches to leaders urging them to address the issue.

177) When is the World Energy Conservation Day observed?

A. 21 February  
B. 10 May  
C. 30 October  
D. 14 December

Answer D

Explanation World Energy Conservation Day is observed on 14 December. The day aims to highlight the importance of energy consumption. This Day creates a sense of urgency on the issues involved.

178) The Aircraft Amendment Bill, 2019 will amend _________.

A. Aircraft Act, 1928  
B. Aircraft Act, 1934  
C. Aircraft Act, 1945  
D. Aircraft Act, 1957

Answer B

Explanation The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the introduction of the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019. The Bill amend the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934).

179) When is Energy Conservation Day observed in India?

A. 15 September  
B. 20 October  
C. 14 December  
D. 20 December

Answer C

Explanation In India, the National Energy Conservation Day is observed on 14 December every year. The day is organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the Ministry of Power.
180) The Aircraft Amendment Bill, 2019 will enhance the maximum limit of fine from the existing Rs.10 lakh to ________.

A. Rs.20 lakh  
B. Rs.50 lakh  
C. Rs.1 crore  
D. Rs.5 crore

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the introduction of the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019. The Bill amend the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934). The bill will enhance the maximum limit of fine from the existing Rs.10 lakh to Rs.1 crore.

181) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) signed an MoU with the _________ to promote sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient farming systems.

A. Reserve Bank of India (RBI)  
B. National Board of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)  
C. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI)  
D. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Board of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on 13 December to promote sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient farming systems.

182) How many Indian-origin candidates were elected to House of Commons in the UK in the UK's 2019 General election?

A. 12  
B. 15  
C. 18  
D. 20

**Answer B**
Explaination Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative party won the UN's General election with a majority vote. Indian-origin candidates in both the ruling Conservative and opposition Labour parties have registered equally strong results of seven wins on each side. Around 15 MPs have made into the UK's House of Commons, the lower house.

183) When was the winter session of the Parliament held in 2019?

A. 12 November-13 December  
B. 18 November-19 December  
C. 21 November-22 December  
D. 10 November-11 December

Answer A

Explaination The winter session of the Parliament in the year 2019 began on 18 November and conclude on 13 December. Some key Bills were tabled and passed during the session. A few other Bills have been sent to a Rajya Sabha select committee and a joint select committee.

184) Which party won the 2019 UK's General election?

A. Labour Party  
B. Democratic Party  
C. Conservative party  
D. Liberal Democrats

Answer C

Explaination Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative party won the 2019 UK's General election with a majority vote.

185) Who organized the International Workshop on Energy Efficient Cooling?

A. Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)  
B. International Energy Agency (IEA)  
C. Centre for Energy and Nuclear Power (CENP)  
D. A&B

Answer D

Explaination Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Ministry of Power, conducted an International
Workshop on Energy Efficient Cooling from 12-13 December 2019 at Scope Convention Centre, New Delhi. It was organized as a part of the Energy Conservation Week that was observed from 9-14 December 2019.

186) Who has been elected as the Prime Minister in the 2019 UK's General election?

A. Jeremy Corbyn  
B. Nigel Farage  
C. Gordon Brown  
D. Boris Johnson

Answer D

Explanation Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative party won the UN's General election with a majority vote.

187) Who won the Best Sports Journalist award in the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards?

A. Kamesh Srinivasan  
B. Mayanti Langer  
C. Harsha Bhogle  
D. Boria Majumdar

Answer A

Explanation Kamesh Srinivasan won the Best Sports Journalist award in the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards.

188) _______ has signed an agreement with UNESCO MGIEP to enable school teachers to adopt technology in classrooms by using Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools.

A. IBM  
B. DELL  
C. Infosys  
D. TCS
Answer B

Explanation Dell Technologies has signed an agreement with UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace (MGIEP) to enable school teachers to adopt technology in classrooms by using Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools.

189) Who won the Sports Person for female of the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards?

A. Saina Nehwal
B. Mary Kom
C. Rani Rampal
D. Mithali Raj

Answer C

Explanation Rani Rampal won the Sports Person of the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards.

190) The US has agreed to suspend tariffs on _________ in Chinese goods that were due to come into effect on 15 December.

A. $182 billion
B. $233 billion
C. $338 billion
D. $400 billion

Answer B

Explanation The United States and China have agreed to a phase one trade deal that includes canceling the tariffs on Chinese goods. Also, the US has agreed to suspend tariffs on $233 billion in Chinese goods that were due to come into effect on 15 December.

191) Who won the Sports Person for male of the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards?

A. Abhinav Bindra
B. Neeraj Chopra
C. Srikanth Kidambi
D. Saurabh Chaudhary
Answer D

Explanation Saurabh Chaudhary won the Sports Person of the 2019 FICCI India Sports Awards.

192) The US will have announced that it will maintain 25% tariffs on $US250 billion of Chinese imports, but cut tariffs in half to _______ on $US120 billion in imports.

A. 7.5%
B. 10.5%
C. 12.5%
D. 25%

Answer A

Explanation The US will have announced that it will maintain 25% tariffs on $US250 billion of Chinese imports, but cut tariffs in half to 7.5% on $US120 billion in imports.

193) Which State approved the draft Disha Act to ensure rape verdicts in 21 days?

A. Karnataka
B. Andhra Pradesh
C. Kerala
D. Uttar Pradesh

Answer B

Explanation The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved the draft Disha Act to ensure rape verdicts in 21 days. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that the State government will make amendments to the AP Criminal Law Act to hand out harsh punishments after a swift process.

194) _______ is an instrument that measures incoming and outgoing radiation.

A. Gyrometer
B. Barometer
C. inframeter
D. Radiometer
Radiometer is an instrument that measures incoming and outgoing radiation.

195) Which of the following bill aims to set up a world-class unified regulator for international financial services?

A. Indian Financial Services Authority Bill, 2018  
B. Indian Financial Services Authority Bill, 2019  
C. International Financial Services Authority Bill, 2018  
D. International Financial Services Authority Bill, 2019

Answer B

Explanation Rajya Sabha passed the International Financial Services Authority Bill, 2019. The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on 11 December. The bill aims to set up world-class unified regulator for international financial services combining powers and functions of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) And Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

196) Researchers installed a network of ________ automatic weather stations atop Mount Everest at an elevation of up to 27,600 feet.

A. 2  
B. 3  
C. 5  
D. 8

Answer C

Explanation In June 2019, the researchers installed a network of five automatic weather stations atop Mount Everest at an elevation of up to 27,600 feet. It includes the two highest weather stations on the planet.

197) Which Bill will fulfill the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) by enabling the DGCA, BCAS, AAIB, the regulatory bodies in the Civil Aviation sector in India to become more effective?

A. Aviation (Amendment) Bill 2018  
B. Aviation (Amendment) Bill 2019
C.Aircraft (Amendment) Bill 2018
D.Aircraft (Amendment) Bill 2019

Answer D

Explanation The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the introduction of the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2019. The Bill amends the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934). It will fulfill the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) by enabling the DGCA, BCAS, AAIB, the regulatory bodies in the Civil Aviation sector in India to become more effective. This will lead to enhancement in the level of safety and security of aircraft operations in the country.

198) Which state/UT unveiled a startup policy of the Industries Department?

A.Goa
B.Puducherry
C.Delhi
D.Uttar Pradesh

Answer B

Explanation The Union Territory Puducherry unveiled a startup policy of the Industries Department. It was announced by Puducherry Industries Minister Shajahan. The policy lays emphasis to provide financial grants, monthly stipend, fiscal incentives to interested entrepreneurs and bring new business ventures to the Union Territory.

199) Government invoked the Drug Price Control Order, 2013 for the first time to increase the prices of ________ medicines to ensure their availability.

A.21
B.45
C.68
D.90

Answer A

Explanation On 13 December 2019, the Government invoked Drug Price Control Order, 2013 for the first-time. It aimed to increase the prices of 21 medicines to ensure their availability.

200) The new startup policy of the Industries Department of Puducherry
creates a corpus fund of ________ to support the setting up of startup incubators and to develop co-working spaces.

A. Rs.1 crore  
B. Rs.5 crore  
C. Rs.10 crore  
D. Rs.15 crore

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Union Territory Puducherry unveiled a startup policy of the Industries Department. The policy creates a corpus fund of Rs.10 crore to support the setting up of startup incubators and to develop co-working spaces.

201) Upon invoking the Drug Price Control Order, 2013, the prices were increased by ________.

A. 20%  
B. 45%  
C. 50%  
D. 60%

**Answer C**

**Explanation** On 13 December 2019, the Government invoked Drug Price Control Order, 2013 for the first-time. It aimed to increase the prices of 21 medicines to ensure their availability. The prices were increased by 50%.

202) Which site did NASA select for the sample collection on asteroid Bennu?

A. Nightingale  
B. Ornyx  
C. Osprey  
D. Flxit

**Answer A**

**Explanation** NASA has finally selected a sample collection site on asteroid Bennu after the arrival of OSIRIS-REx spacecraft in December 2018 on asteroid Bennu. The OSIRIS-Rex mission team has selected the site designated Nightingale, which is located in a crater high in
Bennu's northern hemisphere.

203) The government is planning to allot ________ mines, as of 13 December.

A. 6  
B. 8  
C. 12  
D. 15

**Answer A**

**Explanation** On 13 December 2019, the Ministry of Coal initiated the auction process of coal mines. The move by the government is to reduce coal imports. After the poor participation of investors in the previous rounds of coal auctions, the government is now finally considering allotment of six mines soon.

204) Which site did NASA select as a back up for the sample collection on asteroid Bennu?

A. Linea  
B. Cyprux  
C. Osprey  
D. Fialtae

**Answer C**

**Explanation** NASA has finally selected a sample collection site on asteroid Bennu after the arrival of OSIRIS-Rex spacecraft in December 2018 on asteroid Bennu. The OSIRIS-Rex mission team has selected the site designated Nightingale, which is located in a crater high in Bennu's northern hemisphere. The team has also selected site Osprey of Bennu as a backup sample collection site.

205) Which country conducted a crucial test on 13 December?

A. Japan  
B. China  
C. S. Korea  
D. N. Korea
North Korea has conducted another crucial test on 13 December. The test was aimed to help the country to boost its reliable strategic nuclear deterrent.

206) Which spacecraft is on a mission to asteroid Bennu?

A. OSIRIS-REx  
B. X-15  
C. Voskhod  
D. Skylon-SEK

Answer A

The OSIRIS-REx is a NASA asteroid study and sample-return mission. The mission's main goal is to obtain a sample of at least 60 grams from 101955 Bennu, a carbonaceous near-Earth asteroid, and return the sample to Earth for a detailed analysis.

207) _________ of the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO), 2013, deals with an increase or decrease in drug prices under extraordinary circumstances.

A. Paragraph 8  
B. Paragraph 19  
C. Paragraph 28  
D. Paragraph 35

Answer B

Paragraph 19 of the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO), 2013, deals with an increase or decrease in drug prices under extraordinary circumstances.

208) Where was the first meeting of the National Ganga Council held?

A. Kanpur  
B. Ahmedabad  
C. Jaipur  
D. New Delhi

Answer A
Explanation Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the first meeting of the National Ganga Council in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on 14 December.

209) Who chaired the first meeting of the National Ganga Council?

A. President Kovind
B. Prime Minister Modi
C. Minister of State of Jal Shakti Sanjeev Balyan
D. Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

Answer B

Explanation Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the first meeting of the National Ganga Council in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on 14 December.

210) Over _______ across India have been registered on the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform.

A. 1,05,000 lakh farmers
B. 1,22,800 lakh farmers
C. 1,48,750 lakh farmers
D. 1,65,000 lakh farmers

Answer D

Explanation The government said that over 1,65,000 lakh farmers across India have been registered on the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform. The announcement was made by the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

211) When is the OSIRIS-REx spacecraft expected to return to earth with a sample collection?

A. 2021
B. 2022
C. 2023
D. 2024

Answer C

Explanation OSIRIS-REx sample collection has been scheduled for the latter half of 2020. The
spacecraft is expected to return the asteroid samples to Earth on 24 September 2023.

212) How many wholesale regulated markets have been integrated with e-NAM platform?

A. 239  
B. 422  
C. 585  
D. 635

Answer C

Explanation 585 wholesale regulated markets have been integrated with e-NAM platform.

213) Which country is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC)?

A. Russia  
B. India  
C. China  
D. Thailand

Answer B

Explanation India is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in New Delhi during the first week of March 2020. It is popularly described as the Olympics of Geosciences.

214) The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had announced that FASTags will become mandatory for all vehicles, private and commercial from ________.

A. 15 December 2019  
B. 31 December 2019  
C. 1 January 2020  
D. 15 January 2020

Answer A

Explanation The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had announced that FASTags will
become mandatory for all vehicles, private and commercial from 15 December.

**215) India is to host the ________ International Geological Congress (IGC) to provide a platform for international cooperation in all major fields of geosciences.**

A.28th  
B.30th  
C.36th  
D.40th

**Answer C**

**Explanation** India is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in New Delhi during the first week of March 2020. It is popularly described as the Olympics of Geosciences. In a move to boost the IGC preparation, a half-day interactive workshop was held here on 12 December. It was inaugurated by Dr. M. Rajeevan, the Secretary, Ministry of Earth, and Anil Kumar Jain, Secretary Coal & Mines.

**216) Which State adopted Trakea to make forensic reports tamper-proof?**

A.Punjab  
B.Haryana  
C.Bihar  
D.Uttar Pradesh

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Haryana Police has adopted Trakea, a unique barcoding software to make forensic reports tamper-proof. The technique will ensure the thousands of forensic reports that form the backbone of the criminal investigation system and subsequent trials in the courts of law, are not tampered with.

**217) What is the theme of the International Geological Congress (IGC)?**

A.Bridge the Gap  
B.Science-An ultimate way for revolution  
C.Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Development  
D.No theme
India is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in New Delhi during the first week of March 2020. The theme of the event is Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Development. The IGCs are global geoscientific events held once in four years.

218) Which company won the Space Oscars awards on the international competition Copernicus Masters?

A. Blue Sky Analytics
B. Aramco
C. Orbital Insight
D. Azavea Inc.

Answer A

Explanation Blue Sky Analytics won the Space Oscars awards on the international competition Copernicus Masters. The awards were presented in a ceremony on 4 December 2019 during the European Space Week held at Helsinki, Finland. Blue Sky Analytics became the first Indian Startup to win the Space Oscars award presented by the European Space Agency.

219) Somanathan replaced _________ as expenditure secretary in the finance ministry?

A. Ramesh Bais
B. Jagdish Mukhi
C. R. K. Mathur
D. Girish Chandra Murmu

Answer D

Explanation The government appointed TV Somanathan as an expenditure secretary in the finance ministry. Somanathan will replace Girish Chandra Murmu, who was named the first lieutenant governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in October.

220) India is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in ________.

A. New Delhi
B. Kolkata
C.Srinagar
D.Guwahati

Answer A

**Explanation** India is to host the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) in New Delhi during the first week of March 2020. It is popularly described as the Olympics of Geosciences.

221) Who is appointed as an expenditure secretary in the finance ministry?

A.TV Somanathan
B.Ajay Bhushan Pandey
C.Atanu Chakraborthy
D.Rajiv Kumar

Answer A

**Explanation** The government appointed TV Somanathan as an expenditure secretary in the finance ministry. Somanathan will replace Girish Chandra Murmu, who was named the first lieutenant governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in October.

222) When did India host the IGC event for the first time?

A.1964
B.1978
C.1986
D.1992

Answer A

**Explanation** India is the only Asian country to host the IGC event twice. For the first time, India hosted the 22nd IGC in 1964. The event was inaugurated by the then President of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.
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