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**BANKING & FINANCE**

**India extends LOC to Cuba for financing solar parks**

India has extended a line of credit (LOC) of $75 million to Cuba for financing solar parks. The announcement was made by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The move comes following the agreement signed between Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and Banco Exterior De Cuba on 16 July 2019 that came into effect from 12 December 2019.

Banco Exterior De Cuba is a nominated agency of the Cuban government. The agreement was signed for the purpose of financing the installation of 75 MW Photovoltaic Solar Parks in the Republic of Cuba.

**Agreement:**

Under the LOC, the terminal utilization period is 5 years after the scheduled completion date of the project.

According to the agreement, financing of export of eligible goods and services from India would be allowed subject to their being eligible for export under the Foreign Trade Policy.

Out of the total credit by Exim Bank under the agreement, goods, works, and services of the value of at least 75% of the contract price can be supplied by the seller from India. The remaining 25% of goods and services may be procured by the seller from outside India.

**Piyush Goyal inaugurated NSE Knowledge Hub in New Delhi**

Commerce and Industry & Railways Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated the National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub in New Delhi on 6 January 2020. The hub will provide an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered learning ecosystem which will assist the Banking, Financial services, and insurance (BFSI) sector.

**NSE Knowledge Hub:**

The new AI hub created by NSE is expected to fill in the gaps of the fintech hub and help the financial sector to move into the future.

It will enhance skills and help academic institutions to prepare future-ready talent for the financial service industry.
It is also available on mobile and attempts to bring together world-class content and learners through this platform.

It will help India in building next-generation skills and capabilities in the BFSI sector.

It is expected that the use of AI will ensure that the skill upgradation is affordable and accessible and helps in the creation of a workforce that is adequate for the requirements of the sector.

It will strengthen and empower those who work in the BFSI sector and will benefit investors and the financial services to give world-class services through knowledge, innovation and value-addition.

**Note:**

AI and Machine Learning will contribute around $1 trillion by 2035. NSE can tap the potential of AI and use it as a tool to create a workforce in the BFSI sector in India.

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**RBI revised its framework for UCBs**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised its Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) for urban co-operative banks (UCBs). The move is to expedite the resolution of UCBs experiencing financial stress. The revised framework released by the RBI on 6 January 2020. It stipulates the thresholds for various parameters that could trigger corrective action by the UCBs or a supervisory action by RBI.

**Reason:**

The move comes after the scam in Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank that caused distress to over 9 lakh depositors.

**Revised SAF:**

As per the revised SAF, a UCB may be placed under SAF when its **Net nonperforming assets (NPA) exceed 6%** of its net advances, its **Capital to Risk (Weighted) Assets Ratio (CRAR) falls below 9%**.

When a UCB incurs losses for two consecutive financial years or has accumulated losses on its balance sheet, it will be placed under SAF.

The type of action would depend on the severity of stress.

RBI will undertake different actions like the imposition of all-inclusive directions under section 35A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, as applicable to co-
operative societies.

Cancellation of banking license may be considered by RBI will be continued normal functioning of the UCB is no longer considered to be in the interest of its depositors.

Supervisory action already taken by RBI under the earlier SAF will be reviewed and revised instructions, if any, will be issued to the UCBs concerned.

**NPCI launched the Vajra Platform for a fast and secure platform**

The **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** launched the **Vajra Platform** to make payments fast and secure. The platform is based on **blockchain technology**.

**Aim:**
The main objective of the Vajra Platform is to provide automated clearing and settlement of payments and drastically reduce the need for manual reconciliation.

**Features:**
Vajra Platform uses **distributed ledger technology (DLT)**

The platform uses a **permissions model** in order to ensure that only approved parties are a part of the network.

Payment companies can apply and register to be a part of the network.

After getting the approval, the companies can deploy the platform using an application programming interface (API) that will be provided by NPCI.

**Benefits:**
*The benefits of the Vajra Platform:*

Near real-time clearing and settlement of transactions

Minimal reconciliation of transactions

**Improved security** and reduced operational and financial risks

Legitimate audit trail as DLT is incorruptible

Vajra Platform will be used for **Aadhaar authentication** by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)

**RBI allows select banks in India to offer forex rates 24X7 to Indian Clients**

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has permitted the select banks in India can offer **forex rates to Indian clients** round the clock, which is **24X7**. Now the select banks
can work beyond the inter-bank market hours, which now run from 9 am to 5 pm.

**Benefits:**
The move will allow the Indians to hedge their foreign exchange risks at any time of the day.
It will make the offshore currency markets in Dubai and Singapore less attractive for Indian investors.
RBI has also decided to accept the recommendation of the task force on the offshore rupee market. Hence it permits the authorized dealers Category-I banks to offer foreign exchange prices to users at all times either by a domestic sales team or through their overseas branches.
This allows transactions with person resident outside India, through their foreign branches and subsidiaries can be undertaken beyond onshore market hours.
It benefits the bank's clients to manage overnight currency risk as they can now hedge beyond local market hours.

**HDFC Bank unveiled myApps application to boost digital payments**

In a first, HDFC Bank launched myApps application on 9 January 2020. The app aims to boost digital payments in India.

**myApps:**
myApps is a customized suite of banking products.
The app will benefit urban local bodies, housing societies, local clubs and gymkhanas, and religious institutions.
It will allow institutions to customize their branding and content.
Using the app one can publish their application on the Google PlayStore or Apple AppStore in the name of the institution.
myApps is free to all members of each institution without any monthly subscription charges.
Members can pay monthly bills or fees and make an online booking for different facilities via myApps.
The organization will get easy access to reports on payments, facilities booked by members, requests and complaints registered by users.
The app can be customized in over 20 languages starting with Hindi and English.
The move by HDFC bank aims to help organizations to entirely digitize their ecosystem through myApps.
Currently, HDFC Bank is offering four types of applications namely, mySociety, myClub, myPrayer, and myCity.

**RBI launched the Aadhaar-based Video Customer Identification Process**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the **Aadhaar-based Video Customer Identification Process (V-CIP)** on 9 January 2020. The aim of the move is to allow banks and other lenders to remotely complete Know Your Customer (KYC) of customers on videos.

**V-CIP:**

RBI has allowed consent-based video-based KYC as an option to establish a customer's identity.

It is expected that it will make the process easier for banks and other regulated entities to adhere to the RBI's KYC norms.

It moves with a view to leveraging the digital channels for the **Customer Identification Process (CIP) by Regulated Entities (REs).**

RES has been encouraged to take the assistance of the latest available technology like **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and face matching technologies**, to ensure the integrity of the process and the information furnished by the customer.

This consent-based method will be an alternate method of establishing the customer's identity, for customer onboarding.

This approval by RBI was a long-standing industry demand for several years as many banks, especially digital NBFCs and fin-tech startups, as it will reduce the costs of physically reaching out to customers in remote locations where they did not otherwise have branches.
NSO estimated India's GDP growth rate as 5 percent for the current fiscal

National Statistical Office (NSO) has estimated India's GDP growth rate for 2019-20 estimated at 5% on 7 January 2020. It has seen dipping to an 11-year low of 5% in the current fiscal. This is mainly due to poor showing by the manufacturing and construction sectors. The previous low economic growth was recorded at 3.1% in 2008-09.

Report highlights:

As per the first advance estimates of the national income released by NSO, the estimated growth of the Indian economy of 5% in 2019-20 as against 6.8% in the previous fiscal.

The report also states that the output of the manufacturing sector is expected to decelerate to 2% in 2019-20 from 6.2% in the previous fiscal. The reduction was also witnessed in sectors like construction and electricity, agriculture, gas and water supply.

Some sectors like mining, public administration, and defence have shown minor improvement.

The estimated growth of real Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2019-20 is 4.9% as against 6.6% in 2018-19.

Also, Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) at current prices has been estimated at Rs.57.42 lakh crore in 2019-20 as against Rs.55.70 lakh crore in 2018-19.

NSO has estimated the per capita income at current prices at Rs.1,35,050, showing a rise of 6.8% against Rs.1,26,406 during 2018-19 with a growth rate of 10.0%.
**National Statistical Office (NSO):**

NSO is responsible to conduct large scale sample surveys in diverse fields on an **All India basis.** It functions under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MSoPI).** It maintains a frame of urban area units for use in sample surveys in urban areas.

The **four divisions of NSO** are Field Operations Division (FOD), Survey Design and Research Division (SDRD), Survey Coordination Division (SCD), and Data Processing Division (DPD).

**World Bank estimates Indias growth in FY20 to dip to 5 percent**

The **World Bank** estimated a **5% growth rate** in fiscal 2019-2020 for India. The World Bank's update is in line with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) October policy estimate in which it slashed the Indian economy's expected growth to 5% for the fiscal year 2019-2020.

**Report Highlights:**

The report estimated that weakness in credit from **non-banking financial companies (NBFCs)** will linger during the fiscal, but the rate might recover to 5.8% in the next fiscal.

The reports said that insufficient credit conditions in NBFCs are contributing to a substantial weakening of the domestic demand in the country.

It stated that the regional growth in South Asia is expected to pick up gradually, to
6% in 2022
It also estimated the world economic growth at 2.5% in FY20

India to double the crude oil imports from the US

India is planning to double crude oil imports from the US. The move is a part of its effort to reduce dependence on the West Asia region.

India's major oil imports:
India started to purchase Oil from the US in 2017-18. So far, it has already crossed about 6 million tonnes a year. India also has long-term oil supply contracts with Russia and oil-producing countries in Africa. India is depending highly on oil imports from West Asia.

The top 3 suppliers of Oil to India in 2018-19 are:

- Iraq with about 46.6 million tonnes (MT)
- Saudi Arabia with 40.3 MT
- The UAE with 17.5 MT.

It should be noted that Kuwait has also supplied 10.8 MT to India in 2018-19. These countries supplied about 51% of the total of 226.5 MT of oil worth Rs.7.83 lakh crore ($111.9 billion) that India imported in 2018-19.
INTERNATIONAL

Iran fully withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal

Iran has announced its total withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which is commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal. The exit of Iran comes after the U.S. targeted strike that killed Iran's Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani in Iraq on 3 January 2020. Iran announced that it will no longer commit to any limits on the level of uranium enrichment, a stockpile of nuclear fuel and also nuclear research and development.

Iran nuclear deal:
Iran agreed to a long-term deal on its nuclear programme with the P5+1 group of world powers in 2015. The P5+1 countries are the US, UK, France, China, Russia, and Germany. Under the deal, Iran acceded to a 10-year restriction on nuclear production. As of May 2018, there was a broad consensus that Iran has abided by the agreement. The United States President Donald Trump announced the United States was withdrawing from the deal on 8 May 2018. Even after the US's withdrawal, the European Union, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Russia, and China attempted to maintain the nuclear deal.

Zoran Milanovic won Croatia's presidential election

Zoran Milanovic won Croatia's presidential election. He Croatia's center-left former prime minister. He defeated center-right incumbent Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic in a second-round vote. The presidential election was held on 22 December 2019. He belongs to the Social Democrats (SDP). Milanovic won 52.7% of the vote and Grabar-Kitarovic of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) won 47.3%.

Croatia:
Prime Minister: Andrej Plenkovic
Capital city: Zagreb
Official languages: Croatian
Currency: Kuna (HRK)
It shares border with:
Slovenia to the northwest
Hungary to the northeast
Serbia to the east
Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro to the southeast

Pedro Sanchez to be the Prime Minister of Spain

Spain's Parliament confirmed Socialist leader Pedro Sanchez as Prime Minister of the country on 7 January 2020. He will hold the office for another term at the helm of the country's first-ever coalition government since its return to democracy in the 1970s.

Pedro Sanchez:
Mr. Sanchez won 167 votes in the 350-seat Assembly compared to 165 votes against Catalan and Basque separatist MPs. He is planning to form a minority coalition government with hard-left party Podemos. This will be the first coalition government in Spain since the country returned to democracy following the death of longtime dictator Francisco Franco in 1975.
INDIAN AFFAIRS

MEA sets up NEXT division to new and emerging technologies

The Ministry of External Affairs has announced that it is to set up a new division on New and Emerging Strategic Technologies (NEST). It was announced by the Foreign Minister S Jalshankar. The move is a bid to deal with emerging security implications arising due to the emergence of new technologies like 5G and artificial intelligence (AI).

The move comes after the government approved all the telecom equipment makers, including Chinese Huawei, to participate in the 5G trials.

NEST:

NEST division will be the nodal point in India's foreign ministry. It will handle all matters connected to new and emerging technologies including the exchange of views with foreign governments and coordination with domestic ministries and departments. NEST will deal with emerging challenges and scenarios.

It will also help to assess foreign policy and international legal implications of technology-based resources and emerging technology. The desk will be involved in negotiations to safeguard Indian interests at multilateral fora like the United Nations or the G20 where rules governing the use and access to such technologies could be decided.

KVIC opened the first Silk processing plant in Gujarat

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has opened its first Silk processing plant in Gujarat. The aim is to boost the production of signature Patola Saree and create livelihoods for women. KVIC aims to promote Indian Crafts and Culture.

Patola:

Patola is the trademark Saree of Gujarat. It is one of the most eminent symbols of Indian Craftsmanship. It is priced very high and is out of reach of common women. The raw material is purchased from Karnataka or West Bengal, where the silk processing units are situated. This increases the cost of fabric manifolds.

Silk Processing Plant of KVIC:

The KVIC launched its first Silk Processing Plant at Surendranagar. The major
initiative would help cut down the cost of production of silk yarn drastically and increase the sale and availability of raw material for Gujarati Patola Sarees locally. The cost of the plant is **Rs.75 lakh** in which KVIC has contributed **Rs.60 lakh**. The unit has generated employment for 90 local women, among which 70 women belong to the Muslim community. Cocoons will be brought from Karnataka and West Bengal and Silk yarn will be processed in the new facility. It is expected that this will reduce the cost of production and give a major boost to the sale of famous Gujarati Patola Sarees.

**MHRD has taken steps to transform the education sector**

The Government has initiated the process of formulating a **New Education Policy**. The policy aims to meet the changing dynamics of the requirements of the population with regard to quality education, innovation, and research.

In the year 2019, Dr. K Kasturirangan Committee submitted the Draft National Education Policy to the ministry. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) took a leap forward in transforming the education sector with the motto of Education for All and Quality Education.

**The programs mentioned in the draft launched by MHRD:**

MHRD has launched the Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Program, **DHRUV**, to identify and encourage talented children to enrich their skills and knowledge.

It also launched the **National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA)** to improve learning outcomes at the elementary level through an Integrated Teacher Training Programme.

MHRD launched many other new schemes in the Higher Education Department to boost research and Innovation culture in the country. Department of Higher Education of HRD Ministry has finalized and released a five-year vision plan named Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP). SWAYAM 2.0, Deeksharambh and PARAMARSH are other major schemes of the Department of Higher Education launched in 2019.

Also, under the Samagra Shiksha programme a total of 5930 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas have been sanctioned in the country out of which 4881 such schools are operational. An outlay of over Rs.800 crore has been approved under sports grants for over 10 lakh government schools of different categories.
Chandigarh railway station gets navigation facilities for visually impaired

Navigation facilities for visually impaired was inaugurated at Chandigarh railway station in Punjab on 5 January 2020. This facility has been introduced by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation through Bengaluru-based NGO Anuprayaas. Chandigarh is the fifth Railway station in the country and first in North India to have this facility.

**Benefit:**
This move aims to help visually impaired passengers to know about the passenger amenities at the Chandigarh Railway Station. The railway station is installed with Braille Tactile Map, signages for all the facilities and offices on the premise like Enquiry, Station Manager, waiting rooms, lifts, and toilets, etc. With these applications, visually impaired people can identify these facilities independently. This will reduce the common challenges faced by visually impaired people at railway stations like missing trains because of wrong guidance. It will empower them to travel independently.

Govt. rolls out the 2nd phase of IMI 2.0 in Uttar Pradesh

The second phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 was rolled out at block level in 35 districts of Uttar Pradesh on 6 January 2020. It will cover 425 blocks of 73 districts of the Uttar Pradesh state.

**Aim:**
The drive aims to prevent 8 diseases under the mission. The scheme ensures the children under the age of 2 years and pregnant women are immunized against eight vaccine-preventable diseases.

**Second phase in UP:**
Under the program the government has planned to provide the immunization activity four rounds over seven working days excluding the Regular immunization days, Sundays and holidays.

- **First round** was completed in December 2019
- **Second round** began on 6 January 2020
- **Third and fourth round** will in February and March months respectively

Around 66,000 sessions will be organized for vaccination of more than 5.5 lakh children and around 1.3 lakh pregnant women of the state.
Prior to the launch of the program, detail of all children under the age of 2 who were left during earlier vaccination drives, were collected with the help of Asha workers in December 2019, will benefit in the second phase.

The mission includes an enhanced focus on dropouts, left-outs, and resistant families and hard to reach areas. It will focus on urban, underserved population and tribal areas.

**IMI 2.0:**

The aim of the program launched by the central government in 2017 is to achieve 90% vaccination coverage in *children of less than 2 years* in the state.

The Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 targets full immunization coverage in 272 districts spread over 27 States.

The IMI covers vaccines for whooping cough, tetanus, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, measles, meningitis and Hepatitis B.

In selected areas, vaccines for *Japanese encephalitis (JE)* and *Haemophilus influenza* are also provided.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush will be conducted until March 2020.

**Jai Ram Thakur launched MyGov portal, CM app**

*Himachal State government* unveiled the *Himachal MyGov portal* on 6 January 2020. The portal was launched by the *Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur*. This is expected to strengthen public participation in the Governance process. He also launched the CM App on the occasion. With this launch, the State has become 11th State to have this facility.

**MyGov portal:**

MyGov portal is a platform that aims to provide *partnership between Citizens and State/Central Government* with the help of technology for the growth and development of India.

The platform is expected to enhance citizen-partnership with the State Government and vice versa.

Using the portal the people of the State can communicate their views, suggestions, feedback as well discontentment if any.

The State Government will give due consideration to constructive criticism and synergizing all contributions for the betterment of the State and Country.

Both the app, MyGov Himachal Portal and Chief Minister App, would bring
Administration closer to people and ensure two-way communications between the Government and the People.

**Gujarat to set up Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center**

**Gujarat** Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced that the State is to set up the **Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC)** in the state. The announcement was made at the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) held at Swarnim Sankul in Gandhinagar. He felicitated top 30 idea teams, out 114 teams, led by school students in the state. Also, a letter of intent was exchanged between **Gujarat University and UNICEF** on the occasion.

**VSCIC:**
The center will identify, nurture and promote children's ideas and innovation.

**CIF:**
Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) was organized by **Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC)**. The initiative was aimed to identify, nurture and support children's innovations in the state. More than 480 teams applied from 25 districts of Gujarat, out of which 114 teams were selected for CIF Boot Camp for mentorship and capacity building on entrepreneurship. The festival was exclusively organized for the school-going children up to 18 years old.

**Note:** GUSEC is an incubation centre set up by Gujarat University in partnership with UNICEF.

**Govt approves Capital Grant as VGF for North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)/ Capital Grant** of Rs.5,559 crore, which is 60% of the estimated cost, to **Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited** on 8 January 2020. The aim is to build **Natural Gas Pipeline Grid** covering 8 North-Eastern states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. This is second such funding by the government for the gas pipeline project.

**Natural Gas Pipeline Grid:**
The tentative estimated cost for the grid is **Rs.9,265 crore**. The current approval by the government is expected to cover 60% cost of the project.
The Natural Gas Pipeline Grid project is a **1,656 km pipeline**. It will connect Guwahati in Assam to major cities in the State such as Aizawl, Agartala, Dimapur, Imphal, Itanagar, Kohima. The government plans to develop the **Gas Pipeline Grid** in all the eight states of the North-Eastern region. The Capital Grant approved by the government will provide natural gas supplies to various types of consumers and help in substituting the liquid fuels. It is expected that the pipeline grid will ensure reliability and uninterrupted natural gas supplies to the consumers.

**Cabinet approves to confer National Importance status to Gujarat Ayurveda University campus**

The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved to confer the **Institution of National Importance status** to the **Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar**. It will be given the status by **conglomerating Ayurveda Institutes at Gujarat Ayurveda University campus**, Jamnagar, namely,

(a) Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda
(b) Shri Gulabkunwerba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya
(c) Institute of Ayurveda Pharmaceutical Sciences including Pharmacy Unit and to subsume the Maharshi Patanjali Institute for Yoga & Naturopathy Education & Research into the Department of Swasthvritta of the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda.

The Bill to confer the status to the institute will be introduced in Parliament to declare the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar as Institution of National Importance.

**Why confer National Importance status:**

**AYUSH systems** is a rapidly growing role as it addresses the Public Health challenges of India. By considering the growth, it is necessary for the government to confer the **status of National Importance**. It will boost the role and **importance of Ayurveda** in Public Health. By strengthening Ayurveda, the expenditure on health by the government will be reduced as Ayurveda is cost-effective.

**CM Thackeray to inaugurate 2020 Advantage Maharashtra Expo**
Chief Minister **Uddhav Thackeray** is to inaugurate **Advantage Maharashtra Expo 2020** on 9 January 2020. The event will be held from 9-12 January Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India. The valedictory function will be attended by the **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari**.

**Organized by:**
The four-day event of the industrial exhibition is organized by the **Marathwada Association of Small Scale Industries and Agriculture (MASSIA)** in association with the Maharashtra State Government, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC).

**Aim:**
The expo is aimed at providing business opportunities to the local small-scale industrialists.

**Advantage Maharashtra Expo 2020:**
The seventh Advantage Maharashtra Expo 2020 will witness the showcasing of the regional industrial strength.

- Over 445 stalls will be set up by various companies to exhibit their products
- The event will also include conferences and seminars that are organized by MASSIA.
- Also, different types of **agriculture, industrial, pharma products** which were manufactured by various companies, automobiles spares will be showcased in the event.
- Companies from China, Germany, Japan, and some other countries have been invited to the event.

**Panel approved 150 private trains on 100 routes**

A panel, set up by Union Minister **Piyush Goyal** approved 150 private trains on 100 routes. Railway Board chairman VK Yadav flagged off private trains in the Centre’s 100 days' agenda. The route includes Mumbai-Delhi and Howrah-Delhi sectors, which will compete with Rajdhani. Also, as an experiment **two Tejas trains** have been handed over for running by Railways-controlled **IRCTC** on the Delhi-Lucknow and Mumbai-Ahmedabad routes with the private sector.

**Why are the trains needed?**
There is a huge demand in the country with unmet demand, with **15% waitlisted passengers**.
The move also, aim to improve **service quality**

It comes after the reserved passenger growth estimated at under **5%** during 2013-18, compared with 13% for airlines

According to government data, in 2018-19, the reserved passenger volume was **16%**, around 590 million, of the total who originate from non-suburban passengers and almost **Rs.8.85 crore** of wait-listed passengers could not be accommodated.

The Indian Railways is striving to end the waiting list for passengers.

**Worlds highest railway bridge to be built by 2021 December**

The government has set a fresh deadline for the completion of the **world's highest railway bridge** that connects Kashmir to the rest of India by December 2021. It is the most challenging project in the post-independent history of the **Indian Railways**.

**Aim:**
The **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project** is important in order to provide an alternative and reliable transportation system to Jammu and Kashmir. It will connect Kashmir Valley to the Indian Railways’ network. This project will provide seamless and hassle-free connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Highest railway bridge:**
The major rail project was declared a national project in **2002**.

The highest railway line is expected to be **35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower**. The 1.315-km-long rail line is being constructed in hostile terrain.

It used over **5,462 tonnes** of steel
It is located 359 metres above the river bed
It has been designed to withstand wind speeds of up to 260 km per hour (kmph)
It will connect **Bakkal**, Katra and **Kauri**, Srinagar.

It forms a crucial link in the 111-km stretch between Katra and Banihal.
After completion, it will surpass the record of the Beipan river Shuibai railway bridge, which is 275 m long, in China.

**Manmad and Bhusawal stations gets AI-backed Facial recognition technology**

Bengaluru's **Manmad and Bhusawal stations** were installed with the **Facial recognition technology** backed by artificial intelligence (AI) as test cases to
identify and nab criminals.

**Aim:**
The main objective of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) is to link the facial recognition system with existing databases such as the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and systems. It will also identify criminals who roam in the railway stations.

**AI-backed Facial recognition technology:**
The face recognition software will alert the RPF command centre of any known offenders.

After successful testing of the facial recognition system, the technology will be implemented across the railway network.

The Railway Board has also approved to carry out works for **video surveillance systems (VSS)** covering 983 stations under Nirbhaya funds.

**RailTel** will provide Internet Protocol (IP)-based VSS with video analytics and facial recognition system.

A total sum of Rs.250 crore has been allotted to the Indian Railways in 2020 from the Nirbhaya fund for the installation of VSS.

Indian Railways has also installed IP-based Video Surveillance System at **10 railway stations of Western Railway** namely Bhavnagar Terminus, Nagda, Navsari, Vapi, Rajkot, Udhna, Valsad, Viragam, Veraval, Gandhidham.

The move is a part of a security plan under the **Integrated Security System (ISS)** which was approved in 2016 with an objective to strengthen surveillance mechanisms at 202 railway stations.

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**Cabinet apprised of information about amendments to the 2019 Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill**

The Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi apprised of information about the amendments moved to the **Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019** as passed by the **Rajya Sabha**.

**Provision:**
The amendments made to the Bill will ensure concurrence of the State Governments while formulating National Transport Policy and making schemes for national, multimodal and inter-state transportation of goods and passengers by the Central Government.
History:
The **Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019** was approved by the Cabinet in its meeting held on 24 June 2019 for re-introduction in the Lok Sabha. The lower house passed the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on 23 July 2019. It was then passed for Rajaya Sabha's approval for consideration on 31 July 2019. The Bill with the official amendments was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 31 July 2019. The amendments were placed before the Lok Sabha and were passed in the Lok Sabha on 5 August 2019.

The 8th edition of Odisha MSME International Trade Fair began

The **8th edition of Odisha Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) International Trade Fair 2020** began in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated.

**Organized by:**
The trade fair is being organized by the **MSME department of the state** through Directorate of Export Promotion and Marketing, Directorate Industries, and Odisha Small Industries Corporation in association with the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO).

**Trade Fair:**
The trade fair will offer a unique opportunity to **MSME Entrepreneurs of Odisha** to showcase their products and services before National and International visitors. The brands like Kalinga and Utkal are with a glorious ancient past. Odisha people are known for their enterprising nature and proved themselves in Textiles, Handicrafts, Food Processing and Information Technology.

The fair extended an invitation to the entrepreneurs from **Iran and Bangladesh** who had set up their stalls at the fair.

Government to set up 1023 Fast Track Special Courts

The Central Government has started a **Scheme to set up 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)** across the country. FTSCs will be formed based on the pendency of subject cases obtained from various High Courts, which is **1,66,882 numbers** as on 31 March 2018, for time-bound trial and disposal of pending cases related to rape and POCSO Act.
Earlier, the Supreme Court of India said out of 1023 FTSCs, 389 Courts have been proposed to be set up exclusively for POCSO Act related cases in Districts where pendency of such cases is more than 100. So far, 24 states/UTs have joined the government's scheme to set up 792 numbers of FTSCs, including 354 exclusive POCSO courts. Govt. is making efforts to obtain consent and willingness of remaining States/UTs.

**Note:** The states agreed to set up FTSCs are Andhara Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, NCT of Delhi, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, UT of Chandigarh, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

**Kerala State Youth Commission to conduct Adalat for the LGBT community**

The Kerala State Youth Commission has scheduled a state-level Adalat to be held at Thiruvananthapuram. It aims to encourage the transgender community to open up about various issues faced by them and for speedy grievance redressal.

**Adalat:**
This is the first time such an event is organized in the State.
Adalat is exclusively for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community.
It will provide a platform for the transgender community to air their grievances.
The Youth Commission aims to protect the right of the youths by addressing the problems of young people in the transgender community.
Kerala State government has a transgender policy in place from 2015. The policy aims to improve the lives of the transgender community. The state also has transgender cells working under the social justice department of Kerala.

**BRO inducts 7 FRESIA machines from Italy to clear snowfall blocks in Kashmir**

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has inducted seven high-tech snow cutter FRESIA machines from Italy to clear the snowfall that blocks important highways and roads in the Kashmir Valley every winter. BRO has received four of the machines and the rest will be imported soon.
Reason:
In Kashmir, Snowfall during winter blocks important strategic roads including the Jammu-Srinagar, Srinagar-Leh, Gurez-Bandipora and Kupwara-Karnah highways. It takes a lot of time to clear the snow. The move comes as a solution to this problem.

FRESIA machines:
FRESIA machines will be used for swift snow cutting and clearance of these important highways and passes.

It works with tremendous speed and can operate at an altitude of even 18500 ft and above and have the capability of clearing 5000 tons of snow per hour.

The machines can clear 1.5 meters high accumulated snow and 300 meters long in an hour. The equipment can clear about 1 km of the snow-covered road in just three to four hours.

The new machines have been put to use at Tregbal in Bandipora-Gurez road, Jawahar tunnel on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, Nowgam in Handwara and Sadhna Pass in Tanghdar, Kupwara.

Border Roads Organisation (BRO):
Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was established in May 1960. It is headquartered in New Delhi. It functions under the Ministry of Defence. BRO aims to meet the strategic needs of the armed forces. It develops and maintains the Operational Road Infrastructure of General Staff in the Border Areas. It also contributes to the social and economic development of the Border States. The Director-General of BRO is Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh.

Census India 2021 will begin on 1 April

Census India 2021 will begin on 1 April and will end on 30 September 2020. The Census will be conducted through a mobile phone application. The move aims to move away from the traditional pen and paper.

Census India 2021:
Census enumerators of the census will collect the information of mobile number of the head of the family, information related to toilets, TV, Internet, vehicles owned, source of drinking water, Information will be sought on building number, wall, and roof of the census house, census house number, predominant material of the floor, household number, use of census house, condition of the census house, total
number of persons normally residing in the household, name of the head of the household and the person's sex beginning of 1 April.

The officials have been instructed to ask as many as 31 questions from every household during both house listing and housing census exercises.

The Government of India (GOI) also aims to carry out the National Population Register (NPR) exercise along with the house listing phase of the census.

GoI is targeting September 2020 deadline to update the NPR which is a list of usual residents of the country.

The census will have the reference date as 1 March 2021, but for snow-bound J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand it will be 1 October 2020.

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 programme to be held on 20 January

Seven students from Jammu Division have been selected for the 3rd edition of the Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 programme which will be held on 20 January 2020. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be interacting with the students from across the country at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi.

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 programme:

Of the 7 selected students, 6 students are from Government Schools.

A total of 4569 students from Jammu Division Schools register for the 3rd edition of the programme of using around 85 Facilitation Centers established across the Division by the Directorate Of School Education Jammu to help students in the registration process.

Students were selected on the basis of submission of online forms, open for the students of class 9th to 12th.

The students selected from Jammu Division schools under the programme are:

1) Manya Pandoh from GGHSS, Mubarak Mandi Jammu
2) Lakshya Langeh from Government SRML School
3) Karishma Raina from Government Girls HSS Nowabad, Jammu
4) Avni Pandita from Government Girls HSS Nowabad, Jammu
5) Kanika Sharma from Government HSS Jorian
6) Sanchita from Presentation Convent Senior Secondary School, Jammu
7) Tushrika from Government Girls Model Higher Secondary School, Mubarak Mandi
Odisha approved Rs.8,000 crore for Hindalcos new alumina refinery unit

Odisha's High-Level Clearance Authority (HLCA) approved a new greenfield alumina refinery unit. The project was proposed by Aditya Birla Group-owned Hindalco Industries. This will be Hindalco's second alumina refining complex in Odisha after the Utkal Alumina refining project, also in the Rayagada district.

Alumina refinery unit:
The estimated cost of the new facility is Rs.8,000 crore. The new unit is to be set up at Kansariguda near Rayagada in Odisha. The capacity of the plant is 2 million tonnes per annum. It is expected to provide employment for 4,250 people.

Hindalco counts on the Odisha government on raw material for feeding the refinery. Also, Bauxite from any of the leases of Odisha Mining Corporation will feed the planned refinery of Hindalco.

The estimated project scheduled is four to five years

Hindalco Industries Ltd:
Founded on: 1958
Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra India
Chairman: Kumar Mangalam Birla
Products: Aluminum and copper products

Hindalco is an aluminium and copper manufacturing company in India. It is a subsidiary of the Aditya Birla Group.

India tightens export policy for the rice to EU countries

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry amended the export policy for rice export to the European Union (EU) members on 9 January 2020.

New policy:
Under the tightened inspection policy, the Basmati and non-Basmati rice to outbound shipments are subject to certificates issued by Export Inspection Council (EIC) or Export Inspection Agency. Earlier the export was free to EU member states. The policy includes the EU member states and European countries namely Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

Background:
India's rice export to European countries dipped to around 40% in 2018-19 due to
the issue of **maximum residue level (MRL)** in pesticides. Currently, the market is likely to shrink further in 2020 as rice samples have failed the mandatory testing. European Commission has reduced the maximum residues level for Tricyclazole from 1 ppm for all crops in 2018 to 0.01 parts per million (ppm). After 2018, the export of basmati rice from India to EU was reduced to 38.35% and 9% in 2018-19 and April-September of 2019-20 respectively due to the pesticide residue issue.

**PM Modi is to re-dedicate three iconic colonial buildings in Kolkata**

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi** is to re-dedicate Kolkata's four iconic colonial buildings to the people of Kolkata. The four buildings Currency Building, Metcalfe Hall, Belvedere House, and Victoria Memorial Hall have now been completely resorted. The structures are now expected to be turned into vibrant cultural spaces in Kolkata. He will be re-dedicating the building during his visit to Kolkata on 11-12 January 2020.

**Currency Building:**
The Currency Building is located in Kolkata's Dalhousie region. It was built in the year 1833. It was designed in Italian style with Venetian windows. Till 1937, the building was home to the Reserve Bank of India. It was then neglected and set to demolish. But the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) took over in 2002 and declared the building a protected monument.

**Metcalfe Hall:**
Metcalfe Hall was built between 1840-1844 as a public library. It features 30 Corinthian pillars. It is situated in the Kolkata's Dalhousie region and just around 200 m away from the Currency Building. It was restored in early 2019. Metcalfe Hall has an exhibition called Ami Kolkata, on the people of Kolkata.

**Belvedere House:**
The Belvedere House is situated inside the campus of the National Library. The building used to be home to the Governors of Bengal and the Viceroy of India. After restoration, the building features the paintings of Elizabeth Bruner, Santiniketan, and some old photographs of Kolkata by painters including Raja Deen Dayal.

**Victoria Memorial Hall:**
The Victoria was built between 1906 and 1921 in the memory of Queen Victoria. It lies by the bank of the Hooghly River, near Jawaharlal Nehru Road.
Memorial has around 25 galleries and the gardens are covered of 64 acres.

**AAI reported that 4 Indian airports received international recognition**

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has announced 4 airports in India have received international recognition for reducing carbon emission. The airports had adopted the grading system in 2018 as per ACI.

**Report:**

The airports have transited from level 1 to level 2 as they successfully implemented a carbon emission plan by grading their systems according to the Airports Council International (ACI) in 2018.

**The four airports are:**

1) Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata
2) Biju Patnaik International Airport, Bhubaneswar
3) Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi
4) Trivandrum International Airport

AAI data reported that the CO2 emission in the airports during the years 2015, 16, 17, 18 witnessed a decrease in emission despite an increase in air traffic. It also met the 4 grading systems of ACI namely mapping, reduction, optimization, and neutrality.

The 4 airports met all the necessary requirements to upgrade to level 2 as per the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) Program.

**IT dept sets up control room ahead of Delhi election**

The Income-Tax (IT) Department has launched a control room to monitor black money and illegal inducements round the clock, that is 24x7, in Delhi on 10 January 2020.

**Control room:**

The control room will host a toll-free number, 1800117574

People can inform the department about any activity of illegal distribution of cash, use of money power, among other such election-related crimes.

The control room has been established in the investigation wing of the department in Delhi.

**Delhi Election:**
The moves come before the assembly elections to the seventy seats in Delhi will be held on 8 February. The state election will witness the contest among the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress. The results are scheduled to be declared on 11 February 2020.

On the other, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has also appointed 22 IRS officers of the IT Department as expenditure observers for these poll

UP to set up a zoo named after Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan

Uttar Pradesh State government is to set up a zoological garden in Gorakhpur, UP. The zoo is to be named after the socialist and freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan.

About UP's new zoological garden:
The zoological garden will be spread across 121 acres in Gorakhpur
The state government has set aside Rs.234 crore to set up the zoological garden

Ashfaqulla Khan:
Khan was born on 22 October 1900 in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. He was a freedom fighter who participated in Gandhi’s non-cooperation movement (NCM), Chauri Chaura incident.

Ashfaqulla Khan along with Ram Prasad Bismil found the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). The association aimed to win freedom for the country through an armed revolution. Khan and Bismil were sentenced to death for the Kakori train robbery, commonly referred to as the Kakori conspiracy of 1925. In April 1927, he was arrested and sentenced to death.

UP organizes programs to promote Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat campaign

As a measure to promote Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat, the Uttar Pradesh State government organized various programs in the State. Many schools and colleges of the state are organizing events for the purpose.

Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat in UP:
Uttar Pradesh has partnered with Arunachal Pradesh to promote the campaign. Many cultural exchanges took place between the two states.
Cultural troops of Arunachal Pradesh performed in Agra district of the state in December 2019.
As a part of cultural exchange, many artisans from UP also went to Arunachal Pradesh and tasted the authentic UP Food. This event was promoted by the state culture department.
The events are being organized at a regular interval in various parts of the country. It encourages people of both states to know each other's culture in a better way.
Baba Sahab Bhimrao Ambedkar University Lucknow has announced that it is to celebrate EK Bharat Shreshtha Bharat day on every second Friday of the month.

Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly adopted a new logo

The Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly (APLA) adopted a new logo on 9 January. The logo reflects the distinct identity and culture of the state.

Logo:
The new logo consists of the national emblem and the state flower foxtail orchid, Rhynchostylis Retusa.
The national emblem in the logo signifies the federal system of the Indian Constitution.
The flower foxtail orchid represents the state, its people and culture of the state.
The blue colour of the logo denotes the autonomy of the assembly secretariat.

Ministry of Steel to launch of Purvodaya, an Integrated Steel Hub

Ministry of steel in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and JPC is organizing the launch of Purvodaya-Accelerated Development of Eastern Region through an Integrated Steel hub on 11 January 2020 at The Oberoi Grand Kolkata, West Bengal. The hub will be launched by the Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan. The hub is in line with the Prime Minister's Vision for the focused development of the Eastern States.

Purvodaya:
Purvodaya will be a world-class steel hub. It would significantly contribute to propelling socio-economic development in the Eastern region.
Steel capacity addition will entail capital investments of >$70 Bn and lead to an incremental GSDP of >$35 bn through steel alone.
It is expected that the growth of the steel industry through such a hub will generate over 2.5 Million jobs in the region.
The creation of world-class logistics and utility infrastructure will spur the development of other manufacturing industries across many sectors in the state. The hub will be accompanied by social infrastructure in the form of cities, schools, hospitals, skilling centres, etc.

It will play a significant role in the overall socio-economic growth of Eastern India and reduce the disparity between the East and other regions of the country.

India erects a new non-cut steel fence along Pakistan, Bangladesh

India is currently erecting a new non-cut steel fence along its sensitive border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It aims to plug vulnerable and infiltration-prone patches. Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Border Security Force (BSF) has been speeding up the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) for the deployment of smart fences, advanced surveillance gadgets and anti-infiltration alarms.

Non-cut steel fence:
The single-row fence has loops of concertina wires on top.
It is being erected at a 60 km border stretch in Amritsar, Punjab.
A pilot project of the new fence is being tested at a 7 km stretch in Assam's Silchar. It is being analyzed by the Border Security Force (BSF).
The cost of the fence will cost about Rs.2 crore for a kilometre.

Based on the feedback received from the pilot projects, the new fence will be erected at more places where either the old one has worn out or there was no fence owing to geographical challenges.
It aims to strengthen Indian defences along Pakistan, mapping of infiltration prone areas along the two borders.

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal. Through the portal, people can report cyber crimes online.

Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C):
I4C and the portal will let all cybercrime-related complaints be accessed by law
enforcement agencies in the states and union territories (UTs) to take action as per the law.

More than 700 police districts and more than 3,900 police stations have been connected to the portal, www.cybercrime.gov.in, so far.

It is a citizen-centric initiative.

The portal aims to boost the capacity of the law enforcement agencies to investigate cases.

It is expected that it will improve the success rate of prosecutions.

The portal also focuses on specific crimes especially those related to finance and social media like cyberbullying, stalking, etc.

It will improve coordination amongst the agencies of law enforcement in different states, districts, and police stations to deal with cybercrimes in a coordinated and effective manner.

The 7 main components are:

1) National Cyber Crime Threat Analytics Unit
2) National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal
3) National Cyber Crime Training Centre
4) Cyber Crime Ecosystem Management Unit
5) National Cyber Crime Research and Innovation Centre
6) National Cyber Crime Forensic Laboratory Ecosystem
7) Platform for Joint Cyber Crime Investigation Team.

Note: The scheme to set up l4C portal was approved by GoI in October 2018. The estimated cost for the project was Rs.415.86 crore. It was aimed to deal with all types of cybercrimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO proposes to set up Human Space Flight Centre in Challakere

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has proposed a Rs.2,700 crore master plan to create a top infrastructure that will house its young Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC). The HSFC was formally announced in January 2019. It currently works from a temporary place at the ISRO headquarters, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

HSFC:
ISRO has announced to set up India's world-class facility for training astronauts in three years at Challakere in Chitradurga district of Karnataka. The announcement was made by K. Sivan, ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space. After establishing the centre, everything connected with events and planning of the Human Spaceflight Programme (HSP) will be moved to the Challakere campus. It is expected that the 400-acre ISRO land at Challakere will be the single-stop consolidating infrastructure and activities related to space travellers.

Reason to set up HSFC:
India is currently paying a huge sum to Russia for the training of the first set of four astronaut candidates for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022. Also, HSP work is split across various centres like Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru.

ISRO to set up Indian Data Relay Satellite System

ISRO is planning to set a new satellite series called the Indian Data Relay Satellite System. It aims to ring its own era of space-to-space tracking and communication of its space assets in 2020. It was announced by K. Sivan, ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space.

IRDSS:
The Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) will track and be constantly in touch with Indian satellites, in particular, those in low-earth orbits (LEO) which have limited coverage of earth. This is necessary as ISRO has planned with advanced LEO missions such as space station, space docking, and distant expeditions to the moon, Mars and Venus.
IRDSS will also be useful in monitoring launches.

**Titanic wave of star-forming gases spotted in Milky Way**

Scientists from Harvard University have discovered a **titanic wave of star-forming gases** practically in the Milky way on 7 January 2020. The astronomers reported that the massive structures are located in the Milky Way galaxy's spiral arm closest to Earth.

**New star:**
The researchers were building a **3-D map of the Milky Way galaxy's interstellar matter using a star census gathered by Europe's Gaia spacecraft.**

The star-forming gases have been spotted as a wave-shaped structure.

It is **85 quadrillion kilometres** long

It is home to tens of thousands of small stars and has the potential for countless more stellar births.

The scientist says that all the stellar nurseries, or starforming blobs of gas, are interconnected and forms the wavy, gassy filament.

The wave is located just **500 light-years away from the Sun.**

**Scientist discovered the smallest clumps of dark matter**

The scientists from the University of California discovered the **smallest clumps of dark matter** ever identified called cold dark matter using a new technique using the Hubble Space Telescope and a feature of general relativity. This clump is 100,000 times less massive than the Milky Way galaxy's dark matter halo.

The **Small dark matter clumps** act as small cracks on the magnifying glass. It alters the brightness and position of the four quasar images. These clumps seemed to be between **10,000 and 100,000 times smaller** than the mass of the dark matter in and around the Milky Way.

**Dark matter:**
Dark matter is formed of particles that do not reflect, absorb, or emit light, so they cannot be detected by observing electromagnetic radiation. Such matters cannot be seen directly. The dark matter exists because of the effect it has on objects that can observe directly. The dark matter in space can not be directly detected as the Universe doesn't behave entirely as per the current physics.
ENVIRONMENT

Bihar to inaugurate rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles

Bihar's Bhagalpur forest division is to inaugurate a first-of-its-kind rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles in January 2020.

Rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles:
The rehab centre is spread over half a hectare. It will be able to shelter 500 turtles at a time.

The aim of the state government is because several turtles were found severely wounded and sick when rescued from smuggles by rescue teams. It is expected that this centre will play a significant role in treating these animals and their proper upkeep before being returned to their natural habitat.

It is necessary as the eastern Bihar has been an ideal breeding ground for turtles.

Punjab approves Rs.650 crore for the rejuvenation of Budah Nallah

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh has approved Rs.650 crore for the rejuvenation of highly polluting Budah Nallah at Ludhiana. The state government has directed the local government department to ensure the timely completion of the project, within two years. Out of the total approved amount Rs.342 crore will be contributed by the state government, Rs.208 crore will be contributed by the government of India and Rs.100 crore by the private operator.

Project Implementation:
In the first phase of the mission, augmentation and refurbishment of dairy effluent treatment, sewage treatment facility, survey to find out missing links for industrial effluent and laying of dedicated conveyance system for industrial wastewater to carry the same to Common Effluent Treatment Plant would be executed.

The second phase will involve Rs.150 crore. It will include reuse of treated effluent, and landscaping. Beautification along the Buddha Nallah will be undertaken at a cost of Rs.283 crore.

Budah Nallah pollution:
Budah Nallah has a total length of 47.55 km, of which 14 km passes through Ludhiana city. Ludhiana has been heavily polluted by the industrial and domestic waste thrown into the Nallah. It caused a major threat to public health and the
environment. The State government has called for the participation of the local industry, NGOs, religious and social organizations to carry out the mission. The Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) reported that the actual waste discharge being generated in the city is 711 million litres per day (MLD) including 610 MLD of domestic sewage discharge, 86 MLD discharge from industrial effluent and 15 MLD discharge from the dairy complex.

**IMD reported that 2019 is recorded as the seventh warmest year**

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the year 2019 was recorded as the seventh warmest year since 1901. It also said that the heating was substantially lower than the highest warming observed in 2016.

**Report Highlights:**

- The reports stated that 1,562 people died due to extreme weather events including heatwave, avalanches floods, and thunderstorms.
- It highlighted that the average temperature over India during the year 2019 was above normal.
- The average annual mean surface air temperature in India during 2019 was 0.36 degree Celsius above average recorded between 1981 and 2010 period.
- It records the warming during 2019 was substantially lower than the highest warming which was observed over India with 0.71 degree Celsius during 2016.
- The five warmest years recorded by IMD are 2016 with 0.71 degree Celsius, 2009 with 0.541 degree Celsius, 2017 with 0.539 degree Celsius, 2010 with 0.54 degree Celsius and 2015 with 0.42 degree Celsius.

**EU records 2019 as the 2nd hottest year**

Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) reported that 2019 was the second hottest year on record and ended the hottest decade in history.

**Report Highlights:**

- C3S's data showed that worldwide temperatures in 2019 were second only to 2016.
- It also stated that the temperatures were boosted by an exceptionally strong El Nino natural weather event to 0.12 degrees Celsius.
- It said that the average temperature in 2019 was only a few hundredths of a degree
below 2016.

The report recorded that five last years of the last decade (2010-2019) were the hottest period.

It stated that the global temperatures in 2019 were 0.6 Celsius warmer than the 1981-2010 average.

Earth's temperature over the last five years was 1.1 deg C-1.2 deg C warmer than pre-industrial times.

Global concentrations of CO2, the potent heat-trapping gas, also continued to increase in 2019. It increases by approximately 2.3 parts per million (ppm).

**What is El Nino?**

El Nino is a climate cycle that happens in the Pacific Ocean. It causes a global impact on weather patterns. The cycle begins as the warm water in the western tropical Pacific Ocean shifts eastward along the equator toward the coast of South America. Generally, this warm water pools near Indonesia and the Philippines.

**Copernicus Climate Change Service:**

Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) is the European Union's climate monitoring service. C3S are vital to climate change adaptation. It provides climate and climate change information and knowledge by means of accessible, timely, reliable, and user-oriented products.

**Note:** Copernicus is the EU’s Earth Observation Programme. It consists of a complex set of systems that collect data from multiple sources. The collected information will be processed and provides users with information through a set of services that address the atmosphere, climate change, land, marine, emergency management, and security.

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**Scientists developed a viable scientific method to cultivate Indian Pompano fish in ponds**

For the first time in India, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has developed a viable scientific method to cultivate Indian Pompano fish in ponds. Pompanos are marine fishes. The Indian government began the scientific study on Pompano in 2014.

**Research highlights:**

The method will be of an alternative to shrimp. The funding was provided by the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB). With this, it will now be
officially cultivated in ponds of Vishakhapatnam. The experiment recorded 750 grams of meat per fish in open ponds and 1 kg in cages. The new scientific invention by CMFRI recorded 95% of the survival of the fishes. The method provided 3 tonnes per acre yield and a profit of 25% to 30% of input cost per acre.

The scientists also said that growing Pompano along with shrimp will increase the survival rate of the shrimp as the Pompanos breaks the life cycle of viruses that attack shrimps.

The government is currently planning to implement inter-cropping of Shrimp and Pompanos.

GoI notified new set of rules to conserve wetlands

The government of India has notified a new set of rules to conserve wetlands across the country. The rule set by the Ministry of Environment was issued on 6 January 2020.

New set of rules:

The new rules prohibit setting up or expansion of industries, and disposal of construction and demolition waste within the wetlands.

The rules ensure to set up authority in each state and Union Territory (UT).

The authority has been directed to prepare a list of all wetlands of the state/UT within 3 months and make strategies for conservation and wise use of wetlands within their jurisdiction.

The official should recommend mechanisms to maintain ecological character through promotional activities for land within the boundary of notified wetlands.

The authority will include one expert each in the fields of wetland ecology, fisheries, hydrology, landscape planning, and socio-economics.

The experts will be nominated by the state government.

Wetlands in India:

In September 2019, the government has identified 130 wetlands for priority restoration in the next 5 years. It has also directed the States to submit their respective integrated management plan. The highest number of such identified wetlands are Uttar Pradesh with 16, Madhya Pradesh with 13, Jammu & Kashmir with 12, Gujarat with 8, Karnataka with 7 and West Bengal with 6. According to the data by ISRO provided national wetlands atlas on the basis of satellite imagery
and mapping over 2 lakh wetlands that cover around 4.63% of the total geographic area of India.

**Ten new songbirds have been found in the Wallacea Island**

Scientists found ten songbirds, five new species and five new subspecies, near Sulawesi, have officially joined the scientific record. One among them is a Togian jungle-flycatcher was found in the Wallacean islands off Indonesia's east coast. It is one of the several new bird species. The finding suggested that humans' understanding of biogeographically complex regions such as Wallacea remains incomplete.

**Wallacea Island:**
Wallacea is a group of mainly Indonesian islands separated by deep-water straits from the Asian and Australian continental shelves. Wallacea includes Sulawesi, Lombok, Sumbawa, Flores, Sumba, Timor, Halmahera, Buru, Seram, and many smaller islands. Among them, Sulawesi is the largest island in the group.

**Note:** It should be noted that around 160 new species have been discovered in the last 30 years.

**GAIC launched imported water-soluble fertilizers in Gujarat**

**Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation (GAIC)** launched imported water-soluble fertilizers in Ahmedabad. The move aims to encourage the use of high-grade agri-inputs in the state.

**GAIC:**

GAIC promotes agro-based industries in Gujarat.

It imported 300 tonnes of water-soluble fertilizers from China.

In this move, the role of GAIC will be to import, pack and sell the imported water-soluble fertilizers to the farmers through its network of dealers across the State.

The new-generation fertilizers/water-soluble fertilizers will be sold in the market under its brand 'AGRO'.

The water-soluble fertilizers that were launched include, **AGRO NPK, AGRO CN, AGRO MKP, AGRO MAP, AGRO SOP, AGRO NOP.**
DEFENCE

DefExpo India-2020 to be held from 5-8 February 2020 in Lucknow

The 11th biennial edition of DefExpo India-2020 is to be held from 5-8 February 2020 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The preparations were reviewed by the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on 5 January 2020. It is expected to be the largest exhibition for the world's defence companies to display their land, sea and air capabilities at a single exhibition.

Defence Expo-2020:
Defence Expo-2020 will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The theme of the expo is India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub. The previous expo was held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu in 2018. It was held over an 80-acre area. The 2020 Def Expo is organized over a 200-acre area. Also, it is expected that 65 MoUs will be signed with the Indian and foreign defence companies at the Lucknow expo.

Participants:
India has 135 countries to participate in the event. 70 countries confirmed their participation so far. Around 925 exhibitors are expected to participate in the event. Also, the defence ministers and army chiefs of 25 countries are expected to participate in the programme. Top defence manufacturers from the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, South Korea, France, Sweden, and the Czech Republic will participate in the expo. 20,000 - 50,000 Visitors will participate in the event.

Two ships of the Royal Navy of Oman ships arrived in Goa


Exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr:
RNOV Al Rasikh and RNOV Khassab from the Oman side and Indian Navy ships Beas and Subhadra from the Indian side will be participating in the event. The harbour phase of the exercise will be held in Goa and the sea phase off the
Goa coast.
The Commanding Officers of the visiting ships will call on the Flag Officer Commanding of Goa Naval Area during the harbour phase.
The participating ships will conduct subject matter expert exchanges on professional topics.
The harbour phase will also include sports activities between the Indian Navy and the RNO personnel,
The sea phase of the exercise will have reciprocal receptions and planning conferences during the exercise.

**Note:** Naseem-Al-Bahr or sea breeze is a naval exercise that is held between the Indian Navy and the RNO. It is being conducted since 1993.

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**Indian Army uses GOCO model to improve efficiency**

The **Indian Army** began its work based on the **Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) model**. The model will identify the potential industry partners for its base workshops and ordnance depots intended to improve operational efficiency. Army also issued a **Request For Information (RFI)** to shortlist service providers with experience in warehousing, logistics and supply chain management for **Central Ordnance Depot (COD), Kanpur**.

Also, the Army's Master General of Ordnance (MGO) started to evaluate the GOCO model for **Army Base Workshops (ABWs)** to drive higher operational efficiencies. Indian Army has hired **PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. (PwC)** as a consultant to run the process and to hold conferences & consultations with the industry.

**GOCO Model:**
The GOCO model was recommended by the **Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (Retd.) committee**. The model aims to enhance combat capability and re-balancing defence expenditure. As per the committee's recommendations, the government has decided to disband two advance base workshops, one static workshop and four ordnance depots and **eight ABWs** are recommended to be corporatized on the GOCO model. The 8 ABWs that are identified by the army are located in Allahabad, Agra, Delhi, Kankinara of West Bengal, Jabalpur of Madhya Pradesh, and Meerut of Uttar Pradesh, Kirkee near Pune and Bengaluru.
Visakhapatnam to host naval event MILAN

Visakhapatnam, the City of Destiny is to host MILAN 2020. The International Naval event has been scheduled to be held in March 2020. Vice Admiral SN Ghormade, Chief of Staff ENC reviewed the preparations at the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) on 7 January 2020. The review meeting included site visits of the venues by the Nodal officers from the Navy and the stakeholder organizations that participate in the event.

MILAN 2020:
MILAN 2020 is a multilateral naval exercise. The main objective of the event is to enhance professional interaction between friendly foreign navies and learn the strengths and best practices in the maritime domain. The theme of the exercise is Synergy Across the Seas. The theme is expected to provide a unique opportunity for Operational Commanders of friendly foreign navies to interact with each other in areas of mutual interest. 41 navies were invited and over 30 navies have confirmed their participation in MILAN 2020.

Wings India 2020 to be held in Begumpet Airport

Wings India 2020 has been scheduled to be held at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad from 12-15 March 2020. The event is expected to boost aviation.

Organized by:
The event is organized by Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to provide a congenial forum to the rapidly changing dynamics of the sector.

Wings India 2020:
Wings India 2020 is an international exhibition and conference on the civil aviation sector.

The event focus on new business acquisition, investments, policy formation, and regional connectivity.

The event aims that the restructured focused forums will be instrumental in attaining the objective of connecting the investors, buyers, sellers and other stakeholders at a common forum.

The Centre is currently planning a privatization programme for the flight carriers. It believes that privatization will strengthen the civil aviation sector in
the country.
A curtain raiser event was held at Begumpet Airport where the Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri participated.

**GoI appoints officials to assist Chief of Defence Staff**

Centre appointed **2 joint secretaries, 13 deputy secretaries, and 25 under secretary-rank officials** to the newly-created department of military affairs. The department is to be headed by **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat**. The appointments are in line with the government's vision of ensuring tri-services synergy.

**Convergence:**
India's military is currently planning to bring in convergence among the three services for effectively dealing with future security challenges. As a first move, Gen Rawat took charge as the country's first CDS on 1 January 2020. He is also acting as the Principal Military Advisor to the defence minister on all tri-services matters besides helming the **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)**.

CDS is playing a vital role to ensure optimum utilization of allocated budget. It also works to provide more synergy in procurement, training, and operations of the services through joint planning and integration.

**Naval version of LCA Tejas was successfully tested**

A prototype of the **naval version of the light combat aircraft (LCA)** successfully completed the test trial. It landed and took off from India's aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya on 11 January 2020. The test was a significant step towards India developing its own **deck-based fighters**. This will now pave the way to develop and manufacture the **Twin Engine Deck Based Fighter for the Indian Navy**.

**Developed by:**
It was developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** and **Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA)**.

**Carrier INS Vikramaditya:**
The indigenously developed niche technologies of the carrier are specific to deck-based fighter operations
The carrier **INS Vikramaditya** is currently deployed in the Arabian Sea.
It has the naval version of the **MiG 29** on board. 
INS Vikramaditya has a capacity for **30 aircraft**. 
The carries are the naval version of the Tejas fighter aircraft that the Indian Air Force (IAF) is inducting. 
In September 2019, the naval version of the LCA successfully executed its first-ever arrested landing at a shore-based test facility in Goa.
India currently requires **57 deck-based fighters** for its carrier operations.
AWARDS AND HONOURS

Govt. announced first Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has announced its first Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman. The award will be conferred by the Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting Shri Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi on 7 January 2020.

The award aims to acknowledge the positive role and responsibility of media in disseminating the outreach of Yoga in India and abroad.

Award categories:
The award to be conferred on Media Houses would be given under the following categories: Thirty awards under three categories will be conferred.

- 8 Sammans to be conferred under the category Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Newspapers.
- 8 Sammans to be conferred under the category Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Television.
- 11 awards will be given under the category Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Radio.

AYDMS:
The Ministry of I&B instituted the first Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS) in June 2019. It aimed to mark the contribution of media in spreading the message of Yoga. The award will consist of a medal, plaque, trophy, and a citation. The winners were selected by a jury, consisting of 6 members who assessed the entries for the award. The jury was headed by Justice C. K. Prasad, Chairman, Press Council of India.

Sucheta Satish won the 2020 Global Child Prodigy Awards

Dubai-based Indian girl Sucheta Satish, who can sing in 120 languages, won the Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020. The 13-year-old known is as the Dubai Indian High School's nightingale. Along with Sucheta Satish, 100 other Global Child prodigies across the world were honoured at the award ceremony in different categories.

The award recognized her twin world records for singing in most languages during
one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child. She had set as a 12-year-old two years ago in Dubai at the Indian Consulate Auditorium. During the concert, she sang in **102 languages** over **6.15 hours**.

**Global Child Prodigy Awards:**
The Global Child Prodigy Award celebrates the talent and power of children in different categories such as music, arts, dancing, modelling, writing, acting, innovation, science, sports, etc.
The award is supported by the **Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam International Foundation** and music producer **AR Rahman** among others.

**Two Agricultural Scientists were awarded Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Awards**

Famous Agricultural Scientist **Prof. M S Swaminathan** and **Dr. Gutta Muniratnam** were chosen as the first recipients of **Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence** and **Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service** respectively. The award carried a cash prize of **Rs.5 lakh** and citation.

Prof. M.S. Swaminathan was awarded for his significant contributions in the field of agriculture. Dr. G Muniratnam was awarded for his extraordinary contribution to improving the quality of people's lives through social service.

**Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award:**
The National Award for Excellence was instituted by the Muppavarapu Foundation. The award for Social Service was launched by the Swarna Bharat Trust, in Hyderabad.
Saurabh Chaudhary won gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship

The 17-year-old ace shooter from Uttar Pradesh Saurabh Chaudhary has won the men's 10 metres air pistol gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship in Bhopal on 4 January 2020. Chaudhary shot a 246.4 to finish on top. Sarabjot Singh of Haryana secured second and scored 243.9 and Abhishek Verma won bronze in a high-quality final.

Results:
10m air pistol:
Men:
1. Saurabh Chaudhary 246.4
2. Sarabjot Singh 243.9
3. Abhishek Verma 221.1

Team:
1. Haryana 1734
2. Army Marksmanship Unit 1733
3. Uttar Pradesh 1730

Juniors:
1. Sarabjot Singh 243.3
2. Boby Kaushik 242.2
3. Shiva Narwal 222.3

Team:
1. Haryana 1727
2. Uttar Pradesh 1716
3. Army Marksmanship Unit 1707

Youth:
1. Sharvan Kumar 242.7
2. Shiva Narwal 242.2
3. Naveen 220.3

Team:
1. Haryana 1717
2. Uttar Pradesh 1709
3. Delhi 1704.
Sub-youth:
1. Shiva Narwal 583
2. Lucky 575
3. Mukesh Nelavalli 57

Manav Thakkar became world no.1 in ITTF rankings

Indian paddler Manav Thakkar topped the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings and became world number 1 in the Under-21 men's singles category. Thakkar became the fourth Indian to achieve the rank after Harmeet Desai, G Sathiyan and Soumyajit Ghosh. He jumped nine places to etch his name in the history books.

The 19-year-old Thakkar achieved the rank after claiming the Under-21 men's singles title at the ITTF Challenge Plus Benemax-Virgo North American Open in Markham, Canada in December 2019. Thakkar was also ranked world no. 1 in the Under-18 category in February 2018. He was also a part of the Indian men's team which won a bronze medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.

Other Indian Paddlers in the list:
G. Sathiyan retained his 30th spot in the senior category.
Achanta Sharath Kamal has secured the 33rd position.
Top woman paddler of India, Manika Batra was static at the 61st position.

Magesh Chandran won the Hastings International Chess Congress title

Indian chess player P. Magesh Chandran won the title in the 95th edition of the Hastings International Chess Congress in Hastings, England. He defeated Indian GM Deep Sengupta in the eighth round to win the title. He secured the first place with 7.5 points from nine games.

Other winners:
Indian player G AStany took sixth place with 6.5 points
India's woman player GM R Vaishali secured 6 points and finished 10th.
Two other Indian players, Deep Sengupta and Swayams Mishra finished 13th and 14th respectively by securing identical 6 points.

Hastings International Chess Congress:
A nine-round accelerated Swiss Pairing tournament was held at Hastings,
England. The tournament was held from 28 December 2019 to 5 January 2020. The event provided opportunities to qualify for titles and for the Fdration Internationale des checs (FIDE) Rating List.

First edition of Khelo India University Games to be held in Odisha

The first edition of Khelo India University Games has been scheduled to be held at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) University in Bhubaneswar.

Aim:
The University Games provides a platform for young students to showcase their sports talent. The games are aimed to further nourish the talents of the youth.

Khelo India University Games:
Khelo India University Games is an initiative of the Government of India to empower the sports sector. It aims to mould the future of budding sports stars in India. The games will be held from 22 February to 1 March 2020. Union Minister of Sports Kiren Rijiju and Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik unveiled the logo and jersey of Khelo India University Games at the launching ceremony of the event that was held at Bhubaneswar on 7 January 2020.

Harshvardhan Sadgir won the 2020 Maharashtra Kesari title

Indian wrestler Harshvardhan Sadgir won the Maharashtra Kesari title in the 63rd wrestling event at Balewadi near Pune on 7 January 2020. He defeated his opponent Shailesh Shelek of Latur to claim the title.

63rd wrestling event:
Maharashtra Kesari wrestling competition is organized by Maharashtra State Wrestling Association. The first edition of the event was held in 1961. The 63rd edition of Maharashtra Kesari Kusti 2020 began on 3 January 2020 at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex Balewadi, Mahalunge in Pune, Maharashtra. It was held from 3-7 January. Around 900 wrestlers participated in the event across 10 different weight groups. The weight categories at the Maharashtra Kesari are 57 Kg, 61 Kg, 65 Kg, 70 Kg, 74 Kg, 79 Kg, 86 Kg, 92 Kg, 97 Kg and one Maharashtra Kesari (86 to 125kg).
Fouaad Mirza became the first Indian to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics after 2 decades

Indian equestrian Fouaad Mirza became the first Indian to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics officially. He ended a wait spanning two decades. International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI) issued the latest rankings that included all results between 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019. Mirza's qualification to enter the Tokyo Games was confirmed in the issue. The riders competed the 4-star level tournaments to qualify for the Olympics.

Previously, Imtiaz Anees in 2000 Sydney and Late Wing Commander IJ Lamba in 1996 Atlanta are the two Indians to who represented India at the Olympics.

Fouaad Mirza:
The 27-year-old Mirza had won a silver in individual eventing in the 2018 Asian Games. He secured 34 points on his first horse Fernhill Facetime and 30 with his second horse Touchingwood.
OBITUARY

Former Karnataka Governor TN Chaturvedi passed away

Former Karnataka Governor TN Chaturvedi passed away on 5 January 2020. He was 90 years old. He was appointed as the 14th Governor of Karnataka in 2002 by the NDA government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

TN Chaturvedi:

In 1991, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan. He became Governor of Karnataka on 21 August 2002. He served as the Governor of Karnataka from 2002-2007. He also served as the Governor of Kerala from 25 February 2004, following the death of Sikander Bakht, until June 2004, when he was replaced by a newly appointed governor. Chaturvedi was highly recognized for his role as Karnataka Governor.

Lt Gen Prem Nath Hoon passed away

Former Western Army Commander Lieutenant general Prem Nath Hoon passed away on 6 January 2020. He was 90 years old. Lt Gen Hoon was admitted to Command Hospital, Chandimandir, Panchkula due to illness.

Lieutenant general Prem Nath Hoon:
Prem Nath was born in Abbottabad, pre-partition India on 4 October 1929. Lt Gen Prem Nath Hoon started his career in the Indian Army and led Operation Meghdoot, the code-name for the Indian Armed Forces operation to capture the Siachen Glacier in the Kashmir region, precipitating the Siachen Conflict. The operation resulted in Indian troops gained control of the entire Siachen Glacier. He played a very important role in the war against Pakistan in 1984. He commanded the Western Army headquartered at Chandimandir during one of the biggest military exercises of the sub-continent, Operation Brasstacks, through parts of 1986 and 1987.

He authored a book called The Untold Truth wherein he had claimed that a coup detat had been planned by certain elements to topple the then prime minister Rajiv...
Gandhi’s government in 1987. After retirement, he was associated with Balasaheb Thackeray's Shiv Sena. He held the post of the Director-General of Sena's ex-servicemen wing.

**Famous artist Akbar Padamsee passed away**

One of India's best-known artists, Akbar Padamsee passed away in Coimbatore on 6 January 2020. He was 91 years old.

**Akbar Padamsee:**

Akbar Padamsee was born in Mumbai in 1928. He earned a Diploma in Painting from Sir JJ School of Art. He was one of the pioneers of modern Indian art along with S.H. Raza, F.N. Souza, and M.F. Husain. He was also part of the Progressive Artists' Group. He was renowned for his famous artworks like metascape, Syzygy, Portrait of Husain, Jeune femme aux Cheveux noirs, la tte incline, Metascape - III. He won many honours, including a gold medal from the Lalit Kala Akademi, and the Padma Bhushan in 2010.

**Former parliamentarian Gopinath Gajapati Narayan Deo passed away**

The former parliamentarian Gopinath Gajapati Narayan Deo passed away on 10 January 2020. He died due to prolonged illness. He was 76 years old. In 2017, the Odisha government announced that it would bear all expenses of his treatment.

**Gopinath Gajapati Narayan Deo:**

Narayan Deo was born on 6 March 1943. He had represented the Berhampur parliamentary constituency for two terms as a Congress member. In 1998, he switched over to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and joined the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in 2009.

**Sultan Qaboos of Oman passed away**

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman passed away on 10 January 2020. He was 79 years old. He was the Arab world's longest-serving ruler. The cause of death has not been confirmed. His cousin and former culture and heritage minister Haitham bin Tariq Al Said have been sworn in as his successor.

**Sultan of Oman:**

In Oman, the Sultan is the paramount decision-maker. He also holds the positions
of Prime Minister, Supreme Commander of the armed forces, Minister of defence, Minister of foreign affairs, and Minister of finance.

**Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said:**
Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said overthrew his father, **Said bin Taimur**, in a bloodless coup at the age of 29 and ruled Oman for five decades. He was a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in England. He served in the British army. Being a charismatic and visionary leader he established a modern government and used oil money to develop the country.
SUMMITS & CONFERENCE

Yoga Science meet was organized in Bengaluru

The Yoga Science meet was organized as part of the ongoing 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) in Bengaluru on 5 January 2020. The meet was addressed by the head of SVYASA Yoga deemed University Dr. HR Nagendra.

Highlights:
The participants discussed the benefits of yoga. They also shared ideas and views on Yoga research. The meeting discussed that meditation and yoga can compose the human body and mind and give relief from any anxiety and stress.

107th Indian Science Congress:
The 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) is held from 3-7 January 2020 at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru, Karnataka. ISC will provide the desired platform to the farmers who introduced innovations in agriculture.

Aim:
The theme of the 107th ISC is Science and Technology: Rural Development. The 107th Indian Science Congress aims to bridge the gap between the Indian farmers and tech-developers as the gap has resulted in only partial exploration of the benefits. It focuses on rural development through science and technology. It aims to boost agriculture in India. Many of the innovations have helped to enhance crop productivity, market access, and diversifying rural livelihood profiles.

Participants:
Several policymakers, researchers, scientists, academians, inventors and politicians from across the world participated in the 5-day event. Two Nobel Prize winners, Stefan Hell and Ada Yonath also attended the congress and conducted lectures.

Kochi to host MECOS-3, the global meet on the marine ecosystem

Kochi to host the global meet on the marine ecosystem, MECOS-3. The 3rd international symposium on marine ecosystems-challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) in Kochi from 7-10 January 2020. The meeting will be held at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi, Kerala.

Organized by:
MECOS-3 is to be organized by the Marine Biological Association of India. It will be inaugurated by Petri Suuronen, Programme Director, Blue Bioeconomy Natural Resources Institute, Finland.

**Aim:**
MECOS-3 will serve as a platform to hold discussions on a range of topics, including the impact of the climate crisis on marine ecosystems and the unusual warming of the Arabian Sea.

**Events:**
The meeting will focus on the UN's sustainable development goal-14 (life underwater), recent developments in aquaculture, development of small-scale fisheries, eco-labeling and green fishing technologies.

It will review the concerns involved in the marine ecosystem and formulate strategies for the sustainable utilization of marine wealth.

It will also address issues such as the depletion of resources, marine pollution, extreme weather conditions, and rising sea surface temperature, among others, that pose a threat to the sustainable utilization of marine resources.

It is expected that the symposium would come up with a roadmap to deal with these issues.

**Participants:**
Eminent oceanographers, scientists, researchers, fisheries researchers and marine biotechnologists from across the globe are expected to participate in the 4-day symposium.

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**Pune to host the 5th edition of Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference**

Pune is to host the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5). The biennial conference is hosted for the first time in India. It is hosted from 6-10 January 2020.

**Organized by:**
APDRC5, one of the largest meetings of Drosophila researchers, is organized by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).

**Aim:**
APDRC5 aims to promote the interaction of Drosophila researchers in the Asia-Pacific region with their peers across the world.

**Events:**
A total of 57 talks and 240 posters are discussed at the conference. Topics ranging from morphogenesis, and mechanobiology, gametogenesis and stem cells, hormones and physiology, infection and immunity, ecology and evolution and cellular and behavioural neurobiology will be discussed. The pre-conference symposium called "signals from the gut" in collaboration with the National Centre for Cell Science and pre-conference microscopy workshop on super-resolution microscopy is a part of the conference. It features microscopes from fluorescence imaging to super-resolution imaging of range 50 nm resolution, which is vital for certain kinds of fly work. The last 4 editions of this conference took place in Taipei, Seoul, Beijing, and Osaka.

Participants:
Around 430 delegates, 330 Indian and 100 foreign are participating in the 5-day conference. It also witnessed the participation of two Nobel laureates, professors Eric Wieschaus and Michael Rosbash. They are known for their seminal contribution to the fields of development biology and chronobiology respectively. Scientists working in diverse disciplines ranging from cell and molecular biology to ecology and evolution are participating in the event. The conference encourages undergraduates from various institutes of the world to participate in it.

Kochi to host ASCEND 2020, the Global Investors Meet
Kerala is organizing the Global Investors Meet 'ASCEND 2020'. The meet will be held from 9-10 January 2020 in Kochi, Kerala. The meet will be organized by the Industries Department of the state government.
ASCEND 2020:
In the meeting, the government will highlight a Kochi-to-Palakkad integrated manufacturing cluster, a Rs.131 crore Defence Park at 60 acres in Ottapalam of Palakkad district and an electronic hardware park in Ernakulam district among 18 mega projects the state government.
The meet will focus on integrated solid waste management systems at Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur, and Malappuram.
It will focus on the medium density fiberboard plant in Perumbavoor.
The organizers of the program will showcase 70 other projects classified as large, medium and small to provide jobs.
The megaprojects require an estimated investment of **more than Rs.100 crore.** These projects are expected to give direct employment to at least 500 people.

The proposed mega-projects also include a **Propylene Oxide manufacturing plant** of 2,00,000 MPA capacity in the vicinity of **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)-Kochi Refinery**, a Rs. 1,864-crore **KINFRA-initiated Petrochemical Park** of international standards at Ambalamugal in Ernakulam district and a **Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) manufacturing facility** of capacity 150,000 TPA.

To showcase the meeting, the Kerala State government has launched the Invest Kerala Portal. It will provide a single-window facilitator for easy investment promotion under its Ease of doing business initiatives.

**The 107th Indian Science Congress was held in Bengaluru**

*An Overview of the 107th ISC:* Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **107th Indian Science Congress (ISC 2020)** in Bengaluru on 3 January 2020. The Congress was inaugurated in the presence of top scientists, Nobel Laureates, dignitaries and students from across the country and the world at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The event was held from 3-7 January 2020. ISC provided the desired platform to the farmers who introduced innovations in agriculture.

**Aim:**
The 107th Indian Science Congress aims to bridge the **gap between the Indian farmers and tech-developers** as the gap has resulted in the only partial exploration of the benefits. It focuses on rural development through science and technology.

**Theme:**
The theme of the 107th ISC is **'Science and Technology: Rural Development'**. It aims to boost agriculture in India. Many of the innovations have helped to enhance crop productivity, market access, and diversifying rural livelihood profiles.

**Events Highlights:**
The ISC 2020 covered 14 sectors in contemporary science.

It included events like **Women's Science Congress, Children's Science Congress, Science Communicators Meet, Yoga Science meet, and Farmer's Science Congress.**

The event hosted **4 public lectures** and **26 plenary sessions.**
For the first time, the Farmer's Science Congress provided a forum to the farmers to interact, share their experiences and showcase their innovative techniques and methods developed and followed by them in farming.

A science exhibition titled 'Pride of India' showcased the latest developments in science and technology from all the world, path-breaking research, and developments (R&D) initiatives, leading products and services, schemes and achievements of the public and private sectors.

**Participants:**

About 15,000 delegates, including two Nobel Laureates, Stefan Hell, a physicist from Max Planck Institute, Germany and Ada Yonath, a crystallographer from Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel participated in the event. Many eminent scientists, policymakers, researchers, academicians, inventors, and politicians from across the world participated in the 5-day event.

*Note:* Bengaluru hosted the science congress for the third time. It earlier conducted the event in 1987 and 2002.

**Pulses Conclave 2020 to be held in Maharashtra**

The Pulses Conclave 2020 (TPC 2020) has been scheduled to be held from 12-14 February 2020 in Lonavala, Maharashtra. The announcement was made by the India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA), the nodal body for India's pulses trade and industry on 9 January 2020.

**Events:**

The biennial global pulses conference 'TPC 2020' is in line with the Prime Minister's vision is to double the farmer's income by the year 2022.

The Conclave programme various aspects including the dissemination of global and domestic pulses production numbers, global and domestic prices, supply and demand scenarios will be discussed

It aims to put together a roadmap to help the Indian pulses trade be able to contribute to the PM's vision of making India a $5 trillion economy through the retail sale of pulses, processed pulses, pulse derivates, and value additions, all of which will drive investments in the entire value chain.

IPGA's programme aims to encourage its members to take advantage of the increased domestic production, balance imports vis-a-vis production and demand. It will ensure that the Indian consumer does not face any availability crunch nor high
retail prices.

**Pulses:**

Pulses are the key source of proteins in India. India's pulses production has steadily grown from around 19 million tons in 2013-14 to 23 million tons in 201-19. The target has been for 2019-20 is 26.30 million tons.

**India Pulses and Grains Association (IPGA):**

IPGA is the apex body of India's pulses and grains industry and trade. It is headquartered in Mumbai. IPGA is registered under the Companies Act 2013 with a membership of over 270 including various regional associations of the Pulses industry. It aims to make Indian pulses and grains industry and trade globally competitive which in turn will help India's food and nutrition security.
SCHEMES

UJALA scheme marked the fifth anniversary on 5 January

Government's flagship programme Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) and LED Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP), marked its fifth anniversary on 5 January 2020. The schemes are being implemented and monitored by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of PSUs under the Power Ministry.

UJALA:
UJALA initiative was launched on 5 January 2015 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Under the scheme around 36.13 crore LED bulbs have been distributed across India. This has resulted in an estimated energy savings of 46.92 billion kilowatt-hour (kWh) per year. This measure avoided peak demand of 9,394 MW, and estimated greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction of 38 million tonnes CO2 annually.

SLNP:
Over 1.03 crore smart LED streetlights have been installed under the SLNP programme so far. It enables an estimated energy savings of 6.97 billion kWh per year with an avoided peak demand of 1,161 MW and an estimated GHG emission reduction of 4.80 MT CO2 annually. The scheme has also helped in generating approximately 13,000 jobs to support the Central government's Make in India initiative.

Third edition of Sukanya project began in West Bengal

Kolkata Police has started the third edition of the Sukanya project on 6 January 2020. The project aims to provide girls studying in schools and colleges in the city with self-defence training.

Sukanya project:
The third batch of the project started at 100 city-based schools and colleges situated in Kolkata Police jurisdiction.
Girl students from classes VIII, IX, XI and girls studying in the first year at educational institutions will be trained under the project.
Sukanya project was initiated by the Kolkata Police's Community Policing Wing
with an aim to provide self-defence training to girl students of city-based schools, colleges, and universities.

The project is funded by Women and Child Development and Social Welfare Department of the West Bengal state government.

Andhra Pradesh government launched the Dr. YSR Aarogyasri scheme

Andhra Pradesh state government launched the Dr. YSR Aarogyasri scheme. It was inaugurated by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at Eluru in West Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh. This is the second welfare scheme that the government has launched in 2020

Aim:
The scheme aims to provide free medical treatment to the poor. The services will be extended to each district from April 2020 onwards.

Dr. YSR Aarogyasri scheme:
YSR Aarogyasri scheme will benefit people having an annual income of up to Rs.5 lakh and the eligible people will be given Aarogyasri cards.

The scheme benefits the people whose treatment amount crosses Rs.1,000.

Under the scheme, the government will distribute 1.42 crores cards with QR codes across the state.

Free treatment will be given to cancer patients from February 2020 onwards.

The scheme provides one Asha worker for every 350 houses. 150 super-specialty hospitals located in Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Chennai will also be included in the Aarogyasri network.

The patients will be provided financial aid of Rs.225 per day, to a maximum of Rs.5000 per month, during the recovery or resting period after the operation.

Around 510 medicines will be made available in government hospitals.

Medicines with the World Health Organization (WHO) standards will be distributed from April 2020.

The state government has also announced that it is to provide pensions ranging from Rs.3,000 to Rs.10,000 to patients depending upon their disease. The salaries of the sanitation employees in hospitals will be increased from Rs.8,000 to Rs.16,000.

Nearly 1056 ambulances will be made available by March and vacant posts of doctors and nurses will be filled by the end of May.
Kerala government unveiled a wage subsidy scheme for ventures

Kerala State Government launched a wage subsidy scheme for the **first five years** for new ventures getting registered from **1 April 2020**. The scheme was unveiled by the **Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan** on 9 January 2020 at the **Global Investor Summit ASCEND 2020**.

**Provisions:**
- The initiative will enhance the **ease of doing business** in the state.
- It is expected to subsidize a part of the wage commitment of newly-set up industries for the **first five years**.
- Only Units that provide **Employees' State Insurance (ESI) and Provident Fund (PF)** benefits to workers will benefit under the scheme.
- Women employees will get at least **Rs.2,000 more than their men counterparts** under the proposed scheme.
- It is expected the over 37 lakh people will benefit under the scheme.

Forest Advisory Committee approved the Green Credit Scheme to trade in forests

The **Forest Advisory Committee** approved a **Green Credit Scheme** that will allow the forest to be traded as a commodity.

**Green Credit Scheme:**
- Under the **Green Credit Scheme**, the Forest Department is allowed to outsource to non-government/private agencies.
- The scheme is in line with the **Green India Mission** that aims to achieve its target of 2.523 billion tonnes of carbon by 2020-30. It involves adding 30 million hectares in addition to an existing forest.
- Green Credit Scheme allows agencies they could be private companies, village forest communities to identify land and begin growing plantations.
- If they met the forest department criteria, after three years, they will be eligible to consider compensatory forest land. Industry need forest land could then approach the agency and pay it for parcels of such forested land, and this will be transferred to the Forest Department and be recorded as forest land.
- The scheme will encourage plantation by individuals outside the traditional forest.
area and help in meeting international commitments, such as sustainable development goals (SDGs) and nationally determined contributions.

**AP govt. launched Amma Vodi scheme to support low-income families**

The Andhra Pradesh State government launched the Amma Vodi scheme. It was launched by the Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on 9 January 2020. Amma Vodi can be translated as 'mother's lap' in Telugu. The scheme will be implemented on 26 January 2020.

**Aim:**
Amma Vodi scheme aims to support low-income families in educating their children.

**Amma Vodi scheme:**
Under the scheme, mothers and guardians of school-going children from lower-income groups will receive financial assistance of Rs.15,000 annually.

The scheme will be available to ration cardholders, who fall under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) and clear a few more criteria related to their economic status.

The state government has allocated a budget of around **Rs.6,455 crore** for 2019-20 under the scheme. The fund nearly **20%** of the total education budget of Rs.32,618 crore of the state.

The state government has also taken funds from other departments to support the scheme.

It has released the final list of all the beneficiaries of the scheme.

The applicants who have registered for this scheme can check the **Jaganna Amma Vodi eligibility** list now on the official website of the AP government.
**APPOINTMENTS / RESIGN**

**Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar appointed as an advisor to the Lt Governor of JK**

IPS officer Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar has been appointed as an advisor to the Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He recently retired as the Director-General (DG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The position in the paramilitary force remained vacant for nearly two months after the retirement of K Durga Prasad on 28 February 2019.

The role of the Advisor includes assisting the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in the effective discharge of his functions. The appointment will be effective from the date from which he assumes charge. G C Murmu is the LG of Jammu Kashmir UT since its creation on 31 October 2019.

**Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar:**
Bhatnagar is a 1983-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre. He retired as the DG CRPF on 31 December 2019. He headed the 3.25 lakh personnel force for over two and a half years. His appointment comes at a time when the CRPF has suffered reverses in the theatre of Naxal violence and is dealing with mounting protests in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Arun Kumar Sahu to be the next High Commissioner of India to Dominica**

IFS officer Arun Kumar Sahu is appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the mountainous Caribbean island of Dominica. He will be residing in Port of Spain. The appointment was approved by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Currently, Arun Kumar Sahu is serving as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

**Arun Kumar Sahu:**
Arun Kumar Sahu is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of batch 1996. He is an alumnus of Ravenshaw University in Cuttack and Chandra Sekhar Behera Zilla School in Sambalpur. He holds a Master's Degree in War in Modern World from King's College London and a Master's degree in Linguistics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He was posted as the Deputy High Commissioner in the High Commission of India, Ottawa. He also served as the Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and Deputy Director-General, Indian Council for Cultural
Two Indian origin women appointed as the judges to criminal and civil courts

Two Indian origin women, Judge Archana Rao and Judge Deepa Ambedkar have been appointed as judges to criminal and civil courts. The judges were appointed by New York mayor Bill de Blasio. Judge Archana Rao is appointed to criminal court of New York and Judge Deepa Ambedkar is appointed to civil court in New York. These appointments were effective from 1 January 2020.

Judge Archana Rao:
Rao graduated from Vassar College. She received her Juris Doctor degree from Fordham University School of Law. She served with the New York County District Attorney's Office for 17 years. She also worked as the Bureau Chief of the Financial Frauds Bureau. In January 2019, she was appointed as an Interim Civil Court Judge. In 2013, Judge Archana was included on the Asian Women Prosecutors and the Pursuit of Justice in the 2013 list.

Judge Deepa Ambedkar:
Judge Ambedkar graduated from the University of Michigan. She received her Juris degree from Rutgers Law School. In May 2018, Ambedkar was appointed as an Interim Civil Court judge. She worked at the New York City Council as a Senior Legislative Attorney and Counsel to the Committee on Public Safety. She also served as a Staff Attorney with the Legal Aid Society and Criminal Defense Division.
**IMPORTANT DAYS**

**CISF to observe 2020 as the Year of mobility**

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has announced that it is to observe 2020 as the Year of mobility. This year will have a special focus on the creation of more residential units and the implementation of various welfare measures for the troops.

The observation of the year was announced by the CISF Director General (DG) Rajesh Ranjan on the occasion of the new year. The observation will take all measures for the welfare of troops and their families. CISF in 2020 will focus to create infrastructure and logistics like housing, acquire new land and procuring modern equipment, train with a focus on physical fitness and sports and leverage modern gadgetry and technology on duty.

**Central Industrial Security Force (CISF):**

CISF came into existence on 10 March 1969. It is a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) in India. It has a strength of around 2,800 personnel. It functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is headquartered in New Delhi, India. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is the Minister in charge of the force. The Director-General of CISF is Rajesh Ranjan, IPS.

CISF is mandated as the primary civil airport guarding force of the country. It protects the country from some vital installations in the aerospace, nuclear, government and private sectors. It also plays a major role in Disaster Management.

**Journalists Day was celebrated on 6 January in Maharashtra**

Journalists' Day was celebrated on 6 January 2020. The day is observed every year in Maharashtra. The day is observed in the memory of late thespian journalist Balshashtri Jambhekar.

**Balshastri Jambhekar:**

Balshastri Jambhekar is also known as The Father of Marathi Journalism. He was born on 6 January 1812 in Pombhurle in Devgad taluka in the Konkan region of Maharashtra. He is recognized for his efforts in starting journalism in the Marathi language. He dealt with the issues of widow re-marriage in his newspaper. He fought to develop a scientific set of minds in the masses of
uneducated India. The first newspaper in the Marathi language named **Darpan** was published on 6 January 1832. The release date also marks his birth anniversary. He was the editor of Darpan during British Rule in India. He died on 18 May 1846.

**World Day of War Orphans was observed on 6 January**

The **World Day of War Orphans** was celebrated on 6 January 2020. The day is observed every year. The day enables the global Communities to recognize the plight of a particularly vulnerable group.

**Aim:**
The day aims to address the war orphans as it has become a growing worldwide humanitarian and social crisis. The day ensures to voice out the predicament of war orphans. It highlights that children growing up in orphanage experience emotional, social and physical handicaps.

**War orphans:**
The World Day of War Orphans was initiated by the French organization, **SOS Enfants en Detresses**. UNICEF estimated that there are nearly 9,00,000 children in the Northeast, all of whom have been seriously affected by the war, either through a lack of education, food, shelter or a direct injury.

In the developed countries orphans are relatively less in number but in countries that have been and are subjected to wars and great epidemics such as AIDS, there are significant numbers of orphans. An estimate said that World War II created millions of orphans in Europe, with **300,000 orphans in Poland** and **200,000 in Yugoslavia** alone. The children are most often neglected. The day aims to remember these children and reminds the responsibility to work hard to diminish the shadow of war so that no one would be an orphan within the motherland.

**Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is observed on 9 January**

The **16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** is observed on 9 January 2020. The day is celebrated to recognize the **overseas Indians** who have contributed to the development of India.

**Reason for celebrating the day on 9 January:**
January 9 was chosen for the celebration of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas because on this day in **1915, Mahatma Gandhi**, the greatest Pravasi, returned to **India from**
South Africa and led India's freedom struggle.

**PBD convention:**
Pravasi Bharatiya Divas conventions are being held every year since 2003. The conventions aim to provide a platform to the Non-resident Indians (NRIs) community to engage with the Indian government and its people of the land for mutually beneficial activities.

It also acts as a network among the NRI community residing in various parts of the world.

The convention enables them to share their experiences in various fields.

**Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:**
The day was first observed in 2003. The day is celebrated in many places in India. The day was observed by the Indian government in Singapore in 2018.

On this day **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (PBSA)** is conferred every year. The award is conferred by the President of India. The PBSA award recognizes the significant contributions made by the Non-resident Indian and person of Indian origin (PIO), and organizations that are established by NRIs or PIOs to support, promote and build India's links across the globe.

**World Hindi Day is observed on 10 January**

**World Hindi Day** is observed on 10 January 2020. It is observed every year. The day ensures to promote the Hindi language around the world. World Hindi Day is different from **National Hindi Day**.

**Aim:**
The day aims to create a suitable environment to promote Hindi worldwide and to present Hindi as the prevalent language of the world.

**Events:**
On this day, **Indian Foreign Ministries** located abroad organizes various programs.

People of Indian origin living abroad organize various programs and celebrate the day.

Unique programs for Hindi on various subjects are organized in all government offices.

**World Hindi Day-History:**
The first **World Hindi Conference** was held on 10 January 1975. It was
inaugurated by the then **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi**.
World Hindi Conferences have been organized in various countries like India, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Trinidad and Tobago, United States.
On **10 January 2006**, the Prime Minister **Dr. Manmohan Singh** declared the day should be celebrated as World Hindi Day every year. It is celebrated every year since then.

**Hindi:**
The word Hindi is believed to be transformed from the Sanskrit word **Sindhu**. Hindi is spoken by about **43 crore people** in the world.
It is the **fifth most spoken language** among the total languages spoken in the world.
The Hindi language is spoken in many countries including Bangladesh, Mauritius, Pakistan, Nepal, Germany, New Zealand, Guyana, United Arab Emirates, Uganda, Suriname, Trinidad, USA, UK, and South Africa.

**Note:** World Hindi Day is different from **National Hindi Day**. National Hindi Day is observed on **14 September** every year.

**National Youth Day is observed on 12 January**

**National Youth Day** or Yuva Diwas is observed on 12 January across India. The day is celebrated every year to commemorate the **birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda**. It aims to create awareness and to provide knowledge to the youth about the rights in India.

**Aim:**
The main aim of the celebration of the Youth day is to propagate the **philosophy and the ideals of Swami Vivekananda** for which he lived and worked.

**Theme:**
The theme of the National Youth Day 2020 is **"Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building"**. It aims to inspire the youth generations and to educate them to behave properly in society.

**Events:**
On this day, several functions are organized in schools, colleges, institutions. The day is celebrated by performing the parade, recitations, songs, speech on Swami Vivekananda, conventions, essay-writing competition, seminar, etc.

**History:**
The Indian Government first declared to celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda as National Youth Day in 1984. Since then from 12 January 1985, it is celebrated as National Youth Day all over the country. The government aims to make a better future of India by motivating the youth of the nation through the way of their life and ideas of the Swami Vivekananda.

**Swami Vivekananda:**
Narendra Nath Datta, famously known as Swami Vivekananda, was born on 12 January 1863. He was a philosopher, social reformer, and thinker. He represented India in the first Parliament of Religion held in Chicago in 1893. He established the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897. He urged the youth to have the dedication to the cause to attain success. He said that pursuing a challenge with utmost dedication is really the road to success for the youth. He died on 4 July 1902.
BOOKS & AUTHORS

Amit Shah released a book titled Karmayoddha Granth


Karmayoddha Granth:
The book talks about the three parts of PM Modi's life:
1) The first part talks of Modi dedicating his life to an ideology
2) The second about him entering politics on the ideals of the Sangathan
3) The third about him Upholding the tenets of Parliamentary Democracy and the Constitution of India to construct an ideal State

He has addressed PM Narendra Modi as the epitome of selfless service to the Nation.

It describes all the schemes and the measures the Modi government launched for the welfare of the people.

He has also narrated the challenges faced by Shri Modi while he was the CM of Gujarat and how he faced each one of them to transform the state by creating the Gujarat model.

Note:
Karmayoddha is a man who has a beating heart for people, a statesman, a hard taskmaster, an able administrator and an ideal leader who leads by example.
**India to sign MoU with Russia to procure AK-203 assault rifles**

The Indian Army is to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Russia for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles. The rifles are to be manufactured locally by an India-Russia joint venture (JV). The MoU is expected to be signed in a month.

**MoU provisions:**
- As per the MoU, about 1 lakh rifles will come directly from Russia and the remaining will be manufactured by the JV in India.
- The rifles have been planned to be manufactured by the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh.
- The facility will be set up between the Ordnance Factories Board (OFB) from the Indian side, and Rosoboron Exports and Kalashnikov on the Russian side.
- The OFB will own 50.5% equity and the Russian side will hold the remaining 49.5%.
- The JV was formed after the Inter-governmental Agreement between India and Russia in February 2019.
- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has floated a Request For Proposal (RFP) to the JV for the supply of 6.71 lakh rifles.

**Cabinet approved the MoU signed by India and UK to enable Energy Self-Sufficiency for Indian Railways**

The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and the United Kingdom on 8 January 2020. The MoU aimed for enabling Energy Self-Sufficiency for Indian Railways. It was signed by the Ministry of Railways with Department for International Development, Government of the United Kingdom on 2 December 2019.

**MoU Provisions:**
- The countries agreed on the scope of activities to be undertaken as a part of the endeavor for enabling energy efficiency and energy self-sufficiency for the Indian Railways.
The MoU empowers the parties to govern the subject matter in their respective countries, endeavour to take necessary steps to enable energy efficiency and energy self-sufficiency for Indian Railways.

They agreed for Energy planning for Indian Railways including the Solar & Wind Energy sector, Adopting energy efficiency practices, Enabling Fuel efficiency, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure deployment, Battery operated Shunting Locomotives.

It also approves capacity development like training programmes, industrial visits, field visits, etc. or any other form co-operation may be approved in writing by the Participants.

Cabinet approved the agreement signed between India and Mongolia for outer space cooperation

The Union Cabinet approved the agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on 8 January 2020. The agreement aimed at enhancing the cooperation of the countries in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful and civilian purposes. The agreement was signed at New Delhi on 20 September 2019.

Agreement provisions:

As per the agreement, the countries shall enable pursuing the potential interest areas of cooperation in field such as space science, technology, and applications including remote sensing of the earth, satellite communication and satellite-based navigation Space science and planetary exploration, use of spacecraft and space systems and ground system, and application of space technology.

The agreement set up a Joint Working Group, drawing members from DOS/ISRO and Communications and Information Technology Authority of the Government of Mongolia. The group will work out the plan of action including the time-frame and the means of implementing this agreement.

India, France agreement on ratification of Migration and Mobility Partnership get approval

The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved the ratification of the Migration and Mobility Partnership agreement signed between India and
France. The agreement was signed in March 2018 during the State Visit of the French President Emmanuel Macron to India.

**Agreement provisions:**
The Agreement represents a major milestone to enhance people-to-people contacts and strengthen cooperation on issues related to irregular migration and human trafficking between the two sides.
It also aims to foster the mobility of students, researchers, academics, and skilled professionals between the countries.
The Agreement will be initially valid for a period of 7 **years**. It will then incorporate provision for automatic renewal and a monitoring mechanism through a **Joint Working Group (JWG)**.
The Agreement marks India's expanded multi-faceted relationship and **confidence with France**.

**AP Government signed MoU with KFW to implement ZBNF**
The **Andhra Pradesh Government** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the representatives of a **German firm, KFW**, in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh to implement Zero Budget Natural Farming in the state. It comes after the Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF).

**Provisions of MoU:**
The agreement aims to scale up the ongoing project with KFW.
The YS Jaganmohan Reddy led-State government has allocated Rs.304 crore on the project.
The project aimed to cover 2.39 lakh farmers in around 600 village panchayats and promote natural farming.

**ZBNF:**
The ZBNF was implemented with **German Assistance**. It covered over 1 **lakh hectares** in the past two years. It has been aligned with other schemes like the **Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana**. The estimated amount of the project is **Rs.1015 crore**. The Andhra Pradesh government has taken a loan of **Rs.711 crores** out of the estimated amount towards the climate resilient, ZBNF.
India ranked 34th in TTCI of WEF

India has ranked 34th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) of the World Economic Forum for the year 2019. In 2013, India ranked 65th. WEF analyzed 139 countries and scored each according to three sub-indices:

- **Regulatory Framework**
- **Business Environment and Infrastructure**
- **Human, Cultural, and Natural Resources**

These sub-indices are, in turn, composed of 14 pillars of Travel and Tourism Competitiveness.

The Ministry of Tourism reported that India has gained popularity among overseas travellers as foreign tourist arrivals grew by 3.23% to 96,69,633 during January-November 2019. It also reported that 93,66,478 overseas travellers had arrived in January-November 2018.

**Measures taken by Government:**

In 2019, the tourism ministry has taken several steps by opening 120 new peaks for mountaineering in order to boost inbound tourism. It has also reduced e-visa fees and reduced the GST rates on hotel room bookings, among others.

The government also reduced GST on hotel rooms with tariffs of Rs.1,001-7,500 per night to 12%, while those above Rs.7,501 to 18%.

Also, the government-sanctioned 77 projects for the development of thematic circuits and allocated an amount of Rs.6,035.70 crore, so far, under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

Under the National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) Scheme the Central government identified pilgrimage destinations. It sanctioned 28 projects that amount to Rs.840.02 crore.

**TTCI:**

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) is released by the World Economic Forum (WEF). The index measures the factors and policies that make a country a viable place to invest in the Travel and Tourism sector. This sustainability indicator can be used to calculate the status of the Travel and Tourism goal.

*The top 10 countries of the Index are:*
1) Spain  
2) France  
3) Germany  
4) Japan  
5) United States  
6) United Kingdom  
7) Australia  
8) Italy  
9) Canada  
10) Switzerland  

Power Ministry released the 2019 State Energy Efficiency Index  

Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in association with Alliance for Energy-Efficient Economy released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019. The index used 97 significant indicators and tracked the progress of Energy Efficiency (EE) initiatives in 36 states and union territories (UTs).

**State Energy Efficiency Index 2019:**  
The index showed that a majority of the initiatives taken by states are on the Policies and Regulations front.  
State Energy Efficiency Index categorized states as four types based on their efforts and achievements towards energy efficiency implementation. They are **Front Runner, Achiever, Contender, and Aspirant.**  
In the **Achiever Category Haryana, Kerala and Karnataka** secured the top position.  
There was no front runner state mentioned in the report. It conveys that a lot more can be done at the state level to realize energy savings from energy efficiency.  
The States and UTs are grouped into four groups based on the aggregated **Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES)** and considered the basic energy requirements such as coal, electricity, gas, and oil to meet the state's actual energy demand. **Karnataka, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Puducherry** topped the category. Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan performed the worst in each the same.  
It directed the States/UTs to focus on ensuring greater compliance to achieve savings to contribute towards the national goals on energy security and climate
India ranked fifth-biggest geopolitical risk of 2020 by Eurasia Group

Eurasia Group reported that India is one of the world's top geopolitical risks for 2020. The political risk consultancy India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi was listed as the fifth biggest geopolitical risk of 2020.

Report Highlights:
- Eurasia Group is one of the United States' most influential risk assessment companies.
- The report said that the Indian PM Narendra Modi has spent much of his second term to promote the controversial social policies, include the revocation of the special status for Jammu and Kashmir through an Act, at the expense of an economic agenda.
- It also highlighted that the impacts will be shown in 2020, with intensified communal and sectarian instability, foreign policy and economic setbacks.
- The list was topped by-elections in the US and followed by events and developments like the US-China technology tug of war on 5G and the trade war between China and the US.

IEA released a first in-depth review of Indias energy policies

The International Energy Agency (IEA) along with the country's policy think tank NITI Aayog released the first in-depth review of India's energy policies on 10 January 2020. The review aims to set out a range of recommendations in each energy policy area.
- The IEA regularly releases energy policy reviews for its member and association countries. For the first time, it has carried out the review for India. This is the first review IEA carried out for India.

Report Highlights:
- The report highlighted the achievements made through the country's energy policies
- It suggested recommendations to support the Government of India's (GoI) goals to promote the well-functioning energy markets and boost the deployment of renewables.
The review encourages India to institutionalize energy policy coordination across the government with a national energy policy framework. It marked the government's policy that provided access to electricity, affordable efficient lighting, and clean cooking through schemes like SAUBHAGYA, UJJWALA, and UJALA.

Also, India is pursuing energy market reforms and the swift deployment of renewable technologies.

It highlighted the growth of renewables in India which accounts for almost 23% of India's total installed capacity.

The review also founded that the energy efficiency improvements in the country has avoided 15% of oil and gas imports, additional energy demand, and air pollution and 300 million tonnes (MT) of CO2 emissions between 2000 and 2018.

Note: India has been an IEA association country since March 2017.
FESTIVALS

Mizoram government to organize Zo Festival from 9 Jan

The Mizoram state government is organizing the Zo Festival from 9 January 2020. The festival is a part of the State's endeavour to unify different tribes of Mizo. The Festival will be organized under the banner Zo Kutpui in at least 10 different cities across the globe.

Aim:
The aim of the celebration of the Zo Festival is to reunify and strengthen the brotherhood among different tribes of Mizo.

Zo Festival:
The first festival will be held at Vanghmun, a hub town of Mizos in neighbouring Tripura from 9-11 January 2020. It will be graced by the Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga.

The event will witness cultural programmes and traditional songs from various Mizo tribes from Mizoram and other northeastern states.

It is expected that many important dignitaries from various Mizoram tribes will participate in the event.

Zo Kutpui will also be organized in Maryland in the USA, Tahan in Myanmar, Churachandpur in Manipur and Bangladesh.

Mizo National Front (MNF) led the government is to unify different Mizo tribes. Also, the government is planning to launch bus services from Aizawl to Kanhmun in Tripura, Churachandpur in Manipur, Shillong in Meghalaya and Tahan in Myanmar to connect people of the Mizo community.

Mizo Tribe:
The Mizo population is found in Manipur, Tripura, and Mizoram across India. So far 12 Mizo clans have been identified. These tribal people are native to the north-eastern part of India, western Burma (Present Myanmar) and Eastern Bangladesh. The clans include Chawngthu, Hmar, Hualngo, Hualhnam, Khiangte, Lai, Pang, Pawi-Lusei, Phaite, Renthlei, Ralte, Tlau. Mizo is the common language of all Mizo.

Mizoram:
State formed on: 20 February 1987
Governor: P. S. Sreedharan Pillai
Chief Minister: Zoramthanga
Deputy Chief Minister: Tawnluia
Capital: Aizawl
Literacy rate: 91.58%
It shares borders with Assam, Manipur, and Tripura

The 31st International Kite Festival launched in Ahmedabad

The 31st International Kite Festival was launched at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. The festival will be conducted from 7-14 January in different parts of the state. The festival became an identity of Gujarat.

International Kite Festival:
Makarsankranti, the festival of Kites aims attracts a large number of foreign tourists in the state.
The size of the kite industry in the state has increased multi-fold following the successive International Kite Festivals in the state.
International Kite Festival is being organized at nine other places across the state including Statue of Unity Kevadiya, Surat and Vadodara.

Participants:
More than 140 kite flying experts from 40 countries and about 800 kite fliers from Gujarat and 200 kite fliers from 12 other states are participating in the unique festival.

Madhavpur Mela to be held in 2020 April

The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Dr. Jitendra Singh chaired a high-level meeting with senior officials of the Gujarat Government to review preparations for the mega festival of Madhavpur Melain New Delhi on 8 January 2020. The Madhavpur Mela of Gujarat due to be held in the first week of April 2020. The 8 States of the Northern Eastern Region will participate in the festival.

Madhavpur Mela:
The Madhavpur Mela of Gujarat shares its connection to the Mishmi Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh.
Madhavpur Mela will witness magnificent folk cultural performances from the North-East, especially Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. Troupes from Assam will perform Rukmini-Haran, a popular folk theatre of the region. The musical troupe from Manipur will sing songs related to Rukmini in the Khullong Ishei and Nat gene. Dance-dramas based on Rukmini-Krishna legends from Arunachal and Manipur and folk dance of the Idu Mishmi tribe from Arunachal will be part of the varied repertoire.

**Note:** The Mishmi Tribe traces its ancestry to the legendary King Bhishmak and through him to his daughter Rukmini and Lord Krishna. The festival celebrates the immortal journey which Rukmini undertook from Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat with Lord Krishna. Bhismaknagar, located near Roing in the Lower Dibang Valley district, also finds mention in Kalika Purana.

**National Youth Festival 2020 to be held in Lucknow**

The 23rd National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020 has been scheduled to be held from 12-16 January at Indira Pratishthan, Lucknow. The festival will be jointly inaugurated by Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath and Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju.

**Organized by:**
The NYF 2020 is organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

**Aim:**
The aim of NYF is to provide a platform to bring the youth of the country together. It aims to provide the Indian youth an opportunity to showcase their talents in various activities.

**Theme:**
The theme of the 23rd National Youth Festival 2020 is **FIT YOUTH FIT INDIA.** The theme is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision for New India to be a fit India and Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat. The event aims to promote the knowledge and ideas of the Youth.

**NYF 2020:**
The Government has been organizing National Youth Festival (NYF) since 1995.
It provides a platform where youth will interact in formal and informal settings and exchange their social and cultural uniqueness.

It is a mega National Integration Camp. The youth will be directed to inculcate physical activity and sports in their everyday lives to make new India a Fit India.

The event will host different Competitive events like Folk Dance, Hindustani Vocal Solo, Carnatic Vocal Solo, Elocution, harmonium Light, Tabla, Mridangam, One Act Play, Veena, Flute, Dances Manipuri, Sitar, Guitar, Odissi, Kuchupuri, Bharatnatyam, Kathak and Non-Competitive Events like Young Artist Camp, Adventure Camp, Suvichar, Youth Convention, Yuva Kriti, Food festival.

**Participants:**
NYF 2020 is expected to have around 6000 participants including volunteers from NYKS, NSS and local youth from each State of the country.
QUIZ CORNER

1) How many awards are to be conferred under the first Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman?

A.24  
B.30  
C.34  
D.38  

Answer B

Explanation Thirty awards under three categories will be conferred under the first Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman. The award will be conferred by the Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting Shri Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi on 7 January 2020. The award aims to acknowledge the positive role and responsibility of media in disseminating the outreach of Yoga in India and abroad.

2) The Ministry of External Affairs has announced that it is to set up a new division on NEST to deal with emerging security implications arising due to the emergence of new technologies like 5G and AI. What does NEST stand for?

A.Next Efficient Scientific Technologies  
B.Newly Emerging Strategic Technologies  
C.New and Emerging Strategic Technologies  
D.National Emerging Strategic Technologies

Answer C

Explanation The Ministry of External Affairs has announced that it is to set up a new division on New and Emerging Strategic Technologies (NEST). It was announced by the Foreign Minister S Jalshankar. The move is a bid to deal with emerging security implications arising due to the emergence of new technologies like 5G and artificial intelligence (AI).

3) _________ to host the global meet on the marine ecosystem, MECOS-3.

A.Kochi
B. Alleppey
C. Periyar
D. Thiruvananthapuram

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Kochi to host the global meet on the marine ecosystem, MECOS-3. The 3rd international symposium on marine ecosystems-challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) in Kochi from 7-10 January 2020. The meeting will be held at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi, Kerala.

4) **When did the Ministry of I&B institute the first Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS)?**

A. 2017
B. 2018
C. 2019
D. 2020

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Ministry of I&B instituted the first Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS) in June 2019. It aimed to mark the contribution of media in spreading the message of Yoga. The award will consist of a medal, plaque, trophy, and a citation. The winners were selected by a jury, consisting of 6 members who assessed the entries for the award. The jury was headed by Justice C. K. Prasad, Chairman, Press Council of India.

5) **__________ division will be the nodal point in India's foreign ministry.**

A. DHRUV
B. NISHATHA
C. PRAKAS
D. NEST

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Ministry of External Affairs has announced that it is to set up a new division on New and Emerging Strategic Technologies (NEST). NEST division will be the nodal point in India's foreign ministry. It will handle all matters connected to new and emerging technologies including the exchange of views with foreign governments and coordination with domestic
ministries and departments. NEST will deal with emerging challenges and scenarios.

6) When was the Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme launched?

A. 5 Jan 2015  
B. 12 Aug 2015  
C. 5 Sept 2016  
D. 14 Nov 2016

Answer A

Explanation UJALA initiative was launched on 5 January 2015 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Under the scheme around 36.13 crore LED bulbs have been distributed across India. This has resulted in an estimated energy savings of 46.92 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year.

7) Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has opened its first Silk processing plant in ________.

A. Punjab  
B. Rajasthan  
C. Haryana  
D. Gujarat

Answer D

Explanation Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has opened its first Silk processing plant in Gujarat. The aim is to boost the production of signature Patola Saree and create livelihoods for women. KVIC aims to promote Indian Crafts and Culture.

8) Who implemented the Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP) of the government?

A. TATA  
B. EESL  
C. ESSAR  
D. GAIL

Answer B
**Explanation** Government's flagship programme Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) and LED Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP), marked its fifth anniversary on 5 January 2020. The schemes have been implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of PSUs under the Power Ministry.

9) **The aim of the first Silk processing plant set up KVIC is to boost the production of ________ saree.**

   A. Tussar  
   B. Konrad  
   C. Bhagalpuri  
   D. Patola

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has opened its first Silk processing plant in Gujarat. The aim is to boost the production of signature Patola Saree and create livelihoods for women. KVIC aims to promote Indian Crafts and Culture.

10) **The ________ Indian Science Congress is held from 3-7 January 2020.**

   A. 100th  
   B. 107th  
   C. 125th  
   D. 130th

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) is held from 3-7 January 2020 at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru, Karnataka. ISC will provide the desired platform to the farmers who introduced innovations in agriculture. The theme of the 107th ISC is Science and Technology: Rural Development.

11) ________ is the trademark Saree of Gujarat.

   A. Patola  
   B. Chanderi  
   C. Paithani  
   D. Bandhani
Patola is the trademark Saree of Gujarat. It is one of the most eminent symbols of Indian Craftsmanship. It is priced very high and is out of reach of common women. The raw material is purchased from Karnataka or West Bengal, where the silk processing units are situated. This increases the cost of fabric manifolds.

12) What is the theme of the Indian Science Congress (ISC) of the year 2020?

A. Research and Rural Development for Novel Agri methods  
B. Science and Technology: Rural Development  
C. Agriculture and Rural Development  
D. Innovation at its height- Technology and Rural Development

Answer B

The 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) is held from 3-7 January 2020 at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru, Karnataka. ISC will provide the desired platform to the farmers who introduced innovations in agriculture. The theme of the 107th ISC is Science and Technology: Rural Development.

13) What is the cost estimated for the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)'s first Silk processing plant?

A. Rs.50 lakh  
B. Rs.60 lakh  
C. Rs.75 lakh  
D. Rs.90 lakh

Answer C

The KVIC launched its first Silk Processing Plant at Surendranagar. The major initiative would help cut down the cost of production of silk yarn drastically and increase the sale and availability of raw material for Gujarati Patola Sarees locally. The cost of the plant is Rs.75 lakh in which KVIC has contributed Rs.60 lakh. The unit has generated employment for 90 local women, among which 70 women belong to the Muslim community.

14) The Yoga Science meet was organized as part of the ongoing 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) in _________ on 5 January 2020.
A. Hyderabad  
B. Mumbai  
C. Pune  
D. Bengaluru  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Yoga Science meet was organized as part of the ongoing 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) in Bengaluru on 5 January 2020. The meet was addressed by the head of SVYASA Yoga deemed University Dr. HR Nagendra.

15) Which committee submitted the Draft National Education Policy to the ministry in 2019?

A. Justice Ranjan Gogoi Committee  
B. Abhijit Sen Committee  
C. Dr. K Kasturirangan Committee  
D. Bhurelal Committee  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** In the year 2019, Dr. K Kasturirangan Committee submitted the Draft National Education Policy to the ministry. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) took a leap forward in transforming the education sector with the motto of Education for All and Quality Education.

16) India has ranked _______ in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) for the year 2019.

A. 34th  
B. 42nd  
C. 68th  
D. 62nd  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** India has ranked 34th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) of the World Economic Forum for the year 2019. In 2013, India ranked 65th.

17) TN Chaturvedi who passed away recently is a _______.

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*Current Affairs - Weekly Edition PDF*  
*(January 6 - January 12, 2020)*
A. space scientist
B. botanist
C. bureaucrat
D. footballer

Answer C

Explanation Former Karnataka Governor TN Chaturvedi passed away on 5 January 2020. He was 90 years old. He was a bureaucrat. He was appointed as the 14th Governor of Karnataka in 2002 by the NDA government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

18) Who released the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2019?
A. WHO
B. WEF
C. UNESCO
D. UNEP

Answer B

Explanation The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) is released by the World Economic Forum (WEF). The index measures the factors and policies that make a country a viable place to invest in the Travel and Tourism sector. This sustainability indicator can be used to calculate the status of the Travel and Tourism goal.

19) Navigation facilities for visually impaired was inaugurated at ________ railway station in Punjab on 5 January 2020.
A. Rupnagar
B. Chandigarh
C. Ludhiana
D. Sangrur

Answer B

Explanation Navigation facilities for visually impaired was inaugurated at Chandigarh railway station in Punjab on 5 January 2020. This facility has been introduced by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation through Bengaluru-based NGO Anupraayaas. Chandigarh is
the fifth Railway station in the country and first in North India to have this facility.

20) **Which country topped the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2019?**

A. Spain  
B. France  
C. Germany  
D. Japan  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Spain topped the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2019. Whereas India has ranked 34th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) of the World Economic Forum for the year 2019.

21) **Chandigarh is the ________ Railway station in the country and first in North India to have this facility.**

A. 1st  
B. 5th  
C. 7th  
D. 12th  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Navigation facilities for visually impaired was inaugurated at Chandigarh railway station in Punjab on 5 January 2020. This facility has been introduced by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation through Bengaluru-based NGO Anuprayaas. Chandigarh is the fifth Railway station in the country and first in North India to have this facility.

22) **The DefExpo India-2020 is to be held in _________.**

A. Jaipur  
B. Bengaluru  
C. Chennai  
D. Lucknow  

**Answer B**
Current Affairs - Weekly Edition PDF
(January 6 - January 12, 2020)

Explanation The 11th biennial edition of DefExpo India- 2020 is to be held from 5-8 February 2020 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The preparations were reviewed by the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on 5 January 2020. It is expected to be the largest exhibition for the world's defence companies to display their land, sea and air capabilities at a single exhibition.

23) Who topped the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings Under-21 men's singles category?

A. Manav Thakkar
B. G. Sathiyan
C. Achanta Sharath Kamal
D. Arjun Singh

Answer A

Explanation Indian paddler Manav Thakkar topped the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings and became world number 1 in the Under-21 men's singles category. Thakkar became the fourth Indian to achieve the rank after Harmeet Desai, G Sathiyan and Soumyajit Ghosh. He jumped nine places to etch his name in the history books.

24) The __________ biennial edition of DefExpo India- 2020 is expected to be the largest exhibition for the world's defence companies to display their land, sea and air capabilities at a single exhibition.

A. 7th
B. 8th
C. 11th
D. 12th

Answer C

Explanation The 11th biennial edition of DefExpo India- 2020 is to be held from 5-8 February 2020 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The preparations were reviewed by the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on 5 January 2020. It is expected to be the largest exhibition for the world's defence companies to display their land, sea and air capabilities at a single exhibition.

25) The Indian Army is to sign an MoU with ________ for the procurement of AK-203 assault rifles.

A. UK
B. France
C. Russia
D. USA

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Indian Army is to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Russia for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles. The rifles are to be manufactured locally by an India-Russia joint venture (JV). The MoU is expected to be signed in a month.

**26) What is the theme of the DefExpo India- 2020?**

A. India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub
B. Indian Defence: Potentially Hi-tech revolutionized form
C. Evolution of the Indian Defence
D. Missiles and Weapons of the evolving Defence of India

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The 11th biennial edition of DefExpo India- 2020 is to be held from 5-8 February 2020 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Defence Expo- 2020 will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The theme of the expo is India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub.

**27) The Indian Army is to sign an MoU with Russia for the procurement of over _______ AK-203 assault rifles.**

A. 3 lakh
B. 5.6 lakh
C. 7.5 lakh
D. 10 lakh

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Indian Army is to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Russia for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles. The rifles are to be manufactured locally by an India-Russia joint venture (JV). The MoU is expected to be signed in a month.

**28) Who won the men's 10 metres air pistol gold in the 63rd National Shooting Championship?**
A. Boby Kaushik
B. Shiva Narwal
C. Saurabh Chaudhary
D. Sarabjot Singh

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The 17-year-old ace shooter from Uttar Pradesh Saurabh Chaudhary has won the men's 10 metres air pistol gold at the 63rd National Shooting Championship in Bhopal on 4 January 2020. Chaudhary shot a 246.4 to finish on top.

29) **Where is the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited located?**

A. Rajasthan
B. Uttar Pradesh
C. Gujarat
D. Bihar

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Indo-Russia Rifles Private Limited is a rifle-manufacturing facility in Korwa, Amethi district in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The factory manufactures the AK-203 variant of the Kalashnikov family of rifles.

30) **Where was the 63rd National Shooting Championship held?**

A. Pune
B. Bhubaneswar
C. Guwahati
D. Bhopal

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The 63rd National Shooting Championship was held in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

31) **Which state is to host the MECOS-3 meeting in January 2020?**

A. Kerala
B. Tamil Nadu
C. Andhra Pradesh
Kochi to host the global meet on the marine ecosystem, MECOS-3. The 3rd international symposium on marine ecosystems-challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) in Kochi from 7-10 January 2020. The meeting will be held at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi, Kerala.

32) Who won Junior's 10 metres air pistol gold in the 63rd National Shooting Championship?

A.Sarabjot Singh  
B.Sharvan Kumar  
C.Boby Kaushik  
D.Shiva Narwal

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Sarabjot Singh won Junior's 10 metres air pistol gold in the 63rd National Shooting Championship in Bhopal on 4 January 2020.

33) Who is organizing the MECOS-3 meeting?

A.Asian Marine and Biological Association  
B.International Marine Research Association  
C.Marine Biological Association of India  
D.Global Marine Biological Researchers Organization

**Answer C**

**Explanation** MECOS-3 is to be organized by the Marine Biological Association of India. It will be inaugurated by Petri Suuronen, Programme Director, Blue Bioeconomy Natural Resources Institute, Finland. The 3rd international symposium on marine ecosystems-challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) in Kochi from 7-10 January 2020.

34) Which state is to inaugurate a first-of-its-kind rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles?

A.Odisha
B. West Bengal  
C. Karnataka  
D. Bihar  

**Answer D**  

**Explanation** Bihar's Bhagalpur forest division is to inaugurate a first-of-its-kind rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles in January 2020.

**35) Who won the Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020?**  
A. Sucheta Satish  
B. Taruni Joshi  
C. Arijit Singh  
D. Tony Kakkar  

**Answer A**  

**Explanation** Dubai-based Indian girl Sucheta Satish, who can sing in 120 languages, won the Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020. The 13-year-old known is as the Dubai Indian High School's nightingale. Along with Sucheta Satish, 100 other Global Child prodigies across the world were honoured at the award ceremony in different categories.

**36) Which Police initiated the Sukanya project?**  
A. Delhi Police  
B. Mumbai Police  
C. Kolkata Police  
D. Andhra Police  

**Answer C**  

**Explanation** Sukanya project was initiated by the Kolkata Police's Community Policing Wing with an aim to provide self-defence training to girl students of city-based schools, colleges, and universities. The project is funded by Women and Child Development and Social Welfare Department of the West Bengal state government.

**37) The aim of the Intensified Mission Indradhanush launched by the central government is to achieve ________ vaccination coverage in children of less than 2 years in the state.**
A. 50%
B. 60%
C. 90%
D. 100%

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The aim of the Intensified Mission Indradhanush program launched by the central government to achieve 90 percent vaccination coverage in children of less than 2 years in the state. The Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 targets full immunization coverage in 272 districts spread over 27 States.

38) **Who is elected as the President of Croatia?**

A. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic
B. Zoran Milanovic
C. Andrej Plenkovic
D. Gordan Jandrokovic

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Zoran Milanovic won Croatia's presidential election. He Croatia's center-left former prime minister. He defeated center-right incumbent Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic in a second-round vote. The presidential election was held on 22 December 2019. He belongs to the Social Democrats (SDP).

39) **Dubai-based Indian girl Sucheta Satish, who set twin world records for singing in most languages during one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child, can sing in _________ languages.**

A. 92
B. 102
C. 120
D. 122

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Dubai-based Indian girl Sucheta Satish, who can sing in 120 languages, won the Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020. The award recognized her twin world records for singing in
most languages during one concert and the longest live singing concert by a child. She had set as a 12-year-old two years ago in Dubai at the Indian Consulate Auditorium. During the concert, she sang in 102 languages over 6.15 hours.

40) What is the currency of Croatia?

A. Kuna  
B. Shekel  
C. Euro  
D. Croatian Dollar

Answer A  

Explanation The Croatian Kuna is the currency of Croatia. Our currency rankings show that the most popular Croatia Kuna exchange rate is the HRK to EUR rate. The currency code for Kunas is HRK, and the currency symbol is kn.

41) CISF observe ________ as the Year of mobility.

A. 2017  
B. 2018  
C. 2019  
D. 2020

Answer D  

Explanation The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has announced that it is to observe 2020 as the Year of mobility. This year will have a special focus on the creation of more residential units and the implementation of various welfare measures for the troops.

42) How much did India extend the line of credit (LOC) for financing solar parks in Cuba?

A. $35 million  
B. $48 million  
C. $63 million  
D. $75 million

Answer D
**Explaination** India has extended a line of credit (LOC) of $75 million to Cuba for financing solar parks. The announced was made by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The move comes following the agreement signed between Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and Banco Exterior De Cuba on 16 July 2019 that came into effect from 12 December 2019.

43) Under the Dr. YSR Aarogyasri scheme, people having an annual income of up to __________ and the eligible people will be given Aarogyasri cards for free medical treatment.

A. Rs.2 lakh  
B. Rs.5 lakh  
C. Rs.4 lakh  
D. Rs.3 lakh  

**Answer B**

**Explaination** Andhra Pradesh state government launched the Dr. YSR Aarogyasri scheme. It was inaugurated by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at Eluru in West Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh. YSR Aarogyasri scheme will benefit people having an annual income of up to Rs.5 lakh and the eligible people will be given Aarogyasri cards.

44) Who is the Director-General (DG) of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)?

A. Rajesh Ranjan  
B. Kiran Singh  
C. K. VijayRaghavan  
D. Sashastra Seema Bal  

**Answer A**

**Explaination** Senior IPS officer Rajesh Ranjan is the Director-General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). Ranjan, a 1984 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Bihar cadre.

45) When did Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and Banco Exterior De Cuba sign agreement for financing solar parks in the country?

A. 2017  
B. 2018
India has extended a line of credit (LOC) of $75 million to Cuba for financing solar parks. The announced was made by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The move comes following the agreement signed between Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and Banco Exterior De Cuba on 16 July 2019 that came into effect from 12 December 2019.

46) Where is the headquarters of CISF located?

A. New Delhi  
B. Kolkata  
C. Srinagar  
D. Leh

Answer A

Explaination CISF came into existence on 10 March 1969. It is a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) in India. It is headquartered in New Delhi, India.

47) To which country did India extend a line of credit (LOC) for financing solar parks?

A. Syria  
B. Afghanistan  
C. Siberia  
D. Cuba

Answer D

Explaination India has extended a line of credit (LOC) of $75 million to Cuba for financing solar parks. The announced was made by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The move comes following the agreement signed between Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and Banco Exterior De Cuba on 16 July 2019 that came into effect from 12 December 2019.

48) CISF functions under __________.

A. Ministry of Defence
49) ISRO is to set up India's world-class facility for training astronauts in three years at __________.
A. Jodhpur  
B. Challakere  
C. Hiriyur  
D. Sira

**Answer B**

*Explanation* ISRO has announced to set up India's world-class facility for training astronauts in three years at Challakere in Chitradurga district of Karnataka. The announcement was made by K. Sivan, ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space.

50) CISF is a part of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF). What does CISF stand for?
A. Central Inshore Search & rescue Force  
B. Central Infantry Surveillance Force  
C. Central Intelligence Surgical Force  
D. Central Industrial Security Force

**Answer D**

*Explanation* CISF - Central Industrial Security Force. CISF came into existence on 10 March 1969. It is a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) in India. It has a strength of around 2,800 personnel. It functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is headquartered in New Delhi, India.

51) What is the estimated cost for the establishment of ISRO's Human Space
Flight Centre (HSFC)?

A. Rs.1,200 crore  
B. Rs.2,700 crore  
C. Rs.3,500 crore  
D. Rs.4,800 crore

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has proposed a Rs.2,700 crore master plan to create a top infrastructure that will house its young Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC). The HSFC was formally announced in January 2019. It currently works from a temporary place at the ISRO headquarters, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

52) Himachal Pradesh became the __________ state to launch the MyGov portal, CM app in the state.

A. 3rd  
B. 5th  
C. 8th  
D. 11th

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Himachal State government unveiled the Himachal MyGov portal on 6 January 2020. The portal was launched by the Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur. This is expected to strengthen public participation in the Governance process. He also launched the CM App on the occasion. With this launch, the State has become 11th State to have this facility.

53) Currently, ________ is providing training for the first set of four astronaut candidates for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022.

A. China  
B. USA  
C. Russia  
D. Japan

**Answer C**

**Explanation** India is currently paying a huge sum to Russia for the training of the first set of four
astronaut candidates for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022. Also, HSP work is split across various centres like Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru.

54) Which State launched the MyGov portal on 6 January 2020?

A. Haryana  
B. Himachal Pradesh  
C. Manipur  
D. Assam

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Himachal State government unveiled the Himachal MyGov portal on 6 January 2020. The portal was launched by the Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur. This is expected to strengthen public participation in the Governance process. He also launched the CM App on the occasion. With this launch, the State has become 11th State to have this facility.

55) Who is appointed as the advisor to the Lt Governor of Jammu & Kashmir?

A. Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar  
B. G C Murmu  
C. K Durga Prasad  
D. Guru Prasad Yadav

**Answer A**

**Explanation** IPS officer Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar has been appointed as an advisor to the Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He recently retired as the Director-General (DG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The position in the paramilitary force remained vacant for nearly two months after the retirement of K Durga Prasad on 28 February 2019.

56) The ________ edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC) will be held from 6-10 January 2020.

A. 2nd  
B. 3rd  
C. 4th
Pune is to host the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5). The biennial conference is hosted for the first time in India. It is hosted from 6-10 January 2020.

57) IPS officer Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar retired as the Director-General of ________ on 31 December 2019.

A. CISF  
B. ITBP  
C. CRPF  
D. CAPF

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar is a 1983-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre. He retired as the DG CRPF on 31 December 2019. He headed the 3.25 lakh personnel force for over two and a half years.

58) Who is organizing the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference in 2020?

A. All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)  
B. Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay)  
C. Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER)  
D. CSIR-Indian Institute Of Integrative Medicine

**Answer C**

**Explanation** APDRC5, one of the largest meetings of Drosophila researchers, is organized by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).

59) ________ is to host the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference in January 2020.

A. Hyderabad  
B. Mumbai
C. Pune
D. Bengaluru

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Pune is to host the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5). The biennial conference is hosted for the first time in India. It is hosted from 6-10 January 2020.

**60) Which State celebrates the Zo festival?**

A. Bihar
B. Odisha
C. Tripura
D. Mizoram

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Mizoram state government is organizing the Zo Festival from 9 January 2020. The festival is a part of the State's endeavour to unify different tribes of Mizo. The Festival will be organized under the banner Zo Kutpui in at least 10 different cities across the globe.

**61) The National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub is provided with ________ powered learning ecosystem which will assist the Banking, Financial services, and insurance (BFSI) sector.**

A. AI
B. Digital blockchain
C. WebChain
D. None of the above

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Commerce and Industry & Railways Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated the National Stock Exchange (NSE) Knowledge Hub in New Delhi on 6 January 2020. The hub is provided an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered learning ecosystem which will assist the Banking, Financial services, and insurance (BFSI) sector.

**62) The Mizo population id found in ________.**
A. Manipur  
B. Mizoram  
C. Tripura  
D. All the above  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Mizo population is found in Manipur, Tripura, and Mizoram across India. So far, 12 Mizo clans have been identified. These tribal people are native to the north-eastern part of India, western Burma (Present Myanmar) and Eastern Bangladesh.

63) **AI and Machine Learning will contribute around _______ by 2035.**

A. $1 trillion  
B. $3 trillion  
C. $5 trillion  
D. $10 trillion  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** AI and Machine Learning will contribute around $1 trillion by 2035.

64) **Who is the Chief Minister of Mizoram?**

A. Lal Thanhawla  
B. Zoramthanga  
C. Lalduhawma  
D. Neiphiu Rio  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Zoramthanga is an Indian politician who is the current Chief Minister of Mizoram. He is the leader of Mizo National Front. He served as the Chief Minister of Mizoram from December 1998 to December 2008, for two consecutive terms.

65) **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised its Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) for _______.**

A. Commercial Banks  
B. Shadow Banks
C. Urban Cooperative Banks
D. Retail Banks

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised its Supervisory Action Framework (SAF) for urban co-operative banks (UCBs). The move is to expedite the resolution of UCBs experiencing financial stress. The revised framework released by the RBI on 6 January 2020.

66) With which State Mizoram does not share a border?
A. Assam
B. Arunachal Pradesh
C. Manipur
D. Tripura

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Mizoram shares borders with Assam, Manipur, and Tripura. It doesn't share border with Arunachal Pradesh.

67) Iran has announced its total withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) after the killing of __________ by the US.
A. Ali Khamenei
B. Hassan Nasrallah
C. Imad Mughniyeh
D. Qassem Soleimani

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Iran has announced its total withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which is commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal. The exit of Iran comes after the U.S. targeted strike that killed Iran's Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani in Iraq on 3 January 2020.

68) The second phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 was rolled out in __________.
A. West Bengal
B. Uttar Pradesh
C. Punjab
D. Madhya Pradesh

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The second phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 was rolled out at block level in 35 districts of Uttar Pradesh on 6 January 2020. It will cover 425 blocks of 73 districts of the Uttar Pradesh state.

69) The ________ edition of the Sukanya project that aims to provide girls studying in schools and colleges in the city with self-defence training began in January 2020.

A. 3rd  
B. 1st  
C. 4th  
D. 5th

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Kolkata Police has started the third edition of the Sukanya project on 6 January 2020. The project aims to provide girls studying in schools and colleges in the city with self-defence training.

70) Exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr is being conducted since ________ between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman.

A. 1985  
B. 1993  
C. 1998  
D. 2005

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Naseem-Al-Bahr or sea breeze is a naval exercise that is held between the Indian Navy and the RNO. It is being conducted since 1993.

71) Who launched the Vajra Platform to make payments fast and secure?
A.NSE  
B.RBI  
C.SEBI  
D.NPCI  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched the Vajra Platform to make payments fast and secure. The platform is based on blockchain technology. The main objective of the Vajra Platform is to provide automated clearing and settlement of payments and drastically reduce the need for manual reconciliation.

72) Where is Budah Nallah located?
   A.Bihar  
   B.Punjab  
   C.West Bengal  
   D.Maharashtra  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Budha Nullah or Budha Nala is a seasonal water stream, which runs through the Malwa region of Punjab, India, and after passing through highly populated Ludhiana district, Punjab, India, it drains into Sutlej River, a tributary of the Indus river.

73) Who is appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the mountainous Caribbean island of Dominica?
   A.Arun Kumar  
   B.Dilip Saini  
   C.Udhay Kumar  
   D.Arjun Singh  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** IFS officer Arun Kumar Sahu is appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the mountainous Caribbean island of Dominica. He will be residing in Port of Spain. The appointment was approved by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Currently, Arun Kumar Sahu is serving as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.
74) How much did the Punjab govt. approved for the rejuvenation of highly polluting Budah Nallah at Ludhiana?

A. Rs.400 crore  
B. Rs.500 crore  
C. Rs.650 crore  
D. Rs.730 crore  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh has approved Rs.650 crore for the rejuvenation of highly polluting Budah Nallah at Ludhiana. The state government has directed the local government department to ensure the timely completion of the project, within two years.

75) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted the select banks in India can offer forex rates to Indian clients ________.

A. 9 am to 5 pm  
B. 9 am to 8 pm  
C. 10 am to 10 pm  
D. 24x7  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted the select banks in India can offer forex rates to Indian clients round the clock, which is 24X7. Now the select banks can work beyond the inter-bank market hours, which now run from 9 am to 5 pm.

76) The International Kite Festival was launched at the _______riverfront in Ahmedabad.

A. Narmada  
B. Sabarmati  
C. Mahi  
D. Tapi  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The 31st International Kite Festival was launched at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. The festival will be
conducted from 7-14 January in different parts of the state. The festival became an identity of Gujarat.

77) Akbar Padamsee who passed away recently is a famous _________.

A.politician  
B.artist  
C.banker  
D.entrepreneur

Answer B

Explanation One of India's best-known artists, Akbar Padamsee passed away in Coimbatore on 6 January 2020. He was 91 years old.

78) Who won the title in the 95th edition of the Hastings International Chess Congress?

A.G A Stany  
B.Swayams Mishra  
C.Deep Sengupta  
D.P. Magesh Chandran

Answer D

Explanation Indian chess player P. Magesh Chandran won the title in the 95th edition of the Hastings International Chess Congress in Hastings, England. He defeated Indian GM Deep Sengupta in the eighth round to win the title. He secured the first place with 7.5 points from nine games.

79) Which artist's artwork is Portrait of Husain?

A.Akbar Padamsee  
B.S.H. Raza  
C.F.N. Souza  
D.and M.F. Husain

Answer A

Explanation Portrait of Husain is the artwork of the famous artist Akbar Padamsee.
80) Where was the 95th edition of the Hastings International Chess Congress held?

A. London  
B. Bristol  
C. Hastings  
D. Liverpool  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Indian chess player P. Magesh Chandran won the title in the 95th edition of the Hastings International Chess Congress in Hastings, England. He defeated Indian GM Deep Sengupta in the eighth round to win the title. He secured the first place with 7.5 points from nine games.

81) Which State is hosting the Global Investors Meet 2020?

A. Tamil Nadu  
B. Kerala  
C. Uttar Pradesh  
D. Bihar  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Kerala is organizing the Global Investors Meet 'ASCEND 2020'. The meet will be held from 9-10 January 2020 in Kochi, Kerala. The meet will be organized by the Industries Department of the state government.

82) Where is the place Hastings located?

A. California  
B. Russia  
C. England  
D. Taiwan  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Hastings is a town on England's southeast coast. It's known for the 1066 Battle of Hastings, fought on a nearby field where Battle Abbey now stands.
83) ASCEND 2020 be held from 9-10 January 2020 in ________.

A. Kochi  
B. Chennai  
C. Thiruvananthapuram  
D. Tiruchirappalli

Answer A  

Explanation Kerala is organizing the Global Investors Meet 'ASCEND 2020'. The meet will be held from 9-10 January 2020 in Kochi, Kerala. The meet will be organized by the Industries Department of the state government.

84) Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) is being planned to be set up in ________.

A. Odisha  
B. Andhra Pradesh  
C. Karnataka  
D. Gujarat

Answer D  

Explanation Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced that the State is to set up the Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) in the state. The announcement was made at the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) held at Swarnim Sankul in Gandhinagar.

85) What was the cost estimated for the establishment of Defence Park at 60 acres in Ottapalam?

A. Rs.100 crore  
B. Rs.131 crore  
C. Rs.152 crore  
D. Rs.123 crore

Answer B  

Explanation The cost estimated by the Kerala State government for the establishment of Defence Park at 60 acres in Ottapalam is Rs.131 crore.
86) Who organized the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF)?

A. Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC)  
B. Maharashtra University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (MUSEC)  
C. Bihar University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (BUSEC)  
D. Uttar Pradesh University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (UPUSEC)

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) was organized by Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC). The initiative was aimed to identify, nurture and support children's innovations in the state.

87) When is the Journalists' Day celebrated?

A. 4 January  
B. 5 January  
C. 6 January  
D. 7 January

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Journalists' Day was celebrated on 6 January 2020. The day is observed every year in Maharashtra. The day is observed in the memory of late thespian journalist Balshashtri Jambhekar.

88) Where was the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) held?

A. Hyderabad, Telangana  
B. Bengaluru, Karnataka  
C. Gandhinagar, Gujarat  
D. Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced that the State is to set up the Vikram Sarabhai Children Innovation Center (VSCIC) in the state. The announcement was made at the Children's Innovation Festival (CIF) held at Swarnim Sankul in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

89) Which State celebrates the Journalists' Day?
A. Telangana
B. Rajasthan
C. Odisha
D. Maharashtra

Answer D

Explanation Journalists' Day was celebrated on 6 January 2020. The day is observed every year in Maharashtra. The day is observed in the memory of late thespian journalist Balshashtri Jambhekar.

90) Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC) is an incubation centre set up by Gujarat University in partnership with __________.
A. The UN
B. UNICEF
C. European Union
D. WTO

Answer B

Explanation Gujarat University Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Council (GUSEC) is an incubation centre set up by Gujarat University in partnership with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

91) Journalists' Day is celebrated in the memory of __________.
A. Madan Mohan Malaviya
B. Lala Lajpat Rai
C. Bal Gangadhar Tilak
D. Balshashtri Jambhekar

Answer D

Explanation Journalists' Day was celebrated on 6 January 2020. The day is observed every year in Maharashtra. The day is observed in the memory of late thespian journalist Balshashtri Jambhekar.
92) Two Indian origin women, Judge Archana Rao and Judge Deepa Ambedkar have been appointed as judges to criminal and civil courts of 

A. New York  
B. Washington DC  
C. California  
D. Ohio  

Answer A  

Explanation Two Indian origin women, Judge Archana Rao and Judge Deepa Ambedkar have been appointed as judges to criminal and civil courts. The judges were appointed by New York mayor Bill de Blasio. Judge Archana Rao is appointed to the criminal court of New York and Judge Deepa Ambedkar is appointed to civil court in New York. These appointments were effective from 1 January 2020.

93) Who is known as the Father of Marathi Journalism?  

A. Balshastri Jambhekar  
B. Raja Ram Mohan Roy  
C. Sambad Kaumudi  
D. Mirat-Ul-Akbar  

Answer A  

Explanation Balshastri Jambhekar is also known as The Father of Marathi Journalism. He was born on 6 January 1812 in Pombhurle in Devgad taluka in the Konkan region of Maharashtra. He is recognized for his efforts in starting journalism in the Marathi language.

94) The 2020 Khelo India University Games has been scheduled to be held at 

A. Bihar  
B. Odisha  
C. Assam  
D. Manipur  

Answer B
Explanation The first edition of Khelo India University Games has been scheduled to be held at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) University in Bhubaneswar.

95) When was the first newspaper 'Darpan' in the Marathi language released?

A. 6 January 1832  
B. 6 January 1838  
C. 6 January 1843  
D. 6 January 1848

Answer A

Explanation The first newspaper in the Marathi language named Darpan was published on 6 January 1832. The release date also marks his birth anniversary. He was the editor of Darpan during British Rule in India. He died on 18 May 1846.

96) The ________ edition of Khelo India University Games will be held from 22 February to 1 March 2020.

A. 1st  
B. 2nd  
C. 3rd  
D. 4th

Answer A

Explanation The first edition of Khelo India University Games has been scheduled to be held at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) University in Bhubaneswar. Khelo India University Games is an initiative of the Government of India to empower the sports sector. It aims to mould the future of budding sports stars in India. The games will be held from 22 February to 1 March 2020.

97) Which is the first newspaper in the Marathi language?

A. Kesari  
B. Mahratta  
C. Darpan  
D. Navajeevan
Answer C

Explanation The first newspaper in the Marathi language named Darpan was published on 6 January 1832. The release date also marks his birth anniversary. He was the editor of Darpan during British Rule in India. He died on 18 May 1846.

98) Which committee recommended the GOCO Model for the Indian Army?

A. Lt. Gen. Abhijitha Guha (Retd.)
B. Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (Retd.)
C. Lt. Gen. Syed Ata Hasnain (Retd.)
D. Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh (Retd.)

Answer B

Explanation The GOCO model was recommended by the Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (Retd.) committee. The model aims to enhance combat capability and re-balancing defence expenditure. As per the committee's recommendations, the government has decided to disband two advance base workshops, one static workshop and four ordnance depots and eight ABWs are recommended to be corporatized on the GOCO model.

99) When is the World Day of War Orphans observed?

A. 6 January
B. 7 January
C. 8 January
D. 9 January

Answer A

Explanation The World Day of War Orphans was celebrated on 6 January 2020. The day is observed every year. The day enables the global Communities to recognize the plight of a, particularly vulnerable group.

100) The Indian Army began its work based on the _______ model to improve efficiency.

A. Government Oriented Contractor Operationalized (GOCO)
B. Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO)
C. Private Owned Contractor Operated (POCO)
D. Private Oriented Contractor Operationalized (POCO)

Answer B

Explanation The Indian Army began its work based on the Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) model. The model will identify the potential industry partners for its base workshops and ordnance depots intended to improve operational efficiency. Army also issued a Request For Information (RFI) to shortlist service providers with experience in warehousing, logistics and supply chain management for Central Ordnance Depot (COD), Kanpur.

101) Which organization initiated the World Day of War Orphans observation?
A. Animafac
B. SOS Enfants en Detresses
C. Les Restos du cur
D. France bnvolat

Answer B

Explanation The World Day of War Orphans was initiated by the French organization, SOS Enfants en Detresses. UNICEF estimated that there are nearly 9,00,000 children in the Northeast, all of whom have been seriously affected by the war, either through a lack of education, food, shelter or a direct injury.

102) How many Army Base Workshops (ABWs) are needed for the Government Owned Contractor Operated model of the Indian Army?
A. 5
B. 8
C. 10
D. 12

Answer B

Explanation The GOCO model was recommended by the Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (Retd.) committee. The model aims to enhance combat capability and re-balancing defence expenditure. As per the committee's recommendations, the government has decided to disband two advance base workshops, one static workshop and four ordnance depots and eight Army Base Workshops (ABWs) are recommended to be corporatized on the GOCO model.
103) National Statistical Office (NSO) has estimated India's GDP growth rate for 2019-20 estimated at _________.

A. 5%
B. 5.5%
C. 5.8%
D. 6%

**Answer A**

**Explanation** National Statistical Office (NSO) has estimated India's GDP growth rate for 2019-20 estimated at 5% on 7 January 2020. It has seen dipping to an 11-year low of 5% in the current fiscal. This is mainly due to poor showing by the manufacturing and construction sectors. The previous low economic growth was recorded at 3.1% in 2008-09.

104) The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the year 2019 was recorded as the ________ warmest year since 1901.

A. 5th
B. 7th
C. 2nd
D. 4th

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the year 2019 was recorded as the seventh warmest year since 1901.

105) How many divisions are there under the National Statistical Office (NSO)?

A. 2
B. 3
C. 4
D. 5

**Answer C**

**Explanation** NSO is responsible to conduct large scale sample surveys in diverse fields on an All India basis. The four divisions of NSO are Field Operations Division (FOD), Survey Design and
Research Division (SDRD), Survey Coordination Division (SCD), and Data Processing Division (DPD).

106) 2019 despite being, the heating was substantially lower than the highest warming observed in ________ as per IMD.

A. 2014  
B. 2015  
C. 2016  
D. 2018  

Answer C

Explanation The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the year 2019 was recorded as the seventh warmest year since 1901. It also said that the heating was substantially lower than the highest warming observed in 2016.

107) Which of the following was awarded to acknowledge the positive role and responsibility of media in disseminating the outreach of Yoga in India and abroad?

A. National Media Yoga Awards  
B. Ramon Magsaysay Awards  
C. Best Yoga Propagation and Promotion Media  
D. Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman  

Answer D

Explanation The Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar presented the Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman in New Delhi on 7 January 2020. The award acknowledged the positive role and responsibility of media in disseminating the outreach of Yoga in India and abroad.

108) Where is the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) University located?

A. Jaipur  
B. Ahmedabad  
C. Bhubaneswar
D.Bhopal

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, formerly KIIT University, is a private institute deemed to be a university located in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.

**109) Who is the author of the book Karmayoddha Granth?**

A.Amit Shah
B.Rajnath Singh
C.Nirmala Sitharaman
D.Piyush Goyal

**Answer A**


**110) Which State celebrates the International Kite Festival 2020?**

A.Odisha
B.Gujarat
C.Rajasthan
D.Tamil Nadu

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The 31st International Kite Festival was launched at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. The festival will be conducted from 7-14 January in different parts of the state. The festival became an identity of Gujarat.

**111) India's woman player GM R Vaishali secured 6 points and finished 10th in the _______ edition of the Hastings International Chess Congress.**

A.50th
B.75th
C.95th
D. 100th

Answer C


112) Karmayoddha Granth talks about the life of __________.

A. Former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee
B. Former PM Morarji Desai
C. PM Narendra Modi
D. Former PM Manmohan Singh

Answer C


113) The ________ International Kite Festival was launched on 7 January 2020.

A. 15th
B. 23rd
C. 31st
D. 45th

Answer C

Explanation The 31st International Kite Festival was launched at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. The festival will be conducted from 7-14 January in different parts of the state. The festival became an identity of Gujarat.

114) The Union Cabinet approved the agreement signed between India and __________ at enhancing the cooperation of the countries in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful and civilian purposes.

A. Maldives
B. China  
C. Japan  
D. Mongolia

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Union Cabinet approved the agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on 8 January 2020. The agreement aimed at enhancing the cooperation of the countries in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful and civilian purposes. The agreement was signed at New Delhi on 20 September 2019.

115) Madhavpur Mela is celebrated in ________.

A. Assam  
B. Manipur  
C. Gujarat  
D. Rajasthan

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Madhavpur Mela of Gujarat due to be held in the first week of April 2020. The 8 States of the Northern Eastern Region will participate in the festival.

116) ISRO is planning to set a new satellite series called the Indian Data Relay Satellite System in the year ________.

A. 2020  
B. 2022  
C. 2024  
D. 2025

**Answer A**

**Explanation** ISRO is planning to set a new satellite series called the Indian Data Relay Satellite System. It aims to ring its own era of space-to-space tracking and communication of its space assets in 2020.

117) Who is elected as the PM of Spain?

A. Carles Puigdemont
Spain's Parliament confirmed Socialist leader Pedro Sanchez as Prime Minister of the country on 7 January 2020. He will hold the office for another term at the helm of the country's first-ever coalition government since its return to democracy in the 1970s.

118) When is the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas observed?

A. 7 January  
B. 8 January  
C. 9 January  
D. 10 January

Answer C

The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is observed on 9 January 2020. The day is celebrated to recognize the overseas Indians who have contributed to the development of India.

119) Which year was recorded as the second hottest year on record and ended the hottest decade in history?

A. 2016  
B. 2017  
C. 2018  
D. 2019

Answer D

Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), European Union's climate monitoring service, reported that 2019 was the second hottest year on record and ended the hottest decade in history.


A. 50th
B. 55th
C. 63th
D. 68th

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The 63rd edition of Maharashtra Kesari Kusti 2020 began on 3 January 2020 at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex Balewadi, Mahalunge in Pune, Maharashtra. It was held from 3-7 January.

121) When was the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrated for the first time?

A. 1975
B. 1990
C. 2003
D. 2010

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Pravasi Bharatiya Divas conventions are being held every year since 2003. The conventions aim to provide a platform to the Non-resident Indians (NRIs) community to engage with the Indian government and its people of the land for mutually beneficial activities.

122) Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) is the ________ climate monitoring service.

A. African Union's
B. European Union's
C. The United Nations'
D. India Meteorological Department's

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) is the European Union's climate monitoring service. C3S are vital to climate change adaptation. It provides climate and climate change information and knowledge by means of accessible, timely, reliable, and user-oriented products.

123) Who confers the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (PBSA)?
A. President of India  
B. Prime Minister of India  
C. Minister of Home Affairs  
D. President of INC

**Answer A**

**Explanation** On this day Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (PBSA) is conferred every year. The award is conferred by the President of India. The PBSA award recognizes the significant contributions made by the Non-resident Indian and person of Indian origin (PIO), and organizations that are established by NRIs or PIOs to support, promote and build India's links across the globe.

124) Where does El Nino happen?

A. Atlantic Ocean  
B. Pacific Ocean  
C. Arabian Sea  
D. Indian Ocean

**Answer B**

**Explanation** El Nino is a climate cycle that happens in the Pacific Ocean. It causes a global impact on weather patterns. The cycle begins as the warm water in the western tropical Pacific Ocean shifts eastward along the equator toward the coast of South America. Generally, this warm water pools near Indonesia and the Philippines.

125) When did Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa and led India's freedom struggle?

A. 1909  
B. 1910  
C. 1912  
D. 1915

**Answer D**

**Explanation** January 9 was chosen for the celebration of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas because on this day in 1915, Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa and led India's freedom struggle.
126) Which of the following is the European Union's Earth Observation Programme?

A. Aura
B. Terra
C. Copernicus
D. Aquatin

Answer C

Explanation Copernicus is the EU's Earth Observation Programme. It consists of a complex set of systems that collect data from multiple sources. The collected information will be processed and provides users with information through a set of services that address the atmosphere, climate change, land, marine, emergency management, and security.

127) The ________ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is observed in January 2020.

A. 12
B. 13
C. 16
D. 18

Answer C

Explanation The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is observed on 9 January 2020. The day is celebrated to recognize the overseas Indians who have contributed to the development of India.

128) A panel, set up by minister Piyush Goyal approved to ________ private trains on 100 routes including Mumbai-Delhi and Howrah-Delhi sectors, which will compete with Rajdhani.

A. 100
B. 150
C. 200
D. 180

Answer B

Explanation A panel, set up by minister Piyush Goyal approved to 150 private trains on 100
routes. It flagged off private trains in the Centre's 100 days' agenda. The route includes Mumbai-Delhi and Howrah-Delhi sectors, which will compete with Rajdhani. Also, as an experiment two Tejas trains have been handed over for running by Railways-controlled IRCTC on the Delhi-Lucknow and Mumbai-Ahmedabad routes with the private sector.

129) How much did the CCEA approve as Viability Gap Funding (VGF)/Capital Grant Funding to Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited?

A. Rs.3,232 crore  
B. Rs.1,860 crore  
C. Rs.4,764 crore  
D. Rs.5,559 crore

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the Viability Gap Funding (VGF)/Capital Grant of Rs.5,559 crore, which is 60% of the estimated cost, to Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited on 8 January 2020.

130) Which station gets the Facial recognition technology backed by artificial intelligence (AI) as test cases to identify and nab criminals?

A. Manmad and Bhusawal stations  
B. Sainagar Shirdi stations  
C. Bhusaval and Daund Stations  
D. Kopargaon and Nasik Stations

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Bengaluru's Manmad and Bhusawal stations were installed with the Facial recognition technology backed by artificial intelligence (AI) as test cases to identify and nab criminals.

131) What is the tentative estimated cost for the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited?

A. Rs.2,450 crore  
B. Rs.6,345 crore  
C. Rs.7,000 crore
D.Rs.9,265 crore

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The tentative estimated cost for the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited is Rs.9,265 crore. The current approval by the government is expected to cover 60% cost of the project.

132) How much did the Nirbhaya fund allocate to the Indian Railways in 2020 for the installation of video surveillance systems (VSS)?

A. Rs.100 crore  
B. Rs.150 crore  
C. Rs.200 crore  
D. Rs.250 crore

**Answer D**

**Explanation** A total sum of Rs.250 crore has been allotted to the Indian Railways in 2020 from the Nirbhaya fund for the installation of video surveillance systems (VSS).

133) How many states will the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited cover?

A. 6  
B. 7  
C. 8  
D. 10

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited aims to cover 8 North-Eastern states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. The government plans to develop the Gas Pipeline Grid in all the eight states of the North-Eastern region.

134) Who won the 2020 Maharashtra Kesari title?

A. Sushil Kumar Solanki  
B. Harshvardhan Sadgir  
C. Udey Chand  
D. Kiran Singh
Indian wrestler Harshvardhan Sadgir won the Maharashtra Kesari title in the 63rd wrestling event at Balewadi near Pune on 7 January 2020. He defeated his opponent Shailesh Shelek of Latur to claim the title.

135) The titanic wave of star-forming gases which was found in the Milky way is ________ quadrillion kilometres long.

A.60
B.85
C.100
D.10,117

Answer B

Explanation Scientists from Harvard University have discovered a titanic wave of star-forming gases practically in the Milky way on 7 January 2020. It is 85 quadrillion kilometres long.

136) The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved to confer the Institution of National Importance status to the ____________.

A.Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar
B.Indian Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Dwarka
C.Research Institute in Ayurveda, Itanagar
D.Ayurveda Research Institute, Surat

Answer A

Explanation The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved to confer the Institution of National Importance status to the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar. It will be given the status by conglomerating Ayurveda Institutes at Gujarat Ayurveda University campus, Jamnagar, namely, (a) Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (b) Shri Gulabkunwerba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya (c) Institute of Ayurveda Pharmaceutical Sciences including Pharmacy Unit and to subsume the Maharshi Patanjali Institute for Yoga & Naturopathy Education & Research into the Department of Swasthvritta of the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda.

137) Scientists from Harvard University is building the 3-D map of the Milky
Way galaxy's interstellar matter using a star census gathered by _________.

A. Rosetta spacecraft  
B. Gaia spacecraft  
C. CHEPOS spacecraft  
D. Orion spacecraft

Answer B

Explanation Scientists from Harvard University are building a 3-D map of the Milky Way galaxy's interstellar matter using a star census gathered by Europe's Gaia spacecraft.

138) Where was the Maharashtra Kesari wrestling competition 2020 held?

A. Mumbai  
B. Pune  
C. Nagpur  
D. Nashik

Answer B

Explanation The 63rd edition of Maharashtra Kesari Kusti 2020 began on 3 January 2020 at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex Balewadi, Mahalunge in Pune, Maharashtra. It was held from 3-7 January.

139) The government has set a fresh deadline for the completion of the world's highest railway bridge that connects Kashmir to the rest of India by _________.

A. May 2020  
B. December 2020  
C. May 2021  
D. December 2021

Answer D

Explanation The government has set a fresh deadline for the completion of the world's highest railway bridge that connects Kashmir to the rest of India by December 2021.
140) Who organized the Advantage Maharashtra Expo 2020?

A. Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC)
B. Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC)
C. Marathwada Association of Small Scale Industries and Agriculture (MASSIA)
D. All the above

Answer D

Explanation Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is to inaugurate Advantage Maharashtra Expo 2020 on 9 January 2020. The four-day event of the industrial exhibition is organized by the Marathwada Association of Small Scale Industries and Agriculture (MASSIA) in association with the Maharashtra State Government, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC).

141) When was the Maharashtra Kesari wrestling competition held for the first time?

A. 1961
B. 1965
C. 1973
D. 1978

Answer A

Explanation Maharashtra Kesari wrestling competition is organized by Maharashtra State Wrestling Association. The first edition of the event was held in 1961.

142) When was the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project declared a national project?

A. 2000
B. 2002
C. 2006
D. 2010

Answer B

Explanation The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project was declared a national project in 2002. The highest railway line is expected to be 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower.
143) Who became the first Indian equestrian to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics after 2 decades?

A. Fouaad Mirza  
B. Deccani  
C. Manipuri Pony  
D. Chummarti

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Indian equestrian Fouaad Mirza became the first Indian to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics officially. He ended a wait spanning two decades. International Federation for Equestrian Sports (FEI) issued the latest rankings that included all results between 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019.

144) Who organized Odisha Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) International Trade Fair 2020?

A. MSME Department of Odisha  
B. National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)  
C. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO)  
D. All the above

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The 8th edition of Odisha Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) International Trade Fair 2020 began in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The trade fair is being organized by the MSME department of the state through Directorate of Export Promotion and Marketing, Directorate Industries, and Odisha Small Industries Corporation in association with the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO).

145) When was the first time an Indian equestrian to qualify for the Olympics?

A. 1990  
B. 1996  
C. 1998  
D. 2000

**Answer B**
The first time an Indian equestrian to qualify for the Olympics was 1996. Late Wing Commander IJ Lamba in 1996 Atlanta represented India at the Olympics.

146) Which is called the City of Destiny?

A. Goa  
B. Visakhapatnam  
C. Madras  
D. Kolkata

**Answer B**

Explanation Visakhapatnam is called the City of Destiny.

147) Cabinet approved the ratification of the Migration and Mobility Partnership agreement signed between India and France. When was the agreement signed?

A. 2016  
B. 2017  
C. 2018  
D. 2019

**Answer C**

Explanation The Union Cabinet chaired by the PM Narendra Modi approved the ratification of the Migration and Mobility Partnership agreement signed between India and France. The agreement was signed in March 2018 during the State Visit of the French President Emmanuel Macron to India.

148) Which city is hosting the International Naval event MILAN 2020?

A. Chennai  
B. Kochi  
C. Goa  
D. Visakhapatnam

**Answer D**

Explanation
Visakhapatnam, the City of Destiny is to host MILAN 2020. The International Naval event has been scheduled to be held in March 2020. Vice Admiral SN Ghormade, Chief of Staff ENC reviewed the preparations at the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) on 7 January 2020.

149) The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has developed a viable scientific method to cultivate Indian ________ fish in ponds.

A. Carp  
B. Shrimp  
C. Pompano  
D. Pomfret

Answer C

**Explanation** For the first time in India, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has developed a viable scientific method to cultivate Indian Pompano fish in ponds. Pompanos are marine fishes. The Indian government began the scientific study on Pompano in 2014.

150) What is the theme of the MILAN 2020 event?

A. Friendship Across the Seas  
B. Synergy Across the Seas  
C. All About Navy  
D. Safe Seas and Secure Coasts

Answer B

**Explanation** MILAN 2020 is a multilateral naval exercise. The theme of the exercise is Synergy Across the Seas. The theme is expected to provide a unique opportunity for Operational Commanders of friendly foreign navies to interact with each other in areas of mutual interest.

151) When did the Indian government begin the scientific study on Pompano?

A. 2012  
B. 2014  
C. 2016  
D. 2018

Answer B
Explanation The Indian government began the scientific study on Pompano in 2014.

152) The Central Government has started a Scheme to set up _______ Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country.

A.368  
B.668  
C.960  
D.1023

**Answer D**

Explanation The Central Government has started a Scheme to set up 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country.

153) The Indian Pompano fish have been planned to be cultivated in the ponds of ________, after the invention of CMFRI.

A.Goa  
B.Vishakhapatnam  
C.Odisha  
D.Kolkata

**Answer B**

Explanation For the first time in India, the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has developed a viable scientific method to cultivate Indian Pompano fish in ponds. With this, it will now be officially cultivated in ponds of Vishakhapatnam.

154) Which State is to conduct the event Adalat for the first time?

A.Tamil Nadu  
B.Madhya Pradesh  
C.Uttar Pradesh  
D.Kerala

**Answer D**

Explanation The Kerala State Youth Commission has scheduled a state-level Adalat to be held at Thiruvananthapuram. It aims to encourage the transgender community to open up about various
issues faced by them and for speedy grievance redressal.


A. 1st  
B. 5th  
C. 8th  
D. 12th

Answer C

Explanation The 8th edition of Odisha Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) International Trade Fair 2020 began in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It was inaugurated by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated.

156) Adalat is an event for ________.

A. LGBT community  
B. EWS  
C. Minority community  
D. Fortune 500 company board

Answer A

Explanation The Kerala State Youth Commission has scheduled a state-level Adalat to be held at Thiruvananthapuram. It aims to encourage the transgender community to open up about various issues faced by them and for speedy grievance redressal.

157) Which Indian equestrian was the first to participate in the Olympics?

A. IJ Lamba  
B. Imtiaz Anees  
C. Raghubir Singh  
D. Prahlad Singh

Answer A

Explanation Late Wing Commander IJ Lamba in 1996 Atlanta was the first Indian equestrian to participate at the Olympics.
158) FRESIA machines have been inducted by BRO to clear the snowfall that blocks important highways and roads in the Kashmir Valley every winter from _________.

A.Germany  
B.Spain  
C.Italy  
D.France  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has inducted seven high-tech snow cutter FRESIA machines from Italy to clear the snowfall that blocks important highways and roads in the Kashmir Valley every winter. BRO has received four of the machines and the rest will be imported soon.

159) Census India 2021 will begin on ________ and will end on _______ 2020.

A.1 April, 30 September  
B.1 March, 30 June  
C.1 March, 31 May  
D.1 February, 31 May  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Census India 2021 will begin on 1 April and will end on 30 September 2020. The Census will be conducted through a mobile phone application. The move aims to move away from the traditional pen and paper.

160) Who received the Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence?

A.Dr. Gutta Muniratnam  
B.Prof. M.S. Swaminathan  
C.Prof. E. A. Siddiq  
D.Prof. Subrahmaniam Nagarajan  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Famous Agricultural Scientist Prof. M S Swaminathan was chosen as the first
recipient of Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence. The award carried a cash prize of Rs.5 lakh and citation. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan was awarded for his significant contributions in the field of agriculture.

161) When was Border Roads Organisation (BRO) established?

A.1955  
B.1960  
C.1970  
D.1975  

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was established in May 1960. It is headquartered in New Delhi. It functions under the Ministry of Defence. BRO aims to meet the strategic needs of the armed forces.

162) The ________ edition of the Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 programme is to be held on 20 January 2020 in New Delhi.

A.3rd  
B.4th  
C.5th  
D.6th  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Seven students from Jammu Division have been selected for the 3rd edition of the Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 programme which will be held on 20 January 2020. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be interacting with the students from across the country at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi.

163) Who received the Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Social Service?

A.Dr. Swapan Kumar Datta  
B.Dr. Virender Lal Chopra  
C.Dr. C. N. R. Rao  
D.Dr. Gutta Muniratnam
Famous Agricultural Scientist Dr. Gutta Muniratnam was chosen as the first recipient for Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service. The award carried a cash prize of Rs.5 lakh and citation. Dr. G Muniratnam was awarded for his extraordinary contribution to improving the quality of people's lives through social service.

**164) Who is the Director-General of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)?**

A.Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh  
B.Lt. Gen. Gopal Raj  
C.Lt. Gen. S K Shrivastava  
D.Lt. Gen. S S Hasabnis

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The Director-General of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh.

**165) Which State government signed MoU with a German firm for Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF)?**

A.Uttar Pradesh  
B.Andhra Pradesh  
C.Madhya Pradesh  
D.Himachal Pradesh

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The Andhra Pradesh Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the representatives of a German firm, KFW, in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh to implement Zero Budget Natural Farming in the state. It comes after the Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF).

**166) Odisha's High-Level Clearance Authority (HLCA) approved _________ for a new greenfield alumina refinery unit.**

A.Rs.4,000 crore  
B.Rs.6,000 crore  
C.Rs.8,000 crore
Answer C

Explanation Odisha's High-Level Clearance Authority (HLCA) approved Rs.8,000 crore for a new greenfield alumina refinery unit. The project was proposed by Aditya Birla Group-owned Hindalco Industries.

167) When is the World Hindi Day observed?

A. 2 January  
B. 4 January  
C. 10 January  
D. 12 January  

Answer C

Explanation World Hindi Day is observed on 10 January 2020. It is observed every year. The day ensures to promote the Hindi language around the world. World Hindi Day is different from National Hindi Day.

168) How much did the Andhra Pradesh State government allocate for the _________ on the Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF).

A. Rs.304 crore  
B. Rs.438 Crore  
C. Rs.103 Crore  
D. Rs.267 Crore  

Answer A

Explanation The Andhra Pradesh Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the representatives of a German firm, KFW, in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh to implement Zero Budget Natural Farming in the state. The agreement aims to scale up the ongoing project with KFW. The YS Jaganmohan Reddy led-State government has allocated Rs.304 crore on the project. The project aimed to cover 2.39 lakh farmers in around 600 village panchayats and promote natural farming.

169) When was Hindalco founded?
A.1986  
B.1963  
C.1975  
D.1958

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Hindalco Industries Ltd was founded in 1958. Hindalco is an aluminum and copper manufacturing company in India. It is a subsidiary of the Aditya Birla Group.

170) When was the first World Hindi Conference observed?

A.1966  
B.1953  
C.1975  
D.1980

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The first World Hindi Conference was held on 10 January 1975. It was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

171) Which Bank launched the myApps application to boost digital payments?

A.ICICI  
B.HDFC  
C.HSBC Bank  
D.SBI

**Answer B**

**Explanation** In a first, HDFC Bank launched the myApps application on 9 January 2020. The app aims to boost digital payments in India. The app will benefit urban local bodies, housing societies, local clubs and gymkhanas, and religious institutions.

172) What is the estimated amount of the Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF)?

A.Rs.465 crore  
B.Rs.782 crore
C.Rs.1015 crore
D.Rs.1300 crore

Answer C

Explanation The ZBNF was implemented with German Assistance. It covered over 1 lakh hectares in the past two years. It has been aligned with other schemes like the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. The estimated amount of the project is Rs.1015 crore. The Andhra Pradesh government has taken a loan of Rs.711 crores out of the estimated amount towards the climate-resilient, ZBNF.

173) Who inaugurated the first World Hindi Conference?

A. Former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru
B. Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi
C. Former Prime Minister Morarji Desai
D. Former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh

Answer B

Explanation The first World Hindi Conference was held on 10 January 1975. It was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. World Hindi Conferences have been organized in various countries like India, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Trinidad and Tobago, United States.

174) In September 2019, the government has identified ________ wetlands for priority restoration in the next 5 years.

A. 87
B. 130
C. 158
D. 240

Answer B

Explanation In September 2019, the government has identified 130 wetlands for priority restoration in the next 5 years. It has also directed the States to submit their respective integrated management plan.

175) When was the World Hindi Day observed for the first time?
A.10 January 1996  
B.10 January 2000  
C.10 January 1994  
D.10 January 2006  

Answer D  

Explanation On 10 January 2006, the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh declared the day should be celebrated as World Hindi Day every year. It is celebrated every year since then.

176) Where is the highest number of identified wetlands as per the data provided by the GoI in September 2019?  
A. Uttar Pradesh  
B. Jammu & Kashmir  
C. Gujarat  
D. Karnataka  

Answer A  

Explanation In September 2019, the government has identified 130 wetlands for priority restoration in the next 5 years. It has also directed the States to submit their respective integrated management plan. The highest number of such identified wetlands are Uttar Pradesh with 16, Madhya Pradesh with 13, Jammu & Kashmir with 12, Gujarat with 8, Karnataka with 7 and West Bengal with 6. According to the data by ISRO provided national wetlands atlas on the basis of satellite imagery and mapping over 2 lakh wetlands that cover around 4.63% of the total geographic area of India.

177) Who declared the observation of World Hindi Day?  
A. Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam  
B. Former President Pratibha Patil  
C. Former PM Dr. Manmohan Singh  
D. PM Narendra Modi  

Answer C  

Explanation On 10 January 2006, the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh declared the day should be celebrated as World Hindi Day every year. It is celebrated every year since then.
178) ________ State Government launched a wage subsidy scheme for the first five years for new ventures getting registered from 1 April 2020.

A. Bihar  
B. West Bengal  
C. Haryana  
D. Kerala

Answer D

Explanation Kerala State Government launched a wage subsidy scheme for the first five years for new ventures getting registered from 1 April 2020. The scheme was unveiled by the Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on 9 January 2020 at the Global Investor Summit ASCEND 2020.

179) Who inaugurated the 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC 2020) in Bengaluru?

A. President Ram Nath Kovind  
B. PM Narendra Modi  
C. Union Minister Harsh Vardhan  
D. Union Minister Amit Shah

Answer B

Explanation Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC 2020) in Bengaluru on 3 January 2020. ISC provided the desired platform to the farmers who introduced innovations in agriculture.

180) The Pulses Conclave 2020 has been scheduled to be held from 12-14 February 2020 in ________.

A. Lonavala, Maharashtra  
B. Mumbai, Maharashtra  
C. Pune, Maharashtra  
D. New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh

Answer A

Explanation The Pulses Conclave 2020 (TPC 2020) has been scheduled to be held from 12-14 February 2020 in Lonavala, Maharashtra. The announcement was made by the India Pulses and
Grains Association (IPGA), the nodal body for India's pulses trade and industry on 9 January 2020.

181) When did Bengaluru host Indian Science Congress for the first time?

A. 1963  
B. 1987  
C. 2001  
D. 2013

Answer B

Explanation Bengaluru hosted the science congress for the third time. It earlier conducted the event in 1987 and 2002.

182) Which is the apex body of India's pulses and grains industry and trade?

A. India Pulses and Grains Association  
B. International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics  
C. Indian Chamber of Pulses, Rice, and Agriculture  
D. International Crops Research Institute

Answer A

Explanation IPGA is the apex body of India's pulses and grains industry and trade. It is headquartered in Mumbai. IPGA is registered under the Companies Act 2013 with a membership of over 270 including various regional associations of the Pulses industry. It aims to make Indian pulses and grains industry and trade globally competitive which in turn will help India's food and nutrition security.


A. 5%  
B. 4.8%  
C. 6%  
D. 4.5%

Answer A
**Explanation** The World Bank estimated a 5% growth rate in fiscal 2019-2020 for India. The World Bank's update is in line with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) October policy estimate in which it slashed the Indian economy's expected growth to 5% for the fiscal year 2019-2020.

184) How much did the AP state government allocate as a budget for 2019-20 for the Amma Vodi scheme?

A. Rs.538 crore  
B. Rs.1,145 crore  
C. Rs.4,487 crore  
D. Rs.6,455 crore  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Andhra Pradesh State government launched the Amma Vodi scheme. The state government has allocated a budget of around Rs.6,455 crore for 2019-20 under the scheme. The fund nearly 20% of the total education budget of Rs.32,618 crore of the state.

185) Which State Legislative Assembly adopted a new logo on 9 January 2020 to reflect the distinct identity and culture of the state?

A. Manipur  
B. Mizoram  
C. Assam  
D. Arunachal Pradesh  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Arunachal Pradesh State Legislative Assembly adopted a new logo on 9 January. The logo reflects the distinct identity and culture of the state.

186) World Bank estimated the world economic growth at ________ in FY20.

A. 2.5%  
B. 3.8%  
C. 4.5%  
D. 5%  

**Answer A**
World Bank estimated the world economic growth at 2.5% in FY20.

187) Under the Amma Vodi scheme, mothers and guardians of school-going children from lower-income groups will receive financial assistance of ________ annually.

A. Rs.5,000  
B. Rs.8,000  
C. Rs.12,000  
D. Rs.15,000

Answer D

The Andhra Pradesh State government launched the Amma Vodi scheme. Under the scheme, mothers and guardians of school-going children from lower-income groups will receive financial assistance of Rs.15,000 annually.

188) What is the colour used in the new logo of APLA?

A. Green  
B. Saffron  
C. White  
D. Blue

Answer D

The Arunachal Pradesh State Legislative Assembly adopted a new logo on 9 January. The logo reflects the distinct identity and culture of the state. The blue colour of the logo denotes the autonomy of the assembly secretariat.

189) Who released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019?

A. NITI Aayog  
B. Bureau of Energy Efficiency  
C. Alliance for Energy-Efficient Economy  
D. B&C

Answer D

The Arunachal Pradesh State Legislative Assembly adopted a new logo on 9 January. The logo reflects the distinct identity and culture of the state. The blue colour of the logo denotes the autonomy of the assembly secretariat.
Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in association with Alliance for Energy-Efficient Economy released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019. The index used 97 significant indicators and tracked the progress of Energy Efficiency (EE) initiatives in 36 states and union territories (UTs).

190) Which state launched the Amma Vodi scheme to support low-income families?
A. Karnataka  
B. Telangana  
C. Andhra Pradesh  
D. Tamil Nadu  

Answer C

Explanation The Andhra Pradesh State government launched the Amma Vodi scheme. It was launched by the Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on 9 January 2020. Amma Vodi can be translated as 'mother's lap' in Telugu. The scheme will be implemented on 26 January 2020.

191) Which states topped the Achiever Category of the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019?
A. Haryana, Kerala, and Karnataka  
B. UP, Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka  
C. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Goa  
D. Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura  

Answer A

Explanation Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in association with Alliance for Energy-Efficient Economy released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019. The index used 97 significant indicators and tracked the progress of Energy Efficiency (EE) initiatives in 36 states and union territories (UTs). In the Achiever Category Haryana, Kerala and Karnataka secured the top position.

192) What is the state flower of Arunachal Pradesh?
A. Jasmine  
B. Foxtail orchid  

A
C. African Marigold
D. Lotus

**Answer B**

**Explanation** Foxtail orchid, that is Rhynchostylis retusa, is the official state flower of Arunachal Pradesh.

193) where is the Metcalfe Hall located?

A. Jaipur
B. Agra
C. Kolkata
D. Mumbai

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Metcalfe Hall was built between 1840-1844 as a public library. It features 30 Corinthian pillars. It is situated in the Kolkata's Dalhousie region and just around 200 m away from the Currency Building. It was restored in early 2019. Metcalfe Hall has an exhibition called Ami Kolkata, on the people of Kolkata.

194) Which State to the front runner category of the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019?

A. Uttar Pradesh
B. Maharashtra
C. Karnataka
D. None

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) in association with Alliance for Energy-Efficient Economy released the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019. There was no front runner state mentioned in the report. It conveys that a lot more can be done at the state level to realize energy savings from energy efficiency.

195) When was the Currency Building in West Bengal built?

A. 1883
B.1857  
C.1902  
D.1919

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The Currency Building is located in Kolkata's Dalhousie region. It was built in the year 1833. It was designed in Italian style with Venetian windows. Till 1937, the building was home to the Reserve Bank of India. It was then neglected and set to demolish. But the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) took over in 2002 and declared the building a protected monument.

**196) What are the states/UT that topped the Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES) in the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019?**

A. Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan  
B. Karnataka, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Puducherry  
C. Telangana, Haryana, Kerala, Karnataka, and Goa  
D. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Goa

**Answer B**

**Explanation** As per the State Energy Efficiency Index 2019, the States and UTs are grouped into four groups based on the aggregated Total Primary Energy Supply (TPES) and considered the basic energy requirements such as coal, electricity, gas, and oil to meet the state's actual energy demand. Karnataka, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Puducherry topped the category. Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan performed the worst in each the same.

**197) The ________ National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020 has been scheduled to be held from 12-16 January 2020.**

A. 17th  
B. 23rd  
C. 32nd  
D. 40th

**Answer B**

**Explanation** The 23rd National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020 has been scheduled to be held from 12-16 January at Indira Pratishthan, Lucknow. The festival will be jointly inaugurated by Chief
Minister, Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath and Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju.

198) From which country did GIAC import water-soluble fertilizers in Ahmedabad, Gujarat?

A. Russia  
B. China  
C. US  
D. UAE  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation (GAIC) launched imported water-soluble fertilizers in Ahmedabad. The move aims to encourage the use of high-grade agri-inputs in the state. It imported 300 tonnes of water-soluble fertilizers from China.

199) Which state is hosting the National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020?

A. Telangana  
B. Madhya Pradesh  
C. Uttar Pradesh  
D. Gujarat  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The 23rd National Youth Festival (NYF) 2020 has been scheduled to be held from 12-16 January at Indira Pratishthan, Lucknow. The festival will be jointly inaugurated by Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath and Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju. The NYF 2020 is organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

200) Who launched water-soluble fertilizers in Ahmedabad, Gujarat?

A. Maharashtra Agri-Input Industrial Corporation  
B. TATA Agri-Business Association  
C. Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation  
D. Indian Agri-Business Club
Answer C

Explanation Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation (GAIC) launched imported water-soluble fertilizers in Ahmedabad. The move aims to encourage the use of high-grade agri-inputs in the state. It imported 300 tonnes of water-soluble fertilizers from China.

201) What is the theme of the National Youth Festival 2020?

A. Youth- Foundation of the Indian Economy
B. FIT YOUTH FIT INDIA
C. Challenging Today's Youth
D. Youth and Yoga for the welfare of the future

Answer B

Explanation The theme of the 23rd National Youth Festival 2020 is FIT YOUTH FIT INDIA. The theme is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for New India to be a fit India and Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat. The event aims to promote the knowledge and ideas of the Youth.

202) Which of the following is not a water-soluble fertilizer?

A. AGRO NPK
B. AGRO CN
C. AGRO MKP
D. AGRO PHP

Answer D

Explanation AGRO NPK, AGRO CN, AGRO MKP are water-soluble fertilizers and AGRO PHP is not a water-soluble fertilizer.

203) When was the first time did the GoI organize National Youth Festival (NYF)?

A. 1986
B. 1991
C. 1995
D. 2000

Answer C
The Government has been organizing National Youth Festival (NYF) since 1995. It provides a platform where youth will interact in formal and informal settings and exchange their social and cultural uniqueness.

204) _________ launched the Aadhaar-based Video Customer Identification Process to allow banks and other lenders to remotely complete Know Your Customer (KYC) of customers on videos.

A. RBI  
B. SBI  
C. ICICI  
D. Bank of Baroda

Answer A

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the Aadhaar-based Video Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) on 9 January 2020. The aim of the move is to allow banks and other lenders to remotely complete Know Your Customer (KYC) of customers on videos.

205) India has been an IEA association country since ________.

A. 2008  
B. 2010  
C. 2014  
D. 2017

Answer D

India has been an IEA association country since March 2017.

206) Wings India 2020 has been scheduled to be held in ________.

A. Bengaluru  
B. Hyderabad  
C. Chennai  
D. Mumbai

Answer B

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the Aadhaar-based Video Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) on 9 January 2020. The aim of the move is to allow banks and other lenders to remotely complete Know Your Customer (KYC) of customers on videos.
Wings India 2020 has been scheduled to be held at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad from 12-15 March 2020. The event is expected to boost aviation.

207) As per AAI announcement, what are the Airport/s received international recognition for reducing carbon emission?

A. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata
B. Biju Patnaik International Airport, Bhubaneswar and Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi
C. Trivandrum International Airport, Kerala
D. All the above

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has announced 4 airports in India have received international recognition for reducing carbon emission. The four airports are Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata, Biju Patnaik International Airport, Bhubaneswar, Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi, Trivandrum International Airport, Kerala.

208) Where is Begumpet Airport located?

A. Hyderabad
B. Bengaluru
C. Amaravati
D. Warangal

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad, also known as Hyderabad Old Airport, is a civil enclave located in Begumpet. The airport is home to the Rajiv Gandhi Aviation Academy, the Telangana State Aviation Academy and the Begumpet Air Force Station of the Indian Air Force.

209) The Income-Tax (IT) Department has launched a control room to monitor black money and illegal inducements round the clock, that is 24x7, in ________.

A. Tamil Nadu
B. Assam
C. Delhi
The Income-Tax (IT) Department has launched a control room to monitor black money and illegal inducements round the clock, that is 24x7, in Delhi on 10 January 2020.

210) Who organized the Wings India 2020 event?

A. Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA)
B. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)
C. Airports Authority of India (AAI)
D. A&B

Answer D

The Wings India 2020 is organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to provide a congenial forum to the rapidly changing dynamics of the sector.

211) Uttar Pradesh State government is to set up a zoological garden which will be named after the socialist and freedom fighter ________.

A. Rao Kadam Singh
B. Maulvi Liaquat Ali
C. Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan
D. Acharya Narendra Dev

Answer C

Uttar Pradesh State government is to set up a zoological garden spread across 121 acres in Gorakhpur, UP. The zoo is to be named after the socialist and freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan.

212) Eurasia Group reported that the political risk consultancy India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi the ________ biggest geopolitical risk of 2020.

A. 5th
B. 10th
C. 15th
Eurasia Group reported that India is one of the world's top geopolitical risks for 2020. The political risk consultancy India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi was listed as the fifth biggest geopolitical risk of 2020.

213) Name the State that is to set up zoological garden spread across 121 acres?
A. Karnataka
B. Rajasthan
C. Bihar
D. Uttar Pradesh

Answer D

Uttar Pradesh State government is to set up a zoological garden spread across 121 acres in Gorakhpur, UP. The zoo is to be named after the socialist and freedom fighter Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan.

214) Which country topped the Eurasia Group report as the world's top geopolitical risks for 2020?
A. US
B. China
C. Russia
D. Pakistan

Answer B

Eurasia Group's world's top geopolitical risks for 2020 list were topped by-elections in the US and followed by events and developments like the US-China technology tug of war on 5G and the trade war between China and the US.

215) Ministry of steel in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and JPC is organizing the launch of Purvodaya-Accelerated Development of Eastern Region through an Integrated Steel hub at _________.

Answer A
216) When is the National Youth Day or Yuva Diwas celebrated?

A. 8 January  
B. 10 January  
C. 11 January  
D. 12 January  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** National Youth Day or Yuva Diwas is observed on 12 January across India. The day is celebrated every year to commemorate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. It aims to create awareness and to provide knowledge to the youth about the rights in India.

217) Who inaugurated the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)?

A. Amit Shah  
B. Prahlad Singh Patel  
C. Kiren Rijiju  
D. Pralhad Joshi

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal. Through the portal, people can report cyber crimes online.

218) National Youth Day commemorates the birth anniversary of __________.
A.Bhagat Singh  
B.Guru Gobind Singh  
C.Swami Vivekananda  
D.Guru Arjan  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** National Youth Day or Yuva Diwas is observed on 12 January across India. The day is celebrated every year to commemorate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. It aims to create awareness and to provide knowledge to the youth about the rights in India.

**219) The scheme to set up Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) portal was approved by GoI in _________.**

A.2014  
B.2013  
C.2016  
D.2018  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** The scheme to set up the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) portal was approved by GoI in October 2018.

**220) India is planning to double crude oil imports from _________.**

A.US  
B.Iran  
C.UAE  
D.Saudi Arabia  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** India is planning to double crude oil imports from the US. The move is a part of its effort to reduce dependence on the West Asia region.

**221) What is the theme of the National Youth Day 2020?**

A.Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building
B. Sankalp Se Siddhi
C. Youth for Digital India
D. Indian Youth for Development, Skill, and Harmony

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The theme of the National Youth Day 2020 is Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building. It aims to inspire the youth generations and to educate them to behave properly in society.

**222) What is the estimated cost for the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) portal?**

- A. Rs.265.86 crore
- B. Rs.383.86 crore
- C. Rs.415.86 crore
- D. Rs.512.86 crore

**Answer C**

**Explanation** The scheme to set up the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) portal was approved by GoI in October 2018. The estimated cost for the project was Rs.415.86 crore. It was aimed to deal with all types of cybercrimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

**223) The Indian Government first declared to celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda as National Youth Day in ________.**

- A. 1984
- B. 1992
- C. 1994
- D. 1998

**Answer A**

**Explanation** The Indian Government first declared to celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda as National Youth Day in 1984. Since then from 12 January 1985, it is celebrated as National Youth Day all over the country. The government aims to make a better future of India by motivating the youth of the nation through the way of their life and ideas of the Swami Vivekananda.
224) India is currently erecting a new non-cut steel fence along its sensitive border with _________.

A. Pakistan  
B. Bangladesh  
C. Nepal  
D. A&B  

**Answer D**

**Explanation** India is currently erecting a new non-cut steel fence along its sensitive border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It aims to plug vulnerable and infiltration-prone patches.

225) Which country is the top supplier of oil to India?

A. Saudi Arabia  
B. UAE  
C. Iraq  
D. Kuwait  

**Answer C**

**Explanation** Iraq is the top supplier of oil to India with about 46.6 million tonnes (MT).

226) When was the Ramakrishna Mission established?

A. 1897  
B. 1900  
C. 1902  
D. 1910  

**Answer A**

**Explanation** Narendra Nath Datta, famously known as Swami Vivekananda, established the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897.

227) When did India start to purchase Oil from the US?

A. 2015-16  
B. 2016-17
India started to purchase Oil from the US in 2017-18. So far, it has already crossed about 6 million tonnes a year.

228) A prototype of the naval version of the light combat aircraft (LCA) successfully completed the test trial on __________.

A. INS Kolkata  
B. INS Vikramaditya  
C. INS Sahyadri  
D. INS Tarkash  

Answer B

A prototype of the naval version of the light combat aircraft (LCA) successfully completed the test trial. It landed and took off from India's aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya on 11 January 2020. The test was a significant step towards India developing its own deck-based fighters.

229) Who developed the Naval version of LCA Tejas on the carrier INS Vikramaditya?

A. DRDO  
B. ADA  
C. HAL  
D. A&B  

Answer D

A prototype of the naval version of the light combat aircraft (LCA) successfully completed the test trial. It landed and took off from India's aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya on 11 January 2020. It was developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA).
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