Current Affairs Capsule for IBPS PO Mains Exam 2019 – Part 1

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Important Days

Date	Important days	Theme
May 1	International Labour Day	Sustainable Pension for all: The Role of Social Partners
May 2	World Tuna Day	-
May 3	World Press Freedom Day	Media for Democracy: Journalism and Elections in Times of Disinformation
May 4	International Firefighters' Day	-
May 4	Coal Miners Day	-
May 5 (first Sunday of May of every year)	World Laughter Day	-
May 5	International Midwives Day	Midwives: Defenders of Women's Rights
May 6	International No Diet Day	-
May 7	World Athletic Day	-
May 6 - 12	UN Global Road Safety Week	"Leadership for road safety"
May 7 (first Tuesday of May)	The World Asthma Day	STOP for Asthma
May 7	59th Raising Day of Border Roads Organization	
May 8	World Red Cross Day	"#love" or simply "love"
May 8	World Thalassaemia Day	'Universal access to quality thalassaemia healthcare services: Building bridges with and for patients.'
May 11	National Technology Day	Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future
May 11 (Second Saturday of May)	World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) (twice in a year) (Second Saturday of October)	Protect Birds: Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution
May 12	International Nurses Day	Nurses: A voice to lead - Health for All
May 12 (second Sunday in the month of May)	International Mother's Day	#BalanceforBetter
May 15	International Family Day	"Families and Climate Action: Focus on SDG13"
May 16	The International Day of Living Together in Peace	
May 17	World Telecommunication and Information Society Day	Bridging the standardization gap
May 17	World Hypertension Day	Know Your Numbers
May 17 (third Friday in May)	Endangered Species Day	-
May 18	Worlds AIDS Vaccine Day or HIV Vaccine Awareness Day	-
May 18	International Museum Day	Museums as Cultural Hubs: The future of tradition
May 20	World Bee Day	-
May 20	World Metrology Day	The International System of Units – Fundamentally better
May 21	National Anti-Terrorism Day	-
May 21	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	-
May 22	International Day for Biological Diversity	Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health

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May 23	The World Turtle Day	Adopt, Don't Shop
May 24	International Commonwealth Day	A Connected Commonwealth
May 29	International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers	Protecting Civilians, Protecting Peace.
May 30	Goa statehood day	-
May 31	World No Tobacco Day	"tobacco and lung health"

Date	Important days	Theme
June 1	World Milk Day	"Drink Milk: Today & Everyday"
June 1	Global Day of Parents	"Honor Your Parents!"
June 3	World Bicycle Day	-
June 4	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression	-
June 5	World Environment Day	Beat Air Pollution
June 7	World Food Safety Day	"Food Safety, everyone's business!"
June 3 - 7	Financial Literacy Week	"Farmers"
June 8	World Oceans Day	Gender and the Ocean
June 8	World Brain Tumour Day	-
June 12	The World Day Against Child Labour	"Children should not work in fields, but on dreams"!
June 15	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	
June17 (every year on third Sunday of June)	World Father's Day	-
June 16	International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR)	-
June 17	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	"Let's Grow the Future Together"
June 18	International Picnic Day	-
June 18	Autistic Pride Day	-
June 19	World Sickle Cell Day	-
June 19	World Sauntering Day	-
June 19	International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict	-
June 20	World Refugee Day	#StepWithRefugees — Take A Step on
June 21	International Yoga day	Yoga for Climate Action
June 21	World Music Day or International Music Day or Fete de la Musique	-
June 21	World Hydrography Day	Hydrographic information driving marine knowledge
June 23	International Olympic Day	-
June 23	Public Service day	-
June 23	International Widows Day	-
June 26	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	-
June 26	The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking	'Health for Justice. Justice for Health'
June 26	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	-
June 27	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) Day	-
June 29	National Statistics Day	"Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"
June 30	World Asteroid Day	-
June 30	United Nations International Day of Parliamentarism	-

Date	Important days	Theme
July 1	Charted Accountants Day (CA Day)	-
July 1	National Doctors' Day	"Zero tolerance to violence against doctors and clinical establishment"
July 1	GST Day	-
July 2	World UFO Day	-
July 4	Independence Day USA	-
July 6	World Zoonoses Day	-
July (First Saturday in July)	International Co-operative Day	Coops 4 Decent Work
July 7	World Chocolate Day	-
July 7	International Day of Cooperatives (IDC)	-
July 11	World Population Day	-
July 12	International Malala Day	-
July 18	International Nelson Mandela Day	-
July 26	Kargil Vijay Diwas or Kargil Memorial Day or Kargil Victory Day	-
July 28	World Nature Conservation Day	-
July 28	World Hepatitis Day	-
July 29	International Tiger Day	-
July 30	World Ranger Day	-
July 30	World Day against Trafficking in Persons	-

Important Banking News

RBI

May

RBI imposes penalty on five PPI issuers

- The Reserve Bank of India has imposed penalties on five prepaid payment instrument (PPI) issuers, including Vodafone m-pesa and PhonePe, for violation of regulatory norms
- Also, penalties have been imposed on Western Union Financial Services Inc and MoneyGram Payment Systems Inc, both US firms, for non-compliance of guidelines
- A penalty of Rs. 3.05 crore has been imposed on Vodafone m-pesa and Rs. 1 crore each on Mobile Payments, PhonePe and G.I. Technology Private Ltd.
- Also, a penalty of Rs. 5 lakh has been imposed on Y-Cash Software Solutions.
- In a separate statement, the central bank said it had imposed a penalty of Rs. 29.67 lakh on Western Union Financial Services Inc., USA, and Rs. 10.12 lakh on MoneyGram Payment Systems Inc, USA, for non-compliance of regulatory guidelines.
- RBI also imposed a penalty of Rs. 11.25 lakh on private sector lender Yes Bank for violation of norms pertaining to issuance and operations of PPIs
- According to the section 30 of the Payment and Settlement System Act, 2007, the penalty has to be paid within 30 days of the order being passed

RBI directs banks to enhance housing loan limits for eligibility under priority sector lending

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the eligibility cap on home loans extended by regional rural banks and small finance banks to Rs. 35 lakh in metropolitan areas and Rs. 25 lakh in other centres, provided the overall cost of the dwelling unit in the metropolitan centres and other centres does not exceed Rs. 45 lakh and Rs. 30 lakh.
- All such loans will be now classified by these banks as priority sector loans.

- The existing family income limit of Rs. 2 lakh per annum to be eligible for loans for housing projects exclusively for construction of houses for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Groups (LIG), is revised to Rs. 3 lakh per annum for EWS and Rs. 6 lakh per annum for LIG, in alignment with the income criteria specified under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

RBI slaps Rs. 1-cr fine on Nainital Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 1 crore on Nainital Bank for its failure to fully automate the non-performing asset (NPA) identification process, despite specific directions issued in this regard.
- This action is based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance, and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank with its customers.

RBI releases 'Vision 2021' for payment systems for 'cash-lite' society

- Aiming at a 'cash-lite' society, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a vision document for ensuring a safe, secure, convenient, quick and affordable e-payment system as it expects the number of digital transactions to increase more than four times to 8,707 crore in December 2021.
- The 'Payment and Settlement Systems in India: Vision 2019 - 2021', with its core theme of 'Empowering Exceptional (E)payment Experience', envisages to achieve "a highly digital and cash-lite society" through the goal posts of competition, cost effectiveness, convenience and confidence (4Cs).
- The previous vision document covered the period 2016 to 2018.
- The latest vision document said payment systems like UPI/IMPS are likely to register average annualised growth of over 100% and NEFT at 40% over the vision period (period up to December 2021).

RBI directs NBFCs with asset size of Rs 5,000 crore must have chief risk officers

- Non-banking finance companies (NBFC) with an asset size of at least Rs. 5000 crore must appoint a chief risk officer (CRO). The CRO is required to function independently so as to ensure highest standards of risk management.
- The CRO shall be a senior official in the hierarchy of an NBFC and shall possess adequate professional qualification and experience in the area of risk management.

RBI allows modern currency chests to hike service charges

- The Reserve Bank of India will allow large modern currency chests to increase the service charges on cash deposited by non-chest bank branches from the existing rate of Rs. 5 per packet of 100 pieces to a higher rate subject to a maximum of Rs. 8 per packet.
- For this, only a currency chest (CC) that fulfils the minimum standards will be eligible to be classified as a large modern CC. The increased rates can be charged only after such classification by the issue office concerned.

RBI tweaks norms on VRR investment by FPIs

- The Reserve Bank of India fixed the investment limit at Rs. 54,606.55 crore for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) under the voluntary retention route (VRR), which allows to park funds in both government securities as well as corporate debt.
- VRR for investments by FPIs was introduced on March 1, 2019. Limits for investment in debt by FPIs were offered for allotment 'on tap' during the March 11-April 30 period. Earlier there was an aggregate investment limit of Rs. 40,000 crores for VRR-Govt and Rs. 35,000 crores for VRR-Corp.
- The minimum retention period shall be three years. During this period, FPIs shall maintain a minimum of 75% of the allocated amount in India. (No Change). Investment limits shall be available 'on tap' and allotted on 'first come, first served' basis. The 'tap' shall be kept open till the limit is fully allotted or till December 31, 2019, whichever is earlier.
- FPIs may apply for investment limits online to Clearing Corporation of India Ltd. (CCIL) through their respective custodians.

RBI releases draft norms on liquidity risk management for NBFCs

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released draft circular for all non-deposit-taking non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) with an asset size of Rs. 5,000 crore and above, and all deposit-taking NBFCs

irrespective of their asset size, have to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of a Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR).

- In a draft on liquidity risk management framework for NBFCs and core investment companies, RBI said these measures will promote resilience of NBFCs to potential liquidity disruptions by ensuring they have sufficient High-Quality Liquid Asset (HQLA) to survive any acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days. The banking regulator proposed that it will implement LCR through a glide path from April 1, 2020, to April 1, 2024.
- The LCR requirement shall be binding on NBFCs from April 1, 2020, with the minimum High-Quality Liquid Assets (HQLA) to be held being 60 percent of the LCR, progressively increasing in equal steps reaching up to the required level of 100 percent by April 1, 2024

RBI to purchase govt securities under OMO

- RBI has decided to conduct purchase of Government securities under Open Market Operation (OMO) for Rs. 150 billion (Rs. 15,000 crore) on June 13, 2019
- In the current financial year so far, it conducted OMO purchase of five government securities on two occasions — on May 2 and May 16 — infusing Rs. 12,500 crore in each auction. The total amount of government securities offered by market participants was Rs. 27,426 crore (face value) on May 2, and was Rs. 29,479 crore on May 16.
- Total durable liquidity injected by the RBI through OMOs aggregated Rs. 2,98,500 crore for 2018-19

RBI extends timings for RTGS from 4:30 pm to 6 pm

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended timings for customer transactions in the Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system to 6 pm from 4:30 pm. The new time window for RTGS will come into effect from June 1.
- The RTGS is an online fund transfer system, supported by the RBI, which enables transmission on a real-time basis. The minimum amount for the transaction to be eligible as an RTGS transfer is Rs 2 lakh.
- As per RBI data, Rs 112 lakh crore worth of transactions were processed using RTGS in April 2019.
- The customer is charged a 'time-varying charge' on each outward transaction in addition to the flat processing charge. The fee for transfers between 8 am to 11 am is nil, from 11 am to 1 pm is Rs 2, and from 1 pm to 6 pm is Rs 5. The fee for transfers made after the initial cut off of 6 pm will be Rs 10.
- The initial cut off for customer transactions will be 6 pm and the final cut off for inter-bank transactions will be 7:45 pm. The IDL reversal will take place between 7:45 pm and 8 pm.

RBI sets up panel to develop secondary market for corporate loans

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a six-member committee on the Development of Secondary Market for Corporate Loans to come up with recommendations to increase the efficiencies of the debt market and aid in the resolution of stressed assets
- The six-member body, headed by Canara Bank Chairman T N Manoharan, has been set up to review the existing state of the market for loan sale/transfer in India as well as the international experience in loan trading

RBI sets up committee for development of housing finance securitisation market

- The Reserve Bank of India has constituted a six-member committee on Development of Housing Finance Securitisation Market. The committee, headed by Harsh Vardhan, Senior Advisor, Bain & Co, will review the regulations relating to mortgage-backed securitisation (MBS) currently in place, and make specific recommendations on suitably aligning the same with international norms
- The committee will review the existing state of mortgage securitisation in India and various issues constraining market development, and to develop the market further. The committee will submit its report by the end of August 2019

June

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RBI slaps Rs.1 crore fine on HDFC Bank for non-compliance of KYC norms

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a penalty of Rs. 1 crore on private sector lender HDFC Bank for non-compliance of Know Your Customer (KYC) norms and anti-money laundering norms, and for failure to report frauds.
- The penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested under the provisions of Section 47A(1)(c) read with Section 46(4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, taking into account failure of the bank to adhere to the aforesaid directions issued by RBI
- The issue pertains to a reference to the RBI from customs authorities regarding submission of forged bill of entries (BoEs) by certain importers for remittance of foreign currency.

RBI extends relaxed norms for NBFC loan securitisation till December 31

- The RBI has extended minimum holding period requirement for NBFCs to raise funds via loan securitisation to help the sector overcome liquidity shortage.
- As per the earlier notification issued by the Reserve Bank of India in Novermber, the dispensation was valid till May, 2019. RBI has been decided to extend the dispensation provided therein till December 31, 2019,
- The relaxation in minimum holding period (MHP) criteria will primarily benefit housing finance companies and NBFCs, offering mortgage loans where the tenure is typically more than five years.

RBI enters top-10 list of gold holders with 52.3-tonne purchase in FY19

- The Reserve Bank of India purchased 52.3 tonnes gold in FY19 to augment its foreign exchange reserves, according to the latest data released by the World Gold Council.
- It has entered league of world's top-10 gold holding central banks. RBI currently holds 612.6 tonnes of the metal as part of its foreign exchange reserves. The United States is the top holder of Gold Reserves.

RBI imposes Rs. 2 cr fine on Kotak Bank for lack of disclosure on promoter stake

- The Reserve Bank imposed a penalty of Rs. 2 crore on Kotak Mahindra Bank for not complying with its directions regarding dilution of promoters' shareholding in the company.
- The private sector lender was directed by RBI to furnish information about details of the shareholding held by its promoters and to submit details of the proposed course of action for complying with the permitted timeline for dilution of promoter shareholding.
- However, Kotak Mahindra Bank failed to comply with the directions and a show cause notice was issued to the bank as to why penalty should not be imposed for non-compliance.
- As per RBI's banking licensing norms, a private bank's promoter holding has to be brought down to 40 per cent within three years of operations, 20 per cent within 10 years and 15 per cent within 15 years.

RBI issues revised norms to deal with stressed assets

- The Reserve Bank of India released fresh guidelines to deal with bad loans after the Supreme Court quashed its 12 February, 2018, circular, which mandated lenders to start resolution even if there was a one-day default.
- New NPA resolution norms replace all the previous models, the central bank said. Under the new norms, defaults are to be recognized within 30 days.
- Lenders will get a breather from the one-day default norm. They will get a 30-day review period to frame a resolution strategy. They have to submit a weekly report to the RBI on defaults by borrowers with exposure of Rs. 5 crore and above. New norms also applicable to small finance banks and large NBFCs

RBI forms committee to review ATM Interchange Fee Structure

- The Reserve Bank of India had announced in the Second Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy for the year 2019-20 that it will constitute a Committee to Review the ATM Interchange Fee Structure with a view to give a fillip to the ATM deployment in the unbanked areas.
- The committee is headed by V. G. Kannan, Chief Executive, Indian Banks' Association.
- To review the existing structures and patterns of costs, charges and interchange fees for ATM transactions;

- To review the overall patterns of usage of ATMs by cardholders and assess the impact, if any, on charges and interchange fees;
- To assess the entire gamut of costs in respect of the ATM ecosystem;
- To make recommendations on the optimal charge/interchange fee structure and pattern

RBI waives off charges for transactions using NEFT, RTGS

- With an aim to encourage digital transfer of funds, the Reserve Bank has waived off all charges for transactions using National Electronic Funds Transfer - NEFT and Real Time Gross Settlement - RTGS systems.
- RBI has advised banks to pass on the benefits to their customers with effect from 1st July, 2019.
- The Reserve Bank levies minimum charges on banks for transactions routed through its RTGS and NEFT System. RTGS is meant for large-value instantaneous fund transfers while NEFT System is used for fund transfers up to 2 lakh rupees.

RBI relaxes norms for no-frills accounts

- Banks will now provide cheque books and other facilities to basic account holders.
- However, the banks cannot ask the account holders to maintain any minimum balance in lieu of such facilities.
- The apex bank eased regulations for Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) Accounts, popularly known as 'no-frills' accounts.
- As per the BSBDA norms, account holders are not required to maintain minimum balance and get certain minimum facilities for free.
- These facilities include, four withdrawals from ATMs in a month, deposit of cash at bank branch, and ATM Card or ATM-cum-Debit Card.
- Also there will be no limit on number and value of deposits that can be made in a month in BSBDA

RBI to pump in □12,500 crore liquidity on June 20

- The Reserve Bank of India stated that it will infuse ₹12,500 crore into the financial system through bond purchases on June 20
- The purchase of government securities under the Open Market Operation (OMO) for □125 billion (□12,500 crore) will be conducted on June 20, 2019.
- Earlier in the day, the RBI injected □15,000 crore into the system through bond purchases.
- The RBI uses open market operations (OMO) for injecting liquidity into the system through the purchase of government bonds (G-sec).

RBI panel on MSMEs suggests Rs 20 lakh collateral-free loan under Mudra

- The 8 member panel on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), constituted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in January 2019, headed by the former Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman
  U K Sinha submitted its report to RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on June 17, 2019. The panel was formed to suggest long-term measures for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.
- A Reserve Bank of India (RBI) expert committee on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) has recommended doubling the cap on collateral-free loans to Rs 20 lakh from the current Rs 10 lakh. This will be extended to borrowers falling under the Mudra scheme, self-help groups, and MSMEs
- If the central bank approves the recommendation, the banking regulator will have to amend its July 1, 2010 circular that prescribes a maximum Rs 10 lakh for collateral-free loans.

Forex trading platform for retail participants ready for roll-out on Aug 5

- The Reserve Bank of India,said the electronic trading platform for buying/selling foreign exchange by retail customers of banks is ready for rollout by the Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL). The customer registration process on the platform will commence on July 1.
- The central bank said charges will not be levied by the CCIL on transactions that do not exceed $50,000 per day.

- A transaction charge of 0.0004 per cent will be charged by the CCIL for transactions in excess of $50,000 per day.
- The size of a single transaction is not allowed to exceed $5 million.

RBI launches complaint management system for grievance redressal

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanata Das launched Complaint Management System (CMS) to smoothen its grievance redressal process.
- The portal will be live on RBI's website where people will file their complaints against any of the RBI-regulated entities.
- The system has been equipped with all online features such as SMS/Email notifications, status tracking via unique registration number, receipt of closure advises and filing of appeals, to make the experience user-friendly.
- The information from CMS can be utilised for undertaking root cause analyses and initiating appropriate corrective action, wherever required.
- The system can also be used by RBI officials to track the progress of redressal, which will also allow regulatory and supervisory interventions.
- With the launch of CMS, the processing of complaints received in the offices of Banking Ombudsman (BO) and Consumer Education and Protection Cells (CEPCs) of RBI has been digitalized.

Payments data must be stored in systems located in India, says RBI

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has said all data related to payment transactions must be stored in the country and that such information, if processed abroad, will have to be brought back within 24 hours.
- It said that all data related to payments must be stored in systems located only in India.
- It further clarified that there is no bar on processing of payment transactions outside India if so desired by the PSOs. However, the data shall be stored only in India after the processing.

U.K. Sinha-led RBI panel suggests □5,000 crore stressed asset fund for MSMEs

- A Reserve Bank of India (RBI) committee has suggested a Rs. 5,000 crore stressed asset fund for domestic micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in a relief to small businesses hurt by demonetization, the goods and services tax and an ongoing liquidity crunch.
- The committee to study the problems faced by MSMEs was chaired by U.K. Sinha, former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India.
- The committee recommends for the creation of a distressed asset fund, with a corpus of Rs. 5,000 crore, structured to assist units in clusters where a change in the external environment.
- The committee also suggested forming a government-sponsored Fund of Funds of Rs. 10,000 crore to support venture capital and private equity firms investing in MSMEs.

RBI issues norms for setting up FBAs for fixing efficient benchmarks for financial instruments

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued guidelines for setting up of financial benchmark administrator (FBA) for administering "significant benchmarks" in the markets for financial instruments.
- FBA will be a company incorporated in India and will maintain a minimum net worth of Rs 1 crore at all times.
- FBAs will ensure that a 'significant benchmark' is designed to be an accurate and reliable representation of the referenced (specified) financial instrument.
- It will also ensure that the "data used to construct a 'significant benchmark' is based on an active market involving arm's length transactions. Where such transactions are not available, it shall record justification for any data, information or expert judgment used to construct the benchmark".

RBI opens third office of Ombudsman in New Delhi

- The Reserve Bank has opened third office of the Banking Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Digital Transactions (ODT) at its New Delhi office.

- While announcing the ODT in December last year, RBI had said that there was an emerging need for a dedicated, cost-free and expeditious grievance redressal mechanism as the digital mode for financial transactions was gaining traction in the country.
- The Banking Ombudsman scheme is an expeditious and inexpensive forum for bank customers for resolution of complaints relating to certain services rendered by banks.
- The scheme is introduced under Section 35 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 by RBI with effect from 1995.

RBI develops portal FLAIR for reporting of Foreign Liabilities and Assets (FLA)

- The Reserve Bank of India has developed **a** portal Foreign Liabilities and Assets Information Reporting (FLAIR) system(https://flair.rbi.org.in**)** for Indian companies to report the Foreign Liabilities and Assets (FLA).
- RBI mandates that all Indian companies which have received FDI and/or made FDI abroad (i.e. overseas investment) in the previous year(s) including the current year, should file the annual return on Foreign Liabilities and Assets (FLA). Earlier this was reported via e-mail to RBI.
- Now the reporting will be done by companies via the FLAIR portal of RBI. The reporting is done on July 15th of each year.

July

RBI launches medium-term strategy framework Utkarsh 2022

- RBI governor Shaktikanta Das, launched 'Utkarsh 2022', the Reserve Bank of India's Medium-term Strategy Framework.
- It has launched the framework to achieve excellence in the performance of statutory and other functions, strengthening the trust of citizens and other institutions in the RBI, enhanced relevance and significance in national and global roles, best-in-class and environment-friendly digital as well as physical infrastructure, and innovative, dynamic and skilled human resources.
- In April 2015, a formal strategic management framework was launched. The framework contains the mission of the RBI, the central purpose, the values(public interest, integrity and independence, responsiveness and innovation, diversity and inclusiveness, and introspection and pursuit of excellence) and the declarations of the vision and the bank's commitment to the nation.

RBI relaxes leverage ratio for banks to boost their lending capacity

- The Reserve Bank relaxed the leverage ratio (LR) for banks to help them boost their lending activities.
- The leverage ratio stands reduced to 4 per cent for Domestic Systemically Important Banks (DSIBs) and 3.5 per cent for other banks effective from the quarter commencing October 1, 2019.
- The leverage ratio, as defined under Basel-III norms, is Tier-I capital as a percentage of the bank's exposures. The framework is designed to capture leverage associated with both on- and off-balance sheet exposures.

RBI sets up working group to review regulatory norms for core investment companies

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has now set up a working group to review the regulatory and supervisory framework for core investment companies (CICs).
- Over the years, corporate group structures have become more complex involving multiple layering and leveraging, which has led to greater inter-connectedness with the financial system through their access to public funds. Further, in light of recent developments, there is a need to strengthen the corporate governance framework of CICs
- The six-member working group, which will be headed by Tapan Ray, Non-Executive Chairman, Central Bank of India, and former Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, will examine the current regulatory regime for CICs and suggest changes to the current approach for their registration, including the practice of multiple CICs being allowed within a group.
- The working group shall submit its report by October 31, 2019

Cost of Rs 2000 note falls 65 paise per piece in 2018-19

- The cost of a Rs 2000 currency note fell 65 paise or 18.4 per cent in 2018-19 compared to the year-ago period.
- Introduced after demonetisation in November 2016, Rs 2000 notes are printed only by the Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Pvt Ltd (BRBNMPL) -- a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RBI.
- The selling price of Rs 2000 note from the BRBNMPL was Rs 3.53 apiece in 2018-19. It declined 65 paise from Rs 4.18 apiece in 2017-18.
- The selling price of a Rs 500 note was Rs 2.13 in 2018-19, lower than Rs 2.39 in the same period a year ago.
- The selling price of Rs 200 note per piece declined to Rs 2.15 in 2018-19 compared to Rs 2.24 in 2017-18.
- The expenditure incurred on printing of currency notes rose to Rs 7,965 crore in 2017-18 (July-June) from Rs 4,912 crore in 2016-17.

RBI slaps Rs 7 crore fine on SBI for non-compliance of directions

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has penalised State Bank of India and Union Bank of India for violating certain regulatory guidelines
- SBI was fined Rs. 7 crore for non-compliance with the directions issued by the RBI on Income Recognition and Asset Classification (IRAC) norms, code of conduct for opening and operating current accounts and reporting of data on Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC), and fraud risk management and classification and reporting of frauds
- The central bank also imposed a Rs. 10-lakh fine on Union Bank for non-compliance with the directions on the cybersecurity framework in banks issued by the RBI.

State Bank of India

May

SBI new rules on savings account

- Earlier, the savings bank account of SBI carried an interest rate of 3.50 per cent for deposits up to Rs 1 crore and 4 per cent for deposits above Rs 1 crore. Savings account balance below Rs 1 lakh will continue to carry the fixed rate of interest of 3.5 per cent.
- Or in other words, interest rates on large SBI savings account deposits and interest rate on some short-term loans will automatically change as and when RBI changes its repo rate. SBI savings account with a balance of up to Rs 1 lakh will continue to earn 3.50 per cent interest as per the current fixed rates for under RBI norms
- SBI's domestic savings bank deposits stood at more than Rs. 10.64 lakh crore at end-December 2018.

June

SBI launches digital residential property show in Hyderabad

- SBI has set up a new marketing outfit called 'Destination: The Home Shoppe' near IKEA in Hitec City
- At this Home Shoppe, the bank will have a digital display of residential projects from leading developers and approved by SBI
- It will function as a virtual property show bringing builder, customers and SBI under one roof. The Home Shoppe would facilitate the short-listing of projects by prospective buyers. The bank has already got 12 builders with 17 projects on board.

To boost profitability, SBI creates new group to focus on credit-light sectors

- State Bank of India (SBI) has formed a separate group within its Corporate Accounts Group (CAG) to cater to the non-fund-based requirements of clients in credit-light sectors such as pharmaceuticals, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and information technology (IT). This is aimed at boosting its non-interest income.
- Both the newly created groups – CLG and FIG – have taken off, and have started contributing to the bank's business growth

- The focus on non-interest income is with a view to improve the profitability of India's largest bank without having to allocate capital.
- The credit-light group (CLG) will focus on generating non-interest income comprising letter of credit/bank guarantee commission, cash management charges, exchange income from forex activities, cross-selling commission, remittances, and collections, among others. It is also responsible for garnering low-cost deposits.
- Further, a specialised group, Financial and Institutional Group (FIG), to address credit and transactional banking needs of insurance companies, broking firms, banks (private and foreign), and mutual funds has also been created within the CAG.

ADB

May

India biggest recipient of funds from ADB last year

- India was the biggest recipient of funds from Asian Development Bank last year and would continue to get sovereign loans in excess of USD 3 billion in 2019. ABD will continue to make investment in rural connectivity, urban development and skill development, among others.
- India received nearly 25 per cent of the total loans sanctioned last year. New commitments included USD 21.6 billion in loans, grants and investments from ADB's own resources, exceeding the target of USD 19.71 billion and up 10 per cent from 2017.

ADB launches $5 billion healthy oceans action plan

- The Asian Development Bank has launched a 5 billion dollar action plan aimed at protecting the Pacific Ocean and promoting economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region. The initiative was launched at the 52nd Annual Meeting of ADB's Board of Governors in Fiji. The $5 billion action plan will run between 2019 – 2024.
- The ADB announced the launch of the Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economies.
- The organization wants to help reduce land-based sources of marine pollution, including waste water and plastic waste. It also wants to protect marine ecosystems and create sustainable business opportunities in tourism and the fisheries industry.

Asian Development Bank to provide USD 750 million loan to India for railway track electrification project

- Multilateral funding agency Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement to provide USD 750 million equivalent in Indian rupee long-term financing to electrify railway tracks in India.
- It is the largest single non-sovereign loan ever committed by ADB to Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) to fund the railways track electrification project.
- IRFC will use the proceeds from the loan to install electric traction equipment along about 3,378 kilometres of existing railway lines to enable migration of passenger and freight traffic from diesel to electric traction.

June

ADB sanctions Rs. 1650 core to Tripura for infrastructure development in 7 district headquarters

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a project submitted by Urban Development Department (UDD) amounting to Rs. 1650 crore for overall infrastructure development of seven district headquarters town.
- The fund is meant for development of piped water supply, underground drainage, underground sewage or scientific septage management, roads with pavement.
- The seven district headquarters where the ambitious plan will be implemented include-Khowai, Ambassa, Dharmnagar, Kailashahar, Udaipur, Bishramganj, Belonia.
- The ADB will provide Rs. 1650 crore and out of which 80% is grant in aid and the state will have to repay back only 20% loan in due course of time

July

ADB sanctions about Rs 2000 Cr for power projects in Tripura

- Asian Development Bank has sanctioned 1,925 crore rupees project for upgradation of power generation and distribution in Tripura.
- The amount was recently sanctioned to the Tripura State Electricity Corporation Limited.
- The project has been sanctioned for upgrading capacity of 63 MW Rokhia Project to 120 MW at an estimated cost of over 699 crore and modernising Gumti Hydro Electric Project at an estimated cost of nearly 1225 crore rupees.
- Rokhia project is located at West Tripura district whereas Gumti project is in Gomati district.

ADB cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 7 per cent for FY20

- Asian Development Bank has lowered India's GDP growth forecast to 7 per cent for the current year
- India is expected to grow by 7 per cent in 2019 (FY20) and 7.2 per cent in 2020 (FY21), slightly slower than projected in April
- For the south Asian region growth projected at 6.6 per cent in 2019 and 6.7 per cent in 2020

World Bank

May

World Bank and CommBank Launch the First Blockchain-Based Bond

- World Bank had partnered with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CommBank) to enable blockchain-based secondary market bond recording.
- The secondary trading project was performed on the Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument (bond-i), a platform based on the Ethereum blockchain.
- It was reportedly developed by CommBank's Blockchain Centre of Excellence at the CommBank's Innovation Lab in Sydney as part of the global banking institutions mission to explore and build on the potential of distributed ledgers.
- Just last year, the World Bank issued the bond-i, claiming that it was created, allocated, and managed with the use of blockchain technology.

June

India signs a Loan Agreement worth US$ 400 Million with the World Bank to help Treat and Eliminate Tuberculosis from India

- The World Bank and the Government of India signed a Loan Agreement of $400 Million to expand the coverage and the quality of interventions for the control of Tuberculosis (TB), which kills approximately half a million people in India every year. The World Bank supported program will cover nine States of India.
- The World Bank's Program Towards Elimination of Tuberculosis will support the Government of India's (GoI) National Strategic Plan to end TB in India by 2025.

India signs a Loan Agreement of US$ 250 Million with the World Bank to develop 766 kms of Rajasthan's Roads and Highways

- The Government of India, Government of Rajasthan and the World Bank signed a US$ 250 Million Loan Agreement for the Rajasthan State Highways Development Program II Project to build the State's capacity to better manage its highways and improve traffic flows on selected highways in State of Rajasthan.
- The World Bank-supported Project will support the construction, upgradation, improvement and maintenance of 766 kms of state highways and major district roads. It will also will help build an online project management system and a smartphone application to handle contract management, data reporting, quality control, etc.
- The loan from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a 25-year maturity including a 5-year grace period.

India signs a Loan Agreement of $328 Million with the World Bank for Improved Health Services in Andhra Pradesh

- The Government of India, Government of Andhra Pradesh and the World Bank Executive signed a Loan Agreement of $328 Million to help improve the quality and responsiveness of public health services in Andhra Pradesh.
- The State of Andhra Pradesh has over the years demonstrated a strong commitment to improving health outcomes. In 2017-18, it allocated 5 percent of its total public expenditure towards health and has initiated significant steps towards strengthening its public health system.
- Maternal mortality ratio in the state declined by 52 percent and infant mortality fell to 35 per 1,000 live births from 54 over the decade from 2005. Ninety-three percent women now opt for institutional deliveries. Despite these positive steps, there exist disparities within the state in coverage of maternal and child health services and quality of service delivery. Non-communicable diseases are also on the rise and form 60 percent of Andhra's burden of disease.

World Bank approves $147 Million Loan to the Government of Jharkhand for the implementation of Jharkhand Municipal Development Project

- The Government of India, the Government of Jharkhand and the World Bank, signed a $147 Million Loan Agreement to provide basic urban services to the people of Jharkhand and help improve the management capacity of the urban local bodies (ULBs) in the State.
- The Jharkhand Municipal Development Project will focus on improving the municipal sector's capacity to provide basic urban services. It will invest in urban services such as water supply, sewerage, drainage, and urban roads; and strengthen the capacity of the Jharkhand Urban Infrastructure Development Company (JUIDCO) as well as that of the ULBs to carry out reforms in the areas of urban finance and governance.

Tamil Nadu Health System reform programme gets $287 mn loan from World Bank

- The central government, Tamil Nadu and the World Bank have signed a $287 million loan agreement for the state's Health System Reform Programme that aims to improve the quality of health care, reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and fill equity gaps in reproductive and child health services.Tamil Nadu ranks third among all Indian states in the NITI Aayog Health Index.

July

World Bank to offer $250 million to Kerala for disaster management

- The World bank has cleared the first tranche of $250 million of the $500 million fund for the Resilient Kerala Programme (RKP) to help improve the state's resilience against natural disasters and climate change. Kerala has become the first Indian state to get this fund

OTHER BANKING NEWS

May

Chola Investment gets $222 mn from International Finance Corporation

- Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co. Ltd. (CIFCL), a Murugappa Group company, has received an investment of $222 million from a foreign investor anchored by the IFC
- This is the company's first U.S. dollar-syndicated deal since January 2019, when RBI permitted NBFCs to tap into offshore credit market. CIFCL would use the funds to help small road transport operators (SRTOs) and micro, small and medium (MSMEs) borrowers, especially in the rural and semi-urban areas.
- The present round of funding was anchored by IFC, a member of the World Bank Group. Of the total amount, IFC invested $92 million and the rest syndicated from First Abu Dhabi Bank ($50 million), MUFG Bank Ltd. ($50 million), National Bank of Ras Al-Khaimah PJSC ($20 million), and CTBC Bank Co., Ltd. ($10 million)

KVB to form venture with Centrum Wealth

- Karur Vysya Bank Ltd. has entered into a pact with Centrum Wealth Management Ltd. (Centrum) to form a private limited joint venture (JV) to offer wealth management services to its clients. The private sector bank will hold 51% of the share capital of the JV, Centrum 45% and the balance by the JV's staff
- The board would comprise five directors of whom three would be from the bank. KVB does not hold any shares in Centrum

Indian Overseas Bank launches 'Bank on Wheels' facility

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has launched 'Bank on Wheels' facility in 14 of its lead districts in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, besides Vijayawada.
- The bank said the mobile van facility will enable the public, especially senior citizens, conveniently get door-step banking facility available at identified locations of the lead districts. A dedicated banking correspondent will accompany the vehicle with a micro ATM inside the van to take care of services such as account opening, enrollment of customers in Social Security Scheme, passbook printing, and other inTamil Nadu.

SEBI, IRDAI set up regulatory sandbox for fintech innovations

- After the Reserve Bank of India released a draft framework for setting up a regulatory sandbox (RS) for fintech players in the counter, the market and insurance regulators have also launched similar initiatives.
- The market regulator SEBI and insurance regulator IRDAI have announced initiatives to encourage tech start-ups, especially fintech, by making data and systems available to them through the RS.
- RS is an infrastructure that helps fintech players live test their products or solutions, before getting the necessary regulatory approvals for a mass launch. It saves start-ups time and cost. SEBI is proposing an 'Innovation Sandbox', which would be a testing environment, where fintech firms and entities not regulated by SEBI.
- IRDAI recommended setting up a regulatory sandbox to test new digital and tech-based innovations, before launching them in the market.

Karnataka Bank launches savings bank product for salaried class

- Private sector lender Karnataka Bank launched a new savings bank product called "KBL SB Salary" for salaried class with three variants of Executive, Prime and Classic.
- All these 3 variants of our KBL SB Salary Scheme are available for the Salaried People with a host of Digitally Powered features and without any Minimum Balance Criteria. No annual charge on Debit Cards, Unlimited free access to Karnataka Bank ATMs, Free Cash Deposit facility across all branches, Free Fund Transfer within the Bank, Free NEFT & RTGS through Internet and Mobile Banking, Free Outstation Cheque Collection, No Annual Fee on Demat & Trading Accounts are some of the major features of these schemes.
- The bank will provide, free of cost, an insurance coverage of up to Rs. 50,000 against chain snatching, theft and burglary for women employees falling in the top category of the salary scheme

Bank credit to infra sector grows 18.5% in FY19

- As per RBI data, Bank credit to infrastructure sector grew by 18.5 per cent to Rs. 10.55 lakh crore as of 2018-19, the highest since 2012-13 fiscal. Outstanding bank credit to the sector was Rs. 8.91 lakh crore as at March 2018.
- Within infrastructure, bank loans to power sector had increased by 9.5 per cent to Rs. 5.69 lakh crore compared to Rs. 5.19 lakh crore in FY18. Roads sector witnessed a credit growth of 12.2 per cent to Rs. 1.86 lakh crore as of end-March 2019. Credit to telecommunications and other infrastructure (excluding roads, power and telecom) rose by 36.7 per cent and 53.5 per cent, respectively over FY18.

Sebi gives nod to mutual funds to invest in exchange traded commodity derivatives with investment limits

- Markets regulator SEBI allowed the much-awaited mutual fund's entry into commodity derivative market trading.

- However, it has not allowed investment in physical goods. Experts feel that asset class will also enter as they will have new avenue for investment, adding that this is positive news for investors.
- Mutual funds are now allowed to invest in exchange traded commodity derivatives, except those on 'Sensitive commodities'. Mutual fund schemes participating in ETCDs may hold the underlying goods in case of physical settlement of contracts,in that case mutual funds shall dispose of such goods from the books of the scheme,at the earliest, not exceeding 30 days from the date of holding of the physical goods

Shadow banking assets fairly small by global standards: Fitch

- Shadow banking assets as a percentage of total financial assets within the country were at 14.3 per cent, in line with the global percentage of 13.7 per cent, a Fitch reports.
- The reports pointed out that India's shadow banking assets were fairly small by international standards, ranking 17th globally at $571.7 billion as of YE17, according to the Financial Stability Board's (FSB).

HDFC ERGO launches cover for vector borne diseases

- HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, announced the launch of 'Mosquito Disease Protection Policy'. This new policy will cover an individual against common mosquito-borne diseases like Dengue Fever, Malaria, Chikungunya, Japanese Encephalitis, Kala-azar, Lymphatic Filariasis and Zika Virus.
- This cover is available for individuals between the age group of 91 days to 65 years. This policy also provides international cover to individuals and covers all the vector-borne diseases listed in the policy document.

NABARD announces Rs. 700-crore venture capital fund for agri, rural start-ups

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced aRs 700-crore venture capital fund for equity investments in agriculture and rural-focused startups. NABARD has been contributing to other funds till now and this is the first time that the rural development bank has launched a fund of its own.
- The fund has been launched by Nabventures, a subsidiary of NABARD, and has a proposed corpus of Rs 500 crore with an option to retain over-subscriptions of Rs 200 crore, called as the greenshoe option.
- NABARD has given an anchor commitment for the fund, which will be investing across startups engaged in agriculture, food and rural development space

Sebi allows FPI investment in municipal bonds

- SEBI allowed foreign portfolio investors can invest in municipal bonds.
- Reserve Bank of India permitted FPIs to invest in municipal bonds as a measure to broaden access of non resident investors to debt instruments in the country. As per the RBI, foreign investment in municipal bonds should be within the limits set for FPI investment in State Development Loans (SDLs).

Max Life Insurance to Mark 6th of Every Month as Protection Day

- Max Life Insurance, one of industry's foremost life insurance companies, announced that it will dedicate 6th day of every calendar month as 'Protection Day' towards driving awareness around the concept of financial protection.
- The decision came in line with the Company's launch of Max Life India Protection Quotient survey conducted in collaboration with Kantar IMRB**.** It denoted that the extent to which the Indians feel protected from financial uncertainties is extremely low, and that level was as **35**. The Company will also start an initiative called the "SuperCustomer Week", in which the customers will be taught about the different facets of financial protection.

Bank credit grows 13.2% in FY19

- Bank credit grew by 13.2% in financial year 2018-19 as compared to 10.3% in the previous financial year, mainly aided by loans to services and retail sector. Deposit growth also gained momentum, growing by 10% as compared to 6.7% a year ago.
- Credit growth in services sector till the middle of February was 23.7% and in retail sector it was 16.7%. Credit growth in the industry sector was 5.6%.

Talocity to enable AI-backed hiring in Yes Bank

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based HR solutions provider Talocity would provide Yes Bank its AI-supported "touchless" technology for the bank's hiring process and human resource (HR) operations.
- In the process of recruitment, candidates are interviewed by an AI bot on a one-way video platform. Talocity's machine learning and AI capabilities will create personality report of each job applicant.
- This creates a unique evaluation platform which is effective without any human involvement and helpful in large volume hiring.

SIDBI 's pilot scheme for fintech NBFCs to boost digital lending

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched a Scheme for Assistance to NewAgeFin-Tech NBFCs registeredas Investment and Credit Company (ICC) with the RBI**.** It has been launched on pilot basis.
- SIDBI will extend financial assistance of up to Rs. 10 crore to new-age fintech non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) engaged in financing small businesses and other income-generating activities
- Fintech NBFCs are digital loan companies. They leverage information technology to provide fast and convenient access to funding.
- Minimum Net Owned Fund: Rs. 20 Crore, Minimum Asset Size: Rs. 50 Crore, Maximum Exposure/Maximum Assistance: Rs 10 Crore

HDFC Capital Advisors launches HeART initiative

- HDFC Capital Advisors Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of HDFC, has announced the launch of its new initiative termed 'HeART' that seek to promote technologies to make affordable housing more affordable.
- The HDFC Affordable Real Estate and Technology (HeART) programme seeks to mentor, partner and invest in real estate technology companies that drive innovation and efficiencies within the affordable housing ecosystem. HeART will support businesses which are innovating and building technology solutions to enhance the supply of affordable housing

Tripura Gramin Bank among top banking performers in country

- Posting net profit for seven consecutive years, the Tripura Gramin Bank (TGB) is among India's top three out of 46 regional rural banks (RRBs) in terms of profit, business and growth. TGB Chairman is Mahendra Mohan Goswami.
- After some of them merger with commercial banks, currently India has 46 RRBs against the earlier 56.
- The Central government has a 50 percent stake in TGB, the United Bank of India (UBI) has 35 per cent, while the 15 per cent is held by the Tripura government.
- Like other nationalised banks, the TGB has been providing all modern facilities to the customers, including computerised, online financial transactions and mobile banking, besides ATM (Automated Teller Machine) services.

Corporation Bank launches 'Corp SME Suvidha' for MSMEs

- Corporation Bank has launched 'Corp SME Suvidha', a product for GST-registered MSMEs.
- The product has been designed as part of the bank's efforts to provide best products to MSME sector.
- PV Bharathi, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the bank, launched the product in Mangaluru.

Paytm Payments Bank turns profitable in second year of operation

- Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPB) has posted profit to the tune of Rs. 19 crore within second year of its operation in fiscal 2019. The bank had reported loss of Rs. 20.7 crore for the fiscal ended March, 2018. Satish Kumar Gupta, MD and CEO of Paytm Payments Bank, claimed that PPB was the first payments bank in the country to announce profit, that too within two years of its operations.
- Earlier, RBI data on payment banks revealed that Paytm Payments Bank and Airtel Payments Bank together command over 88% of the deposits in payment banks in India in 2018. PPB now aims to introduce more products and features on its platform to increase the monthly processing of savings account payments from Rs 24,000 crore to Rs. 40,000 crore in FY'20.

- Paytm Founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma holds 51 per cent share in Paytm Payments Bank, while the rest is held by One97 Communications.

June

Cryptocurrency exchange Koinex shuts down in India

- India's Largest cryptocurrency exchange, Koinex(Mumbai) terminating its digital asset trading services and other crypto-related operations citing regulatory uncertainty and disruption.
- It was facing problems with its payment services and gateways, along with non-crypto related transactions like payment of salaries, rent, and purchase of equipment.

YES Bank launches Click OD facility for MSMEs customers

- YES Bank launches Click OD (overdraft) facility for the bank's existing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) customers to let them avail unsecured OD up to Rs 10 lakh digitally without any documentation.
- This unique proposition will be offered to selected customers based on their account conduct and credit history.
- The OD facility is an end to end digital offering where the limit will be disbursed through the bank's MSME portal.
- The bank is targeting a disbursement of Rs 100 crore for FY 2019-20 through the YES MSME portal. YES Bank's total exposure to MSMEs as on March 31, 2019, has crossed Rs 42,000 crore.

HDFC Bank conducts 'Traffic Paathshala' in Thiruvananthapuram

- HDFC Bank, in partnership with the Thiruvananthapuram Police, has launched a campaign to make roads safer by spreading awareness about the do's and don'ts of road safety. This initiative is called 'Traffic Paathshala'.
- Nearly four lakh people are expected to benefit from the initiative that covers the major road crossings in the city including the Central Bus Station and Central Railway Station.
- The awareness rally, which will be undertaken by groups of volunteers and HDFC Bank employees, would be held at all important and busy traffic junctions across the city.
- The volunteers would carry placards having traffic awareness messages to encourage people to follow road safety rules.

IDBI Bank, Tata AIG in bancassurance pact

- IDBI Bank has entered a bancassurance corporate agency agreement with Tata AIG.
- This is to provide the general insurer's products to the bank's two crore customers through its 1,850-plus branches.

HDFC to buy 51.2% in Apollo Munich Health for □1,347 crore

- Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) announced that it would be acquiring 51.2 per cent stake in Apollo Munich Health Insurance and would be later merging it with its general insurance arm HDFC Ergo.
- The two-stage transaction, which is subject to regulatory approvals, is priced at about □1,347 crore. HDFC will pay about □73.2 per share to Apollo Hospitals for the acquisition.

UCO Bank declares Yashovardhan Birla willful defaulter

- Kolkata-based lender UCO Bank declared Yashovardhan Birla as a willful defaulter after Birla Surya Ltd failed to repay loans of □67.65 crore.
- Yashovardhan Birla is the director of Birla Surya and also chairman of the Yash Birla Group, an industrial conglomerate. According to the notice, Birla Surya Ltd was sanctioned a credit limit of □100 crore for fund-based facilities for the purpose of manufacturing of multi-crystalline solar photovoltaic cells from UCO Bank's corporate branch at Nariman Point, Mumbai.
- The present balance outstanding is □67.65 crore plus unapplied interest from the date of turning into a non-performing asset (NPA), 3 June, 2013.

J&K Bank to now come under RTI act, CVC guidelines

- The board of directors of Jammu & Kashmir Bank decided to bring the bank under the J&K RTI Act, 2009 and the CVC guidelines.
- The board, which met under the chairmanship of the bank's interim Chairman and Managing Director R.S. Chhibber, took significant decisions to improve the governance and bring transparency in the functioning of the bank.
- The board decided to implement J&K RTI Act 2009 and the CVC guidelines from June 17, 2019. The board took these important decisions after receiving directions from the state government that owns 59 per cent of the bank's shares

Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2019-20

- The Government of India, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, has decided to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds for 2019-20 starting from June 2019 to September 2019.

The Bonds will be sold every month between July and September only through:

- Scheduled Commercial banks (except Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), Designated post offices, and Recognised stock exchanges *viz.*, National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange Limited.

LIC revises rule to increase maternity leave to 15 months

- Female employees of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) will now get three more months of maternity leave during their service period.
- According to the revised rules for maternity leaves notified by the Finance Ministry, an employee will get a maximum of 15 months of maternity leave during her service period.
- As of March 31, 2018, out of LIC's total employee strength of nearly 1.12 lakh, 24,000 were women.

Bank of Baroda tags Dighi Port chairman Vijay Kalantri as wilful defaulter

- State-owned lender Bank of Baroda (BoB) has declared Vijay GoverdhandasKalantri, chairman and managing director of Dighi Port, as a "wilful defaulter" for not repaying his loans.
- The leading industrialist Vijay GoverdhandasKalantri and his son Vishal Kalantri, director of Dighi Port, owe nearly Rs 3,334 crore to a consortium of 16 Indian banks, including BoB, and Bank of India is the lead lender.
- The bank had reportedly placed a public notice in a Mumbai-based newspaper, with photographs of Dighi Port Limited (borrower), Vishal Vijay Kalantri (Director) and Vijay Kalantri (Director and Guarantor), declaring them as "wilful defaulters".

IRDAI Hikes Third party insurance on small, medium cars by 12-12.5%

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has increased the third party (TP) motor insurance premium for small and medium private cars by 12-12.5 per cent for 2019-20.
- It has also proposed a hike in TP premium for two-wheelers and heavy vehicles for the current year.
- The new rates will come into effect from June 16. The insurance regulator had in March deferred the hike in third party insurance premium due to the elections.

CII launches new Index to measure fiscal performance

- Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has launched a Fiscal Performance Index (FPI) to assess state and central budgets.
- The Index incorporates qualitative assessments of revenue expenditure, capital expenditure, revenues, fiscal prudence and the level of public debt arrive at a more holistic picture of fiscal performance than the fiscal deficit to GDP ratio.
- The new index will use multiple indicators to measure the quality of Budgets at the Central and the State levels rather than a single indicator "fiscal deficit to GDP ratio" used till date.

Foreign exchange reserves swell by $1.8 bn to $421.8 bn: RBI

- The country's foreign exchange reserves increased by USD 1.875 billion to USD 421.867 billion in the week to May 31,

- In the reporting week, foreign currency assets,which is a major component of the overall reserves, rose by USD 1.946 billion to USD 394.134 billion. The country's reserve position with the fund also declined by USD 5.3 million to USD 3.331 billion.
- The special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund fell by USD 2.3 million to USD 1.443 billion

Max Life Insurance launches unique 'My Protection Quotient' tool on second 'Protection Day'

- Max Life Insurance Co. Ltd. ('Max Life'/'Company'), one of India's fastest growing life insurance companies, announced the launch of a unique proprietary tool, 'My Protection Quotient' (MyPQ) further fortifying its commitment to ensure financial protection in the country.
- MyPQ is a smart tool designed to gauge the level of individual's financial protection and to promote awareness and importance of term plans in protecting the financial future of families.
- By launching MyPQ on the first-month anniversary of having dedicated 6th of every month as 'Protection Day

YES Bank conducts e-auction for forest produce

- YES Bank has conducted the first e-auction of forest produce in Dhanora Mahasangh in Maharashtra, something it will now aim to replicate in other states.
- The online auction enables the online purchase of goods aimed at facilitating effective and transparent price discovery. For farmers, this brings in greater transparency and eliminates the middle man, ensuring that they get a better rate for their produce.
- This is done under theTech for Change initiative where the bank work with the government and corporates to create technology-based solutions which have a social impact.

FDI flow into India rises 6% to $42 billion in 2018: UNCTAD

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to India grew by 6 per cent to USD 42 billion in 2018, with strong inflows in the manufacturing, communication and financial services sectors, and cross-border merger and acquisition activities, according to a UN report that ranked India among the top 20 host economies for FDI inflows in 2017-18.
- India ranks 10th amongst the top recipients of FDI in 2018
- The World Investment Report 2019, released by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Wednesday, said global FDI flows slid by 13 per cent in 2018 to USD 1.3 trillion from USD 1.5 trillion the previous year the third consecutive annual decline
- India and UAE were considered among the top 10 most important sources of FDI for the 2019 to 2021 period
- India's FDI outflows more than doubled in 2017 to $11.3 bn, mostly led by ONGC, which bought a 15% stake in an offshore field in Namibia from Tullow Oil

Centre reduces rate of ESI contribution to 4% from 6.5%

- The government has reduced the rate of contribution towards the Employees' State Insurance scheme from 6.5% to 4%. After the reduction of rates, effective from July 1, 2019, employers' contribution will be reduced to 3.25% from current rate of 4.75% while employees' contribution will be reduced from 1.75% to 0.75%, as per the provisions of the Employees' State Insurance Act 1948.
- The move "would benefit 12.85 lakh employers and over 3.6 crore employees."
- ESI Act, 1948 applies to organisations where 10 or more people are employed. All employees drawing salary upto Rs 21,000 are covered under the Act.

SEBI directs rating agencies to disclose probability of default

- The markets regulator directed credit rating companies to start disclosing the probability of default for the issuers they rate, troubled by the raters' track record of detecting defaults or near-defaults.
- Rating companies, in consultation with the regulator, will now create a uniform probability of default benchmark for each rating category on their website, for one-year, two-year and three-year cumulative default rates, both for the short term and long term

- The regulator introduced computation of cumulative default rates (CDR), standard operating procedure (SOP) in respect of tracking and timely recognition of default, probability of default (PD) benchmarks, rating symbol for instruments having explicit credit enhancement feature, disclosure of rating sensitivities in press release, disclosure on liquidity indicators and tracking deviations in bond spreads.

Canara Bank to charge for cash deposits

- Cash withdrawal more than five times in a month at a Canara Bank branch, you will pay Rs 100 for every transaction thereafter. The bank, however, gives five free cash withdrawals for saving banks (SB) accounts.
- However, senior citizen and Jan Dhan holders are exempt from the new levy.
- For current account/overdraft/open cash credit account holders a minimum Rs 100 will be charged withdrawals of Rs 5 lakh or more in a month. The new charges kick in from July 1.
- The Bank will also charge its SB account holders a minimum fee of Rs 50 per transaction if the deposit exceeds Rs 50,000 from the fourth cash deposit and thereafter.

July

IBBI sets one-year timeline for liquidation process of insolvent companies

- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has changed the process of liquidation to make it time-bound. The new rules say that the process must be finished within one year of its commencment.
- The new regulations also say that a compromise between the stakeholders must happen within 90 days of the liquidation order.
- The amendment requires the financial creditors to contribute towards the liquidation costs, when the company does not have resources. This can be recovered with interest later.
- For these changes, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 have been notified.

SEBI fixes minimum staggered delivery period of 5 days for commodity futures

- Capital markets regulator SEBI fixed the minimum duration of the staggered delivery period at five working days for all commodity futures in order to bring uniformity in the timeline across exchanges.
- Staggered delivery period is the duration during which sellers or buyers having open position may submit an intention to give or take the delivery of the contract.
- At present, there is no uniformity in the length of staggered delivery period for commodity futures contracts across exchanges even for the same commodities.
- It clarified that the exchanges shall have the flexibility to set higher duration of staggered delivery period for a commodity futures contract after taking into account factors such as historical open interest, volume near expiry etc.

Nilekani-Backed Sahamati Account Aggregator Could Solve Fintech's Data Problem

- Infosys cofounder and its former chairman Nandan Nilekani brought a phase of disruption for digital India with the work on Aadhaar and the subsequent push from IndiaStack.
- Nilekani has now introduced a new model which could change the game for the fintech ecosystem in India in the form of account aggregator.
- Nilekani debuted Sahamati, a collective of account aggregator focussed on fintech data and addressing the friction in accessing this data.
- The Sahamati framework addresses pain points and provides a digital platform for easy sharing and consumption of data between its partner entities, with user consent.
- Sahamati claims that it has in-principle approval from RBI, while other financial services regulators (FSRs) are providing the required regulatory support and guidance for the rollout.
- Sahamati's data empowerment and protection architecture (DEPA) enables the collection and use of personal data to improve access to financial, healthcare, and other socio-economically important services in real-time. DEPA also claims to preserve the safety, security and privacy of users.

India to be first recipient of AIIB local currency funding

- India is set to be the first recipient of local currency financing by the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB).
- AIIB president Jin Liqun had announced the bank's intention to roll out local currency financing to provide more options to borrowers.
- India, which is the second largest shareholder of Beijing-based AIIB with a 7.5% stake, has received about $2-billion funding for various projects so far. China holds 20.06% in the over-three-year-old bank.

Aditya Birla Payments Bank shuts operations 18 months after launch

- Aditya Birla Payments Bank, a venture between Idea Cellular and Aditya Birla Nuvo, has shut down its operations.
- The payments bank that was only 18-month old has asked its customers to transfer their balances before July 26.
- It was a venture between Aditya Birla Nuvo (51%) and Idea Cellular (49%).
- Stringent KYC norms and stiff competition were some of the key reasons that led to the winding up of the payments bank.

Karnataka Bank launches a Digital Recovery Tool

- Karnataka Bank has launched a web tool named VASOOL SO-Ft (VASOOL SOFAST) for digitalising NPA recovery process.
- As part of Transformation journey, a digital tool for recovery of stressed assets is launched which will provide end-to-end digital solution.

Punjab & Sind Bank sets up centralized MSME & Retail Group for credit approval

- Punjab & Sind Bank has set up the Centralized Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) & Retail Group (Cen-MARG) for credit facilities at its head office in the national capital.
- At this centralized set up, now all MSME and retail credit approvals will be performed. This will not only help branches focus better on lead generation for retail and MSME lending but also enhance customer service.
- The Cen-MARG would be linked with pan-India branches in a phased manner.

IMF approves USD 6 billion loan for cash-strapped Pakistan

- The IMF approved a USD 6 billion loan over a period of three years for cash-strapped Pakistan, aimed at returning sustainable growth to the country's fragile economy and improve the standards of living.
- The USD 6 billion financial aid includes an immediate disbursement of USD 1 billion while, the remaining amount will be phased over the duration of the programme.

YES Bank acquires 9.47% stake in Eveready by invoking pledged shares

- YES Bank has acquired a 9.47 per cent stake in Eveready Industries India, part of the B M Khaitan group, by invoking pledged shares.
- It had acquired 6,880,149 shares having a nominal value of Rs 5 per share constituting 9.47 per cent of the post-issue paid-up share capital.
- The B M Khaitan group has been in troubled waters for the past one year and its major firms — Eveready, McLeod Russel India and McNally Bharat Engineering — have been trying to bring down the group level debt.

SEBI's 75 per cent cash surplus to go to government

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India will now have to transfer 75 per cent of its surplus from the general fund every year to the Consolidated Fund of India that is managed by the Central Government.
- An announcement to this effect was made in the Budget via a proposed amendment to SEBI Act 1992.
- SEBI has a surplus of ₹3,170 crore as per its 2017 balance sheet, which is the latest available in public domain. The surplus could go up by several hundred crore rupees once its 2018 balance sheet is out.
- The Budget has proposed that SEBI should constitute a reserve fund and 25 per cent of the annual surplus of the general fund should be credited to this reserve fund. Moreover, the transfer to the reserve fund every year should not exceed the total annual expenditure of the preceding two years.

- A gazette notification to this effect will be issued after the Budget is passed in Parliament.

Deposits in Jan Dhan accounts cross Rs 1 lakh crore

- Deposits in bank accounts opened under Jan Dhan scheme, launched about five years ago by the Modi-government, have crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore mark. As per the latest finance ministry data, the total balance in over 36.06 crore Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts was at Rs 1,00,495.94 crore as on July 3.
- The deposits in the account of the beneficiaries, which has been steadily rising, was Rs 99,649.84 crore on June 6 and Rs 99,232.71 crore in the week before.
- The PMJDY was launched on August 28, 2014, with an aim to provide universal access to banking facilities to the people in the country.
- Accounts opened under PMJDY are Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) accounts with additional feature of RuPay debit card and overdraft.
- The number of zero balance accounts under PMJDY declined from 5.10 crore (16.22 per cent of the total accounts) in March 2018 to 5.07 crore (14.37 per cent of the total accounts) in March 2019.
- There is no requirement of maintaining minimum balance in BSBD accounts.
- Enthused by the success of the scheme, the government enhanced the accident insurance cover to Rs 2 lakh from Rs 1 lakh for new accounts opened after August 28, 2018.
- The overdraft limit has also been doubled to Rs 10,000.

Nabard to raise Rs 60,000 crore via non-convertible debentures this year

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) will raise long-term funds of Rs 60,000 crore through nonconvertible debentures in the current financial year.
- Its own requirements have been assessed at Rs 30,000 crore and the balance would be for the Centre to cover the shortfall in various schemes in rural development and sanitation in FY20.
- NABARD has already raised Rs 11,000 crore in the first quarter ended June 30, 2019.

Exim Bank inks USD 124 mn loan pact for infra, health projects in Papua New Guinea, Senegal

- Exim Bank has signed agreements with Papua New Guinea and Senegal governments for providing USD 124 million (over Rs 850 crore) loans to finance infrastructure and health care projects in these countries.
- The Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) has entered into an agreement with Papua New Guinea for Government of India supported line of credit of USD 100 million for financing infrastructure projects in the country.
- Of the total soft loan for the country, USD 60 million is to go for Bayer-Madang road project and USD 40 million for Hoskins-Kimbe road project.
- Besides, an agreement was signed with Senegal for USD 24.5 million line of credit for financing upgradation and rehabilitation of health care system in the country.

L&T Finance arm gets $100m from AIIB for green energy funding

- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has announced that it will provide $100 million in loans to L&T Infrastructure Finance Company for on-lending to wind and solar power infrastructure projects in the country.
- This deal with the arm of L&T Finance Holdings marks the bank's first loan to a non-banking finance company.

HDFC Bank, CSC launch credit card for small traders, village entrepreneurs

- HDFC Bank launched a co-branded "Small Business MoneyBack Credit Card" for small traders and village level entrepreneurs (VLEs).
- The credit card is specifically designed for CSC's VLEs, and VLE-sourced customers, and will give users easy access to credit for their day-to-day business expenses.
- The card was launched by HDFC Bank MD Aditya Puri and CSC Chief Dinesh Kumar Tyagi.
- At present, as much as Rs 70,000 crore worth of business is transacted through the network of Common Services Centres (CSCs), which apart from providing a platform for essential government and public

utility services also deliver a range of social welfare schemes, financial services, education and skill development courses, healthcare, agriculture services and digital literacy.

Government cuts interest on GPF by 10 bps to 7.9 per cent

- Government cuts interest on General Provident Fund (GPF) by 10 bps to 7.9 per cent from 8 per cent for the period starting July 1 and ending on September 30.
- This interest rate will be applicable on provident funds of central government employees, railways and defence forces. The rate is in line with that of Public Provident Fund.

Andhra Bank unveils Al chatbot ABHi in Telangana

- Andhra Bank launched its Artificial Intelligence (AI) interactive assistant – ABHi.
- Bank Managing Director and CEO, J Packirisamy has unveiled the Chatbot - ABHi at a function held at Bank's Head office
- The Bank's AI powered chatbot-ABHi uses latest Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithm to understand the customer query and fetch the relevant information from possible knowledgebase in a matter of milliseconds.

ICICI Bank launches digital banking platform 'InstaBIZ' for MSMEs

- ICICI Bank announces the launch of a new digital platform curated specially for MSMEs and self-employed customers to enable them to undertake their business banking transactions digitally and instantly. Called, 'InstaBIZ', it allows customers to avail as many as over 115 products and services in a digital and secure manner on their mobile phone or internet banking platform.
- Many of the services are first-in-the-industry and are available instantly. With this, MSMEs can now enjoy enhanced convenience and productivity, as they can complete their banking transactions 'on-the-go', without visiting a bank branch.
- This first-of-its-kind comprehensive digital platform for businesses enables them to experience the convenience of a range of services completely digitally --- instant overdraft facility (upto Rs 15 lakh) & business loans, easy bulk collection & payments of funds through multiple digital modes, automatic bank reconciliation and undertake largely all of the export-import transactions like inward and outward remittances among others.
- It is the first digital banking platform to enable instant payment of GST using the challan number in a single click payment. Additionally, they can instantly apply for a Point-of-Sale (PoS) machine as well as instant marine insurance policy—both industry first services.

IRDAI tweaks norms for life insurance products

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has tweaked some of the key norms pertaining to life insurance products.
- As per the Gazette notification, issued by the regulatory, the minimum death benefit in the non-linked policy has been decreased from 10 times to seven times. In the non-linked policy, policyholders will get a fixed amount if the policy is surrendered after two years.
- The revival period for this policy has been increased from two years to five years.
- In the Unit-Linked Policies, if it has a surrender value during the first five years, it will become payable only after the completion of the lock-in period. After the lock-in period, the surrender value shall be at least equal to the fund value as on the date of surrender.
- With regards to pension products, policyholders can withdraw 25 per cent of the insured during an emergency, including a serious illness, marriage and the education of their children.

Important Financial & Economy Affairs

May

GST collections touch all-time high of over Rs. 1.13 lakh crore in April

- The Goods and Services Tax, GST collection scaled all-time high of over 1.13 lakh crore rupees in April, up from 1.06 lakh crore rupees in the previous month.

- Out of the total gross GST revenue collected in April, Central GST is 21 thousand 163 crore rupees, State GST is 28 thousand 801 crore rupees, Integrated GST is 54 thousand 733 crore and cess is 9 thousand 168 crore rupees.
- Revenue in April 2019 was 10.05 per cent higher than April 2018 (Rs. 1,03,459 crore). The total number of GSTR 3B Returns filed for March up to April 30 is 72.13 lakh. The revenue in April 2019 is 16.05 per cent higher than the monthly average GST revenue reported in financial year 2018-19 (Rs. 98,114 crore).
- The total revenue earned by the central government and state governments after regular and provisional settlement in April 2019 is 47 thousand 533 crore rupees for CGST and 50 thousand 776 crore rupees for SGST.
- For FY20, GST collection has been budgeted at Rs. 13.71 lakh crore, which means the average monthly collection should be slightly over Rs. 1.14 lakh crore.

Netherlands Becomes the Third Largest Foreign Direct Investor in India

- The Netherlands has emerged as the third largest foreign direct investor in India during 2017-18, with investments pegged at about $2.67billion across sectors.
- The Netherlands was also the second largest destination for foreign investment by Indian companies, after Singapore, with investments worth $12.8 billion in 2017.

Ratings

India Ratings cuts India GDP growth forecast for FY20 to 7.3%

- India Ratings and Research marginally lowered country's GDP growth projection for 2019-20 fiscal to 7.3 per cent mainly due to below normal monsoon prediction and loss of momentum in industrial output.
- The Fitch group company had earlier projected India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 7.5 per cent.

Asia-Pacific to grow 5.7% this year

- According to the bank's Asian Development Outlook 2019 report released in April, developing Asia — which comprises 45 nations ranging from China to Tuvalu — is projected to grow by 5.7 percent this year
- However, the growth outlook for developing Asia is expected to moderate to 5.6 percent in 2020, according to the report
- The bank's lending grew to a record $21.6 billion in 2018, 10% higher compared to 2017. Mr. Nakao elaborated on the Strategy 2030 plan of ADB which will focus on six key areas — operational and action plans for the private sector, addressing remaining poverty and inequality, accelerating progress in gender equality, continuing to foster regional cooperation and integration, expanding private sector operations and using concessional resources effectively.
- Addressing the opening session of the Board of Governors at ADB's 52nd Annual Meeting in Nadi, Fiji , Mr. Nakao stated that consumer and investor behaviour could be undermined by trade tensions between countries

India's economy to grow 7.5% by 2020- OECD

- India's economic growth will regain strength and approach 7.5% by 2020 buoyed by rural consumption and subdued inflation, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Gross domestic product (GDP) growth in India is projected to strengthen to close to 7.25% in FY19 and close to 7.5% in FY20. India's healthy growth forecast came amidst the OECD cutting the projection for global GDP growth from 3.5% in 2018 to a sub-par rate of 3.2% this year, before edging up to 3.4% in 2020.

India projected to grow at 7.1% in FY'20: UN report

- According to United Nation's World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2019 report, India's economy is projected to grow at 7.1 per cent in the fiscal year 2020 on the back of strong domestic consumption and investment.

- The Indian economy expanded by 7.2 per cent in 2018. GDP growth is a downward revision from the 7.4 per cent estimated in January this year. Strong domestic consumption and investment will continue to support growth, which is projected at 7.0 per cent in 2019 and 7.1 per cent in 2020.

Ind-Ra lowers FY 19 GDP estimate to 6.9 pc with Q4 forecast at 6.3 pc

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said that it expects India's GDP growth rate during 2018-19 to be 6.9 per cent as against the advance estimate of 7 per cent. It said the fourth quarter (January to March) GDP growth to decelerate to 6.3 per cent from 6.6 per cent in the third quarter (October to December 2018).
- There will be another fourth-quarter GDP slowdown starting from the fourth quarter of 2017-18. Clearly, FY19 will be the second consecutive year of an economic slowdown in India. It said that 2018-19 will be the second consecutive year of an economic slowdown in India. The GDP growth was 7.2 per cent during 2017-18.

FICCI survey forecasts India's GDP growth at 7.1% for FY20

- The country's median GDP is forecast at 7.1 per cent for FY20 and 7.2 per cent for FY 21. The industry body FICCI's economic outlook survey stated that the minimum and maximum growth estimate stood at 6.8 per cent and 7.3 per cent, for 2019-20.
- The survey was conducted in May 2019 among economists belonging to the industry, banking and financial services sectors. Inflation is expected to remain moderate and the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation rate is projected at 3.1 per cent in 2019-20, while, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation has a median forecast of 4 per cent for 2019-20.

June

Fitch cuts India's GDP growth rate to 6.6% in FY20

- Global rating agency Fitch cut India's GDP growth rate forecast for FY20 by 20 bps to 6.6 per cent, even as it retained FY21 estimate at 7.1 per cent.
- Earlier this year, Fitch Ratings had slashed India's growth forecast for the next financial year beginning April 1, to 6.8 per cent from its previous estimate of 7 per cent.

DBS cuts India's FY20 GDP forecast to 6.8% from 7%

- DBS Bank has revised India's GDP growth for fiscal year 2020 downwards to 6.8 per cent year-on-year (YoY) from 7 per cent projected earlier.
- We expect inflation to remain sub-target this year (3.8 per cent YoY versus 3.4 per cent in FY19).

ORGANISATION	GDP RATE	
	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
World Bank	7.5%	-

July

IMF cuts India's FY20 growth forecast by 30 bps to 7%

- The IMF projected a slower growth rate for India in 2019 and 2020, a downward revision of 0.3 per cent for both the years.
- The GDP Growth rate for India at 7.0% in 2019 and 7.2% in 2020.
- This was announced in the World Economic Outlook, July 2019 released by IMF. The global GDP growth rate is predicted at 3.2% in 2019 and at 3.5% in 2020.

Government reduces interest rates of Small Saving Schemes by 10 bps

- The Finance Ministry said that interest rates for small savings schemes will be reduced by 10 basis points for July-September quarter of the ongoing financial year. Schemes that will fetch lower interest are Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP), Public Providend Fund (PPF), among others, barring interest on savings deposits that has been retained at 4%.

- PPF and National Savings Certificate (NSC) will yield 7.9% annual interest from the earlier 8%. KVP will fetch 7.6% with maturity of 113 months as compared with 7.7% with maturity of 112 months.
- The girl child savings scheme Sukanya Samriddhi Account will fetch a lower return of 8.4% as compared with 8.5%. Similarly, term deposits of 1-3 years will fetch interest rate of 6.9%, to be paid quarterly, while the five-year quarterly pegged at 7.7% and for recurring 7.2% from existing rate of 7.3%.

Morgan Stanley India's GDP at 6.2% in 2019 and 7.1% in 2020

- America based Investment Bank, Morgan Stanley has predicted the GDP growth rate for India at 6.2% in 2019 and 7.1% in 2020.
- For 2018 it was 7.4%.Morgan Stanley has also cut the global growth estimate at 3% and 3.2%t for 2019 and 2020.

Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2019-20 Series II Opens For Subscription

- According to a latest update from the RBI, the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2019-20 - Series II will be opened for subscription for the period from July 08 - July 12, 2019.
- The nominal value of the bond based on the simple average closing price [published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association Ltd (IBJA)] for gold of 999 purity of the last three business days of the week preceding the subscription period, i.e. July 03 - July 05, 2019 works out to Rs 3,443/- (Rupees Three Thousand Four Hundred Forty Three only) per gram.
- Denomination: Minimum investment in the Bonds shall be one gram with a maximum limit of subscription per fiscal year of 4 kg for individuals, 4 kg for Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) and 20 kg for trusts

PAN not linked to Aadhaar card will become invalid from September

- The government will invalidate all PAN cards that are not linked to Aadhaar by September 1.
- At the moment 180 out of the existing 400 million PAN cards are not linked to Aadhaar.
- To validate and continue using the existing PAN cards, citizens will have to link them to Aadhaar. Or else, they will be permitted to use Aadhaar instead for filing returns and while making other high-value transactions, specified under the Income Tax Act.
- Those who cite an Aadhaar number, which is not already linked to a PAN number, for tax returns and other specified transactions after September 1, will get a fresh one from the Income Tax Department.
- This is how the Aadhaar-PAN linkage, proposed in the Finance Bill, 2019 will be rolled out.

UBS pegs down GDP growth to 6.7%

- Swiss brokerage UBS has lowered the country's real GDP growth forecast to 6.7 percent from 6.9 percent earlier in FY20 citing the continuing slowdown in consumption demand and warned that a revival is unlikely before FY21.
- The brokerage expects the Reserve Bank to ease the policy rate by another 75 basis points as against its previous forecast 25 basis points in FY20.

Important Business News

May

Facebook planning to launch its own cryptocurrency, GlobalCoin, by 2020

- Facebook plans to launch its cryptocurrency by the first quarter of next year
- The currency, which is being referred to internally as "GlobalCoin," will reportedly be available in around a dozen countries at launch, where it's expected to offer people affordable and secure payments without the need for a bank account.

Uber Just Launched a Submarine Service in the Great Barrier Reef

- Uber has partnered with Australian tourist group Tourism Queensland to offer the world's first rideshare submarine, scUber. scUber will offer riders the opportunity to explore the Great Barrier Reef in the shared vehicle. Each scUber ride is priced at USD 3,000 for two passengers.

Infosys completes acquisition of 75% stake in ABN AMRO Bank subsidiary Stater

- IT services major Infosys has completed the acquisition of 75 per cent shareholding in ABN AMRO Bank's wholly-owned Stater NV.
- In March, the country's second largest IT services Infosys had stated that it will acquire 75 per cent stake in Stater for about Rs. 989 crore. ABN AMRO continues to hold the remaining 25 per cent.
- Founded in 1997, Stater is the largest mortgage service provider of the Benelux. It services 1.7 million mortgage and insurance loans for approximately 50 clients in The Netherlands and Belgium

HDFC Group overtakes Tata Group as India's largest

- The HDFC group has overtaken the 151-year-old Tata group to emerge as India's most valuable by way of market capitalization (m-cap).
- The combined market value of the five listed companies of the HDFC group - HDFC, HDFC Bank, HDFC Life, HDFC Asset Management and Gruh Finance - stood at Rs. 11.66 lakh crore as on May 20, 2019 while the combined m-cap of 29 Tata group companies stood at Rs. 11.64 lakh crore, about Rs 2,000 crore less than that of the HDFC group.

Doordarshan launches souvenir store on Amazon India

- Public service broadcaster Doordarshan has launched a souvenir store on online shopping website Amazon India.
- The company, one of PrasarBharti's divisions, is also trying to make younger viewers familiar with their famous shows, such as Hum Log, Buniyaad, Ye Jo HaiZindagi, Malgudi Days, Ramayana and Mahabharat.
- DD Souvenir gallery was started on 21 June, 2018 and in view of its success and demand, India's public service broadcaster Doordarshan has started an online store through on Amazon India platform, for selling branded articles like cup, T-shirt and Water bottles. Doordarshan is India's first broadcaster which has started Souvenir store. Online souvenir store will not only strengthen the relation with viewers but also help in establishing Doordarshan brand value.

Standard Life sells 1.78% in HDFC Life Insurance

- Standard Life has successfully divested 1.78 per cent of its stake in HDFC Life Insurance to raise Rs. 1,400 crore.
- The divestment was done through offer for sale (OFS) route and the issue managed to sail through successfully with both qualified institutional investors (QIBs) and retail investor quotas seeing full subscriptions.
- The Standard Life (Mauritius Holdings) proposed to sell up to 3,60,00,000 equity shares (1.78% stake) at a floor price of Rs 390 per equity share and DSP Merril Lynch will be the broker for the sale process on behalf of Standard Life (Mauritius Holdings).

SEBI fines NSE Rs. 1,000 crore in co-location case

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has barred the National Stock Exchange (NSE), which has the largest market share in equity segment and almost a monopoly in equity derivatives, from accessing the securities market for six months.
- The capital markets regulator has further ordered the exchange to disgorge around Rs. 1,000 crore that is, Rs. 624.89 crore plus 12% interest from April 1, 2014 for its alleged failure to exercise proper due diligence while offering co-location facility thereby affecting market fairness and integrity.

Bharti AXA General to sell two-wheeler policies via WhatsApp

- Bharti AXA General Insurance will sell policies through social media messaging platform WhatsApp and has tied up with web aggregator Wishfin Insurance for speedy delivery of two-wheeler cover.
- Bharti AXA General Insurance, a joint venture between Bharti Enterprises and global insurance firm AXA, will sell the policies on the website of Wishfin's insurance arm Wishpolicy.
- Wishfin has launched 'Buy Two-Wheeler Insurance on WhatsApp' through web aggregator Wishfin Insurance, which is available on (Wishpolicy's) site, provided by Bharti AXA General Insurance

Paytm launches recurring payments service for merchants

- Paytm has launched recurring payment (auto pay) service for merchants that are working on a digital subscription model. The move will allow the subscription-based businesses to collect payments from their subscribers effortlessly.
- The auto pay service is targeted at people who use Paytm for bill payments, content subscription, grocery purchases, membership fees, housing society payments etc. The service is being offered as an additional mode of payment other than credit/debit cards, internet banking and other Paytm proprietary instruments.

LIC HFL launches Udyam centre

- LIC Housing Finance (LIC HFL) has launched 'Udyam', a skilling centre in Bengaluru.
- It was launched in association with Lok Bharti Education Society, the implementing partner.
- Centres of Excellence (CoE) have been launched in Delhi and Bengaluru, and later on will expand to other cities

PNB Housing Finance to mop up USD 1 bn from foreign markets

- PNB Housing Finance stated that it will raise up to USD 1 billion (around Rs 6,954 crore) from foreign markets, and additional Rs 10,000 crore by issuing bonds.
- The fund raising move comes days after CARE Ratings placed various facilities of the housing finance company under "credit watch"
- The housing arm of the state-run Punjab National Bank (PNB) stated that it will consider raising up to $1 billion through external commercial borrowings (ECB) and issuing non-convertible debentures worth up to Rs. 10,000 crore

BSNL launches 'Bharat Fibre' broadband service in Kashmir Valley

- State-owned telecom firm BSNL has become the first operator to start optical fibre-based high-speed broadband service in Pulwama with the launch of 'Bharat Fibre'.
- This is the first such FTTH (fibre-to-the-home) service deployment in the (Kashmir) Valley under this unique revenue share model. Since the Bharat Fibre services are provided on the optical fibre right up to the customer premises, reliable and high-speed internet services are delivered to the customers.

Huawei overtakes Apple to become second biggest Smartphone maker

- Huawei Technologies Co overtook Apple Inc to claim the No. 2 spot in smartphones in the first quarter, moving a step closer to its avowed ambition of displacing Samsung at the top of the market
- Huawei's been steadily gaining on Apple and Samsung Electronics Co. with an increasingly high-end line-up of devices, particularly in its home market of China. Huawei grew shipments 50% from a year earlier

Mastercard to invest $1 billion in India over five years

- Mastercard announced a $1 billion investment in India over the next five years aimed at converting India into a vital node in the company's infrastructure, and also to continue business expansion.
- About $350 million of the total amount would be invested in setting up a local payments processing center as per the Reserve Bank of India's mandate to store all payments data locally.

NHB gives nod to DHFL to divest stake in Aadhar Housing Finance

- Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL), has received approval from the National Housing Bank to sell its entire stake of 9.15% in Aadhar Housing Finance to Blackstone's arm.

India to soon get its first Apple retail store in Mumbai

- India is set to get its first Apple Inc retail store in Mumbai. The company has finalised a list of locations for its retail store. The move comes as the tech giant is trying to establish a strong presence in the world's fastest-growing smartphone market. However, the final place is not finalized yet.

Reliance to acquire British toy-maker Hamleys for Rs. 620 crore

- The Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries announced it will acquire iconic British toy maker Hamleys,a 259-year-old toy-maker, for around Rs. 620 crore (nearly 68 million pounds) in an all-cash deal
- It is currently owned by Chinese fashion conglomerate C Banner International, which had acquired it for 100 million pounds in 2015. Hamleys started with a single-store shop, Noah's Ark, in 1760. It now has 167

stores across 18 countries. Besides the UK, it has stores in China, Germany, Russia, India, South Africa and West Asia.

Facebook chooses London as base for WhatsApp payments

- Facebook has chosen London as the centre for the global roll-out of WhatsApp pay, before the social media giant launches its digital payments service on the mobile messaging platform in India
- WhatsApp, which has 1.5 billion users globally, would hire nearly 100 people in London to focus on the digital payments service and additional operations staff would be hired in Dublin
- Facebook chose the UK, where WhatsApp is far more popular than the US, because it attracts a multicultural workforce from many of the countries

Niti Aayog pushes for Rs. 7,500-crore proposal for AI platform, research institutes

- Niti Aayog has circulated a cabinet note to provide Rs 7,500 crore for the establishment of AIRAWAT, a cloud computing platform along with research institutes. This is part of the policy think tank's proposal to create an institutional framework for artificial intelligence (AI) in the country. The expenditure Finance Committee is expected to take up the note soon.
- According to the proposal, the funding would be used to set up five institutes or centres of research excellence (CORE), 20 international centres for transformational AI (ICTAI), along with AIRAWAT, a cloud computing platform that can be accessed by anyone. It is estimated that AI will add $957 billion to India's GDP by 2035, boosting India's annual growth by 1.3 percentage points.

Facebook registers new cryptocurrency firm Libra Networks in Switzerland

- Facebook has registered a new financial technology company, Libra Networks, in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The new subsidiary, with Facebook Global Holdings as the stakeholder, aims to provide financial and technology solutions and develop related hardware and software.
- It focus on “investing, payments, financing, identity management, analytics, big data, blockchain, and other technologies.” Facebook was working on “Facebook Coin." - a stablecoin pegged to a basket of different foreign currencies. The cryptocurrency project even reached the US Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

FSSAI relaxes certification norms for small organic food producers

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has decided to relax certification norms for small original producers or producer organisations with an annual turnover of up to Rs. 12 lakh till April 1, 2020.
- According to the regulations, all organic food sold in the country needs to be certified either under National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) or Participatory Guarantee System for India (PGS-India).
- However, these small organic producers and aggregators will not be allowed to use ‘Jaivik Bharat logo’ on their products. The Jaivik Bharat logo is an identity mark to distinguish organic products from non-organic ones.

BSNL partners with Google to expand Wi-Fi footprint

- BSNL has partnered with Google to increase access to its WiFi footprint in the country. With the launch of this service, people across the country will be able to enjoy BSNL's free WiFi services. This initiative will allow customers use BSNL's high speed internet services on WiFi.
- There are 38,000 BSNL Wi-Fi hotspot locations operational in India. One can access these by buying Wi-Fi vouchers that are priced starting at Rs 19. Google has previously completed the rollout of RailWAccording to an Analysys Mason study, public Wi-Fi will connect 40 million new users to the internet by 2019

June

Working group to review WPI series, Ramesh Chand to head task

- The Centre has constituted a working group for the revision of the current series of the wholesale price index (base 2011-12). The group will be headed by Niti Aayog member Ramesh Chand.

- The group has been tasked to select the most appropriate base year for the preparation of a new official series of wholesale price index (WPI) and producer price index (PPI) in India.
- Other tasks include reviewing the commodity basket of the current series of WPI and suggest additions or deletions of commodities in the light of structural changes in the economy since 2011-12.

Flipkart to roll out reward system SuperCoins from July

- E-commerce firm Flipkart will roll out multi-brand rewards ecosystem 'SuperCoins' using which its customers can shop on various online platforms such as Zomato, OYO and Makemytrip.
- SuperCoins can be earned on all Flipkart transactions and partner services hosted on the Flipkart App and can be redeemed for exciting rewards from an ever-increasing rewards portfolio, making every single transaction a rewarding experience for customers. Flipkart Plus members will get double SuperCoins than non-Plus members.

DCC approves penalties on Airtel and Voda Idea

- The highest decision-making body of the Department of Telecom (DoT), Digital Communications Commission (DCC) approved to levy penalties on Bharti Airtel Ltd and Vodafone Idea Ltd for denial of interconnection to Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd when it had entered market in 2016.
- Telecom Regulatory authority of India (TRAI) had fined Airtel and Vodafone with Rs. 1,050crore each (Rs. 50 cr per circle for 21 circles) and for Idea (Rs. 50 crore per circle for 19 circles) it was Rs. 950 crore. But as Vodafone and Idea merged (August 2018) to form Vodafone-Idea, the new entity had to bear the combined burden of Rs. 2000.
- Reliance Jio had complained that its subscribers were unable to call other networks as its rivals did not release sufficient number of Points of Interconnect (PoI).
  The inter-ministerial panel of DCC has asked TRAI to review penalty amount worth □3,050 crore considering the financial stress in telecom sector.

Facebook to Launch Libra, Its New Digital Currency, in 2020

- Facebook revealed its long-awaited cryptocurrency plans, announcing “Project Libra,” a new type of digital money designed for the billions of people using its apps and social network.
- If the plan is successful, users will soon be able to shop with and send the currency—known as Libra—on Messenger and Instagram, as well as use it with a wide variety of other merchants like Uber, Spotify, and MasterCard.
- Facebook did not provide specifics about exactly when and how consumers will get ahold of the currency, but executives suggest it will first be distributed on Messenger and WhatsApp in mid-2020.
- The company also announced a new digital wallet called Calibra, which will be operated by Facebook as a separate subsidiary and provide users with a way to store and spend Libra.

Tata Mutual Fund launches India’s first mutual fund side pocket

- Tata Mutual Fund has announced plans to introduce segregated portfolios (side pockets) in three schemes hit by the DHFL debt crisis – Tata Corporate Bond Fund, Tata Medium Term Fund and Tata Treasury Advantage Fund. It has also suspended fresh inflows into these schemes.
- This instance is India’s first formal use of the side pocketing provisions introduced by SEBI in December 2018.
- Other AMCs have made amendments to SIDs to allow side pocketing but this is the first time an AMC is actually proposing to carry out the procedure.
- Side pocketing requires an amendment of the Scheme Information Document (SID). Since this amendment constitutes a ‘fundamental change of attribute,’ investors have to be given a 30 day exit load free window to leave the fund.

ICAT Releases India’s 1st BS – VI Certificate in Two Wheeler Segment

- International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) released India’s first Type Approval Certificate (TAC) for Bharat Stage - VI (BS – VI) norms for the two wheeler segment in New Delhi.

- The certificate was released and handed over by Director ICAT, Dinesh Tyagi to top officials of the OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturers).
- ICAT has taken many steps in providing assistance and support to the automotive industry for the development, optimization and calibration of engines and vehicles for complying with these upcoming emission norms.

ONGC overtakes IOC as most profitable PSU after profits jump by 34% in FY19

- ONGC, India's top oil and gas producer, has toppled Indian Oil Corp (IOC) to regain crown of being the country's most profitable public sector company. Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) reported a 34 per cent jump in its 2018-19 fiscal net profit to Rs 26,716 crore. In comparison, IOC registered a net profit of Rs 17,274 crore for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2019.

China, India lead charts for fintech adoption growth

- Fintech adoption rate has risen to an average of 64 percent this year, with emerging markets like China and India leading the way, according to a report by Ernst & Young (EY).
- In its report titled 'Global FinTech Adoption Index 2019', EY said emerging markets like China and India (87 percent adoption rate) led the charts, followed by Russia and South Africa (82 percent).

Nilekani panel suggests 24x7 RTGS, NEFT, elimination of all charges

- To encourage digital payments, the Nandan Nilekani committee has suggested a host of measures, including elimination of charges, round the clock RTGS and NEFT facility and duty-free import of point-of-sales machines.
- The committee, which was appointed by the RBI, had submitted its suggestions on promoting digital payments to Governor Shaktikanta Das
- The committee had recommended that the Interchange on card payments be reduced by 15 basis points (0.15 per cent) as this will increase the incentive for acquirers to sign up merchants. Current import duty of POS machine was 18 per cent. The Committee recommends large scale usage of common and interoperable mobility cards by public across different transit options

Dell emerges as India's most trusted brand

- Dell has emerged as the most trusted brand in India in 2019, according to a report released by brand analytics firm TRA Research. Dell climbed five ranks over the previous year to grab the top spot and also introduced the laptop category in the report.
- The mother-brand Dell has grown its India revenues from US$ 600 million in 2008 to nearly US$ 20 billion in 2018 and US and India are the only two countries that have all Dell's business functions and provide support globally.
- LIC and Amazon are ranked on the third and fourth spots and Apple iPhone emerged as India's fifth most trusted brand, rising 116 ranks from 2018.

UDIN mention now mandatory for audit reports

- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has mandated the mention of the Unique Document Identification Number (UDIN) in audit reports starting July 1.
- The UDIN would help to verify online whether a certificate or audit report that has been submitted has actually been signed by a chartered accountant.
- DIN is a unique number, which will be generated for every document certified/attested by Practising Chartered Accountants and registered with the UDIN portal. The portal is available at https://udin.icai.org/.

Razorpay launches digital payment support for 100 currencies

- Razorpay, a converged payments solution company, announced that it now supports 100 currencies for international digital payments - including all popular currencies such as U.S. Dollar (USD), European Dollar (EUR), British Pound (GBP), Arab Emirates Dirham (AED) and Singapore Dollar (SGD).
- With this offering, the company aims to open new growth avenues for the MSME segment, by enabling them to accept payments from other countries.

- Razorpay's International payments is integrated across the entire range of its product offering including Payment Gateway, Payment Links, Payment Pages, Subscriptions and Invoices.

July

Apple buys 'majority' of Intel's smartphone modem biz for $1 billion

- Apple has announced the acquisition of "majority" of chipmaker Intel's smartphone modem business in a deal valued at $1 billion, which "is expected to close in fourth quarter of 2019".
- Apple will intake 2,200 Intel workers along with equipment, intellectual property and leases.
- Notably, Intel had cancelled plans for 5G modems after Apple settled its 2-year-long dispute with Qualcomm.

Voda's M-Pesa shuts shop in India

- Vodafone's mobile phone-based banking service M-Pesa has shut down operations in India with effect from July 15.
- M-Pesa is one of Vodafone's success stories in countries such as Kenya, where it is hugely popular. It launched in India in 2013 and had received good response initially, but tough market conditions seem to have done it in.

LIC offering Rs 1.25 trillion by 2024 for highway projects

- Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways stated that Mumbai headquartered Indian state-owned insurance group, LIC(Life Insurance Corporation) has agreed to offer Rs 1.25 trillion (Rs 1.25 lakh crore) line of credit by 2024, to fund highway projects for timely execution of the Rs 8.41 trillion ambitious Bharatmala project.
- Bharatmala program will be funded through cess, toll revenue, market borrowings, private sector participation, insurance fund, pension funds, masala bonds, and other initiatives and the LIC credit line was one such initiative(bonds).
- LIC offered Rs 25,000 crore in a year and Rs 1.25 trillion in five years for highways construction.
- The budget allocation for Road Transport and Highways ministry has also increased by about Rs 5,000 crore.

L&T Infotech to Take Over AI Firm Lymbyc Solutions for Rs 38 Crore

- Larsen and Toubro Infotech Ltd, the technology services arm of Larsen and Toubro, has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Bengaluru-headquartered Lymbyc Solutions Pvt. Ltd for Rs 38 crore.
- Lymbyc is a Bengaluru-based specialist artificial intelligence (AI) machine learning and advanced analytics company with customers in the US, the UK, Africa and India. Its acquisition will further strengthen L&T Infotech's digital and analytics offerings. Before Lymbyc's acquisiton, both companies had worked as strategic partners for a year.

Ebix buys Yatra online for Rs 2,323.6 crore

- Ebix Inc, the US-based supplier of on-demand software and e-commerce services to the insurance, healthcare, financial and e-learning industries, has acquired Yatra Online Inc, for an enterprise value of $337.8 million (Rs 2,323.6 crore) in an all-stock deal
- The transaction will create India's largest and most profitable travel services company. However, Yatra will continue to operate independently and also retain its brand and status in India.

Airtel becomes first telco to shut down 3G network

- Bharti Airtel switched off its 3G network in Kolkata and has refarmed the 900 MHz band spectrum to further strengthen its 4G network. This is one of the first phase-outs of 3G technology globally.
- Airtel mobile broadband services in the city will now be available on high-speed 4G.
- The telco is deploying state-of-the-art L900 technology in the 900 MHz band to complement its 4G services in the 2300 Mhz and 1800 Mhz bands.

Delhi Airport becomes first airport to operationalise Transshipment Hub Centre

- Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), a subsidiary of GMR Infrastructure, announced that it is the first Airport in India to operationalize a dedicated Transshipment Excellence Centre (TEC) that will simplify and expedite the procedure for transfer of Transshipment cargo.
- This initiative has been taken by DIAL as per the guidelines of Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) under National Civil Aviation Policy 2016 to develop Air Cargo Transshipment Hubs at major airports of India.
- All the EXIM shippers and the airlines will now have an opportunity to carry more and more volume of Air Cargo across the world by leveraging the TEC facility at Delhi Airport for handling their transshipment cargo.

ICICI Bank, IndoStar Capital join hands for commercial vehicle financing

- ICICI Bank has tied up with non-banking financial company IndoStar Capital for vehicle financing for small and medium fleet owners to buy new as well as old commercial vehicles.
- Under this partnership, IndoStar will originate and service the customers through the entire loan life-cycle including sourcing, documentation, collection and loan servicing
- ICICI Bank will provide funding to these customers
- IndoStar will originate customers in tier-II, III, IV cities where it has a branch network of 322 branches.

Indusind bank buys 2.58% in satin Credit care

- IndusInd Bank Ltd. has picked up a 2.58 percent stake in microfinance firm Satin Creditcare Network Ltd., by converting debentures which the private bank had subscribed earlier.
- IndusInd Bank has been allotted 13,43,283 equity shares of Satin Creditcare, representing 2.58 percent stake in the microfinance firm

Tata Steel Kalinganagar joins WEF's Global Lighthouse Network

- Tata Steel Kalinganagar (TSK) has been included in World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Lighthouse Network, a community of manufacturers showing leadership in applying Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies to drive financial and operational impact.
- TSK in Odisha's Jajpur district is the first and the only Indian manufacturing plant to be included in the WEF's Lighthouse Network.
- The WEF announced the addition of 10 new factories, including TSK, to its Global Lighthouse Network .
- The factories join a network of 16 existing lighthouses across multiple geographies and industries.
- They serve as beacons to guide others to overcome challenges in upgrading systems and applying cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics and 3D printing.

Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express to be Indian Railways 1st 'private' train

- The Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express is set to be the first train to be operated by private players .
- The train that is being considered for Indian Railways experimental initiative is the Lucknow-Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express.

Govt task force to draw up $110-bn mobile export business blueprint

- To figure out how to create a $110-billion mobile phone export business from India, the government has decided to set up a secretary-level task force at the Centre to be steered by NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer Amitabh Kant.
- The push to set up the task force has come from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The PMO has suggested the secretaries should form a policy that eliminates India's weakness vis-à-vis other Asian countries.

Flipkart Co-Branded Credit Card Launched in Partnership With Axis Bank, Mastercard

- Flipkart is getting in on the co-branded credit card game with the launch of its first credit card in partnership with Axis Bank and Mastercard.
- Although this is the first co-branded card for the e-retailer, Flipkart had earlier partnered with Axis Bank back in 2016 for the launch of the Axis Bank Buzz credit card, which offers 5 percent discount on Flipkart purchases and other benefits. The Flipkart-Axis Bank Credit Card will be offered to select users in July.

- Other benefits of the Flipkart-Axis Bank Credit Card include welcome offers from number of merchants, up to 20 percent discount at over 4,000 restaurants, airport lounge access, and fuel surcharge waiver up to Rs. 500 per month. There is a joining and annual fee of Rs. 500, which can be waived on spends of Rs. 2 lakh.

YouTube introduces 'Learning Playlists' for educational videos

- Targeting teenagers, Google-owned content sharing app YouTube is bringing a new education feature called Learning Playlists with dedicated landing pages for educational videos on topics like math, science, music and language, free from algorithmic recommendations.
- Removing recommended videos from Learning Playlists shows that YouTube is not taking any chances when it comes to getting educational content right.

The world's biggest diamond mine is closing after almost four decades

- The world's biggest diamond mine, Argyle Diamond Mine is being shuttered after almost four decades.
- It is run by by Rio Tinto Group and is located in Western Australia. It will close its working by the end of 2020 due to exhausting of its supply of economically viable stones.
- It is the largest diamond producer in the world by volume. Argyle is best known as the source of about 90% of the world's prized pink diamonds.

India to overtake Japan to become 3rd largest economy in 2025

- India will this year overtake the UK to become the world's fifth biggest economy, and is poised to surpass Japan to be the third largest in 2025.
- The key goal is to transform India from a $3 trillion economy in 2019 to a $5 trillion economy by 2025, lifting India into the ranks of the world's upper-middle-income countries.
- IHS Markit estimates that India will overtake the UK to become the world's fifth largest economy in 2019, and forecasts that Indian GDP will reach $5.9 trillion in 2025, surpassing Japanese GDP to make India the world's third-largest economy.

Important Cabinet Approvals

July

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Maldives in Health Sector

- The Union Cabinet has given ex-post-facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives on cooperation in the field of Health.
- The Memorandum of Understanding covers the following areas of cooperation: -
- Exchange & Training of medical doctors, officials, other health professionals and experts;Medical and health research development;
- Regulation of medicines and medical products, and exchange of information thereon;
- Communicable and Non-Communicable diseases;
- E-Health and Telemedicine;
- Any other area of cooperation as may be mutually decided upon.

Cabinet approves proposal for Grant of Organized Group 'A' Service (OGAS) to Group 'A' Executive Cadre Officers

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for Grant of Organized Group 'A' Service (OGAS) to Group 'A' Executive Cadre Officers of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and extension of benefit of Non-Functional Financial Upgradation (NFFU) and Non-Functional Selection Grade (NFSG).
- This would result in grant of NFFU to eligible Group 'A' Executive Cadre Officers of CAPF; and
- The decision would also benefit Group 'A' Executive Cadre Officers of CAPF for availing the benefit of NFSG at an enhanced rate of 30% as per guidelines.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Maldives for Shipping

- The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval for the MoU between India and Maldives for the establishment of passenger and cargo services by sea, which was signed on June 8, 2019 during the visit of Prime Minister of India to Maldives.
- India is a leading development partner of Maldives and has established many of the leading institutions of Maldives. Currently, India has provided US $100 million Stand-by Credit facility (SCF) to Maldives, including long-term loans and revolving credit for trade.
- With a view to harness the potential opportunity that lies in passenger and cargo transportation by sea between the two countries, this MoU with Maldives has been signed. The proposed ferry service would contribute in a big way to promote people to people contact and to boost bilateral trade.

Cabinet approves MoU of Cooperation between India and Morocco

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the MoU between India and Morocco for developing, promoting and strengthening mutual cooperation between the judiciaries of the two countries.
- The approval will promote cooperation between India and Morocco in judicial and other legal areas and enable exchange of knowledge in infrastructure and information technology.

Cabinet approves proposal for leasing out of three airports viz. Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru of Airports Authority of India through Public Private Partnership

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for leasing out of three airports viz. Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru of Airports Authority of India (AAI) through Public Private Partnership (PPP) to the highest bidder i.e. M/s. Adani Enterprises Ltd. who quoted the highest bid for these airports, for operation, management and development under PPP for a lease period of 50 years as per the terms and conditions of the bid documents.
- These projects will bring efficiency in delivery, expertise, enterprise and professionalism apart from harnessing the needed investments in the public sector. This will also result in enhanced revenues to the AAI, which may lead to further investment by AAI at Tier II and Tier III cities and economic development in these areas in terms of job creation and related infrastructure.

Important State Wise National News

Assam

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

June

Assam government hikes parental income limit under fee waiver scheme

- Assam government has waived admission fees for students taking admission up to Post Graduate level whose parental income is less than 2 lakh rupees per year.All provincialized government colleges and 5 universities are incorporated under the scheme.
- Assam Education Minister Siddhartha Bhattacharya said that the quality of the government schools is improved following the Gunotsav.

Assam government to provide subsidy of Rs 1.7 lakh for admission in North East Skill Centre

- Assam government to provide a subsidy of 1.7 lakh rupees for the admission in the North East Skill Centre.
- Total 400 students will get admission in first batch. The total course fees for the first batch students would be around Rs 2.2 lakh for which the state government has planned to provide a subsidy of Rs 1.7 lakh.
- NESC has been set up by the Assam government in collaboration with ITE Education Services (ITEES), Singapore and was inaugurated in March 2019. It will provide International Standard, quality skill training facility in Food & Beverage Service, Housekeeping, Retail Service and Beauty & Wellness

Centre approves setting up of e-Foreigner Tribunal (e-FT) in Assam

- The Centre has approved setting up of e-Foreigner Tribunal (e-FT) in Assam.

- The CEO of e-FT Mission Anand Prakash Tiwari said that the proposed integrated e-FT IT system will be implemented across the state for effective monitoring and resolution of cases registered with Foreigner Tribunal.
- The main objective of the project is to maintain a statewide bio-metric and biographic data, to capture the illegal migrants' data to computerize data flow for all the stakeholders.
- It will also help in the legalization of eligible beneficiaries for welfare schemes.

Assam Transport Minister launches State Transport Corporation's Chalo app

- Assam Transport Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary launched the State Transport Corporation's Chalo app for Guwahati.
- The app will help commuters to know about the live arrival time of their bus so they can plan their travel accordingly.
- People can also track the live GPS position of their bus on a map. It will also ensure safe travel with features such as Emergency SOS.
- The project includes the introduction of electronic ticketing in State Transport buses with the latest generation of cutting-edge Electronic Ticket Issuing Machines which can accept all modes of payment, including cards, mobile payments, QR code payments and other forms of digital payments.

Assam government to set up Skill University at Darrang district

- Assam government will set up a Skill University at the cost of 850 crore rupees at Darrang district.
- This will be perhaps the first skill University of the Country with a capacity of 10 thousand seats. International Yoga Day will be observed at 459 centres of the Skill Development Mission

July

Supreme Court extends Assam NRC deadline to August 31

- The Supreme Court extended the deadline for publication of final National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam by a month to August 31 while rejecting the pleas seeking permission for 20 per cent sample re-verification.
- The Centre and the Assam government sought permission for sample re-verification to find out wrongful inclusions and exclusions of persons in the NRC.
- The National Register of Citizens (NRC) for the state of Assam has been taken as the exercise to enumerate citizens in Assam. The exercise aims at identifying illegal immigrants in the state of Assam that borders Bangladesh.

Andhra Pradesh

Capital – Amravati; CM – Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy; Governor - Biswabhusan Harichandan

June

Jagan's 'YSR Rythu Bharosa' to Replace Naidu's 'Annadata Sukhibhava in Andhra Pradesh

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy scrapped the previous Naidu government's 'Annadata Sukhibhava' scheme to replace it with the Rs 13,000 crore 'Rythu Bharosa' scheme to give direct benefits to farmers.
- Jagan Reddy has given the nod to implement the 'Rythu Bharosa' scheme, one of the key promises in the YSR Congress manifesto. The project has been estimated at Rs 13, 125 crore. The scheme will come into force on October 15 itself although it was due to be implemented from May next year.
- It will offer investment support of Rs. 12,500 per annum per farmer. It will also free crop insurance and interest-free loans to farmers. In total Rs. 50,000 will be given to a farmer in four installments of Rs 12,500. Eligibility: Farmers with land area less than 5 acres.
- It must be noted that the financial assistance of Rs. 15,000 per annum per farmer was provided under the Annadaata Sukhibhava Scheme.

July

Andhra Pradesh Becomes First State to Reserve 75% Private Jobs for Local Youths

- Andhra Pradesh became the first state to reserve jobs for local youth after the assembly passed the Andhra Pradesh Employment of Local Candidates in Industries/Factories Act, 2019, which reserves 75 per cent jobs in industrial units, factories, joint ventures and projects set up under public-private partnership mode.
- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy had promised to provide quota in local jobs during his 'padyatra' in the state. It was also an election promise.
- While the step is positive in that it promotes local hiring, the state will also have to focus on skill development of the youth to ensure their employability.

Arunachal Pradesh

Capital –Itanagar; CM –Pema Khandu; Governor - B. D. Mishra

July

Arunachal CM launches state wide tree plantation programme

- Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched the state wide tree plantation programme 'Clean-Green Arunachal Campaign 2019' in Itanagar.
- The campaign under the State Forest department will plant 1-lakh tree saplings in the next 24 hours.
- The campaign is being held as part of Van Mahotsav celebration and has set the target of planting 1 Crore tree within the next five years.

Chhattisgarh

Capital –Atal Nagar; CM – Raman Singh; Governor - Anusuiya Uikey

May

Chhattisgarh Deploys 1st Anti-Naxal Women Commando Unit

- The Chhattisgarh police for the first time has inducted women commandos in the District Reserve Guard, its frontline anti-Naxal force. Comprising 30 women led by Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Dineshwari Nand, have received extensive training in jungle combat.
- With the induction of the women commando contingent, the number of platoons of the DRG in Dantewada now stands at six. Of the 30 recruits, 10 are surrendered women Naxals, while 10 others are assistant constables who were part of the erstwhile Salwa Judum (anti-Naxal militia) movement

July

CM Bhupesh Baghel inaugurates 'Jan Choupal' programme in Raipur

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated 'Jan Choupal' programme.
- Under this programme, public meetings will be held once every week to discuss the issues of the people.
- The concept of 'Jan Choupal' has been taken from the practices of our ancestors in the village, who used to gather and solve the issues faced by them

Gujarat

Capital: Gandhinagar; CM: Vijay Rupani; Governor: Acharya Dev Vrat

May

Shops, businesses in Gujarat can remain open 24X7 now

- Shops and other businesses in Gujarat can remain open round the clock now with the Gujarat Shops and Establishments (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 2019 coming into force from May 1.
- With this, commercial establishments in municipal corporations limits, or those near national highways, railway stations, state transport depots, hospitals and petrol pumps will be allowed to operate 24 hours.
- The shops and commercial entities operating near state highways and within municipality limits can now operate between 6 am to 2 am.
- The act replaced the Gujarat Shops and Establishments Act of 1948, which prohibited shops and other businesses from operating between 12 am to 6 am.

- Under the new act, working hours for women employees can be between 6 am and 9 pm, which could be relaxed only if a written request is made and after the authorities consider safety issues.

June

Gujarat launches India's first trading programme to combat particulate air pollution

- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani launched India's first trading programme to combat particulate air pollution on World Environment Day 2019, which has air pollution as its theme.
- The programme is a market-based system where the government sets a cap on emissions and allows industries to buy and sell permits to stay below the cap.

India's first Dinosaur Museum and Fossil Park opens in Gujarat

- A Dinosaur Museum and Fossil Park has opened in Gujarat's Mahisagar district's Raiyoli village, the first such facility in our country and third in the world.
- Spread across 72 acres, the park showcases fossilised remains of dinosaurs in the natural form.
- The museum has 10 galleries showcasing the Earth's inception, world dinosaurs, Indian dinosaurs and it also screens 3D movies.

Man on a mission to turn Udhana railway station into India's first Green Railway Station

- To propagate Mahatma Gandhi's mantra 'Cleanliness is Godliness' and achieve the objective of a 'Clean India-Green India', a young entrepreneur from Surat has launched a mission to turn railway station in Udhana town of Gujarat's Surat district into India's first green railway station.
- Viral Sudhirbhai Desai is attempting to turn Udahana Railway Station into a green and pollution free one like Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.
- Desai has installed oxygen bomber and over 1700 air purifying plants at the rail stations to make Udhana Railway Station clean and green. Along with it, to promote the message of nurturing and protecting the environment, the walls of the station has been painted with a special type of "environment protection graffiti."

July

India's first Design Development Centre 'Fashionova' launched in Surat, Gujarat

- India's first Design Development Center 'Fashionova' was launched in the Textile city Surat recently to promote the city in the field of the fashion design sector.
- The main objective of this studio is to provide a strong platform to all those who have a flair of the apparel business.
- It fulfills, on a large scale, all business needs from co-working space, technicians, expert advises to cognitive workshops and exposure to the industry. Surat is renowned for its textile and the city had to be dependent on Mumbai or Delhi for unique and latest design trends. This design development center will bridge this gap.

Goa

Capital –Panaji; CM - Pramod Sawant; Governor - Satya Pal Malik

July

Health plan for heart patients to cover entire Goa by Aug 15

- Entire Goa would be covered under an ambitious health programme of the state government for heart patients by August 15.
- STEMI (ST segment elevation myocardial infraction) programme was launched in Goa last year under which patients suffering heart attack are thrombolysed before bringing them to hospital for further treatment to save their life.
- Thrombolysis is a treatment to dissolve dangerous clots in blood vessels, improve blood flow and prevent damage to tissues and organs.

STEMI programme was launched by the state health department Vishwajit Rane in December last year

Haryana

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

June

High Court declares all animals in Haryana to be 'legal persons'

- The Punjab and Haryana High Court has accorded the status of "legal person or entity" to all animals in Haryana, granting them the "corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person".
- The verdict comes nearly a year after Uttarakhand High Court passed a similar order "to protect and promote greater welfare of animals".

July

Haryana launches 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' portal for farmers

- The Haryana government announced the launch of 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' portal whereby farmers can avail benefits of several government schemes directly after uploading their crop-related details.
- This simple system will enable farmers to self-report their land and crop details and help them receive benefits of several government schemes directly.
- The portal -- www.fasalhry.in -- has brought the departments of agriculture and farmers welfare, revenue, food civil supplies and consumer affairs and science and technology on a single platform for the betterment of the farmers.
- A financial incentive of Rs 10 per acre or part thereof, subject to minimum of Rs 20 and maximum of Rs 50, would be provided to each farmer for registering on the portal.

Haryana to set up Sports University near Sonipat

- Haryana sports and youth affairs minister Anil Vij announced that the Sports School, Rai (Sonipat), will be upgraded to a Sports University, the State Cabinet approved the proposal. To be named the Sports University of Haryana, this will be the first full-fledged sports university in the state.
- The Sports University of Haryana will be the third sports university established by a state government in India after Swarnim Gujarat Sports University (Gandhinagar) and Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University (Chennai). In 2018, the union cabinet had given the go ahead to set up the country's first National Sports University in Imphal, Manipur.

Himachal Pradesh

Capital –Shimla; CM -Jai Ram Thakur; Governor - Bandaru Dattatreya

June

High Court declares all animals in Haryana to be 'legal persons'

- The Punjab and Haryana High Court has accorded the status of "legal person or entity" to all animals in Haryana, granting them the "corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person".
- The verdict comes nearly a year after Uttarakhand High Court passed a similar order "to protect and promote greater welfare of animals".

Jammu & Kashmir

Capital –Jammu (winter) Srinagar (summer); CM - Vacant; Governor - Girish Chandra Murmu

May

Jammu and Kashmir Government Unveils Healthcare Investment Policy-2019

- Jammu and Kashmir Government unveiled Healthcare Investment Policy-2019.
- This follows the State Administrative Council decision taken in this regard on March 08, 2019. As per the new Health Care Investment Policy, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir will promote and encourage the private parties and entrepreneurs for setting up healthcare infrastructure in the state by providing subsidies and incentives
- Accordingly, 30% subsidy on capital investment will be provided for setting up of multi-speciality Hospitals, Super Specialty Hospitals, Medical Colleges, Nursing Colleges and Paramedical Colleges.

- Interest subsidy shall be provided @ 5% per annum on term loan subject to a ceiling of Rs. 15 lakh per year for a period of five years from the date of operationalization of the project.
- Also, the subsidized power tariff rates shall apply as applicable to Industries Sector. 100 % subsidy on purchase and installation of DG sets with an upper ceiling of Rs. 45 lakh.

June

Kheer Bhawani Mela 2019

- Kheer Bhavani Mela is celebrated at Tula Mula village of Jammu and kashmir
- The devotees of the Goddess fast and gather here on the eighth day of the full moon in the month of May/ June (The Annual Festival, held here, is a public holiday in Kashmir) when, according to belief, the Goddess changes the colour of the spring's waters, which are ascribed to different manifestations of the Goddess.
- The kheer bhawanitemple is dedicated to the Goddess Rajnya Devi, popularly known as Kheer Bhawani. The name 'Kheer Bhawani' is derived from the fact that thousands of devotees offer milk and "Kheer" or pudding to the sacred spring, as they believe the pudding turns black to warn of impending disaster.

Jammu and Kashmir admin approves 2nd phase of comprehensive plan for flood management work on Jhelum river

- The Jammu and Kashmir administration has approved the second phase of a comprehensive plan for flood management work on the Jhelum river at a cost of over 5,400 crore rupees.
- The State Administrative Council, which met in Srinagar under the chairmanship of Governor Satya Pal Malik last evening, accorded in-principle approval to the Comprehensive Plan.
- The project is proposed to be implemented part-wise with Part A amounting to 1,684 crore rupees approved under Prime Minister's Development Package and the Part B for which source of funding is to be identified.
- The project has been formulated to achieve short-term goal of mitigating the flood threat at Sangam in Anantnag district.

Centre approves State Cancer Institute at GMC Jammu

- To strengthen the tertiary level cancer care services in the Jammu and Kashmir State, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, has formally approved Rs. 120 crore State Cancer Institute at Government Medical College Jammu.
- Earlier, one State Cancer Institute was approved for SKIMS, Soura in Srinagar for which first grant-in-aid of Rs. 47.25 crore has already been released.

J-K govt launches outreach programme, bureaucrats to spend time in villages

- The Jammu and Kashmir government has launched its ambitious outreach programme, 'Back to the Village', as part of which bureaucrats will spend the next 36 hours in different panchayats, gathering feedback from people on development of their areas. The eight-day programme, from June 20-27, is being organised across all Panchayats of the state.
- During their stay, they will hold meetings with elected 'panches' and 'sarpanches', hold 'gram' (village) and 'mahila sabhas' (women assemblies) in addition to other grassroots level interactions.
- The basic objective of this programme is to move governance from its seat of operation to the doorsteps of the people in villages.

Sindhu Darshan Festival's 23rd edition underway in Leh

- The 23rd edition of the Sindhu Darshan Festival kicked off at Sindhu Ghat Shey in Leh.
- Skyabje Choskyong Palga Rinpoche inaugurated the 4-day event organised by Sindhu Darshan Yatra Samiti (SDYS) in collaboration with Ladakh Phanday Tsogspa.

July

Anganwadi Centres to get transformed into Model Community facilities in Jammu and Kashmir

- Jammu and Kashmir Government rolled out an ambitious plan to transform the Anganwadi Centres into state-of-the-art Model Community Facilities for children and mothers in the State.

- As a part of this programme in the first phase, 50 existing Anganwadi Centres in each district would be transformed through convergence with MGNREGA into Model Anganwadi Centres.
- They will be equipped with upgraded infrastructure and improved amenities like toilets, drinking water and hygiene.
- It will be then replicated at other Anganwadi Centres in the State to change the face of Government's children and women-oriented program for efficient delivery of Integrated Child Development Scheme.

Operation Khumaar launched to make 312 panchayats tobacco-free in J&K

- In Jammu and Kashmir a campaign has been launched in Rajouri, a border district of Jammu division called "Operation Khumaar" to make 312 panchayats tobacco-free. The programme is run by the district administration to make panchayats free from tobacco and tobacco-based products.
- Under this programme, even the headmaster of the schools have been authorised to impose a fine on the sale of tobacco within 100 yards of school limits.
- Block Medical Officers have been directed to set up counselling centres at all Community Health Centres (CHCs) to help tobacco consumers to quit this habit.
- The district officers have been urged upon to work in a mission mode so as to make the society free from the injurious tobacco and tobacco-based products.

J-K government approves Aadhaar-linked payment mode for disbursal of pension

- The Jammu and Kashmir government approved Aadhaar-linked payment mode for disbursal of pension to beneficiaries under various central and state sponsored schemes in order to ensure transparency and avoid delays
- The decision was taken by the State Administrative Council (SAC) which met under the chairmanship of Governor Satya Pal Malik

Jharkhand

Capital –Ranchi; CM - Raghubar Das; Governor –Draupadi Murmu

June

Jharkhand CM inaugurates Haj House

- Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das inaugurated the Haj House on the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr.
- Inaugurating the Rs. 50 crore Haj House, which can accommodate about 1,000 people for offering Namaaz.

Main event of International Yoga Day celebrations to be held in Ranchi

- Main event of International Day of Yoga 2019 to be held in Jharkhand. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the main event of International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2019 celebrations to be held at Prabhat Tara, Ranchi, Jharkhand on June 21, 2019.
- Approximately 30,000 people are expected to participate in the main event.

Kerala

Capital – Thiruvananthapuram; CM – Pinarayi Vijayan; Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan

July

India's first elephant rehabilitation centre in the works at Kerala's Kottoor

- The Kerala government is working to set up the country's first elephant rehabilitation centre in Kottoor, an ecotourism village near the state capital Thiruvananthapuram. The first phase of the Rs 105 crore-project was launched last month by chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- The centre, expected to have an elephant museum, mahout training centre, super-specialty hospital, a retirement home and crematorium for the animals, will house orphaned, injured and older elephants. It is being planned on the lines of the Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage in Sri Lanka.
- While the centre has only 15 elephants so far, officials expect the numbers will go up once work on the infrastructure is complete.

- The centre has set up with 65 hectares of natural forests area will have elephant safari and other activities to attract tourists.

Kerala to set up India's first space tech park in Thiruvananthapuram

- The Kerala government will set up the country's first space tech park at Thiruvananthapuram's Knowledge City. The move is aimed at making the city a manufacturing hub for space-related technology.
- A space museum named after former President of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam will also be a part of the infrastructure. The state government has issued orders to allot the land required for the facility.
- The entire investment will be made by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), a major space research centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- Santhosh Kurup, has been appointed as the special officer of the space park project.

Karnataka

Capital – Bengaluru; CM – BS Yeddyurappa; Governor - Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala

May

Mangaluru City Police launches all-women police patrol unit

- Mangaluru City Police has launched an all-women police patrol unit in the city.
- Flagging off the 'Rani Abbakka Force' in Mangaluru
- Karnataka police is giving utmost importance to the protection of women and children.

Brahmakalashothsava Festival 2019 started in Karnataka

- The 6-day Brahmakalashothsava festival is celebrated in the ancient Chandkuru Sri DurgaParameshwari Temple annually in Polali, Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka.
- The presiding deity of the temple, which has a history of nearly 1,700 years, is ShriRajarajeshwari. The highlight of this temple is its mud idols and this is probably the only idol of this size (about 9ft height) in Karnataka. Other than the presiding deity Rajarajeshwari - two other idols Bhadrakali on the left (may be bigger than the presiding deity in height) and Lord Subrahmanya and Ganesha are on the right hand side.
- It is in news recently because several Dalits and OBCs from Chandkuru and surrounding villages in Belthangadytaluk boycotted festival in a centuries-old temple due to separate seating arrangement had been made for people of the upper caste.

June

B'gluru CM Kumaraswamy launches 'Pink Sarathi' vehicles

- Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy flagged off the 'Pink Sarathi' vehicles procured by the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) under the 'Nirbhaya' scheme.
- The corporation had received □56.07 crore from the Union government under the scheme and had taken up various measures for the safety of women passengers, including the launch of Pink Sarathi vehicles.
- The Chief Minister also launched the student bus pass scheme for the current academic year by unveiling smart cards. In the previous academic year, the corporation had issued 3.5 lakh student passes

Madhya Pradesh

Capital – Bhopal; CM – Kamal Nath; Governor –Lal Ji Tandon

May

Orchha town in Madhya Pradesh makes it to tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- The architectural heritage of Orchha town in Madhya Pradesh which depict peculiar style of the Bundela dynasty have been included in the tentative list of the UNESCO's world heritage sites following a proposal sent by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to the United Nations (UN) body.
- Orchha is situated on the banks of the Betwa river. It is located around 80 km away from Tikamgarh district in Madhya Pradesh and 15 km from Jhansi of Uttar Pradesh. Orchha was built by king Rudra Pratap Singh of Bundela dynasty in the 16th century. The ancient town is famous for its Chaturbhuj Temple, Orchha fort complex, Raja Mahal among others.

June

MP Cabinet passes resolution to increase reservation for OBCs to 27 %

- Madhya Pradesh Cabinet has passed a resolution to increase reservation quota for Other Backward Classes (OBC) from existing 14 per cent to 27 per cent. Madhya Pradesh will become the only state in the country to have a 27 per cent quota for OBCs.
- The move will lead to reservation in the state breaching the Supreme Court-mandated 50 per cent cap to reach 63 per cent

July

India's first cow sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh to be privatised

- India's first cow sanctuary, set up by the previous BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government in September 2017, will be privatised by the Congress-led government.
- Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya in Agar Malwa, 190 km north west of Bhopal, was developed by the MP Gau Samvardhan Board by spending about Rs 32 crore.
- Around 4,000 cows are living in the sanctuary which is spread across 472 hectares.

1st international flight from Indore leaves for Dubai

- The first international flight from Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar International Airport of Indore in Madhya Pradesh left for Dubai
- Air India is operating 162-seater A-320 Neo aircraft on this route, which will fly directly to Dubai on every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday while the return flight from Dubai will be on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday.

Maharashtra

Capital – Mumbai; CM – President Rule; Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari

May

Mumbai most vulnerable to cyberattacks, Delhi, B'luru next

- Mumbai topped the 15-city list of the most vulnerable cities to cyberattacks in 2019, followed by Delhi, Bengaluru and Kolkata, Quick Heal Security Labs revealed. The 'Annual Threat Report 2019' put Maharashtra, Delhi and West Bengal as the top three states at most risk. The report compiled data from several cyberattacks that took place in 2018 on Windows and Android.

June

Police station in Satara tops SMART survey

- Rahimatpur police station in Satara district in western Maharashtra has emerged as the State topper in a survey based on the 'SMART' policing concept
- 'SMART' — strict and sensitive, modern and mobile, alert and accountable, reliable and responsive, techno-savvy and trained
- The Quality Council of India (QCI), which executed the survey, assessed 87 shortlisted police stations across the country on a number of parameters like performance in controlling crime, infrastructure of the police building, mess and optimal use of technology, and citizen feedback.

July

Maharashtra ranks first in NITI Aayog's ease of doing farm business

- Maharashtra achieved first rank in NITI Aayog launched "Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index (AMFFRI), which ranks states based on the degree of reforms they have undertaken in agricultural marketing.
- Gujarat ranks second with a score of 71.5 out of 100, closely followed by Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- NITI Aayog launched in 2016 an index to rank States and UTs based on implementation of seven provisions proposed under model APMC Act like joining e-NAM initiative, special treatment to fruits and vegetables for marketing and level of taxes in mandis.

Maharashtra raises aid for martyrs' kin to ₹1 crore from ₹25 lakh

- The Maharashtra Cabinet approved a four-fold increase in the financial assistance given to families of martyred and disabled soldiers hailing from the state.
- Kin of martyred soldiers will now get ₹1 crore as opposed to the current ₹25 lakh. The government will provide ₹60 lakh to soldiers left 51-100% disabled, instead of the current ₹15 lakh.

Maharashtra police to launch high-tech biometric scanning system

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has launched the Automated Multi-modal Biometric Identification System (AMBIS) which is a special digitized policing system to identify and track down criminals.
- Under AMBIS, a digital database of criminals consisting of their fingerprints, irises, palms and facial features will be prepared, which will help to track a criminal having a single criminal record.
- The system is said to be first-of-its-kind in the country and Maharashtra.

Manipur

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

June

Japan Gifts Museum of Peace to Manipur in Memory of Second World War

- Former adversaries Britain and Japan came together at the inauguration of the Imphal Peace Museum to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Imphal that saw some of the fiercest fighting of World War II at Maibam Lokpa Ching popularly known as Red Hill.
- The Battle of Imphal is regarded as one of the fiercest battles of World War II in which about 70,000 Japanese soldiers along with the Indian National Army, died in battles with the British-led Allied forces in areas around Imphal and Kohima from March to June 1944

Meghalaya

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

May

Meghalaya Cabinet approves creation of Directorate of Dairy Development

- The Meghalaya Cabinet approved the proposal for creation of a new Directorate of Dairy Development in the state to increase milk production. Home Minister James K Sangma had launched the Meghalaya Milk Mission and Rs 215 crore has been sanctioned.
- The state Cabinet has also approved a proposal for enhancing the grant-in-aid to night and morning ad-hoc secondary schools in the state.

Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma Launches 'Aroma Mission'

- The Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangmahave made yet another effort to strengthen the economy of the hill state by ushering in employment opportunities for the people by launching the 'Meghalaya Aroma Mission 2019'.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants-CIMAP and the MBDA (Meghalaya Basin Development Authority) for collaborative work on medicinal and aromatic plants. This partnership is expected to strengthen the livelihood condition of farmers and create employment opportunities in the State.

July

Meghalaya becomes first state to have water policy

- The Meghalaya cabinet became the first state to approve a draft water policy to address water issues, conservation, and protection of water sources in the state.
- The policy intends to achieve sustainable development, management and use of water resources with community participation.
- This will improve health and livelihood and reduce vulnerability among the people.

- This will also assure of good governance for present and future generations through integrated water resources management and environmental sustainability

New Delhi

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

June

Delhi Metro becomes India's first project to receive power from waste-to-energy

- To establish an environment-friendly network, the Delhi Metro has become the first ever project in the country to receive power generated from a waste-to-energy plant.
- The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has started receiving 2 MW power from a 12 MW capacity waste-to-energy plant set up in Ghazipur.
- DMRC will take approximately 17.5 million units per annum from this plant. However, the energy offtake will depend upon the actual generation of the plant.
- The waste-to-energy plant set up by East Delhi Waste Processing Company Limited (EDWPCL) is based on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) involving the Delhi government and East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC), besides the EDWPCL.

Odisha

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

July

Puri Jagannath Rath Yatra begins

- Puri Jagannath Rath Yatra dedicated to Lord Jagannath, brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra begins. Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra started with early rituals in the morning.
- The Rath Yatra marks the journey of Lord Jagannath along with his siblings Lord Balabhadra and DeviSubhadra from Jagannath temple to Gundicha temple. This journey covers a distance of around 17kminPuri.

Odisha rasagola gets Geographical Indication tag

- The rasagola, a popular dessert of Odisha, has received the geographical indication tag from the Registrar of Geographical Indication
- The GI number 612 has been registered in favour of the Odisha Small Industries Corporation Limited (OSIC Limited), a government of Odisha undertaking and Utkal Mistanna Byabasayee Samiti, a traders' organisation, in the foodstuff category

Rajasthan

Capital – Jaipur; CM – Ashok Gehlot; Governor - Kalraj Mishra

May

Rajasthan government gives funds to over 30 startups under iStart

- Rajasthan government has given out funds ranging from Rs. 1.2 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh to over 30 startups as part of its program iStart Rajasthan. The funds were disbursed under the program's financial incentives like sustenance allowance, seed funding, marketing assistance and Techno Fund.
- The startups that received funding reportedly included Hippo Cabs, mPass and others.

Rajasthan set to revamp 'Ujala Clinics' for adolescents

- Rajasthan Government is set to revamp 'Ujala Clinics' for adolescents. It will appoint peer educators and shadow educators for counseling the youngsters in order to ensure coordination with other medical and health schemes.
- Ujjala Clinics function under Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram(RKSK) in 10 districts of the state. They are established at district hospitals, community health centers and selected primary health centers in Udaipur, Rajsamand, Banswara, Dungarpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Jalore, Bundi, Karauli and Dholpur districts.

- The adolescent health strategy is aimed at reducing malnutrition and anaemia. It will improve the knowledge and behaviour of the adolescents with regards to sexual and reproductive health. Ujala Clinic is the new name of Adolescent Friendly Health Clinic(AFHC).

June

Rajasthan govt increases financial aid given to girls under 'Aapki Beti' scheme

- The Rajasthan government increased the financial assistance given to school girls under the 'Aapki Beti' scheme and ex-gratia payment to the families of polling personnel who die during election duty.
- Under the Aapki Beti scheme, girls living under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) and whose mother or father or both have died get annual financial assistance in the state.
- The amount has been increased to 2,100 from Rs. 1,100 for the girls studying in class 1 to 8 and for the girls in class 9 to 12, the financial aid has been increased to Rs. 2,500 from Rs. 1,500.
- Similarly, the government has also increased ex-gratia payment to the next of kin of an official killed on election duty to Rs. 20 lakh from Rs. 15 lakh.

Unemployed graduates to get up to Rs 3,500 in Rajasthan

- Unemployed youth having graduation or equivalent degree will be given unemployment allowance up to Rs 3,500 by the Rajasthan government.
- They will get the benefit of the Chief Minister Yuva Sambal Yojana from February this year.
- Under the scheme, male applicants will get Rs 3,000 per month whereas women and differently-abled will get Rs 3,500 per month. The amount will be given for two years or until they get employed.

July

Walled City of Jaipur makes it to the UNESCO World Heritage list

- The walled city of Jaipur, known for its iconic architectural legacy and vibrant culture, made its entry into the UNESCO World Heritage Site list, becoming the second city of the country after Ahmedabad to get the recognition.
- The decision was taken at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC) in the historic city of Baku, Azerbaijan.
- Some other places included in the list are: Dilmun Burial Mounds (Bahrain), Budj Bim Cultural Landscape (Australia), Archaeological Ruins of Liangzhu City (China), Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto, (Indonesia), Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan (Japan), Megalithic Jar Sites in Xiengkhouang — Plain of Jars (Lao People's Democratic Republic), French Austral Lands and Seas (France), Vatnajökull National Park – dynamic nature of fire and ice (Iceland), Paratyand Ilha Grande – Culture and Biodiversity (Brazil), Ancient Ferrous Metallurgy Sites of Burkina Faso (Burkina Faso), Babylon (Iraq), Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region (Albania), Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China (Phase I) (China) and Hyrcanian Forests (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Tamil Nadu

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

May

Chennai to get its first unmanned substation

- The Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco) has identified a substation to be upgraded into an unmanned substation — the first of its kind in the city.
- The 33 kilo volt (KV)/11 KV substation, located right at the heart of the central business district of Anna Salai, near the Express Mall on Woods Road, has been chosen for the upgrade. It was constructed only a year ago.
- Once the substation becomes unmanned, there will not be any need for posting maintenance staff and it can be operated remotely.

Tree Ambulance launched in Chennai

- A unique 'Tree Ambulance' service - an initiative to provide care to trees besides spread green cover, was launched by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu. The service launched for the first time in the state, aims at providing first aid treatment to trees, uprooted tree planting, seed bank, seed ball distribution, plant distribution, aiding tree plantation, shifting trees, survey of trees and removal of dead trees.
- The ambulance can be availed through the helpline number - 9941006786. People can register themselves as volunteers in their website- www.treeambulance.org. Expressing delight over flagging off the 'Tree Ambulance' on the occasion of International Day for Biological Diversity 2019.

July

Tamil Nadu will become first state to manufacture electric cars

- Korean automobile giant Hyundai's plans for its Chennai facility will help make Tamil Nadu the first state in India to manufacture electric cars.
- The Tamil Nadu Industries Development Corporation (TIDCO), a government agency, is selecting a consultant for preparing a report on developing a greenfield airport near Chennai--the second airport in the city.
- Tamil Nadu ranks third in the amount of invested capital in the industrial sector, at Rs 4.02 lakh crore, after Gujarat (Rs 8.14 lakh crore) and Maharashtra (Rs 5.02 lakh crore). The State ranks third in terms of total industrial output, with Rs 7.66 lakh crore, after Gujarat (Rs 12.22 lakh crore) and Maharashtra (Rs 10.74 lakh crore).

Tamil Nadu Now Has 35 Districts as CM Palaniswami Announces Two New Districts

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami announced that Tenkasi and Chengelpet districts would be carved out of Tirunelveli and Kanchipuram respectively, taking the total number of districts in the state to 35.
- In January, the government had announced Kallakurichi district, the 33rd in the state, by bifurcating regions from Villupuram district.

Telangana

Capital – Hyderabad; CM – Chandrasekhar Rao; Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan.

May

Telangana to have India's first blockchain district

- With Blockchain estimated to generate $3 trillion a year in business value by 2030, the government of Telangana is gearing up to leverage this opportunity by developing a conducive ecosystem for Blockchain in the state.
- Hyderabad, the capital city of Telangana is uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in the development of blockchain technology due to the critical mass of industries leveraging blockchain technology located in Hyderabad (financial services, insurance, pharmaceuticals and life sciences, supply chain and logistics etc.), access to talent, support of entrepreneurship, and collaboration with enterprises.
- The state wants to make Hyderabad one of the top 10 Blockchain cities of the world and has decided to create India's first 'Blockchain District', which will be a physical area within Hyderabad and with the aim to create the world's best blockchain technology ecosystem.
- The Blockchain District will house all major blockchain technology companies, will have a huge incubator and a world-class facility for promoting research, innovation and industry collaboration. This one of its kind initiatives will aim to put all blockchain companies based out of Hyderabad at a strategically advantageous position globally

June

Telangana celebrates State formation day

- In Telangana, people celebrated the fifth anniversary of its Formation Day on June 2nd with enthusiasm and fervour. Telangana state as the youngest state in the country has completed five years of its existence.

- The state had overcome the electricity crisis and on its way to overcome the crisis for drinking water as the mission Bhagiratha programme is on the verge of its completion.

Telangana Government issues guidelines to enhance 'Rythu Bandhu' amount

- Telangana Government issued guidelines to enhance Agriculture Investment Support Scheme - Rythu Bandhu from Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 5,000 per acre per season. The Scheme was implemented in the year 2018-19 with the objective of relieving the farmers from debt burden and not allowing them to fall in the debt trap.
- This scheme was proposed for providing Initial investment support to Agriculture and Horticulture crops by way of a grant @ Rs. 4000/- per acre per farmer each season towards purchase of inputs like Seeds, Fertilizers, Pesticides, towards Labor and other investments in the field operations of farmers' choice for the crop season.

Hyderabad to Host International Quran Exhibition

- The cultural capital of South India, Hyderabad city is hosting an International Quran Exhibition from June 22 to 24, 2019. The exhibition will be open daily from 10 AM till 5 PM at Salar Jung Museum.
- In this 'International The Quran Exhibition' famous and leading museums, institutions and centers in Iran and India will be displaying the facsimile copies of the rare and illuminated copies of the holy Quran, the books published in Iran and India related to all the Quranic Sciences in particular the Tafsir (exegesis) and the software products related to the Hifz (memorization), Qiraat (recitation) and the terminology of the Quranic terms.
- Those participaning in the exhibition include, Quran and Etrat Division, Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Republic of Iran, Tehran; Jamia Nizamia, Hyderabad, India

Telangana CM dedicates Kaleshwaram irrigation project to nation

- Telangana Chief Miniser K Chadrasekhar Rao has dedicated to the nation the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project.
- The □ 80,500 crore multi-purpose project is designed to provide water to 45 lakh acres agriculture land, covering a stretch of bout 1,832 km apart from meeting drinking water requirements, including for Hyderabad and Secunderabad and various industries in the state.

32nd ISTA Congress begins in Hyderabad

- International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) set to hold its 32nd Congress in Hyderabad beginning June 26
- Telangana State enjoys 60 per cent share in seed supply market in the country and has been exploring ways to expand its presence in India as well as export seeds to other nations.
- The 32nd ISTA Congress to be held from June 26 to July 3, is expected to help the State to implement its plans into actions.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and the Telangana government are jointly hosting the eight-day conference

July

Bonalu festival kicks off at Golconda Fort

- The annual Bonalu festival kicked off in the city at the historic Golconda Fort, Telangana.
- Bonalu is celebrated every year in a grand manner in the state during the first month of the monsoon season.
- Bonam means Meal in Telugu, and denotes offering to the Mother Goddess as a form of thanksgiving after the fulfillment of vows.

Tripura

Capital – Agartala; CM – Biplab Kumar Deb; Governor – Ramesh Bais

June

Tripura to host 10th National Science Film Festival of India in 2020

- In an effort to raise awareness about science and environment through films, the 10th National Science Film Festival of India (NSFFI) will be organised in Tripura on January and February 2020.
- The film festival is being held with the objective of highlighting science, technology, innovation, energy, environment, agriculture and traditional knowledge in a simple way that would bring science closer to common people through simple ways of explanation.
- The film festival would include films produced by UNICEF, UNESCO and filmmakers from different countries. It will also include entries from Tripura and other states.
- Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb will make an appeal to filmmakers and producers to participate in this film-making initiative in July this year.

Uttarakhand

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

May

Chardham Yatra begins in Uttarakhand

- The annual Char Dham Yatra began with the opening of the portals of Gangotri and Yamunotri shrines in Uttarkashi district on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. The shrines were closed during winter for nearly six months. Kedarnath and Badrinath shrines will open on May 9 and 10 respectively. The Chardham pilgrimage is one of the biggest Yatra circuits in the world.

NMCG, HCL Foundation and INTACH inked MoU for Rudraksh Plantation in Uttarakhand

- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between National Mission for Clean Ganga, HCL Foundation and INTACH for taking up a project of Plantation of Rudraksh Trees in Uttarakhand as a part of CSR initiative under the NamamiGange Programme.
- The project aims at planting 10 thousand Rudraksh trees in the catchment area of river Ganga in Uttarakhand.

July

U'khand CM accepts proposal to establish Six Sigma Institute of Mountain Medicines & High Altitude Rescue

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat agreed to a proposal to establish Asia's first Six Sigma Institute of Mountain Medicines and High Altitude Rescue at Rudraprayag.
- This mountain institute will create 1,200 employment, Specialised healthcare, advance education and Rescue Training in the Uttarakhand.
- Medical screening of Yatris and Empanelment of the Hospitals across the country for medical checks. Establishment of Bhandara for better food services in the Kedarnath Yatra. Provision of Air Ambulances for Emergencies. Increase of the Hospital bed strength at Kedarnath and Permanent Medical Post at Tungnath and Madhymaheshwar.

Uttar Pradesh

Capital – Lucknow; CM – Yogi Adityanath; Governor – Anandiben Patel

June

Uttar Pradesh cabinet gives nod to 6 proposals

- The cabinet has also gave its assent to a proposal regarding the formation of Gorakhpur Zoological Park with the cost of Rs 181.82 crore. The Umbrella Act has also been approved through which 27 universities across the state will come under one Act.
- The state cabinet approved the formation of education tribunal. A total of Rs 6.15 crores will be spent on this and it will help in resolving disputes in the education sector.
- The Cabinet has sanctioned Rs 30.34 crore for building a college named after Mahant Avaidyanath in Gorakpur.
  The Government has also set a target to plant 22 crore saplings by August 15,2019, for which saplings will be provided across the state free of cost.

West Bengal

Capital – Kolkata; CM – Mamta Benerjee; Governor - Jagdeep Dhankhar

May

Navy Service Selection Board inaugurated in Kolkata

- Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba Tuesday inaugurated the Navy's first full-fledged Service Selection Board (SSB) at the Diamond Harbour near Kolkata. Vice Admiral Karambir Singh, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, has attended the inauguration.
- This is the fifth SSB of the Indian Navy and caters for selection of both permanent and short service commission officers. The other boards are located in Bhopal, Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam and Coimbatore.

July

WB government observes Save Water Day on July 12th

- 'Save Water Day' was observed by the West Bengal government and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee participated in a march in the city to raise awareness on conservation.

To raise awareness on rain water government would observe July 12 as Save water day

Other National News

May

India removed from US currency monitoring list, China stays

- The US Treasury Department has removed India from its currency monitoring list of major trading partners.
- US Congress on International Economic and Exchange Rate Policies, the department removed India and Switzerland from the previous currency watch list of countries with potentially questionable foreign exchange policies.
- India, along with China, Japan, Germany, Switzerland and South Korea, was placed in the bi-annual currency watch list in October last year.Now nine major trading partners continue to be placed on Treasury's 'Monitoring List' of major trading partners that merit close attention to their currency practices.

Song 'Hawa Aane De' launched to spread awareness about Air pollution

- Union Environment Ministry today launched the song 'Hawa Aane De' to spread awareness about Air pollution. The song was launched by Secretary, Ministry of Environment C K Mishra ahead of the World Environment Day on 5th of June.
- This year the theme of Environment Day is Air Pollution. The centre has launched the National Clean Air Programme to control and reduce air pollution across the country.

India elected to Executive Board of first UN-Habitat Assembly

- India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly. India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly at the Plenary Session of the Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The special theme for the UN-Habitat Assembly is "Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities".

Four judges elevated to Supreme Court of India

- The Centre has cleared four names recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium for elevation as judges of the apex court. Justices Aniruddha Bose (Chief Justices of the Jharkhand High Court), AS Bopanna (Chief Justices of Gauhati High Court), Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai (a judge of the Bombay High Court) and Surya Kant (Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court) have been elevated to the top court. With their appointment, the Supreme Court will reach its full sanctioned judicial strength of 31 judges.

Campaign launched to raise awareness on illegal wildlife trade

- UN Environment India and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau of India launched an awareness campaign 'Not all animals migrate by choice' to be displayed at major airports across the country ahead of the International Day of Biological Diversity celebrated on 22nd of May.
- The campaign will be displayed at major airports across the country in collaboration with Airports Authority of India and GMR Group. The event was inaugurated by actor, producer, UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador and recently appointed Secretary-General's SDG Advocate, Dia Mirza.
- In the first phase of the campaign, Tiger, Pangolin, Star Tortoise and Tokay Gecko will be displayed as they are highly endangered due to illegal trading in International markets.

Sushma Swaraj to attend SCO Foreign Ministers meet in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will attend the meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- She had a productive discussion with Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Aidarbekov on all aspects of bilateral relations, including in political and defence, trade and investment, health, capacity building and people-to-people ties. The participating Foreign Ministers will call on Kyrgyz President Sooranbay Jeenbekov.
- This is the second Council of Foreign Ministers meeting that India is attending as a full member of SCO.

India to co-chair Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)

- India has been unanimously chosen as co-chair of the Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for the fiscal year 2020.
- The decision was taken during the meeting of GFDRR held in Geneva, Switzerland
- GFDRR is a global partnership that helps developing countries better understand and reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change. It is is a grant-funding mechanism, managed by the World Bank, that supports disaster risk management projects worldwide.

IGNOU to launch awareness programme on GST

- The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) will launch an awareness programme on Goods and Services Tax (GST) in collaboration with Bombay Stock Exchange Institute Limited from its July 2019.
- The programme, which will be launched by IGNOU's School of Management Studies aims to impart basic knowledge and skills required to fulfil various requirements under the GST Act.
- This programme would be beneficial to people who are engaged in maintaining accounts and filing of various indirect tax returns.

Electric vehicles to get green number plates

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has announced a green registration mark for all battery-operated vehicles, where private vehicles will bear white fonts on a green background on the number plate and commercial vehicles will have a yellow font on a green background.
- The new mandate is supposed to help provide a preferential treatment to the vehicles with no carbon emissions, like parking, free entry in congested areas as well as a concessional toll on highways.

VP Venkaiah Naidu releases postage stamp to commemorate 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu released a postage stamp to commemorate the 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan in New Delhi.
- Sri Vedanta Desikan called for world peace and said that peace and humanity formed the basis of the spiritual teachings of great saints.

India to attend G-7 meet in France

- India will be attending the Group of 7 industrialised nations meet organised by France in Biarritz in August along with Australia, Chile and South Africa, in a sign of the recognition of India's growing economic heft

in the international arena. The invitation to Australia, France and Chile besides India reflects the French emphasis on the Indian Ocean and the Pacific region.

- The G-7 groups together the US, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Japan and Germany.

Anti-dumping duty imposed on saccharin imports from Indonesia

- The Finance Ministry has, on the recommendations of the Commerce Ministry, imposed an anti-dumping duty of $1,633.17 per tonne on the import of saccharine from Indonesia. Saccharine is a compound most commonly used in sugar-substitute sweeteners.
- Indonesia, until recently, accounted for a large chunk of India's saccharine imports. In 2017-18, India imported $4.36 million worth of saccharine from Indonesia, which is 43% of the total imports of the sugar-substitute compound.
- However, imports from Indonesia have declined since then. In the April 2018 to February 2019 period, India imported only $1.48 million worth of saccharine from Indonesia, about 20% of its total imports from around the world.

India re-elected as observer to inter-governmental forum Arctic Council

- India re-elected as Observer of the Arctic Council at the 11th Arctic Council ministerial meeting at Rovaniemi, Finland
- Arctic Council a high level intergovernmental organisation set up in 1996 to promotes cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic states on common issues, particularly on sustainable development and environmental protection. Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States are members of the Arctic Council.
- Besides India, 12 other nations including China, France, Germany, Japan, UK, Switzerland and Netherlands have observer status.

Government Organises 'Chintan Baithak' with RE Industry Stakeholders

- To provide a further boost to the renewable energy sector in the country, the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) held a meeting, termed as 'Chintan Baithak', with the industry stakeholders.
- The government's motive behind organizing this meet, which was chaired by the MNRE Secretary Anand Kumar, was to address various issues with respect to the renewable energy sector in the country.
- This meeting was attended by a number of industry stakeholders including renewable energy developers, regulators, think-tanks, equipment manufacturers, financers, industry bodies and skill developers.

WHO reportsRoad accidents still cause most deaths

- Road accidents are the leading cause of death among people in the 5-29 age-group worldwide with more than 1.35 million lives lost each year and 50 million sustaining injuries, according to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report released during the on-going global road safety week.
- As per the data released by the Indian government, road crashes kill close to 1,50,000 people each year. However, the WHO global status report on road safety had challenged the numbers and stated that India might be losing over 2,99,000 people each year.

Government to set up panel under DGFT to look at steel availability for engineering exporters

- The government has decided to set up a committee under the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to look into availability of steel at competitive prices for engineering goods exporters.
- The committee will submit its report to steel and commerce ministries within two months. It will suggest measures which will be a win-win situation for both steel producers and engineering exporters. The country's engineering exports rose by 6.36 per cent to USD 83.7 billion in 2018-19 from USD 78.7 billion in 2017-18.

Government plans compulsory QR code payment option at all shops: Report

- Government is looking to make QR code payments option via UPI compulsory at all shops and the GST Council has already given the proposal a go-ahead, as per a report.
- The move will provide GST benefit to both shopkeepers and consumers. The government is stated to have roped in NPCI for a nationwide rollout of the plan.

India hosted a 2-day ministerial meeting of WTO in New Delhi

- A WTO Ministerial meeting of developing countries is being hosted by India in New Delhi.
- Sixteen developing countries, Six Least Developed Countries (LDC)(Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Brazil, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, China, Egypt, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Nigeria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda)and DG, WTO are participating in the meeting.
- Issues such as impasse on the appointment of WTO's appellate body members and way forward on reforms at the global trade body would be discussed in the meeting of developing countries in New Delhi.
- The meeting is being held at a time when the multilateral rule-based trading system is facing serious and grave challenges.
- The Ministerial Meeting had hosted by the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, in which Roberto Azevedo, the Director General of WTO, were also present.

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Kerala CM rings opening bell at London Stock Exchange as KIIFB lists masala bonds

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan rang the opening bell at the London Stock Exchange (LSE) to mark the listing of masala bonds sold by Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB).
- KIIFB, a state government agency, had raised Rs 2,150 crore through its debut masala bond issue at a fixed interest rate of 9.723% per annum. KIIFB plans to raise Rs. 5,000 crore through masala bonds to fund large and critical infrastructure projects in Kerala. Indian Rupee denominated overseas bonds are popularly known as masala bonds.

June

Power Min forms dispute resolution committee for clean energy projects

- Union Power Minister R K Singh approved setting up a three-member resolution committee to resolve unforeseen disputes in clean energy projects.
- The three members are M F Farooqui (former DoT secretary/heavy industry secretary), Anil Swarup (former coal secretary/school education secretary) and A K Dubey (former sports secretary).
- The committee will address disputes between the solar/wind power developers and the Solar Energy Corporation of India/NTPC.

Vaishno Devi shrine to have own disaster response force by Sept 2020

- The Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, a religious pilgrimage atop a hilltop that attracts lakhs of devotees from across the world every year, will get a dedicated in-house disaster response force by September next year.
- They are planning to train 180 employees by September next year to prepare a dedicated disaster response force for the shrine.
- The shrine board and the NDRF signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) early this year keeping in mind the hilly terrain and need to impart advanced disaster management training to the shrine board staff in batches to keep them in a state of readiness for effectively and promptly responding to any disaster situation.

Self Defence Training for Girls in Schools under Samagra Shiksha

- Ministry of Human Resource Development launched Samagra Shiksha initiative in 2018-19. As part of this integrated scheme of school education, self-defence training is imparted to girls from class VI to XII.
- The ministry provides Rs. 3,000 per month for a period of three months per government-run school for the self-defence training and inculcating life skills among girls

Hardeep Singh Puri inaugurates central command centre for air traffic flow management

- Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri inaugurated the Central Command Centre for Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM).
- As major airports are facing capacity constraints, the central ATFM system is primarily meant to balance the "capacity against the demand to achieve optimum utilization" of "airport, airspace and aircraft".
- This is a world class system where on one large screen you can see all the civil aviation infrastructure in the country. The planes on the ground, the planes which are in the air, those planes you are in touch with - all of it is integrated with the ATC (air traffic control).

India's first specialised hospital for elephants opens in Mathura

- India's first specialised hydrotherapy treatment centre for elephants has been established on the banks of the Yamuna in Mathura, near the Wildlife SOS' Elephant Conservation and Care Centre (ECCC).
- The new 11-foot-deep hydrotherapy jumbo pool will provide treatment to elephants suffering from arthritis, joint pain and foot ailments using 21 high pressure jet sprays to create water pressure that massage the elephants' feet and body and help in increasing blood circulation.
- ECCC currently houses 20 rescued elephants and is run in collaboration with the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department and the NGO Wildlife SOS.

NITI Aayog Proposes To Convert Two-Wheelers Below 150 cc To Electric By 2025

- Government think tank Niti Aayog has asked conventional two- and three-wheeler makers to suggest within two weeks concrete steps towards transition to electric mobility keeping in mind 2025 deadline.
- Now, OEMs in India have been given a flat timeline of two weeks to come out with a roadmap to enable e-three-wheeler sales by 2023, e-two-wheeler sales by 2025, and e-four-wheeler sales by 2030 respectively.
- The conventional manufacturers such as Bajaj Auto, Hero MotoCorp, HMSI and TVS claimed that adoption of EVs by 2025 would be "unrealistic" and "ill-timed" and it would derail auto manufacturing in the country and start-ups like Revolt Intellicorp, Ather Energy, Kinetic Green Energy and Power Solutions and Tork Motors wanted the adoption of EVs to happen faster.

Group constituted for ensuring inter-ministerial coordination on resolving e-commerce issues

- A group has been constituted under the secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade for ensuring inter-ministerial coordination on resolving issues related to e-commerce.
- The group will look to ensure inter-ministerial/inter-departmental coordination on resolving issues, cutting across Ministries and Departments of Government of India, related to e-Commerce.

Popular ethnic footwear brand Kolhapuri chappal gets GI tag

- Maharashtra's extremely popular footwear brand Kolhapuri chappal has been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, which is likely to further boost its sale in other parts of the country and abroad.
- The GI tag for the popular footwear brand has been jointly granted to four districts of Karnataka and Maharashtra each for making these chappals.
- The GI tag approvals mean that the artisans producing Kolhapuris in Kolhapur, Solapur, Sangli and Satara districts of Maharashtra and Dharwad, Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur Bijapur districts of Karnataka will now be able to make and market their product in domestic and international markets.

India to host UN meet on land degradation in September

- India for the first time will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in September.
- It will see participation from at least 5,000 delegates from nearly 197 countries and will be held between September 2 and 14 in Delhi.

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- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was established in 1994. It is the only legally binding international agreement linking environment and development issues to the land agenda.

Engineers Use Plastic Waste to Build Durable Roads in Lucknow

- The Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) has begun construction of a road using plastic waste in the state capital city under a pilot project in a bid to be environmental-friendly.
- The road construction with plastic waste will be spread from Gomti Nagar Police Station area to Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Lucknow.

This is the first time Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) is constructing a road using plastic waste

I&B Ministry issues advisory to TV channels over portrayal of children in reality shows

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has issued an advisory to private satellite television channels, asking them to avoid indecent, suggestive and inappropriate representation of children in dance reality shows or other such programmes.
- According to the rules, no programme should be carried on TV which denigrates children, and programmes meant for children should not contain any bad language or explicit scenes of violence
- Private satellite TV channels are expected to abide by the provisions contained in the Programme & Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995

Rajnath forms committee to work on modalities of revising pension under OROP

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has constituted a committee to work out the modalities and methodology of the implementation of next revision of pension under One Rank One Pension (OROP).
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviewed the working of DESW including the welfare schemes being extended to the ex-servicemen, widows and dependents.
- The committee will be headed by Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) and will have representatives of all three armed forces.
- Equalisation of pensions means the pension of defence personnel who retire now will be passed to all the past pensioners of the same class (same rank with same length of service).

India to host Kimberley Process inter-sessional meeting

- India will be hosting Intersessional meeting of Kimberley Process (KP) from 17th to 21st June, 2019 in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Besides the meetings of different Working Groups and Committees of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), two special forums regarding Diamond Terminology and Artisanal Mining – Small Steps to Larger Outcomes will also held.
- India is the founding member of KPCS and is the chair of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for the year 2019 with the Russian Federation as Vice Chair.

NITI Aayog reconstituted List of members

- Prime Minister NarendraModi approved the reconstitution of government thinktank NITI Aayog.
- While Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar continues in his post along with members VK Saraswat, Ramesh Chand and VK Paul. The ex-officio members now include Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister NirmalaSitharaman and Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.
- However, the name of BibekDebroy, a former permanent member, is missing from the new list.
- Special invitees to NITI Aayog include Minister of Road, Transport and Highways NitinGadkari; Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Thawar Chand Gehlot; Minister of Railways PiyushGoyal; and Minister of Statistics (Independent) RaoInderjit Singh

Elephanta festival of art and culture begins in Mumbai

- The two-day Elephanta Festival organised by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) began with a concert by folk and classical singer Kailash Kher at the Gateway of India.
- The MTDC organises the festival every year to promote tourism and the culture of Mumbai. The festival is held on Gharapuri Island, which was christened Elephanta by the Portuguese after they found a statue of an elephant on the island.

Government extends Pradhan Mantri Kisan SammaanYojana to all farmers

- The Cabinet has approved extension of Prime Minister Kisan Sammaan yojana to all farmers. Earlier the benefit of this scheme was applicable to farmers having two hectacre land.
- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar stated thaty nearly 14 crore 50 lakh farmers will benefit from the scheme. Under the PM-Kisan scheme six thousand rupees per year is being given in three installments to the farmers.
- The beneficiaries should be in the age group of 18 to 40 years. Under this scheme, the farmers will get a minimum fixed pension of 3 thousand rupees on attaining the age of 60.
- All small shopkeepers, self-employed persons and retail traders with GST turnover of 1.5 crore rupees in the age group of 18 to 40 years will be eligible to enroll for the scheme through the designated centres across the country. Altogether 3 crore retail traders and shopkeepers will be benefited under this scheme.

Cabinet extends scholarship to wards of martyred state police officials

- PM Modi announced major changes to the Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme under the National Defence Fund.
- Major changes approved in PM's Scholarship Scheme under the National Defence Fund including enhanced scholarships for wards of police personnel martyred in terror or Maoist attacks.
- The government has also changed the in rates of scholarship. The rates are now Rs 2,500 per month for boys and Rs 3,000 for girls. It was Rs 2,000 for boys and Rs 2,250 for girls earlier.
- The Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme, which is under the NDF, is implemented to encourage technical and post-graduate education of widows and wards of armed forces personnel. Around 5,500 wards are awarded the PMSS every year.

India's unemployment rate stood at 6.1% in FY18

- India's unemployment rate stood at 6.1% in FY18, official data showed, highlighting the challenge that confronts the Narendra Modi-led government.They showed the unemployment rate was at a 45-year high.
- The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) showed the unemployment rate in the country in FY18 was at 5.3% in rural India and 7.8% in urban India, resulting in overall unemployment rate of 6.1%.

New Initiative to Control Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD), Brucellosis to Support Livestock Rearing Farmers

- During the Union Cabinet Meeting Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31st May 2019, the first since the outcome of the 2019 Lok Sabha election, a novel initiative was cleared that will benefit crores of farmers and improve the health of animals. This initiative pertains to controlling Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis to support the livestock rearing farmers.
- The decision indicates the spirit of compassion towards those animals who are a valued part of our planet but are not able to speak. It must be noted that these diseases are very common amongst the livestock like cow, bulls, buffaloes, sheep, goats, pigs etc. The Cabinet has cleared a total outlay of Rs. 13,343 crores to fully control these diseases amongst the livestock in the country in the next 5 years and subsequently eradicate these diseases.

Kasturirangan committee submits new draft education policy to HRD Ministry

- Former ISRO chief Dr. Kasturirangan led Committee submitted the draft National Educational Policy (NEP) to HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank in New Delhi.
- The policy draft recommends incorporation of Indian knowledge systems in the curriculum, constituting a National Education Commission and curbing arbitrary fees hikes by private schools. The existing NEP was framed in 1986 and revised in 1992.

PM Modi forms two Cabinet panels under his chairmanship to boost growth, jobs

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on constituted two new Cabinet committees under his chairmanship to spur economic growth and investment and employment.

- The five-member Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth includes Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Road Transport and Highways and of MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari and Railway Minister Piyush Goyal.
- Another 10-member Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development has been formed which includes Shah, Sitharaman, Goyal, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Narendra Singh Tomar, Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister Skill and Entrepreneurship Mahendra Nath Pandey and Ministers of State Santosh Kumar Gangwar (Labour) and Hardeep Singh Puri (Housing and Urban Affairs).

Tree bank inaugurated on World Environment Day

- A tree bank was inaugurated and around 3,000 saplings were planted at different locations of the Jamshedpur steel city on the occasion of the World Environment Day.
- Divisional Forest Officer (Dalbhum) Dr Abhisekh Kumar inaugurated the tree bank set up by the Jamshedpur Utility and Services Company (Jusco), a 100 per cent subsidiary of the Tata Steel. The tree bank will help to increase the green cover in and around the steel city.

Culture Minister to inaugurate exhibition-'Unknown masterpieces of Himachal Folk Art'

- Culture Minister Prahalad Singh Patel will inaugurate the exhibition titled Unknown Masterpieces of Himachal Folk Art at National Museum in New Delhi.
- The Exhibition is being jointly organised by the National Museum and Home of Folk Art, Gurugram in which more than 240 artefacts will be on display.
- The aim of the exhibition is to highlight the Folk art tradition of Himachal Pradesh. It will remain open for public till 31st of next month.

Hardeep S Puri launches Swachh Survekshan 2020 League

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched Swachh Survekshan 2020 League in New Delhi.
- The league will be a quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns in India and will be integrated with Swachh Survekshan 2020, the 5th edition of the annual cleanliness survey of urban India to be conducted between January - February 2020.
- The objective of the Swachh Survekshan survey, which is conducted by an independent third party, is to encourage large scale citizen participation, ensure sustainability of initiatives taken towards garbage free and open defecation free cities and create awareness amongst all sections of society about the importance of working together towards making towns and cities a better place to live in.

India's First Dinosaur Museum Park Inaugurated In Gujarat

- India's first Dinosaur Museum cum Park was inaugurated in Gujarat's Mahisagar district and is set to give visitors the true Jurassic Park feel. The museum, which was inaugurated by Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani at Raiyoli near Balasinor, will exhibit remains of various dinosaurs and fossil records.
- It has been claimed that it was the country's first such museum and the world's third park.
- Raiyoli is known to be the third largest dinosaur fossil site in the world, and also the second largest dinosaur hatchery in the world, where thousands of eggs had been found.
- This dinosaur museum was equipped with modern technology like 3D projection, virtual reality presentations, interactive kiosks and life-size dinosaur replicas.

Delhi Metro becomes India's first project to receive power from waste-to-energy

- Delhi Metro has become the first ever metro project in India to receive power generated from a waste-to-energy plant
- The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation has started receiving 2 megawatt (MW) power from a 12 MW capacity waste-to-energy plant set up in Ghazipur in East Delhi. DMRC will take approximately 17.5 million units per annum from this plant

- "The state-of-the-art facility is set up to process above 1,500 tonnes per day (TPD) of waste and generate 12 MW of green power. The plant is India's first Euro norms compliant waste-to-energy facility,"

All States can now constitute Foreigners Tribunals

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has laid out specific guidelines to detect, detain and deport foreign nationals staying illegally across the country.
- The MHA has amended the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964, and has empowered district magistrates in all States and Union Territories to set up tribunals to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not.
- Earlier, the powers to constitute tribunals were vested only with the Centre.

I&B Ministry Institutes Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS)

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has instituted the first edition of Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS), from 2019 to mark the contribution of media in spreading the message of Yoga.
- A total of 33 awards will be conferred grouped into 3 categories namely Newspaper (11), Television (11) and Radio (11). The duration for the coverage for AYDMS would be from 10 June to 25 June, 2019 and awards will be distributed in July 2019.

India to be guest country at Guadalajara International Book Fair in Mexico

- The National Book Trust announced that India has been designated as the Guest of Honour at the 33rd Feria Internacional del Libro de Guadalajara (Guadalajara International Book Fair), in Mexico.
- The book fair, to be organised from November 30 - December 8, will be the largest book fair in the Spanish speaking world.
- The dedicated India pavilion at the fair will showcase over 35 Indian authors and artists, along with 15 publishing houses.
- India's participation at the fair will also include a film festival showing movies like "Dangal", "Chennai Express" and "Omkara".

Government sets target of providing clean drinking water to all by 2024

- Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said the Central government has decided to increase coverage of piped water to households from current 18 per cent to 100 per cent by 2024.
- Sikkim had 99 per cent coverage of piped water to households, while some states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand had below five per cent.

Centre sets up committee headed by Kirit Parikh to review LPG marketing

- The Centre has set up a five-member committee headed by economist Kirit Parikh
- The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is now looking to review the existing structure of LPG marketing in India — a move seen as an effort to bring in more private players.
- The new committee, set up will look into issues related to definition or quality standards of LPG being marketed.

Japan to invest Rs. 13,000 crore in northeast in infrastructure projects

- The government of Japan has decided to invest an amount of 205.784 billion yen, equivalent to approximately Rs 13,000 crore, in several ongoing as well as new projects in different states of northeastern region
- Some of the important projects in which Japan will collaborate include the Guwahati water supply project, Guwahati sewage project, the northeast road network connectivity improvement project spread over Assam and Meghalaya and northeast network connectivity improvement project in Meghalaya.
- Other schemes include biodiversity conservation and forest management project in Sikkim, sustainable forest management project in Tripura, technical cooperation project for sustainable agriculture and irrigation in Mizoram and forest management project in Nagaland

Arjun Munda Launches 'E-Governance Initiatives for ST Welfare Schemes'

- Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda launched the "e-governance initiatives for ST Welfare schemes" at a function organized by Ministry of Tribal Affairs

- A power point presentation on these new e-governance initiatives was made on the occasion.
- Munda applauded the teamworkefforts of the Ministry of Tribal affairs for thesee-governance initiatives for Scheduled Tribes Welfare schemes and said that as per the "SabkaSaath, SabkaVikas and SabkaVishwas", these e-governance initiatives will serve their purpose of the betterment of tribal communities across the nation.
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs has developed online portals namely DBT Tribal (https://dbttribal.gov.in/) and NGO Grants Online Application & Tracking System (https://ngograntsmota.gov.in/) for bringing in greater e-Governance in implementation of welfare schemes for STs.

Banks asked to issue KCC to eligible farmers within 2 weeks of submitting application

- The Centre has directed the concerned banks to issue Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to eligible ones within two weeks of the submission of completed application.
- Currently, there are 6.95 crore active KCCs, under which crop loans are given at subsidised interest rate. KCC has been extended to farmers involved in animal husbandry and fishery activities as well
- Normally, farm loans attract an interest rate of 9 per cent. But the government is providing 2 per cent interest subsidy to ensure farmers get short-term farm loan of up to Rs. 3 lakh at an effective rate of 7 per cent per annum.
- An additional incentive of 3 per cent is being given to farmers for prompt repayment of loans within due date, making the effective interest rate 4 per cent.

Culture Minister, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, inaugurates the exhibition-'Astitva'

- Shri Prahalad Singh Patel, Minister of State (I/c) of Culture & Tourism, Government of India will inaugurate the exhibition titled "Astitva: The Essence of Prabhakar Barwe", at National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi,
- 'Astitva : The essence of Prabhakar Barwe', is the first of its kind to be held in New Delhi that will present his artistic oeuvre in four distinct phases.

India allows 1 lakh tonnes of corn imports at lower duty

- India has allowed two state-run trading companies, MMTC and NAFED, to import 1 lakh tonnes of corn for poultry farms in 2019-20 at a concessional 15% import tax.
- This comes after prices of the animal feed jumped in the country because of drought.
- The government otherwise imposes a 60% import tax on the grain.

PM Kisan Pension Scheme: Farmers' contribution to be Rs 100 per month

- Farmers will have to contribute 100 rupees per month under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Pension Yojana that seeks to provide a minimum fixed monthly pension of 3,000 rupees on the attainment of 60 years.
- The central government will also contribute an equal amount to the pension fund to be managed by the LIC, which will be responsible for the pension payout.
- The government in its first cabinet meeting had approved a separate pension scheme for farmers with an aim to cover 5 crore beneficiaries in the first three years.

DGT, Cisco and Accenture sign MoU to skill youth for digital economy through ITIs

- Directorate General of Training under the aegis of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Ministry has joined hands with Cisco and Accenture to skill the youth for the digital economy through its Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).
- Nearly 15 lakh students across all the ITIs in India can access the digital learning module via the Bharat Skills portal.
- This programme will equip students enrolled in ITIs across India with skills for the digital economy over the next two years.
- The programme includes tailor-made curriculum with modules for digital literacy, career readiness, employability skills and advanced technology skills such as data analytics and a blended learning model enabled by a combination of on-line self-learning via the Bharat Skills portal and in-classroom modules.

- The initial phase of the in-classroom training programme is being rolled out across 227 ITIs in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Bihar and Assam, targeting more than one lakh youth.

India accounts for 6.3% of global fish production: Fisheries dept

- India is the second largest fish producing country in the world as it accounts for 6.3 per cent of the global fish production, a release by the Fisheries Department. It also said the fisheries sector in the country is growing at the rate of 7 per cent, sustaining 14.5 million fishermen.
- Rajni Sekhri Sibal, Secretary, Department of Fisheries, as saying that there is a huge potential in harnessing tuna and tuna-like species in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- 30 per cent of the Indian EEZ is spread across the Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands, but only 1 per cent comprises production of tuna fish.

Around 2.22 crore villagers given Digital Education under PMGDISHA

- Electronics and Information Technology Minister Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad has said that around 2.22 crore villagers are given Digital Education under Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA).
- After the training, 1.34 crore have been duly certified by authorized 3rd party certifying agencies.

July

Indian Railways' NFR zone introduces new 'pink coaches' for women passengers

- Indian Railways' Northeast Frontier Railway zone has started a unique initiative to earmark a special portion of the SLR coach with pink colour. This is done to specially help the women passengers with better safety and security.
- This special colour will help the women passenger to easily identify the coach in the platform even during rush hours.
- Eight trains in Rangiya division of the Northeast Frontier Railway have begun operations with some pink coaches, exclusively for women.
- In some trains depending on the nature of the coach the same has been earmarked both for lady passengers as well as Divyangjan.

GST rate on EVs cut from 12% to 5%; reduced rate effective from August 1

- 36th Goods & Service Tax (GST) Council Meeting was held in New Delhi Via Video Conference under the chairmanship of Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman.
- The GST Council made the following changes in the GST rate on supply of goods and services which will be effective from August 1, 2019.
- The GST rate on all Electric Vehicles (EVs) was reduced from 12% to 5%.
- The GST rate on charger or charging stations for EVs was reduced from 18% to 5%.
- Hiring of electric buses (of carrying capacity of more than 12 passengers) by local authorities was exempted from GST.
- The last date for filing of intimation in FORM GST CMP-02, for availing the option of payment of tax under notification No. 2/2019-Central Tax (Rate) dated 07.03.2019 (by exclusive supplier of services) was extended from July 31, 2019 to September 30, 2019.
- The last date for furnishing statement containing the details of the self-assessed tax in FORM GST CMP-08 for the quarter April, 2019 to June, 2019 (by taxpayers under composition scheme) was extended from July 31, 2019 to August 31, 2019.

Railway's first printing press heritage gallery opened

- Western Railway has opened the first of its kind printing press heritage gallery at Mahalaxmi in Mumbai. This unique heritage gallery was inaugurated by V P Pathak, member (Materials Management) of the Railway Board during his recent visit to Mumbai.
- Western Railway Mahalaxmi General Stores Depot (GSD) has become the first in Indian Railways to portray a heritage gallery of the printing and allied machines used in the Western Railway Printing Press.

Govt sets target for installation of solar projects of 40,000 MW by 2022

- The government has set a target for the installation of Rooftop Solar projects of forty thousand MegaWatt by 2022 in the country.
- The projects include installation of solar panels on the rooftop of houses.
- An average it is estimated that 1.5 million units per MegaWatt per year are generated from solar rooftop plants.

Punjab, Haryana High Court bans live shows of songs promoting liquor, violence

- Punjab and Haryana High Court has ordered a ban on celebratory firing and live shows of songs glorifying liquor, drugs and violence in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh.
- It also banned the use of loudspeakers or public address systems in private or public places without written permission

Amit Shah to head panel on sexual harassment at workplace

- Home Minister Amit Shah will chair a panel of four cabinet ministers to examine ways to prevent workplace sexual harassment.
- The new panel, which includes Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, was set up last week.
- The other members of the reconstituted GoM are: FM Nirmala Sitharaman, HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal and Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani
- Shah replaceshis predecessor Rajnath Singh

Indian Railways launched 'Operation Thirst' to crack down selling of unauthorised packaged drinking water

- As many as 1,371 people were arrested and over 69,294 bottles were seized by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) under 'Operation Thirst', an all India drive to crackdown the selling of unauthorised packaged drinking water.
- According to RPF, the operation was launched in all major railway stations across the country to curb the menace of unauthorised packaged drinking water on railway stations.
- During the operation, which was carried out on July 8 and 9, a total fine of Rs 6,80,855 has been realised from these offenders. Four pantry car managers involved in the selling of spurious mineral water were also arrested.
- Stalls on platforms were also found selling packaged drinking water bottles of brands which are not authorised by the Indian Railways.
- The bottles were seized under the sections of 144 and 153 of the Railway Act.

File tax returns if you have foreign trips, steep electricity bills

- The government has made income tax return filing mandatory for high spenders even if their taxable income is below the threshold exemption limit of ₹5 lakh.
- Those mandated to file returns include people spending more than ₹2 lakh on a foreign trip or depositing ₹1 crore in a year in a bank account or paying electricity bill of more than ₹1 lakh in a year.

Smt. Renuka Singh to Launch 'Go Tribal Campaign' by Tribes India

- Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, Smt. Renuka Singh will launch the "Go Tribal Campaign" by Tribes India at an event.
- TRIFED has organized this event to institutionalize collaborations and partnerships with different organizations to promote tribal products.
- "Go Tribals Campaign by Tribes India" will be launched under which a number of innovative activities have been planned to be undertaken to promote use of tribal handicrafts, handicrafts and natural products.
- Global Launch of "Tribes India" through Amazon Global Selling, under which Tribes India and Amazon Global Marketing will launch TRIBES India products globally through Amazon.com. With this

collaboration, tribal products shall be available in the US and will help establish export market with tribal products.

- Collaboration of Tribes India with Central Silk Board for development, promotion, marketing of tribal silk products and empowerment of tribal weavers.
- TRIFED joins the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi by introducing Khadi Kurtas and Jackets to its products range in association with "I Am Khadi" foundation.

'One nation one ration card' scheme from July 1, 2020

- 'One Nation One Ration Card' scheme, which will allow portability of food security benefits, will be available across the country from July 1, 2020.
- This means poor migrant workers will be able to buy subsidised rice and wheat from any ration shop in the country, so long as their ration cards are linked to Aadhaar.
- All the States have been given one more year to use point of sale (PoS) machines in the ration shops and implement the scheme.
- Already, 77% % of the ration shops across the country have PoS machines and more than 85% of people covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) have their cards linked to Aadhaar

Union Minister Gajendra Shekhawat to launch Jal Shakti Abhiyan

- Union Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat will launch the Jal Shakti Abhiyan in Delhi, amidst rampant water scarcity prevailing in many parts of the country.
- The scheme aims to make water conservation and promotion of irrigation efficiency a mass movement.
- The Jal Shakti Abhiyan has been launched in two phases. The first phase is 1st July to 15th September and is for all participating States and the second phase will be between 1st October to 30th November for States with retreating monsoon.
- Under Jal Shakti Abhiyan, focus will be on 256 water stressed districts and 1,592 water stressed blocks.
- There are five key intervention areas under the movement including water conservation and rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies, reuse, borewell recharge structures, watershed development and intensive afforestation.

NRC deadline extended by 1 month; final list to be published on July 31

- The Centre has given one month extension to complete the enumeration process for updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam by July 31.
- The National Register of Citizens (NRC) for the state of Assam has been taken as the exercise to enumerate citizens in Assam. The exercise aims at identifying illegal immigrants in the state of Assam that borders Bangladesh.
- When the draft NRC was published on July 30 last year, there was a huge controversy over the exclusion of 4 million people from it. The draft NRC included the names of 29 million people out of the total 32.9 million applications. The names of over a lakh more people were also excluded in a list published last month.

Export-promotion forum, trade fair to boost farm cooperatives

- The government has announced that an export-promotion forum for the cooperative sector will be created soon. An international trade fair will also be organised on October 11-13.
- The forum will be set up under the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), after consultations with 20 states and three Union territories.
- The government hopes this will work as an exchange platform for the cooperatives. Both ministries have committed to establish a framework to double farm exports from Rs 2.75 trillion to about Rs 7 trillion by 2024-25.
- The government had unveiled an ambitious agriculture export policy that seeks to double agriculture exports to $60 billion by 2022.
- Aiming to push India into the list of the top 10 agri export nations.

Government sets up high-powered committee of CMs to 'transform Indian agriculture'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi constituted a high-powered committee of chief ministers for the transformation of agriculture and raising farmers' income.
- The nine-member committee, headed by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, will suggest policy measures, attract investments and raise growth in food processing.
- Chief Ministers of Karnataka, Haryana, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Union Agriculture, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand will be the members of the committee.
- The panel will examine various provisions of the Essential Commodity Act (ECA), to attract private investments in agricultural marketing and infrastructure. It will also suggest a mechanism for linking of market reforms with e-NAM, GRAM and other relevant Centrally Sponsored Schemes.
- The committee will further suggest policy measures to boost agricultural export, raise growth in food processing and attract investments in modern market infrastructure, value chains and logistics, besides making other key suggestions.

UGC launches STRIDE scheme with view to boost research culture in universities

- University Grants Commission launched STRIDE scheme aimed at strengthening research culture and innovation in universities and colleges of the country.
- STRIDE scheme will strengthen research culture and innovation in colleges and universities and help students and faculty to contribute towards India's developing economy with help of collaborative research.
- Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy' (STRIDE), aims to " identify young talent, strengthen research culture, build capacity, promote innovation and support trans-disciplinary research for India's developing economy and national development.
- The scheme also seeks to fund high impact research projects in Humanities and Social Sciences.
- The scheme has three components- first is to identify young talent and providing research capacity building in diverse disciplines by mentoring, nurturing and supporting young talents to innovate solutions for local, regional, national and global problems. This component is open to all disciplines for a grant up to Rs 1 crore.
- The second component of the scheme is to enhance problem-solving skills with the help of social innovation and action research to improve wellbeing of people and contribute to India's developing economy. Collaborations between universities, government, voluntary organisations, and industries are encouraged under this scheme. This component is also open to all disciplines for grant up to 50 lakh-1 crore.
- The final component involves funding high impact research projects in the field of identified thrust areas in humanities and human sciences through a national network of eminent scientists from leadinginstitutions. This component is only open to specific disciplines with a possible grant of up to Rs 2 lakhs to developing a proposal.

India-assisted IT-biotech park inaugurated in Cote d'Ivoire

- The Mahatma Gandhi IT and Biotechnology Park in Cote d'Ivoire, a dedicated free trade zone built with India's assistance to build development capacities, has been inaugurated.
- MGIT-BP is a dedicated Free Trade Zone (FTZ) for IT and Biotechnology.
- MGIT-BP is being built with the Indian assistance through EXIM Bank Lines of Credit of USD 20 million

Govt hikes Minimum Support Price of Kharif crops for 2019-20 season

- In a major boost to the farmers' income, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Prices, MSP for all Kharif crops for 2019-20 Season.
- MSP of paddy has been increased by 65 rupees per quintal, Jowar by 120 rupees and Ragi by 253 rupees per quintal.
- MSP of Tur has been raised by 125 rupees, Moong by 75 rupees and Urad pulses raised by 100 rupees per quintal.

- MSPs of soyabean increased by 311 rupees, sunflower by 262 rupees and sesamum by 236 rupees per quintal which is a major step towards increasing the income of farmers.
- The increase in MSP for Kharif Crops for 2019-20 season is in line with the principle of fixing the MSPs at a level of at least 1.5 times of the all India weighted average Cost of production, which was announced in the last budget 2018-19.

First UIDAI-run Aadhaar Seva Kendra operational in Delhi, Vijayawada

- The UIDAI has operationalised the first 'Aadhaar Seva Kendra' in Delhi and Vijayawada, setting in motion an ambitious plan to set up 114 such centres by the year-end.
- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) is in the midst of setting up 'Aadhaar Seva Kendras' (ASKs) - similar to the concept of Passport Seva Kendras - covering 53 cities across India at an estimated project cost of Rs 300-400 crore.
- The new centres are functioning on a pilot basis, the source said adding that Delhi centre - located at Akshardham metro station premises - has a capacity to handle 1,000 enrolment/updation requests a day. It comes equipped with 16 workstations and will be operational six days a week including weekends

IRFC raises Rs 2,120 crore through bond issue

- Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) stated that has raised Rs 2,120 crore via issuance of 15 years bonds through book building process.
- The issue consists of 21,200 secured redeemable non- cumulative taxable bonds of Rs 10,00,000 each at a coupon of 7.85 per cent per annum. The allotment of bond was done on July 1, 2019.
- The issue received a total 85 bids for an aggregate sum of Rs 4,940 crore.
- The base issue size was Rs 500 crore and was oversubscribed by 9.88 times.

Indian Railways commissions longest electrified tunnel between Cherlopalli-Rapuru Station

- South Central Railway has commissioned the longest electrified tunnel, measuring 6.6 Kms between Cherlopalli and Rapuru stations and is part of the recently completed Obulavaripalli – Venkatachalam new railway line.
- The tunnel has been completed in a record time of 43 months.
- Two freight trains have successfully run marking the full-scale Operation of the newly built electrified railway line between the two stations, thereby opening up viable rail connectivity between Krishnapatnam Port and its hinterland for Goods train services.
- The construction of this tunnel paved the way to operate freight trains in Obulavaripalli - Venkatachalam - Krishnapatnam Port new railway line for a distance of 113 Kms. The section is now notified for commercial freight operations as well.

Central Government to set up three CoE in Sports at Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju has informed that central government is going to set-up three Sports Centre of Excellence in Itanagar
- The three centre of excellence will be for Martial Arts, Weight Lifting and Boxing.
- These centres will have a capacity of 300 sportspersons with residential facility.
- The government will also set up 12 to 15 football stadiums with Astro-turf football pitches across the state in the next three years.
- Mr. Rijiju further announced that this year Arunachal Pradesh will host the North East Youth Festival

Centre launches fertiliser DBT 2.0 initiatives

- The Centre launched three new technology initiatives to transfer over Rs 70,000-crore fertiliser subsidy directly to farmers' bank accounts.
- These initiatives are -- a dashboard with details of fertiliser supply, availability and requirement at national, state and district level; advanced version of point of sale (PoS) software and a desktop PoS version.

- These are part of the government's effort to transfer the fertiliser subsidy directly to farmers' bank accounts in the second phase of direct benefit transfer (DBT).
- In October 2017, the first phase of fertiliser DBT was rolled out, under which subsidy is being transferred to companies after checking retail sales data captured through the PoS machines.
- The government has developed the 'PoS software version 3.0' has a multi-lingual facility with a provision for Aadhar virtual identification option during use for registration, login and sale activity in the DBT software.
- Whereas the 'DBT dashboard' provides accurate information about the position of supply, availability and requirement of various fertiliser at national, state and district level. Even general public can access this and get the details.
- The Centre bears over Rs 70,000 crore annually as fertiliser subsidy to give cheaper farm nutrient to farmers.

Govt to launch 6th tranche of CPSE ETF on July 18; raise Rs 10,000 cr

- The government is planning to raise up to Rs 10,000 crore from the sixth tranche of CPSE ETF which would be launched on July 18.
- The CPSE Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) tracks shares of 11 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) -- ONGC, NTPC, Coal India, IOC, Rural Electrification Corp, Power Finance Corp, Bharat Electronics, Oil India, NBCC India, NLC India and SJVN.
- The follow-on fund offer (FFO) 5 will have a base issue size of Rs 8,000 crore with an option to retain over subscription of another Rs 2,000 crore.
- Through the earlier five tranches of the CPSE ETF, the government has already raised Rs 38,500 crore -- Rs 3,000 crore from the first tranche in March 2014, Rs 6,000 crore in January 2017, Rs 2,500 crore from the third in March 2017, Rs 17,000 crore in November 2018 and Rs 10,000 crore in March 2019.
- The government aims to raise a record Rs 1.05 trillion through disinvestment in 2019-20, up from Rs 85,000 crore raised last fiscal.

ICMR launches Mission SHAKTTI

- To commemorate 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has launched Mission SHAKTTI (School based Health Awareness, Knowledge Test and Training Initiative) in collaboration with National Gandhi Museum and Directorate of Education, Govt. of Delhi. This initiative is to create awareness among school children about health.
- Under this program ICMR scientists and officers are visiting schools for active interaction with the school kids to aware them regarding value for good health.

Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched 'LaQshya'(Labour room Quality Improvement Initiative)

- The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India launched 'LaQshya' (Labour room Quality improvement Initiative)Initiative to improve quality of care in labor room and maternity operation theatres in public health facilities.
- It aims to reduce preventable maternal and newborn mortality, morbidity, and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in the Labour room and Maternity Operation Theatre and ensure respectful maternity care.
- It will be implemented in government Medical Colleges (MCs), District Hospitals (DHs), high delivery load Sub- District Hospitals (SDHs) and Community Health Centres (CHCs) with over 100 deliveries/month (60 in hills and desert areas).

Over 30 lakh persons enrolled under PM Shram Yogi Maandhan Scheme till July 10

- Union Government said that total thirty lakh 85 thousand 205 persons have been enrolled under Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Scheme, PM-SYM, till 10th of this month.
- PM-SYM a voluntary and contributory pension scheme for the benefit of unorganized workers in February this year in the country.

- The minimum monthly pension of three thousand rupees to the beneficiaries after attaining the age of 60 years.

12 Indian beaches in the race to crest the 'Blue Flag' challenge

- The Union Environment Ministry has selected 12 beaches in India to vie for a 'Blue Flag' certification, an international recognition conferred on beaches that meet certain criteria of cleanliness and environmental propriety.
- These beaches are at Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Bhogave (Maharashtra), Ghoghla (Diu), Miramar (Goa), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Eden (Puducherry), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha), and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).
- The Blue Flag Programme for beaches and marinas is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education).

Cabinet extends 15th Finance Commission's term up to November 30

- Cabinet has approved the extension of the term of Fifteenth Finance Commission up to 30th November 2019 and mandated the panel to suggest ways for allocation of non-lapsable funds for defence and internal security.
- It will enable the Commission to examine various comparable estimates for financial projections in view of reforms and the new realities to finalise its recommendations for the period 2020-2025
- The Fifteenth Finance Commission was, constituted by the President on 27th November, 2017, headed by N K Singh.
- It was to submit its report on the basis of its Terms of Reference by 30th October this year covering a period of five years commencing from 1st April, 2020

Cabinet approves Rs. 1,600 crore for Dibang Multipurpose Project in Arunachal

- Union Cabinet has approved 1,600 crore rupees for Dibang Multipurpose Project in Arunachal Pradesh
- Dibang Multipurpose Project (Dibang MPP) is envisaged as a storage based hydro-electric project with flood moderation as the key objective.
- The Project is located on river Dibang, in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh. The project envisages construction of a 278 m high Concrete Gravity Dam
- The project shall generate 2880MW (12x240MW) power to produce 11223MU of energy in a 90% dependable year.
- This is the largest ever Hydro Electric Projects to be constructed in India. The dam is 278 metres high and will be the highest dam in India once completed

Google India's 'Internet Saathi' programme expanded to Punjab, Odisha

- Google India's 'Internet Saathi' programme aimed to empower rural women on how to use the Internet has now added two more states -- Punjab and Odisha.
- With this, the programme has now reached 2.6 lakh villages in 20 states.
- Launched as a pilot project in 2015, along with Tata Trusts, 'Internet Saathi' programme focuses on educating women on how to use the Internet.
- In Punjab, the programme will cover around 5,000 villages. In Odisha, it will cover over 16,000 villages.

Supreme Court forms panel to frame emergency plan for the protection Great Indian Bustard and the Lesser Florican Bird

- Supreme Court of India has constituted a three member high powered committee to frame and implement an emergency response plan for the protection of two Indian birds species namely Great Indian Bustard and the Lesser Florican
- The panel comprising
- Dr Deepak Apte – Director of Bombay Natural History Society;
- Dr Asad R Rahmani former Director of Bombay Natural History Society and member of governing body of Wetlands International South Asia
- Dr Dhananjai Mohan, Chief Conservator of Forests of Uttarakhand.

Ambikapur launches India's first garbage café

- By launching India's first garbage cafe, Ambikapur, a city in the state of Chhattisgarh, is bringing out the 'best out of waste'.
- This innovative idea birthed by the Municipal Corporation will not only tackle the ever rising problem of waste management but will also address the issue of food access to the poor and homeless.
- Under this program, any person fetching a kilo of plastic waste to the garbage cafe will be assured of a full meal while those collecting at least 500 grams will benefit from a substantial breakfast.
- The city of Ambikapur ranked second cleanest city in India after Indore.

Harsh Vardhan launches public awareness campaign to control of vector-borne diseases in Delhi

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan emphasised on the need of community efforts in the right direction to help in preventing Vector-Borne Diseases (VBDs) such as Malaria, Dengue and Chikungunya.
- Vardhan launched the 'Jagrukta Abhiyaan', a three-day public awareness campaign on prevention and control of VBDs.
- A total of 286 ward-wise teams have been constituted with 20-25 members per team including officers of the Municipal Corporation along with the officers from Central Government and government of NCTD (National Capital Territory of Delhi).

Flight operations start on 8 more routes under regional connectivity scheme UDAAN

- Eight more routes have started operations under the regional connectivity scheme UDAN.
- The scheme seeks to boost regional air connectivity and provides various incentives to airlines.
- The routes are Mysore - Hyderabad, Mysore - Goa, Mysore - Cochin and Kolkata - Shillong.
- The total UDAN routes that are now operational has increased to 194.

CRPF unveils country's first body protector for women personnel in combat

- The CRPF unveiled the country's first prototype of a body protector for women personnel which it has jointly developed with the Defence Research and Development Organisation.
- The "gender-specific protective gear" weighs 6 kg and has a different design and layout from the regular fibre-made black coloured body protector which is worn by both men and women police and paramilitary personnel during riot-control duties and regulation of public protests.
- One such female body protector, that would protect an individual from the neck to the toe with chest, hand, legs, shin and thigh guards, is estimated to cost ₹9,000.

All lanes at toll plazas to be 'FASTag lanes' from December 1

- To ensure seamless traffic and prevent congestion at toll plazas, the government has decided to declare all lanes at toll fee plaza on national highways as 'FASTag lanes' from December 1.
- However, among all lanes, one 'hybrid lane' will be allowed at every toll plaza to facilitate and monitor over-dimensional or oversized vehicles, where FASTag and other modes of payment will be accepted.
- After December 1, non-FASTag users will be charged double the fee if they pass through FASTag-only lanes.

HRD Minister launches UGC scheme Paramarsh, Quality Assurance in higher education in focus

- The Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" launched the University Grants Commission's (UGC) scheme named 'Paramarsh' on July 18, 2019 in New Delhi.
- The Paramarsh scheme has been launched for mentoring National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) Accreditation Aspirant Institutions to promote Quality Assurance in Higher Education.
- The scheme will target 1000 Higher Education Institutions for mentoring with a specific focus on quality as enumerated in the UGC "Quality Mandate".
- Initially 71 universities and 391 colleges having NAAC score of 3.26 and above will mentor five colleges each.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates two bridges in J&K

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 1000 meter long Ujh Bridge in Kathua district and 617.40-meter Basantar Bridge in samba district.
- Terming construction of Ujh and Basantar bridges a great achievement by Border Roads Organisation.
- The roads and bridges are the lifeline of any nation and play a vital role in the socio-economic development of far-flung regions and population.
- Project Sampark was launched on January 1, 1965 to develop and maintain the operational road infrastructure of Armed Forces in Border Areas of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Norms for PM-KUSUM scheme

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) issued guidelines to roll out the Rs. 34,422-crore PM-KUSUM scheme, which would encourage farmers to generate solar power in their farms and use the clean energy to replace their diesel water pumps.
- The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) scheme entails setting up of 25,750-MW solar capacity by 2022 with the total central financial support of Rs 34,422 crore.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the launch of the scheme with the objective of providing financial and water security.

Important International News

May

India elected to Executive Board of first UN-Habitat Assembly

- India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly, announced Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly at the Plenary Session of the Assembly started in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The special theme for the UN-Habitat Assembly is "Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities".

Nepal celebrating its 12th Republic Day

- Nepal is celebrating its 12th Republic Day on May29,2019. A number of programmes are being organised in different parts of the country to mark the occasion.
- The main function was held at Army Pavilion in Kathmandu, which was attended by the President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Prime Minister K.P.Sharma Oli, cabinet ministers, senior government officials, heads and representatives of various diplomatic missions and other dignitaries

Sri Lanka, Japan, India sign deal to develop East Container Terminal at Colombo Port

- Sri Lanka, Japan and India signed an agreement to jointly develop the East Container Terminal at the Colombo Port.
- The joint initiative is estimated to cost between $500 million and $700 million. The signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) is significant, given that the countries had been negotiating the deal since last year, with little success.
- As per the agreement signed, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) retains 100% ownership of the East Container Terminal (ECT), while the Terminal Operations Company, conducting its operations, is jointly owned. Sri Lanka will hold a 51 per cent-stake in the project and the joint venture partners will retain 49%.

UN says Women bosses are good for businesses and economies

- Companies that improve gender diversity especially at the top, perform better and rake in higher profits, while countries that increase women employment see better economic growth.
- The UN's International Labour Organisation found in a fresh study that companies that improve gender diversity in their management report significant profit increases. According to the report, which based its findings on a survey of nearly 13,000 companies across 70 countries.
- According to the survey, nearly three-quarters of companies that tracked gender diversity in their management reported profit hikes of between 5% and 20%.

Trump becomes first world leader to meet Japan's new emperor

- Donald Trump became the first foreign leader to meet with Japan's newly enthroned Emperor Naruhito
- Emperor Naruhito ascended to the throne on May 1, opening what is called the era of "Reiwa," or "beautiful harmony." The US President, who is on a four-day state visit to Japan, was treated to a welcome ceremony full of pomp and pageantry.

Algeria and Argentina certified malaria-free by WHO

- Algeria and Argentina have been officially recognized by WHO as malaria-free. The certification is granted when a country proves that it has interrupted indigenous transmission of the disease for at least 3 consecutive years.
- Algeria is the second country in the WHO African Region to be officially recognized as malaria-free, after Mauritius, which was certified in 1973. Argentina is the second country in the WHO Region of the Americas to be certified in 45 years, after Paraguay in June 2018. Algeria and Argentina reported their last cases of indigenous malaria in 2013 and 2010 respectively.

UAE unveils 'golden card' permanent residency scheme for expats

- The UAE has launched a permanent residency scheme for expatriates dubbed the 'Golden Card.
- The country's Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai said about 6,800 will benefit from the scheme under the first round of applications. A new "Golden Card" system to grant permanent residency to investors and exceptional doctors, engineers, scientists and artists.

TAPI gas meeting being held in Turkmenistan

- A delegation led by Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Petroleum, Nadeem Babar departed for Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, to participate in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline meeting.
- The TAPI gas pipeline project is expected to be completed by 2022 in Pakistan. Once completed; Pakistan is expected to receive 1.320 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas. Groundbreaking of the TAPI gas pipeline will be held in Pakistan in October

World gets the redefined units of measurement of kilogram, Kelvin, mole and ampere

- After decades of ground-breaking laboratory works, the world's scientific and technical community, in a landmark and historic decision taken in the recent open session of the General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM) at BIPM, has unanimously adopted the resolution to redefine four of the seven base units, the kilogram (SI unit of weight), Kelvin (SI unit of temperature), mole (SI unit of amount of substance), and ampere (SI unit of current).
- This decision has now enabled scientists and researchers to base the SI units entirely on fundamental properties of nature, which will ensure their ongoing refinement and improvement for years to come. The fundamental constants are invariants of time and space and successfully replaced the artifact based units, and aptly opened up the new era for quantum world by linking all seven base units to fundamental constants/quantum standards.
- The new SI is being implemented worldwide from 20th May 2019 i.e. the World Metrology Day. The World Metrology Day (WMD) is celebrated annually on this very day as the Metre Convention was signed by representatives of seventeen nations on May 20, 1875. The Convention set the framework for global collaboration in the science of measurement and in its industrial, commercial and societal applications
- The new SI is being implemented worldwide from 20th May 2019 i.e. the World Metrology Day. The World Metrology Day (WMD) is celebrated annually on this very day as the Metre Convention was signed by representatives of seventeen nations on May 20, 1875. The Convention set the framework for global collaboration in the science of measurement and in its industrial, commercial and societal applications.
- On this occasion CSIR-NPL also published a book entitled, "Redefined SI Units and Glimpses of NPL Metrological Activities" of almost 100 pages to percolate and disseminate the information accommodating details on new changes

Taiwan becomes first in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage

- Taiwan has legalised same-sex marriage, the first of any Asian state, with the passage of legislation giving same-sex couples the right to marry.
- Taiwan's constitutional court had imposed deadline two years ago, which said that excluding same-sex couples from marriage was unconstitutional and the legislature must pass laws allowing same-sex marriage by May 24, 2019, or they would automatically become law.

UK Becomes First Parliament to Declare Climate Emergency

- The UK Parliament has passed a declaration for EnvironmentandClimateEmergencyon May 01, 2019. Hence the Parliament of the UK has become the first parliament, or the UK has become the first country to pass a declaration on climate emergency.
- This was a lot of pressure from the opposition Labour leaders for "rapid and dramatic action" to protect the environment for generations to come. The fight for this Climate Emergency was lead by a group called Extinction Rebellion.
- What does Climate Emergency mean: It means that from now climate and the environment would be at the very centre of all government policy, rather than being on the fringe of political decisions.

Bank of Canada, Monetary Authority of Singapore Complete Cross-Border and Cross-Currency Payment

- The Bank of Canada and the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) have conducted a successful experiment on cross-border and cross-currency payments using central bank digital currencies.
- This is the first such trial between two central banks, and has great potential to increase efficiencies and reduce risks for cross-border payments

Canada's redesigned $10 bill recognized as best international banknote of the year

- Canada's redesigned $10 bill has earned the Bank of Canada a Bank Note of the Year Award from the International Bank Note Society (IBNS).
- The competition came from Mexico's 500-peso note, Russia's 100-ruble note, Norway's 500-krone note and China's 50-yuan note, among many others.

Malaysia Set to Open World's First Crypto Powered City

- Malaysia is set to become the site of the world's first crypto city, where cash will be shunned in favor of a new cryptocurrency called DMI.
- DMI is a company that provides mobile enterprise, business intelligence and cybersecurity services and it has collaborated with the Melaka Straits City on this project. Visitors will be able to exchange normal money for DMI coins when they arrive in the city.

Microsoft unveils free 'ElectionGuard' tool to help secure U.S. polls

- Microsoft has launched a software named "ElectionGuard" to help countries ensure secure and verifiable voting.
- The tool "ElectionGuard" will enable end-to-end verification of elections, open results to third-party organisations for secure validation, and allow individual voters to confirm their votes were correctly counted.
- However, it should be noted that "ElectionGuard" is not designed to support internet voting and is aimed at supplementing and improving the paper ballot systems.

Qantas operates world's first 'zero waste' commercial flight

- The world's first 'zero waste' commercial flight took to the skies as part of a new initiative from the Australian airline Qantas to cut single-use plastics that end up in landfill.
- Flying from Sydney to Adelaide, the airline stated that all products and packaging aboard QF739 will either be reused, recycled or disposed of as compost. The Australian carrier stated that it will cut 100 million single-use plastics by the end of next year and eliminate 75 per cent of the airline's waste by the end of 2021. It Head Quartered in Australia.

Australia central bank prints 184 million A$50 notes with spelling mistake

- The Reserve Bank of Australia confirmed a printing error on the new 50 dollar note after a radio station posted a photo on social media sent in by a listener. An Instagram post by radio station Triple M revealed the typo mistake on the note just above the shoulder of Edith Cowan
- The note came into circulation on Oct. 18, 2018 with new security features designed to deter counterfeiting and with tactile elements for the visually impaired. Cowan was the first Australian woman to serve as a member of parliament from 1921 to 1924. She has featured on the reverse of Australia"s 50-dollar note since 1995

'World's fastest bullet train' starts test runs in Japan

- Japan has started testing its fastest-ever bullet train capable of reaching 400 kilometers per hour (249 mph) as it continues to develop the revolutionary mode of travel.
- The ALFA-X (Advanced Labs for Frontline Activity in rail eXperimentation) version of the Shinkansen train began three years worth of test runs. Once it enters operation sometime around 2030, it will run at speeds of up to 360 kph (224 mph), comfortably making it the world's fastest bullet train.
- It will also outpace China's Fuxing train, which runs at 10 kph slower despite being designed with the same top speed capabilities as the ALFA-X. It'll be tested on the line between the cities of Sendai and Aomori, which are about 280 kilometers apart

Ireland becomes second country to declare 'climate emergency'

- Ireland has become the second country in the world to declare a climate and biodiversity emergency.
- Ireland followed in the footsteps of the United Kingdom, which declared a climate emergency earlier this month
- The governments of Wales and Scotland have also declared climate emergencies.

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- Taiwan's constitutional court had imposed deadline two years ago, which said that excluding same-sex couples from marriage was unconstitutional and the legislature must pass laws allowing same-sex marriage by May 24, 2019, or they would automatically become law.

Saudi Arabia approves permanent residency for first time

- The Saudi government has approved for the first time a scheme that gives permanent residency to certain expatriates, allowing them to own real estate in the kingdom and reside with their families without a Saudi sponsor
- The decision is aimed at attracting long-term investments as the government tries to diversify the economy and boost domestic spending. The "Privileged Iqama" system will offer a permanent residence scheme and one that can be renewed annually to highly skilled expatriates and owners of capital funds.

June

Pakistan gets $3 billion bailout from Qatar

- Pakistan has secured a bailout package of USD 3 billion from oil-rich Qatar, a day after Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad concluded his visit to Islamabad and agreed to cooperate in the fields of trade, anti-money laundering and curbing terror financing.
- The Gulf state is the fourth nation that has come forward to rescue Pakistan
- Earlier, China gave USD 4.6 billion in shape of deposits and commercial loans and Saudi Arabia provided USD 3 billion cash deposit and USD 3.2 billion oil facility on deferred payments. The United Arab Emirates also provided USD 2 billion cash deposit.

Saudi Arabia Becomes First Arab Nation to Get FATF Membership

- Saudi Arabia has become the first Arab country to be granted full membership of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) following the group's annual general meeting in the US.

- Saudi Arabia which had received an invitation from the FATF at the beginning of 2015 to join as an "observer member", was admitted into the organization after the group's meeting in Orlando, Florida.
- The group is responsible for issuing international standards, policies and best practices to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation.
- With the kingdom becoming a FATF member, the number of permanent members in the group is now 39.

UAE launches UN-developed anti-money laundering platform

- The UAE has become the first country in the Gulf to launch a new reporting platform developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC, to curb organised crimes.
- The UAE's Financial Intelligence Unit, FIU, launched the new anti-money laundering platform 'goAML' , which has been open for registration.
- More than 900 entities including, banks, insurance companies and money exchange centres, are required to register on the platform and 50 percent of them have already registered.
- The platform will help the FIU prevent money laundering, financing of terrorism and other illicit financial activities.

India provides USD 15 million assistance to Niger for holding AU summit

- India has extended USD 15 million grant to Niger in support of organising the African Union summit scheduled in July in Niamey.
- The grant assistance of USD 15 million was symbolically handed over to Niger's Deputy Foreign Minister Lamido Ousseini Bala Goga Salamatou in the presence of Minister and Special Advisor to the Niger President Mohammed Saidil Moctar, by Indian Ambassador to that country Rajesh Agarwal at a ceremony.
- Niger is hosting the AU Summit for the first time. The AU Summit, from July 7-8 in Niamey, is also expected to launch the historic African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- India has provided Lines of Credit worth USD 96.54 million to Niger for projects in transport, electrification, solar energy and potable drinking water.
- India is also establishing in Niamey, Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre (MGICC) under a grant assistance.

WHO launches new tool to handle AMR

- WHO has launched a global campaign urging governments to adopt a tool to reduce the spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), adverse events and costs.
- The AWaRe tool was developed by the WHO Essential Medicines List to contain rising resistance and make antibiotic use safer and more effective. It classifies antibiotics into three groups – Access, Watch and Reserve – and specifies which antibiotics to use for the most common and serious infections, which ones should be available at all times in the healthcare system, and those that must be used sparingly or preserved and used only as a last resort.

World's highest operating weather stations installed on Everest

- The National Geographic Society has announced the successful installation of the worlds highest operating weather stations on Mount Everest to provide researchers, climbers, and the public with near real-time information about mountain conditions.
- The other stations were placed at Phortse (3,810 m), Everest Base Camp (5,315 m) and Camp II (6,464 m), each weather station will record data on temperature, relative humidity, barometric pressure, wind speed, and wind direction. The Balcony weather station is the first weather station installed at an elevation above 8,000 metres.

Puerto Williams, Chile becomes world's southernmost city

- Puerto Williams, a growing hamlet draped in snow-covered peaks on the remote southern tip of the South American continent, has been upgraded to the category of "city" by Chilean authorities, making it the world's southernmost city.
- Puerto Williams has nudged out Ushuaia, a neighbor in Argentina's Tierra del Fuego, for the title.

Russia launches first Arctic train service

- The first tourist train traveling through Russia's Arctic region and on to Norway set off from Saint Petersburg station with 91 passengers aboard for the inaugural trial journey.
- The train, named "Zarengold" ("The Tsar's gold" in German) complete with two restaurant cars will travel from Saint Petersburg through Petrozavodsk, the historic town of Kem and Murmansk.
- For the inaugural " test journey" the 91 tourists came from seven countries including the US, Germany, Norway and Russia. The whole trip will take 11 days and allow passengers to discover areas difficult to access by other means

Estonia, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, Vietnam elected UNSC non-permanent members

- Estonia, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam were elected as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for a two year term beginning January 1, 2020. In the African and Asia Pacific category, Vietnam got 192 out of 193 votes, followed by Niger and Tunisia (191 votes each).
- The Security Council is the most powerful organ of the UN and consists of 15 members including five permanent members (China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States), and 10 non-permanent members who are elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.
- Currently, Belgium, Cte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Peru, Poland and South Africa. are the non-permanent members. The two-year terms of Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kuwait, Peru and Poland will end in 2019 and the newly elected members will take on their seats

Canada to ban single-use plastics as early as 2021

- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced, Canada will ban "harmful" single-use plastics as early as 2021 in a bid to reduce ocean waste. This initiative is modelled on similar legislation passed last year by the European Union and other nations
- Canada will also establish "targets" for companies that manufacture or sell plastics to be responsible for their plastic waste. Currently less than 10% of plastic used in Canada gets recycled.

Bangladesh elected as UNWTO Vice-President

- Bangladesh has been elected Vice-President of the United Nations World Tourism Organization as well as member of the organization's credential committee.
- This election was made in the 57th conference of World Tourism Organization's Commission for South Asia held at Bhutan's capital of Thimphu presided over by the Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Mahbub Ali.
- Iran competed against Bangladesh in the vice-presidential position of the World Tourism Organization, but Bangladesh won all the vote of the members of the Commission for South Asia. Bangladesh is currently the Chairman of the United Nations World Tourism Organization's Commission for South Asia.

UAE Cabinet adopts "National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031"

- The UAE Cabinet adopted the National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031 during its meeting at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi.
- One of the most important initiatives is the development of the first 'National Wellbeing Observatory' to support the policymaking process.
- Chaired by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, the National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031 aims to make the UAE a world leader in quality of life through a number of strategic objectives and initiatives.

Bahrain to ban plastic products from next month

- Bahrain will start phasing out the use of plastic products from next month.
- A Ministerial order with respect to the technical regulations for plastic products will come into effect on the 21st of next month. The order will regulate and phase out the use of plastic bags.
- The first phase will focus on single-use plastic bags as well as banning the import of non-biodegradable plastic bags.

- Later phases will witness a permanent ban on the use of plastic bags at certain malls and supermarkets.

July

BRICS Foreign Ministers Meeting 2019 held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- BRICS Foreign Ministers Meet was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- India was represented by Gen. (retd) VK Singh who is the Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways.
- The meeting focused on the importance of upholding and supporting the objectives of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and intensifying cooperation to implement and improve its Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism and Proliferation.
- The Ministers emphasized the importance to comply with and strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC), including by adopting a Protocol to the Convention that provides for, inter alia, an efficient verification mechanism.

New India-UK scheme to fund students from UK to visit India

- A new India-UK bilateral pilot scheme has been launched to support Britain's universities to collaborate with Indian partners to send UK students to India during their studies.
- The "UKEIRI Mobility Programme: Study in India", an initiative of Universities UK International (UUKI) and British Council India.
- It aims to generate up to 200 opportunities for undergraduate students at UK universities to visit India by March 2021.
- Priority for the programme to visit India during their courses will be given to students from traditionally underrepresented groups.
- The Study in India programme will support national and institutional-level objectives to increase the levels of outward student mobility from the UK to 13 per cent by 2020, as set out in UUKi's "Go International: Stand Out" campaign.
- The programme will be funded by the UK and Indian governments as part of Phase 3 of the UK-India Education Research Initiative (UKEIRI) and delivered by the British Council, Universities UK International and EdCIL in India.

India, Saudi Arabia discuss bilateral hydrocarbon cooperation

- Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan held discussions with Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources of Saudi Arabia Khalid Al-Falih to further enhance bilateral hydrocarbon cooperation.
- Both the Ministers discussed further enhancing India-Saudi Arabia hydrocarbon cooperation to become a strong pillar of the existing overall strategic partnership between the two countries.

London to become first 'National Park City'

- London will be officially confirmed as the world's first National Park City.
- Along with the Mayor of London, organizations and individuals will sign a London National Park City Charter demonstrating their support for making the city greener, healthier, and wilder.
- The National Park City Foundation (NPCF), in partnership with World Urban Parks and Salzburg Global Seminar, created the first International Charter for National Park Cities (NPC).
- While London is the first, NPCF is aiming to name at least 25 National Park Cities by 2025 and is already in discussion with other UK and world cities to help them gain NPC status.

Duty Free shops at Dubai airports to accept Indian currency

- Dubai Duty Free has announced that Indian Rupee will now be an accepted currency at all the retail outlets of the Dubai airport.
- Stores at the Dubai Airport will accept notes of various denominations, including 100s, 200s, 500s and 2000s. The move makes the Indian rupee the 16th international currency to be accepted at Dubai's airports.

World's first floating farm in operation in Rotterdam

- The world's first ever floating farm has been built in Rotterdam in the Netherlands.
- The aim of the initiative, said designer Peter Van Wingerden, was to shorten the distance between the production and consumption of food. With the majority of the world's population now living in urban areas, the demand for fresh food in cities is on the rise
- This, combined with the farm's vast array of solar panels, makes the floating project an eco-friendly alternative to current farming methods. The farm has also been designed to desalinate seawater.

Sri Lanka Inaugurates First Model Village Built With Indian Assistance For War-Affected People

- A model village has been inaugurated in Sri Lanka as a part of housing project meant for civil war-affected people and estate workers with Indian assistance.
- A total of 2,400 houses all across Sri Lanka are to be constricted by the Sri Lankan Ministry of Housing and Construction and Cultural Affairs and India has partnered with the ministry and is providing grant of Rs 1,200 million (USD 17.5 million).
- The former President of Sri Lanka, Chandrika Bandaranayke Kumaratunga, Sajith Premadasa, the Minister of Housing and Construction and Cultural Affairs, and Shilpak Ambule, the Acting High Commissioner of India, inaugurated the first model village at Ranidugama in Gampaha.

World's largest burn and plastic surgery institute started in Dhaka

- The world's largest burn and plastic surgery institute in Dhaka started functioning.
- About 6 lakh people suffer burn injuries in Bangladesh every year who will benefit from the institute.
- Named Sheikh Hasina National Burn and Plastic Surgery Institute, the 500-bed hospital with 50 ICU and 12 operation theatres will provide advanced treatment to burn patients in Bangladesh.
- The institute has been built at a cost of over 500 crore Taka.

UAE's Sharjah issues first gold card permanent residency to Indian expat

- UAE-based Indian business tycoon Lalo Samuel has become the first expat in Sharjah to get the gold card permanent residency.
- Unlike the long-term visa of 5-10 years for businessmen and talented individuals, the gold card gives permanent residency of the UAE to the holder.
- Samuel, who was selected as one of the top 100 Most Influential Indian Business Leaders in the Arab World by the Forbes magazine continuously for 2013, 2014 and 2015, became one of the 6,800 investors with total investment exceeding USD 27 billion to receive the gold card under a scheme announced in May by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai.

Unesco Recognizes Heritage Sites, Ancient to Modern, Around the World

- 43rd Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee which was held from June 30 to July 10, 2019 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) added 29 sites into the list of the World Heritage Sites 2019.

- Australia: Budj Bim Cultural Landscape
- Azerbaijan: Historic Centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace
- Bahrain: Dilmun Burial Mounds
- Brazil: Paraty and Ilha Grande — Culture and Biodiversity
- Burkina Faso: Ancient ferrous metallurgy sites of Burkina Faso
- Canada: Writing-on-Stone/Áísínai'pi
- China: Archaeological Ruins of Liangzhu City
- China: Migratory Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China, Phase I
- Czech Republic: Landscape for Breeding and Training of Ceremonial Carriage Horses at Kladruby nad Labem

- Czech Republic/Germany: Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region
- France: French Austral Lands and Seas
- Germany: Water Management System of Augsburg
- Iceland: Vatnajökull National Park
- India: Jaipur City, Rajasthan
- Indonesia: Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto
- Iran: Hyrcanian Forests
- Iraq: Babylon
- Italy: Le Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano a Valdobbiadene
- Japan: Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan
- Republic of Korea: Seowon, Korean Neo-Confucian Academies
- Lao People's Democratic Republic: Megalithic Jar Sites in Xiengkhuang — Plain of Jars
- Myanmar: Bagan
- Poland: Krzemionki Prehistoric Striped Flint Mining Region
- Portugal: Royal Building of Mafra — Palace, Basilica, Convent, Cerco Garden and Hunting Park, Tapada
- Portugal: Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga
- Russian Federation: Churches of the Pskov School of Architecture
- Spain: Risco Caido and the Sacred Mountains of Gran Canaria Cultural Landscape
- United Kingdom: Jodrell Bank Observatory
- United States: The 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright

WHO declares Sri Lanka 'measles-free' nation

- WHO declared that measles disease has been eradicated in the island nation of Sri Lanka.
- Measles is a highly contagious viral disease transmitted via droplets from the nose, mouth or throat of infected persons. It remains an important cause of death among young children globally, despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine.
- Sri Lanka is the fourth country in the WHO South-East Asia Region, after Bhutan, Maldives, and Timor-Leste, to eliminate measles and control rubella. Last year, Sri Lanka achieved rubella control, along with five other countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Timor-Leste.

France to impose green tax on flight tickets from French airports from 2020

- All tickets for outbound flights from French airports will include a green tax from 2020.
- France will introduce an eco-tax of up to €18 ($20) on all tickets for flights flying out of French airports to fund less-polluting transportation projects.
- The tax, estimated to raise around €180 million a year, will come into effect in 2020 and calls for a fee of €1.50 on economy-class tickets for domestic flights and those within Europe. The highest tariff of €18 per ticket will be applied to business-class travelers flying outside.
- It will only be applied on outgoing flights and not those flying into the country

Tropical Storm Barry hits Louisiana in United States

- Tropical Storm Barry began hitting Louisiana in the United States
- President Donald Trump has declared a state of emergency in Louisiana

France Becomes One of the First Countries to Introduce Digital Tax on Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon

- The French Parliament adopted by a final vote of the Senate, the introduction of a tax on GAFA, making France one of the first countries to impose a tax on digital giants.
- The GAFA tax refers to an acronym for Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon.
- The digital tax is endorsed by the opposition-controlled Upper House, paving the pay to the eurozone second largest power to unilaterally tax internet giants by three percent on much of their digital sales in France.

- GAFA targets digital companies with global annual sales of more than 750 million euros ($845.6 million) and sales in France of at least 25 million euros.
- This 3 per cent tax on digital gross sales would help to collect 400 million euros this year and 650 million euros by 2022.

Palau signs International Solar Alliance Framework agreement

- Palau signed the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement here, lauding India for its efforts in promoting sustainable development projects through South-South cooperation.
- Palau became the 76th country to sign the ISA Framework Agreement, which till date has been ratified by a total of 54 of the 76 countries.
- Palau President Tommy Remengesau signed the ISA Framework Agreement during a special ceremony at the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations. Remengesau recognised the ISA as a key initiative for promoting sustainable energy.
- The partnership between India and Palau, Remengesau praised India as an important partner for South-South Cooperation and commended the positive role being played by the India-UN Development Fund in promoting sustainable development projects in partner countries.
- Palau will host the 2020 edition of the 'Our Oceans conference', which will focus on issues such as climate change, sustainable fisheries and marine pollution.

Over 820 million people suffering from hunger

- A UN report has said, more than 821 million people suffered from hunger worldwide last year. It is the third year in a row that the number has risen.
- 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World', produced by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and other UN agencies, including WHO, was released.
- It noted that the number of people without enough to eat had risen from 811 million in 2017 and getting to a world where no one is suffering from hunger remains an immense challenge.

China gifts warship to Sri Lanka

- China has gifted warship frigate P625 to Sri Lanka
- The frigate was commissioned into the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy as Tongling in 1994.
- The warship was decommissioned in 2015 and has been gifted to Sri Lankan Navy after a refit.
- The 'P625' frigate will be mainly used for offshore patrol, environment monitoring and anti-piracy combats

New 'rhino bonds' to allow investors to help with wildlife conservation

- Investors will able to buy bonds that aim to increase the population of the endangered black rhino, and reward investors only when the numbers of these animals rise.
- The $50 million Rhino Impact Bonds (RIB) will be the world's first financial instrument working toward the conservation of a species at the risk of extinction.
- The Rhino Impact Bond (RIB) is the world's first financial instrument for species conservation, transferring the risk of funding conservation from donors to impact investors by linking conservation performance to financial performance.
- The bond, expected to launch in the first quarter of 2020, looks to boost the black rhino population by 10% globally.

Important Appointments

May

National Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Jayshree Vyas	Bombay Stock Exchange first independent woman director
2.	K. Kadiresan	South Zonal Manager of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)
3.	Dragan Mihailovic	India's head coach of Volleyball men's team
4.	Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma	first official brand ambassadors of Myntra

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5.	Krishnamurthy Subramanian (Chief Economic Advisor)	member of Advisory Council of 15th Finance Commission
6.	Sunil Sharma	Archery Association of India (AAI) acting president
7.	Sujatha V Kumar	Visa's Head of Marketing for India and South Asia
8.	Balvinder Singh Nakai	Iffco Chairman
9.	Dileep Sanghani	Iffco Vice Chairman
10.	Croatia's Igor Stimac	Indian football team coach
11.	Dinesh Pangtey	CEO of LIC Mutual Fund
12.	Sanjiv Puri (ITC Managing Director)	Chairman of ITC
13.	Salman Khan	Brand Ambassador of BharatPe
14.	Major General A K Dhingra	first Special Operations Division Commander
15.	R. Gandhi	additional director on Yes Bank's board
16.	Justice A. K. Sikri	Chairperson of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA)
17.	Nitin Chugh	MD and CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (from December 1)
18.	Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant	Brand ambassadors of Himalaya MEN
19.	Jagan Mohan Reddy	CM of Andhra Pradesh
20.	Naveen Patnaik	CM of Odisha
21.	Akshay Kumar	Brand ambassador of TAFE
22.	Lieutenant General Shailesh Tinaikar	commander of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)
23.	Himanta Biswa Sarma	vice-president of Badminton Asia Council
24.	Prem Singh Golay	Chief Minister of Sikkim
25.	Justice DN Patel	Chief Justice of Delhi High Court
26.	Pema Khandu	Arunachal Pradesh CM
27.	Naveen Patnaik	Odisha CM for 5th term
28.	Karambir Singh	New Navy Chief
29.	Narendra Modi	Prime Minister of India
30.	Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain	Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command

International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Kumar Sangakkara	First non-British President of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)
2.	Tod Wolters (US Air Force General)	NATO commander
3.	Reza Baqir	State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor
4.	Stevo Pendarovski	North Macedonian president
5.	Laurentino Cortizo	Panama's president
6.	Rakesh Sharma (Bajaj Auto Executive Director)	Vice-President of Geneva-based International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA)
7.	Jagjit Pavadia (India)	International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)
8.	Justice (Retd.) KS Radhakrishnan	Member of Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal
9.	Dia Mirza and Jack Ma	New 'SDG Advocates' of UN
10.	Muhammad-Bande (Nigerian professor)	President of UN General Assembly
11.	Former SC Justice MB Lokur	Supreme Court of Fiji for three years (non-resident panel)
12.	Cyril Ramaphosa	re-elected as President of South Africa
13.	Jeffrey Rosen	United States' next deputy attorney general
14.	Joko Widodo	President of Indonesia
15.	Peter Mutharika	President of Malawi

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16.	Suresh Kumar	chief technology officer of Walmart
17.	Scott Morrison	Australia's prime minister
18.	James Marape	Papua New Guinea prime minister

Resignation

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Bhushan Patil	Paytm President
2.	Theresa May	Prime Minister of U.K.
3.	Peter O'Neill	Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

June

National Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Namrata Menonas	Brand ambassador to promote yoga in Goa
2.	Satish Chandra Verma	New Advocate General of Chhattisgarh
3.	MN Sarma	Secretary General of General Insurance Council
4.	Ajit Doval	National Security Adviser 2nd term
5.	Sachin Bansal	Independent director of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank
6.	Mrutyunjay Mohapatra	Chief of Indian Meteorological Department
7.	Rakesh Makhija	Chairman of Axis Bank
8.	P Jayadevan	IOCL executive director for TN, Pondy
9.	Justice Dhirubhai Naranbhai Patel	Chief Justice of Delhi HC
10.	R K Chibber	Interim chief of J&K Bank
11.	N Gopalaswami	BCCI's electoral officer
12.	Tapan Ray	MD of Gift City
13.	Sharad Kumar	Interim central vigilance commissioner
14.	Subba Rao	Secretary to Vice President
15.	Nripendra Misra	Principal Secretary
16.	PK Mishra	Additional Principal Secretary
17.	Thawarchand Gehlot	Leader of Rajya Sabha
18.	Piyush Goyal	Deputy Leader for the Upper House
19.	Laxman Narasimhan	New CEO of Reckitt Benckiser
20.	Rabi N Mishra	Executive Director of RBI
21.	Ravinder Singh Dhillon	Director (projects) in Power Finance Corporation
22.	Om Birla	Lok Sabha Speaker
23.	Yerry Mina (Colombian footballer)	Brand Ambassador of Hero MotoCorp
24.	Alok Vardhan Chaturvedi	Extended three months as Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)
25.	Prithviraj Kothari	President of Indian Bullion and Jewellers Association Ltd
26.	Krishnaswamy Natarajan	Next Director General of Indian Coast Guard
27.	Amit Agarwal	Chairman of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)
28.	Narinder Batra	Member of the International Olympic Committee
29.	Amitabh Kant	Two year extension as NITI Aayog CEO
30.	Surendra Ahuja	MD of Boeing Defence India
31.	Samant Kumar Goel	RAW head
32.	Arvind Kumar	IB chief
33.	Padmanabha Balakrishna Acharya (Nagaland governor)	Governor of Manipur
34.	Sarada Kumar Hota	Managing Director of the National Housing Bank (NHB)

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35.	Sharad Kumar Saraf	President of Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO)
36.	Laxman Narasimhan	CEO of Reckitt Benckiser

International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Anita Bhatia	Deputy Executive Director of UN
2.	Ajay Singh (SpiceJet chief)	International Air Transportation Association (IATA)board
3.	Nayib Bukele	President of El Salvador
4.	Anton Aditya Subowo	Re-elected as President of Badminton Asia
5.	Rajiv Mehrishi	External Auditor for WHO
6.	Gianni Infantino	FIFA president
7.	Tijjani Muhammad-Bande	UNGA President
8.	Prayuth Chan-ocha	Thailand PM
9.	PramilaJayapal	first South Asian American woman to chair US house
10.	Kumar Iyer	Chief Economist of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)of UK government
11.	Kassym-Jomart Tokayev	Kazakhstan's president
12.	Zuzana Caputova	Slovakia's first female President
13.	Padmaja	India's High Commissioner to Tuvalu
14.	Inger Andersen	Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
15.	Lt General Faiz Hameed	Director General of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)
16.	Shefali Juneja	India's representative in the council of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)
17.	Author Amish Tripathi	Director of London's Nehru Centre
18.	Mohamed Ould Ghazouani	Presidential Election of Mauritania
19.	Qu Dongyu	Head of Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Resignation

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Azim Premji	Executive Chairman of Wipro

July

National Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Karnam Sekar	MD and CEO of IOB
2.	N.S. Vishwanathan	Reappointed as RBI deputy governor for one year
3.	V K Tyagi	Chief Vigilance Officer of Punjab National Bank
4.	P.K. Purwar	Chairman and Managing Director of BSNL
5.	Nalin Shinghal	Chairman and Managing Director of BHEL
6.	Manoj Kumar Nambiar	Chairman of Microfinance Institutions Network (MFIN)
7.	B Harideesh Kumar	Director of Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS)
8.	A K Misra	Additional director on J&K Bank board
9.	Rajni Saraf	Chief financial officer (CFO) of Jammu and Kashmir Bank
10.	Ashutosh Gupta	LinkedIn country manager for India
11.	Rahul Dravid	Head of Cricket at the National Cricket Academy
12.	Shailesh Sadashiv Tinaikar	Force Commander of UN mission in South Sudan

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13.	M Nageswar Rao	director general of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guard
14.	Arun Kumar	Chief of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)
15.	Katrina Kaif	Brand ambassador of Reebok
16.	Vikas Swarup	Secretary, Overseas Indian Affairs
17.	Kalraj Mishra	Himachal Pradesh Governor
18.	Acharya Devvrat	Governor of Gujarat
19.	Anshula Kant	Managing director and chief financial officer (CFO) of the World Bank
20.	Chandrakant Kavlekar	New Deputy CM of Goa
21.	Biswa Bhusan Harichandan	Governor of Andhra Pradesh
22.	Anusuiya Uikey	Governor of Chhattisgarh
23.	Anandiben Patel	Governor of Uttar Pradesh
24.	Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar	Governor of West Bengal
25.	Ramesh Bais	Governor of Tripura
26.	Lal Ji Tandon	Governor of Madhya Pradesh
27.	Phagu Chauhan	Governor of Bihar
28.	R. N. Ravi	Governor of Nagaland
29.	Amita Prasad	Chairperson of Inland Waterways
30.	Vivek Kumar	Private secretary to PM Narendra Modi
31.	Varun Dhawan	Reebok India brand ambassador
32.	M.M. Naravane	Next Vice-Chief of Army Staff
33.	Ajay Bhadoo	Joint Secretary to President
34.	Dejan Papic	India's table tennis head coach
35.	Sunil Kumar (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited Director)	Additional charge of chairman and managing director of the MTNL
36.	BS Yediyurappa	Karnataka CM
37.	Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury	Chairman of Public Accounts Committee (PAC)
38.	Priti Patel (Indian Origin)	UK Home secretary
39.	V.K. Johri	Director General (DG) of Border Security Force
40.	Meenakshi Lekhi	Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee On Public Undertakings
41.	Girish Bapat	Chairman of the Estimates Committee
42.	Kirit Solanki	Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee for Welfare of SC/ST
43.	Ganesh Singh	Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes
44.	Siddhartha Sanyal	Bandhan Bank chief economist
45.	Justice A.K. Sikri	Ombudsman and ethics officer of Indian Federation of Sports Gaming

International Appointments

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Kyriakos Mitsotakis	Greece's new prime minister
2.	Gitanas Nauseda	President of Lithuania
3.	Justice AK Sikri	Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) judge
4.	Ursula von der Leyen	female president of European commission
5.	Sanjeev Kumar Singla	India's Ambassador to Israel
6.	Upender Singh Rawat	India's next Ambassador to Panama
7.	Vivek Kohli	Chairman of Commonwealth Table Tennis Federation
8.	Kiran More	Interim USA Cricket Coach
9.	Sarvita Sethi	Coca-Cola Vice-President (VP) for Merger and Acquisitions (M&A)for India & South West Asia

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10.	Boris Johnson	UK's new Prime Minister
11.	Ehsan Mani (Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman)	Chairperson of the ICC Financial and Commercial Affairs Committee
12.	Mark Esper	US Secretary of Defence

Important Awards and Honours

May

Sl.No	Person	Designation
1.	Raheem Sterling	Football Writers' Association (FWA) Footballer of the Year 2019
2.	1. Alfred Brownell (Liberia) 2. Bayarjargal Agvaantseren (Mongolia), 3. Ana Colovic Lesoska (North Macedonia), 4. Jacqueline Evans (the Cook Islands), 5. Alberto Curamil (Chile), 6. Linda Garcia (United States)	Goldman Environmental Prize 2019 (Green Nobel Prize)
3.	Rapper Drake	The Billboard Music for his album 'Scorpion'
4.	A S Kiran Kumar (Former ISRO chairman)	Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Lgion d'Honneur
5.	Nileena M S	ACJ (Asian College of Journalism) Award for Investigative Journalism, 2018 for her article 'Coalgate 2.0'
6.	G D 'Robert' Govender	V K Krishna Menon award
7.	Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty	PC Chandra Purashkaar 2019 award
8.	Actress Anne Hathaway	Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
9.	Hinduja brothers	UK's wealthiest people for the third time
10.	Chhaya Sharma	McCain Institute's 2019 Award for Courage and Leadership
11.	Ajey Nagar (Indian YouTuber)	Time magazine Next Generation Leaders' 2019
12.	Dr P.K. Mishra	Sasakawa Award 2019 by UNDRR
13.	Sir Andy Murray	Knighthood from the Prince of Wales
14.	Sunny Pawar	Best Child Actor award at New York Indian Film Festival
15.	Nancy Pelosi	2019 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award
16.	Kapil Sharma	Most viewed stand-up comedians in the world by World Book of Records
17.	Chancy Chitete (Late Malawian soldier)	UN highest peacekeeping award
18.	Shyam Saran	Japan's 'Order of the Rising Sun' award
19.	Jokha Alharthi (Oman)	Man Booker International Prize for "Celestial Bodies"
20.	Hi-Tech Pipes	SAIL's 'Top Performer Award'
21.	Bharti AXA Life Insurance	FICCI Claims Excellence Award
22.	Hema Divakar	Global Asian of the Year 2018-19'
23.	Acharya Balkrishna	'UNSDG 10 Most Influential People in Healthcare Award'
24.	Nalini Malani	first Indian to win $78K Joan Miro Prize
25.	Guy Gunaratne	£30,000 Dylan Thomas prize for In Our Mad and Furious City
26.	Balram Bhargava (ICMR head)	Dr Lee Jong-wook Prize for Public Health
27.	Indian writer Annie Zaidi	$100,000 Nine Dots Prize 2019
28.	Professor N. Kumar	'Lifetime Recognition Award' by the Confederation of Horticulture Association of India

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Indian's charity in UAE enters Guinness World Records for holding longest iftar

- A charity run by an Indian in the UAE has entered the Guinness Book of World Records for its hunger relief efforts during the holy month of Ramzan in Abu Dhabi.
- The charity set the new Guinness World Records for "Longest Line of Hunger Relief Package" in Abu Dhabi.
- Pehal charitable Trust (PCT) has been founded by Joginder Singh Salaria.

Nepali teen Bandana sets new world record

- A Nepali teenager danced continuously for 126 hours to set a Guinness World Records on 'Longest Dancing Marathon by an Individual. Bandana beat the record set by Kalamandalam Hemlatha, who danced continuously for 123 hours and 15 minutes in 2011

Two Indians, among 115 UN personnel, staff honoured for sacrifice in line of duty

- Police Officer Jitender Kumar serving in the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and Shikha Garg, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) consultant attached with India's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, along with 113 UN personnel and staff, lost their lives in the service of peace between January 2018 and March 2019.
- Both are among 115 UN peacekeepers and staff honoured by the global organisation for their sacrifice in the line of duty.

NAARM gets mandate for World Bank – funded NAHEP project

- The National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) has been awarded a World Bank-funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) project. The project, which is referred to as component 2A, calls for investments in Indian Council of Agricultural Research Leadership in Agricultural Higher Education.
- With a budget outlay of Rs. 69.41 crore, the three-year project is aimed at establishing partnerships with globally recognised agricultural higher education institutions. It is also for establishing career development centres at agriculture universities.
- Besides NAARM, Indian Agricultural Statistical Research Institute (IASRI) and National Institute of Agricultural Economics and Policy Research of Indian Council of Agricultural Research will take part in the implementation of the project.

India sets Guinness World Records of 'largest laundry lesson'

- With 400 young Indian men participating across the country to learn laundry lessons to share the responsibility of cleaning clothes along with the female members of their homes, India achieved the Guinness World Records certificate for the largest laundry lesson.
- National award-winning actor Anil Kapoor joined the function which was initiated by Ariel India and hosted by Mandira Bedi. The event was part of the #sharetheload campaign.
- Earlier, the largest laundry lesson involved 318 people, achieved by Lion NANOX Team (Japan) at Lion Hirai Research Laboratory, in Edogawa, Tokyo, Japan, on November 29, 2017.

Pune scientist Ankur Patwardhan wins German chemistry prize

- In a international competition 'Elsevier Foundation-ISC3 Green and Sustainable Chemistry Challenge', a project idea by Ankur Patwardhan from Pune has bagged the second prize of €25,000.
- His project named 'Butterfly attractant for pollination and ecosystem health' is about the relation between chemistry and ecosystem. Patwardhan is currently working as head of the 'Annasaheb Kulkarni Biodiversity Department' at Abasaheb Garware College, Pune.

Bhawana Kanth becomes 1st fighter pilot to qualify to go on combat missions

- Scripting history, Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth became the first woman pilot of the Indian Air Force to qualify to undertake combat missions on a fighter jet. Kanth has completed operational syllabus for carrying out combat missions on Mig-21 Bison aircraft during day time. She is the first woman fighter pilot to be qualified to undertake missions by day on a fighter aircraft.

- Three women -- Kanth, Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh -- were commissioned as flying officers in July 2016, less than a year after the government decided to open the fighter stream for women on an experimental basis.

Statue of Unity enters 2019 World Architecture News Awards

- The world's tallest, Statue of Unity in Gujarat built by Larsen & Toubro (L&T), has entered the globally-acclaimed 2019 World Architecture News (WAN) Awards. The WAN Awards showcase the best international design in current and future projects, and the award ceremony is likely to be held in July.
- The Statue of Unity was by far one of the most complex and challenging assignments we have executed and being featured along with several other global engineering marvels is a truly remarkable achievement, not only for L&T but for the entire nation.
- The statue, designed by Maharashtra's legendary architect Ram V. Sutar, was conceived as a naturalistic depiction of Sardar Patel in his characteristic style in a walking pose, rising out of a star-shaped geometric base that covers the entire Sadhu Hill.

Winners of 2019 BAFTA Awards

The 72nd British Academy Film Awards also known as the BAFTA was held on 10 February 2019 by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts.

- BAFTA Fellowship –Thelma Schoonmaker
- Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema – Elizabeth Karlsen and Stephen Woolley for Number 9 Films
- Best Film-Roma – Alfonso Cuarón and Gabriela Rodríguez
- Best Director – Alfonso Cuarón – Roma
- Best Actor in a Leading Role- Rami Malek – Bohemian Rhapsody as Freddie Mercury
- Best Actress in a Leading Role-Olivia Colman – The Favourite as Queen Anne
- Best Actor in a Supporting Role-Mahershala Ali – Green Book as Don Shirley
- Best Actress in a Supporting Role-Rachel Weisz – The Favourite as Sarah Churchill
- Best Original Screenplay-Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara – The Favourite
- Best Adapted Screenplay-Spike Lee, David Rabinowitz, Charlie Wachtel, and Kevin Willmott– BlacKkKlansman
- Best Cinematography-Roma – Alfonso Cuarón
- Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer- Michael Pearce (Writer/Director) and Lauren Dark (Producer) – Beast-
- Outstanding British Film-The Favourite – Yorgos Lanthimos, Ceci Dempsey, Ed Guiney, Lee Magiday, Deborah Davis, and Tony McNamara
- Best Documentary-Free Solo – Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin, Shannon Dill, and Evan Hayes
- Best Original Music-A Star Is Born – Bradley Cooper, Lady Gaga, and Lukas Nelson
- Best Sound-Bohemian Rhapsody – John Casali, Tim Cavagin, Nina Hartstone, Paul Massey, and John Warhurst
- Best Production Design-The Favourite – Fiona Crombie and Alice Felton
- Best Special Visual Effects-Black Panther – Geoffrey Baumann, Jesse James Chisholm, Craig Hammack, and Dan Sudick
- Best Costume Design-The Favourite – Sandy Powell
- Best Makeup and Hair-The Favourite – Nadia Stacey
- Best Editing-Vice – Hank Corwin
- Best Film Not in the English Language-Roma – Alfonso Cuarón and Gabriela Rodríguez
- Best Animated Film-Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse – Bob Persichetti, Peter Ramsey, Rodney Rothman, and Phil Lord
- Best British Short Animation-Roughhouse – Jonathan Hodgson and Richard Van Den Boom
- Best Short Film-73 Cows – Alex Lockwood

- EE Rising Star Award (voted for by the public)-Letitia Wright

June
Awards and Honors

Sl.No	Winners	Awards
1.	Pratibha Patil (Former Indian President)	"Orden Mexicana del Aguila Azteca" (Order of the Aztec Eagle) Mexico's highest civilian honour
2.	Sheela	J C Daniel Award (Kerala government's highest honour for outstanding contribution to Malayalam cinema)
3.	SundarPichai and Nasdaq president Adena Friedman	Global Leadership Awards 2019
4.	Tayari Jones	£30,000 Women's Prize for Fiction for her novel An American Marriage
5.	Greta Thunberg (Sweden)	Amnesty International prize
6.	Prime Minister Narendra Modi	Maldives' highest honour 'Rule of Nishan Izzuddeen'
7.	Mahindra automobile (India)	Gold Award in South Africa
8.	Nirmala Sitharaman and S Jaishankar	Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)'s 'Distinguished Alumni Award'
9.	Priyanka Chopra	UNICEF's Danny Kaye Humanitarian Award
10.	Akshay Patra's school meals project	BBC World Service Global Champion Award
11.	Suman Rao (Rajasthan)	Femina Miss India World 2019
12.	Shivani Jadhav (Chhattisgarh)	Femina Miss Grand India 2019
13.	Shreya Shanker (Bihar)	Miss India United Continents 2019
14.	Akshay Patra's school meals project	BBC World Service Global Champion Award
15.	Suman Rao (Rajasthan)	Femina Miss India World 2019
16.	Social activist Makarand Tilloo	'Save Water Hero Award'
17.	Dr Gaurav Nigam	'Innovative Research Excellence Award 2019' at Asian Leadership Summit
18.	Rachna Khaira	Redink 'Journalist Of The Year' Award For 'Aadhar' Expose
19.	'Veyil Marangal' (directed by Bijukumar Damodaran)	'Outstanding Artistic Achievement' at the 22nd Shanghai International Film Festival

Indian woman crowned Miss Universe Australia

- India born Priya Serrao, whose family migrated to Australia from Middle East, has won the Miss Universe Australia title for 2019.
- A law graduate who currently works in Department of Jobs, Precincts and regions in Melbourne, Serrao was born in India. Her family later moved to Oman and Dubai before finally settling in Australia.

IIT Kanpur honours Gopichand with honorary doctorate

- India's chief national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand was bestowed upon an honorary doctorate by IIT Kanpur on the occasion of their 52nd convocation.
- The received the honour from former ISRO chairman and Chairman of board of Governors of IIT Kanpur, Prof K Radhakrishnan.
- Former President APJ Abdul Kalam and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh are past recipients of the honour.

Nirmala Sitharaman on list of 100 most powerful women influencing India-UK relations

- Nirmala Sitharaman, Finance Minister of India, is among the 100 most influential women driving the UK-India relationship forward alongside one of Britain's senior-most Cabinet ministers Penny Mordaunt.
- The '100 Most Influential in UK-India Relations: Celebrating Women' list was launched by UK Home Secretary Sajid Javid to mark India Day in the Houses of Parliament in London.

Ex-champion, Sameer Gulati claims TechGig Code Gladiators 2019

- In the 6th Edition of TechGig Code Gladiators 2019, an annual coding competition, Ex-champion, SameerGulati won the title as 'world's best coder' and took home prize money of Rs 3,00,000, a trophy and a certificate. The event was held at Reliance Corporate Park, Navi Mumbai.
- The event also hosted a total of 10 exciting technology themes include Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Chatbots, Robotic Process Automation, Fintech, Software Testing, Location Services, Amazon Alexa Skills, Internet of Things, and New Commerce.

Indian engineer wins Innovation Award in UK for neonatal breathing device

- An Indian engineer whose low-cost neonatal breathing device has saved the lives of new-born babies across small towns of India, has won the 2019 Commonwealth Secretary-General's Innovation for Sustainable Development Award in London.
- Nitesh Kumar Jangir, who created Saans as a breathing support device to tackle avoidable deaths of premature babies from respiratory distress syndrome due to a lack of immediate access to complex medical equipment, received his award in the "People" category alongside 14 other innovators from across the 53 member-countries of the Commonwealth.

44th Matri Shree Awards

- Twenty-nine journalists from print and electronic media were felicitated with Matri Shree Media Awards for their contribution towards journalism
- Apart from media personalities, a social activist has also presented the Bharat Mata shield at the 44th Matri Shree media award ceremony organized.
- Bollywood film 'Badhai Ho' was also presented the Bharat Mata shield.
- The Matri Shree Media Awards was constituted during the Emergency. The first award was presented to journalist Lala Jagat Narayan.

Amitav Ghosh conferred with Jnanpith award

- Renowned author Amitav Ghosh was awarded the 54th Jnanpith Award for his contribution to the enrichment of Indian literature in English at a ceremony here on Wednesday.
- He was conferred the award by former governor of West Bengal Gopalkrishna Gandhi.
- Amitav Ghosh is the first English writer to get this prestigious award.
- The Jnanpith award is the highest literary award in India and can only be conferred upon an Indian citizen. English language was added to the list of languages for consideration after the 49th Jnanpith Award.
- The award consisted of a shawl, citation, statue of goddess Saraswati and Rs. 11 lakh
- His recent novel "Gun Island" is set for its official launch

Former President Jimmy Carter receives statesmanship award

- Former President Jimmy Carter is being recognized for his contributions to relations between the U.S. and China.
- The George H. W. Bush Foundation for U.S. China Relations has conferred its inaugural George H. W. Bush Award for Statesmanship in U.S.-China Relations to former President of United States of America, Jimmy Carter.
- The 94-year-old will receive the award on June 12 at the Carter Center in Atlanta.
- The award goes to people who have made "profound contributions to the development of constructive and mutually beneficial relations" between the U.S and the People's Republic of China.

Flight Lieutenant Mohana Singh becomes first woman pilot to fly Hawk fighter jet

- Flight Lieutenant Mohana Singh has become the first woman fighter pilot to fly by day a Hawk advanced jet aircraft.
- She achieved the feat at the Kalaikunda Air Force Station in West Bengal. Her training involved flying both air-to-air combat and air-to-ground missions.
- She has undertaken many practice missions, which involved firing of rockets, guns and dropping high calibre bombs and also participated in various Air Force Level flying exercises. Earlier, Flight Lt Bhawana Kanth became the first daytime woman fighter pilot to fly a MiG-21 Bison.

WHO award for Rajasthan Health Department

- The World Health Organization has selected the Rajasthan government's Medical & Health Department for its award this year in recognition of its achievements in the field of tobacco control.
- The department's Additional Chief Secretary, Rohit Kumar Singh, will receive the award at a function to mark World No Tobacco Day in New Delhi. The Health Department of the State is the only government body in the country which will be awarded for its tobacco-free initiatives.

Indian billionaire M.A. Yusuffali gets first UAE Permanent Residency 'Golden Card'

- The Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship, ICA, issued the first "Golden Residence Permit" in Abu Dhabi, as part of the "Investors Permanent Residence System" implemented under the UAE Cabinet's Resolution No. 56 for 2018, which aims to help investors, entrepreneurs and qualified individuals who meet its criteria.
- UAE-based businessman, LuLu Group chairman M.A. Yusuffali has become the first expat to get the exclusive Permanent Residency 'Golden Card'.
- The first batch of 6,800 investors with Dh100 billion worth of investments will be granted the "Golden Card."

Jay-Z named world's first billionaire rapper by Forbes magazine

- Jay-Z has been named the world's first billionaire rapper in a new Forbes cover story.
- The 49-year-old Jay-Z, whose real name is Shawn Corey Carter, is the husband of American singer Beyonce.
- His superstar wife is reported to have a net worth of about $ 335 mn.

July

Sl.No	Winners	Awards
1.	NALCO	President's award for excellent CSR in social development
2.	Sir Mark Tully (Veteran British journalist)	Lifetime Achievement Award in London for his contributions to the UK-India relationship
3.	Ajay Banga (Mastercard CEO and President) Azim Premji	2019 Global Excellence Awards at its Second Annual Leadership Summit in Washington.
4.	Genesis Foundation	CSR Implementation Partner Award in the leadership category for 'Project Little Hearts'
5.	'Gully Boy' Movie	NETPAC Award for Best Asian Film at the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFAN) in South Korea
6.	Isha Kanth (Delhi)	International Court of Justice (ICJ) Internship Programme
7.	P Raghu Ram	Honorary Fellowship of The Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) of Thailand
8.	Thich Nhat Hanh (Zen Master)	First Gandhi Mandela Peace Medal
9.	'Nagarkirtan' (Bengali) by Kaushik Ganguly's	won four awards (Best Director', 'Best Actor' and 'Best Original Score') including 'Best Feature Film' at the 9th edition of the SAARC film fest
10.	Shah Rukh Khan	Honorary Doctorate from La Trobe University, Melbourne

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11.	"Find the Incredible You" campaign of the Tourism Ministry	Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Award, 2019
12.	Kapil Dev	Bharat Gaurav award
13.	Repco Micro Finance	Nabard's award for outstanding performance in terms of self-help group (SHG) linkage in Tamil Nadu for 2018-19.
14.	Hilary Swank	Leopard Club Award 2019 at Locarno Film Fest
15.	S. Sowmya (Carnatic vocalist)	Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2019
16.	Keshav Dutt and Prasun Banerjee	Mohun Bagan Ratna
17.	Priya Priyadarshini Jain	'Indian Woman of Influence' award at the House of Lords, the United Kingdom Parliament
18.	Vidisha Baliyan (Uttar Pradesh)	Miss Deaf World 2019 (held in Mbombela, South Africa.)
19.	Meryl Streep	Tribute Actor Award at Toronto International Film Festival.
20.	Sudarsan Pattnaik	People's Choice Prize at Boston International Sand Art Championship
21.	Tiruchy airport terminal	Leading European Architecture Forum (LEAF) awards under the category of 'Best Future Building Under-construction Project.
22.	Sathyamangalam tiger reserve (Tamil Nadu)	Best managed Tiger reserve award from the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change

Sangeet Natak Akademi awards for 2018 announced

- Eminent artists Zakhir Hussain, Sonal Mansingh, Jatin Goswami and K Kalyanasundaram Pillai have been chosen in the Akademi Ratna category by the Sangeet Natak Akademi for the year 2018.
- The General Council selected 44 artists from the field of Music, Dance, Theatre, Traditional/Folk/Tribal Music/Dance/Theatre, Puppetry and Overall contribution/scholarship in the Performing Arts for the Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for the year 2018.
- Diwan Singh Bajeli and Puru Dadhich have been selected for the Akademi Award 2018 in the field of Overall Contribution/Scholarship in the Performing Arts.
- Eleven eminent artists have been selected from the field of Music including Mani Prasad for Hindustani Vocal, Madhup Mudgal - Hindustani Vocal, Tarun Bhattacharya - Hindustani Instrumental - Santoor, Tejendra Narayan Majumdar - Hindustani Instrumental - Sarod. Other sub-categories include Carnatic Instrument, Other Major Traditions of Music-Sugam Sangeet and many more.
- Nine esteemed artists have been selected in the field of Dance including, Radha Sridhar for Bharatanatyam, Ishira & Maulik Shah (Joint Award) for Kathak, Akham Lakshmi Devi for Manipuri, Pasumurthy Ramalinga Sastry for Kuchipudi.
- The honour of Akademi Fellow carries purse money of Rs.3,00,000/- (Rupees three lakh) and Akademi Award carries Rs 1,00,000/- (Rupees one lakh), besides a Tamrapatra and Angavastram.

Important Committees

May

CPWD constitutes 10-member committee to bring 'Safety Manual' of dept

- The Central Public Works Department (CPWD) has constituted a 10-member committee to bring out 'Safety Manual' of the department. According to a CPWD official, the committee, headed by Additional Director General (ADG) K M Soni.
- The move is aimed at ensuring safety of engineers and workers working in various projects of the agency which comes under the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry.

Important MOU

May

IAF signs MoU with ISRO for crew selection, training for Gaganyaan Programme

- Indian Air Force has signed an MoU with ISRO for crew selection and training for the prestigious Gaganyaan Programme. Air Vice Marshal R G K Kapoor handed over the MoU to R Hutton, Project Director of Gaganyaan Programme.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address last year, had announced the launch of Gaganyaan - India's maiden human spaceflight programme by 2022.
- This programme will provide a unique micro-gravity platform in space for conducting experiments and test for future technologies.

NSIC signs MOU with Ministry of MSME for the Year 2018-19

- The National Small Industries Corporation Limited, NSIC signed anMoU with Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises for the year 2019-20.
- The MoU envisages provision of enhanced services by NSIC under its marketing, financial, technology and other support services schemes for MSMEs in the country. The Corporation projects to increase revenue from operation by 22 per cent from two thousand 540 crore rupees in the year 2018-19 to three thousand 100 crore rupees in the year 2019-20

Tech Mahindra signs Rs. 300 crore defence contract with Indian Navy

- Tech Mahindra announced its biggest defence order worth over Rs 300 crore with the Indian Navy. As part of the 'Armed Forces Secure Access Card' (AFSAC) Project, Tech Mahindra will implement RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) based Access Control System across all naval bases and ships.
- The new AFSAC Card will replace the existing paper based Identity Card for all Navy personnel including dependents and ex-servicemen. Using the CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration) level 5 processes.
- Tech Mahindra will develop a secure application to manage the access control devices, network devices and the AFSAC Card through a data center. Scheduled to be implemented over the next two years, the project will ensure smooth issuance, handling, administration, management and life cycle support of AFSAC Cards on turnkey basis.

MoU for Joint Collaboration on Cancer Research

- Department of Biotechnology (DBT), M/o Science and Technology and the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Government of India today signed an MOU for supporting joint collaborative research programmes in the area of Cancer. MOU shall help strengthen the various initiatives specifically for cancer viz. Strategizing and prioritizing cancer research, development of new and affordable technologies, jointly design and fund clinical trials, coordinate and collaborate for translational research, interventions, training of manpower and infrastructure development.
- The clinicians shall work in coherence with Researchers to identify and develop collaborative research programmes and public health initiatives for awareness of the public at large.
- Various activities like joint clinical fellowships, intensive workshops on clinical research methodologies and protocol development shall work towards creating a community of trained manpower and provide a platform to utilize their acquired skills in the best possible manner.

SBI ties up with FMCG arm of the Art of Living

- The State Bank of India (SBI) has announced a strategic partnership with the FMCG arm of The Art of Living — Sri Sri Tattva. Under this partnership, YONO users can avail a discount of 15 per cent on the entire range of products offered by Sri Sri Tattva such as food, personal care, healthcare, homecare, BYOGI apparels and Shankara skincare products

HDFC Ergo and IBM to jointly setup data lab in India

- IBM India announced that it has tied-up with HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, to co-create new Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solutions.
- Teams from HDFC ERGO and IBM Services will work together to develop and test new solutions. This will help to better address customer queries, ensure faster turnaround time and draw deeper customer insights for a better omni-channel experience.

ICICI Bank joins hands with travel portal Goibibo to launch multi-currency card

- ICICI Bank announced the launch of a co-branded multi-currency card with online travel booking portal Goibibo.
- Anyone travelling abroad, whether they hold an ICICI Bank savings account or not, can apply for the Goibibo ICICI Bank Travel Card on the Goibibo website and mobile app. The card also includes benefits of up to Rs. 20,000, including gift vouchers of Rs. 15,000 from Goibibo. Additionally, customers get 40 paise discount on currency conversion rate on loading of a minimum of $1,000.
- Further, they get the advantage of complimentary card protection from theft and loss up to Rs. 5 lakh. It also provides flat 15 per cent discount at more than 100 Indian restaurants across six foreign cities, including Kuala Lumpur, Dubai, London, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Bangkok. The card also offers travel insurance between Rs. 2 lakh and Rs. 10 lakh.

BHEL signs MoU with ARAI for e-mobility projects

- Bharat Heavy Electricals and Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), an autonomous body affiliated to the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises have signed an MoU for cooperation on various projects related to e-mobility.
- BHEL's unique strength as technology developer and implementer and ARAI's advanced facilities and expertise in design, testing and certification of mobility products, will generate synergies in implementing solutions for Electric & Trolley Bus, EV Chargers, Battery & Charger testing, etc.

DCIL inks MoU with WAPCOS to identify suitable future projects

- The Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCIL) has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with WAPCOS Limited to jointly identify suitable future projects and carry out geotechnical investigation and engineering consultancy in fields like Water Resources, Power and Infrastructure Port and Harbour dredging.
- The other areas include shallow water dredging, beach nourishment, lake rehabilitation, flood management, erosion control, river morphology and other related sectors.
- WAPCOS Limited is a mini-ratna public sector undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation

IIT Delhi to Build a Centre of Excellence for Waste to Wealth Technologies

- Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government, Prof K. Vijay Raghavan, and Director, IIT Delhi, Prof V. Ramgopal Rao, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi for setting up the CoE
- The waste to wealth mission project has been approved under the recently constituted Prime Minister's Science Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC), which is an overarching body for assessment, creation and implementation of major scientific, technology and innovation interventions for India.

CBDT and GSTN sign pact to nab evaders, reduce black money generation

- To nab tax evaders and reduce black money generation, the income tax department and Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) signed an agreement to facilitate exchange of data between the two.
- The I-T department will share key financial information, including status of I-T return filings, turnover of business, gross total income, and turnover ratio among others with GSTN, the information technology backbone of the two-year-old indirect tax regime
- The move will allow the I-T department to verify the information filed by businesses in income tax returns, compared to the annual GST returns.

Vodafone Idea signs multi-million dollar IT deal with IBM

- India's largest telecom operator Vodafone Idea Ltd announced a five-year multi-million-dollar IT outsourcing deal with tech giant IBM. Vodafone Idea is collaborating with leading global technology partners including IBM to deploy new age technologies with built-in customisations and novel innovations.
- This five-year collaboration with IBM, opens new opportunities for us to partner together in domains like cloud, AI (Artificial Intelligence) and IoT (Internet of Things). We will also be able to leverage collateral from the cloud partnership already announced between Vodafone and IBM in Europe.

E-Governance Services India ties up with IIT – Kanpur to upscale Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

- Common Service Centre's (CSC) e-Governance Services India Limited, a special purpose vehicle under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, has tied up with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Kanpur to upscale 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan'.
- 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan' is an initiative of the Ministry of HRD. It aims to find solutions to accelerate sustainable growth in rural India. Under the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, IIT-Kanpur has brought together 15 leading higher education institutions from Uttar Pradesh.
- These institutions have agreed to work with CSC for the development of villages under the scheme.

India, UK in talks to build copycat Naval supercarrier under 'Make in India

- The United Kingdom is in talks with the Indian government on building a new state-of-the-art aircraft carrier along the lines of Britain's HMS Queen Elizabeth as part of the ongoing 'Make in India' negotations,
- The talks are under way for the Indian Navy to buy detailed plans for the 65,000-ton British warship to build a so-called "copycat supercarrier" to be named INS Vishal in 2022.
- The report noted that such a new Naval carrier would serve alongside India's 45,000-ton carrier INS Vikramaditya — bought from Russia in 2004 — and the currently under-construction 40,000-ton INS Vikrant. The design for UK aircraft carriers is owned by the British and French aerospace giants BAE and Thales.

India, US agree to strengthen economic co-operation

- India and the United States have agreed to strengthen economic co-operation and bilateral trade by ensuring greater collaboration amongst stakeholders, including government, businesses and entrepreneurs.
- A bilateral trade meeting was held between the two countries in New Delhi. Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu and US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross co-chaired the meeting.

Shyam Benegal to direct Indo-Bangla film on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

- A feature film on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to be jointly produced by India and Bangladesh will be directed by acclaimed filmmaker Shyam Benegal.
- The meeting focussed on various aspects of making the feature film on the founder of Bangladesh, co-production of which had earlier been announced by the prime ministers of both the countries.

Singapore-based cloud-services provider Deskera partners with IIT Kanpur

- Singapore-headquartered Deskera, a cloud-services provider, partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur to provide small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of south-east Asia and India access to research opportunities.
- According to the partnership deal, around 100,000 SMEs associated with Deskera will be able to benefit from modern facilities offered by IIT Kanpur for industries such as manufacturing, aviation, logistics, and supply chain.
- IIT Kanpur is well-equipped with cutting-edge capabilities and will provide an additional layer of research to help enterprises in improved decision-making

Airtel to merge broadband satellite business with Hughes India unit

- Bharti Airtel has decided to merge its broadband satellite, or VSAT, business with that of market leader Hughes Communications India, to create a stronger no. 1 in the space, in a bid to increase scale, improve operational efficiencies and target new customers in areas such as in-flight connectivity.

- After a merger, Hughes Communication will own 67% share of new entity and the remaining 33% will own by Bharti Airtel.

TAFE signs MoU with PCRA to aid efficient energy utilization in agriculture

- Home-grown tractor maker Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE) and Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) have signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at promoting conservation of resources across the country.
- Under the collaboration, it is planned to jointly conduct Agriculture Workshops and Melas by involving TAFE's extensive dealership network in spreading awareness / sensitizing farmers on the advantages of better maintenance and upkeep of their tractors and implements, resulting in lesser fuel consumption and efficient utilization of resources, thereby helping farmers maximize their productivity and profitability

India, Turkey hold foreign office consultations

- Turkey's Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Sedat Onal, who is on a three-day visit to India, met Gitesh A Sarma, Secretary (West) in the Ministry, and held cordial discussions on various aspects of bilateral ties including examining opportunities for enhancing trade and investment relations**.**
- Bilateral trade at present stands at around $8.6 billion with a target of $10 billion by 2020.

WHO Partnered with IFBA for eliminating industrially produced trans fats by 2023

- Trans fat, also called the worst form of fat in food, responsible for over 5,00,000 deaths globally from coronary heart disease each year, could be eliminated from the industrially produced global food supply by 2023.
- The WHO has welcomed its partnership with the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA) to achieve this target. Eliminating industrially produced trans fat is one of the simplest and most effective ways to save lives and create a healthier food supply

Konkan Railways signs contract agreement with Nepal to supply two 1600 HP DEMU train sets

- Konkan Railways Corporation Ltd has signed a contract agreement with Nepal's Department of Railways to supply two 1600 HP DEMU train sets. These trains will be used to operationalise railway link between Jayanagar in India and Kurtha in Nepal.
- The train sets will be manufactured by the Integrated Coach Factory, Chennai. The 34 kms Jayanagar-Kurtha Railway Link has been built by IRCON with Government of India financial grant under India-Nepal Development Partnership programme.
- The agreement was signed in Kathmandu in the presence of Indian Ambassador Manjeev Puri and Nepal's Secretary, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport Madhusudan Adhikari

BhartiAirtel and HDFC Life tied up to offer insurance for prepaid customers

- BhartiAirtel and HDFC Life Insurance have tied up to offer life cover for customers who get a prepaid recharge done.
- Airtel's new Rs. 249-prepaid bundle — which will include 2 GB data, unlimited calls across networks, and 100 SMSes per day — will also offer a cover worth Rs. 4 lakh from HDFC Life. The recharge is valid for 28 days and and the policy cover till recharge is active. A customer needs to enrol for insurance after the first recharge through either an SMS, the My Airtel App.
- The insurance will renew automatically for subsequent recharges.The policy will be available to all customers aged between 18-54, and requires no paperwork or medical examination, except for a declaration of good health from the customer. The policy or Certificate of Insurance (CoI) will be instantaneously delivered digitally, and a physical copy can be provided on request.

Paytm collaborated with Citibank to launch its 'Paytm First Card'

- Paytm, has launched a credit card in partnership with global payments company Citi BankCalled Paytm First Card, this is the first card of its kind launched in India by the American card company, which has similar exclusive partnerships across sectors in the US.
- It is also the first white-label credit card of its kind to offer unlimited one per cent cash-back without restrictions that would get auto-credited to the card every month. For example, on a spend of Rs 100, a

person will get an assured Rs 1 as cash-back. The company's cash-back driven credit card comes at a time when cash-backs are drying up.

- The card will be accepted internationally and is contactless enabled.There is also a full waiver of annual fee of Rs 500 on spends exceeding Rs 50,000 per year.

HDFC partners with IMGC to provide mortgage-guarantee-backed home loan

- Housing finance major HDFC Limited has partnered with India Mortgage Guarantee Corporation (IMGC) to offer a mortgage-guaranteed home loan product.
- The partnership aims to make it possible for HDFC to further penetrate home loan market and access an enlarged customer base, helping them to own a home of their choice. This product will help HDFC to offer more loan to a home loan customer on an enhanced eligibility.
- It also helps customers to avail loans beyond their retirement period. The finer details of the product are being worked out and will be known to market soon.

Ola launches credit card in partnership with SBI

- The ride-hailing company unveiled Ola Money SBI Credit Card in partnership with SBI Cards, one of the largest credit card issuers in the country. The card is powered by payments technology company Visa.
- The SoftBank-backed cab aggregator is targeting 10-million Ola Money SBI Credit Cards to be issued by 2022.

SRFI-HCL tie-up for improving Indian squash

- The Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) announced a tie-up with HCL with an aim to improve the health of the sport in the country. Through 'HCL Squash Podium Programme', multiple tournaments will be organised at both the senior and junior level besides clinics for the existing coaches.
- SRFI president DebendranathSarangi plan to conduct 12 PSA World Tour and Challenger Tour events every year across the country.

Tech Mahindra partners with French digital content solutions firm RakutenAquadas

- IT services firm Tech Mahindra and French digital content publishing firm RakutenAquafadas signed anMoU (Memorandum of Understanding) to collaborate on building enhanced customer experience offerings.
- RakutenAquafadas and Tech Mahindra aim to build a Customer Experience Offering leveraging the suite of software that RakutenAquafadas provides for digital publishing.
- Collaboration with RakutenAquafadas will help us further drive innovation in the Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Digital Transformation space, and enable us to enhance customer experience from the forefront

Ola launches credit card in tie-up with SBI Card

- Ride-hailing company Ola has launched Ola Money SBI Credit Card in partnership with SBI Card, one of India's largest credit card issuers. Powered by Visa, the Bangalore-based company aims to provide a flexible and convenient payment system alongside several benefits to its customers.
- The company says that it offers a simplified application process with no joining fees as Ola users will be able to apply, view and manage their credit card directly on the Ola app. Ola is targeting 10 million Ola Money SBI Credit Cards by 2022. SBI Card is looking at strengthening its card portfolio through unique initiatives.

MOSPI decides to merge NSSO, CSO into NSO in a major restructuring move

- The Statistics and Programme Implementation has decided to merge the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) into National Statistical Office (NSO) in a major restructuring move.
- According to the order, Statistical Wing, comprising the NSO with constituents as the CSO and the NSSO, to be an integral part of the main ministry. The NSSO conducts large-scale surveys and brings out reports on health, education, household expenditure and other social and economic indicators. The NSSO and the CSO were functioning independently.

June

Ahmedabad, Kobe exchange LoI for sister city partnership

- Authorities from the Japanese city of Kobe exchanged a Letter of Intent (LoI) with their counterparts in Ahmedabad for a sister city partnership, which will pave the way for an enhanced economic relationship between the two vibrant cities as well as the two countries.
- The MoU will pave the way for an enhanced economic relationship between the two vibrant cities as well as the two countries.

Ministry of Shipping and IIT Kharagpur signed an MoU to set up CICMT

- A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed between Ministry of Shipping and IIT (Indian Institute of Technology), Kharagpur to set up Centre for Inland & Coastal Maritime Technology (CICMT) at IIT Kharagpur. CICMT is the first of its kind centre in India with the focus on indigenisation of ship designing, building and testing.
- The MoA was signed by IIT Kharagpur Director, Professor Partha P Chakraborty, and Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Shipping, Kailash Kumar Aggarwal in the presence of Shipping Minister Mansukh L Mandaviya in New Delhi.
- The cost of the project is Rs.69.20 crore and it is funded under Sagarmala programme. The funding for the project is for 5 years after which revenues generated from the end users will be used.
- At present, 4 European countries namely Germany, the Netherlands, Russia and Belgium have model testing facilities for ships.

Max Bupa partners with MobiKwik to sell bite-sized health insurance products

- Max Bupa, a standalone health insurer, has entered into a strategic partnership with MobiKwik, a fintech platform, to promote affordable and convenient bite sized group health insurance products for MobiKwik's 107 Million customers across the country.
- Under this tie-up, Max Bupa will come up with slew of innovative offerings, including a Cancer cover at nominal premium and a HospiCash product for MobiKwik's vast customer base.
- Priced at an annual premium of Rs. 135, HospiCash will offer Rs. 500 per day hospital allowance for upto 30 days in a year.

India to have a National Electricity Discom, NTPC-Power Grid sign MoU

- An agreement has been signed between NTPC Limited and POWERGRID for setting up National Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. (NEDCL) - a pan-India power distribution firm in an equal joint venture through JVC on 50:50 equity basis.
- The main aim is to undertake the business for distribution of electricity in distribution circles of India & related activities.
- According to the MoU signed in New Delhi, the new public sector unit will focus on aggregating electricity demand in the country and cater to it and may also take over weak electricity distribution utilities.
- It will comprise of cadre on deputation from other public sector units and is being set up at a time when the state-owned distribution companies (discoms) are struggling with their finances on account of losses and borrowings.
- In such a situation, a national electricity distribution company can procure electricity at competitive rates and help address the issue of stressed assets in power generation.

IIT Guwahati signs MoU with ISRO to set up first-of-its-kind space technology centre in the Northeast

- IIT Guwahati has signed anMoU with The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to set up an IITG-ISRO Space Technology Cell (STC) at the institute where Assam Governor JagdishMukhi inaugurated a new academic complex and research and development building.
- IITG-ISRO STC would be first of its kind in the North-east region to augment research and capacity building processes in the field of space technology.

HMSI partners with IDFC FIRST Bank to offer financing solutions

- Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) has partnered with IDFC FIRST Bank to provide financing solutions across the country.
- The two partners have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) under which facilities like loans up to 100 per cent of vehicle cost, zero processing fee, down payment of □999, and extended loan tenure of 48 months, among others will be offered to the two-wheeler maker's customers

Ashok Leyland ties up with Suryoday Small Finance Bank for vehicle loans

- Hinduja Group flagship firm Ashok Leyland has partnered with Suryoday Small Finance Bank for vehicle loans.
- The two partners have signed an initial agreement to enter a strategic financing partnership for three years.
- Under the pact, the bank will provide end-to-end financial solutions to Ashok Leyland's customers for auto loans across India.
- The partnership with Suryoday Small Finance Bank will benefit our stakeholders and customers with financial products, which are specifically tailored for hassle-free experience.

Indian Oil, BPCL, HPCL to form Joint Venture for Kandla-Gorakhpur LPG pipeline project

- State-owned oil marketing companies Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, Indian Oil Corporation and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd have inked a pact to form a joint venture company for the country's largest LPG pipeline project from Kandla in Gujarat to Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- The 2,757 km long LPG pipeline, which is expected to provide reliability in the supply chain of LPG, would cover an overall distance of 1,063 km in Gujarat, 611 km in Madhya Pradesh, and 1,083 km in Uttar Pradesh.
- As per the exchange filing, Indian Oil would own 50 per cent equity holding in the joint venture company, while BPCL and HPCL would have 25 per cent each.

MCA, SEBI sign MoU for data exchange

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for data exchange between the two regulatory organisations.
- The agreement was signed by K.V.R. Murty, Joint Secretary, MCA, and MadhabiPuriBuch, Whole Time Member, SEBI in the presence of senior officers from both the organisations.
- The MoU will facilitate the exchange of data and information between SEBI and MCA on an automatic and regular basis.
- It will enable sharing of specific information such as details of suspended companies, delisted companies, shareholding pattern from SEBI and financial statements filed with the registrar by corporates, returns of allotment of shares, audit reports relating to corporates.
- SEBI and MCA will also exchange with each other, on request, any information available in their respective databases, for the purpose of carrying out scrutiny, inspection, investigation, and prosecution

V.O.C Port inks MoU with Central Warehousing Corporation

- A memorandum of understanding was signed between the V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust and the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) to facilitate direct port entry (DPE) of cargo, which would help cut down on dwell time and costs.
- Chairman of V.O.C Port Trust T.K. Ramachandran and Managing Director of CWC Arun Kumar Shrivastava signed the MoU that would allow the CWC to operate and manage the truck terminal located opposite to the Fisheries College and Research Institute on an annual lease rental basis for 30 years. The terminal has an area of 18,357 sqm.

Indian Railways joins hands with French National Railways to develop world-class stations

- Indian Railway Station Development Corporation (IRSDC) has entered a tripartite agreement with French Railways (SNCF) & AFD, a French Agency.

- Under this agreement, French Railways will provide up to 7 lakh euros for development of railway stations in India.
- Indian Railways is involved with redeveloping and beautifying various other stations, and has set a target to redevelop scores of railway stations in this financial year.

HCL Technologies signs multi-year contract with Cricket Australia

- HCL Technologies has signed a multi-year contract with Cricket Australia, the governing body of Australian cricket.
- This is India's third-largest information technology services firm's third biggest sports deal, after Volvo Ocean Race and Manchester United (ManU).
- Before HCL, Accenture had been working with Cricket Australia for a five-year deal from November 2013. Under the deal, HCL will provide digital experience to cricket fans, players, partners, employees, and volunteers across the country and around the world.
- HCL will work on a digital core ecosystem for Cricket Australia, including properties such as the Cricket Australia Live App, cricket.com.au, bigbash.com.au, and community cricket applications such as MyCricket and community.cricket.com.au.

Tech Mahindra signs contract with Airbussports

- Tech Mahindra has announced signing of a multi-year contract with Airbus for cabin and cargo design engineering
- The contract aims to capitalise on the specialised skills and competencies in the growing cabin engineering business over the next few years.

NPCI ties up with Telangana for MeeSeva services

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has entered into an agreement with the Government of Telangana to offer MeeSeva portal users the option to pay using UPI Collect Request, RuPay Debit and Credit Cards for the services on the portal.
- The MeeSeva portal of the State government offers over 150 government services and surpassed 100 million transactions last year.
- The partnership with MeeSeva will help people reap the benefits of our first-of-its kind domestic debit and credit card payment network in India and will be a true Make in India collaboration.
- NPCI is in the process of enabling QR code-enabled payment as an additional feature on the portal. This feature would be available online as well as offline.

ICANN partners NASSCOM to develop tech, standards for IoT devices

- Global internet body ICANN and Indian IT industry body Nasscom announced collaboration to develop identifier technology that can be used for managing devices and infrastructure using internet.
- Under the collaboration, both the bodies will first focus on updating Internet of Things (IoT) devices using domain name system (DNS) even in situation when the manufacturer or supplier has closed down the business.
- ICANN - Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

NHA, ICICI Foundation to skill 15,000 personnel to implement Ayushman Bharat scheme

- The National Health Authority and ICICI Foundation have signed an agreement to train 15,000 state and district personnel and Pradhan Mantri Arogya Mitras to streamline delivery of health services under the government's flagship Ayushman Bharat scheme.
- The MoU between NHA and ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth is aimed at capacity building of health personnel at state and district levels.
- The state personnel are responsible for implementing the scheme in their respective states and Arogya Mitras are frontline health service professionals present at each empanelled hospital.
- Arogya Mitras serve as the first-point contact for beneficiaries and help them in availing the services.
- This partnership with ICICI Foundation aims to skill more than 15,000 state personnel and Arogya Mitras over a period of one year.

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July

Google partners with Cisco to roll out free high-speed Wi-Fi zones in India

- Cisco and Google announced plans to roll out free high-speed Wi-Fi zones across India with Google's gStation.
- Cisco will work with gStation platform to provide communities around the country access to a free, open, high-quality public Wi-Fi.
- The service is already live in 25 locations in Bangalore. According to Google, it will be available in 500 locations in Bangalore over the next few months.

NPCI ties up with JCB for global RuPay card

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and JCB International, along with domestic banks, have launched RuPay JCB Global Cards.
- Banks including State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Axis Bank, Union Bank of India, Central Bank of India, Andhra Bank, City Union Bank, and TJSB Bank will issue these cards, which will be accepted in India at all POS terminals and ATMs that accept JCB cards.
- It will be accepted in India at all Point Of Sale (POS) terminals and Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) that accept JCB cards.

India, Indonesia set USD 50 billion trade target by 2025

- India and Indonesia set an ambitious USD 50 billion target for bilateral trade over the next six years as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joko Widodo discussed ways to deepen cooperation in a number of key areas including economy, defence and maritime security.
- The two leaders, who are in Osaka, Japan for the G20 Summit, met in the morning and discussed ways to boost bilateral ties and enhance cooperation in trade and investment.
- According to Ministry of External Affairs, India and Indonesia set a USD 50 billion target for bilateral trade by 2025.

India signs Rs 200-crore deal with Russia to acquire 'Strum Ataka' anti-tank missile for its fleet of Mi-35 attack choppers

- India has signed a deal to acquire 'Strum Ataka' anti-tank missile from Russia for its fleet of Mi-35 attack choppers.
- The deal for the missiles is worth around Rs 200 crore and would give an added capability to the Mi-35 attack choppers to take out enemy tanks and other armoured elements.
- The Mi-35s are the existing attack choppers of the Indian Air Force and are set to be replaced with the Apache gunships being acquired from the US and slated to be delivered from next month onwards.
- India has been trying to acquire the Russian missiles for a long time but the deal has been signed under the emergency provisions after more than a decade.

India pledges to contribute USD 5 million in 2019 to UN Palestine refugee agency

- India has pledged to contribute 5 million US Dollars in 2019 to the UN Palestine refugee agency.
- The Government has increased its annual financial contribution fourfold to the UNRWA core budget, from 1.25 million dollars in 2016 to 5 million in 2018.
- Under an India-Palestine development partnership, agreements have been signed including in agriculture, healthcare and youth affairs in the last five years.

AYUSH ministry inks MoU with MeitY

- The Ministries of AYUSH and Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) inked an MoU to collaborate on the digitisation of the AYUSH sector.
- MeitY has agreed to give technical support to the AYUSH Ministry for planning and development of AYUSH GRID Project.
- In pursuance to the National Health Policy 2017 and e-governance initiative, the ministry aims to digitize the entire AYUSH, leading to transformation in field of healthcare delivery at all levels, in addition to greater research, education, delivery of various healthcare programmes and better drug regulations

SBI inks MoU with NIIF to boost capital availability for infrastructure projects

- State Bank of India (SBI) and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to boost the availability of capital for infrastructure projects.
- The scope of the MoU includes equity investments, project funding, bond financing, renewable energy support and take-out finance for operating assets, according to the joint statement issued by SBI and NIIF.
- The objective of this initiative is to aid in filling the gap at a time when the availability of equity and debt financing for infrastructure has moderated

NHAI inks deal with NIIF for funding of highway projects

- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) inked a deal with quasi-sovereign wealth fund National Investment Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) to fund large greenfield road projects, which will be executed by the highway authority in the future.
- The MoU with NIIF will provide innovative financial models including for the 24,000 km Rs. 7.5 lakh crore Bharatmala Pariyojana.
- The road sector can contribute in a big way in achieving Prime Minister's vision to make India a $5-trillion economy in the next five years.

BCC signs MoU with BRICS chamber to promote trade

- The Bharat Chamber of Commerce, (BCC) and the BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi, signed an MoU for promoting trade and investments between the BRICS countries and the eastern part of India, in particular.
- The MoU was signed by BCC president Sitaram Sharma and BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry Director General B B L Madhukar.
- The MoU will enable both the BCC and the BRICS chamber to share trade related information and exchange trade delegations among the five countries of the group.
- Members of the BRICS are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Prasar Bharati signs MoU with IIT Kanpur for research collaboration

- Prasar Bharati signed an MoU with IIT Kanpur for research collaboration in various areas, including Direct to Mobile Broadcasting, Convergence with 5G, Rural broadband, Artificial Intelligence and Next Generation Broadcasting Standards.
- Prasar Bharati CEO, Shashi Shekhar Vempati exchanged the MoU with Director, IIT Kanpur, Abhay Karandikar in New Delhi.

Samsung ties up with Paisabazaar to offer financial products on Samsung Pay

- South Korean tech giant Samsung announced its partnership with Paisabazaar.com, an online marketplace for financial products in India.
- Paisabazaar.com will now support Samsung Pay to provide users with a one stop solution to their financial requirements.
- Users can apply for credit cards and personal loans from the platform. The move will enable existing and potential users to get the benefit of opting for a host of financial services.
- Samsung Pay has been designed to be the smartest and most convenient method to make digital payments almost everywhere. Our partnership with Paisabazaar.com has helped us create a holistic platform that gives them the comfort of opting for various financial products besides using it as a payment platform.

Israel Aerospace signs $50 million follow-up deal with Indian Navy

- Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) has inked a follow-up deal worth USD 50 million to supply complementary Naval MRSAM (medium range surface-to-air missile) systems to the Indian Navy and the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders.
- The agreement involves a range of maintenance and other services for sub-systems of Israel Aerospace's naval medium range surface-to-air missile.

Telangana, World Economic Forum sign agreement on drone deliveries

- The World Economic Forum Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution Network announced that it will embark on an innovative drone-delivery project called Medicine from the Sky.
- The project will run in partnership with the State Government of Telangana and HealthNet Global and will include a comprehensive study of drone-based deliveries for blood, vaccines, medical samples and organs.
- The project will help facilitate better decision-making in healthcare supply chains, focus on "last-mile" deliveries to augment national healthcare programmes and address issues that affect the medical distribution system.

Important Summit & Conference

May

Urban 20 Mayors Summit Held in Tokyo

- The 2019 Urban 20 Summit was hosted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, led by Governor Yuriko Koike from 21-22 May 2019. The Urban 20 Mayors Summit takes place one month ahead of the G20 Summit.
- The U20 cities convey their joint recommendations in a form of a Communique, to the G20 Chair, to be presented to the G20 Leaders during the Summit. The 2019 G20 Summit will be the fourteenth meeting of Group of Twenty and will be held on 28–29 June 2019 in Osaka, Japan. It will be the first-ever G20 summit to be hosted in Japan.

Fifth Smart Cities India Expo inaugurated in New Delhi

- The 5th Smart Cities India 2019 expo, including Transport India, Solar India, Buildings India and Water India expos, was inaugurated by Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, at the Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- Organised by India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) and Exhibitions India Group, the event builds upon Government of India's 'Smart Cities Mission' through a display of a vast array of products and solutions relevant to building smart cities in India.

Taiwan Expo 2019 begins in Delhi

- Taiwan Expo 2019 began in New Delhi. Representative of Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre Tien Chung-Kwang and Chairman of Taiwan External Trade Development Council, TAITRA James CF Huang inaugurated the three-day event in the presence of Joint Secretary Praveen Bonigala and ITPO Chairman LC Goyal.
- There are 10 theme pavilions at the expo focusing on green products, health care, agriculture, tourism, biotechnology and electrical equipments. 150 exhibitors are showcasing their products in 230 stalls.The expo is open between 10 AM to 6 PM and the entry is free.

IBSA Sherpas Meet Concluded In Cochin

- The IBSA (India, Brazil & South Africa) Sherpas' Meeting, following the 9th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Meeting, was held in Cochin from May 3-5, 2019.
- Sherpas reviewed the progress made under IBSA, since their last meeting. IBSA Sherpas also reviewed the functioning of the Joint Working Groups. The Sherpas appreciated the various events organized during last one year to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of IBSA and the other events panned in this context.

The first global science exhibition in Mumbai

- India's first global science exhibition, 'Vigyan Samagam', began at the Nehru Science Centre in Mumbai.
- This multi-venue science exhibition, which will take place in planned in the four cities - Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and New Delhi - is scheduled to take place for a duration of 11 months.
- This is jointly organised by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Department of Science and Technology (DST), the funding agencies of theses projects, the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) and Ministry of Culture.

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WTO ministerial meeting of developing countries to take place on May 13-14

- The World Trade Organisation, WTO, ministerial meeting of developing countries will take place on 13-14 in New Delhi.
- It will provide an opportunity to the Ministers to discuss various issues and the way forward. On the first day, there will be a meeting of senior officers of the participating countries. Sixteen developing countries and six Least Developed Countries are participating in the meeting.

India Participates in Venice Biennale First Time in 8 Years

- The Venice International Art Exhibition or simply the Venice Biennale is one of the oldest, most important and prestigious international art exhibitions in the world started in 1895. .The 58th International Art Exhibition is being held from May 11 to November 24, 2019 curated by Ralph Rugoff.
- The theme of the 58th International Art Exhibition 'May You Live in Interesting Times'
- India is participating at the art world's oldest Biennale after a gap of 8 years since 2011.
- The India Pavilion has been curated by Roobina Karode of KNMA (Kiran Nadar Museum of Arts) on the title *Our Time for a Future Caring* which reflects upon Gandhi's values of *satyagraha* (non-violence) and unity & equality.

UN to hold 2020 ocean conference in Lisbon

- United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided to hold its 2020 high-level conference in Portugal's Lisbon to support the sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources.
- United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Lisbon, from June 2 to 6, 2020.
- The theme of the 2020 conference will be- Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions.

Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations to open in Beijing

- Conference on Asian Civilizations Dialogue (CDAC) will be held in Beijing, China. The conference will host the opening ceremony and six parallel sub-forums around the theme of Asian civilization exchanges and mutual understanding. The Asian Cultural Carnival, Asian Civilization Week, Asian Food Festival and other activities are planned to be organized alongside this conference.
- Around 1500 experts from around the world, including heads of state and high-level governmental representatives, are invited to attend the conference which seeks to promote intercultural dialogue in view of building an "Asian Community of Shared Future".
- As part of this conference, the Ministry of Education of China in collaboration with UNESCO will organize the parallel panel: *Safeguarding the Diversity of Asian Civilizations*.

2019 Meetings of the COPs to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

- The fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-14), the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-9) and the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-9) will be held from 29 April to 10 May 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The meetings will include joint sessions covering matters of relevance to at least two conventions and separate sessions of the meetings of the each of the three COPs. The theme of the meetings will be "Clean Planet, Healthy People: Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste".

India-Botswana hold Foreign Office Consultations in Delhi

- The third round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Botswana was held in New Delhi.
- The Indian side was led by Joint Secretary, East and Southern Africa in the Ministry of External Affairs Dr. Neena Malhotra. The Botswana side was headed by Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation of Botswana Government, Tapiwa Mongwa.

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- The deliberations provided an opportunity to review the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including political, economic, commercial, defence, consular and international cooperation.

11th Joint Consular Committee meet between India and Iran held in New Delhi

- The 11th Joint Consular Committee meeting between India and Iran took place in New Delhi.
- The early conclusion of Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance on civil and commercial matters and extending the longer duration of e-Visa for each other nationals on reciprocity.
- The meeting provided an opportunity to review the status of ongoing cooperation in consular and visa related issues and to discuss ways and means to further expand people to people contacts and promote friendly exchanges between India and Iran.

June

World Youth Conference on kindness held in New Delhi

- P Jindal Global University (JGU) and Delhi-based UNESCO MGIEP (Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development) will jointly organise the first World Youth Conference on kindness from August 20-23 to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- JGU will host 100 youth leaders from across the world for the three-day conference on its campus in Sonipat while a part of the conference will also be held in Delhi. The university will also organise lectures by experts on the sidelines of the conference during that period.
- The World Youth Congress 2019 is being organised on the theme 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: Gandhi for the Contemporary World: Celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.'
- The conference will culminate at New Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan with panels comprising Nobel laureates, international experts and policy makers and also representatives of youth leaders.

Conclave on 'Transforming North East India through Science and Technology' beings in Meghalaya

- In Meghalaya, a two-day North East Conclave 2019 on 'Transforming North East India through Science and Technology' began today at Shillong. It has been organised by the Institute of Bio-resources and Sustainable Development (IBSD).
- The initiative of the IBSD for organizing this conclave where leading experts and policymakers from different parts of the country along with local stakeholders come together to discuss on transforming North East India through Science and Technology.

G20 Ministerial Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth in Japan

- G20 Ministerial Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth for the year 2019 was held at Karuizawa ,Japan**.**
- The Indian delegation at the G20 Ministerial Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth was represented by Shri RK Singh, Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship. Guests were invited from Finland, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, The Netherlands and Vietnam.

The 10th Regional GRIHA Summit

- The 10th Regional Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) summit ,2019 was held in Nagpur, Maharashtra. Union Minister, Nitin Gadkari addressed this meeting.
- The theme of this year's 2019 summit was "Transformation Strategies for Built Environment".
- This theme was adopted to focus on impact of incorporating sustainability initiatives into functioning public buildings. The summit was organized with help of the Public Works Department (PwD) of the state Government.

World Food India to be held from Nov 1-4 in New Delhi

- Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal stated that The World Food India 2019 event will be held during November 1-4 in New Delhi as part of the government's effort to boost investment into this growing sector
- This will be the second edition of World Food India, with first one held in 2017 that saw the participation of 61 countries and signing of MoUs worth $14 billion.
- The tagline of the event will be "Forging Partnerships for Growth".

Cambodia to Host the 16th Asia Media Summit 2019

- Cambodia will host the 16th Asia Media Summit 2019 (16th AMS) in Siem Reap province from 11-14 June 2019, presided over by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen
- The 16th AMS, co-organized Cambodia's Ministry of Information and Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development, looks into the progresses and challenges as well as mutual sharing across the continent.
- The conference provides a unique opportunity for broadcasters in the region to share their thoughts on Broadcasting and Information.
- The 16th AMS will touch on important topics as how can we adopt digital revolution; envisioning the media in the 4 Industrial Revolution; disinformation and new media; monetization in traditional media new media; technologies for distribution of media contents; preserving our times through archives, and more.

14th Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit held in Mecca

- The OIC foreign ministers meeting, preparatory to the 14th ordinary session of the Islamic Summit conference convened in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the chairmanship of Dr. Ibrahim Ibn Abdulaziz Al Assaf, Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- Yousef Aldobeay of Saudi Arabia, an assistant secretary general of OIC, was among four special envoys for Jammu and Kashmir appointed at the grouping's summit meeting in Makkah

Global Entrepreneurship Summit Kicks Off In The Hague

- Prime Minister Mark Rutte and the American Foreign Minister Mike Pompeo opened the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in The Hague.
- Some 2 thousand entrepreneurs, investors and representatives of government organizations from 134 countries will meet and make deals at the business summit.
- The Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) 2019 is an initiative of the government of United States of America to bring together global leaders in entrepreneurship, innovation, investment and policy to support deals that matters to everyone.

Thaawarchand Gehlot leaves for Buenos Aires to participate in 2nd Global Disability Summit

- The 2nd edition of the Global Disability Summit will be held at Buenos Aires, Argentina from 6-8 June 2019.
- Social Justice and Empowerment minister ThaawarchandGehlot has left for Buenos Aires in Argentina to participate in 2nd Global Disability Summit.
- The objective of the three-day summit is to deliberate on issues across the world concerning empowerment and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and to work out a mechanism for enabling them to live an independent and dignified life. The 1st Global Disability Summit was held in London in July 2018.

16th Asia media summit kicks off in Cambodia

- The 16th Asia media summit that kicked-off in Cambodia
- The two-day summit, held under the topic of Media Digitalization Focusing on Developing Markets, was organized by the Cambodian Ministry of Information in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD),

Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit 2019 Begins in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

- The two-day Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit begins in Bishkek

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the plenary session of the SCO Summit, and will present his vision for the regional cooperation and development.
- Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will also be attending the summit. This will be the first time two leaders will come face to face after months of tensions between the two countries
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral meetings with Presidents of China and Russia at Kyrgyzstan capital Bishkek
- India and Pakistan became full members of the SCO in 2017
- SCO Founded in 2001, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Ujbekistan are the founding members of the organisation

G-20 summit begins in Osaka, Japan

- The two days G-20 Summit is underway at Osaka in Japan.
- The theme of the summit is Human-centred future society.
- 19 countries, the European Union and several special invitees are participating at the Osaka Summit
- The trilateral meeting between the US, Japan and India has commenced in Osaka, Japan, on the sidelines of G 20 Summit

July

Global Ayurveda Summit 2019 to be held at Kochi, Kerala

- The Global Ayurveda Summit Kerala features four components: an international conference, exposition, Start-up contest and a focused business to business meeting platform and the exposition and business to business meetings will enable key players in the Ayurveda and related sectors to exhibit their products and services.
- The event will ensure the participation of all stakeholders to share their views and jointly take action towards the upliftment of Ayurveda in India and globally.
- Theme of Global Ayurveda Summit 2019: 'Mainstreaming Ayurveda Startups, Innovation and Branding.'

International shark meet to be held in Kochi

- Eminent researchers from across the globe working on shark trade and representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations will meet here to discuss the priorities in monitoring shark and ray fisheries, trade and market chain assessment.
- The four-day international panel discussion is being organised at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).
- The meet, which is a first-of-its-kind event in India, would set up a platform for researchers from across the globe working on shark and ray trade to share their experience in the field.

NAM Ministerial Meeting held in Caracas, Venezuela

- Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) was held at Caracas, Venezuela. The theme of the event was: "Promotion and Consolidation of Peace through Respect for International Law".
- Now the Presidency of NAM will be given to Republic of Azerbaijan that will host the 18th Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in October 2019.

First Ever India International Cooperatives Trade Fair (IICTF) to be Held in New Delhi in October 2019

- The first ever India International Cooperatives Trade Fair (IICTF) is going to be held from October 11 to October 13, 2019 at Pragati Maidan.
- The Trade Fair is aimed at promoting cooperative to cooperative trade within India and abroad leading to enhanced rural and farm prosperity.
- The fair will provide an immense opportunity to the participants to collaborate and explore business opportunities with the Cooperative Organizations from India and abroad.

India to host 3rd global sunflower seed meet on July 19

- After China and Ukraine, India will host 3rd International Sunflower Seed and Oil Conference (ISSOC) 2019 on July 19 and 20 in Mumbai.
- The conference, hosted by Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), will see participation from global industry leaders, experts, researchers, and government representatives
- India is the largest importer of sunflower oil with imports of about 2.8 million tonnes. The global imports of sunflower oil is around 9.6 million tonnes. This shows significance of India in the global sunflower seed and oil market as every producer or exporting country in the world looks to India for a market.
- The first International Sunflower Oil Symposium and ISOA launching ceremony was held in October 2015, in Shanghai, China and the second conference was held in July 2017 in Odessa, Ukraine.
- The global sunflower seed production in the year 2018-19 is estimated at 51.41 million tonnes, sunflower oil at 19.45 million tonnes & sunflower meal at 20.90 million tonnes.

10th edition of World Tamil Conference held in Chicago

- The 10th World Tamil Conference (WTC) will be held in Chicago for four days from July 4-7
- The conference was sponsored by International Association of Tamil Research (IATR), Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA) and Chicago Tamil Sangam (CTS),
- This is the first time a world Tamil conference is being held on the American soil.
- The ninth edition was held at Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia in 2015
- Tamil Nadu Minister for Tamil Official Language and Culture K Pandiarajan released 'Sootti Magizhvom Thamizh Peyargal', a book containing 46,000 Tamil names
- The book was edited by S. Parthasarathy, founder of Valaithamizh and writer Pavala Shankari. Poet Ve. Pathumanar is the publishing editor

Second India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue held in New Delhi

- The Second India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue (IRSED) was held in New Delhi, under the chairmanship of Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman, National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog and Mr. TimurMaksimov, Deputy Minister of the Economic Development of the Russian Federation.
- The Second meeting of the IRSED focussed on six core areas of cooperation, namely, Development of Transport Infrastructure and Technologies; Development of Agriculture and Agro-Processing sector; Small and Medium Business support; Digital Transformation and Frontier Technologies; Cooperation in Trade, Banking, Finance, and Industry; and Tourism & Connectivity.

Kerala Startup Mission to host Women Startup Summit in Kochi on August 1

- Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) is hosting the Women Startup Summit on August 1, in association with the Indian Women Network floated by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), at the Integrated Startup Complex, Kochi.
- The 'Women Startup Summit 2019' aims at encouraging aspiring women professionals to take up their entrepreneurial journey and developing an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem in the State

Global Conference on Media Freedom held in London

- First of its kind Global Conference for Media Freedom 2019 was held on 10 – 11 July 2019 in London.
- The event was organised by the UK government and the government of Canada
- The Indian delegation attending the Conference included Prasar Bharati Chairman A Surya Prakash, Member of Parliament and journalist Swapan Das Gupta and Kanchan Gupta, Member, Press Council
- The UK government has committed 18 million pounds towards improving the media freedom across the world and announced the creation of a new Global Media Defence Fund.

Himalayan conclave to be held in Mussoorie on July 28

- A conclave to deliberate on the problems faced by Himalayan states will be held in the queen of hills on July 28.
- States to attend the conclave include Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur.

- The conclave will discuss methods to protect the Himalayan eco system from global warming, water conservation measures to be adopted besides working out an action plan for sustainable development in the Himalayan region and submitting its draft to Niti Ayog.

11th Mekong Ganga Cooperation Senior Officials' Meeting

- The 11th Mekong Ganga Cooperation Senior Officials' Meeting (11th MGC SOM) was held in New Delhi.
- They also discussed the Draft MGC Plan of Action (2019-22) for adoption in the 10th MGC Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok on 1 August 2019.
- India's assistance to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) under the MGC Quick Impact Project Scheme (QIPS) since its inception in 2014 is moving at a steady pace. A total of 24 projects have been completed so far, including 15 in Cambodia and 9 in Vietnam at a cost of USD 1.2 million, generating significant positive impact among beneficiary communities. In addition, currently one project in Cambodia and 3 projects in Lao PDR are under implementation.
- Other notable initiatives under Mekong Ganga Cooperation include the MGC Asian Traditional Textile Museum (MGC ATTM) in Siem Reap, Cambodia and the Common Archival Resource Centre (CERC) at Nalanda University, Rajgir.

Fuzhou (China) to host 2020 session of World Heritage Committee

- The 43rd session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee was held in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- 29 new sites were added to the list during the recent session, including two in China: a series of migratory bird sanctuaries in China's Bohai Gulf, and the archaeological site of Liangzhu in modern-day Zhejiang province, whose ruins date back more than 5,300 years.
- At the conclusion of the 43rd session, it was also announced that Fuzhou, the capital of the southeastern coastal province of Fujian, will host the committee's 44th meeting next year.
- Fujian province currently has three sites on the UNESCO list: Wuyi Mountain, added in 1999; Fujian tulou, a distinctive type of roundhouse architecture characteristic of the region's Hakka people; and danxia, a unique petrographic landform concentrated in southern China. Sanfang Qixiang, a network of lanes and alleys in central Fuzhou dating to the Tang dynasty, was added to the World Heritage Site's Tentative List in 2013, and given an Honorable Mention in 2015.

IFFI's Golden Jubilee Edition to be held from Nov 20 till 28 in Goa

- The Golden Jubilee Edition of International Film Festival of India, IFFI will be held from 20th Nov till 28th November 2019 in Panaji, Goa.
- President of Oscar Academy John Bailey and other eminent cinematographers and producers have been invited for the event. Russia will be IFFI partner in this edition.
- On the occasion, Union Minister Javdekar and Goa Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant released special IFFI Golden Jubilee poster.

Joint Statement of 13th Meeting of India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways Piyush Goyal and Secretary of State for International Trade of the UK, Dr Liam Fox, met in London for the 13th meeting of the India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO).
- India and the UK agreed to set up three new bilateral working groups to tackle barriers in specific sectors including food and drink, healthcare and data services.
- India–UK JETCO was established in 2005 for a strategic economic relationship with the UK and to nurture business and enhance bilateral trade and investment.

DefExpo India-2020 to be held in Lucknow

- The Eleventh biennial edition of DefExpo India - 2020 is scheduled to be held for the first time in Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow in February 2020.
- The main theme of the DefExpo India- 2020 will be -- India - the Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub and the focus will be on Digital Transformation of Defence.

- The exhibition will also highlight the emergence of Uttar Pradesh as an attractive destination for investment in the defence sector and act as a platform for alliances and joint ventures in the defence industry.
- The DefExpo will provide an opportunity to the major foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers to collaborate with the Indian defence industry and help promote Make in India initiative of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Important Mobile App and Web Portal

May

BSE launches 'BSE StAR MF' mobile app for its mutual fund platform

- BSE has launched 'BSE StAR MF' app to enable more participation and help mutual fund distributors process transactions faster.
- BSE StAR MF mobile app supports real-time client registration and paperless transactions, creates and uploads mandate for SIPs, generates the basket of multiple orders, tracks and allows the distributor to analyse his business at his fingertips. BSE StAR MF is the exchange's mutual fund platform which helps distributors purchase and redeem mutual fund units on behalf of their clients

June

BYPL to launch energy saving app, to begin project from Mayur Vihar

- Power distribution company BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) has tied up with several private organisations to launch a slew of initiatives including a 'behavioural energy saving app' to reduce electricity consumption.
- The app -- Susthome -- developed by BYPL and TERI to bring about a behavioural change in how consumers use electricity, will track energy consumption patterns.
- The app will guide enlisted consumers in reducing their energy consumption, carbon footprint and electricity bills by influencing their behavioural patterns. It will also provide customized solutions to make all such units energy-efficient.

AYUSH Ministry launches App to locate yoga centres, instructors

- AYUSH Ministry has launched a mobile application to enable people to locate yoga events and centres providing training and instructors. The mobile app was launched ahead of International Yoga Day on June 21.
- Yoga locator app will help people to locate yoga centres as well as yoga instructors within the preferred radius of their vicinity.It will be a permanent app which will give information to people about yoga activities happening in their vicinity throughout the year. The theme for IDY 2019 will be 'Yoga for Heart'.

US embassy launches app for students who wish to study in US

- The US embassy has launched a mobile application that gives comprehensive and latest information about studying in the United States
- The app -- EducationUSA -- was launched in collaboration with the United States India Educational Foundation and is available on both Android and iOS platforms for free
- The app will act as the first point of information for students, parents, school counsellors and other interested users who want to know about the US higher education but don't know where to begin

Important Defence News

May

Army Conducts Children Summer Adventure Camp 2019 at Manali

- Western Command Children Summer Adventure Camp 2019 is being organised at Manali from 27 May to 02 June 2019.The seven day camp is being conducted under the aegis of Rising Star Brigade.
- This camp aims to provide a wholesome outdoor exposure to young boys and girls through educational, recreational and adventure activities. A total of 218 children from various units of Western Command of Indian Army have volunteered to attend the camp.

DRDO successfully test fires Akash-1S surface to air defence missile system

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired the Akash-1S surface to air defence missile system.
- Akash-1S is a new version of the missile which is fitted with an indigenous seeker. In the last two days, this is the second successful test of the missile by the DRDO. The Akash-1S is capable of striking down enemy fighter jets and drones very effectively.

DRDO test fires guided bomb from Sukhoi combat jet

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired an indigenously-developed 500 kg class guided bomb from a Sukhoi combat jet at Pokhran in Rajasthan.The defence ministry said the guided bomb achieved the desired range and hit the target with high precision.
- The DRDO successfully flight tested a 500 kg class Inertial Guided Bomb from Su-30 MKI Aircraft from the Pokhran test range in Rajasthan. The Indian Air Force successfully test fired the aerial version of the supersonic BrahMos cruise missile from a Sukhoi jet at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.The BrahMos cruise missile travels at a speed of Mach 2.8, nearly three times that of sound.

Assam Rifles battalion, Indian Coast Guard ship sign affiliation charter

- An affiliation charter was signed between 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion of the Assam Rifles and the Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Shaurya' with an aim to enhance inter-armed forces cooperation and utilise each other's assets for training and sports. The objective of the affiliation is to promote bilateral cooperation between the Assam Rifles and the ICG in the field of exchange of information/personnel, build-up camaraderie for training, sports/adventure and sustainable development
- The charter was signed by the director generals of the two sides at an impressive ceremony held at Laitkor in Shillong. The Indian Coast Guard, with 142 ships and 62 aircraft, is one of the youngest armed force under the Ministry of Defence.
- Third (Naga Hills) Battalion Assam Rifles is the oldest battalion of the force raised in 1835 as 'The Cachar Levy' comprising 750 personnel of all ranks for guarding the Eastern Frontier of Assam from Brahmaputra river to the Cachar Hills.

Pakistan Successfully Test-Fires Ballistic Missile Shaheen-II

- Pakistan successfully test-fired a long-range ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, capable of hitting targets as far as 1,500 kilometers away, bringing major Indian cities under its range. The launch was aimed at ensuring operational readiness of the Army Strategic Forces Command.
- Shaheen-II is a highly capable missile which fully meets Pakistan's strategic needs towards maintenance of desired deterrence stability in the region.

Australia, Japan, South Korea and US kick off inaugural Pacific Vanguard naval exercise near Guam

- The United States, Japan, South Korea and Australia have kicked off “first-of-its-kind” naval drills near Guam, the U.S. Navy. The “Pacific Vanguard” exercise brings together more than 3,000 sailors from the four countries to “sharpen skills and strengthen practical cooperation at sea.
- The drills will focus on live fire exercises, defensive counter-air operations, anti-submarine warfare, and replenishment at sea.
- The Royal Australian Navy contributed two frigates to the exercise, HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Parramatta. The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force sent destroyers JS Ariake and JS Asahi, and South Korea the Republic of Korea Navy destroyer ROKS Wang Geon.

IAF successfully fires BrahMos air version missile from frontline Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft

- Indian Air Force successfully fired the BrahMos air version missile from its frontline Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft.
- The missile, designed and developed by BAPL, weighing 2.5 tonnes, has a range of 290km and speed of Mach 3 making it difficult for the air-defence elements of the enemy to counter it. One Mach is equal to the speed of sound.
- The Inidan Air Force became the first Air Force in the world to have successfully fired an air launched 2.8 Mach surface attack missile of this category on a sea target on Novemebr 2017. This was the second such live launch of the weapon. The software development of the aircraft was undertaken by the IAF engineers while HAL carried out mechanical and electrical modifications on the aircraft. The missile has been developed jointly in collaboration with Russia.

GRSE to build 8 anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft for Indian Navy

- Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE) and India's defence ministry signed a contract for construction and supply of eight anti-submarine warfare shallow water crafts (ASWSWCs) for Indian Navy.
- The contract worth Rs. 6,311.32 crore was signed today by Joint Secretary and Acquisition Manager (Maritime Systems) Ravi Kant on behalf of Ministry of Defence and S S Dogra, Director (Finance), on behalf of GRSE, in New Delhi. The first ship is to be delivered within 42 months from contract signing date and subsequent balance ships delivery schedule will be two ships per year. The project will have to completed within 84 months from date of signing the contract.
- Kolkata based GRSE has been a pioneer warship builder of the nation having delivered the highest number of warships till date since its inception as a DPSU in 1960

Defence ministry approves Navy's Rs. 3,600-crore deal with Russia for 10 Kamov-31 helicopters

- Defence ministry has approved the procurement of 10 Kamov Ka-31 Airborne Early Warning and Control helicopters for the Indian Navy. The cost of the deal would be around Rs. 3,600 crore and the 10 helicopters would be deployed on the aircraft carriers and warships of the Navy including the INS Vikrant and Grigorovich-class frigates.
- The aim of the choppers is to sanitise the air space around the battle groups led by the aircraft carriers while carrying out operations in the sea or anti-submarine warfare operations.

Indian Navy's submarine 'Vela' of Project 75 launched

- The Navy launched the Scorpene-class submarine Vela, the fourth of six underwater warships being built in India with French collaboration, with an aim to boost Indian capability to defend and secure the strategic sea lanes. The Vela submarine will undergo a number of tests conducted by the Navy before it is commissioned in the defence fleet.
- The state-owned Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited has entered into a contract for construction and transfer of technology for six Scorpene-class subs with French collaborator Ms Naval Group (formerly DCNS). INS Vela is the fourth in that series.

INS Ranjit decommissioned at Visakhapatnam

- Frontline missile destroyer of the Indian Navy 'INS Ranjit' was decommissioned at the Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam, after serving the Indian navy for 36 years.
- INS Ranjit, the third of the five Kashin-class destroyers built by the erstwhile USSR, was commissioned on September 15 1983. INS Rajat has sailed for 2,190 days, covering over 7,43,000 nautical miles, equivalent to navigating around the world 35 times and 3.5 times the distance from the earth to the moon

Indian Army to commemorate 2019 as 'Year of next of kin'

- The Indian Army is commemorating this year as the 'Year of Next of Kin' and plans to reach out to the next of kin of battle casualties, ex-servicemen and serving soldiers to inform them of entitled financial benefits, welfare schemes and help resolve pension related problems.

- Bipin Rawat, Army Chief General in January stated that the army will observe 2019 as the year for the next of kin. Last year, stress was laid on the disabled soldiers, while this year its on the next of kin of the deceased soldiers.
- It will also seek the involvement of the defence ministry, Nepal Embassy (due to several soldiers being recruited from Nepal), Sainik Boards, banks and welfare agencies such as the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS). The Directorate of Indian Army Veterans will be the nodal agency.

IAF gets first Apache Guardian attack helicopter

- US aerospace major Boeing has handed over first of the 22 Apache Guardian attack helicopters to the Indian Air Force, nearly three-and-half years after a multi-billion dollar deal for the choppers was sealed. Air Marshal AS Butola accepted the first Apache on behalf of the Indian Air Force from US Government.
- The first AH-64E (I) - Apache Guardian helicopter was formally handed over to the Indian Air Force at Boeing production facility in Mesa, Arizona, the US.The AH-64E Apache is a leading multi-role attack helicopter and is flown by the US Army.
- The IAF had signed a multi-billion dollar contract with the US government and Boeing Ltd in September 2015 for 22 Apache helicopters. The first batch of these helicopters is scheduled to be shipped to India by Jul this year.

Chinese navy launches two new guided missile destroyers

- China has commissioned two more guided missile destroyers taking the total of such warships to 20 with more in the pipeline. Two Type 052D guided missile destroyers were launched in Dalian, a coastal city,
- Their commissioning marked the 19th and 20th of launches of their kind,and are named as Tangshan and Suzhou, the report said and quoted Chinese analysts as saying that plans are afoot to build more guided missile destroyers.
- China now has 20 Type 052Ds either in active service or being fitted out for service soon. Destroyers are fast, highly manoeuvrable long distance warships which are also used to accompany the aircraft carriers.

India to host part of International Army Games

- India for the first time will host and participate in a major army competition involving eight countries, including China and Russia, in Jaisalmer. The event called the 'Army International Scout Masters Competition 2019' will be held in August this year.
- The fifth Army International Scouts Masters Competition 2019 is being held in Jaisalmer. Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe, Armenia, Belarus and China besides India are participating. The competition is being held in India for the first time under the Indian Army and being organised by its Konark Corps at Jaisalmer Military Station.
- India will host the fifth Army International Scout Masters Competition as a part of the Games.

ICGS Vigraha decommissions at Vizag

- Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Vigraha, a frontline offshore patrol vessel decommissioned on May 15th. After 29 glorious years of service from 1990 to 2019, the ship was decommissioned at the coast guard jetty. ICGS Vigraha was the seventh offshore patrol vessel built by the Mazagaon Dock Limited, Mumbai and it was commissioned on April 12, 1990.
- The ship was later based at Visakhapatnam and has been instrumental in protecting the east coast in general and Andhra Pradesh coast in particular since then.

Indian Navy successfully test-fires MRSAM missile

- The Indian Navy has successfully test-fired a Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM), achieving a significant milestone to enhance its anti-air warfare capability. The test-firing of the missile was undertaken on the western seaboard by Indian naval ships Kochi and Chennai.
- The test-firing of the missile was carried out jointly by the Indian Navy, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries.

Spanish Naval ship on Mumbai visit from May 18 to 23

- Spanish Navy ship 'Mendez Nunez' (Frigate) with a crew of 30 officers and 135 sailors is on Mumbai visit from May 18 to 23. The ship is on Overseas Deployment and is docked at the Mumbai Port Trust.
- According to the communique, Indian Naval Ships (INS) and submarines have been visiting Spanish ports during overseas deployments. The visit by the Spanish Navy ship to Mumbai would further strengthen the existing bonds between the two navies

Exercise

Indo-French joint naval exercise Varuna 19.1 begins off Goa coast

- The first part of the Indo-French joint naval exercise, Varuna 19.1 is being held off the Goa coast from 1 to 10 May 2019. The exercise will see the participation of the French Navy's aircraft carrier FNS Charles de Gaulle, two destroyers, FNS Forbin and FNS Provence, the frigate FNS Latouche-Treville, the tanker FNS Marne and a nuclear submarine.
- From the Indian side, the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, destroyer INS Mumbai, the Teg-class frigate, INS Tarkash, the Shishumar- class submarine, INS Shankul, and the Deepak- class fleet tanker, INS Deepak, are taking part in the exercise.
- Varuna 19.2, the second part of the exercise, is scheduled to be held in May end in Djibouti.

Indian Armed Forces carried out Exercise Bull Strike at Teressa Island in Andaman and Nicobar

- The military drill, called Exercise Bullstrike, was conducted to showcase joint operations capability of the armed forces. During the exercise, the army personnel got the chance to display their prowess by undertaking company level airborne operation at Teressaisland.
- A number of combat drills were carried out during the exercise, with 170 troops from the three services undertaking para drop operations in a Combat Free Fall and Static Line mode.

India, Singapore conduct SIMBEX-19 naval exercise in the South China Sea

- The 26th Edition of Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) -19 has commenced in the South China Sea. In addition to IN Ships Kolkata and Shakti, Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft P8I will also participate in the exercise along with Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) Ships steadfast and valiant, maritime patrol aircraft Fokker-50 and F-16 fighter aircraft.
- The four-day naval exercise will include various maritime combat drills such as advanced aerial tracking, coordinated targeting tactical exercises and weapon firing on aerial and surface targets

8th Indo-Myanmar coordinated Navy patrol begins

- Navy ships from Myanmar reached Port Blair to attend the opening ceremony of the 8th Indo-Myanmar Coordinated Patrol (IMCOR) which will be held from May 20-28.
- Myanmar Navy Ship UMS King TabinShweHtee (773) and UMS Inlay (OPV-54) have arrived at Port Blair on May 20 for the 'Opening Ceremony' of the 8th Indo-Myanmar coordinated patrol (IMCOR), at Andaman and Nicobar Command. Myanmar ships UMS King TabinShweHtee and UMS Inlay would undertake a coordinated patrol (CORPAT) with Indian Naval Ship Saryu under the program.
- CORPAT initiative between the two navies is meant to address issues of terrorism, illegal fishing, drug trafficking, human trafficking, poaching and other illegal activities inimical to the interest of both nations.

June

Indian Navy executes 'Operation Sankalp' for Gulf region

- Indian Navy launched Operation Sankalp in the Gulf of Oman to re-assure Indian Flagged Vessels operating/ transiting through Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman following the maritime security incidents in the region.
- INS Chennai & INS Sunayna have been deployed in the Gulf of Oman and Persian Gulf to undertake Maritime Security operations.

Current Affairs Capsule for IBPS PO Mains Exam 2019 – Part 1

The first Indian Naval Air Squadron celebrates its Diamond Jubilee

- Indian Navy's oldest Naval Air Squadron (NAS) completes its 60 years of service to the nation. NAS 550 celebrated its Diamond Jubilee on 17 Jun 19 at naval base Kochi.
- The squadron has flown 14 different types of aircraft starting with the Sea land Aircraft to the Dornier maritime reconnaissance aircraft being presently flown.
- The squadron has been part of several operations, from the 1971 Indo-Pak war to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations during the December 2004 Tsunami, Cyclone Okhi in 2017 and the 2018 Kerala floods

Army's training exercise "KhargaPrahar" in Punjab ends

- The exercise "KhargaPrahar", which began on May 27, was undertaken in the plains of Punjab by various units and formations of Army's Kharga Corps.
- A major training exercise conducted by the Indian Army in Punjab ended.
- The components of the Indian Air Force also participated in the exercise.
- The exercise setting also incorporated aspects of joint training wherein para drops from Indian Air Force aircraft were carried out and simulated battlefield air strikes were conducted in support of ground forces

India-France to Hold Mega Air Exercise "Garuda VI" in July

- The Air Forces of India and France will carry out a two-week-long mega air exercise "Garuda VI" beginning July 1, 2019 at an air base in France to further boost to military-to-military ties between the two countries.
- From Indian side, a fleet of Sukhoi 30 fighter jets will engage in dogfights with France's Rafale multirole aircraft in simulated scenarios as part of the exercise.

India tests hypersonic demonstrator vehicle launched from Agni I platform

- India was conducted a successful first test flight of the indigenously developed Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) from a base off the Odisha coast.
- The only other countries that possess this technology are the US, Russia and China
- The HSTDV is an unmanned scramjet (allowing supersonic combustion) demonstration vehicle that can cruise up to a speed of mach 6 (or six times the speed of sound) and rise up to an altitude of 32. km in 20 seconds
- It is being developed by DRDO with assistance from Israel and the UK and Russia.

OPERATION SUNRISE – 2 carried out by India and Myanmar Armies

- The Indian and Myanmar armies carried out "Operation Sunrise -2" from May 16th in their respective borders in mutual military action moves. The operation targeted on several militant groups operating in Manipur, Nagaland and Assam
- The first phase of "Operation Sunrise" was conducted three months ago along the Indo-Myanmar border, during which a number of camps of north-east-based militant groups were busted

ICG co-hosts 12th ReCAAP ISC capacity building workshop in capital

- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) will be co-hosting 12th Capacity Building workshop with Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) The
- ReCAAP is the first regional Government-to-Government agreement to deal with piracy and armed robbery at sea in Asia.
- Presently 20 countries are members of ReCAAP. India played an active role in the setting up and functioning of ReCAAPISC along with Japan and Singapore. India has hosted this workshop earlier in November 2011 at Goa and December 2017 at New Delhi.

Air forces of India, France to participate Garuda-VI in joint drill from July 1-12

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) will participate in a bilateral exercise with the French Air Force called exercise, Garuda-VI, from July 1-12.
- This is the sixth edition of exercise Garuda and is being planned at French Air Force Base, Mont-de-Marsan in France. The last exercise, Garuda V, was held at Air Force Station Jodhpur in June 2014.

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- IAF contingent comprises of 120 air-warriors and four Su-30 MKI along with an IL-78 Flight Refueling aircraft, which shall participate during the exercise.

July

LCU L56 commissioned into Indian Navy

- The sixth of eight indigenously built Landing Craft Utility (LCU) MK IV class ships 'LCU L 56' was commissioned into the Indian Navy by Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C), Eastern Naval Command, at Visakhapatnam.
- The LCU L56 is an amphibious ship with its primary role being transportation, deployment and recovery of main battle tanks, armoured vehicles, troops and equipment from ship to shore and vice-versa
- Indigenously designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE), Kolkata
- GRSE (Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers) become the first shipyard in the country to have built the 100th warship.

India all set to launch first-ever space war exercise 'IndSpaceEx'

- India is all set to launch first ever space war exercise months after success of Mission Shakti. Joint Space Doctrine can also be launched after space war exercise. This exercise will help India to prepare for future space wars. The entire program has been prepared according to the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- Ministry of Defence will organize exercise with all three forces together and draw up future plans of any such eventualities. As per a media report, this exercise has been named 'IndSpaceEx'.
- After Mission Shakti India had become fourth country in the world after Russia, USA and China to have ASAT power

User-Friendly Interface Defence Production Dashboard Launched

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has unveiled a Dashboard of Department Defence Production (DDP) for effective monitoring of various initiatives and schemes taken up by the Ministry of Defence.
- Rajnath Singh launched Department of Defence Production Dashboard -http://ddpdashboard.gov.in for effective monitoring of various initiatives and schemes of the department.
- The dynamic online dashboard shows all key data of the nation's defence manufacturing sector.

HAL delivers Chetak helicopter to Indian Navy

- State-run Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) delivered a Chetak helicopter to the Indian Navy, with the latest communication and navigation systems.
- The HAL entered into a contract with the Indian Navy in the year 2017 to supply 8 Chetak helicopters by August 2020, with the first two by August 2019.
- The remaining seven helicopters will be delivered by August 2020.

INS Sagardhwani embarks on mission Sagar Maitri

- INS Sagardhwani, an oceanographic research vessel of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, embarked on a two-month-long Sagar Maitri Mission-2 from Southern Naval Command in Kochi.
- Sagar Maitri is a unique initiative of the DRDO which aligns with the broad objective of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policy declaration 'Safety And Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR) to promote closer cooperation in socio-economic aspects as well as greater scientific interaction, especially in ocean research among Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) countries.
- The other IOR countries include Oman, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Myanmar.
- The programme also aims at establishing long-term scientific collaboration with these countries in the field of 'Ocean Research & Development' and data collection with a focus in the Andaman Sea.

Abu Dhabi to host first ISA's joint security exercise ISALEX19

- The first edition of the joint security exercise of International Security Alliance (ISA) named ISALEX19 kicked off in Abu Dhabi, UAE on June 30, 2019 to test the readiness of the different teams and to evaluate the tools, strategies and procedures developed jointly between member countries.
- The International Security Alliance was launched in Abu Dhabi in 2017
- The alliance now comprises nine countries, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, France, Italy, Spain, Senegal, Singapore, and the Slovak Republic.

India successfully tests vertical steep dive version of Brahmos missile

- India has successfully test-fired a vertical deep dive version of the indigenous BrahMos supersonic missile
- CEO of BrahMos Aerospace, Sudhir Kumar Mishra, stated that the upgraded version of the world's fastest supersonic cruise missile which has an enhanced range of up to 500 km was also ready.
- India has attained the status of becoming the only country in the world to integrate long-range missiles onto fighter jets with the test-firing of the BrahMos missile from a Sukhoi 30 aircraft of the Indian Air Force

BSF launches operation 'Sudarshan' to fortify Pakistan border in Punjab and Jammu

- The Border Security Force (BSF) has launched a massive exercise, code named 'Sudarshan', to fortify the 'anti-infiltration grid' along the Pakistan border in Punjab and Jammu
- The operation was launched on July 1 and will cover the entire over 1,000-kms length of the India-Pakistan International Border.
- While Jammu shares about 485-kms of the sensitive IB with Pakistan, about 553-kms of the front is in Punjab.

Indian Army to buy American howitzer ammo for long-range accurate strikes

- Indian Army is in the process of acquiring Excalibur guided long- range artillery ammunition which can strike targets more than 50 km away.
- It can be busted in the air and after its penetration into bunker-type structures by using its different fuses.

DRDO carries out three successful Nag missile tests in one day in Pokhran

- The Defence Acquisition Council has last year approved the procurement of DRDO's designed and developed NAG Missile System (NAMIS) at the cost of Rs 524 crore.
- The system includes a third generation Anti-Tank Guided Missile, the NAG, along with the Missile Carrier Vehicle (NAMICA). The NAG missile is a third generation anti-tank guided missile, which has top attack capabilities that can effectively engage and destroy all known enemy tanks during day and night.
- The successful induction of the NAG missile into the Army is expected to give a quantum boost to the Army's capability against enemy armour.
- Nag was one of the first five strategic missiles planned to be developed under the Integrated Missile Development Programme initiated in the 1980s.
- The other missiles developed under the project include the Agni, Prithvi and Akash and all three of them have been successfully developed and inducted into the armed forces.

Indian, Chinese Army To Conduct 'Hand-in-Hand' Military Drills In Meghalaya

- The military drill between the two countries according to North East Now, was resumed last year post a freeze over the Doklam stand-off. The joint military exercise "Hand-in-Hand" will be held at Umroi near Shillong in Meghalaya.
- The last exercise, which was the seventh edition, was held at Chengdu in December 2018.
- The hand-in-hand joint exercise was started in 2007 in Kunming but was halted after the Chinese troops came to Belgaum in Karnataka for the second edition.

Important Science and Technology

May

ISRO launches earth observation satellite RISAT-2B

- Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully launched its earth observation satellite RISAT-2B from Sriharikota. ISRO's trusted workhorse PSLV-C46 carrying RISAT-2B blasted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.
- The 615 kg satellite was released into the orbit 15 minutes after the lift-off. RISAT-2B meant for application in fields such as surveillance, agriculture, forestry and disaster management support. It will replace the RISAT-2, which was launched in 2009.
- There are several new features in RISAT-2B, it is having expanded Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) making it an advanced earth observation satellite, operating in spotlight mode, mode and mosaic mode.

ISRO plans to conduct seven mega missions over next 10 years

- Space Agency ISRO, which is gearing up for the ambitious Chandrayaan-2 this July. It's planning to accomplish six other mega missions over the next 10 years, apart from Chandrayaan-2. Of these, only two have been defined — XPoSat and Aditya-L1 missions.
- The four other undefined missions, which are in the planning stage, are: Mangalyaan-2, Venus mission, Lunar Polar Exploration and Exoworlds. The XPoSat, or the X-ray Polarimeter Satellite, is a dedicated mission to study polarisation.The spacecraft will carry Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays (POLIX) payload which will study the degree and angle of polarisation of bright X-ray sources in the energy range 5-30 keV. The satellite has a mission life of five years.
- Aditya-L1 is an important mission planned for 2021, to study the solar corona. The spacecraft will be placed in a halo orbit around the Sun-Earth Lagrangian point (L1), about 1.5 million km from the Earth

China launches two satellites for scientific experiments

- China successfully sent two Tianhui II-01 satellites into orbit from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China's Shanxi Province.
- The satellites were launched by a Long March 4B carrier rocket, which was the 303rd mission of the Long March series carrier rockets. The satellites will be used for scientific experiments, land resource survey, geographic survey and mapping.

ISRO Launch of RISAT-2BR1 Radar Imaging Satellite to Happen by End-May 2019

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch its latest radar imaging satellite (RISAT), the RISAT-2BR1, by the end of next month. The launch will reportedly take place on May 22, as per the present schedule.
- India will use one of ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) reusable rockets, which have offered significant progress and sophistication of technology in terms of advancement in space technologies.

Momo-3 is Japan's first private rocket to reach space

- A Japanese aerospace startup successfully launched a small rocket, making it the country's first privately developed model to reach outer space.
- The unmanned rocket launched from its test site in Taiki on the northern Japanese island ofHokkaido and it reached about 110 km in altitude before falling into the Pacific Ocean after 10 minutes of flight time.

SpaceX launched the Falcon 9 rocket with Dragon spacecraft

- Elon Musk's Space Exploration Technologies Corp. launched its 17th commercial resupply mission to the International Space Station for longtime customer NASA
- The 213-foot-tall (65-meter) rocket lifted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. Dragon will deliver almost 5,500 pounds of science, supplies and hardware to the Space Station

The US Air Force successfully tested a laser system to shoot down missiles

- The US Air Force has successfully used a laser weapons system to shoot down multiple missiles while in flight. The system is designed to eventually be mounted on aircraft to be used to protect the vehicle from attacks. The Air Force Research Laboratory conducted the test at the US Army's White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.
- The system, called the Self-Protect High Energy Laser Demonstrator (SHiELD), was used from the ground, and was used to shoot down "multiple air launched missiles in flight."

- SHiELD also not the only laser technology that's in testing by the US military — the US Army tested a system mounted on an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter last summer, and the US Navy is working with Lockheed Martin on its own systems to install on warships.

IIT-B researchers develop 'Made in India' microprocessor

- Engineers from the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) have developed a microprocessor called AJIT, the first to be conceptualised, designed, developed and manufactured in India.
- The innovation, which has brought industry, academia and the government together, could reduce the country's dependence on imports.
- The project was funded by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and IIT Bombay. Powai Labs, a Mumbai-based company, has invested in the venture, and will own, market and support the product.

Amazon's Jeff Bezos unveils lunar lander project 'Blue Moon'

- Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world and head of space company Blue Origin, announced his intent to participate in the new race to the Moon with a high-tech lander to carry vehicles and equipment.
- Blue Moon is a vehicle and has been under development for the last three years. However, no specific date of launch has been announced by Jeff yet. The vehicle will be capable of carrying scientific instruments, four self-driving rovers and a future pressurised vehicle for humans.

Samsung has launched a new sensor for ultra-high resolution mobile photography

- Samsung Electronics Co has introduced the world's highest-resolution image sensors that will help smartphones capture images at vibrant ultra-high resolution. Samsung Electronics has come up with ISOCELL Bright GW1, which is a 64MP image sensor.
- Samsung's 0.8 micrometer pixel image sensor line up, which is now available from existing 20 megapixel to the new ultra-high 64 megapixel resolutions.
- ISOCELL Bright GM2 is a 48Mp image sensor that also adopts Tetracell technology in low-light environments and a remosaic algorithm in well-lit settings, bringing highly-detailed pictures with natural and vivid colors. GM2, like GW1, adopts DCG as well for added performance and Super PD for fast autofocus.

ISRO launched 'India Young Scientist Programme' (Yuvika-2019)

- Indian Space Research Organisation has launched a special programme for School Children called "Young Scientist Programme" "YUvaVIgyaniKAryakram"from this year, in tune with the Government's vision "Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan".
- The programme will be of two weeks duration during summer holidays (second half of May 2019) and the schedule will include invited talks, experience sharing by the eminent scientists, facility and lab visits, exclusive sessions for discussions with experts, practical and feedback sessions.
- It is proposed to select 3 students each from each State/ Union Territory to participate in this programme covering CBSE, ICSE and State syllabus. ISRO Chairman Dr K. Sivan inaugurated ISRO's Young Scientist Programme called 'Yuvika 2019' at SatishDhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

DRDO successfully conducts flight test of ABHYAS drone from ITR in Odisha

- India successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS - High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) from a test range in Odisha. The trial, carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Balasore, was tracked by various radars and electro-optic systems.
- The configuration of ABHYAS is designed on an in-line small gas turbine engine and it uses indigenously developed MEMS based navigation system.

Isro's new commercial arm NewSpace India officially inaugurated

- NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro), was officially inaugurated in Bengaluru. NSIL's main objective is to scale up industry participation in Indian space programmes

- NSIL was inaugurated by Isro's honorary adviser, Dr K Kasturirangan in the presence of chairman Dr K Sivan.
- NSIL was incorporated on March 6 2019, for commercially utilising research and development activities carried out by ISRO in the area of space with an authorised share capital of Rs 100 crore and initial paid up capital of Rs 10 crore.
- NSIL will act as an aggregator for all space related activities in industry and develop private entrepreneurship in space related technologies. Specifically, it will be responsible for manufacturing the and production of Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) through technology transfer mechanisms.

ISRO chairman flags off shipment of India's largest liquid hydrogen storage tank

- ISRO Chairman K Sivan flagged off the shipment of India's largest liquid hydrogen storage tank at the VRV Asia Pacific's manufacturing plant at Sri City in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.
- VRV Asia Pacific manufactured the storage tank with a Liquid Nitrogen (LIN) shield, in a collaborative effort with Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, under the Make in India initiative.
- The storage capacity of the tank is 120 kilo liters. Liquid hydrogen is used as fuel for satellite launch vehicles.

June

China tests latest submarine-launched ballistic missile

- China has successfully tested its latest submarine-launched ballistic missile, the JL-3.
- The SLBM might have a range of up to 14,000 kms and be equipped with 10 independent guided nuclear warheads

NASA's Astrobee cube robot flies in space for the first time

- A cube-shaped free-flying robot named 'Bumble' has become the first Astrobee robot to fly under its own power in space.
- NASA dispatched two of the three Astrobee robots to the International Space Station in April 2019. Bumble is the first one to take the flight. Other Astrobee robot dispatched is named 'Honey' while the third robot 'Queen' will be dispatched in July 2019.
- These Astrobee are free-flying robot system to help researchers in testing new technologies in zero gravity and perform routine work alongside astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS).

India Test Fires Brahmos Supersonic Cruise Missile from Chandipur Test Range

- Supersonic cruise missile BrahMos was test fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Odisha.
- The anti-ship version of the missile was launched around noon from the launch complex-3 of the ITR, Defence Research and Development (DRDO). BrahMos is a joint venture between the DRDO and the NPOM of Russia.
- The highly versatile BrahMos has been operationalised in the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force.

China gains new flexible launch capabilities with first sea launch

- China successfully launched a Long March 11 solid rocket from a sea launch platform, bringing its burgeoning space program new, flexible launch capabilities. The Long March 11 solid propellant light launch vehicle lifted off from a mobile launch platform in the Yellow Sea.
- The satellites included Bufeng-1A and B, designed by the China Academy of Space Technology to monitor ocean wind fields and improve typhoon monitoring, Xiaoxiang-1-04, a small satellite developed by Changsha-based private firm Spacety, an experimental communications satellite, Tianqi-3, developed by GuodianGaoke, and two 'Tianxiang' Ka-band communications test satellites for the China Electronic Technology Group.

Chandrayaan-2 to be launched on July 15: ISRO

- Isro officially announced that the Chandrayaan-2 will be launched at 2.51 am on July 15 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- Chandrayaan-2 will have three modules, Orbiter, Lander (Vikram), and Rover (Pragyan). These are designed to carry out various experiments, including mapping of the surface, minerals, chemical composition, detection sparse water molecules above the lunar surface and rock formations.
- The cost of the mission-including foreign service for navigation-is Rs. 603 crore, an additional Rs. 375 crore will be the launch cost
- The total weight of the spacecraft will be 3.8 tonne
- The lunar landing is expected to take place on 6 or 7 September on the unexplored south polar region of the moon.
- Chandrayaan-1, which was launched on 22 October 2008, orbited the moon more than 3,400 times and played a crucial part in the discovery of water molecules on the lunar surface

HCL to roll out "Tech Bee" programme

- HCL Technologies is all set to roll out "Tech Bee", a company initiative under which it trains and hires students who have completed Plus Two, across several states
- Tech Bee, HCL's early career programme provides students an opportunity to start early, become financially independent and trendsetters. Enrolled students are paid stipend of □10,000 per month, she explained.

India to launch first solar mission Aditya-L1 in 2020

- Indian Space Research Organisation has announced that India will launch its first mission to study the sun named Aditya-L1 in the year 2020.
- Aditya-L1 is meant to observe the solar corona and the aim of the mission is to keep a permanent eye on the sun without any disturbance
- Aditya-L1 mission is expected to be inserted in a halo orbit around the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) - which is 1.5 million km from the earth

Indigenously developed nuclear-capable missile Prithvi-II test fired successfully

- India successfully test-fired indigenously developed nuclear-capable missile Prithvi-II as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range off the Odisha coast
- The trial of the surface-to-surface missile, which has a strike range of 350 km, was carried out from a mobile launcher from Launch Complex-III of the Integrated Test Range, ITR at Chandipur.
- The missile is capable of carrying 500 to 1000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines

July

5th Dharma-Dhamma conference to be held in Rajgir

- The fifth international Dharma-Dhamma conference was inaugurated on by Union Minister of State Kiren Rijiju in the presence of Sri Lanka's Home Minister Gamini Jaiwickrama Perera, Bhutan's Home and Culture Minister Lyonpo Sherub Gyeltshen, senior BJP leader Ram Madhav and Juna Akhada's Awadheshananda Giri Ji Maharaj.
- The main purpose of this conference is to address people about the terror, violence and global warming prevalent in the world.
- This two-day conference will address the subjects of Sat-Chit-Ananda and Nirvana which are the pivotal topics of Buddhism. This conference is being hosted by Rajgir for the second time.

IIT Kharagpur team develops app CARE4U for elderly people

- In a move to help geriatric care, students of IIT Kharagpur have built an app which will inform the caregiver when the elderly person falls down with the exact location.
- CARE4U' the android-based app will connect the caregiver to the elderly person. The app has been built by an interdisciplinary team of the second year B-Tech students of the institute.

- The app has a record of medical histories, allergies' account, an SOS button, real time location tracking and so on.

India Successfully Launches Chandrayaan-2 from Sriharikota

- India successfully launched its second moon mission Chandrayaan-2 from its most powerful rocket GSLV-MkoIII-M1with a plan to land the rover on September 7 in the unexplored lunar south pole, exactly a week after the liftoff was aborted due to a technical snag.
- The total cost of the 3,850-kg Chandrayaan-2 mission is Rs 978 crore.
- Once Chandrayaan-2 reaches to south pole region of lunar terrain, India will become the fourth ever nation to have a soft-landing on the moon.
- Other three nations are United States, China and Russia.

IIT Madras students develop 'Agricopter' to eliminate manual spraying of pesticides in agricultural farms

- Students at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras have developed a "smart agricopter" to eliminate manual spraying of pesticides in agricultural fields and help identify crop health by using a imaging camera.
- The innovation will allowing spraying pesticides ten times faster and with 100% precision at the same cost as manual spraying.
- Students at the Centre For Innovation, IIT Madras, identified manual pesticide spraying as an extremely hazardous activity as it endangered farmers' and labourers' health and resulted in a massive overuse of toxic chemicals.
- The advanced multispectral imaging camera allows the hexacopter drone to make smart maps of farmland based on crop health and its completely autonomous pesticide refilling system ensures entire spraying is completely autonomous.

Japan's Hayabusa2 probe touches down on asteroid

- Japan's Hayabusa2 probe made a "perfect" touchdown on a distant asteroid Ryugu, collecting samples from beneath the surface in an unprecedented mission that could shed light on the origins of the solar system
- This is the second time Hayabusa2 has touched down on the desolate asteroid Ryugu, some 300 million kilometres from Earth.
- Ryugu, which means "Dragon Palace" in Japanese, refers to a castle at the bottom of the ocean in an ancient Japanese tale.
- The Hayabusa2 mission was launched in December 2014, and has a price tag of around $270 million.

Indian scientists develop wonder material 'black gold'

- Indian scientists have tinkered with the chemistry of the yellow metal and have turned it into 'black gold'.
- They claim that it can be potentially used for applications ranging from solar energy harvesting to desalinating seawater.
- Scientists at the Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) used gold nanoparticles and by rearranging size and gaps between them developed a new material, which has unique properties such as capacity to absorb light and carbon dioxide.
- Gold does not have these properties, therefore 'black gold' is being called a new material. In appearance it is black, hence the name 'black gold.'

Russia Launches Spektr-RG, a New X-Ray Observatory, into Space

- A Russian and European all-sky-survey satellite is safely in space following a successful launch on a Proton rocket.
- The Spektrum-Röntgen-Gamma mission, also known as Spektr-RG, is a joint project between the Russian space agency, Roscosmos, and the German space agency, DLR. Spektr-RG launched to space from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

- The spacecraft is expected to detect 100,000 galaxy clusters, 3 million supermassive black holes, tens of thousands of star-forming galaxies, the presence of plasma (superheated gas) and many more types of objects.
- The observatory includes two X-ray mirror telescopes, called ART-XC and eROSITA. ART-XC (a Russian payload) will examine the higher energies of X- rays, up to 30 keV, while eROSITA (Extended Roentgen Survey with an Imaging Telescope Array) is optimized for an energy range of 0.5 to 10 keV.

Startup iSpace achieves China's 1st private satellite launch

- Chinese aerospace startup iSpace has successfully launched two satellites into space, marking the first successful orbital launch by a privately funded firm in China.
- The satellites were carried aboard the startup's Hyperbola-1 rocket.
- Earlier, Chinese aerospace startups LandSpace and OneSpace had attempted orbital launches in October 2018 and March 2019 respectively but were unsuccessful

Important Ranking and Indexes

May

Index	India's Rank	Top	Indicators
Kids Right Index	117 / 181	Iceland	5
IMD World Competitiveness Ranking	43	Singapore	-

Reliance Industries overtakes Indian Oil to become largest company by revenue

- Richest Indian Mukesh Ambani's oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries has toppled state-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) to become the country's biggest company by revenue.
- Reliance in the 2018-19 fiscal year that ended March 31, reported a turnover of Rs 6.23 lakh crore. In comparison, IOC posted a turnover of Rs 6.17 lakh crore for the fiscal, according to regulatory filings by the two companies.
- It was also the most profitable company in the country with a net profit of more than double that of IOC in FY2019

India was 4th biggest military spender last year

- India was the world's fourth biggest military spender last year behind the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia, according to new data think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released. India was the fifth largest military spender in 2017. According to the SIPRI data, China was the second-largest military spender last year. Beijing increased its military expenditure by 5% to $250 billion in 2018. It accounted for 14% of global military spending. In contrast, India's military spending went up by 3.1% to $66.5 billion. India accounts for 3.7% of the global defence spending.

PM Narendra Modi 2nd most followed politician globally on social media

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the second most followed politician in the world on social media after former US President Barack Obama.
- Modi has a total audience of 110.9 million on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Obama's total following stood at 182.7 million, the report released by digital marketing platform SEMrush. Narendra Modi has overtaken the present US President Donald Trump who has 96 million followers globally.

TCS overtakes RIL to become most valued company again

- Software services major Tata Consultancy Services reclaimed the status of the country's most valued firm by market valuation, surpassing Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL). RIL's market valuation dropped to Rs. 7,95,628.55 crore on the BSE. The market capitalisation (m-cap) of TCS stood at Rs. 8,13,779.67 crore, which is Rs. 18,151.12 crore more than that of RIL's valuation.

Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi Airport ranked among top 10 in the world

- Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport has been ranked as the world's eighth best in a survey conducted by AirHelp.

- According to the survey, Hamad International Airport in Doha in Qatar was rated the world's best airport with 8.39 out of 10, followed by Tokyo International Airport in Japan and Athens International Airport in Greece.
- The Hyderabad airport was ranked eighth, with a score of 8.27 out of 10, just below Singapore's Changi Airport and above the Tenerife North Airport in Spain
- Kuwait International Airport and Lisbon Portela Airport in Portugal were given the least scores in the survey.
- The New Jersey Hub was ranked as the worst airport in the United States (US) in the 2019.
- Qatar Airways ranked as the top airline for the second consecutive year, followed by American Airlines, Aeromexico, SAS Scandinavian Airlines, and Qantas in the top five.
- Hamad International Airport, Qatar (DOH) ranked as top.

June

Mumbai among top 20 most expensive cities in Asia for expatriates

- Mumbai is India's most expensive city and among the top 20 costliest cities surveyed in Asia for expatriates, with residential housing prices among the highest in the world, according to a survey by global consulting leader Mercer.
- According to Mercer's 25th Annual Cost of Living Survey, Mumbai fell 12 spots and was ranked at the 67th position out of the 209 cities surveyed.
- Other Indian cities in the list include New Delhi at 118th place, Chennai (154), Bengaluru (179) and Kolkata (189). All four have dropped in ranking from last year.

Maharashtra ranks on top with 3,661 startups, Karnataka follows

- Maharashtra ranks on top with 3,661 startups recognised by the government followed by Karnataka with 2,847, New Delhi with 2,552 and Uttar Pradesh by 1,566.
- A total of 19,351 startups across the country have been recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

Kalu in Rajasthan is India's best police station

- The Kalu police station in Bikaner district of Rajasthan has been ranked as number 1 police station ofIndia in 2018, as per the internal survey conducted by the Union Home Ministry**.**
- The Campbell Bay in Nicobar district has been ranked second while Farakka police station inMurshidabad district of West Bengal is ranked third.
- The home ministry had started to rank police stations since 2016 following directions from PM Modi at the DGP conference in Kutch, Gujarat, in 2015.
- The 2018 ranking covered 15.666 police stations based on its performance in crime prevention, investigation and disposal of cases, crime detection, community policing and maintenance of law and order, infrastructure as well as citizens feedback

Kerala tops health rankings; UP, Bihar worst performers

- Kerala took the top spot among larger states for overall performance on health indicators in a NITI Aayog report, followed by Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, while Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha languish at the bottom.
- The index analyses overall performance and incremental improvement in the States and the Union Territories for the period with 2015-16 as the base year and 2017-18 as the reference year.
- The "Healthy States, Progressive India" report is an annual systematic performance tool to measure the performance of the States and UTs on their year on year incremental change in health outcomes, as well as, their overall performance with respect to each other.
- Among the smaller states, Mizoram ranked first in overall performance, while Tripura and Manipur were the top two states in terms of incremental performance. Sikkim and Arunchal Pradesh had the biggest decrease in overall health index scores.

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- Among the UTs, Chandigarh ranked first in overall performance, while Dadra and Nagar Haveli improved the most.
- Haryana, Rajasthan and Jharkhand are the top three ranking states in terms of annual incremental performance
- The report has been prepared by NITI Aayog in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with technical assistance from the World Bank**.**
- The Index ranks the States and Union Territories based on 23 health-related indicators

India is cheapest solar energy producer; beats China, UK, US among others

- India is now the forerunner in producing solar power at lowest cost globally and is far ahead of other nations in low average production costs.
- Beating countries like China, which usually is the cheapest manufacturer of everything, India has also left behind the US, UK, Canada and France among others.
- India was estimated to have the lowest total installed costs for new utility-scale solar PV projects that were commissioned in 2018 at USD 793/kW, 27% lower than for projects commissioned in 2017.

US topples China as India's largest merchandise trade partner

- The US overtook China to once again become India's top goods trading partner in 2018-19. Also, India's trade surplus with the US declined to $16.8 billion from $21.2 billion a year ago.
- India's exports are playing in a stronger position with its trade deficit with China dropping to $53 billion in 2018-19, down from $63 billion a year ago.
- Data showed that India's dependency on Chinese imports also declined to $70 billion from $76 billion a year ago, with over a fourth increase in exports to $16.7 billion in 2018-19.

Bangladesh has emerged as fastest growing economy among 45 countries of Asia-Pacific region

- Bangladesh has emerged as the fastest growing economy among the 45 countries of the Asia-Pacific region according to Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- In the financial year 2018-19 Bangladesh attained growth rate of 7.9 % which is its fastest rate since 1974.
- The bank predicted that the growth will be 8% in the next financial year.

India to be most populous by 2027: UN World Population Prospects 2019

- India is set to overtake China as the most populous country by 2027 and will have almost 1.64 billion inhabitants by 2050
- As per a United Nations report India is expected to add nearly 273 million people between 2019 and 2050 and remain the most populated country through the end of the current century
- While the population of Nigeria is projected to grow by 200 million. Together, these two countries could account for 23 per cent of the global population increase to 2050
- China, on the other hand, is expected to become smaller, dropping from its current 1.43 billion people to approximately 1.4 billion by 2050.
- The rate of population growth is the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, where the fertility rate stand at 4.6 births per woman over a lifetime
- Globally, it's the post-working-age group that is growing the fastest. By 2050, one in six people will be above 65, compared with one in 11 people in 2019
- By 2050, the number of people over 80 is expected to triple to 426 million.
- Growing at a slower pace, world population is expected to reach 9.7 billion in 2050 and could peak at nearly 11 billion around 2100

23 Indian Institutions ranked among best global universities in QS World University ranking

- Twenty-three Indian Institutions have been ranked among the best global universities in QS World University ranking

- The Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-Bombay), has emerged as India's best institution securing 152nd rank in the 2020 QS World University Ranking.
- World-class MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) has made a history by topping the QS World University Rankings for the eighth consecutive year
- IIT-Bombay has been securing the top position among Indian institutes for the past three years by making it to the prestigious world ranking
- IIT-Delhi has fallen 10 places from 172 in 2019 to 182 in the 2020 QS ranking
- Among the 23 institutes, only IIT-Bombay, IIT-Delhi and Indian Institute of Science (184) are ranked in the global top 200
- IISc-Bangalore has achieved the world's second-best score for research impact, securing full 100 marks for citations per faculty metric.
- Stanford University, Harvard University and California Institute of Technology (Caltech) -- all retain their positions at second, third and fourth in the world, respectively

Agartala airport to be 3rd international airport in northeast

- After Guwahati and Imphal, the Agartala airport is set to become the third international airport in the northeastern region by the end of this year or by early 2020.
- The Airport Authority of India (AAI) has informed us that their ongoing works to make Agartala's Maharaja Bir Bikram (MBB) Airport as an international one would be completed by this year end.
- The AAI had undertaken a Rs. 438 crore project to upgrade the Agartala airport to international standards by providing world-class facilities.
- The airport in Agartala is the second busiest in the northeast after Guwahati's Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport. The Imphal airport was declared as an international one two years ago.

Amazon India is the country's most attractive employer brand

- E-commerce giant Amazon India is the country's most attractive employer brand, according to the findings of the Randstad Employer Brand Research (REBR) 2019.
- Amazon scored high on financial health, utilisation of latest technologies and a strong reputation.
- Microsoft India emerged as the runner-up, followed by Sony India. Others in the top 10 are Mercedes-Benz (4th), IBM (5th), Larsen & Toubro (6th), Nestlé (7th), Infosys (8th), Samsung (9th), and Dell (10th).

RIL, HDFC among 57 Indian companies on Forbes magazine's Global 2000 list

- As many as 57 Indian companies figure in Forbes magazine's list of the world's 2000 largest public companies, HDFC Ltd being named among the top ten consumer finance firms.
- Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) topped the list for the seventh year in a row. Reliance Industries was the top-ranked Indian company (ranked 71st globally).
- In the oil and gas sector, Royal Dutch Shell is ranked first and Reliance Industries is ranked 11th.
- In the consumer financial sector, American Express has topped the chart while HDFC Ltd is ranked 7th.
- On the overall Global 2000 list, HDFC is ranked 332nd.
- Out of the 61 countries represented on the list, the US accounts for the largest number of 575 companies, followed by China and Hong Kong (309) and Japan (223).
- In the overall top-ten, ICBC is followed by JP Morgan, China Construction Bank, Agricultural Bank of China, Bank of America, Apple, Ping An Insurance Group, Bank of China, Royal Dutch Shell and Wells Fargo.
- From India, Reliance Industries is the only one in the overall top-200 list. The company is followed by HDFC Bank at 209th, ONGC at 220th, Indian Oil at 288th and HDFC Ltd at 332nd place.

India ranks 95 among 129 countries in global gender equality index

- India ranked 95th out of 129 countries in a new index that measures global gender equality looking at aspects such as poverty, health, education, literacy, political representation and equality at the workplace.
- Denmark was ranked at the first place and Chad at 129th place. China ranked at 74 position, Pakistan at 113 while Nepal and Bangladesh at 102 and 110 respectively.

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SriLankan Airlines named world's most punctual

- SriLankan Airlines, the flag carrier of the island nation, has been named the 'World's Most Punctual Airline' for the second consecutive time with over 90 per cent of its flights in May being "on time" by theportalflightstats.com.
- It also achieved the world's number one ranking in September 2018 with a punctuality rating of 91.37 percent.
- Chile's LATAM Airlines was placed second and All Nippon Airways of Japan stood third.

Mumbai's traffic flow worst in world, Delhi at fourth spot

- Traffic flow in Mumbai is the worst in the world while Delhi is close behind at fourth position, according to a new report detailing the traffic situation in 56 countries.
- Mumbai takes the top spot this year with drivers in the Indian city expecting to spend an average of 65 per cent extra travel time stuck in traffic.
- Next in the global rankings are Bogota (63 per cent), Lima (58 per cent), New Delhi (58 per cent) and Moscow (56 per cent), making up the top five most congested cities in the world.

Amazon beats Apple and Google to become the world's most valuable brand

- Amazon has overtaken Google and Apple to become the world's most valuable brand at $315.5 billion, according to a ranking of global companies, up 52% on last year.
- Apple comes second, valued at $309.5 billion, with Google in third place, at $309 billion, according to the BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brand ranking 2019, compiled by WPP research agency Kantar
- Google and Apple had spent a combined 12 years at the top of the list, with Google taking the top spot in 2018.

India ranks 141 in annual Global Peace Index

- India's rank has slipped five places to 141 among 163 countries on the Global Peace Index 2019
- Australian think tank Institute for Economics & Peace ranks countries according to their level of peacefulness based on three thematic domains -- the level of societal safety and security, the extent of ongoing domestic and international conflict and the degree of militarisation in 163 countries and territories by taking into account 23 indicators.
- Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world, a position it has held since 2008
- Afghanistan is now the least peaceful country in the world, replacing Syria, which is now the second least peaceful. South Sudan, Yemen, and Iraq comprise the remaining five least peaceful countries.
- In South Asia, Bhutan topped the index with 15th rank, followed by Sri Lanka 72, Nepal 76 and Bangladesh 101. The neighbouring country Pakistan has been ranked 153rd on the index.
- "India's rank has moved down to 141 from in GPI 2019 (from its previous position at 136), among 163 countries, and it stands at fifth in the (South Asian) region,"

July

Index	India's Rank	Top	Least	Based on
Money parked by its citizens with Swiss banks	74th	UK	-	-
Henley Passport Index 2019	86th	Japan Singapore	-	-
Global Innovation Index 2019	52nd	Switzerland	Yemen	Released by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

MP tops country with 526 tigers: All India Estimation report

- The All India Tiger Estimation Report 2018 revealed that Madhya Pradesh was the country's "tiger state" with 526 of the big cats.
- The tiger population in the country has grown from 1,400 in 2014 to 2,977 in 2019.

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- MP had lost the coveted "tiger state" status to Karnataka in 2011. As per the 2018 report, Karnataka is a close second with 524 tigers, followed by Uttarakhand with 442.
- The data was collected using an Android-based application- M-STrIPES (Monitoring system for Tigers' Intensive Protection and Ecological Status).
- The Prime Minister also released report of the 4th cycle of the Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves (MEETR) with Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh scoring the highest and Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu showing the highest increment in management since the last cycle for which the latter was awarded

San Francisco Bay Area tops Women Entrepreneur Cities Index 2019

- The San Francisco Bay Area has overtaken New York City as the most accommodative place in the world to be a female entrepreneur.
- The Bay Area's progress this year saw New York to drop to second place, followed by London (3rd), Boston (4th) and Los Angeles (5th). The top 10 was rounded out by Washington D.C. (6th), Seattle (7th), Paris (8th), Toronto (9th) and Stockholm (10th).
- Singapore is the top Asian city at 21st rank. Bengaluru ranked at 43 is top Indian city followed by Delhi at 50.

Uttar Pradesh becomes No. 1 in implementation of Pradhanamntri Suraksha Beema Yojna

- Uttar Pradesh has become number one in implementation of Pradhanamntri Suraksha Beema Yojna in the country.
- As per the statement released by state government 1.95 crores people have been given insurance cover under the scheme till 31 march 2019.
- Implementation of this ambitious central government scheme started in state from January 2018 under which people between age group of 18 to 70 get accidental insurance cover of rupees 2 lakh by paying a nominal premium of 12 rupees annually.
- Information provided by department of institutional finance of state also says that Uttar Pradesh stands second in the country in the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Beema Yojana, another flagship scheme of the Union Government.

RIL overtakes IOC as highest ranked Indian company on Fortune 500 list

- Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries has jumped 42 places to become the highest-ranking Indian firm on the Fortune Global 500 list.
- State-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) had been the top-ranked Indian company on the list and was first on the Fortune India 500 list which was started in 2010.
- This year, ranked 106, Reliance Industries (RIL) has replaced IOC (117) as the top-ranked Indian company on the Global 500 list.
- US giant Walmart continues to top the Fortune 500 list followed by Chinese state-owned oil and gas company Sinopec Group, which moved one rank up. Dutch company Royal Dutch Shell was ranked third followed by China National Petroleum and State Grid.

Maharashtra tops in ATM frauds, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka follow

- Maharashtra reported 233 cases of ATM fraud in 2018-19, the highest in the entire country, Reserve Bank Of India (RBI) data.
- The data showed that Delhi grabbed the second spot with 179 cases, followed by Tamil Nadu with 147 cases of ATM fraud.
- In Maharashtra, people lost Rs 4.8 crore to bank fraud, while in Delhi people lost Rs 2.9 crore. The country witnessed an increase in ATM fraud cases in general (up from 911 to 980).
- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura were the only three states that didn't report a single incident. However, the money lost came down from Rs 65.3 crore in 2017-18 to Rs 21.4 crore in 2018-19.

Switzerland takes top spot from Singapore as best place for expats to live and work

- Switzerland has dethroned Singapore as the best place for expats to work and live, according to the HSBC Global Report.
- Singapore, who has remained top of the rankings for the last four years, has dropped to second while Switzerland climbed seven places to number one overall.
- According to the HSBC survey, Switzerland offered "the complete expat package" where expats enjoyed "an improved quality of life to complement impressive pay and swift career progression".

'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme: U'khand among best performing states

- Uttarakhand has been adjudged as one of the country's five best performing states in 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', a central scheme aimed at addressing declining child sex ratio and issues of women empowerment.
- The state will be felicitated, along with the other selected states, in recognition of its consistent performance in respect of sex ratio at birth, according to a letter from the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- In addition to Uttarakhand, Haryana has bagged three awards, including one state-level and two district-level awards, for consistent performance in respect of the sex ratio at birth (SRB).
- The two districts of Haryana which won the award are Bhiwani and Mahendragarh.

Connaught Place 9th most expensive office location; Hong Kong tops chart

- New Delhi's Connaught Place (CP) is the ninth most expensive office location in the world with an annual rent of nearly $144 per sq ft.
- CP, located in the heart of the national capital, was at the ninth position even last year.
- For the second year, Hong Kong's Central district retained the top spot as the world's most expensive market for prime office rents, with the prime occupancy costs valued at $322 per sq.ft.
- Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex and Nariman Point CBD slipped to 27th and 40th positions, respectively.

Chandigarh ranked among best performing states in education

- Chandigarh has been ranked best among states and Union territories in the field of education and is followed by Kerala and Gujarat.
- As per the Performance Grading Index 2017-18, Arunachal Pradesh is the least performing state and has been ranked 36 on the index.
- Delhi was ranked ninth, behind Rajasthan (8), Punjab (7), Tamil Nadu (5) and Haryana (4), according to it.
- Arunachal Pradesh (36), Nagaland (35) and Meghalaya (34) held the lowest ranks, as per the index.
- Kerala is the state with highest literacy rate followed by Lakshadweep and Mizoram.

Jeff Bezos world's richest person in Bloomberg Billionaires Index

- Amazon Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos is the world's richest person with a total net worth of USD 125 billion
- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani, India's richest person, is world's 13th wealthiest person with a net worth of $51.8 billion in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, a daily ranking of the world's wealthiest 500 individuals.
- Microsoft Corp co-founder Bill Gates, who has never been ranked below the second spot on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index has been pushed to the Number 3 rank by Bernard Arnault, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of LVMH oët Hennessy Bernard Arnault

Important Books and Authors

May

Author	Book
Jairam Ramesh	"Chequered Brilliance: The Many Lives of V K Krishna Menon",
Ruskin Bond	Coming Round the Mountain

Science, Technology Secretary releases four popular science books

- Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Professor Ashutosh Sharma released four popular science books published by Vigyan Prasar in New Delhi.
- The books released are 'Voyage to Antarctica' authored by Felix Bast, 'Story of Consciousness' by Govind Bhattacharjee, 'An Autobiography of Moon' written by Ramesh Shishu and 'Shambhu Nath De - The discovery of cholera toxins' by MS Murthy.

June

Books	Authors
Anupam Kher	'Lessons Life Taught Me, Unknowingly'
Baba Ramdev co-authored with senior journalist Uday Mahurkar	"My Life, My Mission",
Arundhati Roy	'My Seditious Heart'
Vinit Goenka	"Data Sovereignty – The Pursuit of Supremacy"
BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi	'The New Delhi Conspiracy

July

Author	Book
Sushil Kumar (Former Navy Chief)	'A Prime Minister to Remember: Memories of a Military Chief'
Dr Krishna Saksena	'Whispers of Time'
Harivansh and Ravi Dutt Bajpai	"Chandra Shekhar: The Last Icon of Ideological Politics",
Devika Sethi	'War over Words: Censorship in India, 1930-1960'
Rachna Bisht Rawat	"Kargil: Untold stories from the War"
Sunil Mishra	'Who Stole My Job'
Shri Harivansh and Shri Ravi Dutt Bajpai	"Chandra Shekhar - The Last Icon of Ideological Politics."
Narendra Jadhav	'New-Age Technology and Industrial Revolution 4.0'

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju launches AIFF Golden Baby Leagues handbook

- Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju launched the All India Football Federation's Golden Baby Leagues handbook 2019-20 on the sidelines of the Intercontinental Cup in Ahemadabad.
- The launch marked the renaming of the 'AIFF Baby Leagues' to 'AIFF Golden Baby Leagues', with emphasis being laid for ages under 6 to under 12 both for girls and boys.
- The handbook is a guide to help the stakeholder to organise the Golden Baby League. The Leagues aim to provide access to football in localities irrespective of gender, religion, economic background, or ethnic origin.

Important Sports News

Cricket

May

India retains top spot in ICC Test rankings

- India retained its top position in the ICC Test rankings, while England remained the number one ODI side in the latest annual d rankings released in Dubai.
- India also moved two points in second position in the ODI rankings behind England.

Amul to be principal sponsor of Afghanistan cricket team at ICC World Cup

- Dairy major Amul will be the principal sponsor of the Afghanistan cricket team for the upcoming ICC World Cup hosted by England and Wales. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which markets dairy products under Amul brand, exports around Rs. 200 crore worth of products annually to the neighbouring country.
- This is the third time that Amul is sponsoring a cricket team in the World Cup.
- Amul's logo will appear on the leading arm of Afghanistan team playing jerseys as well as on the training kits throughout the World Cup from May 30 to July 14, 2019.

Mumbai beat Chennai by one run to win record 4th IPL title

- Mumbai Indians became IPL champions for the fourth time after defeating Chennai Super Kings by one run in a thrilling final inRajiv Gandhi International Stadium Hyderabad.
- Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the most successful wicket-keeper in the history of IPL by taking his dismissals tally to 132, surpassing his India teammate Dinesh Karthik.

GS Lakshmi appointed first female match referee by ICC

- GS Lakshmi has become the first ever woman to be appointed to the ICC International Panel of Match Referees. The 51-year-old's appointment comes close on the heels of Claire Polosak becoming the first ever woman umpire to stand in a men's ODI. Lakshmi first officiated in domestic women's cricket in 2008-09, and has overseen three women's ODI matches and three women's T20I matches.

Kohli Bags CEAT International Batsman & Cricketer of the Year Award

- India captain ViratKohli bagged the International Cricketer and Batsman of the Year award during the CEAT Cricket Rating (CCR) International Awards 2019. JaspritBumrah was adjudged as International Bowler of the Year.
- CEAT awarded Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan for outstanding bowling and Australian batsman Aaron Finch for his exceptional performance in T20.
- Young prodigy YashasviJaiswal, who performed exceptionally over the year was awarded Junior Cricketer of the Year while KuldeepYadav took home outstanding performance of the year award. AshutoshAman was awarded Domestic Cricketer of the Year. The legendary MohinderAmarnath was bestowed with the 'CCR International Lifetime Achievement Award'.

ICC Releases Official Song for Cricket World Cup 2019

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Friday released the official song for Cricket World Cup 2019 - 'Stand By', a collaboration between new artist LORYN and well-known British band, Rudimental.
- The World Cup is one of the world's biggest global sporting events. The 10-team tournament will get underway with hosts England facing South Africa at the Kennington Oval, London. India will begin their World Cup 2019 campaign against South Africa on June 5 at the Rose Bowl in Southampton.

Helo becomes team sponsor of Indian Wheelchair Cricket

- Helo, India's social media platform, has announced its partnership with the Indian Wheelchair Cricket Association as the team sponsor for Team India during the Asia Cup 2019.
- This association makes Helo the first social media app to host and promote Indian Wheelchair Cricket on its platform. In preparation for the tournament, more than 200 Wheelchair Cricket players have joined Helo as part of this campaign to connect with their local communities across India.

ICC launches criiio campaign on eve of World Cup

- The ICC has launched the criiio campaign on the eve of the men's World Cup, bringing together 460 million people playing cricket globally to celebrate the magnificent diversity of cricket.
- The ICC asked the fans to join the social cricket tribe by sharing pictures and videos of where and how they play cricket across the world using the newly launched #criiio and visiting criiio.com
- This builds on the success of the recent user-generated social media initiative #WorldWideWickets and is the first of a series of programs that will be launched by the ICC over the next 12 months.

June

Yuvraj Singh announces retirement from international cricket

- Yuvraj Singh has announced retirement from international cricket, ending a "rollercoaster" career during which he became the hero of India's 2011 World Cup triumph
- Yuvraj Singh debuted for India in 2000 and went on to play 40 Test, 304 ODIs and 58 T20Is
- He put together 1900 runs in the longest format, and 8701 in the one-dayers

Chris Gayle to retire from international cricket

- West Indies batsman Chris Gayle has announced that he will retire from international cricket after the home Test series against India in August-September.
- He was the captain of the team in the past and has won 2 T20 World Cup titles with the Windies.

Virat Kohli becomes fastest batsman to score 20,000 runs

- Virat Kohli became the fastest cricketer to score 20,000 international runs. The India captain reached the milestone when he reached the score of 37 against West Indies at Old Trafford.
- Kohli reached the milestone in only his 417th international innings while Tendulkar and Lara each took 453 innings
- Kohli became the 12th batsman and third Indian after Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid to reach 20,000 international runs

July

Solomon Mire announces international retirement

- Zimbabwe all-rounder Solomon Mire has announced his retirement from international cricket across all formats.
- He currently holds the record for the highest score for Zimbabwe in a T20I for the 94 he scored against Pakistan in 2018.

Ambati Rayudu announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- India middle-order batsman Ambati Rayudu has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, including the IPL.
- In 55 ODIs, Rayudu scored 1694 runs with three centuries and 10 half-centuries.
- In the six T20Is he played, the middle-order batsman scored 42 runs. Rayudu never got a chance to represent India in Test cricket.

England wins ICC Cricket World Cup 2019

- England defeated New Zealand to win the ICC Cricket Men's World Cup 2019. England won the World Cup on account of more number of boundaries as even the super over resulted in a tie. Both teams made 241 runs in the match and 15 runs in the super over.

Here are some major highlights of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019:

- Venue: England and Wales (In 2023- India is the host country)
- Official Song: 'Stand By' (a collaboration between new artist LORYN and one of the UK's most successful and influential acts, Rudimental)
- Player of the tournament: Kane Williamson (Captain Newzealand)
- Golden Bat award: Rohit Sharma (Highest run scorer in the tournament- 648 runs)
- Golden Ball award: Mitchell Starc (Australia)- Highest Wicket taker- 27 wickets
- Rohit Sharma became the only player to hit 5 century in a single edition of World Cup. He broke the record of Kumar Sangakkara of 4 century.
- Shakib Al Hasan first to 500 runs and 10 wickets in single World Cup
- ICC Team of the Tournament- ICC has also announced the team of the tournament with players from all the country. Two Indians have been listed in this team. They are Rohit Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah. The team is selected on the basis of performance of the players in the tournament.

ICC suspends Zimbabwe Cricket with immediate effect

- The International Cricket Council, ICC has suspended Zimbabwe Cricket with immediate effect over violation of global body's constitution which doesn't allow any government intervention

Sachin Tendulkar inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

- Sachin Tendulkar has been inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame alongside South African pace legend Allan Donald
- He was 6th Indian to be inducted into ICC Hall of Fame. Rahul Dravid was the previous Indian to be inducted on the list in 2018
- Joining Tendulkar and Donald in the Hall of Fame was two-time World Cup-winning Australian woman cricketer Cathryn Fitzpatrick.
- Tendulkar, the most prolific batsman in history, was inducted immediately after becoming eligible for induction, which requires that a player should have played his last international match at least five years before.

Byju's replaces Oppo as Team India's official sponsor: BCCI

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced that Bengaluru-based education and learning app Byju's, which is owned by Think and Learn Private Limited, has replaced Oppo India as the official Team India sponsor.
- The deal period will begin from 5 September, 2019 until 31 March, 2022.

BCCI approves Indian Cricketers Association

- The BCCI has approved the Indian Cricketers Association (ICA), the body formed as per the board's new constitution to look after the interest of former players.
- The ICA is not affiliated to Federation of International Cricketers' Association (FICA) and is only open to former men and women cricketers, unlike the players' associations in most countries.
- The functioning of ICA will be independent of BCCI's functioning and the association will have to generate its own funds even though the board will provide some initial grants.
- Former India cricketers Kapil Dev, Ajit Agarkar and Shantha Rangaswamy are the directors at ICA.

Ellyse Perry becomes first cricketer to reach 1000 runs, 100 wickets in T20Is

- Australia all-rounder Ellyse Perry became the first cricketer of either gender to reach the rare milestone of scoring 1000 runs and taking 100 wickets in the T20 format.
- A four brought up the 1000-run milestone for the all-rounder, who had picked up her 100th wicket by dismissing England's Nat Sciver in the World T20 final in November last year.

Football

May

Raheem Sterling awarded with Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year

- Manchester City's forward Raheem Sterling has been named as the Football Writers' Association (FWA) Footballer of the Year 2019.
- With this win, Sterling became the first Manchester City player to win the football's oldest individual award. The player also received praise for his courageous stance against racism in the game.

Barca legend Xavi Hernandez announces his retirement

- FC Barcelona legend midfielder Xavi Hernandez has announced that he will retire at the end of the season to move into coaching.
- Xavi went on to win 25 titles, including the treble seasons of 2008-09 and 2014-15. In total he holds eight La Liga, three Copa del Rey, four UEFA Champions League, two FIFA Club World Cup, six Spanish Super Cup, and two UEFA Super Cup. Xavi is a six-time Copa Catalunya and one-time Catalunya Super Cup winner.

Chelsea beat Arsenal in the Europa League final

- Chelsea scored four goals in a devastating second-half display to beat Arsenal 4-1 and lift the Europa League trophy in the Baku Olympic Stadium, Azerbaijan.

- Chelsea won their fifth major Uefa European competition final, with only Liverpool winning more among eight English clubs. Arsenal have lost five of their six major European finals, with their only victory coming in the 1994 Cup Winners' Cup against Parma

June

Former Liverpool and Chelsea striker Fernando Torres announces retirement

- Former Liverpool and Chelsea striker Fernando Torres has announced his retirement from football.
- The 35-year-old Spaniard scored 81 goals across four seasons with Liverpool and won the Champions League, Europa League and FA Cup with Chelsea.

Sunil Chhetri becomes India's most capped international player

- Former India skipper Bhaichung Bhutia congratulated Sunil Chhetri after the latter overtook his record and became India's most capped international player with 108 appearances.
- Chhetri overtook his mentor Bhutia's record of 107 matches when he captained India in the King's Cup opener against Curacao.

Messi is world's highest paid athlete, Kohli only Indian on the list

- Lionel Messi was the world's highest-paid athlete over the past year, Forbes reported on in its annual sporting rich list, and India cricket captain Virat Kohli was the sole Indian to feature on the list, ranked 100th on the table.
- According to the Forbes 2019 list, Virat Kohli is estimated to earn $21m from endorsements and $4m from salary and winnings, taking his total tally to $25m for the last 12 months.
- Notably, Virat Kohli was ranked 83rd on last year's list and has moved down to the 100th spot despite an increase of $1m in endorsements.
- Messi has dethroned retired boxer Floyd Mayweather as the sports world's highest earner, raking in $127 million via salary and endorsement deals.
- Athletes from across 25 countries made it to the list this year, an increase from 22 in 2018.

FIFA Rankings: India remains at 101, Belgium on top

- India remains unmoved at 101 position, after FIFA, the apex body of football, released the latest team rankings.
- India was not able to improve their rank as they remained at the same spot and their points too were unchanged from the previous standings of 1219 points.
- Interestingly, the top four teams were unmoved, FIFA World Cup 2018 winner France stayed in the second position.
- While Brazil and England were also able to hold there third and fourth position respectively.

July

India slips two places to 103 in FIFA rankings

- The Indian football team slipped two places to 103rd in the FIFA rankings released on Thursday.
- India lost two matches and drew one in the Intercontinental Cup earlier this month in Ahmedabad. It had lost 2-4 to Tajikistan and 2-5 against eventual winners DPR Korea before playing out a 1-1 draw against Syria.
- India has 1214 ranking points in its kitty, down by five points from the previous chart issued last month.
- The Indian team now lies at 18th among Asian countries. Iran (23rd) is at the top among Asian countries, followed by Japan (33), Korea (37), Australia (46) and Qatar (62).At the top of the rankings, Belgium leads the chart, followed by Brazil, France, England and Uruguay.

Dutch star Arjen Robben announces retirement from football

- Former Bayern Munich and Netherlands forward Arjen Robben has announced his retirement from football.
- The 35-year-old has played in over 500 matches for the club and his country in the entire career.

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Brazil beat Peru 3-1 to lift the title in Copa America

- Brazil have defeated Peru 3-1 to win their first Copa America title since 2007.
- Gabriel Jesus and Richarlison also scored a goal each for Brazil, who have won the title every time they hosted the tournament.
- Everton was named player of the final and also finished as one of the tournament's top scorers with three goals.
- Brazil's veteran right-back Dani Alves was player of the tournament.

USA beat Netherlands to win the FIFA Women's World Cup

- The United States won the Women's World Cup for a record fourth time as they eventually overpowered the Netherlands in Lyon.
- But the USA, playing in their third consecutive final, continued their reign as the world's finest side as they added to their titles of 1991, 1999 and 2015.
- Victory for the USA saw their English-born boss Jill Ellis, from Hampshire, become the first coach to lift the trophy twice.
- Golden Boot (top scorer) – Megan Rapinoe (6 goals)
- Golden Ball (best overall player) – Megan Rapinoe (USA)
- Golden Glove (best goalkeeper) – Sari van Veenendaal (Netherlands)

Mexico beats US to lift 8th Gold Cup

- The 2019 CONCACAF Gold Cup was the 15th edition of the biennial international men's football championship of the North, Central American, and Caribbean region organized by CONCACAF.
- Mexico's men's soccer team have won their record eighth Gold Cup by defeating the United States in the final.
- The loss for the US men came hours after the women's team lifted its second consecutive World Cup title.

Sunil Chhetri and Ashalata Devi bag top honours in AIFF awards

- Indian men's footballer Sunil Chhetri and women's footballer Ashalata Devi won the biggest prizes in their respective categories as the All India Football Federation (AIFF) announced awards for the 2018-19 season.
- Chhetri was declared as the men's footballer of the year whereas in the women's category Devi bagged the award.
- This is the third consecutive footballer of the year win for Chhetri and his seventh honour in men's category.
- Best grassroots development programme: Jammu and Kashmir FA
- Best assistant referee: Joseph Tony (Kerala)
- Best referee: R Venkatesh (Tamil Nadu)
- Emerging women's footballer of the year: Dangmei Grace (Manipur)
- Emerging Men's footballer of the year: Sahal Abdul Samad (Kerala)
- Women's footballer of the year: Ashalata Devi
- Men's footballer of the year: Sunil Chhetri

Other Sports News

May

Rahi Sarnobat, Saurabh Chaudhary Bag Gold Medals in ISSF world cup

- Saurabh Chaudhary won the gold medal in 10m Air Pistol Event at the ISS Shooting World Cup in Munich on May 27, 2019. This is the second gold of the season for the 17-year-old sensation. The first was secured in New Delhi tournament.
- Indian shooter Rahi Sarnobat also bagged the top podium spot in the 25 metre pistol event at the ISSF World Cup 2019 in Munich. With this,the total gold won by India has now reached three. The first gold was won by Apurvi Chandela in 10 m air rifle event.

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Samiya, Maisnam clinch junior badminton titles

- In the Yonex-Sunrise All-India Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament held from May 21-26, 2019 in Chennai, Manipur boy Maisnam Meiraba outplayed Aakash Yadav of Delhi 21-9, 12-7 to clinch the Under-19 Boys Singles title.
- Telanganas No. 5 seed Samiya Imad Farooqui continued her meteoric rise as she clinched the U-19.

India bags 57 medals at India Open International tournament

- India bags a total of 57 medals including 12 Gold, 18 Silver and 27 Bronze at India Open International Boxing tournament in Guwahati.
- MC Mary Kom, Shiva Thapa, L Sarita Devi and Naman Tanwar won gold in their respective finals. The London Olympic bronze medallist blew away the challenge of Vanlal Duati in a facile 5-0 win.
- In women's 54 kg, local favourite Jamuna Boro defeated Sandhyarani and also qualified for the World Championship. In men's 69 kg Aashish clinched the Gold, while in women's 57 kg category Neeraj won the final.

Koepka returns to world No. 1 with PGA win

- After successfully defending a major title (again), Brooks Koepka is back atop the Official World Golf Ranking.
- Koepka teed off at Bethpage ranked No. 3 in the world, but after retaining the Wanamaker Trophy he moved to the top spot even though former world No. 1 Dustin Johnson finished alone in second. It marks the first time Koepka has held the No. 1 ranking since the start of the year.
- But now it's Koepka followed by Johnson, with Rose down one spot to No. 3. The rest of the top 10 remained the same after the second major of the year: Rory McIlroy, Justin Thomas, Tiger Woods, Francesco Molinari, Bryson DeChambeau, Xander Schauffele and Rickie Fowler.

BFA launches two new formats of game - AirBadminton & Triples

- The world body governing Badminton, BFA, has launched two new formats of the game -- AirBadminton and Triples with new dimensions of the court and an innovative shuttlecock called Airshuttle. Traditional competitive badminton has been an indoor game.
- The new formats launched globally at Guangzhou last week, AirBadmintion will be outdoor sports. In Triples format, the match will be played between a team of three players each with presence of at least one female

Indian para-athletes win 1 silver & 2 bronze at Asian Road Para-Cycling Championships 2019

- Indian para-athletes put up a brilliant performance to secure 1 silver and 2 bronze at the Asian Road Para-Cycling Championships 2019 that saw 28 countries vying for the podium at Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 23-28 April.
- Divij Shah continued his remarkable record at this prestigious tournament by clinching his third consecutive silver medal in the C5 category.
- Hand cyclist Sudhakar Marathe from Maharashtra made a debut to remember when he got hold of the bronze medal in H5 category.
- Asian Para Games bronze medallist Gurlal Singh, who is the only Indian cyclist (able-bodied or otherwise) to win a medal at the Asian Games level helped swell India's medal tally further by grabbing the bronze in the C4 section.

G Sathiyan becomes first Indian to break into top-25 of table tennis world rankings

- G Sathiyan became first Indian to break into the top-25 of ITTF rankings.
- Sathiyan rose four spots to be 24th in the latest ITTF rankings.
- Sharath Kamal dropped 9 spots to be in 46th position

Apurvi Chandela attains world number one spot in women's 10 m air rifle event

- Indian shooting ace Apurvi Chandela attained the world number one position in the women's 10 metres air rifle event while compatriot Anjum Moudgil rose to number two.

- The rifle ace from Jaipur is among the five Indian shooters to have already secured 2020 Olympics quotas for the country. Anish Bhanwala, another of India's talented young shooter, secured the 10th spot in 25 metres Rapid Fire Pistol category.

Bajrang Punia wins gold at Ali Aliev tournament

- World number one Bajrang Punia won the gold medal as he defeated Viktor Rassadin in the finals of men's 65kg freestyle in the Ali Aliyev wrestling tournament in Kaspiisk, Russia.
- The 25-year-old Indian grappler had won a gold medal at the Asian Championships in Xi'an, China.

Jaipur to host Asian youth Women Handball Championship

- Jaipur will host the 8th Asian Youth Women Handball Championship in which 10 teams, including defending champions South Korea, will be participating. It is the first time that the tournament will be hosted by Pink city Jaipur. Earlier Delhi had hosted it in 2015 where the hosts India had finished seventh
- The previous edition in 2017 was held at Jakarta in Indonesia where South Korea was the champion while Japan and China were placed second and third respectively

Saurav Ghoshal & Joshna Chinappa win Asian Individual Squash Ch'ship titles

- Ace Indian squash players Saurav Ghoshal and Joshna Chinappa won their respective Asian Individual Squash Championship titles in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Saurav Ghoshal defeated Leo Au Chun Ming of Hong Kong.
- Joshna Chinappa on the other hand retained her title as she beat top seed Annie Au of Hong Kong.
- Ghoshal who had become the first Indian male player to reach top ten of the world rankings

Indian boxers win six medals at 36th Feliks Stamm International Boxing

- Indian boxers finished with a rich haul of six medals, including two gold at the 36th Feliks Stamm International Boxing Tournament in Warsaw, Poland. Gaurav Solanki and Manish Kaushik bagged one gold each. Indian boxers also clinched a silver and three bronze.

Marc Marquez wins the Spanish Grand Prix and regains world championship lead

- World champion Marc Marquez of Honda won the Spanish motorcycling GP ahead of compatriots Alex Rins of Suzuki and maverick Vinale
- Having won two of the four MotoGPs so far this season, Marquez tops the standings with 70 points, one more than US race winner Rins on 69. Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso is third on 67

Roger Federer climbs to third in men's rankings

- Former world number one Roger Federer has returned to third in the ATP Men's ranking, replacing Alexander Zverev
- Federer has won a record 20 Grand Slams, is making his return to clay at the Madrid Open this week after three years' absence. Novak Djokovic(11160 pts) remains first ahead of Rafael Nadal (7765 pts) to mark the Serb's 250th week as world number one,
- Japan's Naomi Osaka (6151 pts) remained atop of WTA Women's rankings, ahead of Czech Petra Kvitova (5835 pts) and Romanian Simona Halep (5682 pts)

Mukesh Kumar wins PGTI Players Championship

- Seasoned golfer Mukesh win the TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship in Panchkula.
- This was his 20th title on the TATA Steel PGTI (Professional Golf Tour of India).

Inaugural edition of world's first women's cricket magazine 'CRICZONE'

- The inaugural issue of world's first exclusive women's cricket magazine 'Criczone' was released here with Indian team vie-captain Smriti Mandhana featuring as the cover story.
- The magazine "CRICZONE" was launched on the sidelines of the inaugural women's T20 challenge event which was attended by international cricketers like Mithali Raj, Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur and overseas player like Danielle Wyatt and Sophie Davine. The objective of this magazine is to empower young aspiring women cricketers to take the sport as a profession and able to make sustainable living.

Novak Djokovic wins Madrid Open title

- Novak Djokovic of Serbia beat Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece to win his third Madrid Open title.
- He held his serve to add the 2019 Madrid Open title to those he won in 2011 and 2016.

Hamilton beats Bottas in Spainish GP

- British racing driver Lewis Hamilton won the Spanish Grand Prix for a third consecutive year after overtaking Mercedes teammate ValtteriBottas.
- It marks the Mercedes' record-breaking win as the pair of Hamilton and Bottas has been taking the top two positions on the podium in all five races of 2019 season. Red Bull's Max Verstappen was third.

Mumbai girl is world's 1st to cross Atlantic Ocean in Light Sports Aircraft

- Captain AarohiPandit, a 23-year-old pilot from Mumbai became the world's first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo in a Light Sports Aircraft (LSA) christened as 'Mahi'.
- when she landed her tiny aircraft at Iqaluit Airport in Canada, after a gruelling 3,000 km long flight, under adverse and extreme weather conditions following take-off from Wick, Scotland (United Kingdom), with brief stopovers in Greenland and Iceland.
- The journey is part of Pandit'songoing year-long global circumnavigation flight from UK to Canad, which was launched with her friend KeithairMisquitta on July 30, 2018 and they will return back to India by July 30 , 2019.

China set to host 2023 AFC Asian Cup after South Korea withdrawal

- China has been confirmed as the hosts for the 2023 Asian Cup soccer tournament after its only bidding rival, South Korea, withdrew from the bidding process**.** The Korean Football Association (KFA) informed the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), the governing body for Asian soccer, of its decision to withdraw its bid and thus allow China to run unopposed.
- Last time China hosted Asian Cup in 2004 when China lost to Japan by 3-1 in the final held in Beijing. This year the Asian Cup was held in UAE in which Qatar defeated Japan by 3-1 in the final.

Double Olympic biathlon champion Dahlmeier retires aged 25

- Germany's double Olympic biathlon champion Laura Dahlmeier announced her retirement at the age of just 25 after struggling with health issues.
- She has won seven world championship gold medals, and last year in Pyeongchang she became the first female biathlete to win both the sprint and the pursuit at the same Olympics.

2nd India Open International Boxing Tournament begins in Guwahati

- The Second India Open International Boxing Tournament begins at Sarusajai stadium in Guwahati.
- India has fielded a strong contingent of 38 men and 37 women in the tournament including Mary Kom in 51-kilogram category. 16 countries will participate in the tournament where nearly 200 boxers will vying for the podium.
- The gold medalist will get 2500 US dollar and Silver medalist will earn 1000 US dollar. The competition will be held in a total of 18 categories, 10 in men and 8 in women.

Saray Khumalo Hailed As Strong Woman after Conquering Mount Everest

- Saray Khumalo is being hailed as a strong woman as the country celebrates her successful climb to the top of Mount Everest. Khumalo made history as she became the first African black woman to summit Mount Everest in her fourth attempt.

Apurvi Chandela Wins Gold in 10m Air Rifle at ISSF Munich World Cup

- Apurvi Chandela from India won the 10m Air Rifle Women's Final at the 2019 ISSF World Cup in Munich.
- Luyao Wang from the Republic of China took the Silver medal, scoring 631.9 points in qualification and 250.8 in the final. Another of China's shooters, Hong Xu, won the Bronze medal with a qualification of 630.8 points and 229.4 in the final. The two Tokyo 2020 Olympic Quota places went to Laura-Georgeta Coman from Romania and Eszter Meszaros from Hungary.

Mahesh Mangaonkar wins Sekisui Open title

- India's Mahesh Mangaonkar defeated Spain's Bernat Jaume, in the final to clinch the Sekisui Open title for the second time in his career in Kriens, Switzerland.

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- This was Mahesh's eighth PSA title. He had won the corresponding title for the first time in 2016.

Men's compound team win bronze in Archery World Cup

- The men's compound team of Rajat Chauhan, Abhishek Verma and Aman Saini earned India a solitary bronze medal in the Archery World Cup Stage III at Antalya in Turkey.
- The Women's compound team of Jyoti Surekha Vennam, Muskan Kirar and Swati Dudhwal lost to Great Britain's Layla Annison, Ella Gibson and Lucy Mason by two points in the contention for a bronze medal.

Lewis Hamilton wins Monaco Grand Prix

- Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton won his Monaco Grand Prix title.
- Valterri Bottas and Vettel finished with second and third respectively.

China beat Japan to win 2019 Sudirman Cup

- China won the badminton world mixed-team championship, Sudirman Cup 2019 in Nanning today. They beat Japan in men's doubles, women's singles and men's singles to clinch the title for an 11th time.
- In the latest Men' singles match Shi Yuqi stunned world champion Kento Momota 15-21, 21-5,21-11. Japan have never won the Sudirman Cup

Ivo Karlovic becomes oldest man to win match at French Open

- Croatia's Ivo Karlovic became the oldest man to win a match at the French Open for 46 years as he beat Spain's fellow veteran Feliciano Lopez in a first-round duel.
- Karlovic became the oldest man to win at Roland Garros since Torben Ulrich in 1973 at the age of 44. He is also the oldest male player to win a Grand Slam match since Ken Rosewall, also 44, did so at the 1978 Australian Open.

India concludes best ever ISSF WC performance in Munich

- In Shooting, India produced their best ever show at the ISSF World Cup with a total tally of five gold medals in Munich, Germany.
- India topped the medals tally with five golds and a silver. Second-placed China bagged nine medals - two gold, two silver and five bronze medals
- India gold medallists included Apurvi Chandela in the Women's 10 metre Air Rifle, Rahi Sarnobat in the Women's 25m Pistol and Saurabh Chaudhary in the men's 10m Air Pistol
- The pair of Anjum Moudgil and Divyansh Singh Panwar first won the 10m Air Rifle mixed team gold. Teenage pair of Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary backed them up with the 10m Air Pistol mixed team title.
- in the Mixed Air Rifle, it was an all India gold medal match and Apurvi Chandela and Deepak Kumar landed the country its lone silver
- Manu and Saurabh, in the Air Pistol finals, found it a bit tough against the experienced Ukranian pair of Olena Kostevych and Oleh Omelchuk but they won 17-9 in the end.

Italian Open 2019 Winners Title

- The 76th edition of Italian Open which is also known as “Rome Masters” or “the Internazionali BNLd’Italia”heldat Foro Italico in Rome, Italy from May 13 to 19, 2019.
- Rafael Nadal defeated Novak Djokovic to win a ninth Italian Open title and a record 34th Masters.

CATEGORY	WINNER	RUNNER
Men’s Singles	Rafael Nadal	Novak Djokovic
Women’s Singles	Karolina Pliskova	Johanna Konta
Men’s Doubles	Juan Sebastian Cabal / Robert Farah	Raven Klaasen / Michael Venus
Women’s Doubles	Victoria Azarenka / Ashleigh Barty	Anna-Lena Gronefeld / Demi Schuurs

Madrid open 2019 Winners List

- The 2019 Madrid Open (sponsored by Mutua) is a professional tennis tournament played on outdoor clay courts at the Park Manzanares in Madrid, Spain from 3 May–12 May 2019.

CATEGORY	WINNER	RUNNER
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic	StefanosTsitsipas
Women's Singles	Kiki Bertens	SimonaHalep
Men's Doubles	Jean-JulienRojer / HoriaTecău	Diego Schwartzman / Dominic Thiem
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-wei / BarboraStrýcová	Gabriela Dabrowski / XuYifan

Asia-Pacific Diamond Cup

- Indian Professional golfer RahilGangjee finished tied 39th while 23-year-old VirajMadappa faltered on the final day and ended tied 53rd at the Asia-Pacific Diamond Cup 2019.Japan's Yosuke Asaji capped the title at the Sobu Country Club.
- Asaji's winning total of three-under-par 281 also secured him a spot at The 148th Open which will be held at Royal Portrush, Northern Ireland in July 2019.

June

Marcus Trescothick announces retirement from professional cricket

- Marcus Trescothick, the prolific England and Somerset opener, has announced that he will retire from professional cricket at the end of the current English domestic season. He amassed 5825 Test and 4335 ODI runs.

Milan-Cortina to host 2026 Winter Olympics

- Milan-Cortina has won the right to host the 2026 Winter Olympics after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach announced the decision.
- The announcement marks the Winter Olympics' return to Europe, with the event having been hosted by Pyeongchang, South Korea in 2018 and the Chinese city of Beijing staging the Games in 2022.
- Italy has twice hosted Winter Olympics in the past -- Cortina in 1956 and Turin in 2006 -- but it will be the first held in Milan.

Provisional ban on India hosting Olympic-related sporting events lifted by IOC

- The IOC had decided to "suspend all discussions" with India regarding hosting of global sporting events after Pakistani shooters were not issued visas for the World Cup held in Delhi in February this year.
- Indian government gave a written guarantee to the Indian Olympic Association, that all eligible athletes will be allowed to participate in events held in the country following which the restrictions were lifted

Annu Rani Cliches Bronze at 58th Ostrava Golden Spike Athletics Meet

- Asian silver medallist Annu Rani, who has been steady in the 60m range this season, won the women's javelin bronze in the 58th Ostrava Golden Spike athletics meet, an IAAF World Challenge event.
- Croatia's Sara Kolak, the Olympic champion who has a personal best of 68.43m, took the gold while Slovenia's Martina Ratej bagged the silver.

India's Pranati Nayak clinches bronze at Senior Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships

- Indian gymnast Pranati Nayak clinched a bronze medal in vault event at the Senior Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- China's Yu Linmin (14.350) and Japan's Ayaka Sakaguchi (13.584) won the gold and silver medal at the event.

Gold for Chitra and Sreeshankar, Johnson wins silver in Folksam Grand Prix

- Asian champion P.U. Chitra beat former Commonwealth` Games champion Kenya's Mercy Cherono and won the women's 1500m gold at the Folksam Grand Prix in Sollentuna, Sweden.
- Asian Games gold medallist Jinson Johnson won the silver in the men's 1500m as he finished behind Sweden's Andreas Almgren.

Sarin wins blitz event at Asian Continental Chess Championship

- India's 14-year old Grand Master Nihal Sarin won the blitz event in the Asian Continental Chess Championship at Xingtai, China. Sarin scored eight points from nine rounds and finished a point ahead of the field.

Liverpool beat Tottenham Hotspur to win Champions League trophy

- In Football, Liverpool breezed past Tottenham at Madrid to win the Champions League for the sixth time.
- This has been evident in the Champions League over the past decade. Eight of the past 10 titles have been won by either Spain's FC Barcelona and Real Madrid or Germany's Bayern Munich.

Sidharth Rawat wins maiden ITF men's Futures singles title

- Third seed Sidharth Rawat outplayed Rio Noguchi of Japan 7-5, 6-0 to clinch his maiden title in the $25,000 ITF men's Futures tennis tournament
- With the ATP points being restored for events of this level, the 26-year-old Delhi lad will be able to improve his current rank of 510. He had a career-best rank of 430

Andy Ruiz Jr. becomes the heavyweight world champion

- Andy Ruiz Jr. became the first Mexican-American heavyweight world champion after a stunning upset victory over British boxer Anthony Joshua.
- Ruiz, 29, won via a seventh round technical knockout at Madison Square Garden in New York. Ruiz knocked Joshua down twice in the third round and two more times in the seventh round

Rakesh Kumar Patra finishes seventh in Parellel Bars final at FIG World Cup

- Indian gymnast Rakesh Kumar Patra finished seventh in the finals of Parallel Bars at the FIG World Cup in Koper, Slovenia. In the final field of eight gymnasts, Patra finished second last with a score of 13.650.
- Frank Baines of Great Britain clinched the top spot, while Kazakhstan's Milad Karimi settled for the second place and Ilias Georgiou of Cyprus was third.

Danilo Petrucci Wins Stunning Italian Moto GP

- Ducati's Danilo Petrucci fought off a stiff challenge from Marc Marquez to win the Italian Grand Prix, his first ever MotoGP victory. Petrucci's win comes a day after he recorded the highest speed in MotoGP history.Petrucci, an Italian riding for local team Ducati.
- Five-time MotoGP champion Marquez on a Honda briefly took the lead in the last lap but Petrucci recaptured first place and won.

French Open 2019

- In French Open 2019, RafaelNadal beat Dominic Thiem to claim the singles title at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France on June 9, 2019.
- With this victory, he has become the first tennis player to win the French Open single event record 12 times.
- In women's single, Australia's Ashleigh Barty claimed her maiden grand slam title and also became the first Australian woman to win the French Open in 46 years, after Margaret Court (1973).

CATEGORY	WINNER	RUNNER
Men's Singles	Rafael Nadal	Dominic Thiem
Women's Singles	Ashleigh Barty	Markéta Vondroušová
Men's Doubles	Kevin Krawietz and Andreas Mies	Fabrice Martin and Jeremy Chardy
Women's Doubles	Duan Yingying and Zheng Saisai	Tímea Babos and Kristina Mladenovic
Mixed Doubles	Latisha Chan and Ivan Dodig	Gabriela Dabrowski and Mate Pavić

Hamilton wins 7th Canadian GP

- Lewis Hamilton secured a record-breaking seventh win at the 2019 Canadian Grand Prix after Sebastian Vettel was penalised for dangerous driving.
- During the race, both Vettel and Hamilton were engaged in a head-to-head battle when the former ran across the grass accidentally. Ferrari will appeal against the decision over the five-second penalty given to Vettel which costed him the race.

Portugal wins UEFA Nations League

- Portugal claimed their second trophy in three years by beating the Netherlands to win the inaugural Nations League.
- Portugal are the first European nation to host and win a final of a major competition since France beat Brazil 3-0 in the final of the 1998 World Cup.
- Goncalo Guedes has been directly involved in five goals in his last eight appearances for Portugal (three goals and two assists).
- England finished third in the tournament after a victory on penalties over Switzerland in Guimaraes.

Sourav Kothari wins Pacific International Snooker C'ship

- World billiards champion Sourav Kothari lifted the 2019 Pacific International Snooker Championship - The Reventon Classic, in Melbourne.
- In a best of nine frames, Kothari got the better of Tyson Crinis of Australia to bag the crown.

IAAF to rebrand as World Athletics

- The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has rebranded itself as World Athletics and revealed a new logo to reflect its name change.
- The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) was initially founded in 1912 as the International Amateur Athletic Federation
- The new brand identity will begin its rollout in October after the world championships in Doha and following congress' approval of the change to the federation's legal name.
- The new logo features the 'W' of 'world', which is meant to represent the symbol of an athlete's arms raised in victory. The logo also incorporates the 'A' of 'athletics', which seeks to represent an athlete's focus as they prepare for the road; and an arc over the 'W' and 'A' to represent the athletics community coming together.

NBA Finals: Toronto Raptors beat Golden State Warriors to win first title

- The Toronto Raptors beat defending champions the Golden State Warriors 114-110 to win their first NBA title.
- Kawhi Leonard was named the NBA Finals Most Valuable Player, averaging 28.5 points, as the Raptors won the best-of-seven series 4-2.

Australia and Qatar to participate in Copa America 2020

- The South American Football Federation, CONMEBOL has invited Australia and Qatar to participate as guest teams in 2020 Copa America. Qatar and Australia will join 10 South American nations in the 2020 tournament.
- For the first time, the event will be held jointly in two countries, Colombia and Argentina.
- The 2019 Copa America football championship is being held in Brazil.

Peter Gilchrist lifted Pacific International Billiards Championship title

- Peter Gilchrist of Singapore defeated India's Sourav Kothari (Kolkata) to win the 2019 Pacific International Billiards Championship at the Yarraville Club in Melbourne, Australia.
- Sourav Kothari defeated Peter Gilchrist of Singapore 1134-944 in 2018 WBL World Billiards Championship title.

Indian men's recurve team bags Silver Medal in Archery World Championships

- The Indian men's recurve team bagged a silver medal in the Archery World Championships at Den Bosch in The Netherlands.
- Indian trio of Tarundeep Rai, Atanu Das and Pravin lost to Chinese team of Ding Yiliang, Wei Shaoxuan and Feng Hao 6-2 in the summit clash.
- India thus ended their campaign with one silver and two bronze medals won in the women's compound team and individual events. This was India's sixth silver at the World Championships where the country is yet to win a gold medal.

Senior National Squash Championship: Joshna Chinappa wins record 17th title, Mahesh Mangaoker clinches men's crown

- Joshna Chinappa won the national squash title for a record 17th time after she outplayed her Tamil Nadu rival Sunayna Kuruvilla in the 76th Senior National Squash Championship in Pune.
- Chinappa set a new standard by winning the national squash title for the 17th time to the break a long-standing milestone set by Bhuvneshwari Kumari, the 16-time national champion, whose record stood for 27 years.
- In the men's category, top seed Mahesh Mangaonkar lived up to his billing to emerge as the winner. In the final, Mangaonkar outplayed second-seeded Abhishek Pradhan in an all Maharashtra battle.

World Archery Championships

- The 50th edition of World Archery Championships, 2019 also known as Hyundai World Archery Championships held from June 10,2019 to June 16,2019 in 'S–Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands.
- Raj Kaur ,Muskan Kirar Jyothi Surekha Vennam won Bronze medal in Women's Compound mixed team event.
- Jyothi Surekha Vennam won Bronze medal in Women's Compound individual event
- Atanu Das ,Pravin Ramesh Jadhav,Tarundeep Rai won silver medal in Recurve men's team.
- South Korea topped the medal tally with 3 gold, 2 Silver, 2 Bronze. Chinese Taipei came second with 3Gold,1 Bronze.
- India won three medals,1 silver and 2 bronze.

Naomi Osaka, Novak Djokovic continue as World No. 1 in latest WTA, ATP rankings

- Japan's Naomi Osaka and Novak Djokovic of Serbia continue as World Number ones in the latest WTA and ATP rankings
- The rankings were announced ahead of Wimbledon which is just two weeks away.
  Naomi Osaka is just 252 points ahead of world No.2 Ashleigh Barty of Australia in unchanged top 20 WTA rankings
- Novak Djokovic leads the men's ATP tennis rankings

India beat South Africa 5-1 to win FIH Series Finals

- India defeated South Africa 5-1 in the summit clash to win the FIH Series Finals hockey tournament at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar
- Earlier a match was held between Japan and USA for the third and fourth positions. Japan defeated USA by a margin of 4-2 goals.
- The top two finishers of this tournament make it to the final round of the Olympic qualifiers to be held later this year

Gary Woodland wins 119th US Open, his first major title

- American Gary Woodland won the 2019 United States Open Championship at Pebble Beach Golf Links in California
- This is Woodland's fourth PGA Tour victory and his first major.

Indian Women's Hockey Team Wins FIH Series Finals, Beats Japan

- An impressive Indian women's hockey team won the FIH Women's Series Finals Hiroshima 2019 after defeating hosts Japan 3-1 in the Final held at the Hiroshima Hockey Stadium.
- The World No.9 Indian team had already qualified for the FIH Olympic Qualifiers 2019 after securing a place in the final of the competition.

Federer Win 10th Halle Title

- Roger Federer made history in Halle, defeating David Goffin to win a record 10th NOVENTI OPEN title.
- It is the first time that Federer has earned 10 crowns at one tournament, joining Rafael Nadal as the only men in the Open Era to accomplish the feat.

Lewis Hamilton wins French Grand Prix

- Lewis Hamilton stretched his F1 World Championship lead with a dominant and masterful victory over Valtteri Bottas at the French GP for his fourth win in a row, while Daniel Ricciardo was stripped of points after finishing in seventh. Charles Leclerc was at the third position in the Grand Prix

Lopez Beats Simon For Queen's Club Title

- Feliciano Lopez became the first wildcard to win the Queen's singles title since Pete Sampras in 1999 by beating fellow veteran Gilles Simon. Lopez won the 2017 title

Indian women's hockey team defeats Japan in FIH Seriesfinal

- Indian women's hockey team won the FIH Women's Series Finals after defeating hosts Japan 3-1 in the Final held at the Hiroshima Hockey Stadium
- The Indian women's team has already secured its place in the final round of the 2020 Olympics qualifiers after entering the final of this tournament

Australia's Ashleigh Barty becomes world's number one female tennis player

- Australian tennis player Ashleigh Barty has clinched the top spot in the world tennis rankings after beating Germany's Julia Gorges 6-3, 7-5, in the final of the Nature Valley Classic in Birmingham.
- She becomes the second Australian woman to achieve No. 1 following Evonne Goolagong Cawley on April 26, 1976 and the 27th woman overall

International Olympic Committee opens new headquarters in Switzerland

- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) formally opened its new headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland exactly 125 years after the Olympic Games were revived.
- The new headquarters costs 145 million US Dollars
- IOC President Thomas Bach has inaugurated the building

IOC strips world boxing body AIBA of Olympic status

- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) stripped Olympic status from the troubled world boxing body AIBA.
- IOC will now organize qualifying and final tournaments for the 2020 Tokyo Games.
- The International Boxing Association (AIBA) is the first federation to have been stripped of its right to organise its own sport at an Olympics.

Sofia Kenin beats Belinda Bencic to claim Mallorca Open title

- American 20-year-old Sofia Kenin saved three match points on her way to beating third seed Belinda Bencic in the Mallorca Open grass court final.
- This was her second WTA (Women's Tennis Association) singles title of the season.
- She claimed her first WTA singles title in the Australian Open 2019 held at Hobart, Australia in January, 2019.

Girish Koushik becomes India's 63rd Grandmaster

- Girish A. Koushik, the 22-year-old from Mysuru became India's 63rd Grandmaster at the 37th Balaton International Chess Festival in Hungary.
- Girish had completed his second GM norm in Mallorca late in May, and the third in Budapest the following week. Only 11 Elo rating points separated him from the figure of 2500 (live), and he duly crossed the line in Balatonlelle.

July

Tamil Nadu girl wins gold at World Deaf Youth Badminton Championship in Taiwan

- 15-year-old Jerlin Anika from Tamil Nadu's Madurai has won the gold medal at the 2nd World Deaf Youth Badminton Championship in Taipei, Taiwan.
- Anika won a total of four medals including two silvers and a bronze.

Verstappen wins German GP, Vettel second and Hamilton 11th

- Max Verstappen wins the German Grand Prix 2019. He is a Belgian-Dutch who drives for Red Bull.
- This is his second win in this season after Austria Grand Prix.

- Sebastian Vettel was on the second spot while Daniil Kvyat was on third.

Mary Kom, Six Other Indians Clinch Gold Medal In 23rd President's Cup

- MC Mary Kom, the six-time world champion, defeated Australia's April Franks in the 23rd President's Cup to clinch the gold medal in a one-sided 51kg category final in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia.
- The Indian boxers finished their campaign with nine medals, including seven gold and two silver, helping the contingent win the 'Best Team' award.
- The women boxers had a flawless record in the finals, winning all the four gold medals on offer, the men had mixed fortunes and had to settle for two silver along with three gold.

Ashish Kumar clinches gold as India grab eight medals at Thailand Open

- Asian Championships silver medallist Ashish Kumar bagged his first international gold, even as Indian boxers finished their campaign with a rich haul of eight medals at Thailand Open International boxing tournament in Bangkok.
- India finished with a gold, four silver and three bronze.
- Silver: Nikhat Zareen (51kg), Deepak (49kg), Mohammed Hussamuddin (56kg), and Brijesh Yadav (81kg).
- Bronze: Manju Rani (48kg), Ashish (69kg) and Bhagyabati Kachari (75kg)

Caeleb Dressel Breaks Michael Phelps' 100m Butterfly World Record

- American swimmer Caeleb Dressel set the new world record in the men's 100 meter butterfly during the World Championships in Gwangju, South Korea.
- Dressel came in at 49.50 during the second semi-final in the event, breaking the old record of 49.82 set by Michael Phelps in August 2009.
- It's the second world record once held by Phelps to be broken this week.

Isner Makes History With Fourth Newport Title

- John Isner lived up to his top seed status at the Hall of Fame Open, becoming the first player to win four titles in Newport with win over seventh-seeded Kazakh Alexander Bublik.

Adam Peaty wins 100m breaststroke gold at world championships

- Adam Peaty claimed the 100m breaststroke title at the world championships for a third time but was unable to break the record he set 24 hours earlier.
- Peaty became the first man to go under 57 seconds when he shattered his own world mark with a time of 56.88 in the semi-finals in Gwangju, South Korea.

Manny Pacquiao Beats Keith Thurman to Take WBA Super Welterweight Title

- Filipino professional boxer, Manny Pacquiao, claimed the WBA Welterweight Super Championship title after securing a split decision victory over Keith Thurman of America in Las Vegas.
- The 40-year-old pacquiao has now become the oldest welterweight champion in history to lift the title.

Harmeet, Ayhika win as India complete golden sweep in C'wealth TT

- Harmeet Desai and Ayhika Mukherjee won the men's and women's singles titles as hosts India completed a clean sweep, claiming all the seven gold medals on offer at the 21st Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships.
- Harmeet made a valiant comeback to outwit Sathiyan in a marathon seven game contest.
- Anthony Amalraj and Manav Thakkar claimed the men's doubles gold by stunning top seeds Sathiyan and Sharath Kamal .
- Ayhika won her maiden gold in the championships, thrashing former national champion Madurika Patkar
- Pooja Sahasrabudhe and Krittwika Sinha Roy defeated compatriots Sreeja Akula and Mousumi Paul to claim the women's doubles crown.

Brilliant Lowry wins The Open at Royal Portrush

- The Republic of Ireland's Shane Lowry won the 148th Open Championship at Royal Portrush in a six-shot romp over runner-up Tommy Fleetwood.
- The 32-year-old is the only second player from Ireland after Padraig Harrington (2007 and 2008) to lift the Claret Jug, or win any of golf's four majors.

Current Affairs Capsule for IBPS PO Mains Exam 2019 – Part 1

Hima Das Wins Gold, Tajinderpal Singh Toor Bags Bronze at Poznan Athletics Grand Prix

- Star Indian sprinter Hima Das won the women's 200m gold, while national record holder shot putter Tajinder Pal Singh Toor bagged a bronze in the Poznan Athletics Grand Prix in Poland.
- Hima, the world junior champion and national record holder in 400m who has been struggling with a back problem for the past few months, on her way to the 200m gold.
- Muhammed Anas, the 400m national record holder, was third in the men's 200m race with a timing of 20.75 seconds. K S Jeevan won the men's 400m bronze in 47.25s.

Karolina Pliskova Destroys Angelique Kerber to Win 2nd Eastbourne International Title

- World number three Karolina Pliskova cruised to her second Eastbourne International title with a 6-1, 6-4 destruction of Wimbledon champion Angelique Kerber.
- Taylor Fritz finally earned his maiden triumph, defeating compatriot Sam Querrey 6-3, 6-4 in 61 minutes to win the Nature Valley International in Eastbourne.

Max Verstappen wins Austrian Grand Prix

- Red Bulls' Max Verstappen overtook Ferrari's Charles Leclerc with three laps remaining to win his second consecutive race at the Spielberg circuit. This is Verstappen's sixth career win
- Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas came home third ahead of Sebastian Vettel in the second Ferrari and defending five-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Mercedes

Veer wins U-19 Asian Squash title

- Veer Chotrani won the Asian junior Individual squash championship in the U-19 category with a win over Yash Fadte in an all-India final in Macau
- Veer is now the third Indian to win this prestigious title after Ravi Dixit and Velavan Senthilkumar
- In the other two finals, India bagged two silver medals through Neel Joshi in the boys Under-17 category and Yuvna Gupta in the girls Under-15 section

ITBP DIG Aparna Kumar becomes first civil servant to summit Mount Denali in North America

- Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Aparna Kumar has become the first civil servant to scale Mount Denali, the highest peak in North America.
- This was her 7th summit in her '7 Summits' challenge.
- She also became the first woman IPS DIG and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) officer to successfully complete the South Pole expedition.

Indian pro boxer Vaibhav Yadav wins WBC Asia title

- Indian pro boxer Vaibhav Yadav became the WBC Asia silver welterweight champion after defeating Thailand's Fahpetch Singmanassak in the title bout held in Pattaya, Thailand.
- The fight was conducted by the Asian Boxing Council and approved by the World Boxing Council (WBC).

Dean Mascarenhas wins the South India Rally of 2019 INRC

- The 2019 Indian National Rally Championship kicked off with South India Rally in Chennai.
- Dean Mascarenhas won the South India Rally beating the late resurgence from ARRC champion Gaurav Gill.

Odisha to host 21st Commonwealth Table Tennis C'ship

- Odisha Government is set to host the 21st Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship at the Jawaharlal Indoor Stadium in Cuttack, scheduled for July 17 to 22.
- The government of Odisha signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) and Odisha State Table Tennis Association (OSTTA) to host the event.

Jio Digital Udaan Literacy Programme Launched in Partnership with Facebook

- Reliance Jio has launched a new digital literacy programme, aimed at first time internet users who are using the connected internet ecosystem and apps for the very first time.
- The programme, which will primarily focus on people using JioPhone and make use of Facebook and its ecosystem to demonstrate the advantages of connectivity and information availability.

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- The Jio Digital Udaan programme is being launched across 200 locations in 13 states, with over 7,000 locations in India earmarked for future release.

Pakistan beat India to lift IBSF Snooker World Team Cup

- Pakistan defeated India 3-1 to lift the IBSF Snooker World Team Cup 2019 title in Qatar.
- The Indian team was outplayed by Pakistan who won the first two frames. The Indian team, however, bounced back to win the third frame before Pakistan made a comeback to take the crown home.

China's Li Shi Feng wins the Canada Open Badminton

- India's Parupalli Kashyap lost to Li Shi Feng of China in the men's singles title clash of the Canada Open
- Kashyap entered the final, defeating Taiwan's Wang Tzu-wei in a semi-final encounter at Calgary

Hima Das clinches gold in Kutno Athletics Meet in Poland

- Star Indian sprinter Hima Das won her second international gold in women's 200m with a top finish at the Kutno Athletics Meet in Poland
- National record holder Muhammed Anas also won the gold in men's 200m race with a time of 21.18 seconds.
- MP Jabir won the gold in men's 400m hurdles in 50.21 seconds while Jithin Paul was third in 52.26 secs.

Marc Marquez wins seventh consecutive German MotoGP

- Honda rider Marc Marquez extended his lead at the top of the championship with a seventh consecutive victory at the German MotoGP
- He has won every MotoGP in Germany since 2013.
- It is Marquez' fifth victory in nine races this season which takes him to 185 points in the championship standings

Vinesh Phogat, Divya Kakran wins gold at Grand Prix of Spain

- India's top wrestler Vinesh Phogat won her first gold medal after shifting to 53kg category while Divya Kakran claimed the top honours in the 68kg category at the Grand Prix of Spain.
- World Championship bronze medallist Pooja Dhanda (57kg) had to be content with a silver after losing the title clash to Russia's Veronika Chumikova.
- India finished second with 130 points in team championship behind Russia (165).

Magnus Carlsen wins the Croatia Grand Chess Tour and his eighth consecutive tournament

- The World Chess Champion Magnus Carlsen has really been showing phenomenal dominance over the current chess scene with his back-to-back tournament wins.
- He put another feather in his cap by winning the second leg of Grand Chess Tour 2019 in Zagreb, Croatia.
- India's Viswanathan Anand ended up with 4.5 points and finished 11th.

Dutee Chand wins 100m gold in World Universiade

Dutee Chand is the first Indian woman track and field athlete to win a 100m gold in a global event.

- National record holder Dutee Chand became the first Indian woman track and field athlete to clinch a gold medal in the World Universiade after she won the 100m dash event in Napoli.
- The Universiade is an international multi-sport event, organized for university athletes by the International University Sports Federation (FISU). It is held once in every two years. This year it is being held in Naples, Italy.
- Headquarters of International University Sports Federation (FISU)- Lausanne, Switzerland

Meet Toran Yadav, a para-athlete silver medals winner World Wealth Yoga Festival and Championship

- Meet Toran Yadav, a para-athlete from Khatti village of Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh. He represented India at 4th World Wealth Yoga Festival and Championship in Europe.
- Yadav won three silver medals in the championship. Indeed, Toran Yadav is an inspiration to all the youth.

G. Sathiyan, Anthony Amalraj win bronze at World Tour Platinum Australian Open

- Indian Table Tennis pair of G. Sathiyan and Anthony Amalraj won the bronze at the World Tour Platinum Australian Open
- This was India's first ever medal in the Australian Open

Vinesh Phogat clinches gold in Yasar Dogu tourney

- Vinesh Phogat added to India's medal tally in Yasar Dogu 2019 Ranking Series tournament in Istanbul, by clinching gold medal in the 53kg category.
- Earlier, Seema and Manju Kumari won a gold medal each in the 50kg and 59kg category respectively.
- In men's wrestling, Rahul Aware won gold in the 61kg freestyle category, while Utkarsh clinched the bronze in the same weight division.

Amir khan wins WBC international welterweight title

- Olympic silver medallist Amir Khan clinched the WBC international welterweight title after knocking out Australian Billy Dib in the fourth round of his bout in the inaugural Super Boxing League.
- The event was held at King Abdullah Sports City, Saudi Arabia.

Vijender Singh beats Mike Snider to clinch 11th consecutive victory

- Indian boxing star Vijender Singh Beniwal (Haryana) clinched his 11th consecutive win in US professional Boxing (United States) against Mike Snider of US in Newark, New Jersey.
- Vijender recently fought and lost in the Indian general elections from the South Delhi seat.

Lewis Hamilton wins F1 British Grand Prix for record sixth time

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes – Britain) has won the Formula One 2019 British Grand Prix. It is the sixth time that he has won the British Grand Prix. He thus overtakes Jim Clark and Alain Prost, who both had five wins, and now has the greatest record of all in this race.
- Valtteri Bottas was at second followed by Charles Leclerc at third.
- Max Verstappen and Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel had a crash during the race crash

2019 Summer Universiade

- The 2019 Summer Universiade, the XXX Summer Universiade was held in Naples, Italy, between 3 and 14 July 2019.
- Japan won the top spot with 82 Medals (33 Gold, 21 Silver, 28 Bronze).
- India got 29th place in the list with the total medal tally of 4 (1Gold, 1Silver, 2 Bronze).
- Dutee Chand, hailing from Jajpur district of Odisha, became the first Indian to win a gold medal at the event.
- She is the current national champion in the women's 100 metres event. She is the third Indian woman to ever qualify for the Women's 100 meters event at Summer Olympic Games (for 2016 Rio Olympics).
- The Indian shooter Elavenil (Cuddalore, Tamilnadu) got 225.2 points in the final round to finish second behind Brazdova Lucie (Czech Republic) with 250.3 points.
- The women's team comprising Nina Chandel, Elavenil Valarivan and Aayushi Gupta got their Bronze medal with 1866.2 points.
- Angad Vir Singh Bajwa (24) shot 44 in the final & got Bronze medal. He had made it to the finals with the third-best of 122/125 score. The gold was won by Nicolas Vasiliou of Cyprus with 56 hits.
- Angad represented India in his first senior world cup in Acapulco 2015.

India to host ISSF World Cup from March 15-26 2020

- The capital will be hosting next year's International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Combined World Cup from March 2020 to be held in New Delhi, India
- The Combined World Cup involves events in rifle, pistol and shotgun.

21st Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship begins in Cuttack

- The 21st edition of Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship began at the Jawaharlal Indoor Stadium in Cuttack
- Odisha Governor Prof. Ganeshi Lal inaugurated the event.

Anish Bhanwala claims gold medal in 25m rapid fire pistol in ISSF Junior World Cup

- Anish Bhanwala won his second ISSF Junior World Cup gold in the men's 25m rapid fire pistol
- While Esha Singh bagged a silver in women's 10m air pistol, consolidating India's top position in Suhl, Germany.
- Anish had won his first Junior World Cup gold in the event in Sydney last year.

Intercontinental Cup 2019: North Korea Beat Tajikistan to Win Title

- North Korea triumphed in the second edition of Intercontinental Cup football tournament beating Tajikistan by a solitary goal in the final.
- Both finalists were the two lowest-ranked teams of the four-nation tournament, the other participants being hosts India and Syria.
- The champions got richer by USD 50000 while the runners-up received USD 25000.

Indian Men & Women's teams win Commonwealth Table Tennis title

- In Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship held in Cuttack, India made a record by winning gold in both men's and women's category.
- The Indian men won the final match defeating England 3-2. The Indian women team defeated England 3-0 in final match.
- The Indian women team won the gold for the first time in the history in the commonwealth games.

Indian bodybuilder Ravinder Malik clinches Mr South Asia title

- Indian bodybuilder Ravinder Kumar Malik has clinched Mr. South Asia title. He has crowned the overall champion at 12th South Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Championship in Kathmandu.
- Malik, the winner of 80 kg category, was adjudged best bodybuilder among the winners of nine senior men's weight categories.
- Afghanistan won a total 15 medals including six gold, four silver and five bronze. Nepal bagged three gold, seven silver and six bronze and India claimed four gold, five silver and one bronze medal.
- The Maldives won three gold and two bronze medals, Pakistan bagged one gold, two silver and two bronze, while Bhutan finished last with a bronze medal.

Shiva Thapa Becomes India's First Gold-medallist in Kazakhstan President's Cup

- Four-time Asian medallist Shiva Thapa became India's first gold-medallist at the President's Cup boxing tournament after getting a walkover in the final in Astana, Kazakhstan.
- Making his international debut in the newly-introduced Olympic category of 63kg, Thapa was to fight Kazakhstan's Zakir Safiullin in the summit clash but his opponent had to pull out due to injury.

2019 Wimbledon Championships

Category	Winner	Runner
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic	Roger Federer
Women's Singles	Simona Halep	Serena Williams
Men's Doubles	Juan Sebastián Cabal and Robert Farah	Nicolas Mahut and Édouard Roger-Vasselin
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-wei and Barbora Strýcová	Gabriela Dabrowski and Xu Yifan

Yonex Canada Open

CATEGORY	WINNER	RUNNER
Men's Singles	Li Shi feng (China)	Parupalli Kashyap(India)
Women's Singles	An Se-young (South Korea)	Wang Zhiyi (China)
Men's Doubles	Mathias Boe & Mads Conrad-	Hiroki Okamura & Masayuki

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	Petersen(Denmark)	Onodera(Japan)
Women's Doubles	Setyana Mapasa & Gronya Somerville(Australia)	Chang Ye-na & Kim Hye-rin(South Korea)
Mixed Doubles	Ko Sung-hyun & Eom Hye-won(South Korea)	Guo Xinwa & Zhang Shuxian(China)

Important Obituaries

May

Person	Field
John Singleton	African-American Filmmaker
Justice B Subhashan Reddy	Former Chief Justice of the Madras and Kerala High Courts
Master Hirannaiah	Kannada theatre personality
Peter Mayhew	British-US Actor
Maramraju Satyanarayana	Writer and Academician
Bajirao	The last captive white tiger at Sanjay Gandhi National Park
Seymour Nurse	Former West Indies cricketer
Derek Sippy	Former billiards player
Eranholi Moosa	Singer of Mappila Paattu
NR Madhava Menon	Father of modern legal education
Mrinal Mukherjee	Bengali TV and film actor
Prof Kirpal Singh	First chronicler of Partition
Baidyanath Mishra	Renowned Odisha economist
Thoppil Mohamed Meeran	Noted Tamil novelist and Sahitya Akademi Award winner
Hiralal Yadav	Bhojpuri folk singer
Peggy Lipton	US Actress
Y.C. Deveshwar	ITC chairman
Doris Day	Hollywood actor-singer
Bob Hawke	Former Austrlian PM
Ieoh Ming Pei	Chinese-American architect
Rallapalli Venkata Narasimha Rao	Veteran Telugu actor
Niki Lauda	The former Formula One driver
Vijaya Mulay	Renowned Filmmaker & Film Historian
Sammy Shore	Actor and Standup comedian
Sultan Ahmad Shah	Former Malaysian King
Prem Tinsulanonda	Thailand's ex-prime minister
Murray Gell-Man	Nobel Prize-winning Physicist
Veeru Devgan	Veteran Filmmaker and Action Choreographer
Kalpana Dash	Odisha's first woman mountaineer
Carmine Caridi	American Actor
Binny	India's Only Orangutan

June

Person	Field
B.M. Khaitan	Veteran industrialist
Jose Antonio Reyes	Spanish footballer
Ruma Guha Thakurta	Bengali Actor-singer
Jaspal Inder Singh Kalra (Jiggs Kalra)	Celebrated chef and culinary revivalist ('Czar of Indian Cuisine')
Dinyar Contractor	Veteran Bollywood actor

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Lennart Johansson	Former UEFA president
Prakash Pant	Uttarakhand finance minister
Malcolm John RebennackJr	Grammy award winning singer and songwriter
Girish Karnad	Noted actor and dramatist
R.V. Janakiraman	Former Puducherry Chief Minister
Crazy Mohan	Actor Comedian
Pazhavila Ramesan	Poet and lyricist
Lee Hee-ho	Former S. Korean first lady and feminist
Franco Zeffirelli	Legendary Italian filmmaker
Mohamed Morsi	Egypt's former President
N. Lingappa	Veteran athletics coach and Dronacharya awardee
Lalrinchhana	Former Mizoram minister and MNF leader
Madan Lal Saini	Rajasthan BJP Chief
Mohan Ranade	Goa Freedom fighter
Swami Satyamitranand Giri Maharaj	head of Bharat Mata Mandir
Vijaya Nirmala	Veteran actor - director
Jharna Dhara Chowdhury	Eminent social activist
Shyam Sundar Mitra	Former Bengal's Ranji Cricket Captain
Mohammed Baji	Eminent freedom fighter

July

Person	Field
Abburi Chaya Devi	Noted Telugu writer
Rakesh Shukla	Former India Cricketer
Keshav Rout	Odia film producer
Carlin Dunne	Renowned Motorcycle Racer
Momir Bulatovic	Former president of Montenegro
BK Birla	Veteran industrialist
Lee Iacocca	US Automobile industry legend
Sudarshan Agarwal	Former Uttarakhand Governor
Joao Gilberto	Brazilian musician and songwriter
A. U. Celestine	Former Indian football team goalkeeper
Wilfred Mesquita	Former Goa minister
Soumendranath Kundu	Former Bengal and Railways leg-spinner
H.M. Ershad	Bangladesh's former military dictator
Fernando Corbató	Computer password inventor
M J Radhakrishnan	Renowned cinematographer
Lt Gen JS Gharaya	1971 war hero
Pernell Whitaker	American boxer
Swarup Dutta	Bengali actor
Johnny Clegg	South African singer and songwriter
Marc Batchelor	Former South African footballer
P Rajagopal	Saravana Bhavan restaurant founder
Sheila Dikshit	Former Chief Minister of Delhi
Peter McNamara	Former Australian Tennis player
Yukiya Amano	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) director general
Ram Chandra Paswan	Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) MP from Bihar's Samastipur
Maxim Dadashev	Russian boxer
Indraganti Srikanta Sarma	journalist, writer and lyricist
Russi Taylor	Voice actor and Disney Legend
S. Jaipal Reddy	Former union minister and senior Congress leader from Telangana

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Donkupar Roy	Meghalaya Assembly Speaker
Attoor Ravi Varma	Eminent Malayalam poet and translator