

SPORTS UPDATE

NATIONAL NEWS



PEOPLE IN NEWS

DECEMBER 2019 SET-1

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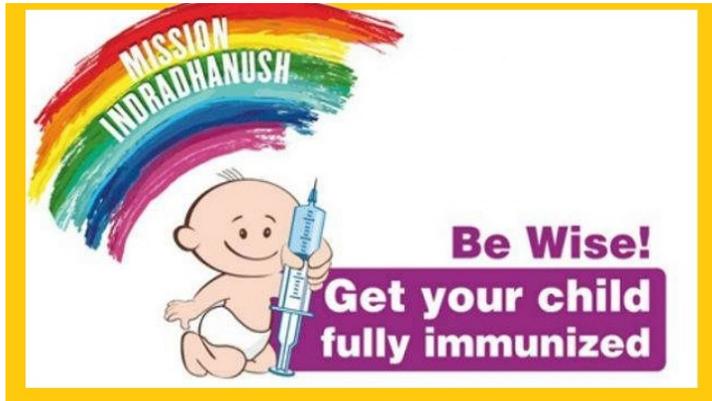
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National News

1. Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 to be launched across India

The Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 2.0 was launched across India on December 2, 2019. The mission aims to immunize children under 2 years of age and pregnant women against eight vaccine-preventable diseases. The immunisation drive covers vaccines for tuberculosis, meningitis, measles, Hepatitis B, tetanus, whooping cough, poliomyelitis and diphtheria. The vaccines for two other diseases- Haemophilus influenzae and Japanese encephalitis are also being provided under the scheme in certain select areas. It was carried out between December 2019 and March 2020. The mission aims to achieve full immunisation coverage in 272 districts spread across 27 states of India.



PM Narendra Modi had launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) on October 8, 2017 to further intensify India's immunisation programme. Under the mission, the Union Government aimed to reach all children aged below two years and pregnant women, who were left uncovered under the government's routine immunisation programme. The key objective behind the launch of the intensified immunisation drive was to ensure that no child suffers from any vaccine-preventable disease.

The programme aimed to cover the low performing areas in the selected districts (high priority districts) and urban areas with special focus on the unserved and low coverage pockets in urban slums with a migratory population.

The Intensified Mission Indradhanush was launched to intensify the work undertaken under Mission Indradhanush, which was launched by the then Union Health Minister JP Nadda on December 25, 2014.

The Mission Indradhanush sought to achieve 90 percent immunisation coverage in India by 2020. The Intensified Mission Indradhanush revised the target and set the goal of achieving at least 90% coverage of full immunisation by December 2018, instead of 2020. Built on the foundation of Mission Indradhanush, the Intensified Mission Indradhanush aims to use additional strategies to reach the high-risk population, especially in the low performing areas. The mission puts enhanced focus on dropouts, left-outs and resistant families and hard to reach areas with a focus on urban, underserved population and tribal areas.

2. 40 statues, allied objects recovered from Brahmaputra in Assam

In Assam, 40 pieces of statues and allied objects, mostly used in worship, have been recovered from the bed of the Brahmaputra at Uzanbazar area of Guwahati. The valuable statues and objects were recovered by a joint team of police and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF). The origin of the objects and other related issues are being investigated. The idols were first spotted by a local person while bathing in the river yesterday, who informed the local Latasil police station.



3. Haj 2020: India becomes first country to make entire Haj process digital

India has become the first country in the world to completely digitize the Haj process. Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said that various services have been added to the online application service like e-visa, haj mobile app, e-messiah health facility, stay and traffic information in Mecca Medina and Haj pilgrimage information. Naqvi has recently signed a bilateral Haj 2020 agreement with Saudi Arabia's Haj and Umrah Minister Mohammad Saleh bin Taher.



It is for the first time when digital pre-tagging has been arranged by the airlines so that Haj pilgrims will get all kinds of information in India itself. Haj pilgrims will get prior information about which room of which building in Mecca Medina and what number bus will have to be taken after landing at the airport. The SIM card of the passengers will be linked with the Haj Mobile app so that they will continue to get the latest information about the Haj. This year 100 telephone line information centers have been started at Haj House in Mumbai. The government of India will provide health cards to all travelers in India, while in Saudi Arabia they will be given 'e-Messiah health facility'. This system will have information about the health of each Haj pilgrim.

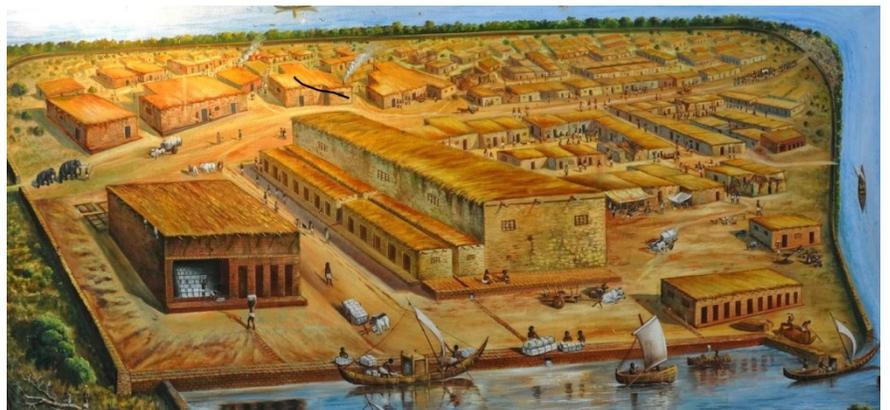
They will be provided medical assistance immediately in case of an emergency.

4. NHRC seeks report from Centre, States on sexual harassment cases

The National Human Rights Commission has issued notices to the Centre, all States and Union Territories seeking reports on the Standard Operating Procedures, SOPs to deal with cases related to sexual violence against women and use of the Nirbhaya Fund. Taking suo motu cognizance of media reports on cases of sexual assault, the rights panel issued notices to the Chief Secretaries of all states and Union Territories seeking reports within six weeks about the status of Nirbhaya Fund. It has also asked the details about the availability of the fund and the money spent during the last three years. The commission has also issued notices to the Directors General of Police of all States and UTs calling for their response about the SOPs and the best practices adopted by them to deal with matters relating to sexual abuse and atrocities against women.

5. India's first maritime museum coming up at Lothal in Gujarat

Underwater or marine archaeology in India is all set to get a boost with the government deciding to establish a National Maritime Heritage Museum at Lothal, Harappan site on the Saurashtra coast in Gujarat. The museum will also be an independent research centre of underwater archaeology for reconstruction of maritime history, archaeology of boat building and materials traded. It will have on display salvaged material from shipwreck sites in the Indian Ocean waters. The museum is being set up with technical help



from the Portuguese Maritime Heritage Museum. Lothal is the site of one of the oldest ports in India dating to the Bronze Age.

Underwater archaeology is a specialized branch of archaeology that involves recovering submerged remains such as ports, shipwrecks and studying proxy records of maritime activity from archaeological excavations as well as archival and historical records. There are an estimated three million undiscovered shipwrecks lying on the ocean floor, according to UNESCO.

Between 1824 and 1962, over 12,000 sailing ships and war vessels were lost at sea. Many of them got wrecked in Indian coastal waters.

6. Chief of Defence Staff to come under RTI Act: MoS Defence



Minister of State (MoS) for Defence Shripad Naik said in the Rajya Sabha that the Chief of Defence Staff will come under the ambit of Right to Information (RTI) Act 2005.

The Union Minister said that the Implementation Committee has submitted its report in the matter. The Committee was constituted to determine and finalise the exact responsibilities of the said post which also includes the framework and all other issues involved to ensure smooth operationalization of the Chief of Defence Staff. The government had, last month, granted in-principle approval for the creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff.

7. 'One nation, one ration card' implemented on pilot basis in 6 states: Govt

The Centre's ambitious 'One nation and one ration card' initiative is being implemented on a pilot basis in a cluster of six states. The inter-State portability of ration card will soon be tried in one more cluster of six states. The government aims to implement the 'one nation, one ration card' facility across the country from June 1, 2020. This facility will largely cover migrant labourers and daily wagers. Under the initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled food grains under the National Food Security Act from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) in the country using the same ration card in any part of the country. About 75 crore beneficiaries have been covered so far under the National Food Security law against the target of 81.35 crore.

8. SC/ST creamy layer exclusion from quota: Centre seeks review, says refer matter to 7-judge bench

The Centre urged the Supreme Court that its 2018 verdict excluding the creamy layer within the SC/ST community from reservation benefits be referred to a seven-judge bench for review. A five-judge Constitution bench in 2018 had held that the well-off members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe communities, who are also termed creamy layer, cannot be granted the benefits of reservation in college admissions and government jobs. A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde, which was hearing a batch of PILs on the issue, said the question whether the aspect of exclusion of creamy layer among SC/ST can be referred to a larger bench or not will be dealt with after two weeks.



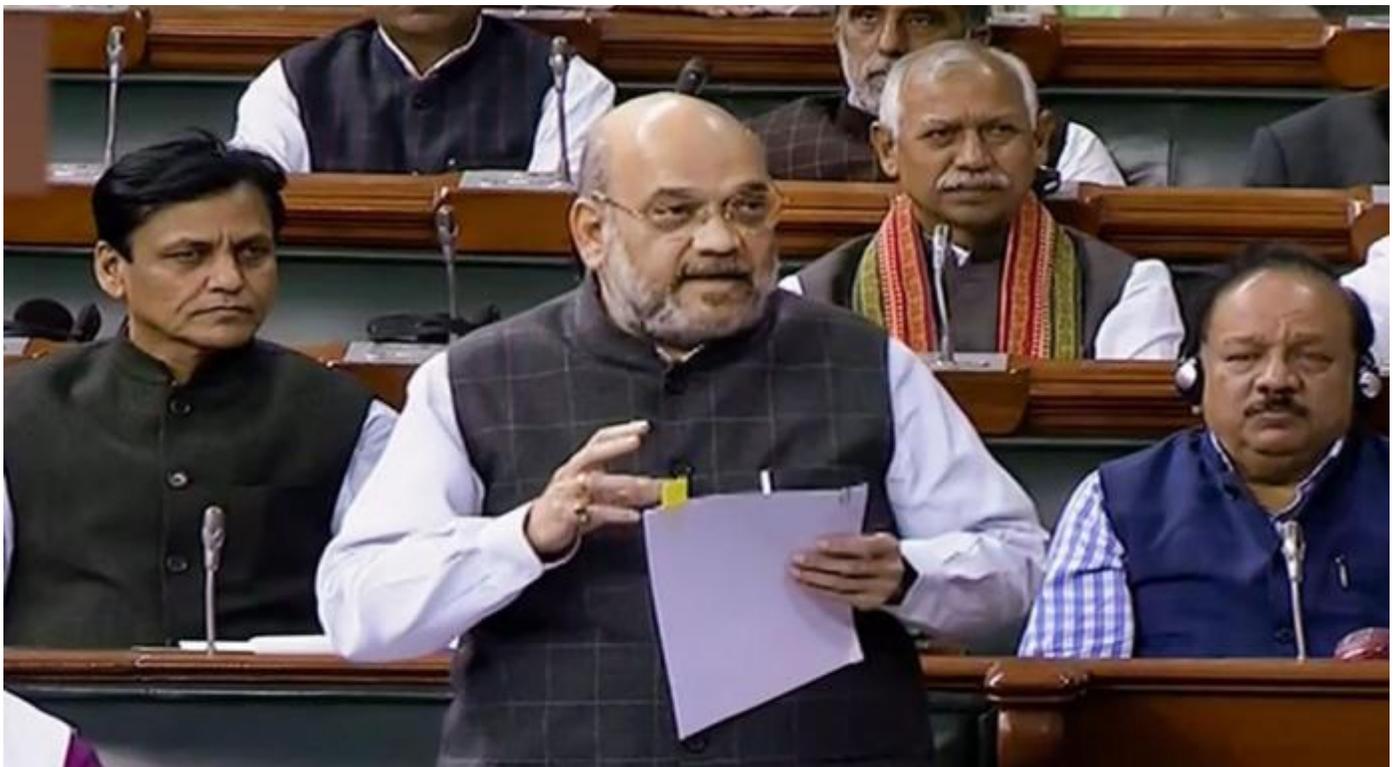
9. Vice President launches 'BharatiyaPoshan Anthem'

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched the "BharatiyaPoshan Anthem" which aims at taking the message of making India malnutrition free to all corners of the country. The anthem has been penned by noted lyricist Prasoon Joshi and sung by Shankar Mahadevan. PoshanAbhiyan was launched by Prime Minister NarendraModi in March 2018 with an objective to make India malnutrition free by 2022.

10. CSIR-IICT Nuclear Magnetic Resonance test facility gets US FDA certification

The CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT), Hyderabad has announced that the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) test facility at the institute has passed the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) inspection with "no observations". The NMR spectroscopy is an important technique for structural characterization of pharmaceutical and other chemical molecules. The USFDA inspected the NMR facility during August 21-22 and found the facility in an acceptable state of compliance with regard to Current Good Manufacturing Practice (CGMP). Accordingly it classified the facility as "no action initiated (NAI)".

11. Parliament passes SPG (Amendment) Bill, 2019



The Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019 has been passed in the Parliament. The bill was passed in the RajyaSabha on December 3, 2019 amidst a walkout by the Indian National Congress.

The LokSabha had passed the SPG bill earlier on November 27, 2019. The SPG (Amendment) Bill, 2019 proposes to provide security to the Prime Minister and the members of his immediate family, who are residing with him at the official residence.

The SPG bill also proposes to provide security to former prime ministers and their immediate family members residing with him at the official residence allotted to him for five years. The SPG (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was introduced in the

lower house of the parliament by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah on November 25, 2019. The bill seeks to amend the Special Protections Group Act, 1988.

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that the main objective behind introducing the amendment was to make the SPG act more effective in ensuring the security of the Prime Minister.

The SPG (Amendment) Bill, 2019 amends the SPG Act and states that the SPG security will be provided to the Prime Minister and his immediate family members living with him at his official residence. The bill also states that the SPG security will be provided to former Prime Minister and his immediate family members, who reside with him at the officially allotted residence for 5 years from the date he ceases to hold the office. The SPG (Amendment) Bill, 2019 amends the SPG act's condition to continue the SPG cover of the PM's immediate family members if the level of perceived threat is high in case of withdrawal of the SPG cover to the former Prime Minister. The bill states that if the SPG cover is withdrawn from a former Prime Minister, it shall also stand withdrawn from his immediate family members. This means that in case of death of an ex-PM dies, the SPG security would be withdrawn from his immediate family members. Under the bill's provisions, only those family members will be provided with SPG security cover, who stay with the PM or former PM at the allotted residence.

The SPG is the highest tier of security, which was set up in 1985 to protect the Prime Minister of India after the assassination of late PM Indira Gandhi by her bodyguards in October 1984.

Though the SPG was initially constituted to provide proximate security to the PM and his immediate family members, the SPG Act was amended in 1991 to provide security cover to former PMs and their immediate families after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1992.

12. Govt. maps 32 tiger corridors, develops conservation plan

The Centre has mapped tiger corridors inside and outside protected areas across the country and developed a conservation plan for big cats, which includes a strategy to streamline infrastructure projects with mandatory inclusion of safe passages.

The plan has been formulated keeping in view the all India tiger estimation results released in July that showed there were 2,967 big cats in the country and that there has been a 6% annual increase in their numbers since 2006. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), under the Union environment ministry, has published a document titled Connecting Tiger Populations for Long-term Conservation, in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun. The document maps 32 major corridors and details the tiger conservation plan under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. These maps have been developed since 2014 and have been constantly updated over the past five years.



These corridors have been assessed and developed based on annual tiger estimation exercises over 15 years based on preliminary big cat dispersal information.

The NTCA has developed a three-level strategy to manage negative human-tiger interactions under the Centre's long-term tiger conservation program. The strategy involves providing material, logistical and financial support to tiger reserves to deal with big cats dispersing out of protected areas. It also seeks to ensure safe dispersal of tigers by limiting habitat interventions (facilitating dispersal to other rich habitat areas), and to follow the NTCA's standard operating procedures to deal with human-animal and livestock conflict after dispersal.

The basic purpose of identifying these 32 corridors is to streamline linear infrastructure projects with mandatory inclusion of mitigation measures for safe passage of tigers. The Centre has allocated Rs 350 crore for tiger conservation to states in 2019. Maharashtra (Rs 37 crore) has got the maximum funds, followed by Madhya Pradesh (Rs 29 crore) and Assam (Rs 21 crore).

The Centre, however, has to improve the speed of relocating villagers from core areas of tiger reserves, and also enhance rehabilitation of hunting communities. The list of tiger corridors includes three across Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh bordering Nepal in Shivalik Hills and Gangetic Plains.

13. Odisha Government launches smart learning app 'Madhu' for school students

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched a smart learning app called 'Madhu' for the schools' children in the state. The app was named after UtkalGourabMadhusudan Das and developed by the Ganjam district administration in accordance with the 5T initiative of the Odisha state government. The mobile app is aimed at helping the school students in the state to learn their lessons via videos and tutorials available on the app. The courses have been prepared in a way to make the video lectures more interesting and self-explanatory with the help of high-quality teaching-learning material. The mobile app consists of video lectures and is available in the Odia language by leading subject experts and educationists.



The first phase of the app consists of study materials for Mathematics and Science subjects from classes 5 to 8.

With the help of the app, students will be provided with access to video explanations of the topics they study at school. The courses in the app have been prepared to make videos interesting for the students by using the latest quality teaching-learning materials along with question-answer sessions for a better understanding of each topic.

The features of the Madhu App includes lectures by expert school teachers in Odia language, usage of high-quality teaching-learning material, interactive question-answer session, and real classroom experience.

The students will be able to download the Odisha Madhu App from Google Play Store which will contain video lectures and exercises in Odia. Along with this the app also contains an interactive question-answer session along with e-learning exercises for maths and science subjects.

14. VP Naidu launches new Rotavirus vaccine - ROTAVAC-5D

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launched the new Rotavirus vaccine - ROTAVAC-5D® designed and developed by Bharat Biotech in New Delhi. ROTAVAC is an example of a true social innovation that was realized through a partnership between scientists from India and the USA.

The first generation, Rotavirus vaccine, ROTAVAC developed under a Public-Private Partnership with the Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India, has put India on the global map for setting new standards in pharmaceutical Research and Development.

15. India achieved a 28% reduction in malaria cases in 2018 : WHO report



India was one of the two high burden countries that achieved a 28 per cent reduction in malaria cases in 2018, according to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) World Malaria Report 2019.

Malaria cases dropped by 28 per cent in 2018 compared to 2017, while there was 24 per cent decline in cases between 2016 and 2017. Despite being the highest burden countries of the South-East Asia Region, India reduced its reported cases by half as compared with 2017. Bangladesh and Thailand also reported substantial decline in reported cases, the WHO said in a statement. Two high-burden-to-high-impact countries that achieved a significant reduction in malaria cases in 2018,

as compared with the previous year, were India (2.6 million fewer cases) and Uganda (1.5 million fewer cases), the report stated.

According to the report, an estimated 6,737,000 malaria cases and 9,620 deaths due to it were reported in India in 2018. It was 9,348,000 cases and 16,310 deaths in 2017.

According to the report, India's progress means the country no longer has the world's 4th highest malaria burden, though it still is the only non-African country among the top 11 countries with the most malaria globally.

As WHO South-East Asia Region continues to register a steep decline in malaria incidence, the WHO today reiterated accelerated efforts by member countries to achieve zero malaria by 2030. There is a strong commitment to eliminate malaria in the region, reflected in the commendable intense efforts and progress being made by the member countries.

This momentum needs to be sustained and further accelerated to prevent, rapidly detect and treat malaria, to benefit everyone, everywhere. As per the report, in 2018 WHO South-East Asia Region had an estimated 8 million cases and 11 600 malaria deaths

69 per cent and 70 per cent less as compared with 2010. This is the largest decline among all six WHO Regions.

Two countries in the region - Maldives and Sri Lanka have been certified malaria-free, and two more, Timor-Leste and Bhutan, are close to elimination target.

16. India signs LOCs in water supply, solar projects with Guinea

India extended Line of Credits for one water supply and two solar projects in Guinea. The agreements were exchanged in the presence of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Guinean counterpart Mamadi Toure. The development of the solar projects reflected Guinea's commitment to the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

Countries which have signed the agreement until now include India, France, Australia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Japan, amongst others. The agreement was opened for signature during the COP22 at Marrakech on



November 15, 2016.

The International Solar Alliance is a group of 121 solar resource-rich countries with headquarters in Gurugram, India. The organisation aims to deploy over 1,000 gigawatts of solar energy and mobilise more than USD 1,000 billion into solar power by 2030, according to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Last year in November, the Centre gave ex-post facto approval for moving a resolution in the first assembly of the International Solar Alliance for amending its Framework Agreement to enable membership for all member countries of the UN. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Inclusion of the UN members to the Alliance will put solar energy in global agenda with the universal appeal for developing and deploying solar energy.

17. Harsimrat inaugurated Central India's first Mega Food Park

The Union Minister for food processing Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated Avantee mega Food Park in Dewas, Madhya Pradesh. This is the first food park in Central India. The Food park aims to establish a direct linkage from farm to processing and then to consumer markets. It will be connected through a network of collection centres and primary processing centres.

The cost of the Food Park is about 150 crore rupees. The park is spread over 51 acres. The food park is in line with the Union Ministry of Food Processing initiative of creating Mega Food Parks in India. It is expected that the Mega Food Park will create more job opportunities.

Various processes like processing of gram, wheat, soybean, other grains, and vegetables will be carried out in the park. In the next phases of the project, warehouses will be opened in Agar, Dhar, Indore, and Ujjain.

18. India's first hybrid annuity model-based STP inaugurated in Haridwar

India's first hybrid annuity model in sewerage sector, a 14 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) was inaugurated in Sarai, Haridwar under the NamamiGange project of National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG). The Sarai STP was inaugurated by Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in the presence of King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden, Uttarakhand Chief Minister



Trivendra Singh Rawat, Director General of NMCG Rajiv Ranjan Mishra and other dignitaries from Indian and Swedish governments.

The Sarai 14 MLD STP has been developed at a cost of Rs. 41.40 crores and the plant has been completed before its scheduled timeline. In order to improve the quality of water in river Ganga in Uttarakhand, 34 projects of sewerage infrastructure works have been taken up at a cost of approximately Rs 1,144.77 crores for creating treatment capacity of 165.50 MLD and for laying sewerage network of 152 kilometres. Once all these projects are commissioned, the entire sewage capacity of Uttarakhand would be met and there would be a substantial improvement in the quality of water of the river Ganga in the state.

19. Artificial Intelligence has been introduced as a subject in class IX from the session 2019-20 in the schools affiliated with CBSE-HRD Minister

In order to enhance multidisciplinary approach in teaching-learning and to sensitize the new generation, Artificial Intelligence has been introduced as a subject in class IX from the session 2019-20 in the schools affiliated with Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). A twelve hours 'Inspire' module on Artificial Intelligence has also been announced, which schools can take up with the students of class VIII. The study material for teaching Artificial Intelligence in classes VIII and IX has already been provided to schools through the CBSE's website



(<http://cbseacademic.nic.in/ai.html>). CBSE has collaborated with several organizations such as Intel, IBM, Microsoft, Private Schools, etc. 41 training programmes on Artificial Intelligence has been conducted in schools affiliated with CBSE at various parts of the country in which 1690 participants (principals and teachers) have been trained. Artificial

Intelligence has been introduced in classes VIII, IX & X in schools affiliated with CBSE. Decision to introduce Artificial Intelligence in the States and UTs will have to be taken by the respective Boards.

20. Blue Flag Certification for beaches



The Ministry has embarked upon a programme for 'Blue Flag' Certification for select beaches in the country. This Certification is accorded by an international agency "Foundation for Environment Education, Denmark" based on 33 stringent criteria in four major heads i.e. (i) Environmental Education and Information, (ii) Bathing Water Quality, (iii) Environment Management and Conservation and (iv) Safety and Services in the beaches. The 'Blue Flag' beach is an Eco-tourism model endeavouring to provide to the tourists/beach goers clean and hygienic

bathing water, facilities/amenities, safe and healthy environment and sustainable development of the area.

13 pilot beaches that have been identified for the certification, in consultation with concerned coastal States/UTs, are Ghoghla Beach (Diu), Shivrajpur beach (Gujarat), Bhogave (Maharashtra), Padubidri and Kasargod (Karnataka), Kappad beach (Kerala), Kovalam beach (Tamil Nadu), Eden beach (Puducherry), Rushikonda beach (Andhra Pradesh), Miramar beach (Goa), Golden beach (Odisha), Radhanagar beach (Andaman & Nicobar Islands) and Bangaram beach (Lakshadweep). Rushikonda beach in Andhra Pradesh also features in the list of 13 pilot beaches, for development of facilities and infrastructure accordingly.

21. Centre sanctions Rs.100 crores to set up Women Help Desks in Police Stations

The central government has sanctioned a sum of Rs.100 crores from Nirbhaya Fund to set up and strengthen Women Help Desks in Police Stations. The scheme will be implemented by the States and Union Territories. Women Help Desks will focus on making the Police Stations more women-friendly and approachable. The government has considered that it would be the first and single point of contact for any woman walking into a police station.

22. India and Sweden sign three agreements

India and Sweden signed three agreements that will help both countries to cooperate in the frontier of science and technology and address climate change and maritime issues. The agreements were signed after the Indian delegation held talks with the Swedish team led by King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia who are on a four day visit to India.

A press release from the Ministry of External Affairs announced both sides signed the Protocol of Cooperation between the Department of Science and Technology of India and the Swedish Energy Agency and the MoU between the Ministry of Earth



Sciences of India and the Ministry of Education and Research of Sweden on cooperation of polar science. A third agreement was sealed between the two countries on Recognition of Seafarer Certificates pursuant to Regulation I/10 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch. The aim of this agreement is to promote safety of maritime environment.

23. Registration of old age homes now mandatory

The Union Cabinet approved the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019 which provides for basic needs, safety and security of senior citizens.

The amended Bill proposes the removal of the `10,000 ceiling as maintenance for the welfare of parents and also includes preference to dispose applications of senior citizens above the age of 80.

The Bill, which seeks to amend the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizen Act, 2007, also proposes registration of senior citizens care homes/homecare service agencies along with maintenance of minimum standards for senior citizen care homes. Nodal police officers for senior citizens in every police station and district level special police unit for senior citizens, and helpline for senior citizens are some of the other key points in the amended Bill. The aim is to provide for maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens, and ensure their rights are recognised under the Constitution.

International News

1. Saudi Arabia takes over G20 Presidency from Japan

Saudi Arabia has taken over the G20 Presidency from Japan. It is the first Arab nation to assume the G20 presidency. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, hailed it as a "unique opportunity" to shape international consensus. The G20 presidency, which Saudi Arabia has taken over from Japan, will host world leaders for a global summit in its capital on 21-22 November in 2020.

2. China introduces mandatory face scans for phone users

China will require telecom operators to collect face scans when registering new phone users at offline outlets, according to the country's information technology authority, as Beijing continues to tighten cyberspace controls. In September, China's industry and information technology ministry issued a notice on "safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of citizens online", which laid out rules for enforcing real-name registration. A China Unicom customer service representative told AFP that the 1 December "portrait matching" requirement means customers registering for a new phone number may have to record themselves turning their head and blinking.

3. Putin and Xi Oversee Launch of Landmark Russian Gas Pipeline to China

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping oversaw the launch of a landmark pipeline that will transport natural gas from Siberia to northeastern China, an economic and political boost to ties between Moscow and Beijing. The start of gas flows via the Power of Siberia pipeline reflects Moscow's attempts to pivot to the East to try to mitigate pain from Western financial sanctions imposed over its 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimea. The move cements China's spot as Russia's top export market and gives Russia a potentially enormous new market outside Europe. It also comes as Moscow is hoping to launch two other major energy projects -- the Nord Stream 2 undersea Baltic gas pipeline to Germany and the TurkStream pipeline to Turkey and southern Europe.



The 3,000-km-long (1,865 mile) Power of Siberia pipeline will transport gas from the Chayandinskoye and Kovykta fields in eastern Siberia, a project expected to last for three decades and to generate \$400 billion for Russian state coffers.

This step takes Russo-Chinese strategic cooperation in energy to a qualitative new level and brings us closer to (fulfilling) the task, set together with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, of taking bilateral trade to \$200 billion by 2024.

The new pipeline emerges in Heilongjiang, which borders Russia, and goes onto Jilin and Liaoning, China's top grain hub. Flows via the pipeline are expected to gradually rise to 38 billion cubic meters (bcm) per year in 2025, possibly making China Russia's second-largest gas customer after Germany, which bought 58.50 bcm of gas from Russia last year. Moscow began supplying natural gas to western and central Europe in the 1950s and Europe has long been Russia's major consumer of gas, supplied by Kremlin-controlled energy giant Gazprom, with total annual supplies of around 200

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bcm. The price China is paying for Russian gas in the new pipeline remains a closely kept secret with various industry sources saying it is tied to the price of an oil products basket.

Russia has been in talks with China about raising gas sales via other routes too, such as from the Russian Far East and via Mongolia or Kazakhstan, but has not yet clinched any deals. Russia has dramatically increased deliveries of oil to China in the past decade, challenging Saudi Arabia as China's top oil supplier in certain months. To achieve that, Russia launched a major oil pipeline to China, which today ships 600,000 barrels per day (bpd), and opened a new port at Kozmino on the Pacific. Russia also ships 200,000 bpd to China via a pipeline crossing Kazakhstan.

Russian coal sales to the east in 2018 exceeded 100 million tons, accounting for more than half of Russia's total coal exports.

4. US House approves Uighur Act calling for sanctions on China's senior officials



The US House of Representatives has overwhelmingly approved a bill that would require the Trump administration to toughen its response to China's crackdown on its Muslim minority in Xinjiang, drawing swift condemnation from Beijing.

The Uighur Act of 2019 is a stronger version of a bill that angered Beijing when it passed the Senate in September. It calls on the president, Donald Trump, to impose sanctions for the first time on a member of China's powerful politburo even as he seeks a trade deal with Beijing.

Last week Trump signed into law legislation supporting anti-government protesters in Hong Kong despite angry objections from China.

The Uighur bill, which passed by 407-1 in the Democratic-controlled House, requires the president to condemn abuses against Muslims and call for the closure of mass detention camps in the north-western region of Xinjiang.

It calls for sanctions against senior Chinese officials who it says are responsible and specifically names the Xinjiang Communist party secretary, Chen Quanguo, who as a politburo member is in the upper echelons of China's leadership. The revised bill still has to be approved by the Republican-controlled Senate before being sent to Trump. The White House has yet to say whether Trump would sign or veto the bill, which contains a provision allowing the president to waive sanctions if he determines that to be in the national interest.

China has denied any mistreatment of Uighurs and says the camps are providing vocational training. It has warned of retaliation "in proportion" if Chen were targeted.

The White House and the Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to requests for comment. China responded to the Hong Kong legislation by saying US military ships and aircraft would not be allowed to visit Hong Kong, and announced sanctions against several US non-government organisations.

5. 2010-2019 Set To Be The Hottest Decade In History, Says United Nations

This decade is set to be the hottest in history, the United Nations said in an annual assessment outlining the ways in which climate change is outpacing humanity's ability to adapt to it.

The World Meteorological Organization said global temperatures so far this year were 1.1 degrees Celsius (two degrees Fahrenheit) above the pre-industrial average between 1850-1900. That puts 2019 on course to be in the top three warmest years ever recorded, and possibly the hottest non-El Nino year yet. Man-made emissions from burning fossil fuels, building infrastructure, growing crops and transporting goods mean 2019 is set to break the record for atmospheric carbon concentrations, locking in further warming. Oceans, which absorb 90 percent of the excess heat produced by greenhouse gases, are now at their highest recorded temperatures. The world's seas are now a quarter more acidic than 150 years ago, threatening vital marine ecosystems upon which billions of people rely for food and jobs. In October, the global mean sea level reached its highest on record, fueled by the 329 billion tonnes of ice lost from the Greenland ice sheet in 12 months. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) last year outlined how vital it was for mankind to aim for a safer cap of 1.5C- ideally by slashing greenhouse gas emissions and retooling the global economy towards renewable energy. The UN said last week in its annual "emissions gap" assessment that the world needed to cut carbon emissions by 7.6 percent each year, every year, until 2030 to hit 1.5C. Instead, emissions are rising.

And while governments spend hundreds of billions of dollars subsidizing fossil fuels, there appears to be no consensus in Madrid over how countries already dealing with climate-related catastrophe can fund efforts to adapt to the new reality.

6. World Bank adopts \$1 billion-plus annual China lending plan over US objections

The World Bank said its board adopted a new plan to aid China with \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion in low-interest loans annually through June 2025, despite the objections of U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and several U.S. lawmakers.

The five-year lending strategy plan was published after the World Bank's board "expressed broad support" for the multilateral development lender's engagement in China's structural and environmental reforms. The World Bank said its lending would decline over the "country partnership framework" plan, in line with reforms agreed under a \$13 billion capital increase agreed in 2018. The World Bank loaned China \$1.3 billion in the fiscal 2019 year ended June 30, down from about \$2.4 billion during fiscal 2017. The new plan calls for lending to "gradually decline" from the previous five-year average of \$1.8 billion.



Economy, Defence and Business News

1. GST collection revenue crosses Rs 1 lakh crore mark in November

The government's booster shots for the economy and the festival period seem to have triggered a step-up in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection in the month of November. The revenue generated crossed Rs 1 lakh crore mark after three consecutive months of sub-Rs 1 lakh crore collections deepening the assessment that the economy was in the midst of a slowdown.

As per data released by the Ministry of Finance, the GST collection in November 2019 was Rs 1,03,492 crore. Out of this CGST was Rs 19,592 crore, IGST collections stood at Rs 49,028 crore (including Rs 20,948 crore collected on imports), SGST at Rs 27,144 crore,



and cess collection was at Rs 7,727 crore (this includes Rs 869 crore collected on imports). The return of collections in the above Rs 1 lakh crore range indicates a 6 per cent growth in the GST revenue over the corresponding month last year. The falling GST was becoming a headache for the finance minister as it was failing to pay the statutory compensation to states for the losses incurred due to the gay regime. Recently, finance ministers of five states had issued a joint statement attacking the Centre for starving the state by not fulfilling what's enshrined in the GST constitutional amendment.

Gross GST revenue collected in October had slipped to Rs 95,380 crore. This amounted to a 5.3 per cent decline on a year on year basis, while September harvest was mere Rs 91,916 crore. The September collection was the lowest since February 2018. Similarly, tax collection in August stood at Rs 98,202 crore.

2. Amid rising prices, MMTC to import 4,000 tons of onions from Turkey

State-run trading firm MMTC has placed another onion import order of 4,000 tonnes from Turkey and the shipments are expected to reach by mid-January. This is in addition to 17,090 tonnes of onions already contracted, which includes 6,090 tonnes from Egypt and 11,000 tonnes from Turkey. MMTC is importing onions on the behalf of the government, which is trying to check prices of the key bulb by improving domestic supplies through various modes, including imports. Onion prices remain high in the range of Rs 75-100/kg across major cities of the country. The Department of Consumer Affairs has also directed MMTC to issue three more tenders for import of onions. Out of three tenders, two are the country-specific, namely Turkey and the European Union, and one is a global tender. Each of these tenders are for 5,000 tonnes.

To facilitate early imports, the Consumer Affairs Ministry said certain norms have been relaxed in the new tenders issued. These include the size of onions to be imported have been expanded to 40mm-80mm, consortium bidding has been allowed, exporters can offer shipment in multiple lots. Additionally, relaxed fumigation conditions that were earlier provided till November 30, have been extended till December 31. This is expected to further increase participation,

competition and reduce price. Besides, a coordination committee has also been formed to ensure that the entire process of import and distribution is streamlined so as to ensure timely arrivals and movement of onions and sale by states. The committee is holding meetings on a daily basis with participation from officials of MMTC, NAFED, CONCOR and associated ministries.

The Shipping Ministry has assured that it will provide priority landing/docking for the ships containing imported onions and will also be appointing a nodal officer at Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Mumbai for ensuring speedy arrivals and onward distribution/dispatch. The Government has also planned procurement of domestically produced onions from major onion producing states to be distributed across all consuming states as per the demand placed by them.

On December 3, the Centre further reduced the stock holding limit for retailers and wholesalers to 5 tonnes and 25 tonnes, respectively. However, these stock limits were exempted on imported onions. The Cabinet has approved import of 1.2 lakh tonnes of onions to improve the domestic supply and control prices. The government has already banned exports and imposed stock holding limits to check price rise. On November 19, Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan had said onion production in kharif and late-kharif seasons of 2019-20 is estimated to fall 26 per cent to 5.2 million tonne.

3. DHFL becomes first financial services firm to be taken to NCLT



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) referred Dewan Housing Finance Corp. Ltd (DHFL), which has a debt of ₹83,873 crore, to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for insolvency proceedings. R. Subramaniakumar, the RBI-appointed administrator for DHFL, will take over the lender's

affairs once his appointment is approved by the NCLT. DHFL is the first financial services firm to be sent to the bankruptcy tribunal after the government notified the rules for referring financial services providers (FSPs) on 15 November. Unlike insolvency proceedings for companies from other sectors, an FSP creditor or debtor cannot approach the tribunal—the firm has to be referred by a regulator.

Under the new powers granted to RBI in the Union budget, it can take over administration of privately-held financial services companies. It can also remove auditors, call for an audit of any group company, and have a say on the compensation of the top management of an NBFC.

On 22 November, RBI set up a three-member advisory committee to assist Subramaniakumar in order to ensure that the debt-laden company's asset quality does not worsen. This came after its decision to supersede DHFL's board on 20 November.

According to the RBI order cited by DHFL in a 20 November regulatory filing, a statutory inspection of the mortgage lender conducted by the National Housing Bank with reference to its position as of 31 March 2018 revealed serious deterioration in its finances. According to the new FSP insolvency rules, an interim moratorium will start from the date of filing of the application till its admission or rejection.

DHFL had public deposits of ₹6,188 crore as on 6 July, down from ₹10,166.72 crore as on 31 March 2018.

4. Exercise Mitra Shakti -VII: 2019



The seventh edition of Exercise MITRA SHAKTI- 2019 aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational efficiency amongst the armies of both India and Sri Lanka when deployed as part of United Nations peacekeeping forces commenced on 01 December at Aundh Military Station, Pune. The objective of the exercise is to build and promote positive relations between armies of India and Sri Lanka through focus on sub unit level training on counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations in urban and rural environment under United Nations mandate. The joint training exercise also signifies the strength of India-Sri Lanka relations in the field of military cooperation and engagement, which is vital for refining the interoperability and operational preparedness. The joint

exercise is designed for incorporating the current dynamics of United Nations peacekeeping operations through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises. The primary focus of the joint training exercise will remain on field craft, battle drills and procedures as also the ability to operate jointly with seamless interoperability. As member nations of the United Nations, the participating contingents will gain immensely through joint operability and enhanced military and diplomatic association.

5. RBI subsidiary claims 'no information' on raising bank deposit insurance beyond Rs 1 lakh

The RBI subsidiary responsible for insuring bank deposits has clarified that it has no information on increasing the existing limit of Rs 1 lakh. This came in the backdrop of an announcement last month by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that government intends to bring in a legislation on raising the insurance cover on bank deposits during the Winter Session of Parliament.

The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), responded to an RTI query saying that it "does not have the requisite information" on proposal or move under consideration to raise the insurance limit of Rs 1 lakh against bank deposits. The agency added that depositors in failed and liquidated banks will get only up to Rs 1 lakh as insurance cover, regardless of the amount in their accounts.

DICGC insures deposits in commercial banks, including branches of foreign banks functioning in India, local area banks and regional rural banks. Cooperative banks that fit the description as defined in Section 2(gg) of the DICGC Act are also covered by the deposit insurance scheme.

6. Facebook to allow transfer of photos, videos to Google Photos

Facebook Inc. has introduced an option to transfer photos and videos from the social media network directly to other services, starting with Google Photos. The option will be available to users in Ireland, with a worldwide roll-out planned for the first half of 2020. All data transfers will be encrypted and users will be asked for a password before the transfer is initiated, the company said in a blog post. Facebook said in September it supports data portability and is planning to build new tools around it.

7. ISRO workhorse PSLV set to make history with 50th launch on December 11

The Indian space agency's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle has proved itself time and again, launching 50 Indian satellites and 222 foreign satellites over the years

December 11 will be a historic day for the Indian space programme when the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) 'workhorse', the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), roars into the sky carrying satellites, in what will be its fiftieth launch. In the last 26 years, the launch vehicle has proven its capability repeatedly, so much so that international clients have been queuing up to put their smaller satellites into orbit using the PSLV. This is not surprising, given that a PSLV trip is far more affordable than those on launch vehicles of other countries.



Indeed, in terms of numbers, if not in size, ISRO's launch vehicles has carried more foreign satellites. Between 1994 and 2019, PSLV launched 50 Indian satellites and 222 foreign satellites for over 70 international customers from 20 countries. It also successfully launched two spacecraft – Chandrayaan-1 in 2008, which made its way to the moon and Mars Orbiter in 2013, which travelled to Mars. PSLV, which costs nearly ₹200 crore, is a third-generation launch vehicle for ISRO. It is the first Indian launch vehicle to be equipped with liquid stages. PSLV has three variants: PSLV-Core alone (PSLV-CA) without the solid strap-on motors; a PSLV with six solid strap-on boosters; and PSLV-XL, the top model, with six extended solid strap-on boosters.

On September 20, 1993, PSLV-D1, the first such rocket, launched from the SatishDhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, failed to place the IRS-1E satellite into orbit. Thereafter it proved its credentials, with 39 consecutively successful missions till June 2017. PSLV-C46 was the 74th launch from the SatishDhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota range (SDSC SHAR). This was the 21st flight of the PSLV in the 'XL' configuration (with six solid strap-on motors). About 17 minutes and 38 seconds after lift-off, Cartosat-3 was injected into an orbit of 509 km at an inclination of 97.5 degrees to the equator. Cartosat-3 satellite is a third-generation agile advanced satellite with high-resolution imaging capability. The 13 commercial nano-satellites from the US were also successfully injected into their designated orbit. These satellites were launched under commercial arrangements with NewSpace India Limited, the commercial arm of ISRO.

8. India Successfully Conducts Night Trial Of Prithvi-2 Missile



India successfully conducted another night trial of its indigenously developed nuclear capable as part of a user trial for the armed forces from a test range in Odisha coast. The flight test of the surface-to-surface missile was carried out barely a fortnight after two back-to-back trials of the Prithvi-2 were conducted successfully at night from the same base on November 20.

Prithvi-2 is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kilograms of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines.

The state-of-the-art missile uses an advanced inertial guidance system with manoeuvring trajectory to hit its target. The missile was randomly chosen from the production stock and the entire launch

activities were carried out by the Strategic Force Command (SFC) of the armed forces and monitored by the scientists of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as part of a training exercise. The trajectory of the missile was tracked by radars, electro-optical tracking systems and telemetry stations by the DRDO along the coast of Odisha. The downrange teams onboard the ship deployed near the designated impact point in the Bay of Bengal monitored the terminal events and splashdown. Already inducted into the armoury of the defence forces in 2003, the nine-metre-tall, single-stage liquid-fuelled "Prithvi" is the first missile to have been developed by the DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).

9. Ministry of Civil Aviation Launches Round 4 of RCS- UDAN

Following the three successful rounds of bidding, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched the 4th round of Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UdeDeshKaAamNagrik (UDAN) to further enhance the connectivity to remote and regional areas of the country. Focus of this round would be the priority areas like NER, Hilly States, J&K, Ladakh and Islands. The provision of VGF for Category 2 / 3 aircraft (more than 20 seater) has been enhanced for operation of RCS flights in Priority Area(s) (Union Territories [UT] of Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir; the States of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, North Eastern State; UT of Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar). The VGF cap applicable for various stage lengths for operation through category



1 / 1 A aircraft (below 20 seater) has also been revised to further incentivize the operation of small aircraft under the Scheme. The provision of VGF would be restricted for routes with stage length up to 600 kms, for operation of Category 2 / 3 aircraft, beyond it no monetary support would be provided. The table for provision of VGF for various stage lengths would be available for stage length up to 500 kms. Airports that has already been developed by AAI would be given

higher priority for award of VGF under the Scheme, followed by airports not part of the above list but located Priority Area(s) would be given a priority, followed by airports located in areas other than Priority Area(s). The Selected Airline Operator (SAO) would be allowed to change the frequency of flight operation, during the tenure of flight operation of the given route, provided that the total scheduled flight operation submitted as part of the Technical Proposal, is conformed and adhered to within a period of one year.

Inclusion of helicopter and seaplane operation under NSOP license – The operation of helicopter and sea plane would be allowed under this round.

10. Sea Harrier may join aircraft museum in Kolkata

The decommissioned Sea Harrier fighter aircraft may join the aircraft museum in Kolkata along with the Tupolev-142. A request has been sent to the Eastern Naval Command Headquarters in Vizag for a decommissioned Sea Harrier fighter aircraft at the museum site.



The Indian Navy is setting up a permanent TU 142 aircraft in Kolkata in the second such museum in the country after Vizag Naval Museum.

While the TU-142 has been handed over by the Indian Navy, the West Bengal government will be setting up the museum and also bear the cost of building it. Government sources say it will be thrown open by mid-2020. The expenses for dismantling, transporting the TU-142 from Tamil Nadu and assembling it in

Kolkata will also be borne by the Bengal state government.

11. Lok Sabha clears Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019

Lok Sabha cleared the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019 that aimed to bring in more investment in the manufacturing sector by bringing down corporate tax rate to 22% without incentives and 15% for new manufacturing entities.

Currently, domestic companies with an annual turnover of up to ₹400 crore pay income tax at the rate of 25%. For other domestic companies, the tax rate is 30%.

12. Hand in Hand 2019: India-China Joint Military Exercise Begins in Meghalaya

A joint military exercise between India and China began at Umroi Cantonment, Meghalaya. It is an annual military exercise held under a United Nations mandate. It will be conducted between December 7 and December 20, 2019, with a theme against terrorism. About 130 soldiers of the Tibet Military Command (on behalf of China) and an equal number of Indian military personnel will participate. The exercise is planned at the company level, with the respective battalion headquarters.

There will be numerous activities during 'Hand-in-Hand' military exercises like training, classes and military tools information, etc. This military exercise will increase mutual coordination between the armies of both countries. There

will be special training for anti-terrorism operations during this military exercise. Two strategic exercises will be conducted during the training.

The first exercise will be focused on the anti-terrorism mechanism and the second on humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) operations. China has deployed its Tibetan troops for this exercise. This exercise will not only increase the capacity of the joint command commander but also troops of both countries can work under one command after this training.

The major objective of the joint military exercise is to promote mutual cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The purpose of this exercise is to build and promote strong relations between the armies of India and China. Another objective is to develop joint operational capability, share useful experiences of counter-terrorism operations and foster friendly relations between India and China.

The joint military exercise "Hand-in-Hand" was started in the year 2007 in Kunming (China), its second edition was held in Belgaum, Karnataka in India. But it was stopped for the next few years. Later, in 2013, the practice resumed after five years.

13. ISRO gears up to launch RISAT-2BR1, 9 foreign commercial satellites on Dec 11

ISRO is gearing up to launch its radar imaging earth observation satellite along with nine commercial satellites from foreign countries, including six from the US, on December 11.

The space agency said PSLV-C48 will launch RISAT-2BR1 from the first launch pad (FLP) of SatishDhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.



RISAT-2BR1, weighing about 628 kg, will be placed into an orbit of 576 km at an inclination of 37 degrees. Launch vehicle PSLV-C48 will also carry 9 customer satellites--six from the US, one each from Israel, Italy and Japan as co-passengers.

According to ISRO, these international customer satellites are being launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL). PSLV-C48 is the 2nd flight of PSLV in 'QL' configuration (with 4 strap-on motors), it said, adding this will be the 75th launch vehicle mission from SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota and 37th launch from the First Launchpad.

14. Cabinet apprised of Indo-German strategic collaboration on railway projects

The Union Cabinet was apprised of the Joint Declaration of Intent signed last month between India and Germany regarding cooperation on strategic projects in the railways.

The Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy of the Federal Republic of Germany will provide a platform to the railways to interact and share the latest developments and knowledge in the field. It will facilitate exchange of information, expert meetings, seminars, technical visits and implementation of jointly agreed cooperation projects. The Ministry of Railways has signed an MoU for technical cooperation in the rail sector with various foreign governments and national railways in respect of identified areas of cooperation, including high speed
www.successmantra.in
www.easevidya.com

rail, speed raising of existing routes, development of world class stations, heavy haul operations and modernisation of rail infrastructure. The cooperation with various countries will facilitate exchange of technical experts, reports and technical documents, training and seminars focusing on specific technology areas and other interactions for knowledge sharing.

15. Mumbai Central gets first 'Eat Right Station' certification from FSSAI



The Mumbai Central station of Railways was conferred with the 'Eat Right Station' certification with four stars rating by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), as a part of 'Eat Right India' movement launched last year.

The Mumbai Central Railway Station is the country's first "Eat Right Station." Mumbai Central station has been judged on the basis of compliance of food safety and hygiene, availability of healthy diet, food handling at preparation, transshipment and retail/serving point, food waste management,

promotion of local and seasonal food and creating awareness on food safety and healthy diet. FSSAI, along with Western Railways (WR) and Indian Railways Catering Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), has trained food handlers, both in canteens and base kitchens. They inspected catering establishments at the station and certified and rated the standard of food. The focus of the movement is on improving the health and well-being of people by ensuring they eat healthy. 'Eat Right India' movement is built on two broad pillars of 'Eat Healthy' and 'Eat Safe'. It aims to engage, excite and enable citizens to improve their health and well-being. Led by FSSAI, it is a collective effort to make both the demand and supply-side interventions through the engagement of key stakeholders.

16. WEF partners with Punjab government to design pilot on Electric Vehicles ecosystem

To combat the growing problem of environmental pollution in the state, the Punjab Government has partnered with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to design a Public-Private pilot on shared, clean and electric mobility. The state, which is also formulating its own EV Policy to support the adoption of e-vehicles, has been chosen for the pilot by WEF as it is well-positioned for shared EV transition, and already houses an existing auto component manufacturing base, besides having skilled labour and being power surplus. The pilot will examine how Public and Private Sectors can interplay to offer the most robust and successful EV ecosystem, as part of the collaboration to be formulated at the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos in January 2020. The study will form a blueprint for EV implementation across cities and countries worldwide.



The collaboration is just one of the initiatives being taken by the state government, to promote e-mobility as a way to transform Punjab's transport system into a cleaner one. The state has already banned new registrations of diesel and petrol 3 wheelers in 5 districts (Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Mohali and Fatehgarh Sahib). It is also encouraging the setting up of EV/Battery units in the new industrial park located over 380 acres in Dhanansu village of Ludhiana district.

Punjab is also set to get India's first Auto Shredding Plant, with capacity to handle two lakh cars per annum in an 8-hour shift. The plant has been set up in technical collaboration with German technology.

To further boost the widespread adoption of electric vehicles, other incentives in the form of green number plates and green corridor have also been included in the policy. To pacify the concern of range anxiety related to adoption of electric vehicles, the policy lays stress on aggressively spreading the charging infrastructure on both public and private platforms. To be abreast of the continuously evolving technologies in the EV sector, a special provision has been given for start-ups and Centre of Excellence, which will capture the research and design, as well as incubation requirements, in the field. The future orientation of the EV policy can be seen in the form of incentives for recycling or reuse of the batteries and the stress on skill development in the sector.

17. 15th Finance Commission submits its report for 2020-21 to President

The Finance Commission submitted its report for the financial year 2020-21 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Commission headed by N K Singh apprised the President of the recommendations contained therein. The 15th Finance Commission was constituted by the President of India under Article 280 of the Constitution on November 27, 2017, to make recommendations for a period of five years from April 2020 to March 2025, it said.



realities to finalise its recommendations for the period 2020-2026.

18. ISRO Sets Up Space Technology Cells In IITs, IISc And Other Colleges

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced the setting up of five space technology cells (STCs) at India's premier engineering and science colleges to conduct space research, build new applications and high-end technology. STCs have been installed at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campuses in, Bombay, Kanpur, Madras and Kharagpur, Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and at the Joint Research Programme with Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU).

Previously, ISRO was engaged with startups through Antrix Corp, where it worked with space startups such as Bellatrix Aerospace, Aniara Communications, Satsure and Exseed Space.

In September 2019, Mumbai-based spacetechnology startup Kawa Space has also raised an undisclosed amount from Paytm founder Vijay Shekar Sharma as part of its Pre-Series A funding round. The startup builds and operates infrastructure in space on behalf of enterprise and corporate clients. Interestingly, its earth observation satellites are used by customers

in financial services, strategic risk management, government departments and agriculture. It has won a contract to build more than 27 satellites for the Indian government.

At present, investors are eyeing a new set of emerging space startups in India. Earlier, most space expedition was backed by government. Currently, there is a mix of private players, investors and entrepreneurs and the government supporting the space startups in India.

19. BRICS remote Sensing Satellite Constellation

The space agencies of BRICS nations have been negotiating a Framework Agreement to formalize the cooperation on building a 'virtual constellation of remote sensing satellites', made up of satellites contributed by BRICS space agencies. Technical aspects with respect to identifying the satellites and the ground stations for the initial virtual constellation were discussed by the Space Agencies. The purpose of the proposed virtual constellation is to get access to satellite remote sensing data, which could be used by the individual BRICS nations for various applications including natural resources management and disaster management.

20. India's forex reserves cross \$450 billion for the first time



India's foreign exchange reserves have crossed the \$450-billion mark for the first time. The foreign exchange reserves have increased due to strong inflows which enabled the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to buy dollars from the market.

Foreign exchange reserves are the foreign currencies held by a country's central bank. They are also called foreign currency reserves or foreign reserve. The foreign exchange reserves are held to back liabilities and influence monetary policy.

They are also held to ensure that a central government agency has backup funds if their national currency rapidly devalues or becomes altogether insolvent.

The critical function of the reserves is also to maintain liquidity in case of an economic crisis.

The reserves are always needed to make sure a country will meet its external obligations. These include international payment obligations, including sovereign and commercial debts.

21. RBI proposes new prepaid card for transactions up to Rs 10,000

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a statement on Development and Regulatory Policies in which it proposed to introduce a new type of prepaid payment instrument (PPI) that could be used only for transactions of goods and services worth up to Rs 10,000. Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) have been playing an important role in promoting digital payments. To further facilitate its usage, it is proposed to introduce a new type of PPI which can be used only for purchase of goods and services up to a limit of Rs 10,000.

The loading /reloading of such PPI will be only from a bank account and used for making only digital payments such as bill payments, merchant payments, etc. Such PPIs can be issued on the basis of essential minimum details sourced from the customer. The RBI further said that instructions on this regard will be released by December 31, 2019. PPIs can be loaded and reloaded by cash or debit to a bank account or by credit card or from other PPIs up to a limit of Rs 50,000 per month. As of now, banks and non-bank entities are permitted to issue and reload such payment instruments. There are currently three kinds of PPIs allowed by RBI closed system PPIs, semi-closed system PPIs and open system PPIs. Some of the popular examples of PPIs are—Paytm, Mobikwik (semi-closed system PPIs), Gift card (closed system PPIs), Travel/Debit/credit cards (open system PPIs).

People in News

1. Soma Roy Burman appointed new CGA, becomes seventh woman to hold the post



The government has appointed Soma Roy Burman, a 1986-batch Indian Civil Accounts Service Officer, as the new Controller General of Accounts (CGA). Burman is the 24th CGA and is the seventh woman to hold this position.

During her 33-year long career, she has held cadre positions at different levels in ministries such as Home Affairs, Information & Broadcasting, Industry, Finance, Human Resource Development and Shipping, Road Transport & Highways. Prior to this, Burman served as the Additional Controller General of Accounts in the office of CGA, handling the critical areas of accounting rules, policy and reforms, financial reporting, data analytics, cash and

budget management.

2. Lt Gen P S Rajeshwar takes over as C-n-C of Andaman & Nicobar Command

Lt Gen Podali Shankar Rajeshwar took over as the 14th Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman & Nicobar Command (CINCAN) on December 01, 2019. He is a graduate of Indian Military Academy and was commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery in December 1980. A gunner and aviator, he is an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Army War College and National Defence College in New Delhi and Philippines.

Lt Gen Rajeshwar has actively taken part in Operation Meghdoot and Operation Rakshak. Further, he has commanded a Medium Regiment in Operation Parakram, an infantry brigade on the Line of Control, Counter Insurgency (Romeo) Force in Jammu & Kashmir and a Corps in the Desert sector. He has served on various staff assignments and also been UN Military Observer in Mozambique and Rwanda. Before assuming the present appointment, he was Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC).

3. Masatsugu Asakawa elected ADB president

Masatsugu Asakawa was elected to be president of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) by its board of governors in Manila, the Philippines. Asakawa, who is currently a special advisor to Japan's prime minister and finance minister, was unanimously elected by the bank's board of governors. He is to assume office as the ADB's 10th president on Jan. 17. Asakawa would succeed Takehiro Nakao, who is to cease being ADB president in January, although his term was not supposed to finish until November 2021. Asakawa is expected to finish his predecessor's term.



In a career spanning four decades, Masatsugu has held a

number of senior positions at Japan's finance ministry, including as the vice minister of finance for international affairs. Throughout his time in the ministry, Masatsugu gained experience in developing national policies, supervising foreign exchange markets and managing international tax policies. Furthermore, he also served as the finance deputy at the 2019 G20 Osaka Summit and the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in Fukuoka, Japan. Also, in the aftermath of the global financial crisis in 2008, Masatsugu served as the executive assistant to the then prime minister Taro Aso. In addition, Masatsugu frequently engaged with the Organization for Economic, Cooperation, and Development (OECD) as the Chair for OECD'S Fiscal Affairs Committee from 2011 to 2016.

Masatsugu obtained his Bachelor's of arts from the University of Tokyo in 1981 and a Master's of public administration from Princeton University in 1985. In addition, he also served as a visiting professor at his alma mater, the University of Tokyo, from 2012 to 2015 and at Saitama University from 2006 to 2009. The bank had committed to new loans and grants amounting to US\$21.6 billion as of 2018. Established in 1966, the ADB is currently owned by 68 members, of which 49 are based in Asia. (bry)

4. PrithvirajsingRoopun elected as new President of Mauritius by parliament

The National Assembly of the Republic of Mauritius has unanimously elected PrithvirajsingRoopun, as new President of the island nation, a largely ceremonial post. He was a former arts and culture minister of country. In Mauritius, Prime Minister is head of government and holds most political power while president is head of state but has no executive role and is considered guardian of constitution.

The Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth also presented a motion for election of Marie Cyril Eddy Boissezon, as new Vice-President of the island nation. PrithvirajsingRoopun, succeeded AmeenahGurib-Fakim who resigned in March 2018

after being embroiled in a scandal over her use of a credit card to buy luxury personal items, however, he denied wrongdoing. In November 2019, Mauritius held elections in which incumbent Prime Minister PravindJugnauth won a new five-year term. PrithvirajsingRoopun is a lawyer who was first elected to the National Assembly in 2000 and has been minister of arts and culture, social integration and regional administration. Since attaining independence from Britain in 1968, Mauritius has become one of the most stable democracies in Africa.



5. SundarPichai made CEO in Alphabet's biggest bet

Google CEO SundarPichai will take over the additional reins of parent Alphabet in place of co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin as the sole occupant of the hot seat amid an unprecedented global demand for more safeguards, regulatory scrutiny and taxes. The 47-year-old IIT Kharagpur and Stanford graduate becomes, arguably, the biggest Indian-born CEO on the world stage, after Page and Brin said they were stepping aside as leaders of the internet behemoth they founded 21 years ago. Apart from leading Google, Pichai will manage Alphabet's investments in Other Bets, a bouquet of futuristic, technology-driven businesses.

6. Joaquin Phoenix Is PETA's Person of the Year

Joaquin Phoenix is PETA's 2019 Person of the Year. Just before the Joker premier, Joaquin's compelling anti-speciesism ad with PETA went up in Times Square and on Sunset Boulevard, proclaiming, "We Are All Animals."

7. Roger Federer's face to go on Swiss coin

Tennis legend Roger Federer will become the first living person in Switzerland to have a coin minted in his honour. The Federal Mint, Swissmint, has created a 20-franc silver coin bearing Federer's image. It's the first time in its history that

Swissmint has created a commemorative coin to honour a living person. For the 20-franc coin, the pre-sale began on December 2 and continues until December 19, or until the first minting run of 55,000 units has sold out, whichever comes first. More coins will have Federer's face next year. In May 2020, Swissmint plans to issue a Federer 50-franc gold coin featuring a different design.

The 38-year-old is perhaps Switzerland's most well-known individual, having won 103 tour-level titles, including 20 Grand Slam crowns and 28 ATP Masters 1000s. He has also spent a record 310 weeks at No. 1 in the ATP Rankings.

8. Ripu Daman Bevli is appointed as the Plogging Ambassador of India



Ripu Daman Bevli has been appointed as the Plogging Ambassador of India. The appointment was announced by the Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs & Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju on the Fit India Plogging Run. The minister also launched the nation-wide Plogging Ambassador Mission under which, Indians who have been running and cleaning their cities, towns or districts, will be nominated as Plogging Ambassadors of their region.

Ripu Daman Bevli is India's first plogger. His mission is to Run to make Litter Free India which is in line Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swachh Bharat campaign.

Fit India Plogging Run was launched on 2 October 2019. The event concluded at Delhi's JawaharLal Nehru Stadium. The run covered 50 cities across the country. Over 36 lakh people from 62,000 locations participated across the country. It was organized jointly by the Sports Authority of India (SAI), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), National Service Scheme (NSS), NGOs, Kendriya Vidyalaya and several other organizations.

Plogging Run is a combination of jogging while picking up litter. India has pledged its support by organizing the Fit India Plog Run.

Awards

1. Malayalam poet Akkitham wins 55th Jnanpith Award



The recipient of the 55th Jnanpith Award for the year 2019 went to Shri Akkitham, eminent Indian poet writing in Malayalam. Some of his celebrated creations include Veeravadam, Bali Darshanam, NimishaKshethram, Amrita Khatika, AkkithamKavithaka, Epic of Twentieth Century and Antimahakalam. Born in 1926, AkkithamAchuthanNamboothiri, popularly known as Akkitham is one of the most revered names in Malayalam poetry. Apart from poetry, his literary excellence has footprints in genre like drama, reminiscence, critical essays, children's

literature, short stories and translations.

Akkitham has authored 55 books out of which 45 are collections of poems including KhandaKavyas, Katha Kavyas, CharithaKavyas and songs. Some of his celebrated creations include Veeravadam, Bali Darshanam, NimishaKshethram, Amrita Khatika, AkkithamKavithaka, Epic of Twentieth Century and Antimahakalam. His works have also been translated into many Indian and foreign languages. A Padma Shri awardee, he has won several literary accolades including the SahityaAkademi Award (1973), Kerala SahityaAkademi Award (1972 and 1988), Mathrubhumi Award, Vayalar Award and KabirSamman.

2. National Mission for Clean Ganga awarded at the 20th GeoSmart India Conference in Hyderabad

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) was given the 'Leadership in Rejuvenation and Protection of Fresh Water Systems in India' award at the 20th edition of GeoSmart India, which was held in Hyderabad from December 3 to 5. The conference is India's largest geospatial event, which aims to bring together the evolving world of geospatial and emerging technologies. The award has been bestowed upon NMCG for its transformative initiatives in the water sector.

NMCG has been recognized as India's leading initiative in using geospatial technologies towards its river cleaning work, regulating the proposed protected and regulatory zone along the banks of river and monitoring pollution. The organisation is also using cutting edge technologies like LiDAR to attain high-resolution maps and data for the entire Ganga river basin.



NMCG has built key platforms and solutions needed to support a robust Resources Management System. National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), which is a part of Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), has been supporting NMCG to use geospatial technology for various activities aimed at achieving the objective of monitoring of pollution in river Ganga. NMCG also strives to achieve GIS mapping of the entire Ganga river basin for effective execution and decision-making. GIS Project on 'Generation of high-resolution DEM and GIS-ready database for part of River Ganga for NMCG' is being executed by Survey of India, Dehradun.

GIS-ready datasets, including high-resolution DEM, would facilitate major support to Ganga river basin management by embedding GIS in different aspects of planning and implementation at National/State/Local level, bringing GIS support in decision-making, and enabling a sound process of monitoring, developing and identifying critical hotspots.

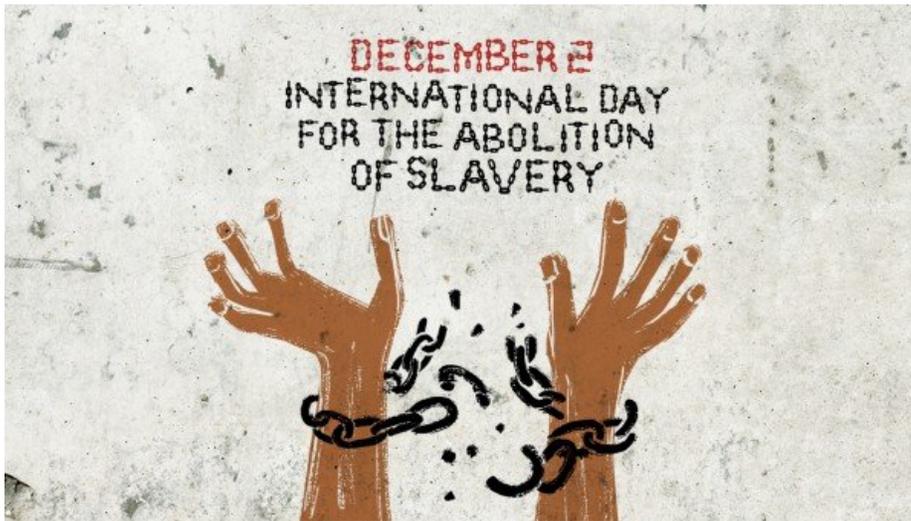
3. National Florence Nightingale Award For Kerala Nurse Who Treating Nipah Patient

LiniPuthussery, the nurse from Kerala who died due to Nipah virus that she contracted while treating a patient last year during the Nipah outbreak, was posthumously awarded the National Florence Nightingale Award 2019.

The award was presented by President Ram NathKovind in New Delhi and it was received by her husband Sajeesh P.

Days and Events

1. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery-2 December



The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, 2 December, marks the date of the adoption, by the General Assembly, of the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. The focus of this day is on eradicating contemporary forms of slavery, such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labour, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

ILO has adopted a new legally binding Protocol designed to strengthen global efforts to eliminate forced labour, which entered into force in November 2016. The 50 for Freedom campaign aims to persuade at least 50 countries to ratify the Forced Labour Protocol by the end of 2019.

2. International Day of Persons with Disabilities-3 December

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3. It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

Building on many decades of UN's work in the field of disability, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 2006, has further advanced the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international development frameworks, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, the New Urban Agenda, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.

The 2019 Theme was Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda

This year, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) focuses on the empowerment of persons with disabilities for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development as anticipated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pledges to 'leave no one behind' and recognizes disability as a cross-cutting issues, to be considered in the implementation of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection and monitoring of the SDGs.

3. Startup India Global Venture Capital Summit, December 7

The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion along with Government of Goa, is organizing the Startup India Global Venture Capital Summit, a specially curated day - long event for Fund Managers and Limited Partners of Top Global Venture Capital Firms, on December 7, 2018 at Cidade de Goa Resort, Goa.

Mobilising global capital for innovation in India. The summit includes engagements involving representatives of leading Global Venture Capital Firms, Government of India Officials, large Corporates and select startups. The event will showcase the India Advantage, diversity and scale of Indian market opportunity and the cutting-edge innovations originating in India.

4. BSF celebrated the 55th raising day on 1 December



Border Security Force (BSF) personnel celebrated the 55th raising day on 1 December 1965. PM Modi greeted the BSF personnel on the day. Border Security Force (BSF) ensures the security of the borders of India by acting as the First Line of Defence against smuggling, infiltration, and military assault. BSF is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF). BSF is the world's largest border guarding force. It functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Minister responsible for BSF is Amit Shah, Minister of Home Affairs.

Sports News

1. Lionel Messi claims record sixth men's Ballon d'Or, Rapinoe wins women's award



Lionel Messi claimed a record sixth men's Ballon d'Or award on December 2, beating Liverpool's four leading nominees to claim soccer's most prestigious individual trophy. The Argentine, who won the Liga title with Barcelona but only managed third place in the Copa America with his country, added to his 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2015 trophies. He beat Virgil van Dijk, the runner-up, and third-placed Cristiano Ronaldo of Portugal, who has won the award five times.

2. Uttar Pradesh's PriyamGarg to lead India in U-19 World Cup 2020

Four-time champions India announced a 15-member squad for the U-19 World Cup 2020. The 13th edition of the quadrennial tournament will be held in South Africa between January 17 and February 9.

Uttar Pradesh batsman PriyamGarg has been named as the captain of the 15-member squad which will head to South Africa. Dhruv Chand Jurel has been named as the vice-captain. He will also handle the wicketkeeping duties. KumalKushagra has also been named as wicketkeeper in the squad.

India have been drawn alongside Japan, New Zealand and Sri Lanka in Group A. 16 teams will participate in the tournament and they have been drawn in groups of 4.

Mumbai's YashasviJaiswal along with DivyanshSaxena, Uttarakhand'sShashwatRawat and Hyderabad's TilakVarma are among the prominent batsmen in the India squad.

3. New Zealand win MCC's Spirit of Cricket award for conduct in World Cup final

New Zealand cricket team have been awarded the MCC's Christopher Martin-Jenkins Spirit of Cricket Award for 2019 for their sporting conduct in the aftermath of the World Cup final against England. After losing to England in a thrilling final held on July 14 at the Lord's -- regarded as one of the most exciting ODI matches of all time -- Kane Williamson's team displayed an exceptional level of sportsmanship, humility, and selflessness in defeat. After losing to England in a thrilling final - regarded as one of the most exciting One-Day International matches of all time - Kane Williamson's team displayed an exceptional level of sportsmanship, humility and selflessness in defeat. On an unforgettable day at Lord's, England won their first-ever men's World Cup, as they initially levelled the scores to tie with New Zealand at the end of the 50 overs before going on to tie the Super Over as well -- winning the tournament by virtue of striking a higher number of boundaries during their innings. The Black Caps were widely praised



for their sportsmanship in the immediate aftermath of the final, and their exemplary conduct towards opposition players throughout the tournament.

4. New Delhi to host 2020 National Sikh Games



New Delhi will host the National Sikh Games (NSG) 2020 and the game will be held from 9-11 January 2020. NSG is a modelled replica of Australian Sikh Games. NSG is dedicated to the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

NSG aims to bring sports to the heart of the Sikh community and tap into a unique sporting talents of Sikh Youths. The game aims to tackle the problem of obesity, drug menace among Sikh children through sports and

physical activities.

NSG is organized by Delhi based philanthropic Jap JaapSewa Trust in association with Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee and various sports, cultural associations.

Around 2,500 athletes from 10 States are expected to participate in the NSG. Around 16 sports competitions are to be held in the National Sikh Games.

Rankings and Index

1. India ranked 73rd in the 2019 E-commerce Index

India ranked 73rd in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) Business-to-Consumer (B2C) E-commerce Index 2019. The ranking was conducted for 152 countries. The Netherlands topped the index for the second consecutive year. The index measured an economy's preparedness to support online shopping. It marks the readiness of the countries that are engaged in online commerce.

The survey also included a parameter where the portion of every country's population that uses the internet and has an account with a financial institution or mobile-money-service provider.



The least developed countries occupy 18 of the 20 bottom positions. Among the 20 economies that ranked the lowest value in the 2019 index, 18 are the least developed countries. Comoros, Burundi, Chad, and Niger holds the last positions in the index.

India has slightly improved its position from 80 in 2018 and 83 in 2017. India Internet shoppers as a share of Internet users were 11% and Internet shoppers as a share of population of 3% in 2017.

Countries are measured on the access to secure internet servers, the reliability of postal services and infrastructure.

2. Delhi enters top 10 club of most popular travel destinations of 2019

Hong Kong is likely to hold on to its status as the world's most popular city with international visitors in 2019, despite months of political unrest that led to a sharp drop in tourist numbers. Meanwhile New York City falls out of the top 10, and Delhi joins the ranks for the first time.

The Top 100 City Destinations report from global market research company Euromonitor International shows Asian destinations dominating the list, with over 40 entries. Globally, inbound arrivals are expected to rise 4.2% in 2019, to 1.5 billion trips.

3. Global Climate Risk Index 2020: India fifth most affected country in 2018



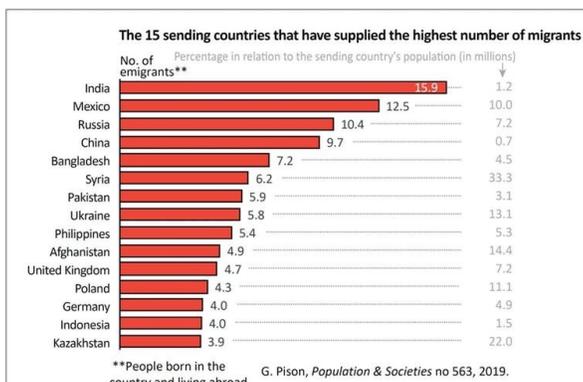
India was the fifth most climate-affected country in 2018, according to the Global Climate Risk Index 2020 released on December 4, 2019. India also recorded the highest number of fatalities due to climate change in 2018. The Global Climate Risk Index 2020 is published by International Environmental think tank Germanwatch. The Climate Risk Index 2020 published its results after assessing 181 countries and quantifying the impacts of climate change through economic fatalities. Japan, the Philippines and Germany were found to be the most climate-affected countries in 2018 followed by Madagascar,

India and Sri Lanka. The heatwave was one of the major causes of damage in 2018.

Among the top ten most affected countries, India, Germany and Japan suffered from extended periods of a heatwave during 2018. Japan topped the list of the most affected countries in 2018. The country was hit by three exceptionally strong extreme weather events during the year:

Typhoon Jebi in September 2018 broke several historical records for sustained winds in Japan, causing economic damage of over US\$ 12 billion. The Philippines was hit by Typhoon Mangkhut in September 2018, which was categorized as a category 5 typhoon, the most powerful typhoon recorded worldwide in 2018. The typhoon affected more than 250 000 people across the country. Germany experienced the second hottest year due to a severe heatwave. The period between April and July 2018 was the hottest-ever recorded in the nation with temperatures 2.9°C above average. It resulted in the death of 1234 people. The nation also witnessed severe drought in October 2018 due to less rainfall, which resulted in a massive decline in harvest. Madagascar became victim to Cyclone Ava in January 2018 and Cyclone Eliakim in March 2018, which together temporarily displaced around 70000 people, forcing them to seek refuge in relief camps.

4. India is the top source of immigrants across the globe



India has emerged as the leading country of origin for immigrants across the world, with 17.5 million international migrants in 2019 coming from India, up from 15.9 million in 2015, according to a dataset released by the Union Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in New York.

The International Migrant Stock 2019, released by the UN DESA's Population Division, said the number of international migrants in the world had reached an estimated 272 million 2019 — 51 million more than in 2010. The percentage of international migrants of the total global population has increased to 3.5% from 2.8% in 2000.

While India remained as the top source of international migrants, the number of migrants living in India saw a slight decline from 5.24 million in 2015 to an estimated 5.15 million in 2019 – both 0.4% of the total population of the country.

Bangladesh was the leading country of origin for migrants in India, the report stated.

The UN DESA Population Division said that one-third of all international migrants originated from 10 countries — after India, Mexico ranked second as the country of origin for 12 million migrants, followed by China (11 million), Russia (10 million) and Syria (8 million).

The European region hosted the highest number of immigrants at 82 million in 2019, followed by North America (59 million) and Northern Africa and Western Asia (49 million). Among countries, the U.S. hosts the highest number of international migrants (51 million), about 19% of the global population.

Around two-fifths of all international migrants had gone from one developing country to another. Forced displacements continue to rise, with the number of refugees and asylum seekers increased by about 13 million from 2010 to 2017