

# Current Affairs

(English)

For

All Upcoming Competitive Exam - 2018



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**SSC, Railway, POST,**  
**Insurance, RBI**

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

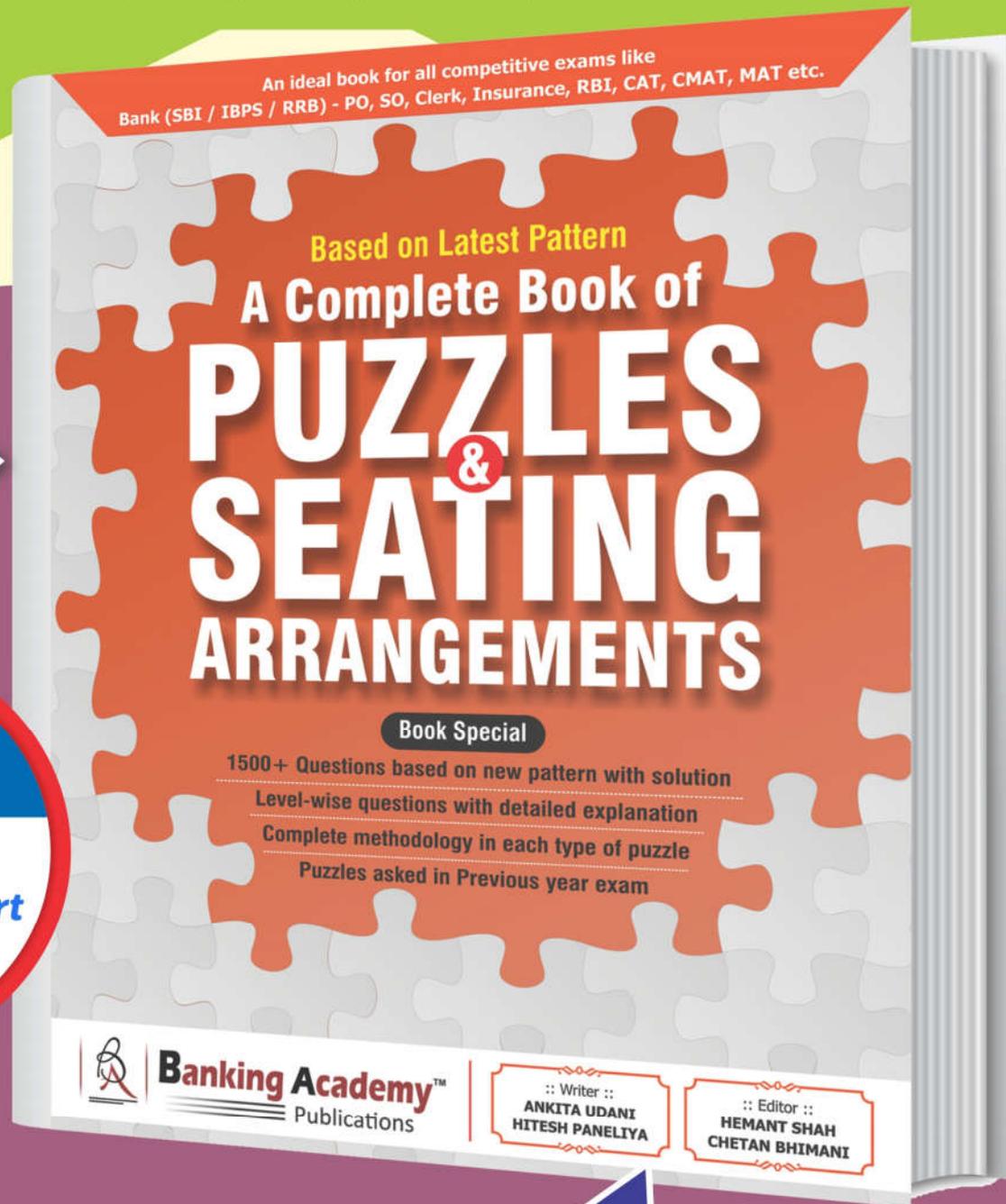
- ❖ **Indian Railways** unveiled 'eDrishti' software that will help **Union Railway Minister** to keep track of punctuality of trains as well as **freight** and **passenger earnings** and much more from anywhere in the country.
- ❖ **Dr Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC)** and the **Jawaharlal Nehru University** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) to facilitate and enhance research activities and policy formulation aimed at **socio-economic transformation and sustainable development**.
- ❖ The **Union Government** has launched a unique initiative called **Bhasha Sangam** to introduce school students to **22 Indian languages**.
  - ✓ Bhasha Sangam is a programme for schools and educational institutions to provide multilingual exposure to students in Indian languages.
- ❖ **25 States** have achieved **100%** saturation in household electrification under **Saubhagya scheme**. Now, only about **10.48 lakh** households are left to be electrified in **4 states - Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Chhattisgarh**.
- ❖ The **National Festival for Children of Child Care Institutions (CCIs)**–“**Hausla 2018**” of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (**MWCD**) was held at Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium in **New Delhi**. Union Minister for Ministry of Women and Child Development, **Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi** and **Ms. Mary Kom**, Indian Olympic Boxer & Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) addressed the ceremony.
- ❖ India's **first indigenously** designed locomotive-less (**engine less**) train known as **Train 18**, breached the **180 kmph** speed limit during test run in **Kota-Sawai Madhopur section**.
- ❖ **Union Government** has constituted **6-member committee** to look at selling as many as 149 small and marginal oil and gas fields of state-owned **Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC)** and **Oil India Ltd (OIL)** to private and foreign companies to boost domestic output.
  - ✓ The committee will be **headed by** NITI Aayog Vice Chairman **Rajiv Kumar** and includes Cabinet Secretary **P K Sinha**, Economic Affairs Secretary **Subhash Chandra Garg**, Oil Secretary M M Kutty, NITI Aayog CEO **Amitabh Kant** and ONGC Chairman and Managing Director **Shashi Shanker**.
- ❖ **South African** President **Cyril Ramaphosa** will be chief guest at India's **70<sup>th</sup> Republic Day** celebrations on 26 January 2019.
- ❖ The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** has decided to support **northeast livelihood programmes for women**, particularly for those falling under the younger age group, through skill development and specialised training.
  - ✓ Objective: The main aim behind the move is to empower the young women as individuals and enable them to earn a living for themselves.
- ❖ The **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** which works under Ministry of Commerce and Industry has put the imports of gold dore in **restricted category**. India, the world's **2<sup>nd</sup>** biggest gold consumer after China, imports about 900 tonnes of gold a year.
- ❖ An **International Workshop** on “Developing a Ganga Museum Concept: Exchanging Experiences and Ideas between India and Europe” was held in **New Delhi**.
  - ✓ The workshop was organized by **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** along with **GIZ India**, as a part of Indo German Development Co-operation. Experts from India and the European Union participated.
- ❖ The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** launched a new mass media campaign “**Heart Attack Rewind**”, for the elimination of industrially produced trans-fat in the food supply and is a follow-up to an earlier campaign called “**Eat Right**”- aaj se thoda kam, and **Rajkummar Rao** it's brand ambassador.
- ❖ The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** has appointed former **Uttarakhand High Court** judge, Justice **U C Dhyani**, as head of the 3-member committee to oversee rejuvenation work of the **Ganga River**.
- ❖ Civil Aviation Minister **Suresh Prabhu** announced about the a portal called '**Digital Sky**' which is an online registration method for **drone operators** in the country. Both pilots and owners of the drones should be registered in this portal to operate.
- ❖ **NITI Aayog** initiated a series of Development Dialogue through its first event on “**Health Systems for A New India: Building Blocks**” in New Delhi.
  - ✓ The conference focused on strengthening governance, policy and regulatory frameworks and institutions for a developed health system that can grow to a globally competitive healthcare insurance.

- ✓ **NITI Aayog: Chairman:** PM Narendra Modi, **Vice-Chairman:** Rajiv Kumar, **CEO:** Amitabh Kant.
- ❖ The President of India, **Shri Ram Nath Kovind**, inaugurated the four day **13<sup>th</sup> edition** of **CII Agro Tech India-2018** in **Chandigarh**.
  - ✓ **Theme:-**Technology in Agriculture: Increasing Farmer's Income.
- ❖ **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has directed all universities across country to observe **December 7** as **Armed Forces Flag Day** to commemorate supreme sacrifices made by country's soldiers during conflicts.
- ❖ **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** proposed to relax norms for registration of **Insurance Marketing Firms (IMFs)** with an aim to improve **penetration of insurance** products in the country.
  - ✓ Earlier in June the IRDAI had formed a panel headed by Suresh Mathur, Executive Director (insurance marketing firms), IRDAI, with nine more members to review the regulations pertaining to insurance marketing firms.
  - ✓ **IRDAI Headquarter:** Hyderabad, **Chairman:** Subhash Chandra Khuntia.
- ❖ **Union Government** has included **Gangotri** and **Yamunotri** in Uttrakhand, **Amarkantak** in **Madhya Pradesh** and **Parasnath** in **Jharkhand** under **Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASAD)** to develop pilgrimage and heritage destinations in the country.
  - ✓ **PRASAD SCHEME:** It was launched in **2014-15** by Union Ministry of Tourism.
    - It aims at integrated development of pilgrimage destinations in planned, prioritised and sustainable manner to provide complete religious tourism experience.
    - It also seeks to promote local art, culture, handicraft, cuisine, etc.
- ❖ The **2<sup>nd</sup>** meeting of the newly constituted '**NITI Forum for North East**' commenced in **Guwahati, Assam**.
  - ✓ **Assam: Capital:** Dispur, **Chief Minister:** Sarbananda Sonowal, **Governor:** Jagdish Mukhi.
- ❖ The Ministry of Railways' **National Rail Museum (NRM)** and **Madame Tussauds Wax Museum**, New Delhi, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) to provide an amazing discount offer to **Delhi NCR tourists**.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** chaired by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** approved the launching of **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)**.
  - ✓ The mission will be launched by the Department of Science and Technology at an expected cost of **Rs 3660 crore** for a period of **five years**.
- ❖ **India Water Impact Summit (IWIS-2018)** has been inaugurated by Union Minister **Nitin Gadkari** in **New Delhi**. The discussions this year will be on the rejuvenation of the **Ganga River Basin**. Here, the spotlight will be on **5 states** viz. Uttrakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Delhi and Bihar, to showcase the efforts and works going on within the respective states.
- ❖ The foundation stone of **Institute of High-Altitude Medicinal Plants (IHAMP)** was laid by Union Ministers **Jitendra Singh** and **Shripad Yesso Naik** (Ayush Ministry) at Bhaderwah in Doda district of **Jammu & Kashmir**.
  - ✓ It will provide research in **medicinal plants** and promote **cultivation** of medicinal plants.
  - ✓ The estimated cost of the construction of Institute of High-Altitude Medicinal Plants is **Rs 100 crore**.
- ❖ Union Railways Minister **Piyush Goyal** has dedicated India's **first railway university** to the Nation in **Vadodara**. The Railway University will be first of its kind institution in the nation and the **3<sup>rd</sup>** in the world after **Russia** and **China**.
  - ✓ It is named as the **National Rail and Transportation Institution (NRTI)**.
- ❖ Cyclonic Storm **Phethai** is the sixth named cyclone of **2018 North Indian Ocean Cyclone** season it was turn of a name suggested by **Thailand**. The previous five named cyclones are Sagar, Mekunu, Luban, Titli and Gaza.
  - ✓ The cyclone that is headed towards the **Andhra Pradesh** and **Odisha** coast along the **Bay of Bengal**.
- ❖ The **3<sup>rd</sup>** edition of **Women Transforming India Awards** to be organized by Government think- tank **NITI Aayog**. On this occasion NITI Aayog will also launch the upgraded portal of **Women Entrepreneurship Platform**. Vice President **M Venkaiah Naidu** will present the awards to the women. The theme for this year-'**Women and Entrepreneurship**' and **15 winners** have been selected.
  - ✓ Women Transforming India Awards: The awards were launched in 2016 to recognize the exceptional women who are working hard and making difference in lives of others.
- ❖ **The Government** has decided to set up the **National Medical Devices Promotion Council (NMDPC)** to boost manufacturing, attract investments and promote exports in the **medical device** sector which is a **sunrise sector**.
  - ✓ The Council will be headed by Secretary, **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)** under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ❖ **The Supreme Court** has given clean chit to **Modi government** for purchase of **36 Rafale fighter Jets** from **France**. The three Judge bench headed by **Ranjan Gogoi**.
- ❖ **India** has the highest number of '**Stunted**' children in the world and nearly a third of all stunted children worldwide are to be found in India as per the recently released **WHO's Global Nutrition Report, 2018**.
  - ✓ About **46.6 million** children in India suffer from stunting due to poor nutrition intake in the long term and repeated infections.
- ❖ Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare **Radha Mohan Singh** launched an online portal '**ENSURE**' - **National Livestock Mission-EDEG** developed by **NABARD**. The portal will be operated under the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries.



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- ❖ The 4<sup>th</sup> **Partners' Forum 2018** has been inaugurated by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** in **New Delhi** to discuss issues related to **maternal and child health**. About 1500 participants from across **85 countries** participated in the international conference.
- ❖ **NITI Aayog** in partnership with a Singapore based AI startup '**Perlin**' launches '**AI 4 All Global Hackathon**' to develop AI Applications to make significant positive social and economic impact in India.
  - ✓ This Hackathon is a part of National AI Strategy which has a vision to expand the idea of "**Artificial Intelligence, AI for All**".
- ❖ **Indian Railways'** catering and tourism arm **IRCTC** announced the launch of the **Buddhist Circuit Tourist Train**.
  - ✓ The train will cover destinations including **Delhi, Bodhgaya, Nalanda/Rajgir, Varanasi/Sarnath, Lumbini, Kushinagar, Sravasti and Agra**.
- ❖ A **2-day Regional Conference on 'Good Governance – Focus on Aspirational Districts'** concluded at **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**.
  - ✓ **kerala: Capital:** Thiruvananthapuram, **Chief Minister:** Pinarayi Vijayan, **Governor:** Palanisamy Sathasivam.
- ❖ The **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** released the Year End review of the policies to envision the creation of a '**Vision of New India**' which would propel the India to become a **USD 5 trillion** economy before **2025**.
  - ✓ **Ministry of Commerce: Union Minister:** Shri. Suresh Prabhu, **Minister of State:** Shri. C R Chaudhary.
- ❖ **Union Minister** of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (I/C), **Giriraj Singh** inaugurated a **Multi-Disciplinary Training Centre (MTDC) of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** named **Samadhan** at **Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat in New Delhi**.
  - ✓ **KVIC: Headquarter:** Mumbai, **Chairman:** Vinai Kumar Saxena.
- ❖ **The Government** constituted a **Group of Ministers** headed by Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley** to check on the recommendations on **stressed power projects** given by the high-level panel headed by Cabinet Secretary **P. K. Sinha**.
- ❖ **The Government** has constituted a **seven-member** panel to select managing directors of **public sector insurance companies**. The panel would be headed by **Banks Board Bureau (BBB)** chairman **B P Sharma**.
- ❖ Union Minister of HRD, **Shri Prakash Javadekar** has inaugurated "**Kala Utsav**" (Festival of Arts) at **Bal Bhavan, New Delhi**.
- ❖ National conference '**AYUSHCHARYA**' on **DINACHARYA** (Daily Regimen) and **RITUCHARYA** (Seasonal Regimen) for public health promotion" organized in **New Delhi**.
- ❖ **The Government** think tank **Niti Aayog** has unveiled the Strategy for **New India @ 75**. This comprehensive national strategy defines clear objectives for **2022-23**.
  - ✓ The strategy document with **41 chapters** has been disaggregated under **four sections**, which are: Drivers, Infrastructure, Inclusion and Governance.
- ❖ **The Union government** has notified **10 Central Agencies** giving them the power to intercept, monitor and decrypt all the data contained in any computer system in India. The **Cyber and Information Security Division** under the Home ministry issued this notification.
  - ✓ The **10 agencies** authorised by the central government are the Intelligence Bureau, Narcotics Control Bureau, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, CBI, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Research and Analysis Wing, Directorate of Signal Intelligence (in Jammu & Kashmir, the North-East and Assam) and the Delhi Police.
- ❖ The **NITI Aayog** has released a first-of-its-kind **Sustainable Development Goals index** released on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018. According to the SDG Index, **Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu** have been ranked on **top 3** positions and are on track to achieve the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**.
  - ✓ **Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh** are at the **bottom** of the rankings in the NITI Aayog's Sustainable Development Goals Index.
- ❖ The **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion** under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** released the **first ever States' Startup Ranking 2018** on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018 in **New Delhi**. As per Startup Ranking 2018, the state of **Gujarat** is the **best-performing state** in the country for the Startups. Total 27 States and 3 UTs took part in this exercise.
  - ✓ Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, and Rajasthan were judged as **Top Performers**.
  - ✓ Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana were ranked as **Leaders**.
  - ✓ Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were ranked as **Aspiring Leaders**.
  - ✓ Assam, Delhi, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand were judged as **Emerging States**.
  - ✓ Chandigarh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Sikkim, and Tripura were ranked as **Beginners**.
- ❖ The "**Asiatic Lion Conservation Project**" has been launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (**MoEFCC**).
  - ✓ The total budget of the "Asiatic Lion Conservation Project" for 3 years stands at about **Rs. 9784 lakh**.

- ❖ Lok Sabha has passed **Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016** to protect surrogacy in the country. The bill has banned **commercial surrogacy** and allows only **altruistic surrogacy**.
- ❖ The **Department of Post** has issued a Commemorative **Postage Stamp** on **Rajkumar Shukla** in **New Delhi**. The stamp was released as a tribute to the contribution made by **Rajkumar Shukla** in the launch of **Champaran Satyagraha** in the year **1917**.
- ❖ The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** has given its approval for the revamped **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs)** scheme. A budget of **Rs. 2,242 crore** during 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- ❖ India's largest Cancer Institute, **National Cancer Institute (NCI)**, has opened on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 in **Jhajjar, Haryana** for public services.
- ❖ The **Central Government** has decided to extend the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** to all poor households in the country. The PMUY scheme targets to reach out to provide free LPG connections to **80 million** families by **2020**.
- ❖ Union Minister **Dr Jitendra Singh** launched the **iGOT (Integrated Government Online Training Programme)** for government employees. The iGOT will augment the existing training mechanism with **online module-based** training coupled with certification.
- ❖ The **6<sup>th</sup> edition** of **Yuva Natya Samaroh** has started at Kamani Auditorium in **New Delhi** with some of the best modern, mythological as well as Parsi style drama.
- ❖ **Cabinet** approves establishment of two new **AIIMS** at **Tamil Nadu & Telangana** under **Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana**. Tamil Nadu at a cost of **Rs 1,264 crore** and Bibinagar, Telangana at a cost of **Rs 1,028 crore**.
- ❖ **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** furthered its effort to reduce pollution in river Ganga before **Kumbha** when Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi** inaugurated projects in **Prayagraj** including 175 KM of sewerage network.
  - ✓ Shri Narendra Modi also laid the foundation stone for **two projects** in the trans Ganga/Yamuna area under **One City-One Operator scheme** with sanctioned cost of **Rs. 767.59 Cr.**
  - ✓ The project is based on Hybrid Annuity based PPP mode that includes Operations and Maintenance of all the sewerage infrastructure for 15 years.
- ❖ The '**Adopt A Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan**', scheme launched, an collaborative effort by **Ministry of Tourism**, Ministry of Culture and **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, State/UTs Governments and envisages development and maintenance of tourist amenities at heritage sites and making them tourist friendly, to **enhance tourism** potential and **cultural importance** in a planned and phased manner.
- ❖ **Minister of State** for Parliamentary Affairs and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, **Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal** gave details on the status of implementation of **National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA)** Project.
  - ✓ Paperless Assembly or e-Assembly is a concept involving of electronic means to facilitate the work of Assembly.
- ❖ **Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)** constituted a **Logistics Development Committee** under the Chairmanship of **Dr. Bibek Debroy**.
  - ✓ Boosting trade and making India a simple and easy place for doing business are integral part of the broader economic priorities of the Government.
- ❖ **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** signed a MoU with **Maruti Suzuki India Ltd** for training **rural youth** for skill development under **Deendayal upadhyaya grameen kaushalya yojana (Ddu-Gky)**.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** announced setting up of a Chair on the **Paika Rebellion**, in Utkal University, **Bhubaneswar**. He also released a **commemorative stamp** and **coin** on the **Paika Rebellion**.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has inaugurated projects worth around **Rs 15,000 crore** in **Odisha** as part of his Mission Purbodaya—a prosperous East for building a **New India**. The projects are related to health, road and highways, higher education and culture.
  - ✓ The Projects inaugurated by the Prime Minister are listed below:
    - **New campus** of IIT-Bhubaneswar at Aragul built at a cost of **Rs 1660 crore** to the Nation.
    - **ESIC hospital** in Bhubaneswar costing **73.5 crore** rupees.
    - **Lalitgiri Archaeological Museum** which houses huge sculptures of the Buddha and various Buddhist deities.
- ❖ The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** has released draft **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines [Amendment] Rules), 2018**.
- ❖ **India** has submitted its **6<sup>th</sup> national report (NR6)** to the Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**) highlighting the progress it has made in achieving the **12 National Biodiversity Targets (NBT)** set under the convention process.
  - ✓ The report was submitted to the CBD Secretariat by Environment Minister **Harsh Vardhan** during the inaugural session of the **13<sup>th</sup> National Meeting of the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)**.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** released a commemorative **stamp** on **Maharaja Suheldev**.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **International Rice Research Institute South Asia Regional Centre (IRRI SARC)** in **Varanasi**. It is the **6<sup>th</sup> campus** of **IRRI SARC**. The institute will complement the government's effort to **double farmer's income** by **2022**.
- ❖ The proposal from **The States** of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Mizoram, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh for the implementation of **Mahila Police Volunteer Scheme** has been approved by **the Union Government**.

- ✓ **Haryana** was the **first** state to adopt the initiative of Mahila Police Volunteer at Karnal and Mahendergarh District on a pilot basis under the Nirbhaya Fund during the financial year 2016-2017.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved the **National Commission for Indian Systems of Medicine Bill, 2018** (NCIM). The bill seeks to replace the existing regulator, the **Central Council for Indian Medicine** (CCIM).
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved the **National Commission for Homeopathy bill, 2018**. The National Commission for Homeopathy seeks to replace the existing regulator **Central Council of Homoeopathy**.
- ❖ The **Indian Government** has strongly rebutted the **US Center for Disease Control and Prevention's** (CDC) travel advisory for Indian travel. The **Zika** alert will adversely affect tourism.
- ❖ The **Union Government** has decided to rename **Ross, Neil and Havelock islands** of **Andaman**. The Ross, Neil and Havelock Islands are to be named as **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island, Shaheed Dweep, and Swaraj Dweep**, respectively.
- ❖ **Sadaiv Atal**, the **Samadhi of Atal Bihari Vajpayee** was dedicated to the **Nation** on the birth Anniversary of the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated **India's longest** rail-cum-road bridge "**Bogibeel**" over the **Brahmaputra** in the **Dibrugarh** district of **Assam**. The 4.94km long double-decker bridge, which begins at Dibrugarh and ends at Dhemaji districts of Assam, will connect parts of Arunachal Pradesh by road as well as railway.
- ❖ Exhibition '**Dandi Yatra**' as part of **150<sup>th</sup>** birth anniversary celebrations of the **Mahatma Gandhi** inaugurated in the **New Delhi**, organized by the **National Gallery of Modern Art**.
- ❖ **The government** has banned **Khalistan Liberation Force** (KLF) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (**UAPA**) for its involvement in several killing bombings and other terror activities during its violent campaign for the secession of **Punjab**.
- ❖ **NITI Aayog** released the **2<sup>nd</sup> Delta Ranking** of the **Aspirational Districts Programme** (ADP) on December 27, 2018. The districts have been ranked in a transparent basis on parameters across Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure through key performance indicators.
  - ✓ 3 aspirational districts from **West Bengal** did not participate, while one district of **Kerala** could not take part because of floods.
  - ✓ The ranking represented the incremental progress made by districts between June 1, 2018 and October 31, 2018.

Most improved districts		
Rank	District	State
1	<b>Virudhunagar</b>	Tamil Nadu
2	<b>Nuapada</b>	Odisha
3	<b>Siddharthnagar</b>	Uttar Pradesh
4	<b>Aurangabad</b>	Bihar
5	<b>Koraput</b>	Odisha
Fast Movers' Districts		
District, State	June 2018 Rank	October 2018 Rank
<b>Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir</b>	108	7
<b>Ranchi, Jharkhand</b>	106	10
<b>Siddharthnagar, Uttar Pradesh</b>	103	3
<b>Jamui, Bihar</b>	99	9
<b>Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh</b>	82	25

- ❖ The **Election Commission** has banned all kinds of tobacco in **polling booths** during next year's general elections, in a bid to effectively implement **tobacco control laws** in the country.
- ❖ The **National Human Rights Commission** (NHRC) launched a toll-free number **14433** and a facility to file complaints through **Common Service Center** (CSC).

### INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- ❖ **India-Mozambique** Joint Commission on Economic, Cultural, Scientific and Technical Cooperation held its **4<sup>th</sup>** session in Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan, **New Delhi**.
  - ✓ **Mozambique: Capital:** Maputo, **Currency:** Mozambican metical.
- ❖ The **14<sup>th</sup> edition** of the **G20 summit** will be held in **Japan** while **India** will host **G20 Summit In 2022**, when it celebrates its **75<sup>th</sup>** year of Independence. It was announced by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** during ongoing G20 meet of international grouping in **Buenos Aires**, capital of **Argentina**. This comes after Italy accepted India's formal request to host this summit in 2021 as earlier it was going to host it in 2022.
- ❖ The **24<sup>th</sup> meeting of Conference of Parties** (COP-24) to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**) began at **Katowice, Poland**. COP-24 is expected to finalise guidelines for implementation of Paris

Agreement adopted in 2016. Delegates from nearly 200 nations are participation in COP24. Indian delegation to this conference is led by Environment Minister, **Dr Harsh Vardhan**.

- ✓ **World Bank** has unveiled **US \$200 billion** in climate action investment for **2021 to 2025** to fight impact of climate change.
- ❖ The **Asia Pacific Summit 2018** was held in **Kathmandu**, Nepal. This summit has attended by 1500 participants from **45 countries** including **India**.
  - ✓ The theme is "Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, and Universal Values".
- ❖ **Qatar's** Energy Minister **Saad Sherida al-Kaabi** announced that the country will withdraw from the **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** in **January 2019**. Qatar joined OPEC in **1961**.
  - ✓ **OPEC :Headquarter:** Vienna, Austria, **Secretary General:** Mohammed Barkindo.
- ❖ The **European Central Bank (ECB)** launched a new pan-European smartphone payment system called **TARGET Instant Payment Settlement (TIPS)** in **Rome**.
- ❖ The Conference on **EU-India Partnership for Cultural Heritage Conservation** commenced at the **National Museum Auditorium**, Janpath, **New Delhi**.
- ❖ **India** is facing a major **Malnutrition Crisis** as it holds almost a **One-third** of the world '**Stunted Children**', according to a **Global Nutrition Report 2018**. The report classifies India as experiencing two forms of **malnutrition anemia and stunting**.
- ❖ **The 4 Indian-origin women** have been named by Forbes among America's **top 50 female technology moguls**.
  - ✓ **Padmasree Warrior**, former chief technology officer (**CTO**) of Cisco, **Komal Mangtani**, senior director at app-based cab aggregator Uber, **Neha Narkhede**, chief technology officer and co-founder of streaming platform Confluent and **Kamakshi Sivaramakrishnan**, CEO and founder of identity-management company Drawbrige are in the list.
- ❖ first **India-ASEAN InnoTech Summit** exhibition, **B2B** and **B2G** meetings was held in **New Delhi**. The theme of the Summit was- **Accelerating towards innovative development**.
  - ✓ It was organized by: Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (**FICCI**) in association with the Department of Science and Technology (**DST**) and the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ❖ The **8<sup>th</sup> session** of the foreign Office Consultation between **India** and **Sudan** was held in **New Delhi** to review the entire gamut of bilateral relations that include political, trade, investments, defence and security.
- ❖ The **International conference on bears** was held in **Agra**, hosted by **Wildlife SOS**.
  - ✓ The conference aims to share knowledge on principles of welfare of bears and other wild animals in zoos, sanctuaries and rescue centres.
- ❖ The **Food Sustainability Index** ranks India **33<sup>rd</sup>** among 67 countries in 2018. A report by the **Economist Intelligence Unit** and **Barilla Center for Food and Nutrition**.
  - ✓ The Food Sustainability Index is based on three broad categories: **food loss & waste, sustainable agriculture** and **nutritional challenges**.
- ❖ According to **World Intellectual Property Indicators 2018** report released by **United Nation's World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)**, number of patents granted by India shot up by **50%** in 2017. The patents granted by India increased from 8,248 in 2016 to 12,387 in 2017, thus keeping up trend of steep increases.
- ❖ The **80<sup>th</sup> session** of Policy Commission of **World Customs Organisation** concluded in **Mumbai**. It was organized by Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).
  - ✓ **WCO: Headquarter:** Brussels, Belgium, **Members:** 182 countries, **Secretary General:** Mr. Kunio Mikuriya.
- ❖ **Sweden** and **India** signed Memorandum of Understandings (**MoU**) in the **Renewable Energy sector** to enhance the technology and bring in power efficiency.
- ❖ The **UK's Cambridge Dictionary** has recently declared "**Nomophobia**", the word that describes the **stress** and **anxiety** caused by being separated from your mobile, as People's **Word of the year 2018**.
- ❖ According to the '**Global Carbon Project**', **India** is the **4<sup>th</sup>** highest emitter of **carbon dioxide** in the **world**.
  - ✓ accounting for 7% of global emissions in 2017. India's emissions look set to continue their strong growth by an average of 6.3% in 2018.
  - ✓ The world's top 10 Co2 emitters were China, the US, the EU, India, Russia, Japan, Germany, Iran, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.
- ❖ The Indian Defense Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** recently met Russian Defence Minister General **Sergei Shoigu** at the **18<sup>th</sup>** meeting of the **India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC)** that was held in **New Delhi**.
  - ✓ **Russia: Capital:** Moscow, **Currency:** Russian ruble, **President:** Vladimir Putin.
- ❖ Russia's **Akademik Lomonosov**, the world's **first** floating nuclear power plant (**FNPP**) has become operational.
- ❖ The **Government of India** and **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** have signed a loan agreement of **\$60 million** for financing project for renovation, protection and community-based flood risk management activities along the Brahmaputra river in **Assam**.
  - ✓ **Assam: Capital:** Dispur, **Chief Minister:** Sarbananda Sonowal, **Governor:** Jagdish Mukhi.



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<p>(Institute of Banking Personnel Selection)</p> <p><b>IBPS-RRB (Officer)</b> (Baroda Gramin, Dena Gramin, Saurashtra Gramin)</p>	<p>Qualification</p> <p><b>Any Graduate</b></p>	<p>Total Vacancies</p> <p><b>4800+</b></p>	<p>Tentative Exam Date</p> <p>Prelim : 3/4/11/17/18/25 Aug. 2019 Mains : 22 Sept. 2019</p>
<p>(Institute of Banking Personnel Selection)</p> <p><b>IBPS (PO)</b> (BOB, DENA, PNB, BOI, Union etc...)</p>	<p>Qualification</p> <p><b>Any Graduate</b></p>	<p>Total Vacancies</p> <p><b>6100+</b></p>	<p>Tentative Exam Date</p> <p>Prelim : 12/13/19/20 Oct. 2019 Mains : 30 Nov. 2019</p>
<p>(Institute of Banking Personnel Selection)</p> <p><b>IBPS (Clerk)</b> (BOB, DENA, PNB, BOI, Union etc...)</p>	<p>Qualification</p> <p><b>Any Graduate</b></p>	<p>Total Vacancies</p> <p><b>11500+</b></p>	<p>Tentative Exam Date</p> <p>Prelim : 07/08/14/15 Dec. 2019 Mains : 19 Jan. 2020</p>

Govt. Insurance Vacancy		Qualification	Total Vacancies	Expected Declaration Month
<p><b>LIC UIIC NICL OICL NIACL</b></p> <p>Assistant &amp; Administrative Officer</p>		<p><b>Any Graduate</b></p>	<p><b>4700+</b></p>	<p><b>Jan to Dec - 2019</b></p>

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- ❖ The recently released rankings by **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** have placed **four** Indian Public Sector Undertakings among world's top **100 arms producers**.
  - ✓ These companies are as follows:
    - Indian Ordnance Factories (37<sup>th</sup> Rank), Hindustan Aeronautics (38<sup>th</sup> Rank).
    - Bharat Electronics (64<sup>th</sup> Rank), Bharat Dynamics (94<sup>th</sup> rank).
- ❖ **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** in its **Outlook Supplement** has retained India's growth forecast at **7.3%** for current fiscal (2018-19) and **7.6%** in following financial year (2019-20).
  - ✓ **ADB: Established:** 1966, **Headquarter:** Manila, Philippines, **Members:** 67, **President:** Takehiko Nakao.
- ❖ The report '**India's Sterling Assets: Britain Meets India**' by the **Confederation of British Industry (CBI)** has noted that UK is the largest foreign **western investor** in India.
- ❖ **Union Government** has inked **\$31 million** loan agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) for **Tamil Nadu Government's Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism (IDIPT)**.
- ❖ **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** was adopted by **164 nations** including India at Intergovernmental Conference to adopt this compact held under auspices of **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** at Marrakesh, **Morocco**.
- ❖ According to World Bank's **Migration and Development Brief**, **India** retain its position as world's **top** recipient of **remittances** in 2018, receiving a total remittance of **\$80 billion** from its diaspora. India is followed by **China** (\$67 billion), **Mexico** and **Philippines** (\$34 billion each) and **Egypt** (\$26 billion).
- ❖ The **UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)** has approved India's proposal to observe **2023** as the **International Year of Millets**. This decision was taken at the 160<sup>th</sup> session of FAO Council, currently underway in **Rome**.
- ❖ **Luxembourg** is set to become the **first** country in the world to make all its **public transport free** by **2019**.
- ❖ **India** has been ranked **11<sup>th</sup>** out of **56** nations & the European Union (EU) at the **2019 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI)**, which was published by **Germanwatch**, the New Climate Institute and the Climate Action Network. The CCPI analysis shows that India has improved its standing by 3 places compared to the 2018 report.
- ❖ **Israel** has recently become a **full member** of the Paris-based **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, the global financial watchdog on money laundering, terror financing and other threats to the international financial system.
  - ✓ **Israel: Capital:** Jerusalem, **Currency:** Israeli new shekel.
- ❖ **India** has signed an agreement with **Iran** to pay for **crude oil** it imports from the Persian Gulf nation in **rupees**.
  - ✓ **Iran: Capital:** Tehran, **Currency:** Iranian Rial, **President:** Hassan Rouhan.
- ❖ The annual **39<sup>th</sup> Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** summit was held in Riyadh, **Saudi Arabia**.
- ❖ The **Nepal government** banned **Indian** currency above **Rs 100**.
- ❖ The **World Bank** recently released a report titled '**In the Dark: How Much Do Power Sector Distortions Cost South Asia**'. As per the report, Efficiency gap in **India's power sector** costs the Indian economy **4%** every year, which equivalent to **\$86 billion** in 2016FY.
- ❖ Recently Vice President **Venkaiah Naidu** met **Zambian** Parliamentary delegation in **New Delhi**. He welcomed **Zambia** as a member of the **International Solar Alliance** and hoped for early ratification of the **ISA Framework Agreement**.
- ❖ **India** has come at **108<sup>th</sup>/149<sup>th</sup>** position in the recently released **Gender Gap Index 2018** by **World Economic Forum**. India was ranked at the same position in 2017 rankings as well. **Iceland** has been ranked as **top** in the WEF's Gender Gap Index for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.
  - ✓ The **Global Gender Gap Report** is published annually by the **World Economic Forum** since 2006.
- ❖ The **Union government** has decided to give **USD 1.4 billion** to the island nation of **Maldives**. This decision came after Maldivian president **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih** met Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** during his 3-days visit to India.
- ❖ **Merriam-Webster** has declared '**Justice**' as the **2018 Word Of The Year**. As per Merriam-Webster says, the word '**Justice**' is used in many phrases like racial justice, social justice and obstruction of justice.
- ❖ **India** and **Vietnam** attach great importance to **defence cooperation**. India is one of only **three countries** with whom Vietnam has a comprehensive strategic partnership. Defence ties between **India** and **Vietnam** are guided by the "**Common Vision on Defense Ties 2015-20**".
- ❖ The **9<sup>th</sup>** meeting of **India-ROK Joint Commission (ROK/South Korea)** was held in **New Delhi**.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** approved a memorandum of understanding between **India** and **France** in the field of new and **renewable energy**.
- ❖ A joint workshop between **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** and **Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK)** on "**Integrated Protection on Civilians (IPOC)**" in **UN peacekeeping operations** was conducted at Manekshaw Centre, **New Delhi**.
  - ✓ The seminar focused on Protection of Civilians (**PoC**), Conflict Related Sexual Violence (**CRSV**) and Child Protection (**CP**) issues on vulnerable populations and UN strategies to address the ongoing challenges.
- ❖ The three day **7<sup>th</sup>** round of India-South Korea **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** negotiations concluded in Seoul, **South Korea**.
  - ✓ **South Korea: Capital:** Seoul, **Currency:** South Korean won.

- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of **India China High-Level Mechanism** on Cultural & People-to-people exchanges was held in **New Delhi**.  
✓ **China: Capital:** Beijing, **Currency:** Renminbi.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** chaired by **PM Modi** has approved the submission of **2<sup>nd</sup> Biennial Update Report (BUR)** to **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, giving India's national greenhouse gas (**GHG**) inventory of 2014.
- ❖ **India** which is the largest **producer** and **consumer** of milk has extended the ban on import of milk products from **China** for 4 months. The ban would continue till **23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019** as per the notification issued by the **Ministry of Commerce**.
- ❖ The **Pakistan Cabinet** has recently approved the issuance of **first-ever Chinese renminbi-denominated bonds** to raise loans from **China's capital markets**.
- ❖ The **12<sup>th</sup> Global Healthcare Summit (GHS)** was inaugurated by President **Ram Nath Kovind** in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**. The summit is being organized by the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (**AAPI**). Mr. Kovind acknowledged the professionalism and excellent reputation of doctors of Indian origin in the **US**.  
✓ Under the **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana**, more than four thousand **600** medical stores have been set up across the country to provide quality generic medicines at affordable prices to all, particularly the poor and disadvantaged.  
✓ **Maharashtra : Chief Minister:** Devendra Fadnavis, **Governor:** C. Vidyasagar Rao.
- ❖ **Palestinian** foreign minister **Riyad al-Malki** declared that Palestine would apply for **full state membership** at the **United Nations** in January.
- ❖ Prime Minister of **Bhutan**, Lyonchhen **Dr. Lotay Tshering** concluded his 3-day visit to **India**.  
✓ **India** will provide Bhutan a transitional **trade support facility** of **Rs 400 crore** over a period of **5 years** to strengthen bilateral trade and economic linkages.  
✓ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** announced a **Rs 4,500 crore** financial assistance to Bhutan for its **12<sup>th</sup> five-year** plan after holding wide-ranging talks with his Bhutanese counterpart Lotay Tshering.  
✓ **Bhutan: Capital:** Thimphu, **Currency:** Bhutanese ngultrum.
- ❖ The **Japanese government** officially announced to **withdraw** from the **International Whaling Commission (IWC)**, enabling Japan to pursue commercial whaling in its adjacent waters, including its **Exclusive Economic Zone**.  
✓ **Japan: Capital:** Tokyo, **Currency:** Japanese yen, **Prime minister:** Shinzo Abe.
- ❖ The **first** meeting of the Follow-up Committee for implementation of the **Trilateral Chabahar Agreement** between **India, Afghanistan** and **Iran** was held in the port city of Chabahar in **Iran**.  
✓ **Afghanistan: Capital:** Kabul, **Currency:** Afghan afghani.  
✓ **Iran: Capital:** Tehran, **Currency:** Iranian rial.

### STATES HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Jharkhand Chief Minister **Raghuraj Das** announced that the government will provide **free mobile phones** to 28 lakh **farmers** and a separate electric feeder for them for agriculture purpose by 2019/2021.
- ❖ The **Union Government** signed an **\$85 million** loan agreement with the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** to improve the skill development eco-system in **Odisha** and establish an advanced skill training center, the World Skill Center (**WSC**), in Bhubaneswar.  
✓ **Odisha: Chief Minister:** Naveen Patnaik, **Governor:** Prof. Ganeshi Lal.
- ❖ The Union Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** launched the single emergency number '**112**' under the **Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)** for the state of **Nagaland**.  
✓ The residents could dial '112' or use **panic button** on their phones or '**112 India**' **mobile App** to connect to a single number based emergency service, which will connect to police, fire, health and other helplines through an emergency response centre in the State.
- ❖ **Nagaland government** signed a **five-year** Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with **e-Governance Academy of Estonia** to provide advisory and technical knowledge for setting up of **e-Governance Academy of Nagaland (e-GAN)**.  
✓ **Nagaland CM:** Neiphiu Rio, **Governor:** Padmanabha Acharya .
- ❖ Jammu and Kashmir Governor **Satya Pal Malik** launched the ambitious **Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)** at Teacher's Bhawan in Jammu.
- ❖ The **Global Agriculture and Food** summit had been inaugurated by Union Agriculture Minister **Radha Mohan Singh** in Tana Bhagat Stadium, Khel Gaon at Ranchi, **Jharkhand**.
- ❖ The Union Home Minister **Shri Rajnath Singh** inaugurated the hugely popular **Hornbill Festival 2018** in Kohima, coinciding with the Formation Day of **Nagaland**.
- ❖ **Delhi Government** announced the launch of a common mobility card called 'One', with a tagline of '**One Delhi One Ride**', for easy commute on **public transport** and **metro trains**.
- ❖ Odisha Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** launched a new programme for transparency and awareness on various government schemes, called- the **Peoples Empowerment Enabling Transparency and Accountability (PEETHA)**.

- ❖ Chief Minister of Nagaland, **Shri Neiphiu Rio**, inaugurated the first ever **Swadesh Darshan Project** in Nagaland named-“**Development of Tribal Circuit: Peren-Kohima-Wokha Project**”.
  - ✓ It was sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism in November 2015 for **Rs. 97.36 Crores**.
  - ✓ **wadesh Darshan Project**: The scheme was launched in **2014 -15** and till date the Ministry has sanctioned **73 projects** worth projects for **Rs. 5873.26 Crore** to 30 States and UTs.
- ❖ Odisha's **Kandhamal Haldi** (turmeric variety), famous for its healing properties, will soon gets **Geographical Indications** (GI) tag. Its registration was applied by **Kandhamal Apex Spices Association for Marketing (KASAM)**.
- ❖ India's **first international indigenous film festival** will take place in February 2019 in **Odisha**.
- ❖ **Punjab Legislative Assembly** unanimously passed a resolution for seeking **30%** reservation for **women** in Parliament and State legislative assembly.
- ❖ **Mr. Zoramthanga** has been sworn in as the **Mizoram's** new **chief minister** of Mizoram.
- ❖ The state assembly of **Jammu and Kashmir** has passed law to ban **sexual extortion** of woman in offices and became the **first state** in the **country** to amend law on Sextortion. The State Administrative Council headed by Governor **Satya Pal Malik** has given approval for Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2018 and Jammu and Kashmir Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018.
- ❖ The **Delhi High Court** has ordered a **ban** on the sale of online medicines by **E-pharmacies** across the **country**. A bench of Chief Justice **Rajendra Menon** and Justice **V K Rao**.
- ❖ **Kerala** has become **first** state in the country to have **four international airports** with the inauguration of **Kannur airport**.
  - ✓ The other three international airports are Trivandrum International Airport, Cochin International Airport and Calicut International Airport.
- ❖ Chief Minister **Devendra Fadnavis** has launched a unique initiative called "**SMART**", which stands for State of Maharashtra's **Agribusiness** and **Rural Transformation**. This World Bank assisted project aims to revamp agricultural value chains, with special focus on marginal farmers across 1,000 villages.
  - ✓ The project will entail an investment of **\$300 million** of which **World Bank** would contribute **\$210 million**.
- ❖ **Arunachal Pradesh** got **Shi Yomi** as its **23<sup>rd</sup> district** after its inauguration by Chief Minister **Pema Khandu** in presence of Union Minister of State for Home **Kiren Rijiju**.
- ❖ **Telangana Rashtra Samiti** (TRS) President **K. Chandrashekhara Rao** was sworn in as the **Chief Minister** of Telangana for the second term by Governor **E.S.L. Narasimhan** at a ceremony held at Raj Bhawan in **Hyderabad**.
- ❖ The Chief Minister of West Bengal, **Mamta Banerjee** has been awarded the **Skoch Chief Minister** of the Year Award for the **year 2017**. The award was given to recognising her contribution in the overall development of West Bengal emerged as the best-performing state in the field of **Governance**.
- ❖ The state of **Jammu and Kashmir** has come under **President's rule** from 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018 as Governor's rule in the state completed its **six months**.
- ❖ **Goa** celebrated the **57<sup>th</sup> Liberation Day** on December 19, 1961 to mark getting independence from the 450-years of Portuguese rule.
  - ✓ **Goa: Chief Minister:** Manohar Parrikar, **Governor:** Smt. Mridula Sinha.
- ❖ **Haryana Government** has launched a mobile app named as '**Shiksha Setu**' with an aim to help the students of the state. The 'Shiksha Setu' App will help in bringing transparency in the Education Department.
  - ✓ This mobile app will contain all the information related to attendance, fee, online admission and scholarships in all the Haryana government colleges.
- ❖ **Bhupesh Baghel**, who is also the president of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee, took otha the new chief minister of **Chhattisgarh** state.
- ❖ The state of **Jharkhand** has been selected for **2018 Krishi Karman award** for producing **best quality rice** in the year 2016-17 by the Union Ministry of Agriculture. The award to be given away in **February 2019**.
- ❖ **Silao Khaja**, the traditional delicacy of Nalanda district of **Bihar**, has recently got **GI tag** from the **Geographical Indications Registry at Chennai**.
  - ✓ **Bihar: Chief Minister:** Nitish Kumar, **Governor:** Lalji Tandon.
- ❖ **Tamil Nadu Government** has launched **door-step Aadhaar enrolment scheme** for kids below five years old.
- ❖ The **Assam government** has approved the release of second instalment of the **Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar Mela**.
- ❖ **Pune District court** became the **first** court in India to allow **e-payments** of court fee, judicial deposits, fines and penalties, the facility which will be eventually available across all courtrooms in the country to bring transparency to cash transactions.
  - ✓ **Maharashtra: Chief Minister:** Devendra Fadnavis, **Governor:** C. Vidyasagar Rao.
- ❖ **Ashok Gehlot** took oath as the **Rajasthan** 12<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister ,where **Sachin Pilot** took oath as the **Deputy Chief Minister**.
- ❖ **Assam Government** spokesperson and Parliamentary Affairs Minister **Chandra Mohan Patowary** announced that government has approved to **waive** off 25 per cent of loan of farmers of maximum upto **Rs.25000** under **Assam Farmers' Credit Subsidy Scheme (AFCSS)**.

- ❖ **Union Minister** for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, Environment and Forests & Climate Change, **Dr. Harsh Vardhan** inaugurated the newly constructed **International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography** (ITCOcean) Complex in the INCOIS campus at Hyderabad, **Telangana**.  
✓ **Telangana: Capital:** Hyderabad, **Chief Minister:** K.Chandrashekhara Rao, **Governor:** E.S.L. Narasimhan.
- ❖ Jharkhand Chief Minister **Raghubar Das** announced a **Rs 2250 crore** scheme named as “**Mukhya Mantri Krishi Yojana**” which will help around **22.76 lakh** medium and marginal farmers to double their income by 2022. The Central Government has set a goal to **double income** of all the farmers by 2022.  
✓ **Jharkhand: Chief Minister:** Raghubar Das, **Governor:** Draupadi Murmu.
- ❖ The **Odisha Cabinet** headed by CM **Naveen Patnaik** announced **Rs 10,000 crore** the **Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation** (KALIA) scheme to empower small, marginal & landless farmers as well as landless labourers.
- ❖ **Tamil Nadu** has announced the setting up of country's **first music museum** with assistance from the Central government in **Thiruvaiyaru**, which is the birth place of **Saint Tyagaraja**.
- ❖ Maharashtra Chief Minister **Devendra Fadnavis** has launched the '**Bharat Ratna Atal Bihar Vajpayee International Schools**' for students in rural areas on the occasion of **94<sup>th</sup>** birth anniversary of the late prime minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee.
- ❖ Haryana Chief Minister **Manohar Lal Khattar** on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2018 has announced the renaming of **Child Care Institutes** being run in the state as **Jagannath Ashrams**.  
✓ **Haryana: Capital:** Chandigarh, **Governor:** Shri. Satyadeo Narain Arya.
- ❖ The **Cyclone Gaja** had hit the coasts of **Tamil Nadu** and **Andhra Pradesh** with a speed of about 184 kmph. The cyclone had also deposited a huge amount of sludges in the **coastal areas**.  
✓ The **cyclone Gaja** means elephant in Sanskrit language and has been named by **Sri Lanka**.
- ❖ **The Government** of Tamil Nadu on **World Environment day** 2018 on **5<sup>th</sup> June** had announced that it would ban the use of **plastic items**, including non-biodegradable bags, from January 1, 2019, with some exceptions. Plastic was allowed only for only milk, oil, medicine packets and other items of basic needs.
- ❖ **Khushi scheme** of Odisha aims to provide good **menstrual hygiene care** to women of the state. The initiative aims to promote health and hygiene among school going adolescent girls leading to higher retention in **school** and greater empowerment of women.  
✓ Under the scheme, the government will provide **free sanitary napkins** to 17 lakh girls studying in Classes 6 to 12 in government and government-aided schools.
- ❖ The Government of **Madhya Pradesh** has announced setting up of a new **Adhyatmik Vibhag** (spiritual department). The proposed new department will be set up by merging several existing departments.  
✓ **Madhya Pradesh: Chief Minister:** Shri. Kamal Nath, **Governor:** Smt. Anandiben Patel.
- ❖ The **Government of Uttar Pradesh** has initiated **One District, One Product scheme** to encourage indigenous and specialized products and crafts of the state. The scheme aims to capitalize the **rich heritage** of the **Uttar Pradesh** by reviving them through modernization and publicisation to enhance the reach of these products.
- ❖ A **postal stamp** dedicated to **Nabin Chandra Das**, inventor of **Rosogolla** was launched on the inaugural day of the three-day festival, **Bagbazar-O-Rosogolla Utsob** marking the **150<sup>th</sup>** year of its invention.  
✓ **West Bengal: Chief Minister:** Mamata Banerjee, **Governor:** Kesari Nath Tripathi.
- ❖ The **Delhi Police** has become the **first police force** in the country to **digitize** all malkhanas, when Delhi Police commissioner Amulya Patnaik inaugurated the **e-malkhana project** in the remaining 10 districts at **Chinamaya Mission**.
- ❖ The **26<sup>th</sup>** edition of **International Camel Festival** (ICF-2019) will be organized by the **Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan** in Bikaner on **January 12 and 13**.
- ❖ Uttarakhand Chief Minister **Trivendra Singh Rawat** launched a **Universal Health Coverage Scheme**, which is known as the '**Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana**'. Under the scheme, each household in the state will be able to avail medical treatment of up to **Rs 5 lakh annually**.
- ❖ The **26<sup>th</sup> National Children's Science Congress** (NCSC) has been inaugurated by the Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** at the Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) in Bhubaneswar, **Odisha**.
- ❖ The **3<sup>rd</sup> Dwijing Festival 2018** has started on the bank of **Aye river** at Chirang district in **Assam**.
- ❖ The **106<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress** (ISC-2019) will be held at **Lovely Professional University** in Jalandhar, **Punjab** on January 3-7 with theme "**Future India: Science and Technology**". It will be inaugurated by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**.
- ❖ The 8-day **11<sup>th</sup> Bengaluru International Film Festival** (BIFFES) will start in **February 7, 2019**. The theme of the Festival would be '**Nature's Fury**'.
- ❖ Governor of Manipur, **Dr. Najma A. Heptulla** inaugurated the 5-day long **42<sup>nd</sup> Indian Social Science Congress** at the **Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology** (KIIT) campus in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**.  
✓ The theme of the congress is '**Human Future in Digital Era**'. Indian Social Science Congress is the annual meet of social scientists organized by **Indian Social Science Academy** (ISSA).

- ✓ **Manipur: Chief Minister:** Shri. N Biren Singh, **Governor:** Dr. Najma A. Heptulla.
- ✓ **Odisha: Chief Minister:** Shri. Naveen Patnaik, **Governor:** Prof. Ganeshi Lal.
- ❖ The 17-day long **International Gita Mahotsav 2018** concluded in **Kurukshetra, Haryana**. It commenced from **December 7, 2018**.
  - ✓ It is celebrated to commemorate the birth of '**Srimad Bhagwat Gita**', the sacred scripture that had its inception on the **first** day of the famous 18-day battle in the **Mahabharata**.
- ❖ **Rajasthan Government** abolished the condition of a **minimum educational qualification** to contest local body elections.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will lay foundation stone of the **Mandal Dam**, built at a cost of **Rs 2,500 crore**, in Jharkhand's Palamau district.

### **ECONOMY AWARENESS**

- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India** said it has approved merger of **SBM (Mauritius), India** with **SBM Bank (India)**. RBI has sanctioned the Scheme of amalgamation of the entire undertaking of **SBM Bank (Mauritius) Limited, India** with **SBM Bank (India) Limited** which has been granted licence by the Reserve Bank to carry on the business of banking in India through Wholly Owned Subsidiary (**WOS**) mode under the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**.
- ❖ **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** made **Legal Entity Identifier (LEI)** code mandatory for all market transactions regulated by the central bank. The **LEI** is a **20-character** unique identity code assigned to entities who are parties to a financial transaction.
  - ✓ LEI is used in areas relating to banking, securities market, credit rating and market supervision.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India** announced the date of its implementation of the **Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR)** norms to be from April 1, 2020.
  - ✓ The NSFR is defined as the amount of available stable funding relative to the amount of required stable funding.
- ❖ The **Finance ministry** has approved **Rs 850 crore** investment to upgrade **Doordarshan (DD)** and **All India Radio (AIR)**. The sanctioned amount will be invested over **FY19** and **FY20**.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** in its **fifth bimonthly monetary policy** review for financial year 2018-19 has decided to maintain status quo in policy rates by keeping **repo rate** unchanged at **6.5%**.
  - ✓ Reverse Repo Rate: **6.25%**, Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate: **6.75%**.
  - ✓ Bank Rate: **6.75%**, Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR): **4%**.
  - ✓ Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR): **19.5%**.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has announced to introduce '**Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions**' to provide cost-free mechanism to **redress grievances** of customers related to digital transactions. The scheme will be notified by end of January 2019. It will cover services provided by entities falling under RBI's regulatory jurisdiction.
- ❖ **Fitch Ratings**, in its report- **Global Economic Outlook**, slashed India's GDP growth forecast to **7.2 per cent** for current fiscal, even lower than **RBI's projection** of **7.4%**.
  - ✓ **Fitch: Headquarter:** New York City, US, **CEO:** Paul Taylor.
- ❖ **India Post** has started **internet facility** of the customers of Post office **savings bank account**. The facility was launched by Union Minister for Communication (independent charge) **Manoj Sinha** at National Media Centre, **New Delhi**.
- ❖ **India's** former economic affairs secretary and current member of the Finance Commission **Shaktikanta Das** is to be appointed **25<sup>th</sup>** RBI Governor.
- ❖ **Union Cabinet** has decided to raise contribution of Central Government to **National Pension System (NPS)** corpus of its employees from **10% to 14%**.
- ❖ The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** signed a loan agreement worth **USD 100 mn** with **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** to boost **rooftop solar** power capacity projects through the private sector participation.
  - ✓ **NABARD: Headquarter:** Mumbai, **Chairman:** Dr. Harsh Kumar Bhanwala.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** imposed a **fine** amounting to **Rs. 1 crore** on Indian Bank for violating cyber security norms.
  - ✓ **Indian Bank: Headquarter:** Chennai, **MD & CEO:** Ms. Padmaja Chunduru, **Tagline:** Your Own Bank.
- ❖ **OBOPAY**, the global financial technology company, announced the launch of a new **generation pre-payment instrument** called- **OBOPAY Card**-in partnership with **Federal Bank** and **Mastercard**.
  - ✓ **Federal Bank: Headquarter:** Kerala, **MD&CEO:** Mr. Shyam Srinivasan, **Tagline:** Your Perfect Banking Partner.
- ❖ **Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank)** has extended a credit facility of **USD 500 million** to Tanzania for water supply projects in the country.
- ❖ **India's foreign exchange reserves** declined in this week by **USD 613.9 million** reaching **USD 393.12 billion**. This decline has been attributed to the fall in **foreign currency assets** as per the **Reserve Bank of India**.

- ❖ The **IDFC Bank** has merged completely with the non-banking financial company **Capital First** on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 into a new entity to be called as **IDFC First Bank**. The new bank i.e. IDFC First bank will have a loan asset book of **Rs 1.03 lakh crore**.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India** has shortlisted **six IT** majors including TCS, Wipro and IBM India to set up **Public Credit Registry (PCR)** for capturing details of borrowers and wilful defaulters.
- ❖ The **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** ordered creation of a **12 member committee** of senior officials chaired by **S K Dash** for a fresh cadre **review** and restructuring of the **Income Tax Department**.
- ❖ The **31<sup>st</sup> Meeting** of the **GST Council** under the chairmanship of Finance Minister **Shri. Arun Jaitley** was held in Vigyan Bhavan, **New Delhi**.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on **24<sup>th</sup> December 2018**, a day before Vajpayee's **94<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary** released a commemorative coin worth **Rs 100** in honour of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
  - ✓ The front side of the coin features the Emblem of India and words **Satyamev Jayate** are inscribed below the Lion Capital of Ashoka Pillar in **Devanagari script**. The words 'Bharat' in Devanagari and 'India' in Roman script are also inscribed on the front side.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has set up an **Economic Capital Framework**, headed by its former governor **Bimal Jalan**, to suggest how the **central bank** should handle its reserves and whether it can transfer its surplus to the government. The committee will submit its report within **90 days** of its **first meeting**.
- ❖ The new norms for the **foreign direct investment (FDI)** in e-commerce, bars e-commerce firms from selling products of entities in which they have an **equity stake**.
  - ✓ The new norms aim to tackle the anti-competitive behaviour by e-commerce entities and to ensure that there is no wrong subsidization and the marketplace remains neutral to all vendors.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has launched a '**Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi)**' to capture payment habits of individuals in **6 cities**, including four metropolitan towns. According to RBI release, the survey will cover a sample of 6,000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds across six cities including Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati.
- ❖ The financial Services Secretary, **Rajiv Kumar** said that the **Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR)** of **Public sector bank** has gone up from **46.04 per cent** as of March 2015 to **66.85 per cent** as of September 2018, reflecting improvement in their financial health.
- ❖ The state-owned **Bank of India** said that the government has decided to infuse **Rs 10,086 crore** in the bank as part of **Rs 28,615 crore** capital infusion to be done in about half a dozen public sector lenders.
  - ✓ **BOI:Headquarter:** Mumbai, **MD & CEO:** Dinbandhu Mohapatra, **Tagline:** Relationship beyond Banking.
- ❖ According to RBI report titled '**Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2017-18**', banks have recovered **stressed assets** helped by the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)** and amendments in the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interests (**SARFAESI**) Act.
- ❖ The Thrissur, Kerala-based **ESAF Small Finance Bank** has received the **Reserve Bank** approval to operate as **scheduled bank** making it the **5<sup>th</sup> scheduled bank** that operates from Kerala after Federal Bank, South Indian Bank, Catholic Syrian Bank, and Dhanlaxmi Bank.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** released the '**Trends & Progress of Banking in 2017-18**' report which stated that, system-wide **Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA)** of banks rose to **11.2 %** or at **Rs 10.39 trillion** in FY18 from **9.3 %** a year ago.
- ❖ India's **Fiscal deficit** for April-November stood at **Rs 7.17 lakh crore** which is **114.8 per cent** of earlier full-year estimates of fiscal deficit that was predicted to be **Rs 6.24 lakh crore**, or **3.3 per cent** of the GDP, for **FY19**.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has relaxed the norms for the Mumbai-based the **City Co-operative Bank**, allowing its depositors to **withdraw** a sum not exceeding **Rs 5,000** of the total balance in every savings bank or current account or any other deposit account, against **Rs 1,000** earlier.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** cleared a proposal to give existing **Rs 1000-crore** corpus to Small Industries Development Bank of India (**SIDBI**) for funding micro finance institutions (**MFIs**).
- ❖ State-owned **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** in collaboration with **Uttar Pradesh government** launched a special card called **PNB Rupay card**, for **Kumbh Mela 2019**.
  - ✓ It is aimed to create a model for digitization at this edition of Kumbh Mela for convenient and hassle-free transactions for the participating 12 crore devotees.

### CORPORATE AFFAIRS

- ❖ FMCG major **Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)** approves the merger with **GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare (GSKCH India)** through an-all equity deal, valuing the total business of the latter at **31,700 crore**.
- ❖ The **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)** in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the **Government of Goa** hosted the annual **#Startupindia Global Venture Capital Summit** in Goa.
  - ✓ **GOA: Chief Minister:** Manohar Parrikar, **Governor:** Smt. Mridula Sinha.

- ❖ **India's stock market** has overtaken **Germany's** to become the **7<sup>th</sup>-largest** in the world with a market capitalisation of **\$2.08 trillion**.
- ❖ **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**, is organizing the **15<sup>th</sup> edition** of the **CII Global SME Business Summit** on 19-20 December 2018 in **New Delhi**.
  - ✓ **Theme** :- 'Building Partnerships through Global Value Chains'.
- ❖ The **Oil Marketing Companies** have launched **Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin Initiative**, as part of their corporate social responsibility (**CSR**) in **Odisha**.
- ❖ **Indian Railways** is building the country's **first** vertical-lift bridge to connect **Rameswaram** to **mainland India**. The bridge will allow ships and steamers to pass through without any **hindrance**.
- ❖ A research from **CRISL** states that security services, where **small and medium enterprises (SMEs)** have 60-65 per cent market share, have logged a **compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18-20 per cent** over the past 3 fiscal years and it expects them to grow at a similar pace over the next **two fiscal years**.
- ❖ **National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA)** assessment has revealed consumer goods maker Hindustan Unilever Ltd (**HUL**) allegedly profiteering to the extent of **Rs 383 crore** after the large-scale goods and services tax (**GST**) rate cut last November.
  - ✓ The National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) has asked HUL to deposit **Rs 223 crore** in central and state consumer welfare funds since the company itself had proactively deposited **Rs 160 crore** with the **central consumer welfare fund**.
- ❖ The **Central Zone** of Indian Railways has developed an **AI-powered robot**, named as '**USTAAD**', which will scrutinize parts of train coaches in **real time** and transmit them over a **WiFi connection**. The acronym '**USTAAD**' stands for **Undergear Surveillance Through Artificial Intelligence Assisted Droid**.
- ❖ The **Indian Railways** has won **17 awards** at the **National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) 2018**. This is the highest number of awards bagged by a **single organisation**. These awards are given by the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** of the Ministry of Power to various institutions for adopting measures for **reducing energy** consumption and cost.

### **DEFENCE & SECURITY**

- ❖ **The Japanese Air Self Defense Force (JASDF)** is in India for a bilateral air exercise **SHINYUU Maitri-18** with Indian Air Force from 03-07 Dec 18 at **A. F. Station Agra**.
  - ✓ Theme of the exercise is: Joint mobility and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief on transport aircraft.
- ❖ Indian Navy Chief Admiral **Sunil Lanba** announced conduction '**Exercise Sea Vigil**' as a part of a 2-month long **Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (Tropex)** in January 2019. It would end in March 2019 to test robustness of entire coastal security apparatus.
- ❖ **Indian Navy** inducted its **first** edition Submarine Rescue System with **Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSRV)** along with associated equipment at western naval dockyard in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.
- ❖ The **7<sup>th</sup> Hand-in-Hand** Military exercise between **India, China** began in Chengdu, **China**. It is being held to improve capabilities of the two armies in fighting terrorism and promote mutual understanding.
- ❖ The **2<sup>nd</sup> edition** of service specific exercise **AVIAINDRA** between **Indian Air Force** and **Russian Federation Aerospace Force (RFSAF)** was held at Air Force Station Jodhpur, **Rajasthan**.
  - ✓ The inaugural IAF-RFSAF Ex AVIAINDRA was conducted in 2014 and since then it is conducted bi-annually (twice a year) in both countries.
- ❖ The **10<sup>th</sup> edition** of **INDRA NAVY maritime exercise** between **India** and **Russia** has conducted off **Visakhapatnam** coast, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The **Indian Coast Guard** has conducted the Regional Level **Marine Oil Pollution Response Exercise** titled '**Clean Sea - 2018**' at sea off **Port Blair**.
  - ✓ **Indian Coast Guard:Headquarter:** New Delhi, **Director General:** Mr. Rajendra Singh.
- ❖ The **2<sup>nd</sup> edition** of **Military Literature Festival (MLF) 2018** was held in **Chandigarh** with an aim to offer an opportunity for the younger generation to get acquainted with India's glorious **military heritage**.
- ❖ **Indian Navy's** first flyaway **Deep Sea Submarine** Rescue System was inducted by Admiral **Sunil Lanba**, Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Naval Staff, at the Naval Dockyard, **Mumbai**.
- ❖ **Indra Navy-18**, a bilateral naval exercise, between **India** and **Russia** concluded. It was a 4-day maritime exercise that took place in the **Bay of Bengal**.
  - ✓ **INDRA NAVY** or India – Russia Navy Exercise is being conducted since 2003. The first edition of this exercise was conducted in May 2003 in India.
- ❖ **India's first** military flight using blended **bio-jet fuel** has been successfully flown by **Indian Air Force (IAF)** through an **AN-32 transport aircraft** in **Chandigarh**.
- ❖ The **Indian Navy** has been commissioned a naval hospital ship, the **INHS Sandhani** at Naval station Karanja in the Raigad district of **Maharashtra**.

- ❖ The 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)** was held in **New Delhi** on **24<sup>th</sup> December 2018**. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, **Kiren Rijiju**, was the chief guest and he witnessed the raising day parade along with delegates from **Nepal** and **Bhutan** on the occasion.
- ❖ Raksha Mantri **Smt Nirmala Sitharaman** launched a newly designed web page for '**Drone Olympics**' (<https://aerolandia.gov.in/Drone>), scheduled to be held at Aero India-2019 at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, **Bengaluru**.
  - ✓ Drone Olympics' is open to both Indian and international players.

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- ❖ NASA's first-ever **OSIRIS-REx mission** designed to visit asteroid and return sample of its dust back to **Earth** reached its destination, **Bennu**, two years after its launch.
  - ✓ OSIRIS-Rex stands for **Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security-Regolith Explorer**. It was launched in September 2016 for studying 101955 Bennu, a carbonaceous asteroid.
- ❖ **Indian Space Research and Organisation (ISRO)** has successfully launched India's heaviest and most-advanced communication satellite **GSAT-11** into space. It was launched on board of **Ariane 5 VA-246 rocket** from Kourou Launch Base, **French Guiana**. GSAT-11 also called Big Bird has been indigenously developed by ISRO.
- ❖ **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has launched Twitter account **@CyberDost** to spread awareness about **cybercrimes** and normal precautions to be taken. It is aimed at enhancing people's basic knowledge about cybercrimes and precautions to be taken for prevention.
- ❖ **Nuclear capable** surface to surface **Agni-5 ballistic missile** was successfully test-fired from **Dr Abdul Kalam Island** off the **Odisha coast**.
- ❖ **InSight**, NASA's new Mars lander, has set up its **first instrument** on planet Mars. The instrument placed by InSight, which landed on Mars, is a **quake monitor** (seismometer) that will listen for quakes and wobbles.
- ❖ **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** successfully launched the Military Communication Satellite **GSAT-7A** from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (**SDSC**) in **Sriharikota**, Andhra Pradesh. GSAT-7A weighing 2250 kg was launched using **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F11)**.
- ❖ **India's first** private sector unit for manufacturing **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)** has recently opened at **Adani Aerospace Park** near Shamshabad in **Hyderabad**.
- ❖ The **Ministry of Aviation** along with the **Airport Authority of India (AAI)** has launched an official mobile app "**GAS-2019**" for the **Global Aviation Summit (GAS)** for 2019, which is scheduled to be held in **Mumbai in January 2019**.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved a budget of **Rs 10,000 crore** for India's **Gaganyaan project**. The allocation of the budget comes after the announcement of Prime Minister that, an Indian would travel to space in an Indian spacecraft by **2022** in his 2018 Independence Day speech.
- ❖ China's **BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS)** has started offering **global service**. It is touted as a rival to America's **Global Positioning System (GPS)**. Pakistan has become the first foreign nation to use the BeiDou system ending its reliance on GPS.

### SPORTS

- ❖ **Pawan Singh** became the **first Indian** to be elected as one of the **7 members** of the Judges Committee of the **International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF)**.
- ❖ **Commonwealth Senior Fencing Championships**, was held in Canberra, **Australia**. India won a total of **3 medals: 2 gold and 1 bronze**, in the championship. The medal tally was **topped** by **England** with 6 gold, 6 silver and 4 bronze medals.
  - ✓ **Bhavani Devi** won **gold medal** in the Senior Women's Sabre event. She has become the **first Indian** to win a gold medal in the Commonwealth Championship.
- ❖ The Hungarian capital **Budapest** was officially confirmed as the host city of the **2023 International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Championships**.
- ❖ The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of **Khelo India School Games** rechristened as **Khelo India Youth Games** will be held from **January 9-20, 2019** in Pune, **Maharashtra**. It will take place at **Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex** in Pune. The **first** edition of this games under Khelo India Programme was held in **New Delhi in February 2018**.
- ❖ **Prathamesh Maulingkar** from India has created history by becoming the **first Asian/Indian** to win **2018 Mister Supranational title** in a competition held in Krynica-Zdroj, **Poland**.
- ❖ **Manika Batra** has become the **first-ever** Indian athlete to be decorated with the Breakthrough Table Tennis Star award at the prestigious **2018 ITTF Star Awards** in Incheon, **South Korea**.
- ❖ **Shubhankar Sharma** became the **youngest** and the **5<sup>th</sup> Indian** to win **Asian Tour Order of Merit** in golf.
- ❖ **Sascha Bajin**, coach of the world number five **Naomi Osaka**, became the first-ever recipient of the **Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Coach of the Year Award**.
- ❖ **Pakistan's** leg-spinner **Yasir Shah** became the fastest cricketer to take **200 Test wickets**.
- ❖ **Belgium Football team** came at number **one position** in the end-of-the-year FIFA global rankings.
  - ✓ Belgium has 1727 points in the rankings whereas **France** which came at **second rank** has 1726 points.

- ❖ **Joshna Chinappa** won the **National Squash Women's Singles title** in New Delhi.
- ❖ Rio Olympics Silver medallist **PV Sindhu** became the **first Indian** to lift the **Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Tour Finals title** at Guangzhou, China.
- ❖ The **37<sup>th</sup> Senior National Rowing Championship** has started in the Army Rowing Node in Pune, **Maharashtra**.
- ❖ The **3<sup>rd</sup> edition of Women's National Boxing Championships** has started at the JSW Sports-owned **Inspire Institute of Sport** in Vijayanagara, **Karnataka** on December 31, 2018.
- ❖ Dronacharya awardee **C A Kuttappa** has taken over as **India's chief boxing coach** at the ongoing national camp.
- ❖ The **10<sup>th</sup> R R Lakshya Cup**, an **international shooting competition**, will be held at **Karnala** in neighbouring Panvel, **Maharashtra**.
- ❖ Former Australia captain **Ricky Ponting** was formally inducted into the ICC Cricket **Hall of Fame**.
- ❖ **Lewis Hamilton** was awarded with **Drivers' Driver of the Year** after claiming the **5<sup>th</sup> World Drivers' Championship**.
- ❖ Asian Games and Youth Olympic Games champion **Saurabh Chaudhary** swept the **10m** air pistol trials at the **Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range** by winning the **2<sup>nd</sup> National trial competitions** in both the men's and junior boy's categories on December 31, 2018.

## AWARDS & HONOURS

- ❖ Indian shooter **Abhinav Bindra** and still India's only individual Olympic gold medallist was awarded coveted **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Blue Cross**. With this Bindra is the **first Indian** to be awarded the Blue Cross.
- ❖ **Mr. Imran Hussain**, Delhi Minister of Food Supplies, Environment and Forest was awarded "**Hero to Animals**" by **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)** for banning **Chinese Manjha** in Delhi.
- ❖ The Indian cricket team captain **Virat Kohli** has received a special honour as a **signed jersey** that he donated after scoring his hundred in the **4<sup>th</sup> Test** at the **Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG)** during India's tour of Australia in 2014-15 has been placed next to **Sachin Tendulkar's** portrait at the **Bradman Museum**.
- ❖ India's national academy of letters **Sahitya Academy** has announced names of **24 poets and authors** who will be conferred the prestigious **Sahitya Akademi Award 2018** in 24 different Indian languages.
  - ✓ **Seven** books of **poetry**, **six novels**, **six short stories**, three of literary criticism and two of essays won the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2018.
  - ✓ Awardees are
    - **7 Poetry:** Sananta Tanti (Assamese), Paresh Narendra Kamat (Konkani), S Ramesan Nair (Malayalam) and Dr Rama Kant Shukla (Sanskrit), Dr. Mohanjit (Punjabi), Dr. Rajesh Kumar Vyas (Rajasthani) and Khiman U Mulani (Sindhi).
    - **6 Short stories:** Sanjib Chattopadhyay (Bengali), Mushtaq Ahmed Mushtaq (Kashmiri), Prof Bina Thakur (Maithili), Rituraj Basumatary (Bodo), Prof. Budhichandra Heisnamba (Manipuri) and Nath Upadhyay Chapagain (Nepali).
    - **6 Novel:** Inderjeet Kesar (Dogri), Anees Salim (English), Chitra Mudgal (Hindi), Shyam Besra (Santali), Ramkrishnan (Tamil) and Rahman Abbas (Urdu).
    - **3 Literary Criticism:** KG Nagarajappa (Kannada), Ma. Su. Patil (Marathi) and Prof. Dasarathi Das (Odia).
    - **2 Essays:** Prof. Sharifa Vijliwala (Gujarati) and Dr. Kolakaluri Enoch (Telugu).
- ❖ Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan** presented awards during the **23<sup>rd</sup> International Film Festival of Kerala** held at **Nishagandhi Auditorium**, Kanakakunnu, Kerala.
  - ✓ List of Awards
    - **The Golden Crow Pheasant Award** (Suvarna Chakoram): Iranian film The Dark Room.
    - **The Silver Crow Pheasant Award** (Rajatha Chakoram) for **best Director:** Lijo Jose Pellissery.
    - **Audience Poll Award for Best Film:** Malyalam Film Ee. Ma.Yau.
    - **Rajath Chakoram for Debut Director:** Anamika Haksar for Taking the Horse to Eat Jalebis.
    - **FIPRESCI Award:** Zakariya's Sudani from Nigeria.
    - **Network for Promotion of Asian Cinema Award:** Malyalam Film Ee. Ma.Yau.
    - **Best reporter award:** Aravind of Metro Vartha.
    - **Special Jury Mention Award:** The Silence.
- ❖ Indian-American **Shree Saini** has won **Miss India Worldwide 2018 title** at a pageant held in the Fords City of New Jersey. Sakshi Sinha from Australia and Anusha Sareen from the United Kingdom were respectively declared first and second runner-ups in the competition.
- ❖ Renowned English fiction writer **Amitav Ghosh** has been selected for **Jnanpith award, 2018**.
- ❖ **Uttar Pradesh** based **startup HelpUsGreen** has been honored by UN for its works to clean River Ganga by recycling tonnes of floral waste.
  - ✓ The startup collects the floral waste daily from the temples. These flowers are then recycled to produce charcoal free incense, organic vermicompost and biodegradable packaging material through Flowercycling technology.

- ❖ **Prof. Rattan Lal**, a distinguished university professor of soil science at the **Ohio State University**, has won the '**Glinka World Soil Prize 2018**' in a ceremony at the headquarters of **UN FAO** in **Rome** for his remarkable contribution to sustainable **soil management**.  
✓ **FAO:Headquarter:** Rome, Italy, **President:** Jose Graziano da Silva.
- ❖ Indian pugilist **MC Mary Kom** has been honoured with the title "**Meethoileima**" (par excellent queen) by the Manipur Government at a function in Imphal.
- ❖ DMK MP **Kanimozhi** has been selected for the **Best Woman Parliamentarian** (Rajya Sabha) set up by Lokmat newspaper for 2018.
- ❖ **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**, Government of India was conferred the **Skoch Award** for National Significance at **54<sup>th</sup> SKOCH Summit** on the State of Power, Oil and Gas and was organized by **SKOCH Group** in **New Delhi**.
- ❖ Mexico's **Vanessa Ponce de Leon** won the coveted **Miss World 2018** crown at the **68<sup>th</sup> edition** of the prestigious Miss World grand event held in the Chinese city, **Sanya**.  
✓ **Mexico: Capital:** Mexico City, **Currency:** Mexican Peso.
- ❖ **IIT Kharagpur** won **DSCI Excellence Award 2018**, given by Data Security Council of India (**DSCI**), for its contributions in **Cyber Security education**.
- ❖ The **Union Government** has announced to confer the **Prime Minister's Shram Awards 2017** to **40 workers** across country. These awardees have been selected among the workers of Departmental Undertakings & Central and State Government **PSUs** and **Private Sector** companies having **500** or more **workers**.
- ❖ **Catriona Elisa Gray** from the **Philippines** was crowned as the **Miss Universe 2018**, beating **93 contestants** from other countries. She was crowned by **Demi Leigh Nel-Peters** from **South Africa**, the **Miss Universe 2017** title winner.
- ❖ An Indian American film producer **Ashok Amritraj** has been honoured with the **French Knight** of the **National Order of Merit** for his contribution to the world of cinema and **Indo-French film industry**.
- ❖ **Mohammed Rafi Award** instituted by the NGO **Spandan Arts** was bestowed upon late music composer **Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar** and playback singer **Usha Timothy**.  
✓ The Mohammed Rafi Lifetime Achievement Award consisting of **Rs 1 lakh** and a trophy was conferred to Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar. The Mohammed Rafi consisting of **Rs 51,000** and a trophy was conferred to Usha Timothy.
- ❖ PM **Narendra Modi** has announced the setting up of **Sardar Patel Award** for National Integration while addressing the conference of **DGPs/IGPs** in Gujarat's Kevadia.
- ❖ The **Central Government** has launched **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskaar** annual awards to recognise the excellent work done by individuals and institutions in the country in the field of **disaster management**.
- ❖ The **Madhya Pradesh Government** has conferred the annual **Tansen Samman** upon eminent **Sitar Player Manju Mehta** for her contribution in the field of **Hindustani Classical Music**.
- ❖ "**Finding Beauty in Garbage**", a documentary film based on the garbage of Dibrugarh town in **Assam** has bagged the **Best Short documentary film award** in Asia South East International Short Film Festival at Phnom Penh in **Cambodia**.
- ❖ Manipur Chief Minister **N Biren Singh** has been conferred the "**Champions of Change**" award by Vice President **M Venkaiah Naidu** for exemplary leadership in bringing about transformation in governance in the Northeastern state at an event organized at Vigyan Bhavan in **New Delhi**.
- ❖ **Aadi Sai Vijaykaran** created history by winning the **Junior Debate Championship** at the **World Scholar's Cup** held at Yale University, **the USA**.
- ❖ **Swachh Surveksahan 2018 award** for Best Capital City in the **Solid Waste Management** was conferred to Greater **Hyderabad Municipal Corporation** (GHMC).
- ❖ Telangana's MNJ **Institute of Oncology and Regional Cancer Centre** entered **Guinness Book of World Records** 'for organising the largest Men's **Health Awareness programme** on prostate cancer on a **single day**.'
- ❖ **Divya Patidar Joshi** from **Madhya Pradesh** was crowned with the **Mrs. India 2018** title at the Mrs. India My Identity Beauty Pageant 2018 finale held in **New Delhi**.

### PERSON APPOINTED /RESIGNED

- ❖ **Sunil Arora** assumed charge as **23<sup>rd</sup> Chief Election Commissioner** (CEC) of **India**.
- ❖ **Ravindra Kumar Verma** has taken charge as Technical Member in the **Appellate Tribunal for Electricity** (APTEL).
- ❖ The **International Association of Athletics Federations** (IAAF) announced the appointment of **Jon Ridgeon** as its new CEO following approval by the IAAF Council on the first day of its **215<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting** in **Monaco**.
- ❖ **Ajay Narayan Jha**, the current expenditure secretary, in the **Ministry of Finance** has been appointed as the new **finance secretary**, by the Union Government.
- ❖ The **State Bank of India** has roped in Asian Games gold medalist **Swapna Barman** as brand ambassador for its digital app **YONO** (You only need one).
- ❖ Former senior Indian diplomat **Preeti Saran** has been elected to the Asia Pacific seat on the **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (CESCR) of the **UN** for **4 years**.

- ❖ **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** has appointed **Brijendra Pal Singh** as the new chairman and President of **Film and Television Institute of India**.
- ❖ Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) **Rajiv Mehrishi** was elected as **Vice-Chair of United Nations (UN) Panel of Auditors** at its annual meeting held in **New York**.
- ❖ **Dr Krishnamurthy Subramanian** has been appointed the new **Chief Economic Advisor (CEA)** for a period of **three years**.
- ❖ **Arundhati Bhattacharya**, former chairman of **State Bank of India (SBI)** has been appointed as **SWIFT India** Chairman.
- ❖ **The Government** announced that **Atul Sahai** will be appointed as Chairman and Managing Director (**CMD**) of **New India Assurance (NIA)** for a five year period replacing G Srinivasan.
- ❖ Justice **Tarun Agarwala** retired Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court has been **appointed** as the presiding officer in the **Securities Appellate Tribunal, Mumbai**.
- ❖ Reserve Bank Governor **Urjit Patel** resigned from his post.
- ❖ **BCCI** has appointed **W V Raman** as Indian **women's cricket team coach**.
- ❖ **Charles Michel** has resigned from the post of the **Prime Minister of Belgium**.
- ❖ The **Union government** has appointed advocate **Madhavi Goradia Divan** as the **Additional Solicitor General (ASG)** in the government of India.
- ❖ **Ranil Wickremesinghe** has once again become the Prime Minister of **Sri Lanka**.
- ❖ **Ramphal Pawar**, has been appointed the new Director of **National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB)**.
- ❖ **Uday Shankar**, currently chairman of **Star India** and president of **21<sup>st</sup> Century Fox Asia-Pacific** (only Asia), has been elected as vice president of the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** for the year 2018-19.
- ❖ **Harsh Vardhan Shringla**, has been appointed as the new **Ambassador** of India to the **United States (US)**.
- ❖ Renowned Kabaddi Player, **Anup Kumar** announced his **retirement** from Kabaddi ending a 15-year iconic career.
- ❖ **A. K. Dhasmana** will be Director of **Research & Analysis Wing (RAW)** for a period of Next 6 months.
- ❖ **Mohinder Pratap Singh** has been appointed as the next **Ambassador** of India to **Mongolia**.
- ❖ The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** had approved the appointment of **Pranab Kumar Das** as the new Chairman of **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** from **January 1, 2019**.
- ❖ **P.V Bharathi** has been appointed as **managing director** and **chief executive officer** of the **Corporation Bank**. P.V. Bharathi is currently working as the Executive Director in the Canara Bank. She will take charge on or after **1<sup>st</sup> February 2019**, and remain in the post till **March 31, 2020**.
- ❖ **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**, Government of India announced that **Mr. Y.K. Sailas Thangal** who is the ambassador of the India to the **Republic of Cote d' Ivoire** has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Liberia with residence in Abidjan.
  - ✓ **Liberia: Capital:** Monrovia, **Currency:** Liberian dollar (LRD), United States dollar (USD).
- ❖ **Ambika Prasad Panda** has been appointed as Chairman and Managing Director of **South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL)**.
- ❖ **Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd** appointed retired Indian Administrative Service official **Bijay Kumar** as its deputy **Managing Director**.

### OBITUARY

- ❖ Noted agriculturalist **Jayaraman**, who pioneered the protection and propagation of **indigenous paddy** varieties in **Tamilnadu**, passed away.
- ❖ **Maulana Asrar-ul-Haque Qasmi**, noted Islamic scholar and Congress Lok Sabha MP from Bihar's Kishanganj constituency, has passed away.
- ❖ Former national champion swimmer **Arun Kumar Shaw** passed away.
- ❖ Senior Congress leader and former Kerala minister **CN Balakrishnan** passed away.
- ❖ West Bengal Assembly Deputy Speaker **H A Safwi** passed away.
- ❖ Famous classical singer **Pandit Arun Bhaduri** passed away.
- ❖ The world's leading female yoga teacher, **Geeta S. Iyengar** has passed away.
- ❖ **Mrinal Sen**, the legendary filmmaker, has passed away in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- ❖ **Nirendranath Chakraborty**, the famous Bengali poet, has passed away in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- ❖ **Dr. Hamidi Kashmiri**, the tallest literary figure in the world of Urdu language, literature and literary criticism, has passed away in Srinagar, J&K.
- ❖ **Sulagitti Narasamma**, the renowned social worker and Padma Shri awardee, has passed away in Bengaluru.

**BOOKS & AUTHORS**

- ❖ The Chief Justice of India **Ranjan Gogoi** released a book authored by father-son duo **Vinay Thakur** and Amogh Thakur named "**Architecture of Justice: A pictorial walk-through of the supreme court and High courts of India**" in New Delhi.
- ❖ A book named "**Modiraj Main Kisan, Double Aamad Ya Double afat**" authored by Swaraj India President **Yogendra Yadav** launched by agricultural economist Ashok Gulati and the Punjab State Farmers' and Farm Workers' Commission Chairman Ajay Vir Jakhar in New Delhi.
- ❖ The book titled '**Blue Waters Ahoy!**' has been authored by **Vice Admiral Anup Singh**, who retired as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command in 2011.
- ❖ **Vice President** of India **Shri M.Venkaiiah Naidu** released **two books** on the compilation of selected speeches made by the President, **Shri Ram Nath Kovind** in the first year of assuming the office.
  - ✓ The books are titled as, "**The Republican Ethic**" in English and "**Loktantra ke Swar**" in Hindi.
- ❖ The book, '**Of Counsel: The Challenges of the Modi-Jaitley Economy**' written by former chief economic adviser **Arvind Subramanian** was launched in **Mumbai**.
- ❖ The book "**A Rural Manifesto - Realising India's Future through her Villages**" has been authored by BJP MP **Varun Gandhi**.
- ❖ The book titled "**Changing India**" has been author by former Prime Minister **Dr. Manmohan Singh** & is recently released at an event in New Delhi.
- ❖ The book on self-styled **godman Asaram Bapu** released after a Chandigarh court refused to stay its publication. The Book is Authored by **Ushinor Majumdar**.
- ❖ The book titled "**Early Indians: The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From**" has been authored by journalist **Tony Joseph**.
- ❖ The **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has brought out a booklet on **cyber safety for school children** to inform them about different aspects of cyber safety. The booklet, titled '**A Handbook for Students on cyber Safety**', also deals with the problems of cyber bullying, cyber grooming and email fraud.
- ❖ Captain **Amarinder Singh**, Chief Minister of Punjab, released the book '**Prince, Patron and Patriarch Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala**', co-authored by the Maharaja's grandson, Brigadier (Retd) **Jagjit Singh**, and **Cynthia Frederick** in Chandigarh.
  - ✓ **Punjab: Capital:** Chandigarh, **Governor:** V.P. Singh Badnore, **Chief Minister:** Amarinder Singh.

**Days|Week|Year**

- ❖ **1<sup>st</sup> December 2018:- World AIDS day.**
  - ✓ **Theme:-**Know Your Status.
- ❖ **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2018:- The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.**
- ❖ **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2018:- World Computer Literacy Day.**
- ❖ **3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018:- The International Day of Persons with Disabilities.**
  - ✓ **Theme:-** Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.
- ❖ **4<sup>th</sup> December 2018:- 47<sup>th</sup> Indian Navy Day 2018.**
- ❖ **5<sup>th</sup> December 2018:- World Soil Day.**
- ❖ **5<sup>th</sup> December 2018:- International Volunteer Day.**
- ❖ **7<sup>th</sup> December 2018:- Indian Armed Forces Flag Day.**
  - ✓ **Theme:-** Working Together to Ensure No Country is Left Behind.
- ❖ **8<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-Submarine Day.**
- ❖ **9<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Anti-Corruption Day.**
- ❖ **10<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Human Rights Day.**
  - ✓ **Theme :-**Stand up for the human rights.
- ❖ **11<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Mountain Day.**
  - ✓ **Theme :-**#MountainsMatter.
- ❖ **11<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-UNICEF Day 2018.**
- ❖ **12<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Universal Health Coverage Day.**
  - ✓ **Theme :-**Unite for Universal Health Coverage: Now is the Time for Collective Action.
- ❖ **12<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Day of Neutrality.**
- ❖ **14<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-National Energy Conservation Day.**
- ❖ **16<sup>th</sup> December 2018:- 47<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Vijay Diwas.**
- ❖ **18<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-Minorities Rights Day.**
- ❖ **18<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Migrants Day.**
  - ✓ **Theme:-**Migration with Dignity.

- ❖ 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-World Arabic Language Day.
- ❖ 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-International Human Solidarity Day.
- ❖ 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2018:-National Mathematics Day.
- ❖ 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2018:-National Farmers Day.
- ❖ 24<sup>th</sup> December 2018:-National Consumer Day.
- ✓ **Theme:-**Timely Disposal of Consumer Complaints.

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