

Current Affairs

(English)

For

All Upcoming Competitive Exam - 2019



Bank
(SBI/IBPS/RRB),
SSC, Railway, POST,
Insurance, RBI

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- ❖ Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, **Suresh Prabhu**, chaired a meeting of the **Board of Trade (BOT)** at Vigyan Bhawan, **New Delhi**.
 - ✓ On this occasion, Suresh Prabhu launched a new online “**Anytime-Anywhere**” export awareness course to **train, mentor and hand-hold potential exporters** so as to help them to tap international trade opportunities. This Online Course has been funded under the ‘**Niryat Bandhu**’ scheme of DGFT and is in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi.
- ❖ The semi-high-speed **Train 18 or Vande Bharat Express** was flagged off by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on 15th February 2019, from the **New Delhi railway station**.
 - ✓ Vande Bharat Express will travel from **Delhi to Varanasi** in 9 hours and 45 minutes, with stoppage points at Kanpur and Prayagraj.
- ❖ **Union Minister** for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, Environment, Forest and Climate Change, **Dr. Harsh Vardhan**, inaugurated the **North Karnataka Agromet Forecasting and Research Centre (NKAFC)**, India’s first agromet forecast centre, at University of Agricultural Sciences (**UAS**) in **Dharwad, Karnataka**.
 - ✓ **Karnataka: Capital:** Bengaluru, **Chief Minister:** H. D. Kumaraswamy, **Governor:** Vajubhai Vala.
- ❖ Union Minister of Mines, **Narendra Singh Tomar** inaugurated **58th** meetings of **Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB)** held at **Pusa in New Delhi**.
 - ✓ During the season 20 mineral exploration reports worth **Rs.79560 crore** handed over to Odisha, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.
- ❖ **The Union Tourism Ministry** recently made a series of amendments in **India's e-visa regime**, liberalising it further and making it more tourist friendly. The e-tourist Visa, which was introduced in September 2014 with **46 countries** has now been made applicable for **166 countries**.
 - ✓ Duration of e-Visa For a maximum period of **60 days** with double entry for e-Tourist and e-Business Visa.
 - ✓ Duration of stay in India of e-Tourist and e-Business visa is maximum upto **1 year**.
- ❖ The **Expert Committee** led by **Anoop Satpathy**, Fellow of **V. V. Giri National Labour Institute (VVGNI)**, submitted its report on “**Determining the Methodology for Fixation of the National Minimum Wage**” to the Government.
 - ✓ An expert committee has recommended fixing the need-based national minimum wage at **Rs 375 per day or Rs 9,750 per month** as of July 2018.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved the introduction of **Registration of Marriage of Non-Resident Indian Bill, 2019** to create more accountability and offer **protection against the exploitation** of Indian citizens, mostly **Indian women** by their NRI partners.
 - ✓ Under the bill’s provisions, a marriage between an **NRI** and an **Indian citizen** will have to be registered in India or Indian missions and posts abroad within **30 days** from the date of marriage.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi** unveiled projects worth **Rs.33,000 crores** in **Barauni, Bihar**. In a significant boost to development of infrastructure, connectivity, energy security and health care services.
 - ✓ The PM also:
 - laid the foundation stone of **Patna Metro Rail Project** at an estimated cost of **Rs. 13,365 crores**. It will have two corridors - **Danapur to Mithapur** and **Patna Railway Station to New ISBT**.
 - Inaugurated the Phulpur to Patna stretch of the **Jagdishpur-Varanasi Natural Gas pipeline**.
 - Inaugurated the **first phase of River Front Development** at **Patna**.
- ❖ **The Government** has issued a set of guidelines to upgrade the **charging infrastructure** in the country to boost the electric vehicles. The **Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry** has made amendments to the **Model Building Byelaws (MBBL) 2016** and **Urban Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation (URDPFI) Guidelines 2014**, making provisions for establishing **EV charging infrastructure**.
 - ✓ A public **charging station** should be on both sides of the **highways or roads** on **every 25 km**.
 - ✓ The government expects **25 per cent** of the **total vehicles** on roads will be **electric vehicles by 2030**, necessitating to erect robust electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the country.

- ❖ **Asia's largest** early childhood conference – “**Early Ed Asia 2019**” was held in Jaipur, **Rajasthan** with motto ‘**Our Children. Our Future**’. The aim of the conference was to provide a platform for **learning, networking** and sharing the best practices of early **childhood education** in **Asia**.
 - ✓ It was organized by the Early Childhood Association, India and ScooNews.
- ❖ **Regional Maritime-Safety Conference** (RMSS) was organised for the **first** time in India (Mumbai) by the **National Maritime Foundation** (NMF) in coordination with the Ministry of Shipping and the Ministry of External Affairs to **focus on security and trade**.
 - ✓ The volume of maritime traffic within the India-ASEAN sub-region is very dense. **The Straits of Malacca-and-Singapore** alone account for about 90,000 ship movements every year. So, security strengthening could help in boosting trade and maritime connectivity.
- ❖ International Conference on the ‘**Vision Zero**’ and its relevance to **Occupational Safety and Health** (OSH), was held from 18th to 20th, Feb 2019 in Mumbai,.
 - ✓ It is organized by the **Directorate General Factory Advice and Labour Institutes** (DGFASLI), the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (**IIT Bombay**) together with the **German Social Accident Insurance** (DGUV).
 - ✓ Vision Zero’ is based on the belief that all **accidents, diseases and harm at work** are preventable by promoting the three core values of safety, health and wellbeing.
- ❖ The Union Minister for Textiles, **Smriti Zubin Irani** laid the foundation stone of a **Hastshilp Complex** at a cost of **Rs.113.56 crores** in **New Delhi**. The complex would be named **Deendayal Upadhyaya as Deen Dayal Antarashtriya Hastshilp Bhawan** and awardee artisans will be allocated space for marketing their products, on rotation basis, and preference will be given to **Divyang artisans**.
 - ✓ The Hastshilp Bhawan will house **23 shops** meant for artisans, one showroom for artisans from **SAARC countries**, one kiosk, five galleries and one conventional hall.
 - ✓ **SAARC: Founded:** 8 December 1985, **Headquarter:** Kathmandu, **Secretary-General:** Amjad Hussain B. Sial.
- ❖ **National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre** (NDDTC) of the **All India Institute of Medical Sciences** (AIIMS), New Delhi submitted its Report “**Magnitude of Substance Use in India**”, conducted the survey and compiled national and state level estimates of people involved in drug abuse.
 - ✓ About 14.6% of people in the age group 10-75 year i.e. about 16 Crore people consume alcohol.
 - ✓ The prevalence of alcohol consumption is 17 times higher among men than women.
- ❖ Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** and Minister for Women and Child Development **Maneka Gandhi** launched a range of **citizen safety initiatives** in **New Delhi**.
 - ✓ The initiatives include **Emergency Response Support System, Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences** (ITSSO) and **Safe City Implementation Monitoring Portal**.
 - ✓ Rajnath Singh launches **pan-India number 112** for women safety, Under this system, all the states have to set up a dedicated **Emergency Response Centre** (ERC) under The **Emergency Response Support System** (ERSS).
 - ✓ The ERCs are connected to **District Command Centres** and the **Emergency Response Vehicles**, and **assistance to victims** is facilitated through them. An amount of over **321 crore rupees** has been provided for this initiative through the **Nirbhaya fund**.
 - ✓ NOTE: **Himachal Pradesh First State** to Launch Single Emergency Number '112'.
 - **Nagaland** became the **first state** in the **Northeast** and **second in the country**, after Himachal Pradesh
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** gave its approval to the **National Policy on Electronics 2019** (NPE 2019), proposed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (**MeitY**).
 - ✓ The Policy envisions positioning India as a global hub for **Electronics System Design and Manufacturing - (ESDM)** by encouraging research and innovation in all sub-sectors of electronics, including early-stage startups in emerging technology areas such as 5G, IoT/ Sensors, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Virtual Reality (VR), Drones, Robotics, Additive Manufacturing, Photonics, Nano-based devices, etc.
 - ✓ The **NPE 2019 aims** to achieve a turnover of **\$400 Bn by 2025** in Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM). This will include **targeted production of 1 Bn** (100 Cr.) mobile handsets **by 2025**, valued at \$190 Bn.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved the Implementation of an externally aided project namely “**National Rural Economic Transformation Project** (NRETP) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (**DAY-NRLM**) through loan assistance (IBRD Credit) from **World Bank**.
 - ✓ Innovative projects will be undertaken under NRETP to pilot alternate channels of **financial inclusion**, creating value chains around rural products, introduce **innovative models** in livelihoods promotion and **access to finance** and scale-up initiatives on **digital finance** and **livelihoods interventions**.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved **Phase-II** of **Grid Connected Rooftop Solar Programme** for achieving a cumulative capacity of **40,000 MW** from **Rooftop Solar Projects** by the year 2022 with total central financial support of **Rs 11,814 crore**.
 - ✓ The Phase II programme provides for **central financial assistance** (for residential rooftop solar installations) up to **40%** for rooftop systems up to **3kW** and **20%** for those with a capacity of **3-10kW**.
 - ✓ NOTE:- **FARMER SECURITY:**

- In a separate decision, the Cabinet approved the launch of the **Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan** aimed at providing financial to set up solar panels in their unused or fallow land and water security to farmers.
- “The scheme aims to add a solar capacity of **25,750 MW by 2022**,” the government said. “The total central financial support provided under the scheme would be **Rs.34,422 crore**.”
- ❖ The **Union Minister of Commerce & Industry** has launched an initiative termed **SWAYATT**.
 - ✓ **SWAYATT** is an initiative to promote **Start-ups, Women and Youth** through e-Transactions on **Government e Marketplace (GeM)**.
 - ✓ GeM is an Online Market platform was setup in 2016 to facilitate procurement of goods and services by the government ministries, departments, public sector undertakings (PSU) etc. It has been envisaged as National Procurement Portal of India.
- ❖ The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** has given the approval to continue the existing schemes of MPDA, Khadi Grant, ISEC and Village Industry Grant, all subsumed under '**Khadi Vikas Yojana**' and '**Gramodyog Vikas Yojana**' at the total cost of **Rs 2,800 crore** for the period **2017-18 to 2019-20**.
 - Khadi Vikas Yojana includes Market Promotion & Development Assistance (MPDA), Interest Subsidy Eligibility Certificate (ISEC), Workshed, Strengthening Weak Infra, Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana, Khadi Grant.
 - Gramodyog Vikas Yojana [Village Industries Grant].
- ✓ To bring in a new component of '**Rozgar Yukt Gaon**' to introduce enterprise-based operation in the **Khadi sector** and to create employment opportunities.
 - **Rozgar Yukt Gaon (RYG)** aims at introducing an 'Enterprise-led Business Model' in place of 'Subsidy-led model' through a partnership among 3 stakeholders- KRDP-assisted Khadi Institution, Artisans and Business Partner.
- ❖ The President of India, **Shri Ram Nath Kovind**, inaugurated the **International Conference and Exhibition on Energy and Environment: Challenges and Opportunities (ENCO 2019)** in **New Delhi**. This Conference is being organised by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (**CSIR**).
 - ✓ **CSIR: Established:** 26 September 1942, **Headquarter:** New Delhi, **Head:** Ashutosh Sharma.
- ❖ Union Science & Technology Minister, **Dr. Harsh Vardhan**, inaugurated the 2-day long **One Health India Conference 2019** in **New Delhi**.
 - ✓ The main objective of the conference was to formulate a roadmap for the response, preparedness, and management of current regional, national and global health challenges using a One Health collaborative approach.
- ❖ The **Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)** has launched **Operation Digital Board (ODB)** to leverage technology in order to **boost quality education** in the country.
 - ✓ ODB aims to have digital and interactive boards in **every classroom**, which **converting a classroom into a digital classroom**.
 - ✓ Help in provisioning of personalised adaptive learning as well as Intelligent Tutoring by exploiting emerging technologies like Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence & Data Analytics.
 - ✓ Also stated that the launching of **e-Pathshala, DIKSHA, NROER, NPTEL, e-pgpathshala, SWAYAM and SWAYAM-Prabha DTH Channels** etc.
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** has approved the implementation of **Phase-2** of the **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)**, under which the government has set a target of constructing **1.95 crore houses by 2022**.
 - ✓ The **PMAY-G** in Phase-2 till **2019-20** will continue as per the existing norms of **PMAY-G Phase-I**, with a target of 60 lakh houses involving financial implication of **Rs 76,500 crore** shared between **Centre and States**.
 - ✓ **Launched in 2016**, PMAY-G aims to fill the gaps in rural housing programme by providing a pucca house, with basic amenities, to all homeless householders and those households living in kutcha and dilapidated house, by 2022.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- ❖ **India and the European Union** has made a decision to mutually invest up to **40 Million Euros** on **7 Research and Innovation projects** to tackle and handle immediate water challenges in the country.
 - ✓ The EU is funding this call under its programme for research and innovation '**Horizon 2020**'.
 - Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of research funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020).
- ❖ **India and the United States** conducted the **India-US CEO Forum and India-US Commercial Dialogue** in **New Delhi**. The meeting was chaired by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, **Shri Suresh Prabhu**.
- ❖ Union Minister of Defence, **Nirmala Sitharaman** signed a Security Protection agreement between **India and Sweden** which will enable both the countries to share classified information each other.
 - ✓ The agreement will boost '**Make in India**' initiative by the Government of India.
 - ✓ **Sweden: Capital:** Stockholm, **Currency:** Krona.
- ❖ President of the United States **Donald Trump** declared a **National Emergency Concerning the Southern Border of the United States**.

- ✓ President Donald Trump, citing an "invasion" of drugs and criminals, declared a national emergency to fund construction of a border wall along **US-Mexico Border**.
- ❖ **India** has withdrawn '**Most Favoured Nation**' to **Pakistan** just a day after the terror attack in **Pulwama, Jammu & Kashmr** in which 40 Central Reserve Police Force (**CRPF**) personal lost their lives.
 - ✓ MFN is a status or level of treatment accorded by one state to another in international trade to ensure non-discriminatory trade between all partner countries of the WTO.
 - ✓ **CRPF Governing Body**: Union Home Minister, **Formed**: 27 July 1939. **Director General**: Rajiv Rai.
 - ✓ **WTO: Founded**: 1 January 1995, **Headquarter**: Geneva, Switzerland, **Director-General**: Roberto Azevedo.
- ❖ A High-level delegation, led by **NITI Aayog CEO, Amitabh Kant** visited **Saudi Arabia** from 16th to 17th February 2019. The delegation comprised of leading Indian CEOs took part in extensive discussions with the **Saudi Centre for International Strategic Partnerships (SCISP)** and with Ministerial level representations from **12 Saudi Ministries** in **Riyadh**.
 - ✓ SCISP held wide ranging discussions on the possible opportunities of joint cooperation and collaboration across sectors like energy, food processing, pharmaceuticals, infrastructure, mining, ICT, tourism, defence etc.
 - ✓ **Six working groups** have identified **40 investment**, trade and business opportunities with vast potential for expansion.
- ❖ **World Health Organization** says the number of **Measles cases** reported in 2018 is nearly **double** the infections contracted in the previous year.
 - ✓ Measles is a viral infection caused by rubeola virus. It is a highly infectious disease but easily preventable by vaccination.
 - ✓ **WHO: Founded**: 7 April 1948, **Headquarter**: Geneva, Switzerland, **Head**: Tedros Adhanom.
- ❖ **New York**-based investment bank **JP Morgan Chase** is launching the **first**-ever major **cryptocurrency** backed by a U.S. bank. The digital token, dubbed "**JPM Coin**," will be used to "**instantly settle payments between clients**,"
 - ✓ The currency is designed to be decentralized so that no one has control over transactions being sent over the network.
- ❖ The **55th Munich Security Conference (MSC)** concluded in **Germany**. MSC is an annual conference on the **international security policy** that takes place in Munich, Germany since 1963.
 - ✓ MSC is an independent venue for policymakers and experts for open and constructive discussions about the most pressing security issues of the day and of the future.
 - ✓ **Germany: Capital**: Berlin, **Currency**: Euro, **Chancellor**: Angela Merkel.
- ❖ The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** has recently released **World Employment and Social Outlook Trends (WESO) 2019 report**. As per the report, **unemployment rates** will fall to **4.9%** in 2019 and remains steady in 2020.
- ❖ **China** is planning to build its **1st space-based solar power station** in the western Chinese city **Chongqing**.
 - ✓ Initially, they plan to develop a smaller power station in the **stratosphere between 2021 and 2025**, a 1 megawatt-level solar facility in space by 2030.
 - ✓ **China: Capital**: Beijing, **Currency**: Renminbi.
- ❖ **India and Morocco** signed **four MoUs** following the delegation-level talks between External Affairs Minister **Sushma Swaraj** and her Moroccan counterpart **Nasser Bourita** in Rabat.
 - ✓ The agreements include setting up of joint working group on counter terrorism, cooperation in housing and human settlement, reciprocal facilitation of procedures for issue of business visa and cooperation in youth matters.
- ❖ The **World Bank, UN Women** (a United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and empowerment of women), and **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** have come together to launch a **five-year tenor 'women's livelihood bond'**.
 - ✓ The proceeds from these social impact bonds will be used to help rural women in the country's poorest States to set up or scale up their own enterprises. WLB's will be unsecured and unlisted.
 - **Unlisted Securities**: Unlisted Securities are shares, debentures or any other securities that are not traded on a stock exchange but through the **over-the-counter (OTC)** market.
 - **Unsecured Bonds**: Unsecured bonds, also called debentures, are not backed by any collateral, or mortgages on real estate. Instead, the issuer promises that they will be repaid. This promise is frequently called "full faith and credit."
 - ✓ **SIDBI has also** put together its own **Rs.1,000 crore** social-impact fund '**Prayaas**' for providing funding support to **women entrepreneurs**.
 - The proposed bond will enable individual women entrepreneurs in sectors like food processing, agriculture, services, and small units to borrow around **Rs 50,000 to Rs 3 lakh** at an annual interest rate of around 13%-14% or less.
 - ✓ **NOTE:- A social impact bond (SIB)** is a contract with the public sector or governing authority, whereby it pays for better social outcomes in certain areas and passes on the part of the savings achieved to investors.

- ❖ The **4th India-ASEAN Expo** and Summit will be held on 21-23 February, 2019 in **New Delhi**.
 - ✓ It is organised by the Department of Commerce in collaboration with industry body Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).
- ❖ The **Union Cabinet** approved the Agreement between **India** and the **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** for participating in the **Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA)**, which will be conducted **by the OECD in 2021**.
- ❖ **Sri Lanka's 150 students** from all **25 districts** were awarded the prestigious **Mahatma Gandhi scholarships for study** in India.
 - ✓ Sri Lankan Education Minister Akila Viraj Kariyawasam and Indian High Commissioner Taranjit Singh Sandhu gave the scholarships at a special ceremony in Colombo.
- ❖ **India and Argentina** signed **10 MoUs** and Agreements during the ongoing three-day visit of the Argentine President **Mauricio Macri**. The MoU for Co-Operation in **Nuclear Energy**.
 - The MoU signed was signed between the **Department of Atomic Energy, India** and **National Atomic Energy Commission, Argentina**.
 - ✓ Other MOU are defence cooperation, Tourism, Broadcasting content, pharmaceuticals, Antarctic Co-operation etc.
 - ✓ Also Argentina has signed an agreement the Framework Agreement of the **International Solar Alliance**.
 - Argentina is the **72nd country** to sign the Framework Agreement of the **International Solar Alliance**.
 - ✓ **Argentina: Capital:** Buenos Aires, **Currency:** Argentine peso.
- ❖ The Iranian President **Hassan Rouhani** has unveiled a “**state-of-the-art**” domestically produced ‘**FATEH SUBMARINE**’ capable of firing cruise missiles. The launch has gained significance due to the skewed relations with the USA.
 - ✓ **Iran: Capital:** Tehran, **Currency:** Iranian rial Trending.
- ❖ Crown Prince of **Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman** visited **India**. This was the **first** state visit by the crown prince in India. **Saudi Arabia** is the **73rd country** to sign the Framework Agreement of the **International Solar Alliance**.
 - ✓ A number of memorandum of understandings (MoUs) were signed during the visit on investing in the **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund of India**, cooperation programme between Invest India and Saudi Arabia General Investment Authority (**SAGIA**). Other MoUs include tourism, housing, exchange of Audio-Visual Programmes.
 - ✓ **Saudi Arabia: Capital:** Riyadh, **Currency:** Saudi riyal.
- ❖ The **8th World Corporate Social Responsibility Congress** (World CSR Congress 2019) is one of the admired meetings was held between Feb 17 and Feb 18, 2019 in **Mumbai**, which promote Entrepreneurship, Social Responsibility, Sustainability and Social Development.
 - ✓ The theme of the year 2019 is ‘**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**’ to focus on corporate strategies, innovation, and strategic alliances.
 - ✓ CEO of **Innovative Financial Advisors Pvt Ltd**, Social Entrepreneur **Dr.Soumitro Chakraborty** was awarded ‘**CEO of the year**’ at the 8th World CSR Congress.

STATES HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ **The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh** and the **World Bank** signed here today a **\$40 Million** Loan Agreement to help bring **clean and reliable drinking water** to the citizens of the **Greater Shimla**.
 - ✓ **Himachal Pradesh: Chief minister:** Jai Ram Thakur, **Governor:** Acharya Dev Vrat.
- ❖ State Water Resources minister **Niranjan Pujari** and Union Water Resources & Ganga Rejuvenation Secretary **U.P. Singh** inaugurated the **5th International Dam Safety Conference 2019** in Bhubaneshwar, **Odisha**.
- ❖ The **Jammu and Kashmir** Governor, **Satya Pal Malik** granted the **Divisional Status** to **Ladakh Region**, while exercising its powers under Section 5 of Land Revenue Act, 1996. The Ladakh division will comprise Leh and Kargil districts with its headquarters at Leh. Till now, the **Ladakh region** formed a part of the **Kashmir Division** of Jammu & Kashmir.
- ❖ **Shri K.J. Alphons**, Union Minister for Tourism inaugurated the project ‘**Development of Eco Circuit: Pathanamthitta-Gavi-Vagamon-Thekkady**’ in Kerala, under the **Swadesh Darshan scheme** of Ministry of Tourism.
 - ✓ The Eco Circuit project was sanctioned in December 2015 at the cost of **Rs. 76.55 crores**.
 - ✓ **Kerala: Capital:** Thiruvananthapuram, **Chief Minister:** Pinarayi Vijayan **Governor:** P. Sathasivam.
- ❖ **Ghumot**, Goa’s indigenous **traditional percussion instrument** made from an earthen vessel, will be notified as a **heritage musical instrument of Goa**.
- ❖ **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** based international cooling provider, **National Central Cooling Company PJSC** (Tabreed) entered into a 30-year concession with **Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority** (APCRDA) to build **India’s first district cooling system** in **Amaravati, Hyderabad**.
 - ✓ The first district cooling was set up in India at **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT)**.

- ✓ **District cooling means** the centralized production and distribution of cooling energy, Chilled water is delivered via an underground insulated pipeline to office, industrial and residential buildings to cool the indoor air of the buildings within a district.
- ❖ **Andhra Pradesh** Chief Minister **N Chandrababu Naidu** announced **Rs 9000** each to the farmers having land less than **5 acres**. under **Annadata Sukhibhava scheme 2019**.
 - ✓ This will be in addition to the **Rs 6,000** announced by the Central government under **PM KISAN YOJANA**.
 - ✓ Effectively, each farmer will get **Rs 15,000 per annum**.
- ❖ **Himachal Pradesh** Assembly passed **Official Language (Amendment) Bill 2019** to make **Sanskrit** as the **second official language** of the state. The first official language of Himachal is Hindi.
- ❖ The **40th** edition of **International Annual Desert Festival 2019** has started in **Jaisalmer, Rajasthan**.
 - ✓ It will have interesting events like Mr Desert and Ms Moomal competitions, moustache competitions, turban tying, tug of war, musical and cultural performances, among others.
- ❖ Union Minister of Textiles, **Smriti Zubin Irani**, launched **four projects in North East** for the development of **silk sector** through video conference in **New Delhi**.
 - ✓ **Four projects: Muga silk** seed production centre in **Tura, Meghalaya**, **silk printing and processing unit** in **Agartala, Tripura**, **Eri spun silk mill** in **Sangaipat, Imphal** and development of **sericulture** in **Mamit, Mizoram**.
- ❖ The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** released **2nd edition** of **Startup Ranking for 2019**. The Ranking Framework 2019 comprises of 7 pillars and 30 action points.
 - ✓ The ranking exercise aims to evaluate measures taken by states and union territories during the assessment period from **May 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019**.
- ❖ The Prime Minister, **Shri Narendra Modi** unveiled development projects worth **Rs. 3350** crores for **Varanasi**.
 - ✓ These projects pertain to various sectors of Health, Sanitation, Smart City, Connectivity, Power, Housing and others.
 - ✓ He also released **commemorative postage stamp** on completion of **100 Years of IIT BHU**.
- ❖ **Union Minister** of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, **Radha Mohan Singh**, inaugurated the **4th Agri Leadership Summit 2019** at the **India International Horticulture Market (IIHM)** in Ganaur, Sonipat district, Haryana.
 - ✓ The theme of the summit was "**Entrepreneurship & Agri Business; Agri Allied-A Promising Sector and Agri Service- Direct Marketing**".
 - ✓ He also presented the **Haryana Kisaan Ratna Puraskar** and the **Haryana Krishi Ratna Puraskar**.
 - ✓ **Haryana: Capital:** Chandigarh, **Chief Minister:** Manohar Lal, **Governor:** Satyadeo Narain Arya.
- ❖ Union Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** inaugurated India's **first hi-tech forensic lab NCFL** and the Delhi Police's cybercrime unit '**The Cyber Protection Awareness and Detection Centre**' (CyPAD) in **Dwarka, New Delhi**.
 - ✓ The CyPAD is a modern, comprehensive facility that aims to provide cyber investigation, cyber forensics, cyber safety and security-related services to the citizens as well as to police units and agencies of Delhi.
 - ✓ NFCL has been set up under **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (ICCCC)**.
- ❖ The **79th Indian History Congress (IHC)** will be held at Barkatullah University in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh** from **February 26**. Earlier the 79th Indian History Congress was supposed to be held at **Pune** but was cancelled citing financial constraints to host the congress.
- ❖ The **Attukal Pongala** held in Attukal Temple, Thiruvananthapuram, **Kerala** is the largest congregation of women for a festival in the world.
 - ✓ Pongala, which means '**to boil over**', is the ritual in which women prepare sweet payasam (a pudding made from rice, jaggery, coconut and plantains cooked together) and offer it to the Goddess or 'Bhagavathy'.
 - ✓ The Attukal Pongala entered the **Guinness Book of Records** as **the largest gathering of women in 2009**.
- ❖ The **India Medical Device 2019** and **India Pharma 2019- 4th** edition of International Conference took place in Bengaluru, **Karnataka**. It was inaugurated by **Shri D. V. Sadananda Gowda**, Minister of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Statistics and Programme Implementation.
 - ✓ In this direction, Cabinet has given approval for **100 % FDI under automatic route** for manufacturing of medical devices". To Encourage 'Make in India'- for manufacturing of Drugs and Pharmaceutical Machines.
 - ✓ The theme for India Pharma 2019- '**Enabling Quality Affordable Healthcare**' and that of India Medical Device 2019 - '**Med-Tech India: Gearing up for Ayushman Bharat**'.
 - ✓ **Karnataka: Capital:** Bengaluru, **CM:** H.D. Kumaraswamy, **Governor:** Vajubhai Vala.
- ❖ **Union Minister** of State for Food Processing Industries **Sadhvi Niranjani Jyoti** inaugurated **Sikaria Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd** at Village Tulakona in **Agartala**. This is the **first Mega Food Park** in the state of **Tripura**.
 - ✓ The Mega Food Park has been set up in 50 acre of land at the cost of Rs. 87.45 crore.
- ❖ Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** flagged off the **first ever diesel-to-electric converted locomotive** at the Diesel Locomotive Works (**DLW**) at **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**.

ECONOMY AWARENESS

- ❖ **Amazon** in partnership with **Axis Bank** launched '**Amazon Pay Unified Payment Interface (UPI)**' to facilitate secure payments and **financial transactions** on its platform.
 - ✓ Transactions held on Amazon is secured through mobile verification as well as with UPI pin. It will help Amazon customers in adopting BHIM UPI as a digital payment method, there by helping the Indian government's Initiative of '**Cashless India**'.
 - ✓ **Axis Bank: Headquarter:** Mumbai, **CEO:** Amitabh Chaudhry, **Tagline:** Badhti Ka naam Zindagi.
- ❖ **Indiamoneyinsurance.com**, a subsidiary of the **Indiamoney.com Group** has acquired a broking license from **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA)** of India's to enter **Insurance Business**.
 - ✓ **Headquarters:** Hyderabad, **Chairperson:** Subhash Chandra Khuntia.
- ❖ The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has withdrawn the earlier order which stipulated a **20% limit** on **investments** by FPIs in **Corporate Bonds**. As part of the review of the FPI investment in corporate debt undertaken in April 2018.
- ❖ **The Government's** disinvestment proceeds have touched **Rs 53,558 crore** so far in the current fiscal, as against the full year budget target of **Rs 80,000 crore**.
 - ✓ As much as Rs 10,000 crore came in from **Bharat-22 ETF** and, another Rs 5,379 crore from the sale of **Specified Undertaking of Unit Trust of India (SUUTI)** stake in **Axis Bank**.
 - ✓ The government has fixed disinvestment target of **Rs 80,000 crore** for the **2018-19** ending March. **For 2019-20**, the target has been set at **Rs 90,000 crore**. **ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund AMC** will manage the fund.
- ❖ **The Reserve Bank of India** has announced that it will transfer an interim surplus of **28,000 crore rupees** to the **Central Government** for the half-year ended **31st December 2018**.
 - ✓ It is the 2nd successive year that RBI has transferred an interim surplus to the Government. In FY 2017 – 18, RBI handed out an interim dividend of Rs 10,000 crore in March 2018 and in August 2018, it transferred Rs 40,000 crore taking the total dividend pay-out to Rs 50,000 crore.
- ❖ A new micro insurance plan '**Micro Bachat**' was launched by the **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)** of India.
 - ✓ It provides both protection and savings and is a regular premium, non-linked, participating endowment micro insurance plan. This plan is available for standard healthy lives only in the age group of 18-55 years.
- ❖ The **Finance Ministry** announced a **Rs 48,239 crore** capital infusion in **12 public sector banks** to help them meet regulatory capital requirements and make growth capital available for the stronger lenders.
 - ✓ With this tranche, the government has now infused Rs 1,00,958 crore of the Rs 1.06-lakh crore bank capitalisation programme for this financial year. Funds to be infused are as follows:
 - ✓ Table: Capital allocation by Government to PSU Banks (**in crores**)

Non PCA Banks		PCA Banks	
Banks	FY18	Banks	FY18
Punjab National Bank	5,908	UCO Bank	3,330
Union Bank of India	4,112	Central Bank of India	2,560
Syndicate Bank	1,603	Indian Overseas Bank	3,806
Andhra Bank	3,256	United Bank of India	2,839
Bank of Maharashtra	205	Corporation Bank	6,896
Bank of India	4,638	Allahabad Bank	9,086
Total	19,722	Total	28,517

- ❖ **The Union Cabinet** chaired by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has approved the **Promulgation of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019**.
 - ✓ The proposed Ordinance will immediately tackle the menace of **illicit deposit-taking activities** in the country launched by rapacious operators, which at present are exploiting regulatory gaps and lack of strict administrative measures to dupe poor and gullible people of their hard-earned savings.
 - ✓ Example: **A Ponzi scheme** is a fraudulent investing scam promising high rates of return with little risk to investors. The Ponzi scheme generates returns for older investors by acquiring new investors.

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

- ❖ **India** with immediate effect has boosted the **Customs Duty** on all the goods imported from Pakistan to **200%** followed by the day after **India repealed Most Famous Nation (MFN)** status from **Pakistan**.
- ❖ **All Indian Cine Workers Association (AICWA)** has announced a **blanket ban on Pakistani actors and artists working** in the Indian film industry.
- ❖ **The Government** Relaxes **Angel Tax Norms For Start-ups From 7 Years To 10 Years** to provide **relief to and boost investments into start-ups in India**.
 - ✓ It will also recognize an entity as a start-up if its turnover for any of the financial years since its incorporation or registration does not exceed **Rs 100 crore** unlike the previous amount of **Rs 25 crore**.

DEFENCE & SECURITY

- ❖ A mega exercise, **EXERCISE VAYU SHAKTI-2019** involving **140 fighter jets** and attack helicopters, in a firepower demonstration was held close to the **border with Pakistan at Pokhran in Rajasthan**.
- ❖ Flight Lieutenant **Hina Jaiswal** broke the glass ceiling and became the **first woman** flight engineer of IAF which was till now an exclusive man's club.
- ❖ The **Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)** has received clearance from the Indian Army and the Ministry of Defence for production of **114 'Dhanush'** long-range artillery guns.
 - ✓ Dhanush Long Range Artillery Guns are equipped with inertial navigation-based sighting system, auto-laying facility, onboard ballistic computation and an advanced day and night direct firing system.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- ❖ **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** launched a new portal **Least Available Depth Information System (LADIS)** for real time data on ship and **cargo owners of National Waterways**.
- ❖ The researchers from the **French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)** have developed the first ant-like walking robot '**AntBot**' that can explore its **environment** and find its way **home without Global Positioning System (GPS)**. The scientists took inspiration from desert ants, which are extraordinary solitary navigators, to design the AntBot.
- ❖ **Infosys**, the country's **2nd largest IT firm** has launched a next generation digital platform '**InfyTQ**' to facilitate engineering students with best **learning experiences** by imparting technical and professional skills.
 - ✓ InfyTQ is a free platform available on both mobile and desktop, featured with always-on, anytime, anywhere learning catered through a continuous transfer of digital skills.
- ❖ Union Minister for Law and Justice and IT **Ravi Shankar Prasad** launching Digital India is designed to empower common man through technology **Mobile Application and Dashboard and Nyaya Bandhu in New Delhi**.
 - ✓ Mobile Application will facilitate **pre-registration of case**. The Tele Law Dashboard is an online platform to connect beneficiary with the panel lawyer through video conference, telephone and chat.
 - ✓ Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono) Mobile Application will facilitate registration of a lawyer volunteering to provide pro bono legal services.
- ❖ Union Culture Minister **Mahesh Sharma** inaugurated India's very first '**Fulldome 3D Digital Theatre**' at the Science City in **Kolkata, West Bengal**.
- ❖ **Israel** is to launch its **first moon mission** this week, sending an unmanned spacecraft to collect data to be shared with NASA.
 - ✓ According to a report, the spacecraft Name **BERESHEET (Genesis)** is to lift off atop a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

SPORTS

- ❖ **Prajnesh Gunneswaran** has made it to the **top-100 of Men's Singles Tennis rankings** with a jump of six places that took him to 97. With this, Gunneswaran has become the **third Indian** player to break into the top-100 barrier in the past decade after **Somdev Devvarman and Yuki Bhambri**.
- ❖ West Indian batsman **Chris Gayle** has announced that he will **retire** from **One-day Internationals** after the forthcoming World Cup.
- ❖ Belgium's **Elise Mertens** claimed the biggest win of her career after beating world number **three Simona Halep** to clinch **the Qatar Open**.
- ❖ The **Punjab Cricket Association (PCA)** has **removed photographs of Pakistani cricketers** from various points inside the **Mohali stadium** to show solidarity with the families of martyrs of Pulwama terror attack.
- ❖ **Vidarbha** became the only **3rd team** in Indian Domestic Cricket history after Bombay and Karnataka to defend their **Irani cup titles** at Jamtha Stadium in **Nagpur** by defeating rest of India.
- ❖ **Saina Nehwal** won her **4th title** at the Yonex-Sunrise **83rd Senior Nationals**. She defeated **P.V.Sindhu** in the finals in **Guwahati**. **Sourabh Verma** completed a hat-trick of titles, claiming the men's singles crown after defeating young Lakshya Sen in straight games.
- ❖ **Sunil Chhetri**, was awarded **India's first-ever "Football Ratna"** by Football Delhipresident Shaji Prabhakaran, former player and administrator at the **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** and FIFA (**Federation Internationale de Football Association**).
- ❖ Malaysian squash queen world champion, **Nicol David**, announced that she will be **retiring** at the end of the 2018-19 **Professional Squash Association (PSA)** season in **June 2019**.
- ❖ The **Laureus World Sports Awards 2019** were presented to honour the greatest sporting achievements of 2018 and celebrate the power of sport to change the world.

- Sportsman of the Year : Novak Djokovic, (Serbia) Tennis.
- Sportswoman of the Year : Simone Biles (USA) Gymnastics.
- Sports person of the Year With A Disability : Henrieta Farkkasova (Slovakia) Skiing.
- Team of the Year : France World Cup Team (France) Football.
- Sport For Good Award : Yuwa (India).

AWARDS & HONOURS

- ❖ The President of India has presented the **Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony**. The Award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or gender.
 - ✓ The award was given to **Shri Rajkumar Singhajit Singh** (scholar of Manipuri dance), **Chhayanaut** (a cultural organization of Bangladesh) and **Shri Ram Sutar Vanji** (a renowned sculptor) for the years 2014, 2015 & 2016 respectively.
 - ✓ The **Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony** was instituted by the Government of India from 2012 recognizing the contributions made by Rabindranath Tagore to humanity at large with his works and ideas, as part of the Commemoration of his 150th Birth Anniversary in 2012, for promoting values of Cultural Harmony.
- ❖ The **Raigarh Municipal Corporation of Chhattisgarh** has won the “**Swachhata Excellence awards 2019**”. The municipal corporations of **Ambikapur of Chhattisgarh** and **Kumbakonam of Tamil Nadu** have bagged the 2nd and 3rd prizes respectively. All of these are AMRUT cities.
- ❖ Sudanese refugee, **Abdul Aziz Muhamat**, who spent 5 years in the Australian detention centre on Manus Island in **Papua New Guinea**, was given the **Martin Ennals Award 2019** in **Geneva, Switzerland**, for exposing “**the very cruel asylum seeker policy of the Australian Government**”.
- ❖ Mallakhamb coach, **Uday Deshpande** and batswoman, **Smriti Mandhana**, were awarded the **Maharashtra State Government’s Shiv Chhatrapati Award** by the State’s Governor C. Vidyasagar Rao at an event held at the Gateway of India, Mumbai.
- ❖ Lieutenant General **Depinder Singh Ahuja**, awardee of the **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal**, has taken charge as the new Chief of Staff at the headquarters of the Southern Command in **Pune, Maharashtra**.
- ❖ The **7th National Photography Awards** were presented by Union Minister of State (IC) for Information & Broadcasting **Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore**. It was organised at **National Media Centre in New Delhi**.
 - ✓ The theme for the Professional category was “Women-led Development” and theme for Amateur category was “Fairs and Festivals of India”. A total of 13 awards were presented during the ceremony.
 - ✓ The winner’s list is enlisted below:
 - Lifetime Achievement Award : Shri Ashok Dilwali.
 - Professional Photographer of the Year : Shri SL Shanth Kumar.
 - Amateur Photographer of the Year : Shri Gurdeep Dhiman.
 - Special Mention Awards (Professional): Shri Arun Sreedhar, Shri P.V. Sunderrao, Shri Kailash Mittal, Shri Mihir Singh, Ms Ranita Roy.
 - Special Mention Awards (Amateur) : Shri V. Ravi Kumar, Ms. S. Neelima, Shri Manish Jaisi, Shri Mahesh Balasaheb Lonkar, Shri Avijit Datta.

PERSON APPOINTED /RESIGNED

- ❖ The **United Nations** has appointed Indian official **Chandramouli Ramanathan** to one of the topmost positions in the **Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC)**.
- ❖ The **Ministry of Civil Aviation** with the approval of Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (**ACC**) re-appointed **Dr. B. P. Sharma** as the new Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of the state-run helicopter manufacturer **Power Hans**.
- ❖ **Dr G C Anupama** has been elected president of the **Astronomical Society of India (ASI)**.
- ❖ Indian-origin global negotiator, **Professor Faizel Ismail**, was appointed as the **director of South Africa’s Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance**.
- ❖ German sports and lifestyle brand **PUMA** has appointed the 6 time world champion woman **M C Mary Kom** as its new **brand ambassador**.
- ❖ **Anirban Mukherjee**, presently the co-chief executive of **Reliance Payments** has been appointed as the **CEO of PayU India**.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- ❖ The book titled ‘**Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India**’ has been authored by former finance minister **P Chidambaram**, which was recently released by former vice president **Hamid Ansari**.
- ❖ The banned Punjabi poem ‘**Khooni Vaisakhi**’ on the **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre** which was written by Punjabi writer **Nanak Singh** in 1919, will be published next month by Harper Collins in **English**.

- ❖ 'Simplicity & Wisdom' written by Dinesh Shahra was launched at Parmarth Ashram in Kumbh Mela. Launched by the Governor of West Bengal- Keshari Nath Tripathi and Swami.

OBITUARY

- ❖ Eminent writer and former Deputy Speaker of Goa Legislative Assembly, **Vishnu Wagh** passed away.
- ❖ Noted Hindi writer **Namvar Singh** passed away in New Delhi.
- ❖ Scientist **Wallace Smith Broecker** who popularized the term "global warming" passed away.

Days|Week|Year

- ❖ 20th February 2019:- **World Day of Social Justice**.
✓ Theme:- 'If you want Peace and Development, Work for Social Justice'.
- ❖ 21st February 2019:- **International Mother Language Day**.

Preparation of All Upcoming Govt. Exam in - 2019

Expected Vacancy - 1,00,000+

IBPS Assistant/ PO/SO	SBI Assistant/ PO	RRB Assistant/ PO/SO	RBI Assistant	Insurance Assistant/ AO
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જેવી પરીક્ષાઓ માટેના વર્ગો દર **સોમવાર** થી હવે **ભરૂચ** માં શરૂ
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