PRATIYOGITA DARPAN

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- Resolution of US-China Trade War : US Signs 1st Phase of Momentous Trade Deal with China
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To Our Readers

Dear Readers,

It is with a sense of great delight that we are presenting to you the March issue of your favourite magazine **Pratiyogita Darpan.** As usual the present issue of the magazine also contains useful material relevant to competitive examinations. Our editorial board and the team of qualified authors take painstaking efforts to present the study material keeping in view the requirements of our esteemed readers. We are sure that if you read it intelligently and wisely, it will go a long way in equipping you with knowledge to face the gruelling battle of the examination and bring you sure success.

We always try to understand the demands and requirements of our readers, their suggestions and changes in the pattern and contents of the competitive examinations. We make all efforts to include them, as far as possible, in further issues of the magazine. It gives us great satisfaction to know that our readers have unanimously endorsed the utility of the magazine.

In the present issue a number of core articles on important national and international events contributed by reputed authors have been given. Some of the representative articles in the present issue of this magazine are : Prime Minister Launches 5 DRDO Scientists Labs; India-Afghan Amity : Afghanistan's Minister Visits India; ISRO's GSAT-30 Satellite Successfully Launched Aboard Ariane Rocket; A Landmark Agreement in North East : 30 K Displaced BRU Tribals to Settle in Tripura; Raisina Dialogue 2020 in New Delhi; India Successfully Tests Its 3,500 km Range K-4 Missile; India, Brazil Ink Action Plan to Deepen Strategic Partnership, Sign 15 Pacts; India Celebrates Its 71st Republic Day; Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen Wins Second Term; Resolution of US-China Trade War : US Signs 1st Phase of Momentous Trade Deal with China; Crisis in British Royalty; ICC Awards, 2019; Padma Awards 2020.

The most important section of the Magazine contains a number of question papers selected from various competitive examinations. These are fully solved with relevant hints and short, but clear-cut explanations. All efforts are made to give their error-free solutions. A careful study of and practice session with these papers will be very useful to face any competitive examination.

The columns **Compendium, Test Your Knowledge, Memorable Points** and **Concentric Quiz** have been widely appreciated as trusted tools for the benefit of our readers. An intelligent study and memorizing of their contents will be highly useful in solving questions in any future examination.

Pratiyogita Darpan gives you the best guidance and reading material. It is upto you to make the best use of it for a bright success in any competitive examination.

Read Pratiyogita Darpan regularly and intelligently. It gives you the power to master your career and shape your destiny.

With best wishes for your brilliant success and bright future.

Sincerely yours,

MAHENDRA JAIN
(Editor)

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MAGAZINE KING

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Editorial

Know What True Education Stands for

Plato in his immortal work 'The Republic' says that the State is primarily an educational institution. According to him, if the state neglects education, it matters little what else it does. Thus, the importance of education can hardly be over-emphasized. All great philosophers, right from the ancient times down to the present day, have emphasized the role of education in making an individual a man in the true sense of the term. Besides Plato, the French philosopher Rousseau assigned to education a place of utmost importance in making an individual a good citizen and a good member of the human society. True education caters to every type of need of the individual. It ensures his material, moral and spiritual development. It inculcates in him humility and drives away arrogance. Plato rightly said that virtue is knowledge. Education nurtures virtue and exterminates vice. It sublimates the baser passions of the individual and fosters the nobler ones. If teaches him the duties of citizenship and cultivates in him love for mankind. It makes him wise and enlightened and promotes the spirit of accommodation. In sum, education makes a person an integrated individual. Education is not limited only to garnering facts and earning degrees. It is a narrow view of education. So many ills the mankind is plagued with to-day can be traced to the faulty education imparted to our young men and women. True education is as much the cultivation of the spirit as it is the cultivation of the mind. The system of education which does not cater to the higher values of life must be discarded. It must be replaced by a system which ensures harmonious development of an individual, an individual ready to work not only for the good of himself, his family, his country but for the good of whole mankind. Only such an individual can be said to be truly educated.

On the entrance of a library are engraved these words—

Enter to grow in wisdom
Go out to serve humanity

Let all that is dark within me burst with blame and veil of error be torn away. Education is the most effective and potent tool to redeem our lives, to bring about an individual's development, his emancipation, his cultural egeneration, his economic advancement, and for training men and women for the divine needs of a socialistic, secular and democratic society in the present scientific, technological and nuclear age. There is no worthier and more delightful cause than helping education. Yet it is a tragic fact that many students endowed with intellect and talent are denied education :

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

The primary purpose of education must be to create a mind which is both scientific and religious. The first concern of education must be with learning the true art of learning and then with the training of a particular profession. The art of living comes only as a bye-product of a deep understanding of the self and the relationship to nature, to things, to people, to ideas and to oneself. Unfortunately, we still harbour the illusion that we can solve our problems through greater power, greater skill. So we pursue these ends, while strengthening the source of the problems at the roots. So long as our vision of education is so narrow, all efforts that we make, will necessarily create greater chaos. The so-called education is confined to the acquisition of knowledge, and training for careers is responsible for creating a society where sensitive perception and feeling of harmony have been lost, the reason being that education is in blind obedience to authority.

An English author has rightly said that "education does not mean to teach people what they do not know; it means teaching to behave as they ought to, specially with nature and man".

The quality of human relationship should be the true end of all educational system. We must stand for a just order in human values. Man is more important than his possessions and the human spirit is more valuable than the prestige of the state. Since to satisfy the craving of the mind is not the aim of education, education should cultivate the habits of a steady concentration of sustained attention and should be directed according to the inborn faculties of the pupil.

Education is, as a matter of fact, the knowledge of how to use the whole of oneself. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "Education is an all round drawing out the best in the child and man–body, mind and spirit. In view of this spirit of education, it has been very aptly said that only the educated are free, because they can think and act of their own free will". The Greek philosopher Plato assigned to education a place of utmost importance in his ideal State sketched out by him in his immortal work 'The Republic'. He even regarded the State as an educational institution. According to him, if the State neglects education, it matters little what else it does. He too believed that true education is the cultivation of the mind and the spirit. True education enables one to adjust with oneself, one's fellow beings and with nature. It teaches us to harmonize ourselves with ourselves and with the outside world and inculcates in us a time tested system of absolute values. In fact, only a truly educated man is free.

Any of our young readers may say that present age is the age of leadership; education can't make us all leaders, so what is the use of education ? To them, the reply is, yes education can't make everyone of you a leader, but it can certainly teach you which leader to follow. Edmund Burke said that the foundation of every state is the education of the youth, and it is the chief defence of nations.

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Topic : **Those Who Indulge in Negative Politics, Jeopardising National Interest, Will Reap a Vitiated Harvest**

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Last Date : March 25, 2020

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Rules and Regulations :

- Participation is open to students and competitors only.
- Only one **complete and consolidated** entry on essay or debate competition will be accepted from one participant.
- Writings on essays and debates should be **strictly to the point and in simple, intelligible but forceful language.**
- Essays and Debates should be written in own hand and should be duly signed by the candidate. Printed and unsigned entries will not be accepted.
- Irrelevant details are to be avoided at all costs.
- The Essay / Debate should not exceed a word limit of 1500.
- The Essay / Debate accompanied by a passport size photograph must be sent by mail or courier.
- The selection committee will decide best entries and they will be awarded through cheque.
- Write your name in English in Capital Letters. The name must be one which appears in your bank account. Also, write the bank account number, IFSC code of the bank and your mobile phone number.
- The winners in Essay Contest will also receive an award certificate from Pratiyogita Darpan. The prize winning entries will be published in the forthcoming issues of Pratiyogita Darpan.
- A certificate should invariably be given under the scripts to the effect that **"this is my original work and is unpublished elsewhere".**

MEMORY RETENTION CONTEST

Win Attractive Prizes :

Are you appearing or want to appear in States' Civil Services Exams., SSC Combined Examination, Banking Service Exam., Indian Insurance Corporation's Administrative Officers Exam., Forest Service, Sub-Inspector, Hindi Translator, M.B.A., CPMT, CBSE, B. Ed. Entrance Exam., Railway etc. ? If Yes ! then you can win attractive prizes.

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(i) The first three participants who will send the most correct answers will get ₹ 600, 400 and 250 respectively.

(ii) Less than 75% correct answers will not deserve any prize from us.

MEMORY RETENTION CONTEST
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MODERN PRINTING

Nation This Month

- *India Celebrates Its 71st Republic Day*
- *Prime Minister Launches 5 DRDO Young Scientists Labs*
- *India's Move to Improve Ease of Doing Business*
- *Government Panel Gives Green Signal to 150 Private Trains on 100 Routes*
- *Govt. Approves ₹ 5,559 Crore Booster for N-E Gas Grid*
- *India-Afghan Amity : Afghanistan's Minister Visits India : 'Nothing Can Destroy India-Afghanistan Ties', Says the Minister*
- *Open Debate in UN Security Council : India Castigates Pakistan for Raising Kashmir Issue Yet Again at UN Security Council*
- *Draft Policy on Rare Diseases : Govt. Looks at ₹ 15 Lakh Aid to the Poor*
- *Minister of External Affairs, Jai Shankar Holds Talks with Uzbek, Latvian Counterparts*
- *ISRO's GSAT-30 Satellite Successfully Launched Aboard Ariance Rocket*
- *India, Bangladesh Sign MoU for Film Production*
- *A Landmark Agreement in North East : Over 30K Displaced BRU Tribals to Settle in Tripura*
- *Raisina Diologue 2020 in New Delhi*
- *India Successfully Tests Its 3,500 Km-range K-4 Missile*
- *India, Brazil Ink Action Plan to Deepen Strategic Partnership; Sign 15 Pacts*

India Celebrates Its 71st Republic Day

India celebrated its **71st Republic Day** on January 26, 2020. This year's Republic Day was unique for India in many different ways as compared to the previous years. At the Republic Day Parade 2020, India showcased its military strength, diversity and pride.

Starting from the military might that was displayed through indigenously developed artillery gun system '**Dhanush**' or with first woman parade adjutant for the Republic Day with **Captain Tania Shergill** leading the parade, there were many 'firsts' that marked India's 71st Republic Day Celebrations.

Republic Day Parade 2020 during 71st Republic Day Parade at Rajpath in New Delhi on January 26, 2020.

Here are Some Highlights :

- **Guest of Honour/Chief Guest :** Brazilian President **Jair Bolsonaro** was the **Chief Guest** at India's 71st Republic Day Parade on January 26. The President was on a 4-day state visit to India from January 24-27, 2020. Bolsonaro was accompanied by a large contingent including 8 ministers, 4 MPs and officials along with a large business delegation.

  Bolsonaro was the third Brazilian President to be invited as Chief Guest for India's Republic Day Parade. Before him, India hosted President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 1996 and President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2004, as Chief Guests for the Republic Day Parade.
- **PM at National War Memorial :** Among the many firsts, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid homage to the fallen soldiers on January 26, 2020 at the **National War Memorial.** This year, for the first time, the wreath laying ceremony was held at the newly built National War Memorial instead of at Amar Jawan Jyoti beneath the India Gate arch. The National War Memorial has been built in the India Gate Complex behind the canopy and was inaugurated in February 2019 by PM Modi. PM Modi was joined by newly appointed Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat along with the Tri-Services Chiefs.
- **Chief of Defence Staff at Republic Day Parade :** At the 71st Republic Parade, for the first time, newly appointed Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat attended the Republic Day parade. General Rawat welcomed PM Modi for the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the National War Memorial along with the service chiefs for all the three armed forces *i.e.* Army, Navy and Air Force. They were also joined by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Minister of State for Defence Shripad Yesso Naik and the Defence Secretary.
- **Tania Shergil leads All-Male Contingent** : Captain Tanya Shergil, a fourth generation Army Officer led an all-male marching contingent of the Indian Army Corps of Signals. The motto of the Corps was 'Teevra Chaukas'.

  Tania's achievement builds upon last year's women-power display at Republic Day Parade when Captain Bhavna Kasturi became the first woman officer to lead an all-men contingent.
- **CRPF's All Women Biker Squad :** Continuing the theme of women power, the day also saw an **all-women biker contingent** of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) make its debut as a part of the 71st Republic Day Parade. The contingent was commanded by Inspector Seema Nag, who is

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posted with the Rapid Action Force (RAF). A 65-member team consisting of women bikers exhibited its acrobatic skills on motorcycles as a part of the CRPF contingent. An all-women biker squad also performed nine daring acts on motorcycles including forming a human pyramid on multiple motorcycles.

- **Dhanush Artillery Gun :** Another key highlight of the 71st Republic Day Parade was inclusion of the **Dhanush artillery gun** for the first time. The Dhanush Artillery Guns are being produced by Ordnance Factory Board under the flagship project of Make in India'. Dhanush is an indigenous long-range artillery developed in-house by OFB. Apart from Dhanush, the parade also saw **K9 Vajra**, another indigenous gun system inducted in the Indian Army, displayed at Rajpath.
- **Rafale, Tejas at Republic Day Parade :** The Indian Air Force (IAF) also participated in the Republic Day Parade with its tableau showcasing scaled system of the five-fighter system. The models on display during Parade included **Rafale Fighter Jet** and **Tejas Aircraft**. Apart from this, the fly-past, which was the highlight of the parade, saw the participation of the newly inducted Apache and Chinook heavy lift helicopters for the first time. The **Republic Day Fly Past** consisted of **41 aircrafts of the IAF** including 16 fighter jets, 10 transport aircrafts and 4 Helicopters of the Army Aviation Wing.
- **Anti-Satellite Weapons System (ASAT) :** India also showcased its state-of-the-art, **Anti-Satellite (ASAT)** weapon system as a part of the parade. Last year, India successfully conducted an ASAT test using an interceptor missile against a live orbiting satellite in the Low Earth Orbit in March.
- **Tableaux for Republic Day :** The Republic Day Parade 2020 included a total of 22 tableaux including 16 from various states and union territories and remaining 6 from various ministries, departments and the National Disaster Response Force

  The tableaux presented as part of the Republic Day Parade showcased India's strength in its 'Unity in Diversity'. These presentations were designed by respective states and presented as a testimony of India's diverse cultural heritage and history. Some of the key tableaux and their themes that were a part of India's 71st Republic Day are as follows:
- **Gujarat–Rani ki Vav-Jal Mandir :** Gujarat presented a tableau based on the unique theme of **Rani ki Vav-Jal Mandir** located in Patan city. The Jal Mandir which translates to Queen's Stepwell, is a unique architectural marvel that stands as testimony to ancient construction work and craftsmanship.
- **Meghalaya–Living Root Bridge :** Meghalaya presented a tableau centred on the replica of Umshiang double decker living root bridge. A tourist attraction and natural marvel, the Living Root Bridge is located at Nongriat in Cherrapunji. The bridge displays the natural craftsmanship of Khansi and Jaintia people of Meghalaya, who built living root bridge using from secondary roots of trees.

10 Facts About the Constitution of India

1. The Constituent Assembly, with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as president, was able to complete its work in less than three years. It took two years, eleven months and seventeen days, to be exact, to draft the Consitution.
2. The Constituent Assembly held its first sitting on December 9, 1946, in the Constitution Hall in Parliament.
3. Over 2,000 amendments were made before the draft of the Constitution was finalised.
4. On 24 January 1950, 284 Constituent Assembly members signed the Constitution at the Constitution Hall, now known as the Central Hall of Parliament in New Delhi.
5. The Preamble to the Indian Constitution was inspired by the Preamble to the Constitution of the USA, which also starts with the phrase 'We The People'.
6. The Drafting Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, took 141 days to complete the Draft Constitution.
7. The Constitution was adopted on November 26, 1949, and signed by the members on January 24, 1950.
8. It is the longest handwritten Constitution of any country in the world.
9. Both the versions of the Constitution, Hindi and English, were handwritten.
10. The Constitution was published in Dehradun and Photo-lithographed by the Survey of India.

- **Punjab–550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev :** Punjab's tableau for Republic Day parade was based on the theme of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev's teachings of three principles—Kirat Karo, Naam Japo and Vand Chhako, which roughly translate to "earn livelihood by honest means, chant name of God and share fruits of labour."
- **Rajasthan - Jaali Jharokha :** The Republic Day tableau of Rajasthan was based on the theme of **Jaali Jharokha**, through which the state showcased glory of heritage of buildings and sites of Jaipur city. The presentation highlighted the grand gateways, vibrant markets, glorious buildings as well as Tripolia Gate and Statue Circle that are key landmarks of Jaipur.
- **Jammu & Kashmir—'Back to Village' :** Jammu & Kashmir, for the first time, participated in the Republic Day Parade as a Union Territory. The state's tableau was based on the theme of '**Back to Village**' programme, which was launched by the government to rehabilitate the displaced Kashmiri Pandits.
- **NDRF–Disaster Relief Technology :** The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) participated in the Republic Day for the first time this year. The NDRF's tableau was based on showcasing cutting-edge technology and instruments used by the force to carry out daring rescue operations in flood-hit and disaster hit areas.
- **Ministry of Finance – Financial Inclusion :** Another highlight that was showcased as a part of the Republic Day Parade was the Finance Ministry's tableau that was based on the theme of **financial inclusion.** The tableau presented India's efforts to achieve financial inclusion, which have been recognized and commended by World Bank. As per the World Bank Data, due to India's financial inclusion efforts, 55 per cent of new accounts opened in the world are from India.

- **Ministry of Commerce–Startup India :** The Ministry of Commerce and Industries also presented its tableau based on the theme of '**Startups : Reach for the Sky**'. The Startup India tableau was based on the lifecycle of a start-up while showcasing different stages of its development. The tableau consisted of a creative mind display at the front, Startup India Tree and end with highlights of different kinds of support given by the government to boost start-up ecosystem in India.

  Earlier, President Ram Nath Kovind unfurled the tricolour, which was followed by National Anthem and 21-gun salute at Rajpath. The ceremony lasted one and a half hours and was witnessed by a galaxy of invitees from India and abroad including members of the Central Cabinet and leaders of different political parties. President Kovind took the salute.

Prime Minister Launches 5 DRDO Young Scientists Labs

Key Highlights

- Operating from different cities, these labs will pursue futuristic war tech.
- These labs will operate from Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad.
- Symmetric technologies will change the way the next wars are fought.

Five New Defence Laboratories led by under-35 directors and young military scientists were formally launched on January 2, 2020 to drive the country's war technologies of the future under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Launching the DRDO Young Scientists Laboratories in Bengaluru on January 2, 2020

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the **DYSLs or DRDO Young Scientists Laboratories** that will operate from five cities across the country.

Key Technology for Defence

The labs operating in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad will each pursue a key technology necessary for developing the nation's next generation of defence systems.

Addressing scientists at the DRDO's Aeronautical Development Establishment, the PM said the government would walk the extra mile with scientists to ensure India got the technologies and innovations needed for its security.

He praised the missiles programme developed by the DRDO as among the outstanding ones in the world and urged the scientists to give a decade's roadmap where the DRDO would set the direction and pace of research in various scientific areas.

Big Leap Forward

The establishment of DYSLs will be a big leap forward for the DRDO from the goal of making India self-reliant to [making it] future ready in defence technologies," a DRDO release said.

DRDO Chairman G. Satheesh Reddy told media that the labs are now formally operational. The new directors were chosen from within the organisation through a tough selection process across six months by a committee chaired by Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government.

There would be no fund constraints for the new labs and the new leaders get the same administrative and financial powers as the directors of existing defence labs.

He said the present labs did not have activities in the five chosen areas except for some work as in AI at the Centre for Artificial Intelligence & Robotics, Bengaluru.

Asymmetric technologies, for instance, will change the way the next wars are fought.

India's Move to Improve Ease of Doing Business

The commerce and industry ministry has prepared a blue print to further improve India's ranking in the World Bank's ease of doing business index with a focus on six parameters, including enforcing contracts and starting a business, says an official.

The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade** (DPIIT) under the ministry is also following reform activities in Kolkata and Bengaluru as these two cities are included by the World Bank this year besides Delhi and Mumbai for preparing the ease of doing business report, with a view to providing a holistic picture of business environment in India.

The Bank has added a new parameter to government contracting, taking the total number of criteria to 11.

The government will share with the World Bank reform activities undertaken for ease of doing business (EoDB) in May June this year. The six parameters where the department is focussing are : enforcing contracts (163rd), resolving insolvency (52nd), starting a business (136th), registering property (154th), paying taxes (115th) and trading across borders (68th). India has jumped 14 places to rank 63rd out of 190 countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business 2020 report on account of significant improvement in resolving insolvency and obtaining construction permits.

The official said that under enforcing contracts, the focus will be on reducing time taken in disposal of cases and improve on quality index of judicial process and increasing awareness regarding electronic case management tool facility for judges and lawyers.

Government Panel Gives Green Signal to 150 Private Trains on 100 Routes

A high-powered panel has cleared the road for rolling out nearly 150 private trains on 100-routes, including

Mumbai-Delhi and Howrah-Delhi sectors, which will compete with Rajdhani.

Why the Trains are Needed

- **Huge unmet demand,** with 15% waitlisted passengers.
- Railways striving to **end waiting list** for passengers.
- To improve **service quality.**
- **Reserved passenger growth estimated at under** 5% during 2013-18, compared with 13% for airlines.

The Tejas Trains

While two Tejas trains have been hand over for running by Railway-controlled **IRCTC** on the **Delhi-Lucknow** and **Mumbai-Ahmedabad** routes as an experiment with the 'private sector', the committee's report is likely to pave the way for a massive competition to the services offered by the state transporter.

The panel was set up by Railway Minister Piyush Goyal after Railway Board Chairman V.K. Yadav flagged off private trains in the Centre's 100 days' agenda.

Performance Parameters

The recommendations put out for stakeholder consultations have proposed that Indian as well as global players, with experience in railway and tourism sectors be permitted, provided they have a minimum net worth of ₹ 450 crore. Other performance parameters, like a maximum-permissible 15-minute delay, beyond which passengers will have to be compensated, have been proposed. On IRCTC-run Tejas trains, a similar facility has been offered.

The routes have been divided into seven clusters with a clear plan to develop infrastructure in less-utilised stations such as Panvel near Mumbai and Tilak Bridge and Okhla in Delhi for running long-distance trains.

The Speed Limit

The train routes have been primarily identified on Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Kolkata routes as the railways is hopeful of freezing up tracks by December 2021, when both Eastern and Western Dedicated Freight Corridors will become fully operational and take over the burden of handling goods traffic. The railways has also approved the plan to improve the existing tracks on the two routes to allow trains to run at 160 kmph, which has been proposed as the speed limit for private trains. According to the plan, the time taken by a train to complete a journey will be comparable with the fastest train operated by the Indian Railways on that route.

Govt. Approves ₹ 5,559 Crore Booster for N-E Gas Grid

The Union government on January 8, 2010 approved viability gap funding (VGF) of ₹ 5,559 crore for a gas pipeline network proposed to be built in the northeast, second instance of public funding for making an energy lifeline economically viable.

- Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the VGF amount sanctioned by the Cabinet's panel on economic affairs will cover 60% of the ₹ 9,265 crore project.
- The 1,656 km pipeline will connect Guwahati in Assam to major cities in the region such as **Itanagar, Dimapur, Kohima, Imphal, Aizwal Agartala, Shillong, Silchar, Numaligarh** and **Gangtok**.
- The pipeline will enable to pipe cooking gas to households and supply CNG (compressed natural gas) for automobiles in the northeast "just like in Delhi" as well as fuel industry. The government had in 2016 sanctioned a capital grant of ₹ 5,176 crore, or 40% of the cost, for Urja Ganga, the 2,655-km **Jagdishpur-Haldia and Bokaro-Dhamra (JHBDPL)** gas pipeline being built by state-run GAIL. All other pipelines have been funded by public or private companies.
- The northeast pipelines grid is to be implemented by Indradhanush Gas Grid, a joint venture of GAIL, Indian Oil, ONGC, Oil India Ltd. The consortium has told the government the project would not be viable in the absence of government funding as there were not enough large customers.
- GAIL is also laying a 750-km line from Barauni to Guwahati as part of the ₹ 12,940 crore JHBDPL project, which is also known as the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga project. This is proposed to be connected to the Northeast via the Indradhanush grid. Mr. Pradhan said the project is critical for implementing the Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for the northeast, which entails leveraging the region's hydrocarbon potential for enhancing access to clean fuel and accelerating economic growth.
- "About 20% of India's natural gas production comes from the northeast. Out of about 75 million cubic meters per day of gas output, 15 come from northeast.

India-Afghan Amity : Afghanistan's Minister Visits India : 'Nothing Can Destroy India-Afghanistan Ties', Says the Minister

Afghanistan's Deputy Foreign Minister Naheed Esar visited India in the first/second week of January, 2020. "India was the first country with which we signed a strategic partnership. But beyond that, there is people-to-people relationship, shared culture and values. This relationship is very strong and goes back thousands of years and nothing can destroy it," said the minister Naheed Esar. She was on a visit to India to open Afghanistan's second consulate in Hyderabad.

Afghanistan's Deputy Foreign Minister Naheed Esar.

It is everybody's knowledge that Afghanistan is mired in uncertainty due to certain factors which could not be tackled for a considerable period of time. That is why the Afghan peace process also is lying in limbo.

"The idea is to expand the relationship between the two counries further. We want to further expand our presence. We have a diaspora in Hyderabad, as well as about 3,000 Afghan students. Hyderabad is one of the main centres for India-Afghan trade. We're trying to move from an aid-dependent to trading nation," she added.

The Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Maheed Esar and Telangana Minister of Home, Prison, Mohammad Mahmood Ali jointly inaugurated the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Hyderabad on January 8, 2020.

Open Debate in UN Security Council : India Castigates Pakistan for Raising Kashmir Issue Yet Again at UN Security Council

Key Highlights

- India has told the International Community that the scrapping of Article 370 was its internal matter.
- "One delegation that epitomises dark arts has, yet again, displayed its wares by peddling false hoods... These we dismiss with disdain."**—India's representative to the UN**
- These observations were made on the occasion of UN Security Council Open debate on 'Maintenance of International Peace and Security Upholding the United Nations Charter'

In a hard-hitting response, India said Pakistan 'epitomises the dark arts', but there are no takers for its 'malware' after Islamabad raked up the issue of Jammu and Kashmir at the UN Security Council.

"One delegation that epitomises the dark arts has, yet again, displayed its wares by pedling falsehoods earlier today. These we dismiss with disdain," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin said on January 9, 2019.

"My simple response to Pakistan is even though it is late, neighbour, heal thyself of your malaise. There are no takers here for your malware," Akbaruddin said, addressing the UN Security Council Open debate on 'Maintenance of International Peace and Security Upholding the United Nations Charter.

Futility of Pakistan Raising Kashmir Issue at UNSC

Akabaruddin's strong response came after Pakistan's envoy to the UN Munir Akram raked up the issue of Jammu and Kashmir while addressing the Council during the open debate.

The Pakistani envoy also raised the abrogation of Article 370, communications lockdown in Kashmir and referred to Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, who was captured by Pakistan after an aerial combat in February last year after New Delhi conducted counter-terror operations in Pakistan's Balakot.

Akram called on the Security Council and Secretary General Antonio Guterres to "act decisively to prevent a disastrous war between Pakistan and India." Pakistan has been unsuccessfully trying to drum up international support against India for withdrawing Jammu and Kashmir's special status and bifurcating it into two union territories.

Reacting to India's decision, Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties with New Delhi and expelled India's high commissioner.

The Indian representative underscored the need for the Council to be part of the political tool kit to address ongoing and future threats to global peace and security, emphasising that the Council should represent current global realities and be fit for purpose.

"The answer to the crises the Council faces, lies in working through Charter provisions that provide for reform. We need a Council representative of global realities...," Akbaruddin said.

Draft Policy on Rare Diseases : Govt. Looks at ₹ 15 Lakh Aid to the Poor

Key Highlights

- However public health groups are not satisfied with the draft. They call the policy narrow.
- Yet, the measure is a step in the right direction and deserves to be welcomed.

In an attempt to address concerns of patients suffering from any rare disease and reeling under its exorbilant cost of treatment, the health ministry of the government of India has come up with a new draft **National Policy for Rare Diseases**, 2020 which highlights 'scarce resources' to provide financial support for treatment of rare diseases.

It proposes to set up a registry under the Indian Council of Medical Research to create a database and provide assistance of upto ₹ 15 lakh to Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries for rare diseases that require one-time treatment in tertiary hospitals only. It also suggests voluntary crowdfunding as an alternative means of financial support and notifying government hospitals to facilitate treatment. "In resource-contrained settings, it is pertinent to balance competing interests of public health for achieving optimal outcome for the resources allocated," the draft says.

Eyeing Crowd-Funding

Key Policy Initiatives Proposed under the National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2020

- To set up a national registry for rare diseases at ICMR to create a database of various rare diseases.
- Financial support of up to ₹ 15 lakh to Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries under Rashtriya Arogaya Nidhi for rare diseases that require one-time treatment in tertiary hospitals only.
- Screening and diagnosis to identify high-risk families, couples, pregnant women.
- Voluntary crowd-funding for treatment by setting up a digital platform.
- Categorise rare diseases based on clinical experiences & availability of treatment.
- Government to notify select centres of excellence. These will be premier government tertiary hospitals with facilities for treatment of rare diseases.
- Facilitate environment to promote R&D for diagnosis.

Alternatively, the draft proposes to set up a digital platform for voluntary crowd-funding. "Keeping in view the resource constraints, and a compelling need to prioritise the available resources to get maximum health gains for the community/population, the government will endeavour to create alternate funding mechanism through setting up a digital platform for voluntary individual and corporate donors to contribute to the treatment cost of patients of rare diseases," the draft says.

The health ministry has asked all stakeholders to send their comments on the draft by February 10.

Three Categories

In the draft, there are three categories of rare diseases based on clinical experiences and treatment availability. The policy also states that in the absence of data to define them, rare diseases in India will construe the three categories as identified in the policy.

Public health groups have criticised the policy. "It appears the entire policy is drafted to justify that the government cannot provide treatment due to high cost as it is resource-constrained," says Archana Panda of Cure SMA Foundation of India. Panda said the policy has adopted a very narrow scope limited to only three categories, ignoring those where treatment is yet to be developed and R&D is required.

Three are 7,000-8,000 rare diseases, but less than 5% have therapies available. About 95% rare diseases have no approved treatment and less than one in 10 patients receive disease specific treatment. Where drugs are available, they are expensive.

Minister of External Affairs Jai-Shankar Holds Talks with Uzbek, Latvian Counterparts

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Uzbekistani counterpart Abdulaziz Kamilov held wide-ranging talks on January 14, 2020, vowing to boost bilateral trade and investment and explore possibilities for a preferential trade agreement.

"Welcome FM Abdulaziz Kamilov of Uzbekistan. Comprehensive talks on our bilateral agenda. Appreciated his insights on regional issues of common concern," Jai Shankar said in a tweet.

External affairs minister S. Jaishankar meets Abdulaziz Kamilov, minister of foreign affairs, Uzbekistan, at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on January 14, 2020. Both ministers held talks on bilateral agenda and regional issues of common concern.

- Emphasising on the need to boost bilateral trade and investment, the two ministers agreed to work towards early conclusion of the feasibility study to be jointly conducted by the two sides to begin negotiations for a preferential trade agreement, the MEA said in a statement.

USD 200 Million Line of Credit

- The External Affairs Minister reiterated the need for early operationalisation of the USD 200 million of line of credit extended by India to Uzbekistan for which Uzbek side is in the process of finalising necessary details of the identified projects, it said.

Strategic Partnership

- Referring to the strategic partnership of the two countries, both the ministers emphasised on the need to maintain the momentum of high level exchanges and implement the agreements reached during the visits of President of Uzbekistan to India in October, 2018 and January last year, the visit of Chief Minister of Gujarat (October 2019) and that of Defence Minister (November 2019) to Uzbekistan.
- Kamilov briefed Jaishankar on Uzbekistan's efforts to liberalise its economy, create business friendly conditions and attract foreign investment, that from Indian companies.
- The ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of defence, counter-terrorism and security, information and communication technology, development partnership and promote cultural exchanges, the statement said.
- Kamilov hailed the initiative of the **India-Central Asia Dialogue** at the level of foreign ministers with the participation of Afghanistan, which was held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in January last year.
- Cooperation in the multilateral fora, including the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was also discussed during the meeting, the statement said.

Talks with Latvian Foreign Minister

- Later in the day, Jaishankar also met Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinka, "Good conversation with FM of Latvia on global issues, technology opportunities and contempary challenges," Jaishankar tweeted.

ISRO's GSAT-30 Satellite Successfully Launched Aboard Ariane Rocket

Highlights

- GSAT-30 was sussessfully launched on board Ariane 5 rocket from French Guiana.
- The satellite drives its heritage from ISRO's earlier INSAT/GSAT satellite series.
- The 3,357 kg satellite is configured on ISRO's enhanced I-3 K Bus structure.

India's 'highpower' communication satellite GSAT-30, aimed at providing high quality television, telecommunication and broadcasting services was successfully launched on board Ariane-5 rocket from French Guiana in the early hours of January 17, 2020.

- Blasting off from the Ariane Launch Complex in Kourou, a French territory located in north-eastern coast of South America at 2·35 am 1st, European

space consortium Ariane space's Ariane 5 vehicle injected GSAT-30 into the orbit in a flawless flight.

- The 3,357 kg satellite which was deployed from lower passenger position of Ariane-5 launch vehicle into geostationary transfer orbit (GTO), is configured on ISRO's enhanced 1–3K Bus structure to provide communication services from Geostationary orbit in C and Ku-bands.

- The satellite derives its heritage from ISRO's earlier INSAT/GSAT satellite series, and is equipped with 12C and Ku transponders.
- GSAT-30 is to serve as replacement to the 'ageing' INSAT-4A spacecraft services with enhanced coverage, ISRO has said, adding the satellite provides Indian mainland and islands coverage in Ku-band and extended coverage in C-band covering Gulf countries, a large number of Asian countries and Australia.
- With a mission life of 15 years, GSAT-30 is an operational communication satellite for DTH television uplink and VSAT services.
- The Bengaluru-headquartered ISRO has said the communication payload of GSAT-30 is specifically designed and optimised to maximise number of transponders on the spacecraft bus.
- Since the launch of India's APPLE experimental satellite on Ariane Flight in 1981, Ariane space has orbited 24 satellites including GSAT-30 for the Indian space agency.

India, Bangladesh Sign MoU for Film Production

India and Bangladesh on January 14, 2020 signed an MoU for co-production of a film on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to be directed by eminent filmmaker Shyam Benegal. It will be released as part of birth centenary celebrations of the Bangladesh founder. The agreement was signed in the presence of Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar and his Bangladesh counterpart Hasan Mahmud.

A Landmark Agreement in North East : Over 30 K Displaced BRU Tribals to Settle in Tripura

Over 30,000 displaced Bru tribals from Mizoram, who have been living as refugees in Tripura since 1997, will permanently settle in Tripura and a tripartite agreement was signed on January 16, 2020.

- The agreement was signed by representatives of Bru and the Central and Mizoram governments in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi.

Background

- Under the pact, over 30,000 Bru tribals will live in Tripura. The Bru tribals have been living in Tripura relief camps after they fled Mizoram following ethnic clashes between Bru and Mizo communities. A 2018 agreement for repatriation to Mizoram did not materialise as most members refused to go back. Only 328 families comprising 1369 individuals returned to Mizoram. The rest of them remained homeless. The Centre then started fresh negotiations to find a solution to the Bru People's demand that they be allowed to settle down in Tripura.
- The central government has sanctioned an amount of ₹ 600 crore for the rehabilitation of the Brus in Tripura.

Shah said that as per the new agreement, each Bru family living in Tripura would be given a 40 ×30 sqft. residental plot, in addition to a fixed deposit of ₹ 4 lakh, ₹ 5,000 cash aid per month for two years, free ration for two years and ₹ 1-5 lakh aid to build a house. The Tripura government would provide the land under this agreement.

North-East Democratic Alliance convenor Himanta Biswa Sarma commended the Tripura CM for pledging the land. "The refugees who were living in very poor conditions will now get to live in their own home," he said after the signing ceremony. Shah said the north-east region was put on the path of fast-paced development under Modi.

Raisina Diologue 2020 in New Delhi

Raisina Dialogue 2020 was held on 14-16 January, 2020 in New Delhi. The inaugural session of the dialogue was addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the dialogue.

This dialogue is **India's annual global conference on geopolitics and geo-economics.** The fifth edition of the Raisina Dialogue was held in New Delhi.

Organised by

The Conference was organised by **Observer Research Foundation** in collaboration with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Aim

The dialogue aims at discovering solutions, identifying opportunities and providing stability to a century that has witnessed an eventful decade. The Raisina Dialogue 2020 is titled **Navigating the Alpha Century**.

Highlights

The conference included intensive deliberations with over **80 sessions and panel discussions** on topics including The India Way : Preparing for Century of Growth and Contest, Hacking Democracy : Defending Pluralism in the Digital Age Competing Nationalisms, Universal Norms : Street Power in 21st Century Democracy, Cracks on the

Roof of the World : Growth, Stability and Assault Rifles in the Heart of Asia, were held.

The dialogue covered **5 Thematic Pillars namely :**

1. The nationalist impulses challenging global institutions and collective action.
2. The role of technologies in determining political stances.
3. The debate on the global trading architecture, economic and military power.
4. The global development agenda.
5. The state-individual relationship in the age of digital communities and cyberspace.

Participants

Over 700 international officials, of which 40% were women, participated in the event. Around 12 foreign ministers, including the foreign ministers of Australia, Maldives, Russia, Iran, Denmark, Africa, Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, South, Uzbekistan and the **European Union (EU), the National Security Adviser (NSA)** of Afghanistan, the Deputy NSA of the United States and several other ministers of state were among others.

About Raisina Dialogue

Raisina dialogue was initiated in 2016. It is a multilateral conference which is organised to address the most challenging **issues facing the global community.** The dialogue is held every year in Delhi. It discusses cooperation on a wide range of pertinent international policy matters. It explores prospects and opportunities for Asian integration and Asia's **integration** with the larger world.

India Successfully Tests its 3,500 Km-range K-4 Missile

The Indian strategic forces got a major boost on January 19, 2020 after the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) tested a 3,500 kilometre range submarine-launched K-4 ballistic missile off the Vizag coast, with the nuclear weapon meeting all its target objectives.

Submarine-Launched Missile

The three-metre-tall missile carries a nuclear warhead of over one tonne with a circular error probability (CEP) far lower than that of Chinese ballistic missiles. Only the US, Russia and China have submarine-launched ballistic missiles of 3,500 km range. The **INS Arihant** is already equipped with a 700-kilometre range B-02 nuclear missile, with the second nuclear submarine **INS Arighat** on way to becoming operational.

With this test India has moved one more step towards the induction of this ballistic missile on the INS Arihant class of nuclear submarines.

CEP Less Than the Chinese Missile

DRDO scientists were happy with how the K-4 test went as the CEP of the Indian strategic missile is less than 100 metres as compared to the 1-2 kilometre range of the Chinese equivalent. The submarine-launched ballistic missile is the **most important part of the air, land and sea nuclear triad and is at the front of India's second-strike capability.** With the K-4 and the Agni-5 missiles in its nuclear arsenal, Indian strategic forces now have a deterrent against all adversaries to the north and south, besides capability of protecting the Indo-Pacific.

The K-4 test met all classified mission objectives. With the DRDO having the capability to conduct laboratory missile tests, India has the ability to build nuclear delivery platforms with far more than officially stated ranges.

Harish Salve Appointed British Queen's Counsel for England and Wales

India's former solicitor general and senior advocate Harish Salve has been appointed as Queen's Counsel (QC) for the courts of England and Wales.

Salve, who was admitted to the Bar in England & Walse in 2013, featured in the list of those 'taking silk' (a reference to their court dress) released by the UK ministry of justice on January 13.

Harish Salve

The 63-year-old, who charged Re 1 for representing India in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case at International Court of Justice, will formally take silk on March 16 at a ceremony in Westminister Hall after which he will take an oath in the UK high court. "I have been working here for quite a few years and decided let's give it a shot. I felt delighted when I found out ... This definitely helps me in the UK."

"The title of QC is recognised all over the world. I am given to understand there is no other Indian citizen practising in both countries who is a QC, but I am not sure, as that would require a lot of research," he said.

India, Brazil Ink Action Plan to Deepen Strategic Partnership; Sign 15 Pacts

Key Highlights

- New chapter opened in bilateral relationship, says PM.
- India and Brazil sign 15 pacts.
- 15 MoUs include deals on investment cooperation and facilitation, bio energy.

India and Brazil on January 25, 2020 concluded an action plan to deepen their strategic partnership as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro outlined efforts to further strengthen ties.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Brazil's President Jair Messias Bolsonaro in New Delhi, January 25, 2020.

The two sides also concluded 15 agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) on a variety of issues, including an investment cooperation and facilitation treaty, social security mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, bioenergy and cybersecurity.

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- *Chinese President Xi Jinping Visits Myanmar : Both Countries Sign Dozens of Deals*

Abu Dhabi Prince Visits Pakistan to Boost Ties

Key Highlights

- The visit comes after Pakistan skipped Malaysia event.
- The skipping of Malaysian event was interpreted as an attempt to create a new bloc in the Muslim world parallel to Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.
- The Abu Dhabi prince's visit is to cement relationships in the Muslim world.

Abu Dhabi crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan on January 2, 2020 arrived in Islamabad on a day long visit amidst criticism of the UAE for siding with Saudi Arabia to put pressure on Pakistan to skip a key conference of Muslim nations in Malaysia.

Prime Minister Imran Khan received the Crown Prince at the Nur Khan Airbase and personally drove him from the airport. It was for the second time that Mr. Khan drove his vehicle as he did during the Prince's last visit in January 2019.

The visit comes in the wake of the controversy created over Pakistan skipping the Kuala Lumpur summit to apparently appease Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

UAE Extends $ 200 million in Aid to Pakistan

The UAE has extended $ 200 million aid to cash-strapped Pakistan for the development of the small and medium-sized enterprises in the country. The announcement came after Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan concluded his one-day visit to the country on January 2, 2020.

Prime Minister Khan had confirmed Pakistan's participation in the summit hosted by Malaysia, but skipped the event at the eleventh hour due to pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates–key financial backers of the cash-strapped country.

The Summit from December 19-21 was seen by Saudis as an attempt to create a new bloc in the Muslim world that could become an alternative to the dysfunctional Organisation of Islamic Cooperation led by the Gulf Kingdom.

US Resumes Pak Military Training Programme

US President Donald Trump has decided to resume a military training programme for Pakistan that was cut off in 2018 while retaining suspension in security-related aid, the top American diplomat for South Asia has announced.

IMET

The resumption of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) for Pakistan was announced through a tweet by principal deputy assistant secretary for South and Central Asian affairs Alice Wells on January 4, 2020.

Wells said in the tweet that Trump authorized the resumption of the IME programme for Pakistan to "strengthen military-to-military cooperation on shared priorities and advance US national security."

She added that the "overall security assistance suspension for Pakistan remains in effect."

Key Trust Building Programme

It may be recalled that the IMET programme for Pakistan, seen by US officials as a key trust building measure, was cut off in August 2018, months after Trump famously announced the suspension of some $ 2 billion in security aid in a New Year's day tweet.

In that tweet, Trump had accused Pakistan of giving the US "nothing but lies & deceit" in return for "more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years." It had also given safe haven to the terrorists the US was hunting in Afghanistan, Trump had tweeted.

The resumption of the IMET programme also sparked speculation that the US envisaged a role for Pakistan in dealing with the tensions caused by Soleimani's killing. Pakistan has good ties with both Iran and Saudi Arabia, the two key players in West Asia, though Imran Khan's recent efforts to broker peace talks between the two rivals did not result in any success.

Syrian War Death Toll Tops 380,000

Almost nine years of civil war in Syria has left more than 380,000 people dead including over 115,000 civilians, a war monitor said in a new toll on January 4, 2020.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which has a network of sources across the country, said they included around 22,000 children and more than 18,000 women.

The conflict flared after unprecedented anti-government protests in the southern city of Daraa on March 15, 2011.

Demonstrations spread across Syria and were brutally suppressed by the regime, triggering a multifront armed conflict that has drawn in jihadists and foreign powers.

The conflict has displaced or sent into exile around 13 million Syrians, causing billions of dollars-worth of destruction.

The Britain-based Observatory's last casualty toll on the Syrian conflict, issued in March last year, stood at more than 370,000 dead.

The latest toll included more than 128,000 Syrian and non Syrian pro-regime fighters. More than half of those were Syrian soldiers, while 1,682 were from the Lebanese Shitte group Hezbollah. The war has also taken the lives of more than 69,000 opposition, Islamist, and Kurdish-led fighters.

Trouble Brewing for US in the Middle East Following its Killing of Irani General on Iraqi Soil : Iraq MPs Vote to Expel US Troops

Key Highlights

- The US killing of an Iranian army general Qassim Suleimani leads to-an-unpalatable situation for the country.
- Iraq people are up in protest saying drone strike on Iraqi soil is a violation of the nation's sovereignty.
- Iraq also approaches the UN Security Council seeking condemnation for Sulemani's killing.

Lawmakers in Iraq voted on January 5, 2020 to require the government to end the presence of American troops in the country after the United States ordered the killing of the Iranian leader of the elite Quds Force, major general Qassim Suleimani, on Iraqi soil.

The decision to heed the demands of angry Shia factions and politicians came as hundreds of thousands mourners poured into the streets of Iran to pay their respects to Suleimani, the most powerful figure in the country after its supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Hezbollah Vows to Drive US Forces out of Middle East

Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah vowed on January 5, 2020 to end the US military's presence in the Middle East, saying US bases, warships and soldiers were all fair targets following the US killing of Iranian general Suleimani. In a speech marking his death, Nasrallah said responding to the killing was not only Iran's responsibility but the responsibility of its allies too. But US civilians should not be targeted, he said, because this would serve the agenda of President Trump. Founded by Iran's Revolutionary Guards in 1982, Lebanese group Hezbollah is key part of an Iranian-backed regional military alliance.

Although the vote was 170-0 in Parliament, many of its 328 members, primarily Kurds and Sunnis, did not attend the session and did not vote, showing the division in Parliament on the demands to oust American troops. While groups that grew out of Shia militia organisations have pushed hard for the expulsion, Sunni Muslim factions and the Kurds wanted the US to stay.

The legislation threads a fine needle: While using strong language demanding that the government "end any foreign presence on Iraqi soil and prevent the use of Iraqi airspace, soil and water for any reason," by foreign forces it gives no time table for doing so.

It would end the mission approved in 2014 that gave the US the explicit task of helping the Iraqi forces to fight the Islamic State. That agreement gave the Americans substantial latitude to launch attacks and use Irani airspace.

On January 5, 2020 the American-led coalition in Iraq and Syria announced that it would pause its yearslong mission of fighting the Islamic State and training local forces in both countries. A pullout of the estimated 5,200 American troops could cripple the fight against the Islamic State and could allow its resurgence.

Violation of Sovereignty

In Iraq January 3's attack was seen as a violation of the nation's sovereignty. On January 5, 2020 Iraq's foreign ministry said it had summoned the US ambassador in Baghdad. Iraq also submitted complaints to the UNSC and sought condemnation for Suleimani's killing.

Act of War

In Iran, the attack was viewed as tantamount to an act of war. Hossein Dehghan, a military adviser to Khamenei, told CNN that Iran's response would include an attack on "US military targets". Members of Iran's Parliament chanted, "Death to America!" en masse in the chamber on January 5, 2020 protest over Suleimani's killing, TV fottage showed.

Zoran Milanovic : Leftist Former PM is Croatia's New President

Former Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic, candidate of the top opposition party the Social Democrats will be

Croatia's next president, the results of the presidential election showed on January 5, 2020. In the second and final round of the election, Milanovic won 52·7% of votes, while the incumbent Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, candidate of the ruling centre-right Croatian Democratic Union, garnered 47·3% of the votes.

The Aftermath of USA's Drone Attack Killing Iranian Gen. Suleimani : Iran Denounces Nuclear Deal Limits

Iran on January 5, 2020 said that it would no longer abide by any of the limits of its unravelling 2015 nuclear deal (JCPoA) with world powers after a US strike killed a top Iranian general in Baghdad, abandoning the accord's key provisions that block Iran from having enough material to build an atomic weapon.

Iran insisted in a state television broadcast it remained open to negotiations with European partners, who so far have been unable to offer Tehran a way to sell its crude oil abroad despite US sanctions. It also didn't back off of earlier promises that it wouldn't seek a nuclear weapon.

However, the announcement on January 5, 2020 represents the clearest nuclear proliferation threat yet made by Iran since President Trump unilaterally withdrew from the accord in May 2018. It also further raises regional tensions.

Iran's state TV cited a statement by President Rouhani's administration saying the country will not observe limitations on its enrichment the amount of Stockpiled enriched Uranium as well as its research and development in its nuclear activities. It, however, did not elaborate on what levels it would immediately reach in its programme.

The IAEA, the UN watchdog observing Iran's program did not immediately respond to a request for comment. However, Iran said that its cooperation with the IAEA "will continue as before".

Comment

These developments could bring Iran closer to building an atomic bomb and enable the Islamic State group to stage a comeback in Iraq, making the Middle East a far more dangerous and unstable place. Naturally, European leaders are desperately seeking a solution to ease the increasing tensions.

Israel and Palestine Stand-off : Israel Approves More than 1900 New Settler Homes in West Bank : NGO Peace Now

Israeli authorities have advanced plans to build nearly 2,000 new homes in West Bank settlements, an anti-settlement watchdog group said on January 5, 2020.

Peace Now said nearly 800 housing units received the final approvals needed for construction to begin. It said initial approvals were given for an additional 1,150 homes. Settlement projects require several rounds of approvals.

According to Peace Now, the projects include retroactive legalisation of two small outposts that were built without authorisation. The Israeli defence body that oversees civilian affairs in the occupied West Bank, known as COGAT, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Palestinian Brand These Settlements Illegal

The Palestinians seek the West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories captured by Israel in the 1967 West Asia war, as parts of a future independent state. The Palestinians, and most of the international community, consider Israeli settlements in the two areas to be illegal.

Israeli Stand

Israel considers the West Bank to be a disputed territory and claims all of Jerusalem.

Crisis in British Royal Family : Prince Harry and Meghan to Step Back as Senior Royals

Britain's Prince Harry, the grandson of Queen Elizabeth, said on January 8, 2020 that he and his American wife Meghan plan to step back from their roles as senior members of Britain's royal family and work to become financially independent. "We now plan to balance our time between the UK and North America, continuing to honour our duty to the Queen, the Commonwealth and our patronages", he and Meghan said in a statement on the social media platform in Instagram on January 8, 2020.

Britain's Maghan, Duchess of Sussex and Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, and Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge.

Harry and Meghan married in May 2018 and in May 2019 the couple, known formally as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, had their first child, a boy they named Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor.

Harry 35, is currently sixth in line to the throne and media speculation had been rife that he and Meghan, 38, planned to step back from public life ever since their return from a six-week holiday in Canada. Last year, Harry said he had disagreements with his elder brother, Prince William, who is second in line to the throne, and both Harry and Meghan have had a tense relationship with some British newspapers.

The couple said splitting their time between Britain and North America "will enable us to raise our son with an appreciation for the royal tradition into which he was born, while also providing our family with the space to focus on the next chapter". This would include the launch of a new charity, Harry and Meghan said, adding that they planned to work to become financially independent.

Royals Who Left Family

There is no precedent for **Harry** and **Meghan's** situation, No senior royals in the past have voluntarily said that they want to remain members of the royal family while also being

somehow outside it at the same time. Not only does the couple want a new role within the monarchy, they want to 'work to become financially independent'. That's a radical notion indeed, in a family whose members have long enjoyed public financing.

Princess of Wales lost her royal title in 1996 after divorcing Prince Charles.	He was all but banished from the family last year after his association with the disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein came to light.	Gave up his right to the throne in 1936 by announcing that he wanted to marry Wallis Simpson, an 'unacceptably divorced American'.
Diana	Prince Andrew	King Edward VIII

British Royals Feel Hurt

Queen Elizabeth, who has devoted her life to the public duty of monarchy since she became queen in 1952, and other senior members of the family felt hurt and disappointed by the move a royal source said.

Royal commentators drew parallels with the abdication crisis of Edward VIII who gave up the throne in 1936 to marry an American divorcee.

Madame Tussauds Moves Waxworks of Meghan, Harry

Madame Tussauds waxwork museum has removed the figures of Prince Harry and his wife Meghan from its British royal family display in response to the couple's announcement that they will be stepping back from royal duties.

Iraq to US : Get Ready to Pull Out Troops

Iraq's caretaker premier Adil Abdul Mahdi has asked the US to send a delegation to Baghdad to begin preparing for a troop pull-out, his office said.

In a phone call on January 9, 2020 with US secretary of state Mike Pompeo, Abdul Mahdi "requested that delegates be sent to Iraq to set the mechanisms to implement Parliament's decision for the secure withdrawal of (Foreign) forces from Iraq".

Some 5,200 US soldiers are stationed at bases across Iraq to support local troops preventing a resurgence of the IS group. They make up the bulk of a broader US-led coalition, invited by the Iraqi government in 2014 to help combat the jihadists.

Their deployment was based on an executive-to-executive agreement never ratified by Iraq's Parliament.

But on January 5, 2020 Iraq's Parliament voted in favour of rescinding that invitation and ousting all foreign troops.

Washington Rebuffs Iraqi Request to Pull out Troops

The US rebuffed an Iraqi request on January 10, 2020 to prepare to pull out its troops, amid heightened US-Iranian tensions following the US killing of an Iranian commander in Baghdad. Iraq looks set to bear the brunt of any further violence between its neighbour Iran and the US, its leaders caught in a bind as Washington and Tehran are also the Iraqi government's main allies and vie for influence there. The US says the presence of US troops in Iraq is "appropriate". "There does, however, need to be a conversation between the US and the Iraqi governments not just regarding security, but about our financial, economic, and diplomatic partnership", spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said in a statement.

US Issues New Curbs on Iran After Iraq Strike

The Trump administration on January 10, 2020 announced new sanctions on Iran following missile strikes on US bases in Iraq. Secretary of state Mike Pompeo and treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin said the new sanctions will target eight senior Iranian officials involved in "destabilising" activities in the Middle East. Mnuchin said President Trump will issue an executive order imposing sanctions on anyone involved in the Iranian textile, construction, manufacturing or mining sectors. They will also impose separate sanctions against the steel and iron sectors.

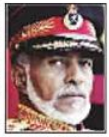
War Games off Crimea : Russian President Witnesses the Military Drills

Russian President Vladimir Putin on January 9, 2020 observed massive military drills off the coast of Moscow-annexed Crimea that involved test launches of cruise and hypersonic missiles. Russia's commander-in-chief was on board the cruiser Marshal Ustinov to watch the joint drills by the Northern and Black Sea Fleets, the Kremlin said. He watched test launches of Kalibr (Caliber) cruise missiles and Kinzhal (Dagger) hypersonic missiles among others, the Kremlin said. Russia annexed the peninsula of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014, in a move condemned by the West that was followed by the outbreak of an insurgency in eastern Ukraine. The conflict has claimed more than 13,000 lives.

Sultan Qaboos : Arab World's Longest Serving Ruler Passes Away

Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin-Said, who ruled for over half a century after seizing power in a 1970 palace coup

and pulled his Arabian sultanate into modernity while carefully balancing diplomatic ties between adversaries Iran and the US, passed away on January 11, 2020. He was 79.


Sultan Qaboos bin Said

The Oman News Agency mourned the death of the Sultan and praised the 'towering renaissance' he had presided over. It said his 'balanced policy' of mediating between rival camps in a volatile region had earned the world's respect.

Under his reign, Oman became known as a welcome tourist destination and a key West Asia interlocutor, helping the US free captives in Iran and Yeman and even hosting visits by Israeli officials while pushing back on their occupation of land Palestinians want for a future state.

"We do not have any conflicts and we do not put fuel on the fire when our opinion does not agree with someone," Sultan Qaboos told a Kuwaiti newspaper in 2008.

The sultan's death had raised the risk of unrest in the country. The unmarried Sultan Qaboos had no children and did not publicly name an heir, a tradition among the ruling al-Said dynasty whose history is replete with bloody takeovers.

But within hours, Oman state television announced **Haitham al-Said**, who has served as the sultanate's culture minister, as the new Sultan.

How Oman will respond to pressures both external and internal in a nation Sultan Qaboos absolutely ruled for decades remains in question. However, the new Sultan vowed in address to continue the foreign policy approach of Qaboos, one that he said is based on peaceful co-existence between nations and on non-interference.

UN Approves Scaled Back Aid for Syria

The UN Security Council voted on January 10, 2020 to renew cross-border aid to Syria but under pressure from Russia scaled back the program, which has been helping millions in the war-ravaged country since 2014. The assistance is being prolonged for only six months, whereas it had been extended yearly previously. And deliveries will now be made from only two points, which are along Syria's border with Turkey, down from four.

N. Irish Government Re-opens After 3 Years

Northern Ireland's government reopened for the first time in three years on January 11, 2020 after rival parties rallied around a new power-sharing agreement that can help the volatile province handle the pressures of Brexit. The region's devolved assembly at Stomont collapsed in January 2017 over a scandal caused by the runaway costs of a renewable energy scheme. Pro-Irish republicans and pro-British unionists were pushed into an agreement on January 10, 2020 by the threat of a new regional election if they missed a looming deadline on January 13, 2020.

Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen Wins 2nd Term as the Country's President : Voters Stand up to China

President Tsai Ing-wen won a **lanslide** victory over China-friendly opposition challenger Han Kuo-yu to clinch a second term in Taiwan's presidential election, dealing a blow to Beijing, which has long sought to bring the democratically run island under its control.

Tsai Ing-wen

Tsai had a record 7·7 million votes. Han had 5·2 million according to Taiwan's Central Election Commission.

The president, whose **Democratic Progressive Party** advocates formal independence from China, has vowed that Taiwan will never be unified with China as long she is in power. Meanwhile Han, of the **Kuomintang party**, had struggled to find a consistent message on China after a meteoric rise that saw him become mayor of Kaohsiung—Taiwan's third-largest city and a top contender to unseat Tsai.

Votes for Tsai surpassed the 6·9 million she reaped in 2016. Crowds of her supporters gathered for an evening victory celebration at her campaign's headquarters in downtown Taipei after hundreds of thousands rallied in city centre the night before the vote. It was a stark contrast to the scene at Han's headquarters further south in Kaohsiung, where staffers cried as it became apparent Tsai was likely to win.

Tsai was bolstered by a resilient economy and stock market and protests against China's grip in neighbouring Hong Kong, which have confronted Taiwanese voters with the potential perils of closer ties with the mainland.

Thai Anti-Govt Run

A protester in a tank costume at the 'Run Against Dictatorship' in Bangkok, Thailand, Thousands of Thais joined the run in the capital on January 12, 2020 in what appeared to be the biggest show of dissent against the government of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, although he also drew a big show of support at a rival event. Police estimated more than 12,745 runners and supporters gathered before sunrise at a park in Bangkok, wearing athletic outfits and colourful shoes. Some of them shouted slogans such as 'Prayuth, get out'.

Malta Chooses New Premier

A first-term lawmaker whose father was Malta's president has been chosen to be the country's Prime

Minister. The count on January 12, 2020 showed Robert Abela received nearly 58% of votes cast by members of the governing Labour Party eligible to choose the new leader. Abela, 42, will replace Joseph Muscat, who is stepping down midway through his second term as prime minister amid demands for accountability over the 2017 murder of anti-corruption journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia.

China Operationalises World's Largest Radio Telescope

Colossal Device

China has operationalised the world's largest radio telescope with a diameter of half a kilometre. The colossal device is expected to make major scientific discoveries in the coming years.

Five-hundred-metre Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST) is a single-dish telescope and is located in southwest China's **Guiyang** city, the capital of Guizhou province. It has a receiving area of around 30 football fields.

The telescope was put to work on January 11, 2020 after three years of trial operation. It will gradually open to astronomers around the globe, providing them with a powerful tool to uncover the mysteries surrounding the genesis and evolution of the universe.

The receiving area of FAST equals 30 football fields.

All technical indicators of the telescope have reached or exceed the planned level, and its performance is world-leading, Shen Zhulin, an official with the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said at the opening of the telescope.

China Sky Eye

Dubbed as "China Sky Eye", FAST is about 2·5 times as sensitive as the second-largest telescope in the world and is capable of receiving a maximum of 38 gigabytes of information per second.

Cost

With a cost of nearly 1·2-billion-yuan (around US $ 170 million), FAST was completed in September 2016, over 20 years after it was proposed by Chinese astronomers.

Scientists from the US, Britain and Pakistan along with their counterparts from China have worked at FAST.

"More global collaborations are expected in areas such as gravitational wave detection and very-long-baseline interferometry following its formal operation," the Xinhua report said.

Tibet Passes Law Making Ethnic Unity Mandatory

For the first time, Tibet has passed a law making ethnic unity mandatory, reflecting the significant role it plays in the sensitive remote Himalayan region's economic and social development.

- The People's Congress of Tibet on January 11, 2020 passed the legislation, which will take effect from May 1, guaranteeing ethnic unity in the territory, a Global Times report said on January 12, 2020.
- The new law makes it clear that Tibet has been an inalienable part of China since ancient times, and it is the common responsibility for the people of all ethnic groups to safeguard national reunification, strengthen ethnic unity and take a clear-cut stand against separatism.
- The law reflects the important role of ethnic unity in the region's economic and social development, the report said.

40 Ethnic Minorities

There are more than 40 ethnic minorities accounting for 95% of Tibet's over three million population. The legislation work started early last year and it collected opinions from all sections of the society.

In line with Constitution's Provisions

The legislation considers local ethnic characteristics of Tibet. Ethnic unity is an important goal of stable social governance in the region. "The move is also in line with the Constitution's provisions on ethnic unity," said Penpa Lhamo, deputy head of the Contemporary Studies Institute at the Tibet Academy of Social Sciences. Tibet population grew from 1·23 million in 1959 to 3·44 million in 2018, with Tibetans accounting for over 90%.

Resolution of US-China Trade War : US Signs Ist Phase of 'Momentous' Trade Deal with China : Tariffs Remain in Place

Key Highlights

- China agreed to buy $ 200 billion more in US goods over two years than it did in 2017 before the trade war erupted.
- In his remarks, Trump called the trade agreement signing a momentous step to a future of fair and reciprocal trade.

The US on January 15 signed the first phase of a trade deal with China, which President Donald Trump described as historic, concluding more than a year of tough negotiations including several months of suspension of talks between the two largest economies of the world.

The First Phase

The first phase of the trade deal includes **Intellectual Property (IP) Protection and Enforcement**, ending forced technology transfer, dramatic expansion of American agriculture, removing barriers to American financial services, ending currency manipulation, rebalancing the US-China trade relationship and effective dispute resolution.

Chinese Vice Premier Liu He and US President Trump sign 'phase one' of the US-China trade agreement at White House on January 15, 2020.

The agreement was signed by President Trump and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, Politburo Member and Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China.

The Centre Piece Point

The centre piece of the deal is a pledge by China to purchase at least an additional $ 200 billion worth of US farm products and other goods and services over two years, over a baseline of $ 186 billion in purchases in 2017.

In his remark, Trump called the trade agreement signing "a momentous step to a future of fair and reciprocal trade."

"The two countries are righting the wrongs of the past," the US President said, adding that he would soon visit China and thanked his Chinese counterpart for this deal.

This is a transformative deal that will bring great benefits for the two countries, Trump said, hoping that this will even lead to a peaceful world.

Tariffs Remain

While the deal stops short of many changes the president has sought from China, it leaves in place tariffs on about $ 360 billion in Chinese imports, leverage the administration hopes will generate future concessions.

The US has dropped plans to impose tariffs on an additional $ 160 billion in Chinese imports, and it cut in half, to 7·5%, existing tariffs on $ 110 billion of goods from China.

Trump said that China has made substantial and enforceable commitment to protecting American ideas.

At the same time, he said, punitive tariffs on China would remain in place till the time the second phase of the deal is agreed.

New Chapter in Relations

Describing this as the start of a new chapter in US-China relations, Vice-President Mike Pence quoted an ancient Chinese proverb : "let to-day be the beginning of a bright future more prosperous" for both the American and Chinese people.

Chinese President Xi Jinping also welcomed the Phase I trade deal reached with the US.

France, Germany and UK Serve Notice on Iran under N-Deal

Key Highlights

- It is first step under 2015 pact towards reimposing UN sanctions.
- On January 14, these three nations set in motion the nuclear deal's dispute resolution process.

Britain, France and Germany on January 14, 2020 formally accused Iran of breaking the 2015 agreement that limited its nuclear programme, taking the first step towards reimposing further United Nations sanctions.

Dispute Resolution Mechanism

The European countries triggered the dispute resolution mechanism under the 2015 deal, setting the clock running on what could be some 60 days of negotiations with Iran about coming back into full compliance. That process could end up with a 'snapback' of UN sanctions on Iran that had been suspended under the deal, including an arms embargo.

The move, which had been expected for more than a week, was delayed when the US killed a top Iranian commander, Major General Qassim Suleimani, with repercussions that are still playing out in Iran and across the region.

President Trump withdrew in 2018 from the deal, which was negotiated under President Barack Obama, and he has imposed several rounds of American sanctions on Iran. In response, Tehran has repeatedly moved beyond the limits that the agreement had placed on its uranium enrichment, raising fears that it could be close to building an atomic bomb.

A file photo of British PM Johnson, German Chancellor Merkel and French President Macron. In a BBC inerview, Johnson suggested that the agreement could be re-worked to address some of the concerns raised by President Trump. "Let's work together to replace the JCPOA with the Trump deal instead," Johnson said.

The JCPOA

The Europeans want to save the deal and persuade both Washington and Tehran to begin a new set of negotiations about missile development and Iran's regional activities, a senior European official said. But the three European countries, all signatories to the deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, clearly felt that they had to respond to Iran's movement away from compliance.

Joint Statement

In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of the United Kingdom, France and Germany said that they had warned Iran on December 6 that "unless it reversed course, we would have no choice but to take action within the framework of the JCPOA, including through the dispute resolution mechanism".

On January 14, 2020 they set in motion the nuclear deal's dispute resolution process, they said. "In good faith, with the overarching objective of preserving the JCPOA and in the sincere hope of finding a way forward through constructive diplomatic dialogue."

The three countries reiterated that they opposed Trump's withdrawal from the deal and were not joining his campaign of 'maximum pressure' to cripple 'Iran economically'. "Our hope is to bring back Iran into full compliance", they said.

Russian Roulette : Russian PM Quits As President Putin Calls for Constitutional Overhaul, New PM Appointed

Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev of Russia abruptly resigned on January 15, 2020, shortly after President Putin sent out proposals for sweeping constitutional changes. Medvedev's cabinet also resigned.

Mikhail Mishustin New PM

As a replacement for Medvedev, Putin appointed as PM a little known bureaucrat who has served for the past decade as head of the federal tax service.

- The lower house of State Duma voted overwhelmingly to approve Mikhail Mishustin as premier on January 17, 2020.
- Putin's current term as President ends in 2024 and observers say the 67-year-old could be laying the groundwork to assume a new position to remain in a powerful behind-the-scenes role.

The last time President Putin faced the two-term limit, in 2008, Medvedev was elected president. Putin became PM, though he remained the real power in the government, and he returned to the presidency in 2012, when Medvedev became PM.

In his state of the nation speech, Putin said he wanted more authority transferred to Parliament from the President for which amendment will be carried out in the Constitution.

Brexit Materialises : Britain Says Goodbye to the European Union (EU)

The UK, led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, has officially left the European Union after 47 years of membership — and more than three years after it voted to do so in a referendum.

The historic moment, which happened at 23-00 GMT on January 31, 2020, was marked by both celebrations and anti-Brexit protests.

Boris Johnson has vowed to bring the country together and 'take us forward'. UK citizens will notice few immediate changes now that the country is no longer in the European Union.

Chinese President Xi Jinping Visits Myanmar : Both Countries Sign Dozens of Deals

Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Myanmar on January 17-18, 2020. As a measure of demonstrating solidarity with Myanmar Xi said that he stood by Myanmarese leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Signs Dozens of Deals

Both countries signed dozens of mammoth infrastructure and trade deals as part of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) after a meeting on January 18, 2020 between President Xi Jinping and Myanmarese leader Suu Kyi, as Beijing doubles down its support for a government under fire for its treatment of Rohingya Muslims.

The Chinese leader's two-day state visit to Myanmar's purpose-built capital comes as western investors cast a wide berth around the country due to the Rohingya crisis.

A 2017 military crackdown on the Muslim minority, which UN investigators have called genocide, forced some 740,000 people over the border into Bangladesh.

Beijing has stood strongly beside Myanmar and the Asian giant is now the country's largest investor even as distrust of its ambitions lingers among the public. **More than 30 agreements** were signed on January 18, 2020. Xi's final day of his visit.

Details on the amount of the package were scant but among the **33 deals** was a concession and shareholders agreement on the $ 1·3 billion-dollar Kyaukhphyu deep-sea port, the centre piece of the so-called China-Myanmar Economc Corridor (CMEC) and economic zone. Ellora

Continued from Page 20

"India and Brazil's strategic partnership is dependent on our similar mindset and values. In spite of the distance, we are together on several global forums. Today, we have agreed to take forward our partnership on several issues," the PM said at a joint press conference.

Stating that the needed legal framework has been created to make investment better in both countries, he said India and Brazil, two big growing democracies, think similarly on several global issues. "From terrorism to the environment, India and Brazil have a similar view on all such issues," he added.

Bilateral relations were elevated to a Strategic Partnership in 2006 and 2023 will mark 75 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

"We have just signed 15 agreements, we have indeed further consolidated our working bilateral relations," Mr. Bolsonaro said.

The 15 agreements will provide for cooperation in a wide range of areas including oil and gas, mineral resources, traditional medicine, animal husbandry, bioenergy and trade and investment.

"Your visit to India has opened a new chapter in ties between India and Brazil," The Indian PM said, summing up the outcome of his talks with Bolsonaro. Calling Brazil a valuable partner in India's economic growth, the Prime minister said both the countries have been on the same page on various global issues and exuded confidence that the ties will strengthen further. "Despite geographical distance, both India and Brazil are together on various global issues as there is convergence in our views," The PM said in his media statement in the presence of Bolsonaro. The Prime Minister said focus is being given to new ways of boosting defence industrial cooperation. "We want to have broad-based cooperation in defence," he added.

On his part Bolsonaro said the two countries have further consolidated the already strong ties by signing 15 agreements which will provide for cooperation in a range of areas. According to the action plan, the two countries will encourage greater collaboration between their defence industrial bases and work together to conclude an agreement in combating international terrorism and transnational organized crime. It mentioned that the two sides will strengthen established institutional mechanisms and promote coordination on bilateral and multilateral issues of mutual interest based on the principles of equality and trust.

Bolsonaro arrived in New Delhi on January 24, 2020, accompanied by his daughter Laura, daughter-in-law Leticia Firmo, eight ministers, four members of the Brazilian Parliament and a large business delegation.

Mr. Bolsonaro was the Chief Guest at India's 71st Republic Day Celebrations. Brazil is also a country which celebrates many festivals with fervour. Ellora

Regional News

Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh Assembly Clears Bill to Establish Three State Capitals

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on January 20, 2020 passed *'The AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020'* that intended to execute the State government's scheme of having three capitals in the State—executive capital in Visakhapatnam, legislative one in Amravati and the judicial one in Kurnool. Opposition Telugu Desam Party opposed the bill and proposed some amendments to it but the ruling YSR Congress rejected the proposals.

The Andhra Pradesh state Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy decided to relegate Amaravati as the legislative capital and make Visakhapatnam the executive capital, where the secretariat and Raj Bhavan would be located. Kurnool in Rayalaseema will be developed as judicial capital, where the AP High Court would be located.

The AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill was introduced in the assembly by Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister B Satyanarayanain.

Andhra Pradesh Assembly Passes Resolution to Abolish Legislative Council

The Andhra Pradesh Assembly on January 27, 2020 passed a statutory resolution for the abolition of the Legislative Council in Andhra Pradesh. Earlier, the State Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy gave its nod to the proposal to end the Legislative Council, where opposition Telugu Desam Party is in majority, in the State.

Andhra Pradesh Assembly Speaker Thammineni Seetharam declared that the government had moved the resolution as per Article 169(1) of the Constitution and 133 Assembly members out of those 'present and voting' gave their consent for the abolition of the Council. After initially putting the number at 121, it was enhanced to 133 after a proper counting.

The government's decision to abolish the Legislative Council comes after the TDP blocked two bills in the Upper House earlier.

The Andhra Pradesh government sent a copy of the statutory resolution to abolish the Legislative Council to the Central government on January 28 for further action.

Jharkhand

Rabindra Nath Mahato Elected Speaker of Newly-formed Jharkhand Assembly

Rabindra Nath Mahato, a Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) legislator from 'Nala' assembly seat was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the newly-formed Jharkhand Legislative Assembly on January 7, 2020 in the three day session of the assembly. Mahato pledged to do justice with the new responsibility given to him.

Mahato is the three time legislator from Nala assembly seat. He was first elected to it in 2005 and then in 2014 and 2019. All the newly-elected MLAs in the 81-member Jharkhand assembly were administered oath by pro-tem Speaker Stephen Marandi.

Daman Becomes Headquarters of Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli Union Territory

The Central government on January 22 designated Daman as the headquarters of the merged Union Territories of Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli. The Central government has also approved amendments or extension or repeal in the legislations and regulations dealing with Goods and Services Tax (GST), Value Added Tax (VAT) and State Excise. The decisions were taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. These amendments will lead to 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance' by way of having common taxation authorities, better delivery of services to the citizens by reducing duplication of work and improving administrative efficiency.

Kerala

Kerala Becomes First State to Move Supreme Court Against CAA

Challenging the validity of the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 Kerala government on January 14, 2020 moved the Supreme Court against it making it as a Centre—State dispute. Kerala government became the first state to take the CAA, 2019 to the Apex Court, urging the Supreme Court to declare the law enacted by the Parliament violative of the Constitution and its secular principles.

The petition was filed after the Kerala Assembly passed a resolution against the CAA on December 31, 2019, requesting the Central government to repeal the CAA.

Citing the original and exclusive jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, Kerala filed the plea under Article 131 of the Constitution against CAA and said in its suit that it would be compelled under Article 256 to comply with the CAA, which was "Manifestly arbitrary, unreasonable, irrational and violative of fundamental rights. Besides the CAA, the suit also challenges other laws that affect citizenship.

The CAA has been facing a nationwide protests especially in Kerala, West Bengal, Assam and other parts of country since its enactment in December 2019.

What is Article 131 ?

Article 131 of the Constitution gives the Supreme Court original and exclusive jurisdiction to resolve disputes between the centre and one or more states; between two or more states.

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Updates National and International

ACRONYMS

ASI	—	Archaeological Survey of India
CCTV	—	Central China Television
CES	—	Consumer Electronics Show
CMEC	—	China-Myanmar Economic Corridor
DPIIT	—	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
EPA	—	Environment Protection Act
FRBM Act	—	Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (Act)
ICIMOD	—	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IMET	—	International Military Education and Training
INI	—	Institute of National Importance
ISFR	—	India State of Forest Report
MAC	—	Multi-Agency Centre
NCAP	—	National Clean Air Programme
NHSRC	—	National Health System Resource Centre
VGF	—	Viability Gap Funding

APPOINTMENTS/NOMINATIONS

Luo Huining China Replaces Top Envoy to Crisis-hit Hong Kong

China has replaced its top envoy to Hong Kong, state media reported on January 4, 2020, the most significant personnel change by Beijing since pro-democracy protests erupted in the city nearly seven months ago. The removal of the head of the Liaison Office, which represents the central government in semi-autonomous Hong Kong, comes as the city grapples with its biggest political crisis in decades. "Wang Zhimin has been dismissed from his position as head of the Liaison Office" and replaced by **Luo Huining**, state broadcaster CCTV said, without giving details about the shuttle.

PERSONS IN THE NEWS

Vithal Tilvi : Goa-born PIO Leads NASA Team to Find Farthest Group of Galaxies

An International team of astronomers linked to NASA led by an Indian-origin Goa-born scientist, Vithal Tilvi, has discovered a never-before-seen group of galaxies, now labelled EGS77, which is the farthest group of galaxies to have even been sighted.

In 2013, Tilvi was also part of a team that discovered the farthest single galaxy ever sighted by astronomers. The new group of galaxies, EGS77, is estimated to be over 13 billion light years away from the Earth. It took Tilvi and team over four years to make the findings. This group of galaxies can help astronomers see the universe directly in its infancy, and see what were the chemicals present when the universe was just born. "As we look farther and farther, we are looking back in time. "This is because, the starlight which carries information about the galaxy group, is reaching the Earth now, after travelling for 13 billion years," Tilvi told the media. "Usually, it is difficult to see galaxies as far as EGS77 because of the presence of neutral hydrogen fog in the universe, which blocks some of the galaxy light," James Rhoads of NASA, a team member, said.

An artist's impression of galaxy group EGS77 shows bubbles clear of neutral hydrogen fog, allowing starlight to travel freely to the Earth; (Background) The composite of Hubble images showing 3 galaxies of EGS77 (green circles); (inset) Goa-born NASA scientist Vithal Tilvi.

Fortunately, intense heat from these same galaxies clears the surrounding hydrogen fog, allowing galaxy light to travel freely to the Earth. Galaxies and galaxy group such as EGS77 must have cleared all the hydrogen fog, leading to the transition from opaque to a transparent universe that we see today. This is a tremendous achievement and will advance our knowledge about how the universe evolved," Tilvi said.

Raja Jon Vurputoor Chari : Indian American Among NASA's New Astronauts

Raja Jon Vurputoor Chari, an Indian-American with family roots in Hyderabad may well be on his way to the moon. He is one among 11 NASA graduates who have completed the initial astronaut candidate training and have been shortlisted for mission assignment.

To become an astronaut was 42-year-old Raja Chari's childhood dream. Chari's father, Srinivas Chari, moved to Wisconsin in 1970s for further education, during which he met his future wife Peggy Egbert, an American nurse at the university. They both got married in 1976. Having been born and brought up in the US, Raja did not forget his roots and describes his travels to Hyderabad as a kind of a pilgrimage.

Raja Chari's father moved to the US in 1970s from Hyderabad.

Raja did his engineering from the Air Force Academy and went to MIT for a master's in aeronautics.

MAGBOOKING

Samira Ahmed : Indian Origin Woman Journalist Wins Equal Pay Claim Against BBC

A BBC journalist who was paid a fraction of the fee received by a male colleague doing a similar job has won a sex-discrimination lawsuit against the British broadcaster.

Samira Ahmed

An employment tribunal ruled on January 10, 2020 that Samira Ahmed, whose mother hails from India, should have received similar compensation as Jeremy Vine. Both presented programmes that dealt with audience comments and complaints about BBC programmes.

Ahmed was paid $ 608 per episode of 'Newswatch' on the BBC News Channel, while Vine received $ 3,920 for each episode of "Points of View" on the more widely watched channel BBC One.

Tribunal judges said the work involved was "the same or, if not the same, very similar" and the BBC had failed to prove that the pay gap was "because of a material factor which did not involve subjecting the claimant to sex discrimination." After the verdict, Ahmed said : "No woman wants to have to take action against their own employer... I love working for the BBC. I'm glad it's been resolved."

The BBC said it was committed to equal pay, but "we have always believed that the pay of Samira and Jeremy Vine was not determined by their gender. Presenters—female as well as male—had always been paid more on 'Points of View' than 'Newswatch'. We'll need to consider this judgment carefully," it added.

Kane Tanaka Extends Record as World's Oldest Person

Japan's Kane Tanaka has extended her record as the world's oldest person by celebrating her 117th birthday at a nursing home in Fukuoka in southern Japan. Tanaka marked her birthday with a party on January 5, 2020 along with staff and friends at the nursing home, television footage from local broadcaster TVQ Kyushu Broadcasting Co showed. Tanaka was last year confirmed as the oldest living person, aged 116 years 66 days old as of March 9.

Kane Tanaka

Nadia Whittome : Indian Origin Britain's Youngest MP : She Wants to Work for S. Asian Solidarity

At 23, half-Punjabi and half Anglo-Indian Nadia Whittome is Britain's youngest sitting MP. The Labour politician, who was elected for the first time in the December parliamentary elections told the media in an interview that her win is a big boost for young people of colour and that she aims to work towards solidarity between South Asians in the United Kingdom.

Nadia Whittome

"I am looking forward to using my position as an Indian-origin MP to build solidarity between South Asian people. Whether we are Bengali, Indian, Pakistani or Kashmiri ... we need to come together over our shared interests, experiences and struggles."

"My election has been a boost for young people of colour in Nottingham", said Nottingham East's first BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) MP, who got actively involved in politics at 16.

DEATHS

Akbar Padamsee : Iconic Artist Passes Away

Celebrated artist Akbar Padamsee passed away in Mumbai on January 6, 2020 following prolonged illness. He was 91.

Akbar Padamsee

A contemporary of the legendary progressive masters, including F.N. Souza, V.S. Gaitonde, M.F. Hussain, Padamsee worked with a variety of mediums including oil painting photography, sculpture, prints and films.

Educated at Sir JJ School of Art, Pdamsee lived and worked in Europe and the United Kingdom before returning to Mumbai. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2010.

While his contemporaries became collectors' favourites in the mid-2000s, Padamsee became the most expensive Indian artist in 2019 when one of his works was auctioned for ₹ 11·70 crore.

Blunt, opinionated and erudite, Padamsee was a wonderful story teller in addition to being one of the most respected artists of his time. "Apart from Krishen Khanna, he's the last of a generation of artists who believe that art could transform consciousness. His legacy is his expansive artistic practice." said Hoskote.

Lt. General P.N. Hoon (1929-2020) : The Man Who Helped Secure Siachen for India in 1984 Passes Away

Lieutenant General Prem Nath Hoon (retd.) under whose leadership the army secured the Siachen glacier in 1984, died in Panchkula on January 6, 2020 following a stroke. He was 90.

Prem Nath Hoon

Hoon was the head of the Srinagar based 15 corps when the army launched **Operation Meghdoot** in April 1984, the first assault to take control of strategic heights on Siachen, a 76 km river of slow-moving ice. India deployed its soldiers at Siachen after Pakistan began allowing international mountaineering expedition to the glacier, sending out a signal that it controlled the area.

Born in 1929 at Abbottabad in Pakistan, Hoon joined the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, in 1947. " I was sure about what I wanted and went ahead to achieve it," the general told HT last June.

Lieutenant General K. J. Singh (retd.) a former Chief of Western Command, recalled Hoon's contribution in Securing the Siachen glacier.

MASTER KEY

Defence minister Rajnath Singh described Hoon as an outstanding officer whose contribution to India's military history would be remembered.

Former Tamil Nadu Speaker P.H. Pandian Passes Away

Senior AIADMK leader and former Speaker of Tamil Nadu Assembly P.H. Pandian died in Chennai in a private hospital on January 4, 2020 owing to illness. Pandian, a lawyer by profession, had served as the Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly from 1985 to 1989. He was elected to the Tamil Nadu Assembly from his native Cheranmadevi in 1977, 1980 and 1984.

Gary Starkweather, Laser Printer Inventor, Passes Away at 81.

Gary Starkweather, an engineer and inventor who designed the first laser printer, bringing the power of the printing press to almost anyone, died on December 26 at a hospital in Florida. He was 81.

Gary Starkweather

Starkweather was working as a junior engineer in the offices of the Xerox Corp in Rochester, New York, in 1964—several years after the company had introduced the photocopier to US office buildings—when he began working on a version that could transmit information between two distant copiers, so that a person could scan a document in one place and send a copy to someone else in another.

At the Palo Alto Research Centre, originally a subsidiary of Xerox, Starkweather built the first working laser printer in 1971 in less than nine months. By the 1990s, it was a staple of offices around the world. By the new millennium, it was nearly ubiquitous in homes as well. "We still use the same fundamental engine to print billions of pages a day." said Doug Fairbairn, a staff director at the Computer History Museum who worked alongside Starkweather at PARC. "It was all Gary's idea."

Christopher, Son & Keeper of JRR Tolkien's Legacy, is No More

Christopher Tolkien, the son of the writer J.R.R. Tolkien who guarded his legacy and edited posthumous works like 'The Silmarillion', died on January 15, 2020 in ?France at age 95. For nearly 50 years after his father died in 1973, Tolkien worked to keep alive the world he had created in 'The Hobbit' (1937) and 'The Lord of the Rings' (1949)—the spiders of Mirkwood, the Eye of Mordor, the elves of Rivendell and thousands of pages' worth of other characters, places and plot twists. In all, he edited or oversaw the publication of two dozen editions of his father's works, many of which became international best sellers.

Chrisopher Tolkien

Christopher is also credited with creating the widely acclaimed 1954 map of Middle-earth, the land in which the sprawling stories were set. "Without Christopher," Thomas Shippey a British professor, said in an interview, "we would have very little knowledge of how Tolkien created his mythology and his own legendarium."

AWARDS AND HONOURS

ICC Awards – 2019

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on January 15, 2020 declared its annual cricket awards in different categories. Ben Stokes, the hero of England's maiden World Cup (ODI format) title victory in 2019, won the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy as he was named the ICC Cricketer of the year for 2019. He also played historic and unforgettable cricket in the Ashes Series last year.

Ben Stokes

Rohit Sharma

India's Rohit Sharma was named the ICC ODI Cricketer of the year for 2019 while Australia's pace bowler Pat Cummins got the Test Cricketer of the Year honour. Indian skipper Virat Kohli continued his strong presence in the ICC Awards. Kohli was named the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award winner for his gesture of trying to stop the fans from booing Steve Smith of Australia during a world cup match in the background of Smith's ball-tampering scandal. Kohli was named the captain of ICC's Test and ODI teams of the year for third year in a row.

ICC Awards 2019 : Major Winners

- **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for Best Cricketer of the Year :** Ben Stokes (England)
- **Test Cricketer of the Year :** Pat Cummins (Australia)
- **ODI Cricketer of the Year :** Rohit Sharma (India)
- **T20I Performance of the Year :** Deepak Chahar (India) (India, 6/7 v Bangladesh)
- **Emerging Cricketer of the Year :** Marnus Labuschagne (Australia)
- **Associate Cricketer of the Year :** Kyle Coetzer (Scotland)
- **Spirit of Cricket Award :** Virat Kohli for stopping the fans booing Steve Smith at the Oval
- **David Shepherd Trophy for Umpire of the Year :** Richard Illingworth (England)

The ICC's Teams of the Year 2019

ODI Team (In batting Order)—Rohit Sharma (India), Shai Hope (West Indies), Virat Kohli (India–Captain), Babar Azam (Pakistan), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Ben Stokes (England), Jos Buttler (England–wicket-keeper), Mitchell Starc (Australia), Trent Boult (New Zealand), Mohammed Shami, Kuldeep Yadav (India)

Test Team (In batting order)—Mayank Agarwal (India), Tom Latham (New Zealand), Marnus Labuschagne (Australia), Virat Kohli (India-captain), Steve Smith (Australia), Ben Stokes (England), BJ Watling (New Zealand-wicketkeeper), Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc (Australia), Neil Wagner (New Zealand), Nathan Lyon (Australia).

Sportstar Aces Awards; Kapil Dev Gets Lifetime Achievement Honour

Sportstar Aces Awards were conferred on numerous sportspersons from different sports and games at a ceremony in Mumbai on January 13, 2020. Legendary cricketer and 1983 World Cup winning captain Kapil Dev was honoured with the Sportstar Aces Lifetime Achievement honour. World badminton champion P. V. Sindhu of India was decorated with the Sportstar of the Year honour. She also won the Sportswoman of the Year (Racquet Sports) honour at the event.

Sportstar Aces Awards : Major Winners

- **Sportsman of the Year** (Cricket) **:** Rohit Sharma
- **Sportswoman of the Year** (Cricket) **:** Smriti Mandhana
- **Sportsman of the Year** (Track & Field) **:** Avinash Sable
- **Sportswoman of the Year** (Track & Field) **:** Annu Rani
- **Sportsman of the Year** (Team Sports) **:** Manpreet Singh
- **Sportswoman of the Year** (Team Sports) **:** Deep Grace Ekka
- **Sportsman of the Year** (Individual Sports) **:** Bajrang Punia
- **Sportswoman of the Year** (Individual Sports) **:** Koneru Humpy & Apurvi Chandela
- **Sportsman of the Year** (Racquet Sports) **:** B. Sai Praneeth
- **Sportswoman of the Year** (Racquet Sports) **:** P. V. Sindhu
- **Sportsman of the Year** (Para Sports) **:** Pramod Bhagat
- **Sportswoman of the Year** (Para Sports) **:** Ekta Bhyan
- **Young Athlete of the Year** (Boys) **:** R. Praggnanandhaa & Esow Alben
- **Young Athlete of the Year** (Girls) **:** Mehuli Ghosh
- **Team of the Year :** Indian Test Cricket Team
- **Coach of the Year :** R. B. Ramesh & P. Gopi Chand
- **Best State for the Promotion of Sports :** Odisha
- **Best PSU/Corporate House for the Promotion of Sports :** Indian Oil Corporation Ltd
- **Best University for the Promotion of Sports** : Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education And Research
- **Special Jury Award :** Pankaj Advani
- **Special Recognition Award :** Leander Paes
- **Chairman's Choice :** Steve Smith
- **Lifetime Achievement :** Kapil Dev
- **Sportstar of the Year :** P. V. Sindhu

BCCI Awards 2018-19; Jasprit Bumrah Gets Polly Umrigar Honour

The BCCI awards in different categories for outstanding cricket performances in 2018-19 season were presented at an award ceremony in Mumbai on January 12, 2020. Indian pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah stole the limelight as he was honoured with the coveted Polly Umrigar award for being adjudged the best male international cricketer. It carries a citation, a trophy and a cheque worth of ₹ 15 lakh. Bumrah also won BCCI's Dilip Sardesai award for being the highest wicket taking Indian bowler in Test cricket. He took 34 wickets in six matches with three five wickets haul.

Cheteshwar Pujara was also honoured with the Dilip Sardesai honour for being the highest run scorer Indian batsman in Tests.

BCCI Awards 2018-19 : Major Winners

AWARD WINNERS

- Col CK Nayudu Lifetime achievement award : **Kris Srikkanth**
- BCCI lifetime achievement award for women : **Anjum Chopra**
- BCCI Speical Award : **Dilip Doshi**
- Dilip Sardesai Award (highest run-getter in Test cricket) : **Cheteshwar Pujara**
- Dilip Sardesai (highest wickets in Test cricket) : **Jasprit Bumrah**
- Polly Umrigar Award (best male International cricketer) : **Jasprit Bumrah**
- Highest run-getter in women's ODIs : **Smriti Mandhana**
- Highest wickets in women's ODIs : **Jhulan Goswami**
- Best International debut (men) : **Mayank Agarwal**
- Best International debut (women) : **Shafali Verma**
- Lala Amarnath award for best allrounder in Ranji Trophy cricket : **Shivam Dube** (Mumbai)
- Lala Amarnath award for best allrounder in limited-overs competitions : **Nitish Rana** (Delhi)
- Madhavrao Scindia award for Highest run-scorer in Ranji : **Milind Kumar** (Sikkim)
- Madhavrao Scindia award for Highest Wicket-taker in Ranji Tropy : **Ashutosh Aman** (Bihar)
- Best Performance in BCCI domestic tournaments : **Vidarbha**

77th Annual Golden Globe Awards

The 77th Annual Golden Globe Awards, one of the most prestigious Hollywood honours, were conferred in different categories on films and actors at a star-studded event on January 5, 2020 in Los Angeles, the USA.

Sam Mendes' World War I movie **1917** and **Once Upon a Time in Hollywood**, Quentin Tarantino's film set in 1960s–70s Tinseltown stole the limelight by sweeping top honours at the 77th Golden Globes. **'1917'** was adjudged the best drama and Sam Mendes won the best director Golden Globe for this movie. **Once Upon a Time in Hollywood** took home three awards including best comedy/musical movie honour. South Korean film **'Parasite'** was declared the best foreign language film at the 77th Golden Globes.

77th Golden Globe Honours : Major Winners

MOVIES

- **Best Motion Picture :** *Musical or Comedy*—Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
- **Best Motion Picture :** *Drama*—1917
- **Best Foreign Language Film :** Parasite (South Korea)
- **Best Actor :** *Musical or Comedy*—Taron Egerton for 'Rocketman'

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- **Best Actor :** *Drama*—Joaquin Phoenix for 'Joker'
- **Best Actress :** *Drama*—Renee Zellweger for 'Judy'
- **Best Actress :** *Musical or Comedy*—Awkwafina for 'The Farewell'
- **Best Director :** Sam Mendes for '1917'
- **Best Motion Picture :** *Animated*—Missing Link
- **Best Actress in Supporting Role :** Laura Dern for 'Marriage Story'
- **Best Actor in Supporting Role :** Brad Pitt for 'Once Upon a Time in Hollywood'
- **Best Original Score :** Hildur Guanadottir for 'Joker'
- **Best Original Song :** (I'm Gonna) Love Me Again for 'Rocketman'
- **Best Screenplay :** Quentin Tarantino for 'Once Upon a Time in Hollywood'

TELEVISION

- **Best Actor in a Television Series :** *Musical or Comedy*—Ramy Youssef for 'Ramy'
- **Best Actress in a Television Series :** *Musical or Comedy*—Phoebe Waller – Bridge for 'Fleabag'
- **Best Actor in a Television Series :** *Drama*—Brian Cox for 'Succession'
- **Best Actress in a Television Series :** *Drama* : Olivia Colman for 'The Crown'
- **Best Actor in a Limited Series :** Russell Crowe for 'The Loudest Voice'
- **Best Actress in a Limited Series :** Michelle Williams for Fosse/Verdon
- **Best Television Limited Series :** Chernobyl
- **Best Television Series :** *Drama*—Succession
- **Best Television Series :** *Musical or Comedy*—Fleabag
- **Cecil B. De Mille Award for Lifetime Achievement**—Tom Hanks

Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards

South Korean thriller **'Parasite'**, a social satire on the wealth gap in South Korea became the first film in a foreign language to get the top honour of best cast ensemble in the Screen Actors Guild Awards on January 19, 2020 in Los Angeles, the USA. Veteran actor Robert De Niro was honoured with the SAG Lifetime Achievement Award in the SAG award ceremony, this year. **Parasite** pipped 'The Irishman' and 'Once upon A Time in Hollywood' to get the top SAG honour.

SAG Awards 2020 : Major Winners

MOVIES

- **Outstanding cast :** *Parasite*
- **Best actor :** Joaquin Phoenix, *Joker*
- **Best actress :** Renee Zellweger, *Judy*
- **Best supporting actor :** Brad Pitt, *Once Upon a Time … in Hollywood*
- **Best supporting actress :** Laura Dern, *Marriage Story*

TELEVISION

- **Outstanding ensemble, drama series :** *The Crown*
- **Outstanding ensemble, comedy series :** *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*
- **Best actor, drama series :** Peter Dinklage, *Game of Thrones*
- **Best actor, comedy series :** Tony Shalhoub, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*
- **Best actress, drama series :** Jennifere Aniston, *The Morning Show*
- **Best actress, comedy series :** Phoebe Waller-Bridge, *Fleabag*

14th Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards

14th edition of the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards were conferred in different categories across Print, Broadcast and purely Digital media for outstanding work in 2018 on January 20, 2020 in New Delhi. President Ram Nath Kovind who was the Chief Guest at the event, presented the awards to the winners.

14th Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards : Major Winners

- **Reporting From Conflict Zones (Print/Digital) :** Dipankar Ghose (The Indian Express)
- **Reporting From Conflict Zones (Broadcast) :** Dheeraj Kumar, Late Achyuta Nanda Sahu and Mormukut Sharma (Doordarshan News)
- **Reporting in Hindi (Print/Digital) :** Diti Bajpai (Gaon Connection)
- **Reporting in Hindi (Broadcast) :** Shadab Ahmad Moizee (The Quint)
- **Reporting in Regional Languages (Print/Digital) :** Anwesha Banerjee (El Samay)
- **Reporting in Regional Languages (Broadcast) :** Saneesh TK (Manorama News)
- **Reporting in Environment, Science & Technology Reporting (Print/Digital) :** Mridula Chari and Vinita Govindrajan
- **Reporting in Environment, Science & Technology Reporting (Broadcast) :** Sarvapriya Sangwan (BBC India)
- **Unconvering India Invisible (Print/Digital) :** Hina Rohtaki (The Indian Express)
- **Uncovering India Invisible (Broadcast) :** Asmita Nandy and Meghnad Bose (The Quint)
- **Business & Economic Journalism (Print/Digital) :** Nidhi Verma (Thomson Reuters)
- **Politics & Government (Print/Digital) :** Sushant Kumar Singh (The Indian Express)
- **Politics & Governemnt (Broadcast) :** Moumita Sen and Shikha (India Today TV)
- **Investigative Reporting (Print/Digital) : Teena Thacker (Mint)**
- **Investigative Reporting (Broadcast) :** Poonam Agarwal (The Quint)
- **Books (Non-Fiction) (Print) :** Gyan Prakash
- **Civic Journalism (Print/Digital) :** Aniruddha Ghoshal (News 18)
- **Photo Journalism (Print/Digital) :** C Suresh Kumar (Times of India)

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw Gets Australia's Highest Civilian Award

Biocon founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw was awarded the top Australian civilian honour, the order of Australia

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honour in January, 2020 for her contribution towards advancing the country's relationship with India. Australia's High Commissioner to India Harinder Sidhu invested Mazumdar-Shaw as an Honorary Member within the order of Australia in the General Division in Bengaluru on January 17, 2020.

Mazumdar-Shaw is an alumnus of Federation University Australia. Her company Biocon is a big name in Indian bio-pharmaceutical companies.

President Ram Nath Kovind Confers Bal Shakti Puraskar 2020 on 49 Children

President Ram Nath Kovind on January 22, 2020 conferred the Bal Shakti Puraskar, 2020 on 49 children in the age group of 5 to 18 years at a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. The award winning children got the coveted honours in the fields of innovation, social service, scholastic achievements, sports, art and culture and bravery. The Bal Shakti Puraskar comprises a medal, a cash prize worth ₹ 1 lakh, a citation and a certificate.

Ishaan Sharma, who saved a Russian tourist from robbers, **Omkar Singh**, the world record holder as the youngest theoretical author, **Gauri Mishra**, the youngest pianist in India, **Darsh Malani**, a versatile magic show performer, **Manoj Kumar Lohar**, a prolific young tabla maestro, **Korok Biswas**, a dancer are among the 49 winners of the Bal Shakti Puraskar this year.

Lalkansung, who saved three girls from drowning in a pond in Manipur, and **Pema**, who saved two girls when the boundary wall of her school collapsed in heavy rain, were among those awarded in the bravery category.

Padma Awards 2020

President Ram Nath Kovind announced the conferment of 141 Padma Awards including 4 duo cases (in a duo case, the award is counted as one) on January 25, 2020 in New Delhi. The list of Padma awardees this year comprises 7 Padma Vibhushan, 16 Padma Bhushan and 118 Padma Shri honours for great contribution in various fields and numerous spheres of life like art, social work, public affairs, science and technology, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil services etc. 12 awards have been given posthumously. 33 of the Padma awardees are women. The list also includes 18 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI.

Padma Vibhushan (7)

1. George Fernandes (Posthumous) : Public Affairs (Bihar); 2. Arun Jaitley (Posthumous) : Public Affairs (Delhi); 3. Sir Anerood Jugnauth GCSK : Public Affairs (Mauritius); 4. M.C. Mary Kom : Sports (Manipur); 5. Chhannulal Mishra : Art (Uttar Pradesh); 6. Sushma Swaraj (Posthumous) : Public Affairs (Delhi); 7. Sri Vishveshateertha Swamiji Sri–Pejavara Adhokhaja Matha Udupi (Posthumous) : Others-Spiritualism (Karnataka).

Padma Bhushan (16)

8. M. Mumtaz Ali (Sri M) : Others-Spiritualism (Kerala); 9. Syed Muazzem Ali (Posthumous) : Public Affairs (Bangladesh); 10. Muzaffar Hussain Baig : Public Affairs (Jammu and Kashmir); 11. Ajoy Chakravorty : Art (West Bengal); 12. Manoj Das : Literature and Education (Puducherry); 13. Balkrishna Doshi : Others-Architecture (Gujarat); 14. Krishnammal Jagannathan : Social Work (Tamil Nadu); 15. S.C. Jamir : Public Affairs (Nagaland); 16. Anil Prakash Joshi : Social Work (Uttarakhand); 17. Dr. Tsering Landol : Medicine (Ladakh); 18. Anand Mahindra : Trade and Industry (Maharashtra); 19. Neelakanta Ramakrishna Madhava Menon (Posthumous) : Public Affairs (Kerala); 20. Manohar Gopalkrishna & Prabhu Parrikar (Posthumous) : Public Affairs (Goa); 21. Prof. Jagdish Sheth : Literature and Education (USA); 22. P.V. Sindhu : Sports (Telangana); 23. Venu Srinivasan : Trade and Industry (Tamil Nadu)

Padma Shri (118)

24. Guru Shashadhar Acharya : Art (Jharkhand); 25. Dr. Yogi Aeron : Medicine (Uttarakhand) 26. Jai Prakash Agarwal : Trade and Industry (Delhi); 27. Jagdish Lal Ahuja : Social Work (Punjab); 28. Kazi Masum Akhtar : Literature and Education (West Bengal); 29. Ms. Gloria Arieira : Literature and Education (Brazil); 30. Khan Zaheerkhan Bakhtiyarkhan : Sports (Maharashtra); 31. Dr. Padmavathy Bandopadhyay : Medicine (Uttar Pradesh); 32. Dr. Sushovan Banerjee : Medicine (West Bengal); 33. Dr. Digambar Behera : Medicine (Chandigarh); 34. Dr. Damayanti Beshra : Literature and Education (Odisha); 35. Pawar Popatrao Bhaguji : Social Work (Maharashtra); 36. Himmata Ram Bhambhu : Social Work (Rajasthan); 37. Sanjeev Bikhchandani : Trade and Industry (Uttar Pradesh); 38. Gafurbhai M. Bilakhia : Trade and Industry (Gujarat); 39. Bob Blackman : Public Affairs (United Kingdom); 40. Indira P. P. Bora : Art (Assam); 41. Madan Singh Chauhan : Art (Chhattisgarh); 42. Usha Chaumar : Social Work (Rajasthan); 43. Lil Bahadur Chettri : Literature and Education (Assam); 44. Lalitha & Ms. Saroja Chidambaram (Duo) : Art (Tamil Nadu); 45. Dr. Vajira Chitrasena : Art (Sri Lanka); 46. Dr. Purushottam Dadheech : Art (Madhya Pradesh); 47. Utsav Charan Das : Art (Odisha); 48. Prof. Indra Dassanayake (Posthumous) : Literature and Education (Sri Lanka); 49. H. M. Desai : Literature and Education (Gujarat); 50. Manohar Devadoss : Art (Tamil Nadu); 51. Oinam Bembem Devi : Sports (Manipur); 52. Lia Diskin : Social Work (Brazil); 53. M.P. Ganesh : Sports (Karnataka); 54. Dr. Bangalore Gangadhar : Medicine (Karnataka); 55. Dr. Raman Gangakhedkar : Science and Engineering (Maharashtra); 56. Barry Gardiner : Public Affairs (United Kingdom) 57. Chewang Motup Goba : Trade and Industry (Ladakh); 58. Bharat Goenka : Trade and Industry (Karnataka); 59. Yadla Gopalarao : Art (Andhra Pradesh); 60. Mitrabhanu Gountia : Art (Odisha) 61. Tulasi Gowda : Social Work (Karnataka) 62. Sujoy K. Guha : Science and Engineering (Bihar); 63. Harekala Hajabba : Social Work (Karnataka); 64. Enamul Haque : Others-Archaeology (Bangladesh); 65. Madhu Mansuri Hasmukh : Art (Jharkhand); 66. Abdul Jabbar (Posthumous) : Social Work (Madhya Pradesh); 67. Bimal Kumar Jain : Social Work (Bihar); 68. Meenakshi Jain : Literature and Education (Delhi); 69. Nemnath Jain : Trade and Industry (Madhya Pradesh); 70. Shanti Jain : Art (Bihar); 71. Sudhir Jain : Science and Engineering (Gujarat) 72. Benichandra Jamatia : Literature and Education (Tripura); 73. K.V. Sampath Kumar & Ms. Vidushi Jayalakshmi K.S. (Duo) : Literature and Education-

Journalism (Karnataka); 74. Karan Johar : Art (Maharashtra); 75. Dr. Leela Joshi : Medicine (Madhya Pradesh); 76. Sarita Joshi : Art (Maharashtra); 77. C. Kamlova : Literature and Education (Mizoram); 78. Dr. Ravi Kannan R. : Medicine (Assam); 79. Ekta Kapoor : Art (Maharashtra); 80. Yazdi Naoshirwan Karanjia : Art (Gujarat); 81. Narayan J. Joshi Karayal : Literature and Education (Gujarat); 82. Dr. Narindar Nath Khanna : Medicine (Uttar Pradesh); 83. Naveen Khanna : Science and Engineering (Delhi); 84. S. P. Kothari : Literature and Education (USA); 85. V.K. Munusamy & Krishnapakthar : Art (Puducherry); 86. M.K. Kunjol : Social Work (Kerala); 87. Manmohan Mahapatra (Posthumous) : Art (Odisha); 88. Ustad Anwar Khan Mangniyar : Art (Rajasthan); 89. Kattungal Subramaniam Manilal : Science and Engineering (Kerala); 90. Munna Master : Art (Rajasthan); 91. Prof. Abhiraj Rajendra Mishra : Literature and Education (Himachal Pradesh); 92. Binapani Mohanty : Literature and Educa-tion (Odisha); 93. Dr. Arunoday Mondal : Medicine (West Bengal); 94. Dr. Prithwindra Mukherjee : Literature and Education (France); 95. Sathyanarayan Mundayoor : Social Work (Arunachal Pradesh); 96. Manilal Nag : Art (West Bengal); 97. N. Chandrasekharan Nair : Literature and Education (Kerala); 98. Dr. Tetsu Nakamura (Posthumous) : Social Work (Afghanistan); 99. Shiv Datt Nirmohi : Literature and Education (Jammu & Kashmir); 100. Pu Lalbiakthanga Pachuau : Literature and Education-Journalism (Mizoram); 101. Moozhikkal Pankajakshi : Art (Kerala); 102. Dr. Prasanta Kumar Pattanaik : Literature and Education (USA); 103. Jogendra Nath Phukan : Literature and Education (Assam); 104. Rahibai Soma Popere : Others-Agriculture (Maharashtra); 105. Yogesh Praveen : Literature and Education (Uttar Pradesh); 106. Jitu Rai : Sports (Uttar Pradesh); 107. Tarundeep Rai : Sports (Sikkim); 108. S. Ramakrishnan : Social Work (Tamil Nadu); 109. Rani Rampal : Sports (Haryana); 110. Kangana Ranaut : Art (Maharashtra); 111. Dalavai Chalapathi Rao : Art (Andhra Pradesh); 112. Shahbuddin Rathod : Literature and Education (Gujarat); 113. Kalyan Singh Rawat : Social Work (Uttarakhand); 114. Chintala Venkat Reddy : Others-Agriculture (Telangana); 115. Dr. Shanti Roy : Medicine (Bihar); 116. Radhammohan & Ms. Sabarmatee (Duo) : Others-Agriculture (Odisha); 117. Batakrushna Sahoo : Others-Animal Husbandry (Odisha); 118. Trinity Saioo : Others-Agriculture (Meghalaya); 119. Adnan Sami : Art (Maharashtra); 120. Vijay Sankeshwar : Trade and Industry (Karnataka); 121. Dr. Kushal Konwar Sarma : Medicine (Assam); 122. Sayed Mehboob Shah Qadri alias Sayedbhai : Social Work (Maharashtra); 123. Mohammed Sharif : Social Work (Uttar Pradesh); 124. Shyam Sunder Sharma : Art (Bihar); 125. Dr. Gurdip Singh : Medicine (Gujarat); 126. Ramjee Singh : Social Work (Bihar); 127. Vashishtha Narayan Singh (Posthumous) : Science and Engineering (Bihar); 128. Daya Prakash Sinha : Art (Uttar Pradesh); 129. Dr. Sandra Desa Souza : Medicine (Maharashtra); 130. Vijayasarathi Sribhashyam Literature and Education (Telangana); 131. Kalee Shabi Mahaboob & Sheik Mahaboob Subani (Duo) : Art (Tamil Nadu); 132. Javed Ahmad Tak : Social Work (Jammu & Kashmir); 133. Pradeep Thalappil : Science & Engineering (Tamil Nadu); 134. Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi : Literature and Education (Arunachal Pradesh); 135. Robert Thurman : Literature and Education (USA); 136. Agus Indra Udayana : Social Work (Indonesia); 137. Harish Chandra Verma : Science & Engineering (Uttar Pradesh); 138. Sundaram Verma : Social Work (Rajasthan); 139. Dr. Romesh Tekchand Wadhwani : Trade and Industry (USA); 140. Suresh Wadkar : Art (Maharashtra); 141. Prem Watsa : Trade and Industry (Canada);

President Ram Nath Kovind Announces Gallantry Awards; Nine Shaurya Chakras Also Announced

President Ram Nath Kovind announced 409 Gallantry awards and other defence decorations to armed forces personnel and others on the eve of 71st Republic Day celebrations on January 25, 2020 in New Delhi. The President approved nine Shaurya Chakra awards, India's third highest gallantry honour in peacetime. Four Shaurya Chakras were given posthumous. Six Shaurya Chakras were given to Army personnel while three were given to security forces personnel for their conspicuous acts of bravery.

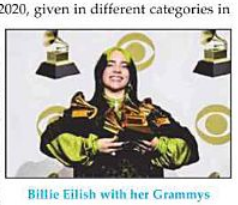
President Kovind conferred 28 Param Vishisht Seva Medals, four Uttam Yudh Seva Medals, 53 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals, 10 Yudh Seva Medals and many other decorations.

The President also approved three Tatrakshak Medal (Gallantry) and two Tatrakshak Medal (Meritorious Service) for personnel of the Indian Coast Guard.

Naib Subedar **Sombir** of the Jat regiment was posthumously given the Shaurya Chakra for his valliant efforts in an anti-terrorist operation in Kashmir in February, 2019. **Lt. Col Jyoti Lama, Major Konjenbham Bijendra Singh, Naib Subedar Narender Singh, Naik Naresh Kumar** and **Karmdeo Oraon** were the other bravehearts who won the Shaurya Chakra this year.

62nd Annual Grammy Awards, 2020

Young singer Billie Eilish dominated the 62nd Annual Grammy Awards for 2020, given in different categories in music on January 26, 2020 in Los Angeles, USA as she won five Grammys including four top honours of the event. Eilish got the Album, Record and Song of the year Grammys and was also adjudged the best new artist. She was the first artist to claim the top Grammys since Christopher Cross in 1981.



Billie Eilish with her Grammys

Earlier, Eilish won the Record of the year and song of the year honours for *'Bad Guy'*. She, along with her brother Finneas O'Connell who is the co-writer of song 'Bad Guy' received the Song of the year Grammy. Eilish's album *'When We All Fall Asleep, Where do We Go' ?* won Album of the year and Best Pop Vocal Album of the year Grammys.

Lizzo won the Pop Solo Performance of the year Grammy for *Truth Hurts*.

but this is the first discovered by TESS, which was launched in 2018.

- TESS stabilises on one area of the sky to detect whether objects—planets—pass in front of stars, which causes a temporary drop in the star's luminosity. This allows TESS to infer the presence of a planet its size and orbit.
- Star TOI 700 is small, about 40 per cent of our Sun's size and only about half as hot.
- TESS discovered three planets in orbit, named TOI 700b, c and d. Only "d" is in the so-called habitable zone, not too far from and not too close to the star, where the temperature could allow the presence of liquid water.
- It is about 20 per cent larger than Earth and orbits its star in 37 days. 'd' receives 36 per cent of the energy that Earth receives from the Sun.
- It remains to be seen what d is made of. Researchers have generated models based on the size and type of star in order to predict d's atmospheric composition and surface temperature.
- In one simulation, NASA explained, the planet is covered in oceans with a "dense, carbon-dioxide-dominated atmosphere similar to what scientists suspect surrounded Mars when it was young." The planet is tidally locked to the star, meaning that one side always faces the star, as is the case with the Moon and Earth.
- This synchronous rotation meant that, in another model, one side of the planet was constantly covered in clouds.

DEFENCE

LCA Makes Ist Landing on INS Vikramaditya

A prototype of the naval version of the light combat aircraft (LCA) landed and took off from the country's sole aircraft carrier **INS Vikramaditya** on January 11, 2020 in a significant step towards India developing its own deck-based fighters. The carrier which is currently deployed in the Arabian Sea has the naval version of the MiG 29 on board.

Last September the naval version of the LCA successfully executed its first-ever arrested landing at a shore-based test facility in Goa. It is the naval version of the locally built **Tejas** fighter aircraft that the Indian Air Force is inducting.

A naval Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) landed on aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, in a first for an indigenous fighter jet, the Indian Navy said.

"With this feat, the indigenously developed niche technologies specific to deck-based fighter operations have been proven, which will now pave the way to develop and manufacture the Twin Engine Deck Based Fighter for the #Indian Navy," the Indian Navy tweeted.

India has a requirement for 57 deck based fighters for its carrier operations.

"After completing extensive trials on the Shore Based Test Facility, DRDO, ADA developed LCA navy did an arrested landing on INS Vikramaditya successfully on 11 January, 2020. Commodore Jaideep Maolan-kar did the maiden landing," the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) tweeted.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO and the Indian Navy after January 11's successful test.

ARCHAEOLOGY

In a First, ASI Team Unearths Neolithic Tools Near Jaisalmer

The scientists of the excavation branch (exploration wing) of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) department, New Delhi, have found prehistoric sites and Neolithic tools around a million years old near Jaisalmer showing the presence of humanity there in the stone-age era.

A team of ASI Excavation Branch II, New Delhi, conducted the survey.

There findings have been reported for the first time from Rajasthan.

Official sources said that till date it was believed that Rajasthan was not inhabited by the Neolithic people, but this finding of ASI has put a question mark over this conventional notion. It could help in proving that like other parts of India, Rajasthan too was perhaps occupied by Neolithic people.

Sources said that during the course of exploration, more than fifteen typical **Neolithic tools** were collected and identified including **celt, adze, ring stone, muller,** etc., generally associated with the Neolithic culture. Celt and adze are reportedly of different sizes, showing the expertness of the tool maker. These were mostly prepared from limestone and sandstone due to their local availability, which is, to some extent, peculiar as generally the Neolithic tools are prepared from diorite and dolerite and hard trap rocks.

Archaeologist Chakraborty said that now the identification of typical Neolithic settlements in and around Jaisalmer district would be the target of the archaeologists which would substantiate these findings and their existence in this region to a great extent.

Decay of Harappan City Due to Dying of Saraswati-like River : Research

Indian researchers have linked the decay of an advanced Harappan settlement to the disappearance of a river fed by Himalayan snow that once flowed in the Rann of Kutch.

The team from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, has said that climate change, a mega drought, and drying up of a river that resembled the mythological Himalayan river Saraswati were behind the **down-fall of Dholavira** the most excavated of all Harappan settlements.

The researchers from **IIT-Kharagpur, Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute, Pune, Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad, and Archaeological Survey of India,** analysed the oxygen isotopes of the shell

of a snail commonly consumed by the people in Dholavira to determine the water sources that sustained them.

The study shows that the settlements in Dholavira began nearly 5,500 years ago, in the pre-Harappan period and continued till about 3,800 years ago. The isotopes in the snail shells show that between 4,300 to 4,100 years ago, the glacial melt-water disappeared.

The Saraswati was mentioned in the Rig Veda, one of the four sacred canonised texts of Hinduism. The debate over its existence has been a serious issue of research for Indian historians.

"We saw that these settlements moved from a village economy to a town to an urban centre. But from the later part of the mature Harappan period, we see a decline… showing a scarcity of resources," said Dr R. S. Bisht, a co-author of the paper and former joint director general at Archaeological Survey of India.

CRIME

494% Rise in Green Offences : NCRB

For the first time, National Crimes Records Bureau (NCRB) compiled citywise environmental crime data. Environment related offences in Maharashtra increased 494% between 2016 and 2018, going from 170 cases in 2016 to 1010 cases in 2018.

According to NCRB's report, Mumbai and Maharashtra saw 10 and 45 cases recorded under the Environment Protection Act (EPA), 1986, respectively, which are the highest in the country.

Most of these were related to tree felling, mangrove cutting, coastal regulation zone (CRZ) violations, debris dumping in eco-sensitive zones, illegal quarrying and hill cutting.

Offences related to air and water pollution were also recorded.

The Mumbai suburban district level committee for coastal regulation zone and mangrove violations alone recorded 286 cases in 2018 under EPA.

Also, the data for seizures and cases booked following the plastic ban in 2018 in Maharashtra have not been tabulated yet, said environmentalists.

"Public awareness and media attention towards environment issues has witnessed a tremendous rise while planning authorities are also attending complaints regularly. The environment department is keen to ensure highest level environmental protection across Maharashtra," said Sanjay Sandanshiv, undersecretary (environment department).

"From illicit tree felling to violations by industries to record number of CRZ and mangrove violations, Mumbai witnesses an average of 250 EPA violations every year. MPCB and other departments through their lackadaisical attitude have failed to live up to their mandate," said Debi Goenka, member, suburban district level committee.

HEALTH CARE

India Adopts Framework to Mitigate Gender Barriers to TB Care

Aiming to eliminate tuberculosis by 2025, India has adopted national framework to mitigate gender barriers and ensure equitable access to TB care and services.

The framework is based on the findings of the TB and gender assessment study last year which highlights that though more men are affected by the disease, women are constrained by social norms which prevent prioritising of their nutrition, health and well being.

Data show a higher proportion of the 27·4 lakh diagnosed with TB in India are men and the ratio is approximately 2 : 1 between men and women. The prevalence of HIV-TB co-infection is higher among women and among transgender persons who live in overcrowded houses and consume alcohol. Pregnant women and women in the postpartum period face a higher risk of the diseases and TB is one of the leading non-obstetric causes of maternal mortality in low-in-come countries like India.

The framework deals with interventions under the heads of Detect, Treat, Prevent and Build. Under 'Detect', the focus will be on eliminating gender differences during diagnosis; 'Treat' will include orienting health workers on adopting a respectful attitude especially the need to maintain confidentiality, improving treatment literacy and providing gender-responsive counselling. The 'Prevent' section will include steps to strengthen periodic screening of women and care givers who are vulnerable, 'Build' will emphasise on building capacity of the programme and involve the private sector to provide patient-centric care. Once implemented, the framework envisages a gender-responsive programme which will catalyse and accelerate efforts to end TB in India.

SWACHHTA CAMPAIGN

Swachhta Survekshan League Results-2020 : Indore Adjudged India's Cleanest City

Madhya Pradesh's Indore has been adjudged India's cleanest city for the fourth time in a row and Kolkata was the **worst** performer among cities with a population of more than one million, according to centre's Swachh **Survekshan League 2020 rankings** (SS League 2020) released on December 31, 2019.

In the category of cities having population more than 10 lakh, **Bhopal** stood **second** in first quarter results (April to June) while **Rajkot** grabbed the second spot in second quarter results (July-September) of Swachh Survekshan Leauge 2020.

Cleanest Cities

- Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- Surat, Gujarat
- Nashik, Maharashtra
- Rajkot, Gujarat

Ranks have been assigned in two categories, namely cities with population 100,00 and above (with two sub-categories, *i.e.* 100,00—1 million and 1 million and above) and cities with population of less than 100,000. The third position was grabbed by **Surat** in the first quarter and Navi Mumbai in the second quarter.

In the second quarter **Vadodara** was ranked fourth, followed by Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Nashik, Greater Mumbai, Allahabad and Lucknow.

Among cantonment boards Delhi Cantt stood first while second and third positions were grabbed by Jhansi Cantonment board and Jalandhar Cantonment board respectively in the second quarter.

Secunderabad Cantonment Board in Hyderabad was worst performer among other cantonment boards, according to the survey, Kolkata grabbed lowest position in cleanliness in the category of cities having population more than 10 lakh in the second quarter.

DISASTER

Ukrainian Passenger Jet Shot Down in Iran : It was Unintentional, Says Iran, Tenders an Unconditional Apology for the Death of 176 Persons on Board the Plane

Iran said on January 11, 2020 it 'unintentionally' shot down a Ukrainian passenger jet killing all 176 people aboard, in an abrupt about-turn after initially denying Western claims it was struck by a missile.

Civilian Planes Shot Down : A GRIM History

President Hassan Rouhani said a military probe into the tragedy had found 'missiles fired due to human error' brought down the Boeing 737, calling it an "unforgivable mistake".

Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei offered his condolences and ordered the armed forces to address 'shortcomings' so that such a disaster does not happen again.

The acknowledgment came after officials in Iran had for days categorically denied Western claims that the Ukraine International Airlines airliner had been struck by a missile in a catastrophic error. The jet, which had been bound for Kiev, slammed into a field shortly after taking off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport before dawn on January 8, 2020.

It came only hours after Iran launched a wave of missiles at bases hosting American forces in Iraq in response to the killing of Qasem Soleimani, one of Iran's top generals, in a US drone strike.

		Killed	
Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 shot down by a missile over Ukraine	July 17, 2014	298	At the time, armed conflict was raging between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian government forces
Siberia Airlines Flight 1812 exploded and plunged into the Black Sea off Crimean coast	Oct 4, 2001	78	Then Ukraine president had later accepted that country's military had accidentally destroyed Russian airliner
Iran Air Flight 655	July 3, 1988	290	US navy warship in Persian Gulf shot down plane, mistaking it for hostile F-14 jet fighter
Korean Air Lines Flight 007	Sept 1, 1983	269	Soviet fighter jet shot it down as it strayed off course; Soviet Union contended jet was on a spying mission which US denied
Itavia Flight 870 suddenly plunged into the Tyrrhenian Sea off Italy	June 27, 1980	81	Most widely accepted theory is that a missile fired by a warplane had hit the plane
Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114 shot down by Israeli fighter aircraft over Sinai Desert	Feb 21, 1973	113 *5 survived*	Israel claimed it downed the plane to a possible act of terrorism
El Al Flight 402	July 27, 1955	58	Bulgaria fighter jets shot down wayward plane that crossed into Bulgarian airspace during a storm

CLIMATE CHANGE/ENVIRONMENT

Billions at Risk as Asia's Great Rivers Suffer

The glaciers of Hindu Kush-Himalayan region (HKH)—the world's 'Third Pole'—are vanishing as the planet warms, the ice that once fed the great rivers of Asia is all but lost, and with it much of the water needed to nurture and grow a continent.

Further stressed by heatwaves, erratic monsoons, and pollution, the waterways are in crisis and the lives of hundreds of millions hang in the balance. Access to clean water, now more precious than oil, is a preserve of the rich and has become a resource so valuable that people—and nations— are willing to fight for it.

This apocalyptic vision is the continent's future if nothing is done to limit global warming, scientists and environmentalists warn.

2015 Paris Agreement

The 2015 Paris agreement saw nations commit to limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels as a way of curbing the worst impacts of global warming.

A lower cap of 1·5 C was set, only as a goal for nations to work towards. But this year's Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) Assessment Report says unless it is met – two-thirds of the region's glaciers will be lost by the end of the century.

Running from Afghanistan to Myanmar, the HKH region takes in the Tibetan Plateau, and the Himalaya, Hindu Kush, and Karakoram mountain ranges.

Functioning as a vast water tower, some of the world's largest and most important rivers, including the Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Mekong and Indus, begin here.

Its health is inextricably linked to that of the continent : Some 1·65 billion people directly rely on these waters – for their lives and livelihoods.

More than half the world's population lives in Asia, but there is less fresh water available per person there than on any continent, according to the UN, often leaving the most vulnerable at risk. "Climate change is rapidly diminishing our access to clean water, which will have a devastating impact on human health, access to food, and sanitation, radically reshaping communities and cities," Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, says.

Asia's rivers feed the continent's breadbaskets and rice bowls–the Indus, Yangtze, and Yellow basins rely heavily on meltwater to irrigate agriculture that helps sustain not only those that live there, but national economies too.

Despite proclamations that we are in "the Asian Century", there are fears that lack of proper planning for the coming water crisis may stifle the economic dreams of a rapidly growing region.

EDUCATION

National Importance Tag on Gujarat Institutes Gets Government Nod

More likely to reduce government expenditure on health as Ayurveda is cost effective.

The Union Cabinet on January 8, 2020 gave its approval to confer the status of **Institution of National Importance (INI)** to the **Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda** in Gujarat's Jamnagar, by conglomerating the cluster of ayurveda institutes at Gujarat Ayurveda University campus there.

The cluster of institutes includes the **Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Shri Gulabkunwerba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya and Institute of Ayurveda Pharmaceutical Sciences** including Pharmacy Unit, and also subsuming the **Maharashi Patanjali Institute for Yoga and Naturopathy Education and Research** into the Department of Swasthvritta of the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda.

The bill to that effect is to be introduced in the ensuing session of Parliament to declare the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar as Institution of National Importance, according to an official statement.

There is rising interest for knowledge and services of Ayurveda. India is the country of origin of Ayurveda and the world is looking up to India for state of the art institutions.
—Official Statement

Elevation of the proposed institute to the status of Institution of National Importance will provide it the autonomy to upgrade standard of Ayurveda education, frame various courses in Ayurveda as per national and international demand, adopt advanced evaluation methodology, etc.

It will have the mandate to frame its own certification courses for deeper penetration of AYUSH across masses and will give the capacity to bring out the unrealized potential of Ayurveda for addressing the major public health challenges faced by the country, the statement said.

It will help the institute to develop tertiary care in Ayurveda and to secure inter-disciplinary collaborations to give a contemporary thrust to Ayurveda, it added.

DEMOGRAPHY

Birth Rate in China Falls to Lowest Level Since 1949

China's birth rate dropped last year to its lowest level since the communist country was founded in 1949, adding to concerns that an ageing society and shrinking work force will pile pressure on a slowing economy.

One Child Policy

To avoid a demographic crisis the government relaxed its one-child policy in 2016 to allow people to have two children, but the change has not resulted in an increase in pregnancies.

In 2019, the birth rate stood at 10·46 per 1,000 people, down slightly from the year before, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) released on January 17, 2020.

The number has now fallen for three consecutive years, still, there were 14·65 million babies born in 2019.

US-based academic Yi Fuxian, senior scientist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said that even though China has abolished its one-child policy, there has been a shift in the mindset of the population, with people now used to smaller families.

He added that a higher cost of living is also a factor, noting that daycare is expensive and inconvenient in China, posing another deterrence.

He believes that China's population is overestimated, and according to his work, the real population "began to decline in 2018".

According to official figures, China's population stood at 1·4 billion by the end of 2019, increasing by 4·67 million from the year before. While China's limit on family sizes could be removed altogether, the demographer He said citizens are still being punished for having three children, even though some areas have reduced punitive measures.

Water Crisis Spilling Over

Scientist warn access to clean water will soon become a major flashpoint for people and countries :

Many Indian rivers are at risk.

2/3rd of glaciers in Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) region will be lost by end of this century a study said.

1·65 billion people directly rely on waters originating from HKH region for their livelihood.

Rivers at Risk—Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Mekong, Indus

Why Asia is Vulnerable : Over half of world's population lives in Asia, but there is less fresh water available per person than any continent, according to UN.

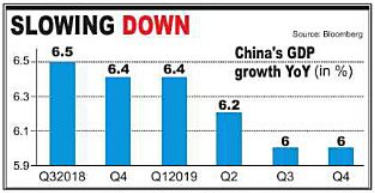
ECONOMIC MATTERS

China Posts Weakest Growth in 29 Years

China's economic growth cooled to its weakest in nearly 30 years in 2019 amid a bruising trade war with the US and more stimulus is expected this year as Beijing is trying to boost sluggist investment and demand. But data on January 17, 2020 also showed the world's second largest economy ended the rough year on a somewhat firmer note as a trade truce revived business confidence and earlier growth boosting measures finally appeared to be taking hold.

As expected, China's growth slowed to 6·1% last year, from 6·6% in 2018, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed. Though still strong by global standards, and within the government's target range, it was the weakest expansion since 1990. This year is crucial for the ruling Communist Party to fulfil its goal of doubling GDP and incomes in the decade to 2020, and turning China into a 'moderately prosperous' nation. Analysts reckon that

long-term target would need growth this year to remain around 6%, though top officials have warned the economy may face even greater pressure than in 2019.



More recent data, along with optimism over a Phase 1 US-China trade deal signed have raised hopes that the economy may be bottoming out.

Fourth-quarter GDP rose 6% from a year earlier, steadying from the third quarter, though still the weakest in nearly three decades. And December industrial output, investment and retail sales all rose more than expected after an improved showing in November. Policy sources have said that Beijing plans to set a lower growth target of around 6% this year from last year's 6–6·5%, relying on increased infrastructure spending to ward off a sharper slowdown. Key targets are due to be announced in March. On a quarterly basis, the economy grew 1·5% in October-December, also the same pace as the previous three months. "We expect China's growth rate will come further down to below 6%" in the coming year, said Masaaki Kanno, chief economist at Sony Financial Holdings in Tokyo.

PLACES IN THE NEWS

Jharia (Jharkhand)

Jharia, a centre of great coal deposits in Jharkhand state, was again found the most polluted city in India in 2018 in Airpocalypse-IV annual report released by Green peace India on January 21, 2020. Dhanbad again in Jharkhand was adjudged the second most polluted Indian city in the report.

The report has been prepared on analysis of particulate matter data across 287 cities at pan-India level, using the Central Pollution Control Board data.

Lunglei in Mizoram was the least polluted city in India, followed by Meghalaya's Dowki, according to the report. Six of the top-10 polluted cities are in Uttar Pradesh : Noida, Ghaziabad, Bareilly, Allahabad, Moradabad and Firozabad. Jharia and Dhanbad are twin cities in the coalbelt of Jharkhand. PM-10 level was recorded at 322 ug/m^3 (micrograms per cubic meter) in Jharia, the highest in the country, while the same was recorded 264 un/m^3 in Dhanbad, the second highest in the country.

The permissible limit for PM-10 is 60 ug/m^3 as per the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Hyderabad and Bengaluru Secure Top Two Positions on the JLL City Momentum Index, 2020

Technology hub Hyderabad emerged on top of the city Momentum Index 2020 released by the global real estate services firm JLL on January 18, 2020. Hyderabad pushed last year top rank holder Bengaluru to second place to regain the top rank after a gap of last year. Ho Chi Minh City secured third rank in the Index based on top 130 cities across the globe.

While Hyderabad and Bengaluru are the top two cities globally for socio-economic momentum, a more active real estate market helped elevate Hyderabad to first position in the overall ranking, says the report released by the US-based Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL).

Hyderabad recorded the highest office net absorption in 2019 (as a proportion of existing stock) of any city globally, while it is also among the world's best-performing cities for prime office rental growth.

Gandhinagar (Gujarat)

The third Global Potato Conclave, 2020 was organised in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from January 28 to 31, 2020. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the conclave at its inaugural day on January 28 through video conferencing. It was organised by Indian Potato Association (IPA) in collaboration with Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi and ICAR—Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla and International Potato Centre (CIP), Lima in Peru.

The previous two Global Potato Conferences were organised during 1999 and 2008.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

1. **The Bicentennial Man** —By Isaac Asimov
2. **A Chequered Brilliance** —It is the biography of India's politician of yesteryears Krishna Menon by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh
3. **Red Card** —By Kautuk Srivastava, Penguin
4. **Manto and I** —By Nandita Das, Aleph
5. **Coming Back to the City : Mumbai Stories** —By Anuradh Kumar, Speaking Tiger
6. **Find Me** —By Andre Aciman, Penguin Random House
7. **Rewilding—India's Experiments in Saving Nature** —By Bahar Dutt, Oxford University Press

IMPORTANT DAYS/WEEKS/YEARS

March 2020

National Days

March	3	National Defence Day
March	4	National Safety Day
March	18	Ordnance Factories Day

International Days

March	8	International Women's Day, United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace
March	15	World Consumer Rights Day
March	20	International Day of Happiness
March	21	World Forestry Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
March	22	World Water Day
March	23	World Meteorological Day
March	24	World Tuberculosis Day
March	27	World Theatre Day

Employment And Career News

Central Board of Secondary Education, Delhi

Invites online applications for Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET)—July 2020

Last Date for Submission of online Applications—February 24, 2020.

Last Date for Submission of Fee—February 27, 2020.

Date of Examination—July 05, 2020.

Essential Educational Qualifications

- **Minimum Qualifications for becoming Teacher for Classes I-V : Primary Stage**

Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in final year of 2-year Diploma in Elementary Education (by whatever name known)

Or

Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 45% marks and passed or appearing in final year of 2-year Diploma in Elementary Education (by whatever name known), in accordance with the NCTE (Recognition Norms and Procedure), Regulations, 2002.

Or

Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in final year of 4-year Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed).

Or

Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in final year of 2-year Diploma in Education (Special Education).

Or

"Graduation with at least 50% marks and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed)."

- **Minimum Qualifications for becoming Teacher for Classes VI-VIII : Elementary Stage**

Graduation and passed or appearing in final year of 2-year Diploma in Elementary Education (by whatever name known).

Or

Graduation with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in 1-year Bachelor in Education (B.Ed).

Or

Graduation with at least 45% marks and passed or appearing in 1-year Bachelor in Education (B.Ed), in accordance with the NCTE (Recognition Norms and Procedure) Regulations issued from time to time in this regard.

Or

Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in final year of 4-year Bachelor in Elementary Education (B.El.Ed).

Or

Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in final year of 4-year B.A / B.Sc. Ed or B.A. Ed / B.Sc. Ed.

Or

Graduation with at least 50% marks and passed or appearing in 1-year B.Ed. (Special Education).

Structure of Examination—All questions in CTET will be Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), with four alternatives out of which one answer will be most appropriate, each question will carry one mark and there will be no negative marking.

There will be two papers of CTET.

(i) **Paper I** will be for a person who intends to be a teacher for classes I to V.

(ii) **Paper II** will be for a person who intends to be a teacher for classes VI to VIII.

A person who intends to be a teacher for both levels (classes I to V and classes VI to VIII) will have to appear in both the papers (Paper I and Paper II).

Paper I will carry 150 questions and Paper II will also comprise 150 questions.

How to Apply—Candidates can apply online through CTET.

Website—www.ctet.nic.in For further details of CTET, candidates can visit the same website.

Rajasthan Staff Selection Board, Jaipur

Invites online applications for 'Patwar Direct Recruitment Examination–2019'.

Last Date for Submission of online Applications—February 19, 2020.

Age Limit—The age of the candidate should not be less than 18 years and not more than 40 years as on January 01, 2021. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be conceded as per the set government rules.

Essential Educational Qualifications—The candidate must be a 'Graduate' from a government recognized university or educational institute. The candidate must also hold the 'O' level or higher level certificate course conducted by NIELIT, New Delhi **or** the candidate must hold a three year diploma in Computer Science & Engineering from a government approved Polytechnic institute. The candidate must have the working knowledge of Hindi in Devnagri manuscript and knowledge of Rajasthan culture.

Structure of Examination—There will be a written examination followed by an interview.

How to Apply—Candidates can apply online only. For detailed description of the 'Patwar Direct Recruitment Examination–2019', candidate must log on to—

www.rsmssb.rajasthan.gov.in

Government Dungar College, Bikaner

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for Pre-Teacher Education Test (PTET) – 2020

Last Date for Submission of Applications—March 06, 2020.

For PTET 2020–Date of Examination—May 10, 2020.

MAGBOOK.NET

Essential Educational Qualifications :

PTET B.Ed (Two Years)—The Candidate must be a 'Graduate' with at least 50% marks from a government recognized university.

PTET BA B.Ed/B.Sc. B.Ed (Four years)—The candidate must possess an Intermediate (10 + 2) or equivalent pass certificate with at least 50% marks.

Structure of Examination—There will be a Written Examination carrying 200 Objective Type Multiple Choice questions. Each question will carry 3 marks.

How to Apply—online for more details log onto—

www.ptetdcb 2020.com

or

www.ptetdcb2020.org

Public Service Commission, West Bengal

Invites online applications for Recruitment of Numerous posts

Last Date for Submission of online Applications—Feb. 17, 2020.

Age Limits—The age of the candidate should not be more than 39 years as on January 01, 2020.

Essential Educational Qualifications—The candidate must possess a pass certificate of Madhyamik Examination of West Bengal of Secondary Education or its equivalent. The candidate must also possess a diploma as per the requirement of the post for which he applies. Diploma qualification vary as per the post. Candidates must have the ability to impart training in Bengali for some post.

How to Apply—Candidates are required to submit the applications online using the website

https://wbpsc.gov.in

Joint Entrance Exam. and Training Research Development Council, Dehradun

Invites applications for 'Joint Entrance Examination Polytechnics – 2020 (JEEP-2020).

Last Date for Submission of online Applications—April 15, 2020.

Last Date for Submission of offline Applications—April 04, 2020.

Essential Educational Qualifications—Essential Educational qualifications vary as per the course in JEEP–2020.

Candidates can submit their applications using the websites—

www.ubter.in

&

www.ubtejeep.in

Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB)

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for recruitment to numerous posts in Department of Education in Delhi.

Last Date for Submission of online Applications—February 23, 2020.

Age Limit—Upper age limit is 36 years. But for some other posts the upper age limit is 30 years and 32 years.

The details of the essential qualification, age limit, fee etc. are available on the website—

http://dsssb.delhi.gov.in/current-vacancies/Delhi-subordinate-services-selection-board

How to Apply—Candidates can submit their applications online only using the website—

http://dsssbonline.nic.in

MAGNIFICENT KING

FORTHCOMING COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS, 2020

Indian Navy Artificer Apprentice (AA) and Senior Secondary Recruit (SSR) Exam., 2019 (Feb.)
Indian Navy Sailors Matric Recruit (MR) Recruitment Exam., 2019 (Feb.)
Reserve Bank of India Assistant Preliminary Exam., 2019 (14-15 Feb.)
Bihar Amin Computer Based Exam., 2019 (15 & 16 Feb.)
Madhya Pradesh School of Excellence/Model School Entrance Exam., 2020 (For Class IX) (23 Feb.)
Uttarakhand Eklavya Adarsh Residential School Entrance Exam., 2020 (For Class VI) (23 Feb.)
Rajasthan Police Constable (General/Driver) Recruitment Exam., 2019 (Feb.-March)
(**Online Closing Date :** 10 Feb., 2020)
Indian Coast Guard Navik (General Duty) 10 + 2 Enrtrance Exam. (Feb.-March)
Reserve Bank of India Assistant (Main) Exam., 2019 (March)
SSC Combined Graduate Level Exam., 2019 (Tier-I) (2-11 Mar.)
DSSSB Forest Guard Direct Recruitment Exam., 2020 (12-13 Mar.)
(**Online Closing Date :** 13 Feb., 2020)
SSC Combined Higher Secondary (10+2) Level Computer Based Exam., (Tier-I) (16-27 Mar.)
Indian Air Force Airmen Group 'X' & Group 'Y' Trade Exam. (19-23 Mar.)
Uttar Pradesh P.C.S. Block Education Officer (BEO) Preliminary Exam., 2019 (22 Mar.)
Bihar B.Ed. Combined Entrance Exam., 2020 (29 Mar.)
(**Online Closing Date :** 2 March, 2020)
Uttarakhand Dl.Ed. Training Entrance Exam., 2019-20 (30 Mar.)
Uttarakhand Van Daroga Direct Recruitment Exam. (April)
National Defence Academy & Naval Academy Exam. (I) 2020 (19 April)
Hotel Management Combined Entrance Exam., 2020 (25 April)
Madhya Pradesh Primary Teacher Eligibility Test, 2020 (25 April onwards)
Uttar Pradesh Polytechnic Joint Entrance Exam., 2020 (26-27 April)
Uttar Pradesh P.C.S. Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Pre.) Exam., 2016 (3 May)
SSC Stenographer Grade 'C' & 'D' Exam., 2019 (Online) (5-7 May)
Rajasthan (Pre.) Teacher Education Test (B.Ed.), 2020 (10 May)
(**Online Closing Date :** 6 March, 2020)
Uttarakhand Polytechnic Entrance Exam., 2020 (10-11 May)
(**Online Closing Date :** 15 April, 2020)
(**offline Closing Date :** 4 April, 2020)
Chhattisgarh PSC State Services (Main) Exam., 2019 (17-20 June)
SSC CAPF/Delhi Police Sub-Inspector Exam., 2019 (Paper-II) (21 June)
SSC CGL Exam., 2019 (Tier-II) (22-25 June)
SSC CHSL Exam. (Tier-II Descriptive) (28 June)
Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET), 2020 (5 July)
(**Online Closing Date :** 24 Feb., 2020)
Uttar Pradesh P.C.S. Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Main) Exam., 2016 (1 Nov. onwards)

Sports World

CRICKET

India Wins Bilateral ODI Series 2-1 Against Australia

India clinched a three One Day International (ODI) match bilateral series against Australia 2-1 by winning the third and series deciding ODI by seven wickets on January 19, 2020 at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

In the third and final ODI of the series, Australia set a target of 287 runs before India which overhauled it at its three wickets cost with 15 balls to spare with the help of splendid knocks from Rohit Sharma of 119 runs off 128 balls and Virat Kohli of 89 runs off 91 balls. Rohit Sharma was adjudged Man of the Match for this fabulous innings in the series-deciding match and helping India seal the series.

Earlier, Australia registered a thumping 10-wicket victory over India in the first ODI of the series on January 14, 2020 at the Wankhede Stadium Mumbai and took a 1-0 lead in the three match series. India set a target of 256 runs before Australia which easily achieved it without losing a wicket and 74 balls to spare. Australian opener David Warner was declared the Man of the Match for his explosive 128 runs innings off just 112 balls.

India levelled the series 1-1 by winning the second ODI by 36 runs on January 17 at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Rajkot. India set 341-run target before Australia which could score 304 runs in reply.

- Virat Kohli was the captain of Indian side while Aaron Finch led the Australian squad as the skipper.
- Virat Kohli was adjudged the Man of the Series.

Jacqueline Williams Becomes First Woman Third Umpire in Men's International Match

Jacqueline Williams of the West Indies on January 15, 2020 became the first woman to officiate as the third umpire in a men's international cricket match when she took up the responsibility for the first of three T20I, between the West Indies and Ireland. She will officiate in the position in all the three matches of the series.

Bapu Nadkarni Passes Away

Veteran Indian spinner Bapu Nadkarni, who played 41 Tests for India in 1950s and 60s, passed away on January 17, 2020 in Mumbai due to age related ailments. He was 86. As a spinner he is known for his pin-point precision and great economy rate of 1·67. He is best remembered for a magic spell of bowling in 1964 season in Madras (now Chennai) against the touring English team when he produced 27 overs at the cost of just 5 runs, including 21 successive maiden overs.

He has 88 Test Wickets to his credit. He was also a handy batsman down the order as he scored 1,414 Test runs including a century and seven half-centuries.

Australia Set to Host 11th Indoor Cricket World Cup, 2020

The World Indoor Cricket Federation in January 2020 announced Australia to be the host of the 11th edition of the Indoor Cricket World Cup scheduled from October 10 to 17, this year. The tournament will be held at the state-of-the art Indoor Cricket Venues—Casey Stadium and Citipower Centre in Melbourne, Australia.

Last time, the Indoor Cricket World Cup was organised in Dubai in 2017 where Australia continued its dominance in the Men's and Women's Indoor Cricket World Cups by retaining the titles in both segments. In the 25 year history of the tournament, Australia never lost the Indoor Cricket World Cup in the either division.

India Wins Bilateral T20I Series 2–0 Against Sri Lanka

India clinched three match India-Sri Lanka bilateral T20 International series 2–0 by winning the third and final T20I match of the series by 78 runs on January 10, 2020 in Pune. In the third T20I of the series, India set a formidable 202 runs target before Sri Lanka to win the match and level the series. In reply Sri Lanka scored only 123 runs and lost the match by 78 runs.

Earlier, the opening match of the series at the ACA Stadium, Baraspara was abandoned on January 5, 2020 due to wet patches on the pitch and unplayable conditions of the ground. India defeated Sri Lanka by seven wickets in the second T20I of the series at the Holkar Stadium, Indore on January 7, 2020 and took 1–0 lead. Sri Lanka gave a modest 143 runs target to India which got it at its three wickets cost and 15 balls to spare.

Indian bowler Navdeep Saini was adjudged the Man of the Series.

TENNIS

Sania Mirza and Nadiia Kichenok Win WTA Hobart International Doubles Title; Rybakina Claims Hobart Singles

Indian tennis star Sania Mirza returned to the International Tennis in a Champion style when she along with her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok clinched the WTA Hobart International Doubles title, beating second seeds Shaui Peng and Shuai Zhang of China 6-4, 6-4 in the final on January 18, 2020 in Hobart.

It was Sania's 42nd WTA doubles title and the first title triumph after the Brisbane International in 2017 with Bethanie Mattek-Sands of the USA. Sania and Nadiia split $ 13580 as prize money and earned 280 ranking points each for their title victory.

Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan won the WTA Hobart International Singles title as she defeated China's Zhang Shuai 7-6(7), 6-3 in the final on January 18. It is Elena's second WTA title.

Serena Williams Wins WTA Auckland Classic Title

American tennis great Serena Williams clinched the WTA Auckland Classic Singles title, ending three-year title drought as she prevailed over Jessica Pegula 6-3, 6-4 in the final on January 12, 2020 in Auckland. It was Serena's first title since she won in Melbourne in 2017. Serena donated her US $ 43,000 prize money to victims of the Australian bushfire.

Serena celebrates her Auckland title triumph.

American duo Asia Muhammad and Taylor Townsend won the WTA Auckland Open Doubles title, beating Serena Williams and Caroline Wozniacki 6-4, 6-4 in the final.

Serbia Emerges Champion of Inaugural ATP Cup

Serbia emerged champion of the inaugural ATP Cup team event, beating Spain 2-1 in the summit clash on January 12, 2020 in Sydney. Serbia's tennis star Novak Djokovic played a key role in the title triumph of his country.

In the first of the three rubbers of the final, Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut defeated Dusan Lojovic 7-5, 6-1, to hand Spain 1–0 lead. In the second rubber and another single contest, Novak came forward to rescue Serbia and defeated great Spaniard Rafael Nadal 6-2, 7-6(4) to level the final 1-1.

In the third and final rubber, Serbian pair of Novak Djokovic and Viktor Troicki prevailed over Spanish pair of Feliciano Lopez and Pablo Careno Busta 6-3, 6-4 to clinch the ATP Cup.

Serbian team celebrates its ATP Cup title triumph.

Serbia defeated Russia in the semifinal of the ATP Cup while Spain prevailed over host Australia to set a summit clash with Serbia.

ATHLETICS

Mumbai Marathon-2020

Ethiopia's Derera Hurisa emerged winner of the 2020 Mumbai Marathon Men's elite title with a course record on January 19, 2020 in Mumbai. Hurisa clocked an impressive 02 hours, 08 minutes and 09 seconds to win the Mumbai Marathon title, improving the course record of 02 hours, 08 minutes and 35 seconds set by Gideon Kipketer in 2016. Ethiopian athletes claimed the top three positions in the men's event in Mumbai Marathon this year. Ayele Abshero and Birhanu Teshome finished second and third respectively in the race after Hurisa.

In the Mumbai Marathon women's elite event, Amane Beriso of Ethiopia clinched the title with a timing of 02 hours, 24 minutes and 51 seconds. Jepkorir finished runner-up in the race.

Srinu Bugatha and Sudha Singh won the Men's and Women's Mumbai Marathon titles in the Indian elite category. Bugatha clocked 02 hours, 18 minutes and 44 seconds to win the title while Sudha Singh clinched the title in the Mumbai Marathon for third straight year. She finished at 10th position overall among women in the race.

BADMINTON

Malaysia Masters Badminton Tournament, 2020

World's top male shuttler Kento Momota of Japan clinched the Malaysia Masters Super 500 Men's Singles Badminton title as he pipped Denmark's Viktor Axelsen 24-22, 21-11 in the final on January 12, 2020 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Momota continued his super form of 2019 in which he claimed a record 11 titles. He received $ 30,000 as prize money.

Chinese shuttler Chen Yu Fei defeated Taiwanese top-seed Tai Tzu-Ying 21-17, 21-10 in the final to clinch the Malaysia Masters Women's Singles Title. Chinese pair of Le Wen Mei and Zheng Yu clinched the Women's Doubles title of the Malaysia Masters, this year.

South Korean pair Kim Gi Jung and Lee Yong Dae emerged champion of the Men's Doubles title, beating Chinese pair of Li Junhui and Liu Yuchen 21-14, 21-16 in the final.

Chinese combination of Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong won the Malaysia Masters Mixed Doubles title with a victory over Capatriot pair of Wang Yilyu and Huang Dongping 21-19, 21-12 in the final.

CHESS

Magnus Carlsen Sets A World Record of Unbeaten Chess Games

Norway's Chess great Magnus Carlsen set a world record of 111 unbeaten classical Chess games after successfully averting a loss against Jorden Van Foreest of the Netherlands in the fourth round of Tata Steel Masters Chess Tournament at Wijk Aan Zee, the Netherlands on January 14, 2020. Carlsen settled the match into a draw.

Carlsen, who last lost a classical game in July 2018 to Ajerbaijan's Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, improved the record of 110 unbeaten classical games set by Russia's Sergei Tiviakov in 2005. Indeed, Carlsen's perfor-

mance came against a much stronger quality of opposition that averaged over 2700 ratings as compared to Tiviakov's rivals.

Abhijeet Gupta Wins Delhi International Open Grandmaster Chess Title

India's Abhijeet Gupta clinched the Delhi International Open Grandmasters Chess title by topping the points tally with 8·5 points in 10 rounds on January 16, 2020 in New Delhi. Abhijeet defeated Aleksej Alaksandrov of Belarus in the 10th and final round to register the title victory by a clear margin of half-a-point. He had won this Chess title in 2008 and 2014 before this one. He received ₹ 6·50 lakh as the prize money and a glittering trophy in the Delhi open.

Aleksej Aleksandrov, Pavel Ponkratov of Russia, Levan Pantsulaia of Georgia and Pranesh of India each secured eight points in the tournament.

P. Magesh Wins 95th Hastings International Chess Congress Title

India's P. Magesh Chandran emerged Champion of the 95th edition of Hastings International Chess Congress title with a score of 7·5 points on January 5, 2020 at Hastings, England. Indian Grandmaster Magesh remained unbeaten in the tournament and secured a draw in the ninth and final round against compatriot GA Stany. Magesh secured the top spot in the tournament with six victories and three draws. He became the GM in 2006.

France's Romain Edouard finished runner-up in the tournament as he was half-a-point behind winner Magesh. Four players shared third to sixth places with 6·5 points.

Fabiano Caruana Wins Tata Steel Masters Chess Title, 2020

Fabiano Caruana of the USA clinched the Tata Steel Masters Chess tournament, 2020 on January 26, 2020 with a score of 10 points in 13th rounds. Having taken an unbeatable lead before the 13th and final round, Caruana signed off the tournament with a win over Russia's Vladislav Artemiev in the 13th round to take his points tally to 10. Since 1980, when the event became a 13-round competition, only Garry Kasparov (1999) and Magnus Carlsen (2013) have clinched the title by scoring 10 points.

Norway's Magnus Carlsen finished runner-up in the event with 8 points followed by Wesley So from the USA on the third spot.

Spain's David Anton Guijarro won the Tata Steel Challengers' Category Chess title with 8·5 points and qualified for next year's Masters section.

GOLF

Cameron Smith Wins US PGA Sony Open

Australia's Cameron Smith clinched the US PGA Sony Open title, beating Brendon Steele in a play-off on January 12, 2020 at Honolulu's Waialae country club in Hawaii. Smith fired a two-under par 68 in the final round to match Steele and set a play-off with him.

BILLIARDS/ SNOOKER

Pankaj Advani Clinches Senior National Billiards Championship Title

Pankaj Advani emerged champion of the Senior National Billiards Championship Crown as he prevailed over Sourav Kothari 5-2 in the best of–9 150-up frame final on January 28, 2020 in Pune. Advani secured his place in the final with a 5-0 victory over Gujarat's Dhvaj Haria in the semifinal.

It was Advani's 33rd National title and 10th in the senior category.

MISCELLANEOUS

Khelo India Youth Games 2020 Successfully Organized; Maharashtra Emerges Overall Champion

The third edition of Khelo India Youth Games was successfully organised from January 10 to 22, 2020 in Guwahati, Assam. The Games got a colourful and spectacular start on January 10 amid presence of hundreds of athletes and young sportspersons from across all Indian states and union territories and thousands of sports lovers at the Indira Gandhi Stadium, Guwahati. Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju officially opened the Games. Star runner Hima Das lit the symbolic Games flame on the opening day. More than 6500 athletes at Pan-India level competed in the 20 sporting disciplines in the 13-day long mega sport event.

The Games came to a successful conclusion on January 22 at a glittering closing ceremony in Guwahati. During the closing ceremony, Assam showcased its rich cultural heritage in many beautiful performances. Maharashtra maintained its dominance in the Khelo India Youth Games, further improving upon its last time performance. Maharashtra emerged the overall champion team of the Khelo India Youth Games by topping the medals tally for second straight year. It clinched the whopping 256 medals including 78 gold and 77 silver medals.

Rank	State	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Medals Tally
1	Maharashtra	78	77	101	256
2	Haryana	68	60	72	200
3	Delhi	39	36	47	122
4	Karnataka	32	26	22	80
5	Uttar Pradesh	29	28	30	87
6	Tamil Nadu	22	32	22	76
7	Assam	20	22	34	76
8	West Bengal	19	14	20	53
9	Gujarat	16	16	20	52
10	Punjab	16	15	28	59

MAGNIFICENT

Haryana secured a distant second position by securing total 200 medals including 68 gold medals. Maharashtra received the champions' trophy from Assam's Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal at the closing ceremony.

Host Assam secured seventh position on the medals tally with total 76 medals including 20 golds.

Arjun Munda Elected President of the Archery Association of India; World Archery (WA) Lifts Ban on AAI Conditionally

Union Minister Arjun Munda was on January 18, 2020 elected as president of the **Archery Association of India** (AAI) in its much-delayed elections, which were held in New Delhi smoothly in the presence of three observers.

Enjoying the support of former AAI President Vijay Kumar Malhotra, Munda had a smooth sailing as he beat his rival BVP Rao by a margin of 34-18 votes in the elections.

Munda's entire panel secured majority share of votes and were elected for a full tenure of four years.

A total of 31 state associations were part of the AAI but only 26 states each having a share of two votes–casted their votes. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir were not part of the electoral college.

There were a total of 52 votes to elect the 19–member executive committee consisting of president, secretary general, senior vice-president, eight vice-presidents, seven joint-secretaries and one treasurer.

A three-time Jharkhand Chief Minister, the 51-year-old Munda is a hugely popular tribal leader who also runs an archery academy which was instrumental in the rise of former world number one Deepika Kumari.

The elections were held as per the Delhi High Court order. Kazi Rajib Uddin Ahmed Chapol, the World Archery Asia region Vice-President was the observer of the WA in the elections. Later he submitted the report to the World Archery body.

In a big boost to Indian archers' preparations for the **Tokyo Olympics,** the world body on January 23 conditionally lifted the suspension on **India,** less than a week after the embattled national federation held its elections.

While lifting the ban, **World Archery** instructed the **Archery Association of India** to make changes in its constitution regarding athlete membership, resolve governance issues and develop a strategic plan. It also asked AAI to furnish a quarterly progress report on these issues.

Archery Association of India : Elected Members

President : Arjun Munda (Jharkhand)

Secretary General : Pramod Chandurkar (Maharashtra)

Senior Vice-President : Capt. Abhimanyu Sindhu (Haryana)

Vice-Presidents : Amarinder Singh (Chandigarh), Rupak Debroy (Tripura), K.K. Jadam (Rajasthan), Rupesh Kar (Bengal), Chetan Kavleka (Goa), Kailash Murarka (Chhattisgarh), Paia Banylla War Nongbri (Meghalaya), D.K. Vidyarthi (MP).

Joint Secretary : Dinesh Bhil (Gujarat), K.B. Gurung (Sikkim), Ram Niwas Hooda (Haryana), Sumanta Mohanty (Jharkhand), Konjum Kibba (Arunachal), Joris Paulose Ummacheril (Kerala) and Shihan Hussaini (TN).

Treasurer : Rajendar Singh Tomar (Uttarakhand).

Basketball Great Kobe Bryant and Eight Others Die in A Helicopter Crash

Basketball great and an athlete of international repute Kobe Bryant was killed at age 41 on January 26, 2020 in a helicopter crash near Los Angeles, the USA along with eight others on board including his 13 year old daughter Gianna. This accident sent deep shock waves across the globe in sports fraternity and others.

Kobe Bryant was travelling with his daughter Gianna and seven other passengers and crew when their Sikorsky S-76 helicopter slammed into a hillside at Calabasas, west of Los Angeles. All passengers perished in the accident. Bryant, a five-time NBA champion and two-time Olympic gold medallist, is widely regarded as one of the greatest basketball players in the world.

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AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2020

Australian Open 2020

Australian Open, 2020, the first 'Tennis Grand Slam' tournament of the year was organised at Melbourne Park in Melbourne from January 20 to February 2, 2020.

Novak Djokovic with his 8th Australian Open.

Serbia's tennis great Novak Djokovic retained his Australian Open Men's Singles title as he prevailed over fifth seeded Dominic Thiem of Austria 6–4, 4–6, 2–6, 6–3, 6–4 in a closely-fought final at the Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne on February 02, 2020. It was Novak's record extending eighth Australian Open title as he had clinched it in 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019 before this one in 2020.

Sofia Kenin with her Australian Open title.

It is Novak Djokovic's 17th Grand Slam Singles title victory. Only Roger Federer (20 titles) and Rafael Nadal (19) are ahead of Novak in terms of Grand Slam titles.

Novak defeated Roger Federer in the semi final to secure his place in the Australian Open final this year. In another semi-final of the Australian Open, Dominic Thiem pipped Alexander Zoerev of Germany to set his title clash with Djokovic.

Top Five Men's Singles Grand Slam Title Winners
(Till Australian Open 2020)

Champions	Total	Australian Open	French Open	Wimbledon	US Open
Roger Federer	20	6	1	8	5
Rafael Nadal	19	1	12	2	4
Novak Djokovic	17	8	1	5	3
Pete Sampras	14	2	—	7	5
Roy Emerson	12	6	2	2	2

Sofia Kenin of the USA clinched the Australian Open Women's Singles title, beating two-time Grand Slam Champion Garbine Muguruza 4–6, 6–2, 6–2 in the final on February 01, 2020 at Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne. It was Kenin's first Grand Slam title. She received $ 2·83 million winner's purse and the Daphne Akhurst trophy given to the Australian Open Women's Singles Champion.

Novak Djokovic's Grand Slam Titles (Singles)

Australian Open—2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020.

French Open—2016.

Wimbledon Open—2011, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019.

US Open—2011, 2015, 2018.

Sofia Kenin pipped local girl Ashleigh Barty in the semifinal while Muguruza defeated Simona Halep of Romania in another semifinal.

Timea Babos of Hungary and Kristina Mladenovic of France clinched the Australian Open Women's Doubles title as they defeated Hsieh Su-wei of Taiwan and Barbora Strycova of Czech Republic in the straight sets (6–2, 6–1) in the final.

Rajeev Ram of the USA and Joe Salisbury of Britain emerged champion of the Australian Open Men's Doubles title as they prevailed over the Australian pair of Max Purcell and Luke Saville 6–4, 6–2 in the final.

In the Australian Open Mixed Doubles finals, Barbora Krejcikova of Czech Republic and Nikola Mektic of Croatia emerged champion as they pipped Bethanie Mattek-Sands of the USA and Jamie Murray of Britain 5–7, 6–4, 10–1 in the final.

Victoria Jimevez Kasintseva of Andora clinched the Australian Open Girls Singles title while Harold Mayot of France clinched the Boys' Singles title of the event.

Australian Open 2020 : Results In Brief

Event/ Competition	Winner	Runner-up	Score
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Dominic Thiem (Austria)	6–4, 4–6, 2–6, 6–3, 6–4
Women's Singles	Sofia Kenin (The USA)	Garbine Muguruza (Spain)	4–6, 6–2, 6–2
Women's Doubles	Timea Babos (Hungary) and Kristina Mladenovic (France)	Hsieh Su-wei (Taiwan) and Barbora Strycova (Czech Republic)	6–2, 6–1
Men's Doubles	Rajeev Ram (The USA) and Joe Salisbury (Britain)	Max Purcell and Luke Saville (Both from Australia)	6–4, 6–2
Mixed Doubles	Barbora Krejcikova (Czech Republic) and Nikola Mektic (Croatia)	Bethanie Mattek-Sands (The USA) and Jamie Murray (Britain)	5–7, 6–4, 10–1

Science & Technology

Earth at Risk of Becoming a 'Hothouse'

The world is at risk of entering 'hothouse' conditions where global average temperatures will be 4-5 degrees Celsius higher even if the emissions reduction targets under a global climate deal are met, scientists have warned.

The Earth at present

The Earth after becoming a 'hothouse'

Around 200 countries agreed in 2005 to limit temperature rise to 'well below' 2°C above pre-industrial levels, a threshold believed to be a tipping point for the climate.

However, it is not clear whether the world's climate can be safely 'parked' near 2°C above pre-industrial levels or this might trigger other processes which drive further devastation.

Scientists from the Stockholm Resilience Center, the University of Copenhagen, Australian National University and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research said it is likely that if a critical threshold is crossed, several tipping points will lead to abrupt change. Such processes include permafrost thaw; the loss of methane hydrates from the ocean floor; weaker land and ocean carbon sinks; the loss of Arctic summer sea ice and the reduction of Antarctic sea ice.

U.S.A. Restores Grizzlies to Protected Species List

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has restored federal protections to grizzly bears in and around Yellowstone National Park, abiding by a court ruling last year that removal of the bears' threatened status violated the Endangered Species Act. The reinstatement came after several years of legal wrangling.

A Universal Flue Vaccine Identified

Scientists have identified a potential influenza vaccine that can protect people against most strains of the virus. The candidate vaccine described in the journal *Nature Communications*, elicited a strong antibody response to a structure on the surface of flue viruses.

It has the potential to be developed into a universal flu vaccine, which—unlike the current seasonal flu vaccines—could be given a few times over a lifetime to provide protection potentially similar to a tetanus vaccine.

"This vaccine was able to do something that most other candidate flu vaccines have not been able to do," said Drew Weissman, a Professor at the University of Pennsylvania in the U.S. "It was able to elicit protective responses against a conserved region that offers broad protection," added Mr. Weissman.

It could be something that everyone uses in the future to protect themselves from the flu," said Scott Hensley, a faculty at the university.

Modern viral vaccines typically use lab-grown viral proteins to elicit an immune response that protects people against future exposures to a virus.

On the whole, this approach has not worked well against influenza viruses.

Seasonal flu vaccines provide temporary protection against the flu. This is why they need to be updated every year.

Dark Matter can be Moved Around

For the first time, scientists have found evidence that mysterious dark matter—believed to make up the most of the mass of the universe—can be heated up and moved around, as a result of star formation in galaxies.

The findings, published in *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, provide the first observational evidence for the effect known as 'dark matter heating', offering clues as to what makes up dark matter.

Scientists found that galaxies that stopped forming stars long ago had higher dark matter densities at their centres than those that are still forming stars today. This supports the theory that the older galaxies had less dark matter heating.

Initially Jupiter was not Larger than Earth

Gas giants are usually close to their stars. Lund University researchers find that Jupiter formed at a distance some four times away from the sun as its present orbit. Over 7,00,000 years it migrated inwards in the solar system. At first, Jupiter was no larger than the earth, they find.

Planet

MASAPRESS

Memorable Points

National

- Who took charge as the new IBA Chief Executive ? **➞ Sunil Mehta**
  - ☞ Noted banker Sunil Mehta on January 27, 2020 assumed charge as the Chief Executive of the Indian Bank's Association (IBA). He succeeds V.G. Kannan, who demitted office as Chief Executive of IBA on December 31, 2019. Mehta, recently retired as the Managing Director and CEO of the Punjab National Bank. Mr. Mehta holds M.Sc. in Agriculture and MBA in Finance. He is also the holder of CAIIB from Indian Institute of Bankers, Mumbai.
- Who was appointed as the new Deputy Governor of RBI ? **➞ Michael Debabrata Patra**
  - ☞ Michael Debabrata Patra was appointed as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in January, 2020 for a three year term. Prior to be elevated on the post of deputy governor, Mr. Patra was the Executive Director in the RBI Monetary Policy Department. The RBI, currently headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das, can have a maximum four deputies. Apart from Patra, N. S. Vishwanathan, B. P. Kanungo and M. K. Jain are the other three Deputy Governors in RBI at present. Patra joined the RBI in 1985.
- GSAT-30, India's first satellite of 2020 was successfully launched. GSAT-30 is a **➞ Communication Satellite**
  - ☞ ISRO's Communication Satellite GSAT-30 was successfully launched by European Space Agency's heavy lift launch Vehicle Ariane-5 (VA251) at Kourou in French Guiana on January 17, 2020. The 3,357 kg GSAT-30 will replace INSAT-4A for communication purposes. GSAT-30 is equipped with 12 normal C band and 12 Ku band transponders with a mission life of 15 years; it is configured on ISRO's enhanced I-3K bus structure. It is the first Indian satellite in space in 2020. GSAT-30 will provide DTH service, connectivity to VSATs for ATM, stock exchange, TV uplinking and teleport services and e-governance applications.
- What is India's rank on the WEF's Global Social Mobility Index, 2020 ? **➞ 76th rank**
  - ☞ India was placed on 76th rank out of 82 countries in the world on the WEF's first Global Social Mobility Index, 2020, released on January 20, 2020. India got the rank with a score of 42·7. The index has been prepared on 5 dimensions — Health, Education (access, quality and equity), Technology, work (opportunities, wages and conditions), Protections and Institutions (Social protection and inclusive institutions). Denmark emerged on top of the index with a score of 85·2 followed by Norway and Finland on second and third positions respectively.
- What is India's rank on EIU's Global Democracy Index, 2019 ? **➞ 51st rank**
  - ☞ India was ranked on 51st position, moving down 10 places on the Global Democracy Index 2019 released by the Economist Intelligence unit in January 2020. India's score down from 7·23 out of 10 in 2018 to 6·90 in 2019 edition, is its lowest ever since the first edition of the index in 2006. The index has been prepared on five parameters or categories—electoral process and pluralism; functioning of government; political culture; political participation and civil liberties, carrying 165 independent states and two territories. Norway was adjudged the most democratic country in the world in the index with a score of 9·87.
- Which actress along with her husband was honoured with the Champion of Change Award, 2019 ? **➞ Shilpa Shetty Kundra**
  - ☞ Noted Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty Kundra and her husband businessman Raj Kundra were honoured with the Champion of Change award for 2019 for their efforts towards encouraging people to take up the Swacch Bharat Abhiyan. Former President of India Pranab Mukherjee presented the award to Shilpa and her husband on January 20, 2020 in New Delhi. Social activist Arushi Nishank also got the Champions of Change award 2019 for her initiative towards cleaning river Ganga — 'The Sparsh Ganga Initiative'.
- Which State won the 'Best Tableau' honour among 'States and UTs' in the Republic Day parade, 2020 ? **➞ Assam**
  - ☞ Assam's tableau was adjudged the best among the States and Union Territories that took part in the Republic Day parade, 2020 on January 26, 2020 in New Delhi. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on January 28 awarded Assam for the best tableau based on the theme 'Land of Unique Craftsmanship and Culture.' The tableaux of Odisha and Uttar Pradesh were named joint second best. The Ministry of Jal Shakti and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) won the joint best tableaux award from among six ministries and departments that participated in the parade.
- Rani Rampal won the World Games Athlete of the Year award, 2019. She is a **➞ Hockey Player**
  - ☞ Indian Women's Hockey team captain Rani Rampal on January 30, 2020 won the World Games Athlete of the Year Award, 2019, becoming the first-ever Hockey player to win the honour. Rani received 199,477 votes to win the honour based on polling by sports fans worldwide. Rani was also chosen for Padma Shri, this year.

- Which Sports Federation was de-recognised by the Sports Ministry of India ? ➞ **The Rowing Federation of India**
  - ☞ The Sports Ministry of India on January 22, 2020 de-recognised the Rowing Federation of India (RFI) on grounds of violating the Sports Code of 2011 during its elections in December 2019. In the RFI elections, Rajlaxmi Singh Deo and M. V. Sriram were elected as its President and Secretary-General respectively. The Ministry found violations of the Sports Code by RFI in four areas. The RFI elections allowed proxy voting while there was no such provision in the model election under the Sports Code, 2011. The RFI also allowed three votes per its affiliated unit in the elections, flouting the two votes per affiliated unit norm. Moreover only 18 State/UT units took part in the elections, falling short of the least number of participant units. The Sports Ministry also asked the Indian Olympic Association to form an ad hoc committee to discharge the functions of the RFI.

International

- Katerina Sakellaropoulou was elected the first woman President of ➞ **Greece**
  - ☞ High Court judge and human rights-environment activist Katerina Sakellaropoulou was on January 22, 2020 elected the first woman President of Greece in the Parliamentary vote where 261 lawmakers supported her Presidential candidature in the 300-seat Greece Parliament. The ruling conservative New Democracy Party nominated her for the post. She got support of the opposition 'Syriza' party, paving her easy election as the President. Katerina has also been the first woman to serve as the President of the Council of State, the country's top administrative court.
- Which country continues to hold the world's strongest passport on the Henley Passport Index, 2020 ? ➞ **Japan**
  - ☞ Japan continues to hold the world's strongest passport for third straight year as it again emerged on top of the Henley Passport Index, 2020 released in January, 2020 based on data from the International Air Transport Association (AITA). Japanese passport holders can access 191 destinations across the globe on visa free or visa-on-arrival facility. Singapore finishes close second again as in 2019 with 190 destinations with a visa-free or visa on arrival on Singaporean passport. Afghanistan's passport was adjudged the weakest one in the world on the Henley Passport Index, 2020. Indian passport was ranked 84th in the list.
- Which country operationalised world's largest radio telescope ? ➞ **China**
  - ☞ China on January 11, 2020 operationalised the world's largest radio telescope with a diametre of 500 metres in Guiyang city, the capital of Guizhou province. Dubbed as "China's Sky Eye", the five-hundred metre Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST) is a single-dish telescope with a receiving area of around 30 football fields. FAST is capable of receiving a maximum of 38 gigabytes of information per second. It will gradually open to astronomers around the globe, providing them with a powerful tool to unfold the deep secrets of the universe.
- Which country retained its top rank on the Global Talent Competitiveness Index, 2020 ? ➞ **Switzerland**
  - ☞ Switzerland retained its top rank on the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI), 2020 with a score of 81-26, released by INSAED, a partner and sponsor of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) tent, on January 22, 2020. The USA and Singapore secured second and third ranks respectively. The GTCI measures and ranks countries based on their ability to grow, attract and retain talent. India was placed on 72nd spot in the current GTCI, moving up eight places in comparison to its previous rank in 2019.
- Which two countries shared the top spot as the least corrupt country on the Global Corruption Perception Index, 2019 ? ➞ **Denmark and New Zealand**
  - ☞ Denmark and New Zealand were adjudged the least corrupt countries of the world as they shared the top spot on the Global Corruption Perception Index, 2019, released by the anti-corruption watchdog the Transparency International on January 23, 2020. Denmark and New Zealand jointly claimed the top rank with a score of 87 each out of 100. Denmark was the top rank holder last year also. Finland (86) follows close second. The corruption index uses a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). India was ranked 80th position with a score of 41 in the current index moving down two ranks. Last year India was ranked 78th.
- Who dominated the 62nd Grammy Awards 2020 by sweeping five Grammys ? ➞ **Billie Eilish**
  - ☞ Emerging singer Billie Eilish stole the limelight at the 62nd Annual Grammy Awards 2020 by sweeping five Grammys including top four ones on January 26, 2020 in Los Angeles. She got the Album, Record, Song of the year Grammys and also claimed Best New Artist honour. She became the first artist to win the top Grammys since Christopher Cross in 1981. Her album *"When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go ?"* won the Album and Pop vocal Album of the year Grammys. She also won Grammys of song and Record of the year categories for 'Bad Guy'. She shared the Song of the year Grammy with her brother Finneas O'Connell as he was the co-writer of the song.
- Who have been honoured with the Tyler Prize, 2020 ? ➞ **Pavan Sukhdev and Gretchen C. Daily**
  - ☞ Eminent environmental economist and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Goodwill Ambassador Pavan Sukhdev from India and US conservation biologist Gretchen C Daily were chosen the joint winners of the Tyler Prize for 2020 for their great work in the field of environment on January 27, 2020. Sukhdev got the honour for his 'green economy' work while Gretchen won it for her work on bringing the economic consequences of environmental degradation and loss to the attention of corporate and political decision-makers. The duo will receive the honour on May 01, 2020. Tyler prize is generally referred to as the "Nobel Prize for environment". It is administered by the university of Southern California.

Economic Scenario

- *The Arogya Sanjeevani Policy Mandated by IRDAI*
- *Qantas Airways is the World's Safest Airline*
- *Shivalik Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd. on the Way to become Small Finance Bank*
- *NIRVIK Scheme (Niryaat Rin Vikas Yojana)*
- *GDP is Most Likely to Grow at 5% in 2019-20 : First Advance Estimates of National Income (2019-20)*
- *RBI Releases National Strategy for Financial Inclusion for 2019-24*
- *Foreign Exchange Reserves Touch Record $ 466·693 billion*
- *63 Indian Billionaires have More Money than the Union Budget for 2018-19 : Oxfam*
- *Climate Change Threatens Around Half of World GDP, says WEF Study (2020)*
- *"APNA UREA-Sona Ugle" Brand of HURL Launched*
- *West Bengal Emerges at the Top in Vegetable Production*
- *First Advance Estimates of Horticulture Crops in 2019-20*
- *Gujarat Replaces West Bengal as Top Governing State in 2019*
- *Govt. Sets up National Start-up Advisory Council*
- *India at 76 in WEF's Social Mobility Index 2020*
- *India in World Bank's Women, Business and Law (WBL), Index 2020*
- *India Falls to 51st Position in EIU's Democracy Index, 2020*
- *India Still Fourth-most Attractive Market, Shows PwC Global CEO Survey 2020*
- *India Among Top 10 FDI Recipients, Attracts $ 49 bn Inflows in 2019 : UNCTAD*
- *India is 80th Most Corrupt Country of the World : Corruption Perception Index 2020*
- *RBI Nominates Janak Raj as Member of Monetary Policy Committee*

The Arogya Sanjeevani Policy Mandated by IRDAI

In a move that helps easy availability of health insurance, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has introduced Arogya Sanjeevani Policy, a standard health cover policy that must be offered by all general and standalone health insurers. Key features of Arogya Sanjeevani are the following :

- Every general and standalone health insurer should offer a standard health product, the Arogya Sanjeevani Policy, with a minimum sum insured of ₹ 1 lakh, with a upper limit of ₹ 5 lakh.
- The policy term will be for one year.
- The minimum entry age will be 18 years with lifelong renewability and there is no exit age.
- The policy covers 22 diseases and treatments with a varying waiting period of from 24 to 48 months.
- It will be offered on indemnity basis, and should not be combined with critical illness covers or benefit-based covers.
- The premium under this product will be the same across India, and no geographic location and pricing will be allowed.
- The insurers will now come up with product filing to the regulator and will have to offer it from April 1, 2020.

Qantas Airways is the World's Safest Airline

As per a rating by Airline Ratings.com, the world's safest and most punctual airlines are in the Asia Pacific region.

- Qantas Airways Ltd. was named safest airline in the world on a top-20 list published by Airline Ratings.com, followed by Air New Zealand Ltd. and Taiwan's Eva Airways Corp.
- Singapore Airlines Ltd. was ranked sixth, while Cathay Pacific Airways and Virgin Australia Holdings Ltd. were ranked ninth and tenth respectively.
- In a separate survey by OAG Aviation Worldwide Ltd. PT Garuda Indonesia was crowned 2019's most punctual carrier.
- Panama's Copa Airlines SA ranked second among airlines arriving or departing within 15 minutes of scheduled times.
- Japans Skymark Airlines Inc, Hawaiian Airlines Inc and Latam Airlines Group SA rounded out the top five.
- Among mega airports ranked by OAG—those catering to more than 30 million airline seats—Moscow Sheremetyevo topped the list for the best on-time performance in 2019. The ranking is based on the proportion of flights at each airport that arrive and leave within 15 minutes of scheduled times.
- In contrast to the poor showing of its airlines, the US airports were top performers for punctuality. Six of the top 10 on-time airports were American, with Atlanta ranking fourth. Seattle came in fifth and Los Angeles seventh. John F Kennedy airport entered the top 10, while Bangkok and Amsterdam dropped out.

Shivalik Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd. on the Way to become Small Finance Bank

Shivalik Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd. is the country's first co-operative bank to get in-principle approval for Small Finance Bank from the RBI. Ten Small Finance Banks are operating in India at present. Within a fortnight of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) coming

up with its draft guidelines on urban cooperative banks (UCB) asking them to lend 75 per cent of their portfolio towards priority sector, Uttar Pradesh based multi-state Shivalik Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd. on January 6, 2020 received an in-principle approval for becoming a small finance bank.

The RBI had come with a scheme on voluntary transition of UCBs into Small Finance Bank (SFB) on September 27, 2018. But there was no taker. However, after the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank scam, the central bank tightened the screw and recently proposed that UCBs should severely restrict their business model and should bring down single and group exposure norms. Half of their portfolio should be comprised of loans of not over ₹ 25 lakh. In the last week of the year 2019 the RBI said the management should be run by professionals and the appointment of CEOs should be subject to RBI approval.

UCBs with a minimum net worth of ₹ 50 crore and maintaining capital to risk (weighted) assets ratio of 9 per cent and above are eligible to apply for voluntary transition to SFB under the RBI's scheme. The minimum net worth of the proposed SFB should be ₹ 100 crore from the date of commencement of business. As SFBs are required to maintain a minimum capital adequacy ratio of 15 per cent of its Risk Weighted Assets (RWA) on a continuous basis, the availability of adequate capital should be ensured. Promoters should maintain at least 26 per cent of the paid-up equity capital.

NIRVIK Scheme (Niryaat Rin Vikas Yojana)

Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (**ECGC**) has introduced '*NIRVIK*' **scheme** to ease the lending process and enhance loan availability for exporters.

- The scheme was announced by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on September 14, 2019 as a part of measures to boost exports.
- The main aim behind introducing the scheme was to enhance accessibility and affordability of credit for exporters.
- The scheme is also called the Export Credit Insurance Scheme (**ECIS**)
- Under the new 'NIRVIK' scheme the insurance cover guaranteed will cover up to 90 per cent of the principal and interest.
- The insurance cover will include both pre and post-shipment credit. The Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) currently provides credit guarantee of up to 60 per cent loss.
- The enhanced insurance cover will ensure that foreign and rupee export credit interest rates will be below 4 and 8 per cent respectively for the exporters.
- The interest rates will likely fall to 3·15 per cent for export credit in dollar terms and 7·35 per cent in rupee terms.
- According to the data compiled by the Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO), around 53 per cent of the export credit outgo is currently in foreign currency, while 47 per cent is in rupee terms.
- The scheme also aims to simplify the procedure for settlement of claims and provisional payment of up to 50 per cent within 30 days on production of proof of end-use of the advances in default by the Insured Bank.

E-visa Facility in India

- e-Visa has 4 sub-categories *i.e.*, e-Tourist visa, e-Business Visa, e-Medical Visa and e-Medical Attendant Visa.
- e-Visa is valid for entry through 28 designated Airports and 5 designated seaports
- At present the e-Visa Scheme is available to nationals of 169 countries.
- E-visa has now been further liberalized to include the following :

1. e-Tourist Visa of 5-year duration has been launched in addition to one-year e-Tourist Visa. This e-Tourist Visa for 5 years will be with a stay stipulation of maximum of 90 days' multiple entry and non-extendable.
2. A one-month e-Tourist Visa with double entry, has been launched.
3. e-Conference Visa, in line with e-Conference Visa for Government/ P.S.U. conferences, would be provided for private conferences organized by private persons / companies / organizations.

- The scheme will be in force for a period of 5-years and on the conclusion, the standard ECGC covers will be made available to the Banks with its regular features.
- For accounts with limits below ₹ 80 crore, the premium rates will be moderated to 0·60 per annum and for those exceeding ₹ 80 crore, the rates will be 0·72 per annum for the same enhanced cover.
- The scheme will mandate inspection of bank documents and records by ECGC officials for losses exceeding ₹ 10 crore as against the present ₹ 1 crore.

GDP is Most Likely to Grow at 5% in 2019-20 : First Advance Estimates of National Income (2019-20)

India is set to clock economic growth of 5 per cent in 2019-20, sharply down from 2018-19's achievement of 6·8 per cent, showed the First Advanced Estimates for 2019-20 released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), on January 7, 2020. In nominal terms, India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow at 7·5 per cent, a multi-decade low, suggesting that tax revenues and individual incomes may remain under stress. The NSO's first advanced estimate has a shelf life of two months, and is used only for Budget arithmetic.

(A) ESTIMATES AT CONSTANT (2011-12) PRICES

Gross Domestic Product . Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹ 147·79 lakh crore, as against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2018-19 of ₹ 140·78 lakh crore. The growth in real GDP during 2019-20 is estimated at 5·0 per cent as compared to the growth rate of 6·8 per cent in 2018-19.

Gross Value Added (GVA) at Basic Prices. Real GVA at Basic Prices is estimated to increase from ₹ 129·07 lakh crore in 2018-19 to ₹ 135·40 lakh crore in 2019-20. Estimated growth of real GVA in 2019-20 is 4·9 per cent as against 6·6 per cent in 2018-19.

The sectors which registered growth rate of over 4·9 per cent are, 'Electricity, Gas, Water Supply and Other Utility Services', 'Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication and Services related to Broadcasting', 'Financial, Real Estate and Professional Services' and 'Public Administration, Defence and Other Services' at 5·4 per cent, 5·9 per cent, 6·4 per cent, 9·1 per cent respectively. The growth in the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing', 'Mining and Quarrying', 'Manufacturing' and 'Construction' is estimated to be 2·8 per cent, 1.5 per cent, 2·0 per cent and 3·2 per cent respectively.

Per Capita Income . The Per Capita Income in real terms (at 2011-12 prices) during 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹ 96,563 as compared to ₹ 92,565 for the year 2018-19. The growth rate in Per Capita Income is estimated at 4·3 per cent during 2019-20, as against 5·6 per cent in the previous year.

(B) ESTIMATES AT CURRENT PRICES

Gross Domestic Product . GDP is derived by adding Taxes on Products net of Subsidies on Products to GVA at Basic Prices. GDP at Current Prices in the year 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹ 204·42 lakh crore, as against ₹ 190·10 lakh crore in 2018-19 showing a growth rate of 7.5 per cent.

National Income . The nominal Net National Income (NNI), also known as National Income (at Current Prices) is likely to be ₹ 181·10 lakh crore during 2019-20, as against ₹ 168·37 lakh crore for the year 2018-19. In terms of growth rates, the National Income registered a growth rate of 7·6 per cent in 2019-20 as against the previous year's growth rate of 11·3 per cent.

World Bank Global Economic Growth Prospects — Jan 2020

Comparative GDP GROWTH

Figures in %	2017	2018	2019 estimate	2020 forecast	% point difference between Jun 2019 & Jan 2020 forecast
World	3.2	3.0	2.4	**2.5**	**-0.2**
Advanced Economies	2.4	2.2	1.6	**1.4**	**-0.1**
United States	2.4	2.9	2.3	**1.8**	**0.1**
Euro Area	2.5	1.9	1.1	**1.0**	**-0.4**
Japan	1.9	0.8	1.1	**0.7**	**0**
Emerging Market and Developing Economies (EMDEs)	4.5	4.3	3.5	**4.1**	**-0.5**
China	6.8	6.6	6.1	**5.9**	**-0.2**
Thailand	4.0	4.1	2.5	**2.7**	**-0.9**
Russia	1.6	2.3	1.2	**1.6**	**-0.2**
Turkey	7.5	2.8	0	**3.0**	**0**
Brazil	1.3	1.3	1.1	**2.0**	**-0.5**
Saudi Arabia	-0.7	2.4	0.4	**1.9**	**-1.2**
India	**7.2**	**6.8**	**5.0**	**5.8**	**-1.7**
Pakistan	5.2	5.5	3.3	**2.4**	**-0.3**
Bangladesh	7.3	7.9	8.1	**7.2**	**-0.2**
South Africa	1.4	0.8	0.4	**0.9**	**-0.6**

Source: World Bank Group — India's growth on fiscal basis (2020 denotes 2020-21) — KBK Infographics

Per Capita Income. The Per Capita Net National Income during 2019-20 is estimated to be ₹ 1,35,050 showing a rise of 6·8 per cent as compared to ₹ 1,26,400 during 2018-19 with the growth rate of 10·0 per cent.

Gross Fixed Capital Formation . Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) at Current Prices is estimated at ₹ 57·42 lakh crore in 2019-20 as against ₹ 55·70 lakh crore in 2018-19. At Constant (2011-12) Prices, the GFCF is estimated at ₹ 45·93 lakh crore in 2019-20 as against ₹ 45·48 lakh crore in 2018-19. In terms of GDP, the rates of GFCF at Current and Constant (2011-12) prices during 2019-20 are estimated at 28·1 per cent and 31.1 per cent, respectively, as against the corresponding rates of 29·3 per cent and 32·3 per cent, respectively in 2018-19.

First Advance Estimates of GVA at Basic Prices by Economic Activity

Industry	Percentage Change Over Previous Year (at Current Prices)		Percentage Change Over Previous Year (at 2011-12 Prices)	
	2018-19	2019-20	2018-19	2019-20
1. Agriculture, forestry & fishing	4·0	9·8	2·9	2·8
2. Mining & quarrying	16·8	–1·6	1·3	1·5
3. Manufacturing	10·9	2·3	6·9	2·0
4. Electricity, gas, water supply & other utility services	13·4	4·8	7·0	5·4
5. Construction	13·4	4·6	8·7	3·2
6. Trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting	11·6	7·6	6·9	5·9
7. Financial, real estate & professional services	12·7	7·6	7·4	6·4
8. Public Administration, defence and other services	14·3	14·6	8·6	9·1
GVA at Basic Price	**11·1**	**7·6**	**6·6**	**4·9**

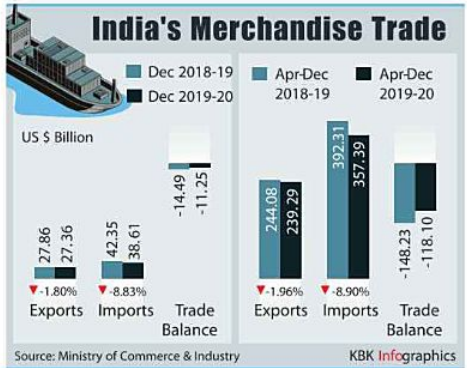
RBI Releases National Strategy for Financial Inclusion for 2019-24

RBI released on January 10, 2020 *National Strategy for Financial Inclusion* for five-year period (2019-24). The financial inclusion is increasingly a key driver of growth and poverty alleviation world over. Access to formal finance can boost job creation,

reduce vulnerability to economic shocks and increase investments in human capital.

Key points of National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) 2019-2024 :

- Increasing the outreach of banking outlets to provide universal access to financial services to every village within a 5 kilometre radius/ hamlet of 500 households in hilly areas by March 2020.
- Banks should move towards an increasingly digital and consent-based architecture for customer on-boarding by March 2024.
- The need to strengthen the eco-system for various modes of digital financial services in all Tier-II to Tier VI centres to create the necessary infrastructure to move towards a less cash society by March 2022.
- NSFI's vision is to make financial services available, accessible, and affordable to all the citizens in a safe and transparent manner to support inclusive and resilient multi-stakeholder-led growth.
- Banks should leverage on the developments in fintech space to encourage financial service providers adopt innovative approaches to strengthen out-reach through virtual modes, including mobile apps, so that every adult has access to a financial service providers through a mobile device by March 2024.
- NSFI suggested that the digital infrastructure must be expanded through better networking of bank branches, BC (business correspondent) outlets, Micro ATM, PoS (Point-of-Sale) terminals and stable connectivity.
- NSFI recommended extending the digital financial infrastructure to cooperative banks and other specialised banks (payments banks, small finance banks) as well as other non-bank entities such as fertilizer shops, office of the local government bodies / panchayats, fair price shops, common service centres, educational institutions, among others, to promote efficiency and transparency in the services offered to customers.



- Every willing and eligible adult who has been enrolled under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (including young adults, who have recently taken up employment), should be enrolled under an insurance scheme (Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, etc.), pension scheme (National Pension Scheme, Atal Pension Yojana) by March 2020.
- The Public Credit Registry (PCR) should be made fully operational by March 2022 so that authorised financial entities can leverage on the same for assessing credit proposals from all citizens.
- All relevant details pertaining to the ongoing skill development and livelihood generation programmes should be made available to the new entrants at the time of account opening.
- The details of the account holders, including unemployed youth and women who are willing to undergo skill development and be a part of the livelihood programme, may be shared to the concerned skill development centres/ livelihood mission and vice-versa by March 2020.
- Keeping in view the importance of handholding for the newly financially included self-help groups/ micro entrepreneurs, a framework for a focussed approach should be adopted, ensuring convergence of efforts from civil society/ banks/ NGOs to increase their awareness on financial literacy. Managerial skills, credit and market linkages must be developed by National Skill Development Mission by March 2022.

Foreign Exchange Reserves Touch Record $ 466·693 billion

The country's foreign exchange reserves touched a record high of $ 466·693 billion, on January 24, 2020 according to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data. In the reporting week, gold reserves rose to $ 28·715 billion. The special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were $ 1·443 billion. India's reserve position with the IMF decreased to $ 3·615 billion.

- About 25 per cent of our assessed plant and animal species are threatened by human actions, with a million species facing extinction, many within decades.

"APNA UREA–Sona Ugle" Brand of HURL Launched

The Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda launched the 'APNA UREA – SonaUgle' brand of Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited (HURL) on January 17, 2020.

- HURL is a Joint Venture Company promoted by the three Maharatna Companies *i.e.*, Coal India Limited (CIL), NTPC Limited (NTPC) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) as the lead promoters with FCIL and HFCL as other two partners.
- The HURL is being looked as a major emerging player in Urea market due to revival of the three closed units in 2021 having total installed production capacity of 38·1 LMT of Neem Coated Urea per annum. The Company will establish and operate state-of-the-art environment friendly and energy efficient Natural Gas based new Fertilizer Complexes with the annual installed capacity of 1.27 MMTPA neem coated Urea at each of the three locations which are expected to be commissioned in February 2021 (Gorakhpur, UP) and May 2021 (Barauni and Sindri). The feedstock to the plants *i.e.*, Natural Gas will be supplied by GAIL under the Pooled Price Mechanism.
- The other two Urea Units being revived are Ramagundam unit by M/s. Ramagundam Fertilizers & Chemicals Limited (RFCL), a Joint Venture of National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), EIL & FCIL, and Talcher unit by M/s. Talcher Fertilizers Limited (TFL), a Joint Venture of Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited (RCF), CIL, GAIL & FCIL.

West Bengal Emerges at the Top in Vegetable Production

West Bengal has overtaken Uttar Pradesh and emerged as the top State in vegetable production in 2018-19. West Bengal produced 29·55 million tonnes (mt) of vegetables during the year 2018-19 against 27.70 mt in the year 2017-18. Vegetable production in UP, which held the numero uno position earlier, came down to 27·71 mt in 2018-19 from 28·32 mt the previous year.

West Bengal accounted for 15.9 per cent of the country's total vegetable production in 2018-19 while UP produced 14·9 per cent. Madhya Pradesh (9·6 per cent), Bihar (9 per cent) and Gujarat (6.8 per cent) were the other major vegetable producers.

The area under vegetable cultivation increased from 6.74 million hectares (mh) in 2004-05 to 10.10 mh in 2018-19 (third advance estimates). Vegetable production increased from 101.25 mt in 2004-05 to 185.88 tonnes in 2018-19, with an average productivity of 18.4 tonnes per hectare. The major vegetable crops grown in India, which accounts for 11·2 per cent of global vegetable production, are potato, tomato, onion, brinjal, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, and okra.

Fruits Production

Andhra Pradesh continued to hold on to the top position in the production of fruits with 17.61 mt, followed by Maharashtra (10.82 mt) and UP (10.65 mt). While Andhra Pradesh marginally improved its position, Maharashtra overtook Assam, which occupied the second position in 2017-18. UP, too, moved several notches up from 2017-18 levels to reach the third rank.

With a production of 98.58 mt, fruits account for about 31.4 per cent of the total production of horticulture crops in the country. The area under fruit crops cultivation during 2018-19 was 6.65 mh, which is 26.1 per cent of the total area under horticulture cultivation in India.

First Advance Estimates of Horticulture Crops in 2019-20

Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare

Toppers : Vegetable Crops Production in 2018-19 (3rd Advance Estimates)

States	Area ('000 hectares)	Production (Million tonnes)	Productivity (tonnes/ hectares)
West Bengal	1,490·39	29·55	19·82
Uttar Pradesh	1,256·27	27·70	22·05
Madhya Pradesh	897·99	17·77	19·79
Bihar	872·55	17·00	19·14
Gujarat	626·26	12·55	20·04
Fruit Crops Production in 2018-19 (3rd Advance Estiamtes)			
Andhra Pradesh	718·91	17·61	24·50
Maharashtra	756·97	10·82	14·30
Uttar Pradesh	480·53	10·65	22·17
Gujarat	433·79	9·23	21·27
Madhya Pradesh	395·55	6·57	16·60

has released the Final Estimates of 2018-19 and 1st Advance Estimates of 2019-20 of Area and Production of various Horticulture Crops.

Highlights of 2018-19(Final) :

- The Total Horticulture Production of the country is estimated to be 310·74 Million Tonnes in 2018-19, which is marginally higher than the Horticulture Production in 2017-18.
- Increase in Fruits, Flowers, Spices and Honey while decrease in Vegetables, Aromatic & Medicinal Plants and Plantation Crops.
- Fruits Production is estimated to be around 97·97 Million Tonnes, compared to 96·45 Million Tonnes of 2017-18.
- Vegetables Production is estimated to be around 183·17 Million, which is lesser than the production of 2017-18.
- Onion Production is estimated to be around 22.82 Million Tonnes, which is lesser than the production of 2017-18.
- Potato Production is estimated to be around 50.19 Million Tonnes, which is lesser than the production of 2017-18.
- Tomato Production is estimated to be around 19,01 Million Tonnes, which is lower than the production of 2017-18.

Highlights of 2019-20 (1st Advance Estimates) :

- Total Horticulture production in 2019-20 (1st Advance Estimates) 313·35 million tonnes is expected to be 0·84% higher than 2018-19.
- Increase in Vegetables, Aromatics and Medicinal and Plantations is envisaged but decrease in Fruits, Flowers and Spices is expected.
- The Fruits production is expected to be lower by 2·27% in 2019-20 over 2018-19. It is mainly due to loss in production of Grapes, Banana, Mango, Citrus, Papaya and Pomegranate.
- Increase of 2.64 % in production of vegetables in 2019-20 over 2018-19. Increase is mainly due to increased production of Onion, Potato and Tomato.
- Onion production is expected to be 24·45 Million Tonnes (increase of 7·17%) as compared to 22·82 Million Tonnes in 2018-19.

Category of Horticulture crops	Area ('000 Hectare)		Production ('000 tonnes)	
	2018-19 (Final)	2019-20 (Ist Ad. Estt.)	2018-19 (Final)	2019-20 (Ist Ad. Estt.)
Fruits	6597	6660	97967	95743
Vegetables	10073	10292	183170	188009
Aromatics and Medicinal	627	634	795	822
Flowers	303	294	2910	2873
Honey		120		120
Plantation	3872	3866	16350	16412
Spices	3957	3866	9428	9372
Total	**25430**	**25611**	**310738**	**313351**

- Potato production is expected to be 51·94 Million Tonnes (increase of 3·49%) as compared to 50·19 Million Tonnes in 2018-19.
- Tomato production is expected to be 19·33 Million Tonnes (increase of 1·68%) as compared to 19·01 Million Tonnes in 2018-19.

Gujarat Replaces West Bengal as Top Governing State in 2019

Gujarat replaced West Bengal as the top governed state in the 2019 Skoch rankings. While there are 22 parameters that go into the overall ranking, health and cleanliness dominated the good governance initiatives across the country in 2019.

NCR Delhi was at the 19th place, lower than 15th spot it occupied in the previous two years. Delhi is ranked fifth on the parameter of health, one of its main claims of governance

State	2017	2018	2019
Gujarat	13	5	**1**
Maharashtra	3	8	**2**
W. Bengal	9	1	**3**
Andhra Pradesh	10	2	**4**
Tamil Nadu	6	17	**5**
Telangana	2	2	**6**
Madhya Pradesh	7	10	**7**
Karnataka	11	11	**8**
Haryana	4	14	**9**
Odisha	12	13	**10**

Govt. Sets up National Start-up Advisory Council

The Central government on January 22, 2020 declared that it has set up a National Start-up Advisory Council to advise the Centre on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and start-ups in the country. The Council, which will be chaired by the Commerce Minister, will consist of non-official members to be nominated by the Centre, founders of successful start-ups, veterans who have grown and scaled companies in India, persons capable to represent interests of investors into start-ups. Besides, it will have persons capable of representing interests of incubators and accelerators and representatives of associations of stakeholders of start-ups and representatives of industry associations. The term of the non-official members will be for a period of two years.

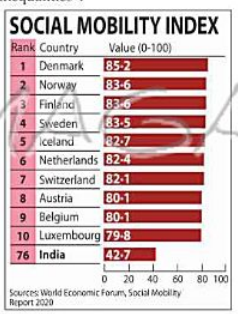
- The Council will suggest measures to foster a culture of innovation among students and others.
- It will also suggest measures to facilitate public organisations to assimilate innovation, promote creation, protection and commercialisation of intellectual property rights, make it easier to start, operate, grow and exit businesses by reducing regulatory compliances and costs.
- The Council will suggest ways to promote ease of access to capital for start-ups, incentivise domestic capital for investments, mobilise global capital for investments, and keep control of start-ups with original promoters.

India at 76 in WEF's Social Mobility Index 2020

Globalisation's fundamental pillar is mobility—a world where ideas, people, goods, and services can cross borders with ease and effici-

ency. Even as the world struggles to push globalisation without its negatives, a key agendum for the Davos summit (2020) was social mobility. The World Economic Forum (WEF) has created a Social Mobility Index, which "is designed to provide policymakers with means to identify areas for improving social mobility and promoting equally shared opportunities in their economies, regardless of their development".

A key finding from the 2020 Index is that irrespective of the size and maturity of the economy, most countries have a poor record of social mobility. Despite the focus on meritocracy, an average individual doesn't have the freedom to make livelihood choices. "An individual's opportunities in life remain tethered to their socio-economic status at birth, entrenching historical inequalities".



The WEF Social Mobility Index 2020 benchmarks 82 countries to help policymakers assess whether their citizens have equal economic opportunities. Can a child have a better life than his/her parents ? Can the impact of socio-economic background on equal opportunity be measured effectively ? These questions are posed to policymakers.

- The index shows that only a handful of countries have the right conditions for social mobility. The top five, unsurprisingly, are Nordic countries— Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Iceland.
- Among the G7 economies, Germany is the most socially mobile, ranking 11th with 78 points, followed by France at 12th position. Canada ranks 14th, followed by Japan (15th), the United Kingdom (21st), the United States (27th), and Italy (34th).
- Among the large emerging economies, the Russian Federation is the most socially mobile of the BRICS grouping, ranking 39th with a score of 64 points. The next is China, which ranks 45th, followed by Brazil (60th), India (76th) and South Africa (77th).
- The poor ranking of India (76th) should trigger a deeper response from policymakers. This is yet another ranking where India needs a strong policy intervention.

India in World Bank's Women, Business and Law (WBL) Index 2020

The World Bank's study (2020)- 'Women, Business and Law' examines laws and regulations affecting women's economic opportunities across 190 economies. There are eight parameters–work place, pay, mobility, marriage, parenthood, pensions, assets and entrepreneurship.

Key findings of the study are the following :

- Only eight economies among the 190 scored a perfect 100 on the WBL Index 2020. These are Belgium, France, Latvia, Sweden, Canada, Denmark, Iceland and Luxembourg.
- Over the past two years, 40 economies across varied regions and income groups have introduced 62 reforms to facilitate women's entry into the workforce, thereby making women's economic empowerment a priority.
- The nations that saw the most significant growth were Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Nepal, South Sudan, São Tomé and Príncipe, Bahrain, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Jordan and Tunisia.
- India has taken the top spot in the South Asian region in the World Bank's Women, Business and Law (WBL) Index 2020. The country gained 4 per cent year-on-year with a score of 74.4 out of 100.
- The World Bank study particularly commended the measures adopted by Maharashtra State to remove restrictions on women's ability to work in jobs deemed dangerous.
- While scoring 100 in the indicators of mobility, workplace and marriage, India scored poorly with respect to pay (25). Its score was relatively low in parenthood (40), entrepreneurship (75), pension (75) and assets (80). On similar lines, China scored poorly in pay (25) and pension (25), and lower in entrepreneurship (75) and parenthood (80).
- Compared to other BRICS countries, India's score was second-to-last. South Africa topped the WBL index (2020) among the BRICS grouping, scoring 88·1 points. It was followed by Brazil, with 81·9 points. China witnessed a dip in its score but obtained 1·2 points more than India.

India Falls to 51st Position in EIU's Democracy Index, 2020

The EIU's Democracy index is based on five pillars : electoral process and pluralism; the functioning of government; political participation; political culture; and civil liberties. Based on their total score, the countries are classified as one of four types of regime: **Full Democracy** (scores greater than eight); **Flawed Democracy** (scores greater than six and less than or equal to eight); **Hybrid Regime** (greater than four and less than or equal to six); **Authoritarian Regime** (less than or equal to four).

- India slipped 10 places to 51st position in the 2019 Democracy Index's global ranking, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, which cited 'erosion of civil liberties' in the country as the primary cause for the down-trend.
- India's overall score fell from 7.23 in 2018 to 6.90 in 2020 in the Index and thus, India was included in the "flawed democracy" category.

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- China's score fell to 2.26 in the 2019 index, and the country is now ranked 153rd, close to the bottom of the global rankings. Over the past year discrimination against minorities, especially in the north-western region of Xinjiang, has intensified. Digital surveillance of the population continued apace in 2019, representing a further constraint on individual freedoms
- Among other emerging economies, Brazil was ranked 52nd with a score of 6.86, Russia stood at 134th with a score of 3.11.
- Pakistan was ranked 108th on the overall list with a score of 4.25, while Sri Lanka was at 69th place with a score of 6·27, Bangladesh (at 80th with 5.88 score).
- The overall list was topped by Norway, followed by Iceland and Sweden. Other countries in the top 10 include New Zealand at the fourth place, Finland (5th), Ireland (6th), Denmark (7th), Canada (8th), Australia (9th) and Switzerland (10th).
- North Korea was at the bottom of the global ranking at 167th place.

India Still Fourth-most Attractive Market, Shows PwC Global CEO Survey 2020

As confidence in the global economy reaches a 10-year low, India has managed to retain the position of the fourth-most attractive market, shows a survey of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from across the world by consultancy giant PwC. Released on January 20, 2020, the 23rd Pwc CEO Survey showed that :

- 53 per cent of global CEOs believe international economic growth would decline in the next 12 months; only 29 per cent of CEOs expressing pessimism in the global economy in the 2019 survey. In the year before, only 5 per cent of CEOs believed growth would dip.
- The findings are the worst since the global financial crash of 2007-08.
- 9 per cent of CEOs believe India remains among the most important regions for the growth of their organisations.
- The level of importance attached to India by global corporate leaders has hovered around the same levels for the past three years. While the 2019 survey showed 8 per cent of CEOs favoured the country, the figure was 9 per cent in the year ago.
- Indian corporate leaders had an equally bleak outlook on the global scenario, with 52 per cent of those surveyed saying growth would decline, up from only 27 per cent a year ago. More than half of the 63 CEOs interviewed by PwC in India attributed their pessimism to uncertain economic growth.

How the CEOs Rate Other Countries

Countries with Maximum growth prospect, according to global CEOs

Survey (% of CEOs)	2020	2019	2018
United States	30	27	46
China	29	24	33
Germany	13	13	20
India	9	8	9
United Kingdom	9	8	15

Response by global CEOs on global economic growth %

	2020	2019	2018
Decline	53	29	5
Stay the same	24	29	36
Improve	22	42	57

Source : PWC 23rd Annual Global CEO Survey.

India Among Top 10 FDI Recipients, Attracts $49 bn Inflows in 2019 : UNCTAD

India was among the top 10 recipients of Foreign Direct Investment in 2019, attracting $ 49 billion in inflows, a 16 per cent increase from the previous year, driving the FDI growth in South Asia, according to a UN report released on January 20, 2020.

The Global Investment Trend Monitor report compiled by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) states that:

- The global foreign direct investment remained flat in 2019 at $1·39 trillion, a 1 per cent decline from a revised $1.41 trillion in 2018.
- Developing economies continue to absorb more than half of global FDI flows.
- South Asia recorded a 10 per cent increase in FDI to $60 billion and this growth was driven by India, with a 16 per cent increase in inflows to an estimated $49 billion. The majority went into services industries, including information technology.
- India attracted an estimated $49 billion of FDI in 2019, a 16 per cent increase from the $42 billion recorded in 2018.
- The FDI flows to developed countries remained at a historically low level, decreasing by a further 6 per cent to an estimated $643 billion.
- The FDI to the European Union (EU) fell by 15 per cent to $305 billion, while there was zero-growth of flows to United States, which received $251 billion FDI in 2019, as compared to $254 billion in 2018.
- Despite this, the United States remained the largest recipient of FDI, followed by China with flows of $ 140 billion and Singapore with $110 billion.
- China also saw zero-growth in FDI inflows. Its FDI inflows in 2018 were $139 billion and stood at $140 billion in 2019.
- The FDI in the UK was down 6 per cent as Brexit unfolded.
- Cross-border M&As decreased by 40 per cent in 2019 to $490 billion—the lowest level since 2014.
- Slowed down by sluggish Eurozone growth and Brexit, European M&A sales halved to $190 billion. Deals targeting United States companies remained significant—accounting for 31 per cent of total M&As.
- The fall in global cross-border M&As sales was deepest in the services sector (a 56 per cent decline to $207 billion), followed by manufacturing (a 19 per cent decline to $ 249 billion) and primary sector (14 per cent decline to $ 34 billion),

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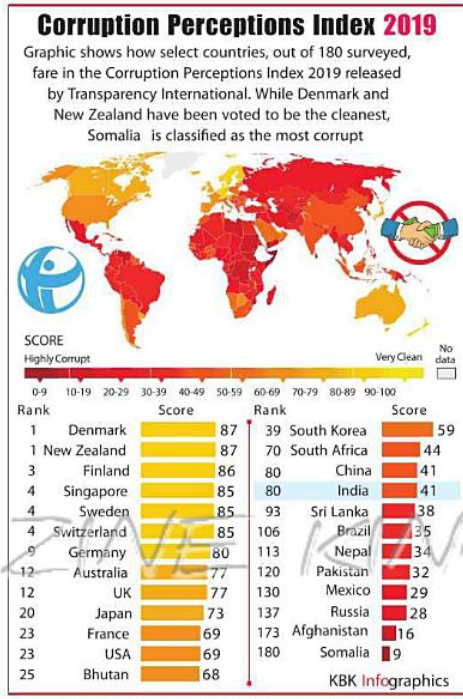
- In particular, sales of assets related to financial and insurance activities and chemicals fell sharply. The decline in M&A values was driven also by a lower number of megadeals. In 2019, there were 30 megadeals above $5 billion compared to 39 in 2018.

India is 80th Most Corrupt Country of the World : Corruption Perception Index 2020

Transparency International, Germany based global watchdog, released Corruption Perception Index 2020 on January 23, 2020 at World Economic Forum meet 2020 in Davos (Switzerland). Key observations of this year's Index are the following :

- The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, according to experts and business people
- Denmark and New Zealand have cornered the top spot, followed by Finland, Singapore, Sweden and Switzerland in the top ten. Other countries in the top level are Norway (7th rank), the Netherlands (8th), Germany and Luxembourg (9th).
- With a score of 41, India is at the 80th spot. The rank is also shared by China, Benin, Ghana and Morocco. Neighbouring Pakistan is ranked at the 120th place. India's rank in 2019 was 78th.
- This year's analysis shows corruption is more pervasive in countries where big money can flow freely into electoral campaigns and where governments listen only to the voices of wealthy or well-connected individuals.
- Even in democracies, such as Australia and India, unfair and opaque political financing and undue influence in decision-making and lobbying by powerful corporate interest groups, result in stagnation or decline in control of corruption.
- Most countries are showing little to no improvement in combating corruption



- Low performers like Afghanistan (16), North Korea (17) and Cambodia (20) continue to highlight serious challenges in the Asian region.

RBI Nominates Janak Raj as Member of Monetary Policy Committee

The Reserve Bank of India's Central Board on January 29, 2020 nominated Janak Raj, Executive Director, on the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) as an ex officio member. Now the Monetary Policy Committee has the following structure, effective January 29, 2020.

- Shaktikanta Das, RBI Governor: Chairperson, ex officio.
- Michael Debabrata Patra, Deputy Governor, in charge of Monetary Policy: Member, ex officio.
- Janak Raj, Executive Director: Member Ex-officio.
- Chetan Ghate, Professor, Indian Statistical Institute : External Member nominated by the Central Government.
- Pami Dua, Director, Delhi School of Economics : External Member nominated by the Central Government.
- Ravindra H. Dholakia, former Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad: External Member nominated by the Central Government.

Raj's nomination comes ahead of the next meeting of the MPC, which is scheduled during February 4-6, 2020.

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Environment, Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change Round-up

—Dhiraj Pandey

Sea Level Rise to Impact More Population in Asia, Including India : Moody's Report

The rise in sea level due to global warming will impact more people in Asian countries than in any other region, Moody's said in a report on the consequences of this inevitability and credit risk to such sovereign nations.

Key Facts :

- Sovereigns in Asia, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and small islands were most exposed to rising sea levels.
- In absolute terms, the largest populations exposed are in Asia, including Bangladesh (Ba3 stable), China (A1 stable), Indonesia (Baa2 stable), and India (Baa2 negative).
- Some high-income economies, such as Japan (A1 stable) and the Netherlands (Aaa stable), also feature.
- The sea level rise posed long-term credit threat to the identified countries as the consequence of climate change was a steady increase in sea levels.
- While there was a high degree of uncertainty about the magnitude, the direction of change was not in question—sea levels several decades from now would be largely determined by past greenhouse gas emissions and temperatures.
- "Sea level rise is gradual, but manifests abruptly, by intensifying the frequency and severity of storm surges, flooding and tropical cyclones, which have credit implications for sovereigns."
- Countries, including Vietnam (Ba3 negative), the Bahamas (Baa3 stable), Egypt (B2 stable), Suriname (B2 stable) and some in the Gulf were highlighted, with up to 10%-25% of the population or GDP exposed.
- "Island sovereigns are not always in scope, but analyses of 'locked-in' sea level rise in particular highlight the Cayman Islands (Aa3 stable), Maldives (B2 negative) and Fiji (Ba3 stable), with 80% or more of the population exposed."
- According to Moody's the credit implications are wide-ranging, including economic and social repercussions of lost income, damage to assets, loss of life, health issues and forced migration from the sudden events related to sea level rise are immediate.
- "The main credit channels for sovereigns are economic and fiscal strength. Vulnerability to extreme events related to sea level rise can also undermine investment and heighten susceptibility to event risk, by hindering the ability of governments to borrow to rebuild, increasing losses for banks, raising external pressures, and/or amplifying political risk as populations come under stress."

2019 was the 7th Warmest Year in India Since 1901 : IMD

The rise in average temperatures over India in 2019 was the lowest since 2016, according to a report from the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Nevertheless, the year that went by was the 7th warmest since record-keeping commenced in 1901.

Key Facts :

- During the year, the annual mean surface air temperature, averaged over the country, was +0·36 v°C above average.
- The average is defined as the mean temperature from 1980-2010.
- The highest warming observed over India was during 2016 or 0·71°C above the mean.
- 2018, which was the 6th warmest in India, was 0·41°C, and 2017 was 0·55°C warmer, than the average.
- According to the World Meteorological Organisation, the rise in global mean surface temperature during 2019 (January to October) was +1·10°C.

Main contributors :

- The main contributors to the warming this year were temperatures in the pre-monsoon (March-May) and monsoon seasons (June-September), said the IMD report titled 'Climate Summary'.
- Meteorologists said that the decline over the previous three years was not indicative of any trend and was just "a regular variation". "There is no declining trend. The only pattern is that

Kalarava-2020

The Forest Department has organised a birding event titled 'Kalarava-2020' in Shivamogga district on January 19, 2020. The department said that as Shivamogga district is known for its rich bio-diversity, the event is being held to stimulate interest for conservation endeavours.

Key Facts :

- As many as eight teams, each comprising ten members will participate. The birding will take place in Megharavalli, Kuppalli, Mandagadde, Shivamogga, Ripponpet, Shettyhalli, Muppane and Shikaripur.
- Each team will walk for a distance of 8 to 10 km on the designated bird line in these places and collect information on the avian species there.
- The participants will document information on birds sighted, the habitat and activity in the data sheet provided.
- All bird habitats in Shivamogga district including wastelands, wet lands, paddy fields, streams, ponds, degraded forest, dry deciduous forest, moist deciduous forest, semi-evergreen forest and evergreen forest would be covered.

global warming is raising average temperatures globally, as well as in India."

- 2019 was also characterised by unusually high rainfall, which was 9% over what is normal for a year—this was due to monsoon rains (June-September) being 10% over its normal, and the northeast monsoon rains being 9% over its normal.

Cyclonic storms :

- During 2019, **eight cyclonic storms** formed over the Indian seas, with the Arabian Sea contributing five out of these eight cyclones against the normal of one per year. This was a phenomenon not seen in India since 1902.

Severe casualties :

- **Rain and floods** killed 850 lives in different parts of the country last year, of which 306 deaths were reported from Bihar, 136 from Maharashtra, 107 from Uttar Pradesh, 88 from Kerala, 80 from Rajasthan, and 43 from Karnataka.
- **Heat waves** over the north-eastern and central parts of the country, from March-June, claimed about 350 lives. Of these, 293 deaths were from Bihar and 44 deaths were from Maharashtra.
- **Lightning and thunderstorm** claimed over 380 lives from central, northeastern, north-western and peninsular parts of the country, of which 125 were from Jharkhand, 73 from Bihar, 51 from Maharashtra and 24 each from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- **Snowfall and avalanche**-related incidents claimed 33 lives from Jammu & Kashmir, and 18 from Leh.
- **A cold wave** claimed 28 lives from different parts of Uttar Pradesh during the last week of December, the Climate Summary noted.

World's Oldest Rhino Dies in Tanzania

- Fausta, an eastern female black rhino, who was believed to be the world's oldest rhino has died at the age of 57 in a Tanzanian conservation area.
- Fausta was first sighted in the Ngorongoro crater in 1965, when she was three.
- Fausta died of natural causes in captivity in Ngorongoro Crater, which lies in Ngorongoro Conservation Area of Tanzania.
- As per Ngorongoro authority, Rhinos' life expectancy is around 40 years in wild but they can live an extra decade in captivity.

About Black rhinoceros :

- The black rhinoceros, also known as the hook-lipped rhino, is native to eastern and southern Africa.
- Although it is referred to as 'black', 'specimens' colors can range from brown to grey.
- Black rhinos are native to eastern and southern Africa including Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.
- The species overall is classified as critically endangered (even though the South-western black rhinoceros is classified as vulnerable).
- Western black rhinoceros has been declared extinct by IUCN in 2011.
- The eastern black rhino is listed as critically endangered. Its numbers are dangerously low because the animals are often poached for their horn – however, numbers are increasing.

Kaziranga Records 96 Species of Wetland Birds

Kaziranga, home of the world's most one-horned rhinos, has 96 species of wetland birds—one of the highest for wildlife preserves in India. Officials of the Kaziranga National Park and avian specialists conducted the second wetland bird count on January 9-10, 2020. The teams counted a total of 19,225 birds belonging to 96 species under 80 families.

Key Facts :

- The first waterfowl census in 2018 had yielded 10,412 birds covering 80 families from 21 families.
- Kaziranga, about 220 km east of Guwahati, has a total area (tiger reserve) of 1,030 sq. km with a core area of 430 sq. km.
- With 6,181 individuals, the bar-headed goose led the species count, followed by the common teal at 1,557 and northern pintail at 1,359. All three belong to the family anatidae.
- The other species with sizeable numbers include gadwall, common coot, lesser whistling duck, Indian spot-billed duck, little cormorant, ferruginous duck, tufted duck, Eurasian wigeon, Asian openbill, northern lapwing, ruddy shelduck and spot-billed pelican.
- The survey covered four ranges of the park—Agoratoli, Bagori, Kohora and Burapahar.
- More than half the birds (9,924) and 85 of the 96 species were recorded in Agoratoli Range.
- This was because Sohola, the largest of Kaziranga's 92 perennial wetlands, is in this range.
- Not surprisingly, more than 34% of the birds counted were found in Sohola.
- The park also has more than 250 seasonal water bodies, besides the Dipholu River running through it.
- The first wetland Bird survey in Kaziranga, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985, was conducted in 2018.
- Avian surveys could have been done in the 115-year-old Kaziranga earlier, but no records were maintained.Data on avian wealth is important because the wetlands nourish Kaziranga's ecosystem.
- Increase or decrease in the number of birds is indicative of the park's health.

The 'Big Four' Species

- Much of the focus of conservation efforts in Kaziranga is focused on the 'big four' species—rhino, elephant, Royal Bengal tiger and Asiatic water buffalo.
- The 2018 census had yielded 2,413 rhinos and approximately 1,100 elephants. The tiger census of 2014 said Kaziranga had an estimated 103 tigers, the third highest population of the striped cat in India after Jim Corbett National Park (215) in Uttarakhand and Bandipur National Park (120) in Karnataka.
- Kaziranga is also home to nine of the 14 species of primates found in the Indian subcontinent.

MAGAZINE

Blackbucks are Fighting for Survival in Punjab

Threatened by untamed dogs and stray cattle, the blackbuck, Punjab's State animal, is fighting for survival at the Abohar Wildlife Sanctuary in the Fazilka district. Change in land use and cropping patterns across the region over the years has also disturbed the natural habitat and consequent fall in the population of this majestic species.

Key Facts :

- In 2019, as many as 30 blackbucks died in the sanctuary, most of them on account of injuries caused by stray dog attacks. Five injured blackbucks were saved following medical intervention from the State Forest and Wildlife Department.
- Blackbucks have also died in road accidents, and by taking a fall into water storage tanks and concrete drains.
- According to State government data, in 2018, 25 blackbucks died and 18 injured blackbucks were saved. In 2017, 42 blackbucks died in the sanctuary area and 33 were saved with medical treatment.
- Around 90% of the blackbucks that died in 2019 were killed by stray dog attacks.

About Blackbuck and Abohar Wildlife Sanctuary

- The blackbuck was notified as State animal of Punjab in 1989, and its presence in the State is confined only to the Abohar Wildlife Sanctuary, with its unique habitat of semi-arid plains featuring agricultural fields, intermittent fallow-barren land, scattered sand dunes and mounds, and ridges.
- Abohar is an open wildlife sanctuary, spreading across private land in 13 villages.
- In the sanctuary, where land is mainly owned by the local Bishnoi community, there were 3,273 blackbucks, according to the 2017 census conducted jointly by the Punjab Biodiversity Board (PBB) and the Forest and Wildlife Department, against 3,500 in 2011.
- In the past few years, the problem has become even more grave as locals, in a bid to save their crops from stray cattle, have put up barbed wires and nets around farms. Such fencing restricts the free movement of blackbucks. When dogs attack and chase them, blackbucks collide with fences, which often results in fatal injuries.

One-fifth of Country's Forests Prone to Fires : Study

About 21·40% of forest cover in India is prone to fires according to a 2019 report by the Forest Survey of India (FSI). FSI carried out a study along forest fire points identified across the country from 2004 to 2017.

Key Facts :

- Forests in the north-eastern region and central India were found to be the most vulnerable.
- The total number of alerts issued for each state from November 2018 to June 2019 were 29,547.
- Mizoram recorded the highest number of fire alerts at 2,795.
- The seven States of the north-eastern region accounted for 10,210 fire alerts making up about one-third of alerts in the country.
- One of the major reasons for forest fires in the north-east is slash-and-burn cultivation. Commonly called jhoom or jhum cultivation. But the FSI study found that the overall green cover has increased in the country.

First-of-its Kind Turtle Rehab Centre comes up in Bihar

A first-of-its-kind rehabilitation centre for freshwater turtles will be inaugurated in Bihar's Bhagalpur forest division in January 2020. The rehab centre, spread over half a hectare, will be able to shelter 500 turtles at a time. The need to build such a centre was felt after several turtles were found severely wounded and sick when rescued from smuggless by rescue teams. This centre will play a significant role in treating these animals and their proper upkeep before being returned to their natural habitat

Key Facts :

- Eastern Bihar has been an ideal breeding ground for turtles.
- In Bhagalpur, the flow of water in the Ganga is ample. Also, there are many sandbanks in the middle of the river, which are ideal breeding ground for turtles.
- The size of turtles found in eastern Bihar is good as well. A turtle weighing up to 15 kilograms can be found here.
- According to environmentalists, the turtles play a significant role in the river by scavenging dead organic materials and diseased fish, controlling fish population as predators and controlling aquatic plants and weeds. They are also described as indicators of healthy aquatic ecosystems.
- However, these species are now under severe threats due to habitat fragmentation and loss through dams and barrages, pollution, illegal poaching, accidental drowning through fishing nets and threats to their nesting habitats, a report jointly prepared by the National Mission for Clean Ganga and Wildlife Institute of India has said.
- The turtles have come under serious threat primarily for two reasons—food and the flourishing pet trade. Turtles are being frequently targeted for meat due to the prevailing belief that it gives an energy boost and keeps various diseases away.

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Inspiring Youth

"Consistency and being hard working and committed to my goal are the secrets of my success."

Yogesh Patil

Topper—Civil Services Exam., 2018 (231st Rank)

"Pratiyogita Darpan" arranged an exclusive interview with Shri Yogesh Patil who has been selected in Civil Services Examination, 2018 conducted by UPSC. He deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on his glorious achievement. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

PD—Achieving top slot in the coveted Civil Services Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

Shri Yogesh—Thank you so much for your kind words.

PD—Medium for writing in the examination.

Shri Yogesh—English.

PD—Medium for Personality Test.

Shri Yogesh—English.

PD—In how many attempts have you achieved this success ?

Shri Yogesh—One.

PD—What was your optional subject ?

Shri Yogesh—*Optional Subject* : Anthropology.

PD—While making final choice for optional subject, what's important and what's not ?

Shri Yogesh—It depends on one's interest, expertise and guidance available in that particular subject. Also availability of good material is important in selecting optional. It is not important how much syllabus of the optional overlaps with other subjects but one should select the optional in which they are comfortable. More guidelines I've shared on my Facebook account.

PD—Give the basis of selecting the optional subject ?

Shri Yogesh—As I mentioned above it is important to figure out whether one will be able to do and understand deep analysis of a subject. Interest alongwith right guidance and good material availability should be the criteria while selecting optional.

PD—What preference in services have you opted for and any particular reason for that priority ?

Shri Yogesh—IAS and IPS. My dream of becoming a civil servant started with meeting Dr. Shrikar Pardeshi (IAS, Maharashtra Cadre). So naturally, my first choice was IAS but during my preparation, I came to know about exemplary works of IAS & IPS officers, which strengthened my will to go for those two.

Climax of hard work is the moment when the door opens and lets the future in.

—Yogesh Patil

PD—'Success is sweet' were you confident of your success with top ranks and how did you react to this news ?

Shri Yogesh—Success indeed is sweet. Considering the competition in this exam, no one can be sure of success with top ranks, but after my interview stage, I felt that I would secure some good rank. My friend Udit gave the sweet news of my result to me. I was elated with joy and happiness and immediately called my mother who prayed for me.

PD—Today, **IAS Toppers** are icons and lots of media coverage makes them popular. Before your success, what was year opinion about these toopers' ?

Shri Yogesh—Indeed, toppers inspire and motivate many future aspirants. I personally was inspired by many toppers. Taking any particular name will be difficult for me. We can learn from their strategies as well as their failures in our preparations. Notes, booklist, right guidance given by the toppers on many platforms are always helpful.

PD—Can you recall the exact moment when you realized the importance of Civil Services ?

Shri Yogesh—In my school days the extraordinary work in my district by the then district collector Dr. Pardeshi Sir inspired me a lot. I realized what impact a civil servant could have on the society with his work. At that moment, I realized that I wanted to be an IAS officer without knowing what IAS was.

PD—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in 'Civil Services' ?

Shri Yogesh—In my graduation, there were many career options before me but my mind was firm about the career in civil services. At that critical juncture, I received hundred percent support from my family members especially my father and my brother Gajanan, which helped me to realize my dream in civil services.

PD—Was CSE your planned decision or your parents' wish ?

Shri Yogesh—As I said above, it was my sole decision to go for the civil services but my father who supported me time-to-time, helped me to achieve this dream in my life.

PD—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts ?

MAGAZINE

Shri Yogesh—I always think that 1st attempt is golden attempt. A fixed time-frame was not there as my ultimate aim was to be in civil services. But I had in my mind to clear this exam in 1st attempt.

Bio-Data

Name—Yogesh Patil

Father's Name–Shri Ashokrao Patil

Mother's Name—Mrs. Sumitra Patil

Date of Birth—June 11, 1995

Educational Qualifications—

10th—2010-11, MSBSHSE, LRPMV, Shelgaon Gouri (96-73%)

12th—2012-13, MSBSHSE, SD. Jr. College, Shankarnagar (94-83%)

B.Tech–2013-17, Pune University, College of Engineering, Pune (8·6 CGPA).

PD—'Time Management' is a key factor, how did you manage things ?

Shri Yogesh—Yes, time management is most important factor in such exams. When syllabus is like an ocean, it needs a meticulous planning and time management. I used to plan for a week, 15 days and a month, but I used to keep them flexible in case of an emergency. I used to work hard to make this plan work.

PD—The first step is the most difficult; from where did you get the right advice ?

Shri Yogesh—Yes, the exam has very vast syllabus, so it becomes difficult initially to start preparation. You need right guidance at right time to get success in this exam. 1st step is always about looking at the syllabus, understanding it so that further preparation can be planned. Secondly find a mentor who can guide you throughout the preparation. Ravindra Shinde, my senior was also preparing and guided me in entire preparation.

PD—What was your approach towards Paper-I (General Studies) and Paper-II (Aptitude Test) during Preliminary Examination preparation ? How long time and how much effort did you divide for each ?

Shri Yogesh—For GS Paper-I (General Studies) **:** I think prelims is very difficult exam and you need a thorough preparation for this exam. It was my first attempt and had to preparer everything from scratch so had to start prelims preparation 3 months before the exam. I used to read from all standard sources and used to support extra material from different classes. Also I didn't prepare for paper 2. I used to give entire time to paper 1. After required amount of study, one must solve Test series of any classes. Solve those papers and analyse your performance so that you can improve test by test. Also I will recommend to solve previous years' UPSC questions.

For GS Paper II (Aptitude Test) **:** Due to my maths background I didn't give time for this paper. I only solved past years' UPSC papers for this.

PD—Was there any change in plan for General Studies Paper II (Aptitude Test) being qualifying in Preliminary Examination ?

Shri Yogesh—Yes, as it is a qualifying paper, I only needed a safe score to clear this, so I didn't allot time for preparation for paper 2.

PD—How did you manage to tackle the **'Negative Marking'** in Prelims ?

Shri Yogesh—Negative marking is an important factor to consider. To minimize this, I used to attempt those questions in which I was sure. But ultimately you have to take risk while solving prelims paper. Here if you are able to eliminate 2 options you should attempt it.

PD—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Main Examination (Written) ?

Shri Yogesh—Mains is all about writing. You need analyzing ability to write good answers. To develop this I used to read from different sources like standard books, magazines, newspapers. But the most important thing is how you write an answer and how you represent it. To improve this, I have written around 15 tests for General Studies and 14 tests for optional subject. This helped me to improve my answer writing as well as my representation. For mains, there is direct relation between how much you study and how many marks you get. Optional subject plays a very important role here, because marks of optional can give boost to your score. This is the stage which can include you in that prestigious list.

PD—Was there any special effort for effective preparation for **ESSAY** Paper ?

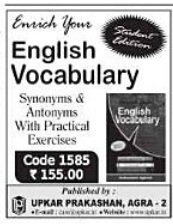
Shri Yogesh—This time I didn't get much time for essay preparation. But in that limited time I wrote 4-5 essays and got them checked from seniors. I prepared some content for essays like quotes, some template on topics like education, women etc. I have read essays of toppers of previous years which helped me to write good essays.

Topic I. Management of Indian Border disputes—a complex task.

Topic II. Customary Morality cannot be guide to Modern life.

PD—How did you prepare yourself for **Interview (Personality Test)** ?

Shri Yogesh—I think every stage in UPSC needs a different strategy, different guidance. For interview preparation my main focus was on Detailed Application Form (DAF). I prepared questions on everything mentioned in my DAF and tried to answer them. I also prepared about my graduation subject as members would like to ask questions on it. I prepared about my home state as well. I used to read 3 newspapers during that time. I used to watch interviews of many public figures like our President, Vice-President, senior bureaucrats. In this crucial time I got the guidance of IPS Shri Mahesh Bhagwat Sir, Shri Sudhir Chandra Sir (Former chairman CBDT) and many of my seniors who were preparing or were selected in UPSC.



My interview was on 12th Feb., 2019 (afternoon session), My Interview Board was headed by Shri B.S. Bassi Sir.

I was the last person to be interviewed at that time. My interview started around 5·30 pm and went on till 6 pm. Interview experience was satisfying; initially some fear was there but with time fear subsided and interview went well. The Board was very cooperative to me and most of the questions asked to me were based on my DAF.

I have provided my interview script on my Quora blog.

Personal Qualities

Favourite Person—I have been inspired by many persons. But the life of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam inspired me a lot. I also admire Swami Vivekanand and his thoughts.

Strong Point—Some of my qualities like hard working, consistent, being committed to my goal are my strong points according to me.

Hobbies—Teaching is my hobby. Whenever, I get time I teach the students in my native village and schools around my village to which I am connected with like my father's school.

PD—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal i.e. Career in Civil Services ?

Shri Yogesh—No, it was my first attempt and I was fully focusing on civil services preparation only.

PD—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Civil Services ?

Shri Yogesh—As I said above, Civil Services was my ultimate goal; so I didn't think of anything else. Alongwith that civil services provide a greater opportunity to serve country and society. Civil services provide an opportunity to you to be innovative in solving issues at hand. All these are more motivating factors than any other economic opportunities.

PD—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Civil Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare for Civil Services Examinations ?

Shri Yogesh—The earlier, the better, I will say. If someone is determined about career in civil services then they can choose graduation according to that and start preparation in graduation. But reading and writing abilities can be improved from an early age. I believe serious preparation of 1 year is all that is needed but your basics must be strong to complete your preparation in one year.

PD—What is your opinion regarding the general view that Science subjects have better chance to score than Humanities ?

Shri Yogesh—Seeing the current trend, we can see that humanities are performing even better. Subjects like Anthropology and Sociology are performing very well. But if someone is comfortable in science subjects like Maths, Zoology, Chemistry they can go for it.

PD—What is the importance of medium of examination for exams like CSE ?

Shri Yogesh—I think medium of examination is very important in civil services. Availability of coaching, reading material and test series are important factors in civil services preparation and they are largely dependent on medium of exam. Especially for optional subject medium of exam is important. One should consider all these factors.

PD—Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation ?

Shri Yogesh—I will say these are important factors to consider. It is not possible for everyone to get good coaching or test series or doing preparation of civil services at all. But we have many examples where people from very humble background cleared this exam. So I think they are important factors to consider but can not be roadblocks if you are determined about your career. If you believe in yourself, you can get rid of them. Don't let them to be burden on you.

PD—In your opinion what role do the Competition Magazines play when you are preparing for an examination like Civil Services ?

Shri Yogesh—Magazines provide you crisp and readymade material, which can be read in short period of time. They provide you a good compilation of current affairs and good content to enrich your understanding of any particular issue. In exams like civil services where syllabus is very vast these magazines help to cover syllabus in a short period of time.

PD—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ?

Shri Yogesh—PD is a very good source for civil services preparation. It helps in preparation of prelims examination. Also it covers many current affairs issues holistically which helped me to understand them and write answers.

In my initial days of preparation, I referred to magazines of PD for my preparation. They have motivating stories along with guidance of selected candidates which helped to motivate me. Also they contain MCQs from different examinations which helped me in my prelims preparation.

PD—What is the secret of your success ?

Shri Yogesh—I always worked hard to get towards my goal. I always used to think WHY CAN'T I ?. If there are other people able to pass this exam Why can't I ? This used to motivate me to work hard. My other qualities like consistency, committed towards goal helped me to get success.

PD—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

Shri Yogesh—I thank Almighty for keeping me healthy and fit in entire time of my preparation. My teachers, my mentors, my friends and my family members all have contributed to my success.

PD—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

Shri Yogesh—Set your priorities in the first place. If you want to go for civil services you must be 100% sure about it. Plan things according to your capability and divide your target in small bits so that it will be easy to achieve them. Be focused every day, try to do maximum things everyday which will be cumulative and contribute to your success. Wake up every day with a goal, try to complete it everyday and you will get success 100%

PD—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

Inspiring Youth

"Honest preparation, timely revision and religious study are the secrets of my success."

Prabhat Kumar

Topper—Bihar Judicial Services Exam., 2018 (4th Rank)

"Pratiyogita Darpan" arranged an exclusive interview with Shri Prabhat Kumar who has been selected in Bihar Judicial Services Exam., 2018. He deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on his glorious success. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

PD—Achieving top slot in the Judicial Services Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

Shri Prabhat—Thank you.

PD—Can you recall the exact moment when you realised the importance of Judicial Services ?

Shri Prabhat—It was during my college days when I realised the importance of judicial officers in the justice delivery system.

PD—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in 'Judicial Services' ?

Shri Prabhat—When I completed my B.A.LL.B (Hons.) from my college at CNLU, Patna, I had the option to join either litigation or the judicial service but owing to my tilt towards this service and also paying heed to my parents' wish, I decided to prepare for and to join the Judicial Service.

PD—You must have read toppers' interviews in newspapers/magazines; what inspired you the most ?

Any particular success story which influenced your journey to this result?

Shri Prabhat—Experiences of the toppers, in particular the way they deal with their adversities, are really helpful in keeping one's patience and perseverance. It's difficult to name a specific interview but I can definitely say that a plethora of interviews published in PD were really helpful to keep me cool during the examinations.

PD—Was JSE your planned decision or your parents' wish ? Did you keep in mind some time-frame, for the examination preparation and number of attempts ?

Shri Prabhat—For me, JSE was a planned decision. My parents wished me to become a Judicial officer. It was an icing on the cake. So, it was a sort of a blend of both.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

—Prabhat Kumar

PD—Describe the exact moment when you came to know about the importance of Judicial Services ?

Shri Prabhat—There was no such exact moment, but it was during my overall study of law at my college that I realised the importance of this exam. Also that the interviews of many toppers of this exam motivated me to take up this exam.

PD—What was your first step when you were really serious about making a career in Judicial Services ?

Shri Prabhat—Since I had planned to take this exam during my college days only, I kept on revising the bare acts of all the relevant subjects and also the General Studies section from the NCERT books.

Then after the college, I took admission in Rahul's IAS Coaching Institute which helped me a lot to cover the syllabus for the exams.

PD—Were you confident of your success in this examination and how did you react to this news of your success ?

Shri Prabhat—I was sort of confident of my selection, but I never expected a top rank. The news of my success filled me, my parents, elders, and friends with joy and ecstasy.

PD—In how many attempts have you achieved this success ?

Shri Prabhat—This was very first Judicial Service Examination.

PD—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal *i.e.*, Career in Judicial Services ?

Shri Prabhat—No, I was very much focused towards the Judicial services examination and so I did not take any other examination. However, I had registered myself at the bar and had took the All India Bar Exam.

PD—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Judicial Services ?

Shri Prabhat—Unlike other services, Judicial Services not only gives subsistence but also gives us a chance to serve the public. It helps us to ameliorate the lives of others.

PD—What's important that needs attention and what's not ? Share your thoughts and opinions.

Shri Prabhat—All the previous years' question papers have to be perused thoroughly of both prelims and the mains and then answer writing practice has to be taken. General Studies part has to be taken very seriously in these exams as they carry much weightage.

MAGAZINE

PD—'Time Management' is a key factor, then how did you manage things ?

Shri Prabhat—Yes, time management is a challenge in both prelims and mains exam. Any student would, normally, face time constraints particularly in the mains exams. For this, one should imbibe the art of writing concise answers and that too with good speed.

Bio-Data

Name—Prabhat Kumar

Father's Name—Shri Anil Kumar Sharma

Mother's Name—Mrs. Subita Sharma

Educational Qualifications—

10th—2010, Mount Assisi School (ICSE), Bhagalpur, (86%)

12th—2012, Adwaita Mission School (CBSE), Banka, (68%)

B.A./L-L.B. (Hons.)—2018, Chanakya National Law University,

PD—Had you thought of some time-frame for this examination ?

Shri Prabhat—No, I had not thought of any time-frame as such. However, I dedicated myself completely for the preparations after my college got over in June, 2018 and I was lucky enough to have qualified this exam in my very first attempt.

PD—List some of the Magazines, Newspapers, Books etc. which you read for 'General Studies' preparation.

Shri Prabhat—For the General Studies part, I relied on the NCERT books, Lucent, Pratiyogita Darpan and a daily newspaper. Apart from this I also relied on the coaching materials provided from Rahul's IAS.

PD—How did you prepare yourself for Interview ?

Shri Prabhat—I had taken the mock interview at the Coaching Institute which helped a lot to instill confidence within me. My interview was on 9th November, 2018 and I faced the Board of Hon'ble Justice Birendra Kumar. My interview was very good and it lasted around half an hour. The Board asked me questions relating to Judicial review, Bail, Appeal, Reference, Review, Delegated legislation, Mitakshara and Dayabhaga school etc.

PD—About Interview Boards, many candidates have set impressions. Do you consider such thoughts help or hinder one's performance in Interview ?

Shri Prabhat—I don't think so. If a candidate has prepared the subjects well and has taken care of other dimensions of the interview like one's personal and educational background and the candidate is confident enough, then there is nothing to worry.

PD—What is the importance of medium of examination for exams like JSE ?

Shri Prabhat—According to me the role of medium is only limited to the extent of one's ability to express the desired answer. Other than this, according to me, medium plays no big role.

PD—Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation ?

Shri Prabhat—According to me all the above factors, to a limited extent, impact the preparation of any aspirant. Guidance by one's parents during early phase of the career or taking decent coaching classes are some of the problems.

Personal Qualities

Strong Point— I believe that my ability to keep working towards a goal with focus and determination continuously is my strength.

Weak Point— Sometimes I get too much sceptical about my chances in the exam.

Hobbies—Watching Cricket, Reading novels and Listening to Music.

PD—Pratiyogita Darpan, the largest read Career & Competition magazine has been the top choice of aspirants; what is your opinion about it ?

Shri Prabhat—Truly, Pratiyogita Darpan has been very instrumental in one's preparation for these exams. The content of this magazine is very crisp and precise which suits the model of these exams. Particularly, I prepared the current affairs section for my examinations by this magazine.

PD—What is the secret of your success ?

Shri Prabhat—According to me religious study and timely revision are the secrets of success. Lastly, one should be honest with his preparations.

PD—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

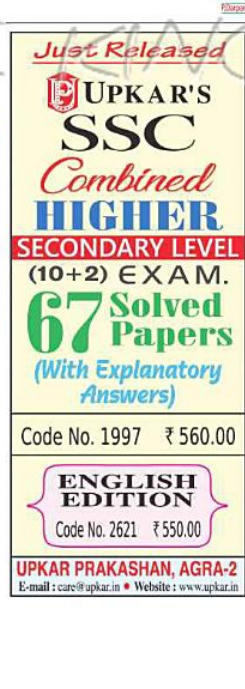
Shri Prabhat—My parents, siblings and last but not least, the Almighty.

PD—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

Shri Prabhat—I just want to say to all the aspirants that having confidence and faith in oneself always works.

Judicial Service requires these traits. Lastly, religious study and perseverance are the key to success.

PD—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.



Inspiring Youth

"Firm will power, focused hard work and patience are the secrets of my success."

Anurag Kumar

Topper—Uttar Pradesh Judicial Services Examination, 2018 (66th Rank)

"Pratiyogita Darpan" arranged an exclusive interview with Shri Anurag Kumar who has been selected in Uttar Pradesh Judicial Services Examination. He deserves high appreciation and our heartiest congratulations on his shining success. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

PD—Achieving top slot in the U.P. PCSJ is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

Shri Anurag—Thank You so much. It could not have been possible without your constant support.

PD—Were you confident of your success in this examination and how did you react to this news ?

Shri Anurag—Yes, I was confident about the success and my reaction was, "sky is the limit."

PD—What were your optional subjects ?

Shri Anurag— *Optional Subject* : LAW

PD—In how many attempts have you achieved this success ?

Shri Anurag—This was my first attempt in UP PCSJ.

PD—What was your approach towards Paper I (General Studies) and Paper II during Prelims preparation ? How long time and how much effort did you divide for each ?

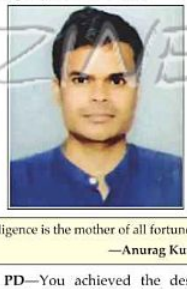
Shri Anurag—I read the NCERT books in depth and I was a regular reader of PD and I used question papers published in PD as mock. For current affairs I preferred PD & daily news papers.

PD— How did you manage to tackle the 'Negative Marking' in Prelims ?

Shri Anurag—I attempted only those questions about which I was 100% sure.

PD— The first step is the most difficult; how to prepare ? What to read ? How much to read ? Many such questions come to your mind when you really get serious about Judicial Services Examination ? From where did you get the right advice ?

Shri Anurag—The first step towards success is conceptual clarity of bare acts which is the starting point of preparation. One must analyse the important concepts from previous years papers' and then read it from standard books and prepare precise notes. Since competitive exams have large syllabus one should stick to basics. I got right advice from my seniors who have been already serving in judicial services.



Diligence is the mother of all fortunes.
—Anurag Kumar

PD—You achieved the desired success in this attempt; how do you visualize your previous attempts ?

Shri Anurag—This was my first attempt in UP. although I qualified in DJS 2017 and that gave me idea what to improve while taking UP PCSJ Exam.

PD—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Mains (Written) ?

Shri Anurag—For mains I prepared the important ingredients of sections and then the leading and recent case laws. The most important strategy is to write the relevant portion in minimal time. If the questions are problem-based, solve those questions in a Mathematical way by applying law to the given facts. Time management is the key and I had divided my time as per the requirement of questions.

PD—Was there any special effort for effective preparation for Essay Paper ? Which topic did you pick up this time and why did you choose this particular topic ?

Shri Anurag—Yes I regularly read editorials of The Hindu and the essays which were published in PD. This time I attempted the essay on corruption in public life as this is the burning topic these days.

PD—'Time Management' is a key factor while making preparations as well as in writing examination papers, be it Prelims or Main Examination. How did you manage things ?

Shri Anurag—Yes, Time-Management is the key to success. For prelims my strategy was to read the question twice and tick appropriate option. I divided the time by number of questions and answered accordingly.

For mains for 20 marks question I allotted 7-10 minutes & for 10 & 5 marks I allotted 5-7 mins and one has to be quick while writing.

PD—How did you prepare yourself for Interview ? When and which Board did you face ? How did your interview go on, how long did it last and what were the questions asked during the interview ?

Shri Anurag—In UP PCSJ the interview is mostly based on basic concepts as this is personality test and not only limited to legal questions.

I faced Board of Shree Dinesh Singh. I went very smooth. The interview lasted for about 15-18 minutes.

MAGAZINE

Questions were—(i) your favourite subject (evidence) (ii) sec 122 of evidence act (iii) section 112 of evidence act (iv) expert opinion & problem based on it (v) a question from local law (vi) Interim bail & anticipatory bail difference followed by problem on it. (vii) Anticipatory breach followed by problem (viii) What is double jeopardy.

I was also tested as to presence of mind as I was asked : which scenery did you see outside ? It was of Kushinagar district. This question was related to the district.

Bio-Data

Name—Anurag

Father's Name–Shri Surendra Kumar

Mother's Name—Mrs. Nirmala Kumari

Date of Birth–27 December, 1995

Educational Qualifications—

10th—2009–10, ICSE, LPS, (83-43%)

12th—2011-12, ISC, LPS, (82-5%)

B.A./L-L.B. (H)–2012-17, Dr. RMLNIU Dr. RMLNLU, (83-40%)

L-L.M.–2017-18, Dr. RMLNIU Dr. RMLNLU, (80-51%)

PD—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal *i.e.*, UP Judicial Services.

Shri Anurag—No I was not preparing for any other career opportunities.

PD—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Judicial Services ?

Shri Anurag—Since most of the persons who go to Lower courts are poor and for them judiciary is the last resort so I thought that working for them would satisfy myself and I always aspired to be judicial officer because of my natural inclination.

PD—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Judicial Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare for Judicial Examination.

Shri Anurag—For me I think one should start one's law career keeping in mind the goal. If Judicial services is the goal one should start from the very beginning. The minimum period should be attempt one year.

PD—Can you recall the exact moment when you realized the importance of Judicial Services ?

Shri Anurag—When I was working as an intern in District court Lucknow I saw the plight of people coming to court and I saw how their rights were saved by the court. From that moment I realized the importance of Judicial Services.

Personal Qualities

Favourite Person— My Mother.
Strong Point— Optimist
Weak Point—Introvert
Hobbies— Listening Songs

PD—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in Judicial Services ?

Shri Anurag—I chose to pursue law because I wanted to be a part of Judicial system; however full fledged preparation started from 3rd year.

PD—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts ?

Shri Anurag—Yes I kept maximum 2 years for full fledged preparation in UP; the maximum number of attempts is 4. I made up my mind to clear it in first attempt.

PD—Was it your planned decision or your parents' wish ?

Shri Anurag—It was my sole decision.

PD—Does the educational, financial and demographic status of the family of an aspirant have any impact on the preparation ?

Shri Anurag—I think if one is determined then above factors cannot come as a hindrance in one's success.

PD—In your opinion what role do the Competition Magazines play when you are preparing for an examination like Judicial Services ?

Shri Anurag—The competition magazines like PD are very useful as it provides the entire material in one place which saves the time of aspirants.

PD—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ? Do you find it close to your expectations ?

Shri Anurag—PD is one of the best competition Magazines. It is very organized, lucid, & easy and content based.

PD—As a reader of PD, do you read IAS Preparation related articles published in it and did you find these constructive ?

List of Books/Magazines

Preliminary Exam.

Paper I : General Studies

- Ghama Chakra
- PD History
- Lucent
- PD Year Book

Paper II : Law

- O. P. Tripathi
- C. L. P.

Main Examination

General Studies

- Rajiv Ahir—Modern History
- Polity by Laxmikant
- P.D. Monthy issues

Law

- A.K. Jain Individual subject books
- Some standard books like Avtar Singh Battuk Lal

Shri Anurag—Yes, I find them very constructive and helpful.

PD—Please give your comments on the PD Extra Issues Series on 'General Studies' and a few Optional Subjects ?

Shri Anurag—PD Extra Issues on GS are very lucid and they contain all the relevant portions and it makes the herculian task of candidates of reading GS very easy.

PD—Did you refer to Pratiyogita Darpan-Year Book ? What is your opinion about the contents, size and the time of publishing ?

Shri Anurag—Yes, during mains exam I purchased year book 2018 which made my revision very easy.

PD—What is the secret of your success ?

Shri Anurag—Hard work, consistency & Patience.

PD—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

Shri Anurag—To my mother, my elder brother, elder sister and Amit Sir from Amit law Institute, Lucknow.

PD—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

Shri Anurag—The only key to success is hard work and consistency. Don't go for short cuts. Success awaits you.

PD—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

Shri Anurag—Thank You.

Focus 1

Potentially Rich But Infrastructurally Weak India's Food Processing Sector

—Dr. S.S.S. Chauhan

India has attained self sufficiency in the foodgrain production and facing glut in the horticulture production. As per the fourth advance estimates of agricultural crops for the crop year 2018-19 total foodgrain production is estimated at 284·65 million tonnes, while the first advance estimates of horticulture crops for the crop year 2019-20 total production of horticulture crops has been estimated at 313·35 million tonnes. India ranks first in the world in the production of Milk, Ghee, Pulses, Ginger, Bananas, Guavas, Papayas and Mangoes. Further, India ranks second in the world in the production of Rice, Wheat and several other vegetables & fruits. The rise in the production of foodgrains as well as the horticulture crops has not resulted into the rise in the income of farmers who are severely indebted and under stress. The production level of foodgrains, fruits, vegetables, milk etc. Indicates that India has a vast potential for food processing sector, but the same could not be exploited as per the availability of raw material.

The mismatch between the growth and promise of the food processing sector on the one hand and stagnating farm incomes on the other cannot easily be brushed aside. The food processing sector is estimated to account for 14 per cent of GDP and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 20 per cent, thanks to a rising population and lifestyle changes.

Abundant supply of raw materials, increase in demand for food products and incentives offered by the Government have impacted food processing sector positively. During the last 5 years ending 2017-18, Food Processing sector has been growing at an Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR) of around 8·41 per cent as compared to around 3·45 per cent in Agriculture at 2011-12 Prices. Food Processing Sector has also emerged as an important segment of the Indian economy in terms of its contribution to GDP, employment and investment. The sector constituted as much as 8·83 per cent and 10·66 per cent of GVA in Manufacturing and Agriculture sector respectively in 2017-18 at 2011-12 prices (Table-1).

Export Potential of India's Food Processing Industry

The World Custom Organization has identified a list of 463 processed food and beverages products at the 6 Digit level of ITC (HS) classification. These products match with Chapter 10 and 11 of National Industrial Classification (NIC), 2008 used by Ministry of Food Processing Industries to measure the growth in GDP of processed food and beverages sector. The value of processed food exports during 2018-19 was of the order of US $ 35·30 Billion accounting for about 10·69 per cent of India's total exports (i.e., US $ 330·07 Billion). The exports of the food products have shown a rising trend since 2014-15 (Table-2).

Yet, weak 'farm to fork' linkages persist despite the entry of large food chains, as investments in backward linkages have not evolved at the expected pace. This has not helped either farmers or industry.

According to the Dalwai committee report on doubling farm incomes, there was a staggering gap of 80-90 per cent between the availability and requirement of cold chain infrastructure about four years back, and this is unlikely to have improved dramatically. This is despite concerted efforts to promote investment.

Initiatives to Boost up Food Processing Sector

Given the nature and size of processing units operating in the food processing sector, investment in basic infrastructure and common facilities are unlikely to come from the private sector in a significant way. With a view to augmenting private investment to food processing sector, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, therefore, has been implementing a number of schemes for creation of infrastructure, expansion of processing capacity, and other supporting measures for healthy growth of food processing industry. All these existing schemes were reviewed, critical gaps identified and some new schemes were formulated to address these gaps in promoting the sector. All these schemes integrated under

Table 1. Gross Value Added (GVA) by Food Processing Industries (FPI) at Constant 2011-12 Prices

(₹ in Lakh Crore)

S.No.	Economic Activity	2016-17	2017-18
1.	GVA-All India	113·19	121·04
2.	GVA-Manufacturing	20·55	21·77
3.	GVA-Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	17·17	18·03
4.	GVA-Food Processing Industry	1·78	1·92
	Percentage Growth of AAGR		
5.	GVA-All India	7·88	6·94
6.	GVA-Manufacturing	7·94	5·93
7.	GVA-Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	6·27	4·98
8.	GVA- Food Processing Industry	10·76	7·68
	Percentage Share in GVA-All India of		
9.	GVA- Food Processing Industry	1·58	1·59
10.	GVA-Manufacturing	18·16	17·98
11.	GVA-Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	15·17	14·90
	Percentage Share of Food Processing in		
12.	GVA-Manufacturing	8·68	8·83
13.	GVA-Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	10·39	10·66

Source : National Accounts Division, Central Statistics Officer.

Table 2. India's Processed Food Export to World (US $ Million)

HS Code	Commodity	2017-18	2018-19
02	Meat and edible meat offal	4174·64	3722·53
03	Fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates	6850·91	6256·57
04	Dairy produce; birds' eggs; natural honey; edible prod. of animal origin, not elsewhere spec. or included	366·60	538·65
07	Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers.	1305·55	1300·14
08	Edible fruit and nuts; peel or citrus fruit or melons	1857·05	1616·16
09	Coffee, tea, mate and spices	3310·34	3199·87
10	Cereals	8151·56	8162·40
11	Products of the milling industry, malt, starches, inulin, wheat gluten	247·39	320·90
12	Oilseeds and olea, fruits, misc. grains, seeds and fruit, industrial or medicianl plants, straw and fodder	1647·14	1641·00
13	Lac, gums, resins and other vegetable saps and extracts	1019·00	1056·90
15	Animal or vegetable fats and oils and their cleavage products, pre. Edible fats, animal or vegetable waxex.	1263·88	1097·38
16	Preparations of meat of fish or of crustaceans, molluscs or other aquatic invertebrates	422·28	432·55
17	Sugars and sugar confectionery	1018·73	1628·64
18	Cocoa and cocoa preparations	177·47	192·69
19	Preparations of cereals, flour, starch or milk; pastry-cooks products	538·38	535·05
20	Preparations of vegetables, fruit, nuts or other parts of plants	584·89	588·5
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations	725·89	769·37
22	Beverages, spirits and vinegar	346·55	325·84
23	Residues and waste from the food industries; prepared animal fodder	1459·66	1918·05
	India's food export to world	**35467·91**	**35303·19**
	India's export to world	**303526·16**	**330069·60**
	% Share of food export	**11·69%**	**10·69%**

Source : DGCI&S, Kolkata April 2019.

an umbrella—**Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana** (PMKSY) and were launched on 3rd May, 2017 to give necessary thrust for accelerated growth of the sector.

PMKSY is a comprehensive package resulting in creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet. Not only does it provide a big boost to the growth of food processing sector in the country but also helps in providing better returns to farmers and is a big step towards doubling of farmers' income, creating huge employment opportunities especially in the rural areas, reducing wastage of agricultural produce, increasing the level of processing and enhancing the export of the processed foods. The allocation under PMKSY was ₹ 6,000 crore for the period 2016-20 coterminous with the 14th Finance Commission cycle. PMKSY is expected to leverage investment of ₹ 31,400 crore for handling of 334 lakh MT agro-produce valued at ₹ 1,04,125 crore, benefitting 20 lakh farmers and generating 5,30,500 direct/indirect employment in the country by the year 2019-20. The scheme launched in May 2017 offered a capital grant of 50 per cent of the project cost to this end. The following schemes are implemented under PM Kisan Sampada Yojana :

1. Mega Food Parks
2. Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure.
3. Creation/Expansion of Food Processing and Preservation Capacities (Unit scheme).
4. Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Clusters.
5. Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages.
6. Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure.
7. Human Resources and Institutions.

Mega Food Park Scheme

Mega Food Parks Scheme, being implemented since 2008, aims to create a modern food processing infrastructure for the processing units based on a cluster approach and on a hub and spoke model in a demand driven manner. The scheme intends to facilitate establishment of an integrated value chain, with food processing at the core and supported by requisite forward and backward linkages. The central processing center is networked with the primary processing centers and collection centers located at the farm gate in production areas. The broader idea behind the scheme is to bring together farmers, processors and retailers and link agricultural production to the market so as to ensure maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages and improving farmers' income. The Scheme of Mega Food Parks envisages a well-defined agri/horticultural—Processing zone containing state-of-the art Processing facilities with support infrastructure and well-established supply chain.

The objectives of the scheme are as follows :

1. Provide modern infrastructure for food processing units in the country in selected clusters to be identified in a demand driven manner.
2. Ensure value addition of agricultural commodities including poultry, meat, dairy, fisheries etc.
3. Establish a sustainable raw material supply chain for each cluster.
4. Facilitate induction of the latest technology.
5. Address the issues of small and medium nature of processing industries through a cluster approach with stakeholders managing the supply chain.
6. Provide an institutional mechanism for producers, processors and retailers to work together to build the supply chain.

The scheme provides for a capital grant at the rate of 50 per cent of the eligible project cost in general areas and 75 per cent of the eligible project cost in difficult and hilly areas *i.e.*, North East Region including Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and ITDP notified areas of the States subject to a maximum of ₹ 50 crores per project.

Continued on Page 77

Focus 2

Dismal Growth of India's Foreign Trade in April-December 2019

—Dr. Punit Mishra

India's foreign trade, particularly the exports, showed poor performance during the first nine months of 2019-20. Exports contracted for the fifth straight month in December, 2019 as processed petroleum exports saw lower receipts and broad-based decline continued to plague all major foreign exchange earning sectors. Till December, 2019, cumulative exports stood at $ 239 billion, 2 per cent lower than the corresponding period in the previous financial year.

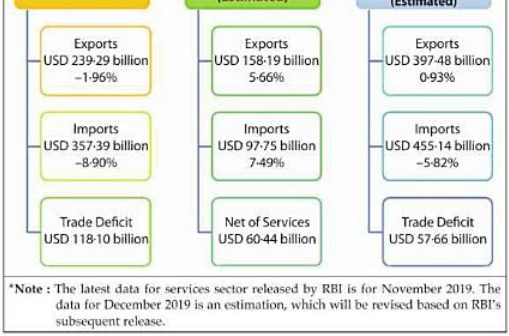
However, officials remain worried about falling imports, which contracted in December by 8·8 per cent. As inbound goods reduced for the seventh time in 2019-20 economists said this shows low demand for both consumer and industrial items—the hallmark of a slowdown. But the rate of import fall had reduced since October 2019, when it crashed by 16·4 per cent. India imported $ 306 billion worth of goods during the April-October (2019-20) period, 8·37 per cent lower than in the previous year. As a result, cumulative trade deficit reached $ 118 billion in April-December (2019-20).

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in April-December 2019-20* are estimated to be USD 397·48 billion, exhibiting a positive growth of 0·93 per cent over the same period last year. Overall imports in April-December 2019-20* are estimated to be USD 455·14 billion, exhibiting a negative growth of (–) 5·82 per cent over the same period last year.

I. MERCHANDISE TRADE

Exports (including re-exports)

Cumulative value of exports for the period April-December 2019-20 was USD239·29 billion (₹ 16,84,558·61 crore) as against USD244·08 billion (₹ 17,02,261·31 crore) during the period April-December 2018-19, registering a negative growth of (–)1·96 per cent in Dollar terms (negative growth of (–)1·04 per cent in Rupee terms). Non-petroleum and Non Gems and Jewellery exports in April-December 2019-20 were USD177·81 billion, as compared to USD177·65 billion for the corresponding period in 2018-19, an increase of 0·09 per cent.



*Note : The latest data for services sector released by RBI is for November 2019. The data for December 2019 is an estimation, which will be revised based on RBI's subsequent release.

Imports

Cumulative value of imports for the period April-December 2019-20 was USD357·39 billion (₹ 25,14,783·82 crore), as against USD392·31 billion (₹ 27,37,092·01 crore) during the period April-December 2018-19, registering a negative growth of (–)8·90 per cent in Dollar terms (negative growth of (–)8·12 per cent in Rupee terms).

Crude Oil and Non-Oil Imports

Oil imports in April-December 2019-20 were USD 95·69 billion (₹ 6,73,447·56 crore) which was 11·78 per cent lower in Dollar terms (11·13 percent lower in Rupee terms) compared to USD 108·47 billion (₹ 7,57,772·55 crore), over the same period last year. Non-oil imports in April-December 2019-20 were USD 261·70 billion (₹ 18,41,336·26 crore) which was 7·80 per cent lower in Dollar terms (6·97 per cent lower in Rupee terms), compared to USD 283·84 billion (₹ 19,79,319·46 crore) in April-December 2018-19. Non-Oil and Non-Gold imports were USD 238·64 billion in April-December 2019-20, recording a negative growth of (–)7·90 per cent, as compared to Non-Oil and Non-Gold imports USD 259·11 billion in April-December 2018-19.

II. TRADE IN SERVICES

Exports (Receipts)

As per the latest press release by RBI dated 15th January, 2020, exports in services in November 2019 were USD 18·00 billion (₹ 1,28,584·48 crore) registering a positive growth of 7·91 per cent in dollar terms, vis-à-vis November 2018. The estimated value of services export for December 2019* is USD 17·92 billion.

Continued on Page 79

Focus 3

NEON : The Artificial Human by Samsung

—Dr. Manish Dev

In the world of artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots, and personal assistants like Siri and Alexa, creating an artificial human is perhaps the Next Big Thing that the tech tsars are looking at. While that will take some time, may be years, to come to fruition, electronics major Samsung's STAR Labs (Samsung Technology and Advanced Research Labs) headed by computer scientist Pranav Mistry, has made some key progress in this endeavour. At the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, the Labs on January 7, 2020 unveiled what it claimed is the world's first 'artificial human' christened NEON. Pranav Mistry, the president and chief executive officer at STAR Labs is behind the entire project. Mistry is also known for his inventions of Sixth Sense and Samsung Galaxy Gear, among others. He made it clear that for the NEON to be 'productised' will take some time. The Labs is building key technologies in phases.

- NEON—which is a portmanteau of Neo (New) and Human—is a computationally created artificial human (humanoid) which looks and behaves like a real human.
- It has the ability to emote and empathise just like real humans.
- NEONs can assist with goal-oriented tasks, while they can also be personalised to assist in tasks that require human touch
- NEON is not like an AI assistant or any other voice assistant. Most act as an interface to the internet to deliver answers or search for the best answer to a query.
- In the case of NEON, the company claims, human emotions and expressions are at the core. It is powered by the company's proprietary CORE R3 technology platform. This also gives visual shape to the visual virtual character.
- NEON is giving human touch with technology. It is more like a friend to you, a person to talk to.
- For now, the NEON derives its understanding on subjects from domain-specific knowledge or the intelligence that is provided by third-party value-added services.
- In the next phase, the Labs is working towards making it more intelligent, using its upcoming technology platform SPECTRA, which is expected to be launched at the NEONWORLD 2020 later in the year 2020.
- SPECTRA will be a key enabler to make the NEON smarter, as it can learn from the interactions, memorise those, and present those with the right emotions.
- For running NEONs, STAR Labs uses a platform called CORE R3, which can computationally create lifelike reality that is beyond normal perception to distinguish.
- The focus of CORE R3 platform now is more on the visual aspects of the NEON. But when SPECTRA kicks in, you can see the magic. With this, the intelligence, memory, emotions and connecting to domain-specific knowledge will also come in.
- A NEON isn't an interface between the user and the Internet.
- The interactions that a user has with a NEON is available only to the user and the NEON itself.
- They are being designed to have conversations and behave like real humans.
- They form memories and learn new skills but don't have a physical embodiment.
- NEONS can help with "goal-oriented tasks or can be personalized to assist in tasks that require human touch." They can act as receptionists, teachers, financial advisers, legal advisors, health care providers, actors, spokespeople or TV anchors.
- While NEONS can borrow traits of real people and have a similar look and voice, they can't be exact copies of existing humans.
- Each NEON is unique, with its own personality.
- NEONS will be our friends, collaborators and companions, continually learning, evolving and forming memories from their interactions.

The artificial human called NEON, which is yet to enter the beta testing phase, will be made to look and behave like a real human

The Three R's

The Neon artificial humans are powered by two pieces of Neon proprietary technology.

- The first, called Core R3, stands for "reality, real time and responsive." That's what makes the Neons respond quickly and in a lifelike manner.
- The second is called SPECTRA, which is responsible for intelligence, learning, emotions and memory.

MANORAMA YEARBOOK

Neon describes Core R3 as an advance in the "domains of behavioral neural networks, evolutionary generative intelligence and computational reality." The company claims it's "inspired by the rhythmic complexities of nature and extensively trained with how humans look, behave and interact." The latency of Core R3, or how long it takes to respond to queries, is less than a few milliseconds, letting the Neons react and respond in real time.

CORE R3 can computationally create lifelike reality that is beyond normal perception to distinguish. CORE R3 is a blend of various technologies, including behavioural neural network, evolutionary generative intelligence, and computational reality, which bring lifelike reality and real-time responsiveness to NEONs. Unlike the prevalent video manipulation techniques, the platform can give a voice or face to any earlier captured data and create unique behaviour or interaction in less than 20 milliseconds, which is almost similar to humans.

Artificial humans are so new that even Pranav Mistry, the man who built Samsung's new artificial humans, doesn't know what the business model for it will be. "We're just a four-five month old venture, so we're not thinking about the business model in too much detail right now," Mistry, President and CEO of STAR Labs, an advanced research lab owned by Samsung, said.

They will also not be able to customise NEONs to suit any need. "It's not like you can just change the look of a NEON, or change its features (eyes, nose etc.) in any way you want," Mistry said. Instead, STAR Labs will let them choose from a number of NEONs in its arsenal. While the company will initially work with businesses and enterprises, it plans to eventually allow consumers to own NEONs as well. In the B2B industry artificial humans are more skill-based. Just like you want employees with particular skill sets, you will be able to choose NEONs in a similar manner. So, a hotel can hire a NEON as a receptionist, using the fact that it can speak myriad languages (including Hindi) to interact with guests.

STAR Labs wants NEONs to remain private and about interactions only. They aren't meant to turn on the lights, give you information from the Internet and other things that voice assistants like Alexa do. Even the company itself cannot access those interactions.

Further, unlike deepfakes, NEONS do not manipulate existing content. "CORE R3 (the technology platform STAR Labs developed for NEONs) is able to generate content that never existed before.

Privacy and Security

The Neons' lifelike appearance raises questions about whether the technology could be used for deepfakes, or videos manipulated to show real people doing or saying something they didn't. Neon said that while an avatar may be based on the appearance of a real person, the technology behind the Neons is "fundamentally different from deepfake or other facial reanimation techniques."

"CORE R3 does not manipulate an individual scene, videos or sequences," the company said. "Instead, it creates unique behaviours and interactions of Neons in real time that never happened before. Thus, CORE R3 creates new realities."

Neon has been designed Core R3 with ethical considerations in mind related to privacy and trust. It secures data by using "state-of-the-art security protocols." The only people with access to a person's interaction with a Neon are that person and the Neon. Neons also never share private data without permission, the company claims.

Neon is funded by Samsung and is a part of Samsung's STAR Labs, its artificial humans are not a Samsung product. It also isn't related to Bixby, Samsung's digital assistant that first appeared in 2017's Galaxy S8. STAR Labs describes itself as a "fully independent future factory with a mission to bring science fiction to reality." The company is speaking to various partners across the world, including India, to undertake beta pilot testing towards the later part of 2020. But the market launch of the product will take some time, which will happen in phases.

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Challenges

Challenges related to the growth and development of food processing sectors are many. So far as the supply of raw material is concerned, it is in surplus but lacks the proper transportation facilities from farm to production centres. Farming of various agricultural and horticultural produces is not evenly distributed in the country. There are certain pockets which dominate in the production of certain crops, particularly the horticulture crops. So, there is a need to chalk out an area specific as well as crop specific plan of establishment of Mega Food Parks.

Mega food parks have been on the policy menu since 2008, with over 40 having been cleared so far. According to reports, only about a quarter of them are working. The progress on setting up integrated cold chains and testing laboratories is more impressive but that too is concentrated in big cities. It may be worthwhile to shift focus to decentralised small units, leveraging traditional skills. The FPO model needs to be furthered, with States encouraging local brand-building and marketing as well. This is also because centralised horticulture facilities require a level of product standardisation, such as in the case of tomatoes and potatoes for making paste and chips, respectively, which cannot easily be achieved. Large-scale operations involving meat and milk would, however, require infrastructure development. Contract farming models need to be revisited to iron out frictions that have cropped up from time to time.

Food processing also needs to contend with a growing sense of health awareness and raise its quality and certification levels. The industry's standards should inspire consumer confidence, for both domestic and export markets to prosper.

Model of developing small units of food processing in rural areas with abundant supply of a particular produce has more potential. It will reduce the cost of transportation of raw material from farm to production plants. Local Youths will get more employment opportunities. Food Processing industries in rural areas will act as a catalyst for overall development of rural industries.

Power of Positiveness

—I.M. Soni

What you make of your life depends on the way you fashion the raw material that is you. On it will depend the price tag you finally put on yourself. The mere existence of talent, brilliance and sharpness of wits is not enough.

Take the case of a steel bar. In its raw shape, its value is not much. Fashion it into a surgical instrument and its price shoots up considerably. Now convert it into fine springs of watches and the price it will fetch would be even higher. It is exactly in that manner that you can add value to your life. Shakespeare says in Hamlet, "What a piece of work is man ? How noble in reason ! How infinite in faculty..."

Such heights of grandeur can be achieved only if you make use of the forces within you.

You must make your individuality, which sets the seal of distinction on you. A highly developed individuality gives you the power to tower over others. You stand higher over the masses of mediocrity.

Cultivate a positive attitude. C D Larson says: "Whatever you think of yourself, think of yourself as being, living and acting in the masterful attitude. In addition, make every desire positive, make every feeling positive, make every thought and action positive."

Few think of the bigger man in them. It is not something apart from you. It is an integral part of your being. It is in a nutshell the sum total of the great powers within you. You have to recognize them, think of them and desire time and again that these be your guiding forces.

You must make conscious effort to arouse them and put them to creative, constructive uses. You will find it difficult in the beginning. If you think you are beaten, you are. Do not give up. Press on. Harold Sherman has put tersely, 'You learn to do by doing'.

There are three fields of action open to you: the conscious, the subconscious and the super-conscious.

When your mind touches the last one, you get real power and inspiration. You feel you have become bigger than yourself. Even if the idea seems mystical, you must know how to act in this higher field of mind.

You are always in touch with it. What happens when you listen to inspiring music, when some passage from a book touches the highest intellect in you, when you see a soul stirring scene of nature ? Simply this: your mind becomes extremely active and gets flashes of brilliance to which you are not accustomed.

It is this brilliance of the mind, which has enabled the great to touch pinnacles of glory in their respective fields.

If you train your mind to touch the super conscious at frequent intervals, you will find the ideas you want, the desire to develop, the desire to put ambition to work. Difficulties and obstacles will then vanish as if at the waving of a magic wand.

The existence of mere ideas, however lofty, will not lead you anywhere. These become fruitful only when they are united with practical action.

Action without concentration is like a diffused ray of light. It is weak, pale and ineffectual. It makes you think of one thing this moment and of another the next.

You must have known people in life whom others dismiss as 'crazy'. Their devotion to one idea is remarkable, though others can neither see nor understand their obsession, which can be traced directly to their power of concentration.

Such people seldom fail in their mission. If you work steadily and surely towards the goal you have in view, if you direct the full power of your mind on that goal, you are sure to achieve the cherished goal.

You cannot save mental action from going waste unless you have cultivated that sort of attitude. To develop that sort of attitude you must give your whole attention to what you want to accomplish, with calmness, firmness and determination.

'Let your actions stem from the depth of your being. Your mind should be suffused with a desire to build. Make this desire so powerful that every part of your being feels that it wants to become greater, more capable and more efficient.

You cannot have too much ambition. You may have too much aimless ambition, but you cannot have too much constructive ambition. If your ambition is strong, and is directed to definite aim, every action of your mind, of your personality will become constructive.

All actions will be inspired by the immense force of your ambition towards its realization. In other words, you made the most of yourself.

A man's personality is the sum total of thoughts. John Milton very well stated that the mind is in its own place and in itself can make a hell of heaven or a heaven of hell. Our actions are the manifestation of our own thoughts. The more we think of creating thing, the more the chances of it coming live.

A plant is from a seed. If there is no seed, then there is no plant. So, if there is no seed of thought, the action will not occur. Each seed of thought sprouts and grows. Once the seed is planted it does not matter whether we water it or someone else is doing it for us.

A positive thought is one that makes you feel lighter and happier. It is generally accompanied with a smile.

Some of the positive thoughts are of care, concern, love, respect and gratitude.

A negative thought is the one that supports your doubts, fear and manipulation. It is generally accom-

panied with pride and revenge. Some of the negative thoughts are of fear, anger, irritation, and speculation.

In both the cases the thought is a manifestation of our mind so we are responsible for it. If our child commits a wrong deed, we cannot refuse to be its parent; whether good or bad, it will always be our child. Similarly, when a thought is created, it is ours whether good or bad, but the choice of acting on it is ours.

Some people associate the feeling of helplessness for not being able to control their thinking, which is not an excuse to create negative thoughts. In this way the person is not only harming others around but also most importantly harming himself.

A recent study by Dr. Masaru Emoto, a Japanese energy scholar, suggested that the water molecules change its shape, size and appearance depending on the kind of words or feelings or thoughts that are projected towards it. A glass of water looked at with anger and frustration had disoriented and distorted molecules whereas a glass of water that was looked at with love and care had beautiful, complete and strong molecules.

Our body is made up of seventy per cent water. The feeling that we hold for our self and others has a strong effect of the molecular structure of the water in our body. Feeling depressed, sad and angry distorts the water molecules, which makes the fight of coming out of the mood even more difficult. Whereas having a great feeling about oneself, taking care of oneself make us a more optimistic person. Our thought pattern makes us what we are.

When someone looks at us with frustration and irritation the molecules in our body become distorted and look ugly. Whereas when someone looks at us with love, care and concern we also feel the same, as the molecules of water in our body are receptive towards that love and care. It is the power of our thought. Its effect is not only to the people for whom we carry these thoughts but also the kind of thoughts we have for ourselves.

Take a bottle of water and explore it some prayer or chants and use positive words of appreciation towards that water. You may then drink the water throughout the day and also make your family members drink it. It will create a similar experience inside your body as it was exposed to.

Another very interesting way to make thoughts work for you is to take the compliment. The thoughts are like cartoon clouds floating in the air. We may put a thought at the back of our mind but it still hangs in with us at some level of consciousness. All these thoughts in the environment are like goody bags available for us. Which one we pick, depends on us.

The power of the thought is immense. It depends on us what we wish to do with it. The improvement always starts from self. If you can change your life, you can influence the lives of people around you.

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Imports (Payments)

Imports of services in November 2019 were USD 11·47 billion (₹ 81,969·39 crore) registering a positive growth of 13·48 per cent in dollar terms, vis-à-vis November 2018. The estimated value of service Import for December 2019* is USD 11·32 billion.

III.TRADE BALANCE

Merchandise : The trade deficit for April-December 2019 was estimated at USD118·10 billion as against the deficit of USD148·23 billion in April- December 2018.

Services : As per RBI's Press Release dated 15th January, 2020, the trade balance in Services (*i.e.*, Net Services export) for November, 2019 is estimated at USD6·52 billion.

Overall Trade Balance : Taking merchandise and services together, overall trade deficit for April-December 2019-20* is estimated at USD57.66 billion as compared to USD89.46 billion in April-December 2018-19.

Merchandise Trade

Exports and Imports (US $ Billion) : Provisional

	(April-December)
Exports (Including Re- Exports)	
2018-19	244·08
2019-20	239·29
% **Growth 2019-20/2018-19**	**– 1·96**
Imports	
2018-19	392·31
2019-20	357·39
% **Growth 2019-20/2018-19**	**– 8·90**
Trade Balance	
2018-19	– 148·23
2019-20	– 118·10

Exports and Imports (₹ crore) : Provisional

	(April-December)
Exports (Including Re-exports)	
2018-19	17,02,261·31
2019-20	16,84,558·61
% **Growth 2019-20/ 2018-19**	**– 1·04**
Imports	
2018-19	27,37,092·01
2019-20	25,14,783·82
% **Growth 2019-20/ 2018-19**	**– 5·12**
Trade Balance	
2018-19	– 10,34,830·70
2019-20	– 8,30,225·21

Services Trade

Exports and Imports (Services) (US $ Billion) : Provisional

	April-November 2019-20
Exports (Receipts)	140·27
Imports (Payments)	86·44
Trade Balance	53·83

Exports and Imports (Services) (₹ crore) : Provisional

	April-November 2019-20
Exports (Receipts)	9,86,225·58
Imports (Payments)	6,07,776·64
Trade Balance	3,78,448·94

Source : RBI Press Release dated 15th October, 2019.

Note : The latest data for services sector released by RBI is for November 2019. The data for December 2019 is an estimation, which will be revised based on RBI's subsequent release.

Tijoriyan

World Panorama

US-Iran Conflict and India's Options

—Arunoday Bajpai

Recent Tensions

The recent flare-up between the US and Iran in the beginning of new year 2020, has wide ramifications for the Middle East and the world. These fundamental tensions led to military incidents in the Middle East in recent past-shooting down of an American drone, attack on Saudi oil facilities, attack by the US on Iranian supported groups in Iraq and attack on the US Embassy in Iraq as well as killing of Iranian General Soleimani in Iraq.

The killing of Iran's top **General Qassem Soleimani** on 3rd January, 2020 by American planned drone air strike outside Iraqi airport was the most tense point in the relations between the US and Iran ever since the US decided to pull out from the Iranian deal in May 2018. The US has re-imposed many stringent sanctions against Iran in the hope that the Iranian regime will come under pressure and renegotiate the nuclear deal as per the new conditions of the US. The other major partners of the deal like France, Germany and Russia continued to support the deal giving legitimacy to Iran's stand.

The politics of sanctions led to military confrontation between the two when the Iranian air force shot down an American drone on 20 June, 2019 in the Persian Gulf region. Trump announced to take revenge but backed off at the last moment. After that tensions have been building from both sides. The US has accused Iran for all proxy attacks against Saudi oil pipe line and tankers. Most recently, few days back, the killing of American civil contractors and attack on American embassy in Iraq were attributed to Iran backed groups. America had retaliated against Iran backed Hezbollah in Iraq and has killed its 25 members recently.

The killing of General Soleimani, the main symbol of military resistance to the US in Iran, will be too much for Iran to bear with as he was a very popular military leader of Iran responsible for her outreach military activities. Iran's top leadership including Khamenei has warned that harsh retaliation is waiting for the US. In retaliation, Iran has launched missiles in the American bases located in Northern and eastern Iran but no casualty has occurred. Iran has also inadvertently hit an Ukranian plane killing all the people onboard. This has caused huge embarrassment for Iran.

It is very likely that Iran will counter attack more American facilities and establishments in the Middle East in near future. Recently, Russia, China and Iran have held a joint naval exercise indicating the changing nature of strategic combinations. If Iran takes some retaliatory measures, the bilateral confrontation will lead to regional confrontation and instability as Israel and Saudi Arabia will back any US military action against Iran. Turkey may join from other side. The further escalation of the conflict depends on the attitude of Russia and China on this matter. But, the military confrontation between Iran and America is likely to intensify. American President, is facing impeachment at home and popular mood in the US is to avoid any confrontation. But these factors may not be sufficient restraints on the US to prevent this confrontation, if Iran succeeds in inflicting considerable damage against American interests in the region.

The US-Iran Conflict : Long Roots

The root causes of US-Iran tensions are located in the modern history of Iran as well as unfolding of US strategy in the Middle East. **The** US considers Iran as a regional bully to undermine her strategic, economic and other interests in the Middle East. On the other hand, Iran considers the US as anti-Islamic and anti-Iran. There are three fundamental reasons for developing such conflicting perceptions :

1. Islamic Revolution and Hostage Crisis : During the Second World War, Iranians held a positive opinion to the US in comparison to Britain and the Soviet Union, which made military intervention in Iran. After the war, America wanted a friendly regime in Iran to subserve her oil interests. Britain and the US became apprehensive of the intentions of Iran in 1952 when the then Iranian Prime Minister Mosaddaq wanted to nationalize the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (A major oil supply company in Iran owned by Britain). The US and Britain organized a coup in 1953 in Iran to depose Mosaddaq and install a more favourable Shah Reza Pehalvi as the new ruler of Iran. During Shah's regime (1953 and 1979), both the US and Britain had a free play in extracting oil resources of Iran.

However, the people of Iran and clerics considered Shah's pro-American policy as harmful to Iran. This resentment led to the Islamic Revolution in 1979 in Iran which deposed Shah and the present Islamic regime came in to power. Shah took shelter in the US, which infuriated young revolutionaries of Iran, who attacked US embassy in Iran on 4 November, 1979 and took 52 Americans as hostage in the Embassy. After the protected negotiations and Syria's mediation, the hostages were freed after 444 days on 19 January, 1981. It was during this period that America severed diplomatic relations with Iran in May 1980 and since then both countries do not have diplomatic relations till present. This has led to acrimonious relations between the two since 1980.

2. Nuclear Issue : During Shah's regime the US assisted Iran to develop nuclear energy programme. But later Islamic regime of Iran secretly developed nuclear weapon programme which came to light in 2000. America and later the UN imposed sanctions against Iran for violating the provisions of NPT. The nuclear issue was resolved in 2015 when Iranian nuclear deal was signed and Iran agreed to stop her nuclear weapon programme. However, as insisted by her close allies Saudi Arabia and Israel, the US withdrew from this deal in May 2018 and re-imposed new sanctions against Iran. This created another bone of contention between the two. The present round of tensions can be traced to the American withdrawal from the deal.

3. Challenge to US Hegemony and Threat to American Allies : The US considers Iran as an obstacle to her strategic interests in the Middle East and a source of terror activities. Shiite Iran and US close ally Sunni Saudi Arabia are engaged in bitter fight for regional supremacy. The US also accuses Iran of exporting terror and extremism to Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and Iraq. This is inimical to American interests. Since Iran is a bold supporter of Palestinian state, another American friend Israel is also dead against Iranian activities in the region. Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels are supported by Iran, but they are acting against Israel and Saudi Arabia, a fact disliked by the US.

Impact on India

This tension is likely to escalate as Iran has been pushed to the wall by the US by planned killing of Iran's most popular and prized military General Soleimani. The catch is—if Iran fails to retaliate, the US would like to target more leaders and Military Generals of Iran and her regional influence will wane and Iran's ambition of emerging as a regional power in the Middle East will suffer. The rising instability in the region impacts India in the following manner :

(1) With military confrontation, the shortage of oil supply and oil prices both will shoot up, raising the import bill of India and putting more pressure on the fiscal deficit of India. At present, the oil products contribute nearly 27 per cent ($ 112 billion) of total Indian imports bill of India. With rising prices of oil in the global market, it will increase the import bill. This will have negative impact on the fiscal deficit of government of India, which is 3·3 per cent of GDP (₹ 7 lakh crore) in 2018-19. It will also increase the trade deficit of India. The rising oil prices will have cascading impact on the prices of essential commodities as the transportation cost of goods will also increase.

(2) The ongoing crisis will adversely affect the foreign remittances coming from the Gulf countries. At present, nearly 8 million Indians are working in the Gulf countries and contribute nearly $ 35 billion foreign exchange annually for India. The tensions will put extra burden on the government for their safety and evacuation.

(3) The intensification of tensions between Iran and the US will lead to strategic changes in the region and India will be pressed hard to take a clear stand on this conflict. China and Russia are likely to extend at least diplomatic support to Iran, which will undermine India's position even further. Now it is not the case that the US will sanction Indian project in Chabahar in Iran, rather Iran herself will shelve this project for India. This will be a great setback for India as it will lose the only viable connectivity to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

(4) If tension flares up, there might emerge a new coalition of regional forces like Russia, China, Turkey, Iran and Syria, which may be harmful for India in the long run. It is because of the possibility of this strategic crystallization that Trump has tried to wean away Pakistan from the Iranian and Chinese ambit. However, Trump's commercial nature of diplomacy may not have desired success in Pakistan, as the latter is also conscious of her balancing position and placed very close to China.

India's Options

Under the US influence, India has already stopped the import of oil from Iran. India has so far maintained contacts with both sides and has called for restraints to maintain peace and stability in the region. But as the conflict unfolds further, India may be pressed hard to come openly. Most likely India will remain a neutral actor in this conflict because siding with one is harmful to her in either case.

The moot question is whether a neutral stand would be beneficial for India in the long run. Perhaps it may annoy both Iran and the US at the same time. To minimize this effect, India should be seen investing her diplomatic energy in finding the political solution of the conflict in tandem with other similar global powers. It may also earn goodwill to India from other nations which are adversely affected by this conflict.

Given the complex nature of the conflict between the US and Iran, which involves other important regional actors like Saudi Arabia and Israel, India's diplomatic means as well as leverage are limited to play any significant role in reducing the tensions and avoiding the conflict. This is in spite of the fact that India has close ties with both the US and Iran. India has called for maintaining restraints on both sides to prevent the escalation of conflict. But this is the general diplomatic refrain of neutral nations. It is good that Indian Foreign Minister has been in touch with both sides after the recent tensions. India has one more opportunity to play a constructive role in this conflict. India can approach European powers specially France, Germany and Russia to cultivate a political solution of the issue. These powers are vital stakeholders in the present conflict and carry weight to convince both sides. The Iran-US conflict was on cards for last one year, but India has missed a great opportunity to push for a political solution with these powers. France had tried to do the same during the G-7 Summit 2019 by arranging a dialogue between the top leaders of the two countries (Iran and the US). Unfortunately, it did not materialize. But, still India has this opportunity to push for a political solution. Maintaining measured neutrality may appeal in the short run, but may not serve India's interests in the long run.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and India

What is RECP ?

The RCEP or the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is an ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) free trade agreement, which was initiated in 2012. It includes 10 members of the ASEAN and six other nations which have FTA with the ASEAN. These six countries are: China, South Korea, Japan, India, Australia and New Zealand. These countries are known as ASEAN plus six and first three countries are known as ASEAN plus three because of their special relations with the ASEAN. The ten members of the ASEAN are : Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines. The basic objective of the RCEP is to reduce the custom duties among the member countries in order to liberalize the trade among them. This will facilitate increase in trade, economic cooperation and prosperity in the region.

The RECP, if concluded will be the largest free trading block in the world. Its members contribute 40 percent of global trade and 39 per cent to the global GDP. Also, these countries are located in the Asia-Pacific region, which is considered the hub of the future economic growth. The two most populous countries of the world—China and India are also its participants.

The conclusion of RCEP has been a lengthy process. So far 27 rounds of negotiations have been held since 2012 to iron out differences among participants. For high level consultation three RCEP summits have been held so far, in which the heads of government of the member countries have participated. The first RCEP Summit was held in Manila (Philippines) in 2017; second in 2018 in Singapore and the third in 2019 in Thailand. It was during the third summit that India has announced to keep out from the proposed agreement.

Why India has not Joined RCEP ?

India has announced to opt out of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in the third Summit of the RCEP held in Bangkok in the first week of November, 2019. While announcing India's decision at the Summit, Indian Prime Minister Modi remarked, *"Today, when we look around we see that during the seven years of RCEP negotiations, many things, including global economic and trade scenarios, have changed. We cannot overlook these changes. The present form of the agreement does not fully reflect the basic spirit and the agreed guiding principles of the RCEP. It also does not address satisfactorily India's outstanding issues and concerns. In such a situation, it is not possible for India to join the RCEP agreement."*

It raises the questions as to what are India's concerns which are not served in the RECP in the present form: Some of these concerns are :

(1) India's prevailing **trade deficit** with RECP partners. India has trade deficit of $ 105 billion with 11 of the total 15 partners, including the $53 billion trade deficit with China alone. India fears that the RCEP will further increase her trade deficit with China, which will surge her imports in the duty free environment. Similarly, New Zealand and Australia which enjoy edge in dairy and agriculture products may harm the interests of Indian farmers.

(2) In case of surge of cheap import to Indian market, the RCEP does not have any provision for **Trigger Price Mechanism** to protect her industry and market. The provision of Trigger price mechanism is made to check the unlimited import to cheap goods from another country. Under this mechanism, a minimum price of each commodity is fixed and if the price of the imported commodity goes below the fixed prices, it is automatically raised to the level of fixed price. This mechanism is adopted to save the domestic industry from the cheap imports.

(3) The RCEP does not provide for the **Rules of Origin** to check the export of goods by third country to India. Rules of origin means the only the original country which produces the good is entitled to export it. If this rule is not followed, a country may label the goods produced in another country and export the same as her own and thus get the benefits of free trade.

India and ASEAN : A Successful Partnership

A major success story of India's post-cold war foreign policy has been the success of her Look East (Now Act East Policy), launched in 1991. The major focus of this policy has been the development of multidimensional close partnership with the ASEAN. The Indian Prime Minister Narsimha Rao made a successful visit of this region in 1992 and India became a sectoral dialogue partner of the ASEAN in the same year. The status of India was elevated to the full dialogue partner in 1995. There was a temporary setback to expanding relations as the US, Japan and other leading counties imposed sanctions against India in reaction to the nuclear tests conducted by her in 1998. The ASEAN became reluctant as its members follow the US line in strategic matters. In fact, the ASEAN was founded as a check to the spread of communism in East Asia. Its activities and functioning have been influenced by the logic of cold war politics and resulting regional problems. As the US and Japan lifted sanctions against India in 2002, the prospects for cooperation between India and the ASEAN became brighter. In 2002, both decided to hold regular annual Summit meetings to strengthen the mutual cooperation. Since 2002, the annual Summit meetings have been held between the two. Usually these meetings are held at the same place and time where annual ASEAN summits are organized. The 16th India-ASEAN Summit was held in Bangkok on 2-4 November, 2019. Presently, India and the ASEAN have strengthened and enhanced their partnership in the fields of trade, investment, technology, culture, environment protection and disaster management and people-to-people contact. The four economically poor members of the ASEAN—Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam are known as CLMV countries. India has initiated special development partnership with these countries.

India and the ASEAN have also held two commemorative Summits in Delhi; First Summit was held in 2012 to commemorate the 20 years of establishment of formal relations between the two sides. Again another summit was held in January 2017 to mark the 25th years of the beginning of India-ASEAN relations. Both have signed the Free trade Agreements in the field of goods, services and investment. The bilateral India-ASEAN trade was $ 97 billion in the year 2018-19.

(4) India has some leverage in the service sector, but RCEP does not have follow-up facilitating provisions for **trade in services**. The reason is that India enjoys some edge in the service sector, which is highly developed in India. If trade in services is also liberalized under the RCEP, India may reap some benefit and make up for loss in the trade in the goods sector. The proposed RCEP does not have any specific provision for liberalization of trade in services.

(5) India has been insisting on the policy of **data localization** in the e-Commerce, but RCEP is not supportive of data localization. Data localization means that the foreign companies like Amazon, VISA Card, Master Card etc., which are engaged in the e-Commerce in India, are required to keep the data of Indian customers in India only. India follows the data localization policy for the safety and protection of personal data of Indian consumers. India has supported data localization policy during the G-20 summit in Japan in June 2019. But, other participants of the RCEP do not support this policy.

It was due to the above immediate factors that India decided to keep out of the deal. However, the fundamental factor behind opting out of the RCEP is the lack of competitiveness of Indian exports and the apprehension that the cheap imports from the partner countries would harm Indian industry and agriculture. Before the summit, there were large scale protests by small manufacturers and farming community demanding India to opt out of the deal. However, there are voices which claim that India has missed the great opportunity for economic growth by not signing the deal.

But India has different experience of FTAs which has produced desired results in the past. India has also announced to review the other FTAs signed with the ASEAN, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. Whatever may be the case, India's decision is largely motivated by protecting Indian economic and commercial interests. Critics may term it as a protectionist measure, but like any other nation, India too has the right to protect her commercial and economic interests.

Out of 15 other countries in the RCEP, India has a total trade deficit of more than $ 105 billion with 11. New Delhi had sought safeguard processes like an automatic trigger safeguard mechanism (ATSM)—a process that automatically increases levies once imports cross a given threshold, which the negotiating partners considered an irritant.

Following the decision of India to opt out of the RCEP, the other participants have not finalized the deal so far. They are likely to deliberate further on the implications of India remaining out of the RCEP ambit. Meanwhile, some participants have tried to persuade India to iron out her differences and join the agreement. The remaining countries of the RCEP also fear the likely trade dominance of China under the RCEP. They view India as the only balancing force against China's trade hegemony.

On the other hand, India has also announced the review of the remaining Free Agreements signed earlier as they have not produced the beneficial results for India. So far India has signed the following FTAs with various countries : Indo-Sri Lanka FTA-1998; India-Thailand FTA-2003; India-Singapore FTA-2005; India-South Korea FTA-2009; India-Malaysia FTA-2011; India-Japan FTA-2011. India also signed FTA in goods with the ASEAN in 2009 and FTA in Services and Investment in 2014. Indian experience of these FTAs has been that, amidst rising bilateral trade, India's trade deficit has also increased. In view of this India may reevaluate her FTA agreements with focus on protecting her valid trade interest. The very logic of the FTA suggests that it will benefit those partners which have some edge in technology in the production. If the production competitiveness of a country is adequate, she may suffer the negative consequences under the FTA regime.

PDurgan

Do you Know ?

What is Nehru-Liaquat Ali Agreement ?

While introducing Citizen Amendment Bill (CAB) in the Parliament recently, the Home Minister of India referred to the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Agreement and its violation by Pakistan as the justification for passing CAB to protect the minorities. The Nehru-Liaquat Ali Agreement was signed on 8 April 1950 in the wake of large scale migration of minorities from both countries amidst looting of their property, women and harassment during the partition of the country. The main provisions of this Agreement are :

1. Protection of the Rights of Remaining Minorities

This agreement mandates both countries to protect the rights of minorities. The Section 'A' of this agreement reads :

"The Government of India and Pakistan solemnly agree that each shall ensure to the minorities throughout its territory complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honour, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation, speech, and worship subject to law and morality. Members of minority will have equal opportunity with members of majority community to participate in the public life of their country, to hold political and other office and to serve in their country's civil and armed forces. Both governments declare these rights to be fundamental……."

2. Protection of the Property, Women and Safety of Migrating Minorities

Both countries agreed to ensure that :

(a) Migrated refugees were allowed to return unharmed to dispose of their property,

(b) The abducted women and looted property of migrated minorities were to be returned, and

(c) Their forced conversions would be unrecognized.

In brief, the agreement provided for the recognition of the religious, cultural, economic and political rights of remaining minorities as well as the safety of the property and women of the migrating minorities in their respective countries. India had already implemented these provisions through her fundamental rights, but the Constitution of Pakistan when created in 1956, 1962 and finally in 1973 declared Pakistan as an Islamic State. The Zia's regime in 1970s and 1980s led to deeper Islamization of Pakistan's polity and society. Thus, Pakistan did not adhere to the spirit and words of this agreement prompting the Government of India to go for CAA to protect the rights of minorities leaving Pakistan and other two other countries. It was in this context that the Home Minister of India referred the violation of this agreement in the Parliament as a justification for passing the Citizenship Amendment Act.

Performance of Ministry of Women and Child Development During the Year 2019

Child Development, Protection and Welfare

In order to ensure development, care and protection of children through cross-cutting policies and programmes the Ministry of Women and Child Development has undertaken various measures to spread awareness about child rights and facilitate access to learning, nutrition, institutional and legislative support for enabling children to grow and develop to their full potential.

Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh

The Union Minister of Women and Child Development (WCD) and Textiles, Smriti Zubin Irani, along with Bill Gates, co-chair of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation launched the Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh (BPKK) on November, 18, 2019 in New Delhi. The BPKK will be a repository of diverse crops across 128 agro-climatic zones in India for better nutritional outcomes.

At the behest of the Ministry of WCD the Harvard Chan School of Public Health through its India Research Center and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will document and evaluate promising regional dietary practices and the messaging around them and develop a food atlas on regional agro-food systems. Both efforts are aimed at mobilizing the diverse sectors of the society.

In consultation with Ministry of WCD and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the project team will select around 12 high focus states which are representative of the geographical, social, economic, cultural and structural diversities of India. In each of the states or group of states the team will identify a local partner organization which has relevant work experience in Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) and nutrition for developing the food atlas.

POSHAN Maah

- POSHAN Maah was celebrated in September, 2019 and in one month 36 million POSHAN related activities were held across the country.
- During POSHAN Maah 1·3 million Anganwadi workers, 1·2 million Anganwadi helpers and state agencies reached out to 85 million beneficiaries.
- Fund allocation under POSHAN Abhiyaan has increased in the last 3 years from ₹ 950·00 crore in 2017-18 to ₹ 3061·30 crore in 2018-19 and to ₹ 3400·00 crore in 2019-20.
- There is no provision under the POSHAN Abhiyaan to provide nutritious food. Providing Supplementary Nutrition is a part of Anganwadi Services scheme. POSHAN Abhiyaan ensures convergence of various nutrition related schemes/interventions of various line Ministries.

Software and Dashboard for POSHAN Abhiyaan

POSHAN Abhiyaan empowers the frontline functionaries like Anganwadi Workers and Lady Supervisors by providing them with smart phones. ICDS-Common Application Software have been developed under POSHAN Abhiyaan which enables data capture, ensures assigned service delivery and prompts for interventions wherever required.

This data/information is then made available on web-based ICDS-CAS dashboard on a near real time basis, for monitoring, to the supervisory staff at Block, District, State and National level, for action and decision making at their end. The dashboard displays data and provides reports on various programme areas to the administrative officers to interpret and use the information for improving service delivery.

For achieving the above targets, Poshan Abhiyaan is to ensure convergence of all nutrition related schemes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development on the target population. This includes convergence of Anganwadi Services, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Scheme for Adolescent Girls; Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), National Health Mission (NHM), Swachh Bharat Mission; Public Distribution System (PDS), Food & Public Distribution (CAF & PD), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and other programmatic interventions of Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. Convergence Action Plan guidelines in this regard have been issued to all the States/UTs and line Ministries.

The approved budget of Poshan Abhiyaan for a period of three years is ₹ 9046 crore. A sum of ₹ 3400 crore has been allocated for Poshan Abhiyaan for the year 2019-20.

POSHAN Anthem

Vice-President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu launched the POSHAN Anthem on 3rd December, 2019. The aim of the POSHAN Anthem is to inspire people to join the movement to fight the scourge of malnutrition. Speaking on this occasion the Vice-President of India congratulated Prasoon Joshi and Shankar Mahadevan, the lyricist and music composer and singer of the anthem and hoped that through this song the message of nutrition will reach each and every corner of the country. He appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Women and Child Development in using innovative tools to take the message of nutrition to all citizens of India. The Vice-President also urged that the anthem may be sung in as many regional languages as possible so that it becomes a song of the people. The overriding priority of all legislators, administrators, civil society activists and citizens must be to ensure that all children of the country get the best possible childhood, added the Vice-President.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO)

Section 28 of the POCSO Act 2012 provides for establishment of Special Courts for the purpose of providing speedy trial. Further, Section 35 of the POCSO Act provides that the evidence of the child shall be recorded within a period of thirty days of the Special Court taking cognizance of the offence and reasons for delay, if any, shall be recorded by the Special Court. Further, Section 35 also lays down that the Special Court shall complete the trial, as far as possible, within a period of one year from the date of taking cognizance of the offence.

The Government of India has taken the following steps to ensure speedy dispensation of justice :

- In furtherance to The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018, the Government has finalized a scheme in August, 2019 for setting up a total of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for expeditious trial and disposal of pending cases pertaining to rape and POCSO Act, 2012, in a time-bound manner under Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The Scheme is for one year spread over two financial years *i.e.*, 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 was enacted for effective deterrence against sexual offences. Further, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 was enacted to prescribe even more stringent penal provisions including death penalty for rape of a girl below age of 12 years. The Act also inter-alia mandates completion of investigation and trials within 2 months each.
- A "National Database on Sexual Offenders" has been launched on 20th September, 2018 to facilitate investigation and tracking of sexual offenders across the country by law enforcement agencies.
- An online analytic tool for police called "Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences" (ITSSO) has been launched on 19.02.2019 to monitor and track time-bound investigation on sexual assault cases in accordance with the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018.
- In order to improve investigation, steps have been taken to strengthen DNA analysis units in Central and State Forensic Science Laboratories. This includes the setting up of a State-of-the-Art DNA Analysis Unit in Central Forensic Science Laboratory, Chandigarh.
- Guidelines have been notified for collection of forensic evidence in sexual assault cases and the standard composition in a Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit. A total number of 6023 officers have been trained by the *Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D)* and *Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan National Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science*. BPR&D has distributed 3,120 Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits to State Governments/UT Administration as orientation kit as part of training.
- A scheme namely *Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC)* has been approved under which an online cybercrime reporting portal (www.cybercrime.gov.in) was launched on 20th September, 2018 to enable public to report complaints pertaining to child pornography/ child sexual abuse material, rape/gang rape imageries or sexually explicit content.

Women Empowerment and Protection

Empowered women living with dignity and contributing as equal partners in development in an environment free from violence and discrimination; and, well-nurtured children with full opportunities for growth and development in a safe and protective environment.

Promoting social and economic empowerment of women through cross-cutting policies and programmes, mainstreaming gender concerns, creating awareness about their rights and facilitating institutional and legislative support for enabling them to realize their human rights and develop to their full potential.

Strengthening of AHTUs & WHDs in States Across the Country

The Empowered Committee (EC) under Nirbhaya Framework, chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, recommended the setting up of Anti-Human-Trafficking-Units (AHTUs) at the cost of ₹ 100 crore for safety and security of women and girl victims of trafficking. 100% cost of setting up these AHTUs has been recommended to be borne by the Central Government under Nirbhaya Fund as per the MHA proposal. The EC has also suggested that psycho-social counselling and legal counselling and aid should be made available through these AHTUs to the beneficiaries.

The EC also recommended the the setting up of Women Help Desks (WHDs) in Police Stations in all States and UTs at a cost of ₹ 100 crore to be funded 100% by the Central Government under Nirbhaya Fund. WHDs will be gender sensitive desks for grievance redressal of women through the policing system, as well as catalysts for improved community interaction of the police with focus on crime against women and children. The desks will also help create a conducive atmosphere for distressed women and girls to approach the police stations without any hesitation and fear.

The EC has suggested that these WHD should preferably be headed by women police officers not below the rank of Head Constables, and preferably by women officers not below the ranks of JSI or ASI. Further, training, orientation and sensitization of both men and women police officials working at or in relation to WHDs at police stations, should also be taken up.

Presently, WHDs have been approved for ten thousand police stations. However, the EC has suggested that the facility may be expanded to all the police stations in the country over a period of time or in phases.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), a flagship scheme of the Government for pregnant

women and lactating mothers has achieved a significant milestone by crossing one crore beneficiaries. The total amount disbursed to the beneficiaries under the scheme has crossed ₹ 4,000 crore.

PMMVY is a direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme under which cash benefits are provided to pregnant women in their bank account directly to meet enhanced nutritional needs and partially compensate for wage loss. Implementation of the scheme started with effect from 01.01.2017. Under the 'Scheme', Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) receive a cash benefit of ₹ 5,000 in three instalments on fulfilling the respective conditionality, *viz*, early registration of pregnancy, ante-natal check-up and registration of the birth of the child and completion of first cycle of vaccination for the first living child of the family. The eligible beneficiaries also receive cash incentive under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY). Thus, on an average, a woman gets ₹ 6,000. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana reaches one crore beneficiaries.

One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme

Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) has been discontinued on 31st March, 2017. The One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme provides a range of services including police facilitation, medical aid, psychosocial counselling, legal counselling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence in an integrated manner under one roof. So far 728 OSCs have been sanctioned and 595 OSCs have started operations.

Recognizing the need to prevent women from exploitation and to support their survival and rehabilitation, the scheme of **Short Stay Home for women and girls** was introduced as a social defence mechanism, by the then Department of Social Welfare in 1969.

The scheme is meant to provide temporary accommodation, maintenance and rehabilitative services to women and girls rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism or are being forced into prostitution and are in moral danger. Another scheme with the similar objectives namely **Swadhar** was launched by the Department of Women and Child Development in 2001-02 for women in difficult circumstances. The scheme through the provisions of shelter, food, clothing, counselling, training, clinical and legal aid aims to rehabilitate women in difficult circumstances. Centre for Market Research and Social Development, New Delhi conducted an evaluation in 2007 to assess the performance of both the schemes. The evaluation report while citing the effectiveness and positive impact of measures adopted under the schemes for counselling and rehabilitation found that the profile and category of residents, admission procedure, counselling, quality of service, vocational training, rehabilitation and follow up procedure are almost similar in both the schemes. It, therefore, recommended merger of these two schemes for better functioning and outcomes with lesser administrative burdens and procedures. There were total number of 307 Short Stay Homes and 311 Swadhar Grehs functioning in the year 2013-14.

The Guidelines and SOP for the OSCs have been circulated to all the States/ UTs and districts for effective implementation of One Stop Centre (OSC) scheme. Awareness generation programmes related to One Stop Centre scheme are conducted by State Governments / UT Administrations from time to time.

Nirbhaya Fund

Government of India has set up a dedicated fund called Nirbhaya Fund for implementation of initiatives aimed at enhancing the safety and security of women in the country. Under the Nirbhaya Fund, the proposed projects should have the features like direct impact on safety and security concerns of women, optimum use of existing infrastructure, innovative use of technology, no duplication of existing government schemes/ programmes, provision for real time intervention as far as possible. strict privacy and confidentiality of women's identity and information and defined monitoring mechanism.

Sexual Harassment Electronic–Box (SHe-Box)

Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has developed an online complaint management system titled Sexual Harassment electronic–Box (SHe-Box) for registering complaints related to sexual harassment at workplace by women, including government and private employees. Once a complaint is submitted to the SHe-Box portal, it directly reaches the concerned authority having jurisdiction to take action in the matter.

A total number of 203 cases have been disposed of so far which include cases under Central Government, State Government and Private sector.

The SHe-Box portal has been developed with the objective to facilitate the registration of complaints related to sexual harassment of women at workplace.

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Social Ethics Article

Gandhian Approach and Global Challenges

—A. Bajpai

We are in the midst of celebrating Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary in an era when the humanity is faced with the global challenges of unprecedented magnitude. It is not without reason that the global Community (The UN) declared his birthday (02 October) as the 'International Non-Violence Day'. This is the best tribute to his approach to human problems and place of human beings in the universe. The world community, in its long recorded history, has never experienced the kind of threats posed by global terrorism or the climate change. Their impact is further compounded in the face of increasing challenges of hunger, poverty, social conflicts and recurring global energy crisis. It is not merely the magnitude of these problems and their impact on the future of human societythat raises global concerns but more troublesome and uncomfortable is the fact of gradual and steady exposure of limits of our approaches and methods to face these challenges. However, we are so obsessed with the invincibility of human logic and its technical competence, groomed in dominant development approaches and paradigms that we consistently fail to acknowledge these limits. It is sooner the better we realize that killing of hundreds of Osamas may not eliminate the problem of terrorism. Can we control the menace of terrorism by unleashing counter-terror and counter violence ? The global community is hard pressed to find ingenious ways to limit the carbon emission to control the effect of climate change. Can we solve or even manage the disastrous effects of climate change, when burgeoning global population exerts huge pressure on limited global resources to satisfy their ever expanding desires, greed and appetite ? The world is replete with diverse kinds of conflicts at various levels. Can we resolve these conflicts, when a small oasis of affluence exists amidst a huge desert of poverty, hunger and unemployment ? Or can we face the contemporary global challenges without desirable transformation of human beings ? The answer to these questions is no. The fault lies with our prevailing perspectives about individual, society and environment as well as interrelationship among them. Gandhian perspective on individual, society, social change, modern civilization, truth and non-violence, and decentralization may provide a better insight.

Let us begin with a simple question. What is common among terrorism, climate change, human rights violations, inequality, food and energy crises, poverty and hunger ? Three things are common. First, all of them are global challenges. Second, human beings are the central element of these challenges either as a cause, or as a target or both. Third is Gandhi, because he is after the central element of these challenges. This is perhaps the essence of Gandhi and certainly the reason for his universal appeal. We may analyze Gandhian thought in any manner; the human element occupies a central position in ultimate analysis. This is the main theme of this article. It seeks to analyze the relevance of Gandhian ideas for addressing the contemporary global challenges on the one hand and its implications for India as an emerging global power on the other. If Gandhi is relevant for global challenges, it is more relevant for an emerging power like India.

Gandhi sought fundamental solutions to the fundamental problems of human society. His life was nothing less or nothing more than experimenting with the fundamental solutions to the human problems. These fundamental solutions are nothing but the embodiments of truth. The very title of his biography—*'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'* boldly states this point. Since human beings are at the core of all global challenges, the solution to these problems should rest on human beings. One may argue that modern solution to these problems is also human centered, what is distinct about Gandhian approach. The modern approach to solve problems primarily focuses on external control of human beings through different forms of control regimes, whereas the Gandhian approach focuses on the internal change of human beings. The modern approach not only faces resistance but also fails to find lasting and permanent solutions, whereas Gandhian approach addresses the core issues of the problem and finds the lasting and permanent solution.

The crux of Gandhism lies in Gandhi's profound understanding of human beings, their behaviour and nature in all dimensions. Gandhi was a great scientist of human beings. He believed in the essential goodness of human beings. The lack of appropriate moral development leads to imperfections in human beings but it opens the hope for future perfection also. For, if human nature is susceptible to degenerating from good to bad, it can move from bad to good also. Thus, Gandhi has immense faith in the moral improvement of individuals. For him individual is the starting point of social regeneration. He remarked in 1942, *'The supreme consideration is man, the end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth.'* The fundamental urge of human beings for self-realization has to be reconciled with the spirit for the service of society. He condemned (Gandhi: 1939) the 'unrestricted individualism as the law of the beast of the jungle.' However, he was also against the social collectivism, which stifles the individual freedom and growth. In fact, Gandhi wanted a perfect integration between the individual and the society. Gandhi has himself elaborated the vision of social integration: *'It (the future world society) would be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual, always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the*

circle of villages, till the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are the integral parts.' The Gandhian notion of moral individuals, perfectly integrated with the society may provide a viable clue to resolve the conflicts between individuals and the society, which are the result of clash of interests between the two.

Gandhi postulated an integrated view of human life. Individual is not only to be well integrated within himself but also with the society and the surrounding environment. For Gandhi, social change is possible and lasting only with inner changes in human beings. The change is to be brought about through peace and non-violence. He finds that peace and love, not violence, is the foundation of society. A society based on the foundations of violence and hatred cannot survive for long. Gandhi remarked, *'the continuous survival of this world proves that the human society is not based on the physical force. Rather, it is based on truth, pity and soul-force'.* Had it not been so, the world would have been destroyed long back. He establishes the superiority of soul force over physical force as the former is based on self-sacrifice and does not generate hatred and violence against the opponent.

For him, truth was God and non-violence was the means to realize it. Gandhi has noted, *'My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters (of Autobiography) does not proclaim to the reader that the only means for the realization of Truth is* ***Ahimsa****, I shall deem all my labour in writing these chapters to have been in vain.'* He further reiterates, 'But for me, truth is sovereign principle, which includes numerous other principles. It is absolute truth, eternal principle that is God. In practical terms, it means that truth is that goal or desirable condition which is always just and acceptable and hence it has to be pursued. The technique of Satyagrah, invented by Gandhi was the most revolutionary, yet non-violent tool for the realization of truth. It literally means the force of soul. Satyagrah is based on the qualities of self-sacrifice and self-discipline. Humility is its core, as Gandhi says, 'The seeker after truth should be humbler than the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after truth should be so humble that even the dust could crush him. This is not merely an ideal, but it has practical significance. While violence and hatred against the opponent breed more hatred and violence in the opponent the display of self-sacrifice generates empathy and moderation in opponents. Perhaps, this is the most important feature of Satyagrah. It leads to inner and permanent change as it appeals directly to the soul of the opponent. Gandhi has an unflinching faith in the ultimate goodness and malleability of each human being, though these qualities may be dormant for some time for some reasons. The true Satyagrahi targets at these qualities of the opponent's soul. Gandhi's entire life is experiments with these principles. The primary message of Hind Swaraj is self sacrifice, limitation of wants, and love. Gandhi stated, *'This book (Hind Swaraj) teaches religion of love in place of religion of hatred; restores self-sacrifice in place of violence; and strengthens soul-force to challenge the physical might.'*

What is the relevance of these ideas for the modern society suffering from the ills of diverse conflicts, violence and terrorism ? Can we get rid of these problems through the use of force ? The human history is replete with examples that use of force and violence generates more counter violence and hatred. Force may give temporary respite, but not provide their solution, let alone their management. Gandhi tries to convince humanity that wars never solved any problem. On the contrary, reconciliation would help humanity to sort out the various problems.

These are human problems, which have roots in the minds of people, hence their solution should be found in their minds. What are the basic causes of the ongoing terrorist violence throughout the world ? Whatever answer we may discover, the root cause is the perceived sense of injustice, even it may be wrongly perceived. Even if it is a wrong perception of injustice, reconciliation and change of minds, rather than use of violence, is the appropriate strategy. Gandhi said that human beings are not capable of knowing the perfect truth. Hence they are not justified to use violence even for the sake of truth.

The Gandhian appeal to solve conflicts through non-violence is criticized for being impractical. But Gandhi has demonstrated its viability not only in foreign land (South Africa) but also during his struggle for India's independence. If the path of peace and non-violence is impractical, no alternative practical approach so far has emerged to find the lasting solution of conflicts and terrorism. The present legalistic and military approach is likely to compound these problems. So Gandhi emerges as the man of last resort. In the final analysis, moral consciousness and upliftment, not violence and force, are the only means to find lasting resolution of conflict at various levels.

The process of globalization riding high on the assumed to be invincible ideology of neo-liberalism has generated wealth and prosperity, but it has also generated inequalities of income and wealth, food and energy crises, environmental degradation, poverty and unemployment. The entire continent of Africa and many countries in Asia have been marginalized in the process of globalization. The future for the realization of SDGs (UN Sustainable Development Goals) is bleak and the number and problems of Least Developed Countries are on increase, and the global agenda for social welfare has suffered in view of the ongoing financial crisis. One of the major causes of this financial crisis is the overspending by the people as well as the governments in affected countries. The economic and social challenges resulting from globalization are complex and varied. In fact, the global economic and social development scenario and the strategies of development require reorientation.

In this respect the Gandhian economic principles hold new promise. In the modern and technological era, the trend of consumerism has increased and moral values are on the wane. Gandhian economic philosophy is the road to prosperity, social justice and balanced growth. It addresses the ills of modern society arising due to jobless, ruthless rootless, voiceless and futureless growth.

Gandhian ideas of economic self-sufficiency, economic decentralization, limiting the undesirable wants, and his emphasis on small scale industries provide vital clues to solve these problems. His idea of trusteeship based on the philosophy of renunciation and moral obligation offers a peaceful solution to economic distribution and establishment of socialism. Gandhi would not like to draw a sharp line or any distinction between economics and ethics. For him, economics that hurts the moral well-being of an individual or nation is immoral, and therefore sinful. The Gandhian principles of Swadeshi and Swaraj are found to be the answer of ills of present capitalist mode of development.

It is alleged that Gandhi was against western scientific development and modern machines. What he disapproved was not the machines as such but the enslavement of human beings to machine culture. Similarly, Gandhi criticized materialistic and consumerist aspects of modern civilization, because these go against the canons of moral social order postulated by him. Gandhi disapproves western civilization based on uncontrolled human greed, satisfaction of unlimited physical desires and unhindered economic and scientific developments at the cost of human dignity and freedom. In place of this civilization he draws outlines of a true civilization, where people discharge their duties guided by moral ethics and control of sense organs (*Indriyanigrah*). He fought against all the perverted tendencies of modern civilization like materialism and selfishness.

Like economic challenges, modern world is faced with environmental challenges leading to various disasters, food and energy crises and even social tensions and conflicts. Climate change is the most immediate and visible incarnation of this challenge. In the prevailing development paradigm, the toolbox approaches to limit the carbon emission will generate new problems. It is not simply that human beings have exploited resources more. The fundamental problem is that the harmony between man and nature has been broken. Gandhi was aware of this, as he warned against a series of social and political turmoil, ecological devastation and other human misery that might arise unless modern civilization takes care of nature and man tries to live in harmony with nature and tries to reduce his wants. Unlimited consumerist tendencies and callous indifference to values will not help humanity to progress towards peace.

Gandhi was of the view that the earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need but not for every man's greed. He warned that modern industrialism would strip the world bare like locusts. No logic can convince that given the reckless exploitation of natural resources to satisfy ever expanding human needs, how we are going to avert pending environmental disaster ? We have no other ptions than to come back to Gandhian principles. After all, what is sustainable development ? It is nothing but the blending of development with the Gandhian moral obligation towards nature and future generations. Without this moral obligation, the idea of sustain-able development cannot succeed. Even the ongoing efforts for the protection of common resources or 'Commons' cannot succeed with legal measures and even financial incentives. They can succeed only if the spirit of moral obligation is strengthened among all the stakeholders.

Throughout the globe there are people and associations adopting Gandhian principles to get environmental justice. Some of the notable examples are : Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, the founder of Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya Movement; Sulak Sivraksa of the Thailand Spirit in Education Movement; John Francis of US; Mary Evelyn Tucker, the co-founder of the Forum on Religion and Ecology; Billy Parish, founder of Climate Campaign etc. The climate change movement has much to learn from Gandhi: the supreme efficacy of his tactics, the deep personal rectitude demanded of the true Satyagrahi, and the real world strategic value of loving one's opponent.

Gandhi is Global

Einstein once remarked that the future generations would not believe that such a mortal human being has ever moved on this earth. *'Gandhi is global'* is a popular notion of our times, which underlines three broad dimensions of his thoughts and actions. **First,** Gandhi's source of ideas bears a global character, as he picked up ideas from diverse individuals, places and disciplines. If Tolstoy's book, *'Kingdom of God is Within You'* strengthened his faith in non-violence, John Ruskin's book, *Unto This Last* influenced his economic ideas. Again, Henry Thoreau' anti-government treatise, *Civil Disobedience*, left deep impression on his idea of Satyagrah. The Sermon on Mount in the *New Testament* had a special appeal to him, as it contained great principles of goodness and righteousness. Thomas Carlyle's book, *Heroes and Hero-Worship* influenced him deeply. He was inspired by its ideas on Prophet's greatness, bravery and austere living. Edwin Arnold's translation of *Gita* as *The Song Celestial* enabled him to learn the principle of *Anasakti* or the performance of one's duty with detachment. Gandhi's global appeal comes from global sources of his thoughts. However, the foundation of his thought rests on the eternal Indian ideas and principles. He was open to and welcomed external influences even much before the globalization became a buzzword. He once remarked that "I would keep the windows of my house open to allow the fresh air from all direction to come in but I would not allow them to sweep away my feet."

Second, Gandhi is global because of global appeal of his ideas of truth, non-violence, simplicity and peaceful resistance. Such is the appeal of his ideals and life lived up to those ideals, that now we have Gandhi's incarnations in every part of the world. We have Martin Luther King as American Gandhi, so we have Nelson Mandela as African Gandhi. Many other great personalities and social movements throughout the world are inspired by his thoughts. Think of and compare with the practice of giving sobriquets to great Indian figures by western thinkers and writers during colonial times. When they discovered the literary genius of the ancient Indian poet and dramatist Kalidas, they promptly designated him as *Indian Shakespeare*, even though the Indian poet lived thousands of years earlier to the English dramatist.

Similar was the designation given to the great ancient Indian thinker, Kautilya, who was designated as *Indian Machiavelli* by western scholars. They were unmindful of the fact that Kautilya excelled in political thought much earlier to Machiavelli's work. The credit goes to Gandhi to reverse this order. He contributed to the liberation of India from cultural domination. We may tend to forget *Indian Gandhi* at home, but Gandhi's influence and reach of his ideas are so wide and far reaching that he has emerged as a global figure. It is not surprising that the global community decided in 2007 to observe his birth day as the International Non-Violence Day. The UNESCO, in its 35th Session held in October 2009, decided to establish the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development in India. This is the only Category-1 Institute of UNESCO in entire Asia.

Third, Gandhi is global because he espoused those principles and ideas which have universal appeal. The principles of non-violence and truth, moral reordering of society, emphasis on internal changes in human beings and limitations of their wants, close affinity between ends and means, and decentralization of economic and political structures strike happy chord with modern human society suffering from conflict, violence, degeneration of moral order, hunger and poverty. These principles are eternal but Gandhi's genius lies in refining and applying them in the modern conditions.

Dr. Martin Luther King, the American Gandhi, adopted Gandhian principles of non-violence and Satyagrah to fight the injustice against blacks in America. Even, King's notion of *'Personalism'*, which locates ultimate reality in human personality, is nothing but the extension of Gandhian idea of unflinching faith in the goodness of human beings.

What is the significance of Gandhi's global profile for India ? India is a rising global power. The global image of a country plays an important role in its rising process, particularly in the age of democracy and public diplomacy. Each country is worried to refurbish her global image in the contemporary globalized world. China has established more than hundred Confucian Institutes in last one decade in different parts of the world to popularize ancient Chinese values and culture. In comparison to this, Indian efforts to promote Indian culture in global arena are far behind. The managers of Indian public diplomacy should take note of this. India has the opportunity to focus on Gandhi's global image under its public diplomacy programme, launched in 2006. So far, one such initiative is visible as India has designated 9 January as the Indian Overseas Day as on this day in 1915 Gandhi came back to India from South Africa. As an Indian ambassador of peace, truth and non-violence, Gandhi is already present in Africa, Asia and America and other parts of the world. While Confucius is following Chinese capital in different parts of the world, India is yet to match Gandhi's global presence in different parts of the world.

It is interesting to note that the global acceptability as well as popularity of Gandhi is on the rise without any deliberate promotion of such popularity. It is spontaneous. A report by the NRI World (2010) reveals that the demand for the Gandhi bust is increasing in all parts of the world. It appears that more and more people across the world are seeking solace in Gandhi's non-violence and simplicity. Gandhi and his ideas have been known to people throughout the world for many generations. What explains the surge in Gandhi's global image in recent times ? One may argue that it is the result of global challenges and the relevance of Gandhian ideas to face those challenges. This is only partly true. The real factor is the feeling of helplessness of the humanity to face those challenges as the limits of prevalent approaches to deal with the complex global problems like terrorism, climate change etc. are exposed again and again. The strength of Gandhian ideas lies in the fact that they inspire us more in the face of uncertainty and helplessness. They teach us the value of fearlessness, the strength of soul force, the moral uprightness of self-sacrifice, the universality and ultimate victory of peace, truth and non-violence and finally the invincibility of human spirit. What else we need to get rid of fear and face the challenges with courage and self-confidence. India should note this global Gandhian phenomenon and make some imaginative moves to enhance her own global profile in 21st century. The basic challenge is how to blend India's global imperatives with Gandhi's ideals in both domestic and international arena. For last many years Gandhi has been a highly revered figure in India, but his thoughts and ideals need serious attention in public life of India. His thoughts have largely been treated as utopian and impracticable by policy makers of all hues. This may undermine India's serious claim over Gandhi's global legacy. Can we recover from this fix ? Whatever may be the answer, but Gandhi's emerging global appeal and its underlying relevance approves the prophesy of British historian Arnold Toynbee, who predicted : "It is already becoming clear that chapter which had a western beginning will have to have an Indian ending, if it is not to end in the self-destruction of human race. At this supremely dangerous movement in human history, the only way for salvation of mankind is the Indian way."

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Indian Economy Article

India's Sliding Economy 'Very Worrisome' : Needs Urgent Succor

—Shrawan Kumar Singh

Leave aside the expert opinions about slowdown in Indian economy during 2018-19 and in current fiscal, the mood of the general public speaks with dismay about the rising unemployment and decreasing growth rate. Economists may categorise the slowdown as structural, cyclical or both as per their own perceptions and affinity with the ruling class.

The current slowdown has been the longest in recent times—around 18 months starting early 2018.

The drivers of the decelerations are multiple, mainly domestic and in part long-lasting. The slowdown is far steeper than what most observers had expected. The consumption demands in the last few years have not been supported by better jobs or higher income growth but more by falling savings and higher borrowings by consumers. Consumption has not just been the biggest drag, but that it also started falling across some of its sub-segments before 2018. While much attention is focused on the auto sector, which contributes a third of the consumption slowdown, non-auto consumption items are responsible for twice as much. Moody's attributed the deceleration to an investment-led slowdown that has broadened into consumption, driven by financial stress among rural households and weak job creation. Over the last 18 years, Indian economy has gone through five economic stages :

(i) economic slowdown (low inflation, low growth) in 2002 and 2003,

(ii) economic boom (low inflation, high GDP) in 2005 to 2007,

(iii) economic peak (high inflation, high growth) in 2008 and 2009,

(iv) stagflation (high inflation and low growth) in 2011 to 2013, and

(v) the current phase of slowdown has been a prolonged one, which, started in 2011-12. Since then the steady process of slowing down has not recovered from the downward trend significantly. During this phase two major obstacles came in the way of economic recovery in 2016 and 2017 demonetisation and GST– that made things even more difficult. Today, India is standing at a position which is quite difficult and challenging: investments haven't picked up for a very long time and consumption has slowed down. The current phase of slowdown can't be blamed on global conditions and trade wars.

IMF joins a parade of multilateral institutions, rating firms and brokerages in cutting economic growth estimates for India, after the economy grew at the slowest pace in six years in the June quarter. Moody's Investors Service lowered its 2019-20 growth forecast for India to 5·8 per cent from 6·2 per cent earlier, saying the economy was experiencing a pronounced slowdown partly due to long-lasting factors. The per capita net national income grew at a meagre 5·6 per cent, which was at a 5-year low. The growth rates of per capita GDP and of net disposable income have also plummeted in the post-demonetisation years. Lower disposable income leaves less money to spend on discretionary items and thus restricts the sale of mostly non-essential products. The decreased buying may have majorly contributed to the lack of demand in the economy, which is a major concern behind the ongoing slowdown. The mainstay of aggregate demand in India has weakened more than initially anticipated. The rural economy is considered more vulnerable to the variations in income and thus the effect of the slowdown is also more prominent in the Indian heartland, which is rural areas. Prima facie, the reasons for slowdown can be summarized as under :

(i) falling consumption,

(ii) the auto sector contributes a third of the consumption slowdown,

(iii) non-auto consumption items are responsible for twice as much,

(iv) financial stress among rural households,

(v) weak job creation,

(vi) stagnant exports,

(vii) onerous tax regime leading to new tax terrorism,

(viii) investment-led slowdown,

(ix) stagnation in demand,

(x) distress in farm sector,

(xi) slowdown in MSMEs sector.

Prof. Arun Kumar has observed that the source of the problem originates from the unorganised sector which has been in decline since demonetisation. It was further hit by the Goods and Services Tax. This sector producing 45 per cent of the output and employing 94 per cent of the workforce, has been in decline, which is pulling down the rate of growth of the economy. The data for this sector is collected once in five years (called reference years) since the sector has tens of millions of units for which data cannot be collected monthly, quarterly or even annually. In between the reference years, the data is only projected on various assumptions. The implicit assumption is that the organised sector can be a proxy for the unorganised sector. In brief, the official data only represents the organised sector. To incorporate the unorganised sector, data from alternative sources need to be used.

A lot of India's problems are structural. There could be a cyclical component but there are large structural issues. The structural issues fall into two categories :

(i) stressed specific structures and

(ii) the need for more reforms before investments can take place.

Take sectors such as banking and NBFCs—the entire financial services ecosystem, take the power sector,

airline and shipping, telecom, real estate, construction. Real estate has been bleeding for nearly a decade with consequences for construction, among the largest employers of non-formal workers in the country. Credit growth, one measure of investment, after peaking at a stimulus-fired 21·5 per cent in 2010-11, has been declining sharply over the last eight years and is down to 10 per cent for 2017-18.

An adverse external environment is another explanation; some point to the inappropriate exchange rate policy impact on exports. There is also currency of opinion about risk-aversion, liquidity and lending squeeze caused by the persisting NBFC crisis, which is popularly held to have retarded private consumption. India may have got into a structural impasse, structural and cyclical, with the structural element dominating. The implied portrayal of banks as the villains of the slowdown story is simply wrong. Banks lend when there is demand for credit and when lending decisions are not seen as potentially criminal acts.

Typically, a cyclical slowdown is caused by an excess of investment demand—over-investment in capital assets (residential and non-residential) and in inventory. The production of final goods generated by excess investment is not absorbed, leading to inventory reduction, lower prices, lower economic activity, and some loss in employment. When this is accompanied by excess debt, the cyclical slowdown can be prolonged or it may become structural. Rangarajan and Srivastava (2019) have opined that India's current economic slowdown is due to a combination of two underlying trends :

(i) there is the short-run cyclical slowdown exhibited by a number of high-frequency indicators, reflecting a significant fall in demand, especially for sectors such as automobiles, consumer durables and housing.

(ii) there is the more serious long-term fall in investment and savings rates. Raising growth requires that attention be paid to both cyclical and structural dimensions of the problem.

Contextually, the IT reform missed reading the secular decline in global inflation, which major central banks have failed to revive. India kept real interest rates astronomically high in this environment, extracting severe output sacrifice. Demonetisation, a 'structural reform' to encourage formalisation, digitisation, and increase public revenues and savings by discouraging cash holdings, eliminating black money proved nothing as such. But, it deserves flagging the economy struggles, today, from a depressed informal sector.

Road blocks in Indian economy : India has poorer infrastructure, higher electricity costs etc. India's labour laws are a big source of frustration and low productivity; it is difficult to see how India can boost its productivity unless this is fixed. How important it is to get large MNCs to use India as a production base is best seen from the fact that the bulk of global trade takes place between companies. Unless India is able to sharply increase the share of global FDI it gets, especially in the manufacturing sector, it is difficult to see how its exports can do well on a sustained basis.

The investment rate has hovered at around 30 per cent for the last several years because the capacity utilisation in the economy has been around 75 per cent. Unless this rises, fresh investment will mean even lower capacity utilisation and lower profitability since capital will be underutilised. Data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) shows that investment proposals are at a 14-year low. The RBI has cut interest rates four times and by a total of more than 1 per cent; but the investment rate has not budged.

Global slowdown : Gopinath (IMF's chief economist) has stated that "the global economy is in a synchronized slowdown and that IMF is downgrading growth for 2019 to 3 per cent, the slowest pace since the 2008 financial crisis. "Growth continues to be weakened by rising trade barriers and increasing geopolitical tensions. We estimate that the US-China trade tensions will cumulatively reduce the level of global GDP by 0·8 per cent by 2020. Growth is also being weighed down by country-specific factors in several emerging market economies, and structural forces such as low productivity growth and ageing demographics in advanced economies" (World Economic Outlook (WEO), 2019).

Impact of slowdown : In ominous signs that the slowdown may be deep, it is the prospect of a slow recovery that is triggering panic, with the undertone the economy's potential might have fallen sharply. The economic slowdown now threatens to sink deep roots and become part of the economic landscape. 'Make in India' has done nothing to increase manufacturing in the GDP. Not only has there been no rise in the share of manufacturing, but it has also shrunk across key sectors. Matters have worsened in June 2019. The index of industrial production hit a four-month low with 15 of the 23 industry groups showing negative growth. The manufacturing is jammed at a long term low of 15 per cent of GDP and going through a grim phase. Domestic demand has seriously slowed down. There is no vent through greater exports.

Government response to slowdown : The government has announced a set of measures for revival. It has also indicated that more are in the pipeline. Government's revival package is a good start, because it squarely addresses some of the problems. The withdrawal of the two bad taxes on capital gains and startup funding and attempts to encourage more retail credit flows and energise aggregate demand, should impact economic sentiments and, therefore, consumer confidence. Front-loading bank recapitalisation and other tweaks in the credit supply chain, as well as the promised quick disbursal of tax refunds and vendor payments to the private sector, plus repeated emphases on saner tax administration, should impact credit flow, sentiments and, therefore, activity in the economic production side.

The announcement of a new export incentives scheme holds out some hope for the struggling export business. The measures are aimed at partly reworking the export incentives regime, introducing export facilitation measures, and providing a

roadmap to address the critical issue of conformity of product and process standards in international markets.

The government in September 2019, issued an ordinance to reduce the **corporate tax rate** for domestic firms and new manufacturing units by 10 to 12 percentage points, effectively bringing India's tax rates on par with its competing Asian peers. The effective tax rate for domestic corporates, inclusive of surcharges, will fall from 34·94 per cent to 25·17 per cent if they stop availing any other tax sops. For new manufacturing firms set up after October 1, 2019 and commencing operations by March 31, 2023, the effective tax rate will fall from 29.1 per cent to 17 per cent.

The corporate tax cut is part of a series of steps taken by the government to tackle the slowdown in economic growth. The tax cut, if it manages to sufficiently revive the economy, can help boost tax collections and compensate for the loss of revenue. Business, investor and consumer sentiment in India is largely driven by taxes. These stimulus and structural measures and monetary policy may help reviving the economy to some extent in the near future. But, these measures alone may not help in getting higher growth. Gita Gopinath is of the view that the government has taken appropriate steps but it needs to do a lot more, including cleaning up the balance sheets of commercial banks, to ward off the negative impact on growth from financial vulnerabilities.

Remedial policies : How to revive the economy : Diagnosing the problem is key for devising policy responses. Cyclical slowdowns can be dealt with using temporary fiscal and monetary stimulus. Structural problems, on the other hand, require long-run policy responses.

Various suggestions have been thrown around on how to revive the economy, or rekindle what Keynes famously called 'animal spirits'. The key to reviving investment or consumption demand perhaps lies in a 10-letter word : **confidence**.

The RBI's consumer confidence survey for the three months ended July 2019, conducted across 13 cities and 5,351 respondents, indicates that households feel the economy has worsened since the previous quarter, with expectations of further worsening in the future. In such a situation, households typically postpone spending till there are clear signs of an improvement. The signs of improvement depend on a combination of factors, which include inflation, income and employment. A fresh jolt to confidence also seems to be in the offing. In a globally connected world, adverse economic trends travel from one geography to another through three channels: Trade, financial flows and confidence.

Many advocate aggressive monetary easing. One should be content if the RBI can manage the rupee at current value given persistent capital account surplus. Fiscal rules, falling revenues, committed welfare spending and large extra-budgetary borrowings for revenuecapex spends limit this route. There is a hard option to break this impasse, provided the government is prepared for near-term growth sacrifice for medium-term gains. Options lie in the political economy domain.

India now has to contend with not only domestic confidence shocks—accumulated over the years through inflation, a bruised credit market leading to credit-averse financial agents, demonetization, a faulty goods and services tax structure, industry feeling victimized, direct tax uncertainty, farm income compression and rising unemployment—but also those washing up from overseas economies.

There is scope for privatisation for vital economic turnaround. It could opt for a more aggressive disinvestment/privatisation programme to alleviate fiscal concerns, while generating resources to ramp up its capital expenditure. Domestic consumption will require a sustained and big policy push to substantively revive, given the huge impact of the global economic slowdown, the need for a consumption-boosting Keynesian multiplier may be more acute than the government may like.

The WEO report said growth in India will be supported by the lagged effects of monetary policy easing, a reduction in corporate income tax rates, recent measures to address corporate and environmental regulatory uncertainty and government programmes to support rural consumption. Revival of consumption demand and private investment should assume the highest priority for the government and the central bank in several sectors—manufacturing, trade, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting, construction and agriculture.

Conclusion

Mood of gloom and doom about the economy is not going to help anyone. The government has to step in with corrective policies, to address both deficiencies. Mere optimism, like mere negativism, does not go very far. The Indian economy is fragmented in all sectors. There is no global scale and hence efficiency gains remain meagre and untapped. Operating conditions have to become genuinely easier for micro and small businesses to grow. The political blame game can go on, but the issue before business and the economy is, how to get out of the economic mess. To be fair, the Government has not been sitting idle. It has taken a number of initiatives for which it can take well-deserved credit. The global economy is witnessing "synchronized slowdown", which will result in slower growth for 90 per cent of the world this year, and the effect is even "more pronounced" in some of the largest emerging market economies like India. The immediate task for the government is to have a singular focus on improving investment and inspire confidence among people about their future.

The government's first response shows a desire to intervene to rectify problems; more may be on the way and necessary. Governments, globally, respond with progressively greater force as they calibrate the intensity of the intervention, the dose of the medicine. Milton Friedman, a Nobel laureate in economics, once wrote: "Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable." But changing the momentum is the challenge, and one hopes that the right interventions come sooner rather than later.

PGurjar

Space Programme Article

Changing Global Trend in Space and India's Status

—Bharat Singh

The US Navy first used navigation satellites in 1960. The total number of military satellites by 2013 in the world were approximately 350, with 193 alone belonging to United States, 74 belonging to Russia and 68 belonging to China. Other countries like France, UK, Germany and Israel own less than 10 satellites. Many GPS satellites launched serve dual purpose for both military and civilian, and their real capabilities are not disclosed. Since 1970, the US Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) has been operating Space based early warning satellites equipped with infrared sensors scanning the earth through wide-angle Schmidt cameras and operating in geosynchronous orbits under its Defence Support Programs. The DSP is meant to detect nuclear explosions, satellite launches and to detect and track ICBM missiles through all their phases of flight. These have since been replaced by 'high' and 'low' Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS). The SBIRS High was designed to use 04 Geosynchronous Earth Orbit (GEO) satellites and 02 High Elliptical Orbit (HEO) satellites to track while the SBIRS was designed to use 24 Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. While the SBIRS Low deployment schedule was 2010, the deployment of SBIRS high satellites 05 and 06 is scheduled in 2021 and 2022 respectively. The USAFSPC's Space and Missile Center (SMC) is now planning on a more capable, resilient and defensible next generation 'Overhead Persistent Infrared' (OPIR) programme, employing GEO satellites, as the next evolution of SBIRS program to rapidly acquire and deliver global missile threat warning to its Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) war fighter systems.

USA spends close to about USD 48 billion on space programs. The US Armed Forces maintain international networks of satellites, with ground stations located in various continents, to provide global positioning system, carry out reconnaissance and for communication networking of armed forces operating around the globe. The soviets had conceptualised Almaz space station as early as in 1960s to search sea based targets. The 'Thor' and 'Rod from God' were some of the US projects in early 1950-1960 to weaponise space and use kinetic energy munitions from space. Directed Energy Weapons and Tactical High Energy Lasers (THEL project) by US and Israel were also tested between 1996 and 2005 to destroy airborne and space borne targets. The Manned Orbiting Laboratory launched by US, between 1963 and 1969, was used for reconnaissance. In 1985, for the first time, a US F-15A fighter aircraft fired a successful anti-Satellite missile. The NASA also has an asteroid mission on the books. The need for capabilities to manoeuvre, divert or decimate an inbound asteroid on collision course with earth, cannot be denied.

The US Space Agency launched Hubble telescope in a low earth orbit (LEO) in 1990 with assistance of European Space Agency, and it remains in operation till date. Its successor James Web Space Telescope will probably be launched in 2021. The inherent advantage of a space based observatory includes much higher resolution and significantly low diffraction. The space observatory would also observe infrared and ultraviolet light which gets absorbed in atmosphere. Apart from Hubble, NASA operates Chandra X-ray and Spitzer infrared space telescope. NASA has many interplanetary missions to its credit including to the Sun and to various asteroids. Its Mars Rover continues to beam back images from Mars and Juno from Jupiter. It has sent mission to Pluto and beyond solar system. In 2003, the 'Mars Odyssey' discovered vast amount of water near the polar region of the Mars.

Russia has a separate Space Force responsible for early warning of missile threats, ballistic missile defence, and the fabrication, deployment, maintenance and control of in-orbit space vehicles like the new reconnaissance satellites. The Space Forces operate the GLONASS global positioning system. The Russian and some Chinese space surveillance networks are capable of searching, tracking and characterising satellites in all orbits. This provides space operations and counter space offensive capabilities. The Russian Federal Space Agency 'Roscomos' played a key role in construction of the International Space Station since 1998, and has a good record of collaboration with NASA. Russia was the first country to have its own space station MIR even before ISS came into existence. Presently astronauts to ISS are launched by Russia's Soyuz spacecraft. Russia, along with the European Space Agency, is looking at a major mission to Mars. It is also looking at many robotic missions to moon. The Venera 7 and Mars 3 were the Russian missions undertaken to soft land on Venus and Mars respectively.

China, in January 2007, had successfully carried out an Anti-Satellite Missile Test by destroying its own satellite at an orbital height of 800 km. The debris created by China's missile test led to the destruction of a Russian Satellite later. China has considerable space-based intelligence, surveillance, navigation, meteorological and communications satellite networks. It is the second highest space budget amounting to USD 11 Billion. Chinese President Xi Jinping has asked the Chinese Airforce to speed up integration of air and space capabilities. After US and Russia, China has become the third country to send a Rover to moon and has had a series of successes in crewed space flights. China is also planning to build its third space station module. The Chinese Space Station intends to provide deep space exploration capabilities to Moon and Mars, and will also provide a test bed for key technologies. As per the latest inputs,

the Chinese lunar rover Yutu-2 has discovered a gel like substance, with mysterious lustre, on the far side of the moon on 2 Sept., 2019.

The International Space Station is a low earth orbit, habitable artificial satellite. The ISS programme has been jointly developed by five space agencies, *viz.*, NASA, Roscomos, JAXA (Japan), CSA (Canada) and ESA (European Space Agency). The ISS serves as a microgravity and space environment research laboratory. The ownership and use of the space station is established by inter-governmental treaties and agreements. It has two segments; one is Russian another American. The American segment is used by many others.

Space-X, the Elon Musk founded US Company, has revolutionised space technology. Its ultimate aim is to colonise other planets and enable people to live in other planets. The company is manufacturing advance rockets and space crafts. It is the only private company to return space craft from low earth orbit. Its Dragon spacecraft is being used to provide supplies to ISS and launching US Military satellites. It also has in its kitty the most powerful rocket 'Falcon'. It is presently focusing on a fully reusable launch vehicle, most powerful ever built, to settle human colonies on Mars.

The Japanese JAXA Hayabusa 2 space craft, launched in 2014 with ion engine technology, became the first spacecraft to land a rover on the surface of an asteroid in June 2018. The mission is for 18 months, the probe was planned to deploy a small lander and three rovers to poke, prod and impact the asteroid. It will then blast an artificial crater to analyze material below the asteroid's surface. After that, the probe will head back to Earth, arriving near the end of 2020 with samples in tow.

In May 2019 NASA, along with ESA, undertook an exercise to study the possibility of an asteroid impact on earth; a fictional scenario with realistic possibilities. The scenario has been developed by the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Center for NEO Studies (CNEOS). Astronomers estimate there are about 1,000 near-Earth asteroids larger than a kilometre across. If one of those struck Earth, no amount of preparation would help, but there are many small asteroids in NEO (near earth orbit) that science could potentially do something about before they strike. The exercise was meant to decide upon a counter strategy.

Emerging Laws of Outer Space and their Implications for India

A law becomes meaningful only when it is enforceable. Space laws, like other international laws, are affected by this principle. International laws do not have enforcement mechanism as member states have sovereignty over their territory and people, and their adherence to any international law is mostly voluntary, or under pressure of potential economic sanctions. International laws are also affected by the military and economic might of the member states who dictate their terms on weaker states. Hence, equality or fairness in implementation of International Laws is highly questionable. In spite of absence of effective mechanism to implement international laws, they continue to be framed and ratified. The known accepted sources of international laws continue to be mutual treaties between states, customary international laws, United Nation charter and laws passed by UN bodies, judgements by International courts, and inter-governmental treaties.

The international space law is based on five core treaties; the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, the 1968 Rescue Agreement, 1972 Liability Convention, the 1974 Registration Convention, the 1979 Moon Agreement and the 2010 IYU Constitution and Convention

The Article 1 of Outer Space Treaty permits freedom to explore, use and conduct scientific investigation in outer space. The article IV of Outer Space Treaty prohibits weaponisation of space and prohibits signatories from putting weapons of mass destruction in outer orbit of Earth. The article VI stipulates that a state shall remain responsible for all its national and space activities, including those taken by non-state actors. It is thus clear that states are free to carry out scientific exploration and investigation of the outer space and are responsible for activities of their citizens. Therefore even Elon Musk can undertake space based activities only with the sanction of the US government.

It must be understood that though a nation state has sovereign rights on land and airspace above its territory, there is no law and method available to delimit airspace from outer space. The United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) has not been able to resolve the issue of delimitation since last 50 years, and with growing advancement in technology, the range of sovereign airspace has increased. The right to peaceful transit of satellite in outer space over territory of other states has now become a customary international law, and remains an uncodified but accepted practice. The 'Aerodynamic Lift Theory' has failed to impress scientists who cannot figure out exactly at which point air dis-appears and space starts. 'Under Bogota Declaration View 1977' developing nations like Brazil, Kenya, and Chille etc. located near equator have declared their position claiming sovereignty rights over space, up to where their geostationary satellite would need to orbit *i.e.*, 30,000 miles away from Earth's surface. India must take a clue from the same to declare its own sovereign rights in the space to deny space to any geostationary enemy spy, reconnaissance, ELINT, and remote sensing satellite, whose presence is detrimental to our national interest. Another primary reason is limited space available, as three geostationary satellites which are launched at equatorial plane are adequate to cover whole earth, and thus will soon run out of prominent space due to increasing space traffic from developed nations.

The Moon Agreement declares Moon as common heritage of mankind. Thus no nation can declare rights of sovereignty on reaching and establishing its facilities on lunar surface first. Moon Agreement allows the right to explore and use of Moon without discrimination. However, as brought out earlier, a law is only good as long as it can be enforced. Any nation state, individual, or a corporation, which sets up its facilities first on Moon, a planet or any other celestial body first, can gain a first mover advantage and physically deny the achievement of the same to late movers. This also applies to Elon Musk's plan of establishing a human colony on Mars where water resource

has been discovered in polar region, and which would enable terraforming. In case of violation of any international Law and treaty by individuals reaching other planets there is no way the laws can be enforced against their wish, as it is one way ticket. Also, as per all ancient land laws including Indian, Roman, German, Mohammadean and English laws, first possession and use of land brings ownership rights. This leads to formation of territorial claims and state boundaries. The same have been endorsed by eminent jurists like Savigny, Salmond, Ihering, Pollock and Holmes. Therefore, use of land by any inter-planetary or Inter-lunar mission will possibly create issues of land ownership and sovereignty rights in future.

Since treaties and agreements are a important source of international law, inter-governmental agreements (IGA) cover the functioning of crew mem-ber on-board the International Space Station observatory. The IGA covers issues ranging from Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), crime by a crew member, civil and criminal jurisdiction and operational responsibilities. On 28 August, 2019 Anne McClain, became the first astronaut on-board ISS to have committed crime of accessing bank account of her spouse, from whom she was obtaining divorce, without his permission. India, must examine such legal arrangements and treaties, so as to get into similar programs with other member states for deep space crewed exploration mission. It would also be required to frame laws for outer space and evolve an enforcement mechanism.

Following the 1986 'UN Principles Relating to Remote Sensing', India allows non-discriminatory dissemination of remote sensing data to all member states. India has a Remote Sensin Data Policy 2001, under which a private Indian player is prohibited from launching Remote Sensing Satellite. The policy also prohibits domestic players from publishing sensitive information pertaining to national security obtained through images from Indian Remote Sensing Satellites from National Remote sensing Agency, Hyderabad. However, there is still no restriction in publication of similar images obtained from foreign remote sensing satellites by Indian or foreign entities. This policy requires relook as it fails to adequately cover our national interest. Additionally, it will be in India's interest to encourage more private players to undertake development of effective, efficient and cheap remote sensing and other satellites and spacecraft for which policy guidelines can be laid out to promote private ventures in space as well as to ensure accountability and national security.

Under the provisions of 1967 'Outer Space Treaty' as well as 1973 'Liability Convention', any nation is liable to pay damages to other member states if its space activities cause damage to property of other member state or its citizen. However any international laws can only be implemented in India, through Indian courts, if the corresponding domestic law to support the same has been enacted by the parliament according to constitutional provisions. Any damage to any satellite caused by debris of Anti- satellite Missile test can make India liable for damages. Such test can be seen as opportunities by other states to seek reparations by claiming damage to their aging satellite.

Conclusion

Outer space offers vast opportunities and risks. The first movers will always enjoy an advantage and reap commercial dividends with their lead in related technology. They may also develop the ability to deny others the same capability. With the improvement in technology, deep space explorations are becoming a reality. The momentum of space activity has gained considerable pace with the entry of private commercial firms. However, any space activity is an expensive business. The space and arms race between USA and USSR led to collapse of the later. Now, 50 years later, India has much grounds to cover. As a self-respecting nation it cannot choose to ignore risks of being left out in the race for outer-space. Additionally, India must build its own capabilities to monitor threat from Near Earth Orbit asteroids striking the Earth on its territory, wherein a small asteroid hit could cause substantial local damage without affecting other parts of the world. The Japanese Space agency (JAXA) has shown its ability to mine and manoeuvre an asteroid. India must also extend its Anti- satellite missile and other capabilities to monitor and counter, or manoeuvre and divert such threats as well. In spite of being a late and slow starter, India has some space feathers in its cap. India must now choose its moves carefully, and exploit its space progress commercially to fund future space projects. India is blessed with a large pool of technically qualified human resource which is educated, multilingual, and has a scientific temperament. India must capitalise on its human resource by encouraging participation of private and public firms for developing indigenous technology for development and fabrication of sophisticated satellites, launch vehicles and space crafts to emerge as one of the leading space faring nations in the world. It must encourage scientific temperament and awareness about utility of space applications among academicians, scholars and media houses through regular interactive and participative programs.

The six nuclear powered nations, who became permanent members of the UN Security Council, had exploited their power and position to dictate biased policies like CTBT and NPT to deny other states the same technological ability. Therefore India should now strive to become a maker of space policies. This can only be achieved by staying technologically and materially ahead in the game, and by gaining strategic dominance in space. While India's space missions must aim to be financially self-sustainable through commercialisation, yet India's space research and ventures should never suffer for want of funds. Human colonisation excursions into outer space, and inter-planetary/exo-solar system colonisation is both imperative and inevitable on account of depleting resources on earth, rising population, pollution, possibility of threat and consequence of nuclear war and an asteroid strike. India will have to play a leading and dominant role in this exercise and firmly establish itself as a leading player in the game. Efforts made by us today will be a proud legacy for tomorrow. We owe this to our future generations.

Legal Article

ICJ Judgement : A Defeat for Pakistan

—Sanjeev Sirohi, Advocate

It is a no brainer that in a major landmark, latest and laudable judgement that has endorsed India's plea that former Indian naval officer Kulbhushan Jadhav's trial under espionage and terror charges in Pakistan violated clearly and blatantly the international law, the International Court of Justice on July 17, 2019 clearly, categorically and convincingly ruled that Pakistan should 'review and reconsider' his conviction and death sentence. The ICJ which is based at the Hague in the Netherlands has also ruled that Pakistan should give the Indian government consular access to Mr. Jadhav, something Pakistan has miserably failed to do in the three years since his arrest, and to stay the execution of his sentence, pending the review process. Very rightly so !

Needless to say, the ICJ in its historic and praiseworthy judgement has very clearly held that the denial of consular access constituted a 'breach' of Article 36 para 1(b) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations which Pakistan is a signatory to, which clearly stipulates that all foreign nationals arrested must be given access to their government or local embassy, and rejected outright Pakistan's counter-claim that the Vienna Convention didn't apply in a case of espionage ! The ICJ also upheld India's contention that the Vienna Convention overrides a 2008 bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan on consular access.

Be it noted, all the 16 Judges of ICJ on the panel unanimously ruled that the ICJ's jurisdiction held over the case. It said that the court "unanimously, finds that it has jurisdiction, on the basis of Article 1 of the Optional Protocol concerning the Compulsory Settlement of Disputes to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 24 April, 1963, to entertain the Application filed by the Republic of India on 8 May, 2017". The judgement which was read out by Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf who was the President of the ICJ at the Peace Palace on July 17, 2019 was decided with 15 judges in favour while only Pakistan's ad-hoc Judge – Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani was the lone dissenter !

What's more, the ICJ specifically ruled that it "finds that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is under an obligation to inform Mr. Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav without further delay of his rights and to provide Indian consular officers access to him in accordance with Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations". Pakistan till now was totally opposed to giving any consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav but now it has no option but to comply ! The ICJ said that the court finds that the 'appropriate reparation in this case consists in the obligation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to provide by the means of its own choosing, effective review and reconsideration of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav so as to ensure that full weight is given to the effect of the violation of the rights set forth in Article 36 of the Convention."

Not stopping here, it added that a "continued stay of execution constitutes an indispensable condition for the effective review and reconsideration of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav. The Court also found that, "by not informing Jadhav without delay of his rights under Article 36, paragraph 1(b) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations", Pakistan 'breached the obligations' incumbent upon it under that provision. It also said that by "not notifying the appropriate consular post of the Republic of India in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan without delay of the detention of Mr. Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav and thereby depriving the Republic of India of the right to render the assistance provided for by the Vienna Convention to the individual concerned, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan breached the obligations incumbent upon it under Article 36, paragraph 1(b), of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations."

It may be recalled that Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav who is a retired Navy officer was arrested on March 3, 2016 and India was informed of this on March 25, 2016, when the Pakistan Foreign Secretary raised the matter with the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad. On that day itself, India sought consular access to Jadhav at the earliest. But Pakistan kept denying on one pretext or the other.

As it turned out, Pakistan claimed that its security forces arrested Jadhav from restive Balochistan province on March 3, 2016 after he reportedly entered from Iran. But India has consistently maintained that Jadhav was kidnapped at gun point from Iran where he had business interests after retiring from the Navy. Later he was falsely charged with terror related activities and espionage !

By all accounts, New Delhi then rightly moved the ICJ in May in 2017 against the 'farcicial trial' by the military court of Pakistan against 48-year-old Jadhav. He was sentenced to death on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017. India had first approached the ICJ on May 8, 2017, for the 'egregious violation' of the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963 by Pakistan by repeatedly denying it consular access to Jadhav.

To put things in perspective, on May 9, 2017, the ICJ asked the two countries to present their arguments and till such time, asked Pakistan from not doing anything. In other words, the ICJ clearly forbade Pakistan from proceeding further with Kulbhushan Jadhav's case any further ! On May 15, the two sides presented their arguments at a public hearing and on May 18, the 10-

member Bench of the ICJ restrained Pakistan from executing Jadhav – until a final verdict.

Truth be told, after written submissions by both sides in mid 2018, the ICJ then fixed oral arguments to be made by representatives from both countries from February 18 to 21, 2019. While India argued on February 18 and 20, Pakistan responded on February 19 and 21. India was represented by former Solicitor General and eminent Supreme Court senior lawyer Harish Salve and Ministry of External Affairs's Joint Secretary (Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran), Deepak Mittal. Pakistan was represented by Anwar Mansoor Khan who is the Attorney General of Pakistan and the legal counsel was Khawar Qureshi.

No doubt, it is quite ostensible that Pakistan could not submit anything concrete to prove before the ICJ which is the United Nations top court that Kulbhushan Jadhav had indulged in some kind of terror activity or spy activity and this alone explains why ICJ too has asked Pakistan to review and reconsider his conviction and death sentence ! Pakistan was thus reduced to a laughing stock in front of the entire world ! If this is not a rap on the knuckles of Pakistan then what else can it be ?

This alone explains why our Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar rightly demanded that Pakistan should respect the International Court of Justice ruling on Kulbhushan Jadhav and release and repatriate the Indian national immediately. He was making a statement on the ICJ landmark ruling slamming Pakistan for violating the Vienna Convention in the Jadhav case. Jaishankar also very rightly minced no words in stating it quite upfront that the ICJ judgement was not only a vindication for India and Jadhav but for all those who believed in the rule of law and the sanctity of international conventions.

Of course, it needs no Albert Einstein to conclude that the Union Foreign Minister's remarks clearly manifest that India will continue to forcefully demand Jadhav's return having rejected allegations of spying levelled against him. While rightly describing the ICJ ruling on Kulbhushan Jadhav as a landmark judgment, the Foreign Minister of India S. Jaishankar rightly said that no forced confession, that too without legal representation and due process, would change the fact that Jadhav was innocent of the charges levelled against him. We all know that India has always maintained that Jadhav was kidnapped by Pakistan in Iran at gun point and made to confess after torturing him to acts of terror in a bid to falsely depict Indian involvement in Balochistan.

To be sure, Foreign Minister S Jaishankar rightly said in Rajya Sabha that, "In 2017, the government made a commitment on the floor of the House to undertake all steps necessary to protect the interest and welfare of Jadhav. The government has made untiring efforts in seeking his release including through legal means in the International Court of Justice. I am sure that the House will join me in appreciating the efforts of all those involved, especially the legal team led by Harish Salve." It is Harish Salve who has single handedly ensured that ICJ rules in India's favour for which the whole nation shall always remain indebted to him and took a token fee of just ₹ 1-! It is again this same Harish Salve who commendably ensured that Lt. Col. Prasad Shrikant Purohit rightly got bail after unlawfully remaining in jail for nearly 9 years without even charge sheet being framed against him as the whole system got after him who is still a serving Army Officer in the Malegaon blast case and is determined to ensure that just like Kulbhushan Jadav, he too gets justice at the earliest ! Very rightly so ! This is the real reason that why Harish salve commands so much of respect in the hearts of each and every Indian !

It also cannot be lost on us that Gautam Bambawale who as India's envoy to Pakistan when Jadhav was arrested had bombarded the Pakistani government with repeated official requests for consular access, thereby creating the right conditions for India's case at the ICJ has said most unequivocally that, "ICJ has clearly ruled that Pakistan must review the case. This implies that the earlier military court proceedings did not give Jadhav due process. So a retrial must take place which must be fairer than earlier, with full consular access and a defence attorney for Jadhav." The ICJ has worked with precedents in the cases of Germany *Vs.* the United States (LaGrand) and Mexico *Vs.* the United States (Avena), and in both these cases it had ruled that the US was in violation of the Vienna Convention and ordered a 'review and reconsideration' of its process !

Put simply, it is quite manifest that Pakistan by terming ICJ's verdict as its own victory is only making a mockery of its ownself ! Who does not know that Pakistan itself is standing on the verge of being declared a terror state and is already in the grey list of Financial Action Task Force and in the October month was retained in the grey list until February 2020 by which time Pakistan has to deliver on all counts to avoid being put in the black list. It is under world pressure that Pakistan recently itself re-opened the Pakistan's airspace, made concessions on Kartarpur corridor and also re-arrested Hafiz Saeed who is the mastermind of 26/11 attack on Bombay ! It goes without saying that the ICJ landmark verdict has admittedly made it enormously difficult for Pakistan to re-impose the death sentence on Jadhav !

Truth be told, in its ruling, the ICJ said that the continued stay of Jadhav's execution was an 'indispensable condition' for the review of his conviction at a forum of Pakistan's choice. Union External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar rightly said that, "We expect Pakistan to implement the directive immediately without any further delay. Pakistan must now grant consular access to Jadhav and conduct an effective review of his case. Each and every point was ruled in favour of India and there is no confusion."

To say the least, former Union Law, Defence and Finance Minister late Arun Jaitley rightly summed up by saying that, "A plain reading of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgement in former naval officer Kulbhushan Jadhav's case shows that India has won on almost all counts. Pakistan lost conclusively before the ICJ. Its farcical process through which the innocent are held guilty stand exposed. The ICJ had given Pakistan

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Constitutional Article

How Much Confusion Over Citizenship Amendment Law and NRC ?

—Vijan Kumar Pandey

The enactment of Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 has created huge controversy. Opposition to the CAA, started in Assam and other NE States engulffed almost the whole country. Stir against the CAA turned violent in NCR Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Gujarat. More than two dozen people died, scores of buses and other public property torched to flame. The opposition parties became successful in their motive and created a wave of fear among Muslims that BJP government has planned to deprive crores of Muslims of their citizenship. Basically CAA seeks to amend definition of illegal migrants for Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Buddhist and Christian immigrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, who lived in India without documentation. The CCA has been challenged in the Supreme Court which declined to stay it.

The CAA, 2019 applies to those who were "forced or compelled to seek shelter in India due to persecution on the ground of religion." It aims to protect such people from proceedings or illegal migration. The cut-off date for citizenship is December 31, 2014. Under the Citizenship Act, 1955, Indian Citizenship is given to those who are born in India or have Indian parentage or have resided in the country for a minimum of 11 years.

In the Citizenship Act, 1955, in section 2, in sub-section (1), in Clause (b), the following proviso has been inserted. Provided that any person belonging to Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian Community from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who entered into India on or before December 31, 2014 and who has been exempted by the Central Government by or under Clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section (3) of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920. or from the application of the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule or order made there under shall not be treated illegal migrant.

The CAA, 2019 has incorporated a sub-section (d) to section 7 which has provision for cancellation of overseas Citizen of India (OCI) registration where the OCI card-holder has violated any provision of the Citizenship Act or any other law in force.

Background of CAB

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was first introduced in the Lok Sabha on July 19, 2016. On August 12, 2016, it was referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee which submitted its report on January 7, 2019. The CAB was introduced in Lok Sabha again on December 9, 2019 and it was passed on December 10, 2019. The CAB was passed by the Rajya Sabha too and got President of India's assent on December 12, 2019.

Opposition to CAA in NE States

There is a feeling among the indigenous tribes that they would have to share their land, economic resources and job opportunities with Hindu refugees who had migrated from Bangladesh and other countries. They are also apprehensive about their indigenous culture which may be vitiated. The local people feel that the entire political demography of the region would change, insecurities abound that they would lose their government jobs to the Hindus who would become new citizens under the CAA. However, the Central government amply made it clear that it would not dilute Article 6 of the Constitution of India and the interests of local and indigenous people of NE States would be protected under the system of 'Inner Line Permit'.

The opposition to CAA in the rest of the country is misguided. It is based purely on the vote bank politics. The CAA has no concern with the citizenship of any citizen of India. The CAA will provide citizenship to those who had fled to India due to severe persecution in their own countries.

It is a well-established fact that any entry of citizens or migrants in any social sphere does not cause harm to any culture. Various global studies and social researches have shown

Inner Line Permit

The Inner Line Permit was introduced by the British government under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 to safeguard the interests of tribals of eastern part of Bengal. This 1873 regulation is also known as ILR or ILP. The Scheduled District Act, 1874 was enforced in hill districts without ILR where ILP was not extended. Subsequently, the whole area was brought under ILR. Under Section 2 of the regulation of 1873, the ILP was only applicable The Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. The Central government extended this provision to Manipur also. Meghalaya Cabinet approved a resolution on December 17, 2019 to bring the state under ILP regime.

- The Inner Line Permit is a legal permission granted to a person who is non-tribal and wants to enter the tribal areas of designated states for tourism or any other purpose.
- He can stay only by the terms and conditions of the permit guaranteed to him and only for the period specified in the permit given to him.
- ILP is a document similar to visa, issued by the Government of India to an Indian citizen for a limited time.
- It was introduced so as to stop outsiders from plundering the wealth in tribal states.
- ILP is issued by the respective states.
- Foreigners need a Protected Area Permit to visit tourist places which are different from Inner Line Permits needed by domestic tourists.

that such migrants contribute to the development of existing societies and communities.

Why Opposition to Citizenship Amendment in North-east ?

It is right that the Citizenship Amendment Act is not for the citizens of India. It is only about giving citizenship of India to the persons of 6 religious minorities from 3 countries. Though the Citizenship Amendment Act is to have an impact across the country, it was opposed in the northeastern states, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. When students started opposing it, its heat reached different universities of the country. In these states, there is a protest against this, that both Muslims and Hindus are allegedly settling in a large number illegally from the neighbouring state of Bangladesh. Opposition is that the current government wants to make it easier for migrant Hindus to take citizenship of India and settle here, in favour of supporting Hindu voters.

What is the Difference Between CAA and NRC ?

The bill which was introduced by the government had two important things - first, granting Indian citizenship to non-Muslim migrants and second, identifying and repatriating illegal foreigners, mostly Muslims. On November 20, Home Minister Amit Shah told the House that his government was going to implement two different citizenship related aspects, one the CAA and the other count of citizens across the country known as the National Citizenship Register or NRC. Amit Shah had said that CAA has provision for granting citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians who came to India before 31 December, 2014 from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan due to religious persecution. He had told that after NRC, the process of identifying illegal residents entering India after 19 July, 1948 and taking them out of the country will be completed. The NRC was originally implemented for Assam on behalf of the Supreme Court. Under this, a register of citizens was issued in the month of August 2019. About 19 lakh people were excluded in the published register. Those who were excluded from this list had to prove their citizenship with valid documents.

Miscalculated the Intensity of Blowback

With tense situation prevailing in north-east states—particularly in Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura-due to protests against the CAA (Citizen Amendment Act), it appears the center miscalculated the intensity of the blowback. North-east states have long been sensitive about migration to their region and fear that the new legislation will endanger their cultural and linguistic identities. Elsewhere as in Bengal where protests have turned violent, CAA is being criticised for unconstitutionally equating citizenship with religion and discriminating against Muslims.

Who is Illegal Migrant ?

- One who has entered India without a valid passport or travel documents.
- One who stays in India for more than his / her time limit.
- To give this benefit, exemption will also have to be given under the Foreigners Act, 1946 and Passport Act, 1920.
- The act of 1920 compels foreigners to keep passports with them.
- The Act of 1946 governs the move-ment of foreigners into India.

Reason of the Ruckus in the North-east

Under the new citizenship law, Hindu-Jain-Buddhist-Christian-Parsi-Sikh refugees from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan will be easy to get citizenship of India, but the north-eastern states are opposing it. In fact, many states of the Northeast say that a large number of people of this community are still staying in their state or area, if they get citizenship now then they will become permanent. This will threaten their culture, language, food and other identity. Some areas / states of the Northeast have been placed in the Inner Line Permit by the Central Government, due to which the citizenship law does not apply there. These include some areas of Manipur, Arunachal, Meghalaya.

So far, a total of 4 states have openly declared not to implement the Citizenship Amendment Act. It includes West Bengal, Punjab, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh. Apart from this, Rajasthan and Maharashtra government have also protested about the Act. However, the Central Government said that it has the right to grant citizenship under the 7th List of the Constitution. In such a situation, no State government can refuse to implement it. The government already has set a cut-off date on 31 December, 2014 to grant citizenship. This means that before this date, all the refugees from 6 religious communities coming from these three countries in India will become claimants of getting citizenship of India by early next year. P.Ranjan

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an opportunity to comply with the rule of law and reform its processes. Will Pakistan use this opportunity or will they squander it ? Pakistan is now under a global gaze as to what direction it follows. The ICJ judgement in this case is a comprehensive victory for India."

Going forward, Harish Salve also very rightly said that, "I see this as a sense of relief, gratification. I see this as something which we are very happy with. It is now the moment for us to help Jadhav to get justice." Pakistan must always remember that ICJ has declared a "continued stay of execution constitutes an indispensable condition for the effective review and reconsideration" of Jadhav's death sentence. Indicating its unhappiness with the opaque judicial process in Pakistan regarding Jadhav, the ICJ said that, "Court considers it imperative to re-emphasise that the review and reconsideration of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav must be effective."

To conclude, Pakistan in its own larger national interest must be gracious enough to concede that Kulbhushan Jadhav was wrongly arrested, wrongly tortured, wrongly framed and wrongly tried. They should initiate the process of setting him free and handing him over to India. This will only serve to smoothen the ruffled feathers in India who are very agitated over India opening Kartarpur Corridor with Pakistan and also help normalize relations between the two countries which will be in Pakistan's own best interests !" P.Ranjan

Growth and Development Article

Performance of India's Power Sector During 2019

Availability of reliable and affordable energy is key for development of any country. Several steps have been taken to reform and strengthen the power sector as a whole including power generation, transmission and distribution. The details of year-long (2019) achievements for Ministry of Power are as below :

1. Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA)

- Launched in September 2017 with the objective to achieve universal household electrification by providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all remaining un-electrified households in rural and urban areas by 31st March, 2019.
- Scheme Outlay : ₹ 16320 crore including GOI Grant of ₹ 12320 crore.
- As on 31st March, 2019, all States reported electrification of all willing households under 'Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana' (Saubhagya), except few households in LWE affected Bastar region of Chhattisgarh.
- Electricity connections to 262·84 lakh households have been released from 11.10.2017 to 31.03.2019.
- Subsequently, seven States reported 19·09 lakh un-electrified households which were unwilling earlier but are now willing to get electricity connection. These households are being electrified by the concerned States and as on 20.12.2019, electricity connections to 7·42 lakh households have been released.

2. Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) (Achievements as on 30.11.2019)

- 100% villages across the country stands electrified as on 28th April, 2018.
- Total Scheme Outlay is ₹ 75893 crore (DDUGJY: ₹ 43033 crore and RE Component : ₹ 32860 crore).
- Projects with total cost of ₹ 43486 crore have been sanctioned in 32 States/UTs.
- Besides above, additional amount of ₹ 14270 crore has been sanctioned for creation of additional infrastructure to support 100% household electrification.

3. Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS)

- Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS) was launched in the year 2014 with an outlay of ₹ 32,612 crore for improving and augmenting the distribution and sub-transmission systems in Urban areas with a view to improve reliability.
- Under the scheme, till Nov. 30, 2019 system strengthening of sub-transmission and distribution network has been in 371 circles. 560 additional urban Towns have been IT-enabled, and about 30,000 kms of HT/LT lines have been installed across 546 circles in the country. 820 new substations have been constructed, while more than 50,000 Distribution transformers have been installed. For better work flow management in the Utilities, IPDS has also funded Enterprise resource planning (ERP) across several Utilities, out of which implementation has been completed in 6 Utilities.
- Under the older projects subsumed under IPDS, till now, 1287 towns have been IT enabled, and SCADA systems have been completed in 57 towns. System strengthening works have been completed in 1195 towns.
- Significant progress has been made under the scheme in the current financial year with the physical progress of IPDS reaching almost 80% in the system strengthening works. The details of the works accomplished under IPDS in new projects in the current financial year are as follows :

4. Smart Metering

- In 2019-20, Ministry of Power has issued guidelines to all States to convert all existing consumer meters into Smart meters in prepaid mode. Operation of Smart meters in prepaid mode would allow consumers to pay as per their own financial convenience and electricity consumption requirements.
- EESL, a JV between CPSUs in the power sector, has been providing Smart metering services to various Utilities as per MOUs entered into with them. EESL has also established innovative financing arrangements for the Smart metering projects that would enable them to provide smart metering services to the DISCOMs without requiring any outright CAPEX funding from the States/Utilities. The recoveries against the funding towards smart metering installations would be taken as a monthly annuity from the Utilities over a period of seven to eight years.
- Apart from installations in NDMC for about 50,000 consumers, EESL has also started installation of Smart meters in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan. Out of these States, the maximum installations are in the State of Uttar Pradesh, where more than 7·78 lakh smart meters have already been deployed across 11 cities.
- More than 9 lakh smart meters have been installed in the state of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, NDMC-Delhi and Andhra Pradesh as detailed below :

5. Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY)

- Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), a scheme for financial and operation turn around of Power Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) was launched by the Government for State owned Distribution Utilities on 20-11-2015 at a time when the outstanding debts and losses of the Distribution utilities had increased to levels that were adversely affecting the viability of the Power and Banking Sectors. The purpose of UDAY was to usher reforms across the Power and coal Sectors through competitive and cooperative federalism to pave the way for 24 × 7 affordable and reliable Power for all.
- UDAY incorporated a slew of measures, including financial re-engineering measures, as well as operational improvement measures. Exemptions were given to the States to borrow outside the FRBM limits in order to enable them to take over 75% of the outstanding debts of DISCOMs, as existing on 30th November, 2015. The scheme had two outcome parameters : (i) AT&C loss reduction to 15%; and (ii) ACS-ARR gap reduction to zero by March 2019. Due to the large scale of problems/challenges in some States, as well as late joining, some States were given extension to complete the turn around process by one or two years.
- UDAY scheme is now in final stages, with majority of states having completed 3 years at the end of FY19. The performance from FY16 to FY18 shows a consistent improvement in AT&C losses, and reduction in annual losses by almost 50% of pre-UDAY times.
- Significant improvements have been observed in terms of reduction in AT&C loss from 20·7% in FY16 to 18·2% in FY19. The lines losses have come down to below the levels of 20%, due to an increase in billing and collection of revenues, reduction in theft, and reduction in technical losses. States like Bihar, Haryana, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir and Manipur have increased the billing efficiency by ~ 8-10%. In many states, like Assam, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, and Meghalaya, collection efficiency has improved by more than 5%.
- Similarly, the gap between ACS and ARR has reduced from 59 paise per unit in FY16 to 27 paise per unit in FY19 due to cost side optimization measures including control in power purchase costs, and reduction in interest costs, and discipline in revision of tariff filings in most of the states.
- The Government of India is formulating additional reform frameworks to buttress the efforts under UDAY to achieve a complete financial and operational turn around of State owned Utilities.

6. Hydro Power

- **16%** higher generation **(120·7 BU)** in 2019-20 (April ~ Nov.) from generation **(103·9 BU)** in 2018-19 (April ~ Nov.).
- Mangdechhu hydropower project **(720 MW)** in Bhutan commissioned in August 2019 and inaugurated by Prime Minister on 17.08.2019.
- CCEA approval of ₹ 1600 crore in July 2019 for pre-investment activities of NHPC's Dibang Multipurpose **(2880 MW)** project in Arunachal Pradesh, the largest hydropower project to be initiated in the country.
- Revival of Subansiri Lower **(2000 MW)** project in Arunachal Pradesh, the largest under construction hydropower project, which was stalled since December 2011 due to local unrest and NGT case, has been re-started after NGT case was dismissed on 31.07.2019 and local issues were resolved.
- Revival of Teesta-VI **(500 MW)** project in Sikkim, which was stalled since December 2012 through NHPC's take over of the project through NCLT bidding.
- On the advice of the Central Govt., the state governments of hydro-rich states of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh have provided relaxations to reduce tariff of hydropower projects.
- Jammu & Kashmir has deferred free power, exempted water cess for 10 years and have given exemptions from local taxes to Kiru and Kwar Projects.
- Himachal Pradesh has also deferred free power, agreed for 50% reimbursement of State GST and for booking 1·5% LADF to any head other than project cost, BOOT/ BOOM for 70 years etc. with an objective to bring down hydro tariff below ₹ 4·5 per unit. On these lines, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh signed agreements with 3 CPSUs *viz.* NTPC, NHPC and SJVN for setting up **10** hydropower projects of **2917 MW** on Chenab river entailing an investment of about ₹ 28,000 crore.

7. One Nation-One Grid-One Frequency

- Expansion of ISTS transmission lines (220 kV and above) by 14,546 km.
- Transformation capacity addition of ISTS network by 74,910 MVA.
- Inter-Regional Transfer capacity of addition of 5,700 MW.

8. Maharatna Status Public Sector Companies of Power Sector

- National Thermal Power Corporation.
- Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd.
- Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) has been conferred with the coveted Maharatna status by the Government of India on 23.10.2019.

9. Power Rail Koyla Availability through Supply Harmony (PRAKASH) Portal

PRAKASH portal was launched on 03.10.2019. On a single platform, the following information will be available :

- *Coal company* : Stocks and the coal requirement at power stations
- *Indian Railways* : Actual coal available at siding.
- *Power stations* can plan future schedule by knowing rakes in pipe line and expected time of receipt.

Continued on Page 114

Disaster Article

Australia's Wildfires : A Global Concern

—Dhiraj Pandey

Why in News ?

Australia is being ravaged by the worst wildfires seen in decades, with large swaths of the country devastated since the fire season began in July 2019. At least 28 people have died nationwide, and in the state of New South Wales (NSW) alone, more than 3,000 homes have been destroyed or damaged. State and federal authorities are struggling to contain the massive blazes, even with fire fighting assistance from other countries. All this has been exacerbated by persistent heat and drought, and many point to climate change as a factor making natural disasters go from bad to worse.

Introduction

Wildfire has been a potent force in Australia for tens of millions of years. Forests and woodlands, grasslands and deserts were forged in the flames that periodically razed the landscape after lightning strikes. Their heat cast our ecosystems and the remarkable species that inhabit them.

Indigenous Australians, arriving around 60,000 years ago, soon came to understand the power and price of wildfires. Their complex fire management techniques varied from the tropical woodlands of the Kimberley, across the spinifex grasslands of the central deserts to the cool temperate rainforests of Tasmania. Some ecosystems they burnt regularly, others rarely, to maintain food resources, allow movement, and as part of cultural obligations. It reflected their intimate understanding of country and respect for its many interdependent elements.

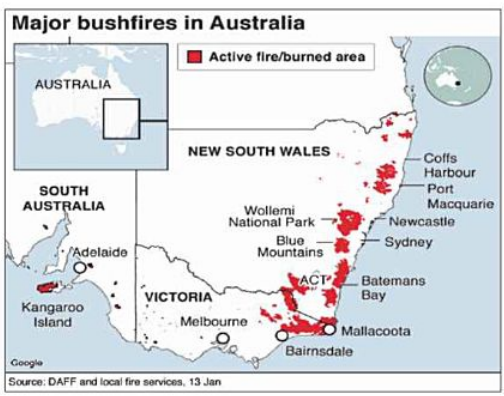
Land management has changed significantly since European settlement. Many feral species and weeds have been introduced, clearing for agriculture has accelerated dramatically and the role of controlled burning in land management has gradually diminished.

The frequency and extent of large, intense, late-season fires is one of the biggest threats to natural and cultural values across northern Australia. The fires can kill mature trees, rob ecosystems of their vegetation diversity, and reduce food resources for wildlife. The loss of healthy mature woodlands and grasslands has been implicated in the decline of goannas, snakes, seed-eating birds such as the Gouldian finch, and some mammals. Traditional Owners understand the benefits of re-instituting 'right-way' fire. Lighting low-intensity fires at the beginning of the dry season has only a patchy impact on under storey vegetation. It creates a mosaic of burnt and unburnt areas that reduces the severity of subsequent lightning strike fires.

Fire management of the kind practiced for thousands of years by Traditional Owners is a key to the conservation of the north. It's critical to the future health of these ecosystems and the species that depend on them.

Range of Devastation

- There have been fires in every Australian state, but New South Wales (NSW) has been hardest hit.
- Blazes have torn through bush land, wooded areas, and national parks like the Blue Mountains.
- Some of Australia's largest cities have also been affected, including Melbourne and Sydney—where fires have damaged homes in the outer suburbs and thick plumes of smoke have blanketed the urban centres.
- South Australia's Kangaroo Island experienced some of the worst conditions in early January, with a third of the island ablaze.
- Some regions of the country recorded air quality measurements 20 times above the hazardous level.
- The fires range in area from small blazes—isolated buildings or part of a neighbourhood to massive infernos that occupy entire hectares of land.
- About 77,000 square miles—an area the size of Nebraska—was at risk of burning in New South Wales state alone.
- Already, more than 11,500 square miles have burned in the state, an area larger than Massachusetts.



What is the Connection to Climate Change ?

A greenhouse gas cannot start a fire on its own. Bushfires aren't *started* by climate change, but they are exacerbated by the effects of global warming. The Climate Council, an independent, community-funded climate organization, suggests bushfire conditions are now more dangerous than they were in the past, with longer bushfire seasons, drought, drier fuels and soils and record-breaking heat. The link between bushfires and climate change has become a political football, but experts agree climate change explains the unprecedented nature of the current crisis.

Notably, Australia experienced its hottest year on record in 2019, climbing 1·5 degrees Celsius higher than the average, according to a report by the Bureau of Meteorology. Rising temperatures increase the risk of bushfire, and in November 2019, Sydney experienced a catastrophic fire danger for the first time ever.

There is also a horrifying feedback loop that occurs when great swaths of land are ablaze, a fact the globe grappled with during the Amazon fires of 2019. Bushfires release carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, into the atmosphere. The gas, which makes up only a small percentage of the total gases in the atmosphere, is exceptionally good at trapping heat. In just three months, Australia's fires are estimated to have released 350 million metric tons of carbon dioxide. Experts warn a century or more will be needed to absorb the carbon dioxide released.

Reasons Behind Fires

- Australia is a continent familiar with bushfires, bushfire management and the importance of fires in regenerating the land. The indigenous people who have lived across the island continent for tens of thousands of years have long known the importance of fire management and how it contributes to the health of ecosystems.
- Bushfires are a well-understood threat, but the fires now burning across the nation have been described as 'unprecedented' in their ferocity and scale.
- Fires can start in a number of ways from carelessly discarded cigarettes to lightning strikes and arson—but they're fuelled by a dizzying amount of factors.
- A lack of rain and low soil moisture can help enable small fires to grow in size, and coupled with the high temperatures and fierce winds that Australia has experienced in the last few months, these small fires can become huge infernos.
- In addition, with the fire season getting longer, the window to perform critical hazard reduction burns has decreased, giving fires a chance to really take hold.
- Each year there is a fire season during the Australian summer, with hot, dry weather making it easy for blazes to start and spread.
- Natural causes are to blame most of the time, like lightning strikes in drought-affected forests.
- Dry lightning was responsible for starting a number of fires in Victoria's East Gippsland region in December 2019, which then travelled more than 20 kilometres (12·4 miles) in just five hours.
- Humans can also be to blame. NSW police have charged at least 24 people with deliberately starting bushfires, and have taken legal action against 183 people for fire-related offences since November, 2019.

Deadly Fallouts

- Fire season in Australia is always dangerous—the 2009 Black Saturday fires killed 173 people in Victoria, making it the deadliest bushfire disaster on record. But conditions have been unusually severe this year, fanning the flames and making fire fighting conditions particularly difficult.
- Australia is experiencing one of its worst droughts in decades—the country's Bureau of Meteorology said in December, 2019 that last spring was the driest on record.
- Meanwhile, a heat wave in December, 2019 broke the record for highest nationwide average temperature, with some places sweltering under temperatures well above 40 degrees Celsius (about 113-120 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Strong winds have also made the fires and smoke spread more rapidly, and have led to fatalities—a 28-year-old volunteer firefighter died in NSW in December after his truck rolled over in high winds.

Fire Clouds : Scientists Warn the Erratic Weather Phenomenon

- The bushfires in Australia are now so big that they are generating their own weather, in the form of giant thunderstorms that start more fires, according to the Bureau of Meteorology in Victoria.
- A pyrocumulonimbus storm combines smoke and fire with the features of a violent thunderstorm. Pollutants from these storms are funneled into the stratosphere.
- A pyrocumulonimbus cloud formation is seen from a plane as bush fires continue in New South Wales, Australia, on Jan. 4, 2020.
- Pyrocumulonimbus cloud is a type of cumulonimbus cloud that forms above a source of heat, such as a wildfire or volcanic eruption, and may sometimes even extinguish the fire that formed it. It is the most extreme manifestation of a flammagenitus cloud.
- Intense fires generate smoke, obviously. But their heat can also create a localized updraft powerful enough to create its own changes in the atmosphere above. As the heat and smoke rise, the cloud plume can cool off, generating a large, puffy cloud full of potential rain. The plume can also scatter embers and hot ash over a wider area.
- Eventually, water droplets in the cloud condense, generating a down-burst of rain—maybe. But the 'front' between the calm air outside the fire zone and a pyrocumulonimbus storm cloud is so sharp that it also generates lightning—and that can start new fires.
- If powerful enough, a pyro-cumulonimbus storm can generate a fire tornado, which happened during the Canberra bushfires in 2003.
- Scientists worry that 'pyroCbs'are on the rise around the world, driven by warmer temperatures and more intense fires.
- Their plumes are so strong that they can even shoot smoke into the stratosphere, 6 to 30 miles above the Earth's surface.

Challenging Situation for Wildlife and Biodiversity	
Immediate loss of biodiversity	• Scientists fear an immediate loss of biodiversity in Australia, because many species are endemic to the continent. • The fires are proving deadly for Australian wildlife. • An estimated 1 billion animals have been killed so far. But this number doesn't include frogs, invertebrates, or bats. Invertebrates, which include insects, earthworms, snails, could be dying by the trillions. • Many species call Australia their only home, making the threat to their habitat particularly worrisome. • The Kangaroo Island glossy black cockatoo was rebounding from near extinction in Australia, up from about 150 individuals in 1995 to nearly 400 in 2019. But the fire on Kangaroo Island destroyed the majority of the birds' habitats and singular food source, seeds from the drooping she-oak. • An endemic species of velvet worm may also be threatened. Their home in one of Australia's national parks has been badly affected by the fires. • The fires have pushed at least 20 threatened species closer to extinction. • Threatened species in Australia sometimes number in the hundreds, and areas that rarely burn went up in flames this year. • Fires on Kangaroo Island have burnt the entire known range of the critically endangered Kl dunnart.
Debris from the fires could threaten water supplies	• Rain and cooler temperatures could help tamp down the blazes. But too much rain, falling too heavily, could spell disaster for Australia's water supplies. • Ash, soot, and charred vegetation could clog up streams, dams, and beaches, leading to blooms of algae and threatening water quality. • Warragamba Dam outside Sydney is one cause for concern: • The dam supplies water for 3.7 million people, but 80%–90% of the catchment area has burned. If heavy rains wash off burned forests in the areas, a torrent of sooty material could choke up its waters and lead to blooms of cyanobacteria. • The blooms may turn water in the Warragamba musty or earthy and exacerbate low water supplies that are already at less than half the dam's capacity. • Fish and other aquatic life will be more at the mercy of the rains, however. • Particles of ash could also lodge themselves in the gills of fish or gag filter feeders like mussels.
Ecosystems may grow back differently	• Animals are hungry and ecosystems may grow back differently. • Many animals couldn't outrun the blazes because the wildfires moved quickly and burned hotter than normal. Drought and high temperatures fanned the flames. • The lucky animals that did survive face a new reality. Their food sources have gone up in smoke. • As fire eradicated vegetation on the rocky habitat of brush-tailed rock wallabies in New South Wales, the government air-dropped thousands of carrots and sweet potatoes to supplement the marsupials' diet. Hungry predators are also a risk to survivors. • Plant opportunists may take root in the burned landscape as well. faster-growing and weedier species may dominate landscapes previously forested, and invasive species could move in.
Circumnavigating the planet and ratcheting up carbon dioxide emissions	• Smoke from the fires is circumnavigating the planet and ratcheting up carbon dioxide emissions. • Smoke billowing from the fires is making its way around the planet, injecting aerosols in the upper atmosphere and increasing carbon dioxide emissions. • Measurements of the ultraviolet aerosol index by NASA satellites in first week of January 2020 ,showed aerosol values at some of the highest levels ever recorded. • Larger aerosol values indicate that the smoke is sitting high up in the atmosphere in a layer called the stratosphere. • Large pyrocumulonimbus storms above the fires in Australia are acting like chimneys, shooting smoke high into the air as if they were volcanic eruptions or nuclear explosions. • Meanwhile, the fires are also spitting out vast amounts of carbon dioxide, one of the greenhouse gases responsible for global climate change. • The fires have already released enough carbon dioxide to rival Australia's annual human-caused emissions: An estimated 400 million tons of carbon have been released from the fires. Last year, Australia emitted roughly 540 million tons from human sources. • But all the carbon dioxide emitted from the fires may not stay in the atmosphere. Fires are thought to be carbon neutral because forests suck in carbon to regrow. But climate change may limit how well forests can grow back.
Caramelized snow darkened by soot	• The fires are raining soot on New Zealand's glaciers, which could speed up melt: • A view of the Franz Josef Glacier in New Zealand revealed another consequence of the fires: "caramelized" snow darkened by soot. • White snow has a high albedo and reflects sunlight at a relatively high rate. The darker the colour the snow is, however, the lower the albedo will dip, and the more heat the glacier absorbs. • The country is in the middle of summer, so although the high glaciers may get a new coat of snow soon, the lower glaciers might not get one until March. • New Zealand's glaciers are already dwindling because of warming temperatures : Last year, more than half of the largest glaciers in the country lost snow from the previous winter and previous years, in some cases. the glaciers have lost a third of their snow and ice volume since the 1970s.

MAGNET BRAINS

- Experts say climate change has worsened the scope and impact of natural disasters like fires and floods; weather conditions are growing more extreme, and for years, the fires have been starting earlier in the season and spreading with greater intensity.

Impact of Devastation

- Entire towns have been engulfed in flames, and residents across several states have lost their homes.
- The heaviest structural damage occurred in NSW, the country's most populated state, where 1,588 homes have been destroyed and over 650 damaged.
- In total, more than 7·3 million hectares (17·9 million acres) have been burned across Australia's six states—an area larger than the countries of Belgium and Denmark combined.
- The worst-affected state is NSW, with more than 4·9 million hectares (12·1 million acres) burned.
- To put that into perspective, the 2019 Amazon rainforest fires burned more than 7 million hectares (about 17·5 million acres), according to Brazilian officials.
- In California, which is known for its deadly wildfires, just over 100,000 hectares (247,000 acres) burned in 2019, and about 404,680 hectares (1 million acres) in 2018.

Action Taken So Far

State and federal authorities have been working to combat the fire crisis for months.

Early in January, Victoria declared a state of disaster and NSW declared a state of emergency—both granting extraordinary powers and additional government resources to battle the fires. The state of Queensland also briefly declared a state of emergency in November.

There are more than 2,000 firefighters working on the ground in NSW alone, and more support is on the way—the US, Canada, and New Zealand have sent additional firefighters to help.

The federal government has also sent in military assistance like army personnel, air force aircraft, and navy cruisers for firefighting, evacuation, search and rescue, and clean-up efforts.

The Prime Minister earlier said up to $ 4,200 will go to each of the volunteer firefighters battling blazes for more than 10 days. Other relief measures include compensated pay and extra leave for volunteer firefighters.

Unfortunately, Australia is only about halfway through its summer season. Normally, temperatures peak in January and February, meaning the country could be months away from finding relief.

The fires are unlikely to end entirely since they are an annually occurring event and may even get worse if recent years are a guide.

Bhargavi

Test Your Knowledge

Answers with Hints

1. (A) "Jingle Mail", a colloquial term, is used of the sound of the keys turned in by former homeowners whose homes were repossessed by banks in the USA in 2008-09.
2. (A) Effective rate of income tax in India was 97·75% in the year 1973-74.
3. (B) The term 'bail-in' refers to bondholders who are either not paid or partly paid off in the event of a company's financial decline. On such occasions, bondholders are accorded similar treatment as shareholders.
4. (C) National Tribal Dance Festival 2019 was organized from December 27-29 in Raipur, the state capital of Chhattisgarh. The festival was inaugurated by Rahul Gandhi. More than 1300 participants from 25 States/UTs and Bangladesh, Thailand, Uganda, Belarus, Maldives and Sri Lanka participated in the festival.
5. (A) The famous battle of Khanwa (1527), a village 60 kms away from Agra, was fought between Babar and Rana Sanga. Babar defeated a formidable army raised by Rana Sanga of Mewar in this battle and firmly established his rule over North India.
6. (B) In the battle of Wandiwash (1760) the French forces were finally defeated by the forces of East India Company.
7. (A) Thousands of ryots refused to grow Indigo—a commercial crop in Bengal in 1859 AD. In 1860, the peasants of Patna and Nadia districts refused to pay rents to the planters and attacked factories. Paharia revolt broke out in 1772 AD while the Bhunji revolt during 1832 to 1832 AD. Mopla rebelled in 1921 in Malabar region in Kerala.
8. (D) The Forward Bloc of the Indian National Congress was formed on May 3, 1939 by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who had resigned from the presidency of the Indian National Congress on 29 April, 1939 after being outmanoeuvered by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.
9. (B) Permanent Settlement was introduced by the Governor General of Bengal Lord Cornwallis in the year 1793. Basically the settlement was between the East India Company and landlords of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. The land revenue was fixed for 5 years.
10. (B) Lord Ripon is known to have granted the Indians first taste of freedom by introducing the Local Self Government in 1882. His scheme of local self government developed the Municipal institutions which had been growing up in the country ever since India was occupied by the British Crown.
11. (C) The 10th Schedule to the Indian Constitution, that is popularly referred to as the 'Anti-Defection Law' was inserted in the Constitution of India by the Fifty-second Amendment to the Constitution (1985).
12. (C) Section 2(1)(b) of CAA, 2019 says, "any person belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian community from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who entered into India

on or before the 31st day of December, 2014 and who has been exempted by the Central Government by or under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 or from the application of the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule or order made there under, shall not be treated as illegal migrant for the purposes of this Act."

13. (B) With the enactment of Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Act, 2019 total number of Union Territories in India was 8, *viz.*, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Jammu & Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Ladakh, NCR Delhi, and Puducherry.
14. (C) The inner line permit (ILP) regime was extended to Manipur on December 11, 2019. Manipur is the fourth state after Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram where the ILP regime is applicable. To visit the ILP-regime states, outsiders, including people from other states of the country, need to take permission.
15. (B) Rule of East India Company was replaced by British Crown under Government of India Act, 1858.
16. (D) The Indian Constitution empowers the Supreme Court to issue writs for enforcement of any of the fundamental rights conferred by Part III of Indian Constitution under **Article 32**. Similary High Courts in India are also empowered to issue writs for the enforcement of any of the rights conferred by Part III and for any other purpose. There are five types of Writs - *Habeas Corpus, Mandamus, Prohibition, Certiorari and Quo warranto.*
17. (A)
18. (C) Tectonic Islands are created by the movements in the Earth's crust. Barbados in West Indies and Kodiak Island near Alaska were formed by tectonic movements of earth's crust. St. Helena is an oceanic Island that rises from the bosom of the ocean.
19. (B) The Son (Sone) originates near Amarkantak in Anuppur district of Madhya Pradesh, just east of the headwater of the Narmada River, and flows north-northwest through Shahdol district in Madhya Pradesh state before turning sharply eastward where it encounters the south-west-northeast—Kaimur Range. Other three rivers are also the tributaries of the Ganges and originate from the Himalayas.
20. (A) The wasting or consuming of snow and ice from the surface of an ice-sheet or glacier is called ablation. It involves melting, sublimation, abration.
21. (C) Jim Corbett National Park is the oldest national park in India and was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park to protect the endangered Bengal tiger. It is located in Nainital district and Pauri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand and was named after Jim Corbett, a well known hunter and naturalist. The park was the first to come under the Project Tiger initiative.
22. (C) NH 19 connects Agra and Kolkata (1279 kms); NH 27 connects Porbandar and Silchar (3300 kms); NH 44 connects Srinagar and Kanyakumari (3745 kms) and NH 59 connects Khariar and Brahmapur (351 kms).
23. (C) With the advent of the Buddhism and Jainism, which were part of Shramana tradition, in the 4th century BCE, the religious and social scenario of gangetic valley began to undergo changes.
24. (A) Akbar took keen interest in the development of art and architecture during his reign. Tudor arch concept was introduced during his rule. Agra fort, Fatehpur Sikari, were constructed by Akbar.
25. (D) Allahabad pillar inscription associated with Samudragupta is a historical document of the Gupta age. Harisena there praises Samudragupta and lists the extent of empire that he built during his rule.
26. (A) Kishangarh was a princely state in Rajasthan ruled by Sawant Singh who patronised painting depicting his love to his beloved Bani Thani. The Kishangrh paintings depict interwinging of lives and myths, romance and bhakti.
27. (C) Japanese weavers produce very accurate indigo and white weft ikat with small scale motifs in cotton. Weavers in Odisha, India have replicated fine Urdu script in weft ikat. In Thailand, weavers make silk sarongs depicting birds and complex geometrical designs in seven-colour weft ikat.
28. (C)
29. (C) Agriculture Price Commission was set up on January 8, 1965; Food Corporation of India was set up on January 14, 1965 while NABARD was set up on July 12,1982.
30. (A) The land ownership system of India during the British rule was against the peasants and real farmers. Zamindaars were the legal owners of the agricultural land. They collected the land revenue from the farmers and shared the same with the government without doing anything. Indian National Congress made this a prominent issue in the freedom movement. Zamindaari Abolition Act was passed in 1952 and the ownership of farming land was transferred to the real farmers. Although other land reforms were also introduced in the country yet no significant achievement has been noticed.
31. (D) 32. (D) 33. (B) 34. (C) 35. (B)
36. (A) 37. (A) 38. (C) 39. (D)
40. (A) Carcinoma is a cancer arising in the epithelial tissue of the skin or of the lining of the internal organs.

Compendium

Indian Polity and Constitution

★ Which Article of the Constitution of India deals with the Sessions of Parliament, prorogation and dissolution ? —**Article 85**

★ Jurisdiction and powers of the Federal Court under existing law to be exercisable by the Supreme Court is under —**Article135**

★ Article 1 of the Indian Constitution describes India as a —**Union of States**

★ Who have been placed on ninth rank on the table of rank and precedence of the persons of India ?
—**Judges of Supreme Court**

★ Which Schedule of the Indian Constitution deals with the disqualification on ground of defection ?
—**10th Schedule**

★ All executive actions of the Government of India are formally taken in the name of
—**The President of India**

★ When the President neither ratifies nor rejects nor returns the Bill passed by the both houses of Parliament and keeps it for an indefinite period, it is called —**The Pocket Veto of the President**

★ Which Constitutional amendment was also referred to as the Mini Constitution of India ?
—**42nd amendment**

★ Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh carry the similar number of representatives in the Rajya Sabha. They are
—**11 members in each state**

★ A Money Bill cannot be introduced in
—**The Rajya Sabha**

Indian National Movement

★ Rabindranath Tagore gave up his 'Knighthood' because of
—**Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy**

★ Which freedom fighter is popularly known as the 'Heroine of the 1942 Movement' ?
—**Aruna Asaf Ali**

★ Who was the British Governor-General of India at the time of announcement of MacDonald's Communal Award ? —**Lord Willingdon**

★ Which great nationalist leader wrote 'Gita Rahasya' during his imprisonment in Mandalay jail ?
—**Lokmanya Bal Gangathar Tilak**

★ When was Congress Socialist Party formed ?
—**1934**

★ How many delegates attended the first session of the Indian National Congress in 1885 ?
—**72 delegates**

★ Which freedom fighter edited 'The Dawn of India' (an English daily) and 'Dainik Basumati' (a Bengali daily) ? —**Barindra Kumar Ghosh**

★ Who invited Mahatma Gandhi to Champaran to lead the movement against the oppression of the indigo cultivators ? —**Raj Kumar Shukla**

★ Pandit Motilal Nehru remained the President of the Indian National Congress twice in
—**1919 and 1928**

★ Who edited the 'Commonweal' and 'New India' papers ? —**Annie Besant**

History and Culture of India

★ Which emperor of ancient India renounced the worldly affairs and went to South India with Jain Monk Bhadrabahu ? —**Chandragupta Maurya**

★ In which Jain text does the list of 16 Mahajanapadas of ancient India occur ? —**Bhagvati Sutra**

★ Which Wariyam was associated with the garden administration during the Chola age ?
—**Tott Wariyam**

★ Which Sultan of Delhi did great work in Canal Construction and irrigation field ?
—**Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq**

★ Birbal used to compose poems under the penname of
—**Brahm**

★ Guru Angadji's childhood name was
—**Lehna**

★ Who is the writer of a famous travelogue 'Rihla' in Arabic ? —**Ibn Battuta**

★ Mahatma Buddha's renunciation of his family and home in search of truth is called
—**Mahabhinishkramana**

★ Revenue and Finance Minister in Shivaji's Ashtapradhan was known as
—**Majumdar (Amatya)**

★ Which British Governor-General is popularly known as the 'Father of the local self-government' ?
—**Lord Ripon**

Economic Affairs of India

★ Who became the FICCI President for 2019-20 ?
—**Dr. Sangita Reddy**

★ What is India's rank on the UNDP's Human Development Index, 2019 ? —**129th rank**

MAGNIFICENT

★ What is India's rank on the WEF's Gender Gap Report, 2020 ? **—112th rank**

★ What is the total forest cover in India as per India State of Forest Report, 2019 ? **—7, 12, 249 sq. km**

★ Which State retained its top position in terms of development on NITI Aayog's SDG India Index, 2019 ? **—Kerala**

★ What is the full form of EPCG ? **—Export Promotion Capital Goods**

★ Who determines the minimum support price in India for crops ? **—The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices**

★ National Consumer Day is observed on **—December 24**

★ Where is the headquarters of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) ? **—Hyderabad**

★ The largest source of national income in India is **—Service sector**

Geography (India and the World)

★ Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets are the examples of **—Continental glaciers**

★ Relationship between visibility and wind direction is expressed by **—Wind-rose**

★ Sea fog is are very common in the **—High latitudes**

★ The hills situated closer to Kanyakumari are **—Cardamom hills**

★ Kariba dam has been built on the river **—Zambezi**

★ The Indian sub-continent was originally part of a huge landmass called **—Gondwana Continent**

★ Which rock system provides most of the coal of India ? **—Gondwana rock system**

★ Raniganj coal mines are located in **—West Bengal**

★ Which current mainly helps in the formation of the Sargasso sea ? **—Antilles current**

★ The mountain range lying between Pamir plateau and the Indus river is **—Karakoram**

Science & Technology

★ Which vitamin is essential for utilization and retention of calcium and phosphorous ? **—Vitamin D**

★ The HIV weekens the immunity of a person because it destroys **—Lymphocytes**

★ The pressure exerted by a 760 mm column of mercury at 0°C is known as **—01 atmosphere**

★ 'Altitude sickness' is caused at high altitude due to **—Low partial pressure of oxygen**

★ Loss of the ability of an eye to focus on near and far objects with advancing age is called **—Presbyopia**

★ Which defect arises due to difference in the radius of curvature of cornea in the different planes ? **—Astigmatism**

★ 'Sleeping sickness' is a parasitic disease caused by **—Trypanosoma**

★ Bats detect obstacles in their path by receiving the reflected **—Ultrasonic waves**

★ The study of cells specially their formation, structure and functions is called **—Cytology**

★ A person presses the earth least when he is **—Lying on the ground**

Agriculture

★ 'Dolomite powder' is applied in some agricultural lands. Its purpose is to **—Increase the pH of the soil**

★ 'DAPOG' is a process of **—Nursery raising of rice**

★ 'Bordeaux mixture', used as fungicide spray on crop, is a mixture of **—Copper sulphate, lime and water**

★ Dwarfness in sugarcane is caused by **—Virus**

★ Chlorosis in plants occurs due to deficiency of **—Nitrogen and Magnesium**

★ Inflorescence of sugarcane is called **—Arrow**

★ Ricyness in cauliflower develops due to application of excess **—Nitrogen and higher relative humidity**

★ 'Suprabha' and 'Surbhi' are varieties of **—Ginger**

★ 'Mauritius' and 'Poovan' are varieties of **—Banana**

★ Red colour in 'Chilli' is caused due to **—Capcyanthin**

Environment, Biodiversity, Climate Change etc.

★ 'Centre of Environmental Management of Degraded Ecosystem' is located in **—Delhi**

★ Centre for Ecological Science is located in **—Bengaluru**

★ Most sensitive creature category to environmental change is **—Amphibian**

★ Which eminent climate change activist was named 'Time Person of the year for 2019' ? **—Greta Thunberg**

★ Who is the author of the book 'Climate and Evolution' ? **—W.D. Mathew**

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★ The size of the Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (R.S.P.M.) in air is
—Less than 5 microne

★ Which greenhouse gas is emitted from landfills and wetlands ? **—Methane**

★ Who is the author of the book 'Tomorrow's Biodiversity' ? **—Dr. Vandana Sharma**

★ Gugamal National Park is located in
—Maharashtra

★ Betla National Park is located in
—Jharkhand

Communication

★ Learner communication has relatively high potential of challenging
—Long-held attitudes

★ Effective classroom communication can transform
—Teaching-learning process

★ In which level does communication in the classroom take place ? **—Surfacial**

★ The credibility of mediated message is attributed to
—Expertness of the source

★ Reading television programmes is a process of
—Negotiation

★ Delayed feedback can take place in intrapersonal communication because of **—Optical illusion**

★ An assemblage of audience will help to create
—Synchronous media

★ Who gave the circular model of communication ?
—Wilbur Schramm

★ The who-to-who communication matrix within the total system is labelled as **—Network analysis**

★ Non-verbal communication is done through
—Moral codes

Education and Child Psychology

★ Language or word is not necessary for
—Imaginative thinking

★ Single factor theory of intelligence was given by
—Alfred Binet

★ Who is the father of "Theory of multiple intelligence"
—Gardner

★ The best place for social development for a 12 years old child is
—playground

★ Sign of creative child is his/her
—creativity

★ The raw material of thinking is
—Symbols

★ How many stages of cognitive development are recommended by Piaget
—Four stages

★ Smallest unit of meaning in language is
—Morpheme

★ The process of expansion of an individual's capacities quantitatively should be termed as
—Development

★ Teaching-learning process is fundamentally completed in **—classroom**

Sports and Games

★ Which country hosted the 13th South Asian Games, 2019 ? **—Nepal**

★ Which Indian cricketer was named captain of Wisden's Test Team of the decade (Men's) ?
—Virat Kohli

★ Which team emerged champion of the FIFA Club World Cup, 2019 ? **—Liverpool**

★ Who emerged champion of the Women's World Rapid Chess Championship, 2019 ?
—Koneru Humphy

★ Who was adjudged the BWF Male Player of the year for 2019 ? **—Kento Momota**

★ Ballon d'or honour is associated with the game of
—Football

★ Barabati Stadium is located in **—Cuttack**

★ 'Ashleigh Barty', 'Naomi Osaka' and 'Simona Halep' are eminent sportswomen associated with the game of **—Lawn Tennis**

★ Which country emerged the overall champion of the 13th South Asian Games, 2019 ? **—India**

★ How many players are there in a team of polo ?
—Four

Miscellany

★ Where was the first-ever Global Refugee Forum organised in 2019 ? **—Geneva**

★ A mobile phone charger is
—A step down transfomer

★ Who was crowned Miss World, 2019 ?
—Toni-Ann Singh from Jamaica

★ Who was crowned Miss Universe, 2019 ?
—Zozibini Tunzi of South Africa

★ 'Nautanki', 'Raslila', 'Kajri', 'Chappeli', 'Jaita' are popular folk dances of
—Uttar Pradesh

★ National Disaster Management Authority is an agency of the
—Union Home Ministry

★ Who is the author of the book 'The Origin of Species' ? **—Darwin**

★ Who has become India's first Chief of Defence Staff
—General Bipin Rawat

★ International Girl Child Day is observed on
—October 11

★ International Day of Yoga is observed on
—June 21

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Important Concepts in News

Art and Culture

Kala Ghoda Arts Festival

Kala Ghoda Arts Festival, known as India's oldest street festival for arts, theatre and cinema, has launched a crowdfunding campaign to organise the 21st edition of the event. The festival has an international reputation and has witnessed an increase in people's participation manifold over the years. For the first time in their 20-year history, the festival organiser, Kala Ghoda Association, has invited people across the country to raise funds through a crowdfunding platform due to a lack of sponsors. This year, marking the twentieth edition, the festival will be held from 2nd February to 10th February, 2020.

Key Facts :

- The nine-day long festival is a prominent attraction for thousands of visitors from all over the country as well as from the world.
- Kala Ghoda festival is held annually in the months of January or February in the Kala Ghoda region of Southern Mumbai.
- The Kala Ghoda festival is organised by Kala Ghoda Association which was formed in 1998 with the aim to maintain and preserve the heritage and art district of South Mumbai.
- The festival is named after the blackish equestrian statue of Edward VII which used to be located in the fort area of Mumbai.
- Though this festival is renowned as art festival, its main highlight is that it is a street festival.
- Since its inception in 1999, this festival has become the largest ethnic and multicultural festival of the city.
- It has managed to grow by leaps and bounds through the years and has drawn over hundreds and thousands of people from the city and from the country.
- There are twelve sections of the festival including visual arts, cinema, dance, theatre, music, workshops, literature, urban design and architecture, food, street section, heritage walks and a section for children.

Dhanu Jatra Festival

The famous 11-day long 'Dhanu Jatra', considered as the largest open-air theatre of the world was held at Bargarh in western Odisha on Dec 31, 2019.

Key Facts :

- Dhanu Jatra is the annual drama-based open-air theatrical performance celebrated in and around Bargarh city.
- It is considered to be the world's largest open-air theatrical festival that finds a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.
- The Jatra is based on the mythological story of Lord Krishna and his demon uncle King Kansa.
- It is about the episode of Krishna and Balaram's visit to Mathura to witness the Dhanu ceremony organized by their (maternal) uncle King Kansa.
- The rule of Kansa symbolizes an oppressive rule and the coronation of Ugrasen marks the beginning of democracy.
- The annual festival came into being in 1947-48 to celebrate India's Independence and to symbolize the victory of good over evil.
- The department of Culture of the Government of India accorded National Festival status to Dhanu Jatra in November 2014.

Science and Technology

GSAT-30

India's latest communication satellite GSAT-30 was successfully launched from the Spaceport in French Guiana on January 17, 2020. The launch vehicle Ariane 5 VA-251 lifted off from Kourou Launch Base, French Guiana at 2 : 35 am IST carrying India's GSAT-30 and EUTELSAT KONNECT for Eutelsat, as scheduled. After a flight lasting 38 minutes 25 seconds, GSAT-30 separated from the Ariane 5 upper stage in an elliptical Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit. With a lift-off mass of 3357 kg, GSAT-30 will provide continuity to operational services on some of the in-orbit satellites.

Key Facts :

- GSAT-30 derives its heritage from ISRO's earlier INSAT/ GSAT satellite series and will replace INSAT-4A in orbit.
- GSAT-30 has a unique configuration of providing flexible frequency segments and flexible coverage.
- The satellite will provide communication services to Indian mainland and islands through Ku-band and wide coverage covering Gulf countries, a large number of Asian countries and Australia through C-band.
- GSAT-30 will provide DTH Television Services, connectivity to VSATs for ATM, Stock-exchange, Television uplinking and Teleport Services, Digital Satellite News Gathering (DSNG) and e-governance applications.
- The satellite will also be used for bulk data transfer for a host of emerging telecommunication applications.
- ISRO's Master Control Facility (MCF) at Hassan in Karnataka took over the command and control of GSAT-30 immediately after its separation from the launch vehicle.

LIGO (Laser Inferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory)

Earth's gravitational wave observatories—which hunt for ripples in the fabric of space-time—just picked up something weird. The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) and Virgo

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detectors recorded an unknown or unanticipated 'burst' of gravitational waves on January 14, 2020. The gravitational waves we've detected so far usually relate to extreme cosmic events, like two black holes colliding or neutron stars finally merging after being caught in a death spiral. Burst gravitational waves have not been detected before and scientists hypothesize they may be linked to phenomena such as supernova or gamma ray bursts, producing a tiny 'pop' when detected by the observatories.

This unanticipated burst has been dubbed, for now, S200114f, and was detected by the software that helped confirm the first detection of gravitational waves.

Key Facts :

- LIGO is the world's largest gravitational wave observatory and a marvel of precision engineering. Comprising two enormous laser interferometers located thousands of kilometers apart, LIGO exploits the physical properties of light and of space itself to detect and understand the origin of gravitational waves.
- LIGO (and other detectors like it) is unlike any other observatory on Earth. Ask someone to draw a picture of an observatory and odds are they will draw a gleaming white telescope dome perched on a mountain-top.
- As a gravitational wave observatory, LIGO bears no resemblance to this whatsoever, as the aerial photo of the LIGO Livingston interferometer at right clearly illustrates.
- More than an observatory, LIGO is a remarkable physics experiment on the scale and complexity of some of the world's giant particle accelerators and nuclear physics laboratories.
- Though its mission is to detect gravitational waves from some of the most violent and energetic processes in the Universe, the data LIGO collects may have far-reaching effects on many areas of physics including gravitation, relativity, astrophysics, cosmology, particle physics, and nuclear physics.
- Nevertheless, since the 'O' in LIGO stands for 'observatory', below we describe how it differs from the observatories that most people envision. Three things distinguish LIGO from a 'traditional' astronomical observatory :
- LIGO is blind, it is not round, and a single detector cannot make a discovery all on its own (another gravitational wave detector or other astronomical instrument must confirm a detection).
- Unlike optical or radio telescopes, LIGO does not see electromagnetic radiation (*e.g.,* visible light, radio waves, microwaves).
- It doesn't have to because gravitational waves are **not** part of the electromagnetic spectrum. They are a completely different phenomenon altogether. In fact, electromagnetic radiation is so unimportant to LIGO that its detector components are completely isolated and sheltered from the outside world.

Human Space Flight Infrastructure Centre (HSFIC)

The ISRO proposed 2,700 crores of infrastructure plan to construct Human Space Flight infrastructure Centre on January 6, 2020. The facility is to be set up at Challakere, Chitradurga district of Karnataka and is expected to become operational in three years.

Key Facts :

- The Centre is to be located in the NH-4 Bengaluru-Pune Highway. ISRO aims to establish a self-contained training facility here.
- At present, astronauts part of Gaganyaan Mission, the Human Spaceflight Programme of ISRO are trained in Russia. The centre aims at bringing in all the features that are provided by Russia and begin training astronauts within the country.
- Also, the centre aims to integrate the works of Human Spaceflight Programme that are currently spread across various centres such as UR Rao Satellite Centre, Bengaluru, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and Institute of Aerospace Medicine of Air Force.
- If successful in the Gaganyaan mission, India will become the fourth country after US, Russia and China to send humans to space.
- In order to achieve this, India is also working on preparing ready to eat foods at DFRL (Defence Food Research Laboratory).

Vigyan Samagam

In order to highlight the value and impact of fundamental research to a broad cross-section of audience including students, academicians and industry, and to further strengthen India's participation in mega-science Projects, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Department of Science and Technology (DST) have jointly organised a multi-venue mega-science exhibition, Vigyan Samagam. The exhibition will be held in New Delhi from 21st January to 20th March, 2020 at the National Science Centre (NSC), Pragati Maidan.

Key Facts :

- Vigyan Samagam exhibition is showcasing India's contribution to international collaborations on fundamental science and research, and providing a common interactive platform for mega-science Projects, industry, academia and institutions.
- It is a science communication platform for policymakers, representatives of print and electronic media along with members of civil society.
- The exhibition is also ushering fundamental science and research as a strong career option for the youngsters. Such a spectrum of audience is expected to pave the way for a greater interaction between all stakeholders resulting in cross-fertilisation of ideas Mega-science collaborations, proposed to be showcased in Vigyan Samagam include :
  - European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)
  - Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research (FAIR)
  - India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)
  - International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)
  - Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO)

* Square Kilometre Array (SKA)
* Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT)

- A first-of-its-kind exhibition, the Vigyan Samagam is being hosted in a caravan mode at four cities – Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Delhi – from May 2019 to March 2020 with around two months at each venue.
- The previous schedule is as given below :
  1. Mumbai from 8th May to 7th July, 2019
  2. Bengaluru from 29th July to 28th September, 2019
  3. Kolkata from 4th November to 31st December, 2019
- The exhibition at NSC, New Delhi will be open on all days from 21st January to 20th March, 2020.
- National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), Ministry of Culture, as a venue partner is providing the required venues at selected cities, exhibition stalls and necessary infrastructural and logistic support to conduct the exhibition.

Defence/Security

K9 VAJRA-T Gun

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged off 51st K9 VAJRA-T Gun from Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Armoured System Complex at Hazira in Gujarat on January 16, 2020. The K9 VAJRA-T 155 mm/52 Cal. Tracked Self-Propelled Howitzer meets the requirements of 21st century warfare, which is based on the following missions :

- deep fire support with its longer firing range;
- qualitative superiority to overcome a numerical inferiority with its higher rate of fire and accuracy and
- effective and reliable fire support in all kinds of circumstances with its higher mobility and protection.

Key Facts :

- The vajra (Sanskrit : meaning thunderbolt and diamond) is a ornamental symbol that appears again and again in Indian, Buddhist, and Jainism mythology to represent the unyielding power of spirit.
- The origin of the vajra comes from the Vedas, where the king of the gods, Indra, uses it as a weapon to kill asuras (demons). It is called 'Dorje' in Tibetan, It also represents a firmness of spirit and spiritual power, being one of the important sacred tools and ritual implements in Vajrayana Buddhism, Hinduism and Tantra where it symbolizes the male principle of creation and represents both method and 'Upaya' (means 'skillful') in religious practice.
- The K9 VAJRA-T is a variant of K9 Thunder which is inarguably the world's best 155 mm/52 Cal.SPH in terms of number of systems in active service.
- Currently, K9 Thunder is serving as one of the main conventional deterrent forces for a number of armies including the Korean Army.
- K9 Thunder has established its superiority through demonstrations and evaluation tests at various proving grounds in extreme weather conditions, jungles, barren deserts and severely cold areas.
- By demonstrating its ability to handle Indian as well as all NATO standard ammunitions, K9 VAJRA-T has proven its excellent conformability to any field artillery unit.

HFHSD–IN 512

State-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) has developed a special class diesel conforming to NATO grade for use in ships and vessels of Indian Navy. One of the Key Result Area for Indian Navy has been fuel quality standards revision to keep pace with induction of new technology equipment and meet contemporary emission standards. With the advent of technology and refining techniques in the petroleum industry better quality of fuel abiding to more stringent specifications has become a necessity. Hence, continuous improvement in technical specification for diesels is the primary focus area.

Key Facts :

- On 13 January, 2020, the launch of the new fuel (High Flash High Speed Diesel) HFHSD – IN 512, with revised technical specifications was undertaken.
- With this, the country will be able to ensure interoperability amongst foreign navies during fleet exercises and provide fuel of quality better than that mandated to all foreign navies under bilateral/ multi-national logistics support pacts including LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement).
- Successful introduction of the new fuel is a landmark occasion highlighting the enormous potential which exists within the country to produce world class products. This effort would also benefit other M/s IOCL consumers in the country like Indian Coast Guard and other merchant marine in the coming years. The achievement would also mark a new high with quality fuel available to all foreign Navy ships at Indian ports during exercises with the Indian Navy.

Economy/Finance

HSN Code

No imports will be allowed without HSN code into the country, said the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways, Piyush Goyal in New Delhi on January 15, 2020. He was speaking at the 6th National Standards Conclave on the subject of Standards for Trade Facilitation. The 6th National Standards Conclave was held in Delhi on 15-16 January, 2020 and is organized by Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Export Inspection Council of India (EIC), National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) and the Centre for Research on International Trade.

Key Facts :

- HSN code stands for "Harmonized System of Nomenclature". This system has been introduced for the systematic classification of goods all over the world. HSN

code is a 6-digit uniform code that classifies 5000+ products and is accepted worldwide. It was developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and it came into effect from 1988.

- It has about 5,000 commodity groups, each identified by a six-digit code, arranged in a legal and logical structure. It is supported by well-defined rules to achieve uniform classification.
- The main purpose of HSN is to classify goods from all over the world in a systematic and logical manner. This brings in a uniform classification of goods and facilitates international trade.
- The HSN system is used by more than 200 countries and economies for reasons such as :
  - * Uniform classification
  - * Base for their Customs tariffs
  - * Collection of international trade statistics.

The Cobra Effect

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 27 December, 2019, cautioned that the asset quality of scheduled commercial banks (SCB) may worsen next year owing to changes in the macro-economic scenario.

In its latest Financial Stability Report, the central bank also warned that there remains an inherent risk of 'froth'—conditions that precede a market bubble—building up in the system due to excess liquidity. Citing factors such as an increase in slippages and declining credit growth, the central bank in its biannual commentary said bad loans of SCBs as a percentage of total loans is expected to increase to 9·9% by September 2020 from 9·3% in September 2019. RBI governor Shaktikanta Das warned against unbridled interest rate cuts, which he said could cause a 'cobra effect'—when a well-intentioned solution ends up worsening the problem.

Key Facts :

- The term is said to be coined by Horst Siebert, the German economist.
- The effect takes place when a well-intended plan leads to unintended consequences, making the problem actually worse instead of solving it.
- This refers to the phenomenon wherein policies that are aimed at addressing a problem only manage to worsen it by leading to some unintended consequences.
- The term originates from the story of a policy pursued by the British colonial government in India to tackle the menace caused by a huge population of cobras out in the open.

Kimberley Process Certification Scheme

The Kimberley Process is an international certification scheme that regulates trade in rough diamonds. It aims to prevent the flow of conflict diamonds, while helping to protect legitimate trade in rough diamonds. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) outlines the rules that govern the trade in rough diamonds. The KPCS has developed a set of minimum requirements that each participant must meet. The KP is not, strictly speaking, an international organisation: it has no permanent offices or permanent staff. It relies on the contributions – under the principle of 'burden-sharing' – of participants, supported by industry and civil society observers. Neither can the KP be considered as an international agreement from a legal perspective, as it is implemented through the national legislations of its participants.

The Kimberley Process (KP) is a multilateral trade regime established in 2003 with the goal of preventing the flow of conflict diamonds. The core of this regime is the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) under which States implement safeguards on shipments of rough diamonds and certify them as 'conflict free'.

Khanpur

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- *MoP/ MoC/Ministry of Railways /CEA/POSOCO* can review the overall availability of thermal power in different regions and coal available for the same.

10. Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA)

- Over 36·10 crore LED bulbs, 71·61 lakh LED tube lights and 23·10 lakh energy efficient fans distributed across the country.
- This has resulted in estimated energy saving of 47 billion kWh per year with avoided peak demand of 9,590 MW, estimated GHG emission reduction of 38 million tonnes CO_2 per year and estimated cost saving of ₹ 18,935 crore per year in electricity bills of consumers.

11. Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP)

- Over 1 crore energy efficient LED streetlights have been installed a cross the country.
- This has resulted in estimated energy saving of 6·9 billion kWh per year with avoided peak demand of 1,152 MW, estimated GHG emission reduction of 4·76 million tonnes CO_2 per year and estimated annual cost saving of ₹ 2,686 crore in electricity bills of Municipalities.

12. National E-Mobility Programme

Procurement process of 10,000 e-cars concluded. The price discovered for e-cars is 25% less than similar cars in market. Till November 30, 3019, 1510 e-cars deployed/under deployment for Government offices and 470 Captive Chargers (300 AC & 170 DC) commissioned in these offices.

13. Atal Jyoti Yojana (AJAY) & Solar Study Lamp Scheme

Over 1·48 lakh Solar LED Street Lights commissioned in rural areas under AJAY and over 59·18 lakh Solar Study Lamps distributed to school going students under Solar Study Lamp scheme.

14. Promotion of Renewable Energy

- In order to promote the capacity addition of Solar and Wind Power Projects, the waiver available for use of Inter State Transmission System (ISTS transmission charges and losses) has been extended for use of Inter State Transmission System (ISTS) for transmission of electricity by Solar or Wind power projects commissioned till December 2022. The waiver shall be applicable for the twenty five years from the commissioning of such projects.
- Clarification on Orders related to Renewable Purchase Obligation for Captive Power Plants (CPP) was issued on 1st February, 2019.

Khanpur

Growing Steps of Research and Development Activities in Rural Development Sector : At a Glance

Undoubtedly ! the Ministry of Rural Development **(MoRD)** under the Government of India (GoI) is now playing a key role with adequate provision in its policies and programmes, through which it is to be ensured that the women of the country are not only empowered, but also become active participants in the development process through gender responsive planning, implementation and monitoring of the programmes/schemes.

- For Rural Development, there is a need for labour reforms. The employment sector in India poses great challenge in terms of its structure, which is dominated by informal workers, high levels of under employment, skill shortages and labour markets with rigid labour laws and institutions. In this regard, the Government is in the process of rationalization of the 38 Labour Acts by framing relevant provisions of existing laws into 4 labour codes *i.e.*, codes on wages, industrial relations, social security and welfare, safety and working conditions.
- Under the **'Kaushal Training Programmes'** of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD, GoI), the total 19·22 lakh trainees have been trained so far from 25 Sept., 2014 to 31 March, 2019 period and total 13·64 lakh employees have been given employment. In Jammu & Kashmir, under 'Himayatee Programme', about 78,704 employees have been trained and 57,608 employees have been employed with effect from the starting year 2011 to 2019 (about 8 years).

Based on the Annual Report 2018-19 of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD–Government of India-GoI) several unique achievements were made during the year. These can be highlighted as under :

Major Activities and Future Directions

- **Organizational set-up/infrastructure and functional activities of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD–Government of India–GoI)**
- Under the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD–GoI), the supreme post is of 1-Secretary (Rural Development) and Joint Secretaries (RE, Trg & Fell, RL, Skills, RH&A&C, PPM&IT etc.), 1-CEA and AS&FA, also work accordingly.
- In the Department of Land Resources (DoLR–GoI), the supreme post is of 1-Secretary (Secy); 1-Additional Secretary (AS); **1-AS&FA** (Additional Secretary & Financial Advisor); 1-Joint Secretary (JS) etc. posts, work as per norms of the Ministry.
- Department of Rural Development came into existence in October 1974. The Ministry of Rural Development, renamed on 23rd January, 1982, was again upgraded on July 5, 1991 and further renamed as the Ministry of Rural Development **(MoRD)** in 1999. At present, two Departments namely; Department of Rural Development and Deptt. of Land Resources are working in the **MoRD.**
- **Mandate of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)**—To improve the quality of life of over 70% people living in rural areas. **"Be Beautiful ! Be Smart : Be stylish ! But, Protect yourself from HIV X."**
- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**—a significant programme for social inclusion and social development, initiated by Women's Groups in the States of Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh has shown a good indication to promote the usage of toilets. Around 3,000 villages in Madhya Pradesh; 3,500 in Rajasthan; 450 in Jharkhand; 250 in Uttar Pradesh and 550 in Bihar were converted into **ODF** (Open Defecation Free) villages during the reporting period of 2016-17. Gujarat has trained 15,500 Swachhata Shilpis to construct toilets, and 133 Rural Sanitary Marts are being managed by village organisations. During 2018-19, the works of 6·04 lakh NRM have been completed under 'MNREGA' programme.

Facts : At a Glance

Research & Development (R&D) Activities Related to Rural Development

- In **'DDUGKY'** (Deen Dayal Upadhyaya-Grameen Kaushalya Yojana)–declared on 25th Sept., 2014 and launched/started on 25th July, 2015 by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), more than 1,232 training Centres and associated with 533 projects activity-agencies are playing a great role in training till 31 March, 2019 and total 19·22 lakh applicants have been trained as well as total 13·64 lakh trainees have been employed upto 31 March, 2019.
- In **'Mahila Kisan Sashktikaran Programme'** (MKSP)–30·65 lakh women in 2016-17; 32·40 lakh women in 2017-18 and 35·97 lakh women in 2018-19 year wise are under coverage, in which, 48,331 women farmers in Agriculture + Dairying Sector; 5,800 Women in Dairy; 46,284 women in Animal Husbandry : 13,699 women in oil-seeds and 19,250 women in pulses are in coverage.

- **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) in North-Eastern Region-NER States—NER-so called '7-Sisters of India'** (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura as well as **8th** State—Sikkim)–**'NSAP'** is

a social assistance programme for poor **BPL** (Below Poverty Line) households for the aged, widows, disabled and also for one time assistance in case of death of the primary bread winner in a **BPL** family. Under this programme, several schemes *viz.* 'Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS); 'Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme' (IGNWPS)-w.e.f., 2009; 'Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), Annapurna and National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) are playing a significant role in social welfare development by the social welfare department. The number of beneficiaries reported (upto Dec. 2016) and **IGNOAPS** in **NER** is 9,79,360; **IGNWPS**–1,23,748; **IGNDPS**–45,740; **NFBS**–8,592 and **Annapurna**–38,503 beneficiaries no's.

- For the welfare of minorities, during the year 2016-17, a total of 22,674 minority candidates have been trained under the **'DDU-GKY'** (Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana) till Dec. 2016.
- 'E-Panchayat, 2006' was prepared under 'National E-Governance Yojana (NEGP), which is one of the Yojanas among 27 mission Mode Yojanas.
- Under 'Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin' (PMAY-G) during the year 2016-17, a total of 3·50 lakh houses have been sanctioned, of which 0·12 lakh houses are sanctioned for minorities. However, during the year 2015-16, out of total 18·32 lakh houses constructed, 2·45 lakh have been constructed for minorities.
- The total geographical area of the country is about 328·73 million hectares; of which cultivated land is about 140·13 million hectares (gross irrigated area about 68·38 million hectare say–48·80 per cent and rest 71·75 million hectare *i.e.*, 51·20% rain-fed area of net sown area).
- **'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana** (PMGSY) w.e.f 1 July, 2015 is providing irrigation facilites to the field of every farmer and improving water use efficiency to facilitate 'Har Khet Ko Pani' and **'Per Drop More Crop'.** The Government of India & State Govts. are providing financial help/assistance to the rural farmers for Drip Irrigation, Sprinkler Irrigation & Plastic Pipe Irrigation System, so as to save 40-50% irrigation water. Rajendra Singh**—'Jal Purush/ Water Man'** awarded with Magsaysay Award, 'born-6 August, 1959 in village. Daulo, distt. Bagpat (U.P.) has given the message—**'Mile Stone in Water Conservation'** through water Tanks–Paal, Taal, Jhaal for dry areas/States of the country, especially for Rajasthan State. Since above 18% population lives in India of the total population of the world, we have only 4% water resources.

Conclusion

Based on the Annual Report 2018-19 of the Ministry of Rural Development (Government of India-GoI), several achievements in rural development sector were accrued during the year 2018-19. These can safely be concluded in a nutshell as :

1. "Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana" (DDU-GKY)-launched on 25th July, 2015, provides for earmarking 29% and 21% funds for skilling candidates from Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), respectively at national level. Upto 31 March, 2019, 19·22 lakh applicants have been trained and 13·64 lakh trainees were employed.
2. Under 'Roshni'–a Special Scheme for tribal areas and critical LWE (Left Wing Extremism) affected districts, about 50,000 youths will be supported in these vulnerable distts. The Scheme is oriented towards addressing the education, infrastructure and health deficiencies in these areas and leveraging the availability of natural resources and traditional skills and knowledge.

Memorable Points :

Women Empowerment, SC&ST Castes, R&D Activities etc. Related to Rural Development

- **'Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY)**–so as to achieve inclusive growth by developing skill and productive capacity of the rural youth from poor family, was launched on 25th July, 2015.
- **'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana' (PMGSY)**–launched on 1st July, 2015, for providing irrigation facilities to the field of every farmer and improving water use efficiency to facilitate **'Per Drop More Crop'.**
- **'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)**–launched on 25th December, 2000, so as to improve connectivety by way of a single all weather roads to the eligible unconnected habitation as per core-network with a population of 500 persons in plan areas.
- **'Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission' (SPMRM)**–a Flagship Programme of the Central Government was launched by the PM Shri Narendra Modi on 21 Feb., 2016.
- **'SAUBHAGYA' Yojana**–declared on 25 Sept., 2017, so as to ensure electric supply to each house in rural and urban areas of the country.
- **'MKSP' (Mahila Kisan Sashktikaran Programme)**-under DAY-NRLM-was started in the year 2010-11 for agriculture based livelihood women.
- The total expenditure by **MoRD** has been kept ₹ 119874·43 crores in the year 2019-20 for Rural Development & Land Resources.

3. For progressive use of Hindi, *'Hindi Diwas'* (started w.e.f 14 Sept., 1949) was celebrated on 14 Sept., 2018 with prize distribution ceremony as well as 'Hindi Fortnight' on 1 to 15 Sept., 2018 in the Department of **MoRD** (GoI). The Joint Director (Rajbhasha) Shri Brajbhan and Assistt. Director (Rajbhasha) Shri Kaushal Kumar of the Foreign Ministry of India, participated in 'Vishwa Hindi Summit organized in East Africa–Mauritius (57% Hindu lives there). Besides, these several achievements were obtained during the year.

Continued on Page 121

Prominent Historical Personalities of India

—Danish Bilal

Rajaraja the Great

The accession of Rajaraja as a king in 985 AD heralded an epoch of power and glory in the Chola Kingdom. 'Rajakesari', 'Anumoli' and 'Mummadi Chola' were the early titles of Rajaraja Chola.

Rajaraja has been compared with Samudragupta in terms of his political and military achievements. The first great triumph of Rajaraja Chola was against the Cheras when he crushed their navy at Thiruvananthapuram. He also got decisive success against the Pandya King and captured Madura. He crushed the power of the Chalukya Kingdom of Vengi. He developed the naval force in the Chola army and got phenomenal military successes in the Maldives and the Laccadives (now Lakshdweep). He also annexed the northern part of Ceylon (Now Sri Lanka) to the Chola empire after success against the Ceylon King. Its King Mahendra V fled to the South-East Ceylon due to the fear of Rajaraja, who declared Polonnaruva as the capital of the Chola province of Ceylon. Rajaraja also conquered Kalinga. The Chola empire under Rajaraja included the whole South India up to the Tungabhadra, the Maldives and north Ceylon. Andhra Pradesh was under his suzerainty. In brief, Rajaraja transformed small Chola Kingdom into an empire in South India in few years of his rule.

Rajaraja the Great was succeeded by his son Rajendra I in 1014 AD.

- Rajaraja the Great was a great patron of art and culture. He built the famous Rajarajesvara Temple at Tanjore. Rajarajesvara Temple, also known as Brihadesvara Temple, was completed in 1010 AD.
- Account of Rajaraja's varied accomplishments are engraved on the walls of the Rajarajesvara Temple.
- Being a devotee of Lord Siva, Rajaraja also had erected temples for Lord Vishnu.
- He also gave cooperation in the construction of the Chudamani Vihar.
- He encouraged the local self-government throughout his kingdom.

Lakshmanasena

Lakshmanasena, the last Hindu ruler of Bengal was the most prominent King of Sena dynasty. He was the son and successor of King Ballalasena. He became King of Bengal in 1179 AD. He not only continued to control the State which he got from his father but also expanded his territorial boundaries through conquests. Lakshmanasena attained notable victories against the Gahadavala rulers and also controlled a large part of Bihar where an era known after him as Lakshmana Samvat was current. He got notable successes in Gaud, Kamarup, Kashi etc.

But he faced stiff challenge from the Turk invaders and subsequently he lost the prestige and power against them. Turk invader Bakhtiyar Khalji attacked his capital Nadia (later renamed Lakhnauti) in 1202 AD and forced him to leave it. It was a severe setback to his power and after sometime he died in agony. The glory and power of the Sena dynasty lost its sheen after Lakhmanasena. However, East Bengal (Vanga) and probably also South Bengal continued under control of the Senas.

- Lakshmanasena was a great writer and patron of art, literature and culture. Great literary personalities like Jayadeva (writer of the 'Gita Govinda'), Halayudha and Sridharadasa were the members of his royal court.
- Halayudha was Lakshmanasena's Chief Justice and Prime Minister.
- Being a great writer himself, Lakshmanasena completed the book *'Adbhutasagar'* which was started by his father Ballalasena.
- Lakshmanasena was giyen the title of 'Parambhagavat' which indicates he accepted the Vaishnavaism contrary to his Sena predecessors as they were the Shavaites.

Razia Sultana

Razia Sultana, the daughter of Sultan Iltutmish, was born in 1205 AD in Badaun, now in Uttar Pradesh. She belonged to the Turkish Seljuks ancestry. Like other Turk princesse and noble ladies of her time, Razia got the military training. Being an efficient and capable administrator, she further honed her skills of ruling state in the company of her father. Sultan Iltutmish himself was so impressed with the courage, efficiency and administrative sagacity of Razia that he named her the successor of the throne after him, flouting the norm to name a Prince as the heir apparent.

Razia Sultana

After the death of Sultan Iltutmish in April 1236, the Muslim nobility crowned Prince Ruknuddin Firuz Shah as Sultan of Delhi in place of Razia. But Razia capitalized on Ruknuddin's in efficiency and captured the throne in November 1236. She thus became the first and only Muslim lady who ruled Delhi Sultanate in medieval India. She succeeded in restoring peace and order to a large extent in her State.

But many Muslim nobles were not ready to accept a lady to rule the Sultanate and political conspiracies started against her. Despite being a brave warrior and able ruler, she fell victim to the powerful Turkish nobility. Governors of Multan, Badaun, Hansi and Lahore revolted

against her. Bhatinda Governor Malik Altunia defeated Razia's army when she came to crush his revolt. He captured Razia and killed her trusted African slave Jalal-ud-din Yaqut. The Turkish nobles in the meantime dethroned Razia and crowned Muizuddin Bahram Shah, another son of Iltutmish as the new Sultan of Delhi.

In a bid to regain the Delhi crown, Razia married Altunia and they together marched to Delhi with their joint forces. But they failed miserably and thus Razia met her tragic end in 1240 AD.

Kandukuri Veeresalingam

Kandukuri Veeresalingam was a noted social reformer and scholar from South India. He was born in an orthodox Brahmin family in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh in 1848. He lost his father Subbarayadu at an early age. After completing his education, he became a teacher and later became the head master in an English medium school.

Kandukuri Veeresalingam

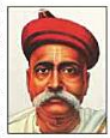
Veeresalingam was a staunch advocate of women's education and empowerment. He launched a girls' school in 1874 in Dhavaleswaram. He started a Telugu journal in 1876 to promote women's education and denounce other social evils like child marriage, caste system etc. in the then Telugu society. He was deeply influenced with the ideas of the Brahmo Samaj, particularly those of Keshab Chandra Sen. He attempted to spread awareness about promotion of widow remarriages, girls' education, social equality by his magazine **'Vivekavardhini'** (Knowledge Improver). He himself wrote many articles against superstitious beliefs, corruption and other social evils in it.

He played a key role in the foundation of 'The Rajahmundry Social Reform Association in 1878 with chief objective of promoting widow remarriages and women's upliftment in the society. Under the Association, Veeresalingam conducted the first widow remarriage in 1881. Apart from being a great social reformer and women's rights crusader, he was a great scholar of Telugu, Sanskrit and English. He wrote many novels, essays, dramas in different languages. **'Satyavathi Charitam'** was his first novel in Telugu. Veeresalingam was also one of the founding members of the Indian National Congress in 1885. He died in May 1919.

- Kandukuri Veeresalingam was decorated with the title of 'Rao Bahadur' in 1893 by the government for his relentless efforts for social reform, campaign for women's rights and education.
- He launched a magazine titled **'Satihitabodhini'** to raise voice for women's issues.
- **'Rajasekhara Charitamu'** was another great literary work by Veeresalingam based on Oliver Goldsmith's 'The Vicar of Wakefield'.
- **'Vyavahara Dharmabodhini', 'Brahma Vivaham', 'Prahlada', 'Satya Harischandra', 'Tiryag-Vidwan Mahasabha'** are some other literary works by Veeresalingam.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was an icon of the Indian struggle for freedom and a great nationalist leader. He was born on July 23, 1856 in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. His father Gangadhar Shastri was a teacher and a scholar of Sanskrit. He took his graduation degree from prestigious Deccan College, Pune in 1877. He completed his L-L.B. from the Elphinston College, Mumbai.



Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Tilak remained disappointed with the miserable conditions of his fellow countrymen in the cruel and oppressive British rule. He launched two newspapers—**The Kesari** in Marathi and **The Maratha** in English languages to propagate his ideas on injustice and cruelties of the British rulers. He attempted to infuse the feelings of nationalism among Indians through these papers. It was Tilak who took the fight against the British rule in India from the elite Indian class to masses. He suffered many years of rigorous jail terms for his vehement opposition and vitriolic onslaught on the cruel British rule. He severely criticized the British government's treatment to the Maharaja of Kolhapur for which he got four months' jail.

He was also charged with instigation of the murders of cruel British officers Mr. Rand and Lt. Ayerest in 1897. In 1908, he was sent to Mandalay jail for six years imprisonment for his anti-British comments. In brief, he got the Indian youth acquainted with the cruelties of the British through his articles, lectures and prepared a huge anti-British sentiment at pan-India level. Being an extremist leader of the Congress, he opposed the policies of the moderate leaders.

His movement against the British government chiefly centered on the principles of Swadeshi, Boycott and Education. Once he commented, *"INC should distinguish between begging and claiming rights."*

Tilak founded the All India Home Rule League in 1916 in Poona (now Pune). He died on August 1, 1920.

- To promote sense of nationalism and patriotism among Indians, he introduced the festivals like 'Ganesh Chaturthi' and 'Shivaji Jayanthi'. He also founded 'Lathi Clubs' and 'Anti-Cow Killing societies for this purpose.
- Bal Gangadhar Tilak was popularly known as 'Lokmanya'.
- He asserted his demand for Swaraj in these words, "Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it."
- He was such a great opponent of the British rule in India as Valentine Chirol called him "The Father of Unrest in India."
- He was a leading member of the Congress Extremist trio—Bal, Lal and Pal. Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal were two other leaders of this group.
- **The Arctic Home of the Vedas** and **'Gita Rahasya'** were two famous books by Tilak.

Current Objective Questions

Trade And Industry

1. The concept of Arogya Sanjeevani Policy has been floated by—
   (A) Life Insurance Corporation of India
   (B) General Insurance Corporation of India
   (C) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
   (D) The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA)

2. Which of the following Urban Cooperative Banks has got in-principle approval from the RBI to convert into Small Finance Bank ?
   (A) New India Cooperative Bank, Mumbai
   (B) Shivalik Mercantile Cooperative Bank, Shahranpur
   (C) Radhaswami Urban Cooperative bank, Dayalbagh Agra
   (D) Saraswat Cooperative Bank, Mumbai

3. As per first Advance Estimates of India's national income, GDP growth rate in real terms is most likely to remain at ..... in 2019-20.
   (A) 4·5% (B) 5·0%
   (C) 5·5% (D) 6·0%

4. As per first Advance Estimates of India's national income, GVA growth rate of manufacturing sector in real terms is most likely to remain at.....in 2019-20.
   (A) 6·0% (B) 5·0%
   (C) 4·0% (D) 2·0%

5. Which of the following is the most worrying factor behind 5 % real growth rate of India's GDP in the first advance estimates for the financial year 2019-20 ?
   (A) Agriculture sector's growth rate is most likely to remain at 2·8% during the financial year 2019-20
   (B) Poor performance of manufacturing sector which is likely to grow at 2·0% during the financial year 2019-20
   (C) Service sector, with a share of about 55% in the GDP, is likely to post 6·9% during the financial year 2019-20
   (D) Nominal growth rate of the GDP is estimated to be 7·5% for the financial year 2019-20

6. As per a latest report (January 2020) of World Economic Forum roughly what percentage of businesses are dependent on nature with an estimated exposure of world GDP ?
   (A) 40 per cent
   (B) 50 per cent
   (C) 60 per cent
   (D) 70 per cent

7. As per a study report released on January 20, 2020 by Oxfam India's richest one per cent people hold more than the wealth held by—
   (A) 70 per cent of the country's population
   (B) 60 per cent of the country's population
   (C) 50 per cent of the country's population
   (D) 40 per cent of the country's population

8. As per NITI Aayog's 'SDG India Index 2019' which of the following states has/have been categorised as the 'Achievers' ?
   I. Tamil Nadu
   II. Kerala
   III. Himachal Pradesh
   IV. Maharashtra
   Correct code is—
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) I, II, III and IV
   (D) None in the country

9. Which Union Territory is at the top in the category of 'Front Runners' in NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2019 ?
   (A) Chandigarh
   (B) Puducherry
   (C) NCR Delhi
   (D) Jammu & Kashmir

10. India's merchandise exports .....during April-December 2019-20 over the same period of 2018-19.
    (A) Declined by 1·96 per cent in US dollar terms
    (B) Increased by 0·89 per cent in US dollar terms
    (C) Declined by 4·56 per cent in US dollar terms
    (D) Increased by 8·01 per cent in US dollar terms

11. India's merchandise imports in US Dollar terms registered a growth rate of .....during April-December 2019-20 over the same period of 2018-19.
    (A) (+) 7·45 per cent
    (B) (+) 2·31 per cent
    (C) (–) 8·90 per cent
    (D) (–) 2·46 per cent

12. Sugar production in India was all time highest during the sugar season (October-September)—
    (A) 2005-06 (B) 2011-12
    (C) 2017-18 (D) 2018-19

13. India State of Forest Report, 2019 has been published by—
    (A) Forest Survey of India
    (B) Geological Survey of India
    (C) Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
    (D) The Controller of Publication, Department of Publication , Ministry of Urban Development

14. As per the India State of Forest Report 2019, the country's forest cover includes all patches of land with :
    I. A tree canopy density of more than 10%
    II. More than 1 ha in area, irrespective of land use, ownership and species of trees.
    Correct code is—
    (A) Only I is correct
    (B) Only II is correct
    (C) I and II both are correct
    (D) Neither I nor II is correct

MAGAZINE RING

15. As per India State of Forest Report 2019 which type of forests in India has the largest area under its cover ?
(A) Very Dense Forest
(B) Moderately Dense Forest
(C) Open Forest
(D) Tree Cover

16. 'NEON'-the artificial human is claimed to have been developed by—
(A) STAR Labs of Samsung
(B) Apple Inc
(C) Microsoft Corporation
(D) Adobe Inc

17. *National Strategy for Financial Inclusion* for five-year period (2019-24) has been chalked out by—
(A) NITI Aayog
(B) Reserve Bank of India
(C) Ministry of Finance
(D) NABARD

18. As on January 1, 2020 e-Visa in India has following sub-categories :
I. e-Tourist visa
II. e-Business Visa
III. e-Medical Visa
IV. e-Medical Attendant Visa
Correct code is—
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and III
(C) Only I, II and III
(D) I, II, III and IV all

19. As per a rating by AirlineRatings.com, the world's safest airlines is—
(A) Qantas Airways Ltd.
(B) Air New Zealand Ltd.
(C) Eva Airways Corp.
(D) Singapore Airlines Ltd.

20. As per a survey by OAG Aviation Worldwide Ltd which of the following airlines was crowned 2019s most punctual carrier of the world ?
(A) Latam Airlines Group SA
(B) PT Garuda Indonesia
(C) Copa Airlines SA
(D) Skymark Airlines Inc

21. India's latest communication satellite GSAT-30 was successfully launched from the—
(A) PSLV-C47 from Satish Dhawan *Space Centre* (SDSC), *Sriharikota* Range (SHAR)
(B) Launch vehicle Ariane 5 VA-251 lifted off from Kourou Launch Base, French Guiana
(C) GSLV-Mark III from Second Launch Pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR (SDSC SHAR), Sriharikota
(D) None of the above

22. Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited (HURL) is Joint Venture Company promoted by—
I. Coal India Limited (CIL) as lead promoter.
II. National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd. (NTPC) as lead promoter
III. Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) as lead promoter
IV. FCIL and HFCL as partners.
Correct code is—
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only I and III
(C) Only I, II and III
(D) I, II, III and IV all

23. "APNA UREA – Sona Ugle" is a leading brand of Neem Coated Urea manufactured by
(A) Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Ltd. (HURL)
(B) Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd. (*KRIBHCO*)
(C) Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Ltd. (IFFCO)
(D) Tata Fertilizers Ltd.

24. Who has been appointed first chairman of National Medical Commission ?
(A) Dr. Rakesh Kumar Vats
(B) Prof. Suresh Chandra Sharma
(C) Dr. Randeep Guleria
(D) Prof. Ravi Kant

25. 'Fit India Campaign' has been launched by—
(A) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
(B) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
(C) University Grant Commission
(D) Ministry of HRD

Answers with Hints

1. (D) The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has introduced standard health cover policy that must be offered by all general and standalone health insurers who should offer a standard health product, the Arogya Sanjeevani Policy, with a minimum sum insured of ₹ 1 lakh, with a upper limit of ₹ 5 lakh.
2. (B)
3. (B) Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2019-20 is likely to attain a level of ₹ 147·79 lakh crore, as against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2018-19 of ₹ 140·78 lakh crore. The growth in real GDP during 2019-20 is estimated at 5·0 per cent as compared to the growth rate of 6·8 per cent in 2018-19.
4. (D) The growth rate during the 2019-20 in the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing', 'Mining and Quarrying', 'Manufacturing' and 'Construction' is estimated to be 2·8 per cent, 1·5 per cent, 2·0 per cent and 3·2 per cent respectively.
5. (B) Manufacturing sector growth holds the key to job creation as one direct job in this sector leads to the creation of four indirect jobs.
6. (B) Flagging huge risks to the economy from dangers of biodiversity loss and climate change, a WEF study released on January 19, 2020 said businesses are more than dependent on nature with an estimated exposure of $ 44 trillion or half of the world GDP.
7. (A) India's richest 1 per cent hold more than four-times the wealth held by 953 million people who make up for the bottom 70 per cent of the country's population, while the total wealth of all Indian billionaires is more than the full-year budget (2018-19), a new study said on January 20, 2020.
8. (D) The SDG India Index 2019 tracks progress of all states and UTs on 100 indicators drawn from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation' National Indicator framework. None of the states or the UTs is in the Achievers category (100) in this Index. Kerala achieved the first rank in the composite SDG Index with a score of 70,

MISSION SSC

followed by Himachal Pradesh at 69, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu ranked third with a score of 69. Thus, all these five states are in Front runners category (65-99).

9. (A) Chandigarh, with a composite score of 70 (Front Runner), is at the top in UTs followed by Puducherry with a score of 66 in SDG India Index 2019.
10. (A) Cumulative value of exports for the period April-December 2019-20 was USD239·29 billion (₹ 16,84,558·61 crore) as against USD244.08 billion (₹ 17,02,261·31 crore) during the period April-December 2018-19, registering a negative growth of (–)1·96 per cent in Dollar terms (negative growth of (–)1·04 per cent in Rupee terms).
11. (C) Cumulative value of imports for the period April-December 2019-20 was USD357·39 billion (₹ 25,14,783·82 crore), as against USD392·31 billion (₹ 27,37,092·01 crore) during the period April-December 2018-19, registering a negative growth of (–)8·90 per cent in Dollar terms (negative growth of (–)8·12 per cent in Rupee terms).
12. (D) Sugar production was 283·6 lakh tonnes during 2005-06; 263·4 lakh tonnes in 2011-12; 325·0 lakh tonnes in 2017-18 and 331·5 lakh tonnes in 2018-19.
13. (A) India State of Forest Report 2019 is 16th in series. It is published by the Forest Survey of India, Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, GoI. Biennial Forest Cover Monitoring and Assessment is being carried out since 1987.
14. (C)
15. (B) As per India State of Forest Report 2019, area under Very Dense Forest is 99278 sq. km (3·02%), 308472 sq. km under Moderately Dense Forest (9·38%), 304499 sq. km under Open Forest (9·26%) and 95027 sq. km tree cover (2·89 % of total geographical area of the country).
16. (A) Electronics major Samsung's STAR (Samsung Technology and Advanced Research) Labs, headed by computer scientist Pranav Mistry, has made some key progress in the development of an artificial human which has the ability to emote and empathise just like a real human.
17. (B) RBI released on January 10, 2020 *National Strategy for Financial Inclusion* for five-year period. It aims to increase the outreach of banking outlets to provide universal access to financial services to every village within a 5 kilometre radius/ hamlet of 500 households in hilly areas by March 2020.
18. (D) 19. (A) 20. (B) 21. (B)
22. (D) HURL is Joint Venture Company promoted by the three Maharatna Companies *i.e.,* Coal India Limited (CIL), NTPC Limited (NTPC) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) as the lead promoters with FCIL and HFCL as other two partners.
23. (A) The Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda launched the "APNA UREA—SonaUgle" brand of Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited (HURL) on January 17, 2020.
24. (B) Professor Suresh Chandra Sharma, who is currently the chief of Delhi AIIMS' ENT head-neck surgery department has been appointed the chairman of National Medical Commission. He has been appointed for a period of three years or till the attainment of the age of 70 years.
25. (C) A complete ban on junk food in canteens, a 45-minute physical activity session for each student every day , and talks by doctors , health specialists, nutrionisists are part of the UGC's action plan to implement the 'Fit India Campaign' in higher educational institutions.

Continued from Page 116

Objective Questions

1. "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" (MANREGA) was notified on……., for providing employment.
   (A) 5 September, 2005
   (B) 5 October, 2005
   (C) 5 November, 2005
   (D) None of the above
2. The "National Rural Health Mission" (NRHM) was launched on ……, so as to provide accessible affordable and accountable quality health services, even to the poorest households in the remote rural regions of the country.
   (A) 12th April, 2004
   (B) 12th April, 2005
   (C) 12th April, 2006
   (D) 12th April, 2007
3. The "Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme" (PMEGP) was announced as a new employment scheme by the Central Government by merging the existing 'Prime Minister' Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) and the 'Rural Employment Generation Programme' (REGP) on 14 August,……
   (A) 2006 (B) 2007
   (C) 2008 (D) 2009
4. The "Sampoorna Bima Gram Yojana" (SBGY) was launched on…, so as to provide banking services through postal network for all villages under its ambit.
   (A) 13 October, 2015
   (B) 13 October, 2016
   (C) 13 October, 2017
   (D) 13 October, 2018
5. In 'NER' (7' Sisters of India)–The 'North-Eastern Regional Centre' of 'NIRDPR' (Northern Institute of Rural Development Panchayati Raj)-established in 1983, is located at—
   (A) Guwahati (Assam)
   (B) Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh)
   (C) Dispur (Assam)
   (D) Imphal (Manipur)
6. The 'Central Institute for Women in Agriculture' (CIWA) under the 'ICAR', (MoA&FW, GoI) is located at……, working for women welfare.
   (A) Patna
   (B) Bhopal
   (C) Jaipur
   (D) Bhubneshwar (Odisha)

Answers

1. (A) 2. (B) 3. (C) 4. (C) 5. (A)
6. (D)

Multiple Choice Questions

Current Questionnaire

1. Which is the only state in India that is giving pulses and oil through the Universal Public Distribution Scheme?
   (A) Tamil Nadu
   (B) Madhya Pradesh
   (C) Karnataka
   (D) West Bengal

2. Which of the following states is the top gainer in the overall composite score of SDG India Index 2·0 2019, as compared to SDG India Index 1·0 ?
   (A) Kerala
   (B) Uttar Pradesh
   (D) Odisha
   (D) Chhattisgarh

3. The National Food Security Act adopts a life cycle approach making special provisions for ensuring food security to—
   I. pregnant women
   II. lactating mothers
   III. children from 6 months to 14 years of age
   IV. Destitutes
   Correct code is :
   (A) I, II and III only
   (B) I Only
   (C) I and II only
   (D) I, II, III and IV all

4. Which of the following statements is correct about Agricultural marketing in India ?
   I. The average share of farmers in retail prices of major primary food items varies between 28% to 78%.
   II. Average share of farmers in retail prices is lower for perishables items.
   III. Average share of farmers in retail prices is higher for non-perishable items.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only I and II are correct
   (C) Only I and III are correct
   (D) I, II and III all are correct

5. Loans given by the commercial banks in India under Priority Sector Lending includes—
   I. Agriculture and Allied Services.
   II. MSMEs sector.
   III. Education, housing and social infrastructure.
   IV. Export credit.
   V. Renewable Energy.
   Correct code is :
   (A) I and II only
   (B) I, II and III only
   (C) I, II, III and IV only
   (D) I, II, III, IV and V all

6. The income gap between top executive and regular employees is highest in India for—
   (A) Reliance Industries Ltd.
   (B) HEG, India's leading graphite electrode manufacturer
   (C) TCNS Clothing
   (D) Tata consultancy Ltd.

7. Which state is at the top in the production of vegetables in the year 2018-19 ?
   (A) Uttar Pradesh
   (B) West Bengal
   (C) Madhya Pradesh
   (D) Bihar

8. Consider the List-I (State) and List-II (Production of Fruits in the year 2018-19) and choose the correct code given below

   List-I
   (State)
   (a) Uttar Pradesh
   (b) Gujarat
   (c) Andhra Pradesh
   (d) Maharashtra

   List-II
   (Million tonnes)
   1. 17·61 2. 10·82
   3. 10·65 4. 9.23

   Codes :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	3	1	4
(B)	1	2	3	4
(C)	4	3	2	1
(D)	3	2	1	4

9. As per PwC Global CEO Survey 2020 India is the .....most attractive market of the world.
   (A) First (B) Second
   (C) Third (D) Fourth

10. Consider the List-I (Country) and List-II (Total FDI inflow during 2019 in US $ billion) and choose the correct code given below—

    List-I
    (Country)
    (a) United State of America
    (b) China
    (c) Singapore
    (d) India

    List-II
    (US $ billion)
    1. 251 2. 140
    3. 110 4. 49

    Codes :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	2	1	3	4
(C)	2	3	1	4
(D)	1	2	4	3

11. Which of the following statements is correct about "APNA UREA- Sona Ugle" ?
    I. It is a latest brand of Neem Coated Urea fertilizer manufactured by Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Ltd. (HURL).
    II. The HURL is being looked as a major emerging player in Urea market due to revival of the three closed units in 2021 having total installed production capacity of 38·1 LMT of Neem Coated Urea per annum.
    III. APNA UREA – Sona Ugle will be manufactured at HURL's Gorakhpur,Barauni and Sindri plants.
    Correct code is :
    (A) Only I
    (B) Only I and II
    (C) I, II and III all
    (D) Only III

12. Consider the following observations of a study report of Oxfam (2020) and choose the correct code given below—
    I. India's richest 1 per cent hold more than four-times the wealth held by 953

million people who make up for the bottom 70 per cent of the country's population.

II. The wealth of Indian billionaires rose from $ 325·5 billion (₹ 22.73 trillion) in 2017 to $408 billion (₹ 28·97 trillion) in 2019.

III. India's top 1 per cent of population holds 42·5 per cent of national wealth while the bottom 50 per cent, the majority of the population, owns merely 2·8 per cent of the national wealth.

(A) Only II is correct
(B) Only I and II are correct
(C) I, II and III all are correct
(D) Only III is correct

13. Which International Agency cuts India's growth estimate to 4·8 per cent in the year 2019-20 ?
(A) International Monetary Fund
(B) World Bank
(C) Asian Development Bank
(D) UNCTAD

14. Which is India's first state to have three capitals in three different cities for three different purposes ?
(A) Chhattisgarh
(B) West Bengal
(C) Andhra Pradesh
(D) Uttarakhand

15. Which Indian State signed an agreement with World Economic Forum at Davos on January 20, 2020 to start "Centre for Internet of Ethical Things" to provide a level playing field for investors and industrialists ?
(A) Karnataka
(B) Gujarat
(C) Madhya Pradesh
(D) Tamil Nadu

16. Even after attaining self sufficiency in foodgrain production Indian agriculture is still in its nascent stage in—
I. Production–driven value chain.
II. Demand-driven value chain.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) I and II both are correct
(D) Neither I nor II is correct

17. Consider the following statements in relation to domestic air passenger traffic in India and choose the correct code given below—
I. At 14.41 crore passengers the domestic aviation industry witness a growth of just 3·74 per cent in traffic in 2019 compared with 2018.
II. The domestic air passenger traffic grew by 18.6 per cent to 13·89 crore in 2018.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) I and II both are correct
(D) Neither I nor II is correct

18. Central government has set up National Start-up Advisory Council in January 2020. It will be chaired by—
(A) Minister of Commerce
(B) Minister of Finance
(C) Secretary, Department of Commerce
(D) Secretary, Department of Industry

19. Indian delegation to annual meeting of World Economic Forum at Davos (Switzerland) in the mid of January 2020 was led by—
(A) Nirmala Sitharaman, Finance Minister
(B) Narendra Modi, Prime Minister
(C) Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry
(D) Narendra Tomer, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

20. As per a 2020 study by Oxfam, Women's unpaid care work has a monetary value of .....per year.
(A) $ 5·8 trillion
(B) $ 10·3 trillion
(C) $ 12·9 trillion
(D) $ 10·8 trillion

21. Which country tops World Economic Forums Social Mobility Index 2020.
(A) Denmark (B) Germany
(C) Norway (D) UK

22. Which country of the world has been attacked by a deadly coronavirus ?
(A) China (B) Australia
(C) Kenya (D) Indonesia

23. India's rank in World Economic Forum's Social Mobility Index 2020 is—
(A) 45th (B) 63rd
(C) 76th (D) 81st

24. Consider the following statements about World Bank's Women, Business and Law (WBL) Index 2020 and choose the correct code given below—
I. Only eight economies among the 190 scored a perfect 100 on the WBL Index 2020. These are Belgium, France, Latvia, Sweden, Canada, Denmark, Iceland and Luxembourg.
II. India's overall score is 74·4 in WBL Index 2020
III. India scored 100 in the indicators of mobility, workplace and marriage
IV. India's score was relatively low in pay (25), parenthood (40), entrepreneurship (75), pension (75) and assets (80).
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and III are correct
(C) I, II, III and IV all are correct
(D) None of the above is correct

25. Which of the following statements is/are correct about 'Vyommitra' ?
I. It is 'lady robot' in India's unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft.
II. ISRO will send 'Vyommitra' in the forthcoming unmanned Gaganyan space mission.
III. She can be a companion and converse with the astronauts, recognise them and can also respond to their queries.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) I, II and III all
(D) None of the above

26. What is 'Greenwashing' ?
(A) Washing the clothes and garments with eco-friendly detergents or soaps
(B) False claims of environmental compliance, plurality of green loan definitions and mismatching of maturity between long term green investments & relatively short term interests of investors

(C) Huge losses in green field projects
(D) None of the above

27. Which of the following statements is/are correct about 'Silver Line Project' ?
I. It is a rail project of Kerala connecting Kasasaragud and Kochuveli (Thiruvananthapuram).
II. It involves construction of railway lines for the movement of semi-high speed trains.
III. The project will be implemented by the Kerala Rail Development Corporation (K-rail), a joint venture between Ministry of Railways and Kerala Government.
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) I, II and III all
(D) Only I and III

28. Which of the following statements is true about 'Sarvatra' ?
(A) It is an indigenous bullet-proof jacket
(B) It is an endangered species of crane
(C) It is poem written by an environmentalist
(D) It is a children film

29. Operation 'Clean Art' is related to—
(A) Protection and conservation of ancient miniature paintings
(B) Conservation of Paintings in the caves
(C) Curb illegal trade in Mongoose hairs
(D) Conservation and protection of performing arts in temples

30. India's rank in Climate Risk Index 2020 is—
(A) 14th (B) 11th
(C) 9th (D) 5th

31. Which type of banking in India is in severe crisis after the failure of IL&FS and DHFC ?
(A) Shadow Banking
(B) Differentiated Banking
(C) Cooperative Banking
(D) Micro Banking

32. India's rank in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2020 is—
(A) 77th (B) 78th
(C) 79th (D) 80th

33. Who was the Chief Guest at India's 71st Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi ?
(A) Messias Bolsonaro, President of Brazil
(B) Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan
(C) Alberto Fernández, President of Argentina
(D) Vladimir Putin, President of Russia

34. India has concluded 2+2 dialogues in 2019 with—
I. United State of America
II. Japan
III. Australia
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and III
(C) I, II and III all
(D) Only II

35. As per the 1st Advance Estimates of horticulture crops for the crop year 2019-20, total production of horticulture crops in India is estimated at—
(A) 313·35 million tonnes
(B) 301·65 million tonnes
(C) 310·25 million tonnes
(D) 304·12 million tonnes

36. Which of the following statements is correct about horticulture production in India ?
I. Total Horticulture production in 2019-20 (1st Advance Estimates) is expected to be 0·84% higher than 2018-19.
II. Increase in Vegetables, Aromatics and Medicinal and Plantations is envisaged but decrease in Fruits, Flowers and Spices is expected.
III. The Fruits production is expected to be lower by 2·27% in 2019-20 over 2018-19. It is mainly due to loss in production of Grapes, Banana, Mango, Citrus, Papaya and Pomegranate.
IV. Increase of 2·64% in production of vegetables in 2019-20 over 2018-19. Increase is mainly due to increased production of Onion, Potato and Tomato.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only II, III and IV
(D) I, II, III and IV

37. Tamil Nadu has got first rank in Good Governance Rank 2019. In which of the following sectors did it also get the first rank ?
I. Public Infrastructure in utilities.
II. Judicial and public security.
III. Social Welfare and Development.
IV. Human Resources Development.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and IV are correct
(C) I, II and III are correct
(D) I, II, III and IV are correct

38. In a major recognition towards Government of India's effort towards conservation, restoration and rejuvenation of its wetlands, which of the following wetland sites have been declared as Ramsar sites of international importance ?
I. Nawabganj and Parvati Agra in Uttar Pradesh.
II. Keshopur-Miani, Beas Conservation Reserve and Nangal in Punjab.
III. Nandur Madhameshwar in Maharashtra.
IV. Saman, Samaspur, Sandi and Sarsai Nawar in Uttar Pradesh.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and IV
(B) Only II and III
(C) I, II and III only
(D) I, II, III and IV all

39. As on February 1, 2020 which of the following labour codes has got the assent of the President of India ?
(A) Code on Wages, 2019
(B) Social Security Code, 2019
(C) Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions, 2019
(D) Code on Industrial Relations, 2019

40. The Code on Industrial Relations , 2019 Bill will replace—
I. Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.
II. Trade Unions Act, 1926
III. Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and III
(C) I, II and III all
(D) Only I and II

MAGAZINE

Answers with Hints

1. (A)
2. (B) Uttar Pradesh has improved its overall score from 42 in 2018 to 55 in 2019, and is the highest gainer.
3. (A) The implementation of a revamped Public Distribution System under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 is a paradigm shift in the approach towards the issue of food security at the household level, from welfare to a rights-based approach.
4. (D) The above observations are based upon a survey conducted by the RBI in 2018 that covered farmers, traders and retailers in 85 mandis, spread across 16 States.
5. (D) Priority sector lending was formalized in 1972. Targets for priority sector were laid down in 1974. Priority sector advances by public sector banks should reach a level of not less than one third of their total outstanding advances by March 1979.
6. (B) CEO of HEG earned 4,045 times the median remuneration of its employees. Close on heels, the managing director of TCNS Clothing earned 3,383 times the median employee remuneration.
7. (B) As per the Third Advance Estimates of Horticulture Production in India for the year 2018-19 total vegetable production in West Bengal was 29·55 million tonnes, followed by 27·7 million tonnes in Uttar Pradesh, 17·77 million tonnes in Madhya Pradesh and 17·0 million tonnes in Bihar.
8. (A) This matrix is based on the data released by the Government of India in the Third Advance Estimates of Horticulture production in the year 2018-19.
9. (D) As confidence in the global economy reaches a 10-year low, India has managed to retain the position of the fourth-most attractive market, shows a survey of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from across the world by consultancy giant PwC.
10. (A) 11. (C) 12. (C)
13. (A) IMF on January 20, 2020 slashed India's GDP growth rate to 4·8 per cent for the current fiscal (2019-20) and 5·8 per cent for 2020-21.
14. (C) Andhra Pradesh Assembly passed a Bill AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020 to have three capitals for the state. Vishakhapatnam will be the executive capital of Andhra Pradesh. Secretariat and offices of all heads of departments will be relocated to the port city. The current capital in the making, Amravati, will only be the legislative capital, while Kurnool will be the seat of the Judiciary.
15. (A) Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa signed the pact with WEF organisers.
16. (B) Under a production-driven supply chain, farmers usually grow excess of certain type of commodities even while the consumption may not be keeping pace, thereby exerting pressure on prices.
17. (C) The economic slowdown, increasing airfares and infrastructure woes at the Delhi and Mumbai airports are being cited as some of the reasons for the dismal show.
18. (A) 19. (C) 20. (D)
21. (A) The WEF Social Mobility Index 2020 benchmarks 82 countries to help policymakers assess whether their citizens have equal economic opportunities.
22. (A) At least 150 people have died and many more have been infected in Chinese city of Wuhan in January 2020 due to the severe infection of Coronavirus among humans.
23. (C) The WEF Social Mobility Index 2020 benchmarks 82 countries to help policymakers assess whether their citizens have equal economic opportunities.
24. (C)
25. (C) Before orbiting astronauts on India's first manned mission to space in December 2021, the Indian Space Research Organisation will send 'Vyommitra', a 'lady robot' in the unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft. Vyommitra, the prototype of the half-humanoid has been made for the first unmanned Gaganyaan mission.
26. (B) Greenwash also known as 'green sheen' is the process of conveying a false impression or providing misleading information about how a company 's products are more environmentally sound.
27. (C) On December 17, 2019 Ministry of Railways gave in-principle approval for the Silver Line project to be implemented in the state of Kerala to provide semi high-speed rail connectivity on the clogged road traffic between Kasaragud and Thiruvananthapuram.
28. (A) Sarvatra is an indigenously developed bullet proof jacket , developed by Major Anup Mishra of Indian army at College of Military Engineering, Pune.
29. (C) Mongoose hairs are in high demand in the manufacturing of fine brushes that are used by artists looking for finesse in their works. Thousands of mongooses are killed every month to extract their hairs, as a result mongoose is an endangered species.
30. (D) Climate Risk Index 2020 has been released by Germanwatch, an independent development and environmental organisation.
31. (A) Infrastructure Leasing and Finance Servicing Ltd and Diwan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd are two big companies of India's non-banking finance company sector which is known as the shadow banking.
32. (D) Corruption Perception Index has been developed by Germany based global watchdog Transparency International. In 2020 India's rank is 80 compared to 78 in 2019.
33. (A) President of Brazil Jair Messias Bolsonaro paid a state visit to India from January 24-27 at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was the chief guest at India's 71st Republic Day Parade on January 26, 2020.

Continued on Page 155

TECHNOLOGY UPGRADATION AND ADOPTION IN 2020

Listing the Top 10 technology trends for 2020, Micro Focus, along with IDC, has highlighted four that stand out as significant for India: inescapable AI, digital innovation factories, trust and connected cloud. "Some of these, like digital innovation factories, are already starting to play out," says Genefa Murphy, chief marketing officer, Micro Focus. The following are solutions that will mark the decadal shift.

TOP 10
IT PREDICTIONS FOR 2020

DIGITAL INNOVATION FACTORIES

- **Companies will** need to operate as a "digital innovation factory" to compete.
- By 2025, about two thirds of companies will deploy code daily, 90% of their apps will be cloud native, 80% of code will be externally sourced and they will have 1.6 times more developers

AI BECOMES INESCAPABLE

In five years, 90% of new applications will leverage artificial intelligence. By 2024, 50% of user interface interactions will use AI-enabled computer vision, speech, natural language processing, and augmented reality/virtual reality

PROMOTION OF TRUST

- **Getting trust** right will be necessary in order to stay competitive. Customers will require that the organizations they do business with demonstrate their digital trustworthiness. By 2023, half of the Global 2000 will have a Chief Trust Officer

CLOUDS TO BE CONNECTED

- By 2022, 70% of companies will integrate public and private clouds by deploying hybrid management technologies, tools and processes to enable digital service providers to be able to run anywhere and anytime.

ACCELERATING INNOVATION

- **IDC predicts** that by 2023, more than half of **all** IT spending will go towards digital transformation and innovation. In 2018 that spending only made up 27% of a company's IT budget. There will also be a shift to less labour and capital-intensive operating models, like the cloud

BUILDING OUT THE EDGE

- **The need** for deploying on the edge has shifted from customer convenience to supporting critical edge activities. By 2023, more than half of new infrastructure will be at the edge, up from just 10% today. In addition, by 2024, the number of edge apps will increase 800%

"India has the opportunity to be the thought leader in how to practically apply AI in a meaningful manner and how it can be used for personalisation and a scalable experience"

—GENEFA MURPHY,
CMO, **Micro Focus**

INDUSTRY APP EXPLOSION

- By 2023, there will be over 500 million digital apps developed and deployed using cloud native approaches. Most of these apps will target industry-specific use cases and will define the new minimum competitive requirements across industries

EVERY ENTERPRISE IS A PLATFORM

By 2023, 60% of the Global 2000 will have thousands of developers. Half of those companies will drive about 20% of their revenue through their digital ecosystem

CROSS-INDUSTRY MASHUPS

- **Companies will** need to be prepared to form new partnerships across industries. By 2025, 20% of revenue will come from "white space" offerings combining services from previously unlinked industries. In addition, 20% of partners will be from previously unlinked industries

TECH PLATFORM WARS WILL CONTINUE

- **By 2023**, the top 5 public cloud mega-platforms will make up 75% of the IaaS and PaaS market. The number of SaaS vendors will also expand, and the top 10 SaaS vendors will generate 20% of their revenue on average from expanding their PaaS services.

Source: IDC and Micro Focus

LaaS : Logging as a Service; PaaS : Platform as a Service
SaaS : Software as a Service; IDC : International Data Cooperation

MAGAZINE

Solved Paper

R.B.I. GRADE 'B' OFFICER EXAM., 2019

(Held on 9-11-2019)

General Awareness

(Based on Memory)

1. In September, 2019 'Airtel Payments Bank' launched an innovative 'Mosquito Diseases Protection Policy' (MDPP) under the corporate agency tie-up with—
(A) ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company
(B) HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company
(C) Acko General Insurance Company
(D) Bharat AXA General Insurance Company
(E) Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company

2. The 'India International Cooperative Trade Fair (IICTF)' was organized in..... in October, 2019.
(A) Bengaluru (B) Chennai
(C) New Delhi (D) Mumbai
(E) Ahmedabad

3. A four-day 'Shirul Lily' festival featuring the beautiful, flower, a unique species of ground fly is held in the Indian State of—
(A) Manipur (B) Sikkim
(C) Mizoram (D) Meghalaya
(E) Tripura

4. In October 2019, the IT Ministry unveiled BHIM 2·0 with several new functionalities. Over and above the existing 13 languages, the new version of BHIM supports—
(A) 3 additional languages
(B) 6 additional languages
(C) 7 additional languages
(D) 4 additional languages
(E) 5 additional languages

5. The 'State of the World's children report' has been released by ..... in October, 2019.
(A) UNDP (B) UNESCO
(C) UNESC (D) UNICEF
(E) UNEP

6. Union Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan hails from the Indian State of—
(A) Odisha
(B) Jharkhand
(C) Uttar Pradesh
(D) Bihar
(E) Chhattisgarh

7. November 14, every year is internationally recognized as the—
(A) Universal Children's Day
(B) World Philosophy Day
(C) World Toilet Day
(D) World Diabetes Day
(E) World Television Day

8. 'Peter Handke' who has recently been conferred the 2019 Nobel Prize in Literature is a novelist and playwright from which country ?
(A) Poland (B) Cuba
(C) Brazil (D) Austria
(E) France

9. The Indian President Ram Nath Kovind was on an official visit to Manila the capital city of—
(A) Republic of Philippines
(B) Republic of Vietnam
(C) Kingdom of Cambodia
(D) Kingdom of Thailand
(E) Republic of Indonesia

10. 'Mohamed Bin Zayed University' the first 'Artificial Intelligence' University has been launched in ..... in October 2019.
(A) Beirut, Lebanon
(B) Manama, Bahrain
(C) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
(D) Amman, Jordan
(E) Abu Dhabi, UAE

11. Which Union Territory of India is the smallest in terms of land area ?
(A) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
(B) Puducherry
(C) Lakshadweep
(D) Daman and Diu
(E) Dadra and Nagar Haveli

12. The 'Subroto Game' is associated with the game of—
(A) Hockey (B) Football
(C) Cricket (D) Tennis
(E) Basketball

13. Which of the following member countries has announced in October 2018 its intention to withdraw from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ?
(A) Angola (B) Nigeria
(C) Ecuador (D) Kuwait
(E) Algeria

14. The brand ambassador for the campaign launched by 'MasterCard' to push digital payment in India is—
(A) PV Sindhu (B) MS Dhoni
(C) Amir Khan (D) Virat Kohli
(E) Sania Mirza

15. 'Ben Stokes' is associated with the game of—
(A) Badminton (B) Football
(C) Tennis (D) Hockey
(E) Cricket

16. President Shri Ram Nath Kovind in July 2019 has appointed Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar as the Governor of the Indian State of—
(A) West Bengal (B) Manipur
(C) Tripura (D) Jharkhand
(E) Uttar Pradesh

17. In September, 2019 Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has set up an 'Advisory Board for Banking Frauds', headed by former Vigilance Commissioner TM Bhasin, to examine bank frauds of over—
(A) ₹ 45 crore (B) ₹ 10 crore
(C) ₹ 30 crore (D) ₹ 25 crore
(E) ₹ 50 crore

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18. Earth Imaging Satellite 'Goafen-10' has been launched onboard ' Long March 4C rocket by—
(A) Russia (B) China
(C) Israel (D) Japan
(E) Singapore

19. The 'BRICS Culture Ministers' meeting was held (October 2019) in—
(A) Pretoria, South Africa
(B) Curitiba, Brazil
(C) Kaliningrad, Russia
(D) Chennai, India
(E) Wuhan, China

20. In May 2019, ……., a global card payments company announced that it will invest USD 1 billion in India in the next five years and that it plans to make the country a global technology node for its platforms.
(A) American Express (AMEX)
(B) China UnionPay
(C) Visa Inc
(D) Discover Financial Services Inc
(E) Master card

21. Which of the following 'energy-rich nations' has pledged to fully eliminate the 'Kafala' labour system that ties foreign workers to their employer and requires them to have their company's permission to leave the country ?
(A) Qatar
(B) Venezuela
(C) Kuwait
(D) Saudi Arabia
(E) United Arab Emirates

22. According to the Reserve Bank of India guidelines (October 2019) on 'on-tap authorisation' for Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU)', entities desirous to function, operate, or provide platforms for BBPOU are required to maintain at all times a minimum net worth of—
(A) ₹ 400 crore (B) ₹ 200 crore
(C) ₹ 300 crore (D) ₹ 500 crore
(E) ₹ 100 crore

23. Trade and Cultural Fare the 'Balijatra Festival' is held every year in the Indian State of—
(A) Chhattisgarh
(B) Goa
(C) Jharkhand
(D) Bihar
(E) Odisha

24. The 10th edition of the Joint Military Exercise 'Vajra Prahar' was held in October, 2019 between India and the—
(A) USA (B) Germany
(C) Israel (D) Japan
(E) Russia

25. Joint Military Exercise 'Shinyuu Maitri' was carried out (in October 2019) by the Indian Air Force with the Japanese Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) in the Indian State of—
(A) Goa
(B) Karnataka
(C) Uttar Pradesh
(D) West Bengal
(E) Odisha

26. Former Olympic Champion, 28-year old Li Xuerui who announced (in October 2019) her retirement, was associated with—
(A) Baseball (B) Boxing
(C) Softball (D) Badminton
(E) Tennis

27. The first man to perform a spacewalk in 1965 'Alexei Leonov' who passed away in October 2019 at the age of 85 was a legendary—
(A) Chinese Astronaut
(B) Canadian Astronaut
(C) American Astronaut
(D) Soviet Cosmonaut
(E) Italian Astronaut

28. The 'DigiSmart' credit card focused primarily on the ever-growing segment of Millennials has been launched in September 2019 by—
(A) Citibank
(B) Bank of Scotland
(C) Standard Chartered Bank
(D) Deutsche Bank
(E) HSBC Bank

29. The headquarters of 'The International Olympic Committee' is situated in—
(A) Vienna, Austria
(B) Lausanne, Switzerland
(C) Geneva, Switzerland
(D) Madrid, Spain
(E) Rome, Italy

30. Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohammad is the current Prime Minister of—
(A) Mauritius
(B) Malaysia
(C) Madagascar
(D) Maldives
(E) Malawi

31. The Asian Amateur Boxing Championships' 2019 was held in—
(A) Delhi, India
(B) Moscow, Russia
(C) Bangkok, Thailand
(D) Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
(E) None

32. The theme of the 'International Day of the Girl Child, 2019 this year is—
(A) 'The Power of the Adolescent Girl : Vision for 2030'
(B) 'Girls Progress = Goals Progress : What counts for Girls'
(C) 'Girl Force : Unscripted and Unstoppable'
(D) 'Innovating for Girls Education'
(E) 'A Skilled Girl Force'

33. ……wont the Best Actor Award (jointly with Ayushman Khurana) in the "66th National Film Awards for 2018" in August 2019 ?
(A) Hrithik Roshan
(B) Nawazuddin Siddiqui
(C) Vicky Kaushal
(D) Ajay Devgan
(E) Irfan Khan

34. The 'Kaiga Atomic Power Station' is located in the Indian State of—
(A) Telangana
(B) Karnataka
(C) West Bengal
(D) Andhra Pradesh
(E) Kerala

35. A new Fixed Deposit(FD) Scheme – 'FD Health' which offers Fixed Deposit with a health benefit through critical illness coverage wherein the customers will be offered a complimentary insurance cover of ₹ 1 lakh has been launched in October 2019 by—
(A) HDFC Bank Limited
(B) IDFC First Bank Limited
(C) Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.
(D) ICICI
(E) IDBI Bank

36. The latest edition of the 'South Asia Economic Focus, Making (De) Centralization Work' report has been released by the—

MAHA ONE PVT

(A) Asian Development Bank
(B) United National Development Fund
(C) New Development Bank
(D) World Bank
(E) International Monetary Fund

37. The 2019 Booker Prize has been awarded jointly to Canadian writer Margaret Atwood for the book 'The Testaments' and British Author Bernardine Evaristo for her book—
(A) 'Girl, Woman, Other'
(B) 'Island of Abraham'
(C) 'Hello Mum'
(D) 'The Emperor's Babe'
(E) 'Blonde Root'

38. As a replacement for the four attack helicopters previously gifted by India in 2015 and 2016, India has recently handed over the second pair of 'Mi-24V helicopters' to which country ?
(A) Mauritius
(B) Afghanistan
(C) Bangladesh
(D) Bhutan
(E) Sri Lanka

39. The Indian Railways conducted (in October 2019) its first 'Buddhist Circuit Train' between India and—
(A) Bhutan (B) Japan
(C) Myanmar (D) Nepal
(E) Thailand

40. Government of India has said that banks or system providers will not impose charges or Merchant Discount rate on customers as well as merchants on digital payments made to establishments have turnover in excess of ..... from November 1, 2019.
(A) ₹ 20 crore (B) ₹ 50 crore
(C) ₹ 10 crore (D) ₹ 25 crore
(E) ₹ 35 crore

41. Which of the following countries has recently in October 2019 tested an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile which travelled 6,750 km across Pacific Ocean to the Kwajalein Atoll ?
(A) People's Republic of China
(B) Russian Federation
(C) United Kingdom
(D) Democratic People's Republic of Korea
(E) U.S.A.

42. The author of the book titled 'The Daughter from a Wishing Tree : Unusual Tales about Women in Mythology is—
(A) Sunita Namjoshi
(B) Sarojini Sahoo
(C) Shashi Deshpande
(D) Shobha De
(E) Shudha Murty

43. The lifetime achievement award at the '2019' Indian Sports Honours (ISH)' an initiative by Sanjiv Goenka, Chairman, RP-SG Group and India Cricket Team captain Virat Kohli was conferred upon—
(A) Sardar Milkha Singh
(B) Sandeep Chaudhary
(C) Jasprit Bumrah
(D) M.S. Dhoni
(E) Ashok Kumar

44. In order to foray into the credit cards segment private sector 'Bandhan Bank' has entered into partnership with..... in August, 2019.
(A) JP Morgan Chase
(B) Royal bank of Scotland Plc
(C) BNP Paribas
(D) The Goldman Sachs Group
(E) Standard Chartered Bank

45. The first Indian Airline to use a robot-used aircraft tractor 'Taxibot' on a commercial 'Airbus A320' aircraft, from aircraft parking bay to runway is—
(A) None of those given as options
(B) Go air Airline
(C) Indigo Airlines
(D) Air India Airline
(E) Spice Jet

46. According to the 'Census 2011 data' released by the Government of India, out of the 22 scheduled languages in India the 'Second most spoken language' was—
(A) Bengali (B) Marathi
(C) Tamil (D) Punjabi
(E) Malayalam

47. Which of the following 'Payments Banks' announced in July 2019 that it will discontinue operation due to unanticipated developments in the business landscape that have made the economic model unviable ?
(A) FINO Payments Bank
(B) Aditya Birla Payments Bank
(C) Airtel Payments Bank
(D) India Post Payments Bank
(E) Paytm Payments Bank

48. A new book titled "How to Avoid a Climate Disaster : The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need" has been authored by philanthropist—
(A) Warren Buffet
(B) Ratan Tata
(C) Azim Premji
(D) Bill Gates
(E) Shiv Nadar

49. The 'UNESCO' headquarters are situated in—
(A) Geneva, Switzerland
(B) London, UK
(C) New York, USA
(D) Frankfurt, Germany
(E) Paris, France

50. The 'State Trading Corporation of India Ltd.' and the 'Project and Equipment Corporation of India Ltd' are both Public sector units under the administrative control of the—
(A) Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises
(B) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
(C) Ministry of Finance
(D) Ministry of Planning
(E) Ministry of Corporate Affairs

51. Article 22 of the Constitution of India relates to—
(A) protection of right to life and personal liberty
(B) protection of form associations or unions
(C) protections of rights regarding freedom of speech
(D) protection against arrest and detention in certain cases
(E) prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste and sex

52. Recently, ISRO and CNES signed an agreement to set up a joint maritime surveillance system. CNES is a space agency of which of the following countries ?
(A) Japan (B) France
(C) Russia (D) Germany
(E) Canada

MAGNIFICENT

53. 'Mount Paetku' is the highest mountain in—
(A) North Korea
(B) Myanmar
(C) Mongolia
(D) Vietnam
(E) South Korea

54. Which of the following companies has recently become the first Indian company to hit a market capitalization of more than ₹ 9 lakh crore ?
(A) Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)
(B) Reliance Industries Ltd.
(C) Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.
(D) Infosys
(E) HDFC Bank

55. The "Green Park Stadium", which hosted the 500th International test cricket match played by India in 2016, is situated in the Indian city of—
(A) Kanpur (B) Indore
(C) Gwalior (D) Rajkot
(E) Ahmedabad

56. The government has launched a portal named .....on October 3, 2019 for better coordination among the ministries of power, coal and Indian Railways for coal supply to power plants.
(A) BAAHAN
(B) BHUMMI
(C) PRAKASH
(D) UJALA
(E) AKASH

57. According to India Innovation Index (III) 2019 released by the NITI Aayog along with 'Institute for Competitiveness' as the knowledge partner, the most innovative major state in India is—
(A) Meghalaya
(B) Madhya Pradesh
(C) Maharashtra
(D) Gujarat
(E) Karnataka

58. 'Ekaterina Paltceva' and 'Manju Rani' both are associated with the sport of—
(A) Badminton (B) Basketball
(C) Baseball (D) Billiards
(E) Boxing

59. For joint lending using end-to-end automated processing, real-time approval and disbursement the 'Home Credit India (HCIN)', a local arm of the international consumer finance provider, has tied-up with .....in October, 2019.
(A) Kerala Gramin Bank (KGB)
(B) Karnataka Gramin Bank (KGB)
(C) Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMB)
(D) Karnataka Bank (KB)
(E) Karur Vysya Bank (KVB)

60. 'Mark Vincent Hurd' who passed away at the age of 62 was the Co-CEO of which multi-national computer technology company ?
(A) Oracle Corporation
(B) Intel Corporation
(C) Microsoft Corporation
(D) IBM Corporation
(E) Cisco Systems, Inc

61. King William Alexander and Queen Maxima who were on a five-day visit to India in October, 2019 are the royal couple from—
(A) Denmark
(B) Netherlands
(C) Switzerland
(D) Belgium
(E) Sweden

62. 'Kuchipudi' is a dance form in India which originated in the State of—
(A) Andhra Pradesh
(B) Maharashtra
(C) Gujarat
(D) Kerala
(E) Uttar Pradesh

63. Which of the following Public Sector Banks is proposed to be amalgamated with 'Union Bank of India' ?
(A) Andhra bank
(B) Allahabad Bank
(C) Indian Overseas Bank
(D) Indian Bank
(E) Central bank of India

64. The 'International Solar Alliance' is a group of solar resource-rich countries with headquarters in—
(A) None of those given as options
(B) Gurugram, India
(C) Geneva, Switzerland
(D) Guangzhou, China
(E) Paris, France

65. Who amongst the following has become the first in women cricket, to have 20 years of international cricket experience ?
(A) Smriti Mandhana
(B) Ekta Bisht
(C) Mithali Raj
(D) Veda Krishnamurthy
(E) Harmanpreet Kaur

66. All-rounder 'Jenny Gunn' who has announced her retirement (in October 2019) from international cricket has made 259 appearances in World Cups wins. She played for—
(A) Australia
(B) England
(C) New Zealand
(D) West Indies
(E) South Africa

67. In October 2019 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced a new reporting system—The Central Information System for Banking Infrastructure (CISBI) for all—
(A) Cooperative Banks
(B) Small Finance Banks
(C) Regional Rural Banks
(D) Payments Banks
(E) Foreign Banks

68. Vice-President Shri Venkaiah Naidu visited 'Freetown' the Capital city of.....in October 2019.
(A) Republic of Tanzania
(B) Republic of Mozambique
(C) Republic of Seychelles
(D) Union of the Comoros
(E) Republic of Sierra Leone

69. The 2019 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with which of the following neighbouring countries ?
(A) Republic of Yemen
(B) Republic of South Sudan
(C) Federal Republic of Somalia
(D) Eritrea
(E) Republic of Kenya

70. The 'Nakki Lake' is situated in the Indian State of—
(A) Himachal Pradesh
(B) Madhya Pradesh
(C) Gujarat
(D) Rajasthan
(E) Haryana

MADE EASY

71. The Frank Worrell Trophy is a test-match (cricket) series played between Australia and—
(A) West Indies
(B) South Africa
(C) New Zealand
(D) England
(E) Pakistan

72. The Japanese capital Tokyo will be hosting the Summer Olympics 2020 for the .....time.
(A) Third (B) Fifth
(C) Second (D) Fourth
(E) First

73. The 46th G7 Summit is 2020 shall be hosted by—
(A) United States of America
(B) United Kingdom
(C) Japan
(D) Germany
(E) France

74. According to the 2019 Annual Report of the Reserve Bank of India, the gross NPA ratio of Banks in 2018-19 was—
(A) 12·1 per cent
(B) 10·1 per cent
(C) 13·1 per cent
(D) 9·1 per cent
(E) 11·1 per cent

75. According to the 'EdelGive Hurun India Philanthropy List 2019' India's most generous philanthropists with a contribution of ₹ 826 crore is—
(A) Shiv Nadar
(B) Azim Prem Ji
(C) Mukesh Ambani
(D) Nandan Nelkeni
(E) Ajay Piramal

76. The 'Padmaja Naidu' Himalayan Zoological Park' is situated in the Indian State of—
(A) Uttarakhand
(B) Sikkim
(C) Himachal Pradesh
(D) Uttar Pradesh
(E) West Bengal

77. The 'Glori Church' which has received the ' Award for Merit' in this year's UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation is situated in which city ?
(A) Panaji (B) Kochi
(C) Chennai (D) Bengaluru
(E) Mumbai

78. The 'Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning programme–DHRUV' has been launched (in October 2019) at the ISRO headquarters by the Union Minister of—
(A) Human Resource Development
(B) Labour and Employment
(C) Earth Sciences
(D) Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
(E) Science and Technology

79. The '2019 Nobel Prize for Medicine' has been awarded to 'William Kaelin', Gregg Semenza' and Peter Ratcliffe' for their discoveries of—
(A) Molecular mechanisms controlling the circadian rhythm
(B) Mechanisms for Autophagy
(C) A novel therapy against malaria
(D) How cell sense and adapt to oxygen availability
(E) Cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation

80. The 'International Criminal Police Organisation' (Interpol) will hold its General Assembly in India in 2022. The 'Interpol' is an intergovernment organization having 194 member countries including India. It is headquartered in—
(A) Lisbon, Portugal
(B) London, UK
(C) Lyon, France
(D) Lucerne, Switzerland
(E) Liverpool, UK

Answers with Hints

1. (B)
2. (C) India International Cooperative Trade Fair (IICTF) was organised in New Delhi from 11 to 13 October.
3. (A)
4. (A) The new version of Bhim also Supports three additional languages–Konkani, Haryanvi and Bhojpuri over and above existing 13 languages.
5. (D) The State of World's Children is an annual report published by the United Nations Children's Fund, previously it was known as United Nations Children's Emergency Fund.
6. (D) 7. (A) 8. (B) 9. (A) 10. (E)
11. (C) Lakshadweep Island with an area of 32 km^2 is a smallest union Territory of India
12. (B) 13. (C) 14. (B) 15. (E) 16. (A)
17. (E) 18. (B) 19. (B) 20. (E) 21. (A)
22. (E)
23. (E) Balijatra Festival is celebrated in Cuttack district of Odisha.
24. (A) A joint military training exercise Vajra–Prahar, Conducted Scattle between October 13, 2019 and Oct. 28, 2019. The exercise is conducted alternately in India and U.S. The special forces and the Southern command of Indian Armed Forces participate in the exercise,
25. (D) The Indian Air Force Carried out a joint military exercise Shinyuu Maitri with Japanese air self defence Force from October 17 to 23, 2019 at Air Force Station Argan Simple in Panagarh Town is West-Bengal.
26. (D) Li Xuerul a Former Olympic Champion is a retired Chinese Badminton player, the most successful player of her time.
27. (D) 28. (C) 29. (B) 30. (B) 31. (C)
32. (C) 33. (C) 34. (B) 35. (D) 36. (D)
37. (A) 38. (B) 39. (D) 40. (B) 41. (E)
42. (E)
43. (A) Milkha Singh, 92, best known as the Flying Sikh and most remembered for finishing fourth in the 400 m final in Rome Olympic games was honoured with the life time achievement award.
44. (E)
45. (D) Air India became the first airline in the World to use a taxibot on A 320 aircraft with passengers on board.
46. (A) 47. (B) 48. (D) 49. (E) 50. (B)
51. (D) 52. (B) 53. (A) 54. (A) 55. (A)
56. (C) 57. (E) 58. (E) 59. (E)
60. (A) Mark Vincent Hurd (January 1, 1957)—Oct. 18, 2019) was an American technology executive who served as Co-CEO and as a member of Board of Directors of Oracle Corporation.
61. (B) 62. (A) 63. (A) 64. (B) 65. (C)
66. (B) 67. (A) 68. (E) 69. (D)
70. (D) Nakki lake is a lake situated in the Indian hill Station of Mt. Abu in Aravalli Range in Rajasthan.

Continued on Page 151

Solved Paper

UGC-NET/JRF EXAMINATION, 2019

(Held on 4-12-2019)

Compulsory Paper

(First Shift)

1. A university teacher plans to improve the study habits of students in his/her class. Which type of research paradigm will be helpful in this regard ?
   (A) Evaluative research paradigm
   (B) Fundamental research paradigm
   (C) Applied research paradigm
   (D) Action research paradigm

2. Which of the following sampling procedures will be appropriate for conducting researches with empirico-inductive research paradigm ?
   (A) Simple random sampling procedure
   (B) Systematic sampling procedure
   (C) Stratified sampling procedure
   (D) Any of the non-probability sampling procedures

3. When there is an animated discussion between a teacher and his or her students in the classroom, it can be classified as—
   (A) Horizontal communication
   (B) Mechanical communication
   (C) Linear communication
   (D) Categorical communication

4. Information overload in a classroom environment by a teacher will lead to—
   (A) High level participation
   (B) Semantic precision
   (C) Effective impression
   (D) Delayed feedback

5. In which of the following types of learning materials are the presentations highly structured and individualised ?
   (A) Textbooks prescribed by the universities
   (B) Journals and the articles recommended for readings
   (C) Writings of great thinkers selected for reflective readings
   (D) Programmed instructional and modular learning material

6. According to classical Indian school of logic, what is the correct sequence of steps involved in Anumana (influence) ?
   (A) Upanaya, Pratijna, Hetu, Udaharana, Nigmana
   (B) Pratijna, Hetu, Upanaya, Udaharana, Nigmana
   (C) Pratijna, Upanaya, Hetu, Udaharana, Nigmana
   (D) Pratijna, Hetu, Udaharana, Upanaya, Nigmana

7. In which of the following formats has 'Chapter Scheme' of the document to be formally approved by a research degree committee in the university ?
   (A) Thesis/dissertation
   (B) Seminar papers
   (C) Research articles
   (D) Research monographs

8. Consider the following argument:
   Statements : Some chairs are curtains. All curtains are bedsheets.
   Conclusion : Some chairs are bedsheets. What is the Mood of the above proposition ?
   (A) IAI (B) IAA
   (C) IIA (D) AII

9. A verbal communication technique used in teaching is—
   (A) Slow expression of words
   (B) Varying the speed of voice and tone
   (C) Presentation without pause
   (D) Resorting to semantic jugglery

10. Which of the following statements differentiate teaching from learning ?
    (a) Teaching is a social act while learning is a personal act.
    (b) Teaching implies learning.
    (c) Teaching is like selling while learning is like buying.
    (d) Teaching can occur without learning taking place.
    (e) In teaching, influence is directed towards learning and learner, while is learning it is usually towards oneself.
    Choose the correct answer from the following options.
    (A) (a), (c) and (e)
    (B) (a), (b) and (c)
    (C) (b), (c) and (d)
    (D) (c), (d) and (e)

11. Which of the learning outcomes is intended in teaching organised at understanding level ?
    (A) Longer recall and retention of facts.
    (B) Seeking of relationships and patterns among facts
    (C) Creative construction and critical interpretation of ideas
    (D) Mastery of facts and information

12. What is the exact equivalent discount of three successive discounts of 10%, 15% and 20% by sale of an article ?
    (A) 35·8% (B) 38·5%
    (C) 35·5% (D) 38·8%

13. Which one of the following hetwabhasa (fallacy) is involved in the argument, "Sound is element because it is caused ?
    (A) Viruddha or contradictory middle
    (B) Satpratipaksa or inferentially contradicted middle
    (C) Sadhyasama or the unproved middle
    (D) Badhita or non-inferentially contradicted middle

MAGAZINE ENGLISH

14. Which of the following is converse of 'Some S is P' ?
(A) Some S is not P
(B) Some P is not S
(C) Some P is S
(D) No P is S

15. Which of the following modes of communication can be employed in a classroom for effective teaching ?
(a) Top-down
(b) Iconic
(c) Associational
(d) Dissociational
(e) Symbolic
(f) Abstract
Choose the most appropriate option from the following :
(A) (a), (b) and(f)
(B) (c), (e) and (f)
(C) (b), (c) and (e)
(D) (a), (c) and (d)

16. Which of the following types of assessment is conducted periodically with an eye on standards ?
(A) Formative assessment
(B) Summative assessment
(C) Portfolio assessment
(D) Performance assessment

17. In a certain coding language, 'AEIOU' is written as 'UNHDZ'. Using the same coding language, 'BFJPV' will be written as—
(A) UOIEA (B) AEIOU
(C) CGKQW (D) WQKGC

18. Which of the following are classroom related factors the influence effectiveness of teaching ?
(a) Prior task related behaviour of students.
(b) Adherence to linear pattern of communication by the teacher.
(c) Socio-economic status of the family to which learners belong.
(d) Inappropriate use of technological resources by the teacher.
(e) Cultural background of students.
(A) (a), (b) and (c)
(B) (b), (c) and (d)
(C) (a), (b) and (d)
(D) (c), (d) and (e)

19. A researcher intends to make use of ICT in his/her research. What considerations should weigh most in such a decision ?
(a) Appropriateness of the tool used.
(b) Cost involved in procuring it.
(c) Availability of tools in the department where research is to be undertaken.
(d) Willingness of his/her supervisor to offer help.
(e) The company from which the ICT equipment has been procured.
Choose your answer from the following options :
(A) (a), (b) and (c)
(B) (c), (d) and (e)
(C) (a), (c) and (d)
(D) (b), (c) and (e)

20. A certain principal invested at compound interest payable yearly amounts to ₹ 10816·00 in 3 years and ₹ 11248·64 in 4 years. What is the rate of interest ?
(A) 3% (B) 4%
(C) 4·5% (D) 5·5%

21. A research scholar while submitting his/her thesis, did not acknowledge in the preface the help and support of the respondents of questionnaires used. This will be called an instance of—
(A) Technical lapse
(B) Wilful negligence
(C) Unethical act
(D) Lack of respect

22. Given below are two Statements One is labelled as Assertion (A) and other is labelled as Reason (R).
Assertion (A) : Use of slang is formal teaching makes communication lively and interesting.
Reasons (R) : Academic decency demands the avoidance of slang in the classroom environment.
In the light of the above statements, choose the correct option :
(A) Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A)
(B) Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is not the correct explanation of (A)
(C) (A) is true, but (R) is false
(D) (A) is false, but (R) is true

23. The sum of a number and its universe is – 4. The sum of their cubes is—
(A) – 52 (B) 52
(C) 64 (D) – 64

24. Consider the argument provided below :
"Sound is permanent because it is a product like the Jar."
Identify the fallacy involved in the above argument on the basis of Indian logic from the options given below
(A) Fallacy of trivial reason
(B) Fallacy of wrong assertion
(C) Fallacy of irrelevant reason
(D) Fallacy of contradictory reason

25. If 3% of $(a + b) = 7\%$ of $(a-b)$ and 5% of $(a - b) = 4\%$ of $(a+b)$, then what percentage of b is a ?
(A) $\frac{47}{23}\%$ (B) $\frac{23}{47}\%$
(C) $\frac{4700}{23}\%$ (D) $\frac{2300}{47}\%$

Comprehension

Directions—(Q. 26–30) The following table gives the percentage of marks obtained by 6 students in 5 different subjects in an examination. The numbers in the parenthesis give the maximum marks in each subject. Answer the given questions based on the table.

Subject (Max. Marks)	Percentage (%) of Marks Obtained				
Name of students	Maths (150)	Chemistry (130)	Physics (120)	Biology (100)	English (100)
Ankit	90	50	80	60	70
Amar	100	60	70	40	80
Sanya	90	60	85	80	60
Rahul	80	75	65	90	90
Puneet	80	80	70	85	50
Pooja	70	75	50	80	40

26. In which subject is the performance of the students worst in terms of percentage of marks ?
(A) Chemistry (B) Physics
(C) Biology (D) English

27. What is the overall percentage of marks obtained by Amar ?
(A) 70% (B) 72%
(C) 60% (D) 58·33%

28. What are the average marks obtained by all the six students in Chemistry ?
(A) 86·66 (B) 76·66
(C) 66·66 (D) 60·00

29. What was the aggregate of marks obtained by Sanya in all the five subjects ?
(A) 375 (B) 395
(C) 455 (D) 475

30. How many students obtained 60% and above marks in all the subjects ?
(A) Three (B) Two
(C) One (D) Zero

31. Under Green India Mission, how many hectares of degraded forest land are to be brought under afforestation ?
(A) 02 million hectares
(B) 06 million hectares
(C) 08 million hectares
(D) 20 million hectares

32. PCI stands for—
(A) Partial Component Interconnect
(B) Partial Component Interaction
(C) Peripheral Component Interconnect
(D) Peripheral Component Interaction

33. Database WOS stands for—
(A) Web of Science
(B) Web of Sources
(C) World of Science
(D) Web of Service

34. Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) aims to achieve the following in Higher Education System—
(a) Equity (b) Access
(c) 50% GER (d) Excellence
Choose the correct option from those given below :
(A) (a), (b) and (c)
(B) (a), (c) and (d)
(C) (a), (b) and (d)
(D) (b), (c) and (d)

35. The national agency for responding to computer security incidents as and when they occur, is—
(A) CAT (B) CDAC
(C) CCA (D) ICERT

36. The most dominant source of Benzene emissions in ambient air is—
(A) Cement industry
(B) Cigarettes
(C) Car exhausts
(D) Paints and varnish

37. Which of the following statements is true in the Indian context ?
(A) Autonomous colleges can grant degrees independent of universities.
(B) Autonomous colleges can grant only bachelor's degree independent of universities.
(C) Except doctoral degrees, all other degrees and diplomas can be granted by autonomous colleges.
(D) Whatever may be the degree or diploma, autonomous colleges can grant them under their own name but under the seal of an affiliated university.

38. Identify from the options given below, the co-benefit of Montreal Protocol—
(A) Impetus to development of energy efficient systems
(B) Reduction in carbon dioxide (equivalent) emissions
(C) Convergence of efforts of international community in addressing air pollution
(D) Control of transboundary movement of hazardous waste

39. The term one gigabyte refers to—
(A) 1024 petabytes
(B) 1024 megabytes
(C) 1024 kilobytes
(D) 1024 bytes

40. Which one of the following tasks is associated with changing appearance of a documents in word processing ?
(A) Editing (B) Formatting
(C) Writing (D) Printing

41. According to GATS (General Agreement on Trade and Services), higher education should be a commodity in the—
(A) domestic public sector
(B) domestic private sector
(C) non-trading sector
(D) global marketplace

42. The most important pollutants that cause degradation of water quality in rivers and streams are—
(a) Bacteria
(b) Nutrients
(c) Metals
(d) Total dissolved solids
(e) Algae
Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below :
(A) (a), (b) and (c)
(B) (a), (b) and (d)
(C) (a), (b), (d) and (e)
(D) (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e)

43. The themes of some Sustainable Development Goals are—
(a) Climate action
(b) Sustainable cities and communities
(c) Peace, justice and strong institutions
(d) Skill development and decent employment
(e) Green agriculture
(f) Responsible consumption and production
Choose the most appropriate from those given below :
(A) (a), (b), (c), (e) and (f)
(B) (b), (c), (e) and (f)
(C) (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)
(D) (a), (b), (c) and (f)

44. ..... is a wireless technology built in electronic gadgets for transferring data over short distance.
(A) WiFi (B) Bluetooth
(C) Modem (D) USB

45. The major barriers for access to higher education in India are—
(a) more opportunities of employment for less educated
(b) government policies
(c) language of instruction
(d) economic status
(e) competition from foreign universities
(f) gender discrimination in society

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Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) (a), (b) and (c)
(B) (b), (c) and (e)
(C) (c), (d) and (f)
(D) (d), (e) and (f)

Directions—(Q. 46–50) Read the passage carefully and answer questions that follow :

There is no doubt that the market as a reality and political economy as a theory played an important role in the liberal critique. But liberalism is neither the consequence nor the development of these; rather, the market played, in the liberal critique, the role of a 'test', a locus of privileged experience where one can identify the effects of excessive governmentality and even weigh their significance : the analysis of the mechanisms of 'dearth' or more generally, of the grain trade in the middle of the eighteenth century, was meant to show the point at which governing was always governing too much. Therefore, an analysis to make visible. In the form of evidence, the formation of the value and circulation of wealth– or, on the contrary, an analysis presupposing the intrinsic invisibility of the connection between individual profit-seeking and the growth of collective wealth–economics, in any case, shows a basic incompatibility between the optimal development of the economic process and maximisation of government procedures. It is by this, more than the play of ideas, the French or English economists broke away from mercantilism and commercialism; they freed reflection on economic practice from the hegemony of the 'reason of state' and from the saturation of governmental intervention. By using it as a measure of 'governing too much'. They placed it at the limit of governmental action. Liberalism does not derive from juridical thought any more than it does from an economic analysis. It is not the idea of a political society, but the result of search for a liberal technology of government.

46. What is incompatible with optimal economic development ?
(A) Play of ideas
(B) Absence of commercialism
(C) Political society
(D) Excessive government procedures

47. The liberal critique examined the implications of—
(A) market expansion
(B) too much governance
(C) growth of political economy
(D) politics of marketisation

48. What kind of evidence was needed to make the liberal critique visible ?
(A) Circulation of wealth
(B) Pre-supposing individual profit
(C) Dearth in supply of grain
(D) Incompatibility of growth

49. The passage is indicative of the author's preference to—
(A) economic hegemony of individuals
(B) limit government control of economics
(C) seek liberalism from juridical thought
(D) promote individual profits

50. Which of the following played a role in the liberal critique ?
(A) Liberalism as a consequence of market forces
(B) Liberalism as an offshoot of political economy
(C) Reality of market
(D) Political economy as a practice

Answers with Hints

1. (D) 2. (D) 3. (A) 4. (D) 5. (D)
6. (D) 7. (A) 8. (A) 9. (B) 10. (A)
11. (B)
12. (D) Required equivalent discount

$$= 100 - \frac{(100-20)}{100\times100}$$

$$= 100 - \frac{90\times85\times80}{100\times100}$$

$$= 100 - 61{\cdot}2$$

$$= 38{\cdot}8\%$$

13. (A) 14. (C) 15. (C) 16. (B)
17. (A) As,

Same as,

18. (C) 19. (A)
20. (B) Let rate of interest $= r\%$
As per question,

$$10816\left(1+\frac{R}{100}\right) = 11248{\cdot}64$$

$$\frac{100+R}{100} = 1{\cdot}04$$

$$100 + R = 104$$

$$R = 4\%$$

21. (C) 22. (D)
23. (A) Let number $= x$
As per question,

$$x + \frac{1}{x} = -4$$

On cubing both side

$$x^3 + \frac{1}{x^3} + 3(-4) = -64$$

$$x^3 + \frac{1}{x^3} = -64 + 12$$

$$= -52$$

24. (D)
25. (C) $(a+b)\times\frac{3}{100} = ab\times\frac{7}{100}$

$$3a + 3b = 7ab$$

$$ab = \frac{3a+3b}{7} \quad \ldots(i)$$

and $(a-b)\times\frac{5}{100} = ab\times\frac{4}{100}$

$$5a - 5b = 4ab$$

$$ab = \frac{5a-5b}{4} \quad \ldots(ii)$$

From equ. (i) and (ii)

$$\frac{3a+3b}{7} = \frac{5a-5b}{4}$$

$$12a + 12b = 35a - 35b$$

$$23a = 47b$$

$$\frac{a}{b} = \frac{47}{23}$$

Required $\% = \frac{47}{23}\times100$

$$= \frac{4700}{23}\%$$

26. (D) Performance % of the students in :

$$\text{Chemistry} = \frac{65+78+78}{+97{\cdot}5+104+97{\cdot}5}{130\times6}$$

$$= \frac{520}{780}\times100$$

$$= 66{\cdot}67\%$$

Continued on Page 151

Solved Model Paper

FORTHCOMING UPSC CIVIL SERVICES (Pre.) EXAM., 2020

General Studies

1. The study of images of deities falls within a branch of art history called—
   (A) Pictography
   (B) Lithography
   (C) Icthyography
   (D) Iconography

2. With reference to the 'Nagara or North Indian temple style', which of the following statements is/are correct ?
   1. In North India it is common for an entire temple to be built on a stone platform with steps leading up to it.
   2. *Phamsana* buildings tend to be broader and shorter than latina ones.
   3. *Valabhi* type are rectangular buildings with a roof that rises into a vaulted chamber.

   (A) 1 and 2 only
   (B) 3 only
   (C) 2 and 3 only
   (D) 1, 2 and 3

3. Which of the following statements with respect to Agri Export Zone are true ?
   1. The concept of Agri Export Zone (AEZ) was introduced to take a comprehensive look at a particular produce/product located in a contiguous area for the purpose of developing and sourcing the raw materials, their processing/packaging, leading to final exports.
   2. The concept hinged primarily on convergence of existing Central and State Government schemes to take care of financial interventions required at various stages of value chain.
   3. Gujarat has the largest number of Agri export zones in the country.

   (A) 1 and 2 only
   (B) 1 and 3 only
   (C) 2 and 3 only
   (D) All of the above

4. With reference to 'The Kartarpur corridor', which of the following statements is/are correct ?
   1. The Kartarpur corridor involves a road link for Sikh pilgrims to visit the famous Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan.
   2. The gurudwara was established by the first Sikh Guru in 1522.
   3. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had first suggested the corridor when he took the bus trip to Lahore in 1999.

   Select the correct answer using the code given below :
   (A) 1 and 2 only
   (B) 3 only
   (C) 2 and 3 only
   (D) 1, 2 and 3

5. The Karkota period of Kashmir is the most significant in terms of—
   (A) Law and Order
   (B) Architecture
   (C) Agriculture
   (D) Governance

6. The process of nation-building did not come to an end with partition and integration of Princely States. Now the challenge was to draw the internal boundaries of the Indian states. Consider the following statements with respect to Reorganisation of States.
   1. During colonial rule, the state boundaries were drawn either on administrative convenience or simply coincided with the territories annexed by the British government or the territories ruled by the princely powers.
   2. Our national movement had rejected these divisions as artificial and had promised the linguistic principle as the basis of formation of states.

   Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?
   (A) Only 1
   (B) Only 2
   (C) 1 and 2
   (D) None of the above

7. Which among the following statements about the partition is incorrect ?
   (A) Partition of India was the outcome of the 'two-nation theory'
   (B) Punjab and Bengal were the two provinces divided on the basis of religion
   (C) East Pakistan and West Pakistan were not contiguous
   (D) The scheme of partition included a plan for transfer of population across the border

8. With reference to Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which among the following statements is/are correct ?
   1. A strategic petroleum reserve is a stockpile of crude oil held by a Government or a private company to ensure economic and national security during an energy crisis.
   2. To address energy insecurity, the Indira Gandhi government mooted the concept of strategic petroleum reserves in 1983.
   3. The construction of the Strategic Crude Oil Storage facilities is being managed by Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL).

MAGAZINE

Select the correct answer using the codes given below :
(A) 1 only
(B) 1 and 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

9. With reference to 'rooftop solar capacity in India, which among the following statements is/are correct ?
   1. Tamil Nadu has the highest installed rooftop solar capacity in India of 132 MW.
   2. The largest rooftop solar plant is installed in Beas, Punjab and has a total capacity of 11·5 MW.
   3. The Haryana government has made it mandatory for any building with 500 square yards plot size or more to install rooftop solar systems.

   Which of the above statements are true ?
   (A) 1 and 2 only
   (b) 2 and 3 only
   (C) 1 and 3 only
   (D) All of the above

10. Consider the following statements regarding Global Picture of Solid Waste Management.
    1. In 2016, the worlds' cities generated 2·01 billion tonnes of solid waste, amounting to a footprint of 0·74 kilograms per person per day.
    2. In low-income countries, over 90% of waste is often disposed in unregulated dumps or openly burned.
    3. The fastest growing regions are Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where total waste generation is expected to triple than double by 2050.

    Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
    Codes :
    (A) 1 and 2 (B) 1, 2 and 3
    (C) 2 only (D) 1 and 3

11. Consider the following statements with regard to Karavali Utsav/festival.
    1. Karavali Utsav/festival is a three decades old festival of this coastal district of Goa.
    2. This festival is organized by District Administration every year in the district.

    Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?
    (A) Only 1
    (B) Only 2
    (C) 1 and 2
    (D) None of the above

12. How many laboratories for Agri product testing have been recently set up by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) ?
    (A) 200 (B) 250
    (C) 150 (D) 186

13. Which of the following statements regarding national trade facilitation action plan are true ?
    1. It aims to transform cross border clearance ecosystem through efficient, transparent, risk based, coordinated, digital, seamless and technology driven procedure supported by state-of-the-art sea ports, airports and land borders.
    2. It lists out specific activities which would be carried out by all regulatory agencies like Customs, Drug Controller, Plant Quarantine, FSSAI, DGFT etc.
    3. The national trade facilitation action plan is headed by the Revenue secretary.

    Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
    Codes :
    (A) 1 and 2 only
    (B) 2 and 3 only
    (C) 1 and 3 only
    (D) All of the above

14. Consider the following statements with regard to PCS 1x—
    1. 'PCS 1x' is a cloud-based new generation technology, with a user-friendly interface.
    2. A unique feature of 'PCS1x' is that it can latch on to third party software which provides services to the maritime industry thereby enabling the stakeholders to access a wide network of services.
    3. Indian Ports Association (IPA), under the guidance of the Ministry of Shipping, launched the Port Community System 'PCS1x'.

    Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
    Codes :
    (A) 1 and 2 only
    (B) 2 and 3 only
    (C) 1 and 3 only
    (D) All of the above

15. Which of the following statements regarding 'Sangai Festival' are true ?
    1. Sangai festival is an annual cultural festival organised by Manipur Tourism Department every year from 21 to 30 November.
    2. It started in the year 1989.
    3. The 'Festival' is named after the State animal, Sangai, the brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur.

    Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
    Codes :
    (A) 1 and 2 only
    (B) 2 and 3 only
    (C) 1 and 3 only
    (D) All of the above

16. Which of the following statements regarding 'Kala Utsav' are true ?
    1. Kala Utsav is an initiative of the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India.
    2. It was launched in 2015, to promote arts in education, by nurturing and showcasing the artistic talent of school students in the country.
    3. Kala Utsav helps in enhancing the various skills of the participants and prepares them as ambassadors of our culture.

    Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
    Codes :
    (A) 1 and 2 only
    (B) 2 and 3 only
    (C) 1 and 3 only
    (D) All of the above

17. Consider the following sentences with reference to Coal To Liquid Technology—
    1. The process of converting coal to liquid hydrocarbons, liquid fuels and petrochemicals is called Coal Liquefaction.

MASTER KEY

2. Coal can be converted into liquid fuels like gasoline/ diesel by indirect liquefaction technique through Fischer-Tropsch route.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

18. Consider the following sentences regarding Exseed Sat-1—
1. Elon Musk-led US space agency Space X based in California launched India's first privately built satellite Exseed Sat-1.
2. Mumbai based Exseed Space has become the first private commercial organisation in India to have a satellite in space.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

19. Consider the following sentences with reference to Asiatic Lion Conservation Project—
1. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has launched the "Asiatic Lion Conservation Project".
2. With timely and stringent protection offered by the State Government and the Center Government, Asiatic lions have increased to the current population of over 500 numbers.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

20. Consider the following sentences with reference to Samagra Shiksha Scheme—
1. Samagra Shiksha an Integrated Scheme for School Education has been launched throughout the country as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with effect from the year 2018-19.
2. It is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class XII and aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels of school education.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

21. Which of the following statements regarding the Logistics Development Committee are true ?
1. The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) constituted a Logistics Development Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bibek Debroy.
2. The Committee was tasked to assess key challenges in logistics development and associated commerce and suggest policy reforms for ease of doing trade in India.
3. The Committee also included Dr. Jayanta Roy, a well-known trade policy expert specializing in Trade and Logistics Facilitation.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :

Codes :

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) All of the above

22. Consider the following sentences with reference to Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)—
1. Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP), the sub-scheme under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
2. It has the objective of helping rural households including women to set up enterprises.
3. Skill building support is provided to all the entrepreneurs supported under Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme through Community Resource Persons for Enterprise Promotion (CRP-EP).
4. SVEP process mandates the preparation of a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for each block.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :

Codes :

(A) 1, 3 and 4
(B) 2 and 4
(C) 2, 3 and 4
(D) All of the above

23. With reference to 'Public Financial Management System (PFMS)' which of the following statements is/are correct ?
1. It is an ambitious project of Government of India being implemented by Department of Investment and Public Asset Management.
2. PFMS provides platform for efficient management of funds through tracking of funds and real time reporting of expenditure and receipts through Treasury and Bank Interface.
3. PFMS has organically grown on the basis of performance and user acceptance.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

24. The term 'Fiat Money' is sometimes seen in the news. Which of the following statements best describes/describe this term ?
1. Any money that the government declares as legal tender.
2. This type of money is backed by a physical commodity.
3. Fiat money has no intrinsic value.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) 1 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

25. Which rock edict informs us about Asoka's first Dhamma Yatra to Bodhgaya and Bodhi Tree ?
(A) Bhabra rock edict
(B) Minor rock edict of Yerragudi
(C) 13th Major Rock Edict
(D) 8th Major Rock Edict

26. Consider the following statements—
1. Pantanal is a natural region encompassing the world's largest tropical wetland area.
2. It is located mostly within the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul, but it extends into Mato Grosso and portions of Bolivia and Paraguay.

Which among the above statements is / are correct ?
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

27. With reference to the Project SECURE, Consider the following statements—
1. The Union Government had launched SECURE Himalaya, a six-year project to ensure conservation of locally and globally significant biodiversity, land and forest resources in high Himalayan ecosystem.
2. It was launched by Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in association with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Which among the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

28. Researchers of which of the following IITs have recently developed materials to produce energy from water on a small scale ?
(A) IIT Hyderabad
(B) IIT Mumbai
(C) IIT Madras
(D) IIT Guwahati

29. Where did Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) inaugurate first Silk Processing Plant ?
(A) Surendranagar, Gujarat
(B) Surat, Gujarat
(C) Rajkot, Gujarat
(D) Bhavnagar, Gujarat

30. With reference to Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), consider the following statements—
1. The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) is the professional head of the Indian Armed Forces and the senior-most uniformed military adviser to the Indian government.
2. The Chief of Defence Staff will also head the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), to be created within the Ministry of Defence and function as its Secretary.
3. He will act as the Principal Military Adviser to Defence Minister on all tri-Services matters.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct ?
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

31. Recently RBI has announced the Indian version of 'America's Operation Twist'—
(A) to bring down long-term interest rates
(B) to reduce NPA
(C) to improve the managerial structure of banks
(D) None of the above

32. Consider the following statements—
1. Deputy Speaker and Speaker may resign by writing to each other.
2. Attorney General and Solicitor General may resign by writing to each other.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

33. Consider the following sentences regarding National Clean Air Programme—
1. The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), was formally unveiled on January 10, 2019.
2. Climate Justice is working at the intersections of environmental degradation and the racial, social, and economic inequities it perpetuates.
3. It is envisaged as a scheme to provide the States and the Centre with a framework to combat air pollution.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 1 and 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

34. Consider the following statements with regard to 'Global Carbon Project'—
1. The Global Carbon Project was established in 2001 by a shared partnership between the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP), the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and Diversitas.
2. It was formed to work with the international science community to establish a common and mutually agreed knowledge base to support policy debate and action to slow down and ultimately stop the increase of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Which of the above state-ments is/are correct ?
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

35. Consider the following statements with regard to Yellow Vests Movement—
1. The Yellow Vests Movement began in Vietnam.
2. The movement is motivated by rising fuel prices, high cost of living, and claims that a disproportionate

MUSAFIR ACADEMY

burden of the government's tax reforms was falling on the working and middle classes, especially in rural and periurban areas.

3. These principles give directions to the state for making laws and policies for the collective good of the people.
4. These principles are justiciable and are enforceable by the Courts of law.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) 1, 2 and 4
(B) 2 and 3
(C) 2 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

36. Consider the following statements with regard to Kala Ghoda Arts Festival—

1. Kala Ghoda Arts Festival is known as India's oldest street festival for arts, theatre and cinema.
2. Kala Ghoda festival is held annually in the months of January or February in the Kala Ghoda region of Southern Mumbai.
3. The festival is named after the blackish equestrian statue of Edward VII which used to be located in the fort area of Mumbai.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 1 and 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

37. Consider the following statements regarding the Dhanu Jatra festival—

1. The famous 11-day long 'Dhanu Jatra', considered as the largest open-air theatre of the world begins at Bargarh in western Odisha.
2. The Jatra is based on the mythological story of Lord Krishna and his demon uncle King Kansa.
3. The department of Culture of the Government of India has accorded National Festival status to Dhanu Jatra in November 2014.

Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1
(B) 1 and 2
(C) 2 and 3
(D) All of the above

38. With reference to 'GSAT-30', which of the following statements is/are correct ?

1. India's latest communication satellite GSAT-30 was successfully launched from the Spaceport in French Guiana on January 17, 2020.
2. GSAT-30 derives its heritage from ISRO's earlier INSAT/GSAT satellite series and will replace INSAT-4A in orbit.
3. The satellite will provide communication services to Indian mainland and islands through Ku-band and wide coverage covering Gulf countries, a large number of Asian countries and Australia through C-band.

Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1
(B) 1 and 2
(C) 2 and 3
(D) All of the above

39. With reference to 'LIGO (Laser Inferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory)', which of the following statements is/are correct ?

1. LIGO is the world's largest gravitational wave observatory
2. The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) and Virgo detectors recorded an unknown or unanticipated 'burst' of gravitational waves on January 14, 2020.

Which among the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

40. With reference to' Human Space Flight Infrastructure Centre (HSFIC)', which of the following statements is/are correct ?

1. The ISRO proposed 2,700 crore of infrastructure plan to construct Human Space Flight Infrastructure Centre on January 6, 2020.
2. The facility is to be set up at Challakere, Chitradurga district of Karnataka and is expected to become operational in three years.
3 At present, astronauts part of Gaganyaan Mission, the Human Spaceflight Programme of ISRO are trained in Russia.
4. The centre aims to integrate the works of Human Spaceflight Programme that are currently spread across various centres such as UR Rao Satellite Centre, Bengaluru, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and Institute of Aerospace Medicine of Air Force.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below :

Codes :

(A) 1 and 4
(B) 2 and 3
(C) 2, 3 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

41. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged off 51st K9 VAJRA-T Gun from Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Armoured System Complex at Hazira in Gujarat on January 16, 2020. Consider the following statements regarding K9 VAJRA-T Gun.

1. The K9 VAJRA-T 155 mm/52 Cal. Tracked Self-Propelled Howitzer meets the requirements of 21st century warfare
2. The Vajra (Sanskrit meaning thunderbolt and diamond) is an ornamental symbol that appears again and again in Indian, Buddhist, and Jainism mythology to represent the unyielding power of spirit

Which among the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

MASTERING

42. Which of the following is a characteristic of Web2.0 applications ?
(A) Multiple users schedule their time to use Web2.0 applications one by one
(B) Web2.0 applications are focused on the ability for people to collaborate and share information online
(C) Web2.0 applications provide users with content rather than facilitating users to create it
(D) Web2.0 applications use only static pages

43. With reference to 'HFHSD – IN 512' which of the following statements is/are correct ?
1. On 13 January, 2020, the launch of the new fuel (High Flash High Speed Diesel) HFHSD–IN 512, with revised technical specifications was undertaken.
2. With this, the country will be able to ensure interoperability amongst foreign navies during fleet exercises and provide fuel of quality better than that mandated to all foreign navies under bilateral / multi-national logistics support pacts including LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement).
3. The new specification will not only ensure a better quality fuel but also result in a reduced carbon footprint.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

44. Lai Haraoba is a ritualistic festival observed in—
(A) Nagaland (B) Tripura
(C) Sikkim (D) Assam

45. With respect to HSN code which of the following statements are true ?
1. HSN code stands for "Harmonized System of Nomenclature".
2. This system has been introduced for the systematic classification of goods all over the world.
3. HSN code is a 6-digit uniform code that classifies 5000+ products and is accepted worldwide.
4. It was developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and it came into effect from 1988.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below :
Codes :
(A) 1 and 4
(B) 2 and 3
(C) 2, 3 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

46. Consider the following sentences with reference to Kimberley Process Certification Scheme—
1. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) outlines the rules that govern the trade in rough diamonds.
2. The Kimberley Process (KP) is a multilateral trade regime established in 2003 with the goal of preventing the flow of conflict diamonds.
3. It relies on the contributions –under the principle of 'burden-sharing' of participants, supported by industry and civil society observers.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
Codes :
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) All of the above

47. With reference to 'Climate Governance', which of the following statements is/are correct ?
1. Climate governance goes beyond the science of climate change to look at the social, economic and political issues related to climate change.
2. Climate governance also deals with how inclusive the decision making process is in the exercise of power and responsibilities.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

48. Consider the following statements about Anti-Satellite test conducted by India—
1. The test was named as Operation Shakti.
2. India is the first Asian country to conduct this test.
3. The test is in violation of Outer Space Treaty.
4. The test was conducted by ISRO

Which of the following are not correct ?
(A) 3 and 4 only
(B) 2 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) All of the above

49. Which of the following is true about Mankad law ?
(A) It says extensive use of the anti-biotic will make them ineffective in future
(B) It is a way used first by an Indian to effect a run out
(C) It is a principle used to separate heavy water from normal sea water
(D) It is a principle which suggests about bio magnification of toxins while moving from lower to higher food chain

50. In which of the following states did the scientists of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), recently declare about the discovery of three new species of tiny frogs ?
(A) Meghalaya
(B) Tripura
(C) Arunachal Pradesh
(D) Sikkim

51. What is Asia Pacific Group ?
(A) An association of Asian countries led by ASEAN against nuclear proliferation
(B) It is a grouping of Asian countries to provide financial support to developing countries
(C) It is the FATF-style regional body for prevention of money laundering and terror financing
(D) It is a group led by Japan with countries in Pacific and Oceania region to control over fishing in the region and for conservation of marine ecosystem

52. With reference to the executive power in a state in India, which among the following statements is/are correct ?
1. Executive power of the state is vested in Governor.
2. Real executive authority in a state is Council of Ministers.
3. All executive decisions in a state are taken in the name of Chief Minister.

Choose the correct option from the codes given below :
(A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 2 and 3
(C) Only 3
(D) 1, 2 and 3

53. Which of the following statements is not true about Aadhaar Payment Bridge System (APBS) ?
(A) It is managed by the National Informatics Center
(B) It is used to transfer subsidies in a timely manner directly into the Aadhaar Enabled Bank Account
(C) Objective of APBS is to make Aadhaar number as a financial address instead of using multiple details like name, account number and IFSC code etc.
(D) Diverted payments APBS have become a major issue the for poor and uneducated

54. Very Large Array (VLA), a radio astronomy observatory which led to the recent discovery of smallest galaxies known to host massive black holes, is located in—
(A) Paris
(B) Hawaii Island
(C) New York
(D) Central New Mexico

55. Which of the following are not the examples of complementary goods for each other ?
1. Pen and ink
2. Shoes and socks
3. Tea and coffee
4. Pigeon pea and gram

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 3 and 4 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 4 only

56. The cemeteries discovered around the cities like Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Kalibangan, Lothal and Rupar throw light on the burial practices of the Harappans. Consider the following statements with regard to Burial Methods of Indus valley civilization—
1. Complete burial and post-cremation burial were popular at Mohenjodaro.
2. At Lothal the burial pit was lined with burnt bricks indicating the use of coffins.
3. Wooden coffins were also found at Harappa.
4. The practice of pot burials is found at Lothal sometimes with pairs of skeletons.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
Codes :
(A) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(B) 1, 2 and 4
(C) 1, 3 and 4
(D) 4 only

57. The social life of the Aryans in the Rig Vedic age was as simple as it was sacred. It reflected the basic realities of a village life style. Consider the following statements with regard to social life of Rig Vedic society.
1. The Rig Vedic Society was patriarchal.
2. The basic unit of society was family or *graham*. The head of the family was known as *grahapathi*.
3. Polygamy was generally practiced while monogamy was prevalent among the royal and noble families.
4. Women were given equal opportunities as men for their spiritual and intellectual development.
5. There was no child marriage and the practice of sati was absent.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
Codes :
(A) 1, 3, 4 and 5
(B) 1, 2, 4 and 5
(C) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

58. Buddhism has made a remarkable contribution to the development of Indian culture. Consider the following statements with regard to contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture.
1. Buddhism promoted education through residential universities like those at Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramasila.
2. The language of Pali and other local languages developed through the teachings of Buddhism.
3. The concept of ahimsa was its chief contribution. Later, it became one of the cherished values of our nation.
4. The stupas at Sanchi, Bharhut and Gaya are wonderful pieces of architecture. Buddhism takes the credit for the Chaityas and Viharas in different parts of India.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :
Codes :
(A) 1, 3 and 4
(B) 1, 2 and 4
(C) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(D) 1 and 4 only

59. Match the following—

(a)	Kosala	1.	Udayana
(b)	Avanti	2.	Pradyota
(c)	Magadha	3.	Prasenajit
(d)	Vatsa	4.	Bimbisara

Select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists :
Codes :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	3	2	4
(B)	3	2	4	1
(C)	2	1	4	3
(D)	2	3	1	4

60. Consider the following statements with regard to treaty of Surat—
1. Raghunath Rao concluded with the Bombay council, the Treaty of Surat in March 1775.
2. Under this treaty Raghunath Rao promised to hand over Bassein and Salsette and a few islands near Bombay to the British.

3. This treaty was approved by the Calcutta Council.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :

Codes :

(A) 1 only (B) 2 only
(C) 1 and 2 (D) 1, 2 and 3

61. Who said that "India's Swaraj would have to come either from the British Parliament or through violence."
(A) Sir Jayson-Hicks
(B) Lord Curzon
(C) Lord Napier
(D) Lord Chelmsford

62. Consider the following statements with regard to Census-2011—
1. Thane district of Maharashtra is the most populated district of India.
2. Dibang Valley of Arunachal Pradesh is the least populated district of India.
3. Kurung Kumey of Arunachal Pradesh registered highest population growth rate of 111·01 per cent.
4. Longleng district of Nagaland registered negative population growth rate of (–)58·39.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :

Codes :

(A) 1 and 2
(B) 1, 2 and 3
(C) 2, 3 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

63. Consider the following statements—
1. To get input, a firm has to pay for them, which is called the cost of production.
2. Production is the process by which inputs are transformed into 'output'.
3. The difference between the revenue and cost is called the firm's profit.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
(A) 3 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

64. Which of the following statement(s) can explain the versatile nature of carbon ?
1. Carbon has the unique property of catenation.
2. The bonds that carbon forms with most other elements are very strong.
3. Carbon is highly active element.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 1 and 3 only
(C) 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

65. On 7-10 January, 2020; third international symposium on marine ecosystems – challenges and opportunities (MECOS-3) was organised in—
(A) Kochi
(B) Mangalore
(C) Vishakhapatnam
(D) Paradip

66. Consider the following statements—
1. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries about 85 per cent of the population of India lived in its villages.
2. Both peasants and landed elites were involved in agricultural production and claimed rights to a share of the produce.
3. This created relationships of cooperation, competition and conflict among them.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) 1, 2 and 3
(D) 2 and 3

67. Consider the following statements with regard to Litmus solution—
1. Litmus solution is a purple dye, which is extracted from Lichen.
2. Lichen is a plant belonging to the division Thallophyta.
3. Litmus solution is commonly used as an indicator.
4. When the litmus solution is neither acidic nor basic, its colour is Red.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 and 4 (B) 2 and 3
(C) 1, 3 and 4 (D) 1, 2 and 3

68. What are the four types of e-commerce transactions ?
(A) business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), manufacturer-to-business (M2B), and manufacturer to consumer (M2C)
(B) manufacturer-to-business (M2B), manufacturer-to-consumer (M2C), consumer-to-business (C2B), and consumer-to-consumer (C2C)
(C) business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), supplier-to-business (S2B), and supplier-to-consumer (S2C)
(D) business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-business (C2B), and consumer-to-consumer (C2C)

69. Consider the following statements with regard to Telangana–
1. For the first time—outside the Hindi and Bengali-speaking areas—two states speaking the same language have been created.
2. Telangana is the 17th largest state in the country.
3. The region is situated at a high altitude in an upland area. Two major rivers Godavari and Krishna flow through the region but most of the land is arid.
4. It would border on Maharashtra, Karnataka and the residuary state of Andhra Pradesh (Seemandhra).

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) 1 and 2 (B) 2 and 3
(C) 1, 3 and 4 (D) 1, 2 and 3

70. The coal in an 'angithi' just glows red and gives out heat without a flame, why ?
(A) Coal produces carbon dioxide when it is burnt
(B) A flame is only produced when gaseous substances burn
(C) Coal has the water content in it which prevents flame to be produced
(D) None of the above

71. Bio-sensor is a device which converts biological signals into an electrical signal. It is used in medical field and industries. Consider the following statements with regard to use of Bio-sensor.
1. Blood glucose level can be detected.
2. Production of any toxin in the body due to infection can be detected.
3. Pollution in drinking water can be monitored.
4. Odour, freshness and taste of food can be measured.

Select the correct answers using the codes given below :

Codes :

(A) 1, 2 and 3 (B) 1, 3 and 4
(C) 1, 2 and 4 (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

72. Consider the following sentences regarding Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (CIBIL).
1. The Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited or CIBIL, is India's first Credit Information Company (CIC) that was created to play an important role in India's financial system by helping the loan providers manage their business and consumers to secure their credit quicker and at improved terms.
2. CIBIL gathers and maintains the records of an individual's payments regarding his loans and credit cards.
3. The member banks and the credit institutions submit these records to CIBIL every month following which, this information is utilised to create Credit Information Reports (CIR) and credit scores which are then provided to credit institutions to help them evaluate and approve the loan applications.
4. CIBIL can alter or delete any records, and it maintain any list of good or bad credit.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) 2, 3 and 4
(B) 1, 2 and 4
(C) 1, 2 and 3
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

73. Consider the following sentences regarding Climate Justice—
1. The first acknowledged reference to the concept of climate justice appeared in a 1999 report titled Greenhouse Gangsters vs. Climate Justice by the San Francisco-based Corporate Watch group.
2. Climate Justice is working at the intersections of environmental degradation and the racial, social, and economic inequities it perpetuates.
3. The heart of climate justice is the understanding that the urgent action needed to prevent climate change must be based on community-led solutions and the well-being of local communities, Indigenous Peoples and the global poor, as well as biodiversity and intact ecosystems.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are incorrect ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

74. Consider the following sentences regarding Crypto-currency.
1. Crypto-currency is a type of digital currency that uses cryptography for security and anti-counterfeiting measures.
2. Users must reach a consensus about crypto-currency's value and use it as an exchange medium.
3. It is tied to a particular country, its value is controlled by a central bank.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are incorrect ?

(A) 1 and 2
(B) Only 3
(C) 1 and 3
(D) None of the above

75. Mark the correct option with reference to the Painted Grey Ware.

(A) Plates and bowls are the most common vessels made out of Painted Grey Ware

(B) These are extremely fine to touch, with a nice, smooth surface.

(C) Perhaps these were used on special occasions, for important people, and to serve special food

(D) All of the above

76. Consider the following sentences—
1. Geopolitics examines the political, economic and strategic significance of geography.
2. In 1890 Alfred Thayer Mahan wrote a book entitled *'The Influence of Sea Power upon History'* in which he discussed, sea power was necessary to facilitate trade and peaceful commerce.
3. The doctrine of geopolitics gained attention largely through the work of Sir Halford Mackinder in England.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) 1 and 2 (B) 2 and 3
(C) 1, 2 and 3 (D) 1 and 3

77. Treaty of Seringapatam was signed by Tipu on the one hand and the English and their allies (Nizam and the Peshwa) on the other. The Treaty stipulated that—
1. The earlier treaties between the English and the rulers of Mysore stood confirmed.
2. Tipu was to cede half his territories which were to be shared among the three allies.
3. Tipu was to make immediate payment of ₹ 1·6 crore out of the total indemnity agreed upon (₹ 6 crore) while the remainder (2 crore) was to be given in three instalments.
4. Tipu was also to order the release of all prisoners of war.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) 1, 2 and 3 (B) 2, 3 and 4
(C) 1 and 2 (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

78. With reference to the Charbagh style under the Mughal's architecture, consider the following statements—
1. Charbagh style was divided into four symmetrical parts.

2. The tradition of making Charbagh began from the time of Babur.
3. Humayun's tomb is built in Charbagh style.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 1 and 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

79. With reference to the Alvar saints, consider the following statements—
1. The untouchables were also included among saints.
2. They were admirers of Buddhism and Jainism.
3. Songs of Alvar saints are compiled in 'Divya-Prabandham'.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) 1, 2 and 3

80. On 17th January, 2020, who has been selected for the 29th Saraswati Samman for 2019 ?
(A) Ishwar Moorjani
(B) Penna Madhusudan
(C) Vasdev Mohi
(D) Nilba A. Khandekar

81 Which among the following Vakataka rulers performed all the seven sacrifices *viz.* Agnishtoma, Aptoryama, Ukthya, Shodasin, Atiratra, Vajapeya, Brihaspati-sava, Sadyaskra and four Asvamedhas ?
(A) Rudrasena-I
(B) Pravarsena-I
(C) Prithvisena-I
(D) Narendrasena-I

82. Consider the following sentences in context of Indian paintings—
1. The history of art and painting in India begins with the pre-historic rock painting at Bhimbetka caves (M.P.).
2. The cave paintings of Narsinghgarh (Maharashtra) show skins of spotted deer left drying.
3. Mural paintings are done on walls and rock surfaces like roofs and sides.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are incorrect ?

(A) 2 only
(B) 3 only
(C) 1 and 2 both
(D) None of these

83. The Satapatha Brahmana and Taitriya Brahmana are the Brahmana texts of—
(A) Rigveda
(B) Yajurveda
(C) Samaveda
(D) Atharavaveda

84. Which of the following is true about i-help ?
(A) It's an initiative to help mental patients and raise awareness about mental health
(B) It's an initiative to promote digital electoral literacy in Assam
(C) It's an e-governance program to help deliver benefits to elder
(D) It's an e-governance program to help farmers suffering crop loss due to disasters

85. Consider following statements about Regulatory Sandbox—
1. Also known as innovation hub to help Fintechstartups to launch innovative products.
2. RBI encourages banks to tie up with Fintech companies to promote financial inclusion.
3. The sandbox (RBI) provides fintech companies suitable regulatory environment to test products and services.
4. The test checks the viability of the product before a wider and expensive rollout.

Which of the above statements is/are true ?

(A) 1 and 3
(B) 1, 3 and 4
(C) 1, 2 and 3
(D) All of the above

86. Which of the following is not true about Official Secrets Acts ?
(A) It is colonial era law passed in 1923 to control Indians working for colonial government keeping information about governance secret
(B) The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (SARC) Report, 2006, suggested that the Act should be substituted by a chapter in the National Security Act
(C) The act has provisions which are in conflict with Right to Information Act
(D) The Act also has provision for protecting Journalists possessing state secrets

87. Which of the following is not one of the grounds for disqualification for being elected as a Member of Parliament ?
1. If the person holds an office of profit under the State Government.
2. If the person has voluntarily acquired citizenship of a foreign State.
3. If a person is so disqualified under the Tenth Schedule.
4. If the person has/had been detained under the Preventive Detention Law.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only 2
(B) Only 4
(C) 1 and 4
(D) 1, 2 and 4

88. Consider the following sentences—
1. Different crops require different climatic conditions, temperature and photoperiods for their growth and completion of their life cycle.
2. Photoperiods are related to the duration of soil saturation.
3. Growth of plants and flowering are dependent on sunlight.
4. Plants manufacture their food in sunlight by the process of photosynthesis.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

Codes :

(A) 1, 3 and 4
(B) 1, 2 and 4
(C) 2, 3 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

89. Consider the following statements—
1. Government of India signed historic agreement to end the Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis.

MAZE ENG

2. The agreement is signed between Government of India, Governments of Tripura and Mizoram and Bru-Reang representatives.

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

90. Snow line is a line above which no vegetation grows on high altitude mountains because of permanent snow cover. This snow line is higher for Eastern Himalayas compared to that of Western Himalayas. What are the reasons ?

Consider the following statements—

1. Eastern Himalayas are near to the Equator.
2. Western Himalayas are more continental in their location thus has lesser maritime influence.
3. Southwest monsoon winds have the moderating effect on the Western Himalayas.

Choose the correct code :

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 1 and 3 only
(C) 2 and 3 only
(D) All of the above

91. Consider the following statements regarding Joint Parliamentary Committee JPC—

1. Joint Parliamentary Committee is formed only when motion is adopted by one house and it is supported or agreed to by the other house.
2. A JPC can obtain evidence of experts, public bodies, associations, individuals or interested parties suo motu or on requests made by them.
3. The Lok Sabha members are double compared to Rajya Sabha.

Which of the above statements are true ?

(A) 1 and 2 only
(B) 2 and 3 only
(C) 1 and 3 only
(D) All of the above

92. The ecological footprint is a measure of human demand on the Earth's ecosystems. It measures—

1. How much of the biological capacity of the planet is demanded by a given human activity or population.
2. Ecological Footprints are calculated for overall activity of a nation or population and activities such as industrialization etc.
3. The disadvantage of Ecological Footprint is that it cannot be calculated for individual people or area.

Select the wrong statement/s :

(A) 1 and 2 (B) Only 2
(C) 1 and 3 (D) Only 3

93. Consider the following statements—

1 SAUBHAGYA scheme's objective is to achieve universal household electrification in all remaining unelectrified households in rural and urban areas by 31st March, 2019.
2. Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) worked for objective that 100% villages across the country stand electrified.
3. Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. (POWERGRID) has been conferred with the Maharatna Status by the Government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) All the of above

94. Consider the following statements about CARA—

1. Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) has been set up as a statutory body of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
2. It deals with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Conventions on Inter-Country Adoptions. Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

95. Aditya-1 is a spacecraft, whose mission is to study the 'Sun'. It will study ?

1. Sun's corona
2. Sun's photosphere
3. Sun's chromospheres

Select the correct code :

(A) 1 only (B) 1 and 3
(C) 2 only (D) All of the above

96. With reference to IT Jargon' Daemon', which of the following statements is/are correct ?

1. In multitasking computer operating systems.
2. A daemon is a computer program that runs as a background process, rather than being under the direct control of an interactive user.
3. The term was coined by the programmers of MIT's Project MAC.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) 1 and 2 (B) 3 Only
(C) 2 and 3 (D) 1, 2 and 3

97. The word 'rupakara' has frequently been used in ancient literature. Consider the following sentences with reference to the word 'rupakara'.

1. The word 'rupakara' has frequently been used in ancient literature to connote a sculptor.
2. Ksemendra in his Brihatkathamanjari explains how a chitrakar or painter draws a figure and a rupakara or sculptor carves it.
3. 'Silpi' is the term commonly used for both rupakara and the chitrakara in the literature.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) 1 and 2 (B) 1 and 3
(C) 2 and 3 (D) 1, 2 and 3

98. Consider the following statements—

1. Jyotisha did not mean Astrology in Vedic period but it was the study of astronomy with the help of mathematics.
2. Shulba Sutras are the texts containing mostly mathematics and geometry in specific.

MADE EASY

3. Jyotishvedanga texts established systematic categories in astronomy.

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) Only 1
(B) 2 and 3
(C) 1 and 2
(D) All of the above

99. E-Agriculture is a new area of knowledge emerging out of convergence of IT and farming techniques. Consider the following sentences in context of E-Agriculture.

1. It uses a host of technologies like Remote Sensing, Computer Simulation, Assessment of speed and direction of Wind, Soil quality assays, Crop Yield predictions and Marketing using IT.
2. The E-Agriculture is part of Mission Mode Project, which has been included in NeGP (under National E-governance Plan).

Which of the above sentence(s) is/are true ?

(A) Only 2
(B) Only 1
(C) 1 and 2
(D None of the above

100. Consider the following statements—

1. On January 10, 2020 the first lunar eclipse of the year 2020 will be visible.
2. The lunar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes directly behind the Earth, into its shadow.

Choose the correct one :

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) None of the above

Answers with Hints

1. (D) The study of images of deities falls within a branch of art history called 'iconography', which consists of identification of images based on certain symbols and mythologies associated with them.
2. (D) 3. (A) 4. (D) 5. (B) 6. (C)
7. (D) During partition areas where the Muslims were in majority were made as Pakistan. The rest was to stay as India. Earlier the plan of transfer was not included in the partition plan but afterwards the minorities in both the states were treated ruthlessly and were killed, so unwillingly they had to leave their homes and fled away to their respective religious majority states.
8. (B) In 1990, as the Gulf war engulfed West Asia, India was in a major energy crisis. By all accounts India's oil reserves at the time were adequate for only three days. To address energy insecurity, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government mooted the concept of strategic petroleum reserves in 1998 and was commissioned in 2003.
9. (D) 10. (B)
11. (B) Karavali Utsav/festival is a three decades old festival of this coastal district of Karnataka. Karavali in Kannada means coastal area.
12. (D) 13. (A) 14. (D)
15. (C) it started in the year 2010 and has grown over the years into a big platform for Manipur to showcase its rich tradition and culture to the world. The festival is labelled as the grandest festival of the State today and helps promote Manipur as a world class tourism destination.
16. (D) 17. (C) 18. (C) 19. (C) 20. (C)
21. (D) 22. (D)
23. (C) Public Financial Management System (PFMS) is an ambitious project of Government of India being implemented by Controller General of Accounts, Ministry of Finance.
24. (C) Fiat money or fiat currency is any money that the government declares as legal tender. Also, this type of money is not backed by a physical commodity such as gold or silver. In other words, fiat money has no intrinsic value. Market forces determine the value of fiat money.
25. (D) 26. (C) 27. (C) 28. (D) 29. (A)
30. (D) 31. (A)
32. (A) Attorney General holds the office during the pleasure of the president, while solicitor general is appointed and removed by Central government.
33. (B) The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), which was formally unveiled on January 10, 2019, is envisaged as a scheme to provide the States and the Centre with a framework to combat air pollution. The National Clean Air Programme is a pollution control initiative that was launched by the Ministry of Environment with the intention to cut the concentration of coarse (particulate matter of diameter 10 micrometer or less, or PM10) and fine particles (particulate matter of diameter 2·5 micrometer or less, or PM2·5) by at least 20% in the next five years, with 2017 as the base year for comparison.
34. (C)
35. (B) Option 1 and 4 are wrong because the Directive Principles of State Policy are included in Part IV of the Constitution. The Directive Principles of State Policy are non justiciable and are not enforceable by the Courts of law. But they are nevertheless fundamental to the governance of country.
36. (D) 37. (D) 38. (D) 39. (C) 40. (D)
41. (C) 42. (B) 43. (D)
44. (B) On 2 January, 2020, Lai Haraoba kickstarted in Agartala, Tripura. Lai Haraoba is a ritualistic festival observed by Manipuri Meitei communities since ancient times. The five-day-long festival is jointly organised by the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of Tripura, Puthiba Lai Haraoba Committee and Puthiba Welfare and Cultural Society, Agartala.
45. (D) 46. (D) 47. (C) 48. (D) 49. (B)
50. (C) According to a journal published in January 2020; three new species of tiny frogs have been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh. These frog species have been discovered in Lower Subansiri district of the state by scientists of Zoological Survey of India.
51. (C) 52. (B) 53. (A) 54. (D) 55. (B)
56. (A)

Continued on Page 151

Solved Paper

ESIC SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICERS (SSO) EXAM., 2019

(Held on 31-8-2019)

Quantitative Aptitude

(Based on Memory)

1. If the length of the rectangle is increased by 30% and breadth is kept constant, its perimeter would become 82 m. If the breadth of the rectangle is increased by 10% and length is kept constant, its perimeter would become 73. What is the perimeter of the original rectangle ? (in m)
(A) 80 (B) 60
(C) 78 (D) 74
(E) 70

Directions—(Q. 2 to 6) Study the table and answer the given questions. Number of wallets sold by 4 stores during 4 days :

Stores / Days	A	B	C	D
Monday	36	87	52	84
Tuesday	60	64	55	52
Wednesday	81	52	44	29
Thursday	63	30	35	50

2. The average number of wallets sold by store B on Tuesday and Wednesday is 21 less than the number of wallets sold by the same store on Friday. What is the number of wallets sold by store B on Friday ?
(A) 81 (B) 75
(C) 83 (D) 77
(E) 79

3. Number of wallets sold by store A on Tuesday constitutes what per cent of total number of wallets sold by same store on all the given days together ?
(A) 20 (B) 25
(C) 12·5 (D) 17·5
(E) 15

4. If the respective ratio between the number of wallets sold by store D on Monday and that on Friday is 7 : 13, what is the number of wallets sold by store D on Friday ?
(A) 117 (B) 182
(C) 130 (D) 191
(E) 156

5. What is the total number of wallets sold by all the given stores together on Wednesday ?
(A) 206 (B) 198
(C) 214 (D) 182
(E) 226

6. Total number of wallets sold by stores B and C together on Thursday is what per cent more than number of wallets sold by store C on Monday ?
(A) 75 (B) 50
(C) 25 (D) 35
(E) 45

7. There are three positive numbers, $1/3^{rd}$ of average of all the three numbers is 8 less than the value of the highest number. Average of the lowest and the second lowest number is 8. Which is the highest number ?
(A) 11 (B) 14
(C) 10 (D) 9
(E) 13

8. A boat can travel 36 km upstream in 5 hours. If the speed of the stream is 2·4 kmph, how much time will the boat take to cover a distance of 78 km downstream ? (in hours)
(A) 5 (B) 6·5
(C) 5·5 (D) 8
(E) 6

Directions—(Q. 9 to 23) What will come in place of the question-mark (?) in the following questions.

9. 36% of ? + 38% of 125 = 137·5
(A) 450 (B) 250
(C) 350 (D) 300
(E) 400

10. $36 \times 3{\cdot}6 \div 0{\cdot}5 \div ? = 6^4$
(A) 0·6 (B) 0·1
(C) 0·5 (D) 0·2
(E) 0·4

11. $60 = \dfrac{? \times 10 + 250}{5}$
(A) 10 (B) 5
(C) 3 (D) 2
(E) 6

12. $(8 \times 9) \div 5 + ?^2 = 23{\cdot}4$
(A) 2 (B) 5
(C) 3 (D) 8
(E) 4

13. 40% of $(362 \div 0{\cdot}05) = ?$
(A) 3084 (B) 3128
(C) 2880 (D) 2896
(E) 2456

14. $0{\cdot}25 \times 696 \div 0{\cdot}3 = ?$
(A) 560 (B) 580
(C) 600 (D) 620
(E) 540

15. $1780 - 62 \div 4 \times 80 = ?$
(A) 540 (B) 640
(C) 480 (D) 680
(E) 740

16. $\sqrt{96 + 1000 + 3000} = ?$
(A) 125 (B) 27
(C) 64 (D) 49
(E) 81

17. $\sqrt{? \times 11} + \sqrt{1296} = 16$
(A) 10 (B) 110
(C) 20 (D) 30
(E) 40

18. ?% of 320 − 69 = 123
(A) 75 (B) 80
(C) 85 (D) 60
(E) 50

19. $276 \div 11{\cdot}5 + 12 = ? \times 3$
(A) 20 (B) 12
(C) 16 (D) 8
(E) 15

MADE EASY

20. $110 \div 5{\cdot}5 + ?^3 \div 12 = 20\frac{2}{3}$

(A) 1 (B) 4
(C) 3 (D) 0·2
(E) 2

21. $\left(\frac{4}{9}+\frac{5}{6}\right)\times 378 = ?$

(A) 483 (B) 260
(C) 573 (D) 400
(E) 800

22. $\left(\sqrt{529}+67\right)\times 5 = ?$

(A) 450 (B) 900
(C) 90 (D) 300
(E) 250

23. $3^7 \times 2^3 \div \sqrt{256} = 40{\cdot}5$

(A) 3 (B) 5
(C) 2 (D) 4
(E) 1

Directions—(Q. 24 to 30) What will come in place of the question-mark (?) in the following number series ?

24. 5 12 26 47 ? 110

(A) 54 (B) 75
(C) 81 (D) 96
(E) 63

25. 8 8 12 24 60 ?

(A) 200 (B) 240
(C) 90 (D) 120
(E) 180

26. 143 119 107 101 98 ?

(A) 95·5 (B) 97
(C) 93 (D) 94·5
(E) 96·5

27. 18 ? 15 24 8 33

(A) 22 (B) 23
(C) 21 (D) 19
(E) 25

28. 23 44 64 83 ? 118

(A) 107 (B) 101
(C) 98 (D) 103
(E) 96

29. 9 5 6 10·5 23 ?

(A) 60 (B) 16
(C) 18·5 (D) 42·5
(E) 32·5

30. 1 19 55 112 193 ?

(A) 301 (B) 336
(C) 330 (D) 252
(E) 636

31. The respective ratio of curved surface area and total surface area of a right circular cylinder is 3 : 5. If the curved surface area of the right circular cylinder is 1848 cm^2, what is its height ? (in m)

(A) 24 (B) 14
(C) 21 (D) 28
(E) 18

32. Jar A and Jar B both contain mixture of milk and water. Jar A has 80 litres of mixture out of which 20% is water. The mixture in Jar B has 40% of water. The mixture from both the jars is poured in an empty Jar C. The resultant respective ratio between milk and water in the Jar C is 5 : 2. What is the quantity of milk in Jar C ?

(A) 105 (B) 120
(C) 110 (D) 100
(E) 130

33. Train A which is 320 m long can cross a pole in 16 seconds. If it halts 5 times each time for exactly 18 minutes, how many hours it will take to cover a distance of 576 kms ?

(A) 8 (B) $10\frac{1}{2}$
(C) $8\frac{1}{2}$ (D) 9
(E) $9\frac{1}{2}$

34. Sheena spent ₹ 38,460 on the renovation of her home ₹ 24,468 on buying home theatre and the remaining 28% of the total amount she had as cash with her. What was the total amount ?

(A) Cannot be determined
(B) ₹ 76,500
(C) Other than those given as options
(D) ₹ 92,600
(E) ₹ 87,400

35. The simple interest (p.a.) accrued on an amount of ₹ 17,000 at the end of four years is ₹ 6,800. What would be the compound interest (Comounded annually) accrued on the same amount at the same rate after two years ?

(A) Cannot be determined
(B) Other than those given as options
(C) ₹ 3,570
(D) ₹ 3,260
(E) ₹ 3,980

Answers with Hints

1. (E) If breadth is constant, then,

$$\text{Perimeter} = 2\left(\frac{130}{100}l + b\right)$$

$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{13}{5}l + 2b = 82 \qquad \ldots(1)$$

and if length is constant then,

$$\text{Perimeter} = 2\left(l + \frac{110}{100}b\right)$$

$$\Rightarrow \quad 2l + \frac{11}{5}b = 73 \qquad \ldots(2)$$

On solving eq. (1) and (2), we get

$l = 20$ m

$b = 15$ m

Original perimeter of rectangle

$= 2(l + b)$

$= 2(20 + 15)$

$= 2 \times 35$

$= 70$ m

2. (E) No. of wallets sold by B on Friday

$$= \frac{116}{2} + 21$$

$$= 58 + 21$$

$$= 79$$

3. (B) $$\% = \frac{60}{240} \times 100$$

$$= 25$$

4. (E) $$\frac{84}{x} = \frac{7}{13}$$

$$\Rightarrow \quad 7x = 84 \times 13$$

$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 12 \times 13$$

$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 156$$

[No. of wallets sold by store D on Friday = x]

5. (A) Total no. of wallets

$= 81 + 52 + 44 + 29$

$= 206$

6. (C) $$\%\ \text{excess} = \frac{65-52}{52} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{13}{52} \times 100$$

$$= 25$$

7. (A) Let Smallest no.$= x$

Second smallest no. $= y$

and Largest no. $= z$

As per question,

$$\frac{x+y+z}{3} \times \frac{1}{3} = z - 8$$

$$x + y + z = 9z - 72 \qquad \ldots(1)$$

and $$x + y = 8 \times 2 = 16$$

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On putting the value of $(x + y)$ in eqn. (1),

$$16 + z = 9z - 72$$
$$8z = 88$$
$$z = 11$$

8. (B) Upstream speed
$$= \frac{36}{5}$$
$$= 7{\cdot}2 \text{ km/hr.}$$
Speed of boat in still water,
$$= 7{\cdot}2 + 2{\cdot}4$$
$$= 9{\cdot}6 \text{ km/hr}$$
$$S_{\text{II}} = 9{\cdot}6 + 2{\cdot}4$$
$$= 12 \text{ km/hr}$$
$$S_{\text{II}} = \frac{78}{t}$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad t = \frac{78}{12} = 6{\cdot}5 \text{ hours}$$

9. (B) $\frac{36}{100}x + \frac{38}{100} \times 125$
$$= 137{\cdot}5$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{36}{100}x = 137{\cdot}5 - 47{\cdot}5$$
$$= 90$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = \frac{90 \times 100}{36}$$
$$= 250$$

10. (D) $36 \times 3{\cdot}6 \div 0{\cdot}5 \div x$
$$= 6^4$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 0{\cdot}2$$

11. (B) $60 = \frac{x \times 10 + 250}{5}$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 10x = 300 - 250$$
$$= 50$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 5$$

12. (C) $(8 \times 9) \div 5 + x^2 = 23{\cdot}4$
$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{72}{5} + x^2 = 23{\cdot}4$$
$$x^2 = 23{\cdot}4 - 14{\cdot}4$$
$$x^2 = 9$$
$$x = 3$$

13. (D) $\frac{40}{100} \times \left(\frac{362}{0{\cdot}05}\right) = \frac{2}{5} \times \frac{362}{\cdot 05}$
$$= 2896$$

14. (B) $0{\cdot}25 \times 696 \div 0{\cdot}3 = 580$

15. (A) $1780 - 62 \div 4 \times 80$
$$= 1780 - 1240$$
$$= 540$$

16. (C) $\sqrt{96 + 1000 + 3000}$
$$= \sqrt{4096}$$
$$= 64$$

17. (C) $\sqrt{x \times 11 + \sqrt{1296}} = 16$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 11x + \sqrt{1296} = (16)^2$$
$$= 256$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 11x + 36 = 256$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 11x = 220$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 20$$

18. (D) $\frac{x}{100} \times 320 - 69$
$$= 123$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{x}{100} \times 320 = 192$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = \frac{192 \times 100}{320}$$
$$= 60$$

19. (B) $276 \div 11{\cdot}5 + 12$
$$= x \times 3$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad = \frac{276}{11{\cdot}5} + 12 = 3x$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = \frac{36}{3} = 12$$

20. (E) $110 \div 5{\cdot}5 + x^3 \div 12$
$$= 20\frac{2}{3}$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{110}{5{\cdot}5} + \frac{x^3}{12} = \frac{62}{3}$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x^3 = \frac{2}{3} \times 12$$
$$= 8$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 2$$

21. (A) $\left(\frac{4}{9} + \frac{5}{6}\right) \times 378$
$$= \left(\frac{8+15}{18}\right) \times 378$$
$$= \frac{23}{18} \times 378$$
$$= 23 \times 21 = 483$$

22. (A) $\left(\sqrt{529} + 67\right) \times 5$
$$= (23 + 67) \times 5$$
$$= 90 \times 5 = 450$$

23. (D) $3^x \times 2^3 \div \sqrt{256}$
$$= 40{\cdot}5$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 3^x \times \frac{8}{16} = 40{\cdot}5$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 3^x = 40{\cdot}5 \times \frac{16}{8}$$
$$= 81$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 3^x = 3^4$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad x = 4$$

24. (B) 5, 12, 26, 47, [75], 110
(+7, +14, +21, +28, +35)

25. (E) 8, 8, 12, 24, 60, [180]
(×1, ×1·5, ×2, ×2·5, ×3)

26. (E) 143, 119, 107, 101, 98, [96·5]
(−24, −12, −6, −3, −1·5; ÷2, ÷2, ÷2, ÷2)

27. (D) 18, [19], 15, 24, 8, 33
(+1, −4, +9, −16, +25; +3, +5, +7, +9)

28. (B) 23, 44, 64, 83, [101], 118
(+21, +20, +19, +18, +17)

29. (A) 9 → (×0·5 + 0·5) → 5 → (×1 + 1) → 6 → (×1·5 + 1·5) → 10·5 → (×2 + 2) → 23 → (×2·5 + 2·5) → [60]

30. (A) 1, 19, 55, 112, 193, [301]
(+18, +36, +57, +81, +108; +18, +21, +24, +27)

31. (C) According to question
$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{2\pi rh}{2\pi r(h+r)} = \frac{2}{5}$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{h}{h+r} = \frac{3}{5}$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 5h = 3h + 3r$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 2h = 3r \qquad \ldots(1)$$
Again $2\pi rh = 1848$
$$\Rightarrow \quad 2 \times \frac{22}{7} \times \frac{2}{3}h^2 = 1848$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad h^2 = 21 \times 21$$
$$\Rightarrow \quad h = 21 \text{ cm}$$

32. (D) In jar A,
$$\text{Water} = 80 \times \frac{20}{100}$$
$$= 16 \text{ L}$$
$$\text{Milk} = 80 - 16$$
$$= 64 \text{ L}$$
Let the quantity of mix. in jar B $= x$ L
$$\text{Water} = x \times \frac{40}{100} = \frac{2x}{5}$$
$$\text{Milk} = x \times \frac{60}{100} = \frac{3x}{5}$$
In jar C,
$$\text{Milk} = 64 + \frac{3x}{5}$$
$$\text{Water} = 16 + \frac{2x}{5}$$

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According to question,

$$\frac{64+\frac{3x}{5}}{16+\frac{2x}{5}} = \frac{5}{2}$$

$\Rightarrow \quad x = 60$ L

The qty. of milk in jar C

$$= 64 + 60 \times \frac{3}{5}$$

$$= 100 \text{ L}$$

33. (E) $S_A = \frac{320}{16} = 20$ m/sec

$$= \frac{20 \times 3600}{1000}$$

$$= 72 \text{ km/hr}$$

$$t = \frac{576}{72} = 8 \text{ hr.}$$

But it take halts of 18 min × 5

$$= \frac{18}{60} \times 5 \text{ hr}$$

$$= 1{\cdot}5 \text{ hr.}$$

So, total time = 8 + 1·5

$$= 9\frac{1}{2} \text{ hours.}$$

34. (E) Let the total amount be x.

Expenses on home renovation and home theatre

$$= 100 - 28$$

$$= 72\%$$

then, $x \times \frac{72}{100} = (38460 + 24468)$

$\Rightarrow \quad x = \frac{62928 \times 100}{72}$

$$= ₹\, 87{,}400$$

35. (C) According to question,

$$r = \frac{6800 \times 100}{4 \times 17000}$$

$$= 10\%$$

$$\text{C.I.} = 17000\left[\left(1+\frac{10}{100}\right)^2 - 1\right]$$

$$= 17000 \times \frac{21}{100}$$

$$= ₹\, 3{,}570$$

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71. (A)
72. (C) Tokyo, the Capital of Japan will host the summer Olympic second time. Previously in 1964. Tokyo held the Summer Olympic.
73. (A) The 46th G7 2020 Summit will be held at Florida, U.S.A.
74. (D) Gross Non-performing Assets ratio of the banking system declining to 9·1% as at end-March 2019 from 11·2% in the previous year.
75. (A)
76. (E) Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park also called the Darjeeling Zoo is in the town of Darjeeling in the Indian State of West Bengal it is at the elevation of 7000 feet, the largest high altitude in India.
77. (E) 78. (A) 79. (D) 80. (C)

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$$\text{Physics} = \frac{96+84+102}{120\times 6} = \frac{+78+84+60}{120\times 6}$$

$$= \frac{504}{720} \times 100$$

$$= 70\%$$

$$\text{Biology} = \frac{60+40+80+90}{100\times 6} = \frac{+85+80}{100\times 6}$$

$$= \frac{435}{600} \times 100$$

$$= 72{\cdot}5\%$$

$$\text{English} = \frac{70+80+60+90}{100\times 6} = \frac{+50+40}{100\times 6}$$

$$= \frac{390}{600} \times 100$$

$$= 65\%$$

27. (B) Marks % obtained by Amar

$$= \frac{(150+78+84+40+80)}{(150+130+120+100+100)} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{432}{600} \times 100$$

$$= 72\%$$

28. (A) Required average

$$= \frac{65+78+78+97{\cdot}5+104+97{\cdot}5}{6}$$

$$= \frac{520}{6}$$

$$= 86{\cdot}66$$

29. (C) Marks obtained by Sanya in all subjects

$$= 135 + 78 + 102 + 80 + 60$$

$$= 455$$

30. (B) Sanya and Rahul obtained 60% and above marks in all the subjects.
31. (B) 32. (C) 33. (A) 34. (C) 35. (D)
36. (C) 37. (D) 38. (B) 39. (B) 40. (B)
41. (D) 42. (A) 43. (D) 44. (B) 45. (C)
46. (D) 47. (B) 48. (A) 49. (B) 50. (C)

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57. (B) Option 3 is wrong because Polygamy was prevalent among the royal and noble families while monogamy was generally practiced.
58. (C) 59. (B)
60. (C) This treaty was not approved by the Calcutta Council and a new treaty - Treaty of Purandar - was signed in 1776.
61. (B) 62. (D) 63. (D) 64. (D) 65. (A)
66. (C)
67. (D) Option 4 is wrong because when the litmus solution is neither acidic nor basic, its colour is purple.
68. (D)
69. (C) Option 2 is wrong because Telangana has an area of 114,840 square kilometres (44,340 sq. mi), which will make it the 12th largest state in the country.
70. (B) 71. (D)
72. (C) Option 4 is wrong because CIBIL can't alter or delete any records, nor does it maintain any list of good or bad credit.
73. (D)
74. (B) Crypto-currency is not tied to a particular country, its value is not controlled by a Central Bank.
75. (D) 76. (C) 77. (D) 78. (B) 79. (B)
80. (C) 81. (B) 82. (D) 83. (B) 84. (B)
85. (D 86. (D) 87. (B)
88. (A) Option 2 in wrong because photoperiods are related to the duration of sunlight. The daily duration of light and dark to which an organism is exposed, considered especially with regard to its effect on growth and development.
89. (C) 90. (A) 91. (B) 92. (D) 93. (D)
94. (C) 95. (A) 96. (D) 97. (A) 98. (D)
99. (C) 100. (C)

MAGAZINE KING

Essay Contest

Expanding Dimensions of India's 'Neighbourhood First' Policy

—Ganesh. P.R

"You can change friends, but not neighbours."

—Atal Bihari Vajpayee

With the changing dynamics of international politics and global equations metamorphosing from bi-polar (post the collapse of the Soviet Union) to a multi-polar world, India has emerged as a vital power axis in the region. India's foreign policy was always non-muscular, non-interventionist and unexploitative. But in the altered scenario India faces stiff competition from China over the superiority in the region and also the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in the South Asian nations. The genuine questions that arise are what should be India's foreign policy towards her immediate neighbours and how to respond to the Pakistan-China axis ?

Ganesh. P.R

India and the Region

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government's commitment towards India's immediate neighbourhood was visible when the leaders of all SAARC nations were invited for the swearing ceremony of Narendra Modi as India's Prime Minister in 2014. Immediately after assuming the office PM Modi visited Bhutan in his maiden foreign visit and also travelled to Nepal on multiple occasions. He even stopped at Pakistan and met the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sherif as a good will gesture to enhance peace and mutual cooperation in the region. The government has also committed itself to various projects in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Iran, Myanmar and Maldives. Friendly summits were also organised along with China to strengthen diplomatic relations between the hostile neighbours.

India's interest in the region is traced back to the Nehruvian days. In the days of cold war, India's position of Non-Alignment was aimed at stopping any form of further colonisation. Foreseeing a possible conflict with China even a 'Panchsheel' doctrine was mutually agreed but the expansionist tendencies of China had cost India 1962 war and the Aksai-Chin territory. India fought four wars with Pakistan in the years 1948, 1965, 1971 and 1999, eventhough India could defeat Pakistan in all successive wars. The constant conflicts reflect the unstable relationship between both the nations. India's involvement in the 1971 war eventually resulted in the formation of Bangladesh.

For greater economic and cultural cooperation, South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was founded in 1985 comprising India's immediate neighbours. But the organisation failed to achieve its objectives since the two major powers within SAARC *i.e.* India and Pakistan couldn't come to an agreement almost all the occasions. This jeopardizing of dialogue process has pushed India to further strengthen another forum called Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectorial Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) virtually excluding Pakistan. The advantage of India in the region is the historical and cultural ties between India and these nations.

India's Neighbourhood Worries

China had always been a threat to India's geo-political interest in the region. With a booming economy China is able to roll out financial assistance and ambitious projects to smaller economies. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) envisioned by China aims at connecting all the nations of the region via-road and rail. The peripheries of this project including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor poses a challenge to India's sovereignty since it passes through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). China also invested heavily in Nepal, India's longest standing ally. It needs to be noted that the agenda behind issuing large scale grants to poorer countries is 'debt trap', a neocolonising strategy of China which these countries easily fall prey to.

China is also posing security challenge to India by forming a strategy called 'String of Pearls' in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) extending from the Chinese mainland to Port Sudan in Horn of Africa. India enjoys a special benefit due to its 7,516 km long coastline. Now, China wants to encircle India with its naval bases and ports operated by it in friendly countries, examples being the Gwadar Port in Pakistan and Hambantoda port in Sri Lanka. The recent Chinese standoffs with the Indian army at Doklam and their unwillingness to recognise Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India are still a bone of contention between India and China.

The rise of radical Islam and the anti-India rhetoric associated with it is yet another major worry for India. With the possibility of Afghanistan falling into the hands of Taliban, the fear looms large. Pakistan has been using Jihad as a proxy weapon against India. The rise of Wahhabism is even evident in Bangladesh as a result of which even several of the army men are radicalised. The killing of an Indian army man by Bangladeshi border security force proves this argument. Infusing of large amount of money and speedy commissioning of projects are also in China's advantage.

NDA Government's Foreign Policy

Multiple domestic factors influence any government's international policy. Some of those factors are political stability, economic growth, technological advancement and the global political scenario. With NDA getting simple majority of its own in 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections India's global positioning has been

constant and unaltered. The government appointed S. Jaishankar, a veteran diplomat as External Affairs Minister to further professionalise India's foreign approach.

Presently India's foreign policy is crafted by the establishment keeping in mind the presence of hostile neighbours, Pakistan and China. It is therefore important to establish strong relations with the extended neighbours excluding the two. India adopted new strategies to resist the looming threat from China in the region. Modi government's doctrine of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) is to counter the Chinese strategy of dominating IOR with 'string of Pearls'. India is also releasing financial assistance to its neighbours for development projects as Line of Credit (LOC) through Export-Import (EXIM) Bank which facilitates India's export and import activities.

Terrorism and religious extremism have been key challenges in the South Asian region. Afghanistan is worst hit with these crises. Due to its geographical location as gateway to Central Asia, India has both strategic and economic interest in the nation. India financed and built a new parliament building for Afghanistan which was inaugurated by PM Modi in 2015. In 2016, he also inaugurated Afghanistan India friendship dam in the Herat province underlining India's commitment to rebuild the war torn nation. For the other projects India has provided a financial assistance of $ 3 billion over the years. India has also partnered with Iran to counter China's access to Gwadar Port of Pakistan. India pledged $ 85 million for the development of Chabahar Port in Iran and a three way memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between India-Afghanistan-Iran worth $ 21 billion Chabahar-Hajigak Corridor.

Myanmar has a key part in NDA government's 'Act east' policy since the nation is India's 'land bridge' to south east Asian nations. During the 5 year tenure of NDA 1 a sum of ₹ 1,300 crore was allotted for Myanmar for various projects. India is also aware of the proposed China-Myanmar Economic Corridor as part of BRI. NDA 1 extended 2 LOCs worth $ 6·5 billion to Bangladesh which goes into community level development projects, construction of educational institutions and so on. China has been trying to woo Nepal with multiple infrastructural projects to wean Nepal away from India.

Being an inevitable partner India spends on an average ₹ 330 crore annually for various projects in Nepal. The government was quick to grant $ 1 billion LOC following the earthquake in 2015. India also highlights the cultural similarities of Nepal and India. Bhutan is a key partner of India and as a buffer state to China has its strategic importance. India has been developing hydropower plants in Bhutan and has also donated $ 4·7 billion dollar from 2000-2017 as aid for Bhutan. With the change of government in Maldives and declaration of their 'India First Policy' the relationship is projected to improve substantially. NDA 1 had also given a financial assistance of $ 1·4 billion in its tenure. India's relationship with Sri Lanka had been in shady lines due to the latter's pro-China tilt. But the geographical location of Sri Lanka is significant for India's security and economic interests.

Conclusion

India has always been projected as a soft power in the global political discourse. But post 2014 it marks a transition of India to a hard power determined to position itself as an alternative to China. India is a key strategic partner of United States of America and its allies in the Asia-Pacific region. India should fast-track completion of various projects undertaken in neighbouring countries and make sure that their soil is not used by any terrorist organisations for anti-India operations. To counter China's influence India should boost its own economy and strengthen its military might. China has been trying to appropriate the Buddhist legacy through false propaganda. Buddha, Bollywood and Cricket can be effectively used for people to people connection in South Asia which eventually fosters diplomatic relations. With the government's target of making India a $ 5 Trillion economy and reconstructing institutions to make it more competitive, India has the potential to ouster Chinese influence in the region and to be an active global leader.

Yojanaa

Continued on Page 29

Madhya Pradesh

Reciting the Preamble of the Constitution Every Saturday in Government Schools Declared Mandatory in Madhya Pradesh

The Madhya Pradesh government on January 22, 2020 declared reciting of the preamble of the Constitution of India in the government-run schools mandatory on every Saturday in the assemblies. Earlier in January 2020, Maharashtra government also made it compulsory for students across the state of read out the Preamble of the Constitution during assemblies everyday.

"As per the order, students will recite the preamble of the Constitution every Saturday under the guidance of the school headmaster or teacher after the prayers in primary and middle schools," a Madhya Pradesh government official said.

"Similarly, students of high schools and higher secondary schools will recite the preamble under the guidance of the principal during the 'bal sabha', which is held every Saturday," he said.

Maharashtra

Maharashtra Government Launches 'Cyber Safe Women' Campaign

Maharashtra government on January 3, 2020 launched 'the Cyber Safe Women' campaign across the State on the occasion of birth anniversary of noted social reformer Savitribai Phule of Maharashtra. The Cyber Safe Women campaign is aimed at spreading awareness about Cyber crime especially against women and children.

Awareness camps will be organized across all districts of the state on the issue of Cyber crime against women. These crimes include matrimonial and dating apps fraud, stalking, online abuse and defamation etc.

Yojanaa

Debate Contest

Third World War is Inevitable

Against

"War is an instrument entirely inefficient towards redressing wrong and multiplies, instead of indemnifying, losses." —**Thomas Jefferson**

Mahesh Kumar

Before the onset of civilisation, there may have been tribal skirmishes but there was not organised warfare between competing military forces. It was not until agriculture allowed for societal specialisation, hierarchy and the generation of a warrior class loyal to a military or political leader or social system that wars began in earnest. Agriculture required defence of boundaries and crops. Such defence required the specialisation of a warrior class organised into military forces. Such forces required organisation and a willing youthful pool of potential soldiers. But legitimate purposes of defence can also be turned to offensive uses. Leaders throughout history have been adept in justifying aggressive war in terms of defence.

War is a byproduct of civilisation and World War is a byproduct of more civilised community and world society. And it is made more likely by having distinct competing social entities, such as city-states or today's nation-states. In the 20th century, wars became global or nearly so. In world war I, soldiers mostly slaughtered other soldiers. In World War II, however with the development of modern air warfare, cities and civilians became targets of warfare.

By our own cleverness, we humans have created instruments capable of destroying ourselves. The creation of nuclear weapons has made the world too dangerous for warfare. Warfare requires a high level of socio-economic organisation, but peace requires an even higher level of socio-economic organisation.

The United Nations Charter prohibits the use of force between nations except under very limited conditions of self-defence or when the Security Council authorises the use of force. Of course, this prohibition against the use of force has not been very successful, largely because the major powers have relied upon the law of force rather than the force of law. We have created a situation in which either warfare or humanity is obsolete. We humans can choose. We can choose to put an end to warfare or we can continue to run the risk of World War III to put to an end to us. This is the way that Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein put it in a 1955 statement calling for an end to warfare due to the power of thermonuclear weapons.

"Here, then, is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful and inescapable : Shall we put an end to the human race, or shall mankind renounce war ?" "People will face this alternative because peace is an imperative of the Nuclear Age. It is both a right as well as responsibility."

The sooner we realise this, the sooner we can get on with the necessary task of abolishing nuclear weapons and building a warless world. In doing so, we will save vast resources that can be used to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals to end poverty, improve health, protect the environment and better the lives of people everywhere.

Today there are many pending wars in the world but none of them seems to be a threat of a new World War or do they ? Wars in the Middle East, violent demonstrations in Greece and China, terrorist attacks in Pakistan and India, the crisis between Russia and Georgia, North Korea and South Korea, Iran and the US, development of nuclear weapons, are they a true warning, or will they have an even more horrific outcome than they already do ? Is this new, great war going to be a nuclear one and will it lead to Earth's destruction ? Has the human state of mind improved ? Have we buried ghosts of the past and learned from our mistakes, or is the only resolution to the situation today a new war after which our world won't exist ?

Third World War is not inevitable as a World War is created when large political powers fight for control of resources, territory, or influence. The fighting state is triggered by lack of willingness to compromise and the willingness to compromise is a function of the relative power of the adversaries. The 'cold war' did not deteriorate into a real war because the US and the USSR (now Russia) felt matched in power, but several small wars-by-proxy were waged when one side felt achievement through force is possible. In Afghanistan, for example, the Soviets invaded expecting low opposition, resulting in the US funding of the Mujahadin or Taliban. A war in Europe between NATO and the USSR did not break because it was deemed unwinable. The first and Second World Wars were a result of one block expecting an easy win. The commanders of the Imperial German Army in World War I expected to be in Paris within few weeks. In today's world, the strengthening of new blocks along with their armies, such as the Chinese Army, the resurgent Russian army and so forth, is accompanied with a dwindling and over stretched US Army, with reduced NATO support and no European army whatsoever. It is therefore to be expected that the rising blocks will consider military success to be more likely, resulting in applying military force on other social and cultural purposes.

It is relevant to state what's happening today. The US and Russia, among others, disagree on what is going on in Syria and have to go through one another to get it. But the war in Syria does not represent major change or development for any of the world powers. Russia and the US are on different sides more due to protecting interest than ideological differences, and Syria does not represent the primary concern of either country.

Concentric QUIZ

Special on Social Change

1. Complete transformation or social change is known as—
   (A) Cultural change
   (B) Structural change
   (C) Functional change
   (D) None of the above

2. The oldest model of social change is—
   (A) Evolutionary
   (B) Cyclical
   (C) Dialectical
   (D) Mechanical

3. Who developed 'Elite theory of change' ?
   (A) Spengler (B) Pareto
   (C) Comte (D) Sorokin

4. Who among the following has used the concept of social development in place of evolution ?
   (A) Hobhouse
   (B) Eshleman
   (C) P. Berger
   (D) W.V. Oghurn

5. Which among the following tribes belongs to Nigrito race ?
   (A) Ho (B) Ainu
   (C) Bodo (D) Kadar

6. Most of the Indians are—
   (A) Nigrite
   (B) Nordic
   (C) Mediterrenean
   (D) Proto-Australoid

7. Who among the following supports the tradition of interdependence ?
   (A) Kula
   (B) Jaimani system
   (C) Mansabdari
   (D) None of the above

8. Spencer linked his theory of social change with—
   (A) Deca
   (B) Supernatural elements
   (C) Technology
   (D) Organism

9. Which is most powerful cause of social change ?
   (A) Women's education
   (B) Secularisation
   (C) Weakening of religious influence
   (D) Technological developments

10. The main factor of social change is/are—
    (A) Cultural pluralism
    (B) Outstanding leadership
    (C) Technological development
    (D) All the above

11. The society has passed through three stages of its development—theological, metaphysical and the positive. This view was expressed by—
    (A) Tonnies (B) Weber
    (C) Comte (D) Spencer

12. Who among the following classified Indian races into six racial types ?
    (A) B.S. Guha
    (B) J.H. Hutton
    (C) H. Risley
    (D) D.N. Majumdar

13. When a person believes that his culture is superior to other cultures, it is called—
    (A) Ethnicity
    (B) Ethnocentrism
    (C) Cultural snobbery
    (D) Cultural relativism

14. Sumner's model of society is known as—
    (A) Development model
    (B) Conflict model
    (C) Progressive model
    (D) Consensus model

15. What is the process under which a culture merges itself with the dominant culture ?
    (A) Adaptation
    (B) Accommodation
    (C) Assimilation
    (D) Acculturation

16. Which of the following is not covered under the 'element of social structure' ?
    (A) Deviation (B) Observance
    (C) Sanction (D) Group action

17. The spread of cultural traits from one society to another is commonly called—
    (A) Acculturation
    (B) Diffusion
    (C) Enculturation
    (D) Discrimination

18. Which of the following is a prerequisite of social interaction ?
    (A) Face to face contact
    (B) Harmony
    (C) Physical contact
    (D) Mutual orientation

19. The name of E.S. Bogardus is associated with one of the following concepts—
    (A) Cultural lag
    (B) Social differentiation
    (C) Social distance
    (D) Cultural diffusion

20. Social relationship involves—
    (A) Cooperation
    (B) Conflict
    (C) Cooperation and conflict
    (D) Face to face contact

P.Ranjan

Continued from Page 125

34. (C) In foreign parlance '2+2' dialogue is a dialogue mechanism between the Defence and External Affairs Ministers of two countries. Indian Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar concluded meetings with their counterparts of Japan (New Delhi), Australia (New Delhi) and USA (Washington DC).

35. (A) 36. (D) 37. (A)

38. (D) Ten more wetland sites have been declared in January 2020 as sites of international importance under Ramsar convention which was signed on February 2, 1971. With this, the numbers of Ramsar sites in India are now 37 and the surface area covered by these sites is now 1,067,939 hectares.

39. (A) Code on Wages, 2019 was passed by both the Houses of the Parliament and got the assent of the President of India on August 8, 2019. The Code on Social Security, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha on December 11, 2019. It was referred to Standing Committee on December 23, 2019.

40. (C)

P.Ranjan

CONCENTRIC QUIZ

(Special on Social Change)

ENTRY FORM

Pratiyogita Darpan

Last date for sending March 15, 2020

Name Mr./Miss/Mrs. .....

Full Address .....

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State ..... Pin Code No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Age..... Academic Qualification.....

Competition examination for which preparing

.....

- How would you rate our magazine on a scale of 1 to 5 ?

  ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

- Topics / Features you would like to see in forthcoming issues

  .....

  .....

- No. of Questions Solved

  .....

I have read and understood the rules of Concentric Quiz of Pratiyogita Darpan and agree to abide by them.

.....

(Signature)

ANSWERS FORM

Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D
1.	☐	☐	☐	☐	11.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	☐	☐	☐	☐	12.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	☐	☐	☐	☐	13.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐	14.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐	15.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	☐	☐	☐	☐	16.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	☐	☐	☐	☐	17.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	☐	☐	☐	☐	18.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	☐	☐	☐	☐	19.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	☐	☐	20.	☐	☐	☐	☐

MAGAZINE RING

Rules and Regulations

- All students or those appearing in competitive examinations can take part in this contest.
- Candidates taking part in quiz contest will necessarily have to send their entries by a fixed date. Entries are to be sent by ordinary post. Please mark your envelope **'Quiz–Pratiyogita Darpan'** on the top left hand side.
- Answers given only on the Entry Form of the magazine will be admissible.
- In the form there are four squares against each question number. Contestants should put a Tick (√) in the square for the answer they think is correct. Giving more than one answer to a question will disqualify it.
- Contestants should essentially write the number of questions they have solved.
- Marks will be deducted for wrong answers.
- The candidate sending the maximum number of correct answers will be given ₹ 800 as first prize. Next two candidates after that will get ₹ 600 and ₹ 400 as second and third prize respectively. If there are more than one candidate eligible for a prize, the amount will be equally distributed among them.
- Write your name in English in Capital Letters. The name must be one which appears in your bank account. Also, write the bank account number, IFSC code of the bank and your mobile phone number.
- The decision of the editor will be final and binding in all cases, and will not be a matter for consideration of any court and no correspondence will be entertained in this concern.
- Names of prize winners of Concentric Quiz alongwith the answers will be published in next issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.
- Pratiyogita Darpan reserves the right to terminate or extend the period of quiz, or to accept or reject any or all the entries at their absolute discretion without assigning any reason.
- Pratiyogita Darpan is not responsible for any postal delays, transit losses or mutilation of entries.
- Last date for the receipt of the entries of CONCENTRIC QUIZ in the office of Pratiyogita Darpan, 2/11A, Swadeshi Bima Nagar, Agra–282 002 (U.P.) is March 15, 2020.

PD/March/2020/156

Mental Exercise — Test Your Knowledge

1. The term 'Jingle Mail' is associated with—
   (A) Real Estate
   (B) Purchase of new commercial property
   (C) Advertising
   (D) Mail between officials working on constitutional posts

2. India's highest ever marginal income tax rate was—
   (A) 97·75% (B) 97·50%
   (C) 98·00% (D) 98·25%

3. The term 'bail-in' is associated with—
   (A) Shareholders
   (B) Bondholders
   (C) Creditors
   (D) Depositors

4. National Tribal Dance Festival 2019 was organised in—
   (A) Imphal (B) Ranchi
   (C) Raipur (D) Kolima

5. Battle of Khanwa was fought between—
   (A) Babar and Rana Sanga
   (B) Humayun and Nusrat Shah
   (C) Ibrahim Lodi and Rana Sanga
   (D) Shershah Suri and Humayun

6. Which of the following pairs is matched correctly ?
   (A) Battle of Buxar–Mir Jafar v/s Clive
   (B) Battle of Wandiwash–French forces v/s East India Company's forces
   (C) Battle of Chilianwala-Dalhousie v/s Marathas
   (D) Battle Kharda–Nizam of Hyderabad v/s East India Company

7. Which of the following pairs is matched correctly ?
   (A) Indigo revolt-1859 AD
   (B) Paharia revolt-1917 AD
   (C) Bhunji revolt-1834 AD
   (D) Mopla revolt-1832

8. Which of the following political groups was established by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose ?
   (A) Congress Socialist Party
   (B) Swaraj Party
   (C) Krishak Praja Party
   (D) Forward Bloc

9. Consider the following statements in relation to Permanent Settlement and choose the correct code given below :
   I. It was introduced in Madras and Bombay presidencies.
   II. It created a new class of landlords with hereditary rights on the land.
   III. The landlords created under the Permanent Settlement could never be removed under any circumstance.
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) Only I and II
   (D) I, II and III all

10. Modern local self government was introduced in India by—
    (A) Lord Irwin
    (B) Lord Ripon
    (C) Lord Curzon
    (D) Lord Chelmsford

11. The Tenth Schedule of Indian Constitution is related to—
    (A) Union list, State list and the Concurrent list
    (B) Powers and functions of Panchayat Raj Institutions
    (C) Anti-defection Law
    (D) Creation of new State/ Union Territories

12. What deadline has been fixed in Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 to grant citizenship of India to certain classes of foreigners who entered into India ?
    (A) on or before the 31st day of December, 2013
    (B) on or before the 31st day of March, 2014
    (C) on or before the 31st day of December, 2014
    (D) on or before the 31st day of December, 2019

13. As on January 1, 2020 total number of Union Territories in India was—
    (A) 7 (B) 8
    (C) 9 (D) 10

14. The inner line permit (ILP) regime was extended to which state aftermath of large scale agitation over Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019—
    (A) Sikkim
    (B) Meghalaya
    (C) Manipur
    (D) UT Jammu & Kashmir

15. Which of the following pairs is mismatched ?
    (A) Charter Act, 1833—Governor General of Bengal became Governor General of India
    (B) Charter Act, 1853—Rule of East India Company was replaced by British Crown
    (C) Indian Councils Act, 1861—Indians were allowed to become the members of the legislature
    (D) Government of India Act 1935—Bicameralism introduced in the provinces

16. Which of the following writs is not specifically provided in the Constitution of India ?
    (A) Prohibition (B) Mandamus
    (C) Quowaranto (D) Injunction

17. Consider the List-I (Desert) and List-II (Country) and choose the correct code given below :

    List-I

    (a) Gobi (b) Kalahari
    (c) Takla-Makan (d) Kara-kum

    List-II

    1. Turkmenistan 2. China
    3. Botswana 4. Mongolia

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	3	2	1
(B)	1	2	3	4
(C)	3	4	2	1
(D)	2	3	4	1

18. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly ?
    (A) Continental Island—British Isles
    (B) Oceanic Island—Tristan De Cunha
    (C) Tectonic Island—St. Helena
    (D) Coral Island—Atolls

MAGBOOK

19. Which of the following tributaries of the Ganges has not originated in the Himalayas ?
(A) Ghaghra (B) Son
(C) Gandak (D) Ramganga

20. The wasting or consuming of snow and ice from the surface of an ice-sheet or glacier is called—
(A) Ablation
(B) Weathering
(C) Cryoplanation
(D) Hydration

21. Which of the following national parks or the sanctuaries has been named after a person ?
(A) Kanha National Park
(B) Gir National Park
(C) Corbett National Park
(D) Anshi National Park

22. As per new numbering of national highways which is the longest national Highway in India ?
(A) NH 19 (B) NH 27
(C) NH 44 (D) NH 59

23. Why did the Jainism and Buddhism gain patronage of the Kshatriya rulers in the 4th century BCE ?
I. Jainism and Buddhism were opposed to the 'varna' and 'jati' system.
II. Kshatriya rulers had grown wary of brahmanical supremacy.
Correct code is—
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) I and II both are correct
(D) Neither I nor II is correct

24. The golden period of Mughal art and architecture started during the reign of—
(A) Akbar (B) Jahangir
(C) Shahjahan (D) Aurangjeb

25. The Allahabad pillar inscription is associated with which one of the following ?
(A) Mahapadmanand
(B) Chandragupta Maurya
(C) Ashoka
(D) Samudragupta

26. Kishangarh School of painting developed in the state of—
(A) Rajasthan
(B) Bihar
(C) Madhya Pradesh
(D) Uttar Pradesh

27. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly in relation to 'tie and dye' art of cloth printing ?
(A) Laharia—Rajasthan
(B) Kalakari—Andhra Pradesh
(C) Ikat—Kerala
(D) Bandhani—Gujarat

28. Which of the following pairs is/are correctly matched ?
I. Nautanki—Uttar Pradesh
II. Kalbeliya—Rajasthan
III. Bhavai—Gujarat
Correct code is—
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) I, II and III
(D) Only II and III

29. The correct chronological order of the establishment of the following institutions is—
I. NABARD.
II. Food Corporation of India.
III. Agricultural Price Commission.
(A) II, I, III (B) I, II, III
(C) III, II, I (D) II, III, I

30. The most successful land reform in India is—
(A) Abolition of Middlemen (Zamindaars)
(B) Tenancy Reforms
(C) Land Ceiling
(D) Distribution of surplus land among landless people of rural areas

31. The numerical ratio of displacement to distance for a moving object is—
(A) Between – 1 and +1
(B) Always equal to 1
(C) Always more than 1
(D) Equal to less than 1

32. Velocity of sound is maximum in—
(A) Air (B) Water
(C) Vacuum (D) Steel

33. Space wave propagation is—
I. Tropospherical propagation
II. Sky wave propagation
III. Line of sight propagation
Correct code is—
(A) Only I (B) Only I and II
(C) Only II (D) I, II and III

34. The phenomenon which can be explained only by quantum nature of light is—
(A) Photo electric effect
(B) Reflection
(C) Interference
(D) Polarization

35. Identify the nitrogenous fertilizers—
I. Urea
II. Nitrolim
III. Ammonium Nitrate
IV. Potassium Nitrate
Correct code is—
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only I, II and III
(C) II, III and IV
(D) I, II, III and IV

36. Which of the following processes does not add particulate materials in air ?
(A) Running of Cold storage
(B) Burning of fossil fuel
(C) Paper Industry
(D) Incomplete combustion of Coal

37. Which of the following is/are colligative properties ?
I. Depression in freezing point
II. Elevation of boiling point
III. Osmotic pressure
IV. Modification of refractive Index
Correct code is—
(A) I, II and III (B) I, III and IV
(C) I, II and IV (D) II,III and IV

38. Which of the following are complementary to each other in relation to absorption in the human body ?
(A) Manganese and Copper
(B) Sodium and Chlorine
(C) Calcium and Vitamin D
(D) Amino Acids and Vitamin A

39. Which of the following pairs is/are matched correctly ?
I. Ptyalin—Mouth
II. Pepsinogen—Stomach
III. Lipase—Small Intestine
IV. Peptidase—Duodenum
Correct code is—
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II, III and IV
(C) Only I, III and IV
(D) I, II, III and IV all

40. Which of the following diseases is a non-communicable disease ?
(A) Carcinoma (B) Pertussis
(C) Dysentery (D) Measles

[See Answer See Page 106]

RESULTS

Essay Competition

Topic : Expanding Dimensions of India's 'Neighbourhood First' Policy

Winners

First Prize Winner

Ganesh. P.R.
Prabha House,
Kothavara, P.O. Vaikom
Kottayam
Kerala–686 607

Second Prize Winner

Raj Verma
H.No. 10, Civil Lines
Jaunpur

Third Prize Winner

Tanish Jain
S/o Mr. Kishor Jain
Veerprabhu-Kalapura Road
Sheoganj (Sirohi)
Rajasthan–307 027

Debate Competition

Topic : Third World War is Inevitable

Winners

In Favour

N.A.

Against the Topic

Mahesh Kumar
Moh. Gurunanakpura
Near Water Tank, Narnaul
Haryana–123 001

Quiz Contest

CONCENTRIC QUIZ
(Special on Oceanography)

First Prize Winner
Bhavishaya Dahiya
H.No. 22/225, Kailashi Sandeep Dahiya,
Gali No. 5 Nehru Park, Bahadurgarh
Haryana–124 507

Second Prize Winner
Nihal Pandey
Parshuram Nagar Colony, Amra Khaira
Chak, Kandwa, Chitaipur,
Varanasi
Uttar Pradesh–221 106

Third Prize Winner
Rishi Pratap
Room 1002, KC Hostel, L&T Knowledge
City, NH-8, Between Ajwa-Waghodia
Crossing, Vadodara
Gujarat–390 019

Answers

1. (A)	2. (B)	3. (A)	4. (B)	5. (D)
6. (A)	7. (D)	8. (D)	9. (D)	10. (A)
11. (B)	12. (A)	13. (B)	14. (A)	15. (C)
16. (D)	17. (B)	18. (A)	19. (B)	20. (C)

MAGAZINE KING

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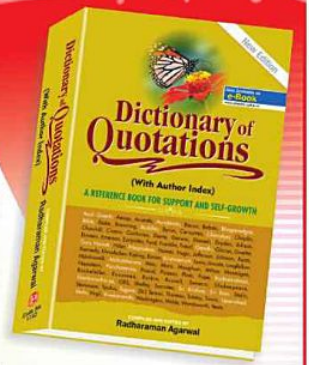

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INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO

Round The Half Year

34-year-old Sanna Marin Becomes Finnish PM, the World's Youngest Prime Minister

Sanna Marin, 34 was nominated Finland's Prime Minister on December 8, 2019. Belonging to Finland's dominant **Social Democrats** the youngest Prime Minister will lead the new women-led coalition cabinet after a political shake-up.

- Centre Party Chief Katri Kulmuni, 32, will be her finance minister.
- Finland's government resigned early in December, 2019 after the Centre Party said it had lost confidence in Social Democrat Prime Minister Antti Rinne over his handling of a postal strike.
- A law maker since 2015, Marin is the party's vice-chairwoman and was minister for transport and communications in the outgoing government. She had a swift rise in Finnish politics since becoming head of the city council of her industrial home town of Tampere at the age of 27. The five parties in power decided to stay in coalition after Rinne stepped down.
- Besides Marin, the coalition's other party leaders are 32-year-old Katri Kulmuni of the Center Party; the Left Alliance's Li Andersson, 32; Maria Ohisalo, the 34-year-old leader of the Greens; and the head of the Swedish People's Party, Anna-Maja Henriksson, who at 55 is the oldest.
- Marin will be Finland's third female government leader. Women have been present in politics in the Nordic region for decades and today represent half of the party leaders in Sweden. Four of Denmark's nine parties are headed by women. Mette Frederiksen became Denmark's prime minister in June, while Erna Solberg has been Norway's head of government since 2013.
- Iceland's Vigdis Finnbogadottir was the first woman to be democratically elected as head of state by voters when she defeated three men for the presidency in 1980.

Pak's Slowing Economy : ADB Comes to Rescue, Approves $ 1·3 Billion Loan

Cash-strapped Pakistan availed $ 1·3 billion loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on December 6, 2019 to support the country's public finances and shore up the slowing economy.

Pakistan is facing a serious economic crisis with short supplies of foreign currency reserves and stagnating growth in recent years.

The ADB's quick disbursing special policy-based loan is part of multi-donor economic reform programme led by the International Monetary Fund to stabilise Pakistan's economy after major deterioration in its fiscal position in 2018, according to a statement by the Manila-based regional lender. "ADB is committed to providing wide-ranging support to strengthen Pakistan's economy and reduce the risk of external shocks," said ADB director general for Central and West Asia Werner Liepach.

US Rolls Out e-Registration for H-1B Visa Applications

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) which overseas immigrations to the US, has announced a new process to apply for H-1B cap visas. Companies sponsoring employees for the H-1B cap visa will have to register electronically, giving basic details of their company and the employee concerned. Registration will be open from March 1 to March 20, in the next calendar year.

- This new process kicks in for the filing season 2020-21 (which means the earliest a selected employee can commence work in the US is October 2020). Sponsoring companies will have to pay a non-refundable registration fee of $ 10 per registration.
- As step 2, the random selection process (the lottery) will be run on these electronic registrations. Companies will have to file H-1B visa applications with the exhaustive documentation, only in respect of the selected registrations. A limited period window, which is likely to start from April 1, will be opened for filing the visa applications. The annual quota of 85,000 for H-1B cap visas remains unchanged (this includes the Masters cap quota of 20,000 for which only those with advanced US educational degrees are eligible).
- In other words, sponsoring employers would be saved from the current process of having to file extensive documentation for all applications at the very onset, just for entry into the lottery. The documentation is exhaustive, especially for IT service companies who place their H-1B employees at client sites.
- H-1B visas are widely used by India's technology sector. Recently, in reply to the Parliament India's external affairs minister S. Jaishankar said that in fiscal 2018, 1·25 lakh H-1B visas were issued to Indian nationals, which accounted for nearly 70% of the total visas.
- A statement from USCIS released on December 7, 2019 stated : "By streamlining the H-1B cap selections process with a new electronic registration system, USCIS is creating cost savings and efficiencies for petitioners and the agency as only those selected will now be required to submit a full petition." USCIS had earlier pegged the savings to be in the range of $ 42·4 million to $ 66·5 million per year for sponsoring employers and for the agency.

- Immigration experts and attorneys are in a wait and watch mode. A major concern is whether the registration system will favour direct employees versus those who are deputed by IT service companies to client sites. Or will it favour those with higher wages ?

Pakistan Unveils China-Funded Train

Pakistan on December 10, 2019 inaugurated the trial run of its first mass transit project, which is funded by China.

The Orange Line Metro train, which would complete 27 km of distance in 45 minutes, will pass through the congested areas of Lahore where more than 250,000 passengers travel on a daily basis.

Punjab transport minister Muhammad Jehanzaib Khan inaugurated the trial run. After the successful completion of the testing phase, the project is expected to open doors for the general public by March 2020.

In 2014, China signed an MoU with Pakistan to fund the Lahore Metro Rail project.

China's Exim Bank agreed to provide a soft loan of around $ 1,500 million.

Opposition PML-N celebrated the opening of the project saying it is a gift to the Lahorites from the Sharif brothers.

PML-N Punjab spokesperson Azma Bokhari has termed it a wise decision of chief minister Usman Buzdar not to formally inaugurate the metro train, saying the credit goes to former chief minister Shahbaz Sharif.

Started in 2015, the project was to be completed before the July 2018 elections but was delayed because of a stay order issued by the supreme court.

Bougainville Votes for Independence

The South Pacific region of Bougainville voted overwhelmingly to become the world's newest nation by gaining independence from Papua New Guinea, results showed on December 11, 2019. Bouginville Referendum Commission Chairman Bertie Ahern was cheered when he announced that more than 98% of valid ballots favoured independence. The other option in the vote was greater autonomy from Papua New Guinea.

Saudi, Kuwait End Dispute Over Oil Fields

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have ended a nearly five-year-long dispute over shared oilfields and have agreed to resume oil production from the divided Neutral Zone, but stressed this would not change their OPEC commitments to crude oil production cuts. The allied Gulf Arab nations signed the agreement in Kuwait City on December 24, 2019. Local media reported that about 300,000 barrels per day were being pumped from the area before the dispute.

US, China Closing in On a Deal : A Welcome Thaw in Trade War

China put a positive face on December 14, 2019 on a first-step trade agreement that dials down a trade war it blames the US for starting.

Chinese experts and news media joined government officials in saying the deal would reduce uncertainty for companies at least in the short term. They remained cautious, saying both sides will have to show a willingness to compromise to resolve the more fundamental differnces between them.

Phase 1 Agreement

The two countries announced a 'Phase 1' agreement on December 13, 2019 under which the US will reduce tariffs and China will buy more US farm products. Chinese officials said the text, which includes intellectual property, technology transfer, financial services and dispute settlement, has to undergo legal and translation review before it can be signed.

At a late night news conference in Beijing, officials said the US would begin phasing out tariffs on Chinese imports, rather than continue to raise them. China will also suspend additional tariffs on certain imports from the US.

Markets React

The S&P 500 Index swung between gains and losses, while Treasuries rose and the dollar was steady as neither side delivered enough details to calm investors who sent stocks to records earlier on reports fresh tariffs due December 15, 2019 have been averted. Washington and Beijing have been in trade war for almost two years, involving almost $ 500 billion in products shipped between the two nations hit by tit-for-tat tariffs.

Race to Space : Planet-Studying Space Craft Blasts Off

European spacecraft was launched from South America on December 18, 2019 on a three year mission to study planets in other solar systems.

A European spacecraft launched from South America on a three-year mission to study planets in other solar systems.

The Characterising ExOPlanets Satellite (CHEOPS) mission blasted off from Kourou, French Guiana atop a **Russian Soyuz rocket**. The launch came 24 hours after a first attempt was delayed shortly before lift-off because of a software problem in the upper stage of the rocket.

The European Space Agency says the satellite is the first mission dedicated to studying bright near-by stars that are already known to have planets, and will focus on "planets in the super-Earth to Neptune size range".

The agency hopes that the data sent by the mission will enable the bulk density of those planets to be calculated, which is a first step towards understanding them better.

Trump's 'Space Force'

The US Senate on December 17, 2019 voted overwhelmingly to pass a $ 738 billion defence policy bill that creates President Donald Trump's 'Space Force' and gives federal employees 12 weeks of paid parental leave, sending it to the White House, where Trump promised to quickly sign it into law.

The Senate voted 86-8 in favour of the National defense Authorisation Act, or **NDAA**. The Democratic-led House approved the bill by 377-48 earlier.

China Commissions Its First Home-built Aircraft Carrier

President Xi Jinping attended the commissioning of China's first entirely home-built aircraft carrier, underscoring the country's rise as a regional naval power at a time of tensions with the US and others over trade, Taiwan and the South China Sea. The **Shandong** is the second Chinese aircraft carrier to enter service after the Liaoning, which was originally purchased as a hulk from Ukraine and entirely refurbished.

State media reported that about 5,000 representatives from the naval forces and aircraft carrier construction groups attended the commissioning ceremony on December 17, 2019 at a naval base near the city of Sanya.

The base in the island province of Hainan opens onto the South China Sea, where China is engaged in an increasingly heated dispute over territory and undersea oil and gas resources. China's claim to virtually the entire strategic waterway, through which passes an estimated $ 5 trillion in trade annually, overlaps partially or in whole with five other governments.

Countries in the region, along with US treaty allies, including Japan and Australia, are also beefing up their navies and maritime law enforcement capabilities in response to Chinese actions such as the construction of manmade islands that Beijing has equipped with airfields and missile batteries.

US-Iran Stand-off : US Calls for 'Serious Steps' Against Iran

The US on November 7, 2019 called for 'serious steps' to be taken after Iran resumed uranium enrichment at its underground Fordo plant in a new step back from its commitments under a 2015 nuclear deal.

Tehran acknowledged blocking an official from the IAEA from visiting its nuclear site at Natanz earlier, the first known case of a United Nations inspector being blocked amid heightened tensions over its atomic program.

These latest steps put additional pressure on Europe to offer Iran a way to sell its crude oil abroad despite the US sanctions imposed on the country since President Donald Trump withdrew America from the nuclear deal over a year ago.

NASA Unveils Its First Electric Airplane

NASA, most prominent for its many Florida-launched exploits into space, showcased an early version of its first all-electric experimental aircraft, the X-57 'Maxwell,' on November 8, 2019 at its lesser known aeronautics lab in the California desert.

Adapted from a Italian-made Tecnam P2006T twin-engine propeller plane, the X-57 has been under development since 2015 and remains at least year away from its first test flight in the skies over Edward Air Force Base.

But after attaching the two largest of 14 electric motors that will ultimately propel the plane—powered by specially designed lithium ion batteries—NASA deemed the Maxwell ready for its first public preview.

NASA also showed off a newly built simulator that allows engineers, and pilots, to get the feel of what it will be like to manoeuvre the finished version of the X-57 in flight.

22nd ASEAN-China Summit in Bangkok : China 'Ready to Work with' ASEAN on S China Sea Row

The ASEAN-China summit, like the Asean-India summit, was held on November 3, 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. At the summit Beijing said that it is 'ready to work' with Southeast Asian nations on a code of conduct in the flashpoint South China Sea, where it is accused of building up military installations and bullying fellow claimants.

China claims most of the resource rich waterway, major global shipping route that has long been a source of tension in the region. For years, the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been locked in talks for a code of conduct for the sea, where China is accused of deploying warships, arming out-posts and ramming fishing vessels.

The agreement, set to be finished in 2021, will lay out conduct guidelines for the sea along with conflict resolution parameters.

The Philippines in 2016 filed a case with a UN-backed tribunal, which ultimately rejected Beijing's assertions in the Sea.

Tensions in the waterway have flared in recent weeks between China and Vietnam.

14th East Asia Summit in November, 2019

The 14th East Asia Summit (EAS) was held in Bangkok, Thailand on November 4, 2019. The meeting was chaired by H.E. General Prayut Chan-o-Cha, Prime Minister of the kingdom of Thailand and attended by the Heads of State/Government of ASEAN member states, Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea (ROK), the Russian Federation and the United States of America, and other representatives. The Secretary General of ASEAN was also in attendance. India was represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

US Formally Quits Paris Climate Accord

The US formally notified the United Nation that it was withdrawing from the Paris Climate accord, triggering expressions of concern and regret from other major powers on November 5, 2019.

US President Donald Trump went ahead with the pull out despite mounting evidence of the reality and impact of climate change, with September the fourth month in a row with record-breaking temperatures.

Washington presented its withdrawal letter to the UN on the first possible date under the accord negotiated by Trump's predecessor Barack Obama, making the world's largest economy the sole outlier from the agreement.

The US will be officially out on November 4, 2020, one day after the presidential election.

Trumph's rationale

Announcing the move, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo reiterated Trump's rationale in 2017 that the accord would disadvantage US businesses.

US Woos Asia with Plan to Rival China's 'Belt and Road Initiative'

Commerce secretary Wilbur Ross said the US will invest and trade more in Asia at it rolls out an American plan to support 'sustainable' projects in Asia as a counterpoint to China's multi-billion-dollar 'Belt and Road' infrastructure initiative.

Ross was leading a high-powered trade mission in Asia and along with national security adviser Robert O'Brien attended meetings at a regional summit that wrapped up November 4, 2019 on the outskirts of Thailand's capital.

Like O'Brien, he sought to dispel suspicions that President Donald Trump's administration is disengaging with the region, a sentiment that deepened when Trump sent his adviser to the annual summit, skipping it for a second straight year in order to campaign. "We have no intention of vacating our military or geopolitical position," Ross told reporters in a conference call.

He said many people had misinterpreted Trump's 2017 US decision to pull out of a regional trade deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, as a sign of waning interest.

"We are here permanently, and we will be continuing to invest more here, and we will be continuing to have more bilateral trade, and I'm spending much more time in the region," Ross said.

To illustrate that commitment, US officials launched the Trump administration's **'Blue Dot Network'** at a high-powered business conference attended by 1,000 people, including more than 200 American business executives.

BRICS Summit in Brazil (November 13-14, 2019) : Putin Extends Invitation to Trump to Attend May 9 Military Parade in Red Square : It would be a Right Step on His Part, Says Putin : BRICS Joint Declaration

Russian leader's move to invite US counterpart on May 9 sparks buzz at BRICS Brasilia summit. BRICS members slam protectionism in the joint declaration.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said it would be a 'right step' if US counterpart Donald Trump accepts his invitation to attend the upcoming May 9 military parade in Red Square **commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War 2.**

The Russian leader warned that the overthrow of Bolivia's socialist president, Evo Morales, and the chaos that it has sparked reminded him of events in Libya following the ouster of Muammar Qaddafi in 2011.

"There's no functioning government, there's no direct foreign intervention, but the country is on the verge of chaos," he said describing the events as "a worrying signal" for the wider Latin American region.

BRICS Nations Take a Swipe at US Policy

Five of the biggest emerging economies railed against protectionism as they vowed to overcome 'significant challenges' facing multilateralism, in a swipe at US tariffs and unilateral action.

Joint Declaration

The Joint Declaration by the BRICS countries came on the second day of the annual gathering which Brazilian host President Jair Bolsonaro used to boost ties with Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping.

Presidential Polls in Sri Lanka : Gotabaya Rajapaksa Storms to Victory

Sri Lanka's former civil wartime defence Chief Gotabaya Rajapaksa was declared the winner in the presidential election on November 17, 2019, after promising to secure the country against militant threats following Easter bombings this year.

Rajapaksa is the latest nationalist leader to sweep to election victory, tapping into the anger and fears of majority communities. In his first comments after defeating his rival Sajith Premadasa, a housing minister in the current government, Rajapaksa struck a counciliatory note, suggesting he would be leader of all Sri Lankans, regardless of their ethnic and religious identities.

The election commission said Rajapaksa won 52·25% of the votes in the election, while Premadasa got 41·99%, giving Rajapaksa a far bigger lead than predicted by politicians and analysts. Other candidates got 5·7% votes.

Rajapaksa, 70, oversaw the military defeat of Tamil separatists under his brother and the then President Mahinda Rajapaksa 10 years ago. He has promised strong leadership to secure the island of 22 million people, the majority of whom are Sinhalese Buddhists.

Rajapaksa will be the second member from the Rajapaksa family to become the President. His elder brother Mahinda Rajapaksa was President from 2005 to 2015.

Takes Oath

Rajapaksa was formally sworn in as Sri Lankan President on November 18, 2019 at an ancient Buddhist Temple outside Colombo. In his short speech, he promised to fulfil the promises made in his election manifesto. He also pledged support to the United Nations' sustainable development goals and make Sri Lanka one of the leading countries in sustainable development.

Sri Lankan President Picks Brother as PM

Meanwhile, the newly elected President on November 20, named his brother Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister. Mahendra Rajapaksa had been President of Sri Lanka for two terms during which the LTTE was finished. The present PM Ranil Wickremesinghe tendered his resignation after his party suffered a humiliating defeat at the presidential polls.

US Claims Successful ICBM Tests

The US military said on October 2, 2019 that it had tested an unarmed Minute Man III inter-continental ballistic missile equipped with re-entry vehicle from a base in California across the Pacific Ocean.

The vehicle launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base travelled approximately 6,750 km across the Pacific Ocean to the Kwajalein atoll, the Air Force said.

UAE's Space Programme : First UAE Astronaut to FLY into Space Lands Back on Earth

The first person from the United Arab Emirates to fly into space landed safely on October 3, 2019 along with an American and a Russian astronaut after a six-hour flight from the International Space Station.

The capsule carrying Nick Hague, Alexey Ovchinin and Hazzaa al-Mansoori touched down on the steppe in Kazakhstan in Central Asia at 3 : 59 pm local time, the impact sending a cloud of dust into the sky.

Al-Mansoori, the first of two men chosen by the United Arab Emirates to fly to the space station, returned after an eight-day mission while space veteran Ovchinin and Hague, who was on his maiden flight, are back after spending six months at the station.

The three-men were extracted from the capsule and put on foldout chairs so that they could rest and undergo preliminary medical checks. Al-Mansoori's team wrapped the smiling astronaut in his country's flag before taking him away for more health checks.

The former military pilot, the first Arab to have travelled to the International Space Station, returned home to a hero's welcome as his flight last month was widely celebrated across the country, and Dubai's tallest sky scraper was lit up to mark the launch.

China, North Korea Display Bonhomie As US-North Korea Talks Fail

China and North Korea on October 6, 2019 reaffirmed ties on the 70th year of the establishment of diplomatic relations, only a day after the latest round of talks between Washington and Pyongyang on nuclear disarmament broke down in the Swedish capital Stockholm.

On the night of October 6, 2019, the North's foreign ministry issued statement accusing the US of trying to mislead public opinion and "spreading a completely ungrounded story that both sides are open to meet" again. It said the talks "made us think they have no political will to improve (North Korea)—US relations and may be abusing the bilateral relations for their own partisan interests" at home.

Hostile Policy

North Korea isn't willing to hold 'such sickening negotiations' as those in Stockholm until the US takes a "substantive step to make complete and irreversible withdrawal of the hostile policy towards" the North, it added.

Exchanging congratulatory messages with North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un, Chinese President Xi Jinping said in the past 70 years, the "traditional friendship" between the two countries stood the "test of time and change in the international landscape".

Cause of Socialism

For his part Kim said the two countries' "invincible friendship will be immortal on the road of accomplishing the cause of socialism", Pyongyang's state news agency KCNA reported.

North Korea was among the first countries to establish ties with Beijing in 1949 after the Communist Party of China (CPC) took over the country.

China Remains North Korea's Key Benefactor

- China remains North Korea's key benefactor both economically and diplomatically. Kim had travelled to China four times since March, 2018 to meet Xi, the last one January 2019. Xi visited Pyongyang in June 2019.

According to reports in South Korean media, Kim is preparing for another visit to China.

- The discussions in Sweden took place after months of stalemate following a February meeting between Kim and US President Donald Trump. Just days before the meeting, a defiant Pyongyang tested a sea-launched ballistic missile.
- The North walked away from the Sweden talks saying it was disappointed at the lack of "new and creative" solutions offered by Washington.
- In Stockholm, the nuclear-armed North's leading negotiator, Kim Myong Gil, blamed the US for not giving up their "old attitude" which led to talks ending "without any outcome".
- But Washington called the talks 'good discussions', saying the comments by North Korea did not reflect the content or the spirit of their eight-and-a-half-hour discussion. The US accepted Sweden's invitation to resume talks in two weeks' time, said a state department spokeswoman.

Saudi Arabia Rules Women Can Now Join Armed Forces

Saudi Arabia announced on October 9, 2019 that it will allow women in the ultra-conservative kingdom to serve in the armed forces as it embarks on a broad programme of economic and social reform.

"Another step to empowerment", the foreign ministry wrote on Twitter, adding that women would be able to serve as private first class, corporal or sergeant.

Last year, Saudi Arabia had authorized women to join its security forces.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, has approved a handful of reforms aimed at widening women's rights, including allowing them to drive and to travel abroad without consent from a male 'guardian'.

But he has at the same time overseen the arrest of several prominent women's rights campaigners, including activist Loujain al-Hathloul.

Chinese President Xi Jinping Visits Nepal; Pledges NPR 56 Billion Financial Assistance to Nepal

Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on October 12, 2019 for a state visit after concluding his India visit for informal summit with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- On his arrival in Kathmandu, after a preliminary ceremonies, China on October 12, 2019 pledged to provide financial assistance of NPR 56-billion to Nepal over a period of two years.
- The announcement in this regard was made following a bilateral between President Xi Jinping and his Nepalese counterpart Bidhya Devi Bhandari on October 12 on the first day of his two-day state visit to Nepal, the first by a Chinese leader in 23 years.
- President Xi held talks with Bhandari at the Nepalese President's official residence Shital Niwas.

- They discussed matters relating to the friendly relations between the two countries, mutual interests and various other issues of concern, according to a statement issued by the Nepal President's Office.
- Xi also pledged to upgrade the Arniko Highway linking Kathmandu with Tatopani transit point—which was shut down following the devastating earthquake of 2015 and open more customs points facilitating connectivity.
- He said a feasibility study of trans-Himalayan railway will soon start and China will also support construction of the **Kerung–Kathmandu** tunnel road. "We have model friendship in the world and there is no issue between the two countries", Xi said during a state banquet hosted by President Bhandari on October 12 in his honour.
- President Xi said he and Bhandari agreed to develop relations, friendship and partnership that world help in development and prosperity for Nepal. "We want to support Nepal in realising its dream of becoming a **land-linked country** from the land-locked country", the Chinese President said.
- On her part, Bhandari reiterated Nepal's commitment to 'One-China policy' and said Nepal will not allow any force to use its territory against China. She appreciated China's support for Nepal's development efforts and cooperation at international platforms. She also sought China's assistance in constructing the Rasuwagadhi–Kathmandu–Lumbini railway line.
- Mr. Xi also met the main opposition parties' leaders including Nepal Congress president Sher Bahadur Deuba and Nepal Community Party co-chairman Pushpa Kamal Prachanda.

Giant Leap : Female Spacewalkers Script History

The world's first female space-walking team made history high above the Earth on October 18, 2019, floating out of the International Space Station (ISS) to fix a broken part of the power network.

- As NASA astronauts **Christina Koch and Jessica Meir** emerged one by one, it marked the first time in a half century of spacewalking that a woman floated out without a male crew mate.
- America's first female space-walker from 35 years ago, Kathy Sullivan, was delighted. She said it is good to finally have enough women in the astronaut corps and trained for space walking for this to happen.
- NASA leaders—along with women and others around the world—cheered Koch and Meir on. At the same time, many noted that this will hopefully become routine in the future.
- NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine watched the big event unfold from NASA headquarters in Washington.
- NASA originally wanted to conduct an all-female space-walk last spring, but did not have enough medium-size suits ready to go.

US to Withdraw 5K Troops from Afghanistan, Shut Bases

The United States would withdraw almost 5,000 troops from Afghanistan and close five bases within about 4 months under a draft peace accord agreed with the Taliban, the chief US negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad said.

Draft Accord

In exchange for the phased withdrawal, the Taliban would commit not to allow Afghanistan to be used by militants to plot attacks on the US and its allies.

It includes provision for so-called 'intra-Afghan' talks to reach a broader political, settlement and end the fighting between the Taliban and the Western-backed government in Kabul. However, details of any future negotiations remain unclear, with the Taliban so far refusing to deal directly with the government.

Many Afghan government officials have resented the government's exclusion from the US-Taliban talks. There was some uncertainty about whether Ghani had been given a copy of the agreement, or simply shown it.

Japan to Police East China Sea

Japan will launch a special police unit equipped with submachine guns and helicopters to patrol disputed isles in the East China Sea—a source of tension between Tokyo and Beijing. The deployment near the tiny islands known as the 'Senkakus' in Japanese and the 'Diaoyu' in Chinese could take place early next year, media reported.

Italy's New Government Takes Oath

Italy's new government, Premier Giuseppe Conte and his Cabinet, took an oath on September 5, 2019 to defend Italy's interests in a ceremony presided over by the Italian President in the Quirinal presidential palace. Conte's first, 14-month-long coalition collapsed in August, 2019 after his right-wing League partner, led by Matteo Salvini, pulled out. Ten ministers are from the populist 5-Stars Movement, Parliament's largest party. The centre-left Democrats have 9 ministers, and a tiny left-wing party has one.

Largest China-Pak Air Force Drill Held

- More than 50 Chinese and Pakistani aircraft completed the most comprehensive and 'confrontational' two-long joint exercises in northwestern China, a drill described by a military observer to be of **'real combat level'.**
- The 15-day exercise that ended on September 6, 2019 was the biggest joint air force exercise involving fighter aircraft of China and a foreign country, the Chinese military said, adding that it was also the most comprehensive in terms of equipment used and involved the most 'complete combat unit'.
- The large-scale Sino-Pak air exercise was held at an undisclosed location in north western China months after Indian and Pakistani air forcers engaged in a dogfight near the Line of Control following Indian air strikes on terror camps in Balakot.
- The annual joint training drill code-named "Shaheen (Eagle) VIII' kicked off on August 23 in an unnamed location in north western China, with both sides practising "air superiority, suppression of ground targets, air attack and joint air defence training," a Chinese air force statement carried by thepaper.cn said.
- Though an annual drill, this edition was the most comprehensive ever.

- The People's Liberation Army Air Force dispatched J-10C, J-16 and early warning aircraft as well as ground detachments covering ground-to-air missile, radar, airborne landing and communication to join the training. The Pakistani air force dispatched multiple types of aircraft, including the JF-17 Thunder, Mirage and early warning aircraft. The air arm of the PLA Navy also deployed aircraft to the joint training.

Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's Hero-Turned-Despot Passes Away

Robert Mugabe, the former guerilla hero-turned despot who ruled Zimbabwe for 37 years until the military forced him out of office passed away in hospital in Singapore, the country's President announced on September 6, 2019. He was 95.

First heralded as a liberator who rid the former British colony of Rhodesia of white minority rule, Mugabe used repression and fear to govern until he was finally ousted by his previously loyal military general in November 2017.

The former political prisoner-turned guerilla leader swept to power in 1960 elections after a growing insurgency and economic sanctions forced the Rhodesian government to the negotiating table.

In office, he initially won international plaudits for his declared policy of racial reconciliation and for extending improved education and health services to the black majority.

But that faded rapidly as Mugabe cracked down on his opponents. During the 1980s, he led an infamous campaign known as Gukurahundi during which an estimated 20,000 dissidents were killed.

Sri Lanka Unveils South Asia's Tallest Tower, Funded by China

Sri Lanka on September 16, 2019 unveiled South Asia's tallest tower, costing over $ 100 million, 80% of which has been funded by China under the controversial Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

- The 350-metre-tall 17 storey Lotus Tower, located in Colombo comprises a TV tower, a hotel, a telecommunications museum, restaurants, auditorium and a mall.
- Local media reported that Sri Lanka and China signed the Lotus Tower agreement in 2012 to build the tower, with **China National Electronics Import and Export Cooperation** being the general contractor.
- Though still under construction Sri Lankan President Sirisena decided to open the tower to public.

US Imposes New Sanctions on Russia Over Spy Poisoning

The US President Donald Trump has imposed another round of sanctions on Russia over the poisoning of a former spy in Britain, the White House said on August 2, 2019, a move Moscow said would hurt already straightened US–Russia ties.

The move came hours before a landmark Cold War-era arms control treaty expired, after Washington withdrew, accusing Moscow of violating it, which Russia denies.

US imposed an initial batch of sanctions last year on Russia after determining that Moscow had used a nerve agent against a former Russian double agent, Sergei Skripal, and his daughter Yulia in UK which Moscow denies. "After the first round of sanctions in response to Russia's assassination attempt against a private citizen in the UK, Russia did not provide the assurances required under US law," said White House spokesman Hogan Gidley. "So we are imposing a second round of sanctions."

Gulf Tensions : Iran Unveils New Missiles, Ready to take on US

Iran unveiled three precision-guided missiles on August 6, 2019, with the defence minister saying they show the country is ready to defend itself in the face of US 'viciousness and conspiracies'.

Air-to-Air Missiles

- The new line-up of air-to-air missiles dubbed **Yasin, Balaban** and a new series of the **Ghaem,** were developed jointly by the ministry and Sa Iran, also known as Iran Electronics Industries.
- Defence minister Amir Halami hailed their launch as "another significant achievement of power and dignity for the Islamic Republic of Iran."

  "It shows that despite the viciousness and conspiracies of the Great Satan America and its mercenaries, the defence ministry will not hesitate for a moment to defend the Islamic republic and expand security" he said.
- The Yasin was a smart guided missile with folding wings that can be fired from a range of 50 km of its target from manned or unmanned aircraft, Fars reported.
- **The Balaban** was guided by GPS and sensors equipped with folding wings and could be mounted under aircraft, while the **Ghaem** was a heat-seeking missile that could hit within 50 cm of a target.

  They were unveiled amid tensions between Iran and the US and its allies in the Strait of Hormuz—a vital corridor linking oil producing countries in West Asia to markets in Asia, Europe and North America.

"War with Iran is the Mother of All Wars"

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on August 5, 2019 said that Iran favours talks with the US if it lifts sanctions, despite an Iranian diplomat turning down a meeting with US President Donald Trump.

Rouhani said that **"peace with Iran is the mother of all peace"** and "war with Iran is the mother of all wars" as he defended a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

Gender Equality : Saudi Women Can Now Travel Without Male Consent

Saudi Arabia's decision to allow women to travel independently was hailed in the kingdom on August 2, 2019 as **a historic leap for gender equality,** but it also drew anger from religious conservatives.

The Muslim kingdom announced it was effectively allowing women over the age of 21 to obtain passports and travel abroad without securing the permission of their 'guardians' husband, father or other male relatives.

The reform, which also covers civil rights such as allowing women to register childbirth, marriage or divorce, does not dismantle but diminishes the male guardianship system that has long been a symbol of repression against women.

"The new regulations are history in the making," Princess Reema bint Bandar, named earlier this year as Saudi Arabia's first woman ambassador to Washington, said on Twitter.

Holistic Approach

"They call for the equal engagement of women and men in our society. It is a holistic approach to gender equality that will unquestionably create real change for Saudi women."

The decision triggered a wave of jubilation on social media, with the hashtag 'No guardianship over women travel' and 'This is our time' gaining traction. Some also denounced the change as 'unIslamic'.

The reform, which grants women greater autonomy and mobility, comes as the petrostate reels from low oil prices and seeks to boost employment opportunities for women currently facing high joblessness.

The changes come after high-profile attempts by women to escape alleged guardianship abuse despite a string of reforms by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, including a historic decree last year that overturned the world's only ban on women drivers. Women in Saudi Arabia are systematically coming into their own. They had earlier been given freedom to drive on their own.

Saudi Arabia Sacks Doctors with MS/MD Degrees from Pakistan

Saudi Arabia has derecognised post graduate medical degree programme of Pakistan and asked several Pakistani doctors in the kingdom to be ready to leave or be deported, a source said on August 7, 2019.

The Saudi ministry of health said that Pakistan's MS (Master of Surgery) and MD (Doctor of Medicine) programmes lacked structured training, which is mandatory to hire medics in high positions. Hundreds of medics have been affected by the decision.

Qatar, UAE and Bahrain follow Suit

Qatar, the UAE and Bahrain are also following the Saudi government's move to de-recognise Pakistani medical programmes, the report said. Most of the affected Pakistani doctors were hired by the Saudi health ministry in 2016 when it conducted interviews in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, it said.

"Your application for professional qualification has been rejected. Reason is that your master degree from Pakistan is not acceptable according to the SCFHS regulations," read the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties' (SCFHS) letter.

Drive Against Deforestation : Indonesian President Bans Forest Clearance

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has issued a permanent moratorium on new forest clearance for activities such as palm plantations or logging, the Indonesian environment minister said on August 8, 2019.

- While likely to be welcomed by green groups, some do not think it goes far enough to protect remaining forests in the tropical archipelago.
- The moratorium which covers around 66 million hectares of primary forest and peatland, was first introduced in 2011 and has been renewed regularly as part of the efforts to reduce emissions from fires caused by deforestation.

  "The president signed an instruction on stopping new permits and improving primary forest and peatland governance," forestry and environment minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar said.
- Bakar said the August 5 presidential instruction mandated that ministers, governors and other officials could not issue new permits within the moratorium area.
- Indonesia has had one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world, with more than 74 million hectares of rainforest, nearly twice the size of Japan logged, burned or degraded in the last half century, according to Greenpeace.

Incomes in China Surge 60 Times in 70 Years : New Data

The per capita disposable income of Chinese citizens surged nearly 60 times in 70 years, latest data revealed in 2019 as China moves closer towards becoming a higher income country.

In 1949, the year the Communist Party of China began building a whole new China, the per capita disposable income stood at 49·7 Yuan. In 2018, it topped 28,200 Yuan ($ 4,000), China's national bureau of statistics (NBS) said in a report in the first week of August 2019.

Consumption Spending

The steady income growth has led to a continuous increase in consumption spending, fuelling the economy as it rapidly grew in the last few decades to become the **second largest in the world.**

Middle Income Country

The latest data, coupled with statistics released by the government earlier this year, show that China is getting closer to becoming a high-income country.

The road ahead, however, will not be smooth as China's economy slows down and the trade war with the US escalates.

G-7 Summit, 2019 in France; Modi Attends as Special Invitee

The 45th G7 summit was held on August 24–26, 2019 in Biarritz, Nouvelle–Aquitaine, France. The participants included all G7 members—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States and the European Union.

This was the first G7 summit for the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson. It was also the last summit for Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and Council President Donald Tusk.

The President of France, Emmanuel Macron invited the Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison, the Prime Minister of Spain Pedro Sanchez and the **Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi** to attend the outreach session of the summit as special invitees.

Other invitees included heads of government/state of Burkina Faso, Chile, Egypt, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and Spain.

Five points were agreed at the issue of the summit, about :

- The World Trade Organisation "with regard to intellectual property protection to settle disputes more swiftly and to eliminate unfair trade practices.
- The "G7 summit commits to reaching an agreement to simplify regulatory barriers and modernize internal taxation within the frame-work of the OECD.
- The G7 shares objectives on Iran : "to ensure that Iran never acquires nuclear weapons and foster peace and stability in the region.
- On Libya : "We support a truce in Libya that will lead to a long-term ceasefire. We believe that only a political solution can ensure Libya's stability. We call for a well-prepared international conference to bring together all the stakeholders and regional actors relevant to this conflict. We support in this regard the **work of the United Nations** and the African Union to set up an inter-Libyan conference."
- In an opaque reference to the **Russian military intervention in Ukraine** (2014-present), "France and Germany will organise a Normandy format summit in the coming weeks to achieve tangible results.
- In the light of the 2019 Hong Kong anti-extradition bill protests "The G7 reaffirms the existence and the importance of the 1984 **Sino–British agreement on Hong Kong** and calls for avoiding violence.

G7 Pledges Millions to Fight Amazon Fires

The G7 has agreed to spend € 20 million on the Amazon, mainly to send fire-fighting aircraft to tackle the huge blazes engulfing many parts of the world's biggest rainforest, the Presidents of France and Chile announced on August 26.

The G7–comprising Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States – has also agreed to back a medium-term reforestation plan that will be unveiled at the UN in September, France's Emmanuel Macron and Chile's Sebastian Pinera said at the G7 summit.

Brazil would have to agree to any reforestation plan, as would indigenous communities living in the Amazon. The initiative was announced after G7 leaders held talks on the environment.

G7 Next Year in Miami, USA

The US President Donald Trump appeared to confirm on August 24, 2019 that he wanted to hold next year's Group of 7-summit meeting at one of his own properties, the National Doral Luxury Golf Resort near Miami, USA.

Indian Prime Minister Modi's Presence at Summit : Rejects Scope for Third Party Mediation in Kashmir

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was a special invitee to the G7 summit by French President Emmanuel Macron, along with a few others. On the sidelines of the summit on August 25, he categorically rejected a scope for third party mediation between India and Pakistan on Kashmir, saying the two countries can discuss and resolve all issues bilaterally and "we do not want to trouble any third country."

President Donald Trump with Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral talks during the G7 summit in Biarritz (France).

On August 25, 2019 before his 40-minute meeting with Trump on the sidelines of the G-7 summit, Modi said : "All issues between India and Pakistan are bilateral in nature, that is why we don't bother any other country regarding them. India and Pakistan were together before 1947 and I'm confident that we can discuss our problems and solve them, together."

Modi struck a measured and conciliatory tone about dialogue with Pakistan. He said that after Imran Khan became Pakistan's Prime Minister, he had called him up and said that both countries have to fight "poverty, illiteracy and disease" and they should work together.

Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said there was no discussion on J&K at the meeting between Modi and Trump that followed—their second in 2019, two months after they last met in Osaka on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Japan.

The discussions on Kashmir appear to have taken place at a dinner on August 24 attended by the two leaders and hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron at the Hotel du Palais.

Gokhale, however, said the issue of J&K was discussed with the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres who met Modi regarding a climate change summit in September. Modi is due to travel to New York to attend the UN General Assembly and also participate in the climate summit. According to sources, the Prime Minister laid out India's basic position on the Kashmir issue that it is **'an internal matter'** and the Article 370 is under the Indian Constitution. He told the US Secretary General that normalcy was returning in Kashmir.

Mitsotakis Sworn in As Greek PM After Securing Win Against Tsipras

Greece's new conservative Prime Minister **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** was sworn in on July 8, 2019 after a sweeping election victory put him in charge of the EU's most indebted member with promises to end a decade of economic crisis.

The 51-year-old Harvard graduate and former McKinsey consultant took the oath of office in the presidential mansion in the presence of his wife and three children in Athens.

He then walked next door to the prime minister's office, where he had a brief discussion with defeated leftist premier Alexis Tsipras.

The US-educated conservative faces a hefty challenge as he takes over from Tsipras, who had imposed austerity measures required under a bailout to keep Greece in the eurozone.

Mitsotakis is the son of former Greek prime minister Constantine Mitsotakis, one of the country's longest-serving parliamentarians. His sister Dora Bakoyannis was Athens's first female mayor.

UAE Okays 100% Foreign Ownership in 13 Sectors

The UAE will allow upto 100% foreign ownership of some companies operating in 13 sectors, including manufacturing, agriculture and renewable energy.

New Foreign Investment Law

The UAE cabinet has approved 122 economic activities across 13 sectors eligible for upto 100% foreign ownership, state news agency WAM said on July 2, 2019. UAE last year approved a new foreign investment law that would allow foreign investors to own more than 49% and up to 100% in some UAE businesses. Officials said that list of which sectors and activities the law would apply to would be published in the first quarter of 2019.

Sectors where up to 100% foreign ownership will be permitted include space, transportation, hospitality, and professional, scientific and technical activities.

Taliban, Afghan Team Agree to Road Map for Peace Deal

Taliban and Afghan representatives, including some government officials, agreed on July 9, 2019 to a basic road map for negotiating the country's future, a major step that could help propel peace efforts to end the long war, now in its 18th year.

Joint Declaration

- In a joint declaration after two days of unprecedented and often emotional discussions in the Qatar capital **Doha** the two sides emphasized a need to work for reducing 'civilian casualties to zero' and assuring women their fundamental rights in "political, social, economic, educational, cultural affairs."
- The declaration is not binding and at best is a starting point for when the two sides meet later for negotiations that could lead to fixed terms. But even the declaration might not immediately deescalate the violence in Afghanistan, it does help push forward a peace process between US diplomats and the Taliban that has been making strides in negotiations, but which has been struggling to overcome the Taliban's refusal to meet with Afghan government officials.
- The Taliban have said direct negotiations with the Afghans would start only after the US announces a timeline for the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan.

Boris Johnson Becomes New Prime Minister of Britain

Boris Johnson, the bombastic politician who played a decisive role in the 2016 Brexit referendum, became UK's new Prime Minister on July 24, 2019. He replaces Theresa May who submitted her resignation earlier.

In accordance with British constitutional protocol, he was officially invited to form the government by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace on July 24, afternoon, after winning the race to replace May as leader of the governing Conservative Party earlier.

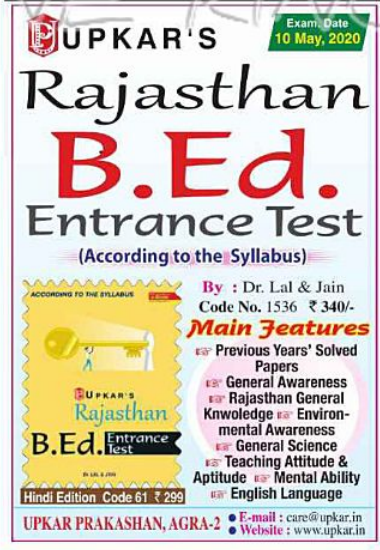
Known for his tousled shock of blonde hair and brash style, Johnson enters Downing Street at a chaotic moment for the UK, both at home and abroad.

Despite his Conservative Party's flimsy majority in Parliament, Johnson pledged to do in three months what May could not do in three years—lead Britain out of the European Union, 'do or die'.

Beyond the political bedlam in Britain, Johnson inherits a mounting crisis with Iran. Tehran's seizure of a British-flagged oil tanker a few days back has thrust the UK into the middle of a stand off between Tehran and Washington.

Johnson, a former Mayor of London and British foreign secretary, won the race to lead his party with 66% of the votes. The election was triggered after an embattled May was forced to quit after losing the support of her Cabinet, many of whom were exasperated with her inability to secure Brexit.

As Prime Minister, Johnson, 55, takes on the same problems that faced May—a deeply divided Parliament and a fracture nation—but under even more pressured circumstances.



SPORTS AND GAMES

Round The Half Year

ATHLETICS

Tata Steel Kolkata 25K Marathon, 2019

Leonard Barsoton of Kenya emerged the winner of the Tata Steel Kolkata 25 K elite men marathon title on December 15, 2019 as he finished the race in 01 hour, 13 minutes and 05 seconds, 28 seconds faster than runner-up Betesfa Getahun of Ethiopia. Bayelign Yegsaw again from Ethiopia claimed third spot in the race.

Srinu Bugatha emerged the fastest Indian in the men's race with the 01 hour, 18 minutes and 31 seconds timing. Tirtha Pun was the second fastest Indian male athlete.

Gutent Shone of Ethiopia won the elite women's title of the Tata Steel Kolkata 25 K event. She finished the race in 01 hour, 22 minutes and 09 seconds. Two Bahraini athletes Desi Jisa and Tejity Daba secured second and third positions respectively in the race. Kiranjeet Kaur was the fastest Indian athlete in the women's race.

Hima Das Clinches Her Fifth Gold

Indian sprinter Hima Das extended her sensational run by claiming her fifth gold of the month in July 2019 as she returned to her pet 400 m competition with a season-best time of 52·09s in Nove Mesto, Czech Republic on July 20, 2019 at the Nove Mesto nad Metuji Grand Prix.

The timing is slower than her personal best of 50·79 seconds, which she managed at the Jakarta Asian Games last year and she also narrowly missed out on the World Championships qualifying mark of 51·80.

It was Hima's fifth gold medal since July 2, 2019 when she ran her first competitive race in Europe.

In her first competitive 200 m race of the year, she clocked 23·65 seconds on her way to grab gold at the Poznan Athletics Grand Prix in Poland on July 2, 2019.

After that, Hima won her second 200 m gold at the Kutno Athletics Meet, also in Poland, on July 7 with a time of 23·97 seconds.

On July 13, she won her third 200 m gold at the Kladno Athletics Meet in Czech Republic with a time of 23·43 while her fourth gold came at the Tabor Athletics Meet in the same country on July 17.

Dutee Chand Becomes First Indian Athlete to Win a 100 Metre Gold At a Global Event

National record holder Dutee Chand became the first Indian woman track and field athlete to clinch a gold medal in the World Universiade after she won the 100 m dash event in Napoli, Italy on July 10, 2019.

Dutee clocked 11·32 seconds to win the gold as she led the race from start to finish. Del Ponte (11·33) of Switzerland finished runner-up in the event.

Lisa KwaYie of Germany took the bronze in 11·39 seconds in the race.

The Odisha runner, whose National record stands at 11·24 seconds, thus became the first Indian athlete to win a 100 m gold in a global event.

She has now become only the second Indian sprinter to win a gold in a global event after Hima Das, who clinched the top spot in 400 m in the World Junior Athletics Championships in 2018.

BADMINTON

Kento Momota and Chen Yufei Win BWF World Tour Finals Singles Crowns, 2019

Japan's Kento Momota emerged champion of the BWF World Tour Finals Men's Singles title, beating Anthony Sinisuka Ginting of Indonesia 17-21, 21-17, 21-14 in the final on December 15, 2019 in Shanghai.

China's Chen Yufei defeated Taiwan's Tai Tzu-ying 12-21, 21-12, 21-17 in the final to clinch the BWF World Tour Finals Women's Singles title, 2019.

Lakshya Sen Clinches Bangladesh International Challenger Men's Singles Title

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen notched up his fifth title of the season, claiming the men's singles crown at the Bangladesh International Challenger with a 22-20, 21-18 win over Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao in the final on December 15, 2019 in Dhaka.

26th Syed Modi International Badminton Tournament

Fourth seed Olympic Champion Carolina Marin of Spain clinched the Syed Modi International Badminton Women's Singles title as she registered a facile straight sets (21-12, 21-16) victory over Thailand's Phittayaporn Chaiwan in the final on December 1, 2019 in Lucknow. It was Marin's first title at Syed Modi.

Chinese Taipei's Wang Tzu Wei defeated local boy Sourabh Verma 21-15, 21-17 in the final to clinch the Syed Modi Men's Singles title.

In an all Korean Women's Doubles final, Baek Ha Na and Jung Kyung Eun emerged the champion, beating Chang Ye Na and Kim Hye Rin 23-21, 21-15 to lift the title. Chinese pair of He Jiting and Tan Qiang carried home the Syed Modi Men's Doubles title with a summit clash victory (21-18, 21-19) over Korean combination of Choi Solgyu and Seo Seung Jae.

Russian combination of Rodion Alimov and Alina Davletova clinched the Syed Modi Mixed Doubles title as they defeated English pair of Marcus Ellis and Lauren Smith 21-18, 21-16 in the summit clash.

MADHUBAN EDUCATIONAL BOOKS

Kento Momota and Chen Yufei Retain Their Fuzhou China Open Singles Titles, 2019

Kento Momota of Japan defeated Chou Tien-Chen of Taiwan 21-15, 17-21, 21-18 in the final on November 10, 2019 in Shanghai to retain the Fuzhou China Open Badminton Men's Singles title. It was Kento's 10th title triumph of this year.

Chen Yufei of China successfully defended the Fuzhou China Open Women's Singles title, beating Japan's Nozomi Okuhara 9-21, 21-12, 21-18 in the final.

Indonesian pair of Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo and Marcus Fernaldi Gideon scripted history by winning their fourth consecutive Fuzhou China Men's Doubles title as they defeated Japanese duo of Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda 21-17, 21-9, in the final to lift the title.

Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota of Japan won the Fuzhou China Open Women's Doubles title, beating Lee So Hee and Shin Seung Chan 21-17, 21-15 in the final.

Chinese pair of Wang Yilu and Huang Dongping won the Mixed Doubles title of the event.

French Open Badminton Championship, 2019

Rio Olympic Champion Chen Long of China defeated Jonathan Christie of Indonesia 21-19, 21-12 in the final on October 27, 2019 in Paris to retain the French Open Badminton Men's Singles title. Long became the second shuttler in the French Open history to retain the Men's Singles title since India's Vimal Kumar in 1983, 1984.

Korean teen sensation An Se-young won the French Open Women's Singles title as she prevailed over reigning Olympic Champion Carolina Marin of Spain 16-21, 21-18, 21-5 in the final. It was Se-young's first title at BWF Super 750 level.

Top seed Indonesian pair of Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo won the French Open Men's Doubles title, beating Indian pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty 21-18, 21-16 in the final.

In an all Korean final, Lee So-hee and Shin Seung Chan emerged champion of the French Open Women's Doubles title as they pipped Kim So-yeong and Kong Hee-yong 16-21, 21-19, 21-12 in the final.

Indonesian pair of Praveen Jordan and Melati Daeva Oktavianti clinched the French Open Mixed Doubles Badminton title as they defeated top seed Chinese pair of Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong 22-24, 21-16, 21-12 in the final.

World Badminton Championships, 2019 : India's PV Sindhu Emerges Champion

India's star shuttler PV Sindhu added a new feather to her cap on August 25, 2019 when she emerged champion of the BWF World Badminton Championship Women's Singles Title, becoming the first World Badminton Champion from India. Fifth seed Sindhu trounced her archrival Nozomi Okuhara of Japan 21-7, 21-7 in the final at the St. Jakobshalle arena in Basel, Switzerland to win the women's singles title in her third consecutive final appearance in the World Badminton Championship.

Sindhu had finished runner-up in the World Badminton Championship in 2017 and 2018 against Okuhara and Carolina Marin respectively. But she came out third time lucky in 2019. Sindhu registered a facile 21-7, 21-14 victory over Chen Yu Fei of China in the Semifinal.

India's B. Sai Praneeth wins Bronze Medal in the Men's Singles event.

Japan's Kento Momota defeated Anders Antonsen of Denmark by 21-9, 21-3 to retain his BWF World Badminton Championship Men's Singles Title. Momota became just the fourth man in the BWF history to retain his singles titles.

The Indonesian pair of Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan emerged champion of the World Badminton Championship Men's Doubles title, beating Japanese Combination of Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi 25-23, 9-21, 21-15 in the final.

In an all Japanese final of the Women's Doubles Event, Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara retained the title, beating Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota 21-11, 20-22, 23-21 in the final. It was the repeat of last year's final in terms of finalists and winners.

The BWF World Badminton Championship Mixed Doubles Title went to Chinese pair of Zheng Siwei and Huang Yagiong when they prevailed over Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai of Thailand 21-8, 21-12 in the final. Siwei and Yagiong were the defending Champions of the Mixed Double Title.

Pankaj Advani Retains the IBSF World Billiards Championship 150-up Format Title, 2019

India's star Cueist Pankaj Advani continued his dominance in world billiards as he clinched his fourth consecutive world billiards title in the 150-up format at the IBSF World Billiards Championship on September 15, 2019 at Mandalay, Myanmar.

In a repeat of the last year's final in terms of finalists and result of the final Advani defeated Nay Thway Oo of Myanmar 6-2 in the best of 11 frame title clash.

It was Advani's seventh title triumph in this format of IBSF World Billiards Championship and his 22nd World title overall. Advani has won at least one global event every year since 2014.

Pankaj Advani and Aditya Mehta Win IBSF World Snooker Team Championship

Indian duo Pankaj Advani and Aditya Mehta emerged champion of the IBSF World Snooker Team title as they prevailed over Thai team 5-2 in the summit clash on September 25, 2019 in Mandalay, Myanmar.

It is Advani's 23rd world title overall while Aditya claimed his maiden world event. For Advani, this title triumph has ensured that his name is now there on every IBSF world title on offer.

CHESS

Koneru Humpy Wins Women's World Rapid Chess Championship, 2019

Koneru Humpy, India's first woman grandmaster emerged champion of the Women's World Rapid Chess Championship at the Grand Sports Arena of the Luzhniki Olympic Complex in Moscow on December 28, 2019 as she defeated China's Lei Tingjie in the Armageddon game to clinch the title. She received $ 40,000 as prize money.

Humpy, Lei Tingjie and Turkey's Ekaterina Atalik finished the rapid Chess games with nine points each from 12 games. Humpy and Lei secured top two positions for a play-off. To break the tie an Armageddon game was played between Humpy and Tingjie. Humpy lost the first game but bounced back solidly by winning the next two games of the three game Armageddon play-off and became the first Indian Chess prodigy to win the Women's World Rapid Chess Crown.

Magnus Carlsen of Norway clinched the World Rapid Chess Championship, 2019, finishing with 11·5 points in 15 games. He remained unbeaten in the tournament. It is Carlsen's third World Rapid Chess title after his victories in 2014 and 2015.

Ruanak Sadhwani Becomes India's 65th Chess Grandmaster

Raunak Sadhwani became India's 65th Chess Grandmaster when he achieved his third and final Grandmaster norm on October 19, 2019 in his ninth round in the FIDE Chess.com Grand Swiss event. At 13 years, nine months and 26 days, Sadhwani is the ninth youngest GM in the world. He is also the youngest GM of Maharashtra.

Wang Hao Wins FIDE Chess.Com Grand Swiss Title, D Harika Wins Women's Crown

Chinese Grandmaster Wang Hao Clinched the FIDE Chess.com Grand Swiss title with eight points on October 21, 2019 at Isle of Man in Douglas. He tied at eight points with Fabiano Caruana but Hao was declared the winner of the title with superior tie-break score. With this title triumph, Hao qualified for the 2020 Candidates Tournament.

Indian Grandmaster D. Harika won the Women's title of the FIDE Chess.com Grand Swiss tournament with 5·5 points. Kazakhstan's Dinara Saduakassova also earned 5·5 points to tie with Harika who took the title on the better tie-break score merit.

Teimour Radjabov Wins FIDE World Cup, 2019

Azerbaijani Grandmaster Teimour Radjabov emerged champion of the 2019 FIDE World Cup Chess title as he defeated Ding Liren of China in tiebreaks in the final match of the tournament on October 04, 2019 in Khanty-Mansiysk. Radjabov got triumphant in both blitz encounters to take home the title and winner's purse of USD 110,000.

Teimour Radjabov and Ding Liren, the two top players of the championship qualified for the 2020 Candidates Tournament.

CRICKET

13th Player Auction of Indian Premier League Takes Place, Pat Cummins Emerges the Most Expensive Buy

The player auction for the Indian Premier League 2020 took place in Kolkata on December 19, 2019. Australian pace bowler Pat Cummins emerged the most expensive buy in the auction event for IPL 2020 as he was bought by Kolkata Knight Riders for a historic 15·50 crore amount, making Cummins the most expensive overseas player in the IPL auctions so far. He also became the second-most expensive buy in the IPL after Indian great Yuvraj Singh who fetched ₹ 16 crore from Delhi Daredevils. Another Australian Glenn Maxwell remained the second most expensive player this auction as he was claimed by Kings XI Punjab for ₹ 10·75 crore.

Piyush Chawla remained the costliest Indian player in the auction as Chennai Super Kings included him in its side with ₹ 6·75 crore offer.

- Total 62 players were auctioned for the IPL 2020. There are 33 Indian in the list.
- More than 140 crore were spent by the eight franchisees of the IPL.

Kuldeep Yadav Becomes First Indian Cricketer to Claim Two Hat-tricks in ODIs

Wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav became the first Indian cricketer to claim two hat-tricks in the international one-day cricket when he scalped his second hat-trick in the second ODI of the three match India-West Indies Series on December 18, 2019 in Visakhapatnam. Kuldeep achieved his second hat-trick milestone in the 33rd over of the second ODI of the series when he dismissed West Indies batsmen trio-Shai Hope, Jason Holder and Alzarri Joseph in three consecutive deliveries.

Bowlers with Two or More Hat-tricks in ODIs

Bowler	Opp.	Venue	Date
L. Malinga (Sri Lanka)	South Africa	Providence	28.3.2007
L. Malinga (Sri Lanka)	Kenya	Colombo	1.3.2011
L. Malinga (Sri Lanka)	Australia	Colombo	22.8.2011
W. Akram (Pakistan)	West Indies	Sharjah	14.10.1989
W. Akram (Pakistan)	Australia	Sharjah	3.5.1990
S. Mushtaq (Pakistan)	Zimbabwe	Peshawar	3.11.1996
S. Mushtaq (Pakistan)	Zimbabwe	The Oval	11.6.1999
C. Vaas (Sri Lanka)	Zimbabwe	Colombo	8.12.2001
C. Vaas (Sri Lanka)	Bangladesh	Pietermaritzburg	14.2.2003
T. Boult (New Zealand)	Pakistan	Abu Dhabi	7.11.2018
T. Boult (New Zealand)	Australia	Lord's	29.6.2019
K. Yadav (India)	Australia	Kolkata	21.9.2017
K. Yadav (India)	West Indies	Visakhapatnam	18.12.2019

MEGA BOOKS

Kuldeep's first ODI hat-trick came against Australia in Kolkata in 2017. Claiming his second hat-trick, he joined the elite club of great bowlers like L. Malinga of Sri Lanka and Wasim Akram of Pakistan etc.

Karnataka Retains Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy-2019

Karnataka successfully defended its Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 title, 2019 as it pipped Tamil Nadu by one run in a breath-taking final on December 1, 2019 at the Lalbhai Contractor Stadium in Surat. It is Karnataka's second victory of the season against the same opponent in the final as it had beaten Tamil Nadu in the Vijay Hazare Trophy final earlier.

Winning the toss, Tamil Nadu asked Karnataka to bat first. Karnataka set a target of 181 runs before Tamil Nadu which gave a tough fight to Karnataka but narrowly lost the final by just one run.

- Manish Pandey, who played a 60-run impressive innings in the final, was the skipper of Karnataka team.
- Karnataka defeated Haryana in the semi-final while Tamil Nadu prevailed over Rajasthan in another semi-final of the Championship.

Kohli and Dhoni Named Captains of Test and ODI Teams of Decade by Cricket Australia

Acknowledging great leadership skills and cricket mind of Indian cricketers Virat Kohli and M.S. Dhoni, the Cricket Australia on December 24, 2019 declared Virat Kohli as the captain of the CA's Test XI of the decade while M.S. Dhoni was chosen as the skipper of the CA's ODI team of the decade. Kohli, having an average of more than 50 in all cricket formats features in both the teams of decade by CA.

Kohli has already amassed 70 international hundreds and is only behind legendary cricketers Ricky Ponting (71) and Sachin Tendulkar (100) so far.

M.S. Dhoni who led India to two ICC World titles in the ICC T20 World Cup 2007 and ICC World Cup 2011 as skipper is also a great captain and cricketer. Apart from captain Dhoni and Kohli in CA's ODI Team of Decade, Rohit Sharma is another Indian face in the ODI team.

CA's ODI Team of Decade :

Rohit Sharma, Hashim Amla, Virat Kohli, AB de Villiers, Shakib Al Hasan, Jos Buttler, M.S. Dhoni (captain), Mitchell Starc, Trent Boult, Lasith Malinga, Rashid Khan.

CA's Test Team of Decade :

Alastair Cook, David Warner, Kane Williamson, Steve Smith, Virat Kohli (c), AB de Villiers, Ben Stokes, Dale Steyn, Stuart Broad, Nathan Lyon, James Anderson.

India-B Clinches Deodhar Trophy 2019

India B emerged champion of the Deodhar Trophy 2019 as it defeated India C in the final by 51 runs on November 4, 2019 at the JSCA Stadium in Ranchi. India B, batting first, set a target of 284 runs before India C which could score only 232 runs in reply and lost the title to India B.

Apart from the two finalists, India A was the third participant team of the tournament. Parthiv Patel was the captain of the Champion India 'B' team while Shubman Gill and Hanuma Vihari led India C and India A teams respectively as captains.

ICC Brings Changes in Its Super Over Rule

The International Cricket Council on October 14, 2019 brought changes to its Super over rule for all its major events following the uproar over the outcome of the ICC Men's World Cup Final in July 2019 when England were declared winners against New Zealand on boundary count in the final. New Zealand and England had headed into the Super Over after scores in the World Cup final were tied at 241. Once the Super Over also ended in a tie with both teams making 15, the winner was decided on the basis of superior boundary count.

Following that nerve-wracking final, the ICC faced the wrath of fans and former players over the controversial rule. Now the ICC has finally made changes to the rule and in case a situation arises where both teams are tied even after the Super Over in a final or semifinal, the Super Over will be repeated until there is a clear winner.

India Red Clinches Duleep Trophy 2019-20

India Red emerged champion of the Duleep Trophy 2019-20, beating India Green by an innings and 38 runs on the fourth day of the final at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on September 7, 2019.

India Green scored 231 runs in its first innings of the final. India Red in reply scored 388 runs and took a 157-run lead on India Green which performed poorly in its second innings and scored only 119 runs. Thus India Red registered an innings and 38 runs victory to lift the Duleep Trophy 2019-20.

Apart from the two finalists, India Blue was the third team of this domestic cricket tournament. Priyank Panchal was the captain of the champion team while Faiz Fazal and Shubman Gill were the captains of India Green and India Blue respectively.

India Wins Under-19 Asia Cup Cricket Crown

India emerged champion of the under-19 Asia Cup Cricket Crown as it defeated Bangladesh by five runs in the closely-fought final on September 14, 2019 at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo. India set a just 107-run target before Bangladesh to clinch the title. But India successfully defended it with phenomenal bowling performance from its left-arm spinner Atharva Ankolekar who scalped five wickets for just 28 runs and derailed Bangladesh's target hunt.

Dhruv Jurel was the skipper of the Indian team while Akbar Ali led the Bangladeshi team as captain.

Host England Emerge Champion of ICC Cricket World Cup, 2019

12th edition of the International Cricket Council's Cricket World Cup, 2019 was successfully organised from May 30 to July 14, 2019 at different venues in England and Wales.

Total 10 teams including England took part in the ICC Cricket World Cup, 2019. The inaugural match of the World Cup was played between England and South Africa on May 30, 2019 at the Oval and England beat South Africa in that match by 104 runs to start its campaign in an emphatic style.

Top Five Batsmen of the 2019 ICC World Cup			
	Batsman	Runs	Match
1.	Rohit Sharma (India)	648	Nine matches
2.	David Warner (Australia)	647	Ten matches
3.	Shakib Al Hasan (Bangladesh)	606	Eight matches
4.	Kane Williamson (New Zealand)	578	Ten matches
5.	Joe Root (England)	556	Eleven matches

Top Five Bowlers of the 2019 ICC World Cup			
	Bowler	Wickets	Match
1.	M. Starc (Australia)	27 wickets	Ten matches
2.	L. Ferguson (New Zealand)	21 wickets	Nine matches
3.	Mustafizur Rahman (Bangladesh)	20 wickets	Eight matches
4.	Jofra Archer (England)	20 wickets	Eleven matches
5.	Jasprit Bumrah (India)	18 wickets	Nine matches

Now England was declared champion of the 12th ICC Cricket World Cup, 2019 on the basis of more boundaries hit in the final as per the ICC rule. England hit 24 fours and two sixes while New Zealand remained distant behind with 14 fours and three sixes. Thus, England won its maiden ICC Cricket World, 2019, becoming the third consecutive host nation to lift the trophy after India in 2011 and Australia in 2015.

- Eoin Morgan was the captain of the champion English team.
- England's Ben Stokes was adjudged Man-of-the-Match in the final for his heroic and splendid 84 runs unbeaten innings in the final.
- England became the sixth country to lift the ICC Cricket World Cup after Australia, West Indies, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson was declared the player of the tournament. He scored 578 runs in this World Cup, becoming the highest run scoring captain in the ICC World Cup.
- This World Cup witnessed two hat-tricks—one from Mohammed Shami of India against Afghanistan and the second one from Trent Boult of New Zealand against Australia.
- England got USD 4 million as prize money for being the champion while New Zealand received USD 2 million for being the runner-up of the tournament.

ICC Cricket World Cups : Facts In Brief				
Year	Winners	Runner-up	Player of the Series	Host Country/Countries
2019	England	New Zealand	Kane Williamson	England & Wales
2015	Australia	New Zealand	James Faulkner	Australia & New Zealand
2011	India	Sri Lanka	Yuvraj Singh	Bangladesh, India & Sri Lanka
2007	Australia	Sri Lanka	Adam Gilchrist	West Indies
2003	Australia	India	Ricky Ponting	South Africa, Zimbabwe & Kenya
1999	Australia	Pakistan	Shane Warne	England
1996	Sri Lanka	Australia	Aravinda De Silva	India, Pakistan & Sri Lanka
1992	Pakistan	England	Wasim Akram	Australia & New Zealand
1987	Australia	England	David Boon	Indian & Pakistan
1983	India	West Indies	Mohinder Amarnath	England
1979	West Indies	England	Viv Richards	England
1975	West Indies	Australia	Clive Lloyd	England

- It was the fifth time Lord's hosted the ICC Cricket World Cup final as it had hosted the event in 1975, 1979, 1983 and 1999 before this one in 2019.
- Apart from the four semi-finalists, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, South Africa, Bangladesh, West Indies and Afghanistan are other six participating teams in this World Cup.
- 13th edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup will be organised in India in 2023.
- India's Rohit Sharma remained the top-scoring batsman in the World Cup. He scored 648 runs in nine matches of this World Cup. He also became the first batsman to score five centuries in a single ICC World Cup, in this event.
- Virat Kohli was the captain of the Indian Team in the ICC Cricket World Cup, 2019.

Liverpool Clinches FIFA Club World Cup, 2019

Liverpool emerged champion of the FIFA Club World Cup, 2019 as it defeated South American Champion Flamengo 1-0 in the final with the help of solitary goal in the final by Roberto Firmino on December 21, 2019 at the jubilant Khalifa International Stadium in Doha.

Liverpool became the first English team to clinch the Champions League, the UEFA Super Cup and the Club World Cup in the same year.

Brazil Wins FIFA Under-17 World Cup, 2019

Brazil emerged champion of the FIFA under-17 Football World Cup, 2019 as it pipped Mexico 2-1 in the final on November 17, 2019 at the Estadio Bezerraa, Brasilia. Kaio Jorge and Lazaro scored a goal each for the champions while Bryan Gonzalez scored a goal for Mexico in the final. It was Brazil's fourth FIFA under-17 title triumph. Brazil defeated France in the semi final to secure its title encounter with Mexico.

USA Retains FIFA Women's World Cup, 2019

Defending champion the United States of America prevailed over the Netherlands 2-0 in the final on July 7, 2019 in Lyon, France to retain its FIFA Women's World Cup title. It was USA's record fourth FIFA Women's Football World Cup Crown in eight editions so far, making it the most successful team till now. Megan Rapinoe and Rose Lavelle scored a goal each for the champion in the final. Rapinoe won the Golden Ball honour after being adjudged the best player of the tournament. She also claimed the Golden Boot honour.

Prize Money for Australian Open 2020 Hiked

The Australian Open organizers on December 24, 2019 announced the hike in the prize money for the Australian Open 2020 by 14 per cent, giving bigger gains to players out in the early rounds.

Players losing in the first round of qualifying at the year's first Grand Slam will take home A $ 20,000, up by a third from last year, while singles players who exit in the first round of the main draw will earn A $ 90,000, a jump of 20 per cent.

The 2020 women's and men's singles champions in the Australian Open will receive smaller increases in prize money, with both winners taking home A $ 4·12 million, up $ 20,000.

France Wins Fed Cup Tennis Crown-2019

France emerged champion of the Fed Cup Tennis Crown for 2019, beating Australia 3-2 in the final on November 10, 2019 in Perth, Australia. It was France's first Fed Cup title since 2003 and third Fed title overall.

French pair of Kristina Mldenovic and Caroline Garcia won the deciding fifth rubber of the five rubber final to help France lift the title 3-2. Mladenovic and Garcia defeated the Australian pair of Ashleigh Barty and Samantha Stosur 6-4, 6-3 in the Double rubber to hand France the title. It was the 57th edition of Fed Cup which is the premier international team Championship in women's tennis. Davis Cup is the men's equivalent of the Fed Cup.

Spain Wins Davis Cup, 2019

Spain emerged champion of the Davis Cup tennis title 2019 as it defeated Canada 2-0 in the top sided final on November 24, 2019 in Madrid, bringing huge celebrations to home crowd. It is Spain's first Davis Cup title since 2011 and the sixth one overall. Roberto Bautista Agut's victory over Felix Auger-Aliassime 7-6(3), 6-3 gave Spain 1-0 lead over Canada in the final. Then Spanish tennis great Rafael Nadal won his rubber in the final against Denis Shapovalov 6-3, 7-6(7) to hand the Davis Cup title to Spain. It was the fourth time Nadal helped Spain clinch the Davis Cup after his success in Spain's 2004, 2009 and 2011 Davis Cup title triumphs.

- Sergi Brugera was the captain of the Champion Spanish team.
- Spain defeated Britain in the semifinal to secure its seat in the Davis Cup final while Canada pipped Russia in another semi-final.

Naomi Osaka Wins China Open, 2019

Naomi Osaka of Japan clinched the WTA China Open Singles title, 2019, as she prevailed over Ashleigh Barty 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 in the final in Beijing on October 6, 2019.

US Open 2019

The 2019 US Open, fourth and final Tennis 'Grand Slam' tournament of the year was organized from August 26 to September 8, 2019 at the hard court of flushing meadows at Sir Arthur Ashe Stadium in New York. It was the 139th edition of the US Open.

Juan Sebastian Cabal and Robert Farah of Colombia clinched the US Open Men's Doubles title, beating Marcel Granollers of Spain and Horacio Zeballos of Argentina 6-4, 7-5 in the final.

In Women's Doubles final, Elise Mertens of Belgium and Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus emerged victorious to lift the title as they outplayed Victoria Azarenka of Belarus and Ashleigh Barty of Australia 7-5, 7-5 in the final.

Jamie Murray of Great Britain and Bethanie Mattek-Sands of the USA clinched the US Open Mixed Doubles title, beating Michael Venus of New Zealand and Chan Hao-Ching of Chinese Taipei 6-2, 6-3 in the final.

Nadal's Grand Slam Titles (Singles)

Australian Open	— 2009
French Open	— 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2019
Wimbledon Open	— 2008, 2010
US Open	— 2010, 2013, 2017, 2019

Wimbledon Open-2019

Wimbledon Open, the third Grand Slam tournament of the year of Lawn Tennis was organized at the grass court of All England Club in London in July 2019.

Defending Champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia retained his Wimbledon Open Men's Singles title as he prevailed over Roger Federer of

US Open 2019 : Results in Brief

Event/Category	Winner	Runner-Up	Score
Men's Singles	Rafael Nadal (Spain)	Daniil Medvedev (Russia)	7-5, 6-3, 5-7, 4-6, 6-4
Women's Singles	Bianca Andreescu (Canada)	Serena Williams (USA)	6-3, 7-5
Men's Doubles	Juan Sebastian Cabal & Robert Farah (Both of Colombia)	Marcel Granollers (Spain) & Horacio Zeballos (Argentina)	6-4, 7-5
Women's Doubles	Elise Mertens (Belgium) & Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)	Victoria Azarenka (Belarus) & Ashleigh Barty (Australia)	7-5, 7-5
Mixed Doubles	Jamie Murray (Britain) & Bethanie Mattek Sands (The USA)	Michael Venus (New Zealand) and Chan Hao-Ching (Chinese Taipei)	6-2, 6-3

Wimbledon Open-2019 : Results in Brief			
Event/ Competition	Winner	Runner-up	Score
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	Roger Federer (Switzerland)	7-6(5), 1-6, 7-6(4), 4-6, 13-12(3)
Women's Singles	Simona Halep (Romania)	Serena Williams (USA)	6-2, 6-2
Men's Doubles	Juan Sebastian Cabal and Robert Farah (Both from Colombia)	Nicolas Mahut and Edouard Roger Vasselin (Both from France)	6-7(5), 7-6(5), 7-6(6), 6-7(5), 6-3
Women's Doubles	Barbora Strycova (Czech Republic) and Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan)	Yifan Xu (China) and Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada)	6-2, 6-4
Mixed Doubles	Ivan Dodig (Croatia) and Latisha Chan (Taiwan)	Robert Lindstedt (Sweden) and Jelena Ostapenko (Lativa)	6-2, 6-3

Switzerland in the longest final of the Wimbledon history on July 14 at All England Club, London.

Simona Halep emerged champion of the Wimbledon Open Women's Singles title, beating American great Serena Williams 6-2, 6-2 in the lopsided final at the All England Club, London on July 13, 2019. Halep is the first Romanian to win the Wimbledon Open Singles Crown. It was Halep's second Grand Slam Crown of the career as she had clinched the French Open in 2018.

India Chosen Host of FIH Men's Hockey World Cup, 2023

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) on November 8, 2019 declared India as the host country of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup of 2023 edition, following recommendations of a Task Force formed to assess the hosting bids. India edged past Belgium and Malaysia to get the hosting rights. India will become the first country to host consecutive world cups after this FIH decision. The men's event is scheduled to be held from January 13 to 29, 2023 in India.

The hosting rights for the FIH women's World Cup in 2022 have been accorded to Spain and the Netherlands jointly the first time the event will be held across multiple countries. Germany, Malaysia and New Zealand were the other contenders for hosting the women's hockey event.

Bhubaneswar and Rourkela Declared Host Cities of FIH Men's Hockey World Cup, 2023

The 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup will be held in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced it in Bhubaneswar on November 27, 2019.

India will host the Men's Hockey World Cup for the second consecutive time after the country was picked to stage the game's showpiece event in 2023 by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) earlier this month.

The tournament will be held from January 13 to 29, 2023.

"We hosted the 2018 World Cup and I would like to announce that the 2023 Hockey World Cup will again be held in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela. Are you happy ? I am happy," Patnaik said, while addressing the crowd at the Kalinga Stadium in a brief ceremony.

The ceremony was also attended by International Hockey Federation and Indian Olympic Association President Narinder Batra, Hockey India President Mohd. Mushtaque Ahmed, Odisha Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera, besides other dignitaries.

Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Stadium will host the game's showpiece tournament for the second consecutive time after successfully conducting the event in 2018, which was won by Belgium.

Indian Men's and Women's Hockey Teams Win Olympic Test Events

Giving double delight to India, Indian men's and women's hockey teams emerged champions of the Olympic Test Events on August 21, 2019 in Tokyo.

The Indian men's hockey team prevailed over New Zealand 5-0 in the summit clash on August 21, 2019 at the Oi Hockey Stadium, Tokyo to lift the Olympic Test title. With this emphatic victory India avenged the loss it endured in its round robin clash against New Zealand. Harmanpreet Singh, Shamsher Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Gursahibjit Singh and Mandeep Singh each scored goals for the champions in the final. Harman-preet Singh was the captain of Indian men's hockey team.

Indian women hockey team clinched the Olympic Test event (women's) beating host Japan 2-1 in the final. Navjot Kaur and Laremsiami scored goals for the champions in the final while Minami Shimizu scored the goal for Japan in the final.

Kim Joo Hyung Wins Panasonic Open Golf Title

Korean golfer Kim Joo Hyung clinched the Panasonic Open golf title with the 13-under 203 score on November 17, 2019 in Gurugram. He received $ 72,000 as prize money.

Indian duo S. Chikkarangappa and Shiv Kapoor finished runner-up spot jointly each falling one stroke short of the victory.

Rory McIlroy Wins WGC-HSBC Golf Championship

Rory McIlroy of Ireland clinched his maiden WGC-HSBC championship-2019 defeating defending champion Xander Schauffele in the playoff on November 3, 2019 in Shanghai. Rory received $1·745 million winner's purse at the event.

Nepal Successfully Hosts 13th South Asian Games, India Tops The Medal Tally

13th South Asian Games, 2019 were successfully organised from December 1 to 10, 2019 in Kathmandu,

Pokhara and Janakpur in Nepal. Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari officially opened the Games at a glittering ceremony at Dasaratha Rangshala in Kathmandu on December 1 in the presence of athletes from participating countries—India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, dignitaries and sports loving crowd. Nepal's cricketer Paras Khadka took oath on behalf of participating players. Shot-putter Tejinder Pal Toor was the flag bearer of Indian contingent in the 13th SAG in the opening ceremony.

2715 athletes from the South Asian countries competed for 1119 medals in the multi-sport event in 26 games.

India ended its South Asian Games campaign with a best-ever medal haul of 312 and finished on top for the 13th time-in-a-row, in the regional multi-sporting event, in Nepal on December 10.

India collected 174 gold, 93 silver and 45 bronze after 10 days of competitions to surpass the 309 it had won in the previous edition at home in 2016.

But the number of gold India won this time was 15 less than the previous edition.

13th SAG : Medal Tally

	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1.	India	174	93	45	312
2.	Nepal	51	60	95	206
3.	Sri Lanka	40	83	128	251
4.	Pakistan	31	41	59	131
5.	Bangladesh	19	33	87	138
6.	Maldives	01	00	04	05
7.	Bhutan	00	07	13	20

Hosts Nepal secured second position in the event on the medal tally as it claimed 206 medals, including 51 gold and 60 silver medals. Though third-placed Sri Lanka claimed more medals than Nepal, more gold medal counts of Nepal created the difference and Nepal got the second spot.

Bhutan remained the least successful country as it could not win even a single gold medal and won total 20 medals including 7 silver medals.

The 13th SAG came to a successful conclusion amid a grand closing ceremony on December 10, 2019. 14th SAG will be hosted by Pakistan in 2022.

- It is the third time that Nepal hosted the South Asian Games as it had hosted its inaugural edition in 1984 and another one in 1999.
- **Krishnasar** (the blackbuck antelope) was the official mascot of the 13th SAG.

Bengal Warriors Clinches 7th Pro Kabaddi League Title

Bengal Warriors prevalied over Dabang Delhi 39-34 in the final on October 19, 2019 in Ahmedabad to clinch its maiden Pro Kabaddi League Crown. Muhammad Nabibakhsh, the Iranian debutant in the League and Sukesh Hegde earned 10 and 8 points respectively for Bengal to help it clinch the title. Warriors earned ₹ 3 crore as prize money while Dabang Delhi received ₹ 1·80 crore for being the runner-up. Naveen Kumar of Delhi was adjudged the Most Valuable Player of the seventh edition of PKL.

Formula One Championship, 2019 : Results in Brief

S.No.	Formula One Race	Date	Venue	Winner	Runner-up
1.	Australian Grand Prix	March 17, 2019	Melbourne	Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes)	Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)
2.	Bahrain GP	March 31, 2019	Sakhir	Lewis Hamilton	Valtteri Bottas
3.	Chinese GP	April 14, 2019	Shanghai	Lewis Hamilton	Valtteri Bottas
4.	Azerbaijan GP	April 28, 2019	Baku	Valtteri Bottas	Lewis Hamilton
5.	Spanish GP	May 12, 2019	Circuit de Catalunya, Barcelona	Lewis Hamilton	Valtteri Bottas
6.	Monaco GP	May 26, 2019	Monaco	Lewis Hamilton	Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari)
7.	Canadian GP	June 9, 2019	Montreal	Lewis Hamilton	Sebastian Vettel
8.	French GP	June 23, 2019	Le Castellet	Lewis Hamilton	Valtteri Bottas
9.	Austrian GP	June 30, 2019	Spielberg	Max Verstappen (Red Bull)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)
10.	British GP	July 14, 2019	Silverstone	Lewis Hamilton	Valtteri Bottas
11.	German GP	July 28, 2019	Hockenheim	Max Verstappen	Sebastian Vettel
12.	Hungarian GP	August 4, 2019	Hungaroring	Lewis Hamilton	Max Verstappen
13.	Belgian GP	September 1, 2019	Spa-Francorchamps	Charles Leclerc	Lewis Hamilton
14.	Italian GP	September 8, 2019	Monza	Charles Leclerc	Valtteri Bottas
15.	Singapore GP	September 22, 2019	Singapore	Sebastian Vettel(Ferrari)	Charles Leclerc
16.	Russian GP	September 29, 2019	Sochi	Lewis Hamilton	Valtteri Bottas
17.	Japanese GP	October 13, 2019	Suzuka	Valtteri Bottas	Sebastian Vettel
18.	Mexican GP	October 27, 2019	Monaco	Lewis Hamilton	Sebastian Vettel
19.	US Grand Prix	November 3, 2019	Austin	Valtteri Bottas	Hamilton
20.	Brazilian GP	November 17, 2019	Sao Paulo	Max Verstappen	Pierre Gasly (Toro Rosso)
21.	Abu Dhabi GP	December 1, 2019	Abu Dhabi	Lewis Hamilton	Max Verstappen

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Pratiyogita Darpan

Upkar Prakashan's attempt to present the latest and valuable material to the youths preparing for Indian Civil Services Examination, PCS/RAS Examinations, Competitive examinations of RBI, Commercial Banks, LIC, CAT, MAT, Railways etc., is a continuous effort. Economic Survey 2019-20 is a broad document in its new pattern, has not only discussed the present economic scenario of the Indian economy, but also proposed some of the innovative ideas such as Thalinomics Union Budget 2020-21, as presented by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Finance Minister, GoI, presents a road map for 2020-21 and coming years.

MAGAZINE RING

In its pursuit to enrich the readers the present supplement is extremely useful not only for the current month but also for the whole of the year.

Our attempt your Success.

—Mahendra Jain
(Editor)

ECONOMIC SURVEY 2019-20

The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey 2019-20 in the Parliament on January 31, 2020. The Key Highlights of the Economic Survey 2019-20 are as follows :

- GDP growth pegged at 6-6·5 per cent in 2020-21, up from 5 per cent in 2019-20.
- Uptick in growth projected in second half of current fiscal based on 10 factors including higher FDI flows, build up of demand pressure, positive GST revenue growth.
- Ethical wealth creation key to India becoming USD 5 trillion economy by 2025.
- Share of formal employment increased from 17·9 per cent in 2011-12 to 22·8 per cent in 2017-18 reflecting formalisation in the economy.
- Theme of Survey is wealth creation, promotion of pro-business policies, strengthening of trust in the economy.
- To achieve GDP of USD 5 trillion by 2024-25, India needs to spend about USD 1·4 trillion over these years on infrastructure.
- 2·62 crore new jobs created in rural, urban areas between 2011-12 and 2017-18 among regular wage/salaried employees.
- 8 per cent increase in regular employment of women in 2017-18 over 2011-12.
- Easing of crude prices lowers current account deficit; imports contract more sharply than exports in first half of 2019-20.
- Declining inflation from 3·2 per cent in April 2019 to 2·6 per cent in December 2019, reflecting weakening demand pressure in the economy.
- GST collections grew by 4·1 per cent for the centre during April-November 2019.

Entrepreneurship and Wealth Creation at the Grassroots

India ranks third in number of new firms created, as per the World Bank.

- New firm creation in India increased dramatically since 2014 :
  - 12·2% cumulative annual growth rate of new firms in the formal sector during 2014-18, compared to 3·8% during 2006-2014.
  - About 1·24 lakh new firms created in 2018, an increase of about 80% from about 70,000 in 2014.
  - Survey examines the content and drivers of entrepreneurial activity at the bottom of the administrative pyramid—over 500 districts in India.
  - New firm creation in services is significantly higher than that in manufacturing, infrastructure or agriculture.
  - Survey notes that grassroots entrepreneurship is not just driven by necessity.
  - A 10% increase in registration of new firms in a district yields a 1·8% increase in Gross Domestic District Product (GDDP).
  - Entrepreneurship at district level has a significant impact on wealth creation at the grassroots.
  - Birth of new firms in India is heterogeneous and dispersed across districts and sectors.
- Literacy and education in a district foster local entrepreneurship significantly :
  - Impact is most pronounced when literacy is above 70 per cent.
  - New firm formation is the lowest in eastern India with lowest literacy rate (59·6% as per 2011 Census).
- Physical infrastructure quality in the district influences new firm creation significantly.
- Ease of Doing Business and flexible labour regulation enable new firm creation, especially in the manufacturing sector.
- Survey suggests enhancing ease of doing business and implementing flexible labour laws can create maximum jobs in districts and thereby in the states.

Pro-business Versus Pro-markets

- Survey says that India's aspiration of becoming a $ 5 trillion economy depends critically on :
  - Promoting 'pro-business' policy that unleashes the power of competitive markets to generate wealth.
  - Weaning away from 'pro-crony' policy that may favour specific private interests, especially powerful incumbents.
- Viewed from the lens of the Stock market, creative destruction increased significantly post-liberalisation :
  - Before liberalisation, a Sensex firm expected to stay in it for 60 years, which decreased to only 12 years after liberalisation.
  - Every five years, one-third of Sensex firms are churned out, reflecting the continuous influx of new firms, products and technologies into the economy.
- Despite impressive progress in enabling competitive markets, pro-crony policies destroyed value in the economy :
  - An equity index of connected firms significantly outperformed market by 7 % a year from 2007 to 2010, reflecting abnormal profits extracted at common citizens' expense.

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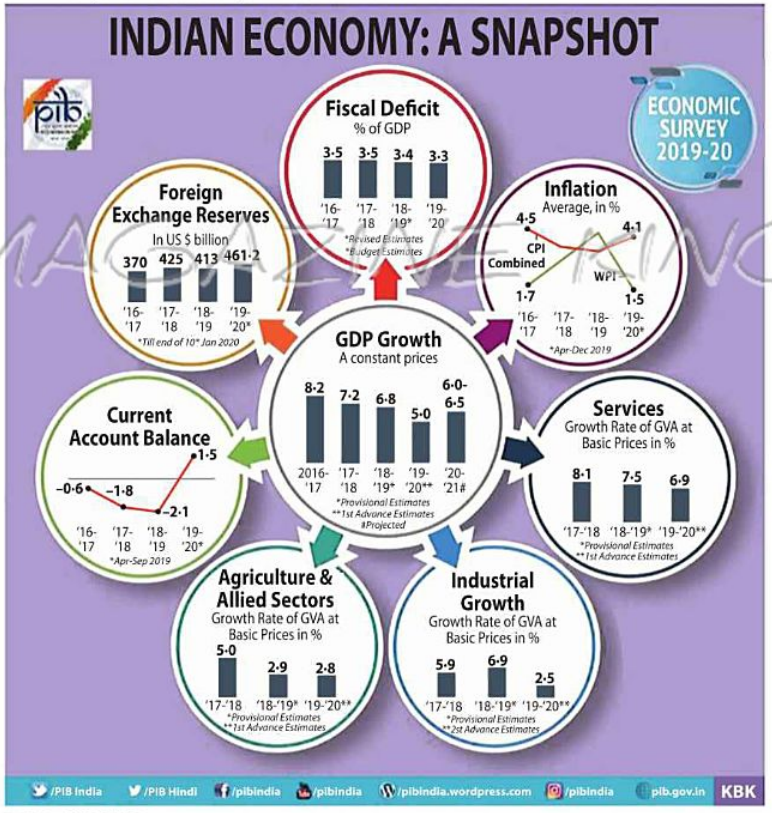
- In contrast, the index underperforms market by 7·5% from 2011, reflecting inefficiency and value destruction inherent in such firms.
- Pro-crony policies such as discretionary allocation of natural resources till 2011 led to rent-seeking by beneficiaries while competitive allocation of the same post 2014 ended such rent extraction.
- Similarly crony lending that led to wilful default, wherein promoters collectively siphoned off wealth from banks, led to losses that dwarf subsidies for rural development.

Undermining Markets : When Government Intervention Hurts More Than It Helps

- Government intervention, though well intended, often ends up undermining the ability of the markets to support wealth creation and leads to outcomes opposite to those intended.
- Four examples of anachronistic government interventions :
  - Essential Commodities Act (ECA), 1955.
  - Frequent and unpredictable imposition of blanket stock limits on commodities under ECA distorts.
  - The incentives for the creation of storage infrastructure by the private sector.
  - Movement up the agricultural value chain.
- Development of national market for agricultural commodities.
  - Imposition of stock limits on *dal* in 2006-Q3, sugar in



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2009-Q1 and onions in September, 2019 spiked up the volatility of the retail and wholesale prices of onions.

- Drug Price Control under ECA :
  - The regulation of prices of drugs, through the DPCO 2013, led to increase in the price of the regulated pharmaceutical drug vis-à-vis that of an unregulated but similar drug.
  - The increase in prices is greater for more expensive formulations than for cheaper ones and for those sold in hospitals rather than retail shops.
- Government, being a huge buyer of drugs, can intervene more effectively to provide affordable drugs by combining all its purchases and exercising its bargaining power.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare must evolve non-distortionary mechanisms that utilise Government's bargaining power in a transparent manner.
- Policies in the food-grain markets led to :
  - Emergence of Government as the largest procurer and hoarder of rice and wheat.
  - Crowding out of private trade.
  - Burgeoning food subsidy burden.
  - Inefficiencies in the markets, affecting the long run growth of agricultural sector.
- The food-grains policy needs to be dynamic and allow switching from physical handling and distribution of foodgrains to cash transfers/food coupons/ smart cards.
- Analysis of debt waivers given by States/Centre :
  - Full waiver beneficiaries consume less, save less, invest less and are less productive after the waiver, compared to the partial beneficiaries.
  - Debt waivers disrupt the credit culture.
  - They reduce formal credit flow to the very same farmers, thereby defeating the purpose.
- Survey suggests that :
  - Government must systematically examine areas of needless intervention and undermining of markets; but it does not argue that there should be no Government intervention.
  - Instead it suggests that the interventions that were apt in a different economic setting may have lost their relevance in a transformed economy.
  - Eliminating such instances will enable competitive markets spurring investments and economic growth.

Creating Jobs and Growth by Specializing in Network Products (NP)

- By integrating "Assemble in India for the world" into Make in India, India can:
  - Raise its export market share to about 3·5% by 2025 and 6% by 2030.
  - Create 4 crore well-paid jobs by 2025 and 8 crore by 2030.
  - Exports of network products can provide one-quarter of the increase in value added required for making India a $ 5 trillion economy by 2025.
- Survey suggests a strategy similar to one used by China to grab this opportunity :
  - Specialization at large scale in labour-intensive sectors, especially network products.
  - Laser-like focus on enabling assembling operations at mammoth scale in network products.
  - Export primarily to markets in rich countries.
  - Trade policy must be an enabler.
- Survey analyses the impact of India's trade agreements on overall trade balance :
  - India's exports increased by 13·4% for manufactured products and 10·9% for total merchandise.
  - Imports increased by 12·7% for manufactured products and 8·6% for total merchandise.
  - India gained 0·7% increase in trade surplus per year for manufactured products and 2·3% per year for total merchandise.

Targeting Ease of Doing Business in India

- A jump of 79 positions to 63 in 2019 from 142 in 2014 in World Bank's Doing Business rankings.
- India still trails in parameters such as Ease of Starting Business, Registering Property, Paying Taxes and Enforcing Contracts.
- Survey has numerous case studies :
  - For merchandise exports, the logistics process flow for imports is more efficient than that for exports.
  - Electronics exports and imports through Bengaluru airport illustrate how Indian logistical processes can be world class.
  - The turnaround time of ships in India has almost halved to 2.48 days in 2018-19 from 4.67 days in 2010-11.
- Suggestions for further Ease of Doing Business :
  - Close coordination between the Logistics division of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Ministry of Shipping and the different port authorities.
  - Individual sectors such as tourism or manufacturing require a more targeted approach that maps out the regulatory and process bottlenecks for each segment.

Golden Jubilee of Bank Nationalisation : Taking Stock

- Survey observes 2019 as the golden jubilee year of bank nationalization.
- Since 1969, India's Banking sector has not developed proportionately to the growth in the size of the economy.
- India has only one bank in the global top 100–same as countries that are a fraction of its size: Finland (about 1/11th), Denmark (1/8th), etc.

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- The onus of supporting the economy falls on the PSBs accounting for 70% of the market share in Indian banking.
- In 2019, investment for every rupee in PSBs, on average, led to the loss of 23 paise, while in New Private Banks (NPBs) it led to the gain of 9·6 paise.
- Credit growth in PSBs has been much lower than NPBs for the last several years.
- Solutions to make PSBs more efficient :
  - Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) for PSBs' employees.
  - Representation on boards proportionate to the blocks held by employees to incentivize employees and align their interests with those of all shareholders of banks.
  - Creation of a GSTN type entity that will aggregate data from all PSBs and use technologies like big data, artificial intelligence and machine learning in credit decisions for ensuring better screening and monitoring of borrowers, especially the large ones.

Financial Fragility in the NBFC Sector

- Survey investigates the key drivers of Rollover Risk of the shadow banking system in India in light of the current liquidity crunch in the sector.
- Key drivers of Rollover Risk : 1. Asset Liability Management (ALM); 2. Interconnectedness; 3. Financial and Operating Resilience of an NBFC; 4. Over-dependence on short-term wholesale funding.
- Survey computes a diagnostic (Health Score) by quantifying the Rollover risk for a sample of Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) and Retail-NBFCs (which are representative of their respective sectors). The analysis of the Health Score has the following findings :
  - The HFC sector exhibited a declining trend post 2014 and overall health of the sector worsened considerably by the end of FY2019.
  - The Score of the Retail-NBFC sector was consistently below par for the period 2014-19.
  - Larger Retail-NBFCs had higher Health Scores but among medium and small Retail- NBFCs, the medium size ones had a lower score for the entire period of 2014-19.
  - Survey suggests that the Health Score provides an early warning signal of impending liquidity problems.
  - Equity markets react favourably to increase in Health Score of individual HFCs and Retail-NBFCs.
  - The Survey prescribes this analysis to efficiently allocate liquidity enhancements across firms (with different Health Scores) in the NBFC sector, thereby arresting financial fragility in a capital-efficient manner.

Privatization and Wealth Creation

Survey examines the realized **efficiency gains from privatization** in the Indian context and bolsters the case for aggressive disinvestment of CPSEs.

- Strategic disinvestment of Government's shareholding of 53.29 per cent in BPCL led to an increase of around ₹ 33,000 crore in national wealth.
- Survey presents an **analysis of the before-after performance of 11 CPSEs** which underwent strategic disinvestment from 1999-2000 to 2003-04.
- Financial indicators such as net worth, net profit, return on assets (ROA), return on equity (ROE) etc of the privatized CPSEs, on an average, have improved significantly.
- Privatized CPSEs have been able to generate more wealth from the same resources.
- Survey suggests **aggressive disinvestment of CPSEs** to :
  - Bring in higher profitability.
  - Promote efficiency.
  - Increase competitiveness.
  - Promote professionalism.

Thalinomics : The Economics of a Plate of Food in India

- An attempt to quantify what a common person pays for a Thali across India.
- A shift in the dynamics of Thali prices since 2015-16.
- Absolute prices of a vegetarian Thali have decreased significantly since 2015-16 across India and the four regions; though the price has increased during 2019-20.
- Post 2015-16 :
  - Average household gained close to ₹ 11,000 on average per year from the moderation in prices in the case of vegetarian Thali.
  - Average household that consumes two non-vegetarian Thalis gained close to ₹ 12,000 on average per year during the same period.
- From 2006-07 to 2019-20 :
  - Affordability of vegetarian Thalis improved 29%.
  - Affordability of non-vegetarian Thalis improved by 18%.

India's Economic Performance in 2019-20

- India's GDP growth moderated to 4·8% in H1 of 2019-20, amidst a weak environment for global manufacturing, trade and demand.
- Real consumption growth has recovered in Q2 of 2019-20, cushioned by a significant growth in government final consumption.
- Growth for 'Agriculture and allied activities' and 'Public administration, defence, and other services' in H1 of 2019-20 was higher than in H2 of 2018-19.
- India's external sector gained further stability in H1 of 2019-20 :
  - Current Account Deficit (CAD) narrowed to 1·5% of GDP in H1 of 2019-20 from 2·1% in 2018-19.
  - Impressive Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
  - Rebounding of portfolio flows.
  - Accretion of foreign exchange reserves.

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- Sharper contraction of imports as compared to that of exports in H1 of 2019-20, with easing of crude prices.

- Headline inflation expected to decline by year end :
  - Increased from 3·3% in H1 of 2019-20 to 7·35% in December 2019-20 due to temporary increase in food inflation.
  - Rise in CPI-core and WPI in December 2019-20 suggests building of demand pressure.
  - Deceleration in GDP growth can be understood within the frame-work of a slowing cycle of growth.
  - Financial sector acted as a drag on the real sector (investment – growth - consumption).
- Reforms undertaken during 2019-20 to boost investment, consumption and exports :
  - Speeding up the insolvency resolution process under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).
  - Easing of credit, particularly for the stressed real estate and NBFC sectors.
  - Announcing the National Infrastructure Pipeline 2019-2025.
- Survey expects an uptick in the GDP growth in H2 of 2019-20 :
  - 5% GDP growth for 2019-20 based on CSO's first Advance Estimates.
  - Expeditious delivery on reforms for enabling the economy to strongly rebound in 2020-21.

Fiscal Developments

- Revenue Receipts registered a higher growth during the first eight months of 2019-20, compared to the same period last year, led by considerable growth in Non-Tax revenue.
- Gross GST monthly collections have crossed the mark of ₹ 1 lakh crore for a total of five times during 2019-20 (up to December 2019).
- Structural reforms undertaken in taxation during the current financial year :
  - Change in corporate tax rate.
  - Measures to ease the implementation of GST.
  - Fiscal deficit of states within the targets set out by the FRBM Act.
  - Survey notes that the General Government (Centre plus States) has been on the path of fiscal consolidation.

External Sector

- Balance of Payments (BoP) :
  - India's BoP position improved from US $ 412·9 bn of forex reserves in end March, 2019 to US $ 433·7 bn in end September, 2019.
  - Current account deficit (CAD) narrowed from 2·1% in 2018-19 to 1·5% of GDP in H1 of 2019-20. Foreign reserves stood at US $ 461·2 bn as on 10th January, 2020.
- Global trade :
  - In sync with an estimated 2·9% growth in global

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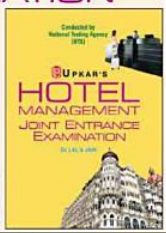

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output in 2019, global trade is estimated to grow at 1·0% after having peaked in 2017 at 5·7%.

- However, it is projected to recover to 2·9% in 2020 with recovery in global economic activity.
- India's merchandise trade balance improved from 2009-14 to 2014-19, although most of the improvement in the latter period was due to more than 50% decline in crude prices in 2016-17.

- India's top five trading partners continue to be USA, China, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong.
- Exports :
  - Top export items : Petroleum products, precious stones, drug formulations & biologicals, gold and other precious metals.
  - Largest export destinations in 2019-20 (April-November) : United States of America (USA), followed by United Arab Emirates (UAE), China and Hong Kong.
  - The merchandise exports to GDP ratio declined, entailing a negative impact on BoP position.
  - Slowdown of world output had an impact on reducing the export to GDP ratio, particularly from 2018-19 to H1 of 2019-20.
  - Growth in Non-POL exports dropped significantly from 2009-14 to 2014-19.
- Imports :
  - Top import items : Crude petroleum, gold, petroleum products, coal, coke & briquittes.
  - India's imports continue to be largest from China, followed by USA, UAE and Saudi Arabia.
  - Merchandise imports to GDP ratio declined for India, entailing a net positive impact on BoP.
  - Large Crude oil imports in the import basket correlates India's total imports with crude prices. As crude price rises so does the share of crude in total imports, increasing imports to GDP ratio.
  - Significant Gold imports also correlate India's total imports with gold prices. However, share of gold imports in total imports remained the same during 2018-19 and the first half of 2019-20, despite an increase in prices, possibly due to increase in import duty that reduced the import of gold.
  - Non-POL-non-gold imports are positively correlated with GDP growth.
  - Non-POL-non-oil imports fell as a proportion to GDP from 2009-14 to 2014-19 when GDP growth accelerated.
  - This may be because of consumption driven growth while investment rate declined, lowering non-POL-non-gold imports.
  - Continuous decline in investment rate decelerated GDP growth, weakened consumption, dampened the investment outlook, which further reduced GDP growth and along with it non-POL-non-gold imports as a proportion of GDP from 2018-19 to H1 of 2019-20.
  - Under trade facilitation, India improved its ranking from 143 in 2016 to 68 in 2019 under the indicator, "Trading across Borders", monitored by World Bank in its Ease of Doing Business Report.
- Logistics industry of India :
  - Currently estimated to be around US $ 160 billion. Expected to touch US $ 215 billion by 2020.
  - According to World Bank's Logistics Performance Index, India ranks 44th in 2018 globally, up from 54th rank in 2014.
- Net FDI inflows continued to be buoyant in 2019-20 attracting US $ 24·4 bn in the first eight months, higher than the corresponding period of 2018-19.
- Net FPI in the first eight months of 2019-20 stood at US$ 12·6 bn.
- Net remittances from Indians employed overseas continued to increase, receiving US $ 38·4 billion in H1 of 2019-20 which is more than 50% of the previous year level.
- External debt :
  - Remains low at 20.1% of GDP as at end September, 2019.
  - After significant decline since 2014-15, India's external liabilities (debt and equity) to GDP increased at the end of June, 2019 primarily by increase in FDI, portfolio flows and external commercial borrowings (ECBs).

Monetary Management and Financial Intermediation

- Monetary policy :
  - Remained accommodative in 2019-20.
  - Repo rate was cut by 110 basis points in four consecutive MPC meetings in the financial year due to slower growth and lower inflation. However, it was kept unchanged in the fifth meeting held in December 2019.
- In 2019-20, liquidity conditions were tight for initial two months; but subsequently it remained comfortable.
- The Gross Non-Performing Advances ratio :
  - Remained unchanged for Scheduled Commercial banks at 9·3% between March and September 2019.
  - Increased slightly for the Non-Banking Financial Corporations (NBFCs) from 6·1% in March 2019 to 6·3% in September 2019.
- Credit growth :
  - The financial flows to the economy remained constrained as credit growth declined for both banks and NBFCs.
  - Bank Credit growth (YoY) moderated from 12·9% in April 2019 to 7·1% as on December 20, 2019.
  - Capital to Risk-weighted Asset Ratio of SCBs increased from 14.3% to 15.1% between March 2019 and September 2019.

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Prices and Inflation

- Inflation Trends :
  - Inflation witnessing moderation since 2014.
  - Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation increased from 3.7 per cent in 2018-19 (April to December, 2018) to 4.1 per cent in 2019-20 (April to December, 2019).
  - WPI inflation fell from 4·7 per cent in 2018-19 (April to December, 2018) to 1·5 per cent during 2019-20 (April to December, 2019).
- Drivers of CPI - Combined (C) inflation :
  - During 2018-19, the major driver was the miscellaneous group.
  - During 2019-20 (April-December), food and beverages was the main contributor.
  - Among food and beverages, inflation in vegetables and pulses was particularly high due to low base effect and production side disruptions like untimely rain.
- Cob-web Phenomenon for Pulses :
  - Farmers base their sowing decisions on prices witnessed in the previous marketing period.
  - Measures to safeguard farmers like procurement under Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF), Minimum Support Price (MSP) need to be made more effective.
- Divergence Between Retail and Wholesale price :
  - Observed for essential agricultural commodities in four metropolitan cities of the country from 2014 to 2019.
  - Divergence particularly high for vegetables like onion and tomato. This may be due to the presence of intermediaries and high transaction costs.
- Volatility of Prices :
  - Volatility of prices for most of the essential food commodities with the exception of some of the pulses has actually come down in the period 2014-19 as compared to the period 2009-14.
  - Lower volatility might indicate the presence of better marketing channels, storage facilities and effective MSP system.
- Regional variations :
  - CPI-C inflation has been highly variable across States ranging between (-)0.04 per cent to 8.1 per cent across States/UTs in financial year (FY) 2019-20 (April-December).
  - In most states, CPI-C inflation in rural areas is lower than the CPI-C inflation in urban areas
  - Rural inflation has been more variable across states than urban inflation.

Sustainable Development and Climate Change

- India moving forward on the path of SDG implementation through well-designed initiatives.
- SDG India Index 2019 :
  - Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh are front runners.
  - Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh come under the category of Aspirants.
- India hosted COP-14 to UNCCD which adopted the Delhi Declaration : Investing in Land and Unlocking Opportunities.
- COP-25 of UNFCCC at Madrid :
  - India reiterated its commitment to implement Paris Agreement.
  - COP-25 decisions include efforts for climate change mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation from developed country parties to developing country parties.
- Forest and tree cover- State of India's Forest Report 2019 :
  - Forest cover is Increasing and has reached 80·73 million hectare.
  - 24·56% of the geographical area of the country is under forest cover in 2019.
  - The States/UTs showing gain in forest cover are Karnataka (1,025 sq. km), Andhra Pradesh (990 sq. km) and Jammu & Kashmir (371 sq. km) whereas those showing loss in forest cover include Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. In the Forest Report 2019, the total carbon stock in forest is estimated as 7,124·6 million tons, showing an increase of 42·6 million tons as compared to the last assessment in 2017.
- Burning of agricultural residues, leading to rise in pollutant levels and deterioration of air quality, is still a major concern though the total number of burning events recorded reduced due to various efforts taken.
- International Solar Alliance (ISA) :
  - 'Enabler' by institutionalizing 30 Fellowships from the Member countries.
  - 'Facilitator' by getting the lines of credit worth US $ 2 Billion from EXIM Bank of India and 1·5 Billion from AfD, France.
  - 'Incubator' by nurturing initiatives like the Solar Risk Mitigation Initiative.
  - 'Accelerator' by developing tools to aggregate demand for 1000 MW solar and 2·7 lakh solar water pumps.
- India has the Second largest Emerging Green Bond Market after China. The SBI entered the market with an US $ 650 million Certified Climate Bond. India also joined International Platform on Sustainable Finance (IPSF) in 2019 to scale up the environmentally sustainable investments.

Agriculture and Food Management

- Largest Proportion of Indian population depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for employment opportunities as compared to any other sector.
- The share of agriculture and allied sectors in the total Gross Value Added (GVA) of the country has been continuously declining on account of relatively higher growth performance of non-agricultural sectors, a natural outcome of development process.

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- GVA at Basic Prices for 2019-20 from 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' sector is estimated to grow by 2·8%.
- Agricultural productivity is also constrained by lower level of mechanization in agriculture which is about 40% in India, much lower than China (59·5%) and Brazil (75%).
- Skewed pattern of regional distribution of agricultural credit in India: Low credit in Hilly, Eastern and North Eastern states (less than 1% of total agricultural credit disbursement).
- Livestock sector has been growing at a CAGR of 7·9% during last five years.
- During the last 6 years ending 2017-18, Food Processing Industries sector (FPS) has been growing :
  - Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR) of Food processing sector is of around 5·06%.
  - FPS Constitutes as much as 8·83% and 10·66% of GVA in Manufacturing and Agriculture sector respectively in 2017-18 at 2011-12 prices.
- While interests of the vulnerable sections of the population need to be safeguarded, Survey emphasizes on sustainability of food security operations by :
  - Addressing the burgeoning food subsidy bill.
  - Revisiting the rates and coverage under NFSA.

Industry and Infrastructure

- The industrial sector as per Index of Industrial Production (IIP) registered a growth of 0·6 per cent in 2019-20 (April-November) as compared to 5·0% during 2018-19 (April-November).
- Fertilizer sector achieved a growth of 4·0% during 2019-20 (April-November) as compared to (-) 1·3 per cent during 2018-19 (April-November).
- Steel sector achieved a growth of 5·2% during 2019-20 (April-November) as compared to 3·6% during 2018-19 (April-November).
- Total telephone connections in India touched 119·43 crore as on September 30, 2019.
- The installed capacity of power generation has increased to 3,64,960 MW as on October 31, 2019 from 3, 56,100 MW as on March 31, 2019.
- Report of the Task Force on National Infrastructure Pipeline released on 31.12.2019 has projected total infrastructure investment of ₹ 102 lakh crore during the period FY 2020 to 2025 in India.

Services Sector

Growing in its significance, the Services Sector accounted for about 55 per cent of the economy and Gross Value Added (GVA) growth, two-thirds of total FDI inflows into India and about 38 per cent of the total exports. The sector's share now exceeds 50 per cent of the Gross State Value Added in 15 out of the 33 states and UTs :

- Increasing significance of services sector in the Indian economy :
  - About 55% of the total size of the economy and GVA growth.
  - Two-thirds of total FDI inflows into India.
  - About 38% of total exports.
  - More than 50 % of GVA in 15 out of the 33 states and UTs.
  - Gross Value Added growth of the services sector moderated in 2019-20 as suggested by various high-frequency indicators and sectoral data such as air passenger traffic, port and shipping freight traffic, bank credit etc.
  - On the bright side, FDI into services sector has witnessed a recovery in early 2019-20.

Social Infrastructure, Employment and Human Development

- The expenditure on social services (health, education and others) by the Centre and States as a proportion of GDP increased from 6·2% in 2014-15 to 7·7% in 2019-20 (BE).
- India's ranking in Human Development Index improved to 129 in 2018 from 130 in 2017 :
  - With 1·34% average annual HDI growth, India is among the fastest improving countries.
  - Gross Enrolment Ratio at secondary, higher secondary and higher education level needs to be improved.
- The share of regular wage/salaried employees has increased by 5 percentage points from 18% in 2011-12 to 23% in 2017-18.
- A significant jump of around 2.62 crore new jobs with 1.21 crore in rural areas and 1.39 crore in urban areas in this category.
- Total formal employment in the economy increased from 8% in 2011-12 to 9·98 % in 2017-18.
- Gender disparity in India's labour market widened due to decline in female labour force participation especially in rural areas.
- Around 60% of productive age (15-59) group engaged in full time domestic duties.
- Access to health services inter-alia through Ayushman Bharat and Mission Indradhanush across the country has improved.
- Mission Indradhanush has vaccinated 3·39 crore children and 87·18 lakh pregnant women of 680 districts across the country.
- The two Schemes, Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana—Gramin (PMAY-G) and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), seek to achieve the target of housing for all by 2022. Under PMAY-G, the number of houses completed in a year increased by more than four times, from 11·95 lakh in 2014-15 to 47·33 lakh in 2018-19
- About 76.7% of the households in the rural and about 96% in the urban areas had houses of pucca structure.
- A 10 year Rural Sanitation Strategy (2019-2029) launched to focus on sustaining the sanitation behavior change and increasing access to solid and liquid waste management.
- Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) was launched in 2014 with twin objectives of ensuring 100% scientific solid waste management and making urban India ODF to achieve total environmental improvement. All Urban areas of 35 States/UTs have become ODF and percentage of waste processing rose from around 18% to 60%.

MADHUBAN

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Navigating the uncertain world of disequilibrium requires its—
   I. A clear vision.
   II. A general strategy to achieve the vision.
   III. The flexibility and willingness to continuously recalibrate tactius in response to unanticipated situations.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I and II
   (B) Only III
   (C) I, II and III all
   (D) Only II and III

2. Tools for navigating the economy in a constant state of disequilibrium are—
   I. Change in modeling approaches
   II. Measurement of new concepts
   III. Micro data
   IV. Both stocks and flows
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I, II and III
   (B) Only II, III and IV
   (C) Only I, III and IV
   (D) I, II, III and IV all

3. Concept of "Swasth + Ayushman = Sundar" Bharat has taken a leaf from .....
   (A) Swachh Bharat Mission
   (B) Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogy Yojana
   (C) National Health Mission
   (D) 10 year Rural sanitation Strategy 2019-2029

4. As per Economic Survey 2019-20 entrepreneurial activity in the infrastructure sector is highest in the state of .....
   I. Jharkhand and Bihar
   II. Arunachal Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh
   III. Mizoram and Jammu & Kashmir
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only I and II
   (C) I, II and III all
   (D) Only III

5. Share of Information Technology and Financial Sector in total market capitalisation of Sensex in 2019 is about ..... in India.
   (A) 19% (B) 31%
   (C) 55% (D) 63%

6. The Concept of 'Thalinomics' has been presented in India in—
   (A) The Union Budget 2020-21
   (B) Economic Survey 2019-20
   (C) SDG India Index 2019
   (D) National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-24

7. Consider the following statements about 'Thalinomics' discussed in Economic Survey 2019-20 and choose the correct code given below—
   I. Affordability of Vegetarian Thalis improved 29% from 2006-07 to 2019-20.
   II. Affordability of non-vegetarian Thali improved 18% from 2006-07 to 2019-20
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only II is correct
   (C) I and II both are correct
   (D) Neither I nor II is correct

8. Which of the following statements is correct about 'Network' Products (NP) ?
   I. The Gross Value creation in these industries are controlled by leading Multinational Enterprises.
   II. These products in general, are not produced from start to finish within a given country.
   III. Within the production network, each country specialises in a particular fragment of the production process.
   IV. Lead firms retain skill and knowledge intensive stages of production in high income headquarters but locate assembly related activities in low wage countries.
   Correct code :
   (A) Only I and II
   (B) Only III and IV
   (C) Only IV
   (D) I, II, III and IV

9. Which of the following products/industry are classified in Network Product Category ?
   (A) Mobile Phones and Laptops industry
   (B) Iron and Steel Industry
   (C) Fertilizers Industry
   (D) Cotton taxtiles and Ready-made garments Industry

10. Which of the following statements is/are correct ?
    I. India has made substantial gains in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index ranking from 142 in 2014 to 63 in 2019.
    II. India has progressed on seven out of 10 parameters.
    Correct code is :
    (A) Only I is correct
    (B) Only II is correct
    (C) I and II are correct
    (D) Neither I nor II is correct

11. Consider the List-I (Parameters) and List-II (2019 Ranking in Ease of Doing Business) about India and choose the correct code :

    List-I
    (a) Ease of starting a business
    (b) Dealing with construction Permit
    (c) Registering your property
    (d) Paying Taxes

    List-II
    1. 27 2. 115
    3. 136 4. 154

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	3	2	4
(B)	3	1	4	2
(C)	4	3	2	1
(D)	1	2	3	4

12. Which country has maximum number of banks in the Global Top 100 banks in 2019.
    (A) USA (B) Japan
    (C) China (D) France

Continued on Page 203

UNION BUDGET 2020-21

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented on February 1, 2020 her second Union Budget 2020-21 incorporating a series of far-reaching reforms, aimed at energizing the Indian economy through a combination of short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures. The Union Budget has been structured on the overall theme of 'Ease of Living'. Key components of the Budget are the following :

- The Union Budget Aims :
  - (i) To achieve seamless delivery of services through **Digital governance**
  - (ii) To improve physical quality of life through **National Infrastructure Pipeline**
  - (iii) Risk mitigation through **Disaster Resilience**
  - (iv) Social security through **Pension and Insurance penetration.**
- The budget is woven around three prominent themes :
  1. **Aspirational India** in which all sections of the society seek better standards of living, with access to health, education and better jobs.
  2. **Economic development** for all, indicated in the Prime Minister's exhortation of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas".
  3. **Caring Society** that is both humane and compassionate, where Antyodaya is an article of faith.
- The three broad themes are held together by
  - (a) Corruption free—policy-driven good governance
  - (b) Clean and sound financial sector.
- The three components of Aspirational India are—
  - (a) Agriculture, Irrigation and Rural Development ,
  - (b) Wellness, Water and Sanitation and
  - (c) Education and Skills

Agriculture, Irrigation and Rural Development

- More than ₹ 2·83 lakh crore would be spent on Agriculture, Rural Development, Irrigation and allied activities as farmers and rural poor continue to remain the key focus of the Government.
- Reiterating the commitment of doubling farmers' income by 2022, she said, Government has already provided resilience for 6.11 crore farmers insured under PM Fasal Bima Yojana.
- Agriculture credit target for the year 2020-21 has been set at ₹ 15 lakh crore.
- All eligible beneficiaries of PM-KISAN will be covered under the KCC scheme.
- Moreover, comprehensive measures for one hundred water stressed districts, proposal to expand PM-KUSUM to provide 20 lakh farmers for setting up stand-alone solar pumps
- Another 15 lakh farmers will be encouraged to solarise their grid-connected pump sets. Setting up efficient warehouses at the block/taluk level and in Horticulture sector with focus on "one product one district" for better marketing and export are some of the steps in that direction.
- Foot and Mouth disease, brucellosis in cattle and also peste des petits ruminants(PPR) in sheep and goat to be eliminatated by 2025

MASAZ MEDIA

Expenditure of Major Items

(In ₹ Crore)

	2018-19 Actuals	2019-2020 Budget Estimates	2019-2020 Revised Estimates	2020-2021 Budget Estimates
Pension	160211	174300	184147	210682
Defence	290802	305296	316296	323053
Subsidy				
(i) Fertiliser	70605	79996	79998	71309
(ii) Food	101327	184220	108688	115570
(iii) Petroleum	24837	37478	38569	40915
Agriculture and Allied Activities	63259	151518	120835	154775
Commerce and Industry	27851	27043	28608	27227
Development of North East	1961	3000	2670	3049
Education	80345	94854	94854	99312
Energy	45461	44638	42458	42725
External Affairs	15514	17885	17372	17347
Finance	14920	20121	24880	41829
Health	54477	64999	63830	67484
Home Affairs	98116	103927	124083	114387
Interest Payments	582648	660471	625105	708203
IT and Telecommunication	14868	21783	16000	59349
Others	74497	76665	76782	84256
Planning and Statistics	5322	5814	5811	6094
Rural Development	132803	140762	143409	144817
Scientific Departments	24755	27431	27694	30023
Social Welfare	43664	50850	48210	53876
Tax Administration of which Transfer to GST Compensation Fund	69416	117285	137307	152962
	54275	101200	121200	135368
Transfer to States	119144	155447	155447	200447
Transport	143626	157437	158207	169637
Union Territories	14073	15098	15026	52864
Urban Development	40612	48032	42267	50040
Grand Total	**2315113**	**2786349**	**2698552**	**3042230**

- Coverage of artificial insemination to be increased from the present 30% to 70%
- MNREGS to be dovetailed to develop fodder farms
- Doubling of milk processing capacity from 53·5 million MT to 108 million MT by 2025 to be facilitated.
- Focusing on the Blue Economy, raising of fish production to 200 lakh tonnes is proposed by 2022-23.
- Youth to be involved in fishery extension through 3477 Sagar Mitras and 500 Fish Farmer Producer Organisations.
- Fishery exports hoped to be raised to ₹ 1 lakh crore by 2024-25.
- Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana-for alleviation of poverty, half a crore households are mobilized with 58 lakh SHGs and it will be further expanded.

Wellness, Water and Sanitation

- Dwelling on the Wellness, Water and Sanitation theme, ₹ 69,000 crore is being provided for Health care including ₹ 6400 crore for Prime Minister Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).
- Under PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), there are more than 20,000 empanelled hospitals more in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities for poorer people.
- Setting up hospitals in the PPP mode mainly in Aspirational Districts, using machine learning and AI, in the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.
- 'TB Harega Desh Jeetega' campaign to end Tuberculosis by 2025.
- Expansion of Jan Aushadhi Kendra Scheme to all districts offering 2000 medicines and 300 surgicals by 2024.
- On **sanitation front**, Government is committed to ODF Plus in order to sustain ODF behaviour and the total allocation for Swachh Bharat Mission is ₹ 12,300 crore in 2020-21.
- ₹ 3·60 lakh crore approved for Jal Jeevan Mission and ₹ 11,500 crore in 2020-21.

Education and Skills

- On Education and Skill front ₹ 99,300 crore is being allocated in 2020-21 and ₹ 3000 crores for skill development.
- New Education Policy will be announced soon.
- About 150 higher educational institutions will start apprenticeship embedded degree/diploma courses by March 2021.
- Degree level full-fledged online education programme to be started.
- Under its 'Study in India' programme, an Ind-SAT is proposed to be held in Asian and African countries.
- A National Police University and a National Forensic Science University are being proposed in the domain of policing science, forensic science, cyber-forensics etc.
- It is proposed that special bridge courses be designed by the Ministries of Health, Skill Development.

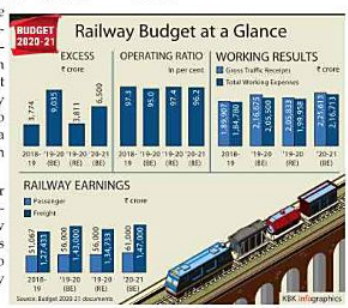
Economic Development

Industry, Commerce and Investment

- ₹ 27,300 crore would be allocated for development and promotion of Industry and Commerce for the year 2020-21.
- An Investment Clearance Cell will be set up to provide "end to end" facilitation.
- It is proposed to develop five new smart cities in collaboration with States in PPP mode.
- A scheme to encourage manufacture of mobile phones, electronic equipment and semi-conductor packaging is also proposed.
- A National Technical Textiles Mission would be set up with a four-year implementation period from 2020-21 to 2023-24 at an estimated outlay of ₹ 1480 crore to position India as a global leader in Technical Textiles.
- To achieve higher export credit disbursement, a new scheme, NIRVIK is being launched to support mainly small exporters.
- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is moving ahead for creating a Unified Procurement System in the country for providing a single platform for procurement of goods, services and works. It is proposed to take the turnover of GeM to ₹ 3 lakh crores. 3·24 lakh vendors are already on this platform.

Infrastructure

- On Infrastructure sector ₹ 100 lakh crore would be invested over the next 5 years
- National Infrastructure Pipeline was launched on 31st December, 2019 of ₹ 103 lakh crore. It consists of more than 6500 projects across sectors and these are classified as per their size and stage of development. About ₹ 22,000 crore has already been provided as support to Infrastructure Pipeline.
- Accelerated development of highways will be undertaken. This will include development of 2500 km access control highways, 9000 km of economic corridors, 2000 km of coastal and land port roads and 2000 km of strategic highways.
- Delhi-Mumbai Expressway and two other packages to be completed by 2023.
- Chennai-Bengaluru Expressway also be started.
- It is proposed to monetise at least 12 lots of highway bundles of over 6000 km before 2024.
- **Indian Railways** aims to achieve electrification of 27000 km of tracks.



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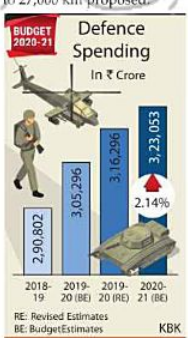
- Within 100 days of assumption of this government, it has commissioned 550 wi-fi facilities in as many stations.
- Four station re-development projects .
- Operation of 150 passenger trains would be done through PPP mode. The process of inviting private participation is underway.
- More Tejas type trains will connect iconic tourist destinations.
- High speed train between Mumbai and Ahmedabad would be actively pursued.
- 100 more **airports** would be developed by 2024 to support Udaan Scheme. Air fleet number expected to go up from the present 600 to 1200 during this time.
- Allocation of ₹ 1.70 lakh crore proposed for transport Infrastructure in 2020-21.
- Allocation of ₹ 22,000 crore proposed for power and renewable energy sector in 2020-21.
- Expansion of the national gas grid from the present 16,200 km to 27,000 km proposed.



New Economy

- Under New Economy a policy to enable private sector to build Data Centre parks throughout the country will be brought out soon.
- Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connections through Bharatnet will link 100,000 gram panchayats this year.
- It is proposed to provide ₹ 6,000 crore to Bharatnet programme in 2020-21.
- Measures proposed to benefit the Start-ups include a digital platform for seamless application and capture of IPRs
- Knowledge Translation Clusters to be set up across different technology sectors including new and emerging areas.
- For designing, fabrication and validation of proof of concept, and further scaling up Technology Clusters, harbouring test beds and small scale manufacturing facilities to be established.
- It is proposed to provide an outlay of ₹ 8000 crore over a period of five years for the National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications.

Caring Society

Women and Child, Social Welfare

- ₹ 35,600 crore proposed for nutrition-related programmes for the financial year 2020-21.
- ₹ 28,600 crore proposed for programs that are specific to women.
- ₹ 85,000 crore would be allocated towards the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Other Backward classes for 2020-21.
- For furthering development and welfare of Scheduled tribes, ₹ 53,700 crore is proposed for 2020-21.
- The government is mindful of the concerns of senior citizens and Divyang. Accordingly, an enhanced allocation of ₹ 9,500 crore is being provided for 2020-21.

Culture and Tourism

- On Culture and Tourism, establishment of an Indian Institute of Heritage and Conservation under Ministry of Culture proposed with the status of a deemed University.
- 5 archaeological sites to be developed as iconic sites with on-site Museums–Rakhigarhi (Haryana), Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh) Shivsagar (Assam), Dholavira (Gujarat) and Adichanallur (Tamil Nadu).
- Re-curation of the Indian Museum in Kolkata.
- Museum on Numismatics and Trade to be located in the historic Old Mint building Kolkata.
- 4 more museums from across the country to be taken up for renovation and re-curation.
- Support for setting a Tribal Museum in Ranchi (Jharkhand).
- Maritime museum to be set up at Lothal-the Harrapan age maritime site near Ahmedabad, by Ministry of Shipping.

Environment and Climate Change

- States that are formulating and implementing plans for ensuring cleaner air in cities above one million to be encouraged.
- Parameters for the incentives to be notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change and the allocation for this purpose is ₹ 4,400 crore for 2020-21.

Governance

- National Recruitment Agency (NRA) will be set up as an independent, professional, specialist organisation for conduct of a computer-based online Common Eligibility Test for recruitment to Non-Gazetted posts. A test-centre in every district, particularly in the Aspirational Districts would also be set up.
- It is also proposed to evolve a robust mechanism for appointment including direct recruitment to various Tribunals and specialised bodies to attract best talents and professional experts. Deliberation to strengthen the Contract Act is also on.

Financial Sector

- Government of India has infused about ₹ 3,50,000 crore by way of capital into Public Sector Banks for regulatory and growth purposes.
- Governance reforms would be carried out in these banks, so that they become more competitive.
- Government has already approved consolidation of 10 banks into four.
- Further, the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corpora-

tion (DICGC) has been permitted to increase Deposit Insurance Coverage for a depositor, which is now ₹ 1 lakh to ₹ 5 lakh per depositor.

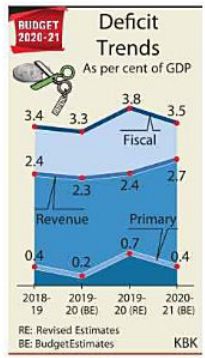
- The limit for NBFCs to be eligible for debt recovery under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act 2002 is proposed to be reduced from ₹ 500 crore to asset size of ₹ 100 crore or loan size from existing ₹ 1 crore to ₹ 50 lakh.
- To meet the need for greater private capital, it is proposed to sell the balance holding of Government of India IDBI Bank to private, retail and institutional investors through the stock exchange.
- To help easy mobility while in jobs, we wish to infuse into the Universal Pension coverage with auto enrolment.
- More than five lakh MSMEs have benefited from restructuring of debt permitted by RBI in the last year. The restructuring window was to end on March 31, 2020. Government has asked RBI to consider extending this window till March 31, 2021.
- For selected sectors such as pharmaceuticals, auto components and others, it is proposed to extend handholding support – for technology upgradations, R&D, business strategy etc.
- A scheme of ₹ 1000 crore will be anchored by EXIM Bank together with SIDBI.

Financial Markets

- Certain specified categories of Government securities would be opened fully for non-resident investors, apart from being available to domestic investors as well.
- Government also proposes to expand by floating a new Debt-ETF consisting primarily of government securities. This will give retail investors access to government securities as much as giving an attractive investment for pension funds and long-term investors.
- To address the liquidity constraints of the NBFCs/HFCs, post the Union budget 2019-20, the government formulated a Partial Credit Guarantee scheme for the NBFCs.
- The Government and RBI has taken various measures to permit Rupee derivatives to be traded in the International Financial Services Centre at GIFT city, Gujarat.

Disinvestment

- It also gives opportunity for retail investors to participate in the wealth so created.
- The government now proposes to sell a part of its holding in LIC by way of Initial Public Offer (IPO).



Budget at a Glance

(In ₹ crore)

	2018-2019 Actuals	2019-2020 Budget Estimates	2019-2020 Revised Estimates	2020-2021 Budget Estimates
1. **Revenue Receipts**	**1552916**	**1962761**	**1850101**	**2020926**
2. Tax Revenue (Net to Centre)	1317211	1649582	1504587	1635909
3. Non Tax Revenue	235705	313179	345514	385017
4. **Capital Receipts**	**762197**	**823588**	**848451**	**1021304**
5. Recovery of Loans	18052	14828	16605	14967
6. Other Receipts	94727	105000	65000	210000
7. Borrowings and Other Liabilities	649418	703760	766846	796337
8. **Total Receipts (1+4)**	**2315113**	**2786349**	**2698552**	**3042230**
9. **Total Expenditure (10+13)**	**2315113**	**2786349**	**2698552**	**3042230**
10. On Revenue Account of which	2007399	2447780	2349645	2630145
11. Interest Payments	582648	660471	625105	708203
12. Grants in Aid for creation of capital assests	191781	207333	191737	206500
13. On Capital Account	307714	338569	348907	412085
14. **Revenue Deficit (10-1)**	**454483 (2·4)**	**485019 (2·3)**	**499544 (2·4)**	**609219 (2·7)**
15. Effective Revenue Deficit (14-12)	262702 (1·4)	277686 (1·3)	307807 (1·5)	402719 (1·8)
16. **Fiscal Deficit [9-(1+5+6)]**	**649418 (3·4)**	**703760 (3·3)**	**766846 (3·8)**	**796337 (3·5)**
17. Primary Deficit (16-11)	66770 (0·4)	43289 (0·2)	141741 (0·7)	88134 (0·4)

Notes :

(i) GDP for BE 2020-2021 has been projected at ₹ 22489420 crore assuming 10·0% growth over the estimated GDP of ₹ 20442233 crore for 2019-2020 (RE).

(ii) Individual items in this document may not sum up to the totals due to rounding off.

(iii) Figures in parenthesis are as a percentage of GDP

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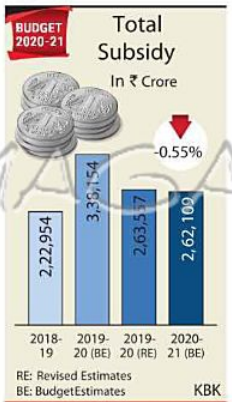
Fiscal Management

- XV Finance Commission has given its first report pertaining to Financial Year 2020-21. In the spirit of co-operative federalism, Government in substantial measure, accepted the recommendations of the Commission. The Commission would submit its final report to the President during the latter part of the year, for five years beginning 2021-22.
- The GST Compensation Fund balances due out of collection of the years 2016-17 and 2017-18 will be transferred in two instalments.
- Hereinafter, transfers to the fund would be limited only to collection by way of GST compensation cess.



- The Revised Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial Year 2019-20 are at a level of ₹ 26·99 lakh crore and the receipts are estimated at ₹ 19·32 lakh crore.
- Government has estimated nominal growth of GDP for year 2020-21, on the basis of trends available, at 10%.
- Accordingly, receipts for the year 2020-21 are estimated at ₹ 22·46 lakh crore.
- Keeping in mind commitment of the Government towards various schemes and need for improvement in quality of life, level of expenditure has been kept at ₹ 30·42 lakh crore.
- A good part of the borrowings for the financial year 2020-21 would go towards Capital expenditure of the Government that has been scaled up by more than 21%. She said that the measures would spur growth impulses in the economy.

Personal Income Tax and Simplification of Taxation

- In order to provide significant relief to the individual taxpayers and to simplify the Income-Tax law, the Finance Minister has proposed to bring a new and simplified personal income tax regime, wherein income tax rates will be significantly reduced for the individual taxpayers who forego certain deductions and exemptions.

Revenue Receipts

(In ₹ crores)

	Actuals 2918-2019	Budget Estimates 2019-2020	Revised Estimates 2019-2020	Budget Estimates 2020-2021
Gross Tax Revenue	**2080465-43**	**2461194-93**	**2163423-00**	**2423020-00**
Corporation Tax	663571-62	766000-00	610500-00	681000-00
Taxes on Income	473002-86	569000-00	559500-00	638000-00
Wealth Tax	40-86	—	—	—
Customs	117812-85	155904-00	125000-00	138000-00
Union Excise Duties	231981-90	300000-00	248012-00	267000-00
Service Tax	6903-62	—	1200-00	1020-00
Goods and Services Tax (GST)#	581559-30	663343-00	612327-00	690500-00
Taxes of Union Territories	5592-42	6947-93	6884-00	7500-00
Less : NCCD transferred to the National Calamity Contingency Fund/National Disaster Response Fund	**1800-16**	**2480-00**	**2790-00**	**2930-00**
Less : State's share	**761454-15**	**809133-02**	**655046-07**	**784150-87**
Centre's Net Tax Revenue	**1317211-12**	**1649581-91**	**1504586-93**	**1635509-13**

TAXATION

- The Union Government has spearheaded radical fiscal measures to ensure that India's economy continues to tread the path of high growth. Finance Minister said that to make sure India stays globally competitive and a favoured destination for investment, a bold historic decision was taken to reduce the corporate tax rate for new companies in the manufacturing sector to an unprecedented level of 15%. For existing companies, the rate has been brought down to 22%. As a result, our corporate tax rates are now amongst the lowest in the world. The Finance Minister said that in continuation of the reform measures already taken so far, the tax proposals in this budget introduce further reforms to stimulate growth, simplify tax structure, bring ease of compliance, and reduce litigations.

The proposed changes in tax slabs are listed in the following table :

Taxable Income Slab (₹)	Existing Tax Rates	New Tax Rates
0-2·5 Lakh	Exempt	Exempt
2·5-5 Lakh	5%	5%
5-7·5 Lakh	20%	10%
7·5-10 Lakh	20%	15%
10-12·5 Lakh	30%	20%
12·5-15 Lakh	30%	25%
Above 15 Lakh	30%	30%

- Surcharge and cess shall be continued to be levied at the existing rates.
- In the new tax regime, substantial tax benefit will accrue to a taxpayer depending upon exemptions and deductions claimed by him.
- The new tax regime shall be optional for taxpayers. An individual who is currently availing more deductions and exemption under the Income Tax

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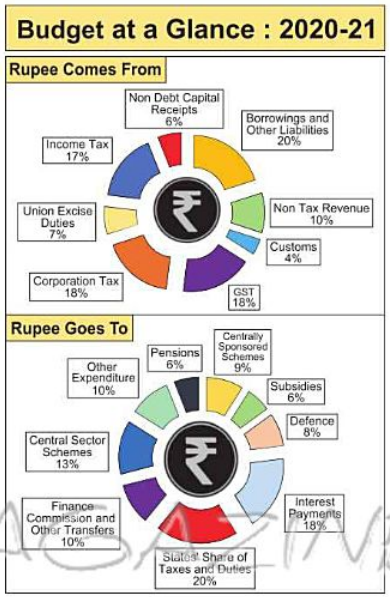

Act may choose to avail them and continue to pay tax in the old regime.

- The proposed tax rates are similar to all the three categories of tax payers *i.e.*, general tax payer, senior citizen tax payer (Aged 60 years and more than 60 years) and Super senior citizens (Aged 80 years and more than 80 years).
- For a taxpayer not opting for the new PIT regime, there shall be no change in income tax slabs or rates.
- At least 70 types of deductions and exemptions, available under Income tax Act, have been abolished in proposed new regime.
- While opting for the new PIT regime, only employer contribution to National Pension System ('NPS') is allowed as a deduction and the following exemptions and deductions, amongst others, cannot be claimed :
  - Housing, leave travel & amp; certain allowance which are incurred wholly for the purpose of business, meal vouchers, etc
  - Standard deduction of ₹ 50,000 and professional tax.
  - Interest paid on loan taken for self-occupied house property
  - Section 80C deduction of ₹ 150,000 for investment in LIC, public provident fund, ELSS, employee provident fund, principal repayment of home loan, etc
  - Section 80D deduction of ₹ 25,000 for medical insurance premium
  - Other deductions under Chapter VIA, which include interest for educational loan repayment (80E), donations (80G), additional interest on housing loan (80EEA), interest on savings account (80TTA), etc
- The new personal income tax rates will entail estimated revenue foregone of ₹ 40,000 crore per year. Measures have been initiated to pre-file the income tax return so that an individual who opts for the new regime would need no assistance from an expert to file his return and pay income tax.
- The Finance Minister said she had reviewed all exemptions and deductions which got incorporated in the income tax legislation over the past several decades. Currently more than one hundred exemptions and deductions of different nature are provided in the Income Tax Act.
- Around 70 exemptions and deduction have been removed in the new simplified regime.
- The remaining exemptions and deductions would also be reviewed and rationalized in the coming years, with a view to further simplifying the tax system and lowering the tax rate.

Dividend Distribution Tax

- Currently, companies are required to pay Dividend Distribution Tax (DDT) on the dividend paid to its shareholders at the rate of 15% plus applicable surcharge and cess, in addition to the tax payable by the company on its profits.
- In order to increase the attractiveness of the Indian Equity Market and to provide relief to a large class of investors, the Finance Minister has proposed to remove DDT, and adopt the classical system of dividend taxation, under which the companies would not be required to pay DDT.
- The dividend shall be taxed only in the hands of the recipients at their applicable rate.
- In order to remove the cascading effect, the Finance Minister has proposed to allow deduction for the dividend received by holding company from its subsidiary.
- The removal of DDT will lead to estimated annual revenue foregone of ₹ 25,000 crore. This will further make India an attractive destination for investment.

Concessional Tax Rate for Electricity Generation Companies

- New provisions were introduced in September 2019, offering a

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concessional corporate tax rate of 15% to the newly incorporated domestic companies in the manufacturing sector which start manufacturing by 31st March, 2023.

- In order to attract investment in the power sector, it has been proposed to extend the concessional corporate tax rate of 15% to new domestic companies engaged in the generation of electricity.

Tax Concession for Foreign Investments

- To incentivize investment by Sovereign Wealth Fund of foreign governments, the Finance Minister has proposed to grant 100% tax exemption to their interest, dividend and capital gains income in respect of the investment made in infrastructure and other notified sectors before 31st March, 2024 and with a minimum lock-in period of 3 years.

Start-ups

- During their formative years, Start-ups generally use Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP) to attract and retain highly talented employees. Currently, ESOPs are taxable as perquisites at the time of exercise.
- In order to give a boost to the start-up ecosystem, it has been proposed to ease the burden of taxation on the employees by deferring the tax payment for five years or till they leave the company or when they sell their shares, whichever is earliest.
- An eligible Start-up having turnover upto 25 crore is allowed deduction of 100% on its profits for three consecutive assessment years out of seven years if the total turnover does not exceed 25 crore rupees. It has been proposed to increase this limit to ₹ 100 crore. It has been proposed to extend the period of eligibility for claim of deduction from the existing 7 years to 10 years.

Concessional Tax Rate for Cooperatives

- Cooperative societies are currently taxed at a rate of 30% with surcharge and cess.
- In order to bring parity between the cooperative societies and corporates, it has been proposed to provide an option to cooperative societies to be taxed at 22% plus 10% surcharge and 4% cess with no exemptions/deductions.
- It has also been proposed to exempt these societies from Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), just like companies under the new tax regime are exempted from the Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT).

Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises

- In order to reduce the compliance burden on small retailers, traders, shopkeepers who comprise the MSME sector, the Union Budget 2020-21 has proposed to raise by five times, the turnover threshold for audit from the existing ₹ 1 crore to ₹ 5 crore.
- In order to boost less-cash economy, it has been proposed that the increased limit shall apply only to those businesses which carry out less than 5% of their business transactions in cash.

Affordable Housing

- In the last budget, the Finance Minister had announced an additional deduction of upto one lakh, fifty thousand rupees for interest paid on loans taken for purchase of an affordable house. The date of loan sanction for availing this additional deduction is proposed to be extended by one year, beyond 31st March, 2020.

Charity Institutions

- Income of Charity Institutions is fully exempt from taxation.
- Donation made to these institutions is also allowed as deduction in computing the taxable income of the donor.
- It is proposed to pre-file the donee's information in taxpayer's return on the basis of information of donations furnished by the donee.
- In order to claim the tax exemption, charity institutions have to be registered with the Income Tax Department.
- It is proposed to make the registration completely electronic under a unique registration number (URN) to be issued to all new and existing charity institutions.

Faceless Appeals

- In order to impart greater efficiency, transparency and accountability to the assessment process, a new faceless assessment scheme has already been introduced.
- It is proposed to amend the Income Tax Act so as to enable Faceless appeal on the lines of Faceless assessment.

'Vivad se Vishwas' Scheme

- Under the proposed 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme, a taxpayer would be required to pay only the amount of the disputed taxes and will get complete waiver of interest and penalty, provided he pays by 31st March, 2020. Those who will avail the scheme after 31st March, 2020 will have to pay some additional amount. The scheme will remain open till 30th June, 2020.

Instant PAN through Aadhaar

- In order to further ease the process of allotment of PAN, a system will be launched under which PAN shall be instantly allotted online on the basis of Aadhaar, without any requirement for filling up of detailed application form.

Indirect Tax

GST

- A simplified GST return shall be implemented from 1st April, 2020.
- It will make return filing simple with features like SMS based filing for nil return, return prefiling, improved input tax credit flow and overall simplification.
- Dynamic QR-code is proposed for consumer invoices. GST parameters will be captured when payment for purchases is made through the QR-code.

Customs

- On the Customs side, India has taken a quantum leap in the "Trading Across Border" parameter of Ease of Doing Business rankings by the World Bank. India's rank has improved from 146 to 68.
- Imports under Free Trade Agreements are on the rise.
- Undue claims of FTA benefits have posed threat to domestic industry.
- In the coming months, Rules of Origin requirements shall be reviewed, particularly for certain sensitive items, so as to ensure that FTAs are aligned to the conscious direction of our policy.
- Labour intensive sectors in MSME are critical for employment generation.
- Cheap and low-quality imports are an impediment to their growth.
- Keeping in view the need of this sector, customs duty is being raised on items like footwear and furniture.
- Rate of Duty for footwear is being raised from 25% to 35%; and for 'parts of footwear' from 15% to 20%.
- Rate of Duty for specified Furniture goods is being raised from 20% to 25%.
- To give impetus to domestic industry, and to generate resource for health services, it is proposed to impose a nominal health cess of 5% on imports of specified medical equipment.
- Basic customs duty on imports of newsprint and light-weight coated paper is being reduced from 10% to 5%.
- An increase is proposed in National Calamity Contingent Duty (NCCD) on Cigarettes and Tobacco products. NCCD on Bidis remains unchanged.

Outlay on Major Schemes of Central Government

(In ₹ Crore)

	2018-2019 Actuals	2019-2020 Revised Estimates	2020-21 Budget Esitmates
(A) Core of the Core Schemes			
National Social Assistance Programme	8418	9200	9197
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme	61815	71002	61500
(B) Core Schemes			
Green Revolution	11758	9965	13320
White Revolution	2422	1799	1805
Blue Revolution	485	455	570
Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana	8143	7896	11127
Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana	15414	14070	19500
Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)	25443	25328	27500
Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)	5484	10001	11500
Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban)	2462	1300	2300
Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)	12913	8338	9994
National Health Mission	31502	34290	34115
National Education Mission	30830	37672	39161
National Programme of Mid Day Meal in Schools	9514	9912	11000
Umbrella ICDS	21642	24955	28557
Mission for Protection and Empowerment for Women	1138	961	1163
National Livelihood Mission-Ajeevika	6282	9774	10005
Jobs and Skill Development	6126	5749	5372
Urban Rejuvenation Mission : AMRUT and Smart Cities Mission	12085	9842	13750
Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission	433	300	600
Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)	649	465	858
PMJAY-Ayushman Bharat	2602	3314	6429
(C) Major Central Sector Schemes			
Crop Insurance Scheme	11937	13641	15695
Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan)	1241	54370	75000
Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana	592	889	1081
Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana	3797	4733	6020
Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)	2263	2100	2200
Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)	2119	2464	2500
Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (KUSUM)	—	—	700
Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana	3800	4066	4500
National Highways Authority of India	39287	36691	42500
Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLAD)	3950	3960	3960
Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits around specific themes (Swadesh Darshan)	1101	566	1200
Budgetary Support to Schemes of Ministry of Railways	54913	69967	72216
Sagarmala	360	381	297
Support to Infrastructure Pipeline	—	—	12500

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OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

1. The Union Budget 2020-21 aims—
   I. To achieve seamless delivery of services through Digital governance.
   II. To improve physical quality of life through National Infrastructure Pipeline.
   III. Risk mitigation through Disaster Resilience.
   IV. Social security through Pension and Insurance penetration.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I, II and III
   (B) Only II, III and IV
   (C) Only I, III and IV
   (D) I, II, III and IV

2. The Union Budget 2020-21 is woven around certain themes mentioned below—
   I. Aspirational India in which all sections of the society seek better standards of living, with access to health, education and better jobs.
   II. Economic development for all, indicated in the Prime Minister's exhortation of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas".
   III. Caring Society that is both humane and compassionate, where Antyodaya is an article of faith.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I and II
   (B) Only II and III
   (C) Only I and III
   (D) I, II and III all

3. As per the provisions of Union Budget 2020-21 the components of Aspirational India are—
   I. Agriculture, Irrigation and Rural Development.
   II. Wellness, Water and Sanitation.
   III. Education and Skills.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only I and II
   (C) I, II and III all
   (D) Only II and III

4. Agriculture credit target for the year 2020-21 has been set at—
   (A) ₹ 15 lakh crore
   (B) ₹ 14 lakh crore
   (C) ₹ 13 lakh crore
   (D) ₹ 12 lakh crore

5. Which of the following statements is/are true about issues addressed in Union Budget 2020-21 for agriculture and allied sector ?
   (A) More than ₹ 2·83 lakh crore would be spent on Agriculture, Rural Development, Irrigation and allied activities
   (B) All eligible beneficiaries of PM-KISAN will be covered under the KCC scheme
   (C) Foot and Mouth disease, brucellosis in cattle and also peste des petits ruminants(PPR) in sheep and goat to be eliminatated by 2025
   (D) All of the above

6. Which of the following steps has been announced in the Union Budget 2020-21 for the development of Blue Economy ?
   I. Raising of fish production to 200 lakh tonnes by 2022-23.
   II. Youth to be involved in fishery extension through 3477 Sagar Mitras and 500 Fish Farmer Producer Organisations
   III. Fishery exports to be raised to ₹ 1 lakh crore by 2024-25
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only I and III
   (C) Only II and III
   (D) I, II and III all

7. "TB Harega Desh Jeetega" campaign aims to end Tuberculosis by the year—
   (A) 2025 (B) 2030
   (C) 2035 (D) 2040

8. Consider the List-I (Programmes/ Schemes) and List-II (Allocation in ₹ Crore in Union Budget 2020) and choose the correct code given below—

   List-I
   (a) Prime Minister Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)
   (b) Swachh Bharat Mission
   (c) Jal Jeevan Mission
   (d) National Technical Textiles Mission

   List-II
   1. 1480 2. 6400
   3. 360000 4. 12300

   Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	3	2	1
(B)	1	2	3	4
(C)	2	4	3	1
(D)	3	2	4	1

9. Which of the following scheme has not been announced in Union Budget 2020-21 ?
   (A) Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan
   (B) Degree level full-fledged online education programme
   (C) "Study in India" programme
   (D) Establishment of National Police University

10. Allocation for BharatNet programme for 2020-21 is—
    (A) ₹ 10000 crore
    (B) ₹ 8000 crore
    (C) ₹ 6000 crore
    (D) ₹ 4000 crore

11. Allocation for National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications in Union Budget 2020-21 is—
    (A) ₹ 8000 crore
    (B) ₹ 14000 crore
    (C) ₹ 16000 crore
    (D) ₹ 17000 crore

12. Which of the following pair is not matched correctly in relation to budgetary allocations in Union Budget 2020-21 ?
    (A) Nutrition-related programmes —₹ 35,600 crore
    (B) Programs that are specific to women —₹8,600 crore
    (C) Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Other Backward classes —₹ 85000 crore
    (D) Welfare of Scheduled tribes —₹ 53,700 crore

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13. Which of the following archaeological site has not been included in the proposed sites to be developed as iconic sites announced in the Union Budget 2020-21?
(A) Rakhigarhi (Haryana) and Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh)
(B) Shivsagar (Assam) and Dholavira (Gujarat)
(C) Adichanallur (Tamil Nadu)
(D) Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh) and Gaya (Bihar)

14. Maritime museum to be set up at Lothal—the Harrapan age maritime site near Ahmedabad, by—
(A) Ministry of Shipping
(B) Ministry of Culture
(C) Ministry of HRD
(D) Ministry Home Affairs

15. National Recruitment Agency (NRA) will be set up as an independent, professional, specialist organisation for conduct of a computer-based online Common Eligibility Test for recruitment to—
(A) Gazetted posts
(B) Non-Gazetted posts
(C) Technical posts
(D) All types of posts

16. Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) has been permitted to increase Deposit Insurance Coverage for a depositor, which is now ₹ one lakh to—
(A) ₹ 5 lakh per depositor.
(B) ₹ 10 lakh per depositor
(C) ₹ 12 lakh per depositor
(D) ₹ 15 lakh per depositor

17. How many slabs have been proposed in the new regime of income tax in the Union Budget 2020-21 ?
(A) Five (B) Six
(C) Seven (D) Eight

18. The new proposed income tax regime announced in Union Budget 2020-21 is.....for tax payers.
(A) Optional
(B) Mandatory
(C) Optional with certain riders
(D) Mandatory with certain riders

19. Which of the following exemptions and deductions will not be allowed to tax payers if they opt new tax regime ?
(A) Deductions under Sections 80C and 80 D
(B) Standard deduction for salaried tax payers
(C) Interest paid on loan taken for self-occupied house property
(D) All of the above

20. Fiscal deficit has been targeted at .....of GDP for the fiscal year 2020-21
(A) 3·2% (B) 3·3%
(C) 3·4% (D) 3·5%

21. 'Vivad Se Vishwas' scheme is related to—
(A) Direct taxes
(B) Indirect taxes
(C) Both (A) and (B)
(D) Neither (A) nor (B)

Answers

1. (D) 2. (D) 3. (C) 4. (A) 5. (D)
6. (D) 7. (A) 8. (C) 9. (A) 10. (C)
11. (A) 12. (B) 13. (D) 14. (A) 15. (B)
16. (A) 17. (C) 18. (A) 19. (D) 20. (D)
21. (A)

Continued from Page 193

13. How much taxpayers money is invested as governments equity in Public Sector Banks ?
(A) ₹ 430,000 crore
(B) ₹ 5,90,000 crore
(C) ₹ 6,10,000 crore
(D) ₹ 680,000 crore

14. The Theme of Economic Survey 2019-20 is :
(A) Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas
(B) Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwaas
(C) Enable Markets, Promote 'Pro-Business' Policies and Strengthen 'Trust' in the economy
(D) 'Make in India' to 'Assemble in India'

15. Economic Survey 2019-20 posits that India's aspiration to become a US $ 5 trillion economy depends critically on :
I. Strengthening the invisible hand of the market.
II. Supporting it with the hand of trust.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) I and II both are correct
(D) Neither I nor II is correct

16. Frequent and unpredictible imposition of blanket stock limits on commodities under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 impact adversely—
(A) The incentives for the creation of storage infrastructure by the private sector
(B) Movement up the agricultural value chain
(C) Development of National Market for agricultural commodities
(D) All of the above

17. Government intervention in foodgrain markets has resulted into :
I. Emergence of Government as the largest procurer and hoarder of rice and wheat
II. Crowding out of private trade.
III. Burgeoning food subsidy burden.
IV. Inefficiencies in the market, affecting the long run growth of agricultural prices.
Correct code :
(A) Only I and III
(B) Only II and IV
(C) I, II, III and IV
(D) Only III

18. As per Economic Survey 2019-20 projections to achieve GDP of US $ 5 trillion by 2025, India needs to spend about.....on infrastructure.
(A) US $ 1·02 trillion
(B) US $ 1·40 trillion
(C) US $ 1·52 trillion
(D) US $ 1·79 trillion

19. Economic Survey suggests agressive disinvestment of Central Public Sector Enterprises to—
(A) Bring in higher profitability
(B) Promote Efficiency and professionalism
(C) Increase efficiency
(D) All of the above

20. India's top five trading partners are—
(A) USA, China, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong
(B) USA, China, UK, Japan, Russia
(C) China, USA, UAE, France, Japan,
(D) China, UAE, USA, UK, France

Answers

1. (C) 2. (D) 3. (A) 4. (C) 5. (C)
6. (B) 7. (C) 8. (D) 9. (A) 10. (C)
11. (B) 12. (C) 13. (A) 14. (C) 15. (C)
16. (D) 17. (C) 18. (B) 19. (D) 20. (A)

Latest Schemes, Campaigns And Programmes

The Union Budget 2020-21 presents an overall positive outlook for agriculture and allied industries. With over 2·83 lakh crore being allocated to the sector, the Centre's 16-point agenda shows optimism for India to double farmer incomes and emerge as a leading global food-basket in the coming years.

16-Points Action Plan for Farmers

1. Agricultural Laws : To encourage the state governments to follow the model of agricultural laws.

2. Water Stress : Union Finance minister proposed comprehensive measures to address water issues in 100 water-stressed districts of India.

3. Balanced use of Fertilizers : Finance minister said, there is a need to encourage a balanced use of fertilizers and this is a necessary step to change the prevailing incentive regime which promotes chemical fertilisers.

4. Creation of Solar Power Stations : Government to push for renewable energy through PM KUSUM scheme. Union Finance Minister proposed 20 lakh farmers will be helped in setting up standalone solar power sets for solar power generation which can be sold to the Discoms on their barren lands. Another 15 lakh farmers will be assisted to set up solar-aided pumps. Thus, the use of barren land for the generation of solar power is to be promoted.

5. Cold Storage Creation : India has an estimated capacity of 162 metric tonnes of cold storage and warehousing and these facilities will be geo-tagged by NABARD. Agri-warehousing will be encouraged and the state governments will help with the land.

6. Village Storage Scheme : She proposed a village storage scheme which will be run by self-help groups (SHGs). This will provide villagers with better storage capacities. She said this scheme will allow women SHGs to regain their position as 'Dhan Lakshmi' and they can avail Mudra loans for opening storage facilities.

7. Kisan Rail : Indian Railways will set up a Kisan Rail for transporting perishable goods. "To build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables, Indian Railways will set up Kisan Rail through PPP model so that perishable goods can be transported quickly.

8. Krishi Udaan Scheme : Ministry of Civil Aviation will be launching Krishi Udaan scheme on national and international routes."

9. Promotion of Horticulture : Horticulture exceeds the production of foodgrains and that's why she proposed that her government will support states to focus on promoting horticulture and adopt one district one produce.

10. Jaivik Kheti Portal : The portal on the national organic product market, jaivik kheti, will be strengthened.

11. E-warehousing : Financing of e-warehousing will be integrated

12. Agricultural Credit Availability : NABARD refinance scheme will be further expanded. The Agri credit for the fiscal has been set at ₹ 15 lakh crore.

13. Disease elimination : Finance minister said her government intends to eliminate foot and mouth diseases affecting livestock.

14. Milk Capacity : Milk capacity will be doubled to 108 metric tonnes.

15. Blue Economy : Finance minister proposed that fish production will be raised to 2 lakh tonnes. Marine fishery boost will help the youths in coastal areas as the government will involve youth in fisheries through Sagar Mitra scheme.

16. Mobilisation of SHGs : 58 lakh SHGs have been mobilised under the poverty alleviation program.

Scheme/ Campaigns/ Programme	Characteristics/Key Provisions
Sagar Mitras Scheme	• Government of India has announced the **scheme Sagar Mitra** for development of fisheries in rural areas . • With the scheme **Sagar Mitra scheme** govt is aiming improve the opportunities to young people depending on fishing and fisheries . • With the **scheme Sagar Mitra** govt will assist and provide support the fisher forming men for more productivity and improve the export quantity.
KUSUM Solar Power Pumps Scheme	• Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1, 2020 announced expansion of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM) Scheme . • While presenting the budget for 2020-21, the minister said that 15 lakh farmers would be provided funds to set up grid-connected 15 lakh solar pumps • The previous Modi government in February last year had unveiled the PM KUSUM scheme with an outlay of ₹ 34,422 crore • The scheme also enables the farmers to set up solar power generation capacity and sell it to the grid. • Farmers would be able to earn livelihood through their baron land also (by generating solar power on that).

	• The PM KUSUM scheme has three components—10,000 megawatts (MW) of decentralised ground mounted grid-connected renewable power plants (Component-A); installation of 17·50 lakh standalone solar powered agriculture pumps (Component-B); and solarisation of 10 lakh grid-connected solar powered agriculture pumps (Component-C). • All three components combined, the scheme had aimed to add a solar capacity of 25,750 MW by 2022.
Village Storage Scheme	• The government has estimated the current capacity of cold storage and warehousing at 162 MT. • However, it is still far from the market demand to efficiently address the rate of food loss in the country. • With responsibility on the states to provide land infrastructure and the centre's allocation of funds, there is great scope for the boost of the cold chain infrastructure in the country. • The initiative for NABARD to geotag these centres, in addition to the village storage scheme to create backward linkage will also help improve awareness and access among farmers. • The setting up of storage facilities in villages as part of the Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages (CBFL) under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY). • Under CBFL, financial assistance was provided for setting up primary processing centres / collection centres at farm gate and modern retail outlets at the front-end along with connectivity through insulated / refrigerated transport, stated the scheme document. • The proposed facilities will be run by women self-help groups (SHG) and are expected to reduce logistics cost of farmers.
Dhaanya Lakshmi	• Dhaanya Laxmi Scheme has been rolled out for women's self-help group. • These groups known as Dhaanya Laxmi will be helped by NABARD and Mudra Schemes. • It is a village storage scheme for women. • The aim of the scheme is to provide holding capacity for farmers and through this women in villages and the rural parts of the country will be able to retain their status as 'Dhaanya Lakshmi' (one of the eight forms of Hindu deity Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth).
Kisan Rail Scheme	• Indian Railways will start Kisan Rail for special refrigerated coaches to carry perishable goods. • To build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables, the Indian Railways will set up Kisan Rail through PPP model so that perishable goods can be transported quickly. • Refrigerated parcel vans on select mail express and freight trains for carrying perishable cargo was also on the anvil. • Perishable goods like fruits, vegetables, dairy products, fish, meat need to be carried in such temperature controlled vans in order to travel long distances. • The proposal to use refrigerated parcel vans to ferry perishables was first announced by then railway minister Mamata Banerjee in the 2009-10 Budget; however, it had failed to take off.
Krishi UDAN Scheme	• Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1, 2020 said the Aviation Ministry will launch the Krishi Udan scheme to assist farmers in transporting agricultural products so that it improves their 'value realisation'. • The setting up of the Krishi Udaan scheme by the Ministry of Civil Aviation on national and international routes to transport perishable goods will help in reducing food loss and address the overall cost within the farm-to-fork process, thereby driving profitability for farmers and reducing prices for consumers. • "This will immensely help improve value realisation (on agricultural products), especially in the north-east and tribal districts." • The Modi government had launched Udan Scheme in 2016 to improve regional connectivity. • Under the scheme, financial incentives in terms of concessions from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and undeserved airports, and keep airfares affordable. • In Udan 4.0, the VGF has been enhanced for aircraft having more than 20 seats and that would operate in priority areas—Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, north-eastern states, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.
Vivad Se Vishwas' Scheme	• Under the proposed 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme, a taxpayer would be required to pay only the amount of the disputed taxes and will get complete waiver of interest and penalty, provided he pays by 31st March, 2020. • Those who will avail the scheme after 31st March, 2020 will have to pay some additional amount. • The scheme will remain open till 30th June, 2020.
National Technical Textile Mission	• The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman, has announced a proposal to set up a National Technical Textiles Mission with a four-year implementation period from 2020-21 to 2023-24 at an estimated outlay of ₹ 1480 crore to position India as a global leader in Technical Textiles. • India imports significant quantity of technical textiles worth USD 16 billion every year. • Technical textiles are material and products manufactured primarily for their technical properties and functional requirements rather than for aesthetic characteristics. • The scope of use of technical textiles encompasses a wide range of applications such as agro-textiles, medical textiles, geo-textiles, protection-textiles, industrial-textiles, sports-textiles and many other usages.

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	• Use of technical textiles have benefits of increased productivity in agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture fields, better protection of military, para-military, police and security forces, stronger and sturdier transportation infrastructure for highways, railways, ports and airports and in improving hygiene and healthcare of general public. • In India, technical textiles hold immense growth opportunities both for the industry as well as across various applications. • In terms of the projections of the last baseline survey on technical textiles submitted in 2015, the market size in India for the year 2017-18 is projected as ₹ 1,16,217 crore. • Although, there is no projection in the last baseline study with regard to the projections for the 2020-21, taking into account the current trend of growth and various initiatives of the Government, domestic market size of the technical textiles is expected to cross ₹ 2 lakh crore by the year 2020-21.
NIRVIK Scheme	• To achieve higher export credit disbursement, a new scheme Nirvik (Niryat Rin Vikas Yojana) scheme is being launched which provides for high insurance cover, reduction in premium for small exporters and simplified procedures for claim settlements. • The scheme is being prepared by the commerce ministry. • The new scheme of NIRVIK will immensely help the small exporters by increasing the insurance cover given to banks and reducing the premium for exporters. • Under the scheme, also called the Export Credit Insurance Scheme (ECIS), the insurance guaranteed could cover up to 90 per cent of the principal and interest. • The ministry has also proposed to subsidise the premium under the scheme that has to be paid by exporters of certain key sectors. • The Export Credit Guarantee Corporation currently provides credit guarantee of up to 60 per cent loss. • The development assumes significance as exporters have raised concerns over availability of credit.
TB Harega Desh Jeetega Campaign	• The Finance Minister in the Budget 2020 announced 'TB Harega Desh Jeetega' campaign. • The campaign will be strengthened to eliminate tuberculosis by 2025 in the country. • The Finance Minister has proposed ₹ 69,000 crore allocation for healthcare sector. • PM Jan Arogya Yojana to get ₹ 6,400 crore. • The three strong pillars of the campaign include clinical approach, public health component and active community participation. • Other supporting elements of the campaign comprise private sector engagement, patient support, and political and administrative commitment at all levels. • According to Press Information Bureau report in September 2019, a total of 21·5 lakh TB cases were reported to the government in 2018, compared to 18 lakh in 2017, an increase of 17 per cent in one year.
Policy for Data Centre Parks	• The government will bring out a policy for data centre parks throughout the country. • The government has provided ₹ 6,000 crore for BharatNet in FY21, she said adding that fibre-to-home through BharatNet will link 1 lakh gram panchayats this year. • All public institutions at gram panchayat levels such as police stations and post offices will be connected digitally.
National Mission on Quantum Technologies & Applications	• The government in its budget 2020 has announced a National Mission on Quantum Technologies & Applications (NM-QTA) with a total budget outlay of ₹ 8000 crore for a period of five years to be implemented by the Department of Science & Technology (DST). • The new economy is based on innovations that disrupt established business models. Artificial intelligence, Internet-of-Things (IoT), 3D printing, drones, DNA data storage, quantum computing, etc., are re-writing the world economic order." • "Quantum technology is opening up new frontiers in computing, communications, cyber security with wide-spread applications. It is expected that lots of commercial applications would emerge from theoretical constructs which are developing in this area. It is proposed to provide an outlay of ₹ 8000 crore over a period five years for the National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications. • The Mission will be able to address the ever increasing technological requirements of the society, and take into account the international technology trends and road maps of leading countries for development of next generation technologies. • Implementation of the mission would help develop and bring quantum computers, secured communications through fibre and free space, quantum encryption and crypt-analysis and associated technologies within reach in the country and help address India specific national and regional issues. • The mission will help prepare next generation skilled manpower, boost translational research and also encourage entrepreneurship and start-up ecosystem development. By promoting advanced research in quantum science and technology, technology development and higher education in science, technology and engineering disciplines India can be brought at par with other advanced countries and can derive several direct and indirect benefits.

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	• Quantum Technology is based on the principles of quantum theory, which explains the nature of energy and matter on the atomic and subatomic level. It concerns the control and manipulation of quantum systems, with the goal of achieving information processing beyond the limits of the classical world. Quantum principles will be used for engineering solutions to extremely complex problems in computing, communications, sensing, chemistry, cryptography, imaging and mechanics. Quantum field has not yet matured for commercialization, due to the extreme scientific challenges involved.
Atal Bhujal Yojana	• On the Birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (25 December, 2019), Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL). • Atal Bhujal Yojana is a scheme aimed at improving groundwater management through community participation. • Under Atal Bhujal scheme, the government will promote Panchayat led ground water management and behavioural change with primary focus on demand side management. The central government scheme stresses on the need to use technology to prevent wastage of water in various spheres, including agriculture. • The Union Cabinet gave its approval for the implementation of the Atal Bhujal Yojana, a central sector scheme with a total outlay of ₹ 6,000 crore to be implemented over a period of five years (2020-2021 to 2024-2025). • The scheme aims to improve groundwater management through community participation in identified priority areas in seven states—Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. • Implementation of the scheme is expected to benefit nearly 8,350 gram panchayats in 78 districts in these states. • The initiative will promote panchayat led groundwater management and behavioural change with a primary focus on demand-side management.
PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)	• The Union Budget for 2020-21, kept unchanged the outlay for the government's flagship health insurance scheme, Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) under Ayushman Bharat at ₹ 6,400 crore. • The government is expected to utilize only half of its initial allocation in the current financial year. • The revised Budget estimate for Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY for this year has been slashed to ₹ 3,200 crore from the initial estimate of ₹ 6,400 crore. • Of the total allocation for the next fiscal, ₹ 6,200 crore will come from the National Investment Fund (NIF) and not in the form of gross budgetary support. • The PMJAY, launched in September 2018, aims to provide health insurance for secondary and tertiary hospitalization to over 100 million poor and vulnerable families, which would total around 500 million beneficiaries. • However, since its introduction, only 8·1 million hospitalizations have taken place using the scheme, primarily attributed to lack of hospitals.
SUMAN Scheme	• Aiming zero preventable maternal and newborn deaths in India, the central government on 10 October, 2019 launched the Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN) scheme, under which pregnant women, mothers up to 6 months after delivery, and all sick newborns will be able to avail free healthcare benefits. • The scheme will largely help in bringing down maternal and infant mortality rates in the country. • Under the scheme, the beneficiaries visiting public health facilities are entitled to several free services. • These include at least four ante natal check-ups that also include one checkup during the 1st trimester, at least one checkup under Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, Iron Folic Acid supplementation, Tetanus diptheria injection and other components of comprehensive ANC package and six home-based newborn care visits. • Under the scheme there will be zero expense access to identification and management of complications during and after the pregnancy. • The government will also provide free transport from home to health institutions.
National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP)	• In one of the major efforts towards doubling the Farmers Income, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) for eradicating the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis in the livestock, on 11th September, 2019 from Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. • With 100 Percent funding from the Central Government, of ₹ 12,652 crores for a period of five years till 2024, the programme aims at vaccinating over 500 Million Livestock including cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats and pigs against the FMD. • The programme also aims at vaccinating 36 Million Female Bovine Calves annually in its fight against the Brucellosis disease. • The Programme has two components – to control the diseases by 2025 and eradication by 2030.

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Bills/ACTs/Ordinances 2019

Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019

The Parliament passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019 which received the President's assent to become an Act on 12th December, 2019. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Main Provisions of the Amendment Act :

- The Bill amends the Act to provide that the Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who entered India on or before December 31, 2014, will not be treated as illegal migrants.
- In order to get this benefit, they must have also been exempted from the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 by the Central government. The 1920 Act mandates foreigners to carry passport, while the1946 Act regulates the entry and departure of foreigners in India.
- The Act allows a person to apply for citizenship by registration or naturalisation if the person meets certain qualifications.
- For instance, if a person resides in India for a year and if one of his parents is a former Indian citizen, he may apply for citizenship by registration.
- To obtain citizenship by naturalisation, one of the qualifications is that the person must have resided in India or have been in the service of the central government for at least 11 years before applying for citizenship.
- The Bill creates an exception for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, with regard to this qualification. For these groups of persons, the 11 years' requirement will be reduced to five years.
- On acquiring citizenship: (i) such persons will be deemed to be citizens of India from the date of their entry into India, and (ii) all legal proceedings against them in respect of their illegal migration or citizenship will be closed.

Applicability of the Amended Act :

- These provisions on citizenship for illegal migrants will not apply to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura, included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. These tribal areas include Karbi Anglong (in Assam), Garo Hills (in Meghalaya), Chakma District (in Mizoram), and Tripura Tribal Areas District.
- Further, it will not apply to the 'Inner Line' areas notified under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873. In these areas, visits by Indians are regulated through the Inner Line Permit.
- Currently, this permit system is applicable to Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, and Nagaland. Manipur has also been brought under the Inner Line Permit (ILP) regime through a Gazette Notification on the same day the bill was passed in the Parliament.

Cancellation of registration of Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) :

The Act provides that the Central government may cancel the registration of OCIs on certain grounds. These include : (i) if the OCI has registered through fraud, or (ii) if, within five years of registration, the OCI has been sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more, or (iii) if it becomes necessary in the interest of sovereignty and security of India.

- The Bill adds one more ground for cancelling the registration, that is if the OCI has violated the provisions of the Act or of any other law as notified by the central government. The orders for cancellation of OCI should not be passed till the OCI cardholder is given an opportunity to be heard.

The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019

The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019 passed by the Parliament and received the assent of the President on the 31st July, 2019.

Main Provisions of the Act :

- **Declaration of Talaq :** The Act makes all declaration of talaq, including in written or electronic form, to be void (*i.e.*, not enforceable in law) and illegal.(The Act defines talaq as **talaq-e-biddat** or any other similar form of talaq pronounced by a muslim man resulting in instant and irrevocable divorce.)
- **Offence and Penalty :** The Act makes a declaration of talaq a cognizable offence, attracting up to three years' imprisonment with a fine. (A cognizable offence is one for which a police officer may arrest an accused person without warrant.)
- **Cognizable Offence :** The offence will be cognizable only if information relating to the offence is given by married woman (against whom talaq has been declared), or any person related to her by blood or marriage.
- **Bail :** The Act provides that the Magistrate may grant bail to the accused. The bail may be granted only after hearing the woman (against whom talaq has been pronounced), and if the Magistrate is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for granting bail.
- **Compounding Offence :** The offence may be compounded (*i.e.*, the parties may arrive at a compromise) by the Magistrate upon the request of the woman (against whom talaq has been declared). The terms and conditions of the compounding of the offence will be determined by the Magistrate.

- **Allowance :** A Muslim woman against whom talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek subsistence allowance from her husband for herself and for her dependent children.The amount of the allowance will be determined by the Magistrate.
- **Custody :** A Muslim woman against whom such talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek custody of her minor children. The manner of custody will be determined by the Magistrate.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019

The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, 2019 passed by the Parliament and received the assent of the President on the 9th August, 2019.

Main Provisions of the Act :

- **Reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir :** The Bill reorganises the state of Jammu and Kashmir into : (i) the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir with a legislature, and (ii) the Union Territory of Ladakh without a legislature. The Union Territory of Ladakh will comprise Kargil and Leh districts, and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will comprise the remaining territories of the existing state of Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Lieutenant Governor :** The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir will be administered by the President, through an administrator appointed by him known as the Lieutenant Governor. The Union Territory of Ladakh will be administered by the President, through a Lieutenant Governor appointed by him.
- **Legislative Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir :** The Bill provides for a Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The total number of seats in the Assembly will be 107. Of these, 24 seats will remain vacant on account of certain areas of Jammu and Kashmir being under the occupation of Pakistan. Further, seats will be reserved in the Assembly for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. In addition, the Lieutenant Governor may nominate two members to the Legislative Assembly to give representation to women, if they are not adequately represented.
- The Assembly will have a term of five years, and the Lieutenant Governor must summon the Assembly at least once in six months. The Legislative Assembly may make laws for any part of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir related to : (i) any matters specified in the State List of the Constitution, except 'Police' and 'Public Order', and (ii) any matter in the Concurrent List applicable to Union Territories. Further, Parliament will have the power to make laws in relation to any matter for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Council of Ministers :** The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will have a Council of Ministers of not more than ten percent of the total number of members in the Assembly. The Council will aid and advise the Lieutenant Governor on matters that the Assembly has powers to make laws. The Chief Minister will communicate all decisions of the Council to the Lieutenant Governor.
- **High Court :** The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir will be the common High Court for the Union Territories of Ladakh, and Jammu and Kashmir. Further, the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir will have an Advocate General to provide legal advice to the government of the Union Territory.
- **Legislative Council :** The Legislative Council of the state of Jammu and Kashmir will be abolished. Upon dissolution, all Bills pending in the Council will lapse.
- **Advisory Committees :** The central government will appoint Advisory Committees, for various purposes, including : (i) distribution of assets and liabilities of corporations of the state of Jammu & Kashmir between the two Union Territories, (ii) issues related to the generation and supply of electricity and water, and (iii) issues related to the Jammu & Kashmir State Financial Corporation. These Committees must submit their reports within six months to the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, who must act on these recommendations within 30 days.
- **Extent of laws :** The Schedule lists 106 central laws that will be made applicable to Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on a date notified by the central government. These include the Aadhaar Act, 2016, the Indian Penal Code, 1860, and the Right to Education Act, 2009. Further, it repeals 153 state laws of Jammu & Kashmir. In addition, 166 state laws will remain in force, and seven laws will be applicable with amendments. These amendments include lifting of prohibitions on lease of land to persons who are not permanent residents of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Act, 2019

The Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019 passed by the Parliament and received the assent of the President on the 9th August, 2019.

Main Provisions of the Act :

- The Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Amit Shah, on November 26, 2019. The Bill provides for the merger of the Union Territories (UTs) of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu into a single UT. Key features of the Bill include :
- **Amendment of the Constitution :** The First Schedule to the Constitution specifies the territories that come under various states and UTs. The Bill amends the First Schedule to merge the territories of the two UTs : (a) Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and (b)

Daman and Diu. The merged territory will form the UT of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. This will come into effect from the day notified by the central government.

- Article 240(1) of the Constitution allows the President to make regulations for certain UTs, including the UTs of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu. The Bill amends the Article to replace these two UTs with the merged UT.
- **Representation in Lok Sabha :** The First Schedule to the Representation of the People Act, 1950 provides one seat in Lok Sabha to each of the two UTs. The Bill seeks to amend the Schedule to allocate two Lok Sabha seats to the merged UT.
- **Services under the UTs :** Every person employed in connection with the affairs of the existing UTs will provisionally serve the merged UT. The central government will determine whether every such person will finally be allotted for service in the merged UT.
- The merged UT will take steps to integrate employees into services under its control. The central government may give orders and instructions to the merged UT in this regard.
- The central government may establish Advisory Committees to assist in ensuring fair treatment of all persons affected by these provisions and consideration of any representations made by them. Representations against any service orders must be made within three months from the date of publication, or notice of the order, whichever is earlier.
- These provisions will not apply to members of All India Services (such as Indian Administrative Services, Indian Police Services, and Indian Forest Services), and persons on delegation from any state.
- **Jurisdiction of High Court :** The Bill provides that the jurisdiction of the High Court of Bombay will continue to extend to the merged UT.

Act to Curb Ponzi Schemes, Protect Poor Investors

Rajya Sabha on July 29, 2019 unanimously passed the **Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2019**, which seeks to put in place a mechanism by which poor depositors will get back their hard earned money. It will curb the Ponzi schemes. The Lok Sabha had passed the bill on July 24, 2019. The Bill received the assent of the President on 31st July, 2019. The Act replaced the Ordinance on the same.

- The first claim on the recovered money will be of depositors.
- It has some exclusion including money collected by real estate firms and from friends and relatives.
- The bill seeks to help tackle the menace of illicit deposit taking activities in the country, which at present are exploiting regulatory gaps and lack of strict administrative measures to dupe poor and gullible people of their hard earned money.
- The legislation has adequate provisions for punishment and disgorgement or repayment of deposits in cases where such schemes nonetheless manage to raise deposits illegally.
- It bans deposit takers from promoting, operating, issuing advertisements or accepting deposits in any unregulated deposit scheme.
- The law proposes to create three different types of offences, running of unregulated deposit schemes, fraudulent default in regulated deposit schemes, and wrongful inducement in relation to unregulated deposit schemes.
- It provides for severe punishment ranging from 1 year to 10 years and pecuniary fines ranging from ₹ 2 lakh to ₹ 50 crore to act as deterrent.
- The proposed law provides for attachment of properties or assets and subsequent realisation of assets for repayment to depositors. Clear-cut timelines have been provided for attachment of property and restitution depositors.

Tax Relief to Corporate Sector

The Government has brought in **the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Act 2019** to make certain amendments in the Income-tax Act 1961 and the Finance (No. 2) Act 2019. The salient features of these amendments are as under :

(a) In order to promote growth and investment, a new provision has been inserted in the Income-tax Act with effect from FY 2019-20 which allows any domestic company an option to pay income-tax at the rate of 22% subject to condition that they will not avail any exemption/incentive. The effective tax rate for these companies shall be 25·17% inclusive of surcharge & cess. Also, such companies shall not be required to pay Minimum Alternate Tax.

(b) In order to attract fresh investment in manufacturing and thereby provide boost to 'Make-in-India' initiative of the Government, another new provision has been inserted in the Income-tax Act with effect from FY 2019-20 which allows any new domestic company incorporated on or after 1st October, 2019 making fresh investment in manufacturing, an option to pay income-tax at the rate of 15%. This benefit is available to companies which do not avail any exemption/incentive and commence their production on or before 31st March, 2023. The effective tax rate for these companies shall be 17·01% inclusive of surcharge & cess. Also, such companies shall not be required to pay Minimum Alternate Tax.

(c) A company which does not opt for the concessional tax regime and avails the tax exemption/incentive shall continue to pay tax at the pre-amended rate. However, these companies can opt for the concessional tax regime after expiry of their tax holiday/exemption period. After the exercise of the option they shall be liable to pay tax at the rate of 22% and option once exercised cannot be subsequently withdrawn. Further, in order to provide relief to companies which continue to avail exemptions/incentives, the rate of Minimum Alternate Tax has been reduced from existing 18·5% to 15%.

(d) In order to stabilise the flow of funds into the capital market, it is

provided that enhanced surcharge introduced by the Finance (No. 2) Act, 2019 shall not apply on capital gains arising on sale of equity share in a company or a unit of an equity oriented fund or a unit of a business trust liable for securities transaction tax, in the hands of an individual, HUF, AOP, BOI and AJP.

(e) The enhanced surcharge shall also not apply to capital gains arising on sale of any security including derivatives, in the hands of Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs).

(f) In order to provide relief to listed companies which have already made a public announcement of buy-back before 5th July, 2019, it is provided that tax on buy-back of shares in case of such companies shall not be charged.

(g) The Government has also decided to expand the scope of CSR 2 per cent spending. Now CSR 2% fund can be spent on incubators funded by Central or State Government or any agency or Public Sector Undertaking of Central or State Government, and making contributions to public funded Universities, IITs, National Laboratories and Autonomous Bodies (established under the auspices of ICAR, ICMR, CSIR, DAE, DRDO, DST, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) engaged in conducting research in science, technology, engineering and medicine aimed at promoting SDGs.

The total revenue foregone for the reduction in corporate tax rate and other relief is estimated at ₹ 1,45,000 crore.

Union Government Promulgates Act to Ban e-cigarettes

The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Import, Export, Transport, Sale Distribution, Storage and Advertisement Act.), 2019 promulgated December 2019.

Key features of the Act are the following :

- Production, manufacturing, import, export, transport, sale, distribution and advertisement of e-cigarettes has been banned .
- These include all forms of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems, Heat Not Burn Products, e-Hookah and the like devices. These novel products come with attractive appearances and multiple flavours and their use has increased exponentially and has acquired epidemic proportions in developed countries, especially among youth and children.
- Any violation will constitute a cognizable offence, punishable with imprisonment up to one year or a fine up to ₹ 1 lakh or both for the first offence. Subsequent offences will attract imprisonment up to three years and a fine up to ₹ 5 lakh.
- While single possession will not be prosecuted, bulk storage of e-cigarettes shall be punishable with imprisonment up to six months or a fine up to ₹ 50,000 or both.

e-cigarettes

E-cigarette and Vape are electronic devices used for smoking. Instead of smoke from burning tobacco, an e-cigarette user inhales aerosol, commonly called vapour, produced from a combination of vape juice and atomiser. Hundreds of varieties of vape juice (with and without nicotine) and e-cigarettes are there in the market, mostly imported from China. More sophisticated e-cigarettes might have features to control the vapour flow, heating, large liquid tanks and replaceable parts.

On pressing the on/off button, the battery powers the coil which heats up the cotton that is soaked in vape juice.

When a user inhales, the air travels from the air vents through the cotton up to the mouth piece. Cotton burning in vape juice, which may be flavoured and/or contain nicotine, produces the vapour :

- Hundreds of e-cigarettes from Chinese makers like Kanger Tech, SMOK and Eleaf easily make it to India through imports.
- Health hazard from vaping hasn't conclusively been proved. There is lack of scientific research because vaping, as a phenomenon, is only 3-5 years old
- Proponents sell vaping as an alternative to cigarettes, which are harmful, but studies show vapes also promote early smoking among teens
- In the US, Michigan and New York have banned vapes. UK maintains it is safe.
- With India banning vapes, Marlboro-owned Juul and Philip Morris won't be allowed to launch here.

- The owners of existing stocks of e-cigarettes on the date of commencement of the Ordinance (*i.e.* September 19, 2019) will have to suo moto declare and deposit these stocks with the nearest police station.
- The Sub-Inspector of Police has been designated as the Authorized Officer to take action under the Ordinance.
- The Central or State Governments may also designate any other equivalent officer(s) as Authorized Officer for enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance.

Code on Wages, 2019 (CoW)

The Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India notified the Code on Wages, 2019 on August 8, 2019, which seeks to amend and consolidate the laws relating to wages and bonus and matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, and subsumes the provisions of the :

- Payment of Wages Act, 1936 ;
- Minimum Wages Act, 1948
- Payment of Bonus Act, 1965
- Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 .
- *Definition of wages under the Code :*
  - As per the Code : (i) basic pay, (ii) dearness allowance and (iii) retaining allowance have been included as components of 'wages'.
  - The Code excludes the following components from the definition of wages : (a) bonus payments; (b) value of the house-accommodation, supply of light, water, medical attendance or other amenity or of any service excluded from the computation of wages by an order of the appropriate Government; (c) employer contributions to any pension or provident fund; (d) conveyance allowances; (e) sums paid to the employee to defray special expenses on him by the nature of his employment; (f) house rent allowance; (g) remuneration payable under award or settlement between the parties or order of court or tribunal; (h) overtime allowance; (i) commission

payable to employee; (j) gratuity payments; and, (k) retrenchment compensation or other retirement benefits payable to the employee or any ex-gratia payment made to the employee on the termination of his employment.

Highlights of the Code on Wages 2019 are the following :

- The definition of 'wages' varies across labour legislations in India. The CoW seeks to provide a single uniform definition of 'wages' as applicable to minimum wages, payment of wages and payment of bonus.
- For the purpose of equal wages to all genders and for the purpose of payment of wages, the emoluments specified in clauses (d), (f), (g) and (h) (specified above), should also be considered for computation of wages.
- The CoW prescribes that if the sum-total of the excluded components (apart from gratuity and retrenchment compensation) exceeds 50% (or such other percentage notified by the Central Government) of the total remuneration, then that portion of the amount exceeding 50% (Fifty percentage) (or such other percentage notified by the Central Government) is also to be calculated as 'wages' under the Code.
- The definition of 'employee' is broader than that of 'worker' as it includes persons carrying out managerial and administrative work. The definition of 'worker', however, expressly includes working journalists and sales promotion employees.
- Consistent with the Equal Remuneration Act, the CoW, *inter-alia*, includes provisions prohibiting discrimination on grounds of gender (i) with respect to wages by employers, with respect to same work or work of a similar nature done by employees and (ii) with respect to recruitment of employees for same work or work of a similar nature.
- The CoW introduces the concept of a **floor wage**, which is to be determined by the Central Government after taking into account the minimum living standards of workers in a manner to be prescribed, which may be different for different geographical areas. The appropriate Government can, under no circumstance, fix a minimum wage rate which is lower than the floor rate determined by the Central Government. However, if the existing minimum wage fixed by the appropriate Government is higher than the floor wage, they cannot reduce the minimum wages. The CoW prescribes that the minimum rate of wages are to be reviewed and revised by the appropriate Government in intervals not exceeding five years.
- In case an employee works on any day in excess of the number of hours constituting a normal working day, the employer is to pay him for every hour or for part of an hour so worked in excess, at the overtime rate which should not be less than twice the normal rate of wages.
- Previously, the Payment of Wages Act was applicable only to employees drawing wages below ₹ 24,000 per month. However, the Code makes no mention of any such threshold and it appears that the payment of wages provisions in the Code will be applicable to all employees across the board.
- The Code is applicable to all employees across the board. Accordingly, the Code has raised the responsibility of an employer to ensure proper wage structuring and timely payment of such wages to all its employees.
- CoW defines 'contractor', along the lines of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970. The CoW has also defined 'contract labour'. Workers (other than part-time employees) who are regularly employed by the contractor for any activity of his establishment, where their employment is governed by mutually accepted standards of the conditions of employment and who get periodical increment in the pay, social security coverage and other welfare benefits as per the law would not be considered as contract labour.
- The CoW has provided express provisions for the employer to fix the wage period for the employees on a daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis, and stipulates the time limits for payments by the employer under each of such wage periods. In this era of the gig-economy monthly basis payments are less relevant and increasingly more number of employees are migrating out of the formal sector.
- The CoW lists disqualifications for receiving bonus along the lines of the Payment of Bonus Act. However, CoW additionally provides that dismissal from service due to conviction for sexual harassment would also be considered as a ground for disqualification for receipt of bonus under the Code.
- The CoW prescribes a limitation period of three years (calculated from the date on which claims arose) for filing of claims by an employee as against the existing time period varying from six months to two years, to provide a worker more time to settle his claims. The CoW now allows the trade union of which the employee is a member to file claims. Additionally, the Code places the burden of proof on an employer to prove that the amounts claimed by the employee have been paid.
- The CoW provides for appointment of inspectors-cum-facilitators and their powers.These authorities would have a dual function—providing compliance advisory to employers and workers and conducting inspections.
- The CoW has provided an impetus for trade unionism by allowing a registered trade union to make complaints for offences under the Code.
- The Code provides for a graded penalty system for contraventions under the provisions of the Code.

The National Medical Commission Act, 2019 (NMC Act)

The National Medical Commission Act, 2019 (**NMC Act**) has been notified *vide* the Gazette Notification dated August 8, 2019. The NMC Act aims to repeal the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 (**IMC Act**) and constitute the National Medical Commission (**NMC**), which shall supersede the Medical Council of India (**MCI**).

Key highlights of the NMC Act are the following :

1. The National Medical Commission : The NMC will comprise thirty three members, including one Chairman, ten *ex officio* members and twenty two part-time members. Out of the twenty two part-time members, a total of nineteen will be nominated by States and Union Territories.

The Chairperson, certain part-time members, and the Secretary of the NMC shall be appointed by the Central Government on the recommendation of a Search Committee.

The powers and functions of NMC are two-fold and include, *inter alia*, the laying down of policies and regulations for : (a) maintaining high quality and standards in medical education; and (b) regulating medical institutions, medical research and medical professionals. By extension, the NMC has also been empowered to lay down policies and codes to ensure : the observance and promotion of professional ethics in the medical profession and during provision of care by medical practitioners; assess requirements in healthcare, including human resources for health and healthcare infrastructure; and develop a road map for meeting such requirements.

In relation to regulation of medical education, Section 10(1)(i), requires the NMC to frame guidelines for determination of fees and all other charges in respect of fifty per cent of seats in private medical institutions and 'deemed to be Universities', which are governed under the provisions of the NMC Act.

Autonomous Boards

The NMC Act sets up four autonomous boards under the supervision of the NMC. Each board will consist of a President and four members (of which two members will be part-time), appointed by the central government (on the recommendation of a search committee). These bodies are :

- **The Under-Graduate Medical Education Board (UGMEB) and the Post-Graduate Medical Education Board (PGMEB)** : These two bodies will be responsible for formulating standards, curriculum, guidelines for medical education, and granting recognition to medical qualifications at the under-graduate and post-graduate levels respectively.
- **The Medical Assessment and Rating Board** : The Board will have the power to levy monetary penalties on institutions which fail to maintain the minimum standards as laid down by the UGMEB and the PGMEB. It will also grant permissions for establishing new medical colleges, starting postgraduate courses, and increasing or decreasing the number of seats in a medical college.
- **The Ethics and Medical Registration Board** : This Board will maintain a National Register of all the licensed medical practitioners in the country, and also regulate professional and medical conduct. Only those included in the Register will be allowed to practice as doctors. The Board will also maintain a register of all licensed community health providers in the country.

2. Medical Advisory Council : MAC would be comprised of the Chairperson and all members of the NMC (*as ex-officio members*), the Chairman of the University Grants Commission, the Director of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, and various other members to be nominated by the State Governments, Ministry of Home Affairs in the Government of India, State Medical Council, and the Central Government.

3. Community Health Providers : In a notable addition, Section 32 of the NMC Act provides for the power of the NMC to grant a limited licence (One third to the total registered medical practitioners in the country) to practice medicine at mid-level as a Community Health Provider (CHP). The CHP is required to qualify the criteria as specified under the NMC Act and the regulations that may be formulated there under. Further, CHPs have been allowed to prescribe specified medicine, independently, in primary and preventive healthcare. However, in cases other than primary and preventive healthcare, the CHP can prescribe medicine only under the supervision of duly registered medical practitioners.

4. Entrance and EXIT Tests : Section 14 of the NMC Act mandates a National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to the undergraduate and postgraduate super-specialty medical education in all medical institutions that are governed by the provisions of the said Act. Additionally, the NMC Act under Section 15 has also brought in a common final year undergraduate medical examination, to be known as the National Exit Test (NEXT), to be held for granting licences to practice medicine as medical practitioners and for enrolment in the State Register or the National Register. Admissions to the PG/Diploma courses and other super specialty courses will be done through the merit of NEET.

Consumer Protection Act, 2019

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 received the assent of the President on the 9th August, 2019.

Key Highlights of the New Act are the following :

Central Consumer Protection Council, an advisory body, will be established by the Central Government. State consumer councils will be established by every state.

Establishment of Central Consumer Protection Authority : The Central Consumer Protection Authority will be established by the Central Government. It will have wide powers of investigation including the power of search and seizure. The CCPA will have an investigation wing, headed by a Director-General, which may conduct inquiry or investigation into violation of consumer rights or unfair trade practices .

The Central Authority has been granted wide powers to take suo-moto actions, recall products, order reimbursement of the price of goods/ services and file class-action suits if a consumer complaint affects more than 1 (one) individual.

Product Liability : The concept of product liability has been introduced in the CPA and brought within its fold not just the product manufacturer and product service provider but the product seller as well. A 'product seller' is such a person who is involved in placing the product in the market for a commercial purpose (*e.g.,* brand owner). A product liability action for compensation can now be formally made on grounds of defectiveness of goods or deficiency of services that has caused harm to a person or his/her property on grounds. The scope of defect and deficiency has been expanded to include non-conformance to express warranty or specifications, design defect, failure to provide adequate instructions or warnings to prevent any harm *etc.* Certain exceptions have been provided under the New Act from product liability actions, such as, that the product seller will not be liable where the product has been misused, altered or modified.

Unfair Contracts : Following international jurisprudence, the CPA introduces a unique provision that safeguards consumers against unfair contracts by declaring them to be illegal. An unfair contract covers contracts between manufacturer/ trader and a consumer that causes significant changes in the rights of the consumer that the CPA explicitly recognizes, such as by way of—imposing unreasonable obligation or condition on the consumer which puts consumer to disadvantage; reserving right to unilateral termination (without reasonable cause) or assignment without consent (which is to the detriment of the consumer) in the contract; imposing a penalty for breach which is disproportionate to loss caused *etc.*

Unfair Trade Practices : The CPA introduces a broader definition of Unfair Trade Practices, which also includes sharing of personal information given by the consumer in confidence, unless such disclosure is made in accordance with the provisions of any other law. The CPA empowers the Central Authority and Consumer Commission to order the perpetrator of such practice to discontinue it.

Penalties for Misleading Advertisement : The CPA introduces, for the first time, a definition of misleading advertisement. It covers false description and guarantee of a product or services. It also covers information that was deliberately concealed from the consumer. If a misleading advertisement is found to be prejudicial to the interest of consumers, then the CCPA may impose a penalty of up to ₹ 1,000,000 on a manufacturer. Separately, the CPA has made it a criminal offence to publish false or misleading advertisement for manufacturers and services providers. If endorsers are found guilty, they could be sentenced to imprisonment for up to 2 (two) years.

Celebrity Endorsement : If a misleading advertisement is found to be prejudicial to the interest of consumers, then the CCPA may impose a penalty of up to ₹ 1,000,000 on the endorser as well. The CCPA can also prohibit the endorser of a misleading advertisement from endorsing that particular product or service for a period of up to 1 (one) year. For every subsequent offence, the period of prohibition may extend to 3 (three) years.

E-Commerce Transactions Covered : The CPA has widened the definition of 'consumer'. The definition now includes any person who buys any goods, whether through offline or online transactions, electronic means, teleshopping, direct selling or multi-level marketing. The earlier Act did not specifically include e-commerce transactions.

Enhancement of Pecuniary Jurisdiction : There are three fora for consumer grievance redressal : The District Commission, State Commission and National Commission. Each commission has been given a pecuniary limit to entertain consumer complaints. The District Commission can now entertain consumer complaints where the value of goods or services paid does not exceed ₹ one crore. The State Commission can entertain disputes where such value exceeds ₹ one crore but does not exceed ₹ Ten crore, and the National Commission can exercise jurisdiction where such value exceeds ₹ Ten crore.

E-Filing of Complaints : Complaints can be filed with the jurisdictional consumer forum either at the place of residence or work of the consumer. Complaints can be filed electronically as well as physically before the jurisdictional forum which can hear and/or examine parties through video-conferencing.

Provision for Alternate Dispute Resolution : The CPA provides for mediation as an alternate dispute resolution mechanism, making the process of dispute adjudication simpler and quicker. This will help speedier resolution of disputes and reduce pressure on consumer courts.

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