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Awards and Honours

Recipient Name	Award Name	Extra Information
Sanjana Kapoor	French honor of 'Chevalier dans Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters)	Franck Riester will confer the symbol of the distinction on Kapoor in a special investiture ceremony on January 28 at the French embassy in New Delhi.
Dr Saima Yunus Khan	IADR Fellowship	She became the first Indian to be conferred with the prestigious IADR Fellowship in the field of dental research, a statement from the varsity said.
Dr. N.S. Dharmashaktu	International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy	Government's measure on leprosy – Government has accomplished levels of leprosy elimination defined as less than one case per ten thousand population.
Manoj Das	Mystic Kalinga Literary Award	He received the award at the literary-cultural festival in Bhubneswar on 8 February. The award carried a cash prize of Rs.1 lakh along with a khadi shawl and certificate for the laureate.
Joaquin Phoenix, Renee Zellweger	Best actor , Best Actress	This is Phoenix's fourth nomination and first Oscar win. In his speech, the actor talked about animal cruelty and world peace.
Singareni CMD N Sridhar	Bharatiya Mahantam Award at Bangkok	Singareni Chairman and Managing Director N. Sridhar received the prestigious Bharatiya Mahantam Puraskar 2019-20, at the 13th Asian Business and Social Forum conference held at Bangkok, Thailand
Pullela Gopichand	first Indian to receive IOC's 'honourable mention'	Gopichand received the mention in the male category of the awards. He is the first-ever Indian to receive the prestigious honour.
Lalremsiami	2019 FIH Women's Rising Star of Year	India forward Lalremsiami has been named as the 2019 FIH Women's Rising Star of the Year by the International Hockey Federation.

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Manpreet Singh	Player of the Year 2019 by IHF	Manpreet, a midfielder, became the first Indian to win the accolade since the awards were introduced in 1999.
Election Commission of India	'Silver' award for Excellence in Government Process re-engineering for digital transformation	The award seeks to recognize the projects that involved analysis and re-design of workflow and which resulted in improvement in outcomes related to efficiency, effectiveness of process, cost, quality, service delivery or a combination of these.
Sachin Tendulkar	Laureus honour	Tendulkar was in Berlin for the awards ceremony on Monday, 17 February, and received the trophy from former Australia captain Steve Waugh, after Tennis legend Boris Becker made the announcement.
RailMadad	National e-Governance Award	The award was presented at the 23rd National Conference on e-Governance which was held in Mumbai on 7-8 February 2020.
SK Barua	PSU Leadership Award	The award was conferred by the Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries, Arjun Ram Meghwal.
P V Sindhu	ESPN's Female Sportsperson of the Year award	World champion shuttler P V Sindhu today won the ESPN's Female Sportsperson of the Year award for a third consecutive time while young shooter Saurabh Chaudhary bagged the honour in the male category.
Hrithik Roshan	Best Actor - Dadashakeb Phalke Intl film festival	Hrithik Roshan on Thursday won the Best Actor award for his performance in 'Super 30', that won Best Film award, at the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards.
Sreeramakrishnan	Ideal Legislative Assembly Speaker Award	It was conferred by the Vice President, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu at the 10th edition of Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad in New Delhi on 20 February 2020.

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Lewis Hamilton, Lionel Messi	Laureus World Sportsman of the year award	The two received the same number of votes. For the first in the 20-year history, the award was split.
Adline Castelin	2020 LIVA Miss Diva Universe	She was crowned by Vartika Singh, Miss Diva Universe 2019, at an event held on Mumbai.
KV Jeyasri	Sahitya Akademi award	KV Jeyasri, who bagged the Sahitya Akademi award for translating Malayalam novel 'Nilam poothu malarnna naal' into Tamil.

Appointments

Name	Designation	Extra Information
B Murali Kumar	Election Commission of India - Special Expenditure Observer	Sh Murali, in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi, will be supervising and monitoring the work done by the electoral machinery.
YK Joshi	Northern Command chief	The general officer is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, and a postgraduate from the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.
M Ajith Kumar	chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).	"The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of M. Ajit Kumar, IRS (C&CE 84), as Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)."
Gita Sabharwal	UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand	She was appointed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres with the host Government's approval on January 29, 2020.
Mohammed Allawi	Iraq PM	Anti-government protesters in Iraq have been quick to dismiss President Barham Salih's appointment of Mohammed Tawfiq Allawi as prime minister-designate.
Amitabh Bhatt	Chief Executive Officer - Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's Bangalore Complex	Earlier, he was heading the Light Utility Helicopter (LUH)

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		project in HAL as Executive Director.
Philip Barton	High Commissioner to India by the British government.	Philip Barton is a career diplomat. He studied economics and politics at Warwick University. He holds a Masters degree in economics from the London School of Economics. He joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 1986.
Vinita Bali	Cognizant board as independent director	It further said Vice-Chairman Francisco D'Souza will leave the board effective March 31.
Karen Pierce	UKs ambassador to the US	She will replace Kim Darroch who had resigned in 2019 over his controversial comments on US President Donald Trump in leaked diplomatic cables.
Arvind Kejriwal	Aam Aadmi Party's Legislative Party Leader	Mr Kejriwal met the MLAs at his official residence during which he was elected as the leader of the Legislative Party.
Sanjay Vatsyayan	Eastern Fleet Commander	Rear Admiral Suraj Berry will take over as Chief of Staff of the tri-services Andaman and Nicobar Command shortly.
Atul Gupta	President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India	He got elected as Vice-President in February, 2019 for the term 2019-2020
Srinath Narasimhan	Tata Trusts – CEO	Narasimhan, currently managing director of Tata Teleservices Ltd and Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd, will take over his new assignment from 1 April.
Robin Singh	UAE director of cricket	Robin Singh, the former India all-rounder, was named UAE's new director of cricket after the Emirates Cricket Board decided to sack Dougie Brown as head coach.
Rajiv Bansal	Air India chief	Bansal, currently additional secretary in petroleum ministry, had held additional charge of Air India (AI) chief in August 2017 for about four months when the then chairman Ashwani Lohani was moved to Railway Board.

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Rishi Sunak	finance minister of UK	The 39-year-old former Goldman Sachs banker was appointed in dramatic fashion on Thursday when incumbent Sajid Javid unexpectedly quit — in a row over advisers — during what Downing Street had cast as a routine ministerial reshuffle.
Debasish Panda	finance secretary	Senior IAS officer Debasish Panda was appointed as the new finance secretary, according to a Personnel Ministry order.
Alok Sharma	UK's business minister	Sharma, 52, was also appointed as the minister in charge of the UK's COP26 climate change summit. He was previously secretary of state for international development.
Vinay Dube	GoAir CEO	Till now, Dube was serving as an advisor to the carrier, a role which he took up after quitting the defunct Jet Airways in May last year.
Arvind Kejriwal	Chief Minister of Delhi for third time	Aam Aadmi Party convenor Arvind Kejriwal today took oath as Chief Minister of Delhi for the third consecutive time.
Barry O'Farrell	Australia next high commissioner to India	Australia appointed former New South Wales Premier Barry O'Farrell as the next high commissioner to India. O'Farrell will succeed Harinder Sidhu.
Ashraf Ghani	Afghanistan – president	In Afghanistan, independent Election Commission announced that Ashraf Ghani has won a second term as President of the country.
Sanjay Kothari	Central Vigilance Commissioner	Sanjay Kothari, the Secretary to the President, has been selected as the new Central Vigilance Commissioner by a high-powered committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, an official said on Wednesday.
Bimal Julka	Chief Information Commissioner	The committee has also chosen former Information

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		and Broadcasting Secretary Bimal Julka, currently serving as an Information Commissioner, as the new Chief Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission.
Sunil Gurbaxani	Dhanlaxmi Bank MD	Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on February 20 approved appointment of Sunil Gurbaxani as managing director and CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank. Gurbaxani is working with Axis Bank at present.
Bhaskar Khulbe, Amarjeet Sinha	Advisors to PM Narendra Modi	The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointments in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the rank and scale of Secretary.
Riek Machar	vice president in South Sudan	In South Sudan, rebel leader Riek Machar was sworn in as first vice president. The rebel leader returns as first vice president in a transition government which will serve for 36 months.
Jawed Ashraf	Indias next Ambassador to France	Diplomat Jawed Ashraf has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to France on 26 February.
Salman Khan	Realme - brand ambassador	Bollywood actor Salman Khan will endorse the Chinese smartphone maker Realme, the companysaid on Wednesday.
Sumant Kathpalia	MD and CEO of IndusInd Bank Ltd	Kathpalia will replace Romesh Sobti. Romesh Sobti: Sobti has been serving as MD & CEO at IndusInd Bank since 2008. Prior to that, he served as the India head for ABN Amro Bank.

Banking and Finance

RBI Introduces 'Low KYC' To Help Fintech Companies Retain Customers

- In an attempt to ease out regulations for fintech companies, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has agreed to allow non-compliant know-your-customer (KYC) accounts to continue making payments through mobile wallets. The central bank had earlier put a cap on transaction limits.
- RBI is expected to permit transactions by giving customers the option to convert their 'minimum KYC' accounts to the central bank's newly introduced 'low KYC' PPI (Paid Payments Instruments) accounts.

RBI releases bi-monthly policy: Repo rate unchanged

- Reserve Bank of India released its bi-monthly monetary policy. The apex bank has kept the policy repo rate unchanged. It remains at 5.15%. The Monetary Policy Committee that meets once in two months under the chairmanship of its Governor has made the following observations
- The inflation has increased and the unusual price hike in onions has been the main reason behind price rise. The Retail Inflation has increased from 4.6% in October to 5.5% in November. It increased further to 7.4% in December 2019. It is the highest since July 2014.
- The Committee estimates CPI for Q4 of the Financial Year 2020 at 6.5%. For Q3, it was at 3.2%.
- The Reverse Repo Rate under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility remained unchanged at 4.9%
- The Bank Rate and the Marginal Standing Facility Rate stood at 5.4%

IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, Central Bank seek RBI nod to exit PCA framework: Report

- IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, and Central Bank of India have approached the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), seeking permission to exit the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework, according to a report in the Financial Express on Thursday.
- "It's possible that one bank may be brought out of PCA by the end of this month," the report said, citing a source.

SBI announces rate cut in FDs

- State Bank of India (SBI) has announced a cut in retail fixed deposits (FD) rates. The rate cut will be effective from 10 February. The move by SBI is due to the surplus liquidity in the system. SBI realigned its interest rate on Retail Term Deposits which is less than Rs.2 crores and Bulk Term Deposits of Rs.2 crores and above.

Repo rate remains unchanged as per the 6th bi-monthly monetary policy statement

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the 6th bi-monthly monetary policy statement for 2019-20 on 6 February. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) which was led by Governor Shaktikanta Das from 4-6 February. The Central Bank has kept the repo rate unchanged at 5.15%.

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India attends 3rd Global Conference on Road Safety held in collaboration with WHO, World Bank

- Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari represented India at the 3rd global Conference on Road Safety. The Conference aimed at achieving Global Goals 2030. It was held in Stockholm, Sweden.

RBI directs banks to link all the new floating rate loans to medium enterprises with external benchmark

- The Reserve Bank has directed banks to link all the new floating rate loan to medium enterprises with external benchmark.
- In a circular, RBI said that the direction will be effective from 1st April 2020. With respect to micro and small enterprises, floating rate loans are already linked with external benchmarks.

RBI to release Digital Payment Index by July 2020

- The Reserve Bank of India announced that it will create a Digital Payment Index by July 2020. The main aim of the index creation is to capture the extent of digitization of monetary payments in the country.

RBI appoints 5 officials to the post of ED

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed five officials to the executive directors' post. The elevated officials will take charge in 2020. Currently, the RBI has 12 executive directors (ED). Out of 12, five of them are due to retire in 2020.
- **The officials are:**
 - 1) Indrani Banerjee, Regional Director, Nagpur
 - 2) Saurav Sinha, chief general manager-in-charge
 - 3) Vivek Deep, CGM in-charge
 - 4) J.K. Dash, CGM in-charge
 - 5) P. Vijayakumar, the senior-most RBI ombudsman

SEBI introduces a system to track client securities

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced an in-house system to track the movement of client securities that are collected as collateral by brokers.
- **SEBI:**
 - Formed on: 12 April 1988
 - Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
 - Chairman: Ajay TyagiSEBI is the regulator for the securities market in India. It was established through the SEBI Act, 1992.

Govt to infuse ₹1,300 cr in Exim Bank next fiscal

- The government has decided to pump Rs 1,300 crore into state-owned Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) to fund its business growth. Last year, the government doubled its authorised capital from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore.

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- “The (Rs 1,300 crore) provision is for Exim Bank as equity support/ subscription to increase the paid up capital of the bank to the level of its authorized capital,” as per the Budget documents presented in Parliament earlier this month.

GoI, World Bank signs loan agreement to improve groundwater management

- Government of India and the World Bank signed a \$450 million loan agreement on 17 February. The agreement aims to support the national programme to arrest the depleting groundwater levels and strengthen groundwater institutions in India. The loan agreement was signed by Shri Sameer Kumar Khare, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, and Mr. Junaid Ahmad, India Director, India on behalf of the World Bank.

RBI unveiled a 2019-24 National Strategy for Financial Inclusion

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) unveiled a National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2019-24. The RBI’s Strategy is aimed at providing access to formal financial services in an affordable manner. It aims to promote financial literacy among customers.

RBI directed banks to link all new floating rate loan

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directed banks to link all the new floating-rate loan to medium enterprises with external benchmark. It will be effective from 1 April 2020. The floating rate loans of the micro and small enterprises are already linked with external benchmarks.

Indian Affairs

Union Budget Highlights 2020-2021 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

- Union Budget 2020 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to revive economic growth and boost people’s income.
- The Budget is based on Three themes Aspirational India Economic development Caring society Union Budget 2020 was presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharamanin, a bid to revive economic growth and boost people’s income. The Budget is based on three themes – aspirational India, economic development for all, and caring society.

First Banana Container Train sent to JNPT for Exports

- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority(APEDA) along with State Government of Andhra Pradesh one of the largest member exporter of banana, dispatched the first shipment of 890 MTs of high-quality bananas loaded in 43 refrigerated containers, from Tadipatri, Anantpur in Andhra Pradesh to Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) in Mumbai for export to international markets.

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Union Govt aims to achieve objective of Housing for All by 2022 under PMAY-G

- Union Government aims to achieve the objective of Housing for All by 2022 under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen. A total of over one crore 50 lakh rural houses have been completed in the last five years.
- Eligible beneficiaries will get one crore 95 lakh houses in the second phase of the scheme. The government has set a target of 60 lakh houses for the current financial year.

Goa 2020 National Games unveils Rubigula as mascot

- Rubigula, Flame-Throated Bulbul unveiled as the official mascot for the Goa 2020 National Games. The Flame-Throated Bulbul is the state bird of Goa. The mascot Rubigula will generate the interest of people towards the National Games.
- The mascot incorporates the best elements and characteristics of Goa and the Goan people. The state has world-class infrastructure for the games.

GoI hosts National Organic Food Festival in New Delhi

- The Government of India is to host National Organic Food Festival at the National Capital between February 21, 2020 and February 23, 2020. The festival is first of its kind. Around 150 women entrepreneurs are to participate in the festival.

President's Colours Awards to INS Shivaji on its 75 years of Service

- President Ram Nath Kovind presented the President's Colours Awards to INS Shivaji. The Indian Naval Station Shivaji has completed 75 years of service. Last year, the award was given to Indian Naval Academy. The award was presented to the Indian Naval Station at Lonavala. The station was commissioned as HMIS (Her Majesty's Indian Ship) in 1945.

I-T dept launches e-calculator to compare due tax under new, old regime

- The Income-Tax Department has launched an e-calculator for individuals to estimate their tax liability if they opt for the new tax slabs, without claiming deductions and exemptions, for ITR filing as announced in the recent Budget, officials said.
- The calculator, with a comparative table to compare taxes in the old and the new tax regime, for resident individuals (financial year 2020-21) has been hosted on the official e-filing website of the department.

Union Government appoints M Ajit Kumar as chairman of CBIC ahead of Budget

- Central Government appoints M Ajit Kumar as chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs. The appointment comes just two days before the Union Budget presentation.
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs is the national nodal agency responsible for administering Customs, GST, Central Excise, Service Tax and Narcotics in India.

Pune, Nashik among four cities to launch clean air project

- Lucknow and Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh and Pune and Nashik in Maharashtra will launch the 'Clean Air Project in India' (CAP India) initiative to improve the air quality in their cities. This project will be implemented by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) in partnership with city authorities. CAP India was announced at the World Sustainable Development Summit 2020 held in New Delhi.

CII celebrates 125 years; Tamil Nadu CM launches new scheme at the event

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is celebrating its 125th birth anniversary in the year 2020. In order to commemorate its anniversary, the organization has been hosting several events in different parts of India under the theme – Theme: CII@125: Business and Beyond.
- The Journey of CII began as Engineering and Iron Trades Association (EITA) in 1895. Later the Engineering Association of India that was established in 1942 merged with EITA to form the Association of Indian engineering Industry (AIEI) in 1974. In 1986, it became the Confederation of Engineering Industry (CEI).

FM emphasises on building "caring society" in budget

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting the 2020-21 budget in the Lok Sabha emphasised on building a caring society by including a slew of measures for social welfare, climate change and improvement of culture and tourism.
- Putting forth her government's stand against manual scavenging, the Minister announced "suitable technologies" for automatic cleaning of sewer systems and septic tanks had been identified by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Budget 2020 | NIRVIK scheme to provide high insurance cover for exporters

- The government's proposed scheme to provide enhanced insurance cover and reduce premium for small exporters is timely amid India's slowing exports, industry said.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday announced NIRVIK (Niryat Rin Vikas Yojana) scheme to provide enhanced insurance cover and reduce premium for small exporters.

Fiscal deficit hits 132% of Budget estimate till December

- The government's fiscal deficit touched 132.4% of the full-year target at December-end mainly due to slower pace of revenue collections, official data showed.
- In actual terms, the fiscal deficit or gap between expenditure and revenue was ₹9,31,725 crore, the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) showed. The government aims to restrict the gap at 3.3% of the GDP or ₹7,03,760 crore in the year ending March 2020.

Flame-Throated Bulbul 'Rubigula' official mascot for Goa 2020 National Games

- 'Rubigula', Flame-Throated Bulbul, has been unveiled as the official mascot for the Goa 2020 National Games in Panaji, Goa.

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- Goa will be hosting the 36th edition of the National Games from 20th October to 4th November 2020. The event will see participation by 36 states and union territories, 12,000 athletes, officials and will host 37 sports disciplines across 24 venues in Goa.

Portal Santusht launched: To implement policies of Labour Ministry at grass root level

- The Portal Santusht is an Implementation Monitoring Cell that was launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in January 2020. The portal addresses delivery of public services, their transparency, accountability, schemes and policies at grass root level.
- The portal aims to address the speedy redressal of grievances of workers and employers. It monitors services that are provided by the health insurance and EPFOs (Employment Provident Fund Organization).

New Delhi: 3rd Defence Attaches Conference – Rajnath Singh

- To promote defence exports and expand its defence diplomacy, India is planning to have 10 more defence attaches to 10 different countries, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh announced.
- Singh explained that India cannot restrict its defence cooperation to a few countries. He thereafter announced the creation of 10 new defence wings so that 10 more defence attaches could be appointed. “This will further strengthen India’s defence diplomacy,” he said, addressing the third Defence Attaches conference here.

What is RFID Tag? Over 3.5 lakh coaches to be equipped with smart tags

- Indian Railways has announced that it will equip all coaches and engines with radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags. About 3, 50,000 passenger coaches and freight coaches of the railways will be equipped with RFID tags for their smart monitoring.

Central Government Proposes Single Exam For All Government Jobs

- The union government proposes a single exam for all government jobs. In the budget 2020, presented by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the union government intends to introduce major reforms in recruitment to non-gazetted posts in governments and public sector banks.
- At present, candidates appear for various exams held under the discretion of the recruiting organization or exam agencies like UPSC and SSC. The government proposes to form a National Recruitment Agency which would also be referred to as NRA.

Budget 2020: Indian Railways’ operating ratio for FY20 at 98.41%

- In FY2019-20, the Indian Railways spent about Rs 98.41 to earn every Rs 100, according to the revised estimates in the Union Budget 2020, which was tabled in the Lok Sabha by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1.
- This pegs the Railways’ operating ratio at 98.41 percent compared to 98.30 percent in the year ago period

Budget 2020-21 announces largest ever science mission: A 8000 cr 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 Rs 8000 Crore for a period of five years to be implemented by the Department of Science & Technology (DST).

India raises import tax on crude palm oil to 44%

- India has raised import tax on crude palm oil to 44% from 37.5%, a government notification said, as the world's biggest palm oil importer tries to boost local oilseed production.
- The notification confused traders as on Dec. 31, India cut import tax on crude palm oil imported from Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries to 37.5% from 40%, said the Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA), a trade body.

APEDA-CFTRI Sign MoU for Guwahati Liason Office

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by CSIR-CFTRI with APEDA to set up a Liaison Office in Guwahati, Assam, to give specialized help to the nourishment businesses in the North East district. It will profit the ranchers, makers, and business people. APEDA has embraced numerous limited time exercises as of late to bring the North East conditions of India on to the fare map.

DST launches SATHI Initiative for building shared, professionally managed strong S&T infrastructure

- The Finance Minister in her speech yesterday said "Intellectual property creation and protection will play an important role. A digital platform will be created which will facilitate seamless application and capture IPRs and also in an institute of excellence, a centre will be established that will work in the field of intellectual property.

Railway customers can now converse in Hindi through 'ASKDISHA' chatbot

- Ministry of Railways upgraded services of Artificial Intelligence (AI) based ASKDISHA chatbot to converse with Railway customers in the Hindi language. It aims to resolve queries of railway passengers over the internet pertaining to various services offered.

India to host 16-team FIH Junior Men's World Cup 2021

- The International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced India as the hosts for the FIH Junior Men's World Cup 2021. In an official announcement on Monday, the international governing body also announced that the competition will be played towards the end of 2021.
- The competition, which features the best young U-21 level talent from across the world, will again be heading to India, which won accolades from around the world for hosting one of the best FIH Senior Men's Hockey World Cups in 2018 held at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium, Bhubaneswar.

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NADA bans javelin thrower Amit Dahiya for four years

- National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) has banned javelin thrower Amit Dahiya for four years for evading sample collection and trying to cheat officials during the 2nd National Javelin Throw Open Championship 2019 held at SAI Centre in Sonipat.

NITI Aayog organizing Sustainable Development Goals Conclave 2020

- NITI Aayog is organizing Sustainable Development Goals Conclave 2020: Partnerships, Cooperation and Development of North Eastern states- in Guwahati, Assam. The inaugural session will be held on Monday evening in presence all Chief Ministers of North Eastern states among others.

India to host Commonwealth Shooting and Archery Championships in January 2022

- India will host the Commonwealth Shooting and Archery Championships in January 2022. The medals from the two events will be counted for ranking of competing nations at the Birmingham Games. However, the medals will be added to the final tally one week after the conclusion of the Games.

Ladakh all set to host first-ever Khelo India Winter Games

- The Union Territory of Ladakh is all set to host the first-ever Khelo India Winter Games. In the presence of Ladakh Lieutenant Governor R K Mathur, Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijju will inaugurate the games on Tuesday, 25th Feb at NDS Indoor Ice Hockey Rink in Leh.

INCOIS launched 3 technological support and alert systems

- The Hyderabad-based Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) launched three new technological support and alert systems on 25 February. The technology aims to significantly reduce damage and losses to fishermen, offshore oil exploration industries and coastal population during extreme weather and oceanic events.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijju Announces Khelo India Winter Games in Jammu and Kashmir

- Union Territory of Ladakh will host the inaugural Khelo India Winter Games later this month, followed by a similar event in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir in March, Sports Minister Kiren Rijju. The sports ministry will fund both the Khelo India Winter Games in Ladakh in the third week of February and Jammu and Kashmir in the first week of March.

India first inter-city electric bus service between Mumbai and Pune launched

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launched India's first inter-city electric bus service between Mumbai and Pune. Planning to extend these services in other parts of Maharashtra and adjoining states in the near future.

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- The 43-seater capacity luxury electric bus is capable of operating within a range of 300 kilometers on a single charge and would be administered twice daily between the two cities.

National Conference on Policy Framework for Skilling of Women and Children was held in New Delhi

- National Conference on Policy Framework for Skilling of Women and Children was held on 14 February in New Delhi. The Ministries of Women & Child Development (WCD) partnered with Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to enable and empower the women and youth of India with skilling in every segment where India is competent to make a mark. The announcement was made by the Union Minister of WCD and Textiles Smriti Zubin Irani.

14,100 tonnes of the rare metal, Lithium Reserves found in India

- The researchers at the India's Atomic Energy Commission have found Lithium Reserves of 14,100 tonnes in Mandya. Mandya is 100 km away from Bengaluru, Karnataka. Being a very rare metal Lithium is mainly used in manufacturing batteries for electric vehicles.
- The reserves found is very little as compared to the world's leading producers of Lithium. Of the major producers Chile produces 8.6 million tonnes, Australia produces 2.8 million tonnes and 1.7 million tonnes in Argentina.

What is Adjusted Gross Revenue?

- There was a tussle between the Telecommunication industries and the GoI over the license fee settlement. The Union Budget waived penalty for those who paid their interest charges over the disputed tax liabilities before March 2020. The case over the license fee settlement was pronounced in favour of the GoI recently. Following this, several companies like Airtel, Vodafone, TATA have recently paid their dues.
- Adjusted Gross Revenue are mainly collected from two main charges namely usage and licensing fee. Apart from these fees, it also includes other revenues like profits, revenue from assets, etc.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana: 4th National Conference held in Udaipur

- The fourth National Conference of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima yojana was held in Udaipur, Rajasthan. The Conference was organized by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- The scheme was launched in 2016. It replaced the Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme and National Agricultural Insurance Scheme. Under the scheme the farmers are paid a premium of 2% for Kharif crops and 1.5% for Rabi crops in case of crop damages. The scheme is in line with One Nation-One Scheme theme.

CCI approves acquisition of WABCO Holdings by ZF Friedrichshafen AG

- Fair trade regulator CCI has approved acquisition of WABCO Holdings Inc. (WABCO) by ZF Friedrichshafen AG.

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- As per a combination notice filed with the Competition Commission of India (CCI), ZF will acquire 100 per cent shares in WABCO via its indirect wholly-owned subsidiary Verona Merger Sub Corp, a Delaware corporation, resulting in acquisition of sole control over WABCO.

PM unveiled statue of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya in UP

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the statue of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya on 16 February. He inaugurated the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Memorial Centre in Padoa on the Varanasi-Chandauli border. He also launched several projects worth Rs.1,200 crore that includes a 430-bed super specialty government hospital, and a 74-bed psychiatry hospital at Banaras Hindu University, UP.

Centre approved 32 projects under PM Kisan Sampada Yojana

- An inter-ministerial approval committee under the 'Unit' scheme of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) sanctioned 32 projects spread across 17 states on 27 February. The committee was chaired by the Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal. The 32 projects leverage an investment of Rs.406 crore. The projects will cover over 100 agro-climatic zones across India.

GoI paid tribute to the 124th birth anniversary of former PM Morarji Desai

- Government of India paid tribute to former PM Morarji Desai on his 124th birth anniversary on 29 February. President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and State leaders paid tribute to the late former PM. His birth anniversary is celebrated every four years. Morarji Desai: Morarji Desai was born in Bulsar district of Gujarat on 29 February 1896.

Defence Minister inaugurated new LCH Production Hangar at HAL Complex, Bengaluru

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the new Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) Production Hangar at Helicopter Division in HAL Complex at Bengaluru, Karnataka. The move is towards manufacturing military equipment indigenously under the 'Make in India' initiative. Light Combat Helicopter is a 5.5-tonne class combat helicopter.

The 14th Meeting of JWG on Counter-Terrorism

- The 14th Meeting of Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-Terrorism on 28 February in New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. Mahaveer Singhvi, Joint Secretary for Counter-Terrorism, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the French delegation was led by Mr. David Bertolotti, Assistant Secretary of State for Strategic, Security and Disarmament Affairs of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

Cabinet approved occupancy rights to Scheduled Tribes of Lakshadweep

- The Union Cabinet approved the amendment of the Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands Land Revenue and Tenancy Regulation, 1965. The amendment will confer

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occupancy rights to the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in the union territory (UT). Lakshadweep island mostly comprises the ST population and they did not have occupancy rights.

The 11th National KVK Conference 2020 was held in Delhi

- The Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurating the 11th National Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Conference 2020 on 28 February in New Delhi. The conference directed KVKs to serve not only the affluent, resourceful and Progressive farmers but also focus on the small and deprived farmers.

Mission Purvodaya: India-Japan join hands to make Odisha a Steel Hub

- Union Minister of Steel announced at a workshop organized by Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) that GoI is to make Odisha the steel hub of India. This is to be achieved by the Government with the help of Japan.

World Productivity Congress in India after 45 years of gap

- The World Productivity Congress has been conducted by the World Confederation of Productivity Science since 1969. It was last held in India in 1974. The Congress is held under the theme Theme: Industry 4.0-Innovation and Productivity.

SC rules in favour of permanent commission to women officers

- The Supreme Court ordered the government to grant permanent commission to women officers in the Army's noncombat support units on par with their male counterparts should they wish to continue with it after completing their short-service commission.
- Denial of such an opportunity to women officers, combined with the Army policy of not giving them command posts of Colonel and beyond based on a performance index, lowers their status to that of a jawan or junior commissioned officer, the SC noted.

Indian Bird Species have declined by 80% says State of India's Birds Report at CMS COP 13

- State of India's Birds Report was released at the CMS COP 13. It assessed the status of more than 867 birds. The report says that more than 80% of Indian bird species have declined in the last 5 years. More than 15,000 bird watchers participated in the survey.

Kala Kumbh: Exhibition to promote GI crafts and Heritage of India held in New Delhi

- Kala Kumbh – Handicrafts Thematic Exhibition was held in various parts of the country through the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts). The aim of the exhibition is to promote Geographical Indication (GI) crafts and heritage of India. The exhibition will be held from 14-23 February 2020 at Bengaluru and Mumbai. The event will be conducted in Kolkata and Chennai in March 2020.

Navi Mumbai to host final of FIFA U-17 Womens World Cup

- Navi Mumbai will be hosting the final of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup on 21 November. The announcement was made by the organizing committee. The official slogan of FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2020 is "Kick off the Dream". The tournament will be held from 2-21 November 2020. India also seeks to host the U-20 World Cup and the Club World Cup.

Smart City Mission: Centre devises 20:20 model to boost laggard cities

- In a final push to the Smart City Mission, the Centre has devised a 20-20 model to pair the top 20 cities with the bottom 20 and help the laggard cities to kick-start the smartening up process by borrowing technical know-how and financial studies.
- Top-ranking **Ahmedabad has been paired with Chandigarh, which is ranked 81.** Nagpur, which ranks 2, will hand hold Port Blair which is 96th in the all-India ranking. Similarly, other sister cities are Tirupur (rank 3) with Silvassa (87), Ranchi (rank 4) with Shimla (92), Bhopal (rank 5) with Aizawl (rank 82), Surat (rank 6) with Saharanpur (91).

Cabinet approved 2020 IIIT Laws Amendment Bill

- The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill will approve the formalization of IIITs at Agartala, Bhagalpur, Bhopal, Raichur, and Surat. The institutions will now be covered under the IIIT (PPP) Act, 2017.

Cabinet approves the setting up of Vadhavan Port in Maharashtra

- The Union Cabinet led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave its in-principle approval to set up a Major Port at Vadhavan near Dahanu in Maharashtra. The total estimated cost of the project is Rs.65,544.54 crore. Vadhavan port: ? The Vadhavan port will be developed on the landlord model.

Kaamya Karthikeyan: Mumbai Girl becomes the youngest to climb Mt Aconcagua

- Kaamya Karthikeyan became the youngest girl to climb the highest peak in South America, Mt Aconcagua. Kaamya Karthikeyan is a Class VII student studying in Navy Children School. She has set the record of become the youngest in the world to summit the highest peak of the Andes Mountain Range, Mt Aconcagua. She has also summited Mt Mentok Kangri II in August 2019.

National Conference on E-Governance held in Mumbai; National E-Governance Awards presented

- The 23rd National Conference on E-Governance was held in Mumbai to transform governance using digital technologies. The conference adopted Mumbai declaration. Delhi, Chandigarh and Daman and Diu emerged as the leaders in delivering e-governance services among Union Territories. Among the states, Haryana and Rajasthan emerged as leaders.

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Cabinet clears Major Ports Authority Bill; approves Pesticide Management Bill

- Union Cabinet cleared the Major Ports Authority Bill. The Bill will replace 1963 law governing the country's 12 major ports.
- The legislation will be introduced in the second part of the Budget session of Parliament. Briefing reporters in New Delhi, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, the proposed law is aimed at enhancing the overall efficiencies of the ports.

IDSA renamed Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses

- The Union government has decided to rename well-known think tank Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) as 'Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses'.
- "The decision has been taken to honour the commitment and legacy of the late Manohar Parrikar. It will align the vision and aspiration of the premier defence institute with the contribution of the former Defence Minister and Padma Bhushan awardee," the Defence Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

Govt to facilitate doubling of milk processing capacity by 2025

- Union Government will facilitate doubling of milk processing capacity from over 53 million tonne to 108 million tonne by 2025.
- In India, milk production is growing by 6.4 per cent during the last five years and has increased from over 146 million tonne in 2014-15 to over 187 million Tonne in 2018-19. The Ministry said, about 54 per cent of milk produced is marketable surplus and remaining 46 per cent is retained in villages for local consumption.

TRIFED conducted a fashion show in Suraj Kund Mela

- Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) conducted a fashion show entitled "Naturally North-East: The Naga Narrative" held at Suraj Kund Mela on 7 February. It was curated by Mrs. Ritu Beri noted fashion designer and Chief designer of Tribes India.

Cabinet approved amendment of the 2020 Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas Bill

- The Union Cabinet approved the amendment of the Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas Bill, 2020 on 12 February. The Bill was introduced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2020. The Bill seeks to provide resolution for disputed tax cases that involve Rs.9.32 lakh crore. The amendment will widen the scope to cover litigation pending in various debt recovery tribunals (DRTs).

Uttarakhand Cabinet approves 377 sq km for ESZ in Corbett Tiger Reserve

- The Uttarakhand State cabinet approved a 377 sq km area for the proposed eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) for the Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) on 12 February. The proposal will be forwarded to the Central government.

Cabinet approves 2020 Pesticides Management Bill

The Union Cabinet approved Pesticides Management Bill, 2020 on 12 February. The move comes as the pesticide business is regulated by 1968 rules which have become age-old and need immediate rewriting.

Bill provision:

- The Bill aims to regulate the business of pesticides and compensate farmers in case of losses from the usage of spurious agro-chemicals.
- The Bill will protect the interest of farmers and ensure they get safe and effective pesticides.
- As per the Bill, the farmer will not get spurious pesticides.
- It will empower farmers to get all information as the data would be in open source and in all languages.
- The bill aims to promote organic pesticides.
- The farmers will know about the strength and weaknesses of pesticides, the risk, and alternatives and this will be open data in digital format also.
- The farmers will essentially get the information from the dealers selling pesticides.

Cabinet approved the Major Ports Authority Bill to replace existing law

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the “Major Ports Authority Bill” on 12 February. It will replace the existing 1963 law (Major Port Trusts Act, 1963) that governs the country’s 12 major ports. The announcement was made by Union Minister Mansukh Lal Mandaviya.

The 20th International Seminar on Comprehends the Evolving Contours of Terrorism is held in Haryana

- The Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated the 20th International Seminar on “Comprehends the Evolving Contours of Terrorism & IED Threat-Way ahead for the Security Community”. The seminar was organized by the National Security Guard (NSG), at Manesar, Haryana 12 February 2020. It will be held on 12-13 February.

Cabinet approves MoU signed between India and Iceland in the field of Fisheries

- The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Iceland in the field of Fisheries. The MoU was signed on 10 September 2019.

President Kovind paid homage to martyrs of Pulwama

- President Ram Nath Kovind paid homage to martyrs of Pulwama. In Jammu, a memorial to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel was inaugurated at Lethpora camp on 14 February. On the memorial, the names of all the 40 martyrs along with their pictures are engraved as a part of the memorial along with the motto of CRPF ‘Seva and Nishtha’ (Service and Loyalty).

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Commonwealth Games 2022: Shooting and archery events to be held in India

- India will host the archery and shooting events at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, six months before the main event in Birmingham. The proposal was put forward by India, who threatened to boycott Birmingham 2022 after shooting was excluded.
- Both events will take place in Chandigarh in January 2022, with the main Games from 27 July to 7 August.

Dolphin population in Odisha's Gahirmatha halves: Annual census

- An annual census found the number of dolphins at Odisha's Gahirmatha marine sanctuary has nearly halved over a year, pushing down the state's overall count.
- The January 2020 census spotted only 62 of the marine mammals at Gahirmatha — also the world's largest rookery of sea turtles — down from 126 found last year. Gahirmatha is located within Bhitarkanika National Park in Odisha's Kendrapara district.

CSR: Adani Foundation ties up with Lifology

- Adani Foundation has launched a unique CSR activity among Kerala's coastal communities in association with Lifology.com, an international career accelerator for youth. The project aims to provide career-building opportunities to students from less developed coastal areas using the Lifology.com platform.

PM to distribute Daily Living Aids and Devices to senior citizens and Divyangjan

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute Assistive Aids and Devices to Senior Citizens under Rashtriya VayoshriYojana (RVY) and to Divyangjan under ADIP Scheme at a 'Samajik Adhikarita Shivir' and a mega distribution Camp organized by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh on 29 February 2020.

CAPS-HQ MC Joint Seminar on Challenges of the Evolving Threats Facing India held in New Delhi

- A Joint Seminar on the theme "Challenges Of The Evolving Threats Facing India" was held at Air Force Station Tughlakabad, New Delhi. It was organized by the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS) and Maintenance Command, Indian Air Force (MC, IAF) on 25 February. The event was inaugurated by Air Marshal Shashiker Choudhary AVSM VSM, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, MC IAF. The seminar hosted three sessions.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated BSNL FTTH in Dehradun

- Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) and wifi service in Dehradun, Uttarakhand on 27 February. The move by BSNL is to expand its services in rural areas. BSNL FTTH: Fiber to the home (FTTH) is the installation

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and use of optical fiber from a central point directly to individual buildings such as apartments, residences, buildings, and businesses.

Cabinet approved to accord National Importance status to NIFTS at Kundli, Thanjavur

- The Union Cabinet approved to grant the status of National Importance to National Institutes of Food Technology (NIFT) at Kundli, Haryana, and Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, on 26 February. It was announced by the Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar. The approval to grant National Importance status will bring more professionalism and lead to faster growth of these institutes.

National Winter Games to be held in Gulmarg

- The National Winter Games is to be held in Gulmarg from March 7, 2020. The games are to be held for five days in Gulmarg, the world-famous Ski destination. It is being held under Khelo India.

43rd Session of International fund for Agricultural Development: UN SDG 2030 not achievable

- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) of the United Nations works to address hunger and poverty in developing countries. The 43rd session of the governing council of IFAD was held at Rome between February 11, 2020 and February 12, 2020. It was announced at the council meet that with the current progress rate, it is not possible to achieve United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2030.

Common portal for health insurance claim settlements on the cards

- The settlement of health insurance claims could soon be a matter of a few clicks, as the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) is planning a common portal for the process.
- The insurance regulator is seeking to bring all stakeholders in the health insurance space — insurers, the insured, as well as hospitals — under one roof with an aim to standardise the claim settlement procedure and ensure payment in a time-bound manner, T L Alamelu, member (non-life), Irdai, said on Friday.

Government of India announces Maiden Summit on Artificial Intelligence

- The Government of India (GoI) announced the mega event, RAISE 2020- ‘Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020,’ to be held from April 11-12 in New Delhi.
- RAISE 2020 is India’s first Artificial Intelligence summit to be organized by the Government in partnership with Industry & Academia. The summit will be a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and charter a course to use AI for social empowerment, inclusion and transformation in key areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility amongst other sectors.

CBSE releases an app to locate the Exam Centre

- The Central Board of Secondary Education has released an app giving information about the examination center for the convenience of the students.

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- The examinations of CBSE have already started, but the papers of the main subjects are starting from today. With the help of this app, students will easily search their examination center.

Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra in New Delhi renamed as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan

- Government has decided to rename Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra in New Delhi as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan and Foreign Service Institute in the national capital as Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service.
- The announcement was made today by the Ministry of External Affairs on the eve of the birth anniversary of Mrs Swaraj and in the honour of the legacy and decades of public service of the former External Affairs Minister.

ACI rules amended for making arbitration user friendly

- The government has amended the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 to make arbitration process user friendly and cost effective. This will also ensure speedy disposal and neutrality of arbitrators.
- According to reports, the government has recently amended the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 by the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act 2019. The Amendment Act was effective from 30.08.2019.

Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries to get upto Rs 15 lakh aid under RAN scheme

- Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries not covered under various packages of the insurance programme and requiring high-cost treatment will be able to get financial assistance of up to Rs 15 lakh under the Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN) scheme, an office memorandum said.
- The Union Health ministry has issued revised guidelines of the umbrella scheme of RAN in the wake of complaints that poor patients suffering from life-threatening diseases have not been able to avail treatment under it if they are beneficiaries of the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY).

Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ presents Chatra Vishwakarma Awards 2019

- Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ presents Vishwakarma Awards 2019 to the winners in New Delhi today. The valedictory function of Vishwakarma Awards 2019 was organised in All India Council for Technical Education. A total of 23 teams under various sub- categories were recipient of the Chatra Vishwakarma Awards (CVA). Six institutes were felicitated by the Union Minister under the Utkrisht Santhan Vishwakarma Award (USVA).

Mansukh Mandaviya launched OPV-6 VAJRA in Chennai

- The 6th Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV-6) ‘VAJRA’ was launched on 27 February at Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The Union Minister of State for Shipping(I/C) and Chemicals & Fertilizers Shri Mansukh Mandaviya chaired the launching ceremony.

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Cabinet approved amendments to bring cooperative banks under RBI regulation

- The Union Cabinet approved the proposal to amend the Banking Regulation Act. The move comes after the Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank crisis. The amendment will bring the cooperative banks under the regulatory mechanism of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat Campaign began on 10 February

- Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat Campaign began on 10 February across India. It was organized by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry. The campaign functions under the idea of a cultural connection between different regions.
- The aim of Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat is to promote the spirit of national integration through engagement between all states and union territories.

Best Performing Smart Cities paired up with least performing to work as SISTER CITIES

- The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has paired up 20 best performing smart cities with least performing cities. They will work as “sister cities”.
- The best performing cities include Tiruppur, Nagpur, Bhopal, Ranchi, Kanpur, Surat, Indore, Vellore, Vishakhapatnam, Varanasi, Vellore, Nashik, Vadodara, Pune, Kota, Davangere, Dehradun, Udaipur, Amaravati and Agra.

National Conference on E-Governance held in Mumbai; National E-Governance Awards presented

- The 23rd National Conference on E-Governance was held in Mumbai to transform governance using digital technologies. The conference adopted Mumbai declaration. Delhi, Chandigarh and Daman and Diu emerged as the leaders in delivering e-governance services among Union Territories. Among the states, Haryana and Rajasthan emerged as leaders.

PFRDA doubles minimum net worth for pension fund managers to ₹50 cr

- The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), the regulator of the National Pension System (NPS), has doubled the minimum net worth criterion for pension fund managers to ₹50 crore from the ₹25 crore stipulated earlier. Existing pension fund managers must comply with this requirement within such time as the PFRDA stipulates.

NIFM, Faridabad renamed ‘Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management’

- The Centre has decided to rename the National Institute of Financial Management (NIFM), Faridabad, as ‘Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management’ (AJNIFM).
- NIFM, Faridabad was set up in 1993 as a registered society under the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, with the mandate to train officers of various finance and accounts services recruited by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) through the Civil Services Examination.

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MoCA flagged off first Heli Services under UDAN in Uttarakhand

- Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) operationalized the first-ever helicopter services from Dehradun's Sahastradhara helipad to Gauchar and Chinyalisaur. It was flagged off under the Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) of Government of India.

Patnaik inaugurates BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise in Bhubaneswar

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday inaugurated Seven Nation BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise – 2020, which will take place from February 11 to 13. The exercise is being organised by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in Odisha, on behalf of the Government of India.

Medical devices now under Drugs and Cosmetics Act

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has brought medical devices within the regulatory ambit, treating them as a category of 'drugs' for the purpose of regulating them under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act (DCA). Till date. A gazetted notification to this effect was issued on Tuesday and the notification will come into effect from April 1.

NITI Aayog organizes North East Sustainable Development Goal Conclave 2020 in Assam

- NITI Aayog is to organize North East Sustainable Development Goal Conclave 2020 in Assam between February 24, 2020 and February 26, 2020. The Conclave is to be held in the state capital Guwahati. Chief Ministers of all the north eastern states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura and Sikkim are to participate in the conclave.

Cabinet approves to set up a 12-member Technology Group

- Union Cabinet approved to set a technology group. The 12-member group will provide scientific advice on mapping of technologies, commercialization of dual use technologies and develop a road map on selected key technologies. The group will provide three major pillars of support namely Policy support namely Policy support, research and development proposals and procurement support.

Manipur- the major role player of Act East Policy

- India has been focusing on Act East Policy lately with a strong motive of developing the North East. Out of all the North Eastern States, Manipur has evolved the major supporter of Act East Policy.

International Judicial Conference was held in New Delhi

- International Judicial Conference was held in New Delhi on 22 February. The conference was addressed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Distinguished

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Judges of the Supreme Court and various High Courts, Eminent lawyers and delegates from overseas also took part in the Conference.

CDS to celebrate first anniversary of National War Memorial

- The first anniversary of the iconic National War Memorial (NWM) will be observed on 25 February. Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the monument to the nation on 25 February 2019. The memorial is a tribute to the fallen heroes in the line of duty during various wars and internal security challenges since Independence.

GoI launches “SPICe+” to improve Ease of Doing Business in the country

- Government of India launched SPICe+, a web form that integrates 10 services of various ministries and departments. This will help boost Ease of Doing Business in India. It was launched by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. India ranked 63rd in Ease of Doing Business ranking published by World Bank.

Cabinet approves Phase II of Swachh Bharat Mission

- Union Cabinet approved on implementing the phase II of Swachh Bharat Mission. The phase II of the mission will focus on Open Defecation Free Plus. The budget allocated for phase II of the mission is Rs 52,497 crores. The mission in this phase is to converge with Jal Jeevan Mission and MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act).

GoI to launch “TILHAN Mission” to make India Self Reliant in oil seed Production

- Agricultural Minister Narendra Singh Tomar announced that Government of India is to launch “TILHAN MISSION” to boost the oil seed production. The announced that Government of India is to launch “TILHAN MISSION” to boost the oil seed production. The announcement was made at an occasion of Soil Health Card Day. Soil Health Card Day was celebrated all over India on February 19, 2020.

Indias first private gold mine to be set up in Jonnagiri, Andhra Pradesh

- India’s first private gold mine operation will begin in the last quarter of 2021 at Jonnagiri in Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh. The land acquisition for the mining project is expected to be completed in the next six months. Geomysore Services India Pvt Ltd is in the process of acquiring the land by negotiating with farmers and completing exploratory mining.

India won 11 medals at the Brazil Para Badminton International Championships

- India finished Brazil Para Badminton International Championships with 11 medals in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Among the total are 11 medals, 4 gold, 5 silver, and 2 bronze medals.
- Indian shuttler Pramod Bhagat claimed two gold medals in men’s singles SL3 and men’s doubles SL3-SL4 categories. With this win, he was qualified for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. Suhas Lalinakere Yathiraj won gold in men’s singles SL4.

Web Portal Launched for Star Rating of Mines in India

- In order to promote green, safe and sustainable mining practices using technology as a tool, Ministry of Coal (MoC) has launched a web portal for star rating of coal mines. Union Minister for Coal & Mines Shri Pralhad Joshi launched this portal in New Delhi today which enables all operational coal mines across India for self-rating, their subsequent validation by Coal Controller's Organization (CCO), further evaluation and finally award of star rating.

Ministry of Agriculture To Initiate Kisan Credit Card Saturation Drive For PM-KISAN Beneficiaries

- To enable universal access to Concessional Institutional credit, Government of India has initiated a drive in Mission Mode for saturating all PM-KISAN beneficiaries with Kisan Credit Card (KCC). This will help all such farmers to get short term loan for crop & animal/fish rearing at a maximum interest of 4% on timely repayment.

SNA to compile National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

- Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) has collaborated with Zonal Cultural Centers of Ministry to prepare a list of ICH elements for the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). The information was shared by the Union Minister of State (I/c) of Culture and Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.
- A list of ICH elements will be compiled and at least 100 elements will be documented by March 2020.
- The aim is to document at least 20 new elements in the ICH list every year.
- Along with this listing, the establishment of an 'Indian Institute for Culture' is at a conceptual stage.
- Apart from this, the National Culture Mapping portal is being conceptualized for aggregating art forms and artists. It is in the pilot phase.

United Nations World Pulses Day celebrated in New Delhi

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare inaugurated the celebrations of World Pulses Day in New Delhi that aims to increase the production of pulses.

First Jerusalem-Mumbai festival held in Mumbai

- The Jerusalem-Mumbai festival is to be held in Mumbai on February 15, 2020 to promote artistic and cultural ties between Israel and India. The festival is first of its kind. The main aim of the festival is to promote cooperation between the countries in the field of music, culinary art and dance.

Indian Railways launches mobile app for employees

- Railway Board Chairman Vinod Kumar Yadav on Thursday launched the HRMS mobile app, in which the employees can see the data related to their service and communicate with the administration for any changes, if required.

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- According to the Railways, the mobile app allows employees to view their historical data since their date of joining, including details related to increments, promotions, awards, transfers, postings, leave, training and retirement benefits.

Cabinet approves amendment to bring cooperative banks under regulatory control of RBI

- Union Cabinet has decided to bring Cooperative banks under the regulatory mechanism of Reserve Bank of India. Briefing media persons after the Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadkar said the move will ensure greater accountability and transparency in the functioning of Cooperative Banks. Mr Javedkar said Cooperative Banks need to fulfill regulatory requirements set for scheduled commercial banks.

NTPC signs largest-ever single foreign currency loan for \$750 million

- State-owned power generator NTPC Ltd today announced it has signed a syndicated loan in Japanese Yen equivalent to \$750 million. The proceeds will be channelized to fund projects for cutting down emission levels from power plants and hydro projects.
- “This is the largest-ever syndicated JPY loan raised by any Asian corporate from offshore Samurai loan market. It is also the highest-ever single foreign currency loan raised by NTPC,” the company said in a statement.

India’s GDP growth to be slightly higher at 5.5% in 2021: Jahangir Aziz of JPMorgan

- India’s economy might gain some momentum in 2020 given greenshoots popping up here and there, but it would struggle to achieve 5 percent gross domestic product (GDP) growth, according to Jahangir Aziz, head of emerging markets economic research at JPMorgan .
- Aziz told CNBC-TV18 that things were not looking very good on the growth front and hopefully next year GDP will be slightly higher at about 5.5 percent.

JK, Ladakh is to come under the jurisdiction of CAT

- The Union Territory (UT) of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh will soon be covered by the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT). The announcement was made by the Minister of State in the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) Jitendra Singh at the annual conference of the CAT in New Delhi.

Soil health card Scheme completes 5 years as on 19February

- Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare reported that so far 6954 villages have been identified by the States/UTs in which against the target of 26.83 lakh samples, 20.18 lakh samples have been collected, 14.65 lakh samples have been analyzed and 13.54 lakh cards have been distributed to farmers. The Soil health card scheme completes 5 years on 19 February 2019.

India marks the beginning of “Super Year of Biodiversity” with CMS COP 13

- The year 2020 has been nick named as “Super Year” by global advocacy groups including the United Nations. This has been done to highlight 21 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and their targets. India marks the “Super Year of Biodiversity” with the Conservation of Migratory Species Conference of Parties 13. The year includes UN summit in September 2020 and will end in UN Biodiversity Conference in the end of 2020.

BioAsia Summit 2020 to be held in Hyderabad

- The Government of Telangana is hosting Bio-Asia Summit 2020 in Hyderabad between February 17, 2020 and February 19, 2020. The main objective of the summit is to explore the capabilities of Life Science Companies and their investments.

Cabinet Approval: India-Iceland MoU in Sustainable Fisheries Development

- Union Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and Iceland in the field of fisheries. The countries had signed agreements in September 2019, to develop inland fisheries. According to the agreement, the countries agreed to create facilities of technical experts and scientists in shore areas and deep sea areas. They also agreed on exchange of scientific research literature, scientific experts in the field of fisheries.

Cabinet approves amendment in DTAA with Sri Lanka

- Cabinet approves protocol amending the Agreement between India and Sri Lanka for avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income
- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the Signing and Ratification of the Protocol amending the Agreement between India and Sri Lanka for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.

Cabinet approves Exemption from applicability of DPE Guidelines to India Ports Global Limited (IPGL)

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved the exemption of the India Ports Global Ltd (IPGL) from the DPE Guidelines, except reservation and vigilance policies.
- IPGL was incorporated under Companies Act 2013, as a Special Purpose Vehicle jointly promoted by Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) and Deendayal Port Trust (DPT), [earlier Kandla Port Trust (KPT)], under Administrative control of Ministry of Shipping, for development and management of Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar in Iran.

Govt aims to make Chhattisgarh a steel hub of the country: Dharmendra Pradhan

- Union Minister for Petroleum, Natural Gas and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan has said that the government aims to make Chhattisgarh a steel hub of the country. Talking to media

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persons in Bhilai city today, Mr. Pradhan said that the steel industry has an important role to play in making India a five trillion dollar economy.

State Related Affairs

Telangana govt to soon begin testing of Novel CoronaVirus in Hyderabad

- Telangana State Government will begin testing of Novel CoronaVirus in Hyderabad with the help of testing kits. The authorities at Gandhi Medical Hospital begun test trails of the packages following the approval given by the Central Health Ministry for testing the Virus in Hyderabad.
- The medical authorities sent a total of 15 samples of suspect cases to the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, and the reports of nine have come negative while the remaining are awaited.

Transfer of BHEL-EML, kasargod plant to Kerala Government

- Government of Kerala has agreed to take over BHEL's 51% stake in BHEL-EML. Thereafter, as per the laid down procedure in General Financial Rules and the extant guidelines, transfer of assets is being processed.

Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh celebrated the Statehood Day on 20 February

- Indian states of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh celebrated the Statehood Day on 20 February. The culture of Arunachal Pradesh is special. The people are known for their wonderful nature and patriotic zeal. Similarly, the people of Mizoram are known for their valour and rich value systems. It holds the rich Mizo culture and the contribution of the state towards India's progress.

MP becomes first state to launch unified vehicle registration card

- Madhya Pradesh has become the first state in the country to introduce the unified registration card and the second state to launch the unified driving license after Uttar Pradesh. Chief Minister Kamal Nath distributed the unified cards, including vehicle registration and driving license, to six persons in a function held in Bhopal today.

Losar festival is celebrated in Himachal Pradesh

- Losar festival was celebrated by the Tibetans from 24-26 February. The festival was celebrated in the Dharamshala, Lahaul Valley of Himachal Pradesh. The festival is aimed to preserve its unique identity and rich traditions. The festival includes sacred and secular prayers, several ceremonies, rituals, and folk dancing.

Karnataka launches Janasevaka scheme for home delivery of govt services

- The Karnataka government on Tuesday launched the Janasevaka scheme in a few municipal corporation wards to ensure home delivery of various services like ration cards, senior citizen identity and health cards.

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- The scheme, which was launched by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, will pertain to 53 services involving 11 departments.

Pink City-Jaipur receives World Heritage Certificate from UNESCO

- Pink City of Rajasthan, Jaipur, received World Heritage Certificate from the UNESCO. The UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay visited India to present the certificate.
- Jaipur is known for its palaces, architecture, forts. The architecture in the city reflected inclusion of Mughal, Persian and Hindu designs. In order to preserve this cultural mixture of the city, UNESCO and the Rajasthan Tourism Department have signed an agreement.

CM inaugurated the first Commercial flight operations at Bidar Airport

- Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) flagged off the first direct flight from Bidar airport to Bengaluru in Karnataka on 7 February 2020. The flight operation was inaugurated by Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri B.S. Yediyurappa, and Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Bidar MP Shri Bhagwanth Khuba. Bidar airport has been remodeled under the Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) of the Government.

Kerala to host global meet on climate change, ocean health

- ClimFishCon 2020, a three-day international conference on the impact of climate change on 'hydrological cycle, ecosystem, fisheries and food security' will begin here on February 12 at the Le Meridian Convention Centre.
- More than 300 delegates from 12 countries including scientists, researchers, administrators, policymakers, academicians, and entrepreneurs will deliberate on strategies to: deal with climate emergency and changing hydrological cycles; preserve the ocean and other aquatic biodiversity; and build a circular and blue economy. Fishers, aqua farmers, students and other stakeholders will also attend.

Odisha govt signs MoU with HDFC Bank to boost startups

- The Odisha government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the HDFC Bank Limited to provide smart banking solutions to Startups in the state. The Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Department signed the MoU with the HDFC Bank in the presence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here.

Foundation Stone for Lighthouse at Dhanushkodi laid

- Foundation stone for a 50-metre high foundation stone laid at Dhanushkodi in Rameswaram. This is the fifth lighthouse in the region. The light house is to be built at a cost of Rs 8 crore rupees. The lighthouse is to be located opposite to the old church that was destroyed in a cyclone in 1964. It will facilitate navigation to 33 to 37 km from the sea shore.

Salmara Mankachar district received National Award for implementing Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

- The district of South Salmara Mankachar of Assam won National Award for implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana under the category of State/Union Territory having a population of more than one crore. The award was conferred by the Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani in a prize distribution meeting held at New Delhi.

India International Seafood Show to be held in Kochi

- Ministry of Commerce and Industry is conducting the 22nd edition of India International Seafood Show (IISS) 2020 in Kochi from 7-9 February 2020. Organizing Team: The three-day event is organized by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in association with the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI).

Narendra Modi in Assam: PM hails Bodo accord, announces Rs 1,500 crore developmental package for BTAD

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is visiting Assam to celebrate the signing of the Bodo agreement, attributed the signing of the Bodo peace accord to people's support, heralding a new dawn of peace in Assam.

Maharashtra tops India's first ever ranking of States on Justice delivery

- India's first ever ranking of States on their capacity to deliver Justice to citizens, announced here, lists Maharashtra at the top of the 18 Large and Mid-sized States (with population of over one crore each), followed by Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Haryana. The list of seven Small States (population less than one crore each) was topped by Goa, followed by Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh.

First-ever Hornbill Festival Begins In Tripura

- The first-ever hornbill festival in Tripura began on Saturday with an objective to raise awareness among people for conservation of the bird and to showcase biodiversity in the state. Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb inaugurated the two-day festival at Barmura Eco-park, an abode of the 'oriental pied hornbills' in West Tripura district.

Hunar Haat inaugurated in Indore, Madhya Pradesh

- Governor of Madhya Pradesh Lalji Tandon has inaugurated Hunar Haat in Indore. Union Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi was also present on this occasion. Hunar Haat is being organized till 16th February 2020. Governor stated that India is a country of diversity with every region having different art, culture, language, costumes. This Unity in Diversity is the identity of India. Every corner of the country has a legacy of arts/crafts.

Rajasthan govt to create separate identity card for the transgender community in the state

- Rajasthan state government has announced that it is to connect the transgender community with the mainstream society. It is to provide separate identity cards for transgenders in the state. The announcement was made by the Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Master Bhanwarlal Meghwal.

Andhra Pradesh gets its first Disha Police station

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy inaugurated Disha police station in Rajamahendravaram city to address heinous crimes against women and children in Andhra Pradesh. He also launched the Disha app to help women in distress, and demonstrated how women can send SOS through the app which will alert the nearest police vehicle.

UP government approves 2020 Ground Water Act

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath chaired a state cabinet approved the Ground Water Act, 2020. It aims to improve the falling groundwater level.

- **Ground Water Act, 2020:**
Under the Ground Water Act, 2020, registration is mandatory to install submersible pumps.
- Online registration facility will also be available.
- The domestic users and farmers need not pay any fee.
- Rainwater harvesting system has been made mandatory in all private and government schools and colleges.
- In the urban areas, if a landlord installs a submersible pump to build a house larger than 300 sqm area, then it will be necessary to install the rainwater harvesting system.
- If someone pollutes groundwater through boring pipes, then there will be punishment and penalty against him.
- Boring companies must get their registration done. The companies should give all the information every three months.
- The map of government and private buildings will be cleared only when they have a provision to install a rainwater harvesting system.

Odisha govt announced a hike in 5% for Dearness Allowance

- Odisha State government has announced a hike in 5% for Dearness Allowance (DA) for the state government employees and pensioners. The announcement was made by the Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik on 14 February. The state also announced a hike of 10% arrears of 7th pay commission.

CM Pinarayi Vijayan launches 'Yodhavu' mobile app to combat drug menace

- 'Yodhavu' (Warrior), a mobile app through which the public can inform police about drug abuse and its distribution, was launched by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan here on Saturday as part of efforts to curb the growing menace in the State.

Manipur: Seed sowing festival ‘Lui-Ngai-Ni’ celebrated at Ukhrul

- The Naga tribes of Manipur celebrated its seed sowing festival ‘Lui-Ngai-Ni’, under the theme “Oneness through Culture”, with much fanfare at Tangkhul Naga Long (TNL) ground in Ukhrul on Saturday. Manipur’s Minister of Tribal Development N. Kayisii graced the festival as inaugural Chief Guest and Tamei MLA Awangbou Newmai as Guest of Honour.

International Affairs

World’s First Transcatheter Mitral Valve Approved in Europe

- The Abbott Tendyne Transcatheter Mitral Valve Implantation (TMVI) system received the European CE mark. It is the first transcatheter mitral valve replacement (TMVR) technology in the world.
- The main aim is to make critical need to eliminate mitral regurgitation when surgery or mitral repair is not an option in high-risk surgical patients. This therapy treats significant mitral regurgitation (MR) in patients requiring a heart valve replacement.

Mo O’Brien to become the first deaf person to row across the Atlantic Ocean

- Mo O’Brien aims to be the first deaf person to row across the Atlantic Ocean in a boat with her all-female team, the Oarsome Foursome, in the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge 2019.

Bangladesh: PM Sheikh Hasina inaugurates month long Ekushey Book Fair

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh on Sunday inaugurated the month long Ekushey Book fair at the Bangla Academy premises in Dhaka.
- Ekushey Book Fair is the biggest and longest book fair of Bangladesh. It is organised every year in February commemorating the martyrs of the language movement during which eight people laid down their lives on February 21, 1952 for establishing Bangla as the official language of the then East Pakistan.

Baftas 2020: Sam Mendes and 1917 emerge victorious with seven awards

- Sam Mendes’s nerve-shredding war drama 1917 was the big winner at the 2020 Bafta film awards, on an evening when the movie industry’s diversity problem hovered ominously in the background.
- 1917, which tells the story of two young soldiers sent on a perilous, near-impossible mission to prevent an otherwise certain massacre, won seven Baftas including best film and outstanding British film, best director for Mendes, sound, production design, special visual effects and, for Roger Deakins, best cinematography – his fifth Bafta.

WHO names the new Corona Virus: “COVID-19”

- World Health Organization announced a new name for the Corona Virus, “COVID-19”. Today more than 42,000 are infected with the virus according to the organization. WHO has chosen the name with no reference to geographical location.

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According to WHO, the name was chosen in such way that it does not affect normal lives of a country.

Pakistan successfully tested Ra'ad-II cruise missile

- Pakistan successfully flight tested the air-launched nuclear-capable cruise missile Ra'ad-II. The test aimed to boost the military's deterrence capability on land and at sea. The Ra'ad-II missile is an attempt to match India's BrahMos cruise missile

Pakistan to remain in Grey List

- The International Co-operation Review Group (ICRG) of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) announced that Pakistan will be retained on the "Grey List". Pakistan failed to completely implement the 27-point action plan to check terror financing. The announcement was made during the five-day FATF Plenary session which is held in Paris.

New Zealand Deputy PM, FM arrive on four-day India visit

- Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of New Zealand Winston Peters arrived in New Delhi yesterday on a four-day visit to India.
- Today, he will attend the inaugural ceremony of New Zealand Centre at IIT Delhi and will give a speech on Indo Pacific at the Indian Council of World Affairs. Mr Peters is scheduled to meet External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar this evening.

Bangladesh records sharp decline in Child malnutrition: UNICEF Survey

- The child malnutrition rate in Bangladesh has declined sharply over the last six years. The finding was reported in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019, jointly conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and UNICEF.
- The survey has also recorded improvement in many other areas related to health and nutrition, Child protection, hygiene and sanitation.

Canadian doctors use robot to perform surgery to treat brain aneurysm

- In a first, Canadian doctors have used a robot to perform a surgery to treat brain aneurysm. The medical condition is a weakness in a blood vessel in the brain that balloons and fills with blood. The experimental procedure was described at the International Stroke Conference-2020, held in the United States. The surgery was performed on a 64-year-old female patient.

African Union summit was held in Addis Ababa

- The African Union (AU) summit was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Heads of state and government officials from across Africa gathered in the summit. The theme of the summit is "Silencing the Guns: Creating conducive conditions for Africa's development".

Highlights:

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- The focus of the summit was to end regional violence, including the conflicts in South Sudan and Libya.
- The summit highlighted three challenges namely eradicating poverty, tackling the climate crisis and silencing guns in Africa.
- AU announced that it is to host two summits in May on conflict resolution and on implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo will replace South Africa as AU chair in 2021.

Researchers found Pangolin as the host of CoronaVirus in China

- Chinese researchers who conducted the investigation on the animal origin of the deadly coronavirus outbreak in China found that the endangered pangolin may be the reason for the outbreak. Scientists at the South China Agricultural University found the genome sequences of viruses in pangolins to be 99% identical to those on coronavirus patients. The scientists conducted tests on more than 1,000 samples from wild animals.

Antarctica recorded the hottest temperature of 20.75 degrees Celsius

- World Meteorological Organization announced that for the first time in record Antarctica has recorded its hottest temperature ever, 20.75 Degree Celsius. So far, the highest was 18.3 Degrees Celsius that was recorded in January 1982.

Natural disasters cost world \$232 billion in 2019: Report

- The world lost as much as \$232 billion due to natural disasters in 2019, with India leading in casualties with 1,750 deaths, said a recent report by AON, global professional firm which provides risk solutions to insurance firms, among other things.

WHO report: Cancer Cases to increase by 81% in 2040

- While the world marked World Cancer Day on February 4, 2020, the World Health Organization released its report on Cancer. According to the report, the cancer cases will increase by 81% by 2040. This is mainly due to lack of investment. The report says that it is essential to invest 25 billion USD in the next decade to save millions of lives.

Bangladesh to sign Free Trade Agreement with Nepal

- Bangladesh and Nepal have agreed to sign a Free Trade Agreement to enhance trade between the two countries; Announcing this after meeting the visiting Foreign Minister of Nepal Pradeep Kumar Gyawali on Monday, Commerce Minister of Bangladesh Tipu Munshi said that a committee will be formed to work out the modalities of the agreement.

China moves against Pakistan in FATF, Turkey now the only supporter

- China has joined India and United States in putting Pakistan on Grey list of the FATF (Financial Action Task Force). Both China and Saudi Arabia have joined US, India and other European countries sending stern messages to Pakistan against its actions of terror funding money laundering.

US to sign peace deal with Taliban forces to end war in Afghanistan

- The US President Donald Trump recently announced that the United States of America will sign a peace agreement with the Taliban forces on February 29, 2020.
- The US and the Taliban forces are to sign peace agreement to end the war of 18 years in Afghanistan. After the agreement, 12,000 US troops that are currently deployed in Afghanistan are to return to US.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad resigns

- The Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad resigned over political issues. The 94-year old Mahathir tried to form a coalition. This move would exclude his successor Anwar Ibrahim. This led to a tussle in the party and eventually the leader resigned. However, he will act as an interim PM.

Sweden MP delegation visits the ECI

- A ten-member delegation of MPs, members of the Committee on the Constitution in Riksdag, the Parliament of Sweden, visited the Election Commission in New Delhi. The delegation met Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora and Election Commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra yesterday.

Foreign Relation

India and Norway to work towards mitigating marine plastic littering

- CMS COP-13, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species Conference of Parties-13, was marked by India. The Convention is to be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat between February 17, 2020 and February 22, 2020.

India, Maldives agree to combat terrorism, radicalization

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah met his Maldivian counterpart, Sheikh Imran Abdulla, on 21 February 2020. The Ministers agreed to combat terrorism, radicalization in both the countries.

US surpasses China to become India's top trading partner

- The United States has surpassed China to become India's top trading partner. According to the Commerce Ministry data, the bilateral trade between the US and India stood at nearly 88 billion dollars in 2018-19 fiscal. During the period, India's trade with China was at 87.1 billion dollars.
- Similarly, during April-December 2019-20, the bilateral trade between the US and India stood at 68 billion dollars against a nearly 65 billion dollars trade with China in the same period.

India-Africa Defence Ministers Conclave at DefExpo for first time

- For the first time, in the history of DefExpo, India and Africa are to discuss their defence relations. The India-Africa Defence Conclave is to be held on February 6, 2020. Around 24 Defence Ministers are to participate in the conclave.
- India's largest Defence Exhibition is to be held in Lucknow between February 5, 2020 and February 8, 2020. During the exhibition, India showcases its existing and new defence technologies to the world. As a part of the event, the India-Africa Defence Conclave is to be held.

Baftas 2020: Sam Mendes and 1917 emerge victorious with seven awards

- Sam Mendes's nerve-shredding war drama 1917 was the big winner at the 2020 Bafta film awards, on an evening when the movie industry's diversity problem hovered ominously in the background.
- 1917, which tells the story of two young soldiers sent on a perilous, near-impossible mission to prevent an otherwise certain massacre, won seven Baftas including best film and outstanding British film, best director for Mendes, sound, production design, special visual effects and, for Roger Deakins, best cinematography – his fifth Bafta.

Task Force Meet: India and Norway to strengthen their BLUE ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP

- India and Norway jointly inaugurated a Task Force of Blue Economy for Sustainable Development. The third meet of the task force was held on February 18, 2020. They also launched a new collaboration of Integrated Ocean Management and Research at the meet.

India, UK to partner on developing jet engine technology

- India and the United Kingdom are expected to sign a government-to-government agreement on jet engine technology development. The announcement was made by the UK Minister for Defence Procurement James Heapey on 6 February.

FICCI & Central asian countries jointly launches India-Central Asia business council in New Delhi

- In order to boost business & economy, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) together with 5 of the biggest industry bodies of Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) launched the India-Central Asia Business council in New Delhi.

India, Portugal sign 14 pacts

- India and Portugal exchanged 14 agreements and understandings in a number of key areas, including maritime, intellectual property rights, aerospace and scientific research, as President Ram Nath Kovind hosted his Portuguese counterpart Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa in New Delhi.

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- Kovind received Sousa at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on his first state visit to India. Kovind said Portugal-India relations are very special and the two countries enjoy 500 years of shared history.

India and Thailand marching hand-in-hand to foster business relations

- AsiaOne Magazine and URS Media organized a Networking Meet called India-Thailand: Today, Tomorrow, Together collaboration with the India Thai Chamber of Commerce (ITCC) at their premises at Sathon, Bangkok, The exclusive networking saw the presence of eminent dignitaries such as Abhisit Vejjajiva, the former Prime Minister of Thailand and Suchitra Durai, the Ambassador of India to the Kingdom.
- The 13th Asian Business and Social Forum and attempted to highlight the fact that India and Thailand share a strong historical and cultural connection.

US President Donald Trump visited Taj Mahal

- US President Donald Trump visited the Taj Mahal with his wife Melania Trump during his two-day state visit to India. The last US president who visited the Taj Mahal was Bill Clinton. He visited India in 2000. Also, in 1959, then US president David Dwight Eisenhower had visited Taj.

India and China Trade Deficit

- India's trade in China decreased from USD 89.71 billion in 2017-18 to USD 87.07 billion in 2018-19. India's imports from China declined from USD 76.38 billion in 2017-18 to USD 70.32 billion in 2018-19, and our exports grew from USD 13.33 billion in 2017-18 to USD 16.75 billion in 2018-19. India's trade deficit with China reduced from USD 63.05 billion to USD 53.57 billion.

India, Sri Lanka to strengthen cooperation to combat terrorism

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held talks with his Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa on 8 January during his state visit to India. The leaders discussed covering a range of key bilateral issues, including trade, defence and security, and the island nation's Tamil population.

India-Sri Lanka ties:

- The two countries agree to deepen cooperation to combat terrorism
- They discussed the joint projects in Sri Lanka apart from deepening trade, investment, and people-to-people ties.
- PM Modi reaffirmed that the new lines of credit (LoC) announced in 2019 will strengthen development cooperation between the two countries.

India, Norway ink 4 MoUs in field of research, higher education

- India and Norway on Tuesday signed four MoUs in the field of research and higher education to strengthen their bilateral partnership.

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- The agreements were signed here during the visit of a delegation of prominent education and research institutions from Norway led by Director-General, Anne Line Wold, Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

Top US officials to address India-focused meet in Washington

- Reflecting the new Indo-US bonhomie, the White House has lined up its top officials, including the all-powerful Jared Kushner, for a India-centric business conference here this week.
- The move comes close on the heels of the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump in Japan last month.

India, Portugal signs Cooperation Agreement in the field of Maritime Transport and Ports

- A Cooperation Agreement was signed between India and the Republic of Portugal in the field of Maritime Transport and Ports on 14 February 2020. The objective of the agreement is to strengthen the coordination of Maritime transport between the two countries.

India attends Munich Security Conference in Germany

- Munich Security Conference is being held in Germany between February 14, 2020 and February 16, 2020. The Conference was attended by External Affairs minister Jaishankar representing India. The Minister met his counterparts of Georgia, Portugal and Lithuania on the sidelines of the conference. The minister his Portugal Counterpart as a backdrop of its President visiting India.

Nagpur Oranges Exported to Dubai first Time

- The first Consignment of Nagpur Oranges were sent to Dubai from Navi Mumbai. The oranges were sent in refrigerated containers. In the state of Maharashtra, around 40 hectares of land is under cultivation of Nagpur oranges. The APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) selected Nagpur district as a cluster for oranges under Agriculture Export Policy.

India and US sign defence deals worth 3 billion dollars

- India and the United States yesterday finalized defence deals worth three billion dollars and signed three agreements, including in health and oil sectors. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on mental health between the health departments of both the two countries.

BIMSTEC to connect 3000 km long power grid from Myanmar-Thailand to India

- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is working on a project of connecting about 3,000 kilometre-long power grid from Myanmar-Thailand to India.

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- The above announcement was made during the inauguration of the Conference on Enhancing Energy Cooperation in the BIMSTEC Region, which was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The 3,000 kilometre-long BIMSTEC regional power grid will come up with various advantages. The member country's demand of energy will be ensured with the introduction of power grid. It will also benefit consumers with uninterrupted power supply at economical prices.

Ranks

India ranked 40th in the International IP Index

- India ranked 40th on a global International Intellectual Property (IP) Index. It was released by the Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) of the US Chambers of Commerce. GIPC conducted the survey for 53 countries.
- India scored 38.46% (19.23 out of 50) in 2020. In 2019, it scored 36.04% (16.22 out of 45). As per the report, India has shown improvement in terms of scores when it comes to the protection of IP and copyright issues.

ICMR Report says Delhi and Ahmedabad tops in added-fat consumption

- The Indian Council of Medical Research conducted study on the food habits of the citizens of the country. The study said that vegetarians consume more fat than that of non-vegetarians. Also, among the metropolitan cities of India, Delhi and Ahmedabad topped the list in average consumption of added fat.

Bengaluru accounted highest number of digital transactions

- Online payment processor Worldline India reported that Bengaluru accounted for the highest number of digital transactions in India in 2019. The aim is to move India towards a less-cash economy. As per the report, Bengaluru is followed by Chennai, Mumbai, and Pune. United Payments Interface (UPI) was the most preferred mode of payment. It is followed by debit cards, immediate payment service (IMPS), and credit cards.

Corona Virus Ranking: India ranks 17 in importing Corona Virus

- The researchers of Robert Koch Institute in Germany and Humboldt University have founded mathematical model to predict global spread of novel corona virus cases. India was ranked 17th in the ranking system. So far three cases have been reported in Kerala. They are all from Kerala.

Mumbai, Kolkata see highest women, child trafficking cases: NCRB study

- The highest incidence of children and women being trafficked were observed from the cities of Mumbai and Kolkata, according to the latest study by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). The data on missing children and women was compiled on the directions of the Supreme Court.

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- In 2011, the SC constituted a panel which submitted its report in 2019. The panel has asked the apex court to direct the NCRB to compile data on missing children and women to identify the areas prone to trafficking.

ONGC, Indian Oil, NTPC topped the 2018-19 Public Enterprises Survey

- Public Enterprises Survey 2018-19 tabled at Parliament stated that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation and NTPC Limited were the top three profitable PSUs in 2018-19. Also, BSNL, Air India and MTNL incurred the highest losses for a third consecutive year.

Hindi is the 3rd most spoken language of the world

- The 22nd edition of the world language database Ethnologue reported that Hindi is the 3rd most spoken language of the world in 2019. English at the top of the list with 1,132 million speakers. Chinese Mandarin is in second position with 1,117 million speakers.

India ranked 131 out of 180 nations in WHO ‘child flourishing index’

- India ranks lower than 130 other countries on measurements of children’s survival, health, education and nutrition, factors taken into account in the World Health Organisation’s ‘child flourishing index’. The report additionally states that every country in the world has levels of excess carbon emissions that will prevent younger generations from a healthy and sustainable future.

India becomes 5th largest economy, overtakes UK, France: Report

- India emerged as the world’s fifth largest economy by overtaking the UK and France in 2019, says a report. A US-based think tank World Population Review in its report said that India is developing into an open-market economy from its previous autarkic policies.
- “India’s economy is the fifth largest in the world with a GDP of \$ 2.94 trillion, overtaking the UK and France in 2019 to take the fifth spot,” it said.

India ranked 77th on the Sustainability Index as per UN report

- India secured 77th rank on the Sustainability Index and 131st on the Flourishing Index in the UN report that was commissioned by a Commission of World Health Organization (WHO), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and The Lancet. The report was released by over 40 child and adolescent health experts from around the world.

World Wide Education for the Future Index: India jumps to rank 35

- The Economic Intelligence Unit recently published the Worldwide Education for the Future Index for the year 2019. India has jumped by five ranks and currently holds rank 35. The ranking is provided based on the ability of a country to equip their students in skill-based education. India ranked 35th with an overall score of 53.

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Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) tops in Nature Ranking Index-2020

- The CSIR of Delhi topped the National Ranking Index 2020 that ranks the scientific research institutes. CSIR was followed by IISc Bangalore.
- The Rankings were provided based on the numbers of research output. It is indicated by total citations in numbers. It also includes shares, that is the sharing percentage of an article.

14 of world's 20 most polluted cities are Indian, Delhi most polluted capital

- According to 2019 World Air Quality Report, 14 of the world's 20 most polluted cities of the world are in India. Delhi topped the list of world's most polluted capital cities in the world while Ghaziabad topped the list of most polluted regional cities. The average Particulate Matter (PM 2.5) concentration of Delhi is 98.6, said the report.

The US became Indias top trading partner

- The data provided by the Ministry of Commerce stated that in 2018-2019 the US had surpassed China to become India's top trading partner. It shows greater economic ties between the two countries. The trend is expected to continue in the coming years as India and the US are engaged in further deepening the economic ties.

Business

TERI: India's Steel Demand to increase carbon emissions by 600 MT

- World Sustainable Development Summit released its report on India's Steel Demand. According to the report, if the steel demand of the country continues to grow, the carbon-dioxide emissions from the steel sector will reach 600 million tonnes by 2050.

AAI signs concession agreements with Adani Group for 3 airports

- Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed three concession agreements with Adani Enterprises for operations, management, and development of Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru airports.
- The agreements were signed on Friday with the group's subsidiary companies, namely Adani Ahmedabad International Airport Ltd, Adani Lucknow International Airport Ltd, and Adani Mangaluru International Airport Ltd. The concessionaires are required to take-over the three airports after fulfilling certain conditions precedents within 180 days from February 14.

Microsoft, SBI partner to Train Differently-Abled People

- Global tech giant Microsoft has announced a partnership with State Bank of India to train differently-abled people for empowering them to find jobs in the banking, financial services and insurance sector.
- More than 500 differently-abled youths will be upskilled in the first year of the partnership. As per the firm it is an ideal partnership. This is a new beginning in training and finding people with any kind of disability but employable. Our experience with

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them has been fantastic, SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar told the media persons in Mumbai.

Tech Mahindra to acquire Zen3 Infosolutions for Rs 460cr

- IT company Tech Mahindra on Monday said it has signed an agreement to acquire 100 per cent stake in US-based Zen3 Infosolutions for \$64 million (Rs 460 crore) in an all-cash deal. Headquartered in Seattle, Zen 3 has over 1,300 employees spread across offices in Seattle, Dublin, Hyderabad, Vishakhapatnam and Bengaluru.

NTPC's acquisition of entire stake in NEEPCO, THDC India gets CCI nod

- Fair trade regulator CCI on Monday said it has given nod to acquisition of government's entire stake in THDC India and North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd (NEEPCO) by state-owned NTPC Ltd.
- As part of transactions, NTPC will acquire 100 per cent of the issued and paid-up share capital of the NEEPCO and 74.5 per cent stake in THDC India, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) noted in separate releases.

DoT approved the merger of Tata group with Bharti Airtel

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) approved the merger of the consumer mobile operations of the Tata group with Bharti Airtel. The final approval comes over two years after the companies had announced their plan to merge businesses.

Religare group to sell equity in health insurance arm to Kedaara group for Rs 400 crore

- Religare Enterprises Ltd (REL) said it will sell part of stake in its health insurance subsidiary Religare Health Insurance Company Ltd to the Kedaara group for Rs 400 crore.
- REL has entered into a binding agreement with a Kedaara group entity, Trishikhar Ventures LLP, which is a private equity investment firm for investments in its health insurance subsidiary Religare Health Insurance Company Ltd (RHICL), it said in a release.

Defence News

IAF AN-32 Lands at LEH with Indigenous Bio-Jet Fuel

- IAF achieved a milestone, when an AN-32 aircraft of the Indian Air Force, powered with a 10% blend of Indian bio-jet fuel, took-off from Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport, Leh. It is the first time that the bio-jet indigenous fuel-powered both engines of the aircraft. The aircraft was flight tested, and its performance was validated at Chandigarh Air Base before undertaking the operational flight to Leh.

Matla Abhiyan: Coastal Security Exercise conducted by Indian Navy

- The Indian Navy recently launched a unique coastal security exercise in Kolkata. The exercise was conducted to create awareness about the coastal security to the local community.
- The Indian Navy conducted the Coastal Security Exercise, Malta Abhiyan in the Sunderbans region and the exercise is unique of its kind.

India-Bangladesh joint military exercise SAMPRITI-IX begins in Meghalaya

- It is the ninth edition of India-Bangladesh joint military exercise Sampriti. The exercise commenced at Umroi, Meghalaya on February 03, 2020. The objective of SAMPRITI-IX is to provide basic counter-terrorism training for mountainous and jungle locations.
- As per the government agencies, a delegation of Bangladesh Army comprising of 31 officers and 138 other ranks are participating in the joint military exercise. On the other hand, a company group of Indian Army is showing its skill in SAMPRITI-IX.

Parth: World's Cheapest Gun Shot Locator developed by Indian Army

- The Indian Army's College of Military Engineering with a private firm developed the gun shot locators called "Parth". These are much cheaper than the ones imported. The device was showcased at DefExpo 2020.

Bhabha Kavach: New bullet proof jacket developed by BARC-to be used by CISF

- The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre developed a new bullet proof jacket called Bhabha Kavach. The jackets are to be used by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).
- Around 55 pieces of Bullet proof jackets were handed over to the CISF. The nominal weight of the jacket is 6.8kg. It is the lightest level-3 plus jacket. It has been produced based on carbon nanotube and hot- pressed boron carbide technologies.

First Integrated Tri-Service Command to be set up in June by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)

- The Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat aims to set up an integrated tri-service command for the first time by June 2020. This command will be headed by an Air Marshal. The talks among the CDS, Air Force Chief RKS Bhadauria and Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane have begun regarding the creation of the command.

Milan 2020: Biggest Multilateral Naval Exercise in the Indian Ocean Region

- Indian Navy is preparing itself for the biggest multilateral naval exercise to be conducted in the Indian Ocean Region. The Exercise is to be conducted under the theme Theme: Synergy across the Seas
- Around 42 countries are to participate in the exercise. It includes Russia and USA as well. India has not invited China to participate in the exercise. The exercise is to be conducted in Vishakhapatnam in March 2020.

SAMPRITI-IX: Indo-Bangladesh joint military exercise concludes in Meghalaya

- Over the past two weeks, with effect from 03 February to 16 February 2020, Armies of India and Bangladesh participated in joint military exercise SAMPRITI-IX at Umroi, Meghalaya. As the 9th edition of the Joint Exercise SAMPRITI reached its culmination day on 16 February 2020, the Head of Observer Delegations from both sides conveyed their appreciation for both the participating contingents for successfully achieving the objectives of the Exercise.

Biggest jump in world defence spending in 10 years: study

- Global spending on defence rose by four percent in 2019, the largest growth in 10 years, led by big increases in the US and China, a study said Friday.
- The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said the rise was fuelled by growing rivalries between big powers, new military technologies and rumbling conflicts from Ukraine to Libya.

Ajeya Warrior: India-UK to hold joint military exercise

- India-UK hold joint exercise called Ajeya Warrior on February 13, 2020. The exercise is being held from 2005. Around 120 soldiers are to participate in the exercise. This is the fifth edition of the exercise. The countries will hold the exercise in Salisbury Plains.

HAL signed MoU with Elbit Systems for Digital HUD for fighter planes

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) signed an MOU with Israel-based defense electronics company Elbit Systems on 6 February 2020 during the DefExpo 2020. The MoU aims to promote and market the Digital Head-Up Displays (HUD) units.

HAL received approval to produce light utility helicopter

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) received initial clearance from DRDO's department of defence research and development for its light utility helicopter (LUH). The clearance will pave way for its production. LUH will replace the aging fleet of Cheetah and Chetak helicopters.

India-UK joint Army Exercise Ajeya Warrior 2020 begins in Salisbury Plains

- The fifth edition of Ajeya Warrior-2020 exercise between the Indian Army and United Kingdom Army commenced today at Salisbury Plains, United Kingdom. The aim of the exercise is to conduct training of troops in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations in both urban and semi-urban areas.

Exercise Indradhanush commenced at Airbase in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

- The fifth edition of Exercise Indradhanush was jointly commenced at Air Force Station Hindan, Airbase in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh on 24 February 2020. The exercise is held between the Indian Air Force (IAF), India and Royal Air Force (RAF), the UK. The exercise will formally conclude on 29 February 2020.

DRDO signed Technology Development Contract with Rosoboronexport Russia

- DRDO's High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) signed a Technology Development Contract with Rosoboronexport Russia. It was signed during the DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow. The contract aims for the development of a spectrum of high energy materials required for missiles, rockets, and guns.

Science and Technology

ISRO launches a low-cost satellite launch vehicles

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) declares that it is preparing low-cost satellite launch vehicles costing around 30-35 crores rupees, each which can put into orbit satellites weighing 500 kgs. The first launch is expected to take place in the next four months from the country.
- The ISRO has a significant commercial boost as it will be able to cater to micro, mini, and medium segments of the market. ISRO earmarked 1,600 million Dollars for launch vehicles, of which 870 million Dollars will be for PSLV and the remaining for GSLV.

India is developing new Swine Fever Control Vaccines

- The ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research's) Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) has built up a cell culture Classical Swine Fever immunization.
- The immunization will assist with sparing a few bunnies. This is because the present vaccine called the Lapinised CSF (Classical Swine Fever) being utilized is delivered by relinquishing an enormous number of hares. The new immunization concocted gives invulnerability for a long time when contrasted with the past antibodies that gave insusceptibility to 3 to a half year.

UAE discovers new natural gas reserves

- The United Arab Emirates has discovered huge shallow natural gas reserves between the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The newly discovered gas reserves contain about 80 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. The discovery of the huge gas reserves will help the nation achieve self-sufficiency in gas production.

Record-setting Nasa astronaut returns home after spending 328 days in space

- Expedition 61 Flight Engineer Christina Koch of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) returned home to Ellington Field in Houston, Texas, US. After setting a record for the longest single spaceflight in history by a woman, Nasa astronaut Christina Koch returned to Earth.

NASA sends a Solar Orbiter probe to map poles of the sun

- The US space agency NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are sent a new probe toward the Sun to map its poles. The aim is to help researchers grasp how the sun's vast bubble of energy affects Earth and humans in space.

International protection for Great Indian Bustard, Bengal Florican and Asian Elephant

- India's proposal to include Great Indian Bustard, Asian Elephant and Bengal Florican in Appendix I of UN Convention on migratory species was unanimously accepted today at the ongoing thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Gandhinagar.
- The Government of India has declared Indian elephant as National Heritage Animal. Indian elephant is also provided highest degree of legal protection by listing it in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

GSI discovers gold deposits of over 3,000 tonnes in Sonbhadra

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has discovered gold deposits to the tune of around 3,000 tonnes in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh, almost five times India's current reserve of the yellow metal.
- District Mining Officer K.K. Rai said the gold deposits were found in Son Pahadi and Hardi areas. Work on finding gold reserves in Sonbhadra was started almost two decades back in 1992-93 by the GSI, he said, adding that auctioning of these blocks through e-tendering would start soon.

Department of Telecommunications launches '5G Hackathon'

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has launched '5G Hackathon' in association with government, academia and industry stakeholders. Aimed at shortlisting India's focused cutting edge ideas that can be converted into workable 5G products and solutions, the Hackathon that began yesterday will be spread across three phases.
- The event will culminate in a grand felicitation ceremony at India Mobile Congress on the 16th of October this year. Winners of the various phases will share a total prize pool of 2.5 crore rupees.

ISRO to launch 10 Earth Imaging Satellites in 2020 including first Geo Imaging Satellite-1

- ISRO published its annual report 2019-20. According to the report, the Indian Space Research Organization will launch 10 Earth Observation Satellites in 2020-21. It includes the first Geo Imaging Satellite, GISAT-1.

Xiaomi to use ISRO's NavIC technology

- Xiaomi has collaborated with ISRO to bring the space agency's Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System "NavIC technology" to its smartphones. The announcement was made by Xiaomi Global VP and MD Manu Jain. Xiaomi is the only smartphone brand to have worked with ISRO to bring tech that has been developed in the country to the fore, so far.

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Abbott India launches vaccine against 4 strains of influenza virus

- Abbott India announced the launch of an inactivated vaccine in India against four strains of influenza virus.
- “It is the only 0.5 ml quadrivalent flu vaccine in India that has been approved for use in children below 3 years. In fact, it can be given to children from 6 months onwards, and to adults,” the company said in a statement.

Sports

Name	Title name	Extra Information
Bala Devi	becoming the first woman Indian footballer to play professionally outside India	Ngangom Bala Devi who earlier went to Scotland for a trial for Rangers has officially signed by the Scottish giants with the club releasing a statement of signing her.
Sofia Kenin	Australian Open - Grand Slam title	Kenin, who turned 21 in November, is the youngest Australian Open champion since Russian Maria Sharapova in 2008.
Ayonika Paul	women's 10m Air Rifle T1 event	She came to a quality eight-woman field, which had the likes of Tokyo 2020 quota holders Apurvi Chandela and Anjum Moudgil among competitors. Registered a score of 252.0.
Novak Djokovic	Australian Open - 8th Men's singles title	The men's doubles title clinched by Joe Salisbury of UK and American Rajeev Ram who beat Australia's Luke Saville and Max Purcell.
Indian boxers	six gold at Golden Girl Championship	While the junior women's team clinched five golds, three silvers and one bronze medal, the youth team secured a single gold and four bronze medals. The Boxing Federation of India in a press release said, the event concluded.
Mirabai Chanu	Gold - 203 kg lift	The 25-year-old Manipuri lifted 88kg in snatch in her second attempt and 115 kg in clean and jerk for a total of 203kg.
Rakhi Halder	gold at Senior Womens National Weightlifting Championships	She lifted 93 kg in snatch and 117 kg in clean and jerk on 5 January 2020. She lifted 10kg

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		ahead of Harjinder Kaur of Chandigarh, her rival.
Bangladesh	Under-19 World Cup	Bangladesh beat India by three wickets to win maiden ICC U-19 World Cup cricket title by Duckworth-Lewis method last night in South Africa.
Haryana	10th Hockey Senior Women National C'ship	Haryana thrashed Sports Authority of India (SAI) 6-0 to win the 10th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2020 (A Division) title at Kollam.
Bangladesh	Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2020	Bangladesh won Under 19 Cricket World Cup organized by International Cricket Cup (ICC).
Aditya Mehta	National Snooker Championship	Ace cueist Aditya Mehta defeated multiple-time world champion Pankaj Advani 6-2 to win the National Snooker Championship here.
Armand Duplantis	pole vault world record	The USA-born Swede, 20, cleared 6.17m at the second attempt in Torun, Poland, to beat Frenchman Renaud Lavillenie's previous mark.
Joshna Chinappa	77th Senior National squash Championship	With the win, she claimed her 18th title in the career. Saurav Ghosal won in Men's category bagging 13th titles to his kitty.
Vidit S Gujrathi	Prague Chess	India's no. 2 player Vidit S Gujrathi posted a win over Austrian GM Markus Ragger in the third round to jump to the top spot in the Masters category of the Prague Chess festival here.
Ayan Bin Shahnaz bagged silver, while Zain Ali and Muzamil Hussain Mir, all are from Kashmir, bagged bronze medals	World Snow Shoe Championship	Athletes from 17 countries including the USA, Canada, Australia, Italy, Germany, Spain, Sweden and France participated in the championship.
Koneru Humpy	Cairns Cup title – chess	World rapid champion Koneru Humpy claimed her second title in the last two months by emerging triumphant at the Cairns Cup chess tournament following a draw against compatriot Dronavalli Harika

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		in the ninth and final round here.
Sunil Kumar	gold in 87-kg Greco Roman category in Asian Wrestling Championships	The seasoned grappler beat Azat Salidinov from Kyrgyzstan in the final of the 87 kg category.
Divya Kakran, Pinki and Sarita Mor	Gold medal - Asian Wrestling Championships	Divya Kakran on Thursday won a gold medal at the Asian Wrestling Championships after a dominant show in which she won all her bouts by fall, including against junior world champion Naruha Matsuyuki.
Sharath-Sathyan	silver at Hungarian Open	The Indians entered the summit clash after stunning top seeds Kwan Kit Ho and Chun Ting Wong of Hong Kong in the semis, but were unable to keep their momentum going as they lost 5-11, 9-11, 11-9 and 9-11 in four games.

Obituary

Name	Associated Field
Vidya Bal	Social Activist, Feminist
Kirk Douglas	A Star of Hollywood's Golden Age
Orson Bean	actor and guest on TV game show
P Parameswaran	Veteran RSS pracharak
Wendell Rodricks	Award-winning designer
RK Pachauri	Former TERI Chief And Environmentalist
Katsuya Nomura	Baseball legend
Tapas Pal	Bengali actor and former Trinamool Congress MP
V L Dutt	Former Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) President
Mickey Wright	Women's golf legend
Larry Tesler	Computer scientist behind 'cut-copy-paste'
C Channigappa	Former Karnataka Minister
'Human computer' Katherine Johnson	NASA mathematician
Hosni Mubarak	Egypt's former President
Mohammed Hosni Mubarak	30 Years Egypt Ruler
Kazuhisa Hashimoto	Creator Of Famous 'Konami Code' Gaming Cheat
Sudhakar Chaturvedi	Renowned Vedic Scholar

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Important Days

Day	Date	Theme
World Wetlands Day	February 02	
World Cancer Day	February 04	I can, we can acknowledges that everyone has the capacity to address the cancer burden.
International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation	February 06	“Unleashing Youth Power: One decade of accelerating actions for zero female genital mutilation”.
National Deworming Day	February 10	
International Day of Women and Girls in Science	February 11	
World Unani Day	February 11	
National Productivity Day	February 12	
World Radio Day	February 13	Radio and diversity.
National Women’s Day of India	February 13	
Soil Health Card Day	February 19	
World Day of Social Justice	February 20	Closing the Inequalities Gap to Achieve Social Justice
International Mother Language Day	February 21	Languages without borders
Central Excise Day	February 24	
National Protein Day	February 27	Protein Mein Kya Hai
National Science Day	February 28	Women in Science
World rare disease day	February 29	Reframe Rare