

MONTHLY ONE-LINER GK DIGEST: JANUARY 2019

NATIONAL EVENTS

- The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India had launched the Yarn Bank Scheme as one of the components of PowerTex India Scheme with an aim to avoid fluctuation in yarn price. Under the Scheme, an interest-free corpus fund up to **Rs 2 crore** would be provided to the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)/Consortium formed by power loom weavers.
- The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Modi has approved the restructuring of existing National Health Agency as National Health Authority.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of a high-level committee for the implementation of clause 6 of the Assam Accord.
- The Government has launched the Green - Ag: Transforming Indian Agriculture project for global environmental benefits and the conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes in association with Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- The Sabarimala Shrine has been opened for the annual 21-day Makaravilakku festival season.
- An ambitious web-based single-window system PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub) for environmental clearances will be rolled-out at state levels by January 15.
- The Union Home Ministry has approved the proposal of the Uttar Pradesh Government to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj.
- The Panel headed by IIT-Hyderabad chairman B V R Mohan Reddy has suggested All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), not to allow setting up of new Engineering colleges from 2020.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Rice Research Institute South Asia Regional Centre (IRRI SARC) in Varanasi. It is the sixth campus of IRRI SARC.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation stone for the Mandal Dam Project on the North Koel River. The Mandal Dam Project would be boon for the states of Jharkhand and Bihar.
- The Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) has released the Ease of Doing Business Rankings for Indian states. Andhra Pradesh has topped the Ease of Doing Business rankings. Maharashtra and Delhi came in second and third place respectively.
- The New Delhi World Book Fair will be held at the Pragati Maidan. The theme of the 27th edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair is "Readers with special needs". The UAE's third largest emirate Sharjah is the guest of honour for the New Delhi World Book Fair.
- Ministry of Railways has planned to set up 1000 Mega Watt (MW) solar power by 2020-21. This would help Railways to source about 10% of its electrical energy from renewable source.
- Khelo India Youth Games 2019 are being held at Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Pune.
- The Lok Sabha has passed the 124th Constitutional Amendment Bill to provide reservations to the 'Economically Weaker Sections' of society. The Bill **amends Article 15** of the Constitution to provide reservations to economically weaker sections for admission to educational institutions including

private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions. The Bill also **amends Article 16** of the Constitution to provide reservations to people from economically weaker sections in government posts. The Bill caps the reservation to economically weaker sections at 10%.

- The World Economic Forum has recognised Tata Steel's plant at IJmuiden in the Netherlands as Manufacturing Lighthouse with state-of-the-art production facilities which successfully adopt and integrate the cutting-edge technologies of the future and drive financial and operational impact.
- The Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). It is a five-year action plan with a tentative target of 20-30% reduction in concentrations of PM10 and PM2.5 by 2024, with 2017 as the base year.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India has launched an online campaign Web-Wonder Women to discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been driving positive agenda of social change via social media
- The operational guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) prescribed the timeline of two months of completion of Crop Cutting Experiments/harvesting period for settlement of claims by insurance companies. Provision of 12% interest rate per annum to be paid by the Insurance Company to farmers for any delay in settlement of claims beyond 10 days of prescribed cut off date for payment of claims. State Governments are required to pay 12% interest rate for delay in the release of the State share of Subsidy beyond three months of prescribed cut off date/submission of requisition by Insurance Companies.
- The Union Minister of Human Resource Development Prakash Javadekar has announced an increase of around 5,000 seats in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas across the country. The increase in the number of seats was part of the Government efforts to increase the access to quality education for students, especially from rural areas.
- The Airports Authority of India has banned the single-use plastic items at its 129 airports across the country.
- The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is implementing the scheme of Rashtriya Gokul Mission to conserve and develop indigenous bovine breeds in a focused and scientific manner.
- The Government has set up a committee headed by former Union tourism secretary M.P. Bezbaruah to review the implementation of clause 6 of the Assam Accord.
- Rail Kumbh Seva Mobile App has been launched by the North Central Railway (NCR) to help the devotees arriving in Allahabad for the Kumbh Mela.
- The Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched 70-Point Grading Index to assess the quality of school education in the states.
- The Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Col Rajyavardhan Rathore (Retd) launched the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 as part of the National Youth Day celebrations. The theme of the National Youth Parliament festival is "Be the Voice of New India" and "Find solutions and contribute to policy".
- The Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook Naye Dishayen, Naye Nirman, Naya Bharat was released by the NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission.
- The National Wildlife Board has given its approval for the Trishna Gas project of ONGC which falls in

the Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary in the Gomati district of Tripura.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin and stamp on Guru Gobind Singh to mark the 350th birth anniversary. . The front side of the coin bears the rupee symbol and denominational value '350' in international numerals below the Lion Capital. The reverse side bears the picture of "Takht Shri Harimandir Ji Patna Sahib" in the centre and the years '1666' and '2016' in international numerals will be on the left and right periphery of the coin.
- The data from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has revealed the the facts about the implementation status of AMRUT Yojana. With only a year to the deadline, only 20 per cent of the total projects were completed utilising 3 per cent of the total funds approved. States like Bihar and Assam were not able to complete even a single project. Tamil Nadu topped the list by completing 378 projects. Tamil Nadu was the only State to have completed more than 300 projects.
- The India Manufacturing Barometer 2019 Report has been prepared by Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in association with PwC. India would witness faster growth in the next 12 months driven by expanding domestic market, technology and increased spending. India's economy is projected to grow anywhere between 7.3 – 7.7 per cent and the domestic market would be a major demand driver for India.
- The Defence India Startup Challenge has been launched by the Defence Innovation Organisation to boost innovations under the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme. The initiative has been launched with support from the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence, Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog.
- The Ministry of Industries and Commerce had initiated the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) to assist the organic producers to tap the market which is growing steadily in the both in domestic and export segments.
- Norway Prime Minister Erna Solberg arrived in New Delhi for a three-day state visit to India at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi.
- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) at Films Division of India premises in Mumbai.
- The Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced the decision to induct women in Personnel Below Officer Rank, PBOR, role in Corps of Military Police. The women will be inducted in a graded manner to eventually comprise 20% of total Corps of Military Police.
- The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is organising a fortnight of events named Shehri Samridhi Utsav all over the country with an aim to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM) to the poorest of poor and the most vulnerable.'
- The Union Minister of Housing and Urban affairs Hardeep Singh Puri launched the Global Housing Technology Challenge. The challenge is undertaken under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U). GHTC aims to fast-track the construction of affordable housing and meet the target of constructing 1.2 crore houses by 2022.
- Sanrakshan Kshмата Mahotsav (SAKSHAM) Vans was flagged off by Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan to promote and create awareness among people on the need of oil and gas conservation for the future and the methods to do it. Sanrakshan Kshмата Mahotsav

(SAKSHAM) is an annual flagship event of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Govt. of India.

- The Union Finance Ministry has started the Know Your Budget series on Twitter to educate the general public about the budgetary process. It is a fortnight series which explains the importance of Union Budget and its making.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) has announced Young Scientist Programme to inculcate and nurture space research fervour in young minds. 3 students from each of the 29 States and 7 Union Territories will be selected for the Young Scientist program
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for the capacity expansion project of Numaligarh Refinery from 3 MMTPA (Million Metric Tonne Per Annum) to 9 MMTPA. Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) was set up at Numaligarh in the district of Golaghat (Assam)
- The Minister of Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan launched the initiatives DD Science and India Science to popularise science in India. The initiatives aim to develop the scientific temper in Indian society.
- Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the 1st batch of UNNATI programme of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The full form of UNNATI is: Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly and Training programme.
- Commerce Ministry announced that the Government e Marketplace [GeM] launched “Womaniya on GeM” initiative to enable women entrepreneurs and women self-help groups [WSHG] to sell handicrafts and handloom, accessories, etc. directly to various Government ministries, departments and institutions.
- The word Nari Shakti is chosen as the word of the Year 2018 by the Oxford dictionaries. The announcement regarding this was made in the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF).
- Bharat Parv was organised as part of Republic Day celebrations at Red Fort, Delhi to generate a patriotic fervour and promote the rich cultural diversity of the country. Bharat Parv showcases the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.
- Ministry for Science and Technology inaugurated the three Department of Science and Technology (DST) mission centres at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) at the collective cost of Rs 50 crore.
- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) will launch a new train Samantha Express which will cover prominent places associated with Gautam Buddha and chief architect of the Constitution Dr B R Ambedkar.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of National Bench of Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal. Section 109 of Chapter XVIII Chapter of CGST Act empowers the Central Government to constitute an Appellate Tribunal known as the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal for hearing on the recommendation of Council
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana. Under the scheme, a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year. People of Indian-origin aged 45 to 65 can apply can avail the benefits under the scheme.
- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Armoured Systems Complex (ASC), developed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) at Hazira near Surat in Gujarat. This Armoured Systems Complex (ASC) is the

country's first private facility where the K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns will be manufactured.

STATE EVENTS

- The Government of Maharashtra has decided to give two LED bulbs, a DC fan and a mobile charging socket as freebies to farmers enrolling under the Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana. Under the Scheme, farmers with less than five acres will have to pay 5 per cent of the cost of a 3 HP solar pump while farmers with more than five acres will get a 5 HP solar pump for Rs 30000.
- The oil marketing companies have launched Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin Initiative, as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Odisha.
- Khushi Scheme of Odisha aims to provide good menstrual hygiene care to women of the state. Under the Scheme, the Government will provide free sanitary napkins to 17 lakh girls studying in Classes 6 to 12 in Government and Government-Aided Schools.
- The Government of Madhya Pradesh has announced setting up of a new Adhyatmik Vibhag (Spiritual Department).
- The government of West Bengal has announced the Krishak Bandhu scheme to address farm distress in the state. The West Bengal government will give annual financial assistance of Rs 5,000 per acre in two instalments, one during Kharif and another during Rabi season.
- Madhya Pradesh had become the first state in the country to create Happiness Department. The government had also announced the setting up of the Happiness Institute
- The new Government of Rajasthan has abolished the condition of a minimum educational qualification to contest local body elections. The cabinet also decided on holding the election of mayors and chairmans in corporations through the direct system instead of the indirect method introduced by the previous government.
- The Government of Uttar Pradesh has initiated "One District, One Product" Scheme to encourage indigenous and specialized products and crafts of the state.
- The Government of Chhattisgarh has withdrawn the general consent accorded to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to probe the cases in the state.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Gangajal Project which aims to improve water supply to the city of Agra.
- The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu inaugurated India's longest single-lane steel cable suspension bridge over Siang River in Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The bridge is 300-metre-long and is also known as Byorong bridge.
- The ruling party of Sikkim, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) has assured the implementation of the Universal Basic Income in Sikkim by 2022. If things go as per plan, Sikkim would become the first state in the country to implement the Universal Basic Income (UBI).
- The High Court of Kerala has set a seven-day notice period for political parties and individuals to call for hartal and general strike in the State.
- The Chief Minister of Sikkim Pawan Kumar Chamling has announced the One family one job scheme to provide employment to the youth of Sikkim.
- The government of Odisha has launched the scheme Ama Ghare LED to provide LED bulbs at free of

cost to about 95 lakh families in the state.

- The Uttar Pradesh Governor Shri Ram Naik inaugurated the Sanskriti Kumbh at Prayagraj. The Sanskriti Kumbh celebrates the conglomeration of Spiritual Consciousness and Cultural Heritage of India in the main premises of Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. It is being organised by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative.
- The government of West Bengal has decided to exit from the Centre's ambitious Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana.
- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the Foundation Stone for several development projects at Silvassa in Dadra and Nagar Haveli. He, also, launched m-Arogya mobile app for the citizens of Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The app provides a new dimension to Health-care with its various features ranging from Booking appointments, Accessing past health records, Program & schemes, Upcoming camp and event, Feedback & Grievance, Government health facilities details, Add your family members, IEC, Get Emergency Help.
- Uttar Pradesh became the third state after Jharkhand and Gujarat to approve the 10 per cent reservation for economically backward among upper castes in jobs and educational institutions.
- Odisha launched Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) with a primary objective to target small farmers, cultivators and landless agricultural labourers.
- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has given its approval for the Sita Rama Lift Irrigation Project of Telangana. The project would be completed in three years and would lead to submergence of about 1,930-hectare area and 157 villages.
- Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb launched the Sustainable Catchment Forest Management (SCATFORM) project which is undertaken with the assistance of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). The SCATFORM project aims to address issues such as forest cover loss and forest degradation have been mainly caused by shifting cultivation, which increases soil erosion risks on hill slopes especially in upper catchment areas.
- The Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the 426.60 m long Pre Stressed Concrete Box Girder type Dippo bridge over Dippo river on Roing – Koronu- Paya road in Arunachal Pradesh. The Dippo bridge will provide for uninterrupted access between Dibang Valley and Lohit valley region
- "Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana" scheme was launched by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri. Kamal Nath. It is Rs 50,000 crore farm loan waiver scheme for farmers.
- Chennai Traffic Police introduced a road safety robot named ROADEO, to help in traffic management and assist citizens.
- Tamil Nadu has released Startup and Innovation policy 2018-2023 with a mission of providing an enabling and innovative ecosystem for startups registered in the State and to make Tamil Nadu a 'Global Innovation hub for startups' by 2023.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- Creation of at least 5000 technology startups of which at least 10 global high growth startups in social impact sectors
- Infrastructure support to strengthen existing mechanism in areas like the Internet of Things (IoT),

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML) and Software as a Service (SAAS)

- Madhya Pradesh government has announced Yuva Swabhiman Yojana with an aim to provide employment for the unemployed youth from the economically weaker sections of the society. The scheme aims to provide 100 days of employment to youngsters from economically weaker sections of the society in urban areas.
- The government of Kerala has launched 'Pravasi Dividend Pension Scheme. Under the scheme, a regular pension would be provided to Non-Resident Keralites on a one-time payment of Rs 5 lakh.
- The government of Uttar Pradesh celebrated UP Divas for the first time on 24th January 2019.
- The states of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya celebrated their 47th Statehood Day on 21st January. The states of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya became full-fledged states on January 21, 1972.
- The Chief Minister of Tripura Biplab Kumar Deb unveiled the official logo of Tripura Tea. The Tripura Tea logo features Neermahal, the iconic landmark of Tripura.
- The government of Odisha announced a hike of Rs 200 per month in the social security pension under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY). The Scheme was instituted by merging the two pension schemes i.e. namely, Revised Old Age Pension Rules, 1989 and Disability Pension Rules, 1985.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

- Pakistan has declared the ancient Hindu religious site of Panj Tirath in Peshawar of North Western Pakistan as national heritage.
- Japan has announced its decision to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission (IWC).
- The government of Pakistan has decided to launch Panda Bonds to raise loans from Chinese capital markets.
- The Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) of the United States Chamber of Commerce has launched a new innovation initiative Fair Value for Innovation at the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi. The initiative, titled "Fair Value for Innovation", will examine economic underpinnings that would enable breakthrough innovation, and explore how policymakers can harness innovation capital in India and around the globe through research, advocacy, partnerships, and programs.
- The Sino-Indian Digital Collaboration Plaza (SIDCOP) has been launched by the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) in association with Municipal Governments of Guiyang and Dalian. The initiative aims to bring Indian IT companies and Chinese enterprises closer to each other on a single AI enabled platform. This platform will be managed by a joint venture comprising of one Indian and Chinese company.
- China has passed a new law to regulate Islam and make it more compatible with socialism by "Sinicizing Islam".
- Nicolas Maduro was sworn in as Venezuela's President for the 2nd term for a new 6-year term.
- Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen appointed 71 years old Su Tseng-chang as the new Prime Minister of Taiwan
- Palestine has taken over the chairmanship of G77 from Egypt. Palestine will be formally elected chair at the annual G77 ministerial meeting, scheduled to take place in mid-September. The chairmanship of the G77 is based on the system of geographical rotation. 2019 was Asia's turn and the Asian group had

unanimously endorsed Palestine.

- British government has announced South Asian Nitrogen Hub a research project to study nitrogen pollution in India and South Asia. The project led by UK's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology will partner with 50 organisations from the UK and South Asia.
- South African President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered the first IBSA Gandhi-Mandela Memorial Freedom Lecture.
- Rio de Janeiro has been recognised as 'World Capital of Architecture' for 2020 by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).
- The "Conference of Rulers" elected 59 years old Sultan Abdullah who is the ruler of the Malaysian state of Pahang as new King for the period of 5 years

BANKING AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

- The Prevention of Money Laundering (PMLA) court in Mumbai has declared Vijay Mallya as a Fugitive Economic Offender. Vijay Mallya is the first businessman to be charged under the new Fugitive Economic Offender's Act 2018.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has formed an expert committee to look into the various challenges being faced by MSMEs and suggest ways and measures to rejuvenate them. The eight-member committee would be Chaired by former Securities and Exchange Board of India Chairman UK Sinha.
- The RBI has proposed a one-time loan restructuring scheme for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The scheme is applicable to the stressed accounts provided the total fund and non-fund based exposure to such a borrower does not surpass Rs 25 crore.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHI). The Survey will capture payment habits of individuals in cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an expert committee, headed by its Former Governor Bimal Jalan, to suggest how the Central Bank should handle its reserves and whether it can transfer its surplus to the Government.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has made changes with the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) to allow charitable institutions, Central Government entities and state government entities to deposit gold under GMS. Now the entities allowed to deposit gold under the scheme include Resident Indians (Individuals, HUFs, Proprietorship & Partnership firms), Trusts including Mutual Funds/Exchange Traded Funds registered under SEBI (Mutual Fund) Regulations, Companies, charitable institutions, Central Government, State Government or any other entity owned by Central Government or State Government
- The GST Council meeting on January 10 has taken the some important decisions: The exemption limit for Goods and Services Tax (GST) registration has been increased to Rs 40 lakh from the current Rs 20 lakh to ease the cost of compliance for small taxpayers or micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). This exemption limit has been doubled to Rs 20 lakh for North-Eastern and hilly states. The increased exemption limit of Rs 40 lakh is applicable for those businesses who deal in goods and also do intra-state trade and not for those who do inter-state transactions. The small States such as

Puducherry which have a small assess base have been given the option to 'opt in' or move to a lower exemption and registration limit. The threshold limit for the compensation scheme under which small traders and businesses pay a 1 per cent tax based on turnover has been increased to Rs 1.5 crore. Kerala has been allowed to levy a 1 per cent calamity cess on the intra-state sale of goods and services for a period of up to two years to mobilise revenues to meet the cost of rehabilitating parts of states that were ravaged by floods.

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI), under the relevant provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, imposed a penalty of Rs 3 crore on Citibank India for non-compliance in criteria for directors of the bank.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Iran's Pasargad Bank to open branches in Mumbai for easing trade related transactions.
- Jana Small Finance Bank has launched a new Current Account with Auto-Sweep facility that will enable bank's existing and potential new customers to auto sweep-in and sweep-out the idle funds in the current account to Sweep Fixed Deposit and earn high interest.
- The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved a capital infusion of Rs 6,000 crore in state-owned Export-Import Bank of India (Exim) to expand its business.
- The Finance Ministry has asked the public sector banks to gradually reduce the government's equity to 52 per cent. Currently, some of the public sector banks have government's holding beyond 75 per cent.
- Vice-President of India Shri Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the 2-days Agri-Vision 2019 conference on 'envisioning Agro-solutions for smart and Sustainable Agriculture' in Hyderabad, Telangana
- The Union Cabinet has approved the amendments to the framework on currency swap arrangement for SAARC member countries. The amendments incorporate a standby facility of USD 400 million. This stand-by facility enables India to provide a prompt response to the current request from SAARC member countries for availing the swap amount exceeding the present limit prescribed under the SAARC Swap Framework.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

- Kathak exponent Anindita Neogy Anaam has been honoured with the prestigious National Nritya Shiromani award for her contribution towards preserving and promoting the dance form across the world.
- Andhra Pradesh was conferred with CBIP's "Best Implementation of Water Resources Project" for better planning, implementation, monitoring and speedy execution of Polavaram multipurpose project on the Godavari River.
- Writer Namita Gokhale was awarded in the 'Best Book of Fiction Written by a Woman Author' category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF). She has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel "Things to Leave Behind".
- National award-winning filmmaker Buddhadeb Dasgupta was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award, in the name of late Satyajit Ray, by the West Bengal Film Journalists Association (WBFJA) in Kolkata.
- Satyarup Siddhanta, 35-year-old Kolkata mountaineer has set the world record of youngest to climb 7

highest volcanoes, 7 highest mountains in 7 continents in 7 years. He is also the first Indian to conquer the seven mountain peaks and seven volcanic summits.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded first ever Philip Kotler Presidential Award. Philip Kotler Presidential Award aims to spread examples of individuals and companies who create an innovative culture for the economic, social and technological advancements of an industry or a country.
- Yohei Sasakawa was named to receive Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018, who is the Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organization for Leprosy Elimination
- No Presents Please is English Novel translated from Kannada Work of Jayant Kaikini won the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature 2018. The novel was translated to English by Tejaswini Niranjana.
- India's highest peacetime gallantry honour, Ashoka Chakra was awarded to Lance Naik Nazir Wani posthumously.
- The 2019 Bharat Ratna award has been conferred to former President Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh and singer Bhupen Hazarika. Nanaji Deshmukh and singer Bhupen Hazarika were awarded Bharat Ratna posthumously.
- Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Aparna Kumar became the first woman Indian Police Service (IPS) and ITBP officer to successfully conquer the South Pole.
- The first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research has been awarded to C N R Rao.
- 'Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) awarded social impact award to Tetra Pak India, the world's leading packaging and processing solutions provider under the category 'Sustainable Environment
- Karthiyani Amma from Kerala became Commonwealth Learning Goodwill Ambassador. She was the oldest ever candidate to appear for Kerala Literacy Mission's Akshara Laksham (Million Letters) literacy exam.
- The government formed an annual award titled Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar. This award is to be awarded every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The Award carries a certificate and a cash prize of 51 lakh rupees. For the year 2019, 8th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force located at Ghaziabad is selected for its work in disaster management.
- 27th edition of Saraswati Samman Award ceremony was held in New Delhi. Eminent Gujarati poet Sitanshu Yashaschandra was awarded for his poetry collection, 'Vakhar,' published in 2009.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

- Prime Minister, Narendra Modi delivered the inaugural address at the 106th session of the Indian Science Congress. The 106th Indian Science Congress is being held at Jalandhar. The theme of the 106th science congress is 'Future India: Science and Technology'.
- The first India-Central Asia Dialogue is to be held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on January 12 and 13. The Dialogue will be co-chaired by External Affairs Minister (EAM) Sushma Swaraj and the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Kamilov.
- The 25th edition of the Partnership Summit was inaugurated by Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu in Mumbai. The Partnership Summit is being organized by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, State Government of

Maharashtra and Confederation of Indian Industry.

- The Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg along with Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu inaugurated India-Norway Business Summit 2019 in New Delhi.
- 2+2 Inter-Sessional meeting between the United States and India which focused on the progress of defence and foreign policy issues between the two countries took place in New Delhi.
- The three-day 6th annual 'Women of India Organic Festival' commenced at Leisure Valley, Sector-10, Chandigarh. It has been organized by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The one-day Global Skill Summit 2019 was held in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The theme of the Summit was: 'Skilling Youth, Enabling Youth'.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 9th edition of Vibrant Gujarat Summit at Mahatma Mandir Exhibition cum Convention Centre in Gandhinagar. 5 Heads of States from Uzbekistan, Rwanda, Denmark, Czech Republic and Malta along with the captains of industry from various sectors & over 30,000 delegates from India and abroad are taking part in the event.
- The Global Aviation Summit 2019 was organized in Mumbai with the theme 'Flying for All'.
- 4-day 2nd world Orange Festival commenced in Nagpur, the city of oranges, for the first time.
- As per Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, India will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties to United Nations Convention to combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 2019 to address the issues of land degradation and desertification.
- National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama, Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) launched the second phase of the Web Campaign 'SĀNJHI –MUJH MEIN KALĀKĀR' to document and promote direct public-participation in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and diverse cultural traditions of the country
- The 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 on the 'Regulation of Homeopathic Medical Products; Advancing global collaboration' organised on 23-25 January 2019 at Goa.
- National Conference on Self Reliance in Defence Manufacturing is organised at Hyderabad.
- Rio de Janeiro will host the World Congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) in July 2020. The theme of the 2020 World Congress of the International Union of Architects is "All the worlds. Just one world,"

IMPORTANT DAYS

- The United Nations observed the first official World Braille Day on 4th January to create awareness about the importance of Braille.
- 10th January is celebrated as World Hindi Day to create awareness about the language of Hindi across the World and to present Hindi as an international language.
- India celebrates National Youth Day on January 12 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.
- India celebrates Pravasi Bhartiya Divas on 9 January to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India. 9th January also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai in 1915. The Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) will be held at Varanasi on January 21 and would be formally inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22. The theme of the PBD 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India."

- India celebrated 9th National Voters Day on 25th January 2019 for enhanced participation of citizens in the electoral process.
- National Girl Child Day (NGCD) is celebrated in India on January 24th with an aim to raise awareness about Child Sex Ratio (CSR) levels and promote the empowerment of girls. The theme of National Girl Child Day-2019 is “Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow”

APPOINTMENTS

- President Ram Nath Kovind has nominated Justice AK Sikri as Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- Saurabh Kumar has been appointed as the Director General of Ordnance Factories (DGOF) and chairman of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) in Kolkata.
- Pranav R Mehta, President of the National Solar Energy Federation of India has become the President of the Global Solar Council.
- The appointment of Kumar Rajesh Chandra as the Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has been approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.
- Gita Gopinath has joined the International Monetary Fund as its Chief Economist. She is the first woman to occupy the post of Chief Economist of IMF.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of IDFC First Bank for a period of three years.
- Government of India has appointed Senior IPS Officer Prabhat Singh as Director General (Investigation) in the National Human Rights Commission.
- Boxing Federation of India (BFI) appointed India's first Commonwealth Games gold medalist in boxing, Mohammed Ali Qamar, as chief coach for the country's women pugilists.
- Lakshmi Vilas Bank got approval from RBI and reappointed Parthasarathi Mukherjee as its managing director for next two years.
- Yes bank has elected Ravneet Singh Gill as the MD.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- The New Horizon Spacecraft of NASA has flown past Ultima Thule, a trans-Neptunian object located in the Kuiper belt.
- China's Chang'e 4 probe spacecraft has become the first spacecraft to land on the far side of the Moon.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched an outreach programme called Samwad with Students.
- The Panel headed by IIT-Hyderabad chairman B V R Mohan Reddy has suggested All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), not to allow setting up of new Engineering colleges from 2020.
- The researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) have recreated space fuel by simulating interstellar conditions in the laboratory.
- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of USA has discovered a new planet. It is the third new planet discovered by the NASA mission- Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS). The

new planet HD 21749b is outside our solar system and orbits a dwarf star 53 light years away.

- India celebrated 9th National Voters Day on 25th January 2019 for enhanced participation of citizens in the electoral process.
- National Girl Child Day (NGCD) is celebrated in India on January 24th with an aim to raise awareness about Child Sex Ratio (CSR) levels and promote the empowerment of girls. The theme of National Girl Child Day-2019 is “Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow”

SPORTS

- Gurgaon’s 8-year-old Kartik Singh won the under-8 category Junior world title at the Kids’ Golf World Championship organised by US kids Golf in Malaysia to become the youngest Indian to win the title
- Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri received honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket.
- M C Mary Kom attained the first position in the latest women ranking released by the International Boxing Association (AIBA) in the Light Fly 45-48 kilograms category with 1700 points.
- Confederation of African Football’s (CAF) Executive Committee announced that Egypt will host African Cup for the fifth time in 2019.
- Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat, who hails from Haryana, became the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award.
- M C Mary Kom was named as the event ambassador for the 16th Tata Mumbai Marathon

MOUS AND AGREEMENTS

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IMHCL) and leading Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) like BPCL, HPCL and IOCL for sale of FASTags through their petrol pumps.
- The Union Cabinet has approved India’s Currency Swap Agreement with Japan. The \$75-billion bilateral currency swap arrangement is a milestone in mutual economic cooperation and special strategic and global partnership between two countries.
- Indian Army and Punjab National Bank (PNB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Defence Salary Package.
- IRCTC tied up with Bharti AXA General insurance company to provide free travel insurance to the air travellers. This insurance is applicable to only those who book ticket in the official website of air ticketing irctc, IRCTC Air – air.irctc.co.in.
- The Competition Commission of India has approved the deal wherein Samara Capital-backed Witzig Advisory Services and Amazon will acquire Aditya Birla Retail Ltd, which operates a supermarket store chain ‘more’.
- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and **Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev** held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2019. An agreement for importing uranium from Uzbekistan was signed. An agreement for a line of credit of \$200 million from India for financing housing and social infrastructure projects in Uzbekistan. The agreement for the supply of

Uranium was signed between the Department of Atomic Energy of India and the Novoi Minerals and Metallurgical Company of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the long-term supply of uranium ore concentrate for India's energy requirements.

- The Union Cabinet of India has approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Kuwait for cooperation on the recruitment of domestic workers.
- The Swedish aerospace and defence company Saab and Airports Authority of India (AAI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to explore air traffic management (ATM) solutions for airports operating under the regional connectivity scheme, UDAN.
- In Pokhara, India and Nepal agreed to set up energy banking mechanism to make use of the surplus electricity in an essential and a useful way.
- SBI Card, the country's second largest credit card issuer and Etihad Guest, the loyalty programme of Etihad Airways have joined their hand together for a specific visa credit card to come into play for members and Indian travellers.

REPORTS AND INDICES

- The Henley Passport Index was released recently. It measures the access each country's travel document affords. The Index is based on the data provided by the International Air Transport Authority (IATA) and covers 199 passports and 227 travel destinations. Japan retained its top spot as the world's most travel-friendly passport due to the document's access to 190 jurisdictions. India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th this year.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released the Democracy Index which ranks 167 countries by 60 indicators across five broad categories. The index classifies each country either as a full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime or authoritarian. Only 4.5% of the world's people live in a full democracy. Australia and New Zealand are the only "full democracies" in the entire Asia-Pacific region. India was at the 41st place with a score of 7.23/10 and was placed in the flawed democracies category.
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has released the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018. The report draws information from 142 countries, examining trafficking trends and patterns. Regions of Asia and the Americas witnessed the largest increase in the numbers of victims detected.
- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the first advance estimates of National Income for 2018-19.
- The Indian economy is expected to grow at 7.2 per cent in the financial year 2018-19 which is higher than the 6.7 per cent GDP growth in the previous financial year 2017-2018. The Real GVA (Gross Value Added) is expected to grow at 7 per cent in the current fiscal as against 6.5 per cent in 2017-18.
- The London-based Times Higher Education (THE) has released the Emerging Economies University Rankings 2019. The 2019 ranking comprises of 450 universities from 43 countries. The Indian Institute of Science has topped the rankings among Indian institutes with 14th rank; the second spot among Indian Institutes was occupied by the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay with 27th rank.
- The City Momentum Index of JLL which identifies World Dynamic Cities has been released by the property consultant JLL. Bengaluru has emerged as the world's most dynamic city among 131 major

established and emerging business hubs globally. The Second place is occupied by Hyderabad.

- The Bloomberg Innovation Index 2019 was recently released. It analyses each country in a range of areas including education, research and development, and manufacturing before coming up with a list of the 60 most innovative countries. The index is topped by South Korea for the sixth time in a row with a total score of 87.38. India stands at 54th spot in the Bloomberg Innovation Index with a score of 47.93 out of 100.
- The SBI Ecowrap report recommends the government to opt for the unconditional cash transfer to farmers to alleviate agrarian distress rather than Universal Basic Income (UBI) scheme.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

- Malala Yousafzai, the youth icon of the world and the Noble Prize winner has come up with the new book, "We Are Displaced" about my Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World .

COMMITTEES

- Market regulator SEBI has set up a Research advisory committee(RAC) that will help and analyses the new methods of policy making for the development of capital market. The committee formed will be headed by Sankar De
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a high-level committee under Nandan Nilekani to suggest measures to strengthen the safety and security of digital payments in the country.
- Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi is to head the seven-member committee to look into revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out, and suggest steps for augmenting collections
- The Committee headed Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha has submitted the report on revisiting the section 126 of the Representation of the People Act. Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act Prohibits public meetings during period of forty-eight hours ending with hour fixed for conclusion of the poll.
- Former Chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), U.K. Sinha will head an 11-member working group constituted by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy board of India (IBBI) to study the concept of 'Group Insolvency' and suggest a suitable framework.
- Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a panel headed by Praveen Kutumbe to identify domestically systematically important insurers (SIIs) and an augmented regulatory framework is logically established in this regard.

DEFENCE

- India-Myanmar bilateral army exercise, IMBEX 2018-19, has begun at Chandimandir Military Station (Panchkula)
- India celebrates Army Day on January 15. Army Day is celebrated to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens. It is in recognition of Field Marshal Kodandera M. Cariappa taking over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India, on 15 January 1949.

- Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur has been commissioned as INS Kohassa to enhance the operational capability of Andaman and Nicobar Command. INS Kohassa will be India's fourth air base and the third naval air facility in the Andaman and Nicobar region that overlooks key sea lanes of communication and strategic points with more than 60,000 commercial vessels passing through each year.
- The coast guards of India and Japan undertook disaster control, search and rescue exercises off the coast of Yokohama in Japan. ICGS Shaunak is the main Indian ship taking part in the drills.
- Indian Navy undertook Sea-Vigil which is a first of its kind multi-agency drill, covering the entire Indian coastline and exclusive economic zone and involving 13 coastal states and Union Territories to check the efficacy of maritime security and surveillance.

