

## CONTENTS

National Events .....	1
International Events .....	3
State Events .....	3
Science and Technology .....	4
Sports .....	4
Banking and Finance .....	4
Appointments .....	6
Awards and Honours .....	6
Defence .....	6
Summits and Conferences .....	7
Government Schemes .....	8
Key Points .....	8
Know India Programme .....	8
Arundhati .....	9
Credit Linked Capital Subsidy and Technology Up-gradation Scheme (CLCS-TUS) .....	9
Index and Ranking .....	9
Important Days .....	9
Committees .....	10
MoUs and Agreement .....	10
Books and Authors .....	10
Miscellaneous .....	11

# MONTHLY ONE-LINER GK DIGEST: FEBRUARY 2019

## NATIONAL EVENTS

- The Facebook-owned messaging app WhatsApp has announced Startup India-WhatsApp Grand Challenge to encourage entrepreneurs and small businesses in India.
- The Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) which would be the core of ISRO's future manned missions was inaugurated at the ISRO headquarters in Bengaluru.
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi discussed ways to handle the exam pressure in the second edition of "Pariksha Pe Charcha 2.0" at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi. The Programme was organized by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).

- The government of India has announced the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as the mascot for the 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Convention on the conservation of migratory species (CMS) to be held in Gujarat next year. The mascot for the event, Great Indian Bustard has been fondly named as 'Gibi'.
- The Union Cabinet has approved setting up of a unified authority for regulating all financial services in international financial services centres (IFSCs) in the country. The first IFSC in India was set up at GIFT City in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- India is now the second largest consumer and importer of the LPG in the world. The import of LPG grew by 12.5 per cent over the past five years to 12 million metric tons (13 million tons) in 2018-19. India now stands at the second position when it comes to the import of LPG surpassing Japan.
- India celebrated the 30th Road Safety Week from 04th February (Monday) to the 10th February (Sunday).
- India has set the **target to eliminate Tuberculosis in India by 2025.**
- To evolve a strategy in this regard, India has put in place National Strategic Plan 2017 – 2025 which sets out the government plans of how the elimination of TB can be achieved.
- Elimination of a disease is **defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO)** as there should be **less than 1 case of TB for a population of a million people.**
- India is now the **second largest consumer and importer of the LPG in the world.**
- Import of LPG The import of LPG grew by 12.5 per cent over the past five years
- India now stands at the second position when it comes to the import of LPG surpassing Japan.
- India is at second place behind China.
- The Central government has increased the **minimum selling price (MSP)** of sugar by Rs. 2 per kg to Rs. 31. Minimum Selling Price Minimum Selling Price is the rate below which the mills cannot sell sugar in the open market to wholesalers and bulk consumers like beverage and biscuit makers.
- The Ministry of External Affairs had **organised a training course for the officials of the Government of Nepal on 'Global Perspectives on Public Financial Management'** at the Institute of Government Accounts and Finance (INGAF) in New Delhi.
- The training programme was part of the **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme.**
- The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme was instituted on 15 September 1964 as a bilateral programme for providing assistance from the Government of India.
- Prime Minister, Narendra Modi inaugurated **National Cancer Institute (NIC) at Badhsa in Jhajjar district of Haryana.**
- Prime Minister also inaugurated an ESIC Medical College and Hospital in Faridabad. It is the first Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Medical College and hospital in North India.
- **National Productivity Council (NPC)** is celebrating National Productivity week from February 12th to 18th, 2019. This year, the theme is "Circular Economy for Productivity & Sustainability". This theme will help NPC to meet its zero waste goal.
- **National Productivity Council (NPC)**
  - **Circular Economy** is based on the model of Make, Use and Return.
  - It **controls the finite stocks and reuses them** by recycling and thus balances the resource flow.
  - **National Productivity Council** is an autonomous registered society under **DIPP (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade)**, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
  - It was established in the year 1985.
  - Its core function is to promote and adopt the new and improved culture of productivity in India.
- Deloitte launched of its global initiative 'WorldClass' in India for the empowerment of women. The initiative was launched by Deloitte's Global CEO, Punit Ranjan. The initiative aims to support 10 million girls and women by 2030 through education and skills development.

- Union Human Resource Minister, Shri Prakash Javadekar launched Operation Digital Board to leverage technology to boost quality education in the country. Under Operation Digital Board seven lakh classrooms of 9th, 10th and 11th standards and two lakh classrooms of colleges and Universities will be equipped with digital boards in the next three years.
- Argentina's President Mauricio Macri arrived in New Delhi for a three-day India visit.

## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

- UNESCO has declared 2019 as the International Year of the Period Table of Chemical Elements to commemorate the 150th birthday of the periodic table of chemical elements. The Periodic table of the Chemical elements was first published by Russian scientist Dmitry Mendeleev in the year 1869.
- INSTEX acronym of Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges is a project of the three governments of UK, France and Germany to bypass US sanctions on Iran. **INSTEX** is a special payment system which will help to save the Iran nuclear deal by allowing Tehran to keep trading with EU companies despite Washington re-imposing sanctions.'
- The central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia will launch a common digital currency called Aber. Aber will be used for financial settlements between the two countries through Blockchains and Distributed Ledgers technologies.
- Abu Dhabi has included Hindi as the third official language to be used in its courts, alongside Arabic and English. It is part of the efforts of Abu Dhabi to improve access to justice.
- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) condemning the Pulwama Terror Attack has decided to continue the 'Grey' listing of Pakistan for its failure to stop funding of terrorist groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamat-ud-Dawa.
- A month-long Festival of India in Nepal is being held at Nepal. It is organised by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center at the Indian embassy in Kathmandu with support from India's Ministry of culture.
- Zimbabwe's central bank launched a new currency called RTGS dollars, to resolve a long-term monetary crisis.

## STATE EVENTS

- 2nd Phase of Pasupu-Kumkuma (Turmeric-Kumkum) scheme and welfare pensions was launched by Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Chandrababu Naidu. 94 Lakh DWCR (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) women will be given Rs 10000 in three installments under the Pasupu-Kumkuma scheme. Under the scheme, Rs 2500 will be given on 1st February 2019, Rs 3500 will be given 8th March and Rs 4000 will be given on 5th April.
- Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh declared one of the rarest mammal, Indus River Dolphin, which is only found in Beas River, as Punjab State Aquatic Animal.
- A special scheme is launched by the Maharashtra government with an aim to curb infant deaths. The baby care kit contains a blanket, a small mattress, a towel, a thermometer, baby oil, shampoo, toys, nail cutter, gloves, socks, among other items. The kit costs around Rs.2000. The scheme is applicable only for first child of the parents. It will be beneficial for around 4 lakh women across Maharashtra.
- The Sarthi Sandesh Vahini vehicles were flagged off by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The Uttar Pradesh state family welfare department has initiated the Sarthi Sandesh Vahini mission to spread awareness regarding family planning in urban and rural areas.
- The government of Meghalaya has decided to rename the Dikkibandi stadium after P A Sangma.

- Kerala organized ASCEND 2019 to position Kerala as a hotspot for attracting investments from India and abroad and setting up enterprises in a hassle-free manner.
- PM Narendra Modi launched DD Arunprabha – a dedicated 24x7 Satellite channel for Arunachal Pradesh.
- PM Narendra Modi laid Foundation Stone for the Sela Tunnel Project in Arunachal Pradesh across Sela Pass
- The government of Assam has announced a new scheme called Arundhati to provide gold at free of cost to the brides.
- Under the scheme, the government of Assam aims to provide 1 Tola Gold, at about Rs 38K as on today, to brides belonging to all such communities of Assam where it is customary to provide gold at the time of the wedding. The scheme is limited for economically weaker sections, whose annual income is below Rs 5 lakh. The government has set aside Rs 300 cr has been for the implementation of the Arundhati Scheme.
- PM Narendra Modi laid Foundation Stone for the **Sela Tunnel Project** in Arunachal Pradesh across Sela Pass.
- PM Narendra Modi launched various developmental works in the state of Arunachal Pradesh which includes DD Arunprabha – a dedicated 24x7 Satellite channel for Arunachal Pradesh.
- The government of Meghalaya has decided to rename the Dikkibandi stadium after P A Sangma.
- The Sarthi Sandesh Vahini vehicles were flagged off by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- The Uttar Pradesh state family welfare department has initiated the Sarthi Sandesh Vahini mission to spread awareness regarding family planning in urban and rural areas.
- India's First District cooling system will come up in Amravati, capital of the Andhra Pradesh. The government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into a 30-year concession with UAE-based international cooling provider.
- The Rajasthan Assembly has passed the Rajasthan Backward Classes Amendment Bill, 2019. The bill aims to address the demands of the Gujjars who are protesting for reservations. It provides five per cent quota in jobs and educational institutions to Gurjars, Banjaras, Gadia Lohars, Raikas and Gadaria communities.
- The government of Himachal Pradesh has made an announcement regarding the announcement of Monkey as Vermin for the period of one year in 11 districts of the state
- Sikaria Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd which is the 17th Mega Food Park in the country and first in the state of Tripura was inaugurated .
- Yogi Adityanath launched a scheme for adolescent girls aged between 11 to 14 years, who have left their education and will take steps to provide them proper nutrition and special care.
- UP Government decided to observe 8th of every month as Adolescent Girls Day, at Anganwadi Centres across the state, and Nutrition Campaigns will be organized for these girls on that day.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

- India's communication satellite GSAT-31 was successfully launched from the Spaceport in French Guiana. GSAT-31 was launched from the launch vehicle Ariane 5 VA-247.

## **SPORTS**

- Qatar won its first major soccer title by beating four-time champion Japan 3-1 in the 17th edition of the AFC Asian Cup held in United Arab Emirates(UAE).

## **BANKING AND FINANCE**

- According to the interim budget in 2019, India has received massive foreign direct investment worth USD 239 billion in the last five years.

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the First Revised Estimates of National Income, Consumption Expenditure, Saving and Capital Formation, 2017-18. The forecast for GDP growth for 2017-18 was increased to 7.2% . The actual growth rate in 2016-17 has been increased to 8.2% from the 7.1% estimated earlier.
- The Government reduced the import duty on parts and components of electric vehicles to 10-15 per cent from 15-30 per cent in order to promote domestic assembling of electric vehicles. The new rates will come into effect from 30th January 2019.
- Kisan Suvidha loan' for small and marginal farmers launched by Ujjivan Small Finance Bank. The scheme will attempt to reach the bottom of the pyramid with products and services. . It provides loans to individuals with an amount ranging from Rs. 60000 to Rs. 2 Lakh to fulfill the customized needs of the mass market segment. The loan does not require any collateral.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the abolition of institutions of Ombudsman for income tax and indirect which was set up in 2003 to deal with grievances of public related to the settlement of complaints relating to income tax.
- The six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das has lowered the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25
- The Reserve Bank has come out with a new policy for overseas borrowings. The RBI has rationalized the earlier policy in consultation with the Government of India. The new policy allows all eligible borrowers to raise External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) up to \$750 million or equivalent per financial year under the automatic route replacing the existing sector wise limits.
- The data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) shows that the Foreign Exchange Reserves of India increased by \$2.063 billion to \$400.24 billion in the week to February 1.
- The six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das has lowered the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent.
- The limit of collateral free bank loans for farmers to Rs 1.6 lakh from Rs 1 lakh
- The definition of **"bulk deposits"** has been increased to Rs 2 crore from Rs 1 crore currently.
- The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the abolition of **institutions of Ombudsman for income tax and indirect tax.**
- The office of Income-Tax Ombudsman was set up in 2003 to deal with grievances of public related to the settlement of complaints relating to income tax.
- The data released from the Ministry of Commerce and Industries shows that the FDI inflows to India contracted by 7 per cent to USD 33.49 billion during April-December in the financial year 2018-19.
- World Bank, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women(UN Women), and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) launched new social impact bonds exclusively for women, called Women's Livelihood Bonds (WLBs), with an initial corpus of Rs 300 crore. It will enable individual women entrepreneurs in sectors like food processing, agriculture, services and small units to borrow around Rs 50,000 to Rs 3 lakh at an annual interest rate of around 13% to 14% or less and have a tenure of 5 years. They will be unsecured, unlisted bonds and offer fixed coupon rate of 3% per annum to bond investors.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in accordance with an announcement made during the last bi-monthly policy, decided to create a single category for the NBFCs (non-banking financial companies) by bundling their present three-tier structure. It was also decided that exposures to all NBFCs, excluding core investment companies, will be risk weighted as per credit ratings.
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## APPOINTMENTS

- IPS officer Rishi Kumar Shukla has been appointed as the chief of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a fixed tenure of two years.
- Actress Kareena Kapoor Khan has been appointed as an ambassador of Swasth Immunised India campaign. The Swasth Immunised India campaign has been launched by Serum Institute of India (SII) and Network 18.
- Justice Uma Nath Singh took the oath as the first lokayukta of Nagaland.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

- The Union Minister of Railways and Coal, Piyush Goyal has been awarded the Carnot Prize 2018 for the transformational changes brought by him during his tenure as Union Minister of Power.
- Manus Island 's refugee Behrouz Boochani 's debut book "No Friends But the Mountains" won both the 25,000 dollars non-fiction prize at the Victorian premier's literary awards and the 100,000 dollars Victorian prize for literature, in Australia.
- The State Bank of India's UK head **Sanjiv Chadha** has been honoured with the '**Freedom of the City of London**' award in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations.
- Father Francois Laborde a 92-year-old priest from Bengal was conferred with Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour) in recognition of his work for specially-abled and destitute children.
  - Father Laborde has his roots in France and is the citizen of India now.
- **International Hockey Federation (FIH) Player of the Year Awards**
  - **IH Player of the Year, Men:** Arthur van Doren (Belgium)
  - **Women:** Eva de Goede (Netherlands)
  - **FIH Goalkeeper of the Year, Men:** Vincent Vanasch (Belgium)
  - **Women:** Maddie Hinch (Great Britain)
  - **FIH Rising Star of the Year, Men:** Arthur de Sloover (Belgium)
  - **Women:** Lucina von der Heyde (Argentina)
  - Indian historian **Sanjay Subrahmanyam** has won prestigious Dan David Prize of Israel for the year 2019.
  - **Sanjay Subrahmanyam** shares the award in the category of '**past time dimension**' with Prof Kenneth Pomeranz of the University of Chicago.
- The Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) has been honoured with the prestigious 'FICCI CSR Award' for Women Empowerment. JSPL was awarded for its innovative and high impact women empowerment programmes
- Dr Divya Karnad, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Ashoka University has been awarded the prestigious Global Future For Nature Award 2019 for her work on marine conservation.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been honoured with the Seoul Peace Prize for his service to international cooperation, global growth and human development.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation(ONGC)'s Rajahmundry unit won the Energy and Environment Foundation Global Clean Awards-2019 for sustained efforts in pursuit of Swachh Bharat Mission as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at a function in New Delhi.
- Harmanpreet Singh was awarded the 2018 Player of the Year award while women's team striker Lalremsiami as the Rising Player of The Year, by the Asian Hockey Federation.

## DEFENCE

- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman approved the indigenous construction of 6 Project 75(India) submarines under the strategic Partnership model at the cost of Rs 40,000 crore.
- The annual multinational maritime exercise Cutlass Express was held in the vicinity of Djibouti, Mozambique and Seychelles. It was sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF). The Indian Navy was represented in the exercise through INS Trikand.
- The annual multinational maritime exercise Cutlass Express was held from 27 Jan to 06 Feb 19.
- The annual Exercise Cutlass Express is sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF).
- Exercise Cutlass Express 2019 is the eighth iteration of the annual multinational maritime exercise and was held in the vicinity of Djibouti, Mozambique and Seychelles.
- The Indian Navy was represented in the exercise through INS Trikand.
- Indian Army on 12th February 2019 showcased its artillery firepower by using ultra light Howitzers and indigenous Swathi weapon-locating radar at the annual “Exercise Topchi”.
- The exercise was held at Deolali Camp near Nashik. The aviation and surveillance capabilities were also showcased.
- Thailand and the United States hosted the annual Cobra Gold military exercise, the biggest activity of its type in the Asia-Pacific region with 29 nations taking part as participants or observers.

### SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

- The fourth edition of the International Spice Conference was held in the City of Pearls and the capital city of Telangana-Hyderabad.
- The seventh annual World Government Summit is being held in Dubai (UAE). The World Government Summit is a forum dedicated to shaping the future of governments.
- The second edition of the Asia LPG Summit was held at New Delhi. The two-day summit with the theme ‘LPG – Energy for Life’ showed how India’s successful Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana can become a viable model for other countries to replicate particularly those striving to provide clean cooking fuel to its people.
- India Foundation, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Government of Assam, organized the 2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit on the theme “Connectivity is the pathway to shared prosperity.” The Youth Summit was organised in Guwahati, Assam.
- The second edition of the Asia LPG Summit was held at New Delhi.
- The two-day summit revolved around the theme ‘LPG – Energy for Life’.
- The Union Government has announced the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as the mascot for the **13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Convention on the conservation of migratory species (CMS) to be held in Gujarat next year.**
- The mascot for the event, Great Indian Bustard has been fondly named as ‘Gibi’.
- The seventh annual World Government Summit was held in Dubai (UAE). The World Government Summit is a forum dedicated to shaping the future of governments.
- The first LAWASIA Human Rights Conference was organised by LAWASIA, in association with the Bar Association of India in New Delhi.
- The World Sustainable Development Summit 2019 was inaugurated by the Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in New Delhi.
- It was organized by The Energy and Resources Institute – TERI.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **PETROTECH -2019** conference a three-day mega event held at **India Expo Centre, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh**.
- NITI Ayog organised the conference on Future of Indian Banking and Role of technology Tomorrow in association with the Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare (EGROW Foundation).
- The 4th India-ASEAN Expo and Summit was inaugurated in New Delhi.
- “VIVID-Vision Insight and Voices as India goes Digital”- the District Informatics Officer (DIO) meet, was organised by National Informatics Centre (NIC) as an initiative to interact with the DIO’s and to share their experiences as well as contribution, as digital change-makers at the grass-root level in the States.
- Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0) Scheme has been devised to promote the momentum into the tech entrepreneurship landscape. The Scheme provides financial and technical support to incubators engaged in supporting ICT startups using emerging technologies such as IoT, AI, Block-chain, Robotics etc. in seven pre-identified areas of societal relevance.
- Digidhan Mitra Chatbot: Designed and developed by NIC, the AI based Digidhan Mitra enables a text & voice based conversation with the user, mining the Digidhan Portal, to give customized information in graphical, tabular and textual format. It provides bank wise transactions details as well as growth pattern of various modes of transactions like BHIM, IMPS, Cards etc. in tabular as well as graphical form."

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

- The Union Finance Minister Piyush Goyal announced the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan scheme in the interim budget 2019 for workers in the unorganised sector. Under the scheme, an assured monthly pension of Rs 3,000 per month will be provided to workers in the unorganised sector after 60 years of age. To avail the benefits of the scheme, workers will have to contribute a minimal Rs 100 month per month.
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)** proposes three models through which the states can implement the scheme. The models are an insurance model, trust-based model and hybrid model.

### KEY POINTS

- **Insurance model:** premiums are paid to the insurance company which administers and pay the claim.
- **Trust-based model:** each state forms its own trust to manage the scheme and claims will be disbursed from a corpus created from central and state government contributions.
- **Hybrid model:** a part of the claim comes under the insurance model while the balance gets processed under the trust.

## KNOW INDIA PROGRAMME

- **Ministry of External Affairs**
- It is a flagship initiative for Diaspora engagement which familiarizes Indian-origin youth (18-30 years) with their Indian roots and contemporary India
- It was a three-week programme in existence since 2003
- In 2016, the scheme was revamped to increase duration from 21 to 25 days, with a 10-day visit to one or two States and preference given to PIOs from Girmitya countries.
- Since 2016, six KIPs are being organised in a year.
- An online portal (kip.gov.in) has been launched in 2017 exclusively for Know India Programme.
- A maximum of 40 Indian Diaspora youth are selected for each programme and provided full hospitality in India.
- 90% of the total cost of international airfare is also paid by the Ministry.



- The entire process of applying, processing etc. is now through a portal(kip.gov.in).

### ARUNDHATI

- The government of Assam has announced a new scheme called Arundhati to provide gold at free of cost to the brides.
- Under the scheme, the government of Assam aims to provide 1 Tola Gold to brides belonging to all such communities of Assam where it is customary to provide gold at the time of the wedding.
- The government has set aside Rs 300 cr has been for the implementation of the Arundhati Scheme.
- The benefit under Arundhati scheme can be availed upon formal registration of marriages under Special Marriage (Assam) Rules, 1954 & the gold will reach beneficiaries right in time for the social marriage. The scheme is limited for economically weaker sections, whose annual income is below Rs 5 lakh.

### CREDIT LINKED CAPITAL SUBSIDY AND TECHNOLOGY UP-GRADATION SCHEME (CLCS-TUS)

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved a three-year extension of the Credit Linked Capital Subsidy and Technology Up-gradation Scheme (CLCS-TUS) for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) with a total outlay of 2,900 crores on 13th February 2019.
- This scheme will continue beyond the 12th Five Year Plan for three years from 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- Under this scheme, an upfront capital subsidy of 15 per cent will be provided to the MSMEs on institutional finance of up to Rs 1 crore availed by them.
- The government of Gujarat has launched the second edition of the water conservation scheme Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan. The state government has increased its financial contribution for the scheme to 60 per cent, which meant private groups getting involved would have to give only the remaining 40 per cent.
- The Minister of Textiles, Smriti Irani inaugurated Soil to Silk Project and Eri Spun Silk Mill in Assam. Soil to Silk Project envisages new Eri plantation on 100 hectares and will facilitate post cocoon activities for an on-farm sector like plantation, spinning and reeling.
- Madhya Pradesh launched the Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana to provide employment for youth. The scheme guarantees 100 days of employment every year to urban youths from economically weaker sections (EWS). They will get Rs 4,000 stipend per month and total Rs 13,500 for the 100 days period would be provided. The scheme defines Economically weaker sections as those whose family's annual income is less than Rs 2 lakh and the scheme is limited to youth in the age group 21-30 years.
- Odisha government approved Khusi scheme aimed at improving menstrual hygiene among adolescent girl students in the state, with an outlay of Rs 466.08 crore over a period of 5 years.

### INDEX AND RANKING

- In the Transparency International's Corruption, Perception Index Denmark is the world least corrupt country scoring 88 out of 100 points. Denmark is followed by New Zealand and Finland. Somalia has been ranked last with a score of 10 behind South Sudan and Syria. India has moved up to 78th position in 2018. India was ranked 81st in 2017.

### IMPORTANT DAYS

- World Wetlands Day was celebrated on February 2nd with the theme of “Wetlands and Climate Change”.
- January 30 is celebrated as Martyrs Day to honour the brave martyrs of India who have sacrificed their lives for the country.
- The International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation is observed on February 6 every year.
- February 10, 2019, was celebrated as the first World Pulses Day.
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) every year celebrate February 13 as the World Radio Day. World Radio Day 2019 is celebrated to highlight the importance of the radio in its search for a more peaceful and tolerant world.
- February 11 marks the birth anniversary of Hakim Ajmal Khan. Hakim Ajmal Khan took great interest in the expansion and development of the native system of Unani medicine.

## COMMITTEES

- On the recommendation of Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, The government constituted a committee under the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) to explore prepaid payments by state electricity distribution companies to power plants.
- The Central government reconstituted a tribunal headed by Delhi High Court Judge Justice G.S. Sistani for another 5 years to adjudicate the extension of the ban imposed on the eight insurgent groups in Manipur which were involved in 756 violent and unlawful incidents in the last five years. The Tribunal had been set up under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 and the tribunal will adjudicate whether there is sufficient cause for declaring these insurgent groups of Manipur as “Unlawful Associations”.

## MOUs AND AGREEMENT

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, India and South African sealed a 3-year strategic partnership for 2019 to 2021 to boost cooperation in the various key areas including defence and investments.
- In order to improve the education system, Microsoft signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Sikkim government.
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) signed a five-year global partnership deal with beverage manufacturer Coca-Cola Company. ICC and Coca-Cola's partnership will continue till 2023.
- India and Norway signed a letter of Intent for establishing the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative. The letter of intent was signed by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India together with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Government e Marketplace (GeM) and Competition Commission of India (CCI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enable a fair and competitive environment in the e-Marketplace.
- India and South Korea was signed an agreement for releasing a joint stamp, commemorating Princess Suriratna (Queen Hur Hwang-ok), a legendary Princess of Ayodhya, who went to Korea in AD 48 and married King Kim-Suro.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

- The book “**Law, Justice and Judicial Power – Justice P N Bhagwati’s Approach**” written by **Mool Chand Sharma** was launched by the Chief Justice of India, Shri Justice Ranjan Gogoi.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Abu Dhabi has included Hindi as the third official language to be used in its courts, alongside Arabic and English. It is part of the efforts of Abu Dhabi to improve access to justice.
- India and Bangladesh signed a MoU for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants.
- The MoU was signed between India's **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) and the Ministry of Public Administration of Bangladesh.**
- The book "**Law, Justice and Judicial Power – Justice P N Bhagwati's Approach**" written by **Mool Chand Sharma** was launched by the Chief Justice of India, Shri Justice Ranjan Gogoi.
- The first copy of the book was received by the President Ram Nath Kovind.
- The book is a collection of 24 essays celebrating Justice P N Bhagwati's judicial work and landmark judgments as well as his work towards introducing public interest litigation in India.
- February 10, 2019, was celebrated as the first World Pulses Day.
- The Year 2016 was celebrated as **International Year of Pulses** to highlight the contribution of Pulses to sustainable food production and towards food security and nutrition.
- The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) launched a new portal LADIS – Least Available Depth to aid in ensuring of optimum use of National Waterways.
- Ministry of AYUSH launched the e-Aushadhi portal for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs.
- The new e-portal, e-Aushadhi is an acronym for Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy Automated Drug Help Initiative.
- India and Norway signed a letter of Intent for establishing the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative.

