

Current Affairs March 2019

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National

New Railway Zone Announced For Andhra Pradesh

- i. Union Railway Minister **Piyush Goyal** announced a new railway zone for **Andhra Pradesh**, that is the **Southern Coast Railway** and it will be headquartered in **Visakhapatnam**.
- ii. It will be the **18th zone** in the country. The new zone will comprise the existing **Guntakal, Guntur and Vijayawada divisions** that currently fall under the **South Central Railway**. The cost of creating infrastructure for a new zone is around **Rs. 205 crore**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **ESL Narasimhan** is the present Governor of Andhra Pradesh.
- **Chandrababu Naidu** is the present CM of Andhra Pradesh.



President presents Swachh Survekshan-2019 Awards

- i. President **Ram Nath Kovind** has presented **Swachh Survekshan-2019 Awards** in New Delhi. **Indore** bagged award for the cleanest city for the third straight year in **Swachh Survekshan**.
- ii. **New Delhi Municipal Council** area gets cleanest small city award while **Uttarakhand's Gauchar** was adjudged **Best Ganga Town** in the survey. Top-ranked cities received a statue of **Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi** as the award for their work towards cleanliness. **Swachh Survekshan 2019** covered all **Urban Local Bodies** in the country, making it the largest such cleanliness survey in the world.



Women To Get Permanent Commission In 10 Army Branches

- i. Women officers can now get permanent commissions in 10 branches of the Indian Army, the government announced. The Defence Ministry stated that it has taken necessary steps to ensure that women, who were earlier inducted for short service commission (SSC), get the permanent commission in the armed forces.
- ii. The permanent commission will be granted to women officers inducted in branches such as Signals, Engineers, Army Aviation, Army Air Defence, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Intelligence.



'Azaadi Ke Diwane' museum inaugurated at Red Fort

- i. Union Minister **Maanish Sharma** has inaugurated '**Azaadi Ke Diwane**' museum, dedicated to the unsung heroes of the country's freedom struggle, on the **Red Fort** premises in New Delhi.
- ii. Built by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, the museum is the fifth in a series of recently inaugurated ones — the others being the **Subhash Chandra Bose** and **INA** museum, the **Yaad-e-Jallian** museum, the **Museum on 1857** (on the country's first war of Independence) the **Drishyakala** (a museum on Indian Art) on the sacrifices of India's freedom fighters.



SBI, Hitachi arm to roll out digital payments platform

- i. **State Bank of India (SBI)** and **Hitachi Payment Services Pvt Ltd**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Hitachi Ltd** has launched their merchant-acquiring joint venture, **SBI Payment Services Pvt Ltd (SBIPSPL)** in **Mumbai** for establishing a digital payments platform for India and other countries in the region.
- ii. The joint venture (SBI) has a 74 percent stake, and the balance is with **Hitachi Payment Services** will facilitate expansion of the digital payments landscape in India via its digital payments platform.

Bharat Electronics launches SWAGAT- Automatic Fare Collection Gating System

- i. **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**, a defence public sector undertaking, presented **SWAGAT** – the **Automatic Fare Collection Gating System**. **PM Narendra Modi** launched the system as part of the inaugural of **Phase-I** of the **Ahmedabad Metro**.
- ii. **SWAGAT** is an initiative steered by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** in collaboration with **BEL** and **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC)** with the support of **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)**, **National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI)** and **State Bank of India (SBI)**.



PNB Ranks 1st In Implementation Of 'Reforms Agenda'

- i. According to **BCG-IBA Report - EASE Reforms for Public Sector Banks**, released by Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** secured the **top spot** among all public sector banks in the implementation of '**Reforms agenda**'.
- ii. **PNB** which topped the list with a score of **78.4** out of 100 in the **EASE-index** was followed by **BoB (77.8)**, **SBI (74.6)**, and **Oriental Bank of Commerce (69)**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Punjab National Bank CEO: Sunil Mehta, Headquarters: New Delhi.**

Signalchip Unveils India's First Indigenous 4G, LTE Semiconductor Chips

- Bengaluru-based **Signalchip** has unveiled semiconductor chips for **4G, LTE and 5G modems**. These are first such chips developed in **India**.
- 4 chips** were launched by the **SIGNALCHIP** as part of its series code-named '**Agumbe**'. They also support positioning using India's own satellite navigation system **NAVIC**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **SIGNALCHIP Founder and CEO: Himanshu Khasnis.**

IRCTC Launches Its Own Digital Payment Gateway 'IRCTC iPay'

- IRCTC** launched its own digital payment aggregator called '**IRCTC iPay**'. With **iPay**, passengers will not need any third-party platforms as it will provide payment options like credit card, debit card, unified payment interface and international card.
- This will help reduce the gap between **IRCTC and banks** which will eventually lead to a substantial reduction in payment failures.

7TH Guinness Book of World Record Created By DEPwD In Bharuch, Gujarat

- Mr. Gehlot stated that the "**7th Guinness Book of World Record**" has been created by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (**DEPwD**), at **Bharuch, Gujarat**.
- '**Modern Artificial Limbs (Legs)**' were implanted on **260 Divyang jans** within 8 hours in Gujarat. **DEPwD** has already created **6 World Records** in other categories.



Arun Jaitley releases book titled 'Mann Ki Baat – A Social Revolution on Radio'

- A book titled, '**Mann Ki Baat- A Social Revolution on Radio**' was released by Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley** in New Delhi. The book is a compendium encompassing 50 editions of the '**Mann Ki Baat**' programme by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on All India Radio.

India to grow at 7.3% in 2019, 2020: Moody's

- According to **Moody's**, Indian economy is expected to grow at 7.3 percent in the calendar year 2019 and 2020, and the government spending announced ahead of elections this year which will support near-term growth.
- Moody's** stated in its quarterly Global Macro Outlook for 2019 and 2020. In 2018-19 fiscal, ending March 2019, the Indian economy is estimated to have grown 7 percent, lower than 7.2 percent in 2017-18.



Sushma Swaraj addresses OIC Foreign Ministers plenary session in Dubai

- External Affairs Minister **Sushma Swaraj** addressed the plenary session of the foreign ministers' meet of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation states in **Abu Dhabi**.
- Swaraj** presented a picture of the secular fabric of India and began the speech by saying that she stands as a representative of land, that has been for ages a fountain of knowledge, a beacon of peace, a source of faiths and traditions, and home to religions from the world.



Centre, ADB sign 926 million loan agreement to operationalize two lines of Mumbai Metro

- The Centre and the Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) have signed a 926 million dollar loan agreement to operationalize two lines of the **Mumbai Metro Rail System**.
- It is the single largest infrastructure project loan in **ADB** history approved by the **ADB Board**. Once operational by the end of 2022, an estimated two million passengers a day will use the two new lines and will travel in improved safety and comfort.

India Signs Deal With Russian Firm To Produce 7.5 Lakh AK-203 Rifles

- India has signed a deal with a Russian firm to manufacture **7.5 lakh AK-203** rifles. These are the latest derivative of the **AK-47** rifles.
- Defence Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** stated that the **AK-203** rifles will be produced at the **Indian Ordnance Factory at Amethi's Korwa**. The new rifles will replace the indigenous **INSAS** rifles in the Army, Air Force, and Navy.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Russia Capital: Moscow, Currency: Russian ruble.**



PM Launches 'One Nation One Card'

- PM Narendra Modi** launched the indigenously-developed **National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)** to enable people to pay multiple kinds of transport charges, including metro services and toll tax, across the country.
- Dubbed as '**One Nation One Card**', the inter-operable transport card would allow the holders to pay for their bus travel, toll taxes, parking charges, retail shopping and even **withdraw money**.

India's First Policy To Protect Bank Locker Launched

- IFFCO Tokio General Insurance has launched 'bank locker protector policy', the first stand-alone bank locker cover offered by any insurance company with a plan to protect the contents of a bank locker such as **jewellery, title documents, and other valuables**.
- The policy offers a cover against various risks including fire, earthquake, burglary, holdup or any act of terrorism. It offers 7 options of sum insured ranging from **Rs 3 lakh to Rs 40 lakh** and above and the premium rate is affordable with a cover of Rs 3 lakh available at just **Rs 300**.



Important Takeways from above news-

- IFFCO Tokio is a joint venture between the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative (IFFCO) and its associates and Tokio Marine and Nichido Fire Group which is also the largest listed insurance group in **Japan**.
- IFFCO Tokio Chairman:** Mr. K. Srinivasa Gowda, **Headquarters:** Gurugram, Haryana.

Assam's Hailakandi Became The Top Aspirational District

- According to the **Delta ranking report** released by **NITI Aayog**, Assam's **Hailakandi** has become the top aspirational district among the **112 aspirational districts** of the country.
- Hailakandi in Assam has made a giant leap from **52nd position** to no. 1 position on the basis of its performance during November-December 2018 and January 2019. For securing the first rank as an aspirational district, Hailakandi will be given an allocation of **Rs. 10 crore**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Assam Capital:** Dispur, **CM:** Sarbananda Sonowal, **Governor:** Jagdish Mukhi.

Janaushadhi Diwas is being celebrated across the country

- Janaushadhi Diwas is being celebrated across the country on 07th March. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address five thousand Janaushadhi stores across the country through video-conferencing on the occasion.
- He will also interact with owners of Janaushadhi Kendras and beneficiaries of the scheme. More than five thousand 50 Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana Kendras, PMBJP, are functional in 652 districts.



Government announces new Rs 20 coin

- The Centre has announced a new Rs 20 coin which will come in 12-edged polygon (dodecagon) shape. The government is also planning to release new coins of Re 1, Rs 2, Rs 5 and Rs 10. However, the govt has not announced the exact date for the issuance of these new series coins.
- The Finance Ministry stated that the new Rs 20 coin will be made in copper, zinc and nickel. It will be 27mm (millimeters) and weigh 8.54 grams. The Lion Capitol symbol of Ashoka Pillar with the legend "Satyamev Jayate" below it will be inscribed on its front side. The words "Bharat" in Hindi and "INDIA" in English will be there on the right and left-hand side of the symbol respectively.



NGT slaps Rs 500 crore fine on Volkswagen

- The National Green Tribunal has slapped a fine of Rs 500 crore on German auto major Volkswagen for damaging the environment through the use of "cheat device" in its diesel cars in India. A bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the carmaker to deposit the amount within two months.
- The tribunal enhanced the compensation amount of Rs. 171.34 crore, which was recommended by an NGT- appointed committee, as a means of "creating deterrence".



Kerala's Marayoor Jaggery Gets Geographical Indication Tag

- Idukki's The Marayoor Jaggery**, the traditional and handmade product from Idukki district of Kerala received the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** from the Central Government.
- The Marayoor jaggery finally managed to get the GI Tag after two years of continuous efforts by the Agricultural Department of the state.

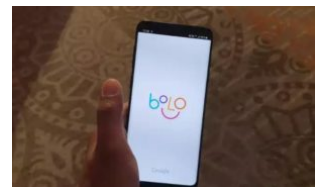
Important Takeways from above news-

- A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on products which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g. a town, region, or country).



Google Launches Reading Tutor App 'Bolo' For Kids in India

- Google launched a free app called **"Bolo"** that parents can download to help primary grade children improve their Hindi and English reading skills.
- Launched in India first**, the app is designed to work offline and comes with a built-in reading buddy, "Diya", who encourages, aids, explains, and corrects the child, as they read aloud.



India Ranks 11th In Gold Holding: WGC Report

- i. India, which is the world's largest consumer of gold, has the 11th largest gold reserve, with the current holding pegged at 607 tonnes, as per the latest report by the World Gold Council (WGC).
- ii. India's overall position in terms of total gold holding would have been tenth had the list included only countries. The top spot is occupied by the US with gold reserves of 8,133.5 tonnes, followed by Germany with 3,369.7 tonnes.

Lok Sabha Elections 2019: Polls to be held in 7 phases, starting April 11

i. Lok Sabha 2019 elections start from April 11, in seven phases, says Election Commission. Code of Conduct for parties kicks in from 10th March and there are close to 90 crore eligible voters. Date of counting will be on the 23rd of May 2019.

ii. Schedule of Lok Sabha polls-

- Phase one - 11th April 2019,
- Phase two - 18th April 2019,
- Phase three - 23rd April 2019,
- Phase four - 29th April 2019,
- Phase five - 06th May 2019,
- Phase six - 12th May 2019,
- Phase seven - 19th May 2019,
- Date of counting- 23rd May 2019.



3-member Mediation Panel Created By Supreme Court To Settle Ram Mandir-Babri Masjid Case

i. The Supreme Court ordered a court-monitored mediation in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case to arrive at a "permanent solution" to the politically and religiously sensitive issue.

ii. The five-judge constitution bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi appointed a panel of 3 mediators in the title suit with Retired Justice Kalifullah chairing the court-appointed and monitored mediation process. The other two members are spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and senior advocate Sriram Panchu.



Madhya Pradesh Government Increases Reservation Quota of OBCs to 27%

i. The Madhya Pradesh government issued an ordinance increasing reservation quota for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 27% from the current 14%. The announcement was made by the state's Law and Legal Affairs Minister PC Sharma.

ii. The ordinance was issued and notified after it received the assent from the state's Governor Anandiben Patel.



Important Takeways from above news-

- Madhya Pradesh CM: Kamal Nath, Governor: Anandiben Patel.

Dipa Karmakar Selected As Barbie Role Model

i. Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar was selected as Barbie role model & was presented with a one-of-a-kind doll by Barbie as the company celebrates its 60th anniversary.

ii. She was part of the 'Shero' program launched in 2015 by the company.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Dipa Karmakar was the 1st Indian female gymnast in the Olympics.

4th Internet of Things India Congress To Be Held In Bengaluru

i. The 4th IoT India Congress, an event which will see digital technology leaders converge to discuss and explore business opportunities in mainstreaming Internet of Things (IoT), will be held in Bengaluru in August 2019.

ii. The IoT India Congress 2019 will include tracks on segments such as healthcare, manufacturing, telecom, smart cities, energy, retail, cybersecurity, skills and development, IoT Standards, legal and regulatory, and agriculture.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Ravi Shankar Prasad is the Minister of Communications and Information Technology.



Erode Turmeric Gets GI Tag After An 8-Year Process

i. After an eight-year-long process, Erode turmeric (of Tamil Nadu) finally got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the Geographical Indication Registry.



ii. The Erode Manjal Vanigargal Matrum Kidangu Urimaiyalargal Sangham applied for the GI tag in January, 2011, at the office of the Deputy Registrar of GI Registry in Chennai. Erode turmeric is a rhizome, both finger and bulb obtained from the Erode local cultivar.

Delhi Government Sets-Up High-level Committee To Reform Higher Education

- i. The Delhi government's Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC), a think-tank that advises the government on key issues, has set up a 17-member high-level committee to "reform higher education" in the capital.
- ii. The committee will be chaired by DDC vice-chairperson Jasmine Shah. Nalanda 2.0, a non-profit policy think tank is collaborating with the DDC as the knowledge partner in the initiative.

United States To Set Up Six Nuclear Power Plants In India

- i. The 9th round of the India-US Strategic Security Dialogue was held in Washington DC. Both sides reaffirmed to deny Weapons of Mass Destruction to non-state actors and work towards setting up US nuclear plant in India agreement.
- ii. The two sides committed to strengthen bilateral security and civil nuclear cooperation, including the establishment of 6 U.S. nuclear reactors in India.



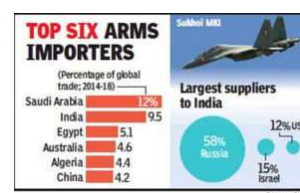
Areca Nut Gets Its First GI Tag For 'Sirsi Supari'

- i. The Registrar of Geographical Indications, Government of India, accorded a GI tag, 'Sirsi Supari', to areca nut grown in Sirsi, Siddpaur and Yellapur taluks of Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka.
- ii. The Totagars' Cooperative Sale Society (TSS) Ltd, a Sirsi-based agri cooperative, is the registered proprietor of the GI 'Sirsi Supari'.



India Now 2nd Largest Arms Importer In The World; Saudi On Top: SIPRI Report

- i. India is the second largest importer of weapons in the world, as per the annual report 'Trends in International Arms Transfers-2018' released by the think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Saudi Arabia is now the world's largest weapons importer.
- ii. After maintaining its position of world's largest arms importer for about 8 years, India dropped down to be the second largest importer of weapons during 2014-18. India accounted for 9.5% of the global total imports during 2014-18, while Saudi Arabia accounted for 12% of the total imports during the period.



NCLT Clears ArcelorMittal's Rs 42,000-crore Bid To Take Over Essar Steel

- i. The Ahmedabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has approved the Rs 42,000-crore resolution plan submitted by ArcelorMittal for the debt-ridden Essar Steel Ltd.
- ii. ArcelorMittal's takeover proposal for the indebted steel-maker was approved by the Essar Steel's Committee of Creditors last October and it was pending before the NCLT for approval since then.

HDFC Bank Becomes 3rd Indian Firm To Cross Rs6 trillion Market Cap

- i. HDFC Bank Ltd crossed the Rs6 trillion market capitalization mark for the first time, making it only the third Indian firm—after Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) and Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)—to achieve the milestone.
- ii. RIL is the most valued company in India with a market cap of Rs8.50 trillion, followed by TCS at Rs7.48 trillion.

Climate Vulnerability Index Highest For Assam And Mizoram

- i. Indian scientists have developed a common framework for the assessment of climate change vulnerability in all the states in the Himalayan region. The assessment shows that the vulnerability index is the highest for Assam (0.72) and Mizoram (0.71).
- ii. Sikkim is the least vulnerable state with the index being 0.42. Professor NH Ravindranath from IISc, Bangalore, stated that the framework can be applied to states in the rest of the country as well, with suitable modifications.

Mukesh Ambani Tops Forbes' List of World's Richest Sports Team Owners

- i. Reliance Industries CMD Mukesh Ambani leads Forbes' list of richest sports team owners with a net worth of around \$50 billion. Ambani purchased the IPL team Mumbai Indians through a RIL subsidiary in 2008 for just over \$100 million.
- ii. Steve Ballmer (Net worth: \$41.2 billion), the American Businessman and Dietrich Mateschitz (Net worth: \$18.9 billion) were at 2nd and 3rd positions, respectively.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Mumbai Indians lifted the IPL crown in 2013, 2015 and 2017.

Tata, Reliance And Airtel Emerge Best Indian Brands Of 2019

- i. Tata, Reliance, and Airtel emerged as the top three Indian brands of 2019, according to a report published by Interbrand, part of the Omnicom Media Group.



ii. **Tata** continued to hold the **top** position in the best Indian Brands ranking as its brand value grew by 6%, mainly due to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). Knocking Airtel off from the 2nd spot, **Reliance's** brand value grew by 12%, bolstered by the success of Jio. **Airtel** stood at number 3.

RBI Names SBI, ICICI and HDFC As Systemically Important Banks

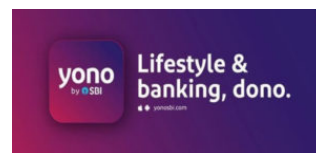
i. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) named **State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank** as **Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)**, which in other words mean banks that are too big to fail.

ii. As per the norms, these banks will have to set aside **more capital** for their continued operation. Inclusion in **D-SIB** indicates that failure of any of these banks would have a cascading effect on the Indian financial system.

SBI Launches Cardless ATM Withdrawal With YONO Cash

i. The **State Bank of India** has launched a new service called '**YONO Cash**' for its customers using which customers can withdraw money from ATMs without using debit cards.

ii. This facility is available over **16,500** of its ATMs through the **You Only Need One (YONO)**, mobile app platform for the first time in the country. The ATMs enabled for this service will be called as **YONO Cash Point**.



CBSE Launches Shiksha Vani App

i. The **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** launched a new podcast app '**Shiksha Vani**' that will disseminate crucial information to students and parents in a timely manner.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **CBSE Chairperson-** Anita Karwal, **Headquarters-** New Delhi.

Microsoft Launched Project 'Sangam' To Boost India's Swachh Bharat Mission

i. **Microsoft** has announced that it has partnered with **The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** to promote its Project '**Sangam**' which is developed to accelerate **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** in India.

ii. It is one of the world's largest Cleanliness Programme. Project Sangam is a cloud-hosted, mobile-first community learning platform.



ICICI Lombard, Mobikwik To Offer Online Fraud Protection Policy

i. **ICICI Lombard and Mobikwik** announced a **strategic partnership** to provide cyber-insurance cover. The relationship **aims to provide protection against unauthorized and fraudulent transactions online**, across bank accounts, debit and credit cards, and mobile wallets.

ii. **MobiKwik users** can avail the commercial cyber-insurance policy underwritten by **ICICI Lombard** and enjoy the benefit of stress-free and secured transactions.



Integral Coach Factory of Chennai Became The World's Largest Rail Coach Manufacturer

i. **Indian Railways Integral Coach Factory (ICF)** has surpassed the top Chinese manufacturers after creating a **40% record increase** in its production.

ii. With this, **Indian Railway's** oldest and premier coach manufacturing unit becomes the single largest rail coach manufacturer in the world.

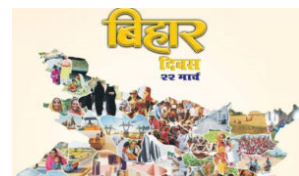
Bihar Diwas: 22nd March

i. **Bihar Diwas or Bihar Day** is celebrated **every year on 22 March** to commemorate the state's separation from Bengal presidency in 1912.

ii. This day is a public holiday in Bihar. This day marks the **107th foundation day of Bihar**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Governor of Bihar-** Lalji Tandon, **Chief Minister-** Nitish Kumar.



PM Modi Addresses The Nation: India Becomes Elite Space Power

i. PM Narendra Modi addressed the nation. PM Modi announced that **India has entered its name as an elite space power**. An **Anti-Satellite Weapon (A-SAT)** successfully targeted a live satellite on a low earth orbit. The name of this mission was '**Mission Shakti**'.

ii. After the US, Russia, and China, **India is the fourth country** to acquire this space capability.

iii. **Anti-satellite is a milestone for the country's security and technological achievement**. **India is a space superpower now**.



ISRO Launches Young Scientist Programme 'YUVIKA' For Schoolkids

i. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched a special programme for schoolchildren called **Young Scientist Programme or Yuva Vigyani Karyakram (YUVIKA)**, in tune with the government's vision "**Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan**".

ii. The program is primarily aimed at imparting basic knowledge on space technology, space science and space applications to the younger ones with the intent of arousing their interest in the emerging areas of space activities.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **ISRO Director:** K. Sivan, **Headquarters:** Bengaluru, **Established in:** 1969.



Facebook launches tools to boost Electoral Process

i. Social Media giant, Facebook has launched two new India-specific tools viz. "**Candidate Connect**" and "**Share You Voted**" to boost civic engagement on its platform during the Lok Sabha elections 2019 that commence in April.

ii. Both these tools will be made available in 12 local languages.

Infosys, Roland-Garros Team Up For Digital Innovation

i. Infosys, a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting, and **Roland-Garros Grand Slam** tennis tournament, also called the **French Open**, announced a three-year strategic technology partnership.

ii. The partnership aims to re-imagine the tennis experience for the fans and the players globally.



Indians Marked In "World's 100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy for 2019"

i. The "**100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy**" list is comprised of seven Indian names including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Dr. Harsh Vardhan, who took important measures to combat climate change.

ii. The list is prepared by Apolitical, a peer to peer learning platform for governments. The list has been topped by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (Congresswoman, US Congress).

iii. The other 5 names from India:

1. **Mukta Tilak**- Mayor of Pune.
2. **Jyoti Kirit Parikh**- Executive director of Integrated Research and Action for Development.
3. **Sunita Narain**- Director of the Centre for Science and the Environment.
4. **Vandana Shiva**- Founder of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Natural Resource Policy.
5. **Upendra Tripathy**- Director general of the International Solar Alliance.



In a 1st, SpiceJet Joins International Air Transport Association

i. Indian low-cost airlines SpiceJet has joined the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)**. SpiceJet is the first Indian budget carrier to join the IATA, which has over 290 airlines as members.

ii. The membership of IATA will allow SpiceJet to explore and grow its collaborations with international member airlines of IATA through interlining and code shares and also enables to seamlessly expand the network options for its passengers in future.



IGI Airport Delhi Becomes The 12th Busiest Airport In The World

i. In accordance with the preliminary world airport traffic rankings for 2018 released by **Airports Council International (ACI)**, **Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA)** of New Delhi has elevated 4 ranks to reach at **12th** spot in terms of the busiest airport as compared to 2017's 16th spot.

ii. The list of world's busiest airports by passenger traffic ranking has been topped by **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (US)** followed by Beijing Capital International Airport (China) and Dubai International Airport (UAE).



India Ranks 76th On WEF Global Energy Transition Index

i. India has moved up 2 places to rank **76th** on a **global energy transition index**. The annual list, compiled by **Geneva-based** World Economic Forum (WEF), has ranked **115** economies on how well they are able to balance energy security and access with environmental sustainability and affordability.

ii. **Sweden** remains on the top and is followed by **Switzerland** and **Norway** in the top three.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **The founder and Chairman of WEF-** Klaus Schwab.
- **WEF Headquarters-** Switzerland.



Book Titled 'Every Vote Counts' of Navin Chawla Launched

i. Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari launched the book titled '**Every Vote Counts-The Story of India's Elections**'.

ii. The author of this book is **former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla**.

PFC Becomes India's 2nd Largest State-Owned Financial Firm

i. State-owned **Power Finance Corporation (PFC)** has completed the **acquisition of majority stake in REC Ltd by transferring Rs 14,500 crore to the government**.

ii. This **acquisition and merger will make PFC second-largest government-owned financial player in the country** based on the current market capital **after State Bank of India (SBI)** and also PFC will be the **third-highest profit-making financial player in India**.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Rajeev Sharma** is the Chairman & Managing Director of Power Finance Corporation.
- PFC headquarters in **New Delhi**.
- PFC was incorporated on **July 16th, 1986** and is a leading Non-Banking Financial Corporation in the Country.

Government Leaves Interest Rate On Small-Saving Schemes Unchanged

i. The **Finance Ministry has decided to keep the interest rate unchanged** on small savings schemes for the three-month period beginning April 1. The announcement covers small-saving schemes.

ii. The unchanged interest rate means the NSC (5 years) and the PPF (15 years) will fetch 8% interest, while money deposited in KVP will double in little over nine years. At the same time, if one is parking money in a fixed deposit with a maturity of five years with the State Bank of India, he/she will get 6.85%. Senior citizens will get half a percent more: 7.35%.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Based on the recommendations of the **Shyamala Gopinath panel**, interest rates on these schemes are reviewed before the end of every quarter, and accordingly, new rates are announced for the next quarter.

ISRO Set To Launch 29 Satellites Including EMISAT

i. **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** will launch 29 satellites including the **primary payload EMISAT**, on the first of April. **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C45** will take off from **Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota** tentatively at 9:30 AM carrying the satellites onboard.

ii. **EMISAT** has been developed for monitoring radar network by India. **EMISAT, weighing 436 kg**, is intended for electromagnetic spectrum measurement. It will be placed in an orbit of about 753 km altitude.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **ISRO Director: K. Sivan, Headquarters: Bengaluru, Established in: 1969.**

Adani Becomes 1st Indian Port Operator To Record 200 MMT Cargo Movement

i. **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ)** announced that it has **recorded cargo movement of more than 200 million metric tonnes (MMT)** at nine ports along the east and west coasts, becoming the **first Indian port operator to achieve the milestone**.

ii. Adani Ports embarked its journey in 2001 and has become one of the largest port operators in the world.



Tashigang in Himachal Pradesh Becomes World's Highest Polling Station

i. **Tashigang, a Himachal Pradesh village at an altitude of 15,256 feet** has now become the highest polling station in the world.

ii. Situated about 29 km from the **India-China border**, the polling station covers two villages, **Tashigang and Gate**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Himachal Pradesh CM- Jai Ram Thakur, Governor- Kaptan Singh Solanki.**



GI Certification For 5 Varieties Of Indian Coffee

i. The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India** has recently awarded Geographical Indication (GI) to five varieties of Indian coffee.

ii. They are:

1. Coorg Arabica coffee,
2. Bababudangiris Arabica coffee,
3. Chikmagalur Arabica coffee,
4. Araku Valley Arabica coffee,
5. Bababudangiris Arabica coffee.



Important Takeways from above news-

- In India, coffee is cultivated in about 4.54 lakh hectares by 3.66 lakh coffee farmers of which 98% are small farmers. Coffee cultivation is mainly done in the Southern States of India:
 1. Karnataka – 54%

2. Kerala – 19%
3. Tamil Nadu – 8%
- Coffee is also grown in non-traditional areas like Andhra Pradesh and Odisha (17.2%) and North East States (1.8%).

Former Governor's Book Titled 'Indian Fiscal Federalism' Launched

- i. The **Chairman of 15th Finance Commission** of India, N.K. Singh launched the book **"Indian Fiscal Federalism"**.
- ii. The book has been written by **Dr. Y. V. Reddy, former Governor of RBI and Chairman of the 14th Finance Commission of India** along with Dr. G. R. Reddy, Advisor (Finance) to the Government of Telangana.

IIT Kharagpur, Wipro Partner For Research In 5G and AI

- i. **Wipro Limited (Bengaluru Based)**, a leading global information technology, consulting and business process services company and **Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IIT Kharagpur)**, signed an MoU to collaborate on high-impact, industry-focused applied research in the areas of 5G and AI.
- ii. Research outcomes from this partnership will be leveraged by Wipro to develop solutions for its customers, across industry verticals. IIT Kharagpur will benefit from the commercialization of the joint research insights and Wipro's real-world industry expertise.



International

China slashes its GDP target to 6-6.5% amid slowdown

- i. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has expressed concern that the country will face a graver and more complicated environment to development, amid an ongoing trade war with the US and continued economic slowdown.
- ii. The world's second-largest economy has slashed its GDP target to 6.00 to 6.50 percent this year.



Kylie Jenner becomes world's youngest self-made billionaire

- i. Kylie Jenner was named the youngest self-made billionaire of all time by Forbes magazine, thanks to the booming cosmetics company she founded three years ago.
- ii. Jenner, 21, the half-sister of reality television stars Kim, Khloe and Kourtney Kardashian, made it onto the annual Forbes list of billionaires after debuting her Kylie Cosmetics online in 2015 with \$29 lip kits containing matching lipstick and lip liner.



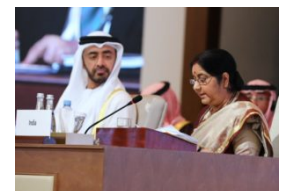
US Officially Closes Jerusalem Consulate

- i. The United States has officially shuttered its consulate in **Jerusalem**, downgrading the status of its main diplomatic mission to the **Palestinians** by folding it into the U.S. Embassy to **Israel**.
- ii. The U.S. State Department stated that the decision was driven to increase the efficiency and effectiveness in diplomatic engagements.



Abu Dhabi Hosted Organization Of Islamic Corporation (OIC) Meeting

- i. **Abu Dhabi** hosted the 46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the **Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC)**. It was a two-day gathering dedicated to discussing ways to combat hate speech, extremism and conflict in the region.
- ii. This is the **first time** that India participated in the meeting. **Sushma Swaraj** attended the inaugural session of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation meeting in Abu Dhabi where she was welcomed as a **"guest of honour"**.



Important Takeways from above news-

- United Arab Emirates (UAE) **Capital:** Abu Dhabi, **Currency:** Dirham.

Venezuela orders German ambassador to leave

- i. The Venezuelan government has announced to expel German ambassador Daniel Kriener from the country. President Nicolas Maduro's embattled government has declared the German ambassador persona non grata and ordered him to leave the country within 48 hours.



NASA astronauts to carry out first all-female spacewalk

- i. Just in time for International Women's Day, NASA announced that it will be conducting the first-ever, all-female spacewalk.
- ii. Astronauts Christina Koch and Anne McClain will exit the International Space Station on March 29, 35 years after the first woman performed a spacewalk. They'll be guided from the ground by flight director Mary Lawrence, and flight controllers Jackie Kagey and Kristen



Malaysia joins International Criminal Court

- i. Malaysia has become a member of the International Criminal Court. The ICC is the world's only permanent war crimes court and aims to prosecute the worst abuses when national courts are unable or unwilling. Malaysia becomes the 124th member of the court since its establishment in 2002.
- ii. But the tribunal in The Hague has come under fire over high-profile acquittals, while Burundi became the first country to quit the court in 2017 and the Philippines have announced its intention to withdraw.



116-Year-Old Japanese Woman Honoured As World's Oldest Person Alive By Guinness World Records

- i. A 116-year-old Japanese woman who loves playing the board game Othello is being honoured as the world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records.
- ii. Tanaka was born January 2, 1903, the seventh among eight children. The previous oldest living person was another Japanese woman, Chiyo Miyako, who died in July at age 117.

Google launches 'Bolo' to tutor children to read Hindi, English

- i. Tech giant Google has unveiled a new app 'Bolo' that aims to help children in primary school learn to read in Hindi and English. The free app, which is being launched in India first, uses Google's speech recognition and text-to-speech technology.
- ii. The app features an animated character 'Diya', who encourages children to read stories aloud and helps if the child is unable to pronounce a word. It also lauds the reader when he/she completes the reading.



First BRICS Sherpa Meeting Under Presidency Of Brazil Held In Curitiba

- i. The first BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Sherpa meeting held in Curitiba, Brazil under the Presidency of Brazil.
- ii. The Indian delegation was led by Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs T S Tirumurti.

Important Takeways from above news-

- BRICS Headquarters: Shanghai, China; President: K V Kamath.



Cyclone Idai Hits Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe

- i. Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi have been hit by a vicious cyclone 'IDAI' that has killed nearly 150 people, left hundreds more missing and stranded tens of thousands who are cut off from roads and telephones in mainly poor, rural areas.
- ii. Cyclone Idai has affected more than 1.5 million people in the three southern African countries, according to the UN and government officials.
- iii. Hardest hit is Mozambique's central port city of Beira where the airport is closed, electricity is out and many homes have been destroyed.



UN Releases Global Environment Outlook 2019 Report

- i. The United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) has released the sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (2019) titled 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People'.
- ii. The report calls on the decision makers to take immediate action to address pressing environmental issues to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as well as other internationally agreed environment goals, such as the Paris Agreement.

Important Takeways from above news-

- UNEP Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya, Head: Joyce Msuya.

Vienna Topped The Mercer's Quality Of Living Survey 2019

- i. The human resource consulting firm, Mercer's annual Quality of Living Survey 2019 has placed Austria's capital city Vienna at the number 1 spot, making it the 10th year in a row. The only cities outside of Europe to make the top 10 list are Vancouver, Canada, and Auckland, New Zealand.
- ii. The Economist Intelligence Unit had also given Vienna the top spot in its ranking of the world's most liveable cities in 2018. Hyderabad and Pune, at a rank of 143, continue to be the most liveable cities in India for expatriates.

Top 3 cities in the list:

- Vienna, Austria
- Zürich, Switzerland
- Vancouver, Canada; Munich, Germany; Auckland, New Zealand (tie).
-

In a 1st, UN Council Passes Resolution To Combat Terrorist Financing

- i. The UN Security Council has unanimously passed the **first-ever resolution** ordering members to **enforce laws against terror financing**.
- ii. UNSC resolution demands all states “ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offenses” to collect funds or financial resources to terrorist groups or individual criminals.

Important Takeways from above news-

- The UN Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote.
- Vladimir Voronkov is the chief of U.N. counter-terrorism.



Skytrax World Airport Awards: Singapore's Changi Tops, India's IGI Ranks 59th

- i. Singapore's Changi Airport has been crowned the world's best aviation hub for the seventh time in a row, while New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport featured at number 59, according to the Skytrax World Airport Awards.
- ii. The list has been compiled by the UK-based Skytrax, a consultancy firm which runs an airline and airport review and ranking site, featuring 100 airports. New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport is India's Best Airport.



New Zealand Bans Assault Weapons

- i. New Zealand has imposed an immediate ban on assault weapons following the Christchurch massacre that claimed the lives of 50 mosque-goers.
- ii. Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern announced assault rifles and military-style semi-automatic weapons would be banned with immediate effect, making a pledge to ensure that nothing like Christchurch massacre ever occurs in the Pacific nation again.

Important Takeways from above news-

- New Zealand Capital: Wellington, Currency: New Zealand dollar.



Apple Partners With Goldman Sachs And Mastercard For Apple Card

- i. Apple Inc & Goldman Sachs Group Inc jointly launched the Apple Card credit card for iPhones.
- ii. The card is tied to Apple Pay, a service that allows people to load banking information and pay in store or use it for purchases online.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Apple Inc. CEO- Tim Cook; Headquarters- California, USA.
- Apple card is a virtual credit card that can be integrated into the Wallet app of the iPhone.



First Ever High-Level Dialogue On Indo-Pacific Cooperation (HLD-IPC) Held In Jakarta

- i. The Government of Indonesia has hosted the first ever High-Level Dialogue on Indo-Pacific Cooperation (HLD-IPC) in its capital city Jakarta. The theme of the HLD was 'Towards a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Inclusive Region'.
- ii. The objective behind this meet was to urge all participating governments to talk openly about their plans for increasing cooperation and for building trust in the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean region.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Indonesia Currency: Indonesian rupiah, President: Joko Widodo.



Kazakhstan Renames Its Capital Astana To Nursultan

- i. Kazakhstan has renamed its capital Astana to Nursultan to honor outgoing leader Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- ii. Mr. Nazarbayev, 78, served nearly 30 years as president of the nation. The change was announced after Kassym-Jomart Tokayev was sworn in as president, promising to seek his predecessor's opinion on key decisions.



World's First Wireless Electric Car Charging Station Introduced By Norway

- i. Oslo, the capital city of Norway will become the world's first city to install wireless, induction-based charging stations for its fleet of electric taxis with an aim to have a zero-emission cab system by the year 2023 according to a report by Reuters.

- ii. Norway wants all new cars to be zero emission by 2025 whereas other nations, like Britain and France, have similar goals for 2040.

Important Takeways from above news-



- **Norway capital:** Oslo, **Currency:** Norwegian krone.

Trump Sign Proclamation Recognising Israel's Sovereignty Over Golan Heights

i. US President Donald Trump has signed a proclamation recognising Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights and told the visiting Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, that Israel has an absolute right to self-defence.

ii. Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 war but its sovereignty over the territory is not recognized by the international community. Over the past years terrorist groups in southern Syria continued to make the Golan Heights a potential launching ground for attacks against Israel.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Israel Capital:** Jerusalem, **Currency:** Israeli new shekel.

Oman Signs Agreement Allowing United States Military To Use Its Ports

i. Oman has signed an agreement with the United States of America that allow American ships and warplanes to take advantage of his ports and airports.

ii. The agreement will allow the US forces to take advantage of the facilities offered at some of the Sultanate's ports and airports during visits of the US military vessels and aircraft.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Oman Capital:** Muscat, **Currency:** Omani rial, **PM and Sultan:** Qaboos bin Said al Said.

World Happiness Report Released, India Ranks 140th

i. The World Happiness Report was released by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations on March 20, the International Day of Happiness. India is ranked 140th out of 156 nations. India shows a 7 spot decline.

ii. For the second consecutive year, Finland topped the list. Denmark ranked second followed by Norway. Pakistan ranked 67th, Bhutan 95th, China 93rd, Bangladesh 125th, and Sri Lanka 130th while South Sudan ranked last in the World Happiness Report.



World's Largest e-waste Recycling Hub Opened At The Dubai Industrial Park

i. The world's largest e-waste recycling plant has been opened in Dubai Industrial Park, Dubai by 'Enviroserve' company with a total cost of \$5 million. It will recycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), IT asset disposition (ITAD), refrigerant gas and specialized waste.

ii. The processing capacity of this recycling hub is 100,000 tonnes of total integrated waste (per year), of which 39,000 tonnes is e-waste. The project is supported by the Swiss Government Export Finance Agency.



In a 1st, UN Council Passes Resolution To Combat Terrorist Financing

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ii. UNSC resolution demands all states "ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offenses" to collect funds or financial resources to terrorist groups or individual criminals.



Important Takeways from above news-

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- It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote.
- Vladimir Voronkov is the chief of U.N. counter-terrorism.

Defence

Africa-India Field Training Exercise AFINDEX-19 Begins

i. The inaugural Africa-India Field Training Exercise-2019 for India and African nations called AFINDEX-19 started with a grand opening ceremony at Aundh Military Station, Pune.

ii. Contingents of the 17 African Nations came together for the opening ceremony along with a contingent of Maratha Light Infantry representing India.



Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Exercise Mitra shakti-VI To Be Held in Sri Lanka

i. Exercise MITRA SHAKTI is conducted annually as part of military diplomacy and interaction between armies of India & Sri Lanka. The joint exercise for the year 2018-19 will be conducted in Sri Lanka.



ii. Troops from **1st Battalion the BIHAR Regiment** of the Indian Army and Gemunu Watch Battalion of Sri Lankan Army would be jointly undertaking the exercise.

Bilateral joint exercise between India, Oman to begin from 12th March

- i. The third edition of the bilateral joint exercise between India and Oman, Al Nagah 2019 will begin from 12th of this month (March) at Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains in Oman.
- ii. It will continue till 25th of March. In the exercise, both the armies will exchange expertise and experience in tactics, weapon handling and firing.

Indo-Oman Joint Ex Al Nagah 2019 Begins

- i. **Indo Oman Joint Exercise Al Nagah III 2019**, a joint military exercise between **Indian and Royal Army of Oman (RAO)**, commenced this morning at HQ Jabel Regiment, Nizwa, Oman.
- ii. The opening ceremony saw the unfurling of the national flags of both countries with Omani and Indian soldiers standing side by side signifying the growing cooperation, synergy and understanding between both the countries.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Oman Capital:** Muscat, **Currency:** Omani rial.



Indo-Bangladesh Joint Military Exercise Sampriti 2019 Concludes

- i. Exercise Sampriti-VIII, a joint **Indo-Bangladesh military exercise** which witnessed participation of a company group of **9th Battalion the Rajputana Rifles** from the Indian Army and the Company of **36 East Bengal Battalion, Bangladesh Army** concluded at Tangail, Bangladesh.
- ii. The closing ceremony was graced by HE Mrs. Riva Ganguly Das, Indian High Commissioner who highlighted the special bonds between the two nations.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Bangladesh PM:** Sheikh Hasina, **Capital:** Dhaka, **Currency:** Taka.
- Exercise Sampriti was the **8th edition in the Sampriti series**, which started in 2009.



'Vijit' Becomes 1st Indian Coast Guard Ship To Visit Indonesia

- i. Highlighting the close maritime proximity between India and Indonesia, **Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vijit'** became the **first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit Sabang, Indonesia**.
- ii. During its maiden voyage, officers and crew of Vijit will hold interaction with officials of **Bakamla (Indonesian Coast Guard)**, Indonesian Armed Forces and the civil administration at Sabang, read a press release from Indian embassy in Jakarta.

Important Takeways from above news-

- This visit of the coast guard ship follows from the first-ever-visit of Naval Ship INS Sumitra to Sabang in July 2018.



US Special Operations Forces Hold Exercise With NSG In Hyderabad

- i. The **United States Special Forces Group stationed in Japan** is involved in a joint exercise with **India's National Security Guard in Hyderabad**, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries.
- ii. The US forces are from the 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) stationed out of Okinawa in Japan.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **National Security Guard (NSG)** formally came into being in September 1986.
- **Sudeep Lakhtakia** is the present Director General of NSG.



CISF Sets Guinness Record For Longest Single Line Cycle Parade

- i. The **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** created the **Guinness World Record for 'longest single line bicycle parade (moving)'** at the Yamuna Expressway, **Noida**.
- ii. CISF personnel rode **1,327 bicycles non-stop** in a single line, maintaining a uniform distance between the bicycles. The record was earlier held by Hubballi Bicycle Club of India, with 1,235 bicycles in a single chain.



PINAKA Guided Weapons System Successfully Test Fired

- i. **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** successfully test fired the **PINAKA guided WEAPON rocket system** from Pokhran range in Rajasthan.



ii. The weapon system is equipped with state-of-the-art guidance kit comprising of an advanced navigation and control system. The weapon systems impacted the intended targets with high precision and achieved desired accuracies.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO.
- DRDO Established in: 1958, Headquarters in: New Delhi.

U.S. And South Korea End Military Exercises 'Foil Eagle 2019' And 'Key Resolve'

i. The United States and South Korea decided to call off their joint exercise “Foil Eagle” and “Key Resolve” and instead bifurcate them into smaller exercises. This is being done to ease tensions with North Korea. “Key Resolve” will be replaced by “Dongmaeng” which is also known as alliance in English, Foil Eagle drills will be replaced by a smaller battalion-sized exercise.

ii. This decision has been made after there was a failure to reach an agreement on denuclearisation during the summit in Hanoi, Vietnam between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.



India, Australia To Hold Bilateral Exercise AUSINDEX In Vishakhapatnam

i. The third edition of the biennial, bilateral exercise AUSINDEX 19 between India and Australia will be held in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

ii. The upcoming exercise will focus on anti-submarine warfare and will see Australia's largest defence force deployment in India.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Exercise Malabar is a naval exercise b/w U.S.A, Japan & India.



INS Kadmat at Langkawi, Malaysia to Participate in LIMA-19

i. Indian Navy's frontline ASW corvette, INS Kadmat arrived at Langkawi, Malaysia on a 7 days official visit.

ii. The ship is scheduled to participate in the 15th edition of Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, LIMA-19 during the visit. The ship would be participating in numerous activities at Langkawi with 29 other participating navies, cultural exchange programmes, cross visits to ships, and sporting events.



Indian Navy Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Training Facility Launched

i. The Indian Navy's state of the art Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Training Facility (NBCTF) was inaugurated by Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba at INS Shivaji, Lonavala.

ii. The training facility has been named ABHEDYA, which means impenetrable in Sanskrit.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Vice Admiral Karambir Singh has been appointed as the next Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS).



Chinook Helicopters Inducted In Indian Air Force

i. The Indian Air Force formally inducted the CH 47 F(I)- Chinook heavy-lift helicopters into its inventory at Air Force Station Chandigarh. IAF had signed a contract with M/s Boeing Ltd in September 2015 for 15 Chinook helicopters.

ii. The first batch of four helicopters has been delivered on schedule and the last batch is to be delivered by March 2020. These helicopters will be deployed in the Northern and Eastern regions of India.



Important Takeways from above news-

- Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa is the present Chief of the Air Staff of IAF.

Indian-Sri Lankan Joint Military Exercise MITRASHAKTI-VI Begins

i. The joint training exercise MITRASHAKTI – VI between Indian and Sri Lanka Army kick-started at Diyatalawa in Sri Lanka.

ii. An Indian contingent of 120 Army personnel, including 11 officers arrived last evening to take part in the two-week long exercise. MITRASHAKTI is one of the largest bilateral armies to army exercises conducted in the region.



Appointments or Resign/Retired

AN Jha Replaces Shaktikanta Das As 15th Finance Commission Member

i. Former Finance Secretary Ajay Narayan Jha has joined as a member of the 15th Finance Commission. Jha has been posted in place of Shaktikanta Das who had resigned as a member of the Commission after being appointed the RBI Governor.



ii. Jha is a 1982-batch IAS officer of Manipur cadre. He was retired as a **Finance Secretary** to the central government.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Finance Minister of India:** Arun Jaitley.
- **15th Finance Commission Chairman:** N K Singh.

Bhagwan Lal Sahni Appointed Chairman Of the National Commission For Backward Classes

i. Bhagwan Lal Sahni has been appointed as the **chairman** of the newly constituted **National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)**. Kaushalendra Singh Patel, Sudha Yadav and Achary Talloju have been appointed as members of the commission.

ii. Their names were approved by President Ram Nath Kovind. The NCBC was given constitutional status by Parliament in **2018**, after repealing the National Commission for **Backward Classes Act, 1993**.



UNDP appoints Padma Lakshmi as Goodwill Ambassador

i. Indian-American television personality and food expert **Padma Lakshmi** has been appointed by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** as its **newest Goodwill Ambassador**, supporting the agency's fight against inequality and discrimination around the world.

ii. UNDP announced Lakshmi's appointment on the eve of International Women's Day.



Kummanam Rajasekharan Resigns as Mizoram Governor

i. Mizoram Governor **Kummanam Rajasekharan** has stepped down from his post. **Governor of Assam, Prof. Jagdish Mukhi**, has been given temporary charge of the Aizawl Raj Bhavan.

ii. Mr. Rajasekharan, who was former State president of the BJP in Kerala, had been sworn in as Governor of Mizoram in May 2018.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Mizoram Capital:** Aizawl, **Chief Minister:** Zoramthanga.



Subhash Chandra Garg Appointed As Finance Secretary

i. The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** has approved designating **Shri Subhash Chandra Garg, IAS**, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance as **Finance Secretary**.

ii. Former finance secretary Ajay Narayan Jha superannuated on February 28. Garg, 58, a 1983 batch IAS officer of Rajasthan cadre, has been working as the Secretary in Department of Economic Affairs since June 2017.



Soumya Swaminathan Named Chief Scientist at WHO

i. Soumya Swaminathan, a Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organisation has been named **Chief Scientist of the WHO**.

ii. As Deputy Director-General Programmes (DDP), she was one of the three DDGs assisting WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.



Scientist Ajit Kumar Mohanty Appointed Bhabha Atomic Research Centre Chief

i. Distinguished scientist **Ajit Kumar Mohanty** was appointed **Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)**, the country's premier multi-disciplinary nuclear research facility.

ii. Mohanty has been appointed **Director, BARC** for a period of three years. He is at present Director, Physics Group in BARC and Director, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **BARC Headquarters in:** Mumbai, **Founder:** Homi J. Bhabha, **Founded:** 3 January 1954.



Mohammad Shtayyeh Named As Palestinian PM

i. Mohammad Shtayyeh has been named as **Palestinian Prime Minister** by President of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas. A member of the West Bank's dominant Fatah party is a long time ally of Abbas.

Axis Bank Names Rakesh Makhija As New Chairman

i. Axis Bank has appointed **Rakesh Makhija** as **Non-Executive Chairman** for a period of 3 years.

ii. The 67-year-old, who has served as an independent director on the lender's board since October 2015, will take over from **Sanjiv Misra** when his term ends on July 17.

Ex-Finance Secretary Hasmukh Adhia appointed non-executive chairman of BoB

i. Former Finance Secretary Hasmukh Adhia was appointed as non-executive chairman of Bank of Baroda. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment as the part-time non-official director as well as non-executive chairman on the board of Bank of Baroda for a period of three years.



ii. Adhia, a 1981-batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, superannuated on November 30 last year. He last served as the Finance Secretary.

C Lalsawta Sworn In As Mizoram's 1st Lokayukta Chairman

i. Retired IAS officer C Lalsawta was sworn-in as the first Chairman of the newly-constituted Lokayukta in Mizoram.

ii. He was administered the oath of office and secrecy by the newly appointed Mizoram governor Jagdish Mukhi in a swearing-in ceremony held at Raj Bhavan in Aizawl.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Mizoram CM: Zoramthanga, Capital: Aizawl, Formation in: 1987.



Rahul Bajaj Resigns As Bajaj Finserv Chairman

i. Bajaj Finserv's Chairman and Non-Executive Director Rahul Bajaj has resigned and will take over as the Chairman Emeritus from May 2019.

ii. Bajaj, 80, has tendered his resignation which will be effective from the conclusion of the board meeting scheduled for May 16, 2019.

MR Kumar Appointed LIC Chairman

i. The government has appointed MR Kumar as the Chairman of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and Vipin Anand and TC Suseel Kumar as the managing directors (MDs).

ii. LIC's executive board comprises of 1 chairman and 4 managing directors. MR Kumar is currently the Zonal Manager, Delhi at LIC.

Justice P.C. Ghose Named India's First Lokpal

i. Former Supreme Court judge Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose was recommended to be the first Lokpal or anti-corruption ombudsman of India. Justice Ghose, 67, is a member of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) since June 2017.

ii. His name was finalised and recommended by the Selection Committee comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan and eminent jurist Mukul Rohatgi.



Pramod Sawant Sworn In As Goa Chief Minister

i. Pramod Sawant (45), former Speaker of Goa legislative Assembly and MLA from Sankhelim in North Goa was sworn-in as 11th Chief Minister of Goa, succeeding Manohar Parrikar, who died after a prolonged battle with advanced pancreatic cancer.

ii. He was given the oath of office and secrecy at Raj Bhavan by Goa Governor Mridula Sinha. The entire Cabinet of Manohar Parikkar has been retained.



Gauri Sawant Becomes India's 1st Transgender Election Ambassador

i. The Election Commission of India has appointed transgender social activist Gauri Sawant, as one of the 12 election ambassadors from Maharashtra. She is the first transgender election ambassadors.

ii. According to the Election Commission, Gauri Sawant's appointment would help in more people from this category getting registered during the final phase of voters enrollment.



Kazakhstan President Resigns After Nearly 30 Years In Power

i. Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev has announced his resignation after nearly 30 years in power. The 78-year old leader had ruled the country since it emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

ii. The Chairman of the Kazakh Senate would take over. The announcement came less than a month after the President sacked his government, citing a lack of economic development despite the country's vast energy resources.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Kazakhstan Capital: Astana, Currency: Kazakhstani tenge.



Nareish Goyal Steps Down From Jet Airways Board

i. Jet Airways Founders Nareish Goyal and wife Anita Goyal have stepped down from the board of the cash-strapped airline. With this, Nareish Goyal ceases to be Chairman. Another director Kevin Knight has also resigned.

ii. The board also approved the issue of 11.4 crore equity shares to the lenders upon conversion of Re 1 of the outstanding debt. Lenders will infuse up to Rs 1,500 crore via debt instruments.



RBI Appoints 5 Member Committee To Deepen Digital Payments

- i. Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has appointed **5-member committee** under the chairmanship of **Nandan Nilekani** to strengthen digital payments as well as to boost financial inclusion through Financial Technology. The committee would submit its recommendations within **3 months**.
- ii.** This announcement was made by RBI Governor **Shaktikanta Das** at the first event of Financial Technology (Fintech) Conclave, which was organized by NITI Aayog in **New Delhi**.

AIBA President Gafur Rahimov Resigned

- i.** The **Amateur International Boxing Federation (AIBA)** President **Gafur Rahimov** announced his resignation claiming that political based discussions were harming the organizations progress. Rahimov will be replaced by an interim president.
- ii.** Rahimov was elected in November 018 despite being on the U.S. Treasury Department's sanctions list **"for providing material support"** to a criminal organization.



Vice Admiral Karambir Singh To Take Over As Next Chief of Naval Staff

- i.** The Government of India has appointed **Vice Admiral Karambir Singh**, presently Flag Officer Commander-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) Eastern Naval Command as **next Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from May 31, 2019**. The **present Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba** retires on the same day.
- ii.** Born on November 03, 1959, Vice Admiral Karambir Singh was commissioned on July 01, 1980 into the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy. Vice Admiral Karambir Singh has been decorated with the **Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM)** and the **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM)**.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Navy Day** in India is celebrated on **4 December every year** to celebrate the achievements and role of the Naval force to the country.

Tata Coffee Appoints Chacko Purackal Thomas As MD And CEO

- i.** **Tata Coffee** announced the appointment of **Chacko Purackal Thomas** as the managing director and chief executive officer.
- ii.** He will replace **Sanjiv Sarin**. He will assume the charge from **April 1, 2019**.

President Administers Oath Of Office to Justice PC Ghose As Lokpal Chief

- i.** President **Ram Nath Kovind** administered the oath of office to **Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose** as the country's first Lokpal.
- ii.** The oath was administered at a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Justice Ghose, a former Supreme Court judge, was named the country's first Lokpal, the anti-corruption ombudsman.



BCCI Ombudsman Justice D.K. Jain to Serve As Ad-Hoc Ethics Officer

- i.** Supreme Court-appointed **BCCI Ombudsman Justice D K Jain (retd)** will now serve as the **Ethics Officer of the Indian cricket board on an ad-hoc basis**.
- ii.** According to the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, provisions in its constitution require an Ethics Officer to be appointed to determine and decide issues related to conflict of interest.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Justice D K Jain (retd)** has been appointed as the first Ombudsman of the BCCI recently.

Honours / Awards

Indian Bank Receives Best Bank Award From The State Government Of Tamil Nadu

- i.** **Indian Bank**, a Public Sector Bank (PSB), headquartered at **Chennai**, Tamil Nadu has been awarded the Best Bank Award by the Tamil Nadu government for successfully meeting the needs of **women's self-help groups (SHGs)**.
- ii.** The award was given to **MK Bhattacharya**, the executive director of Indian Bank by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **K Palaniswami** at Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Tamil Nadu Capital:** Chennai, **CM:** Edappadi K. Palaniswami, **Governor:** Banwarilal Purohit.

Tata Steel Recognised As One Of World's Most Ethical Companies

- i.** **Tata Steel** has received the award as one of the 2019 **World's Most Ethical Companies**. The award has been given by **Ethisphere Institute, USA**.
- ii.** The company was also recognised 7 times previously and is one of the only two awardees in the **'Metals, Minerals and Mining'** industry. In 2019, 128 honourees across 21 countries and 50 industries have been recognised.

DRDO Chairman Wins Missile Systems Award

- i. **Satheesh Reddy**, the Secretary of India's Department of Defence R&D and Chairman of the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has been chosen by the **American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)** as the co-winner of the **2019 Missile Systems Award**.
- ii. The other co-winner is **Rondell J. Wilson** who is a former **Principal Engineering Fellow** of Raytheon Missile Systems. Satheesh Reddy is the first person to be honoured with this award outside the USA in 40 years.



Bharti AXA General Insurance Claims The 'Non-Life Insurer of the Year Award 2019'

- i. **ASSOCHAM (The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India)**, which is one of the apex trade associations of India has conferred '**Non-Life Insurer of the Year Award 2019**' to Bharti AXA General Insurance.
- ii. It is a joint venture between Bharti Enterprises and French insurance giant AXA. This award recognizes efficacy, excellence and contribution in the insurance industry annually.



life insurance

Important Takeways from above news-

- **Bharti AXA Life Insurance CEO: Vikas Seth.**

President Confers Gallantry And Distinguished Service Awards

- i. The President and Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces **Ram Nath Kovind** conferred **3 Kirti Chakras** and **15 Shaurya Chakras** to Armed Forces Personnel for displaying conspicuous gallantry, indomitable courage and extreme devotion to duty at a solemn ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhawan. 2 Kirti Chakras and 1 Shaurya Chakra were given posthumously.
- ii. The President also conferred **15 Param VishishtSeva Medals**, **1 Uttam Yudh Seva Medals** and **25 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals** to senior officers of the Armed Forces for distinguished service of an exceptional order.
- iii. **Kirti Chakra Winners:**
1. **SEPOY VRAHMA PAL SINGH**, THE **RAJPUT REGIMENT** (POSTHUMOUS): **ARMY**
 2. **SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR NAIN**, CONSTABLE, **130 BN, CRPF** (POSTHUMOUS): **MHA.**
 3. **MAJOR TUSHARGAUBA**, THE **JAT REGIMENT**: **ARMY.**



Nobel prize in literature to be awarded twice this year

- i. Two Nobel prizes in literature will be awarded this year, to make up for the lack of one in 2018 while the scandal-plagued Swedish Academy attempted to get its house in order.
- ii. Last year's Nobel was withheld for the first time since 1949 after the Swedish Academy, the august institution that selects the winners was hit with a sexual misconduct scandal that saw the husband of one member imprisoned for rape.



TVS Motor Company bags International Sustainability 'Green Era' Award

- i. TVS Motor Company has recently bagged the International Sustainability Award – 'Green Era Award for Sustainability' in Lisbon, Portugal. The company also won the 'Quality and Business Excellence Award' in acknowledgment of its endeavor to create new benchmarks in product quality.
- ii. The 'Green Era Award for Sustainability' was set up to recognize the true global exemplars who have been innovative and creative in pursuing the sustainable imperative. TVS Motor Company bagged the award because of its sincere commitment towards being a responsible manufacturer. The company has bagged this award for the second time.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **KN Radhakrishnan- Director & CEO of TVS Motor**

Padmanaban Gopalan Wins the Commonwealth Youth Award For The Asian Region

- i. A social entrepreneur from Tamil Nadu, **Padmanaban Gopalan**, founder of **No Food Waste**, was named the winner of the **Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian region** worth 3,000 Pounds at a ceremony at the Commonwealth Secretariat in **London**.
- ii. His initiative runs a geo-mapping platform, which allows users to drop food at located "**hunger spots**" and has so far recovered over **650,000 meals** across 14 cities and the platform has been used by over **12,000 volunteers**.



President Kovind to give Nari Shakti awards on International Women's Day

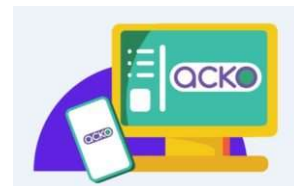
- i. **International Women's Day** is being observed on **08th March**. Governments, NGOs and other organizations across the world observe the day on the 8th of March every year to highlight the achievements of women.
- ii. The theme for this year's women's day is '**Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change**'.



iii. President Ram Nath Kovind presented the highest civilian honour for women in India, Nari Shakti Puraskar 2018 in New Delhi. This year, 44 awardees have been selected for these Puraskar.

Acko Awarded Coveted Golden Peacock Award 2019 For Innovative Product

- i. **ACKO General Insurance** a new-age digital insurance company was awarded the coveted **Golden Peacock Innovative Product Award – 2019**, for their contextual micro insurance product -“**Ola Ride Insurance**”. The award ceremony was held in Dubai.
- ii. **Established by the Institute of Directors, India in 1991**, The Golden Peacock Awards for Corporate Leadership and Excellence are now regarded as a benchmark of business excellence, both locally and globally.



Important Takeaways from above news-

- Acko's General Insurance Company was Founded in 2016 by Varun Dua.
- Its Head office is in Mumbai.

India Bags 1st Prize At International 'Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019' In Berlin

- i. The **Ministry of Tourism, Government of India** has won the **First Prize in the category of TV Cinema Spot** at the prestigious international Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019. The awards were received by Yogendra Tripathi, Secretary, Tourism at ITB, Berlin.
- ii. Following promotional films/television commercials produced by the Ministry as part of its **Incredible India 2.0 Campaign** received the awards:
1. Yogi of the Racetrack,
 2. The Reincarnation of Mr. and Mrs. Jones,
 3. Sanctuary in Paris,
 4. Maharani of Manhattan and,
 5. Masala Master Chef.



Kent RO Awarded As The Best Domestic Water Purifier 2019

- i. **Kent RO Systems Pvt. Ltd.** has received the **Best Domestic Water Purifier Award 2018-19** for its **RO+UV+UF** technology at the Water Digest Water Awards function that was held in New Delhi.
- ii. The **Water Digest Water Awards** are given jointly by the **Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation and UNESCO**. Kent had also earlier received awards like Organization of the Year Awards 2017, Best Domestic Water Purifier Award 2016-17, and Asia's Most Promising Brand 2016.



Mathematician Karen Uhlenbeck becomes 1st Woman To Win Abel Prize

- i. **University of Texas professor Karen Uhlenbeck** has become the **first woman to win the Abel Prize**, a mathematics honour first given in 2003. The 76-year-old was awarded for the impact of her work on "**analysis, geometry and mathematical physics**".
- ii. Modelled after the Nobel Prize, the Abel Prize is presented by the King of Norway and carries a \$700,000 cash award.



Indian Writer Raghu Karnad Wins Windham-Campbell Prize

- i. An Indian journalist, author and chief of The Wire, '**Raghu Karnad**' received the prestigious Windham-Campbell prize of USD 165,000 for his debut book, '**Farthest Field: An Indian story of Second World War**', published in the year **2015** in the non-fiction category.



Physicist Marcelo Gleiser Wins Templeton Prize 2019

- i. **Brazilian physicist and astronomer Marcelo Gleiser** has been awarded the **2019 Templeton Prize**, worth **\$1.4 million**, for his work blending science and spirituality.
- ii. Gleiser, 60, is the first Latin American to win the award. Previous winners of the award, started in 1972 by late global investor Sir John Templeton, include the Dalai Lama and Mother Teresa.



Hindi Writer Leeladhar Jagudi Awarded Vyas Samman 2018

- i. Hindi writer **Leeladhar Jagudi** honoured with **Vyas Samman 2018** for his collection of poems "**Jitne Log Utne Prem**" published in **2013**. The award carries an amount of **Rs. 4 lakhs** and it was started by **K K Birla foundation in 1991**.
- ii. He has received **Padma Shri in 2004** and Sahitya Akademi Award, Akashvani National Award and Uttarakhand Gaurav Samman as well.



64th Filmfare Awards Announced: Complete List of Winners

Winners of the 64th Filmfare Awards were announced at Jio Garden, BKC, Mumbai. Alia Bhatt won Best Actress for playing the role of a spy while Raazi also fetched Meghna Gulzar the Best Director Filmfare Award. Raazi also grabbed the Best Film trophy. Meanwhile, Ranbir Kapoor scored the Best Actor Filmfare Award for playing the role of Sanjay Dutt in biopic Sanju.



Here's the complete winner's list of 64th Film fare Awards 2019:

Sl. No.	Category	Winner
1.	Best Film	Raazi
2.	Critics' Award for Best Film	AndhaDhun
3.	Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female)	Alia Bhatt, Raazi
4.	Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male)	Ranbir Kapoor, Sanju
5.	Best Director	Meghna Gulzar, Raazi
6.	Best Debut Actor(Female)	Sara Ali Khan, Kedarnath
7.	Best Debut Actor(Male)	Ishaan Khatter, Beyond The Clouds
8.	Best Debut Director	Amar Kaushik, Stree
9.	Best Actor In A Supporting Role (Male)	Gajraj Rao, Badhaai Ho and Vicky Kaushal, Sanju
10.	People's Choice Award for Best Short Film	Plus Minus
11.	Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Female)	Surekha Sikri, Badhaai Ho
12.	Critics Best Actor In a Leading Role (Male)	Ayushmann Khurrana

Nobel Prize Recipient Amartya Sen To Be Honored Oxford University's Bodley Award

- Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen will be awarded the prestigious Bodley Medal, the highest honor granted by the University of Oxford's world-famous Bodleian Libraries.
- The medal is awarded to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the fields in which the Bodleian is awarded are, including literature, culture, science, and communication.

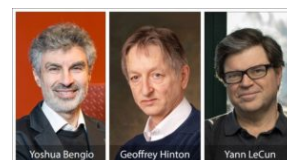
Important Takeways from above news-

- Amartya Sen is an Indian economist and philosopher.
- He was awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize in 1998 in Economic Sciences for his valued work in welfare economics and social choice theory.



Geoffrey Hinton, Yann LeCun, and Yoshua Bengio Named Turing Award Winners

- Three pioneers in AI, University of Toronto faculty member and Google Brain researcher **Geoffrey Hinton**, Facebook chief AI scientist and NYU professor **Yann LeCun**, and Element AI founder and University of Montreal professor **Yoshua Bengio** has been honored with the Turing Award.
- It is an annual prize the **Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)** has been awarding since **1966** to individuals who've made contributions of lasting and major technical importance to the computer field.



Peter Tabichi Conferred With Global Teacher Prize For 2019

- i. **Peter Tabichi**, a member of the Franciscan religious order has been conferred with the prestigious **Global Teacher Prize for 2019** at a ceremony in **Dubai** hosted by Hollywood actor, **Hugh Jackman**.
- ii. Peter Tabichi gives away 80% of his monthly income to the poor. The award recognises 'exceptional' teacher's commitment to pupils in a remote part of Kenya's Rift Valley.



ADNOC Awards Onshore Block To Indian Consortium

- i. A consortium of two Indian oil companies, **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited**, and **Indian Oil Corporation Limited** has been awarded the exploration rights for **Abu Dhabi's Onshore Block 1**.
- ii. The **Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)** signed agreements awarding the exploration rights. The award has been endorsed by Abu Dhabi's Supreme Petroleum Council.



President Kovind Honoured With Croatia's Highest Award

- i. **President Ram Nath Kovind** has been awarded the **Grand Order of King Tomislav with Sash and Grand Star** by the **President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic** for his exceptional contribution to the advancement of overall relations and development of mutual cooperation between India and Croatia and for promoting friendship and partnership between the people of both the countries. This is the highest award of the Republic of Croatia.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Croatia Capital:** Zagreb, **Currency:** Croatian kuna.

Dr Rajendra Joshi Conferred With 'Pravasi Bhartiya Samman'

- i. **Swiss-based NRI scientist Dr Rajendra Joshi** has been conferred with the **Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award** by the **President of India Ram Nath Kovind**.
- ii. The Indian Ambassador to Switzerland **Sibi George** handed over the award citation signed by the President to Dr Joshi at his residence in Switzerland.



Important Takeways from above news-

- The currency of Switzerland is Swiss franc.

Sports

India To Host U-17 Women's Football World Cup In 2020

- i. **India** will host the **Under-17 Women's Football World Cup** in **2020**. This was announced by the President of International Football Federation (**FIFA**) **Gianni Infantino** after the council meeting in **Miami, USA**.
- ii. This will be the second FIFA tournament India will be hosting, after the **U-17 Men's World Cup** in **2017**.



JP Duminy To Retire From ODIs After World Cup 2019

- i. **South African** all-rounder **JP Duminy** announced that he would retire from ODIs after the **ICC World Cup in England**. Duminy will, however, continue to be available for South Africa in T20 Internationals.
- ii. Duminy, who announced his retirement from Test and first-class cricket in **2017**, stated that 'the time is right' to close this chapter of his international career.



Asian Youth Championship 2019 Concludes: India Finishes 2nd, China Tops

- i. In **Asian Youth Athletics Championships** in **Hong Kong**, boys medley relay team won a gold medal for India on the final day to help **Indian youth team finish second** in the overall medals tally with a **total of 26 medals** including **8 gold, 9 silver and 9 bronze medals**.
- ii. **China topped the overall medals tally with 31 medals** that included **12 gold, 11 silver and eight bronze medals** and **Japan finished third with 20 medals** that included **6 Gold, 8 Silver and 6 bronze**.



Bengaluru FC Crowned ISL Champions For 1st Time

- i. **Bengaluru FC** clinched their maiden **Indian Super League** title as **Rahul Bheke** found a championship-winning header in the dying minutes of the **final against FC Goa**, in **Mumbai**.
- ii. The two teams were locked 0-0 after 90 minutes. Even the first extra time saw no goals but Bengaluru got better of a 10-men Goan team 1-0, four minutes from the end of the second extra half.



Roger Federer Claims 100th ATP Title Of His Career

- i. **Roger Federer** has claimed the **100th ATP title** of his career after beating 20-year-old Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the **Dubai Tennis Championships**. The **20-time grand slam champion** is the second man, after American **Jimmy Connors** to claim 100 titles.
- ii. Federer will have to win 10 more titles to beat Connors' men's record of **109**, while **Martina Navratilova** holds the all-time record having won **167** women's singles crowns during her career.



Special Olympics World Games 2019 in The UAE Makes History

- i. **Special Olympics World Games 2019** which is being held from **March 14 to March 21** in the UAE has made history by welcoming a **record-breaking 200 nations** ahead of the Games. Of the 200 nations, 195 will compete in the Games and five will observe.
- ii. It is **being held in West Asia for the first time**. 7,500 athletes will take part in 24 Olympic-style sports over seven days.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **UAE Capital:** Abu Dhabi, **Currency:** United Arab Emirates Dirham.

Deepak Singh Wins Gold At Makran Cup In Boxing

- i. National Boxing champion **Deepak Singh (49kg)** was the only Indian boxer to notch up the **gold medal**, while **five** others claimed **silver medals** in the Makran Cup in **Chabahar, Iran**. Deepak defeated Jaafar Naseri in the finals.
- ii. P. Lalitha Prasad (52kg), Commonwealth Games silver-medallist Manish Kaushik (60kg), Duryodhan Singh Negi (69kg), Sanjeet (91kg) and Commonwealth Games silver-medallist Satish Kumar (+91kg) claimed silver medals.



Chris Gayle Becomes First Player To Smash 500 Sixes In International Cricket

- i. **West Indies** opener **Chris Gayle** has become the **first batsman ever** to smash **500 or more sixes** in international cricket. In the 4th ODI against **England** in **Grenada**, Gayle scored 162 runs.
- ii. His innings contained a staggering **14 sixes** and powered the Windies to their highest-ever ODI score of **389**. Gayle also reached the **10,000-run milestone** in ODIs and became only the **second West Indian** after **Brian Lara (10,405 runs)** to achieve the milestone.



Finland Boxing Tournament: India Wins 1 Gold, 4 Silver

- i. **Kavinder Singh Bisht** in the **56kg-category** **struck gold** while Shiva Thapa in the 60kg category and three others claimed silver medals to end a fine Indian campaign at the **38th GeeBee Boxing Tournament in Helsinki, Finland**.
- ii. Bisht defeated Commonwealth Games bronze-medallist Hussamuddin in the 56kg summit clash. Signing off with silver medals were three-time Asian medallist Shiva Thapa, Govind Sahani, Commonwealth Games bronze-medallist Mohammed Hussamuddin and Dinesh Dagar.



Important Takeways from above news-

- **Finland Capital:** Helsinki, **Currency:** Euro.

All England Open Badminton Championships 2019: Complete List of Winners

2019 All England Open, officially **YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships 2019** was a BWF World Tour 1000 event which took place at Arena Birmingham in England from 6 to 10 March 2019. It had a total purse of \$1,000,000.

Here is the complete list of Winners of All England Open Badminton Championships 2019:



Sl. No.	Event	Winner	Runner Up
1.	Men's Singles	Kento MOMOTA (Japan)	Viktor AXELSEN (Denmark)
2.	Women's Singles	CHEN Yufei (China)	Tai Tzu-ying (Taiwan)

Sailor Upamanyu Dutta Clinches Bronze In Asian Regatta

- i. Young Mumbai sailor **Upamanyu Dutta** bagged the **bronze medal** in the **Laser Standard race for men** in the Laser Asian Sailing Championship which concluded in **Singapore**.



ii. The young sailor sailed superbly to gain **India's first ever medal in the competitive single-handed Laser Standard category**. **Nethra Kumanan of Chennai** achieved a creditable 4th position in the Laser Radial event for women.

Supreme Court Appoints PS Narasimha As Mediator To Resolve Disputes Within BCCI

- The Supreme Court appointed senior advocate PS Narasimha as a mediator for resolving various disputes related to cricket administration within the cricket body, the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**.
- Narasimha will hear the BCCI's position, and then make recommendations to the **Committee of Administrators (CoA)**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- BCCI President: C.K. Khanna, Headquarters: Mumbai.



18-yr-old Diksha 2nd Indian Golfer To Win Ladies European Tour

- 18-year-old **Diksha Dagar** has become the second Indian to win an event on **Ladies European Tour** after clinching **South African Women's Open** in Cape Town.
- Aditi Ashok** was the first Indian to win on the Ladies European Tour after clinching **Hero Women's Indian Open** in Gurugram in **2016**.



2019 Swiss Open Championship Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The **2019 Swiss Open**, officially the **YONEX Swiss Open 2019**, was a badminton tournament which took place at St. Jakobshalle in Basel, Switzerland and had a total purse of \$150,000.

Here is the complete list of Winners of 2019 Swiss Open Badminton Championships 2019:



Sl. No.	Event	Winner	Runner Up
1.	Men's Singles	Shi Yuki (China)	B Sai Praneet (India)
2.	Women's Singles	Chen Yufei (China)	Saena Kawakami (Japan)

Valtteri Bottas Wins Australian F1 Grand Prix 2019

- Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas** beat his world champion teammate **Lewis Hamilton** to clinch the season-opening **Australian Formula One Grand Prix**.
- Hamilton finished the race in the second spot, while Red Bull's Max Verstappen finished third.



Special Olympics Games 2019 Concludes: India Bag 368 Medals

- India returned with **368 medals (85 gold, 154 Silver, and 129 Bronze)** at the **Special Olympics World Summer Games**, held at **Abu Dhabi, UAE**.
- Indian power lifters bagged the maximum number of medals **20 gold, 33 silver and 43 bronze**. Roller Skating earned India **49 medals 13 gold, 20 silver and 16 bronze**. In cycling, the Indians won **11 gold, 14 silver and 20 bronze** to total **45 medals**.



Important Takeways from above news-

- The next Special Olympic Games are set to take place in Sweden in 2021.

India Clinch SAFF Women's Championship For 5th Time

- India has lifted **South Asian Football Federation SAFF Women's Championship** **5th time** in a row. Keeping its winning streak **India defeated host Nepal** in the final by **3-1** in **Biratnagar, Nepal**.
- India's **Dalmia Chhibber** scored 1st goal of the match in 26th minute. **India's Indumathi Kathiresan and Sabitra Tamang of Nepal** remained top scorer of the tournament.

Important Takeways from above news-

- This is India's **23rd straight victory** in the championship **since inception of the tournament in 2010**.
- India has **clinched all five editions** of SAFF championship.



Suresh Raina 1st Cricketer To Score 5,000 Runs in IPL

i. **Chennai Super Kings' Suresh Raina** has become the **first ever cricketer to reach 5,000 runs in Indian Premier League**.

ii. The 32-year-old left-handed batsman achieved the feat after scoring 15 runs in the IPL 2019 opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Important Takeways from above news-

- Suresh Raina is the 1st Indian to score 100 in all 3 formats.



Manu Bhaker-Saurabh Chaudhary Won Gold Medal At Asian Airgun Championship

i. In Shooting, **Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary** have won a Gold medal in the **10-meter Air Pistol Mixed team** event at the **12th Asian Airgun Championship** at Taoyuan in Taipei.

ii. The pair made it to the Final after smashing the **world record** in the qualification. A second Indian team, comprising Anuradha and Abhishek Verma, also reached the Finals but finished fourth.



Veselin Matic Set To Be India's Basketball Coach

i. **Veselin Matic**, who took **Iran** to an **Asian Games bronze medal** in **2010**, is set to be appointed as the new head coach of the Indian men's **basketball** team.

ii. The Serbian's name had been cleared by the sports ministry. A veteran international coach, Matic helped Iran qualify for its first ever World Championship (2010) with victory in the **2009 FIBA Asia Championship**.



Obituaries

Andre Previn, Legendary Composer And 4 Time Oscar Winner Passes Away

i. Legendary **composer** and pianist **Andre Previn** has passed away at the age of 89 in Manhattan, New York, USA. He was a 10-time Grammy Award winner and had won **4 Oscar**s throughout his lifetime.

ii. In 2010 he was honored with a **lifetime achievement award**. He is known for immortal classics like 1964's 'My Fair Lady' and 1996's 'The Fortunate Cookie.'



Nobel Laureate Zhores Alferov Passes Away

i. **Zhores Alferov**, a **Russian physicist** and **Nobel Prize laureate**, has passed away. He was 88. In 2000, Alferov received the Nobel Prize in Physics together with US scientists **Jack Kilby** and **Herbert Kroemer**, for developing semiconductor heterostructures used in high-speed-and optoelectronics.

ii. He was elected a corresponding member of the **USSR Academy of Sciences** in **1972**, and a full member in **1979**.



American Actor Luke Perry Passes Away

i. American actor **Luke Perry** has passed away in **California** at the age of 52, less than a week after suffering a massive stroke.

ii. The actor rose to fame for his roles in 'Beverly Hills 90210' and "Riverdale".

Famed Economist Alan Krueger Passes Away

i. **Former White House economist** and **Princeton University professor Alan Krueger** passed away. He was **58**.

ii. **Krueger served as chief economist** at the Department of Labor under President Bill Clinton and **chair of the Council of Economic Advisers** from 2011 to 2013 under former President Barack Obama.



Goa CM Manohar Parrikar Passes Away

i. **Manohar Parrikar**, Goa Chief Minister and former **defence minister**, has passed away at the age of 63 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.

ii. Parrikar was diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer in February 2018. He was an **IIT Mumbai** graduate in metallurgical engineering and among the first members of BJP in Goa.



Malayalam Writer And Poet Ashita Passes Away

i. **Celebrated Malayalam writer and poet Ashita** passed away at the age of 63 in Thrissur, after fighting a long battle with cancer.

ii. She was the recipient of myriad awards, and some include the **Padmarajan Award - Thathagatha (2000)**, Lalithambika Antharjanam Award (1994) and Edasserri Award (1986).



Folk Artiste and Radio Commentator Anasuya Devi Passes Away

- i. Kala Prapoorana awardee, **Vinjamuri Anasuya Devi** passed away at the age of 99 due to illness in the USA. She was an eminent **folk artist**, radio commentator, harmonium player, music composer, and author.
- ii. In 1977, she was honored with a Doctorate by Andhra University. She was also an awardee of **lifetime achievement award in America** and **'Queen of Folk'** award in Paris.

Scott Walker, Experimental Pop Hero, Passes Away

- i. **Scott Walker**, one of the most innovative and enduring songwriters of the **20th century**, has died aged 76.
- ii. Walker first came to fame in the mid-1960s in the group the Walker Brothers, before creating a string of acclaimed solo albums – Scott, Scott 2, Scott 3 and Scott 4.

Soviet-era Cosmonaut Valery Bykovsky Passes Away

- i. Russian cosmonaut **Valery Bykovsky**, who made the first of his three flights to space in 1963, passed away at the age of 84 years.
- ii. In June 1963, He first flew to space as a member of the **Vostok-5** crew. He was a recipient of the **Hero of the Soviet Union** and **Order of Lenin** awards.



Veteran Journalist Prafulla Rajguru Passes Away At 82

- i. **Veteran journalist and academician Prafulla Rajguru** passed away at the age of 82.
- ii. Rajguru authored four books and was a member of several social organizations like the **Asom Sahitya Sabha**.

Important Days with theme

World Wildlife Day: March 3

- i. **World Wildlife Day** is observed on **3rd March** every year to spread awareness about wildlife. This date was designated as the World Wildlife Day on 20 December 2013 at the 68th session of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**.
- ii. On this day, the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** was signed. The theme for World Wildlife Day 2019 is **'Life below water: for people and planet'**, which corresponds to goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is **'Life below water'**.



International Women's Day: 08th March

- i. **International Women's Day** is celebrated on **March 8** every year. It is a focal point in the movement for women's rights.
- ii. **International Women's Day 2019 campaign theme: #BalanceforBetter.**



World Kidney Day 2019: 14th March

- i. **World Kidney Day (WKD)** is observed annually on the **second Thursday in March** to create awareness on the importance of the kidneys and reducing the frequency and impact of kidney disease.
- ii. The theme of WKD 2019 is **Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere**, which calls for universal health coverage for prevention and early treatment of kidney disease.



World Consumer Rights Day: 15th March

- i. **World Consumer Rights Day** is celebrated every year on **15 March** as part of an initiative by Consumer International, a membership organization for consumer groups around the world.
- ii. The theme for World Consumers day 2019 is **"Trusted Smart Products"**.
- iii. World Consumer Rights Day was **inspired by President John F Kennedy**, who sent a special message to the US Congress on 15th March 1962, in which he formally addressed the issue of consumer rights.



International Day Of Happiness: 20 March

- i. **International Day of Happiness** is celebrated every year on March 20.
- ii. The theme for IDH 2019 is **'Happier Together'**, focusing on what we have in common, rather than what divides us.



International Day of Forests: 21 March

- i. The **International Day of Forests** is held annually on **21 March** to raise awareness of the importance of forests to people and their vital role in poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and food security.
- ii. The theme for 2019 is **Forests and Education**.

World Water Day: 22 March

i. **International World Water Day** is held annually on **22 March** as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

ii. The theme for World Water Day 2019 is '*Leaving no one behind,*' which is the central promise of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

Important Takeways from above news-

- The United Nations General Assembly designated **22 March 1993** as the **first World Water Day**.



Martyr's Day: 23rd March

i. The nation is observing **Shaheed Diwas or Martyr's Day on 23rd March**. Each year, March 23, homage is paid to the great revolutionary fighters **Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev** who sacrificed their lives for the country.

ii. It was on **March 23, 1931**, three young freedom fighters were hanged to death in the **Lahore Central Jail (Now in Pakistan)**.



World Tuberculosis Day: 24th March

i. Each year, **World Tuberculosis (TB) Day** is commemorated on **March 24** to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of TB, and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic.

ii. The theme of **World TB Day 2019** - '*It's time*'. The date marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes TB, which opened the way towards diagnosing and curing this disease.



World Meteorological Day: March 23

i. **World Meteorological Day** is observed annually on **March 23** to commemorate the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1950.

ii. The theme 2019 was "**The Sun, the Earth and the Weather**". The day was first observed in 1961.

Important Takeways from above news-

- **World Meteorological Organization Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.

