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## JANUARY 2019

### NATIONAL

#### **India ranks 54th in 'Bloomberg Innovation Index' of 60 Economies**

India has been ranked in Bloomberg's 2019 list of most innovative countries in the world – 2019 Bloomberg Innovation Index – for the first time ever.

#### **Indian Railways has named Train 18 as Vande Bharat Express**

Minister of Railways & Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal announced the name Vande Bharat Express for Train 18, acknowledging its made-in-India status. This train set has been manufactured by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in the period of 18 months under 'Make in India' program. Vande Bharat Express is India's first semi-high speed train equipped with world class passenger amenities.

#### **Govt declares sugarcane juice as 'national drink' of Pakistan**

The government of Pakistan has declared sugarcane juice as the 'national drink' of the country. Poll includes three option including orange juice, carrot juice and sugarcane juice. But it is sugarcane juice which won the poll with 81 percent votes. Over 7,600 people participated in the poll and declared sugarcane as national drink of Pakistan with 81 percent votes. 15 percent of the participants voted in favor of orange juice while 4 percent choose carrot juice.

#### **India among the Most Trusted Nations Globally: Report**

India is among the most trusted nations globally when it comes to government, business, NGOs and media. The 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer report, noted that the Global Trust Index witnessed a marginal increase of 3 points to 52. China topped the Trust Index among both the informed public and the general population segments.

#### **Indias longest single lane steel cable bridge opened in Arunachal**

India's longest 300-metre single lane steel cable suspension bridge was inaugurated by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu. The bridge across the Siang river at Yingkiong in Upper Siang district has been named Byorong Bridge. The bridge, built at a cost of 48.43-crore provided by the DONER (Department for Development of North

Eastern Region) Ministry, will reduce the distance from Yinkiong to Tuting by almost 40 km.

## STATES

### Uttarakhand's First Tulip Garden in Pithoragarh

Uttarakhand's First Tulip Garden will come up over 50 hectares of forest land near Chandak hilltop in Pithoragarh district at a cost of Rs 50 Crore. It will be developed by the ONGC under its corporate social responsibility programme. The proposed tulip garden will be the Country's second after the one located in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir.

### Odisha announces Jiban Sampark Project

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced 'Jiban Sampark' project in partnership with UNICEF India to generate awareness about the development and welfare initiatives of state government among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state. The announcement was made after Patnaik inaugurated the annual tribal fair popularly known as 'Adivasi Mela'.

### 'Operation Olympics' commences in Kerala

'Operation Olympics', an expert programme to train athletes in 11 disciplines has commenced in Kerala. The Kerala sports department and the state sports council are preparing the 123 athletes, who are participating in the programme. The objective of 'Operation Olympics' is to provide international standard training with the help of eminent trainers from both India & abroad.

### Bihar top state in terms of GDP growth in FY18

Bihar has been ranked the top state in terms of GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) growth in financial year 2017-18, according to a report by Crisil. The state has topped the list with 11.3 percent GSDP growth in fiscal 2018. It was ranked at eighth spot in fiscal 2017 with 9.9 percent GSDP growth. The second spot has been secured by Andhra Pradesh, whose GSDP growth in FY18 jumped to 11.2 percent. Gujarat listed third with growth of 11.1 percent.

### Assam govt to give 10% quota to economically weaker sections in general category

Assam Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has approved 10 percent quota for the economically weaker sections of the general category in government employment and government education institutes.

### AP Cabinet approved 5% quota for Kapus and EBCs

The Andhra Pradesh State Cabinet has decided to give 5% quota for Kapu community and another 5% to the Economically Backward Classes (EBCs) among the forward castes.

### **UP third state to approve quota for poor among upper castes**

Uttar Pradesh became the third state after Jharkhand and Gujarat to approve the 10 per cent reservation for economically backward among upper castes in jobs and educational institutions. The Approval was given in a meeting headed by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath.

### **Gujarat becomes The First State to Implement 10% Quota for General Category**

Gujarat has become the first state to implement the 10% reservation for economically weaker sections of the general category. This comes a day after President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the bill. Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani stated that it will also be applicable to jobs for which announcement has been made but the procedure is yet to commence.

### **West Bengal exits Ayushman Bharat scheme**

The government of West Bengal has decided to exit from the Centre's ambitious Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana. The Government of India was issuing entitlement letters to the beneficiaries without the knowledge of the state government

### **Kallakurichi announced as 33rd district, after bifurcating**

Tamil Nadu chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswam announced the formation of a new district Kallakurichi by bifurcating Villupuram district which is one of the large districts in the State. With this, the state will now have 33 districts.

### **Andhra Pradesh tops ACIs Ease of Doing Business Index**

The Asia competitiveness institute (ACI) has released the Ease of Doing Business Rankings for Indian states. Andhra Pradesh came on first position while Maharashtra and Delhi came on second and third position respectively. The weakest indicators for the state of Andhra Pradesh were Worker density, foreign direct investment per capital, labour productivity, and the illiteracy rate.

### **India floats mega tender of 7.5 GW for Jammu & Kashmir**

Solar Energy Corporation of India has invited solar power developers to construct 7.5 GW grid connected projects in Leh and Kargil Districts in the state of Jammu & Kashmir under a competitive bidding process. Out of the 7.5 GW capacity, 2.5 GW will be constructed in the Kargil district and 5 GW in Leh district. The tender is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal of building 100 gigawatts of solar capacity in the country by 2022.

**Home Ministry approved UP's proposal of renaming Allahabad as Prayagraj**

Ahead of the 'Kumbh Mela 2019', the Union Home Ministry (MHA) approved the Uttar Pradesh government's proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj. MHA had earlier approved the renaming of the British-era railway station Robertsgang as Sonbhadra, Farah Town railway station near Mathura and iconic Mughalsarai junction after Deen Dayal Upadhyay – both in Uttar Pradesh.

**Centre Approves Rs 1,146.12 cr Cyclone 'Gaja' Assistance for Tamil Nadu**

The High-Level Committee (HLC) chaired by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh approved additional assistance of Rs 1,146.12 crore from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to Tamil Nadu, which was affected by cyclone 'Gaja' recently.

**MP Government to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag (Spiritual department)**

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has announced setting up of a new Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department). The proposed new department will be set up by merging several existing departments.

**INTERNATIONAL****India gifts 30 ambulances, 6 buses to Nepal on Republic Day**

India on Saturday donated 30 ambulances and six buses to Nepal and extended its support to the country in achieving prosperity. India's gesture came as it marked 70th Republic Day. India's Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri handed over keys of the ambulances and buses to the recipient organisations amidst celebrations in Indian Embassy premises, Katmandu.

**Sultan Abdullah elected New Malaysian King**

Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah was elected as Malaysia's new king by the members of the country's royal families. The 59-year-old was earlier appointed the Sultan of the Malaysian state of Pahang. He replaced Sultan Muhammad V of Kelantan, who stepped down recently, making it the first abdication in Malaysia's history.

**Burkina Faso President appoints Christophe Joseph Marie Dabire as new PM**

West African country Burkina Faso President appointed Christophe Joseph Marie Dabire new Prime Minister as Paul Kaba Theiba and his cabinet resigned last week. Christophe Joseph Marie Dabire is a politician and economist. He takes the reins of government at the time when Burkina Faso is economic and security challenges.

**Venezuela breaks off Diplomatic ties with the US**

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has announced that he is breaking off diplomatic ties with the United States after his American counterpart Donald Trump recognized Opposition leader Juan Guaido as the South American country's interim President.

### **Andry Rajoelina sworn in as President of Madagascar**

Andry Rajoelina was sworn in as President of Madagascar. The oath-taking ceremony was attended by delegation from 35 countries and international organizations.

### **Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Lofven wins second term**

Sweden's parliament has elected Prime Minister Stefan Lofven to a second four-year term ending more than four months of political deadlock.

### **Asif Saeed Khosa sworn in as Chief Justice of Pakistan**

Justice Asif Saeed Khosa, known for adding lyrical flair in his judgments, sworn in as the Chief Justice of Pakistan in a ceremony at Islamabad. It was attended by foreign legal luminaries, including former Indian SC judge Madan Bhimarao Lokur. He is the 26th Chief Justice of Pakistan.

### **Palestine Takes Reins at UN's Group G77**

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has pledged to protect the interests of all 134 countries in the UN's Group of 77, as Palestine took the chairmanship of the group from Egypt for 2019.

### **British Parliament rejects Brexit deal**

British Prime Minister Theresa May suffered a crushing defeat in Parliament over Brexit deal. May's bid to get the Withdrawal Agreement, struck between Britain and European Union, passed by House of Commons was defeated by a margin of 202 to 432 – a majority of 230 votes.

### **Taiwan President appoints new PM**

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen appointed a new Prime Minister following the resignation of the incumbent over the recent electoral setback suffered by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party. The President announced the appointment of Su Tseng-chang to replace Lai Ching-te at a press conference in Taipei. Lai announced his resignation and made it effective after a cabinet meeting.

### **Maduro Sworn in as Venezuela President for 2nd Term**

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro started a second term in office, amid the economic and humanitarian crisis faced by the Latin American country. Maduro was re-elected last year amid allegation of vote buying and electoral fraud. The US, EU and 13 other countries have said that they would not recognise Maduro's Presidency.

### **Pakistan's Provincial Government declares Panj Tirath Hindu religious site as national heritage**

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provincial government of Pakistan has declared the ancient Hindu religious site of Panj Tirath in Peshawar of North Western Pakistan as national heritage. The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums of KP has issued a notification under the KP Antiquities Act 2016 declaring the land in the Panj Tirath Park as a heritage site.

### **Pakistan, India exchange list of nuclear installations**

India and Pakistan exchanged the list of nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear installations between them. This is the 28th consecutive exchange of such lists between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. The list was exchanged through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad.

### **Jair Bolsonaro takes oath as new President of Brazil**

Jair Bolsonaro was sworn in as Brazil's President in a ceremony at Brazil's National Congress Building. Bolsonaro is a former Army captain and admirer of the country's 1964-1985 military dictatorship.

### **Qatar Withdraws From OPEC**

Qatar has withdrawn its membership from Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The country had sent an official notification to the OPEC expressing its wish to pull out and to focus on its liquefied natural gas production. Qatar has been in OPEC for 57 years. The decision came amid the ongoing diplomatic and economic blockade imposed on the country by its Persian Gulf neighbours and several Arab states.

### **US, Israel Quit UNESCO Citing Bias**

The United states of America (USA) and Israel officially quit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) amid concerns that the organization fosters anti-Israel bias. UNESCO was established in 1945 after the end of world war II to foster peace and it is best known for its World Heritage programs which designates cultural sites and aims to preserve traditions.

### **Sheikh Hasina wins third consecutive term as prime minister**

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina secured her third consecutive term and fourth overall with a landslide victory in the nation's general elections. The results were announced by the Election Commission.

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## **INDIA & WORLD**

**India replaces Japan to be world's second largest steel producer**

India has replaced Japan as the world's second-largest steel producing country, only behind China, which is the largest producer of crude steel accounting for more than 51 per cent of production, as per the latest report by World Steel Association.

**Global Corruption Index Released, India Ranks 78**

Transparency International has released the Global Corruption Index 2018. India rose by 3 points to 78 in the list of 180 countries in the world with a score of 41. China lagged far behind at 87 and Pakistan ranked 117. The top countries on the list are Denmark and New Zealand, with scores of 88 and 87. Somalia, Syria and South Sudan remained at the bottom, with scores of 10, 13 and 13.

**India replaces Japan to be world's second largest steel producer**

India has replaced Japan as the world's second-largest steel producing country, only behind China, which is the largest producer of crude steel accounting for more than 51 per cent of production, as per the latest report by World Steel Association. The report noted that India's crude steel production in 2018 was at 106.5 MT, which is up by 4.9 per cent from 101.5 MT in 2017.

**IAFTX 2019: India Africa Field Training Exercise held in Pune**

The final planning conference to work out the modalities for Indian Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019 was conducted at Pune, Maharashtra. Delegates from Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, Namibia, Mozambique, Uganda, Niger & Zambia attended the conference.

**India Ranks 79th, Japan Tops List of Most Powerful Passports**

According to Henley Passport Index, which keeps in record and analyses of every country's travel afford revealed a report of powerful passport holding country, in which Japan has retained its position to the top for the consecutive year due to access the document's access to 190 countries and India has leaped two steps forward to 79th rank from 81st rank. A total of 190 countries are analyzed here.

**Former Indian envoy to Myanmar, Vikram Misri, took charge as India's new envoy to China**

India's new ambassador to China, Vikram Misri, took charge of the post. He reported to Hong Lei, Deputy Director General of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing. He is a 1989-batch India Foreign Service (IFS) officer, and replaced Gautam Bambawale.

**India to contribute Rs 4,500 cr to Bhutan for 12th five-year plan**



India will contribute Rs 4,500 crore to Bhutan for the 12th five-year plan, announced Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The announcement comes during the official three-day visit of Bhutanese Prime Minister Lotay Tshering. He also revealed that the Mangedechchu project will soon be completed and the tariff of the project has also been agreed upon.

## CONFERENCES

### South India MSME summit 2019 held in Bengaluru

southern Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Association organized the South India MSME Summit-2019 at Bengaluru. Basavaraj S Javali chaired the event. The summit is held with a motive to find solution for their major problems like absence of good infrastructure, technology issues, marketing, procurement issues, regulatory issues, red tape, harassment and victimization.

### 2+2 Inter-Sessional meeting between India and US held in New Delhi

The inaugural round of a 2+2 Inter-Sessional meeting between the United States and India which focused on the progress of defence and foreign policy issues between the two countries took place in New Delhi. Shri Gourangalal Das, Joint Secretary (AMS), Ministry of External Affairs and Shri Shambhu S. Kumaran, Joint Secretary (PIC), Ministry of Defence led the Indian delegation.

### Global Investors Summit held in Chennai

Tamil Nadu Government organised the 2nd edition of Global Investor summit in Chennai. The state government would soon unveil e-vehicle policy to give a boost to electric vehicles manufacturing in the state. In the opening ceremony, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was the chief guest.

### WEF Annual Meet Begins in Switzerland

The World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meet had begun in Davos, Switzerland. The meeting will continue for 5 days. The theme of the event would be 'Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution'. More than 100 CEOs from India expected to be participating in the meet.

### Arab Economic & Social Development Summit held in Beirut

The Arab Economic and Social Development Summit held in Lebanon's capital Beirut. The leaders of many Arab countries took part in the summit aimed to make a joint statement on a 29-item agenda that ranges from discussions on an Arab free trade zone and the economic effect of Syrian refugees on host countries.

### India to Host the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties to UNCCD

India will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to address the issue of land degradation and desertification which will have participation from over 100 countries.

### **'Global Aviation Summit 2019' begins in Mumbai**

Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the 'Global Aviation Summit 2019' in Mumbai. The summit is a union and it will address the problems being faced. The summit, with a theme 'Flying for all-especially the next 6 Billion', is being organized by Ministry of Civil Aviation in association with FICCI.

### **9th International Conference on Micro Irrigation**

Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India is organizing the 9th International Micro Irrigation Conference on Modern Agriculture at Aurangabad in Maharashtra, in association with International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), Indian National Committee on Surface Water (INCSW) and WAPCOS Limited.

### **4th Meeting of CTDTP held in New Delhi**

Union Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, chaired the 4th meeting of the Council for Trade Development and Promotion (CTDP) in New Delhi. Suresh Prabhu informed in the meeting that the Government of India has formulated an Agricultural Export Policy for the first time with a focused plan to boost India's agricultural exports to USD 60 billion by 2022.

### **29th Indian Paint Conference 2019 Started in Agra**

The Indian Paint Association (IPA), the apex body of the country's paint industry announced that the 29th biennial Indian Paint Conference started in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. The theme of the Conference is 'Paints Pe Charcha – Naye Ayaam'.

### **PM Modi Inaugurated 106th Indian Science Congress at Jalandhar**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 106th Indian Science Congress (ISC-2019) at Jalandhar, Punjab. The ISC is an annual congregation that witnesses deliberations by top scientific minds of the country. The theme for which is 'Future: India-Science and Technology'. This will be his 5th address to Indian Science Congress after assuming office as Prime Minister.

## **AWARDS & HONOURS**

### **Tamil Nadu won Best State award in the Swasth Bharat Yatra**

Tamil Nadu has bagged the Best State Award for its active participation in the Swasth Bharat Yatra, a pan-India cyclothon. It aimed at promoting the concept of 'eating right for a healthy life'. The movement is to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of

Mahatma Gandhi. It is organized by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

### **India bags the award of Excellence for Best in Show at NYTTS 2019**

India received the Award of Excellence for 'Best in Show' at the New York Times Travel Show 2019, the largest travel show in North America. India was honored during the Closing Bell Ceremony at the New York Stock Exchange. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India participated as the 'Presenting Partner' in the New York Times Travel Show (NYTTS 2019) organised at Jacob K Javits Centre, New York with a view to scale up its tourism promotional efforts in the US, enhance India's visibility and to increase its share of US Outbound travel market.

### **Jayant Kaikini Wins DSC Prize for South Asian Literature**

Noted Kannada writer Jayant Kaikani won the 2018 edition of the DSC South Asian Literature Prize for his short story collection No Presents Please. The \$25,000 prize was jointly awarded to Kaikini and Tejaswini Niranjana, the translator of the book, at the Tata Steel Kolkata Literary Meet.

### **Dhirendra nath chakravathi to be conferred with Republic Day Journalism Award**

The 'Republic Day Journalism Award 2019' will be conferred upon Dhirendra Nath Chakraborty, veteran journalist & former Editor of Dainik Asom, Dainik janambhumi and Ajir batori Kakot newspapers. The award which would be presented under the aegis of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), contains Rupees 1 Lakh, a citation, a memento, xaraai, jaapi and an angabastra.

### **NRL receives 'Best Miniratna PSU' award**

Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) has been awarded the best miniratna PSU in strategic performance (financial category) at the Governance Now Sixth PSU awards. The award, comprising of a trophy, was presented to NRL MD S K Barua by Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwari at an award function held in New Delhi.

### **Bharat Ratna Awards 2019**

The Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of the Republic of India. Instituted in 1954, the award is conferred in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order, without distinction of race, occupation, position, or sex. The Bharat Ratna 2019 awarded to Nanaji Deshmukh, Dr Bhupen Hazarika and Pranab Mukherjee.

### **BJP MP Anurag Thakur honoured with Sansad Ratna Award**

Anurag Thakur, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and party's chief whip in the Lok Sabha, was bestowed with Sansad Ratna Award for distinguished performance as a parliamentarian. He is the first MP from the BJP, besides being the only Member of Parliament from north India, to have been awarded the Jury Committee Special Award.

### **3 Indian expats From UAE win Prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award**

Three Indian expats from the UAE are amongst those who won the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award the highest honor conferred on Indian diaspora. President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the award on Girish Pant, Surender Singh Kandhari and Dr. Zulekha Daud and other awardees at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention in Varanasi.

### **President conferred Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019**

The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 at Rashtrapati Bhawan. The awards were given to 26 shortlisted awardees. The names of awardees were finalized by the National Selection Committee under the Chairpersonship of WCD Minister, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi.

### **Ranjani Murali Wins 'Woman's Voice Award' at AKLF 2019**

US Based Indian poet Ranjani Murali was awarded the "Woman's Voice Award" at the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF). The Objective of the award is to recognize and encourage creative writing by women in India. The Award carried a cash prize of Rs 1 Lakh along with a citation.

### **Gurinder Singh Khalsa presented with the prestigious Rosa Park Trailblazer award**

Indian-American philanthropist and entrepreneur, Gurinder Singh Khalsa(45), has been presented with the prestigious Rosa Park Trailblazer award for his campaign that forced US authorities change their policy towards headgear of the Sikh community.

### **Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research awarded to C N R Rao**

The first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research has been awarded to C N R Rao. The award will be presented to Rao by Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi ruler of Ras Al Khaimah emirate during the International Workshop on Advanced Materials at Ras Al Khaimah.

### **Yohei Sasakawa received Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018**

Yohei Sasakawa was named to receive Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018, who is the Goodwill Ambassador of the World Health Organization for Leprosy Elimination. The award will be given to Yohei Sasakawa in recognition of his work towards the eradication of the disease in India and across the world.

### **Dr. Rattan Lal Honoured with 2019 Japan Prize**

The Japan Prize Foundation announced India born professor Dr. Rattan Lal, University Professor of Soil Science at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A, as the recipient of the 2019 Japan Prize for his contributions in the field of 'Biological Production, Ecology'.

### **India born, Dr. Rattan Lal honoured with 2019 Japan Prize**

Two scientists are being recognized with the 2019 Japan Prize for original and outstanding achievements that not only contribute to the advancement of science and technology, but also promote peace and prosperity for all mankind.

### **Gandhi Peace Prize Conferred for Last 4 Years**

The Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 has been conferred. The Gandhi Peace Prize conferred to Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari in 2015, Akshaya Patra Foundation in 2016, Ekal Abhiyan Trust in 2017 & Shri Yohei Sasakawa in 2018.

### **First-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award presented to PM Modi**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi received the first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award, at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg, in New Delhi. The Award focuses on the triple bottom-line of People, Profit and Planet. It will be offered annually to the leader of a Nation.

### **Yu Wensheng wins Franco-German Human Rights Award**

A detained Chinese rights lawyer Yu Wensheng has won a Franco-German human rights award for his 'exceptional contribution' to the protection and promotion of human rights. Yu Wensheng, who is in pretrial detention on subversion charges, has been held incommunicado by authorities in Jiangsu's Xuzhou city for more than a year.

### **Namita Gokhale wins Sushila Devi Literature Award**

Writer Namita Gokhale has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel 'Things to Leave Behind'. She was awarded in the 'Best Book of Fiction Written by a Woman Author' category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF).

### **Adi Godrej conferred ICSI lifetime award**

Industrialist and Godrej Group Chairman Adi Godrej was conferred the ICSIs Lifetime Achievement Award for 'Translating Excellence in Corporate Governance into Reality.' The awards were instituted by The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), which is celebrating its golden jubilee.

### **Journalist Dinu Randive conferred with lifetime achievement award**

Veteran journalist Dinu Randive has been conferred with the lifetime achievement award by the Mantralaya and Vidhimandal Vartahar Sangh, an association of journalists covering Maharashtra legislature and secretariat.

**Rami Malek, Glenn Close win Best Acting awards at Golden Globes 2019**

Rami Malek won the Best Actor Award in the drama category for 'Bohemian Rhapsody' at the 76th Golden Globe Awards while Glenn Close got the Best Actress Award in the drama category for 'The Wife'. Olivia Colman won the Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture, Musical or Comedy for 'The Favourite'.

### **M Gunasekaran, Sandhya Ravishankar & Vijay Kumar honoured with Ramnath Goenka Award**

Three Journalists from Tamil Nadu win, this year, the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award that includes News18 Tamilnadu's Chief Editor M Gunasekaran, Freelance Journalist Sandhya Ravishankar for her contribution to The Wire and Vijay Kumar S from The Hindu for his Investigative reporting on Gutka Scam.

### **Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi to confer National Awards to Anganwadi Workers under ICDS Scheme**

Union Minister for Women & Child Development, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi will confer National Awards to 97 Anganwadi Workers(AWWs) for Exceptional Achievements for the year 2017-18, on the 07th of January 2018, in New Delhi. Government of India formulated a scheme for awarding Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) at the National and State Levels in the year 2000-2001. The award is given to motivate the AWWs and recognise their exemplary service in the field of child development and related areas under the ICDS Scheme.

### **AP govt bags CBIP award for Polavaram project**

The Andhra Pradesh government bagged the Central Board of Irrigation and Power (CBIP) award for speedy execution of Polavaram multipurpose project on the Godavari river. AP Water Resources Minister Devineni Umamaheswar Rao received the award in the category of "Best Implementation of Water Resources Project" for better planning, implementation and monitoring.

### **Vijay Mallya First Tycoon to be named Fugitive Economic Offender**

Vijay Mallya became the first tycoon to be charged under a new anti-fraud law, with a court in Mumbai naming him as an offender under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018. The anti-corruption court was hearing an application by the Enforcement Directorate, seeking a direction to declare Mr. Mallya a fugitive economic offender.

### **IIT Professor awarded with the National Geospatial Award for Excellence**

Jayanta Kumar Ghosh, a professor at the civil engineering department of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Roorkee, was conferred the National Geospatial Award for Excellence-2017 (Lifetime Achievement Award) at the Space Application Centre in Ahmedabad. The Indian Society for Remote Sensing is an organisation known in the area of space science, remote sensing and geo-spatial technology.

### **National Nritya Shiromani Award 2019 for Anindita**

US-based Kathak dancer Anindita Neogy Anaam will be honoured with the National Nritya Shiromani award for promoting the dance form across the world. This award of national repute has been given in the past to the outstanding Indian classical dance performers and musicians of India and abroad.

### **03 Indian-origin women scientists awarded by Australian government un STEM**

Three Indian-origin women scientists were among the 60 Superstars of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) list awarded by Australian government. The 3 scientists are Onisha Patel, Devika Kamath and Asha Rao. Under the initiative, due to gender gap in STEM courses, the government there is planning to train these scientists for one year to become influencers for female students.

### **ISRO chairman K.Sivan was awarded gold medal by SSI**

ISRO chairman K.Sivan was presented the National Systems Gold Medal by the Systems Society of India (SSI) during the 42nd National Systems Conference held in Thiruvananthapuram. The medal acknowledges his outstanding contributions to system science and engineering. B.N. Suresh, the Chancellor, Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST), presented the medal at a function held at the VSSC.

## **SPORTS & GAMES**

### **Kartik Sharma won New South Wales men's Amateur Golf Championship**

Kartik Sharma won the New South Wales Men's Amateur Golf Championship held in Australia by defeating Australia's Nathan Barberie in the scheduled 36-hole final. He is playing for India as a part of National Squad since the age of 10.

### **Saina Nehwal wins Indonesia Masters 2019**

Ace shuttler Saina Nehwal won her first Indonesia Masters title after three-time world champion Carolina Marin limped out of the final due to a leg injury. Marin was leading 10-4 in the first game at Jakarta when she developed an injury in the knee.

### **Novak Djokovic claims title of men's singles final**

Novak Djokovic (R) of Serbia changes jersey during the men's singles final match between Novak Djokovic of Serbia and Rafael Nadal of Spain at 2019 Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia.

### **Botha announces retirement from all forms of Cricket**

Former South Africa all-rounder Johan Botha has announced his immediate retirement from all forms of Cricket. Botha played for South Africa in five test matches, 78 one-day internationals and 40 T20 Internationals from 2005 to 2012. Botha captained the Proteas in 10 ODIs and took the team to the No. 1 ranking after they defeated Australia 4-1 in Australia in 2009.

**Shami becomes fastest Indian to reach 100 ODI wickets**

Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian to claim 100 wickets in One-day Internationals. This was his 56th game in the 50-over format. Shami's wicket number 100 was New Zealand opener Martin Guptill. Before Shami, Irfan Pathan reached the 100-wicket mark in 59 ODIs.

**Rishabh Pant Named ICC Emerging Player of the Year**

Rishabh Pant was named the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Emerging Player Of The Year following an impressive show in India's first-ever Test series win in Australia. The 21-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman scored 350 runs in the four-match Test series that India won 2-1 to script history in 71 years and 11 attempts.

**Lovlina wins gold medal, Manisha settles for silver**

World Championship bronze medallist Assam's Lovlina Borgohain claimed the gold medal while Haryana boxer Manisha Moun had to settle with silver at the Women's National Boxing Championships held at the JSW Sports' Inspire Institute of Sports, Vijayanagara, Karnataka. Lovlina Borgohain of Assam won the gold in 69 kg category bout.

**Ankita Raina Wins ITF's Tournament in Singapore**

India's Ankita Raina has won the International Tennis Federation's 25,000-dollar Women's tournament in Singapore. In the Final, Ankita defeated top seed Arantxa Rus of the Netherlands, 6-3, 6-2. She toppled four seeded players in the tournament to win her first title of the season and eighth overall.

**Vinesh Phogat becomes first Indian athlete to be nominated in Laureus World Comeback of Year Award**

Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat has become the first Indian athlete to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Comeback of the Year Award. She has been nominated alongside US Tour Championship winner Tiger Woods, who won his first tournament in five years. The Awards will be presented in Monaco on the 18th of next month.

**Petr Cech announces retirement from professional football**

Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech (from Czech Republic) announced that he would be retiring from professional football at the end of the current season. The 36-year-old, who had signed his first professional contract 20 years ago, was of the view that it was the right time to retire.

**Chennai's Gukesh Crowned India's Youngest Grandmaster**



Tamil Nadu lad D Gukesh became the 2nd youngest Grand Master in the world and the youngest Indian to achieve the feat at 12 years, 7 months and 17 days, erasing the mark set by his state-mate R Praggnanandhaa.

### **Bengaluru Raptors won 1st Ever PBL Title**

Bengaluru Raptors have won their first ever Premier Badminton League, PBL title. In the title clash played at Bengaluru, Bengaluru edged out Mumbai Rockets, with a 4-3 win. Star player Kidambi Srikanth, Vu Ji Trang and the Men's Doubles pair of Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Satiawan won their matches for Bengaluru guiding them to victory.

### **Mohamed Salah Named African Footballer of the Year**

Liverpool's Mohamed Salah named as the 2018 Confederation of African Football Player of the Year. For the second consecutive year he has won the award. Egypt forward Salah, 26, beat Liverpool team-mate Sadio Mane of Senegal and Arsenal and Gabon striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang to the title. He received the award at a ceremony in Senegal.

### **Virat Kohli, Ravi Shastri receive honorary membership of Sydney Cricket Ground**

Indian national cricket team's captain Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri received the honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket. The Indian team defeated Australia 2-1 in the four-match Test series, ending the country's 71-year-old wait for a rare series win Down Under.

### **Albie Morkel retires from All Forms of Cricket**

South African allrounder Albie Morkel retired from all forms of cricket. His career spanned for nearly 20 years. He represented South Africa in 58 ODIs, 50 T20Is and one Test.

### **Mary Kom Attains No. 1 Position in AIBA Rankings**

The celebrated MC Mary Kom became the World No 1 Boxer in 45-48 kg category in the latest International Boxing Association's (AIBA) World Rankings. Mary Kom was placed by AIBA at top of the charts in the 45-48 kg category weight division with 1700 points.

### **Mohamed Salah Named African Footballer of the Year**

Liverpool's Mohamed Salah was conferred with the 2018 Confederation of African Football Player of the Year award, for the second time, in Senegal. He also won the BBC African Footballer of the Year award for the second time. He beat Liverpool team-mate Sadio Mane of Senegal and Arsenal and Gabon striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang to the title.

### **Sydney & Brisbane chosen to host \$15 million 24 team ATP Cup in 2020**

Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane have been announced as the first two host locations for the newest team event in men's tennis for the multi-million dollar ATP Cup from 2020. The two cities have beaten competition from other parts of Australia to host the re-launched team event, the ATP Cup, slated to start from 3-12 January next year with a 24-team competition. The third Australian city for the tournament is yet to be determined.

### **2nd Edition of Khelo India Youth Games begins in Pune**

The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games has officially begun in Pune, Maharashtra. Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis attended a virtual torch ceremony at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the event through a video message. More than 9,000 players from different states will participate in 18 different events.

### **India thrash Thailand 4-1 in AFC Asian Cup**

In Football, India made a thrilling start in the opening encounter at the AFC Asian Cup campaign defeating Thailand 4-1 at Abu Dhabi. Captain Sunil Chettri scored twice, while Anirudh Thapa and Jeje were other scorers for India. At halftime, India and Thailand were at the level score of one goal each. This is India's fourth Asian Cup appearance, having last appeared in the 2011 edition of the tournament. This was India's first victory against Thailand since the Merdeka Cup of 1986.

### **Hopman Cup: Roger Federer & Belinda Bencic Retain Title For Switzerland**

Switzerland's Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic secured victory over Germany's Angelique Kerber and Alexander Zverev to win the Hopman Cup for the second year in a row. In a rerun of 2018 final, Federer beat Zverev to give the Swiss an early 1-0 lead.

### **Head Constable Rani wins gold medal in Senior National's Judo C'Ship**

Lady head constable Rani of 5th Indian Reserve Battalion of Himachal Pradesh Police won a Gold medal in the Senior National Women's Judo Championship at Visakhapatnam. She claimed top honours in the 78 kg category. Rani was also declared the best Judoka at the Championship.

### **80th National Table Tennis Championship begins in Cuttack**

The 80th National Table Tennis Championship began at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack. As many as 35 teams, including 550 players from different parts of the country are participating in the mega championship. Medal winners at Commonwealth Games and Asian Games Manika Batra, Senior players like Sharath Kamal, Madhuriba Patkar, Olympian Ankita Das are some of the key players who will be in the limelight during the event.

### **Kohli, Rabada maintain top spot in year-end ICC Test Player Rankings**

It turned out to be a glorious 2018 for India captain Virat Kohli and South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada. Both maintained their respective pole positions in the year-end ICC Test Player Rankings. Kohli enjoys a 34-point lead over nearest rival Kane Williamson of New Zealand.

### **Smriti Mandhana Named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year**

India's left-handed opener Smriti Mandhana has won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year. Mandhana was also adjudged as the ICC Women's ODI Player of the Year. The announcement was made by the International Cricket Council.

## **ECONOMY**

### **GST on Haj Reduced from 18% to 5%**

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi stated that GST on Haj has been reduced from 18% to 5% and this will significantly lower the airfare thus saving Haj pilgrims' 113 crore rupees this year. Mr. Naqvi also stated that for the first time since the independence 2,340 women from India will go on 2019 Haj without Mehram.

### **India's growth to accelerate from 7.4% to 7.6% in FY20: UN Report**

With robust private consumption and 7.4% GDP growth rate in the current fiscal, the Indian economy is expected to accelerate at a rate of 7.6% in 2019-20, according to a report by the United Nations titled United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2019. As per the report, the world trade growth moderated over the course of 2018 to 3.8% from growth of 5.3% in 2017.

### **India knock Down UK In Largest Economy Rankings**

India surpassed the UK in the 2019 rankings of world's largest economies by increased rate 1.65% GDP growth. India became the World's Fifth-Largest Economy. France also surpassed the UK in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, knocking it from fifth to seventh place with an increased rate of 1.7% GDP.

### **China's Economy Grew at 6.6% in 2018, Slowest Rate in 3 Decades**

China's economy grew at 6.6% in 2018, its slowest rate in almost 3 decades. The world's 2nd biggest economy was grappling with the effects of the current trade war with the US and declining exports. In the 3 months to December, the economy grew 6.4% from a year earlier, down from 6.5 % in the previous quarter.

### **India to Surpass UK in World's Largest Economy Rankings in 2019: PwC**

India is likely to surpass the United Kingdom in the world's largest economy rankings in 2019, to become the world's fifth largest economy, according to a report by global consultancy firm PwC. PwC's Global Economy Watch report projects real GDP growth of 1.6% for the UK, 1.7% for France and 7.6% for India in 2019.

**GDP to be A Tad Higher to 7.5% in FY20: India Ratings**

India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra), a Fitch Group Company, estimated India's GDP growth could touch 7.5 % in the financial year 2019-20 as against 7.2 % during current fiscal i.e. 2018-19. India Ratings believes investments are slowly but steadily gaining traction with gross fixed capital formation growing 12.2 % in FY19 and projected to clock 10.3 % in FY20.

**Consumer retail inflation fell 18-month-low to 2.19% in December 2018: CSO report**

According to an official release by Central Statistics Office (CSO), citing cooling food and fuel prices as the reasons, it stated that wholesale and retail inflation reduced to a multi month low with CPI falling to an 18-month low.

**India to become world's third largest consumer market by 2030: WEF**

A report by World Economic Forum said that India is set to become the world's third largest consumer market behind only USA and China by 2030. The report said consumer spending in India is expected to grow from 1.5 trillion US dollar at present to six trillion US dollar by 2030. The report said that with the annual GDP growth rate of 7.5 percent, India is currently the world's sixth largest economy.

**Per Capita Income Doubled In 7 Years: CSO**

The income earned by an average Indian doubled in 7 years, from Rs 63,642 per year in 2011-12 to Rs 1.25 lakh in 2018-19, the first advance estimates of national income released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show. The year-on-year growth in per capita income had touched its bottom in 2017-18 under the current national accounts series (the base year 2011-12) at 8.6 %. In 2018-19, it has bounced back to 11.1%.

**CSO Forecasts Indian Economy to Grow at 7.2% in 2018-19**

Releasing the first advance estimates of National Income for 2018-19, Central Statistics Office (CSO) stated that the growth in GDP during 2018-19 is estimated at 7.2% as compared to the growth rate of 6.7% in 2017-18, mainly due to improvement in the performance of agriculture and manufacturing sectors.

**CII Forecasts India's Economy to Grow 7.5% In 2019**

Growth Outlook for 2019', Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) stated that India will remain the fastest growing major economy with GDP growth estimated to be 7.5% in FY19. RBI to have lending restrictions on banks under the PCA (prompt and corrective action) and create a limited special liquidity window to meet emergencies of financial institutions.

**India's core sector growth drops to a 16-month low in November**

The data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industries has shown that the growth in the eight core sectors of the economy fell to a 16-month low of 3.5 per cent in November. The eight core sectors are coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizer, steel, cement and electricity.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### ISRO successfully launched Microsat R into space

Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) first mission of 2019, Microsat-R, was successfully launched into space. PSLV-C44 was launched from the older First Launch Pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The 130-kg Microsat-R is a military imaging satellite.

### ISRO to launch two unmanned space missions in 2020 and 2021

ISRO announced that two unmanned space missions to be launched in the year 2020 and 2021. Country's first manned space flight Gaganyaan will send three humans into space for seven days by December 2021, which will carry humanoids not animals. In order to boost the Space Mission in India, the Union Cabinet had approved Rs 10,000 crore budget for the proposed human spaceflight mission.

### Japan Launches Satellite For World's 1st Artificial Meteor Shower

Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency has launched Tokyo-based startup Star-ALE's mini-satellite aimed to deliver the world's first artificial meteor shower. The satellite carries 400 tiny balls, will be enough for 20-30 events, that will glow as they rush down the atmosphere on being released. ALE plans to deliver its first show in Hiroshima in early 2020.

### India's 1st Manned Mission To Space By December 2021: ISRO

ISRO Chairman Dr. K Sivan has announced that the organization is well prepared to meet the targets of launching Gaganyaan manned mission to outer space by December 2021. Under Gaganyaan project, India is planning to send three astronauts to outer space for seven days and bring them back.

### NASAs TESS found a new planet

Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), NASA's latest planet-hunting probe, has discovered a new world outside our solar system, orbiting a dwarf star 53 light years away. This is the third new planet confirmed by TESS. The planet has been named as HD 21749b.

### China: Lunar rover named 'Yutu-2', lands on the far side of the moon

Lunar rover Yutu-2 or Jade Rabbit-2 of the Chang'e-4 spacecraft made the first-ever soft landing on the far side of the moon. Images were sent back to the Earth via the relay satellite 'Queqiao'.

### **Chandrayaan-2 mission launch most likely in Feb**

Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) will most likely launch Chandrayaan-2, the country's second mission to the Moon in the month of February. Chandrayaan-2 mission is a totally indigenous venture comprising of an orbiter, a lander and a rover. There would be a controlled descent and the lander would soft-land on the lunar surface at a specified site and deploy a rover.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

#### **Dilip Sadarangani appointed as Chairman of Federal Bank**

South India based private sector lender Federal Bank appointed Dilip Sadarangani as the part-time Chairman. He has been on bank's board since 2013. The appointment of Mr. Dilip Sadarangani who has been guiding person in technology in multiple banks, as Chairman of the board of Federal Bank comes at a time when the bank makes confident strides in gaining market share in India.

#### **Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh appointed as Regional Director WHO SOUTH EAST Asia**

Dr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh appointed Regional Director for World Health Organization South-East Asia, for a second five-year term. Her second term of office. She is the first woman to become Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia Region Previous year, Thailand became the first in Asia-Pacific to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis.

#### **Pakistan appoints first ever female Hindu civil judge**

Pakistan has appointed the country's first ever Hindu female civil judge after she passed an examination for induction of judicial officers. Suman Kumari, who hails from Qambar-Shahdadkot in Sindh province, will serve in her native district. Kumari passed her LL.B. examination from Hyderabad and did her masters in law from Karachi's Szabist University.

#### **Hrithik Roshan as it Brand Ambassador for Flamingo**

Medical products maker Ascent Meditech appointed Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan as the brand ambassador for its brand 'Flamingo'. Ascent Meditech's product ranges from orthopaedic, healthcare, wound and injury, till to date it have over 300 products available to 47 countries in the world.

#### **IndiGo Airlines appointed Ronojoy Dutta as its new CEO**

IndiGo Airlines appointed global aviation professional Ronojoy Dutta as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Mr. Ronojoy Dutta replaces the former CEO Aditya Ghosh. The place has been vacant after his resignation in April 2018. Mr. Dutta was president of United Airlines, where he worked for nearly twenty years. He has served on the boards of United Airlines, US Airways, and Marsico Trust Funds.

### **Ravneet Gill as Yes Bank MD & CEO**

Yes Bank has appointed veteran banker Ravneet Singh Gill as its new MD & CEO and the lender has also received the RBI's approval for the same. He will join the bank. Mr Gill is currently the chief Deutsche Bank's India operations.

### **Piyush Goyal named Interim Finance Minister**

Piyush Goyal has been named the interim Finance Minister and interim Minister of Corporate Affairs during Arun Jaitley's indisposition. Goyal will retain his existing portfolios of coal and railways.

### **Shri Jha was appointed Member of CERC**

Shri Indu Shekhar Jha was appointed the member of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) and Shri Lalchharlian Pachuau was appointed as a member of Joint Electricity Regulation Commission for Manipur and Mizoram by Power Ministry. Union Minister of State for Power and the New & Renewable Energy, Shri R K Singh administered the oath of Office and Secrecy to Indu Shekhar Jha.

### **V Vaidyanathan appointed as MD, CEO of IDFC First Bank**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan as MD and CEO of IDFC First Bank for a period of three years. The Tenure of V Vaidyanathan. V Vaidyanathan is the founder and chairman of Capital First.

### **Prabhat Singh Appointed DG in NHRC**

The Department of Personnel & Training, Government of India has appointed Senior IPS Officer Prabhat Singh as Director General (Investigation) in the National Human Rights Commission. Singh, a 1985 batch IPS Officer of AGMUT cadre is at present Special Director, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

### **Mary Kom named event ambassador of 16th Tata Mumbai Marathon**

Six-time women's world boxing champion and Olympic medallist M C Mary Kom was named as the event ambassador for the 16th Tata Mumbai Marathon. The marathon will have a prize money of USD 405,000 and will see the participation of over 46,000 runners.

### **Raja Krishnamoorthi is appointed as a new member of HPSCI for the 116th Congress**

Raja Krishnamoorthi, a Democratic lawmaker, has been appointed as a member of a Congressional committee on intelligence. He is the first South Asian to serve in the powerful body tasked to strengthen U.S.'s national security. Mr. Krishnamoorthi, 45, who represents Illinois's 8th Congressional District in the House.

### **President approved elevation of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice Dinesh Maheshwari to SC**

President Ram Nath Kovind approved the elevation of Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Dinesh Maheshwari to the Supreme Court. Justice Khanna is presently a judge of the Delhi High Court. Justice Maheshwari is the Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court.

### **ECI appointed Dwivedi as CEO of Andhra Pradesh**

The Election Commission of India (ECI) appointed Gopal Krishna Dwivedi as has Chief Electoral Officer of Andhra Pradesh with immediate effect. Mr. Dwivedi will replace R. P. Sisodia. The ECI termed the CEO's replacement as an administrative decision.

### **Sanjay Jain, K M Nataraj appointed as Additional Solicitor Generals**

President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed senior advocates Sanjay Jain & K M Nataraj as Additional Solicitor Generals of India. The appointments were made by the President as per the recommendations of the Appointments Committee of the cabinet.

### **Manu Sawhney named as new ICC CEO**

The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the appointment of Manu Sawhney as its new Chief Executive Officer. Sawhney, the former CEO of Singapore Sports Hub and Managing Director of ESPN Star Sports, will join the organisation next month before formally taking over the reins from David Richardson in July following the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

### **Mohammed Ali Qamar appointed Women's Team Coach**

Mohammed Ali Qamar, the man who won India's first Commonwealth Games gold medal in boxing, has taken over as the chief coach for the country's female boxers. He has replaced veteran Shiv Singh. Qamar, who is set to turn 38, is also the youngest person to land the job. Qamar's CWG gold came in the 2002 Manchester edition in the light flyweight category.

### **ICICI Bank appoints B Sriram, Rama Bijapurkar Independent Directors**

Private sector ICICI Bank inducted former SBI Managing Director B Sriram and management consultant Rama Bijapurkar on its board as independent director. Both are appointed for 5 years, subject to the approval of shareholders, ICICI Bank stated in a regulatory filing on stock exchanges.

### **TCS appoints Daniel Callahan as Independent Director**



India's largest software exporter Tata Consultancy Services has appointed Don Callahan as an additional and independent director for a period of 5 years, based on the recommendations of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee. He was the Chief Administrative Officer and Head of Operations and Technology at Citigroup and was a member of Citi's Operating Committee earlier.

### **Senior bureaucrat Jaideep Govind appointed as Secretary General of NHRC**

According to an announcement by the Personnel Ministry, The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of senior bureaucrat Jaideep Govind as the Secretary General, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

### **Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu elected to US Congress to run for President in 2020**

Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu elected to US Congress and a four-time Democratic lawmaker, has said she will run for President in 2020, becoming the latest member of her party to challenge Republican President Donald Trump. Gabbard, 37 years old, said she will formally announce her candidacy within a week.

### **M. Nageshwar Rao again takes charge as new CBI chief**

A day after the removal of Alok Verma, Additional Director M. Nageswara Rao again took charge of the office of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director. Verma was removed as the CBI Director on account of the 'extremely serious nature of observations made by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) against him'.

### **Yes Bank appoints Brahm Dutt as Non-Executive Part-Time Chairman**

Yes Bank, India's fourth-largest private sector bank, announced the appointment of Brahm Dutt as non-executive part-time chairman. He is currently also the chairman of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee.

### **Ex-Hotstar CEO Ajit Mohan officially joined Facebook India as VP and MD**

Ajit Mohan officially took over as Facebook India's new Vice President and MD. He succeeded Umang Bedi who left the post. Mohan, a former CEO of Hotstar, was earlier appointed to lead as India's head for the company.

### **Gita Gopinath becomes the first female chief economist of IMF**

Gita Gopinath has joined International Monetary Fund as its chief economist. She is the first woman to occupy the post of chief economist of IMF. She is the 11th chief economist of the IMF.

### **Pranav R Mehta becomes 1st Indian to Head Global Solar Council**

A visionary in the field of Solar Energy and the chairman of National Solar Energy Federation, Pranav R Mehta, has taken over as the president of Global Solar Council (GSC). He has become the first Indian to head the GSC.

### **Kumar Rajesh Chandra Appointed Director-General of SSB**

Civil Aviation Security head and senior IPS officer Kumar Rajesh Chandra was appointed as the director general of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Chandra, a 1985-batch IPS officer of Bihar cadre, is at present the director general of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).

### **Alok Verma Reinstated as CBI Chief by Supreme Court**

Alok Verma reinstated as the CBI chief by the Supreme Court, three months after the government divested him of his powers and sent him on forced leave. Alok Verma and his deputy Rakesh Asthana were both sent on leave in October amid a bitter feud between the CBI's top two. Supreme Court strikes down CBI Chief Alok Verma's removal.

### **Rakesh Aggarwal took over as new JIPMER director**

Dr Rakesh Aggarwal assumed charge as the new director of Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education & Research (JIPMER), Puducherry. He succeeded Dr S Vivekanandan. He is also an elected fellow of Indian Academy of Sciences, Indian National Science Academy, National Academy of Sciences (India) and National Academy of Medical Sciences (India).

### **PayU India CEO Amrish Rau joined parent company Naspers as head of financial technology**

PayU India's CEO Amrish Rau joined as the head of financial technology partnerships and investments for Naspers' fintech business. Nasper is South African parent of PayU. Rau will continue to report to Laurent le Moal the chief executive of PayU, which is headquartered in the Netherlands. He joined PayU after Citrus Pay was acquired by PayU in 2016 for \$130 million in cash.

### **Chhabilendra Roul takes charge as Secretary, Department of Fertilizers**

Chhabilendra Roul has assumed the charge of Secretary, Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India. Shri Roul is an Indian Administrative Services Officer of 1985 batch, from Punjab Cadre.

### **Justice Cholendra Rana takes over as Nepal's new Chief Justice**

Justice Cholendra Shamsheer J B Rana Wednesday took over as the new Chief Justice of Nepal's Supreme Court. President Bidya Devi Bhandari administered the oath to Rana at the swearing-in ceremony at Sheetal Niwas, the official residence of the President, The Himalayan Times reported.

**Justice Asif Saeed Khosa appointed as the new Chief Justice of Pakistan**

Justice Asif Saeed Khosa will take oath of his office a day after incumbent CJP Justice Saqib Nisar retires. Justice Khosa has been a senior Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. He will remain as the top judge of Pakistan.

**Hemant Bhargava Appointed LIC's Acting Chairman**

The government has appointed Hemant Bhargava, Managing Director, Life Insurance Corporation of India, as the Acting Chairman. The move comes after VK Sharma retired from the top job at LIC.

**New chairman for the Ordnance Factory Board**

Saurabh Kumar has been appointed as the Director General of Ordnance Factories (DGOF) and chairman of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) in Kolkata. Indian Ordnance Factories organisation is a family of 41 Ordnance Factories under the aegis of its corporate headquarters Ordnance Factory Board, Kolkata. It is working under the aegis of Ministry of Defence.

**Justice AK Sikri nominated as Executive Chairman of NALSA**

President Ram Nath Kovind has nominated Justice AK Sikri as Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). He will be replacing Justice Madan B Lokur.

**Vinod Kumar Yadav appointed as Railway Board Chairman**

General Manager of South Central Railway, Vinod Kumar Yadav, has been appointed as Chairman of Railway Board and ex-officio Principal Secretary to Government of India. His appointment came after Ashwani Lohani's superannuation. Vinod Kumar Yadav belongs to the 1980 batch of Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE).

**Justice T B N Radhakrishnan sworn in as first Chief Justice of Telangana HC**

Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan sworn in as the first Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court. The oath to the office was administered to Justice Radhakrishnan by Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Governor ESL Narasimhan at a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan. The ceremony was attended by Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and other judges, lawyers and senior government officials.

**Sudhir Bhargava Appointed New Chief Information Commissioner**

The government has appointed Sudhir Bhargava as Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), along with four information commissioners. Mr. Bhargava was Information Commissioner in the CIC. An alumnus of St Michael's High School in Patna and St Stephen's College in Delhi, Mr. Sinha is a 1981-batch Indian Foreign Service officer who was the High Commissioner of India in the United Kingdom.

**Y.K. Sailas Thangal concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Liberia**

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India announced that Mr. Y.K. Sailas Thangal who is the ambassador of the India to the Republic of Cote d' Ivoire has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Liberia with residence in Abidjan.

**RESIGNS****Accenture CEO Pierre Nanterme steps down from the post**

Accenture, a Dublin based consultant firm's CEO Pierre Nanterme steps down from his post due to his health issues. Financial Officer of the company David Rowland was named interim CEO. Though resigned as CEO of the company, Pierre Nanterme will continue at Accenture as advisor to the CEO. THE lead independent director Marge Wagner was named non-executive chair.

**Stephen Constantine Resigns as Coach of Indian Football Team**

Indian football team head coach Stephen Constantine has stepped down after the team's shock 0-1 defeat to Bahrain which led to its exit from the Asian Cup. The Anglo-Cypriot coach took over the reins of the team in 2015 for a 2-year tenure. He was given one-year contract extension twice. It was his second stint as India coach after serving as the coach in 2002-05.

**Ananth Narayanan resigned his position as CEO of Myntra & Jabong**

Ananth Narayanan, CEO of Myntra and Jabong, has decided to step down from his position as the CEO. He cited his reasons as his interest to pursue external opportunities. Flipkart Group CEO Kalyan Krishnamurthy named Amar Nagaram, head, Myntra and Jabong as the new CEO for the company. As a part of the new structure, Myntra and Jabong has been brought under Flipkart.

**Ashok Chawla Resigned as NSE Chairman**

Ashok Chawla resigned as chairman of the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) with immediate effect 'in light of recent legal developments'. Chawla's resignation came on a day the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) told a special court in Delhi that it has obtained the sanction of the ministries concerned to file charges against him and four other former bureaucrats in the Aircel-Maxis case.

**Malaysia's monarch, Sultan Muhammad V, stepped down**

Malaysia's monarch Sultan Muhammad V resigned, as the 15th Yang di-Pertuan Agong, from the throne before completing their five-year tenure for the first time in Malaysia's history. he selection of the next king can be decided by a vote in the Council of Rulers, made up of all nine royal households, who takes turns to sit on the throne.

**World Bank President Jim Yong Kim to step down**

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announced that he will step down from his position on February 1 – much before the end of his term in 2022. Kim, 58, has been in this position for over six years now. In a statement, the World Bank said he will join a firm and focus on increasing infrastructure investments in developing countries. Kristalina Georgieva, World Bank CEO, will assume the role of interim President effective 1st of next month.

**Pentagon Chief of Staff Kevin Sweeney Resigns**

Kevin Sweeney, the chief of staff of the US Department of Defence, resigned from his position. Kevin Sweeney retired as a Rear Admiral from the US Navy in 2014.

**SC judge Justice M B Lokur retired from his duties**

The second senior-most Supreme Court judge Justice Madan B Lokur retired. He was among the four judges who held the controversial press conference against the then Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra over the issue of allocation of sensitive cases. He also played an active role in the pursuit of judicial reforms — computerisation of courts, judicial education, legal aid and legal services.

**DEATHS****Former Defence Minister George Fernandes Passes Away**

Former Defence Minister George Fernandes passed away in Delhi at the age of 88. Fernandes also served as the Railways Minister in former Prime Minister VP Singh's government. His last stint as a parliamentarian was as a Rajya Sabha MP between August 2009 and July 2010.

**Pulitzer Prize-Winning Columnist Russell Baker died at 93**

Pulitzer winning author yet well known for his columns in The New York Times passed away at the age of 93 due to severe health complications. Baker won Pulitzers in 1979 for the "Observer," the Times column, and in 1983 for his autobiography 'Growing Up'.

**Jnanpith Winning Hindi Writer Krishna Sobti Passes Away**

Eminent Hindi author and essayist Krishna Sobti passed away in Delhi. She was 93. She was a recipient of many coveted awards like Sahitya Akademi, Jnanpith awards and was also offered Padma Bhushan, which she had declined. Some of her celebrated works include Daar Se Bichhudi, Mitro Marjani, Zindaginama, Dil-o-Danish, Badalom ke Ghare, Ai Ladki and Gujarat Pakistan Se Gujarat Hindustan.

**Siddaganga mutt seer Sri Shivakumara Swamiji passed away**

Siddaganga mutt seer Sri Shivakumara Swamiji, popularly known as “Nadedaduva Devaru” (Walking God) passed away in Tumakuru, Karnataka at the age of 111. Siddaganga Swamiji was conferred honorary doctorate by Karnatak University, Dharwad in 1965.

### **INLD MLA Jaswinder Sandhu passes away in Haryana**

Indian National Lok Dal (INLD)’s senior leader and MLA Jasvinder Singh Sandhu passed away after suffering from Cancer at the age of 63 in Haryana. He had been elected to the Haryana Vidhan Sabha from the Pehowa seat in 1991, 1996, 2000 and 2014. He had also served as the agriculture minister of the state.

### **World’s Oldest Man Masazo Nonaka Passes Away at 113**

The world’s oldest man, Masazo Nonaka of Japan, has died at the age of 113. Nonaka, who was officially recognized as the oldest male in the world by Guinness World Records in April 2018, passed away at his home in the north of Japan’s Hokkaido island.

### **Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Mary Oliver dies at 83**

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Mary Oliver died at her residence in Hobe Sound, Florida due to a disease caused lymphoma at the age of 83. She was critically acclaimed for her rapturous odes to nature and the animal life. Mary Oliver wrote more than 15 poetry and essay collections.

### **Vanguard Group Founder John C. Bogle passed away**

John C. Bogle, who founded the Vanguard Group of Investment Companies in 1974 and built it into a giant kingdom, with \$4.9 trillion in assets under management today, died at the age of 89. Bogle was also a best-selling author, Stay the Course: The Story of Vanguard and the Index Revolution is the recent and the last masterpiece written by him.

### **Assam Accord signatory Biraj Sarma passes away**

Senior AGP leader and one of the signatories of the Assam Accord, Biraj Kumar Sarma, has passed away after suffering from chronic liver disease. Sarma along with former Assam Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta and the late Bhrigu Kumar Phukan signed the Assam Accord, marking the end of the six-year-long Assam movement against ‘foreigners’.

### **Malayalam Director Lenin Rajendran Passes Away**

Malayalam director and screenwriter Lenin Rajendran has passed away at 67. He was a five-time recipient of the Kerala State Film Awards and also received the International Federation of Film Critics Award for the best Malayalam film for his film ‘Makaramanju’. He was also chairman of the Kerala State Film Development Corporation.

### **Fields Medal-Winning Mathematician Passes Away**

Sir Michael Atiyah, a British mathematician who received the 1966 Fields Medal, also known as the 'Nobel for Mathematics,' passed away at the age of 89. Atiyah was best known for his co-development of a branch of mathematics called topological K-theory and the Atiyah-Singer index theorem. Atiyah was also the President of the Royal Society from 1990-1995.

### **Former banker and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Meera Sanyal passed away**

Banker-turned-politician Meera Sanyal passed away at 57. She was the country chief executive of Royal Bank of Scotland when she quit and joined the Aam Aadmi Party. She also unsuccessfully contested the Lok Sabha election from Mumbai twice, in 2009 and 2014. In 2018, she also wrote a book named: 'The Big Reverse: How Demonetization Knocked India Out'.

### **Veteran Kannada actor C H Loknath passes away**

Veteran Kannada actor C H Loknath passed away at a private hospital in Bengaluru. He was 91.

### **Sachin's Coach Ramakant Achrekar Passes Away**

Veteran cricket coach Ramakant Achrekar, who trained Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kambli, among others, passed away following a heart attack. He was 87 and breathed his last at his home in Dadar. Achrekar, honoured with Padma Shri in 2010 and Dronacharya Award in 1990, was instrumental in shaping the careers of Tendulkar, Kambli and over a dozen other top cricket stars.

### **Bollywood actor Kader Khan passes**

Kader Khan was an Afghan-born Indian-Canadian film actor, screenwriter, comedian, and director. As an actor, he appeared in over 300 films after his debut film in the 1973 film Daag, starring Rajesh Khanna, in which he acted as a prosecuting attorney.

### **Norman Gimbel, Grammy and Oscar Winning Lyricist Passes Away**

Norman Gimbel, the Oscar and Grammy-winning lyricist, has passed away at the age of 91. Gimbel's work included Killing Me Softly With His Song – recorded by Roberta Flack, the Fugees and others – and the theme to TV series Happy Days.

### **Noted filmmaker Mrinal Sen passed away**

Legendary filmmaker Mrinal Sen passed away at the age of 95 in Kolkata. A Padma Bhushan and Dada Saheb Phalke awardee, Sen paved the way for parallel cinema in the country with films like Ek Din Achanak, Padatik, Mrigaya, Akaler Sandhane, Chorus, Kharij, Khandahar, Bhuwan Shome, Akash Kusum and Calcutta 71.

### **Overview of P.M's Visit to TamilNadu & Kerala**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, laid the foundation stone for the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Thoppur near Madurai, Tamil Nadu. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, dedicated to the nation an Integrated Refinery Expansion Project Complex (IREP) of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and laid the foundation stone for a petrochemical complex in Kochi, Kerala.

### **Norwegian PM Erna Solberg in India on 3-Day Visit**

Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg has arrived in New Delhi on a three-day state visit to India. She was accompanied by senior officials from her government and a large business delegation. She will participate in the Indo-Norwegian Business Conference.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **Dubai Airport retains top position as world's Busiest Airport**

Dubai International (DXB) airport became the world's busiest airport for international passengers for the fifth consecutive year. Dubai International (DXB) shows an increase of 1% in passenger traffic when compared to previous year. It is the slowest growth for Dubai Airport in the past decade.

#### **Jallikattu event breaks Guinness record**

The jallikattu (bull taming sport) event in Tamil Nadu's Viralimalai made to Guinness records for the highest number of bulls to have taken part in it i.e. 1,353. According to the Viralimalai Jallikattu committee, they had expected 2,000 bulls for the event. Jallikkattu is a traditional bull taming sport in the state and is conducted during the Pongal festival.

#### **Women to get 20% jobs in Military Police**

The Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced the decision to induct women in Personnel Below Officer Rank, PBOR, role in Corps of Military Police. The women will be inducted in a graded manner to eventually comprise 20% of total Corps of Military Police. Accordingly, the Army chalked out induction of approximately 800 women in military police with a yearly intake of 52 personnel per year.

#### **Mukesh Ambani in top Global Thinkers List of Foreign Policy**

Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries, Mukesh Ambani who is also the Richest Indian, has been featured in the Top 'Global Thinkers 2019' ranking released by the prestigious Foreign Policy publishing. Alibaba's founder Jack Ma, Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos and IMF Head Christine Lagarde also featured in the list of few names released by Foreign Policy Publishing.

#### **India's Satyarup becomes World's Youngest Mountaineer to Climb 7 Peaks, 7 Volcano Summits**



Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Antarctica's highest point, Mount Sidley. With this feat, he became the first Indian and youngest man to climb the 7 highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents.

### **PM releases commemorative coin and stamp on Sikh Guru Gobind Singh**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin and stamp on Guru Gobind Singh to mark the 350th birth anniversary. On the occasion, Prime Minister Modi underlined the role of Guru Gobind Singh in uniting the country through Khalsa sect.

### **Arunima Sinha becomes world's first woman amputee to scale Mount Vinson**

Arunima Sinha, the Indian mountaineer who became the world's first woman amputee to climb Mount Everest in 2013, has now become the first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson (highest peak of Antarctica). Sinha is a national level volleyball player who had one of her legs amputated in 2011 after she was pushed from a running train by dacoits she had resisted.

## **BOOKS IN NEWS**

### **Malala Pens New Book on Refugee Girls Titled We Are Displaced**

Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai pens a new book, titled 'We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World,' charting her experiences traveling the world and visiting refugee camps.

### **Rajya Sabha Vice Chairman launches 'A Crusade Against Corruption' book**

Vice-Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Harivansh Narayan Singh launched Manohar Manoj's book 'A Crusade against corruption'. Manoj has written this book after massive research and deep observations on the subject during the last 15 years and claimed that this is a kind of 'Encyclopedic Snapshots on Corruption in India'.

### **Sanjay Khan announces second book on 78th birthday**

On the occasion of his 78th birthday, veteran actor-producer Sanjay Khan announced his second book, 'Assalamalaikum Watan'. He is the recipient of the 'National Citizen Award' twice, the 'Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence' and the 'Gem of India Award for Excellence' among many other honours.

### **Centre brings booklet on cyber safety for school children titled 'A Handbook for Students on cyber Safety'**

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India has released a booklet titled 'Handbook for Students on cyber Safety' to inform the school children about the different aspects of cyber safety. The booklet aims to create awareness among citizens especially students about cyber threats and provides details about the various

safeguards that can be adopted by the children in order to protect themselves from cyber grooming.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **IBBI sets up committee under SEBI chairman UK Sinha**

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India has set up a working group under former Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman UK Sinha. The committee will set up regulatory framework to facilitate insolvency resolution and liquidation of debtors in a corporate group within the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

### **Sushil Modi to Head Committee on GST Revenue Shortfall Faced by States**

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi will head the 7-member committee to look into revenue shortfall being faced by the states after the GST roll-out and suggest steps for augmenting collections.

### **SEBI Constitutes Research Advisory Committee Headed By Sankar De**

Market regulator Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has constituted a 'Research Advisory' committee which will assist in formulating policy to undertake research relevant for development and regulation of capital markets. According to SEBI, the committee would comprise prominent financial economists and market practitioners. It will be headed by Sankar De.

### **RBI Forms Committee To Boost Digital Payments**

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion. The five-member committee headed by UIDAI's former Chairman Nandan Nilekani will include RBI's former Deputy Governor Mr. H.R. Khan and Former Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology, Mrs. Aruna Sharma among others.

### **High-level Committee Notified on Assam Accord**

The government has notified a High-Level Committee for implementation of Clause six of the Assam Accord. The clause envisaged that appropriate constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, should be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the people of Assam. The nine-member committee, comprising of eminent Assamese persons from different fields, is headed by former bureaucrat MP Bezbaruah.

### **Committee Meeting of Members of Parliament on National Sugar Institute, Kanpur**

The Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan chaired the meeting of Consultative Committee of Members of Parliament attached with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution. The

Consultative Committee Meeting reviewed the functioning of National Sugar Institute established at Kanpur.

### **A new high level committee to protect Assams heritage**

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the setting up of a high-level committee for implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord. It provides for constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of Assam.

### **DAYS & DATES**

#### **January 28: Data Protection Day**

The Council of Europe had launched a Data Protection Day to be celebrated each year on 28 January, the date on which the Council of Europe's data protection convention, known as "Convention 108", was opened to the signature. Data Protection Day is now celebrated globally and is called Data Privacy Day outside Europe.

#### **25 January: National Voters Day**

25 January is celebrated every year as National Voters Day to spread awareness about the necessity of voting and to encourage young generation towards the voting rights. National Voters Day Theme 2019 is 'No Voter to be left behind'. This is the ninth year of celebrating National Voters Day.

#### **24 January: International Day of Education**

24th January is International Day of Education. The United Nations General Assembly adopted with consensus a resolution proclaiming 24 January as International Day of Education, in celebration of the role of education for peace and development.

#### **15 January: Indian Army Day**

Army Day is observed on January 15 in India. On this day in 1949, Field Marshal Kodandera M Cariappa took over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief. Army day is dedicated to the soldiers who fought to safeguard the country's honour. This is the 71st celebration of the Indian Army Day.

#### **12 January: National Youth Day**

The National Youth Day is celebrated across the country on 12th January. NYD 2019 is the 156th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Known for his pragmatic approach towards spirituality, inter-faith harmony and modernization, Vivekananda is often considered an inspiration for India's youth.

## January 10: World Hindi Day

Every year 10th January is celebrated as World Hindi Day to create awareness about the language of Hindi across the World and to present Hindi as an international language. The first world World Hindi Conference was organized in Nagpur.

### **BANKING AWARENESS**

#### **RBI to Inject Rs 37,500 Crore Through OMO in February**

The Reserve Bank of India has stated that it will inject Rs 37,500 crore into the system through the purchase of government securities in February to increase liquidity. RBI stated that it has decided to conduct the purchase of government securities under Open Market Operations (OMOs) for an aggregate amount of Rs 375 billion in the month of February 2019 through three auctions of Rs 125 billion each during the 2nd, 3rd and 4th week.

#### **Nepals Central Bank announces Ban of Indian Notes above Rs 100**

Nepal's central bank banned the use of Indian currency notes of Rs 2,000, Rs 500 and Rs 200 denominations, a move that could affect Indian tourists visiting the Himalayan nation where Indian currency is widely used. Nepal Rastra Bank issued a circular prohibiting Nepali travelers, banks and financial institutions from holding or carrying and trading Indian bank notes higher than Rs 100.

#### **HDFC Standard Life Insurance renamed to HDFC Life Insurance**

HDFC Standard Life Insurance on Friday changed its name to HDFC Life Insurance following the receipt of relevant approvals from regulatory authorities. The change in name is effective right off the bat and the company will henceforth operate under the name HDFC Life Insurance Company Ltd.

#### **Cabinet approves Rs 6,000 recap of EXIM Bank**

The Union Cabinet approved capital infusion of Rs 6,000 crore in Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank) through recapitalisation bonds to boost the bank's capacity in export financing.

#### **IDFC Bank re-named IDFC First Bank: Registrar of Companies, Chennai**

Private sector lender IDFC Bank changed its name to IDFC First Bank Ltd owing to the merge of the bank with Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC) Capital. The change was effective by virtue of 'Certificate of Incorporation pursuant to change of name' issued by the Registrar of Companies, Chennai.

#### **Sri Lanka's Central Bank gets USD 400 Million Swap from RBI**

Sri Lanka's Central Bank announced that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has agreed to provide USD 400 million under a swap arrangement to boost the island nation's

reserves. It stated that a further request to the RBI for another SWAP arrangement of USD 1 billion is 'Under consideration'.

### **RBI expected to pay government up to Rs 40,000 crore interim dividend**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is likely to transfer an interim dividend of up to Rs 30,000 crore to Rs 40,000 crore (\$4.32 billion-\$5.8 billion) to the government by March. The funds are crucial to meet the fiscal deficit target of 3.3 percent of the GDP for the financial year ending in March, as the government's revenue shortfall may be as high as Rs 1 lakh crore.

### **ICICI Bank, SBFC Joined Hands to Provide Loans Worth Rs. 1 Crore to MSMEs for 15-year Tenure**

ICICI Bank, in a first-of-its-kind programme, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Business FinCredit India Pvt. Ltd. (SBFC), a systemically important Non-Banking Finance Company for entrepreneurs, to jointly provide credit worth up to Rs 1 crore to MSMEs for a tenure of 15 years.

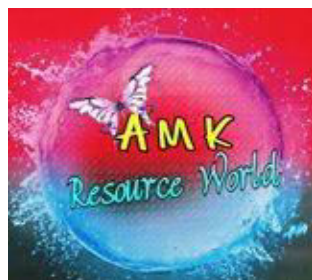
### **Cabinet approves merger of Vijaya Bank, Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda**

The Cabinet has approved the merger of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda. The move will help create a strong globally competitive bank with economies of scale and enable the realization of wide-ranging synergies, leveraging of networks and low-cost deposits and substantial rise in customer base and operational efficiency. The pay and allowances and services of the employees of all three banks will remain same as earlier.

### **Banks Recover Rs 40,400 crore From Defaulters: RBI Report**

Banks have seen a significant improvement in recovery of stressed assets helped by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and amendments in the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interests (SARFAESI) Act, during FY18, according to the RBI data.

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