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NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

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THE
OSCARS.



Pulwama Terror Attack

Dear readers, we have started edristi English edition as well since August, 2015. We are hopeful that it will help us to connect to the broader audience and amplify our personal bonding with each other.

While presenting Day-to-day current affairs, we are very cautious on choosing the right topics to make sure only those get the place which are useful for competitive exams perspective, not to increase unnecessary burden on the readers by putting useless materials. Secondly, we have also provided the reference links to ensure its credibility which is our foremost priority. You can always refer the links to validate its authenticity.

We will try to present the current affairs topics as quickly as possible but its authenticity is given higher priority over its turnaround time. Therefore it could happen that we publish the incident one or two days later in the website.

Our plan will be to publish our monthly PDF on very first day of every month with making appropriate modifications of day-to-day events. In general, the events happened till 28th day will be given place in the PDFs. The necessity of this is to ensure the contents factual authenticity.

Reader's satisfaction is our utmost priority so requesting you to provide your valuable feedback to us.

We will warmly welcome your appreciation/criticism given to us. It will surely show us the right direction to improve the content quality. Hopefully the current affairs PDF (from 1st February to 28th February) will benefit our beloved readers.

Current affairs data will be useless if it couldn't originate any competitive exam questions. E-Dristi has been very successful in that direction. Almost all the questions from UPPCS and other examinations have been asked from our materials. You can verify that by matching the question papers and e-Dristi contents from yourselves.

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National

First Major Recruitment with 10% EWS Reservation

Question: Which Ministry has initiated first major recruitment with inclusion of 10% EWS Reservation?

(a) Ministry of Defence (b) Ministry of Finance (c) Ministry OF Human Resource (d) Ministry of Railways

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- In line with the mega recruitment process for recruitment of 1,51,548 employees initiated 14 months ago, Indian Railways will initiate fresh recruitment of 2,30,000 more employees under various cadres of Indian Railways, which will be recruited over the next two years in two phases.
- Recruitment shall be conducted in two-phases duly observing the laid down criteria of reservation in Government of India.
- Phase-I (starting February-March, 2019 and completed by April-May, 2020) will comprise of 1,31,328 posts. 10% of these vacancies i.e. around 13,100 shall be filled in from Economically Weaker Sections (EWS).
- As per the reservation policy of the Government, approximately 15,000, 7,500, 27,000 and 10,000 posts shall be reserved for SC, ST, OBC and EWS candidates respectively.
- Phase II (starting May-June 2020 and completed by July-August, 2021) will comprise of 99,000 posts.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187702>

India Rubber Expo 2019

Question: 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo was organised in which of the following city?

(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Ahmedabad

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- 10th edition of the India Rubber Expo was organised at Mumbai from 17-19 January 2019. It was inaugurated by Union Minister of Commerce Shri Suresh Prabhu.
- The three-day event held at the Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai.
- The IRE offers a unique opportunity for Indian companies to meet and collaborate with overseas companies. Over 300 exhibitors and 27,000 plus visitors participated in the event.
- India Rubber Expo (IRE) is currently Asia's largest Rubber Exhibition. It made its debut in year 2001.
- Inaugurating the event, Union Minister Suresh Prabhu stated that the National Rubber Policy will be unveiled soon to address issues concerning the sector and also to boost productivity.
- As per Minister, rubber industry can also contribute significantly in India's efforts to become a 5 trillion dollar economy.
- He notified that a multi-pronged strategy is being formulated to boost India's exports and to ensure that India's products get market access in more than 150 countries.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/Main-New -Details.aspx?id=358172>

India's first Lithium Ion Giga Factory

Question: Name the companies in dialogue to build India's first Lithium Ion Giga Factory?

(a) BHEL & LIBCOIN (b) Tata & Mahindra (c) Samsung SDI & Panasonic (d) Tesla & A123 systems

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) & Libcoin is focusing to initially build 1GWh lithium ion battery plant in India.
- It is proposed that its capacity will be scaled up to 30GWh.
- This project will bring energy independence by replacing oil imports with abundant renewable.
- This project also includes "Made by India, for India", with focus on core-cost components manufactured domestically.
- Numerous Indian cities including Delhi have been struggling to cut down their pollution level for last several years and electric transportation has been considered as one of the reasonable approaches to cut down emission.
- The number of electric cars in the world already hit million-mark last year and the International Energy Agency has projected almost 140 million electric cars globally by 2030 if all countries comply to meet Paris climate accord targets.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187590>

International Kite Festival

Question: International kite festival held at which of the following place?

(a) Ajmer (b) Ahmedabad (c) Jodhpur (d) Jaipur

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- International Kite Festival was organised from 6-14 January 2019 at the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad (Gujarat). It was inaugurated by Gujarat Governor OP Kohli.
- Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, Ahmedabad Mayor Bijal Patel and Revenue Minister Kaushik Patel took part in the festival.
- Ahmedabad has been hosting the international kite festival since 1989, as a part of the official celebration of Makar sankranti or Uttarayan.
- Around 500 internationally famed kite enthusiasts held a march past along with their kites. Master kite makers and fliers participated in the festival to demonstrate their creations and skills.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/photos/india-news/international-kite-festival-ahmedabad-skyline-painted-riot-of-colors-5525600/>

PM Inaugurated Subhas Chandra Bose Museum

Question: PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Subhas Chandra Bose Museum on which of the following occasion?

- (a) 122nd Birth Anniversary of Bose (b) 150th Birth Anniversary of Gandhi
(c) 156th Birth Anniversary of Vivekanand (d) None of the above.

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 23 January 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Subhas Chandra Bose Museum at Red Fort, New Delhi on the occasion of 122nd Birth Anniversary of Subhas Chandra Bose.
- The museum has various things related to Netaji from his childhood days to documenting the Indian National Army (INA) trials. The Bose museum showcases various artefacts related to Netaji which includes the wooden chair and sword used by the leader, medals, badges, uniforms and other artefacts related to the INA.
- PM also visited Yaad – E- Jallian Museum on the Jallianwala Bagh & World War I, Museum on 1857 on India's First War of Independence and Drishyakala Museum on Indian Art.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/netaji-subhash-chandra-bose-birth-anniversary-2019-live-updates-narendra-modi-museum-5551435/>

INS KOHASSA

Question: Consider the following statements in reference to INS Kohassa:

- On 24 January 2019, Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur was commissioned as INS KOHASSA.
- It is third air base of Indian Navy in Andaman & Nicobar.
- It would help in improving 'UDAN' scheme & 'Act East Policy' of Government.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

- (a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All 1,2,3

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 24th Jan 2019, Naval Air Station (NAS) Shibpur was commissioned as INS Kohassa by Admiral Sunil Lanba in a ceremony.
- INS Kohassa is an Indian Naval Air Station located at Shibpur, a village in North Andaman near Diglipur Island in Andaman and Nicobar territory. This is the third air base in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- NAS Shibpur was established in 2001 as a Forward Operating Air Base for enhanced surveillance in North Andaman. The close proximity of Coco Islands (Myanmar) and wide expanse of Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) makes the base a very vital asset.
- INS Kohassa has been named after a White Bellied Sea Eagle, which is a large bird of prey endemic to Andaman and Nicobar islands.
- It would help improve domestic air connectivity under the Centre's UDAN Scheme and to make successful 'Act East Policy'.
- NAS Shibpur was identified by NITI Aayog as one of the 'Early Bird' project as part of holistic island development. Towards this, the Indian Navy has been ready in all respects to facilitate civil flight operations from NAS Shibpur.



- This will help India in keeping an eye on increasing presence of the Chinese Navy in the Indo – Pacific region and to maintain the balance of power.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187726>

Ganga Expressway

Question: Which of the following statements are correct in reference to the Ganga Expressway of Uttar Pradesh?

- 1) This will be the world`s longest Expressway
- 2) It will connect eastern U.P. (Meerut) to Lucknow
- 3) This project is approved by Cabinet with an estimated cost of Rs. 36,000 cr.
- 4) The expressway will be 600 kms long

Choose the correct option:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 2, 3 and 4 (c) 1, 2 and 4 (d) 1, 3 and 4

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet in its historic meet in Prayagraj (Allahabad) approved the construction of Ganga Expressway on January 30, 2019.
- The meeting was chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. It was for the first time that such meeting held outside Lucknow after 1962 when the UP cabinet meeting took place at Nainital (now in Uttarakhand) during the regime of then Congress CM Govind Ballabh Pant.

Highlights of the project:

- The 600 kilometer four lane expressway which can be developed further to six lanes.
- The project will be constructed with an estimated cost of Rs 36,000 crore.
- This expressway will connect Eastern UP with holy city of Prayagraj (Allahabad). The expressway will connect Meerut, Amroha, Bulandshahr, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Kannauj, Unnao, Rae Bareilly, Pratapgarh and will end connecting Prayagraj.
- The Expressway will have an acquisition of 6,556 hectare land. Eight rail over bridges (ROB) and 18 flyovers will be constructed in the project.

Other projects:

- The Cabinet also approved much awaited Bundelkhand Expressway. This will be 296.26 kms long and procured area will 3641.62 hectare, the width of the expressway will be 110 mts and will constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 14,716.26 crore.
- The expressway will start from Jhansi, Mirzapur National Highway and will pass through districts like Banda, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jalaun, Auraiya and Etawah and will join the Agra-Lucknow Expressway.
- The Cabinet also cleared the Gorakhpur Link Expressway (Four Lane) will be 91 kilometers long and total effective area will be 987.48 hectare. The cost of civil work is estimated to be 5555.16 crores.

Links:

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/state-editions/yogi-cabinet-meets-at—kumbh—construction-of-ganga-expressway-gets-nod.html>

DAY – NRLM: Reducing Poverty Through Livelihood Diversification

Question: Consider the following statements in reference to Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana:

1) Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Rural Development

2) It seeks to alleviate rural poverty through building sustainable community institutions of the poor

3) According to the report, the pace of reduction of poverty in India has speeded up in recent years as per the Global Multi – dimensional Poverty Index 2018.

Of the above correct statement/s is /are:

- (a) Only 1
- (b) only 2
- (c) only 3
- (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The recently published Global Multi-dimensional Poverty Index 2018 reported the pace of reduction of poverty in India has speeded up in recent as also the note published by The Brookings Institution.
- The Deendayal Antodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) is aimed at alleviation of rural poverty through building sustainable community institutions of the poor. It is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- It seeks to mobilize about 9 crore households into SHGs and link them to sustainable livelihood opportunities by building their skills and enabling them to access formal sources of finance, entitlements and services from both public and private sectors.



The Report:

- The achievements of the Mission during April 2014 to November 2018 in key areas are Mission Footprint, community Institution Building, Financial Inclusion, Etc.
- Mission Footprint: During the period, 2411 additional blocks have been covered under the “Intensive” strategy. Cumulatively, the Mission is being implemented in 5,123 blocks spread across 612 districts of 29 States and 5 Union Territories (UTs).
- Community Institution Building: Between April 2014 and November 2018, more than 3 crore rural poor women have been mobilized into 26.9lakh Self Help Group (SHGs) across the country. Cumulatively, more than 5.63 crore women have been mobilized into more than 49.7 lakh SHGs.
- Financial Inclusion: The loans outstanding to SHGs have increased from Rs. 32,565 crores in March 2014 to Rs. 76,591 crore in October 2018. Cumulatively, Rs.1.96 lakh crore worth of bank credit has been leveraged by the SHGs during the last five years.
- Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme: DAY-NRLM has been promoting SVEP to promote and strengthen rural start-ups in the non-farm and off-farm sector.
- Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY) was launched in August 2017 to provide safe, affordable and community monitored rural transport services to connect remote rural villages. As on November 2018, proposals from 17 States have been approved and 624 vehicles are currently plying on road.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187719>

Farm Loan Waiver Scheme in Madhya Pradesh

Question: What is the name of the recently launched farm loan waiver scheme in Madhya Pradesh?

- (a) Jai Kisan Yojana (b) Jai Kisan Mukti Yojana (c) Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana
(d) Kisan Karzmafi Scheme

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Madhya Pradesh government under the leadership of newly elected Chief Minister Kamal Nath launched Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana, a farm debt waiver scheme to the amount of 50,000 crore.
- About 55 lakh small and marginal farmer will be benefitted from the ambitious scheme having loans upto 2 lakh
- The state cabinet earlier on 5th January, 2019, gave its nod to waive crop loans extending the cut-off date to December 12, 2018 from March 31, 2018.
- Farmers who have registered themselves in GST and are paying income tax cannot avail this facility of loan waiving.



Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/mp-launches-rs-50000-cr-farm-loan-waiver-scheme/article25999963.ece>

Foundation stone for 400/220/132 kV Powergrid Sitamarhi sub-station laid

Question: What amount is allocated to 400/220/132 kV Powergrid Project-Sitamarhi ?

- (a) Rs 620 Crore (b) Rs 420 Crore (c) Rs 320 Crore (d) Rs 520 Crore

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 17 January 2019, Union Minister of State RK Singh informed that Rs 620 Crore is allocated to 400/220/132 kV Powergrid Project, and the foundation stone is being laid by Chief Minister of Bihar Shri Nitish Kumar.
- Sitamarhi Sub-station shall be constructed along with associated 400 kV transmission line in an area of about 36 acres land at Village Parmanandpur, Distt- Sitamarhi in North Bihar.
- The Sub-station will be completed in two years and will supply power to Sitamarhi, Darbhanga, Madhubani, East Champaran, West Champaran and Sheohar districts of Bihar.
- In nearly 4.5 years, the grid has been interconnected to form one national grid, fulfilling the cherished dream of One Nation, One Grid.
- The above project is being constructed by POWERGRID Mithilanchal Transmission Limited as part of the Eastern Region Strengthening Scheme-XXI (ERSS-XXI) project under Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) route.
- Moreover, it shall also facilitate in additional power transfer between Bihar (India) and Nepal and would serve as an additional 400 kV Inter State Transmission System (ISTS) source point in North Bihar.
- It will further help in resolving low voltage issues in Sitamarhi and Motihari areas.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187572>

Global Trade Show 2019

Question: Prime Minister inaugurated Global Trade Show in the State of-
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Haryana

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 18th January, 2019; Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 9th edition of Global Trade Show at the Mahatma Mandir Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. On the same day and venue PM also inaugurated of the 9th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Summit.
- The trade show will continue till January 22 and opened for general public on the last two days (January 21 and 22).
- The stalls brought to the fore the Prime Minister's vision of Make in India with an apt tagline – From Charkha to Chandrayaan.
- The Global Trade Show is spread over an area of 200,000 sq. mts, with more than 25 industrial and business sectors showcasing their ideas, products and designs under one roof.
- Over 30,000 delegates from India and abroad took part in the event including 5 Heads of States from Uzbekistan, Rwanda, Denmark, Czech Republic and Malta along with the captains of industry from various sectors.
- The Prime Minister invited global business leaders and companies to come and invest in India where the business climate is more investor friendly now with the required infrastructure and facilities in place.
- Prime Minister notified that now in India Doing Business has become cheaper with the implementation of GST and other measures of simplification of taxes have reduced transaction costs and made processes efficient.



Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/pm-inaugurates-global-trade-show-at-vibrant-gujarat-summit/article26014925.ece>

15th Finance Commission meet

Question: 15th Finance Commission began its deliberations with which of the following state?

(a) Tripura (b) Nagaland (c) Assam (d) Uttar Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 16 January 2019, the meeting of the 15th Finance Commission began in Tripura with its Chairman, members and senior officials having a detailed interaction with the representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTADC) in the state.
- Chairman of 15th finance commission is N. K. Singh.
- Commission seriously feels that devolution of funds and functions to PRIs needs to be speeded up as it remains incomplete as of date and it is required to meet the constitutional stipulations.
- Tripura receives rainfall for almost eight months in the year, and managing infrastructure projects pose special challenges.



- The TTADC which is an institution of local self government vested with financial, legislative and administrative powers as provided under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution also deserves devolution of Finance Commission.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187540>

15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention

Question: 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention held at which of the following place?

(a) Varanasi (b) Allahabad (c) Kanpur (d) Ghaziabad

Answer :(a)

Related facts:

- In reverence to the sentiments of the larger diaspora community to participate in Kumbh Mela and Republic Day celebrations, the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was organized from 21 to 23 January 2019 instead of 9th January.
- It is noteworthy that Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated on 9th January every year to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India.
- On 21st January 2019, the inauguration of Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in partnership with Ministry of Youth affairs and Sports.
- Honorary members at the ceremony was Mr. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius (Chief Guest of the Convention) and Mr. Himanshu Gulati, Member of Parliament of Norway (Special Guest).
- Mr. Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, Member of Parliament of New Zealand was the Guest of Honor at the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on 21st January, 2019.
- The theme of 15th PBD (Pravasi Bharatiya Divas) 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India."



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/15th-pravasi-bharatiya-divas-be-held-varanasi-january-21-23>

Availability of funds for youth & sports activities among girls

Question: Under which of the following schemes Gol has made sufficient funds available for youth & sports activities among girls?

**(a) Khelo India – National Programme (b) Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA)
(c) Sports Authority of India (SAI)'s Training Centre and Special Area Game Schemes
(d) All of the above**

Answer: (d)

Related facts

- On 7 January 2019, Colonel Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore informed in Rajya Sabha about availability of funds for youth & sports activities among girls.
- He notified that Indian women sportspersons have symbolised the country at international level in various sports recognised by the Ministry.
- All Sports Promotional Schemes of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (Department of Sports) are gender neutral and allocations of funds are also gender neutral.
- Same facilities are made available during the training camps and national/international tournaments/championships.



- In 2015-16, Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA) Scheme was implemented. RGKA, inter-alia, provided for financial assistance to States/UTs for conducting Women Sports Competition. Rs.3.07 crore was released to States/UTs for the same during 2015-16.
- In 2017, The “Khelo India – National Programme for Development of Sports” Scheme was implemented with twelve components, inter-alia, includes a dedicated vertical “Sports for Women”, which provides for financial assistance for holding sports competitions for women.
- To pay special emphasis for promotion of sports among the women sportspersons, SAI has established three SAI Training Centre & one SAG Centre exclusively for women.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1558900>

Union Government Forms GoM

Question: Consider the statements in reference to a recent GoM (Group of Ministers) constituted by government:

- (1) The GoM was constituted to boost the real estate sector under GST regime.
- (2) The constituted group has 5 members in it.
- (3) The convenor of the group is Nitin Patel.

Chose the correct option:

- (a) 1 and 2 (b) 1 and 3 (c) 2 and 3 (d) All of the above

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- On 15 January 2019, Central Government has constituted a seven-member Group of Minister (GoM) to boost the performance of real estate sector under the Goods & Services Tax (GST).
- The convenor of the Group is Nitin Patel, Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat. The members include Finance Ministers of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the Panchayat Minister of Goa.
- The decision of its formation was taken in the last GST Council meeting which took place last week. The GoM will analyse the tax rate of GST and will further suggest a composition scheme for residential construction units.
- The panel will look into various issues like the legality of inclusion or exclusion of land or any ingredient in the composition scheme and suggested valuation mechanism.
- The panel will examine different aspects of the GST levy on Transfer of Development Rights and development rights in a joint agreement and suitable model. The current rate of GST on under-construction flats and houses is 12% whereas no GST on ready-to-move-in flats with a completion certificate.
- The committee will also invite officers from Centre and States, if required. The Council's law and fitment committee will also assist the panel.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/government-forms-gom-for-gst-issues-in-real-estate-119011501039_1.html

Godavari Cauvery Link Project

Question: What is the maximum estimated cost of the recently announced linking project of Godavari and Cauvery?

(a) Rs. 50,000 cr. (b) Rs. 55,000 cr. (c) Rs. 60,000 cr. (d) Rs. 65,000 cr.

Answer: (c)

- A major project for linking Godavari and Cauvery River will be brought by the Central Government. This project is expected to cost Rs. 60,000 crores for which the finance will be raised by Asian Development Bank or World Bank.



About the Project:

- This project will lead to use of 1100 tmc ft. of Godavari water which get drained into Bay of Bengal. The project wholesome is Godavari- Krishna- Pennar – Cauvery project.
- Southern states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka usually face water scarcity which adversely affect to daily work and agriculture.
- This project will also help in settling the interstate dispute of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on water usage.
- The project will be using low thickness steel pipes with special treatment instead of canals which will be cheaper as well as easy to maintain.

Link:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/centre-to-soon-take-up-linking-of-godavari-and-cauvery/article26051033.ece>

Growth Outlook for 2019

Question: Who published the report titled Growth Outlook for 2019 for Indian economy?

(a) NITI Aayog (b) Indian Chamber of Commerce (c) Confederation of Indian Industries (d) Ministry of Finance

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) published a report titled 'Growth Outlook for 2019'. In this report CII suggests that the economy will continue to achieve the growth rate ranging around 7.5% in the year of 2019. This would be possible because of the favorable environment which will drive the economy with this growth rate.
- Factors like better demand condition, settled GST implementation, improve credit availability and capacity expansion from increasing investment in infrastructure are the key drivers helping the economy to achieve high growth rate.
- The report also mentions that amid the vulnerabilities of GST implementations and note-ban as well as global trade wars, India did exceptionally well in being fastest growing major economy in the world in 2018.
- It also suggested some reform to the government including simplification of process in doing business like single window systems in state, digitization of land records for better recordkeeping. It also suggested only three tax slabs for GST- a standard rate, a higher rate for demerit goods and lower rate for mass consumption items.
- CII also mentioned the need to solve the issue of Non Performing Assets and suggested opening of additional benches of National Company Law Tribunal to address this issue.
- CII is a non-govt. industry led and managed organization working to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government



and civil society through advisory and consultative process. It was established in 1895 and is headed by Mr. Rakesh Bharati Mittal.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/settled-gst-credit-flows-among-7-reforms-to-aid-india-grow-7-5-in-2019-cii/articleshow/67314737.cms>

Indus Food 2019

Question: Indus Food 2019 was hosted by which of the following city?

(a) Delhi (b) Greater Noida (c) Patna (d) Jaipur

Answer: (b)

Related facts

- On 14th & 15th January, 2019, INDUS FOOD-2019 held, at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida with the theme World Food Supermarket.
- INDUS FOOD 2019 aimed to promote value addition to India's agriculture exports and integrate Indian farmers and agricultural products with global value chains.
- Event was divided into 15 product display zones namely: Sweets & confectionary, Dairy, Dry fruits, Fruits & vegetables, Indian ethnic food & snacks, Meat poultry & seafood, Non-alcoholic beverages, Oil & oil seeds, Organic & health food, Pulses grain and sugar, Spices, tea & coffee, Wine & alcoholic beverages, Consumer food, Ingredients and fragrances and Extracts.
- More than 700 buyers from 70 countries and over 500 food suppliers participated in the event.
- One of the prime objectives of Indus food 2019 was globalization of the event in order to focus on enhanced product development for better price realization in international markets.
- After the success of INDUS FOOD-I, Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) has scaled up the Reverse Buyers-Sellers Meet (RBSM) with the financial assistance under Market Access Initiative (MAI) scheme of Department of Commerce.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187397>

Meeting of CTDTP held in New Delhi

Question: Recently how many states participated in the Fourth Meeting of CTDTP (Council for Trade Development and Promotion) held in New Delhi?

(a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 7 (d) 10

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 10th January 2019, fourth meeting of the CTDTP, (Council for Trade Development and Promotion) chaired by Union Minister Suresh Prabhu, was held in New Delhi.
- Ten states including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh attended the meeting.
- Government of India has planned an Agricultural Export Policy with a targeted attempt to boost India's agricultural exports to USD sixty billion by 2022.
- He called upon States/ UTs to explore all possible ways of tapping into the global value and supply chain by promoting the export of services, organic agricultural produce, in



corporate value addition to agricultural products and fully utilize all the schemes and programmes of the Government of India.

- Suresh Prabhu notified the Council that concerning efforts being created by the Central Government in making ready a development set up for every and each district in order that growth is led from the district upwards which can be a game changer in taking India's GDP to USD five trillion in 2025.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1559372>

Monthly Production Report of Crude Oil and Natural Gas

Monthly Production Report of Crude Oil and Natural Gas

Question: Consider the following statements:

1) The monthly production report of crude oil and Natural Gas in Dec. 2018 was released by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

2) According to report crude oil & Natural Gas Production has registered de-growth within the specified Target for the Month

3) Refinery Production during the month of December, 2018, was 4.32 % lower than the target for the month of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 24th January 2019, Production Report of Crude Oil and Natural Gas for the month of December, 2018, was released by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- Crude Oil Production during December, 2018, was 2862.35 TMT which is 10.13 % lower than target and 4.3 % lower when compared with December, 2017.
- Cumulative Crude Oil Production during April-December, 2018 was 25937.54 TMT which is 5.83% lower than target for the period and 3.7% lower than production during corresponding period of last year.
- Natural Gas Production during December, 2018, was 2866.51 MMSCM which is 4.86 % lower than the target for the month by 4.19 % higher when compared with December, 2017.
- Cumulative Natural Gas Production during April-December, 2018 was 24650.25 MMSCM which is 7.26% lower than target for the period and 0.15% lower than the production during corresponding period of last year.
- Refinery Production during December, 2018, was 21031.92 TMT which is 4.32 % lower than the target for the month and 4.96 % lower when compared with Dec. 2017.
- Cumulative Production during April-December, 2018 was 192681.14 TMT which is 1.0% higher than the target for the period and 2.51% higher than the production during corresponding period of last year.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1561204>

National Clean Air Program

Question: Consider the following statements regarding National Clean Air Program:

1) Centre has targeted to cut air pollution by 20% till 2022 under this programme in 102 Indian cities

2) The programme will check the concentration of PM 2.5 and PM 10

3) Year 2016 has been chosen as the base year for the programme

Choose the correct the option of the following:

(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) All of the above (d) 1 and 3 only

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The centre has launched a five –year action plan (2019 as the first year) with a tentative target of 20-30% reduction in concentration of PM10 and PM2.5 by 2024, with 2017's average annual PM (Particulate Matter) as the base year for the comparison of concentration.
- The National Clean Air Program (NCAP) was launched by Union minister Harsh Vardhan with an initial budget of Rs. 300 crore for the first two years.
- The plan includes 102 non-attainment cities, across 23 states and Union territories, which were identified by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) on the basis of their ambient air quality data between 2011 and 2015.
- The NCAP will focus on collaborative and participatory and participatory approach covering all sources of pollution and coordination between relevant central ministries, state governments, local bodies and other stakeholders.
- The World Health Organisation's database on air pollution over the years has listed Tier 1 and tier 2 cities as some of the most polluted places in the world.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187400>

National Youth Parliament Festival 2019

Question: Youth of which age group will be invited to participate in the District Youth Parliaments, 2019.

(a) 14-16 years. (b) 15-17 years. (c) 18-22 years. (d) 18-25 years.

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Minister of State (I/C) Col Rajyavardhan Rathore (Retd) launched the National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 for youth in the age group of 18-25 years, on 12th January, 2019. This festival will continue up to 24th of this month.
- National Youth Parliament Festival 2019 is organised on the theme of "Be the Voice of New India" and "Find solutions and contribute to policy".
- A maximum of 50 best speakers from the Digital screening and 50 best speakers from Walk-in process will be shortlisted by the Screening Committee in each district & will participate in the District Youth Parliaments.
- The best three speakers selected by a Jury from each District Youth Parliament will participate at the State Youth Parliament.



- The highest scorer from each District in the District Youth Parliament (DYP) will participate in the National Youth Parliament (NYP) as a delegate.
- The National Service Scheme and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan organizations will remain involved at different levels in its conduct and management.
- The best three speakers at the National Youth Parliament will be awarded Rs. 2 Lakhs, Rs. 1.50 Lakhs and Rs. 1 Lakh respectively by the Prime Minister.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187450>

PM Modi visit to Odisha

Question: Projects worth ——— crores were unveiled in the recent visit to Odisha by PM Narendra Modi.

(a) Rs. 1,500 crore (b) Rs. 1,330 crore (c) Rs. 1,220 crore (d) Rs. 1,660 crore

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In his State visit to Odisha on 15 January 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled various developmental projects worth over Rs. 1,500 crore.
- In Balangir PM Narendra Modi dedicated Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) Jharsuguda to the Nation. The MMLP will make Jharsuguda the prime hub of logistics in the region. Giving a boost to rail projects. Mr. Modi inaugurated the Balangir-Bichhupali railway line built at an estimated cost of Rs. 115 crore.
- The PM also dedicated to the nation, the new bridge over Nagavali River, Doubling of Railway Lines between Barpali-Dungaripali and Balangir-Deogaon and Electrification of 813 km of Jharsuguda-Vizinagaram and Sambalpur-Angul line.
- The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of Kendriya Vidyalaya in Odisha's Sonepur at an estimated cost of Rs.15.81 crore.
- Mr. Modi also inaugurated restoration and renovation work of Ranipur Jharial group of monuments in Balangir & Asurgarh Fort in Kalahandi.



Links:

http://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/pm-visits-balangir-launches-development-projects-worth-rs-1500-crore-for-odisha/?comment=disable

Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana

Question: The beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana have crossed ——— as on 14th January, 2019.

(a) 50 lakh (b) 20 lakh (c) 70 lakh (d) 1 crore

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- As on 14 January 2019, Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Protsahan Yojana, the flagship scheme of Central Government for employment generation has crossed the milestone of one crore beneficiaries.
- PMRPY was announced on 7 August 2016 and is being implemented by Ministry of Labour and Employment through the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO).
- Under the scheme, Government is paying full employers' contribution of 12% (towards Employees' Provident Fund and Employees' Pension Scheme both), for a period of 3 years in respect of new employees who have been registered with the EPFO on or after 1st April 2016, with salary up to Rs. 15,000 per month.



- During 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 (up to January 15, 2019) 33,031, 30,27,612, and 69,49,436 beneficiaries respectively, have been enrolled with EPFO under PMRPY.
- The entire system is online and AADHAR based. The number of establishments who have benefitted during the implementation of the scheme is 1.24 lakh.
- PMRPY has a dual benefit i.e. on the one hand, the employer is incentivized for increasing the employee base in the establishment through payment of EPF contribution of 12% of wage, which otherwise would have been borne by the employer and on the other hand, a large number of workers find jobs in such establishments.
- A direct benefit is that these workers have access to social security benefit through Provident Fund, Pension and Death Linked Insurance. The terminal date for registration of beneficiaries through an establishment under the PMRPY is March 31, 2019.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1560363>

Production of Coal by CIL

Question: The coal production by Coal India Limited (CIL) in 2017-18 is-

(a) 462.41 Metric Ton (b) 567.36 Metric Ton (c) 534.5 Metric Ton (d) 489.38 Metric Ton

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The production of coal by Coal India Limited (CIL) has been 567.36 MT in 2017-18 as compared to 462.41 MT in the same period for the year 2013-14.
- Coal off take/ sale from CIL have increased to 580.28 MT in 2017-18 from 471.58 MT in 2013-14. Actual coal based power generation has been about 659 Billion units against the total Coal based power Generation program of 663.60 Billion units and achieving 99.2% materialization of program registering a growth of 5.5% over last year same period.
- During April-November, 2018, all India coal production in India was 433.90 MT having a growth rate of 9.8% and the coal production by CIL was 358.32 MT having growth rate of 8.8% over the corresponding period of previous year.
- CIL supplied 315.94 MT of coal for generation of electricity by domestic coal based power plants during April-Nov 2018 enabling the generation of 605.01 BU domestic coal based power plants which was 101% of program generation. The supply of coal has increased by 8% as compared to 291.78MT in the corresponding period last year.
- CEA report on coal stock at Power House end reveals that as on 25.12.2018 is 15.86 MT as against the stock of 12.92 MT on 25.12.2017 thereby registering an increase of 22.75%.



Links:

<http://164.100.158.168/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1557917>

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Institute of Medical Sciences

Question: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Institute of Medical Sciences and Research was unveiled by PM Modi in which city?

(a) Mumbai (b) Surat (c) Ahmedabad (d) Vadodara

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 17 January, 2019 Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the state of art, super-



specialty public hospital – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Institute of Medical Sciences and Research in Ahmedabad.

- The hospital, built by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, is 78 meter high, provided with 1500 bed and equipped with all modern amenities, including an air ambulance.
- Rs. 750 crore has been spent on the construction of the 17 floor hospital and it would provide world class services at an affordable price and is linked with Ayushman Bharat.

Link:-

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187574>

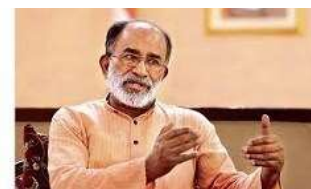
Tourism Ministry sanctions spiritual circuit of Rs 85.23 crore in Kerala

Question: Recently, how much money is sanctioned to spiritual circuit-III in Kerala by Tourism Ministry of India?

(a) 85.23 Crore (b) 84.23 Crore (c) 83.23 Crore (d) 82.23 Crore

Answer : (a)

Related facts



- On 14th January 2019, Union Minister of State for Tourism Shri K J Alphons announced that the Ministry of Tourism sanctioned projects worth Rs 85.23 crore for the development of Spiritual Circuit III for Kerala under Swadesh Darshan Scheme.
- The Minister informed that the sites identified under the circuit are spread across all 14 districts of the state and cover 133 religious places.
- Overall, the circuit will cover numerous religious heritage sites across the state like the Cheraman Jumah Masjid (Kodungalloor), Koodalmanikyam temple (Irinjalakkuda), St. Thomas Church (Malayattoor), Thiriparayar Sreerama Temple (Thrissur) etc.
- On the extremes, the Circuit covers religious sites all across the state from Ananthapadmanabhaswamy Temple in the northernmost district of Kasargode to the Madre De Deus Church in Thiruvananthapuram, the southernmost district.
- The scheme aims to provide better experience and facilities to the visitors on one hand and on other hand promoting economic growth.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187482>

Swachh Bharat Mission well on track to achieve ODF India

Question: How many villages and districts have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) as of 9th January 2019?

(a) 5,40,000 villages and 585 districts (b) 3,60,000 villages and 565 districts (c) 6,40,000 villages and 558 districts (d) 1,40,000 villages and 485 districts

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In order to achieve universal sanitation coverage, under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), over 5.4 lakh villages and 585 districts have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF). The Mission is on track to achieve an ODF India by October 2019.
- 27 States and Union Territories have been declared as Open Defecation Free.
- As of now, over nine crore toilets have been built across rural India, taking the national rural sanitation coverage to over 98% from 39% in 2014.



- According to a third-party National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey 2017-18 under the World Bank-supported project across 90,000 households in over 6000 villages, rural toilet usage was founded to be 93.4%.
- Swachh Bharat Mission was launched by PM Narendra Modi on 2nd October, 2014.

Link:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187359>

Tuberculosis Eradication

Question: Which Yojana of Central Government provides Rs. 500 monthly to all TB notified TB patients?

**(a) TB Aarogya Yojana (b) TB Poshan Yojana (c) TB Niroga Yojana
(d) Nikshay Poshan Yojana**

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- The Minister of State Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey in his written reply in the Rajya Sabha 5th Feb 2019 informed that the government has launched Nikshay Poshan Yojana in the 2018 with an aim to tackle Tuberculosis by 2025; the scheme provides Rs 500 monthly to all TB notified patients for nutritional and medicinal support.
- As per World Health Organization (WHO) statistics for India 2016, India has around 2.79 million TB cases.

Measures taken by Government:

- Early diagnosis of all the TB patients, prompt treatment with quality assured daily treatment regimen along with suitable patient support systems to promote adherence to prevent the development of drug resistance among any patient. To identify the drug resistance at early stage, all TB patient are being screened for detection of resistance under Universal Drug Susceptible Testing (U-DST). Revised guidelines for Programmatic Management of Drug Resistant TB (PMDT) are being implemented since December 2017.
- Increase in diagnostic and management capacity for early detection and consequent earlier initiation of treatment. This will aid in decreasing mortality and cutting down transmission of the infection.
- The country has 1180 functional CB-NAAT sites, 89 Culture and Drug Susceptibility Testing (C-DST) laboratories certified in various technologies for drug resistance-TB detection.
- Various interventions like Integrated mechanism for management of Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs), provision of patients & family counselling at the time of diagnosis and during the course of treatment, airborne infection control as well as grievance redressal mechanism have been introduced to improve patient compliance.
- Private sector engagement is being promoted to reach out to all patients who are seeking treatment in the private sector and efforts are being made to provide them all diagnostic, treatment and care facilities, including public health action such as counselling, nutritional support, contact tracing etc.
- Newer evidence-based regimens have been introduced to improve the treatment outcomes of drug resistance TB patients. These are-
- The Shorter MDR Regimen for MDR/RR TB patients (9-11 months of regimen instead of 24 months of conventional regimen)
- Newer drugs (Bedaquiline) containing regimen has also been introduced country-wide under the program and made accessible to all districts during 2018.
- Newer drugs (Delamanid) containing regimen has been introduced in 7 states.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188065>

Nation observes Martyrs' Day

Question: Which of the following statements is not correct regarding Mahatma Gandhi?

(a) Since 1949, Mahatma Gandhi death Anniversary is observed as Martyr day

(b) He returned to India in 1916 from South Africa

(c) He had written Hind Swaraj (Indian Home Rule) in 1909

(d) Nathuram Godse killed Mahatma Gandhi in 1948

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 30 January 2019, Martyr Day was observed in the country to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi and the countless freedom fighters who sacrificed their life for Independence. Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse in Birla House.
- On this day Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial at Dandi in Navsari district, Gujarat to the nation.
- Dandi Salt March was an act of nonviolent civil disobedience led by MK Gandhi in 1930 to make salt from sea water against the British law.
- On Martyr's Day, The President, The Vice President, The Prime Minister, The Defence Minister, and the three Service Chiefs gather at the Samadhi at Raj Ghat Memorial and lay wreaths decorated with multi-color flowers.



Links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martyrs%27_Day

India's first GI store

Question: India's first GI store has been opened in which of the following state?

(a) Karnataka (b) Goa (c) Mumbai (d) Gujarat

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Minster of Civil Aviation, **Suresh Prabhu** inaugurated India's first **Geographical Indication (GI)** store in at **Dabolim International Airport** in **Goa**.
- The store will display and sell original and authentic products of Goa recognized as **GIs** under the **Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**.
- This stall will be promoting the **cashews** and other specific products of Goa. The GI store has been set up by the **Cashew Export Promotion Council of India (CEPCI)**.
- All the 101 airports of the country will have GI Stall. These GI stalls will promote products made by local artisans and talents.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/goa/goa-civil-aviation-ministry-launches-first-gi-store-5558562/>

National Salt Satyagrah Memorial

Question: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Salt Satyagrah Memorial in which of the following district?

(a) Ahmedabad (b) Narmada (c) Navsari (d) Surat

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 30th January 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial to the nation situated at Dandi in the Navsari district of Gujarat.
- The memorial also has 24- narrative murals depicting various events and stories from the historic 1930 salt march. Solar trees are installed to meet the energy requirements of the memorial complex.
- At the Memorial site, he also unveiled statues of Mahatma Gandhi and 80 Satyagrahis who had marched with him during historic Dandi Salt March in 1930.
- As part of the Civil Disobedience Movement against the British rule, Satyagrahis led by Mahatma Gandhi marched 241-miles from Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad to the coastal village of Dandi and broke the Salt Law imposed by the British.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187883>

Pradhan Mantri Shram-Yogi Maandhan Yojna

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Pradhan Mantri Shram -Yogi Maandhan Yojna:

- (1) At least 15 crore labourers and workers in the organized sector will be covered through scheme
 - (2) Rs. 1000 will be transferred in the bank account of the beneficiary after the age of 60
 - (3) Rs 500 crore has been allocated for this scheme
- of the above correct statement/s is/are:
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) only 1 (d) All of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Finance Minister Piyush Goyal in his budget speech announced a Mega Pension Scheme **Pradhan Mantri Shram-Yogi Maandhan Yojna** for workers and labourers in the Un-organized sector.
- This scheme will cover almost 10 crore labourers with monthly income upto Rs. 15,000 and this pension scheme shall provide them an assured **Monthly Pension of Rs. 3,000** from the age of **60 years**.
- If a worker is employed in the **Un-organized Sector** and he joins the Pradhan Mantri Shram-Yogi Maandhan Yojna at the age of **18 years** then he will have to contribute **Rs 55** till the age of **60 years**; on joining the **Yojna** at the age of **29 years** the worker will have to contribute **Rs 100** till the age of 60 years. Government will contribute **equal amount of money** in the pension account every month.
- A sum of Rs. 500 crore has been allocated for the scheme. This scheme will be implemented from the current year.
- Half of India's GDP comes from **42 crore Workers** in the **Unorganized Sector** working as street vendors, rickshaw pullers, construction workers, rag pickers, agriculture workers, beedi workers, handloom, leather and numerous other similar occupations.



4th Annual Carnot Prize

Question: Name the Union Minister who received 4th annual Carnot Prize (2018) award held at the New Delhi?

- (a) Piyush Goyal (b) Nirmala Sitharaman (c) Smriti Irani
(d) Ravi Shankar Prasad

Answer :(a)

Related facts:



- On 30th January 2019, **Piyush Goyal** Minister of Railways & Coal and former Minister of Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines (Government of India) received **Carnot Prize 2018** at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. This is the **4th Annual Award** of series.
- As per **Kleinman Center for Energy Policy**, the Carnot Prize recognizes India's "**solid footing to reach a 40% renewable mix by 2030**".
- This award has been conferred recognizing transformational changes in power sector—including the fast-track electrification of nearly 18,000 villages in some of the most remote and inaccessible parts of the country as well as rolling out a comprehensive power sector reform plan, the world's largest LED bulb distribution program, and the world's largest renewable energy expansion program under his tenure.
- The Award money received will be **donated** to the **International Solar Alliance** to institute the **Diwakar Award**.

Carnot Prize:

- Carnot Prize is annual recognition of Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania intended to honor those leading revolutions in energy policy to further progress and prosperity.
- The award is named after French physicist Nicolas Sadi Carnot (Father of Thermodynamics).

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187882>

1st Ekalavya Model Residential Schools Sports Meet 2019

Question: How many Ekalavya Model schools are being planned to be established by Government of India till 2022?

- (a) 400 (b) over 400 (c) 200 (d) 300

Answer :(b)

Related facts:



- On **14th January 2019**, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Jaswantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor inaugurated the **1st Ekalavya Model Residential Schools Sports Meet 2019** at GMC Balayogi Stadium, Gachibowli in **Hyderabad**.
- The 3 day meet was organised by Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society and hosted by Telangana.
- This event offered a platform to about 1735 participants from 20 States across the country to exhibit various events including Athletics.
- Addressing the occasion, the Minister informed that the government of India is planning to establish more than **400 Ekalavya Model** schools by **2022**.

- He further notified that the government of India is working a vision to develop **Ekalavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** on par with the **Navodaya vidyalays** with a focus on overall development of **tribal students**.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187494>

Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna

Question: Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna has been announced by which of the following state?

(a) Bihar (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Uttarakhand (d) Madhya Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 13 February 2019, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced a universal old age pension scheme Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna(MVPY) covering peoples above age of 60 years.
- All senior citizens of the state will be provided 400 rupees monthly pension excepting retired government employees.
- In addition to this, a pension of Rs 6,000 per month was also announced for journalists above 60 years under the Bihar Patrakar Samman Yojana (BPSY). Journalists served for 20 years and not availing any pension are eligible to be benefitted with scheme.
- These ambitious schemes will implemented from 1st April 2019.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Bihar-govt-announces-universal-old-age-pension-scheme-Mukhyamantri-Vridhajan-Pension-Yojna&id=359707>

Surging Silk Mega Event

Question:A mega event Surging Silk was organized in which of the following city?

(a) Ranchi (b) Bhopal (c) New Delhi (d) Manipur

Answer :(c)

Related facts:

- On 9 February 2019, Surging Silk,a mega event was organized by the Ministry of Textiles and Central Silk Board in New Delhi emphasizing the growth of silk industry in India.
- In order to eradicate thigh reeling by end of March 2020,Buniyaad Tasar Silk Reeling Machines were distributed to women reelers from tribal areas. The machine is developed by Central Silk Technological Research Institute in association with an entrepreneur from Champa in Chhattisgarh.
- A mobile application e-cocoon was also launched for certifying the quality of silkworm seeds.
- On the occasion,best achievers of silk industry across various segments were honoured and awards were also given to the best performing states.
- Addressing the event,Union Minister of Textiles Smriti Zubin Irani notified that silk production in country has increased by 41 per cent since 2013-14.
- It is worth to mention that India is the second largest silk producer and largest consumer of silk while China tops the list of silk production in the world.



- Silk production capacity of India is expected to reach about 38,500 tonnes by 2020 from the current level of 32,000 tonnes.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188300>

NIC Command and Control Centre

Question: Name the Union Minister who inaugurated NIC (National Informatics Centre) Command and Control Centre recently?

(a) Ravi Shankar Prasad (b) Smriti Irani (c) Rajnath Singh (d) Piyush Goyal

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 10th January 2019, Honorable Minister for Electronics & IT and Law and Justice Mr Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated NIC's Command & Control Centre (CCC) and Centre of **Excellence** in Artificial Intelligence by NIC, at **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**.
- NIC has been offering Data Centre and Cloud services to the Government. Currently, it has **4 National Data Centres** and **30 Mini Data Centres** across the country hosting over **10,000 e-Governance** applications.
- NIC has set up the Command and Control Centre, making it first of its kind in the Government which will **increase** the **agility of NIC's** nationwide **ICT infrastructure**.
- Applications like – eOffice, eHospital, Beneficiary Identification System under Ayushman Bharat have already been catered by NIC.
- Earlier **Center of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence (CoE in AI)** has been established with the motto of '**Inclusive AI**' for responsive governance & to work towards improving Government service delivery to citizens.
- **CEDA (Centre of Excellence for Data Analytics)** was launched in 2018, with the main motive to make India efficient & independent in **digital governance**.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187409>

PM Narendra Modi launches several Development Projects in Haryana

Question: Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributed the Swachh Shakti-2019 Awards during state visit of which of the following?

(a) Kurukshetra, Haryana (B) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (C) Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir (D) Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi visited Kurukshetra in Haryana on 12th February, 2019. He participated in Swachh Shakti- 2019 and distributed the Swachh Shakti-2019 awards.
- He inaugurated / laid foundation stone of several development projects in Haryana.
- He visited the Swachh Sundar Shauchalay exhibition at Kurukshetra and addressed a public gathering.



- **Swachh Shakti-2019** is a national event aiming to focus the leadership role played by rural women in Swachh Bharat Mission. Women Sarpanches and Panches (approx. 15,000) from all over the country participated in the event.
- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in association with the Govt. of Haryana organized the Swachh Shakti-2019.
- **First edition** of Swachh Shakti Programme was launched from Gandhinagar, in the year 2017 and the next edition Swachh Shakti-2018 held in Lucknow.

Prime Minister inaugurated/laid foundation stone of the following:

- Dedicated National Cancer Institute, Badhsa, Jhajjar to nation.
- Laid foundation stone of ESIC Medical College & Hospital, Faridabad.
- Laid foundation stone of National Institute of Ayurveda, Panchkula.
- Laid foundation stone of Sri Krishna Ayush University, Kurukshetra.
- Laid foundation stone of 'Battles of Panipat Museum', Panipat.
- Laid foundation Stone of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay University of Health, Karnal.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1563870>

Goa's Heritage Musical Instrument

Question: Which instrument was declared as Goa's Heritage Musical Instrument?

(a) Dhol (b) Mridanga (c) Ghumot (d) Kasale

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 11 February 2019, Govind Gaude, Art and Culture Minister of Goa, announced that Goa's indigenous traditional percussion instrument named Ghumot made from an earthen vessel is to be notified as a heritage instrument.
- The instrument was banned due to the use of the skin of the endangered monitor lizard for the drum membrane.
- In recent years, Ghumot makers have started using goat skin which is excluded from animals listed in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/ghumot-to-be-goas-heritage-instrument/article26242058.ece>

Development Projects worth Rs. 3350 crores unveiled by PM in Varanasi

Question: In which of the following city Prime Minister Modi recently inaugurated Bhabha Cancer Hospital?

(a) Prayagraj (b) Varanasi (c) Lucknow (d) Patna

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 19th February, 2019; Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled development projects worth **Rs. 3350 crores** for Varanasi.



- These projects pertain to various sectors of Health, Sanitation, Smart City, Connectivity, Power, Housing and others. Modi also inaugurated **BHU Cancer Centre and Bhabha Cancer Hospital, Lahartara**.
- PM distributed certificates to the beneficiaries of various schemes. He also released commemorative postage stamp on completion of 100 Years of IIT BHU.
- Prime Minister distributed Aids & Assistive Devices to Divyangjans, and extended greetings on the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188733>

e-AUSHADHI Portal

Question: Siddha Medicine, traditional system of healing originated in which country?

(a) Nepal (b) West Bengal (c) South India (d) Jammu & Kashmir

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 13th February, 2019; Minister of State, (IC) for AYUSH, Shripad Yesso Naik launched the **e-AUSHADHI Portal** at New Delhi.
- This portal has been launched for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters.
- Shri Naik informed that this **e-AUSHADHI** portal is intended for increased transparency, improved information management facility, improved data usability and increased accountability; timelines will be fixed for processing of application through this portal with SMS and e-mail status updates at each step of the process.
- This portal will aid the licensing authority, manufactures and consumers, and it will also provide real time information of the licensed manufactures and their products, cancelled and spurious drugs, contact details of the concerned authority for specific grievances.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188553>

Suresh Prabhu launches Outreach Programme with Industry and Trade Associations

Question: At present, Suresh Prabhu is holding which of the following portfolio?

(a) Union Minister of Commerce & Industry (b) Union Minister of Railways
(c) Union Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (d) Union Minister of Power

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 18th February, 2019; Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, launched Outreach Programme with Industry and Trade Associations through video conference.
- This was the first ever direct interaction with trade and export bodies at this scale by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This was an effort to establish a dialogue with them.
- On this occasion the Minister referred to the jump made by India to 77th position in the **Ease of Doing Business** ranking and exports have growing for the last three years.



The agriculture export policy will help in creating new avenues for exports of India's superior agricultural products.

- The video conference took place through 100 nodes set up across the country. Ninety-two trade bodies participated in this interaction.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188711>

42 CRPF Jawans killed in Pulwama

Question: Recently 42 CRPF Jawans killed in Pulwama, which of the following terrorist group took the responsibility this major terror attack?

- (a) Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) (b) Jaish-e- Mohammed (JeM) (c) Harkat-ul-mujahiddin (HuM)
(d) ISIS

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 14th February, 2019 a deadliest attack took place by a suicide bomber who rammed his vehicle into a convoy of 78 vehicles carrying Central Reserve Police Force (on way from Jammu to Srinagar), killing 42 Jawans and injuring a dozen others in Pulwama (Jammu and Kashmir).
- Pakistan based terrorist group Jaish-e- Mohammed (JeM) claimed the responsibility for the attack. Lone Kashmiri suicide bomber of JeM drove the vehicle carrying approx 250 kg explosives.



Jaish-e- Mohammed (JeM):

- Jaish-e- Mohammed (JeM) is a Pakistan based terrorist group having links with several terror outfits including Taliban and al-Qaida whose primary motive is to separate Kashmir from India and merge it with Pakistan.
- Since its inception in 2000, the terror outfit has carried out several attacks in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which includes Pathankot airbase in January, 2016, and an army camp in Uri in September, 2016.

Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Jaish-e-Mohammed>

Argentinean President's visit to India

Question: Which of the following Latin American countries' President recently visited the India?

- (a) Chile (b) Brazil (c) Venezuela (d) Argentina

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- President of Argentina Mauricio Macri was on the state visit of India from 17th Feb to 19th Feb, 2019, on the invitation of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- It is a part of the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Argentine Republic and the Republic of India.
- The Prime Minister recalled and commended President Macri's leadership for successfully steering the G20 Leaders Summit. They also expressed satisfaction over



the successful conclusion of the fifth India-Argentina Joint Commission Meeting, held in New Delhi on 14th January 2019.

- Both the leaders issued a joint statement to elevate India-Argentina multi-faceted cooperation to a strategic partnership with focus on key areas for the prosperity of both countries.
- Both the countries discussed and agreed upon Defence Cooperation, Space, Peaceful use of Nuclear Energy, combating Terrorism, Pharmaceuticals, Agriculture, Oil and Gas, Mining, Renewable Energy, People to People Exchanges, Tourism, and Media Exchanges, adapt the WTO to face current and future challenges, on United Nations Security Council Reforms, on South-South Cooperation and more.
- Bilateral cooperation spans wide range are of areas including nuclear, space, economic and commercial, agriculture, science and technology, culture and tourism. Bilateral trade at present is around USD 3 billion.
- Indian companies have made investments in IT, agro-chemical, pharmaceutical and cosmetic sectors in Argentina. The total Indian investments in Argentina are to the tune of USD 1 billion.

Links:

<https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/31063/IndiaArgentina+Joint+Statement+during+State+Visit+of+President+of+Argentina+to+India+February+1719+2019>

Eco Circuit Pathanmthitta- Gavi- Vagamon-Thekkady

Question: K J Alphonse, Union Minister of Tourism inaugurated Eco Circuit project at? (a) Karnataka (b) Goa (c) Kerala (d) Tamil Nadu

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Shri K J Alphons, Union Minister of Tourism inaugurated the project 'Development of Eco Circuit: Pathanmthitta- Gavi- Vagamon-Thekkady' in Kerala. This project is the part of eco circuit theme of Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism.
- This eco circuit project was sanctioned for Rs. 76.55 in December, 2015.
- Major works carried out under the project includes Eco Adventure Tourism Park at Vagamon, Cultural Centre at Kadamanitta, Eco Log Huts at Peerumedu, Idukki Approach Roads, Walking trails, Rain Shelters at Pine Valley Forest, Thekkady, Kumily, Moozhiyar Dam, Penstock and Kakki Dam.



Swadesh Darshan:

- Swadesh Darshan scheme is one of the flagship programmes of Ministry of Tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned and prioritized manner.
- Under this scheme the government is focusing on development of quality infra structure, in the country with objective of providing better experience and facilities to the visitors on one hand and on other hand fostering the economic growth.
- The scheme was launched in 2014-15 and as on date the ministry has sanctioned 77 projects worth projects for Rs. 6131.88 crore to 30 States and UTs.
- The Ministry of Tourism recognizing the tourism potential of the state has sanctioned 7 projects in the State of Kerala under the Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD scheme for an approximate amount of Rs. 550 crore.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188661>

Taj View Garden

Question: Which of the following statement regarding Taj View Garden is not correct?

- (a) Foundation Stone of Taj View Garden was laid by Dr. Mahesh Sharma
- (b) The Taj View Garden is being developed on the Mughal period's Charbagh Garden pattern by the UNESCO and Ministry of Culture, India
- (c) It will increase greenery by enormous plantation around the Taj Mahal
- (d) Garden will help to reduce the pollution around the Taj Mahal

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 14th February, 2019; Foundation Stone of Taj View Garden on the Taj Corridor Area between the Agra Fort and Taj Mahal in Agra was laid by Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independence Charge), Ministry of Culture.
- The Taj View Garden is being developed on the Mughal period's Charbagh Garden pattern by the Archaeological Survey of India, Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
- Purpose of developing this type of garden is to increase greenery by enormous plantation around the Taj Mahal. This Garden will not only help to reduce the pollution around the Taj Mahal but also provide a pleasant view to the visitors.
- A permanent photo exhibition near the newly constructed Visitor's Facility Centre at the Eastern Gate of Taj Mahal, was also inaugurated.
- The theme of the exhibition is Taj Mahal through the ages. The main purpose of this photo exhibition is to give a glimpse of our rich history to the people and motivate the young generation to preserve our heritage.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188621>

Bettiah Steel Processing Unit dedicated to the Nation

Question: Recently SAIL's Steel Processing Unit (SPU) at Bettiah has been dedicated to the nation. Bettiah is located in-

- (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Bihar (c) Odisha (d) Telangana

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Union Minister of Steel, Chaudhary Birender Singh and Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan dedicated SAIL's Steel Processing Unit (SPU) at Bettiah in West Champaran, Bihar, on 18th February, 2019.
- The Steel Ministry is making all out efforts to bridge the gap in steel consumption between rural and urban India.
- High quality steel tubes and pipes will be produced by this Unit and will also fulfill local steel requirements. Under the National Steel Policy 2017 it is hoped to double the capacity and take steel production to 300 Million Tonnes by 2031.
- Trial production from this Unit has begun since January 2019 with technical expertise from Bokaro and Rourkela Steel Plant.
- This SPU has been set up at an estimated cost of Rs 116 crores and will get raw material from Bokaro Steel Plant. The installed capacity of this unit is 50,000 Tonnes per year. The unit will expand its capacity in coming years and will generate more employment for local people.



- It should be noted that SAIL is observing the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, in its 60th year, in Bettiah at Champaran, Bihar.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188698>

Gem SWAYATT

Question: What is SWAYATT?

- (a) An initiative to promote start-ups, Women and Youth advantage
 (b) An employment scheme (c) A poverty eradication programme (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, launched SWAYATT in New Delhi on 19th February 2019.
- SWAYATT is an initiative to promote start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage through eTransaction on Government eMarketplace (GeM).
- This will bring together the key stockholders within the Indian entrepreneurial ecosystem to Government e-Marketplace the national procurement portal.
- Commerce Minister also dedicated GeM start-up Runway- an initiative of GeM in association with Start-up India to facilitate Start-ups registered with Start-up India to access the public procurement market and sell innovative products and services to government buyers.
- Approximately 1,516 Start-ups are presently registered on GeM with 12,915 products to offer and have received more than 5,000 orders till date.
- GeM was setup in 2016 and has 801,956 products and 5,197 services with 199,654 registered seller, service providers and 33,536 government buyers. Since inception, GeM has processed 1,386,030 orders worth Rs. 19,214 crore in gross merchandise value.



Link:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188740>

Model Building Byelaws 2016 & Urban Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation Guidelines 2014 Amended

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Government has initiated several steps to reduce dependence on fossil fuels
 (2) Government has desired that 25% of the total vehicles on roads should be EVs by 2030
 (3) Ministry of Power has issued guidelines and standards for charging infrastructure for electric vehicles

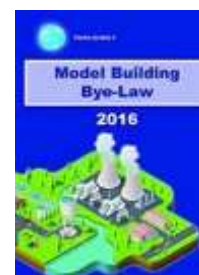
Which of the statement/s are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has made amendments to the Model Building Byelaws (MBBL) 2016 and Urban Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation (URDPFI) Guidelines 2014 making provisions for establishing Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, in order to facilitate availability of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure.
- Ministry of Power has issued guidelines and standards for charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.



- The Guidelines will act as a guiding document to the State Governments and Union Territories to incorporate the norms and standards of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure in their respective Building Bye Laws.
- Cities and towns in the country are facing the problems of environmental pollution thereby severely impacting the health of the urban residents.
- India is committed to Sustainable Development Goal 13: Climate Change of United Nations to take urgent action to combat climate change.
- Government has initiated several steps to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. One of the major steps is to encourage Electric Vehicles (EVs), which are environment friendly. Government has desired that 25% of the total vehicles on roads should be EVs by 2030.

Link:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1564744>

PM flags off 1st ever diesel to electric converted locomotive twin engine

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) The world's first electric train engine converted from a diesel engine flagged off in Varanasi by Prime Minister
- (2) It is a complete 'Make in India' initiative
- (3) The converted locos will result in less green house gas emissions

Which of the following alternatives is/are true?

- (a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All 1,2,3

Answer (d)

Related facts:

- On **19th February 2019**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the first ever 10,000 HP Diesel to Electric Converted Locomotive at the Diesel Locomotive Works, Varanasi.
- Diesel Locomotive Works has converted two WDG 3A diesel locos into a twin electric WAG C3 loco of 10,000 HP. It is a complete 'Make in India' initiative. The converted locos will result in less Green House Gas emissions and better efficient locomotives for the Indian Railways.
- The work on the project began on December 22, 2017 and from concept to execution of the conversion of the diesel locomotive to electric
- It is a part of Indian Railways Mission 100 percent electrification and de-carbonization efforts.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188701>

International

Academy Awards 2019

Question: Which film has won the academy awards for Best Picture category?

- (a) The Shape of Water**
- (b) Green Book**
- (c) Black Panther**
- (d) Bohemian Rhapsody**

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- Green Book won the Oscar for the Best Picture for the year 2019
- Skin wins the 2019 Oscar for Short Film (live action).
- Indian film, Period: End of Sentence has won the award in Documentary (short film) category.
- **Others winners are as follows:**

Actor(Leading Role)	Rami Malek
Actress(Leading Role)	Olivia Colman
Animated Feature Film	Spider Man: Into the Spider- Verse
Short Film Animated	Bao
Documentary (feature)	Free Solo
Documentary (short film)	Period: End of Sentence
Directing	Alfonso Cuaron (Roma)
Foreign Language Film	Roma (Mexico)
Music Original Score	Ludwig Goransson (Black Panther)
Music Original Song	Lady Gaga (Shallow from A Star Is Born)

By Ramayan Upadhyay

Macedonia named as the Republic of Northern Macedonia

Question: Which Southeast European country is named as the Republic of Northern Macedonia recently?

(a) Macedonia (b) Greece (c) Serbia (d) Bulgaria

Answer : (a)

Related facts:

- On 11th January 2019, Macedonia is named as the Republic of Northern Macedonia. The name change aims at ending a twenty-seven year dispute with Greece, which has its own region called Macedonia.
- Earlier total of 81 deputies in the 120-seat parliament voted in favour of renaming the Balkan country as Republic of North Macedonia & this year Prime Minister Zoran Zaev won by two-thirds majority.



Facts about Macedonia dispute:

- Greece's objections forced the UN (United Nation's) to refer to the new country as "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".
- Athens also vetoed Macedonia's attempt to join NATO in 2008 – and blocked its EU (European Union) membership ambitions.
- Since 1991, many suggestions have been proposed but rejected.

Links:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/20/welcome-to-north-macedonia-parliament-votes-for-name-change>

First human rights TV channel Launched in London

Question: World's first television channel dedicated to human rights was launched at which of the following place?

(a) London (b) Miami (c) Boston (d) Manchester

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 15th January 2019, world's first television channel dedicated to human rights was launched in London.
- The International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR) informed that its internet-based channel would bring human rights issues to audiences in over twenty countries across Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.
- This TV channel will telecast topics which will include refugees, press freedom and the incarceration of journalists, extremism, women's rights, LGBT+ issues and the plight of the world's stateless people.
- Broadcasts can be viewed through the netgem.tv interactive platform and will be available via mobile applications.
- IOHR hopes to broadcast in other languages including Farsi, Turkish, Arabic and Russian.



Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-rights-media-television/first-human-rights-tv-channel-vows-to-give-a-voice-to-voiceless-idUSKCN1P931K>

Question: What is the rank of India in GDPR Readiness Index of CISCO?

(a) 4th (b) 5th (c) 6th (d) 7th

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- India is ranked sixth in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Readiness Index of global networking leader Cisco on January 25, 2019.
- Around 65% of the organisations of India are better prepared for the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of European Union.
- Cisco mentioned significant improvement in the GDPR of India with its fast evolving data privacy ecosystem.

Report and its Findings:

- The GDPR focuses on increasing privacy and personal data of EU residents. This came into force in May last year since when the organisation is working on this. The survey was conducted among more than 3,200 global security and privacy professionals in 18 countries.
- Around 75% of respondents expressed the multiple broader benefits from their privacy investments, which include greater agility and innovation resulting from having appropriate data controls, gaining competitive advantage and improved operational efficiency from having data organized and catalogued.
- Only 37 per cent of GDPR-ready companies experienced a data breach costing more than \$500,000, compared with 64 per cent of the least GDPR-ready companies.
- GDPR-ready companies are benefitting from their privacy investments beyond compliance in a number of tangible ways. They had shorter sales delays due to customer's privacy concerns (3.4 weeks vs. 5.4 weeks).
- They were less likely to have experienced a breach in the last year (74% vs. 89%), and when a breach occurred, fewer data records were impacted (79k vs. 212k records) and system downtime was shorter (6.4 hours vs. 9.4 hours).
- Sales delays due to customer data privacy concerns continue to be an issue for most organizations. 87% reported they have delays in selling to existing customers or prospects, which is up significantly.
- These results highlight that privacy maturity has become an important competitive advantage for many companies. Organizations should work to maximize the business benefits of their privacy investments, which may go beyond the requirements of any particular privacy regulation.

Links:

https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/about/doing_business/trust-center/docs/dpbs-2019.pdf

Global Talent Competiveness Index (GTCI)

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Global Talent Competiveness Index (GTCI):

- 1) Singapore has topped the list in this year's index.**
- 2) India secured the 80th rank in Global Talent Competiveness Index (GTCI) 2019.**
- 3) This is the sixth edition of the GTCI and measures and ranks countries based on their ability to grow attract and retain talent.**

Choose the correct option/s of the following:

- (a) Both 1 and 2 (b) Both 2 and 3 (c) Only 1 (d) All of the above**

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- India has secured 80th rank in Global Talent Competiveness Index (GTCI) 2019.
- This index is published annually since 2013, by INSEAD business school, TATA communications and the Adecco group.
- This is the second year of TATA communications in doing the ranking.
- This is a comprehensive annual benchmarking measuring how countries and cities grow, attract and retain talent, providing a unique resource for decision makers to understand the global talent competitiveness picture and develop strategies for boosting their competitiveness.
- Switzerland followed by Singapore, the US, Norway and Denmark were the top five on the list.
- This is the second year of TATA communications in doing the ranking.
- According to report, India's biggest challenge is to improve its ability to attract and retain and retain talent. It further added, there is a need to address its poor level of Internal Openness in particular with respect to weak gender equality and low tolerances towards minorities and immigrants- and its disappointing showing in lifestyle indicators.



Global Talent Competiveness Index (GTCI)

- The report measures levels of Global Talent Competiveness by looking at 68 variables.
- 2019 index covers 125 national economies and 114 cities across all groups of income and levels of development.
- The report Global Talent Competiveness Index (GTCI) takes a close look at entrepreneurial talent- who has it and how to encourage it.
- In this sixth edition, Switzerland (scored 81.82) continues to lead the 2019 GTCI while Singapore and The United states comes in second and third respectively as they did in 2018.
- The top three is followed by Scandinavian countries, Norway (4th), Denmark (5th), Finland (6th) and Sweden (7th).
- China is the best performer among BRICS nations, and secured 45th rank.
- Yemen was at bottom in the list this year and placed at 125th spot just below Congo and Burundi.

Outcomes of report:

- The highest-ranking countries and cities tend to be most open to entrepreneurial talent.
- Digitalization and globalization are increasing the role of entrepreneurial talent.
- Top ranked city this year is Washington, DC followed by Copenhagen, Oslo, and Vienna and Zurich.

- The main finding is that the gap separating the talent champions from the rest of the global community has been growing.
- This edition of the GTCI the topic of entrepreneurial talent competitiveness and attempts to identify the way in which large and small firms, nations, and cities can foster entrepreneurial talent in the era of digital transformation.

Links:

<https://www.insead.edu/news/2019-global-talent-competitiveness-index-nurturing-entrepreneurial-talent-identified-as-key-to-competitiveness>

INF Treaty

Question: Consider the following question in reference to INF Treaty which is recently in news:

- 1) INF Treaty was signed between US and the then USSR in 1987
- 2) This treaty banned the usage of long range missiles (above 3500 miles)
- 3) US announced to pull itself out from the treaty
- 4) Russia in return also suspended this binding treaty

Correct option:

(a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 1, 3 and 4 (c) 1, 2 and 4 (d) All of the above.

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- In a recent move against nuclear disarmament, US and its counterpart Russia announced to pull themselves out of the INF (Intermediate Range Nuclear Force) Treaty.
- US announced to withdrawal from the treaty on February 2, 2019. Russia did the same in return and announced to suspend the treaty from its part.

INF Treaty:

- The Intermediate Range Nuclear Force Treaty popularly known as INF Treaty is a Cold War era treaty done between the then chiefs of USA and USSR Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev respectively.
- This treaty was signed on December 8, 1987 at White House, Washington DC.
- Gorbachev was on the visit of US and there both the parties decided not to develop, launch and test the nuclear and non –nuclear land based ballistic and non-ballistic missiles ranging from 500 to 5500 km (310 to 3400 miles) by this treaty.
- This treaty was one of the most important treaties of disarmament during Cold War between US and Russia alongwith Anti Ballistic Treaty in 1972.
- Cold War led to development of large amount of nuclear weapons in US and USSR. Many other European countries also became nuclear powers in that time.
- This created a mandatory situation to stop this arm race which will bring disarmament of nuclear weapons.
- This treaty led to destruction of around 2700 missiles including USs Pershing I and II and USSRs SS-4, 5.

Results:

- Both the parties can now develop the short length nuclear weapons. Russia`s President Vladimir Putin announced to develop new missiles.
- This can again start the nuclear weapon race between both the nations. In the time of nations like North Korea is condemned for its nuclear tests, this can create an environment of nuclear arm race.

Links:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47101429>

Issues at WTO

Question: On 7th January 2019, Minister of State of Commerce and Industry, C. R. Chaudhary, told in the Lok Sabha about Issues at WTO. In how many areas INDIA is facing issues at WTO?

(a) 6 (b) 7 (c) 8 (d) 9

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- About one-fourth of the 164 World Trade Organization (WTO) members, including India, have expressed concerns on the matter at every relevant WTO meeting.
- At present, India has seven disputes at WTO which are at different stages of settlement. India is defending its interest in these disputes with the help of experienced Law Firms.
- India along with EU and 12 other countries have submitted a communication to the WTO General Council for addressing the issues raised by United States on functioning and operations of Dispute Settlement Body, including appointment of Appellate Body members.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187276>

The Global Risk Report 2019

Question: Consider the following statements in reference to the Global Risk Report 2019:

1) The report consist worrying geopolitical and geo-economic tensions which can hinder the progress of world

2) This is based on the result obtained from latest Global Risk Perception Survey

3) It is published by International Monetary Fund (IMF)

4) Environmental threats are utmost worry for the third year in row

Choose the correct option:

(a) 1, 3 and 4 (b) 1, 2 and 4 (c) 1, 2 and 3 (d) All of the above

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The Global Risk Report of 2019 is released by World Economic Forum. This is the 14th edition of this annual report which consists and discusses many Geo-political and geo-economic tensions and challenges in front of the world which needs collective will and measure to tackle it.
- The report has results of the latest Global Risk Perception Survey of World Economic Forum in which nearly 1,000 decision makers from the public sector, private sector, academia and civil society assess the risks facing the world. The survey is divided into four parts.



About the report:

- Environmental threats dominate the list for the third year in row both in terms of impact and likelihood. A report of World Wide Fund (WWF) last year mentions the environmental challenge- with loses in vertebrate species averaging a whopping 60% between 1970 and 2014.

- Nine out of 10 respondents (90%) expect economic and political confrontations between major powers will worsen this year. Extreme weather and climate-change policy failures are seen as the gravest threats over a ten-year horizon. 88% of respondents agree of erosion of multilateral trading rules and agreements with growing economic confrontation.
- 700 million people are estimated to have a mental disorder. Health issues are one of the worrying threats in the world. Mental disorder and deadly disease have an upward trend. 30% women are experiencing intimate partner violence during their lives.
- Estimates also suggest that 90% of the coastal areas will experience above average rise of sea level leading to loss of land and area. More people will be crammed into shrinking tracts of habitable urban space.
- Spending on disaster recovery is almost nine times higher than on prevention. This shows the lack of preventive measures taken by governments to prepare and tackle the disasters and hence leads to heavy loss of human life and infra.
- The gap between urban and rural areas is increasing and has reached a tipping point. Human rights have severe seen severe scrutiny in society. Major cities are facing severe water crisis and lack planned measures to tackle with it.
- Cyber attacks are also one of the top threats. Many data breaches have been witnessed last year both in public and private sectors. 82% of respondents expected the risk of cyber-attacks leading to theft of money and data to increase in 2019.
- A “global risk” is defined as an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, can cause significant negative impact for several countries or industries within the next 10 years.

World Economic Forum:

- Founded by Klaus Schwab in 1971 and Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, World Economic Forum is a not for profit organisation for Public Private Cooperation engaging foremost political, business and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Links:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/these-are-the-biggest-risks-facing-our-world-in-2019/>

US President nominates three Indian American to key posts

Question: Who was nominated for the post of assistant secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy) by US President?

(a) Adityas Bamzai (b) Rita Baranwal (c) Raj Shah (d) Nikki Haley

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- US President Donald Trump nominated three Indian-American to key posts in administrations, as per the latest list of senior nominations sent by the White House to Senate.
- President has nominated Rita Baranwal for the post of assistant secretary of Nuclear Energy. She has served as director of the technology Development and Application at Westinghouse.
- Another Indian- American Aditya Bamzai is nominated for Member of Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board. Bimal Patel is nominated as assistant secretary of treasury.
- Trump has nominated and appointed more than three dozen India- American in key posts so far.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/world/donald-trump-nominates-three-indian-americans-to-key-administration-post-5542354/>

Singapore remains the most liveable location for Asian Expatriates

Question: Which country has been rated as the most liveable location for Asian expatriates recently?

(a) New Zealand (b) Japan (c) New Zealand (d) Singapore

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Singapore has been rated as the most liveable location for Asian expatriates in 2019 for the 14th consecutive year. The report is conducted by global agency ECA International, focusing on solutions for businesses operating across borders.
- According to the Survey, the other top 20 locations include cities in Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Denmark, Netherlands, Switzerland and Norway, with numerous cities at the same place in the ranking.
- ECA's Location Ratings system is conducted annually by global mobility experts in over 480 locations worldwide, the survey is based on evaluation of factors such as; low crime rate, climate, health service availability, natural phenomena, personal safety etc.
- This year Hong Kong dropped 12 places to become the 41st liveable city for Asian expatriates.
- Due to infrastructure improvement other cities in Asia like China, Malaysia and Thailand have also attained higher ratings.



Links:

<https://www.eca-international.com/news/january-2019/singapore-remains-the-most-liveable-location-for-a>

Africa Centre for Climate & Sustainable Development

Question: Africa Centre for Climate & Sustainable Development is opened in which of the following city?

(a) Rome (b) Paris (c) London (d) Petersburg

Answer : (a)

Related facts:

- On 28th January 2019, Italy's Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte cut the ribbon for the new '**Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development**' in Rome.
- The Centre has its roots in a declaration endorsed by the G7 meeting of the Environment Ministers in 2017. It was established to facilitate coordination among the G7 and African countries on common initiatives in Africa to achieve the goals set by the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.
- The Centre will provide a fast-track, demand-driven mechanism for African countries to access grant resources that support policies, initiatives, and **best practices on climate change**, food security, access to water, **clean energy**, and **accelerating progress** on the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in Africa.
- UNDP's current **Climate Change portfolio** in **Africa** is large and diverse, implementing **216** projects in **41** countries, worth over **\$828 million** in grants. **33% of this work** is on adaptation to climate change.



Links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

New York Times Travel Show 2019

Question: Name the country who won the Award of Excellence for 'Best in Show' at the recently concluded New York Times Travel Show 2019?

(a) India (b) Pakistan (c) Bhutan (d) Sri Lanka

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- India received the **Award of Excellence for 'Best in Show'** at the recently concluded **New York Times Travel Show 2019(NYTTS 2019)** organized at Jacob K Javits Centre, **New York**. This is largest travel show in North America, held from 25th – 27th January 2019.
- The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India participated as the **'Presenting Partner'** in the travel show 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.
- A high level delegation led by Mr Yogendra Tripathi (Secretary, Ministry of Tourism), Government of India and a number of stakeholders from India's tourism industry participated in the Show.
- Numerous Indian centric activities were organized at the Show including 'Focus on India' and Consumer Seminars, Indian cultural performances, Indian Culinary Demonstration, Food tasting, etc.
- India was honored during the Closing Bell Ceremony at the New York Stock Exchange.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187846>

EU adds Saudi Arabia to dirty-money blacklist

Question: Which of the following country was added by EU to dirty-money blacklist?

(a) India (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Qatar (d) UAE

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The European Commission has added Saudi Arabia, Panama, Nigeria and other jurisdictions to a blacklist of nations seen as posing a threat to the continent because of lax controls on terrorism financing and money laundering.
- The move is part of a crackdown on money laundering after several scandals at EU banks, but it has been criticized by several EU countries, including Britain.
- The 28 EU member states now have one month, which can be extended to two, to endorse the list. They could reject it by qualified majority.
- The list includes 23 jurisdictions, up from 16 added on the basis of strategic deficiencies in their anti-money laundering and countering terrorist financing regimes.
- Other newcomers to the list are Libya, Botswana, Ghana, Samoa, the Bahamas and the four United States territories of American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Guam.
- The other listed states are Afghanistan, North Korea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Yemen.
- Bosnia, Guyana, Laos, Uganda and Vanuatu were removed.



Links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Abu Dhabi will include Hindi as Third Court language

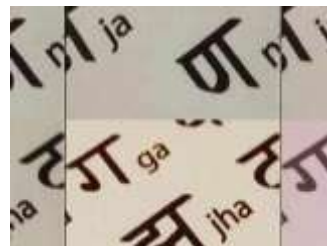
Question: Name the city which will include Hindi as Third Court Language?

(a) Rawalpindi (b) Colombo (c) London (d) Abu Dhabi

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- **Hindi** will be included as a **third official language** to be used in the courts alongside Arabic and English in **Abu Dhabi**.
- An estimated 3.3 million Indian expats live in UAE, and a large number of them are blue collared workers.
- This move will improve access to justice and will help the **Hindi speakers** in Abu Dhabi to learn about **litigation procedures**, their **rights and duties** without a **language barrier**.
- Further it will promote the bilateral **relations** between **India and UAE (United Arab Emirates)**.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/abu-dhabi-includes-hindi-as-third-official-court-language/articleshow/67925348.cms>

World Government Summit 2019

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The three-day World Government Summit 2019 runs until February 12 at Dubai in UAE

(2) It is a global platform dedicated to shaping the future of government World wide

(3) Pop Francis addressed the summit via a live video.

On the basis of the above given facts which of the alternative/s is/are correct:

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All 1,2,3

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- From 10 to 12th February 2019, the seventh annual World Government Summit held in Dubai (UAE).
- The World Government Summit is a global platform dedicated to shaping the future of government worldwide.
- Each year, the summit sets the agenda for the next generation of governments with a focus on how they can harness innovation and technology to solve universal challenges facing humanity.
- It is basically a knowledge exchange centre at the intersection between government, futurism, technology and innovation.
- It functions as a thought leadership platform and networking hub for policy makers, experts and pioneers in human development.
- About 4000 participants including heads of governments and representatives of 16 international organizations participated in the event. Pope Francis addressed the summit via a live video.



Links:

<https://www.worldgovernmentsummit.org/>

Economics

Defence Projects under Make in India

Question: Contracts worth ——— have been signed with Indian Vendors for procurement of defence equipments in the last three financial years under Make in India.

(a) Rs. 60,471 crores (b) Rs. 67,5668 crores (c) Rs. 72,574 crores (d) Rs. 65,471.28 crores

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- Contracts worth Rs. 65,471.28 crores have been signed with Indian Vendors for procurement of defence equipment in the last three financial years i.e. from 2015-16 to 2017-18.
- Defence sector promotes Make in India for manufacturing the defence equipment in country by harnessing the capability of both Public and Private sector. It sets to promote indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipments.
- In the last three financial years 111 proposals of been accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) by the government worth Rs. 1,78,900 crores approximately under Buy (Indian-IDDM), Buy (Indian), Buy and Make (Indian) or Make categories of capital procurement as per Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP), that is Request for Proposal (RFP) is issued only to Indian Vendors.
- In the last three financial years i.e. from 2015-16 to 2017-18, 99 contracts worth about Rs.65,471.28 crore have been signed with Indian vendors for procurement of defence equipment.
- Defence Production Policy was promulgated in 2011 aiming to achieve substantive self reliance in the design, development and production of equipment, weapon system, platforms required for defence at the earliest.
- This also provides opportunities to private industry to play an active role in enhancing potential of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in indigenisation and broadening the defence R&D base of country.
- A yet to be finalized Defence Production Policy's (DPP) 2018, first draft was prepared and placed in public domain for providing a focused, structured and significant thrust to development of defence design and production capability in the country.

Links:

<http://164.100.158.168/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1557926>

Monthly Production Report of Crude Oil and Natural Gas in Dec 2018

Question: Consider the following statements in reference to production of Crude Oil and Natural Gas:

- 1) The monthly production report of crude oil and Natural Gas in Dec. 2018 was released by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.**
- 2) According to report crude oil & Natural Gas Production has registered de – growth within the specified Target for the Month.**
- 3) Refinery production during December 2018 is 4.32 percent lower than the target for the month.**

In the light of the above facts which of the following alternatives are true;

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All of the above.

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 24 Jan 2019, a monthly production report of crude oil and natural gas in Dec. 2018 was released by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.

- According to report Crude oil production during Dec. 2018 was 2862.35 TMT which is 10.13 percent lower than target and 4.3 percent lower when compared with Dec. 2017.
- Natural gas production during Dec. 2018 was 2866.51 MMSCM which is 4.86 percent lower than the target for the month by 4.19 percent higher when compared with Dec. 2017.
- Refinery production (in terms of crude oil processed) during Dec.2018 was 21031.92 TMT which is 4.32 percent lower than the target for the month and 4.96 percent lower when compared with Dec. 2017.
- LPG production registered a de-growth of 6.4 percent during Dec. 2018, over December 2017.
- Natural Gas Gross production in December 2018 was 2866.51 MMSCM which is 4.19% higher when compared with December, 2017.



Links: https://www.ppac.gov.in/WriteReadData/Reports/201901250430313071380WebVersion_MonthlyReportDec2018.pdf

Farm Loan Waiver Scheme in Madhya Pradesh

Question: What is the name of the recently launched farm loan waiver scheme in Madhya Pradesh?

- (a) Jai Kisan Yojana (b) Jai Kisan Mukti Yojana (c) Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana
(d) Kisan Karzmafi Scheme

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Madhya Pradesh government under the leadership of newly elected Chief Minister Kamal Nath launched Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana, a farm debt waiver scheme to the amount of 50,000 crore.
- About 55 lakh small and marginal farmer will be benefitted from the ambitious scheme having loans upto 2 lakh
- The state cabinet earlier on 5th January, 2019, gave its nod to waive crop loans extending the cut-off date to December 12, 2018 from March 31, 2018.
- Farmers who have registered themselves in GST and are paying income tax cannot avail this facility of loan waiving.



Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/mp-launches-rs-50000-cr-farm-loan-waiver-scheme/article25999963.ece>

Angel Tax Controversy

Question: In Context of Angel Tax Controversy, which rules of Income tax act, 1961 has been put in place as a mechanism in order to exempt gains so as to promote start ups in India?

- (a) 56(2) (b) 53 GB (c) 79 –IAC (d) 51 EE

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 19 December 2018, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) has taken notice of the news reports regarding issue of notices by Income Tax authorities to Angel Investors/Start-ups.

- It is noteworthy that funds raised by an unlisted company through equity issuance are covered under this tax to the extent the amount is in excess of the fair market value.
- Such extra inflow is taxable as “income from other sources” under Section 56(2) of the Income Tax Act, and charged the corporate tax rate, resulting in an effective tax of over 30%.
- Since April 2018, DIPP is in consultation with the Department of Revenue (DoR) & has put in place a mechanism to grant exemption from the provisions of Section 56(2) of the Income Tax Act to genuine investors in recognized start-ups.
- DIPP has again taken up this matter of issue of IT notices with the DoR so that there is no harassment of Angel Investors or Start-ups.
- Government is committed to protect legitimate investments into start-ups.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=186629>

Status Paper on Government Debt

Question: Which edition of the Status Paper on Government is released by Central Government recently?

(a) 7th (b) 8th (c) 11th (d) 20th

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- The Central Government released the 8th Edition of the Status Paper on the Government Debt on 18th January, 2019. This provides a detailed analysis of the Overall Debt Position of the Government of India.
- The Central Government has been bringing-out an Annual Status Paper on Government Debt since 2010-11.
- This paper enhances transparency by providing a detailed account of debt operations during the year and an assessment of the health of the public debt portfolio based on internationally accepted debt performance indicators.
- The paper also covers details of fiscal deficit financing operations of the Central Government during the year 2017-18.
- The overall liabilities of the Central Government are on a medium-term declining trajectory and Government's Debt Portfolio is characterised by prudent risk profile. Government is primarily resorting to market linked borrowings for financing its fiscal deficit.

The report facts:

- Total debts of Central government has increased to Rs. 82.03 lakh crore from Rs. 79.80 lakh crore previously. In the last four-and-half years of NDA government, it has increased to 49 per cent of total which was Rs. 54.90 lakh crore in June 2014.
- The Total Debt is the sum total of Public Debt and other liabilities. Public debt further includes external and internal debts.
- The Public Debt increased from Rs. 71.25 lakh crore to Rs. 73.22 lakh crore as compared to the last findings contributing majorly to the total debts.
- The Total Internal Debts in Public Debts increased from Rs. 66.23 lakh crore to Rs. 67.96 lakh crores.
- The External Debts in Public Debts also went up from Rs. 5.01 lakh crore to Rs. 5.25 lakh crore.

Steel production

Question: India secured the second spot in global steel production by replacing which of the following country?

(a) USA (b) Japan (c) Russia (d) South Korea

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- In the latest report of World Steel Association (world steel) India replaced the Japan (104.3 MT) and secured the second place in global steel production.
- Global crude steel output registered a growth of 4.6 per cent in 2018.
- China is the largest producer of steel accounting for more than 51 per cent of production.
- China's crude steel output jumped 6.6 per cent to 928.3 million tons (MT) in 2018 from 870.9 MT in 2017.
- India crude steel production reached 106.5 MT in 2018 from 101.5 MT in 2017.
- Top ten steel producing countries include United States, South Korea, Russia, Germany, Turkey, Brazil and Iran respectively in the same order.
- World steel association is one of the industry associations in the world.
- Its members represent around 85 per cent of the world's steel production, including over 160 steel producers with 9 out of the 10 largest steel companies, national and regional steel industry associations, and steel research institutes.



Links:

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/india-replaces-japan-to-become-second-largest-crude-steel-producer#gs.4JR8jFzY>

Index of Eight Core Industries

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Index of Eight Core Industries, November 2018:

1) The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 percent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

2) The Natural Gas production increased by 0.5 % in November 2018.

3) Petroleum Refinery production increased by 2.3% in November 2018.

4) Coal production increased by 6% in November 2018.

Correct option:

(a) 1, 2 and 4 (b) 2, 3 and 4 (c) 1, 2 and 3 (d) All of the above.

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Eight Core Industries shares 40.27% of the total weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). The summary of Index of Eight Core Industries (base 2011-12) is given:
- Coal: Coal production has increased by 3.7% in November, 2018. The cumulative index also increased by 9% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.
- Crude Oil: Its production decreased by 3.5% in November, 2018 over November 2017 and the cumulative Index saw a decline by 3.6% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.



- Natural Gas: Its production increased by 0.5% in November 2018 over the same in 2017 and its cumulative index decreased by 0.7% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.
- Petroleum Refinery: Its production increased by 2.3% in November 2018 over November 2017 and the cumulative index increase by 5.3% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.
- Fertilizers Production: Its production decreased by 8.1% in November 2018 over November 2017 and its cumulative index declined by 1.3% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.
- Steel: Its production increased by 6% in November 2018 over November 2017 and cumulative index increased by 3.7% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.
- Cement: Its production increased by 8.8% in November 2018 over November 2017 while its cumulative index increased by 14.2% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.
- Electricity Generation: Its production increased by 5.4% in November 2018 over November 2017 while its cumulative index increased by 6.7% during April-November 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.

Links:

<http://164.100.158.168/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1557958>

GST Exemption limit doubled to give relief to small businesses

Question: GST Exemption limit is raised from Rs 20 lakhs to?

(a) Rs 40 lakhs (b) Rs 25 lakhs (c) Rs 26 lakhs (d) Rs 28 lakhs

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 10th January 2019, GST Council approved the exemption limit under Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime from Rs 20 lakhs to Rs 40 lakhs.
- Small traders and businesses who pays small tax based on turnover rather than value addition is raised to Rs 1.5 crore from Rs 1 crore.
- However States will have the option to choose between the two exemptions limits of Rs 20 lakh and Rs 40 lakh and will have to intimate their decision within a week. The changes will come into effect from 1st April, 2019.
- GST Council also allowed Kerala to collect a 1 % disaster cess on intra-state sale of goods and services for a period of up to two years in order to mobilize revenues so as to meet the cost of rehabilitating parts of states that were destroyed by floods last year.
- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley informed that the GST Composition Scheme, under which small traders and businesses pay a 1 % tax will be based on turnover and it will be extended to service providers up to a turnover of Rs 50 lakh at a tax rate of 6 %.
- Finance minister also informed that those opting for the composition scheme would have to file just one tax return annually but pay taxes once every quarter.
- The revenue loss on account of hike in exemption limit to Rs 40 lakh is estimated to be around Rs 5,200 crore, assuming 50 % of the taxpayers will go out of GST.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/business/economy/gst-relief-for-small-businesses-fm-arun-jaitley-doubles-tax-exemption-limit/>

RBI releases Financial Stability Report

Question: Which of the following statement is/are correct regarding the Financial Stability Report of RBI?

- 1) This is the eighteenth issue of Financial Stability Report (FSR)
- 2) It has information over the risks to financial stability, as also the resilience of financial system
- 3) It shows concern over growing NPAs and non improvement of banking sector
- 4) It also mentions the risk of fiscal deficit target which remains unachieved

Correct option:

- (a) 1, 3 and 4 (b) 2, 3 and 4 (c) 1, 2 and 4 (d) All of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- On 31 December 2018, apex bank of India, RBI (Reserve Bank of India) released the eighteenth issue of Financial Stability Report (FSR). The FSR shows the collective assessment of the Sub Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on the risks to financial stability, as also the resilience of the financial system.
- The report discusses the issues which are related to development and regulation of the financial sector. The overall assessment of the financial system remains stable even when the global economic scenario poses challenges. It drained wide publicity for the decline of the NPAs (Non Performing Assets) of the banks.

Concerns regarding Global and Domestic macro financial risks:

- The global growth outlook for 2018 and 2019 remains steady. The growth of gross domestic product (GDP) on the domestic front showed slight moderation in Q2: 2018-19 while inflation remained contained.
- The structural shift in credit intermediation and the evolving interconnectivity between banks and the non-banks call for greater vigilance in the domestic financial markets.

Financial Institutions: Performance and risks

- Between March 2018 and September 2018, credit growth of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) has improved and is driven largely by Private Sector Banks (PSBs).
- The asset quality of the banks showed an improvement as the Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio to Scheduled Commercial Banks declined to 10.8% in September 2018 from 11.5% in March 2018.
- GNPA is expected to decline further to 10.3% in March 2019. The analysis of financial network structure between September 2017 and September 2018 also reveals shrinking

linkages with asset management companies-mutual funds (AMC-MFs) for raising funds and with NBFCs/ Housing Finance Companies for lending.

Links:

https://rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=45862

National Bamboo Mission

Question: How much money is allotted under National Bamboo Mission for North Eastern states during the year 2018-19?

(a) 1200 crore (b) 1300 crore (c) 1280 crore (d) 5225.71 lakhs

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- On 8th January 2019, Parshottam Rupala Minister of State for Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare presented the details of funds released during the year 2018-19 for North Eastern states under the National Bamboo Mission.
- Financial assistance to North Eastern States is provided in the ratio of 90:10 between Central & State Government.
- Restructured National Bamboo Mission is a centrally sponsored scheme approved on 25th April, 2018 for implementation till the end of 14th Finance Commission i.e. 2019-20. It aims to ensure holistic development of the bamboo sector by addressing complete value chain and establishing effective linkage of producers (farmers) with industry.
- The Mission envisages on adopting area-based, regionally differentiated strategy and to increase the area under bamboo cultivation and marketing. Under the Mission, steps have been taken to increase the availability of quality planting material by supporting the setting up of new nurseries and strengthening of existing ones.
- A total of Rs.1290 crore (with Rs. 950 crore as Central's share) is sanctioned for implementation of the Mission. Over one lakh farmers would be directly benefitted under this Mission.
- 17 States have so far been covered under the Mission and an amount of Rs.111.05 crore has been released (till 31 January 2018) based on the annual action plans.
- For North Eastern States, total allocated amount is Rs 5225.71 lakhs which is as follows:

Assam – 500 lakhs Rs.

Arunachal Pradesh – 1127.43 lakhs Rs.

Manipur – 450.00 lakhs Rs.

Mizoram – 950.00 lakhs Rs.;

Nagaland – 623.83 lakhs Rs.

Sikkim – 344.45 lakhs Rs.

Tripura – 1230.00 lakhs Rs.

Meghalaya- Annual Action Plan not received yet

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1559073>

RBI initiates Survey

Question: Which of the following survey is initiated recently by RBI?

**(a) Industrial Outlook Survey (IOS) (b) Fiscal Policy Survey (c) Budget Survey
(d) Monetary Policy Survey**

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) initiated two surveys on January 28th, 2019. Industrial Outlook Survey (IOS) and Services and Infrastructure Outlook Survey (SIOS) to examine the current situation including the job scenario in India's manufacturing, services and infrastructure sectors. Both are quarterly surveys which will inspect current scenario of various fields including condition of jobs.
- IOS will be conducted by Hansa Research Group Pvt. Ltd. The survey of IOS would be based on qualitative responses on a set of indicators pertaining to demand conditions, financial conditions, employment conditions and the price situation. The survey would also give detailed information of the performance of manufacturing sector.
- SIOS will be conducted by Spectrum Planning India Ltd. The survey of SIOS would assess the current quarter's (January- March 2019) business situation from selected companies in the services and infrastructure sectors in India, and will give an outlook for the coming quarter (April- June 2019).



Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rbi-starts-two-quarterly-surveys-of-manufacturing-services-infra-sectors-119012100874_1.html

Report on Trend & Progress of Banking in India 2017-18

Question: In context of Report on Trend & Progress of Banking in India 2017-18, Reserve Bank of India pursues to remove burden on banks and has revised guidelines 2017-18.

What are the issues faced by banks?

**(a) Recapitalisation (b) Improvement in Banks (c) Containment of Cyber security risks
(d) All of the above**

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Report on Trend & Progress of Banking in India 2017-18 can be considered as a milestone in the evolution of India's Banking System for the following reasons.
- The foundations of exhaustive, conclusive and reliable resolution architecture was laid and built upon, with the Reserve Bank equipped with the legislative amendment that empowered it to direct banks on the mechanism to resolve Bad Loan cases, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC, 2016) is being established as the pivot in the architecture to resolve stressed assets.



- The Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) were given an opportunity to freely convert to Small Financial Banks (SFBs) allowing them to carry out a wider range of activities and have a pan-India presence as well.
- The concerted policy initiatives were put in place as force multipliers aiming at inclusive lending, in addition to trading of priority sector lending certificates (PSLCs) on e-Kuber which facilitates indirect lending to the priority sector.
- The Reserve Bank also encouraged direct lending through co-origination of loans by banks and Non Banking Financial Company (NBFCs).
- The drive for financial inclusion was rejuvenated by the introduction of the modified Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY).
- The introduction of the recent version of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has properly placed the banking system to reap the benefits from technology, while being aware of cyber security risks.

Links:

<https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/AnnualPublications.aspx?head=Trend%20and%20Progress%20of%20Banking%20in%20India>

RBI raises limit for collateral – free agri – loans

Question: Consider the following statements:

- 1) RB raised the limit for collateral – free agriculture loans to 1.6 lakh from 1 Lakh
- 2) Ujjivan Small Finance Bank is the first bank to provide collateral free loans
- 3) The limit of 1 Lakh has been fixed in the year 2010

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

- (a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All 1,2,3

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 7th February, 2019, Reserve Bank of India raised the limit for collateral – free agricultural loans to Rs1.6 lakh from Rs1 lakh.
- The decision has been taken in view of the overall inflation and rise in the agricultural input costs since 2010 when the limit was last revised. This move will enhance coverage of small and marginal farmers in the formal credit system.
- RBI has constituted an Internal Working Group (IWG) to review agricultural credit. IWG will also examine the issues and arrive at workable solutions and policy initiatives.
- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank has announced the launch of 'Kisan Suvidha Loan' for small and marginal farmers and allied activities.
- It is a first bank of this series to provide collateral – free loans for agricultural and allied activities. Ujjivan has launched the product in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Karnataka and Odisha.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=359375>

India withdrew MFN Status of Pakistan

Question: In the backdrop of Pulwama attack, India made few decisions. Choose the incorrect statements mentioned below:

- (a) India withdrew the most favored nation status of Pakistan on the aftermath of Pulwama
- (b) India has granted the MFN status way back in 1996
- (c) MFN offers preferential treatment to the nation
- (d) Currently the value of trade between India and Pakistan is \$ 2.61 billion

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- India withdrew the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status of Pakistan on 15th February, 2019, a day after Pulwama attack. It also raised the custom duty to 200 percent on all goods imported from Pakistan.
- The importance of the MFN is shown in the fact that it is the first clause in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). India has granted the MFN status way back in 1996.
- India has invoked a security exception clause of the World Trade Organization to withdraw this status.
- Under the MFN pact, a WTO member country is obliged to treat other trading nation in a non-discriminatory manner, especially with regard to customs duty and other levies.
- During April-October 2018-19, India's exports to Pakistan stood at \$1.18 billion, while imports were \$338.66 billion.
- India mainly exports raw cotton, cotton yarn, chemicals, plastics, manmade yarn and dyes to Pakistan, and the imports include fresh fruits, cement, petroleum products and mineral ore.



Links:

<https://www.bloomberqquint.com/business/india-hikes-import-duty-on-pakistani-goods-to-200-pc#gs.HU8e5h7d>

Scientific

Defense/Science Short Notes

Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates UNNATI-Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training Programme of ISRO in Bengaluru

Question: Recently, capacity building programme was inaugurated by ISRO in Bengaluru. Name the programme?

- (a) UNNATI (b) PUBSAT (c) SNAP-1 (d) ROBUSTA

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 17th January 2019, UNNATI (Unispace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training by ISRO) programme was inaugurated by Union Minister Shri Dr. Jitendra Singh was organized by ISRO in Bengaluru. Dr. K. Sivan, Chairman, ISRO briefed about various activities undertaken by ISRO.
- UNNATI, a capacity building programme on Nanosatellite development, is an initiative by ISRO to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE-50).
- The programme provides opportunities to the participating developing countries to strengthen in assembling, integrating and testing of Nano satellite.
- UNNATI programme is planned to be conducted for 3 years by U.R. Rao Satellite Centre of ISRO in 3 batches and will target to benefit officials of 45 countries. The first batch consisted of 30 delegates from 17 countries participated in the event.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187571>

India-Myanmar bilateral army exercise IMBEX 2018-19

Question: India-Myanmar bilateral army exercise IMBEX 2018-19 held at which of the following place?

- (a) Chandimandir Military Station (b) Bay of Bengal (c) Aundh Military Camp (d) Malabar**

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Second edition of India-Myanmar bilateral Army exercise 'IMBEX 2018-19' was organised at Chandimandir Military Station at Panchkula district in Haryana.
- This was a six day training exercise commenced on 14 January featuring participation of 15 officers from Myanmar Army and 15 officers from the Indian Army
- During the exercise, key focus was on training the Myanmar Army on tactics, procedures, expertise and methodology required by the contingent of the member nations for serving in UN peacekeeping operations.



Links:

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/india-myanmar-joint-training-exercise-begins-in-chandimandir/713632.html>

ISRO Launches Samwad Scheme

Question: ISRO has launched a scheme named Samwad. For which of the following aims is this scheme launched?

- (a) It is project to reach scientists of world
(b) This scheme will integrate space organization in South Asia
(c) This scheme will increase communication of NASA and ISRO in technical aspect
(d) This scheme is an outreach programme to engage youngsters in space science activity**

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Indian space agency ISRO (Indian Space Research Agency) has initiated a new scheme called Samwad with Students (SwS). This is part of its enhanced outreach programme.
- This scheme was launched in Bangaluru on 1st January, 2019. This scheme aims to engage young minds in the nation in activities related to space science. This scheme will inspire the youngsters with scientific temperament and help them develop it.
- The inaugural event of SwS had 40 students and 10 teachers in the session. ISRO Chairman K Sivan also interacted with the students.
- The students were taught about Indian Space programmes and their benefits to the common man. Students and teachers also had an interactive session with scientists and engineers.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=357442>

Coastal Defence Exercise: Sea Vigil

Question: 'Sea Vigil' is defence exercise of which of the following country?

(a) China (b) Indonesia (c) Japan (d) India

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Coastal Defence Exercise codenamed 'Sea Vigil 2019' was conducted by Indian Navy, in close coordination with the Indian Coast Guard and all coastal security stakeholders on 22 and 23 January 2019.
- The mega exercise undertaken along the entire 7516.6 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India comprising the states West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.
- It was the largest such exercise the country had ever witnessed in recent times and saw participation by more than 100 ships, aircraft and patrol boats manned and operated by various security agencies.
- The exercise consisted of two distinct phases. In the first phase, all stakeholders assessed the robustness of their own organisations. During the second phase, simulated attacks were carried out on vital installations and assets by infiltrating through the sea, in Kerala and Lakshadweep.
- During the exercise, multi-agency teams also evaluated the security set up implemented by agencies including at fishing harbours, fish landing centres, police control rooms and ports amongst others.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187714>

Early life around New Planet Barnard b

Question: Name the planet around which early life is discovered recently?

(a) Barnard b (b) Kerberos (c) Valetudo (d) Hyrrokkin

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In the 233rd meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) in Seattle, Washington held on 10th January, 2019 it was disclosed that its new-found planet labeled Barnard b (GJ 699 b) have the potential to nurse primitive life.
- Barnard's star is the nearest single star (and now the second-nearest star system) to our own sun at only six light-years away.
- Barnard's star is a low-mass red dwarf star & only emits a fraction of the energy our sun puts out. Barnard's Star is about 9 billion years old (twice as old as the sun).
- Barnard b is super-Earth exoplanet orbiting the legendary Barnard's Star. It is about three times the mass of Earth and orbits the star every 233 days.
- The team of researchers also evaluated the amount of X-ray and ultraviolet radiation the star's planet would receive at its distance of 0.4 astronomical units (1 astronomical unit (AU)=Distance between Earth-sun) to determine the effects on any atmosphere Barnard b might host.
- A young star like Barnard b rotates faster & emit more ultraviolet & X-Ray radiation as compared to when it is older.
- Currently, Barnard b only receives about 2 % the radiation Earth receives from the Sun, and is a cold world with a surface temperature of nearly -275 °F (-170 °C).



Links:

<http://www.astronomy.com/news/2019/01/life-might-exist-on-the-new-planet-discovered-around-barnards-star>

Genomic chips developed by Brazil can be very useful for implementing genomic selection for our indigenous breeds

Question: India aims to implement Genomic chips technology with the help of Brazil.

Excellence centers in India are to be set up in which of the given places?

(a) Kalsi & Motihari (b) Pipli & Samastipur (c) Dhaund & Rohtas (d) Ulna & Munger

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Union Minister Shri Radha Mohan Singh met delegation from Brazil led by Dr. Jose Ribamar Felipe Marques, Director, Buffalo Research and Development, Brazil on 8th January, 2019.
- The main objective of this meeting was to promote technical cooperation between India and Brazil for the rapid growth of the production and productivity of indigenous breeds.
- India will seek Embryo transfer technology (ETT), Promotion of In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) and Sex-sorted semen production from Brazil.
- For latest development in breeding techniques India is aiming to develop research & development centers with a provision for training professionals.
- Four animal breeding Centers of Excellence (COE) are being set up for : **ETT, IVF, sex-sorted semen, genomics and training of skilled manpower.**
- These centers will not only serve as training centers but also work as centers of research and development.
- Out of which Two Excellence Centers are being established in Kalsi Uttarakhand and Central Agricultural University, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Motihari with the help of Brazil.
- Germplasm produced at these centers will be made available to all the states.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187344>

ISRO announces Human Space Flight Centre in Bengaluru

Question: ISRO announces Human Space Flight centre in Bengaluru whose actual flight with crew is targeted to happen by?

(a) November 2020 (b) December 2021 (c) March 2022 (d) April 2019

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 30 January 2019, Dr. K Kasturirangan, Former Chairman, ISRO in the presence of Dr. K Sivan, Secretary, DOS/Chairman, ISRO, inaugurated Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) at ISRO Headquarter campus in Bengaluru.
- A full scale model of GAGANYAAN's crew module was also unveiled during this event. HSFC shall be responsible for implementation of GAGANYAAN Project which involves end-to-end mission planning, development of Engineering systems for crew survival in space, crew selection & training and also pursue activities for sustained human space flight missions.
- HSFC will take support of the existing ISRO Centres to implement, the first development flight of GAGANYAAN under Human Space Flight Programme.
- Gaganyaan, India's mission to send astronauts to space is reserved to happen before December 2021. Dr. S Unnikrishnan Nair is the founder Director of HSFC and Shri R Hutton is the Project Director of GAGANYAAN project.
- Mission includes the heavy lift launch vehicle GSLV MarkIII which aims to have two non-crew flights in December 2020 and July 2021.



Links:

<https://www.isro.gov.in/update/30-jan-2019/inauguration-of-human-space-flight-centre-hsfc>

ISRO to launch two unmanned space missions in 2020 & 2021

Question: ISRO is all set to launch about two unmanned space missions in the near future. With respect to space missions Small Satellite Launch Vehicle's (SSLV) first flight will commence in which year?

(a) March 2019 (b) April 2019 (c) June 2019 (d) July 2019

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 18th January 2019, Dr K Sivan informed media that ISRO has planned 32 missions this year. Small Satellite Launch Vehicle's (SSLV) first flight will commence in July 2019 & can carry payload up to 500 kg.
- Elaborating on the priority areas of ISRO, the Chairman said that these include Gaganyaan project, reaching out to students, outreach programmes, planned missions of this year and Vikram Sarabhai Centenary celebrations.
- Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) has been set up for Gaganyaan project and the first unmanned space flight will be launched by December 2020, second unmanned mission by July 2021 and first manned mission by December 2021.
- ISRO Chairman notified that 9 student satellites have been launched by ISRO till date and KALAMSAT will be launched by PSLV-C44 on 24th January 2019. Other future projects include GSAT-20, RISAT and GMAT series of satellite.



- Six incubation centres will be established in various parts of the country – North, South, East, West, Centre and North-East. First such Centre has been established in Agartala. Six R&D centres will also be established. ISRO has inaugurated UNNATI programme for the purpose of training participants on Nano Satellite assembly.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1560531>

Launch window for Chandrayaan-2

Question: With reference to Launch window for Chandrayaan-2 in near future, Chandrayaan's orbiter lifespan is around?

(a) One year (b) Two year (c) Three year (d) Four year

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 18th January 2019, ISRO Chairman Dr K Sivan notified that India's second Moon mission Chandrayaan-2 will be launched during March 25-April 30.
- Chandrayaan-2, India's second mission to the Moon is a totally indigenous mission comprising of an Orbiter, Lander and Rover.
- After reaching the 100 km lunar orbit, the Lander housing the Rover will separate from the Orbiter. After a controlled descent, the Lander will soft land on the lunar surface at a specified site and deploy a Rover.
- The Chandrayaan-2 weighing around 3290 kg will have a life span of one year and would orbit around the moon and perform the objectives of remote sensing the moon.
- The payloads will collect scientific information on lunar topography, mineralogy, elemental abundance, lunar exosphere and signatures of hydroxyl and water-ice.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1560531>

Pakistan tests short range Missile

Question: Which of the following short range ballistic missile is successfully test fired by Pakistan?

(a) Nasr (b) Hatf (c) Ghaznavi (d) Harbah

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Pakistan's Army Strategic Forces Command successful tested short range ballistic missile named Nasr on 31st January, 2019.
- The missile is claimed to have the capacity of defeating every available defence system of ballistic missiles available in the nation's neighborhood.
- As per the Pakistan Army, Nasr has a strike range of about 70 km. It is a high precision, shoot and scoot weapon system with the ability of in-flight maneuverability, according to the Pakistan Army.
- The test of missile come shortly after the release of the United States' 2019 Missile Defense Review, which acknowledges that the United States "has discussed potential missile defense cooperation with India."



Links:

<https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/pakistan-conducts-second-nasr-nuclear-capable-ballistic-missile-test-in-a-week/>

CUTLASS EXPRESS 2019

Question: Which of the following participated in CUTLASS EXPRESS – 19 held from 27th January to 06th February 2019.

(a) INS Trikand (b) INS Karanj (c) INS Tarini (d) INS Khanderi

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- INS Trikand, a front-line warship of the Indian Navy, participated in a Multinational Training Exercise CUTLASS EXPRESS – 19 organized from 27th January to 06th February, 2019.
- The aim of the exercise was to improve law enforcement capacity, promote regional security and progress inter-operability between the armed forces of the participating nations for the purpose of interdicting illegal maritime activity in the Western Indian Ocean.
- During the exercise, Naval, Coast Guard and Marine Police personnel from a number of East African countries were jointly trained by mentors from USA, India, and Netherlands, with support of international organizations like the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Combined Maritime Force (CMF) and European Naval Forces (EUNAVFOR).
- The exercise was conducted in two phases. First Phase, called the Command Post Exercise (CPX) was conducted from 27th January, to 02nd February, 2019. Second Phase, called the Final Training Exercise (FTX) was conducted from 03rd February to 05th Feb 2019.
- The closing ceremony of the event was held at the Djibouti Naval Base.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188260>

Indigenous anti-tank guided missile system Helina successfully flight tested

Question: Name the anti-tank guided missile system which was successfully flight tested by India recently?

(a) Helina (b) Cobra (c) Amogha (d) Mosquito

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 8 February 2019, India test-fired its helicopter-launched version of one of the most-advanced anti-tank weapons (HeliNa) from the Odisha coast. The Helina will make use of an IIR (infrared imaging seeker) for target engagement like the Nag.
- HeliNa (Helicopter-launched Nag), Indigenous Nag anti-tank guided missile system has a hit range of 7-8 km.
- The weapon system was tested for its full range near the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur in Balasore district.
- Helina is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).
- In August 2018, HeliNa was also successfully test-fired from Rudra helicopter at Pokhran test range and prior to that, three round trials of HeliNa were conducted at a firing range in Jaisalmer in Rajasthan on 13th July, 2015.



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/helicopter-launched-anti-tank-missile-helina-test-fired-119020800579_1.html

Exercise Cobra Gold 2019

Question: Exercise Cobra Gold 2019 is being organised in which of the following country?

(a) Thailand (b) Vietnam (c) Laos (d) Cambodia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- 38th iteration of Multinational Military Exercise Cobra Gold is being organised from 12 to 22 February 2019 in Phitsanulok, Thailand.
- This exercise is co-hosted by the Royal Thai Armed Forces and the United States Indo-Pacific Command.
- Nine nations including Thailand, the United States, Singapore, Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and South Korea are participating in the exercise.
- This exercise focuses on three major components such as a military field training exercise (FTX), humanitarian civic assistance (HCA) to communities and a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercise.
- Began in 1982, it is one of the largest multinational exercises in the Asia-Pacific region.



Links:

<https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1759421/multinational-cobra-gold-exercise-kicks-off-in-thailand/>

Exercise Rahat

Question: What was the aim of recently conducted Exercise Rahat?

(a) Synergize efforts for humanitarian assistance (b) Disaster relief operations
(c) Minimize civilian casualties (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise '**Exercise Rahat**' was conducted on 11-12 February 2019 at three places Jaipur, Alwar and Kota in Rajasthan.
- Jaipur based conducted Sapta Shakti Command on behalf of Indian Army in coordination with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).
- The aim of the exercise was to synergize efforts for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operation and to minimize civilian casualties.
- Representatives of Armed Forces, National Disaster Management Response Mechanism (NDMRM), State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) Rajasthan, DLMA's took part in the event.
- As a prelude to the exercise, a curtain raiser was organised at Jaipur Military Station on 4th February 2019.



Links:

<http://newsonair.nic.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=359593>

Sports

Tennis

Australian Open 2019

Question: Who won the Men's Single title in Australian Open 2019?

(a) Roger federer (b) Rafael Nadal (c) Andy Murray (d) Novak Djokovic

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The first Grand Slam of the Year Australian Open 2019 Mens singles title was won by Serbias Novak Djokovic on January 27, 2019.
- The 14 day event started on 14th January, 2019 before which 4 days qualifier took place from 8 January to 11 January.
- World No. 1 Novak Djokovic defeated World No. 2 Rafael Nadal of Spain in straight sets of 6-3, 6-2, 6-3.
- Men's double title was won by Pierre Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Mahut of France. They defeated Henri Kontinen of Finland and John Peers of Australia by 6-4, 7-6.
- Naomi Osaka of Japan won the Womens Singles title defeating Czech Republics Petra Kvitova by 7-6, 5-7, 6-4.
- She became the first Asian Women to become world number one in Rankings after this win. She is also the current US Open Womens single winner.
- Samantha Stosur of Australia and Zhang Shuai of China won the Womens Double title. They defeated Timea Babos of Hungary and Kristina Mladenovic of France by 6-3, 6-4.
- Australian Open is the first Grand slam of the year.



Links:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/tennis/2019/01/27/novak-djokovic-vs-rafael-nadal-australian-open-2019-final-live/>

Cricket

Virat Kohli, Ravi Shastri receives honorary membership of Sydney Cricket Ground

Question: Who received honorary membership of Sydney Cricket Ground?

(a) Virat Kohli, Ravi Shastri (b) Cheteshwar Pujara,Rahul Dravid

(c) Jasprit Bumrah, Kapil Dev (d) Ravichandran Ashwin, Anil Kumble

Answer :(a)

Related facts:

- On 11 January 2019, Indian captain Virat Kohli & Indian cricket team coach Ravi Shastri received honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG).
- The SCG had also congratulated Team India for securing its first Test series win on Australian soil.
- Prior to this,the only other international cricketers granted honorary membership of the SCG are Sachin Tendulkar of India & Brian Lara of West Indies.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/sports/cricket/virat-kohli-ravi-shastri-receive-honorary-membership-of-sydney-cricket-ground-5533835/>

First Asian woman cricketer

Question: Who is the first Asian woman cricketer to play hundred T20 international matches?

(a) Mithali Raj (b) Sana Mir (c) Harmanpreet Kaur (d) Sarah Taylor

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Sana Mir (Former Pakistan women's cricket team skipper) becomes the first Asian woman cricketer to play hundred T20 international matches.
- The 33-year-old reached the milestone when she played into the field for the ongoing third and final T20I against West Indies in Karachi.
- Earlier in 2009, the right-arm bowler was part of Pakistan inaugural T20I team which played against Ireland.
- Overall, Sana is the 6th woman cricketer to complete a century of T20 Internationals.
- Daendra Dottin of West Indies is at the top with a total of 109 T20s Matches.
- In the Asian list, Sana is followed by fellow Pakistan cricketer Bismah Maroo (94 T20Is) and India's Harmanpreet Kaur on third position (93 T20Is).



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/sana-mir-becomes-first-asian-woman-cricketer-to-play-100-t20is-119020300248_1.html

Women ODI Top Batsman

Question: Name the cricketer who held the top spot in the latest ICC Women ODI rankings?

(a) Mithali Raj (b) Harmanpreet Kaur (c) Smriti Mandhana (d) Jhulan Goswami

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Smriti Mandhana moved up three spots to reach the top spot in the ICC Women ODI Rankings as per the latest release.
- Overall She has scored 1798 runs in 47 ODIs cumulating over career total of 4 centuries and 14 half centuries with 135 runs as the best score.
- Australian Ellyse Perry and Meg Lanning are in number 2 and 3 spot respectively.
- Mithali Raj, moved down to the fourth spot.



Links:

<http://www.espncriinfo.com/india/content/player/597806.html>

Hockey

Harendra Singh removed as coach of India men's hockey team

Question: Name the person who was removed as coach of India men's hockey team recently?

(a) Harendra Singh (b) Nagendra Singh (c) Kamaljeet Singh (d) Sukhwinder Singh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 9th January, 2019, Hockey India removed Harendra Singh as the coach of Indian senior men's team.
- The above decision was taken after a meeting of Hockey India High Performance and Development Committee on 7th January 2019, which was attended by Chairman Dr. RP Singh and members including Olympians Harbinder Singh, B.P. Govinda and Syed Ali.
- He is given back the charge of the Junior Men's team, with a vision and emphasis on building a strong player base ahead of the 2021 Junior World Cup and the 2020, 2024 Olympic Games.



Facts about Indian Hockey Team under Harendra Singh:

- After the side's disappointing run at the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast under coach Sjoerd Marijne, Harendra Singh was appointed as the senior side's coach in May 2018.
- Under Harendra Singh, India managed to get sixth position at the World Cup and India won Bronze medal at the Asian Games under his guard, and then followed it up with gold at the Asian Champions Trophy.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/sports/hockey/harendra-singh-coach-india-hockey-5530729/>

Athletics

Vinesh Phogat

Question: Who is the first Indian athlete to be nominated the Laureus World Sports Awards recently?

(a) Sakshi Malik (b) Kavita Devi (c) Babita Kumari (d) Vinesh Phogat

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 17 January 2019, Nominees for the 2019 Laureus World Sports Awards were announced selecting the highest achieving men, women and teams over the past calendar year.
- Indian female wrestler Vinesh Phogat has been nominated in the Laureus World Comeback of the Year category.
- With this achievement she made the history as the first Indian athlete to be nominated in one of the categories of Laureus World Sports Awards.
- She has been nominated alongwith US Tour Championship winner Tiger Woods, Japanese figure skater Yuzuru Hanyu, Canadian snowboarder Mark McMorris, US ski racing legend Lindsey Vonn and Dutch Paralympic champion Bibian Mentel-Spee.



- It is worth to mention that Vinesh Phogat won the gold medal at the 2018 Asian Games and became first Indian woman wrestler to win gold in the Asian Games.
- Vinesh is the 24-year-old wrestler from Haryana.
- The Laureus World Sports Awards is the premier global sporting award ceremony recognising the year's outstanding sporting achievements and individuals across eight categories.
- The winners, as voted for by the 66 members of the Laureus World Sports Academy, will be unveiled at the 2019 Laureus World Sports Awards in Monaco on 18 February 2019.

Links:

<https://www.laureus.com/news/2019-nominees-revealed>

Sports Miscellaneous

Abhinav Bindra, Pullela Gopichand in jury for Indian Sports Honors

Question: Who among the following players is not included in the selection panel for second edition of the Indian Sports Honors (ISH)?

(a) Mahesh Bhupathi (b) PT Usha (c) Sardar Singh (d) P.V. Sindhu

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 16th February, 2019; second edition of the Indian Sports Honors (ISH), will be held in Mumbai.
- Abhinav Bindra and Pullela Gopichand have been named jury members for this year's Indian Sports Honors. The selection panel also consists of Sardar Singh, Mahesh Bhupathi, PT Usha and shooter Anjali Bhagwat.
- The Indian Sports Honors (ISH) is a joint initiative of RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group and the Virat Kohli Foundation.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/sports/sport-others/abhinav-bindra-pullela-gopichand-in-jury-for-indian-sports-honours-5569084/>

Short Notes

Personalities

German Nobel Prize winner passed away

Question: German Nobel Prize winner Manfred Eigen who died at age of 91, belongs to which field?

(a) Physics (b) Chemistry (c) Economics (d) Medicine

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Manfred Eigen, a German Nobel Prize winning chemist, passed away at the age of 91.



- The Bochum-born **chemist** revolutionized the way scientists measure extremely fast chemical reactions. He also founded the **Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry** in Göttingen.
- Eigen was best known for his work in measuring extremely fast chemical reactions, for which he was awarded half of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.
- In 1953, he introduced a high frequency sound wave that could determine chemical reaction rates in the micro- and nanosecond range.

Links:

<https://www.dw.com/en/german-nobel-prize-winning-chemist-manfred-eigen-dies-age-91/a-47405677>

Indian Air Force first woman flight engineer

Question: Recently, who scripts history by becoming the first woman flight engineer of Indian Air Force?

(a) Hina Jaiswal (b) Ruchi Sharma (c) Shubhi Jaiswal (d) Shobha Malviya

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 15 February 2019, Flight Lieutenant Hina Jaiswal hailing from Chandigarh scripts history by becoming the first woman flight engineer of Indian Air Force.
- She holds the achievement after completing the 6 months Flight Engineers course from the 112 Helicopter Unit based at Air Force Station Yelahanka in Bengaluru.
- She was commissioned in the IAF's engineering branch in 2015.
- In year 2018, the flight engineer branch was opened to woman officers.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/iaf-gets-its-first-woman-flight-engineer/article26279347.ece>

Aribam Syam Sharma to return Padma Shri

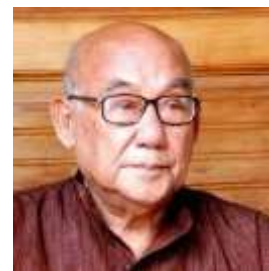
Question: Aribam Syam Sharma decided to return Padma Shri in protest against which of the following bill?

(a) Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (b) The Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018 (c) The Specific Relief Bill, 2017 (d) The Payment of Gratuity Bill 2017

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Acclaimed lyricist, actor, music composer, film director Aribam Syam Sharma decided to return Padma Shri as a mark of protest against Citizenship Bill remarking it will wipe out indigenous population.
- He was awarded Padma Shri in year 2006.
- The citizenship amendment bill 2016 seeks to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955 allowing the Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan to apply for Indian citizenship.
- Relaxation of 11-year cutoff to six years out of 14, for immigrants of the six religions from the three countries is another disputed provision.



- This liberalism will promote issue of illegal immigration in North East against Assam Accord and National Registry of Citizens regulated to curb the menace of the illegal immigrants.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/society/indigenous-people-will-become-strangers-in-their-own-lands-aribam-syam-sharma/article26215177.ece>

Ladu Kishore Swain

Question: Ladu Kishore Swain who passed away recently was-
(a) Politician (b) Painter (c) Author (d) Actor

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 5, 2019; Senior Biju Janata Dal MP Ladu Kishore Swain passed away. He was 71 and was suffering from kidney-related ailments.
- He represented Aska Lok Sabha Constituency in the State of Odisha.
- He was born on 8th July, 1947, in Ganjam districts of Odisha.
- In 2014, Swain was elected to the Lok Sabha from Aska Constituency and in 2004 he was elected as MLA from Kabisuryanagar Assembly Constituency in Odisha.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/odisha-mp-ladu-kishore-swain-passes-away/article26191280.ece>

Satyarup named in Guinness World Record

Question: Styarup Siddhanta registered his name in the Guinness Book of World Records. He is associated with which of the following sport?

(a) Cycling (b) Paragliding (c) Mountaineering (d) Chess

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Satyarup Siddhanta, a 35 years old IT professional from Kolkata named himself in Guinness Book of World Records for becoming the youngest climber in the world to have scaled seven peaks and seven volcanic summits.
- He achieved this feat by scaling to Mount Sidley in Antarctica on January 16, 2019. It is said to be the most remote volcanic summit in the world. He started this mission on January 10.
- With this, he broke the record of Australian climber Daniel Bull who has achieved this feat at the age of 36 years and 157 days.
- Satyarup has previously climbed Mt. Giluwe and Mt. Wilhelm, the highest volcano of Ocenia and the highest mountain of Papua New Guinea. He is also the first Indian to do so. He has also climbed Mt. Everest.



Links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Raghubir Singh Bhola

Question: Raghubir Singh Bhola passed away recently. He was associated with which of the following sport?

(a) Cricket (b) Hockey (c) Football (d) Tennis

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 21 January 2019, former Hockey Olympian and former India selector Group Captain Raghubir Singh Bhola passed away. He was a member of the Indian team that won the gold and silver medal at 1956 and 1960 Olympics respectively.
- He provided his services in various fields such as the member of the IHF selection committee, FIH international umpire, manager of the Indian hockey team, TV commentator and government observer at the Olympic Games.
- He was born in Multan in Pakistan on 21 August 1927.
- Bhola was awarded the Arjuna Award for Lifetime Contribution in year 2000 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sport/hockey/hockey-veteran-bhola-passes-away/article26063172.ece>

Power Ministry administers oath of office to New CERC Member

Question: Who has been appointed as new Member of CERC?

(a) Indu Shekhar Jha (b) Lal Chharliana Pachau (c) Dr. T.C.A. Anant (d) Dr. Lal Charan Singh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Indu Shekhar Jha has been appointed as a new member of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) on 21st January 2019.
- The oath ceremony was administered by Union Minister of State for Power and New & Renewable Energy Mr. R.K. Singh.
- Prior to this he was holding the post of CMD, Powergrid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) since 2015.



Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC):

- CERC is established by Government of India under the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) Act 1998.
- CERC is the central Commission for the purposes of the Electricity Act, 2003 which has repealed the ERC Act 1998.

- The Commission consists of a Chairperson and four other members including chairperson of Central Electricity Authority who is Ex-officio member of the Commission.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187642>

First Indian Women to reach South Pole

Question: Who became the first Indian women IPS Officer to reach South Pole?

(a) Arunima Sinha (b) Aparna Kumar (c) Sugandha Singh (d) D. Purnima

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Uttar Pradesh cadre women IPS officer Aparna Kumar created history by becoming the first lady IPS officer to reach South Pole. She is posted as Director General of Police in ITBP (Indo- Tibetan Border Police), Dehradun.
- The journey to reach South Pole started on January 04, 2019 with a 10 member expedition team. She reached the pole on January 13, 2019.
- She also hoisted National Flag on South Pole. Her next campaign will be to reach Mt. Denali, Alaska, US. She was also the first lady officer to scale Mt. Vinson Massif.
- She was awarded by Rani Lakshmi Bai Puraskar by Uttar Pradesh Government in March 2015 for being an inspiration to people around. She has done the six of the Seven Summits (climbing the highest peaks of seven continents)



Links:

<http://www.news Bharati.com/Encyc/2019/1/15/Aparna-Kumar-south-pole.html>

New Chief Information Commissioner

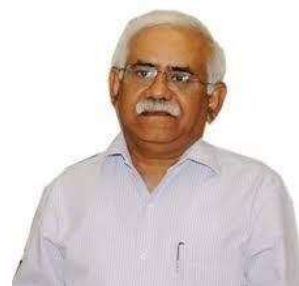
Question: Who is appointed as the new Chief Information Commissioner?

(a) AK Sikri (b) Yashwardhan Kumar Sinha (c) Sudhir Bhargava (d) Suresh Chandra

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 1 January 2019, Sudhir Bhargava took over as the new Chief Information Commissioner of India. President Ram Nath Kovind administered the oath of office to Mr. Bhargava at the swearing-in ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- Along with him, four new members namely Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha, Vanaja N Sarna, Neeraj Kumar Gupta and Suresh Chandra were also administered the oath of office of the Information Commissioner, Central Information Commission (CIC).
- With these fresh appointments, the total number of Information Commissioners went to seven. Four vacancies still remain. Central Information Commission (CIC) is the highest body of appeal under the Right to Information Act.
- Mr. Bhargava is a retired bureaucrat and was formerly Secretary to the Ministry of Social Justice. He will be the ninth Chief of CIC.



Links:

<https://cic.gov.in/sites/default/files/Press%20Release.pdf>

Kader Khan passed away

Question: Kader Khan who passed away was a popular figure of which field?

(a) Films and Theatre (b) Medicine (c) Politics (d) Law

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Veteran afghan born Indian-Canadian actor and screen writer Kader Khan passed away on 31st December in Canada. He was admitted at a private hospital due to prolonged ailments and was kept on ventilator. He was 81 years old.
- However he was a very versatile actor and has enacted many kind of roles but he was mostly remembered for her comic character roles especially in collaboration with actor Govinda during 90s. He was born in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1937 in an ethnic pashtun of the kakar tribe.
- He made his acting debut with Daag of Rajesh Khanna in 1973 and went on to feature in more than 300 films. He also worked as a dilogue writer in over 250 movies.
- He also had collaborations with Manmohan Desai and Prakash Mehra as a screenwriter including movies like Dharam Veer, Ganga Jamuna Saraswati, Sharaabi, Lawaarisand many more. Many prominent actors of Bollywood paid homage to him. PM and President expressed grief on his demise.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=357405>

Awards & Honors

Sanjay Subramanyam won Dan David Prize

Question- Dan David Prize is a prestigious award of which of the following country?

(a) America (b) India (c) Israel (d) France

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Indian Historian Sanjay Subramanyam won the Israel's prestigious Dan David Prize on 10 February 2019.
- The award was given in the category of Past Time Dimension. He has made a fundamental, highly influential contribution to the methodology and practice of macro history.
- Sanjay Subramanyam shared the award in past category with Professor Kenneth Pomeranz of University of Chicago.
- Sanjay Subramanyam is a Professor of history at the University of California in Los Angeles.



Dan David Prize:

- The Dan David Prize is an international award, presented by the Dan David Foundation and headquartered at Tel Aviv University. The award covers three dimensions – Past, Present, and Future.
- The Dan David Prize recognizes and encourages Innovative and interdisciplinary research that cuts across traditional boundaries and paradigms.

Links:

<https://www.dandavidprize.org/>

Amrut Cities-Municipal Corporations of Raigarh, Ambikapur, and Kumbakonam Bag Top Swachhata Excellence Awards

Question: Which Amrut City got the first prize of Swachhata Excellence Awards 2019?

(a) Raigarh (b) Ambikapur (c) Kumbakonam (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) cities and Municipal Corporations of Raigarh, Ambikapur and Kumbakonam have bagged the first, second and third prizes respectively of Swachhata Excellence Awards 2019.
- Nagar Palika Parishad Jashpur Nagar, Malappuram Municipality, and Nagar Palika Parishad Surajpur have claimed the prizes in the category of Statutory Towns.
- For Million Plus Cities, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has been awarded with first prize.
- For Aspirational Districts, Chas Municipal Corporation has been awarded with a consolation prize.
- A total of 40 awards were distributed to the Area Level Federations (ALFs), City Livelihoods Federations (CLFs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- 28 ALFs received Swachhata Excellence Awards, out of these 13 ALFs were conferred first prize of Rs. 2 lakh each, 10 ALFs were given second prize of Rs. 1.50 lakh each and 1 ALF was given third prizes of Rs. 1 lakh.
- 4 ALFs received consolation awards of Rs. 1 lakh each.
- 4 CLFs received national awards; **Rs 2.50 lakhs** was given to **1 CLF**; **Rs 2.0 Lakhs** was given to **1 CLF** and **2CLFs** received **Rs 1.50 Lakhs**.
- New learning resources prepared by the DAY-NULM Technical Support Unit, set up by Urban Management Center, Ahmedabad and supported by the Bill & Melinda gates Foundation were released. These included Urban Livelihoods e-Learning and Resource Network (U-LEARN),



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1564790>

Sportstar Aces Award 2019

Question: Which Indian player has been conferred Sportsman of the Year (Cricket) at the Sportstar Aces Awards?

(a)Virat Kohli (b)Jasprit Bumrah (c)Both a & b (d)MS Dhoni

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 14 February 2019, Indian men's team captain Virat Kohli and seamer Jasprit Bumrah have been conferred Sportsman of the Year (Cricket) at the Sportstar Aces Awards.



- Australian spin legend and Rajasthan Royals brand ambassador Shane Warne presented the award to Kohli while Bumrah received the award from former BCCI president and ICC's first independent chairman, Shashank Manohar.
- At present, Virat Kohli is at first spot in the ICC Test and ODI batting rankings while Jasprit Bumrah holds first position in the ODI bowler rankings.

Links:

<https://sportstar.thehindu.com/aces-awards/sportstar-aces-awards-virat-kohli-bumrah-shane-warne/article26269846.ece>

National Selection Committee finalizes names for Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019

Question: Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 awards is conferred by which of the following?

- (a) President of India (b) Prime Minister of India (c) Speaker of Lok Sabha
(d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 16th January 2019, National Selection Committee under the Chairpersonship of Women & Child Development (WCD) Minister has finalized the names of awardees for Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 to be given away by Honorable President of India.
- The National Selection Committee also finalized the names of two individuals (for Bal Shakti Puruskar award) and three institutions/individuals (for Bal Kalyan Puraskar) working for children; under National Child Welfare Awards category.
- These awards are given to children for their extraordinary achievement in the fields of innovation, scholastic, sports, arts, culture, social service, music or any other field deserving recognition.
- The WCD (Women & Child development) Ministry has shortlisted twenty six awardees including one joint award for Bal Shakti Puraskar under the category of innovation, scholastic, sports, arts & culture, social service and bravery.
- In past, the Bravery awards were organized by an NGO named ICCW, after the financial integrity of ICCW was questioned by Delhi High Court, the Government dissociated itself from ICCW and remodeled the scheme of National Awards for children in 2018 to include Bravery as an extra component in the Pradhan Mantri National Children Awards.
- The Ministry had launched a portal 'National Children Award' for receiving online applications from across country throughout the year.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1560240>

Haryana announces Shaurya Award for Students

Question: Which Indian State has announced Shaurya Awards for students?

- (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Haryana (d) Maharashtra

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 16 January 2019, Chief Minister of Haryana Manohar Lal Khattar announced the Shaurya Awards for students in the name of 71 state police martyrs. The award would be given to a student for courageous deeds every year in the block, in which the school is located where the martyr had studied during his childhood.

- The Shaurya Awards includes prize money of Rupees 11000.
- Addressing the family members of Haryana Police martyrs at National Police Memorial in Delhi CM also declared the construction of a state-level police memorial in the state of Haryana & issued the book titled "Martyrs of Haryana police".
- Ex-gratia grant which is being given to family members of police personnel has been enhanced from Rs10 lakh to Rs 30 lakh.
- Apart from this assistance under government policy, financial aid of Rs 30 lakh is also given under a special agreement of accidental death insurance cover with HDFC bank and as a result family of a police martyr gets financial assistance of Rs 60 lakhs.



Links:

<https://www.newsx.com/national/india-news-haryana-shaurya-samman-early-assembly-elections-manohar-lal-khattar-chandigarh>

Gandhi Peace Prize Announced

Question: Who is awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize of 2018?

- (a) Ekal Abhiyan Trust (b) Akshaya Patra Foundation (c) Vivekananda Kendra (d) Yohei Sasakawa**

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Central Government announced the winners of prestigious Gandhi Peace Prize. The awardees for year 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 were announced jointly by the government as it was unawarded for last four years.



Awardees:

- Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, Goodwill Ambassador of United Nations and Chairman of Nippon Foundation was awarded with Gandhi Peace Prize of 2018 for his voluntary contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India as well as across the world.
- The prize for the year 2017 was given to Ekal Abhiyan Trust for their contribution in providing Education for Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender and Social Equality.
- Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sulabh International were jointly given the award for 2016. Akshaya Patra Foundation has immensely contributed in providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India while Sulabh International has contributed in improving the sanitation facility and hygiene as well as emancipation of manual scavengers.
- The award for 2015 was conferred to Vivekananda Kendra, Kanya Kumari for their contribution in rural development, education, development of natural resources.
- These awardees were selected unanimously by a jury consisting of PM Narendra Modi, Chief Justice of India, Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Khadge and Member of Parliament Lal Krishna Advani.
- Gandhi Peace Prize Award was instituted in the year 1995 on 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The awardees are awarded with Rs. 1 crore, a citation in a scroll, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handloom item.
- Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania was the first recipient of this award in 1995. ISRO was the last recipient of this award for the year 2014.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187551>

Chhatra Vishwakarma Awards and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) Awards

Question: Chhatra Vishwakarma Awards and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) Awards were distributed recently. The event was organized by-

(a) HRD Ministry (b) AICTE (c) IIT Chennai (d) IIM Ahmedabad

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 21st January 2019; The Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu presented the 2nd ChhatraVishwakarma Awards to students and their mentors, and the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) Awards to institutions working for the development of adopted village.
- The event was organized by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) at New Delhi.

ChhatraVishwakarma Awards:

- The Awards are aimed for motivating young individuals, inspiring leaders and institutions/ organizations to recognize and applaud the innovations and achievements of individuals as well as institutions.
- This year AICTE in association with Engineering Council of India (ECI) and the Indian Society for Technical Education (ISTE) announced the 2nd AICTE-ECI-ISTE ChhatraVishwakarma Awards 2018 under the theme “Empowerment of Villages through Technologies”.



Categories and the Recipients:

- Any other Rural Appropriate Technologies: Army Institute of Technology, Maharashtra.
- Education, Skill Initiative & Startups: Gokaraju Rangaraju Institute of Engineering and Technology, Telangana.
- Rural Craft & Livelihood, Rural Infrastructure, Tourism: Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering, Andhra Pradesh.
- Agriculture & Food: Sri Krishna College of Technology, Tamil Nadu.
- Water & Irrigation: Aditya Engineering College, Andhra Pradesh.
- Sanitation & Solid Liquid Waste Management: Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Tamil Nadu.

Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) Awards:

- Sansad Adarsh GramYojana (SAGY) was launched in October 2014 with the aim to translate the comprehensive vision of Mahatma Gandhi of an ideal Indian village. The institution which are located in proximity and are working hard for the development of the adopted village; these institution are being encouraged by AICTE under the theme Developed Village-Developed Nation.
- Under the award out of the 24 shortlisted applications, College of Technology and Engineering Udaipur, Rajasthan was awarded with first rank, Seethi Sahib Memorial Polytechnic College, Tirur, Kerala was honoured with second rank while Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu secured third position.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187649>

Operations & Campaign

Web-WonderWomen Campaign

Question: Which of the following ministry/organization is responsible for the campaign 'wonder women campaign'?

- (a) NITI Aayog (b) Ministry of Tribal Affairs (c) Ministry of Women and Child Development
(d) A and C Both

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 9 January 2019, Ministry of Women and Child development has launched an online campaign, '#www: Web- WonderWomen' in New Delhi.
- This campaign aims to discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been driving positive agenda of social change via social media.
- Ministry have partnered with Breakthrough and Twitter India.
- Nominations have been invited in a large number of categories including Health, Media, Literature, Art, Sports, environmental protection, and fashion among others across the globe.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187372>

WAQF Properties for Social Empowerment

Question: Consider the following statement in reference to the campaign led by Central Government to utilize WAQF properties:

- 1) The property will be used for socio-economic empowerment of the needy sections
- 2) The central government under Skill India has constructed many schools, colleges etc. on the property on WAQF
- 3) The government has expanded the development programmes for Minority to 308 districts
- 4) The Central Government is also awarding those Mutawallis who are performing well in management of WAQF properties

Choose the correct options:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 2, 3 and 4 (c) 1, 3 and 4
(d) All of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Union Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has successfully been carrying forward the campaign to utilise WAQF properties across the country for socio-economic empowerment of the needy sections.



- Report of a five member committee headed by retired Justice Zakiullah Khan for reviewing waqf property leased rule was also presented to the Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi.

Developmental Works done:

- The “Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karykram” (PMJVK) has constructed schools, colleges, ITIs, skill development centres, multi-purpose community centres, Sadbhav Mandap, Hunar Hub, hospitals, business centres etc on WAQF properties across the country.
- The districts identified for Minorities Development has also increased to 308 districts and campaign for educational empowerment of girls from minority community has started across 308 districts of country for the first time.
- 308 districts, 870 blocks, 331 towns and thousands of villages have been covered under PMJVK accelerating the properties for the benefit of society. There are around 5.76 lakh registered waqf properties across the country.
- The Central Government is awarding those “Mutawallis” who are performing well in management of WAQF properties to ensure utilisation of these properties for betterment of the society especially educational empowerment of girls.
- Central WAQF Council is also helping state waqf boards in complete digitalization of records. One-man “Board of Adjudication” has been established at the Central level under the chairmanship of retired Supreme Court justice for the purpose of dealing with complaints regarding waqf properties.

About WAQF Board

- A WAQF is a charitable donation mentioned in Islamic law and done mostly in the form of building, plot, land and other assets for Muslim religious and charitable purpose with no intention to reclaim it. There are various State WAQF Boards as well as a Central WAQF Board which looks after and administer these properties.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1560348>

Commission & Committee

Committee of Expert by Ministry of Defence

Question: Which of the following committee of experts was constituted by Ministry of Defence to enhance combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure of the armed forces?

- (a) Bezbaruah Committee (b) Shekatkar Committee (c) Nanawati Committee (d) Jaiprakash Committee**

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The Committee of Experts (CoE) constituted by the Ministry of Defence under the chairmanship of Lt. Gen (Retd) DB Shekatkar to recommend measures to enhance combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure of the armed forces, submitted its report in December 2016.
- A total of 99 recommendations were forwarded for implementation to concerned agencies / stake holders.



Recommendations:

- Optimization of Signals Establishments to include Radio Monitoring Companies, Corps Air Support Signal Regiments, Air Formation Signal Regiments, Composite Signal Regiments and merger of Corps Operating and Engineering Signal Regiments.
- Restructuring of repair echelons in the Army to include Base Workshops, Advance Base Workshops and Static / Station Workshops in the field Army.
- Redeployment of Ordnance echelons to include Vehicle Depots, Ordnance Depots and Central Ordnance Depots apart from streamlining inventory control mechanisms.
- Better utilization of Supply and Transportation echelons and Animal Transport units.
- Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.
- Enhancement in standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.
- Improving the efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188022>

Planning & Project

Pahari Dam Modernization Project

Question: Pahari Dam is situated on which river?

(a) Dhasan River (b) Yamuna River (c) Ganga River (d) Kaveri River

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 15th February 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid Foundation Stone of various development projects in Jhansi, U.P.
- PM inaugurated Pahari Dam Modernization Project. Pahari Dam is a water storage dam situated on Dhasan River in Jhansi district. The project will benefit farmers by reducing the water leakage from the dam and make more water available for the farmers.
- He laid the foundation stone of Defence corridor in Jhansi. Jhansi is the six nodal points of the Uttar Pradesh defence corridor.
- PM laid Foundation Stone of Piped Water Scheme for the rural areas of Bundelkhand Region.
- PM laid the foundation Stone of Jhansi City Drinking Water Scheme Phase-II.
- He also laid the foundation stone of doubling of 425-kilometer long Jhansi-Manikpur and Bhimsen-Khairar railway lines and Coach Refurbishing Workshop in Jhansi.
- The PM inaugurated the electrification of 297 kilometer long section of Jhansi-Khairar section.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1564810>

HRD Minister launches Operation Digital Board

Question: Which of the following statement is incorrect related to Operation Digital Board launched recently by Prakash Javadekar?

- (a) It will make teaching process interactive
- (b) It will leverage technology for boosting quality education
- (c) The digital board will be introduced all over the country in the private and government aided schools from class 9th onwards
- (d) The process will begin from the coming session of 2019

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 20th February, 2019; Minister of Human Resource Development, Prakash Javadekar launched Operation Digital Board.
- Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, the Minister announced that Operation Digital Board will be revolutionary step; which will make the learning as well as the teaching process interactive and it will popularize flipped learning as a pedagogical approach.
- The digital board will be introduced all over the country in Government and Government Aided Schools from class 9th onwards as well as in higher education institutions.
- The process will begin from the coming session of 2019 itself. He further said that The Minister explained that ODB aims at converting a class room into a digital class room.
- It will also help in provisioning of personalized adaptive learning as well as intelligent tutoring in addition to availability of e-resources at any time and at any place to the students. This will be done by exploiting emerging technologies like Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence & Data Analytics. An expert committee has worked out optimum configuration of the Digital Class Rooms under ODB.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188812>

Cabinet approves Patna Metro Rail Project

Question: Recently the Union Cabinet has approved Patna Metro Rail Project having two Metro Rail Corridors. Name the two stations between which one of the Metro Rail Project runs?

- (a) Danapur to Mithapur (b) Jahanabad to Darbhanga (c) Muzaffarpur to Madhubani
(d) Arrah to Chhapra

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 13th February, 2019, Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved Patna Metro Rail Project having **two** Metro Rail Corridors, namely (i) **Danapur to Mithapur** (ii) **Patna Railway Station to New ISBT (Inter State Bus Terminus)** at an estimated cost of Rs 13,365.77 crore.
- The Project will be completed in **5 years**.
- Danapur Cantt to Mithapur corridor will pass through the heart of city and connect densely populated areas such as **Raza Bazar, Secretariat, High Court, and Law University Railway Station**.
- The length of Danapur to Mithapur corridor is **16.94 km**, which is mostly underground (11.20 km) and partly elevated (5.48 km) and comprises of **11 Stations (3-Elevated and 8-Underground)**.
- Patna Jn. to ISBT corridor will connect **Gandhi Maidan, PMCH, Patna University, Rajendra Nagar, Mahatma Gandhi Setu, Transport Nagar and ISBT**.
- The length of Patna Station to New ISBT corridor is **14.45 km**, which is mostly elevated (9.9 km) and partly underground (4.55 km) and comprising of **12 stations (9-Elevated and 3-Underground)**.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188587>

Cabinet approves Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase II

Question: What is the total length of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project (Phase II), recently approved by Union Cabinet?

(a) 23.635 km (b) 38.254 km (c) 28.254 km (d) 32.234 km

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 19 February 2019, Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved proposal for developing two corridors for the purpose of Metro Rail Project Phase II.
- Implementation of the project will provide the much-needed additional public transport infrastructure to Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar.
- Implementation of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II, includes two corridors of total length 28.254 at a total completion cost of Rs. 5384.17 crores.
- **Corridor 1** extends from **Motera Stadium to Mahatma Mandir** for a length of 22.838 km.
- **Corridor 2** extends from **GNLU to GIFT City** for a length of 5.416 km.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188789>

Sustainable Catchment Forest Management Launched in Tripura

Question: Recently Chief Minister of which State launched a project for Sustainable Catchment Forest Management?

(a) West Bengal (b) Assam (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Tripura

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- With an aim to improve **forestlands** in **targeted catchment areas** of **Tripura** the Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb launched a project for **Sustainable Catchment Forest Management** at State Forest Academy Ground in **Hatipara** in **West Tripura**.
- In this Project **1,447 check dams** in hilly terrains of **Tripura** will be built. This Project is jointly funded by the **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** and **Government of India**.
- **80 %** of the project would be funded by **JICA** while **20 %** of the project value would be funded by **Govt. of India**. JICA will provide **Rs. 1,000 crores** in a period of **10 years**.
- The water conserved through check dams would be used for **agricultural purposes**, for **fisheries** and **poultry farming** (ducks).
- **Two check-dams** will be built in the upper catchment of hilly rivers in **Baramura Hills** in order to **check seasonal floods** in **Agartala**.
- The State Government will focus on developing **Agar cultivation** and to grow **black pepper, pineapples, bamboo, ginger, betel nut leaves** in large scale in the near future.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/north-east-india/tripura/tripura-launches-project-for-sustainable-catchment-forest-management-5541660/>

NITI Aayog signs SOI with MSDF

Question: NITI Aayog signs Statement of Intent (SOI) with Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) to document Systemic Transformation in which sector?

- (a) Health reform (b) Education reform (c) Employment reform (d) None of the above

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The **NITI Aayog** and **Michael & Susan Dell Foundation** (MSDF) signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) to codify, document and share best practices to improve learning outcomes in **public school education** through systemic reforms, based on their collective experiences of working with various State Governments in India.
- The NITI Aayog was established with the core mandate of promoting cooperative and competitive federalism through evidence-based policy reform and knowledge inputs. Since its inception, NITI Aayog has placed learning outcomes as a key focus area for **establishing sustainable education systems**.



Background

- As a part of this push, the School Education Quality Index (SEQI) is being developed to rank States/UTs on educational outcomes, with a high weightage to learning outcomes.
- Further, NITI is implementing the Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital in Education (SATH-E) initiative to induce systemic transformation **in Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha**.
- Nearly 30 million children are reported to have been positively impacted across India through such systemic reforms in education in different states.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1564141>

VAYUSHAKTI-2019

Question: VAYUSHAKTI-2019 held at which of the following place?

- (a) Pokhran, Rajasthan (b) Kalaikunda Air Force Station, West Bengal
(c) Tilpat Range, Delhi (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- VAYUSHAKTI-2019, a mega exercise of Indian Air Force held from 8 – 18 February 2019 at Pokhran, Jaisalmer in Rajasthan. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attended the events.



- In its indigenous firepower demonstration, 140 fighter jets and attack helicopters roared close to the border with Pakistan.
- The exercise witnessed the participation of Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, (LCA) Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Akash (surface-to-air missile) and Astra (air-to-air missile).
- Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and Akash were deployed for the first time in a military exercise.
- A total of 137 aircrafts including MIG-29, Jaguars, Su-30s, Mirage 2000s fighters as well as transport aircraft such as Hercules AN-32 and helicopters participated in the exercise.
- VAYUSHAKTI is a triennial exercise being conducted from 1953.

Links:

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/vayu-shakti-2019-air-force-jets-helicopters-destroy-targets-in-mega-exercise-in-rajasthan-1994695>

INSTEX

Question: Recently European nations came forward to support Iran against the US sanctions and proposed plan for INSTEX. What is INSTEX?

- (a) Iran Trade promotion plan (b) Oil export plan (c) Visa permit for Iranian citizens
(d) military exercise with Iran

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- **France, Germany and Britain** have set up a **financial mechanism (INSTEX)** designed to **avoid US sanctions against Iran** which keeps the **nuclear deal** alive.
- **INSTEX (Instrument for Support of Trade Exchanges)** will act as a proposed bilateral payment channel from **Europe to Iran**.
- This plan will not be fully operational until later this year.
- This mechanism will be used for **humanitarian supplies** and in later stage will be expanded to help **firms trade**.
- Through the INSTEX trade vehicle, they hope to say European economic sovereignty within the face of Washington's determination to impose its policy on Europe.
- The strategy would at the start specialize in making an attempt to ease the flow of **humanitarian supplies to Iran**.
- Such supplies, **including medicines and foodstuffs**, are not supposed to be subject to US sanctions.
- **Iran Nuclear Deal:**
 - **Earlier in 2015**, Iran agreed a **long-term deal** on its **nuclear programme** with the **P 5+1** group of world powers- the **US, UK, France, China, Russia, and Germany**.
 - **Nuclear deal** signed in **2015** between Iran and was crucial for the security of the region.
 - **EU** refused to follow US last year in **pulling out** of the **2015 nuclear deal**.

Links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

India and Norway launch initiative to combat Marine Pollution

Question: India has launched an initiative to combat Marine Pollution with which of the following country?

(a) USA (b) Israel (c) Norway (d) China

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- On 11 February 2019, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change signed a letter of Intent establishing the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative together with the Norwegian ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- In January, 2019, the Indian and Norwegian governments agreed to work more closely on oceans by signing a MoU and establishing the India-Norway Ocean Dialogue during the Norwegian Prime Minister's visit to India in January.
- A joint Task Force on Blue Economy with government officials, researchers and experts as well as private sector was established to develop sustainable solutions within strategic areas of the blue economy, such as maritime and marine sector in addition to energy sector.
- In partnership, Norway and India will share experiences and competence, and collaborate on efforts to develop clean and healthy oceans, sustainable use of ocean resources and growth in the blue economy.
- Both the governments launched the first Joint initiative under this new partnership.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188383>

Sanction for increased maritime surveillance assets-12 do Aircraft

Question: How many Dornier aircraft were sanctioned in a contract between HAL & Dornier Aircraft Company?

(a) 12 (b) 13 (c) 14 (d) 15

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- The contract for procurement of 12 Dornier Aircraft was signed with HAL (Kanpur) on 29th December, 2016, with delivery scheduled in January 2019.
- Govt of India has sanctioned, three new Naval Air Squadrons to be setup in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.
- Moreover Central Government has also sanctioned manpower towards manning additional aircraft in existing Dornier Surveillance Squadrons in Kerala and Andaman Islands.
- The new Dornier 228 Aircraft is equipped with improved state of the art sensors and equipment which will include glass cockpit, advanced surveillance radar, ELINT, optical sensors and networking features.
- Through improved technology Maritime Domain Awareness of Indian Navy will provide round the clock sensor and it will help in providing target data in areas of operation to ward off terror and other threats from India's vast coastline of over seven thousand kms.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187592>

Proposals for New Atomic Power Plants

Question: How many nuclear power reactors are about to be installed by the year 2031?

(a) 12 (b) 9 (c) 20 (d) 21

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- In a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on 3th January 2019, by the Union Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh informed that twenty one nuclear power reactors, with an installed capacity of 15700 MW are under implementation & anticipated for progressive completion by the year 2031.
- At present, 9 nuclear power reactors are targeted for completion by 2024-25 and 12 more nuclear power reactors have been given administrative approval as well as financial sanction in June 2017.
- The unit size of indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) has already been enhanced from 220 MW to 540 MW.
- Moreover, Light Water Reactors of 1000 MW have also been introduced with foreign cooperation.



Nuclear Power in India:

- Nuclear power is the fifth-largest source of electricity in India after coal, gas, hydroelectricity and wind power.
- At present, India has 22 nuclear reactors in operation in 7 nuclear power plants .Total installed nuclear power capacity in India is 6780 MW.
- In India, there are seven Atomic Power Stations located in Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187135>

I & B Ministry hikes advertisement rates for print media by 25 percent

Question: Information & Broadcasting Ministry hiked the advertisement rates for print media on the recommendation of-

**(a) 8th Rate Structure Committee (b) 9th Rate Structure Committee
(c) 7th Rate Structure Committee (d) 6th Rate Structure Committee**

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Ministry of Information & Broadcasting hiked advertisement rates for print media by 25 percent w.e.f. 8th January, 2019 and will be valid for three years.
- The decision taken was based on the recommendations of the 8th Rate Structure Committee, constituted by I&B Ministry, which took into account several factors including increase in price of news print, processing charges and other factors effecting the computation of advertisement rates.
- The last such revision took place in 2013 when an increase of 19% had been announced over and above the rates of 2010.



Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1559153>

Government drafts five-year action plan to address drug abuse in the country

Question: Recently which ministry of government drafted plan to address drug abuse in the country?

(a) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (b) Ministry of Coal
(c) Ministry of Commerce and Industry (d) Ministry of Communications

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 14th January, 2019, an official in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment notified that a five-year action plan has drafted for addressing the problem of drug and substance abuse in the country.
- The National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2023) aims to employ many faceted strategies — involving education, de-addiction and rehabilitation of affected individuals and their families — to address the issue.
- The move comes after the ministry withdrew the draft National Drug Demand Reduction Policy from the Cabinet. It had been pending for more than five-and-half years and was redrafted twice during the period.
- The Ministry has planned several measures, including co-ordination with implementing agencies for controlling the sale of sedatives, painkillers and muscle relaxant drugs, and checking the online sale of drugs.
- Plans are also afoot for awareness generation through social, print, digital and online media, and engagement of celebrities, involving various govt. & non-govt. institutions besides strengthening the national toll free helpline for drug prevention.
- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has also asked states and union territories to prepare action plan for ensuring facility of de-addiction centres in each district or as per prevalence of addiction and also establish separate and specialized de-addiction treatment centres.
- Modules for re-treatment, ongoing treatment and post-treatment of addicts of different categories and age groups will be developed as a part of the plan.



Links: https://www.nhp.gov.in/sites/default/files/pdf/draft_national_health_policy_2015.pdf

India signed 11 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with Afghanistan

Question: Recently India signed 11 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with Afghanistan for 26 projects worth-

(a) 10.5 million dollars (b) 5.5 million dollars (c) 11.5 million dollars (d) 9.5 million dollars

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- India signed 11 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with Afghanistan for 26 projects worth 9.5 million dollars.
- These MoUs were signed in the field of infrastructure, public services such as health clinics and governance-related projects.
- The projects will amplify economic opportunities for women for seven provinces of Afghanistan namely Balkh, Ghor, Herat, Kabul, Bamyan, Badghis and Kapisa.
- It will help local communities in education, employment and livelihood generation and capacity building.



- Since 2001, projects worth over \$2 billion has been undertaken by India in Afghanistan.
- These projects are part of 577 Development Projects being funded by India for 2005-2021 worth \$120 million.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-signs-11-mous-worth-9-5-million-with-afghanistan/articleshow/67617756.cms>

Contracts signed by armed forces under Make in India programme

Question: Contracts signed by armed forces under Make in India programme instructs HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) to manufacture platforms like-

(a) Sukhoi Aircraft, Light Combat Aircraft (b) Dornier Aircraft, Advance Light Helicopter

(c) Chetak and Cheetal Helicopter (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- On 7 January 2019, Union Minister of State, Ministry of Defence Dr. Subhash Bhamre Informed in Rajya Sabha that Capital procurement of defence equipment is carried out as per the extant Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP).
- DPP-2016 focuses on institutionalizing, streamlining and simplifying defence procurement procedure to give boost to 'Make in India' initiative of the Government of India by promoting indigenous design, development and manufacturing of defence equipment, robust platforms, systems and sub-systems.
- At present, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has firm orders to manufacture platforms like Sukhoi Aircraft, Light Combat Aircraft, Dornier Aircraft, Advance Light Helicopter, Chetak and Cheetal Helicopter which are likely to be executed in the near future.
- During the last three years and current year (upto October, 2018), out of total 188 contracts, 121 contracts have been signed with Indian vendors including DPSUs / PSUs / OFB and private vendors for capital procurement of defence equipment for Armed Forces.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1558894>

Cabinet approves MoU between India & Australia on the safety in Mines, Testing & Research Station

Question: Name the Australian Research Station which signed MOU with DGMS (Directorate General of Mines Safety), in context of safety in mines recently?

(a) SIMTARS (b) Casey (c) Davis (d) Mawson

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 16th January 2019, Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DGMS & SIMTARS.
- SIMTARS (Safety in Mines, Testing and Research Station) is the Australian Research Station involved with DGMS (Directorate General of Mines Safety), in context of Memorandum of Understanding between India & Australia on the safety in mines.
- The memorandum of understanding will become operative from the date of signing and remain in effect for three years.



Key points of MOU:

- To implement risk based safety management system, providing training,
- organizing, conference, seminar and other technical meetings, setting up occupations safety and health academy and national mine disaster centre, and
- Modernizing R&D laboratory of DGMS.

Facts about mining in Australia:

- Mining accident rates in Australia is the lowest in the world.
- Australia has pioneered in conceptualizing and implementing risk based Safety Management Plans for the mining sector using the technique of hazard identification and risk assessment.
- SIMTARS is known to have exclusive expertise in Mines Safety Management Systems.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1560118>

Bureau of Energy Efficiency & CPWD signs MoU on promoting energy efficiency in buildings

Question: Recently, Bureau of Energy Efficiency & CPWD signed MoU on promoting energy efficiency in buildings. It aims to save energy with operational savings of nearly-
 (a) More than 260 million units; 100 crores (b) More than 250 million units; 90 crores
 (c) More than 230 million units; 60 crores (d) More than 200 million units; 50 crores

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 10 January 2019, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) kick starting cooperation in building energy efficiency.



Key features of MoU:

- Cooperate on promoting designs and construction of Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) compliant new buildings.
- Star rating of CPWD managed buildings across the country with no registration or renewal fee.
- Awareness on energy efficiency in building sector and support for capacity building of CPWD officials in ECBC.

Other Highlights:

- Recently, ECO Niwas Samhita 2018 an Energy Conservation Building Code for residential buildings was launched to push for energy efficiency in residential sector. The code also aims for promoting design and construction of homes including apartments and townships.
- Commercial building sector in India is expanding rapidly at over 9% per year triggered largely by the strong growth in the services sector.
- It has been estimated that more than 50% of building stock that will exist in the year 2030 is yet to come up in the country.
- The Star rating Programme (in terms specific energy usage in kwh/sqm/year) is being implemented to provide a public recognition to energy efficient buildings.
- On a scale 1-5, 5 being labeled as most efficient.
- Numerous categories of buildings such as Day Use Office Buildings, BPOs, Shopping Malls and Hospitals in the five climatic zones have been identified under the scheme.
- In the preliminary stage approximately 150 buildings will be taken under star rating scheme and to promote energy efficiency in CPWD managed buildings.
- It is expected that this initiative will result in energy saving of more than 260 million units in the first stage with operational savings of about Rs 100 crore.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187394>

Conference

Two Day One Health India Conference Inaugurated in New Delhi

Question: On 18th February, 2019; Dr. Harsh Vardhan Union Science & Technology Minister inaugurated the two day One Health India Conference, 2019. The subject matter “One Health” deals with-

- (a) Health of at least one member per family (b) Treatment Provided for only one disease
(c) Human and animal health together (d) Human and animal health separately

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 18th February, 2019; Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Science & Technology Minister inaugurated the two day One Health India Conference, 2019, in New Delhi.
- The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology in partnership with other related Departments organized this One Health India Conference.
- The conference plans to launch India's new One Health Initiative – an intersectoral approach to tackling the most urgent health threats in India as well as in low and middle income countries across South and South East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- One Health deals with human and animal health together in interaction with the environment in an integrated manner. The Union Minister further stated that there is an urgent need for protecting the global health and secure livelihoods to address One Health.
- The main objective of the conference is to formulate a roadmap for the response, preparedness, and management of current regional, national and global health challenges using a One Health collaborative approach.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188686>

2nd ASEAN Youth Summit

Question: In which of the following city 2nd ASEAN Youth Summit has been organized between 3rd February and 7th February, 2019?

(a) Bengaluru (b) Mumbai (c) New Delhi (d) Guwahati

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- India Foundation and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (MEA) organized the 2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit on the theme “Connectivity: Pathway to Shared Prosperity” in Guwahati from 3-7 February 2019.
- The 1st India-ASEAN Youth Summit (themed on Shared Values) was organized in 2017 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership in 2017.
- This summit provided a platform for youth leaders of both India and ASEAN to engage with each other to develop a resilient and symbiotic relationship between countries.
- This confluence of youth leaders from India and the ten ASEAN countries – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam led to a shared understanding of the challenges which are faced and the actions that is required to be taken to restore and nourish connectivity in all dimensions within the region.
- Promising young leaders were represented by some of the largest institutions in their respective countries including political parties, think-tanks, media and cultural organizations.
- Brainstorming events were organized over the course of five days mentored by thought leaders from the region.
- Connectivity with ASEAN in all its dimensions—physical, institutional and people-to-people continues to be a strategic priority for India.



Links:

<http://youthsummit.indiafoundation.in/>

1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference 2019

Question: Consider the following statements:

1) 1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference 2019 was held in New Delhi.

2) Its motive was to explore a broad range of human rights issues of reference in the Asia Pacific region.

3) LAWASIA is a regional association of lawyers, judges, jurists and legal organizations.

On the basis of the above given facts which of the following alternatives are true:

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All 1,2,3

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 9th February, 2019, a two-day, 1st LAWASIA Human Rights Conference in New Delhi was hosted by LAWASIA, in association with the Bar Association of India.
- Its motive was to explore a broad range of human rights issues of relevance in the Asia Pacific region.
- The Conference will focus on topics ranging from Gender, Sexuality and Human Rights to Climate Change, Water Conflicts and Human Rights.
- The theme of the conference was, “State Power, Business and Human Rights: Contemporary Challenges.”



- The conference aims to provide a unique opportunity for lawyers and associated professional members to exchange insight and expertise on topics of significant importance to all.
- It is remarkable that LAWASIA is a regional association of lawyers, judges, jurists and legal organizations.
- It advocates for the interests and concerns of the Asia Pacific legal profession.

Links:

<https://www.lawasia.asn.au/1st-human-rights-conference-2019>

International Conference and Exhibition on Energy and Environment

Question: President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated International Conference and Exhibition of which of the following?

- (a) Foreign Direct Investment (b) Waste Water Management (c) Clean Air in Metro Cities
(d) Energy and Environment



Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 20th February, 2019; President, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the International Conference and Exhibition on Energy and Environment in New Delhi. The 3 day conference was organized by **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**.
- The conference aims to deliberate and identify the R&D needs to innovate new techniques, technologies and applications for clean, safe, symbiotic sustenance of society, environment, energy and industries in post-2020 era.
- Around 1000 delegates consisting of policy makers, regulators, thought leaders, managers, entrepreneurs, administrators, practicing engineers and Environmentalist etc. from India and abroad participated in the conference.
- During the 3 day Conference, an **Industrial Exhibition** was also organized at Vigyan Bhawan. It was inaugurated by Union Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan.
- About 200 papers were deliberated in the Conference which included 9 keynote papers and 150 oral presentations and 50 poster presentations.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188808>

CREDAI 3rd YOUTHCON

Question: CREDAI 3rd YouthCon -2019 held in which city?

(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Bangalore (d) Chandigarh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The 3rd YouthCon (annual Youth Conclave of CREDAI), was held in New Delhi during 13th and 14th February, 2019.
- The “**CREDAI Youth Wing**” – CYW was formed to bring together the next generation of real estate builders and developers and also to groom and nurture to become better professionals, ethical businessmen and true leaders in Real Estate.
- The CREDAI Youth Wing also aims to inculcate strong values by providing learning based environment. It will ensure leaders of tomorrow will be well informed and knowledgeable with an open-mind and having strongest of the business values.
- The **theme** for this YouthCon is ‘**NexGEN – Next Generation**’. This conclave provides the youth of the industry with infinite opportunities to grow, infinite opportunities to learn and a platform for them to present their infinite thoughts.
- This conclave aims to enlighten the young mind of next generation of real estate builders and developers and share their new age thinking and approach.



About CREDAI:

- **Confederation of Real Estate Developers’ Association of India** (CREDAI) is the apex body representing **12,500** private Real Estate developers spread across **23** state level chapters and **205** cities in India.
- It was established in 1999 and seeks to create a favorable policy climate to ensure housing for all. CREDAI specially articulates the concerns of private housing providers.

Links:

<https://credai.org/youthcon>

INTERNATIONAL SPICE CONFERENCE 2019

Question: Name the city where International Spice Conference took place recently?

(a) Chennai (b) Coimbatore (c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- **Fourth International Spice Conference (ISC 2019)** held at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre in **Hyderabad** from January 28 to 31, 2019.
- The **theme** for the conference (**ISC 2019**) was ‘**Challenges of Change- Redefining the Value Chain**’.
- This conference provided a platform to business houses, spice associations, policy makers, farmers and the end users to address and interact the concerns and imbalances of the industry in the city of pearls, the silicon valley of India.
- Earlier **third international spice conference (ISC 2018)** held in **Jaipur** last year.



Links:

<https://www.internationalspiceconference.com/>

Workshop on Public sector Enterprises on CSR held

Question: Workshop on Public sector Enterprises on CSR held at which of the following place?

(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Jaipur (d) Patna

Answer : (a)

Related facts:

- On 9 January 2019, Workshop on Public sector Enterprises on CSR was held under the patronage of the National Water Mission (NWM), in partnership with the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) at New Delhi.
- Approximately, around thirty to thirty five Navratna Companies and other Public sector Units were present in the workshop along with Corporates such as Reliance Foundation and organizations like TERI, CII Water Institute etc.
- During the workshop NMCG (National Mission for Clean Ganga) showcased the efforts being carried out for Ganga Resurgence, which primarily aim at a holistic vision of restoring the wholesomeness of Ganga through attaining Nirmalta and Aviralta.
- Namami Gange Program launched in 2015, is an integrated Ganga conservation mission, which has made significant strides and achieved key milestones during 2018-19.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187361>

12th Regional Standards Conclave

Question: 12th Regional Standards Conclave held in which city?

(a) Bhubaneswar, Odisha (b) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (c)

Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

(d) New Delhi

Answer : (a)

Related facts:



- The BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) Act 2016 lays down the framework for Standards development and delivery in India.
- The products, process, the service, delivered in the country, should be of high quality and meet the expectation of both consumers and producers as informed by Director General, BIS, Ms. Surina Rajan, while addressing the inaugural session of 12th Regional Standards Conclave in Odisha.
- She informed that BIS (National Standards Body), is committed to deliver quality assurance and standards' solutions not only for exports but also for the consumers within the country.
- Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Government of India, Mr Sudhanshu Pandey informed that the Global trade in goods is valued at USD 18 trillion and Services trade is worth USD 5 trillion.
- At present India is a USD 2.6 trillion economy.

- MSMEs need to adopt standards. We have almost 3.7 lakhs MSME's, 300 exporters and 356 startups, who need to be made aware of following the right standards to boost their turnover and profits.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187981>

25th edition of Partnership Summit

Question: 25th edition of Partnership Summit took place in which of the following City?

(a) New Delhi (b) Hyderabad (c) Pune (d) Mumbai

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 12- 13th Jan. 2019 the 25th edition of Partnership Summit took place in the city of Mumbai.
- It was inaugurated by Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu.
- The summit is a global platform for dialogue, debate, deliberation and engagement among Indian and global leaders on economic policy and growth trends in India.
- The summit will expectedly build new partnership and explore investment opportunities through high level exchanges and B2B (Business to Business) meetings and will showcase India in the present landscape of an emerging “New India”, the “New Global Economic Address”.
- The summit was organized by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, State Government of Maharashtra and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- Minister of Commerce and Civil Aviation Suresh Prabhu presided over as Chair of the Summit and delivered keynote address in starting session.
- The topics discussed in the session include Partnering with New India, Reforms and Deregulations, The Infra Exchange and The Inclusion Dynamics. It also witnessed discussions over critical sectoral series like Innovations, India 4.0: AI, Big Data, Agri and Food Processing, Healthcare, Tourism, Defence and Renewable Energy etc.
- Suresh Prabhu also held bilateral dialogues with officials of various nations who took part in the summit.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187433>

Law & Justice

Personal Laws (Amendment) Bill 2018

Question: Consider the following statements:

- 1) Personal Laws (Amendment) Bill 2018 has been passed by the Parliament
- 2) Bill seeks to remove leprosy as a ground for divorce as it is curable
- 3) India is a signatory to a UN resolution which calls for elimination of discrimination against persons suffering from Leprosy

On the basis of the above given facts which of the following alternative/s are true:

- (a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Only 3 (d) All 1,2 3

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 13th February 2019, Parliament has passed the Personal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018 Rajya Sabha approving it without discussion.
- It is remarkable that the Lok Sabha has passed the bill in the last session.
- The Personal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018 seeks to remove leprosy as a ground for divorce in five personal laws – (1) Hindu Marriage Act 1955 (2) Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act 1939 (3) Divorce Act 1869 (4) Special Marriage Act 1955 and (5) Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act 1956.
- The Law Commission in its report had recommended repeal of laws and provisions which were discriminatory against leprosy affected people.
- Before this landmark decision, people affected by leprosy were equated with those experiencing mental illness under several Marriage Acts and the Indian Divorce Act.
- India has ratified UN Resolution A/HRC/15/30 which spells out principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members.



Links:

<https://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/personal-laws-amendment-bill-2018>

Cinematograph Amendment Bill, 2019

Question: Recently introduced Cinematograph Amendment Bill, 2019 has made provision of imprisonment up to ——— years for violation of the Act.

- (a) 3 years (b) 5 years (c) 7 years (d) 9 years

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 12th February 2019, Union Minister Mr Ravi Shankar Prasad informed that Union Cabinet approved the proposal of **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I & B)** for introducing the **Cinematograph Amendment Bill, 2019** to amend to the **Cinematograph Act, 1952**. The Bill was introduced in **Rajya Sabha**.
- According to **Cinematograph Amendment Bill, 2019** the government has proposed to make **Film Piracy Offences** punishable with imprisonment **up to 3 years** or with a fine which may extend up to **Rs.10 Lakhs**, or with both.
- This **Bill seeks to amend provisions of Cinematograph Act, 1952 in order to tackle film piracy** by including **penal provisions** for unauthorized camcording and duplication of films.



Links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2018

Question: The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2018 seeks to amend which of the following?

- (a) The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1959
- (b) The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1967
- (c) The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950
- (d) The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1978

Answer:(c)

Related facts:



- On 2 January 2019, Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the introduction of the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2018 in the Parliament for certain amendments in the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 so as to modify the list of Scheduled Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Listed community members of state in the revised list of Scheduled Tribes will derive benefits meant for STs under the existing schemes of the Government.

Changes made in list of STs of Arunachal Pradesh:

- Deletion of 'Abor' in serial No. 1, as it is the same as 'Adi' in Serial No. 16 for removal of duplication.
- Replace Tai Khamti' instead of 'Khampti' at serial No. 6 as there is no such tribe.
- Inclusion of 'Mishmi-Kaman' (Miju Mishmi), Idu (Mishmi) and Taraon (Digaru Mishmi) in serial No. 8 as existing entry "Mishmi" is no such community.
- Inclusion of Monpa, Memba, Sartang, Sajolong (Miji) in serial No. 9 in lieu of 'Momba' as these are the only Naga tribes in the State.
- Inclusion of 'Nocte', "Tangsa", Tutsa', 'Wancho' in lieu of 'Any Naga Tribes' in serial No. 10 in list of Scheduled Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh as these are the only Naga tribes in the State.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187069>

The Right of children to free & Compulsory education (Amendment) Act, 2019

Question: In context of, the Right of children to free & Compulsory education (Amendment) Act, 2019 which has been notified recently in the Gazette of India, there shall be a regular examination for which classes at the end of every academic year?

- (a) Fifth & Eighth (b) Fourth & Sixth (c) Fourth & Ninth (d) Fifth & Ninth

Answer :(a)

Related facts:

- On 10th January 2019, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Act, 2019 received the assent of the President of India and has been notified in the Gazette of India. It was passed by the Parliament on 3rd January 2019.
- Right of children to free & Compulsory Education (Amendment) Act, 2019 abolishes the no-detention policy in schools (automatic promotion) unlike guaranteed by RTE Act, 2009 regarding elementary education (Class 1-8).



- Four sections have been substituted in the section 16 of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.
- As of now provisions made by amended act, there shall be a regular examination for Fifth & Eighth classes at the end of every academic year.
- Child failing the examination shall be given additional opportunity for re-examination within a period of two months provided with two-month remedial teaching from the date of declaration of the result. Children failing the re-exam would be left to the States to decide whether to continue the no-detention policy.
- This move was supported by 25 states, as per Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (the Act) provisions for free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1560225>

National River Ganga Bill

Question: The National River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection and Management) Bill 2018 provides for the constitution which corps as an armed forces of the union?

**(a) Ganga Protection Corps (b) Ganga Raksha Putra (c) Ganga Raksha Bal
(d) Ganga Swacchagrahi**

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Draft of “The National River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection and Management) Bill 2018” provides for the constitution of Ganga Protection Corps as armed forces of the union.
- The Ganga Protection Corps is proposed to be empowered to arrest or caused to be arrested for offence under the Act, and to take the person to the nearest police station.
- The Court would take cognizance of the offence on the basis of the complaint filed by the officers who are authorised under the proposed Act.
- The draft Act contemplates certain provisions conferring powers to the “National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection and Management of River Ganga” to arrange to carry out or caused to be carried out impact assessment of certain projects and activities which affect or are likely to affect the flow of water in river Ganga, such as building barrages, deforestation on hill slopes, hydroelectric projects etc.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188011>

Lok Sabha passes DNA technology (Use & Application) Regulation Bill-2019

Question: The key component of the DNA Technology (Use & Application) Regulation Bill-2019 are-

**(a) Establishment of a DNA Regulatory Board
(b) Accreditation of DNA laboratories undertaking DNA testing, analyzing
(c) Establishment of the National and Regional DNA Data Banks (d) All of the above**

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 8 January 2019, Lok Sabha passed “The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill – 2019.”
- This Bill aims to establish DNA-based forensic technology which is efficient in strengthening Justice delivery system of the country; for solving crimes; to identify missing persons; to identify offenders; to identify person under trials and to know more about unknown deceased persons.
- DNA (Deoxy-Ribo nucleic Acid) Technology assures that the DNA test results are reliable, and the data remain protected from misuse or abuse in terms of the privacy rights of our citizens.
- The key components of “The DNA Technology (Use & Application) Regulation Bill-2019” include; establishment of a DNA Regulatory Board; accreditation of DNA laboratories undertaking DNA testing; analyzing, establishment of the National and Regional DNA Data Bank and to assist in forensic investigations.
- This will aid in scientific up-gradation and streamlining of the DNA testing activities in the country with appropriate inputs from the DNA Regulatory Board which would be set up for the purpose.
- The Bill will add value in empowering the criminal justice delivery system by enabling the application of DNA evidence, which is considered the gold standard in crime investigations.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1559099>

Competition Commission of India decides the third lesser Penalty case in respect of cartelisation in Indian Zinc-Carbon Dry-Cell Batteries Market

Question: In context of cartelisation in Indian Zinc-Carbon Dry-Cell Batteries Market which two companies were granted reduced penalty by Competition Commission of India (CCI).?

- (a) Panasonic Energy India Co Limited & Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co Limited
- (b) Samsung India electronics Pvt. Limited & Airtel
- (c) Tata Motors Limited & Tata technologies Limited
- (d) All of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 17th January 2019, The Competition Commission of India (‘CCI’) passed a Final Order imposing penalty on Panasonic Energy India Co. Limited (‘Panasonic’) and Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co. Limited (‘Godrej’) for colluding to fix prices of zinc-carbon dry cell batteries in India.
- In case of Panasonic, CCI granted 100 percent reduction in penalty by calling upon the provisions of Section 46 of the Competition Act, 2002 (‘the Act’) read with the Competition Commission of India (Lesser Penalty) Regulations, 2009 (‘Lesser Penalty Regulations’).
- From the evidence collected in the case, included an anti-competitive clause in the form of written agreement entered into between Panasonic and Godrej for supply of batteries, and e-mail communications between the key managerial personnel of the two of them, CCI found existence of a bi-lateral ancillary cartel between Panasonic and Godrej in the market of institutional sales of dry cell batteries.
- Considering all the appropriate factors, penalty on Panasonic was levied at the rate of 1.5 times of its profit for each year from January 2012 to November 2014 amounting to INR



31.76 crores, and on Godrej at the rate of 4 percent of its turnover for each year from January 2012 to November 2014 amounting to INR 85 lacs.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187564>

Year, Day & Week

26th Army AD Day

Question: On 10th January 2019, Army Air Defence Corps celebrated silver jubilee of which day?

(a) 26th Army AD day (b) 70th Republic day (c) Indian Army day (d) Indian Air force day

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 10th January 2019, Army Air Defence Corps celebrated the Silver Jubilee of its raising at India Gate, New Delhi.
- The Corps of Army Air Defence is the youngest arm of Indian Army, which has proved its grit in various wars, counter insurgency operations and nation building tasks.
- Unit (Army Air Defence Corps) is further undergoing a massive advancement programme to act as a robust force in future.
- The motto of Army AD Corps is “Akashe Shatrun Jahi” with a resolve to keep our skies safe & build the system so that we are free from the fear of enemy intrusions.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187399>

Miscellaneous

National Productivity Council (NPC) celebrated its 61st Foundation Day

Question: On 12th February, 2019; National Productivity Council (NPC) celebrated its-

(a) 51st Foundation Day (b) 61st Foundation Day (c) 31st Foundation Day
(d) 41st Foundation Day

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 12th February, 2019; **National Productivity Council (NPC)** celebrated its 61st Foundation Day as Productivity Day and celebrated National Productivity Week from 12th February to 18th February at New Delhi. This year's theme is “**Circular Economy for Productivity & Sustainability**”.
- Panel discussions on subjects like artificial intelligence by experts were organized to deliberate on the challenges, benefits and outcomes from implementation of circular economy.
- Apart from New Delhi workshop, 13 more seminars and workshops will be organized at Kolkata, Chennai, Guwahati, Bhubaneswar and Chandigarh in coordination with State Government, State PSUs and Business. The 23 Local Productivity Councils spread across the country are also organizing workshops.



About NPC:

- NPC is a constituent of the Tokyo-based Asian Productivity Organization to promote productivity culture in India. It was established by the Ministry of Industry, Government of India in 1958.

Links:

<http://www.npcindia.gov.in/>

Skill development along with education

Question: Which of the following was incorporated by Ministry of Finance in year 2008 to promote skill development?

- (a) National Skill Development Corporation (b) BFSI Sector Skill Council of India
(c) Skill India (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 7 January 2019 in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Shri Anant Kumar Hegde, Minister of State for Skill Development notified that National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is supporting UGC (University Grant Commission) for three schemes namely Community College, Bachelor of Vocational course (BVOC) & Deen Dayal Upadhyaya (DDU) Kaushal Kendras being introduced in different colleges and universities.
- At present, there are 429 colleges/universities under these schemes.
- Application of above system yield in employability of the general graduates which increases effectively as the student can have vocational experience on the shop-floor, along with their graduation.
- Around, one lakh students are covered under 165 BVOC colleges, 223 Community Colleges and 64 DDU Kaushal Kendra Colleges.
- Ministry of Skill development and Entrepreneurship is supporting these schemes through NSDC. NSDC a body under Ministry of Finance incorporated on July 31, 2008 on Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187248>

Import of Fertilizers

Question: Import of urea is canalized by which two State Trading Enterprises?

- (a) Metals & Mineral Trading Corporation of India & STC State Trading Corporation of India (b) Coal India Limited & Project & development India Limited
(c) Bharat Heavy Electricals limited & NFL National Fertilizers Limited
(d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts

- On 8 January 2019, in a written reply to a question on prices of imported fertilizers, in Lok Sabha, Rao Inderjit Singh Minister of State for Planning (IC) and Chemicals & Fertilizers notified that the price of urea is determined on the basis of demand and supply of urea in the international market.
- The Department of Fertilizers (DoF) has been importing urea on government account and the import of Urea is canalized through the two State Trading Enterprises (STEs) namely



Metals & Mineral Trading Corporation of India (MMTC) & State Trading Corporation of India (STC).

- The STEs import is based on Global tendering and the quantities are procured at L1 rates by the STEs.
- For import of urea, Steering Committee of Secretaries (SCOS) takes the decision. This Committee consists of Secretary (Fertilizers) (as Chairman), Chairman Railway Board, Secretary (Commerce), Secretary (Expenditure), Secretary (Agriculture) and Secretary (Shipping).
- SCOS decides the overall quantity of urea required to be imported on Government Account and authorizes Secretary (Fertilizers) as Chairperson of SCOS to determine the timing, quantity and STE to import urea on Government Account for ensuring adequate availability of urea in the country.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187303>

Chadar trek expedition by Air Force Station, Thoise

Question: To commemorate the momentous occasion of 70th Republic Day, Air Force (AF) Station Thoise conducted a trekking expedition on which river?

(a) Zaskar river (b) Ganga (c) Yamuna (d) Ghaghara

Answer : (a)

Related facts:

- On 15th Jan. 2019 to commemorate the momentous occasion of 70th Republic Day, AF Station Thoise conducted a trekking expedition in the daunting terrain of Ladakh region.
- This arduous expedition took place on the frozen Zaskar river by the air warriors of Air Force Station, Thoise.
- The team leader and overall coordinator of this adventurous expedition was Wing Commander Vikrant Uniyal, a qualified mountaineer from Army Mountaineering Institute, Siachen.
- The Chadar Trek is one of the toughest and most challenging trails in the country.
- The trek began from “Chilling” and continued on Chadar (frozen Zaskar river) via “Tibb” cave till “Naerak” village.
- The team spent the nights in tents near caves near the frozen river at an altitude of 13000 ft.
- The mercury count was between -15 and -20 degrees during daytime while it dropped to -25 degrees at night which reveals the harsh environmental conditions unique to this terrain.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187496>

All India Radio organises National Symposium of Poets

Question: Recently, 64th National Symposium of Poets, organised by All India Radio held at which of the following place?

(a) Chennai (b) Bengaluru (c) Hyderabad (d) Vijayawada

Answer : (a)

Related facts:

- On 10th January 2019, the 64th National Symposium of Poets (Sarva bhasha Kavi Sammelan), organised by All India Radio, held at Chennai.



- Total of 23 poets, representing all 22 languages in the 9th Schedule of the Indian Constitution participated in the symposium.
- The Director General of All India Radio (AIR), Mr Fayyaz Sheryar recalled the glorious tradition of the Kavi Sammelan.
- This programme is a reflection of varied heritage of Indian Languages.

Links:

<http://allindiaradio.gov.in/profile/specialevents/pages/default.aspx>

Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019

Question: In terms of the Ease of Doing Business recently India has improved its ranking from 142 place to-
a) 77 b) 88 c) 98 d) 101

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 17 January, 2019; Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 12 day Ahmedabad Shopping Festival-2019 at the Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad.
- Various business related groups like street vendors, Craftsmen, shopping malls and hotels-restaurant linked businesses across the Gujarat participated and exhibited their products.
- The festival is unique since it is being organized simultaneously with the Vibrant Gujarat Summit.
- Addressing the event he notified that because of immense efforts by the government country's ranking in the world gone up by 65 points i.e from 142 to 77 in terms of Ease of Doing Business.
- PM also inaugurated the Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show at the Mahatma Mandir Exhibition cum Convention Center in Gandhi Nagar.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=187576>