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NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

Vol. - 3 >>> Issue - 1 >>> July, 2019



Union Budget 2019-20
and
Economic Survey 2018-19

Preface

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 June to 30th June) 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.

National

Economic Survey 2018-19

Question: Consider the following statement in respect to the Economic Survey 2018-19 and choose the correct option given below:

(1) Union Finance Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey 2018-19 in the Parliament on July 04, 2019.

(2) The theme of Economic Survey, 2018-19 is “Shifting Gears towards a \$5 trillion Indian economy by 2024-25”.

(3) Total Exports (including re-exports) for the year 2018-19 stood 23, 07,663 Cr.

Choose the correct option:

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey 2018-19 in the Parliament on July 04, 2019.
- This is the first survey by the new chief economic advisor Krishnamurthy V Subramanian.
- The theme of Economic Survey, 2018-19 is “Shifting Gears towards a \$5 trillion Indian economy by 2024-25”.



The Key Highlights of Economic Survey 2018-19 are as follows:

Shifting gears: Private Investment as the Key Driver of Growth, Jobs, Exports and Demand

- Survey states that pathways for trickle-down opened up during the last five years; and benefits of growth and macroeconomic stability reached the bottom of the pyramid.
- Sustained real GDP growth rate of 8% needed for a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25.
- Private investment- key driver for demand, capacity, labor productivity, new technology, creative destruction and job creation.

Nourishing Dwarfs to become Giants: Reorienting policies for MSME Growth

- Survey focuses on enabling MSMEs to grow for achieving greater profits, job creation and enhanced productivity.
- Dwarfs (firms with less than 100 workers) despite being more than 10 years old, account for more than 50% of all organized firms in manufacturing by number.
- Contribution of dwarfs to employment is only 14% and to productivity is a mere 8%.
- Large firms (more than 100 employees) account for 75% employment and close to 90% of productivity despite accounting for about 15% by number.
- Unshackling MSMEs and enabling them to grow by way of:
 - A sunset clause of less than 10 years, with necessary grand-fathering, for all size-based incentives.
 - Deregulating labor law restrictions to create significantly more jobs, as evident from Rajasthan.

Data “Of the People, By the People, For the People”

- Society’s optimal consumption of data is higher than ever given technological advances in gathering and storage of data.

- Government must intervene in creating data as a public good, especially of the poor and in social sectors.

Ending Matsyanyaya: How to Ramp up Capacity in the Lower Judiciary

- Delays in contract enforcement and disposal resolution are arguably now the single biggest hurdle to the ease of doing business and higher GDP growth in India.
- Around 87.5 per cent of pending cases are in the District and Subordinate courts. 100 per cent clearance rate can be achieved by filling out merely 2279 vacancies in the lower courts and 93 in High Courts.

India's Demography at 2040: Planning Public Good Provision for the 21st Century

- Sharp slowdown in population growth expected in next 2 decades.
- Working age population to grow by roughly 9.7mn per year during 2021-31 and 4.2mn per year during 2031-41.

From Swachh Bharat to Sundar Bharat via Swasth Bharat: An Analysis of the Swachh Bharat Mission

- Traceable health benefits brought about by Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). 93.1% of the households have access to toilets. 96.5% of those with access to toilets are using them in rural India.
- 100% Individual Households Latrine (IHHL) Coverage in 30 states and UTs.
- Financial savings from a household toilet exceed the financial costs to the household by 1.7 times on average and 2.4 times for poorest households.

Enabling Inclusive Growth through Affordable, Reliable and Sustainable Energy

- India now stands at 4th in wind power, 5th in solar power and 5th in renewable power installed capacity.
- Rs 50,000 crore saved and 108.28 million tonnes of CO2 emissions reduced by energy efficiency programmes in India. Thermal power still plays a dominant role at 60% share.
- Market share of electric cars only 0.06% in India while it is 2% in China and 39% in Norway.

Effective Use of Technology for Welfare Schemes – Case of MGNREGS

- Survey says that efficacy of MGNREGS increased with use of technology in streamlining it along with significant reduction in delays in the payment of wages with adoption of NeFMS and DBT in MGNREGS.
- Demand and supply of work under MGNREGS increased, especially in distressed districts.
- Vulnerable sections of the society viz. women, SC and ST workforce increased under MGNREGS during economic distress.

Redesigning a Minimum Wage System in India for Inclusive Growth

- Present minimum wage system in India has 1,915 minimum wages for various scheduled job categories across states. 1 in every 3 wage workers in India not protected by the minimum wage law.
- 'National Floor Minimum Wage' should be notified by the Central Government, varying across five geographical regions.
- 'National level dashboard' under the Ministry of Labour & Employment for regular notifications on minimum wages, proposed by the Survey.

State of the Economy in 2018-19: A Macro View

- India is still the fastest growing major economy in 2018-19.
- Growth of GDP moderated to 6.8 per cent in 2018-19 from 7.2 per cent in 2017-18.
- Inflation contained at 3.4 per cent in 2018-19.
- Non-Performing Assets as percentage of Gross Advances reduced to 10.1 per cent at end December 2018 from 11.5 per cent at end March 2018.
- Current account deficit manageable at 2.1 percent of GDP.

Money Management and Financial Intermediation

- Banking system improved as NPA ratios declined and credit growth accelerated.
- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code led to recovery and resolution of significant amount of distressed assets:
- Till March 31, 2019, the CIRP yielded a resolution of 94 cases involving claims worth INR 1, 73,359 crore.
- As on 28 Feb 2019, 6079 cases involving 2.84 lakh crores have been withdrawn.
- As per RBI reports, INR 50,000 crore received by banks from previously non-performing accounts.

Sustainable Development and Climate Change

- India's SDG Index Score ranges between 42 and 69 for States and between 57 and 68 for UTs:
- Kerala and Himachal Pradesh are the front runners with a score of 69 amongst states.
- Namami Gange Mission launched as a key policy priority towards achieving the SDG 6, with a budget outlay of INR. 20,000 crore for the period 2015-2020.

External Sector

- India's External Debt was US\$ 521.1 billion at end-December 2018, 1.6 per cent lower than its level at end-March 2018.
- Composition of India's exports and import basket in 2018-19(P):
- Exports (including re-exports): INR23, 07,663 Cr.
- Imports: INR35, 94,373 Cr.
- Top export items continue to be Petroleum products, precious stones, drug formulations, gold and other precious metals.
- Top import items continue to be Crude petroleum, pearl, precious, semi-precious stones and gold.
- India's main trading partners continue to be the US, China, Hong Kong, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.
- India has signed 28 bilateral / multilateral trade agreements with various country/group of countries. In 2018-19,
- Exports to these countries stood at US\$121.7 billion accounting for 36.9 per cent of India's total exports.
- Imports from these countries stood at US\$266.9 billion accounting for 52.0 per cent of India's total imports.

Agriculture and Food Management

- Agriculture sector in India typically goes through cyclical movement in terms of its growth.
- Gross Value Added (GVA) in agriculture improved from a negative 0.2 per cent in 2014-15 to 6.3 per cent in 2016-17 but decelerated to 2.9 per cent in 2018-19.

- Gross Capital Formation (GCF) in agriculture as percentage of GVA marginally declined to 15.2 per cent in 2017-18 as compared to 15.6 per cent in 2016-17.
- Women's participation in agriculture increased to 13.9 per cent in 2015-16 from 11.7 per cent in 2005-06 and their concentration is highest (28 per cent) among small and marginal farmers.
- 89% of groundwater extracted is used for irrigation. Thrust should be on micro-irrigation to improve water use efficiency.
- Fertilizer response ratio has been declining over time. Organic and natural farming techniques including Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) can improve both water use efficiency and soil fertility.
- Diversification of livelihoods is critical for inclusive and sustainable development. Policies should focus on
- Dairying as India is the largest producer of milk.
- Livestock rearing particularly of small ruminants.
- Fisheries sector, as India is the second largest producer.

Industry and Infrastructure

- Overall Index of Eight Core Industries registered a growth rate of 4.3 percent in 2018-19.
- India's ranking improved by 23 to 77th position in 2018 among 190 countries assessed by the World Bank Doing Business (DB) Report, 2019.
- Road construction grew @ 30 km per day in 2018-19 compared to 12 km per day in 2014-15.
- Rail freight and passenger traffic grew by 5.33 per cent and 0.64 per cent respectively in 2018-19 as compared to 2017-18.
- Total telephone connections in India touched 118.34 crore in 2018-19
- The installed capacity of electricity has increased to 3, 56,100 MW in 2019 from 3, 44,002 MW in 2018.
- Building sustainable and resilient infrastructure has been given due importance with sector specific flagship programmes such as SAUBHAGYA scheme, PMAY etc

Services Sector

- Services sector (excluding construction) has a share of 54.3 per cent in India's GVA and contributed more than half of GVA growth in 2018-19.
- The IT-BPM industry grew by 8.4 per cent in 2017-18 to US\$ 167 billion and is estimated to reach US\$ 181 billion in 2018-19.
- The services sector growth declined marginally to 7.5 per cent in 2018-19 from 8.1 per cent in 2017-18.
- Services share in employment is 34 per cent in 2017.
- In tourism, 10.6 million foreign tourists received in 2018-19 compared to 10.4 million in 2017-18. Forex earnings from tourism stood at US\$ 27.7 billion in 2018-19 compared to US\$ 28.7 billion in 2017-18.

Social Infrastructure, Employment and Human Development

- Government expenditure (Centre plus States) as a percentage of GDP on
- Health: increased to 1.5 per cent in 2018-19 from 1.2 per cent in 2014-15.
- Education: increased from 2.8 per cent to 3 per cent during this period.
- Encouraging Skill Development by:
- Introduction of the skill vouchers as a financing instrument to enable youth obtain training from any accredited training institutes.

- Net employment generation in the formal sector was higher at 8.15 lakh in March, 2019 as against 4.87 lakh in February, 2018 as per EPFO.
- Around 1, 90, 000 km of rural roads constructed under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) since 2014.
- About 1.54 crore houses completed under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) as against a target of 1 crore pucca houses with basic amenities by 31st March, 2019.
- Accessible, affordable and quality healthcare being provided through National Health Mission and Ayushman Bharat scheme for a healthy India.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=191213>

Union Budget 2019-20

Question: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget of India on July 5, 2019. Consider the following statement in relation to the budget and choose the correct option:

- (1) Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman became the first women to present the Union Budget in the history of India.
- (2) The budget mentions that more than 95% cities and 5.6 lakh villages declared ODF.
- (3) Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana is a scheme for fishery launched in this budget.
- (4) Fiscal deficit in FY 19 has been set at 3.3% of the GDP.

Correct option:

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

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- Union Finance Minister Smt. Niramala Sitharaman tabled the Union Budget 2019-20 in the Parliament on July 5 2019.
- She became the second women in India to introduce a budget after the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Major Highlights of the Budget:

- The government proposes to spend Rs 27,86,349 crore in 2019-20, which is 13.4% above the revised estimate of 2018-19.
- 3.18 lakh crore rupees have been given for defense budget. This is 7.93 percent more than the year 2018-19, compared to 2 lakh 95 thousand 511 rupees and the last time it has increased by 20 thousand crore rupees.
- A provision of Rs. 62,398 thousand crores has been made for the health sector. This has increased by 19 percent compared to the previous year.
- Rs 65,837 crore has been allocated for Railways and Rs 1.60 lakh crore has been fixed for capital expenditure.
- The government has assumed a nominal GDP growth rate of 12% in 2019-20. The nominal growth estimate for 2018-19 was 11.5%.
- Ministry allocations: Among the top 13 ministries with the highest allocations, the highest percentage increase is observed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (82.9%), followed by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (32.1%) and Ministry of Railways (23.4%).
- India is inching to become a 5 Trillion Dollar Economy. Indian economy to become a 3 trillion dollar economy in the current year.
- There is a need for investment in infrastructure, digital economy, job creation in small and medium firms, initiatives to be proposed for kick-starting the virtuous cycle of investments.

- MUDRA loans for ease of doing business have improved the cash facilitation to the needy sector leading to generation of SSI and MSMEs.
- Around 70% of the total beneficiary in this is women. Measures related to MSMEs.
- Pradhan Mantri Karam Yogi Maandhan Scheme: Pension benefits to about three crore retail traders & small shopkeepers with annual turnover less than Rs. 1.5 crore.
- Rs. 350 crore allocated for FY 2019-20 for 2% interest subvention (on fresh or incremental loans) to all GST-registered MSMEs, under the Interest Subvention Scheme for MSMEs
- India's first indigenously developed payment ecosystem for transport, based on National Common Mobility Card (NCCM) standards, launched in March 2019.
- Inter-operable transport card runs on RuPay card and would allow the holders to pay for bus travel, toll taxes, parking charges, retail shopping.
- Massive push given to all forms of physical connectivity through Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Industrial Corridors, Dedicated Freight Corridors, Bharatmala and Sagarmala projects, Jal Marg Vikas and UDAN Schemes.
- State road networks to be developed in second phase of Bharatmala project.
- Navigational capacity of Ganga to be enhanced via multi modal terminals at Sahibganj and Haldia and a navigational lock at Farakka by 2019-20, under Jal Marg Vikas Project.
- A proposal for Rs. 50 lakh crore investments needed in Railway Infrastructure during 2018-2030. Public-Private-Partnership proposed for development and completion of tracks, rolling stock manufacturing and delivery of passenger freight services.
- 657 kilometers of Metro Rail network has become operational across the country.
- Upfront incentive proposed on purchase and charging infrastructure, to encourage faster adoption of electric vehicles. Only advanced-battery-operated and registered e-vehicles to be incentivized under FAME Scheme.
- National Highway Programme to be restructured to ensure a National Highway Grid, using a financeable model.
- Power at affordable rates to states ensured under 'One Nation, One Grid'.
- Credit Guarantee Enhancement Corporation to be set up in 2019-2020.
- Government to organize an annual Global Investors Meet in India, using National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF) as an anchor to get all three sets of global players (pension, insurance and sovereign wealth funds).
- New Space India Limited (NSIL), a PSE, incorporated as a new commercial arm of Department of Space.

Overview:

	Actuals 2017-18	Budgeted 2018-19	Revised 2018-19	Budgeted 2019-20	% change (RE 2018-19 to BE 2019- 20)
Revenue Expenditure	18,78,833	21,41,772	21,40,612	24,47,780	14.3%
Capital Expenditure	2,63,140	3,00,441	3,16,623	3,38,569	6.9%
Total	21,41,973	24,42,213	24,57,235	27,86,349	13.4%

Expenditure					
Revenue Receipts	14,35,233	17,25,738	17,29,682	19,62,761	13.5%
Capital Receipts	1,15,678	92,199	93,155	1,19,828	28.6%
<i>of which:</i>					
Recoveries of Loans	15,633	12,199	13,155	14,828	12.7%
Other receipts (including disinvestments)	1,00,045	80,000	80,000	1,05,000	31.3%
Total Receipts (without borrowings)	15,50,911	18,17,937	18,22,837	20,82,589	14.2%
Revenue Deficit	4,43,600	4,16,034	4,10,930	4,85,019	18.0%
% of GDP	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.3	
Fiscal Deficit	5,91,062	6,24,276	6,34,398	7,03,760	10.9%
% of GDP	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.3	
Primary Deficit	62,110	48,481	46,828	43,289	-7.6%
% of GDP	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	

Rupee comes from:

- 21% Corporate Tax
- 20% Borrowings and Other Liabilities
- 19% GST

- 16% Income Tax
- 9% Non Tax Revenue
- 8% Union Excise Duties
- 4% Customs
- 3% Non debt Capital Receipts

Rupee Goes to:

- 23% States' share of taxes and Duties
- 18% Interest Payments
- 13% Central Sector Schemes
- 9% Defence
- 9% Centrally Sponsored Schemes
- 8% Subsidies
- 7% Finance Comm. & Transfers

Direct Taxes:

- Tax rate reduced to 25% for companies with annual turnover up to Rs. 400 crore.
- Surcharge increased on individuals having taxable income from Rs. 2 crore to Rs. 5 crore and Rs. 5 crore and above.
- India's Ease of Doing Business ranking under the category of 'paying taxes' jumped from 172 in 2017 to 121 in the 2019.
- Direct tax revenue increased by over 78% in past 5 years to Rs. 11.37 lakh crore
- PAN and Aadhaar will become interchangeable. One can use Aadhaar number to file I-T Returns.
- Rs. 5 lakh minimum limit announced for taxpayers.
- Electricity and clean cooking facility to all willing rural families by 2022.
- Affordable housing: Additional deduction up to Rs. 1.5 lakhs for interest paid on loans borrowed up to 31st March, 2020 for purchase of house valued up to Rs. 45 lakh.
- Additional income tax deduction of Rs. 1.5 lakh on interest paid on electric vehicle loans.

Indirect Taxes:

Make In India

- Basic Customs Duty increased on cashew kernels, PVC, tiles, auto parts, marble slabs, optical fiber cable, CCTV camera etc.
- Exemptions from Custom Duty on certain electronic items now manufactured in India withdrawn.
- End use based exemptions on palm stearin, fatty oils withdrawn.
- Exemptions to various kinds of papers withdrawn.
- 5% Basic Custom Duty imposed on imported books.
- Customs duty reduced on certain raw materials such as:
- Inputs for artificial kidney and disposable sterilised dialyser and fuels for nuclear power plants etc.
- Capital goods required for manufacture of specified electronic goods.

Defence

- Defence equipment not manufactured in India exempted from basic customs duty

Other Indirect Tax provisions

- Export duty rationalised on raw and semi-finished leather
- Increase in Special Additional Excise Duty and Road and Infrastructure Cess each by Rs. 1 per litre on petrol and diesel
- Custom duty on gold and other precious metals increased

Grameen Bharat/ Rural India

- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G) aims to achieve “Housing for All” by 2022.
- Eligible beneficiaries to be provided 1.95 crore houses with amenities like toilets, electricity and LPG connections during its second phase (2019-20 to 2021-22).
- Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY): A robust fisheries management framework through PMMSY to be established by the department of Fisheries.
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY): 30,000 kilometers of PMGSY roads have been built using Green Technology, Waste Plastic and Cold Mix Technology, thereby reducing carbon footprint.
- 1,25,000 kilometers of road length to be upgraded over the next five years under PMGSY III with an estimated cost of Rs. 80,250 crore.
- 75,000 entrepreneurs to be skilled in agro-rural industry sectors.
- 10,000 new Farmer Producer Organizations to be formed, to ensure economies of scale for farmers.
- Zero Budget Farming in which few states’ farmers are already being trained to be replicated in other states.

Shahree Bharat/ Urban India

- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-Urban)-
- Over 81 lakh houses with an investment of about Rs. 4.83 lakh crore sanctioned of which construction started in about 47 lakh houses.
- Over 26 lakh houses completed of which nearly 24 lakh houses delivered to the beneficiaries.
- Over 13 lakh houses so far constructed using new technologies.
- More than 95% of cities also declared Open Defecation Free (ODF).
- Almost 1 crore citizens have downloaded Swachhata App.
- Target of achieving Gandhiji’s resolve of Swachh Bharat to make India ODF by 2nd October 2019.
- To mark this occasion, the Rashtriya Swachhta Kendra to be inaugurated at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat on 2nd October, 2019.
- Gandhipedia being developed by National Council for Science Museums to sensitize youth and society about positive Gandhian values.

India’s water security

- New Jal Shakti Mantralaya to look at the management of our water resources and water supply in an integrated and holistic manner.
- Jal Jeevan Mission to achieve Har Ghar Jal (piped water supply) to all rural households by 2024.
- Under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, 9.6 crore toilets constructed since Oct 2, 2014. More than 5.6 lakh villages have become Open Defecation Free (ODF).
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-Urban): Over 81 lakh houses with an investment of about Rs. 4.83 lakh crore sanctioned of which construction started in about 47 lakh houses.

- Over 26 lakh houses completed of which nearly 24 lakh houses delivered to the beneficiaries. More than 95% of cities also declared Open Defecation Free (ODF).

Youth

- New National Education Policy to be brought which proposes major changes in both school and higher education.
- National Research Foundation (NRF) proposed to fund, coordinate and promote research in the country.
- Rs. 400 crore provided for “World Class Institutions”, for FY 2019-20, more than three times the revised estimates for the previous year.
- ‘Study in India’ proposed to bring foreign students to study in Indian higher educational institutions.
- Draft legislation to set up Higher Education Commission of India (HECI), to be presented.
- National Sports Education Board for development of sportspersons to be set up under Khelo India, to popularize sports at all levels.
- Stand-Up India Scheme to be continued for the period of 2020-25. The Banks to provide financial assistance for demand based businesses.

Naari Tu Narayani/Women

- Approach shift from women-centric-policy making to women-led initiatives and movements.
- Women SHG interest subvention program proposed to be expanded to all districts.
- One woman per SHG to be eligible for a loan up to Rs. 1 lakh under MUDRA Scheme.
- About 30 lakh workers joined the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Scheme that provides Rs. 3,000 per month as pension on attaining the age of 60 to workers in unorganized and informal sectors.
- Approximately 35 crore LED bulbs distributed under UJALA Yojana leading to cost saving of Rs. 18,341 crore annually.
- Proposal to consider issuing Aadhaar Card for NRIs with Indian Passports on their arrival without waiting for 180 days.
- 18 new Indian diplomatic Missions in Africa approved in March, 2018, out of which 5 already opened. Another 4 new Embassies intended in 2019-20.
- Revamp of Indian Development Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) proposed.
- 17 iconic Tourism Sites being developed into model world class tourist destinations.

Banking and Financial Sector

- NPAs of commercial banks reduced by over Rs. 1 lakh crore over the last year. Record recovery of over Rs. 4 lakh crore effected over the last four years. Domestic credit growth increased to 13.8%.
- Rs. 70,000 crore proposed to be provided to PSBs to boost credit.
- Target of Rs. 1, 05,000 crore of disinvestment receipts set for the FY 2019-20.
- New series of coins of One Rupee, Two Rupees, Five Rupees, Ten Rupees and Twenty Rupees, easily identifiable to the visually impaired to be made available for public use shortly.

Achievements during 2014-19

- 1 trillion dollar added to Indian economy over last 5 years (compared to over 55 years taken to reach the first trillion dollar).
- India is now the 6th largest economy in the world, compared to 11th largest five years ago.
- Indian economy is globally the 3rd largest in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms.

- Average amount spent on food security per year almost doubled during 2014-19 compared to 2009-14.

10-point Vision for the decade

- Building Team India with Jan Bhagidari: Minimum Government Maximum Governance.
- Achieving green Mother Earth and Blue Skies through a pollution-free India.
- Making Digital India reach every sector of the economy.
- Launching Gaganyaan, Chandrayan, other Space and Satellite programmes.
- Building physical and social infrastructure.
- Water, water management, clean rivers.
- Blue Economy.
- Self-sufficiency and export of food-grains, pulses, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables.
- Achieving a healthy society via Ayushman Bharat, well-nourished women & children, safety of citizens.
- Emphasis on MSMEs, Start-ups, defence manufacturing, automobiles, electronics, fabs and batteries, and medical devices under Make in India.

Roadmap for future

- Simplification of procedures.
- Incentivizing performance.
- Red-tape reduction.
- Making the best use of technology.
- Accelerating mega programmes and services initiated and delivered so far.

Link:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=191301>

Pink City Jaipur declared World Heritage site by UNESCO

Question: Recently, which city has got the entry in the list of world heritage site inscribed by UNESCO?

(a) Hampi (b) Jaipur (c) Ahmedabad (d) Khajuraho

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Jaipur city of Rajasthan, made its entry into the UNESCO World Heritage Site list on 6th July, 2019.
- The decision was taken in the 43rd Session of the UNESCO's World Heritage Committee in a meeting held in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- ICOMOS (The International Council on Monuments and Sites) had inspected the city in 2018.
- Jaipur is the second city of the country after Ahmedabad to get the recognition.
- The historic walled city of Jaipur in Rajasthan was founded in 1727 AD under the patronage of Sawai Jai Singh II. Jaipur was established on the plain and built according to a grid plan interpreted in the light of Vedic architecture.
- It serves as the capital city of the culturally-rich state of Rajasthan.
- In town planning, it shows an interchange of ancient Hindu, Mughal and contemporary Western ideas that resulted in the form of the city.
- Jaipur City is an exceptional example of a late medieval trade town in South Asia and defined new concepts for a thriving trade and commercial hub.



- The city is associated with living traditions in the form of crafts that have national and international recognition.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/jaipur-gets-unesco-world-heritage-tag-119070600724_1.html

NITI Aayog launched the first ever AMFFRI

Question: Recently, which institution has launched the first ever Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index?

- (a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Law and Justice (c) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
(d) NITI Aayog

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- The State of Maharashtra achieved first rank (score 81.7) in NITI Aayog's Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index (AMFFRI).
- The index ranks states on the degree of reforms that they have undertaken in agricultural marketing. The indexing process is based on the Economic Survey 2018-19.
- AMFFRI has a score that can have minimum value 0 implying no reforms and maximum value 100 implying complete reforms in the selected areas.
- NITI Aayog has identified three key areas for reform and is now persuading states to undertake the reforms. The areas identified for immediate reforms are:
 - Agricultural market reforms.
 - Land lease reforms.
 - Reforms related to forestry on private land – felling and transit of trees.
- The proposed index has a wider ambit but the focus is still on reforms, with marketing reforms (25%) and governance and land reforms (20%) carrying almost half of the weight of the parameters in its scoring system.
- Maharashtra has implemented most of the marketing reforms and it offers best environment for doing agri-business among all the States/UTs.
- Gujarat ranks second with a score of 71.5 out of 100, closely followed by Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- Uttar Pradesh with score of 47.8 is ranked 13th.
- The bottom three States/UT are Puducherry(4.8), Delhi UT(7.3) and Jammu & Kashmir(7.4).
- However, some states such as Bihar, Kerala, Manipur, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Andaman and Nicobar were not included in the ranking as either they did not adopt APMC Act or revoked it.

Links: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/maharashtra-ranks-first-in-niti-aayogs-ease-of-doing-farm-business/articleshow/70071633.cms>

Longest Electrified Railway Tunnel in India commissioned

Question: Consider the following statements regarding the commissioning of longest electrified railway tunnel in India.

- (1) The South Central Railway Zone has successfully commissioned the longest electrified tunnel. The 6.6 km long tunnel is situated between Cherlopalli and Rapuru railway stations and is part of the new Obulavaripalli – Venkatachalam railway line.
(2) The tunnel will facilitate operating freight trains on Obulavaripalli -Venkatachalam – Krishnapatnam Port new railway line for a distance of 113 km.

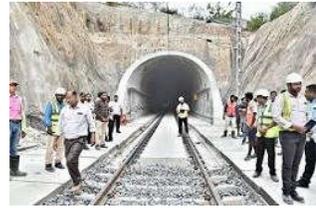
Of the above, correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The South Central Railway Zone in Andhra Pradesh has successfully commissioned the longest electrified tunnel (6.6 kms) situated between Cherlopalli and Rapuru railway stations. It is constructed in the shape of Horse Shoe.
- The tunnel is part of the new Obulavaripalli-Venkatachalam railway line (113 kms) and it has been completed in a record time of 43 months.
- On 25th June, 2019, two freight trains successfully ran between the two stations, marking the full-scale operation of the newly built electrified line, thereby opening up viable railway connectivity between Krishnapatnam Port and its hinterland areas for freight train services.
- Enabling Indian Railways to start freight operations on this crucial line, this has reduced the distance between Krishnapatnam Port and its hinterland areas by 60 km.
- Height of tunnel (rail level to roof) is 6.5 meters and the minimum height of the contact wire is maintained at 5.2 mts.
- For construction of the tunnel, New Australian Tunneling Method (NATM) has been used and a cost Rs 460 crore has been incurred.
- For the first time in South Central Railway, instead of conventional type Auto Tensioning Device (ATD), Spring type ATD of South Korea has been adopted for maintaining necessary tension in OHE wires.



Links:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/infrastructure/railways/indian-railways-builds-longest-electrified-tunnel-record-time-key-features-game-changing-project/1636209/>

UP launches Dastak Campaign to eradicate AES & JE

Question: Recently, which campaign has been launched by the UP Government to eradicate AES & JE?

(a) Samadhan (b) Mu Hero (c) Dastak (d) Unnat Sheti

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Uttar Pradesh Government launched massive door to door campaign DASTAK against Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) and Japanese Encephalitis (JE).
- This campaign has been launched on 1st July, 2019 by UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and it will continue till 31st July, 2019.
- The campaign was launched in association with UNICEF.
- The objective behind the campaign is to eradicate deadly Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) and Japanese Encephalitis (JE) disease from the state.
- The war cry of DASTAK is Darwaja khatkhatao, AES aur JE ko Bhagao.



About AES & JE:

- Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) is a serious public health problem in India. It is characterized as acute-onset of fever and a change in mental status (mental confusion, disorientation, delirium, or coma) and/or new onset of seizures in a person of any age at any time of the year.
- Viruses are the main causative agents in AES cases, although other sources such as bacteria, fungus, parasites, spirochetes, chemicals, toxins, and noninfectious agents have also been reported over the past few decades.
- Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) is the major cause of AES in India (ranging from 5-35 percent).
- It is a mosquito-borne flavivirus and belongs to the same genus as dengue, yellow fever, and West Nile viruses.
- Implementation of Dastak Campaign
- Whole state machinery with the help of UNICEF will go door to door in every village of districts in the State to create awareness about the communicable diseases as well as JE and AES.
- The tarai region of the State contributes to about 60% of the total AES cases all over the country.
- Many departments of the state especially health, rural development, primary education will work together to spread awareness about the disease through mass media communication, provide clean drinking water, initiate sanitation drive, ensure vaccination and early treatment so that disease should be nipped in the bud.
- Children of 600 schools in the affected areas will also be part of this campaign.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Campaign-to-eradicate-AES-to-be-launched-in-UP-today&id=366770>

NGT imposes Rs 100 crore fine on Meghalaya Government

Question: National Green Tribunal imposed Rs. 100 Crore fine on which state for failing to curb illegal Mining?

(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Meghalaya (c) Sikkim (d) Nagaland

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 3 July 2019, The Supreme Court directed Meghalaya government to deposit the Rs 100 crore fine imposed on it by the NGT.
- Fine has been imposed due to failure to curb illegal coal mining in the Meghalaya State.
- A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and K M Joseph directed the state administration to hand over the illegally extracted coal to Coal India Limited (CIL) which will auction it and deposit the funds with the state government.
- The bench also allowed the mining operation to go on in the state on the privately and community-owned land subject to the permissions from the concerned authorities.
- Prior to this decision of Supreme Court, The National Green Tribunal had fined the Meghalaya government on 4th January, 2019.



Links:

<http://newsonair.nic.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=367915>

Goa Cabinet clears bill that allows women to work in late night shifts

Question: Which State has recently cleared the Bill which allows women to work in late night shift?

(a) Goa (b) Punjab (c) Assam (d) Odisha

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 26th June 2019, Goa Cabinet cleared amendments to the Factories Act, which would allow women to work in factories during night hours.
- It was announced by Deputy Chief Minister Vijai Sardesai.
- An amendment proposed in the Factories Act, 1948 will facilitate women to work in night shifts from 7 pm and 6 am.
- The Cabinet also cleared amendment to the Act, which would allow industrial units to extend working hours from 75 to 125 per quarter to boost production.
- The permission would be granted on case to case basis by the Directorate of Factories.
- This amendment is to end discrimination against women and provide equal job opportunities.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/goa/goa-cabinet-clears-bill-that-allows-women-to-work-in-late-night-shifts-5801718/>

Kimberley Process Inter-sessional Meeting 2019

Question: Kimberley Process is related to which one of the following metal?

(a) Gold (b) Silver (c) Diamond (d) Copper

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Kimberley Process Chairmanship 2019 India event is organized by the Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India; and co-organised by KP Exporting/Importing Authority – Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC).
- The Kimberley Process (KP) is a commitment to remove conflict diamonds from the global supply chain.
- India is the KP chair for 2019 and is hosting the KP Inter-sessional meeting in Mumbai during 17th June to 21st June, 2019.



Kimberley process:

- The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) Inter-sessional Meeting 2019 is an annual mid-year event of KPCS, which unites administrations, civil societies and diamond industry in reducing the flow of conflict diamonds used to finance wars against governments around the world.
- It also defines conflict diamonds as: rough diamonds used to finance wars against governments – around the world.
- The 4Cs (Cut, Clarity, Color & Carat) of diamond may soon be expanded to 5Cs with the 5th C being Conflict-free.
- The 5Ps of diamond marketing (Precious, Popular, Prestige, Priceless) will include Peace diamonds.

- India is committed to make this process stronger in terms of inclusiveness, strengthened administration and implementation, efficiency in delivery and transparent and empathetic approach towards lives of the people dependent on the production, trade and manufacture of diamonds.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1574811>

ICG to Open Its 5th Recruitment Centre in Uttarakhand

Question: The 5th Indian Coast Guard (ICG) recruitment centre was opened in which State?

(a) Karnataka (b) Goa (c) Punjab (d) Uttarakhand

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The fifth Indian Coast Guard (ICG) recruitment centre was opened in Uttarakhand.
- This recruitment centre is established at Kuanwala (Hararwala), Dehradun.
- It will be the 5th ICG recruitment centre in Uttarakhand after Noida, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata.
- Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat laid the foundation of the land for this recruitment centre on 28th June, 2019.
- Government has sanctioned Rs 17 crore for the purchase of the land and Rs 25 crore for the construction of building for the centre.
- The recruitment centre will be useful for the youths of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana along with the youth of the Uttarakhand and it will be ready in about eighteen months.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190682>

Cannes Film Festival

Question: Who led this year's Indian delegation in the prestigious Cannes Festival in France?

(a) Akshay Kumar (b) Iqbal Durrani (c) Vivek Oberoi (d) Amit Khare

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The prestigious Cannes Film Festival of France took place this year from 14th to 25th May, 2019.
- The Indian Delegation this year was led by Amit Khare, Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. The Film Delegation would consist of Prasoon Joshi, Chairman, CBFC and acclaimed filmmakers Rahul Rawail, Shaji N. Karun and Madhur Bhandarkar.
- India Pavilion was inaugurated at Cannes Film Festival which showcased Indian cinema across linguistic, cultural and regional diversity, with the aim of forging international partnerships in distribution, production, filming in India and many more.
- The Pavilion was set up by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.
- The Pavilion serves as a platform for the Indian Delegates to meet International Delegates attending the Festival to promote networking with other countries and organizations.



- A key focus area of the Indian Delegation was to promote the Golden Jubilee Edition of International Film Festival of India to be held in Goa later this year.
- The Delegation also popularized steps taken to ease shooting films in India through Film Facilitation Office that facilitates Single Window Clearance for film-makers and steps by the Government to combat film piracy.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1571906>

Women handled entire vote counting in Harda district

Question: Harda is a district in the state of?

(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Rajasthan

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Harda district of Madhya Pradesh achieved the feat of becoming the first district to handle the entire work of counting votes by all women counting staff on 23rd May, 2019.
- This initiative is probably the first of its kind.
- Harda district is a part of Betul parliamentary seat and the counting of votes of Timarni and Harda assembly segments took place at Harda district headquarter.
- 84 women were trained for counting in Polytechnic College. This initiative was taken to encourage them and to prove that the women are not behind in any case.
- Apart from the counting of votes, only women were deployed for the security of the counting centre.
- Betul was voted on 6th May, 2019, and the women had taken the responsibilities of voting in 60 all women polling booths in Harda district.



Links:

<http://newsonair.nic.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=363433>

Iran's Foreign Minister visit to India

Question: Who is the current foreign minister of Iran carried out its visit to India?

(a) Hassan Rouhani (b) Mohammad Javad Zarif (c) Asad Rohilla (d) Ikram Mohammed

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was on a visit of India on May 13-14, 2019.
- This visit comes at a time when US ended sanctions exemption to India for importing Iran oil after May 1 and India decided to follow U.S. restrictions on buying Iranian oil.
- Zarif met External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and other officials in the visit.
- This sudden visit is just three weeks after President Donald Trump decided to squeeze Iran and revoking the sanctions granted for exemption to Iran's oil customers.
- India will decide over the purchase of Iranian energy after the general election and the formation of new government.



ssues discussed in the visit:

- The issue of continued oil export to India despite US sanction was at the top of agenda during the visit.

- The end of the waiver means India cannot import oil from Iran; if imported, Indian enterprises will face US sanction. The two sides are likely to discuss the impact of the US decision in their relation.
- Both the leaders also discussed the outlook of Chabahar port project as the Trump administration has assured for the exemption on Chabahar port.
- India and Iran also expressed satisfaction at the operationalization of the interim contract between India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) and Ports and Maritime Organisation (PMO).

Recent happenings:

- US last year came out of the JCPOA deal that took place between P5 (UNSC permanent members) and Iran to curb the nuclear programme of Iran resulting to the exemption of sanctions imposed on it.
- US had led the move at the United Nations Security Council in listing Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist, a move India was trying from a decade long time.

India-Iran relations:

- India and Iran share a close trade and cultural relations with each other. India is building Chabahar Port in Iran to exempt Pakistan in the route of trading with Afghanistan and Middle East.
- Iran is India's third-largest oil supplier behind Iraq and Saudi Arabia.
- It was second largest after Saudi Arabia until 2010-11. In, India bought 11 million tonnes and 10.95 million tonnes in 2013-14 and 2014-15 respectively from Iran.
- This increased to 12.7 million tonnes in 2015-16, before supplies of 27.2 million tonnes catapulted Iran to the third spot in 2016-17.
- India imported \$97 billion worth of petroleum oil and oil obtained from bituminous minerals crude between April 2018 and January 2019.
- The US decision to end waivers for countries importing crude from Iran beginning May 2 may hurt India's interests, as it will have to look for alternative sources.

Links:

<https://thediplomat.com/2019/01/in-india-iranian-foreign-minister-discusses-sanctions-crude-exports-and-more/>

First Apache Helicopter formally handed over to the IAF

Question: Which of the following company has manufactured the Apache Helicopter?

(a) Dassault (b) Boeing (c) Airbus (d) Larsen & Tubro

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The first AH-64E (I) – Apache Guardian helicopter was formally handed over to the Indian Air Force at Boeing production facility in Mesa, Arizona, USA on 10th May, 2019.
- Air Marshal AS Butola, represented the Indian Air Force and accepted the first Apache in a ceremony at Boeing production facility, representatives from US Government were also present.
- IAF had signed a contract with US Government and M/s Boeing Ltd in Sept 2015, for 22 Apache helicopters. The first batch of these helicopters is scheduled to be shipped to India by July 2019.
- Selected aircrew and ground crew have undergone training at the training facilities at US Army base Fort Rucker, Alabama.



- The addition of AH-64 E (I) helicopter is a significant step towards modernisation of Indian Air Force's helicopter fleet.
- The helicopter has been customized to suit IAF's future requirements and would have significant capability in mountainous terrain.
- The helicopter has the capability to carry out precision attacks at standoff ranges and operate in hostile airspace with threats from ground. The ability of these helicopters, to transmit and receive the battlefield picture, to and from the weapon systems through data networking makes it a lethal acquisition.
- These attack helicopters will provide significant edge in any future joint operations in support of land forces.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/iaf-receives-first-ah-64e-apache-attack-helicopter/article27101808.ece>

Doordarshan launches online souvenir store

Question: Which company has partnered Doordarshan in the launch of online souvenir store?

(a) Flipkart (b) Amazon (c) SBI Bank (d) Master Card

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Doordarshan has launched an online souvenir store in partnership with Amazon India.
- The DD souvenir store was launched by Chairman Prasar Bharti for its viewers on Amazon India so that one can easily access it.
- DD Souvenir gallery was started on 21st June, 2018 and in view of its success and demand, India's public service broadcaster Doordarshan has started an online store through on Amazon India platform, for selling branded articles like cup, T-shirt and Water bottles.
- Doordarshan is India's first broadcaster which has started Souvenir store. Online souvenir store will not only strengthen the relation with viewers but also help in establishing Doordarshan brand value.



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national-business/doordarshan-launches-online-souvenir-store-partnership-amazon-india>

Consultative Group of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery

Question: Which country will co-chair the Consultative Group of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for the fiscal year 2020?

(a) Bulgaria (b) China (c) India (d) Maldives

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- India is unanimously chosen as co-chair of the Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for the fiscal year 2020.
- The decision was taken during the CG meeting of GFDRR held in Geneva, Switzerland on 14th May, 2019, on the margins of the 6th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) 2019.



- The CG Meeting was co-chaired by Africa Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, the European Union (EU) and World Bank.
- GFDRR in cooperation with the UNDRR and the EU is also organizing the 4th edition of World Reconstruction Conference (WRC) from 13th to 14th May, 2019.

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR):

- GFDRR is a global partnership that helps developing countries better understand and reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change. GFDRR is a grant-funding mechanism, managed by the World Bank, which supports disaster risk management projects worldwide.
- India became member of CG of GFDRR in 2015 and expressed its interest to co-chair in last meeting of CG held in October 2018. India's candidature was backed by its consistent progress in disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the country and its initiative to form a coalition on disaster resilient infrastructure.
- This will give the country an opportunity to work with the member countries and organizations of GFDRR with a focused contribution towards advancing the disaster risk reduction agenda during the course of the year.
- This is the first time that a country has been afforded the opportunity of co-chairing the CG meeting of GFDRR. India would like to pursue a focused agenda and develop synergies with ongoing work streams of GFDRR.
- Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (DRI) will be a central theme of engagement with the GFDRR partners and stakeholders.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572014>

US Naval Operations Chief's visit to India

Question: Who is the current Chief of the naval operations of US?

(a) Jim Mattis (b) Vince Truman (c) John Michel Richardson (d) Ryan Eston

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Admiral John Michael Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations, US Navy, was on an official tour to India from 12th to 14th May, 2019.
- His visit was intended to consolidate bilateral naval relations between India and USA and also to explore new avenues for naval cooperation.
- Admiral John M Richardson had discussions with Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chairman COSC and Chief of the Naval Staff, Defence Secretary, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, and Chief of the Air Staff.



Bilateral relations between India US:

- Indian Navy and US Navy interact regularly at bilateral and multilateral forums and participate in maritime exercises such as MALABAR and RIMPAC.
- Regular Subject Matter Expert exchange also takes place between both the navies to institutionalize interoperability in various fields.
- After being accorded Major Defence Partner status by USA in 2016, India – US ties have grown significantly in recent years.
- The inaugural Ministerial 2+2 Dialogue conducted in September 2018 also facilitated new avenues for defence cooperation between the two countries.

- Major issues discussed during the visit included operations and exercises, training interactions, information exchange, capacity building and capability enhancement.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1571920>

Centre extends ban on LTTE

Question: The Central Government has extended ban on Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for a period of?

(a) 4 years (b) 5 years (c) 7 years (d) 2 years

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The Central Government has extended the ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for another five years under sub-sections (1) and (3) of section 3 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967) with immediate effect.
- The notification in this regard was issued on 14th May, 2019.
- The notification states that the LTTE's continued violent and disruptive activities are prejudicial to the integrity and sovereignty of India; and it continues to adopt a strong anti-India posture as also continues to pose a grave threat to the security of Indian nationals.
- The notification also mentioned that the Diaspora continued to spread through articles in the Internet portals, the anti-India feeling amongst the Sri Lankan Tamils by holding Government of India responsible for the defeat of the LTTE.
- LTTE activities and propaganda on the Internet are a threat to the security of VVIPs in India.



LTTE:

- LTTE was banned in India after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.
- It was established in 1976 by Velupillai Prabhakaran.
- LTTE was an association based in Sri Lanka, but having its supporters, sympathizers and agents in India.
- Its objective is to form a separate homeland Tamil Eelam for all Tamils threatened the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India and thus, fell within the ambit of unlawful activity.
- Even after its military defeat in May 2009 in Sri Lanka, it has not abandoned the concept of Eelam and has been clandestinely working towards the Eelam cause by undertaking fund raising and propaganda activities in Europe.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tamil-Tigers>

750th Birth Anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan

Question: Who released a postage stamp to commemorate the 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan?

(a) Venkaiah Naidu (b) Ram Nath Kovind (c) Ram Naik (d)

Narendra Modi

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 2nd May, 2019, the Vice President, M. Venkaiah Naidu released a postage stamp to commemorate the 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan in New Delhi.
- Sri Vedanta Desikan is one of the most prominent preceptors in the Srivaishnava tradition.
- He had authored brilliant poems, prose, drama, epics, commentaries, scientific texts and philosophical treatises in Sanskrit, Tamil, Prakrit and Manipravalam.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=189910>

The market of pollution protection masks in India going to rise in future

Question: Which of the following agency has recently declared in its report that the market of pollution protection masks in India is going to rise in coming future?

(a) WHO (b) Assocham (c) World Bank (d) UNEP

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:

- On 1st May, 2019; Industry Board Assocham declared in a report that the market of pollution protection masks in India will reach Rs 118 crore (\$ 1.68 million) by 2023.
- According to the Assocham report this is happening due to deteriorating air quality and rapid urbanisation.
- The report says that presence of high concentration of pollutants in the air leads to high pollution levels in northern parts of India due to which demand for anti-pollution masks is increasing in north India.
- According to the report few more reasons, which will fuel demand in the coming years, for pollution masks in India are increasing per capita expenditure on healthcare and rising awareness among the people.
- Masks are filters that prevent fine particles from entering the nasal passage and then the lungs.
- The Report also explains about the quality of mask, as the finer the particles that a mask filters, the denser is the texture of the Mask.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/anti-pollution-mask-market-to-reach-16-86-million-by-2023-asso-cham-techsci-study/articleshow/69129938.cms>

Rare life size figurine unearthed

Question: Recently, from which place the archaeologists unearthed a rare life-size stucco sculpture?

(a) Phanigiri (b) Konark (c) Thanjavur (d) Mahabaleshwar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- A life-sized stucco sculpture of a Bodhisattva has been unearthed at Phanigiri, Telangana on April 26, 2019.
- The sculpture:
 - It is found that this life size stucco Bodhisattva has been created around 1,700 years ago.
 - It was created by craftsmen at Phanigiri at the peak of Ikshavaku dynasty rule.
 - It is a 1.74-metre tall statue.
 - Brown and white fragments of the statue covered with soil were laid out on two tables at the State Museum at Gunfoundry.



- It belongs to a Buddhist site in southern India dating back to the first century B.C.
- Archaeological excavation of the site has also revealed domed structures known as stupas, assembly chambers, pillared halls, a monastery, platforms and staircases, and sculptures with Brahmi inscriptions ranging in age from the first century B.C. to the fourth century A.D.

Links:

<https://www.archaeology.org/news/7620-190430-india-stucco-sculpture>

Ramayana Themed Stamp Released by Indonesia

Question: Who designed the Ramayana Themed Stamp released by Indonesia?

(a) Padamshri Bapak Nyoman Nuarta (b) Yohei Sasakawa (c) Tsai Ing-wen (d) Ramesh Goyal

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- On the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Indonesia, a special stamp on the theme of Ramayana was released by Indonesia.
- The stamp was designed by renowned Indonesian sculptor Padamshri Bapak Nyoman Nuarta.
- The stamp features a scene from Ramayana where Jatayu valiantly fought to save Devi Sita.
- An Indian troupe “Chhau Group” performed a cultural dance performance to mark the occasion.
- A specially signed version of the stamp will be displayed at the Philately Museum in Jakarta.



Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/indonesia-releases-ramayana-stamp-for-1st-time-celebrating-centuries-old-cultural-bonds/articleshow/69013917.cms>

IBSA Sherpas Meeting

Question: Where did the IBSA Sherpa meeting 2019 take place from 3 to 5 May 2019?

(a) Rio de Janeiro (b) Durban (c) Cochin (d) Kathmandu

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The IBSA (India, Brazil & South Africa) Sherpas' Meeting, following the 9th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Meeting, was held in Cochin from May 3-5, 2019.



The meeting:

- Secretary (Economic Relations) in Ministry of External Affairs, T.S. Tirumurti led the Indian delegation. Prof. Anil Sooklal, Sherpa of the Republic of South Africa, and Amb. Norberto Moretti, Sherpa of the Federative Republic of Brazil led respective delegations at the Meeting.
- Sherpas reviewed the progress made under IBSA, since their last meeting. IBSA Sherpas also reviewed the functioning of the Joint Working Groups.
- The Sherpas also took note of the 9th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission Meeting held in New York in September, 2018 and welcomed the holding of the 6th IBSAMAR (Joint Naval Exercise) off the Coast of South Africa in October, 2018.

- IBSA Sherpas appreciated the work done by the IBSA Fund on Poverty and Hunger Alleviation that is spread over 31 projects in 20 countries.
- Representatives of Ministry of Tourism, and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) participated in the meeting and shared their views on strengthening IBSA cooperation, particularly in the areas of tourism and South-South Cooperation.
- IBSA Academic Forum also met in Cochin on 3-4 May, 2019.
- They commended the ongoing IBSA Fellowship Programme at the RIS, launched at India's initiative in 2017. The Fellows of the three countries were invited to the Sherpas' Meeting.

Links:

https://www.mea.gov.in/pressreleases.htm?dtl/31236/IBSA_Sherpas_Meeting_Cochin_35_May_2019

First HIV-Infected mountaineer to scale Mount Everest

Question: Who became the first HIV infected mountaineer to scale Mount Everest in May 2019?

(a) Vimal Shrestha (b) Gopal Shrestha (c) Deepa Sherpa (d) Baburam Oli

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 22 May 2019, Nepali mountaineer Gopal Shrestha, became the first HIV infected climber to scale the world's highest peak Mount Everest (height 8848 meters).
- Gopal Shrestha, once a former national footballer, climbed this peak in the second attempt.
- His first attempt executed in 2015 was abandoned from the Everest Base Camp due to earthquake.
- Shrestha's current ascend is a part of his "Step-Up Campaign: Second Phase Everest Expedition", whereby he intends to increase recognition in the culture as well as nation.
- It also aimed to provide quality education and learning to youngsters influenced with HIV.



Links:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/gopal-shrestha-becomes-first-hiv-infected-climber-to-scale-mount-everest20190522225645/>

Yellow Weather Warning in Himachal Pradesh

Question: India Meteorological Department was established in?

(a) 1875 (b) 1895 (c) 1905 (d) 1940

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Meteorological Department (MeT) issued a yellow weather warning for rain in Himachal Pradesh.
- According to Shimla MeT centre director, the weather department forecasted thunderstorm with hail in isolated places of mid hills, including Shimla, Mandi, Kullu, Chamba, Solan and Sirmaur.
- The MeT office issues color-coded warnings to alert people ahead of severe or hazardous weather which has the potential to cause damage widespread disruption or danger to life.



- Yellow is the least dangerous out of the weather warnings – it indicates the possibility of severe weather over the next few days that could affect people.
- India Meteorological Department was established in 1875 with headquarter situated at New Delhi. This department is under Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- It is the National Meteorological Service of the country and the Principal government agency in all matters relating to meteorology, seismology and allied subjects.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/met-issues-yellow-weather-warning-for-himachal-119040700642_1.html

14th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the UNCCD

Question: Which of the following country is hosting the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the UNCCD in September, 2019?

(a) USA (b) India (c) Australia (d) Japan

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- India for the first time will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification).
- It will be held between 2nd September to 13th September, 2019 at the India Expo Center and Mart, New Delhi.
- The conference will be hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India. From 197 countries nearly 5,000 delegates will be participating in the event.
- The purpose of the event is to address the issues of land degradation and desertification.
- One of the primary functions of the COP is to review reports submitted by the Country Parties, detailing how they are carrying out their commitments. India will take over the COP presidency from China during COP-14 for two years until the next COP in 2021
- Ahead of the COP-14, Environment Minister Mr. Prakash Javadekar launched a flagship project to enhance India's capacity for forest landscape restoration as a part of a larger international initiative called the Bonn Challenge.
- India had joined voluntarily with the Bonn Challenge pledge at COP-13 (2015) in Paris.
- Bonn Challenge is a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world's degraded and deforested land under restoration by the year 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030.
- In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly declared 17th June the "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought" to promote public awareness and the implementation of the UNCCD in the desertification affected countries.
- It had committed to restore 13 million hectares (MH) of degraded and deforested land by 2020, and an additional 8 million hectares (MH) by 2030. It is one of the largest pledges in Asia.
- UNCCD was established in 1994, and is the only legally binding international agreement linking environment and development issues to the land agenda.
- Apart from UNCCD, the United Nations has two other important major Conventions: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190496>

Joint Statement on Indo-French Bilateral Cyber Dialogue in Paris

Question: Third Joint Statement on Indo-French Bilateral Cyber Dialogue held at which place?

(a) Paris (b) New Delhi (c) Washington D.C. (d) Hyderabad

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The third Indo-French cyber dialogue was held in Paris on 20th June 2019.
- During this dialogue, both parties shared their threat analysis and presented the latest developments in their respective cyber policies and steps taken for protection of critical national infrastructure.
- They also exchanged views on the ongoing discussions and initiatives in multilateral forums related to peace and security in cyberspace, as well as the related issues of digital sovereignty and Internet governance.
- The countries identified the areas for deepening their cooperation in these domains.
- France and India reaffirmed their commitment to an open, reliable, secure, stable and peaceful cyberspace and recalled in particular the applicability in cyberspace of existing principles of international law, including the United Nations Charter in its entirety and that there was a need to continue and deepen deliberations on the applicability of international law and set norms of responsible behavior of states.
- Commitment to a multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance was also emphasized.
- Both countries exchanged views on fight against cybercrime and the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.
- The two major economies intend to strengthen the coordination of their efforts in support of implementation of voluntary and non-binding norms of responsible behavior, as well as confidence-building and capacity-building measures in cyberspace.
- France and India will maintain a continuous dialogue on cybersecurity in order to address their shared concerns.
- Under their framework of counter-terrorism cooperation, they will also continue their exchanges to fight against the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes and online radicalization, as illustrated in their joint support to the Christchurch Call to Action.
- Finally, France and India welcomed the forthcoming G7 summit under the French presidency, with which India will be associated.
- France and India will hold the fourth Indo-French cyber dialogue in India.



Links:

[https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/31458/Joint Statement on IndoFrench Bilateral Cyber Dialogue in Paris June 20 2019](https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/31458/Joint_Statement_on_IndoFrench_Bilateral_Cyber_Dialogue_in_Paris_June_20_2019)

Fourth edition of National Yoga Olympiad of school children

Question: Where was the fourth edition of National Yoga Olympiad of school children organized by NCERT?

(a) Hyderabad (b) Jamshedpur (c) New Delhi (d) Ranchi

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- A three day National Yoga Olympiad of school children organised by the National Council of Educational Research and Training took place at Chacha Nehru



Bhawan in New Delhi.

- It was organized between 18 and 20 June 2019.
- The Olympiad was inaugurated on June 18,2019 by the Director and UNESCO Representative for India, Eric Falt in the presence of Director NCERT, Professor Hrushikesh Senapaty.
- This was the fourth edition of National Yoga Olympiad. It was first started in the year 2016.
- The purpose of this program is to create positive attitude among all human beings and promote peaceful living together in the society. Yoga has found an important place in the school curriculum as a part of Health and Physical Education.
- This year, 567 students from 33 States/UTs including CBSE, KVS and NVS and 4DMS of RIEs of NCERT had participated in the Olympiad as compared to the participation of 431 students from 28 States/UTs last year.
- Yoga has been inscribed on the UN representative list of intangible Cultural Heritage.
- The book title 'Health and Physical Education – A Teachers Guide Class VIII" was released on the occasion by the guests.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1575001>

20th Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

Question: When did the 20th Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) take place?

(a) 18 June 2019 (b) 19 June 2019 (c) 20 June 2019 (d) 15 June 2019

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The 20th Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was held on June 19,2019 under the Chairmanship of the Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman.
- The FSDC Meeting was also attended by Anurag Thakur, MoS (Finance & Corporate Affairs), Shaktikanta Das, Governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI); Subhash Chandra Garg, Finance Secretary and Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and other officers.
- The Meeting reviewed the current global and domestic economic situation and financial stability issues including, inter-alia, those concerning Banking and NBFCs.
- The Council was also apprised of the progress made towards setting-up of the Financial Data Management Centre (FDMC) to facilitate integrated data aggregation and analysis as also a Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-Fin) towards strengthening the cyber security framework for the financial sector.
- The Council also held consultations to obtain inputs/ suggestions of the financial sector regulators for the Budget. All the regulators presented their proposals for the Union Budget 2019-20.
- The Council also took note of the activities undertaken by the FSDC Sub-Committee Chaired by Governor, RBI and the action taken by Members on the decisions taken in earlier Meetings of the Council.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1575006>

Bihar becomes first state to launch Universal Old-Age Pension Scheme

Question: Recently, which state has launched the Universal Old-Age Pension Scheme for 36 lakh beneficiaries?

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 14th June 2019, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar launched a universal old age pension scheme – Mukhyamantri Vridhajan Pension Yojna (MVPY).
- This scheme aims to cover an estimated 36 lakh senior citizens who were still not privy to any salary, pension or family pension.
- The scheme brings all elderly under a social security plan with the initiation of direct benefit transfer (DBT) for a respective monthly entitlement of Rs 400 for people in the age group of 60-79 years and Rs 500 for those 80 years and above.
- Till now, only BPL persons above 60 years were covered under the prevalent old age pension scheme.
- The government had announced the scheme in February in State Assembly and later the State Cabinet had sanctioned a sum of Rs 384 crore from Bihar Contingency Fund for the payment of the universal old age pension scheme for financial year 2019-20.
- The state government is likely to incur an additional annual revenue expenditure of Rs 1,800 crore.



Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/patna/bihar-cm-nitish-kumar-launches-universal-old-age-pension-scheme-for-36-lakh-beneficiaries/story-J9vCjoTjsFx7ZIXSMAcuWK.html>

Swachh Survekshan League 2020

Question: Swachh Survekshan League 2020 was launched by which of the following Ministry on 4th June, 2019?

(a) Ministry of Human Resource (b) Ministry of Home Affairs

(c) Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation

(d) Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State (I/C) for Housing & Urban Affairs launched Swachh Survekshan 2020 League at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), New Delhi on 6th June, 2019.
- Swachh Survekshan League 2020 will be a quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns in India and will be integrated with Swachh Survekshan 2020, the 5th edition of the annual cleanliness survey of urban India to be conducted between January to February 2020 by MoHUA under the aegis of Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban (SBM-U).
- The objective of the Swachh Survekshan (SS) survey is to encourage large scale citizen participation, ensure sustainability of initiatives taken towards garbage free and open defecation free cities, provide credible outcomes validated by third party certification.
- The 4th edition, Swachh Survekshan 2019 covered 4237 cities in a record time of 28 days and was a fully digitized and paperless survey. Indore has retained the title of the Cleanest City in the last three years.



- SS League 2020 will be conducted in 3 quarters, i.e. April to June, July to September and October to December 2019 and will have a weightage of 2000 marks for each quarter to be evaluated on the basis of monthly updation of SBM-U online MIS by cities along with citizen's validation on the 12 service level progress indicators through outbound calls.
- These two parameters will together determine the quarterly ranking of cities. Ranks will be assigned in two categories, namely, cities with population of one lakh and above and cities with population of less than 1 lakh.
- The performance of cities in SS League 2020 will be crucial to their ranking in Swachh Survekshan 2020 due to the 25% weightage of the quarterly assessments to be included in the annual survey in January 2020.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/centre-to-launch-swachh-survekshan-league-2020-on-thursday-119060401353_1.html

Diamond Jubilee of the Oldest Naval Air Squadron

Question: Where did the Indian Navy's first Naval Air Squadron 550 celebrated its Diamond Jubilee on 17 June, 2019?

(a) Pune (b) Visakhapatnam (c) Kochi (d) Havelock Islands

Answer: (c)



- Indian Navy's first Naval Air Squadron 550 celebrated its Diamond Jubilee on 17 Jun 19 at naval base Kochi.
- Completing 60 glorious years of yeoman service to the nation, Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 550 has played a key role in training the Navy's Maritime Reconnaissance pilots and observers and has provided invaluable maritime support to our fleet.
- Various outreach activities and community events have been conducted by the squadron commemorating the occasion.
- First day cover was released by the Postal department to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the squadron by Assistant Superintendent of post office central region, and Senior Post Master Kerela at Ernakulam Head post office, Kochi on 17 Jun 2019.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleseDetail.aspx?PRID=1574899>

8th National Party of India

Question: Which party has been recently recognized as the 8th National Party of India by the ECI?

(a) Bahujan Samaj Party (b) Assam Gana Parishad (c) Telangana Rashtra Samiti (d) National Peoples Party

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Election Commission of India recognized the National People's Party as the 8th National Party of India on 7th June, 2019.
- NPP is led by Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma. It became the first party from the North-east to be recognized as National Party.



- NPP fulfilled the National Party status requirement as it polled more than 6% of the total votes in the last general election and was recognised as a State party in at least four States (Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya and Nagaland)
- The NPP has 21 MLAs of 60 in Meghalaya state assembly. It is also the single largest political family in Meghalaya.
- The party also has five MLAs in Arunachal Pradesh and four in Manipur.
- Other seven national Party are Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC), Communist Party of India (CPI), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Communist Party of India- Marxist (CPI-M), National Congress Party (NCP) and All India Trinamool Congress (TMC).
- Trinamool Congress led by West Bengal CM Mamta Banerjee was included in the list in September 2016.

Links:

<http://www.uniindia.com/npp-recognised-as-national-party/east/news/1624668.html>

External Affairs Minister first overseas visit

Question: External Affairs Minister of India made a two day visit to which nation in the first week of June 2019?

(a) Nepal (b) Maldives (c) China (d) Bhutan

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- Newly appointed External Affairs Minister and former External Affairs Secretary Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Bhutan on 7-8 June, 2019.
- This is his first visit abroad as the foreign External Affairs Minister.
- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Bhutan's top leadership, including Prime Minister Lotay Tshering on June 7 and discussed important elements of the bilateral ties with emphasis on development partnership and cooperation in the hydropower sector.
- He also conveyed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greetings during his talks with Prime Minister Lotay Tshering.
- Bhutan has been a close ally of India and bilateral ties between the two countries are on an upswing in the last few years.
- India and Bhutan share a unique and time tested bilateral relationship, characterized by utmost trust, goodwill and mutual understanding.
- During the visit, the two sides discussed entire gamut of bilateral relations, including the upcoming high-level exchanges, economic development and hydro-power cooperation.
- Bhutan was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first overseas visit after assuming charge in 2014.



Links:

https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31413/External_Affairs_Ministers_visit_to_Bhutan_June_0708_2019

Telangana Statehood Day

Question: On which date was the State of Telangana formed as the 29th State of the Union of India?

(a) 3rd June, 2015 (b) 2nd June, 2014 (c) 3rd June, 2015 (d) 2nd June, 2015

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Telangana celebrated its fifth Statehood Day on 2nd June, 2019.
- It was formed as the 29th State of India, separating itself from Andhra Pradesh. Hyderabad, which was the capital of Andhra Pradesh, became the capital of Telangana.
- The Prime Minister and the President extended their wishes to people of the State of Telangana on this occasion.
- Incumbent Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Reddy was the first CM of Telangana and won the recent state elections.

Formation:

- Telangana was formed by the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014 passed by the Parliament in February, 2014.
- It stated the formation of Telangana state comprising 10 districts of Andhra Pradesh.
- They will be having a common capital Hyderabad for 10 years.
- Telangana have 7 seats in the Rajya Sabha and in the Lok Sabha it have 17 seats.

Links:

<https://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-andhra-pradesh-reorganisation-bill-2014-3133>

Ban of online food without hygiene rating

Question: Which state has recently announced the ban of online ordered food without hygiene rating?

(a) Kerala (b) Telangana (c) Gujarat (d) Punjab

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The state of Punjab has announced to ban online delivery of food without hygiene rating on 30th May, 2019.
- This decision was taken under the Tandarust Punjab Mission.
- The Health Ministry has issued instructions to all online food order and supply companies to display the hygiene rating of the food business operators registered with them.
- A deadline of three months is given to the distributors to complete the hygiene rating.



Links:

<http://www.theshillongtimes.com/2019/05/31/punjab-to-ban-online-food-without-hygiene-rating/>

17th Lok Sabha Summoning

Question: When will the first meeting of the newly elected 17th Lok Sabha take place?

(a) 07th June (b) 15th June (c) 17th June (d) 20th June

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in its first meeting, has approved the summoning of the 17th Lok Sabha on the 17th of June, 2019 and subject to the exigencies of Government Business, the Session will conclude on 26th July, 2019.
- The Rajya Sabha will be convened on 20th June, 2019 and subject to exigencies of Government Business, the Session will conclude on 26th July, 2019.
- The Election of Speaker will be held on 19th June, 2019.



- The President will be requested to address both the Houses of Parliament assembled together in the Central Hall of Parliament on 20th June, 2019, in term of Article 87(1) of the Constitution.
- Article 87(1) in The Constitution of India 1949 provisions that at the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year the President shall address both Houses of Parliament assembled together and inform Parliament of the causes of its summons.
- The Union Budget for 2019-20 will be presented in the Lok Sabha on 5 July, 2019 and after presentation/laying of the Budget, the respective Houses will be adjourned for the day.

Link:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1573016>

International

Fastest growing economy in Asia Pacific

Question: Which of the following country has emerged as the fastest growing economy in the Asia-Pacific region?

(a) Bangladesh (b) Maldives (c) India (d) Nepal

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 19 June 2019, ADB Country Director for Bangladesh Resident Mission Manmohan Parkash handed over the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2019 to the country's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
- As per the report of Asian Development Bank (ADB), Bangladesh is the fastest growing economy in the Asia-Pacific region comprised of 45 countries.
- In the financial year 2018-19, country's GDP growth accelerated to 7.9 % which is its fastest rate since 1974.
- The bank has predicted 8% growth rate for Bangladesh in both fiscal 2019 & 2020 terming it a new record.
- Higher public sector investment, stronger consumption demand, revival in exports, improved power supply and higher growth in private sector credit were the key drivers of the high growth performance of Bangladesh.
- The report figures moderate growth across most of developing Asia -5.7 percent in 2019 and 5.6 percent in 2020. However, the growth rate was 6.2 percent in 2017 and 5.9 percent in 2018.
- Meanwhile, India's growth is forecasted to pick up modestly to 7.2% in FY2019 and expected to edge up further to 7.3% in FY2020. The economic growth was 7.0% in FY2018 and 7.2% in FY2017.
- As of the report, South Asia will see buck trend of slowing growth in Asia – 6.8 percent in 2019 and 6.9 percent in 2020.

Links:

<http://newsonair.nic.in/News?title=Bangladesh-has-emerged-as-fastest-growing-economy-among-45-countries-of-Asia-Pacific-region%3a-ADB&id=365191>

World Health Organization (WHO) launched a global campaign named AWaRe

Question: AWaRe has been launched by which organization?

(a) WHO (b) UNCTAD (c) UNESCO (d) UNICEF

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 18 June 2019, World Health Organization (WHO) launched a global campaign named AWaRe urging governments to adopt a tool to reduce the spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), adverse events and costs.
- It is developed by the WHO Essential Medicines List.
- It classifies antibiotics into three groups – Access, Watch and Reserve.
- The campaigns aims to increase the proportion of global consumption of antibiotics in the Access group to at least 60% and to reduce the use of the antibiotics from the Watch and Reserve groups.
- However, the AWaRe campaign: Adopt AWaRe, Handle antibiotics with care –was officially launched on 19 June by the Ministers of Health of The Netherlands and Indonesia and WHO Assistant-Director General Hanan Balkhy, at the second ministerial conference on AMR in Noordwijk, The Netherlands.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is concerned with international public health.
- It was established on 7th April, 1948, and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The WHO is a member of the United Nations Development Group.

Links:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/18-06-2019-in-the-face-of-slow-progress-who-offers-a-new-tool-and-sets-a-target-to-accelerate-action-against-antimicrobial-resistance>

USCIRF 2019 Report

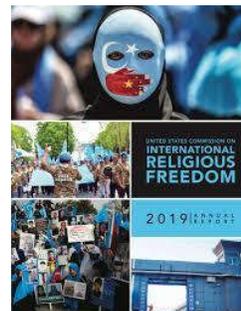
Question: Which country is found to be the worst offender of the religious freedom as per the latest report of USCIRF on World's most egregious violators of religious freedom?

(a) China (b) Myanmar (c) Iraq (d) Saudi Arabia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) released 2019 Annual Report and Recommendation for World's Most Egregious Violators of Religious Freedom on 29th April, 2019.
- This was the 20th Annual Report documenting country conditions in, and analyzing and recommending U. S. policy initiatives toward, the world's worst violators of religious freedom.
- The report found world's most populous country China as the worst offender when it comes to persecution of religious faiths.



Major highlights of the report:

- The report divided the countries into three tiers. Countries of particular concern (CPCs) for engaging in or tolerating systematic, ongoing, egregious violations.
- Entities of particular concern (EPCs) to be designated where non-state actors cited for similarly severe violations and Tier 2 countries meaning the violations meet one or two, but not all three, of the elements of the systematic, ongoing, egregious test for CPC status.
- The 16 countries USCIRF recommended for CPC designation which are Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Central African Republic (CAR), Nigeria, Russia, Syria, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.
- The 12 countries on USCIRF's Tier 2 list are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cuba, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Laos, Malaysia, and Turkey.
- The five entities recommended for EPC designation include the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Taliban in Afghanistan, al-Shabab in Somalia, and new to the list this year, the Houthis in Yemen and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria.
- China sits prominently on the list of religious persecution. There has been persecution of Uyghur Muslims, Falung Gong practitioners, Christians, and Tibetan Buddhists in China. Around 1 million Uyghur Muslims were put on internment camps in an effort to combat extremism last year.
- Russia continued a downward spiral of religious liberty, using the pretense of combating extremism to repress minorities.
- In Myanmar, where nearly 88% of citizens are Buddhist, religious minorities found little justice. The government and military denied there was a campaign to extinguish Rohingya Muslims through systematic rape, torture and mass killings.

Report on India:

- There has been an overall deterioration of religious freedom conditions in 2018, the report mentions for India. It continues to remain a Tier 2 country, a list it has been unable to get off of since 2009.
- The report has found an increased securitisation and politicisation of religion. It is increasingly difficult to separate religion and politics, a tactic that is sometimes intentional by those who seek to discriminate against and restrict the rights of certain religious communities.
- The report says conditions for minorities in India have deteriorated over the last decade. There has been multifaceted campaign by Hindu nationalist groups like the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), Sangh Parivar to alienate non-Hindus or lower-caste Hindus is a significant contributor to the rise of religious violence and persecution.
- Serious Mob Violence on Muslims and Dalits has been done on the name of cow slaughter, anti-conversion laws.
- There is a lack of transparency on denying international NGOs registration and political targeting of NGOs.
- The Commission also found some positive developments like the decrease in communal attacks by 12 % in 2018 from their 2017 levels, a 12% increase in the budget of the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the Supreme Court's push for an 11-point plan to counter mob violence.

USCIRF:

- United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is an independent, bi-partisan U.S. federal government commission created by the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) that monitors the universal right to freedom of religion or belief abroad.
- USCIRF uses international standards to monitor religious freedom violations globally, and makes policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress.

- USCIRF Commissioners are appointed by the President and Congressional leaders of both political parties.

Links:

<https://www.uscirf.gov/news-room/press-releases-statements/uscirf-releases-2019-annual-report-and-recommendations-world-s>

WTO Ministerial Meeting of Developing Countries

Question: Where will the World Trade Organization’s Ministerial Meeting for the developing countries take place?

(a) Brasilia (b) New Delhi (c) Shanghai (d) Cape Town

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- A WTO Ministerial meeting of developing countries was hosted by India in New Delhi on 13-14 May 2019.
- Sixteen developing countries, Six Least Developed Countries (LDC)(Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Brazil, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, China, Egypt, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Nigeria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda)and DG, WTO are participating in the meeting.
- The two-day meeting was interactive in order to provide an opportunity to the Ministers to discuss various issues and the way forward.
- The meeting took place at a time when the multilateral rule-based-trading system is facing serious and grave challenges. In the recent past, there have been increasing unilateral measures and counter measures by members. The current situation has given rise to demands from various quarters to reform the WTO.
- The meeting held at New Delhi fosters an effort to bring together the developing countries and Least Developed Countries on a platform for sharing common concerns on various issues affecting the WTO and work together to address these issues.
- The two-day meeting also provided an opportunity to the developing countries and LDCs to build consensus on how to move forward on the WTO reforms, while preserving the fundamentals of the multilateral trading system enshrined in the WTO.



Link:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1571846>

Wikipedia blocked by an Asian country

Question: Which Asian country has recently blocked Wikipedia website in all languages?

(a) Myanmar (b) Mongolia (c) China (d) Pakistan

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Chinese authorities have blocked Wikipedia in all the languages.
- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media sites have long been blocked in China.
- Tests run by GreatFire.org which tracks Internet censorship in China revealed that the site had not been accessible since 23rd April, 2019, in China.
- Wikipedia’s Chinese-language site was blocked in 2015 by China’s “Great Firewall” which prevents Internet users from accessing certain foreign website but the other language versions have largely remained accessible, although with some interruptions.
- Internet authorities in China face huge censorship and restrictions.

- This June will mark 30 years since the army used force to suppress the pro-democracy protests centred on Tiananmen Square.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/china-blocks-wikipedia-in-all-languages/article27141724.ece>

UN Report of Drug Resistant

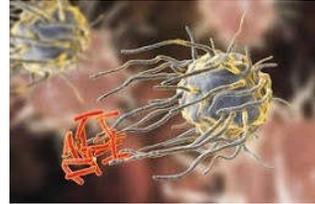
Question: What is the number of expected death to be caused by drug resistant diseases annually by 2050?

(a) 5million (b) 7 million (c) 10 million (d) 11 million

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- A United Nations expert committee gave a report on deaths related to drug resistant disease.
- As per the report submitted by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG) which was setup in March 2017 with experts from different countries as members, alarming levels of resistance have been reported in countries of all income levels.
- The report mentions that there can be around 10 million deaths annually by 2050 due to drug resistant infections and diseases.
- This can further lead to financial crisis as equal to the Great Recession of 2008.



The report:

- The recent trend shows that drug-resistant infections mainly by the antibiotic overuse in humans, livestock and agriculture kill 700,000 people across the globe every year.
- This includes 230,000 deaths caused by Multiple Drug Resistant Tuberculosis.
- This antimicrobial resistance will also force 24 million people into extreme poverty by the year 2030.
- The overuse of antimicrobial drugs for the cure of diseases such as tuberculosis; malaria and MRSA have made these infections more resistant to traditional treatment.
- This is also seen on the treatment of cold or flu where antibiotics are taken without realizing that such drugs are incapable of killing viruses.
- Farmers using antibiotics to increase the growth or prevent the spread of disease among animals such as chickens, pigs and cows also contribute to the resistant.
- When microbes come into unnecessary contact with bacteria, they have more chances to adapt to specific strains, increasing the likelihood of genetic mutations that undercut medications' effectiveness.
- Around 2.4 million people could die in high-income countries alone between 2015 and 2050 due to antimicrobial drug resistance. This is made worse by the overuse of existing antimicrobials agents such as antibiotic, antiviral, antifungal as well as antiprotozoal drugs.
- Drug-resistant infections are even greater threat in developing countries. The germs grow in environments having unclean and infected water and inadequate sewage systems.
- Poor people are also more likely to purchase cheap and low-quality antibiotics from street vendors without understanding the implications of such misuse. This increases the problem.

Key recommendations:

- The IACG has called on all Member States to phase out the use of antimicrobials on the WHO's highest priority list.

- It has also recommended the setting up of a One Health Global Leadership Group on Antimicrobial Resistance with a joint secretariat from WHO, UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and World Organisation for Animal Health, or OIE.
- The U.N. group outlines several key recommendations for curbing the spread of drug-resistant pathogens.
- It includes regulating the sale of antibiotics sold without a proper prescription, stopping the use of antibiotics for spurring farm animals' growth.
- It also asks rich nations to fund public health improvements in poorer countries, and incentivizing pharmaceutical companies to develop new antibiotics.
- The report said preparing and implementing national antimicrobial resistance action plans is the first step towards tackling the drug resistance.

Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/science/superbugs-could-kill-10-million-by-2050-warns-a-un-backed-panel/article26991531.ece>

Two journalists came out of Myanmar jail

Question: The two journalist who recently came out of Myanmar's jail belonged to which news agency?

(a) BBC (b) Aljazeera (c) Zee News (d) Reuters

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Two Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo jailed in Myanmar were freed on 7th May, 2019 after spending more than 500 days.
- They were freed along with 6,520 prisoners as part of amnesties granted by the President on the occasion of New Year in Myanmar.
- The journalists were arrested in December 2017.
- They had been convicted in September 2018 and sentenced to seven years jail for breaking the country's secrets law for their journalistic investigation on the military's brutal crackdown and killings of Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state. These killings took place in August 2017.
- As per U.N. estimates, this operation sent more than 730,000 Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh.
- Earlier on 2 May 2019, they were conferred the prestigious UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize 2019. The award recognizes their exceptional courage in reporting on alleged human rights violations in the state of Rakhine, Myanmar.



Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-journalists/two-reuters-reporters-jailed-in-myanmar-freed-after-more-than-500-days-idUSKCN1SD056>

Iran announced partial withdrawal from nuclear deal

Question: Which of the following country had completely withdrawn itself from the nuclear deal of 2015 a year ago?

(a) Iraq (b) US (c) Iran (d) Russia

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 8th May, 2019, Iran announced to withdraw itself partially from the nuclear deal signed with world powers in 2015. This announcement comes a



year after Donald Trump pulled out USA from the deal accusing Iran for not following its provisions. Tensions between Iran and the US have risen since US quit.

- Iranian President Hassan Rouhani will be sending a letter informing the remaining parties to the deal – the UK, France, Germany, China and Russia. It will be giving a 60 day time to them for negotiating the financial deal and oil export sanction put over it, the failure of which will compel Iran's partial withdrawal from the deal.

The deal:

- The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a detailed, 159-page agreement between Iran and the P5+1 (China France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) on 14th July, 2015.
- The nuclear deal was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231, adopted on 20th July, 2015.
- 16th January, 2016 was its Implementation Day and the deal was to be terminated in October 2025.
- The deal took place after several year of tension due to Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear weapon. Iran insisted that its nuclear programme was peaceful, but the international community did not believe that.

Commitment under the deal:

- Low-enriched uranium with 3%-4% concentration of U-235 can be used to produce fuel for nuclear power plants. Iran cannot use Weapons-grade uranium which is 90% enriched.
- Iran had two uranium enrichment sites named Natanz and Fordo. The deal allowed enrichment in Natanz with constrains while Frodo was to be developed as a nuclear, physics and technology centre.
- The deal limited Iran to install no more than 5,060 of the oldest and least efficient centrifuges at Natanz until 2026. Iran had almost 20,000 centrifuges in June 2015.
- Iran's uranium stockpile was reduced by 98% to 300kg (660lbs), which remains un-exceeded till 2031.
- Iran was building a heavy water reactor in Aarak which had the capacity to produce Plutonium. Iran said to redesign the reactor so it could not produce any weapons-grade plutonium.
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the global nuclear watchdog, was given the rights to vigilantly monitor the declared nuclear sites of Iran and also verify that no fissile material is moved covertly to a secret location to build a bomb.

Recent tension:

- President Donald Trump announced the withdrawal of US from the deal last year arbitrarily. This led to increase in tension between Iran and US. Iran is facing massive economic sanctions from US.
- US announced to all its trade allies to immediately stop importing oil from Iran. India and China were earlier exempted from this sanction but from the coming week they have to abide the sanction. India said it will follow the sanction.
- The U.S. also warned Europe against doing business with Tehran via a system of non-dollar trade to avoid U.S. sanctions.
- The previous sanction imposed by UN, US and EU over Iran to stop its uranium enrichment crippled its economy. It costed Iran more than \$160bn (£118bn) in oil revenue from 2012 to 2016 alone.

Links:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/07/iran-to-announces-partial-withdrawal-from-nuclear-deal>

Cybercrime Report, 2019

Question: Which organization released the report- Current State of Cybercrime Report, 2019?

(a) SIPRI (b) World Economic Forum (c) HCL Solutions (d) RSA Security

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The RSA Security released the Current State of Cybercrime Report, 2019 recently.
- The report highlighted cybercrime details and the initiatives to be taken for the safety.



Major highlights of the report:

- Digital transformation is making it easier not only for legitimate organizations to expand their reach but also for fraudsters and other bad actors to expand theirs.
- Cybercriminals are increasingly using mobile for frauds. It is evidential with a whopping 680% increase in fraud transactions from mobile apps between 2015 and 2018
- Fraud in the mobile channel has grown significantly over the last several years, with the origin of 70% of fraud transactions in the mobile channel in 2018.
- The usage of rogue mobile applications to fraud the consumers are on the rise each year. RSA report mentioned an average of 82 rogue mobile applications per day last year across most popular app stores. 1 of 5 cyber attacks is attributed to the rogue mobile apps in 2018.
- The frauds are done by various means which includes SMS texts rather than email to deliver phishing messages aimed at getting victims' account credentials, credit card numbers, etc.
- 57% of companies use up to 10 different anti-fraud tools to manage fraud across channels
- RSA reported that there is a fast-growing trend of cybercriminals in using Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and other social media and messaging platforms to communicate with each other and sell stolen identities, credit card numbers etc.
- Social media fraud attacks had increased 43% by the end of last year, as cybercriminals continued to find new ways of making social media platforms useful for them.
- Cybercriminals are developing their own apps to increase their anonymity, avoid detection and otherwise keep anti-fraud forces from tracking them down and exposing what they're doing.
- Money laundering is essential elements in the proliferation of cybercrime, as much of the funds come in the form of crypto currencies with a chain traceable to crime.
- 52% of financial institutions are planning to adopt an authentication hub in the next 1-2 years.

Links:

<https://community.rsa.com/docs/DOC-101537>

16th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue

Question: Where did the 16th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue take place recently?

(a) Dhaka (b) Doha (c) Crimea (d) New Delhi

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The 16th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) was held in Doha, Qatar on 1st May, 2019. The theme of the meeting was 'Partners in Progress'.
- Gen. (Dr) V.K. Singh (Retd), Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation.
- India's appealed for working cooperatively with all ACD Member States in line with the Government of India's approach of 'Collective Efforts, Inclusive Growth'.
- The need for concerted efforts across Asia to ensure energy security in the region for sustainable development and poverty eradication by pursuing non-polluting renewable sources such as solar power was stressed at the ACD.
- It was also urged to the Member States to join the International Solar Alliance launched in November 2015.
- The keenness of India to play an enabling role for ensuring collective action on various objectives and projects of ACD in order to promote the pursuit of stability, peace, growth and prosperity was also underscored.



Asia Cooperation Dialogue:

- The Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) was inaugurated in June, 2002 in Cha-Am, Thailand, where 18 Asian Foreign Ministers met together for the first time. It has 34 member countries with Nepal being the latest.
- ACD aims to constitute the missing link in Asia by incorporating every Asian country and building an Asian Community without duplicating other organizations.
- India and China are the founding members of this organisation. It was joined later by Russia, Kuwait, and Turkey etc.

Links:

[https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31232/16th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue](https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31232/16th%20Ministerial%20Meeting%20of%20Asia%20Cooperation%20Dialogue)

11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting

Question: To which country the Chairmanship of Arctic Council was passed at the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting?

(a) Finland (b) Germany (c) Iceland (d) Ireland

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The 11th Arctic Council Ministerial meeting took place on 7th May, 2019 at Rovaniemi, Finland.
- Minister-level representatives from the eight Arctic States reviewed and approved work completed under the two-year Finnish Chairmanship to improve sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.
- Foreign Ministers from the eight Arctic States, leaders from the six indigenous Permanent Participant organizations and the Chairs of the Council's six Working Groups convened at the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland
- The Chairmanship of the council was passed to Iceland from Finland in this meeting. Finland was the Chairman of this council for 2 years.



- In the Rovaniemi Joint Ministerial Statement, the Arctic States reaffirmed the Council's commitment to maintain the Arctic as a region of peace, stability and constructive cooperation.
- At the Ministerial meeting, the Council welcomed the International Maritime Organization as new Observer.
- India has been re-elected as an observer to the Arctic Council.
- Observer status in the Arctic Council is open to Non-Arctic states along with inter-governmental, inter-parliamentary, global, regional and non-governmental organizations that the Council determines can contribute to its work.

Finland's two year achievement:

- Finland placed a special emphasis for the Council's work on environmental protection, meteorological cooperation, connectivity, and education. The accomplishments included projects on oil spill prevention, preparedness and response, on teacher education for diversity and equality in the Arctic and a series of health-related projects aimed at improving the health and mental wellness of Arctic inhabitants.
- Major reports released on or around the Ministerial meeting included the Arctic Climate Change Update, 2019, the State of the Arctic Freshwater Biodiversity Report etc.

Arctic Council:

- The Arctic Council is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.
- As per the Ottawa Declaration; Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States are six organizations representing Arctic indigenous peoples having status as Permanent Participants.

Links:

<https://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/our-work2/8-news-and-events/512-rovaniemi-ministerial-11>

Sovereign Internet Bill

Question: Which country passed the Sovereign Internet Bill to create an independent internet in the country?

(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia (c) North Korea (d) Russia

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Russia President Vladimir Putin signed into law a sovereign internet bill on May 1, 2019. This law will allow Russian authorities to isolate the country's internet.
- Russia made this move to ensure the security of its networks after US President Donald Trump unveiled a new American cyber security strategy last year that said Russia had carried out cyber attacks with impunity.



Sovereign Internet law:

- This law would enable the creation of a national network which can be operated separately from the rest of the world. For now, the network remains largely theoretical though with few practical details disclosed.

- This new law aims to protect Russia from foreign online restrictions by creating what the Kremlin calls a “sustainable, secure and fully functioning” local internet.
- The legislation takes effect in November 2019.
- The law will be creating a monitoring and a management center.
- It will be supervised by Russia’s telecoms agency Roskomnadzor.
- The state agency will be charged with ensuring the availability of communication services in Russia in extraordinary situations. It would also be empowered to cut off external traffic exchange and creating a purely Russian web.
- The information from state entities and state-owned enterprises on the Internet will be protected via encryption.

Reaction on this law:

- Internet in Russia has faced restrictions in the past. There has been a greater domestic censorship in recent years.
- An independent Russian internet would involve the creation of a Chinese-style national firewall to monitor and censor content passing in and out of the country fearing the activists and right groups in Russia.
- This can also lead to severe privacy violation and will allow for greater surveillance by Russian intelligence agencies, and the ability of state authorities to control information.
- Russian authorities have blocked online sites and content linked to the opposition in the recent times including the Dailymotion video platform, the LinkedIn online social networking site and the encrypted messaging app Telegram.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Russia-President-Vladimir-Putin-signs-into-law-a-sovereign-internet-bill&id=362890>

Times Higher Education Asia University Ranking 2019

Question: In the latest Times Higher Education Asia University Ranking 2019, which university got the top spot?

**(a) National University of Singapore (b) Peking University, China
(c) University of Tokyo, Japan (d) Tsinghua University, China**

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Times released the Higher Education Asia University Ranking 2019 recently.
- The top five universities in the list are Tsinghua University, China, National University of Singapore, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, University of Hong Kong and Peking University, China.
- TIME’s Asia University Ranking 2019 rank universities on the basis of five broad parameters as used in the overall World University Rankings.
- Out of 5 parameters, teaching carries a weightage of 25 per cent, while research and citations each carry weightage of 30 per cent, followed by international outreach and industry income carrying 7.5 per cent weightage each.
- The 2019 ranking comprises 417 universities, covering 27 countries and regions.
- Japan is the most-represented nation, with 103 institutions.
- Malaysia made its debut in the top 40 this year with the University of Malaya rising eight places to joint 38.



Indian institutions:

- The list of Indian universities was topped by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. It got the 29th ranking overall.
- The second position among Indian Universities was secured by Indian Institute of Technology- Indore. It ranked 50th in the list.
- Other institutions include IIT Bombay (54th), IIT Roorkee (54th), JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research (62nd).
- The report mentions China as the leader in Higher Education in Asia and India giving just some pocket of excellence. Overall India's universities delivered a mixed performance due to significant changes at individual institutions.

Links:

[https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2019/regional-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/locations/IN/sort by/rank/sort order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2019/regional-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/locations/IN/sort%20by/rank/sort%20order/asc/cols/stats)

SIPRI World's Top Military Spender 2018

Question: As per the latest report of SIPRI on military expenditure by countries of the world, what is the rank of India in the top spender countries?

(a) 3rd (b) 5th (c) 4th (d) 2nd

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released a latest report on the World military spending 2018 report on April 29, 2019.
- The report ranks India as the fourth biggest spender country on military.

Major highlights of the report:

- Total world military expenditure rose to \$1822 billion in 2018, representing an increase of 2.6 per cent from 2017, according to new data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- The five biggest spenders in 2018 were the United States, China, Saudi Arabia, India and France.
- These top five nations account for 60 per cent of global military spending.
- Total global military spending rose for the second consecutive year in 2018. It is the highest level of spending since 1988.
- This expenditure is also 76 per cent higher than the post-cold war time of 1998.
- In 2018, the global military spending shares 2.1 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) or \$239 per person.

US and China:

- The USA and China accounted for half of the world's military spending in 2018.
- The military spending of US grew for the first time since 2010 by 4.6 per cent.
- The expenditure in military by US reached to \$649 billion in 2018. The USA remained the largest spender in the world
- Its expenditure on military is almost equivalent to the combined expenditure by the next eight largest spending countries.
- China is the second-largest spender in the world. It increased its military expenditure by 5.0 per cent to \$250 billion in 2018.
- This was the 24th consecutive year of increase in Chinese military expenditure. Its spending in 2018 was almost 10 times higher than in 1994.

Asia and Oceania:

- Military expenditure in Asia and Oceania has witnessed a rise every year since 1988. Military spending in the region accounted for 28 per cent of the global total in 2018 with \$507 billion.
- Military expenditure by Pakistan grew by 11 per cent (the same level of growth as in 2017), to reach \$11.4 billion in 2018.
- South Korean military expenditure was \$43.1 billion in 2018 with an increase of 5.1 per cent compared with 2017.

Central and East European countries:

- Several countries in Central and Eastern Europe made large increases in their military expenditure in 2018.
- Spending by Poland rose by 8.9 per cent in 2018 to \$11.6 billion, while Ukraine's spending was up by 21 per cent to \$4.8 billion.
- At \$61.4 billion, Russian military spending was the sixth highest in the world in 2018.
- Military spending in South America rose by 3.1 per cent in 2018.
- Military expenditure in Africa fell by 8.4 per cent in 2018,
- Military spending by states in the Middle East for which data was available fell by 1.9 per cent in 2018.
- Total military expenditure by all 29 North Atlantic Treaty Organization members was \$963 billion in 2018, which accounted for 53 per cent of world spending.
- The largest absolute increase in spending in 2018 was by the USA (\$27.8 billion), while the biggest decrease was by Saudi Arabia (-\$4.6 billion).
- Six of the 10 countries with the highest military burden (military spending as a proportion of GDP) in the world in 2018 are in the Middle East: Saudi Arabia (8.8 per cent of GDP), Oman (8.2 per cent), Kuwait (5.1 per cent), Lebanon (5.0 per cent), Jordan (4.7 per cent) and Israel (4.3 per cent).

India's position:

- India became the fourth biggest military spender in the world in 2018.
- India's military spending went up by 3.1% to \$66.5 billion. India accounts for 3.7% of the global defence spending.
- India surpassed France in the expenditure ranking to gain the 4th spot. France is now the 5th largest spender.
- India is behind China in Asia while neighbor Pakistan ranks 20 in the list.

Links:

<https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2019/world-military-expenditure-grows-18-trillion-2018>

SCO Council of Foreign Minister Meeting

Question: Where did the Foreign Council meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Association (SCO) take place from 21 and 22 May 2019?

(a) Minsk (b) Shanghai (c) Bishkek (d) Belgrade

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 22 May 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan hosted a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states.
- The meeting was attended by Foreign Ministers of India (Sushma Swaraj), Kazakhstan (Beibut Atamkulov), People's Republic of China (Wang Yi), Kyrgyz Republic (Chingiz Aidarbekov), Pakistan (Shah Mehmood Qureshi), Russia Sergei Lavrov), Tajikistan



(Sirodjidin Mukhriddin), Uzbekistan (Abdulaziz Kamilov), SCO Secretary-General Vladimir Norov and Director of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) Executive Committee Jumakhon Giyosov.

- The meeting was chaired by Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Chingiz Aidarbekov.

Major highlights of the meeting:

- The ministers reviewed the implementation of the decisions of the SCO Heads of State Council meeting (Qingdao, 9-10 June 2018) and the SCO Heads of Government Council meeting (Prime Ministers) (Dushanbe, 11-12 October 2018).
- The ministers stated that the SCO is steadily developing as a stable platform for promoting understanding, trust-based dialogue between the member states. The SCO is becoming an influential participant in international relations and is making tangible contribution to the maintenance of security and stability in the region.
- The ministers believe that firmly adhering to the goals and principles of the SCO Charter, and following the “Shanghai Spirit” that implies mutual trust, mutual advantage, equality, reciprocal consultations, respect for the diversity of cultures and a striving for joint development
- The ministers are convinced that in conditions of deep transformations in global politics and the economy, the priority goal is to create a multi-polar world arrangement that meets the interests of each and all states and relies on the norms of international law.
- They noted the topicality of the initiative to build international relations of a new type based on mutual respect, justice, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation.
- While resolutely denouncing terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations, the ministers support the creation of a united global anti-terrorism front with the UN playing a central coordinating role.
- The ministers emphasised that global challenges and threats — terrorism, separatism and extremism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal drug trafficking, organised crime, cybercrime, unsettled regional and local conflicts etc.
- The ministers emphasised that keeping outer space free of weapons and an arms race meets the interests of all of humanity.

India’s position:

- This was the second CFM meeting that India will be attending as a full member of SCO. India became its full member on 9 June 2017 along with Pakistan.
- India welcomed regional connectivity initiatives, that are inclusive, sustainable, transparent and respect the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- Reign Minister also met Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi. The leaders discussed issues of bilateral interest, including implementation of understanding reached during Wuhan Summit.

Links:

<http://eng.sectsco.org/news/20190522/543257.html>

First major airline to operate plastic-free

Question: Which one is the first major airline to operate plastic free?

(a) Lufthansa Airline (b) Emirates Airline (c) Etihad Airway (d) Delta Airline

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- UAE's flag carrier Etihad Airways has become the first airline in the Gulf region to operate a flight without any single-use plastics on board, in a bid to raise awareness about pollution on Earth Day (April 22, 2019).
- According to the Abu Dhabi-based national airline of the UAE, the flight EY484 landed in Brisbane on the day.
- The milestone flight is part of Etihad's pledge to reduce single-use plastic usage by 80 per cent not just in-flight, but across the entire organisation by the end of 2022.
- Etihad identified that over 95 single-use plastic products are used across its aircraft cabins. Once removed from the Earth Day flight, Etihad prevented over 50 kilograms of plastics from being landfilled.
- Guests on board enjoyed replacement products including sustainable amenity kits, award-winning eco-thread blankets made out of recycled plastic bottles, tablet toothpaste and edible coffee cups while children were treated to eco-plush toys.
- By the end of this year, Etihad will have removed 100 tonnes of single-use plastics from its inflight service.



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/business/etihad-becomes-first-major-airline-operate-plastic-free>

TAPI Gas pipeline meet

Question: Where did the meeting of TAPI Gas pipeline take place recently?

(a) Afghanistan (b) India (c) Pakistan (d) Turkmenistan

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- A delegation led by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Petroleum, Nadeem Babar attended a meeting on May 19, 2019 on the development of Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline, also known as Trans-Afghanistan pipeline in Turkmenistan.
- Groundbreaking of the TAPI gas pipeline will be held in Pakistan in October this year.
- The Pakistani delegation is travelling to Turkmenistan to finalise the plans for the groundbreaking of the project.



TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) Gas Pipeline:

- The TAPI gas pipeline project is expected to be completed by 2022 in Pakistan.
- It is supported by the United States and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and also by Turkmenistan since the 1990s. But the initiation of the project was delayed due to issues related to the instability in the region, especially in Afghanistan.
- The ADB is acting as the facilitator and coordinator for the project.
- It is proposed to lay a 56-inch diameter and 1,680-kilometre pipeline with a capacity of transporting 33 billion cubic meters (BCM) of natural gas per annum from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Fazilka near the India-Pakistan border.
- The pipeline will run through areas of southern Afghanistan largely controlled by the Taliban.
- Kabul has assured that no hindrance will be caused to the project. This project will benefit Afghanistan with five billion cubic meters of the gas itself, while the rest would be divided between India and Pakistan.

Links:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/tapi-meeting-to-take-place-in-turkmenistan-today20190519180530/>

India sets the tone at COP meetings of Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Question: At which place COP meeting of Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions took place from 29th April to 10th May, 2019?

(a) New York (b) Guangzhou (c) Tel Aviv (d) Geneva

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The joint meetings of three conventions on chemicals and waste i.e. Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions took place from 29th April to 10th May, 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The joint meetings comprises fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (COP 14), the ninth meeting of the COP to Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the ninth meeting of the COP to Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.
- The theme of the meetings this year was “Clean Planet, Healthy People: Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste”.
- An Indian delegation of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and comprising other ministries such as Agriculture, Chemicals, and Electronics and Information Technology participated in the meeting.



Basel Convention:

- Two important issues were discussed and decided in Basel Convention, i.e. technical guidelines on e-waste and inclusion of plastic waste in the PIC procedure.
- The draft technical guidelines stipulated the conditions when used electrical and electronic equipment destined for direct reuse, repair, refurbishment or failure analysis should be considered as non-waste.
- India had major reservations regarding these provisions as in the name of re-use, repair, refurbishment and failure analysis there was a possibility of dumping from the developed world to the developing countries including India in view of the growing consumption of electronic equipment and waste across the world.
- The Indian delegation strongly objected the proposed decision on these guidelines during plenary and did not allow it to be passed by the conference of the parties (COP).
- On the final day of the COP, a modified decision was adopted in which all the concerns raised by India were incorporated.
- These were: dumping of e-waste in developing countries; recognition that the interim guideline has issues and further work is required specially on the provision on distinguishing waste from non-waste; the guidelines were adopted on an interim basis only; the tenure of the expert working group was extended to address the concerns raised by India; and the usage of interim guidelines to be done only on a pilot basis.

Plastic pollution addressed:

- Under the Basel Convention, another major achievement of COP 14 was the decision to amend the convention to include unsorted, mixed and contaminated plastic waste under PIC (Prior Informed Consent) procedure and improve the regulation of its transboundary movement.

- Under the Stockholm Convention the COP decided to list “Dicofol” in Annex A without any exemption. The “PFOA” was also listed with some exemptions in the Annex A of the Stockholm Convention. Under the Rotterdam Convention, two new chemicals (Phorate and HBCD) were added in the list for mandatory PIC procedure in international trade.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572102>

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION STATE CLIMATE REPORT 2018

Question: Consider the following statements regarding World Meteorological Organization State Climate Report 2018:

- (1) Year 2018 is on course to be the fourth warmest year on record
- (2) Mean Global Mean Sea Level for the period from January to July 2018 has been 2 to 3 mm higher than for the equivalent period in 2017
- (3) The oceans absorbed around 25% of anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions in last decade

Choose the correct statement/s:

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has published the Statement on the State of the Global Climate on the sidelines of a high-level meeting on climate and sustainable development.
- 2018: Fourth Warmest Year: 2018 is on course to be the fourth warmest year on record. This means that the past four years—2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018—taken together are the four warmest years on record.
- In contrast to the other top warmest years, 2018 began with La Niña conditions, which are typically associated with lower global temperatures.
- Greenhouse Gas Concentrations Continue to Rise: Levels of carbon dioxide concentrations continued to increase in 2018. Atmospheric concentrations reflect a balance between emissions due to human activities and the net uptake by the biosphere and oceans.
- Sea Level Rise Continues: Mean Global Mean Sea Level for the period from January to July 2018 has been 2 to 3 mm higher than for the equivalent period in 2017.
- Ocean Heat Content at Record High: More than 90% of the energy trapped by greenhouse gases goes into the oceans.
- Ocean Acidification: In the past decade, the oceans absorbed around 25% of anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions.
- Sea Ice Well Below Average: Arctic sea-ice extent was well below average throughout 2018 and was at record-low levels for the first two months of the year. Antarctic sea-ice extent was also well below average throughout 2018.
- Glaciers are retreating: In the hydrological year 2016/17, observed glaciers experienced an ice loss of 0.850 meter water equivalent (m.w.e.).
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO):
- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is the United Nations’ authoritative voice on weather, climate and water.
- Every year, WMO issues a Statement on the State of the Global Climate based on data provided by National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and other national and international organizations.

Link:

<https://wmo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=855267a7dd394825aa8e9025e024f163>

Donald Trump criticizes India for its high tariffs

Question: At present, how many countries are member of World Trade Organisation?

(a)164 (b)162 (c)169 (d)172

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- US President slammed the India for imposing 100% tariffs on American products, including the iconic Harley Davidson motorcycles.
- He claimed India a 'tariff king' for not being parallel in tax structure with US.
- Currently, world's two largest economies US and China are locked in a trade war since Trump imposed heavy tariffs on imported steel and aluminium items from China. This move sparked fears of a global trade war.
- Countries in which India has trade surplus (during 17-18 H1):- USA (11.9 billion dollar) – Nepal (2.6 billion dollar) – UK (2.2 billion dollar).
- Countries in which India has trade deficit (during 17-18 HQ):- China (-32.1 billion dollar) – Switzerland (-9.2 billion dollar) – Saudi Arabia (-7.3 billion dollar) – South Korea (-6.7 billion dollar) – South Korea (-6.7 billion dollar) – Iraq (-5.0 billion dollar).
- India's total trade deficit (2017-18 H1) is 74.3 billion dollar.



India-China Trade:

- India's major items of imports from China are telephone sets including mobiles, automatic data processing machines, diodes and other semiconductor devices, electronic devices chemical fertilizers, etc.
- India's major items of export to China are cotton yarn, copper, refined and copper alloys unwrought, POL (Petroleum Oil and Lubricants) items, granite, aluminum ores other fixed vegetable fats and oils, cycle hydrocarbons, cotton, polymers and iron ore.

Links:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/india-among-highest-taxing-nations-donald-trump-slams-for-100-tariffs-on-us-products/1537590/>

US reaches H-1B visa cap

Question: In its recent announcement US reaches H-1B visa Cap for which year?

(a) 2018 (b) 2019 (c) 2020 (d) 2021

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The United States on 5th April, 2019, announced it had received enough petitions for H-1B visas for the congressionally mandated annual cap of 65,000 for 2020.
- Indians have historically accounted for more than 70% of the total of 85,000 H-1B visas the US grants every year against applications by American employers for specialty occupations.
- Some of them were those employed by Indian companies with US operations such as TCS and Infosys, but most were hired by American companies such as Google, Facebook and Microsoft.



- President Donald Trump's "Buy American, Hire American" policy, rules have been introduced and changed to make it harder to qualify, costlier and less welcoming.
- The new rule favoring foreigners with US degrees, which was announced in January, is expected to boost their numbers by an estimated 16%, or 5,340 workers.
- US employers seeking to employ foreign workers with a US master's or higher degree will have a greater chance of selection in the H-1B lottery in years of excess demand for new H-1B visas.
- Other changes include increased scrutiny of applications as a result the number of requests for more information has gone up, increasing the paperwork and attorney fees.
- It is less attractive for foreigners hoping to stay on, the administration has decided to end work authorization, for instances, for spouses of H-1B visa-holders cleared for Green Card (permanent residency).

Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/us-reaches-h-1b-visa-cap-for-2020/story-V36a8BLjJefEFxGQLuBSM.html>

State of World Population-2019 (UNFPA)

Question: Consider the following statement regarding State of World Population-2019 report by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):

- (1) India's population grew 1.2% annually between 2010 and 2019
- (2) 67% of the India's population was in the 15-64 age brackets
- (3) In India, the total fertility rate per woman is 2.3 in 2019

Choose the correct statement/s:

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 10 April 2019, 'State of World Population-2019' report was published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
- As per report, the world's population rose to 7.715 billion in 2019, up from 7.633 billion in 2018. It was 3626 million in 1969.
- The global average life expectancy was 56 years in 1969. It has grown to 72 years in 2019.
- World population has grown by 1.1 percent annual growth rate.
- On global level, the total fertility rate per woman was 4.8 percent in 1969, is registered 2.5 percent in 2019.
- Report states that India's population was 541.5 million in 1969 which rose to 942.2 million in 1994. As of now, India's population is 1368.7 million in 2019.
- India's population grew at an average of 1.2% annually between 2010 and 2019 which is more than double the annual growth rate of China and marginally higher than the world's growth of 1.1%.
- In India, the total fertility rate per woman declined from 5.6 in 1969 to 3.7 in 1994 and 2.3 in 2019.
- India registered an improvement in life expectancy at birth. The life expectancy at birth in 1969 was 47 years, growing to 60 years in 1994 and 69 years in 2019.
- 26% of World's population was in the age bracket of 0-14 years. 24 percent in 10-24 years, while 65% of the world's population was in the 15-64 age bracket. 9% of the global population was of the age 65 and above.
- Whereas 27% of India's population was in the age bracket of 0-14 years and 10-24 years each, while 67% of the country's population was in the 15-64 age bracket. 6% of the country's population was of the age 65 and above.



- The least developed countries recorded the highest population growth, with countries in Africa registering an average of 2.7% a year.

Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-s-population-grew-at-1-2-a-year-during-2010-19/story-kUriMWaVWH2tBkEzUaxWFJ.html>

UNSCAPS report: Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2019

Question: UNSCAPS stands for?

- (a) United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- (b) United Nations Economic and Social Committee for Africa and the Pacific
- (c) United Nations Economic and Social Committee for Asia and the Pacific
- (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related Facts

- The United Nations Economic and Social Committee for Asia and the Pacific (UNSCAPS) released a report which urged the countries of the region to contribute 1.5 trillion dollar annually to achieve Agenda 2030's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Report:

- The report is titled as 'Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2019 – Ambitions beyond Growth'.
- The report quotes that the countries had the fiscal space to implement the suggestion.
- An additional annual investment of 1.5 trillion dollar – equivalent to a dollar per person per day – would allow countries in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

17 SDGs:

- The UN Defines 17 SDGs as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
- These (SDGs) include targets such as “No Poverty”, “Zero hunger”, “Good Health and Well-being”, “Quality education” and “Gender equality”.

New Paradigm:

- UNESCAP proposes an investment package, equivalent to 5% of the combined GDP of Asia-Pacific developing countries in 2018, that includes:
 - 669 billion dollar to support basic human rights and development human capacities.
 - 590 billion dollar to achieve clean energy for all and live in harmony with nature.
 - 196 billion dollar for improved access to transport, information and communications technology (ICT), and water and sanitation.
- Closing this investment gap is within reach for many countries, but the gap is widest in countries which can least afforded to narrow it.
- North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation as well as strengthened multilateral financing mechanisms will be essential to accelerate the pace of SDGs.

Links:

<http://in.one.un.org/un-press-release/put-people-and-planet-first-says-un-report-for-asia-and-the-pacific/>

Global Financial Stability Report- 2019

Question: Consider the following statement regarding Global Financial Stability Report 2019:

- 1) The Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR) is a semi-annual report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- 2) The report specifically focuses on corporate sector debt in advanced economies of the above correct statement/ is/are:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Neither (1) nor (2) (d) All the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR) is a semi-annual report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that assesses the stability of global financial markets and emerging-market financing. It is released twice per year, in April and October.
- It draws out the financial ramifications of economic imbalances highlighted by the IMF's World Economic Outlook.
- In addition to assessing the condition of worldwide markets, the GFSR also issues recommendations for central banks, policymakers and others who supervise global financial markets.
- The April 2019 Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR) finds that despite significant variability over the past two quarters, financial conditions remain favorable.
- The latest GFSR introduces a way to quantify vulnerabilities in the financial system so policymakers can monitor them in real time and take preventive steps if needed to mitigate risks. The framework encompasses six sectors: corporate, households, governments, banks, insurance companies, and other financial institutions.
- The report specifically focuses on corporate sector debt in advanced economies, the sovereign-financial sector nexus in the Euro area, China's financial imbalances, volatile portfolio flows to emerging markets, and downside risks to the housing market.
- It recommends action by policymakers, including through the clear communication of any changes in their monetary policy outlook, the deployment and expansion of macro prudential tools, the stepping up of measures to repair public and private sector balance sheets, and the strengthening of emerging market resilience to foreign portfolio outflows.



Links:

<https://www.imf.org/en/publications/qfsr>

Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP)

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP):

- 1) It was published by World Health Organization
- 2) India ranks 17th out of total 28 countries
- 3) Australia topped this index

Choose the correct option among the following.

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

Answer: (b)

Related facts:



- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released the 2019 Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP) in which India's overall rank is 19th out of 28 countries, having a score of 64.9.

Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP) 2019:

- Australia tops the ICP, followed by the Netherlands and Germany.
- Saudi Arabia 26th rank with 53.0 score, Romania 27th with 51.1 score, and Egypt 28th rank with 48.4 score, are at the bottom in Index.
- The ICP explores the issue of cancer preparedness through three broad domains:
 1. Policy and planning;
 2. Care delivery;
 3. Health systems and governance.

India and ICP:

- India ranks 17th in cancer policy and planning, but it has a relatively high score of 80.8.
- India was ranked first for research and third for tobacco control in ICP.
- In its delivery of cancer care, India ranks 20th with a score of 61.3.
- With a score of 40.3, India's healthcare system ranks 25th in the index, above only Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Egypt.

Cancer:

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally and is estimated to account for 9.6 million deaths in 2018.
- World Cancer Day is observed on 4th February every year.

Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU):

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), created in 1946, is the research and analysis division of The Economist Group and the world leader in global business intelligence.
- Its headquarter is in London, United Kingdom.

Links:

<http://www.eiu.com/home.aspx>

US deploys F-22 Stealth Fighters to Qatar

Question: US has deployed F-22 Stealth Fighters in which of the following country?

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

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 28th June, 2018, the United States has deployed F-22 stealth fighters in Qatar for the first time.
- The announcement adds to a build-up of US forces in the Gulf amid tensions with Iran.
- The US Air Forces Central Military Command stated that the Air Force F-22 Raptor stealth fighters have been deployed to defend American forces and interests.
- Tehran and Washington have been locked in an escalating stand-off since US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from multi-party 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and re-imposed sanctions on the Islamic republic.



- Tensions spiked recently when Iran shot down a US drone over sensitive Gulf waters following a series of tanker attacks that Washington blamed on Tehran, which has denied involvement.
- Earlier in May 2019, the US Air Force deployed several nuclear-capable B-52 Stratofortress bombers and an aircraft carrier task force to the Gulf.

Link:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=US-deploys-F-22-stealth-fighters-to-Qatar-for-1st-time&id=366702>

New Energy Outlook Report, 2019

Question: Consider the following statement regarding New Energy Outlook Report, 2019:

(1) Wind and solar energy make up almost 50% of world electricity in 2050

(2) Coal energy continues to grow in Asia, but collapses everywhere else and peaks globally in 2026

Correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both(1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- In order to outline the status of global energy industry, New Energy Outlook 2019 report was published by Bloomberg NEF (BNEF).



Findings of the Report:

- Wind and solar make up almost 50% of world electricity in 2050 – 50 by 50 – and help put the power sector on track for 2 degrees to at least 2030.
- A 12 TW expansion of generating capacity requires about \$13.3 trillion of new investment between now and 2050 – 77% of which goes to renewables.
- Europe decarbonizes furthest, fastest. Coal-heavy China and gas-heavy U.S. play catch-up.
- Wind and solar are now cheapest across more than two-thirds of the world. By 2030 they undercut commissioned coal and gas almost everywhere.
- Consumer energy decisions such as rooftop solar and behind-the-meter batteries help shape an increasingly decentralized grid the world over.
- Batteries, gas peakers and dynamic demand help wind and solar reach more than 80% penetration in some markets.
- Coal continues to grow in Asia, but collapses everywhere else and peaks globally in 2026.
- Gas-fired power grows just 0.6% per year to 2050, supplying system back-up and flexibility rather than bulk electricity in most markets.
- Making heat and transport electric lowers emissions. The challenge is scale.
- To keep an electrified energy sector on a 2-degree trajectory, we will need to deploy additional zero-carbon technologies that are dispatchable and economic running at low capacity factors, or technology that can capture and sequester emissions at scale.

Link:

<https://about.bnef.com/new-energy-outlook/>

Trafficking in persons report for 2019

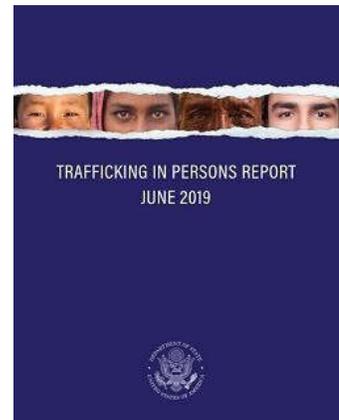
Question: According to the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report for 2019 what is the category of India?

(a) Tier-1 (b) Tier-2 (c) Tier-3 (d) None of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts:

- The U.S. State Department has released the **Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report** for 2019.
- India continued to be placed in Tier-2 on the country trafficking scale.
- The U.S. State Department report has used the International Labour Organisation (ILO) data.



Highlights of the Report

- There are 25 million adults and children suffering from labour and sex trafficking all over the world. In 77% of the cases, victims are trafficked within their own countries of residence, rather than across borders.
- The number of victims trafficked domestically was high compared to foreign victims being trafficked in all regions of the world except Western and Central Europe, the Middle East, and certain East Asian countries.
- Victims of sex trafficking were more likely to be trafficked across borders while victims of forced labour were typically exploited within their own countries.
- The report stresses on the implementation of the Palermo Protocol. The countries need building **legal frameworks** to prosecute traffickers and provide care for survivors.

Palermo protocols:

- The Palermo protocols are three protocols that were adopted by the United Nations to supplement the 2000 Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Palermo Convention). These are:
- The protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children.
- The protocol against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air.
- The protocol against the illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition.

- These protocols and convention fall within the jurisdiction of the United Nations office on drugs and crime.

Links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palermo_protocols

Mexico first to ratify USMCA trade deal

QUESTION: Which country became the first to ratify USMCA trade deal?

(a) Mexico (b) Chile (c) Brazil (d) Argentina

Answer:(a)

Related facts:



- Mexico on June 20, 2019 became the first country to ratify the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) agreed late last year to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) at the behest of U.S. President Donald Trump.
- By a vote of 114 in favor to 4 against, Mexico's Senate backed the deal tortuously negotiated between 2017 and 2018
- Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador had already anticipated ratification this week in the Senate, where his leftist National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) and its allies have a comfortable majority in the 128-member chamber.
- There has been little parliamentary opposition in Mexico to trying to safeguard market access to United States, by far Mexico's top export destination, and the trade deal was approved with overwhelming cross-party support in the Senate.
- Mexico sends around 80% of its exports to the United States, and Trump last month vowed to impose tariffs on all Mexican goods if Lopez Obrador does not reduce the flow of U.S.-bound illegal immigration from Central America.
- Lopez Obrador says he wants to avoid conflict with Trump, but noted at the weekend that the tariff dispute showed Mexico needed to become more economically self-sufficient.
- Canada, which has also fought with Trump over trade, is pressing ahead to ratify the deal.

NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement)

- The North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, is a three-country accord negotiated by the governments of Canada, Mexico, and the United States that entered into force in January 1994.

- NAFTA's terms, which were implemented gradually through January 2008, eliminated most tariffs on products traded between the three countries.
- Liberalization of trade in agriculture, textiles, and automobile manufacturing was a major focus. The deal also sought to protect intellectual property, establish dispute resolution mechanisms, and, through side agreements, implement labor and environmental safeguards.

Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-mexico-usmca/mexico-becomes-first-country-to-ratify-usmca-trade-deal-idUSKCN1TK2U3>

Five countries had zero malaria cases in 2018: WHO

Question: Which country from Asia has been zero malaria cases in 2018?

(a) China (b) India (c) Pakistan (d) Afghanistan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- According to WHO Four countries from Asia — **China, Iran, Malaysia and Timor-Leste** — and one from Central America — **El Salvador** — reported no indigenous cases of malaria in 2018.
- China and El Salvador reported zero cases for the second consecutive year; Iran, Malaysia and Timor-Leste had zero cases of malaria for the first time in 2018, showed the E-2020 initiative: 2019 progress report.
- The countries were part of the global health body's E-2020 initiative, launched in 2016, working in 21 countries, spanning five regions, to scale up efforts to achieve malaria elimination by 2020.
- From 5,194 malaria cases in 2010, to 85 cases in 2017, Malaysia reported zero cases in 2018.
- According to the report prompt diagnosis, treatment and surveillance in remote, hard-to-reach regions helped the country achieve the target, two years ahead of the 2020 deadline.
- In 2018, Iran reported zero indigenous malaria cases as compared to more than 1,800 in 2010.
- Timor-Leste, that came into existence in 2000, remarkably lowered the disease rate — from a high of 223,002 cases in 2006, to 95 cases in 2016, to zero cases in 2018.
- India (4 per cent) was among the five countries, the others being — Nigeria (25 per cent), Democratic Republic of the Congo (11 per cent), Mozambique (5 per cent), and Uganda (4 per cent) — that accounted for nearly 50 per cent of all malaria cases worldwide.



Links:

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

Women Political Leader Summit 2019

Question: Where will the Women Political Leader (WPL) Summit 2019 be organized between June 25 and 27, 2019?

(a) Brussels (b) Tokyo (c) Colombo (d) Dhaka

Answer- (b)

Related facts:

- The Women Political Leader Summit 2019 will be organized in Tokyo, Japan between 25 and 27 June 2019.
- This summit is co-hosted by WPL and the House of Representatives of Japan.
- It will bring together female Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and Parliamentarians from all over the world.
- India has yet not confirmed its attendance to this summit.

Links:

<https://wplsummit.org/>

New President of Kazakhstan

Question: Who took oath as the President of Kazakhstan on 13th June, 2019?

(a) Nursultan Nazarbayev (b) Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (c) Volodymyr Zelensky (d) Rumen Radev

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Kassym-Jomart Tokayev took oath as the new President of Kazakhstan at the Palace of Independence in the capital Nur-Sultan on 13th June, 2019.
- He was acting president after Nursultan Nazarbayev resigned from the post of President after almost 30 years in March, 2019.
- The career diplomat became the country's second elected president after succeeding 78-year-old Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- Tokayev received nearly 71% of the ballots in the presidential election.



Links:

<https://www.rte.ie/news/world/2019/0612/1054873-kazakhstan-tokayev-sworn-in/>

Traffic Index 2018

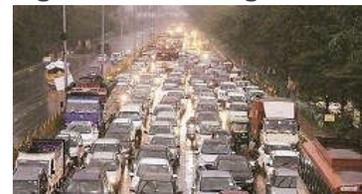
Question: Which city topped the list of the Traffic Index becoming the most congested city of the world for the second time in a row?

(a) Mumbai (b) Beijing (c) Lagos (d) Bangkok

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Mumbai is ranked as the most congested city in the world as per the latest Traffic Index 2018 released by an Amsterdam based traffic solution company Tom Tom.



- Tom Tom offers traffic solutions, uses location technology to collect traffic information, and has been publishing city rankings for eight years. The latest index ranks 403 cities across 56 countries, including 13 new cities.
- Mumbai became the most congested city for the second time in a row. The congestion level here is 65% which means that the extra travel time is 65% more than an average trip taken in uncongested conditions.
- Columbia's capital Bogota is ranked second with 63% congestion level. Lima with 58% ranks third and Delhi ranks fourth with 58% congestion level each.
- Moscow (56% congestion level) is ranked fifth in the list.
- Istanbul, Jakarta, Bangkok, Mexico City and Recife are ranked from six to ten respectively in the list.
- The stats were calculated using GPA data from navigation devices, in-dash systems and smartphones.
- Nearly 75% of the cities in the index had shown increased or stable congestion levels between 2017 and 2018 while 90 cities showed measurable decrease in the congestion level.

Links:

https://www.tomtom.com/en_gb/traffic-index/ranking/

First Arctic Train Service

Question: Which country started the first Arctic Train service recently?

(a) China (b) Germany (c) Australia (d) Russia

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Russia started the first Arctic Train Service on 5th June, 2019.
- The first tourist train traveling through Russia's Arctic region and on to Norway set off from St. Petersburg station.
- The train carries 91 passengers aboard for the inaugural trial journey.
- The tourists came from seven countries including the US, Germany, Norway and Russia.
- The train, named Zarengold will take 11 days to complete the whole trip and allow passengers to discover areas difficult to access by other means.
- At Murmansk, by far the largest city north of the Arctic Circle, the tourists will get off the train and continue by bus to Kirkenes in Norway before ending their journey with a boat trip to Oslo or by air to the island of Spitsbergen.
- The train was expected to run twice next year and four times in 2021.
- Russia hopes to become the top economic and military power in the Arctic and so is working for the new trading routes as global warming breaks up the glaciers.



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/russia-opens-first-arctic-train-service-119060600063_1.html

Air Passenger growth in the world

Question: As per the report of IATA, India is continuing to be one of the fastest growing domestic market for air passengers for how many years?

(a) 3 years (b) 4 years (c) 5 years (d) 2 years

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- International Air Transport Association, IATA, has reported that India and China are projected to account for nearly half of the air passenger growth worldwide over the next two decades, with travellers coming from all walks of life.
- It is said that with more number of people are making air travel where India was seen as one of the fastest growing domestic aviation markets in the world for nearly five years continuously.
- However, the growth turned negative in April mainly due to flight cancellations and subsequent grounding of full-service carrier Jet Airways.



Other highlights:

- India has 18.9% air travel growth while China had 12.1% growth in the same period.
- Asia has the fastest growth rate continent wise.
- The return on capital down to 7.4% and net profits is \$28bn or \$6.12 per passenger.
- Trade wars damaging world trade: air cargo traffic forecast for zero growth.
- IATA is a grouping of around 290 airlines.

Links:

<https://www.iata.org/publications/economics/Reports/Industry-Econ-Performance/Airline-industry-economic-performance-update-Jun19-presentation.pdf>

Termination of GSP status of India

Question: Which country provides GSP status to other countries in trade from which India was removed recently?

(a) European Union (b) United Kingdom (c) United States (d) China

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- US President Donald Trump announced the exit of India from the Generalised System of Preference (GSP) list with effect from 5th June, 2019. All the benefits availed by the Indian traders under this system will not be in effect and India will be treated as a general nation for trade.
- India is the largest beneficiary of this scheme since its inclusion. US President made this move after finding India unable to provide market to US firms.
- Donald Trump announced on 4th March, 2019 that the US intends to terminate India's designations as a beneficiary developing country under the GSP programme. The 60-day notice period ended on May 3.
- India had offered the U.S. a meaningful package earlier that covered U.S. concerns, but this was not acceptable to the U.S.
- The benefits, however, could possibly be reinstated subject to India and the U.S. reaching an agreement.



Generalised System of Preference (GSP) Program:

- The Generalized System of Preference (GSP) is the largest and oldest US trade preference programme. It is designed to promote economic development by allowing duty-free entry for thousands of products from designated beneficiary developing countries.
- Under the GSP programme, nearly 2,000 products including auto components and textile materials can enter the US duty-free if the beneficiary developing countries meet the eligibility criteria established by Congress.

- The GSP criteria include, among others, respecting arbitral awards in favor of the US citizens or corporations, combating child labour, respecting internationally recognised worker rights, providing adequate and effective intellectual property protection, and providing the US with equitable and reasonable market access.

India as the beneficiary:

- India was the largest beneficiary of the programme in 2018 with USD 6.3 billion in imports to the US given duty-free status.
- It included 11% of all merchandise imported from India.
- Trump's decision will cost American businesses over USD 300 million in additional tariffs every year.

Possible impact:

- The loss estimated by Indian officials due to this decision is around \$ 190 million.
- India had \$ 5.6 billion export under the GSP category.
- Industries such as gem & jewellery, leather & processed foods are likely to get impacted with this decision.

Links:

<https://in.reuters.com/article/usa-trade-india/exclusive-u-s-considers-withdrawal-of-zero-tariffs-for-india-sources-idINKCN1PX0ZI>

Economics

The World Population Prospects, 2019

Question: Consider the following statement regarding World Population Prospects 2019?

(1) The World Population Prospects, 2019 is being published by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

(2) India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country by 2030.

(3) People in overage group >65 will be increased by 2050.

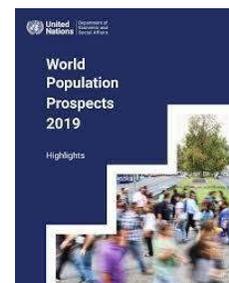
Choose the correct statement

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- According to The World Population Prospects, 2019 published by the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country by 2027.
- Through the end of the century (between 2019 and 2050) India is expected to remain the world's most populous country, followed by China, Nigeria, United States of America, and Pakistan.
- The global population is projected to increase by another 2 billion people by 2050.
- Aging of the world's population will also spike due to increasing life expectancy and falling fertility levels.
- By 2050, one in six people in the world will be over age 65 (16%), up from one in 11 in 2019 (9%).
- Aging will result in a decline in the proportion of the working age population that in turn will exert pressure on social security systems.
- Europe and North America will have a much higher number of aging population.



- Many countries are experiencing a reduction in population size (between 2019 and 2050, many countries will experience populations shrink by at least 1%).
- The population of India in 2019 is 1.37 billion, which is 2.3 million (0.2%) less than the previous estimate from the 2017 revision. This decrease results from slightly lower levels of total fertility rate and, in some cases, high rates of emigration.
- In countries like Bangladesh, Nepal and the Philippines out-migration plays a key in population change (outflow of migrant workers).
- In some instances, out-migration could also be caused by violence, lack of security or wars as in Myanmar, Syria and Venezuela.
- Many of the fastest growing populations are in the poorest countries, where population growth brings additional challenges in the effort to eradicate poverty, achieve greater equality, combat hunger and malnutrition and strengthen the coverage and quality of health and education systems to ensure that no one is left behind.

Links:

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-projected-to-surpass-china-as-the-world-s-most-populous-country-around-2027-un-report-1560786495954.html>

15th Finance Commission Advisory Council Meeting

Question: Where did the 3rd meeting of the Advisory Council of the 15th Finance Commission take place recently?

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The 3rd meeting of the Advisory Council of the 15th Finance Commission was held in New Delhi on 16th May, 2019.
- It was chaired by N.K. Singh, Chairman, XVFC (15th Finance Commission) and attended by Members of the Advisory Council, Members of the Commission Dr. Anoop Singh, Ajay Narayan Jha, Amitabh Kant, CEO, Niti Aayog (Special Invitee), and senior officials of the Commission.
- In the meeting the Council Members were updated by the Commission on the progress made in terms of State Visits by the Commission, consultations with the RBI, with Bankers and financial institutions, with stakeholders and domain experts.
- Discussions were also held on the structure of the Commission's Report and the ToR-wise mapping of the Report. Issues of Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR), issues concerning GST, transparency in publishing accounting data related to debt and deficit, impact of UDAY on state liability, interest rates and private investments were also discussed in detail.
- Views of the Members were sought on possible scenario for macro variables like GDP projections and economic outlook during the award period of the Commission i.e. 2020-21 to 2024-25.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572133>

Sino-Indian border trade

Question: Which edition of the annual Sino-Indian border trade opened at Nathu La on May 1, 2019?

(a) 14th (b) 13th (c) 12th (d) 11th

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The 14th edition of the annual Sino-Indian border trade opened on May 1, 2019.
- Venue of the event was Nathu La in Sikkim.
- Officials and traders of both the countries were present at the border to mark the commencement of the border trade.

Bilateral border trade:

- The bilateral border trade between the two countries is organised four days a week for six months, between May 1 and November 30, every year.
- It was resumed in 2006 after a gap of 44 years.
- A total of 36 items, from dairy products are on India's export list comprising dairy products to utensils.
- While a total of 20 items, including carpets, quilts and jackets among others, are in the country's import list from the Tibet Autonomous Region.
- Last year, the export of goods from India stood at Rs. 45.03 crore, while items worth Rs. 3.23 crore were imported from the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/14th-edition-of-sino-indian-border-trade-opens-at-nathu-la-119050100666_1.html

SBI: Linking of interest rates to the RBI's repo rate

Question: Which of the following is/are Policy rates of RBI?

- (a) Repo rate & Reverse repo rate (b) Marginal Standing Facility Rate (c) Bank Rate
(d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- In March, the State Bank of India announced that it will link interest rates for its savings accounts (with balances over Rs. 1 lakh) and short-term loans to the RBI's repo rate.
- Repo rate stands for — Re Purchase Option Rate
- The new rates linked to the external benchmark (repo rate) will come into effect from May 1, 2019.
- With this, SBI will become the first bank in the country to link deposit accounts and loans of any kind directly to an external benchmark wherein changes in the latter would be auto-transmitted to the former.



Pros and cons:

- As per the current repo rate, SBI's savings accounts with over Rs. 1 lakh deposits will (from May 1, 2019) earn less interest than those with smaller balances in their accounts and also 0.75 percent less than 4% being offered on post office savings account.
- However, if the repo rate goes above 6.25%, then the interest rate for the large SBI savings accounts would be higher than the current 3.5% being earned on smaller accounts, as per the external benchmark formula.

Terms of Conditions:

- Only savings accounts with deposits above Rs. 1 lakh will be linked to the external benchmark.
- All cash credit accounts and overdrafts with limits above Rs. 1 lakh will also be linked to the benchmark policy rate, plus a spread of 2.25 percent.

Policy rates:

Policy rates of RBI are as follows–

- Policy Repo rate : 5.75%
- Reverse Repo rate : 5.50%
- Marginal Standing Facility rate : 6.00%
- Bank rate : 6.00%

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/wealth/personal-finance-news/interest-rate-for-sbi-saving-a/cs-with-rs-1-lakh-plus-balance-to-be-linked-to-repo-rate-from-may-1/articleshow/69111909.cms?from=mdr>

Product launched for protection from Cyber Attack

Question: Which company recently launched a product to protect business from Cyber attack loss?

- (a) National Insurance Company (b) United India Insurance Company
(c) SBI General Insurance Company (d) United India Insurance Company

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- SBI General Insurance has launched a product on April 22, 2019 aiming to give protection to businesses from financial and reputational losses due to cyber attacks.



Highlights of the product:

- The product will focus on SMEs and mid-market businesses in the initial phase and will go to cater larger business conglomerates as well in the coming time.
- The product gives protection against the growing threat of cyber attacks and is designed to protect against major insurable cyber exposures like hacking attacks, disclosure of sensitive information etc.
- The digital advancement has led to increased cyber risk exposures for almost all types and sizes of businesses.
- This product offers both first and third-party coverage benefits. It also includes coverage options for contingent business interruption, system failure, reputational loss, multimedia liability and computer crime etc.
- The crisis response service alongwith this product enables swift and efficient management of cyber events.
- It also provides IT forensic investigations, legal advice, reputational and PR management.
- All individuals using any digital platform need to be mindful of sensitivity of personal information. Taking simple precautions like not sharing Passwords, Transaction OTP and Card CVV numbers, can go a long way in securing data misuse.

Links:

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/corporate/sbi-general-insurace-cyber-attacks-insurance-news-hackers-cyber-crime/story/339221.html>

Growth projection of India Ratings and Research

Question: What is India's GDP growth projection for 2019-20 as per India Ratings and Research?

- (a) 7.3% (b) 7.7% (c) 7.0% (d) 6.9%

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 30 April 2019, India Ratings and Research marginally lowered country's GDP growth projection for fiscal 2019-20 to 7.3%.
- This is due to below normal monsoon prediction and loss of momentum in industrial output.
- The 'Fitch' had earlier projected India's gross domestic product growth at 7.5%.
- Investment expenditure growth, as measured by growth fixed capital formation (GFCF), has been downwardly revised to 9.2% for 2019-20 from the earlier forecast of 10.3%, according to India Ratings and Research.
- Following the monsoon forecast, India Ratings and Research estimates agricultural gross value added growth at 2.5% (earlier forecast was 3%) for 2019-20 compared with the 2.7% recorded for 2018-19.
- The key support to the gross value added growth in 2019-20 is likely to come from services, followed by industry.
- On the prices front, India ratings and research expects wholesale and retail inflation to remain benign at 3.4% and 4% in 2019-20, respectively.

**India Ratings
& Research**
A Fitch Group Company

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/retail-inflation-inches-up-to-2-92-in-april/articleshow/69308936.cms?from=mdr>

India to grow at 7.1% in FY'20: United Nations' Report

Question: What is the growth rate forecasted by United Nations for India in financial year 2020?

(a) 7.1% (b) 7.2% (c) 7.4% (d) 7.3%

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- According to a report by United Nations, India's economy is projected to grow at 7% in 2019 and 7.1% in the fiscal year 2020 on the back of strong domestic consumption and investment.
- However, India's growth rate for year 2018 was evaluated to 7.2% facing downward revision from the earlier 7.4% estimated in January this year due to GDP's downward growth.
- The updated estimates for India, however, reflect a downward revision from the projections made in the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2019 report released in January this year. That report had estimated 7.6% growth rate in the fiscal year 2019 and 7.4 per cent in 2020.
- Report affirms that despite of weakened growth of many developing economies, India remains strong amid robust domestic demand.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=India-to-grow-at-7.1%25-in-FY%26%2339%3b20%3a-United-Nations%26%2339%3b-report&id=363766>

WPI based inflation date

Question: Which index is used to calculate inflation in India?

**(a) Wholesale Price Index (b) GDP deflator (c) Productive Price Index
(d) Commodity Price Index**

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- As per government data, wholesale price-based inflation rose for the second consecutive month to 3.18% in March on costlier food and fuel.
- The Wholesale Price Index is defined as the measure of the cost of a given basket of goods.
- It includes raw materials and semi-finished goods.
- It is design to measure prices at an early stage of the distribution system.

Recent Data:

- The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation was at 2.93% in February. It was 2.74% in March 2018.
- Inflation in Food articles hardened with steep rise in prices of vegetables during March 2019.
- Vegetables inflation was at 28.13% in March up from 6.82% in the previous month.
- However inflation in potato cooled substantially to 1.30% from 23.40% in February.
- Inflation in food articles basket was 5.68% during March.
- Inflation in Fuel and power category also spiked to 5.41%, from 2.23% a month ago.
- The RBI, which mainly factors in retail inflation for monetary policy decision, had earlier this month cut interest rates by 0.25%.
- For April-September period, the RBI has projected retail inflation at 2.9 to 3.0%



Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/whole-sale-price-inflation-rises-to-3-18-for-march/articleshow/68884844.cms?from=mdr>

India's GDP expected to expand 7.5% in 2019-20: World Bank

Question: What is the estimated GDP growth of India for fiscal year 2019-20 as per by World Bank?

(a) 7.3% (b) 7.4% (c) 7.5% (d) 7.6%

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- According to World Bank India's GDP growth is expected to accelerate moderately to 7.5 per cent in fiscal year 2019-20.
- It will be driven by continued investment strengthening, particularly private-improved export performance and resilient consumption.
- Data for the first three quarters suggest Industrial growth accelerated to 7.9 per cent, making up for a deceleration in services.
- Agriculture growth was robust at 4%.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/indias-gdp-expected-to-expand-7-5-in-2019-20-world-bank/articleshow/68778165.cms>

Index of Eight Core Industries

Question: Cumulative index of Coal production increased by 7.3 % in which term?

(a) April to March, 2018-19 (b) April to March, 2017-18

(c) December, 2018 to March, 2019 (d) December, 2017 to June, 2017

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Index of Eight Core Industries was released by Ministry of Commerce & Industry on April 30, 2019.
- The Eight Core Industries Comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production.
- The combined Index of Eight Core Industries stood at 145.0 in March, 2019, which was 4.7% higher as compared to the index of March, 2018.
- Its cumulative growth during April to March, 2018-19 was 4.3%.

Coal

- Coal production (weight: 10.33 percent) increased by 9.1% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 7.3% during April to March, 2018-19 over corresponding period of the previous year.



Crude Oil

- Crude Oil production (weight: 8.98%) declined by 6.2% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index declined by 4.1%, during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Natural Gas

- The Natural Gas production (weight: 6.88%) increased by 1.4% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 0.8% during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Refinery Products

- Petroleum Refinery production (weight: 28.04%) increased by 4.3% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 3.1% during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.
- Fertilizers
- Fertilizers production (weight: 2.63%) increased by 4.3% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 0.3% during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Steel

- Steel production (weight: 17.92%) increased by 6.7% in March 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 4.7% during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Cement

- Cement production (weight: 5.37%) increased by 15.7% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 13.3% during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Electricity

- Electricity generation (weight 19.85%) increased by 1.4% in March, 2019 over March, 2018.
- Its cumulative index increased by 5.1% during April to March, 2018-19 over the corresponding period of previous year.

Link:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=189879>

Most profitable Public Sector Company

Question: Which of the following became the most profitable Public Sector Company of India recently?

(a) NTPC (b) GAIL (c) ONGC (d) IOC

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) overtook Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to become the country's most profitable public sector company.
- It is India's top oil and gas producer.
- ONGC reported a 34 per cent jump in its 2018-19 fiscal net profit to 26,716 crore rupees while IOC registered a net profit of 17,274 crore rupees for the fiscal year ended 31st March, 2019.
- With its refining margins under pressure due to falling oil prices, IOC had also lost the title of being India's largest company by turnover tag to billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries in FY19.
- In 2017-18 fiscal, IOC had posted a record net profit of 21,346 crore rupees. That year ONGC had a net profit of 19,945 crore rupees.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=ONGC-topples-IOC-to-regain-most-profitable-public-sector-company&id=364278>

RBI bimonthly Monetary Policy

Question: What is the Repo Rate, decided by the RBI in the latest Monetary Policy review on June 7, 2019 which is the lowest since 2010?

(a) 5.5% (b) 6% (c) 5.75% (d) 6.25%

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- At the end of a three-day MPC meeting on June 7, 2019, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das announced its second bi-monthly monetary policy statement for 2019-20.
- Among all the decisions taken, the Repo Rate was decided to be decreased further to 5.75% with a 25 point cut due to slowing economic growth and rising global uncertainty.
- This is the third continuous decrease in the Repo Rate which makes it the lowest since 2010.

Important Highlights of the Policy:

- The Reverse repo rate is now 5.50 % and Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate is 6 %.
- RBI changes policy stance to accommodative from neutral
- It has also decreased the GDP growth forecast of economy to 7 % from 7.2 % for FY 2020
- The retail inflation forecast for April-September 2019 is raised to 3-3.1 per cent and 3.4-3.7 per cent in October-March 2020.
- The risk of inflation is estimated due to uncertain monsoon, unseasonal rise in vegetable prices, crude oil prices, financial market volatility and fiscal scenario.
- RTGS and NEFT charges are waived to promote digital transactions.
- A new panel will be set up to review ATM charges, fees levied by banks.
- Average daily surplus liquidity in the system at ₹ 66,000 crore in early June
- Foreign Exchange Reserves stood at USD 421.9 billion on May 31, 2019
- Next monetary policy statement on August 7, 2019.

Links:

https://rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=47225

Scientific

Defense/Science Short Notes

ASEAN Maritime Drill

Question: Which country will host the ASEAN Maritime drill?

(a) Japan (b) India (c) South Korea (d) Indonesia

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- A two-part maritime exercise by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its partnering countries took place in South Korea's port city of Busan.
- The exercise aimed to counter maritime crime, including illicit transactions of weapons and other banned items.
- The drills took place from 29th April to 2nd May, 2019 in South Korea, following which they will be held in Singapore from 9th May to 13th May, 2019.
- This exercise involved 18 countries of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus. Out of the 18 countries, 12 countries sent 16 warships and six aircraft for the exercise. Six other countries sent their military personnel.
- South Korea's Navy sent a 4,400-ton destroyer Wang Geon, the 2,500-ton frigate Jeonbuk, 4,900-ton landing ship Cheonjabong, two UH-60 choppers and one Lynx helicopter for the first part of the exercise.
- Naval forces from India, Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and the United States, led by the Korean Navy, practiced the art of rescuing ships hijacked by armed groups, amongst other maritime security operations.
- Japan skipped the portion of the drills which was held in South Korea amid tensions caused by a military argument with Seoul late last year. It later joined the drills in Singapore.



Links:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/s-korea-set-to-hold-asean-maritime-drills20190428155344/>

Exercise Bull Strike

Question: Where did the Indian Air Force carry out Exercise Bull Strike?

(a) Lakshadweep Islands (b) Teressa Islands (c) Kolkata (d) Lonavala

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Indian Armed Forces carried out Exercise Bull Strike at Teressa Island in Andaman and Nicobar.
- This military drill was conducted to showcase joint operations capability of the armed forces. During the exercise, the army personnel got the chance to display their prowess by undertaking company level airborne operation at Teressa Island.
- 170 troops from three services carried out para drop operations in a Combat Free Fall and Static Line mode.
- Notably, in December last year, the Indian Air Force's Wing Commander Gajanand Yadava had created a record. He had undertaken the jump from an AN-32 aircraft over Malpura Drop Zone in Agra.
- The jump was executed from an altitude of 12,000 feet above the ground on December 12, 2008. He belongs to the IAF's skydiving team Akashganga.



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/exercise-bull-strike-teressa-island-andaman>

AKASH – MK -1S successful test fired

Question: Which of the following research centre has developed the AKASH MK 1S missile which was successfully test fired on 27th May, 2019?

(a) ISRO (b) HAL (c) DRDO (d) BARC

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully test fired AKASH-MK-1S missile from ITR, Chandipur, Odhisa on 25th and 27th May, 2019.
- Akash-MK-1S is an upgrade of existing AKASH missile with indigenous Seeker. Akash-MK-1S is a surface to air missile which can neutralize advanced aerial targets.
- The Akash weapon system has combination of both command guidance and active terminal seeker guidance.
- Seeker and guidance performance have been consistently established in both the missions. All the mission objectives have been met.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572701>

DRDO Successfully Flight-Tested Guided Bomb

Question: From which test range DRDO successfully flight-tested Inertial Guided Bomb recently?

(a) Sriharikota (b) Chandipur (c) Asansol (d) Pokhran

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Defence Research and Defence Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested a 500 kg class Inertial Guided Bomb from Su-30 MKI Aircraft from the Pokhran test range in Rajasthan.
- This test took place on 24th May, 2029. The guided bomb achieved the desired range and hit the target with high precision.
- All the mission objectives have been met. The weapon system is capable of carrying different warheads.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572551>

Successful test of ABHAYAS

Question: Where was the successful flight test of ABHAYAS missile conducted?

(a) Sriharikota (b) Pokharan (c) Chandipur (d) Rudrapur

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted successful flight test of ABHYAS – High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) from Interim Test Range, Chandipur in Odisha on 13 May 2019.
- The flight test was tracked by various RADARS & Electro Optic Systems and proved its performance in fully autonomous way point navigation mode.
- The configuration of ABHYAS is designed on an in-line small gas turbine engine and uses indigenously developed Micro-Electro-Mechanical Systems (MEMS) based navigation system for its navigation and guidance.
- The performance of the system was as per simulations carried out and demonstrated the capability of ABHYAS to meet the mission requirement for a cost effective HEAT.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1571949>

Successful Firing of BrahMos air version missile

Question: Which fighter aircraft successfully test fired the BrahMos air version missile recently?

(a) Rafale (b) Tejas (c) Jaguar (d) Sukhoi- 30 MKI

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Indian Air Force successfully fired the BrahMos air version missile from its frontline Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft on May 22, 2019.
- The launch from the aircraft was smooth and the missile followed the desired trajectory before directly hitting the land target.
- The air launched BrahMos missile is a 2.5 ton supersonic air to surface cruise missile. It has a range of around 300 km and named after Brahmaputra river of India and Moskva of Russia.
- It is designed and developed in collaboration with Russia by BAPL.
- The IAF became the first Air Force in the world to have successfully fired an air launched 2.8 Mach surface attack missile of this category on a sea target on 22 November 2017.



- This was second such live launch of the weapon. The integration of the weapon on the aircraft was a very complex process involving mechanical, electrical and software modifications on aircraft.
- The IAF has been involved in the activity from its inception. The software development of the aircraft was undertaken by the IAF engineers while HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) carried out mechanical and electrical modifications on the aircraft.
- The BrahMos missile provides Indian Air Force a much desired capability to strike from large stand-off ranges on any target at sea or on land with pinpoint accuracy by day or night and in all weather conditions.
- The capability of the missile coupled with the superlative performance of the Su-30MKI aircraft gives the IAF the desired strategic reach.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572385>

International Army Scouts Masters Competition, 2019

Question: Which city will host the International Army Scouts Masters Competition, 2019?

(a) Jaisalmer (b) Udaipur (c) Bikaner (d) Pokharan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- International Army Scout Masters Competition as a part of International Army Games will be organised under the aegis of Konark Corps at Jaisalmer from 24th July to 17th August, 2019.
- The event will witness participation of the Mechanized Infantry Scout Teams of eight countries including Russia.
- Russia is the founding member of this format of International Army Games.
- The Russian Delegation, Senior Military and Diplomatic dignitaries from participating countries visited Jaisalmer Military Station on 14th and 15th May, 2019.
- The delegates were shown and briefed on the special training facilities created at Jaisalmer and Pokhran.
- The International Army Scout Masters Competition will be conducted in five stages, which will test the overall skills of Mechanized Infantry Scouts in simulated battle field scenarios. The combat skills will be adjudicated by a panel of international judges and referees.
- The competition will showcase combat training and promote camaraderie amongst the contestants, facilitate sharing of best practices as well as develop military and technical cooperation between participating nations.
- India will be conducting the Army Scout Masters Competition for the first time as part of the International Army Games. It is also for the first time that an Indian team will participate in this competition

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/jaisalmer-to-host-army-scout-masters-competition-119051401516_1.html

Indian Navy successfully test-fires MRSAM missile

Question: The successful test fire trial of MRSAM missile was done by Indian Navy & DRDO in collaboration with?

(a) US aerospace (b) Israel aerospace (c) Russian aerospace (d) France aerospace

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The Indian Navy achieved a significant milestone in enhancing its Anti Air Warfare Capability with the maiden cooperative engagement firing of the Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM) on 17th May, 2019.
- The firing was undertaken on the Western Seaboard by Indian Naval Ships Kochi and Chennai wherein the missiles of both ships were controlled by one ship to intercept different aerial targets at extended ranges.
- The firing trial was carried out by the Indian Navy, DRDO and Israel Aerospace Industries.
- DRDL Hyderabad, a DRDO Lab, has jointly developed this missile in collaboration with Israel Aerospace Industries. The MRSAM has been manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Limited, India.
- These Surface to Air Missiles are fitted onboard the Kolkata Class Destroyers and would also be fitted on all future major warships of the Indian Navy.
- With the successful proving of this cooperative mode of engagement, the Indian Navy has become a part of a select group of Navies that have this niche capability.
- This capability significantly enhances the combat effectiveness of the Indian Navy thereby providing an operational edge over potential adversaries.



Link:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1572157>

ICGS Vighraha decommissioned

Question: What was the service period of Indian Coast Guard Ship, Vighraha which was decommissioned on 15th May, 2019?

(a) 1995-2019 (b) 1998-2019 (c) 1990-2019 (d) 1985-2019

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Vighraha, a frontline offshore patrol vessel, was decommissioned on 15th May, 2019 at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- The decommissioning ceremony was attended by eight former Commanding Officers along with former and the present crew.
- The chief guest of the ceremony was Inspector General S. Paramesh, Commander Coast Guard Region (East).
- Service:
 - It served the navy of India for 29 glorious years from 1990 to 2019. It was commissioned on 12th April, 1990.
 - ICGS Vighraha was the seventh offshore patrol vessel built by the Mazagaon Dock Limited, Mumbai.



- The ship has participated in major coast guard operations involving search and rescue, anti-poaching, pollution response, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, repatriation and joint exercises.
- The ship was later based at Visakhapatnam and has been instrumental in protecting the east coast in general and Andhra Pradesh coast in particular since then.
- INS Vighraha:
- ICGS Vighraha is the symbolic representation of an able-minded warrior in the battle field. It has been instrumental in saving many lives at sea and helped in busting smuggler gangs.
- Among them, 275 kg silver haul was the most prominent.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Visakhapatnam/icgs-vighraha-sails-into-sunset/article27142535.ece>

Kharga Prahar

Question: Name major Army Training Exercise conducted by Indian Army in Punjab recently?

(a) Vajra Prahar (b) Indra (c) Dharma Guardian (d) Kharga Prahar

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- A major training exercise 'Kharga Prahar' was conducted by the Indian Army in Punjab, from 27 May- 4 June, 2019.
- This exercise was undertaken in the plains of Punjab by various units and formations of Army's Kharga Corps. The components of the Indian Air Force also participated in the exercise.
- Validation of latest operational concepts designed to deliver a swift punitive blow to the adversary were the key features of this exercise.
- The exercise setting also incorporated aspects of joint training wherein para drops from the Indian Air Force aircraft were carried out and simulated battlefield air strikes were conducted in support of ground forces.
- The exercise was successful in validating many important operational aspects and brought out valuable lessons and also reinforced a high degree of operational preparedness of the Kharga Corps.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/armys-training-exercise-in-punjab-ends/articleshow/69649917.cms>

Sports

Cricket

India, England tops Test and ODI ratings after annual update

Question: Which countries topped the Test and ODI rankings as per annual updates?

(a) India & England (b) India & South Africa (c) India & New Zealand

(d) West Indies & England

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- India has retained the top position with 113 ratings followed by New Zealand with 111 rating. The third position was held by South Africa with 108 rating in the team rankings for Tests.
- In the ODI (One Day International) rating, England is at the top with 123 rating followed by India with 121 rating. South Africa occupied the third position with 115 rating.
- Papua New Guinea (PNG) has joined the rankings (16th) immediately having played several ODIs prior to April, 2018.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/sports/cricket/news/india-england-top-test-and-odi-rankings-after-annual-update/articleshow/69139628.cms>

Table Tennis

Ceat Ultimate Table Tennis, 2018

Question: Which of the following team won the title of the Ceat Ultimate Table Tennis Championship, 2018, held on July 1st, 2018?

(a) Warriors TTC (b) Maharashtra United (c) Dabang Smashers TTC (d) Empowerji Challengers

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- Final round of Ultimate Table Tennis, 2018 Sponsored by CEAT concluded in Kolkata. (July 1, 2018)
- Six teams participated in competition namely- Dabang Smashers TTC, Empowerji Challengers, Falcons TTC, Maharashtra United, RP-SG Mavericks and Warriors TTC.
- **Competition Results:**
- Winner – Dabang Smashers TTC (by 11-7), prize money – Rs. 1 crore
- Runner Up – Falcons TTC, prize money – Rs. 75 lakhs
- **Competition award:**
- Standout Indian player – Manika Batra (Dabang Smasher)
- Most Valuable Players (MVP), Women – Elizabeta Samara (Maharashtra United)
- CEAT Most Valuable Player (Male) – Liam Pitchford (Falcons)
- Super Saver – Matilda Ekholm (Falcons)
- Ultimate 1 – Yoshida Masaki (Dabang Smashers)



See also the links below:

<https://www.ultimatetabletennis.in/news/sathiyam-manika-power-smashers-to-ceat-utt-finale-triumph>

Football

Santosh Trophy

Question: Who was the winner of the 2018-19 Santosh Trophy?

(a) Services (b) Punjab (c) Kerala (d) Delhi

Answer: (a)

Related Facts

- Services won their sixth Santosh Trophy title with a 1-0 victory over home side Punjab at the Guru Nanak Stadium on 21 April, 2019.
- The 2018-19 Santosh Trophy (8-21 April, 2019) was the 73rd edition of the Santosh Trophy, the premier competition in India for teams representing their regional and state football associations.
- Santosh Trophy is an association football knock-out competition contested by the regional state associations and government institutions under the All India Football Federation (AIFF).
- Most successful team in the history of Santosh Trophy is West Bengal (32 titles).



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/services-lift-santosh-trophy-title-with-1-0-win-over-punjab-119042100551_1.html

Forbes: The World Highest Paid Athletes 2019

Question: Who is the highest paid athlete in the Forbes 2019 list?

(a) Virat Kohli (b) Lionel Messi (c) Cristiano Ronaldo (d)

Roger Federer

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Argentinean football star Lionel Messi topped the Forbes 2019 list of 100 world's highest-paid athletes announced on June 11, 2019.
- Virat Kohli is the only Indian in the Forbes 2019 list of 100 world's highest-paid athletes. His ranking was 100th down from 83rd ranking last year despite increase in the earnings by \$1 million.



Forbes 2019 list: Key Facts:

- Lionel Messi has topped the Forbes 2019 list as the world's highest-paid athlete (total earnings \$127million) for the first time, dethroning boxing world champion Floyd Mayweather.
- Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo was at the second spot (total earnings \$109 million) and Brazilian footballer Neymar was spotted on the third place (total earnings \$105 million).
- It is the first time since Forbes began tracking athlete earnings in 1990 that footballers have taken up the top three spots. 35 basketball players appear in the top 100 athletes.
- Roger Federer was at the fifth place in the list with (total earnings \$93.4 million).

- Other major names in the top 25 of the Forbes 2019 list include Tiger Woods, F1 racer Lewis Hamilton, tennis great Novak Djokovic and Irish martial artist and boxer Conor McGregor. Serena Williams sole woman on Forbes 2019 list with earnings of \$29.2 million.

Links:

<https://www.forbes.com/athletes/#7885059b55ae>

Champions League 2019

Question: Which of the following team won the 2019 Champions League title recently?
 (a) Tottenham (b) Real Madrid (c) Liverpool (d) Manchester United

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Club Liverpool defeated Tottenham in the final match at Madrid to win the Champions League 2019 title.
- Liverpool won the final match by 2-0. Mohamed Salah and Divock Origi scored the goals for Liverpool.
- Last season, Liverpool had lost to Real Madrid, 1-3, at Kiev.



Links:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/liverpool-fc-beat-tottenham-win-champions-league-trophy-190601205146349.html>

Formula One

French Grand Prix, 2019

Question: Who has won French Grand Prix, 2019?

(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Valtteri Bottas (c) Sebastian Vettel (d) Daniel Ricciardo

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 22nd June 2019, Lewis Hamilton won the French Grand Prix, 2019 defeating Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas.
- The five-time world champion, who had struggled to match the Finn's pace in the previous two practice sessions, reeled off a fastest lap in one minute and 28.319 seconds.
- It was the 86th pole of his career for Hamilton, who won last year's race from pole and a record-increasing 63rd front-row lock-out for Mercedes.
- Hamilton has taken 60 of his poles with Mercedes.



Link:

<https://www.news18.com/news/formula-one/formula-one-lewis-hamilton-mercedes-french-grand-prix-pole-2199569.html>

Indian racer wins inaugural round of FIA Formula 3 Championship

Question: Which Indian racer recently won the inaugural round of FIA Formula 3 Championship in Barcelona?

(a) Jehan Daruwalla (b) Narayan Kartikeyan (c) Vinod Jhakad (d) Pramod Dubey

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Young Indian racer Jehan Daruwalla, driving for Prema Racing, won the inaugural round of the FIA Formula 3 Championship in Barcelona on 12th May, 2019.
- FIA Formula 3 Championship is one of the support events to Formula One.
- The all-new FIA F3 Championship was created by merging the erstwhile GP3 Championship and FIA F3 European Championship, resulting in an ultra-competitive 30 car grid.
- Jehan is the only Indian to win a Grand Prix when he won the New Zealand Grand Prix and later went on to become the only Indian to win a race in the erstwhile FIA F3 European Championship, which used slower cars.



Link:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Indian-racer-Jehan-Daruwalla-wins-inaugural-round-of-FIA-Formula-3-Championship&id=363334>

Max Verstappen wins Austrian Grand Prix

Question: Who won the Austrian Grand Prix, 2019?

(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Charles Leclerc (c) Max Verstappen (d) Antonio Giovinazzi

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Max Verstappen won the Austrian Grand Prix for the second year in a row on 30th June, 2019.
- Max Verstappen belongs to Red Bull Team.
- In a close competition, Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finished second.
- With this turnaround, Team Mercedes lost for the first time this season which ended its run of 10 wins in a row and eight this season.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sport/motorsport/max-verstappen-wins-austrian-grand-prix/article28235716.ece>

Monaco Grand Prix 2019

Question: Who won the Monaco Grand Prix 2019 held recently?

(a) Sebastian Vettel (b) Max Verstappen (c) Lewis Hamilton (d) Fernando Alonso

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- British F1 racer Lewis Hamilton won the Monaco Grand Prix Formula 1 race held on May 26, 2019 at Monte Carlo.
- He left behind Sebastian Vettel and Valtteri Bottas to hold the title.



- As of 6th June 2019, Mercedes driver Hamilton is at first spot on the 2019 Driver Standings. Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes is at second position followed by Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari at third rank.

Links:

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2019/may/26/lewis-hamilton-monaco-grand-prix-mercedes-f1-formula-one>

Athletics

Italy to Host 2026 Winter Olympics

Question: Which among the following countries will host the 2026 Winter Olympic Games?

(a) Norway (b) Italy (c) Sweden (d) Japan

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 24th June, 2019, Thomas Bach, President of International Olympic Committee announced that the 2026 Winter Olympics will be held in Italy.
- The International Olympic Committee voted to hold the 2026 Winter Olympic Games in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.
- The announcement was being made in the presence of Prime Minister of Italy, Giuseppe Conte.
- Italy won the bid over Stockholm (Sweden) to host the Winter Games. It'll be the first time that the Games will be held in Italy since Turin hosted in 2006.
- The 2026 Winter Olympics will take place from 6th to 22nd February and the 2026 Winter Paralympics will be held from 6th to 15th March.
- The opening ceremony will be held at Milan's San Siro soccer stadium, which hosted the 1990 soccer World Cup, and the closing ceremony is scheduled to take place in an amphitheater in Verona.
- The 2022 Games were awarded to Beijing almost by default as a number of potential host cities withdrew.



Links:

<https://www.italytravel.com/2019/06/italy-to-host-2026-winter-games-in-milan-cortina/>

Sports Miscellaneous

Vaselin Matic: India's basketball coach

Question: Who will be the coach of the Indian basketball team?

(a) Vaselin Matic (b) AB De Villiers (c) Andre Nell (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Vaselin Matic has been appointed coach of Indian men's basketball team.
- The incoming Serbian coach had led Iran to their first ever World Championship qualification in 2010 after they won the Asian Championship in 2009, beating China in the final.
- He was the coach of the Iranian team which won the Asian Games bronze in 2010.



- The 50 years old Vaselein Matic, has coached Poland and Lebanon national teams and was last with Syria.

Links:

<https://sportstar.thehindu.com/basketball/india-basketball-team-coach-veselin-matic/article26625460.ece>

Sports Personality

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- Other major names in the top 25 of the Forbes 2019 list include Tiger Woods, F1 racer Lewis Hamilton, tennis great Novak Djokovic and Irish martial artist and boxer Conor McGregor. Serena Williams sole woman on Forbes 2019 list with earnings of \$29.2 million.

Links:

<https://www.forbes.com/athletes/#7885059b55ae>

Short Notes

Personalities

IOA and FIH chief Narinder Batra elected IOC member

Question: Recently, Who has been elected as a Member of International Olympic Committee?

(a) Kiren Rijju (b) Nita Ambani (c) Narinder Batra (d) Mohammad Mushtaque Ahmad

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 26th June, 2019, Indian Olympic Association president Narinder Batra was elected as a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- Batra was elected to the prestigious seat during the IOC Session in Laussane. He secured 58 votes out of 62.
- Batra's election was announced by IOC Chief, Thomas Bach and the IOA chief later took the oath by holding the Olympic flag.
- He already became the first Indian to head an international federation of an Olympic sport — that of FIH (International Hockey Federation).
- Reliance Foundation Chairperson Nita Ambani was elected as an individual member of the IOC in 2016.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/sports/more-sports/others/ioa-president-narinder-batra-elected-ioc-member/articleshow/69962913.cms>

Joy Harjo, the first Native American to be named U.S. poet laureate

Question: Joy Harjo, Library of Congress named 23rd poet laureate belongs to which country?

(a) France (b) USA (c) UK (d) Brazil

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 19th June, 2019 Joy Harjo, named by Library of Congress as the first Native American poet laureate of the United States.
- She is the 23rd person to hold the position and her term will be for one year and will hold office from this September 2019. She will succeed Tracy K. Smith.
- A member of the Mvskoke Creek Nation, Harjo has written over a dozen books, including poetry, essays, children's fiction, and memoirs.
- Some of her works are American Book Award-winning poetry collection, 'In Mad Love and War', a collection of pedagogical piece entitled 'Soul Talk', Song Language, and Wings of Night Sky.
- Wings of Morning Light: A Play by Joy Harjo and a Circle of Responses was published in January.
- Joy Harjo's verse invokes tradition, politics and personal memoir to celebrate the quest for freedom.



Links:

<https://www.npr.org/2019/06/19/733727917/joy-harjo-becomes-the-first-native-american-us-poet-laureate>

UN Sustainable Development Goals Advocates

Question: Which Indian personality is appointed as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocate?

(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Priyanka Chopra (c) Dia Mirza (d) Medha Patker

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 9 May 2019, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) advocates.
- Indian actress Dia Mirza has been appointed SDG Advocate alongwith 16 other prominent global figures.
- The list also includes Jack Ma, the founder and Executive Chairman of Chinese MNC Alibaba Group.
- These 17 influential public figures are committed to raising awareness, inspiring greater ambition, and pushing for faster action on the SDGs, which were adopted by world leaders on 25th September, 2015.



DG Advocates:

- United Nations Member States agreed to accomplish the SDGs by 2030. To build the momentum for transformative, inclusive development by 2030, the Secretary-General's SDG Advocates will use their unique platforms and leadership to inspire cross-cutting mobilization of the global community.
- The Advocates will leverage and build bridges between their unique audiences, and work together to drive progress.

Links:

<http://in.one.un.org/un-press-release/un-secretary-general-appoints-new-sustainable-development-goals-advocate/>

Chairman of NBSA

Question: Who has been appointed as the Chairman of NBSA?

(a) PC Ghosh (b) Narayan Mishra (c) DY Chandrachud (d) A.K Sikri

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- News Broadcasters Association (NBA) has announced the appointment of Justice A. K. Sikri, former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, as Chairperson of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA).
- He assumed office on 26th May, 2019.
- Justice (Retd.) A. K. Sikri succeeded Justice (Retd.) R. V. Raveendran, who has completed his term on 25th May, 2019.
- Justice Sikri enrolled as an Advocate in 1977 and practiced in Delhi before becoming Judge to the Delhi High Court in 1999. Justice Sikri was elevated Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court in the year 2012. He was elevated as Judge, Supreme Court of India on 12th April, 2013.



- NBSA is an independent body for self-regulation of 24×7 news channels, who are members of the NBA. It implements the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards and Guidelines for its Member news broadcasters.

Links: [http://www.nbanewdelhi.com/assets/uploads/pdf/70 PRESS RELEASE 14 5 19 w.pdf](http://www.nbanewdelhi.com/assets/uploads/pdf/70_PRESS_RELEASE_14_5_19_w.pdf)
<https://barandbench.com/former-supreme-court-judge-justice-ak-sikri-take-over-chairperson-nbsa/>

PR Ramachandra Menon

Question: Who has been appointed Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh High Court recently?
 (a) PR Ramachandra (b) Ajay K. Tripathi (c) T.B. Radhakrishnan (d) None of the above

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- On 6 May, Justice PR Ramachandra Menon sworn in as Chief Justice of the Chhattisgarh High Court.
- Governor Anandiben Patel administered him the oath of office and secrecy .
- His appointment to the post came after the resignation of Chief Justice Ajay Kumar Tripathi serving as a judicial member in the Lokpal.
- Prior to this, he served as a judge in Kerala High Court.
- He obtained Law degree from the Government Law college, Ernakulam in Kerala.



Links:

<https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/pr-ramachandra-menon-sworn-in-as-chief-justice-of-the-chhattisgarh-hc-144838>

Gagandeep kang

Question: Who became first Indian woman to be elected as Royal Society Fellow?

(a) Gangandeep Kang (b) Nita Ahuja (c) Needhi Bhalla (d) Sangeeta N. Bhatia

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- Fifty-one eminent scientists were elected as Fellows of the Royal Society on April 16, along with 10 new Foreign Members and one Honorary Fellow for their exceptional contributions to science.
- Among these are Gagandeep Kang, who is now with the Translational health Science and Technology Institute, Faridabad.
- Dr. Kang is the First Indian Woman to be elected to the Fellow of the Royal Society.
- Princeton professors Manjul Bhargava and Akshay Venkatesh have also been elected to the fellowship of the Royal Society of London.



The Council and Fellow of the Royal Society of London:

- Founded on November 28, 1660, the society recognises, promotes, and supports excellence in science and encourages the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity.
- It is the oldest scientific academy the world which has been working continuously for 360 year.

First Indian:

- Parsi-born Ardaseer Coursetjee Wadia, an Indian Shipbuilder and engineer belonging to the Wadia ship building family, was the first Indian to be elected a Royal Society Fellow, way back in 1841.
- Since then, there have been a few male scientists from India to follow the line, notably Srinivasa Ramanujan (1918), and Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar (1944), but sadly, no female scientist.

Gangandeeep Kang:

- Kang is a leading scientist in India and her main research Focus is on viral infections in Children, and the testing of rotaviral vaccines.
- With over 300 scientific research papers, she serves on the editorial boards for several journals.

Other India scientists elected Royal Society Fellows in 2019:

- Gurdyal Besra : Bandrick Professor of Microbial Physiology and Chemistry, University of Birmingham.
- Manjul Bhargava : Professor of Mathematics, Princeton University.
- Anant Parekh : Professor of Physiology, University of Oxford.
- Akshay Venkatesh : Professor of Mathematics, Institute for Advanced Study, US.

Links:

<https://royalsociety.org/news/2019/04/royal-society-announces-2019-fellows/>

First women on ICC International panel of match referee

Question: Who became the first woman to be appointed to ICC's international panel of match referees?

(a) Sana Mir (b) Lucy Williams (c) GS Lakshmi (d) Kathy Cross

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- India's G.S. Lakshmi has become the first woman to be appointed to ICC's international panel of match referees and will be eligible to officiate in international games with immediate effect.
- Claire Polosak had become the first ever woman umpire to stand in a men's ODI, earlier this month.
- Lakshmi, 51, who first officiated as a match referee in domestic women's cricket in 2008-09, has overseen three women's ODI matches and three women's T20 International matches.



Links:

<https://www.icc-cricket.com/media-releases/1219995>

N.S. Vishwanathan re-appointed as RBI Deputy Governor

Question: Who has been recently re-appointed as the Deputy Governor of the RBI?

(a) Viral V Acharya (b) Shaktikanta Das (c) Dilip S Shanghavi (d) N.S. Vishwanathan

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 1 July 2019, The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet re-appointed N S Vishwanathan as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for one more year.
- His existing tenure expired on 3rd July, 2019. He took charge of office on 4th July, 2016.
- Vishwanathan is one of the three deputy governors, besides B P Kanungo and M K Jain, working at the central bank.
- Vishwanathan is in charge of regulation of banks, non-banking finance companies and cooperative banks. He is known to be one of the key architects behind the revised norms, which encourage banks to take companies to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code by freeing up locked provisions.
- The Reserve Bank of India was established on April 1, 1935 in accordance with the provisions of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. It is headquartered in Mumbai.



Links:

https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=47474

FIEO elects Sharad Kumar Saraf as President

Question: Who has been elected as New President of FIEO on 27th June, 2019?

(a) Mahesh Chandra Keyal (b) Sharad Kumar Saraf (c) Ajay Sahai (d) Ashwani Kumar

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Exporters body FIEO has elected Sharad Kumar Saraf as its new President on 27th June, 2019. Saraf has taken his charge on 28th June, 2019.
- FIEO stands for Federation of Indian Export Organizations.
- It is an apex body of Indian export promotion organizations, was set up jointly by the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India and private trade and industry in the year 1965.
- Saraf has replaced Ganesh Kumar Gupta, a renowned exporter.
- He is also Chairman and Founder of Technocraft Industries (India).



Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/fieo-elects-sharad-kumar-saraf-as-president/article28182551.ece>

Appointment of new RAW chief

Question: Who has been appointed as new RAW chief?

(a) Samant Goel (b) Arvind Kumar (c) Anil Kumar Dhamsana (d) Rajinder Khanna

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Narendra Modi government appointed IPS officer Samant Goel as the new Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) chief.
- This comes three months after Samant Goel played key role in India's counter-attack on the terror infrastructure in Pakistan's Balakot.
- Apart from this, the government has appointed senior IPS officer Arvind Kumar as the Director of the Intelligence Bureau. He is considered as an expert hand on matters related to Kashmir.
- Both IPS officers are of the 1984 batch and hold the rank of Director General.
- Goel is from the Punjab cadre while Kumar is from the Assam-Meghalaya cadre.
- Goel replaces incumbent Anil Kumar Dhasmana, who is retiring after two and a half years of illustrious service. He has handled Punjab militancy at its peak in the 1990s.
- On the other hand, Arvind Kumar has been involved in tackling Naxal extremism at the Intelligence Bureau. He is holding charge as special director Kashmir at the IB.



Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW or RAW):

- The Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW or RAW) is the foreign intelligence agency of India.
- It was established in 1968 following the intelligence failures of the Sino-Indian War, which persuaded the Government of India to create a specialized, independent agency dedicated to foreign intelligence gathering
- Previously, both domestic and foreign intelligence had been the purview of the Intelligence Bureau.

Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/balakot-strategist-samant-goel-is-new-raw-chief-kashmir-expert-arvind-kumar-ib-director-1556415-2019-06-26>

Speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha

Question: Which of the following constituency is represented by Om Birla who has been elected as the Speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha Assembly?

(a) Churu (b) Harda (c) Kota (d) Bikaner

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- National Democratic Alliance nominee and BJP MP from Kota, Om Birla was unanimously elected as the Speaker of 17th Lok Sabha on June 19, 2019.
- All major political parties including Congress, DMK, TMC, BJD, TDP, YSR Congress, JD(U) and Shiv Sena supported the motion moved by Prime Minister and Leader of the House, Narendra Modi to choose Om Birla as the Lok Sabha Speaker.
- 13 motions were moved in support of Mr. Birla.
- Pro-tem speaker Dr Virendra Kumar declared Om Birla as the Speaker.
- Prime minister along with other leaders of different political parties escorted Om Birla to the Speaker's chair.



Om Birla:

- Birla won his first Lok Sabha election in 2014 and was again elected this year from Rajasthan's Kota-Bundi seat.

- He was elected for Rajasthan Assembly for three times consecutively (2003, 2008 and 2013) from Kota South seat.
- He was BJP's Rajasthan President for 6 years.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/om-birla-elected-as-lok-sabha-speaker/article28071593.ece>

Indian Historian elected as the member of American Philosophical Society

Question: Which Indian historian is recently elected as the member of the prestigious American Philosophical Society (APS)?

(a) Ramchandra Guha (b) Gurcharan Das (c) Romila Thapar (d) Partha Chaterjee

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- American Philosophical Society (APS), the oldest learned society in the United States has elected eminent Indian writer and historian Romila Thapar as its member.
- Dr. Thapar is a professor emerita of history at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.
- She was among the 1,013 members elected to the society at its spring 2019 meeting.
- She has authored various books over the ancient history of India like Ancient Indian Social History, A History of India Volume One, and Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/romila-thapar-becomes-american-philosophical-society-member/article27431091.ece>

E. Gopinath

Question: E. Gopinath passed away on June 8, 2019. He was a well-known-

(a) Politician (b) Movie Director (c) Journalist (d) Chef

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Veteran journalist and ANI (Asian News International) Tamil Nadu Chief E Gopinath passed away in Chennai on June 8, 2019 at the age of 88.
- He was one of the longest-serving journalists of Independent India.
- Gopinath started his career as a scribe around 60 years ago and associated ANI for almost 3 decades.
- He covered India's first general election held from 25, October 1951 to 21, February 1952 for the Press Trust of India (PTI) and was active till the recently concluded general elections.
- He was known for interviewing Latin America's revolutionary Che Guevara and Cuban supreme leader Fidel Castro.



Links:

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/veteran-journalist-e-gopinath-passes-away-88-chennai-103285>

Appointment of two new Chief Justices

Question: On 22nd May, 2019, who was appointed the new Chief Justice of Delhi High Court?

(a) Justice Deepak Patil (b) Justice Rajendra Menon (c) Justice Ajay Kumar Tripathi (d) Justice D.N. Patel

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Justices Dhirubhai Naranbhai Patel and Ajay Kumar Mittal were appointed as the Chief Justices of Delhi and Meghalaya High Courts respectively on 22nd May, 2019.
- Justice Patel is currently posted at the Jharkhand High Court and Justice Mittal at the Punjab and Haryana High Court.
- Justice Patel will take charge on 7th June, 2019. Justice Mittal will take charge on 28th May, 2019 as the Chief Justice of Meghalaya High Court.
- Talwant Singh, Rajnish Bhatnagar, Asha Menon and Brijesh Sethi were also appointed judges of the Delhi High Court.
- With an approved strength of 60, the Delhi High Court has a shortage of 24 judges.



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/delhi-meghalaya-hcs-get-new-chief-justices-119052201664_1.html

Awards & Honors

Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019

Question: Who has been awarded the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019?

(a) Rana Dasgupta (b) Deep Dasgupta (c) Swaminathan (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019 has been conferred to Ranna Dasgupta on April 24, 2019.
- Ranna Dasgupta is an author and was awarded the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019 for his 2010 novel "Solo".
- It was the second edition of the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019.
- An amount of \$10,000, a Tagore statue and a certificate for contribution to literature was given to Ranna Dasgupta.
- Dasgupta is the literary director of India's richest literary award, JCB Prize for Literature.
- In addition, Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2019 was also awarded to:
- Yohei Sasakawa (WHO Goodwill ambassador for Leprosy Elimination) for social achievement.
- Tsai Ing-wen (Taiwan President) as a beacon of democracy.



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/rana-dasgupta-bags-2019-tagore-literary-prize-119042401001_1.html

Golden Environmental Prize 2019

Question: Who among the following is/are recipient/s of the Goldman Environmental Prize 2019?

(1) Linda Garcia (2) Bayarjargal Agvaantseren (3) Alfred Brownell (4) Jacqueline Evans

Choose the correct :

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- Six grassroots environmental activists were given the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize on April 29, 2019.
- Six people were honored this year for their contribution in saving the environment from degradation as well as for the activism and contribution in creating awareness.

Recipients:

- Environmental lawyer Alfred Brownell of Liberia stopped the clear-cutting of Liberia's tropical forests by palm oil plantation developers and protected 513,500 acres of primary forest that constitute one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots.
- Bayarjargal Agvaantseren of Mongolia helped create the 1.8 million-acre Tost Tosonbumba Nature Reserve in the South Gobi Desert, a critical habitat for the vulnerable snow leopard and persuaded the Mongolian government to prohibit all mining within the reserve.
- Ana Colovic Lesoska of North Macedonia led a seven-year campaign to cut off international funding for two large hydropower plants planned inside of North Macedonia's Mavrovo National Park, thereby protecting the habitat of the nearly-extinct Balkan lynx.
- Jacqueline Evans of Cook Islands led a five-year campaign to protect the Cook Islands' stunning marine biodiversity. Because of her persistent organizing, the Cook Islands enacted new legislation—Marae Moana—to sustainably manage and conserve all 763,000 square miles of the country's ocean territory, designating marine protected areas (MPAs) around all 15 islands.
- Linda Garcia of US organized her community to stop construction of the Tesoro Savage oil export terminal in Vancouver, Washington.
- Alberto Curamil of Chile organized his Mapuche community to stop the construction of two hydroelectric projects on the sacred Cautín River in Chile. In 2018, Curamil was arrested and remains in jail today.

The award:

- This year (2019) marks the 30th anniversary of the Prize.
- This award is also called as the Green Nobel Prize.
- It is awarded to the environmental activists from each of the six continental regions: Europe, Asia, North America, Central America and South America, Africa and islands and island nations.
- It was founded in 1989 by U.S. philanthropists Rhoda and Richard Goldman.
- A total of 194 winners from 89 different nations have received this award.

Links:

<https://www.goldmanprize.org/blog/introducing-the-2019-goldman-environmental-prize-winners/>

UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize-2019

Question: Who has won the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize,2019?

(a) Wa Lone (b) Kyaw Soe Oo (c) Both (a) & (b) (d) Mazen Darwish

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Journalists Kyaw Soe Oo and Wa Lone (both Myanmar) won this year's UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize.
- Both laureates were announced seven-year prison sentences for breaking the country's secrets law for their journalistic investigation.
- At the time of their arrest in Yangon on 12th December 2017, they were working for the Reuters news agency, reporting on alleged human rights violations in Myanmar's state of Rakhine.
- The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize was awarded on 2nd May as part of the celebration of World Press Freedom Day which took place in Ethiopia on 3rd May, 2019.
- This year's theme for the day is 'Media for Democracy: Journalism and elections in times of disinformation'.



About the Prize:

- Awarded annually, the \$25,000 Prize is named in honour of Guillermo Cano Isaza, a Colombian journalist who was assassinated in front of the offices of his newspaper El Espectador in Bogotá, Colombia on 17th December 1986.
- It is funded by the Guillermo Cano Isaza Foundation (Colombia) and the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation (Finland).

Links:

<https://en.unesco.org/prizes/guillermo-cano/about-prize>

Swachhata Pakhwada Award 2019

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Swachhata Pakhwada Award 2019:

1) All India Radio was the winner in this award ceremony

2) It is of bringing a fortnight of intense focus on the issues and practices of Swachhata by engaging GOI Ministries/Departments in their jurisdictions

Choose the correct statement/s:

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) Neither (1) nor(2)

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- All India Radio, Publication Division and Children's Film Society of India have been conferred Swachhata Pakhwada Awards-2019 in New Delhi.
- Secretary in the Information and Broadcasting Ministry Amit Khare gave away the awards. Director General of All India Radio F. Sheheryar and Director General (News) Ms. Ira Joshi received the Award for All India Radio.
- Press Council of India, Press Information Bureau and BECIL were also mentioned during the award ceremony for their efforts during the Swachhata Pakhwada.



Swachhata Pakhwada:

- Swachhata Pakhwada started in April 2016 with the objective of bringing a fortnight of intense focus on the issues and practices of Swachhata by engaging GOI Ministries/Departments in their jurisdictions.
- The Ministries observing Swachhata Pakhwada are monitored closely using online monitoring system of Swachhata Samiksha where action plans, images, videos related to Swachhata activities are uploaded and shared.
- For the Pakhwada fortnight, observing ministries are considered as Swachhata Ministries and are expected to bring qualitative Swachhata improvements in their jurisdictions.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=All-India-Radio%2C-Publication-Division-%26-Children%26%2339%3Bs-Film-Society-of-India-given-Swacchta-Pakhwada-Awards-2019&id=362619>

Akshaya Patra wins BBC award

Question: Which organization has been awarded the BBC World Service Global Champion Award for 2019?

(a) UK charity WRAP (b) Akshaya Patra (c) Food 4 Education (d) None of these

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Akshaya Patra, a non-profit organization running one of the world's largest school meals project in India, has been awarded the BBC World Service Global Champion Award for the programme.
- The award, presented at the BBC Food Awards in Bristol, recognizes a person or project that is changing the way the world produces, processes, consumes or thinks about food for the better.
- Akshaya Patra Foundation is an NGO in India founded by Madhu Pandit Dasa in 2000. Since its establishment it is running mid-day meal programme across India. Almost 20 years ago it started providing 1,500 free school lunches every day and as of now it feeds 1.75 million children all over India with freshly prepared meals.
- The Bengaluru-based NGO (Akshaya Patra) was selected by an international panel of judges from nominations sent in by the World Service audience from around the world.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/akshaya-patra-wins-bbc-award/article27944688.ece>

Amnesty International Human Rights Award

Question: Which climate activist is conferred with the prominent Amnesty International Prize recently?

(a) Dia Mirza (b) Luisa Neubauer (c) Greta Thunberg (d) Njeri Kabeberi

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The 16-year-old teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg from Sweden has been conferred with Amnesty International Human Right Award.

- She was awarded for mobilising world public opinion on the looming peril of global warming.
- She started an international youth movement against climate change when she protested outside the Swedish parliament in 2018.
- People who have received this award in the past include Malala Yousafzai, Alicia Keys and Nelson Mandela.
- The head of Amnesty International, Kumi Naidoo, appreciated her environment related work in a statement announcing the prize from his organisation.
- Thunberg has announced that she is taking a year off school to pursue her campaigning.
- Her popular protest movements include Skip School and protest on Fridays, became a global movement in which school and college students protested and demonstrated for climate change action.



Links:

<https://www.dw.com/en/greta-thunberg-fridays-for-future-movement-win-amnesty-human-rights-award/a-49096921>

Election Visitors Programme

Question: Representatives of how many Election Management Bodies across the world witnessed the 17th Lok Sabha election in the Election Visitors Programme?

(a) 15 (b) 14 (c) 17 (d) 20

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) organised an Election Visitors Programme.
- Heads and Representatives of 20 Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from across the World, namely Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Fiji, Georgia, Kenya, Republic of Korea, and more arrived in New Delhi on 12th May, 2019 to witness the ongoing General Elections to 17th Lok Sabha.
- More than 65 such delegates have been invited by Election Commission of India to join the Election Visitors Program.
- Chief Election Commissioner, Sunil Arora addressed the participants and lauded the foresight and vision of forefathers of Indian Constitution in establishing the Election Commission of India a day before the promulgation of the Republic.
- Second issue of ECI's quarterly magazine "My Vote Matters" was also released on this occasion by the Commission. The Magazine presents a comprehensive glimpse of preparatory initiatives in different States for the ongoing elections.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1571891>

IAF Contingent Departs for Exercise Garuda-VI

Question: The Bilateral Exercise, Garuda-VI will be conducted between which of the following countries?

(a) India and France (b) India and US (c) India and China (d) India and Myanmar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Indian Air Force is participating in a bilateral exercise along with French Air Force named Exercise Garuda-VI.

- It will be conducted at French Air Force Base, Mont-de-Marsan from 1st to 12th July, 2019.
- The last exercise, Garuda V was held at Air Force Station, Jodhpur in June 2014.
- Indian Air Force contingent comprises of 120 air-warriors and 4 Su-30 MKI along with an IL-78 Flight Refueling aircraft.
- C-17 strategic lift aircraft will provide the logistic support to the contingent during the induction and de-induction phase.
- This is one of the biggest air exercises that are being planned between the two Air Forces. The Indian Air Force Su-30 MKI will be operating in a simulated operational war fighting scenario along with French Air Forces multirole Rafale aircraft.
- This will enhance understanding of interoperability during mutual operations between the two Air Forces and provide an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices.
- Participation of IAF in the exercise will also promote professional interaction, exchange experiences and operational knowledge besides strengthening bilateral relations with the French Air Force.
- It will also provide a good opportunity to the air warriors to operate in an international environment.
- The team has departed from Air Force Station Bareilly and Agra on 25th June, 2019.



Link:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1575592>

Planning & Project

First Resilient Kerala Program

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Rebuild Kerala Initiative:

(1) The Government of India, the Government of Kerala and the World Bank signed a Loan Agreement of USD 250 million.

(2) The New Program is part of the Government of India's support to Kerala's Rebuild Kerala Development Programme aimed at building a green and resilient Kerala.

From the above, correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Government of India, the Government of Kerala and the World Bank signed a Loan Agreement of USD 250 million (approximately Rs.1700 Crore) for the First Resilient Kerala Program on 28th June, 2019.
- The program objective is to enhance the State of Kerala resilience against the impacts of natural disasters and climate change.
- The Resilient Kerala Program will focus on strengthening the State's institutional and financial capacity to protect the assets and livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups through an inclusive and participatory approach.
- The New Program is part of the Government of India's support to Kerala's Rebuild Kerala Development Programme aimed at building a green and resilient Kerala.
- This partnership will identify key areas of policy and institutional strengthening to maximize development impact.



- The Loan Agreement was signed by Mr. Sameer Kumar Khare on behalf of the Government of India, and Mr. Junaid Kamal Ahmad, Country Director, World Bank India.
- The World Bank has been working closely with the Government of India and Kerala Government since the floods struck in August 2018 in assessing the impact of the floods and assisting in recovery and reconstruction.
- The Program, which represents the First State Partnership of the World Bank in India, is the First of two Development Policy Operations aiming to mainstream disaster and climate resilience into critical infrastructure and services.

The Program aims to support the State with

- Improved river basin planning and water infrastructure operations management, water supply and sanitation services.
- Resilient and sustainable agriculture, enhanced agriculture risk insurance.
- Improved resilience of the core road network.
- Unified and more up-to-date land records in high risk areas.
- Risk-based urban planning and strengthened expenditure planning by urban local bodies.
- Strengthened fiscal and public financial management capacity of the state.

Other Drives

- The World Bank has been supporting the State through engagements such as the Second Kerala State Transport Project, Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project, National Hydrology Project, National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project Phase 2 and the Kerala Local Government and Service Delivery Project.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190970>

Vaishno Devi shrine to have own disaster response force by Sept 2020

Question: Which temple will have its own disaster response force by September 2020?

(a) Vaishno Devi (b) Somnath Temple (c) Vishwanath Temple (d) Kedarnath

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu will get a dedicated in-house disaster response force by September next year.
- The shrine is located atop the Trikuta hills in Reasi district of Jammu region.
- The shrine board and the NDRF have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) early this year keeping in mind the hilly terrain and need to impart advanced disaster management training to the shrine board staff in batches to keep them in a state of readiness for effectively and promptly responding to any disaster situation.
- The shrine board is also planning to set up an emergency operation centre as part of its disaster preparedness.



Links:

<https://www.businesstoday.in/pti-feed/vaishno-devi-shrine-to-have-own-disaster-response-force-by-sept-2020/story/358419.html>

IAF's Aircraft Certified to Operate on Indigenous Bio-Jet Fuel

Question: Which of the following aircraft of the Indian Air Force is certified to operate on indigenous bio-fuel recently?

(a) AN-32 (b) Jaguar (c) Tejas (d) Hercules

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Indian Air Force's formidable workhorse, the Russian made AN-32 aircraft was formally fleet certified to fly on blended aviation fuel containing up to 10% of indigenous bio-jet fuel on May 24, 2019.
- The approval certificate was received at the aero-engine test facilities at Chandigarh by Air Commodore Sanjiv Ghuratia VSM, Air Officer Commanding.



Push for greener fuel in Airforce:

- The IAF has undertaken a series of evaluation tests and trials with this green aviation fuel for the last one year. The scope of these checks was in consonance with the international aviation standards.
- The indigenous bio-jet fuel was first produced by the CSIR-IIP lab at Dehradun in 2013, but could not be tested or certified for commercial use on aircraft due to lack of test facilities in the civil aviation sector.
- On 27 July, 2018, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa had formally announced IAF's intention to permit the use of all its resources for testing and certifying the indigenous fuel.
- Since then, IAF's flight test crew and engineers have been evaluating the performance of this fuel against international standards.
- This is a huge step in promoting the 'Make in India' mission as this bio-fuel would be produced from Tree Borne Oils (TBOs) sourced from tribal areas and farmers, augmenting their income substantially.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572562>

ROADIS & NIIF

Question: Consider the following statement:

(1) A platform created jointly by ROADIS and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) will invest up to USD 2 billion in highways projects in country

(2) ROADIS is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Public Sector Pension Investment Board (one of Canada's largest pension investment managers)

of the above correct statement/s is / are:

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both (1) and(2) (d) All the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- ROADIS and the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) of India announced the creation of a platform that will invest in road projects in India.
- The platform will invest up to USD 2 billion of equity to target Toll Operate Transfer models, acquisitions of existing road concessions and investment opportunities in the road sector with the aim of creating a large roads platform in the country.
- With 710 km of highways under ownership and management, ROADIS is the largest European highway concession manager in India.



- This jointly-held platform will benefit from the expertise and value creation capabilities of both ROADIS and NIIF.
- With strong investment and operational expertise, the platform intends to operate the roads portfolio with the highest global standards, while creating maximum value for the shareholders.
- The road network is a key enabler for the Indian economy to grow and sustain its position as the fastest growing major economy in the world, and this provides significant upside potential for investments, while creating value for users.

ROADIS

- It is a leading multinational developer, operator and manager of highway concessions.
- It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Public Sector Pension Investment Board (PSP Investments), one of Canada's largest pension investment managers.
- It currently manages 1,892 kilometers of highways, divided among ten concessions in Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Portugal and India.
- It is also a shareholder in Wind Energy Transmission Texas (WETT), an electricity transmission line in the United States.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)

- An institution anchored by the Government of India, NIIF is a collaborative investment platform for international and Indian investors with a mandate to invest equity capital in domestic infrastructure.

Links:

<http://www.roadis.com/en/communication/press-releases/roadis-and-niif-partner-to-create-platform-for-investment-in-road-sector.html?idCategoria=0&fechaDesde=&texto=&fechaHasta=&csrfToken=58E026159242B661EBDF62CD041778C3>

Notification to exempt Battery Operated Vehicles from paying registration fees

Question: Which Ministry has issued a notification to exempt battery operated vehicles from paying registration fees?

- (a) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (b) Ministry of Home Affairs
(c) Ministry of Finance (d) Ministry of Environment

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has initiated steps for providing for differential registration fees under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989.
- This is done in order to give a boost to Battery-Operated or Electric Vehicles in the country.
- For this, the Ministry has issued a draft notification dated 18th June 2019 vide Gsr 430 (E), to amend Rule 81 of CMVR.
- The amendment proposes to exempt Battery Operated Vehicles from payment of fees for the purpose of issue or renewal of registration certificate and assignment of new registration mark.
- This means that Electric Vehicles would be exempted from such registration charges.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1575002>

Channels of Bangladesh and South Korea on DD Free Dish

Question: Which channel owned by Bangladesh TV will now be shown in the DD Free Dish, as per a decision of the government of India?

(a) Ekkator TV (b) Asian TV (c) Channel 24 (d) BTV World

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- In a big boost to India-Bangladesh cooperation, the Government of India has decided to show BTV World, a channel owned by Bangladesh TV, on the Doordarshan Free Dish.
- At the same time, DD India would be made available in Bangladesh for being viewed by the people in that country.
- This arrangement is as a result of an MoU signed between Prasar Bharati and Bangladesh TV (BTV) on 7th May, 2019.
- The channel – BTV World would be of special interest to the viewers of Eastern India.
- The decision marks an important watershed in the strengthening of ties between the two countries and follows with an earlier decision taken by the two Governments to co-produce a film on Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, which will be directed by the eminent film Director/Producer Shyam Benegal.
- The Government has also approved the proposal of Prasar Bharati for making available the KBS World, an English 24×7 channel of Government of Republic of South Korea on the DD Free Dish for the Indian viewers.
- Simultaneously, people of Korea would be able to view DD India in their country.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1574973>

Treaty & Agreements

UN accord on plastic waste

Question: Around how many countries agreed on UN accord to curb plastic waste disposal in oceans?

(a) 150 (b) 200 (c) 120 (d) 180

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 10th May, 2019, around 180 governments agreed on a new UN accord to regulate the export of plastic waste.
- Around eight million tonnes of plastic wastes ends up in the ocean every year hitting hard on the aquatic life and health of environment.
- This new United Nations accord came after 12 days of discussions at a United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) meeting in Geneva, Switzerland.
- About 1,400 representatives from the world represented the UNEP meeting in Geneva.
- The Geneva meeting amended the 1989 Basel Convention on the control of hazardous wastes to include plastic waste in a legally-binding framework.
- U.S. and a few others have not signed the accord. They however cannot ship plastic waste to countries that are on board with the deal.
- The meeting also undertook to eradicate two poisonous chemical groups — Dicofol and Perfluorooctanoic Acid, plus related compounds.



- The latter has been used in a wide variety of industrial and domestic applications including non-stick cookware and food processing equipment, as well as carpets, paper and paints.
- Developed countries like the US and Canada have been exporting their mixed toxic plastic wastes to developing Asian countries claiming it would be recycled in the receiving country since long time.
- Much of this waste cannot be recycled and is instead dumped or burned, or finds its way into the ocean.
- Plastic waste pollution has reached epidemic proportions with an estimated 100 million tonnes of plastic now found in the oceans.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/180-nations-agree-on-a-new-un-accord-to-curb-export-of-plastic-waste/article27104379.ece>

MoU signed for Rudraksh Plantation

Question: As per the tripartite MoU signed, the Plantation of Rudraksh will be done in which state?

(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Kashmir

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between National Mission for Clean Ganga, HCL Foundation and INTACH for taking up a project of 'Plantation of Rudraksh Trees in Uttarakhand' as a part of CSR initiative under the Namami Gange Programme.
- While the project aims at planting 10,000 Rudraksh trees in the catchment area of river Ganga in Uttarakhand in association with the local community and other stakeholders, it will also help in generating income for people residing in those areas.
- The tripartite MoU was signed by a representative from HCL Foundation, INTACH and Executive Director (Finance) from NMCG on 14th May, 2019 in the presence of Director General NMCG and Executive Director (Projects).
- Namami Gange Mission aims at providing comprehensive and sustainable solutions for a cleaner ecosystem along the stretch of 97 towns and 4,465 villages on the Ganga stem and a public-private partnership will provide the initiative a much-needed impetus.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572049>

Affiliation of ICG ship Shaurya with 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion

Question: In order to improve Inter Armed Forces Cooperation, an affiliation charter was signed between Shaurya ship of Indian Coast Guard and 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion of?

(a) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (b) Manipur Rifles (c) Assam Rifles (d) Gorkha Rifles

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- To enhance inter Armed Forces Cooperation and utilize each other's assets for training, the Director Generals of Assam Rifles and Indian Coast Guard (ICG) in an



impressive ceremony held at Alticor, Shillong signed an Affiliation Charter between 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion of Assam Rifles and Indian Coast Guard Ship, Shaurya, on 22nd May, 2019.

- Assam Rifles is the oldest Para Military Force of India with a rich history of valour, courage and tradition.
- Assam Rifles have 46 Battalions manning the Indo-Myanmar border and countering the insurgency in the north east states. On contrary the ICG, with 142 ships & 62 aircraft is one of the youngest Armed Force under Ministry of Defence.
- 3rd (Naga Hills) Battalion Assam Rifles is the oldest battalion of the force raised in 1835 as The Cachar Levy comprising of 750 personnel of all ranks for guarding the Eastern Frontier of Assam from Brahmaputra River to the Cachar Hills.
- Presently, the battalion is deployed at Kohima, Nagaland where it had earlier bravely fought the Japanese in World War-II and stopped their advance into India.
- ICG Ship, Shaurya, is indigenously built at Goa Shipyard Limited, based in Chennai is a modern state-of-the-art 105 mtrs long Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) commissioned on 12th August, 2017.
- Shaurya meaning courage is a projection of ICG's commitment To Serve & Protect the maritime interest of the nation. The ship is extensively developed for EEZ surveillance and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard charter to safeguard the maritime interest of India.

Objectives of the affiliation:

- The objective of the affiliation is to promote bilateral cooperation between the Assam Rifles and the ICG in the field of exchange of information / personnel, build-up camaraderie for training, sports / adventure and sustainable development.
- This affiliation will facilitate the Sentinels of the North East to interact with the Sentinels of the Seas on professional and social platforms and share rich experiences and best practices.
- Assam Rifles personnel will be able to understand the peculiarities of a Maritime Service (Indian Coast Guard) and their role in guarding and intercepting the anti-national forces / non state actors detrimental to the maritime / coastal security. The personnel of ICG will be able to see and understand the operational ethos of the Assam Rifles working along the Indo-Myanmar border.
- The reciprocation Ceremony will be held onboard Indian Coast Guard Ship Shaurya at Chennai on 11th and 12th June, 2019.

Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572392>

Acquisition of Hamleys

Question: Which of the following company has announced to acquire British Toymaker Hamleys?

(a) Amazon (b) Softbank (c) Reliance (d) Disney

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Reliance Industries announced that it would acquire iconic British toymaker Hamleys for Rs 620 crore in an all-cash deal.
- It is currently owned by Chinese fashion conglomerate C Banner International. It was acquired for 100 million pounds in 2015.



- Hamleys, a 259-year-old toy-maker, has struggled to generate profits in recent times. It reported a profit after tax of 2.44 million pounds in 2018 after suffering a loss of 11.24 million pounds in 2017.
- Hamleys was delisted from the London Stock Exchange (LSE) in 2003 when it was taken over by Icelandic investment firm Baugur Group for USD 68.8 million.
- Hamleys opened its flagship Regent Street London store in 1881. This flagship store is set over seven floors covering 54,000 sq ft, with over 50,000 lines of toys on sale.
- It is considered one of London's prominent tourist attractions, receiving over 5 million visitors each year.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/reliance-industries-buys-global-toy-retailer-hamleys/articleshow/69256149.cms>

India signs 300cr deal to buy spice bombs

Question: The Indian Air Force has recently signed a deal to buy 100 more Spice Bombs with which of the following country?

(a) Russia (b) US (c) France (d) Israel

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Indian Air Force has signed a contract with Rafael Advanced Defense Systems of Israel to buy around 100 advanced SPICE 2000 bombs.
- The deal is worth Rs. 300 crore under emergency procurements.
- Air Force used these bombs in the airstrike done in Pakistan's Balakot as a counter terrorist operation on 26th February 2019.
- It has earlier purchased these bombs in 2014 for about \$100 million.
- These bombs will be supplied by Rafael in the coming three months.



SPICE Bombs:

- SPICE stands for smart, precise impact, cost-effective.
- It is an Israeli-developed, electro-optics and GPS-guided kit for converting air-droppable unguided bombs into precision-guided bombs.
- It weighs 900 kgs and designed for air-to-ground strikes.
- SPICE bomb has a standoff range of 60 kilometres and approaches the target as its unique scene-matching algorithm compares the electro-optical image received in real-time via the weapon seeker with mission reference data stored in the weapon computer memory and adjusts the flight path accordingly.
- SPICE 2000 also has an add-on kit for warheads such as the MK-84, BLU-109, APW and RAP-2000.

Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/iaf-to-buy-100-more-balakot-bombs-signs-rs-300-cr-deal-with-israel-1544063-2019-06-06>

MoU between Ministry of Corporate Affairs and SEBI

Question: A MoU has been signed between Ministry of Corporate Affairs and SEBI for which of the following sector?

(a) App development (b) Data exchange (c) Rule making (d) None of the above

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for data exchange between the two regulatory organizations on June 7, 2019.
- The MoU was signed by K.V.R. Murty, Joint Secretary, MCA and Madhabi Puri Buch, Whole Time Member, SEBI.

The MoU:

- The MoU comes in the wake of increasing need for surveillance in the context of Corporate Frauds affecting important sectors of the economy.
- The private sector plays an increasingly vital role in economic growth so a robust Corporate Governance mechanism becomes the need of the hour.
- The MoU will facilitate the sharing of data and information between SEBI and MCA on an automatic and regular basis.
- It will enable sharing of specific information such as details of suspended companies, delisted companies, shareholding pattern from SEBI and financial statements filed with the Registrar by corporates, returns of allotment of shares, audit reports relating to corporates.
- The MoU will ensure that both MCA and SEBI have seamless linkage for regulatory purposes.
- In addition to regular exchange of data, SEBI and MCA will also exchange with each other, on request, any information available in their respective databases, for the purpose of carrying out scrutiny, inspection, investigation and prosecution.
- A Data Exchange Steering Group also has been constituted for the initiative, which will meet periodically to review the data exchange status and take steps to further improve the effectiveness of the data sharing mechanism.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1573677>

Conference

The 10th Regional GRIHA Summit

Question: Consider the following statements regarding GRIHA Summit, 2019:

- (1) The 10th Regional GRIHA Summit is aligned to focus on the challenges and pragmatic approach of incorporating sustainability initiatives into functioning of public buildings.
- (2) The theme of summit is Transformation Strategies for Built Environment
- (3) This summit was held in Kanpur.

Choose the correct statement

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

Answer: (b)

- The 10th Regional GRIHA Summit was inaugurated by Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari on 14th June, 2019, at Nagpur. The summit was organized with the help of the Public Works Department of Government of Maharashtra.
- The theme of the summit was 'Transformation Strategies for Built Environment' and it was aligned to focus on the challenges and pragmatic approach of incorporating sustainability initiatives into functioning of public buildings
- The one day summit will create an opportunity to embark on multi-stakeholder partnerships; serve as a platform for knowledge sharing among different domains of the green building industry and facilitate networking opportunities among individuals



representing government, academia, civil society organizations, architecture, engineering, and construction management sector.

- GRIHA is an independent, non-profit society jointly set up by the Ministry of New and renewable energy and the energy and resources institute.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Innovative-methods-can-make-projects-environmentally-sustainable%2C-says-Nitin-Gadkari&id=364915>

Workshop on Artificial Bio Organs

Question: Where did the workshop on Artificial Bio Organs take place?

(a) Hyderabad (b) Visakhapatnam (c) Bhopal (d) Nagpur

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- In order to strengthen Indo-Australian Cooperation and achieve development of 3D printing industry in both the countries, Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) has recently organized a one-day workshop on Organ Bio Printing at the Kalam Convention Center, AMTZ Campus in Visakhapatnam.
- The workshop explored 3D printing, an innovative technology that covers all medical disciplines and offers new opportunities in diagnostics and therapy. From diagnostic visualization to surgical planning, patient-specific models provide an added value for patients and physicians.
- Dr. Jitendar Kumar Sharma, MD & CEO invited the delegates to experience the 3D printing facility at AMTZ, which is one of the largest 3D printing facilities in the world with diverse materials and diverse applications.
- He also emphasized Bio Harmonized Aids for Rehabilitation and Treatment (BHARAT), a new initiative to develop at least 10 organs by 3D Bioprinting. He invited international and national collaboration in this project that would benefit lakhs of people.



Link:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1572038>

Asian Culture Carnival of Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations

Question: Which country hosted the Asian Culture Carnival of Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations?

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

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Asian Culture Carnival of the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations (CDAC) was organized at Beijing on 15th May, 2019.
- Chinese President Xi Jinping also attended the event. He delivered a keynote speech at the event.
- The participants of the event included over 2,000 government officials and representatives from 47 Asian countries as well as other countries outside the region.
- The conference included Thematic Forums, an Asian Culture Carnival and Asian Civilization Week.

- Around 30,000 audiences around the world and artists from across Asia performed folk dances, played traditional musical instruments or sang popular songs from their homeland.

Links: <http://english.cctv.com/2019/05/16/ARTI5lyYvRrcC38mkPZJC62p190516.shtml>
<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1150050.shtml>

India International Hospitality Expo 2019

Question: 2019 edition of India International Hospitality Expo will be hosted by which city?

(a) Greater Noida (b) Bengaluru (c) Vijayawada (d) Jaipur

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- India International Hospitality Expo (IHE) will host its second edition in 2019.
- The 4-day one of kind hospitality event will be held from 7th to 10th August, 2019 at India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida Expressway.

Major highlights expo:

- The four-day long event will witness the biggest exposition spread over 45,000 square metres of expo space, conferences, gastronomic demonstrations and competition areas for both hospitality professionals as well as hospitality students.
- This makes IHE 19 the biggest hospitality exposition in South Asia till date.
- IHE 2019 will act as an impactful platform for all the hospitality stakeholders to come, network and rub shoulders with the very best in the industry.
- IHE 2019 was also promoted at worldwide events that further opened gateways to attract influential visitors from across the globe.
- Armed with a vast array of exhibition divided into the broad categories of: Food and Kitchen Equipment; Food and Beverage; Furniture, Furnishing, Lifestyle and Decor; Technology; and Design and Architecture etc.

Links:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/business/india-international-hospitality-expo-2019-to-attract-25000-visitors20190517115150/>

Namaste Thailand Film Festival

Question: Where did the 3rd edition of Namaste Thailand Festival took place?

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The third edition of Namaste Thailand Festival was organised in New Delhi.
- It was organised during 14 – 16 June, 2019 at PVR Select Citywalk, New Delhi. The screenings were free of cost and on a first-come-first-serve basis.
- This festival is organised annually since 2017 with the motto of bridging the gap between Indian and Thai cultures by bringing a taste of Thai films to the Indian audience.
- Six quality Thai films showcasing the uniqueness and the diversity of the Thai culture and her people, as well as the similarities and linkages between our two cultures were screened during the festival.



Links:

<https://www.wionews.com/entertainment/namaste-thailand-film-festival-concludes-its-third-edition-in-delhi-227801>

2nd Global Disability Summit

Question: Where did the 2nd Global Disability Summit take place between 6th and 8th June, 2019?

(a) New York (b) Tokyo (c) Buenos Aires (d) Manila

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- A delegation headed by Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot will participate in the 2nd Global Disability Summit to be held at Buenos Aires, Argentina during 6th to 8th June, 2019.
- The summit represents an opportunity to reflect on the formulation and strengthening of public policies and good practices in the different discussion panels, with the voices of people with disabilities to be at the forefront.
- The objective of the summit is to deliberate on issues across the world concerning empowerment and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and to work out a mechanism for enabling them to live an independent and dignified life.
- The delegation will also participate in the bilateral discussions with Government of Argentina for developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries on 9th to 10th June, 2019.



Links:

<http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/disability-summit-argentina-2019>

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1573478>

4th Coast Guard Subordinate Officers Conclave 2019

Question: Where did the 4th Coast Guard Subordinate Officers Conclave 2019 took place between 6 and 7 June 2019?

(a) Jaipur (b) Visakhapatnam (c) New Delhi (d) Hyderabad

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The 4th Coast Guard Subordinate Officers Conclave 2019 was inaugurated by Director General Rajendra Singh on June 6, 2019.
- The two-day conclave at Coast Guard Headquarters in New Delhi had brainstorming and various other plenary sessions, involving highly motivated and committed subordinate officers who have come from various units of Coast Guard across the country.
- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and has not only broadened the horizons of subordinate officers but also has provided them a platform to express their innovative ideas, thought process before the highest decision-making echelons in the service.
- Director General Rajendra Singh also conferred 'Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak' to Navik Vinod in recognition of his exceptional courage, expert use of lifesaving techniques and selfless attitude displayed in saving a precious life of a women drowning in to rough sea due to monsoonal weather conditions in pitch dark hours near Gateway of India, Mumbai in 2018.
- A Coast Guard Benevolent Association App was also launched by DG Coast Guard on the occasion. With the launch of this App the Coast Guard Personnel can log on the site and apply for the required financial assistance online.



Links:

<http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1573609>

Law & Justice

Cabinet approved the Special Economic Zones (Amendment) Bill, 2019

Question: The Special Economic Zones (Amendment) Bill permits which of the following to set up units in special economic zones?

(a) Individuals (b) Group of companies (c) Trusts (d) None of these

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved to introduce the Special Economic Zones (Amendment) Bill, 2019.
- This Bill will replace the Special Economic Zones (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019 (12 of 2019).
- The Bill will be introduced in ensuing session of the Parliament.
- After the amendment of sub-section (v) of section 2 of the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005, a trust or any entity notified by the Central Government will be eligible to be considered for grant of permission to set up a unit in Special Economic Zones.
- The present provisions of the Act do not permit 'trusts' to set up units in SEZs. 'Person' defined in the Act who is allowed to seek permission for setting up units does not include 'trusts'.
- SEZs are major export hubs in the country as the government provides several incentives and single-window clearance system.
- The developers and units of these zones enjoy certain fiscal and non-fiscal incentives such as no license requirement for import; full freedom for subcontracting; and no routine examination by customs authorities of export/import cargo. They also enjoy direct and indirect tax benefits.



Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190424>

Year, Day & Week

World Refugee Day

Question: When is the World Refugee Day celebrated?

(a) 18th June (b) 19th June (c) 20th June (d) 21st June

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- World Refugee Day is celebrated on 20th June every year.
- 2019 Theme of this day is: #StepWithRefugees — Take A Step on World Refugee Day.
- United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention defines refugee as someone who fled his or her home and country owing to "a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.



Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/why-do-we-mark-international-days/>

5th UN Global Road Safety Week

Question: When was the 5th United Nations Global Road Safety Week observed?

(a) 06th to 12th May, 2019 (b) 01st to 06th May, 2019 (c) 13th to 19th May, 2019

(d) 24th to 30th April, 2019

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- The Fifth United Nations Global Road Safety Week was held from 6th to 12th May, 2019. This week focussed on leadership for road safety.
- A campaign named #SpeakUp to Save Lives was also launched.

SpeakUp campaign:

- The #SpeakUp campaign operates on the principles of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.
- On 11th May, 2011, dozens of countries around the world kicked off the first global Decade of Action. From New Zealand to Mexico and the Russian Federation to South Africa, governments committed to taking new steps to save lives on their roads.
- The Decade of Action seeks to prevent road traffic deaths and injuries which expert's project will take the lives of 1.9 million people annually by 2020.
- The #SpeakUp campaign provides an opportunity for civil society to generate demands for strong leadership for road safety and to inspire leaders to take action by showcasing strong leadership for road safety within governments, international agencies, NGOs etc.
- UN's global goal for sustainable development mentions to reduce the number of global death and injuries by road accidents to half by 2020.

Road Accidents:

- According to WHO, nearly 1.3 million people die in road traffic crash – which averages more than 3000 deaths everyday. Of these, nearly 400,000 young people under the age of 25 are killed. Road traffic accidents are the leading cause of death among young people globally.
- There were about five lakh road accidents in India in 2015 which led to the death of 1.5 lakh people and injured about five lakh people.
- India is a signatory to the Brasilia declaration and intends to reduce road accidents and traffic fatalities by 50% by 2022.
- Road length in India has increased from about 4 lakh kilometres in the 1950s to about 55 lakh kilometres in 2015.

- Tamil Nadu recorded the highest accident fatalities in 2015 (23 fatalities/ lakh persons) followed by Haryana (18 fatalities/ lakh persons), and Karnataka (18 fatalities/ lakh persons).

Links:

<https://www.unroadsafetyweek.org/en/about#gq>

International Nurses Day

Question: When is the International Nurses Day celebrated?

(a) May 1 (b) May 7 (c) May 10 (d) May 12

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world on 12th May every year on the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.
- The theme for 2019 International Nurses Day 2019 is – Nurses – A Voice to Lead – Health for All.
- It is organised every year by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) since 1965. The day celebrates the contribution that nurses make to societies around the world.
- Florence Nightingale was born on 12 May in 1820. She is said to be the foundational philosopher of the modern nursing.
- International Council of Nurses established the day in 1974 for highlighting the importance of nurse's role in providing the best healthcare services.



Links:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-england-dorset-48216658/dorset-nurses-celebrate-international-nurses-day>

International Everest Day

Question: International Everest Day is observed on-

(a) 29th May (b) 28th May (c) 30th May (d) 26th May

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- International Everest Day is observed annually on 29th May since its inception in year 2008.
- The day is observed in order to commemorate Nepalese Tenzing Norgay and New Zealand's Edmund Hillary for scaling world highest peak Mt. Everest (8,848m) on this day in 1953.
- The day is celebrated with memorial events, processions, and special events in Kathmandu and the Everest region.
- Recognition of this day as International Everest Day was decided by Nepal in 2008, when the legendary climber Hillary passed away.



Link:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=International-Everest-Day%3a-All-you-need-to-know&id=364073>

Commonwealth Day 2019

Question: Commonwealth Day is observed on?

(a) 24th May (b) 26th May (c) 28th May (d) 22nd May

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 24th May, 2019, Commonwealth Day was observed throughout India.
- This year's theme for the day was 'A Connected Commonwealth'.
- Formerly, this day was known as Empire Day.
- In 1958, Harold Macmillan announced in Parliament the renaming of Empire Day as Commonwealth Day.
- This day is observed in the countries which were once part of the British Empire.
- On 11th March, 2019, people in Commonwealth countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, the Pacific and Europe observed the Commonwealth Day.



Links:

<http://thecommonwealth.org/commonwealthday>

International Day of Families

Question: When is the International Day of Family celebrated?

(a) 10th May (b) 15th May (c) 20th May (d) 05th May

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The International Day of Families is observed on the 15th of May every year. It was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993.
- This day provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase the knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting families.
- The theme for the year 2019 is 'Families and Climate Action: Focus on SDG 13'.
- Families and family-oriented policies and programmes are vital for the achievement of many of the sustainable goals.



Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/events/familyday/index.shtml>

World Day Against Child Labour

Question: When World Day Against Child Labour is celebrated?

(a) June 12 (b) June 10 (c) June 8 (d) June 15

Answer- (a)

Related facts:

- World Day Against Child Labour is observed every year on June 12.
- The theme of this day in 2019 is 'Children shouldn't work in fields, but on dreams'.
- This day was launched by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 2002 to focus attention on the global extent of child labour and the action and efforts needed to eliminate it.



- Around 152 million children are still in child labour. Child labour occurs in almost all sectors, yet 7 out of every 10 of these children are working in agriculture.

Links:

<https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/wdacl/lang-en/index.htm>

World Blood Donor Day

Question: When is World Blood Donor Day celebrated?

(a) June, 5th (b) June, 18th (c) June, 12th (d) June, 14th

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- World Blood Donor Day was celebrated across the globe on 14th June.
- The host country for World Blood Donor Day, 2019 is Rwanda.
- The theme of this day was: Blood Donation and Universal Access to Safe Blood Transfusion, as a component of achieving universal health coverage.
- A slogan: Safe Blood for All has also been adopted.
- This day encourages more people all over the world to become blood donors and donate blood regularly.



Facts about Blood donation:

- There are three type of blood donors; voluntary unpaid, family/replacement and paid.
- Of the 117.4 million blood donations collected globally, 42% of these are collected in high-income countries having 16% of the world's population.
- In low-income countries, up to 52% of blood transfusions are given to children under 5 years of age; whereas in high-income countries, the most frequently transfused patient group is over 65 years of age, accounting for up to 75% of all transfusions.
- Based on samples of 1000 people, the blood donation rate is 32.6 donations in high-income countries, 15.1 donations in upper-middle-income countries, 8.1 donations in lower-middle-income countries and 4.4 donations in low-income countries.
- 71% of reporting countries, or 123 out of 173, had a national blood policy in 2015. Overall, 60% of reporting countries, or 104 out of 173, has specific legislation covering the safety and quality of blood transfusion.

Links:

<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-blood-donor-day/2019>

First ever World Food Safety Day

Question: When was the first ever World Food Safety Day celebrated?

(a) June 5 2019 (b) June 7 2019 (c) June 4 2019 (d) June 8 2019

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The first ever World Food Safety Day was celebrated on June 7 2019.
- The theme of this day was “Food Safety, everyone’s business”.
- Food safety is the handling, preparing and storing of food in the best way possible so to reduce the risk of individuals becoming sick from food borne illnesses.
- WHO, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is pleased to facilitate Member States effort to celebrate the World Food Safety Day this year and in coming years.

- Access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food is key to sustaining life and promoting good health



Food-borne diseases:

- With an estimated 600 million cases of foodborne diseases annually – almost 1 in 10 people in the world fall ill after eating contaminated food.
- Children under 5 years of age carry 40% of the foodborne disease burden with 125 000 deaths every year.
- Food contamination is an increasing threat to human health.
- Food safety is key to achieving several UN Sustainable Development Goals

Celebration in India:

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare inaugurated the first-ever World Food Safety Day being celebrated by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan unveiled a statue of 'Gandhiji on a Bicycle' installed at the FSSAI complex.
- The Union Health Minister felicitated seven leading States/UTs based on the ranking for the year 2018-2019 for their impressive performance. These were Chandigarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- FSSAI has developed the first State Food Safety Index (SFSI) to measure the performance of States on five parameters of food safety. The categories included Human Resources and Institutional Arrangements, Compliance, Food Testing-Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training and Capacity Building and Consumer Empowerment
- Clean Street Food Hubs certification in several cities based on third-party audits and training of street food vendors now declares Golden Temple Street, Amritsar as a 'Clean Street Food Hub'.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched a new-age, hand-held battery operated device called 'Raman 1.0'. This device performs rapid detection (in less than 1 minute) of economically driven adulteration in edible oils, fats and ghee.
- A Web-resource online Library of FSSAI was also launched. This library hosts informative and interesting videos on topics such as food adulteration, eating a balanced diet, fortified foods etc.

Links:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2019/06/07/default-calendar/celebration-of-world-food-safety-day>

Books

Politics of Jugaad-The Coalition Handbook

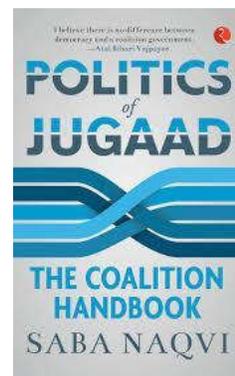
Question: Name the author of the book Politics of Jugaad-The Coalition Handbook?

(a) Saba Naqvi (b) Vandana Shiva (c) Mahasweta Devi (d) Teesta Setalvad

Answer :(a)

- "Politics of Jugaad: The Coalition Handbook", a new book authored by journalist Saba Naqvi examines possibility of coalition government after 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

- In “Politics of Jugaad: The Coalition Handbook”, the political analyst runs through the history of political alliances in the country taking into account their performance on economic and social policies, among others, while juxtaposing them with that of single-party rule.
- Moreover, Naqvi also cites the example of resentment brewing within some nations in Europe, such as Spain, where the more prosperous parts are beginning to resent taking responsibility of the rest of the country.
- However, Naqvi, who has penned three other political books (In Good Faith (2012), Capital Conquest (2015), and Shades of Saffron (2018)) prior to this, is certain the UP, which sent the maximum BJP MPs to Parliament earlier in 2014, would remain crucial and have a major impact in the 2019 elections.
- The book has been written at the cusp of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, held in April and May this year.



Links:

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/politics-of-jugaad-new-book-examines-coalition-govt-possibility-in-2019/1523781>

Book-My Life, My Mission

Question: ‘My Life, My Mission’ book is an autobiography of-

(a) Baba Ramdev (b) Narendra Modi (c) Pranav Mukharjee (d) Venkaiah Naidu

Answer: (a)

- Yoga guru Baba Ramdev will unveil the trials, tribulations, and triumphs of his life and provide insights into his childhood in his soon-to-be published autobiography.
- The book, ‘My Life, My Mission’, co-authored with senior journalist Uday Mahurkar, addresses the major controversies, turning points and achievements of Ramdev’s life.
- Baba Ramdev is an Indian yoga guru and co-founder of the Patanjali Ayurved Ltd. with his colleague Acharya Balkrishna.



Links:

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/yoga-guru-ramdev-announces-his-first-official-memoir-my-life-my-mission/791040.html>

Miscellaneous

Water storage capacity of 91 reservoirs goes down to 1%

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Water storage available in 91 major reservoirs of the country for the week ending on 25th April, 2019 was 42.52 BCM, which is 26% of total storage capacity of these reservoirs

(2) The total live water storage available in reservoirs of Eastern Region was 6.56 BCM which is 35% of total live storage capacity

Choose the correct statement/s

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) Neither (1) nor(2)

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The water storage available in 91 major reservoirs of the country for the week ending on 25th April, 2019 was 42.52 BCM, which is 26% of total storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- This percentage was at 27 for the week ending on 18th April, 2019.
- The level of water storage in the week ending on 25th April, 2019 was 114% of the storage of corresponding period of last year and 104% of storage of average of last ten years.
- The total storage capacity of these 91 reservoirs is 161.993 BCM which is about 63% of the total storage capacity of 257.812 BCM which is estimated to have been created in the country.
- 37 Reservoirs out of these 91 have hydropower benefit with installed capacity of more than 60 MW.



REGION WISE STORAGE STATUS:

NORTHERN REGION:

- The Northern region includes States of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan.
- There are six reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 18.01 BCM.
- The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 9.17 BCM which is 51% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- The storage during corresponding period of last year was 20% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 27% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- Thus, storage during current year is better than the corresponding period of last year and is also better than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

EASTERN REGION:

- The Eastern region includes States of Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal and Tripura. There are 15 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 18.83 BCM.
- The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 6.56 BCM which is 35% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- The storage during corresponding period of last year was 36% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 33% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- Thus, storage during current year is less than the corresponding period of last year but is better than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

WESTERN REGION:

- The Western region includes States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. There are 27 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 31.26 BCM.
- The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 5.67 BCM which is 18% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- The storage during corresponding period of last year was 24% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 28% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- Thus, storage during current year is less than the storage of last year and is also less than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

CENTRAL REGION:

- The Central region includes States of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- There are 12 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 42.30 BCM.
- The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 12.51 BCM which is 30% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- The storage during corresponding period of last year was 28% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 28% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- Thus, storage during current year is better than the storage of last year and is also better than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

SOUTHERN REGION:

- The Southern region includes States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, AP&TG (Two combined projects in both states), Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- There are 31 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 51.59 BCM.
- The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 8.63 BCM which is 17% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- The storage during corresponding period of last year was 15% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 18% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs.
- Thus, storage during current year is better than the corresponding period of last year but is less than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.
- States having better storage than last year for corresponding period are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- State having equal storage than last year for corresponding period is AP&TG (Two combined projects in both states) Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- States having lesser storage than last year for corresponding period are Rajasthan, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Tripura, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala.

Links:

<http://pib.nic.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1571160>

Amazon beats Apple and Google to become the world's most valuable brand

Question: Which company has overtaken Apple and Google to become the world's most valuable brand as per BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brand ranking 2019?

(a) Microsoft (b) Amazon (c) Wal-Mart (d) AT & T

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Amazon has overtaken Google and Apple to become the world's most valuable brand at \$315.5 billion, according to BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brand ranking 2019 compiled by WPP research agency Kantar and released on 11th June 2019.
- Apple comes second, valued at \$309.5 billion, whereas Google is in third place, at \$309 billion.



- Google and Apple had spent a combined 12 years at the top of the list, with Google taking the top spot in 2018.
- Amazon's smart acquisitions, that have led to new revenue streams, excellent customer service provision and its ability to stay ahead of its competitors by offering a diverse ecosystem of products and services, have allowed Amazon to continuously accelerate its brand value growth.
- The Seattle-based retail behemoth (Amazon) was founded by Jeff Bezos in his garage in 1994.

Links:

<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/06/11/amazon-beats-apple-and-google-to-become-the-worlds-most-valuable-brand.html>