



Current Affairs - May to October 2018

Month: Type:



- ▶ **450** Current Affairs were found in **Last Six Months** for Type - **International**

International

- ▶ A public health emergency has been declared in Oceania Nation Papua New Guinea (PNG), amid recent polio outbreak (first in 18 years).
- ▶ Forbes released 4th annual *America's Richest Self-Made Women* list 2018 -

It lists 60 women with combined net worth of \$71 billion, with minimum net worth needed is \$320 million.

Top 5 are -

Rank	Name	Company	Net Worth (\$B)
1.	Diane Hendricks	ABC Supply	\$4.9 billion
2.	Marian Ilitch	Little Caesars	\$4.3 billion
3.	Judy Faulkner	Epic Systems	\$3.5 billion
4.	Meg Whitman	Hewlett Packard Enterprise	\$3.3 billion
5.	Johnelle Hunt	J.B. Hunt Transport Enterprise	\$3.2 billion

- ▶ Actress Kylie Jenner is notable entrant in list as at just 21 years, she has built a \$900 million cosmetics fortune with virtually no employees or capital. Kylie Cosmetics launched 2 years ago has sold over \$630 million worth of makeup accessories.
 - ▶ 2 Indian-origin Women named in List. Jayshree Ullal (CEO of Arista Networks, ranked 18th) has net worth of 1.3 billion dollars. Neerja Sethi is Vice president of Syntel and ranked 21st.
- ▶ North Korea extended its Clocks by 30 Minutes, to synchronize its time zone with that south Korea, which was pulled back 30 minutes 3 years ago. Its a major step towards unification among 2 Koreas looking for peace.
 - ▶ World Bank mandated Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) to issue world's first blockchain-based bond. The Kangaroo bond, referring to foreign bonds issued in Australia in local currency, has been named bond-i, an acronym standing for Blockchain Offered New Debt Instrument. (It's also a reference to Bondi Beach, an iconic spot in Sydney).
 - ▶ Bond-I is Ethereum blockchain bond denominated in Australian dollars, making it Kangaroo bond (referring to foreign bonds issued in Australia in local currency).
 - ▶ 12th Global Peace Index (GPI) 2018 by Australian Think Tank Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), Rankng 163 Nations -
 - ▶ Top 5 - Iceland (1), New Zealand (2), Austria (3), Portugal (4), Denmark (5)
 - ▶ Bottom 5 - Syria (163), Afghanistan (162), South Sudan (161), Iraq (160), Somalia (159)
 - ▶ Neighbours - Nepal (84), Pakistan (151), **Sri Lanka (67)**, Bangladesh (93)
 - ▶ BRICS - Brazil (106), Russia (154), **India (136)**, China (112), South Africa (125)
 - ▶ India improved as compared to 137th Rank in 2017 List.
 - ▶ 18th International Children's Film Festival began in Kolkata, to screen 36 films from 17 countries. It is organised by Cine Central in collaboration with UNICEF.
 - ▶ 1st Asia Power Index Australia Based Lowy Institute -
 - ▶ Termed as *giant of the future*, India is ranked 4th out of 25 nations in Asia-Pacific region. As per Report, India trails behind in indicators of defence networks and economic relationships.
 - ▶ A country's overall power is its weighted average across eight measures of power - *economic resources, military capability, resilience, future trends, diplomatic influence, economic relationships, defence networks and cultural influence.*
 - ▶ USA, China And Japan are top 3. While Russia is at 5th Place.
 - ▶ 2018 *Soft Power 30* Index, by UK-based firm Portland and University of Southern California -

- 🇬🇧 UK topped the list, with France placed second. List does not feature India. Germany was ranked 3rd, followed by USA.
- 🇮🇳 India does not feature in global list, but is ranked 8th 10 countries in Asia.
- 9. ▶ 2018 A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index (25 Nations) -
 - 🇺🇸 Top 5 - USA, Canada, Germany, UK, China.
 - 🇮🇳 India is ranked at 11th, down from 8th Position in China.
- 10. ▶ 2018 Global Hunger Index (GHI), prepared by global NGOs Concern Worldwide (Ireland) and Welthungerhilfe (Germany).
 - 🌍 Level of hunger and undernutrition worldwide fell to 20.9, down from 29.2 in 2000.
 - 🇮🇳 India was ranked 103rd out of 119 qualifying countries.
 - 🌍 15 countries with 2018 GHI scores of less than 5 are not assigned individual ranks, but rather are collectively ranked 1–15. These are - Belarus, Cuba, Estonia, Kuwait, Latvia, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Chile, Lithuania, Bosnia & Herzegovina.
 - 🇮🇳 Bottom 5 - Central African Republic (119), Chad (118), Yemen (117), Madagascar (116), Zambia (115)
 - 🇮🇳 Neighbours - Bangladesh (86), China (25), Nepal (72), Pakistan (106), Sri Lanka (67)
- 11. ▶ 2018 Global Liveability Index released by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) -
 - 🇮🇳 Austrian capital Vienna ranked as world's most liveable city among 140 major cities.
 - 🇮🇳 Top 5 -
 - 🇦🇹 Vienna (Austria)
 - 🇦🇺 Melbourne (Australia)
 - 🇯🇵 Osaka (Japan)
 - 🇨🇦 Calgary (Canada)
 - 🇦🇺 Sydney (Australia)
 - 🇮🇳 Bottom 10 (Least Liveable) -
 - 🇵🇬 Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) (136th)
 - 🇵🇰 Karachi (Pakistan) (137th)
 - 🇳🇮 Lagos (Nigeria) (138th)
 - 🇧🇩 Dhaka (Bangladesh) (139th)
 - 🇸🇾 Damascus (Syria) (140th)
 - 🇮🇳 No Indian cities were ranked in top ten or bottom ten of this edition of index. New Delhi ranked 112th and Mumbai ranked 117th position in list.
- 12. ▶ 2018 Golden Globe Race, a sailing race around world which started on 1 July 2018 from Les Sables-d'Olonne (France). It dates back to fifty years, featuring yachts similar to those used at that time, with no modern technology allowed.
- 13. ▶ 3rd BRICS Film Festival held in Durban (South Africa), along with International Durban Film Festival (DIFF). Last day of festival was celebrated as India Country Day. Indian winners of Film Festival -
 - 🇮🇳 Best Actress - Bhanita Das, Village Rockstars
 - 🇮🇳 Best Film - Newton by Amit Masurkar
 - 🇮🇳 Special Jury Award - Village Rockstars by Rima Das
- 14. ▶ 7 Indian companies have been listed in Fortune's 500 list 2018 of world biggest corporations, led by Indian Oil Corp (137th) and followed by Reliance (148th).
 - 🇮🇳 RIL is most profitable in India and ranked 99th globally, with with Apple at top.
 - 🌍 World's 500 largest companies generated \$30 trillion in profits in 2017.
 - 🇮🇳 Top 5 - Walmart, State Grid, Sinopec Group (China), China National Petroleum (China), Royal Dutch Shell
- 15. ▶ 9th London Indian Film Festival (LIFF) -
 - 🇮🇳 Actors Irrfan Khan and Manoj Bajpayee were honored by special Icon Awards in the event.
 - 🇮🇳 Outstanding Achievement Award went to Actress Richa Chadha.
 - 🇮🇳 Satyajit Ray Short Film Award worth GBP 1,000 went to Indo-German co-production "The Peanut Seller".
 - 🇮🇳 The LIFF will tour will tour Birmingham and Manchester in June - July 2018.
- 16. ▶ 9th Mountain Echoes Literary Festival 2018 held in Thimphu (Bhutan).
- 17. ▶ *End of Childhood Index 2018* report by global child rights group named *Save the Children*.
 - 🇮🇳 India ranked 113th in list of 175 countries.
 - 🇮🇳 Top 5 - Singapore (1), Slovenia (2), Norway (3), Sweden (4), Finland (5)
 - 🇮🇳 Bottom 5 - Niger (175), Mali (174), Central African Republic (173), Chad (172), South Sudan (171)

18. ▶ A massive Earthquake of 7.5 Richter Scale along with Tsunami waves hit Palu City of Indonesia, triggering over 1000 human casualties.
19. ▶ A web-based tool to monitor spread of fake news on social media platforms has been developed by Researchers from University of Michigan (USA). It uses a Platform Health Metric called the Iffy Quotient and will supposedly draw data from two external entities namely NewsWhip and Media Bias/Fact Check.
20. ▶ ASSOCHAM study on *Electricals & Electronics Manufacturing in India* -
 - ▶ India recycles only 5% of its e-waste and is one of biggest contributors of e-waste (2 million tonnes per annum). E-waste includes discarded computer monitors, motherboards, Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT), Printed Circuit Board (PCB), mobile phones and chargers etc.
 - ▶ Other top e-waste generator countries are China, US, Japan and Germany.
 - ▶ In India, Maharashtra is at top in e-waste generation (19.8%), followed by Tamil Nadu (13%), Uttar Pradesh (10.1%).
21. ▶ According to *Clampdowns and Courage-South Asia Press Freedom Report 2017-18* by UNESCO -
 - ▶ India accounted for 82 out of 97 instances of Internet shutdown among South Asia between May 2017 and April 2018.
 - ▶ Pakistan witnessed 12 while Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka reported just 1 instance each of internet shutdown.
22. ▶ According to *The Annual World Airport Traffic Report 2018* by Airport Council International (ACI) -
 - ▶ Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) is 16th busiest in world, by handling 63.4 million passengers in 2017.
 - ▶ First place was held by Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson in US, handling 103.9 million passengers in 2017, followed by Beijing with 95.8 million passengers.
23. ▶ According to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), India tops list of skilled immigrants to Australia, with 234395 individuals (19 %), followed by England and China at 160,558 (13 %) and 146,842 (12 %) people. Further, 154012 Indians have acquired Australian citizenship.
24. ▶ According to British aviation intelligence firm OAG, Mumbai is fifth-least punctual airport in world in terms of on-time performance out of 513 airports. Japan Nagoya Komaki airport was ranked best with 94.5% on-time performance during 12-month period.
25. ▶ According to FDI Report 2018 by FDI Intelligence (division of Financial Times Ltd.), USA surpassed India as top destination to attract Greenfield FDI investment (\$87.4 billion FDI).
 - ▶ Number of greenfield FDI projects in India during year fell sharply by 21% to 637.
26. ▶ According to Global Soil Biodiversity Atlas prepared by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), India faces grave danger to soil biodiversity -
 - ▶ Atlas was released as part of WWF's biennial Living Planet Report (LPR) 2018. The key aspect of this year's report was threat to soil biodiversity and pollinators, the two key drivers of biodiversity.
 - ▶ Soil Biodiversity -
 - ▶ Soil biodiversity is total community from genes to species, and varies depending on environment. The immense diversity in soil allows for great variety of ecosystem services that benefit species that inhabit it.
 - ▶ India was coloured red on atlas and is among countries whose soil biodiversity faces the highest level of risk
 - ▶ Pollinators -
 - ▶ 150 million bee colonies were needed to meet pollination requirements of about 50 million hectares of agricultural land in India, only 1.2 million colonies were present. Pollination is process by which plant pollen is transferred from male reproductive organs to female reproductive organs to form seeds.
27. ▶ According to International Monetary Fund (IMF), Macau in China would overtake oil-rich Qatar with highest per-capita gross domestic product of any country or jurisdiction on earth, by 2020. Macau is only place in China where casinos are legal and its gross domestic product has more than tripled from about \$34,500 per capita in 2001.
28. ▶ According to International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications (ISAAA) '*Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/ GM Crops in 2017*' report -
 - ▶ India with 11.4 million hectares (mh) has world's 5th largest area cultivated under genetically modified (GM) crops in 2017. India's entire GM crop area is under single crop BT Cotton incorporating genes from *Bacillus thuringiensis* or Bt soil bacterium coding for resistance against heliothis bollworm insect pests.
 - ▶ USA has highest area under transgenic crops (75 mh), followed by Brazil (50.2 mh), Argentina (23.6 mh) and Canada (13.1 mh).
 - ▶ In 2017, farmers planted 189.8 mh under transgenic crops, as against 1.7 mh in 1996, when transgenic crops were grown commercially for first time.
 - ▶ Highest share in world's total 189.8 mh GM crop area in 2017 is of soyabean (94.1 mh), followed by maize (59.7 mh), cotton (24.1 mh).
29. ▶ According to Standard Chartered study-'The Emerging Affluent Study 2018- Climbing the Prosperity Ladder', India is Asia's most investment savvy economy.

30. ▶ According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) -
- ✍ Total nuclear warheads with 9 nuclear countries (*USA, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea*).
 - ✍ Out of 14465 nuclear warheads at beginning of 2018, 3750 are actually deployed.
 - ✍ Top Holders are -
 - ✍ Russia - 6850
 - ✍ USA - 6450
 - ✍ France - 300
 - ✍ China - 280
 - ✍ Pakistan 140-150
 - ✍ Britain - 215
 - ✍ India - 130-140
 - ✍ Israel - 80
 - ✍ North Korea - 10-20
31. ▶ According to United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2018 report, number of hungry people in world has risen for first time in more than decade. There are now approximately 38 million more undernourished people in world, rising from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016.
32. ▶ According to Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index -
- ✍ Approx 4 crore people worldwide were subjected to modern slavery in 2016.
 - ✍ North Korea has highest concentration of modern slavery where one in 10 people are in this condition.
 - ✍ Most action taken by Netherlands, US, UK, Sweden, Belgium, Croatia, Spain, Norway, Portugal, Montenegro.
33. ▶ According to a Mercer survey, Mumbai is most expensive city in India to live in for expatriates as compared to Washington and Melbourne. Hong Kong is ranked as world's costliest city to live in for expatriates, followed by Tokyo, Zurich, Singapore, and Seoul.
34. ▶ According to a recent study, earth may enter an irreversible hothouse condition, with global temperatures rising by 4 - 5 degrees and sea levels rising 10 - 60 metres, even if targets under 2015 Paris climate deal are met.
- ✍ Currently, global average temperatures are just over 1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial and rising at 0.17 degree Celsius per decade.
 - ✍ Keeping global warming to within 1.5-2 degrees Celsius as agreed in 2015 Paris climate agreement by around 200 countries.
35. ▶ According to a report titled *Summer 2018 State of the Internet/ Security: Web Attack report*, by Cloud delivery network provider Akamai Technologies, India is ranked fourth in list of top 10 target countries for Web Application Attacks.
36. ▶ According to a study by Seattle-based Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation published in *The Lancet* -
- ✍ India ranks 158th in world for its investments in education and healthcare, among 195 Surveyed countries.
 - ✍ Finland tops the list in two key sectors.
 - ✍ USA ranked 27th, while China placed at 44th and Pakistan 164th.
37. ▶ According to a study named Economic Freedom in the World by Centre for Civil Society (CCS) along with Canada's Fraser Institute -
- ✍ India stands at 96th rank out of 162 countries in economic freedom.
 - ✍ Hong Kong (1) and Singapore (2) are at top of list. New Zealand (3), Switzerland (4), Ireland (5) are others in Top 5.
 - ✍ Among BRICS nations, Russia and South Africa are ahead of India at 87th and 94th place and China and Brazil are behind it at 108th and 144th positions.
 - ✍ 10 lowest-ranked countries - Sudan, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Syria, Algeria, Argentina, Libya and last-place Venezuela.
38. ▶ According to global airlines events organiser Routesonline -
- ✍ Bengaluru Kempegowda International Airport Secured Second Spot and Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport Secured Sixth Spot as fastest growing airport in world during January to June 2018.
 - ✍ Tokyo's Haneda Airport topped the Survey.
39. ▶ According to recent report, Pakistan could become world's 5th largest nuclear weapons state after Russia, United States, France and China in terms of possession of total nuclear warheads. Pakistan currently has 140 to 150 nuclear warheads and its stockpile is expected to increase to 220 to 250 by 2025 (surpassing United Kingdom).
- ✍ The current estimate of 140 to 150 nuclear weapons with Pakistan exceeds projection made by US Defense Intelligence Agency in 1999 that Pakistan would have 60 to 80 warheads by 2020.
40. ▶ According to report *Indian Industry's Inclusive Footprint in South Africa – Doing Business, Doing Good*, released by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) -

- 140 Indian companies invested approx \$4 billion in South Africa, creating nearly 18000 direct employment opportunities.
41. ▶ According to report by organization European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), Norway observes lowest rate of traffic accidents in world (20 deaths per 10 lakh inhabitants).
 42. ▶ According to review by Asia Pacific Policy Group on Money Laundering (APPG), Pakistan's recent action against terror financing, particularly on legal front were found to be "unsatisfactory". Note that Pakistan was placed on Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in February 2018 for failing to curb terror funding. APPG examines cases of all countries on the grey and black lists and reports to FATF.
 43. ▶ Acting New Zealand PM Winston Peters demanded Australia to change their flag, As the Flag of New Zealand looks similar to that of Australia. New Zealand flag was adopted 52 years before Australian flag and was adopted in 1902, replacing union jack. Australian flag was adopted in 1954.
 44. ▶ Aditya Puri, managing director of HDFC Bank is only Indian in Barron's top 30 global CEO list 2018, Featuring for fourth consecutive year.
 45. ▶ AfrAsia Bank Global Wealth Migration Review -
 - ▶ India is named 6th wealthiest country in world, with total wealth of 8,230 billion dollars.
 - ▶ USA is ranked top with total wealth of 62,584 Billion dollars, followed by China with wealth of 24,803 billion dollars and Japan (19,522 billion dollars).
 46. ▶ African Nations Ethiopia and Eritrea declared end to their long conflict, with marking launch of a commercial flight from Ethiopia to Eritrea in 20 years.
 - ▶ Eritrea was once a province of Ethiopia. In 1993, Eritrea separated after an independence struggle. Demarcation of shared border caused a brutal conflict in 1998-2000, in which 80,000 people were killed.
 47. ▶ After USA withdrawing recently from UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), UN General Assembly elected Iceland to replace USA. Iceland's term will be valid until December 31, 2019.
 48. ▶ After recent launch of Fateh Mobin (Bright Conqueror) short-range ballistic missile, Iran unveiled first domestically manufactured fighter jet nicknamed Kowsar. Its a fourth-generation fighter with advanced avionics and multi-purpose radar.
 49. ▶ Agriculture and Environment ministries along with UN body Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) launched agriculture project that seeks to bring transformative change in farm sector through conservation of biodiversity and forest landscapes.
 - ▶ It will be implemented in Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.
 - ▶ It is being funded with US \$33.5 million grant from Global Environment Facility (GEF).
 - ▶ Existing unsustainable agricultural practices have resulted in depletion of water tables, biodiversity and habitat loss for wild species and land and soil degradation which have contributed to the environmental crisis in India. To overcome it, there is need for alternative paradigm to current extractive methods of agricultural production systems.
 50. ▶ Airports Authority of India (AAI) announced its project report for development of Palaly airport in northern Sri Lanka, as first project undertaken by AAI in Sri Lanka.
 51. ▶ American e-Commerce Giant Amazon crossed \$900-billion market cap for first time in its history, becoming 2nd company after Apple to achieve this milestone.
 52. ▶ Amid economic crisis, Argentina central bank raised its benchmark interest by 15 percentage points to 60%, highest in world. The Argentine peso is down 50% this year against the dollar and the country's inflation is running at over 30%. Many south american nations are facing economic crisis, with neighbouring nation venezuela being under more more steep financial stress.
 53. ▶ Apple became first US-based company with a market value of \$1 trillion.
 54. ▶ As part of its plan to connect billions of people who are still offline, Facebook will launch Athena, its own Internet satellite, early in 2019. The project is designed to *efficiently provide broadband access to unserved and underserved areas throughout the world.*
 55. ▶ As per Future Development blog of World Bank's Brookings Institute titled as *The start of a new poverty narrative* -
 - ▶ India is no longer a nation having world's largest poor population. Nigeria has now overtaken India with largest number of extremely poor people at 87 million in early 2018.
 - ▶ India is moving down in global poverty ranking. From 125 million poor people in 2016, India had just 73 million people in poorest of poor index as of May 2018.
 - ▶ Approx 44 Indians are being taken out of poverty every minute, highest rate in world.
 56. ▶ As per Germany's Ifo Institute for Economic Research -
 - ▶ Germany's current account surplus will remain world's largest in 2018, for 3rd year at \$299 billion, in spite of increased trade tensions. It is followed by Japan in second position with \$200 billion. Netherlands is 3rd with 110 billion dollars. From 2011, Germany's current account surplus has been consistently above the European Commission's indicative threshold of 6 % of gross domestic product (GDP).

- ▶ Current account surplus measures flow of goods, services and investments. It is considered a positive for any economy.
 - ▶ On other hand, in terms of Current Account Deficit, USA will remain to have largest current account deficit with nearly 420 billion euros.
57. ▶ As per Grant Thornton's quarterly global business survey -
 - ▶ India slipped to 6th position globally in business optimism index for first quarter of 2018.
 - ▶ Top five - Austria, Finland, Indonesia, Netherlands and US.
 58. ▶ As per International Air Transport Association (IATA), India will become world's 3rd largest aviation market by 2024. India is presently at 7th place.
 59. ▶ As per Mercom Communications India - second largest solar market with installed capacity of 4.9 GW of solar power. China is at top of list.
 60. ▶ As per World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Living Planet Report 2018, Humanity has wiped out 60% of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians between 1970 and 2014. Vast consumption of food and resources by global population is destroying the web of life.
 61. ▶ As per a Report named *Humanity at Risk – Global Terror Threat Indicant (GTTI)* by Oxford University and Strategic Foresight Group (SFG) -
 - ▶ Pakistan registered highest number of terrorist bases and safe havens, possesses three times more threat to humanity than Syria.
 - ▶ Among Terror Groups , Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Afghan Taliban pose maximum threat to the international security.
 62. ▶ As per a UN Report, Delhi will surpass Tokyo (Japan) as most populous city in world by 2028.
 63. ▶ As per a UN report on 'state of food security and nutrition in the world' number of undernourished globally increased to 821 million in 2017. Africa has highest prevalence of undernourishment, affecting almost 21 % of population (more than 25 crore people). Situation is also deteriorating in South America, where PoU increased from 4.7 % in 2014 to a 5 % in 2017.
 64. ▶ Asian Development Bank released its 2018 Flagship Statistical Report for Asia and the Pacific. This year's report is focusing on: Technological Innovation for Agricultural Statistics. As per the report -
 - ▶ Asia and Pacific region continues to grow in GDP and labour force has been reduced and is shifting from agriculture towards employment in industry and services.
 - ▶ Around 780 million people from the region moved out of extreme poverty from 2002 to 2013,
 - ▶ The GDP has increased from 30.1% in 2000 to 42.6% in 2017 (at 2011 purchasing power parity),
 - ▶ Use of satellite imagery and remote sensing technology has improved data accuracy.
 65. ▶ Asian Economic Integration Report 2018 presented by Asian Development Bank, with focus on progress in cooperation and migration.
 - ▶ India hosts highest number of outward international migrants in 2017, followed by China and Bangladesh. About one third of international migrants were from Asia in 2017.
 - ▶ FDI in Asian region remain stable with 517.5 billion in 2017.
 - ▶ This year in the report there was a special chapter "Toward Optimal Provision of Regional Public Goods in Asia and the Pacific". It stressed on that optimal provision of Regional public goods can be a solution for development challenges in era of economic interdependence.
 66. ▶ Asia's first arbitration centre specialised in intellectual property, called *International Arbitration Centre in Tokyo (IACT)*, will be opened in Tokyo (Japan) in September 2018. It will have around 12 arbitrators from various parts of the world, who would try to resolve disputes within a time period of 1 year. IACT would also handle disputes between non-Japanese companies if both parties agree.
 67. ▶ Assam Govt. inaugurated Indo-Bhutan Border Centre at Darranga in Assam's Baksa district, To strengthen bilateral trade with Bhutan.
 68. ▶ At International Court of Justice, India supported Mauritius over its claim on Chagos Islands, which are under United Kingdom's control in Indian Ocean..
 69. ▶ Australia resumed adoption of children from India after reportedly 8 years of suspension of the same over reports of trafficking of children.
 70. ▶ Australian govt released an India Economic strategy report, recommending to lift India into its top three export markets. It prioritizes trade opportunities in India covering 10 sectors.
 71. ▶ Azerbaijan inaugurated a pipeline at Sangachal Terminal, creating first direct route to transport gas from one of world's largest fields to Europe bypassing Russia. Project is worth USD 40-billion. It consists of 3 linked pipelines that will bring gas from Azerbaijani Shah Deniz 2 field across Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Albania and Adriatic Sea to southern Italy.
 72. ▶ BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) will launch Americas Regional Office in Brazil, to increase operational capabilities of NDB in Brazil.
 73. ▶ Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid approved controversial Digital Security Bill 2018, combining colonial-era Official Secrets Act with tough new provisions such as arrests without warrant. It aims to deal harshly with cybercrimes, including hurting religious sentiment,






spreading negative propaganda against 1971 Liberation War and Bangabandhu (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman).

- It also covers illegal activities in e-transactions and spreading defamatory data under its ambit. It provides for 7 - 14 years imprisonment and monetary fines of 25 lakh - 1 crore Taka

- Law faced widespread vocal opposition from rights groups and journalists that it could endanger freedom of speech— especially on social media. The law has also drawn opposition internationally including from USA.

74. ▶ Bangladesh's first communication satellite Bangabandhu-1 will be launched by SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket from Kennedy Space Center Launch Complex 39A. It will provide wide range of broadcast and communication services throughout Bangladesh. It is built by Thales Alenia Space, a Franco-Italian aerospace manufacturer. It is named after Bangladesh's *Father of the Nation - Sheikh Mujibur Rahman*.
75. ▶ Based on Data by American Community Survey, Telugu is the fastest growing language in USA, with number of US residents speaking Telugu rose by 86 % between 2010 and 2017. Telugu However, is outside top 20 of most widely-spoken languages other than English in USA.
76. ▶ Bilateral trade between India and China through Nathu La border (Sikkim) has resumed, located at 14,200 feet.
77. ▶ Blood Moon 2018 or century's longest total lunar eclipse of 1 hour 43 minutes occurred on July 27-28, 2018. It was majorly seen in Eastern Hemisphere including Central Asia, Eastern Africa and South East Asia.
 - Moon was gradually covered by Earth's shadow and totality phase was seen on July 28 and total eclipse lasted up to 2h 43m. During this time, Moon was located at apogee (i.e. at farthest from Earth) in its orbit and moved at slower speed in its orbit, making it longest duration of total eclipse of this century.
 - Such long duration of total lunar eclipses earlier had occurred on July 16, 2000 for totality duration of 1 hour 46 minutes and on June 15, 2011 for totality duration of 1 hour 40 minutes.
78. ▶ BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands List 2018 -
 - HDFC Bank is only Indian brand in List, ranked 60th.
 - Top 4 - Google (1), Apple (2), Amazon (3), Microsoft (4).
79. ▶ Britain's Royal Navy Received its first unmanned autonomous minesweeping system, capable of operating from a land or ship-based control station.
80. ▶ Canada agreed to sign a trade deal with USA and Mexico, revamping North American Free Trade Agreement. New deal has been named as *United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)*.
 - USMCA modernises what was covered by NAFTA by adding provisions on digital trade and intellectual property.
 - It would allow US farmers greater access to Canada's dairy market and address concerns about potential US auto tariffs. The pact will come up for review every six years.
 - Canada will export 2.6 million vehicles to USA, after 25 % global autos tariffs imposed by US on national security grounds. Deal, however, failed to resolve U.S. tariffs on Canada's steel and aluminum exports.
 - Background -
 - USA President Trump threatened to end 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement into a bilateral pact with Mexico and tax Canadian vehicle exports to USA if Canada failed to sign deal before September 30 midnight deadline. Canada, USA's 2nd largest trading partner, was left out when the US and Mexico had reached a preliminary deal in late August to revamp NAFTA.
81. ▶ Canada legalised possession and use of recreational cannabis (also called Marijuana), becoming 2nd country to do so After Uruguay.
82. ▶ Canadian Parliament passed a historic bill legalizing recreational use of marijuana nationwide, becoming second country to do so.
83. ▶ Caribbean Nation Dominican Republic and China established diplomatic relations, amid China's growing influence. With this, Dominican Republic has broken 77-year alliance with Taiwan.
84. ▶ Central African Nation Democratic Republic of Congo declared end of an Ebola outbreak which was first reported in month of May in Bikoro province. It was the ninth Ebola outbreak since discovery of virus in Congo in 1976.
85. ▶ Central Bank of Argentina raised interest rates by 300 basis points to fight inflationary pressures. Interest rates have been raised from 27.25 to 30.25 %, to prop up its ailing currency from sliding further against US dollar.
86. ▶ Chemical weapons watchdog Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has granted itself new powers to help identify those responsible for chemical attacks in Syria, as a proposal tabled by United Kingdom. Until now, OPCW was only able to say whether chemical weapons were used – but not who had used them.
87. ▶ China and Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) started off their first joint maritime exercises in Zhanjiang (China), to ease regional tensions linked to rival claims in South China Sea.
88. ▶ China approved USD 1 billion grant to Pakistan, just after Pakistan has been placed in Financial Action Task Force FATF 'grey list', which may hamper Pakistan's Economy and make receiving foreign funds tougher.

89. ▶ China approved first domestically developed, long-acting injectable HIV drug named Albuvirtide. It can block fusion of virus and host cell membranes, blocking HIV life cycle in earliest stage.
90. ▶ China has built world's longest cross-sea bridge with length 55 KMs, connecting Hong Kong, Macau and mainland China. It took 7 years to complete, is six lanes wide and comprises of 4 tunnels and 4 artificial islands. It has cost approx 20 Billion USD.
 - ▶ World's longest bridge is also in china, known as Danyang-Kunshan Grand Bridge, with 164.7 KM Length.
 - ▶ China also aims to deliver its domestically developed AG600 by 2022, world's largest amphibious aircraft.
91. ▶ China is planning bullet trains from Kolkata to Kunming City of China, expected to traverse through Myanmar and Bangladesh. The service is also expected to give a thrust to trade and commerce in the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor.
 - ▶ BCIM project is projected to run through Mandalay in Myanmar, Chittagong and Dhaka in Bangladesh, terminating in Kolkata.
92. ▶ China launched a hyperspectral imaging satellite 'Gaofen-5' for comprehensive observation of atmosphere, including air pollution. It is first China-developed satellite that can monitor air pollution.
93. ▶ China launched a new communication satellite named *APSTAR-6C*. It will offer TV transmission, communication, Internet and multimedia services to customers in Asia-Pacific region.
94. ▶ China launched an optical remote sensing satellite which will be used to monitor its Belt and Road Initiative, named Gaofen-11.
95. ▶ China launched its Centispace-1-s1 satellite, on a Kuaizhou-1A low-cost solid-fuel carrier rocket.
96. ▶ China launched twin BeiDou-3 navigation satellites, as 35th and 36th of the BeiDou navigation system.
97. ▶ China launched two remote sensing satellites belonging to the Yaogan-32 family by a Long March-2C rocket.
98. ▶ China offered gift of \$295 million to Sri Lanka, marking start of construction of a Chinese-funded kidney hospital in Polonnaruwa constituency.
99. ▶ China pledged \$60 billion of financial assistance to Africa, announced at 3rd Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in Beijing. FOCAC excludes Swaziland (recently renamed to Eswatini).
 - ▶ Out of \$60 billion offered, China will disburse \$15 billion as aid, interest-free loans and concessional loans, \$20 billion as credit line, channel \$10 billion into special fund for China-Africa development and \$5 billion special fund will be set up only for African imports.
100. ▶ China successfully launched a new marine satellite called HY-1C aboard a Long March-2C rocket. It will aim at better monitor its maritime waters and study impact of climate change.
101. ▶ China successfully launched new Earth observation satellite Gaofen-6. It will focus on agricultural resources research and disaster monitoring. Also, a scientific experiment satellite named LuoJia-1 was sent into space.
102. ▶ China successfully tested its first hypersonic aircraft called Xingkong-2 *Starry Sky-2*, capable of flying at speed 5 - 6 times that of Sound. It attained top speed of 4563 miles (7344 kilometers) per hour (speed of sound is 1235 km/h). It is difficult to trace this spacecraft due to its excessive speed.
103. ▶ China tested the world's largest unmanned transport drone which can carry a payload of 1.5 tonnes, called Feihong-98 (FH-98). It has Max takeoff weight of 5.25 tonnes, capacity of 1.5 tonnes and 15 cubic metres, a flight height of 4,500 metres, speed of 180 KMPH, and a maximum range of 1200 kms.
 - ▶ China is also planning to put a 'moon' of its own in the night sky by 2020, to replace conventional street lamps and save electricity.
 - ▶ Chengdu city in southwestern Sichuan province of China is developing illumination satellites, which will shine along with the real moon but will be eight times brighter.
 - ▶ These satellites will have a reflective coating which can reflect sunlight towards Earth similar to the moon. Placed only 500km above Earth, light reflected from the man-made moon will be more luminous than actual moon.
104. ▶ China will build a railway connecting western region of Tibet with Nepal, one of several bilateral deals signed during Nepali PM Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli's visit to China. It will connect Tibetan city of Xigaze with Nepal's capital Kathmandu.
105. ▶ China will sale 48 Wing Loong II high-end armed drones to Pakistan, as largest export deal for drones to date to any country.
 - ▶ Wing Loong II is a high-end reconnaissance, strike and multi-role endurance unmanned aerial system, capable of being fitted with air-to-surface weapons. It can payload up to 480kg (1,060lbs), including 12 laser guided missiles or YJ-9E anti-ship missiles. It can fly at maximum altitude of 9,000 metres (29,500 feet).
106. ▶ China's first private research university officially inaugurated in Zhejiang Province's Hangzhou city. Autonomy for top educational institutions has been a long-standing demand of Chinese academic community, as china's higher education bodies are mostly govt owned.
 - ▶ Chinese Govt also announced to scrap setting population target in future, and give people more freedom with respect to childbirth. China wants to ease restrictions on family planning to combat ageing population.
107. ▶ China-Maldives Friendship Bridge opened for traffic, as first cross-sea bridge to be built in Maldives.
 - ▶ It is 2.2 km long bridge and has four vehicle lanes and two pedestrian lanes. It connects Maldives capital city Male and neighbouring Hulhule island where island country's main international airport is located.

-  The bridge was built with Chinese grant of \$116 million, along with \$72 million as an additional loan.
108. ▶ China's first domestically manufactured aircraft carrier known only as "Type 001A" started sea trials. Its name is speculated to be *Shandong*, after province of same name. It is approx 315 metres long, with displacement capacity of about 55,000 tonnes (70,000 loaded).
109. ▶ China's first home-grown amphibious aircraft AG600 (code-named Kunlong) successfully carried out its first take-off and landing on water, claimed as world's largest amphibious aircraft. It can carry 50 people and can stay airborne for 12 hours, with operational range of 4,500-km.
110. ▶ Chinese President Xi Jinping officially opened world's longest sea-crossing bridge.
-  The \$20-billion bridge, which spans 55 kilometres, connects Hong Kong and Macau to the mainland Chinese city of Zhuhai.
-  Bridge is designed to withstand earthquakes and typhoons, built using 400,000 tonnes of steel, enough to build 60 Eiffel Towers.
-  It includes dual three-lane, oversea stretch (22.9 km) and undersea tunnel (6.7 km) which reaches depth of 44 m. The rest 25.4 km of the bridge runs over land. The two ends of tunnel of bridge are connected to two artificial islands. Bridge contains 400,000 tonnes of steel.
-  Its total cost was 120 billion yuan (\$17.3 billion).
111. ▶ Chinese e-Commerce giant Alibaba acquired Pakistan's Largest e-commerce firm *Daraz.pk* for \$150 Million.
112. ▶ Chinese space startup *OneSpace* launched its OS-X rocket, with a 30 feet long satellite named *Chongqing Liangjiang star*. It is first private Chinese firm to launch a commercial rocket.
113. ▶ Chinese tech firm Baidu partnered with Softbank's public-transportation subsidiary SB Drive to launch a self-driving bus service in Japan next year.
114. ▶ Citi Bank is first to enroll as *Payment Initiation Service Provider* under UK's Open Banking regime, According to which the European Banks are required to share customer data with third party banks upon the customers' approval. This would enable it to receive small payments directly from UK's customer bank accounts without debit or credit cards.
115. ▶ Colombia Became first South American Nation to Join North Atlantic Treaty Organization as global partner. NATO reached partnership agreement with Colombia in May 2017, just after Colombia signed peace agreement with communist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), ending longest civil conflict in Latin America.
116. ▶ Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) signed MOU with UN Environment for coherent implementation of environmental dimension of sustainable development. The major activity planned by CII and UN Environment under this MoU includes #Un-plastic Initiative. It will begin with 'Call to Action' which will include commitments by industry to take action to curb plastic pollution.
117. ▶ Cyclonic Storm Sagar, the strongest tropical cyclone to ever make landfall in Somalia (East Africa), and first named cyclone of 2018 North Indian Ocean cyclone season. It traversed entire Gulf of Aden, affected Yemen and made landfall over northwestern Somalia.
118. ▶ Delhi government signed MOU with Seoul Metropolitan Government to work closely in the fields of environment, tourism, waste / solid waste management, infrastructure and public health.
119. ▶ Delhi government signed a twin-city agreement with the Moscow (Russia) for cooperation in fields like environment, culture and education, for the next 3 years.
120. ▶ Democratic Republic of Congo declared a new outbreak of Ebola in northwestern part, as 9th outbreak of Ebola since its discovery in 1976.
121. ▶ Denmark banned wearing of face veils (burqa and niqab) in public places, a move that will criminalise Muslim women who choose to wear niqab or burqa.
122. ▶ Druzhba 2018 (Friendship 2018) joint bilateral military exercise between Pakistan and Russia held in Pakistan, as 3rd addition of this joint military drill.
123. ▶ East African Nation Uganda's parliament passed a law to impose a controversial tax on people using social media platforms. It imposes a 200 shilling (\$0.05, £0.04) daily levy on people using internet messaging platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber and Twitter, arguing that social media encouraged gossip.
124. ▶ East African Nations Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed to fully implement a peace deal reached in 2000, ending 20-year war between two countries. Eritrea seceded from Ethiopia in 1993, and the two countries fought a border war from 1998 to 2000.
125. ▶ Europe Space Agency launched a rocket named 'Aeolus' from French Guyana. This satellite will be put into orbit at an altitude of 320 kilometres (200 miles) above the Earth which will track global winds, allowing for improved weather forecasting.
126. ▶ European Nation Hungary will withdraw from Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration agreement, to be adopted in December 2018. Hungarian government opposed migration, arguing that UN agreement could aid flow of migrants to Europe and force countries to shelter them. USA withdrew from it last year.
127. ▶ European Parliament rejected a controversial European Union copyright law proposal that was proposed by Beatles legend Paul McCartney against creators of Wikipedia.

- ✎ It proposed to put more responsibility on websites to check for copyright infringements and forced platforms to pay for linking to news.

- ✎ Wikipedia went down on July 4 in Poland, Spain and Italy, in protest against the Draft law.

- ✎ The two highly contested parts of the law are -

- ✎ Article 11 -

- ✎ Required online platforms to pay publishers a fee if they link to their news content. It proposed to protect newspapers and other outlets from internet giants like Google and Facebook using their material without payment.

- ✎ However, article failed to clearly define what constitutes a link and hence, could be manipulated by governments to curb freedom of speech on Internet.

- ✎ Article 13 -

- ✎ Proposed greater responsibility on websites to enforce copyright laws. It would make online platforms legally liable for copyrighted material put on the web by users.

- ✎ It means that social media sites and other websites would check every piece of content uploaded including texts, images, sounds or code. It is too expensive for most companies.

- ✎ Article has been most controversial and it faced most resistance from critics.

128. ▶ European Union (EU) and Japan have signed Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), as biggest ever trade deal negotiated by EU and creates free trade zone covering nearly third of the world's GDP. Key Fats Include -

- ✎ Eases up Agricultural exports. It ensures protection in Japan of more than 200 high-quality European agricultural products (Geographical Indications (GIs)), and protection of several Japanese GIs in EU.

- ✎ Services markets - Opens up services markets, in particular financial services, e-commerce, telecommunications and transport.

- ✎ Procurement markets - Guarantees EU companies access to large procurement markets of 48 large Japanese cities.

- ✎ Automotive sector - Addresses sensitivities of EU in this sector and elimination of customs duties in transition periods of up to 7 years.

- ✎ Trade and sustainable development .

- ✎ Data protection.

129. ▶ European Union (EU) will stop twice-yearly changing of clocks from October 2019, implemented during the two World Wars and the 1970s oil crisis to save energy. EU countries are required to move forward by an hour on the last Sunday of March and back by an hour on the last Sunday of October.

130. ▶ European Union Film Festival (EUFF) began in New Delhi on 18th June at the Siri Fort Auditorium, With 24 latest European films from 23 EU Member States. The festival will traverse through 11 cities in India till 31st August.

131. ▶ European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) brought into full effect, clarifying individual rights to personal data collected by companies for targeted advertising and other purposes.

- ✎ GDPR sets new rules for how companies manage and share personal data. Though rules apply only to citizens of European Union, global nature of internet means that nearly every online service will be affected.

- ✎ GDPR sets a higher than ever bar for obtaining personal data on the internet, higher seen before. Rules will also force companies that suffer data breaches to disclose them within 72 hours.

132. ▶ External Affairs Ministry and Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL) signed agreement for implementation of e-VidyaBharati and e-AarogyaBharati (e-VBAB) Network Project in Africa, seen as digital bridge of knowledge and health between India and Africa.

- ✎ It is technological upgrade and extension of Pan-African e-Network Project (Phase 1) which was implemented in 48 partner countries across Africa from 2009 till 2017.

- ✎ e-VBAB Network Project is completely funded by India for its entire duration, open for participation to all India's partner countries in Africa. Over its five-year duration, this project will provide free tele-education courses to 4000 students every year from African countries.

133. ▶ Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and Bill Gates' Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation partnered to accelerate breakthroughs in education. It will focus on math, writing, and skills that correspond with things like memory and self-control.

134. ▶ Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg overtook Warren Buffett as world's third-richest person, with \$81 Billion Net Worth. He is now only behind Amazon founder Jeff Bezos (\$141 Billion) and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates (\$93 Billion).

135. ▶ Facebook launched *Digital Literacy Library* to help young people build skills they need to safely enjoy online technology. It is resource for educators looking to address digital literacy and help these young people build skills they need to use digital technology safely.

136. ▶ Facebook obtained a licence to set up a startup incubator in China despite its website being banned in country since 2009. The \$30-million subsidiary will be located in Hangzhou city, to reportedly make small investments and give advice to local businesses.

137. ▶ Facebook will invest over \$1 billion to build its first Asian data centre in Singapore, expected to open in 2022. Like other data centres, it will be fully powered by renewable energy.
138. ▶ Facebook-owned WhatsApp has launched a 'forward label' feature which will highlight the forwarded messages on the platform. The feature will help users in determining that the sender is not the creator of the message. It will prevent spreading of fake messages that prompted many mob lynching cases in India.
139. ▶ Financial Action Task Force (FATF) placed Pakistan in its 'grey list' for its failure to check activities of terrorists operating from and within its territory, including failure to curb Terror Financing.
- ✎ This may hurt Pakistan's economy as well as its international standing and make it tough for it to receive international funding.
 - ✎ FATF is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
140. ▶ Finnish Communication Giant Nokia acquired California (USA) based Internet of Things (IoT) start up *SpaceTime Insight*.
141. ▶ First Franco-Chinese satellite launched into orbit to study ocean surface winds and waves, aboard a Long March 2C carrier rocket.
142. ▶ First-ever land-based communication link between China and Pakistan has been inaugurated, named Pakistan-China Optical Fibre Cable project. It includes an 820-kilometre underground cable that starts from Pakistan's Rawalpindi and ends at Khunjerab bordering China.
143. ▶ For the first time, bus services between Bihar and Nepal have started. With 4 buses between Bodhgaya and Kathmandu and 4 buses between Patna to Janakpur.
144. ▶ Forbes Released *Celebrity 100* list of World's Highest-Paid Entertainers. USA's Boxer Floyd Mayweather captures top spot with \$285 Million Earnings, followed by American Actor George Clooney (\$268 Million) and American Actress Kylie Jenner at 3rd Place. Indian Actor Akshay Kumar (40.5 million dollars) is ranked 76th while Salman Khan (37.7 million dollars) is 82nd.
145. ▶ Forbes' *World's Most Powerful People 2018* List (75 People) -
- ✎ Xi Jinping (China's President) is at top for first time ever.
 - ✎ Top 5 - Chinese President XI Jinping (1), Russian President Vladimir Putin (2), US President Donald Trump (3), German Chancellor Angela Merkel (4), Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos (5).
 - ✎ 2 Indians named in list - PM Modi (9th) and Reliance Chairman Mukesh Ambani (32nd).
146. ▶ Forbes' list of World's Highest-Paid Actors 2018 -
- ✎ Top 3 -
 - ✎ George Clooney: \$239m
 - ✎ Dwayne Johnson: \$124m
 - ✎ Robert Downey Jr: \$81m.
 - ✎ Indian Actors Akshay Kumar (\$40.5 million) and Salman Khan (\$38.5 million) ranked at 7th and 9th place respectively.
147. ▶ Former PM HD Deve Gowda (*11th PM from June 1, 1996 to April 21, 1997*) conferred with Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti Award on occasion of Valmiki Jayanti (Oct 24), for his contribution to welfare of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes communities. Award will be given by Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy.
148. ▶ Fortune Change the World List 2018 -
- ✎ It ranked companies using profit motive to help tackle social problems.
 - ✎ Reliance Industries' Telecom Unit Jio ranked as top company globally, for widening Internet access in India and benefitting the subscribers in terms of monetary savings and quality of services.
 - ✎ Top 5 Companies are -
 - ✎ Reliance Jio (Telecommunications) - India
 - ✎ Merck (Pharmaceuticals) - USA
 - ✎ Bank of America (Commercial Banking) - USA
 - ✎ Inditex (Specialty Retailers) - Spain
 - ✎ Alibaba Group (Internet Services & Retailing) - China
149. ▶ Four persons of India-origin are named by Fortune among 40 of most influential and inspiring young people in business under age of 40 -
- ✎ Dhivya Suryadevara (4th) (CFO of USA Car Major General Motors)
 - ✎ Anjali Sud (14th), CEO of Vimeo
 - ✎ Baiju Bhatt (24th), Cofounder & Co-CEO of Robinhood
 - ✎ Anu Duggal (32nd), founding partner of Female Founders Fund
150. ▶ France Parliament approved a controversial asylum and immigration bill, designed to accelerate asylum procedures by cutting maximum processing time from 120 days to 90 days after entering France.

151. ▶ France will reintroduce compulsory national service for all 16-year-olds. French boys and girls would do a minimum of 1 month service in first phase which would focus on voluntary teaching and working with charities among others. 2nd phase will be voluntary and focus on areas linked to defence and security.
152. ▶ France banned smartphones, tablets and other internet-enabled devices in schools, applicable for pupils aged between 3 - 15 years.
153. ▶ From January 2019, Indian tourists travelling to Bhutan via road will need either a voter ID or a valid passport to enter the country, while accompanying children can also travel with a birth certificate. Visitors will now get entry permits instead of identification slips.
154. ▶ German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced that she will step down as Chancellor in 2021. She would not seek re-election as leader of the centre-right Christian Democratic Union(CDU).
155. ▶ German conglomerate Bayer completed its \$63-billion takeover of US-based Monsanto to create world's biggest agro-chemical and seed company.
156. ▶ German insurer Allianz Group signed up as a global Olympic sponsor for a 4-Games period of 10 years between 2021 and 2028, as IOC's 14th top sponsor.
157. ▶ Germany and UK with support from World Bank, launched a new Global Risk Financing Facility (GRiF), To support vulnerable countries to climate and disaster shocks.
- ▶ This fund will consist of an initial corpus of \$150 million. It will be built on the work of several existing programs including InsuResilience Climate Risk Financing and Insurance Program MDTF established by BMZ, DFID and World Bank, Centre for Global Disaster Protection established by DFID and World Bank, and InsuResilience Solutions Fund jointly established by BMZ and KfW.
 - ▶ Funding includes Insurance premium financing, Risk financing investments, Risk financing mechanisms that promote parallel improvements in countries for crisis response and recovery AND Technical assistance and capacity building where this is not yet covered by other programs.
158. ▶ Germany will provide soft loan of euro 120 million (INR 990 crore approximately) to India to strengthen sewage water treatment infrastructure in Uttarakhand in an effort to clean River Ganga under Clean Ganga Mission. German development agency GIZ also has prepared 'Ganga Box' aimed to target schools-going children and inform them about the river.
159. ▶ Global Competitiveness Report 2018 by World Economic Forum (WEF) -
- ▶ India - Ranked 58th, Bettering 2017 Rank by 5 Places.
 - ▶ Top 5 - USA (1), Singapore (2), Germany (3), Switzerland (4), Japan (5)
 - ▶ Bottom 5 - Chad (140), Yemen (139), Haiti (138), Angola (137), Burundi (136)
 - ▶ Neighbours - Bangladesh (103), Sri Lanka (85), Pakistan (107), Nepal (109)
160. ▶ Global Flight Pricing Report by Melbourne-based Rome2rio Low-cost carriers IndiGo & Air India among top 5 cheapest airlines in world in providing international connectivity, ranked 2nd and 5th position. Air Asia X is named as cheapest airline in world.
161. ▶ Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018, by Cornell University, INSEAD and World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) -
- ▶ India ranked 57th, improving from its last year rank of 60.
 - ▶ Top 6 - Switzerland (1), Netherlands (2), Sweden (3), United Kingdom (4), Singapore (5), USA (6)
 - ▶ Neighbours - China (17), Bangladesh (116), Pakistan (109), Sri Lanka (88), Nepal (108)
162. ▶ Global Military Expenditure Report 2017 by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) -
- ▶ India surpassed France to become 5th largest military spender.
 - ▶ Top five (Amount in Billion USD) - US (610), China (228), Saudi Arabia (69.4), Russia (66.3) and India (63.9).
163. ▶ Global Real Estate Transparency Index (GRETI) 2018 by realty consultant JLL -
- ▶ India is ranked 35th among 100 countries.
 - ▶ Top 5 - UK (1st), Australia (2nd), United States (3rd), France (4th), Canada (5th)
 - ▶ Bottom 5 - Venezuela (100), Libya (99), Senegal (98), Mozambique (97) and Ivory Coast (96).
 - ▶ South Asia: Sri Lanka (66th position), Pakistan (75th).
164. ▶ Global Urban Air Pollution database released by World Health Organisation (WHO) -
- ▶ 14 Indian cities named in list of world's 20 most polluted cities in terms of particulate matter PM2.5 levels in 2016. These cities include Delhi, Varanasi, Kanpur, Faridabad, Gaya, Patna, Agra, Muzaffarpur, Srinagar, Gurgaon, Jaipur, Patiala and Jodhpur.
165. ▶ Global financial services major Morgan Stanley reported that India will become a leader in shared mobility by 2030, caused by increasing amount of electric and autonomous vehicles being used. In 2017, 10% of total 257 million miles have been travelled by shared mobility and this trend would increase to 35% by 2030.
166. ▶ Google launched Android Things (codenamed Brillo), a variant of Android operating system for Internet of Things (IoT) devices, aiming to enable IoT machines developers to be built faster, cheaper and more secure.

- ▶ *Android Things* is aimed to be used with low-power and memory constrained Internet of Things (IoT) devices, which are usually built from different microcontroller unit (MCU) platforms.
- 167. ▶ Google launched a new video-based Q&A app called 'Cameos', which allows people to answer questions about themselves, then share those answers directly on Google. It is aimed at celebrities and other public figures, who are often subject of people's Google searches.
- 168. ▶ Google will shut down its social network Google+ for consumer use over next 10 months after a bug exposed personal data of up to 5 lakh users. Google+ currently has "low usage and engagement" and that 90% of Google+ user sessions last less than 5 seconds. Company plans to keep it alive enterprise customers who use it to facilitate conversation among co-workers.
- 169. ▶ Google's latest Android operating system update, Android 9 Pie has been officially released. It introduces a new gesture-based system interface that's similar to the interface of iPhone X.
- 170. ▶ Greece and Republic of Macedonia reached a historic agreement to end a bitter 27-year name dispute that kept Macedonia out of international institutions such as Nato and EU.
 - ▶ Macedonia naming dispute is a political dispute over use of name "Macedonia" between Greece and Republic of Macedonia, formerly a region within Yugoslavia.
 - ▶ Agreement says that Republic of Macedonia will be Known as *Republic of Northern Macedonia*, ending the naming dispute.
 - ▶ Deal reached by two countries' prime ministers is expected to be signed by their foreign ministers soon. After that, Macedonia's parliament would vote on it, and if it approved, Macedonian President Gorge Ivanov's signature would be needed.
 - ▶ However, Macedonian President Mr. Ivanov said that he will not sign the accord to change his country's name.
- 171. ▶ Green Climate Fund (GCF) approved more than \$1 billion new investments for 19 new projects to help developing countries tackle climate change, during a meeting of GCF in Manama (Bahrain).
 - ▶ Funding was approved for projects linked to geothermal energy in Indonesia, greener cities in Europe and Middle East and protection for coastal communities in India.
 - ▶ About GCF -
 - ▶ GCF is UN-backed fund considered as key vehicle for climate-related development programs, guided by principles of UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It aims to help developing countries to finance clean energy projects other mitigation efforts, practices and adaptation to counter climate change.
 - ▶ It was formally established by UNFCCC decision in Durban, South Africa in December 2011.
- 172. ▶ Guatemala (Central America) and Paraguay (South America) moved their Israeli Embassy to Jerusalem, after USA recently moved its Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
- 173. ▶ HDFC has been ranked as 5th biggest public company globally in 'consumer financial services category' on Forbes' list. American Express topped category, while Indiabulls Housing Finance is only other Indian company (at 13th place). In overall list topped by China's ICBC, HDFC took 321st place. There are a total of 58 Indian companies on the overall list of 2000 firms, with Reliance Industries (83rd) as Best in India.
- 174. ▶ Healthcare Access and Quality Index Data for 195 countries from Global Burden of Disease Study 2016 by Lancet -
 - ▶ India ranked 145th.
 - ▶ Top five - Iceland (1), Norway (2), Netherlands (3), Luxembourg (4), Finland and Australia (5th rank each)
 - ▶ Countries with lowest scores are Central African Republic (195), Somalia (194), Guinea-Bissau (193), Chad (192), and Afghanistan (191).
 - ▶ China (48th), Sri Lanka (71st), Bangladesh (133rd), Nepal (149th), Pakistan (154th).
- 175. ▶ Henley Passport Index 2018.
 - ▶ Indian passport secured 81st rank with visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 60 destinations.
 - ▶ Top 5 - Japan (1), Singapore (2), Germany (3), France (4), South Korea (5)
- 176. ▶ High-level talks between USA and North Korea held during U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's Visit to North Korea. Its aim was to make sure North Korea completely discontinues its Nuclear Programme, as decided during a recent high voltage meet US Prez Donald Trump and North Korean Leader Kim Jong un In Singapore in June 2018.
- 177. ▶ Historic Esala Maha Perehera festival held in Kandy 9Sri Lanka), held in month of Esala (July or August). It commemorates first teaching of Buddha after his enlightenment.
- 178. ▶ Hollywood Actress Scarlett Johansson named best-paid actress in world with USD 40.5 million, by Forbes magazine.
 - ▶ 2nd place is held by Angelina Jolie (US) with earnings of 28 Million USD, while Jennifer Aniston (US) named 3rd with earnings of 19.5 Million USD.
- 179. ▶ IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative) and Indian Potash Ltd (IPL) acquired 37 % stake in JPMC (Jordan Phosphate Mines Company), Jordan's largest mining and chemical firm, for INR 900 crores.










180. ▶ IMD World Competitiveness Rankings (63 countries) -
✎ India rose one place to 44th. China is ranked 13th.
✎ Top 5 - US (1), Hong Kong (2), Singapore (3), Netherlands (4), Switzerland (5).
181. ▶ IT Firm IBM partnered with Indian IT companies (*including Persistent Systems, Invest India, Wipro, Capgemini and NASSCOM*) for its 'Call for Code' initiative that aims to build global solutions for disaster management. For this, IBM provides access to its cloud, data, Artificial Intelligence and blockchain technologies, along with training and code to developers.
182. ▶ IT firm Cognizant acquired Hedera Consulting, a Belgium-based business advisory and data analytics services company.
183. ▶ India Based construction major Larsen & Toubro is only Indian firm to be featured among top 25 companies in Forbes' global 2000 best employers list (ranked 22).
✎ Among top 100, there are 4 Indian firms - Mahindra & Mahindra (55), Grasim Industries (59) and HDFC (91). Also, Total 24 domestic companies in overall list.
✎ Top 3 - Alphabet (1), Microsoft (2), Apple.
184. ▶ India and Agence Française de Développement (France) signed an implementation agreement on "MOBILISE YOUR CITY (MYC)". MYC is part of an international initiative which is supported by French and German Governments and was launched at 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) meeting in December 2015.
✎ European Union has agreed to provide funds of Euro 3.5 million through the AFD to contribute to specific investments and technical assistance components within the Mobilise Your City (MYC) programme in India.
✎ MYC aims at supporting three pilot cities - Nagpur, Kochi and Ahmedabad, to reduce their Green House Gas (GHG) emissions related to urban transport.
185. ▶ India and Bangladesh jointly launched construction of India-Bangladesh Friendship Product Pipeline Project, as first such pipeline through which refined diesel will be supplied to Bangladesh from India.
✎ It involves construction of 130-kilometre long pipeline that will connect Siliguri in West Bengal and Parbatipur in Dinajpur district of Bangladesh. 6 KM stretch will be in India side and remaining 124 kilometres will be in Bangladesh.
✎ Pipeline has capacity of 1 million metric tons per annum. Initially, it will supply Bangladesh 2.5 lakh tonnes of diesel every year and gradually it will be increased to 4 lakh tonnes. It will replace existing practice of sending diesel by rail covering distance of 510 kilometers.
✎ Also, Bangladesh approved allowing India to use its Chittagong and Mongla ports to transport cargo to and from its northeastern states. Indian goods can be transported through four entry points from states Tripura, Meghalaya and Assam. India will have to follow General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) and Bangladeshi regulations, pay customs duties and buy tax equivalent bonds to transport freight.
186. ▶ India and Bangladesh several agreements for enhancing inland and coastal waterways connectivity, including an agreement to use Chattogram and Mongla Ports in Bangladesh for movement of goods to and from India. An addendum to 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between two countries' has also been signed for the inclusion of Dhubri in India and Pangaon in Bangladesh as new Ports.
187. ▶ India and China launched their first joint programme for Afghanistan to train its diplomats. Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan, Vinay Kumar hosted 10 Afghan Diplomats who will travel to India for 1st India-China joint training programme for Afghan diplomats, under Trilateral Cooperation between India, China and Afghanistan.
188. ▶ India and China signed an agreement for reduction of tariffs on Chinese imports of Indian medicines, particularly cancer drugs. China also agreed to increase imports of Indian medicines.
✎ India and China had both slashed import tariffs for a range of products with effect from July 1, following the fourth round of negotiations under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), which also includes Bangladesh, Laos, South Korea and Sri Lanka.
✎ Under APTA, China reduced tariffs on 8549 items, while India agreed to do the same for 3142 products.
✎ Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), previously named Bangkok Agreement, was signed in 1975 as an initiative of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). It is the oldest preferential trade agreement among the developing countries in Asia-Pacific region.
189. ▶ India and European Union (EU) partnered for Rs. 240 crore research programme to develop a Next Generation Influenza Vaccine to protect people throughout world, through "Horizon 2020" programme. It requires 3 applicants from both 3 European member states and India.
190. ▶ India and Germany signed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on skill development, which will provide dual vocational education and training to Indian youth. Under it, students who complete specific training courses in India will get certificate that is recognised in India and also in Germany.
191. ▶ India and Morocco signed an MoU for deepening cooperation between MSME sectors of the two countries in Rabat (Morocco).

192. ▶ India and Myanmar signed MoU for appointment of private port operator for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of Sittwe Port, Paletwa Inland Water Terminal and associated facilities included in Kaladan Multi Model Transit Transport Project.
- ▶ Sittwe port in Myanmar will connect India's landlocked north-east region to Bay of Bengal through Mizoram. It will also provide alternate route to Kolkata.
 - ▶ It is also significant in implementation of India's Act East Policy as it will boost connectivity and will contribute to job creation in whole region, particularly in Myanmar's strife-torn Rakhine and Chin States.
 - ▶ It will significantly lower cost and distance of movement from Kolkata to Mizoram and beyond. It will also reduce dependency on only route narrow strip dubbed as Chicken's Neck in West Bengal, sandwiched between Bhutan and Bangladesh.
193. ▶ India and Singapore signed Second Protocol amending Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in New Delh, to come into effect on 14th September 2018.
194. ▶ India and Sri Lanka agreed on cooperation on exchange of information and other aspects to tackle smuggling of drugs in both countries.
195. ▶ India and Sri Lanka signed 2 MoU for construction of 1200 houses through 50 model villages, using Indian grant assistance of 60 crore Srilankan rupees.
- ▶ Also, Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Auditorium built with Indian grant assistance of 30 crore Sri Lankan rupees in Sri Lanka was dedicated to the people.
196. ▶ India and Sri Lanka signed an MoU for construction of a 5000-metric ton temperature controlled warehouse in Dambulla (Sri Lanka), with Indian grant assistance of 30 crore Sri Lankan rupees.
197. ▶ India and UAE signed MoU to create a bilateral Artificial Intelligence Bridge that envisages the generation of \$20 billion in economic benefits during the next decade. It was signed During Visit of Deepak Bagla to UAE, managing director and CEO of Invest India.
198. ▶ India and UK will collaborate for research on different aspects of Ganga delta region and Bay of Bengal, announced duuring a programme launched by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).
199. ▶ India become 69th shareholder of European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- ▶ European Bank is headquartered in London (UK). President is Suma Chakrabarti (Indian Origin).
200. ▶ India contributed \$1 million to United Nations (UN) Headquarters' Solar Project, under which solar panels will be installed on roof of UN headquarters at New York (US).
201. ▶ India donated 3 lakh Dollars for a peacekeeping initiative at UN, under 'Pipeline to Peacekeeping Command Programme'.
202. ▶ India dragged USA to World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Dispute Settlement Mechanism over imposition of import duties on steel and aluminium.
- ▶ In March 2018, USA imposed heavy import tariffs on imported steel and aluminium items, sparking fears of global trade war. USA levied 25% tariff on steel and 10% tariff on aluminium imported from all countries except Canada and Mexico.
203. ▶ India elected as President of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for 2 years, during its annual gathering in Colombo (Sri Lanka). Also, India's F. Sheheryar was re-elected as chair of executive board of AIBD and Sri Lanka elected as vice-chair.
- ▶ AIBD is regional inter-governmental organisation serving countries of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in field of electronic media development. It was established in 1977 under auspices of UNESCO.
204. ▶ India elected to United Nations' Human Rights Council for a period of three years, by securing 188 votes in Asia-Pacific category (highest vote among all candidates).
205. ▶ India extended financial aid of INR 99 million (approx 10 Crores) to Nepal for construction of 2,700 shallow tube well (STWs) irrigation systems in 12 districts of southern Terai region to boost agricultural productivity. It is final payment for Nepal-Bharat Maitri Irrigation Project, which has seen India release total 227.6 million Nepali rupees to Nepal for implementing this project.
206. ▶ India handed over 404 houses built for Indian-origin people in Sri Lanka's tea plantation areas at Dunsinane Estate in Nuwara Eliya city, as first lot of houses built under Indian Housing Project in Plantation Areas in Sri Lanka.
207. ▶ India has been elected new President of Asian Tug of War Federation. India's Gautam Kaul won prestigious post in Federations' Executive Committee elections held in Kathmandu (Nepal).
208. ▶ India invited USA President Donald Trump to be chief guest at 2019 Republic Day celebrations. If accepted, Trump will be 2nd serving US President after Barack Obama to be invited as chief guest of Republic Day Parade.
- ▶ Also, 1st India-USA 2+2 Talks may be held in September 2018. On India's Behalf, Sushma Swaraj (External Affairs Minister) and Nirmla Sitharaman (Defence Minister) will be attending the talks.
209. ▶ India is Partner Country in 87th Izmir International tradeshow in Turkey. India also launched its mega business pavilion 'Source India' hosting 75 Indian companies. Izmir is 3rd most populous city in Turkey, after Istanbul and Ankara.
210. ▶ India is elected as Vice Chair of Asia Pacific Region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) for 2 years.
- ▶ WCO is Located in Brussels (Belgium), with 182 customs administrations as Members and Kunio Mikuriya as Secretary General.

211. ▶ India is ranked 6th in global optimism index in second quarter (Q2) of 2018, by Grant Thornton's International Business Report (IBR), a quarterly global business survey. It was topped by Indonesia followed by Netherlands, Austria, Philippines and China.
212. ▶ India launched humanitarian operation Samudra Maitri to provide assistance to earthquake and tsunami victims in Indonesia, dispatching two aircraft C-130J and C-17 and three naval ships carrying relief material and personnel to Indonesia.
213. ▶ India lost one spot to rank as 9th most valuable nation brand in world, according to UK-based consultancy Brand Finance's Nation Brands 2018 report. However, India's brand value increased by 5% to \$2,159 billion. US topped the list with a brand value of \$25,899 billion.
214. ▶ India moved up 15 places to 73rd in terms of money parked by its citizens with Swiss banks in 2017, while UK remains on top. UK accounted for over 27% (403 billion francs) of total foreign money while India accounted for 0.07%. The money held by Indians rose 50% to 1.01 billion francs (INR 7000 crores).
215. ▶ India named 3rd largest solar market in world in 2017 behind China and USA, in a Mercom Communications report. India had set up record 9.6 GW of solar installations in 2017, more than double 4.3 GW installed in 2016.
216. ▶ India pledged \$5 million for United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) in Near East. Besides, 19 other countries also made pledges for UNRWA at Pledging Conference for UNRWA in New York (US). Sweden pledged US \$250 million over 3 years, \$ 51 million and UAE \$50 million.
 - ▶ India also increased its grant to Global Environment Facility's (GEF) new four-year investment cycle, known as GEF-7 from \$12 million to \$15 million. It was announced at GEF Council meet at Da Nang (Vietnam), and approved \$4.1 billion replenishment of GEF-7.
217. ▶ India ranked 11 in terms of FDI attractiveness, according to AT Kearney report, down from 8 in 2017 and 9 in 2016.
 - ▶ Top 5 - US (1), Canada (2), Germany (3), UK (4), China (5)
218. ▶ India ranked 28th among 73 countries in 2018 Government e-Payments Adoption Ranking (GEAR) by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)
 -
 - ▶ India jumped 8 positions in this ranking from 36th in 2011.
 - ▶ Norway has topped 2018 GEAR list scoring 89.7 points in seven categories.
219. ▶ India ranked 5th among 206 countries in 2018 *Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status* Report by Canadian Cancer Society. In India, 85% of both sides of cigarette packets are covered with warnings.
 - ▶ Top 5 - Timor-Leste (92.5%), Nepal (90%), Vanuatu (90%), New Zealand (87.5%) and India held 5th rank jointly with Hong Kong and Thailand for 85% warnings.
220. ▶ India ranks 109th in overall 4G mobile internet speeds with an average download speed of 9.12 Mbps which is less than Pakistan (14.03 Mbps), according to data speed tester Ookla. Out of 124 countries, Qatar ranked first with 63.22 Mbps, Norway 2nd with 62.14 Mbps download speed.
221. ▶ India ranks third globally in terms of number of family-owned businesses with 111 companies having a total market capitalisation of \$839 billion, according to a Credit Suisse report. India followed China (159 companies) and US (121 companies).
222. ▶ India received first shipment of its so far cheapest Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Russian supplier Gazprom, priced USD 7 per million British Thermal Unit (mmBtu), which is around 1.5 USD cheaper from LNG imported from Qatar (India's oldest and largest supplier of LNG).
 - ▶ India is fourth largest importer of LNG, with import dependence 45% to 50 %.
223. ▶ India released additional 47 Crore Nepali Rupees for Phase I of Postal Highway Project being constructed in Southern Plains of Nepal. India has so far released Rs 2.35 billion to Nepal out of total grant assistance of Rs. 8.00 billion committed to implement 14 packages under Postal Highway Project.
224. ▶ India released grant of Nepalese Rupees (NRs) 18.07 crore for river training and construction of embankments along Lalbakeya, Bagmati and Kamla rivers in Nepal. India also released 33.10 Crore rupees to Nepal towards cost of two road packages of Birgunj-Thori Road being implemented under Postal Highway Projects.
225. ▶ India sent Bangladesh its second relief consignment under Operation Insaniyat, on board INS Airavat, to help displaced Rohingya Muslims who fled Myanmar into Bangladesh following military crackdown in violence-hit Rakhine state.
226. ▶ India signed 2 agreements with Myanmar's Rakhine State Government to facilitate capacity building and economic development in province.
227. ▶ India signed joint venture with Sri Lanka Government to operate loss-making Mattala international airport in southern Sri Lanka, named after former president Mahinda Rajapaksa.
228. ▶ India stands 19th in 'Theft Ranking' for countries with weapons-usable nuclear materials, according to the Nuclear Security Index. The index was released by the US-based Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI).





 Neighboring Pakistan ranks 20th in List.

 Australia shared top spot with Switzerland.

229. ▶ India will buy 18 Bullet Trains from Japan, Each train with 10 coaches and would be able to attain speed of 350 km per hour. The 508-km high speed train corridor between Mumbai and Ahmedabad at an estimated cost of Rs 1,10,000 crore is expected to be operational by 2022.
230. ▶ India will make strategically important Chabahar port operational by 2019, even as US reimposed sanctions on Iran after withdrawing itself from nuclear deal.
231. ▶ India will open four new air entry points to Nepal in eastern and western parts of country. Routes are - Kathmandu-Biratnagar-Dhaka, Kathmandu-Janakpur-Kolkata, Kathmandu-Janakpur-Patna in eastern Nepal, Kathmandu-Mahendranagar-Delhi (L626) in west.
232. ▶ India's Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) signed agreement to set up a framework for recognizing members easier and encourage mobility of professionals between both countries.
233. ▶ India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting joined SDG Media Compact aimed at advancing awareness of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
-  SDG Media Compact is initiative of United Nations, in collaboration with UN Foundation. It is alliance of news and entertainment media and it is committing to work with United Nations to foster public discourse and spur action on SDGs.
-  It seeks to inspire media companies around world to leverage their resources to advance SDGs adopted by all world leaders at UN in 2015.
-  SDGs are 17 global non-binding goals featuring 169 targets to be implemented from 2015 to 2030.
234. ▶ India, Netherlands and Sweden launched first-of-its-kind joint research programme on HIV/AIDS, aimed at harnessing complementary research strengths and diverse expertise of 3 nations to catalyze development of better tools to address epidemic of HIV.
235. ▶ India-assisted emergency ambulance service launched in Sri Lanka, with Indian grant of \$22.8 million - \$7.6 million for the first phase and \$15.2 million. Under the first phase, 88 ambulances were purchased for the two provinces while another 209 ambulances will be provided to cover all districts in the country.
236. ▶ Indian IT industry apex body Nasscom partnershiped with Hiroshima government for co-creating a Japan-India IT Corridor in Hiroshima. Through this partnership, India would be getting a gate way to the cutting-edge manufacturing technology of Japan. Indian companies on software side can help Japanese manufacturing companies adopt digital transformation and create innovative product and solutions lines.
237. ▶ Indian PM Narendra Modi, Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina and CMs of West Bengal (Mamta Baannerjee) and Tripura (Biplab Kumar Deb), jointly inaugurated three projects in Bangladesh, via video conference. Projects are -
-  500 MW additional power supply from India to Bangladesh, through existing Bheramara (Bangladesh) - Baharampur (India) interconnection.
-  Akhaura – Agartala Rail Link
-  Rehabilitation of Kulaura-Shahbazpur section of Bangladesh Railways.
238. ▶ Indian Pharma Firm *Aurobindo Pharma* received approval from United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to manufacture Azithromycin tablets, used for treatment of patients with mild to moderate infections, in US market.
239. ▶ Indian-American astronaut Sunita Williams is among 9 astronauts selected by NASA to fly first missions into space on commercial spacecraft, starting in 2019. The astronauts will on board of Boeing CST-100 Starliner and SpaceX Dragon capsules to International Space Station starting in 2019.
240. ▶ India's Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) bagged order for executing largest hydro power project in Nepal, The 900 Megawatt Arun-3 hydro project placed by SJVN Arun-3 Power Development Company (SAPDC). Order is worth INR 536 Crores.
241. ▶ India's National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) established 2nd Digital Collaborative Opportunities Plaza (SIDCOP) platform in Guiyang (China), as India's second IT corridor in China (1st in Dalian) to provide Indian IT firms access to Chinese software market.
242. ▶ India's non-life insurance penetration risen marginally to 0.9 % of GDP (\$ 27 billion), but still remains among highest underinsurance levels globally, as per a report by Lloyd's. It was .7 % for India in 2012.
-  India's insurance gap accounts for 17 % of the total global insurance gap (\$162.5 billion).
-  Globally, India has seventh-largest insurance gap, with top spot held by Bangladesh (in Terms of % of GDP). In absolute terms, China has biggest insurance gap of \$ 76.4 billion.
-  Netherlands remains the country with the highest insurance penetration at 7.7 per cent, followed by South Korea (5 %).
243. ▶ Indra Jatra festival hed in Kathmandu (Nepal), as an eight day long annual festival observed to worship Indra, the lord of rain and good harvest.










244. ▶ Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) launched China's first India-dedicated publicly offered investment fund, named *Industrial and Commercial Bank Credit Suisse India Market Fund* with over \$3.6 trillion in assets (largest in world).
- ✍ It will invest in exchange-traded funds listed on more than 20 exchanges in Europe and US that are based on Indian market. It will invest in future of Indian economy and track distribution of industrial structure across Indian market.
 - ✍ This fund opens way for Chinese investors and provided good tool for low-threshold investment in India. It is also regarded as significant to boost investments in India.
245. ▶ Interbrand's "Best 100 Global Brands 2018" report -
- ✍ Apple displaced Google to become top brand in the world in 2018. Apple's brand value grew 16 % to \$214.5 billion. It also became first company in US to hit the \$1 trillion market cap.
 - ✍ Amazon achieved 56% growth to become third top brand globally.
 - ✍ Facebook fell to 9th place, amid data breach controversies.
246. ▶ International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) removed Nepal from its Significant Safety Concern (SSC) list. In 2013, ICAO enlisted Nepal in SSC category as Nepal's compliance to ICAO's standard at that time stood only at 55 % out of standard 60 %.
247. ▶ International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a loan agreement with Economically troubled South American Nation Argentina, on a 36-month Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) totaling to US\$57.1 billion. It is largest ever loan given by IMF.
248. ▶ International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and World Trade Organization collectively launched report "Reinvigorating Trade and Inclusive Growth" report, seeking liberalisation of global service sector, asserting that barriers to these services trade currently is roughly as high as those to trade in goods about a half century ago.
- ✍ Services comprise some two-thirds of global GDP and employment, Yet facing lags due to limited opening of service sectors to foreign competition. Full services trade liberalisation can raise manufacturing productivity by average of 22%.
 - ✍ Services comprise significant shares of value added of all sectors in economy, yet Only quarter of global trade is traded as services. The trade in services sector has potential of contributing particularly strongly to productivity growth and economic growth overall.
 - ✍ Prolonged slowdown in pace of trade reform is leading to widespread trade distortions and putting at risk strength of global economic recovery, despite recent rebound in trade.
249. ▶ International Monetary Fund (IMF) released its loan of \$252 million to Srilanka, as part of a \$1.5 billion deal.
250. ▶ International Whaling Commission (IWC) defeated a proposal to create a whale sanctuary in South Atlantic, first introduced by Brazil in 2001.
251. ▶ Internet Firm Google has been fined a record €4.34bn by European Commission, saying it used Android mobile operating system to illegally *cement its dominant position* in search.
252. ▶ Invest India and Business France have signed an MoU to promote investment facilitation and cooperation between startups of India and France, to facilitate direct foreign investment by providing investment information to enterprises and support companies pursue those opportunities.
253. ▶ Iran and Syria signed a deal to expand military cooperation. Iran also pledged to help reconstruct the war-torn country.
254. ▶ Iran unveiled Fateh Mobin (Bright Conqueror) next generation short-range ballistic missile capable of striking targets on land and sea. It is believed to have range between 300-500 kilometers.
- ✍ Amid this, USA created Iran Action Group (IAG) to execute Its Iran strategy and pressure it to change its behaviors. USA recently withdrawn from Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (also known nuclear deal) signed between Iran and P5+1 countries (P5: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States and +1: Germana) and European Union in Vienna (Austria) in July 2015.
255. ▶ Iraq Parliament ordered a full manual recount of country's recent parliamentary election where 1.1 crore votes were cast, as a response to charges of electoral fraud. Elections were held in Iraq last month for first time since defeat of Islamic State in country.
256. ▶ Ireland People voted to end *abortion ban*, hailed as *a quiet revolution* in a very socially conservative country. Government proposed that law should be changed to allow unrestricted access to abortions up to 12 weeks of pregnancy.
257. ▶ Israel government enacted a new law which will financially penalize Palestinian Authority for paying stipends to Palestinians killed or jailed by Israel. Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu repeatedly demanded to stop Palestinians from paying stipends to prisoners and their families.
258. ▶ Israel opened a Visa Application Centre in Kolkata for tourists from West Bengal and the northeastern states to encourage more Indian travelers to visit Israel. It also reduced visa fees to INR 1,100 rupees from 1,700 charged from Indians.
259. ▶ Israel passed a Controversial Bill declaring that only Jews have right of self-determination in country, defining it as an exclusively Jewish state. It also strips Arabic of its designation as an official language alongside Hebrew, downgrading it to a special status that enables its continued use within Israeli institutions.
260. ▶ Israel withdrawn its bid for a non-permanent seat at UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2019-2020 term.

 UNSC has 5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members who are elected for a two-year term.

261. ▶ Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries launched United Arab Emirates' (UAE) first locally made satellite KhalifaSat into orbit. The Japanese rocket also carried an IBUKI-2 greenhouse gas observation satellite for Japan.
262. ▶ Japan Based Conglomerate Sony Corporation acquired London Based EMI Music Publishing, in a USD 1.9-billion deal. EMI is second-largest music publishing company by revenue. It will add over 2.1 million songs to Sony's huge list, which already owns 2.3 million copyrights.
263. ▶ Japan adopted an economic plan that will allow more foreign workers to work in country. This will help rapidly aging country to make up for its declining workforce. Under it, Japan will relax visa requirements in sectors facing severe labour shortages and will create new five-year visa category for non-professional foreign workers. Applicants for new visa status will need to pass certain skill tests and have some degree of Japanese language proficiency in order to receive new five-year visas.
264. ▶ Japan became world's first country to land 2 robotic rovers in asteroid Ryugu, also being first man made robot to have landed in an asteroid. Name of the rover that landed is *MINERVA-III*, consisting of 2 rovers.
265. ▶ Japan joined joint exercise 'Kamandag'(venom) with US and Filipino troops in Philippines for first time since World War II. Its first time Japanese armoured military vehicles were used on foreign soil since 1945.
266. ▶ Japan's Hayabusa2 probe launched French-German Mobile Asteroid Surface Scout, or MASCOT, towards asteroid Ryugu's surface.
267. ▶ Jeff Bezos led e-commerce major Amazon became 2nd US company to hit \$1 trillion in market capitalisation after Apple. Also, TCS became 2nd Indian Company to hit 8 Lakh crores INR (Approx \$120 Billion USD), after Reliance achieved it recently.
268. ▶ Joint military exercise *Iron Magic 19* between United Arab Emirates (UAE) and United States (US) held near Dubai.
269. ▶ Kereru, a native green and bronze wood pigeon, known to fall from trees after consuming rotten berries, named 2018 bird of the year in New Zealand.
270. ▶ Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve became 11th Biosphere Reserve from India, to be included in UNESCO designated World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR), during 30th Session of Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme of UNESCO held at Palembang (Indonesia).
 -  India has 18 Biosphere Reserves, with 11 internationally designated WNBR now with this Inclusion.
 -  Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve (Sikkim) reaching elevations of 1220 metres above sea-level.
 -  Khangchendzonga National Park was designated a World Heritage Site in 2016 under 'mixed' category.
 -  Over 118 species of large number of medicinal plants found in Dzongu Valley in north Sikkim are of ethno-medical utility.
271. ▶ Kuwait presented draft UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution, proposing to set up an international protection mission for Palestinians, after recent killing of palestinians amid their anti Israel protests at Gaza Strip.
272. ▶ London administration launched *Walking Action Plan*, to make London as world's Most walkable City. It aims to reduce air pollution by making streets more pedestrian friendly.
273. ▶ Macedonia held a referendum on whether to change its name to the 'Republic of North Macedonia'.
 -  Greece and Macedonia had signed a deal in this regard in June. Greece argued that the name 'Macedonia' implied a territorial claim on its own province of the same name and has thus vetoed Macedonia's entry into NATO and European Union.
274. ▶ Malaysia Government abolished death penalty, following strong domestic opposition for it.
275. ▶ Malaysia Government announced abolishing Goods and Services Tax (GST) by reducing it to 0%. New Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had promised to abolish 6% GST levy before his electoral victory.
276. ▶ Maldives asked India to withdraw its military helicopters and around 50 personnel stationed there, after expiry of an agreement in June.
277. ▶ Manila (Philippines) based Asian Development Bank (ADB) launched its first Trade Finance Scorecard, a new tool to address market and boost trade finance. It aims to prevent money-laundering and terrorism. It will use a 2 level assessing, First level will consist of score out of 10 on seven criteria on the macro level and Second level will consist of five working-level issues on the micro level.
278. ▶ McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) for Asia-Pacific region stated that India's gender inequality is extremely high on work & politics. India's score was 0.30 in gender equality at work and 0.78 in legal protection and political voice out of 1.0 scale. India behind Asia-Pacific average in all, but ahead of Bangladesh and Pakistan.
279. ▶ Members of European Parliament approved banning single-use plastics, to curb marine pollution. The ban is likely to take effect by 2021.
280. ▶ Microsoft acquired video discussion platform Flipgrid which is used by 20 million teachers and students across world.
281. ▶ Microsoft launched prototype of an underwater data centre off the coast of Scotland's Orkney Islands, as part of Microsoft's Project Natick. The capsule contains 864 servers and 27.6 Petabytes of storage, and has been placed 117 feet below ocean's surface. It is designed to hold data for up to 5 years without maintenance.
282. ▶ Microsoft surpassed Google's parent company Alphabet in market capitalisation for first time in 3 years, becoming 3rd most valuable firm (at \$753 billion) after Apple (\$924 billion) and Amazon (\$783 billion).

283. ▶ Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare asked United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UNFAO) to declare 2019 as 'International Year of Millets', to draw wider global attention and action to promote cultivation of millets.
- India is observing 2018 as *National Year of Millets* to promote cultivation by amending cropping pattern of areas which are especially susceptible to climate change.
284. ▶ Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) decided to participate in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) after gap of nine years, by sending team of officers to Paris to negotiate India's terms of participation in PISA 2021.
- Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is assessment test for 15-year-olds, organised every three years by Organisation for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD), Paris (France).
 - PISA measures student performance in mathematics, reading, and science and even innovative subjects like collaborative problem-solving and money literacy.
 - PISA test results give insight into education systems around the world. The results are shown as a national mean score and not shown individually. Its objective is not to rank countries, but to see how education system can be improved.
285. ▶ Myanmar and UN agencies signed an agreement that could lead to return of some of 700,000 Rohingya Muslims who fled brutal persecution by country's security forces and are now crowded into makeshift camps in Bangladesh.
286. ▶ NASA launched 'Remote Sensing Toolkit' to promote commercial use of satellite data, as part of NASA's Technology Transfer program. It aims to make it easier for users to utilise relevant satellite data for their research or conservation efforts. It aims to spark innovation among entrepreneurial community and lead to further commercialisation of NASA technology.
287. ▶ NITI Aayog and United Nations signed India-United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) for 2018-2022.
- It outlines work of UN agencies in India, with 19 UN agencies signing UNSDF 2018-2022.
 - 7 priority areas outlined in the UNSDF are - Poverty and Urbanization; Health, Water, and Sanitation; Education and Employability; Nutrition and Food Security; Climate Change, Clean Energy, and Disaster Resilience; Skilling, Entrepreneurship, and Job Creation; Gender Equality and Youth Development.
288. ▶ NSE signed a pact with the Uttarakhand government to provide access to capital to SMEs, to fuel growth of such SMEs in state by increasing awareness along with government on opportunities to raise capital, SME exchange guidelines, listing processes, compliance with listing etc.
289. ▶ National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) signed an agreement with Cab Aggregator Uber to explore Urban Air Mobility (UAM) for future air transportation such as flying cars in populated areas. UAM is a safe system for air vehicles, to move passengers and cargo within a city.
290. ▶ National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) signed a MoU with the Dubai Internet City (DIC) to help small and medium-sized Indian enterprises expand their operations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.
291. ▶ Nepal become first country to double its tiger population in a decade as part of World Wildlife Foundation's (WWF) 'Tx2' programme, that aims to double number of tigers in all over world by 2022.
- There are now estimated 235 wild tigers in Nepal, compared to 121 back in 2009.
 - Tx2 programme It was launched by World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) at the 2010 St Petersburg Tiger Summit held in Russia. Under it, 13 tiger range countries had agreed to double the world tiger population by 2022, which is the year of tiger in Chinese calendar.
292. ▶ Netherlands Parliament banned full-face veils such as burqa and niqab in public places. Violation will result in a fine of nearly INR 32000.
293. ▶ New Zealand banned sale of existing homes to foreign buyers, saying that citizens were being "tenants in our own land". The ban applies to all nationalities, except foreigners with residency status and buyers from Singapore and Australia.
294. ▶ ONGC Videsh Ltd received the first equity oil cargo from Abu Dhabi's Lower Zakum oilfield, where it recently bought 10% stake in. A shipload of Das blend crude oil reached New Mangalore port. Lower Zakum (LZ) oilfield produces 400000 barrels per day.
295. ▶ Ocean Cleanup foundation (founded by 24-year-old Dutch innovator Boyan Slat) launched world's first ocean cleanup array from San Francisco, called System 001, marking start of cleanup of Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a collection of marine debris in North Pacific Ocean. The patch is larger than area of France.
- System 001, named as 'Wilson', will be able to collect 50 tons of plastic in its first year. • It consists of a 2000 ft long U-shaped floating barrier with a three-meter (10 ft) skirt attached below.
 - Great Pacific Garbage Patch -
 - Its a collection of marine debris in the North Pacific Ocean, containing up to 16 times more waste than previously thought.
 - The Patch occupies an area three times the size of France in the Pacific Ocean between California and Hawaii with 79000 tons of plastic debris in the form of 1.8 trillion pieces.

 It was discovered in 1997 by Charles Moore, who had sailed through a mishmash of floating plastic bottles and other debris on his way home to Los Angeles.

296. ▶ Over 100 Swedish intellectuals joined formed *The New Academy*, as a new prize-giving body to award a new literature prize as 2018's Nobel Literature Prize has been postponed. Swedish Academy that selects Nobel laureates, had postponed 2018's Nobel Literature Prize due to sexual assault allegations. This was the first time in almost 70 years that Nobel literature award has been postponed.
297. ▶ Oxford English Dictionary (OED) has officially added word 'Idiocracy' in it, among 1400 new words, senses, and phrases added to latest update.
298. ▶ PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) and Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) signed MoU to establish India-Nepal Centre. to promote Indian investment in Nepal.
299. ▶ PM Narendra Modi conferred with United Nation's Champions of the Earth Award 2018 by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in New Delhi. He is among the six winners who received this award. Other Awardees are -
 -  French President Emmanuel Macron.
 -  India's Cochin International Airport - Awarded in Entrepreneurial Vision category. It is world's first fully solar-powered airport.
 -  Joan Carling - Awarded lifetime achievement award as a prominent defender of environmental and indigenous rights.
 -  Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods - Jointly recognised in Science and Innovation category.
 -  China's Zhejiang's Green Rural Revival Programme - Awarded in inspiration and action category.
300. ▶ Pacific Endeavor-2018, a communication exercise under Multinational Communications Interoperability Program (MCIP) began in Kathmandu (Nepal). It aims to develop common communications operating procedures to enable military forces in Asia Pacific region to collectively work in wake of disaster. It is jointly organised by Nepali Army and United States Pacific Command.
301. ▶ Pacific nation of Vanuatu reimposed emergency and ordered a mandatory evacuation of residents of Ambae island as a volcano erupted and filled sky with ash. It was temporarily evacuated in September 2017 when eruption cycle began.
302. ▶ Pakistan and Russia signed contract on admission of service members of Pakistan in Russia's Military Training Institutes. This will be for first time, Pakistani soldiers will undergo training at Russian military institutes.
303. ▶ Pakistan hosted its first ever Shanghai Cooperation Organisation-Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (SCO-RATS) legal experts meeting in Islamabad.
304. ▶ Pakistan invited Saudi Arabia to join \$50 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as 3rd strategic partner. Saudi Arabia is first country that Pakistan has invited to become partner in CPEC.
 -  Saudi Arabia has long history of financially bailing out Pakistan during economic crisis. Saudi Arabia loaned Pakistan \$1.5 billion in 2014 to strengthen its rupee currency, six months after Pakistan obtained its last IMF bailout.
305. ▶ Pakistan launched 2 indigenously built satellites named PRSS1 and PAK-TES-1A, from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in China. PRSS-1 is a Earth observational and optical satellite. PAK-TES-1A is a research satellite.
306. ▶ Pakistan test-fired Ghauri ballistic missile capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads up to a distance of 1300 kilometres.
307. ▶ Pakistan will launch its first manned mission in 2022, same year that India has planned to launch its own manned space mission Gaganyaan. It will be attempted by Pakistan with China's help.
308. ▶ Pakistan's Parliament passed a bill granting fundamental rights to transgenders and outlawing discrimination against them.
309. ▶ Palestine submitted instrument of accession to Chemical Weapons Convention to European Union (EU), world's chemical weapons watchdog.
310. ▶ Passport Index 2018 by Henley and Partners -
 -  It analyzes 199 different passports across 227 destinations to list rankings annually.
 -  Japanese passport is named most powerful passport in world, granting visa-free access to 189 countries.
 -  Indian passport secured 76th rank in index with its holders getting visa-free access to 59 countries.
311. ▶ Paytm launched QR-based smartphone payment settlement service in Japan, Named *PayPay*, in collaboration with SoftBank and Yahoo Japan Corporation. It is built around its QRtech, which is deployed in India to allow customers to make offline payments.
312. ▶ Philips selected 19 start-up companies for its first global start-up collaboration programme named 'AI in Healthcare for Radiology, Ultrasound and Oncology'. It will be conducted at Philips' innovation hubs in Bengaluru, Cambridge (US), Eindhoven (Netherlands) and Shanghai (China).
313. ▶ Portuguese parliament approved a law that will allow citizens to change their gender and name from age of 16 without a medical report showing identity disruption. Portugal become 6th European country to grant right to self-determination of transgender identity without guardianship of a third party and without a diagnosis of identity.

314. ▶ Prasar Bharati and Mizzima Media Group of Myanmar signed MoU to realize cooperation and collaboration in broadcasting and content sharing.
315. ▶ Property consultant CBRE report on Most expensive markets -
- ▶ New Delhi's Connaught Place ranked 9th most expensive office location, with annual rent of USD 153 per sq ft, Up from 10th place last year. Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) ranked 26th. Central business district (CBD) of Nariman Point ranked 37th.
 - ▶ Hong Kong (Central) is at first position with an annual rent of USD 306.57 per sq ft, followed by London (West End), Beijing (Finance Street) in China, Hong Kong (Kowloon) and Beijing (CBD) in China.
316. ▶ QS Asia University Ranking 2018 -
- ▶ Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-Bombay) has topped the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asia University Rankings from India followed by IIT Delhi and IIT Madras.
 - ▶ Eight Indian universities have figured among the top 100 in the list of Asia's top 50 universities.
 - ▶ There are 75 universities from India in the top 500 Asia list.
 - ▶ National University of Singapore is ranked as Asia's best university, followed by University of Hong Kong, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore), Tsinghua University (China) and Peking University (China).
317. ▶ QS World Best Universities Ranking 2019 (Top 1000 Universities Listed) -
- ▶ Top 5 -
 - ▶ Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA)
 - ▶ Stanford University (USA)
 - ▶ Harvard University (USA)
 - ▶ California Institute of Technology (Caltech) (USA)
 - ▶ University of Oxford (UK)
 - ▶ Indian Universities in List -
 - ▶ 24 Indian Universities in 2018 List, up from 20 last year.
 - ▶ IIT Bombay topped among Indian Universities in List (162nd Place), Followed by IISC Bengaluru (170), IIT Delhi (172), IIT Madras (264) and IIT Kanpur (283).
318. ▶ Qatar announced direct investments worth 15-billion US dollar in Turkey, amid Turkey's currency crisis and heightened tensions with USA.
319. ▶ Qatar banned products from United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt; To protect safety of consumers by stopping trafficking of goods. These 4 nations has cut all diplomatic relations with Qatar amid suspected terror financing by Qatar.
320. ▶ Qatar become first Gulf nation to offer permanent residency to expatriates, allowing maximum 100 expatriates to gain permanent residency each year.
321. ▶ Queensland became 5th Australian state to legalise abortion, allowing termination of pregnancy up to 22 weeks gestation, and thereafter with approval of doctors.
322. ▶ RTI rating by Access Info Europe and the Centre for Law and Democracy, created by Transparency International -
- ▶ India ranked at 6th position out of 123 countries, after a downfall of 4 positions from the previous year. India got a score of 128 out of 150. It noted that India doesn't provide protection for whistleblowers.
 - ▶ In India, total RTIs filed in 2017 were: 66.6 lakh, out of which, 4.8 lakh were rejected. Total number of second appeals were 18.5 lakh and total penalty imposed by CIC is 1.9 crore.
 - ▶ Top 5 - Afghanistan, Mexico, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Slovenia. Austria Ranked Lowest.
323. ▶ Rajniranth Starrer Kaala become first Indian film to release in Saudi Arabia. Note that Hollywood's Black Panther recently became first film to release in Saudi Arabia in 35 years. Saudi Arabia also recently gave away its first batch of driving licenses to women after decades long ban.
324. ▶ Researchers discovered new strain of Ebola virus in bats in northern Bambuli region of African Nation Sierra Leone, named as Bambuli. It is 6th known virus strain Ebola virus. Others are Zaire, Sudan, Tai Forest, Bundibugyo and Reston. Zaire strain of Ebola virus is the most deadly strain known.
325. ▶ Researchers from Institute of Archaeology of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Peking University announced that Chinese civilization was born 5800 years ago and got matured 3800 years ago., after 15 years of state-funded work. First civilisation emerged in areas around Yellow, Yangtze and Western Liao rivers.
326. ▶ Russia established a new directorate in Russian Army to promote patriotism. A similar directorate existed in the Soviet Army to ensure that soldiers remained loyal to then-ruling Communist party.

327. ▶ Russia launched Glonass-M positioning satellite on board of Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket, as part of GLONASS network GLONASS (Russian acronym for Global Navigation Satellite System) which provides real-time positioning data for surface, sea and airborne objects around globe, at accuracy reportedly at par with US Global Positioning System (GPS). With this, there are now total 26 Glonass satellites in orbit.
328. ▶ Russia launched world's First floating nuclear power unit into Baltic Sea, with 70-megawatt Capacity, named Akademik Lomonosov.
329. ▶ Russia successfully launched a Soyuz-2.1B rocket for first time since failure of a similar rocket aborted a manned take-off to the International Space Station (ISS), on Oct 11.
330. ▶ Russia will build 2 nuclear power units in China, to be operational by 2026 and 2027 respectively. Russia's Rosatom and China's National Energy Administration signed a deal to build the two 1,200-megawatt units at Tianwan nuclear power plant. Russia has built 35 nuclear power units around the world under intergovernmental agreements.
331. ▶ Russia will conduct Vostok-2018 (East-2018) military exercise in September 2018, as biggest war games ever conducted by Russia since Zapad-81 (West-81) exercise conducted by erstwhile Soviet Union in 1981 which saw involvement of 100,000 to 150,000 troops.
- ✎ In Vostok 2018, over 300000 troops will participate. China and Mongolia will also participate in Vostok 2018.
 - ✎ Vostok-2018 exercise is being conducted in response to aggressive attitude towards Russia by NATO and West countries.
332. ▶ Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation (Rosatom)'s subsidiary Nikiret signed an agreement with Indian engineering services firm Core Energy Systems Pvt Ltd for promotion of its technical security equipment in India, to assist in India's Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) project.
333. ▶ SAARC Development Fund (SDF) will launch social enterprise development programme (SEDP) as part of its social window, aimed at building social enterprises by using mix of grants and concessional returnable capital. It intends to fund around 80 enterprises across 8 SAARC member states (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) annually.
334. ▶ SBI signed MoU with Kathmandu-based National Banking Institute (NBI) for development of human resources of NBI. SBI will impart education, training and development to facilitate transformation of NBI's HR department.
335. ▶ Salesforce.com founder Marc Benioff and his wife Lynne acquired *Time magazine* from Meredith Corp. for \$190 million in cash. TIME magazine publisher Time Inc was sold to Meredith for \$1.8 billion in January 2018.
336. ▶ Saudi Arabia Government established Ministry of Culture, separating it from Information Ministry, amid attempts to modernise the conservative kingdom.
337. ▶ Saudi Arabia agreed to provide \$3 billion in foreign currency support for a year to Pakistan to help address Pakistan's balance of payment crisis. It also agreed to provide a one-year deferred payment facility for import of oil, worth up to \$3 billion.
338. ▶ Saudi Arabia froze all new trade and investment with Canada over its interference in its internal affairs. Saudi foreign ministry expelled Canadian ambassador and recalled its own envoy in Canada.
339. ▶ Saudi Arabia inaugurated a high-speed rail line connecting the holy Islamic cities of Mecca and Medina, to take down travel time to 2 hours.
340. ▶ Scotland became first country to provide free sanitary products to all students in a bid to tackle "period poverty", to ensure that students do not miss out on education due to lack of access to sanitary products.
341. ▶ Scotland became first country to introduce a minimum unit pricing for alcohol. Alcoholic products in Scotland will cost a minimum of 50 pence per unit.
342. ▶ Search engine Google launched Dataset Search, a new search engine for scientific community that will help them make sense of millions of datasets present online. It will work like Google Scholar, company's popular search engine for academic studies and reports.
- ✎ It will have twin benefits of creating data sharing ecosystem that will encourage data publishers to follow best practices for data storage and publication and give scientists way to show impact of their work through citation of datasets that they have produced.
 - ✎ Google also launched a new app 'Blog Compass' to help Indian bloggers manage their site and find topics to write about. The India exclusive app works as an analytics and recommendation platform. .
343. ▶ Seychelles President Danny Faure said that India-Seychelles joint project to develop naval base at Assumption Island in his country can not move forward. Seychelles will develop military facilities at the island on its own.
- ✎ Agreement was signed with India in 2015 to develop a naval facility at Assumption Island which would have given India strategic advantage in Indian Ocean Region (IOR), but the project had to be halted after growing political opposition in Seychelles. It was meant to India's first Naval Base project overseas and had acquired significance after China had acquired its first African naval base in Djibouti (near Horn of Africa) in November 2014.
 - ✎ Assumption Island is a small island situated southwest of Seychelles main and largest island of Mahe. It is situated very close to Mozambique Channel from where much Indian Ocean maritime routes pass. Its location lends it strategic importance for monitoring shipping in the Mozambique Channel.

344. ▶ Singapore based DBS Bank named as world's best bank by Global Finance magazine, for its ability to invest in digital innovation while still maintaining stable operations for its customers. DBS is the first Asian bank to receive this title from New York-based publication, which last year gave it to ING Bank.
345. ▶ South Africa entered recession for first time since 2009, after Its economy contracted by 0.7% in 2nd quarter of current Fiscal.
346. ▶ South Africa unveiled a powerful radio telescope, part of an international project that scientists say will provide new details on the Milky Way and other galaxies, called MeerKAT.
- ▶ MeerKAT, originally Karoo Array Telescope, is a radio telescope consisting of 64 mirrors.
 - ▶ It is largest and most sensitive radio telescope in southern hemisphere until Square Kilometer Array is completed in 2024 (tentative).
 - ▶ Square Kilometre Array (SKA) is a large multi radio telescope project aimed to be built in Australia and South Africa. If built, it would have a total collecting area of approximately one square kilometer.
347. ▶ Super Typhoon Mangkhut, world's strongest storm in 2018, hit northern coast of Philippines with winds up to 200 kmph and heavy rains.
348. ▶ Sweden released a handbook of its "feminist foreign policy" for rights groups and foreign governments, showcasing lessons from nation's flagship approach to promote women's rights globally.
- ▶ Sweden began its feminist foreign policy in response to discrimination and systematic subordination that still marks daily lives of countless women and girls around the world.
 - ▶ Policy's main aim is to include promotion of economic emancipation, fighting sexual violence and improving women's political participation.
349. ▶ Swedish Academy, That organizes Nobel Prize in Literature announced that, Nobel Prize in literature will not be awarded this year due to sex-abuse allegations and other issues. Swedish Academy has been in stress due to #MeToo campaign since November 2017. Academy has been alleged of sexual misconduct by husband of one of its members.
350. ▶ Swedish PM Stefan Löfven became country's first leader to be ousted in a no-confidence vote.
351. ▶ Syrian President Bashar al-Assad will become 1st international head of State to travel to North Korea to meet North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un, since he took over in 2011.
352. ▶ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is only Indian company among top 10 firms to get foreign labour certification for the H-1B visas for the fiscal year 2018, according to data from US Department of Labour.
- ▶ H-1B visas are the most sought-after among Indian IT professionals. London-headquartered Ernst and Young emerged as top employer to have received the certification.
353. ▶ Times Higher Education's (THE) world university rankings 2019 -
- ▶ No Indian institution figures in the top 250 Universities. Although number of Indian institutions in rankings increased from 42 last year to 49, making India 5th best-represented nation.
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru retained its position as best In India (ranked 251 - 300 globally), followed by IIT Indore (351-400).
 - ▶ Top 5 Globally -
 - ▶ University of Oxford (UK)
 - ▶ University of Cambridge (UK)
 - ▶ Stanford University (USA)
 - ▶ Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA)
 - ▶ California Institute of Technology (USA)
354. ▶ To highlight Kashmir issue, Pakistan released 20 "commemorative" postage stamps, one of which portrays slain terrorist Burhan Wani as a 'freedom icon'.
355. ▶ Trident Juncture 18 (TRJE18) NATO-led military exercise to be held in Norway in October and November 2018, as largest of its kind in Norway since 1980s. 50,000 participants from 31 nations will take part, including 10,000 vehicles, 250 aircraft and 65 vessels.
356. ▶ UAE began 3 month visa amnesty program which allows illegal foreign workers to legalise their status in country or return home.
357. ▶ UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) fined Facebook a maximum amount of around \$645,000 allowed under country's law, over Cambridge Analytica scandal. ICO said the data of around 1 million UK users had been put at risk by Facebook.
- ▶ UK government also allowed Women to apply for all roles in military services.
358. ▶ UK launched new UKRI Science, Research and Academia scheme for overseas scientists and researchers, including Indians, to enhance growth of UK's research sector. It invites researchers and academics to come to UK for up to 2 years. It is being added to the already existing Tier 5 (Temporary Worker Government Authorised Exchange) visa route.
359. ▶ UK-based charity Oxfam International's 'Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) Index -
- ▶ India ranked 147th among 157 countries, describing country's poor commitment to reducing inequality.

- 📌 Top 5 - Denmark (1), Germany (2), Finland (3), Australia (4), Norway (5).
 - 📌 Bottom 5 - Nigeria (157), Uzbekistan (156), Haiti (155), Chad (154), Sierra Leone (153).
 - 📌 Neighbours - Bhutan (152), Bangladesh (148), Nepal (139), Pakistan (137), Sri Lanka (102), China (81)
360. ▶ UK-based data analytics company Cambridge Analytica announced to shut down its operations, after being caught in a massive data-harvesting scandal took away all of its customers. Approx 2 months ago, it was revealed that CA had illegally harvested data of over 87 million Facebook users and used it to manipulate voter behavior in 2016 US Presidential elections.
361. ▶ UK's Prince William became first member of the royal family to visit Israel on an official visit. He also met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas which will mark first UK royal visit to West Bank.
362. ▶ UN Environment Programme (UNEP) partnered with Google to monitor impacts of human activity on global ecosystems by using sophisticated online tools, to develop platform to enable governments, NGO's and public to track specific environment-related development targets with user-friendly front-end.
- 📌 In long term, it will strive to establish platform for open-source data and analysis of UN Sustainable Development Goals. It will enable UNEP to get access to most sophisticated online tools to track progress, identify priority areas for action, and needs for making world sustainable.
363. ▶ UN Member states approved a 6.69 billion US Dollar budget for 13 peacekeeping operations for 2018-19. It is 2nd year in a row, that UN has made significant cuts to overall peacekeeping budget.
- 📌 Missions include -
 - 📌 MINUJUSTH (UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti)
 - 📌 MINUSCA (Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Central African Republic)
 - 📌 MINURSO (Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara)
 - 📌 MONUSCO (Stabilisation Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo)
 - 📌 UNIFIL (Interim Force in Lebanon).
 - 📌 United States is biggest contributor to UB, paying 22% of \$5.4 billion core budget and 28.5% of US \$7.9 billion peacekeeping budget. China is other top contributor with 10.3% followed by Japan with 9.7 %.
364. ▶ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced to hold a climate summit in September 2019 in New York to review commitments of 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Considering effects of climate spreading all over the world. Earlier, Guterres appointed Michael Bloomberg as his Special Envoy for Climate Action.
365. ▶ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres declared 2019-2028 as *Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace*, during Nelson Mandela peace summit honouring South African leader at UN.
366. ▶ UN Security Council (UNSC) held its first-ever meeting on corruption and its linkages to global conflicts. Citing the World Economic Forum's estimates, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that corruption costs at least \$2.6 trillion or 5% of global GDP.
367. ▶ UN will launch a project on creating an "inventory" of art forms, craftsmanship and other intangible cultural heritage of the country. A total of 13 intangible cultural heritage elements from India have been inscribed till date on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
368. ▶ US Defence Department will create a Space Force as 6th branch of military by 2020.
369. ▶ US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the first time approved the use of Epidiolex, an oral solution made from marijuana, for treatment of seizures related to 2 rare and severe forms of epilepsy. Epidiolex is a plant-derived oral solution of cannabidiol (CBD), the main ingredient of marijuana that does not cause intoxication or a euphoric high.
370. ▶ US Imposed Preliminary Anti-Dumping Duties of 50.55% on Metal Pipes Made in India, to help US Domestic Industry.
371. ▶ US President Donald Trump signed a new executive order imposing sanctions on any country or foreign individual found trying to interfere in US elections. It calls for sanctions against any entity that authorises, directs or sponsors meddling operations in the American elections.
372. ▶ US President Donald Trump signed an executive order to create a *faith-based* initiative, which would recognize vital role of faith in American life. It would ensure that faith-based organizations have equal access to government funding and equal right to exercise their beliefs.
373. ▶ US State Department's *2018 Trafficking in Persons Report* categorised North Korea as *worst human trafficking nation* for 16th consecutive year, citing use of forced labour. N Korea is included in Tier 3 category, along with China, Russia and Iran.
374. ▶ US and Mexico signed deal to replace North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the 'United States-Mexico Trade Agreement'.
375. ▶ US state California's economy surpassed UK to become world's fifth largest, With GDP of \$2.7 trillion, with UK and India as Next. California is only behind USA, China, Japan and Germany.

376. ▶ US-based *Internet Society and Internet Service Providers Association of India (ISPAI)* signed MoU to make Internet safe and secure in India by securing routers which is vital for healthy internet infrastructure. It will also promote Mutually Agreed Norms for Routing Security (MANRS) which is global initiative to implement crucial fixes needed to reduce most common threats to internet's routing system.
377. ▶ US-based Hyperloop Transportation Technologies or HyperloopTT launched first full-scale transportation capsule to be operational in 2019, named *Quintero One*. Its a 32-metre 5 tonne capsule, made a specially made dual-layer smart composite material called "Vibranium".
- ✍ It can move at speeds of more than 750 miles (1,200 kilometers) per hour and has a capacity to hold 30 to 40 passengers.
 - ✍ In May 2018, Andhra Pradesh signed Mou with HyperloopTT to set up Hyperloop transportation system connecting Anantapur, Amaravati, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam, as part of 700-800-km-long integrated public transit system.
 - ✍ Maharashtra government too signed pact with Richard Branson-led Virgin Group to build Mumbai-Pune Hyperloop.
 - ✍ HyperloopTT would build the first Hyperloop system in China in the Guizhou province.
378. ▶ US-based aircraft maker Boeing will set up an electronics manufacturing and avionics assembly facility in Bengaluru at an investment of INR 1,152 crores, as company's second-largest such facility after one in Seattle (Washington).
379. ▶ USA Congress passed National Defense Authorisation Act-2019 (NDAA-19) which capped its security-related aid to Pakistan to \$150 million, significantly below over \$ 1 billion to \$750 million per year. US Senate also passed a bill waiving sanctions against India for buying Russian arms, called National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) 2019.
380. ▶ USA Govt. cancelled NASA's Carbon Monitoring System (CMS) programme, amid budget constraints and higher priorities within science budget. NASA's CMS Programme costing \$10 million per year was meant to track carbon and methane, key greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.
381. ▶ USA Space exploration firm SpaceX launched Telstar 19 Vantage satellite, world's heaviest commercial communications satellite weighing over 7000 kg, through its Falcon 9 rocket.
382. ▶ USA and Cuba will permanently restore postal services after running a pilot program for 2 years, which was suspended in 1963.
383. ▶ USA and Morocco launched GCTF Terrorist Travel Initiative under Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), to enable sharing expertise on implementing effective counterterrorism watchlisting and screening tools. It will strengthen UNSC Resolution 2396 aiming to stop terrorist travel altogether.
384. ▶ USA and Philippine Armies held their Joint annual military exercise *Balikatan*.
385. ▶ USA announced \$39 million grant to Sri Lanka as part its foreign military financing to boost maritime security, as first US grant to Sri Lanka since 2009, after US stopped arms sales to Sri Lanka during its Tamil separatist war that ended in 2009.
386. ▶ USA announced closure of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) mission in Washington DC, after PLO leaders failed to engage with US efforts to bring about peace with Israel and attempted to prompt an investigation of Israel by International Criminal Court.
387. ▶ USA announced its withdrawal from United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), accusing it of "chronic bias" against Israel. Recently, UNHRC blamed Israel for Gaza violence, and rejected USA demand to condemn Hamas (The palestinian Extremist Group).
388. ▶ USA based IT Firm IBM acquired software Firm Red Hat in a \$34 billion cash and debt deal, as IBM's biggest ever acquisition so far. It will become a unit of IBM's Hybrid Cloud division.
389. ▶ USA based software Firm Adobe acquired Magento for USD 1.68 billion. Magento works in B2B and B2C context and will help Adobe to compete with salesforce and provide functionality in e-commerce space.
390. ▶ USA designated India as Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) country that will allow it to buy highly advanced and cutting-edge sensitive technologies from USA, bringing India in par with US's closest allies such as NATO.
- ✍ Currently there are 36 countries on STA-1 list, wit India being only South Asian on list.
 - ✍ STA-1 treatment will expand scope of technology exports subject to Export Administration Regulations (EAR) that can be made to India without individual licenses.
391. ▶ USA imposed stiff 25% tariff on US \$50 billion worth of Chinese goods, accusing China of intellectual property (IP) theft and unfair trade practices. Tariffs will be applied in two waves, first to 818 Chinese goods worth \$34 billion and in second wave it will apply to 284 goods worth another \$16 billion. As a backfire action, China also imposed additional tariffs and duties on \$50-billion worth of American products.
- ✍ Also, India also imposed higher import tariffs (ranging from 20 to 50%) on 30 goods from USA, ranging from automobile components to agro products such as almonds, shrimps and chocolates. It is expected to rake in additional \$240 million to India.
392. ▶ USA merged its Consulate General with its new embassy in Israel into single diplomatic mission in Jerusalem, as part of US's global efforts to improve efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. Earlier in May 2018, US moved its Israeli Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

- ▶ US will establish new Palestinian Affairs Unit inside embassy in Jerusalem to continue reporting, outreach and programming in West Bank and Gaza as well as with Palestinians in Jerusalem.
- 393. ▶ USA proposed establishing an *Arab NATO* force to counter Iran's military expansion in region. Proposed Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA) will consist of the US, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt and Jordan.
- 394. ▶ USA pulled out of 1955 Treaty of Amity with Iran, After International Court of Justice (ICJ) told US to lift sanctions on Iran which are linked to humanitarian goods and civil aviation. Iran took US to ICJ arguing that it violated terms of the treaty by imposing sanctions following withdrawal from 2015 nuclear deal.
- 395. ▶ USA pulled out of an international nuclear deal with Iran signed in 2015 by USA and 5 other Powers (UK, Russia, France, China, Germany and European Union).
 - ▶ This could raise risk of conflict in Middle East, upset America's European allies and bring uncertainty to global oil supplies.
 - ▶ The deal eased sanctions on Iran in exchange for the country limiting its nuclear programme, seen by many as a way to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear bomb.
 - ▶ USA Prez Trump complained that the agreement, does not address Iran's ballistic missile programme, its nuclear activities and nor its role in conflicts in Yemen and Syria. It did not prevent Iran from cheating and continuing to pursue nuclear weapons, so it needs to be vanished and Tough Economic Sanctions are being put back on Iran.
- 396. ▶ USA renamed its oldest and largest strategically important military command US Pacific Command (PACOM) to Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM). It is responsible for all US military activity in greater Pacific region. It has about 375,000 civilian and military personnel assigned, which also includes India. Renamed INDOPACOM will now extend its reach from Pacific Ocean to Indian Ocean Region.
- 397. ▶ USA unveiled world's most powerful supercomputer called 'Summit', beating previous record-holder China's Sunway TaihuLight. With a peak performance of 200,000 trillion calculations per second (200 petaflops), it is over twice as fast as Sunway TaihuLight, which is capable of 93,000 trillion calculations per second. Summit has 4,608 servers.
- 398. ▶ USA will pull out of three-decade-old Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty signed with Russia during Cold War.
 - ▶ INF was crucial Cold War-era treaty banning development, testing and possession of short and medium range ground-launched nuclear missiles with range of 500-5,000 km, signed in December 1987 between USA and USSR.
 - ▶ It was central to ending arms race between two superpowers during cold war and protected America's NATO allies in Europe from Soviet missile attacks. It was designed to provide measure of some strategic stability on continent of Europe.
 - ▶ USA alleged that Russia has violated treaty and has been violating it for many years. This violation comes after Russia's alleged development and deployment of Novator 9M729 missile (also known as SSC-8), that could strike Europe at short notice.
 - ▶ It will allow US new nuclear weapon options in Pacific, to counter China's growing influence and may also trigger new Arms race between USA & Russia.
- 399. ▶ USA withdrawn invitation to Chinese navy to participate in 2018 Rim of Pacific (RIMPAC) maritime exercise, amid China's continued illegal militarisation of islands in disputed South China Sea. RIMPAC 2019 is 26th edition of this exercise. RIMPAC is world's largest international maritime warfare exercise, held biennially near Honolulu, Hawaii (USA).
- 400. ▶ USA's Central Bank Federal Reserve raised interest rates for a third time this year (by 25 basis points to 2.25 %), also reaffirming outlook for further hikes well into 2019. It reflects an upbeat assessment of economy.
- 401. ▶ USA's Stanford University will assist Uttar Pradesh Government to combat chronic disease like Japanese Encephalitis (JE) and Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES).
- 402. ▶ Udaipur (Rajasthan) has been ranked among World's Best Cities by *Travel + Leisure*, ranked 3rd among 15 of world's best cities to travel to.
- 403. ▶ Ukraine began series of large-scale air force exercises with USA and other NATO countries, named *Clear Sky 2018*.
- 404. ▶ Ukraine launched annual joint military exercise named Rapid Trident with United States and other NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member countries, to be held in western Ukrainian village of Starychi till September 15, 2018.
- 405. ▶ United Arab Emirates (UAE) adopted a new system of entry visas, under which it will issue long-term residency visas for up to 10 years to international investors and 'exceptional talents' including professionals and students. It will attract investors and increase economic competitiveness globally. UAE also allowed foreign investors to own 100% of UAE-based businesses by end of 2018, up from 49% cap currently.
- 406. ▶ United Arab Emirates (UAE) flagship carrier Emirates Airline launched a joint project with US Crop One Holdings to build world's largest vertical farming facility near Dubai's Al Maktoum International Airport, with investment of \$40 million.
 - ▶ Vertical farm facility will cover an area of 12,077 square metres with an output equivalent to 3.64 million square metres of farmland.
 - ▶ It will harvest 2,700 kg of high-quality, herbicide and pesticide-free leafy greens daily, using 99 percent less water than outdoor fields.

407. ▶ United Kingdom announced changed law for organ and tissue donation to address urgent need for organs within Indian-origin communities in country. The amendment in existing law will propose new system of consent for organ and tissue donation, to be known as Max's Law after Max Johnson, a 10-year-old boy who was saved by a heart transplant.
408. ▶ United Kingdom chosen *Sutherland*, on A'Mhoine peninsula on north coast of Scotland as site of UK's first spaceport, to send satellites vertically into orbit by early 2020s.
409. ▶ United Kingdom's National Crime Agency (NCA) listed Pakistan among top three sources for money laundering, other two being Nigeria and Russia. UK is prime destination for foreign corrupt and politically exposed people (PEPs) to launder money.
410. ▶ United Nations E-Government Survey 2018 -
- ▶ India jumped 22 places to break into top 100 this year, ranked 96th.
 - ▶ Top 5 - Denmark (1), Australia (2), South Korea (3), UK (4), Sweden (5)
411. ▶ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) reiterated India's status as polio-free country, after some oral polio vaccine vials being found contaminated with the type-2 polio virus.
- ▶ They also asserted that all vaccines provided under Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) are safe and urged people to get their children vaccinated.
 - ▶ India was certified polio-free in March 2014 and it still continues to remain vigilant against all three types of polioviruses. Last polio case due to wild poliovirus in country was detected on 13 January 2011.
412. ▶ United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index 2018 -
- ▶ India ranked 130 among 189 countries.
 - ▶ Neighbours - Bangladesh (136), Pakistan (150), Nepal (149), Sri Lanka (76)
 - ▶ Top 5 - Norway (1), Switzerland (2), Australia (3), Ireland (4) and Germany (5)
 - ▶ Bottom 5 - Niger (189), Central African Republic (188), South Sudan (187), Chad (186), Burundi (185).
413. ▶ United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) elected South Africa, Indonesia, Dominican Republic, Germany and Belgium as non-permanent members of UN Security Council (UNSC). They will have two-year term beginning January 1, 2019.
414. ▶ United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released special report on global warming in Incheon (South Korea), with contributions from 91 authors from 40 countries. It will be key scientific input in upcoming Katowice Climate Change Conference in Poland in December 2018.
- ▶ It shows how half degree of warming makes big difference, adversely impacting global population and overall ecosystem.
 - ▶ It is possible to meet new warming target, with nations taking rapid transitions over 10 to 20 years and reach net zero around 2050, 25 years earlier than planned under earlier 2-degree goal.
 - ▶ It lists four pathways to curb global warming and through which the 1.5 degree target can be achieved. Also, Varying amounts between 100 to 1000 gigatons (billion tonnes) of CO₂ needs to be removed from atmosphere in these four pathways.
 - ▶ Advantages of keeping global temperature rise within 1.5 degrees celsius -
 - ▶ By 2100, global sea level rise would be 10 cm lower with global warming of 1.5 degrees compared with 2 degrees Celsius.
 - ▶ Arctic Ocean free of sea ice in summer would be once per century with global warming of 1.5 degrees, compared with at least once per decade with 2 degrees Celsius.
 - ▶ Coral reefs will decline by 70-90% with global warming of 1.5 degrees, whereas virtually all (over 99%) would be lost with 2 degrees Celsius.
 - ▶ Climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius and increase further with 2 degrees Celsius.
415. ▶ United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres constituted a High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, to be co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma (Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group).
- ▶ Panel has been mandated to contribute to broader public debate on the importance of cooperative and interdisciplinary approaches to ensure a safe and inclusive digital future. It Panel will identify policy, research and information gaps, and make proposals to strengthen international cooperation in the digital space.
416. ▶ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2427 aimed at providing legal framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout conflict cycle. It strongly condemns recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts.
417. ▶ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2428 to impose an arms embargo on South Sudan, 5 years after civil war began. It calls upon all UN member states to prevent supply, sale or transfer to South Sudan – from or through their territories till 31 May 2019.

418. ▶ United Nations finalized Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to better manage international migration and strengthen migrant rights. Its first time that UN Member countries negotiated an agreement covering all dimensions of international migration, forming a non legally binding framework. US did not agreed upon these new UN Migration terms.
419. ▶ United Nations will hold a Climate Summit in September 2019, with focus on sectors that create most emissions and areas where building resilience could make great difference.
420. ▶ United States Food & Drug Administration (USFDA) approved Indian Pharma companies to market their medics in USA -
✎ Sun Pharma - INFUGEM injection, used for treatment of cancer.
✎ Lupin - Tadalafil tablets, used to treat erectile dysfunction and prostate gland enlargement.
421. ▶ University of Houston (USA) signed MoU with Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IIPE) to build scientific and technical knowledge through joint research.
422. ▶ Value of China's stock market fell to \$6.09 trillion, losing its spot as the second biggest stock market to Japan (\$6.17 trillion). China's stock market overtake Japan in 2014 and soared to an all-time high of over \$10 trillion in 2015.
423. ▶ Vatican reached a landmark deal with China on appointment of bishops in China, with Pope Francis recognizing 7 state-appointed Chinese bishops as part of the deal.
424. ▶ Video sharing platform YouTube will invest \$25 million to counter spread of fake news on its platform, as part of \$300 million Google News Initiative launched in March 2018.
425. ▶ WHO launched new *WHO Global action plan on physical activity and health 2018-2030: More active people for a healthier world*, explaining how countries can reduce physical inactivity in adults and adolescents by 15% by 2030. It specifies a set of 20 policy areas aimed to develop more active societies by improving the environments and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to do more Physical Activities.
426. ▶ With Over 186000 Indian students studying in USA, India is 2nd highest sender of foreign students to US, next only to China.
427. ▶ World Bank (WB) agreed to provide a grant to Bangladesh for meeting the basic needs of around one million Rohingyas who fled their homeland Myanmar.
428. ▶ World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation (IFC) launched its \$1 billion masala bond programme in the US and Europe, aimed at funding rapidly expanding investment activities of IFC in India.
✎ Masala bonds are rupee-denominated borrowings issued overseas. IFC uses them to raise rupee funds overseas and brings the proceeds to India for investments.
429. ▶ World Bank announced concessional loan worth USD 195 million to Nepal to reform country's financial and energy sectors.
430. ▶ World Bank announced funding of up to \$1 billion for the Indonesian government to supplement relief and reconstruction efforts in wake of the earthquake and tsunami that hit the country last month.
431. ▶ World Bank approved \$700 million to help Bangladesh achieve its education for all vision by improving primary education sector, under Quality Learning for All Program (QLEAP). Also, Pakistan and World Bank inked agreements worth \$565 million to support projects in power and water sectors.
432. ▶ World Bank released its East Asia and Pacific economy update October 2018 edition.
✎ Countries of the East Asia and Pacific region will grow at 6.3 per cent in 2018 mainly due to China's moderate growth, down from 6.6 % growth of region in 2017.
433. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) classified gaming addiction as mental health disorder in its International Classification of Diseases (ICD). WHO defines gaming disorder as pattern of gaming behaviour characterized by impaired control over gaming, increased priority given to gaming over other activities.
434. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) published its first *Essential Diagnostics List*, a catalogue of tests needed to diagnose most common diseases along with number of global priority diseases.
✎ It aims to address inability to access diagnostic services, keeping the away from correct treatment.
✎ The list contains 113 tests, out of which 58 are for detection of a wide range of common conditions and Remaining 55 tests are for detection of *priority* diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, HIV, hepatitis B and C, syphilis and human papillomavirus.
✎ WHO will update list on regular basis and will also issue call for applications to add categories to next edition.
✎ It will provide a uniform tool useful to all countries, to test and treat health complications better and use health funds more efficiently by concentrating on truly essential tests.
435. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) released 2018 Global TB Report, calling for commitments to end Tuberculosis (TB) by 2030. As per report, global efforts have prevented approx 5.4 crore TB deaths since 2000, but TB remains world's deadliest infectious disease.
436. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) SAFER initiative to support governments in taking practical steps to accelerate progress on health, beat noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). SAFER provides five high-impact strategic actions prioritized for implementation to promote

health and development -

- ▶ Strengthening restrictions on alcohol availability.
- ▶ Advance and enforcing drink driving countermeasures.
- ▶ Facilitating access to screening, brief interventions, and treatment.
- ▶ Enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship, and promotion.
- ▶ Raising prices on alcohol through excise taxes and pricing policies.

437. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) launched comprehensive plan to eliminate industrially-produced artificial trans fats from global food supply by 2023. WHO calls on governments to use 'REPLACE' action package to eliminate industrially-produced trans-fatty acids from food supply. World Health Organization (WHO) also held an emergency meeting to discuss on outbreak of Ebola in Congo (Central Africa).
438. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) launched first global guidelines on sanitation and health, aimed at securing health and wellbeing for everyone, everywhere by considering sanitation as fundamental foundation of human health and development. By adopting these, countries can significantly reduce diarrhoeal deaths due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene.
439. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) validated Nepal for having eliminated trachoma, a contagious bacterial infection of eye. It makes Nepal first country in WHO's South-East Asia Region to defeat trachoma, world's leading infectious cause of blindness.
440. ▶ World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) notified declaration submitted by India related to Article II and III of Appendix to Paris Act (1971) related to Berne (*Switzerland*) Convention for Protection of Literary and Artistic Works.
- ▶ It will enable India to avail facilities provided for Article II and III of Appendix to Berne Convention during 10 years period that will expire, on October 10, 2024.
 - ▶ India has been member of Berne Convention since April 1928 and has been submitting declaration as per Article II and III of Appendix from time to time.
 - ▶ Berne Convention for Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (Berne Convention) is international copyright agreement that mandates equal treatment of copyrighted works by signatories, known as Berne Union. It was adopted in 1886 in Berne, Switzerland.
441. ▶ World Meteorological Organization (WMO) designated India as nodal centre for developing customized model to issue advance warning of floods to Asian countries, called as Flash Flood Guidance System.
- ▶ It will provide forecasts by computing likelihood of rainfall and soil moisture levels to warn of possible floods. It will be customized weather model, originally developed by US and donated to WMO to warn about flash floods at least six hours in advance.
442. ▶ World Reputation Rankings 2018 Times Higher Education (THE) -
- ▶ Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru (IISc Bangalore) is Only University in Global Top 100 (Ranked 91).
 - ▶ Top 5 - Harvard University (USA), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA), Stanford University (USA), University of Cambridge (UK) and University of Oxford (UK).
443. ▶ World Trade Organization has set up a panel to look into the India-US export-subsidy dispute, on request of the US to examine the allegations on India's export incentive measures.
- ▶ US has challenged India's export subsidy programmes such as Merchandise Exports from India Scheme in the WTO, stating that these initiatives were harming its companies.
 - ▶ According to US, all WTO members, including India, are required to provide subsidies consistent with provisions of WTO's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.
444. ▶ World's First Intertidal art gallery called Coralarium opened in Maldives, filled with around 30 Sculptures acting as a habitat for coral and other marine species.
445. ▶ World's First third generation European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) reactor started working in Taishan (China).
- ▶ EPR is a third generation pressurised water reactor (PWR) design, developed mainly by Framatome and Électricité de France (EDF) in France, and Siemens in Germany. In Europe this reactor design was called European Pressurised Reactor, and internationalised name was Evolutionary Power Reactor. 2 EPR units under construction in Finland and France are both facing costly construction delays.
446. ▶ World's Most Innovative University Report, by Reuters news agency rankings -
- ▶ It was first published in 2015, since then there has been no mention of any Indian university in the list.
 - ▶ In top 100, 48 universities are from North America, 23 from Asia, 27 from Europe and 2 from Middle East. US dominated with 46 universities among top 100.
 - ▶ Top 10 -
 - ▶ Stanford University (US)
 - ▶ Massachusetts Institute of Technology (US)
 - ▶ Harvard University (US)

-  University of Pennsylvania (US)
-  University of Washington(US)
-  University of Texas System(US)
-  KU Leuven (Belgium)
-  Imperial College London (United Kingdom)
-  University of North Carolina (US)
-  Vanderbilt University (US)

- 447. ▶ World's first all-digital art museum opened at MORI Building Digital Art Museum in Japan's Tokyo. It features around 50 kaleidoscopic installations triggered by motion sensors, which are projected across every surface of 100,000-square-foot exhibit space with help of lights.
- 448. ▶ World's first self-driving tram, fitted with multiple radar, LiDAR, and camera sensors, has been successfully tested in Potsdam (Germany). The tram operated on a 6-km test route in real traffic with a safety driver for emergency purposes.
- 449. ▶ World's largest airport terminal *under one roof* with a capacity to serve 90 million passengers will be opened in Istanbul (Turkey), Dubbed as phase-1A of project Istanbul New Airport. It will have a capacity to handle 90 million passenger per year, making it largest such facility in world.
- 450. ▶ Yahoo launched a group messaging app called *Squirrel*, focussed on friends, family and work groups.

Top

[Read Important Ones](#)