



Current Affairs - February to July 2018

Month Type



- **836** Current Affairs were found in **Last Six Months** for Type - **National**

(Showing **566** Important Ones)

National

1. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (June 27, 2018) -

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs Approvals -

- Contribution of 1040 crores to National Export Insurance Account Trust (NEIA), to be utilised till 2019-20. Corpus would strengthen NEIA to support project exports from the country that are of strategic and national importance.
- Capital infusion of 2000 crores for strengthening of Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC). It would enhance insurance coverage to MSME exports and strengthen India's exports to emerging and challenging markets like Africa, CIS and Latin American countries.
- Hiked price of ethanol, used for doping in petrol, by almost INR 2.85 per litre to Rs 43.70 in a bid to cut India's oil import dependence as well as give higher price for sugarcane.

General Approvals -

- Establishment of additional 6.5 Million Metric Tonne (MMT) Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) facilities at Chandikhol in Odisha (4 MMT) and Padur in Karnataka (2.5 MMT), including construction of SPMs (Single Point Mooring) for 2 SPRs.
 - ISPRL has already constructed underground rock caverns for storage of 5.33MMT of crude oil at 2 locations - Vishakhapatnam (1.33 MMT), Mangalore (1.5 MMT) and Padur (2.5 MMT).

MOUs -

- Singapore - Planning
- Denmark - Science, Technology and Innovation, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- Germany - Civil Aviation
- France - Maritime Awareness Mission
- Indonesia - Technical Cooperation in Railways sector
- Bahrain - Healthcare

2. ▶ Cabinet Approvals on Mar 28, 2018 -

- New Central scheme namely *Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS)* will be implemented during 2018-19 and 2019-20, aimed at bringing more transparency and efficiency in distribution of foodgrains as it will improve the mechanism to identify fake/duplicate ration cards.
- Approved restructuring of National Skill Development Fund (NSDF) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to strengthen governance, implementation and monitoring framework.
- CCEA Approvals -
 - Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved continuation of Credit Guarantee Fund for Education Loans Scheme and continuation and modification of Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme with outlay of INR 6600 crores for period from 2017-18 to 2019-20. This will provide education loans to 10 lakh students during this period. Modifications -
 - Ceiling on loan amount has been refixed at Rs. 7.5 lakhs.
 - Moratorium period would be course period + 1 year.
 - Department of School Education and Literacy's Proposal to formulate a Integrated Scheme on School Education by subsuming Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) from 1st April,

2018 to 31st March, 2020, with allocation of INR 75000 crores. It aims to ensure inclusive quality education from nursery to senior secondary stage, with emphasis on 2 two T's - Teacher and Technology.

- Enhancing scope of Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY). Govt will now contribute Employer's full admissible contribution for the first 3 years from the date of registration of new employee for all sectors including existing beneficiaries for their remaining period of 3 years.

 - Informal sector workers would get social safety net and there would be more job creation.

- Continuation of Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) and City Compost Scheme beyond 12th Five Year plan till 2019-20, with expenditure INR 61972 crores. Subsidy on P&K fertilizers and Market Development Assistant (MDA) on City Compost will be provided on subsidy rates approved by CCEA on annual basis. Continuation of these schemes will ensure that adequate quantity of P&K is made available to farmers at statutory controlled price

- Removal of prohibition on export of all varieties of edible oils except mustard oil.

MOUs

- With Zambia in the field of Judicial Cooperation.

- With Canada to establish bilateral cooperation in field of Intellectual Property (IP).

- With United Kingdom and Northern Ireland regarding cooperation and Exchange of Information for Combating International Criminality and Tackling Serious Organised Crime.

- With South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) for cooperation on response to Oil and Chemical Pollution in the South Asian Seas Region (Bangladesh, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). It aims at protection and preservation of marine environment in region.

3. ▶ Government declared 6 educational 'Institutions of Eminence', out of 114 applications (74 from public sector & 40 from private sector) -

- Public Sector - Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore Karnataka, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.

- Private Sector - Jio Institute (Reliance Foundation), Pune under Green Field Category, Birla Institute of Technology & Sciences Pilani, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal (Karnataka).

- Each 'Public Institution' selected as 'Institution of Eminence' will get financial assistance up to 1000 Crore over 5 years, to help them become World Class Educational Institutions.

- To achieve top world ranking Institutions shall be provided with

 - Greater autonomy to admit foreign students up to 30% of admitted students

 - Recruit foreign faculty upto 25% of faculty strength

 - Offer online courses upto 20% of its programmes and

 - Enter academic collaboration with top 500 in world ranking Institutions without permission of UGC

 - Freedom to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction

 - Flexibility of course structure in terms of number of credit hours and years to take a degree

4. ▶ Maharashtra government signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth Approx 35000 Crores Thrust Aircraft Pvt Ltd, company led by Amol Yadav who built six-seater aircraft. Under the MoU signed at *Magnetic Maharashtra* investors' summit, state will give Yadav's firm 157 acres of land in Palghar district.

- During the summit, Reliance Industries announced to invest over 60000 crore in Maharashtra in 10 years for establishing an integrated digital industrial area.

- Indian Railways signed MOU with Maharashtra government to set up a coach factory in Latur with an investment of INR 600 crores.

5. ▶ To make adventure sports safer, Minister of State for Tourism (IC) K. J. Alphons launched Government's newly formed Guidelines on Adventure Tourism, formulated along with Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI). Guidelines have been framed for 15 Land Based, 7 Air Based and 7 Water Based activities which cover entire portfolio of Adventure Tourism available in India.

6. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government in association with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched 'DASTAK', a door to door campaign to eradicate deadly Acute Encephalitis (AE) Syndrome and Japanese Encephalitis (JES) disease from state, with tagline *Darwaja khatkhatao, AES aur JE ko bhagao*.

7. ▶ 105th Indian Science Congress held in Imphal (Manipur) with theme *reaching the unreached through science and technology*. ISC is being held for second time in North-East. Earlier it was held at Shillong in 2009.

- 106th Indian Science Congress will be held in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) with theme *Future India: Science and Technology*.














- 7TH Women Science Congress, Children's Science Congress and 11th Science Communicators' Meet were also held during this event.

- Drdo Pavilion has been Adjudged As Most Informative at 105th Indian Science Congress.

8. ▶ 13 Indian beaches will soon get the Blue Flag certification, for being Environment-friendly, clean and equipped with amenities of international standards. These beaches of Odisha, Maharashtra and other coastal states will be the first in Asia, to get Blue Flag certification. Blue Blue Flag beach standards are conferred by Copenhagen (Denmark) based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).
9. ▶ 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) in January 2019, with Mauritius PM Pravind Jugnauth as Chief Guest. Theme of 15th PBD will be *Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India*.
 - ▶ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated in India on 9 January, commemorating return of M K Gandhi from South Africa in Bombay on January 9, 1915.
10. ▶ 21st Law Commission Recommendations (headed by former SC judge B.S. Chauhan) -
 - ▶ Declare Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) a public body and bring BCCI and its all member cricket associations under Right to Information (RTI) law regime.
 - ▶ Recommendations related to Elections -
 - ▶ Holding simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha and state assemblies. simultaneous elections were held after Independence up to 1967. Dissolution of certain Assemblies in 1968 and 1969 followed by dissolution of Lok Sabha led to disruption of conduct of simultaneous elections.
 - ▶ Issuance of Notification - Statutory limit of six months for issuance of notification of general elections.
 - ▶ No-confidence motion - Parties which introduce no-confidence motion should simultaneously give a suggestion for an alternative government as no-confidence motion and premature dissolution of House is major roadblocks to simultaneous elections.
 - ▶ Anti-defection law - The rigour of 'Anti-defection Law' must be removed as exception, to prevent stalemate (गतिरोध) in Lok Sabha/Assembly in case of Hung Parliament/Assembly.
 - ▶ Mid-term elections - In case of mid-term elections, new Lok Sabha or Assembly will only serve remainder of term of previous Lok Sabha/Assembly and not a fresh term of five years.
 - ▶ Prime minister/ CMs should be elected to lead Lok Sabha/Assembly, by full house like electing speaker of Lok Sabha. This will provide stability to government and in turn to Lok Sabha and state legislative assembly.
 - ▶ Centre should get Constitutional amendments, if agreed upon, to be ratified by all the States so as to avoid any challenge to them.
11. ▶ 220 MW Unit-1 of Karnataka's Kaiga Generating Systems (KGS-1) has set a new record of the continuous operation of 766 days, surpassing earlier record of 765 days set by the Unit-5 of Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS-5) in 2014. With this, KGS-1 stands second in world among Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) and fourth among all nuclear power reactors in terms of continuous operation.
12. ▶ 23 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will get largest portion of loans on offer under Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) scheme.
 - ▶ RISE Scheme was in Budget 2018-19, with a corpus of INR 100000 crores. Under this, all centrally-funded institutes (CFIs) can borrow funds over next 4 years to expand and build new infrastructure.
 - ▶ Out of allotted funds, INR 25000 crores will be set aside exclusively for 23 IITs.
 - ▶ Central Universities can borrow upto 20000 crores, National Institutes of Technology (NITs) can borrow INR 11300 crores.
 - ▶ All financing will be done through the Higher Education Funding Agency (HEFA).
13. ▶ 2nd India Mobile Congress (IMC-2018) will be held in New Delhi in October 25-27, 2018 with theme *NEW DIGITAL HORIZONS Connect, Create, innovate*. It will be organised by Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI).
14. ▶ 2nd edition of 'Nobel Prize Series India 2018' started in Panaji (Goa). Its a month-long Nobel Science Exhibition in which Nobel laureates interact with school children and teachers. Theme of Nobel Prize Series India 2018' is *Science Impacts Life*.
15. ▶ 3 day annual Sindhu Darshan Festival celebrations on bank of Indus River in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir.
16. ▶ 4-day annual Meghalaya Annual Cultural Festival *Behdienkhlam* held in Jowai (Meghalaya).
17. ▶ 51 day long 8th Theatre Olympics Concluded in Mumbai. This edition of Theatre Olympics brought together around 25,000 artists under theme "Flag of Friendship". It witnessed 450 shows from more than 30 countries performed across 17 cities.
18. ▶ 578 metre long Theng tunnel inaugurated in Sikkim, as state's longest tunnel. It is constructed on Gangtok-Chungthang Highway.
19. ▶ *Advantage Assam*, Assam's first Global Investors summit held in Guwahati. During this, Assam Government signed MoU with National Building Construction Corporation (India) Limited for setting up a twin tower trade centre in Guwahati with a project cost of INR 1950 crores.

- During this, it was decided that Assam State Government would set up *Invest Assam*, as dedicated agency to look into all aspects of business and investment in state.
20. ▶ A Web portal (www.praapti.in) and an App namely PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators), has been launched by Govt. It is meant to bring transparency in power purchase transactions between Generators and Discoms. It will capture Invoicing and payment data for various long term PPAs from Generators. It will also help make transactions in the power Sector more transparent.
 21. ▶ A recent Nipah Virus (NiV) infection has been reported in Kerala, with Its traces were found in samples of two persons who died of viral fever in Kozhikode region, and confirmed by National Institute of Virology Pune.
 - ▶ Fruit bats of Pteropodidae Family, Pteropus genus are natural host of this virus. Its first outbreak took place in Kampung Sungai Nipah, Malaysia in 1998.
 - ▶ Virus is believed to spread through direct contact with infected bats, or contaminated Fruits. Human to Human transmission from other NiV-infected people is also reported.
 - ▶ Symptoms Include breathing trouble, inflammation in brain, fever, headache, drowsiness, disorientation and delirium. It can be deadly too.
 22. ▶ ASEAN India Film Festival held in New Delhi, organised by Ministry of External Affairs as part of series of events to commemorate 25 years of ASEAN and India relations. Its tagline was 'Friendship through Films'.
 23. ▶ According to Minister of State for Rural Development, West Bengal is the best performing State in terms of allotting jobs and utilising funds under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).
 - ▶ WB so far spent over INR 7335 crores and generated over 28.21 crore work days under MGNREGA. West Bengal is followed by Tamil Nadu (TN) which spent INR 5981 crores and generated 22.17 crore work days during 2017-18. Goa is ranked at bottom.
 24. ▶ According to Recently Released SRS bulletin (2016) -
 - ▶ India registered significant decline in Maternal Mortality Ratio, with 22% reduction in since 2013. MMR declined from 167 in 2011-2013 to 130 in 2014-2016, against UN MDG (Millennium Development Goals) target of Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of 139 by 2015. Total maternal deaths for first time are reduced to 32000.
 - ▶ Uttar Pradesh with 30% decline topped in reduction of Maternal Deaths. Three states (*Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu*) have already met SDG target for MMR of 70 per 100000.
 - ▶ WHO commended India's progress in reducing the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by 77 %, from 556 per one lac live births in 1990 to 130 per one lac live births in 2016. This puts India country on track towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal target of MMR below 70 by 2030.
 25. ▶ According to recently released language data of Census 2011, Hindi is most spoken in India with it being mother tongue of 43.63% Indians, followed by Bengali. Marathi replaced Telugu as 3rd most spoken language in nation. Sanskrit is least spoken in India(Sanskrit by approx 25000 people).
 - ▶ More than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongue.
 - ▶ There are 121 languages which are spoken by 10,000 or more people in India.
 26. ▶ According to recently released language data of Census 2011, Hindi is most spoken in India with it being mother tongue of 43.63% Indians, followed by Bengali. Marathi replaced Telugu as 3rd most spoken language in nation. Sanskrit is least spoken in India.
 27. ▶ According to report by green energy market tracker Mercom Capital, India has achieved 20 GW (Giga watt) cumulative solar power capacity, Out of which, utility-scale cumulative installations is 18.4 GW and rooftop solar is 1.6 GW.
 - ▶ By 2022, India is targeting installation of 175GW of renewable energy capacity. It Includes 60GW of large and medium-scale gridconnected solar power projects, 60GW wind, 40GW solar rooftop projects, 10GW of bio-power and 5GW of small hydro.
 28. ▶ Actor Kamal Haasan launched his political party Makkal Needhi Maiam (*People Justice Centre*) in Madurai (Tamil Nadu).
 29. ▶ Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched 6 new features in National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform to make it more user-friendly -
 - ▶ MIS dashboard for better analysis
 - ▶ BHIM payment facility by traders
 - ▶ Mobile payment facility by traders
 - ▶ Enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile
 - ▶ Integration of farmer's database
 - ▶ e-Learning module.
 30. ▶ Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched Meghalaya Milk Mission in Shillong, to promote Milk revolution in State, along with sanctioning projects 215 crores through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

- ✏ Project consists of 2000 dairy farm units, in one unit there is provision for purchase of 5 cows, shed constructions, storage room construction, animal insurance, 79 bulk milk coolers of 500 litre capacity, 13 milk tankers of 3000 litre capacity etc.
- 31. ▶ Airport Authority of India (AAI) signed MoU with Assam government for sustainable development of human settlements at villages in Kamrup district, under its Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) initiative. AAI will provide financial assistance of Rs. 4.58 crore for same. AAI also tied up with National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to develop a green corridor covering 16.55 km in Varanasi.
- 32. ▶ Airports Authority of India (AAI) announced construction Goa's 2nd Airport (after first at Dabolim) at Mopa, with Both Passenger and Cargo Hub Facilities. It will become functional in 2020, with annual capacity of 30 million passengers.
- 33. ▶ Airports Authority of India (AAI) will set up Civil Aviation Research Organization (CARO) at Hyderabad's Begumpet Airport, with cost of 1200 crores to be spent over 12 years. Its focus will be on pursuing inter-disciplinary solutions to improve the civil aviation sector. CARO will find indigenous solutions to meet challenges posed by growing air traffic and for enhancing safety and efficiency of aircraft operations.
- 34. ▶ An MoU has been signed between Government of Bihar and NTPC Limited, aiming to improve performance of Power Sector in Bihar through transfer of Barauni Thermal Power Station (720 MW) and Bihar State Power Generation Company's (BSPGCL) equities in Kanti Bijlee Utpadan Nigam & Nabinagar Power Generating Company to NTPC. It will result in better performance of these units.
- 35. ▶ An innovative cost-effective drinking water project in Bihar will provide safe drinking water at price of 50 Paise / Litre, termed as *Sulabh Jal*. It is cheapest safe drinking water solution in world, launched in Darbhanga by Sulabh International.
- 36. ▶ Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu laid foundation for *Universal Peace Retreat Center of Prajapita Brahmakumari Eswariya University* in Amravati. It will propagate and teach Raja yoga, Dhyana, Youth development, women empowerment, stress relief activities, child care, positive attitude, life skills and moral values.
- 37. ▶ Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu laid foundation stone of Amaravati International Sports Complex in Vijayawada. He also launched 'Project Gandiva'. Under it, government will choose students aged between 10-16 years and offer them international level facilities and coaching with an aim to secure medals in Olympic Games in a period of 10 years.
- 38. ▶ Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu launched 'e-Pragati core platform', aimed at connecting citizens to various Govt departments, autonomous organisations and 745-plus services.
- 39. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government launched 60 Anna Canteens across state in first phase to provide subsidised food to urban poor. They will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner at Rs 5 a meal, to be run by Akshaya Patra Foundation. State Government plans to set up 203 *Anna Canteens*.
 - ✏ Other States having subsidised food canteens - Amma canteens (Tamil Nadu (1st)).Tamilnadu Inspired other states - Rajasthan (Annapurna Rasoi Yojana), Madhya Pradesh (Deendayal canteens), Delhi (Aam Aadmi canteens), Aahar (Odisha), Indira Canteens (Karnataka).
- 40. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government launched a Zero Based Natural Farming (ZBNF) scheme for benefitting farmers, aiming 100% chemical-free agriculture by 2024. It has provisioned investment of INR 16134 crores by 2024. It makes Andhra Pradesh as India's first 100 % natural farming state.
- 41. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government launched multi-utility vehicle NAIPUNYA RATHAM (also called World on Wheels), under Smart village Smart Ward Programme. It will look to improve digital literacy and create awareness on various government schemes.As part of it, a 20-seater bus enabled digital facilities and learning lab equipped with smart technology gadgets as well as with e-learning tools.
- 42. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Govt. launched official 'NCBN' (Nara Chandrababu Naidu) App in Collector's conference in Amaravati, Aimed at implementing effective governance in Andhra Pradesh.
- 43. ▶ Andhra Pradesh government Initiated its *Bhu Seva* project aimed at offering integrated services related with land. Each land parcel will be given an 11 Digit Bhudhar Number, to help in easy identification of details of land parcel. Ch Vijayamohan is Mission Director of Bhu Seva Mission.
- 44. ▶ Andhra Pradesh government announced monthly allowance of INR 1,000 each to unemployed graduate youths in state with an upper age limit of 35 years.
- 45. ▶ Andhra Pradesh will become first state to use auto-disable syringes for all clinical purposes to prevent infection, from World Hepatitis Day on July 28.
- 46. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government launched 3rd year of insurance scheme Chandranna Bima Yojana, aimed to benenefit over 2.5 crores labourers in unorganised sector (with monthly income under INR 15000). Beneficiaries need to pay only 15 per year to get -
 - ✏ Insurance of 5 lakh for accidental death / permanent disability and up to 2.50 lakh for temporary disability due to accident.
 - ✏ Those in 18 - 50 years age will receive 2 lakh and those aged between 51 - 59 years will receive 30000 in case of natural death.
- 47. ▶ Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) ranked Pune (Maharashtra) at top with a score of 5.1 and Karnataka Capaital Bengaluru at bottom with a score of 3.
 - ✏ Top 5 - Pune, Kolkata, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhubaneswar and Surat.

-  Bengaluru is at bottom, with Chandigarh as 2nd worst and Dehradun 3rd from botto in Urban governance.
48. ▶ Annual multicultural festival *Kala Ghoda Arts Festival* held in South Mumbai (Maharashtra). This year's theme is 'Hara Ghoda' (Green Horse), focusing on sustainability and environment-friendliness.
49. ▶ Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) allowed photography within premises of all centrally protected monuments/sites except at Ajanta Caves, Leh Palace and Taj Mahal. It has been ruled after PM Narendra Modi questioned logic behind existing restrictions.
50. ▶ Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) has been removed completely from Meghalaya. AFSPA empowers security forces to conduct operations and arrest anyone anywhere without prior notice.
51. ▶ Arunachal CM Pema Khandu inaugurated State's biggest solar power plant in Itanagar, with capacity of 1 MW and cost accumulated is INR 8.50 crores.
52. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh Assembly passed Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill 2018 to remove Anchal Samiti, intermediate level of 3 tier panchayati raj system and set up a two-tier system in state.
-  It is being done under 73rd Amendment of Constitution that enables state having less than 20 lakh population not to have intermediate level (Arunachal has population of 13.84 lakh). 3 tier panchayati raj institutions were set up in state in 2003, 2008 and 2013.
-  Anchal Samiti (3rd Tier) is being removed to standardise use of limited financial resources and avoid delay in passing policies as they delayed at Anchal Samiti level (intermediate level).
-  In 2 tier panchayati raj system, execution of schemes will be faster as there will be direct connection between Gram Panchayats and Zilla Parishads.
53. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu inaugurated 6 MW Shaikangchu small hydro electric project at Gongkhar village in Arunachal Pradesh.
54. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu launched *Arunachal Rising* Campaign, to create awareness among people about government programmes. It will highlight positive works of government and involve feedback services covering all sections of people.
55. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu launched LED Solar Street Lighting System in 4 Districts (*Tirap, Longding, Namsai and Tawang*), with assistance from Rural Infrastructure Development Fund of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
56. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh Government signed MOU with Andhra Pradesh-based Smart Village Movement (SVM), To facilitate technology innovations, research and development in selected villages of state. 100 villages spread over 60 constituencies would be selected in consultation with government for SVM project.
57. ▶ As a first such Initiative in Country, Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) will launch India's first public sector hotel run entirely by women for women in capital Thiruvananthapuram, named *Hostess*.
58. ▶ As a landmark reform in field of Higher Education, University Grants Commission has approved UGC (Online Courses) Regulations 2018, allowing Higher Educational Institutions to offer Programmes in completely online mode.
-  It is applicable for disciplines in which institute has already been offering same or similar Courses at graduation level in regular mode or in Open and Distance Learning mode and from which at least one batch has been graduated and approved by statutory councils.
-  Online Programmes requiring Practical/ Laboratory Courses as a curricular requirement shall not be permitted.
-  Online learning shall have minimum four quadrants - video lectures, e- content, self-assessment and discussion forum to clarify doubts.
-  Higher Educational Institutions will be eligible to offer Online Programmes if they have been in existence for at least five years and are accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with a valid minimum score of 3.26 on a 4-point scale. It should also be in top-100 in overall category in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) for at least 2 years in the previous 3 years.
-  Analytics of Learning Management System shall be used for ensuring the learner's participation at least for 2 hours every fortnight.
-  This initiative is a big step towards attaining the targeted GER (Gross enrolment ratio) of 30% by 2020.
59. ▶ As per Data by Census Directorate, 42 Indian languages are heading towards extinction as only few thousand people speak them.
-  There are total 22 scheduled languages and 100 non-scheduled languages in India, spoken by one lakh or more people.
-  Andaman and Nicobar Islands has most Number of Languages headed towards Extinction (11 Languages), followed by Manipur (11).
60. ▶ As per Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry -
-  19 of 25 dirtiest cities in India are from West Bengal. Jharkhand is the cleanest state in India, followed by Maharashtra and Chattisgarh.
-  Among cities, Indore is cleanest for 2nd year in a row, followed by Bhopal and Chandigarh. While, Bhadracharya in Gujarat is at bottom of 500 cities.
61. ▶ As per State of India's Environment (SoE) 2018 in Figures that has been released recently by Down To Earth magazine -

- ✎ India ranked 177 out of 180 countries in Global Environment Performance Index (EPI) rankings 2017, India slipped from 141st place in 2016.
 - ✎ India scored 5.75 out of 100 in air quality.
 - ✎ Through Swachh Bharat scheme, 72.1 million individual household toilets have been constructed. But funds allocated for spreading awareness on this to rural people remains unused.
 - ✎ Central government's target of installing 175 gigawatt (GW) of renewable energy by 2022, is not seeing expected progress, with only 9 % of the roof-top solar target achieved so far.
 - ✎ There is a 146 per cent increase in forestland diversion for non-forest activities in the last one year with maximum diversions recorded in Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha. Forest fires have increased by 125 per cent in just two years (2015-2017).
62. ▶ As per US-based Institute for Energy Economics & Financial Analysis (IEEFA), Karnataka is new national leader in renewable energy generation, overtaking Tamil Nadu.
 63. ▶ As per data by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Madhya Pradesh has highest number of 55770 fully covered tribal habitations with safe drinking water in country followed by Odisha and Jharkhand. Under *National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP)*, 10% of total allocation of funds is earmarked to be used for supply of drinking water to Scheduled Tribe (ST) dominated habitations.
 64. ▶ Assam Employees PRANAM Act would be implemented in state from October 02, 2018 (Gandhi Jayanti), To not let employee neglect their loved ones. The Act will deduct 10% of an employee's pay and transfer it to the account of relatives concerned. Another 5% would be deductible if the employee has a differently abled sibling.
 65. ▶ Assam Government launched a special programme to build 1 lakh toilets across the state under Swachh Bharat Mission, named *Mission Sambavh* (Mission Possible), under which, construction works will be completed within 10 days.
 66. ▶ Assam become 4th state (1st in North East) to issue Right of Way (RoW) guidelines for telecom service providers.
 - ✎ A legal right, established by usage or grant is referred to as Right of Way (RoW).
 - ✎ These guidelines will regulate establishment of underground and overground telecom infrastructure in Assam.
 67. ▶ Assam government launched a toll-free helpline for women, to tackle recent surge in crime in state. The helpline is called Sakhi and is available at 181.
 68. ▶ Assam government will introduce awareness programme called 'Sanskar' in all its development blocks and panchayats, after incidents triggered by superstition and ignorance including lynching of two people in Karbi Anglong district.
 69. ▶ Assam government will observe September 22 as Rhino Day (*On World Rhino Day*) to generate public awareness on protection of one-horned rhinoceros (pachyderm).
 70. ▶ Assam government's new cashless health scheme, 'Atal Amrit Abhiyan' has been launched. It offers free medical care of up to Rs 2 lakh to every individual in state. It will cover 92 % of state's population with annual income below Rs 5 lakh, with INR 400 crores allocated in FY 2018-19.
 71. ▶ Assam released final draft of National Register of Citizens (NRC), after first draft released in January 2018 that included 1.9 crore names out of total 3.29 crore applicants. It has left out 40.07 lakh people wherein 2.89 crore people were found eligible.
 - ✎ NRC was prepared in 1951.
 - ✎ Out of 40.07 lakh applicants left out of final draft, 2.48 lakh applicants have been kept on hold including D-Voters (doubtful voters), descendants of D-voters and persons whose cases are pending before foreigners tribunal.
 72. ▶ Assembly Elections 2018 in North East States of Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland -
 - ✎ Tripura -
 - ✎ BJP (Bharatiya Janata party) emerged as largest party with win over 35 seats (out of 60 seats). Communist Party of India (Marxist), that ruled Tripura for 25 years (led by Manik Sarkar), won 16 seats. Vote percentage - BJP (43%), CPI (M) - 42.7%.
 - ✎ Nagaland -
 - ✎ Naga Peoples Front (NPF) emerged as largest party with win over 27 seats (out of 59 seats), followed by Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (16 Seats) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with 12 Seats. Vote percentage - NPF (38.8%) NDPP (25.2%) BJP (15.3%).
 - ✎ Meghalaya -
 - ✎ Indian National Congress (INC) emerged as largest party with win over 21 seats (out of 59 seats), followed by National People's Party (19 Seats).
 73. ▶ Ayushman Bharat Yojana under Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Swasthya Suraksha Mission will be implemented in Madhya Pradesh from August 15 this year. Under it, annual health security cover worth Rs 5 lakh will be provided to each family. Expenditure for implementation of yojana is INR 1200 per family.

74. ▶ BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government won its 1st No Confidence motion moved in Lok Sabha, as moved by a former NDA ally Telugu Desham Party (TDP). In this trust vote, NDA bagged 325 votes against motion, while 126 members voted in favour.
- ▶ Constitutional rule allows any Lok Sabha MP who can garner support of 50 colleagues, to introduce motion of no-confidence against Council of Ministers. If there are 50 MPs in favour, motion is admitted and speaker allots date for discussion on motion. If government loses trust vote, it has to resign.
 - ▶ Rajya Sabha does not have procedure for moving of no-confidence motion against Government and also adjournment motion, censure motion.
75. ▶ Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) bagged order worth INR 560 crores from National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) for setting up flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) system at National Capital Power Station (capacity 2×490 MW) at Dadri in Uttar Pradesh, aimed at controlling various harmful emissions.
76. ▶ Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) is setting up a joint venture (JV) in India with Zorya Mashproekt, to overhaul turbines in India. The navy will soon have 34 warships driven by Zorya turbines, with four turbines per vessel, adding up to 136 in-service turbines. A turbine is overhauled after running 30,000 hours. This is costly and time-consuming process as it involves sending turbine back to Ukraine.
77. ▶ Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) launched its first Internet telephony service Wings, to be on complete roll out from August 1, 2018. It also launched prepaid initiative in its landline offerings and a rent free landline connection for existing subscribers
- ▶ To use Internet telephony through Wings, customer needs to install soft app on any of its smart devices, having internet to make and receive calls from anywhere in India and abroad with any party (mobile/landline). Through wings, customer can make or receive calls by using internet service of any operator.
 - ▶ This service will use mobile numbering scheme, provided using IP based access network of IMS NGN Core switches to allow users to make and receive calls over the Internet via their landline or mobile phone.
78. ▶ Bhitarkanika national park in Odisha became largest habitat of endangered estuarine crocodiles in India with a record number of 101 nesting sites.
79. ▶ Bhubaneswar (Odisha) became 4th National data centre of National Informatics Centre (NIC) after Delhi, Hyderabad and Pune. New cloud-enabled National Data Centre has ability to support 35000 virtual servers. NIC hosts nearly 10,000 websites of Government.
80. ▶ Bihar CM Nitish Kumar flagged off *Krishi Mahabhiyan-cum-Beej Vikas Vahan Rath*, to create awareness among farmers about government schemes during Kharif season (2 Rathes for each district). One is 'Kharif Mahabhiyan-cum-Mahotsav Rath' that would travel to villages AND other is 'Beej (Seed)Vahan Vikas Rath' which would have Kharif seeds and pesticides for treatment of kharif crop.
81. ▶ Bihar Government banned sale of loose cigarettes, to be deterrent to kids and youngsters who start smoking by buying loose cigarettes.
82. ▶ Bihar Govt. Requested Centre for granting Special Category Status for state, stating that It will act as catalyst for private investment and will boost employment generation.
- ▶ Concept of SCS was introduced in 1969 by 5th Finance Commission (Chaired by Mahavir Tyagi), for states that were disadvantaged in contrast to others, because of their inherent features and low resource base. It is discretion of central govt. to give special favours to states.
 - ▶ Special Category States have special socio-economic, geographical problems, high cost of production with less availability of useful resources and hence low economic base for livelihood activities.
 - ▶ National Development Council accorded Special Category Status to 11 states - 7 North-East States (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura), Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
83. ▶ Bihar government launched new crop insurance scheme named *Bihar State Crop Assistance scheme*, to be effective from Kharif season 2018. Under this, farmers would get compensation of INR 7500 per hectare if less than 20% of crop is damaged. And if more than 20% of crop is damaged, INR 10000 would per hectare would be given as compensation.
84. ▶ Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) secured image trademark for its iconic building, Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers located on Dalal Street in Mumbai, under Trade Marks Act 1999. Henceforth no one can use images of the Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers for commercial purposes without consent from BSE or paying it licensing fee. BSE's Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers serves as barometer of Indian economy.
85. ▶ Buddhist Community of Itanagar celebrated silver jubilee of the Losar Festival in Arunachal Pradesh. This festival is termed as *New Year* according to their Buddhist calendar.
86. ▶ Business Info Provider *Dun & Bradstreet* released *Port Logistics: Issues & Challenges in India* report, looking into various roadblocks and suggests policy recommendations to resolve challenges across ports in India.
- ▶ Report proposes 60 policy measures to strengthen ports sector, that represents bulk of India's merchandise trade.
 - ▶ Report introduces a 'Port Performance Index' to benchmark performance of various ports by combining qualitative perception of stakeholders with quantitative outcome based data. It covers 13 ports that handle around 67 % of India's maritime trade.
 - ▶ Out of 13 major ports, 3 ports (*Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT), Kamarajar Port, Visakhapatnam Port*) received 'Good' score.

87. ▶ Cab Aggregator Ola and Assam Government signed MoU to pilot an app-based river taxi service in Guwahati. River taxis will be machine-operated boats and users will be able to book rides through Ola app.

88. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Apr 11, 2018) -

✍ General Approvals -

✍ Increasing pay and allowances of Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories, from INR 80000 per month to 2.25 Lac Per Month.

✍ MOUs -

✍ With United Kingdom and Northern Ireland on return of Illegal Migrants.

✍ CCEA Approvals -

✍ Delegated powers to Finance and Petroleum Ministers to award oil and gas exploration blocks to successful bidders under Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP). Under HELP, exploration blocks awarded twice in a year and currently awarding of blocks requires CCEA's approval.

✍ Relaxed rules for Coal India Ltd (CIL) for extraction of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) lying below coal seams in its blocks in bid to quickly boost production. Till now, CIL had to apply to oil ministry for a licence to extract coal-bed methane (CBM) from its coal blocks.

89. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Apr 25, 2018) -

✍ MOUs -

✍ With Sao Tome and Principe for Cooperation in Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy, Medicinal Plants.

✍ With World Health Organisation (WHO) for Cooperation in Public Health.

✍ With BRICS countries on cooperation in regulation of medical products for human use amongst medicine regulatory agencies.

✍ Renewal Long Term Agreements (LTAs) for supply of iron ore (lumps and fines) of grade +64% Fe content to Japanese Steel Mills (JSMs) and POSCO, South Korea for 5 five years (till 31.3.2023) through MMTTC Limited.

✍ Declaration of Extension in Scheduled Areas in Rajasthan under 5th Schedule of Constitution of India.

✍ CCEA Approvals-

✍ Approved increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Raw Jute for 2018-19 season, at INR 3700 per quintal (compared to 3500 in 2017-18 season).

✍ Approved Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Bamboo Mission (NBM) under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) during remaining period of Fourteenth Finance Commission (2018-19 & 2019-20). Expenditure is estimated at INR 1290 crores.

90. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (July 18, 2018) -

✍ General Approvals -

✍ Approved to make district magistrates (DMs), instead of courts, as final authority for approving adoptions. Courts are overburdened and take long time to approve adoptions. Since, DMs have information about adoption cases and have access to all departments, it is easier for DMs to take the process ahead faster.

✍ Approved to grant Special Remission to Prisoners as part of commemoration of 150th birth anniversary of M K Gandhi to be observed in 2019. Prisoners to be considered for special remission are Male convicts of over 60 years of age (55 for Women and Transgender convicts) and who have completed 50% of their actual sentence period, Physically disabled convicts (70% disability) and more and who have completed 50% of their sentence period AND Terminally ill convicts.

✍ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -

✍ To protect interest of sugarcane farmers, Approved Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for 2018-19 at 275 per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10% and premium of 2.75 /qtl for each 0.1 % increase in recovery above 10%. Cost of production of is INR 155 per quintal. Remittances to sugarcane farmers will be over 83000 crores. Updated FRP will be w.e.f. 1st October, 2018.

✍ Approved establishment of new medical college at Deoria at a cost of INR 250 crores under Phase-II of Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

✍ Approved proposal for Continuation of Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship Schemes for the students belonging to the six notified Minority Communities at a total cost of Rs. 5338.32 crore for period up to 2019-20. This will benefit 70 lakh students annually.

✍ Approved policy framework for streamlining operations of Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) for increased domestic production of hydrocarbon resources. Framework includes -


- ✎ Special dispensation for E&P activities in North Eastern Region (NER), Based on recommendations in 'Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for North East'.
- ✎ Sharing of Royalty and Cess in Pre-NELP Exploration Blocks, to benefit Pre-NELP Exploration Blocks in which fresh investment for additional development activities is expected as sharing of royalty and cess, and cost recoverability of same will help in making additional investment commercially viable for Licensee company; ONGC/OIL.
- ✎ Extending tax benefits under Section 42 of Income Tax, 1961 prospectively to operational blocks under Pre-NELP discovered fields for extended period of contract under PSC extension policy.
- ✎ Relaxing timeline from 7 days to 15 days for giving written notice to notify the occurrence of a Force Majeure event in PSCs.
- ✎ Approved completion of 83 minor irrigation projects and 8 major / medium irrigation projects in Maharashtra's drought prone Vidharbha and Marathawada regions. Cost of projects is approx 13651 crores, with Central Assistance of 3831 crores under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana- Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (PMKSY-AIBP).
- ✎ MOUs -
 - ✎ MoU amongst BRICS Nations (*Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa*) on Regional Aviation Partnership Cooperation.
 - ✎ Cuba - Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy.
 - ✎ Indonesia - Pharmaceutical products, pharmaceutical substances, biological product and cosmetics regulatory functions.
 - ✎ Approved Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) agreements -
 - ✎ *Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)* (signed in 2010) with Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) of Ireland.
 - ✎ MoU with Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF).
 - ✎ MoU with National Board of Accountants and Auditors, Tanzania.


91. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (July 4, 2018) -

- ✎ MOUs -
 - ✎ With United Kingdom - Law & Justice and to set up a Joint Consultative Committee.
- ✎ General Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved creation of 1 post each of Vice-Chairperson and Member in National Commission for Safai Karmacharis.
 - ✎ Approved renaming Agartala Airport in Tripura as *Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport*, Agartala.
 - ✎ Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore, who ascended throne of the erstwhile Tripura Princely State in 1923, was an enlightened ruler. Agartala Airport was constructed in 1942 on land donated by Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore.
 - ✎ Approved continuance of 8 existing schemes of Ministry of Home Affairs upto March 2020 for relief and rehabilitation of migrants and repatriates under the Umbrella scheme "Relief and Rehabilitation of Migrants and Repatriates", with financial implication of 3183 crores for 2017-18 to 2019-20. Schemes are -
 - ✎ Central Assistance for one-time settlement of displaced families from Pak Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and Chhamb settled in Jammu & Kashmir.
 - ✎ Rehabilitation Package and up-gradation of infrastructure of Bangladeshi Enclaves and Cooch Behar District after transfer of enclaves between India and Bangladesh under Land Boundary Agreement.
 - ✎ Relief assistance to Sri Lankan refugees staying in camps in Tamil Nadu and Odisha.
 - ✎ Grant-in-Aid to Central Tibetan Relief Committee (CTRC) for five years for administrative and social welfare expenses of Tibetan settlements.
 - ✎ Grant-in-Aid to Government of Tripura for maintenance of Brus lodged in relief camps of Tripura.
 - ✎ Rehabilitation of Bru/Reang families from Tripura to Mizoram.
 - ✎ Grant of enhanced relief of Rs. 5.00 lakh per deceased person, who died during 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots.
 - ✎ Central Scheme for Assistance to Civilian Victims/Family of Victims of Terrorist/Communal/LWE Violence and Cross Border Firing and Mine/IED blasts on Indian Territory'.
 - ✎ Approved DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill 2018, aimed at expanding application of DNA-based forensic technologies to strengthen justice delivery system of country.
 - ✎ By providing for the mandatory accreditation and regulation of DNA laboratories, Bill ensures that with proposed expanded use of this technology in country, there is also assurance that DNA test results are reliable and data remain protected from misuse or abuse in terms of the privacy rights of our citizens.
 - ✎ Approved India's accession to WIPO Copyright Treaty, 1996 and WIPO Performers and Phonograms Treaty, 1996 which extends coverage of copyright to the internet and digital environment. These treaties will help India to enable creative right-

holders enjoy fruit of their labour, through international copyright system that can be used to secure return on investment made in producing and distributing creative works.

 Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -


 Approved expanding scope of Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) by enhancing its capital base to 10000 crores and asking it to mobilise 100000 crores for Revitalizing Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) by 2022. CCEA also approved infusing additional Government equity of 5,000 crore (in addition to 1,000 crore already provided) in HEFA. This would enable addressing the needs of all educational institutions with differing financial capacity in an inclusive manner

 Approved increase in Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for all 14 kharif crops for 2018-19 Season, ensuring minimum 50 % profit for farmers. Crops are - Paddy, Jowar, Bajra, Ragi, Maize, Arhar(Tur), Moong, Urad, Groundnut, Sunflower Seed, Soyabean, Sesamum, Nigerseed and Cotton. It will cost INR 15000 Crores to the Government.


 Updated MSPs for Kharif Crops are -


Crop	Earlier MSP	New MSP	% Rise
Paddy	1550	1750	12.90
Jowar	1700	2430	42.94
Bajra	1425	1950	36.84
Ragi	1900	2897	52.47 (Most Increase)
Maize	1425	1700	19.30
Arhar(Tur) -	5450	5675	4.13
Moong	5575	6975	25.11
Urad	5400	5600	3.70
Groundnut	4450	4890	9.89
Sunflower Seed	4100	5388	31.42
Soyabean	3050	3399	11.44
Sesamum	5300	6249	17.91
Nigerseed	4050	5877	45.11
Cotton	4020	5150	28.11

 Several Farmer Friendly Initiatives taken by govt. are -

 Premium rates to be paid by farmers are very low - 2 % of sum insured for all kharif crops, 1.5% for all rabi crops and 5 % for commercial and horticulture crops. Government launched Mobile App *Crop Insurance*, to help farmers to find out details about insurance cover available in their area and to calculate insurance premium for notified crops


 Government launched a scheme to develop a pan India electronic trading platform under 'National Agriculture Market' (NAM) aiming to integrate 585 regulated markets with common e-market platform in order to facilitate better price discovery and ensure remunerative prices to farmers.

 Government formulated a new model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion & Facilitation) Act, 2017 to provide farmers market options beyond the existing APMC regulated market yards.


 Soil Health Cards are being issued to farmers, renewed every 2 years. SHC provides information on fertility status of soil and a soil test based advisory on use of fertilizers. Over 15 crore Soil Health Cards have been distributed.


 Under Paramparagat KrishiVikasYojana (PKVY), Government is promoting organic farming and development of potential market for organic products.

 Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana is being implemented to extend coverage of irrigation 'HarKhetkoPani' and improving water use efficiency 'Per Drop More Crop ' in a focused manner.

 Government is focusing on improving productivity of crops such as rice, wheat, coarse grains and pulses under National Food Security Mission.

 A dedicated online interface e-KrishiSamvad provides direct and effective solutions to problems faced by farmers.

 Government is encouraging formation of Farmer Producer Organisations. Budget for 2018-19 has extended a favourable taxation treatment to Farmer Producers Organisations (FPOs) for helping farmers aggregate their needs of inputs, farm services, processing and sale operations.

 Government has set up a buffer stock of pulses and domestic procurement of pulses is also being done under Price Stabilization Fund (PSF), mainly to protect consumers. It aims to ensure that farmers should get full benefit of increased MSPs. For this, it is essential that if price of agriculture produce market is less than MSP, Government should purchase either at MSP or work in a manner to provide MSP for farmers through some other mechanism.

- ✎ A handbook for women farmers 'Farm Women Friendly Hand Book' containing special provisions and package of assistance which women farmers can claim under various ongoing Schemes has been brought out.
 - ✎ With above measures taken, Government has set a target to double the farmers' Income by 2022.
 - ✎ Approved extension of scheme of recapitalization of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) for upto 2019-20. It will enable RRBs to maintain minimum prescribed Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 9 %.
 - ✎ 56 RRBs are functioning in the country. As on 31st March, 2017, credit given by RRBs is 2,28,599 crores.
 - ✎ Scheme of Recapitalization of RRBs started in FY 2010-11 and was extended twice in 2012-13 and 2015-16. Amount of 342.80 crores will be utilized to provide recapitalization support to RRBs whose CRAR is below 9%.
 - ✎ First regional rural bank was 'Prathama Bank' that was established on 2nd October, 1975 in Moradabad (UP). RRBs are jointly owned by Government of India, concerned State Government and Sponsor Banks with capital shared in proportion of 50%, 15% and 35% respectively.
92. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (June 06, 2018) -
- ✎ CCEA (Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs) Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved construction of 9.9 km long new 6 - lane bridge across river Ganga on NH - 96 at Phaphamau in Allahabad with total cost of INR 1948 crores, to be completed by December 2021. It will resolve the traffic congestion on existing old 2 - lane Phaphamau bridge on NH-96 at Allahabad. This will also boost pilgrimage and local economy of Holy city of Prayag.
 - ✎ Implementation of Phase-3 of Off-grid and Decentralised Solar PV (Photo Voltaic) Application Programme to achieve additional 118 MWp(Mega Watt peak) off-grid solar PV capacity by 2020. Off-grid solar systems will also open better livelihood opportunities for beneficiaries in remote areas, increasing self-employment. Implementation of Phase-III is likely to generate employment opportunity equivalent to 8.67 lakh man-days. It will Cover -
 - ✎ 300000 solar street lights will be installed across country.
 - ✎ Solar power plants of individual size up to 25 kWp(kilo Watt peak) will be promoted in areas where grid power has not reached or is not reliable. Aggregated capacity of solar power plants would be 100 MWp.
 - ✎ 2500000 solar study lamps will be provided in North Eastern States and LWE affected districts.
 - ✎ Total project of the three components included under the phase 3 is INR 1895 crores of which INR 637 crores will be provided as central financial assistance.
 - ✎ General Approvals -
 - ✎ Release of Joint Stamps between with Russia, to establish postal cooperation.
 - ✎ Approved revision in wage structure of Gramin Dak Sevaks (GDS), with expenditure of INR 1258 crores during 2018-19, benefitting . 3.07 lakh Gramin Dak Sevaks. GDSs have been brought under two categories - Branch Postmasters (BPMs) and Assistant Branch Postmaster (ABPMs). Present 11 TRCA slabs will be merged into 3 TRCA Slabs with two levels each for BPMs and other than BPMs. Introduction of new Time Related Continuity Allowance (TRCA).
 - ✎ Approved Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) Continuation Programme (Phase 6) and funding of thirty PSLV operational flights under the Programme, with total fund requirement of INR 6131 Crores.
 - ✎ PSLV Continuation Programme was sanctioned in 2008, with four phases completed and fifth phase to be completed by Q2 of 2019-20. Phase 6 approval will cater to launch of satellite missions during Q3 of 2019-20 to Q1 of 2023-2, with frequency of up to 8 launches per year.
 - ✎ Approved Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III (GSLV Mk-III) continuation programme (Phase-I) consisting of ten (10) GSLV (Mk-III) flights, at a total estimated cost of Rs. 4338 crores.
 - ✎ The GSLV Mk-III continuation Programme – Phase 1 is first phase of operational flights that will enable launch of 4 tonne class of communication satellites to meet country's satellite communication requirements, during 2019-2024.
 - ✎ It will meet launch requirement of communication satellites to meet national demand for High Throughput Satellites for rural broadband connectivity, increase and sustain the availability of transponders for DTH, VSAT and Television broadcasters.
 - ✎ Approved several measures worth approx INR 8500 crores, to improve liquidity of sugar mills resulting in accumulation of huge cane price arrears of farmers.
 - ✎ Creation of buffer stock of 30 LMT of sugar for 1 year and to incur estimated expenditure of 1175 crores.
 - ✎ To fix minimum selling price of white / refined sugar at mill gate below which no white / refined sugar can be sold by a sugar mill in domestic market. Minimum selling price of white/refined sugar shall be initially fixed at Rs.29/kg which can be revised by DFPD based on revision of FRP etc.

- To up-grade existing distilleries attached to sugar mills by installing incineration boilers and setting up new distilleries in sugar mills. Government will bear interest subvention of maximum 1332 crores over 5 years on bank loans amounting 4440 crores to be sanctioned to sugar mills by banks.

MOUs -

- With Netherlands on technical cooperation in Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management.
- With Denmark on technical cooperation in Sustainable and Smart Urban Development.
- With United Kingdom, France on technical cooperation in Sustainable Urban Development.
- With Oman on Cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space.

93. Cabinet Approvals (June 13, 2018) -

MOUs -

- Joint issue of a postage stamp between Department of Posts of India and Vietnam.
- MoU signed between Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Institut National de la Santeet de la Recherche Medicale (INSERM) of France. It aims at cooperation in areas of common interest within medical, life sciences and health research fields.

General Approvals -

- Permitted HDFC Bank to raise additional share capital of up to a maximum of 24000 crores, over previous approved limit of 10000 crores. Provided that Composite foreign shareholding in Bank shall not exceed 74% of paid-up equity share capital.
- Approved continuation of 3 Year Action Plan (2017-2020) of scheme for Agricultural Education Division and ICAR Institutes with outlay of INR 2225 crores. It is aimed to generate quality human resources from the institutions of higher agricultural education. It comprises of -
 - Strengthening and Development of Higher Agricultural Education in India - 2050 crores
 - ICAR-National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) - 24 crores
 - ICAR - Central Institute of Women in Agriculture (CIWA) including All India Coordinated Research Project on Home Science (AICRP-HS) - 151 crores.
- Approved withdrawal of Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill 2013 (pending in Rajya Sabha). Nalanda University was established after a Joint Press Statement at 4th East Asia Summit in Thailand in October 2009. Present proposal is for withdrawing Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill 2013, which is aimed at amending certain existing provisions of Nalanda University Act 2010.
- Approved introduction of Dam Safety Bill 2018 in Parliament. It will help States and UTs to adopt uniform dam safety procedures which shall ensure safety of dams and safeguard benefits from such dams. The Bill provides for -
 - Constitution of a National Committee on Dam Safety which shall evolve dam safety policies and recommend regulations.
 - Establishment of National Dam Safety Authority as a regulatory body which shall implement guidelines and standards for dam safety.
 - Constitution of a State Committee on Dam Safety by State Governments.
- Approved nomination of Home Minister as Chairman of North Eastern Council (NEC), and Minister of State (Independent Charge) in Ministry of DoNER as Vice Chairman of NEC. NEC has Governors and CMs of all 8 North Eastern State as its members. Presently, Rajnath Singh is Home Minister and Jitendra Singh is Minister of State (IC) in Ministry of DoNER.

94. Cabinet Approvals (May 01, 2018) -

General Approvals -

- Approved doubling investment limit from INR 7.5 lakhs to 15 lakhs and extending time limits for subscription from May 4, 2018 to Mar 31, 2020 under Pradhan MantriVayaVandanYojana (PMVVY). It will enable upto Rs.10000 Pension per month for Senior Citizens.
 - PMVVY is implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to provide social security during old age and protect elderly persons aged over 60 years . It provides assured pension based on a guaranteed rate of return of 8% per annum for 10 years.
- Approved construction of 100 bedded General Hospital at Rural Health Training Centre (RHTC) Najafgarh in New Delhi at cost INR 95 Crores.
- Approved Restructuring of Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) by abolition of certain posts of Joint Secretary-level and above, with cadre strength Unchanged.
- Approved Cadre review and formation of Group 'A' service of technical cadre of Petroleum & Safety Organization (PESO) in name *Indian Petroleum & Explosives Safety Service (IPESS)*, to enhance capacity of organization.

- ✍ Approved promulgation of Ordinance to amend a law for speedy disposal of commercial disputes, aimed at improving India's ranking in World Bank's ease of doing business index. It will bring down specified value of commercial dispute to INR 3 lakh from 1 crore. It also aims to bring down time taken from present 1,445 days in resolution of commercial disputes of lesser value.
- ✍ **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -**
 - ✍ Approved upgradation of infrastructure at Chennai, Guwahati and Lucknow airports at a total cost of INR 5,082 crores. Chennai airport would get max INR 2,467 crores, while Guwahati and Lucknow airports would get INR 1,383 and 1,232 crores.
 - ✍ Approved to provide financial assistance @ of Rs. 5.50 per quintal (INR 55 per Ton) of cane crushed in sugar season 2017-18 to sugar mills to offset cost of cane, in order to help sugar mills to clear cane dues of farmers, which have accumulated upto 19000 Crores INR
 - ✍ Approved Umbrella Scheme *Green Revolution – Krishonnati Yojana* for period 2017-18 to 2019-20 with Central Share of INR 33270 crores. It comprises of 11 Schemes.
 - ✍ Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) - Central share of INR 7533.04 crores, MIDH aims to promote holistic growth of horticulture sector.
 - ✍ National Food Security Mission (NFSM), including National Mission on Oil Seeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP) - Central share of INR 6893.38 crores. It aims to increase production of rice, wheat, pulses, coarse cereals and commercial crops, through area expansion and productivity enhancement.
 - ✍ National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) - Central share of Rs.3980.82 crore. It aims at promoting sustainable agriculture practices best suitable to specific agro-ecology.
 - ✍ Submission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE) - Central share of 2961.26 crores. SMAE aims to strengthen ongoing extension mechanism of State Governments, local bodies etc., achieving food and nutritional security and socio-economic empowerment of farmers.
 - ✍ Sub-Mission on Seeds and Planting Material (SMSP) - Central share of 920.6 crores. SMSP aims to increase production of certified seed, upgrade quality of farm saved seeds, strengthen seed multiplication chain and promote new technologies and methodologies in seed production.
 - ✍ Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM) - Central share of 3250 crores. SMAM aims to increase reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to regions where availability of farm power is low.
 - ✍ Sub Mission on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine (SMPPQ) - Central share of 1022.67 crores. SMPPQ aims to minimize loss to quality and yield of agricultural crops from ravages of insect pests, diseases, weeds, nematodes, rodents, etc.
 - ✍ Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Census, Economics and Statistics (ISACES) - Central share of 730.58 crores. It aims to undertake agriculture census, study of cost of cultivation of principal crops, undertake research studies on agro-economic problems.
 - ✍ Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Cooperation (ISAC) - Central share of 1902.636 crores. It aims to provide financial assistance for improving economic conditions of cooperatives, remove regional imbalances and to speed up - cooperative development in agricultural marketing.
 - ✍ Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Marketing (ISAM) - Central share of 3863.93 crores. ISAM aims to develop agricultural marketing infrastructure, promote innovative and latest technologies and competitive alternatives in agriculture marketing.
 - ✍ National e-Governance Plan (NeGP-A) - Central share of 211.06 crores. It aims to bring farmer centricity & service orientation to programmes, to enhance reach & impact of extension services and improve access of farmers to information & services.
 - ✍ These sub schemes/missions were approved independently as separate scheme/mission. In 2017-18, it was decided to club all these under one umbrella scheme known as *Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana*.
 - ✍ Approved Continuation of Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) beyond 12th Five Year Plan to 2019-20, with financial outlay of INR 14832 crores. Under this, new AIIMS are established and Government medical colleges are upgraded. It will lead to employment generation for nearly 3000 people in various faculty & non-faculty posts in each of AIIMS.
 - ✍ Under this extension, 20 new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) will be established and 73 medical colleges will be upgraded.
 - ✍ Approved renaming and restructuring of Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK), along with continuation during remaining period of 14th Finance Commission (Till 2020).

- ✎ PMJVK would provide better socio economic infrastructure facilities to minority communities, particularly in education, health & skill development.
- ✎ Criteria for identification of Minority Concentration Towns have been rationalized by lowering population % criteria of Minority Communities (50 % to 25%) and fulfilment of parameters as Given -
 - ✎ Earlier Towns which were backward in terms of both in Basic Amenities and Socio-economic parameters were taken as MCTs. Now, Towns which were found backward in either or both of criteria have been taken up as MCT.
 - ✎ Area to be covered under PMJVK would be 57% more as compared to MsDP. MsDP covered 196 districts, while PMJVK will cover 308 districts.
 - ✎ Expenditure for continuation of programme as PMJVK will be INR 3972 crores.
 - ✎ It aims to address development deficits in identified minority concentration areas. Inclusion of Minority Concentration District HQs with Minority Concentration Towns having population over 25000, Minority Concentration Blocks and Cluster of Villages as per Census, 2011 data, will extend coverage.
 - ✎ PMJVK would cover 5 more States/UTs - Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Goa and Pondicherry.
 - ✎ Minority Concentration Areas of 61 districts out of 115 Aspirational districts have been covered under PMJVK.
 - ✎ Area covered under PMJVK will have 109 MCD Hqrs., 870 MCBs and 321 MCTs.

✎ MOUs and Foreign Approvals -

- ✎ Approved Mutual Recognition Agreement between Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA).
- ✎ Approved to accede to Protocol under World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on tobacco control to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products.

95. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (May 16, 2018) -

✎ Foreign MOUs -

- ✎ France - Technical Cooperation in railways.
- ✎ Morocco - legal Matters, Mining and Geology.
- ✎ Swaziland - Health and Medicine
- ✎ Colombia - Traditional Systems of Medicine.
- ✎ Suriname - Electoral management and administration
- ✎ Equatorial Guinea - Traditional Systems of Medicine
- ✎ With Brunei Darussalam for Exchange of Information and Assistance in Collection with respect to Taxes.

✎ General Cabinet Approvals -

- ✎ Establishing a **New Central University in Andhra Pradesh**, named *Central University of Andhra Pradesh*, in Janthaluru Village of Ananthapur District (Andhra Pradesh). INR 450 crores are approved for first phase expenditures.
 - ✎ Cabinet approved its operationalization initially by forming a society under Societies Registration Act 1860, till amendment to Central Universities Act 2009 is enacted and to enable commencement of academic activities from 2018-19.
- ✎ Setting up a **new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Deoghar (Jharkhand)**. INR 1103 crores have been approved for it and it will be set up under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).
- ✎ **Establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR)** at Bhopal (MP) as a Society under Societies Registration Act 1860, under Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. Estimated cost is Rs. 179.54 crore in first three years. NIMHR will provide rehabilitation services to persons with mental illnesses. It will have 9 Departments and will conduct 12 courses in area of mental health rehabilitation.
- ✎ Approved **strengthening of mechanism for resolution of commercial disputes** of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) -
 - ✎ New 2 tier mechanism will be put in place of existing Permanent Machinery of Arbitration (PMA) mechanism to resolve commercial disputes (excluding disputes concerning Railways, Income Tax, Custom & Excise Departments).
 - ✎ At First level, commercial disputes will be referred to a Committee comprising of Secretaries of administrative Ministries / Departments to which disputing CPSEs / Parties belong and Secretary in Deptt. of Legal Affairs. Max time at 1st Level is 3 Months.
 - ✎ If unresolved at 1st Tier, dispute will be referred to Cabinet Secretary, whose decision will be final.
- ✎ Approved **National Policy on Biofuels 2018**, to promote biofuels, that are more environment friendly and match up well with ongoing initiatives of Government like Make in India, Skill Development and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Salient features

Include -

✎ Salient Features -

✎ Categorises of biofuels -

✎ Basic Biofuels - First Generation (1G) bioethanol and biodiesel.

✎ Advanced Biofuels: Second Generation (2G) ethanol, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) to drop-in fuels, Third Generation (3G) biofuels, bio-CNG etc.

✎ Expansion scope of raw material for ethanol production - It allows use of sugarcane juice, sugar containing materials like sweet sorghum, sugar beet, starch containing materials like corn, cassava, damaged food grains like broken rice, wheat, rotten potatoes, unfit for human consumption for ethanol production.

✎ Allows use of surplus food grains for production of ethanol for blending with petrol with approval of National Biofuel Coordination Committee.

✎ Viability gap funding scheme indicated for 2G ethanol Bio refineries of 5000 crores in 6 years for giving special emphasis to advanced biofuels.

✎ Encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production from non-edible oilseeds, used cooking oil, short gestation crops.

✎ Expected Benefits Of Policy -

✎ Reduce Import Dependency.

✎ Cleaner Environment - will reduce CO₂ emissions and Green House Gas emissions.

✎ Health benefits - Using cooking oil as a potential feedstock for biodiesel will prevent diversion of used cooking oil in the food industry.

✎ Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Management - One ton of such waste has potential to provide around 20% of drop in fuels.

✎ Infrastructural Investment in Rural Areas - Addition of 2G bio refineries across country will spur infrastructural investment in rural areas.

✎ Employment Generation - Setting up one 100klpd 2G bio refinery contributes to 1200 jobs in plant operations, village level entrepreneurs and supply chain management.

✎ Additional Income to Farmers - Adopting 2G technologies for producing biofuels, agricultural residues and waste which otherwise are burnt by farmers can be converted to ethanol. Through this process farmers can fetch price for these waste.

✎ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Approvals -

✎ Approved Development of Freight Village, an Integrated Multi Modal Logistics Hub (IMLH), Nangal Chaudhary (Haryana), in two phases. Sanction of 1029 crore for development of Phase I has been approved. Investment of 763 crore by National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT).

✎ Approved **enhancement of budget by 11,330 crores for Network For Spectrum (NFS) project** for laying alternate communication network for Defence Services for release of spectrum over INR 13,334 crore already approved by Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure in July 2012. Project, being implemented by BSNL, will be completed in 24 months. NFS project will boost communication capabilities of Defence Forces.

✎ Approved initial Corpus of INR 5000 crores for setting up of a dedicated **Micro Irrigation Fund (MIF) with NABARD** under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

✎ Allocation of 2,000 crore and 3,000 crore will be utilised during 2018-19 and 2019-20 respectively. NABARD will extend loan to State Governments during this period, to be paid back in 7 years (with grace period of 2 years). Lending rate will be 3% lower than cost of raising fund by NABARD.

✎ Dedicated MIF will supplement efforts of Per Drop More Crop Component (PDMC) of PMKSY.

✎ Fund will facilitate States to mobilise resources for their initiatives, to achieve annual target of about 2 Million ha/year during remaining period of 14th Finance Commission under Per Drop More Crop Component of PMKSY.

✎ Approved extension of Delhi Metro from Noida City Centre to Sector-62 (Noida - UP) covering 6.675 KM at cost INR 1967 crore.

96. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (May 23, 2018) -

✎ MOUs -

✎ Angola - Electronics and Information Technology

✎ France, Morocco - Renewable Energy

- ✍ Denmark - Food Safety Cooperation
- ✍ Singapore - Personnel Management and Public Administration
- ✍ Turkey - Trade in poppy seeds to ensure quick and transparent processing for import of poppy seeds from Turkey
- ✍ General Cabinet Approvals -
 - ✍ Approved a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for North Eastern Region (NER) in Meghalaya, at cost of INR 3911 crores to be funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). Features Include Provision of 2G+4G mobile coverage in uncovered areas and National Highways in Meghalaya. It will increase penetration of mobile connectivity in Meghalaya, resulting in equitable access of communication, information and governance.
 - ✍ Approved *Universal Service Obligation Fund [USOF]* supported scheme to provide mobile services at 4072 tower locations identified by MHA in inhabited uncovered areas affected by Left Wing Extremism [LWE] of 96 districts in 10 States for Phase-II project, with cost approx 7330 Crores. It would be used by security personnel deployed in LWE affected areas and will also provide mobile services to residents in unconnected inhabited villages.
 - ✍ Approved an ordinance to set up country's first national sports university in Imphal (Manipur), on lines of National Sports University Bill 2017 which is pending in Parliament. Proposed university is expected to bridge gap that exists in sports environment of country in various areas such as sports science, sports technology, high performance training.
- ✍ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs Approvals (CCEA) -
 - ✍ Approved restructuring of balance sheet of Scooters India Limited Lucknow, by reducing equity of INR 85.21 crores in share capital of SIL held by Government, amid consistent accumulation of losses.
 - ✍ Approved amending Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016 (IBC), giving relief to homebuyers who invested in housing projects of real estate companies that have gone bankrupt -
 - ✍ Committee of creditors voting rights of resolution plans will be limited to 66 % from earlier threshold of 75 %, to speed up the resolution process.
 - ✍ Withdrawal of insolvency application will be allowed, if 90 % of creditors agree.
 - ✍ Promoters of companies with turnover of up to Rs 250 crore will be allowed to bid. Earlier, they were barred from bidding as government feared that they will walk away with stressed assets at a discount.
 - ✍ Waiving Penal Interest on Government Loans to -
 - ✍ Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT) - 250.89 crores of Penal Interest to be waived, although VPT will pay outstanding Principal of INR 44.69 crores. Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT) availed INR 110.41 crore of loan during 1970-71 to 1984-85. VPT could not pay interest during 1979-80 to 1989-90 due to revenue losses, accumulating huge amount of Penal Interest.
 - ✍ Paradip Port Trust (PPT) - 1076.59 crores of Penal Interest to be waived, although PPT will pay outstanding Principal of INR 387.74 crores. Paradip Port Trust (PPT) availed INR 642.69 crore of loan during 1967 to 2002. PPT could not pay start repayment on time due to revenue losses, accumulating huge amount of Penal Interest.

97. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- ✍ MOU with Iran in field of Traditional Systems of Medicine, agriculture and allied sectors.
- ✍ Agreement with Iran for Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income.
- ✍ MoU with Sri Lanka for promoting cooperation in field of Information Technology and Electronics.
- ✍ Approved *Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts (Amendment) Bill 2018* for introduction in Parliament.
 - ✍ It brings down specified value of a commercial dispute to 3 Lakhs from the current 1 Crore. Hence, commercial disputes of a reasonable value can be decided by commercial courts. It reduce time taken (presently 1445 days) to resolve commercial disputes of lesser value and will improve India's ranking in the Ease of Doing Business.
 - ✍ It provides for establishment of Commercial Courts at district Judge level for territories over which respective High Courts have ordinary original civil jurisdiction i.e. in Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and State of Himachal Pradesh.
- ✍ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved continuing Urea Subsidy Scheme upto 2019-20 at a total estimated cost of 164935 crores and for disbursement of fertilizer subsidy.

98. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- ✍ MOUS / Agreements -
 - ✍ Approved signing of Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement between India and France. It represents major milestone in enhancing people-to-people contacts, fostering mobility of students, academics, researchers and skilled professionals and strengthening cooperation on issues related to irregular migration and human trafficking between two sides.

- ✍ MoU with Hellenic on Cooperation in Renewable Energy.
- ✍ MoU between India's Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and Public Service Commission of Mauritius, for sharing expertise of both parties in area of recruitment.
- ✍ Agreement with France to prevent illicit consumption and reduction of illicit traffic in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Chemical Precursors and related offences.
- ✍ Introduction of Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill 2018 in Parliament -
 - ✍ It aims to encourage institutional arbitration for settlement of disputes and make India a centre of robust Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism. It will amend Act of 1996 and will improve institutional arbitration by Creation of an independent body *Arbitration Council of India (ACI)* which will grade arbitral institution and accredit arbitrators by laying down norms and take steps to promote arbitration, conciliation, mediation and other ADR Mechanism.
- ✍ Release additional instalment of Dearness Allowance (DA) to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners wef 01-01-2018, representing increase of 2% over existing rate of 5% of Basic Pay/Pension, for a period of 14 months from January 2018 to February 2019).
- ✍ Recommendations of Inter-Ministerial Group on Stressed Assets in Telecom Sector, Including -
 - ✍ Restructuring deferred payment liabilities of spectrum auction of telecom service providers and revising limit of the cap for spectrum holding for telecom service providers. It gives one-time opportunity to opt for higher number of instalment (max. 16 instalment) apart from currently permitted 10 instalments.
 - ✍ Revision of limits of cap for spectrum holding Based upon the recommendations of TRAI and Telecom Commission, from current limit of 25% to 35%.
- ✍ Shifting Headquarters of Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) from Chennai (Tamilnadu) to Ballabhgarh (Haryana).
- ✍ CCEA approved INR 1151 crores Central Sector Scheme for in-situ management of crop residue in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. It will promote agricultural mechanization for upto 2020 to provide cost-effective solution to farmers to deal with stubble burning.

99. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- ✍ Cooperation Agreement with Morocco to develop long-term cooperation in railways.
- ✍ Agreement with Israel on Film Co-production.
- ✍ Cabinet approved Introducing 2 new Bills in Parliament, aimed at protecting savings of investors -
 - ✍ Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill 2018 - It aims to tackle menace of illicit deposit taking activities.
 - ✍ Chit Funds (Amendment) Bill 2018 - It aims at facilitating orderly growth of Chit Funds sector and remove bottlenecks being faced by Chit Funds industry. Amendments Proposed in Chit Funds Act 1982 Include Increasing ceiling of foreman's commission from a maximum of 5% to 7%, as rate has remained static since commencement of Act.
- ✍ CCEA approved construction of 4.531 km long 2-Lane Bi-Directional *Silkyara Bend - Barkot Tunnel* along NH-134 (old NH-94) in Uttarakhand, under Chardham Plan. It will be built over 4 years, at cost approx INR 1383 crores. Tunnel will provide all weather connectivity to Yamunotri (one of Chardhams).
- ✍ CCEA approved methodology for auction of coal blocks for sale of coal to private sector under Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act 2015 and Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act 1957. It will open coal sector to commercial mining by private sector, ending 41 year old monopoly of Coal India Ltd (CIL). It will allow power cement and steel producers to source coal more efficiently.
 - ✍ SC in September 2014 cancelled 204 coal mines and blocks allocated to various Companies since 1993 under Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act 1973. After this, Parliament enacted Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act 2015 to bring transparency in allocation of coal mines by way of auction and allotment for the sale of coal.
- ✍ Approved setting up of tribunal for adjudication of long-pending dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over Mahanadi river waters. Tribunal was constituted under Inter-State River Disputes (ISRWD) Act 1956 on request of Odisha and is in line with SC's January 2018 order.
- ✍ Approved Setting up crèche facility in Parliament House premises, to establish inclusive and supportive work environment for women employees, in line with Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017. Creche Facility is *a nursery where babies and young children are cared for during the working day.*

100. ▶ Cabinet Approvals Mar 1, 2018 -

- ✍ Approved proposal for establishment of National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA), as an independent regulator for auditing profession which is one of key changes brought in by Companies Act 2013. It is expected to improve investments, globalisation of

business by meeting international practices, and assist in development of audit profession. NFRA will be 15 members body, consisting of Chairperson, three full-time Members and one Secretary.

Approved Introducing *Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill 2018* in Parliament, to lay down measures to deter economic offenders from evading process of Indian law by remaining outside jurisdiction of Indian courts. Cases with offences valued Over 100 crores will come under purview of this Bill.

It is expected to re-establish rule of law with respect to the fugitive economic offenders as they would be forced to return to India to face trial for scheduled offences.

101. ▶ Cabinet Approvals on Apr 04, 2018

MOUs -

With Afghanistan for cooperation in field of food safety and related areas.

With Iran on establishment of an expert group on trade remedy measures.

With Canada to foster cross-border partnerships focused on research excellence and industry-academic collaboration.

With UAE for Technical Co-operation in Railway Sector.

CCEA (Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs) -

Approved closure of Burn Standard Company Ltd (BSCL) - a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under Ministry of Railways. It has been decided after continued poor physical and financial performance of company for over 10 years.

Government will provide one-time grant of INR 417.10 crores for clearing liabilities of company. 508 employees of BSCL will benefit from Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS). BSCL was incorporated in 1976 following nationalization and amalgamation of Burn and Company and Indian Standard Wagon Company Limited in 1987 under Department of Heavy Industries (DHI). It and was declared sick in the year 1995.

Approved Revised Cost Estimates (RCE) of scheme of Updation of National Register of Citizens (NRC) 1951 in Assam at a cost of Rs. 1220 crores upto 31-12-2018. Scheme of NRC, 1951 is specific to state of Assam covering about 3.29 crore applicants.

Other Approvals -

Approved rightsizing Competition Commission of India (CCI) from One Chairperson and Six Members (totalling seven) to One Chairperson and Three Members (totalling four), by not filling the existing vacancies of two Members and one more additional vacancy, expected in September 2018. It is being done in line with Government's objective of *Minimum Government - Maximum Governance*.

102. ▶ Cabinet Approvals on Feb 7, 2018 -

MoU with Tunisia for cooperation on Youth matters.

Protocol amending Agreement between with China for Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion.

MOU with USA on Law Enforcement Training.

MoU with UK on Cooperation in Skill Development, Vocational Education and Training.

MoU for Secondment Programme with Australia.

Ratification of Minamata Convention on Mercury, enabling India to become a Party of Convention. It gives flexibility for continued use of mercury-based products and processes involving mercury compound up to 2025. Minamata Convention was signed in October 2013 in Kumamoto (Japan), aimed to protect human health and environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.

Government approved 2nd round of Discovered Small Field (DSF) auctions under Discovered Small Field Policy, to offer total 60 un-monetized discoveries with an estimated 194.65 Million Metric tonnes of oil.

Of these, 22 fields belong to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), 5 to Oil India Limited (OIL), 12 are relinquished discovered fields from New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) blocks, and 21 fields that did not receive any investor interest in first round of DSF.

Amendment to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act 2006 for classifying MSMEs from current *investment in plant and machinery* criteria to *annual turnover* criteria. It aims at encouraging ease of doing business, make MSME classification norms growth oriented and align them to new indirect tax regime revolving around Goods & Services Tax (GST). The amendment also empowers Central Government to vary turnover limits. New Classification Criteria -

Micro - It will be unit with annual turnover under INR 5 crores.

Small - It will be unit with annual turnover Between 5 - 75 crores.

Medium - It will be unit with annual turnover Between 75 - 250 crores.

103. ▶ Cabinet Approvals on Mar 21, 2018 -

- ✎ Approved launch of new Centrally Sponsored *Ayushman Bharat -National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM)*. Scheme has benefit cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year and will target over 10 crore families belonging to poor and vulnerable population based on SECC database. AB-NHPM will subsume on-going -Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS).
- ✎ Approved second and final extension of term of Commission constituted to examine issue of Sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes in Central List for upto June 2018. It was constituted under article 340 of Constitution in October 2017 and is headed by Justice (Retd.) G. Rohini.
- ✎ Approved foformation of 100% owned C Corporation of Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd.(TCIL) in USA in the state of Texas. Its initial capital will be 5 Million USD.
- ✎ Approved closure of India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI)to enhance synergies in channelizing Diaspora's contributions to India's flagship programmes such as National Mission for clean Ganga and Swachh Bharat Mission.
 - ✎ IDF-OI was set in 2008 as an autonomous not-for-profit Trust, to facilitate Overseas Indian donate into social projects in India. As Foundation received only 36.80 Lakhs between December 2008 and March 2015 as donation from Indian community, it was reviewed in 2015.
 - ✎ After Review and adding Flagship programmes like National Mission for Clean Ganga and Swachh Bharat Mission etc. into mandate of IDF-OI, It received INR 10.16 crores in 3 years.
 - ✎ Now, to enhance synergies and improve efficiency, it was decided that Trust would be closed down by March 31, 2018.
- ✎ Approved North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS) 2017 with outlay of 3000 crores upto March, 2020. NEIDS is a combination of incentives covered under the earlier two schemes with a much larger outlay. Overall cap for benefits under all components of incentives will be of INR 200 crores per unit.
- ✎ Foreign Affairs -
 - ✎ Revision of the Agreement with Qatar for avoidance of double taxation and for the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.
 - ✎ MoU with Guyana on cooperation in Renewable Energy.
 - ✎ Approved opening 18 new Indian Missions in Africa by 2021. It will increase number of Resident Indian Missions in Africa from 29 to 47.
- ✎ Approved inclusion of the communities namely *Parivara* and *Talawara* as synonym of *Nayaka*, in list of STs of Karnataka.
- ✎ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approvals -
 - ✎ *Integrated Scheme for Development of Silk Industry* for 2017-18 to 2019-20, with allocation of INR 2161.68 Crores. It will be implemented by the Ministry through Central Silk Board (CSB). It will focus on multidimensional development of Sericulture sector.
 - ✎ Continuation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme *Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)* from 1-04-2017 to 31-03-2020. It seeks to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio of the country to 30% by 2020. Funds alloctaed for concerned period are 9604 Crores.
 - ✎ Funding ratio - Central and State Governments ratio of 90:10 for North-Eastern States, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, 60:40 for other States and UTs with Legislature and 100:0 for UTs without Legislature.
- 104. ▶ Cabinet has Introducing Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill 2018 in Parliament, to address issue of human trafficking.
 - ✎ Deals with confidentiality of victims and witnesses and complainants.
 - ✎ Time bound trial and repatriation of the victims, within 1 year from taking into cognizance.
 - ✎ Creates Rehabilitation Fund for the first time, to be used for well-being of victim including education, skill development, health care and psychological support, legal aid, accommodation etc.
 - ✎ Creates dedicated institutional mechanisms at District, State and Central level.
 - ✎ Punishment prescribed under it ranges from rigorous minimum 10 years to life and fine not less than Rs. 1 lakh.
- 105. ▶ Central Government disapproved execution Karnataka Government's *Mukhya Mantri Anila Bhagya Yojane* that promises free LPG gas connections for Below Poverty Line families.
 - ✎ Central Govt wants State Govt to execute it through oil marketing companies (OMCs), unlikely current practice of directly going through the distributors' network.
- 106. ▶ Central Government sanctioned a special package to strengthen security in 3 eastern districts of Arunachal Pradesh - Tirap, Changlang and Longding.

107. ▶ Central Government started a Pilot Scheme for Procurement of Aggregate Power of 2500 MW on competitive basis for 3 years from generators with commissioned projects but without Power Purchase Agreement. It will revive power demand, which has affected generators who do not have Power Purchase Agreements. Maximum allotment to a single entity has been capped at 600 MW.
108. ▶ Central Government will set up 562 more Ekalavya Model Residential School (EMRS) in tribal areas, aimed at providing best quality education to tribal children in their own environment. Currently, 190 EMRSs are operational, with approx 56000 tribal students enrolled.
109. ▶ Central Oil PSUs IOCL, ONGC, GAIL, OIL, and NRL signed agreement for executing 1500 Km North-East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid, to connect all North-East States to National Gas Grid, under Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project. JV will have equal equity contribution from all partners. Expenditure is INR 6000 crores and is scheduled to complete by 2022 in three phases.
- ▶ Urja Ganga Gas Pipeline Project was launched in October 2016 with an aim to provide piped cooking (PNG) gas to residents of eastern region of country and CNG gas for vehicles. It envisaged laying 2,050-km pipeline connecting Jagdishpur (UP) to Haldia (West Bengal) by 2018, covering UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.
110. ▶ Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) launched *Saathi* mobile help centre to reach out to people undertaking annual pilgrimage to 3,880-metre high holy cave shrine of Amarnath.
111. ▶ Central Reserve Police Force launched 'Madadgaar Helpline', a distress helpline for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, with helpline number 14411.
112. ▶ Central Water Commission (CWC) signed agreement with Google for flood forecasting and dissemination of flood related information to masses, to help crisis management agencies to better handle extreme hydrological events, under National Hydrology Project (NHP).
- ▶ CWC will use technological advances made by Google in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning and geo-spatial mapping for effective management of water resources.
 - ▶ Google also rolled out an offline mode for Android users, to enable surfing web with Chrome even without a constant internet connection. Users who are signed into Chrome can also access relevant articles, based on browsing history.
113. ▶ Centre and state governments of Tripura and Mizoram signed agreement for repatriation of thousands of people belonging to Bru community from Tripura to Mizoram. Over 3200 people living in refugee camps in Jampui Hills of Tripura for two decades are being replaced to Mizoram before October 2018.
114. ▶ Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS) developed a mobile based application *utsonmobile*, with features -
- ▶ It enables booking of unreserved tickets, issue and renewal of season and platform tickets, check and load R-wallet balance and helps maintain user profile management and booking history.
 - ▶ Upon registration, Railway Wallet (R-Wallet) will be created. R-Wallet can be recharged online (<https://www.utsonmobile.indianrail.gov.in>) or at any of UTS counters.
 - ▶ No advance ticket booking is allowed (Journey date will always be current date).
 - ▶ No need to carry hardcopy of ticket.
115. ▶ Chennai based Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India awarded Geographical Indication (GI) Tag to Madhya Pradesh's Kadaknath chicken. It will ensure that no one else can use name Kadaknath Chicken while selling any other black chicken.
- ▶ Kadaknath chicken breed is unique for its black colour due to its black-feathers. This breed of chicken is popular for its adaptability and flavourful good-tasting black meat, which is believed to have medicinal properties. It is native tribal districts of Jhabua, Alirajpur and parts of Dhar in Madhya Pradesh.
 - ▶ Kadaknath chicken contains 25-27% of protein in comparison with other breeds of chickens that contain 18% protein. It is also known for its high iron content.
116. ▶ Chennai based Geographical Indication Registry has awarded Geographical Indication (GI) Tag to two more craft forms from Telangana - Adilabad dokra and Warangal Dhurries.
- ▶ Adilabad Dokra is an ancient bell metal craft and Warangal Dhurries is a popular traditional cotton rug. Adilabad Dokra It is form of ancient bell metal craft practiced by Woj community native to Adilabad district.
 - ▶ Warangal Dhurries is a popular traditional cotton rug in which weavers create beautiful patterns and dye them using vegetable colours, which are washed in flowing water after printing process. Currently, there are more than 2000 weaving community members present in Kothawada, Warangal in spinning Dhurrie.
117. ▶ Chhatrapati Shivaji International airport (Mumbai) created new world record for single-runway operations by handling 980 arrivals and take-offs in 24 hours. It has thus become world's busiest single-runway airport.
118. ▶ Chhattisgarh CM Raman Singh launched Vikas Yatra from Dantewada district aimed at spreading awareness about the development the state has witnessed during current Govt's tenure. It will include distributing free pesticides to 5.5 lakh labourers and giving smartphones to 50 lakh families under Sanchar Kranti Yojna.

119. ▶ Chhattisgarh Government approved merger of *shikshakarmi* with state school education department., wef July 2018. It is expected to benefit around 1.50 lakh shikshakarmi who are currently working under Panchayats and urban local bodies. For merger, a shikshakarmi must have completed 8 years of service.
- ▶ Merged teachers would from now onwards be known as Teacher (LB) cadre and their management as well as control would be with School Education Department instead of Panchayat Department.
120. ▶ Chhattisgarh Government will start distributing free smartphones to over 50 lakh people across state under Sanchar Kranti Yojana (SKY), In a bid to reduce the digital divide. This will give phone connectivity to 13900 villages of Chhattisgarh.
121. ▶ Chhattisgarh Govt. launched a smartphone distribution scheme called 'Mobile Tihar' under Sanchar Kranti Yojna. It includes distribution of smartphones to 45 lakh women and 5 lakh children and setting up of 556 new mobile towers.
122. ▶ Chhattisgarh government launched a new *Aabhar Aapki Sevaon Ka* Pensioners Portal, enabling a central mechanism for pension database and making payment in a unified manner to benefit 80,000 pensioners. All pensioners can access portal at ekoshonline.cg.nic.in/aabhar/.
123. ▶ Chhattisgarh will become first state to recruit transgenders in police force, To promote gender equality.
124. ▶ Chhattisgarh will soon get specialised anti-Naxal combat force called Black Panther, like Greyhounds unit of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. It Raised in 1989, Greyhounds is elite commando force force that specialises in anti-insurgency operations against Naxals and Maoists.
125. ▶ Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology adopted word '*AYUSH*' in Hindi and English languages for scientific and technical purposes. AYUSH is acronym for five traditional systems of medicine - *Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy*.
126. ▶ Common Service Center (CSC) and National Health Accounts (NHA) signed MoU to implement Ayushman Bharat scheme (NHPS) through 3 lakh Common Service Centers (CSCs) across country.
- ▶ NHPS aims to cover over 10 crore poor vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage of up to Rs. 5 lakh (per family per year) for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.
 - ▶ CSCs will help beneficiary to identify his name in Health Ministry database and his entitlement for the scheme. It will also help beneficiary to scan and upload his KYC documents for verification of his identity and claim his entitlement.
127. ▶ Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) signed MoU with Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for designating Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Lucknow (CSIR-CIMAP) as Coordinating Centre on Medicinal Plants.
128. ▶ Council of Scientific and Industrial Research -National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) and Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under Ministry of Communications signed an MOU on technical knowledge sharing for establishing a nationwide Time Stamping & Time Synchronization network and traceability of Time signal to UTC NPL Time.
- ▶ Nationwide, Time Stamping & Time Synchronization network consisting of 22 numbers of Time Synchronization Centers (TSC's) will be set up by DoT with technical assistance from CSIR-NPL. This network will provide synchronizing pulse in Indian Standard Time(IST) to all Telecom & Internet Service providers in all the 22 LSA (Licensed Service Areas) in the country.
 - ▶ Purpose of synchronizing the telecom network with IST time stamp is to enable security agencies to overcome difficulty in analyzing cyber events in this era of greatly increasing network speed with advancement of telecom technology. It will also improve telecom network efficiency by reducing packet loss due to reduced slips in better synchronized digital network.
129. ▶ Dalmia Bharat Group adopted Gandikota Fort in Andhra Pradesh and Red Fort in Delhi, under government's 'Adopt A Heritage' scheme, for a period of five years.
130. ▶ Delhi Government will introduce a "happiness curriculum" in Delhi's government schools from coming academic session, for students from nursery up to Class VIII.
131. ▶ Delhi Govt. approved a scheme under which farmers will be able to lease out a part of their agricultural land for setting up of solar panels to get additional income, called *Mukhyamantri Kisan Aaye Badhotri Solar Yojana*.
- ▶ Any farmer can rent out not more than one-third of his land to a private firm to set up solar panels at a rate of 1 lakh per annum per acre.
 - ▶ Panels will be set up at a height of 3.5 metres, so that the land can also be used for agriculture.
 - ▶ Farmers will also get 1,000 units of free solar power without any investment.
132. ▶ Delhi government and Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) launched *Clean Air Campaign*, to focus on improvement of air quality, with 70 teams formed as a part of the campaign.
133. ▶ Delhi government launched *Mission Buniyaad* for improving learning skills of children studying in state and municipal-run schools. It will run from April to June for Class 3 to 5 in MCD schools and for Class 6 to 8 in government's schools. Children will undergo a reading level assessment based on which they will be enrolled in specialised *Mission Buniyaad* classes.

134. ▶ Delhi government will establish State Sanskrit Education Council to improve formal education of Sanskrit in Delhi.
135. ▶ Delhi government will set up *Rogi Kalyan Samitis* in each Assembly constituency and *Jan Swasthaya Samitis* in state-run dispensaries, poly clinics and mohalla clinics, to provide support to health institutions. Each such entity will receive INR 3 lakh as grand-in aid every year.
136. ▶ Delhi-NCR region began supplying ultra-clean Bharat Stage VI grade fuel (both petrol and diesel), to combat the rising levels of air pollution. Delhi became first city in country to switch from BS-IV grade fuels to BS-VI.
137. ▶ Department of Agriculture released 3rd Advance Estimates of production of major crops for 2017-18. At 279.51 million tonnes, Record Foodgrains generation is expected in 2017-18.
138. ▶ Department of Biotechnology constituted Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee (FISEC) to investigate matter of illegal cultivation of Herbicide Tolerant (HT) or BG-III cotton in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat and Maharashtra, after several complaints regarding illegal cultivation of HT cotton.
- ▶ Cultivation of HT cotton (BG-III) is not approved by country's biotech regulator, Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of Ministry of Environment. HT Cotton (Herbicide-Tolerant (HT) Cotton / BG-III cotton) takes care of weeds problem at much lower cost as compared to physical labour required for weeding. It contains Round-up Ready and Round-up Flex (RRF) gene.
 - ▶ The herbicide-resistant gene in HT cotton can spread through pollen into biodiversity system leading to transformation of weeds into super weeds on large-scale. It will threaten growth and yields of all crops in future and also increase cultivation costs and lead to health hazards.
139. ▶ Department of Economic Affairs (Finance Ministry) signed loan agreement worth US \$ 375 million with World bank for Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP), JMVP for capacity augmentation of navigation on National Waterway-1(River Ganga) from Varanasi to Haldia.
- ▶ Total project cost is \$800 Million and is expected to be completed by March 2023. It will enable commercial navigation of vessels of capacity 1500-2,000 tons on NW-I and will lead to generation of upto 84000 jobs in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal.
140. ▶ Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) released final rankings of States in Ease of Doing Business.
- ▶ Top 5 - Andhra Pradesh (1), Telangana (2), Haryana (3), Jharkhand (4), Gujarat (5).
 - ▶ DIPP (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) in collaboration with World Bank conducted an annual reform exercise for all States / UTs under Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP). It aims to improve delivery of various Government services in an efficient manner.
 - ▶ DIPP for first time introduced taking feedback to ensure that reforms have actually reached ground level. 78 reforms out of 372 were identified for survey. More than 5,000 private sector users in 23 States and UTs shared their experience.
141. ▶ Department of Industrial and Management Engineering of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur has set up India's first Centre for Energy Regulation (CER) with help of United Kingdom Govt. It aims at providing independent advisory on matters related to power and energy sector.
- ▶ IIT-Kanpur also signed a 15-crore MoU with VTOL Aviation India to develop vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) craft prototypes, potentially to be used as flying taxis.
142. ▶ Department of Posts launched DIGITAL ADVANCEMENT OF RURAL POST OFFICE FOR A NEW INDIA (DARPAN) Project, aiming to connect all 1.29 lakh Rural Branch Post Offices, to enable them to do online Postal and Financial Transactions. Project cost is INR 1300 crores.
143. ▶ Department of Telecom (DoT) and IIT Chennai, will jointly set up a development centre for 5G technologies. It will help provide applications like Internet of Things and Machine-to-Machine internet. A similar tie up had already been made between Ericsson and IIT Delhi.
144. ▶ Department of Telecommunications (DoT) released draft of new Telecom policy – *National Digital Communications Policy 2018*.
- ▶ It Calls for Universal broadband coverage, creating 40 lakh jobs in digital communications sector, enhancing contribution of digital communications sector to 8% of India's GDP from 6% in 2017. These objectives are to be achieved by 2022. It also aims to hike India's rank in ITU's ICT development index to top 50, from 134 in 2017.
 - ▶ Improvement in regulatory framework - The policy recognises its importance for attracting investments and ensuring fair competition, to serve needs of people.
 - ▶ Rationalising spectrum regulatory regime - It recognises spectrum as key natural resource for public benefit to achieve socio-economic goals. It calls for simplifying process of obtaining permissions from various agencies, to promote efficiency.
 - ▶ National Broadband Mission - It will be established to secure universal broadband access for implementation of broadband initiatives, to be funded through Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF) and Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). Its components include- BharatNet (10 to 10 Gbps to Gram Panchayats), GramNet (connecting key rural areas with 10 to 100 Mbps), NagarNet (establish one- million public Wi-Fi Hotspots in urban areas), JanWiFi (establishing two-million Wi-Fi Hotspots in rural areas) and Fibre First Initiative.

- ✎ Satellite Communication Technologies - Government would develop an ecosystem for satellite communications in India.
 - ✎ USOF's scope and modalities will be reviewed by redesigning USOF and broadening its objectives to enable universal broadband access and strengthening institutional capacity.
 - ✎ Better Quality of services.
 - ✎ Comprehensive data protection regime has been mandated for digital communications that safeguards the privacy, autonomy and choice of individuals.
145. ▶ Diu Smart City become first city in India to run 100% on renewable energy during daytime setting a new benchmark for other cities to become clean and green. Diu had been importing 73% of its power from Gujarat until last year.
 146. ▶ Diu become only Union Territory to be fully run on solar energy. It generates 13 megawatts (MW) of electricity from solar power generating facilities daily. 3 MW is generated by rooftop solar plants and 10 MW by its other solar power plants.
 147. ▶ Draft national disaster risk index prepared by home ministry with support from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has ranked Maharashtra at top, followed by West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, while Delhi is most at risk among Union territories (UTs).
 148. ▶ Election Commission launched its online RTI Portal at URL (<http://rti.eci.nic.in>), to facilitate applicants seeking information under Right to Information Act.
 149. ▶ Election Commission of India launched a mobile app called *Cvigil*, for citizens to report any violation of the model code of conduct during elections. It will be operational only where elections are announced, beginning from coming elections in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Rajasthan. Vigilant citizen has to take a picture / video of upto 2 minutes duration of scene of violations of model code.
 150. ▶ Election Commission of India will launch mobile application called *Model Code of Conduct Violation Reporting App*, ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha polls, to empower people to share evidence of malpractices directly with ECI. It will allow instant sharing of photos, audio and video clips related to electoral malpractices.
 151. ▶ Environment Ministry has set noise standards for all airports across country, excluding defence aircrafts. Civil airports with over 50000 aircraft movements per year should not exceed noise levels beyond 75 dB(A) during daytime (till 10pm) and 65 dBA during night. All other airports should not exceed levels beyond 65 dBA during day and 60 dBA during night.
 152. ▶ Environment Ministry notified Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules 2018, validating phasing out of Multilayered Plastic (MLP). MLP is non-recyclable, non-energy recoverable and has no alternate use. Other recommendations -
 - ✎ Central registration system for registration of producer, importer or brand owner is to be created by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
 - ✎ Producers with presence in over 2 states need to apply for national registry CPCB, while small producers require a state-level registration with State Pollution Control Board.
 - ✎ Rule 15 has been removed, that stated explicit pricing of carry bags.
 153. ▶ Expert committee headed by HN Nagamohan Das, constituted by Karnataka Government to examine demand for a separate religion tag for Lingayats, has recommended *Religious Minority* status for Lingayat community. It concluded that there is enough evidence to show that Lingayat religion is different from Hindu religion.
 154. ▶ FMCG Firm Patanjali tied up Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) to launch Swadeshi Samridhi SIM cards.
 - ✎ It can be recharged for INR 144, for which users will get unlimited calls throughout country, 2 GB data and 100 SMS daily.
 - ✎ After Roll Out, customers will get 10% discount on Patanjali products. SIM card also comes with medical insurance and life insurance covers. Medical insurance cover is for Rs 2.5 lakh, while life insurance costs Rs 5 lakh (in event of road accident).
 - ✎ Patanjali also launched a new swadeshi messaging application called 'Kimbho' to compete with WhatsApp, with tagline *Ab Bharat Bolega*.
 155. ▶ FMCG major ITC tied up with NITI Aayog to train 2 lakh farmers to increase their income and raise productivity of major crops in 25 aspirational districts across 7 states by 2022. These districts are from Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
 156. ▶ Facebook and Andhra Pradesh government signed MOU to take up innovative pilot projects in state.
 157. ▶ Feb 12 - National Productivity Day. 2018 theme is *Industry 4.0 Leapfrog Opportunity for India*.
 158. ▶ Finance Ministry approved to provide Assistance for completion of 8 Irrigation projects and 83 Surface Minor Irrigation (SMI) projects in Vidarbha, Marathwada and drought prone areas of Maharashtra, with Estimated cost INR 13651 Crores. These projects are expected to be completed by 2022-23.
 159. ▶ Finance Ministry hiked threshold monetary limit for tax departments to file appeals all three levels of appeal — Appellate Tribunals, High Courts, and Supreme Court, to decrease taxpayer grievances.

160. ▶ First Indian Sign Language Dictionary of 3000 words launched by Thaawarchand Gehlot, developed by Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLR&TC). It aims to remove communications barriers between deaf and hearing communities as it is focused on providing more information in Indian sign language. It consists words of five categories Everyday Terms, Legal Terms, Academic Terms, Medical Terms and Technical Terms.
161. ▶ First International Children's Film Festival of Kerala s held in Thiruvananthapuram. Chairman of organising committee is Mukesh.
162. ▶ First Mega Food Park in Maharashtra (10th in India) has been opened as *Satara Mega Food Park Pvt. Ltd* at Village Degaon in Satara District. Aim is to boost food processing sector by adding value and reducing food wastage at each stage of supply chain with particular focus on perishables.
- ▶ Mega Food Parks create modern infrastructure facilities for food processing along the value chain from farm to market with strong forward and backward linkages through a cluster based approach.
163. ▶ First high speed electric locomotive of Indian Railways, will be launched in March 2018, capable of running at of a maximum speed of 120 kmph.
- ▶ It will be launched during French President Emmanuel Macron's Indian visit. It has capacity of 12000 horsepower and is produced in collaboration with French Firm Alstom. It has been assembled at Madhepura plant in Bihar.
164. ▶ First phase of 2000 MW Capacity *Shakti Sthala* solar park inaugurated in drought-prone Pavagada region of Tumkur district (Karnataka), claimed to be world's largest solar park.
- ▶ It is in line with Central Government's plans to enhance solar power capacity to 100 gigawatts (GW) by 2020.
 - ▶ First phase of this INR 16500 crores Project will generate 600MW power, while balance 1,400MW will be commissioned in 2nd phase by of 2018.
165. ▶ Food Ministry allowed sugar mills to manufacture ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or an intermediate product called B-molasses, amanding Sugarcane Control Order 1966. It would help mills divert cane juice for ethanol manufacturing during surplus years.
- ▶ Now, in case of production of ethanol directly from sugarcane juice or B-molasses, recovery rate of sugarcane factory will be determined by considering every 600 liters so produced as equivalent to one tonne of production of sugar.
 - ▶ Earlier, sugar mills were allowed to manufacture ethanol from by-product called C-molasses, after sugar was taken out while processing raw sugarcane juice.
166. ▶ Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched *Project Dhoop* to address rising incidence of Vitamin D deficiencies (VDD). It aims to encourage schools to shift their morning assembly to around noon-time, to ensure maximum absorption of Vitamin D in students through natural sunlight.
167. ▶ Former footballer Bhaichung Bhutia launched his political party named "Hamro Sikkim".
168. ▶ Foundation of Rhodendron Park laid in Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh). Tawang has 50 plus species of Rhodendron (*a genus of 1,024 species of woody plants*). More than 30 species of rhododendrons would be planted and conserved in park.
169. ▶ Four States and 1 UT (*Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Chandigarh (UT)*) signed first MoU with Government's National Health Mission, for implementing Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Swasthya Suraksha Mission (PMRSSM).
- ▶ MOUs were signed during Ayushman Bharat Northern Region's first workshop on PMRSSM at Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).
 - ▶ Ayushman Bharat is Centrally Sponsored health insurance scheme of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
 - ▶ It will target over 10 crore families belonging to poor and vulnerable population based on Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011 (SECC) database.
 - ▶ It will provide Rs. 5 lakh insurance cover per family per year.
 - ▶ Under it, government will set up 1.5 lakh wellness centres across the country by 2022 that will leverage on comprehensive primary health care for preventive, promotive and curative care.
170. ▶ French power utility EDF and American conglomerate General Electric (GE) signed strategic cooperation agreement with State-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) for construction of 6 EPR (European Pressurized Reactors) type nuclear reactors of capacity 1,650 megawatt (MW) each at Jaitapur nuclear plant in Ratnagiri district (Maharashtra).
- ▶ Agreement is for construction of conventional island on each of 6 reactor units of Jaitapur nuclear plant. GE Power will design conventional islands for plant and EDF will supply EPR technology and will be responsible for building and coordinating industrial partners.
 - ▶ Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant is proposed 9900 MW nuclear power project to come at Madban village of Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra. It will be built under Indo-France Civil Nuclear Deal signed in December 2010. Estimated cost of this project was around US \$15 billion (Rs. 1 Lakh Crores).
 - ▶ World's First third generation European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) reactor recently started working in Taishan (China).

171. ▶ Gandhi Nagar railway station in Jaipur (Rajasthan) became railway station to be fully-managed by women, with 40 women staff at station.
172. ▶ General Conferences (Apr 11-20, 2018) -
- ✍ India's Largest Defence Expedition DefExpo-18 Held in Thiruvananthapuram, Chennai (Tamilnadu). Third India-Russia Military Industrial Conference was also held alongwith. Theme of expo was *India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub*. During DEFEXPO 18 -
 - ✍ Boeing India, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and Mahindra Defence Systems entered into agreement to manufacture fighter aircraft F/A-18 Super Hornet in India.
 - ✍ Mahindra Defence Systems also signed agreement with ShinMaywa Industries of Japan to manufacture amphibious aircraft ShinMaywa US-2 in India. It is only 'in-service' open sea-capable amphibian aircraft with advanced equipment suitable for rough sea operations.
 - ✍ India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) organized 2-day Consultative Workshop for Delegation from the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Kazakhstan in New Delhi.
 - ✍ India-Wiesbaden Conference 2018 held in New Delhi with theme *Securing Global Supply Chains through Government-Industry Partnerships towards Effective Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540*.
 - ✍ First regional conference of eastern states on Water Resources is held in Kolkata (West Bengal), to address outstanding water resources issues.
 - ✍ First meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition) Abhiyaan held in New Delhi. It aims to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children.
 - ✍ 7th Home Expo India 2018, organised by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) at India Expo Centre in Greater Noida (UP).
 - ✍ Biannual Indian army commanders' conference 2018 held in New Delhi.
 - ✍ 2-day Regional Conference on "Urban Development: Technological Solutions and Governance Challenges" held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
173. ▶ General Conferences (Apr 21 - 30, 2018) -
- ✍ Election Commission a Training and Certification Programme for State Level Master Trainers (SLMTs) at New Delhi. Certification course for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) was also conducted.
 - ✍ Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu chaired first meeting of think tank on Framework for National Policy on E-commerce held in New Delhi.
 - ✍ National Kharif Conference 2018 held in New Delhi.
 - ✍ 23rd meeting of Western Zonal Council held at Gandhinagar (Gujarat).
 - ✍ First International SME Convention organised by Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in New Delhi.
 - ✍ 29th Road Safety Week held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. Book named "Have a Safe Journey" was also released.
 - ✍ 3rd Annual 5G India Congress 2018 held in New Delhi.
 - ✍ 3rd meeting of Island Development Agency (IDA) held in Delhi.
 - ✍ Secure India Conclave, organised by Global Counter Terrorism Council held in New Delhi.
 - ✍ National Disaster Response Authority (NDMA) conducted its first ever mock exercise at Patna (Bihar), aimed at enhancing preparedness of Airport Emergency Handlers (AEHs) to respond to CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) emergencies at airports.
 - ✍ A Cancer Screening Mela was organized in Mizoram, by state's Health Department with Public Foundation of India and National Health Mission under initiative of Swasth Purv.
 - ✍ Odisha Govt. inaugurated 'Odisha Skills 2018', state-level chapter of India Skill competition organised by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in Cuttack (Odisha).
 - ✍ Kerala hosted India Skills Kerala 2018 in Kochi, as part of World Skills India 2018, to help youngsters to show their vocational skills. It also helped training students for World Skills Competition Kazan 2019 (Russia).
174. ▶ General Conferences (April 1-10, 2018) -
- ✍ Second lead-up Conference to 3rd Annual Meeting of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) held in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). About AIIB -
 - ✍ Headquarters - Beijing (China).
 - ✍ 64 Members and Jin Liqun is current (President).
 - ✍ First meeting of the newly constituted 'NITI Forum for North East' held in Agartala (Tripura) today.

- 9th US-Japan-India held trilateral meeting in New Delhi.
 - 2 Assam Spring Festival held at Manas National Park, organised by Indian Weavers' Association and Swankar Mithinga Onsa Afat, an association of reformed poachers in Manas who are engaged in wildlife conservation.
 - Uttarakhand's second Mega Food Park- Himalayan Mega Food Park Private Ltd inaugurated at Mahuakhera Ganj in Kashipur in Udham Singh Nagar district. State's first Mega Food Park is operational at Haridwar.
 - National Convention of Swachhagrahis held at Motihari (Bihar) with theme Satyagraha se Swachhagrah, organized as part of centenary celebrations of Champaran Satyagraha.
 - 34th annual session of FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) held in New Delhi.
175. ▶ General Conferences (Feb 1 - 10, 2018) -
- Lalit Kala Akademi organized First International Kala Mela in New Delhi.
 - International Conference on 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy' held in New Delhi.
 - 17 day Surajkund International Crafts Mela (32nd) began in Faridabad (Haryana). Uttar Pradesh is theme state and Kyrgyzstan is Partner Nation this year.
 - 7th India Energy Congress was held in New Delhi with theme *Energy 4.0: Energy Transition Towards 2030*. It is organized by World Energy Council India (WEC India).
 - NITI Aayog organized Conference on Jobs and Livelihood opportunities in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industries in Delhi.
 - 2 day International conference on Unani Medicine held at New Delhi.
 - 5th South Asia Region Public Procurement Conference held in New Delhi, with theme *Public Procurement and Service Delivery*.
 - 3 day International Conference on Operations and Maintenance - *Indian Power Stations 2018* held in delhi.
 - President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated 88th Mahamastakabhisheka of Lord Gomateshwara at Shravanabelagola in Hassan (Karnataka).
 - 4th meeting of Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister (EAC-PM) held in New Delhi under chairmanship of Bibek Debroy.
 - Institute Of Directors organised 12th International Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility in Bengaluru (Karnataka).
 - National Informatics Centre (NIC) organized 3 day National Meet on Grassroot Informatics - *VIVID 2018* at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, with Theme *Cyber Security and Innovation*.
176. ▶ General Conferences (Feb 11 - 20, 2018) -
- International Agricultural conference *Agricon 2018* and *Agriexpo 2018* held at Chandrashekhar Azad University of Agriculture & Technology (CSAUT) at Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh).
 - Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare organized a National Conference *Agriculture 2022 – Doubling Farmers' Income* at National Agriculture Science Complex (NASC) in New Delhi.
 - National Banana Festival 2018 held in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala).
 - India's biggest Global Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices held in Bengaluru with theme '*Driving NextGen Pharmaceuticals*'.
 - Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) organized Youth Exchange Programme *Watan Ko Jano*, with special focus on youth of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - 3rd Global Procurement Summit in New Delhi, organized by All India Management Association (AIMA) and World Bank with Theme *New Frontiers faced in the Transformation process of Procurement Today*.
 - 10th international plastics exhibition, *PlastIndia* held in Gandhinagar (Gujarat), organized by Plastindia Foundation.
 - 12th International Conference on corporate social responsibility (CSR) held in Bengaluru (Karnataka).
 - 3 day International Conference on Operations and Maintenance, *Indian Power Stations 2018* held in New Delhi with theme *Technological Challenges: Risks and Challenges in Power Generation*. It is hosted by NTPC to commemorate synchronization of its first Thermal plant at Singrauli Super Thermal Power Station on February 13, 1982.
 - 54th annual Munich Security Conference held in Munich (Germany).
 - 6th Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) of India Region held in Patna (Bihar).
 - Scientists observed *Darwin Week* in Kolkata, to effectively put an end to any confusion regarding Charles Darwin's 'Theory of Evolution'.
 - International R&D Conclave* 2 day conference on Emerging Opportunities and Challenges of R&D in Indian Power Sector organised by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in Delhi.
 - National Seminar on *Emerging Building Materials and Construction Technologies* held in New Delhi. During This, Hardeep Puri (Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs) launched Mobile App *Bamboo Housing & Construction. Technologies*.

177. ▶ General Conferences (Feb 21 - 28, 2018) -

- ▶ 3 day India International Textiles Expo (IITExpo) held in Sri Lankan capital of Colombo.
- ▶ Regional conference of southern states on water resources held in Hyderabad (Telangana).
- ▶ 44th Khajuraho Dance Festival 2018 held at Khajuraho temple (UNESCO world heritage site) in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ▶ Central Govt.'s Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and Government Telangana organized 21st National Conference on e-Governance in Hyderabad.
- ▶ 2 day International Conference on Sustainable Biofuels organized by Department of Biotechnology at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi.
- ▶ Ministry of Culture organized a week long diversified cultural carnival 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav' in Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh).
- ▶ Economic Times Global Business Summit held in New Delhi with theme *New Economy – New Rules*.
- ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government Organized 3rd Partnership Summit 2018 in Vizag, aiming to facilitate investments, foster innovations in creating business models.
- ▶ 15th edition of BioAsia (*annual flagship event of Telangana Government*) held in Hyderabad (Telangana), with theme *Right Time, Right Now*. During it, Telangana government stated that it aims to double valuation of its life sciences ecosystem to \$100 billion in 10 years.
- ▶ 7th Youth Festival held in New Delhi organised by Sahitya Kala Parishad and Delhi Government with theme *Let Love Live*.
- ▶ 15th Vodafone Odeon Theatre Festival held in Kolkata, (West Bengal), to provide a platform for theatre artists to display their talent.
- ▶ *Aadi Mahotsava*, a tribal festival organized by Assam Government held in Guwahati (Assam).

178. ▶ General Conferences (July 01 - 10, 2018) -

- ▶ National Workshop on Skill Development for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) organized by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) in New Delhi.
- ▶ Election Commission organized a two-day "National Consultation on Accessible Elections," in New Delhi.
- ▶ A conference of Ministers for Power, New & Renewable Energy of States & Union Territories held in Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).
- ▶ Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare held special meet on *Marine Fisheries - Mariculture in India* in Rameswaram (Tamil Nadu).
- ▶ 2 Day National Level Consultations on Accessible Elections held in New Delhi. During This, Election Commission Announced several Measures to improve Participation of Persons With Disabilities in Election Process. It Includes Issuing Electoral Photo Identity Cards with Braille Features for Visually Impaired, Auxiliary Polling Stations to be Established, Mobile APP to be Developed by ECI for PWD.
- ▶ 9th and final meeting of Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on Nepal-India Relations concluded in Kathmandu (Nepal).
- ▶ 9th Heads of Mission Conference held in New Delhi, with theme *Unprecedented Outreach: Unparalleled Outcomes*.
- ▶ Govt. Aims to link 22000 rural markets with Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) by 2020, as announced at *AgriVikas 2018* conclave on agriculture and allied sectors in Bhubaneswar (Odisha). It will enable farmers sale directly to potential buyers.
- ▶ Exhibition titled *Arth - art for earth* held at IGNCA (New Delhi). IGNCA introduced 5 PG diploma courses and 6 new Certificate Courses in art and culture and related subjects.
 - ▶ PG Diploma -
 - ▶ Cultural Informatics, Preventive Conservation, Buddhist Studies, Digital Library and Data Management, Manuscriptology and Palaeography
 - ▶ Certificate Courses -
 - ▶ Academic Integrity and Research Ethics, Open Access for Library and Information Science Professionals, Open Access for Researchers, Digital Library and Information Management, Research Methodology, Cinema Studies and Cultural Documentation.
- ▶ Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) organized 2 day International Round Table Conference at New Delhi, called *Data for New India*. It aims to identify innovative ideas for improving the statistical system in India, taking cue from best practices followed in advanced countries.
- ▶ 22nd International Conference on Non-Ferrous Minerals and Metals 2018 held at Ranchi (Jharkhand). During this meet, Tapan Kumar Chand, (CMD of NALCO), received Knowledge Excellence Award for Outstanding Contribution in Aluminium Knowledge domain.
- ▶ First meeting of Task Force on e-commerce held in New Delhi. Task Force was formed under chairmanship of Suresh Prabhu (Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation). It is divided into nine sub-groups.

- ✎ 2nd meeting of joint working group on tourism cooperation between India and Nepal concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ✎ 67th plenary meeting of North Eastern Council (NEC) held in Shillong (Meghalaya).
- ✎ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated *Dharohar Bhawan*, new Headquarters building of Archaeological Survey of India, in New Delhi.
- ✎ India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) organized a Capacity Development programme for Media Officials from Bhutan, in New Delhi.
- ✎ Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Parliamentary Affairs, Ananth kumar laid foundation stone of new (32nd) Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (CIPET) Building at Dehradun (Uttarakhand). He also allocated 40 crores for establishing a plastic park in Uttarakhand, to generate employment for over 5000 people.

179. ▶ General Conferences (July 11 - 20, 2018)

- ✎ First meeting of India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats held in Agartala (Tripura).
- ✎ 10th Delhi Dialogue (DD X) held in New Delhi, with theme *Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation*. It is an important platform for engagement with ASEAN on political, security and economic issues.
- ✎ All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) and IIT (Indian Institute of Technology)-Delhi signed MoU to enhance research in field of Ayurveda, during 2 day conference on 'Raising towards Excellence' held in New Delhi.
- ✎ Ratha Yatra (Festival of Chariot of Lord Jagannath) celebrated every year at Puri in Odisha. It is celebrated on 2nd day of shukla pakshya (waxing cycle of moon) of Ashadh Maas (3rd month in Lunar Calendar).
- ✎ 2nd India-China Maritime Affairs Dialogue was held in Beijing, China. 4th India-Japan Maritime affairs dialogue also held in Japan.
- ✎ 7th Indo US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) held in New Delhi.
- ✎ 1st meeting of Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on coordination between Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and agriculture held at NITI Aayog (New Delhi). It was chaired by Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- ✎ 1 day meeting of directors of 59 institutes of higher learning held in Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
- ✎ Conference of Intra-ocular Implant & Refractive Society of India held in Chennai (TN).
- ✎ 4th National Conclave on Mines & Minerals held at Indore (Madhya Pradesh).
- ✎ Top Nuke Powers USA and Russia's current Presidents Donald Trump and President Vladimir Putin held their first-ever one-to-one talks in Helsinki (Finland).
- ✎ Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) joined National Day event of Montenegro in India on July 13, 2018 in New Delhi, named *Trendy Montenegro with Indian Khadi*.
- ✎ SBI organized a Kisan Mela at its rural and semi-urban branches across country to impart financial literacy to farmers.

180. ▶ General Conferences (July 21 - 31, 2018)

- ✎ 1st Nepal-India Think Tank Summit held in Kathmandu, to foster greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing among the think tanks of two countries.
- ✎ 11th state-level pineapple festival cum Sellers & Buyers Meet and Youth Festival 2018, held in Thoubal district of Manipur.
- ✎ 2 day Air Defence India 2018 Seminar & Exhibition held in New Delhi.
- ✎ From 1st August 2018, *Gaj Yatra* exhibition will be conducted to raise awareness about conservation of elephants in Delhi. It will be conducted for 2 months. It is conducted as part of India Habitat Centre year-long multi-media festival on sustainable development named *Habitat Photosphere*.
- ✎ 2nd Young Superintendent of Police Conference held in New Delhi.
- ✎ 3 day National Traders' Conclave held at Constitution Club of India in New Delhi.
- ✎ 2nd meeting of National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges under POSHAN Abhiyan in New Delhi.
 - ✎ Government launched POSHAN Abhiyaan (PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) from Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan). It aims to use a targeted approach to reduce level of malnutrition across Nation. More Info is available at <http://www.icds-wcd.nic.in/nnm/home.htm>.
- ✎ International conference on "Empowering Women: Fostering Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainability" organized by NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in New Delhi.
- ✎ International conference on India-Vietnam economic ties held in New Delhi.
- ✎ 7 day *Kharchi Puja* held at Pura Habeli in Tripura, as an annual festival to cleanse sins of mortal souls.
- ✎ The tourism department of Rajasthan announced that The 2nd National Tourism Conclave was organised in Jaipur.
- ✎ World-class permanent exhibition on four eminent personalities of Bengal – Rabindranath Tagore, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and Syama Prasad Mukherjee, held at National Library in Kolkata.
- ✎ On occasion of Guru Purnima, Ministry of Human Resource Development organized a National Conference of Vice Chancellors & Directors of Higher Education Institutions of India in New Delhi, with theme *Research and innovation in Higher Education*.

- ✎ A conference for Indian Languages Technology Industry 'Bhashantar' held in New Delhi. During this, IT ministry launched a desktop software e-Aksharaya.

181. ▶ General Conferences (June 1 - 10, 2018) -

- ✎ India and South Centre (an inter-governmental organisation based in Geneva (Switzerland)) organized an International Conference on TRIPS- CBD Linkage in Geneva, aiming to revive WTO discussions on issues related to preventing theft of traditional knowledge.
- ✎ 49th Conference of Governors Held in New Delhi.
- ✎ 3rd National Health Editors' Conference on Yoga held at Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) in New Delhi.
- ✎ Oxford University Press South Asia Conclave 2018 held in New Delhi.
- ✎ State Environment Ministers Conference as a run-up to World Environment Day held in New Delhi.
 - ✎ In this event, Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan released 'Status of Environment Report, India 2015'.
 - ✎ India's forest cover was 21.34 % in 2015, and non forest trees area is 2.82%. Mizoram with 89 % has highest forest cover, followed by Lakshdweep (84.56 %), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (82 %), Arunachal Pradesh (80 %).
 - ✎ Assam has lowest forest cover with 35 % among 15 states / UTs with over 33 % forest cover.
 - ✎ Madhya Pradesh has maximum forest cover of 72,462 sq km, out of total approx 7 Lakh Sq Km forest cover in India.
- ✎ 11th GeoIntelligence Asia 2018 organised at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi with theme *GeoSpatial : A Force Multiplier for Defence and Industrial Security*.
- ✎ India's Sanjana Ramesh was awarded 'Most Valuable Player' (MVP) even as compatriot Vaishnavi Yadav won the 'Girls Grit Award', during Basketball Without Borders Asia 2018 event held in New Delhi.
- ✎ Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) organised National Consultation on Child Protection in New Delhi.
- ✎ Ministry of Shipping in association with Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), Ministry of Rural Development conducted a workshop on "Skill Development in the Port and Maritime Sector" in New Delhi.

182. ▶ General Conferences (June 11 - 20, 2018) -

- ✎ 15th annual Asia and Oceania Region Intergovernmental Ministerial meeting on anti-doping held in Colombo.
- ✎ 2 day National Consultation on 'Making Agriculture Sustainable and Profitable' held at Pune (Maharashtra).
- ✎ 4th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog held in New Delhi.
 - ✎ Rajiv Kumar is Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog and Amitabh Kant is Its CEO.
- ✎ Kerala government organized promotion programme *Yoga Ambassadors Tour*, as a specialized trip for yoga professionals.
- ✎ 1 day thematic Seminar on "Private Sector Participation and Innovation in Resource Mobilisation" hosted in Mumbai by Ministry of Finance and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) as knowledge partner.
- ✎ Conference on Implementation of National Pension System (NPS) by Central Autonomous Bodies (CABs) organized by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) in Delhi.
- ✎ J P Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare exchanged MOUs with State Health Ministers of 20 States marking their commitment towards launch of the Ayushman Bharat – National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM) at a Health Ministers conclave in Delhi.
 - ✎ Also, government proposed to impose penalty on insurance companies for delay in payment to hospitals for settlement of claims under its Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS). If an insurance company delays claim payment beyond 15 days, then it would have to pay a penalty of 1 % interest on claimed amount per week till it finally settles the claim.
- ✎ About NHPM -
 - ✎ NHPS aims to provide a cover of Rs 5 lakh per family annually to 10 crore vulnerable families.
 - ✎ Indu Bhushan is CEO of NHPM.
- ✎ 3rd Meeting of National Council of Senior Citizens(NCSrC) held in Delhi.
- ✎ IIT Kharagpur hosted Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon 2018 – Hardware edition, in association with Ministry of HRD, AICTE, Persistent Systems and i4C.
 - ✎ SIH2018 – Hardware edition is first of its kind innovative initiative to provide platform to young technical minds to showcase their innovations which can bring out revolutionary changes in crucial sectors like agriculture, health, clean water, waste management, automotive, smart communication.
- ✎ 2nd India-US colloquium on Earth Observations and Sciences for Society and Economy was inaugurated at CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO) at Dona Paula (Goa).
- ✎ International Conference on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) held in Kathmandu (capital of Nepal) with Theme *Sustainable Development Goals for Smart Society*.
- ✎ 10th Meeting of Global Alliance to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GAELF) held in New Delhi.

- ✎ Workshop on Cyber Security Framework for Department of Defence organised by Ministry of Defence in New Delhi.
 - ✎ 5th National Standards Conclave with theme *Implementing the Indian National Strategy for Standardization* held in New Delhi.
183. ▶ General Conferences (June 21 - 30, 2018) -
- ✎ National Seminar on Conservation of Particularly Vulnerable Tribes of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (*The Way Forward*) held in New Delhi.
 - ✎ Students from KCJ College of Engineering, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, have won first prize at the Smart India Hackathon 2018 Hardware Edition under the 'Smart Communication' category conducted at the CSIR-CEERI in Pilani, Rajasthan.
 - ✎ 2 day National Consultation on 'Making Agriculture Sustainable and Profitable' held at Pune (Maharashtra).
 - ✎ A turmeric workshop on 'Production and export promotion of turmeric' held in Telangana. Commerce Ministry announced to set up a special cell for turmeric in Nizamabad (Telangana).
 - ✎ 19th All India Conference of Directors of Finger Prints Bureau in Hyderabad (Telangana).
 - ✎ 7th India Minerals and Metals forum organized in New Delhi.
 - ✎ 4th National Review and Consultation on Swachh Iconic Places began in Hyderabad.
 - ✎ PM Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Vanijya Bhawan, a new office complex in New Delhi for Department of Commerce. PM also laid foundation stone for National Centre for Ageing at All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi. It will be completed by February 2020.
 - ✎ Pilot Training of Trainers (ToT) Course on Civilian Protection and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) held at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi.
 - ✎ Ministry of Women and Child Development organized a Seminar on Technology Partnerships 'TECH-THON' for steering POSHAN Abhiyaan at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi.
 - ✎ Conference on Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan 'IPledgefor9' Achievers and MMR Reduction Awards held in New Delhi.
 - ✎ 500th death anniversary of noted saint Kabir observed at Maghar in Sant Kabir Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh.
 - ✎ Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) organized Renewable Energy Dialogue 2018 in New Delhi. India has set a fresh target of achieving 100 GW of solar power by 2022 (up from 20 GW earlier). India also aims to achieve 40% of its total electricity generation from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
 - ✎ 4th National Consultation Meeting of Ministers of States & UTs, in-charge of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs held in New Delhi.
 - ✎ J P Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare inaugurated NIMHANS Digital Academy (Bengaluru).
184. ▶ General Conferences (Mar 1 - 10, 2018) -
- ✎ 27th Technological Conference of Indian Jute Industries' Research Association (IJIRA) held in Kolkata.
 - ✎ Cultural Festival *Shigmotsav* organized in Goa, with Shigmo parades offering glimpses of Goan life depicted through folk dance and music performances by locals.
 - ✎ 46th Know India Programme (KIP) organized by Government in New Delhi, aiming to engage and make students and young professionals of Indian Diaspora, connected with their motherland.
 - ✎ Conference on *Indian Metros: Collaborating for Excellence* held in New Delhi. During this, I-METROS, an association of all Indian Metro Rail companies was launched. It will be a forum for exchange of ideas, pooling of knowledge and sharing of experience, best practices, innovations etc.
 - ✎ Biennial event *WINGS INDIA 2018* held in Hyderabad (Telangana) with theme *India-Global Aviation Hub*. During this, International Air Transport Association (IATA) signed MoU with Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) and National Aviation University (NAU) to enhance human resource availability in India's aviation industry.
 - ✎ India International Institute for Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) Delhi conducted a training programme on 'Capacity Development for Election Management'.
 - ✎ 29th International Yoga Festival (IYF) held at Rishikesh (Uttarakhand).
 - ✎ Event named *Vision for Future* held in New Delhi to commemorate 70 years of Indo-Russia ties.
 - ✎ Large scale Media & Entertainment Services Market - enTTech 2018 organized in Mumbai.
 - ✎ National Legislators Conference held in New Delhi with theme *We For Development*'.
 - ✎ World ATM Congress (WATMC) 2018 held in Spain as world's largest international air traffic management (ATM) exhibition.
 - ✎ 4th India-Europe 29 Business Forum (IE29BF) held in New Delhi with theme *Synergising Economic Vision for Expanded Relations* and Czech Republic as *Focus Country*.
 - ✎ *FICCI Frames 2018* Conference held in Mumbai and released FICCI-EY Media & Entertainment Report 2018 named *Re-imagining India's M&E Sector*.

- 📌 *End TB Summit* held in New Delhi, highlighting India's aim to be TB-Free by 2025. Member Countries of World Health Organization-Regional Office for South-East Asia (WHO-SEARO) adopted 'Delhi End TB Summit Statement of Action'.
- 📌 Executive Committee tasked with overlooking all Nutrition related activities under POSHAN Abhiyaan (*PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment*) held its first meeting in New Delhi.
- 📌 2018 World Conference on Tobacco or Health held in Capetown (South Africa).

185. ▶ General Conferences (Mar 11 - 20, 2018)

- 📌 IARI's Annual Krishi Unnati Mela 2018 held in Pusa (Bihar) and New Delhi. Krishi Vigyan Mela (Agriculture Science Fair) is held since 1972 and is a highly important annual event of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Objective is to create awareness among farmers about the latest agriculture-related technological developments.
- 📌 First Indo-French Knowledge Summit for university, scientific and technology cooperation held in New Delhi.
- 📌 National Conference on Counterfeiting and Role of Enforcement Agencies held in New Delhi, organised by Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) in collaboration with European Union (EU).
- 📌 2 day Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) held in New Delhi with theme *Challenges to Policing in 2020*.
- 📌 First edition of *Soldierathon* held in New Delhi, as a special marathon aimed at raising funds for welfare of Indian soldiers and their families.
- 📌 First regional conference on *Mass Rapid Transport System (MRTS) for Urban Areas – Opportunities and Challenges* held in Kolkata.
- 📌 *Indian Images: People and Places*, a photo exhibition about India organized in Cairo (Egypt), as part of annual cultural festival *India by the Nile*.
- 📌 Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (FINE) held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi. On this occasion, President Ram Nath Kovind presented Gandhian Young Technological Innovation awards instituted by Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions [SRISTI].
- 📌 First India-Japan Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction held in New Delhi.
- 📌 3rd National Conclave on Mines and Minerals Held in New Delhi. During This, Ministry of Mines launched Sand Mining Framework to help states deal with the sand mining issues, including demand supply deficit and illegal extraction.
 - 📌 There have been various issues in mining activities related to sand like non availability of sand, environmental degradation, high sand prices, illegalities in sand mining etc.

186. ▶ General Conferences (Mar 21 - 31, 2018)

- 📌 An International Yoga Fest held in New Delhi, as a curtain raiser for International Yoga Day (IYD) to be held on 21st June 2018.
- 📌 First edition of Delhi Energy Dialogue (DED) 2018 organised by Ashden India Collective (AIC) in alliance with the Climate Parliament and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).
- 📌 1st meeting of Working Group on making India a USD 5 Trillion Economy held in New Delhi, chaired by Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu.
- 📌 Rising India Summit organized by Network 18 held in New Delhi.
- 📌 5th *Nadi Mahotsava* held at Bandrabhan in Hoshangabad (Madhya Pradesh).
- 📌 Bihar Govt. inaugurated first 'Startup hub' of Bihar in Patna.
- 📌 First National Conference on Drug Law Enforcement held in New Delhi.
- 📌 5th India Maize Summit 2018 held in New Delhi, to harness the potential of maize and technological innovations.
- 📌 46th All India Police Science Congress held in Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).
- 📌 11th Rashtriya Rifles Biennial Conference is being conducted at Nagrota (J & K).
- 📌 National Conference on Down Syndrome organised by National Trust under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in New Delhi.
- 📌 1st *International Print Biennale*, an International Exhibition of Graphic Prints held in New Delhi.
- 📌 1st National Conclave on Psychological Trauma, Child Protection, and Mental Illnesses held in New Delhi.
- 📌 SARAS Aajeevika Mela 2018 organized in New Delhi under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). It aims to provide to rural women producers a national platform and an opportunity to showcase their products and seek buyers, either individuals or bulk buyers for sale nationally/internationally.
- 📌 Smart India Hackathon Grand Finale 2018 (Software edition) held in New Delhi. 1 lakh students from 1200 colleges participated in this world's largest Hackathon.
- 📌 International Yachting Festival held in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), conducted by the Andhra Pradesh government.

187. ▶ General Conferences (May 11 - 20, 2018)

- ✍ 6th US-India Aviation Summit held in Mumbai, jointly organised by Ministry of Civil Aviation and US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA). During this, Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed a Rs 945-crores 15 year deal with Harris Corporation of USA for development of its futuristic telecommunications infrastructure (FTI) programme.
- ✍ Customs and Department of India Posts held a first-ever Joint Conference in Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi, to deliberate on streamlining of imports and exports by post.
- ✍ 2 day North east Regional Conference on *Physical and Social Infrastructure for Regional Development* held in Guwahati (Assam).
- ✍ Stakeholder Meeting on Samarth (*Scheme for Capacity Building in Textile Sector under Skill India Mission*) held in New Delhi. This scheme was Launched in December 2017 and aims to provide placement oriented National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF), by training 10 lakh persons (9 lakh in organised and 1 lakh in traditional sector) by 2020, with outlay of 1300 crores.
- ✍ First International Rail Coach Expo (IRCE) held in Chennai (Tamil Nadu), to focus on Rail Coaches and train sets, hosted by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) under Railways Ministry.
- ✍ National Conference of Fisheries Ministers of Coastal states held in New Delhi.
- ✍ NITI Aayog and Vision India Foundation organized Venture Capital Symposium 2018 to deepen economic relationships between France and India. 20 big French venture capital participated in event, to explore investment opportunities.

188. ▶ General Conferences (May 21 - 31, 2018) -

- ✍ A children's theatre and personality development workshop held in North Delhi, organized by Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA).
- ✍ Workshop on Challenges and Opportunities of Arbitration in SAARC region held in New Delhi.
- ✍ Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Krishan Pal Gurjar committed to provide govt financial assistance worth Rs 6 Lakh for cochlear implant of children with hearing impairment in economically weak sections of Sikkim.
- ✍ Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram launched an exhibition cum sale event, *the PANKHA (Hand-fans)*, created by TRIFED through its artisans from all over the country at its showroom Tribes India in New Delhi.
- ✍ Railways conducted a one day workshop "Mission Raftaar" aimed at raising average speed of freight trains and coaching trains in New Delhi. Mission Raftaar aims at doubling average speed of freight trains and increasing average speed of coaching trains by 25 kmph over 5 years.
- ✍ India and Pakistan held meeting of their coast guard officials in New Delhi.
- ✍ Actor Akshay Kumar launched twin pit toilet technology campaign in New Delhi, to spread awareness on issue and make cleanliness drive more effective.
- ✍ Smart Cities India 2018 Expo held in New Delhi, with a vision to help develop attractive and safe cities.
- ✍ 34th meeting of Central Sanctioning and Monitoring held in New Delhi. During it, Construction of new 1.5 lakh affordable houses (most in Andhra Pradesh was approved, under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Urban). It has an investment of 7227 crores with central assistance of 2209 crores. It took number of houses under PMAY(U) to 47,52,751 houses.
- ✍ 1st biannual IAF Commander's conference held at Air headquarters in New Delhi.

189. ▶ Goa government will launch its own app-based taxi service to few key tourist destinations of state. Taxi operators would be required to follow online queuing system, based on which a ride will be confirmed or assigned to them. It is expected to solve state's problematic tourist taxi issue that has been plaguing its tourism sector for several years.

190. ▶ Goa tourism department will launch app-based taxi services in state called *GOAMILLES* in July 2018, to organize taxi services in tourism prone state. It has more than 2,800 licensed taxi drivers partnering with the app.

191. ▶ Google and Tata Trusts extended their *Internet Saathi* programme to 4,000 villages in six districts of Tamil Nadu, aimed at *Bridging the online gender divide in rural India*.

192. ▶ Google's philanthropic arm Google.org announced \$3 million in grants for teacher training and educational content creation in India.

- ✍ Google will also facilitate all Gram Panchayats in Andhra Pradesh with internet access, by installing 25000 Wi-Fi hotspots by December 2018.

193. ▶ Government approved assistance of INR 5.5 lakh per family to West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs), to benefit 5764 families of WPRs settled in Jammu and Kashmir. Full expenditure for this scheme will be borne by Central Government.

194. ▶ Government approved creating Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Police Investigation, aimed to promote high professional Investigation of Crime in State/UT Police and Central Investigating Agencies (CIAs).

- ✍ Officers from rank of Sub-Inspector to Superintendent of Police will be eligible for this honour.
- ✍ Names of awardees will be declared every year on 15th August.

Based on the average crime data for last three years, total 162 medals will be awarded every year, of these, 137 will be for States/UTs and 25 for CIAs viz. National Investigation Agency (NIA), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Narcotic Control Bureau (NCB).

195. ▶ Government approved setting up an exclusive *Brahmaputra Study Centre* at Gauhati University (Assam), with funds approx INR 28 crores. It will offer an opportunity for research in different aspects of river Brahmaputra in physics, hydrology, waterways, environment, disaster/flood management, hydro-power production etc.
196. ▶ Government approved setting up of a Plastic Park in Deoghar District (Jharkhand), at a cost of Rs. 120 crores in an area of 150 acres and a range of polymer products including woven sacks, moulded furniture, water tanks, bottles, pipes mosquito nets, etc would be manufactured. It will provide direct employment to about 6000 people and indirect employment to over 30000 people.
197. ▶ Government formulated water conservation scheme Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) to tackle ever-deepening crisis of depleting groundwater level, with allocation of INR 6000 crores. It aims to create sufficient water storage for agricultural purposes. It will cover 78 districts, 193 blocks and more than 8,300 gram panchayats across Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
198. ▶ Government in June 2017 approved setting up 10 indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) of 700 MW each in fleet mode, by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). Projects are -

Location & State	Project	Capacity(MW)
Chutka, Madhya Pradesh	Chutka - 1&2	2 X 700
Kaiga, Karnataka	Kaiga - 5&6	2 X 700
Mahi Banswara, Rajasthan	Mahi Banswara - 1&2	2 X 700
Gorakhpur, Haryana	GHAVP - 3&4	2 X 700
Mahi Banswara, Rajasthan	Mahi Banswara - 3&4	2 X 700

With these projects, Total nuclear power capacity of India will reach 22480 MW by 2031.

199. ▶ Government is developing tool named *soft power matrix*, aimed at calibrating effectiveness of India's soft power outreach. It will help in dealings with neighbouring countries and serve better as operational instrument in India's broader diplomatic doctrine.
- Currently, articulation of India's soft power abroad is done through Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), with some 36 foreign cultural centres working to promote artistic and cultural traditions through range of activities such as Festivals of India abroad.
- Standing Committee on External Affairs recommended that MEA should formulate comprehensive and well-structured policy delineating India's soft power resources and their articulation abroad.
200. ▶ Government launched *#InnovateIndia Platform* as a collaboration between Atal Innovation Mission and Govt.'s citizen centric platform MyGov, to serve as common point for all innovation happening across nation. It is accessible at <https://innovate.mygov.in/innovateindia/>.
201. ▶ Government launched GOBARDhan Yojna nationally from National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) in Karnal district of Haryana. GOBAR is acronym for Galvanising Organic Bio Agro Resources. This scheme focuses on managing and converting cattle dung and solid waste from farms and fields to useful compost, biogas and bio-CNG. It will also help in keeping villages clean and generate energy while increasing income of farmers and cattle herders.
- Central and state governments will provide funds in the ratio of 60:40, depending upon number of households in village.
- It will be beneficial as India is home to highest cattle population in world (around 30 crores) and produces around 3 million tonnes of dung. It will encourage farmers to consider dung and other waste not just as waste but as source of income.
202. ▶ Government launched Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0, as a flagship programme of HRD Ministry, it aims to link Higher Education Institutions with set of atleast (5) villages, so that these institutions can contribute to the economic and social betterment of these villages. Currently 748 Institutions are participating under it.
203. ▶ Government launched a ASH TRACK Web based and mobile application based Fly Ash monitoring System. It will enable better management of the ash produced by thermal power plants by providing an interface between fly ash producers (Thermal Power Plants) and potential ash users such as – road contractors, cement plants etc.
- ASH TRACK Mobile App will manage 200 million tonnes of fly ash by tracking coal based power plants situated within 100 km and 300 km from given location and availability of fly ash, along with prospective users within same radius.
204. ▶ Government preponed national development target date for completion of PMGSY-I (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) , from 2022 to 2019. Since its inception in 2000, PMGSY provided connectivity to 152124 habitations (from 178184 eligible habitations). Target is to Provide connectivity to 166012 habitations by March 2019.
- Construction of PMGSY roads reached record high of 134 kms per day in 2017-18 as against average of 73 kms during 2011 - 2014.

205. ▶ Government proposed to set up 3000 Van Dhan Kendras involving 30000 SHGs across country under Van Dhan Scheme of Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- ▶ Van Dhan Scheme was launched on 14th April, 2018 during celebrations of Ambedkar Jayanti at Bijapur (Chhattisgarh).
 - ▶ Under Van Dhan Scheme, 10 Self Help Groups of 30 Tribal gatherers each have been constituted at Bijapur, Chhattisgarh. They are then trained and provided with working capital to add value to the products, which they collect from the Jungle.
 - ▶ Van Dhan Mission targets at livelihood generation for tribals by harnessing non-timber forest produces, with estimated value of 2 Lakh Crores per year.
 - ▶ Further it is to set-up tribal community owned Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (the Kendra) in predominantly forested tribal districts. A Kendra shall constitute of 10 tribal SHGs, each comprising of upto 30 tribal NTFP gatherers or artisans i.e. about 300 beneficiaries per Kendra.
206. ▶ Government sanctioned INR 1500 crore to promote organic farming in Uttarakhand, to be disbursed over 3 years.
207. ▶ Government sanctioned a new project to control pollution in River Sal at Navelim town (Goa), under National River Conservation Plan. It will be completed at cost of INR 61.74 crores (to be borne by Centre and State on 60:40 basis), scheduled for completion by January 2021.
208. ▶ Government will link additional 200 wholesale mandis to online trading platform eNAM (electronic National Agriculture Market) in 2018-19 and will encourage inter-mandi transactions. At present, 585 regulated mandis in 14 states are linked with the eNAM, with 73.50 lakh farmers, 53,163 commission agents and over 1 lakh traders registered on it.
- ▶ eNAM is pan-India electronic trading portal for farm produce which aims creates unified national market for agricultural commodities by integrating existing Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) markets.
 - ▶ It provides single window service for all APMC related services, including commodity arrivals and prices, provision for responding to trade offers, buy and sell trade offers, among other services.
209. ▶ Government will set up an international educational institution for minorities in Rajasthan's Alwar city, as 1 of 5 such institutes that Government is planning to set up across India. This plan was prepared in 2016 by a committee headed by Afzal Amanullah.
210. ▶ Government's Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme (implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Ltd) has so far distributed over 30 crore light emitting diode (LED) bulbs across country.
- ▶ It has led to energy savings worth INR 15581 crores, increased penetration of LED in domestic market to 10% from mere 0.4% earlier.
 - ▶ It has increased India's share in global LED market to 12% from a mere 0.1%.
211. ▶ Government launched *JANAUSHADHI SUVIDHA* Oxo-biodegradable Sanitary Napkin, under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), to be available at over 3600 Janaushadhi Kendras across India. It is priced at INR 2.5 Per pad, down from average price of a pad at INR 8 Currently.
212. ▶ Govt. launched *National E-Mobility Programme* aimed boosting e-mobility ecosystem including vehicle manufacturers, charging infrastructure companies, fleet operators, service providers etc, to be implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL). EESL will procure electric vehicles in bulk to get economies of scale, to replace existing petrol and diesel vehicles. With 20000 Procured electric cars, India is expected to save over 5 crore litres of fuel every year, and reduction of over 5.6 lakh tonnes of annual CO₂ emission.
213. ▶ Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani launched 'Poshan Abhiyan'--a statewide mission to eradicate malnutrition among children by providing them nutritious food through Anganwadi centres. He also launched PURNA (*Prevention of Under Nutrition and Reduction of Nutritional Anaemia among Adolescent Girls*) project to eliminate malnutrition among girls in the age group of 14 to 18.
214. ▶ Gujarat Government granted religious minority status to approx 170 Jews living in state, being 3rd state in India to grant religious minority status to Jews after West Bengal and Maharashtra.
215. ▶ Gujarat Govt. approved 39-crore rupees 'Seema Darshan' project for developing more infrastructure facilities from T-Junction to Zero Point at Nadabet near Suigam in Banaskantha district, to instil patriotism through a unique Gujarat initiative for border tourism.
216. ▶ Gujarat Govt. approved setting up a 5,000 MW capacity solar park at Dholera Special Investment Region (SIR), as largest Solar Park in world. It would be set up in 11,000 hectares of land with an investment of INR 25000 crores.
217. ▶ Gujarat government announced wind-solar hybrid power policy 2018, aiming to make optimum utilisation of the land and grid. It provides 50% concession for cross-subsidy surcharge and additional surcharge when generated energy is sold to a third party. Gujarat currently generates over 5,500 MW of wind power and 1,600 MW of solar power.
218. ▶ Gujarat government launched *Urban Sanitation and Cleanliness Policy* for better management of solid and liquid waste in cities. It focuses on streamlining collection and disposal of all types of waste in cities and towns.
219. ▶ Gujarat government launched Suryashakti Kisan Yojana (SKY), solar power scheme for farmers enabling them to generate electricity for their captive consumption as well as sell surplus power to grid and earn extra buck.
- ▶ It is first such scheme in country, where farmer will produce his power and sell surplus to State power utility.


- ✎ Pilot Phase with approx 137 feeders will cover as approx 12400 farmers from 33 districts. The project cost is around Rs 870 crore and it will generate 175 MW.
 - ✎ Under it, farmers of state having existing electricity connection will be given solar panels as per their load requirements. It envisages setting up of separate feeders for agricultural solar energy consumption.
 - ✎ Cost Sharing - State and Central governments will give 60% subsidy on cost of project. Farmer is required to take 5% cost, while 35% will be provided to him as affordable loan with interest rates of 4.5 to 6%.
 - ✎ Duration of scheme is 25 years, split between 7 and 18 year periods. For first 7 years, farmers will get per unit rate of Rs 7 (Rs 3.5 by state power utility + Rs 3.5 by state government). For subsequent 18 years they will get rate of Rs 3.5 for each unit sold.
220. ▶ Gujarat government signed an MoU with Poland government, regarding centenary celebrations to mark independence of Poland in Delhi and other regions of world.
221. ▶ Gujarat government unveiled its *Reuse of Treated Waste Water Policy*, that aims to reduce state's dependence on freshwater sources like Narmada river. It will promote use of treated wastewater and will see setting up of sewage treatment plants (STP) across Gujarat.
222. ▶ Gujarat government will launch free treatment scheme for road accident victims, by bearing medical expenses of up to 50,000 rupees for each victim of a road accident in for first 48 hours.
223. ▶ Gujarat police unveiled *Pocket Cop* project, which will enable quicker verification of passport applicants, and search of accused persons. Under this, smartphones with data connectivity will be given to 4,900 police personnel.
224. ▶ HRD Ministry approved draft Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act) Bill 2018 , that seeks to repeal UGC Act and set up Higher Education Commission of India. Stakeholders can give their suggestions at reformofugc@gmail.com by 07-07-2018.
- ✎ Principals of Draft Include Less Government and more Governance, Separation of grant functions, End of Inspection Raj, Focus on academic quality, Powers to enforce.
 - ✎ Highlights of Bill -
 - ✎ Improving academic standards and quality of higher education, specifying norms for learning outcomes, lay down standards of teaching/research etc.
 - ✎ Provide roadmap for mentoring of institutions found failing in maintaining the required academic standards.
 - ✎ Shall have the power to enforce decisions, grant or revoke authorization for starting / closure of academic operations.
 - ✎ Will encourage higher education institutions to formulate a Code of Good Practices covering promotion of teaching and learning.
 - ✎ Provides for penal provisions (graded), which will cover withdrawal of power to grant degrees/ diplomas, or even prosecution sanction in serious willful non-compliance.
 - ✎ There will be an Advisory Council to render advice the Commission on matters concerning coordination of standards in country.
 - ✎ Commission will specify norms for fixing of fee chargeable by higher education institutions and advice Governments accordingly..
 - ✎ It will monitor, through a national data base, development of emerging fields of knowledge and balanced growth of higher education in all spheres.
225. ▶ HRD Ministry launched *Study in India* portal at URL www.studyinindia.gov.in, as a single window to cover all aspects relating to studying in India for foreign students. Students across world will now be able to pursue the education in prominent Indian Educational Institutions. Integration of e-SANAD portal and NAD – National Academic Depository (of HRD Ministry), was also launched on the occasion.
- ✎ e-Sanad is aimed at online submission and verification of documents with ultimate object to extend contact less, cashless, faceless and paperless document attestation service. Using it, any type of document viz personal, educational or commercial can be authenticated and apostilled.
 - ✎ National Academic Depository (NAD) is 24X7 online store house of all academic awards viz. diplomas certificates,, degrees, mark-sheets etc. duly digitised and lodged by academic boards, institutions, eligibility assessment bodies. It ensures easy access to and retrieval of academic award and validates and guarantees its authenticity and safe storage.
226. ▶ Harayana Government launched 7-Star Gram Panchayat Rainbow scheme to give star rankings to its panchayats on the basis of seven social parameters - *sex ratio, education, hygiene, environment preservation, governance and social participation*. So far, Ambala topped star ranking followed by Gurugram and Karnal. .
- ✎ Gram panchayats scoring maximum in all parameters will be recognized as Indradhanush Gram Panchayats. They will get special grants for development works from Development and Panchayats Department of State Government.


 Rewards -

 6 stars - 20 lakh.

 5 stars - 15 lakh.

 4 stars - 10 lakh.


 Villages for achieving each parameter will be rewarded Rs 1 lakh. Villages having equal or more girl population will be given INR 50000 as bonus with their reward money. Villages which adopt Swachhta Mission will be given additional INR 50000.

 Various Colours -

 Pink star - To panchayats that make outstanding performance in improving sex ratio.

 Green star - For protection of environment

 White star - Cleanliness.


 Saffron star - For crime-free villages.


 Sky colour star - To village that will have no drop out.


 Golden star - For good governance.

 Silver star - For participation in development of villages.

227. ▶ Hardeep S Puri (*Minister of State (I/C) of Housing and Urban Affairs*) launched India Smart Cities Fellowship (ISCF) and Internship (ISCI) program, to provide youth an opportunity to experience aspects of Urban planning and governance. Smart Cities Digital Payments Awards 2018 were also launched.

 India Smart Cities Fellowship (ISCF) Program is designed to provide valuable experience to the youth interested in smart cities specifically, and urban renewal sector in general and will bring in new ideas to implement solutions for key urban problems.

 India Smart Cities Internship (ISCI) Program - MOHUA will engage students pursuing Higher education as Interns to help implementation of Smart City Projects in various States/Cities. Internship will be on unpaid basis for 6 to 12 weeks. They will be given an Experience Certificate at successful completion of program.

 The Smart Cities Digital Payments Awards 2018 - *100 days Challenge in 100 Smart Cities* aims to promote ease of living for India's urban residents. Objective of these awards is to guide and reward Smart Cities for promoting digital payments and carrying out innovative payment initiatives.

228. ▶ Haryana Government approved an affordable housing policy *Housing for all-2018* for core areas of municipalities in state. Town and Country Planning Department would be delegating power to Urban Local Bodies Department for implementation. Key Highlights -

 For core areas, projects would be allowed in core areas of municipal towns with an area 1 - 5 acres, while floor area ratio (FAR) should be 250 and for 2.5 to 5 acres, it should be 275.

 Allotment rate is 4000 per sq ft in hyper potential zones, Rs 3,000 per sq ft in high potential zones, Rs 2,500 for medium potential zones and Rs 2,100 per sq ft in low potential zones.

 Beneficiaries would be provided financial assistance of Rs 2.5 lakh.

229. ▶ Haryana Government launched 'Paudhagiri campaign', to increase green cover in state and improve climatic conditions. Under this, 22 lakh students studying in Class 6th to 12th will plant sapling each, during 3 months of monsoon (July, August and September), provided by State forest department. Student will get total Rs 300 in three years for successfully looking after its sapling.

230. ▶ Haryana Govt. launched *Parivartan* scheme, to address 10 issues in 46 developmental blocks of state.

231. ▶ Haryana Govt. will launch *Chatra Parivahan Suraksha Yojana*, developed for safety of girl students in Haryana.


232. ▶ Haryana State Government will establish *Kisan Kalyan Pradhikaran* as farmers' welfare department which will look to make agriculture remunerative by enhancing productivity and mitigate distress of farming households.

233. ▶ Haryana government increased upper age limit to enter into government service from 40 to 42 years.

234. ▶ Haryana government issued a notification directing sports persons employed with state to pay 33% of their income earned professionally and through commercial endorsements to state sports council. It will be used for development of sports in Haryana. State government also hiked Dearness Allowance (DA) from 5 % to 7%.

235. ▶ Haryana government opened subsidised canteens in 4 districts (Faridabad, Gurugram, Hisar and Yamunanagar) under *Antyodaya Aahaar Yojana* to provide hygienic food at affordable prices to poor and needy persons. These canteens will serve food to concerned people at INR 10, having 4 chapattis, rice, dal, cooked seasonal vegetables, curd or raita, green chutney and gur.

236. ▶ Health Ministry approved proposal of Medical Council of India (MCI) to amend Screening Test Regulations 2002, making it mandatory to qualify National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) to pursue foreign medical course.

 A common National Entrance Exam, National Eligibility cum Entrance Test has been made mandatory for admission to all medical courses in the country.

Indian students can also pursue medical education abroad, however, they need to qualify *Foreign Medical Graduates Exam (FMGE)* for practicing in India after obtaining MBBS overseas.

Overseas Citizen of India shall have to mandatorily qualify NEET for admission to MBBS course abroad, from May 2018. Result of NEET will be treated as the Eligibility Certificate for such persons.

237. ▶ High-speed interceptor boat ICG C-162 has been commissioned into service by Indian Coast Guard (ICG), built by Bharati Defence and Infrastructure Ltd (BDIL).
238. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Food, civil supplies and Consumer Affairs department launched an app for ration card holders, called ePDS (electronic public distribution system). Beneficiaries can use digital ration card in ration shops. HP government also recently started Himachal Grihni Suidha Yojna, which will provide 1 lakh women with gas cylinders and stoves free of cost.
239. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government approved setting up of a regional-cum-facilitation centre of National Medicinal Plants Board of Ministry of Ayush, in Jogindernagar town in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh.
240. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government launched *Prakritik Kheti Khushhaal Kissan Yojana*, to promote Zero Budget Natural Farming System. It would increase soil productivity, decrease use of fertilizers and harmful chemicals and increase water infiltration. State Govt. also Launched a week long *Polythene Hatao, Paryavaran Bachao* Campaign.
241. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government will introduce free Heli-ambulance services in order to help patients in far flung and inaccessible areas . Free Heli-ambulance services will be operated by Heli-mission Switzerland with the assistance of Lady Willingdon Hospital (Kullu District).
- State Govt. inaugurated Kanda Pattan-Sarkaghat Water Supply Scheme in Mandi district. It will benefit more than 31,000 people of region. State govt. also decreased age criteria for getting old age pension to 70 years from 80 years.
242. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Govt. launched Mother's Absolute Affection (MAA) programme with an aim to promote breastfeeding, strengthening inter-personal communication through ASHA workers, skilled support for breastfeeding at delivery points.
243. ▶ Himachal Pradesh adjudged as top performer under Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) in country.
244. ▶ Himachal Pradesh cabinet announced increment of honorarium of ASHA workers of he health department from 1000 to Rs 1250, to benefit 7,829 ASHA workers in the state.
245. ▶ Himachal Pradesh government will do away with semester system in undergraduate (UG) courses and revert to annual examination system, as recommended by a committee formed to review RUSA (Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan).
246. ▶ Himachal Pradesh government will spend 25 crore rupees on renovating h historic British Raj 'Bantony Castle Estate' as a major tourist attraction. It was acquired by government for over 27 crores two years ago, from a Business family.
247. ▶ Hindon Elevated Road, India's longest elevated road inaugurated in Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh) by UP CM Yogi Adityanath. It will make it easier to commute between Delhi and Ghaziabad, saving approx 40 minutes of travel. It is 10.5KMs long, built on 227 single pillars. It was built at a cost of about Rs 11,000 crores.
248. ▶ Home Ministry approved Central Assistance of INR 1161 Crores to Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Lakshadweep (UT) and Rajasthan -
- ▶ Assam (480 Crores), Himachal Pradesh(84 Crores), Sikkim (67 Crores) were affected by floods/ landslides during 2017-18.
 - ▶ Lakshadweep (2.6 Crores) was affected by cyclone Ockhi.
 - ▶ Rajasthan (526 Crores) affected by kharif drought during 2017.
249. ▶ Human Resource Development Ministry launched 2nd edition of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan in New Delhi. Under this, students from 750 higher educational institutions from across country will adopt nearby villages and visit them to get acquainted with regular lifestyle of village people and problems faced by them. Main objective is to enable higher education institutions to work with people of rural India in identifying development challenges and evolving appropriate solutions for accelerating sustainable development in rural areas.
250. ▶ Human Resource Development Ministry released NIRF India Rankings 2018 of higher educational institutions -
- ▶ Top 10 (Overall) -
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Technology Madras
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Technology Bombay
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur
 - ▶ Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
 - ▶ Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee
 - ▶ Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
 - ▶ Anna University, Chennai

📌 Top 5 Universities -

- 📌 Indian Institute of Science Bangalore
- 📌 Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi
- 📌 Banaras Hindu University Varanasi
- 📌 Anna University Chennai
- 📌 University of Hyderabad

📌 Top 5 Medical Institutes -

- 📌 All India Institute of Medical Sciences New Delhi
- 📌 Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh
- 📌 Christian Medical College, Vellore
- 📌 Kasturba Medical College, Manipal
- 📌 King George`s Medical University, Lucknow

📌 Top 5 Colleges -

- 📌 Miranda House, Delhi University
- 📌 St, Stephens, Delhi University
- 📌 Bishop Heber College, Tiruchirappalli
- 📌 Hindu College, Delhi
- 📌 Presidency College, Chennai

📌 Top 5 Engineering Institutes -

- 📌 IIT Madras
- 📌 IIT Bombay
- 📌 IIT Delhi
- 📌 IIT Kharagpur
- 📌 IIT Kanpur

📌 Top 5 Management Institutes -

- 📌 Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad
- 📌 Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore
- 📌 Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Calcutta
- 📌 Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Lucknow
- 📌 Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode

251. ▶ Human Resource Development Prakash Javadekar Minister launched *Samagra Shiksha* - an integrated Scheme for school education extending support to States from pre-school to senior secondary levels for first time It will treat *school* holistically as a continuum from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary and senior secondary levels.

📌 It focuses on improving quality of education at all levels by integrating two T's – Teachers and Technology.

📌 Earlier budget on 3 education schemes (SSA, RMSA and Teacher Education) was 28,000 crores in 2017-18. But, budget outlay on new scheme will be 34,000 crore in 2018-19 and 41,000 crores in 2019-20.

📌 10 Lakh schools will get library grant of 5,000 to 20,000 to strengthen libraries.

📌 Every school will get sports equipment under *Samagra Shiksha* - 5000 for Primary, 10,000 for Upper Primary & up to 25,000 for SSC & HSC schools.

📌 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) will be expanded from Class 6-8 to Class 6-12 with 4385.60 crores in 2018-19 & 4553.10 crores in 2019-20.

📌 *DIKSHA* - national digital platform for teachers would put high quality teaching learning resources for ready use of teachers.

Samagra Shiksha Scheme will support 'Operation Digital Board' in all secondary schools over a period of 5 years, so as to enhance use of digital technology through smart classrooms. Digital initiatives like ShaalaKosh, Shagun, ShaalaSaarthi will be strengthened.

252. ▶ Human Resources Development ministry will set up an innovation cell to develop new ideas and encourage innovation in India.

253. ▶ IFFCO launched e-commerce platform IFFCO iMandi to address needs of 5.5 Crores farming community associated with it, in partnership with Singapore-based technology firm iMandi. Through this, IFFCO is targeting to reach GMV (gross merchandise value) of \$5 billion in 2 years. Using it, farmers buy all agri inputs of IFFCO, including fertilisers, agro chemicals and seeds at discounted price and get free delivery at their doorstep.

254. ▶ ISRO signed Technology Transfer Agreement (TTA) with Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), to transfer technology for manufacture of space grade Li-Ion cells.

- ✎ ISRO uses Li-Ion batteries as power sources for satellite and launch vehicle applications due to their high energy density, reliability and long cycle life.
 - ✎ This Technology Transfer will enable BHEL to produce space grade Li-Ion cells which can meet country's space programme requirements.
255. ▶ India Meteorological Department (IMD) teamed up with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to send extreme weather alerts to people. BSNL and IMD will send area-specific alerts to users if they happen to be at place likely to experience extreme weather conditions, even if their phone numbers do not belong to that particular telecom circle.
256. ▶ India Meteorological Department (IMD) will add 30 more doppler radars in 2 years, with 14 in northeast, 4 in Jammu and Kashmir and 3 each will be Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.
- ✎ Doppler radar is an observational tool used for precisely monitoring and predicting severe weather events such as hailstorms, thunder storms, cyclones and tornados.
 - ✎ It uses Doppler effect by bouncing microwave signal off desired target to produce velocity data.
 - ✎ It mainly gives information about wind velocity and precipitation. Doppler radar has radius of 250 km and helps in issuing forecasts two-three hours prior to severe weather conditions.
 - ✎ First Doppler radar in India was installed in Chennai, Tamil Nadu in 2002. There are currently 27 Doppler radars in country.
257. ▶ India signed \$ 84 Million Loan Agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Improvement and Expansion of Water Supply in Bihar.
258. ▶ India started nationwide tiger census 2018, as largest survey of wildlife anywhere in world. India will now use more technology, including mobile app *MSTrIPES*, with higher focus on northeast to determine number of tigers in India.
- ✎ Tiger census 2018 by National Tiger Conservation Authority will be INR 10 crores exercise, which will involve 40,000 forest guards traversing 4,00,000 sq. km. of forests.
259. ▶ India will get its first national police museum in Lutyens Delhi, depicting history of central and state police forces. It will be inaugurated on Police Commemoration Day, which is held on October 21.
- ✎ Also, A National Tribal Museum along with a National Level Tribal Research Institute will also be set up in Delhi.
260. ▶ India will host Its 1st (overall 8th edition) of Theatre Olympics 2018 in February - April 2018. This 51 day event will be organized by National School of Drama under Ministry of Culture, with budget of INR 51.81 crores, with theme *Flag of Friendship*.
- ✎ It will witness performances in 30 different Indian languages, 15 foreign languages as well as in non-verbal languages. Artists from 30 nations will participate.
261. ▶ Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and American pharmaceutical firm Pfizer signed MoU to establish a 'Centre to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance' in New Delhi, to help combat growing threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in India.
262. ▶ Indian IT industry apex body NASSCOM (National Association of Software & Services Companies) opened Centre of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (CoE-DSAI) in Bengaluru (Karnataka). to nurture innovation in emerging disruptive technologies such as AI and to leverage the power of data science.
- ✎ NASSCOM also signed MoU with NITI Aayog to collaboratively foster applied research, accelerating adoption and ethics, privacy and security.
263. ▶ Indian Institute of Technology – Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi) and Amazon Internet Services Private Limited (AISPL) signed MoU to develop cloud-ready job skills by providing access to AWS Educate program and to help establish a Cloud Research Lab on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). Cloud Research Lab will provide students with opportunities to use AWS Cloud technology to pursue research initiatives that focus on AI and ML innovation for India.
264. ▶ Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) approved animal-free tests for drug manufacturers. It replaces pyrogen test carried out on rabbits and abnormal toxicity test carried out on guinea pigs and mice with tests that can be done in test tubes. These guidelines will come into effect from July 1, 2018.
- ✎ Pyrogen test will be replaced by bacterial endotoxin test or monocyte activation test which can be carried out in test tubes.
 - ✎ It is carried out to check impurity that can cause adverse side-effects. Drug is injected into rabbit and it is closely observed for feverish symptoms.
 - ✎ For abnormal toxicity test, Vaccine manufacturers can apply for waiver by getting compliance certificate from National Control Laboratory.
 - ✎ This test is carried out to check hazardous biological contamination in vaccine formulations. In this, mice or guinea pigs are injected with vaccine. The scientists observe if there is death of any animal.
265. ▶ Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited (IRSDC) Launched Idea Competition called *SRIJAN*' (*Station Rejuvenation through Joint ActioN*) at MyGov portal, under redevelopment of 635 major Railway stations across country. Last date for submission of

entries in competition is 26-03-2018, with winner for logo competition to get cash prize of INR 75000.

266. ▶ Indian Railways and General Electric (GE) Jointly inducted 2 wholly designed in India Digitally Enabled Locomotives based on Insulated-gate bipolar transistor (IGBT) technology.
- ▶ IGBT Technology has 3 terminal power semiconductor device primarily used as electronic switch. It offers greater power gain than standard bipolar type transistor combined with higher voltage operation and lower input losses.
 - ▶ GE is providing locomotive technology to Indian Railway and by 2025, through JV (Indian Railways has 26% stake), it will manufacture 1000 fuel-efficient locomotives (100 per year) for freight traffic hauling. 40 fuel efficient diesel locomotives will be manufactured in GE facility at Erie in US and rest 960 diesel locomotives will be manufactured in Marhaura (Bihar).
267. ▶ Indian Railways inducted three 09-3x Dynamic Tamping Express machines for improved mechanised Track Maintenance, manufactured in India under Make in India initiative with imported components. This technology is available in five countries including India.
- ▶ Railways plans to induct 42 more such machines in its maintenance fleet over next 3 years.
 - ▶ These Machines can perform several track maintenance tasks which are currently performed manually / through several machines.
 - ▶ Railways has planned complete mechanisation of inspection, monitoring, relaying and maintenance of track by 2024. Induction of such new machines will further help to improve safety, reliability and economy in maintenance of tracks over Indian Railways.
268. ▶ Indian Railways launched *Voluntary Safety Reporting* website for its employees to anonymously report internal safety issues and hazards. It allows employees to report issues anonymously OR to mention their contact details for confidential feedback.
269. ▶ Indian Railways launched first consolidated Bridge Management System (IR-BMS), with data on its 1.5 lakh bridges. IR-BMS aims for meaningful assimilation, analysis and dissemination of information related to various activities about its bridges.
270. ▶ Indian Railways organized a programme on Ethics in Public Governance and Launched “Mission Satyanishtha”, at National Rail Museum in New Delhi. It aims to sensitize all railway employees about need to adhere to good ethics and to maintain high standards of integrity at work.
271. ▶ India’s first Aviation Multi Skill Development Centre (MSDC) is launched at Chandigarh Airport’s old terminal, as a CSR initiative of Airports Authority of India (AAI). It will train about 2,400 youth and women in 8 aviation job roles over next 3 years.
272. ▶ India’s first artificial intelligence (AI) research institute inaugurated in Mumbai as *Wadhwani AI*. It will focus on researching ways to harness power of AI to solve deep rooted problems in India. Indian-American tech entrepreneurs Romesh Wadhwani and Sunil Wadhwani are committing \$30 million to institute over first 10 years.
273. ▶ India’s first insect museum with state-of-the-art amenities is unveiled at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University campus in Coimbatore. It will display insects preserved as specimens as also live ones depicting their different developmental stages.
274. ▶ India’s first national coastal policing academy, National Academy of Coastal Policing (NACP) to train police forces in effectively safeguarding country’s shoreline will start functioning from April 2018. It will be launched from campus of Gujarat’s Fisheries Research Centre in coastal Okha town in Devbhumi Dwarka district of Gujarat.
275. ▶ India’s longest Rail and Road bridge *Bogibeel bridge*, linking Dibrugarh in Assam to Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh will be inaugurated in 2018. It is 4.94 km long and stays 32 metres above waters of Brahmaputra River. At present, travel from Dibrugarh to Arunachal Pradesh by train takes over 500 km detour. This bridge will bring travel length under 100 km.
276. ▶ Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)’s National Cultural Audiovisual Archives (NCAA) project has been certified as the world’s first Trusted Digital Repository as per ISO 16363:2012 standard, granted by Primary Trustworthy Digital Repository Authorisation Body Ltd. (PTAB), United Kingdom.
- ▶ Primary objective of NCAA is to preserve cultural heritage of India available in audiovisual form through a process of digitization and making it accessible to people.
277. ▶ Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Laboratory (IBSD) Imphal has set up a floating laboratory in northeast India’s largest freshwater lake, Loktak to constantly monitor its water quality and improve it.
278. ▶ J P Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare released National Health Profile (NHP) 2018 prepared by the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI). He also launched National Health Resource Repository (NHRR) - Country’s first ever national healthcare facility registry of authentic, standardized and updated geo-spatial data of all public and private healthcare establishments.
- ▶ NHRR will be ultimate platform for comprehensive information of all healthcare establishments in India (Private / Government). Over 20 lakh healthcare establishments like hospitals, doctors, clinics, diagnostic labs, pharmacies and nursing homes would be enumerated under this census, capturing data on over 1,400 variables.
279. ▶ Jackfruit (कटहल) has been named as official fruit of State of Kerala.
280. ▶ Jammu & Kashmir State Government constituted State Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (SCPUL), for promotion of Urdu.
281. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) cabinet approved adopting Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) for horticulture crops such as apple and saffron in state. Under RWBCIS, farmers will be provided insurance coverage and financial support in event of

failure of any of notified crops due to adverse weather incidences. RWBCIS will be in addition to Central Government's Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

282. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir government will host its first ever *global investors meet* in July 2018 in Srinagar, focused on harnessing hydropower potential of 20,000 mega watts in Jammu Kashmir.
283. ▶ Jharkhand Government announced to develop country's first Khadi mall.
284. ▶ Karnataka Assembly Election Results 2018 -
- ▶ Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as largest party by winning 104 out of 222 Seats. INC (Indian National Congress) won 78 seats and Janata Dal (Secular) won 40 Seats.
 - ▶ Votes Percentage - BJP (36.2%), INC (38 %), JDS (18.3%)
 - ▶ Karnataka Election witnessed maximum expenditure by candidates and parties ever, estimated at 9500 - 10500 crores.
285. ▶ Karnataka Government accepted state flag as official flag in place of an unofficial red and yellow flag currently used in state to signify local pride. New tricolour having yellow (at top), white (in middle) and red (at bottom) colorus, with state's emblem Gandaberunda (a two-headed mythological bird) in centre. Karnataka is 2nd state after J&K to have its own state flag.
286. ▶ Karnataka Govt. recognised Lingayats as a 'religious minority' and included Veerashaivas who follow Basavanna as a group within community, approving recommendations of HN Nagamohan Das Committee.
287. ▶ Karnataka Govt. unveiled healthcare scheme *Arogya Karnataka* aimed at benefitting about 1.43 crore households in state. It will provide quality primary, secondary and tertiary treatment to both below-poverty-line (BPL) and above-poverty-line (APL) families in state.
288. ▶ Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan launched M-Kerala app, at #Future, Kerala's first-ever global digital summit held in Kochi. It will help citizens to avail nearly 100 government services using their mobile phones. Theme of the Summit was *Towards a Digital Future*.
289. ▶ Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan launched Pravasi pension scheme, offering pension of INR 2000 a month to state's Non Resident Citizens of over 60 years age. To avail this scheme, person has to pay Rs 100 per month for 5 years.
290. ▶ Kerala Government approved setting up of *Kerala Fibre Optic Network Limited*, to offer free internet to over 20 lakh poor families. A Joint Venture company will be launched by *IT Infrastructure Limited, State Electricity Board and state government* to get this task done.
291. ▶ Kerala Government will start a 'community radio' to update farmers about latest developments, as first such community radio in India. It will start broadcast from Kuttanad in Alappuzha district, known as *rice bowl of Kerala*.
292. ▶ Kerala government made vaccination compulsory for school admissions from next academic year onwards.
293. ▶ Kerala government will soon be utilising services of robots called *Bandicoot*, to clean sewer holes in state, developed by startup *Genrobotics*. Services of robots will be initially utilised in Kerala's capital Thiruvananthapuram, which has over 5000 manholes.
294. ▶ Law Commission of India (LCI) in its 276th Report *Legal Framework: Gambling and Sports Betting including Cricket in India*, recommended that gambling and betting on sports be allowed as regulated activities.
- ▶ It recommended number of changes in law for regulating betting for making it taxable under direct and indirect tax regimes and used as source for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI).
 - ▶ It recommended linking Aadhar or PAN card of individual indulging in betting and gambling and making transaction cashless to regulate illegal activities such as money laundering.
 - ▶ FDI in casino and online gaming industry will bring substantial amounts of investment to those states that decide to permit casinos, propelling growth of tourism, while also enabling such states to generate higher revenue and employment opportunities.
 - ▶ 21st Law commission of India is led by former SC Justice Balbir Sinsh Chauhan, constituted effect from 1st September, 2015. It has a three-year term, ending on 31st August, 2018.
295. ▶ Law ministry will file a review petition against Supreme Court's ruling on the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989, that puts a stop to immediate arrests in complaints filed under its provisions.
- ▶ Previously, to curb misuse of SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989) and protect honest public servants, Supreme Court stated that
 - ▶ An arrest is not mandatory under the SC/ST Act, and automatic arrest has been scrapped.
 - ▶ SC directed that public servants can only be arrested with written permission of their appointing authority.
 - ▶ Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act was enacted in 1989. It is a comprehensive law which not only defines atrocities against SCs and STs but also make several rules and regulations. One provision states that public servant (non SC/ST) neglecting his duties related to SCs/STs will be punished with imprisonment for a term of 6 months to 1 year.
296. ▶ Linguist Panchanan Mohanty from University of Hyderabad discovered 2 endangered languages Walmiki and Malhar predominantly spoken in remote regions of Odisha.
- ▶ Walmiki - Spoken in district of Koraput of Odisha and on bordering districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Malhar - Spoken in a remote and isolated hamlet about 165 km away from Bhubaneswar. It is spoken by community consisting of about 75 speakers including children.

297. ▶ Lok Sabha MPs will be allowed to ask a maximum of five questions in the house per day from upcoming Monsoon Session, down from earlier 10 permitted questions.
298. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Animal Husbandry Department signed MoU with Bharat Financial Inclusion Ltd (BFIL) to launch *Pashu Dhan Sanjeevani – 1962* Programme. It offers range of veterinary services, available on toll-free helpline number 1962. Services include emergency treatment, artificial insemination, vaccination and deworming etc. It will be monitored through 'Bharat Sanjeevani' software.
299. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Govt. increased retirement age of Madhya Pradesh government employees from 60 to 62 years.
300. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government announced outstanding power bill waiver scheme for laborers and poor families, expected to benefit about 77 lakh people. Cabinet also approved Mukhyamantri Jan Kalyan (Sambal) Yojana 2018 to provide subsidized power.
301. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government launched a mobile application *pollution metre* to spread awareness against pollution in western part of state.
302. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government launched an outstanding power bill waiver scheme and subsidised power scheme called 'Sambal' for labourers and poor families. Under it, Below Poverty Line (BPL) families would be provided electricity at a cost of Rs 200 per month (maximum).
303. ▶ Maharashtra Government approved Ghodazari in Chandrapur district as new wildlife sanctuary in state. Located in North East of Tadoba, it will include 159 sq km of Brahmapuri forest.
304. ▶ Maharashtra Government became first state to set up a Transgender Welfare Board, to look after education, employment, housing, and health schemes for transgenders and protect their Constitutional and human rights.
305. ▶ Maharashtra Government launched 4 schemes aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in agriculture and allied sectors among economically backward segments (Beneficiaries in 18 – 41 years age group) -
 - ▶ 1st scheme is about extending loan along with interest subsidy
 - ▶ 2nd is for promoting group farming.
 - ▶ 3rd scheme is for group projects related to agro-industries and small and medium scale entrepreneurs
 - ▶ 4th scheme relates to skill development training in agriculture under which, training will be imparted to 2.5 lakh rural youths.

▶ *Annasaheb Patil Arthik Backward Development Corporation (APABDC)* will be nodal entity for implementation of these schemes.
306. ▶ Maharashtra Government launched a new scheme to help the landless labourers from the Scheduled Castes to acquire agricultural land, paying only 5 % of cost. The rest up to 8 lakh rupees will be borne by Maharashtra government. This is a modified version of Dadasaheb Gaikwad empowerment scheme for landless labourers scheme, that offered 50 % subsidy.
307. ▶ Maharashtra Government signed MoU with Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) to launch Cotton Mission, to create value chain with final market linkages for thousands of cotton farmers in Vidarbha region. Under this, MCX will partner with state agriculture department and other agencies to work with Farmer Producer Organisations and help them connect to organised market network for building their capabilities.
308. ▶ Maharashtra Government will provide Rs 3 subsidy for every litre of milk to co-operative and private producers to manufacture milk powder, aimed at encouraging production of milk powder from surplus milk. Milk producers in Maharashtra will get Minimum Support Price (MSP) of INR 27 per litre.
309. ▶ Maharashtra Govt. launched QUEST (*Quality Evaluation for Sustainable Transformation*), a centre to evaluate and quantify special development budget allocations and their impact on tribal development, to bring greater accountability in management of funds allocated for tribal welfare.
310. ▶ Maharashtra State Government became first state to sign a MoU with Centre's Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) Council to train state's Public Works Department (PWD) officials to rate government buildings. Objective is to encourage environment friendly buildings, that are designed using environmentally responsible processes.
311. ▶ Maharashtra became first State to adopt a fintech (Financial Technology) policy for fostering an environment for fintech startups. Under this, State Government will provide infrastructure and financial support to facilitate 300 startups over 3 years, with INR 200 crores allotted for it.
312. ▶ Maharashtra became first state to provide digitally-signed land record receipts (also known as 7/12 receipts), to check irregularities and bring in transparency.
313. ▶ Maharashtra government announced *Kanya Van Samruddhi Yojana*, in which farmers families with girl child will be given saplings for plantation. A farmer family with a girl child between April 1 and March 31 will get 10 saplings free of cost from forest department. Beneficiaries will have to plant saplings between July 1 and 7. Scheme will be applicable for 2 girl childs per family.

314. ▶ Maharashtra government announced that cancer patients would be provided with free chemotherapy treatment at district hospitals, starting June 2018. It aims to ease travelling and lodging problems of cancer patients who come to Mumbai's Tata Memorial Hospital in Parel, which is one of the country's premier cancer treatment facilities.
315. ▶ Maharashtra government made it compulsory for the Public Works Department to use plastic waste for construction and repair of asphalt roads, to sustainably use increasing amount of plastic waste collected by state civic bodies.
316. ▶ Maharashtra government partnered with Wikipedia, to spread Marathi language and enhance its online usage. It was announcement on Marathi language day (Feb 27).
317. ▶ Maharashtra government will launch *one transformer per farmer* Scheme, to reduce electricity losses. Under it, 2 lakh farmers will be given electricity connection for high voltage distribution line which will ensure uninterrupted power supply.
- ✎ Farmers who lose their cattle in attack by wild animals will now get Rs 40,000, up from Rs 25,000 earlier.
 - ✎ Rs 2 lakh hike in for kin of people killed in an attack by wild animals was announced.
318. ▶ Maharashtra government will rename Jalgaon-based North Maharashtra University after Bahinabai Chaudhari, renowned poetess of 19th century.
319. ▶ Maharashtra government will roll out *Asmita Yojana* on International Women's Day (March 8, 2018) to provide affordable (subsidised) sanitary pads to school girls and women. Under this, schoolgirls studying in Zilla Parishad schools will get sanitary napkin packet at Rs 5 while rural women can avail it at subsidised rate of INR 24 and INR 29. State government appointed *Umed*, Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission, as a nodal agency for effective implementation.
320. ▶ Manipur CM N.Biren Singh launched *Go to Village* mission throughout, aimed at identifying eligible beneficiaries across state and delivering government services at their doorstep. The mission has been launched in 60 villages of all 60 Assembly constituencies.
321. ▶ Manipur's Shirui Lily Festival 2018 has been concluded at Ukhrul district, to spread awareness about conservation of endangered Shirui Lily.
322. ▶ Meghalaya Cabinet approved convergence of phase 4 of Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS) with centre's Ayushman Bharat Yojana. Under this, health coverage has been increased to Rs. 5 lakh from previous Rs.2.8 lakh per household excluding government employees.
323. ▶ Meghalaya Governor Ganga Prasad inaugurated *Friendship Gate* for Indian and Bangladesh border guards, aimed to have a Wagah-like beating retreat ceremony for India's Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh.
324. ▶ Meghalaya Govt. released policy document of 5 year jackfruit mission, during state's jackfruit festival. It aims to generate employment opportunities for over 80,000 farmers, costing approx 80 Crores INR.
325. ▶ Meghalaya government launched 'Mission Lakadong' to achieve a five-fold increase in production of Lakadong turmeric, an organic variety of turmeric grown in Meghalaya, to at least 50,000 metric tonne per year in 5 years. Jaintia Hills District is home to Lakadong turmeric.
326. ▶ Microsoft signed MoU with Rajasthan government to provide free digital training to 9,500 college students in one year. Microsoft will also train educators from government colleges through the Microsoft Innovative Educator Programme, building capacity for innovative use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in classroom.
327. ▶ Minimum Wages (Delhi) Amendment Act 2017 has been officially notified after of President's Approval. It amends Minimum Wages Act 1948, and was passed by Delhi Assembly in August 2017.
- ✎ As per new rules, employers violating labour rules in Delhi will now face fine ranging from Rs 20000 to 50000 and jail term of one to three years.
 - ✎ Courts will be required to dispose it off within a month from the date of filing.
 - ✎ Delhi Government hiked minimum wages of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers by 37 %. Minimum Wages are -
 - ✎ Unskilled worker - 13350
 - ✎ Semi-skilled - 14698
 - ✎ Skilled persons is Rs 16182 in Delhi.
328. ▶ Minister for Railways and Coal Piyush Goyal launched UTTAM App for Coal Quality Monitoring. UTTAM stands for – Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal (uttam.coalindia.in). It aims to provide an App for all citizens and coal consumers to monitor Third Party Sampling of coal across CIL subsidiaries. It provides a platform for monitoring of sampling and coal dispatches and aims to make citizens a stakeholder in coal ecosystem.
329. ▶ Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan laid foundation stone of country's first National Skill Training Institute at Barang near Bhubaneswar (Odisha).
330. ▶ Minister for Women and Child Development, Maneka Sanjay Gandhi laid Foundation for India's First Advanced Forensic Lab in Chandigarh, dedicated to women related cases. It will augment current capacity of CFSL Chandigarh to 2000 Cases per year (from 160

cases). 5 more advanced forensic labs would come up in Mumbai, Chennai, Guwahati, Pune and Bhopal in 3 months, taking annual capacity to 50000 cases.

331. ▶ Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Radha Mohan Singh laid foundation stone of frozen semen station in Maranga, Purnea (Bihar), being set up at a cost of Rs 64 crore under Rashtriya Gokul Mission (100% contribution from Central Government). It aims at increasing milk production through artificial insemination techniques used by CMOFED (Sudha) in Bihar.
- ▶ Rashtriya Gokul Mission was initiated in December 2014 with an aim to conserve and develop indigenous breeds.
332. ▶ Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu launched *ReUnite* mobile application, to track missing children. It will use *AmazonRekognition* web facial recognition service to identify missing kids.
333. ▶ Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu launched Intellectual Property (IP) mascot – IP Nani, at conference on National Intellectual Property Rights Policy in New Delhi.
- ▶ Mascot IP Nani is a tech-savvy grandmother who helps the government and enforcement agencies in combating IP crimes with the help of her grandson “Chhotu” aka Aditya. IP mascot will spread awareness about the importance of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).
 - ▶ National IPR Policy is a vision document that aims to create synergies between all forms of intellectual property (IP), concerned statutes and agencies. It aims to adapt global best practices to Indian scenario. In this regard, Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) was created in 2016 under DIPP.
334. ▶ Minister of Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda launched *Viral Load testing* for all People Living with HIV/AIDS, to provide free of cost viral load testing to 12 lakh PLHIV for treatment in India at least once a year. It will empower medical officers to detect failure on first line treatment and therefore save PLHIV from developing resistance to drugs.
335. ▶ Minister of Information & Broadcasting Smriti Zubin Irani Launched a scholarship of INR 25000 in commemoration of Deen Dayal Upadhyay, for people who did exemplary work in development of journalism.
336. ▶ Ministry for Development of North-East Region (DoNER) will set up *NITI Forum for North-East* to recommend suitable interventions for sustainable growth in North East Region (NER). It will be co-chaired by Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog (Rajiv Kumar Currently) and Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER).
337. ▶ Ministry of Agriculture and Famers Welfare unveiled Model Agriculture Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion & Facilitation) Act 2018, to ensure better price to farmers and encouraging investment from agribusiness and food processing industries.
- ▶ Under contract farming, agricultural production can be carried out based on pre-harvest agreement between buyers and producers (farmers or farmer organisations). It reduces risk of fluctuating market price and demand.
 - ▶ Model Act seeks to create regulatory and policy framework for contract farming and services. It covers contract farming in agriculture crops, livestock, dairy and poultry products. It lays special emphasis on protecting interests of farmers, considering them as weaker of two parties entering into a contract.
 - ▶ It makes mandatory for covering contracted produce under crop and livestock insurance in operation. Under it, no permanent structure can be developed on farmers' land or premises.
 - ▶ It establishes Contract Farming Facilitation Group (CFFG) for promoting contract farming and services at village or panchayat at level.
338. ▶ Ministry of Agriculture launched *Krishi Kalyan Abhiyan* from June 1 to July 31, 2018, to promote best farming practices and double farmers income launched in 25 villages in Aspirational Districts identified by Ministry of Rural Development and NITI Aayog. Activities include distribution of soil health cards, mini kits of pulses and horticulture plants etc.
339. ▶ Ministry of Culture launched *Seva Bhoj Yojna* scheme with outlay of INR 325 Crores for 2018-19 and 2019-20. It envisages to reimburse Central Government share of Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) and Integrated Goods and Service Tax (IGST), to lessen burden of Charitable Religious Institutions who provide Food free of cost without any discrimination to General Public, including Temples, Gurudwara, Mosque, Church, Dharmik Ashram etc.
- ▶ It is applicable to Organizations which have been in existence for at least 5 years before applying for financial assistance/grant and who serve free food to at least 5000 people in a month.
 - ▶ Ministry will register eligible charitable religious institutions for a time period ending with finance commission period and subsequently registration may be renewed by the Ministry, subject to performance evaluation.
 - ▶ Entity will be permitted to submit reimbursement claim of GST and Central Government share of IGST to designated authority of GST Department at State level in prescribed format during validity of registration.
 - ▶ Eligible institutions should be registered with Darpan portal.

340. ▶ Ministry of Culture organized 9th Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav under *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat*, in Tehri (Uttarakhand), also subsuming Tehri Lake Festival (where one can explore water sports) within itself.
- ▶ Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav (RSM) presents rich diversity and uniqueness of Indian culture and promotes cultural inter-linkages amongst states to strengthen National integration.
 - ▶ Paired state for Uttarakhand under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat matrix is Karnataka, giving special emphasis to Karnataka in the event.
341. ▶ Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation launched Swajal Scheme in 115 Aspirational districts, aimed at providing clean drinking water. It will involve outlay of 700 crores through flexi-funds under existing National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) budget. 90% of project cost is taken care by Government and remaining 10% is contributed by beneficiary community.
- ▶ Modernisation of 2000 water quality testing laboratories spread across country will also be taken up. INR 1000 crores will be earmarked for addressing drinking water needs of 27,544 arsenic and fluoride affected habitations of country, under National Water Quality Sub-Mission (NWQSM).
342. ▶ Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation selected 10 more iconic sites under Phase III of Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) of Swachh Bharat Mission, launched at Mana village (Uttarakhand).
- ▶ 10 new iconic sites are - Raghavendra Swamy Temple (Andhra Pradesh), Hazarduari Palace (West Bengal), Brahma Sarovar Temple (Haryana), Vidur Kuti (Uttar Pradesh), Mana village (Uttarakhand), Pangong Lake (J&K), Nagvasuki Temple (UP), Ima Keithal market (Manipur), Sabarimala Temple (Kerala) and Kanvashram (Uttarakhand).
 - ▶ SIP is an initiative of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission and was launched in 2016. It was initiated as project to take iconic places and their surroundings to higher standards of cleanliness (swachhata).
 - ▶ Phase 1 and 2 of SIP each have 10 Iconic places listed under them.
343. ▶ Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) launched Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018) in New Delhi, a survey to rank all states / districts on basis of rural cleanliness.
- ▶ 6980 villages in 698 districts will be covered. The SSG 2018 will assign 65% weightage to findings and outcome and 35% to service level parameters to be obtained from Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of MDWS.
 - ▶ Weights to different elements of SSG are - direct observation (30%), citizen's feedback (35%), service level progress on sanitation (35%).
 - ▶ SSG 2018 will be conducted in August 2018. Best states / districts are expected to be awarded on 2nd October 2018.
344. ▶ Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) launched a mobile application named Mumbai Weather Live that will provide information on extreme weather events in Mumbai.
345. ▶ Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeITY) launched 5000 Wi-Fi Choupals in villages in partnership with common service centres (CSCs), aiming to transform rural Internet connectivity through BharatNet. They will provide 60,000 WiFi hotspots in rural areas. Wi-Fi Choupals are in addition to broadband connectivity provided gram panchyats through optical fibre network under BharatNet.
346. ▶ Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeITy) will expand its India BPO Promotion Scheme to 1 lakh seats from current 48,000 seats. It will also set up 5th and India's largest National data centre (NDC) in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) with capacity of 5 lakh virtual servers.
- ▶ India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS) was Launched in 2014, to incentivize establishment of BPO firms and their extension to Tier II and Tier III cities.
347. ▶ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITY) launched Digital India Internship Scheme along with its website.
- ▶ Under this, 25 interns will be inducted for period of three months. These interns will be paid a stipend of Rs. 10, 000 per month.
 - ▶ Eligibility - Indian students from recognized universities who secured over 60% marks in last held degree. Students pursuing B.E/B.Tech or M.E/M.Tech or dual degrees can apply for internships on the portal.
 - ▶ Internship will be offered two times in year - summer Internship during May and June and winter Internship during December and January.
 - ▶ Proposed broad areas for Internship are Cyber Security, e-Governance, Digital Literacy (HRD), International Cooperation & Industrial Promotion, Hardware Industry and Digital Payments and Electronic Testing.
348. ▶ Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF's) gave environmental clearance to India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) project to be set up in Bodi West hills in Tamil Nadu.
- ▶ MoEF's Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) showed there will be no impact of blasting on any habitation in vicinity, along with no scope for radioactivity and leaching of water.
 - ▶ INO) Project aims at building a world-class underground laboratory with a rock cover of approximately 1200 meter. Its mandate is to conduct basic research on elementary particle called neutrino. Underground Observatory will provide shielding to neutrino detector

from cosmic background radiation.

- ▶ The non-accelerator based high energy and nuclear physics underground research complex will be approached by a 2-kms long tunnel. It also envisages construction of 50,000 tonne magnetised iron calorimeter detector (ICAL).

349. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched Green Skill Development Programme (GSDP), to train over 5.5 lakh workers in environment and forest sectors through 30 courses by 2021 for sustainable conservation of natural resources.

- ▶ GSDP-ENVIS mobile application was also launched to provide more information and applying to courses under GSDP programme.

- ▶ GSDP was launched in 2017 by MoEFCC in partnership with National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) to develop green skilled workers having technical knowledge and commitment to sustainable development.

350. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released 15th India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017 (by Forest Survey of India (FSI)) -

- ▶ Total forest and tree cover in India increased over 8,021 sq km (80.20 million hectare), which is 1 % increase from 2015. Forest cover increased by 6778 sq km and tree cover increased 1243 sq km. Total forest and tree cover is 24.39% of geographical area of country.

- ▶ Globally, India is ranked 10th in terms of forest and tree cover.

- ▶ State-wise break-up -

- ▶ 7 States/UTs have more than 75% forest cover - Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Manipur.

- ▶ 8 States/UTs have forest cover between 33% to 75% - Tripura, Goa, Sikkim, Kerala, Uttarakhand, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Chhattisgarh and Assam.

- ▶ Top 5 States with maximum Forest cover - Madhya Pradesh (77,414 sq km) Arunachal Pradesh (66,964 sq km) and Chhattisgarh (55,547 sq km).

- ▶ States with highest Forest cover in terms of percentage geographical area - Lakshadweep (90.33%), Mizoram (86.27%) and Andaman & Nicobar Islands (81.73%).

- ▶ Mangrove cover is 4,921 sq km and has increased by 181 sq kms.

- ▶ Water bodies inside forests have increased by 2,647 sq kms during last decade. Maharashtra leads with 432 sq kms, followed by Gujarat (428 sq kms).

351. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) rolled out 'Gaj Yatra', an awareness campaign to protect elephants from Tura in Garo Hills of Meghalaya. Under this, elephant mascot will be taken across districts frequented by jumbo herds for generating awareness.

352. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) declared 438 sq.km. area around Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) in Nilgiris as an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ), to prohibit human activities near the reserve, which was declared a tiger habitat in 2007. It is a critical part of Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve spread over 5,500 sq. km.

353. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched *Green Good Deeds* campaign to sensitise people and students about climate change and global warming.

354. ▶ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) launched *Videsh Aaya Pradesh ke Dwaar* engagement programme with regional media in Hyderabad, Telangana. It aims at enhancing public diplomacy outreach of MEA and its commitment to take objectives of foreign policy to people at grassroot-level.

355. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare approved amending regulation for admission to PG medical courses in order to expand scope of persons with disabilities getting the benefit of reservation. Now, seats reserved for people with disabilities for admission to postgraduate medical courses will be increased from 3 to 5 %.

356. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched *LaQshya* Program aimed at improving quality of care in labour room and maternity Operation Theatre (OT).

- ▶ Under this, Quality Improvement in labour room and maternity OT will be assessed through NQAS (National Quality Assurance Standards). Facilities with 70% score on NQAS will be certified as LaQshya certified facility. Facilities scoring more than 90%, 80% and 70% will be given Platinum, Gold and Silver badge accordingly.

357. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare signed an MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to scale up short term healthcare courses through IGNOU's platform. Under this, curriculum for 10 courses especially designed for health sector, will provide more than 14 lakh trained manpower by 2025.

- ▶ With coming up of 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) by 2022 under National Health Protection Mission (NHPM), there will be an urgent need for such health care providers.

- ▶ Initially four courses will be launched, namely Home Health Aide, Geriatric Care Assistant, Phlebotomist and General Duty Assistant. Followed by remaining six skill-based curriculum as standardized by MoHFW- Diabetes Educator, Dietetic Aide, EMT-Basic,

Dispensing Optician/VT and Medical Equipment Technology Assistant.

358. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will roll out 'Integrated initiative for prevention & control of viral hepatitis' under National Health Mission (NHM) for prevention and control of viral hepatitis. It will have budgetary support of over 517 crores for three years. India aims to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030.
359. ▶ Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises has extended Phase-1 of FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles) Scheme to provide financial support to electric and hybrid vehicles by another six months till 30 September 2018 or till launch of phase-II.
- ✎ FAME-India scheme was launched in 2015 under National Electric Mobility Mission (NEMM). It aims at promoting eco-friendly vehicles in the country.
360. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) extended Anti-Narcotics Scheme for 3 more years to combat illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances, with an estimated budget of INR 21 crores. It was launched in October 2004 for 5 years and has been extended twice since then.
361. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) launched web-based application e-FRRO (e-Foreigners Regional Registration Office) to allow foreign tourists and travellers to avail of paperless and cashless visa-related services.
362. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) relaxed six-decade-old protected area permit (PAP) regime to allow foreign tourists to access border areas of Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur for 5 years effect from April 1, 2018. However, citizens from Pakistan, China and Afghanistan will still be banned from all PAP areas.
363. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs sponsored Student Police Cadet (SPC) Programme launched in Gurugram (Haryana), to build bridge between Police and larger community through school students by inculcating values and ethics in them through classes in school and outside. It focuses on students of class 8th and 9th.
- ✎ It does not have any prescribed text book and also any exam. Only one class is proposed in a month. Programme will broadly cover Crime prevention and control.
 - ✎ Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) with support of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has prepared handbook for imparting instructions.
364. ▶ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) will launch Global Housing Construction Technology Challenge as part of technology sub-mission of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U). It aims to accelerate PMAY-U's target of providing 'housing for all', as it is moving very slower than its rural counterpart.
- ✎ Through this, MoHUA will invite ideas for innovative technologies for mass housing projects that can help build houses faster, cheaper and of better quality with sustainable green materials. Winning technologies will be used for construction under PMAY (U).
 - ✎ Also, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs announced that over 51 lakh houses have been approved under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) in the 3 years of its implementation. Out of Which, 28 lakhs houses are already in various stages of construction and 8 lakh completed. PMAY(U) aims provide affordable houses to all poor in urban areas by 2022. Its objective is to construct 2 crore houses across nation.
365. ▶ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs approved construction of 1.87 more affordable houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), that aims at building 2 Crore Houses for urban poor by 2022. This round has taken number of houses approved under PMAY to 39.25 lakh. Haryana has been sanctioned maximum number of houses in this round.
366. ▶ Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) announced that National Testing Agency (NTA) will train paper setters to set better question papers and provide better model answers. NTA It will take over all examinations from CBSE (except 10th and 12th board examinations) from 2019 in phased manner. It will be also conducting prestigious Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for admission to prominent engineering colleges.
367. ▶ Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) launched National Digital Library of India (NDLI) on occasion of National Reading Day (June 17) in New Delhi. NDLI aims to make digital educational resources available to all, to empower learning.
- ✎ NDLI (under aegis of National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT)) is a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility. It been developed by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur.
368. ▶ Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) launched initiative for development of 1.5 million higher education faculty using massive open online course (MOOC) platform SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active – Learning for Young Aspiring Minds). Under first phase, 75 discipline-specific National Resource Centres (NRCs) have been identified.
- ✎ NRCS includes varied institutions under Ministry's Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNMTT), in Central Universities, IISc, IUCAA, IITs, IISERS, NITs, State Universities, UGC's Human Resource Development Centres (HRDCs), National Institutes for Technical Teachers Training (NITTTRs), IIITs, Open Universities.

369. ▶ Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) approved *Study in India* programme to attract foreign students to pursue higher education in India, with expenditure of INR 150 crores for 2018-19 and 2019-20. It aims to double India's market share of global education exports from less than 1% to 2%.
- Under it, 100% waiver of tuition fees will be only for the top 25% students, 50% waiver of tuition fees only for the next 25% students, 25% waiver of tuition fees only for next 25% students and no waiver of tuition fee for remaining 25% of students.
370. ▶ Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) declared medium (5 GW by 2022) and long-term (30 GW by 2030) targets for offshore wind power capacity addition, as a new element in already existing basket of renewable energy of country.
- Target for offshore wind power is moderate in comparison to on-shore wind target of 60 GW and its achievement of 34 GW and solar target of 100 GW by 2022, because of challenges in installing wind power turbines in open seas.
 - Global capacity of off-shore wind power is about 17 to 18 GW, led by UK, Germany, Denmark, Netherlands & China.
371. ▶ Ministry of New and Renewable Energy issued National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy, aiming at promotion of large grid connected wind-solar PV hybrid system for efficient utilization of transmission infrastructure and land. It provides for integration of both energy sources (wind and solar) at AC and DC level.
- It also provides for flexibility in share of wind and solar components in hybrid project, subject to condition that, rated power capacity of one resource be at least 25 % of rated power capacity of other resource for it to be recognised as a hybrid project.
 - Policy permits use of battery storage in hybrid project for optimising output and further reduce variability.
 - With significant capacity additions in renewables, and Hybrid Policy aiming at better utilisation of resources, it is envisaged that Hybrid Policy will open-up a new area for availability of renewable power at competitive prices.
 - A scheme for new hybrid projects under the policy is also expected shortly.
372. ▶ Ministry of New and Renewable Energy under *Development of Solar Cities* scheme approved 60 Cities including 13 Pilot and 5 Model Cities up to 12th Five-year Plan period.
373. ▶ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas amended Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules 1959 to include shale in definition of petroleum, to enable exploration of all hydrocarbons in existing fields which is line with new Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP). It will help in enhancing domestic exploration and production of hydrocarbons and increasing India's energy security and reducing dependency on imports.
- Shale is fine-grained sedimentary rock that forms from compaction of silt and clay-size mineral particles, commonly called as mud. Shale is distinguished from other mudstones due to laminated (rock is made up of many thin layers) and fissile (rock readily splits into thin pieces along the laminations) nature.
374. ▶ Ministry of Power partnered with Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to train manpower in six states for speedy implementation of its Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojna (Saubhagya Scheme). States - Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh. Under this, 47,000 Distribution Lineman-Multi Skills and 8,500 Technical Helpers will be trained to meet requirement of power sector projects under Saubhagya scheme.
375. ▶ Ministry of Power will make 24 degrees celsius as mandatory default setting and labeling of air conditioners within few months, as part of campaign to promote energy efficiency.
- Every one degree increase in temperature of air-conditioner results in saving of 6% of electricity consumed.
 - Normal human body temperature is approximately 36-37 degree Celsius. Lower temperature around 18-21 degree Celsius controlled by air conditioners is not only uncomfortable but is also unhealthy.
376. ▶ Ministry of Railways has launched new user interface of its Next Generation e-Ticketing (NGeT) System on Indian Railway's ([url - www.irctc.co.in/nget](http://www.irctc.co.in/nget)).
- Using it, user can enquire trains and check availability of seats without logging in to system, saving time of users.
 - It will provide enhanced class-wise, train-wise, destination-wise, departure and arrival time wise and quota-wise filters for facilitating customer while planning their journeys.
 - It also has waitlist prediction which will allow user to get probability of wait-listed or RAC tickets getting confirmed.
 - User can find out availability for entire Advance Reservation Period (of 120 days), except for few trains in improvised page.
377. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual named Indo-HCM, to guide road engineers and policy makers about road expansion. It lays down guidelines for when and how to expand or manage different types of roads and their intersections and level of services to be put in place.
378. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) approved green licence plates bearing numbers in white fonts for private e-vehicles and yellow for taxis to promote electric vehicles. It aims at easy identification of electric vehicles for preferential treatment in parking, free entry in congested zones besides other proposed benefits like concessional toll.
- India presently has approx 1 to 1.5 lakh electric vehicles. It is projected to grow to about 5% of total vehicles in next five years.

379. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) issued draft amendments to Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 -
- ▶ Makes mandatory for vehicles to affix sticker confirming fitting of Fastag in front wind screen of vehicles.
 - ▶ Stipulates additional conditions for obtaining national permit.
 - ▶ Tanker carrying dangerous or hazardous goods will be painted in white colour.
 - ▶ Fitness certification of transport vehicles will be renewed for 2 years for vehicles up to 8 years old and for 1 year for vehicles older than 8 years.
 - ▶ Henceforth, pollution under control certificates and driving license can be carried in physical or digital form.
 - ▶ Goods carrying vehicles will be required to carry goods in closed body of vehicle or container, or use tarpaulin if needed to carry in open.
380. ▶ Ministry of Shipping and IIT Chennai signed MoU to set up of a National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC) at IIT Chennai, under Shipping Ministry *Sagarmala Programme*. It will act as a technology arm of Ministry of Shipping for providing technological inputs and support for Ports, Inland Waterways Authority of India and other institutions.
381. ▶ Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs will introduce first ever ranking system for National Sports Federations (NSFs), to build healthy competition between sports bodies. Sports federations will be ranked on the basis of administrative capability, transparency, talent-spotting ability, and medal count of athletes etc.
382. ▶ Ministry of Tourism expanded Buddhist tourism circuit under Swadesh Darshan Scheme to 21 more states to make it India's first trans-national tourist circuit. Earlier it was envisaged only to 7 major Buddhist pilgrimage sites in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
383. ▶ Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) launched Adopt a Heritage Project. Under it, tourist amenities will be developed at selected heritage sites. Engaged Entities will be called as *Monument Mitra* and adopt sites essentially under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activity.
384. ▶ Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) will expand Van Dhan Vikas Kendras in tribal districts, with 3000 such kendras proposed to be set up in 2 years. Initially, it will be taken up in 39 districts with over 50% tribal population and then will be expanded to other Tribal Districts.
- ▶ Van Dhan Yojana aims at mainstreaming tribal community by promoting primary level value addition to Non Timber Minor Forest Produce (MFP) at grassroots level. It also aims to promote MFPs-centric livelihood development of tribal gatherers and artisans.
 - ▶ Through this, share of tribals in value chain of Non-Timber Forest Produce is expected to rise from 20% to around 60%.
385. ▶ Ministry of Tribal affairs approved establishment of first multipurpose "Van Dhan Vikas Kendra" in Bijapur District of Chhattisgarh for value addition of Forest Produce, as part of Government's scheme of Mechanism for marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support price (MSP) and development of Value chain for MFP.
386. ▶ Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation approved 2 major irrigation projects and 4 flood management schemes with a cumulative cost of INR 84748 crores from six States/ UT.
- ▶ Kaleshwaram Project (Telangana), will divert 195 TMC (5522 Million Cubic Meter) of Godavari water to irrigate about 18.25 lakh acres of land in 13 districts of Telangana. It is worth approx INR 80190 crores.
 - ▶ Upper Pravara (Nilwande-II) Project (Maharashtra) will irrigate an area of 2,12,758 acres. It is worth approx INR 2232 crores.
387. ▶ Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation constituted Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal for adjudication of longstanding disputes between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over sharing of Mahanadi river water. It will have 3 members with A M Khanwilkar nominated as chairman. Other members are Ravi Ranjan and Indwermeet Kaur Kochar.
388. ▶ Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation launched fortnightly video contest *Jal Bachao, Video Banao, Puruskar Pao*, to encourage people for better water management. Ministry joined hands with MyGov portal (www.mygov.in) for this contest. Contest will last till 4th November 2018 and three winners will be chosen every fortnight.
- ▶ Video should be uploaded on YouTube and share its accessible link in MyGov contest page, with duration 2 - 10 minutes. Prize amount for first, second and third positions is Rs 25,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000 respectively.
389. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development partnered with NASSCOM to improv its nutrition monitoring app, Integrated Child Development Services-Common Application Software (ICDS-CAS), developed under Poshan Abhiyan (*PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment*) that aims to fight malnourishment and stunting.
390. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development will establish National Women Entrepreneurship Council (NWEC) as an umbrella organization for socio-economic gender parity, financial inclusion and economic empowerment of women in India and to promote entrepreneurship among women.
391. ▶ Mizoram government will introduce a resolution in state legislature objecting to Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016, as the amendment will legalise thousands of Buddhists (Chakmas) who have illegally entered Mizoram from Bangladesh.
- ▶ Also, cabinet approved Sinlung Hills Council Bill 2018, signed as result of peace accord between Mizoram government and erstwhile underground Hmar People's Convention (Democratic) in April 2018.

392. ▶ Monsoon Season 2018 - 19 Passed Bills -

- ✎ Rajya Sabha passed State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017 to merge six subsidiary banks with SBI. It was approved by Lok Sabha in 2017. It repeals State Bank of India (Subsidiary Banks) Act 1959 AND State Bank of Hyderabad Act 1956, that established SBI subsidiary Banks.
 - ✎ Lok Sabha passed *The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Second Amendment) Bill 2017* to abolish 'no detention policy' in schools (meaning that no child can be held back in any class until completion of elementary school (classes 1-8)). It will empower central / state government to allow schools to hold back child in class 5 / 8, after re-examination on being failed at first.
 - ✎ Lok Sabha passed Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill 2017 to reduce number of cheque dishonour cases pending in courts, amending Negotiable Instruments Act 1881.
 - ✎ Interim compensation - Allows court trying offence related to cheque bouncing to direct drawer (person who writes cheque) to pay interim compensation to complainant. It will not exceed 20% of cheque amount and will be paid by drawer within 60 days.
 - ✎ Deposit in case of appeal - If drawer convicted in cheque bouncing case files appeal, appellate court may direct him to deposit minimum of 20% of compensation awarded by trial court during conviction. This will be in addition to any interim compensation.
 - ✎ Returning interim compensation - If drawer is acquitted during trial or by appellate court, court will direct complainant to return interim compensation along with interest.
 - ✎ Lok Sabha passed National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill 2017, to approve institutions which are funded by Centre or states, but do not have recognition. It amends NCTE Act 1993. Key Features Include Retrospective recognition of certain teacher education institutions and permits these institutions to start new course / training in teacher education to institutions.
 - ✎ Rajya Sabha passed Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill 2013 . It amends Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA) 1988, to bring it in line with United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Key Features Include
 - ✎ Making Giving bribe a punishable offence
 - ✎ Making it mandatory to take prior approval of competent authority to conduct any investigation into offence alleged to have been committed by a public servant.
 - ✎ Sets trail time period. In case of delays, reasons for it must be recorded for every extension of six months obtained. Total trial period may not exceed 4 years.
 - ✎ Anyone who is caught bribing government officials can be sentenced to a jail term of up to 7 years.
 - ✎ Lok Sabha passed Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill 2018 that aims to curb practice of evading criminal prosecution by economic offenders fleeing from country to evade clutches Indian law by remaining outside jurisdiction of Indian courts. Key Features -
 - ✎ It is applicable in cases where total value involved in such economic offences is Rs.100 crore or more.
 - ✎ It establishes Special Court under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 to declare a person as FEO. court will appoint 'administrator' to oversee confiscated property.
 - ✎ It empowers director / deputy director (appointed under Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002) to attach any property mentioned in application with permission of special court. Attachment will continue for 180 days, unless extended by court.
 - ✎ Bill allows any civil court or tribunal to disallow person declared FEO, from filing or defending any civil claim.
 - ✎ Director / deputy director will have powers vested of civil court.
 - ✎ Appeals against orders of special court will lie before High Court.
 - ✎ Lok Sabha passed Homeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill 2018, that seeks to replace Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) with a board of governors.
 - ✎ It abolishes CCH, as it does not have the powers to deal with its corrupt chief and other members.
 - ✎ New board will comprise seven eminent homeopathy practitioners and administrators to be appointed by government.
 - ✎ Lok Sabha passed Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018 -
 - ✎ Jail term of minimum 20 years or life imprisonment or death for rape of girl under 12 years.
 - ✎ Increases minimum punishment from 10 years to 20 years for crime of rape of girl under 16 years, which can be extended to imprisonment for rest of life.
 - ✎ Increases minimum punishment for rape of women from rigorous imprisonment of 7 years to 10 years, which can be extended to life imprisonment.
 - ✎ Investigation and trial must be completed in two months. It proposes 6 months' time limit for disposal of appeals in rape cases.
393. ▶ Myanmar joined India-initiated International Solar Alliance (ISA), making it 68th signatory to Framework Agreement of ISA.
- ✎ ISA was jointly launched by India and France in November 2015 at Paris on side lines of COP21 UN Climate Change Conference. Its Framework Agreement came into force in December 2017.

- It is headquartered at campus of National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram, Haryana, making it first international intergovernmental treaty based organization to be headquartered in India. Upendra Tripathy is current head of ISA.
394. ▶ NITI Aayog Approved Blue Print for National Health Stack, a Digital Healthcare Infrastructure To Implement Centre's Ayushman Bharat Scheme.
- National Health Stack will facilitate collection of comprehensive healthcare data across the country. It Includes assigning a Digital Health ID for every Indian Citizen, Which will enable privileged medical institutions to access Person's Health Data.
 - Ayushman Bharat aims to provide a coverage of INR 5 Lakh per family annually and benefit more than 10 crore poor families. NITI Aayog has invited comments from stakeholders on consultation paper, by August 1, 2018.
395. ▶ NITI Aayog Launched a Composite Water Management Index as a tool to improve management of water resources. This index is an attempt to inspire States and UTs towards efficient and optimal utilization of water. States are categorized as *North Eastern and Himalayan States AND Other States*. Outcomes of report (for 2016 - 17) -
- In Other States, Gujarat is ranked at top in reference year (2016-17), followed by Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra.
 - In North Eastern and Himalayan States, Tripura is at top followed by Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam.
 - In terms of incremental change (over 2015-16 level), Rajasthan is at top in general States and Tripura first amongst North Eastern and Himalayan States.
396. ▶ NITI Aayog and ABB India signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) to government realise its vision of 'Make in India' through advanced manufacturing technologies that incorporate latest developments in robotics and artificial intelligence. NITI Aayog will work with ABB across various sectors, to suggest solutions for digitalisation, incorporating Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies.
397. ▶ NITI Aayog and Actor Sushant Singh Rajput collaborated to promote 2 major initiatives of NITI Aayog - promotion of BHIM and Women Entrepreneurship Platform.
398. ▶ NITI Aayog and IBM signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) to develop a crop yield prediction model using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide real-time advisory to farmers in aspirational districts. Aim is to enable cooperation in the use of technology to provide insights to farmers to improve crop productivity, soil yield, control agricultural inputs with the overarching goal of improving farmers' incomes.
399. ▶ NITI Aayog launched baseline ranking for the Aspirational Districts based on published data of 49 indicators across 5 developmental areas of Education, Health and Nutrition, Agriculture and Water Resources, Basic Infrastructure and Financial Inclusion and Skill Development.
- Additionally, *Champions of Change* Dashboard (created by NITI Aayog in partnership with Government of Andhra Pradesh) for real-time data collection and monitoring will be open for public viewing from April 1, 2018. District Collectors of aspirational districts will be able to input latest available data of their respective districts through this Dashboard.
400. ▶ NITI Aayog released a comprehensive 'Healthy States, Progressive India' report in New Delhi.
- Health Index is a weighted composite Index, which for larger States, is based on indicators in three domains - Health Outcomes (70%), Governance and Information (12%), Key Inputs and Processes (18%).
 - Large States -
 - Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu are top 3 states in overall performance.
 - Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh are top 3 ranking larger States in terms of annual incremental performance.
 - Smaller States -
 - Mizoram ranked first, followed by Manipur in Overall performance.
 - Manipur and Goa are top 2 in terms of annual incremental performance.
401. ▶ NITI Aayog released comprehensive roadmaps and detailed timelines for its initiative 'Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital in Education (SATH-E)' project.
- NITI Aayog Launched SATH program with a vision to initiate transformation in education and health sectors. SATH identifies 3 states in each of Health and Education Sectors.
 - Health - Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Karnataka, Education - Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Jharkhand.
402. ▶ NITI Aayog released first Delta ranking for 108 aspirational districts to measure their incremental progress across five developmental areas during April and May 2018. 49 key performance indicators were mapped across 5 developmental areas - health and nutrition, education, financial inclusion and skill development, agriculture and water resources and basic Infrastructure.
- Districts started entering data from April 1, 2018 in *Champions of Change* dashboard.
 - Most improved - Dahod (Gujarat, rank: 1st), West Sikkim district (Sikkim, 2nd). Ramanathapuram district (Tamil Nadu, 3rd) and Vizianagaram (Andhra Pradesh, 4th) and YSR Kadapa district (Andhra Pradesh, 5th).

Least improved - Kupwara (Jammu and Kashmir), Begusarai (Bihar), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Simdega (Jharkhand) and Khagaria (Bihar).

403. ▶ NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) with Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Limited (GNFC) to work together for implementing Proof-of-Concept (PoC) application for fertilizer subsidy management using Blockchain Technology.
404. ▶ NITI Aayog will build National Data & Analytics Platform (NDAP) to host and analyse huge amount of data which shall be helpful for citizens to understand spend patterns of government, consumption trends and success of various government policies.
405. ▶ NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) selected 3,000 additional schools for establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs), bringing the total number of ATL schools to 5441. Selected schools shall receive a grant of Rs 20 lakh spread over 5 years to establish Atal Tinkering Labs for nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial spirit among secondary school children across India.
- ▶ Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is Government's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in country.
 - ▶ Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) create innovators, Atal Incubation Centres and support to Established Incubation Centres ensure that innovations are taken to market and help create enterprises around these innovations.
406. ▶ NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) signed Statement of Intent (SOI) with German tech company SAP to promote culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across 100 Atal Tinkering Labs across India. SAP will adopt 100 Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATL) in 2018 for five years to nurture science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning among secondary school children across India.
- ▶ Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) AIM is flagship initiative to promote culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in country. Its mandated is to create umbrella structure to oversee innovation ecosystem of country and revolutionize innovation eco-system.
407. ▶ NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurs Platform (WEP) signed Statement of Intent (SoIs) with *Shri Mahila Sewa Sahakari Bank, Indiabulls Housing Finance, SREI Infrastructure Finance, Srimanta Sankar Mission and Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)*, to create opportunities and support women entrepreneurs. WEP was launched on International Women's day (March 8, 2018).
408. ▶ National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) drafted fee regulations to put in place uniform fee framework to check increases in school fees by unaided private schools. NCPCR will recommend these draft regulations to Ministry of Human Resource Development. It Suggests -
- ▶ 10% yearly cap on fee hike permissible by private, unaided schools.
 - ▶ Setting up district fee regulatory authority in states to monitor school fee increases.
 - ▶ Formula for determining fees, based on school's location, costs incurred, revenue earned, student strength and other parameters.
 - ▶ It proposes revenue fines of 1 %, 2 %, 5 % on first 3 violations and bar admissions after any further violations.
409. ▶ National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) initiated process of introducing QR code (Quick Response code) in their textbooks, aimed at helping students understand chapters better by watching film or reading additional content on laptops and digital boards.
410. ▶ National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is creating a national registry of crimes against women, amid growing concern over incidents of sexual assaults. Records will be sourced from the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS).
411. ▶ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched ranking system for over 300 toll plazas, on the basis of cleanliness, staff behaviour, availability of ambulance and cranes in case of any emergency on highways. Every quarter, 3 best toll plazas will be identified.
412. ▶ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will launch pilot project *Pay as you use tolling* on Delhi Mumbai national highway.
- ▶ It involves implementing a satellite based electronic toll collection system running on GPS/GSM technology for selected commercial vehicles on a national highway for 1 year.
 - ▶ This tolling system will work on combination of mobile telecommunications technology (GSM) and satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS). It will deduct money from vehicle account, credit money to concessionaire within a day and open toll gate.
413. ▶ National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) retained its 'A' status of accreditation of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) for fourth consecutive term.
- ▶ NHRC was awarded 'A' status for first time in 1999 which it retained in 2006 and 2011 reviews.
 - ▶ The 'A' accreditation is given to those human rights institutions, which are found fully compliant with UN-mandated Paris Principles.
414. ▶ National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) New Delhi will conduct *INDIASize* as a National Sizing Survey to develop a comprehensive size chart for ready-to-wear industry based on body measurements of 25000 Indians in age group 15 - 65 years. India will be 15th Nation to complete a national sizing survey.
- ▶ Findings of study will impact various other sectors like automotive, aerospace, fitness and sport, art and computer gaming where insights from this data can produce ergonomically designed products suited for Indian population.

415. ▶ National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) under Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) issued Expression of Interest (EoI) for first offshore wind energy project of India in Gulf of Khambat off the coast of Gujarat, with 1000 MW (1 GW) capacity. MNRE is planning to install at least 5 GW of offshore wind capacity by 2022.
416. ▶ National Security Guard (NSG) became first central paramilitary force to opt for e-ticketing instead of railway warrant. With this, NSG personnel don't have to carry railway warrants as Buying tickets through railway warrant system is a lengthy process.
417. ▶ Navratna CPSE National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) signed MoU with Ministry of Mines, setting highest ever target of Rs 9350 crore revenue from operations for FY 2018-19, 15% higher than last year.
- ✍ It aims at production of 2.1 million tons Alumina with 100% capacity utilisation & an optimum Aluminium production target of 4.15 lakh tonnes.
418. ▶ New train between Naharlagun (Arunachal Pradesh) and Anand Vihar Terminal (Delhi) named Arunachal Express has been flagged off, as 2nd direct train for Arunachal Pradesh and overall 14th for North East to connect with Delhi. Its route is 2013 kilometres long.
419. ▶ Nine member committee constituted by Karnataka government recommended separate state flag, discounting any constitutional / legal hurdles for it.
420. ▶ Niti Aayog proposed 15-point action plan named "Breathe India" for combating air pollution in ten most polluted cities.
- ✍ Government should increase focus on electric and hybrid vehicles. Procurement of electric vehicles (EVs) should be mandatory for vehicles for central government use. Central government offices should replace existing fleets older than 15 years to electric vehicles by April, 2021.
 - ✍ Niti Aayog has suggested a carrot-and-stick policy towards air pollution adopted in many European countries. It has called for implementing a large scale feebate programme beginning 2020.
 - ✍ Niti Aayog favoured setting up smog-free towers in cities for providing quick relief from sudden spike in air pollution. Smog-free towers are an innovative technological solution deployed across Europe, which cleans polluted air in an area around it.
 - ✍ To deal with Construction dust, Niti Aayog asked government to enforce use of ready-made concrete.
 - ✍ Recommended strategic decommissioning of inefficient power plants, primarily running on coal. Renewable energy sources must be deployed and preferred.
 - ✍ Suggested government to push to rooftop solar panel power generators. Increasing solar power generation is a critical measure that needs to be adopted in order to reduce air pollution.
421. ▶ Nobel laureate and noted economist Muhammad Yunus (Bangladesh) has been honoured with 11th KISS Humanitarian Award 2018 in Odisha.
422. ▶ Northeast Frontier Railway started operating one lease Parcel Cargo Express Train (PCET) on fortnightly basis, connecting Northeast to West Coast, Connecting New Guwahati in Assam to Kalyan in Maharashtra with stoppages at New Jalpaiguri, Kalumna Goods Shed.
- ✍ It would enable farmers in North east to market their products like tea, betel nuts, pineapple, jute, horticulture products, cane furniture etc. at the retail markets in Mumbai, Bengaluru, Nagpur, Pune etc.
 - ✍ A single PCET can carry consignment equivalent to 52 trucks. This will ensure less Carbon Emission which will contribute for Green India & saving of foreign exchange on account of purchasing of fuel.
423. ▶ Northeast India's first regional Centre for Agriculture with collaboration of Israel will be inaugurated in Mizoram in March 2018. It will be first such centre in North East region of India being established with Israeli collaboration.
424. ▶ Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in Assam became first oil public sector undertaking (PSU) in India to adopt an online legal compliance system by introducing 'Legatrix'. Legatrix is cloud-based compliance management system, to effectively manage legal and regulatory compliances through monitoring control at different levels.
425. ▶ Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated 300 crores Rukura Medium Irrigation Dam project in Sundargarh district, to irrigate 5,800 hectares of agricultural field.
426. ▶ Odisha Government launched Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana as a new Health Insurance Scheme for journalists. It provides INR 2 Lakh per annum health insurance cover to all working journalists, initially covering families of around 3200 journalists. It is named after prominent social worker Gopalbandhu Das.
427. ▶ Odisha Government launched *Green Mahanadi Mission*, a plantation drive under which 2 crore saplings will be planted along Mahanadi river and its tributaries. It aims to stop soil erosion on river banks and recharge groundwater reserves. Odisha government will also set up a riverine port on river Mahanadi in Kendrapara district.
428. ▶ Odisha Government signed MoU with British Council for cooperation in several areas including education, skills and culture. British Council will support Odisha State governments *Mo School (My School)* initiative by contributing to development of English language skills for learners and teachers.

429. ▶ Odisha Government signed MoU with Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) to enhance effective management of all kinds of disasters, aimed at automating risk management, advisory generation and dissemination.
430. ▶ Odisha Government unveiled first-ever 'Tribal Atlas of Odisha', a compilation of demographic and cultural information of the tribal population in state, as first-of-its-kind tribal compilation in India. It gives information on tribal regions in state and key demographic indicators like literacy, sex ratio and education.
431. ▶ Odisha Special Task Force (STF) launched drive to bust international syndicate that peddles pangolin, one of world's most illegally traded mammals. It requested Home Ministry to ask Myanmar government to block transit route for smuggled pangolin under Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT). Pangolin is only scaly mammal on planet. Of its 8 species worldwide, 2 are found in India (Chinese pangolin and Indian pangolin).
432. ▶ Odisha approved long-term bauxite linkage policy that would help Vedanta's Lanjigarh alumina refinery to source bauxite from government-owned Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). Now, 70 % of total production by OMC will now be available for long-term linkage.
433. ▶ Odisha government and Tata Trusts signed MoU for implementing state's decision on land rights settlement for slum dwellers in urban areas. Recently, Odisha Government discontinued evicting slum dwellers in urban areas (by treating them as encroachers), and granted them land rights.
434. ▶ Odisha government constituted a *Heritage Cabinet*, headed by CM Naveen Patnaik, aimed at protection of cultural and historical monuments.
435. ▶ Odisha government launched KHUSHI scheme to provide free sanitary napkins to school girls across state. Under this, govt. will provide free sanitary napkins to 17 lakh girls studying in Classes 6 to 12 in government and government-aided schools.
436. ▶ Odisha government launched programme named *Ama Gaon, Ama Vikas* to reach out to people in rural areas and involve themselves in developmental activities.
437. ▶ Odisha government raised health cover from 5 lakh to 7 lakh under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) for women. CM Naveen Patnaik also sanctioned 31.54 crore for 154 panchayats in seven blocks of 6 districts under Ama Gaon Ama Bikash Yojana.
438. ▶ Odisha government will collaborate with Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) for strengthening its early warning services and enhancing preparedness for management of hazards in state.
439. ▶ PM Narendra Modi announced that April 28 will be remembered as a historic day as on this day, every single village of India was electrified, few days before deadline of May 10, 2018.
- ▶ Leisang, a village in central Manipur's Senapati district, was last one to receive electricity on April 29, 2018 under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY).
 - ▶ Out of 18,452 villages that were without electricity in 2015, 17,181 have been electrified. Others are either uninhabited or classified as grazing reserves.
 - ▶ Still, 3.2 crore homes are still not electrified as government considers a village electrified, if it has basic electrical infrastructure; and 10 % of its places including schools, local administrative offices and health centres have power.
 - ▶ PM Modi in his speech on August 15, 2015 promised electrification all un-electrified villages within 1000 days. For this, government launched Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY).
440. ▶ PM Narendra Modi dedicated Mohanpura Project to the Nation, to facilitate irrigation of agricultural land in Rajgarh district (Madhya Pradesh), which is among 115 Aspirational Districts identified by Government for putting special developmental focus.
- ▶ INR 3866 crores project includes a dam and a canal system which will provide drinking water to over 400 villages.
441. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 4th Container Terminal (FCT) of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) in Mumbai, as India's Largest Container Terminal. It has been developed at estimated cost of INR 7915 crores.
- ▶ New FCT will add capacity of 24 lakh containers per year in Phase-I and after completion of Phase-II in 2022, capacity of JNPT will be 100 lakh containers per year.
442. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first smart and green highway-135 km long Kundli-Ghaziabad-Palwal (KGP) Expressway also known as Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE).
- ▶ It has been completed in about 500 days, as against target of 910 days with cost INR 11000 crores. PM also inaugurated first phase of Delhi-Meerut Expressway, India's first 14 lane expressway and spans from Nizamuddin Bridge to Uttar Pradesh border.
 - ▶ Several Features of Expressway Include Solar power Plants, Rainwater harvesting, Closed tolling system, Weigh-in-Motion (WIMs) equipment, Auto Challans, Intelligent Traffic management AND Green cover.
443. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project and laid Foundation Stone of Pakal Dul Power Project in J & K -
- ▶ Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project -
 - ▶ With capacity of 330 MW, This project in Bandipora District of Jammu and Kashmir is a run of river scheme, that is designed to divert water from the Kishanganga River to a power plant in Jhelum River basin.

- ✎ It has been completed at cost of INR 5882 crores. Kishangana H.E. Project will provide free power of 13 % to J & K, of approx 133 crores per year.
- ✎ Pakal Dul -
 - ✎ With 1000 MW capacity, it will be largest Hydro Power Project in J & K on completion. To be built on Marusadar River (a right bank tributary of Chenab), It is also first storage Project in state. Its sanctioned cost is INR 8112 crores.
 - ✎ As it is a storage project, it shall improve water availability during lean season.
 - ✎ It will employ Around 3000 persons during construction and 500 persons shall be employed during operation phase.
 - ✎ J&K will get 12 % free power after 10 years of commissioning of Project.
- 444. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Zojila tunnel project, to provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh. Its Length will be 14.2 km, making it country's longest road tunnel. It will cut down time taken to cross Zojila pass from 3.5 hours to 15 minutes. It will also be Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel and will be built at a cost of INR 6,809 crores.
- 445. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated newly constructed Dorjee Khandu State Convention Centre in Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh).
- 446. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated several developmental projects in Chhattisgarh -
 - ✎ Launched Integrated Command and Control Centre at Naya Raipur Smart City.
 - ✎ Launched modernized and expanded Bhilai Steel Plant.
 - ✎ Laid foundation stone for IIT Bhilai.
 - ✎ Inaugurated air services between Jagdalpur and Raipur.
- 447. ▶ PM Narendra Modi laid foundation stone today for 2400MW first phase of NTPC's Patratu Super Thermal Power Project in Jharkhand, as a 74: 26 Joint Venture between Government of Jharkhand (GoJ) and NTPC Owned Patratu Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (PVUN). PVUNL will develop it in two phases: 2,400 MW (3x800MW) in Phase-I and 1,600 MW (2x800 MW) in Phase-II.
 - ✎ It will allocate 85 % of power to Jharkhand. Under Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya) scheme, it will ensure 24x7 power availability to households.
 - ✎ Engineering, Procurement & Construction contract of the project has been awarded to BHEL. Commissioning of first unit is envisaged in 2022.
- 448. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched *Amma two-wheeler Scheme* meant to provide scooters at subsidised rates to working women on occasion of former Tamilnadu CM Jayalithaa's 70th birth anniversary.
 - ✎ Under this Scheme, beneficiary will be given 50% of cost of a two-wheeler or grant of INR 25000, covering 1 lakh working women annually.
- 449. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched India's first 12,000 horsepower electric locomotive with transport capacity of 6000 tonnes from Madhepura locomotive factory of Bihar, made with help of French company Alstom.
 - ✎ India Joins Russia, China, Germany and Sweden that have successfully run over 12000 horsepower capacity electric Locomotives.
 - ✎ Alstom will deliver 800 high horsepower locomotives over 11 years to India. First five locomotives will be imported while remaining 795 will be manufactured in India.
- 450. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched development schemes worth Rs 1,000 crore for UT of Daman and Diu, Including a flight connecting Ahmedabad to coastal town of Diu. PM Modi also flagged off *Run for New India* marathon in Surat (Gujarat).
- 451. ▶ Pakyong airport in Sikkim will be 100th operational airport in country, after its commissioning in June 2018. Post commissioning, Airline SpiceJet will be operating flights to Pakyong in Sikkim from Kolkata under UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik).
- 452. ▶ Passed Bills in March 2018 -
 - ✎ Parliament passed Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill 2017 to empower government to fix period of maternity leave and tax-free gratuity amount.
 - ✎ It seeks to amend Payment of Gratuity Act 1972 that allows for payment of gratuity to employees in any establishment, factory, mine, oilfield, plantation, port, railways, company, or shop employing 10 or more workers. Employees are paid gratuity if they have provided at least 5 years of continuous service at time of termination.
 - ✎ Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill 2017 empowers government to notify period of maternity leave eligible for qualifying as continuous service and determine amount of gratuity available to employees. Bill removes reference to 12 weeks in Maternity Benefit Act 1961 and empowers central government to notify maximum maternity leave. Maximum maternity leave was changed from 12 to 26 weeks by Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017. Bill removes ceiling of INR 10 lakh amount of gratuity payable to an employee and ceiling may be notified by central government.
 - ✎ After implementation of 7th Central Pay Commission recommendations, ceiling of tax-free gratuity amount for central government employees was increased from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh.

📌 Lok Sabha passed Specific Relief (Amendment) Bill 2017 to further ease procedures for doing business by amending Specific Relief Act 1963.

📌 This bill sets out remedies available to parties whose contractual or civil rights have been violated. It also provides a remedy that aims at fulfilment of an obligation or specific performance of contract rather than a general relief or compensation or damages.

📌 Lok Sabha passed a bill (Without debate) that will exempt political parties from the scrutiny of funds they have received from abroad since 1976. It included amendment to Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 2010 that bans overseas corporations from funding political parties.

453. ▶ Pelican Bird Festival-2018 is held for first in Atapaka Bird Sanctuary on at Kolleru lake in Andhra Pradesh. Recently, Atapaka Bird Sanctuary was recognised as one of the largest pelicanry in the world.

454. ▶ PepsiCo Foundation announced a USD 4.26 million grant to an international non-profit organisation WaterAid to provide safe water access to communities in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala by December 2020. This adds to USD 17 million that Foundation has made in India to date.

455. ▶ Piyush Goyal (*Minister for Railways, Coal, Finance & Company Affairs*) inaugurated Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLCIL)'s three 100 MW Solar Power Projects for commercial operation, situated at Thoppalaakkarai and Sethupuram in Virudhunagar District and Sellaiya Sezhiyanallur in Tirunelveli District (Tamil Nadu).

456. ▶ Piyush Goyal (Minister of Coal, Railways, Finance & Corporate Affairs) launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and Mobile Application 'Khan Prahari' developed by CMPDI (a Subsidiary of CIL).

📌 Basic objective of CMSMS is reporting, monitoring and taking suitable action on unauthorised coal mining activities. CMSMS is a web based GIS application through which location of sites for unauthorised mining can be detected. It will use satellite data to detect changes by which unauthorised mining activity extending beyond allotted lease area can be detected.

📌 Complaints originating from coal mines allotted to Coal India will go to Coal India Offices and those originating from coal blocks not allotted to Coal India will go straight to State Government Officers and for each complaint the alert will also go to DM and SP of district.

📌 System also uses information provided by responsible citizens using smartphones using the mobile application "Khan Prahari".

📌 Its Uniqueness is that it uses satellite data as well as public input to capture information on unauthorised coal mining activities and also take appropriate action on them with due transparency.

457. ▶ Power Ministry extended waiver of inter-state power transmission charges and losses for solar and wind power projects commissioned till 31 March 2022, to promote clean energy sources. Waiver will be available to solar and wind projects for 25 years from date of commissioning.

📌 It holds significance in view of India's ambitious target of having 175GW of renewable energy capacities (100GW of solar, 60GW of wind energy, 10GW energy from Biomass and 5 GW from Hydel).

📌 Earlier, waiver was available to solar and wind power projects commissioned till 31 December 2019, and 31 March 2019 respectively.

458. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind formally declared *Queen Pineapple* as state fruit of Tripura. He also inaugurated National Highway from Matabari to Sabroom in Udaipur (Tripura), during his visit to State.

459. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Bill 2015, passed by State Assembly in August 2015. It aims to check rising incidents of witch hunting cases across state, eliminating superstition from society by making such offences under it as non-bailable, non-compoundable and cognizable.

📌 It imposes up to 7 years of jail and fine up to 5 lakh rupees. It also proposes sentence of 3 years imprisonment if anybody blames a person for natural disasters in a particular locality.

460. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Integrated Centre for Crisis Management (ICCM) at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) Mumbai. It will help respond more effectively to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) emergencies, monitoring radiological data from 504 radiation sensors across country. Other launches Include -

📌 Multi-leaf collimator system - It enables gamma radiation to be exposed only on cancer-affected organs.

📌 Trombay Chhattisgarh Dubraj Mutant-1 - High-yielding dwarf variety of Dubraj mutant rice.

📌 Metal fuel pin fabrication facility - Will help increase plutonium production in fast breeder reactors.

📌 High-power electron beam melting furnace - To be used for nuclear and strategic applications.

📌 Integrated enriched boron tri-fluoride gas generation facility - It was developed by Heavy-water Board in Odisha. It will be used in neutron detectors.

461. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind launched three public welfare schemes in Rajasthan - Sundar Singh Bhandari EBC Swarozgar Yojana, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat Antyodaya Swarozgar Yojana and loan and interest waiver scheme for SCs/STs/OBCs, sanitation workers,

physically challenged -

- ✎ Sundar Singh Bhandari EBC Swarozgar Yojana - Government will provide loans of up to Rs 50000 to members of economically backward classes (EBC) from around 50,000 families at 4 % interest rate.
- ✎ Bhairon Singh Shekhawat Antyodaya Swarozgar Yojana - State government would provide loans worth up to Rs 50000 at 4 % interest rate to about 50,000 families from the scheduled castes and tribes and other backward classes for self-employment.
- ✎ Loan waiver scheme - State government would provide 2 lakh worth interest-free loans to people belonging to SC/ ST community and other backward classes for skill development and create employment resources.

462. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind released INR 1000 and INR 10 commemorative coins on occasion of Nabakalebar festival in Puri (Odisha), marking festival which is a symbolic recreation of sibling deities — Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra.
463. ▶ Press Council of India Chairman C.K Prasad rejected Reporters Without Borders (RWB)'s World Press Freedom Index report 2018 that was recently released and ranked India 138th among 180 Nations in terms of level of freedom for media. PCI stated that the report had *lack of clarity*.
464. ▶ Public Affairs Index 2018 released by think tank Public Affairs Centre (PAC) -
- ✎ Top 5 States - Kerala (1), Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat (5). Kerala named 3rd best governed state for 3rd consecutive year.
 - ✎ Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar ranked the lowest on PAI.
 - ✎ Top 5 small states - Himachal Pradesh (1), Goa, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura (5). Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya were ranked at the bottom of index among small states.
 - ✎ Total of 30 focus subjects and 100 indicators were measured to derive PAI.
465. ▶ Puducherry Tourism announced first Pondicherry International Film Festival (PIFF), to showcase over 100 films from more than 25 countries. It will be held in September 2018, with France as partner country.
466. ▶ Punjab Government discontinued sale of 20 pesticides (insecticides) including Endosulfan harmful to health of humans and environment.
467. ▶ Punjab Government launched *Paani Bachao, Paise Kamao* campaign for checking depletion of underground water. Through this, farmers will receive monetary benefit for less use of tube well. Details related to the use of power and money transferred into account of farmers will be provided to them on phone.
468. ▶ Punjab Government launched a mobile application named 'i-Hariyali' aimed at increasing state's green cover, under 'Mission Tandarust Punjab. It will enable users to order free plant saplings. The 'i-Hariyali' app, ' can be downloaded from the app store for free.
469. ▶ Punjab Government launched a 'Business First Portal' to give a big push towards ease of doing business in state. It aims at facilitating industrialists for regulatory clearances and fiscal approvals and real-time tracking of applications on a common platform.
470. ▶ Punjab Government signed MOU with Nandan Nilekani's e-Governments Foundation (e-Gov) for managing of electronic governance of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across state.
471. ▶ Punjab Government signed MoU with United Kingdom (UK) for setting up of bio-gas and bio- Compressed natural gas (CNG) plants in state. It aims to find a sustainable solutions to paddy straw burning, which is a major concern in Punjab and surrounding region.
472. ▶ Punjab government along with WWF-India will conduct first organised census of Indus Dolphins, one of world's rarest mammals. Dolphins are found only in India and Pakistan, confined to 185 km stretch between Talwara and Harike Barrage in India's Beas River in Punjab.
473. ▶ Punjab government formed 6 member Revenue Commission with an aim to bring greater efficiency and accountability in functioning of Revenue Department. It will be headed by Justice SS Saron.
474. ▶ R K Singh (Minister of Power (IC)) laid foundation stone for 60 MW Naitwar Mori Hydro Electric Project in Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand), on Tons River (a tributary of Yamuna). It will give 265.5 Million Units of renewable energy to grid and cut CO2 emissions by 0.21 Million Tons annually.
475. ▶ Railways introduced Double Stack Dwarf Container Services, flagging off from Western Railway's Rajkot railway station on its maiden commercial run. Despite being smaller in size, dwarf containers can hold a capacity of 30,500 kgs.
476. ▶ Railways launched 2 mobile applications to ease traveling experience - '*Rail MADAD* and *Menu on Rails*. Rail MADAD will enable travelers to lodge complaints, and *Menu on Rails* will facilitate seamless ordering of food. Also, Northern Railways will now monitor the cleanliness of its trains using WhatsApp groups supervised by senior officials.
477. ▶ Railways will set up of a rail coach factory in Latur district (Maharashtra), to help generate employment opportunities and bring economic development in this backward Marathwada region. Plant will manufacture Electric Multiple Units for suburban trains and coaches for metros.

478. ▶ Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT), an Indore-based unit of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has developed an instrument called Fluorimeter, to measure traces of uranium in water, capable of examining traces of uranium in sample of water from 0.1 PPB (Parts-per-billion) unit to 100 PPB. DAE has transferred its technology to its Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL) for mass production. It will be especially helpful in states like Punjab where uranium traces in water sources have been found to be at dangerous levels.
479. ▶ Rajasthan Government launched *Nidaan* software, for diseases monitoring and strengthening tele-medicine services in government hospitals. It will help in providing presumptive monitoring of seasonal and non-communicable diseases as well as trends of ailments found in specific areas.
480. ▶ Rajasthan Government signed MoU with a private trust Sohanlalji Buladevi Ojha Gaushala Samiti to build its first 'Cow Sanctuary', a shelter for 10000 cows, in Bikaner district. State government introduced a 20 % surcharge on liquor to use the proceeds for protection of cows.
- ▶ In 2015, Rajasthan became first state to have a separate department and ministry for the welfare of cows.
 - ▶ India's first cow sanctuary is located at MP's Agar Malwa district, named *Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya*.
481. ▶ Rajasthan Govt. launched *Bijli Mitra* Mobile app, to help farmers to get their defunct transformers replaced within 6 hours of registering a complaint through app. It is initially launched in Jhalawar.
482. ▶ Rajasthan became first state to implement National Policy on Biofuels, unveiled by central Government in May 2018. Under this, State Government will lay emphasis on increasing production of oilseeds and establish Centre for Excellence in Udaipur to promote research in fields of alternative fuels and energy resources.
483. ▶ Rajasthan government approved 1 % reservation for 5 communities - Gadia Lohar, Banjara, Gujjar, Raika and Gadariya.
484. ▶ Rajasthan government launched Annapurna Dudh Yojana, to provide milk thrice a week to 62 lakh students in government schools and madrassas. While students till Class 5 will get 150 ml, students in Class 6-8 will get 200 ml.
485. ▶ Rajasthan ranked first by NITI Aayog among all states after it registered a significant increase in groundwater level due to water conservation structures built under Chief Minister Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan. State also witnessed increase of 81% in irrigation capacity.
486. ▶ Road Transport & Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari launched a mobile App and Toll-free Emergency number for Highway users.
- ▶ Sukhad Yatra mobile application is prepared by National Highways Authority of India to allow Highway users to enter road quality-related information or report any accident or pothole on highway, and several other related info.
 - ▶ Toll-free number 1033 will enable users to report an emergency condition, or highway-related feedback, across highway.
487. ▶ Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari announced development of a new Expressway between Delhi and Mumbai, at a cost of 1 Lakh Crore Rupees. Minister also disclosed plans for a Chambal Expressway which would be connected to Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, and is likely to benefit states like Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
488. ▶ Saudi Aramco and ADNOC (Abu Dhabi National Oil Company) signed MoU today to jointly develop an integrated refinery and petrochemicals complex at Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, implemented by Ratnagiri Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd. (RRPCL).
- ▶ Earlier, Saudi Aramco joined the project by signing an MoU with Indian consortium, during International Energy Forum Ministerial meet in April 2018 in New Delhi. RRPCL will now have Saudi Aramco & ADNOC as overseas strategic partners.
 - ▶ The project will be set up as a 50:50 joint partnership (50:50) between the consortium from India and Saudi Aramco and ADNOC.
 - ▶ Mega refinery will be capable of processing 1.2 million barrels of crude oil per day (60 million metric tonnes per annum). It will also provide feedstock for integrated petrochemicals complex, with capacity of 18 million tonnes per annum of petrochemical products.
 - ▶ Project cost is estimated at around Rs.3 lakh crore (USD 44 billion).
489. ▶ Science & Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan unveiled a Air Quality and Weather Forecast System – SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting) at Chandni Chowk in Delhi. The giant LED displays real-time air quality index with colour coding alongwith 72-hour advance forecast. The system, first of its kind in the country, was developed by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology Pune.
- ▶ It will also measure sun's UV-Index (UVI), PM1, Mercury and Black carbon in real time in addition to regular air quality and weather parameters like PM2.5, PM10, Sulfur Dioxide, Ozone, Nitrogen Oxides, Carbon Monoxide.
490. ▶ Search engine Google is most trusted Internet brand in India as per TRA Brand Trust Report 2018, With 1.2 trillion searches per year. Google is followed by Facebook, Amazon and eBay. Biggest falls was seen by Snapdeal (fell by 142 ranks) and best trust gainer is Netflix (up 506 ranks).
491. ▶ Shillong (capital of Meghalaya) selected as 100th Smart City. With selection of Shillong, proposed investment in finally selected 100 cities under Smart Cities Mission would be INR 2,05,018 crores.
492. ▶ Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) is named as Nodal Agency to set up 2.5 GW Wind-Solar hybrid Project by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, aiming to Build Hybrid Projects with Transparent Bidding Process limited from 200 MW to 500 MW, with atleast 1

project site with capacity of 50 MW. As of now, we have only 20 GW of renewable energy produced through wind-solar hybrid power projects.

- Govt aims for 175 GW Renewable energy capacity by 2022. As of now, India has over 20 GW of Solar Power And approx 354 GW of Wind power Installed Capacity.

493. ▶ South Central Railway (SCR) became first railway zone to complete 100% LED lighting at all 733 stations under its jurisdiction.
494. ▶ SpiceJet became first airline to operate a commercial flight from Kolkata to Pakyong Airport near Gangtok in Sikkim, becoming first passenger plane to land in Sikkim. Pakyong Airport is 32 km away from Gangtok.
495. ▶ Supreme Court Bench (A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan) ruled for the 3rd time that Chief Justice of India (CJI, currently Dipak Misra) is *Master of Roster*. CJI is an individual judge and not powerful collective of five senior-most judges of Supreme Court called the 'Collegium'. CJI has exclusive authority to allocate cases to fellow judges and is spokesperson of the court.
 - Judgment was based on petition filed by former Law Minister Shanti Bhushan for considering expression CJI should be read as meaning Collegium for purpose of allocation of cases. Petition mentioned that to have collegium of SC judges collectively to allocate cases rather than leave entire power in hands of CJI in his administrative capacity as 'Master of Roster'.
496. ▶ Supreme Court approved Centre's draft Cauvery Management Scheme for smooth distribution of water among Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry (UT). SC raised Karnataka's share of Cauvery water by 14.75 tmcft saying that issue of drinking water of Southern Karnataka region is of higher priority. Tamil Nadu's share is reduced, compensated by allowing TN to extract 10 tmcft more groundwater from river basin.
 - Cauvery Management Scheme deals with release of water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry, implemented by Cauvery Management Authority (CMA).
497. ▶ Supreme Court asked Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board to show documents signed by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan to prove its ownership on Taj Mahal. SC Bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra asked Waqf board counsel to authenticate that Shah Jahan executed a 'Waqfnama' in favour of Waqf board, a document through which a person conveys intention to donate a property to Waqf for charitable purpose.
 - SC also raised a question for Waqf board that how Shah Jahan could sign a document when he was imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb after war of succession at Agra Fort in 1658 and Mughal emperor died in fort itself in 1666. SC also told council that Taj Mahal and other heritage structures were built by Mughals and were taken over by Britishers after end of Mughal rule.
 - SC ruled this when he Waqf board counsel told court that Shah Jahan had himself declared Taj Mahal a Waqf property. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) filed an appeal in SC against waqf board's declaring Taj Mahal as its property.
498. ▶ Supreme Court ruled that courts can look into Parliamentary Standing Committee reports while deciding on an issue. However, parliamentary reports cannot be challenged in Courts. It will help NGOs, which frequently file PILs in the SC, to rely on Parliamentary Standing Committee reports.
499. ▶ Supreme Court struck down a legislation that allowed former Uttar Pradesh Chief Ministers to continue occupying government accommodation even after demitting office, terming it as *arbitrary and discriminatory*.
500. ▶ Supreme Court's Verdict on Cauvery Water Dispute -
 - SC stated that Karnataka government will release 177.25 tmcft of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu from its inter-state Biligundlu dam, down from state's earlier allocation of 192 TMC water. Karnataka will now have an enhanced share of 14.75 tmcft water per year.
 - Earlier, Cauvery Water Tribunal's order in 2007 stated Karnataka to have share of 270 tmcft of Cauvery water. Now it will go up to 284.75 tmcft.
 - Verdict stayed 30 tmcft water to Kerala and 7 tmcft water to Puducherry as per Tribunal's 2007 Order. SC also allowed Tamil Nadu to draw an additional 10 tmcft 'groundwater' from a total of 20 tmcft beneath Cauvery basin.
 - SC order on Cauvery water allocation will continue to hold for next 15 years.
 - Cauvery Water Dispute -
 - Water sharing of Cauvery River has been a major source of conflict between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Its origin is traced back to two agreements in 1892 and 1924, which had taken place between the then Madras Presidency and Kingdom of Mysore.
 - 802 km long Cauvery River has 44,000 km² basin area in Tamil Nadu and 32,000 km² basin area in Karnataka.
 - Cauvery Water Tribunal, in its ruling in 2007, allocated 192 TMC water to Tamil Nadu, 270 TMC water to Karnataka, 30 tmcft to Kerala and 7 tmcft to Puducherry per year.
501. ▶ Surat (Gujarat) become first district in country to have 100% solar powered Primary Health Centers (PHCs), with All its 52 PHCs now powered by solar system. Surat has set an example by developing villages that use sustainable forms of energy, when global warming is mounting.

502. ▶ Surat railway station (Gujarat) will be third in India to be developed as a world-class facility under Railway's station redevelopment programme, After Habibganj (Bhopal) and Gandhinagar (Gujarat), which will both be ready by 2019. It is being done Railway Ministry's 1 lakh crore station redevelopment programme.
503. ▶ Swachh Survekshan 2018 Results -
- ▶ Top 3 cleanest Cities - Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), Chandigarh.
 - ▶ Stats -
 - ▶ Organized by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), It Assessed 4203 Urban Local Bodies, compared to 434 cities covered in 2017 and 73 cities in 2016.
 - ▶ Record 37.66 lakh citizen feedbacks were collected during Swachh Survekshan 2018.
 - ▶ In ranking cities, 35% weightage given to each of citizen feedback & service level progress, 30% weightage given to direct observation. In 2017, it was 25 % to direct observation, 30 % to citizen feedback and 45 % to service level progress.
 - ▶ Cleanest cities in various categories -
 - ▶ Big City - Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh)
 - ▶ Medium City - Mysuru (Karnataka)
 - ▶ Small City - New Delhi Municipal Council
 - ▶ State Capital / UT - Greater Mumbai (Maharashtra)
504. ▶ Swedish-Swiss Firm ABB announced commissioning of India's first industrial solar microgrid in Vadodara (Gujarat). Microgrid is a localized electricity source which can function autonomously as well as by connecting and being synced with traditional centralized electrical grid (macrogrid). Microgrids with integrated battery energy storage are setup to ensure continuity of work during power outages.
505. ▶ Tamil Nadu Government launched 24-hour helpline number 14417, claiming to be the first in India, to offer information and guidance on education to students.
506. ▶ Tamil Nadu Government launched bi-lingual (*Tamil and English*) Uzhavan (farmer) mobile application in a bid to use technology for benefit of farmers. It will allow farmers to access nine types of services, including crop insurance, farm subsidies, farm equipments and related infrastructure.
507. ▶ Tamil Nadu government announced setting up of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) facility near Madurai, at estimated of INR 1500 crores.
508. ▶ Tamil Nadu government demanded permanent closure of controversial Vedanta Group's Sterlite Copper factory in Thoothukudi / Tuticorin, which was centre of violent protests recently that led to killing of 13 people in Police Firing. Locals had been protesting for closure of the factory for 100 days. The actions of police has been highly criticised.
- ▶ Protests intensified after Sterlite Copper recently applied for to double capacity of plant to 800,000 metric tonnes per annum.
 - ▶ Residents of nearby villages claimed that smelter caused huge level air and water pollution and is the reason behind unnaturally high cancer rates in surrounding villages.
509. ▶ Tamil Nadu government launched Amma Free Wi-Fi zones in 5 cities of Tamil Nadu, under which Wi-Fi zones will be set up in 50 spots. Users will be offered 20 minutes of free internet service per day. After that users will be charged Rs 10 per hour.
510. ▶ Tamil Nadu government released draft state Forest Policy that aims to conserve forests and wildlife, under Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 document.
- ▶ Tamil Nadu has 30.92 % of the forest declared as 'protected areas'. It has 15 wildlife sanctuaries, 5 National parks, 15 bird sanctuaries, 3 biosphere reserves and 4 project tiger areas.
 - ▶ Tamil Nadu will develop innovative strategies to enhance forest and tree cover from current 21.76 % to 33 % by 2030.
 - ▶ Forest department will also develop mangroves in Tamil Nadu as 'bio-shield' along the coast as per the policy.
511. ▶ Tamil Nadu government released its Ecotourism Policy 2017, which includes identifying ecotourism sites and will have specific ecotourism product associated with it in their uniqueness and value in terms of aesthetic, natural, cultural and landscape characteristics.
512. ▶ Tamil Nadu government signed an agreement with IT Major Microsoft to improve integration of technology in teaching and learning in state, to reform education sector, build tech capacity and enhance digital literacy across all levels.
513. ▶ Tata Motors and Maharashtra Government signed MoU to deploy 1,000 Electric Vehicles across a range of passenger and commercial vehicles in Maharashtra. Also, Mahindra & Mahindra signed two MoUs with Maharashtra Government to advance its next phase of expansion in electric vehicles (EVs) and achieve its goal to become completely electric ready.
514. ▶ Tata Trusts signed MoU with Government to provide development support in eight worst Naxal-affected districts in Chhattisgarh, covered under Transformation of aspirational districts Programme of NITI Aayog. Districts are - Kanker, Rajnandgaon, Bijapur, Bastar, Kondagaon, Dantewada, Narayanpur and Sukma.


515. ▶ Telangana Government announced a health-cum-life insurance scheme worth INR 5 lakh for farmers in state, with allocation of INR 500 crores.
516. ▶ Telangana Government constituted a task force on urban mobility to study feasibility of the monorail model and other modes of transport for IT corridor in Hyderabad. Arvind Kumar is Member Convenor of task force.
517. ▶ Telangana Government signed MoU with Singapore-based engineering & consulting firm Surbana Jurong for preparing roadmap for Genome Valley 2.0, an upgraded version of life sciences and biotechnology industrial cluster state's capital Hyderabad.
- ▶ Genome Valley is India's first organized pharma-biotech cluster for life sciences R&D activities and largest life sciences destination in Asia, being home to over 200 companies employing 10,000 people.
518. ▶ Telangana Government will organize Bonalu Festival between July 15 and August 5, 2018. State government released INR 15 Crores for the same.
519. ▶ Telangana Govt. announced 2 % reservation in state government jobs for sportspersons.
520. ▶ Telangana Govt. mandated teaching Telugu as a compulsory subject in all public and private schools of state. Telugu University and Sahitya Academy will decide the Telugu syllabus for various standards.
521. ▶ Telangana Police launched COP CONNECT mobile application to support communication and collaboration needs of entire police department of state. This app has features of regular mobile messaging apps and is enabled for chatting, group chats, file and location sharing.
522. ▶ Telangana government launched *T App Folio* mobile governance application for delivery of government to citizen (G2C) and business to citizen (B2C) services efficiently. Telangana is 2nd state to launch a mobile governance application in place for provision of G2C services, After Karnataka.
523. ▶ Telangana government launched Rythu Bandhu (friend of farmers) Scheme, an investment support scheme to support livelihood of farmers. It is first such investment support scheme for farmers to be launched by any state in India.
- ▶ Farmers will directly get financial support twice every year to maximise agricultural production. They will get support of 8,000 per acre every year (Rs. 4000 each for monsoon and Rabi season) as crop investment support.
 - ▶ State government has set aside Rs 12,000 crore in 2018-19 budget exclusively for this scheme.
 - ▶ State government also announced to provide life insurance cover to all farmers in state for Rs five lakh each, from August 15, 2018 Onwards.
524. ▶ Telangana government launched Women Entrepreneurship Hub (WE-Hub), India's first state-led incubator for women entrepreneurs, to help women entrepreneurs establish their own enterprises by providing services including seed funding, mentoring, and business guidance.
525. ▶ Telangana government signed a MoU with Safran Electrical and Power SAS for establishing an aerospace unit in Telangana.
526. ▶ Telangana govt. reduced Value Added Tax (VAT) on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) to 1 % from 16 %, to boost air traffic at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport located near Hyderabad.
527. ▶ Telecom Commission approved voice and data in-flight connectivity, permitting Internet and Mobile Communication on Aircraft (MCA) in Indian airspace. It is recommended to permit MCA services with minimum height restriction of 3000 meters in airspace.
528. ▶ Telecom Firm Bharti Airtel and Chinese telecom equipment maker Huawei successfully conducted India's first 5G (fifth generation) network trial, achieving over 3 gigabit per second (Gbps) data speed.
- ▶ 5G is wireless communication technology based on third-generation partnership project (3GPP). It is next generation mobile networks technology after 4G LTE networks. It is expected to offer enhanced mobile broadband (eMBB) through R15 repeaters that can cater to coverage requirements. India aims to roll out 5G Services by 2020.
529. ▶ Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha launched India's first locally developed 4G/LTE (*Long-Term Evolution*) telecom system, developed by telecom equipment manufacturer VNL Ltd. It ensures seamless connectivity at affordable prices and reduces import dependence for such equipments.
530. ▶ Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) proposed use of blockchain technology to check menace of Unsolicited Commercial Communication (UCC) or spam calls / messages. Blockchain technology based norms will record all communication between subscribers and entities, capturing customer consent for information and authorised telemarketing agencies. Subscriber will be now able to revoke consent given to entities through TRAI app and other mechanism that will be provided under regulation.
531. ▶ Telangana Government will set up *District Child Protection Units (DCPU)* in all 31 districts to protect the children from child abuse, child labour and to implement the child rights in all districts.
532. ▶ To save environment from air pollution caused by stubble burning, Punjab government made attachment of super straw management system with harvester machines mandatory for harvesting paddy (rice) crop.
533. ▶ Tripura Government announced 10% of all police force will be reserved for women, to encourage women to participate and deal more efficiently with crimes related to them.


534. ▶ Tripura Horticulture Corporation Limited (THCL) signed an MoU with Spicejet Merchandise Pvt Ltd, To provide pineapples to majority of country and help farmers earn profit.
535. ▶ Tripura became first North East state to launch state component of Pradhanmantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) in Agartala, aiming to train over 1.16 lakh youths by 2020.
536. ▶ Tripura government launched GPS (Global Positioning System) and wireless based 24×7 “mobile policing” service to control crime, mainly against women. Under Mobile policing, Police will reach the spot within a few minutes to tackle the situation.
537. ▶ Tripura government will set up a well-equipped crime branch under state police to deal with unlawful activities in state such as drug and narcotics peddling.
538. ▶ UIDAI unveiled beta version of ‘Virtual ID’, which will soon be accepted by service providers in place of Aadhaar numbers. An Aadhaar holder can generate VID from UIDAI’s website is a random 16-digit number mapped to a person’s Aadhaar number and biometrics. VID would give any authorised agency like a mobile company, limited details for verification purpose.
- It will do away with sneed of disclosing 12-digit Aadhaar number for authentication or verification purposes.
539. ▶ UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund) launched Data Visualisation App to provide user-friendly visual representation of complex analytics of education scenario in India, developed with technical inputs from UNICEF, NCERT and National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA).
- It uses UDISE (Unified District Information System for Education), NAS (National Assessment survey) and demographic data. It can be used as visual tool by policy makers, academia and researchers to address gaps and monitor programs in education.
540. ▶ UP Investors Summit 2018 Lucknow -
- Government will establish India’s 2nd defence industrial production corridor in Uttar Pradesh, at approx INR 20000 crores and will generate about 250000 jobs. It will link Agra, Aligarh, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi and Chitrakoot. 1st of 2 defense industrial production corridors proposed in Budget 2018 will link Chennai & Bengaluru.
 - UP’s Khadi and Village Industries Board signed pact with Amazon India to facilitate online selling of Khadi products.
 - Uttar Pradesh (UP) became first state to clear business and investment projects digitally, without any human interface. This became possible with launch of ‘Nivesh Mitra’ digital platform. It will serve as a single-window clearance system.
 - UP government signed 1045 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) worth INR 4.28 lakh crores at UP Investors Summit 2018.
541. ▶ US Food and Drug Administration has approved World’s first prosthetic iris that can be implanted to treat patients with missing or damaged iris (coloured part of eye).
542. ▶ Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) introduced updated ‘QR code’ for offline Aadhaar verification to strengthen its privacy measures during usage, aimed at adding an extra layer of privacy to Aadhaar after recently introducing concept of virtual identification.
543. ▶ Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) rolled Under 5 years age version of Aadhaar Card, named *Bal Aadhaar*. It will have blue colour and will be linked with one of parent’s Aadhaar card. No biometric details (Iris scan / fingerprint scans) will be captured as Biometrics are not developed for children before 5 years of age.
544. ▶ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will set up a skill development centre for clients of Bharosa, an integrated support centre for distressed women and children in Hyderabad (Telangana). It aims at empowering marginalised women by imparting skills training.
545. ▶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will set up ‘Design University for Gaming’ in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. For This, UNESCO signed agreement with Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB).
546. ▶ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recognised Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL) in Kerala as world’s first fully solar energy powered airport. CIAL is India’s first airport to be constructed in public-private-partnership (PPP) model in 1999.
- It has 15 MWp solar power plant, comprising 46,150 solar panels laid across 45 acres. Plant generates 50,000 units of electricity daily.
547. ▶ University Grants Commission (UGC) has so far granted full autonomy to 62 higher educational institutions that have maintained high standards of excellence under Autonomous Colleges Regulation. These include 5 central universities, 21 state universities, 26 private universities and 10 other colleges.
- Complete autonomy will allow these institutions to start new courses, new departments, new programmes, skill courses, research parks, appoint foreign faculty, take foreign students etc.
548. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government announced a new Defence Manufacturing policy named ‘UP Defence Aerospace Unit and Employment Generating Policy 2018’. Under this -
- Entrepreneurs will be given land under plug and play formula investment of INR 50000 crore in 5 years. This would generate 2.5 lakh jobs.


- ✎ Six districts — Aligarh, Agra, Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Kanpur and Lucknow – will be notified for the Defence manufacturing hub, with focus on Bundelkhand region.
 - ✎ There will be 2 categories of investment - mega anchor project worth over Rs 1000 crore which will include companies willing to build aircraft, tanks, choppers and anchor units which could invest 200 - 400 crores in several regions.
 - ✎ Government also approved proposal to get bank loan of INR 12000 crores from PNB for construction of Purvanchal Expressway.
 - ✎ It also approved construction of civil airports at Aligarh, Azamgarh, Moradabad and Shravasti under Regional Air Connectivity policy.
 - ✎ Government also approved asset settlement of UP Mining Development Corporation.
549. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Ganga Hariteema Yojana (also known as Ganga Greenery scheme) in 27 districts of the state located on bank of river Ganga. It aims at enhancing green cover in catchment areas of river Ganga and control land erosion. Under it, tree plantation will be carried out in 1 Km areas from banks of river.
550. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Govt. passed Uttar Pradesh Control of Organised Crime Bill (UPCOCB), a stringent bill to curb organised crime and deal strictly with those trying to fuel terror. It seeks to curb organised crime and deal strictly with those trying to foment terror or dislodge government forcibly or through violent means.
551. ▶ Uttar Pradesh State Government inaugurated state's first ever butterfly park in Kanpur, as pollution-free spaces which do not have chemicals/pesticides and play an important role in conserving endangered butterfly species.
- ✎ Further, Madhya Pradesh's first butterfly park opened in Raisen district.
552. ▶ Uttar Pradesh government launched a mass marriage policy for poor girls, under which financial assistance worth INR 35000 will be provided. It aims to discourage practice of dowry.
553. ▶ Uttarakhand Govt inaugurated state's first (and India's 8th) City Gas Distribution (CGD) network at Rudrapur in Udham Singh Nagar district, comprising 500 km long pipeline and 10 CNG stations.
554. ▶ Uttarakhand High Court declared entire animal kingdom (all animals, including avian and aquatic species) as legal entities with rights, duties and liabilities of living person.
- ✎ HC was hearing PIL by Narayan Dutt Bhatt, filed in 2014 where petitioner had sought directions to restrict movement of horse carts (tongas) between India and Nepal through Banbasa in Champawat district of Uttarakhand. However, HC enlarged scope of petition in larger public interest to promote protection and welfare of animals.
 - ✎ HC directed State Government that no animal, including horses moving between India and Nepal, carries excess weight. It also banned use of any sharp equipment throughout state to avoid bruises, swelling, abrasions or severe pain to animals.
 - ✎ It also directed all veterinary doctors across state to mandatorily treat animals brought to them.
555. ▶ Uttarakhand high court banned paragliding, and white water rafting and other water sports until the government frames a policy to regulate them.
556. ▶ Virgin Group (USA) signed agreement with Maharashtra Government to build world's first hyperloop transportation system between Mumbai and Pune, during Magnetic Maharashtra investor summit in Mumbai. It aims to reduce travel time between two mega cities to 20 minutes from three hours at present, with capability of travelling up to 1000 km per hour.
- ✎ Hyperloop Technology is dubbed as fifth mode of transportation. It is system of magnetically levitating capsules (pods) that are sent at high speeds through low-pressure tubes. It uses linear Induction motors in it to control speed of pods.
 - ✎ Hyperloop is two-to-three times faster than fastest high-speed rail and has speeds even greater than commercial air travel.
 - ✎ Hyperloop departures could happen with a low frequency of a pod every 20 seconds which is not possible in railways.
557. ▶ West Bengal Government will invest 107 crore rupees to check erosion at vulnerable areas along banks of Ganga and Padma.
558. ▶ West Bengal Government signed MOU with British Council, to promote cultural, educational and skill development exchanges between UK and west Bengal, on occasion of British Council's 70th anniversary in India.
559. ▶ West Bengal became first state to opt out of Central Govt's proposed NHPS (National Health Protection Scheme, informally called *Modicare*), Claiming that Bengal government had already enrolled 50 lakh people under its own Swasthya Sathi programme.
560. ▶ West Bengal government applied for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Kohitur mango, which was sold for INR 1500 a piece last season. It is believed to have been cultivated by a royal breeder named Hakim Ada Mohammadi at behest of the last Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daulah. The variety was reportedly only consumed by royals.
561. ▶ West Bengal government introduced a new scheme called *Rupashree*, to provide marriage assistance to girls coming from economically weaker families with a budgetary allocation of Rs 1500 crores. It proposes financial assistance of INR 25000 to family of girl whose annual income is up to Rs 1.5 lakh.
562. ▶ Western Railway renamed Elphinstone Road suburban railway station in Mumbai to Prabhadevi Station (PBHD). It was initially named after Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay Presidency from 1853 to 1860. It has now been renamed in honour of local deity Prabhadevi.

563. ▶ World Heritage Committee declared Victorian and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai as a World Heritage Property, inscribing it site on UNESCO's World Heritage list, as India's 37th UNESCO Heritage Site.

 This makes Mumbai the second city in India after Ahmedabad to be inscribed on World Heritage List.

 Apart from the Mumbai site, committee inscribed three other cultural sites on World Heritage List - Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars region of Iran, Hidden Christian Sites in Nagasaki Region of Japan and Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea.

 Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai comprises 2 architectural styles - 19th century collection of Victorian structures and the 20th century Art Deco buildings along the sea, conjoined by the historical open space of the Oval Maidan.

 With this, India now has 37 World Heritage Inscriptions with 29 Cultural, 07 Natural and 01 Mixed sites. India stands second in Asia Pacific (after China), in number of World Heritage properties, overall sixth in world.

564. ▶ World Malaria Day (WMD) is being observed every year on 25 April across the world to recognise the global efforts to control preventable vector borne disease malaria. The theme of 2018 WMD is “Ready to beat malaria“

565. ▶ World's first of its kind International Centre for ‘Humanitarian Forensics’ (ICHF) launched at Gujarat Forensic Sciences University in Gandhinagar (Gujarat), as joint venture of International Committee of Red Cross in India, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and Gujarat Forensic Science University. It would promote best practices in forensics.

566. ▶ World's tallest girder rail bridge (141 Metres Height) is being built near Noney (Manipur), as part of 111-km-long Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal new broad gauge railway project in Manipur. First section involves construction of 84 kms of railway line connecting Jiribam to Tupul which is on verge of completion. 2nd section of 27 kms connecting Tupul to Imphal is expected to be completed by 2019.

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