



Current Affairs - October to December 2018

Month Type






















- [374 Current Affairs were found in Last Three Months for Type - National](#)

(Showing **261** Important Ones)

National

- ▶ Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) signed 2 MoUs with Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), to launch the programme "PRAKRITI" with objective to promote awareness about forests and environment.
 - ▶ Through this collaboration, knowledge will be imparted to students/teachers of NVS and KVS on environment, forest, environmental services and contemporary areas of forestry research by way of lectures and interactive sessions by scientists of ICFRE institutes.
 - ▶ MoUs are signed for period of 10 years are expected to make youth sensitive about issues of environment and forests and help them to become responsible citizens.
- ▶ 14th edition of *Jashn e Bachpan* a theatre festival for children held in New Delhi, organised by National School of Drama's (NSD) Theatre in Education (TIE) Company.
- ▶ 17.86 KM long Trilokpuri Sanjay Lake to Shiv Vihar section of Delhi Metro Pink Line has been flagged off, taking Delhi Metro to league of top metro networks with operational length over 300 km (like London, Beijing, Shanghai and New York). Delhi Metro Network has now become 314 kilometres long with 229 metro stations.
- ▶ 2018 Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Election Results (90 Seats) -
 - ▶ Indian National Congress (INC) emerged largest Party with 68 Seats. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 2nd with 15 Seats.
 - ▶ In terms of Votes, INC got 43 % votes while BJP got 33%.
- ▶ 2018 Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly Election Results (230 Seats) -
 - ▶ Indian National Congress (INC) emerged largest Party with 114 Seats. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 2nd with 109 Seats.
 - ▶ In terms of Votes, BJP got 41 % votes while INC got 40.9%.
 - ▶ INC Leader Kamal Nath is set to be appointed as Next chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, replacing BJP's Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- ▶ 2018 Mizoram Legislative Assembly Election Results (40 Seats) -
 - ▶ Mizo National Front emerged largest Party with 26 Seats.
 - ▶ In terms of Votes, MNF got 37.6 % votes while INC got 30.2%.
- ▶ 2018 Rajasthan Legislative Assembly Election Results (200 Seats)-
 - ▶ Indian National Congress (INC) emerged largest Party with 99 Seats. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 2nd with 73 Seats.
 - ▶ In terms of Votes, INC got 39.3 % votes while BJP got 38.8%.
- ▶ 2018 Telangana Legislative Assembly Election Results (119 Seats) -
 - ▶ Telangana Rashtra Samithi emerged largest Party with 88 Seats. INC 2nd with 19 Seats.
 - ▶ In terms of Votes, TRS got 46.9 % votes while INC got 28.4%.
- ▶ 2nd India International Cherry Blossom Festival hosted in Shillong (Meghalaya), as world's only autumn cherry blossom festival.
- ▶ 2st India-ASEAN InnoTech Summit held in New Delhi, organized by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).
- ▶ 38th India International Trade Fair Concluded at Pragati Maidan (New Delhi). Uttarakhand was adjudged Best State and Himachal Pradesh 2nd, for their pavilions showcasing potential to boost tourism and promotion of local products. Theme of IITF 2018 was *Entrepreneurs of Rural India*.
- ▶ 4 day international dance festival titled "Udbhav Utsav" held in Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh).
- ▶ 49th International Film Festival of India held in Goa, showcasing 212 films from over 68 countries.
 - ▶ While Israel is focus country, Jharkhand is the focus state this year. Theme is *New India*.

Awards -

-  Israeli Director Dan Wolman was honoured with lifetime achievement award.
 -  Script writer Salim Khan honoured with IFFI 2018 Special Award for his lifetime contribution to cinema.
 -  Best film (Golden Peacock) award - Donbass (Ukrainian movie) directed by Sergei Loznitsa.
 -  Best director (Silver Peacock) award - Lijo Jose Pellissery (Malayalam film-India).
 -  Best Actor (Male) Award - Chemban Vinod for his role in 'Ee.Ma.Yau' (Malayalam-India)
 -  Best Actor (Female) Award - Anastasiia Pustovit for her role in 'When the Trees Fall' (Ukrainian)
 -  Centenary Award for Best Debut Feature Film of Director - Alberto Monteras II for 'Respeto' (Filipino)
 -  ICFT –UNESCO Gandhi Medal: 'Walking with the Wind' directed by Praveen Morchhale
14. ▶ 4th International Film Festival of Shimla "IFFS 2018" concluded in Shimla (Himachal Pradesh). Best Feature Film award was given to *Sinjar* by Sandeep Pampally.
 15. ▶ 4th edition of Kochi-Muziris biennale began at Fort Kochi (Kerala), as first Biennale in world in which participation of women accounts for half of participating artists. 108-day long event will showcase 94 artists, with Theme *Possibilities for a Non- Alienated Life*.
 -  Contemporary artists Bose Krisnamachari and Riyaz Komu proposed state government the idea of Biennale on the lines of Venice Biennale.
 16. ▶ 6th India International Silk Fair (IISF) held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi, organised by Indian Silk Export Promotion Council (ISEPC).
 -  India is 2nd largest producer of silk after China.
 17. ▶ NITI Aayog released Baseline Report of the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index*, stating Indian progress towards 2030 SDG targets.
 -  *SDG India Index* is developed in collaboration with Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Global Green Growth Institute and United Nations.
 -  SDG India Index tracks progress of all States / UTs on 62 Priority Indicators selected by NITI Aayog, guided by MoSPI's National Indicator Framework comprising 306 indicators. *Index* spans 13 out of 17 SDGs. Progress on SDGs 12, 13 & 14 could not be measured as relevant State/UT level data were not available and SDG 17 was left out as it focuses on international partnerships.
 -  Classification Criteria based on *SDG India Index* Score is as -
 -  Aspirant (0-49) - Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh
 -  Performer (50-64) - Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi and Lakshadweep
 -  Front Runner (65-99) - Himachal Pradesh (Top State), Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh (Top UT) and Puducherry
 -  Achiever (100) - *Not Available*
 18. ▶ Minister for Food Processing Industries, Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated 2nd Mega Food Park in Maharashtra, named Paithan Mega Food Park Pvt Ltd, in Wahegaon and Dhangaon village in Paithan Taluka of Aurangabad district. State's first Park was inaugurated on 1st of March 2018 in Satara district. Paithan Mega Food Park Park has been set up in 102 acre of land at a cost of Rs. 124.52 crore.
 19. ▶ NITI Aayog constituted 'Himalayan State Regional Council' to ensure sustainable development of the Indian Himalayan region. It will review and implement identified action points based on Reports of five Working Groups, constituted by NITI Aayog. Himalayan State Regional Council will be chaired by the Dr VK Saraswat (Member in NITI Aayog).
 20. ▶ Airports Authority of India (AAI) cancelled UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) licence of low-cost carrier Air Odisha for seven airports for poor and irregular services. Airports are — Jharsuguda, Raipur, Raigarh, Bilaspur, Ambikapur, Jagdalpur and Visakhapatnam.
 21. ▶ Alphonso Mango from Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Palghar, Thane and Raigad districts of Maharashtra has been registered as Geographical Indication (GI).
 -  GI is an indication used on products with a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. GI products can benefit the rural economy in remote areas, by supplementing the incomes of artisans, farmers, weavers and craftsmen.
 -  King of mangoes, Alphonso, better known as 'Hapus' in Maharashtra, is in demand in domestic and international markets not only for its taste but also for pleasant fragrance and vibrant colour.
 22. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government launched Bhuseva and Bhudaar web portal through which people can view land records online. Bhudaar is 11 digit unique identification code to be assigned to each agriculture land holding and rural and urban property. Unique Bhudaar ID will start with 28 and if it is government land, 28 is followed by 00. Bhudaar card can be generated by land owner or property owner from Bhuseva web portal.

23. ▶ Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal governments have withdrawn their "general consent" to the CBI to conduct raids and investigations. CBI would now need permission from the respective state governments to carry out any sort of investigation in these states, except those ordered by courts and against central government officials.
24. ▶ Andhra Pradesh government finalised its new emblem for official use, five years after state's bifurcation in 2014. Inspired by Amaravati School of Art, it consists of "Dhamma Chakka" - "the Wheel of Law". Representation is -



25. ▶ Annual Sangai Festival celebrated in northeastern state of Manipur, as grandest festival of state named after state animal Sangai, the critically endangered brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur.
26. ▶ Annual river festival named Dwijing held on the bank of River Aie at Chirang district in Assam.
27. ▶ As per 6th edition & 2019 version of India Skills Report, Andhra Pradesh topped list of states with the highest employability followed by Rajasthan and Haryana.
28. ▶ As per Govt, 8 States have achieved 100% saturation in household electrification under Saubhagya -Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Bihar, J&K, Mizoram, Sikkim, Telangana and West Bengal. Till now, 15 States have 100 % household electrification.
- ▶ Saubhagya – ‘Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana’ was launched in September 2017 with the objective to electrify all remaining households in country
 - ▶ Aim is to ensure 24x7 access to electricity for all by 31st March 2019.
29. ▶ Assam Government become first Indian state to offer a Wage Compensation Scheme for pregnant women working in tea gardens of state -
- ▶ INR 12000 will be given to pregnant women in 4 instalments - 2000 in 1st trimester, 4000 in 2nd trimester, 3000 for institutional delivery and 3000 for registration of child's birth. Women will also get maternity leaves, ranging 3 months before delivery to 3 months after delivery.
30. ▶ Assam celebrated its 3rd Bihu festival known as 'Kati Bihu' festival across state. Name of the other 2 Bihu festivals is: Rongali and Bohagi Bihu.
31. ▶ Assam government announced three schemes for the welfare of farmers. -
- ▶ Assam Farmers' Credit Subsidy Scheme (AFCSS) - Under it, 25% of amount of Farmer Loans will be reimbursed by state government, upto 25000.
 - ▶ Assam Farmers' Interest Relief Scheme (AFIRS) - Currently, 3% of 7% interest against farm loan is paid by Central government and remaining 4% is required to be paid by farmers. Under AFIRS, State government will pay remaining 4% loan.
 - ▶ Assam Farmers' Incentive Scheme (AFIS) - Government would focus on bringing back defaulting farmers into banking system. Government will give INR 10000 to a farmer to help him repay loan.
32. ▶ Bihar Government approved to pay INR 25000 to every girl graduating in 2018 and onwards, irrespective of the pass division, community or region.
33. ▶ Bihar's Shahi litchi got Geographical Indication (GI) tag, making it an exclusive brand. Shahi litchi is famous for its sweet, juicy, unique flavour and aroma, is mostly grown in Muzaffarpur and neighbouring districts including East Champaran, Vaishali, Samastipur and Begusarai.
34. ▶ Bills passed in Winter Session 2018-2019 -
- ▶ Lok Sabha passed Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, known as Triple Talaq Bill. It would replace the ordinance passed in September 2018. It makes all types of declaration of triple talaq to be void and illegal. Declaration of Triple Talaq would be a cognizable offence, attracting up to three years' imprisonment with a fine.
 - ▶ Cognizable offence is one for which a police officer may arrest an accused person without a warrant.
 - ▶ A Muslim Women against whom the triple talaq is pronounced is entitled to seek subsistence allowance from her husband for herself and for her dependent children and the amount of the allowance will be determined by Magistrate.
 - ▶ Lok Sabha passed Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016, banning commercial surrogacy and allowing only altruistic surrogacy. It protects rights of the surrogate mother and child born from surrogacy and promotes ethical surrogacy.
 - ▶ Surrogacy is defined as an agreement between a couple who cannot conceive and a surrogate mother to carry their child.

- ✍ The bill is applicable to all Indian states, except Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✍ Bill provides for constitution of National Surrogacy board and State Surrogacy board for regulation of surrogacy process.
- ✍ It bars couple who already have children, to go for surrogacy.
- ✍ Women can only surrogate once in her lifetime and her age should be in between 25 to 35 years.
- ✍ Couple who intend for surrogacy should be aged between 23 to 50 years and married for at least 5 years.
- ✍ Lok Sabha passed Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2016, which seeks to empower the transgender community in the country by providing them a separate identity.
- ✍ Lok Sabha passed Consumer Protection Bill 2018 -
 - ✍ It aims to protect consumers' interests through a redressal mechanism that would ensure timely and effective settlement of disputes.
 - ✍ It seeks to establish a Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to protect consumer rights and look into the issues related to false or misleading ads. It calls for strict punishment and fines for misleading advertisements and food adulteration.
 - ✍ District Commissions will have mandate to hear complaints having claim worth one crore rupees. In the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 this limit was 20 lakh rupees. Limit of Commissions' at State level enhanced from 1 to 15 crore rupees. Complaints above 15 crore rupees worth of claim will be settled by National Commission.
- 35. ▶ CSIR has developed Less Polluting Firecrackers named – safe water releaser (SWAS), safe minimal aluminium (SAFAL) and safe thermite cracker (STAR), which are environment friendly and are 15-20 % cheaper than conventional ones. E-crackers also being developed with products like E-Ladi, E-Anar, E-cracker.
- 36. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Dec 06, 2018) -
 - ✍ MOUs -
 - ✍ Japan - Environmental Cooperation.
 - ✍ USA - Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the Earth Sciences.
 - ✍ Approved Revised Model MOU between Financial Intelligence Unit(FIU) – India (FIU-Ind) with its counterpart foreign Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) for exchange of information.
 - ✍ France - energy efficiency / energy conservation.
 - ✍ Algeria - Space Sciences, Technologies and Applications.
 - ✍ Armenia - Joint issue of postage stamp
 - ✍ Japan - Postal, Healthcare and Wellness.
 - ✍ Tajkistan, Uzbekistan, Morocco - Peaceful uses of Space Technology for Development.
 - ✍ Russia - Joint Activities under Human Spaceflight Programme.
 - ✍ Zimbabwe - geology, mining and mineral resources.
 - ✍ General Approvals -
 - ✍ Approved Amendment of Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act 1951. Proposed amendment ensures representation of the Opposition Party in Trust. It will empower Government to terminate and replace a Trustee to participate in functioning of Trust or for any other reason.
 - ✍ Approved Agriculture Export Policy 2018, along with establishment of Monitoring Framework at Centre, to oversee implementation of Agriculture Export Policy. It aims to double farmers' income by 2022 by doubling agricultural exports from present US\$ 30+ Billion to ~US\$ 60+ Billion by 2022 and reach US\$ 100 Billion later. Its Elements have been organised in two categories – Strategic and Operational.
 - ✍ Approved implementation of Shahpurkandi Dam Project on river Ravi in Punjab, to be completed by June 2022.
 - ✍ On completion, Irrigation Potential of 5,000 ha in Punjab and 32,173 ha in J&K would be created.
 - ✍ Some of water of River Ravi at present is going waste through the Madhopur Headworks downstream to Pakistan whereas there is water requirement in Punjab and J&K. Implementation of the project would minimise such wastage of water.
 - ✍ Balance cost of works component of ShahpurKandi Dam project is Rs. 1973 crores. Out of this, 485 Crores would be provided as Central Assistance.
 - ✍ Approved launching National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to be implemented by Department of Science &Technology at a total outlay of INR 3660 crores for 5 years.
 - ✍ It addresses increasing technological requirements of society. It would develop and bring Cyber Physical Systems (CPS) and associated technologies within reach in country and adoption of CPS technologies to address National / Regional issues.

- 4 focused areas along which mission implementation will proceed - Technology Development. HRD & Skill Development, Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Start-ups Ecosystem Development AND International Collaborations.

- It aims at establishment of 15 Technology Innovation Hubs (TIH), 6 Application Innovation Hubs (AIH) and 4 Technology Translation Research Parks (TTRP). These Hubs & TTRPs will connect to entities in developing solutions at reputed academic, R&D and other organizations across country in a hub and spoke model.

- CCEA Approvals -

- Approved sale of Government's existing 52.63% stake in Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to Power Finance Corporation (PFC), to achieve integration across Power Chain and have enhanced capability to support energy access and efficiency by improved capability to finance power sector. REC and PFC are Central PSEs under Ministry of Power.

- Approved streamlining National Pension System (NPS) -

- Enhancement of contribution by Central Government for its employees covered under NPS Tier-I from 10% to 14%.

- Providing freedom of choice for selection of Pension Funds and pattern of investment to central government employees.

- Tax exemption limit for lump sum withdrawal on exit has been enhanced to 60%. Entire withdrawal will now be exempt from income tax.

- Contribution by Government employees under Tier-II of NPS will now be covered under Section 80 C for deduction up to 1.50 lakh.

37. Cabinet Approvals (Dec 17, 2018)-

- MOUs -

- France - New and renewable energy.

- Afghanistan - Human resource development.

- Approved Joint Issue of Postage Stamps by India and South Africa on theme *125th Year of Mahatma Gandhi's Pietermaritzburg Station Incident & Birth Centenary of Nelson Mandela*.

- Australia - Disability Sector.

- General Approvals -

- Approved establishment of 2 new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Madurai (Tamil Nadu) at cost of 1264 crores and Bibinagar (Telangana) at cost of 1028 crores, under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).

- CCEA Approvals -

- Approved proposal of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas to release deposit free LPG connections to poor families, who have not been considered earlier for release of LPG connections under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), for their names not covered in any of Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) list OR Seven identified categories (*SC/STs households, beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) (Gramin), Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Forest dwellers, Most Backward Classes (MBC), Tea & Ex-Tea Garden Tribes, people residing in Islands / river islands*).

- PMUY was launched on 1st May, 2016 through which deposit free LPG connections are released with the cash assistance of Rs 1600 per connection by Government. Interest free loan are available to purchase stove and refill by Oil Marketing Companies.

- Over 5.86 crore LPG connections are released so far under PMUY, against target of 8 crore.

- Approved construction of a 5.634 km long new 4 - lane bridge across river Ganga, just 38 meters on upstream side of existing MG Setu on NH-19 at Patna in Bihar, with cost of 2926 croreS. It is to be completed by January 2023. Total Project is 14.5 km long and passes through Patna, Saran and Vaishali districts of Bihar.

- Approved setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) in every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons. CCEA approved cost of 2242 crores during 2018-19 and 2019-20 for rolling out revamped scheme.

- There will be an Autonomous Society under Ministry of Tribal Affairs similar to Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti to run EMRSs.

- Upgradation of already sanctioned EMRSs with unit cost subject to a maximum of 5 crore per school.

- Setting up sports facilities in 163 tribal dominated districts at a unit cost of 5 crore each to be constructed by 2022.

- Facts -

- 102 of such blocks are already having EMRSs. Thus, 462 new EMRSs will be established in these blocks across country.

- Increase in construction cost of EMRS from current 12 crore to 20 crore to improve construction quality.

- Recurring cost to be enhanced to 109000 per student per year from existing 61500 per student per year from 2019-20.

38. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Dec 28, 2018) -

✎ General Approvals -

- ✎ Approved Submission of India's second Biennial Update Report (BUR) to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change towards fulfilment of reporting obligation under Convention.
 - ✎ BUR contains five major components - National Circumstances, National Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Mitigation Actions, Finance, Technology and Capacity Building Needs and Support Received and Domestic Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) arrangements.
- ✎ Approved draft National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill 2018, that seeks to replace existing regulator Central Council for Homoeopathy (CCH) with a new body to ensure transparency. It includes constitution of a National Commission with three autonomous boards entrusted with conducting overall education of Ayurveda.
- ✎ Approved National Commission for Indian Systems of Medicine (NCIM) Bill 2018, to replace existing regulator (Central Council for Indian Medicine). National Commission for Indian Systems of Medicine aims to promote transparency and accountability. It provides for constitution of a National Commission with four autonomous boards.
 - ✎ Board of Ayurveda would be responsible for overseeing the overall education of Ayurveda.
 - ✎ Board of Unani, Siddha and Sowaigpa will be responsible for overseeing the overall education of Unani, Siddha and Sowaigpa.
 - ✎ The bill provides for two common boards, Board of Assessment and Rating and Board of Ethics and Registration.
- ✎ Approved proposal for Amendment in Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012, to make punishment more stringent for committing sexual crimes against children, Including death Penalty.
 - ✎ Section-4, Section-5 and Section-6 are proposed to be amended to provide option of stringent punishment, including death penalty, for aggravated penetrative sexual assault crime on a child.
 - ✎ Amendments are also proposed in section-9 to protect children from sexual offences in times of natural calamities and disasters.
 - ✎ Section-14 and 15 are proposed to be amended to address menace of child pornography.
- ✎ Approved Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification 2018, which was last reviewed and issued in 2011. It will lead to enhanced activities in coastal regions while conserving the coastal environment. Features Include -
 - ✎ Allowing Floor Space Index (FSI) or Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as per current norms in CRZ areas, which was frozen as per 1991 Development Control Regulation (DCR) levels in As per CRZ 2011 Notification
 - ✎ Densely populated rural areas to be afforded greater opportunity for development
 - ✎ Tourism infrastructure for basic amenities to be promoted.
 - ✎ Pcedure for CRZ clearances has been streamlined.
 - ✎ A No Development Zone (NDZ) of 20 meters has been stipulated for all Islands.
 - ✎ All Ecologically Sensitive Areas have been accorded special importance
 - ✎ Pollution abatement has been accorded special focus
 - ✎ Defence and strategic projects have been accorded necessary dispensation.
- ✎ Approved Gaganyaan Programme with demonstration of Indian Human Spaceflight capability to low earth orbit for a mission duration ranging from one orbital period to a maximum of seven days. A human rated GSLV Mk-III will be used to carry orbital module which will sustain a 3-member crew for the mission. Total fund requirement for Gaganyaan Programme is within 10000 crores.

✎ MOUs -

- ✎ Cuba and South Korea in area of Biotechnology.
- ✎ Approved Framework Agreement with Sao Tome & Principe (Central Africa) on Cooperation in Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes.

✎ CCEA Approvals -

- ✎ Approved listing 7 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE) on Stock Exchange through Initial Public Offering (IPO) /Further Public Offer (FPO) -
 - ✎ Telecommunication Consultants (India) Ltd. [TCIL] - IPO
 - ✎ RailTel Corporation India Ltd. - IPO
 - ✎ National Seed Corporation India Ltd. (NSC) - IPO
 - ✎ Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited (THDC) - IPO
 - ✎ Water & Power Consultancy Services (India) Limited [WAPCOS Ltd.] - IPO

- ✍ FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals (India) Limited [FAGMIL]- IPO

- ✍ Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited (KIOCL) – FPO

- ✍ Approved increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of "Milling Copra" to 9521 per quintal for 2019 season (Hike of INR 2000 per quintal).

- ✍ Increased export incentives granted for Onions under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) from existing 5% to 10%, to benefit farmers.

39. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Nov 01, 2018) -

- ✍ MOUs -

- ✍ Morocco - Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

- ✍ Russia - MoU for cooperation in transport education and MoC with Russian Railways for technical cooperation in railways.

- ✍ South Korea - Cooperation in Tourism.

- ✍ General Approvals -

- ✍ Approved promulgation ordinance to amend Companies Act 2013, aimed at declogging National Company Law Tribunals (NCLTs) and decriminalise minor offences by companies. It will transfer 90% of the cases to regional directors under Ministry of Corporate Affairs from NCLTs. It will retain status of all non-compoundable offences since they are serious in nature.

- ✍ Approved renaming Jharsuguda Airport in Odisha as Veer Surendra Sai Airport.

- ✍ Approved moving a Resolution in first Assembly of International Solar Alliance (ISA) for opening up ISA membership to all United Nations Member Nations. It will make ISA inclusive, where all member countries that members of UN could become members.

40. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Nov 08, 2018) -

- ✍ General Approvals -

- ✍ In-principle approval for leasing out six airports of AAI - Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram and Mangaluru for management under Public Private Partnership (PPP) through Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC).

- ✍ Apprised of India joining as Member of Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme (AMF TCP) under International Energy Agency (IEA). AMF TCP works under International Energy Agency (IEA) to which India has "Association" status since 30th March, 2017.

- ✍ Aim is to facilitate market introduction of Advanced motor fuels/ Alternate fuels with an aim to bring down emissions and achieve higher fuel efficiency in transport sector.

- ✍ Approved filling of Padur Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) at Padur (Karnataka) by overseas National Oil Companies (NOCs). The SPR facility at Padur is an underground rock cavern with a total capacity of 2.5 million metric tonnes (MMT). The filling of the SPR under PPP model is being undertaken to reduce budgetary support of Government of India.

- ✍ Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd. (ISPRL) has constructed and commissioned underground rock caverns for storage of total 5.33 MMT of crude oil at three locations namely Vishakhapatnam (1.33 MMT), Mangalore (1.5 MMT) and Padur (2.5 MMT).

- ✍ Approved setting up a Central Tribal University in Andhra Pradesh, in Relli village of Vizianagaram District. 420 crores INR Funds for first phase expenditure have been approved.

- ✍ Defence Ministry enhanced Financial Powers of Vice Chiefs of Tri-Services by Five Times, with enhanced ceiling of 500 Crores.

- ✍ MOUs -

- ✍ Morocco - Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters. Also Approved Extradition Agreement with Morocco.

- ✍ Italy - for continuing training and education in the fields of Labour and Employment.

- ✍ CCEA Approvals -

- ✍ Approved strategic disinvestment of 100% Government of India's shares in DCIL to consortium of four ports namely, Vishakhapatnam Port Trust, Paradeep Port Trust, Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Trust and Kandla Port Trust. Presently the Government of India holds 73.44% shares in Dredging Corporation of India Limited.

41. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Oct 03, 2018) -

- ✍ General Approvals -

- ✍ Approved implementation of Indore Metro Rail Project (MP), with Ring Line of length 31.55 Km, to connect major public nodes.

- ✍ Length of the Ring Line is 31.55 km, with 30 Stations on Ring Line

- ✍ Estimated cost is INR 7500 crores and it will be completed in four years.

- ✎ Approved implementation of Bhopal Metro Rail Project (MP), comprising two corridors of total length 27.87 Km - Karond Circle to AIIMS (14.99 Km) and Bhadbhada Square to Ratnagiri Tiraha (12.88 Km) -
 - ✎ Estimated cost is INR 6941 crores and project will be completed in 4 years.
- ✎ Approved 2nd Protocol amending Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with Singapore.
- ✎ Approved Redevelopment of Railway Stations by IRSDC as Nodal Agency, through simplified procedures and longer lease tenure (upto 99 years). Multiple sub leasing, simplified bid procedures Redevelopment will create smart stations that will function as mini smart cities.
- ✎ Approved establishment of National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation(NIMHR) in Sehore District (Bhopal-Sehore highway) instead of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, as decided earlier.
- ✎ MOUs -
 - ✎ Russia - Road Transport, MSME.
- ✎ CCEA Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved providing a package of 469 crores for Revival and Mill Development Plan (RMDP) of PSU NEPA Limited, in Neapanagar (Madhya Pradesh).
 - ✎ To boost farmers' income, CCEA approved increase in Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for all Rabi crops for 2018-19 to be marketed in 2019-20 season. It will give additional return to farmers of INR 62635 crores to at least 50 % return over cost of production and will aid in doubling farmers' income.
 - ✎ Increase in MSPs of wheat has been raised by 105 per quintal, safflower by 845 per quintal, barley by 30 per quintal, masur (lentil) by 225 per quintal, gram by 220 per quintal and rapeseed & mustard by 200 per quintal.

42. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Oct 10, 2018)

- ✎ General Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved closure of National Jute Manufactures Corporation Ltd. (NJMC) and its subsidiary Birds Jute & Exports Ltd. (BJEL).
 - ✎ NJMC has been incurring losses for several years and was under reference to BIFR since 1993. Its primary product was hessian jute bags used for packaging of food grain used by various State Governments.
 - ✎ Approved establishment of permanent campuses of 2 new Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISERs) at Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh) and Berhampur (Odisha). Cost is INR 3074 crores.
 - ✎ Approved merger of skills space regulatory institutions National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) and National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) into *National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)*.
 - ✎ NCVET will regulate entities engaged in vocational education and training, and establish minimum standards for their functioning.
 - ✎ Approved Productivity Linked Bonus for Railway Employees Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB) equivalent to 78 days' wages for the financial year 2017-18 for About 11.91 lakh non-gazetted Railway employees.
- ✎ MOUs -
 - ✎ Lebanon - agriculture and allied sectors.
 - ✎ Romania - Tourism.
 - ✎ Finland - Environmental Cooperation.
- ✎ CCEA Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved closure of Bienco Lawrie Limited (BLL) including giving Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to its employees.
 - ✎ BLL is a Schedule 'C' CPSE with 67.33% and 32.33% equity share held by Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) and Government of India respectively. It operates in four segments - Switchgear Manufacturing, Electrical Repair, Projects Division and Lube blending & filling facility.
 - ✎ BLL has been making losses for several years. Net worth of Company stood - 78.88 crores at end of FY 2017-18 and accumulated loss during 2017-18 were - 153.95 crores.

43. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Oct 24, 2018) -

- ✎ General Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved setting up of Indian Institute of Skills(IISs) across the country in Public Private Partnership (PPP), to augment global competitiveness of key sectors of Indian economy by providing high quality skill training and applied research education.
 - ✎ Approved appointment of Adjudicating Authority and establishment of Appellate Tribunal under Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act (PBPT) 1988. It is aimed at better administration of cases referred to Adjudicating Authority and speedy disposal of appeals filed against order of the Adjudicating Authority before Appellate Tribunal.

- Approved constitution of a High Level Steering Committee for periodically reviewing and refining the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with associated targets. It will be chaired by Chief Statistician of India and Secretary in Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI, Currently Pravin Srivastava).

- SDGs with 17 Goals and 169 Targets intend for promotion of sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.

- NIF will help in outcome-based monitoring & reporting on progress on SDGs at National level.

- Creation of 1 post of Director in basic pay of Rs. 2,25,000/- (fixed) plus NPA (under 237500) each for new AIIMS at Rae Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh), Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), Bathinda (Punjab), Guwahati (Assam), Bilaspur (Himachal Pradesh) and Deoghar (Jharkhand).

- MOUs -

- Approved signing and ratification of Extradition Treaty with Malawi (East Africa).

- MoU among BRICS Nations for Cooperation in Social and Labour Sphere, Environment.

- MoU with Singapore on constitution of a Joint Working Group (JWG) on FinTech.

- MoU between Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and Certified Professional Accountants Afghanistan (CPA Afghanistan)

- CCEA Approvals -

- Creation of special Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF), with size 7522 crores, comprising 5,266 crores to be raised by Nodal Loaning Entities (NLEs), 1316 crores beneficiaries contribution and 939 crores budgetary support from Government. NABARD, National Cooperatives Development Corporation (NCDC) and Banks shall be NLEs.

- It aims to achieve fish production of 15 million tonnes by 2020 and 20 million tonnes by 2022-23, up from current production of 11.4 million tonnes.

- Increase in supervisory visit charges for ASHA Facilitators from 250 per visit to 300 per visit for 2018-2019 to 2019- 2020. ASHA Facilitator will undertake about 20 supervisory visits per month.

- New Railway Between Bahraich and Khalilabad in Uttar Pradesh, to serve 5 districts of Uttar Pradesh including 4 aspirational districts (Bahraich, Balrampur, Shravasti and Siddharth Nagar) and Sant Kabirnagar. It will cost approx 4939 crores and will be completed by 2024-25.

44. Cabinet Approvals (Nov 22, 2018) -

- General Approvals -

- Approved setting up of Medical College at Silvassa in UT of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, with yearly intake of 150 students.

- Extended term of Commission to examine issue of Sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in Central List for six months, till 31st May 2019, as fourth extension to commission for submission for its politically crucial report on creating quotas within quotas.

- Government had constituted 5 member Commission under article 340 of Constitution in October 2017, headed by former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court Justice G. Rohini. Its report is expected to recommend earmarking sub-quotas for the extremely backward classes within the OBCs.

- Commission is formed under Article 340 of Constitution which was also used to establish landmark Mandal Commission (set up in 1979) more than two decades ago which recommended 27% reservation for socially and educationally backward classes in higher education and government jobs.

- Approved Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill 2018 for regulation and standardisation of education and services by allied and healthcare professionals. It provides for setting up of an Allied and Healthcare Council of India and corresponding State Allied and Healthcare Councils which will play role of a standard-setter and facilitator for professions of Allied and Healthcare.

- Approved development of Kartarpur Corridor from Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur district of Punjab to international border with Pakistan. Kartarpur is located in Shakargarh in Narowal district of Punjab province of Pakistan. Guru Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism and its first guru had spent over 18 years of his life here.

- MOUs -

- Tajikistan - Youth Matters

- Uzbekistan - Science, Technology and Innovation.

- MoU between Atal Innovation Mission India and Fund "Talent and Success" Russia for promotion of science & technology, strong foundation to the collaborative work through exchange of students, teachers, researchers and scientists.

- ✎ Mauritius - Consumer Protection and Legal Metrology
- ✎ CCEA Approvals -
 - ✎ Approved to expand scope of mandatory packaging norms under Jute Packaging Material (JPM) Act 1987 -
 - ✎ 100% of food grains and 20% of sugar shall be mandatorily packed in diversified jute bags.
 - ✎ Initially 10% of indents of jute bags for packing foodgrains would be placed through reverse auction on Gem portal, to gradually usher in a regime of price discovery.
 - ✎ This will give a fillip to development of jute sector, increasing quality and productivity of raw jute, diversification of jute sector and also boosting and sustaining demand for jute product.
 - ✎ Approved continuation of 9 sub-schemes of *Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)* during 2017-2020 at cost of 1450 crores. CCEA also approved establishment of National Facility for Airborne Research (NFAR) with a financial commitment of Rs 130 crore during 2020-21 and beyond.
 - ✎ It will provide improved weather, climate and ocean forecast and services, ensuring transfer of commensurate benefits to the various services.
- 45. ▶ Central Government launch Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS) scheme to promote research in Social Sciences.
 - ✎ Government support would be funding of 414 crore on 1500 projects for policy themes in the social sciences at cost of 20-25 Lakh per project.
 - ✎ 11 Thematic Areas - State and Democracy Urban transformation, Media, Culture and Society Employment, Skills and Rural transformation Governance, Innovation and Public Policy Growth, Macro-trade and Economic Policy Agriculture and Rural Development Health and Environment Science and Education Social Media and Technology Politics, Law and Economics.
 - ✎ Indian Council of Social Science and Research (ICSSR) will be the project implementing agency.
- 46. ▶ Central Ground Water Authority (Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation) notified revised guidelines for ground water extraction, to be effective from June 1, 2019.
 - ✎ One of noted features of revised guidelines is introduction of Water Conservation Fee (WCF), fee charged on extraction of ground water. It will vary betwe areas, and may progressively increase from safe to over-exploited areas and from low to high water consuming industries.
 - ✎ Mandatory water audit by industries abstracting ground water 500 m³/day or more in safe and semi-critical area and 200 m³/day or more in critical and over-exploited assessment units. Mandatory roof top rain water harvesting except for specified industries.
 - ✎ Ground water extraction in India is primarily for irrigation in agricultural activities, aprox 228 Billion Cubic Meters, which amounts to 90 % of annual ground water extraction.
- 47. ▶ Central Information Commission (CIC) brought Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) under the RTI (Right to Information) Act, after concluded that characteristics of BCCI fulfil required conditions of Section 2(h) of RTI Act.
- 48. ▶ Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP) signed MoU with US-based Research Institute for Fragrant Materials (RIFM) for improving quality of fragrant oils, during annual conference of International Fragrance Association (IFA) in Paris (France).
 - ✎ It will standardize fragrant material produced in India and bring it to an international level. It will give impetus to aroma mission of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) which aims at enhancing production of fragrant materials.
- 49. ▶ Central Railways developed an in-house robot named 'USTAAD' - 'Undergear Surveillance Through Artificial Intelligence Assisted Droid', to checks for safety in under gear parts of train coaches.
 - ✎ Also, Central Railways' Nagpur division introduced technology called Automated Train Examination System (ATES) for enhancement of train safety, developed by Konkan Railway. It eliminates mechanical examination of parts of trains, to uplift efficiency and safety
- 50. ▶ Coal India and NLC India (formerly Neyveli Lignite Corporation) will jointly set up 5000 MW of power generation capacity of which 3000 MW would be solar powered while the rest 2000 MW would be coal-fuelled.
 - ✎ Coal India has been tasked to become a net zero emission energy company by the ministry of coal, a move which requires it to generate 3,000 MW of solar power.
- 51. ▶ Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu released a report on Industrial Park Rating System, prepared by Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP). It will be a useful tool for policymakers and investors and database includes 3000 parks and all industrial parks will be rated on - Internal infrastructure, External infrastructure, Business services and facilities AND Environment and safety management.
- 52. ▶ Country's first music museum will be set up in Thiruvaiyaru, birthplace of Saint Tyagaraja, one of Trinities of Carnatic music. Other two Trinities are Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri.
- 53. ▶ Cyclonic Storm Phethai stuck Andhra Pradesh with winds upto 100 KMPH. It is 6th cyclone of 2018 North Indian Ocean Cyclone season. Previous ones being Sagar, Mekunu, Luban, Titli and Gaza.

54. ▶ Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal inaugurated long awaited Delhi's Signature Bridge, the first asymmetrical cable-stayed bridge in India, constructed at expenditure of 1518 crores. The 675-metre bridge aims to reduce travel time and traffic congestion between the north-eastern and northern parts of Delhi.
- ✎ It was first approved in 1997 after school bus fell off the narrow Wazirabad Bridge into the Yamuna, killing 22 children.
55. ▶ Delhi Govt. launched 'Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana', which will offer free travel packages for senior citizens from Delhi to five religious circuits. 1100 senior citizens from every constituency of Delhi will be able to avail this facility at one go. Total 77000 pilgrims will be able to avail this facility every year.
56. ▶ Delhi Police launched an e-learning portal 'Nipun' to impart training and provide up to date information to police officers, designed under project CLAP "The Collaborative Learning and Partnership". It will have online courses and resources on law, standing orders, investigation checklists, forms for case files, latest High Court and Supreme Court rulings.
57. ▶ Delhi government and Indian Railways launched a scheme to give free tourism package for senior citizens travelling to 5 religious circuits, named *Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Yojana*. Under it, 1100 senior citizens from all Delhi constituencies will be able to avail the offer. State government will bear expenses of 77,000 pilgrims every year.
58. ▶ Delhi government launched Chief Minister's Urban Leaders Fellowship Programme that seeks to attract young leaders across the country to work with it on addressing some of the most pressing urban challenges. Fellows will be assigned to work with ministers or senior officials and will be paid remuneration of Rs 1.25 lakh per month (75,000 per month to Associate Fellows).
59. ▶ Delhi government launched a common mobility card called 'One', with a tagline of 'One Delhi One Ride'. It would enable access to Metro and bus services with a single card at a 10 % discount. Further provision of coverage of auto-rickshaws, taxis and other modes would be inducted soon.
60. ▶ Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) announced results of first ever States' Start-up Ranking 2018 (exercise began in January 2016). On the basis of performance, States are recognised in several categories -
- ✎ Best Performer - Gujarat
 - ✎ Top Performers - Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, and Rajasthan
 - ✎ Leaders - Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana
 - ✎ Aspiring Leaders - Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal
 - ✎ Emerging States - Assam, Delhi, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand
 - ✎ Beginners - Chandigarh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Sikkim, and Tripura
61. ▶ Department of Telecom (DoT) exempted wireless devices that operate in low frequency range like bluetooth, wireless chargers, internet-of-things (IoT) products, medical devices etc. from licensing requirement. It is aimed at facilitating ease of doing business for adoption of new technologies like IoT, machine-to-machine (M2M) communications.
62. ▶ Dharmendra Pradhan (Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Skill Development and Entrepreneurship) launched SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) as an innovative initiative to make available Compressed Bio-Gas CBG in market for use in automotive fuels.
- ✎ Under it, with PSU Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) to set up CBG production plants, by 31st March, 2019.
 - ✎ Government is keen to set up 5000 CBG plants in next 5 years. Government will incur 75,000 Crore capital expenditure for setting up infrastructure for City Gas distribution network.
 - ✎ SATAT initiative promises efficient municipal solid waste management and tackling problem of polluted urban air due to farm stubble-burning and carbon emissions.
63. ▶ Doordarshan TV Channel DD Kisan launched a first-of-its-kind reality show 'Mahila Kisan Awards', To be telecast from 17th December. It will include two women farmers from across country, talking about their achievements in each episode. Judges will score these contestants based on their assessment. 5 contestants will reach finals and 1 will be declared winner.
64. ▶ Election Commission announced Schedule for General Elections to Legislative Assemblies of Chhattisgarh Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Mizoram & Telangana (To be held in November - December 2018).
65. ▶ Environment Ministry launched *Harit Diwali, Swasth Diwali* campaign, which was initiated in 2017-18, aiming to minimize bursting of crackers. This campaign is now merged with "Green Good Deed" movement, initiated as a social mobilization for protection of environment.
66. ▶ First India-Israel Innovation Centre (IIIC) entrepreneurial technology hub launched in Bengaluru (Karnataka), to forge local partnerships and joint ventures between companies from two countries.
67. ▶ First Swadesh Darshan Project in Nagaland has been inaugurated, named *Development of Tribal Circuit: Peren-Kohima-Wokha Project*. It was sanctioned by Tourism Ministry in November 2015 for INR 97 Crores. Ministry has sanctioned another project in Nagaland

“Development of Tribal circuit: Mokokchung–Tuensang-Mon” for 99.67 crores.

68. ▶ Forbes India Celebrity 100 list -

🔗 Top 5 Most Earning Celebrities - Salman Khan (1), Virat Kohli (2), Akshay Kumar (3), Deepika Padukone (4), M S Dhoni (5)

69. ▶ Foundation stone for Second Generation (2G) Ethanol Bio-refinery of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited laid at Baulasingha village in Bargarh district of Odisha.

🔗 The Bio-refinery, the first of its kind to be set up, will have a capacity to produce 3 crore litres of fuel grade Ethanol annually using Rice straw as feedstock. Ethanol produced from this plant will be blended with Petrol. The cost is around 100 Crores.

🔗 India has surplus biomass availability of about 120-160 MMT annually which if converted, has potential to yield 3000 crore litres of ethanol. National Biofuel Policy of India 2018 targets 20% Ethanol blending to Petrol by 2030. However, due to non-availability of Ethanol, current Ethanol blending in Petrol is about 3 to 4%.

🔗 Setting up of 2G Ethanol plants will help achieve target of Ethanol blending in Petrol. Bargarh Bio-Refinery will utilize about 2 lakh tonnes of Rice straw annually as feedstock which will be sourced from nearby locations.

70. ▶ General Conferences (Dec 01 - 10, 2018) -

🔗 1st India Indonesia Business forum (IIBF) was held at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

🔗 Indian Owl Festival, India's first owl fest, held at Pingori village in Pune (Maharashtra).

🔗 Conference on partnership between European Union and India for Cultural Heritage Conservation held in New Delhi.

🔗 Global Agriculture and Food Summit 2018 held in Ranchi (Jharkhand), with participation of 7 countries.

🔗 National Mission for Clean Ganga organised a two-day international workshop on 'Developing a Ganga Museum Concept: Exchanging Experiences and Ideas between India and Europe' in Delhi.

🔗 India Water Impact Summit 2018 organized by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (Ganga) in New Delhi. During this, Govt. announced sanction of 254 projects worth over 24 thousand crore rupees under National Mission for Clean Ganga.

🔗 13th edition of CII Agro Tech India 2018 held in Chandigarh.

🔗 Minister for Electronics & IT, Law & Justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad launched a National Challenge for Youths, *Ideate for India - Creative Solutions using Technology* in New Delhi. It aims to give school students across the country a platform to become solution creators for problems they see around them and their communities.

🔗 1st International Conference under aegis of National Hydrology Project (Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation) at Indian School of Business Mohali with theme '*Sustainable Water Management*'.

🔗 Conference on 'Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code – A New Paradigm for Stressed Assets' organised in New York (USA), addressed by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley through Video Conferencing.

🔗 Annual Startup India Venture Capital Summit held in Goa with theme 'Mobilizing Global Capital for Innovation in India.'

🔗 Military Literature Festival (MLF) 2018 held in Chandigarh.

🔗 Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Radha Mohan Singh laid Foundation stone of Pusa Kisan Haat in Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC) in New Delhi. It will allow farmers to sell their agricultural products, along with other farmer friendly facilities.

71. ▶ General Conferences (Dec 11 - 20, 2018) -

🔗 39th Gulf Cooperation Council Summit held in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia). Next (40th) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit will be held in UAE.

🔗 4th WHO Global Forum on Medical Devices held in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). To boost medical device sector, Govt. announced setting up of a National Medical Devices Promotion Council under Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) in Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

🔗 4th edition of Partners' Forum held in New Delhi, hosted by government of India in association with Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and child Health (PMNCH). It aims to explore findings of 12 success factors case studies which shows how the countries are working towards improvement of women's and children health.

🔗 Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (I/C), Giriraj Singh inaugurated a Multi-Disciplinary Training Centre (MTDC) of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) named Samadhan at Rajghat (New Delhi).

🔗 All India Institute of Ayurveda New Delhi organized a National conference 'AYUSHCHARYA' on Dinacharya (Daily Regimen) and Ritucharya (Seasonal Regimen) for public health promotion.

72. ▶ General Conferences (Dec 21 - 31, 2018) -

🔗 To commemorate 200th Birth Anniversary of Sikh philosopher, reformer and freedom fighter, Sri Satguru Ram Singhji, an International Seminar held in New Delhi.

- ✎ World Herbal Forest Project inaugurated as a collaboration of Patanjali and Haryana Government, at Morni Hill, near Chandigarh. It is aimed at developing a forest of medicinal plants which will provide a boost to Ayurvedic industry. About 25 different varieties of plants found in the country will be housed in this forest.
- ✎ President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Centre of Excellence Genetic Blood Disorders at Prathima Institute of Medical Sciences in Karimnagar (Telangana).
- ✎ Sahitya Kala Parishad, Department of Art, Culture and Languages (Delhi Government) organized 6th edition of Yuva Natya Samaroh at Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi.
- ✎ 15th edition Global SME Business Summit organised by Ministry of MSME and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in association with Government e-marketplace in New Delhi.
- ✎ First meeting of Follow-up Committee for implementation of the Trilateral Chabahar Agreement between India, Afghanistan and Iran held in the port city of Chabahar in Iran.
 - ✎ India Ports Global Limited Company has opened its office and took over operations at the Shaheed Behesti port at Chabahar.
- ✎ A Joint workshop between ICRC and CUNPK on “Integrated Protection on Civilians (IPOC)” in UN peacekeeping operations conducted at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi.
- ✎ International Gita Festival 2018 organised in Kurukshetra in Haryana, as 3rd edition of the event. Mauritius is partner country and Gujarat is partner state.
- ✎ 12th edition of annual Global Healthcare Summit held in Mumbai, jointly organized by American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) and Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO).
- ✎ India submitted its Sixth National Report (NR6) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), during 13th National Meeting of the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) in New Delhi.
 - ✎ Submission of national reports is a mandatory obligation on Parties to international treaties, including CBD.
 - ✎ NR6 provides an update of progress in achievement of 12 National Biodiversity Targets (NBT) developed under Convention process in line with the 20 global Aichi biodiversity targets.
- ✎ 3 state level campaign on “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao” organized in Maharashtra, Goa and Dadra & Nagar Haveli to spread awareness among people to save and educate girls.

73. ▶ General Conferences (Nov 11 - 20, 2018) -

- ✎ 1st Indo-Japan Business Council- KONNICHIIWA PUNE Festival held in Pune (Maharashtra).
- ✎ 2 day annual meeting of World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Global Future Councils held in Dubai (UAE).
- ✎ 6th Indian Social Work Congress held in New Delhi, with theme *Human Development and Social Inclusion: Imperatives for Social Work Education and Practice*.
- ✎ Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities (GITC) 2018 held in New Delhi.
- ✎ Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) hosted a conference on Global Digital Content Market (GDCM) 2018 in New Delhi.
- ✎ 2 day Global Cooling Innovation Summit Held in New Delhi -
 - ✎ During the Summit, Global Cooling Prize was launched as an international competition to incentivize development of a residential cooling technology that will have at least five times lesser climate impact than the standard Room Air Conditioning (RAC).
 - ✎ Prize is supported by Government of India and will be administered by leading research institutes including Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), Conservation X Labs, Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE) and CEPT University.
 - ✎ A winning technology could prevent up to 100 gigatons (GT) of CO₂-equivalent emissions by 2050, and put the world on a pathway to mitigate up to 0.5° C of warming by 2100.
 - ✎ Over US\$3 million will be awarded in prize money over 2 year competition. Up to 10 short-listed competing technologies will be awarded up to US\$200,000 each in intermediate prizes to support design of their innovative residential cooling technology.
 - ✎ Winning technology will be awarded at least US\$1 million to support its incubation and early-stage commercialization.
 - ✎ Risk is that There are currently 1.2 billion room air conditioning units in service around world, estimated to rise to 4.5 billion by 2050. India alone will see over 1 billion air conditioning deployed by 2050.
- ✎ 26th Conference of Central and States Statistical Organizations at Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh, with theme *Quality Assurance in Official Statistics*.
- ✎ Twitter India launched #PowerOf18 campaign aimed at encouraging youth to contribute in public debates and participate in civic engagement for 2019 general elections.

- ✎ Inaugural session of General Assembly of Network for Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific (NEDAC) held in New Delhi. NEDAC was set up in 1991 by United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).
- ✎ 8th National Conference of Women in Police held in Ranchi (Jharkhand).
- ✎ Election Commission has set up 'Sangwari' polling booths in various constituencies of Chhattisgarh to encourage women voters to vote in Assembly elections.
- ✎ Delhi government announced "Jashn-e-Virasat-e-Urdu", a festival to celebrate Urdu culture and its heritage.
- ✎ 4 day regional meeting of World Customs Organisation (WCO) held in Jaipur (Rajasthan).
- ✎ Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) organised a seminar on "International Standards and the Fourth Industrial Revolution" in New Delhi to celebrate the World Standards Day 2018 (October 14).
- ✎ India and China held 9th Annual Defence and Security Dialogue in Beijing (China), attended by Defence secretary Sanjay Mitra.
- ✎ 38th edition of India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2018 inaugurated at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi today, to last till Nov 27, 2018.

74. ▶ General Conferences (Nov 21 - 30, 2018) -

- ✎ 3rd India-Singapore Defence Minister dialogue(DMD) held in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).
- ✎ 24th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF 2018) held in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- ✎ 4th annual "Aadi Mahotsav", a National Tribal Festival organized by Ministry of Tribal Affairs in at Dilli Haat (Delhi).
- ✎ 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health will be held in Hyderabad (Telangana), with theme '*Ending the Emergency: Science, Leadership, Action*'.
- ✎ 12th World Congress on Mountain Medicine started in Kathmandu (Nepal), with theme *Mountain Medicine in the Heart of the Himalayas*.
- ✎ 2nd India-UAE Strategic Conclave held in Abu Dhabi (UAE).
- ✎ Government decided to set up domestic Gold council in India to promote the growth of the sector and boost exports of jewellery. It was announced during 2nd India Gold and Jewellery Summit in New Delhi.
- ✎ PM Narendra Modi laid Foundation Stones of City Gas Distribution (CGD) Projects in 65 Geographical Areas (GAs) in 129 Districts under 9th CGD Bidding Round, awarded by Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB).
- ✎ 1st offshore wind investment conference held in New Delhi, During which European Investment Bank (EIB) and State Bank of India (SBI) agreed to cooperate on financing renewable energy and wind energy projects across India. EIB also approved a new line of credit worth USD 100 million to Yes Bank to boost private investment in clean energy projects.
- ✎ Uttar Pradesh Government launched Women Empowerment Resolution Campaign to develop leadership capacities in women and make them vocal for their rights.
- ✎ National Festival for Children of Child Care Institutions (CCIs)- "Hausla 2018" of Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) was held in New Delhi. Theme for event is "Child Safety".
- ✎ Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu launched logo and brochure of Logix India 2019 in New Delhi, Major Logistics sector event scheduled to take place in New Delhi from 31st January to 2nd February 2019.
- ✎ South Asia Regional Youth Peace Conference held in New Delhi, organized by Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti (GSDS) to mark beginning of celebration of 150th birth anniversary of M K Gandhi.
- ✎ 2nd International Ambedkar Conclave held in New Delhi as part of commemoration of Constitution Day.
 - ✎ Dr Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC) and Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi signed MoU to enhance research activities and policy formulation aimed at Socio-economic Transformation and Sustainable Development.
- ✎ Bihar CM Nitish Kumar unveiled 70-feet tall statue of Lord Buddha at Rajgir in Nalanda district of state, as 2nd tallest statue of Buddha in India.
- ✎ 7th 'International Tourism Mart' was held in Agartala (capital of Tripura), with theme *Adventure Tourism*.

75. ▶ General Conferences (Oct 1-10, 2018) -

- ✎ Workshop on 'Best Practices in International Arbitration' held in New Delhi by NITI Aayog in collaboration with ICC International Court of Arbitration.
- ✎ 2-day First ever Regional Conference on 'Women in Detention and Access to Justice' held at Shimla (Himachal Pradesh), by Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).
- ✎ First Uttarakhand Investors Summit held in Dehradun, attracting investments over 125000 Crores.
- ✎ Exhibition "Revisiting Gandhi: The Art of Shelly Jyoti" held at IGNCA (New Delhi).

- 🔗 *India Chem 2018*, 10th Biennial International Exhibition & Conference held in Mumbai, as largest event of Chemicals and Petrochemical Industry in India.
- 🔗 PM Narendra Modi has unveiled a 64-foot-tall statue of peasant leader Sir Chhotu Ram at his native village Sampla in Rohtak district of Haryana, sculpted by renowned sculptor and Padma Bhushan-recipient Ram Vanji Sutar.
- 🔗 International Conference on Technological Advancements in Railway and Metro Projects (IC-TRAM 2018) held in New Delhi.
- 🔗 Women Health for Women Empowerment Conference held in Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh).
- 🔗 Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference of India Region held in Guwahati (Assam).
- 🔗 14th Hospitality India and Explore the World Annual International Travel Awards 2018 held in New Delhi. Nepal won tourism award. Also, Chandragiri Hills Limited of Nepal got the best tourism destination of Nepal award in hospitality and tourism sector.
- 🔗 Actor Ruhaan Rajput received the Mid-day Young Achiever Icons Award for 2018 recently in Mumbai, in film and television category for his work in industry in short time.

76. ▶ General Conferences (Oct 11-20, 2018) -

- 🔗 6th UAE-India High-Level Joint Task Force meeting held in Mumbai. During this, Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu announced setting up of a special UAE desk to facilitate investments and resolve any business issues between two nations.
- 🔗 8th European Congress on SMEs held in Katowice, Poland, with theme *Science- Business-Self Government TOGETHER FOR ECONOMY*.
- 🔗 Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi unfurled India's highest tricolour on the terrace of the majestic Haj House in Mumbai. It measured 20×30 feet and stood 350 feet.
- 🔗 46th world's largest IHGF-Delhi Fair held at India Expo Centre & Mart at Greater Noida (UP). It has played a vital role in increasing exports of handicrafts from country and has special importance for handicrafts sector.
- 🔗 Turkey will host a summit for Turkey, France, Germany and Russia in Istanbul, to discuss conflict in Syria and efforts for a lasting solution to end war in Syria.
- 🔗 Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare has released 12th Analytical Report of the National Health Profile 2018, prepared by Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI) since 2005.
- 🔗 inaugural 'Workshop on Best Practices in International Arbitration' organised by NITI Aayog and ICC International Court of Arbitration in New Delhi.
- 🔗 6th Interregional Ministerial Meeting of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) held in Singapore. C. R. Chaudhary (*Minister of State (MoS) for Commerce & Industry and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution*) Visited On India's Behalf.
- 🔗 India and Japan held their 2nd edition of 'Japan-India Act East Forum' in New Delhi.
- 🔗 Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Harsh Vardhan Launched air quality early warning system for Delhi.
- 🔗 6th India International Silk Fair (IISF) HELD in New Delhi. India is 2nd largest producer of silk in world, providing gainful employment to around 8 million artisans and weavers in rural areas.

77. ▶ General Conferences (Oct 21 - 31, 2018) -

- 🔗 4th World Congress on Disaster Management (WCDM-2019) will be organised in Mumbai in January - February 2019, to be organised jointly by Government of Maharashtra, Disaster Management Initiatives and Convergence Society (DMICS), IIT Bombay & TISS Mumbai. WCDM 2019 will be largest assembly on disaster management outside UN system.
- 🔗 5th National Summit on "Good & Replicable Practices & Innovations in Public Health Care Systems in India" held at Kaziranga (Assam).
- 🔗 10th Edition of BIOFACH INDIA, the largest show on the "Organic Sector" in India, held at Pragati Maidan (New Delhi), with theme *Enhancing export of organic products trade from India – strategies and synergies*.
- 🔗 6th North East festival and 15th edition of Indian International Centre festival organized in New Delhi.
- 🔗 20th Water, Energy, Technology, and Environment Exhibition (WETEX) 2018 held at Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, in Dubai (UAE).
- 🔗 5th Edition of 'Women of India National Organic Festival' held in New Delhi.
- 🔗 *Krishi Kumbh 2018* held in Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), to pave way for new technology to be imbibed and better opportunities to be created in the agriculture sector.
- 🔗 36th Indian Carpets Expo held at Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), to augment efforts of the handicrafts and small and medium industries.
- 🔗 3-day Sagar Discourse 2 conference held in Panaji (Goa), organized by Forum for Integrated National Security.
- 🔗 Conclave on Capital Goods for Steel Sector, manufacture in India, organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Bhubaneswar (Odisha). 38 pacts worth \$5 billion were signed among 20 technology providers, to boost manufacturing of capital goods for iron and steel industry.

- ✎ Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali campaign aimed to reduce adverse environmental conditions after Diwali celebrations due to excessive bursting of crackers. It is merged with “Green Good Deed” movement that has been initiated as social mobilization for conservation and protection of environment.
- ✎ First trilateral meeting among India, Afghanistan and Iran of Coordination Council of Chabahar Agreement took place in Tehran (Iran). Indian delegation was led by Secretary (Economic Relations) TS Tirumurti.
- ✎ President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated International Arya Mahasammelan 2018 in Delhi.
- ✎ NITI Aayog organized 4th NITI Lecture Series at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, with theme *AI for ALL: Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Inclusive Growth*.
- ✎ Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation organised a seminar on Gandhian thoughts and Swachhta to make India a Swachh Bharat by 2019 - 150 the birthday celebration of M K Gandhi.
- ✎ 2nd Guwahati International Film Festival (GIFF 2018) began in Assam, with theme ‘*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*’ Focus region of GIFF 2018 is the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region.
- ✎ *Childrens Film Bonanza* concluded at Naharlagun (Arunachal Pradesh), organized by Children’s Film Society of India (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting).

78. ▶ General Conferences (Nov 1 - 10, 2018) -

- ✎ Ayodhya Deepotsav 2018, an event organised to mark Diwali celebrations in Ayodhya town - has entered Guinness Book of World Records. On this occasion, over 3 lakh clay lamps were illuminated at Ram Ki Paidi on Chhoti Diwali as part of Deepotsava.
- ✎ Indo-French Conclave held in Nagpur (Maharashtra), in which French and Indian firms signed 12 agreements worth 200 million euro.
- ✎ Seminar on ‘Emerging Trends in Aviation Engineering and Logistics’ (AVIAMAT-2018) concluded at Air Force Auditorium in New Delhi.
- ✎ Indian Air Force has organised a two day seminar on ‘Emerging Trends in Aviation Engineering and Logistics’ (AVIAMAT-2018) at Air Force Auditorium, Subroto Park, New Delhi.
- ✎ First Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health held at WHO Headquarters in Geneva (Switzerland).
- ✎ Preparatory meeting of *Shanghai Cooperation Organization Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search & Rescue- 2019* held in new Delhi. Main exercise is scheduled for February 2019 in Delhi.
- ✎ 2 day Gyan Kumbh held at Patanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar (Uttarakhand).
- ✎ India-UAE Partnership Summit (UPS) 2018 was held in Dubai (UAE). It aimed to identify the investment areas, projects, funding needs and helped to raise investments to funds vital infrastructure projects.
- ✎ 1st ‘Annual Senior Care Conclave – Igniting Industry for India’s Ageing Sector’ held at the Indian Habitat Centre in New Delhi.
- ✎ 13th Indo-Myanmar Regional Border Committee Meet concluded at Mantripukhari Garrison in north Imphal (Manipur).

79. ▶ Gogha- Dahej Ro-Pax Ferry service inaugurated in Gujarat, under Sagarmala programme of Ministry of Shipping.








- ✎ In a successful trial run, 12 loaded trucks were transported by Ro- Pax ferry from Dahej to Gogha across the Gulf of Cambay, via sea route.
- ✎ Land route is a 294 km or 8 hour drive, while Ro-Pax service reduces this to just 31 km through sea route by crossing Gulf in Cambay, taking just 1.5 hours.
- ✎ This is an important development for diamond and textiles traders & workers in Surat to travel via coastal shipping and save the travel time by almost half.
- ✎ Fully operational Ro Pax service with carrying capacity of 100 vehicles and 500 passengers is now opened
- ✎ Total cost of project is estimated to be 615 Crores, of which 117 Crore is funded by Central Government under Sagarmala programme.



✎ Pictorial Representation -

80. ▶ Government Launched *Digital Sky* platform, for managing flying of Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (known as drones) across Country.

- ✍ In August 2018, Govt released Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) to enable safe flying of RPAS in India.
 - ✍ Digital Sky Platform will implement 'no permission, no take-off' (NPNT) system of software-based self-enforcement to minimize deviations from CAR.
 - ✍ Nano drones in India can start flying legally from Dec 1, 2018. For micro and above categories, operators and pilots are required to register on Digital Sky Portal.
 - ✍ Payments for Unmanned Aerial Operator's Permit (UAOP) and Unique Identification Numbers (UIN) will be accepted through the Bharat Kosh (bharatkosh.gov.in) portal.
 - ✍ Flying in 'green zones' will require only intimation of time and location of flights. Permissions will be required for flying in 'yellow zones' and flights will not be allowed in the 'red zones'. Location of zones will be announced soon.
81. ▶ Government allowed foreign tourists to visit Andaman and Nicobar Islands without any restrictions, overpowering its earlier order that made it mandatory for foreign tourists to register with Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) within 24 hours of their arrival. However, citizens of Afghanistan, China and Pakistan will require Restricted Area Permit (RAP) to visit.
 82. ▶ Government announced recipients of Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony for 2014, 2015 & 2016 -
 - ✍ 2014 - Manipuri dancer Rajkumar Singhajit Singh
 - ✍ 2015 - Chhayanaut (a cultural organization of Bangladesh)
 - ✍ 2016 - Ram Vanji Sutar (Noted sculptor).
 - ✍ Tagore Award -
 - ✍ First Tagore Award was conferred on Noted Sitar Maestro Pt. Ravi Shankar, in 2012. 2nd was conferred on Shri Zubin Mehta in 2013. It carries an amount of Rs. 1 crore, a citation in a scroll, a plaque as well as an exquisite traditional handicraft item.
 83. ▶ Government approved 3 proposals under Nirbhaya Fund including setting up of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs). It was proposal forwarded by Department of Justice under Ministry of Law and Justice) to dispose off pending cases of rape and POCSO Act across country. It will have total financial outlay of Rs 767.25 crores.
 84. ▶ Government included Gangotri and Yamunotri in Uttrakhand, Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh and Parasnath in Jharkhand under Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASAD), meant to develop pilgrimage and heritage destinations in country. Number of sites under PRASAD has now reached to 41 in 25 states.
 85. ▶ Government launched Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskaar annual awards to recognise exemplary work done in field of disaster management. 3 institutions and individuals will be given the award annually with cash rewards between 5 - 51 lakh. For 2019, award would be announced on January 23, birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
 86. ▶ Government launched an air pollution prediction system for Delhi, making it easier to alert general public about air quality 48 hours in advance. It is called *Air Quality Early Warning System*.
 87. ▶ Government launched initiative called Bhasha Sangam to introduce school students to 22 Indian languages, as part of *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat* programme. It will continue till December 21, 2018.
 88. ▶ Government notified Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules 2018, allowing phone calls and internet on flights and ship voyage within India's territory. Airlines and shipping companies operating in India can provide in-flight and maritime voice and data services by partnering with an Indian telecom company, using satellites.
 - ✍ Both domestic and foreign satellites can be used for providing IFMC (in-flight and maritime connectivity) services by a telco after permission of Department of Space.
 - ✍ The in-flight and maritime connectivity services will only be activated once aircraft reaches a minimum height of 3,000m in Indian airspace. Objective is to avoid any interference with terrestrial mobile networks.
 - ✍ Licences for IFMC will be granted for an annual fee of Rs. 1 for a period of 10 years.
 89. ▶ Government observed Vigilance Awareness Week from 29th Oct-3rd Nov 2018, with 2018 Theme *Eradicate Corruption-Build a New India*.
 90. ▶ Government renamed Ross Island, Neil Island and Havelock Island in Andaman and Nicobar as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island, Shaheed Dweep and Swaraj Dweep respectively.
 91. ▶ Government will build a stadium of international standard for differently-abled persons in Meghalaya, expected to be completed by 2022, at an estimated cost of over 200 crores.
 - ✍ Meghalaya Govt also launched flagship scheme "Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries", to enable self-sufficiency in fish production.
 92. ▶ Government will introduce a bill in Winter Session in December 2018, to speed up inter-state river water dispute resolution among states and manage affairs of 13 river basins across country. Named River Basin Management Bill 2018, it will replace River Board Act 1956 which is only advisory in nature.

-  Authorities will be set up for river basins of Ganga, Indus, Godavari, Mahanadi, Mahi, Narmada, Pennar, Cauvery, Krishna, Tapi, Subarnrekha, Brahmani-Baitarini and Brahamaputra- Barak-inter-state rivers of north-east.
93. ▶ Government will set up first-of-its-kind institute of Inter-Faith Studies in Punjab to promote brotherhood and diversity, as part of year-long activities to commemorate 550th birth anniversary of first Sikh Guru and founder of Sikh religion Guru Nanak Dev Ji.
-  Government constituted National Implementation Committee (NIC) under Chairmanship of Home Minister Rajnath Singh to commemorate 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak.
94. ▶ Government's think tank NITI Aayog signed agreement with Microsoft India to deploy artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to address challenges in agriculture and healthcare and promote adoption of local languages. This will help NITI Aayog to move beyond pilots and understand how to scale AI implementation in sectors characterized by preponderance of public goods.
95. ▶ Govt. laid foundation stone for proposed Museum on Prime Ministers of India at Teen Murti Estate in New Delhi.
-  Teen Murti Estate has a total area of 25.50 acres out of which, Nehru Memorial Museum Building occupies around 2 acres only. Government decided to set up *Museum on Prime Ministers of India* in remaining area of Teen Murti Estate.
96. ▶ Govt. launched upgraded version of AirSewa 2.0 web portal and mobile app, for superior user experience with enhanced functionalities. Improvements include secure sign-up with social media, support chatbot, improved grievance management and detailed flight schedule.
-  Ministry of Civil Aviation launched AirSewa portal and app, to address passengers issues like flight delays, problem in refunds, long queues, inadequate facilities at airports and complaints of lost baggage.
97. ▶ Green Climate Fund (GCF) has approved US \$43.4 million for enhancing climate resilience for millions of people living in India's coastal communities. This project will focus on selected vulnerable areas of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha states. It will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions – over 3.5 million tonnes of CO₂ will be absorbed through restored ecosystems.
-  It is part of Green Climate Fund (GCF)'s recently approved over \$1 billion new investments for 19 new projects to help developing countries tackle climate change, during a meeting in Manama (Bahrain).
98. ▶ Gujarat Forest Department started vaccination of lions in Gir sanctuary to protect them from a deadly canine distemper virus (CDV) and protozoa infections, The virus blamed for death of as many as 23 lions in Gujarat's Gir sanctuary in less than month.
-  Asiatic lions are believed to have split from African Lions 100,000 years ago. Gir sanctuary is the only wild population of Asiatic lions in world, having over 523 Asiatic Lions.
99. ▶ Gujarat government launched a Rs 351-crore project for conservation of the Gir lions, after Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) outbreak that claimed 23 Asiatic lions in Gir National park in Saurashtra. It will also include an emergency ambulance van similar to 108 emergency services.
100. ▶ HDFC ERGO General Insurance has set up a remote sensing lab for crop insurance, to help in early detection of information and alert the farmers. The lab will work accurately for assessing the risks of the insurers and will also be able to give early warnings about the losses.
101. ▶ HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar launched Ministry of Human Resource Development's Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) Program. Innovation cell is established at AICTE to systematically foster culture of Innovation in all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across country. Purpose is to encourage young students by exposing them to new ideas and processes resulting in innovative activities in their formative years.
102. ▶ Haryana Government introduced *Pashu Sanjeevni Sewa* scheme to provide free of cost health care services to livestock in the state through mobile veterinary clinics. Livestock farmers would be able to avail service 24×7 after giving a call on toll free No.1962.
103. ▶ Haryana Government launched a mobile app named as 'Shiksha Setu', aiming to help students and bring transparency in Education administration. It will contain information about attendance, fee, online admission and scholarships in all the Haryana government colleges.
104. ▶ Haryana Government launched an anti-terrorist force (ATF) 'Kavach, to deal with security challenges. For this, Haryana police recruits will be trained by National Security Guard (NSG).
105. ▶ Himachal Pradesh government approved implementing Sashakt Mahila Yojna in state with a vision to empower rural women by providing them an interface for organization and socio-economic development.
106. ▶ Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for Himachal Pradesh, making Himachal Pradesh first state to launch pan-India single emergency number '112' under ERSS. The single emergency services number (112) will connect to Police, Fire, Health and other helplines through an Emergency Response Centre in State, obviating need to remember multiple helpline numbers.
107. ▶ Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar announced Swachh Campus rankings -
-  Cleanest Government universities -
-  Maharashi Dayanand University, Haryana
- Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar, Punjab

Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), New Delhi

 Cleanest residential campus of private universities - Symbiosis International University, Pune

 Cleanest non-residential campus of private universities - IITM University, Raipur




 Cleanest technical institutions -

 Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in Coimbatore









 IIT Guwahati

 Siksha 'O' Anusandhan University in Bhubhaneshwar

 IIIT Delhi.

108. ▶ Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar launched web portal of Scheme *Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)*, at url www.sparc.iitkgp.ac.in.
-  SPARC scheme aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in world. Under this, 600 joint research proposals will be awarded for 2 years.
-  Government in August 2018 had sanctioned SPARC scheme at total cost of 418 Crores for implementation up to 31-3-2020 and Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur is the National Coordinating Institute to implement it.
109. ▶ IIM Calcutta Innovation Park and Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) signed MoU for energising start-up ecosystem in East and Northeast India. It will offer platform for market linkage for start-ups and promote their products especially from northeastern region which need greater attention.
110. ▶ IIT Kharagpur Researchers have devised decision support system (DCS) to help maximise LPG connections in BPL (below poverty line) households under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, as first such analysis of national level energy policy. Its a computer program that helps in making sound rational decisions using mathematical programming and operation research techniques.
111. ▶ IIT-Kharagpur named national coordinating institute of Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) under Ministry of Human Resource Development.
112. ▶ IIT-Madras will collaborate with Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA) to enhance data-driven governance, by supporting State government on various data science and ICT-related challenges.
113. ▶ INS Cuddalore, a Pondicherry-class vessel that was decommissioned in March 2018, will be sent to the seabed at a depth of 26m about 7km off Puducherry coast to create India's first underwater museum.
114. ▶ IRCTC launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered chatbot *Ask Disha*, aimed at facilitating accessibility by answering users' queries pertaining to various services offered to railway passengers.
115. ▶ IT Industry Body National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) partnered with IIT-Madras to provide re-skilling/upskilling of four million people on digital skills.
116. ▶ India Meteorological Department (IMD) developed technology called 'Impact Based Forecasting Approach' to assess rise of water level in rivers and reservoirs by rain. It can generate scenario to help take decisions to release water or not from reservoirs after heavy downpour.
117. ▶ India' first private sector unit for manufacturing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) opened at Adani Aerospace Park in Hyderabad, Built by Adani Group and Israel-based Elbit Systems. iT will develop Hermes 900 medium altitude long-endurance UAVs.
118. ▶ India's WAPCOS and Austria based Doppelmayr signed MOU for providing end-to-end solutions for passenger ropeway projects. Doppelmayr are world's largest ropeway manufacturers with cutting-edge ropeway technologies.
119. ▶ IndiaSkills 2018, 2nd edition of India's biggest skill competition held at Aerocity Ground in New Delhi. some of awardees in 46 trades will participate in 45th WorldSkills Competition at Kazan (Russia) in 2019.
120. ▶ Indian Ports Association (IPA) launched a new Port Community System 'PCS 1x', as a cloud based new generation technology, with user-friendly interface to increase ease of doing business. URL for portal is www.indianpcs.gov.in. Various Services offered by PCS1x platform will reduce up to 2 days in a life of transaction.
121. ▶ Indian Railways announced elimination of all Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLCs) on Broad Gauge. There were 3479 Unmanned Level Crossings on Broad Gauge routes of which, 3402 UMLCs have been eliminated in last 7 months. 12 Zonal Railways have been freed from UMLC on Broad Gauge route.
122. ▶ Indian Railways unveiled 'eDrishti' software that will help Railways keep track of punctuality of trains and earnings etc. It has been developed by Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS).
123. ▶ Indian Railways will build India's first vertical-lift bridge to connect Rameswaram to mainland India, allowing ships to pass without any hindrance. It would replace 104-year-old Pamban bridge, to be ready by 2023.
-  New Vertical Bridge will have a 63-metre stretch which will lift up while remaining parallel to the deck to allow access to the ships.

 Pamban Bridge was first sea bridge of India and was the longest sea bridge in India until the Bandra-Worli Sea Link was opened in 2010.


124. ▶ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) signed MoU with Central University of Jammu (CUJ) for setting up Satish Dhawan Center for Space Science in University. Another MoU was signed between CUJ and Central Scientific Instruments Organization (CSIR-CSIO), To create awareness about space research and to motivate young minds to take up research related to space.
125. ▶ Indian postal services honoured Udaipur-based non-profit organisation Narayan Seva Sansthan, by launching their rs 5 postal stamps.
126. ▶ India's first National Environment Survey (NES) will begin in January 2019 to map environment data of 55 districts across 24 states and 3 UTs. The earliest first set of complete green data from this survey will be available in 2020.
-  It will be carried out by MoEFCC through Environmental Information System (ENVIS). It will be done through grid-based approach, using grids measuring 9×9 km to collect comprehensive data on various environmental parameters.
-  Green data from this survey will provide important tool in hands of policy-makers for decision making at all levels – district, state and national. skilled manpower required for survey will be provided from persons skilled and trained under MoEFCC's Green Skill Development Programme.
127. ▶ India's first gallery on robotic dinosaurs was opened to the public at the Pushpa Gujral Science City, in Kapurthala (Punjab).
128. ▶ India's first international indigenous film festival will be held in February 2019 in Odisha, as an initiative of activist film collective 'Video Republic'.
129. ▶ India's first specialized hospital for elephants was formally opened Churmura village in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh, promoted by Wildlife SOS which had established first elephant conservation and care centre in 2010. It is designed to treat injured, sick or geriatric elephants.
130. ▶ India's longest river bridge with total length of 19.3 kilometers will be built on Brahmaputra river in Assam, connecting Dhubri (Assam) to Fulbarani (Meghalaya). At present, India's largest river bridge is Dhola-Sadia bridge, its length is 9.15 kilometers. It will be completed by 2026-27 and will be public-funded work, with loan from Japanese Finance Agency (JICA).
131. ▶ Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has set sail a container cargo belonging to food and beverage giant PepsiCo (India) from Kolkata to Varanasi on river Ganga (National Waterway-1). It is India's first container movement on inland vessel post-independence.
132. ▶ Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) will start a new Roll on-Roll off (Ro-Ro) facility in collaboration with Assam Government to provide much-needed connectivity for Majuli Island. It will cut down circuitous road route of 423 KMs that trucks take from Neamati to Majuli Island via Tezpur Road Bridge, by limiting distance to only 12.7 KM.
-  Majuli is one of the biggest riverine islands in the world located on river Brahmaputra and faces serious challenges of connectivity. It has 144 villages with a population of over 1,50,000. Currently, there are only four road bridges across river Brahmaputra - at Jogighopa, Guwahati, Tezpur and Sadiya for connectivity between southern and northern parts of Assam.
-  Earlier, IWAI started a similar Ro-Ro service between Dhubri and Hatsingimari which reduced the travel distance by 190 KMs.
133. ▶ Insolvency Law Committee (ILC) submitted its 2nd Report on Cross Border Insolvency to Arun Jaitley, which was constituted by Ministry of Corporate Affairs to recommend amendments to Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India 2016,
-  ILC recommended adoption of UNCITRAL Model Law of Cross Border Insolvency 1997, for it provides for a comprehensive framework to deal with cross border insolvency issues.
-  UNCITRAL Model Law has till now been adopted in 44 countries and forms part of international best practices in dealing with cross border insolvency issues. The model law gives precedence to domestic proceedings and protection of public interest.
134. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik dissolved State Assembly with immediate effect, after both rival alliances put their claim to form government.
135. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir assembly passed law to ban sexual extortion of woman in offices and became first Indian state to amend law on Sextortion.
-  New law amended section 154, 161 and schedule of Criminal Procedure Code and Section 53 of Evidence Act to bring Sextortion as a similar offence prescribed under RPC. New Section E has been added to Section 354 of Ranbir Penal Code that makes sexual harassment a criminal offence with 3 years of imprisonment.
-  Ranbir Penal Code - Indian Penal code is not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir and in place of IPC, a similar criminal law Ranbir Penal Code applies in . It was introduced by Ranbir Singh during Dogra Dynasty and it came in effect from 1932. Provision of code was prepared by Thomas Babington Macaulay.
136. ▶ Karnataka Government launched Samruddhi, 800-crore entrepreneurship and skill development scheme, for economically and socially underprivileged youth of small towns. It aims to train youth from SC and ST communities through private organisations in retail management and franchise opportunities.















137. ▶ Karnataka Government unveiled 'Unnati Scheme' to help entrepreneurs from SC/ST Communities. Under it, State Govt. will invest up to Rs 20 crore to create end-to-end support infrastructure for startups and entrepreneurs from a marginalised background.
138. ▶ Kerala Govt. launched 'Cow Samridhi Plus Scheme' to provide insurance coverage to dairy farmers in the state. Farmers belonging to general category will be getting 50% subsidy on premiums while those belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) category would get 70% subsidy on the premium.
139. ▶ Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE) rolled out– KOOL, its Online Open Learning training platform, to train teachers, students and general public. KOOL has been designed in a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) model.
140. ▶ Kerala became first state to have 4 international airports, with inauguration of Kannur airport. other three international airports are AT Trivandrum, Cochin and Calicut.
141. ▶ Kerala government commenced a scheme to offer free education and vocational training to the children of fishermen who died or went missing in 2017 Ockhi cyclonic storm.
142. ▶ Kingdom of Netherlands will be Partner Country in 25th DST – CII Technology Summit to be organized in 2019.
143. ▶ Lonar Lake, an ancient circular lake created by a meteorite strike, in Maharashtra and St. Mary's Island, a hexagonal mosaic of basaltic rocks in an island off Udupi will be made global geoparks by Geological Survey of India (GSI).
 - ▶ St. Mary's Island which was declared a national geo-heritage site in 1975 is estimated to be an 88-million-year-old.
 - ▶ Lonar crater became a geo-heritage site in 1979. It is around 50,000 years old.
144. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Government announced creation of Niwari as its 52nd district, carved out of Tikamgarh district. It will include tehsils of *Niwari, Orchha and Prithvipur*.
145. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government declared Kuno wildlife sanctuary as a national park, in compliance with condition imposed by Supreme Court for 'translocation of Asiatic lions from Gir in Gujarat.'
146. ▶ Madras High Court banned online drug sale in Tamilnadu. It said the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 was enacted during the colonial era and much before advent of online trade. There is no provision in it that permits the online sale of drugs and medicines.
147. ▶ Maharashtra Government launched World Bank assisted State of Maharashtra's Agribusiness and Rural Transformation (SMART) Project to transform rural Maharashtra. SMART Project aims to create and support value chains in post-harvest segments of agriculture, facilitate agribusiness investment, stimulate SMEs within value chain. It will be implemented in 10,000 villages of state.
148. ▶ Maharashtra Govt. launched 'Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Schools' for students in rural areas.
149. ▶ Maharashtra government allowed citizens to inspect records in district-level offices and local bodies throughout state under Right To Information (RTI) for 2 hours every Monday (3 pm to 5 pm). It aims to bring transparency in functioning of government and reduce RTI applications. People can directly go to the offices and inspect the records.
150. ▶ Maharashtra government approved hyperloop project between Pune and Mumbai as a public infrastructure project. This Fresh approval will ensure more competition and easier land acquisition for this ultra-high speed project, which aims to bring travel time between Pune and Mumbai down to 25 minutes.
 - ▶ Bidding will be held under 'Swiss challenge' method, which allows the government to invite global firms to bid for the project and challenge original proponents of endeavour, Virgin Hyperloop One.
151. ▶ Maharashtra launched website and app Maha madat to analyze drought situation, to help in accurate analysis of drought-like situation in villages of state. Drought can be declared if a region does not receive rain for a span of 21 days.
152. ▶ Maharashtra legislative assembly passed Maratha Reservation Bill, approving 16 % reservation for Maratha community in education and jobs in state. Bill will now be sent to the state's upper house, legislative council (Vidhan Parishad). State legislature will create a new category called SEBC (socially and educationally backward class) in order to give reservation to Marathas.
153. ▶ Mammals of India (MaOI) model of repository on Indian mammals, by National Centers for Biological Sciences (NCBS) Bangalore -
 - ▶ It is a first of its kind repository of Mammals in India, as an online portal that aim is to develop individual pages for all Indian mammals covering all related information.
 - ▶ The website *mammalsofindia.org* provides facility for common citizen to upload photographic observations about mammals.
 - ▶ MaOI is an initiative under Biodiversity Atlas project (a species-based bioinformatics platform).
 - ▶ There are about 426 species of mammals known from India, which is about 8.86% of the world species.
154. ▶ Meghalaya Government announced 378 crores INR investment in 2nd phase of State's flagship aquaculture mission aimed at cutting down fish imports into hill State. Mission named Aqua Mission 2.0 was announced at 5th state aqua festival held in Shillong at U Soso Tham auditorium premises.
155. ▶ Meghalaya Govt. launched Meghalaya Health Insurance Scheme(MHIS-IV) in convergence with that of Centre's Ayushman Bharat scheme. It targets to cover over 8 lakh households offering over 2300 medical and surgical packages and up to Rs 5 lakh per family,

functional from February 2019. It covers all citizens in state while Ayushman Bharat(Centre's Scheme) targets bottom 40 % of lower income families.

156. ▶ Minister for Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated the first Mega Food Park in Gujarat, located at Village Shah and Vasravi, Taluka Mangrol, District Surat. State's 2nd mega food park is sanctioned in Mehsana.
157. ▶ Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, Environment and Forests & Climate Change, Harsh Vardhan inaugurated newly constructed International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCOocean) Complex in the INCOIS (Hyderabad).
 - ▶ UNESCO Category 2 Centre established as a training facility at INCOIS will give an opportunity to Nations bordering Indian Ocean and small island nations in Pacific to benefit from expertise of INCOIS in areas of ocean science and management.
 - ▶ UNESCO approved offer of Government of India to establish ITCOocean as a UNESCO Category 2 Centre in November 2017, Aimed at assist Member Nations of IOC/UNESCO in areas of ocean science and management.
158. ▶ Minister of Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu released the policy on biometric based digital processing of passengers at airports called "Digi Yatra".
 - ▶ It aims to develop standards for digital processing of passengers at airport to ensure uniform implementation and passenger experience across airports. DigiYatra Central Platform will be operational by February 2019, starting from Bangalore & Hyderabad Airports.
159. ▶ Minister of State (IC) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Jitendra Singh laid foundation stone of new Science Centre, the "Technology Facility Centre" (TFC) in Jorhat (Assam), in premises of CSIR-North East Institute of Science & Technology (NERIST).
160. ▶ Minister of State (IC) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Jitendra Singh launched iGOT (Integrated Government Online Training Programme) developed by Department of Personnel and Training (Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions). It will augment existing training mechanism with online module-based training coupled with certification. This will make training inputs available to government servant on site and on flexitime basis.
161. ▶ Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Statistics & Programme Implementation, Vijay Goel, inaugurated Online Assurances Monitoring System (OAMS), To create transparency in assurance process in Parliamentary affairs.
162. ▶ Minister of State for Power and Renewable Energy RK Singh launched award scheme under Saubhagya Scheme (known as Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana). It will felicitate the power distribution companies (DISCOMs) for achieving 100 % household electrification. There will be two quantum of award -
 - ▶ Under first quantum of award, 1st DISCOM / Power Department that achieves 100 % household electrification by end of November 2018 would be provided cash award of Rs 50 Lakh.
 - ▶ 2nd quantum of award includes cash award of Rs 100 crore as grant to concerned DISCOM to be spent in distribution infrastructure development in their area of operation.
163. ▶ Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare will launch new index to rank states on 'ease of doing agri-business', to incentivise states for various reform measures undertaken by them. It will broadly rank states on six major reform parameters related to the farming sector and have a total score of 100. These six parameters include -
 - ▶ Marketing reforms (weightage of 25)
 - ▶ Reducing cost of inputs (20)
 - ▶ Governance and land reforms (20)
 - ▶ Risk mitigation (15)
 - ▶ Increasing production and productivity (10)
 - ▶ Investment in agriculture (10)
164. ▶ Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and World Bank jointly released report on Strengthening Forest Fire Management in Country. It provides recommendations on five broad themes – policy, institutions and capacity, technology, community engagement and data and information.
 - ▶ People are main driver of fires in India and forest fires are distributed close to people and infrastructure. But over longer term, shifts in climate caused by anthropogenic global warming may further alter India's forest landscape and fire regime.
 - ▶ India's monsoons are largely responsible for seasonal nature of forest fires in country. Forest fires peak during dry months of March or April before arrival of monsoon.
 - ▶ Forest fires in Northeast are concentrated in smaller area that is subject to repeat burning. Peak fire season is most concentrated (shortest) in Northeast and Northern state of Bihar. Fires in other regions, particularly districts in Central and Southern India are more expansive.
 - ▶ According to National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), fires affecting forests have significant ecological value. Between 2006 and 2015, NRSC scientists forest fires were detected in just under half (281 of 614) of protected areas in India.

- Report is significant in light of recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report that explores possibilities of keeping global temperature rise within 1.5 degree Celsius to prevent catastrophic impacts due to unchecked temperature rise.
165. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched *Asiatic Lion Conservation Project*, to protect world's last ranging free population of Asiatic Lion and its associated ecosystem. Its budget for 3 years is approx INR 98 Crore.
- Asiatic lions once ranged from Persia (Iran) to Palamau in Eastern India, were almost driven to extinction by indiscriminate hunting and habitat loss. Single population of less than 50 lions persisted in Gir forests of Gujarat by late 1890's. With efforts of Indian Government, number of Asiatic lions increased to over 500.
166. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) reconstituted Supreme Court-empowered Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA). Bhure Lal will continue to be Chairman of reconstituted 20 Member EPCA.
- EPCA is Supreme Court mandated body tasked with taking various measures to tackle air pollution in the National Capital Region, notified in 1998 under Environment Protection Act 1986. It is also mandated to enforce Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in NCR as per the pollution levels.
 - In November 2017, EPCA enforced several measures, including ban on brick kilns, closure of Badarpur thermal power plant, hot mix plants and stone crushers, and construction activities in NCR.
167. ▶ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) launched India for Humanity initiative, to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of M K Gandhi. It will feature year-long series of artificial limb fitment camps in a number of countries spanning globe. MEA has collaborated with renowned charitable organisation Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS).
168. ▶ Ministry of Finance will release Rs 75 commemorative coin on occasion of 75th anniversary of hoisting of Tricolour for first time by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose at Cellular Jail, Port Blair on December 30, 1943. 35-gram coin will be composed of 50% silver, 40% copper, and 5% each of nickel and zinc.
- Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on this day hoisted Tricolor for first time on free Indian soil at Cellular Jail of Port Blair.
 - It was much before India attained Independence in 1947. He announced freedom of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (making it first Indian Territory) from British rule and renamed them as "Shaheed-dweep" and "Swaraj-dweep".
 - Island was liberated from British rule by Japan which captured it during World War – II. Major General Arcot Doraiswamy Loganadan of Indian National Army (INA) was made Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
169. ▶ Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) approved operationalisation strategy for Operation Greens. It was announced in Budget speech 2018-19 with outlay of 500 crores, to stabilize supply of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) crops. Measures Include -
- Short term Price Stabilisation Measures - NAFED will be Nodal Agency to implement price stabilisation measures. MoFPI will provide 50% of the subsidy on two components -
 - Transportation of Tomato Onion Potato (TOP) Crops from production to storage;
 - Hiring of appropriate storage facilities for TOP Crops.
 - Long Term Integrated value chain development projects -
 - Capacity Building of FPOs & their consortium
 - Quality production
 - Post-harvest processing facilities
 - Agri-Logistics
 - Marketing / Consumption Points
 - Creation and Management of e-platform for demand and supply management of TOP Crops.
 - Eligible Organisations for assistance under the scheme will be required to submit online application on SAMPADA portal of ministry (<https://sampada.gov.in/>).
170. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) sanctioned 5 new battalions of anti-riot and crowd control Rapid Action Force (RAF), to be stationed at Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Hajipur (Bihar), Jaipur (Rajasthan), Mangalore (Karnataka) and Nuh (Haryana). Total number of RAF battalions in the country has gone up to 15.
171. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs clarified that members of Gorkha community living in Assam are Not Foreigners and Belong to State, amid questions arising about the same after recently released National Register of Citizens (NRC) for Assam that left out 40 Lakh People.
172. ▶ Ministry of New and Renewable Energy prepared a draft of new Scheme called Indian Wind Turbine Certification Scheme (IWTCS) incorporating various guidelines Turbine Certification Scheme (IWTCS), as a consolidation of relevant National and International Standards (IS/IEC/IEEE), and various best practices from other countries to ensure quality of wind energy projects.
- IWTCS is aimed at assisting and facilitating Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), End Users - Utilities, State Nodal Authorities (SNAs), Developers, Independent Power Producers (IPPs), Owners, Authorities, Investors and Insurers, Certification Bodies and Testing Laboratories.

 Type Certification of wind turbines plays an active role in ensuring that wind turbines in India meet the requirements of requisite IS/IEC/IECRE standards in vogue.

173. ▶ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has set up state-of-the-art National Data Repository which is database of all geo-scientific data of hydrocarbon resources in country. It will provide ready access to interested companies. Its main objective is to provide reliable exploration and production data for India with provisions for seamless access and online data management.
174. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport & Highways launched Youth Road Safety Learners Licence programme in New Delhi, as a Public-private partnership (PPP) initiative in collaboration with Diageo India and Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE). It attempts to bring structured training program for young, first-time drivers as they apply for learner's license.
175. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport & Highways mandated that all new public service vehicles except auto rickshaws and e-Rickshaws, registered on and after 1st January 2019 to be equipped with Vehicle Location Tracking (VLT)with emergency buttons. Objective: To ensure safety of passengers especially women.
176. ▶ Ministry of Tourism inaugurated 2 important projects as part of Development of North East Circuit under Swadesh Darshan Scheme in Arunachal Pradesh -
-  Bhalukpong- Bomdila – Tawang Project : Sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism in March 2015.
 -  Nafra- Seppa- Pappu, Pasa, Pakke Valleys- Sangdupota- New Sagalee- Ziro- Yomcha Project - It was sanctioned in December 2015.
177. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) announced that government will pay employers salaries for first seven of 26 weeks of maternity leave for women earning more than Rs 15,000 month, amid complaints that many companies were reluctant to hire pregnant women after maternity leave was extended from 12 to 26 weeks and some were even firing women employees.
-  It covers both government as well as private sector.
 -  Government had increased maternity leave for pregnant women was extended from 12 weeks to 26 weeks in 2017 after Parliament had passed Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill 2016.
178. ▶ MoRD (Ministry of Rural Development) signed MOU with Automaker Maruti Suzuki for training rural youth for skill development, by providing training to atleast 5000 candidates in 2 years with assured employment, under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY).
179. ▶ MoRD (Ministry of Rural Development) signed MOU with Maruti Suzuki India Ltd for training rural youth for skill development, to provide training to over 5000 candidates in two years with assured placement to the rural youth of our country
180. ▶ NITI Aayog and IBM launched a first-of-its-kind internship programme for students selected by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM). It will see 38 students receive a two-week paid training in areas like artificial intelligence, Internet-of-Things, cybersecurity, cloud computing and blockchain.
-  14 Selected teachers from ATLS will also be trained by IBM volunteers and mentors to become innovation coaches.
181. ▶ NITI Aayog launched model guidelines for Public-Private partnership in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). Under these, private partner will invest in upgrading, building and deploying human resources. They will be responsible for operational management and service delivery. Newly issued guidelines will help streamline private participation and encourage world-class infrastructure and patient care in the health sector.
182. ▶ NITI Aayog partnered with Perlin (Singapore-based AI start up) to launch 'AI 4 All Global Hackathon', to further expand the idea of *Artificial Intelligence, AI for All*. It aims to develop solutions that deliver twin benefit of efficient computing to address the infrastructure challenges, while also not compromising on privacy of data for training AI algorithms. Hackathon will be run two stages in Jan and Mar 2019.
-  First stage will invite ideas for use cases of multi-party computation in areas such as Healthcare, Education, Agriculture, Urbanization, Financial Inclusion.
 -  2nd stage will call for these ideas to be matured and developed, with a focus on privacy preserving AI and distributed computing.
 -  Winners will share in a prize pool worth USD \$50,000.
183. ▶ NITI Aayog released 2nd Delta ranking for Aspirational Districts, measuring progress made by them between June - October 2018 across six developmental areas - *Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial Inclusion, Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure* -
-  Most Improved (June - October 2018 Period) -
 -  Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu)
 -  Nuapada (Odisha)
 -  Siddharthnagar (Uttar Pradesh)
 -  Aurangabad (Bihar)
 -  Koraput (Odisha)

Least Improved (June - October 2018 Period) -

Pakur (Jharkhand) - Rank 111

Hailakandi (Assam) - Rank 110

Chatra (Jharkhand) - Rank 109

184. ▶ NITI Aayog unveiled its comprehensive national Strategy for New India, which defines clear objectives for 2022-23, titled ‘*Strategy for New India @75*’. Focus of Strategy document is to further improve policy environment in which private investors and other stakeholders can contribute their fullest towards achieving the goals set out for New India 2022 and propel India towards a USD 5 trillion economy by 2030. Document has been disaggregated under four sections - Drivers, Infrastructure, Inclusion and Governance.
185. ▶ National Commission for Women (NCW) launched dedicated e-mail address (ncw.metoo@gmail.com) to report instances of sexual harassment at workplace. On receiving complaint, NCW will take forward complaints of sexual harassment at workplace received so that appropriate action may be taken.
186. ▶ National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) launched a youth-friendly scheme ‘Yuva Sahakar-Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme’ for attracting them to cooperative business ventures. It will be linked to Rs 1000 crore ‘Cooperative Start-up and Innovation Fund (CSIF)’ created by NCDC.
- ▶ Funding for project will be up to 80% of project cost for special categories as against 70% for others.
 - ▶ It envisages 2% less than applicable rate of interest on term loan for project cost up to Rs 3 crore including 2 years moratorium on payment of principal. All types of cooperatives in operation for at least one year are eligible.
187. ▶ National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC) will be set up on banks of the Ganga river in Patna University campus in Patna (Bihar), as Asia’s first Dolphin research centre.
- ▶ Gangetic river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) is one of four freshwater dolphin species in world. The other three are found in Yangtze river, Indus river in Pakistan and Amazon river.
188. ▶ National Green Tribunal (NGT) banned all mining activities within 10 km of the Sariska Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan, following a plea challenging environmental clearance granted to 24 mines within 10 km radius. Supreme Court in 2006 had prohibited mining within 1 km of national parks and sanctuaries.
189. ▶ National Green Tribunal dismissed Tamilnadu government’s order of May 2018 to permanently shut down Vedanta’s Sterlite Copper plant in Thoothukudi. Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has announced to approach the Supreme Court challenging the National Green Tribunal (NGT)’s order allowing the reopening of .
- ▶ Thoothukudi Sterlite Plant is largest copper smelter plant in India, operated by Vedanta group. It started operation in 1998 till 2018 when the plant was shut on the orders of Tamil Nadu government in May 2018, after various violent protests from locals demanding the entire shutdown of operational smelting plants.
 - ▶ This plant is long-opposed by local residents for polluting their environment as well as causing a range of health problems and has been subject to several closures, on grounds of violating environmental norms.
190. ▶ National Mission for Clean Ganga laid down limits of ecological flow of the river Ganga for first time, to enable hydropower projects to modify their operations along river.
- ▶ Upper stretches (origin to Haridwar) will have to maintain 20% of average flow of preceding 10-days between November and March which are dry seasons, 25% during October, April and May, which are the lean seasons, 30% during monsoon months of June-September.
 - ▶ In main stem from Haridwar to Unnao, minimum flow of various barrages have been specified.
191. ▶ National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) signed MoU with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to provide skill training and jobs in construction sector for 2.5 lakh poor people. It will strengthen skill trainings in construction sector for urban poor under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission.
192. ▶ Nepal celebrated festival of Fulpati, observed on 7th day of Dashain festival. Tradition is to bring nine types of Fulpati into home on seventh day of Navaratri.
193. ▶ New State government of Rajasthan abolished condition of a minimum educational qualification to contest local body elections, which was put in place in 2015 by previous Government.
- ▶ Candidates were Required to have passed Class X for contesting municipal elections, Class VIII for contesting panchayat polls for the post of a sarpanch, and Class X for contesting zila parishad or panchayat samiti elections.
194. ▶ Nongkrem dance festival annual event celebrated in Khasi Hills in Shillong (Meghalaya). It is performed by members of Hima Khyrim, a sub-tribe of the indigenous Khasi tribe.
195. ▶ North Central Railways (NCR) launched two mobile apps, NCR RASTA (Railway assets Summerised Tracking Application) and Yatri RASTA (Railway Approach to Station Tracking Application) for its employees and passengers, respectively, for locating assets and stations.

196. ▶ Northeast and Assam Petro-chemicals launched Asia's first cannisters based and India's first "Methanol Cooking Fuel Program" in Namrup (Assam). 500 households inside the Assam Petro Complex will be the first pilot project, scaling it to 40,000 households in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana, Goa and Karnataka.
- ▶ It aims at reducing import of crude and an effort to provide clean, import substitute, cost effective and pollution free cooking medium.
 - ▶ Safe handling cannister based cooking stoves are from Swedish Technology and through a Technology transfer a large-scale cooking stove manufacturing plant will come up in India in next 18 months, producing 10 lakh Cookstoves and 1 Crore Cannisters per year.
 - ▶ This Cooking medium can directly substitute LPG, Kerosene, Wood, Charcoal and any other fuel for cooking. The gaseous form, Methanol - DME, can be blended in 20% ratio with LPG.
 - ▶ It is a much more cost effective and environment friendly solution for domestic cooking needs.
197. ▶ Odisha Government launched *Nirman Kusuma* programme for providing financial assistance to children of construction workers for their technical education in state. It aims to help fulfil dreams of construction workers' children by providing financial assistance for their education in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and polytechnics.
- ▶ Under it, ITI student is entitled to get financial assistance of Rs. 23,600 and diploma student to get Rs. 26,300 per annum. Besides this, State government also -
 - ▶ Increased financial assistance for girl students by 20%.
 - ▶ Doubled death benefits for the construction workers, to 2 lakh now. Accidental benefit for construction workers' also doubled to 4 lakh.
198. ▶ Odisha Government launched *Peoples Empowerment - Enabling Transparency and Accountability of Odisha Initiatives (PEETHA)* initiative, as part of 3T initiative of Technology, Transparency and Team Work model. PEETHA is a sub-scheme of the Odisha government's flagship Ama Gaon Ama Bikash Yojana.
199. ▶ Odisha Government launched Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Policy 2018, aimed at forwarding process of industrialization through promotion of aerospace and defence manufacturing enterprises and generate employment. Key Features -
- ▶ Proposes to extend subsidy upto 50% of cost of land, building, plant and machinery to special purpose vehicle (SPV) for setting up first state-of-the-art Aerospace and Defence Park in state.
 - ▶ Sets ceiling of 50 crore for Common Facility Centre, 30 crore for Technology Innovation Centre and 25 crore for Testing Centre to be established with private participation.
 - ▶ It allows interest subsidy allowed up to a limit of Rs. 10 Crore per annum and Rs. 5 crore per annum for first three OEMs setting up manufacturing units in state based on investment of over 500 Crore and between 100 - 500 crores respectively. This provision is designed to attract key players to set up units in state.
200. ▶ Odisha Government launched Saura Jalnidhi scheme to encourage use of solar energy in irrigation by farmers. Under this, farmers will be given 90% subsidy and 5,000 solar pumps. It will provide irrigation benefits in 2,500 acres. For this, state government has made a provision of 27.18 crore in 2017-18.
201. ▶ Odisha Government launched an automatic public address system to warn citizens about cyclone and tsunami, as first such technology in field of Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) in India. It has been implemented under the assistance of World Bank with a cost of 82 crores.
- ▶ 122 towers have been installed along 480 km long coastline, to produce sirens during emergency. Sound from towers can be heard in communities within 1.5 km. Button will be pressed from state emergency centre in Bhubaneswar during an emergency situation.
 - ▶ Six coastal districts named Balasore, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Puri and Ganjam have been covered under the system.
202. ▶ Odisha Govt. announced INR 10000 crores Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme to empower small, marginal & landless farmers as well as landless labourers. It would cover 92% (over 30 lakh) of cultivators, loanee and non-loanee, share-croppers & landless labourers.
203. ▶ Odisha government announced a new Biotechnology Policy 2018 to attract investments in sector, at concluding day of Make in Odisha Conclave in Bhubaneswar.
204. ▶ Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi (turmeric) will get Geographical Indications (GI) tag, famous for its healing properties. It is main cash crop of tribal people in Kandhamal. It is also used for cosmetic and medicinal purposes.
205. ▶ Old World Theatre festival will be organized by India Habitat Centre, recognized by UNESCO as a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity". It will showcase 15 plays on a pan-Indian constellation of original scripts from Chennai, Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Pune, Mumbai, and Kerala.
206. ▶ Ongoing CBI Controversy -

- ✎ Government on October 23, 2018 removed CBI Director Alok Verma and Special Director Rakesh Asthana from their posts. Government and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) cited that Verma was not cooperating with CVC's inquiry into allegations made by Asthana against him.
- ✎ Alok Verma approached Supreme Court after his removal from post of CBI Director, claiming that it was in violation of Section 4B of Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act 1946, which grants CBI Director a secure term of 2 years. SC will now examine the issue. Meanwhile, M Nageshwar Rao is appointed as CBI Director by Govt.
- ✎ Rakesh Asthana Removal -
 - ✎ On October 15, CBI booked Asthana for alleged corruption following the FIR registered against him for alleged extortion of over 3 crores from Sathish Babu Sana in a case against meat exporter Moin Qureshi, who is accused of taking money from several people for getting favours from senior government functionaries.

✎ Timeline -

- ✎ August 24 - CBI Special Director Rakesh Asthana writes to Cabinet Secretary, informing him that Alok Verma took Rs 2 crore bribe from businessman Sathish Babu Sana
- ✎ September 14 - Asthana informs CBI that Verma has issued orders to remove him from IRCTC and INX Media cases
- ✎ September 20 - Special Investigation Team headed by Aasthana proposes to interrogate Sathish Babu Sana
- ✎ October 3 - Sana appears before CBI
- ✎ October 15 - CBI booked Asthana and Sana for alleged corruption. Alok Verma filed a case against Rakesh Asthana, accusing him of taking Rs 3 crore as bribe from Sana. Sana accepted that he agreed to pay Rs 5 crore to Asthana as bribe to give clean chit to Moin Qureshi.
- ✎ October 19 - Asthana removed from Special Investigation Team
- ✎ October 21 - PM Modi summons Alok Verma
- ✎ October 22 - CBI raids its own office and arrests DSP Devender Kumar in connection with allegations against Asthana
- ✎ October 23 - Central Vigilance Commission divested Alok Verma and Rakesh Asthana of their CBI posts
- ✎ October 23 - Asthana approached Delhi High Court to get CBI's FIR against him quashed
- ✎ October 24 - Alok Verma moved SC against his removal and pressed for an urgent hearing

207. ▶ PM Narendra Modi gave awards to top Ranked State, District and State with maximum citizen participation based on National Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018. As part of Swachh Survekshan Grameen, 6786 villages were covered. top ranked States / Districts -

- ✎ States - Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra
- ✎ Districts - Satara (Maharashtra), Rewari (Haryana), Pedapalli (Telangana)
- ✎ States with maximum citizen participation - Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra
- ✎ Districts with maximum citizens' participation - Nashik (Maharashtra), Solapur, (Maharashtra), Chittorgarh (Rajasthan)

208. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Bogibeel Bridge as India's longest rail-road bridge with length of 4.94 km.

- ✎ Former PM HD Deve Gowda laid foundation stone for Bogibeel bridge in January 1997, work started in April 2002 by Former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ✎ Its India's only fully welded bridge and for first time European codes and welding standards were adhered to. It has lifespan of over 120 years.
- ✎ It connects southern bank of Brahmaputra River in Assam's Dibrugarh district with Silapathar in Dhemaji district, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. It is constructed at a cost of Rs 5,900 crores and it is Asia's second-longest railroad bridge.
- ✎ It is referred to as "Lifeline of Assam", and is an important asset for entire north-eastern region.
- ✎ Benefits include reducing travel time from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh to four hours and eliminate a detour of over 170 km via Tinsukia. It also reduces train travel time between Delhi and Dibrugarh by about three hours.

209. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first Inland Multi-Modal Terminal Port on river Ganga at Ramnagar in Varanasi and received first container cargo belonging to PepsiCo. It is first of four Multi-Modal Terminals being constructed on National Waterways-I (NW1) on River Ganga as part of World Bank-aided Jal Marg Vikas project of Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).

- ✎ The other three terminals are under construction at Sahibganj, Haldia and Gazipur.
- ✎ It will enable commercial navigation of vessels with capacity of 1500-2,000 DWT on river Ganga.
- ✎ JMVP was approved in January 2017 for capacity augmentation of navigation on NW-1, at cost INR 5369 crores. IWAI in February 2018 had signed project agreement with World Bank for Jal Marg Vikas Project, for \$375 million.

210. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated International Rice Research Institute South Asia Regional Centre (IRRI SARC) in Varanasi, as 6th campus of IRRI SARC. IRRI SARC will educate scientists and agriculture leaders about latest technologies and innovations for sustainable farming.

211. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Kundli-Manesar section of the Western Peripheral Expressway. He also inaugurated 3.2-kilometer long Escorts Mujesar-Ballabhgarh corridor of the Delhi Metro.
- ▶ Western Peripheral Expressway also known as KMP expressway is expected to divert more than 50 thousand heavy vehicles away from Delhi. 136-kilometer long six-lane expressway has been built at a cost of over 6400 crore rupees.
 - ▶ PM Narendra Modi also laid foundation of India's first Skill Development University, named Sri Vishwakarma Skill Development University, in Palwal (Haryana).
212. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched *Grand Challenge* on resolving seven identified Ease of Doing Business (EODB) problems with use of cutting edge technologies Including Such as Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence.
- ▶ Aim is to Bring India in Top 50 countries in Ease of Doing Business Index of World Bank. Note that in World Bank's Doing Business Report (DBR, 2019) released on October 31, India recorded a jump of 23 positions against its rank of 100 in 2017 to be placed at 77th rank among 190 countries.
 - ▶ Top Innovative ideas will be rewarded with 1/2/3 Lakh INR.
 - ▶ Platform for the Grand Challenge is the Startup India Portal.
213. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched *Main Nahin Hum* Portal and App, on theme "Self4Society". It will enable IT professionals and organizations to bring together their efforts towards social causes, and service to society, on one platform. It is also expected to generate wider participation of interested people who are motivated to work for the benefit of society.
214. ▶ Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched 'Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin' initiative In Odisha, to improve accessibility to basic sanitary pads and create employment opportunity to women.
- ▶ In February 2018, Odisha government had launched 'Khushi' scheme, to provide free sanitary napkins in government schools.
215. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind approved bill seeking punishment for sexual offenders, cyber criminals and traditional unlawful acts like bootlegging and dacoity in Telangana state. This will replace 1986 Act that had jurisdiction for the undivided Andhra Pradesh but not for Telangana.
216. ▶ President's rule has been imposed in Jammu and Kashmir, after a span of 22 years, after President Ram Nath Kovind signing a proclamation to implement recommendation of state Governor Satya Pal Malik for the same
217. ▶ Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced annual Sardar Patel Award for National Integration, to be given annually for outstanding efforts to further national integration.
218. ▶ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched several developmental initiatives in Odisha, worth over INR 14500 crores, as part of Mission Purbodaya : a prosperous East for building a new India -
- ▶ Released a commemorative stamp and coin on Paika Rebellion. The Paika Rebellion (Paika Bidroha) was fought against British rule, in Odisha in 1817. It is noted as First ever armed conflict as part of Indian Freedom movement. A Chair on Paika Rebellion has been set up in Utkal University Bhubaneswar.
 - ▶ Inaugurated Lalitgiri Museum, a famous Buddhist centre of archaeological importance, comprising Stupa, Viharas (monasteries) and images of Lord Buddha.
 - ▶ Dedicated IIT Bhubaneswar campus and inaugurated new ESIC Hospital at Bhubaneswar.
 - ▶ Laid foundation of Paradip-Hyderabad Pipeline Product Project by IOCL and Bokaro-Angul section of Jagdishpur-Haldia & Bokaro-Dhamra Gas Pipeline Project by GAIL.
219. ▶ Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to mark 75th anniversary of hoisting of Tricolour on Indian soil by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- ▶ On December 30 in 1943, Indian tricolour was hoisted at Cellular Jail in Port Blair for first time by legendary freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. It was before India attained Independence, declaring island as the free territory from British rule.
 - ▶ Central Government released Rs 75 coin to commemorate this historic event.
 - ▶ On this occasion, Govt. renamed Ross Island as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep, Neil Island as Shaheed Dweep and Havelock Island renamed as Swaraj Dweep.
220. ▶ Pune District court became first court in India to allow e-payments of court fee, judicial deposits, fines and penalties, the facility which will be eventually available across all courtrooms in country to bring transparency to cash transactions.
221. ▶ Punjab Assembly passed a resolution for seeking 30% reservation for women in Parliament and State legislative assembly.
222. ▶ Punjab Govt. launched 3 apps to prevent crop residue burning, To check and create awareness about environmental effects of crop residue burning. Apps are i-Khet Machine, e-PEHaL and e-Prevent.
223. ▶ Punjab government signed four MoUs with Israeli institutions to address issues of farmers and depleting groundwater level in state.
224. ▶ QS Quacquarelli Symonds released "QS India University Rankings 2019" as first standalone ranking of India's higher education institutions - Top 5 universities in QS India University Rankings 2019 -

- ✍ Indian Institute Of Technology Bombay
- ✍ Indian Institute Of Science Bangalore
- ✍ Indian Institute Of Technology Madras
- ✍ Indian Institute Of Technology Delhi
- ✍ Indian Institute Of Technology Kharagpur

225. ▶ Railways Minister Piyush Goyal dedicated India's first railway university to Nation in Vadodara (Gujarat), as 3rd such institution in world after Russia and China, named as National Rail and Transportation Institution (NRTI). Chairman of Railways Board Ashok Lohani is named Vice Chancellor of University.
226. ▶ Railways launched UTSONMOBILE mobile app, introduced Unreserved Mobile Ticketing to promote Cashless transactions, Contact less ticketing and Customer convenience. It will enable booking of unreserved tickets on all non-suburban sections across all Zonal Railways. It will remove need for passengers to wait in queues for purchasing tickets.
- ✍ It involves registration and booking ticket through this application within ticketing area and outside Geo-fenced area (geofenced area is station premises and train route within which ticket cannot be booked. Ticketing area is outside geofenced area as defined in application).
227. ▶ Railways will Build first station inside a tunnel, at Keylong, at a height of 3,000 metres, on strategic Bilaspur-Manali-Leh line in Himachal Pradesh.
- ✍ It will be part of world's highest rail network at 5,360 metres height. 465-km railway line will have 30 stations and is estimated to cost 83,360 crores.
228. ▶ Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) for Africa and Asia has termed 'Titli', severe cyclonic storm that struck Odisha in October 2018 as 'rarest cyclone'. Its rarity lies in terms of its characteristics such as recurvature after landfall, retaining its destructive potential after landfall and recurvature away from coastal areas for more than two days.
229. ▶ Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) designed India's first indigenous microprocessor called 'Shakti'.
- ✍ Microprocessors are brain of all computing and electronic devices and are used to operate larger high-speed systems and supercomputers.
 - ✍ It will reduce dependency on imported microchips especially in communication and defence sectors and thus eliminate risk of cyber-attacks. It can be used in mobile computing, wireless and networking systems.
 - ✍ IIT M researchers are now conducting research on 'Parashakti', an advanced microprocessor for supercomputers, to be ready by December 2018. It will have its applications in desktops and 32 such interconnected microprocessors may be used in supercomputers.
 - ✍ IIT Madras also developed portable solar-powered cold storage device with 500 kg capacity for storing vegetables and fruits. It will help farmers store their produce for sufficient time so that it does not get spoilt before it is sold, preventing wastage of agricultural produce.
230. ▶ Rural Development Ministry's Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) signed MoU with Delhi University's Lady Irwin College for establishing ROSHNI - Centre of Women Collectives led Social Action.
231. ▶ Satya Pal Singh, Minister of State (Ministry of Human Resource Development) launched two new initiatives - Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP) and Annual Refresher Programme In Teaching (ARPIT).
- ✍ LEAP is a three weeks Flagship leadership development training programme (2 weeks domestic and 1 week foreign training) for second level academic functionaries in public funded higher education institutions. objective is to prepare second tier academic heads who are potentially likely to assume leadership roles in future. Implementation will be through 15 NIRF top ranked Indian Institutions. Foreign Universities identified for training are -
 - ✍ University of Michigan, NTU Singapore, Harvard University, Purdue University (USA), University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania / Stanford, Monash University, London School of Economics/ Oxford University University of Cambridge and University of Virginia, USA.
 - ✍ ARPIT is a unique initiative of online professional development of 15 lakh higher education faculty using MOOCs platform SWAYAM. 75 discipline-specific institutions have been identified and notified as National Resource Centres (NRCs) in first phase, tasked to prepare online training material.
 - ✍ Course is a 40 hour module with 20 hours of video content and 20 hours of non-video content. Faculties who successfully complete online refresher course will be certified. The courses will remain open from 1st November, 2018 to 28th February, 2019.
 - ✍ ARPIT will be an ongoing exercise so that every year NRCs will continuously develop new refresher module in their earmarked discipline each year. NRCs will revolutionize professional development of faculty by catering to massive numbers by leveraging

ICT and online technology platform of SWAYAM.

232. ▶ Satyajit Ray directed *Pather Panchali* included in BBC's 100 best foreign language films, as only Indian film in list. It was released in 1955.
233. ▶ Severe Cyclone Storm Gaja affected Tamilnadu and UT of Puducherry, causing heavy rainfalls and losses.
234. ▶ Severe Cyclone Titli caused heavy losses in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, with winds above 150 KMPH.
235. ▶ Shi Yomi became 23rd district of Arunachal Pradesh, created by bifurcating West Siang district with its headquarters at Tato. 2 more districts Pakke-Kesang and Lepa Rada will be formally inaugurated in state.
- ✍ In August 2018, State assembly passed Arunachal Pradesh Re-Organisation of Districts (Amendment) Bill 2018 for creation of three new districts, Pakke-Kesang, Lepa Rada and Shi Yomi.
236. ▶ Shipping and Road Transport & Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid foundation stone for development work of Ghagra River as National Waterway-40 at Basti in Uttar Pradesh, as part of Sagarmala Programme.
- ✍ Waterway will stretch from Manjhighat at Ganga-Gaghra river confluence to Faizabad or Ayodhya along Gaghra River for 354 kms.
 - ✍ It was declared as National Waterway (NW)-40 during the year 2016.
 - ✍ Together with National Waterway-1 (on river Ganga), NW-40 will be a major transport modal choice for cargo and passenger movement.
237. ▶ Shri Ramayana Express, a special tourist train to run on Ramayana circuit to cover major spots related to Hindu epic flagged off from Safdarjung Railway Station (New Delhi). It will have 2 travel components - one each in India and Sri Lanka. It will cover important destinations of Ramayana circuit such as Nandigram, Sitamarhi, Janakpur, Varanasi, Prayag, Shringverpur, Chitrakoot, Nasik, Hampi and Rameshwaram.
- ✍ Fare for 16-day trip at 15,120 per person. Sri Lanka leg of the tour will be charged separately as passengers opting for Sri Lanka leg of Ramayana Yatra package can take flight to Colombo from Chennai.
238. ▶ Silao Khaja, the Traditional delicacy of Nalanda district of Bihar, has been granted GI tag by Geographical Indications Registry (Chennai). Silao Khaja is a crisp, multi-layered dough sheeted sweet, made up of wheat-flour, sugar, maida, ghee, cardamon and aniseeds as ingredients.
239. ▶ State government of Arunachal Pradesh signed an MoU with the British Council to strengthen educational and cultural cooperation, to support the knowledge ambitions and economic growth of state.
240. ▶ Supreme Court (SC) introduced witness protection regime, amid several incidents of witnesses turning hostile due to no security given to them. Witness Protection Scheme 2018 will come into effect immediately across all States, to stay a law till Parliament enacted suitable legislation.
241. ▶ Supreme Court gave its nod for a separate High Court for Andhra Pradesh, which will start functioning from January 1 next year. It will be 25th High Court in the country and will temporarily function from a makeshift building till permanent structure is built in Justice City complex in Andhra's de-facto capital Amaravati.
242. ▶ Supreme Court ruled that no Bharat Stage-IV vehicle shall be sold across the country with effect from April 1, 2020. Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) emission norm would come into force from April 1, 2020.
- ✍ Bharat stage emission standards were instituted by Government to regulate the output of air pollutants from motor vehicles. BS-IV norms were in force across country since April 2017
 - ✍ In 2016, Government decided to switch over to BS-VI grade fuel directly from BS-IV skipping BS-V.
243. ▶ Tamil Nadu government launched a 24-hour toll-free helpline '181' for women facing domestic violence and sexual harassment.
244. ▶ Tata Trust and The Global Fund backed Indian Health Fund (IHF) has chosen four innovators for early detection of tuberculosis (TB), malaria to effectively tackle these eradicate diseases. Three selected innovators are related to TB and one to malaria. Government has set a target of eliminating TB by 2025 and malaria by 2030.
245. ▶ Tea Board of India will launch an app aimed at guiding small growers, whose share in total tea production is increasing. Name of the app is Chai Sahay (tea help). It aims to establish two-way communication between manufacturer and customers.
246. ▶ Tourism Ministry handed over an MOU to Resbird Technologies under 'Adopt a Heritage' project for development of a mobile audio guide application for five iconic sites - Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Kaziranga (Assam), Colva Beach (Goa), Kumarakom (Kerala), Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).
247. ▶ Tribal Baduga community in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu celebrated their annual Heddaiyamman festival.
248. ▶ UNICEF and NASSCOM Foundation signed an agreement to strengthen child rights through "meaningful business interventions.
249. ▶ Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath made three announcements -
- ✍ Faizabad district will be renamed as Ayodhya.
 - ✍ New airport named after Lord Rama and medical college named after King Dasharatha will be opened in district.

250. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government announced creation of an umbrella university named after former Prime Minister late Atal Bihari Vajpayee. University would be the controlling authority of all medical and dental colleges and nursing institutions in state.
251. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government has approved renaming of Faizabad and Allahabad divisions as Ayodhya and Prayagraj respectively. Government justified name changes are merely restoring older names and correcting historical distortions.
252. ▶ Uttarakhand High Court directed state government to provide reservation to transgenders in educational institutions and public appointments, for welfare of transgender persons in state.
253. ▶ Uttarakhand government approved renaming Dehradun's Jolly Grant Airport after late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
254. ▶ West Bengal Assembly passed West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill 2018 to give land rights to enclave dwellers in north Bengal. It will end uncertainty for people residing in those enclaves, giving them full-fledged status as citizens of India. It will result in creation of 13 'mouzas' (administrative district), while rest area will be amalgamated with existing 31 'mouzas'.
- ✎ Bangladesh and India exchanged total of 162 enclaves in August 2015 as per historic 1974 Land Boundary Agreement (LBA), ending one of world's most-complex border disputes.
 - ✎ In Cooch Behar, 111 Indian enclaves became part of Bangladesh territory and 51 Bangladesh enclaves joined India.
255. ▶ West Bengal Govt. will set up development boards for Matua and Namasudra communities, for social representation and welfare of the 2 communities present in large numbers in state.
256. ▶ West Bengal assembly approved renaming West Bengal Green University as Rani Rashmoni Green University, in commemoration of Rani Rashmoni's 225th Birth anniversary.
257. ▶ Winter session of Lok Sabha will be held between Dec 11 - Jan 08, 2019. Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh had recommended convening Winter session of Parliament between this period.
258. ▶ Women and Child Development Ministry launched online marketing portal named: "Mahila-E-Haat" for promoting women farmers and entrepreneurs. It will serve as an e-platform to promote achievements of women farmers. It was launched during 5th *Women of India National Organic Festival 2018* in New Delhi.
259. ▶ World Bank released World Development Report 2019, with Theme *The Changing Nature of Work*. As part of report, World Bank launched a Human Capital Project (HCP), claimed to be a program of advocacy, measurement, and analytical work to raise awareness and increase demand for interventions to build human capital.
- ✎ There are three components of HCP - Human capital measurement metric called Human Capital Index (HCI), a programme of measurement and research to inform policy action, and a programme of support for country strategies to accelerate investment in human capital.
 - ✎ Human Capital index (HCI) -
 - ✎ HCI is constructed for 157 countries. It measures amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18. HCI has three components -
 - ✎ Survival, as measured by under-5 mortality rates.
 - ✎ Expected years of Quality-Adjusted School
 - ✎ Health environment using two proxies of *adult survival rates* and *rate of stunting for children under age 5*.
 - ✎ How World Banks' HCI Is different from UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) -
 - ✎ HIC uses survival rates and stunting rate instead of life expectancy as measure of health, and quality-adjusted learning instead of merely years of schooling as measure of education.
 - ✎ Two significant changes from HDI are exclusion of income component and introduction of quality adjustment in learning. Exclusion of income element and introduction of quality adjustment makes HCI far less representative of Human Capital Development than Index claims it to be.
 - ✎ Observations of 1st HCI Report -
 - ✎ For 56% of world's population, HCI is below 0.50, for 92% it is at or below 0.75. Hence only 8% of the population can expect to be 75% as productive as they could be.
 - ✎ Advanced economies such as North America and Europe mostly have HCI value of above 0.75, while South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa have lowest HCI.
 - ✎ Top 5 - Singapore (1), South Korea (2), Japan (3), Hong Kong (4), Finland (5)
 - ✎ Bottom 5 - Chad (157), South Sudan (156), Niger (155), Mali (154), Liberia (153)
 - ✎ Neighbours - China (46), Bangladesh (106), Pakistan (134), Sri Lanka (74), Nepal (102)
 - ✎ Report in Context of India -
 - ✎ HCI for India is estimated at 0.44, **ranked 115th**.
 - ✎ There has been improvement in HCI components in India over last five years.

- ✎ Probability of Survival to Age 5 is 96 %.
- ✎ In India, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 10.2 years of school by her 18th birthday.
- ✎ Harmonized Test Scores: Students in India score 355 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.
- ✎ Across India, 83 per cent of 15-year olds will survive until age 60.
- ✎ In India, HCI for girls is marginally higher than for boys.
- ✎ Further, India finds the report Insignificant as -
 - ✎ Quality adjusted learning has been measured in case of India by using the data as old as 2009.
 - ✎ Purpose of Index is to create political incentive for increased spending on health and education. Unfortunately, indicators used are so slow moving that none can really be excited about setting out programme of Index improvement.
 - ✎ HCI score for India does not reflect the key initiatives that are being taken for developing human capital, Including -
 - ✎ *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan*
 - ✎ *Ayushman Bharat Programme* (world's largest Health Insurance initiative providing 500 million citizens with adequate health coverage)
 - ✎ Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan that triggered Sanitation coverage expansion from 38% in 2014 to 83% in 2018, under *Swachh Bharat Mission*.
 - ✎ *Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana* that provided over 4 Crore women with LPG connection to replace firewood and coke based cooking stoves.

260. ▶ World Economic Forum (WEF) launched new Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution in India, based in Maharashtra, as fourth center in chain-ones as part of WEF's global network along with San Francisco (US), Tokyo (Japan) and Beijing (China).

- ✎ It will facilitate to bring together government and business leaders to pilot emerging technology policies. It has selected drones, artificial intelligence and blockchain as the first three project areas.
- ✎ First project will focus on expanding access to data to accelerate adoption of AI in socio-economic areas like education, healthcare and agriculture. 2nd will focus on application of smart contracts to boost productivity and transparency while reducing inefficiency.

261. ▶ government notified 10 Central Agencies giving them power to intercept, monitor and decrypt all data contained in any computer system in India. The Agencies are *Intelligence Bureau, Narcotics Control Bureau, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, CBI, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Research and Analysis Wing, Directorate of Signal Intelligence (in Jammu & Kashmir, the North-East and Assam) and the Delhi Police*.

- ✎ Section 69 of Information Technology Act 2000 provides for interception and monitoring along with decryption for cyber-crime investigations. This notification by government caused oppositon in Parliament.
- ✎ Government clarified that it has not given *blanket power* to any agency to intercept information from any computer and they have to strictly adhere to existing rules and stick to the book while carrying out such action.

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