



Current Affairs - April 2019

Month Type



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Appointments

- ▶ Bibhu Kalyan Nayak became first Indian to be appointed Chair of International Hockey Federation (FIH) Health and Safety Committee by world governing body of Hockey.
- ▶ Gargi Kaul has been appointed as Secretary (Defence Finance).
- ▶ Shiv Das Meena has been appointed as Chairman cum Managing Director (CMD) of PSU National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC).
- ▶ US Department of Interior inducted its very first Indian, Sanjay Kumar, Secretary General of World Geospatial Industry Council (WGIC), to its National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC). Kumar first joined the committee as a representative of the WGIC.
 1. WGIC was launched on 1st August, 2018 at 8th Session of the UN-GGIM, at UN HQ in New York.

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Awards

- ▶ 2019 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize awarded to Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, for their exceptional courage in reporting on alleged human rights violations in the Myanmar's state of Rakhine.
 1. Their documentary on the taboo topic regarding crimes committed against Rohingyas landed them behind the bars. UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize recognises outstanding contributions to the defence or promotion of press freedom especially in the face of danger. It carries a reward of \$25,000 Prize.
 2. Prize is named after Guillermo Cano Isaza, Colombian journalist who was assassinated in front of offices of his newspaper El Espectador in Bogotá, Colombia, on 17 December 1986.
- ▶ Alice G. Vaidyan, CMD of General Insurance Corporation (GIC) of India has been awarded Freedom of the City of London in recognition of her work to promote insurance ties between India and UK. She was first lady CMD of GIC and also the first lady CMD in public-sector insurance industry (non-life).
 1. Freedom of the City is an honour bestowed by City of London Corporation, with its Genesis traced to medieval time of around 1237.
- ▶ An image of a little girl crying, as she and her mother have been taken into custody by US border officials in Texas won World Press Photo of the Year 2018. It has been taken by photographer John Moore in June 2018. Dutch-Swedish photographer Pieter Ten Hoopen won "World Press Photo Story of the Year Award" for image of 2018 mass-migrant caravan to the US border.
- ▶ England's MCC (the Marylebone Cricket Club) bestowed honour of 'Honorary Life Members' to Pakistan's Inzamam-ul-Haq and South Africa's Mark Boucher for their exemplary achievements in cricket.
- ▶ India's flagship programme, National Mission for Clean Ganga or Namami Gange felicitated with coveted Public Water Agency of the Year award at Global Water Summit at London (UK), presented by Global Water Intelligence.
 1. Namami Gange programme aims at providing sustainable solutions for major pollution hot spots along stretch of 97 towns and 4,465 villages on Ganga stem.
 2. In Namami Gange programme, total 289 projects have so far been sanctioned at a cost of Rs 28,377 crore out of which 87 projects have been completed.

3. Till date, 37 projects of pollution abatement have been completed, which has resulted in laying 2,565 km sewer networks and of 575 MLD of STP capacities in Ganga basin.

6. ▶ Pulitzer Prize 2019 -

1. Winners -

1. Journalism -

1. Public Service - *The Sun-Sentinel*
2. Breaking News Reporting - Staff of *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
3. Investigative Reporting - Matt Hamilton, Harriet Ryan and Paul Pringle of *Los Angeles Times*
4. Explanatory Reporting - David Barstow, Susanne Craig and Russ Buettner of *The New York Times*
5. Local Reporting - *The Advocate* staff
6. National Reporting - Staff of *The Wall Street Journal*
7. International Reporting - Maggie Michael, Maad al-Zikry and Nariman El-Mofty of *The Associated Press* AND Staff of *Reuters*, with notable contributions from Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo (who recently also won 2019 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize)
8. Feature Writing - Hannah Dreier of *ProPublica*
9. Commentary - Tony Messenger of *the St. Louis Post-Dispatch*
10. Criticism - Carlos Lozada of *The Washington Post*
11. Editorial Writing - Brent Staples of *The New York Times*
12. Editorial Cartooning - Darrin Bell (freelancer)
13. Breaking News Photography - Photography Staff of *Reuters*
14. Feature Photography - Lorenzo Tugnoli of *The Washington Post*

2. Letters, Drama, and Music -

1. Fiction - *The Overstory* by Richard Powers
2. Drama - *Fairview* by Jackie Sibblies Drury
3. History - *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* by David W. Blight
4. Biography or Autobiography - *The New Negro: The Life of Alain Locke* by Jeffrey C. Stewart
5. Poetry - *Be With* by Forrest Gander
6. Music - *Prism* by Ellen Reid
7. General Nonfiction - *Amity and Prosperity: One Family and the Fracturing of America* by Eliza Griswold (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

3. Special Awards and Citations -

1. *Aretha Franklin* For her indelible contribution to American music and culture
2. Capital Gazette, Annapolis, Md.

2. About Pulitzer Prizes -

1. Given for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in USA.
2. Established in 1917 by provisions in will of American (Hungarian-born) Joseph Pulitzer who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher and is administered by Columbia University in New York City.

7. ▶ Rio Paralympics silver medalist Deepa Malik honoured with New Zealand Prime Minister's Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship for 2019 in recognition of her "inspiring achievements". She won silver in shot put F53 event in Rio Paralympics in 2016. She became the first Indian woman to win a medal at Paralympics and first Indian women to win medals in 3 consecutive Asian Para Games in 2010, 2014 and 2018.

8. ▶ Russia honoured Indian PM Narendra Modi with Order of St Andrew the Apostle, highest order of Russian Federation, for promoting partnership and friendly relations between the two countries.

1. Order of St Andrew the Apostle is both the highest and the oldest state decoration of Russia. It was established as the first and highest order of chivalry of Russian Empire in 1698 but was abolished under USSR in 1918 before being reinstated as top Russian order in 1998.

9. ▶ Sunil Kumar Gautam honored with 'Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Award' for 2018-19 by Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), for his book titled 'Samvidhan Kavya', as Poetic representation of Indian Constitution.

10. ▶ Three teams from India won awards at NASA's annual Human Exploration Rover Challenge which invites high school and college students to build and test roving vehicles for future missions to Moon, Mars and beyond.

1. Team from KIET Group of Institutions in Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh) won the “AIAA Neil Armstrong Best Design Award”, which recognises systems best designed to meet Rover Challenge performance requirements.
 2. Team from Mukesh Patel School of Technology Management and Engineering from Mumbai (Maharashtra), won “Frank Joe Sexton Memorial Pit Crew Award” for ingenuity and persistence in overcoming problems during race as well as “System Safety Challenge Award”.
 3. Team from Lovely Professional University in Phagwara (Punjab) won “STEM Engagement Award”, presented to the team that best-informed others about rocketry and other space-related topics.
11. ▶ UK Royal Society elected 51 eminent scientists as Fellows of Royal Society. Selected Indians / PIOs -
1. Yusuf Hamied (Cipla pharmaceuticals chairman)
 2. Gurdyal Besra (Professor at University of Birmingham)
 3. Manjul Bhargava (American-Canadian mathematician)
 4. Anant Parekh (Oxford University)
 5. Akshay Venkatesh (Australian Mathematician)
 6. Gagandeep Kang (Christian Medical College, Vellore). She is also First Indian woman scientist to be selected as a fellow of UK’s Royal Society.
12. ▶ West Bengal government Schemes ‘Utkarsh Bangla’ (skill training of youth) and ‘Sabooj Sathi’ (cycles for students) won World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) awards by UN. Utkarsh Bangla emerged winner in Capacity Building category and Sabooj Sathi was ranked in the first five as a champion project under ICT application: E-Government category.
1. Utkarsh Bangla is aimed at providing vocational training to school dropouts. The beneficiaries of the scheme will be trained in driving, tailoring, repairing television and other electronic equipment’s, beautician courses etc.
 2. Sabooj Sathi aims at distribution of bicycles to students of class IX to XII studying in Govt. Schools and Madrashes.
 3. World Summit on the Information Society Awards is a global multi-stakeholder platform facilitating the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines for advancing sustainable development.

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Books

1. ▶ India edition of first biography of Apple CEO Tim Cook, ‘Tim Cook: The Genius Who Took Apple to the Next Level’, has been released.
2. ▶ Noted Author Salman Rushdie’s new novel Quichotte will be released in August 2019. It is inspired by classic “Don Quixote” and is the story of an ageing travelling salesman who falls in love with a TV star and sets off to drive across America on a quest to prove himself worthy of her.

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Days

1. ▶ Apr 11 - National Safe Motherhood Day (NSMD). 2019 theme is “Midwives for Mothers”.
2. ▶ Apr 11 - World Parkinson’s Day, related to Parkinson’s disease. It marks birth anniversary of James Parkinson, who published first detailed description on Shaking Palsy, in 1817.
3. ▶ Apr 12 - International Day of Human Space Flight. It marks first human space flight by Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin in 1961. It was proclaimed by UN General Assembly in 2011. The day is also observed as ‘Cosmonautics Day’ in Russia and some other countries.
4. ▶ Apr 13, 2019 marks 100th anniversary of Jallianwallah Bagh Massacre.
 1. On 13th April 1919, huge number of people gathered at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar to celebrate harvest festival of Baisakhi and to protest against Rowlatt Act. Troops of British Indian Army under command of Colonel Dyer opened fire at people, Killing over 1000 people.
 2. British Prime Minister Theresa May described Jallianwala Bagh massacre as a “shameful scar” on British Indian history and expressed deep regret over the event.
 3. Apr 13 is also observed as Rajouri Day, Which commemorates valour of soldiers who laid down their lives for liberation of Rajouri district. Pakistani raiders captured Rajouri (J & K) on 7 November 1947. Rajouri was recaptured on 12 April 1948 from rebels and Pakistan Army personnel were dispelled.
5. ▶ Apr 18 - World Heritage Day. 2019 theme is *Rural Landscapes*.

1. 2019 International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Scientific Symposium on Rural heritage will be held at Marrakesh, Morocco in October 2019.
2. On 18 April 1982 on occasion of a symposium organised by ICOMOS in Tunisia, it was suggested to observe the "International Day for Monuments and Sites" simultaneously throughout world.
6. ▶ Apr 19, 2019 is observed as Good Friday (also known as Holy Friday or Black Friday). It is observed every year in honor and remembrance of Jesus's Crucifixion and Christians believe Jesus was crucified on Good Friday and rose again three days later which is marked as Easter.
 1. Apr 19 is also observed as World Liver Day.
7. ▶ April 14th is Birth Anniversary of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. He campaigned against social discrimination towards the untouchables (Dalits). He was independent India's first law and justice minister, architect of the Constitution of India. His Birth anniversary is observed as Social Justice Day, announced in 2018. Note that UN World Day of Social Justice is observed on Feb 20.
8. ▶ April 15 - Himachal Day. It is being observed since 1948.
 1. Province of Himachal Pradesh was organized on 15 April 1948, as a result of integration of 28 princely states.
 2. Statehood of Himachal Pradesh happened on Jan 25, 1971.
9. ▶ April 17 - World Haemophilia Day, marks birthday of Frank Schnabel who established World Federation of Haemophilia in 1963. Haemophilia is a medical condition in which ability of blood to clot is severely reduced. As a result, even a minor injury can cause severe bleeding.
 1. It is mostly inherited and is attributed to the defect in X chromosome.
 2. If a girl is born with one defective X chromosome, her other X chromosome can compensate for it. As a result, she will be a carrier of haemophilia but she herself will not suffer from it. However, boys do not have second X chromosome to compensate for it. Hence he will suffer from haemophilia. That's why it is more common among men.
 3. Britain's Queen Victoria is the world's most widely known carrier of haemophilia.
 4. There were over 1.96 lakh persons living with haemophilia across world in 2017, with India having nearly 19,000.

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Defence

1. ▶ 2nd Edition of Indian Navy-Vietnam Peoples' Navy Bilateral Exercise (IN – VPN BILAT EX) held at Cam Ranh Bay (Vietnam).
2. ▶ 3rd edition of Joint Naval Exercise of India and Australia AUSINDEX held off the coast of Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).
3. ▶ DRDO Tested Long range sub sonic cruise missile *Nirbhay*, developed by Bengaluru based Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE). It is India's first indigenously designed and developed long-range cruise missile. This Nuclear capable missile can be equipped with 300kg warhead and has range of 1000s.
4. ▶ India and France will conduct their Joint naval exercise 'Varuna' off Goa coast in May 2019. Varuna is a top-level naval exercise, with intensive dual carrier task group operations and anti-submarine warfare manoeuvres.
5. ▶ Indian Coast Guard vessel Veera has been commissioned into service. Its 3rd in series of new generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), built by Larsen & Toubro Ltd.
6. ▶ Indian Navy launched guided missile destroyer 'Imphal' (built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Mumbai), as 3rd third ship to be launched under Project 15B.
 1. Warships built under Project 15B project are propelled by four gas turbines to achieve speed in excess of 30 knots. They have a length of 163 metres and 17.4 metres at beam and a displacement of 7,300 tonnes.
7. ▶ Navy chief Sunil Lanba inaugurated Virtual Reality Centre (VRC) in New Delhi at Directorate of Naval Design (Surface Ship Group), that aims to boost indigenous warship design capabilities of Navy. VRC centre will facilitate collaborative design reviews for continuous interaction between designers and end-users to improve design and ergonomics onboard warships.

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Economy

1. ▶ According to RBI Data, bank credit rose 13.24% to Rs 97.67 lakh crores in FY 2018-19. It is 2nd consecutive credit growth after 2018-19. The credit growth was 4.54 % in FY17 at Rs 78.41 lakh crores, lowest in 5 decades.
2. ▶ Airtel Payments Bank partnered with Bharti AXA General Insurance for a two-wheeler insurance product, available on My Airtel App and over 40,000 Airtel Payments Bank contact points.

3. ▶ Asian Development Bank committed to provide USD 3 billion in sovereign loans to India in 2018, highest level of assistance since operations began in India in 1986, as per ADB annual report.
4. ▶ Bajaj Finserv lending arm Bajaj Finance launched a unique proposition through its campaign #BijliOnEMI wherein customers buying air-conditioners on EMI can avail an Insta Credit loan in their Bajaj Finserv Wallet which they can use to pay their electricity bills on EMI. It is aimed to help customers finance high electricity bills that may arise due to extensive usage of conditioners during summer.
5. ▶ Bank of Baroda and Srei Equipment Finance Ltd collaborated to offer joint loans for infrastructure equipment. Sourcing of loans will be facilitated through iQuippo, a Kanoria Foundation initiative.
6. ▶ Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) partnered with M1Xchange Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform for MSME bill discounting.
 1. TReDS is a digital platform to support MSMEs to get their bills financed at a competitive rate through an auction where multiple registered financiers can participate. It aims to facilitate smooth flow of liquidity in system and make finance available at a competitive rate.
7. ▶ CCI (Competition Commission of India) Approved Bandhan Bank's acquisition of Gruh Finance, to enhance and strengthen its portfolio.
 1. Gruh Finance is low-cost arm of HDFC Group. After the merger, HDFC Sought to take 14.96 % state in Bandhan Bank. The same has been limited by RBI hold 9.9%. 9.9 % is maximum a non-banking finance company can own in a private bank.
8. ▶ CRISIL Ltd will transfer its rating business to its proposed new wholly-owned subsidiary, to comply with SEBI norms issued in 2018. SEBI had modified its regulations for credit rating agencies and mandated segregation of rating and non-ratings businesses of credit-rating agencies.
9. ▶ Canara Bank successfully rolled out major new functionality to support EMV card acquiring across its ATM network and Aadhaar Authentication. It has been announced by ACI Worldwide, global provider of real-time electronic payment and banking solutions.
 1. EMV shift is aimed at reducing lost and stolen card fraud and making counterfeit card fraud more difficult. RBI had set a deadline of December 31, 2018 for switch, mandating use of an embedded chip to replace the traditional magnetic stripe card.
10. ▶ Cash-strapped Airline Jet Airways suspended all its domestic and international flights indefinitely, amid cash crunch. It has put 20000 jobs with JetAirways at Stake. Founder Chairman Naresh Goyal had earlier resigned from Board of Jet Airways.
11. ▶ Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) issued guidelines for monetisation of non-core assets of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and immovable enemy properties.
 1. An inter-ministerial group chaired by DIPAM secretary will identify non-core assets of CPSEs, and final call will be taken by Finance minister-headed panel.
 2. After panel approves assets for monetisation, it should be completed within 12 months from date of approval, failing which finance ministry may restrict budgetary allocations to CPSEs.
12. ▶ Digital payments security and payment facilitator PayU acquired Wibmo, a US-based financial technology firm for USD 70 million (about Rs 484 crores). Wibmo will continue to operate and serve all of its clients as a wholly-owned subsidiary of PayU.
13. ▶ ETMONEY integrated with UPI as a payment method, as a market first. It will simplify mutual fund payment for ETMONEY users.
14. ▶ Export Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) provided soft loans of USD 266.60 million to Rwanda for various projects.
 1. USD 100 million for financing development of two SEZs (Special Economic Zones) and expansion of the Kigali SEZ in Rwanda.
 2. USD 100 million for financing three agriculture project schemes --Warufu Multipurpose Project, Mugesera Irrigation Project and Nyamukana Irrigation Project.
 3. USD 66.60 million will be funded for Base-Butaro-Kidaho Road Project.
15. ▶ Government retained interest rate for General Provident Fund (GPF), Contributory Provident Fund and other related schemes at 8 % for the first quarter of current financial year. It will be applicable on provident funds of central government employees, railways and defence forces.
16. ▶ IDBI Bank launched 'NRI-Insta Online' account opening process for NRIs residing in Financial Action Task Force (FATF) member countries to open an account without visiting branch or submitting paper documents.
 1. FATF is an inter-governmental body founded in 1989, which sets standards to promote successful implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

17. ▶ Income tax department altered method for taxing multinational companies (MNCs) and digital firms with permanent establishment in India -
 1. CBDT Committee stated that MNCs that are suffering global losses or a global profit margin of less than 2% and have their operations in India will be considered to have made a profit of 2% of Indian revenue and will be taxed accordingly.
18. ▶ Insurance Firm Cholamandalam MS General Insurance Company Limited received ISO 31000:2018 certification by TUV India, for applying risk management system which conforms to prescribed standards.
19. ▶ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) granted Indiabulls Group the R1 licence for general insurance business..
20. ▶ Life Insurance Corporation(LIC) has been given 12 years from RBI for cut down stake in IDBI Bank, which is currently at 51 %.
 1. IRDAI claimed that LIC can take up to 15 % stake in any bank, which can stretch up to 30 %. But in 2018, regulator authorised LIC to hold up to 51 % in IDBI Bank.
 2. After 12 years, LIC has to decrease stake in IDBI Bank to bring it down to 40 %.
21. ▶ PAISALO Digital Limited signed first co-origination loan agreement with State Bank of India, as first such agreement by SBI. Loans between 10,000 to 2 lakh are available under this arrangement.
22. ▶ Payments Platform Google Pay partnered with Bullion refiner MMTC-PAMP India to initiate buying and selling of gold. Through this, Google Pay users will be able to buy 99.99 percent 24-karat gold for any value, which will be stored on behalf of the user in secure vaults by MMTC-PAMP.
23. ▶ RBI arm Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) launched a 5G Use Cases Lab for banking and financial sector. 5G technology, along with blockchain, will be progressively adopted by banks.
 1. Department Of Telecommunications had already launched test beds for 5G use in the academia in Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore to develop 5G for Indian use.
24. ▶ RBI issued Rs 50 denomination banknotes signed by current Governor Shaktikanta Das. The design of these notes is similar in all respects to Rs 50 banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi new series.
 1. It bears motif of 'Hampi with Chariot' on the reverse that depicts India's cultural heritage.
 2. It has the Ashoka pillar emblem on the right side of the obverse and bears year of printing on the reverse side.
 3. Note is fluorescent blue in colour. It has Width 135 mm AND Height 66 mm.
25. ▶ RBL Bank partnered with credit profiler CreditVidya to improve RBL's customer experience.
26. ▶ Retail arm of Reliance Industries, Reliance Retail became India's first retail company to cross the Rs.1 lakh crore annual revenue, with revenue for 2018-19 being INR 1,30,556.
27. ▶ Telecom Department approved merger of TTSL (Tata Teleservices Limited) consumer mobility business with Bharti Airtel, subject to condition that Airtel provides bank guarantees of about Rs. 7,200 crores.
 1. Merger will be taken on record after Airtel submits bank guarantee of about Rs 6,000 crore for one-time spectrum charges and another Rs 1,200 crore for spectrum that would be acquired from TTSL.
 2. Airtel will absorb Tata consumer mobile business (CMB) operations in 19 telecom circles (17 under TTSL and 2 under Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd).
 3. Merger will bolster Airtel's spectrum pool with significant additional 178.5 MHz spectrum in 1800, 2100 and 850 MHz bands, all widely used for 4G.

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International

1. ▶ Time 100 Most Influential Peoples' List 2019 -
 1. Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani, public-interest litigators Arundhati Katju and Menaka Guruswamy are Indians on the List. Arundhati Katju and Menaka Guruswamy spearheaded a historic legal battle for LGBTQ rights in India.
 2. Anand Mahindra (chairman of Mahindra Group) wrote profile of Mukesh Ambani for TIME 100 influential people. Actress Priyanka Chopra wrote profile for ArundhatiKatju and Guruswamy.
 3. List also includes Indian-American comedian and TV host Hasan Minhaj. It also Includes Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan.
2. ▶ 150 Indian peacekeepers serving with UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) were honoured with medals of honour by the United Nations for their dedicated service and sacrifice.
 1. Till Now, over 200,000 Indian Personnel have served under various peacekeeping missions of UN and 168 Indian military personnel have lost their lives under UN flag.

3. ▶ According to United Nations Population Fund Report -
 1. India's population grew to 1.36 billion at an average annual rate of 1.2% between 2010 and 2019 which stands more than double the annual growth rate of China.
 2. India's population is 1.36 billion in 2019, picking from 942.2 million in 1994 and 541.5 million in 1969.
 3. Compared to India, China's population has grown at an average annual rate of 0.5% between 2010 and 2019. Currently in 2019, China's population stands at 1.42 billion which has risen from 1.23 billion in 1994 and 803.6 million in 1969.
 4. In India, fertility rate per woman dropped from 5.6% in 1969 to 3.7% in 1994 to 2.3% in 2019. Life expectancy at birth was 47 years in 1969, 60 years in 1994 and now, 69 years in 2019, thus recording a thorough enhancement in life expectancy at birth.
 5. Maternal Mortality Ratio decreased from 488 deaths per 100,000 live births (in 1994) to 174 deaths per 100,000 live births (in 2015).
4. ▶ Apr 17 is observed as Mujibnagar Day in Neighbouring Nation Bangladesh, with tributes to Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. It marks formation of First provincial government of newly formed Bangladesh in 1971.
5. ▶ As per WHO's (World Health Organisation) list of 15 most polluted cities in the world -
 1. Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh) is the most polluted city in the world and is positioned 1 on the list.
 2. 14 of the 15 most polluted cities in the world are in India. Faridabad in Haryana is in 2nd position after Kanpur.
 3. Delhi is ranked 6th on the list.
6. ▶ As per a report, United Nations owes India USD 38 million, highest it has to pay to any country, for peacekeeping operations as of March 2019. total amount payable to countries for peacekeeping missions was USD 265 million. Of this, UN owes USD 38 million to India, followed by Rwanda (USD 31 million), Pakistan (USD 28 million), Bangladesh (USD 25 million) and Nepal (USD 23 million).
7. ▶ Asian Tea Alliance (ATA) has been opened in Guizhou (China). Its union of five tea-growing and consuming countries, aimed at boosting tea trade, cultural and technical exchanges as well as global promotion of tea. Alliance was constituted with Indian Tea Association, Indonesian tea Marketing Association, China tea marketing Association, Sri Lanka Tea Board and Tea Association.
8. ▶ Bhutan government sent bill for ratification of Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) initiative for road and rail connectivity to its upper senate, which aims at improving rail and road connectivity in the region. Agreement for BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement was signed by four member nations in June 2015.
 1. Bangladesh, India, and Nepal ratified the pact and agreed to start its implementation among the three signatory countries, with Bhutan joining after it ratifies the agreement.
9. ▶ China tested world's first armed amphibious drone boat which can be used in land assault operations and is capable of forming a combat triad with aerial drones and other drone ships. Built by Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group under China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC), its named Marine Lizard.
10. ▶ Forbes compiled its first-ever list of World's Best Banks 2019 in terms of customer services and technological advancements. In context of India, Top 5 Banks are - HDFC Bank (1), ICICI Bank (2), DBS (3), Kotak Mahindra Bank (4) and IDFC Bank (5).
 1. Syndicate Bank, PNB, Allahabad Bank, Vijaya Bank and Axis Bank were ranked from sixth to tenth respectively.
 2. India's largest public sector bank, State Bank of India (SBI), was ranked 11th by customers.
11. ▶ Google launched Anthos, a new open platform from Google Cloud. It allows users to run applications, unmodified, on existing on-premise hardware or on public cloud, based on Cloud Services Platform that Google announced in 2018.
12. ▶ Google launched its first African artificial Intelligence (AI) laboratory in Accra, capital city of Ghana, to tackle Africa's challenges.
13. ▶ Hong Kong's equity market overtook Japan to be world's third largest in value, behind U.S. and mainland China. Hong Kong Equity market cap was \$5.78 trillion, ahead of Japan's market cap of \$5.76 trillion.
14. ▶ India and Sweden launched a joint programme that will work towards addressing a range of challenges around smart cities and clean technologie, co-funded by Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Swedish agency Vinnova.
15. ▶ India became net importer of steel during FY 2018-19, For the first time in 3 years. Indian Steel exports fell by 34 % to 6.36 million tonnes in FY 2018-19. Indian Steel Imports During 2018-19 rose 4.7 % to 7.84 million tonnes.
16. ▶ India partnered with Japan and United Arab Emirates (UAE) to implement two projects in Africa. India will build a cancer hospital in Kenya in collaboration with Japan, while it will partner with UAE to set up an ICT centre in Ethiopia.
17. ▶ India will be Guest of Honour country at 2019 Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF) to in last week of April 2019 (29th edition). It aims to highlight UAE's rich heritage, and showcase its authenticity, cultural and literary output.
18. ▶ India's Haj Quota has been increased by Saudi Arabia, by about 25,000, raising number to 2 lakh from 1.75 lakh. Also, total 2,340 Muslim women from India will go for Haj without 'Mehram' or male companion. This year, GST on Haj pilgrimage has been

reduced from 18 % to 5 %.

19. ▶ International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Jointly launched a private blockchain with a pseudo-token, called “Learning Coin”. Its only accessible within IMF and World Bank, with a purpose to teach relevant individuals within organizations about blockchain.
20. ▶ Iran’s Parliament approved a bill labelling U.S. forces in the Middle East as terrorist groups, a few days after U.S. designation of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard as terrorist organisation formally took effect. IRGC’s designation as a terrorist group by US was first-ever designation for a Military division of another Nation.
21. ▶ Japan Based Firm Sony launched taxi-hailing service in Tokyo (Japan) named S.Ride, which uses artificial intelligence (AI) technology to predict where demand will be highest and dispatch drivers accordingly. S in S.Ride stand for simple, smart, and speedy.
22. ▶ Malaysia resumed a China-backed rail link project, after Chinese contractor agreed to cut the construction cost by one third to 10.6 billion USD, now costing approx \$33.8 billion.
 1. Project is 40 % owned by Malaysia government, will be developed with same consortium partners, Malaysian developer Iskandar Waterfront Holdings and China Railway Engineering Corp.
 2. It was initiated by the indebted 1MDB state investment fund in 2011 but it later sold a 60 percent stake to the consortium.]
23. ▶ Nepal launched its first satellite NepaliSat-1 into space, from USA. Two Nepali scientists, Aabhas Maskey and Hariram Shrestha, studying at Japanese Kyushu Institute of Technology, developed it under BIRDS project of their institute. NepaliSat-1 is a low orbit satellite which will be in 400-km distance from Earth's surface.
24. ▶ Parliament of New Zealand voted to ban all types of semi-automatic weapons and assault rifles following recent Christchurch attacks.
25. ▶ Person of Indian Origin (PIO) Keshav Raghvan will lead team CubeSat to be sent to space by NASA. CubeSat is a mini research satellite to detect cosmic rays, flown into space on future missions.
 1. Team's CubeSat BLAST (Bouchet Low-Earth Alpha/Beta Space Telescope) is named for physicist Edward A Bouchet, the first African American to receive a PhD in America.
 2. BLAST will contribute to ongoing search for origins and nature of cosmic rays, to provide an insight into origins of universe.
 3. CubeSats are miniature satellites intended as a standard, inexpensive design that can easily fit alongside larger satellites aboard launch vehicles. CubeSats are built from a modular structure of 10x10x10cm cubes and feature a wide variety of commercially available off-the-shelf components, designed to fit the structure from various manufacturers.
 4. NASA Ames launched its first CubeSat, GeneSat, in December 2006. Since then Ames has launched 16 CubeSat spacecraft varying in size from 1U to 3U with an additional 12 CubeSats in development or awaiting launch.
26. ▶ Sri Lanka launched its first satellite ‘Raavana-1’ into space from NASA’s Wallops Flight Facility on Virginia’s East Shore (USA). It weighs around 1.05 kg, with lifespan of 1.5 years. It was built at Kyushu Institute of Technology in Japan by two Sri Lankan research engineers.
27. ▶ Sudan's 3 decade long rulling president Omar al-Bashir has been removed and arrested following months of protests against him.
 1. Army general announced dissolution of government, suspension of the 2005 constitution, along with a three-month state of emergency.
 2. Protests started against al-Bashir in December 2018 when government stopped subsidies on wheat and fuel. Situation turned violent and engulfed capital Khartoum and major metropolitan areas.
 3. Government took a strong action against protesters by cracking down on protestors, killing over 49 people. President also declared a yearlong state of emergency and dissolved both central and state governments.
 4. All these actions by al-Bashir provoked the protests across country and the coup occurred.
28. ▶ UN labour agency International Labour Organisation (ILO) in its report *The Safety and the Health at the Heart of the Future of Work- Building on 100 years of Experience* termed Bhopal Gas Tragedy as one of world’s ‘major industrial accident’, which killed over 15,000 people due to result of at least 30 tons of highly toxic Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) gas leak in Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal in 1984.
29. ▶ US Department of Justice released special counsel Robert Mueller’s report, which looks into alleged Russian collusion in 2016 Presidential elections which saw incumbent US President Donald Trump rise to power. Report found Russian government-sponsored efforts to illegally interfere with 2016 presidential elections in US, but did not find that the Trump campaign or other Americans colluded in those schemes.
30. ▶ US President Donald Trump vetoed a bill passed by Congress to end US military assistance in Saudi Arabia-led war in Yemen. The veto, which is 2nd in Trump's presidency, was expected. He issued his first veto in March on a legislation related to

immigration.

1. Earlier in April 19, Congress had voted for first time to invoke the War Powers Resolution to try and stop US involvement in a foreign conflict.
31. ▶ US designated Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. This is first time that a state military entity has been designated as a terror group.
 1. Iran has two parallel land forces with some integration at the command level: the regular Artesh (Army), and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, also known as the Sepaah (IRGC). IRGC strength is approx 125000.
32. ▶ US lawmakers reintroduced a legislation named H R 2123 in House of Representatives, that seeks to strengthen US-India strategic relationship. If enacted, the new bill would ensure that the US State Department treats India as a NATO ally for the purposes of the Arms Export Control Act.
33. ▶ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) approved resolution to completely end its peacekeeping operations in Haiti on October 15, 2019.
 1. UN Peace Keeping Mission in Haiti was known as MINUSTAH, a French acronym which stood for "The United Nations is not leaving."
 2. MINUSTAH began operations in Haiti in 2004, when a violent rebellion swept country and forced then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide out of power and into exile.
34. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) released new recommendations on 10 ways through which countries can use digital health technology which is accessible via mobile phones, tablets and computers to improve people's health and essential services. Guideline underlines the importance of reaching vulnerable populations and ensuring that digital health does not endanger them in any way.
35. ▶ World Press Freedom Index 2019 report by Reporters Without Borders -
 1. Norway topped the index in third consecutive year. Top 5 - Norway (1), Finland (2), Sweden (3), Netherlands (4), Denmark (5)
 2. Bottom 5 - Vietnam (176th), China (177th), Eritrea (178th), North Korea (179th), Turkmenistan (180th)
 3. India drops by two positions (138th rank in 2018) to 140th in 2019 (out of 180 countries).
 4. Two African countries Ethiopia and Gambia have significantly improved their ranking from 150th to 110th and 122nd to 92nd respectively as compared to 2018.
 5. Neighbours - China (177th), Bangladesh (150), Pakistan (142), Sri Lanka (126th).
36. ▶ World's first privately funded lunar Mission Beresheet crash landed on Moon. It had problems with main engine during its descent that left it unable to slow down in time before it smashed into lunar surface. Beresheet was an Israeli mission launched by a partnership between nonprofit SpaceIL and government-owned aerospace company Israel Aerospace Industries.
37. ▶ World's largest airplane completed its first test flight, built by Stratolaunch (USA) in eight years. Stratolaunch was founded in 2011 by the late Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen.
 1. Its first flight duration was 2.5 hours at up to 5200 meter above sea level.
 2. The plane weighs about 227,000 kg and has the biggest wingspan ever built, measuring 118 meter from one end to the other. It can hold more than 113,000 kg of fuel.
 3. It is designed to carry nearly 250,000 kg between the two fuselages. It has 28 wheels.
 4. The plane is powered by six Pratt & Whitney engines, which were originally designed for Boeing 747s.

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Meetings

1. ▶ Saudi Arabia will host G20 summit in November 2020 in its capital Riyadh, as first G20 summit to be hosted in any of Arab nations. 2018 G20 meeting was held in Buenos Aires (Argentina).
2. ▶ United Arab Emirates (UAE) will host world's leading Artificial Intelligence (AI) Summit - AIE from April 30 to May 1, 2019. Its aim is to empower global dialogue on the future of government, business and society.

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National

1. ▶ Face of Disasters 2019 report released by the Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS), highlighting significant changes in climatic conditions across India. Extreme floods in unexpected locations during the Monsoons

are fast becoming a new normal in India.

2. ▶ As per a report submitted by Rajasthan forest department following directive of National Green Tribunal (NGT), there are about 150 Great Indian Bustards (GIBs) in Jaisalmer area of Desert National Park in Thar. The species is marked Critically Endangered by IUCN.
3. ▶ Assam's Rongali Bihu Festival has began, also known as 'Bohag Bihu'. It marks beginning of new Assamese calendar year.
 1. This festival is observed at almost same time as Baisakhi in Punjab, Poila Baisakh in Bengal, Puthandu in Tamil Nadu and Vishu in Kerala this year.
 2. In Assam, three Bihu festivals are celebrated in a year called as Rongali Bihu or Bohag Bihu, Bhogali (Magh Bihu) and Kangali (Kati Bihu) for marking the distinctive phase in the farming calendar.
4. ▶ Bamboo rice shown up in Odisha, after last witnessing it in 1979. Forest Authorities of Chandaka-Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary in Cuttack district have opened up the gates for the forest dwellers to collect Bamboo rice.
 1. Whenever bamboo rice shows up, it would be accompanied by the increase in the rat population which starts running over bamboo rice. To avoid this menace, forest authorities allowed forest dwellers to harvest Bamboo rice.
 2. Bamboo rice grows out of a dying bamboo shoot. Bamboo rice looks like paddy rice and tastes more like wheat. Bamboo rice is not commonly available as it takes many years for a bamboo tree to flower. Bamboo rice is believed to contain a low glycaemic index compared to other varieties and it is good for diabetics. It's rich in proteins and does not contain any fat.
5. ▶ CBSE will allow differently abled students to use magnifying glasses and portable video magnifiers during Class X final examination, from 2020, for questions having visual inputs.
6. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Apr 16, 2019) -
 1. General Approvals -
 1. Approved creation of one post of Deputy Comptroller & Auditor General (Coordination, Communication and Information System) in Pay Level-17 (by abolishing one STS level post) in Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India.
 2. Approved ongoing GSLV continuation programme Phase-4 consisting of five GSLV flights during the period 2021-2024 GSLV Programme - Phase 4 will enable launch of 2 tonne class of satellites for Geo-imaging, Navigation, Data Relay Communication and Space Sciences.
 1. Fund requirement is Rs. 2729.13 Crores.
 2. It will meet launch requirement of satellites for providing critical Satellite Navigation Services, Data Relay Communication for supporting Indian Human spaceflight programme and next interplanetary mission to Mars.
 2. MOUs -
 1. Brazil - Strengthen ties to work out future agenda for collaboration for innovation in Science & Technology diplomacy to evolve a concrete strategic plan in area of biotechnology education, training and research.
 2. South Korea - Joint issue of Postage Stamps on the theme "Queen Hur Hwang-ok of Korea".
 3. Denmark - Sector cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy with a focus on Offshore Wind Energy and a Letter of Intent to establish an Indo-Danish Centre of Excellence for renewable energy in India.
 4. Bolivia - Cooperation in Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy, Geology and Mineral Resources.
 5. Cambodia - Cooperation in field of Communications.
 3. CCEA Approvals -
 1. Approved proposal of Department of fertilisers to extend duration of New Urea Policy 2015 from April 1, 2019 till further orders. It would facilitate in continuation of operations of urea plants and ensure regular supply of urea to the farmers.
7. ▶ Delhi High Court has ruled that Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) prevails over Bankruptcy Act and insolvency code when it comes to attachment of properties obtained as 'proceeds of crime'.
 1. Enforcement Directorate (ED) had challenged orders of PMLA appellate tribunal on pleas of various banks. PMLA Tribunal held that third parties (banks in this case) have a superior claim over such properties.
 2. Delhi High Court stated that PMLA, Recovery of Debt and Bankruptcy Act (RDBA), Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest (SARFAESI) Act and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) must co-exist and be enforced in harmony.
8. ▶ Delhi High Court sought response from Cabinet Committee on Security on a plea seeking directions to remove dual control of Assam Rifles and bring it under Ministry of Defence.

1. Assam Rifles which is oldest paramilitary force of India. Its administrative control lies with Home Ministry, while operational control is with Defence Ministry. Plea filed by alleges dual control as violation of rights of troopers of Assam Rifles.
2. Plea filled by All India Assam Rifles Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association challenges Government (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 saying that it places Assam Rifles under the head 'Police', which is arbitrary and unreasonable.
9. ▶ Delhi Metro Started Operating trains on Solar Power, on Commencement of supply of 27 MW power from Madhya Pradesh-based Rewa Solar Power Project. DMRC aims to become world's first 100 % Solar Power Run Metro System.
10. ▶ General Conferences (Apr 11 - 20, 2019) -
 1. India's first-of-its-kind 'Voter Park' inaugurated in Gurugram (Haryana), aimed at increasing voter awareness and educating people about electoral process.
 2. 8th edition of Home Expo India 2019 opened at India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida (UP).
 3. Project Kannamma initiative launched by Rotary Club of Madras North to provide biodegradable sanitary napkins under the brand name, "Aavaram" to the girl students in government schools of Tamil Nadu.
 4. 4th Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific Congress 2019 organised by International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) in New Delhi. It aims to find innovative solutions to build resilience to climate change at sub-national level.
 5. India and Netherlands held Joint foreign office consultations held in New Delhi. India welcomed participation of Netherlands as partner country for 25th edition of CII-DST Tech Summit scheduled to be held in New Delhi in October 2019.
 6. World Allergy Week observed worldwide between 7th to 13th of April, 2019, with theme *The Global Problem of Food Allergy*.
 7. 21st ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) held at New Delhi to improve cooperation in maritime sector.
 8. National Fire Service Week observed between 14th - 20th April, observed Since 1968. 2019 theme is *Fire Prevention is better than Fire Fighting*.
11. ▶ Google and Apple blocked access to popular Chinese video app 'TikTok' on their app stores following refusal of Madras High Court to lift ban imposed on it in early April 2019.
 1. Court appointed Arvind P Datar as amicus curiae to assist Court in upcoming proceedings related to concerned ban.
 2. Earlier on April 3, 2019, Madras HC asked Government to ban TikTok, claiming it encouraged pornography and made child users vulnerable to sexual offenders. It came after an individual filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) calling for a ban.
12. ▶ Government approved proposal of Madhya Pradesh Government, to change name of a village in Madhya Pradesh from 'Durjanpur' to 'Shivdham', in Katni District of Madhya Pradesh.
13. ▶ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) partnered with the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) to map, validate and protect smaller wetlands in the coastal region and preserve them through coastal livelihood programmes.
 1. Smaller wetlands in India cover a total area of more than 5 lakh hectares, with Kerala alone having 2,592 smaller wetlands. Concerned MOU between CMFRI and ISRO will identify and separate various wetlands and conserve degraded wetlands through suitable livelihood options.
 2. A mobile app and a centralised web portal with a complete database of wetlands in country which were smaller than 2.25 hectares will be developed.
 3. Collaboration is part of the national framework for fisheries and wetlands recently developed under the National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA).
14. ▶ India's first exotic Bird Park 'EsselWorld Bird Park' launched by EsselWorld Leisure Pvt. Ltd. in Mumbai. It is home to over 500 exotic birds from more than 60 species of flying, terrestrial and aquatic birds and has 200 species of special plants and trees for the birds.
15. ▶ Ministry of Commerce and Industries urged Health Ministry to frame law banning manufacture and sale of e-cigarettes in the country, to put a blanket ban on its imports. Electronic cigarettes are devices that do not burn or use tobacco leaves but instead vaporise a solution, which a user then inhales. As per WHO, 30 countries have already banned Electronic cigarettes.
16. ▶ Ministry of External Affairs has set up an Indo-Pacific division in the foreign office, to give a coherent architecture to Indo-Pacific policy, which was articulated by PM Narendra Modi at the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018. Indo-Pacific Wing is currently headed by joint secretary Vikram Doraiswami. The division will integrate the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Asean region and the Quad to the Indo-Pacific table.
17. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs suspended LoC trade in Jammu & Kashmir, Between Indian Kashmir and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, amid reports that Cross LoC trade routes are being misused by the Pakistan based elements for funnelling illegal weapons, narcotics and fake currency etc.

1. LoC trade is meant to facilitate exchange of goods of common use between local populations across the LoC in Jammu & Kashmir. It is based on Barter system and zero duty basis.
18. ▶ MoU signed by Tata Trusts and Microsoft India for jointly rejuvenating handloom clusters in the eastern and north-eastern parts of India in order to build a digitally-inclusive society. Under Project 'ReWeave', Microsoft will help to preserve traditional weaving forms by upskilling workers, designing and marketing products, and creating sustainable livelihood options.
19. ▶ My Circle App was launched by Bharti Airtel in collaboration with FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO). It enables women to send SOS alerts to any five of their family or friends in 13 languages, as they face any problem or panic situation. SOS alert will send user's location over SMS to five contacts.
20. ▶ National Green Tribunal (NGT) formed a Central Monitoring Committee to prepare and enforce a national plan to make over 350 river stretches pollution free across country. It will also coordinate with River Rejuvenation Committees of states and oversee execution of action plans.
21. ▶ RailWire Wi-Fi by RailTel is now live at 1600 railway stations across country, with Santacruz railway station in Mumbai becoming the 1600th. RailWire It envisages extending broadband and application services to the public. RailTel.
22. ▶ Supreme Court Judge K.M. Joseph stated that Right to Information Act confers on ordinary citizens the 'priceless right' to demand information even in matters affecting national security and relations with a foreign state.
 1. This judgment countered claim made by government for privilege over Rafale purchase documents under Official Secrets Act (OSA), saying it affected national security and relations with France. Justice Joseph said Right to Information (RTI) Act overawes the OSA.
 2. Under Section 8(2) of RTI Act, government cannot refuse information if disclosure in public interest overshadows certain 'protected interests.'
23. ▶ Supreme Court banned all mining activities along the Kaziranga National Park and catchment area of rivers originating in Karbi Anglong Hills in Assam.
24. ▶ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) partnered with Google Cloud to build industry-specific cloud solutions. It will help enterprises build secure, cloud-native analytics platforms that enable high levels of personalization, and are cost-effective, easy to maintain, and future ready.

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Persons

1. ▶ NASA announced that astronaut Christina Koch is going to have her mission on International Space Station (ISS) extended to 328 days. She would set a record for longest single spaceflight by a woman.
 1. Christina Koch reached ISS on March 14, 2019. Now her stays is extended to February 2020. On completing it, she will break record for single longest spaceflight by a woman of 288 days set by retired astronaut Peggy Whitson in 2016-17 (288 Days).
2. ▶ Visits from India (Apr 11 - 20, 2019) -
 1. Navy Chief Sunil Lanba visited Thailand.

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Science

1. ▶ American researchers discovered a new method to build better performing Lithium-ion batteries that can be charged much quickly.
 1. Lithium-ion battery charges and discharges as lithium ions move between two electrodes, called anode and cathode. In a traditional lithium-ion battery, anode is made of graphite and cathode of lithium cobalt oxide. Researchers improved performance of lithium-ion battery by substituting cobalt oxide with vanadium disulfide (VS₂).
2. ▶ In Mariana Trench (Deepest part of Earth's oceans, approximately 11,000 metres) of Western Pacific Ocean, scientists (*from Ocean University in Qingdao, China and University of East Anglia in Norwich, England*) discovered a unique hydrocarbon degrading oil-eating bacteria that can help in sustainable ways of cleaning up man-made oil spills.
 1. Hydrocarbons are organic compounds that are made of hydrogen and carbon atoms, and are found mostly in crude oil and natural gas.
3. ▶ Last known female member of Yangtze giant softshell turtle, aged 90 years old, died in Suzhou Zoo, China. Now, only three members of this species are left in world. It has been declared world's most critically endangered turtle species.

4. ▶ NASA announced that SpaceX will fly its Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) planetary-defence mission, with total launch cost approx \$69 million. DART is a planned space probe that will demonstrate kinetic effects of crashing an impactor spacecraft into an asteroid moon for planetary defense purposes.
 1. The mission is intended to test whether a spacecraft impact could successfully deflect an asteroid on a collision course with Earth.
 2. DART will be will launched in June 2021. It will slam into “Didymoon,” 540-foot-wide (165 meters) satellite of near-Earth asteroid Didymos which is located at about 4 million miles from Earth in October 2022.
 3. Scientists will measure change in Didymoon’s orbit around the asteroid.
 4. Scientists hope to move it by just a fraction of a per cent off its path, which is enough to deflect any future asteroids off course since Didymos poses no threat to Earth.
5. ▶ NASA found long sought evidence of universe's earliest molecule, the helium hydride ion. Scientists found it in NGC 7027, a planetary nebula (a remnant of a Sun-like star) located 3,000 light-years away. NASA used its Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) to detect the primordial molecule.
 1. Scientists suspected that, around 100,000 years after big bang, helium and hydrogen combined to form the first molecule, helium hydride. That helped the universe begin to cool and led to the formation of stars. But, despite decades of searching, scientists could never locate helium hydride in space - until now.
6. ▶ NASA's Antares rocket lifted off to International Space Station, carrying the Cygnus Cargo Spacecraft. The Spacecraft carried about 7,600 pounds of supplies and scientific experiments to station.
7. ▶ NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) discovered an Earth-sized planet, HD 21749b and a “sub-Neptune” world, revolving around star HD 21749. It lies 53 light-years from Earth. HD 21749b is about 23 times heavier and 2.7 times wider than Earth. Its temperature is mostly around 150 degrees Celsius.
8. ▶ New technique named dual-PWS, has been developed by researchers to study the movement of cells without using labels or dyes. It also disclosed an undiscovered phenomenon that may play a role in earliest stages of cell death. New technique is a label-free and can image and measure macromolecular motion without using dyes.
9. ▶ Researchers at IIT Roorkee found a new method to detect breast and ovarian cancer which is responsible for one-fifth of the cancer-related death across world. As opposed to traditional method using blood samples, researchers used whole saliva as a body fluid for early detection of breast and ovarian cancers.
10. ▶ Researchers at San Diego State University (USA), detected new Neptune-to-Saturn size planet orbiting between two previously known planets Kepler-47b and Kepler-47c, using data from NASA’s Kepler Space Telescope. This new planet named as Kepler-47d. Its 7 times larger than Earth and also largest of 3 planets in Kepler-47 circumbinary system.
 1. Kepler-47 system is approximately 3.5 billion-years-old and it is 3,340 light years away in the direction of the constellation Cygnus.
 2. 3 Known planets in Kepler-47 are orbiting two suns.
11. ▶ Researchers at University of California (USA) created a 3D-printed device that that can produce electricity from falling snow. The device is small, inexpensive and does not need batteries, termed as snow-based triboelectric nanogenerator or snow TENG. It generates charge through static electricity and produces energy from electron-exchange.
12. ▶ Researchers at University of Wisconsin-Madison in US have manufactured a tiny spectrometer that can be used in smartphone-sized devices to identify dangerous chemicals based on a unique “fingerprint” of emitted and absorbed light. It uses hyperspectral imaging, collecting every information about each individual pixel in an image to identify materials.
13. ▶ Researchers from Tel Aviv University (Israel) have printed world’s first 3D vascularised engineered heart using a patient’s own cells and biological materials. During this, patient-specific biological materials served as bio-inks (substances made of sugars and proteins that can be used for 3D printing of complex tissue models).
 1. Even though people had managed to 3D-print structure of a heart in the past, but those attempts were not with cells or with blood vessels.
 2. The heart produced now by researchers is about the size of a rabbit’s.
 3. This underlines potential for engineering personalized tissue and organ replacement in the future.
 4. The challenge now is to teach the printed hearts “to behave” like real ones.
14. ▶ Saturn's largest moon Titan has small liquid lakes that run more than 100 metres deep, perched atop hills and filled with methane, scientists have found using data from NASA's Cassini spacecraft.
 1. Titan is only planetary body in our solar system other than Earth known to have stable liquid on its surface.

2. Titan's hydrologic cycle works similarly to Earth's - with one major difference. Instead of water evaporating from seas, forming clouds and rain, Titan does it all with methane and ethane.
 3. Scientists earlier knew that much larger northern seas are filled with methane, but finding smaller northern lakes filled mostly with methane was a surprise.
 4. Cassini arrived in Saturn system in 2004 and ended its mission in 2017 by deliberately plunging into Saturn's atmosphere. It mapped more than 1.6 million square kilometers of liquid lakes and seas on Titan's surface.
15. ▶ Scientists discovered a new human species '*Homo luzonensis*' in Philippines, with remains being between 67,000 years to 50,000 years old. It has 13 bones and teeth from two adults and one child found in a cave on island of Luzon in Philippines. Unlike *Homo sapiens*, whose premolar teeth generally have a single root, *Homo luzonensis*' premolars had two or three roots, similar to more primitive species such as *Homo erectus*, which lived in Africa and Asia between about 1.89 million and 143,000 years ago.
 1. It's quite possible that *Homo luzonensis* was smaller than *Homo sapiens*, and perhaps even smaller than *Homo floresiensis*, as the study's lead author Florent Détroit, a paleoanthropologist at Paris' Museum of Man.
 2. *Homo luzonensis* in many features hark back to australopithecines, upright-walking ape-like creatures that lived in Africa between two and four million years ago, as well as very early members of the genus *Homo*.
 16. ▶ Scientists from University of San Juan (Argentina) discovered a site containing fossils of nearly a dozen dinosaurs. It is 220 million year old and belonging to an unknown era.
 17. ▶ Successful birth of a baby using DNA from three people (2 Female, 1 Male) has been reported in Greece.
 1. A similar DNA switching technique was adopted in Mexico in 2016 to avoid transmission of a mother's hereditary illness to her child.
 2. But this case is unique owing to the fact that for the first time an IVF (in vitro fertilization) technique using DNA from three people has been deployed to allow a mother otherwise unable to conceive to have a child.
 18. ▶ US space flight company SpaceX carried out its first commercial launch with its Falcon Heavy rocket by placing a Saudi telecommunication satellite in orbit. This was also the first time that all three of the rocket's reusable boosters returned safely to Earth.
 1. With total 27 Merlin engines, Falcon Heavy rocket is capable of generating more than 5 million pounds (2.3 million kg) of thrust at liftoff, which is equal to about eighteen 747 aircraft or more than a dozen jetliners.
 2. The rocket can lift a total weight of 64 tons into orbit, which is just double of the lift capacity of operational vehicle 'Delta IV Heavy'.
 3. Falcon Heavy equals strength of 3 Falcon 9 rockets of SpaceX.

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Sports

1. ▶ 2019 Singapore Open (Badminton) -
 1. Men's Singles - Kento Momota (Japan). He defeated Anthony Sinisuka Ginting (Indonesia)
 2. Women's Singles - Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei). She defeated Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)
 3. Men's Doubles - Japan's Takeshi Kamura AND Keigo Sonoda
 4. Women's Doubles - Japan's Mayu Matsumoto AND Wakana Nagahara
 5. Mixed Doubles - Thailand's Dechapol Puavaranukroh AND Sapsiree Taerattanachai
2. ▶ 2019 U.S. Men's Clay Court Tennis Championship -
 1. Singles - Christian Garín (Chile). Christian Garin became the first Chilean to win an ATP Tour title in 10 years.
 2. Doubles - Santiago González (Mexico) AND Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi (Pakistan)
3. ▶ All India Tennis Association (AITA) has signed an MoU with Serbian Tennis Federation (STF) to train Indian junior players under world-renowned Serbian coaches.
4. ▶ Cologne Boxing World Cup 2019 (Germany) -
 1. India finished with a haul of five medals (1 Gold, 2 Silver and 2 Bronze).
 2. Meena Kumari Maisnam (54kg) won Gold. Sakshi (57kg) and Pwilao Basumatary (64kg) won silver medals and Pinki Rani (51kg), Parveen (60kg) won bronze medals.
 3. Cologne Boxing World Cup was earlier known as Chemistry Cup.
5. ▶ FC Goa (nicknamed *The Guard*) won 2nd edition of Hero Super Cup 2019 Football title, beating Chennaiyin FC at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

6. ▶ India's Harsheel Dani defeated Mads Christophersen of Denmark to win 20th Victor Dutch International Badminton title at Wateringen (The Netherlands).

7. ▶ Mercedes Racer Lewis Hamilton (UK) won Chinese Formula One Grand Prix 2019 -

1. Formula 1 Season 2019 -

Round	Grand Prix	Winner	date
1	Australian Grand Prix	Valtteri Bottas (Finland)	17 March
2	Bahrain Grand Prix	Lewis Hamilton (UK)	31 March
3	Chinese Grand Prix	Lewis Hamilton (UK)	14 April
4	Azerbaijan Grand Prix		28 April
5	Spanish Grand Prix		12 May
6	Monaco Grand Prix		26 May
7	Canadian Grand Prix		9 June
8	French Grand Prix		23 June
9	Austrian Grand Prix		30 June
10	British Grand Prix		14 July
11	German Grand Prix		28 July
12	Hungarian Grand Prix		4 August
13	Belgian Grand Prix		1 September
14	Italian Grand Prix		8 September
15	Singapore Grand Prix		22 September
16	Russian Grand Prix		29 September
17	Japanese Grand Prix		13 October
18	Mexican Grand Prix		27 October
19	United States Grand Prix		3 November
20	Brazilian Grand Prix		17 November
21	Abu Dhabi Grand Prix		1 December

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