



Current Affairs - December 2018

Month Type



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Appointments

- ▶ Government appointed Arti Chhabra Srivastava as first full-time Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of SEBI for 3 years.
- ▶ Government appointed Brijendra Pal Singh as President of FTII Society and Chairman of FTII Governing Council.
- ▶ Government appointed Pranab K. Das as Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), replacing S. Ramesh.
- ▶ Government appointed Shaktikanta Das as new (25th) Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for 3 years term. This appointment is made after Urjit Patel Resigned as RBI Governor recently. Mr. Patel is First RBI governor to resign before completion of term, which was to end in September 2019.
- ▶ Harsh Vardhan Shringla appointed as Ambassador of India to USA, replacing Navtej Sarna.
- ▶ India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Rajiv Mehrishi elected as Vice-Chair of United Nations (UN) Panel of Auditors. CAG of UK was also appointed as Chair of Panel for another term (2019).
- ▶ Indian National Congress announced that Bhupesh Baghel will be new chief minister of Chhattisgarh and Ashok Gehlot will be New Chief Minister of Rajasthan, after Congress won recent assembly elections 2018 in both states. All New CMs of 5 States who recent went for state assembly elections -
 1. Madhya Pradesh - Kamal Nath (Indian National Congress)
 2. Rajasthan - Ashok Gehlot (Indian National Congress), Sachin Pilot (Deputy CM)
 3. Telangana - K Chandrasekhar Rao (President of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS)). Its his 2nd consecutive term as CM.
 4. Chhattisgarh - Bhupesh Baghel (Indian National Congress)
 5. Mizoram - Zoramthanga (Mizo National Front (MNF)), Tawnluia (Deputy CM)
- ▶ Mizo National Front (MNF) President Zoramthanga sworn-in as new Chief Minister of Mizoram, after his party won recent state assembly elections 2018.
- ▶ President of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), K Chandrasekhar Rao, sworn-in as Chief Minister of Telangana for 2nd consecutive term, after his party won recent state assembly elections 2018.
- ▶ Ramphal Pawar has been appointed as Director in NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau).
- ▶ Ranil Wickremesinghe appointed as Prime minister of Sri Lanka by President Maithripala Sirisena, bringing an end to the weeks-long political crisis in country.
 1. Mr. Wickremesinghe was removed as Prime minister in October and was replaced by Mahinda Rajapaksa who resigned after failing to garner a majority in Parliament.
- ▶ Sandip Somany has been appointed as President of FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) for 2018-19. While, Uday Shankar is appointed as is Vice President of FICCI.
- ▶ Yes Bank named Brahm Dutt as bank's non-executive interim chairman, after Ashok Chawla resigned last month.

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Awards

- ▶ 23rd International Film Festival of Kerala held at Nishagandhi Auditorium (Kanakakunnu) -
 1. Crow Pheasant Award (Suvarna Chakoram) – Iranian film The Dark Room
 2. The Silver Crow Pheasant Award (Rajatha Chakoram) for best Director – Lijo Jose Pellissery

3. Audience Poll Award for Best Film – Malyalam Film Ee. Ma.Yau
 4. FIPRESCI Award – Zakariya’s Sudani from Nigeria
 5. Special Jury Mention Award – The Silence
2. ▶ Actress Sonam Kapoor named by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) as India’s Person of the Year 2018.
 3. ▶ Asian Academy Creative Awards (AAA’s) 2018 (held in Singapore). Notable winners are -

Category	Show	Winner
Best entertainment host/presenter	Bigg Boss	Salman Khan (<i>India</i>)
Best direction (fiction)	Netflix’s original series Sacred Games	Anurag Kashyap (<i>India</i>)
Best actress	Critical Eleven	Adinia Wirasti of Indonesia
Best Actor	The Hunter	Yu Hweiwei of China
Best Supporting Actor	Kenapa Harus Bule	Michael Kho of Indonesia
Best Supporting Actress	Roseki	Candy Yang of Taiwan

4. ▶ Author Amitav Ghosh honoured with 54th Jnanpith Award for 2018, an award for outstanding contribution to literature. Selection committee was chaired by novelist Pratibha Ray.
5. ▶ Catriona Gray of Philippines crowned as Miss Universe 2018, with pageant held in Bangkok (Thailand).
 1. 1st Runner-Up - Tamaryn Green (South Africa)
 2. 2nd Runner-Up - Sthefany Gutiérrez (Venezuela)
6. ▶ Eight parliamentarians honoured by Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu under Lokmat Parliamentary Awards 2018 -
 1. Lifetime achievement - Rajya Sabha MP Sharad Pawar and Murli Manohar Joshi
 2. Best Parliamentarian - Ghulam Nabi Azad AND Nishikant Dubey
 3. Best debut woman parliamentarian (Lok Sabha) - Hema Malini
 4. Best woman parliamentarian Lok Sabha - Rama Devi
 5. Best woman parliamentarian in Rajya Sabha - Kanimozhi
 6. Best debut woman parliamentarian (Rajya Sabha) - Chhaya Verma
7. ▶ Government will confer Prime Minister’s Shram Awards 2017 to 40 workers employed in Public Sector Undertakings. This year, no nomination was found suitable for prestigious Shram Ratna Award. 3 nominations for Shram Bhushan Award, 12 for Shram Vir/Shram Veerangana and 16 for Shram Shree/Shram Devi Awards have been selected.
8. ▶ Indian American Producer Ashok Amritraj honoured with French Knight of the National Order of Merit. He is former CEO of National Geographic Films and United Nations Goodwill Ambassador.
9. ▶ Indian-American Shree Saini crowned Miss India Worldwide 2018 at annual global pageant held in New Jersey (USA), Organised by New York-based India Festival Committee (IFC). Sakshi Sinha from Australia declared as first runner-up.
10. ▶ Manika Batra became first Indian table tennis player to be honored with ‘Breakthrough Table Tennis Star’ award at ITTF Star Awards in Incheon (South Korea). Other Awardees at event are -
 1. Star Point - Xu Xin (China)
 2. Female Para Table Tennis star - Kelly van Zon (Netherlands)
 3. Male Para Table Tennis star - Jordi Morales (Spain)
 4. Star Coach - Massimo Costantini (Italy)
 5. Female Table Tennis Star - Ding Ning (China)
 6. Male Table Tennis Star - Fan Zhendong (China)
11. ▶ Manipur Government honored Noted Boxer MC Mary Kom with title “Meethoileima” (par excellence queen).
12. ▶ Novak Djokovic (Serbia) and Simona Halep (Romania) named as 2018 International Tennis Federation (ITF) world champions by International Tennis Federation (ITF). It is Djokovic's 6th honour and Halep's first time with this honour.
13. ▶ Sascha Bajin (coach of Naomi Osaka (Japan)) became first-ever recipient of Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) Coach of the Year Award.
14. ▶ Singers Shaan and Arijit Singh honored with *Sangeet Maha Samman* award by West Bengal government at inaugural session of Bengal music and folk culture festival in Kolkata.
15. ▶ Star Screen Awards 2018 Winners -
 1. Best Actor - Ranveer Singh for Padmaavat
 2. Best Actress - Alia Bhatt for Raazi
 3. Best Director - Sriram Raghavan for Andhadhun
 4. Best Film - Stree

5. Best Actor in Supporting Role (Male) - Pankaj Tripathi for Stree
6. Best Actor in Supporting Role (Female) - Surekha Sikri for Badhaai Ho
7. Lifetime Achievement - Shabana Azmi
8. Best Music - Amit Trivedi for Manmarziyaan
9. Best Male Playback singer - Arijit Singh for Ae Watan from Raazi
10. Best Lyrics - Gulzar for Ae Watan from Raazi
11. Best Female Singer - Harshdeep Kaur for Dilbaro from Raazi

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Books

1. ▶ Book *Changing India* written by Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has been released.
2. ▶ Book *Of Counsel: The Challenges of the Modi-Jaitley Economy*, written by Former Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) Arvind Subramanian has been released.
3. ▶ Book on self-styled godman Asaram Bapu titled '*God of Sin: The Cult, The Clout and Downfall of Asaram Bapu*', has been released. It is Authored by Ushinor Majumdar.
4. ▶ Prime Minister Narendra Modi released book titled *Timeless Laxman*, based on noted cartoonist RK Laxman, containing his work over the years. It has been written by R K Laxman's daughter-in-law Usha Srinivas Laxman.

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Committees

1. ▶ Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) created of a 12 member committee headed by S K Dash for a fresh cadre review and restructuring of Income Tax Department.
2. ▶ Government constituted a Group of Ministers headed by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley to vet recommendations of a high-level panel on stressed power projects, which was headed by Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha and had submitted its report last in November 2018.
3. ▶ Government constituted a panel to select managing directors of public sector insurance companies, to be headed by Banks Board Bureau (BBB) chairman B P Sharma.
4. ▶ 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.

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Days

1. ▶ Dec 11 - International Mountain Day, established by UN General Assembly in 2003. 2018 theme is *Mountains Matter*. Dec 11 is also formation day of UN Body UNICEF.
2. ▶ Dec 12 - International Universal Health Coverage Day, proclaimed In 2017 by UN. 2018 theme is *Unite for Universal Health Coverage: Now is the Time for Collective Action*. Dec 12 is also noted as International Day of Neutrality after, adopted by UN General Assembly in 2017.
3. ▶ Dec 14 - National Energy Conservation Day in India.
 1. On this occasion, Ministry of Power launched ECO Niwas Samhita 2018 , an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings launched Implementation of this Code expected to save 125 Billion Units of electricity per year by 2030, which is equivalent to 100 million ton of CO2 emission.
 1. Initially, Part-I of Code is launched that prescribes minimum standards for building envelope designs with purpose of designing energy efficient residential buildings.
 2. It is estimated that energy demand in the building sector will rise from around 350 billion units in 2018 to approximately 1000 billion units by 2030.
 2. On this occasion, 26 industrial units got National Energy Conservation Awards for excellent performance in energy efficiency.
4. ▶ Dec 15 is observed as International Tea Day. On this occasion, Indian Tea Association (ITA) signed MoU with China Tea Marketing Association (CTMA).

5. ▶ Dec 16 - Observed as Vijay Diwas in India, marking India's military victory over Pakistan in 1971 during war for independence of Bangladesh. War resulted in unconditional surrender of 93000 Pakistan Army Soldiers and subsequent secession of East Pakistan into Bangladesh.
6. ▶ Dec 18 - International Migrants Day. 2018 theme is *Migration with Dignity*. It is also noted as UN World Arabic Language Day.
7. ▶ Dec 18 - Minorities Rights Day in India.
8. ▶ Dec 19 is Liberation Day of Goa. It marks state's getting independence from 450-years of Portuguese rule on this day in 1961. Operation Vijay was completed by Indian Forces liberating Territories of Goa, Daman and Diu and the Anjadiv Island and from Portuguese rule.
9. ▶ Dec 20 - International Human Solidarity Day.

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Defence

1. ▶ 4th Edition of India-USA Joint Air Force Exercise *Cope India-18* conducted at Kalaikunda and Panagarh Air Force bases in West Bengal.
2. ▶ 10th edition of Russia and India Joint Navy Exercise INDRA NAVY 2018 conducted off Visakhapatnam coast.
3. ▶ IN LCU L55 has been commissioned into Indian Navy, as 5th ship of Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Mk-IV class. It is indigenously built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Kolkata.
4. ▶ Indian Air Force (IAF) concluded exercise codenamed CROSS BOW 18 at Suryalanka in Andhra Pradesh.
5. ▶ Indian Air Force's ASTE (Aircraft & Systems Testing Establishment) flew India's first military flight using blended bio-jet fuel on the An-32 transport aircraft. This fuel is made from Jatropa oil sourced from Chattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP Dehradun. IAF intends to fly An-32 transport aircraft using biojet fuel on 26 January 2019, in Republic Day flypast.
6. ▶ Indian Coast Guard launched an exercise along serene sea waters of Gahirmatha marine sanctuary in Odisha to protect endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles, named 'Operation Oliva'.
7. ▶ Indian Navy's first flyaway Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System inducted at Naval Dockyard Mumbai.
 1. New Submarine rescue system was needed as traditional methods of search and rescue at sea are ineffective for a disabled submarine.
 2. Indian Navy's Deep Sea Submarine Rescue System considered to be the most advanced system currently in operation globally, which is capable of undertaking rescue from a disabled Submarine upto 650 m depth.
8. ▶ Supreme Court gave clean chit to Central government for purchase of 36 Rafale fighter Jets from Dassault Aviation (France), stating nothing wrong found in purchase of 36 fighter jet instead of 126 from France.
 1. Dassault Rafale won MMRCA competition in January 2012 to supply 126 Jet aircraft with additional 63 aircraft to Indian Air Force. First 18 aircrafts were to be supplied by Dassault and remaining were to be manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.
 2. Dassault refused to ensure quality of aircraft produced by HAL. In 2014, price of deal increased to \$30 billion. This created price issue and deal couldn't be signed.
 3. Thereafter, New central government confirmed the deal for 36 multirole fighter aircraft of 58000 crores from France's Dassault Aviation.

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Economy

1. ▶ Amazon partnered with Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME) to encourage Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to sell products online through e-commerce.
2. ▶ Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched *ENSURE- National Livestock Mission-EDEG* Portal developed by NABARD.
 1. Government Launched National Livestock Mission for sustainable development of livestock sector. Under Mission's component called Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG), subsidy payment for activities related to poultry, small ruminants, pigs etc. goes directly to beneficiary's account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
 2. ENSURE Portal is developed to make the process simpler and more transparent (URL <https://ensure.nabard.org>), so that information related to beneficiary and processing of application can be made readily available.

3. ▶ Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has added 2 new currencies (Korean Won (WON) and Turkish Lira (TRY)) into list of currencies whose Rate of Exchange it notifies for purpose of conversion of foreign exchange to Indian Rupees (INR) and vice versa for assessment of imports & exports. Now, number of currencies in list has gone up to 22.
 1. South Korea and Turkey are both Important Trade partners for India as Trade between India-South Korea grew to \$16.36 Billion during 2017-18 from \$12.59 Billion in 2016-17 and India - Turkey trade stood at US \$ 7.2 Billion during 2017-18.
 2. This Inclusion of 2 new currencies will facilitate trade & business by easing process of conversion of these currencies into INR and vice versa. It will also help exporters claim benefits of Merchandise Export Incentive Scheme (MEIS) easily, as rates of TKY and WON will be readily available on realization date of remittances.
4. ▶ Global financial Firm OBOPAY launched a new generation pre-payment instrument called- OBOPAY Card-in partnership with Federal Bank and Mastercard. It aims to be one-stop solution that facilitates easy disbursements and payments by enterprises.
5. ▶ Government moved proposal in Parliament for enhanced bank recapitalisation outlay from 65,000 crore to 1,06,000 crores in current financial year, to strengthen PSU Banks. The enhanced provision is aimed at -
 1. Meeting regulatory capital norms
 2. Providing capital to better-performing PCA Banks to achieve 9% Capital to Risk-weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR); 1.875% Capital Conservation Buffer and 6% Net NPA threshold, facilitating them to come out of PCA
 3. Facilitating non-PCA banks that are in breach of some PCA thresholds to not be in breach
6. ▶ IDFC Bank completed its merged with non-banking financial company Capital First, making a new entity called *IDFC First Bank*, with loan asset book of 1.03 lakh crores. V Vaidyanathan is appointed as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of new entity.
7. ▶ India signed \$31 million Loan Agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) to build-up State Tourism Industry and boost visitor arrivals in Tamilnadu.
8. ▶ India signed \$60 Million Loan Agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) to continue financing riverbank protection works and community-based flood risk management activities in flood-prone areas along Brahmaputra River in Assam. This Tranche 2 loan is part of \$120 million financing facility for Assam Integrated Flood and Riverbank Erosion Risk Management Investment Program approved by ADB in October 2010.
9. ▶ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) stated that customers would be covered under standalone compulsory personal accident (CPA) from January 1, 2019. IRDAI introduced standalone PA cover where a single PA cover can be taken for multiple vehicles.
 1. In September 2018, IRDAI raised minimum insurance cover for owner-driver to 15 lakh from 1 lakh for an annual premium of 750.
10. ▶ Jana Small Finance Bank launched Jana bankable Debit Card, in association with Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), designed for cricket fans and offers several related deals.
11. ▶ RBI allowed Bandhan Bank to open as many as 40 new branches by end of 2018, releasing restriction that was put on Bandhan bank 3 months back.
 1. RBI barred bank from opening new branches in September after It failed to bring down main shareholder's stake to below 40 % as mandated in licensing norms for universal banks.
 2. Bandhan Financial Services (BFSL) the promoter of Bandhan Bank, currently holds 82.28 % stake in bank.

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International

1. ▶ As per International Monetary Fund, global debt reached an all-time high of 184 trillion US dollars with USA, China and Japan accounted for over half of it. On average, world's debt exceeds 86,000 USD dollars per person, which is over 2.5 times average income per-capita.
2. ▶ As per the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) report, FDI inflows to South and South-West Asia decreased by 6% in 2017 (USD 63 billion), due to drop in foreign funding flow to countries like India and Turkey.
3. ▶ Australia formally recognized West Jerusalem as capital of Israel, becoming one of few countries to do so (Including USA). However, it will not move its embassy from Tel Aviv until a peace settlement is reached.
4. ▶ Central Asian Nation Kazakhstan opened a consulate in Gujarat to enhance development of mutually beneficial cooperation between Kazakhstan and India.
5. ▶ Central Indonesia's Mount Soputan volcano erupted with ash going upto 7.5 km high in sky.

1. Indonesia is highly prone to earthquakes and volcanoes as it is located on *the Pacific Ring of Fire*, a major area in Pacific Ocean, spread approx 25000 miles. 75% of world's volcanoes are located in this region.
6. ▶ European Parliament approved a free trade agreement between Japan and EU, covering 63.5 crore people and almost 33% of world's economy, known as world's largest free trade agreement. EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement will remove duties on almost all agricultural and industrial products as well as open up service sector and procurement, eliminating all non-tariff barriers for trade.
7. ▶ European Union (EU) established India's first Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (CoE) at Department of European Studies (DES) at Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) in New Delhi. It comes with grant of €1,00,000 to pursue India-EU interdisciplinary studies in culture, literature, education and society. This is for fifth time MAHE has been awarded grants under Erasmus+Jean Monnet initiative.
8. ▶ Government launched information fusion centre (IFC) to boost maritime security and Information exchange in Indian Ocean Region (IOR), set up by Indian Navy at Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in Gurugram (Haryana).
 1. IFC-IOR will share information on "white shipping", or commercial shipping with the countries in the region to improve maritime security and tackling piracy and terrorism in Indian Ocean. Those countries will be served that have White Shipping Information Exchange agreements with India. (21 countries so far).
 2. IFC will generate a seamless real-time picture of the nearly 7,500-km coastline of India by linking all coastal radar chains.
 3. India also recently signed ascension agreement to Trans Regional Maritime Network (T-RMN), that will allow information exchange on movement of commercial ships on high seas. T-RMN agreement is being steered by Italy.
9. ▶ India signed ascension pact to 30-member Trans-Regional Maritime Network that will give it an access to information on ships passing through Indian Ocean Region. India already has bilateral White Shipping Agreements with 36 countries.
10. ▶ India's Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) partnered with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), National Institutes of Health (USA), to become a member of NIAID TB Portals program.
11. ▶ Indian Short Film *Period. End of Sentence* made it Oscar shortlist in Documentary Short Subject category. Its about women in India fighting against deeply rooted stigma of menstruation and delving upon work of real-life 'Pad Man' Arunachalam Muruganantham. India's entry for the Foreign Language Film Category, Village Rockstars is out of Oscar race.
12. ▶ Ireland parliament passed a landmark legislation to make abortion legal in country. Note that in 2012, an Indian dentist died in Ireland, from blood poisoning in 2012 when doctors refused her repeated requests to abort the foetus.
13. ▶ Israel became a full member of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an international body set up to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other threats to international financial system.
14. ▶ Nepal banned Indian currency above Rs 100 (Including New Indian notes of Rs 2,000, Rs 500 and Rs 200 denominations). It can affect Indian tourist and Nepali people working in India, who carry currency in Nepal for transaction.
15. ▶ Netherlands (Northwestern Europe) has built 5 artificial islands to bring wildlife back, in Markermeer, one of Europe's largest freshwater lakes.
16. ▶ Russia's Akademik Lomonosov, world's first floating nuclear power plant (FNPP) become operational. For power generation, it has been fitted with two modified KLT-40 naval propulsion nuclear reactors (each of 35 MW capacity) together providing up to 70 MW of electricity and 300 MW of heat. It is named after Russian Academician Mikhail Lomonosov.
17. ▶ Swedish think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) announced that Russia has emerged as world's second-largest arms producer after USA. Russia surpassed Britain for the 2nd spot. Report also said that 4 Indian PSUs ranked among top 100 arms producers globally - Indian Ordnance Factories (37th), Hindustan Aeronautics (38th), Bharat Electronics (64th), Bharat Dynamics (94th).
18. ▶ UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan declared 2019 as Year of Tolerance, an extension of the Year of Zayed which has run in 2018. In 2016, UAE introduced first post of Minister of State for Tolerance and launched National Tolerance Programme.
19. ▶ UN General Assembly adopted a framework to strengthen international response to global refugee crisis, with USA and Hungary only nations to have voted in against the Global Compact on Refugees.
20. ▶ US Based Merriam-Webster declared 'Justice' as its 2018 Word Of The Year.
 1. Earlier, 'Toxic' was chosen as 'Word of the Year 2018' by Oxford Dictionaries. Also, Dictionary.com chosen *misinformation* as its word of the year.
21. ▶ US Senate approved ending US military support for Saudi-led coalition in Yemen's civil war.
22. ▶ Ukraine approved ending two-decade-old treaty on friendship, cooperation and partnership between Ukraine and Russia. Treaty will be terminated on April 1, 2019 amid rising tensions between two countries.

23. ▶ World Bank report titled *In the Dark: How Much Do Power Sector Distortions Cost South Asia*. As per the report -
1. Efficiency gap in India's power sector costs the Indian economy 4% every year (\$86 billion in 2016 FY).
 2. Rural household's income in India can be increased by \$9.4 billion and business losses worth USD 22.7 billion can be eliminated with 24 hours access to power supply. In 2016, around 20% of electricity generated was lost during transmission and distribution, as highest loss rate in world.
 3. The consumption of groundwater in India has increased by 700% from 1950 to 2014.
 4. Reliable access to electricity will have positive impact on Gender Equality by increasing women's employment and girls' study time. It will lead to lower use of kerosene lamps which would improve environment. Energy prices should be rationalised to reflect actual cost of supply.
24. ▶ World Economic Forum Gender Gap Index 2018 -
1. India ranked at 108th position, same rank as 2017.
 2. Top 10 - Iceland (1), Norway (2), Sweden (3), Finland (4), Nicaragua (5).

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Meetings

1. ▶ 24th meeting of Conference of Parties (COP-24) to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held at Katowice (Poland). Main Objective of COP 24 is to finalise guidelines for implementation of Paris Agreement adopted in 2016, to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius.
1. India at COP 24 -
 1. On Behalf of India, it was attended by Environment Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan.
 2. India has ambitious goal of generating 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022, with achievement of 72 GW renewable energy by 2018.
 3. During COP-24, India has set up a Pavilion to create awareness about India's positive climate actions in various sectors of economy, themed as *One World One Sun One Grid*.
 4. NABARD signed loan agreement worth USD 100 mn with Green Climate Fund (GCF) to boost rooftop solar power capacity projects through private sector participation. Total corpus of project is USD 250 mn, to be executed by Tata Cleantech Capital Ltd.
 5. Uttar Pradesh based startup HelpUsGreen honored by UN for its works to clean River Ganga by recycling tonnes of floral waste. UN presented the award to 14 other countries along with India at Nations Climate Action award ceremony during UN Climate Change Conference (COP 24).
 1. HelpusGreen collects floral waste daily from the temples. These flowers are then recycled to produce charcoal free incense, organic vermicompost and biodegradable packaging material through Flowercycling technology. It cycled 11060 metric tonnes of temple waste, through women working with startup.
 2. Over 800 million metric tonnes of flowers are used in temples and these flowers are thrown into Ganga river.
 2. Other Facts About COP 24 -
 1. World Bank unveiled US \$200 billion in climate action investment for 2021 to 2025 to fight impact of climate change, comprising of approx 100 billion direct finance from World Bank.
 2. Climate Change Performance Index 2019 was released on the sidelines of COP24 UN Summit in Katowice. The index was produced by the New Climate Institute, Climate Action Network and Germanwatch.
 1. No countries were in top three ranks because none did well in all categories assessed.
 2. Sweden topped the list with 4th rank, followed by Morocco in 5th position.
 3. European Union as a whole rose from 21st to 16th place. But Germany fell from 22nd to 27th because of its reliance on lignite coal, a big source of greenhouse gas emissions.
 4. Bottom ranked - Saudi Arabia (60), USA(59), Iran (58), Korea (57), Chinese Taipei (56),Australia (55),Canada (54),Russian Federation (52),Turkey (50),Japan (49).
 5. India ranked 11th. China ranked 33. Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar were not assessed.
 3. World Bank released report named *Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE) 2018* . Number of countries with strong policy frameworks for sustainable energy more than tripled,from 17 to 59 in 8 years till 2017.
 1. RISE 2018 charts global progress on sustainable energy policies and shows that policies matter – they are a leading indicator and building block of the world's transition to sustainable energy.

4. *Katowice package*, the rulebook for implementation of 2015 Paris climate agreement, was signed during this conference.

1. One of key components is a detailed transparency framework to promote trust among nations. It sets out how countries will provide information about Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), including reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Sets a way to decide on ambitious funding targets from 2025 onwards from current commitment to mobilise USD 100 billion per year as of 2020 in support of climate action in developing countries.
3. Nations agreed to collectively assess effectiveness of climate action in 2023, and finalised procedure to monitor and report progress on the development and transfer of technology.
4. Countries can now establish the national systems that are needed for implementing Paris Agreement by 2020.
5. Main issues still need to be resolved such as use of cooperative approaches, and sustainable development mechanism. Resolution of these issues would allow countries to meet a part of their domestic mitigation goals through use of *market mechanisms*.
6. These negotiations will be taken up at UN climate change conference, COP25, set to take place in Chile in November 2019.

3. About -

1. UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) is international environmental treaty negotiated at Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and entered into force in 1994. It is parent treaty of 1997 Kyoto Protocol which was ratified by 192 of the UNFCCC Parties.
 1. Objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas (GHGs) concentrations at a level, to prevent dangerous human interference with climate system.
2. Conference of Parties (COP)COP is supreme decision-making body of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). At COP, all parties review implementation of Convention and take decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of Convention.

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National

1. ▶ 3-day AdventureNext 2018 event, concluded in Madhya Pradesh, organised by *The Adventure Travel Trade Association* as first-of-its-kind in India & Asia, with theme *Pulse of Tomorrow*. Major partner was Jharkhand Tourism.
2. ▶ 3rd edition of Women Transforming India Awards organized by NITI Aayog in New Delhi. NITI Aayog also launched upgraded portal of Women Entrepreneurship Platform. 2018 theme is – *Women and Entrepreneurship* and 15 winners have been selected.
3. ▶ 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*.
 1. Contemporary artists Bose Krisnamachari and Riyaz Komu proposed state government the idea of Biennale on the lines of Venice Biennale.
4. ▶ Assam government announced three schemes for the welfare of farmers. -
 1. Assam Farmers' Credit Subsidy Scheme (AFCSS) - Under it, 25% of amount of Farmer Loans will be reimbursed by state government, upto 25000.
 2. 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.
 3. 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.
5. ▶ Ayushmann Khurrana and Tabu starrer *AndhaDhun* as top Indian movie of 2018 by global film and TV website IMDb.
6. ▶ Cabinet Approvals (Dec 17, 2018)-
 1. MOUs -
 1. France - New and renewable energy.
 2. Afghanistan - Human resource development.
 3. 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*.

4. Australia - Disability Sector.

2. General Approvals -

1. 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).

3. CCEA Approvals -

1. 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*).

1. 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.

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

2. 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 crore\$. 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.

3. 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.

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

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

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

4. Facts -

1. 102 of such blocks are already having EMRSs. Thus, 462 new EMRSs will be established in these blocks across country.
2. Increase in construction cost of EMRS from current 12 crore to 20 crore to improve construction quality.
3. Recurring cost to be enhanced to 109000 per student per year from existing 61500 per student per year from 2019-20.

7. ▶ 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.

1. One of noted features of revised guidelines is introduction of Water Conservation Fee (WCF), fee charged on extraction of ground water. It will vary between areas, and may progressively increase from safe to over-exploited areas and from low to high water consuming industries.

2. 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.

3. Ground water extraction in India is primarily for irrigation in agricultural activities, approx 228 Billion Cubic Meters, which amounts to 90 % of annual ground water extraction.

8. ▶ Cyclonic Storm Phethai struck 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.

9. ▶ Delhi High Court banned online sale of medicines by e-pharmacists across country, till proper regulations are set in place.

10. ▶ Delhi Police entered Limca Book of Records for training 208125 women and girls in 989 self-defence programme in 2017. Self-defence programme of Delhi Police was started in 2002. Delhi Police have set a target to train around 3.5 lakh women in 2019.

11. ▶ Delhi government launched a 10-day special inspection drive named- "Operation Minimum Wage", to check implementation of minimum wage rules set by state government. Violation would be checked as per Minimum Wages Act 2017 and labourers can lodge a complaint by calling 155214.

12. ▶ 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 -
 1. Best Performer - Gujarat
 2. Top Performers - Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, and Rajasthan
 3. Leaders - Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana
 4. Aspiring Leaders - Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal
 5. Emerging States - Assam, Delhi, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand
 6. Beginners - Chandigarh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Sikkim, and Tripura
13. ▶ 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.
14. ▶ Foundation stone of Institute of High-Altitude Medicinal Plants (IHAMP) laid in Baderwah in Doda district of Jammu & Kashmir. It will provide research in medicinal plants and promote cultivation of medicinal plants.
15. ▶ General Conferences (Dec 11 - 20, 2018) -
 1. 39th Gulf Cooperation Council Summit held in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia). Next (40th) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit will be held in UAE.
 2. 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.
 3. 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.
 4. 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).
 5. All India Institute of Ayurveda New Delhi organized a National conference 'AYUSHCHARYA' on Dinacharya (Daily Regimen) and Ritucharya (Seasonal Regimen) for public health promotion.
16. ▶ 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.
 1. 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.
 2. 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.
 3. Licences for IFMC will be granted for an annual fee of Rs. 1 for a period of 10 years.
17. ▶ 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.
18. ▶ Himachal Pradesh assembly adopted a resolution to declare cow as the "rashtra mata" or 'mother of the nation', to boost cow protection efforts in State.
19. ▶ 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.
20. ▶ Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) approved registration of record 15 new breeds of livestock and poultry in 2018. Newly registered breeds include -
 1. 2 cattle breeds – Ladakhi (J&K) and Konkan Kapila (Maharashtra & Goa)
 2. 3 buffalo breeds – Luit (Assam & Manipur), Bargur (Tamil Nadu), Chhattisgarhi (Chhattisgarh);
 3. 1 sheep breed – Panchali (Gujarat)
 4. 6 goat breeds – Kahmi (Gujarat), Rohilkhand (UP), Assam Hill (Assam & Meghalaya), Bidri (Karnataka), Nandidurga (Karnataka), Bhakarwadi (J&K)
 5. 1 pig breed – Ghurrah (UP)
 6. 1 donkey breed – Halari (Gujarat)

7. 1 chicken breed – Uttara (Uttarakhand).

21. ▶ 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.
22. ▶ India's largest Cancer Institute named National Cancer Institute (NCI) opened in Jhajjar (Haryana), to be formally inaugurated in January 2019 for public services. It will be headed by G.K. Rath. NCI is built at cost of Rs 2035 crores, and will act as the nodal institution for all cancer-related activities in India.
23. ▶ International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) launched Certification with high security features in order to prevent use of forged certificates, as first such initiative by any automotive certification agency in India for enhancing security of CMVR certificates which includes Type Approval Certificates (TAC) and Conformity of Production (COP) Certificates for vehicles, engines and components.
 1. With new high security features it will become difficult to forge or counterfeit the ICAT certificate.
 2. ICAT is premier certification agency authorized by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) for providing testing and certification services to vehicle and component manufacturers within India and abroad.
24. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir assembly passed law to ban sexual extortion of woman in offices and became first Indian state to amend law on Sextortion.
 1. 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.
 2. 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.
25. ▶ Kaiga Atomic Power Station in Karnataka has set a new world record, with one of its units operating uninterrupted for more than 940 days. This is a record for all kinds of nuclear power-generating units, including advanced gas-based reactors globally.
26. ▶ 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.
27. ▶ 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.
 1. 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.
28. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has launched Twitter account @CyberDost to spread awareness about cybercrimes and normal precautions to be taken.
29. ▶ 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).
30. ▶ MoRD (Ministry of Rural Development) signed MOU with Maruti Suzuki India Ltd for training rural youth for skill development in presence of Hon'ble Minister Shri. Narendra Singh Tomar. This partnership between the government and the leading industry from the automotive sector will provide training to atleast 5000 candidates in two years with assured placement to the rural youth of our country
31. ▶ 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.
32. ▶ 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 .

1. 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.
2. 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.
33. ▶ President's rule has been imposed in Jammu and Kashmir, after President Ram Nath Kovind signing a proclamation to implement recommendation of state Governor Satya Pal Malik for the same.
34. ▶ 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.
35. ▶ Punjab Assembly passed a resolution for seeking 30% reservation for women in Parliament and State legislative assembly.
36. ▶ 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.
37. ▶ Tamil Nadu government distributed 200 NavIC- powered satellite-enabled communication devices developed by ISRO to 80 fishing boat groups in Tamil Nadu. These gadgets will help fishermen to get cyclone and weather updates on a real-time basis. Alerts received can be read on NavIC App.
 1. NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) is touted to be Indian version of USA's merican GPS (Global Positioning System), consisting of 8 satellites. NavIC provides accurate real-time position, navigation and timing services over India and region extending 1,500 km around Indian borders.
38. ▶ 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.

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Persons

1. ▶ Govt. released a Commemorative Postage Stamp on Rajkumar Shukla, who drew attention of M K Gandhi to plight of peasants suffering under an oppressive system established by European indigo planters in Champaran (Bihar). He made great contribution in launch of Champaran Satyagraha in 1917.
2. ▶ Visits from India (Dec 11 - 20, 2018) -
 1. Indian Army Chief Bipin Rawat visited Tanzania and Kenya.
 2. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman visited USA, focusing around US-India Defence partnership.
 3. President Ram Nath Kovind visited Myanmar.
 1. He dedicated - India assisted project 'Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research & Education' (CARE) - to the people of Myanmar.
 2. 2 MOUs signed -
 1. MOU on training of Myanmar judicial officers in India.
 2. MOU to enhance cooperation in science and technology.
 4. Minister for Minority Affairs, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi Visited Saudi Arabia. India and saudi Arabia signed bilateral annual Haj 2019 agreement.
3. ▶ Visits to India (Dec 11 - 20, 2018) -
 1. Foreign Affairs Minister of South Korea, Ms. Kang Kyung-wha Visited India, for 9th India-Korea Joint Commission Meeting held in New Delhi. India and South Korea agreed to raise bilateral trade to 50 billion dollars by 2030.
 2. Minister of Trade of Turkey, Rushar Pekcan Visited India.
 3. Nepal Minister for General Administration and Federal Affairs, Lal Babu Pandit Visited India.
 4. Thailand Navy Chief Luechai Ruddit Visited India.
 5. Patrick Matibini, Speaker of National Assembly of Zambia visited India. Zambia approved its membership of India led International Solar Alliance.
 6. Foreign Affairs Minister of Denmark, Anders Samuelsen Visited India.
 7. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France Visited India.
 1. India signed mega supercomputer *Bull Sequana* deal with France, to procure supercomputers worth INR 4,500 crores into India. Contract will last for 3 years for developing Bull Sequana (high-performance supercomputers), with computing power of over 10 petaflops.

8. Achmad Taufiqerrochman, Chief of Indonesia Coast Guard (called BAKAMLA) visited India, for 6th India-Indonesia Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) meeting in New Delhi.
9. Maldives President Ibrahim Solih Visited India -
 1. India announced a \$1.4 billion package for Maldives, to meet its capital requirements.
 2. 4 agreements signed - Facilitation of Visa Arrangements , Cultural Cooperation, Mutual Cooperation to Improve Ecosystem for Agribusiness AND Cooperation in field of Information & Communications Technology and Electronics.
 1. Maldives announced to re-join the Commonwealth AND joining Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) family.
10. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu visited India for 18th meeting of India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC), held in New Delhi.
11. Foreign Affairs Minister of South Korea, Kang Kyung-wha visited India for attending 9th India-ROK Joint Commission meeting, held in New Delhi.

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Science

1. ▶ As per a study published in journal Royal Society Open Science, Dracula ant possesses fastest animal movement on record, With speeds of up to 90 metres per second / 200 miles per hour.
2. ▶ India launched its latest communication satellite, GSAT-7A aboard Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F11) from Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh).
 1. GSAT-7A is 39th Indian communication satellite of ISRO to provide services to the users in Ku-band over Indian region. It weighs 2250 KG.
 2. GSAT-7A satellite is the heaviest satellite (2250 kgs) with an indigenously developed cryogenic stage that has been launched by GSLV.
3. ▶ India will launch 2 Satellite Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) As a part of its proposed manned space mission, to improve data relay and communication links with its remote sensing/earth observation satellites.
 1. IDRSS will reduce the dependence on the ground stations in tracking satellites. Communication and data transfer would be in real time as remote sensing satellites can relay data gathered to IDRSS satellites which in turn can transmit them to the ground.
 2. IDRSS will be like a hub as it can receive commands from the ground stations and in turn relay the same to other satellites.
4. ▶ Most-distant object ever observed in our solar system known as 2018 VG18 and nicknamed “Farout,” has been discovered by American scientists. It is the first to be observed at a distance of more than 100 AU (astronomical units) which almost 120AU or 11 billion miles from the sun.
5. ▶ World’s oldest plant virus dating back 1,000 years named Zea mays chrysovirus 1(ZMVCV1) has been discovered at a Native American archeological site. The previous oldest was found about 750 years ago.

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Sports

1. ▶ 2018 Men's Hockey World Cup -
 1. It was 14th edition of the tournament, hosted by India at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar (Odisha).
 2. 16 teams participated in the event.
 3. Belgium won the Title, as their first Hockey World Cup title. They defeated Netherlands in Final. Australia were ranked at Third place.
 4. India ranked 6th and were eliminated in Quarter finals, after a defeat by Netherlands.
 5. Arthur Van Doren (Belgium) was named as Best Player of tournament. Australia’s Blake Govers and Belgium’s Alexander Hendrickx scored most number of goals (7).
 6. Team of Spain was given Fair Play award.
 7. Mascot was Turtle ‘Olly’, representing Olive Ridley turtles which are an endangered species.
2. ▶ Asian Cricket Council (ACC) approved Pakistan as hosts of 2020 Asia cup.
3. ▶ Cricket Australia (CA) and Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) rebranded Allan Border Medal to Australian Cricket Awards from 2019 onwards.

4. ▶ PV Sindhu became first Indian Badminton Player to win BWF World Tour Finals tournament in Guangzhou (China), the season-ending Tournament. She defeated Nozomi Okuhara (Japan). Total Prize of Championship is USD 1500000. Winners of BWF World Tour 2018 -

Category	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's Singles	Shi Yuqi (China)	Kento Momota (Japan)
Women's Singles	P. V. Sindhu (India)	Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)
Men's Doubles	Li Junhui and Liu Yuchen (China)	Hiroyuki Endo and Yuta Watanabe (Japan)
Women's Doubles	Misaki Matsutomo and Ayaka Takahashi (Japan)	Lee So-hee and Shin Seung-chan (South Korea)
Mixed Doubles	Wang Yiliu and Huang Dongping (China)	Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong (China)

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