



Current Affairs - June 2019

Month Type



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Appointments

- ▶ Ajit Doval has been Re-appointed as National Security Adviser (NSA). He has also been given cabinet rank (with tenure of five years), as recognition of his contribution in national security.
- ▶ Arun Kumar has been given additional charge of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). He currently holds position of an additional secretary at aviation ministry.
- ▶ Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India Rajiv Mehrishi has been elected as external auditor of World Health Organization (WHO) for four years term (2020 to 2023).
- ▶ Indian Airline SpiceJet Chairman and Managing Director Ajay Singh elected to board of the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- ▶ Mrutyunjay Mohapatra is appointed as Director-General India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- ▶ Nayib Bukele has been appointed as New President of El Salvador (Central American Nation).
- ▶ Newly Appointed Deputy CMs and Speakers of Recently elected State Assemblies -
 - Andhra Pradesh -
 - Speaker - Tammineni Sitaram
 - Deputy CM - Pilli Subhash Chandra Bose, Alla Nani, K. Narayana Swamy, Pushpasreevani Pamula, Amzath Basha Shaik Bepari
 - Chief Minister - Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy
 - Also, Ajeya Kalama is appointed as Principal Advisor to Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jaganmohan Reddy.
 - Arunachal Pradesh -
 - Speaker - Pasang Dorjee Sona
 - Chief Minister - Pema Khandu
 - Odisha -
 - Speaker - Surjya Narayan Patro
 - Chief Minister - Naveen Patnaik (CM for his 5th Consecutive Term)
 - Sikkim -
 - Speaker - L. B. Das
 - Chief Minister - Prem Singh Tamang
- ▶ Noted Indian historian Romila Thapar elected as international member of American Philosophical Society (APS). She is renowned for her scholarship on emperor Aśoka, epigraphy of Mauryan period, and ground-breaking studies about contested Hindu and Muslim history of Somnath. She is among 1013 members elected to APS at its spring 2019 meeting.
- ▶ Prashant Kumar has been Appointed as Acting Chief Justice of Jharkhand High Court, after previous Chief Justice D N Patel was appointed as Chief Justice of Delhi High Court.
- ▶ RBI approved appointment of Rakesh Makhija as chairman of Axis Bank, with effect from July 18, 2019 to July 17, 2022.
- ▶ Thailand Parliament elected Prayuth Chan-ocha as Prime Minister.
- ▶ Tijjani Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria's Ambassador to the United Nations (UN)) has been elected as President of 74th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). He will succeed Maria Fernanda Espinosa as President of next General Assembly session that commences in September 2019.

13. ▶ VP Sivakolundhu has been elected as new Speaker of Puducherry Assembly.

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Awards

1. ▶ American novelist Tayari Jones won 2019 Women's Prize for Fiction for her fourth novel "An American Marriage". She won £30,000 and 'Bessie', which is a limited edition bronze figurine.
2. ▶ Former Indian President Pratibha Patil has been honored by Mexico's highest civilian honour for foreigners titled 'Orden Mexicana del Aguila Azteca' (order of the Aztec Eagle).
 1. The Royal Eagle is Mexico's national animal and is sacred to ancient Aztecs.
 2. 13 Indian nationals, including first Vice president of India, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has been given this award. Pratibha Patil is 2nd Indian head of state (after former President S. Radhakrishna) to get this award.
3. ▶ Former US Prez (39th) Jimmy Carter won inaugural George H. W. Bush Award for Statesmanship in recognition of his contributions to relations between U.S. and China, conferred by George H. W. Bush Foundation.
4. ▶ Google's India-born CEO Sundar Pichai and Nasdaq president Adena Friedman chosen for Global Leadership Awards 2019 by business advocacy group USIBC, in recognition contribution in technology.
5. ▶ Teenage Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg (16 year old) won Amnesty International's 'Ambassador of Conscience' Award 2019 for mobilising world public opinion global warming.
 1. She began protesting outside Swedish parliament in August 2018, skipping school every Friday demanding Swedish government take more serious action to tackle climate crisis. Her 'Fridays for Future' movement has spread globally with students around world strike from school to participate in climate protests.
6. ▶ Women Sangams (groups) of Deccan Development Society (DDS) honoured with Equator Prize 2019 by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for their contribution to ecology and innovations in rainfed millet cultivation. They became only Indian group to have won 2019 award. They were honored for building their own seed banks and growing millets in predominantly rain-fed villages of Sangareddy district (Telangana).
 1. Equator Prize was established in 2002, with India getting 9 awards so far. It is biennially given by Equator Initiative of UNDP.
7. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) awarded Rajasthan government's Medical & Health Department its Tobacco Control Award for 2019 in recognition of Rajasthan's achievements in field of tobacco control.
 1. Every year WHO recognizes various individuals / institutions worldwide and in each of six WHO regions for their accomplishments in area of tobacco control, on occasion of World No Tobacco Day (31 May).
 2. On This occasion, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommended 'complete' ban on Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), including e-cigarettes.
 1. ICMR released a white paper (an authoritative report or guide that informs readers about an issue) about harmful effects of ENDS and e-cigarettes.
 2. A committee headed by K Srinath Reddy of Public Health Foundation of India (PHAI) was constituted, to analyse over 300 research articles from globally and prepare the white paper.

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Books

1. ▶ Book titled 'Cricket World Cup: The Indian Challenge', written by senior-most active cricket broadcaster Ashis Ray has been released.

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Committees

1. ▶ Committee led by Infosys Founder Nandan Nilekani gave suggestions about promoting digital payments in India. The committee was set up in January 2019.
 1. Major recommendation includes making RTGS and NEFT facilities available 24x7 and make them free. Also, it recommends duty free import of point of sales machines.
 2. It also Includes several suggestions related to KYC and customer on boarding process, To ease difficulties faced by industry. It Includes multi-pronged strategy to meet legal and regulatory requirements.

Days

1. ▶ June 1 - World Milk Day. It has been marked by Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), observed since 2001. 2019 theme is "Drink Milk: Today & Everyday.". June 1 is also proclaimed as "Global Day of Parents" by United Nations.
2. ▶ June 1 is Statehood Day of Telangana, which was formed in 2014 as India's 29th State.
3. ▶ June 3 - World Bicycle Day, declared by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2018. It promotes use of Bicycle for its environmental and health benefits.
4. ▶ June 4 is observed as International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression.
5. ▶ June 5 - World Environment Day, designated by United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) in 1972. It was first celebrated in 1974. Theme for World Environment Day 2019 is 'Beat Air Pollution', chosen by this year's host, China.
 1. Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched song 'Hawa Aane De' to spread awareness about Air pollution. It is written by Swanand Kirkire.
 2. Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani launched world's first Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) for Particulate Matter(PM) to reduce air pollution. It is aimed to reduce particulate pollutants PM2.5 and PM10 and incentivize the industrial units which cap their emissions.
 - Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB) will set a limit or cap on amount of a pollutant that can be emitted by industrial units.
 - The permits are traded like any other commodity on National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX).
 - Buyer has to pay a charge for polluting whereas the seller will be rewarded for reduced emissions. The scheme was initiated in Surat by GPCB.
 - It will be implemented across 350 industrial units in the city in a phased manner, with around 160 units in the first phase.
 - At present, the government has set a cap on concentration of emissions for each industrial unit at 150 microgramme per cubic metre (ug/m3). It is the 24-hour average for emission standard set by the Central government for industrial units.
 3. On this occasion, Nagaland's scenic Dzükou Valley became Plastic Free Zone.
 4. On eve of World Environment Day, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar launched a people's campaign called #SelfiewithSapling, urging people to advocate the cause on social media.
6. ▶ June 6 is observed as UN Russian Language Day, established by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2010. June 6 is also observed as Birth Anniversary of Legendary Mewar Ruler Maharana Pratap.
7. ▶ June 7, 2019 observed as First ever World Food Safety Day, with theme - 'Food Safety, everyone's business'. It was facilitated in December 2018 by World Health Organisation (WHO) in collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of United Nations (UN). On this occasion, Health Ministry launched various initiatives, Including -
 1. State Food Safety Index (SFSI), to measure performance of States on five parameters of food safety.
 2. Food adulteration checkin equipments named Raman 1.0 and Food Safety Magic Box.
 3. Eat Right Awards instituted by FSSAI , to recognize contributions made by companies / individuals to empower citizens to choose healthy food options.
8. ▶ June 8 - World Oceans Day. 2019 theme is 'Gender and the Ocean'. June 8 is also observed as World Brain Tumor Day.

Defence

1. ▶ *Kharga Prahar* training exercise conducted by Indian Army in Punjab, by various units of Army's Kharga Corps. Indian Army's II Corps, based in Ambala is known as Kharga Corps, stationed at Ambala since 1985.
2. ▶ Anti-ship version of supersonic cruise missile BrahMos test fired from Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Odisha. Range of this medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile is approx 290 km.
3. ▶ Army launched online platform named *Retired Officers Digital Records Archive (RODRA)*, at URL <https://rodra.gov.in>, to have a better connection with armed forces veteran officers and family pensioners.
4. ▶ India and France will hold Joint Air Exercise Named *Garuda*, in July 2019 in France.
5. ▶ India will hold it's first-ever simulated space warfare exercise in July 2019, named – IndSpaceX, as a 'table-top war-game'.
 1. It aims to understand possible challenges in space warfare and to counter China's growing influence in this domain.

2. Recently, Under Mission Shakti, India launched a 19-tonne interceptor missile to destroy 740-kg Microsat-R satellite, at an altitude of 283 km in a 'hit-to-kill mode'. With This, China started developing military capabilities in space in terms of both kinetic and non-kinetic (lasers, electromagnetic pulse) weapons.
6. ▶ Indian Army commissioned a "Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System" (CAAQMS) at its Eastern Command headquarters in Fort William Military Station, Kolkata in West Bengal. Its done as part of Army's 'Go Green' initiative, which started in April 2019.
 1. CAAQMS will measure air pollution continuously, measuring pollutants like SO₂, NO, NO₂, NH₃, CO, O₃, VOC and particulate matters (PM 10 and PM 2.5).
7. ▶ Indian Navy deployed its P8I surveillance planes for carrying out anti-piracy patrol sorties from Salalah (in Oman) to patrol the Gulf of Aden and other piracy prone areas. This is second time in 2019 that the P-8I was operated from Salalah for anti-piracy.
8. ▶ US approved sale of NASAMS-II Air Defence system to India under its foreign military sales programme, at a cost of over Rs 6,000 crore (about US dollar 1 billion).
 1. NASAMS-II (National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System) is an upgraded version of the NASAMS developed by Raytheon in partnership with KONGSBERG Defence and Aerospace of Norway.
 2. NASAMS-II is armed with 3D Sentinel radars, short and medium-range missiles, launchers, fire-distribution centres and command and control units to quickly take down multiple airborne threats.

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Economy

1. ▶ India signed \$287 million loan with World Bank for Tamil Nadu Health System Reform Programme, aimed at improving quality of health care, reduce burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and fill equity gaps in reproductive and child health services in Tamil Nadu.
2. ▶ MOU signed between Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for data exchange, amid increasing need for surveillance in context of Corporate Frauds affecting important sectors of economy. It will enable automated sharing of related information among SEBI and MCA.
3. ▶ According to National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Business confidence index (BCI) of India slipped 9.1 % in fourth quarter of 2018-19. Political Confidence Index (PCI) of businesses increased by 12.1% on a quarterly basis in Q4.
 1. BCI is an indicator of business sentiments across Indian industry segments, compiled by NCAER on the basis of four components.
4. ▶ As per Data released by Controller General of Accounts (CGA), Government met fiscal deficit target of 3.4% for FY 2018-19, with Fiscal deficit being 3.39 %. It was met through reduction in government spending, which also contributed to GDP growth slowing to 5.8% in Q4 of FY19.
 1. For FY19, the fiscal deficit stood at Rs 6.45 trillion(Lakh crore), slightly above than the revised estimate of Rs 6.34 trillion.
 2. Expenditure of government was Rs 23.11 lakh crores, which is 1.5 lakh crores INR less than revised budget size of 24.57 lakh crores.
 3. Revenue deficit for FY19 was 108.2% of full year target, compared to 102% for FY18.
 4. Revenue for FY19 was 16.66 trillion, about Rs 1.57 trillion less than revised estimates of Rs 18.23 trillion. Net tax revenue for FY19 was at 88.7% of the revised full year target, compared to 97.9% for the same period last year.
5. ▶ As per RBI Report on *Benchmarking India's Payment Systems* -
 1. Report said that India has strong regulatory system and robust large value and retail payment systems, which have contributed to the rapid growth in volume of transactions in these payment systems. However, India needs to make more efforts to decrease volume of paper clearing and increase acceptance infrastructure to promote digital payments.
 2. With e-Money transactions of 345.9 Crores in 2017, Share of e-Money in India's payment systems rose to 21.5 % in 2017 from 0.8 % in 2012. India has 26 % of online transactions using e-Money, next only to China.
6. ▶ As per RBI report, bank frauds have been reached to INR 71,500 crores in 2018-19 with over 6,800 cases. In 2017-18, 5,916 cases were reported by banks which involved Rs 41,167.03 crore. In last 11 fiscal years, 53334 cases of fraud were reported by banks involving amount of INR 2.05 lakh crores.
 1. ICICI Bank Reported 6811 Frauds, most for any Bank , involving INR 5033 crores. SBI was 2nd with 6793 fraud cases involving Rs 23,734 crores.
7. ▶ Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), political risk insurance arm of World Bank Group, agreed to expand Development Finance in Asia and Pacific to increase flow of private sector investment.

8. ▶ Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) launched a Fiscal Performance Index (FPI) to assess state and central budgets. It incorporates qualitative assessments of revenue expenditure, capital expenditure, revenues, fiscal prudence and level of public debt arrive at a more holistic picture of fiscal performance than fiscal deficit to GDP ratio. FPI has been constructed using United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index methodology.
9. ▶ Fincare Small Finance Bank and Kookmin Bank included in second schedule of Reserve Bank of India Act 1934. Both banks can now broad-base its lines of funding and liquidity facilities.
10. ▶ Fitch Ratings certified long-term Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs) to six banks - State Bank of India(SBI), Bank of Baroda(New Zealand), Punjab National Bank(PNB), Bank of Baroda (BOB), Canara Bank and Bank of India (BOI), with 'BBB-' a stable outlook.
 1. Rating of IDBI Bank's long-term IDR was certified at 'BB+'.
 2. 5 banks were also given the Viability Ratings (VR). BOB's VR is maintained at Rating Watch Negative (RWN) and VR of Canara Bank was downgraded to 'bb-' from 'bb' as bank's core capital position was not compared with its weak asset quality and earnings.
11. ▶ GST collection in May 2019 were INR 100289 crores (CGST - 17811 crore, SGST - 24462 crore, IGST - 49891 crore and Cess - 8125 crores). Its the third consecutive month of GST revenue being over 1 Lakh Crores INR. In April 2019, It was 113865 crores, highest ever monthly receipts ever in GST regime.
12. ▶ India signed \$350 million loan agreement with Asian Development Bank(ADB), to rehabilitate and upgrade two state highways and 23 major district roads totaling about 850 kilometers in Chhattisgarh. It will improve connectivity and access to basic services and livelihood opportunities in state. Total cost of the project is \$521.69 million. State government will provide \$171.69 million.
13. ▶ Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) launched a dedicated center in Bengaluru to provide hazard free services to small business owners and startups. It provides services including capital loans and legal and valuation desk to help customers in resolving challenges related to collateral for various loans.
14. ▶ Karur Vysya Bank partnered with Centrum Wealth Management Ltd to form private limited Joint Venture (JV) to provide wealth management services to its clients. KVB will hold 51% of share capital, Centrum will hold 45% and 4% will be held by JV's Staff.
15. ▶ NBFC L&T Finance Services Ltd launched "Digital Sakhi" educational program aimed at financial inclusion of rural women in Villupuram District, Tamilnadu.
 1. L&T Finance also launched 'Sabse Khas Loan' for two-wheeler customers. , which provides burden-free and low-cost finance for two-wheelers eliminates need for hypothecation of vehicle to financier over tenure of loan.
16. ▶ Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) overtook India Oil Corporation (IOC) as India's most profitable Public Sector Undertakings (PSU).
 1. ONGC's net profit increased by 34% to INR 26716 crores as compared to it IOC's net profit of INR 17274 crores for FY 2018-19.
 2. ONGC had lost the most Profitable PSU Title to IOC in previous two financial years (2016-17 and 2017-18).
17. ▶ Paytm Payments Bank had second most value of digital transactions in FY 2019-20, with 501.16 crores worth of Transactions. It is behind only after SBI in this regard. Paytm payments bank has share of 19% and 32% respectively in terms of mobile banking and UPI transactions. Paytm PB has over 500 crore deposits in savings accounts, largest among payments bank in India.
18. ▶ RBI Observed Financial Literacy Week Between June 3 - 7, 2019, with Theme *Farmers*, on how they can benefit by being a part of formal banking system. RBI designed Audio visuals on "Basic Financial Literacy", "Unified Payments Interface" (UPI) and "Going Digital" for benefit of general public on topics relating to Financial Literacy.
19. ▶ RBI Second Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Review 2019-20 -
 1. 6 member RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is led by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.
 2. RBI cuts Repo Rate by 25 bps, also changing other monetary policy metrics.
 3. RBI revises GDP growth for year 2020 downwards to 7 % from 7.2 % projected earlier.
 4. Minimum Liquidity Ratio for Domestic Systemically Important Banks (DSIBs) to be 4 %. For other banks, Minimum Liquidity Ratio shall be 3.5 %.
 5. Current Monetary Policy Rates -
 1. Repo Rate - 5.75 %
 2. Reverse Repo - 5.50 %
 3. Bank Rate - 6 %
 4. CRR (Cash Reserve Ratio) - 4 %
 5. SLR (Statutory Liquidity ratio) - 19 % (RBI decided to reduce SLR from 18.0% in six quarterly instalments beginning January 2019)

6. Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate - 6 %

20. ▶ RBI amended norms on banks' exposure to large borrowers, to reduce concentration of risk and align them with global norms. It will help in lending to Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFC) in an effective way and invite scrutiny on structure of these entities.
1. As per revised 'Large Exposures Framework' (LEF) norms, sum of all exposure values of a bank to a single counter-party should not be greater than 20% of bank's available eligible capital base at all times.
 2. With regards to connected counter-parties, sum of all exposure values of a bank to a group of connected counter-parties should not be greater than 25% of bank's available eligible capital base at all times.
 3. On exposures to NBFCs, banks' exposures to a single NBFC are restricted to 15% of their eligible capital base.
21. ▶ RBI announced to set up a foreign exchange trading platform for retail participants, to create a infrastructure that ensures fair pricing for users of foreign exchange like Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) exporters & importers and individuals. It will be available to users from early August 2019. Draft Guidelines were issued in Oct 2017.
1. Foreign exchange trading platform will enable customer to choose most competitive rate among all banks and buy forex.
 2. Minimum order size would be USD 1000 and thereafter in multiples of USD 500. Maximum order size shall be USD 500,000.
22. ▶ RBI has put penalty of INR 2 crores on Kotak Mahindra Bank for its failure to adhere to RBI's diktat on promoter shareholding. RBI has been in a dispute with Kotak Mahindra since 2014 over its failure to meet milestone for stake reduction by Its founder Uday Kotak.
1. Under RBI shareholding norms, Uday Kotak was required to cut his holding to 20 % from 30 % in Kotak Mahindra Bank, by December 31, 2018 and to 15 % by March 2020.
23. ▶ RBI issued new NPA guidelines *Prudential framework for resolution of stressed assets* to deal with bad loans, as per provisions of Section 35AA of the Banking Regulation Act 1949. Previous circular that was issued by RBI in Feb 2019, was rejected by Supreme Court.
1. RBI mandated lenders to review accounts within 30 days of default and initiate a resolution plan before default. Its Mandatory to sign inter-creditor agreement (ICA) by all lenders, which will provide for a majority decision making criteria.
 2. Earlier norm of 100 % approval from creditors is also changed. ICA shall now provide any decision agreed by lenders representing 75 % by value of outstanding credit facilities and 60 % of lenders by number shall be binding upon all lenders.
 3. Lenders must resolve over INR 2000 crores NPA account within 180 days.
 4. Lenders will have to make 35 % provisions—first 20 % for 180 days and additional 15 % if no resolution is found within 365 days.
 5. For borrowers with exposure between INR 1500 - 2000 crores, new norms will be applicable from January 1, 2020. Terms for loans up to 1500 crores will be announced shortly.
24. ▶ State Bank of India (SBI) will become first bank to introduce repo-linked home loan products, from July 2019. Any changes in Repo Rate by RBI would be passed on directly to customers.
1. Home loans up to 75 lakh will be priced at 2.65% over repo rate of 5.75% resulting in the interest rate of 8.40%. At present, SBI offers home loans linked to its MCLR (Marginal Cost of Funds Based Lending Rate) at 8.55%.
 2. SBI also reduced interest rate on Cash Credit Account (CC) and Overdraft (OD) customers with limits above Rs 1 lakh. Now, effective Repo-Linked Lending Rate (RLLR) for CC/ OD customers is 8% whereas for savings deposits above Rs 1 lakh new rate is 3%.
 1. In March, SBI had linked all CC accounts and ODs with limits above 1 lakh to repo rate plus a spread of 2.25%. For account balance above 1 lakh, it had set its savings deposit rates to 2.75% below repo rate.

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International

1. ▶ African Union (AU) suspended Sudan until establishment of a civilian-led transition to democracy, ending the stretched bloody crisis.
1. Since December 2018, Sudan is facing international anger over increasing bread prices and shortages, which then turned into protests against Omar al-Bashir (7th President of Sudan) and culminated in military removing him after a three-decade rule. Military took control of Sudan after ouster of Omar in April 2019.
2. Widespread violence since then has caused huge amount of casualties.

2. ▶ Agreement between India and Marshall Islands for Exchange of Information with respect to taxes has been notified. It enables exchange of information, including banking and ownership information, between two countries for tax purposes.
3. ▶ Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed technical assistance agreement with American Aircraft Maker Boeing to develop and modernise India's Air Traffic Management, by jointly developing a 10-year roadmap. Roadmap will be undertaken with a grant from the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA).
4. ▶ American Rapper Jay-Z has been named world's first billionaire rapper by Forbes'.
5. ▶ As per data by US based think-tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI) India lost \$13 billion in revenue collections due to trade misinvoicing in 2016, amounting to 5.5% of total revenue collections. Out of this \$13 Billion, \$4 billion was due to export misinvoicing and nearly \$9 billion was due to import misinvoicing.
 1. GFI urged India to adopt a public registry of beneficial ownership information on all legal entities. It considered using online tools for building the capacity of customs authorities to better detect misinvoicing and take corrective steps in real time.
6. ▶ Barbadian Singer Rihanna named world's richest female musician by Forbes magazine with an estimated wealth of \$600 million. Forbes' Magazine also named American Rapper Jay-Z (real name *Sean Carter*), as World's 1st Billionaire Rapper.
7. ▶ China launched space rocket named *Long March 11* from a mobile launch platform in Yellow Sea off Shandong province (China) for first time. China became 3rd nation after U.S. and Russia to launch satellites into orbit from a floating platform. The rocket carried 2 experimental satellites (named Bufeng-1A and Bufeng-1B) and 5 commercial ones.
8. ▶ Estonia, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, and Vietnam elected to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as Non-permanent Members for a 2-year term beginning January 1, 2020.
 1. UNSC has 15 members - 5 permanent (China, France, Russia, UK and US) and 10 non-permanent members who are elected for two-year terms.
9. ▶ Europe's Highest Volcano Mount Etna (southern Italy) erupted with huge burst. Mount Etna has elevation of 3,326 m (10,912 ft), as highest peak in Italy and highest active volcano in Europe outside Caucasus. Mount Sinabung (Sumatra Island of western Indonesia) also erupted.
10. ▶ India and Portugal will cooperate in setting up of a national maritime heritage museum at ancient Indian site of Lothal in Gujarat, to showcase and preserve India's rich and diverse maritime heritage.
 1. During Portuguese Defence Minister João Gomes Cravinho visit to India in April 2019, discussions were held for developing maritime museum. A similar museum in Lisbon is administered by Portuguese Navy.
11. ▶ Indian Air Force (IAF) signed INR 300 crore deal with Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, to procure a batch of SPICE 2000 guided bombs.
 1. IAF used SPICE bombs recently for a non-military, pre-emptive strike on terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed's (JeM) terrorist training camp in Pakistan's Balakot region, after JeM carried out suicide attack in Pulwama, Killing over 40 CRPF Personnel.
12. ▶ Mumbai Named Most congested globally, ranking first in *Traffic Index-2018*, compiled by location technology specialist TomTom. Mumbai has congestion level of 65 %. New Delhi ranked fourth. The study covered 403 cities in 56 countries.
13. ▶ Russia launched first Arctic train service running from St. Petersburg station headed to Norway. Its' Inaugural trial journey will be a 11-day trip with 91 passengers aboard.
 1. Train is named 'Zarengold' (means 'The Tsar's gold' in German). Tourists will get off the train at Murmansk (largest city north of Arctic Circle) and will continue by bus to Kirkenes in Norway before ending their journey with a boat trip to Oslo (Norway's capital) or by air to island of Spitsbergen.
14. ▶ Russia's annual Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) held in St. Petersburg (Russia's former imperial capital). Theme for SPIEF 2019 is *Creating a Sustainable Development Agenda*.
15. ▶ SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Gender Equality Index 2019, developed by UK-based Equal Measures 2030 -
 1. India is ranked 95th among 129 countries in this new Index. The gender gap index of World Economic Forum ranked India at 108th rank.
 2. Top 3 - Denmark (1), Finland (2), Sweden (3). US is ranked 28th.
 3. Bottom 3 - Chad (129), DR Congo (128), Congo (127).
 4. Neighbours - China (74), Pakistan (113), Bangladesh (110), Nepal (102).
16. ▶ Sri Lanka National Carrier SriLankan Airlines has been named 'World's Most Punctual Airline' for 2nd consecutive time, by global flight tracker, 'Flightstats'. SriLankan Airlines Achieved punctuality rating of 90.75% in May 2019, despite challenges caused by heightened security after recent terror attacks in Sri Lanka.
17. ▶ Tata Motors-owned Jaguar Land Rover partnered with BMW to develop next-generation electric drive systems.

18. ▶ UAE's Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship (ICA) issued first Golden Residence Permit in Abu Dhabi, as part of Investors Permanent Residence System aimed to attract investors and qualified individuals.
1. The first permit has been issued to investor Yousuf Ali, Board Member of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of the Lulu International Group. He is worth 4.7 billion dollars and is ranked richest expat in UAE by Forbes.
 2. UAE government announced that first batch of 6,800 investors with 100 billion Dirhams worth of investments in country will be granted Golden Card.
 3. UAE had approved long-term visa system for expatriates in early 2019, mentioning the criteria needed to be met. The programme is an outreach initiative for investors and business leaders of foreign origin.
19. ▶ US asked all Visa applicants to provide information about their social media use and declare their social media profiles going back five years. It aims to enhance careful examining of foreign nationals seeking Visa and to screen out dangerous individuals seeking entry.
1. If visa applicant do not use social media they will have the option to say so but if applicant lies about social media use, they could face serious consequences. Also, in future, visa applicants will be required to turn more extensive information on their travel history.
20. ▶ US terminated India's designation as a beneficiary developing nation under GSP (Generalized System of Preference) trade program w.e.f. 5 June 2019. Reasons stated are trade imbalance with India, no access to Indian market for US dairy, medical device industry and issues related to data localisation norms.
1. Under US's oldest preferential trade scheme called GSP, India is largest beneficiary and exported goods worth \$6.35 billion under scheme in 2018. As Outcome, exports will become costlier, but overall impact would be minimal on India's outbound trade with US.
 2. GSP benefits were instituted on 1 January 1976, as unilateral, non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory benefits extended by some developed nations to developing countries.
 3. U.S. designed trade program seeks to promote economic growth in developing countries by providing preferential duty-free entry for up to 4,800 products from 129 beneficiary countries and territories.
21. ▶ United Arab Emirates (UAE) Cabinet adopted a National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031.
1. It has 2 pronged objectives - To make UAE a world leader in quality of life by undertaking various strategic objectives and initiatives, and To promote an integrated concept of wellbeing, thereby supporting vision of UAE Vision 2021 and UAE Centennial 2071.
 2. 90 new projects will be launched that will target more than 40 priority areas and will improve physical, psychological and digital health of future generations.
 3. An important initiative is development of first National Wellbeing Observatory, which will support policymaking .
22. ▶ United Nation Security Council (UNSC) extended arms embargo and sanctions on South Sudan for a year, Despite resistance from Russia, China and African countries. A US-drafted resolution was adopted by UNSC after a vote of 10 in favour with five abstentions.
1. As per rule, in 15-member UNSC, a resolution presented for vote requires a minimum of nine votes for adoption.

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Meetings

1. ▶ 14th summit of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.
 1. During the summit, OIC Nations asked countries that have moved their embassies to Jerusalem (by recognizing it as Israel's capital) to rethink their strategy, considering it a serious violation of international law and international legitimacy. USA and Guatemala earlier moved their Israeli Embassy to Jerusalem.
 2. OIC was established in 1969 by 24 member states, with now 57 member states.
 3. OIC appointed Yousef Aldobeay of Saudi Arabia as its special envoy for Jammu & Kashmir. OIC also called upon India to hold a referendum in J&K under United Nations' patronage. Earlier in March 2019, India was invited for first time as the guest of honour for plenary session of the OIC foreign ministers' meet held in at Abu Dhabi (in UAE).
2. ▶ 2nd Global Disability Summit held at Buenos Aires (Argentina). India was represented by Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot.
3. ▶ Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman attended meeting of G-20 finance ministers and central bank governors in Fukuoka (Japan).

4. ▶ G20 Ministerial meeting on Trade and Digital Economy held in Japanese city of Tsukuba. Indian delegation was led by Railways & Commerce and Industries Minister Piyush Goyal. G20 Summit 2019 is to be held in End of June 2019 in Osaka (Japan).
5. ▶ Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (also known as Quad) meeting held Bangkok (Thailand).
 1. Quad is an informal strategic grouping consisting of India, US, Australia and Japan. It is committed to preserving rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.

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National

1. ▶ Competition Commission of India approved acquisition of electrical and automation (EA) business of Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T) by Schneider Electric India Private Limited (Schneider) and MacRitchie Investments Pte. Ltd. (MacRitchie).
 1. Commission found that Schneider and L&T are Top 2 players in low voltage (LV) switchgear industry in India. Their consolidation would make it difficult for new players to enter market. Thus, Commission was against the acquisition of EA business of L&T by Schneider Electric India.
 2. To eliminate competition concerns, Commission ordered Acquirers to reserve a part of L&T's installed capacity to offer white labelling services to third party competitors. This would be available in respect of five high market share LV switchgears, which are generally used together in LV panels.
2. ▶ Punjab and Haryana High Court accorded status of "legal person or entity" to animals in Haryana, granting them "corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person". Nearly an year ago, Uttarakhand High Court passed a similar order to promote welfare of animals.
3. ▶ 3rd Advance Estimates of production of major crops for 2018-19 released by Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare - Estimated production of major crops during 2018-19 -
 1. Foodgrains – 283.37 million tonnes.
 - Rice – 115.63 million tonnes. (record)
 - Wheat – 101.20 million tonnes (record)
 - Nutri / Coarse Cereals – 43.33 million tonnes.
 - Maize – 27.82 million tonnes.
 - Pulses – 23.22 million tonnes.
 - Gram – 10.09 million tonnes.
 - Tur – 3.50 million tonnes.
 2. Oilseeds – 31.42 million tonnes.
 - Soyabean – 13.74 million tonnes
 - Rapeseed and Mustard – 8.78 million tonnes
 - Groundnut – 6.50 million tonnes
 3. Cotton – 27.59 million bales (of 170 kg each)
 4. Sugarcane – 400.37 million tonnes (record)
4. ▶ V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust (Tuticorin and Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) signed MOU for facilitating Direct Port Entry (DPE) of e-sealed factory stuffed export container to the port under 'Ease of Doing Business'. CWC will use 18,357 sqm area earmarked for operating DPE facility for 30 years on Annual Lease Rental basis.
5. ▶ As Per Data by National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), India has 20.6 health workers per 10,000 people. It is less than World health Organization's (WHO) minimum overreach of 22.8 per 10,000 people. Rural areas with 71% of India's population have only 36% of health workers. Delhi has highest concentration of health workers followed by Kerala, Punjab, and Haryana.
6. ▶ Assam government waived admission fees for students taking admission up to Post Graduate level whose parental income is less than 2 lakh rupees per year. All provincialized government colleges and 5 universities are incorporated under the scheme.
7. ▶ Chaukhandi Stupa, an ancient Buddhist site located in Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh (UP) has been declared as 'protected area of national importance' by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Chaukhandi Stupa Name is known as 'Chaukhandi' because of its four armed plan, originally constructed in 5th Century AD.
8. ▶ Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal announced free of cost Delhi Metro and DTC bus rides for women. The decision came when under one year is left for Delhi assembly elections 2020. The decision is expected to cost over 1000 Crores to already loss making Delhi Metro.
9. ▶ Delhi Metro became first India Project to receive power generated from a waste-to-energy plant, after DMRC started receiving 2 MW power from a 12 MW capacity waste-to-energy plant set up in Ghazipur (Uttar Pradesh). This is being utilised at Vinod Nagar Receiving Sub-station (RSS) for meeting operational requirements of Pink Line of Delhi Metro.

10. ▶ General Conferences (Jun 1 - 10, 2019)

1. 4th Coast Guard Subordinate Officers Conclave 2019 held at ICG Headquarters in New Delhi.
2. Karnataka government launched Pink Sarathi vehicles for women's safety.
3. 6th India-China Bilateral Dialogue on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation held in New Delhi. Chinese delegation was led by Fu Cong, Director General, Department of Arms Control of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
4. Elephanta Festival of art and culture commenced at Gateway of India in Mumbai (Maharashtra), held annually since 2012 to promote tourism and culture of Mumbai
5. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) organized orientation workshop for Population Research Centres (PRCs). MoHFW established 18 PRCs in 17 States / UTs.
6. Social network Facebook launched its first interactive game show, "Confetti" in India, during Facebook's Social Entertainment Summit in Mumbai. The interactive game show is exclusive to Facebook's Video Streaming Service *Watch*.

11. ▶ Google Maps launched three India-first public transport navigation features, to ease daily commute of users. Google Maps users will now be able to see bus travel times from live traffic across ten Indian cities, get live train status for Indian Railways and get mixed-mode commute suggestions which now combines auto-rickshaw and public transport.

1. Real-time bus travel information is first such product feature, launched first in India. It will enable users to know how long bus trip will take, considering live traffic conditions. Its now live across ten cities - Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Pune, Lucknow, Chennai, Mysore, Coimbatore, and Surat.
2. Real-time live running status of a train will work only in case of a long distance train journey. This is developed in partnership with 'Where is my Train' app, acquired by Google in 2018.
3. Mixed-mode navigation Guidance with auto-rickshaw recommendation will tell users if taking an auto-rickshaw is better or a different mode of transport such as metro, local train, or a bus when taking a journey.

12. ▶ Government approved changes to Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme for wards of deceased defense personnel under National Defence Fund. Quota of new scholarships for children of state police officials will be 500 in a year.

1. Scholarships have been increased from 2000 to 2500 per month for boys and 2250 to 3000 per month for girls.
2. Under this, every year new scholarships are given for 5500 wards of armed forces controlled by Ministry of Defence, 2000 wards of paramilitary forces controlled by Ministry of Home Affairs and for 150 wards of forces controlled by Ministry of Railways.

13. ▶ Government reconstituted 8 key cabinet committees. 6 Previous Cabinet sub-committees were also reconstituted and two new ones were formed, to deal with job creation and economic growth.

1. Home Minister Amit Shah is part of all cabinet committees while P M Modi is part of six committees, excluding Cabinet Committee on Accommodation and Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs.
2. Committees includes -
 1. Appointments Committee of Cabinet.
 2. Cabinet Committee on Accommodation
 3. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs
 4. Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs
 5. Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs
 6. Cabinet Committee on Security
7. 2 New Cabinet Committees -

1. Cabinet Committee on Investment Growth
2. Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development

14. ▶ Hardeep S Puri, Minister of State (I/C) for Housing & Urban Affairs launched Swachh Survekshan 2020 league, as a quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities / towns in India. It will be integrated with Swachh Survekshan 2020, 5th edition of annual cleanliness survey of urban India to be conducted between January - February 2020 by MoHUA under aegis of Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban (SBM-U).

1. 1st edition - 'Swachh Survekshan-2016' for rating 73 cities was conducted in January 2016, followed by 'Swachh Survekshan-2017' conducted in January-February 2017 that ranked 434 cities. 2018 edition ranked 4203 cities. 4th edition covered 4237 cities.
2. In 2016, Mysuru emerged as cleanest city. While Indore has been named cleanest in last three years.
3. Swachh Survekshan League 2020 (SS League 2020) is introduced to sustain cleanliness performance of cities by continuous monitoring. SS League 2020 will be conducted in 3 quarters and will have weightage of 2000 marks for each quarter.

4. Performance of cities in SS League 2020 will be crucial to their ranking in Swachh Survekshan 2020 due (25% weightage).
15. ▶ IIT Madras has launched a Data Platform of 'Integrated Database on Infrastructure Projects' (IDIP) to improve efficiency of Government Infrastructure Development, with Akara Research and Technologies as development partner. It was launched at 15th World Conference on Transport Research (WCTR) at IIT Bombay.
1. Initially, IDIP's focus will be on the road sector due to its highest allocation of funds among other projects and highest private investment through PPP.
16. ▶ India's First Dinosaur Museum-cum-Park Inaugurated at Raiyoli village in Balasinor town of Mahisagar district. It is first such park in India and world's third park which exhibits remains of various dinosaurs and fossil records.
17. ▶ Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL) signed agreement to form a Joint Venture (JV), for laying world's longest Liquefied petroleum gas(LPG) pipeline from Kandla (Gujarat) to Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh).
1. IOCL, BPCL and HPCL will hold 50%, 25% and 25% equity holding in JV.
 2. 2,757-km pipeline will connect 3 major States with west coast and 2 refineries at Koyali, Gujarat and Bina, Madhya Pradesh.
 3. After completion, single pipeline can transport up to 8.25 million metric tonnes of LPG per year which amounts to about 25% of India's LPG demand.
18. ▶ International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) released India's first Type Approval Certificate (TAC) for Bharat Stage - VI (BS - VI) norms for two wheeler segment, to Hero MotoCorp.
1. Bharat Stage norms are automotive emission norms which automotive manufacturers have to comply to sell their vehicles in India.
 2. To curb growing menace of air pollution, Government decided to leapfrog from exiting BS - IV norms to BS- VI, skipping BS - V norms.
 3. Mandate is to implement BS - VI norms from 1st April 2020.
 4. In 2018, ICAT issued approval for BS -VI norms to Volvo Eicher Commercial Vehicles for Heavy Commercial Vehicle segment.
 5. ICAT is the premier testing and certification agency authorized by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for providing testing and certification services to vehicle and component manufacturers in India and abroad.
19. ▶ L&T Financial Services launched 'Digital Sakhi' educational programme aimed at digital financial inclusion of rural women, in two villages of Villupuram district in Tamil Nadu.
20. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Cabinet approved increasing reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC) from 14 to 27 %. It will now be taken up in monsoon session of state Assembly.
1. If implemented, MP will become only state to have 27 % quota for OBCs. State government passed an Ordinance on March 9 to implement the quota. However, MP High Court stayed the Ordinance.
21. ▶ Ministry Of Home Affairs (MHA) amended Foreigners (Tribunals) Order 1964, empowering district magistrates in all States / UTs to set up tribunals to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not. Earlier, powers to constitute tribunals were vested only with Centre.
22. ▶ Ministry for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship waived off fee for SC/ST candidates joining vocational training under Jan Shikshan Sansthan.
1. Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) were transferred to Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in 2018, from Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD).
 2. JSS was initially launched in 1967 as Shramik Vidyapeeth, a multi-faceted adult education institution that was aimed at improving vocational skills and quality of life of industrial workers and their family members and of migrants workers, coming to urban areas.
 3. In April 2000, It was renamed as Jan Shikshan Sansthan and its focus was also extended to the rural areas.
23. ▶ New Andhra Pradesh government under CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy revoked previous governments' order of barring Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) from conducting raids in state without state government permission.
1. Earlier, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government headed by N. Chandrababu Naidu had withdrawn *general consent* to CBI for exercising jurisdiction in state.
 2. CBI will now have all powers to take up corruption and other cases in Andhra Pradesh without requiring any state permission.
24. ▶ PM Narendra Modi approved reconstitution of government's think tank NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India).

1. Chairman - Narendra Modi (PM)
 2. Vice Chairman - Rajiv Kumar
 3. Full-Time Members – V.K. Saraswat, Ramesh Chand and V.K. Paul
 4. Ex-officio Members - Rajnath Singh (Defence Minister), Amit Shah (Home Affairs Minister), Nirmala Sitharaman (Finance Minister and Corporate Affairs Minister), Narendra Singh Tomar (Rural Development Minister, Panchayati Raj Minister and Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister).
25. ▶ Rajasthan government increased assistance given to school girls under ‘Aapki Beti’ scheme and assistance to families of polling personnel who die during election duty.
1. Assistance has been increased to INR 2100 from 1100 for girls studying in class 1 to 8 and for girls in class 9 to 12, it has been increased to 2500 from 1500. Also, ex-gratia payment given to next of kin of an officer killed on election duty is increased to 20 lakh from 15 lakh.
26. ▶ Sahara Group announced entry into automobile sector with launching of electric vehicles under brand name ‘Evol’s’. It will also introduce a network of battery-charging-cum-swapping stations.
27. ▶ Telangana Government extended Rythu Bandhu scheme for 2019-20 while enhancing amount from INR 4000 to 5000.
1. This scheme is aimed at providing income support to agriculturists directly to back their crops.
 2. It provides Initial Investment support to crops through a grant of INR 4000 per acre per farmer (now increased to 5000) each season towards purchase of inputs like seeds, fertilisers etc.

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Persons

1. ▶ Mohana Singh became first woman fighter pilot to fly a Hawk advanced jet aircraft.
2. ▶ Visits from India (Jun 1 - 10, 2019)
 1. India Foreign Minister Jaishankar Visited Bhutan, as his 1st bilateral visit after taking charge as External Affairs Minister.
 2. Indian Air Force Chief Birender Singh Dhanoa visited Sweden.

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Science

1. ▶ New species of dung beetle *Anoplotrupes talangensis* found in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, measuring up to 27 mm. Dung beetles belong to superfamily Scarabaeoidea and have clubbed antennae and pro-tibiae (pro-legs) modified for burrowing dung inside soil. They are referred to as little recyclers as they help in nutrient cycling of soil.

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Sports

1. ▶ China won 4 gold medals at 2019 ITTF World Tour Hong Kong Open -
 1. Women’s Singles: Wang Yidi (China)
 2. Women’s Doubles - China's Chen Ke and Mu Zi won.
 3. Men’s Singles - Lin Gaoyuan (China).
 4. Men’s Doubles - China's Liang Jingkun and Lin Gaoyuan.
2. ▶ French Open 2019 Tennis Title -
 1. Men's Singles - Rafael Nadal (Spain). He Defeated Dominic Thiem (Austria). It was Nadal's 12th French Open Title and Overall His 18th Grand Slam Title.
 2. Women's Singles - Ashleigh Barty (Australia). She Defeated Markéta Vondroušová (Czech Republic).
 3. Men's Doubles - Germany's Kevin Krawietz AND Andreas Mies. They defeated France's Jérémy Chardy AND Fabrice Martin.
 4. Women's Doubles - Tímea Babos (Hungary) AND Kristina Mladenovic (France). They Defeated China's Duan Yingying AND Zheng Saisai.
 5. Mixed Doubles - Latisha Chan (Chinese Taipei) AND Ivan Dodig (Croatia)
 6. Boys' Singles - Holger Vitus Nødkov Rune (Denmark)
 7. Girls' Singles - Leylah Annie Fernandez (Canada)
3. ▶ Mercedes Racer Lewis Hamilton (UK) won Canadian Grand Prix 2019.

1. Although Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel crossed finish line ahead of Lewis Hamilton, but a five-second penalty for unsafe re-entry during the race dropped Sebastian Vettel into second place.

2. Formula 1 Season 2019 -

1.

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	Valtteri Bottas (Finland)	28 April
5	Spanish Grand Prix	Lewis Hamilton (UK)	12 May
6	Monaco Grand Prix	Lewis Hamilton (UK)	26 May
7	Canadian Grand Prix	Lewis Hamilton (UK)	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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