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Phone : 76700 26262, 98640 93327, **email:-** careerflite@gmail.com, **website:-** www.careerflite.com

Monthly GK Mania

NATIONAL NEWS

Satyarup Siddhanta conquered Mt. Giluwe !

On November 12, 2018, Indian mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta scaled 4,367 metres high Mt. Giluwe, the second highest mountain in Papua New Guinea, country in Oceania. With this, he has become the first Indian to do so. Satya has so far scaled 5 of the 7 volcanic summits. In September 2018, he along with Mousumi Khatua scripted history by climbing Asia's highest volcanic peak Mount Damavand. Mexico Mt. Pico de Orizaba and Antarctica's Mt. Sidley are his future destinations.

India- Indonesia 'Samudra Shakti' exercise

On November 12, 2018 bilateral naval exercise 'Samudra Shakti' began at Surabaya, Indonesia to fortify bilateral relations, expand maritime cooperation, upgrade interoperability and exchange best practices. INS Rana of the Eastern Fleet based at Visakhapatnam is participating in this event which will continue till 18th November. The exercise has Harbour Phase as well as Sea Phase. The event will witness planning and briefing on various activities, professional interactions, cross deck visits, sports fixtures, social interactions, Joint Manoeuvres, Helicopter Operations, Surface Warfare exercise, ASW exercise and Anti Piracy exercises.

The new beginning of Meghalaya's largest apparel manufacturing unit

In November 2018, Meghalaya's largest apparel manufacturing unit near Ampati at Hatisil in South West Garo Hills has become functional again after two years of inactivity. Union Ministry of Textiles had established this unit in 45,000 sq feet area at expenditure of Rs. 14.26 crore. The School of Livelihood and Rural Development (SLRD) that has expertise in skill development, market integration and rural development had taken this unit under its possession to begin the production work.

ISRO's GSAT-29 has reached the space

On 14th November 2018, The Indian Space Research Organization ISRO launched the modern communication satellite GSAT-29 of 3423kilogram weight via GSLV-Mark-III rocket from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Center at Sriharikota. This was the second development flight of the heavier launch vehicle GSLV which has a potential of carrying satellites of about four-tons into a geostationary transfer orbit. The satellite has Ku and Ka spot beams for augmenting hi-speed data connectivity in remote and far flung areas.

India-Russia 'INDRA 2018' exercise

India and Russia's joint military exercise 'INDRA 2018' will start from November 18, 2018 at Babina Field Firing Ranges, Babina Military Station in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh. The purpose of the exercise is to combat insurgency under the aegis of United Nations. This eleven day exercise will welcome company-sized contingents of the 5th Army of the Russian Federation and a Mechanised Infantry Battalion of India. The exercise will enhance the interoperability of the two armies in the peacekeeping and enforcement environment activities.

Hima Das : UNICEF India's Youth Ambassador

In November 2018, Hima Das got appointed as UNICEF India's Youth Ambassador to ensure holistic development of children by raising awareness about the rights and needs of children and help amplify the voices of children and young people as active participants in decision making. Hima had coined silver in the 400 meters sprint and a gold medal in the 4X400 meters relay at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta. The sports celebrity is all set to support various initiatives of UNICEF.

Children's Day : 14th November

130th birth anniversary of Pt. Nehru was celebrated as Children's Day on 14th November 2018. The first Prime Minister of independent India, Pt Jawaharlal Nehru was born on November 14, 1889. Nehru was recognized for his immense love for children. Before 1964, Children's day was celebrated in India on November 20. It was also observed as the Universal Children's Day by the United Nations. But after Chacha Nehru's death in 1964, the nation decided to celebrate his birthday as Bal Diwas (Children's Day) in his memory.

Beginning of LEAP and ARPIT programmes

In November 2018 Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Satya Pal Singh started two new initiatives viz. 'Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP)' and the 'Annual Refresher Programme In Teaching (ARPIT)' for higher education faculty. Between them, LEAP is for second level academic functionaries in higher education institutions while ARPIT is a unique initiative of online professional development of 15 lakh higher education faculty. 15 NIRF top ranked Indian Institutions will play the role in implementation of LEAP. While MOOCs platform SWAYAM will be employed for ARPIT.

Mangaluru boy won silver in Astronomy Olympiad

In November 2018, Mangaluru boy, Prathyush S Poduval won silver medal in International Olympiad in Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA- 2018) in Beijing, China. He is a former student of the Centre for Advanced Learning (CFAL), and is one among five students who participated from India. He competed with 214 students from 40 nations including USA, Russia and China. Currently he is studying at IISc Bengaluru. He had been the Karnataka state topper in KVPY 2017-18 and is on a KVPY scholarship.

Establishment of National Data Repository

In November 2018, Union Government established National Data Repository equipped with cutting-edge technology which has database of all the geo-scientific data of hydrocarbon resources. It is an integrated data repository of Exploration and Production data of Indian sedimentary basins hosted at Directorate General of Hydrocarbons in Noida which is a technical arm of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. With this, India has joined the row of UK and Norway which have a National Data Repository for the upstream sector.

AIIMS MBBS 2019 will have two stage online registration

In November 2018, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi has introduced two-stage online registration process viz. Basic Registration and the Final registration for candidates willing to appear for the MBBS entrance examination. The move aims at removing discrepancy in the details of the candidates. There will be no fee for the basic registration and only after verifying the filled details, the candidate can proceed to the final registration. The application form will be soon available at aiimsexams.org.

Dr Debabhuson Borah: Winner of MuninBarkotoki Literary Award 2018

In November 2018, young writer-critic Dr. Debabhuson Borah was chosen for the prestigious Munin Barkotoki Literary Award 2018 in Assam. His book on literary criticism titled 'Nirbochon' fetched him this honor. He will be felicitated with cash prize of Rs. 50,000 along with a citation and a plaque at a function to be held in February 2019 in Guwahati, Assam. The Munin Barkotoki Memorial Trust instituted this award in 1995 in memory of the eminent writer, critic and journalist Munin Barkotoki to encourage Assamese writers

Demise of T.N. Srinivasan

In November 2018, powerful voice for economic reform in India, the Samuel C. Park Jr. Professor Emeritus of Economics at Yale and a leading intellectual force behind India's economic liberalization, T.N. Srinivasan

died at the age of 85 in Chennai. He made key scientific contributions to international trade, development economics, applied general equilibrium, political economy, nutrition, income distribution, and contracts. He co-edited the first two volumes of the influential “Handbook of Development Economics” with economist Hollis Chenery, and the third volume in the series with Jere Behrman in 1995.

Professor Anju Seth: The first woman director of IIM-Calcutta

The alumni of the Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta (IIM-C), Anju Seth has been appointed as the first woman director of the institute in 50 years history of the institution. She has been the Pamplin Professor of Management at Virginia Tech, USA. Before that, she served as professor of business administration at the University of Illinois and has received several awards for her teaching and research. She is on the editorial board of many scholarly journals.

The First Naturopathy Day

Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) celebrated the first Naturopathy Day across the nation on 18th November 2018. An autonomous body under AYUSH Ministry, Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy conducted health camps, workshops and exhibitions in association with local naturopathy centres and hospitals. More than 1,000 Naturopathy specialist doctors from across the nation participated in the event organised by International Naturopathy Organisation along with Ministry of AYUSH in New Delhi.

Country’s first specialized hospital for elephants

In November 2018, India’s first specialized hospital for elephants was formally inaugurated in Churmura village in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh. The establishment is unique medical centre that offers wireless digital X-ray, dental X-ray, laser treatment, thermal imaging, ultrasonography, hydrotherapy and quarantine facilities for sick injured or aging elephants. One of the largest non-profit Wildlife Organisations in South Asia, Wildlife SOS that established first elephant conservation and care centre in 2010 promoted this hospital.

IIT Kharagpur devised DSS system for LPG connections

In November 2018, Researchers from IIT Kharagpur launched a computer programme, Decision Support System (DSS) to amplify LPG connections in BPL (below poverty line) households under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana. It is a first of its kind for evaluation of national level energy policy. This kind of DSS can be developed for many central and state level policies for several commodities like agricultural commodities, solar panels distributions and so on. Using mathematical programming and operation research techniques, DSS can provide exact values of key parameters over prescribed policy time period.

Demise of 1971 war hero Kuldip Singh Chandpuri

On 17th November 2018, Brigadier Kuldip Singh Chandpuri who defended Longewala border post in Rajasthan with just 120 Indian soldiers during the 1971 war against Pakistan that led to liberation of Bangladesh, died of cancer in Mohali, Punjab at the age of 78. He served as the source of inspiration for Movie ‘Border’ in which character of Kuldip Singh Chandpuri was famously portrayed by Sunny Deol. The deceased was well acknowledged with Maha Vir Chakra for his leadership during the Battle of Longewala.

NATA will be held twice

The Council of Architecture decided to conduct the National Aptitude Test in Architecture (NATA) twice in a year from the upcoming session of 2019-2020. Now the exam will be held in mid of April and second week of July and students will have the choice to appear either in one or both the exams and the best of the two

scores will be considered for selection. The allotted time for drawing paper has been increased to 120 minutes from 90 minutes. Besides these, the council will conduct a national-level counselling for admissions into B. Arch courses.

The ongoing Qaumi Ekta Week

19th November 2018 kickstarted Qaumi Ekta week (National Integration Week) to underline the significance of secularism, anti-communalism and non-violence. An autonomous organization with Ministry of Home Affairs, the National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH), has organized the campaign which will coincide with Communal Harmony Flag Day on 25 November. Each day of the week marks a particular observation viz. 19 November (National Integration Day), November 20 (Welfare of Minorities day), November 21 (Linguistic Harmony day), November 22 (Weaker Sections' day), November 23 (Cultural Unity Day), November 24 (Women's day) and November 25 (Conservation day).

Punjab became the third state to ban hookah bars

In November 2018 after Maharashtra and Gujarat, Punjab government has also imposed ban on hookah bars or lounges via Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018. The law is expected to curb use of tobacco in various forms to prevent diseases like Tuberculosis. The state was found to have unregulated growth of these hookah parlours and increased trend of 'hookah-sheesha' smoking. Moreover, there were instances of drug consumption in these hookah bars which added fuel to the smoke.

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan got lifetime achievement award

On 17th November 2018, one of India's greatest Sarod Master Ustad Amjad Ali Khan of Gwalior was felicitated with "Sumitra Charat Ram Award for Lifetime Achievement" at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi for his remarkable contribution to the enrichment and promotion of Indian Classical Music. The awardee already holds fellowship of sangeet Natak Akademi, UNESCO Award, UNICEP National Ambassadorship, Fukuoka cultural Grand prize of Japan & 'Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters' of France. He was honored with Padma Vibhushan in year 2001.

Sanjay Kumar Mishra became Director of Enforcement Directorate

In November 2018, Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed 1984-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Sanjay Kumar Mishra as full-time Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED). He will serve on this post for next two-years from the date of assumption of the charge of the post or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Before this appointment, he has worked in capacities of principal special director in EB in October 2018 and as well as chief commissioner of Income Tax Department in Delhi.

NEET opens path for Ayurveda, Unani medical colleges

In November 2018 the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad high court permitted admissions to Ayurveda, Unani medical colleges of Uttar Pradesh through National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) till December 20. According to the court's order the state government will complete the admission process and will ensure that colleges get their quota of students on or before December 15. And if government did not get such students then between December 16 and 20, NEET qualified students will be sent to AYUSH colleges.

Gujarat started conservation project for Gir lions

On November 20, 2018, Gujarat government launched a Rs 351-crore project for the conservation of the Gir lions. Around 23 Asiatic lions died of Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) outbreak in Gir National park in

Saurashtra which led to urgency of the project. Canine distemper is a viral disease also termed as hardpad disease caused by a single-stranded RNA virus of the family Paramyxoviridae that affects several body systems of animals. This intensive project has an emergency ambulance van akin to the 108 emergency services. Besides this, it is well equipped with 24/7 all-weather large-scale intelligent technology, 'E-Eye' for efficient wildlife supervision to avert probable violations.

India's first Sri Vishwakarma Skill Development University

On 19th November 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation of India's first Sri Vishwakarma Skill Development University in Palwal district of Haryana. The University will impart skill training to the youth and will motivate them to get self employed. The campus of this prospective university will be erected over 82.7 acres at estimated expenditure of more than Rs 1,000 crore. Apart from this, PM also inaugurated 136-kilometre long Western Peripheral Expressway (WPE), also known as the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal stretch in Haryana.

UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey became the new revenue secretary

On November 17, 2018, UIDAI CEO Ajay Bhushan Pandey got appointed as the new revenue secretary by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. The 1984 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Maharashtra cadre will take place of the present Finance and Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia, who is retiring on November 30th, 2018. Besides him, Girish Chandra Murmu (Officer on Special Duty (OSD) of the Department of Expenditure), Anshu Prakash (additional secretary in the Department of Telecommunications), Chhabilendra Roul (officer on special duty (OSD) in the fertilizers department), Yogendra Tripathy (secretary in the tourism department), Upma Chawdhry (Secretary in the Department of Youth Affairs), Sumanta Chaudhuri (Secretary in the Coal Ministry) etc were the other top Bureaucratic Appointees.

Provision of land rights to enclave dwellers in West Bengal

In November 2018, the West Bengal Assembly passed 'the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill, 2018' in chorus to provide land rights to enclave dwellers in north Bengal. The approval has ended an era of undecided future for the people residing in West Bengal enclaves. The historic bill has ensured full-fledged citizenship of India, along with all civic amenities and citizenship rights to the enclave dwellers. Flashback says, on August 1, 2015, India and Bangladesh ended one of the world's most-complex border disputes by exchanging a total of 162 enclaves.

Amitabh Bachchan became Sayaji Ratna Awardee

In November 2018, Film superstar Amitabh Bachchan was honored with the third Sayaji Ratna Award for his key role in several social causes and for being an inspiration for millions of artists across the globe. In 2013, the Baroda Management Association had instituted this award on the 150th birth anniversary of erstwhile Baroda ruler Sayajirao Gaekwad III, who was credited for undertaking major social reform measures during his rule in the early 20th century.

Death of Indian classical musician Ustad Imrat

On November 22, 2018, Indian classical music maestro Ustad Imrat Khan died of brief illness at the age of 83 in USA. He had dedicated his life to propagation of the Sitar and the Surbahar across the globe. He hailed from the illustrious Etawa Gharana, or the Imdadkhani Gharana which was named after his grandfather Ustad Imdad Khan. The development of the musical instrument surbahar, a stringed instrument that is sometimes called the "bass sitar" is a credential of his family.

Justice Kothari sworn in as Judge of Madras High Court

On November 23, 2018, Justice Vineet Kothari took oath as a judge of the Madras High Court in Chennai. The Chief Justice of Madras High Court VK Tahilramani administered this oath ceremony. With this, the number of judges in the Madras High Court has gone up to 61. Before this, Kothari has served as a judge in the Karnataka High Court as well as in the Rajasthan High Court for 11 years. Past says, as a lawyer, he had practised tax and other commercial and constitutional laws, arbitration and company law for 20 years.

26th November : Constitution Day

26th November 2018 was celebrated as Constitution Day across the nation. On this day in year 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India which came into effect on January 26, 1950. On this day, glowing tributes were paid to Father of Indian constitution, Dr. B R Ambedkar along with other members of Constituent assembly who carved Indian Constitution. On this occasion, Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee invoked people to protect Sovereignty, Socialism, Secularity, Democratic Republic, Justice, Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality which comprise the spirit of our Constitution.

IFFI celebrated Jharkhand Day

The International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa celebrated Jharkhand Day on 24th November 2018 by featuring The untold story, Ajab Singh ki Gajab Kahani, Begum Jaan, Ranchi Diaries, A Death in the Gunj and Mor Gaon Mor Desh. Jharkhand is an eastern state of India which was formed from the southern part of Bihar on 15th November in 1956. The state has given several renowned celebrities like MS Dhoni, Priyanka Chopra, archer Deepika Kumari and actor R Madhavan. Jharkhand has been declared the focus state for the first time at IFFI.

Aspirants of NEET-UG 2018 in Tamil are celebrating!

According to November 2018 verdict of the Apex Court, the NEET-UG 2018 aspirants who had opted to write the test in Tamil language on account of error in translation will be awarded 196 grace marks. The Apex court has overruled the Madras High Court's verdict in this context saying that "the method adopted by the Madurai bench of Madras High Court is manifestly arbitrary and unjustified and cannot be sustained". With this, the students who got 260 marks has been awarded a total of 456 marks, those with 137 marks got entitled to 333 marks and those who got 92 marks claimed 288 marks.

Forestry, Agriculture and allied fields need NEET

In November 2018, NEET-UG has been made mandatory for seeking admission in AYUSH related courses, BSc Agriculture, BSc Forestry, Bachelor of Fisheries Science etc along with medical field as per the latest notification of Commissioner for Entrance Examinations (CEE), Kerala. This criteria will be implemented from the coming academic year. The seats reserved under NRI quota will also be filled based on the NEET 2019 result. Thus, the admission in Kerala will be based on the state's NEET rank list.

November 26 : National Milk Day 2018

26th November 2018 got celebrated as National Milk Day and Amul dedicated a doodle with caption 'Celebrating the legacy of the Milkman of India!' with the words 'Amul Ratna!' It showed Dr Verghese Kurien in the background along with the Amul girl offering milk to bikers. The bikers depicted the rally which began from Jammu on November 17 and covered various dairy farms village cooperative societies before entering Gujarat. In 1970s NDDDB began Operation Flood or White Revolution of India to create a nationwide milk grid. It made India the largest producer of Milk and Milk Products.

Announcement of Major changes in engineering courses

In November 2018, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) announced some major changes in its policies on student internships, examination reform and the training of technical teachers while laying down the roadmap for engineering courses. Students pursuing bachelor's degree in engineering will have to undergo at least 600 to 700 hours of internships which will fetch them credits. AICTE has also opened provision of open book exams. Technical teachers will have to undergo an induction course at the time of joining and will also have to keep updating themselves.

27 November was Indian Organ Donation Day

On November 27, 2018 the '9th Indian Organ Donation Day' was organized by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization in Delhi. On this occasion, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey conferred the Best performing state award to Tamil Nadu. Maharashtra welcomed award for being the Best State for promoting awareness on organ donations. Besides this, Dr. Subramania Iyer K, Kochi was well rewarded for conducting first hand transplant in the country and Dr. Shailesh Puntambekar, Pune got the award for conducting first Uterine Transplant in India.

"Making of New India" is in the bookstores

In November 2018, Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley handed over a book titled "Making of New India: Transformation under Modi Government" to the President Ram Nath Kovind at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Edited by Dr. Bibek Debroy, Dr. Anirban Ganguly and Shri Kishore Desai, the book has 51 essays on themes ranging from economy to diplomacy, education to public health. The book presents a perspective of the way the government, more importantly, the Prime Minister himself, functions.

India's Wildlife Crime Control Bureau won UN Environment award

In November 2018, The United Nations Environment has awarded the Asia Environment Enforcement Award, 2018 to India's Wildlife Crime Control Bureau for its excellent performance in combating transboundary environmental crime. The bureau has developed an online Wildlife Crime Database Management System to track real-time data in order to help analyse trends in crime and devise effective measures to prevent and detect wildlife crimes across India. The award acknowledges contribution of excellence and leadership in enforcement of national laws to fight transboundary environmental crime in fields like collaboration, impact, innovation, integrity and gender leadership.

Arvind Saxena, the new Chairman of UPSC

On November 28, 2018, the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind appointed Arvind Saxena as Chairman of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). He will serve the post till August 7, 2020 when he will attain the age of 65 years or till further orders, whichever is earlier. In June 2018 the government had appointed him as the acting Chairman of UPSC in place of Vinay Mittal. After completing civil engineering at the Delhi College of Engineering, he earned M.Tech. in systems management from IIT Delhi. He joined the Indian Postal Service in 1978 and UPSC in May 2015.

The 49th IFFI concluded in Goa

On 29th November 2018, the 49th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) met full stop at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Bambolim in Panaji, Goa. 'New India through a variety of genres of cinema, including history, action, romance and sports' was this year's theme. Israel was focus country and Jharkhand was the focus state. "The Aspern Papers" was opening film, while world premiere of the German film "Sealed Lips" was the closing film. Major movies and celebrities that were felicitated in this festival were

Israeli Director Dan Wolman (lifetime achievement award); Story-screenplay-dialogue writer Salim Khan (IFFI 2018 Special Award); Ukrainian movie Donbass directed by Sergei Loznitsa (Best film (Golden Peacock) award); Lijo Jose Pellissery Best director (Silver Peacock award for Malayalam film); Malayalam film 'Ee. Ma. Yau' actor Chemban Vinod (Best Actor (Male) Award); Ukrainian movie 'When the Trees Fall' actress Anastasiia Pustovit (Best Actor (Female) Award); Filipino 'Respeto' Alberto Monteras II (Centenary Award for Best Debut Feature Film of Director) and 'Walking with the Wind' directed by Praveen Morchhale (ICFT –UNESCO Gandhi Medal). The event witnessed over 220 movies from 67 nations including 26 feature films and 21 non-feature films from the Indian Panorama section.

Dera Baba Nanak - Kartarpur Sahib Corridor

In November 2018, Venkaiah Naidu laid down foundation stone of Dera Baba Nanak Kartarpur Sahib Corridor on the Indian side at Mann village in Gurdaspur district of Punjab with a purpose of making way for Indian Sikh pilgrims to visit the holy site of Gurudwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Pakistan. The Kartarpur Road Corridor will connect India's border district of Gurdaspur with the historic Gurudwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan, which was the resting place of Guru Nanak. NHAI will build it via funds from the Union Government.

ISRO launched 30 foreign satellites along with HysIS

On November 29, 2018, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) succeeded in launching an earth observation satellite, hyperspectral imaging satellite (HysIS), along with 30 foreign commercial satellites from Sriharikota launch centre in Andhra Pradesh via its commercial arm Antrix Corporation Limited. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C43) rocket launched HysIS along with 1 Micro and 29 Nano satellites from 8 different countries. All the foreign satellites have been placed in a 504 km orbit which includes 23 US satellites.

'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti'

On November 27, 2018, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti' in New Delhi. Department of Defence Production instituted it as a part of the ongoing initiatives to enhance self-reliance in defence and encourage the IPR culture in indigenous defence industry. The Directorate General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) has been given the responsibility of coordinating and implementing the programme. The Defence Minister used the occasion to felicitate some of the scientists, who invented and innovated useful products for the nation.

Government launched 'PAiSA'

In November 2018, government inaugurated a portal, 'PAiSA' under National Urban Livelihoods Mission for a centralised electronic platform, Affordable Credit and Interest Subvention Access, for fast processing of loans under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana. PAiSA is just another effort of government to link directly with the beneficiaries, ensuring that there is greater transparency and efficiency in delivery of services. By the end of this year all 35 States and Union Territories, all scheduled commercial banks, RRBs and Cooperative Banks will be on board of the PAiSA portal.

World-class township for autistic people

In November 2018, government planned to erect an India Autism Centre in Kolkata in collaboration with a private firm. The proposed centre will be a World-class township for autistic children and adults, well equipped with training, treatment and boarding facilities. This one-of-its-kind initiative is expected to come up over a 52-acre plot at Sirakol in South 24 Parganas in upcoming five years. The centre will accommodate 350 residents and will have daycare centre for over 200 children, adolescents and adults.

BPRD organised the second National Conference of Heads of Investigating Agencies

On November 29, 2018, the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) conducted the second National Conference of Heads of Investigating Agencies on 'capacity building of police investigators in the era of new age crimes' theme in New Delhi. The two-day Conference is about various legal aspects, procedures and use of technology in investigation to improve its quality and secure effective prosecution. More than 200 delegates from all states and union territories including officers of Economic Offence Wing, Special Task Force will participate in the conference along with CBI, NIA, Enforcement Directorate.

India Rivers Week 2018

November 2018 witnessed India Rivers Week 2018 at the World Wide Fund for Nature-India, New Delhi. The event involved a unique meeting on rivers that focussed on 'Can India Rejuvenate Ganga?' The meeting was dedicated to Dr. G D Agrawal (Swami Gyan Swaroop Sanand), who died of prolonged fasting in context to the uncatereed demands related to the river project. The meeting also tracked the current progress on the rejuvenation of the Ganga, the appropriateness or effectiveness of the current road map and connected future plans. Vishwanath Srikantaiah and River Journalist Arun Tiwari were rewarded for their outstanding contributions in the river projects.

IIT Delhi is aspiring for artificial intelligence research

In November 2018, IIT Delhi disclosed its plan of establishing a Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in upcoming six months to promote research in the technology to get solutions for complex problems in fields such as medicine, finance and customer support. According to Niti Ayog's paper on National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence, India has only 386 out of total 22,000 Ph.D. researchers in the technique across the globe and is being ranked 10th globally. Besides this, IIT-Delhi is also planning to offer certificate courses in AI for professionals. India is all set to Chair Kimberley Process In November 2018, the European Union entrusted India the Chairmanship of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) at the KPCS Plenary 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. India will take the stage from January 1, 2019. As a KPCS Chair, India will make the KPCS a stronger process in terms of inclusiveness, strengthened administration and implementation. A United Nations General Assembly Resolution had set up the KPCS process in 2000 to prevent "conflict diamonds" from entering the mainstream rough diamond market. India is the founding member of KPCS.

K Krishnankutty has become the Water Resources Minister of Kerala

In November 2018, K Krishnankutty sworn in as the new Water Resources Minister in the Pinarayi Vijayan cabinet of Kerala. He has succeeded Matthew T. Thomas. Before this, Krishnankutty served in capacity of state president, Janata Dal (Secular) and was earlier elected to the Kerala Assembly in 1980, 1982 and 1991. He has also worked as President of Agricultural Processing and Marketing Society, and chairman of the government-appointed committee for framing an agricultural policy for the state during 2011-2016.

AS Rajeev became MD & CEO of Bank of Maharashtra

On December 1 2018, Bank of Maharashtra appointed Executive Director of Indian Bank, Mr. AS Rajeev as its new Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer. The appointee had served in Syndicate Bank, Vijaya Bank and Indian Bank. Rajeev is a mathematics graduate with professional qualifications of FCA, MBA, DISA and CAIIB. and has professional experience of 30 years in important areas of banking, including corporate credit, international banking, treasury, risk management, credit monitoring and supervision, NPA management, planning and development, human resources, finance, accounts and taxation among others.

Dr. R. Rukkumani got Woman Scientist Award

On 1st December 2018, a faculty in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of Pondicherry University, Dr. R. Rukkumani was honored with prestigious 'Woman Scientist Award' at the 15th Biotechnology Research Society of India (BRSI) Convention and the International conference on Innovation for Bio Sustainable development in Hyderabad. The award includes, certificate, shield, citation and a cash prize of Rs. 25,000/-. She has identified an efficient anticancer molecule from a natural source and has filed a patent for the same.

Drone registration via Digital Sky Platform

On December 1, 2018, Aviation Ministry's Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) to ensure safe flying of Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) popularly referred to as drones has come into effect. The Government had announced this regulation in August 2018 that speaks of airspace divided into three zones viz. Green Zone (automatic permission), Yellow Zone (controlled airspace) and Red Zone (flying not permitted). For this the operators of drones of micro size will need to register on the Digital Sky portal. This platform is the first-of-its-kind national unmanned traffic management (UTM) platform that implements "no permission, no takeoff" (NPNT).

47th Navy Day was observed on 4th December

4th December 2018 was observed to commemorate the success of Operation Trident of Indian Navy on Karachi Harbour during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. In this operation, the Indian Navy sank four vessels near the largest Pakistani port of Karachi and ruined the Karachi harbour fuel fields, killing more than 500 Pakistani Navy personnel. Three Indian Navy missile boats - INS Nipat, INS Nirghat, and INS Veer played a significant role in the attack. The naval forces displayed acrobatic skills from Army choppers on the tip of the Rameswaram Island, Tamil Nadu for celebrations.

Ullas Narayan won India's first international medal in ultrarunning

In December 2018, Ullas Narayan finished an international ultra running event at the third position, after two Japanese runners in the 2018 International Association of Ultra Running (IAU) 24 Hour Asia & Oceania Championships. He won a bronze medal after completing 250 km run and with this he became the first ever Indian individual medal winner in an international ultra running event. Yoshihiko Ishikawa completed (253 km) and Nobuyuki Takahashi (252 km) and won gold and silver medals respectively.

Tuhin became first Indian to scale Sahayadri mountain range

On 3rd December, 2018 Tuhin Satarkar, became the first Indian to climb three routes in the treacherous Sahayadri mountain range in span of 12 days, from November 16 to 28. He is a Pune based rock climber who conquered Dhodap, Jivdhan and Naneghat peaks. The Red Bull athlete got into this vertical sport at the tender age of eight. He had conquered Sahyadri Mountains of Western Ghats, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is among one of the eight "hottest hot-spots" of biological diversity in the world.

Plan of Indian Navy's 'Exercise Sea Vigil'

On December 4, 2018, Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba revealed Indian Navy's plan of a 2-month long Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (Tropex) from January to March 2019. Like every year, under this a large-scale coastal defence exercise 'Exercise Sea Vigil' will be conducted to test the strength of the entire coastal security apparatus. More than 45 ships including INS Vikramaditya, submarines, the nuclear powered Chakra, naval aircraft MiG-29K, helicopters as well as ships from both the Western and Eastern Naval Commands of the Indian Navy will participate in this event.

HC judge U C Dhyani will monitor Ganga cleaning

In November 2018, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has appointed former Uttarakhand High Court judge, Justice U C Dhyani, as head of the three-member committee to oversee rejuvenation work of the Ganga River. He has taken place of Justice Arun Tandon. Nominee of Central Pollution Control Board and nominee of IIT Roorkee are the other members of the committee. The NGT has ordered decentralised processing facilities closest to the source of generation of solid waste near hotels, dharamshalas and ashram for segregation and treatment of biodegradable waste and its appropriate disposal.

Ajay Narayan Jha, the new Finance Secretary

On 3rd December 2018, the Ministry of Finance has appointed the current Expenditure Secretary, Ajay Narayan Jha, as the new Finance Secretary. The 1982-batch IAS officer of Manipur- Tripura cadre has taken place of Hasmukh Adhia who retired on November 30. Jha is an alumnus of St Stephens College and has earned an MPhil in public administration from Delhi University. It is worth knowing that he has been a proud recipient of World Bank scholarship to pursue masters in economic policy management from McGill University in Canada. Besides him, UIDAI CEO and the chairman of GSTN, Ajay Bhushan Pandey is the next Revenue Secretary.

RBI permitted SBM subsidiary

Wholly Owned Subsidiary (WOS) mode under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 came into effect from December 1, 2018. Reserve Bank of India used this ACT to grant license to State Bank of Mauritius (SBM) to operate its SBM Bank (India) Limited in Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata, Pune, Ahmedabad and Jaipur by next year. Sidharth Rath has already been appointed as MD & CEO of this company. Currently State Bank of Mauritius has its branches in Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Ramachandrapuram in India.

The 5th Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy of RBI

RBI released its 5th Bi-monthly monetary policy on December 5, 2018 . The Monetary Policy Committee chaired by RBI Governor Dr. Urjit Patel has stated Repo Rate 6.5%, Reverse Repo rate 6.25%, Marginal Standing Facility (MSF)rate 6.75%, Bank Rate 6.75%. Reserve Ratios CRR4%, SLR 19.5% and GDP Prediction for 2018-19 7.4%, for 2018-19 H2 7.2-7.3% and for 2019-20 H17.5%. CPI Inflation for 2018-19 H2 2.7-3.2% and for 2019-20 H1 3.8-4.2%.

National Rail Museum & Madame Tussauds Wax Museum inked MoU

In December 2018, National Rail Museum of Ministry of Railways and Madame Tussauds Wax Museum inked MoU to foster tourism in Delhi NCR. As per the agreement a special discount of 35% will be offered on ticket prices to National Rail Museum visitors when they visit Madame Tussauds Museum, Delhi and similarly, Madame Tussauds Wax Museum visitors will be getting discount of 30% on combo packages of NRM. The agreement offers a special provision for school groups under which school children will be able to enjoy both museums at a 45% discount.

Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi is in que for GI tag

Odisha's KandhamalHaldi (turmeric) will get Geographical Indications (GI) tag this December. Known for its healing attributes, Kandhamal Haldi is main cash crop of tribal people in Kandhamal. Apart from domestic use, it also serves cosmetic and medicinal purposes. Kandhamal Apex Spices Association for Marketing initiated its registration that won approval under sub-section (1) of Section 13 of Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. GI tag is name or sign used on certain products which correspond to specific geographical location or origin enabling stakeholders to authenticate their production while earning a premium.

Noted agriculturalist Jayaraman passed away

On December 6, 2018, renowned agriculturalist Nel Jayaraman, who had pioneered the protection and propagation of native paddy varieties in Tamil Nadu died in Chennai. Jayaraman belonged to Thiruthuraiipoondi and was credited for documenting and protecting over 170 paddy varieties. He followed the footsteps of his late mentor Nammalvar and worked diligently for protecting the gene prototypes of indigenous paddy varieties. He had won a National Award in year 2015 and a state award in year 2011. His popularity as a seed conservation activist earned him the nickname – Nel Jayaraman, (Nel means Paddy seed in Tamil).

Dr. B R Ambedkar's 63rd Mahaparinirvan Diwas

December 6, 2018 was observed as 63rd Mahaparinirvan Diwas of father of our constitution, Dr. B R Ambedkar who died on this day in year 1956. Bharat Ratna Ambedkar was a jurist, economist, politician and a social reformer who campaigned against social discrimination of Dalits, women and labourers. Several functions were organised all over the country to mark the occasion. Mumbai staged a two-day exhibition of paintings based on the theme of secularism which was inaugurated at Chaitya Bhoomi.

Boards have introduced changes in exam pattern

In December 2018, the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) has introduced changes in the exam pattern for the class 10th and class 12th examinations. CISCE has introduced compartmental examination at both ICSE and ISC level for failures of class 10th and class 12th in July each year and the result for the same will be declared in August of the corresponding year from 2019 onwards. CISCE has also added new subjects and details are available on the official website. Besides this, in addition to the subject-wise marks, paper-wise marks will also be provided for English, history, civics and geography and science on the statement of marks. Apart from this, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has been instructed by the Central government to make 'descriptive and objective knowledge' based exam to bridge the prevalent disparity in marking style in different regions of India.

The 75th anniversary of Dainik Jagran newspaper

On 7th December 2018, PM Narendra Modi addressed Jagran Forum on the occasion of the 75th anniversary celebration of Dainik Jagran in Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi. He applauded Dainik Jagran's efforts in generating awareness, and in the rebuilding of the nation. The newspaper is said to have strengthened several government movements and initiatives through digital platforms like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao; Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan; Ayushman Bharat Yojana; PM Awaas Yojana; Ujjwala; Saubhagya; etc.

Krishnamurthy Subramanian : The new Chief Economic Adviser

One of the world's leading experts in banking, corporate governance and economic policy, Krishnamurthy Subramanian has been appointed as the new Chief Economic Adviser for three years. The appointee holds a PhD from Chicago-Booth and is a top-ranking IIT-IIM alumnus. Presently, Subramanian is an Associate Professor of Finance (with tenure) and Executive Director for the Centre for Analytical Finance at the Indian School of Business. He has also worked in capacity of finance faculty at Goizueta Business School at Emory University in the United States.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Hilda Heine survived vote of no confidence

In November 2018, Hilda Heine, leader of Marshall Islands, a country in Oceania succeeded in surviving a vote of no confidence. The first and only elected female leader of a Pacific island nation had split parliament into 16-16. The no-confidence motion was staged on account of her government's refusal to support plans for an independently administered tax haven on an atoll within the Marshalls. Though the idea was about making the territory self governing, completely tax free as well as attractive option for hi-tech firms yet her government rejected the proposal to prevent money laundering and passport-for-sale scams.

World Antibiotic Awareness Week

12th November kickstarted World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW) to increase global awareness of antibiotic resistance and encourage best practices among the general public. A multi-day messaging campaign has been scheduled for creating awareness about comprehension of risk due to antimicrobial resistance, mobilizing labs to detect resistance development in microbes, to make available all requisite sanitation and hygiene facilities for preventing infections in health care centres, effective circulation of antibiotics, increasing funding for tools, skills and technologies used in domain of antibiotics.

Eritrea got freed from bans

In November 2018, United Nations Security Council agreed in chorus to uplift bans against Eritrea regarding arms embargo, asset freeze, and travel that were imposed nine years ago. These bans were imposed on this East African nation as it was charged of supporting al-Shabab militants in Somalia. In June 2018, it agreed on a peace deal with Ethiopia after 20 years of animosity. Eritrea and the UN-backed government in Somalia recently inked a joint cooperation agreement regarding regional economic development.

UNICEF- Atal Tinkering Lab Hackthon

On November 14, 2018, NITI Aayog in collaboration with UNICEF launched the UNICEF- Atal Tinkering Lab Hackthon to encourage children towards making new innovations. This Hackthon is a 72-hour problem solving quest and the winners of this competition will be announced on November 20, 2018. According to UN Resident Coordinator in India, Yuri Afanasiev, India has inspiring ecosystem of innovation and it is interesting to see the way young people are producing low-cost, high-impact solutions. Atal Tinkering Labs and Atal Innovation Mission bridge innovation and schools across the country, providing solutions to grassroot problems.

Farrell got Lifetime Achievement Award

In November 2018, Lifetime Achievement Award (posthumously) was given to Late Dr. Martha Farrell to acknowledge her lifelong work towards gender equality, women's empowerment and prevention of sexual harassment at workplace. This award was announced on the occasion of the 6th Indian Social Work Congress in New Delhi. The deceased was among 14 people who were killed in a terrorist attack on a guest house in Kabul, Afghanistan on May 13, 2015.

International Day for Tolerance

16 November 2018 was observed as International Day for Tolerance. The UN General Assembly instituted this day in year 1996 via resolution 51/95. The UN started a new campaign 'TOGETHER' to promote tolerance, respect and dignity towards refugees and migrants across the globe. The 2018 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence, instituted on 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, went to social entrepreneur and filmmaker Manon Barbeau of Canada and a NGO, 'Coexist Initiative' who are working to end violence against women (Kenya).

Neomi Rao became the USA Supreme Court justice

In November 2018, US President Donald Trump nominated Indian-American, Neomi Rao as the Supreme Court Justice on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. She has succeeded Justice Brett Kavanaugh. The 45 year old Rao, will be the second Indian American judge after Sree Srinivasan on the DC Circuit, which has jurisdiction over important regulatory, national security, and separation of powers questions. Presently, Rao is serving in capacity of the administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA).

The Global Cooling Prize

In November 2018, Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the Global Cooling Innovation Summit in New Delhi. On this occasion the Union Minister launched an international competition, the Global Cooling Prize, to incentivise the development of a climate-friendly residential cooling solution that can provide access to cooling to people worldwide without warming the planet. The competition seeks development of a cooling technology that requires radically less energy to operate, utilises refrigerants with no ozone depletion and low global warming potential. It should also have the capability to be cost-effective at scale.

‘Barnard’s Star’, the new neighbour of Earth

In November 2018, Astronomers of the Institute of Space Studies of Catalonia and Spain’s Institute of Space Sciences announced discovery of a red dwarf star, ‘Barnard’s Star’, revolving six light years away from Earth. It is frozen, dimly lit and 3.2 times heavier than Earth. It is the second nearest star to the Earth outside the solar system and orbits its host star once every 233 days. It has a surface temperature of -170 degrees Celsius and is far too cold to support life.

UN asked Bangladesh to halt Rohingya repatriation plan

In November 2018, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet asked Bangladesh to put on hold the repatriation plan of more than 2,200 Rohingya refugees to Myanmar. These refugees in Bangladesh are the victims of human rights violations that happened in the violence of August 2017 and are unwilling to return under current conditions. The Government of Myanmar is being asked to ensure suitable conditions for return of refugees by solving the root problems of the crisis in Rakhine state, in particular, the systematic discrimination against and persecution of Rohingyas.

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

18th November 2018 was observed as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims on “Roads have stories” theme. Instituted by Road Peace organization in 1993, the day is being observed annually on the third Sunday of November. This day reminds people who got killed and injured on the roads across the globe, together with their families, friends and others who are affected. In this context, national charity for road crash victims in London, United Kingdom was established in 1992.

Death of Asia’s first woman neurosurgeon, T.S. Kanaka

In November 2018, Asia’s first woman neurosurgeon, T.S. Kanaka died of brief illness at 86 in Chennai. Interested in deep brain stimulation as well as cerebral palsy, the deceased was a big inspiration for neurosurgeon aspirants. 75 to 80 women opted neurosurgery under her influence. She was the third woman neurosurgeon across the globe. In 1990, Dr. Kanaka got retired as professor of Neurosurgery, Institute of Neurology, Madras Medical College (MMC). She had also served as an army medical officer for two years during the India-China war.

Gulati Got Global Education Leaders Award 2018

In November 2018, His Highness Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, member of the Cabinet and Minister of State for Tolerance, United Arab Emirates bestowed Global Education Leaders Award 2018 to Dr. Saroj Suman Gulati for her outstanding contribution to 'K-12 education and promotion of Art and Culture'. Besides her, Dr. Atul Chauhan (globalization of Indian Education); MME Grace Pinto (Exemplary Contribution to the Growth & Development of Indian K-12 Education); Dr. M.K. Madan (Exemplary Contribution to Higher Education & Women's Empowerment) were the other awardees among total 9 prize winners.

Kilogram got redefined after 130 years

On November 16, 2018, Over 60 nations agreed to adopt the new system that redefined the kilogram along with three other basic units, the ampere (electrical current), the kelvin (thermodynamic temperature) and the mole (amount of a substance). Kilogram has been the last remaining unit to be based on a physical artefact, the International Prototype Kilogram (IPK). So far it was defined by a shiny piece of platinum-iridium kept at the headquarters of the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM) outside Paris. IPK is found to pick microparticles of dirt which will now be defined by a tiny but immutable fundamental value called the 'Planck constant.' NIST-4 watt Kibble balance has been employed to measure Planck's constant to within 34 parts per billion, demonstrating the accuracy.

The second Bilingual Kannada Dictionary of Oxford

In November 2018, Oxford University Press launched its second Bilingual Kannada Dictionary 'English-English-Kannada Dictionary'. The dictionary has more than 52,000 translations and one word equivalents in simple Kannada. It is not only pedagogically more advanced but also has the contemporary methods of learning and teaching languages, enabling speakers of Kannada to learn English with perfection. It has example sentences, synonyms, antonyms, more than 200 illustrations and detailed notes in Kannada on English grammar. Besides these, it also has 5 appendices having prefixes, suffixes and irregular verbs.

Oxford University devised new treatment for Tuberculosis

In November 2018, scientists of Oxford University along with collaborators at the John Innes Institute have discovered new, safe antibiotics for Mycobacterium tuberculosis through their recent study of the structure and function of the naturally-occurring antimicrobial agent tunicamycin. Tunicamycin is an antibiotic produced by several types of bacteria and is said to be toxic for humans as it causes rare genetic diseases. The team first studied the interaction of Tunicamycin with the gene that produces glycoprotein and found that the antibiotic mutates the gene to generate genetic disorders. The researchers then altered Tunicamycin's structure creating new analogues of the antibiotic, which proved effective in treating Tuberculosis in mice and was also less toxic than other drugs which are currently being used to treat the disease.

International children's theatre festival : JashneBachpan

International children's theatre festival 'Jashne Bachpan' began on 17th November 2018 at the Sammukh, Abhimanch, Abhikalp and Little Theatre Group (LTG) auditorium in New Delhi. This nine day long 14th edition of the festival will continue till 25th November 2018. National School of Drama's (NSD) Theatre in Education (TIE) Company organized this festival to bring theatre into prominence. The event is featuring 21 productions from India and 3 from foreign groups viz. Sri Lanka (non-verbal), Switzerland (English) and Indonesia (Javanese).

World Toilet Day

20th November 2018 was observed as World Toilet Day worldwide to inspire action to address the global sanitation crisis and ensure a safe toilet for everyone by 2030. It is part of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 that aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of sanitation and water for all by 2030. 'Toilets and nature' was the theme of this observation. The key objective of the observation is to devise nature-based solutions to cater world's sanitation needs and engage communities and reaffirm the national resolution for sustenance of the Sanitation achievement.

US acknowledged eight Indian-American women

In November 2018 America honoured Eight Indian-American women at the inaugural American Bazaar Women Entrepreneurs and Leaders Gala for their achievements in diverse fields. They are NASA astrophysicist Madhulika Guhathakurta, Immigration lawyer Sheela Murthy (the vice chair of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA)), Jagruti Panwala, Maryland Delegate Aruna Miller, Manisha Gaekwad from Florida, Ann Ramakumaran (founder and CEO of a tech company Ampcus, Inc) and Suman Raghunathan (executive director of the racial justice and civil rights group South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)).

Cambodia has forbidden foreign military base

On 19th November 2018, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has decided to prohibit all foreign military bases in his country stating that Constitution does not permit foreign troops in Cambodia. He did so in wake of China's attempt of setting up naval base in southern Cambodia that would potentially provide Beijing with easier access to the South China Sea. It is worth knowing here that China has supported Hun Sen's administration with billions of dollars of financial aid.

Australia denied UN migration pact

On November 21, 2018, the Australian Government refused the UN Global Compact for Migration as the proposed agreement is likely to impair its existing immigration policies. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison backed this decision by stating that the nation's immigration policy already promotes safe, orderly and regular migration and adopting the pact would risk encouraging illegal entry to Australia and reverse the hard-won successes in combating the people-smuggling trade. The US as well as a number of populist governments in Europe, including Poland and Hungary, have also stepped back from signing this pact.

Resignation of UN environment Chief Erik Solheim

On November 20, 2018, UN Environment Chief Erik Solheim resigned from his post after an audit report of UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) questioned his huge travel expenses. The resignee was found to have spent nearly five lakh US dollar on travel since 2016. The Norwegian diplomat served as the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme from 2016 to 2018. He travelled for 529 out of the 668 days audited, spending \$488,518 with no regard for carbon emissions generated by his air travel.

International Space Station completed 20 years

On November 20, 2018, International Space Station completed 20 years of its existence. It was Russian space agency Roscosmos that launched its US funded Zarya module from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on November 20, 1998 followed by launch of NASA's Unity module. The pair was joined in low-earth orbit, which led to a 13-year construction of a habitable artificial satellite, International Space Station which presently serves as a giant orbiting observatory and laboratory. It is the largest manned object in space, 357ft long, just a yard short of a full-length football field. It weighs 419,725kg .

World's first underground hotel

In November 2018, China inaugurated world's first underground hotel "the InterContinental Shanghai Wonderland" in Shanghai, which is buried almost 90 metres deep in the ground. It is an eighteen storey luxury hotel that has only two floors above ground and the rest are underground including two floors that are underwater. It has been constructed in the Sheshan Mountain Range and it has 336 rooms. Its bottom floors have underwater suites that feature in-room aquariums where guests can enjoy the aquatic ecosystem.

'Foal Eagle' scaled down

In November 2018, the United States and South Korea have scaled down an annual joint military exercise, Foal Eagle, scheduled for the spring of 2019. The step has been taken to negotiate nuclear talks with North Korea which condemns the exercise as a preparation for invasion. Foal Eagle is the biggest of the regular joint exercises held by the allies and has always infuriated North Korea. They have not cancelled the exercise but have only realigned one exercise.

Singer Nahid Afrin: The North Eastern 'Youth Advocate'

In November 2018, UNICEF appointed singer Nahid Afrin of Assam as first 'Youth Advocate' of north-eastern region to fight for child rights. The UNICEF employs 'Youth Advocates' to harness their voice as agents of change in society. In 2016, the singer made her playback debut in Bollywood film 'Akira' starring Sonakshi Sinha in the lead role. She was bestowed the best female playback singer award at the Assam state Film Award 2018.

Nepal began 'ConMac 2018'

On November 22, 2018, Nepal's largest exhibition on construction equipment and technology "ConMac 2018" began in Bhaktapur near Kathmandu. Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in association with Embassy of India has organized the three day mega exhibition which will play significant role in helping Nepal government in achieving its commitment of infrastructure development of 6,000 to 8,000 km roads and 2,800 km railway lines in the next four years. The construction industry in Nepal has grown by 11% and has become one of the fastest growing sector contributing to the GDP of Nepal.

India-UAE Strategic Conclave

Abu Dhabi will host the second edition of the India-UAE Strategic Conclave on November 27, 2018. The proposed conclave will be focussed on the scope of bilateral investments. The event will witness aggregation of important business leaders and senior government officials who will prepare the blueprint for greater economic cooperation between India and UAE to explore the economic gains through boosting the status of both countries as major trade hubs and key gateways to regional and international markets. Indian Ambassador to the UAE, Navdeep Suri will be inaugurating this event.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

November 25, 2018 was observed as International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on "Orange the World: #HearMeToo" theme. It is worth knowing here that the 25th of every month has been designated as 'Orange Day' by the UN Women campaign "Say No, UNiTE", which was launched in year 2009 to mobilise civil society, activists, governments and the UN system to put an end to violence against women.

Demise of Oscar winner Bernardo Bertolucci

On 26th November 2018, Italian film-maker, Bernardo Bertolucci died at the age of 77 in Rome. The deceased had won Oscar for 'The Last Emperor'. Besides this, 'Last Tango in Paris', 'The Dreamers', '1900'

and 'The Conformist' are his other renowned films. Last Tango explored the sexual relations among characters stuck in a psychological crisis while, The Conformist contained politics and ideology were considered his masterpieces. The Venice Film Festival had honored Bertolucci with a lifetime achievement award in year 2007.

World's first total-body scanner "Explorer"

In November 2018, Scientists from the University of California – Davis in the US in partnership with Shanghai-based United Imaging Healthcare (UIH) announced development of world's first medical imaging scanner "Explorer". This positron emission tomography (PET) and X-ray computed tomography (CT) scanner has a potential of capturing a 3D picture of the whole human body at once in 20-30 seconds. The first images from scans of humans through this device were displayed at the Radiological Society of North America meeting in Chicago, US.

The Apex Court of Sri Lanka is all set to judge President's proclamation

In November 2018, Sri Lanka's Supreme Court constituted a seven-judge bench to decide upon President's announcement to dissolve the parliament. Several parties filed petitions against dissolution of Parliament which led to a stay order on the proclamation. Another court of appeal is about to take up the petition of Quo Warranto filed by 122 MPs challenging Mahinda Rajapaksa's authority to hold the office of Prime Minister on November 30, 2018 after a no-confidence motion was passed in Parliament against him.

French Honor travelled to 100-year-old WWII veteran

In November 2018, French Consul General Guillaume Lacroix honored Lt. Col. William Pollard with the French Legion of Honor in Frankfort, Kentucky. Guillaume Lacroix said, "The American people changed everything ... Without this gentleman, my flag would not be flying." The awardee is a 100-year-old World War II veteran who was part of the Allied invasion of German-occupied France in 1944. He saved 14 soldiers from a caisson after it was hit by enemy fire. The Legion of Honor was founded in 1802 by Napoleon, the French emperor.

WhatsApp appointed Abhijit Bose as India Head

In November 2018, WhatsApp appointed Abhijit Bose as its India head. This is the first occasion when the Facebook-owned app has named a head for the country that accounts for most users worldwide. WhatsApp insisted the government to find ways to trace the origin of fake messages circulated on the platform and sought to address rumour-mongering on its platform by flagging forwarded messages with an explicit "forwarded" label to clarify when a text had not originated from the sender. Besides this, it also impeded forwarding in India by limiting the number of contacts to whom a message could be sent i.e. to five at a time.

12 movies got chosen for ICFT UNESCO Gandhi Medal

In the 49th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), 12 movies got nominated for this year's International Council for Film, Television and Audio-visual Communication (ICFT) UNESCO Gandhi Medal. Among them Tamil film 'Baaram' and Ladakhi movie 'Walking with the Wind' are from India and the rest are foreign movies. 'Baaram', means 'burden', is a 92-minute Tamil film directed and produced by Priya Krishnaswamy. The film revolves around a widowed night-watchman, Karuppaswamy and his sons during his last days. While, 'Walking With The Wind' is dedicated to the legendary filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami. Directed by Praveen Morchhale, the film is set in a small Ladakhi village where life is harsh but achingly simple.

The First India Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue

In November 2018, The first-ever India Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue was held at St. Petersburg in Russia. NITI Aayog Vice Chairman, Rajiv Kumar represented India and the Economic Development Minister, Maxim Oreshkin represented the Russian delegation. The two-day forum focussed on transport, agriculture and agro-processing, small and medium enterprises, digital transformation and frontier technologies and industrial cooperation. The next round of this dialogue will take place in July/ August 2019.

World's first GST calculator

In November 2018, Japanese company Casio introduced world's first Goods and Services Tax (GST) calculators MJ-120GST and MJ-12GST in India for simplifying the GST calculations for tax payers. The GST calculators showcase built-in GST tabs for all five tabs- 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28% including separate buttons for GST slabs to reduce time required for processing invoice. The tax slab buttons include GST+0, GST+1, GST+2, GST+3, GST +4 and are changeable as per industry standards. The five buttons can store Gross value (net value + Tax), net value and tax paid under GST slabs. They have tax-mode application to calculate base value of products by deducting tax from MRP.

InSight Mars explorer reached Mars

In November 2018, NASA's InSight Mars explorer landed the Red Planet, Mars after an almost seven-month journey through deep space. InSight stands for Interior Exploration using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport. It has been designed to study the "inner space" i.e. crust, mantle, and core of Mars. This is the eighth time in human history that NASA has executed a successful landing on the red planet. InSight has been deployed for a period of two years (one Martian year, plus 40 Martian days) till November 24, 2020 on the planet.

1st December: World AIDS Day

The 30th anniversary of World AIDS Day got observed on 1st December 2018. The theme for the World AIDS Day 2018 was "Know Your Status". Launched in 1988, the day was meant to encourage people to make efforts to fight HIV/AIDS. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2017, approximately 36.9 million people were suffering from HIV and an estimated 940,000 people died from AIDS-related illnesses, and about 1.8 million people were newly infected with HIV across the globe.

Slovenia scripted news with female Army Chief appointment

On 28th November 2018, Country in Central Europe, Slovenia appointed Major General Alenka Ermenc to the post of Head of its Army and with this, the country became the first North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Country with the female Army Chief. The 55 years old former Army Commander, Alenka Ermenc had begun her military career in 1991 when Slovenia got independence from former Yugoslavia. Alenka Ermenc has earlier served in capacity of the Army's Deputy-chief of Staff.

Salome Zurabishvili: Georgia's first woman president

Salome Zurabishvil won the Presidential elections of Georgia and with that she became the first woman President of this nation. She won 59.52% of the votes while her rival Grigol Vashadze from an alliance of 11 opposition parties got 40.46% votes in the elections in Tbilisi, Georgia. Grigol's party is being led by exiled ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili's United National Movement (UNM). This election was observed as a test of Georgia's democratic credentials as Georgia is aspiring for European Union and NATO membership.

George HW Bush passed away

On 1st December 2018, the 41st President of United States, George HW Bush (from 1989 to 1993) died at age 94. The Republican was defeated by Democrat Bill Clinton in his bid for a second term. The deceased had also been a World War II hero, Texas congressman, CIA director and Ronald Reagan's Vice President. His son, former US President George W. Bush, was the 43rd President. Besides George HW Bush, John Adams was the only other US President, whose son had also been the President of the state.

Raninder Singh: The first Indian ISSF's Vice-President

On 1st December 2018, Raninder Singh got elected as the Vice-President of International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) with 161 votes in the General Assembly meeting of ISSF in Munich, Germany. With this, he has become the first Indian to get chosen for this most coveted post. Presently Raninder is the President of the National Rifle Association of India. On this occasion, he was felicitated with a gold medal by the outgoing longest serving President of the ISSF, Olegario Vazquez Rana, who commanded the post for 38 years. Besides him, Vladimir Lisin, of Russia got elected as the seventh President and Alexander Rather as the new Secretary General of ISSF

Indian-origin women in Forbes list of US tech moguls

In November 2018, four Indian-origin women got listed in America's top 50 female technology moguls. Among them are the former chief technology officer of Cisco, Padmasree Warrior, who had helped Cisco grow in influence through acquisitions; Senior director of Uber, Komal Mangtani presently serves on the board of nonprofit organization 'Women Who Code' had steered Uber's USD 1.2-billion donation and partnership with Girls Who Code to increase access to computer science; Neha Narkhede as a software engineer at LinkedIn helped in development of Apache Kafka to process the huge influx of data coming from the site in real time and Kamakshi Sivaramakrishnan, CEO and founder of identity-management company Drawbridge used large-scale artificial intelligence and machine learning to identify the different devices people use on a daily basis.

Andrés Manuel: The First Leftist President of Mexico

On December 2, 2018, Andrés Manuel López Obrador became president of Mexico. With this, he has become the first leftist president in over 70 years, marking a turning point in one of the world's most radical experiments in opening markets and privatization. The new President has inked an agreement with three Central American counterparts to create a plan to stem the flow of migrants seeking asylum in the US. He has also pledged to build more state-owned oil refineries and encourage Mexicans to produce commodities within the country instead of importing from abroad.

Privilege to US-Educated Workers For H1-B Visas

On 1st December 2018, The Trump Administration has brought a new turn in H1-B Visas provision. Now the new H1-B visa programme advocates preference to US-Educated Workers. According to a recent report of the State Department and the Institute of International Education, around 95,651 Indians are presently studying for advanced degrees in the US and 75,390 are in practical training programmes after graduation. Over this, the US Department of Homeland Security said that the proposed changes would "help ensure that H-1B visas are awarded to the most-skilled or highest-paid petition beneficiaries".

'Nomophobia' : The People's Word of 2018

In November 2018, Cambridge Dictionary declared word 'Nomophobia' as People's Word of the Year (2018). "Nomophobia" means the "fear or worry at the idea of being without your mobile phone or unable to use it". This word was chosen among other words such as "gender pay gap", "ecocide" (destruction of the natural environment of an area, or very great damage to it), and "no-platforming" (the practice of refusing someone an opportunity to make their ideas or beliefs known publicly, because you think these beliefs are dangerous or unacceptable).

Beginning of COP24

On December 3, 2018, UN Conference 'COP24' on Climate Change began at Katowice, in Poland which will continue till December 14, 2018. It is the 24th meeting of Conference of Parties (COP24) of the United Nations Framework Convention in which the Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama transferred the presidency of the talks to Michal Kurtyka, Poland's Deputy Environment Minister. Around 200 delegates from across the globe are participating in this conference which is likely to witness more than 100 events in transport, water, land-use, energy, the fashion industry, representing the wide spectrum of climate action.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

3rd December 2018 was observed as International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 'Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring inclusiveness and equality' theme which is a part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Instituted in 1992, the day aims to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development. UN Secretary-General presented a flagship report titled "UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development | 2018 – Realizing the SDGs by, for and with persons with disabilities".

NASA made the news

On 4th December 2018, NASA launched VISIONS 2 rocket to capture images of Earth's leaky atmosphere. The rocket will employ Neutral Atom Sensing-2 for Visualizing Ion Outflow. The sounding rocket made brief, targeted flights into space before returning to the Earth just a few minutes later. Sounding rockets are said to be unique among scientific spacecraft on account of their superior dexterity. Besides this, NASA chose nine US companies for moon program funding to start construction on a new space station laboratory that will orbit the moon and will act as a pit stop for missions to deeper parts of our solar system.

5th December was World Soil Day

World Soil Day was observed on 5th December 2018 on 'Be the Solution to Soil Pollution' theme across the globe. The day is observed annually to underline the significance of healthy soil and advocates the sustainable management of soil resources. Although capacity of soil is finite, yet its potential to filter and buffer contaminants and degrade the negative effects of pollutants is huge. Besides this, due to its immense carbon holding capacity it can also address challenges of a changing climate. The Indian government has launched a soil health card scheme on this occasion.

ECB began TIPS instant payment system

In November 2018, the European Central Bank (ECB) launched a new pan-European smartphone payment system called TARGET Instant Payment Settlement (TIPS) in Rome. The system will enable people and companies in Europe transfer euros to each other within 10 seconds or less, irrespective of the opening hours of their local bank. Developed by the Banca d'Italia in cooperation with the central banks of Germany, France and Spain, TIPS system is currently available to providers that have an account at a central bank connected to the euro zone's TARGET 2 network, restricted to European Union banks.

The 7-Year-Old Multi-Millionaire

American business magazine Forbes has revealed its list of the world's highest-paid YouTube stars in 2018. The list shows that a 7-year-old named Ryan reviews toys on his channel named Ryan ToysReview, has reportedly pulled in \$22 million (about Rs. 154.84 crore) during the 12-month period ending June 1, 2018. With this, he has become YouTube's Highest-Paid Star. He was followed by Jake Paul (\$21.5 million), Dude Perfect (\$20 million), DanTDM (\$18.5 million) and Jeffree Star (\$18 million) comprising top five.

Malala became Harvard award recipient

On 6th December 2018, Nobel Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai was felicitated with the 2018 Gleitsman Award of Harvard University for being a source of inspiration for a generation of boys and girls. The award carried \$125,000 for activism that has improved quality of life around the world. Past recalls that Yousafzai was the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for her global work of supporting schooling for all children. During her teens the awardee had survived an assassination attempt by the Taliban. She is founder of the nonprofit Malala Fund to support her work.

British artist received Turner Prize 2018

On 4th December 2018, a Glasgow-based British artist Charlotte Prodger won the prestigious £25,000 Turner Prize 2018 for her film work examining landscapes and gender identity. A highly personal film 'Bridgit' shot by her on her iPhone, recalling her experiences of coming out as gay in rural Scotland, fetched her this award. The jury acknowledged the painterly quality of Bridgit and the featured art history. The Turner Prize was instituted in 1948 in memory of the 19th-century English painter J. M. W. Turner.

The Opec-Russia meeting

The members of Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other oil-producing countries are scheduled to meet in Vienna on 8th and 9th December 2018 to devise ways to manage the oil output, supply glut and demand slowdown after the biggest monthly drop in oil prices in a decade. US President Donald Trump requested OPEC members to maintain the low global oil prices. Presently a barrel of Brent crude stands at around USD 60. It is worth noting here that OPEC meeting has come up at a crucial time as Qatar had earlier announced to exit the group.

7th December brought International Civil Aviation Day

Globe celebrated 7th December 2018 as International Civil Aviation Day on "Working Together to Ensure No Country is Left Behind" theme. The theme highlighted the huge transformational power of air connectivity to improve people's lives. The day tried to set up and reinforce global awareness of the significance of international civil aviation in the social and economic development. The day was instituted in 1994 as part of ICAO's 50th anniversary activities when 54 countries gathered in Chicago to witness autograph of USA on Convention on International Civil Aviation, which is best known as the 'Chicago Convention'.

Peru & UAE entered in contract with India

In December 2018, Peru signed agreement with India for sharing of information and intelligence between the Customs authorities of the two countries in the 80th Session of the Policy Commission meeting of the World Customs Organisations (WCO) in Mumbai. Apart from this, UAE also inked agreement in Abu Dhabi with India on currency swap to enable trading in their own currency and payments to import and export trade at a pre-determined exchange rate without involving the third benchmark currency like the US dollars.

India & Iran agreement on crude oil

On 6th December 2018, India has inked an agreement with Iran to pay for crude oil that it imports from the Persian Gulf nation in rupees. This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed after the US permitted India and seven other nations to keep buying Iranian oil despite the November 2018 re-imposed sanctions on the Islamic state. With this, the Indian refiners will make rupee payments in a UCO Bank account of the National Iranian Oil Co (NIOC). Under the 180-day exemption, India has been permitted to import a maximum of 300,000 barrels a day of crude oil.

Sports News

Lewis Hamilton won Brazilian GP

On November 11, 2018, Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton rejoiced his Brazilian GP victory at the Interlagos race track in Sao Paulo, Brazil. In this thrilling Formula One Grand Prix, Max Verstappen of the Netherlands driving the (33) Aston Martin Red Bull Racing RB14 TAG Heuer collided with Esteban Ocon of France driving the (31) Sahara Force India F1 Team VJM11 Mercedes on track. And this paved way for Lewis Hamilton's 10th victory of his championship-winning campaign.

Dasari left Ashok Leyland

In November 2018, Vinod K. Dasari announced his resignation as the CEO and MD of Ashok Leyland. His resignation will be in effect from March 31, 2019. He joined Ashok Leyland on April 6, 2005 and worked for almost 14 years in the company. He had been the head of the manufacturing, strategic sourcing, and corporate quality engineering divisions of Ashok Leyland. On May 8, 2008 he became a whole-time director of the company.

Messi won La Liga Player of The Year Award

On 15th November 2018, Lionel Messi won the La Liga Player of The Year Award at an award ceremony in Barcelona. The Alfredo Di Stefano Trophy was conferred upon him for the sixth time in his career. Messi also received the Pichichi Trophy for being the top scorer in La Liga this year. His 34 goals in 36 games fetched him the prize for the fifth time in his career. So far a Spanish football player, Telmo Zarra is the only one who claimed this trophy for record six times.

Maldives rejoined Commonwealth

On 19th November 2018, the Maldives cabinet gave nod to the proposal of rejoining the Commonwealth, two years after withdrawing from the 53-nation grouping. The proposal won consent of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and is now on its way to the Parliament for ratification. Maldives had left the Commonwealth during former President Abdulla Yameen's administration in October 2016 on account of the mounting pressure over corruption and deteriorating human rights. The new government under Solih's administration started resetting many decisions and policies of the previous administration.

The Yonex-Sunrise Hong Kong Open 2018

Yonex-Sunrise Hong Kong Open 2018 was held at Hong Kong Coliseum from 13th to 18th November 2018. Total Prize Money for the tournament was USD 400,000. Son Wan Ho of South Korea won Men's Singles; Nozomi Okuhara of Japan claimed Women's Singles; Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo of Indonesia clinched Men's Doubles; Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota of Japan won Women's Doubles; Yuta Watanabe, Arisa.

Higashino of Japan conquered Mixed Doubles' event.

Vimal Chandra Srivastava won Young Scientist Award in November 2018, IIT Roorkee Professor, Vimal Chandra Srivastava clinched the NASI-Scopus Young Scientist Award in 'Environmentally Sound Sustainable Development' category. The awardee has worked on Industrial Wastewater Treatment, Clean Liquid Fuels, and Multi-component Adsorption. This award is on purpose of acknowledging India's most promising researchers who are working in the field of earth, oceanographic, environmental and ecological studies, social sciences and ecosystem and are making significant contribution to protection of our planet and conservation of its natural resources.

Bulgaria's Petkov: The oldest European international goalkeeper (football)

In November 2018, Bulgarian Georgi Petkov became the oldest European international goalkeeper as Bulgaria played a Nations League draw with Cyprus. The 42 year and eight months old goalkeeper has also become Bulgaria's oldest player in their Nations League match in Nicosia. He is the goalkeeper of Slavia Sofia club who made his debut for the Bulgarian national team in 1998. He has broken the record of former Liverpool goalkeeper Elisha Scott, who was 42 years and six months old when he last played for Ireland in 1936.

Mary Kom conquered the Sixth World Championship Title

24th November 2018 became another red letter day for MC Mary Kom who created history by becoming the first woman to win six boxing world titles by clinching gold in the 48 kg category at the 2018 AIBA Women's World Boxing Championships in New Delhi. The 35-year-old Indian boxing legend defeated Ukrainian Hanna Okhota in the summit clash. Mary has overtaken Ireland's Katie Taylor as the first female boxer to win six gold medals, and with this she has become the second boxer ever (male or female) to achieve the feat after Felix Savon.

Australia won the fourth Women's World Twenty20

In November 2018, Australia have won their fourth Women's World Twenty20 championship after defeating England by eight wickets in the final. Player of the match Gardner and Lanning later combined for an unbeaten 62-run partnership that steered Australia to victory. Gardner and Wareham took five wickets between them to curb England to a lowly 105 off 19.4 overs. Healy was adjudged Player of the Tournament for her 225 runs at an average of 56.25, including two half-centuries. Prior to this, Australia had won three successive tourneys in 2010, 2012 and 2014.

Scolari's Palmeiras scripted Brazilian title for 10th time

In November 2018, football club Palmeiras, coached by former Brazil and Chelsea coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, succeeded in winning the Brazilian title for the tenth time after beating Brazilian football club Vasco de Gama by 1-0. The credit went to Deyverson's 72nd-minute goal that gave the Sao Paulo-based club 77 points, five ahead their closest rivals Brazilian sports club Flamengo. It has remained unbeaten for 22 games under former Chelsea coach Scolari. This was the club's second victory in three years.

Esha Singh: The New National Shooting Champion

In November 2018, 13-year-old Telangana teenager Esha Singh shot 241.0 in the Women's final of the 62nd National Shooting Championship at Trivandrum, Kerala, surpassing Youth Olympic games champion Manu who finished with 238.9. Shweta who represented ONGC, won bronze with a score of 217.2. Esha won three gold medals in Women's, Youth Women's and Junior Women's 10m Air Pistol competitions on 29th November 2018 itself. In other events, the Army's Satyendra Singh conquered the Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions crown leaving behind Haryana's Sanjeev Rajput.

Luka Modric won the Ballon d'Or award

On 4th December 2018, Croatian professional footballer, Luka Modric scripted the Ballon d'Or award on his name, breaking Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo's dominance over the award. He received the prestigious award in a glitzy ceremony held in Paris. Ronaldo, Antoine Griezmann, Kylian Mbappe and Messi completed the podium at second, third, fourth and fifth positions respectively. The gala ceremony also witnessed a women's Ballon d'Or named for the first time in which Lyon's prolific Norwegian striker Ada Hegerberg won this award.

Kohli received Bradman Museum honor

On 2nd December 2018, Bradman Museum, 'The Home of Cricket Memories' honored the Indian cricket team captain Virat Kohli by placing his signed and donated jersey next to Sachin Tendulkar's portrait at the Museum. Kohli had autographed this jersey when he scored his hundred in the fourth test at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) during India's tour of Australia in 2014-15. At that time he had presented his shirt to Cricket Australia Liaison Officer Pearce Gibbons in appreciation of his assistance to the Indian side throughout the summer at the conclusion of the tournament.

Vinesh Phogat & Sakshi Malik won gold

In December 2018, Indian wrestling star Vinesh Phogat won gold in the 57 kg category at the Senior National Championship scripting the sixth National title on her name. Prior to this, she had won five Nationals in a row from 2012 to 2016. She had also won the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games titles earlier this year. Another Indian freestyle wrestler, Sakshi Malik won gold and emerged as the champion in the 62 kg category in the the Tata Motors Senior Women's National Championship.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. Who has won bronze medal in the vault event at the Artistic Gymnastics World Cup 2018?
(a) Rebeca Andrade (b) Jade Carey (c) Simone Biles
(d) DipaKarmakar (e) Aruna Reddy
2. In November 2018, which company has launched world's first Goods and Services Tax (GST) calculator in India?
(a) Casio (b) Bowmar (c) Canon
(d) Elektronika (e) Friden
3. In November 2018, who has been appointed as the new Chief Election Commissioner of India?
(a) Om Prakash Rawat (b) Achal Kumar Jyoti (c) Sunil Arora
(d) Nasim Zaidi (e) None of above
4. In November 2018, who has been honored with the highest French civilian distinction Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur?
(a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Lakshmi Mittal (c) Shiv Nadar
(d) Kumar Mangalam Birla (e) Azim Premji
5. The famous playback singer Mohammed Aziz passed away in November 2018. He belonged to which state?
(a) West Bengal (b) Odisha (c) Maharashtra
(d) Kerala (e) Uttar Pradesh
6. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is celebrated every year on _____.
(a) 22nd November (b) 23rd November (c) 24th November
(d) 25th November (e) 26th November
7. In November 2018, who became the first Indian woman to win gold medal in the Senior Commonwealth Fencing Championship 2018?
(a) Soumya Sundaraj (b) Bhavani Devi (c) Husanpreet Kaur
(d) Shivani Barode (e) None of above
8. In November 2018, who has been appointed as the first 'Youth Advocate' of north-eastern region by UNICEF?
(a) Sharmila Tagore (b) Mary Kom (c) Nahid Afrin
(d) Hima Das (e) None of above
9. Who has won the gold medal in men's singles category at the Syed Modi International Championships 2018?
(a) Guangzu Lu (b) Sameer Verma (c) Chen Long
(d) Lin Dan (e) Chetan Anand
10. Who among the following wrote the book "The Velevt Gloves"?
(a) Manish Kumar (b) Arjun Kakkar (c) Indira Goswami
(d) Balakrishna Kamath (e) Mitra Phukan

11. In November 2018, which launch vehicle has successfully launched ISRO's HysIS satellite into the orbit?
(a) PSLV-C41 (b) PSLV-C30 (c) PSLV-C40
(d) PSLV-C42 (e) PSLV-C43
12. In November 2018, Salome Zurabishvili has been elected as the first female President of which country?
(a) Estonia (b) Greece (c) Finland
(d) Georgia (e) Hungary
13. Who has won the World Chess Championship 2018 title?
(a) Fabiano Caruana (b) Ding Liren (c) Magnus Carlsen
(d) Vladimir Kramnik (e) Levon Aronian
14. In November 2018, K. Krishnankutty was sworn in as the new Water Resources Minister of which state?
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Karnataka (c) West Bengal
(d) Kerala (e) Telangana
15. In November 2018, which nation has become the first NATO nation to appoint a female Chief of Armed Forces?
(a) Canada (b) Slovenia (c) Denmark
(d) Iceland (e) Belgium
16. In November 2018, which state has signed an agreement with Estonian academy on e-governance?
(a) Nagaland (b) Assam (c) Tripura
(d) Meghalaya (e) Arunachal Pradesh
17. Who among the following wrote the book "Architecture of Justice: A Pictorial Walk-through of the Supreme Courts and High Courts of India"?
(a) Vinay Thakur (b) Amogh Thakur (c) Kuldip Singh
(d) Both b) and c) (e) Both a) and b)
18. In November 2018, who has been honored with the ISSF's highest shooting honour 'Blue Cross'?
(a) Jitu Rai (b) Vijay Kumar (c) Gagan Narang
(d) Abhinav Bindra (e) None of above
19. Who became the first woman to win the Greg Norman Medal as the best Australian golfer?
(a) Sabrina James (b) Minjee Lee (c) Asha Louie
(d) Sheena Weinstein (e) None of above
20. In December 2018, AS Rajeev has been appointed as the new Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of which bank?
(a) Bank of Maharashtra (b) Bank of India (c) Bank of Baroda
(d) Punjab National Bank (e) State Bank of India

ANSWERS

- 1.(d) **DipaKarmakar** of India has won bronze medal in the vault event at the Artistic Gymnastics World Cup 2018. In the final, she scored 4.316 points. Rebeca Andrade of Brazil has won the Gold Medal with a score of 14.728 whereas Jade Carey of USA has won silver with a score of 14.516.
- 2.(a) Japanese electronics company “**Casio**” has launched world’s first Goods and Services Tax (GST) calculator in India to simplify the GST calculations for tax payers. The company has two variants of GST calculators MJ-120GST and MJ-12GST in the Indian market. These calculators feature built-in GST tabs for all five tabs- 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%
- 3.(c) 1980-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, **Sunil Arora** has been appointed as the new Chief Election Commissioner of India. He succeeds Om Prakash Rawat. Arora was also served as the information and broadcasting secretary, and secretary in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- 4.(e) **Azim Premji**, the Chairman of Wipro, has been honored with the highest French civilian distinction Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur. He received the honor from Alexandre Ziegler, the Ambassador of France to India. He received the award for his tremendous contribution to developing the information technology industry in India.
- 5.(a) The famous playback singer Mohammed Aziz passed away in November 2018 at the age of 64 years. He was born in Ashoknagar, **West Bengal**. He was the voice behind evergreen tracks like "My name is Lakhan", "Aapke aa jane se" and "Dil le gayiteribindiya". He also recorded several devotional bhajans and Sufi songs as well. He made his film debut with Bengali film, ""Jyoti".
- 6.(d) The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is celebrated every year on **25th November**. The main aim to celebrate this day is to raise public awareness around the issue as well as increase both policymaking and resources dedicated to ending violence against women and girls worldwide.
- 7.(b) **Bhavani Devi** became the first Indian woman to win gold medal in the Senior Commonwealth Fencing Championship 2018 held in Canberra, Australia. In the final, she defeated Emily Ruaux of England by 15-12 points.
- 8.(c) Famous singer **Nahid Afrin** of Assam has been appointed as the first 'Youth Advocate' of the north-eastern region by the UNICEF. The UNICEF engages “Youth Advocates” to harness their voice as agents of change in society. Nahid made her playback debut in the 2016 Bollywood film 'Akira' starring Sonakshi Sinha in the lead.
- 9.(b) Famous Badminton player, **Sameer Verma** has won the gold medal in men’s singles category at the Syed Modi International Championships 2018. In the final, he defeated Guangzu Lu of China. Besides this, former champion Saina Nehwal has won silver medal in women’s singles. In the final, she was defeated by Han Yue of China.
- 10.(d) The book “The Velevt Gloves” has been written by former Intelligence Bureau (IB) Officer **Balakrishna Kamath**. Maharashtra Director General of Police, Datta Padsalgikar released the

book. The book revolves around a retired intelligence officer who finds himself in the midst of a sinister plot that begins the same day he retires.

- 11.(e)** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched its earth observation satellite 'Hyper Spectral Imaging Satellite (HysIS)' into orbit from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. Apart from HysIS, the rocket 'PSLV-C43' successfully injected 30 small satellites of 8 nations into their designated orbits. The satellite HysIS can send pictures and data in multiple frequencies with high resolution.
- 12.(d)** In November 2018, Salome Zurbashvili has been elected as the first female President of **Georgia**. The new President is expected to take office on 16th December 2018. In the presidential election, she received 59.5% of the total votes while her opponent Grigol Washadze received 40.5% of the total votes.
- 13.(c)** **Magnus Carlsen** of Norway has won the World Chess Championship 2018 title. In the final, he defeated Fabiano Caruana of United States. Carlsen has won the Chess Championship thrice earlier.
- 14.(d)** K. Krishnankutty was sworn in as the new Water Resources Minister of **Kerala**. He replaced Matthew T. Thomas. Prior to this, Krishnankutty was serving as state president of Janata Dal (Secular). He was previously elected to the Kerala Assembly in 1980, 1982 and 1991.
- 15.(b)** **Slovenia** has become the first NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) nation to appoint a female Chief of Armed Forces after Major General Alenka Ermenc took the post of Head of its Army. She started her military career in 1991 when Slovenia won independence from Yugoslavia.
- 16.(a)** The **Nagaland** government has signed an agreement with Estonian academy to enlighten the state people on the e-governance models prevailing in the world. The main aim of this 5-year agreement is to work together to develop and expand scientific collaboration on setting up e-Governance Academy in Nagaland.
- 17.(e)** The book "Architecture of Justice: A Pictorial Walk-through of the Supreme Courts and High Courts of India" has been written by father-son duo **Vinay Thakur and Amogh Thakur**. The book is a sequel to Vinay's earlier book 'The Courts of India Past to Present' (2016), is not about photographs alone, and is replete with interesting trivia and story about the monumental buildings.
- 18.(d)** India's Olympic and world champion shooter, **Abhinav Bindra** has been honored with the ISSF's highest shooting honour 'Blue Cross' at the General Assembly in Munich for his outstanding services as the Chairman of the International Shooting Sport Federation Athletes Committee. The Blue Cross is the highest laurel for shooters given by the ISSF.
- 19.(b)** Australian Golfer, **Minjee Lee** became the first woman to win prestigious Greg Norman Medal as the best Australian golfer on the international stage after her brilliant performance in 2018. She ranked 6th in the world ranking list.
- 20.(a)** December 2018, AS Rajeev has been appointed as the new Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of **Bank of Maharashtra**. Prior to this, he worked in Syndicate Bank, Vijaya Bank and Indian Bank.