



# Monthly **GK** Mania



March - 2019

**CAREER**  **FLITE** <sup>TM</sup>  
*giving flight to your career*

"A Leading Coaching Institute For  
Bank PO/ Clerk, SSC, Railway, CAT, MAT, CLAT"

2nd Floor, Prahar Building, Opp. Mamtara Brothers, Danish Road, Panbazar, Guwahati-781001  
**Phone** : 76700 26262, 98640 93327, **email**:- [careerflite@gmail.com](mailto:careerflite@gmail.com), **website**:- [www.careerflite.com](http://www.careerflite.com)



### **Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra has become NCC Director General**

On 31st January 2019, an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, and the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra assumed charge as the Director General of NCC (DGNCC) in New Delhi. He was commissioned into the Madras Regiment in December 1980 and has commanded an infantry battalion in Operation Rhino (Assam), and a Brigade in Eastern Command. He had also been an Inspector General of HQ IGAR (South) in the insurgency-torn state of Manipur.

### **Punit Goenka : The new chairman of BARC India**

On 29th January 2019, The Broadcast Audience Research Council of India (BARC India) chose Punit Goenka MD and CEO of Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited (ZEEL) as their Chairman. Punit Goenka is a founder Chairman of BARC and has played a key role in institutionalizing BARC. BARC India is a collaborative Industry Company which was founded in 2010 by stakeholder bodies that represent Broadcasters, Advertisers, and Advertising and Media Agencies. Indian Broadcasting Foundation, Indian Society of Advertisers and Advertising Agencies Association of India are promoters of BARC India.

### **IIT Mandi found another weapon to combat Zika Virus**

In January 2019, Researchers of IIT Mandi discovered target protein for action of antimalarial drug against Zika Virus. Proceeding with the earlier knowledge that a drug commonly prescribed for treating malaria, Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) reduces ZIKV transmission from mother to foetus, Prof Giri's lab has identified the target viral protein on which HCQ acts. Scientists designed and cloned the protease gene construct of the Zika virus and expressed and purified its NS2B-NS3 protease enzyme. HCQ inhibited the enzyme activity, proving HCQ a promising drug for ZIKV infection. In the next step, the research team treated trophoblast cells infected with ZIKV with HCQ and found that the HCQ bonded with the NS2B-NS3 protease complex, thus it competitively inhibited its ability to contribute to viral multiplication.

### **IIT Roorkee generated electricity from river surface**

In January 2019, researchers of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee tested a floating device or a prototype that can harnesses energy from flowing surface water of rivers and streams making the way for an alternative source of renewable energy. In traditional dams, water is made

to fall from a height to turn turbines that leads to electricity generation. IIT Roorkee used the velocity of the flowing river to turn a turbine and generate power and found that flowing water has potential of generating a hundred times more power than wind of same velocity. The discovery will alter the construction of large-scale dams, which have significant ecological and environmental consequences.

### **Inauguration of Human Space Flight Centre**

On 30th Jan 2019, Dr. K Kasturirangan, Former Chairman of ISRO inaugurated Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) at ISRO Headquarter campus in Bengaluru in the presence of Dr. K Sivan, Secretary, DOS/Chairman, ISRO. This centre will be the core of ISRO's future manned missions. The centre will implement the first development flight of Gaganyaan with help of existing ISRO centres and will look after end-to-end mission planning, development of engineering systems for crew survival in space, crew selection and training and will also pursue activities for sustained human space flight missions.

### **Gujarat increased DA of more than 9.61 lakh employees**

In January 2019, Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat, Nitin Patel has announced an increment in Dearness allowance of more than 9.61 lakh employees and pensioners by 2%. The Deputy CM proclaimed that the increased salary will be paid from February along with the arrears since July last year. This fetched an additional annual burden of Rs 771 crores on the state exchequer. It is also worth knowing that apart from state government employees and pensioners, employees of Panchayati Institutions will also be the beneficiaries of this hike.

### **ISRO is all set to transfer Lithium-ion cell technology**

In February 2019, ISRO chose 10 companies for the Lithium-ion cell technology transfer after an examination of a brief description of the qualification aspects, technology transfer process, timelines and other relevant details. Amara Raja Batteries Limited (Chittoor), Bharat Electronics Limited (Pune), Carborundum Universal Limited (Kochi), Exicom Tele-Systems Limited (Gurgaon), GOCL Corporation Limited (Hyderabad), Jyoti CNC Automation Limited (Rajkot), National Aluminium Co Limited (Bhubaneswar), Sukhbir Agro Energy Limited (New Delhi), Tata Chemicals Limited (Mumbai) and Thermax Limited (Pune) are the chosen companies that will cover the entire spectrum of power storage requirements of the country.

### **Observer Research Foundation made the news**

On February 1, 2019, Launder Institute conferred 'highest rank' upon Indian think tank 'Observer Research Foundation(ORF)' under Best New Idea or Paradigm category in Think tanks and Civil Societies Programme. While under think tanks with the Most Innovative Policy Ideas category, Observer Research Foundation(ORF) was spotted eighth. And under US and non-US category, it has been ranked at 118th position. Under US and non-US category, Brookings Institution topped the list followed by French Institute of International Relations and the Carnegie Endowment on the second position.

### **K.P.Singh appointed as DGP of Haryana**

On 2nd February 2019 Senior Indian Police Service officer, K.P.Singh assumed the charge as officiating Director-General of Police, Haryana. This has come as an addition to his present duty as D-G Human Rights Commission. He will perform this additional duty till the finalization of the ongoing process of regular appointment to the post as per guidelines of the Supreme Court. On this new post Mr. Singh has taken place of incumbent DGP B.S.Sandhu, who was scheduled to retire in September 2018 but got an extension for three months which ended on January 31.

### **Jharkhand's first women's university campus**

After getting approval from the Union government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid foundation of Jharkhand's first Women's University campus in Jamshedpur via video conferencing on 3rd February 2019. It is worth knowing that this will be the only women's university in Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand region and more than 8,000 students of the JWC will be benefited from this new university. The government had approved the elevation of the Jamshedpur Women's College (autonomous) into university under Rastriya Uchha Siksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in February 2017 and fund for it was sanctioned in 12th Five year plan (2012-2017) of India.

### **Generation of lasers from carrots**

Indian Institute of Technology Madras Researchers have shown the possibility of generating biocompatible lasers from carrots in February 2019. In this first-of-its-kind development a particular class of lasers called 'random lasers' have been demonstrated in carrots where a Raman process plays a central role along with the cellulose network. Organic bio-pigments like carotenoids found in carrots are optically active media because of their visible light absorption properties. The fluorescence quantum yield of carotenoids is found to have produced the requisite vibrational spectra that can serve as lasing source. The discovery ensures natural and fully biocompatible system which is easy and safe to handle and use.

### **Communication satellite GSAT-31 of ISRO**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch its latest communication satellite GSAT-31, aboard Ariane-5 (VA 247) on February 6, 2019 from French Guiana. Designed and manufactured by ISRO, GSAT-31 satellite weighs about 2,535 kg and is meant to provide communications services in Ku-band for at least 15 years. It is India's 40th communication satellite. Besides this, the European launch vehicle, Ariane-5 will also launch Saudi Geostationary Satellite 1 or Hellas Sat 4 of Cyprus meant to provide telecommunications services in the Middle East, South Africa and Europe.

### **Kalia scholarship scheme of Odisha**

On 4th February 2019, Odisha government introduced Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scholarship scheme 'KALIA Chhatravritti Yojana' to encourage education for children of farmers in Keonjhar district. The scheme entitles the beneficiaries, free of cost higher education in professional courses. Children of farmers who have taken admission at Government Professional colleges on merit basis will be eligible for the scheme. Besides this, the Odisha government also inaugurated drinking water projects worth Rs 1,050 crore to supply safe drinking water in the district.

### **The Upcoming Of Tamil Nadu Grama Bank**

Under the sponsorship of Indian Bank, two regional rural banks viz. Pallavan Grama Bank and Pandyan Grama Bank will be amalgamated to form a single RRB i.e. Tamil Nadu Grama Bank in Tamil Nadu. The consolidation will come into effect from April 1, 2019. Ministry of Finance approved this amalgamation under Regional Rural Banks Act 1976. This newly integrated bank will be sponsored by Indian Bank and will have its head office located at Salem, Tamil Nadu. Initially Pallavan Grama Bank was sponsored by Indian Bank and Pandyan Grama Bank was sponsored by Indian Overseas Bank.

### **Renaming of Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion**

In recent past, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has been renamed as the 'Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade'. The newly named department will function under the Union Ministry of Commerce. As per issued order of the President, the department will deal with matters related to start-ups, facilitating ease of doing business among others. The move has come in response of request of Confederation of All India Traders Association (CAIT) that demanded a separate Ministry of Internal Trade.

### **Azim Premji honored with Ernst & Young Lifetime Achievement Award 2018**

On 4th February 2019, the Chairman of Wipro Ltd, Azim Premji has been honored with the Ernst & Young Lifetime Achievement Award 2018. He has been instrumental in developing the Indian information technology industry. He is also a Padma Vibhushan and a Padma Bhushan awardee. The finalists were chosen by an eminent eight-member independent Jury Panel led by Uday Kotak, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Kotak Mahindra Bank.

### **RBI imposed penalty on Syndicate, Axis Bank**

In February 2019, the Reserve Bank of India has imposed a Rs. 1 crore penalty on Syndicate Bank and Rs. 20 Lakh on Axis Bank for violating norms. The penalty on Syndicate Bank is due to non-compliance with the directions regarding frauds and risk management systems. Axis Bank was fined for contravention of the directions on detection and impounding of counterfeit notes and installation of note sorting machines.

### **Rahul Jain: General Manager of ICF**

On 6th February 2019, former Assistant General Manager at Western Railway, Rahul Jain has been appointed as the General Manager of Integral Coach Factory (ICF). He succeeded Sudhanshu Mani, who is known as the architect of India's first self-propelled long distance "Train 18", which was later named "Vande Bharat Express". Rahul Jain belongs to the Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Cadre.

### **Pradeep Singh Kharola: New Civil Aviation Secretary**

In February 2019, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Air India, Pradeep Singh Kharola has been appointed as the new Civil Aviation Secretary as part of a minor bureaucratic reshuffle. He is a 1985 batch IAS officer of Karnataka cadre. The post of the Civil Aviation Secretary was vacant due to the superannuation of Rajiv Nayan Choubey on 31st January 2019. Now, Choubey took over as Member in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

### **Sena medals awards**

Lieutenant General Ranbir Singh, GOC-in-C of Northern Command distributed 76 medals for gallantry services, 7 medals for distinguished services and 8 for Vishisht Seva at impressive investiture ceremony at Udhampur on 7th February 2019. Among the 92 awardees, Ashok Chakra awardee Lance Naik Nazir Ahmed Wani, was awarded Bar to Sena Medal posthumously which was received by his wife. Around 20 units were applauded for their overall outstanding performance in the Command Theatre in the year 2018.

### **The latest bi-monthly monetary policy**

The Monetary Policy Committee headed by Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das, announced a reduction in policy repo rate by 25 basis points from 6.5 % to 6.25% with immediate effect. With this, the reverse repo rate is presently at 6.0% , and the marginal standing facility rate and the Bank Rate are at 6.5%. The bank also projected an economic growth rate of 7.4% for the next fiscal, up from 7.2 % estimated for the current fiscal by Central Statistics Office. The central bank foresees consumer price inflation at 2.4 in the January-March period and 3.2-3.4% from April to September.

### **Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for Year 2017**

On February 6, 2019, President Ram Nath Kovind bestowed Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for Year 2017 on behalf of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama which is an autonomous body of the Union Ministry of Culture at Rashtrapati Bhawan during a special investiture ceremony. Among the 42 awardees chosen by General Council of the Sangeet Natak Akademi were Umakant Gundecha and Ramakant Gundecha (Gundecha Brothers) received Joint Award for Hindustani Vocal, Lalith J Rao (Hindustani Vocal), Yogesh Samsi (Hindustani Instrumental - Tabla), Rajendra Prasanna (Hindustani Instrumental - Shehnai Flute), M.S.Sheela (Carnatic Vocal), Suma Sudhindra (Carnatic Instrumental – Veena), Tiruvarur Vaidyanathan (Carnatic Instrumental – Mridangam), Shashank Subramanyam (Carnatic

Instrumental – Flute), Madhurani (Other Major Traditions of Music -Sugam Sangeet), Haimanti Sukla (Other Major Traditions of Music -Sugam Sangeet) and Gurnam Singh (Other Major Traditions of Music - Gurbani). Among dance awardees were Rama Vaidyanathan(Bharatanatyam), Shobha Koser (Kathak), Madambi Subramanian (Kathakali), L.N.Oinam Ongbi Dhoni Devi (Manipuri), Deepika Reddy (Kuchipudi), Sujata Mohapatra (Odissi), Ramkrishna Talukdar (Sattriya), Janmajay Saibabu (Chhau) and Ashit Desai(music for dance). Among theatre awardees were Abhiram Bhadakamkar (Playwriting), Sunil Shanbagh (Direction), Bapi Bose (Direction), Hema Singh (Acting), Deepak Tiwari (Acting), Anil Tickoo (Acting), Nuruddin Ahmed (Allied Theatre Arts - Stagecraft), Avtar Sahani (Allied Theatre Arts - Lighting), Shougrakpam Hemanta Singh (Other Major Traditions of Theatre - Shumang Leela, Manipur). In Folk music category, Anwar Khan Manganiyar (Folk Music, Rajasthan), Prakash Khandge (Folk Arts, Maharashtra), Jagannath Bayan (Traditional Music – Khol, Assam), Ramchandra Majhi (Folk Music, Bihar), Rakesh Tiwari (Folk Theatre, Chhattisgarh), Parvathy Baul (Folk Music (Baul), West Bengal), Saravjit Kaur (Folk Music, Punjab), K.C. Runremsangi (Folk Music, Mizoram), Mukund Nayak (Folk Music, Jharkhand) and Sudip Gupta (Puppetry, West Bengal). Besides these, Vijay Verma and Sandhya Purecha were acknowledged for their overall contribution/scholarship in the Performing Arts.

### **No negative marking in competitive exams !!!**

In February 2019, the Madras High Court held that the practice of awarding negative marks in competitive examinations should be stopped as the practice of deducting marks for wrong answers is futile in evaluation of intelligence, aptitude or knowledge of the candidates. This came as huge relief to a number of students who fail to qualify entrance for prestigious institutions like IITs due to negative marking. The verdict came in reply of a writ petition filed six years back by an IIT JEE aspirant who failed to clear the Mains due to negative marking.

### **Odisha saw statue of Guru Padmasambhava**

In February 2019, Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik unveiled a 19-foot-high and 29 tonne stone statue of Guru Padmasambhava at Jirang in Gajapati district, Berhampur, Odisha. Guru Padmasambhava was the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, who was born and brought up in Odisha before he left for Tibet. This statue is placed in the middle of ‘Padma Sarovar’, a large tank near Padmasambhava Mahavihara, the largest Buddhist monastery in eastern India which was inaugurated by Dalai Lama in 2010. Tibetan refugees settled in this region 60 years ago.

### **Beginning of 4-Year B.Ed Course**

In February 2019, Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar announced a four-year integrated course of B.Ed in three streams viz. BA, B. Com and B. Sc. from next year with an aim to improve the quality of teaching. National Council for Teacher Education has already laid the curriculum for the same. This course will save one year of aspirants as they will be able to join it right after their Class 12, against the current system of first doing graduation and then the two-year B.Ed.

### **The second edition of National Cleft Day**

On 8th February 2019, the Indian Society of Cleft Lip, Palate and Craniofacial Anomalies and cleft charities of India observed the second annual National Cleft Day. On this occasion, Smile Train India launched country's first toll free national cleft helpline number 18001038301 for ensuring 100% free, quality and safe cleft treatment. Besides this, the Right to Smile Campaign created awareness about cleft surgery support in which leading specialist in oral health care, GSK consumer Health Care Ltd has extended support to Smile Train.

### **The book "Let's Talk On Air: Conversations with Radio Presenters"**

Publication of Penguin Random House, a book titled "Let's Talk On Air: Conversations with Radio Presenters" will be launched on February 13, 2019 i.e. World Radio Day (WRD-2019) in Mumbai. Authored by Rakesh Anand Bakshi, the book gives insight of intricacies of radio as a medium and features lives of 14 famed RJs including the legendary Ameen Sayani, Yunus Khan, Rohini, Mamta Singh, Sayema, Hrishikay Kannan, Anuraag 'picture' Pandey and Anmol and many more behind the microphones. The celebrated RJs made huge contribution in attracting talent to this industry.

### **Foundation Day of National Productivity Council**

On 12th February 2019, National Productivity Council (NPC) has celebrated its 61st Foundation Day on "Circular Economy for Productivity and Sustainability" theme as Productivity Day. The celebration highlighted a distinctive opportunity for circular business representative models for 'Make-Use-Return' for further economic prospects and revitalization of materials. Discussions about the challenges, problems and repercussions from the execution of the circular economy which will augment productivity and create jobs were done at length. The day also kick started National Productivity Week from 12th Feb to 18th Feb, 2019.

### **The book 'What Marx Left Unsaid'**

In February 2019, Indian Politician and author, Manish Tewari unveiled Malay, Arindam and Che Kabir Chaudhari's new book 'What Marx Left Unsaid' at Indian International Centre, New Delhi. Times Group published this book about production of skills by means of skills authored jointly by 3 generations of authors of the same family. The book answers about why human beings must earn as per their skills, which in turn will determine their ability to contribute to the society.

### **IIT Ropar invented Pen-sized Pocket Inverter**

In February 2019, IIT Ropar announced invention of a pen-sized pocket Inverter worth Rs. 5000 which is four times cheaper than any commercially available Inverter. This compact size Inverter is useful for UPS, Electric vehicular etc. Usually the inverters which are used at homes can convert and supply power upto 1.1 KV whereas this new compact design is capable of supplying power upto 4 KV. It is 14×5 cm in dimension is capable of driving up to 5HP field machines.



### **Andhra erected India's first Aqua Mega Food Park**

Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated India's first Aqua Mega Food Park 'Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park Pvt. Ltd' at Tundurru Village in Bhimavaram Mandal, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh through video conferencing. Built in 57.81 acres of land at an expenditure of Rs. 122.60 crores, the mega food park includes pre-processing line for fish of 1.5 TPH, pre-processing line for shrimp of 1.5 TPH, freezing of fish of 1.5 TPH, freezing of shrimp of 1.5 TPH, cold storage for fish of 2000MT, cold storage for shrimp of 1000 MT, ice plant and food testing laboratory

### **Seven banks got penalized by RBI**

RBI imposed monetary penalty on seven banks for violating various norms in February 2019. HDFC Bank Limited (penalty Rs. 2 million), IDBI Bank Limited (Rs. 2 million) and Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (Rs. 2 million) violated KYC norms and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) standards. While Allahabad Bank (Rs. 15 million), Andhra Bank (Rs. 10 million), Bank of Maharashtra (Rs. 15 million) and Indian Overseas Bank (Rs. 15 million) violated norms related to monitoring of end use of funds, exchange of information with other banks, classification and reporting of frauds, and on restructuring of accounts.

### **Siddhartha Lal : EY Entrepreneur of the 2018 – India**

On 12th February 2019, the CEO and Managing Director of Eicher Motors, Siddhartha Lal has been adjudged as the EY Entrepreneur of the Year for 2018 in Mumbai. He fetched a huge turnaround of the Eicher Motors after he had taken over the reins in 2006. Resurrection of the motorcycle brand Royal Enfield in India is his credential. Besides him, the Chairman of Wipro Mr. Azim Premji has been chosen for Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution in the Indian information technology industry and his philanthropic work. While Byju Raveendran, founder and CEO, Think & Learn (start-up); Kishore Biyani, founder and CEO, Future Group (business transformation); Nirmal K Minda, CMD, Minda Industries (manufacturing); Ritesh Agarwal, founder and CEO, OYO Hotels and Homes (services); Sanjay Agarwal, MD and CEO, AU Small Finance Bank (financial services); Binish Chudgar, vice CMD, Intas Pharmaceuticals (Life Sciences & Healthcare) Rajesh Mehra, promoter and director, Jaquar group (consumer products and retails) and Titan Company Limited MD Bhaskar Bhat emerged as other winners. They will be felicitated at annual event of Entrepreneur of the Year in June 2019.

### **Indian Army's 'Exercise Topchi'**

Indian Army on 12th February 2019 displayed its artillery firepower, aviation and surveillance capacity at the annual "Exercise Topchi" held at the vast firing ranges at Deolali Camp near Nashik. The exercise employed entire range of guns, from the indigenous 120 mm Mortar, 105 mm Indian Field Gun, 105 mm Light Field Gun to the 155mm FH 77B Bofors and 122mm Multibarrel Rocket Launcher GRAD BM 21 as well as indigenous advanced light helicopter, light combat helicopter, Cheetah & Chetak helicopters. Besides these, an impressive array of a

variety of new generation Surveillance and Target Acquisition equipment viz. the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Surveillance & Weapon Locating Radars were also showcased.

### **Sushil Chandra: The New Election Commissioner**

On 14th February 2019, President Ram Nath Kovind appointed Sushil Chandra, as the new Election Commissioner. He is an IIT graduate and a 1980 batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service who recently got retired as the chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). He was appointed as CBDT Chairman on November 1, 2016, and was granted two extensions. With this appointment, the Election Commission now has Sunil Arora as the Chief Election Commissioner who will succeed O.P. Rawat and Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra as fellow commissioners.

### **Vice Admiral SN Ghormade: The Chief of Staff at Eastern Naval Command**

On 14th February 2019, Vice Admiral SN Ghormade has taken charge as the Chief of Staff at Eastern Naval Command. He is a National Defence Academy (NDA) graduate from Visakhapatnam. He had joined Indian Navy on 1st January 1984 and had taken command of Guided Missile Frigate INS Brahmaputra, Submarine Rescue Vessel INS Nireekshak and Minesweeper INS Alleppey in his 35 years long career. President of India had acknowledged his remarkable services with Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) on 26th January 2017 and Nau Sena Medal in 2007.

### **IIT Mandi Researchers' Innovation**

The February 2019 publication of journal - Environmental Science and Pollution Research revealed that researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi have used the fumes emitted by diesel engines to mop up oil and other organic pollutants from water. The diesel engines are known to be associated with emitting significant amounts of particulates and these particulates largely comprise of soot or carbon black, which is formed in the fuel rich regions of the burning diesel jets. The researchers showed constructive utilization of the emitted soot to bring down soot emissions to zero.

### **KSIDC's First Investor Conference 'ASCEND 2019'**

In February 2019, Kochi hosted the first investor conference 'ASCEND 2019' of Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC) to showcase industry-friendly initiatives. The conference highlighted landmark administrative and policy reforms that contributed to the improvement of ease of doing business in Kerala. The conference was meant to focus on transparent, efficient and simplified governance which can facilitate business and investments via reducing bureaucratic procedures. KSIDC is the industrial and investment promotion agency of the Kerala government.

### **PMKVY trained 25.25 Lakh Candidates**

In February 2019, the government broke the news of completion of training of 25.25 lakh candidates, out of the 37.32 lakh (approx.) under the Short-Term Training (STT) of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY). Similarly, under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), 11.27 lakh candidates and under Special Project, 0.8 lakh candidates were trained in various sectors across India. The government also launched 'Skill Loan Mission' to support youth by providing loan facility to individuals who wish to pursue the skill development courses, as per the Skill Loan eligibility criteria.

### **Kerala introduced Manchadi for Maths**

In February 2019, Alappad panchayat of Kerala introduced Manchadi project for teaching Mathematics to children. Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) started this first of its kind school project to teach mathematics by connecting it to real life situations using simple methods. The programme will encourage students to compare and analyse various methods and will lead them to new ideas. Initially around 55 students from various schools of Kerala in the age group of 6 to 9 years and 9 to 12 years will have the privilege of attending this pilot programme.

### **Hyderabad witnessed its first Trompe-l'oeil art set up**

In February 2019, a Trompe-l'oeil art set up illustrating three-dimensional painting got established in Hyderabad. The Trompe-l'oeil art technique added an illusion of depth or three dimensions to flat surfaces. Paintings showcased at the exhibition in Hyderabad were unique blend of creativity, imagination and fine art skills that were made using realistic imagery to create the optical illusion. Visitors enjoyed posing with lifelike images of an elephant spouting water, a tiger leaping out of the frame, a giant open-mouthed snake as well as a rain scene from a famous Bollywood flick starring Nargis and Raj Kapoor.

### **District cooling system of Amravati**

In February 2019, United Arab Emirates (UAE) based international cooling provider, National Central Cooling Company PJSC (Tabreed) entered into contract with Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) to construct district cooling system in Amravati, Andhra Pradesh. The proposed system is likely to have a cooling capacity of 20,000 Refrigeration Tons (RTs) to cater the energy requirements of the upcoming State Assembly, High Court, Secretariat and other Government buildings which are presently under construction. The proposed cooling services will begin in early 2021. The first district cooling was established in India at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in April 2015 with a capacity of 10,000 RTs.

### **Demise of former Goa Deputy Chief Minister Francis D'Souza**

In February 2019, former Goa Deputy Chief Minister and BJP Lawmaker, Francis D'Souza died of cancer in Healthway hospital in Old Goa at 64. He was elected to Goa Legislative assembly in 1999 as a candidate of Goa Rajiv Congress party and later he joined membership of BJP to get elected in 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017's state legislative assembly from Mapusa constituency. He was appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister of Goa when BJP formed a government in year 2012. He has also served in capacity of Urban Development Minister.

### **IIM-Ahmedabad added GRE for admission into ePGP programme**

In February 2019, the Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad announced that it will accept valid GRE scores (of last five years) apart from GMAT and CAT for admission in the e-mode Post Graduate Programme from 2019-21 batch onwards. This comes as an opportunity for the candidates who have missed the Common Admission Test (CAT) 2018 deadline. They can also appear in GMAT/GRE until March 31, 2019 to become eligible for 2019-21 batch application. Further, the shortlisted candidates applying for 2019-21 batch will be called for a personal interview at the IIM-A campus or other cities decided by the institute. It should be noted that the application for admission into ePGP 2019-21 batch has already begun. The last date for the application is May 31, 2019 and the first campus module for a new batch is likely to begin from September 23, 2019.

### **Presentation of Tagore Awards**

On February 18, 2019, President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony upon Rajkumar Singhajit Singh, Bangladesh cultural organisation Chhayanaut and Ram Sutar Vanji for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively at a function in Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, New Delhi. Each awardee received an amount worth Rupees one crore, citation in a scroll, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft and handloom item. The Prime Minister of India, Chief Justice of India, leader of the opposition in Lok Sabha or the leader of the single largest opposition party in the House and two eminent persons were the judges for these prizes.

### **Sanskrit : The second official language of Himachal**

In February 2019, the Himachal Pradesh assembly approved Sanskrit as the second official language of the state. Irrigation and Public Health minister, Mahender Singh Thakur had introduced the Himachal Pradesh Official Language Bill, 2019 (Amendment). After its approval in the Assembly, Himachal Pradesh has become the second state to adopt Sanskrit as the second official language of the state after Uttarakhand. Besides this, Himachal Pradesh University of Health Sciences has been renamed as Atal Medical and Research University, Himachal Pradesh.

### **J&K Government withdrew security of separatist leaders in Kashmir**

On February 17, 2019, J&K Government ordered withdrawal of previously granted privileges as well as security cover of six separatist leaders viz. Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Abdul Gani Bhat, Bilal Lone, Hashim Qureshi, Fazal Haq Qureshi and Shabir Shah. These leaders are being funded by Pakistan and the ISI as well. The move came on pretext of the Pulwama terror attack that took lives of 44 CRPF personnel. The decision came after review of the security situation in Kashmir.

### **I&B Minister presented 7th National Photography Awards**

On 19th February 2019, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Information and Broadcasting Minister presented the 7th National Photography Awards in New Delhi. The theme for the Professional category was “Women-led Development” . List of Awards: Ashok Dilwali has won Lifetime achievement award; S.L. Shanth Kumar (Professional Photographer of the Year); Arun Sreedhar, Kailash Mittal, Mihir Singh, Ranita Roy and P.V. Sunder Rao (Special mention awards in professional category); Gurdeep Dhiman (Amateur category); Avijit Datta, Mahesh Balasaheb Lonkar, Manish Jaisi, S. Neelima and P. Ravi Kumar( special mention awards in the amateur category).

### **Banned Punjabi Poem ‘Khooni Vaisakhi’ will be published after 99 years**

The banned Punjabi poem “Khooni Vaisakhi” on the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre will be published next month by Harpercollins in English. The poem was written by Punjabi writer Nanak Singh aka “Father of Punjabi Novels” in 1919. The poet was present at Jallianwala Bagh on 13th April 1919. The poem was banned by the British government after its publication in 1920 as this poem was a blasting critique of the British rule. After 99 years, this poem was rediscovered and was translated into English by Navdeep Suri.

### **Dhanya: First woman to climb Kerala’s Agasthyarkoodam peak**

In February 2019, Bureaucrat K. Dhanya Sanal has become the first woman to climb Agasthyarkoodam peak in Kerala. There was an unofficial ban for women to trek the peak which was swept aside by Kerala High Court. The peak is a 1868 metres high mountain peak within Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala. It lies on Kerala and Tamil Nadu border. It is a pilgrimage centre of Hindu Puranas for the devotees of Agasthya.

### **The Fourth India-Asean Expo Summit**

A three day fourth edition of India-Asean Expo Summit began on 21st February 2019 in New Delhi. An association of business organisations in India, The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has organized this flagship event of Department of Commerce to lend momentum and strength to India-ASEAN relations under the Act-East Policy. The relationship between the two is a key pillar of our foreign policy and the foundation of our Act-

East Policy. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is comprised of Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Cambodia and Brunei.

### **President ratified changes in the Indian Stamp Act**

On 21st February 2019, President Ram Nath Kovind gave nod to the amendments to the Indian Stamp Act, 1899 that formed part of the Finance Act 2019. These amendments look forward to regularise the system of levying stamp duty and to help in curbing tax evasion. The Act states that for the stamp duty rates, the duties levied by Maharashtra will be taken as a benchmark as the state accounts for 70% of the total collection. Besides this, it proposes creation of a Coordination Council; a legal and institutional mechanism to enable states to collect stamp duty on securities market instruments at one place by one agency as well as a mechanism for appropriate sharing of the stamp duty with relevant state governments on the basis of state of domicile of the buying client. It condemns the practice of tax evasion completely and advocates minimisation of cost of collection and enhancement of revenue productivity.

### **President is in session**

On February 21, 2019, President Ram Nath Kovind promoted four ordinances viz. the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Second Ordinance, 2019; the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Second Ordinance, 2019; the Companies (Amendment) Second Ordinance, 2019 and the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019. The Muslim Women Second Ordinance is in harmony with the first one that declares practice of triple talaq as void, illegal, cognisable and non-bailable offence and spells three year imprisonment with a fine for guilty. The Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Act has kept the Board of Governors' authority intact over MCI for a period of two years or till the Council is reconstituted, whichever is earlier. The Companies (Amendment) Act empowers the Central Government to permit certain companies to have a different financial year instead of the year determined by the Tribunal. The Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Act authorizes the central legislation to handle the menace of illicit deposit schemes in India.

### **PM Modi became Seoul Peace Prize 2018 recipient**

On February 22, 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was presented the prestigious Seoul Peace Prize 2018 by Kwon E-hyock, the Chairman of the Seoul Peace Prize Cultural Foundation for his remarkable contribution to international cooperation and fostering global economic growth via 'Modinomics', 'Modi Doctrine' and 'Act East Policy'. He has promoted global peace and harmony and improved quality of life. Besides this, a short film on the life and achievements of Prime Minister Modi was also screened at the event. With this, he has become the 14th recipient of the Seoul Peace Prize.

### **Divya Karnad : Future of Nature Awardee**

In February 2019, 33-year-old Ashoka University teacher and Wipro Sustainable Fellow, Divya Karnad got honored with “Global Future of Nature Award” for her work on marine conservation. With this, she has become the first Indian woman as well as the second Indian to receive this award after Dr. Charudutt Mishra. Besides her, Oliver Nsengimana and Fernanda Abra were also felicitated with the same award. This prestigious international award acknowledges achievements in protection of wild animals and plant species.

### **Launch of Atmospheric Water Generator**

In February 2019, the Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) introduced static and mobile (vehicular) versions of Atmospheric Water Generator (AWG) at the Aero India 2019 with an aim to provide an innovative solution to meet the ever-increasing need for drinking water worldwide. The Atmospheric Water Generator can generate water straight from the humidity present in the atmosphere through a novel technology. It will be available in 30 litres/day, 100 litres/day, 500 litres/day and 1,000 litres/day capacities.

### **PM inaugurated National War Memorial**

In February 2019, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated National War Memorial in New Delhi. Its main structure has been constructed in the form of four chakras viz. Amar Chakra, Veerta Chakra, Tyag Chakra and Rakshak Chakra. It has names of 25,942 martyrs etched in stone. In addition to these, the memorial features a tribute to the 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees with each recipient applauded by a bronze bust surrounded by a lush green patch, complete with pathways and informative plaques on the courage they displayed during war. The memorial will also serve as the place for future ceremonies for armed forces.

### **India Hits Terror Camps Across Line Of Control**

The strikes by the Indian Air Force across the Line of Control (LoC) comes nearly two weeks after the Pulwama terror attack. India carried out pre-dawn air strikes on terror training camps on Tuesday, two weeks after 40 soldiers were killed in a terror attack in Kashmir's Pulwama. At around 3:30 this morning, 12 Mirage 2000 fighter jets of the Indian Air Force dropped 1,000 kg bombs on terror camps of the Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen. Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with top ministers in the cabinet committee on security. Terror launch pads were destroyed by the laser-guided bombs and so were control rooms of the Jaish. The operation lasted around 19 minutes.

### **Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana**

In February 2019, Madhya Pradesh government has launched the Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana to provide employment for youth. The scheme guarantees 100 days of employment annually to urban youths of 21-30 years of age group from economically weaker

sections. In this, youth will be entitled for Rs 4,000 stipend per month and total Rs 13,500 for the 100 days period. During this period, they will be given skill development training to make them independent. According to the scheme, economically weaker sections cover those whose family's annual income is less than Rs 2 lakh.

### **Srei Equipment & Syndicate Bank joined hands**

In February 2019, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Srei Infrastructure Finance, Srei Equipment Finance and Syndicate Bank collaborated with each other to provide equipment financing under co-lending arrangement for many equipment categories viz. construction, mining, material handling, commercial vehicles, medical and farm equipment. In this deal, Syndicate Bank will utilise its low-cost funds and co-lend equipment loans with Srei at mutually agreed rate under the aegis of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) circular dated September 21, 2018.

### **“National Action Plan – Viral Hepatitis”**

Union Minister of State, Health & Family Welfare, Ashwini Kumar Choubey launched National Programme to eliminate Hepatitis C by 2030. Amitabh Bachchan who is the goodwill ambassador for hepatitis, World Health Organization South-East Asia Region was also present on the occasion. According to World Health Organisation (WHO), Viral Hepatitis has claimed 1.34 million deaths globally in 2015. In India, it is estimated that there are around 4 crore victims of Hepatitis B and 0.6-1.2 crore victims of Hepatitis C.

### **Beginning of FinTech & Blockchain course**

In February 2019, The Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta in association with TalentSprint has announced the beginning of an Advanced Programme in FinTech and Financial Blockchain for finance professionals from May 2019. The programme will help students to recognize the explosive growth of FinTech and its increasingly disruptive impact on banking and financial ecosystem as well as will lead to designing and driving product strategies for the involved organizations. India is presently a leading contender to become the FinTech capital of the world with a total of 2.45 billion digital payments in August 2018.

### **Assam introduced PRANAM Commission**

In February 2019, Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal launched a panel, ‘PRANAM Commission’ to look after the issues concerning the Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) Bill. This Bill was approved by the state cabinet last year, mandating the state government employees to look after their parents and unmarried differently abled siblings who do not have their own sources of income. In case of violation, 10% or 15% of the employee's salary will be deducted by the government and will be paid to the parents or differently abled siblings.



### **Playwright Mahesh Elkunchwar became META lifetime achievement awardee**

In February 2019, eminent Indian Playwright, Mahesh Elkunchwar got entitled for 2019's META Lifetime Achievement Award for his wide range experiments in field of drama. The critically-acclaimed and famous playwright has proved his mettle in both Indian and Marathi theatre scene. He will be presented the prestigious award at the 14th Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) festival in New Delhi on 12th March 2019. He has scripted over 30 plays and essays, like 'Sultan', 'Holi', 'Garbo', 'Yatanagar', and 'Atmakatha' and his play 'Wada Chirebandi' (Old Stone Mansion) (1985) got staged in Marathi, Hindi and Bengali and adapted for television as well.

### **National Science Day**

India celebrated National Science Day on 28th February 2019 on 'Science for the People and the People for Science' theme. It is celebrated annually to commemorate CV Raman's theory of Raman Effect which fetched him the Nobel Prize in 1930 that made him the first Indian and the first Asian to win the prestigious award. He was also acknowledged with Bharat Ratna in 1954 for his contribution in science. National Council for Science and Technology Communication instituted this day in 1987. This year PM Narendra Modi distributed Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar prizes for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 in New Delhi. Late Dr (Sir) Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar was the founder director of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research(CSIR).

### **PNB topped in implementation of 'Reforms agenda'**

In February 2019, Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Piyush Goyal released BCG-IBA report on Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE) Reforms index in which fraud hit bank, Punjab National Bank (PNB) secured the top spot among all public sector banks in the implementation of 'Reforms agenda'. It topped the list with a score of 78.4 out of 100 followed by BoB (77.8), SBI (74.6) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (69). The Index evaluated Banks on 140 objective metrics across 6 themes that includes customer responsiveness, credit off-take and digitalization.

### **India's first native 4G/5G semiconductor chips**

In February 2019, Bengaluru based semiconductor company "SIGNALCHIP" introduced India's first native Semiconductor Chips viz. SCBM3412, SCBM3404, SCRF3402 and SCRF4502 for 4G/LTE and 5G NR MODEMs at an event in New Delhi. The Radio Frequency (RF) sections have covered all LTE/5G-NR bands up to 6GHz and they also support positioning using India's own satellite navigation system, NAVIC. On this occasion, the Secretary, Telecom, Mrs Aruna Sundararajan acknowledged the need for India to manufacture its own chips as Data Security.



### **Israel Aerospace Industries did \$93 million agreement**

On 30th January 2019, Israel Aerospace Industries cracked a deal worth \$93 million with Indian Navy, Cochin Shipyard for providing Naval Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile systems to India. Under the contracts, IAI will provide complementary systems for the air defense system and will follow up orders for a range of maintenance and other services for various sub-systems of IAI's advanced MSRAM ADS. Prior to this, the Indian Navy, in collaboration with IAI, held an interception test aboard INS Chennai that demonstrated the way and scope of doubling the operational force of the defense system regionally, rather than topically.

### **'2019' is International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements**

On 29th January 2019, UNESCO proclaimed year 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements to celebrate the 150th anniversary of publication of the periodic table of chemical elements. In the year 1869, Russian scientist Dmitri Mendeleev published the periodic table of the chemical elements for the first time. UNESCO featured a lecture on the "Periodic Table for Society and the Future" by the Professor Ben Feringa, 2016 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry and presented its educational initiative, '1001 Inventions: Journeys from Alchemy to Chemistry' on the occasion.

### **Be aware of your thoughts!!!**

In January 2019, researchers from Columbia University in the United States developed an artificial intelligence (AI) based system that directly translates thoughts into intelligible, recognisable speech. The system can read the brain activity of a listening patient, then repeat, what that patient heard with a clarity which was never before seen from such technology. The research is a boon for people who cannot speak as it will let them regain their ability to communicate with the outside world. This breakthrough will lead to new ways for computers to communicate directly with the brain.

### **1st February 2019 : The 40th anniversary of Iranian revolution**

Thousands of Iranians gathered at the mausoleum of the Islamic republic's founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in Tehran to celebrate for the 40th anniversary of Iranian revolution. It is in commemoration of Khomeini's return from exile after the pro-Western shah fled Iran following widespread demonstrations. The ceremonies for the revolution started on 1st February 2019 at

9:33 am (0603 GMT), the exact time that Khomeini returned to Iran and his plane touched down at Tehran airport in 1979. On this occasion head of the influential expert's assembly who appoints the supreme leader of the Islamic republic, Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati addressed the crowd.

### **Behrouz Boochani : Australian literary prize winner**

In January 2019, author of "No Friends But the Mountains", Behrouz Boochani won the 25,000 dollars non-fiction prize at the Victorian premier's literary awards and the 100,000 dollars Victorian prize for literature in Australia. This is a debut book of this Kurdish-Iranian writer who has been made captive on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea for almost six years. He texted the entire book in Farsi on WhatsApp messages to the translator Omid Tofighian. He left Iran because of problems with the authorities over his journalism but got detained in Australia in 2013.

### **Singapore emerged as the most liveable location for Asian refugees**

In January 2019, Singapore succeeded in keeping its top position intact for the 14th year in an international statistical survey of ECA in which around 480 locations were declared to be the most liveable location for Asian Expatriates. Singapore was followed by Australia's Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide in the second position in the list. The Typhoon Mangkhut that struck in the year 2018 brought Hong Kong down by 12 places on 41st rank . Bangkok has received the 89th place whereas George Town and Kuala Lumpur climbed to 97th and 98th places respectively and Colombo was spotted on 194th rank.

### **World Cancer day**

Union for International Cancer Control introduced a new 3-year campaign with the theme: "I Am and I Will" for observance of World Cancer day on 4th February 2019. The campaign is on purpose of empowering call-to-action urging for personal commitment and represents the power of individual action taken now to influence the future. In India, Punjab government initiated door to door screening as well as Special Screening and Awareness Camps for general public regarding oral, breast and cervix cancers. Telangana featured "Sixth Yashoda Cancer Awareness 5K Run -2019".

### **Nayib Bukele: President of El Salvador**

Former mayor of San Salvador, Nayib Bukele has won presidential election of the smallest Central American country, Republic of El Salvador. He garnered 53% of the votes against his closest rival Carlos Calleja's 32% votes. It is worth knowing here that for past three decades politics in El Salvador has been dominated by two main parties viz. the incumbent left-wing Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front 'FMLN' and the right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance 'ARENA'. Bukele belongs to small, conservative Grand Alliance for National Unity.

### **Sri Lanka celebrated its 71st Independence day**

On 4th February 2019, Sri Lanka celebrated its 71st Independence day under the patronage of President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was the guest of honour at the function held in Colombo. The function witnessed three branches of military performing an impressive parade along with display of defence equipments while artistes and students presented spectacular major dance forms of the country including Kandyan and Bharatnatyam. President Maithripala Sirisena addressed the crowd on the occasion. Sri Lanka gained independence from the colonial forces on 4th February 1948.

### **Ministry of Coal signs MoU with Poland's Ministry**

On 4th February 2019, the Union Ministry of Coal, India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Energy, Republic of Poland. The MoU was signed between Haribhai Parthibhai Chaudhary, Minister of State for Coal and Mines and Grzegorz Tobiszowski, Secretary of State for Poland's Ministry of Energy. The objectives of this MoU is to promote trade and investment in the coal sector, enhancing the understanding of coal related energy issues, clean coal technologies. The MoU will greatly benefit the field of clean technologies and would provide opportunities to both India and Poland.

### **SBI UK Chief awarded 'Freedom of the City of London'**

On 6th February 2019, UK Chief of State Bank of India, Sanjiv Chadha has been honored with the 'Freedom of the City Of London' by city of London Corporation in recognition of his contribution to promoting the bilateral relations. He was nominated for the honor by Lord Mayor of London, Peter Estlin and Sheriff Vincent Keaveny. He took up the position in the year 2014. The genesis of the 'Freedom of the City of London' is traced to the medieval time of around 1237. Pt.Jawaharlal Nehru was the previous Indian recipient of this award.

### **Macedonia inked accord to join NATO**

On 6th February 2019, Macedonia inked an accord to join NATO to become the 30th member of the US-led alliance. At a formal signing of the NATO accession protocol, Macedonia's Foreign Minister Nikola Dimitrov hailed the moment showing that the country will never walk alone once in the alliance. On this, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated that the admittance of a new member highlighted that all European nations who meet the entrance criteria could join the regional alliance.

### **Siamese fighting fish : National aquatic animal of Thailand**

On February 5, 2019, Thailand declared the tiny, eye-catching, colourful fin plumaged Siamese fighting fish as its aquatic animal for ensuring its conservation and breeding. The fish is found in

Mekong basin of Thailand as well as in the Chao Phraya river in Thailand. In the west it is popularly known as betta fish. The underwater brawler is mostly seen in home aquariums for its iridescent body and many-hued tail. In 2013, the Siamese fighting fish was registered as intangible cultural heritage.

### **International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**

Globe observed the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on 6th February. This is an annual awareness day celebrated as part of the UN's efforts to weed out female genital mutilation since 2003. The First Lady of Nigeria and spokesperson for the Campaign Against Female Genital Mutilation, Stella Obasanjo, made the official declaration on "Zero Tolerance to FGM" on February 6, 2003 in Africa during a conference organized by the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC). After this, the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights adopted this day as an international awareness day.

### **Demise of the longest-serving US Congressman John Dingell**

In February 2019, the longest-serving US Congressman John Dingell died at the age of 92. He was first elected in 1955 and after serving in the House of Representatives for the 59 years, he got retired in 2015. The deceased served through the terms of 11 US presidents. The late Michigan Democrat was a driving force behind many significant liberal laws, notably health programmes. He will be remembered for his efforts on many landmark laws that shaped the US.

### **10th February: World Pulses Day**

United Nations began a new global event named 'World Pulses Day' on February 10, 2019 to celebrate pulses worldwide that followed the significant gains made with the 2016 International Year of Pulses. The United Nations General Assembly voted unanimously in December 2013, to declare 2016 as the International Year of Pulses which promoted the consumption of pulses globally and raised awareness about the outstanding benefits of pulses on nutrition and health. Pulses and peas are the key ingredients in sustainable food production systems and in food security.

### **Great Indian Bustard : the new mascot for the 13th UN Convention**

Union Environment Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan announced the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as the mascot for the 13th Conference of Parties of the UN Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) which will be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 15th to 22nd February, 2020. Besides this, government also introduced a website for the Conference of Parties (COP)-13. CMS-COP 13 is a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species and their habitats in which around 120 countries will be participating. So far, 12 COPs have been convened.

### **Multinational Maritime Exercise ‘Aman 19’**

On 8th February 2019, a five-day multinational maritime exercise ‘AMAN-19’ began in which 46 nations are participating from across the globe at Pakistan Navy Dockyard, with a colorful flag hoisting ceremony. It is the 6th episode of the AMAN initiative which was inaugurated by Pakistan’s Naval Chief, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi with motto “Together for Peace”. This exercise is meant to facilitate a forum of understanding of each other’s maritime concepts and operation cultures and to produce ways and means to confront common threat at sea. The event is witnessing harbour phase and sea phase.

Deepa Mehta: Lifetime Achievement award from Canadian Academy In February 2019, Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television chose world acclaimed Indo-Canadian filmmaker, Deepa Mehta for the Lifetime Achievement Award for her enormous impact and impression on the essence of Canada’s entertainment industry. Born in India, she had shifted to Canada in 1973 after her marriage. Presently she is involved in Netflix series “Leila”. Deepa Mehta is best known for her trilogy- “Fire”, “Earth” and “Water”. Her "Earth" was submitted by India as its official entry for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, "Water" was Canada's official entry for Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. "Earth" was the first to receive an Oscar nomination.

### **‘Cutclass Express 2019’**

Multi-national training exercise, ‘Cutclass Express 2019’ got concluded in February 2019. Mentors from USA, India and Netherlands, with support of International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Combined Maritime Force (CMF) and European Naval Forces (EUNAVFOR) trained Naval Coast Guard and Marine Police personnel from several East African countries. The exercise was on purpose of improving law enforcement capacity, promoting regional security and progressing interoperability among the armed forces of the participating nations for the purpose of curbing illegal maritime activity in the Western Indian Ocean. The frontline warship of the Indian Navy, INS Trikand had participated in this exercise.

### **Grammy Awards 2019**

On 11th February 2019, announcements regarding winners of 61st Annual Grammy Awards were aired at Staples Center in Los Angeles. Studio album ‘Golden Hour’ of American singer Kacey Musgraves got adjudged as Album Of The Year as well as Best Country Album. Official music video “This Is America,” of Childish Gambino turned as the big winner with maximum honors viz. Record Of The Year, Best Music Video as well as Song Of The Year. American rapper, singer, and songwriter, Cardi B made history as the first solo female to win (Best Rap Album), The list of other felicitated winners include Dua Lipa (Best New Artist), Invasion Of Privacy, H.E.R. (Best R&B Album Winner) ,“God’s Plan,” Drake (Best Rap Song), The Fires of Greta Van Fleet (Best Rock Album),“Masseduction”St. Vincent (Best Rock Song), Woman Worldwide,

Justice (Best Dance/Electronic Album), Blanton Alspaugh of classical music (Producer Of The Year), “Space Cowboy” of Kacey Musgraves (Best Country Song), All Ashore, Punch Brothers (Best Folk Album) and Comedy titan Dave Chappelle’s Equanimity & The Bird Revelation (Best Comedy Album).

### **11th February : International Day of Women and Girls in Science**

11th February 2019, the United Nations General Assembly celebrated the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on “Investment in Women and Girls in Science for Inclusive Green Growth” theme. The day was meant to achieve full and equal participation of women and girls in science, and bridge gender gap empowering of women and girls. According the UNESCO data of 2014 to 2016, only about 30% of all female students select STEM-related fields in higher education. The enrolment of female students is particularly low in ICT (3%), Natural Science, Mathematics and Statistics (5%) and in Engineering, manufacturing and construction (8%).

### **Death of world cup-winning goalkeeper Gordon Banks**

World cup-winning goalkeeper of England, Gordon Banks passed away at the age of 81 on 11th February 2019. Banks made 356 appearances for Leicester City between 1959 and 1967. With Leicester, Banks won the 1964 League Cup and England manager Sir Alf Ramsey promoted him to his first-choice goalkeeper after which in 1966 he played every minute of England’s World Cup campaign as they won on home soil. Banks registered 73 appearances for England and is regarded as the greatest goalkeeper in the Three Lions’ history. He was best known for a wonder save he produced against Brazilian great Pele in the 1970 World Cup and got retired in 1973.

### **Arsenal’s Aaron Ramsey signs four-year Juventus deal**

On 11th February 2019, Arsenal midfielder Aaron Ramsey has inked a four-year contract to join Juventus football club on a free transfer from next July. This will lead to arrival of 28-year-old Wales international player in northern Italy on July 1 with his contract running until June 30, 2023. When his contract will end, Arsenal will not be entitled to a transfer fee and as a result of the registration of the player, Juventus will incur additional costs of 3.7 million euros (\$4.1 million). The move spells an end to Ramsey’s 11-year spell with the Zimbabwean football club Gunners.

### **World Radio Day**

Globe celebrated 13th February 2019 as World Radio Day on ‘Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace Broadcasts’ theme. The day highlighted radio as a forum for information and entertainment, that works as a bridge of communication for remote communities and plays significant role in empowering people. Radio has unique power of touching lives and bringing people together from

world wide. Radio programming can help in building tolerance by eliminating the differences by uniting several groups for common social goals. UNESCO made official announcement of this day on 3rd November 2011 in the 36th General Conference.

### **Hindi became the third official court language of Abu Dhabi**

In February 2019, the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department has added Hindi as the third official language to be used in the city's courts after Arabic and English. The move is meant to help foreigners to learn about litigation procedures, their rights and duties without a language barrier, in addition to facilitating registration procedures via unified forms available through the judicial department's website. According to official figures, the UAE population is 9 million out of which 88.5% are expatriate workers from foreign countries. The Indian community in the UAE is about 2.6 million that constitutes 30% of the total population and is the largest expatriate community in the country.

### **Multinational Cobra Gold Military Exercise**

In February 2019, the United States and Thailand are hosting the multi-nation Cobra military exercise in the northern Thai province of Phitsanulok. 10000 personnel of 29 nations including Singapore, Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand and the United States are taking part in this annual Asia-Pacific region's largest multinational military exercise. India joined this exercise for the first time in 2016 and it is participating in this exercise with a 14 member contingent.

### **PETA's "Oscat" Awards**

Film and Television Division of the largest animal rights organization, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) presented its Oscats awards to films and stars who promoted kindness to animals through storylines and/or the use of computer-generated imagery in place of live creatures on camera. Bradley Cooper who had cast his own canine in 'A Star Is Born' got Best Director's award. Among the awardees were Winston Duke (Best Actor, Black Panther), Natalie Portman (Best Actress, Vox Lux and Annihilation), Annihilation (Best Stunt Team), Black Panther (The Cat's Meow award), Isle of Dogs (Best Animated Film), The Meg and Mowgli (Best Instant Karma Moment), Donald Glover's fur-free jacket from Solo (Best Costume), Tully (A Star Wars Story Birds' Pick), Free Solo and Won't You Be My Neighbor? (Best Documentary) and Stan Lee (In Memoriam). The award for Best SeaWorld Side-Eye was a tie between Love, Simon that describes the way animals live at the amusement park as "really sad"—and Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom that takes a strong anti-captivity stance.



### **Vote on Egyptian President 's extension**

On 14th February 2019, The Egyptian parliament approved the proposed constitutional changes for extension of President Abdel-Fattah al-Sissi term beyond 2022 after the end of his current term. Around 485 lawmakers in the 596-strong parliament voted in favour of extending the presidential term from four to six years. The proposed changes are on their way to the assembly's Legislative and Constitutional Committee for further study, which could take up to two months. After this, the changes will seek approval of at least two-thirds of parliament before occupying a place in a public referendum.

### **New standard music devices for safe listening**

Much ahead of upcoming World Hearing Day (3rd March 2019), World Health Organization (WHO) and International Trade Union (ITU) have issued a new international standard regarding fabricating and utilization of musical devices that includes smartphones and audio players, to make them safe for listening. This "Make Listening safe" initiative of WHO has recommended Sound allowance function, Personalized profile, Volume limiting options, general information and guidance as around 1.1 billion young people use musical devices most often. And among them 50% of the people in the age group of 12-35 are at risk of getting deaf due to prolong and immoderate exposure to loud sounds, they listen via their music devices.

### **India- US deal for 72,400 Assault Rifles**

The Indian Government has inked a deal with the US under Fast Track Procurement (FTP) to equip the Indian Army with 72,400 new 'Sig Sauer Assault Rifles' which will recondition the army's inventory of frontline rifles. The 7.62 x 51 mm Sig Sauer Assault rifles are compact, strong, empowered with advanced technology and are easy in maintenance to field conditions. The army troops will deploy these Rs. 700 Crore worth rifles along the 3,600 km China's border.

### **Pakistan stripped off the Most Favoured Nation status**

On 15th February 2019, the government of India snatched the 'Most Favoured Nation' status which it accorded to Pakistan in trade in year 1996 on pretext of Pulwama attack incident of 14th February 2019. Pakistan's Jaish-e-Mohammed group is said to have killed more than 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel in the deadliest terror attack on security forces in Jammu and Kashmir. Besides this, the government is also considering punitive trade measures such as a sharp hike in customs duties or a ban on goods imported from Pakistan.

### **Queen Elizabeth announced future King & Queen of England**

As per the news published in February 2019 in the National Enquirer, the 92-year old Queen Elizabeth apparently officially crowned her grandson and his wife, Prince William and Catherine Middleton the next King and Queen. Her so called decision ran against the royal tradition in which Prince Charles and his wife Camilla Parker-Bowles, were slated to be the next King and

Queen. Queen Elizabeth is said to have thrown "protocol out the window by deciding to skip a generation and name her favourite grandson instead of her oldest son as the next monarch" according to a US magazine.

### **J P Morgan became first US Bank with Cryptocurrency**

In February 2019, JP Morgan became the first US bank to roll cryptocurrency. The move will make the bank more competitive. It will be employing the cryptocurrency to gauge its potential in using digital coins with an aim to reduce risk. Further, JPM Coin will not be used by retail customers and its usage will be restricted to enable instant transfers of payments between institutional accounts. It is worth recalling here that Cryptocurrencies are used successfully to circulate money between bank and a client and it usually rides on a blockchain technology.

### **Early Ed Asia 2019**

In February 2019, Asia's largest early childhood conference, Early Ed Asia 2019 took place in Jaipur on 'Our Children, Our Future' theme. Around 6000 eminent early childhood educators, researchers, policy-makers, and other stakeholders from India and foreign countries participated in this first-of-its-kind conference in India and discussed the latest trends in teaching and research for providing a stronger foundation to the children. Princess Diya Kumari, the Royal Family of Jaipur in association with ScooNews and Early Childhood Association (E.C.A) presented the event.

### **Military novelist Griffin passed away**

In February 2019, William E. Butterworth III who authored military novels like "Badge of Honor," "Clandestine Operations" and "Presidential Agent" died at the age of 89. He had joined the army at the age of 17 and had served in the Korean War. The deceased had scripted over 200 books under the pen name W.E.B. Griffin and various other names and millions of copies of his work got place in bookstores across the globe.

### **India- Morocco agreements**

On February 18, 2019, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Moroccan counterpart Nasser Bourita in Rabat inked four MoUs to increase cooperation in various fields. Setting up of Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism, Cooperation in Housing and Human Settlement, Cooperation in Youth Matters and Reciprocal facilitation of procedures for issue of Business Visa were the fields for which the agreement has been signed. Sushma Swaraj also visited Spain at the invitation of her Spanish counterpart, Josep Borrell Fontelles and was felicitated with the prestigious Grand Cross of the Order of Civil Merit by the Spanish Government for India's swift response through Operation Maitri in rescuing 71 Spanish nationals from Nepal in April 2015 amid the earthquake disaster .

## **20th February: World Day of Social Justice**

The World Day of Social Justice is observed every year on 20th February to create attentiveness about social justice based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability. The main objective of this day is to promote peaceful and prosperous coexistence among different countries. It also creates awareness about the values of gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. The theme for the year 2019 is ‘If you want Peace and Development, Work for Social Justice’. This year’s theme focuses on the goal of achieving full employment for the bottom 40% of people.

## **Saudi Arabia joins International Solar Alliance**

On 20th February 2019, Saudi Arabia signed the framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA). Now, Saudi Arabia has become the 73rd country to join the India-led renewable energy organisation which now has a total of 122 members. The signing of the agreement took place after a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. Both the countries discussed about the key areas of mutual interest such as trade and investment, renewable energy, defence, nuclear and space, civil aviation, counter-terrorism, community welfare as well as regional challenges.

## **Climate scientist Broecker passed away**

Wallace Smith Broecker, popularly known as ‘Grandfather of Climate Science’, passed away in February 2019 at the age of 87 years at New York. He popularised the term global warming. He was the first scientist to recognize the Ocean Conveyor Belt which is said to have a major impact on climate including air temperature and rain patterns. He also stated that “the release of greenhouse gases into the Earth’s atmosphere has an effect on the ocean currents”.

## **Extinction of Australian rat**

Australian small brown rat created history by getting extinct in February 2019. Small brown rat of ‘Bramble Cay melomys’ species that lived on a tiny island off northern Australia became the world’s first mammal to have become extinct because of “human-induced climate change”. Scientists suspect extreme high water levels and damaging storm as the probable reasons for destruction of the habitat and the sources of food of these creatures. The extinct species was found only near the coast of Papua New Guinea.

## **World’s first female AI news anchor**

In February 2019, China introduced world’s first female AI news anchor ‘Xin Xiaomeng’. Search engine company, Sogou Inc and Xinhua developed it. It is well equipped with stiff facial muscles, remarkable life-like hand adjustments and cue blinking. The computer-generated journalist was

modelled after ‘Qu Meng’, the world’s first male AI news anchor that was unveiled by China at the World Internet Conference in Wuzhen held in November 2018, whose voice and image served as the source of inspiration for developers.

### **Israel’s first moon lander, “Beresheet”, from Florida**

On 22nd February 2019, US-based SpaceX launched Israel’s first moon lander, 585 kg heavy “Beresheet” (“Genesis” in Hebrew) via Falcon 9 rocket from Florida, United States at an expenditure of USD 100 million. This was the first privately backed lunar lander mission financed by businessman and philanthropist Morris Kahn as part of renewed global interest in the Moon, sometimes called the “Eighth Continent” of the Earth. However, the project also welcomed donations from Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Israel’s space agency and Israel’s Ministry of Science and Technology. Beresheet has a “time capsule” with digital files having a Bible, children’s drawings, Israeli songs, memories of a Holocaust survivor and the blue-and-white Israeli flag.

### **Discovery of New Tyrannosaur species**

In February 2019, Scientists of National Geographic announced discovery of a new species of tiny tyrannosaur, ‘Moros intrepidus’ that can elaborate comprehension of how the dinosaurs evolved from small, speedy hunters, into the bone-crushing apex predators. The discovered species existed 96 million years ago in the lush, deltaic environment of Utah in Western United States during the Cretaceous period. According to journal Communications Biology, it was the oldest Cretaceous tyrannosaur species narrowing a 70-million-year gap in the fossil record of tyrant dinosaurs on the North America. The bones of Moros also revealed the origin of T rex's lineage on the continent.

### **World Thinking Day**

Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from across the globe celebrated 22nd February 2019 as World Thinking Day on ‘Leadership’ theme. The aim for this year was to learn the various ways to become a leader and develop the power to bring the desired change in the world. The occasion was used to show gratitude towards brothers and sisters who showed care and help. This day is celebrated annually to commemorate birth anniversary of Scouting and Guiding founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell and of Lady Olave Baden-Powell, his wife and World Chief Guide.

### **Oscars 2019**

24th February 2019 aired announcements of the 91st Academy Awards in which ‘Green Book’ won the top prize in Best Picture as well as Best Original Screenplay categories. Black Panther got nominated in seven categories in Oscar 2019 and won prize in Best Original Score, Best Production Design, Best Costume Design categories. ‘A Star is Born’ won Best Original Song in

which Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper gave their melodious performances. Besides these, Alfonso Cuarón (Best Director as well as Best Cinematography for Roma), Olivia Colman (Best Actress for The Favourite), Rami Malek (Best Actor for Bohemian Rhapsody), Regina King (Best Supporting Actress for If Beale Street Could Talk), Mahershala Ali (Best Supporting Actor for Green Book), Roma (Mexico) (Best Foreign Film), Spider-Man (Best Animated Feature Film), BlacKkKlansman (Best Adapted Screenplay), Free Solo (Best Documentary Feature), Period. End Of Sentence (Best Documentary Short), Skin (Best Live Action Short), Bao (Best Animated Short), Vice (Best Hair And Makeup), Bohemian Rhapsody (Best Sound Editing as well as Best Sound Mixing) and First Man (Best Visual Effects) were the other applauded celebrities and films.

### **Wallace's giant bee : World's largest bee**

In February 2019, World's Largest Bee Wallace's giant bee (Wallace Bee) of the species Megachile pluto got resighted in Indonesian islands of the North Moluccas after 38 years. It is approximately 4 times larger than a European honey bee with a wingspan of 2.5 inches. The giant bee – the female measures nearly 4 cm in length which was discovered in 1858 for the first time by a British explorer and naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace on the tropical Indonesian island of Bacan. He had described the female bee as “a large, black wasp-like insect, with immense jaws like a stag beetle”.

### **Twitter co-founder Evan Williams stepped down**

In February 2019, Evan Williams, one of the co-founders of San Francisco-based social media company, Twitter decided to step down from the board by the end of February this year. 46 year old Williams spent around 13 years in the company which is known for its 140-character limit messages. Russian operatives manipulated this service, along with Facebook and Google's YouTube during the 2016 presidential elections of America and Williams has apologized previously for Twitter's potential role in helping Trump get elected.

### **New regulations on Biotech**

On 26th February 2019, China drafted a set of new regulations on gene-editing and other new biomedical technologies which it considers to be at "high-risk." The move has followed claims of Chinese scientist Jiankui, who is said to have assisted creation of world's first genetically edited babies. Under these rules, technology involving gene editing, gene transfer and gene regulation will be categorized as "high-risk" and placed under the authority of the State Council, China's Cabinet. In this context it is worth knowing that gene editing for reproductive purposes has been prohibited in the US and most of Europe.

### **Muhammadu Buhari became President for the second term**

President of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari succeeded in keeping his seat intact in February 2019 presidential elections. He is a member of the governing All Progressives Congress (APC) party, who sought a second term in office with more than 4 million votes. He has defeated his rival Atiku Abubakar of People's Democratic Party (PDP) with a big margin. Presently, Nigeria is Africa's largest oil producer which is suffering from corruption has stopped the development.

### **India-Brunei tax information agreement**

India and Southeast Asian nation Brunei signed a deal for exchange of Information and Assistance in Collection with respect to taxes in New Delhi on 28th February 2019. After this agreement both the nations will exchange information regarding banking and ownership information for tax purposes and will also avail mutual assistance in collection of tax revenue claims. The agreement is on purpose of promoting mutual cooperation between them by providing an effective framework by curbing tax avoidance and tax evasion.

### **First Indian-origin WWII spy, Noor Inayat will get Blue Plaque in UK**

Daughter of Indian Sufi saint Hazrat Inayat Khan and an agent for Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE) during World War II, late Noor Inayat Khan has been selected for honor of a Blue Plaque at 4 Taviton Street in Bloomsbury, London (her former home). The Indian origin woman was captured and killed by the Nazis in 1944 at the age of 30 years. English Heritage honours notable people who lived or worked in particular buildings across London under the Blue Plaque scheme.



### **Vani Kapoor : Australian LPGA card holder**

On 1st February 2019, Golfer Vani Kapoor earned Australian Ladies PGA Tour (LPGA) after securing 12th rank tied with three others in the first ever qualifying tournament at the Ballarat Golf Club in Australia. She finished two-over 218 after shooting rounds of 71, 78 and 69. With this, she has become the first Indian to grab Australian LPGA card. 81 players participated in the qualifying tournament out of which top-20 earned the card for LPGA. Although Diksha Dagar and Astha Madan failed to earn the card yet they will participate in the two day AUD 30000 event in the upcoming Australian LPGA Pro-Am.

### **India won the fifth ODI against New Zealand**

On 3rd February 2019, India claimed 35-run victory over New Zealand in the fifth and final ODI to secure the five-match series by 4-1 in Wellington. Ambati Rayudu (90 off 113) and Vijay Shankar (45 off 64) made a 98-run stand to take India's score to a fighting 252. Hardik Pandya also contributed 45 off 22 balls towards the end of the innings. Yuzvendra Chahal took three timely wickets for the nation giving just 41 runs in 10 overs.

### **Smriti Mandhana topped latest ICC women's ODI rankings**

Indian opener Smriti Mandhana has climbed three spots to become number one in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings. Prior to this she was 'ICC Women's Player of the Year 2018'. Indian skipper Mithali Raj came down one spot to finish at the fifth position. Among other Indians the spin trio of Deepti Sharma, Poonam Yadav and Ekta Bisht were spotted on 9th, 8th and 13th positions respectively. Young Jemimah Rodrigues rose up 64 places and received 61st position in the rankings.

### **Sana Mir: The first Asian woman to play hundred T20Is**

Former captain of the Pakistan women team, Sana Mir became the first Asian woman to complete hundred T20Is on 3rd February 2019. She touched this milestone while playing against West Indies in Karachi. With this, she has become the sixth woman in the world to complete 100 T20Is. The right-arm bowler has been a part of Pakistan inaugural T20I team which played against Ireland in 2009. So far record of playing maximum T20Is lies with Deandra Jalisa Shakira Dottin of West Indies.

### **Ramit Tandon won Seattle Open title**

On 3rd February 2019, Indian squash player Ramit Tandon scripted the fourth title of Seattle open title on his name by defeating Mohamed El Sherbini of Egypt by 11-4, 11-7, 2-11, 11-2. Ramit Tandon won his first PSA title during PSA challenger squash Tour held in USA. He stands at 58th position in the latest February 2019 released list of World Squash Federation.

### **Mirabai Chanu won gold at EGAT Cup in Thailand**

World champion Indian weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu coined a gold medal in the 48 kg category at the EGAT Cup in Thailand. She lifted 82 kg in snatch and 110 kg in clean and jerk to top the podium. The points earned from this tournament will come in handy when the final rankings for Tokyo 2020 cut are done. This was 24-year old's first international event after recovering from injury. Earlier in 2017 she had won World Championships with 194 kg.

### **Rohit Sharma : The highest run-scorer in T20 internationals**

On 8th February 2019, Rohit Sharma has become the highest run-scorer in T20 international cricket during India's successful chase of 159 runs against New Zealand in the second T20I at Eden Park in Auckland. Rohit Sharma scored a boundary in the 8th over of the Indian innings that took him to 37 which led him beyond Martin Guptill's record of 2272 runs. Rohit achieved this milestone in 92 matches and celebrated the feat with a score of 50. Rohit now has 2288 runs at an average of 33.15 and a strike rate of 138.49.

### **Railways won Senior Men's National hockey title**

On 10th February 2019, Railway Sports Promotion Board won the 9th Senior National Men's Hockey Championship crown at Gwalior. They defeated defending champions Punjab by 3-2 to earn the gold medal. Harsahib Singh scored a brace, while Dilpreet Singh struck late for the winners. Rupinder Pal Singh and Ramandeep Singh scored goals for Punjab. Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) defeated Punjab and Sind Bank (PSB) by 4-1 to clinch the Bronze medal. Talwinder Singh, Devinder Walmiki, Harmanpreet Singh and Mandeep Singh scored goals for (PSPB) while Gaganpreet Singh struck goal for PSB.

### **Russia's Medvedev won Sofia Open Title**

Russia's ace Daniil Medvedev won his fourth ATP title after defeating Hungary's Morton Fucsovics by 6-4, 6-3 in the Finale of Sofia Open 2019 which was held at the Arena Armeec in Sofia, Bulgaria. The 2019 Sofia Open was the 4th edition of the Sofia open as part of the 2019 ATP Tour that was held between February 5th to February 11th. Daniil Medvedev has already ensured his top ranks after his titles of Sydney, Winston-salem, and Tokyo of last year.



### **Gunneswaran reached Top-100 in ATP rankings**

In February 2019, Indian tennis player, Prajnesh Gunneswaran got 97th position in the top-100 in Men's Singles Tennis rankings and with this he has become the third Indian player after Somdev Devvarman and Yuki Bhambri to make place in the top-100 ATP rankings. He had a brilliant 2018 season which took him to the semi-finals of the ATP Chennai Challenger and if he happens to maintain the rank inside top-100, he will secure his place into the Grand Slam singles main draws.

### **Vihari scripted three successive Irani Cup hundreds**

In February 2019, Hanuma Vihari has become the first player in the history of the Irani Cup to score centuries in three consecutive innings. In the list of most Irani Cup hundreds, Vihari is now just behind Dilip Vengsarkar and Gundappa Viswanath, who have the record of scoring four hundred in this domestic tournament. Vihari is also the second player to post twin centuries in an Irani Cup tie since Shikhar Dhawan did it for Rest of India in the year 2011.

### **Chris Gayle is about to bid goodbye to ODI**

In February 2019, West Indies cricketer Chris Gayle announced retirement from ODI. He posted 23 centuries in ODIs which is the maximum number of centuries scored by any West Indian in one-day internationals. In his terrific ODI career, he scored 140 runs against India at Ahmedabad on November 15,, 2002 in the 4th ODI; he scored unbeaten 133 (135) vs South Africa Semi Final in 2006 ICC Champions Trophy; he was 132 not out vs England in 2004 Natwest Tri Series; in 2009, Gayle smashed 135 off 129 against the fierce New Zealand bowling line up at Napier in 5th ODI.

### **Sunil Chhetri : India's first-ever "Football Ratna"**

In February 2019, Football Delhi president Shaji Prabhakaran bestowed India's first-ever "Football Ratna" to 34-year-old Indian striker Sunil Chhetri at the majestic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. In recent past, Chhetri was also named as the 6th Indian Footballer in the elite Padma Shri list. Presently, Chhetri stands second in the list of goal scorers among active players in World Football. He had started his football career in Delhi. Besides him, Shubham Sarangi, the player of Delhi Dynamos team for Indian Super League (ISL), was also applauded for his performance in the Under-14 and Under-17 National Teams.

### **Beginning of ISSF Shooting World Cup**

Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore has inaugurated the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF) World Cup in New Delhi on 22nd February 2019. India is hosting this world cup which will continue till 27th February 2019. A 23-member squad of India with 11 shooters in the non-competition Minimum Qualification Score category are participating in this event which is important for Indian shooting as it has 16 quotas up for booking berth in Tokyo 2020 Olympic.

### **Ajay Singh: The new AIBA Elite Foundation head**

In February 2019, the President of the Boxing Federation of India, Ajay Singh got chosen as the President of the International Boxing Association, Foundation Board for Better Boxing of AIBA for upcoming four years. AIBA formed this Foundation Board during the last meeting of its Executive Committee to lay action plan for global development of the sport in future. Gafur Rahimov (President, AIBA), Franco Falcinelli (Vice-President, AIBA & President, European Boxing Confederation (EUBC)), Sidi Mohamed Moustahsane (Vice-President, AIBA & President, African Boxing Confederation) and Tom Virgets (Executive Director, AIBA) are other members of the Foundation Board.

### **Apurvi Chandela scripted record in ISSF World Cup**

In February 2019, Indian shooter Apurvi Chandela created world record in women's 10m air rifle event at the ISSF World Cup at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range. The Indian earned 252.9 points to win gold in the event. She was followed by China's Ruozhu Zhao, who coined silver with 251.8 points, while another Chinese Xu Hong finished with 230.4 points in the tournament winning bronze at the third spot. It is worth recalling here that Chandela had secured a Tokyo Olympic quota in the last World Championships and was spotted fourth in the qualifications with 629.3.

### **Suresh Raina :The first Indian to score 8000 runs in T20s**

In February 2019, playing for Uttar Pradesh, Suresh Raina became the first Indian to achieve the milestone of 8000 runs in T20 cricket after scoring 12 runs in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match against Puducherry. He has scored 8001 runs in 300 Twenty20s and posted 4 centuries and 48 fifties in this format of the game. With this, he has become the the 6th most scorer in T20s after Chris Gayle (12298 runs), Brendon McCullum (9922), Kieron Pollard (8838 runs), Shoaib Malik (8603 runs) and David Warner (8111 runs).

### **Afghanistan posted the highest Twenty20 cricket total**

In February 2019, Afghanistan made 278/3 against Ireland in their second Twenty20 International at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. This is the highest-ever total in T20s. Before this, Australia held this record with score of 263/3 against Sri Lanka in year 2016. Hazratullah Zazai became the first player from Afghanistan to score 150 or more runs, and his 236-run opening stand with Usman Ghani (73 runs from 48 balls) became the highest partnership in T20Is. They succeeded in breaking 223-run partnership record between Australia's Aaron Finch and Darcy Short.

### **Dhoni: The first Indian with 352 international sixes**

In February 2019, M. S. Dhoni became the first Indian to hit 352 international sixes during India's innings in the second and final T20I against Australia at the M Chinnaswamy stadium in

Bengaluru. With this, he has become the fourth player with maximum sixes in international cricket after Chris Gayle (506), Shahid Afridi (476) and Brendon McCullum (398) sharing tie with Sanath Jayasuriya at 352. Before the match, Dhoni and Rohit Sharma were tied on 349 sixes.

### **ISSF World Cup 2019**

International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF) World Cup concluded on 28 February 2019 in New Delhi. In this annual event of the ISSF World Cup India shared the first rank with Hungary. In this Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary together coined gold in 10m Air Pistol Mixed Category. The duo topped the podium with 483.4 points. Both had earlier equaled Qualification World Record and also established a new qualification world record junior by shooting 778 points. Saurabh Chaudhary succeeded in booking berth at an Olympic quota for Tokyo 2020 in the category. Besides them, Apurvi Chandela also won gold in women's 10m Air Rifle event.

### **The Makran Cup news**

In February 2019, National champion Deepak Singh defeated Jaafar Naseri in 49 kilogram category in boxing and became the only Indian boxer to win gold in the Makran Cup in Chabahar, Iran. While five others won silver medals. Among them are P Lalitha Prasad (52 kg category), Commonwealth Games silver-medallist Manish Kaushik (60kg), Duryodhan Singh Negi (69kg), Sanjeet (91kg) and Commonwealth Games silver-medallist Satish Kumar (91kg). Prior to this, Rohit Tokas (64kg) and Manjeet Singh Panghal (75kg) lost in the semifinals and settled with bronze medals.

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

- In February 2019, who became the first Indian to hit 352 international sixes ?

(a) Rohit Sharma (b) Virat Kohli (c) M S Dhoni  
(d) Shikhar Dhawan (e) Yuvraj Singh
- Muhammadu Buhari became President of \_\_\_\_\_.

(a) Egypt (b) Sudan (c) Nigeria  
(d) Mauritius (e) Morocco
- In February 2019, \_\_\_\_\_ government has launched the Zero Fatality Corridor (ZFC).

(a) Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Gurugram  
(d) Chennai (e) Hyderabad
- According to RBI's 6th bi-monthly monetary policy statement for 2018-19, what is the current repo rate of India?

(a) 6.50% (b) 6.00% (c) 6.75%  
(d) 6.25% (e) 7.00%
- Which weightlifter has won gold medal in the 48 kg women's category at EGAT Cup 2019?

(a) Sanjita Chanu (b) Swati Singh  
(c) Saikhom Mirabai Chanu (d) Punam Yadav (e) Monika Devi
- In February 2019, which country has become the world's second largest consumer and importer of LPG?

(a) China (b) Pakistan (c) Japan  
(d) India (e) Qatar
- In February 2019, which country has officially declared Siamese fighting fish as its national aquatic animal?

(a) Indonesia (b) Thailand (c) China  
(d) Japan (e) Malaysia

8. On 6th February 2019, Sanjiv Chadha, State Bank of India's \_\_\_\_\_ Chief got honored with 'Freedom of the City Of London'.
- (a) Australia (b) Belgium (c) Bhutan  
(d) Canada (e) UK
9. Chief Minister of which state unveiled statue of Guru Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism in February 2019 ?
- (a) Bihar (b) West Bengal (c) Arunachal Pradesh  
(d) Assam (e) Odisha
10. In February 2019, Himalayan Cloud Observatory has been setup in which state?
- (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Assam  
(d) Tamil Nadu (e) Uttarakhand
11. In February 2019, the Robert Bosch Center for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (RBC-DSAI) has established in which IIT?
- (a) IIT-Bombay (b) IIT-Delhi (c) IIT-Roorkee  
(d) IIT-Madras (e) IIT-Kanpur
12. Who has been honored with the Lifetime Achievement award 2019 from Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television?
- (a) Atom Egoyan (b) Deepa Mehta (c) Sarah Polley  
(d) Dilip Mehta (e) Sugith Varughese
13. In February 2019, which gulf city's High Court has included hindi language as third High Court language?
- (a) Doha (b) Cairo (c) Amman  
(d) Riyadh (e) Abu Dhabi
14. Who among the following wrote the book "Law, Justice and Judicial Power – Justice P N Bhagwati's Approach"?
- (a) Kiran Desai (b) Mool Chand Sharma (c) Vikram Seth  
(d) Arundhati Roy (e) None of above
15. In February 2019, Ruchira Kamboj has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) Nepal (b) Indonesia (c) Malaysia  
(d) Myanmar (e) Bhutan

16. In February 2019, Abdel Fattah El Sisi, the President of \_\_\_\_\_, has been elected as the Chairman of African Union at a summit in Ethiopia.
- (a) Rwanda (b) Egypt (c) Algeria  
(d) Burkina Faso (e) Comoros
17. In February 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched several development projects in which state?
- (a) Punjab (b) Rajasthan (c) Uttar Pradesh  
(d) Uttrakhand (e) Haryana
18. Who has been honored with the Dan David Prize of Israel for the year 2019?
- (a) Romila Thapar (b) Irfan Habib  
(c) Sanjay Subrahmanyam (d) Ramachandra Guha (e) Dipesh Chakrabarty
19. In February 2019, the Institute of Advanced Virology (IAV) has been inaugurated in which state?
- (a) Odisha (b) West Bengal (c) Tamil Nadu  
(d) Telangana (e) Kerala
20. In February 2019, Macedonia officially changed its name to \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) East Macedonia (b) West Macedonia (c) South Macedonia  
(d) North Macedonia (e) None of above

# • ANSWERS •

- 1.(c) In February 2019, **M S Dhoni** became the first Indian to hit 352 international sixes during India's innings in the second and final T20I against Australia at the M Chinnaswamy stadium in Bengaluru. With this, he has become the fourth player with maximum sixes in international cricket after Chris Gayle (506), Shahid Afridi (476) and Brendon McCullum (398) sharing tie with Sanath Jayasuriya at 352.
- 2.(c) Muhammadu Buhari of All Progressives Congress (APC) party, got re-elected as **Nigeria's** President with more than 4 million votes in February 2019 Presidential elections.
- 3.(a) In February 2019, **Delhi** government has launched the 'Zero Fatality Corridor' (ZFC) to examine the cause for accidents and crashes on the stretch between Burari Chowk and Bhalswa Chowk, located on the outer ring road. The aim of the pilot project is to reduce deaths to near zero levels on this particular stretch.
- 4.(d) According to RBI's 6th bi-monthly monetary policy statement for 2018-19, the current repo rate of India reduced from 6.5% to **6.25%** with immediate effect. Consequently, the reverse repo rate under the LAF stands adjusted to 6.0%. On the supply side, the FAE has placed the growth of real gross value added (GVA) at 7.0% in 2018-19 as compared with 6.9% in 2017-18.
- 5.(c) Indian weightlifter **Saikhom Mirabai Chanu** has won gold medal in the 48 kg women's category at EGAT Cup 2019 in Thailand. She has lifted 82 kg in snatch and 110 kg in clean and jerk to finish on top of the podium.
- 6.(d) According to the Oil Minister of India, Dharmendra Pradhan, **India** has become the world's second largest consumer and importer of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). India surpassed Japan as the import of LPG grew 12.5% over the last 5 years to 12 million metric tons. India mainly imported LPG from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Iran.
- 7.(b) In February 2019, **Thailand** has officially declared Siamese fighting fish as its national aquatic animal. Siamese fighting fish is the native of Mekong basin of Thailand and is mostly found in the Chao Phraya river in Thailand. The fish was registered as intangible cultural heritage in the year 2013.

- 8.(e)** On 6th February 2019, Sanjiv Chadha, State Bank of India's **UK** Chief got honored with 'Freedom of the City Of London' by city of London Corporation. Sanjiv Chadha assumed this post in 2014.
- 9.(e)** Chief Minister of **Odisha**, Naveen Patnaik unveiled a 19-foot-high statue of Guru Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism at Jirang in Gajapati district, Berhampur, Odisha in February 2019. Historians claim that Guru Padmasambhava, also known as second Buddha, was born and brought up in Odisha before he left for Tibet.
- 10.(e)** In February 2019, Himalayan Cloud Observatory has been setup in Tehri district of **Uttarakhand**. The main aim to setup this observatory is to forecast and monitor cloudburst incidents in the Himalayan region and help to minimize the damage. The observatory is established in the SRT campus, in Tehri.
- 11.(d)** In February 2019, The Robert Bosch Center for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (RBC-DSAI) has established in **IIT-Madras** with an aim of advance scientific innovation for societal benefit. The RBC-DSAI will undertake foundational research in many areas of AI and Data Science viz. deep learning, network analytics, interpretable machine learning, and domain aware AI.
- 12.(b)** Indo-Canadian filmmaker, **Deepa Mehta** has been honored with the Lifetime Achievement award 2019 from Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television. She received this award for her outstanding contribution in Canada's film industry. Deepa Mehta is best known for her trilogy- "Fire", "Earth" and "Water".
- 13.(e)** In February 2019, Hindi is included as the third official language in the **Abu Dhabi High Court** system with a motive to improve access to justice for foreign workers. Authorities have created bilingual language guides to explain complex legal terms in an effort to help people understand court process.
- 14.(b)** The book "Law, Justice and Judicial Power – Justice P N Bhagwati's Approach" is written by **Mool Chand Sharma**. The book was launched by the Chief Justice of India, Justice Ranjan Gogoi. The first edition of the book was received by President Ramnath Kovind. Justice Ranjan Gogoi referred to Justice Bhagwati as the "harbinger of environmental jurisprudence" and a "judicial statesman".
- 15.(e)** In February 2019, Ruchira Kamboj has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to **Bhutan**. Currently, he is serving as the High Commissioner of India to South Africa. Kamboj is a 1987 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer.
- 16.(b)** In February 2019, Abdel Fattah El Sisi, the President of **Egypt**, has been elected as the Chairman of African Union at a summit in Ethiopia. The Egyptian President said that the motive behind this is to improve peace and security in Africa in a holistic and sustainable manner, by keeping mediation and preventive diplomacy as the priority.



- 17.(e)** In February 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched several development projects at Kurukshetra in **Haryana**. The important events are enlisted as follows: The National Cancer Institute at Bhadsa in Jhajjar district, Employees' State Insurance Corporation's (ESIC) medical college and hospital in Faridabad, National Institute of Ayurveda in Panchkula, and Sri Krishna Ayush University, Kurukshetra.
- 18.(c)** Indian historian **Sanjay Subrahmanyam** has been honored with the Dan David Prize of Israel for the year 2019 for his work on inter-cultural encounters between Asians, Europeans and people of North and South America during the early modern era. He shares the award in the category of 'past time dimension' with Prof Kenneth Pomeranz of the University of Chicago.
- 19.(e)** In February 2019, Chief Minister of **Kerala**, Pinarayi Vijayan has inaugurated the Institute of Advanced Virology (IAV) at Thonnakkal in the capital city ,Thiruvananthapuram. This institute is linked to the Global Virus Network, which has 45 centres of excellence in over 29 countries. This institute is built with bio-safety level-3 facilities to detect virus like Nipah.
- 20.(d)** In February 2019, Macedonia officially changed its name to **North Macedonia**. Greece had been blocking Macedonia's entry into the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as it disapproved of the name of the country.