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INDEX

-INTERNATIONAL (WORLD)

NATIONAL NEWS

-ECONOMY / FINANCE

-APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

-AWARDS AND HONOURS

-SPORTS/ GAMES

-OBITUARIES

-IMPORTANT DAYS

-BOOKS AND AUTHORS

-RANKING

-SCIENCE ANDTECH

-DEFENCE

-SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. 2019 Announced As The International Year Of The Periodic Table

- The United Nations announced 2019 as the International Year of the Periodic Table of the Chemical Elements to highlight its first publication in 1869. The periodic table was first designed by the Russian scientist Dmitri Ivanovich Mendeleev.

-This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first publication of the periodic table by Mendeleev.

2. Macedonia Signs Accord To Join NATO

-Macedonia signed an accord to join NATO to become the 30th member of the US-led alliance.

3. India Pavilion Inaugurated At 69th Berlin International Film Festival

- Ministry of I&B, in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry, is participating in the Berlin International Film Festival being held from 7th – 17th February, 2019 at Berlin, Germany.

4. Hindi Included As 3rd Official Court Language in Abu Dhabi

-Abu Dhabi has decided to include Hindi as the third official language used in its courts, alongside Arabic and English, as part of a move designed to improve access to justice.

(Abu Dhabi is the capital of the United Arab Emirates).

5. The seventh session of the World Government Summit's 7th Session Held In Dubai

-More than 4,000 people from 140 countries participated in the event.

-The main objective of the summit is to shape the future generation of governments, by bringing the public and private sectors together to collaborate with world-renowned experts, it seeks to help create a positive impact for citizens worldwide.

6. Macedonia Officially Changed Its Name to North Macedonia

-The country, formerly known as the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, on paper ending a decades-long dispute that should pave the way for NATO membership.

7. India Signs Legal Agreements With The World Bank

-The Government of India, Government of Himachal Pradesh (GoHP) and the World Bank signed a \$40 Million Loan Agreement to help bring clean and reliable drinking water to the citizens of the Greater Shimla area, who have been facing severe water shortages and water-borne epidemics over the last few years.

8. J P Morgan Became First US Bank With Cryptocurrency

-The cryptocurrency, called "JPM Coin," is intended for the bank's wholesale payments business that moves \$6 trillion around the world daily and not for retail customers.

9. Iran's First Semi-Heavy Missile-Equipped Submarine "Fateh" Unveiled

-Fateh (conqueror) submarine is equipped with subsurface-to-surface missiles with a range of about 2,000 km (1,250 miles) and is capable of reaching Israel and U.S. military bases in the region.

10. PM Modi visited South Korea

-MoU on the release of commemorative postal stamp on Queen Hur (Suriratna) for releasing a joint stamp commemorating the legendary Princess Suriratna (Queen Hur Hwang-ok), a legendary Princess of Ayodhya, who went to Korea in AD 48 and married King Kim-Suro.

11. Australian Small Brown Rat Becomes World's First Mammal To Go Extinct Due To Climate Change



-A small brown rat of bramble cay melomys species lived on a tiny island off northern Australia becomes the world's first mammal to have become extinct due to "human-induced climate change". The Australian government has officially listed the Bramble Cay melomys as extinct.

12. Zimbabwe Starts Trading New Currency RTGS dollar

-The new currency replaces electronic bank savings called digital dollars and the bond notes and was named after the real-time gross settlement system that banks use to transfer money between each other.

13. Women's Livelihood Bond Launched By World Bank, UN And SIDBI

-World Bank, UN Women, and SIDBI launched new social impact bonds exclusively for women, called Women's Livelihood Bonds (WLBs), with an initial corpus of Rs 300 crore. It will enable individual women entrepreneurs in sectors like food processing, agriculture, services, and small units to borrow around Rs 50,000 to Rs 3 lakh at an annual interest rate of around 13% to 14% or less and have a tenure of 5 years. They will be unsecured, unlisted bonds and offer a fixed coupon rate of 3% per annum to bond investors.

14. India To Attend OIC Meet for 1st Time in Abu Dhabi

-External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj has been invited to deliver an address at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Abu Dhabi. This is the first time that a leader of the non-Muslim country has been invited to the OIC conference.

15. World's Largest Bee Spotted The First Time Since 1981

-Wallace's giant bee (Wallace Bee), the largest bee known on the Earth which was considered to be extinct since 1981 was re-spotted in an Indonesian forest.
-Scientists spotted a female bee of the species *Megachile pluto* and its size is four times the size of the typical European honeybee and has a wingspan of 2.5 inches.

16. Saudi Becomes 73rd Nation To Sign International Solar Alliance

-ISA was unveiled by PM Narendra Modi and former French President Francois Hollande in 2015. The move came at Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visit to India.

NATIONAL NEWS

1. Government Renames DIPP as Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

- The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has been renamed as the *Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade* with a mandate to deal with matters related to start-ups, facilitating ease of doing business among others.
- The newly-named department under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry will look into matters related to promotion of internal trade, including retail trade, welfare of traders and their employees, facilitating ease of doing business and start-ups.

2. Punjab Government Approves 'Smart Village Campaign' Worth Of Rs 385 Crores

-The Punjab government approved a rural development scheme worth Rs 384.40 crore to supplement the ongoing works to build village infrastructure and provide essential amenities.

3. PM Laid Foundation Stone For Various Development Projects in Leh (worth nearly 12,000 crore rupees)

-He laid the foundation stone for a 480 crore rupee Terminal Building at Leh Airport. Mr Modi inaugurated the 9-megawatt Dah hydroelectric project.



- The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation the 220 KiloVolt Srinagar-Alusteng-Drass-Kargil-Leh transmission system. Mr Modi also launched the University of Ladakh, the first-ever in the state's region.

- He also visited Jammu and Srinagar. He inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of various projects, including two new All India Institute of Medical Sciences and 624 MW Kiru Hydroelectric project in Kishtwar.

4. Kala Ghoda Festival 2019 Begins In Mumbai

- The Kala Ghoda festival, India's largest multi-cultural street festival begins in Mumbai to celebrate its 20 years of art and culture through cinema, theatre, dance, literature, and sculpture.

5. 'Sopan 2019' Held At New Delhi

- The 6-day long music and dance festival 'Sopan 2019', to encourage young artists to take up traditional art took place in New Delhi.

6. Kerala Becomes 1st State To Set Up Price Monitoring And Research Unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).

7. Shehri Samridhi Utsav Launched Across The Country

- *Shehri Samridhi Utsav*, an initiative of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), aims to extend the outreach of Deendayal Antyodaya Mission – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), to the most vulnerable, showcase its initiatives and facilitate access of Self-Help Group (SHG) members to the other government schemes.

8. Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) App Launched

-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) App has been launched on Google play store. Ayushman Bharat Yojana or Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) is a centrally sponsored scheme; which was launched in the year 2018, under the Ayushman Bharat Mission of MoHFW in the country. This scheme aims at making interventions in primary, secondary and tertiary care systems, covering both preventive and promotive health, to address healthcare holistically. Moving ahead to digitalisation this app is now available on Google Play store. Indu Bhushan is the CEO of PM-JAY.

9. India And Germany Join Hands On Water And Waste Management

-During the meeting of 3rd Indo-German Working Group for cooperation on water and waste management which concluded in New Delhi, both sides discussed potential cooperation in this area.

10. 2019 Asia LPG Summit Held In New Delhi

-Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister for petroleum and natural gas, inaugurated the 2019 Asia LPG summit in New Delhi. This two-day event will focus on 'LPG – Energy for Life.' India is the 2nd largest consumer of liquified natural gas (LPG) in the world.

11. 'Darwaza Band Part 2' Campaign Launched by Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen

-'Darwaza Band- Part 2' campaign launched by Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen focuses on sustaining the open defecation free status of villages across the country. Earlier Darwaza Band campaign was launched in 2017. The campaign launched by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in Mumbai in the presence of actor Amitabh Bachchan.

12. Chennai Police Launches Mobile App 'Digicop'

- Using the App, people can track the status of stolen two-wheelers and cell phones.

13. 5th India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Committee Meet Held in New Delhi



- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Foreign Affairs Minister of Bangladesh Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen co-chaired the meeting.

14. India And Bangladesh Signed MoU for Training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants

-India and Bangladesh have signed an MOU for training 1800 Bangladesh Civil Servants at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) an institute under the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DAR&PG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Govt. of India, over the next 6 years.

-This is the second time that NCGG would be entering into an MOU for a training program for Bangladesh Civil Servants. Under the first MOU signed 5 years ago, 1500 Bangladesh Civil Servants have already been trained in NCGG.

15. -The State Government of Jammu and Kashmir issued a notification of creation of Ladakh as 3rd Division in the state. Divisional status would facilitate this region in a great way to progress.

16. 2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit Held in Guwahati

-Union Minister of State for Tourism KJ Alphons and Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the *2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit* at Hotel Taj Vivanta in Guwahati.

17. Himalayan Cloud Observatory Set Up In Tehri

-A Himalayan Cloud Observatory is set up in Tehri district of Uttarakhand with a motive 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 and is in the testing period. This is the second observatory in the country to monitor cloud activities by the Indian Science and Technology Department and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur that can function in high-altitudes.

18. Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Lays Foundation Stone of Mega Food Park in Mathura

19. PM Modi launches dedicated 24x7 Satellite channel 'DD Arunprabha' for Arunachal Pradesh.

-DD Arunprabha is the Doordarshan's second channel for the northeastern region; DD Northeast was the first one.

20. 3-Day Long Krishi Kumbh Held In Motihari ,Bihar

-Over fifteen thousand farmers from different states and about two hundred agricultural scientists participated in this. Its objective is to promote modern techniques and diversification in agriculture that could help in doubling farmers income.

21. India and Norway Launched Initiative To Combat Marine Pollution

22. 5th International Dam Safety Conference Starts In Bhubaneswar

-(Globally India ranks third after China and the USA in terms of the number of large dams with 5264 large dams in operation and 437 large dams under construction).

23. National Conference on Unani Medicine held in New Delhi

24. India's 1st Aqua Mega Food Park Commissioned in Andhra Pradesh (exclusively for fish and marine products processing in the state of Andhra Pradesh).

25. 16th Lok Sabha Session Concludes on 13th of February 2019.



-Parliamentary Affairs Minister Narendra Singh Tomar informed that there were a total number of 331 sittings for Lok Sabha. 205 bills were passed and the productivity was 85%. For Rajya Sabha, 154 bills were passed and the productivity was 68%.

26. AYUSH Ministry Launched e-AUSHADHI Portal for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha,

Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters at New Delhi.

-This e-AUSHADHI portal is intended for increased transparency, improved information management facility, improved data usability and increased accountability.

27. India Withdraws Most Favoured Nation Status To Pakistan after Pulwama incident.

-India had granted the status to Pakistan in 1996, a year after WTO's formation.

-India also Boosts Customs Duty To 200% On Goods Imported From Pakistan

28. India Signed Deal With US To Procure 72,400 Assault Rifles

-The Indian Government has signed a deal with the US under Fast Track Procurement (FTP) to avail the Indian Army with 72,400 new 'Sig Sauer Assault Rifles' which will overhaul the army's inventory of frontline rifles. These new rifles will come at a cost of around Rs. 700 Crore and will be used by the army troops deployed along the 3,600 km China's border.

29. Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan Implemented In India

-Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) was rolled out by the Ministry of Labour and Employment from 15 February 2019. The scheme announced in the Interim Budget was notified by the Ministry recently.

"Salient Features of PM-SYM":

1. Minimum Assured Pension: Each subscriber under the PM-SYM, shall receive minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60 years.

2. Family Pension: During the receipt of pension, if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension received by the beneficiary as family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.

30. Expert Committee Recommends Rs 9,750 Monthly National Minimum Wage

-The Expert Committee led by Anoop Satpathy, Fellow of V. V. Giri National Labour Institute (VVGNI), submitted its report on "Determining the Methodology for Fixation of the National Minimum Wage" to the Government. It recommended the fixation of need-based National Minimum Wage (NMW) for India at Rs 375 per day or Rs 9,750 per month irrespective of sectors, skills, occupations and rural-urban locations for a family comprising of 3.6 consumption units. The Present NMW is Rs. 4,576.

31. India's First Agromet Forecast Centre Inaugurated In Karnataka (at University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Dharwad, Karnataka)

-The main objective of the centre is to give accurate reports on the weather which would enable the farmers to protect the crops and get a good yield.

32. IWAI Launched Portal 'LADIS' For Real Time Information

-Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) launched a new portal Least Available Depth Information System (LADIS) for real-time data on available depth on stretches of National Waterways.

33. Amazon Launched 'Amazon Pay UPI' For Android Users In India in partnership with Axis Bank. With this, users would be able to use their Amazon Pay UPI ID to shop on Amazon.in, make payments for their daily purchases, including recharge and bill payments, without entering bank account or debit card credentials.



34. India's First District Cooling System To Be Built In Amravati

-United Arab Emirates (UAE) based international cooling provider, National Central Cooling Company PJSC (Tabreed) entered into a 30-year concession with Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) to build India's first district cooling system in Amravati. The agreement is for a contracted cooling capacity of 20,000 Refrigeration Tons (RTs) and will cater to the State's Assembly, High Court, Secretariat and other Government buildings currently being constructed, for which cooling services will start in early 2021..

35. 4th Agri Leadership Summit 2019 Held At Sonipat, Haryana

36. 40th International Annual Desert Festival Held In Jaisalmer

37. Rajasthan Assembly Passes Bills Scrapping Minimum Qualification For Local Polls

-The Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan passed the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2019 and the Rajasthan Municipality (Amendment) Bill, 2019 to end the minimum education criterion for panchayat and civic polls candidates.

-The previous BJP government had introduced the minimum qualification of class 10 for Zila Parishad/Panchayat member election, and class 5 or 8 class for the post of sarpanch.

38. India's First 'Full-dome 3D Digital Theatre' Inaugurated In Science City Kolkata

39. Rajnath Singh Launches Pan-India Number 112 For Women Safety

-Persons in distress can dial a pan-India number: 112. Under this system, all the states have to set up a dedicated Emergency Response Centre, ERC.

40. PM Modi Flagged Off 1st Ever Diesel To Electric Conversion Locomotive

-Under 'Make in India' initiative, Indian Railways has created history by converting a diesel locomotive into electric locomotive for the first time in the world. This all new converted energy-efficient electric locomotive has been flagged off by PM Narendra Modi in Varanasi.

41. Commerce Minister Launched 'SWAYATT' on GeM

-Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, launched SWAYATT in New Delhi. SWAYATT is an initiative to promote Start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage Through eTransactions on Government e Marketplace (GeM).

42. Operation Digital Board Launched By HRD Ministry

-The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry launched Operation Digital Board on the lines of Operation Blackboard to provide better digital education in school.

-The government has aimed at equipping 9 lakh classrooms in schools and colleges across the country (7 lakh classrooms of 9th, 10th and 11th standards and 2 lakh classrooms of colleges and Universities) with digital facilities for teaching by 2022.

43. Tele-law Mobile App, Nyaya Bandhu Launched By Department of Justice

-The application will benefit 73,000 paralegal volunteers (PLVs) of National Legal Service Authority and State Legal Services Authorities (SLSA) in the country who will be associated under Tele-Law service.

44. 'KALIA Chhatra Bruti' Scholarship Launched In Odisha

-'KALIA Chhatra Bruti' scholarship for the children of farmers benefited under the KALIA scheme was launched by the Odisha govt. It aims at providing financial assistance for technical and professional education to farmers' children by creating a provision for the State government to bear all expenses involved in various levels of education.



45. CCEA Approves KUSUM Scheme For Farmers' Welfare

-The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the launch of 'Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan' (KUSUM Yojana) with the objective of providing financial and water security to farmers. The Central Government will provide a total financial support of Rs 34,422 crore for the scheme.

-Components of KUSUM Yojana: The Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan scheme consists of three components:

Component-A: 10,000 MW of Decentralised Ground Mounted Grid Connected Renewable Power Plants.

Component-B: Installation of 17.50 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.

Component-C: Solarisation of 10 Lakh Grid-connected Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.

46. Odisha To Give Free Sanitary Napkins To 17 Lakh School Girls

-The Odisha Cabinet approved the 'Khushi' scheme to provide free sanitary napkins to school girls across the state. The scheme will benefit nearly 17.25 lakh school girls from Class VI to XII studying in government and government-aided schools.

47. CBDT Set Up Panel To Help Bring Down Tax Litigation

-The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) formed a 4-member committee, headed by income tax commissioner Sanjeev Sharma, to look into the matter of taxation related pain points and submit its final report and recommendations by mid-March.

48. HM Rajnath Singh Inaugurates Waste To Wonder Park In Delhi

-It is the first-of-its-kind tourist attraction in the world, with the replicas of seven wonders of the world. The replicas of all seven wonders of the world have been built with eco-friendly, self sustainable material, and has its own solar and wind power generation.

49. Bihar Becomes The 1st State To Deploy Dog Squad To Check Liquor Smuggling

-20 liquor-tracker dogs were trained rigorously for nine months at Hyderabad-based Integrated Intelligence Training Academy. Patna will witness deployment of 4 such dogs.

50. Tamil Nadu Becomes 1st State in Mainland to Get 2 Coast Guard Districts

-Tamil Nadu became the first state in the country to get a second Coast Guard district headquarters - Thoothukudi. The first district headquarters is Chennai.

-it has been set up with an aim to augment security mechanism on the eastern coast and the state in particular.

51. Indian Government Launched Rail Drishti Dashboard to keep people informed about the work going on in the Railways across the country.

52. FAGMIL Signs MoU With Himachal Pradesh To Establish India's 4th White Cement Plant Project

-Under its diversification programme, FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited (FAGMIL) has taken up a project to establish a white cement plant near village Nohra Dhar in Himachal Pradesh, at a project cost of approximately Rs. 605 crores. It will be the 4th white cement plant in the country.

(FAGMIL is a GoI Undertaking, under the administrative control of Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India).

53. Rising India Summit 2019 Held In New Delhi

The theme of the summit was, 'Beyond Politics: Defining National Priorities'.



54. Assam Launches PRANAM Commission To Protect Parents Of State Government Employees

-Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched the PRANAM Commission, which is a panel set up to look after the issues concerning a Bill brought in for the protection of parents of state government employees. The Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) Bill, stated to be the first-of-its-kind bill in the country, aims to protect elderly parents of government employees in their times of need.

55. HRD Ministry Launches SHREYAS Scheme

-Union minister Prakash Javadekar launched 'Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills' (SHREYAS) for providing industry apprenticeship opportunities to fresh graduates. This scheme is a programme basket comprising the initiatives of three central ministries, including the HRD, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

56. Union Minister Smriti Irani Inaugurated 'Titanwala Museum' In Rajasthan

-Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani inaugurated the 'Titanwala Museum' that showcases the hand block printing of the Chhipa community in Bagru.

-Bagru printing is one of the traditional techniques of printing with natural color followed by the chhipas of Rajasthan. The Bagru hand-block printing has a history of over 1000 years.

57. PM Modi Inaugurated 40-Acre National War Memorial in New Delhi

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated a new National War Memorial, situated in the India Gate complex in New Delhi, to the nation. It is dedicated to soldiers killed during the Indo-China War in 1962, Indo-Pak Wars in 1947, 1965 and 1971, Indian Peace Keeping Force Operations in Sri Lanka and in the Kargil Conflict in 1999, and also those in the UN peacekeeping missions.

(India Gate : The 42-metre-high India Gate was built during the British Raj as the All India War Memorial Arch to honour the soldiers who died in the First World War (1914-1918) and the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919).

58. Mukhya Mantri Vriddha Pension Yojana (MMVPY) : Universal Old Age Pension Scheme Announced By Bihar Government

-The scheme facilitates the amount of Rs. 400 monthly pension for all in the state above the age of 60 who are not getting a pension from the government. The Chief Minister also announced a pension of 6,000 rupees for journalists above 60 years of age.

59. India To Host 13th Conference of Parties of Convention On Conservation of Migratory Species

-The 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (CMS), an environmental treaty under the aegis of United Nations Environment Programme, is going to be hosted by India during 15th to 22nd February 2020 at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

-India has been a Party to the CMS since 1983.

-Great Indian Bustard ('Gibi') Announced As The New Mascot For COP-13

-CMS-COP 13 is a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species and their habitats. It has over 120 participating countries.

-CMS Headquarters: Bonn, Germany.

-The Government also launched a website for the COP-13. CMS COP is also known as the Global Wildlife conference.

FINANCE

1. Interim Budget 2019:



Finance minister Piyush Goyal presented the Interim Budget for 2019-20.

Note: This topic (Budget) is covered in a separate document.

2. RBI Raised Collateral-Free Farm Loan Limit From Rs. 1 Lakh To Rs. 1.6 Lakh with a view to help small and marginal farmers.

3. RBI Doubles The Limit Of Bulk Deposits From Rs. 1 Crore To Rs 2 Crore

-According to current RBI rules, last reviewed in January 2013, banks have the option of not permitting premature withdrawals of 'large rupee term deposits' of INR 1 crore and above. Now this limit has been raised to 2 crore Rs. This move will enhance the operational freedom of Banks.

4. RBI Lifts Cap On FPI Investments In Corporate Bonds

-The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) withdrew the 20% limit on investments by FPIs in corporate bonds of an entity with a view to encourage more foreign investments.

5. Government Relaxes Angel Tax Norms For Start-ups From 7 Years To 10 Years

-The Ministry of Commerce and Industry in an attempt to provide relief to and boost investments into start-ups in India has decided to simplify the process for them to get exemptions under the Income Tax Act, 1961. It will now recognize an entity as a start-up up to 10 years from the date of its incorporation or registration instead of the existing duration of 7 years. It will also recognize an entity as a start-up if its turnover for any of the financial years since its incorporation or registration does not exceed Rs 100 crore unlike the previous amount of Rs 25 crore.

6. EPFO Hikes Interest Rates On EPF By 0.1%

-Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has hiked interest rate on employees' provident fund to 8.65% from 8.55% for the 2018-19 fiscal year. The announcement was made by Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Muhammadu Buhari Re-Elected Nigerian President

2. Rishi Kumar Shukla Appointed As New CBI Director for a fixed term of two years.

3. P V Bharathi Appointed As CEO Of Corporation Bank

-The former executive director of Canara Bank, P V Bharathi assumed charge as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Corporation Bank. P V Bharati became the first woman CEO of the bank.

4 Dinesh Bhatia Appointed As The Ambassador of India To The Republic Of Argentina

5. Air India Chairperson Pradeep Singh Kharola Appointed Civil Aviation Secretary

-The government appointed Air India chief managing director and Chairperson Pradeep Singh Kharola the secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

6. Ruchira Kamboj Appointed India's Ambassador to Bhutan

7. Egypt's President El-Sissi Elected As Chairman of African Union

8. P C Mody Appointed As Chairman of CBDT (Central Board of Direct Taxes)

-He will succeed Sushil Chandra, who was recently appointed Election Commissioner.



(CBDT is a statutory authority established under The Central Board of Revenue Act, 1963. It is supreme body in India for framing policies related to direct taxes and is also tasked to enforce direct tax laws in the country).

9. CBDT Chief Sushil Chandra Appointed As Election Commissioner

-The post had fallen vacant after the appointment of the then Election Commissioner Sunil Arora as Chief Election Commissioner.

10. UN Appoints Chandramouli Ramanathan As Controller And Assistant Secretary-General For Programme Planning, Budget and Finance.

11. SC Appoints Former Judge Justice D.K. Jain as BCCI Ombudsman

-The Supreme Court appointed a retired judge of the court Justice D.K. Jain as the first ombudsman under the new BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) Constitution approved by the court in a judgment.

12. Indra Nooyi Joins Amazon's Board of Directors

She was Pepsico CEO from October 2006 to October 2018.

13. Former Law Minister of Nepal Nilambar Acharya Appointed Country's Ambassador to India

14. Sanjiv Ranjan Appointed As The Ambassador of India To The Republic Of Colombia

AWARDS

1. Francois Laborde Conferred France's Highest Civilian Honour

-Father Francois Laborde, a 92-year-old priest, was conferred the Légion d'Honneur (Legion of Honour), the highest civilian award of France, in recognition of his work for specially-abled children. He was entitled by the French Ambassador to India, Alexandre Ziegler. Father Laborde had set up Howrah South Point, an organisation working for the development of specially-abled children, the destitute and the most deprived sections of the society.

-Father Francois Laborde is the third person from the state (West Bengal) to have been awarded the Legion of Honor after film maestro Satyajit Ray and actor Soumitra Chatterjee.

2. Indian Historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam Wins Israel's Dan David Prize 2019

-He won Israel's prestigious USD 1 million dollar award in the category of "*Past Time Dimension*" for his work in macro-history.

3. Sunil Chhetri Given First Ever "Football Ratna Award" by Football Delhi, the association governing the sport in Delhi.

-He is popularly known as Captain Fantastic. He has scored the 2nd highest number of goals in international matches among active players after Cristiano Ronald.

4. De Goede, Van Doren Win 2018 FIH Player Of The Year Awards

-Eva de Goede (Female) from Netherlands and Arthur van Doren (Male) of Belgium were titled the International Hockey Federation's Players of the Year for 2018.

5. Abdul Aziz Muhamat Wins International Human Rights Prize

-Sudanese refugee, Abdul Aziz Muhamat, who spent 5 years in the Australian detention centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea, was given the Martin Ennals Award 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, for exposing "the very cruel asylum seeker policy of the Australian Government".



6. Jharkhand's NGO Yuwa Won Laureus Sports For Good Award.

-NGO Yuwa works for girl empowerment and became the third Indian entry to receive this honour. Yuwa was founded in 2009 by Americans Franz Gastler and Rose Thomson. It runs a football program in rural Jharkhand with 450 girls. In 2004, Indian Cricket team and Pakistan counterpart shared Laureus Award for the first time and recently by Magic Bus in 2014.

7. Shiv Chhatrapati Awards Conferred On Uday Deshpande And Smriti Mandhana

-Mallakhamb coach, Uday Deshpande, and batswoman, Smriti Mandhana, were awarded the Maharashtra State Government's Shiv Chhatrapati Award.

8. Laureus World Sports Awards 2019 Announced:

-Novak Djokovic : World Sportsman of the Year.

-Simone Biles (United State gymnast) : Sportswoman of the Year at the 2019.

9. PM Modi Conferred With Seoul Peace Prize in South Korea

-Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are among previous recipients of the award.

10. Divya Karnad Becomes First Indian Woman To Receive Future For Nature Award

-33-year-old Ashoka University teacher and Wipro Sustainable Fellow, Divya Karnad became the First Indian Woman to be honoured with the 'Future for Nature Award' for her work on marine conservation. The award is given to 3 people annually, and this year it was given to Oliver Nsengimana and Fernanda Abra along with Divya Karnad. It is a prestigious international award that celebrates achievements in protecting wild animals and plant species.

11. Manpreet Singh Honoured With AHF's Player Of The Year

-The Asian Hockey Federation has honored Indian skipper Manpreet Singh with the 2018 Player of the Year award. Women team's striker Lalremsiami has bagged the Rising Player of The Year prize.

12. President Conferred 'Gandhi Peace Prize'

-President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2015, 16, 17 and 18 at a function in Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

-The award comprises a cash award of one crore rupees, a citation in a scroll, a plaque and a traditional handicraft item.

Here are the awardees that were facilitated at the occasion:

1. For 2015: Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari was given the award for its contribution in Rural Development, Education and Development of natural resources.
2. For 2016: Jointly to Akshaya Patra Foundation for its contribution in providing mid-day meals to millions of children across India and Sulabh International for its contribution in improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers.
3. For 2017: Ekal Abhiyan Trust for its contribution in providing Education for Rural and Tribal Children in remote areas pan India, Rural Empowerment, Gender, and Social Equality.
4. For 2018: Japan's Yohei Sasakawa for his contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.

(Instituted in 1995 on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the annual award is given to individuals and institutions for their contribution towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violence and other Gandhian methods).

13. CZPDC Bhopal And WZPDC Indore Honoured With Saubhagya Award

-The Central Zone Power Distribution Company (CZPDC), Bhopal and West Zone Power Distribution Company (WZPDC), Indore were conferred with the "Saubhagya Award" under Pradhan



Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana at the National Conference of Energy Ministers by the Union Minister of State for Energy, R.K. Singh.

- The award includes a cash prize of Rs 100 crore each. The PM Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana-Saubhagya was implemented by the Central Government in September 2017, and intends to provide electricity to all Below Poverty Line (BPL) houses of rural and urban areas.

15. Grammy Awards 2019 Announced

-The 61st Annual Grammy Awards ceremony was held at Staples Center in Los Angeles.

-Album Of The Year: Golden Hour, Kacey Musgraves

(A **Grammy Award** (stylized as **GRAMMY**, originally called **Gramophone Award**), or **Grammy**, is an award presented by [The Recording Academy](http://www.grammy.com) to recognize achievements in the [music industry](http://www.musicindustry.com).)

16. BAFTA Awards 2019 Announced

2nd British Academy of Film and Television Arts Awards ceremony, popularly referred to as BAFTA Awards 2018 was held on 10th February 2019 in **Royal Albert Hall, London, United Kingdom**.

-Netflix drama '**Roma**' won the best film prize along with director, **Alfonso Cuaron** and co-stars **Olivia Colman** and **Rachel Weisz** won in their respective categories.

-With seven BAFTAs, **The Favourite** by the director **Yorgos Lanthimos** emerged as the top winner on the awards night.

17. Bradley Cooper Wins Best Director From PETA for movie 'A Star Is Born'

- Bradley Cooper has been awarded the 'Oscat'(not Oscar) by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

18. Oscar Awards 2019 Announced

The **91st Academy Awards**, presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), honored the **best films of 2018**. The ceremony was held at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California. AMPAS presented Academy Awards (commonly referred to as **Oscars**) in 24 categories.

BEST PICTURE – Green Book

ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE – Rami Malek, Bohemian Rhapsody

ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE – Olivia Colman, The Favourite

DIRECTING – Alfonso Cuaron, Roma

SPORTS

1. Mithali Raj Becomes First Woman To Play 200 ODIs

- India captain Mithali Raj has become the first woman cricketer to play 200 ODIs, adding another achievement to her illustrious career. The 36-year-old is also the highest run-getter in ODIs with 6622 runs at an average of 51.33, including 7 hundreds. She made her ODI debut way back in 1999. She has also played 10 Tests and 85 T20s.

2. Qatar Defeat Japan To Win Their First-Ever Asian Cup Title In Football

-Qatar forward Almoez Ali broke the record of most goals in a single Asian Cup after netting his ninth goal. This was the first time that Japan lost in an Asian Cup final.

3. South Korean Footballer (Midfielder) Ki Sung-yueng Announces Retirement

4: Vani Kapoor Becomes First Indian To Grab Australian LPGA Card

- Golfer Vani Kapoor has become the first Indian to grab 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.



5. Former captain of the Pakistan women team Sana Mir Becomes 1st Asian Woman To Play 100 T20Is

6. Smriti Mandhana Becomes World No.1 Women's ODI Batter

- Indian women's cricket team opener Smriti Mandhana has become the top-ranked batter in women's ODI cricket, as per the latest rankings released by the ICC.

7. Ramit Tandon Wins Seattle Open

-Indian squash player Ramit Tandon defeated Egyptian Mohamed El Sherbini in the finals to win the Seattle Open, a PSA challenger squash Tour event.

8. Smriti Mandhana Scores India's Fastest-ever T20I Fifty

- Indian opener Smriti Mandhana hammered the fastest fifty for India in Women's T20Is. The left-handed batswoman struck a half-century in just 24 balls in the 1st T20I against New Zealand at Westpac Stadium in Wellington.

-New Zealand's Sophie Devine holds the record of the quickest half-century in women's T20Is. She set the record in 2005 against India when she hammered an 18-ball fifty.

9. World champion Indian weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu won Gold At EGAT Cup in Thailand (in 48kg category).

10. France's Corentin Moutet Clinched Chennai Open ATP Challenger Title (Lawn Tennis)
after beating Andrew Harris of Australia in the singles final.

11. Ricky Ponting Appointed As Assistant Coach Of Australia For 2019 World Cup

-The main coach for the Australian Cricket team is Justin Langer.

12. Prajnesh Gunneswaran, 3rd Indian To Reach Top-100 of Men's Singles Tennis Rankings after Somdev Devvarman and Yuki Bhambri.

13. Vidarbha Clinches The Irani Cup Title

-Vidarbha became the only 3rd team in Indian Domestic Cricket history after Bombay and Karnataka to defend their Irani cup titles at Jamtha Stadium in Nagpur by defeating rest of India. Young player Karnewar was the Player of the match.

14. Chris Gayle Announces that will retire From One-day Internationals after the forthcoming World Cup.

(The World Cup will be held in England and Wales from 30th May till 14th July).

15. Senior Badminton Nationals: Saina Nehwal Wins Women's Singles Title

-She defeated P.V.Sindhu in the finals in Guwahati. Sourabh Verma completed a hat-trick of titles, claiming the men's singles crown after defeating young Lakshya Sen in straight games. Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Chirag Shetty won the Men's Doubles title.

16. Elise Mertens (frpm Belgium) Beats Simona Halep To Win Qatar Open (Lawn tennis).

17. Squash Great Nicol David Announces Retirement

-Malaysia's 8-time World Champion Nicol David has announced that she will call time on her record-breaking career at the end of the 2018/19 season.

18. Afghanistan Scores Highest Ever T20 International Score



-Afghanistan scored 278 in 20 overs, to register the highest-ever total in T20s at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

-Hazratullah Zazai scored 162 runs from just 62 balls. Zazai became the first player from Afghanistan to score 150 or more runs, and his 236-run opening stand with Usman Ghani became the highest partnership in T20Is.

19. Sri Lanka Becomes 1st Ever Asian Team To Win Test Series In South Africa

20. Grandmaster (chess) Abhijeet Gupta Wins Cannes International Open Trophy

21. Manu Bhaker, Saurabh Chaudhary Win Gold In 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team event at the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi.

22. 'Clouded Leopard' To Be Mascot For National Games 2022

-Meghalaya will host the 2022 National Games, which is coinciding with its 50 years of statehood. Clouded Leopard is among the wild cats that live throughout the forests of Garo, Khasi, and Jaintia Hills.

23. Jamie Chadwick from England Becomes The First Female Driver To Win MRF Challenge Title in Chennai.

OBITUARIES

1: Hiten Bhaya : Former Planning Commission member and ex-director of IIMC (Indian Institute of Mass Communication) passed away.

2. Veteran Marathi Actor Ramesh Bhatkar Passes Away

3. Longest-Serving US Congressman John Dingell Passes Away at 92.

-He was first elected in 1955, serving in the House of Representatives for the next 59 years. He retired in 2015. Mr. Dingell served through the terms of 11 US presidents.

4. Oscar-nominated British Actor Albert Finney Passes Away

5. Actor Mahesh Anand Passes Away

-Noted actor Mahesh Anand, best known for playing the villain in several Bollywood films in the late 1980s and 1990s has passed away at the age of 57.

6. 1967 Chemistry Nobel Prize Winner Manfred Eigen Passes Away

-Eigen had won the prize for working on a method to calculate speeds of extremely fast chemical reactions, effected by disturbing the equilibrium by means of short energy pulses.

7. Legendary Goalkeeper Of England, Gardon Banks Passed Away

8. Best-selling British Author 'Andrea Levy' Passed Away

9. Swiss Actor Bruno Ganz Passed Away

10. Climate Scientist Wallace Smith Broecker Passes Away

-Broecker was also first to recognize what he called the Ocean Conveyor Belt, a global system of ocean currents circulating water and nutrients.



11. Noted Hindi Writer Namvar Singh Passes Away

-He received Sahitya Academy Award for literary criticism in 1971 for 'Kavita Ke Naye Pratiman'.

12. 'Badge of Honor' Military Novelist, W.E.B. Griffin Passes Away

-American military veteran and novelist, William E. Butterworth III, better known as W.E.B. Griffin (his pen name), passed away at the age of 89. He joined the army at the age of 17 and wrote more than 200 books under the pen name W.E.B. Griffin.

13. Veteran Film Producer Raj Kumar Barjatya Passes Away

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Wetlands Day: February 2

- Theme : 'Wetlands and Climate Change'.

2. World Cancer Day: 4th February

-This year, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), which organizes World Cancer Day, is launching a new 3-year (2019-2021) campaign with the theme: "*I Am and I Will.*"

3. International Day Of Women And Girls In Science: 11 February

4. World Radio Day: 13 February

-13 February is celebrated as World Radio Day by UNESCO all over the world.
-The theme of WRD 2019 is "*Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace*".

5. World Day of Social Justice: 20 February

-Theme : "*If You Want Peace & Development, Work for Social Justice*".

6. International Mother Language Day: 21 February

-Theme: "*Indigenous languages matter for development, peace building and reconciliation*".

7. National Science Day: 28 February

-Famous Indian scientist Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman or CV Raman discovered the Raman Effect on this day in 1928. For his discovery, Sir CV Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930. This year the theme for the National Science Day is 'Science for people and people for science'.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

1. 'Simplicity & Wisdom' Authored By Mr. Dinesh Shahra Launched

2. P Chidambaram's Book "Undaunted: Saving the Idea of India" Launched

RANKS & REPORTS

1. 'World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2019' Report Released By ILO

- As per the report, unemployment rates will fall to 4.9% in 2019 and remains steady in 2020. Among the age group 15-24 the global unemployment stood at 11.8% which is much higher than it is among other age groups. In the global labor market, 2 billion out of 3.3 billion people worked keeping their economic security at risk in informal employment.



2. India Jumps 8 Place To 36th On International IP Index 2019

- India has jumped eight places to 36th position on the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, which analyses the IP climate in 50 global economies, this year. The US, the UK, Sweden, France and Germany remained the top five economies on the intellectual property index in 2019 retaining their spots from the last year.
- The index brought out by the US Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC).

3. Assam Tops In Budgetary Practices Followed By States: Transparency International

Assam occupied the top slot in the ranking of best practices followed by states in the Budget formulation, followed by Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, as per a survey by Transparency International. The survey is based on 4 parameters which include public disclosure, budgetary process, post-budget fiscal management and efforts to make the budget more transparent and citizen-friendly. The states which figured lower in the ranking were Meghalaya, Manipur and Punjab.

4. India's Tourism Sector Registers 19% Growth In 2018

5. India's Unemployment Rate Hit 4 Decade High Of 6.1% In 2017-18: NSSO

- As per the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO's) periodic labor force survey (PLFS) India's unemployment rate hit a 45 year high of 6.1% in 2017-18. It is the first comprehensive survey on employment conducted by a government agency after demonetization. Unemployment is higher in urban areas which is 7.8% as compared to 5.3% in rural areas of the country. The unemployment rate is at its highest level as in 1972-73. The rate of jobless rural males rose to 17.4% from 5% and among rural jobless females, the rate became 13.6% from 4.8%.

6. India Ranked 47th In The 'Inclusive Internet Index 2019'

-India ranked 47th in the 'Inclusive Internet Index 2019' which is prepared by the 'Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) for Facebook. The index was expanded to include 100 countries which will represent 94% of the world's population and 96% of global GDP.

-Sweden topped the index whereas Singapore ranked 2nd and the USA ranked 3rd. India maintained its previous year rank.

7. Mukesh Ambani World's 8th Richest With Net Worth Of \$54 bn

-The Hurun Global Rich List 2019 is topped by Amazon chief Jeff Bezos for the second year in a row, while the senior Ambani is placed 8th. Ambani is the only Asian among the top 10.

SCI-TECH NEWS

1. ISRO Launches GSAT 31 From French Guiana

-India's 40th communication satellite GSAT-31 has been launched successfully from French Guiana. The Ariane-5 rocket lifted off with it from Kourou Launch Base, and in 42-minutes, placed it in the intended Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit.

-GSAT-31 will provide transponder capacity for DTH television and connectivity to services like VSATs for ATMs, stock-exchanges, Digital Satellite News Gathering DSNG and e-governance applications.

2. NASA To Launch SPHEREx Mission To Investigate Universe in 2023.

- SPHEREx : Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization and Ices Explorer

-Once SPHEREx is in orbit, it will observe and collect data on over 300 million galaxies, some as far as 10 billion light-years away from Earth, and 100 million stars in our own Milky Way every six months.

3. Infosys Unveils A Learning App 'InfyTQ' For Engineering Students



-Infosys, the country's 2nd largest IT firm has launched a next-generation digital platform 'InfyTQ' to facilitate engineering students with best learning experiences by imparting technical and professional skills. InfyTQ is a free platform available on both mobile and desktop, featured with always-on, anytime, anywhere learning catered through a continuous transfer of digital skills.

4. Israel To Launch Its First Moon Mission : about to send an unmanned spacecraft to collect data to be shared with NASA. According to a report, the 585-kilogram Beresheet (Genesis)spacecraft is to lift off atop a Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

5. Bandicoot-A Drainage-Cleaning Robot Introduced In Chennai

-Bandicoot, a drainage-cleaning robot, has been introduced for the first time in India at the Kumbakonam city corporation as part of efforts to rid of manual scavenging at the cost of Rs 18 lakh in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. It is a semi-automatic robot can enter manholes for cleaning sewage lines with its robotic arm and is equipped with 5 night-vision cameras to relay the scenario underneath.

6. China's Xinhua Unveils World's First Female AI News Anchor

-Chinese news agency Xinhua unveiled the world's first female AI (artificial intelligence) news anchor Xin Xiaomeng. She has been developed in collaboration with Sogou Inc, a search engine company.

-Earlier, Xinhua also developed Qiu Hao, the world's first male AI news anchor at the World Internet Conference in Wuzhen held in November 2018, who is capable of mimicking human facial expressions and mannerisms while reading out news-reports.

7. Pinarayi Vijayan Inaugurated First Humanoid Police Robot KP-BOT In India

-Kerala Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, inaugurated India's first Humanoid Police Robot named KP-BOT, ranked as Sub-Inspector (SI), at the Police Headquarters in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The robot's gender is declared female keeping in mind women empowerment and gender equality. It is made under the project Cyberdome which was started by state police and a Kochi based start-up, Asimov.

7. ISRO Sets Up Human Space Flight Centre for Gaganyaan Mission in Bengaluru

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) unveiled its Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) at ISRO Headquarter campus in Bengaluru, Karnataka for its maiden manned space mission 'Gaganyaan'. The space flight centre was inaugurated by K Kasturirangan, former ISRO Chairman.

-ISRO is gearing up for its maiden manned mission Gaganyaan, which is planned for 2021-end. The plan is to have the first unmanned mission in December 2020 and the second one in July 2021.

8. AntBot, The First Walking Robot To Navigate Without GPS, Developed

-AntBot is the first walking robot to have navigational capabilities without GPS or mapping. It has been designed by Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and Aix-Marseille University, France researchers on lines similar to desert ants who use polarised lights and UV radiation to navigate in space. Weighing only 2.3 kg, this robot has six feet for increased mobility, allowing it to move in complex environments, precisely where deploying wheeled robots and drones can be complicated.

7. NASA Announces The End Of Opportunity rover

-NASA announced that its Opportunity Rover mission is complete after the rover failed to respond despite repeated trials since August 2018. The space agency inferred that a planet-encircling dust storm cut off communications with Opportunity on June 10, 2018, disabling its solar panels from storing power. The robotic rover, which wandered the surface of the red planet for over 15 years, was launched by NASA in July 2003 as a part of its Mars Exploration Rover program. It is survived by NASA's Curiosity rover, which is now the only active robot on Mars.



DEFENCE NEWS

1. DAC Approves Indigenous Construction of 6 Submarines Worth Rs40000 cr

-The Defence Acquisitions Council, DAC chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman approved indigenous construction of six submarines worth 40 thousand crore rupees. It is the second project under the Ministry's ambitious strategic partnership model aiming to boost the government's 'Make in India' program.

-DAC has also approved the acquisition of about five thousand MILAN Anti Tank Guided Missiles for the Army.

2. Multinational Maritime Exercise 'Aman 19' Commenced In Karachi

-The 5-day multinational maritime exercise 'AMAN-19' in which 46 nations participated from all over the world was formally commenced at Pakistan Navy Dockyard, with a colorful flag hoisting ceremony.

3. INS Trikand Participates In Exercise 'Cutclass Express 2019'

-INS Trikand, the frontline warship of the Indian Navy, participated in a multi-national training exercise 'CUTCLASS EXPRESS 2019'. The annual Exercise Cutlass Express is sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and conducted by Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF).

-It is the eighth iteration of the annual multinational maritime exercise and was held in the vicinity of Djibouti, Mozambique and Seychelles.

4. 'Exercise Rahat' Concluded In Jaipur

-Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise 'Exercise Rahat' concluded in Jaipur, Rajasthan. It was demonstrated in Jaipur, Kota, and Alwar in Rajasthan.

5. Indian Army Carried Out The Annual Exercise Named 'Exercise Topchi'

-The exercise was held at Deolali Camp near Nashik.

6. IAF Carried Out 'Vayu Shakti' Exercise At Pokhran

-Indian Air Force conducted mega exercise 'Vayu Shakti' in Pokhran, Rajasthan. The exercise was carried out day and night where the IAF showcased firepower capability of indigenously developed platforms and efficacy of missiles. For the first time, the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALP) and the Akash surface-to-air missile were deployed in the military exercise. MiG-29 fighter jet also participated in the exercise.

7. Cobra Gold Military Exercises Held In Thailand

-Thailand and the United States hosted the annual Cobra Gold military exercise, the biggest activity of its type in the Asia-Pacific region with 29 nations taking part as participants or observers. Apart from the 2 countries, 7 countries who participated in the exercise were India, Singapore, Japan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and South Korea. India participated in this exercise for the first time in the 'Observer Plus' category in 2016 alongside China.

8. Hina Jaiswal Becomes The First Indian Woman Flight Engineer

-Flight Lieutenant Hina Jaiswal from Chandigarh, became the First Indian Woman Flight Engineer of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

9. India-Bangladesh Joint Military Exercise 'Sampriti 2019' in Tangail, Bangladesh.

10. Defence Ministry Approves Torpedo Acquisition For Naval Submarines



-In a major boost for the Navy's firepower, the Defence Ministry has approved the acquisition of more than 100 heavyweight torpedoes which will be equipped on the force's six Scorpene-class submarines being built at Mazagon Dockyards in Mumbai.

The French-origin Scorpene submarines are being built in India at Mazagon Dockyards Limited (MDL) and have now been named the Kalvari class. The first boat of the class called INS Kalvari has already been inducted into the Navy and is carrying out operational duties.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

1. World Sustainable Development Summit 2019 Held At New Delhi

-The theme of WSDS 2019 was 'Attaining the 2030 Agenda: delivering on our promise'. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji was honoured with the Sustainable Development Leadership Award 2019 for his outstanding contributions towards sustainable development in Fiji.

2. Early Ed Asia 2019 Held In Jaipur

-Early Ed Asia 2019, the two-day event which is Asia's largest conference on Early Childhood, was held at the City Palace in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The motto of the event was 'Our Children. Our Future'.

3. 8th World CSR Congress 2019 Held in Mumbai

-World Corporate Social Responsibility Congress (World CSR Congress 2019) promotes Entrepreneurship, Social Responsibility, Sustainability and Social Development. The 8th World CSR Congress was held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

-The theme of the year 2019 is 'Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs)' to focus on corporate strategies, innovation, and strategic alliances.

4. 4th India-ASEAN Expo Summit held in New Delhi

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

5. BioAsia 2019 Held In Hyderabad

-The 16th edition of BioAsia 2019 Asia's largest biotechnology and life-sciences forum was conducted in Hyderabad, Telangana.